



# On-line Journal Modelling the New Europe

---

Interdisciplinary studies

Issue No. 33 | September 2020

ISSN 2247-0514

ISSN - L2247 - 0514

**EDITORIAL TEAM**

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:**

Prof. Nicolae Păun, PhD

**EXECUTIVE EDITORS:**

Assist. Prof. Horațiu Dan, PhD

Assoc. Prof. Adrian Corpădean, PhD

Assoc. Prof. Laura Herța, PhD

**EDITORS:**

Assoc. Prof. Paula Mureșan, PhD

Assist. Prof. Delia Flanța, PhD

Teaching Assist. Roxana Nistor, PhD

Teaching Assist. Elena Rusu, PhD

Teaching Assist. Andreea Stretea, PhD Candidate

Researcher Oana Poiană, PhD

**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE**

Prof. Dr. Gérard Bossuat (European Union Liaison Committee of Historians / Université de Cergy-Pontoise, France)

Prof. Dr.dr.h.c. Wichard Woyke (Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Germany)

Prof. Dr. Wilfried Loth (European Union Liaison Committee of Historians / Duisburg-Essen University, Germany)

Prof. Dr. phil. habil Michael Gehler (Universität Hildesheim, Germany)

Prof. Dr. Dr.h.c. Reinhard Meyers (Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster, Germany)

Prof. Dr. Sylvain Schirmann (Director of the Institut d'études Politiques de Strasbourg, France)

Prof. Dr. Vasile Pușcaș (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Prof. Dr. Ovidiu Pecican, (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Prof. Dr. Pery Assis Shikida (Western Parana University, Brazil)

Prof. Dr. Lucir Alves (Western Parana University, Brazil)

Prof. Dr. Sergiu Musteata (Ion Creangă University, Chisinau, Moldova)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Calandri (University of Padua, Italy)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Laszlo Erdey (Debrecen University, Hungary)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pawel Hut (University of Warsaw, Poland)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mircea Maniu (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nicoleta Racolța-Paina (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Georgiana Ciceo (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alina Branda (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Florin Duma (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Adrian Basaraba (West University, Timișoara, Romania)

Assist. Prof. Irina Roibu (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul, South Korea)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Nicolae Toderas (SNSPA, Bucharest, Romania)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Anna Skolimowska (Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw, Poland)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Bartosz Rydliński (Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw, Poland)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Alice Cunha (Nova University, Lisbon, Portugal)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Kamil Zajączkowski (University of Warsaw, Poland)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Dorota Jurkiewicz-Eckert (University of Warsaw, Poland)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Kamil Ławniczak (University of Warsaw, Poland)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Wojciech Lewandowski (University of Warsaw, Poland)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Miroslav Fečko (Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice, Slovakia)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Paula Wiśniewska (Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw, Poland)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ciprian Alupului (Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Mihaela Oprescu (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Monica Burca-Voicu (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ovidiu Vaida (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Radu Albu (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Romana Cramarencu (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Beata Górka-Winter (University of Warsaw, Poland)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Lucian Butaru (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Gabriel Gherasim (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Teaching Assist. Dr. Adrian Ludușan (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Researcher Dr. Zoltán Grünhut (Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, Hungary)

## Table of Contents

Zoltan GRUNHUT

EUROPE IN THE LATE MODERN SOCIAL ACCELERATION. THE ‘SPOKESPEOPLE’ OF  
EUROPEAN STUDIES.....4

Krzysztof JASIECKI

THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION OF THE VISEGRAD GROUP  
COUNTRIES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION.....25

Adrian BODEA and José Manuel SÁNCHEZ SANTOS

DECENTRALIZATION AND EXPECTED TIME IN OFFICE. THE EFFECT OF DECENTRALIZATION  
ON CABINET DURABILITY.....46

Jacek WOJNICKI

CENTRAL EUROPEAN PARTY SYSTEMS AFTER 1990 – STABILIZATION OR CHAOS..... 70

Pavel HUT

POLISH REPATRIATION POLICY AFTER 1989–CONDITIONS, COURSE AND FORECASTS.....91

Yevheniy HAYDANKA

ELECTORAL AND CITIZEN’S VIEW ON EUROSCEPTICISM IN TRANSITIONAL SOCIETY: THE  
CASE OF CZECH REPUBLIC.....111

Tadeusz ZIELIŃSKI

COMPARISON OF PERCEPTIONS OF THREATS TO EXTERNAL SECURITY: STRATEGIC  
DOCUMENTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND POLAND.....134

Monika Maria BRZEZIŃSKA

MODELS OF INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE ROLE THEORY ON THE EXAMPLE OF  
THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY.....156

Alexandra OPREA

DENOUNCING CORRUPTION THROUGH VISUAL MEANS: CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVES IN  
POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIA.....179

## EUROPE IN THE LATE MODERN SOCIAL ACCELERATION THE ‘SPOKESPEOPLE’ OF EUROPEAN STUDIES

Zoltan GRUNHUT, PhD

Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, Hungary

[grunhut@rkk.hu](mailto:grunhut@rkk.hu)

---

**Abstract:** *The paper embraces the concepts of social acceleration and Late Modernity into a multi-theoretical argument. It sheds light on the reflexive and critical shifts, both at individual and institutional-structural level, induced by these processes. Through this lens, the proposed argument revisits the principal fundaments of ‘Europe’; those orienting and underpinning foundations that need to move from the ‘either/or’ framings to the ‘both/and’ logics of pan-relationalism, anti-representationalism, and anti-essentialism. Finally, in the last chapter, the paper (re-)theorizes the role of ‘spokespeople’ in the field of European Studies in order to show how academics/scholars can contribute the most to the reflexive and critical actorness of ‘Europe’ as a multi-layered institutional entity and its European citizens.*

---

**Keywords:** social acceleration, Late Modernity, Europe, reflexivity and critical agency, spokespeople.

### Introduction

The current paper proposes an argument based on various conceptual sources, which inputs are put together not with the aim to understand something meta-theoretically, but rather to question something multi-theoretically. While the former approach strives to give meaningful answers by exploratory, descriptive, and/or explanatory investigations, the latter settles for unanswered problematizations. A meta-theory is synthesizing in order to grasp a more comprehensive, more detailed, and more accurate truth, while a multi-theory is only linking, without any reinterpretation and reframing, so that different kinds of truths could be embraced. The former approach claims objectivity for its truth, the latter tries to contest subjective truth-candidates in a process of deliberative justification. Through this multi-theoretical lens the paper aims to shed light on how social acceleration is inducing globally and locally relevant structural changes end up in cultural abstraction that undermines the reference value of semantic patterns frame the subjects’ routinized

ideas and praxes. Without valid references, in a contingent social world, the subjects have to develop reflexive competencies and critical agencies in order to keep being engaged in interactions. This process of individualization, then, further dismantles the cultural constraints, facilitates structural changes, and triggers social acceleration, therefore a circularity of impacts is emerging. Subjects and structures shape and reshape each other progressively. The interrelatedness of agents and institutions is shifting to a mutually reflexive and critical constellation. 'Europe' as a supranational entity, based on multilateralism and oriented towards integration, has to reconsider itself along these institutional trends. And as part of these efforts, it has to rely more on 'spokespeople' who realize the importance of multi-theoretical questioning against meta-theoretical answering, who contribute to the process of subjective justification against the imposition of objective truths.

### **Social acceleration in the era of Late Modernity**

Hartmut Rosa (2013) claims that the core difference between Classic and Late Modernity could be grasped as an 'acceleration' of time. Since everything (production, consumption, needs for institutional updates, social relations, construction of subjective reflections, narrative/performative (re-)constitution of the self, etc.) turns to be faster, then the 'horizon of expectation' and the 'space of experience' are more and more detaching from each other (Koselleck, 1979). This means that the subjects are much less able to predict the possibilities of the future based on their impressions gained in the past; they do not experience what they expect. While this acceleration is an inherent part of modernity, in the classic era social narratives as well as social praxes based on the relevant ideational framings aimed to make changes foreseeable and calculable, i.e. controlled to some extent. In line with this, social theories also proposed shifting but predictable paths, such as differentiation (Durkheim), rationalization and bureaucratization (Weber), individualism (Simmel), or a bit later systemic (or field-related) diversification (Parsons, Luhmann, Bourdieu) (cf. Giddens, 1995). What is new in Late Modernity is that acceleration is so fast that there is no time to establish coherent grand narratives any longer (cf. Lyotard, 1984; 1988). All kinds of framings and references, among them also the various cultural semantics, are heavily questioned (Giddens, 1990). Hence, in this era acceleration is much less the consequence of modernization, but the cause of it. It triggers itself especially respective to technologization, production-consumption, transportation, and info-communication (Rosa, 2013).



However, this is not a homogenous trend since acceleration also facilitates contingencies that are challenging for people to cope with (Giddens, 1991). Uncertain and unpredictable interactions with other agents (intersubjective relations) or abstract entities (subjective relations) undermine people's ontological security (Giddens, 1990). When routinized ideas and praxes, as interiorized cultural patterns, turn to be dysfunctional, then people experience pressuring anxieties and ambiguities (Grunhut, 2019a). Since acceleration avoids the possibility to reestablish (or stabilize) collectively agreed semantics, people have to be critical about their own individual references. They need to reflexively de- and reconstruct their routines, both their epistemologically relevant ideational framings and their praxis-related agency (Beck, 1992). Due to this pressure, an individualization of actorness emerges that further induces social acceleration because cultural constraints cannot keep their reference value any longer. This is how flows of migrants, products, services, information, as well as digitalized, automatized, and robotized technologies that depersonalize daily interactions, furthermore various threats and hazards, like ecology crises, diseases, terrorism, extremism, state-failings, and international crimes are not only consequences of globalization but they accelerate this process too; and this circular trend undermines the reference value of particular (traditional) cultures, because local structures are becoming more and more shaken (Beck, 1998). Due to these circularly interlinked processes, people have to de- and reconstruct their routines as there are no reliable patterns to apply (Beck et al. 1994). Thus, a parallel globalization/localization occurs. Global trends have impacts of abstractions on local structures and cultures, while local events and social reflections (e.g. sudden spreading of a disease, social protest against the various forms of – patriarchal, state, military, theocratic, oligarchic – power, artistic revolution, etc.) could trigger global waves (Giddens, 1999). Individual agents experience that their 'inhabited microcosm' of a social neighborhood is extremely expanding and shrinking at the same time. Global flows widens their social space while devaluation of particular (traditional) semantics pins down their options of being attached to partial groups or communities (Grunhut, 2019a). Some agents experience these processes with anxiety and fears, they strive to protect the once unequivocal cultural references in order to stabilize their ontological security (routinized form of knowledge, ideas, and praxes). Others, instead, try to cope with the challenges reflexively and critically by using social acceleration as a foundation to liberate their subjectivity from constraints (Beck et al. 2003).

In Late Modernity the present narrows down to short, impulsive moments. It is not experienced as a constellation of continuity links the past to the future rather as a density of fragments unattached from what was before and what will be after. In a phenomenological sense, this means that the past immediately turns to be a closed chapter that does not have a valid framing significance to predict the future, while the latter is necessarily perceived as something inscrutable (Rosa, 2013). Accordingly, there is no time for long contemplations and experimental periods to construct and deliberate meanings, to interpret and reinterpret the relevancy of experiences, to let patterns of narrative understandings being settled. References cannot be collectively stabilized or individually customized. Everything is in a status of constant formulation. Agents, thus, have to rely on impulses gained from snapshots of experiences; they need to make quick decisions and spontaneous shifts (Rosa, 2009). Autopoietic (narrative and performative) self-constitution is based on life-long but at least years-long ideational and praxes-related self-framings. It always happens in the present but it tries to embrace both the past and the future into a self-controlled constellation of strategic construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction (like ‘from where I’m coming, where I’m now, and where I’m heading to’ through what kinds of unexpected/desired critical junctures). The subject has to commit itself to relevant experiences in the past, while it aims to foresee and pre-plan the future (Rosa, 2013). Self-constitution extends time into a continuity. However, social acceleration very much hardens this actorness since neither past experiences can hold their importance, nor future expectations and predications can stay reliable. Due to these impacts, subjects easily find themselves in a decontextualized stream of rushing situations and interactions, where they are managing their own selves as detemporalized and atomized provisional fragments (Rosa, 2009). Self-constitution, thus, needs to be more spontaneous and more flexible. It has to be open for unanticipated inputs and abrupt impulses. Subjects should not strive for completeness.

Yet, not only individuals have to reconstitute themselves constantly, but also semantics and abstract entities using these references cannot keep fixed forms. While subjects reflexively and critically strengthen their actorness (competencies, abilities, capacities), they also realize their agency in relation to structures; how to alter institutions, how to question meanings, and how to deconstruct ideational (narrative) framings (cf. theory about structuration – Giddens, 1984). Hence, acceleration creates a social constellation where agents and structures are progressively shaping each other. These processes lead to various changes to social roles, statuses, positions,

relations, and interactions. The most fundamental shift may happen to traditional perceptions of Man and Woman since patriarchal structures are heavily questioned as legitimizing semantics in Late Modernity (Giddens, 1992). Many dynamics of the man-dominated social constellation are unveiled to be male chauvinist and sexist. The ‘othering’ of women through the lens of aggressive ‘macho’ pride of masculinity (such as women are physically weaker, more sensitive, more affective, more caring, more romantic, less competitive, less autonomous, more aesthetic-minded, etc.) is under attack even it is far away to be completely condemned. Still, women are slowly liberating themselves from their reified (instrumental) status, which trend has important future prospects on women’s lifestyles from relationships (roles in family, status of marriage, courtships and friendships), through education and career (studies, positions, leadership, employment, entrepreneurship), to consumption and various forms of public-political engagements (Beck & Beck-Gersheim, 1995).

All these changes de- and reconstruct differently the status of loving relationships. Both the traditional narrative of romantic bond and the legal interpretation of marriage as a pact are being more and more devaluated as ideational framings (Giddens, 1992). Instead, aspects like intimacy, togetherness, equality, honesty, bond of communion, mutuality, respect, giving freedom and space, providing a supportive and inspirational atmosphere to each other are becoming essential features of a courtship/loveship (Grunhut, 2019a). The sexual orientation of the parties is not perceived through the patriarchal lens of ‘normality/abnormality’ any longer, because the traditional family-model of husband, wife, and kid(s) cannot keep being a universal reference. The focus, thus, moves to the quality of the relationship, if it can safeguard an intimate connectedness for the couple to live a peaceful life in an era full of contingencies (Beck & Beck-Gersheim, 2002). In line with this, break-ups are not considered as failures as long as the once satisfying relationships stop to function according to the aforementioned features. On the contrary, to cut short these unhappy partnerships is a reflexive action contributing to one’s subjective emancipation (Grunhut, 2019a). Of course, due to these shifts, the concept of marriage is changing as well. Couples are together for years or decades without being married; frequently they are not keeping a common household or living in the same area. It is more and more a tendency that not just men but also women – irrespective to age – enjoy the autonomy from social pressures to be single, or to have relationship without being married. The connotation of divorcement is also different than it used to be. If a loving relation is not working then its legal status cannot hold it together either, so the



procedure of getting divorced is demanded to be faster and easier. In line with this, contracts about separated incomes, bank accounts and properties are becoming usual features of a marriage (Grunhut, 2019b).

Family as a basic social unit is perceived through a new lens as well. On the one hand, homosexual couples in more and more societies have the same rights as heterosexual ones (to marry, to adopt, to have joint loans and credits, to enjoy family-related social benefits and subsidies, etc.), while on the other hand, single-parent families are widely accepted and respected, both socially and institutionally (Giddens, 1992). The roles of family members are also changing rapidly. Neither based on gender, nor due to traditional family functionality there should not be a distinction between 'breadwinning' and 'childrearing-housekeeping' tasks (Beck & Beck-Gersheim, 2002). Although it is an inherent mechanism of every relationship that the parties are identifying themselves with certain roles, yet these are not socially-culturally pressured in Late Modernity, therefore flexibility of being reflexively adaptive to changing circumstances is expected from the couples (Grunhut, 2019a). The relevancy of 'strong ties', the intensity of informal relations between different generations of an extended family (for instance, to have common household, to ask for daily favors, to share certain costs, etc.) is decreasing; nuclear families are more relying on formal relations with various organizations in their everyday issues.

Above, the argument addressed the globally-locally interlinked structural aspects of acceleration and how these trends undermine the particular cultures and their semantics. It was also briefly elaborated how agents, in lack of valid narratives and culturally grounded references and patterns, need to reflexively revisit their routinely applied ideational framings and praxes, which critical attempts lead to individualization, i.e. to the unfoldment of individual subjectivity against certain traditional constraints. Of course, these shifts are neither linear, nor homogenous since social acceleration is incomplete; as regards to some aspects it is (self-)initiated, while respective to other things, it is much more restrained. This is because acceleration triggers wide varieties of contingencies and people are coping with these risks differently. Time is a scarce resource in Late Modernity (Rosa, 2013). Agents are anxious about their shaken ontological security not only because there is no time to de- and reconstruct routinized knowledge and praxes (neither collectively, nor individually), but because there is no time even to really live through (to emotionally-mentally contemplate) experiences (Schulze, 2005). People feel to be rushed like they cannot waste so much time and efforts on certain experiences because they may miss other

important ones that would enrich their subjectivity. Therefore, a hurried gathering of experiences unfolds as a general social praxis. This attempted search for self-completeness, however, cannot be achieved due to its distorted logics (what the subject misses is always more relevant than what it reaches, even though the missed experiences are unknown). This hastiness of being sooner than later a prime ‘experience-holder’ prevents the ethically relevant contents of experiences to be subjectively internalized. Agents are eager to achieve the state of being fulfilled since they expect the re-stabilization of their ontological security from this satisfaction. However, they should not be focused on *what to achieve* as *how to reach there* is much more pivotal. Self-completeness is impossible as ‘life’ cannot be enclosed into a form. It is always moving, changing, creating new circumstances, events, links, and trials to experience. Progressivity is in the journey, in the *voyage* and not at the arrival. Mikhail Bakhtin’s thoughts should be considered here: *“If I am consummated and my life is consummated, I am no longer capable of living and acting. For in order to live and act, I need to be unconsummated, I need to be open for myself – at least in all the essential moments constituting my life; I have to be, for myself, someone who is axiologically yet-to-be, someone who does not coincide with his already existing makeup”* (Bakhtin, 1990: 13).

Due to this social acceleration people’s actorness moves towards multi-tasking, i.e. they try to do things both more intensively (more thoroughly) and more extensively (in many areas and respective to many subjects) at the same time. Of course, this is contradictory as – over an individually diverse limit – enhancing more the quantity of actions necessarily reduces the quality of these deeds and their meaningfulness. Therefore, sparing time is a distinguished goal in this constellation (Rosa, 2013). Efficiency is regarded as the core motivating factor. If something is doable in a shorter period, then more time remains for other activities. Technologization and flexibility are seen as the main driving contributions to production both in economic and self-constitutional sense. By innovations and robotized-automatized modes as well as by flexible openness about how to register, administer, and solve problems in new and creative ways ‘profit’ could be increased, since these novel applications earn time for the ‘investors’. However, these trends also create a constant state of being loaded with over-spins. While both the economic sector and individual agents try to introduce crisis management strategies that are adapted to the unbreakable acceleration (such as increasing the consumption of products/experiences, keeping the pace of competitiveness/running for self-completeness by higher quality and more diverse inputs/experiences, etc.), yet continuous hardships are unavoidable. This is an inherent part of the

capitalist mode of product: there are winners and losers, there are ups and downs, and constant inequalities. However, subjects cannot balance and settle their inner-fights similarly. Especially not in an era when common references and narratives turn to be invalid and dysfunctional. The experience of mental, emotional, and physical misery and affliction harden the efforts to stabilize ontological security. Depression, boredom, indifference, lethargy, burnout, and loneliness deepen the anxieties and tensions of the late modern subjects (Sik, 2018; 2019). Both, the unappeasable hunger for experiences triggered by social acceleration and the isolationist self-exclusion from these hastened progression are dead ends for the agents. They need to find, instead, a subjectively constructed (continuously de- and reconstructed) balance. A reflexively constituted and critically revisable ideational and praxes-related individual pattern that helps them coping with the everyday trials of interactions. The extreme acceleration of Late Modernity undermines all the particular (traditional) references, however it also paves the path for an individualization based on self-reliability. This is a demanding shift for the people, so they need to be encouraged by supportive institutional dynamics. Reciprocated acknowledgement of one's individual uniqueness, of course, has to be grounded in intersubjective relations, however subjective interactions with abstract entities should provide an institutional framework for this ideationally driven and praxes-related recognition (cf. Honneth, 1995). Agents and structures, thus, have to shape and reshape each other in a framework of mutually reflexive and critical interrelatedness. At the institutional level certain 'spokespeople' should take the lead in this emancipatory progression.

### **'Europe' in the accelerated late modern times**

Social theories of Classic Modernity, irrespective to their main claims, understand modernization as a diversification and sophistication of the social complexity. Subsystems (Parsons, Luhmann, Münch) or fields (Bourdieu) are becoming both more connected and more complicated in a sense of multi-layeredness. If there is general social acceleration, then this trend of Late Modernity has to trigger desynchronizations and disintegrations insofar as the various subsystems' or fields' response time is dissonant (Rosa, 2013). Translating the structural changes and reflecting on these shifts, for instance, take much more time for education and health care than for info-communication and technology or finance. This is why grand narratives are collapsing and particular (traditional) cultures and their references are becoming questioned in this era. There are no prevalent, for the whole social complexity valid ideational framings and semantics. Even

economy as the most relevant and comprehensive subsystem or field of the capitalist mode of production is losing its influence over the other sectors (or superstructures), because it cannot react uniformly (in a fully harmonious way) and immediately (without hesitation). The binary logic of profitable/non-profitable is not so obvious in these accelerated circumstances.

The political subsystem or field is losing ground even more drastically. Since policies (means and ends), politics (modes and practices), as well as polities (institutional designs and set-ups) are all need time to be deliberated and continuously updated, and social acceleration heavily shortens these temporal capacities, then the political sphere has two alternatives to follow. On the one hand, new populism proposes hard-handed governmental style based on protectionism, centralization, in-group-favoritism, ideological hegemony, and respect for traditional semantics. Anxious people who struggle to develop reflexive competencies and critical agencies, urged by the social acceleration they are living in, are tempted to expect deceleration and predictability, i.e. security from this new populist promises (Sik, 2019). They feel nostalgia for something that might never existed before, new populism, still, could orient them towards this illusion/delusion of the past. New populists have similar narratives: the status quo, for instance, ethnic, national or religious unity-superiority, traditional family model, cultural and historical heritages, social conventions and customs, etc., have to be protected, so defensive mechanisms and inwardness should be encouraged and institutionalized at all – micro, meso, and macro – levels.

The other alternative for the political sphere is to ‘actively withdraw’, i.e. to let other subsystems or fields to make decisions in their own response time. In this case, the political sphere realizes that it cannot integrate the whole social complexity, it cannot deal with the asynchronies democratically, so it has to step back from its privileged status. This trend leads to privatization, deregulation, and juridification with many potential, both socially and functionally relevant anomalies. Yet, this latter alternative is still more an adequate path for Late Modernity insofar as not only the subjects need to develop reflexive competencies and critical agencies, but the same is expected from the institutions too.

‘Europe’ as a supranational entity based on multilateralism and bounded by the objective to promote comprehensive political, economic, and social integration does not have a choice between new populism and ‘active withdrawalment’. It has to go for the latter alternative since the nationalist-protectionist option explicitly hampers the European unification. For long, the future of ‘Europe’ was seen as a necessary post-national shift that gradually reduces the member states’

sovereignty in order to institutionalize supranational superstructures (cf. Habermas, 1998). However, this understanding is wrong according to the lens of Late Modernity. The shift has to be taken in this era is not about facilitating ‘post-nationalism’ against ‘nationalism’, since this framing cannot proceed beyond the ‘either/or’ logics of Classic Modernity. What is needed, instead, is a progression along the ‘both/and’ principle enables the emergence of reflexive competencies and critical agencies both for subjects and abstract entities (Beck & Grande, 2007). ‘Europe’ is not supranational and therefore post-national, but rather a multi-level and multi-sector institutional complexity being in a constant state of formulation due to rapidly changing multi-actor partnerships and cooperation (Delanty & Rumford, 2005). It is not a fixed structure but an elastic framework could be flexibly altered (Delanty, 2016; Rumford, 2007; 2008).

‘Europe’ has to be driven by three fundamental principles. *Pan-relationalism* suggests that everything is interlinked in the subjects’ objective, natural, and social surroundings (Rorty, 1979). An individual agent is neither a detached observer could take a neutrally rational position, nor an untouched actor able to unconstrainedly construct and deconstruct itself only by itself. No, both the subject–subject (intersubjective) and the subject–object (subjective) relations refer to a self-transcendent interrelatedness that cannot be substituted for a self-enhancing ontological stance without pathologies. The most common negative consequence of forgotten pan-relationalism is reification, i.e. the completely instrumental, egoistically profit-oriented treatment of one’s ‘world-out-there’ involving objects, natural entities, and other people (Honneth, 2007). This form of knowledge seems to be exempt from epistemological category-mistakes and immoralities since it pretends to be rationally coherent and consistent both respective to ideational framings and applied praxes. This is because it is distorted already at an ontological level. It makes the agent to take a contemplative position from where everything can be broken down into partialities (Lukács, 1971). Then, these reified partialities are easier to be assessed, measured, categorized, and addressed by meanings and functionalities, i.e. to compare them to each other according to a simple logic of maximizing gains and minimizing losses. Every objectified partiality has binarily segmented values (like: true/false, right/wrong, beauty/ugly, useful/useless, etc.) underpinned by a basic economic relevance about profitability/non-profitability. The fully mondialized (globally pervasive) capitalist mode of production imposes this rational form of knowledge on the agents. However, this rationale also tears them out from their objective, natural, and social surroundings, moreover it even urges them to treat their own selves instrumentally (not the total matters but the parts, i.e.



reified partialities overshadow the ‘big picture’). This form of knowledge claims to be rational as it aims to understand the details in an in-depth way and in accordance with logical reasons, however the core pattern, in any case, remains ontologically distorted, since the more the agents follow these patterns, the more they reproductively narrow down their subjectivity into something alienated reflectivism paralyzes social actorness (Honneth, 2007). Classic Modernity, framed by the ‘either/or’ logic, urges people to be rational. Bureaucratization, reflective scientization, individualism, functional theories and explanations about systemic diversification all apply this rational form of knowledge which is lately more and more questioned by the emerging late modern shifts and social acceleration. Developing reflexive competencies and critical agencies cannot be progressed without pan-relationalism. People are able to unfold their subjectivity (individualization, i.e. being unique among the others), if they acknowledge other people’s similar efforts and do not treat them and their perspectives instrumentally from a self-enhancing stance constrained by the pattern of rationalism (which latter stance should be seen as individualism, i.e. a contemplative egoism strives for capital gains).

Pan-relationalism is inherently linked to the second fundamental principle of the ‘both/and’ logic of ‘Europe’, which is *anti-representationalism*. Reflexivity and critical agency require from the subjects to realize that nothing is ‘represented’ in their objective, natural, and social surroundings, but everything is presented, i.e. subjectively constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed (Rorty, 1989). The privileged status of ‘reflectivity’ that aims for rationally reasoned objectivity is misleading since there is no apparatus to compare human (therefore subjective) knowledge to something natural or logical (objective) knowledge. What people do not know about, it is unknown for them, it cannot be labeled, and what they know about, it has to be subjective, i.e. constructed (narratively and performatively theory-laden) (Vandenberghe, 2014). Giving meanings has nothing to do with representations. It is, instead, an act of presenting better to be acknowledged as a subjective agency of construction always remain open for reflexive and critical reconsiderations (Rorty, 1991a). The concern is right that this understanding could lead to extreme relativization, however the other option, based on reflective representations and objectivity, is the path of hegemonic idea-impositions. The key is to stop searching for Truths and institutionalize, instead, discursive debates about justice.

To make this shift *anti-essentialism* has to be respected as the third principle of the ‘both/and’ logic of ‘Europe’. It is a lens emphasizes the importance of deliberative justifications

against Truth-vindications (Rorty, 1998). If nothing is represented and there is no objective knowledge, then essential Truths are invalid. As Richard Rorty said: “...we can tell you about justification, but can’t tell you anything about Truth, there’s nothing to be said about Truth. We know how to justify beliefs, we know that the adjective ‘true’ is that we apply to the beliefs we have justified. We know that a belief can’t be true without being justified. That’s all we know about Truth. Justification is relative to an audience regarding truth-candidates, Truth is not relative to anything. Just because it is not relative to anything, there’s nothing to be said about it”.<sup>1</sup> Every subject has the right to propose and deliberate its own truth as long as this truth-statement does not exclude others from the process of justification. Oppositional truth-statements can contest against each other vehemently, but none of the truth-candidates should be silenced or muted in discursive justification.

The multi-layered, always reflexively and critically alterable institutional complexity of ‘Europe’ based on the ‘both/and’ logic of pan-relationalism, anti-representationalism, and anti-essentialism is the condition for a progressive agent-structure constellation. Without a shift like this, ‘Europe’ won’t be able to cope with the challenges of social acceleration and Late Modernity. On the contrary, it would be stuck in a state of sovereignty-related power-struggles, disintegrations, desynchronizations, and institutional dysfunctionalities. The path ahead of the European political sphere about ‘active withdrawalment’ urges reforms that could institutionalize mechanisms of reflexive and critical reconsiderations, deliberations, and consensus-oriented justifications in the various subsystems or fields of the social complexity. The political sphere cannot keep its privileged status any longer. However, it is principally responsible for progressive shifts in the other subsystems or fields.

In order to contribute to these changes, it is important to note that pan-relationalism, anti-representationalism, and anti-essentialism are all telling us that the diverse phenomena and events of ‘life’ (or the world-out-there involving objects, natural entities, and people) are grasped and framed by subjectively constructed ideas (Vandenberghe, 2014). Although ideational framings cannot be extended enough to hold ‘life’, yet what we know about ‘life’, it is definitely framed by ideas (Bhaskar, 1986). ‘Life’ does not have an agency of speaking for itself, however individual subjects are ‘spokespeople’ for themselves to frame ‘life’, i.e. to construct, deconstruct, and

---

<sup>1</sup> Of Beauty and Consolation. Episode 23. Richard Rorty. Interview with journalist Wim Kayzer

reconstruct theory-laden meanings about it (Archer, 1995). Understanding ‘life’ is a subjective self-constitution, an autopoietic (narrative and performative) formulation of the self (Fehér, 1994). When subjects are giving meanings to the phenomena and events of ‘life’, when they are addressing somehow their objective, natural, and social surroundings and the linkages among these entities, they are more talking about themselves, they are more constituting themselves than identifying the world-out-there. This is why agents have the agency to be ‘spokespeople’ for themselves. Yet, this actorness is constrained. Constrained by ‘either/or’ kinds of logics, traditional semantics, cultural references, i.e. by grand narratives. Late Modernity and social acceleration undermine these narratives, therefore liberate the subjective agency of being a ‘spokesperson’. However, ‘influencers’ (‘gate-keepers’), i.e. more powerful ‘spokespeople’, who enjoy privileged political, economic, scientific, artistic, media, etc. statuses, have the actorness to impose ideational framings on others, or even to convince them about the unequivocal significance of these references (see Foucault’s theory about ‘govern-mentality’). Thus, the fundamental task of the agents active in the political sphere of the institutionally multi-layered ‘Europe’ is to make ‘spokespeople’ of other subsystems or fields accept and respect the ‘both/and’ logic of pan-relationalism, anti-representationalism, and anti-essentialism. This means to be rather ‘mentors’ than powerful ‘influencers’. Agents of the political sphere have to institutionalize the general frameworks and mechanisms of this late modern shift. If the ‘spokespeople’ of the political sphere do not initiate a reform like this, then ‘Europe’ will never be able to establish reflexive and critical institutional capacities. ‘Active withdrawal’ in this sense means that the political sphere does not try to integrate the whole social complexity as a dominant subsystem or field, nor strive to establish fixed structures; it aims to take care of, instead, the holistic framework, grounded in the ‘both/and’ logic of pan-relationalism, anti-representationalism, and anti-essentialism, by urging ‘mentors’ to encourage the individual agents’ abilities of being ‘spokesperson’ for themselves.

### **‘Spokespeople’ of European Studies**

In the last chapter, the paper theorizes how ‘spokespeople’ of European Studies, or at least a certain group of agents in this field, should contribute by general questioning to the reflexively and critically revisable multi-layered institutional entity of ‘Europe’. Although this is a very specific and small sector (or *epistemic community*) of the more comprehensive scientific subsystem or field, yet by addressing this sector, the paper describes in an in-depth way how agents

in other subsystems or fields should act as ‘mentors’ encouraging the reflexive capacities and critical agencies of individual subjects. At first, Slavoj Žižek’s argument needs to be considered about the differentiation between ‘intellectuals’ and ‘experts’. Žižek (2013) claims that ‘intellectuals’ have to aim for the right questions, i.e. they are critically revisiting all kinds of theoretical and methodological approaches that strive for the status of being a narrative. In this sense, ‘intellectuals’ have the role to identify problems, to ask rather than to answer. They do not try to synthesize ideas into meta-theories, but to link together subjective ideational framings into multi-theories, to ‘unmute’ critical arguments, to leave questions unanswered. This intellectual approach is very much needed for deliberative justifications, for communicative inclusions respect the ‘both/and’ logic of pan-relationalism, anti-representationalism, and anti-essentialism. ‘Experts’, on the contrary, are acting as ‘influencers’. They are looking for explanations, they elaborate rationalized answers. ‘Experts’ have to propose cause-effect-framed closed narratives underpinned by the ‘either/or’ logic otherwise they would not be able to offer solutions. Their contributions are useful but have to be considered as arguments of truth-candidates and not as objective Truths. By constant questioning, it is the job of the ‘intellectuals’ to prevent the Truth-vindication of ‘experts’ and the discursive praxis of idea-imposition attached to it.

How ‘experts’ are using ideational framings in their communicative interactions (discursive actorness), it is something similar to Max Weber’s argument about the role of ‘academics/scholars’ described in *Science as a Vocation*.<sup>2</sup> Weber (2004) claims that scientific results stem from routinized ‘practical activities’ respect certain rules and commitments. Rules about rationally-logically reasoned mode of argument and language/notion use, and commitments towards the theoretical-methodological exploration and explanation of the smallest possible details. Weber says that science expects specialization from the ‘academics/scholars’. “*Only rigorous specialization can give the scholar the feeling for what may be the one and only time in his entire life, that here he has achieved something that will last. Nowadays, a really definitive and valuable achievement is always the product of specialization. And anyone who lacks the ability to don blinkers for once and to convince himself that the destiny of his soul depends upon whether he is right to make precisely this conjecture and no other at this point in his manuscript should keep*

---

<sup>2</sup> *Science as a Vocation* (German: *Wissenschaft als Beruf*) is the text of a lecture given by Weber in 1917 at Munich University.

well away from science. He will never be able to submit to what we may call the ‘experience’ of science.” (Weber, 2004: 81–82). Weber sees the objections against this rigorous specialization: “Among young people nowadays the idea is very widespread that science has become a question of simple calculation, something produced in laboratories or statistical card indexes, just as ‘in a factory’, with nothing but cold reason and not with the entire ‘soul’” (ibid: 82). He accepts that being inspired of new problems, new questions, and new approaches is fundamental for scientific progression, however ‘academics/scholars’ – he stresses – cannot substitute the ‘practical activities’ with enthusiasm. Motivation and stimulation for the new achievements, thus, have to consider the ‘blindness’ of rationalized science: “Inspiration does not do away with the need for work. And for its part, work cannot replace inspiration or force it to appear, any more than passion can. Both work and passion, and especially both together, can entice an idea” (ibid: 83). Weber emphasizes that the process of intellectualization is grounded in the progression of reflective scientization: “... we all know that what we have achieved will be obsolete in ten, twenty, or fifty years. That is the fate, indeed, that is the very meaning of scientific work. [...] Scientific progress is a fraction, and indeed the most important fraction, of the process of intellectualization... It means that in principle, then, we are not ruled by mysterious, unpredictable forces, but that, on the contrary, we can in principle control everything by means of calculation. That in turn means the disenchantment of the world” (ibid: 85, 86–87). Weber does not say that the ‘practical activities’ of science can answer everything; he is well aware of the limits of science. However, he believes that the process of rational intellectualization is the only progressive alternative that could push these limits.

Using Žižek’s aforementioned terms, Weber was surely in favor of ‘expertization’; he clearly and emphatically argued the importance of reflective scientization based on specialization and rationalized modes of researching (conceptualizing, theorizing, and methodological inquiring), i.e. producing answers. The Hungarian philosopher, Georg Lukács, who knew Weber well, took another path. In the opening chapter of the book *Soul and Form*, which is a letter to his friend, Leo Popper, Lukács developed on the importance of the essay. He begins his argument with the core differentiation between science and art: “Science affects us by its contents, art by its forms; science offers us facts and the relationship between facts but art offers us souls and destinies. Here they ways part; here there is no replacement and no transition. [...] as soon as science has become separate and independent, everything that has led up to it (such as religion,



ethics, and art – Z.G.) *loses its value. Only when something has dissolved all its content in form, and thus become pure art, can it no longer become superfluous; but then its previous scientific nature altogether forgotten and emptied of meaning*” (Lukács, 1974: 5). So, there is science deals with facts and their links, with contingent findings as these outcomes are based on rationalized verifications and falsifications in a pre-enclosed framework of concepts, methods, terms, etc. And there is art, pure art that can progress beyond the temporarily consolidated facts of the contingent ‘life’ to shed light on something deeper. According to Lukács, then, there is the science of art that works as science but aims for the substantial goals of art to question and criticize. This aspiration, thus, oscillates between science and art. It is proposing questions but also looking for answers, which shapes its asking-ability. It is using artistic expressions but tries to crystallize fact-like conclusions. For Lukács, though, a fourth way of *expression of human temperament* is relevant, and this is essay. These are “*writings in which the same life-problems are raised as in the writings which call themselves criticism, but with the difference that here the questions are addressed directly to life itself: they do not need the mediation of literature or art. And it is precisely the writings of the greatest essayists...*” (ibid: 5) The nature of essay is to question. It is asking ‘life’ itself – directly, without artistic mediation. And it is not looking for answers. Lukács’ ‘essayists’ are Žižek’s ‘intellectuals’; they are ‘spokespeople’ who remind us that facts and the relationships between them, subjectively conceptualized in theory-laden ideational framings, could be discursively justified in deliberative communications, but could never be objective Truths explored by specialized and systematized ‘practical activities’.

These ‘essayists’ or ‘intellectuals’ know very well that the moment when European Studies starts to develop only answers based on ‘either/or’ kind of unequivocal solutions, it is the end of a discipline that should propose, instead, theorizations on ‘Europe’ as a multi-layered institutional entity bounded by the goal of promoting comprehensive political, economic, and social integration through multilateralism. If ‘spokespeople’ of European Studies, at least a significant number of agents of them, cannot ignore the trend of ‘expertization’ in the field, and they continue to pursue answers for problems pre-formulated by powerful ‘influencers’, then the discipline will degrade into mere Truth-vindication and hegemonic idea-imposition. ‘Essayists’ or ‘intellectuals’ are needed to remind us to what Richard Rorty said: ‘[I]t is comical to believe that one human being is more in touch with something nonhuman than another human being. [...] It is comical to think that anyone could transcend the quest for happiness, to think that any theory could be more than

*a means to happiness, that there is something called Truth which transcends pleasure and pain”* (Rorty, 1991b: 74). ‘Essayists’ or ‘intellectuals’ are reflexively and critically addressing ‘life’ itself, i.e. they are identifying problems through open-ended multi-theoretical arguments. They are leaving questions unanswered since all of us as individual subjects have to have the ability and capability to be ‘spokespeople’ for ourselves. To quote Rorty again: “[T]o gain an objective knowledge of the world, and thus of oneself, [is] an attempt to avoid the responsibility for choosing one’s project. [T]his is not to say that the desire for objective knowledge of nature, history, or anything else is bound to be unsuccessful, or even bound to be self-deceptive. It is merely to say that it presents a temptation to self-deception insofar as we think that, by knowing which descriptions within a given set of normal discourses apply to us, we thereby know ourselves” (Rorty, 1979: 361).

### **Conclusion**

The political project of ‘Europe’, as a multilevel and multilateral institutional entity, is bounded by the objective of promoting economic, political, cultural, and social integration. It cannot give up this normative principle. Progressed or regressed integration of the EU is not a dilemma of ‘either/or’; it is not like more ‘Europe’ means more constrained national sovereignty. On the contrary, if the EU is stuck in a process of integration/disintegration (i.e. one step forward/one step back), then the unstoppable late modern trend of social acceleration will generate harmful social-political conflicts and deteriorative impacts at all (supranational, national, regional, local, and even at individual) level. The current paper argued that the parallel globalization/localization of Late Modernity with its flows and accelerative tendencies is affecting people and their everyday routines (ideas and praxes) in various ways. Not only their actorness is impacted related to institutions, but fundamentally their social roles, statuses, habits, customs, narratives, etc. are deeply challenged. Subjects need to rely on their reflexive capacities and critical agencies in Late Modernity since the once so stable cultural (traditional) patterns are becoming more and more shaken due to the structural (institutional) abstractions progress rapidly. There is a trend of universalism that undermines all kinds of particular references; people, thus, have to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct their own subjective ideational and praxis-related routines in order to be able to interact without paralyzing experiences and anxieties. Their ontological security (i.e. the ‘know-how’ of dealing with the ‘would-out-there’ embraces objects, objectified

non-tangible products, nature, and other subjects) is not based on fixed references any longer. Instead, a mutually recognized and respected individualization among agents is requested in this late modern era. This individualization means that the most relevant common feature of us as human beings is that we are diverse; we have only one world, but we constitute it differently since we are unrepeatably unique.

To contribute to these progressively proceeding social-cultural shifts ‘Europe’ has to reconsider itself along three basic principles: pan-relationalism, anti-representationalism, and anti-essentialism. Breaking down the ‘either/or’ logics of fixed Truths (references) demands deliberative justice communicated among pan-relationally interrelated agents who are recognizing each other’s perspective and their individually constructed (therefore subjectively presented and not objectively represented) understandings. This deliberative justice of non-essential subjective truths diffuses framings based on the ‘both/and’ logic of multi-layered spaciousness. Both the agents and the institutions enjoy this multi-layered spaciousness for their reflexive and critical de- and reconstitution since there are more theoretical (optional) position to be taken (as part of the continuously expected self-adaptions). ‘Europe’ as a reflexively and critically shapeable institutional entity is vice versa interlinked to its reflexive and critical citizens and their active engagement. The ‘spokespeople’ of European Studies have important roles and responsibilities in this process; they need to focus on questions instead of searching for answers, they need to strive for deliberative justice instead of fixed Truths. They cannot be only ‘influencers’ if ‘Europe’ as a project has to be formulated by its engagement-oriented and participation-ready citizens. By continuous questioning, the ‘spokespeople’ of European Studies should encourage European citizens to be active ‘spokespeople’ for themselves.

### **Acknowledgement**

Project no. PD124706 (‘The Normative Actorness of the European Union’) has been implemented with the support provided from the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund of Hungary, financed under the PD17 funding scheme.

### **References**

1. Archer, M. (1995) *Realist Social Theory: The Morphogenetic Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University.

2. Bakhtin, M. (1990) *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays*. Dallas: University of Texas Press.
3. Beck, U. (1992) *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. London: Sage.
4. Beck, U. (1998) *World Risk Society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
5. Beck, U. & E. Beck-Gernsheim (1995) *The Normal Chaos of Love*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
6. Beck, U. & E. Beck-Gernsheim (2002) *Individualization: Institutionalized Individualism and its Social and Political Consequences*. London: Sage.
7. Beck, U. & E. Grande (2007) *Cosmopolitan Europe*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
8. Beck, U., W. Bonss, W. & C. Lau (2003) The Theory of Reflexive Modernisation. *Theory and Society*, 32 (2), pp. 1–33.
9. Beck, U., A. Giddens & S. Lash (1994) *Reflexive Modernization. Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
10. Bhaskar, R. (1986) *Scientific Realism and Human Emancipation*. London: Verso.
11. Delanty, G. (2016) Multiple Europes, Multiple Modernities: Conceptualising the Plurality of Europe. *Comparative European Politics*, 13 (4), pp. 398–416.
12. Delanty, G. & C. Rumford (2005) *Rethinking Europe: Social Theory and the Implications of Europeanization*. Abingdon–New York: Routledge.
13. Fehér M. I. (1994) Sartre, hermeneutika, pragmatizmus. *Holmi*, 5 (12), pp. 1810–1831.
14. Giddens, A. (1984) *The Constitution of Society. Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. Cambridge: Polity.
15. Giddens, A. (1990) *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity.
16. Giddens, A. (1991) *Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Cambridge: Polity.
17. Giddens, A. (1992) *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Cambridge: Polity.
18. Giddens, A. (1995) *Politics, Sociology and Social Theory: Encounters with Classical and Contemporary Social Thought*. Cambridge: Polity.
19. Giddens, A. (1999) *Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping Our Lives*. London: Profile.

20. Grünhut, Z. (2019a) Reflexive Europe and the Era of Late Modernity. *Acta Baltica Historiae et Philosophiae Scientiarum*, 7 (3), pp. 42–57.
21. Grünhut, Z. (2019b) Recognizing the Other as a Test of Europeanness. The Value-based Foundations of Individual Reflexivity in the era of Late Modernity. *Europolity*, 13 (2), pp. 125–147.
22. Habermas, J. (1998) *The Post-national Constellation*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
23. Honneth, A. (1995) *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*. London: Polity.
24. Honneth, A. (2007) *Reification: A Recognition-theoretical View*. Oxford: Oxford University.
25. Kosselleck, R. (1979) *Futures Past. On the Semantics of Historical Time*. New York: Columbia University Press.
26. Lukács, G. (1974) *Soul and Form*. Cambridge MA, MIT Press.
27. Lukács, G. (1971) *History and Class Consciousness. Studies in Marxist Dialectics*. Cambridge MA, MIT Press.
28. Lyotard, J.-F. (1984) *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
29. Lyotard, J.-F. (1988) *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
30. Rorty, R. (1979): *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
31. Rorty, R. (1989) *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*. Cambridge MA: Cambridge University Press.
32. Rorty, R. (1991a) *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth: Philosophical Papers I*. Cambridge MA: Cambridge University Press.
33. Rorty, R. (1991b) *Essays on Heidegger and Others: Philosophical Papers II*. Cambridge MA: Cambridge University Press.
34. Rorty, R. (1998) *Truth and Progress: Philosophical Papers III*. Cambridge MA: Cambridge University Press.
35. Rosa, H. (2009) Social Acceleration: Ethical and Political Consequences of a Desynchronized High-Speed Society. In Rosa, H. & W. E. Scheuerman (eds.) *High-Speed*



- Society: Social Acceleration, Power, and Modernity*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University. pp. 77–112.
36. Rosa, H. (2013) *Social Acceleration. A New Theory of Modernity*. New York: Columbia University Press.
37. Rumford, C. (2007) *Cosmopolitanism and Europe*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
38. Rumford, C. (2008) *Cosmopolitan Spaces: Europe, Globalization, Theory*. Abingdon: Routledge.
39. Schulze, G. (2005) *The Experience Society*. London: Sage.
40. Sik, D. (2018) Adalékok az eldologiasodás fenomenológiájához. *Replika*, 29 (108–109), pp. 79–95.
41. Sik, D. (2019) Az “idegélet fokozódásától” a “gyorsulás társadalmáig”. *Replika*, 30 (112) pp. 47–61.
42. Vandenberghe, F. (2014) *What’s Critical about Critical Realism?* Abingdon–New York: Routledge.
43. Weber, M. (2004) *The Vocation Lectures*. Cambridge MA: Hackett.
44. Žižek, S. (2013) *Demanding the Impossible*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.

DOI: 10.24193/OJMNE.2020.33.02

## THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION OF THE VISEGRAD GROUP COUNTRIES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Krzysztof JASIECKI, PhD

Centre for Europe, University of Warsaw, Poland

[k.jasiecki@uw.edu.pl](mailto:k.jasiecki@uw.edu.pl)

---

**Abstract:** The purpose of the article is to characterize the genesis, role, significance, conditions, and effects of economic cooperation of the Visegrad Group states in the European Union, with particular emphasis on their development after 2015. It presents the distinguishing features and specificity of the Group before the accession to NATO and to the EU in the context of the then situation of Central Europe and other European post-communist countries, as well as characterizes the most important aspects of the economic potential of the V4 states against the background of the EU and of some selected Member States. The strengths and weaknesses of economic cooperation in the region are discussed, as well as structural restrictions on the role of the Visegrad countries in the European Union and the controversy surrounding their cooperation. The last part contains conclusions referring the activity of the Visegrad Group to the main axes of post-crisis political and economic divisions in the EU, with particular emphasis on their economic dimensions.

---

**Keywords:** economies of the Visegrad Group countries in the EU, structural limitations of the role of the Visegrad Group countries in the EU, controversy around cooperation of the V4 countries.

### Introductory remarks

The activities of the Visegrad Group (The V4) states in the EU since 2015 are being considered in a new way. They have a more controversial nature, which, among other things, reflects the broader trends of political and economic change since the 2007-2009 global financial crisis. The Group's policy has been part of the divisions in the EU, which currently run mainly between: 1) the countries with trade and budget deficit and those with trade and budget surplus; 2) the countries of the developed northern "core" and southern and eastern low-innovative "peripheries", 3) the euro area and the "second-speed" countries (outside the euro area); 4) the

countries accepting and those opposing to the admission of migrants from North Africa and the Middle East, and 5) the countries complying with and those non-complying with the EU rule of law (Zielonka, 2018; Góralczyk, 2018; Bohle and Greskovits, 2012).

The Group's activity in the EU acts as a catalyst for autonomous and centrifugal tendencies also in other European post-communist countries and inspires new projects, including The Three Seas Initiative inaugurated in August 2016 in Dubrovnik, and discussed as a new regional cooperation model (Zbińkowski 2019; Muresan, Georgescu, 2017). In the post-crisis political and economic circumstances, such actions in some EU countries (not only the "old" Union) are interpreted as a manifestation of the revival of a n into "the East" and "the West". "In the opinion of critics, the Visegrad Group's previously positive image has been changed to non-empatic, and non-solidary" (Orzelska-Stączek 2019, p. 127). The purpose of the article is to characterize the role, significance, conditions, and effects of cooperation between V4 countries in a changing EU.

### **The Visegrad Group before the accession to NATO and to the EU**

The Visegrad Group is a regional faction formed by four post-socialist countries of Central Europe. The name comes from the Hungarian town of Visegrad, in which in 1991 the declaration of cooperation in the pursuit of integration with the European Communities was signed by Lech Walesa, the President of Poland, Vaclav Havel, the President of Czechoslovakia and Józef Antall, the Prime Minister of Hungary. This group, known as the Visegrad Triangle, after the collapse of Czechoslovakia in 1993 transformed into the Visegrad Group formed by Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia (hence the term The Visegrad Four, the V4). The Visegrad states had common goals: implementing democratic and market reforms as well as joining NATO and the EU as soon as possible after the collapse of the Mutual Economic Assistance Council (Comecon) and of the Warsaw Pact in 1991. It was also about obtaining Western financial aid and foreign investments necessary to carry out reforms after the collapse of the command and distribution economy and trade relations in the Comecon.

The V4 countries (plus Romania) have the largest economies among the post-socialist countries within the EU, and geographically are strategically located in Europe. They are often treated as anticipating broader trends of political and economic changes occurring also in the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Against this background, cooperation within the Visegrad Group had from the beginning features that essentially determined its further

development: 1) weakness of formalized political structures; 2) clear Atlantic orientation in terms of security; 3) a market-oriented economic attitude stronger than in the European mainstream; and 4) support for further enlargement of the EU to include other post-communist countries. “From the beginning, the Visegrad Group was described as a “cooperation forum”, an “informal grouping”, a “cooperation structure” [...], a “political lobby group”, or simply the “V4” (Orzelska-Stączek, 2019, p. 119).

The V4 activity was particularly significant in the early 1990s. The most important common denominator of the policy of the countries of the region (with the temporary exclusion of Slovakia) was the direction of political and economic changes based on liberal-democratic consensus and the desire for rapid rapprochement with the West. However, the development of the Group was limited by scepticism towards the creation of strong V4 institutions, which distinguished Czech politicians in particular, perceiving their country as the best in the region prepared for accession to NATO and to the EU (fearing that strengthening the institutions of the Visegrad Group may put a strain on this process). The effectiveness of the V4 was also limited by the rule of Vladimir Meciar in Slovakia between 1993 and 1998, considered by the Western states to be authoritarian and undemocratic, which halted the country’s negotiations with NATO and with the EU (Malova, 2017; Sikulova and Frank, 2013, pp. 23-27). On the other hand, the strong Atlantic orientation resulted from the historical experience of the countries of the region fearing that the breakup of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the weakening of Russia’s imperial ambitions may be a temporary phenomenon. Exiting the grey security zone between the East and the West required a new root in a stable alliance, guaranteed by NATO.

The decidedly neo-liberal orientation of the reformers in the V4 resulted from the will to quickly transform the economies towards the market and from their openness onto international connections. In accordance with the recommendations of the IMF and of the World Bank, such actions increased the chances of significant economic growth based on the principles of developed countries and foreign capital. It was believed that due to the development gap between the V4 and Western Europe, more radical actions were necessary than those in the “old” Union, where the market economy had been built for generations. Leszek Balcerowicz in Poland and Vaclav Klaus in the Czech Republic became symbols of a novel approach to reforms, recognized as a model for the European post-communist countries. The V4 Group created a positive example of regional development, stability, and good relations with other countries (Aslund, 2008). It played a more

important role in that it operated in an area known in the past for frequent wars, political, social and national conflicts as well as for changes in national and territorial affiliations.

The creation of the V4 was an argument in the relations of its members with the EU, especially against the background of dramatic events in countries arising after the collapse of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) and some countries of the former USSR (Góralczyk, 1999). A strong impulse strengthening cooperation was the invitation to the “Partnership for Peace” program and then to join NATO. The effect was, among other things, supporting Bratislava in catching up with integration after the fall of Meciar’s government and in the efforts to join the EU. The new status of the countries of the region strengthened the prestige and attractiveness of the Visegrad cooperation<sup>1</sup>.

### **The migration crisis and the political revival of the V4**

The accession of the Visegrad states to NATO and to the EU meant that the most important premises for developing regional cooperation disappeared. Each state began to pursue its own interests, which weakened the political possibilities of the region. After joining the major Euro-Atlantic organizations, the V4 states failed to develop a new, comprehensive vision of cooperation in policies in the following areas: foreign, defence, security, economic, euro, energy, etc. The frequently asked question at the time was: “Is there a future for the V4?” (McDonagh, 2014). Old animosities were activated, and different political concepts came to the fore. Poland, the largest country of the four, showed ambitions to co-decide on the directions of the EU and NATO development (e.g. through cooperating with Germany and France in the Weimar Triangle). However, the other Group members did not support these leadership aspirations, and the V4 as a whole did not have a common cooperation strategy<sup>2</sup>.

At the same time, the consequences of the global financial crisis that spread to the euro area meant that the EU ceased to be perceived by CEE only as a modernization opportunity. It became a source of political, economic and/or migration problems. The crisis also diversified

---

<sup>1</sup> The expansion of the Group was considered, and Lithuania, Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia were mentioned among potential members. However, the V4 leaders decided that the Group would not be expanded. Researchers distinguishes three stages in the functioning of the V4: the accession stage (1992-2004), the integration stage (2005-20014) and since 2015, the Eurosceptic stage (Orzelska-Stączek, 2019, p. 126).

<sup>2</sup> The head of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the discussion on the role of Poland in the V4 expressed the view that “having leaders would be dangerous, because it would be difficult to fight for national interests” (Kubisz, 2008).



reactions to the new problems and challenges: Hungary and Poland started to strongly emphasize the importance of the nation-state and partly reverse the directions of political changes of the 1990s; Slovakia joined the euro area in 2009 and continues to strengthen its integration with the “core” EU countries; all the V4 countries are redefining the goals and forms of cooperation resulting from the changes within the European Union and in its external environment. However, the most important catalyst for political change turned out to be the migration crisis of 2015. The *Willkommenskultur* policy of Chancellor Angela Merkel and the EC’s proposals on compulsory quotas for refugees, not consulted with the EU partners, aroused opposition of the CEE countries. They launched consolidation reactions and defined a new common denominator for the political cooperation of the V4 states. The position of the Hungarian government was particularly important in this respect, which after the passage through its territory of 200,000 migrants heading for Germany and Sweden, considered them a threat to the social order and Hungarian national identity. The other V4 countries joined this position, including Poland after the change of government in 2015.

This had various consequences. In domestic politics, it strengthened support for right-wing, nationalist, and anti-immigrant groups that referred to slogans for defending traditional values and national identity. This brought about a new division in the V4 relations with the EU, especially in relations with Southern Europe, which has been struggling with the refugee issue to the greatest extent (Chojan 2019). In Central Europe, the migration crisis became a pretext to manifest greater assertiveness in relations with the EU, which is an indication of political changes related to the seizure of power by anti-liberal and Eurosceptic parties. In Hungary and Poland (to a lesser extent in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia), the V4 Group is treated as a tool for populist, authoritarian and neoconservative policy aimed at limiting the influence of the liberal West and its institutions, including the EU<sup>3</sup>. The Group’s strength is to build political coalitions that could represent the interests of other CEE countries as well (Jasiecki, 2019).

### **The economic and demographic potential of the Visegrad countries in the EU**

The importance in the EU of the V4 countries considered together is illustrated by selected economic and demographic indicators. According to Eurostat, the region’s countries accounted for

---

<sup>3</sup> Like the Three Seas Initiative, V4 activities are currently being interpreted in various ways: 1) complementing European integration, strengthening the region's cooperation in defence against Russian neo-imperialism; 2) counteracting the dictates of Berlin, Paris and Brussels; 3) creating an alternative to the possible deepening of the EU crisis (Świder, 2018, p. 25).

5.6% of total EU-28 GDP in 2017 (12.6% of the EU population). In comparison, it was 21.3% of EU GDP in Germany, 15.2% in the United Kingdom, 14.9% in France, 11.2% in Italy, and 7.6% in Spain. The data also indicate the asymmetry of potentials between the V4 countries and the EU and Germany, whose share in the EU population is about 16%, and whose GDP is four times as high as that of the V4 states<sup>4</sup>. However, although the economies of the Visegrad countries - except for Poland - are small, they are developing more dynamically than the euro area countries and remain attractive for foreign investors. The euro crisis and changes in the EU, especially Brexit, further increase the importance of the V4 countries in the EU (see Table 1). The role of the V4 Group as an industrial base and factor of competitiveness of the German economy is particularly growing. “Since 1989, Germany has become the most important trade and investment partner for the V4 countries, which had a significant impact on the evolution of the Central European economic model and helped in the process of modernizing the region.” At the same time, “the countries of the Visegrad Group have become Germany’s most important global partners in both export and import” (Popławski, 2016, p. 5).

**Table 1. Area, population and GDP of the V4 against Germany and the EU (2017)**

	Czech Republic	Hungary	Slovakia	Poland	Germany
Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	78868	93011	49035	312697	357380
Population (million)	10.6	9.8	5.4	38	82.5
Population as % of the whole of the UE	2.1	1.9	1.1	7.5	16.1
GDP in Euro (million) <i>current prices</i>	191.7	124.1	84.9	467.3	3277.3
GDP share UE 28	1.2	0.8	0.6	3.0	21.3
GDP per capita in PPS Index (UE 28=100%)	89	68	76	70	124

Source: Eurostat 2019

Especially since the 2008-2009 euro crisis affected the V4 countries to a much lesser extent than it did the Baltic Republics, reducing GDP in Hungary by 6.7%, in Slovakia by 5.5% and in

<sup>4</sup> Even greater asymmetry between the level of economic development and the number of inhabitants characterizes Romania. According to Eurostat data from 2017, Romania generates 1.2% of EU GDP, although it is inhabited by 3.8% of the EU population (19.6 million citizens).

the Czech Republic by 4.3% (for comparison: this decrease in Latvia was 17%, in Lithuania 15.8%, and in Estonia 12.3%) (Gorzelak and Goh, 2010). Poland was the only EU country that achieved a 1.7% increase in GDP during that period. According to Eurostat, at the end of 2017, the share of the Polish economy in the EU GDP is greater than that of Belgium (2.9%) and approached that of Sweden (3.1%).

### **The strengths and weaknesses of economic cooperation in the V4**

The Visegrad Group was one of the important centres of activity focused on rapprochement with the economic structures of Western Europe, as exemplified by the creation of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) of 1992. This aspect of cooperation was also developed after the accession to the EU of the countries of the region. For instance, during the Polish leadership in the V4 in 2016-2017, development of cooperation was declared in the fields such as EU transport and energy policy, the Digital Single Market and optimization and sealing of tax systems. Joint arrangements were reached on the EU cohesion policy, actions for the single market, internal security and defence, climate, and environmental protection, as well as on the migration policy. Regular and *ad hoc* consultations with high-level politicians, expert meetings, preparation of joint documents on key issues (declarations, letters of intent, meetings of ambassadors, etc.) were indicated as the main mechanisms and instruments<sup>5</sup>. However, the Visegrad countries did not create positive economic synergies (internal and/or external) and they did not develop any significant infrastructure projects. Due to capital and technology deficits, they compete against each other in order to secure foreign investment, especially in the automotive industry (Kuźelewska and Bartnicki, 2017, p. 104).

There are several main reasons for their poor economic cooperation. Initially, they included the following: low level of economic development compared to EEC/EU countries, early stage of creating modern market institutions, high costs of systemic changes, deficits in investment capital as well as weakness of native middle classes and of business elites. First and foremost, the V4 states needed capital and technologies from more developed countries, as well as markets and distribution networks that generated demand for their products. There was an expansion of exports

---

<sup>5</sup> Work on V4 cooperation is also underway with representatives of other countries, in particular Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Slovenia and partners from outside the EU, e.g. South Korea. Meetings are also held with representatives of the Benelux Union and the Nordic Council.

to western countries and an increase in the quality of commercial and production offer. The prospect of accession to the Union made the economies of the Group more dynamic; however, due to their low complementarity and coherence, asymmetrical economic relations were created – especially with Germany, which opened up more opportunities for cooperation than integration under the V4. One of the effects of such relationships is the low level of synergy and economic integration in the V4, as illustrated by export and import exchange which shows that Germany is the main trade partner of the V4 Group, while export and import links with Germany keep growing, least in the case of Slovakia (Tables 2-3).

**Table 2. The main directions of exports of the V4 countries (%)**

2016		2012		2016		2012	
Czech Republic				Hungary			
Germany	32.4	Germany	31.4	Germany	27.9	Germany	25.1
Slovakia	8.3	Slovakia	9.0	Romania	5.2	Romania	6.0
Poland	5.8	Poland	6.1	Slovakia	5.0	Slovakia	6.0
U.K.	5.2	France	5.1	Austria	4.9	Austria	5.8
UE-28	83.7	UE-27*	81.0	UE-28	81.4	UE-27	56.7
Poland				Slovakia			
Germany	27.2	Germany	25.2	Germany	21.9	Germany	21.4
U.K.	6.6	U.K.	6.8	Czech Rep.	11.9	Czech Rep.	14.1
Czech Rep.	6.5	Czech Rep.	6.3	Poland	7.7	Poland	8.4
France	5.4	France	5.9	France	6.2	Hungary	7.3
UE-28	79.6	UE-27	76.0	UE-28	85.5	UE-27	83.8

\* In 2012, the EU did not include Croatia, which obtained its membership in 2013.

Source: *The Economist* 2019.

The role of such ties is strengthened by the fact that they have higher trade exchange with Germany per capita than France or the United Kingdom (with a significant increase after 2009) (Popławski, 2016, p. 18)<sup>6</sup>. The relations of the V4 countries with the EU market are equally stable, but in different proportions, and amount to exports from nearly 80% (Poland) to over 85% (Slovakia). An analogous situation applies to imports, in which the share of EU countries also dominates, although to a slightly smaller extent. The large dependence of the region's development on EU markets means that they are above average susceptible to changes in the economic situation

<sup>6</sup> Cooperation with the German economy is favoured by a large percentage of industry in the GDP of the V4 economies, which is among the highest in the EU. According to the World Bank, it was 32.2% in the Czech Republic in 2018; 30.1% in Slovakia, 28.6% in Poland, 25.4% in Hungary and 27.4% in Germany.

in the EU. The cooperation of the Visegrad countries is mainly of a political nature. However, the weak formalization of the Group and the lack of real coordination mechanisms (e.g. similar to those of the Benelux Union or to the Nordic Council), make it unable to generate its own political identity recognizable in the international environment.

**Table 3. The main directions of imports of the V4 countries**

2016		2012		2016		2012	
The Czech Republic				Hungary			
Germany	30.6	Germany	29,3	Germany	27.4	Germany	24.8
Poland	9.7	Poland	7.7	Austria	6.6	Russia	8.8
China	7,4	Slovakia	7.4	China	6.4	China	7.4
Slovakia	6.3	China	6.3	Poland	5.6	Austria	7.2
UE-28	79.2	UE-27	75.3	UE-28	77.7	UE-27	63.27
Poland				Slovakia			
Germany	28.1	Germany	26.2	Germany	20.7	Germany	17.8
China	7.8	Russia	11.5	Czech Rep	17.4	Czech Rep	17.1
Netherlands	5.9	Netherlands	5.7	Austria	10.0	Russia	9.7
Russia	5.7	Italy	5.1	Poland	6.7	Hungary	7.6
UE-28	72.1	UE-27	67.7	UE-28	80.2	UE-27	73.6

Source: same as above.

The current status of the V4 remains ambivalent and highly problematic due to the different objectives of its members, their divergent interests, ambiguity of the development line, the lack of a legislative dimension at the sub-regional level, as well as the lack of mechanisms for formal arrangements and consultations (e.g. in the form of a joint parliament with a limited legislative delegation). From historical point of view, “the Visegrad countries have not had positive experienced with regional cooperation; they are also not linked by strong common regional identity” (Orzelska-Skrzypek, 2019, p. 129, see also Roszkowski, 2015; Judt, 2005; Rothschild 1998).

### **The structural limitations on the role of the Visegrad Group states in the EU**

The debt and economic crisis in the euro area undermined the concepts of rapid development convergence that underpin the EU. Its course also revealed the diversity of directions

of changes in the European Union, which are manifested in the processes of political and economic divergence and the discussion of a “multi-speed” Europe. What is consolidated, among other things, is the distinction between highly developed “core” countries of the euro area, cantered around Germany, France, Benelux and Austria, and two groups of “peripheral countries” – in Southern Europe and Central and Eastern Europe (Myant, 2018; Jasiecki, 2013; Bohle and Greskovits, 2012). One of the main problems of post-communist system changes is the role of their structural dependencies in relations with the more developed countries of the “core” of the euro area. The common denominator of discussions on such relations is the thesis that the V4 countries joined the EU on principles that give advantage to the interests of Western corporations. The unprecedented rate of increasing the share of foreign investors in the region resulted in Western transnational corporations (TNCs) dominating the most important sectors in the system – financial intermediation, telecommunications, export industries and retail.

The transition based on foreign capital in the second half of the 1990s was reflected in the definitions of the V4 states as variants of the new “transnational capitalism” (Bohle and Greskovits, 2012), “dependent market economy” (Nölke and Vliegenhart, 2009; Pula, 20018)<sup>7</sup>. Due to their position in the international division of labor, these countries are considered as FDI-based second rank market economies. Modelled on those of the EU, economic institutions of these countries relatively quickly integrated with international markets. Foreign investors dominate, and the development is based on exports with a growing share of highly processed goods, produced mainly by local branches of TNCs (Myant and Drahekoupil, 2011). A system was created that is a combination of export-oriented economic development, financially dependent and determined by the weakness of domestic capital accumulation compensated by foreign investment and EU funds. In this approach, the progressing “Europeanization” may, however, mean further “peripheralization” in the form of dependence on EU-15 import markets (especially Germany) and foreign credit and technologies<sup>8</sup>. Partial confirmation of the structural weaknesses of cooperation among the V4 economies is provided by data on ownership in the banking sector and in the group

---

<sup>7</sup> In application to Romania, discussions on various strategies for modernization and economic development from the perspective of political economy, taking into account the modern variant of “dependent neoliberalism” is characterized, among others, by Cornel Ban (Petrovici 2015).

<sup>8</sup> It is metaphorically illustrated by the essence of a Czech joke from the 1990s indicating two threats: 1) Germany will make huge investment and buy out the local economy and 2) Germany will not make any investment and the economy will stagnate (Judt, 1996, p. 151).



of the largest 500 List companies, mostly controlled by foreign capital (see Tables 4-5). A characteristic feature of the economies of the region has become the dualism of the development of more productive and profitable companies with the participation of foreign investors and less effective domestic enterprises, as well as geographical and sectoral concentration of foreign direct investment (FDI).

**Table 4. The share of various types of banks in the V4 market (2014)**

Banks controlled by capital (in%)		
country	Foreign	state-owned
Czech Republic	83	2.6
Hungary	88	5.8
Poland	62	21.0
Slovakia	99	0.8

Source: Deloitte, *CE Top 500 CE TOP 500*, “Rzeczpospolita”, 3.09.2014.

The capabilities of domestic companies necessary for long-term growth and competitiveness do not increase significantly. At the same time, the technological activity of branches of foreign corporations is often implemented without significant links with national innovation systems. These trends are deepened by regional, economic, and social diversity increased by the inflow of foreign capital and weakness of the representation of CEE's economic interests on the states level and the EU forum (Jasiecki 2019).

**Table 5. The share of various types of ownership in the structure of the 500 largest enterprises in the V4 economies (2014)**

Businesses controlled by capital (in%)
--

country	Foreign	private domestic	state-owned
Czech Rep.	65.8	16.5	17.0
Hungary	87.3	1.6	11.1
Poland	56.8	19.0	23.5
Slovakia	75.0	0.0	25.0

Source: same as above.

In the sphere of consequences, they resemble in a new way the problems known from the theory of dependence and the theory of the world system that characterized island development and semi-peripheral countries. The manifestation of similar phenomena is the emergence of a new “metropolitan class,” the elite of wealth and middle classes concentrated in the capitals – Budapest, Prague, Bratislava and in Warsaw and several major agglomerations in Poland (Pula, 2018, pp. 194-195; Jasiecki 2013). The crisis in the EU revealed also many other negative aspects of the V4 development based on foreign investment<sup>9</sup>, including a radical reduction in the lending activity of banks controlled by transnational capital, exchange rate risks passed on to enterprises and households (e.g. loans denominated in the Swiss francs), as well as a sharp decline in the export of companies with foreign capital. Accumulation of such phenomena and trends also contributed to the increase in the budget deficits in the region and the entry of some countries, like Hungary and Poland, into the procedures of excessive debt in the EU. A discussion about the costs of its service, including tax optimization and the inward/outward balance<sup>10</sup> became part of the reaction of the countries of the region to the development based on foreign capital.

Repatriated profits abroad by foreign owners included in GDP were also considered a problem of the V4 countries; since 2010 their share is the largest in the Czech Republic – hovering at around 5%, slightly smaller in Slovakia and Hungary, and the smallest (about 2% per year) in Poland (Septimiu, 2019). Such estimates lead to the conclusion that the development in the Visegrad countries is in fact significantly smaller than shown by the official statistics. This is also a reason for explaining the discrepancy between GDP growth rates in these countries and a much slower improvement in the standard of living of the inhabitants. Dynamic economic changes in

<sup>9</sup> The financial weakness of the CEE countries is demonstrated by the share of banks in the region reaching a total of 1.5% in the structure of the EU banking sector's assets (Orłowski et al., 2018, p. 52).

<sup>10</sup> International investments are difficult to monitor and classify due to their often non-transparent origin. It is estimated that about 1/3 of global financial flows are multiple transactions carried out by third countries, which leads to tax revenue losses, welfare losses, as well as distorted competition in the host country. TNCs, which benefit from tax preferences in some countries, make such transfers; in Europe, this applies to Cyprus, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the UK (Aykut et al., 2017).

recent years have created new structural barriers common (to varying degrees) for the V4 countries. These include, in particular, the “middle income trap” growing labor shortages and labor costs, and the issue of openness of domestic labor markets to foreign economic immigration. Many countries, after reaching approximately 60% (+/- 10%) of American prosperity, cease to catch up with the United States – which, as the largest economy in the world, is the frame of reference. This occurred, among others, in Greece and Portugal and in some Latin American or Middle East countries which are based on low and medium advanced production. The “middle income trap” is caused by the declining return on investment, forcing the search for other sources of development – primarily switching to innovation and technically advanced capital (Aiyar et. al., 2013).

### **Controversies around V4 cooperation**

What raises the biggest discussions among the many controversies in the Visegrad Group is political cooperation considered at three levels: relations among the V4 countries, relations between the V4 countries and the EU, and other external relations of the countries of the region, especially with the USA, with Russia and with Ukraine. The approaches presented in the international forum can be simply reduced to the rule of “four countries and three positions”; with Hungary and Poland showing a tendency to pursue separate policies, and the Czech Republic and Slovakia usually have similar perspectives. Relations within the V4 are slightly different in terms of political and economic issues, which for several years have been divided into the countries of “illiberal democracy” and countries continuing the modified version of the 1990s development strategies. Hungary (since 2010) and Poland (since 2015) have been moving away from the Western European separation of powers. Nationalist-populist and conservative groups rule there. They centralize the executive branch while implementing three policies: statist (based on large state corporations), economically liberal (in the sphere of economic regulations, the pension system) and paternalistic in the social sphere (lowering the retirement age, providing extensive family transfers, marginalizing social dialogue).

What is occurring in these countries is a shift towards state capitalism. In the conditions of weakness of domestic capital, an essential part of this return is to increase the role of the state in the economy, including the share in ownership of enterprises. These activities are primarily aimed at overcoming the risks associated with strengthening the dependent position of the market economy and reducing the threat of the “middle income trap.” However, basing the development

of the economy on the state sector is very controversial in the conditions of post-communist CEE countries<sup>11</sup>. The experience of nomenclature statism shows that support for state champions of the economy is burdened by the growing risk of poor resource allocation. The mixing of ownership, regulatory and management functions favours new forms of monopolization and politicization of the economy and facilitates corruption, as well as lowers institutional standards in the public sphere. It is also associated with a lower efficiency of state-owned enterprises compared to companies with foreign capital and private domestic capital (IMF, 2019; Bałtowski and Kwiatkowski, 2018). The crises of state-owned banks in the Czech Republic in the 1990s (and later also in Slovenia) confirmed the negative consequences of similar actions. Despite the state support for reindustrialization, export promotion of domestic companies and modern technologies in Hungary and Poland, there is no evidence that these countries are now able to effectively deviate from the FDI driven growth strategy (Pula, 2018, pp. 208-212).

The view is being discussed, however, that it is more important for the future to eliminate of the performance gap between domestic labor productivity and leading world economies, to significantly strengthen the spill over effect in domestic enterprises and to increase their competitiveness, than to renationalize enterprises (Farkas, 2016, p. 209; Myant, 2018, p. 302). The Czech Republic and Slovakia have not significantly changed their development model. In the Czech Republic, where parties with stronger centre-left and liberal preferences rule, and in Slovakia, where the party of conservative Social Democrats and nationalists is in power, an ideologically homogeneous block of power has not formed. Anti-liberal political tendencies are weaker in these countries and have less impact on the economy. However, the situation of Slovakia is fundamentally different compared to all the V4 countries. It has belonged to the euro area since 2009. Thus, it participates in the “hard core” of integration processes, which has granted to it significant political benefits, including greater capacity for building coalitions and forcing own interests in the European Union. In contrast, Poland and the Czech Republic are distancing

---

<sup>11</sup> In Hungary, between 2010 and 2013, the value of the state share in ownership doubled (Farkas, 2016, p. 414). Between 2010 and 2016, over 80% of renationalization transactions concerned foreign entities (Mihalyi, 2016, p. 588). Poland has also increased state ownership, especially in the financial services and the energy sector (e.g. in banking, the share of national capital controlled by the state has exceeded 52%, in the energy sector 60%). For comparison, the share in the assets of the banking sector with dominant foreign capital in the Czech Republic and Slovakia is 92% and 84% respectively (in UK 38%, in Italy 8%, in Germany 7%, in France and Spain 5% each) (NBP, 2018, p. 88).

themselves from adopting the single currency, which at this stage of development places them on the outskirts of the EU.

In addition to systemic and political divergences, there are also other types of differentiation among the V4 Group countries, including those resulting from a different definition of national interests. For example, Poland has the ambition to become a significant European gas hub, which conflicts with the similar aspirations of Hungary cooperating in this respect with the Russian Federation. These divergences have specific consequences, including the weak presence in the public debate of joint economic initiatives (analogous to the Swedish-Danish road and rail bridge connecting Malmo with Copenhagen), which would testify to the vitality and prospects of the Group's cooperation. Although some activities have recently been undertaken, Via Carpathia remains the only significant project, and the weakness of joint activities is illustrated by the financing of the Visegrad Fund which has a budget of around EUR 7-8 million per year. The main differences between the EU and governments of the V4 countries concern mainly the interpretation of the EU law in the areas of system and migration.

New political tensions create controversies in the assessment of the directions of systemic changes, of the observance of European values enshrined in the Treaty (such as separation of powers, rule of law, independence of judges, freedom of the media and minority rights), as well as the extent of further participation in the development of European integration. Hungary and Poland entered into an open conflict with the EU institutions and the procedure defined in Art. 7 of the EU treaty has been set out against the two states to counteract the threat to European values - for the first time in history the European Union (Bluhm and Varga 2019; Zielonka 2018). Slovakia and the Czech Republic are not introducing legal and institutional changes that would raise EU reservations comparable to those regarding Poland and Hungary. However, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary are accused of abusing the use of EU funds. The attitude towards the migration crisis has become an important test of the coherence of the V4 states in the EU. Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia acted as opponents of unrestricted access of migrants to the European Union and began to be treated as a "coalition of the reluctant" operating in opposition to the other Member States.

The matter was treated by the V4 as an element of the subregion's impact on the future of the EU. However, they fail to reach a common position on other prominent issues, such as the spectacular vote on Donald Tusk's second term as President of the European Council (March

2017), work on the Services Directive (the Mobility Package), and recently the position on climate neutrality and low-carbon transformation (UN COP25 Climate Summit in Madrid in December 2019). There are also significant differences between the V4 countries in the spheres of external relations and security policy. Although all these countries are members of NATO, they represent different positions. While Poland indicates Russia as the main security threat, Hungary and Slovakia openly cooperate and develop contacts with Moscow. The Czech Republic is also sceptical about the threats defined by Warsaw. Poland, unlike Hungary, pursues also by far the most pro-American policy. Poland is effectively seeking the location on its territory of NATO military bases and the presence of US troops, which is not supported by the other Visegrad Group countries (Koziej, 2019)<sup>12</sup>. Major differences are also visible in the energy policy. Hungary bases its security in this area primarily on cooperation with the Russian Federation, treating the implementation of the joint project as an opportunity to restore the pragmatic cooperation between the East and the West (nuclear power plant in Paks, support for the South Stream). On the other hand, Poland emphasizes the need to weaken the energy dependence on Russia in favour of cooperation with Norway and Denmark (the Baltic Pipe gas pipeline) and with the USA (the LNG terminal) (Bokajło, 2019).

After joining the EU, the V4 countries consistently supported the EU principle of the open-door policy, whose important manifestation became the Eastern Partnership (EP) Polish-Swedish initiative in 2009, assumed to be an instrument of active participation in shaping the EU neighbourhood policy towards Eastern and Southeast Europe. Currently, the EP is considered a rather moderate success, as evidenced by the complex EU political relations with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine or the fiasco of the policy towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus<sup>13</sup>. The Ukrainian-Russian conflict has changed the context of Eastern policy of the countries of Central Europe, including the nature of cooperation with Ukraine. The Visegrad countries became divided in the attitudes towards the annexation of Crimea and the war in Donbas. Although all the countries

---

<sup>12</sup> Opinion polls confirm that the countries of the Group differ in their approach to the United States and Russia. The highest level of trust in the USA is in Poland (50%), the lowest in Slovakia (27%). The Polish public opinion feels the highest level of distrust towards Russia, while the Slovaks - on the contrary - feel the lowest level of distrust towards Russia (Gyárfášová and Mesežnikov, 2016, p. 6).

<sup>13</sup> See. "New Eastern Europe" No. 3-4/2019 a special issue with the statements of politicians who initiated the Eastern Partnership (C. Bild, R. Sikorski), as well as well-known experts (e.g. A. Aslund).

in the region support EU sanctions against the Russian Federation, relations with Ukraine (except for Poland) remain secondary to relations with Russia.

Relations with China are quite a new aspect of cooperation between the V4 countries (since 2016 all the Visegrad countries have been operating as part of a strategic partnership with the PRC). The key role of these countries in the Chinese strategy towards Central Europe in the case of Poland results from its geostrategic location, for Hungary it stems from its political attitude and for the Czech Republic it is the result of its increasing technological advancement. However, the tensions in the Chinese American relations and the recognition by NATO of China as a country that could threaten the global security raise questions about the prospects for the V4 cooperation with Beijing.

### **Conclusions**

The V4 is mainly a forum for political cooperation of relatively low economic importance (the Visegrad countries generate about 6% of the total EU GDP). They are just beginning to implement joint major projects. The revival of the Group is political and is mainly associated with the migration crisis and the opposition to the centralist and federalist concept of UE integration. In the context of the limited complementarity of economies, the diversity of national trajectories for political and economic development in the V4 countries usually characterized by neorealist or functionalist theories of European integration. A different perspective of capitalism with the leading role of foreign investors draws attention to the position in the international division of labor, which is both a premise and an effect of the peripheral status of the V4 states compared to the core countries of the EU, especially Germany. This status is one of the main causes of the Group's weakness, which is also aggravated by the diverse political goals of the V4 countries, their low level of economic integration and the key role of foreign capital in the Visegrad economies. This reduces the position of Central Europe in international value chains and reduces the possibility of economic policy being coordinated by governments in the countries of the region.

Other aspects of the Visegrad Group status in the EU are also relevant. Their growing importance among Germany's most important economic partners strengthens their negotiating power. The V4 countries have become an important source of improving the international competitiveness of the largest economy in the EU. The V4 can therefore defend the interests of other CEE countries, especially in the debate on a "Europe of many speeds." It weakens some



divisions; hence its importance may grow, due to the gradual development of common positions regarding energy security problems, migration threats and the future of the common market. The V4 has an opportunity to become a regional policy tool, affecting the reorientation communication and energy routes from East-West to North-South, which would foster greater EU cohesion.

However, different perceptions of threats and various strategic interests (e.g. those of Poland and of Hungary) may constitute a real obstacle in this respect. The policy of the V4 countries regarding the divisions in the EU is often inconsistent. On the one hand, they are closer to the countries of Western and Northern Europe, which have trade surpluses and balanced budgets. On the other hand, like the South of Europe, the V4 economies belong to the not very innovative peripheries of the EU (see European innovation scoreboard country ranking, in which only the Czech Republic is included in the “strong innovators” category). The V4 are divided by their attitudes towards the euro area. Slovakia is a member of Euroland; Hungary pragmatically does not reject the possibility of joining; however, Poland and the Czech Republic do not currently see such a need.

Another dividing line runs around the climate neutrality and low-carbon transformation, where a lonely, fossil fuel dependent Poland does not find support from the other V4 members on the EU forum, which may limit its access to funds under the Just Transformation Mechanism. In the dispute regarding the admission of migrants from North Africa and from the Middle East, the Group’s position is consistent with the approach of many other EU countries questioning the relocation rules promoted by the EC. The consistent demand for the EU external borders to be sealed has received support, an example of which is the strengthening of Frontex. The Visegrad Group is divided in the discussion on the system of European values and the rule of law. Hungary and Poland are weakening their political position due to controversies regarding political issues. This involves the possibility of introducing a mechanism for making the payment of EU funds conditional on the application of the rule of law. Czechs and Slovaks are not faced with similar charges, which is important for their participation in discussions on reforms and on the future of the European Union. As a result, the role of the Visegrad Group in the EU is determined more by the resultant interests of individual countries than by their cooperation within the Group.

## References

1. Aslund, A. (2008), *How Capitalism was Built. Transformation of Central and Eastern Europe, Russia and Central Asia*. Cambridge University Press, New York.
2. Aykut, D., Sanghi, A. and Kosmidou, G. (2017), *What to Do When Foreign Direct Investment is Not Direct or Foreign: FDI Round Tripping*. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 8046, April 28.
3. Bałtowski M., Kwiatkowski G. (2018) *Przedsiębiorstwa państwowe we współczesnej gospodarce*. PWN, Warszawa.
4. Bluhm, K., Varga, M. (2019) *New Conservatives in Russia and East Central Europe*. London, New York: Routledge.
5. Bohle D., Greskovits B. (2012) *Capitalist Diversity on Europe's Periphery*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca .
6. Bokajło J. (2019) *Dependence on Hydrocarbons as a factor Destabilizing the Economic Order of the European Union with Particular Emphasis on the Role of the Visegrad Group Countries*, in: J.M. Fiszer, A. Chojan, P. Olszewski (eds), *Place and Role of the Visegrad Group Countries in the European Union*, ISP PAN, Warsaw, pp. 189-213.
7. Chojan A. (2019) *The Visegrad Group and the Migration Crisis in Europe: A Discussion in the Context of the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy*, in: J.M. Fiszer, A. Chojan, P. Olszewski (eds), *Place and Role of the Visegrad Group Countries in the European Union*, ISP PAN, Warsaw, pp. 87-102.
8. Deloitte (2014) CE Top 500 CE TOP 500. *Rzeczpospolita*, 3.09.
9. Farkas B. (2016) *Models of Capitalism in the European Union. Post-crisis Perspectives*. Palgrave, London.
10. Góralczyk B. (2018) New Division Lines in the European Union: How to Cope with Them? *Studies in European Affairs*, No 4, pp. 9-21.
11. Gorzelak G., Goh Ch. Ch. (eds.) (2010) *Financial Crisis in Central and Eastern Europe: From Similarity to Diversity*. Scholar, Warsaw.
12. IMF (2019) *Reassessing the Role of State-Owned Enterprises in Central, Eastern, and Southeast Europe*, <file:///C:/Users/Inspiron/Downloads/RRSOECESEEEA.pdf> (access 31.01.2020).
13. Jasiecki K. (2013) *Kapitalizm po polsku. Między modernizacją a perypetiami Unii Europejskiej*. IFiS PAN, Warszawa.

14. Jasiecki K. (2019) A Reconfiguration of the Interest Representation System in the European Union. *Polish Sociological Review*. No 2, pp. 123-140.
15. Judt, T. (2005) *Postwar : A History of Europe Since 1945*. Penguin Press.
16. Judt, T. (1996). *A Grand Illusion?: An Essay on Europe*. Douglas & McIntyre.
17. Koziej S. (2019) *The Role of the Visegrad Group in Eastern Security*, in: J.M. Fiszer, A. Chojan, P. Olszewski (eds), *Place and Role of the Visegrad Group Countries in the European Union*. ISP PAN, Warsaw, pp 69-86.
18. Kubisz J. (2008) Słowacja dba o własny interes. *Rzeczpospolita*, 19 grudnia.
19. Kuźelewska E., Bartnicki A.R. (2017) Grupa Wyszehradzka – nowe wyzwania bezpieczeństwa i perspektywy współpracy. *Rocznik Integracji Europejskiej*, No 11, pp. 103-117.
20. Malova D. (2017) *Transformation Experiences in Slovakia*, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Berlin.
21. McDonagh K. (2014) *A view on Central Europe: Does the V4 have a future?* Bratislava – Globes, July 16.
22. Mihalyi P. (2016) Renacjonalizacja i recentralizacja w gospodarce Węgier, 2010-2016. *Economic Studies*, No 4, pp. 579-597.
23. Muresan L., Georgescu A. (2017) A Romanian Perspective on the Three Seas Initiative. *The Market for Ideas*, No7-8.
24. Myant M., Drahokoupil J. (2011) *Transition Economies: Political Economy in Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia*. Wiley & Sons. Hoboken.
25. Myant M. (2018) *The Limits to Dependent Growth in East-Central Europe*, *Revue de la regulation*, Autum, <https://journals.openedition.org/regulation/13351?lang=en> (access 12.12.2019).
26. *New Eastern Europe* (2019) No. 3-4.
27. Nölke A., Vlieghenhardt A. (2009) Enlarging The Varieties of Capitalism: The Emergence of Dependent Market Economies in East Central Europe. *World Politics*, No 61 (4).
28. Orłowski W. M. (ed.) (2018) *Jak żyć z Euro? Doświadczenia krajów Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*, Polska Fundacja im. Roberta Schumana, Warszawa.
29. Orzelska-Stączek A. (2019) *Should the Visegrad Group Become an International Organization Given the Challenges in International Relations?* in: J.M. Fiszer, A. Chojan, P. Olszewski (eds), *Place and Role of the Visegrad Group Countries in the European Union*, ISP PAN, Warsaw, pp 117-134.

30. Petrovici N. (2015) *Dependență și dezvoltare. Economia politică a capitalismului românesc* (Dependency and Development. The Political Economy of Romanian Capitalism) by Cornel Ban. Cluj-Napoca: Tact Publishing House, 2014, 293 pages. *Studia Ubb Sociologica*, 60 (LX), 2, 2015, pp. 137-151.
31. Popławski K. (2016) *The role of Central Europe in the German economy. The political consequences*. OSW, Warsaw.
32. Pula B. (2018) *Globalization Under and After Socialism. The Evolution of Transnational Capital in Central and Eastern Europe*. Stanford University Press.
33. Roszkowski W. (2015) *East Central Europe, A Concise History*. Warsaw, ISP PAN.
34. Rothschild Joseph. 1998. *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars*, University of Washington Press, Seattle and London.
35. Septimiu S. (2019) *FDI in the Czech Republic: A Visegrád Comparison*, Economic Brief 042, EC, February, [https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/foreign-direct-investment-czech-republic-visegrad-comparison\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/foreign-direct-investment-czech-republic-visegrad-comparison_en) (access 10.09.2019).
36. Sikulova, K. Frank (2013) *The Slovak experience with transition to market economy*, Institute of Economic Research SAS, Bratislava.
37. Świder, K. (2018) Europa Środkowa jako obszar projektowania geopolitycznego. *Studia Europejskie*, No. 2, pp. 11-32.
38. The Economist (2019) *Pocket World in Figures*. London 2019.
39. Zbińkowski G. (2019) The Three Seas Initiative and its Economic and Geopolitical Effect on the European Union and Central and Eastern Europe. *Comparative Economic Research. Central and Eastern Europe*, No 2, pp. 105- 119.
40. Zielonka, J. 2018. *Counter-Revolution. Liberal Europe in Retreat*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

DOI: 10.24193/OJMNE.2020.33.03

## DECENTRALIZATION AND EXPECTED TIME IN OFFICE. THE EFFECT OF DECENTRALIZATION ON CABINET DURABILITY

**Adrian BODEA, PhD**

Faculty of Economics and Business, University of A Coruña, Spain

[a.bodea@udc.es](mailto:a.bodea@udc.es)

**José Manuel SÁNCHEZ SANTOS, PhD**

Faculty of Economics and Business, University of A Coruña, Spain

[jose.manuel.sanchez.@udc.es](mailto:jose.manuel.sanchez.@udc.es)

---

**Abstract:** *The objective of this study is to analyze the role played by both fiscal and political decentralization as determinants of the expected time in office, understood as the latent (unobservable) durability of the cabinets. Using data for all the EU member states for the period that spans from 2007 up to 2017 and employing two competing survival analysis models, namely Weibull (parametric) and Cox (semiparametric), the results show that, even after controlling for other relevant variables (such as majority in legislative, the number of parties in government, the range between the most distant positions in coalition, etc.), decentralization (either fiscal or political) seem to be insignificant over the expected time in office of the cabinets. To the best of our knowledge there is only one study that focused on testing this kind of relationships, but which only considered the case of regional parties with portfolio positions (thus losing sight of the very important “supply and confidence agreements”). The originality of this works stems from the fact that we are more inclusive and that we employ new data and new variables that are more appropriate for framework of European politics, dominated by the anti-EU and populist debates, since the Great Recession of 2008.*

---

**Keywords** Decentralization; Cabinet Durability; European Union.

### Introduction

Regional parties that have won seats in national parliaments are in many countries parties that usually support the government no matter the political ideology. Sometimes their role is emphasized by the fact that they are crucial in determining the majority, thus having a very decisive word in the stability of the political landscape. Furthermore, due to the fact that their main political interests are related to autonomy-centralization debate, they present a relatively flexible left-right

voting behavior, making them easy coalition partners for big national parties in the central legislatures.

The main hypothesis that we put to the test here is that an increased relative power of the regional political parties in the national parliaments will determine an unstable political landscape and will shorten the lives and expected time in office of the cabinets due to the pivotal roles in majority making and due to their relatively flexible left-right voting behavior in this context.

By looking at raw data on the index represented in Figure 1 we can notice, apart from the obvious high variance among EU countries, very high levels of decentralization in Germany, France, Spain and Belgium. But, checking the values these countries register in terms of mean cabinet duration for the same period (Figure 2) we might be surprised to see that only two of them (Belgium and France) are relatively politically unstable, while the other two seem to register medium to high values of political stability.

Contrasting these facts with the information comprised in the statistics regarding the mean share of regional parties (Figure 3) we notice again the case of Belgium which supports the main hypothesis of our study and that of Romania, which even if it registered a low level of fiscal decentralization, it has a relatively big share of regional parties in the national parliament and quite an unstable political environment. Still, there are other two noteworthy observations that seem to refute it (Spain, Bulgaria).

It is obvious from the analysis of raw data that the relationship proposed by the main hypothesis seems inconclusive and that a more rigorous in depth analysis of this nexus is required. The rest of the analysis is structured as follows: the second part will treat the literature regarding the issue of decentralization, while the third one will be dedicated to the ample and long spanning debate of cabinet survivability from political science; the fourth one is the exposition of our research design together with the main research hypothesis, assumptions and methodology, followed by a fifth part dedicated to the interpretation of the results and discussion on the margin of them. The last part is dedicated to conclusions and future prospects regarding this research.

### **Decentralization – Debates over definition and measurements**

Decentralization refers to the extent to which the locus of political power, i.e. actual policymaking, lies with the local/regional executives and legislatures in a country (Clark, Golder, & Golder, 2013p. 684). It is not necessarily a characteristic of federal states only, as opposed to

the unitary ones. It is true that in the case of a federal state each level of government has the authority to act independently of the other in at least one policy realm, but this does not suffice for a decentralized polity; imagine a state where many policies are prerogatives of local governments, but where the fiscal aid for implementing them comes only from the central government. In this case, the central government could, at any time, retain all the funds and leave the regions without any implemented policies. This hypothetical example shows that only by looking at constitutional prerogatives of central and local governments can be misleading in defining/measuring decentralization.

Due to its complicated nature, the debate over what are the characteristics of a decentralized state has been ample, although lately, there seems to be a consensus over the fact that decentralization can be seen as a cumulus of mainly three factors (Rodden, 2004; Schneider, 2003):

The regional governments can raise taxes and revenues independently from the central government. This is referred to as fiscal decentralization and proposed measures for it are the ratio between regional and general government revenues, the ratio between regional and general government expenditures or the share of all the tax revenues collected by the regional government. Of course, here certain points can be raised with respect to any of these measures; the first and second measure will fail in the case where the budget of regions is financed through transfers and grants by the central government, while the third one will fail in the case where the regional/local authorities are mere tax collectors for the central government, which is the one that decides the tax rate and base (Rodden, 2004).

Some policy areas are the realm of regional authorities. It is referred as administrative or policy decentralization. This characteristic can only be measured by making a case-by-case analysis of constitutional prerogatives of different countries. The tediousness of this task did not stop political scientists; for instance, Henderson (2000) using data for 1960-1995 and using a scale of 0-4 managed to code this characteristic by looking at whether educational and infrastructure policies are the sole prerogatives of regional government, central governments or shared between the two. The high cost in time required to compute an index of such kind discouraged many; furthermore, the data in this regard are not widespread.

The presence of regional elections as a form of interest aggregation and representation at local level, which can also signal the accountability of local offices in the face of the citizens. This characteristic is referred to as political decentralization and proposed ways to measure it are



instrumental variables indicating the presence or absence of such elections, both at municipal/local level and regional level (Schneider, 2003). Of course, here certain points can be raised with respect to the reliability of such information: do the central government imposes a predefined list of candidates at local level (power of agenda setting) or is the other way around, in the sense that the local political leaders/electors have a very strong word in selecting the candidate that should run for a central government position, as is the case in Germany, Australia and US (Rodden, 2004)?

As it can be noted from the discussion above, none of these proposed measures are quite perfect, but while criticized by many, the most used for decentralization is the fiscal one (Clark et al., 2013); as demonstrated by Rodden, (2004) this measure also has the highest correlation and significance coefficients in a pairwise matrix with all the other proposed measures. Furthermore, as opposed to the others, it is quite convenient due to the fact that cross-section data for it are widely publicized by relevant international organizations such as IMF (Government Finance Statistics) or Eurostat, while in the case of other measures, the researcher need to go on a case-by-case study of their own.

Another point related to decentralization and survivability of cabinets that we have to consider is the role played by the regional parties in the national cabinets. The survival of a certain cabinet depends on many factors, but the main one, as stated also in the next section, cumulates the overall environment conditions in the national legislature. There, the power of parties and factions is relative and it should come as nothing new or surprising the fact that “small and resolute blocs” – as the regional parties in national parliaments usually are – can have an impressive amount of relative power, especially if they are to vote in a mass of indifferent population (Penrose, 1946). Such blocks are referred to as “critical voters”, as they can shift the result of an election easily, even if they have relative small number of representatives; they can also be considered as having conditional veto over policy in the case when no single party detains the majority (Heller, 2002). In such a context our attention should be drawn by the role played by regional parties in the overall political stability of states. By stability we refer to a low cabinets turnover.

### **The origins and proliferation of regional parties**

For clarification purposes, we would like to refer to regional parties as the political parties that have their electoral base in just one region of a country. While it is true that some regional parties are more “regionalist” (i.e. they campaign for more autonomy in their region) than others,

these are just a subset. Thus, for the purposes of this paper, when talking about regional parties, we refer to the broader sense of the concept. The traditional explanation regarding the origins of the regional parties is, just as in the case of national parties, related to the concept of social cleavages (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). Regional parties tend to form where there are regional interests that are not properly represented on the stage of state politics, even if we talk about differences in terms of culture, ethnicity and language or differences in economic development; over- and under-development are causes very much cited in the literature (Brancati, 2008). A strong emphasis should be given to economic causes: regional parties tend to appear and win votes in regions where the voters are well aware that “outside vs. remain” calculation favors the former; i.e. the bigger the GDP of the region and the better the prospects of independence for it, the greater the share of votes for regional parties which will bargain for more autonomy and better payoffs at the central level, independently of whether to voters care or not for their regionalist identity (Fearon & Van Houten, 2002).

In the same line of thought with respect to social cleavages, Grossman and Lewis (2014) by focusing on the case of Uganda, found proof the fact that new administrative territorial units and powerful local leaders and factions emerge especially where citizens consider themselves marginalized with respect to the core of the country/region, but only if there is confluence of local interests and national ones – the gain of national governments is mainly of electoral nature, thing emphasized also by other authors (Resnick, 2017); in this kind of situations the local leaders manage to get a hold on power of a new region (these new regions usually secede from the bigger, more heterogeneous ones) and local citizens get a closer position to the policy-making locus, while the national governments, besides the better electoral prospects in this newly formed district, will get more influence (interestingly, thus a process of “recentralization” occurs) due to the fact that the new region is smaller and more homogenous, things that affect the citizens capacity for collective action. This will also result in a subsequent lower level and quality of public goods and services they receive (Grossman & Lewis, 2014).

Although this explanation of social cleavages is widely accepted by many political scientists, it does not encompass all the cases: as Brancati (2008) puts it, there are countries where strong cleavages exists without a very powerful regional representation, while in others the relative

“uniformity” of the country is paired with strong regional parties<sup>1</sup>. The aforementioned author comes thus with a complementary explanation: the institutional framework of the country, i.e. the existence of political decentralization (understood as “a division of political authority among multiple levels of government in which each level is democratically elected and has independent decision-making power over at least one issue area”) also influences the appearance of regional parties. Employing a statistical analysis with data for 37 democracies from 1945 till 2002 and controlling for relevant variables (such as the existence of strong regional cleavages, the fiscal decentralization, presidentialism, electoral representation, etc.) she manages to confirm her hypothesis (Brancati, 2008).

A very interesting case of regional parties’ appearance and proliferation, different from what was discussed before is that of India, where in less than a decade, the aggregate vote share of such parties augmented from 26 percent (1991) to 46 percent (1999), while their number in the lower house of the Parliament increased from 19 (1991) to 35 (1999). This startling sudden increase of power of regional parties is explained by the fact that in 1989, as opposed to the previous period in the political history of India when cabinets were single party majorities, a coalition government formed; due to this, the political calculations also changed – if up until then the high-profile politician preferred positions in large nation-wide political parties due to the highest probability of obtaining payoffs related to being in office, with the advent of the coalition cabinets, the payoffs of being/forming regional parties equalized with those of being in a large one because the regional parties gained pivotal roles in cabinet formation. Thus, many high-profile politicians preferred to create or adhere to regional parties instead of competing for positions inside the large national-wide parties (Ziegfeld, 2012).

### **The interplay of regional with national parties’ interests and effects of regionalization**

What are the effects of regionalization of political power? Does the existence of regional parties have any effect on the national political landscape? As argued by Heller (2002), which

---

<sup>1</sup>Among the examples that fall in the first category (powerful regional cleavages, but very weak regional representation) (Brancati, 2008) enumerates Romania and Indonesia, while for the second category gives the example of former Czechoslovakia, even though these examples are very debatable; for instance, the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians Party in Romania has a very concentrated electorate in 3 counties and has had a strong representation in the Bucharest Parliament ever since 1990. Also, one should not forget that for most of its history, Czechoslovakia was a communist state with a dictatorial rule and should not be considered a representative democracy.

focused its study on the case of Spanish political landscape between 1993 and 2000, regional parties compete for votes with national-wide parties in specific regions, but also tend to collaborate with them in the national parliaments by trading policy for authority in the sense that they help the national parties get the policies they want passed in return for transferring policy making authority to regional level.

The same author also offers an answer to the question of why the national parties collaborate or trade favors with the regional ones – employing a two dimensional political space (one dimension being the left-right divide, while the second autonomy-centralization divide), it can easily be seen that either of the two represented national parties prefer to collaborate with the regional party in order to change the status-quo instead of collaborating with one another to maintain it, due to the closeness of the new status-quo to their preferred positions. As it can be noted from Figure 1, the status-quo lies at the intersection of second indifference contours of the two national parties (Nat1 and Nat2). As each party will want to move the status-quo to a position closer to their initial point, they both see an opportunity in collaborating with the regional party (Reg), knowing very well that such collaboration will sacrifice central government's influence in that respective region. The new status-quo policy point can lie at the intersection of the first (closer, more preferred) indifference contour of the regional party with either Nat1 (PolicyP1) or Nat2 (Policy P2). Besides this argument, the big national parties tend not to enter into coalition with one another due to the fact that they should find an equilibrium position between their office seeking behavior (the parties seek to win as many portfolios positions as possible) and a long known law in coalition formation: Gamson's law – the coalition parties will divide their cabinets portfolios in accordance with their respective vote shares (Warwick & Druckman, 2006). Thus, in order to find the optimal position, the formateurs need to stay in line with the minimum winning coalition rationale, i.e. ally with the smallest party possible in order to insure the majority.

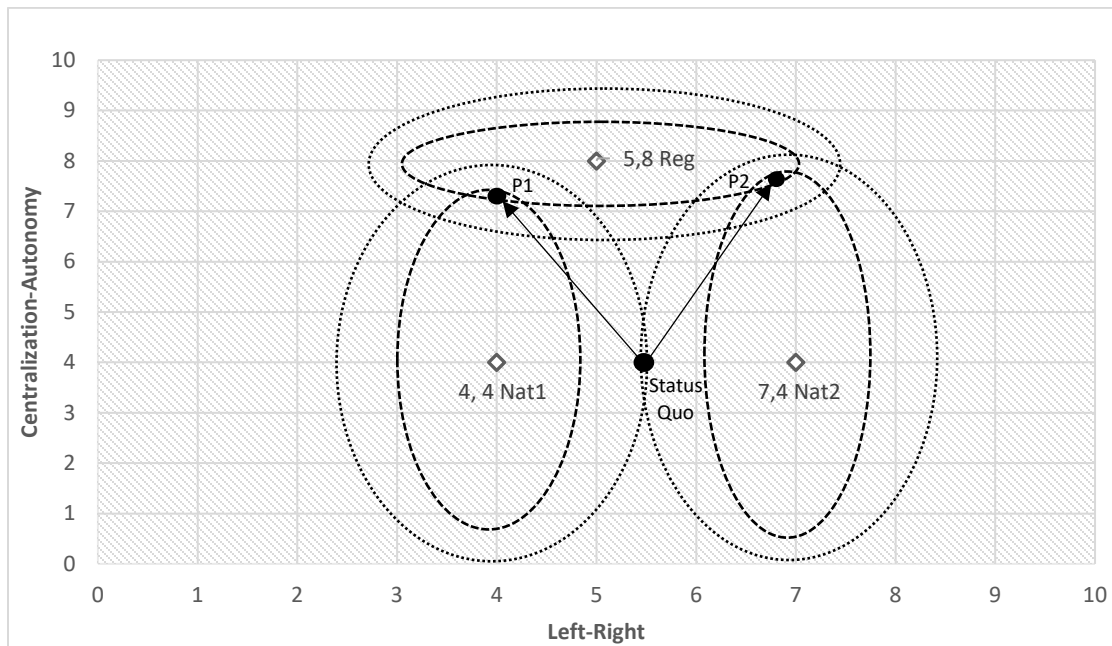


Figure 1 – A hypothetical two-dimensional political space (with left-right and autonomy-centralization divides) with two national and a regional party. Source: own elaboration based on (Heller, 2002).

Two things should be noted though – the first one is the assumption that no large national party controls a majority in the parliament (otherwise, there wouldn't have been the need for alliances and trade-offs in the first place) and secondly, the regional party has a wider indifference contour with respect to left-right divide, as opposed to the national parties. This is possible due to the fact that the “mandate” of this kind of party is to represent the region in the resource allocation fight at the central level, not a policy preference in terms of ideology. Such position allows it to be more flexible in future political alliances and to enter into eventual coalition cabinets with more ease. Indeed, empirical evidence seems to suggest the validity of this theoretical assumption. For instance, in post-communist Romania and democratic Spain, the regional party from the Hungarian-populated region and regional parties from Basque Country and Catalonia respectively, have been in numerous occasions minor coalition partners (with or without portfolio position) in very ideologically different cabinets. Also, empirical evidences that can be found in the literature include the experiences of United Kingdom in the late 90s and that of Belgium in the late 70s (Heller, 2002).

Some other empirical insights on the matter seem to suggest an improvement of democratic governance due to the rise of regional parties; for instance, Sadanandan (2012) brought evidence that in India, since the early 1990s the central usurpation of the power of regional governments via invoking article 356 of the Constitution was brought to a minimum since the independence due to the regional parties entering in opportunistic alliances with big national parties; the formers effectively act as veto players against the decisions of the latter in invoking the above mentioned article. In addition, it also brought a rise in institutional safeguards against the arbitrary takeovers of power by the central government.

At the same time, bilateral cooperation between regional governments seem to be more symbolic, at least in the case of Spain; ever since the adoption of Statute of Autonomies in the late 70s, the Southern European country have known a period of difficult horizontal coordination between its autonomous communities, thing that can be explained by the lack of congruence of regional parties interests, due to the fact that in these regions, non-state-wide parties usually come to power (Aja & Colino, 2014). This discovery should come as no surprise; it is well known that if federalization is done through decentralization (as in the case of Spain and Belgium, for instance, – also known as “holding together federalism”), the electoral strategy of the parties is to focus on regional interests and regional disparities, while if it is done through the centralization of power (i.e. the regions agree to cede sovereignty in order to pool together resources for improved future outcomes (as in the case of the US, Australia, European Union – also known as “coming together federalism”) the electoral strategy of the parties is to concentrate on common interests and common bonds (Brzinski, 1999; Riker, 1964).

With respect to the income inequality among regions, a relatively recent study with panel data from OECD countries that spanned over the period 1980-2007, seem to suggest that the dissimilarities in wealth at national level between regions explain the electoral success of regional parties and that the reverse causality is not present; i.e. the authors demonstrate that the presence and influence of regional parties do not positively affect income inequalities among regions, but vice versa (Kyriacou & Morral-Palacin, 2015).

As stated already in the introduction, to our knowledge, only one work was concerned with the nexus between decentralization and political instability at the European level (Brancati, 2005). Although a very well done original analysis (with original data above all), we have a few points to raise.

The first one is that the paper is only concerned with the destabilizing effect of the regional parties that are already represented in government and not with the overall effect of regional parties present in the national legislature. We believe that this is wrongly put due to the fact that many of the regional parties, and small parties in general, give support for a cabinet without occupying cabinet positions (the so-called “confidence and supply agreement”)<sup>2</sup> – thus cabinet survivability might depend on these parties without an a priori formal political coalition. Hereby, we will be more inclusive and consider the overall effect of regional parties on the cabinet durability, either if they are or not rewarded with portfolios. Thus, we can affirm that the originality of our work stems from this more encompassing and inclusive analysis.

Secondly, we believe that two of the control variables included in the model could have been considered in a better way; the first that we refer to is decentralization; in the above mentioned study this variable was a dichotomous indicating the existence or absence of at least one issue/policy where sub-national governments have decision-making powers. As explained above, this measure refers strictly to political decentralization and sometimes in the literature the existence of it is considered a necessary and sufficient condition for federalism (Clark et al., 2013). We believe is better to include fiscal decentralization as a ratio between regional and general government expenses (a continuum scale being a more accurate depiction of variability in data), than dichotomous dummy for the presence or absence of it. Also, by including this variable we also control for the effect that fiscal decentralization has on political stability in the sense that some regional parties and factions might not agree with the budget draft proposed by the government and due to this critical impasse could force a cabinet resignation. The second control variable that could be better coded is first democratic government; by including this variable, Brancati (2005) wanted to control for the existence of unstable first cabinets in young democracies; but we believe that by making a difference between the first and the subsequent cabinets in a young democracy does not make sense as there are no warranties of the fact that the second (or even the third or fourth, etc.) democratic government will be more stable than the first one. We believe that a more appropriate variable would have been a dichotomous dummy accounting for the status of transition democracy. Due to the fact that our study employs data for 2007-2017 in EU we will not include

---

<sup>2</sup> Cases like this are very common in Spain, Romania and United Kingdom, for instance.



this variable (or better yet, this constant) in our model due to the absence of such transitional democracies.

We also preferred to add some control variables that are either suggested by the literature and omitted in Brancati (2005), either more appropriate for the current European political landscape. This points that we raised should not be regarded as critics, but as ways to prove the robustness of this finding.

### **Expected time in office – what matters and how to compute it?**

The question in order now should be: based on what is every cabinet judging their durability? As stated by Laver (2003), durability is a theoretical (latent) concept referring to the expected survivability of the cabinet and should be differentiated from duration, an empirical (observable) concept, which is the actual survived time in office.

Drawing from the book-length analysis made by Warwick in the early 90s, we can identify two schools of thought that entered in this debate (1995). The first one, with representative authors such as Taylor, Herman, Laver, Dodd and Strøm, which preferred to use an attributes analysis, i.e. independent variables that were statistically related to government durations, argued that the survival in power is determined by to what degree and by how many of the following conditions can be met: majority in parliament, minimum winning coalition (or single party majority), compactness of the ideology, low fragmentation index of the political system (otherwise identified as the complexity of the bargaining system). In turn, the other approach was based on what is called event analysis (or survival analysis) – starting from the basic assumption that the governments exist in a world of “critical events” (such as scandals, international conflicts, economic crises, etc.), each of which poses a threat to their existence, political scientist such as Browne, Frendreis and Cioffi-Revilla, argued that this so-called hazard rate (the potentiality of termination at certain points in time), was not a function of the attributes, but that of probabilities of such events happening – these authors demonstrated that the pattern observed for government terminations resembles a Poisson distribution (Laver, 2003; Warwick, 1995).

The debate reached an end in the mid 90’s when hybrid models of cabinet duration, that is, including both attributes and critical events, were developed – the attributes were considered as the prime factors in determining the stochastic process of critical events, but also vice versa (the critical events could shape attributes of the political landscape). One of the pioneering works in

this sense is that of Lupia and Strøm (1995) which reached the conclusion that stochastically-determined external events can deeply affect the outcome of the dynamics coalition bargaining, but not wholly determine them. The effect of these critical events will depend also on the context in which the parties of the coalition find themselves. This conclusion was reaffirmed in a latter paper by Diermeier and Stevenson (1999) that proved, among others, that hazard rates behave differently when analyzing government replacements, i.e. dismissals (in which case is represented by a flat line) and when analyzing government dissolution, i.e. a government ending in early elections (in which case the hazard rate is a line that gets steeper as the time in office passes for the cabinet).

Further works in this area had been conducted by Merlo (1997) who estimates a structural model of government formation and bargaining in postwar Italy (thus having the disadvantage of being a custom-made model, not applicable to all contexts), by Diermeier, Eraslan and Merlo (2003) which taking from the work of previously cited paper, managed to construct a government formation and duration model which highlights the importance of constitutional features such as constructive no confidence-vote, no investiture vote and fixed inter-election periods for the formation and duration of cabinets, and by Laver (2003), which makes an excellent up-to-date review of the methodology and of the literature, indicating the missing pieces from each approach and showing points for future improvement.

Another work that is worth mentioning is that of Chiba, Martin and Stevenson (2015) because it brought to attention and solved (through a copula approach) a long-lasting problem in the literature: the issue of selection bias; because government formation and duration are said to be dependent and were commonly estimated, the sample of observed governments analyzed in studies of government survival may be non-randomly selected from the population of potential governments. When trying to determine the durability of a government, we can base out estimation on certain features as stated above, but we neglected the fact that the governments that we chose as researchers, were already preselected through political bargaining when the coalition formed and the criteria used by politicians might or might not have coincided with the ones we considered important for formation and duration.

One thing that is worth mentioning and that might seem surprising is that even though is common sense among scholars assuming the high government turnover or short duration is intrinsically bad for democracy and economy broadly defined , there are only a handful of articles

(no more than 3 to our knowledge) in the political science literature that put government durability “on the right side of the equation”, i.e. as an independent variable and that found robust relationships (Fortunato & Loftis, 2018). These are Harmel and Robertson (1986) which determines that high government turnovers (frequent government changes) negatively influence the overall satisfaction with democratic government, Huber (1998) which proved that short-run increases in portfolio volatility present problems for government decision-makers, but not in the long run, and Fortunato and Loftis (2018) which proved that instability positively affects public deficit and debt level.

### **Research design and methodology**

As suggested in the literature, we set forth from the hypothesis that decentralization with its both dimensions, fiscal and political, negatively impacts the cabinet stability. In theory, the greater the power of sub-national actors (executives and regional parties in national parliament) with respect to national governments, the higher the cabinet turnover.

We have several reasons to believe that this link exists, as either Brancati (2005) pointed out either as the literature on the role of regional parties pointed out. The small regional parties may withdraw at any time their support for governing parties if their autonomy demands are not met (a highly probable scenario as these regional parties are very resolute, their demands are hard to meet by the nation-wide parties – it would mean relinquishing decision-making power at subnational level, thus a loss of influence). Another explanation for this link is that the regional parties could act as pivotal actors (due to their high relative power and very flexible voting behavior on the left-right divide) in determining the policies and cabinets even if they detain or not portfolio positions. The variables considered, replicating the models of many political science papers concerned with cabinet durability, are:

1. Days in office of each cabinet – dependent variable (Casal Bértoa, 2019; source: Döring & Manow, 2019).
2. Dummy for caretaker government (Casal Bértoa, 2019; source: Döring & Manow, 2019).
3. The numerical status of the government in the parliament; we considered the seats share as an indicator of majority/minority of the government because by considering only the polling results at elections could have been misleading; big parties are usually rewarded and small parties are punished when transforming votes into legislature seats. If in

minority, 0, if in majority 1 (source: Casal Bértoa, 2019; European Consortium for Political Research, 2019).

4. Ruling number of parties (source: Casal Bértoa, 2019; European Consortium for Political Research, 2019).
5. The range between the most distant positions among the parties forming the government. Up until our work, these distances were computed using the left-right ideological distance (which we also include). But, in the contemporary European landscape (at least since the Great Recession of 2008), this left-right divide will give nonrepresentative results; that is why, we introduced a new method and a new dimension. We took into account, besides the classical left-right dimension, also the pro vs. contra European integration perspective of the parties. Using these two dimensions, we computed a matrix of Euclidean distances between all the parties in the countries of the EU28, and we choose the most distant positons in a coalition. The formula is the following:

$$dist_{AB} = \sqrt{distlefttright_{AB}^2 + distproconEU_{AB}^2} \quad (1)$$

where  $dist_{AB}$  is the Euclidean distance between the hypothetical parties A and B,  $distlefttright_{AB}$  is the left-right ideological distance between the same parties, and  $distproconEU_{AB}$  is the distance between their views on European Union. Of course, the assumption here was that the more distant the governing coalition members, the sooner the coalition it will break (Döring & Manow, 2019; source: own computations with data from Volkens et al., 2018).

6. The proportion of parties from current government that were part of the previous government (source: Casal Bértoa, 2019) – assumption: the higher the proportion, the lower the costs of the governing parties to break to current coalition, because they know it is a high probability of their return in power. Note: the independent portfolio holders in each cabinet were not considered, as theoretically they do not act as a political party per se and they are not represented as a group in the next government.

7. The complexity of the bargaining system measured as the effective number of political parties at the parliamentary or legislative level (source: Gallagher, 2019), under the assumption that a complex bargaining system will create cabinets more prone to the shocks, thus lowering their survivability. The formula used for computing the effective number of parties is as follows (Laakso & Taagepera, 1979):

$$N = \frac{1}{V_1^2 + V_2^2 + \dots + V_n^2} \quad (2)$$

where  $N$  is the effective number of parties, and  $V^2$  with subscript is the squared vote share of party  $i$  (in decimals).

8. Fiscal decentralization index, computed as the ratio between regional plus local expenses to general government expenses (source: Eurostat) – under the assumption that the more decentralized a state, the more unstable are its cabinets (when sub-national actors are unhappy with redistribution of fiscal resources in their region, they voice their concerns in national parliaments against the incumbent government).
9. An index for political decentralization – the seats share of regional parties inside the national legislatures.

In order to assess the effect of each variable on the times in office for each government, we employed both semi-parametric/proportional (Cox) and parametric (Weibull) models of survival analysis. The proportional hazard rates model was employed in Brancati (2005), thus giving us the chance to check for the robustness of the findings, while the Weibull parametric model is more widespread in studies concerned with cabinet survivability (Chiba et al., 2015; Diermeier & Stevenson, 1999; Fortunato & Loftis, 2018). In fact, one of the pioneering studies in this field (Warwick, 1995) already recommended the use of graphical analysis (of both survival function and baseline hazard rates) in order to determine which model to be employed; as explained in the paragraph dedicated to results and discussions, graphical analysis suggested the use of a parametric Weibull model.

The difference between the two is that the first one (Cox) does not assume any baseline hazard function, while the second one assumes, in our case, an increasing baseline function (Kleinbaum & Klein, 2012). One thing that is worth mentioning about the hazard rates; given that the formula for hazard function is:

$$h(t) = \lim_{\Delta t \rightarrow 0} \frac{P(t \leq T < t + \Delta t | T > t)}{\Delta t} \quad (3)$$

where  $h(t)$  is the hazard rate at time  $t$ ,  $\lim$  is the value of the function as  $\Delta t$  (the time unit) approaches 0;  $P(t \leq T < t + \Delta t | T > t)$  is the conditional probability of individual fails in the interval between  $t + \Delta t$ , given that the subject survived by then. Hazard rates should not be interpreted as probabilities, but rather as probability per time (Kleinbaum & Klein, 2012).

Survival analysis requires a special treatment of data and cannot be substituted by regular linear regression mainly due to two reasons: the first one is that due to the fact that the dependent variable is always a time unit, its estimated value cannot be negative (in a linear regression case it can be) and secondly, the data from the survey can be censored and this is a special case of missing data, that offers important information on the observations (Kleinbaum & Klein, 2012). In our case, as the sample we extracted finishes in 2017, the cabinets still in office on January 1st 2018, were considered censored observations.

## Results and discussions

With data for more than 190 cabinets from EU 28, we will start this section by exposing some descriptive statistics, presented in Table 1 and by presenting the correlation matrix in Table 2.

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Duration	192	656.417	499.591	7	1885
Failures	192	.922	.269	0	1
Caretaker	192	.13	.337	0	1
Government status	192	.656	.476	0	1
Parties in cabinet	192	2.599	1.258	1	7
Returnability	192	53.481	38.438	0	100
Euclidean distance	190	18.424	18.413	0	87.878
Left-right distance	192	2.077	1.689	0	5.905
Fiscal decentralization	192	.335	.145	0	.715
Regional parties share	190	.03	.057	0	.274
Effective number of parties	192	4.091	1.507	1.97	8.42

Table 1 – Descriptive statistics for the variables considered in the model. Source: own computation

The correlation between cabinet duration and fiscal and political decentralization measures are truly negative as predicted by the theory, but the relationship seems to be very weak with coefficients of approximately -0.1 and -0.14 respectively.

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
(1) Duration	1.000									
(2) Caretaker	-	1.000								
(3) Government status	0.333		1.000							
(4) Parties in cabinet	0.266	-0.286		1.00						
(5) Returnability	-	-0.132	0.299		1.00					
(6) Euclidean distance	0.151			0		1.00				
(7) Left-right distance	-	-0.004	0.097	0.01			1.00			
(8) Fiscal decentralization	0.162			3	0			1.000		
(9) Regional parties share	-	-0.044	0.237	0.55	0.09				1.000	
(10) Effective number of parties	0.122	-0.133	0.402	0.66	0.03	0.557				1.000
	-	0.116	0.061	0.29	0.04	0.219	0.069			
	0.070			9	5					
	-	0.291	-0.164	0.10	0.01	0.108	0.006	0.150		
	0.099			0	1					
	-	0.147		9	1					
	-	0.153	0.006	0.51	0.21	0.485	0.348	0.230	0.298	1.000
	0.149			2	4					

Table 2 – Correlation matrix. Source: own computation

As the graphs below show, as the time passes by, the probability of survival (Y axis) diminishes (Figure 5). In Figure 6, we have the represented the hazard rate function, i.e. the instantaneous potentiality at each time unit for the critical event (in our case, the fall of cabinet) to happen, given that the subject survived by then. Both graphical representations are in accordance with the structure of our data and with our theoretical expectations, i.e. it suggests the use of a Weibull model, due to the continually decreasing survival estimate function (confirmed also by the Akaike Information Criterion contrast between the two models).

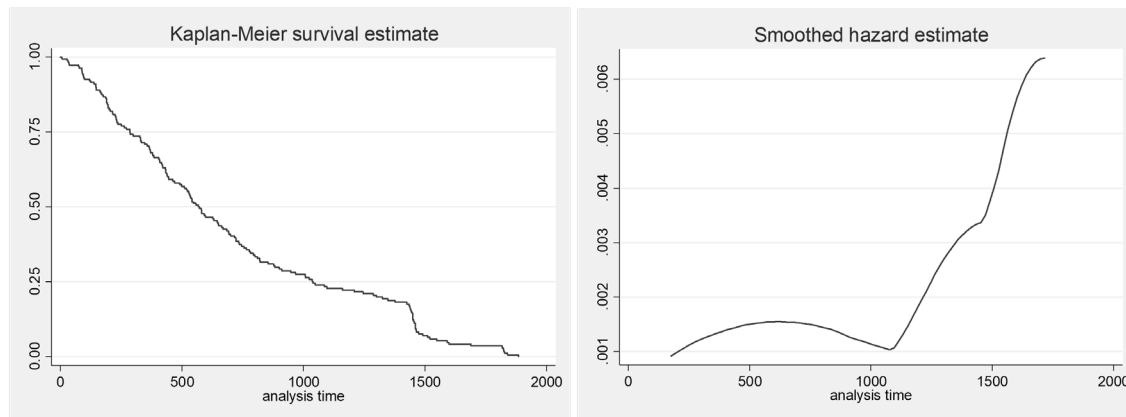


Figure 1 (left) - Graphical representation of the survival function of cabinets in our sample. Source: own elaboration



Figure 2 (right) - Graphical representation of hazard rates. Source: own elaboration

In Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5 we have represented the results for our estimations. As noted, none of the two decentralization measures considered for testing seem to present any significant effect over cabinet durability, even though they have the expected signs, in neither of the two competing models considered. With coefficients and hazard rates for fiscal decentralization with a p-value of close to 0.6 and for political decentralization with close to 0.8 cannot we reject the null hypothesis.

Duration	Coef.	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf. Interval]	Sig	
Caretaker	3.248	0.796	4.81	0.000	2.009	5.252	***
Government status	0.670	0.125	-2.15	0.031	0.465	0.964	**
Parties in cabinet	1.213	0.111	2.11	0.035	1.014	1.452	**
Returnability	1.003	0.002	1.72	0.086	1.000	1.007	*
Left-right distance	1.028	0.066	0.43	0.666	0.907	1.166	
Effective number of parties	0.896	0.064	-1.55	0.122	0.779	1.030	
Fiscal decentralization	1.355	0.749	0.55	0.582	0.459	4.001	
Regional parties share	1.630	2.254	0.35	0.724	0.108	24.501	
<hr/>							
Mean dependent var.	654.595		SD dependent var.		496.857		
Number of obs.	190.000		Chi-square		36.135		
Prob. > chi2	0.000		Akaike crit. (AIC)		466.817		

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table 3 - Results for the semi-parametric/proportional (Cox) survival analysis. Source: own computation

It is also worthy of mentioning the fact that both measures for maximum distances between ideological positions in cabinet (Euclidean and classical left-right) are also insignificant p-values of approximately 0.9 and 0.6 respectively (suggesting that during the period of the selected sample, 2007-2017, the ideological dimension seem to be insignificant, while other studies like those of Brancati (2005), Chiba et al. (2015) and Fortunato and Loftis (2018), employing samples from the postwar period to the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, proved the opposite, i.e. the significance of the ideological dimension on cabinet durability)<sup>3</sup>. The effective number of political parties in parliament is significant, but at 10%.

As opposed to a classic regression, the dependent variable considered in the model is in fact a combination of the information from two sources: the time and failure, i.e. the cabinet duration and cabinet replacement (1 the cabinet was replaced, 0 if the observation is right censored). Hazard rates above one indicate a government is more likely to collapse while hazard rates below one indicate a government is less likely to collapse.

The coefficients for hazard rates in this case have a different interpretation; if higher than 1, subtract from the hazard ratios 1 and interpret the result in percentages. For instance, if the

<sup>3</sup> A quite interesting result that seems to be in line with the widespread popularity fall of the traditional left-right parties in Europe in recent times and that could be considered for further research.

cabinet is a caretaker, its chances of survival drops with 570% (i.e.  $6.7 - 1 = 5.7$ ) if the cabinet that holds majority in legislature (1 for Government status variable, 0 otherwise) has a positive effect on survival time, i.e., it increases the durability by close to 55%, while an increase with one in the ruling number of parties (Parties in cabinet), determines a lowering of survival likelihood by 30%. A counterintuitive effect (at least for the authors) was observed in the case of the complexity of the bargaining system (measured as the effective number of political parties) if the effective number of parties increases by 1, the survival likelihood increases by 13%; we suspect that this may be due to the fact that a higher number of parties in the legislature, even though represents a bigger pool of hypothetical political allies in the next cabinet formation, will also increase the costs associated with cabinet formation; thus once a government is formed in a complex legislature, it will want to maintain the *status-quo* so it won't incur further renegotiations costs.

Duration	Coef.	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf. Interval]	Sig	
Caretaker	6.769	1.865	6.94	0.000	3.945	11.616	***
Government status	0.559	0.106	-3.07	0.002	0.385	0.810	***
Parties in cabinet	1.316	0.121	3.00	0.003	1.100	1.575	***
Returnability	1.005	0.002	2.54	0.011	1.001	1.009	**
Left-right distance	1.030	0.066	0.46	0.644	0.908	1.169	
Effective number of parties	0.870	0.065	-1.85	0.064	0.751	1.008	*
Fiscal decentralization	1.298	0.713	0.48	0.634	0.443	3.809	
Regional parties share	1.371	1.925	0.23	0.822	0.088	21.483	
<hr/>							
Mean dependent var.	654.595	SD dependent var.		496.857			
Number of obs.	190.000	Chi-square		68.482			
Prob. > chi2	0.000	Akaike crit. (AIC)		411.733			

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table 4 - Results for the Weibull parametric survival analysis with left-right distances considered. Source: own computation

Duration	Coef.	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf. Interval]	Sig	
Caretaker	6.769	1.871	6.92	0.000	3.938	11.635	***
Government status	0.569	0.103	-3.10	0.002	0.399	0.813	***
Parties in cabinet	1.351	0.113	3.58	0.000	1.146	1.593	***
Returnability	1.005	0.002	2.58	0.010	1.001	1.009	**
Euclidean distance	1.000	0.006	0.01	0.990	0.989	1.011	
Effective number of parties	0.874	0.068	-1.73	0.083	0.751	1.018	*
Fiscal decentralization	1.214	0.664	0.35	0.723	0.415	3.545	
Regional parties share	1.381	1.941	0.23	0.818	0.088	21.707	
<hr/>							
Mean dependent var.	657.431		SD dependent var.		497.283		
Number of obs.	188.000		Chi-square		68.510		
Prob. > chi2	0.000		Akaike crit. (AIC)		410.324		

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table 5 - Results for the Weibull parametric survival analysis with Euclidean distances considered. Source: own computation

## Conclusions

As indicated above, after controlling for all the relevant institutional and cabinet-specific factors, we determined that in the last decade's EU political landscape, the time horizon of each cabinet is not affected in any way by the fiscal or political decentralization of the country. This result comes against the previous findings, although this contradiction can be explained by some differences of methodological and research design order. Our study was more inclusive in considering the effect of political decentralization (as indicated by the power of regional parties in national legislatures) because it took into account also the supply and confidence agreements between these small parties and the big national ones, as opposed to the previously cited study that only took into account the effects of regional parties with portfolio positions. Thus, in order to reconcile the seemingly opposite findings, we could say that while in cabinet, the small regional parties can act as pivotal players and their behavior affects the political stability of the country in a negative sense, but while performing either their supply and confidence duties either their opposition roles, they do not affect it in any way.

Furthermore, we can say that, even though it wasn't its scope, this study also discovered some very puzzling relationships that were taken as granted before: the effect of the ideological dimension and that of the complexity of the bargaining system on cabinet durability. These findings might have to do with the very recent sample that we extracted; while most of the studies conducted in this area were sampling for longer periods of time (usually 1945-beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century), our study was only focused only with the last decade's politics. These puzzling findings might suggest some structural changes in the European political landscape that worth further research.

## References

1. Aja, E., & Colino, C. (2014). Multilevel structures, coordination and partisan politics in Spanish intergovernmental relations. *Comparative European Politics*, 12(4-5) doi:10.1057/cep.2014.9
2. Brancati, D. (2005). Pawns take queen: The destabilizing effects of regional parties in europe. *Constitutional Political Economy*, 16(2), 143-159. doi:10.1007/s10602-005-2233-7
3. Brancati, D. (2008). The origins and strengths of regional parties. *British Journal of Political Science*, 38(1), 135-159. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27568336>
4. Brzinski, J. B. (1999). Changing forms of federalism and party electoral strategies: Belgium and the european union. *Publius*, 29(1), 45-70. doi:10.2307/3330919

6. Casal Bértoa, F. (2019). Database on WHO GOVERNS in Europe and beyond. Retrieved from <https://whogoverns.eu/>
7. Chiba, D., Martin, L. W., & Stevenson, R. T. (2015). A copula approach to the problem of selection bias in models of government survival. *Political Analysis*, 23(1), 42-58. doi:10.1093/pan/mpu013
8. Clark, W. R., Golder, M., & Golder, S. N. (2013). *Principles of comparative politics* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: CQ Press.
9. Diermeier, D., Eraslan, H., & Merlo, A. (2003). A structural model of government formation. *Econometrica*, 71(1), 27-70. doi:10.1111/1468-0262.00389
10. Diermeier, D., & Stevenson, R. T. (1999). Cabinet survival and competing risks. *American Journal of Political Science*, 43(4), 1051-1068. doi:10.2307/2991817
11. Döring, H., & Manow, P. (2019). *Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov): Information on parties, elections and cabinets in modern democracies.*
12. European Consortium for Political Research. (2019). *European journal of political research political data yearbook.*
13. Fearon, J. D., & Van Houten, P. (2002). (2002). The politicization of cultural and economic difference. Paper presented at the Fifth Meeting of the Laboratory in Comparative Ethnic Processes. Stanford University, May,
14. Fortunato, D., & Loftis, M. W. (2018). Cabinet durability and fiscal discipline. *American Political Science Review*, 112(4), 939-953. doi:10.1017/S0003055418000436
15. Gallagher, M. (2019). Election indices dataset. (). Retrieved from [https://www.tcd.ie/Political\\_Science/people/michael\\_gallagher/ElSystems/Docts/ElectionIndices.pdf](https://www.tcd.ie/Political_Science/people/michael_gallagher/ElSystems/Docts/ElectionIndices.pdf)
16. Grossman, G., & Lewis, J. I. (2014). Administrative unit proliferation. *American Political Science Review*, 108(1), 196-217. doi:10.1017/S0003055413000567
17. Harmel, R., & Robertson, J. D. (1986). Government stability and regime support: A cross-national analysis. *The Journal of Politics*, 48(4), 1029-1040. doi:10.2307/2131011
18. Heller, W. B. (2002). Regional parties and national politics in Europe - Spain's estado de las autonomias, 1993 to 2000. *Comparative Political Studies*, 35(6), 657-685. doi:10.1177/0010414002035006002

19. Henderson, J. V. (2000). The effects of urban concentration on economic growth. NBER Papers, (No. w7503)
20. Huber, J. D. (1998). How does cabinet instability affect political performance? portfolio volatility and health care cost containment in parliamentary democracies. *The American Political Science Review*, 92(3), 577-591. doi:10.2307/2585482
21. Kleinbaum, D. G., & Klein, M. (2012). *Survival analysis: A self-learning text*. New York: Springer.
22. Kyriacou, A. P., & Morral-Palacin, N. (2015). Regional inequalities and the electoral success of regional parties: Evidence from the OECD. *Publius-the Journal of Federalism*, 45(1), 3-23. doi:10.1093/publius/pju007
23. Laakso, M., & Taagepera, R. (1979). "Effective" number of parties: A measure with application to west europe. *Comparative Political Studies*, 12(1), 3-27. doi:10.1177/001041407901200101
24. Laver, M. (2003). Government termination. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 6(1), 23-40. doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.6.121901.085530
25. Lipset, S. M., & Rokkan, S. (1967). *Party systems and voter alignments: Cross-national perspectives.* New York: The Free Press.
26. Lupia, A., & Strøm, K. (1995). Coalition termination and the strategic timing of parliamentary elections. *The American Political Science Review*, 89(3), 648-665. doi:10.2307/2082980
27. Merlo, A. (1997). Bargaining over governments in a stochastic environment. *Journal of Political Economy*, 105(1), 101-131. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2138873>
28. Penrose, L. S. (1946). The elementary statistics of majority voting. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, 109(1), 53-57. doi:10.2307/2981392
29. Resnick, D. (2017). Democracy, decentralization, and district proliferation: The case of Ghana doi://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2017.02.011
30. Riker, W. H. (1964). *Federalism: Origin, operation, significance*. Boston: Little, Brown.
31. Rodden, J. (2004). Comparative federalism and decentralization - on meaning and measurement. *Comparative Politics*, 36(4), +. doi:10.2307/4150172
32. Sadanandan, A. (2012). Bridling central tyranny in India. How regional parties restrain the federal government. *Asian Survey*, 52(2), 247-269. doi:10.1525/as.2012.52.2.247

33. Schneider, A. (2003). Decentralization: Conceptualization and measurement. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 38(3), 32-56. doi:10.1007/BF02686198
34. Volkens, A., Krause, W., Lehmann, P., Matthieß Theres, Merz, N., Regel, S. & Weßels, B. (2018). The manifesto data collection. manifesto project (MRG/CMP/MARPOR). version 2018b. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.25522/manifesto.mpps.2018b>
35. Warwick, P. (1995). *Government survival in parliamentary democracies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511528132 Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/government-survival-in-parliamentary-democracies/3CCAD28F43FE08980CB0A0F491A05D23>
36. Warwick, P., & Druckman, J. N. (2006). The portfolio allocation paradox: An investigation into the nature of a very strong but puzzling relationship. *European Journal of Political Research*, 45(4), 635-665. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6765.2006.00632.x
37. Ziegfeld, A. (2012). Coalition government and party system change: Explaining the rise of regional political parties in India. *Comparative Politics*, 45(1), 69-87. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41714172>.

## Appendix

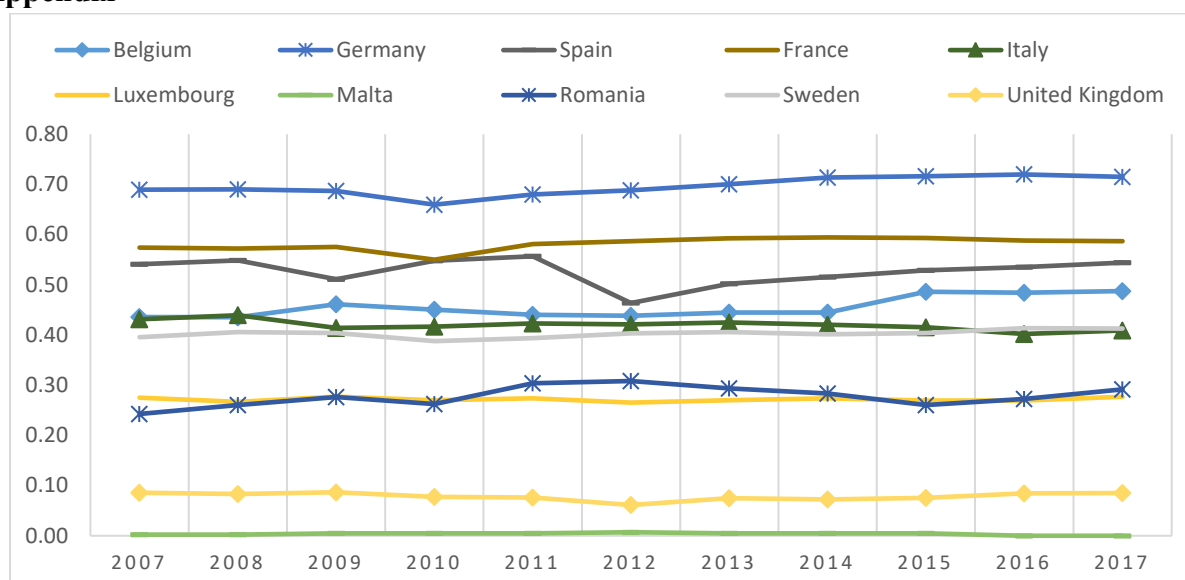


Figure 3 – Fiscal decentralization index for 10 EU countries 2007-2017. Source: own elaboration with data from Eurostat

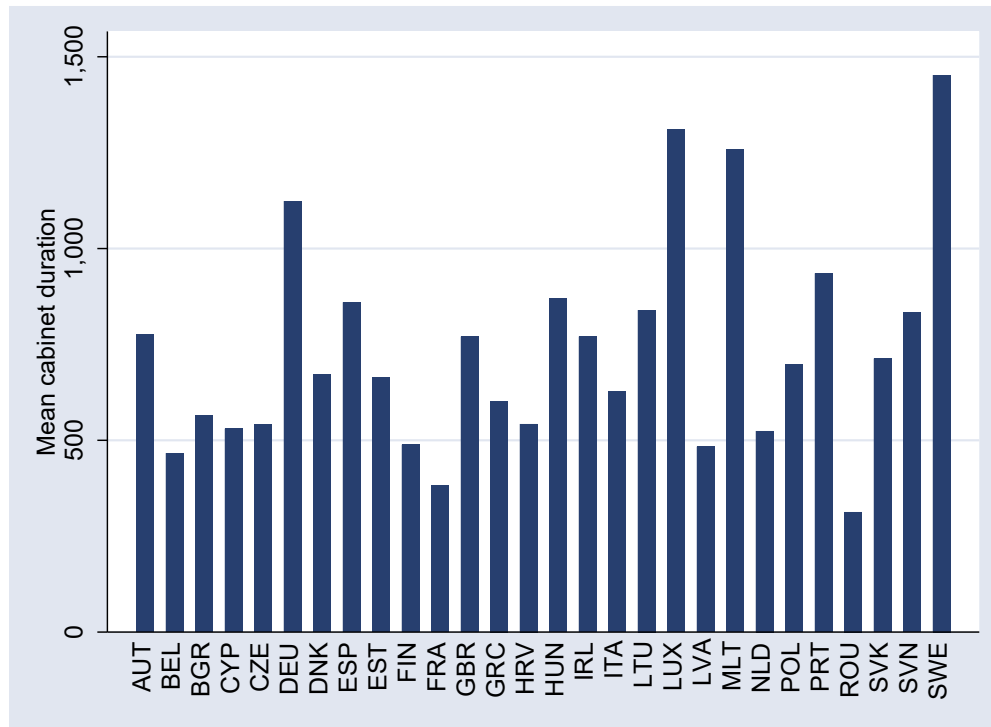


Figure 4 – Mean cabinet duration by country (EU28) 2007-2017. Source: own elaboration with data from ParlGov (Döring & Manow, 2019) and Casal Bértoa (2019)

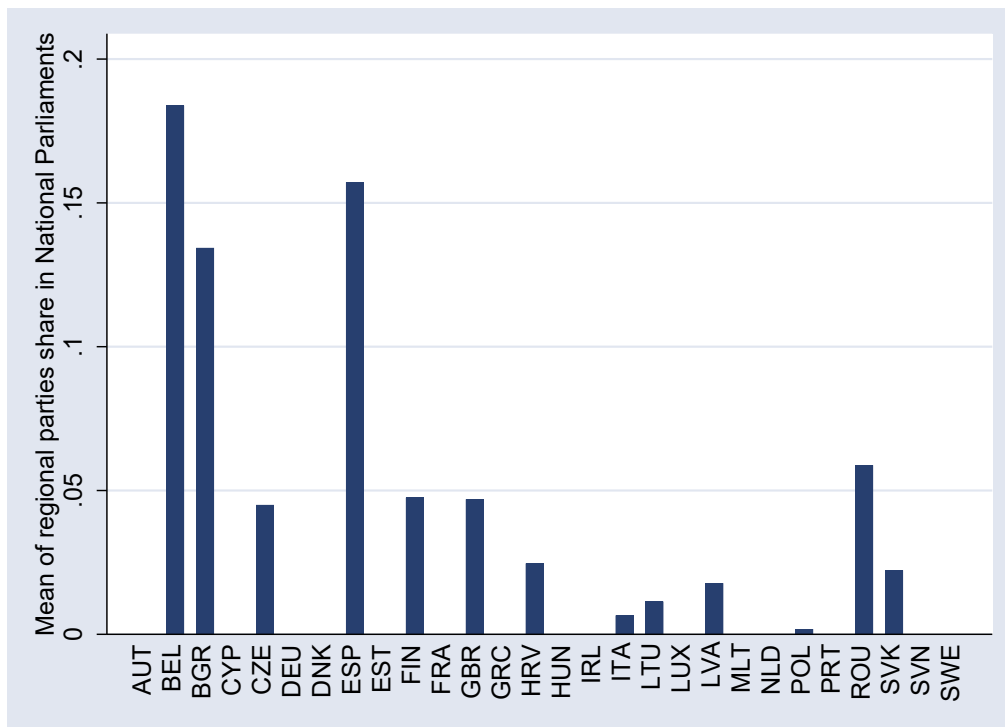


Figure 5 – Mean regional parties shares in the national parliaments (EU 28) by country. Source: own elaboration with data from Manifesto Project 2018 (Volkens et al., 2018)



## CENTRAL EUROPEAN PARTY SYSTEMS AFTER 1990 – STABILIZATION OR CHAOS

**Jacek WOJNICKI, PhD**

Faculty of Political Science and International Studies, University of Warsaw, Poland

[jacekwojncki@uw.edu.pl](mailto:jacekwojncki@uw.edu.pl)

---

**Abstract:** *The article analyzes the process of the formation of pluralist political scenes in Central and Eastern European countries. The focus of the analysis is five post-communist countries – the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania. The first contested parliamentary elections were held in successive months of 1990 (except Poland and Albania), which determined changes in the political scene. In the first transition period, the primary criterion determining the sociopolitical division was the historical factor. On the one hand, there were the so-called post-communist factions related to former ruling parties in the socialist states; on the other, factions created based on broad democratic opposition coalitions. In subsequent years, however, the socioeconomic division along the left-right lines grew in importance, as did the attitude toward the integration processes in Europe and the transformation process itself (along with the lines beneficiaries vs. transition losers). Also noteworthy is a weak „anchoring” of political parties in their electorates, which has resulted in frequent changes to the structure of parliaments and local government councils.*

---

**Keywords:** Political pluralism, party system, systemic transformation, democratization, elections, sociopolitical divisions.

### Introduction

The pluralization of political scenes in Central European countries is a direct result of the transformation processes of the late 1980s. The subject of our analysis will be several post-communist countries undergoing the process of systemic transformation from the turn of the 1990s: the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania. There will also be occasional references to other cases – eastern German lands (the former GDR), Poland, and Slovenia. Decisions of communist authorities to introduce political pluralism and call free (or at least contested) parliamentary elections constituted the first steps towards a democratization of the existing political systems. Relevant decisions were first taken among the ruling elites in Poland (January 1989), Hungary (February 1989), Slovenia (September 1989), East Germany,

Czechoslovakia (November 1989), Bulgaria, and Germany (December 1989). (Sobolewska-Myślik 1999; Antoszewski, Herbut 1997; Wojnicki 2004; Fitzmaurice 1998; Dawisha, Parott 1997; Szajkowski 1991). The article will use three research methods: comparative, historical and systemic. They will allow to verify the research hypothesis - whether in the discussed countries we are dealing with the stabilization of party systems or their fragmentation.

The introduction of the freedom to establish and operate political parties meant it was necessary to amend the constitutions in force, adopt democratic electoral legislation and prepare new laws on parties' operation. That is-because existing legal regulations did not provide open competition between party blocs (lists) in parliamentary and local elections. Constitutional amendments involved the removal of provisions about the leading role of the political party in the state and society, the ideological declarations in question could be found in individual constitutional acts (starting from the constitution of Czechoslovakia from July 1960 to the Soviet constitution from October 1977). Constitutional regulations introduced a prohibition on activities of political parties in military forces, prosecutor's offices and courts. In Bulgaria statutory regulations from April 1990 were interesting as they banned the creation of political parties on a religious, ethnic, racial basis. Adopted regulations were quite liberal, new factions were not subject to excessive formal requirements. The model of registration or license was adopted. The number of signatures necessary to register or declare a new political party ranged from 15 (the Polish act) to 251 (the Romanian decree), 750 (the Hungarian legislation), to as many as 1,000 (the Czechoslovak act from 1990). (Chmaj 2006, Zawadzka 1992, Chruściak 1990)

### **The formation of multiparty systems**

The first contested elections to legislative bodies were held in the discussed region in 1990. The order of elections was determined more by a dynamic social and political situation (e.g. a virtual collapse of the GDR statehood, instability after the „December revolution” in Romania) than any far-reaching scenarios of the elites in power (the agreements at the „triangular table” in Budapest). (Migalski 2005, Fitzmaurice 1998, Ágh 1998, Raciborski 1991; Bugajski 2002)

The new social and political situation was changing the shape of party systems. In the conditions of state socialism (as the then system of governance was usually called), there was a

monopolistic party (the casus of Hungary or Romania). In other example it had a monopolistic position while the so-called satellite parties operated formally (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and GDR). (Rakowska-Harmnstone 1984; Dawisha, Parrot 1997; Żmigrodzki, Sokół 2003)

The political scene in the first period of systemic transformation was mainly divided along the historical criterion which determined the attitude towards the departing political system. The following types of parties could thus be identified: 1/postcommunist; 2/historical; 3/formed around widespread civic and democratic movements; 4/new factions and 5/ethnic and regional ones. To sum up this thread of analysis – postcommunist factions included parties originating from previous ruling factions (e.g., MSZMP, BKP, KSČ, SED, PZPR, PCR). Internal changes in those factions varied considerably –from the adoption of social democratic postulates by MSZP, SdRP, SDL, to the democratic left BSP, the Romanian parties of Petre Roman, and largely cosmetic changes made by KSČM, to the Romanian parties of Ion Iliescu. A research question arose at the same time – how to treat formerly allied factions operating in the past systemic reality, like Poland's ZSL, SD, or Bulgaria's BZNS, East Germany's LDPD or CDU). Those parties were usually quite quick to sever their close links with the previous leftist hegemons, branded themselves as centrist or center-right, declared an intention to establish cooperation with factions from the anti-communist opposition. (Wightman 1995; Ágh 1998; Żmigrodzki, Sokół 2003; Sobolewska-Myślik 1999, Raciborski 1997; Bureš, Charvát, Just, Štefek 2012; Szajkowski 1991)

Secondly: historical parties usually meant a reactivation of political factions operating before the communist rule (the turning point of 1947, 1948 only in the case of Czechoslovakia). During the communist rule, they usually operated in exile – in the U.S., London, Paris, or Rome. Permission to operate legally in the country was a milestone in modern history. It is worth nothing. However, that reestablishment of a faction after several dozen years did not automatically mean an electoral success. Notable political factions that obtained the status of a parliamentary party included: Poland's PSL, the Czech social democracy ČSSD, Hungary's FGKP, Bulgaria's BZNS, and Romania's PNL. It is worth noting that in several cases factions existing under the same name united into a single faction. A different case was a unification of the post-communist factions and one wing of the historical parties – the cases of Poland's PSL in May 1990, Romania's PSD in June 2001, and Bulgaria's BZNS. (Antoszewski 2009, Wojnicki 2004, Ágh 1998, Wightman 1995,

Krejčí 2006, Jackowicz 1992, Burakowski 2014; Bureš, Charvát, Just, Štefek 2012; Bugajski 2002)

Thirdly: factions originating from the broad front of democratic opposition were created in the early 1990s due to fragmentation of the so-called forum-type coalitions. One case of such fragmentation was the post-Solidarity factions in Poland – the cause of the Centre Agreement (the party of Jarosław Kaczyński), the Liberal Democratic Congress (the party of Donald Tusk, Grzegorz Schetyna and Jan Krzysztof Bielecki), the Democratic Union (the party of Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Bronisław Geremek and Jacek Kuroń) and the Christian National Union (the party of Wiesław Chrzanowski and Stefan Niesiołowski). Similar fragmentation occurred in the Czech Republic (the causes of the Civic Forum), Slovakia (Public Against Violence), and Bulgaria (the Union of Democratic Forces). It is worth noting that the phase of forum-type coalitions did not occur in Hungary, where, as a result of a fairly liberal political regime, proto-parties started forming in the late 1980s. The political factions vying for seats in the parliamentary elections at the turn of March and April 1990 originated from those. (Antoszewski, Herbut, Fiala 2003; Raciborski 1991; Czwólek 2013; Sula 2005; Krejčí 2006, Nalewajko 1997; Bureš, Charvát, Just, Štefek 2012; Bugajski 2002)

The fourth group of political factions involves new organizations, created as a result of current sociopolitical and socioeconomic divisions. They do not represent an „unfreezing” of the social divisions from before the communist rule after several decades. Instead, they relate to current social conflicts, a modern society going through a systemic transformation. Nevertheless also relating to the dynamics of social and political processes in Western Europe. Noteworthy in the discussed group of factions are liberal parties (weakly anchored in the Central and Eastern Europe region in the 1920s and 1930s due to a peripheral nature of capitalist systems), green factions. This group also includes the so-called one issue parties, organizations representing supporters of one crucial social or political issue – parties bringing together young people (e.g., Slovenia’s Youth Party - SMS, pensioners’ factions – Poland’s National Party of Retirees and Pensioners - KPEiR, Slovenia’s DeSUS). (Markowski, Cześnik, Kotnarowski 2015, Kosowska-Gąstoł 2010, Wojtaszczyk 1992, Krysiński, Wojnicki 2009; Bugajski 2002)

The last group of political factions is a direct result of the ethnic structure of the discussed region. The ethnic mosaic is a consequence of the political map of Central and Eastern Europe, directly related to the Yalta and Potsdam order and indirectly related to the Versailles order. After the Treaty of Trianon (1920), the Hungarian population was distributed across several neighboring countries: Slovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Ukraine. In turn, a significant percentage of the Turkish population lives in Bulgaria, particularly in the country's southern regions. Classic ethnic mosaic can be seen in the post-Yugoslav countries – the Hungarian and Italian population in Slovenia, Serbian in Croatia, Albanian in Macedonia or Montenegro. Ethnic divisions translate directly into the political party structure in those countries. Hungarian (SMK, UDMR), Turkish (DPS), Albanian (DUI, DPA) parties represent a fairly stable element of political scenes. (Bugajski 1995, Wojnicki 2004, Wojtaszczyk 1998, Szajkowski 1991)

### **Sociopolitical divisions**

The formation of political scenes was connected with sociopolitical and socioeconomic conflicts found in particular societies. In political science, they are called „cleavages” (socially significant divisions). Since the turn of the 1990s, various social divisions have emerged in Central and Eastern European countries, resulting in a progressive pluralization of party systems.

*Table 1 – social divisions in the post-communist countries*

country	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Bulgaria	M	M					H		
Croatia						H	H	M	
Czech Republic		M					H		
Poland			H	H			H		
Romania	M					H	H		

Slovakia	M	M				H	H	M	
Slovenia		H	M			H	H		M
Hungary			H	M			H		

Source: (Siaroff, A., 2000)

Types of conflicts: 1/denominational, 2/regional/ethnic, 3/religious, 4/urban-rural, 5/support for the system, 6/nationalism, 7/socioeconomic, 8/foreign policy, 9/postmaterialism

Levels: **M-moderate, H – high**

The proposed systematization of social conflicts in Central and Eastern European countries makes it possible to arrive at some conclusions. Firstly: what all the discussed countries share is a socioeconomic conflict underpinning the development of political factions along the left-right lines. Over the years, as market changes advance, it has been strengthening as a factor that defines parties. Secondly: the religious factor which is of crucial importance for confessional factions is found both in Orthodox (Bulgaria, Romania) and Catholic countries (Slovakia) where other religions are present as well – Islam (Bulgarian Turks), Hungarian and German Catholics in Romania. Thirdly: also significant is the conflict between the center and the regions as well as the ethnic-based one, found at a moderate level in three countries – Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia, at a high level in Slovenia. Fourthly: the religious factor of crucial importance for confessional factions is found in countries where the Catholic religion is dominant (Poland, Hungary, Slovenia). Fifthly: it is interesting that the „urban-rural” factor, key to social divisions in the pre-communist period, has lost its political importance. Its substantial importance is still seen in only two regional countries – Poland and Hungary. Sixthly: nationalist issues remain essential just like in the interwar period. It is quite understandable given the relatively late nation-making and state-making processes in the discussed region of the Old Continent (e.g., Croatia, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia). Seventhly, foreign policy’s importance for forming social divisions can be considered substantial only in Croatia and Slovakia. In both cases, it is a consequence of undemocratic rule in the 1990s (F. Tudjman, V. Mečiar) which resulted in delayed

accession of both countries to defense and European institutions concerning neighboring countries (Croatia with Slovenia and Slovakia with the Visegrad Group countries: Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary). Finally, it is worth adding that post-material values' substantial importance only in the case of Slovenia quite accurately illustrates the civilizational level of the wealthiest post-communist Central European country. (Siaroff 2000)

In the first period of the transformation processes, historical divisions were the most important, pitting post-communist factions against factions originating from the democratic opposition circles. The first coalition built over those divisions was the coalition backing the government of Janez Drnovšek in Slovenia (April 1992), then the political foundation of the government of Jozsef Moravčík in Slovakia (March 1994) and the political basis of the government of Gyula Horn in Hungary (May 1994). In the first case, the decisive factor was a rising importance of socioeconomic divisions and a centrist position of the social-liberal LDS faction headed by Janez Drnovšek. In the Slovak case until 1998, a major sociopolitical division defined political factions around supporters and opponents of the undemocratic rule exercised by Vladimir Mečiar. In the Hungarian case, on the other hand, the post-communist faction (MSZP) held an absolute majority in the National Assembly after the election in May 1994. Its coalition with the social-liberal SZDSZ was supposed to document the credibility of the pro-democratic and pro-market reorientation of the Hungarian socialists. In addition to that, in the previous parliamentary term (1990-1994), both factions remained in opposition to the center-right cabinet of J. Antall and P. Bőrröss. (Antoszewski, Herbut, Fiala 2003; Wojnicki 2004; Wightman 1995; Krejčí 2006; Fitzmaurice 1998; Bugajski 2002)

For factions originating from the anti-communist opposition circles, the most important axes of the conflict centered around two issues: attitude to the pace and scope of economic reforms in Central and Eastern European countries, and relations with post-communist parties. Including the issue of accounting for the communist past symbolized by decommunization and vetting of former collaborators with security services. The category of factions advocating for the swift and determined introduction of free-market institutions included Poland's Democratic Union (UD) and the Liberal Democratic Congress (KLD), the Czech Republic's Civic Democratic Party (ODS), the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKU), Bulgaria's Union of Democratic Forces



(SDS). (Migalski 2005, Wojtaszczyk 1998, Sobolewska-Myślik 1999, Jackowicz 1992, Ágh 1998, Szajkowski 1991; Bureš, Charvát, Just, Štefek 2012)

In the case of the federal countries (Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia), in turn, an essential axis of political conflict in the early 1990s was the attitude of individual factions to the restructuring of the union state and independence demands. Parties in Slovenia, Croatia, and Slovakia should be put in this context. In the first case, we should mention the Slovenian National Party (SNS), in the second – the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), and in the third – the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS). (Bugajski 1995; Dawisha, Parott 1997; Krejčí 2006; Krysieniel, Wojnicki 2009)

In the next period of the transformation processes (after 2000), the issue of attitude to European integration and Europeanization processes (in the context of the of the countries in question to European institutions) and attitude to the ongoing transformation processes became the factor differentiating the political scene. The first axis of division shaped parties as 1/Euro-enthusiastic, 2/Euro-realistic, and 3/Euro-sceptic. Slogans of distance towards the integration processes were voiced by 1/the League of Polish Families and „Self-Defense” in Poland, 2/Jobbik in Hungary, 3/Ataka in Bulgaria, 4/People’s Party „Our Slovakia”, or 5/the Greater Romania Party (PMR). In turn, the moderate distance towards the integration processes was expressed by Law and Justice in Poland and FIDESZ in Hungary (who called themselves Euro-realists). (Antoszewski 2009, Kosowska-Gąstoł 2010, Wojnicki 2004, Czwólek 2013)

A negative attitude to the transformation processes meant criticism of the adopted model of political and economic changes after 1989 as too liberal (without social support for the poorer segments of society) and as an insufficient rupture with the previous political system (petrification of post-communist influence in political and social-economic life). Such slogans were voiced at the turn of the 21st century by conservative factions – Law and Justice (PiS), FIDESZ, and the Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS). (Antoszewski 2009, Kosowska-Gąstoł 2010, Wojnicki 2004; Bugajski 2002)

### **The typology of party systems**

It is worth invoking the opinion of Polish scholars of political systems, A. Antoszewski and R. Herbut, who pointed to the following as they analyzed emerging party systems: 1/no

development of permanent sociopolitical divisions in the post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (defined as a stable relationship between the society and a particular political faction), 2/formation of the so-called politicization of group interests, and 3/low social „anchoring” of parties. The result of these social attitudes and behaviors is substantial electoral volatility. (Antoszewski, Herbut 1997, Markowski 2015, Lewis, Markowski 2011)

Polish researcher of political party issues Marek Sobolewski listed three essential functions of parties: 1/shaping political opinions and attitudes; 2/electoral (creating a political program and selecting candidates), and 3/governing (being in charge of state authorities and government accountability offices). (Sobolewski 1977: 300) In this typology, it is worth mentioning the issue of alternation of political power in Central and Eastern European countries after 1989. We have witnessed a few scenarios: 1/alternation of power after following the first contested elections (indirectly Poland after 1989, Hungary, GDR, Czechoslovakia, Slovenia, Croatia – in 1990); 2/the first elections confirmed a stable position of the post-communist factions (Bulgaria, Romania – in 1990, Albania in 1991, Serbia and Montenegro – in 1990); 3/also subsequent parliamentary elections did not make the alternation of state power – Romania in 1996 (third election), Serbia until 2000 (fourth election). It is worth mentioning that in the case of Montenegro, there has been no alternation of power until 2020. (Chruściak 1990; Krejčí 2006; Ramet 2012)

Let us take a look now at the typologies of party systems and their practical application in the discussed region of the Old Continent. Italian political scientist and scholar of political parties Giovanni Sartori proposed the following typologies of party systems: 1/a two-party system with alternating governments; 2/moderate pluralism; 3/polarized pluralism; 4/a system of a dominant party in moderate pluralism. In the second model, there is usually little ideological distance between the main factions, with a desire for the polar formation of parliamentary coalitions, and dominance of centripetal competition between parties without anti-system factions. The third scenario involves a trend towards centrifugal political competition. Consequently, these elements threaten the legitimacy of the political system. The above model can be formed in two variants: polarized pluralism with fundamental opposition on the left and right, and polarized pluralism with centrist parties capable of governing. (Sartori 1976)

The model of moderate pluralism has been seen in the Czech Republic (until 2010), Hungary (until 2010), Romania since the 1992 election, and Bulgaria since 1990. The most fragmented political scene, has been found in Slovakia, which is marked by the highest electoral volatility and frequent changes of factions present in the National Council of the Slovak Republic. In turn, a system of a dominant party in moderate pluralism formed in Hungary after 2010, with a unique position held by FIDESZ, was occasionally seen in Romania – the early 1990s – the dominance of FSN, and the Social-Liberal Union after 2012. We should also mention the presence of anti-system factions that were left out of government and parliamentary coalitions. The status of such parties was held for many years by the Czech communists from KSČM and the Czech republicans from SPR-RSČ, the Hungarian populists from MIÉP (after this nationalist faction's break away from MDF) and Jobbik, the Romanian nationalists from PRM, the Bulgarian nationalists from Ataka and the Slovak nationalists from LSNS. (Barański 2018, Krejčí 2006; Kopeček 2007; Bajda 2010, Burakowski 2014, Markowski, Wnuk-Lipiński 2001; Bureš, Charvát, Just, Štefek 2012)

The typology by Jean Blondel assumed the presence of the following partisanship models: 1/a two-party system; 2/a two-and-a-half party system; 3/a multiparty system with a dominant party; 4/a multiparty system without a dominant party. In the second variant, a vital role is played by a complementary party necessary to form a government and parliamentary coalition. The third variant assumes that one faction can exercise governing power even if other parliamentary factions form a broad governing coalition. (Blondel 1968)

Referring to this typology, we can point to the development of a two-bloc system (from 2001) with a unique position of a pivotal party for Turkey's DPS, which has supported both center-left and center-right governing coalitions in Bulgaria's National Assembly. Poland's PSL was a similar case until 2006, having the potential to form centre-right and centre-left coalitions. In the Czech example, a pivotal position was held by the Christian Democratic People's Party. The third variant has developed in its fullest form in Hungary after 2010, with a dominant position of FIDESZ. The fourth formula has been the most popular in the discussed region – a multiparty system without a dominant party. Such examples can be found in Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Romania and Bulgaria (except a few turning points – short-lived domination of BSP or SDS).

(Barański 2018; Kopeček 2007; Kowalczyk, Tomczak 2007; Kosowska-Gąstoł 2010; Burakowski 2014; Góralczyk 2000; Csizmadia, Lakatos 2016; Bureš, Charvát, Just, Štefek 2012)

In the view of Gordon Smith, three models of party systems can be identified according to the government formation criterion: 1/balanced, 2/unbalanced, and 3/dispersed. In this typology, what matters is the existence of political polarization, the domination of one political faction, or there is no polarization of the political scene and several factions score similar election results. (Smith 1989, 1992)

In the period after 1989, the domination of a political faction was occasionally seen in post-communist countries. Such cases include The National Salvation Front in post-revolution Romania (1990-1991), Fidesz after 2010, Law and Justice after 2015 (though without domination in the upper parliamentary chamber after the election in autumn 2019). The first parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic and Hungary showed the features of a balanced model, there was an alternation between the leftist ČSSD and the conservative-popular ODS in the Czech case (until 2006), and between the leftist MSZP and the conservative FIDESZ in the Hungarian case (until 2006). Also in the case of Bulgaria until 2001, there was a balanced political rivalry between the „blues” from the Union of Democratic Forces and the „red” socialists from BSP. In turn, the domination of Slovenia’s LDS stemmed from growing support for this faction in successive elections (from 1992 to 2000 – support rising from 24% to 36%) and centripetal political rivalry and pragmatic creation of parliamentary and governmental coalitions. Another example was a declining dominance of Slovakia’s HZDS, which lost support in successive elections from 1992 to 2006, but kept coming first in elections (a drop from 34% to 19%). (Czwolek 2013, Kopeček 2007, Krejčí 2006; Burakowski 2014, Krysieniel 2009, Csizmadia, Lakatos 2016; Bureš, Charvát, Just, Štefek 2012)

In the analyzed post-communist countries (including the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania), 44 parliamentary elections took place after 1990. In the Czech and Slovak case, the parliamentary election held in June 1990, still within the then federal state, is also included in our analysis. That is because it resulted in the formation of diverse political scenes of the independent Czech Republic and Slovakia after 1992. The first observation relates to the scale of victory achieved by individual political factions in the period examined.

*Table 2 – the scale of the biggest parliamentary victory in the post-communist countries*

Country	1	2	3	4
Bulgaria	SDS 1997 52,3 %	BSP 1990 47,5 %	NDSV 2001 42,7 %	GERB 2013 39,7 %
The Czech Republic	ODS 2006 35,4 %	ČSSD 1998 32,3 %	ČSSD 2006 32,3 %	ANO 2011 2017 29,6 %
Romania	FSN 1990 66,7 %	USL 2012 58,6 %	PSD 2016 45,5 %	DA 2004 36,8 %
Slovakia	SMER 2012 44,4 %	SMER 2010 34,8 %	HZDS 1994 34,7 %	HZDS 1992 34,4 %
Hungary	FIDESZ 2010 52,7 %	FIDESZ 2018 49,3 %	FIDESZ 2014 44,9 %	MSZP 2006 43,2 %

Source: <http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/countries.html> (08.04.2020)

Abbreviations: **SDS** – the Union of Democratic Forces, **BSP**- the Bulgarian Socialist Party, **GERB** – Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria, **NDSV** – the National Movement for Simeon II, **ODS** – the Civic Democratic Party, **ČSSD** – the Czech Social Democratic Party, **ANO 2011**- Action of Dissatisfied Citizens, **FSN** – the National Salvation Front, **USL**- the Social Liberal Union, **PSD**- the Social Democratic Party, **DA**- the „Justice and Truth” Alliance, **SMER** –

Direction, **HZDS** – the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia, **FIDESZ** – the Federation of Young Democrats – Hungarian Civic Party, **MSZP** – the Hungarian Socialist Party

Analysis of these election results shows that winning factions have occasionally obtained an absolute parliamentary majority enabling a one-party cabinet to be formed in the discussed countries. This situation has occurred most often in Hungary – FIDESZ has won an absolute majority in the National Assembly three times after 2010. In Romania, in turn, an absolute majority has been won twice by broad coalitions of factions – the postcommunist FSN in May 1990 (66.7%) and the centre-left USL (58.6%) in 2012. Both coalitions broke up rather quickly, so their domination in the political scene did not last long. In Slovakia, however, only following the election in 2012 did the victorious SMER hold an absolute majority in the National Council of the Slovak Republic (83 mandates out of 150). In Bulgaria, in turn, winning factions (or coalitions) have obtained an absolute majority in the National Assembly three times – the broad democratic coalition led by SDS in 1997 and the postcommunist BSP twice, in June 1990 and in December 1994. It is worth noting that the faction of former tsar Simeon II (NDSV) came very close to winning the required majority of seats in 2001 (half the seats, 120 out of 240). The Chamber of Deputies in the Czech Republic is yet to see an absolute majority for a winning faction. (Kosowska-Gąstoł 2010, Antoszewski 2009, Ramet 2012, Krejčí 2006; Burakowski 2014, Barański 2018, Jackowicz 1992, Csizmadia, Lakatos 2016; Bureš, Charvát, Just, Štefek 2012)

*Table 3 – the scale of the smallest parliamentary victory in the post-communist countries*

country	1	2	3
Bulgaria	GERB 2013 30, 5 %	BSP 2005 31, 0 %	-
The Czech Republic	ČSSD 2013 20, 5 %	ČSSD 2010 22, 1 %	ODS 1996 29, 6 %

Romania	PSD 2008 33, 1 %	PSD 2000 36, 6 %	PSD 1992 27, 7 %
Slovakia	OL'aNO 2020 25, 0 %	HZDS 2002 19, 5 %	-
Hungary	MSZP 1994 33, 0 %	MSZP 1998 32, 9 %	MDF 1990 24, 2 %

Source: <http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/countries.html> (08.04.2020)

Abbreviations: **BSP**- the Bulgarian Socialist Party, **GERB** – Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria, **ODS** – the Civic Democratic Party, **ČSSD** – the Czech Social Democratic Party, **PSD**- the Social Democratic Party, **OL'aNO**- Ordinary People and Independent Personalities, **HZDS** – the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia, **MDF** – the Hungarian Democratic Forum, **MSZP** – the Hungarian Socialist Party

Analysis of the smallest support for a winning faction in parliamentary elections makes it possible to draw the following conclusions. A situation of the most fragmented parliament has been seen four times, twice each in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Thus, the winning faction has twice won less than 23% support in the Chamber of Deputies - ČSSD in the elections of 2010 and 2013. In Slovakia, in the election to the National Council in 2002, the victorious HZDS won less than 20% of the votes cast, and in the last election in March 2020, OL'aNO won about a quarter of the votes cast. Both countries symbolized political scene fragmentation following the break-ups of their opinion poll leaders – in the Czech Republic, as a result of the weakened political influence of the previous archrivals - ODS and ČSSD; in Slovakia, as a result of decreased public support for HZDS (2002) and SMER (2020). Moreover in the Hungarian case, the most fragmented parliament was elected in March 1990 when the winning faction registered support of less than 1 in 4 votes cast. In the case of the Slovak party system, a few stages of its development



can be identified – 1/a two-bloc rivalry (1992-1998), 2/a broad coalition government (1998-2006), and 3/a multiparty system with a dominant faction (2006-2016) (Kosowska-Gąstoł 2010, Antoszewski 2009, Burakowski 2014, Krejčí 2006; Barański 2018, Ramet 2012, Fitzmaurice 1998; Bureš, Charvát, Just, Štefek 2012)

*Table 4 – the scale of support for new factions in the post-communist countries*

Country	1	2	3	4	5	6
Bulgaria	2001 42, 7 %	2005 19, 7 %	2009 39, 7 %	2013 3, 7 %	2014 26, 1 %	2017 4, 2 %
The Czech Republic	1998 8, 6 %	2002 -	2006 6, 3 %	2010 27, 6 %	2013 25, 6 %	2017 26, 6 %
Romania	2004 31, 5 %	2012 14, 0 %	2016 19, 9 %	-	-	-
Slovakia	2002 42, 9 %	2006 -	2010 20, 2 %	2012 8, 6 %	2016 12, 2 %	2020 12, 8 %
Hungary	1998 5, 5 %	2010 24, 2 %	-	-	-	-

Source: <http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/countries.html> (08.04.2020)

The last issue to be analyzed involves the scale of fragmentation of new political factions. The bigger the scale, the lower the stability of the party systems and parliamentary elite of individual countries. Replacement of factions in legislatures is also indicative of anti-establishment sentiments in the society and a low level of trust in the political class. That is why new parties and

political factions (which often do not define themselves as parties) win considerable public support and obtain parliamentary seats. (Markowski 2015; Lewis, Markowski 2011)

The presented table indicates that the highest level of parliamentary instability is found in Bulgaria and Slovakia. In the first case, we have witnessed it since 2001, after a loss of trust in the major factions of the Bulgarian transformation – the „reds” from BSP and the „blues” from SDS. Then it is time for former tsar Simeon II (NDSV) to enter the political scene, as a temporary savior. GERB and the nationalist Ataka emerge in the next election. Considerable instability has also been seen in Slovakia. On the one hand, it resulted from a weakening of the leading faction thus far – HDZS, which opened a window for populist and conservative-popular factions. On the other hand, the center-right specter of the political scene, emerging in opposition to the then regime of Vladimir Mečiar, focusing on big city population and intelligentsia, was yet to stabilize. Therefore, numerous factions popped up invoking liberal slogans, created by both businessmen and scientists. The last election to the National Council (March 2020) demonstrated a continuation of the process, particularly in the context of a weakening position of Smer, which has dominated since 2006. (Barański 2018; Czwolek 2013, Krejčí 2006; Kosowska-Gąstoł 2010, Antoszewski 2009; Kopeček 2007)

In the Czech Republic, in turn, the process of destabilization of the party system strengthened after 2010 as a result of the weakened popularity of the existing hegemons – the conservative ODS and the leftist ČSSD. Two factions were created which claimed to be „powerbrokers” in the political scene. The first project, appealing to the conservative and liberal electorate, was TOP’ 09 created around popular politician Karel Schwarzenberg. Moreover the other faction rode a wave of discontent with the political elites and was founded by brisk businessman and economic heavyweight in the Republic, Andrej Babiš – ANO 2011. (Barański 2018; Kosowska-Gąstoł 2010; Krejčí 2006; Bureš, Charvát, Just, Štefek 2012)

Romania, in turn, has had a rather stable political scene, broad center-right (CDR in 1992 and DA in 2004) or eclectic coalitions (USL in 2012) were created, but they brought together factions and politicians who had already sat in the parliament before. Thus, it would be difficult to treat them as formally new political factions. Some changes in this regard can be seen since 2012, as a result of rising mistrust in the existing political elite, both on the right and left of the political

specter. New parties claiming to fight corruption and criminal links between the political class and business and officials were created. (Burakowski 2014, Kosowska-Gąstoł 2010, Antoszewski 2009, Bugajski 2002)

A fairly stable political scene has also developed in Hungary. The biggest quantitative change was the entry of nationalist Jobbik into the National Assembly in April 2010. However, the place vacated by the social-liberal SzDSz was not permanently taken up by liberal factions and those appealing to the big city electorate. (Bugajski 2002, Czwólek 2013, Kosowska-Gąstoł 2010, Antoszewski 2009, Csizmadia, Lakatos 2016)

### **Summary**

This analysis included the issues of the formation and stabilization of party systems in Central and Eastern European countries. The pluralization of political scenes was a significant element of the transformation processes launched at the turn of the 1990s. The emerging party systems had numerous common features while taking into account the specific nature of a particular country and traditions of homegrown political institutions. In the initial period of the systemic transition (the first ten-fifteen years), the fundamental sociopolitical division involved the historical criterion. Apart from a few examples (Slovenia in 1992, Hungary in 1994 and 2002, Romania in 1996 and Slovakia in 1994), political factions were divided, per their origins, into postcommunist ones and those originating from broad democratic opposition camps. Another common feature of the countries in question was a (smaller or bigger) failure of the so-called historical parties, which failed to reactivate after several dozen years of outlawing. The only example of a successful reactivation of such a party is the Czech social democracy (ČSSD) and, to a lesser extent, Poland's PSL. Another common feature of the party systems was a „weak anchoring” of factions in the electorate. It resulted in considerable voting volatility and changes in the structure of the political scenes. The most stable party systems developed in Hungary and Romania. In turn, the fairly stable Czech party system underwent substantial fragmentation after 2010 due to a weakened position of the previously dominant two factions: ODS and ČSSD. The most unstable party systems were found in Slovakia and Bulgaria. In the first case, it resulted from a weakened position of the dominant factions – HZDS and SMER, as well as an inability to form

an effective opposition bloc to these parties. In the other case, we saw increasing mistrust in the political elites symbolized by the camp of the „reds” from BSP and the „blues” from SDS. They were firstly exploited by former tsar Simeon II (NDSV) and then by GERB and its leader Boyko Borisov who profiled himself as a „strongman”.

## References

1. Ágh, A., 1998, *The Politics of Central Europe*, London: SAGE; 1998
2. Antoszewski, A., 2009, *Partie i systemy partyjne państw Unii Europejskiej na przełomie wieków*, Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek
3. Antoszewski, A., Herbut, R., Fiala, P., 2003, *Partie i systemy partyjne Europy Środkowej*, Wrocław; Uniwersytet Wrocławski
4. Antoszewski, A., Herbut, R., 1997, *Demokracje Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w perspektywie porównawczej*, Wrocław: Uniwersytet Wrocławski
5. Bajda, P., 2010, *Elity polityczne na Słowacji w latach 1989-2010: kręta droga do nowoczesnego państwa*, Warszawa: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN: Instytut Wydawniczy Pax
6. Barański, M., et alii, 2018, *Współczesne partie i systemy partyjne państw Grupy Wyszehradzkiej w procesie demokratyzacji*, Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego
7. Blondel, J., *Party Systems and Patterns of 'Government in Western Democracies'*, „Canadian journal of Political Science”, 1 /2 (1968), 180-203
8. Bugajski, J., 1995, *Ethnic politics in Eastern Europe: a guide to nationality policies, organizations, and parties: with a new postscript*, Armonk, N.Y. ; London: M. E. Sharpe
9. Bugajski, J., 2002, *Political Parties of Eastern Europe: A Guide to Politics in the Post-Communist Era*, Armonk-New York: M.E. Sharpe,
10. Burakowski, A., 2014, *System polityczny współczesnej Rumunii*, Warszawa: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN; Kraków Ośrodek Myśli Politycznej
11. Bureš, J., Charvát, J., Just, P., Štefek, M., 2012, *Česká demokracie po roce 1989. Institucionální základy českého politického systému*, Praha: Grada Publishing

12. Chmaj, M., 2006, *Wolność tworzenia i działania partii politycznych: studium porównawcze*, Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego
13. Chruściak, R., Koperska, T., 1990, *Nowe ordynacje wyborcze Bułgarii, Czechosłowacji, NRD, Rumunii i Węgier: materiały prawnoporównawcze*, Warszawa: Biblioteka Sejmowa
14. Csimadia, E., Lakatos, J., 2016, *Fenomem Fideszu. Alternatywne podejście*, w: *Przekraczając uprzedzenia i entuzjazm*, red. Sullivan, J., Póczy, K., Kraków-Budapeszt: Ośrodek Myśli Politycznej- Danube Institute
15. Czwolek, A., Nowak-Paralusz, M., Gawron-Tabor, K., 2013, *Partie i systemy partyjne Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej: dwie dekady doświadczeń*, Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika
16. Dawisha, K., and Parrot, B., 1997, *The consolidation of democracy in East-Central Europe*, Cambridge; New York: Cambridge Univ. Press
17. Dawisha, K., and Parrot, B., 1997, *Politics, Power and the Struggle for Democracy in South-East Europe*, Cambridge; New York: Cambridge Univ. Press
18. Fitzmaurice, J., 1998, *Politics and government in the Visegrad countries: Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia*, Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave
19. Góralczyk, B., 2000, *Węgierski pakiet*, Warszawa: Studio Wydawnicze Familia
20. Grzybowski, M., Zięba, A., 1996, *Współczesne systemy partyjne wybranych państw europejskich*, Kraków: Wydaw. UJ: nakł. WPiAUJ
21. Harmstone-Rakowska, T., 1984, *Communism in Eastern Europe*, Bloomington; London: Indiana University Press
22. Jackowicz, J., 1992, *Bulgaria: od rządów komunistycznych do demokracji parlamentarnej: 1988-1991*, Warszawa: ISP. PAN
23. Kopeček, L., 2007, *Politické strany na Slovensku 1989 až 2006*, Brno: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury
24. Kosowska-Gąstoł, B., 2010, *Systemy partyjne państw Unii Europejskiej*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego
25. Kowalczyk, K., Tomczak, Ł., 2007, *Czechy, Polska, Ukraina: partie i systemy partyjne: stan i perspektywy*, Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek
26. Krejčí, O., 2006, *Nová kniha o volbách*, Praha: Professional Publishing

27. Krysieniel, K., Wojnicki, J., 2009, *Partie i systemy partyjne państw byłej Jugosławii: (Bośnia i Hercegowina, Chorwacja, Czarnogóra, Macedonia, Serbia, Słowenia)*, Pułtusk: Akademia Humanistyczna im. Aleksandra Gieysztora; Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza ASPRA-JR
28. Lewis, P., G. and Markowski, R., 2011, *Europeanising party politics?: comparative perspectives on central and Eastern Europe*, Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press
29. Markowski, R., Cześnik, M., Kotnarowski, M., 2015, *Demokracja - gospodarka - polityka: perspektywa polskiego wyborcy*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar
30. Markowski, R., Wnuk-Lipiński, E., 2001, *Transformative paths in Central and Eastern Europe*, Warsaw: Instytut Studiów Politycznych Polskiej Akademii Nauk
31. Michalak, B., 2010, *Partie polityczne i systemy partyjne: zarys wykładu*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej TWP
32. Migalski, M., 2005, *Partie i systemy partyjne państw Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej*, Sosnowiec: Wyższa Szkoła Zarządzania i Marketingu: Abako
33. Nalewajko, E., 1997, *Protopartie i protosystem?: szkic do obrazu polskiej wielopartyjności*, Instytut Studiów Politycznych Polskiej Akademii Nauk
34. Raciborski, J., 1991, *Wybory i narodziny demokracji w krajach Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej*, Warszawa: Agencja Scholar
35. Raciborski, J., 1997, *Polskie wybory: zachowania wyborcze społeczeństwa polskiego w latach 1989-1995*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe "Scholar"
36. Ramet, S., P., 2012, *Polityka Europy Środkowej i Południowo-Wschodniej po 1989*, Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza
37. Sartori, G., 1976, *Parties and Party Systems: A framework for analysis*, Cambridge University Press
38. Siaroff, A., 2000, *Comparative European Party Systems. An Analysis of Parliamentary Elections since 1945*, New York-London
39. Smith, G., 1989, *Politics in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*, 5th Edition Aldershot: Gower
40. Smith, G., 1992, *Życie polityczne w Europie Zachodniej*, Londyn: Puls (polskie wydanie)

41. Sobolewska-Myślik, K., 1999, *Partie i systemy partyjne w Europie Środkowej po 1989 roku*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Akademickie
42. Sobolewska-Myślik, K., Kosowska-Gąstoł, B., Borowiec, P., *Organizational structures of political parties in Central and Eastern European countries*, Kraków: Jagiellonian University Press
43. Sobolewski, M., 1997, *Partie i systemy partyjne świata kapitalistycznego*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo PWN
44. Stolarik, M., M., 2016, *The Czech and Slovak Republics Twenty years of Independence, 1993–2013*, Budapest, Hungary; New York, New York: CEU Press
45. Sula, P., 2005, *System partyjny Węgier*, Wrocław: Uniwersytet Wrocławski
46. Szajkowski, B., 1991, *New political parties of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, Harlow: Longman Group
47. Wightman, G., 1995, *Party formation in East-Central Europe: post-communist politics in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Bulgaria*, Aldershot; Brookfield: E. Elgar
48. Wojnicki, J., 2004, *Kształtowanie się systemów wielopartyjnych w Europie Środkowowschodniej. 1989-2004*, Pułtusk: Wyższa Szkoła Humanistyczna im. A. Gieysztora
49. Wojtaszczyk, K.,A., 1998, *Partie polityczne w państwie demokratycznym*, Warszawa: Wydaw. Szkolne i Pedagogiczne
50. Wojtaszczyk, K.,A., 1992, *Współczesne systemy partyjne*, Warszawa: Wydaw. Naukowe PWN
51. Zawadzka, B., 1992, *Zmiany systemu politycznego w ustawodawstwie państw Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej 1989-1991*, Warszawa: Agencja Scholar
52. Żmigrodzki, M., Sokół, W., 2003, *Współczesne partie i systemy partyjne: zagadnienia teorii i praktyki politycznej*, Lublin: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej



DOI: 10.24193/OJMNE.2020.33.05

## POLISH REPATRIATION POLICY AFTER 1989–CONDITIONS, COURSE AND FORECASTS

Paweł HUT, PhD

Faculty of Political Science and International Studies, University of Warsaw, Poland

[pawel.hut@uw.edu.pl](mailto:pawel.hut@uw.edu.pl)

---

**Abstract:** This article describes the process of repatriation back to Poland originating in the former Soviet Union and contemporary post-Soviet republics that emerged after the fall of the USSR. Over 3 Mln. Poles were living in the USSR (mainly in Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine), as Polish communist authorities organized two waves of mass repatriation, accounting for over 1,5 Mln. Poles. By contrast, after 1989, more precisely between 1991 and 2018, only ca. 3,5 thousand Poles were subject to repatriation, a situation that needs to be analyzed in the context new migration opportunities opened up by Poland's EU accession.

---

**Keywords:** Poles in USSR, repatriation policy, repatriation, remigration, Polish Charter.

### Introduction

The regaining of sovereignty by Polish society at the turn of 1989/1990 was only a prelude to the regulation of various issues that had remained open since the end of the World War II in May 1945. One of them was the fact that many millions of Polish citizens remained outside the new borders of the Polish State in the Soviet Union (Csérge, Goldgeier 2004: 23).

Although internally very diverse due to its place of residence (from borderland Poles from the Grodno region to the forgotten Poles in Kazakhstan or Transnistria), the social status, living conditions and sources of income, this was not the researchers' subject of interest during the People's Republic of Poland period. The actual situation of persons of Polish nationality in the USSR was only provided by fragmentary studies of statistical yearbooks published by the USSR statistical office (Centralnoye Statisticheskoye Upravlyeniye 1962: 184, Goskomstat 1988: 102) or memories of Poles from the USSR (Budzyński 1998, Budzyński 2006a, Budzyński 2006b, Archiv Prezidenta Kazakhstan 2000). The first study that dealt with the issue of Poles in the Soviet Union as a whole was Julian Siedlecki's book published outside the Eastern Bloc, but it also contained a number of inaccuracies due to restrictions on direct access to information from the post-war period (Siedlecki 1987). The previous very short book or properly report about Poles in USSR was

published in London in 1983 (Plater-Zyberk 1983). The orientation of the scientific community, but also of the Polish society more broadly, on the actual situation in Polish circles in the USSR in the post-war period should be assessed as small and covering only the circulation of information within families. This state of ignorance has only began to change at the end of the 1980s, when a wider debate on the situation in the Soviet Union was allowed in the Polish research centres.

In studies published after 1989/1990, the problem of selecting the names to describe the process of post-war movements of Poles from the Soviet Union appeared. The used term “repatriation” did not really reflect the specificity of this process, but The European Council experts in own report used concept “repatriation” (Tinquy de, Hadjiisky 1997). As a result, researchers and publicists began to use various names to describe the post-war migration from the USSR to Poland, including: evacuation, population transfer, expatriation, impatriation (Hut 2002), resettlement, and less often, expulsion. These terms referred to the nomenclature used after the war in West Germany. Due to its presence in Polish regulations, the term “repatriation” has finally become established. Another problem is the question of the name of the group that is being repatriated. There is no doubt that in the 1940s and 50s, and even in the 60s, most representatives of this group could be called Poles, while due to integration with representatives of ethnically dominant groups, as well as the many years of separation from the Polish State, the term “foreign Poles” seems more precise (Hut 2014: 79 ff.)

The following part of the article will present the characteristics of Polish communities in the Soviet Union in the post-war period, and then the conditions of repatriation to Poland from individual countries that emerged after the fall of the USSR. Part of the consideration will be devoted to the situation of people who have managed to overcome a number of formal barriers and material problems and have settled in Poland. The last part of the article will contain a forecast of expected changes to the repatriation process. The article uses unpublished data from own research conducted in 2000 and 2011

<sup>1</sup>, as well as information obtained during the performance of the function of the Refugee Board’s adjudicator in 2004-2019 and in 2016-2018 the director of the Migration Policy

---

<sup>1</sup> National survey among repatriates conducted by the Institute of Social Policy of the University of Warsaw in 2000, research manager Paweł Hut.

National survey and in-depth interviews among repatriates conducted by the Institute of Social Policy of the University of Warsaw in 2011, research manager: Paweł Hut.

Department and then the Migration Policy and Analysis Department of the Ministry of Interior and Administration of the Republic of Poland. The article also uses information obtained from employees of the Department of Repatriation and Citizenship of the Ministry of Interior and Administration during the author's non-categorised interviews in 2016-2020.

### **Poles in the USSR and their post-war repatriations**

According to estimates, 14.5 million Polish citizens lived in the areas annexed by the USSR in 1945 before the war, including about 4.5 million Poles. As a result of warfare, natural migration, as well as forced Soviet deportations in 1940-1941, in this area in 1945. Poles constituted only about 2.5 million people.

Table 1: Poles in particular USSR republics, 1959-1979

<b>Republic</b>	<b>1959</b>	<b>1979</b>
Russian Federation	118422	99733
Ukrainian	363297	258309
Belarussian	538881	403169
Kazakh	53102	61136
Moldavian	4783	4961
Lithuanian	230107	247022
Latvian	59774	62690
Estonian	2256	No data

Source: own work, Centralnoye Statisticheskoye Upravlyenye 1962: 202-208; Goskomstat 1988: 101-105.

The most numerous groups of Poles lived in 1946 in Lithuanian SRS, Belarusian SRS, Ukrainian SRS, Federative Russian SRS, Latvian SRS and Kazakh SRS, however, due to war circumstances, groups of Poles also lived in other USSR republics. On the basis of the census data in 1959, it was found that over 1380 thousand people declaring Polish nationality lived on the territory of the Soviet Union, including over 900 thousand in agricultural areas (Centralnoye

Statisticheskoye Upravlyeniye 1962: 184, 196). As a result of the post-war mass resettlements to Poland, in 1979, there were as many as 1150 thousand Poles (Goskomstat 1988: 99).

An obvious organizational challenge during the post-war repatriation was the necessity of a different approach to Polish indigenous groups—living for generations in their “small homelands”, while separate actions were required by a group of Polish resettlers—people deported to the Asian part of the Soviet Union after the annexation of the eastern provinces of the Second Republic in September 1939 (Plater-Zyberk 1983: 5).

Faced with the challenges of resettling the Western and Northern Lands, the authorities of communist Poland were interested in enabling the resettlement of as many people as possible. As a result of bilateral Polish-Soviet arrangements, it was established that the right to leave applies only to Poles and Jews, omitting other ethnic groups that had Polish citizenship before the war. As early as in 1944, lists of people to leave were started and first transports were organized. More than 1.7 million people declared their willingness to leave their homelands and leave the former eastern provinces of Poland, which were incorporated into the Soviet Union between 1944 and 1949 (Hut 2002: 24). Some could not do so because of their situation, e.g. the long-term illness of their closest relatives or the serving of long-term sentences for “political crimes”. In spite of the agreements concluded, the Soviet authorities were reluctant to allow the departure of Poles from Soviet Lithuania (except for the capital Wilna). The resettlement from the Soviet Ukraine was carried out without major restrictions.

In order to facilitate this specific migration, in which repatriates were not only allowed to leave but also to take some of their belongings (furniture, bedding, tools, clothes), freight trains were organized. The transport route was organized in such a way that transports with Poles from the North (Lithuania) were settled in Pomerania, Varmia and Masuria, newcomers from Belarus arrived in Masuria and Lubuskie, while transports from Lwów (currently Lviv) were directed to Upper and Lower Silesia. After crossing the border, the visitors were directed to the staging points of the State Repatriation Office (PUR), which dealt with the overall post-war migration back to Poland, including the German Nazi concentration camps from the occupation zones in Germany and Austria (Kersten 1974: 37).

In the end, in the years 1944-1949, 1507 persons entered the “new” Poland. No separate records were kept to determine how the participation of individual ethnic groups in the repatriation process developed. On the basis of fragmentary data, it can be assumed that in the described period,

about 10 thousand Jews who later emigrated to Western Europe and the USA left the USSR (Szydzisz 2019: 16).

Another wave of repatriation began after the liberalisation of the political system in the Soviet Union in the mid-1950s. At that time, the right to travel to the homeland was granted to representatives of nationalities that had their ethnic states, including Germany, Hungary and Romania. According to the agreements concluded, almost 250 thousand people came to Poland (Hut 2002: 36). Importantly, the authorities of the People's Republic of Poland were also carrying out a repatriation campaign from the West at that time—but its effects turned out to be disappointing. Out of the multimillion-strong Polish community in the West, the decision to settle in the Polish People's Republic was made by only 8 thousand Poles. Such modest returns were probably influenced by the fact that a large group of potential repatriates from the West originated from the areas incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1945 and, in their understanding, repatriation would mean going to the Soviet Union.

Between 1955 and 1960, the most numerous repatriate groups from the USSR came to Poland in 1957 and 1958. As in the first post-war years, assistance to the newcomers was organised and institutionalised in this period as well—from staging points, through field administration, to the directors of the work establishments and state farms, where repatriates were immediately employed. The newly arrived could also count on medical assistance and help while settling in. Municipal or company apartments were at their disposal. Children were taken into compulsory schooling (Latuch 1994: 63, 97).

With the last few transports of repatriates, the possibility of settling in Poland has ended. For a long time, letters were sent to the embassy of the People's Republic of Poland in Moscow and various offices in Poland from people who did not manage to take advantage of the repatriation opportunities. However, these appeals did not have any effect. The authorities of the People's Republic of Poland and the USSR were of the opinion that anyone who wanted to leave the Soviet Union for their homeland was able to do so. This assessment was further strengthened by the fact that foreign Poles in the USSR were guaranteed the possibility of nurturing the Polish identity. In the post-war period, only the area of the Western Soviet republics had Polish language education. It was very limited—to the secondary school level; education in Polish was possible only in Lithuania and in two Lwów schools in Ukraine. What is important, there was no form of education in Polish in Soviet Belarus, where there were the most Poles (e.g. the Grodno Region). At that time

a Polish language daily newspaper, *The Red Banner*, the organ of the communist party, was also published in Wilna. The activities of folklore groups or the theatre (Lwów) had a symbolic dimension. The authorities of the Soviet Union deemed that the Polish population could meet all cultural, social or economic needs on an equal footing with representatives of other ethnic groups of the Soviet state and thus did not need new and unique opportunities for development to be created for it.

### **Repatriation from Kazakhstan and Lithuania after 1990**

It was not until the *perestroyka* and *glasnost* that initiated the democratic changes in the Soviet Union that the grassroots organization of Polish communities was allowed. However, this special time at the end of the USSR existence was not sufficiently exploited by the foreign Poles. There was a lack of courage, help and support in Polish institutions, but also time and material resources, which were very important at that time. In addition, the embassies in Wilna and Minsk were headed by people who were not conducive to the development of the Polish identity in these countries, considering that an over-strong Polish minority in Lithuania and Belarus would have a negative impact on the Polish relations with these countries. The disintegrating structures of the state, separatisms and nationalisms of the titular nations of the Soviet Union did not create the conditions for linking their future with their present living place. The brutal manifestations of nationalistic attitudes affected the Poles most in the two republics: Kazakh and Lithuanian. The situation in Lithuania resembled the specificity of the development of 19th century nationalist movements in Europe (Anderson 2006: 67-68).

In Kazakhstan, the activities of the indigenous population were aimed at “regaining” the state by the indigenous people, who were marginalised and considered backward in Soviet times. This damaging attitude triggered a reaction to restore the due position to the autochthonous population. Poles in Kazakhstan were considered to be “white”. As Christians or post-Christians, they also differed from the indigenous people by their religion. Like the Russians or Ukrainians, they were regarded as colonisers occupying their country. Together with other “white” people, Poles have started to look for possibilities to emigrate from this country. It is also worth emphasizing that they were forced settlers (*specposielyency*), who in the 1930s and 40s were deported from Ukraine and areas of Poland annexed by the USSR. The paradox was that these people were punished twice: first, they were forced to adapt to the harsh living conditions in the

northern part of Kazakhstan, suffering from poverty and hunger, and in the 1990s, a number of instruments were used to push them out of this hard-won “Asian homeland”. The social pressure, the political activity of the Kazakhs, but also the dramatic material situation caused a panicky search for opportunities to emigrate. Only a part of the forced settlers could count on the help of their national states. This group included the descendants of the Germans from the Volga region (Volga Deutschen), who were given a privileged way of acquiring German citizenship and were guaranteed extensive social assistance. Few Poles, as spouses of the Germans from the Volga region, experienced improvement of their situation by going to Germany. Desperation and migratory pressure were, however, so strong that some Poles tried to go to Poland on their own (Elrick, Frelak, Hut 2006: 9, Gawęcki 1994: 16, 47).

The spontaneous repatriation of that time, which began in 1990, was a huge disappointment for those few who managed to break through administrative resistance and overcome formal barriers, as well as incurring considerable costs of leaving Kazakhstan (Grzymała-Kazłowska, Grzymała-Moszczyńska 2014: 611). It should be remembered that the distance between Warsaw and the towns of northern Kazakhstan is about 3.5 thousand km. Due to the distance, family contacts between compatriots from the country and Kazakhstan were rare. This meant that the resettlement process was completely dependent on the socialists and enthusiasts of helping foreign Poles from the Asian part of the former USSR.

In the early 1990s, many political declarations were made about helping foreign Poles. A number of visits at various political levels raised hopes for a prompt departure to Poland. These promises, however, were not really covered. In fact, the legalisation of the stay and the first repatriates who came to Poland in the 1990s was based on court rulings and generally formulated provisions of the dated Polish-Soviet agreements from the 1950s and 1960s. As a consequence, the status of the repatriates themselves was unclear, including restrictions on access to the labour market and social security. No forms of aid were envisaged for integration into Polish society, from which the Kazakh Poles were separated by 2 or 3 generations. They did not know the Polish language or even the Latin letters. In large part, they were people with low professional qualifications, although at times, specialists. The labour market of the 1990s in Poland was characterised by a high rate of registered unemployment, which resulted from structural transformations in the national economy. This meant great difficulties in finding employment for uneducated people, with poor knowledge of Polish. Students who took up education in national



universities as persons of Polish origin were in the most convenient situation. After overcoming their initial difficulties, they were coping better and better and often decided to settle down in Poland permanently (Hut 2002: 152).

Resettlement from Lithuania, where Poles have always lived in their historical centres, and also constituted a dominant group (about 90% of the population in some districts), was slightly different. In Soviet times, there was an extensive network of Polish language education (both in the capital Wilna and in small towns), the communist Polish language press, and some Catholic churches were active.

After the end of mass resettlement in 1960, Poles in the Wilna Region constituted a specific group. The repatriations of the 1950s and 1960s were mainly left by representatives of the Wilna elite, intelligentsia and specialists who did not see a future for themselves in the Soviet state. Those who were left behind were most of all kolkhoz farmers (the farmland was taken over by the state) and workers. In this situation, there were no adequate human resources to oppose the depolonisation process carried out by Soviet officials and Lithuanian circles.

At the end of the 1980s, Lithuanian nationalist circles were increasingly emphasizing their willingness to gain autonomy and take over power in Lithuania. The Russians, but also indigenous Poles, were perceived by them as occupiers and opponents of independence. These attitudes aroused anxiety about the future among Poles (Jankowski 2010: 226).

In the early 1990s, when Lithuanian aspirations grew rapidly, Poles, in fear of Lithuanian nationalists, proposed the creation of an autonomous territorial unit in the Wilna region. This concept has led to the Polish-Lithuanian conflict outbreak in the region. The Polish circles were deemed to oppose Lithuanian independence (Kurcz 2005: 130, 138-140).

After the dramatic events in Wilna in January 1991 and the actual exit from the USSR, the authorities of the independent Lithuania started extensive Lithuanisational activities. These include dismissals of persons of non-Lithuanian origin, restrictions on the education of national minorities, as well as ownership transformations—including quasi-reprivatisation. These political and economic activities dramatically worsened the situation of Poles in the Wilna Region. The issue of returning the property to its pre-war owners was very emotional. In a travesty of any democratic standards, the Lithuanian side has done everything in its power so as not to return Poles' homes and land to them using ethnic criteria. The largest scale of these activities was achieved in the capital city of Wilna, where the real estate price was the highest (Kurcz 2005: 266-

270). However, the factors that preserved Polish identity include: being in a traditional place of settlement from several to several dozen generations back, the geographical proximity of Poland and the slow and tedious formation of the Polish elite. In the 1990s, the first generation of numerous Polish intelligentsia educated in the Soviet Union entered the labour market: teachers, engineers, doctors. It was they who decided about the growing ability of self-organization of Polish communities in Lithuania and they started to articulate their political and cultural aspirations more and more loudly (Kurcz 2005: 52, 219, 331).

Unlike Poles from Kazakhstan or Ukraine, Poles from Lithuania were not willing to leave their homeland. There were only 51 people in the repatriation procedure until 2000, 7 of whom were repatriated by 2000 (Hut 2002: 87). The scarce interest in settling in Poland was probably influenced by a number of reasons: the educational network, the possibility of religious practices in Catholic churches, the ownership of agricultural land, but also clear declarations of the Lithuanian authorities related to European aspirations.

Interest in repatriation in other republics was closely linked to the dramatic economic situation. At that time, it was common for workplaces to collapse and workers to be left destitute. Factories were being liquidated, kolkhozes were being dissolved, crime was increasing. The failure to meet the elementary vital needs has become a key push factor for emigration. Thousands of people were looking for any possibility of obtaining a visa to travel to another country.

### **Problems in the social group of repatriates from the 1990s after settling in Poland**

In the 1990s, repatriation to Poland was decided mainly by people who were of mobile working age, and their most numerous groups came from Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus. The above features of repatriates prove that they were determined, first of all, to break their ties with their country of origin and re-establish their life in their “external national homeland” (Brubaker 1996: 5). It was mainly women who decided to leave. Apart from the 7-17 age group, they dominated all the others, and in the 60+ seniors group, they even outnumbered men twice (Hut 2002: 91).

One interesting fact may be that repatriation visa applications were also submitted by people from Canada, Switzerland, Sweden, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands and Bulgaria. As mentioned earlier, this was the time when any person who declared willingness to settle in Poland and was able to demonstrate a link with the Polish identity could apply.

Table 2: The voivodship of settlement for repatriates (1996-2000)

Voivodship	Number of repatriates
dolnośląskie (Lower Silesia)	158
kujawsko-pomorskie (Kuyavian-Pomern)	52
lubelskie	58
lubuskie	59
łódzkie	49
małopolskie (Lesser Poland)	87
mazowieckie (Mazovia)	146
opolskie	36
podkarpackie (Subcarpatian)	64
podlaskie (Podlachia)	35
pomorskie (Pomern)	48
śląskie (Silesia)	58
świętokrzyskie (Holy Cross)	18
warmińsko-mazurskie (Varmia–Masuria)	65
wielkopolskie (Greater Poland)	67
zachodniopomorskie (Western Pomern)	67
no data	3
<i>overall</i>	<i>1070</i>

Source: own work, based on the unpublished Ministry of Interior data for the years 1996-2000.

In the described period, the settlement of repatriates in Poland took place mainly due to family contacts between Poles from Ukraine and their relatives resettled in the 1950s and 1960s to the Lower Silesia. In Masovia, repatriates settled thanks to contacts made during their studies in Warsaw. It was similar in Lesser Poland, where Kraków's students from the former USSR had a

few years to find the local authorities who would invite them or their families. At the opposite pole were Holy Cross region and Podlachia region, where a small number of repatriates arrived. There were no strong academic centres in these regions at that time, their labour market was characterised by a high rate of registered unemployment and there were no strong historical ties between the repatriates who had come to Poland in the earlier years and their relatives from the former Soviet Union.

Formal barriers were a key problem in the resettlement process. Persons interested in repatriation had to travel hundreds of kilometres to the Polish consular post, they had to collect the necessary documents proving the Polish identity of their ancestors, other documents required expensive translations from Russian, as well as finding a local government that would take on the obligation to guarantee the repatriates' housing and livelihoods. After settling down in Poland, the next stage of formalities followed: the most difficult was the university diploma nostrification. Not all officials dealing with repatriates' cases were characterized by empathy and understanding that they talked to people with completely different life experiences and were not able to cope on their own with meeting deadlines, proper justification of the application, and often with filling in the form in Polish. In the 1990s, the appointment of a repatriate assistant was not even considered to help him with the formalities and support him in the initial period of adaptation to the new place.

The repatriates encountered great difficulties when trying to enter the Polish labour market. The paradox was that provincial governments in small towns that were willing to donate a flat for repatriates were struggling with high unemployment rates. It was easier to get a job in large cities, but again, housing there was very expensive and it was much more difficult to convince local government representatives from large cities to invite repatriates. As a consequence, for many Poles from the former USSR, coming to Poland meant a drastic deterioration of their social and professional position and, in practice, acceptance of employment below the qualifications and for the lowest salary. Entry into the labour market was also hindered by the lack of language skills, a common issue among repatriates. While Polish and Russian languages are similar and there is no problem with communicating at a basic level, a very good knowledge of the language is required, for example, in the teaching profession, as well as on clerical positions. This part of the labour market was shut from the repatriates.

Poverty was a shared experience of all repatriates from the 1990s. Deprived in Soviet times of their own farms, real estate and even family heirlooms, they came to Poland in hope of

improving their living standards. Unfortunately, low-paid work did not make it possible to reach the standard of living of their neighbours. Large families lived in substandard apartments, which they accepted only because of the formal requirement to have accommodation to obtain a repatriation visa. This resulted in a lower level of life than in the country of origin. Most of the repatriates—especially those from Kazakhstan—enjoyed the civilisational advancement, which pulled them out of provincial kolkhozes and other places with no life prospects. Very often they understood their decisions to emigrate to Poland as an investment in the future, their own and their children's.

Especially among the repatriates of the 1990s, worsening health was common. People coming to Poland because of stress and anxiety about the future, as well as nostalgia for the “tame world” of their country of origin, experienced health deterioration. Repatriates from Kazakhstan also had difficulties in getting used to the Polish climate, which is different from that in the northern part of their country of origin.

In the second half of the 1990s, work was only just beginning to prepare a repatriation system and a privileged mode of acquiring citizenship. Nevertheless, it was immediately decided that resettlement would take place on an individual basis, with a minimum involvement from state institutions. Despite formal changes, this formula has been maintained to this day. First of all, a person interested in settling in Poland had to obtain an invitation from the commune and a guarantee to ensure their livelihood and housing conditions. According to studies carried out in 2000 and 2011, these were the requirements that actually hindered the resettlement process. Due to the passage of time, geographical distance, severing family ties and financial limitations, it was very difficult to establish contacts between communes from all over Poland and Poles in the former USSR. Moreover, the economic changes that were taking place in Poland at that time and their consequence, among others, the high rate of registered unemployment—in some regions, exceeding 25-30%—hampered the readiness of local authorities to issue invitations to Poles from the former USSR. The repatriation law adopted in 2000 not only did confirm these principles, but also limited repatriation to the Asian part of the former Soviet Union. The applications of persons wishing to resettle in Poland from Latvia or Lithuania were refused since 2001, unless the applicant lived in the Asian part of the USSR until 1991.

### **The repatriation process after 2001**

The legislation adopted at the end of 2000 aimed at improving the resettlement process and favouring repatriation from the Asian part of the former Soviet Union. The legislators were based on the conviction that people living mainly in Kazakhstan and Siberia are in a more difficult situation and thus, in a way, lose in the competition for invitations from communes in Poland. In order to improve the resettlement process, the IT system RODAK, managed by the Ministry of Interior, was organized, collecting information on persons interested in repatriation from the Asian part of the former USSR and Polish local governments interested in receiving a repatriate. However, this system has proven to be a failure. In the first 15 years, the number of communes willing to accept repatriates did not exceed 20 per year; additionally the inviting party could determine the professional competence of the invited repatriate. As a result, local government officials sought to solve their own local problems by accepting specialists, e.g. English philologists or doctors. Of course, such qualifications occurred incidentally in the group of repatriates.

After the adoption of the Act on Repatriation in 2000, the process of resettlement to Poland faded. Although in 2001 as many as one thousand people arrived, this was the result of an accumulation of applications submitted before the entry into force of the new regulations, and already in 2002-2010 each year there were fewer repatriates—in 2009 it was only 214 people (Hut 2014: 187).

Resettlement after 2000 took place under different socio-economic conditions. The initial differences between the standard of living in Poland in the 1990s and the post-Soviet states began to diminish. The times when workers were paid in kind (e.g. sanitary ceramics at work or agricultural products at kolkhozes) are gone. The Russian Federation and Kazakhstan have embarked on a path of economic development. Many descendants of Poles from Kazakhstan instead of Poland decided to go to the Russian Federation, where they had no problems with acquiring citizenship, diploma nostrification, document translation or the lack of language proficiency. Undoubtedly, with the improvement of the economic situation in these countries and the information about the problems penetrating from the repatriates of the 1990s, interest in repatriation was decreasing.

Over the next decade, interest in repatriation continued to decline until the regulations were changed. These included, above all, the organisation of the adaptation period on the Polish territory

and greater financial involvement from the state institutions. This has resulted in a clear increase in the number of people arriving from 2016 onwards.

Table 3: Number of repatriates in Poland in the following years.

Year of arrival	Number of repatriates
2010	147
2011	193
2012	123
2013	163
2014	165
2015	200
2016	239
2017	488
2018	756
<i>Total</i>	2474

Source: own work, based on the unpublished Ministry of Interior data for the years 2010-2018.

Repatriation after 2016 was already taking place under the changed conditions. Firstly, it incidentally concerned people who had Polish citizenship before 1939 and was addressed mainly to the descendants of those forcibly deported by the Soviet authorities to the Asian part of the USSR. Their emotional connection with their historical homeland was and is much weaker than that of their ancestors. They spent their entire lives in the Soviet Union and the republics formed after its break-up. For them, repatriation was not a restoration of the original state of normality, they were not forcibly uprooted from the Polish identity by war circumstances, but were adapted to live in a sovietised and Russified environment. They treated the trip to Poland as a way to improve their own life situation. It is worth stressing that it is not only about improving the material situation, but also about a sense of advancement to a “better, western world”.

The assumption in 2016 that state institutions should become more deeply involved in the repatriation process was correct. If similar legal solutions had been introduced with the adoption



of the Act on Repatriation as early as 2001, many critical life situations among repatriates would have been avoided, as well as the re-repatriation to the country of origin. The issue of “withdrawal from repatriation” still remains indescribable in the literature due to the non-disclosure of such cases by those concerned. Occasionally, one can hear about a family that has returned to its home country due to an adaptation failure.

The real and unknown scale recognized issue is primarily the repatriates’ further emigration from Poland. It concerns young people, most often after graduating from Polish studies, who, having already had Polish citizenship, can enjoy all the rights of a European Union citizen—including the right to free movement, residence and employment. So far, no instruments have been developed that could limit the emigration of repatriates from Poland after acquiring the Polish citizenship. So far, the findings have shown that this issue has not been addressed by the state authorities in charge of the resettlement process.

The legal changes introduced in 2016 did not only include material support for repatriates, but also the arrangement of their affairs in the state's administrative structure. First of all, a repatriation plenipotentiary has been appointed, a position customarily held by the Secretary of State in the Ministry of Interior and Administration. He is responsible for monitoring the resettlement process. In addition, a Repatriation Council has been established to settle disputed repatriation issues and to provide an advisory body for the resettlement process. However, it should be stressed that both bodies have rather symbolic meaning and their activity is unnoticeable in the public space. These are authorities with a marginal position in the administrative structure, e.g. in comparison with authorities dealing with the immigration of foreigners from third countries.

### **Problems in the repatriates’ social group in Poland after 2001**

In the first decade after 2001, the difficulties faced by the repatriates were no different from those experienced by the repatriates of the 1990s. These were: problems with finding housing, work below qualification or household income below the subsistence level. Expensive translations were still required, and officials from the poviats’ labour offices or social welfare centres did not have enough patience to provide support to repatriate households.

Paradoxically, the repatriates’ situation began to improve with Poles’ progressing mass emigration to the wealthy EU countries. Between 2004 and 2010, the domestic labour market started to change in the face of the labour deficit. Both large companies and small local service

providers have faced the outflow of workers and their growing wage aspirations. Repatriates of working age benefited from this change. The requirements for professional competences to enter the labour market have been lowered—language problems, which a decade earlier seemed to be a major barrier to taking up employment, are no longer an issue.

The change described above has not caused the problems in the labour market to disappear, but has nevertheless led to a fundamental change. The earlier, often desperate search for any kind of employment for at least one person in the household has given way to more “strategic” career planning and the search for an employer with better working conditions. The increase in employee mobility is also worth noting. With the increased availability of flats for rent, it was much easier to take up employment outside the place of residence than in the 1990s. The market for the rental of cheap employee accommodation has been developing rapidly, and in view of the increase in residential construction (more than 100,000 apartments delivered annually), the supply of cheap individual rentals has increased. Information on the recruitment process by offices and companies has also become widely available on the Internet. These conditions have determined the widespread employment of repatriates of mobile age.

Diagnosed in the 1990s, poverty so prevalent in repatriate households began to change its face in the mid-2000s. It no longer had an objective dimension. However, the repatriates subjectively assessed their situation as worse than in their friends’ households. The income earned by the young generation of repatriates was small and thus they increased the precariat count in the national labour market. And it was that group that often decided to emigrate to Western European countries. However, exceptions are worth noting! The people who have made a career in the public sphere in Poland include without the slightest doubt in the period 2018-2019 the former Minister of Finance – prof. Teresa Czerwińska, who repatriated from Dyneburg (Daugavpils) in Latvia, and the famous actress Joanna Moro, who was born in Wilna. Others, however, have not found enough determination to achieve comparable success.

Health problems were no longer as severe as in the 1990s. The resettlement procedure and the emigration to Poland itself did not tear people out of their tame reality so brutally—they could maintain contacts through video connections with relatives and friends in their country of origin, in a way still retaining a connection with their place of birth and the known environment. Over time, the repatriates were also losing people who paid with health for the inhuman policy of the

Soviet deportations. Destroyed by the living conditions, they no longer had the strength to benefit from repatriation to Poland.

For repatriates arriving under the Act on Repatriation of 2001, climatic conditions in Poland were no longer a problem. Although they occasionally pointed out some inconveniences (e.g. related to the winds blowing in Warsaw), they did not consider the air humidity different from that in Kazakhstan or higher average monthly temperatures than in Siberia as a problem.

In conclusion, it should be observed that the 1990s repatriates' problems were objectively the most severe. Later, their intensity weakened and took on a subjective dimension. It is likely that by improving the involvement and effectiveness of social service, the scale of problems in repatriate households could be further reduced. Undoubtedly, it is a paradox that in the 1990s, when social support for repatriation was very high and involved moral and emotional responsibility for the compatriots who were victims of Stalinist deportations and collectivization, the Polish authorities failed to perform a repatriation operation.

The current repatriation operation takes place in another organisational, social and economic dimension. In the administrative structure, the resettlement process is based on cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior, as well as the Repatriation Plenipotentiary and the Council for Repatriation. Their activities are supported by NGOs and social services throughout the country. Undoubtedly, the organisational improvement fosters the correctness of the resettlement operation, but this is a marginal activity which, unlike in previous years, did not even appear in the parliamentary election campaign in 2019, and in 2020, this topic did not appear in the initial presidential campaign weeks. These signals coming from the world of politics demonstrate the actual position of repatriation and repatriates in the hierarchy of importance of matters in Poland.

### **Repatriation process assessment and 2020-2030 forecasts**

The repatriation campaign after 1990 should be regarded as a missed opportunity to put in order the unresolved issues since the end of the Second World War and to obtain a demographic resource for depopulated areas. During the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the formation of the authorities of the post-Soviet republics, there was a great interest in emigrating to Poland. Many pre-war Polish citizens scattered over the vast territory of the former USSR were also alive by then. At the moment the Polish authorities had housing infrastructure, jobs in state-owned

enterprises or a strongly centralised state administration at their disposal at that time—did not decide to carry out mass resettlement. In this situation, repatriation took on a lively character, abounding in numerous human dramas and disappointments.

A map of the repatriates' settlement provides a lot of information about the course of repatriation over almost 30 years. The repatriates reached mainly three provinces: Lower Silesia, Varmia-Masuria and Pomerania. It was there that thanks to family contacts, which survived many years after the new borders were established, relatives invited Poles from the former USSR. Indirectly, thanks to studies for Poles from the former Soviet Union, financed by the Polish authorities, the repatriates reached Mazovia, the Lublin region and Lesser Poland. Although it was assumed that graduates in Poland would strengthen Polish circles in the post-Soviet space, in fact a significant group of graduates at the end of their studies initiated a repatriation procedure, which in time also included their parents and siblings.

Actions to improve the repatriation process after 2000 were started three times. In 2006, a task force was established in the Chancellery of the Prime Minister to develop assumptions, administrative procedures and adjust the administrative structure to the challenges related to the arrival of repatriates. The result of the team's work was the later so-called "civic bill on repatriation", which has never reached the Sejm plenary. For the second time, in view of the drastically decreasing scale of arrivals in 2011, the government took the initiative. The changes at that time were superficial and did not increase the number of repatriates. The repatriation procedure reform in 2016 was in fact the implementation of some of the measures planned as early as 2006 and resulted in the government administration taking over the responsibility for the adaptation process in Poland. In practice, this involves organising competitions for NGOs to provide social services and living conditions for repatriates upon their arrival in Poland. Currently, the repatriates are staying in two adaptation centres: in Pułtusk and Środa Wielkopolska. Experience demonstrates that the adopted system works and does not require major changes. However, it is difficult to get rid of the impression that it is temporary and reactive.

When forecasting the scale and directions of repatriation to Poland, one should take into account first of all the Polish demographic stock in the former USSR, the economic and social situation in the post-Soviet republics and the economic and social situation in Poland.

The most probable option seems to be an influx of about 1000 repatriates per year. This is due to the demographic and economic conditions in the countries of origin. This level will be

maintained for about 5 years and will start decreasing to 200-300 people per year. There is also a likelihood of a significant increase in the number of repatriates, but only if the regulations are changed and the North and South American Polonia is included in the procedure. The extent of repatriation may also be influenced in the future by supporting the repatriation of descendants of post-accession migrants who left Poland after 2004 and settled in the UK, Germany or Benelux.

Taking into account the specificity of modern migration processes—and despite its uniqueness, repatriation is a part of migration—it would be advisable to start studies on the preparation of new legal solutions. The reduction in the number of people interested in permanent settlement in Poland in favour of circular migration should be seriously considered. This applies above all to the largest concentration of Polish population near the eastern border—the Grodno region in Belarus. The second such area with Polish population directly adjacent to the border is the Lwów region. If cross-border flows from these two areas are liberalised, circular migration will be under the strongest pressure.

## References

1. Act of 09 November 2000 on Repatriation (Journal of Laws 106, item 1118).
2. Anderson B. 2006. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nation*. London,-New York: Verso.
3. Archiv Prezidenta Respubliki Kazachstan, 2000. *Iz istorii Polyakov v Kazachstanye (1936-1956 gg.) Sbornik dokumentov*. Almaty: Kazakstan.
4. Brubaker R. 1996. *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
5. Budzyński A. (Eds.), 2006a. *Pamiętniki Polaków na Wschodzie: Białoruś, Ukraina, Kazachstan – losy pokoleń*, vol. I, Warsaw: IGS SGH.
6. Budzyński A. (Eds.), 2006b. *Pamiętniki Polaków na Wschodzie: Białoruś, Ukraina, Kazachstan – losy pokoleń*, vol. II, Warsaw: IGS SGH.
7. Budzyński A. (Eds.). 1998. *Pamiętniki Polaków na Litwie 1945-1995 – losy pokoleń*. Warsaw: IGS SGH.
8. Centralnoye Statisticheskoye Upravlyeniye pri Soviete Ministrov SSSR, 1962. *Itogi vsesoyuznoy perepisi nasyeleniya 1959 goda; SSSR (svodnyy tom)*. Moskva: Gosstatizdat.

9. Csergo Z, Goldgeier J. 2004. Nationalist Strategies and European Integration [in:] *Perspective on Politics* Vol. 2 Iss. 1, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
10. de Tinquy A., Hadjiisky M. 1997. Repatriacja osób w wyniku zmian politycznych w Europie Środkowej i Wschodniej. The European Council, CDMG (97) 13E.
11. Elrick J., Frelak J., Hut P. 2006. Polen und Deutschland gegenüber ihren Diasporas im Osten / Polska i Niemcy wobec rodaków na Wschodzie. Warszawa: Instytut Spraw Publicznych.
12. Gawęcki M. 1996. Kazachstańscy Polacy. Warszawa: Polskie Towarzystwo Ekonomiczne.
13. Goskomstat–Nacyonalnyy Komitet SSSR po Statistiki, 1988. Nasyelyenye SSSR 1987; Statisticheskii Sobornik. Moskva: Finansy i Statistika.
14. Grzymała-Kazłowska A. & Grzymała Moszczyńska H., 2014. The Anguish of Repatriation: Immigration to Poland and Integration of Polish Descendants from Kazakhstan. In: *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures*. Vol. 28, Issue 3. Newbury Park: SAGE Publications.
15. Hut P. 2002. Warunki życia i proces adaptacji repatriantów w Polsce w latach 1992-2000. Warsaw: IPS UW.
16. Hut P. 2014. Polska wobec Polaków w przestrzeni poradzieckiej: Od solidaryzmu etnicznego do obowiązku administracyjnego. Warsaw: IPS UW.
17. Jankowski A. 2010. Polskie uczenie. Wspomnienia Antoniego Jankowskiego. Wilno: Scripta Manet.
18. Kersten K. 1974. Repatriacja ludności polskiej po II wojnie światowej. Studium historyczne. Wrocław-Warszawa-Gdańsk-Kraków: Ossolineum.
19. Latuch M. 1994. Repatriacja ludności polskiej z ZSRR w latach 1920-1960. Warszawa: Polskie Towarzystwo Demograficzne.
20. Plater-Zyberk K. 1983. W obronie Polaków w ZSRR. Toronto-Londyn: Free World Polonia.
21. Siedlecki J. 1987. Losy Polaków w ZSRR w latach 1939-1986. London: Gryf Publications.
22. Szydzisz M. 2019. Społeczność żydowska na Dolnym Śląsku w świetle działalności Towarzystwa Społeczno-Kulturalnego Żydów w Polsce w latach 1950-1989. Wrocław–Warsaw: IPN.

DOI: 10.24193/OJMNE.2020.33.06

## ELECTORAL AND CITIZEN'S VIEW ON EUROSCEPTICISM IN TRANSITIONAL SOCIETY: THE CASE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Yevheniy HAYDANKA, PhD

Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, Trnava University, Slovakia

[yevheniy.haydanka@truni.sk](mailto:yevheniy.haydanka@truni.sk)

---

**Abstract:** *The present study draws upon Eurosceptic sentiment in the present-day Czech Republic from the perspective of the political and party segment, and at the public level. Given the total of nine manifestations of Euroscepticism (Riishøj), we distinguish two types of party Euroscepticism: Hard and Soft Euroscepticism (Szczerbiak, Taggart). Czech party Euroscepticism is contemplated in terms of party behavior towards the processes of European integration (Kopecky and Mudde), the period of accession to the EU (Rovny) and the post-accession period of European adaptation (Marek, Baun). Two parties, such as KSČM (Hard Euroscepticism) and ODS (Soft Euroscepticism) parties enjoyed considerable electoral support (Chamber of Deputies), being backed by a Eurosceptically oriented electorate. Throughout accession and adaptation to the EU (2002–2010), the Chamber of Deputies rotation comprised around 50%. Since 2013, the Tomio Okamura political projects (Hard Euroscepticism) have joined Eurosceptic parties. In the 1990s, Czech society was mentally prepared for the EU accession, since the number of Democrats (Euro-optimists) was set at 65–77% (1994–1998) (Haerpfer). Following the EU accession, Eurosceptic sentiment in the Czech society constantly fluctuated, with the largest number of hard Eurosceptics in 2004–2010 (Eurobarometer). Simultaneously, elections to the European Parliament remain the least important issue for the Czech electorate (turnout of 28%), with political interests dominated by those of the national. The Czechs consider it best to maintain the EU membership, yet with the prevalence of national interests.*

---

**Keywords:** party Euroscepticism; public Euroscepticism; Soft Euroscepticism; Hard Euroscepticism; Chamber of Deputies Parliament of the Czech Republic.

### Introduction

For a while, post-socialist countries measured the overall success of democratic transformation by the achievements and benefits of the European integration processes.



Acquisition of the EU membership attested to the proximity of the post-socialist country to the regime of consolidated democracy, marking the completion of the country's modernization to bring it institutionally closer to Western European democracies. Reforms, strategically initiated by new democratic governments in the 1990s and completed in the mid-2000s, were continuing in the "European Union" format. At present, the Czech Republic, having avoided the fate of either becoming a "democracy with adjectives" (Collier–Levitsky, 1997) or returning to an authoritarian model, belongs to the group of countries that demonstrated considerable success in the course of European integration.

Concurrently, in the course of the European integration policy implementation and upon the accession to the European Union, the Czech party system began to manifest signs of Euroscepticism. Generally, the nature of Eurosceptic sentiment in the party environment resulted from anticipating actual benefits from the European membership acquisition in 2004. Although, the Czech version of party Euroscepticism is still a broad concept, dating back to the period of defederalization in the early 1990s. As early as 2004, the Czech Republic entered a phase of adjustment to a new reality, which, any adaptation process likewise, could not but affected the level of Euroscepticism spread. The political rhetoric of Euroscepticism, having deeply anchored in election campaigns and parliamentary activities, established a stable electorate over 2002–2017. Low interest in the elections to the European Parliament not only puts the national electoral processes at the foreground but also lays foundations for the EU apathy of Czech voters. The wave of right-wing populist forces in the 2010s, continuously winning ever-greater electoral support in different EU countries (parliamentary parties in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Greece, France), are Eurosceptic by nature of their programmatic material. The urgent need to elaborate and pursue deliberate migration policy within the entire European Union only contributes to the spread of right-wing populism. One should also mention the socio-economic fragmentation of the Czech Republic, which often contributes to electoral differentiation into pro-European and Euro-sceptic wings.

At the public level and through the lens of the perception of the Czech Republic's perspectives in the European formats, we distinguish several society groups, namely "Europhobes" and "Europhiles". Moreover, the predominant sentiment among the population is a crucial factor in determining the country's European perspective, for national referendums on European integration are key instruments for government decision-making.

The present-day European Union also faces numerous challenges, which, beyond doubt, are sure to reflect in Eurosceptic sentiment in Czech society, as well as its political community. Even upon the Czech Republic's accession to the European Union in 2004, the draft Constitution of the European Union was effectively overthrown by a group of countries that put in doubt the very idea of the European Union rapprochement. The Czech Republic ended up among the latter, being the last to ratify the Lisbon Treaty in late 2009. Brexit, proceeding since 2016, is also contributing to the abovementioned factors, hence consolidating the idea of Euroscepticism.

### **Post-communist Czech Republic and euroscepticism**

Eurointegration processes on the post-socialist arena took various ambiguous trajectories, including those of growing Euroscepticism. Among the decisive reasons for exploring the phenomenon of Euroscepticism, we would point out the following: a) poor implementation of the “permissive consensus” phenomenon as a Eurointegration-focused policy (in particular, dramatic contradictions and problems in some Western European countries, arising out of the Maastricht Treaty ratification in 1992, as well as and the 2004 Constitutional Treaty, b) all-national referendums, addressing the most urgent issues for the development of the European Union (leading to legal establishment of growing Eurosceptic sentiments) c) a targeted policy for the enlargement of the European Union, implemented in a short span of time (obvious differences in methods of discussing and decision-making between the old and new members) (Taggart–Szczurbiak, 2008, p.3).

Euroscepticism origins can be traced back to the times of founding and gradual expansion of the European Union, the process being reflected in the theory of “permissive consensus”. This is a kind of agreement between political elites, facilitating the European integration processes and the general public, envisaging increasing delegation of governmental powers to the interstate level of the European Union however on condition of specific dividends (benefits) for the population of the country. As the matter stands, the enlargement of the European Union owing to the post-socialist countries of the Visegrad Group and the Baltic States caused yet another wave of Eurosceptic sentiments, especially in regard of population attitudes towards libertarian values. Traditional values were regarded as a priority, with new agreements between the public and political elites further taking the form of constraining dissensus (Gillespie, 2017). The evolution of a variety of approaches to the Eurointegration strategy, namely the transition from “permissive

consensus” to “constraining dissensus”, has proved that the public sentiment took over the government policy. As a result, the current model of European integration is characterized by three variables: a) politicization of European integration during election campaigns resulting in nationwide referendums, b) domination of national parties and public sentiments in defining the foundations of European integration policy, c) national identity as the dominant vector, creating additional constraints for the Eurointegration of a certain country (Hooghe–Marks, 2009).

The global changes of the end of the first decade of the 2000s also posed challenges for the institutional strength of the European Union. Among the main reasons for maintaining a high level of Euroscepticism one should mention the following: a) Eurocrisis resulting from the 2008 economic crisis (demonstrating the heterogeneity of economic development in the south of the European Union – Greece, Spain, Portugal), b) migration policy crisis resulting from increasing influxes of migrants to the EU countries over 2015–2016, c) Brexit, d) the Hungarian model of party populism, exemplified by FIDESZ, as well as conservative governments in Poland (Hooghe–Marks, 2019). The present-day European Union is facing two crises, e.g. a general European crisis of the so-called “European Union identity” and the Schengen crisis. These crisis phenomena have led to politicization of Eurointegration processes in Central and Eastern Europe. Right-wing populist parties have emerged, accumulating and spreading Eurosceptic sentiments in society in order to uphold national identity (Börzel–Risse, 2018, p.101–102).

Prior to its EU accession the Czech Republic was among the most Eurosceptic post-socialist countries, due to the Eurosceptic rhetoric of the two Czech parties, namely ODS and KSČM. Simultaneously, pro-European public opinion held at a high level, which, along with the pro-European government, enabled the country to successfully obtain the European Union membership (Kopecký, 2004). By the late 1990s and early 2000s, several variations of Euroscepticism had emerged in the Czech party environment, associated with three parties, such as: ODS, KSČM and Republicans (SPR-RSČ). Each of these political actors played their own role in intensifying Eurosceptic sentiments, from “Ideology Driven” to “Strategy Driven”. The most critical of the European rapprochement of the Czech Republic was the SPR-RSČ, the ODS displaying a more liberal version of Euroscepticism; whereas for the KSČM, the European Union is, above all, ideologically unacceptable (Rovný, 2004, p.44). The ODS demonstrates that Euroscepticism as a tool of party politics may arise as a result of changing ideological orientations. Since the early 1990s, the ODS had been perceived as a neoliberal force, implementing post-

communist economic reforms. However, since 1997, with the increasing party centralization by its leader Václav Klaus, attended by the need for electoral novelty, the ODS has gradually shifted to moderate Eurosceptic stance (Hanley, 2004, p.548).

Upon the Czech Republic's accession to the European Union, European integration, as a tool to fight the post-communist past, is gradually losing in importance. By and large, the desire to return to the European community and catch up with Western European countries in the socio-economic development is blending with the Eurosceptic sentiment in society. In the course of the negotiations with the European Union, some of the parties received the desired political benefits, whereas some, on the contrary, lost the available political capital. Since 2004 the Czech party space has been largely dominated by the Euroscepticism of a "political" type, with ODS retaining the role of its main driver (Riishøj, 2004). To understand the peculiarities of the Czech Euroscepticism model, apart from the party sphere, it is crucial to take cognisance of public opinion on the perspectives of the European Union itself. In general, in its early years of membership (2004–2009), Czech society displayed a growing confidence in European institutions. At the same time, the overall level of Euroscepticism in the Czech Republic in the first five years of membership was higher than the overall EU indicator, as well as that of other Central European countries (Marek–Baun, 2011, p.33).

### **Materials and methods**

Contemplating the phenomenon of Euroscepticism in a particular country, it is of primary importance to identify the nature of Eurosceptic sentiments. Following the conceptual approaches of Aleks Szczerbiak and Paul Taggart, Søren Riishøj points out nine types (manifestations) of Euroscepticism. These types of Euroscepticism can be further divided into two hypothetical groups:

1) a group of endogenous Eurosceptic factors: a) "Identity-based" – those, based on contradictions between the national identity and "novel" European identity, which is perceived as a potential threat, b) "Cleavage-based" factors are those, triggered by social and economic gaps, as well as relevant pro- and anti-European orientations in society (the wealthy – the poor, the city – the village, inter-denominational religious factors, etc.), c) "Institutional" – those, reiterating a higher level of legitimacy of the EU authorities over the national authorities, which in the future may lead to a potential threat of Euroscepticism d) "Party-based" factors presuppose a traditional

party Euroscepticism, imposed by individual party leaders or the populist ideology of particular political entities (e.g. neoliberal, traditionalist and left-wing or right-wing political orientation) (Riishøj, 2004).

2) a group of exogenous factors of Euroscepticism: a) “Policy-based” factors presuppose rejecting not so much a European integration idea as a separate direction of European Union policy (eg, separate issues of public morality), b) “National interest-based” – those arising out of contradictions between preservation of national interests and development prospects of the European Union (for example, the degree of management centralization in the European Union), c) “Experience based” factors are those referring to the asymmetrical perception of the negotiations on the EU accession as opposed to the level of expectations of the country upon gaining membership (i.e., “inaugural talks” hold more promise than benefits in the future), d) “Atlantic-based” factors include the problem of choosing either a pro-American or pro-European foreign policy model by a new EU Member State, e) “Practice-based” factors refer to strategic support for a nation-wide course on deepening European integration, yet interpreting European standards from a pure self-interest perspective (for example, manipulating the idea of joining the European Union by new post-communist national democracies) (Riishøj, 2004).

Discussing the role of external factors that affect the emergence of various Euroscepticism types, in further study we primarily contemplate the internal prerequisites for the spread of Euroscepticism. In regard to party Euroscepticism, the two-type classification proposed by Aleks Szczerbiak and Paul Taggart (2000) is considered classic. In the CEE countries, hard and soft types of Euroscepticism were formed during the European integration period. Hard Euroscepticism concerns party politics aimed at not joining or leaving the European Union. The main motive for opposition to the European structures is their incompatibility with the national interests of the country. Most often, hard Euroscepticism stems from the ideological orientations of the party that are incompatible with pan-European values (for example, left or right populists, traditional communists, etc.). Soft Euroscepticism does not imply either the denial of integration or the EU membership. The Eurosceptic motive is the European Union’s rejection either of a specific direction or issue of the priority of national interests. In party activities, soft Euroscepticism frequently uses anti-European rhetoric as an element of the electoral campaign (Szczerbiak–Taggart, 2008, p.8–9).

The practice of European integration as such forms different vectors of party politics, and it is the issue of the EU membership that plays one of the central roles in the political positioning of parties. Petr Kopecký and Cas Mudde distinguish two groups of types of party behaviour towards European integration: 1) Europhile – a generally positive perception of the European integration processes and the EU membership, 2) Europhobe – a negative attitude to the rapprochement processes with the European Union. At the same time, the EU-optimist group further falls into two types of party behavior: Euro-enthusiasts (unquestioned support for European integration) and Euro-pragmatists (a common Euro-sceptic position, but it explains rapprochement with the European Union as a pragmatic necessity for the national course). Respectively, EU-pessimist group includes Eurosceptics (general support for the idea of European integration, but the denial of the European Union as the implementer of this idea) and Eurorejects (absolute denial of European integration as well as rapprochement with the European Union) (Kopecký–Mudde, 2002, p.303). Based on this typology, the Czech parliamentary political parties before the EU accession (1996–2002) is viewed as a) Euro-enthusiasts: ČSSD, KDU-ČSL, ODA, US, b) Eurosceptics: ODS, c) Eurorejects: KSČM, SPR-RSČ, and d) no party belongs (Kopecký, 2004, p.236).

In his turn, Jan Rovny proposes his own typology of Central European parties by the degree of their post-EU accession Euroscepticism, based on the traditional division into Hard Euroscepticism and Soft Euroscepticism, however with an emphasis on the ideological orientation (stance) of the party. In this typology, the Czech Republic is represented by three Eurosceptic parties, namely Hard Euroscepticism – KSČM (ideological orientation Orthodox Communists) and SPR-RSČ (Populists), whereas ODS (Modern Conservatives) represents Soft Euroscepticism (Rovny, 2004, p.44).

D. Marek and M. Baun (2011) suggest their evaluation of a degree of Euroscepticism in the Czech party space. Upon gaining the European Union membership, the largest parties fall into several groups: a) Pro-EU without reservations/preferences for the federal EU: ČSSD, KDU-ČSL, TOP 09, b) Pro-EU with reservations/preferences for intergovernmentalism – ODS, and c) Reservedly anti-EU – KSČM (Marek–Baun, 2011, p.45).

Considering the development the party level of the Czech Euroscepticism, the three main subjects of anti-European politics should be singled out: ODS (Soft Euroscepticism), as well as SPR-RSČ and KSČM (Hard Euroscepticism). Given the low level of electoral support for the SPR-

RSC since 1998 and its political opposition of extra-systemic nature, Euroscepticism in ODS and KSČM party activities is of the greatest interest.

Hypothesis 1. Low turnout in the elections to the European Parliament contributes to stable party Euroscepticism in the national parliament (Czech electoral preferences: European, national parliamentary, presidential, regional or local level?).

The low turnout in the European elections testifies to the secondariness of the European politics factor as opposed to that of the national. Some political parties may take advantage of the electorate's low interest in the European elections, hence labeling apolitical voters as Eurosceptics. Conversely, an increase in the turnout in the European elections should reduce the electoral potential of convinced Eurosceptics.

Hypothesis 2. The insignificant rotation of deputies ( $\leq 50\%$ ) in the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic that had determined the strategy of the EU accession (2002–2006), as well as in its subsequent composition (2006–2010), indicates a stable pro-European vector of the country's development.

The Lower Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic (Poslanecká sněmovna Parlamentu České republiky) has enjoyed significant powers in implementing the European integration strategy for accession to the European Union. The composition of the Chamber of Deputies, elected in 2002–2006, provided parliamentary support for the Czech acquisition of membership in the European Union. The next Chamber of Deputies (2006–2010) was to create favorable conditions for the country's adaptation to the institutional environment of the European Union. Therefore, the homogeneity of the pro-European composition of the representative body testifies to the invariability of the European choice of the Czech Republic. In addition, important is the internal rotation of pro-European and Eurosceptic parties.

Hypothesis 3. At least half of the democratically-oriented public ( $\geq 50\%$ ) is sufficient for public support for the Czech European integration reforms in the 1990s.



It can be argued that for post-communist countries, the success of democratic transit is determined, *inter alia*, by the European integration gains, even in the context of a fragmented party system (Meka, 2016, p.188–189). Therefore, the higher the level of the democratically oriented electorate, the higher the European integration potential of the country. According to the applied sociological monitoring of transitional countries “New Democracies Barometer” by Christian Haerpfer (Haerpfer, 2001)<sup>1</sup>, in the 1990s the total number of “democrats” and “non-democrats” in the country is determined. Based on the proportion of pro-democratic and anti-democratic groups in the Czech transitional society, it seems expedient to discuss the real level of public support for the European integration strategy.

Hypothesis 4. The future format of the Czech-EU relations presupposes prioritising national interests over the Pan-European but with simultaneous preservation of the EU membership.

In order to determine public sentiment towards the future within the European Union, we consider the findings of the public opinion polls by the European Commission via the Eurobarometer (In the near future..., 2019) program. The monitoring covered the period of membership of the Czech Republic from 2004 (the Czech Republic joined the EU) and up to mid-2019.

## **Results and discussion**

### **Electoral preferences of Czech voters**

In the post-communist period, parties ideologically close to Euroscepticism have always been noticeable political actors. The seven electoral cycles to the Chamber of Deputies of the

---

<sup>1</sup> The methodology of the “New Democracies Barometer” program lies in identifying a democratically oriented part of the public in transitive societies. The transition from a non-democratic to a democratic society is the main precondition of sociological monitoring, i.e., a vast majority of the post-communist countries, including the Czech Republic, have undergone a thorough analysis. Having evaluated the prospects for a new democracy and the possibility of returning to the communist regime (nine issues in total), two large groups of the public have been outlined, e.g. “democrats” and “non-democrats”. We consider the 1994, 1996, and 1998 survey findings. Over the given period more than 3,000 respondents in the Czech Republic participated in the survey: 1167 (1994), 978 (1996), and 1017 (1998).

Parliament of the Czech Republic resulted in Eurosceptic parties winning a permanent electoral support quota of 1/3 (38.2%) with a minimum of 29.4% in 2013 and a maximum of 48.1% in 2006. Ironically enough, in the first post-communist parliamentary elections, following the start of the independent period, Eurosceptics obtained almost half of the seats (47.9%), which contrasts with a nationwide course on deepening European integration to strengthen a new democracy. The first elections after the EU accession proved by far the greatest success of Czech Eurosceptics (48.1%). Although, in the next parliamentary elections, the level of parliamentary Euroscepticism has gradually declined, dropping below 30% of electoral support.

Undoubtedly, the party spectrum of Czech Eurosceptics is quite variegated, including both moderate (ODS) and outspoken political populists (Rally for the Republic – Republican Party of Czechoslovakia). For instance, “republican” populists do not currently produce a major impact on Czech electoral preferences. It is, however, worth mentioning that moderate Eurosceptics ODS would often play a central role in the formation of government cabinets<sup>2</sup>.

In the two recent parliamentary election campaigns, the new political projects by Tomio Okamura<sup>3</sup> have made a statement, stamping themselves as a third Eurosceptic force. The overall scores of the dynamics of electoral support for Eurosceptic parties at the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic are based upon the election results of Soft Eurosceptic ODS and Hard Eurosceptic KSČM<sup>4</sup> (see Figure 1).

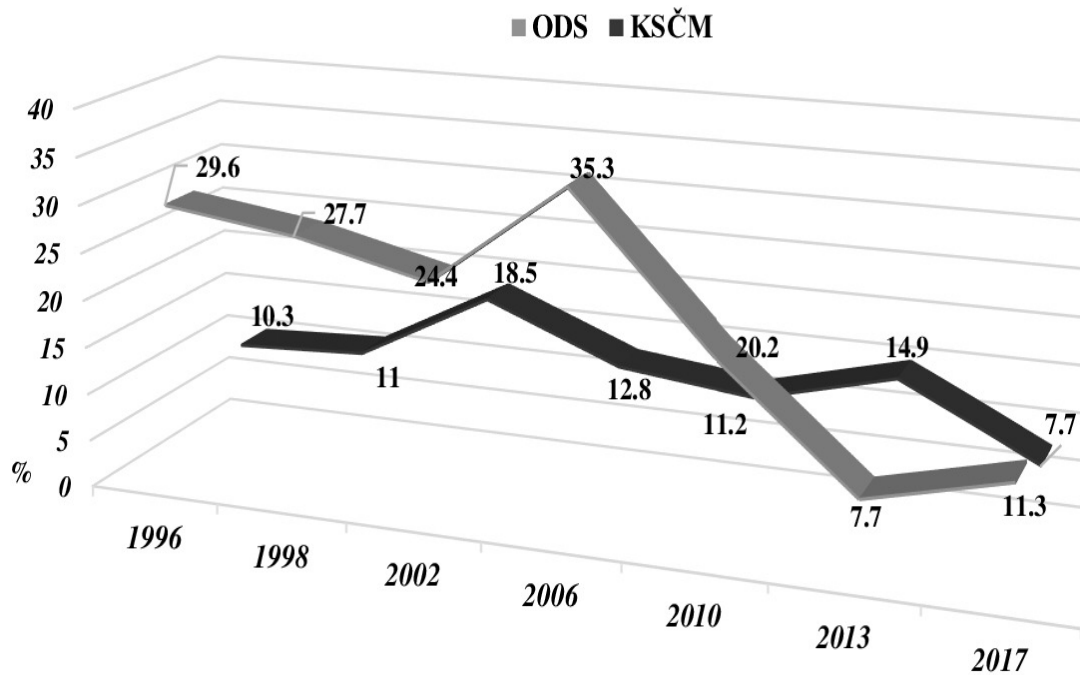
---

<sup>2</sup> Following the formation of the Czech Republic, the ODS delegated two prime ministers – Václav Klaus (07.1992 – 07.1996, and 07.1996 – 01.1998) and Petr Nečas (07.2010 – 07.2013), and Mirek Topolánek (09.2006 – 01.2007, and 01.2007 – 05.2009) (Členové vlády, 2019).

<sup>3</sup> In 2013, a newly created right-wing populist party “Dawn of Direct Democracy” (ÚSVIT) obtains 6,8%. Already in 2017 the party “Freedom and Direct Democracy” (Svoboda a přímá demokracie), based on ÚSVIT and conforming to the same Eurosceptic stance, improves its previous result and obtains 10,6% support.

<sup>4</sup> Along with the so-called Czech “Eurosceptic forces”, we observe yet another party that falls under the category of Hard Eurosceptic parties, i.e. Party of Free Citizens (“Svobodní”). The electoral peculiarity of the party is that it failed the elections at the parliamentary level, at the same time delegating its leader, Petr Mach, to the European Parliament in 2014. The party received a low, but a sufficient number of votes (5.24%) in the 2014 European Parliament elections. (Cabada, 2008, p.25). According to Ladislav Cabada, due to a low voter turnout (18.2%) the party managed to get one European mandate (Cabada, 2008, p.25). Interestingly, in the next elections to the European Parliament in 2019, the Party of Free Citizens failed to overcome the electoral barrier.

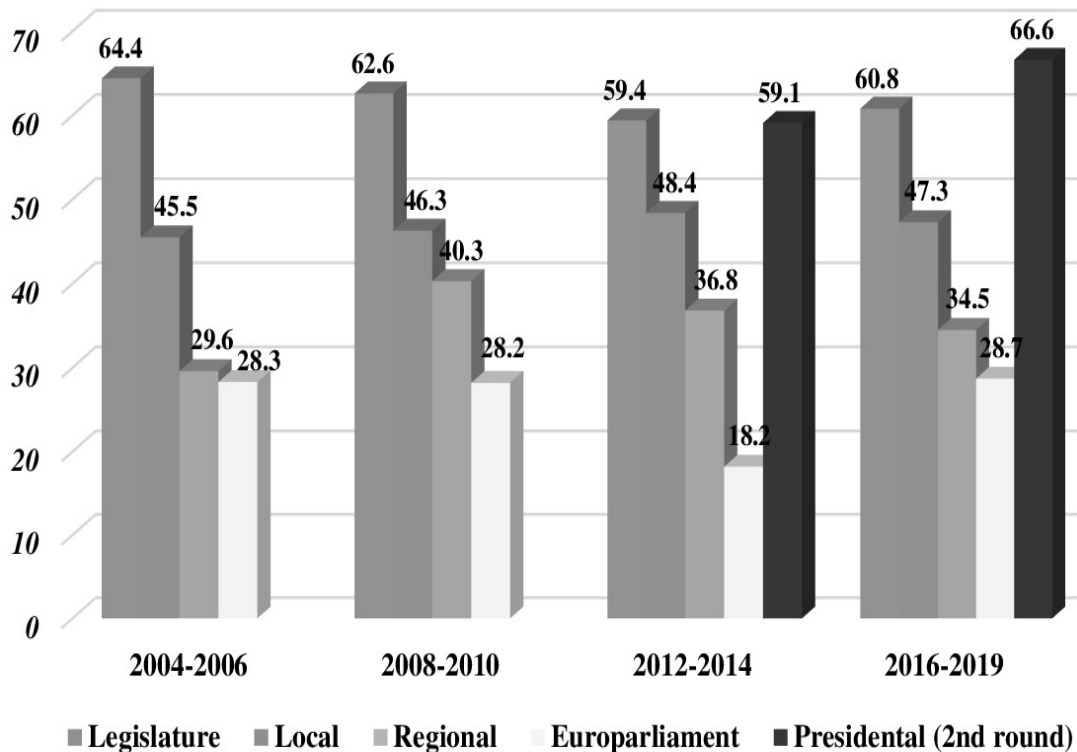
Figure 1: Dynamics of electoral support for Hard Eurosceptics and Soft Eurosceptics in the elections to the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic (1996–2017)



Source: own calculations according to the Czech Statistical Office data (Volby.cz).

In May 2004, following its EU accession, the Czech Republic was almost immediately involved in European electoral processes. A month later, in June, the Czech parties participated in the elections to the European Parliament for the first time. Recently, four European Parliament election campaigns have taken place in the Czech Republic, simultaneously with the elections to the representative bodies of national and regional governments, as well as the presidential elections. The Czech electorate decided on their electoral preferences, prioritizing the national policy level over that of Europe (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: The level of electoral participation of the Czech voters, in % (2004–2019)



Source: own calculations according to the Czech Statistical Office data (Volby.cz).

According to the voter turnout statistics, the Czech electorate has prioritized elections to the lower chamber of Parliament. The inter-party ideological struggle is associated with the opposition in the parliamentary arena. On the other hand, Czech voters express a high level of electoral interest in the personalized level of politics, with the highest voter turnout in the 2013 and 2018 presidential elections. This is particularly exhibitve in the light of the supremacy of parliamentary institutions in the Czech political system. Given the populist activities of the twice-elected president Miloš Zeman, it is worth discussing the dominance of Eurosceptic sentiment in the Czech presidential institutions.

At a local level, the main competition arises on the one hand between pro-European and Eurosceptic parties, and with independent candidates, on the other. At a regional level, the turnout is slightly lower, comprising about 30% of voters who elect delegates to higher self-governing bodies in 14 Regions, including the capital of Prague.

Czech voters appear to be the least interested in elections to the European Parliament. In the Czech Republic, European elections turnout has remained approximately 28% (18% in 2014). However, the Czech Republic has typically delegated Eurosceptics to the European Parliament, with ODS and KSČM respectively delegating one and four deputies in the 2019 elections (21 deputies from the Czech Republic in total) (Volby.cz). Euroscepticism in the elections to the European Parliament has two main peculiarities: a) according to the 2019 election, the turnout in the Czech Republic was among the lowest of all 28 Member States (The Czech Republic overtook only Slovakia, where the turnout was 22.74%) (Turnout - 2019), b) Eurosceptic voters are rather versatile, represented by the apolitical electorate that ignores the European elections and simultaneously votes at national elections, and the active electorate, voting for either Soft or Hard Eurosceptics in both the European and national elections.

### **Rotation of the pro-Eurointegration composition of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic**

The strategic role of the parliament in the political support of Eurointegration processes is hard to deny. The more ideologically polar the composition of the parliament, the harder it is to secure the country's institutional rapprochement in the European Union. It is due to the steady political course on deepening European integration both before and during the Czech accession to the European Union, as well as following it. Based on a comparative analysis of the Chamber of Deputies in 2002 and 2006, the rotation dynamics make up exactly 50% (see Table 1), proved by the fact that 100 deputies of the previous Lower house composition (2002–2006) were elected to the next Parliament (2006–2010). These figures illustrate that the composition of the parliament had hardly changed, and consequently, the pro-European course of the Czech Republic continued onwards, especially in the course of adaptation to the EU requirements.

**Table 1: Dynamics of the pro-Eurointegration membership rotation of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic (2002–2010)**

<i>Parliamentary rotation indicator (2002 elections; 2006 elections)</i>			
50% (100 deputies out of 200)			
<i>Party rotation indicator (2002 elections; 2006 elections)</i>			
ODS	ČSSD	KSČM	KDU-ČSL
30%	49%	44%	68%

Source: own calculations based on the Czech Statistical Office data (Volby.cz).

More dynamic is the rotation rate of MPs from different political forces. First and foremost, the overall balance of political forces in the Lower house was preserved, since only SZ with the result of 6.2% (Volby.cz) joined the usual cohort of parliamentary parties (ČSSD, ODS, KSČM, parties under the umbrella of KDU-ČSL) in 2006. The difference was that the Eurosceptics ODS in 2006 obtained the highest electoral support, with the pro-European ČSSDs running up.

Intra-party rotation of deputies also has several peculiarities: a) the biggest rotation is typical of pro-European parties, for example, the Social Democrats of ČSSD changed their parliamentary composition by 49%, whereas Christian Democrats of KDU-ČSL by 68%, b) Eurosceptics demonstrated a significantly lower rotation rate: the Communists of KSČM changed parliamentary composition by 44%, with the Conservatives of ODS only by 30%.

Another electoral trend of the Lower House composition rotation over 2002–2010 is a high level of conservatism remaining in voting districts. According to the electoral sustainability criterion, the following tendencies arise:

a) ODS preserved the election rate of deputies in each district (14 out of 14), with Central Bohemian region (Středočeský Kraj) and the capital of Prague having delegated the largest number of MPs (6 MPs each);

b) ČSSD – the MPs were elected in 12 voting districts out of 14, with Moravian-Silesian region (Moravskoslezský Kraj) proving the most represented (6 MPs);

c) KSČM – Communists were elected in 13 regions out of 14, and 2 regions proved to be electorally favorable, represented by 3 deputies each (Central Bohemian region (Středočeský Kraj) and South Moravian region (Jihomoravský Kraj));

d) KDU-ČSL – MPs were re-elected in the smallest number of voting districts (10 out of 14), with no electorally favorable regions for this political force as well as no more than 1 MP re-elected in either of them.

One way or another, throughout accession and initial adaptation of the Czech Republic to the European Union, the issue of European integration remained the main political discourse in the Lower House. A traditional post-communist Eurosceptic sentiment, to a large extent, manifested itself in the early 2010s, strongly polarizing the Czech party space.

### **Democratic and Non-democratic Sentiments in the Czech Society in Transit**

Democratic sentiments in a post-communist society form a favorable social foundation for Eurointegration processes. Respectively, the non-democratic slant of the public facilitates the spread and support of Euroscepticism. Based on Christian Haerpfer's sociological monitoring methodology under the "New Democracies Barometer", we can identify the correlation between the democratic/nondemocratic public sentiment and Eurooptimists/Eurosceptics (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Correlations between democratic orientations versus European aspirations of the public**

<b>Eurooptimists</b>	<b>Eurosceptics</b>
A negative evaluation of the communist regime	A neutral or positive evaluation of the communist regime
A positive attitude towards the new democracy	A neutral or negative attitude towards the new democracy
Inability to dissolve a new parliament and ban political parties	Supporting the dissolution of parliament and the ban on political parties
The unwanted dissolution of a new parliament and ban on political parties over the next few years	It is desirable to dissolve parliament and ban political parties over the next few years
The rejection of an authoritarian leader as an alternative to democracy	Rejection of parliament and elections, as well as transition to a one-man dictatorship



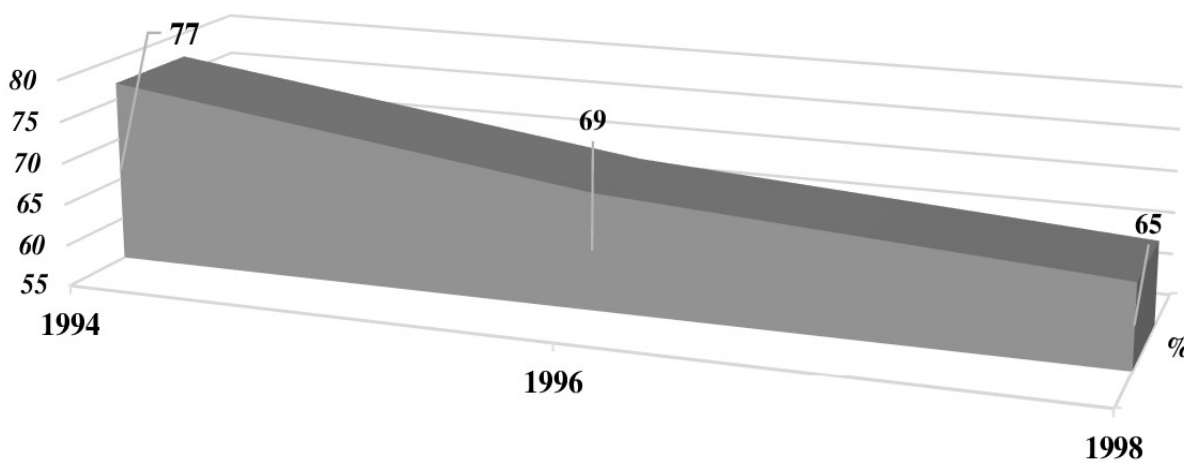
The rejection of military dictatorship as an alternative to democracy	Positive perception of the army in ruling the country
Denial of prospects for a monarchy	A positive attitude towards the return of the monarchy (in case there was such state experience)
A return to the communist past is a mistake	The desire to return to the communist past
The progress of the current democratic regime over five years	The regress of the current democratic regime over five years

Source: own calculations on the basis of “New Democracies Barometer” (Haerpfer, 2001, p.128–130).

The aforementioned findings serve as evidence that the main factors of non-democracy are the mental desire to return to the previous communist regime, as well as the lack of real prospects for the development of the existing type of political regime in terms of democratic principles. Therefore, these factors are relevant to the system of coordinates of modern hard Euroscepticism. In turn, free elections and a competitive party system, forming the basis of parliamentary democracy, are viewed as indispensable elements of Euro-optimism. Such defining political institutions of democracy are classified as those related to modern Euro-optimism.

Throughout the 1990s, the Czech Republic created favorable conditions for a positive perception of the country’s European integration course at the public level. Eventually, the total number of democratically-oriented public (Euro-optimists) significantly outweighs undemocratic groups (potential Euro-skeptics) (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3: The Number of Democrats (Eurooptimists) in the Transitional Czech Republic (according to “New Democracies Barometer” program)**



Source: based on “New Democracies Barometer” (Haerpfer, 2001, p.130).

In the 1990s, the Czech Republic formed a favorable background for the European integration at the public level. The Czechs proved to express the highest level of confidence in the new national democracy no sooner than the independent parliamentary republic had been established (over two-thirds of the public). Onwards the level of democracy in the country was gradually falling, comprising around 70%. Such a declining trend was facilitating a strong public foundation for Euroscepticism. On the other hand, the Czech Republic has demonstrated the best democracy indicator among the 15 post-communist countries surveyed. At any rate, the Czech Republic had striven for systemic Eurointegration since the 1990s, aiming for institutional consolidation with the European Union in the early 2000s.

#### **Potential relationships between the Czech Republic and the European Union as perceived by the Czech population**

The public opinion of the priority of national versus Pan-European interests is an important indicator to measure the Euroscepticism level in a country. It is the public preferences that determine the dominance of national (mostly conservative) values, or, on the contrary, those leaning towards the EU philosophy. A moderate combination of both seems the best possible state of affairs, yet a slight dominance of either national or European factors is preferable.

A traditional annual public opinion monitoring “Eurobarometer” conducted by the European Commission for the EU Member States (In the near future..., 2019) offers a dynamic vision of the European future. There are several trends relevant to the Czech Republic:

a) traditionally, post-communist countries that have recently joined the EU express a minimal level of Eurooptimism that ranges from 1 to 3%. No doubt, the Czech population can hardly be expected to illustrate a higher level since such a choice would seemingly misrepresent national interests for rather “obscure” pan-European prospects;

b) yet another purely Eurooptimistic option, i.e. the domination of European values maintaining the national ones, was met with a positive attitude on the part of the Czech population. In this case, observable is a high rate of positive perception (nearly 10%) the year following the accession to the European Union, although later on the level of support systematically fell to 3% (2010). Since that time the figures never went back to the highest positions;

c) another type of public opinion can be classified into Eurosceptic and further subdivided into 2 groups: 1) Hard Euroscepticism (“Nationality only”), and 2) Soft Euroscepticism (“Nationality and European”). These two indicators account for about 90% of all public preferences in the Czech Republic from 2004 to 2019. Hard Euroscepticism dominates in this ideological confrontation, reaching its peak of 59% in 2010. The highest Soft Euroscepticism rate of 58% came close to that in 2018.

Soft Euroscepticism is characterized by a three-level trajectory: 1) the bottom-up trajectory (2004–2005) illustrated that the number of soft Eurosceptics almost doubled (+ 29%) during a year after the country joined the EU, 2) the top-down trajectory (2005–2010) demonstrated a decline in the number of soft Eurosceptics by 12%, and 3) the largest upward trajectory (2010–2019) led to a gradual increase in a critical mass of soft Eurosceptics, with their lowest rate of 38% (2010), as opposed to the highest of 57% (2019).

Hard Euroscepticism trajectory proved to be less dynamic, undergoing two main phases: 1) ascending phase (2004–2010), marked by a sharp increase in hard Eurosceptics from 29% in 2004 up to 59% in 2010, and 2) descending phase (2010–2019) that illustrated the lowest level of Hard Euroscepticism in 2018 (34%).

In general, the Czechs identify themselves as a European nation, respectively viewing the Czech Republic as a part of the EU. Simultaneously, preservation of the national interests remains a priority, which is a sign of a substantial Euroscepticism level. Interestingly, the lowest recorded

level of Hard Euroscepticism was 29% in 2004 (the time of the country's accession to the EU) yet the Czech population could no longer go back to this indicator. Similarly, Soft Euroscepticism comprised 19% in 2004, which can be explained not only by a problematic institutional adaptation of the Czech Republic to the European Union and mental adaptation of the population to European ideas. A growing Euroscepticism in the "post-accession period" is attributed to the fact that some parties (primarily ODS), as well as politicians (for example, President Miloš Zeman, so far having no alternative), took advantage of the negative sentiments in Czech society to mobilize the electorate.

### **Conclusions**

1. Euroscepticism has deeply rooted in the party environment of the post-communist Czech Republic. By the late 1990s and early 2000s, two major groups of Czech party Euroscepticism had already emerged: Soft Euroscepticism (ODS) and Hard Euroscepticism (KSČM). Both political forces received a significant level of electoral support in each election to the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic (the highest ODS statistics were 35.3%, KSČM – 18.5%). Worth mentioning is another Eurosceptic party Rally for the Republic – the Republican Party of Czechoslovakia, which had firmly established itself as parliamentary opposition from 1992 to 1998. Since the 2013 elections, Tomio Okamura's political projects, classified as Hard Euroscepticism on an anti-immigrant basis, joined the Czech Eurosceptic camp. The overall share of Eurosceptic parties in the current Chamber of Deputies (2017–2021) is relatively insignificant, amounting to some 31% (ODS + KSČM + FDD). However, the electorate maintains a considerable level of Euroscepticism, for instance, elections to the European Parliament posed little to no interest to Czech voters.

2. Throughout the 1990s, the legitimacy level of the Eurointegration course in the Czech Republic was the highest among other post-communist countries, with a democratically-oriented public ranging from 65% to 77%. Intended to bring the country more in line with European political and economic structures, the reforms in the country have contributed to its successful democratic transit. The sustainable pro-European stance of the Czech electorate is noticeable regarding an inconsiderable rotation level in the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic (2002–2010), being exactly 50% of the MPs. It was this composition of the Lower Chamber that

was to support the Czech Republic's accession to the European Union and facilitate its adaptation in the European community.

3. It is necessary to point out certain predicted patterns of the Euroscepticism dynamics and the deployment of forces in the political and party space in the Czech Republic. The biggest growth of Euroscepticism was recorded in 2010 (59%), coinciding with the incumbency of the conservative Mirek Topolánek Government (2006–2009). Paradoxically, the conservative composition of the Government simultaneously led to a decrease in Hard Euroscepticism. Under the conservative Petr Nečas Government (ODS), the total number of hard Eurosceptics significantly dropped. This resulted in an equal total number of hard and soft Eurosceptics in 2013 (45% each). The major reason for a decreasing number of hard Eurosceptics is the rupture of the government coalition led by the ODS, followed by a government corruption scandal and early parliamentary elections in 2013. The Social-democratic Bohuslav Sobotka Government was characterised by steady numbers of both soft and hard Eurosceptics (45%) throughout 2014–2017. The recent 2017 elections to the Lower House evidenced a positive tendency for soft Eurosceptics, accompanied by a simultaneous decrease in hard Euroscepticism. As of 2019, the gap between them amounted to 18%. Ever since the Government of Andrej Babiš (ANO 2011) has been contributing to a fall of Euroscepticism among the Czech population.

In light of our study, another trend deserves attention. The COVID-19 pandemic that began in Europe in early 2020 has led to limiting Europeans' well-established civil rights and freedoms. A vast majority of countries have introduced severe quarantine restrictions and unpopular social measures to reduce the risk of infection. According to Freedom House experts, European governments need to be very careful about restrictive measures, since citizens may lose trust in institutions and mechanisms of government in the process of restricting citizens' freedoms (Funk–Linzer, 2020). Hence, we can assume that a forced restriction of civil rights during and after the pandemic will inevitably lead to political speculations on the part of Eurosceptic parties. Specifically, the new circumstances will cultivate the issue of strengthening national sovereignty (as opposed to EU cosmopolitanism), criticizing Schengen principles, reduced labor migration, and a revision of the government's fiscal policy. Finally, the level of growth or decline of Eurosceptic sentiment in Czech society will continue in the forthcoming 2020–2021.

### Acknowledgement

The research was carried out within the framework of the VEGA Project 1/0131/18 entitled “Europe in Movement. Multicausality of Present Democracy Crisis and the Rise of Extremism in Europe”.

### References

1. Börzel, A.T. and Risse, T. (2018). From the euro to the Schengen crises: European integration theories, politicization, and identity politics, *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 25, No 1, pp.83-108.
2. Cabada, L. (2016). Party of Free Citizens and the Genesis of the Czech Liberal Conservative “Anti-EU” Stream in Czech Politics, *Politické vedy*, Roč. 19, č. 2, ss. 8–34.
3. Collier D. and Levitsky, S. (1997). Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research, *World Politics*, Vol. 49, No. 3, pp. 430-451.
4. Členové Vlády. 1993–2019 ČR. Vláda ČR. Available from: <https://www.vlada.cz/cz/clenove-vlady/historie-minulych-vlad/prehled-vlad-cr/1993-2007-cr> [Accessed: 15/03/2020].
5. Funk, A. and Linzer, I. (2020). How the coronavirus could trigger a backslide on freedom around the world, *The Washington Post*, March 17, 2020. Available from: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/03/16/how-coronavirus-could-trigger-backslide-freedom-around-world/> [Accessed: 16/03/2020].
6. Gillespie, P. (2018). Public debate on Europe has shifted World View: Leaderships accept political reality but struggle to find suitable vocabulary, *The Irish Times*, Feb 17. Available from: <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/public-debate-on-europe-has-shifted-1.3394877> [Accessed: 01/02/2020].
7. Haerpfer, Ch. (2001). Novy`j indeks demokratii. Demokratizacziya obshhestvennosti v pyatnadcziati gosudarstvakh Evropy` (1991–1998) (A New Democracy Index. Public Democratisation in 15 European Countries (1991–1998). *Socziologiya: teoriya, metody`, marketing (Sociology: theory, methods, marketing)*, No 3, pp. 123-150. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/38413263.pdf> [Accessed: 10/10/2019].

8. Hanley, S. (2004). From Neo-Liberalism to National Interests: Ideology, Strategy, and Party Development in the Euroscepticism of the Czech Right, *East European Politics and Societies*, Vol. 18, No 3, pp. 513-548.
9. Hooghe, L. and Marks, G. (2009). A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 39, No 1, pp. 1-23.
10. Hooghe, L. and Marks, G. (2019). Grand theories of European integration in the twenty-first century, *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 26, No 8, pp. 1113–1133.
11. *Identity and Solidarity in the Foreign Policy of EU Members Renewing the Research Agenda*. E. Tulmets (ed.). Prague: Tiskárna, Dobříš, 2012.
12. *In the Near Future. Do you see yourself as...? Czechia (from 03/1992 to 06/2019)*. 2019-Public Opinion – European Commission. Available from: <https://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Chart/getChart/chartType/lineChart/themeKy/41/groupKy/206/savFile/47> [Accessed: 09/04/2020].
13. Kopecky, P. and Mudde, C. (2002). The Two Sides of Euroscepticism: Party Positions on European Integration in East Central Europe, *European Union Politics*, Vol. 3, No 3, pp. 297-326.
14. Kopecký, P. (2004). An Awkward Newcomer? EU Enlargement and Euroscepticism in the Czech Republic. Euroscepticism: Party Politics, National Identity and European Integration. R. Harmsne, M. Spiering (eds.). *European Studies. An Interdisciplinary Series in European Culture, History and Politics*, 20. Amsterdam & New York, pp. 225-245.
15. Marek, D. and Baun, M. (2011). *The Czech Republic and the European Union*. New York: Routledge.
16. Meka, E. (2016). European Integration, Democratic Consolidation, and Democratic Regression in CEE: An Institutional Assessment, *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 38, No 2, pp. 179-194.
17. *Opposing Europe? The Comparative Party Politics of Euroscepticism*. A. Szczerbiak, P. Taggart (eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
18. Riishøj, S. (2004). Europeanisation and Euro-scepticism: Experiences from Poland and the Czech Republic, *Středoevropské politické studie*, Vol. 6, No 4. Available from: <https://journals.muni.cz/cepsr/article/view/4051/5269> [Accessed: 12/03/2020].



19. Rovny, J. (2004). Conceptualising Party-based Euroscepticism: Magnitude and Motivations, *Collegium*, No 29, pp. 31-47.
20. Szczerbiak, A. and Taggart, P. (2000). *Opposing Europe: Party Systems and Opposition to the Union, the Euro and Europeanisation*. Proceedings of a Workshop held at the Sussex European Institute, Centre on European Political Economy, 23 June 2000. Sussex European Institute. Available from: <http://users.sussex.ac.uk/~ssfj3/oppeuro> [Accessed: 24/02/2020].
21. Turnout – 2019. *European election results. European Parliament*. Available from: <https://europarl.europa.eu/election-results-2019/en/turnout> [Accessed: 14/01/2020].
22. Volby.Cz. Čsú – *Český Statistický Úřad*. Available From: [Https://Www.Volby.Cz](https://Www.Volby.Cz) [Accessed: 14/01/2020].

## COMPARISON OF PERCEPTIONS OF THREATS TO EXTERNAL SECURITY: STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND POLAND

Tadeusz ZIELIŃSKI, PhD

War Studies University, Warsaw, Poland

[t-zielinski@akademia.mil.pl](mailto:t-zielinski@akademia.mil.pl)

---

**Abstract:** *The article presents opinions and interpretations relating to the perception of threats to external security of the European Union (EU) and Poland. These are based on a comparison of the content of their strategic documents on the area of security. Despite the fact that Poland is a member of the EU it points out different attitude to threats assessment comparing those indicated in strategic documents of the EU. The EU security strategies and the security strategies of the Republic of Poland will be analysed. The time period taken was from the end of the Cold War until the current strategic documents were published. The perception of threats to the external security of the EU and Poland was correlated with the results of public opinion polls of the member states of the EU and Poland. The general findings lead to the conclusion that the perception of threats to external security contained in the strategic documents of the entities concerned is basically the same, but they perceive differently their priorities in reducing the risks associated with the occurrence of specific threats. Besides, Poland is more focused on military than non-military threats to its security especially from Russia's side.*

---

**Keywords:** European Union (EU) strategies, external security, Poland's security, threats to global security, security strategy.

### Introduction

The objectives and main directions of action of states and international organizations make up the content of strategic documents and they are a source of narrative about the identity of those entities. As a rule, they contain key information relating to the assessment of the security environment, including external, taking into account global challenges and threats, the strategic

objectives of the given organization and the resulting implications for the organization. This information was and is included in both the strategies of the European Union, as well as Poland. What is more, there is a correlation between these documents, especially after the end of the Cold War. This is understandable because the vast majority of the countries are both the EU members, including Poland. On the other hand, Poland indicates different approaches based on its own perception of threats to external security. Thus, these attitudes might be interesting for further analysis.

The key content contained in the strategic documents of the EU and Poland refer to the anticipation of their external security environment. These assessments are carried out by teams of experts based on past and current events, mainly in the fields: political, economic, social and military (security). Unfortunately, in most cases they are reactive, with little anticipation of future threats to global security. On the other hand, the catalogue of security threats has definitely expanded due to new dangers, but also due to a broader understanding of security itself, understood as an interdisciplinary concept. Thus, security threats no longer include only military elements, but they constitute a whole register of identified and anticipated risks that may lower the level of acceptable threat to the external security of entities. This evolutionary approach is also evident in the strategic documents of the EU and Poland in the post-Cold War period.

The contemporary global security environment is exposed to a number of threats that may negatively affect its level. These phenomena are not entirely new, some of them have been functioning in the consciousness of societies for many decades, others have emerged recently, and some are not yet predictable. All of them have a significant impact on the perception of international security, and the repercussions associated with them affect many countries. Anticipating threats to the international security environment is extremely difficult, and their mere articulation depends on the researcher's approach.

### **Materials and Methods**

Description and assessment of threats resulting from strategic documents of the EU and Poland requires references to the strategy itself as a key document identifying an international organization (European Union) or a state (Poland) – actors in international relations.

In classic term, strategy focused on war: peacetime defence planning and preparation, and guiding the military effort during a war to achieve victory. Nowadays, the strategy must

correspond to complexity of the security environment and the scale of difficulty of regulating and managing this environment. The strategy must take into account the fact that the international security paradigm is evolving, the potentials and capabilities of many actors (not only superpowers, also middle states) are shifted, new areas for foreign policy and interest play on the international arena are opening up. In particular, strategy (as a document) diagnoses and defines security conditions, paying attention to the risks and threats, as well as the possibilities and chances of shaping the security environment in the manner most compatible with the national interest. Each strategy is a deliberate, planned activity that determines resources, capabilities and opportunities for action, as well as ways of coping with difficulties and challenges. The latter usually refer to the sources of weakness, instability and tensions, pointing to violence and armed conflicts as extreme forms of insecurity and immediate threats. Such a document creates a framework for national and international policy aimed at ensuring the inviolability of the vital interests of the nation and the state (understood as a set of legal norms and institutions serving the will of the nation expressed in an unrestricted and legally permissible manner), as well as outlining the directions of constant and successful development.

Henry Kissinger (2017) defines strategy as the way in which society secures its future. In his view, strategy is a long-term concept that becomes a kind of guideline for foreign policy. He emphasizes that the strategy has a national character and, similarly to the policy to which it is subordinated, takes into account the environment in a broad sense, the entire spectrum of political, economic and military conditions, which makes it a "grand strategy". However, Kissinger also uses the term "strategy" in its narrower sense - as the use of military power. Thus, the strategy covers that part of the policy in which the military instrument is used to ensure national security. Kissinger's approach is also visible in building the EU security strategy and national strategies, including Poland's.

The starting point of each strategy is to define its own goals, which in the case of a security strategy means identifying and defining national interests (if we are dealing with a national security strategy, state security) or defining a mission (if we are talking about an international organization strategy) in relation to the identified threats and risks. The threats included in the EU and Polish strategies analysed in the article, constituting a starting point for defining vital interests and missions, lead to the conclusion that the strategies try to reconcile two approaches: realism and liberalism, which are expressed by interests and values. The last decade of the EU's functioning in

the field of security has been a very practical and hard test of the approach to security adopted in Europe. This approach, represented in particular in the European Security Strategy of 2003 (ESS), was dominated by the liberal concept, and in it the belief that values are the most important thing and that around their confession one can build a community action in the field of security as well. The practice of various crises and conflicts has shown that states in the face of a serious threat, however, act in accordance with the theory of realism rather than liberalism (idealism), i.e. they are primarily guided by strategic national interests. The current approach to the European strategy is therefore based on the lessons of recent years. There are two main approaches in defining the EU's security missions: realistic and liberal. With this approach, the strategic mission of the EU in the area of security is expressed in providing its citizens and states with conditions for realization of their basic interests, which take into account the most important common values. A similar approach is represented by the recent national security strategies of Poland.

The aim of this paper is to compare content of the strategic documents of the EU and Poland in context of identified threats to external security. The time period taken was from the end of the Cold War until the current strategic documents were published, both in the EU and Poland. Considering the above, key strategic documents describing the visions of external security of the EU and Poland were analysed. In this case, these are the security strategies of the EU and security strategies of the Republic of Poland. The results of the analysis were compared to threats perceived by public opinion. In order to answer the research question: what are the main differences in perception of threats to external security arising from strategic document of the EU and Poland, two main strategies of the EU were analysed with theoretical methods such as analysis, synthesis and generalization. The first one was European Security Strategy entitled *A Secure Europe in a Better World* and the new EU strategy for security (*Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe*). And the second, *A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy*, known as a *European Union Global Strategy (EUGS)*. The main result is that the first strategy of the EU was a declarative tool with huge ambitions without chance to implement it as a whole. Threats identified and described inside the document referred mainly to none-military, for instance, terrorism. What is more, there is no information about possibility of large-scale conflict against any EU country. The second document is more realistic in respect of identified threats to the EU which encompasses whole spectrum of none-military and military risks to the EU. Analysis of the five Security National Strategies of Poland leads to conclusion, that threats to external

security of Poland, described into the documents are similar to those identified in the EU strategies. It is obvious, due to the fact that Poland is a member of the EU. However, Polish documents are stronger in expressing opinion related to military threats from Russia side. Comparison the EU's and Poland's strategies led to conclusion that despite of the same understanding of threats to external security there is no consensus which of the are more important with high priority to individual countries of the EU.

Threats identified into the EU's and Poland's strategic documents were confronted with opinion poll. I used secondary data from European Council on Foreign Relations and Polish Public Opinion Research Centre. What is interesting, survey of opinion in context of perceptions of security by society, comparing to threats identified into strategic documents both the EU and Poland differentiate. It results from the fact, that surveys are often conducted in the aftermath of events which may influence sense of security or threats.

### **Identification of threats to external security in the content of the European Union strategies**

Three key stages can be distinguished in the EU approach to security, including defence in the strategic dimension. Koziej (2018) indicates the pre-strategic stage, the declarative strategy stage and the current stage of initiative strategy. The first stage covered the period up to 2003 when the EU did not have a security (defence) strategy and the tasks in this area were carried out by the Western European Union. This constituted a political and defensive organization guaranteeing Member States defence "services". During this period, the collapse of the bipolar international order, after the end of the Cold War, contributed to the "thaw" of multifaceted needs and interests of nation states – conflicts in new forms were revived again, and new types of threats appeared. A common feature of the conflicts that emerged after the end of the Cold War was, as a rule, their internal dimension, based on ethnic, cultural and religious differences. As a result, there was a redefinition of the classic threats, understood as military (mainly armed aggression), in the direction of non-military threats.

The second stage covered the period from 2003 when the EU adopted its first Security Strategy – ESS entitled A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy. The authors of the ESS indicated globalization as the main factor of the changes taking place, in both positive and negative senses. In their opinion, globalization processes have, on the one hand,

contributed to the socio-economic development of many societies, and on the other, have deepened cultural, economic and social differences, becoming a source of new conflicts. The ESS also identified many security threats and challenges. One of the threats referred to in the ESS is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction treated at that time as potentially the greatest danger to the EU security, especially in relation to non-state actors. Terrorism and organised crime are equally important threats identified in the ESS (European Security Strategy 2003). The authors of the ESS also indicate security threats in cyberspace, warning against possible attacks on critical infrastructure of the EU member states. The problem of internet crime, including that carried out on private or government IT systems in the EU Member States, is also highlighted. In the opinion of the authors of the ESS, these activities give a new dimension as a potential new economic, political and military weapon. A lot of attention was paid in the ESS to energy security. Threats related to the EU Member States becoming dependent on the supply of energy resources from third parties represents a real threat of loss of energy security. The problem of progressive climate change and its impact on the EU security was treated as a challenge in the ESS (European Security Strategy 2003).

The ESS was devoid of implementation tools that would enable the actual implementation of the strategic goals. In the context of the threats identified, pointing only to the political will of the EU Member States proved to be far from sufficient. The weaknesses also include the lack of references to direct defence of the territory of the EU countries, as well as the categorical statement about the low probability of large-scale aggression against any EU country. Defining the EU as a global security entity, thus having a real (at least in theory) impact on shaping the international security environment, deserves positive assessment. Analysis of the document also leads to the conclusion that the adopted ESS is similar to the American strategy then in force. As Koziej points out (2018a), "it is expressed by, among others, highlighting the need for preventive action that can prevent more serious problems in the future. Although the EU experts are trying to show differences between the American strategy and the EU strategy, among others by diverging from the notion of 'pre-emptive actions', this clearly noticeable real conceptual convergence may indicate that the international community is gradually developing a common approach to security in the current environment."

Referring to threats, the content of the ESS seems too categorical in terms of stating that large-scale aggression against any EU country is unlikely. It is true that, in retrospect, that such an



event did not take place, but the strategic document should contain a more balanced assessment, indicating the low probability of such aggression in the short and medium term (several, maybe even several years). On the other hand, the new quality of contemporary threats, which are more diverse, less visible and less predictable, largely asymmetrical, has been properly emphasized.

The weaknesses of the strategy include the complete omission of the issues of direct defence of the territory of EU countries against various threats, including, for example, terrorist attacks. It concerns both military and non-military issues, e.g. border protection, air protection, anti-missile defense, anti-terrorist operations, defence against weapons of mass destruction, civil protection, disaster recovery, etc. Internal (national) security is, after all, an integral part of the security of the EU.

There is a noticeable tendency related to security matters included in the ESS to American approach. It is expressed in emphasizing the need for preventive measures that can inhibit more serious problems in the future, and it shows that a transatlantic approach to this issue is gradually taking shape. On the other hand, the strategy itself remained in fact a political and strategic manifesto, without implementation instruments. Therefore, it was of little practical importance. This is because the EU and the documents it issues are one thing, and practice is another. There are too many references to "declarative" values in the ESS, and not enough real assessment of the future international situation and lack of real proposals related to improving the security of the EU and its member states. This is the result of the EU adopting a liberal model of international policy making rather than currently dominant realistic approach.

Regardless of the assessments, the ESS was the first document containing the word "strategy" in the security context, and thus setting the direction for the EU to function in a global security environment. This environment has turned out to be much more complex, dynamic and turbulent in the last dozen or so years of functioning of the EU, which is why the contents of the ESS from 2003 have become at least inadequate to the political, social and economic changes taking place (Terlikowski 2015). The redefinition of threats was caused primarily by the Russian-Georgian war in 2008, the economic crisis in the years 2007–2009 with its long-term consequences for security (with even a reduction in defence spending), the negative consequences of Arab Spring (civil war in Syria, Libya, Yemen) and, above all Russia's neo-imperialist policy, manifested in the annexation of the Crimea in 2014 and support for separatists in eastern Ukraine. These factors have become the reason for the start of work on a new security strategy, which opens a third stage

– an initiative strategy that begins the implementation of practical solutions in the field of the EU security.

Analysis of the new EU strategy for security (Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy), often referred to as a global strategy (European Union Global Strategy, EUGS) leads to the observation that the perception of threats to the environment of European security in relation to those contained in the previous document has not significantly changed (Archick 2018). Despite the above-mentioned factors determining the development of a new the EU security strategy, threats related primarily to transnational terrorism, organised crime and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction continue to be at the forefront (European Union Global Strategy 2016). These threats are also valid today, as evidenced by the unforeseen nuclear tests conducted by North Korea, Iran's activities in the area of weapons of mass destruction and terrorist attacks that took place in the capitals of European cities. The dangers related to economic instability and ensuring energy and cyber security, as well as climate change, which may be the cause of further threats, among others related to migration, are further justified. Among the newly identified threats are hybrid threats which appear as a consequence of actions taken by Russia (Piskorska 2018). In the European Union Global Strategy (2016), Russia was indicated as a state that "violated international law and caused the destabilization of Ukraine." It has also been clearly articulated that the EU "will not recognise Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea or reconcile with the destabilization of eastern Ukraine." On the one hand, the content of the EUGS does not define Russia as a threat (relations with it are defined as a "strategic challenge"), on the other, however, the areas of activity that have been identified as priority overlap with the areas of Russian activity referred to as a hybrid war. The document emphasises the need to invest in both military capabilities as well as cyber and energy security. The second area of geographical threats relates to the Mediterranean basin, the Middle East and parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, from where challenges to EU security arise, related primarily to migration (European Union Global Strategy 2016).

The taking of practical steps by the EU in the field of security aimed at preventing the identified threats to security, is based is on the implementation of four priority areas for EU action: 1) lawful global governance, 2) democracy, 3) well-being, and 4) internal and external security of the citizens and the Member States. In turn, the strength of the EU as a security entity in the international environment depends in the main part on its credibility, activity and consistency of

actions, because "none of our countries alone have sufficient power or resources to deal with these threats and exploit the opportunities of our time" (Wróblewska-Łysik 2016).

It seems that the perception of threats to the EU's external security environment has been treated too superficially in the EUGS. From Poland's perspective, as a NATO flank state, Russia's confrontational policy, including its military activities, should be treated by the authors of the EUGS in a particular way (Koziej 2017). In the author's opinion, in the EUGS decidedly more prominence is given to the threats associated with the southern flank (equally important), and so to the threats linked to uncontrolled migration and its potential negative consequences.

The principles of the global security system, which was also built by Europeans, are eroding or falling apart. The rivalry between economic and military global powers directly affects the EU, and threats related to international terrorism, cyberattacks as well as climate change raise further concerns in EU Member States (Koziej 2018). This is evident in the content of the EUGS, which identifies threats both to the east and to the south of the continent and indicates the uncertainty associated with the ally to the west – the United States. The articulation of threats to European security in the EUGS is a consensus among individual Member States, which was described in the strategy in a politically correct way. In fact, there are differences in the perception of threats to EU external security. For example, EU Member States in the neighbourhood of Russia perceive this country as a real threat to their security, including the possibility of violating their territorial integrity (Buzanski 2018). In southern Europe, on the other hand, uncontrolled migration from the Middle East is considered a greater threat, hence the cooperation of these countries with the increasingly autocratic regime in Ankara. In turn, conflicts and poverty on the other side of the Mediterranean and the resulting migration increasingly threaten Europe's security and even its solidarity. The uncertainty is also tied to the unpredictable behaviour of the President of the United States, who shows disregard for international treaties and standards that for Europeans are indisputable. The unilateral withdrawal of the US from the Iran nuclear deal, and earlier exit from the climate agreement, the trade war with China and Iran are just some examples that require Europeans to reconsider the issues of their security. These voices are also heard in the content of the EUGS, but Europeans themselves are divided on the perception of threats to the EU security. The political crisis related to uncontrolled migration in 2015 revealed fundamental divisions related to the way Member States view their security. Krastev (2017, 25) point out "The refugee crisis exposed the futility of the post-Cold War paradigm, and especially the incapacity of Cold

War Institutions and rules to deal with the problems of the contemporary world". For many Europeans, the migration crisis has shown the lack of capacity of the EU and the global system to deal with such problems, but it also affected internal divisions in individual countries.

The content of EUGS might be fully implemented through the preparation of specific strategies, plans and implementation programs, including in the first place sectoral and geographic strategies. An example of such a strategy is the constantly developed and implemented Maritime Security Strategy of 2014. However, a great challenge is for preparation of the EU Defence Strategy (CSDP strategy) in a short time. Daniel Keohane and Christian Mölling (2016) consider four options for approaching the preparation of such a strategy: conservative, comprehensive, ambitious and realistic. The first approach - conservative - is based on taking into account the existing EU structure and basically assumes the continuation of the classic CSDP as a crisis management system. The comprehensive approach takes as a starting point the assessment of threats and risks to European security and suggests broadening the strategic interest of the EU beyond defence issues, including those related to universal values, norms and global goods, which would require the construction of new measures and instruments, as well as significant institutional changes. The ambitious approach is based on the need to be guided by the interests (the mission of the EU) and proposes to expand the current main goals, tasks and capabilities, including concerning defence spending, cybersecurity, contribution to common strategic deterrence with NATO, or the ability to independently conduct external military operations. A realistic approach calls for relying on the existing and possible future capabilities of the Member States and on this basis determining in what situations and how the EU can conduct defense operations, being aware that this will mean lowering the level of ambition and giving up the EU's global role. Regardless of the general option of approaching works on defence strategy, their starting point should be identification of a catalog of common and non-conflicting national interests of the Member States, allowing for the definition of a realistic strategic mission of the EU in the field of defence (in the scope of the CSDP).

Preliminary assessing the implementation of the EUGS leads to conclusion that in terms of intentions and plans these actions look promising. The EU has clearly become active. There is a will to create the conditions for the EU to become an organized strategic actor in security practice.

At present, it seems that the EU is generally agreed on the growing threats to its security. In a study conducted by the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) respondents from the

EU Member States stated clearly that the threat to their countries in the period 2008–2018 strongly intensified, and in their opinion it will be deepened in the next decade (Dennison, Franke, and Zerka 2018). According to the respondents, currently the top five threats to the EU security are, in descending order: cyberattacks, the collapse of states and civil wars in the immediate vicinity of the EU, the interference of external entities in the internal politics of the EU Member States, uncontrolled migration to the EU Member States, deterioration of the international order and institutional order. Further significant threats considered are: terrorist attacks, interstate conflict, the disintegration of the EU, the lack of resistance of state apparatus and social instability, financial instability, disruption in the supply of energy, climate change, nuclear attack on a country or ally. Respondents indicated that in the coming decade the identified threats to the EU security will be largely the same (Dennison, Franke, and Zerka 2018). The researchers conducting the survey assessed that the degree of perception of threats to the security of the EU Member States in 2018 is slightly different than that assessed in 2008, when the most important threats were considered to be (in descending order) economic instability and terrorist attacks, instability in the EU's immediate neighbourhood disrupting energy supply and cyberattacks. In other words, identifying security threats is closely linked to current events that occur before and during the research. In 2008, these were: the emerging economic crises and cyberattacks carried out on government institutions in Estonia in 2007 (Dennison, Franke, and Zerka 2018). Some threats can be considered universal, e.g. terrorist attacks, which are also reflected in the content of the EU strategic documents. In the context of the international situation, respondents indicated that one of the key threats to the EU security continues to be jihadists and related terrorist attacks, but also indicated the real threat from Russia and North Korea. Respondents said that these threats could persist for another decade until 2028.

The degree of perception of threats to EU security varies from one Member State to another (Krumm et al. 2019). There is widespread belief about divisions in security issues to the East, where the main threat is associated with Russia's aggressive policy, and to the South, where terrorism is recognised as the main threat. The ECFR study indicates that perception of threats is more complex, and the differences in their perception are not as obvious as a common narrative would suggest. Europeans in both the east and the south of the continent are concerned about uncontrolled migration to their countries. Slovenia, Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Malta and Italy view this threat as the most significant for security issues. In turn, organised international crime comes

to the fore as a threat among the southern the EU countries – Greece, Malta, Spain, but also in Slovakia and Austria. Fear of terrorism is particularly evident in countries that have recently experienced this type of attack, mainly in the United Kingdom, France, Spain, Germany, Denmark and Belgium. In the countries of the northern and eastern parts of the continent – Estonia, Romania, Lithuania, Poland and Finland, the unpredictable Russian policies are considered to the greatest threat, although in Germany and the UK, they are also regarded as a serious security threat. In addition, Lithuania and Estonia are particularly concerned about Russia's interference in the internal politics of these countries. Most of the countries surveyed also indicated the threat posed by Russia in the sphere of cyberattacks, the inability to respond to information action (disinformation), and susceptibility to influence of European public opinion (Dennison, Franke, and Zerka 2018).

The perception of security threats outside the EU articulated in its strategic documents do not keep up with the actual phenomena that occur in the environment of the EU, and which can directly affect the level of its security. As a rule, these are reactive assessments based on events that have already taken place and which may increase or recur. This is understandable because predicting future threats is extremely difficult. At the same time current events related to global security allow the articulation of "universal" threats, which can operate over a period of several years (decades) and which may be included in the strategic documents of the EU. The EU's security strategies (ESS, EUGS) seem to be politically correct, reconciling security concerns among individual Member States. Still, in the author's opinion, real military threats are articulated, to a small extent, aimed primarily at Central and Eastern Europe. In this context, there is a possible unfavourable scenario (disintegration) for Central and Eastern Europe, including Poland. Differences in perception of threats can lead to the EU security of "different speeds" and, in an extreme scenario, to the collapse of the European security system. As a consequence, a grey security zone may appear in Central and Eastern Europe, which everyone will know and accept by agreement, treating it as a kind of shield for other European countries. Such a possibility, although not very realistic, should also be considered.

### **Identification of threats to external security in the security strategies of Poland**

Retrospection associated with the analysis of regulatory documents defining the security strategy of the Republic of Poland starts from 2000 when the first Security Strategy of the Republic

of Poland (SSRP 2000) after the accession to NATO was published, together with the Strategy of Defence of Poland, representing the development of the sector in matters of national defence. The assessment of threats in the document is the result of the generally prevailing opinion that NATO is the main guarantor of Polish security, through a reduction in relation to the threat of aggression and the strengthening of deterrence. The changing nature of threats and challenges to the security of European countries is clearly indicated, downplaying the risk of global war in favour of an increased risk of local and regional conflicts for which Poland should be prepared. The key threats from the point of view of Polish security include: the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, economic threats, uncontrolled cross-border migration, the existence of an excessive concentration of military capabilities in some regions, threats to the environment, terrorism and organised crime as well as the activity of foreign special services (Koziej and Brzozowski 2015).

The threat assessment presented in SSRP 2000 remains valid in many places. Nevertheless, in 2003 a new National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland (NSSRP 2003) was presented, which in the context of the threat assessment took into account trends emerging after the terrorist attacks in the United States in September 2001. In the assessment of the threats contained in NSSRP 2003 first place is taken by global challenges associated primarily with the tensions and instability caused by international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the phenomenon of failed or failing states. According to the authors of NSSRP 2003, Poland is also directly exposed to the resulting threats, and its security is increasingly dependent on the effects of globalization. International terrorism taking up modern technological solutions was recognised as the most serious danger, the effects of which are felt in individual countries in different ways. Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was also identified as a threat, in particular the development of means of delivery. The document indicates that the territory of Poland may in the coming years be within range of ballistic missiles from outside Europe. In addition, terrorist organizations may gain possession of these weapons and their means of delivery. International crime (the smuggling of weapons, dangerous materials and human-trafficking, narco-business) is very strongly emphasised as a threat. This is due to the fact that Poland is a transit country and is becoming the subject of interest of international criminal groups. For the first time in a strategic document, threats in the IT sphere have been clearly articulated, indicating that Polish government institutions and its critical infrastructure may be the target of a cyberattack (Koziej and Brzozowski 2016). Also, the threat from broadly-understood ecology, including the degradation of the



environment in the immediate surroundings, ecological disasters, large-scale air and water pollution, can intensify and pose a real danger in the country. Mass migration from poor and poorly developed countries resulting from local conflicts has been recognised as a serious threat, and the increase in "migratory pressure" may be a reason for the development of illegal trafficking in human beings (Koziej and Brzozowski 2016).

In the context of threat assessment, NSSRP 2003 shifts the focus from classic threats (armed aggression) to atypical threats, sources of which include non-state entities that are difficult to identify. The strategy emphasises to a greater extent threats to the sphere of internal security. It seems that the content of the document lacks assessment of threats to Poland and its allies in relation to classic armed conflict, which should never be overlooked in assessments related to Poland's security.

In 2007 a new National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland (NSSRP 2007) was adopted, which was an expression of a new approach to the issue of national security, treated in an integrated manner. The authors of NSSRP (2007) indicate that "the security of Poland is influenced mainly by processes and phenomena in its surroundings – in the region, in Europe and within the Euro-Atlantic community". For the first time since the end of the Cold War, there is an expression of the threat from Russia in the context of energy policy and discrimination against some NATO and the EU members. There is a new category of threats – asymmetric, mainly related to non-state actors that are often difficult to identify. In the assessments of the authors of NSSRP (2007), regional and local conflicts as well as failed states that are unable to control their territory remain an important source of threats. The deepening disparities between rich and poor countries are causing tensions in international relations. The dependence of the Polish economy on the supply of energy resources (crude oil and natural gas) from one source (primarily from Russia) was considered the greatest threat to Poland's security in the NSSRP 2007. Subsequently, organised international terrorism and related organised crime, was indicated as retaliation for Poland's participation in NATO and the EU crisis response operations (National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland 2007).

In the years 2010–2012, a Strategic National Security Review was carried out for the first time in Poland, on the basis of which the National Security Bureau developed the White Book of National Security of Poland. These formed the basis for the development of the next National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland of 2014 (NSSRP 2014). The basis for the development

of the new document were the assumptions of the so-called strategic return presented by the President of the Republic, defining new directions of activities of the state in strengthening its security, including national defence. The crisis of European security and NATO's adaptation to new security conditions also proved to be determinants of changes. A key factor influencing the need to develop a new strategic document should also be identified as the aggressive policy of the Russian Federation, manifesting, in the context of Polish security, militarization of its foreign policy in relation to its neighbours. As a consequence, the principles of international law are being undermined, including the post-Cold War order, and there is an increase in symmetrical and hybrid threats that may trigger crisis situations. In addition, Islamic extremism and terrorism are intensifying the threat to European security, including Poland. Therefore, in Newport (2014), the North Atlantic Alliance made key decisions to strengthen NATO's eastern flank and monitor relations with Russia.

In the assessment of Poland's security threats presented in NSSRP 2014, changes in the area of European security come to the fore, including in particular the crisis in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. From the Polish perspective, the most serious dangers come from the Russian-Ukrainian conflict that could escalate the threat of aggressive actions by Russia toward countries in the region of Central and Eastern Europe. These activities may be strengthened by Russia with elements of an economic campaign, in particular access to energy resources. According to authors of National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland (2014), the information campaign led by Russia directed against the countries of the region is a significant threat, along with political and military pressure exerted by demonstration of conventional and nuclear potential, including a large number of military exercises in the direct vicinity of Poland. The possibility of aggression below the war threshold (hybrid actions) are of clear concern, which could hamper the potential reaction of the North Atlantic Alliance under art. 5 of the Washington Treaty. The threat assessment also takes into account the dangers arising on the southern flank of Europe, including those associated with the so-called Islamic State, including in the form of terrorist activities. In global terms, it also points to the threats associated with the failure of international organizations responsible for security, the lack of decisiveness in the United Nations, as well as the increase in threats related to the undermining of the credibility of disarmament agreements, including those related to nuclear weapons (National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland 2014). Generally speaking, NSSRP 2014 there is a visible focus on threats related to

direct aggression on the territory of Poland or a country of the eastern NATO flank by a state entity, in this case Russia. The remaining types of threats correspond to those identified in earlier versions of the strategic documents.

Discussion on the new National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland (NSSRP 2020) has been going on since the publication of the one from 2014. This is due to the changes in the contemporary international security environment and the near vicinity of Poland. New strategy was issued in May of 2020. The threats include uncertainty and failure to respect international law, as well as an increase in the number of threats. In particular, the policy of the authorities of the Russian Federation and its military aggression accompanied by the development of anti-access/area denial systems and offensive military potential are mentioned. The document points to the following areas: the Kaliningrad Oblast and the Baltic Sea, military exercises based on conflict scenarios with the countries of the North Atlantic Alliance, rapid movement of large troops and the use of nuclear weapons. The strategy also points to Russia's aggressive hybrid activities, designed to destabilize NATO and its allied states, which pose a risk of conflict, including disinformation and cyber attacks. The persistent regional and internal conflicts in Europe's southern neighborhood also pose a threat. As a result, as well as due to the rapid population growth and differences in living standards, migration pressure has intensified, which remains a challenge for Europe's security. On a global scale, an important phenomenon is the intensifying strategic rivalry between the United States of America, the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation, which affects the entire international system. There are new threats related to technological development: artificial intelligence, unmanned aerial vehicles and other robotic platforms, long-range precision weapons, including ballistic missiles and cruise missiles. The element of using nuclear weapons as an element of de-escalation of the conflict is also growing (National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland 2020).

Compared to the previous strategies, the articulated threats mainly relate directly to external security, i.e. maintaining sovereignty and territorial integrity. The main threat in this context is the neo-imperial policy of the authorities of the Russian Federation, which is important in line with the way NATO started to perceive this situation. In addition, the Sino-US conflict and pandemic threats were noticed, but the threats resulting from the cyber area and the use of new technologies were treated marginally.

The assessment of security threats to Poland presented in security strategies indicates they are identical with the feelings of public opinion, which have been tested in this regard in social research. In a study commissioned by the Kazimierz Pułaski Foundation (Smura 2018) in 2018, a question was put about the most important threat to the security of Poland and Poles. The respondents could choose from four possible answers (threats): migration crisis, the EU collapse, armed conflict with the Russian Federation and terrorism, which also appear in the security strategies of the Republic of Poland. The proportions of the possibility of occurrence of individual threats were distributed fairly evenly. 28.6 percent of Poles believed armed conflict with the Russian Federation to be the greatest threat to security, the migration crisis – 24.6%, terrorism – 23.3%, and the break-up of the EU – 23.2%. This study was conducted in January 2018 and repeated in March of the same year. In the March survey, the fear of armed conflict had increased quite significantly – to 36.8%, and the fear of the migration crisis had decreased (19.4% of respondents indicated it as the greatest threat). This change should be explained by the fact of the closing of the emigration route in the eastern Mediterranean and the reduction in the influx of migrants to Europe (Smura 2018). These results may change drastically under the influence of current political events in the world. An example would be a survey conducted by the Public Opinion Research Centre also in 2018, in which Poles were asked whether there is a threat to Poland's independence at present. Since April 2014, that is after the "referendum" in Crimea and the annexation of this peninsula by the Russian Federation, the level of fears of maintaining Poland's independence, which had not been recorded before, remains elevated. The results of the research from the last four years strongly contrast with those carried out in the years 1992–2013, when the vast majority of respondents claimed that there is no threat to Poland's independence. The worst assessment of the situation was in April 2014, when as many as 47% of respondents thought that there was a threat to Poland's independence, and 41% did not agree (Public Opinion Research Centre 2018).

The exemplification of threats to Poland's security, presented in the security strategies and an informal document of the Ministry of National Defence, clearly indicates fears related to the danger of a conflict with a state entity that may take various forms, including hybrid actions. The possibility of armed conflict is decidedly more strongly articulated in normative documents in force in Poland compared to strategic documents in the EU. Poland perceives as decidedly more realistic the threats resulting from the immediate vicinity of Russia, whose unpredictable foreign

policy may arouse and raises legitimate concerns about its external security. This is conditioned by historical experience, but also by an actual assessment of Russia's actions in close proximity to Poland.

### **Conclusion**

Predicting future threats to the external security of entities (countries, organizations) is extremely difficult and is based primarily on the experience of researchers and the assessment of already existing adverse phenomena in relation to geopolitical trends (Zięba 2016; Coats 2018; The Global Risks Report 2019). The perception of threats to the external security of the EU, Poland or, in a broader dimension, global security is presented in strategic documents as an important element within the challenges that determine the strategic goals of a given entity. Their identification in relation to the discussed entities is essentially the same. This should not come as a surprise, since Poland is the EU Member, and in principle, profess the same so-called western values. The differences are visible in the assessment of which of the identified threats have a real impact on the external security of Poland. Hence, the first conclusion relates to the need to develop a catalogue of common threats to external security that will take into account the concerns of all countries and treat them in the same way. While there is no problem with identifying common threats to external security, their degree for individual countries currently differs diametrically. For example, from the point of view of the security of Poland – a state on the eastern flank of the EU and NATO – the narrative related to threats from the East, and above all Russia's unpredictable policy, is of key importance. Meanwhile, however, the EUGS clearly focuses on counteracting threats from the southern strategic direction, such as terrorism and illegal migration, as well as on stabilising the Mediterranean region and Africa. Therefore, establishing a common perception of threats and common priorities in their elimination is necessary and at the same time beneficial for the functioning of all members of the EU, as it will strengthen their resistance to threats.

Another important aspect related to the perception of threats to the external security of the EU and Poland is associated with the need to strengthen cooperation between the EU and NATO, of which Poland is also a member. The scope of this cooperation will primarily be determined by the dynamics of relations between the two organizations, but also by the scale of US involvement in European security. Taking into account the very good relations between Poland and the USA, it should play a catalytic role to increase the scope of cooperation in the field of security for the

Member States of the EU and NATO. Significant progress has been made in this respect since the end of 2016, including through joint NATO and the EU initiatives in the field of security and defence. Therefore, a common map of threats to security covering the Euro-Atlantic area is necessary, which will reconcile the often-divergent interests of individual states and the organizations to which they belong.

Simplifying on the issue of the perception of threats articulated in strategic documents of the EU and Poland, there is a visible change in the concept of their perception – from the centric (state or organization) to one directed towards the citizens. Although the very articulation of threats in strategic documents is often associated with the functioning of the state or organization, they are as a consequence perceived through their impact on the security of citizens. This may suggest that the state or organization is seen as relatively secure, while their citizens may be exposed to all kinds of dangers. In other words, this unit is in the centre of ensuring security, and it should focus the activities of the state or the organization, so it becomes the subject of security. This is particularly evident when it comes to articulating threats related to economic, social or political instability. On the other hand, ensuring the security and territorial integrity of the state (organization) translates into the security of its citizens.

Comparison of the perception of threats contained in strategic documents of the EU and Poland also leads to the conclusion that awareness of the significance of threats related to climate change is increasing. The consequences of the process of global warming and violent weather phenomena, occurring practically everywhere around the globe, will affect societies in many regions of the world, contributing to the development of crisis situations. Conflicts may arise due to the lack of resources necessary for survival; climate change will directly cause the emergence of economic damage or uncontrolled migration of people. It is appropriate that strategic documents articulate this type of threat, because it gives the opportunity to develop adequate prevention in advance.

The map of threats to external security of the EU and Poland articulated in strategic documents is in many places consistent for both sides. It is therefore a very good basis for consensus on identifying common threat areas and priorities for eliminating them to ensure security.

## References

1. Archick, K. (2018). "The European Union: Ongoing Challenges and Future Prospects." Report R44249. Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R44249.pdf>.
2. Buzanski, M. (2018). "Threat Perceptions and Scenarios for EU Security and Defense. Outcomes Report of the Mercator European Dialogue Workshop Brussels – 9 July 2018." Berlin: German Marshall Fund of the United States. <https://www.mercatoreuropeandialogue.org/download-file/726/>.
3. Coats, D. R. (2019). "Statement for the Record. Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community, January 29, 2019." Washington D.C.: U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=820727>.
4. Dennison, S., Franke, U.E and Zerka, P. (2018). "The Nightmare of the Dark. The Security Fears that Keep Europeans Awake at Night." London: European Council on Foreign Relations. [https://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/SECURITY\\_SCORECARD\\_267.pdf](https://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/SECURITY_SCORECARD_267.pdf).
5. European Security Strategy 2003. "A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy." Brussels: Council of the European Union. [https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2004/10/11/1df262f2-260c-486f-b414-dbf8dc112b6b/publishable\\_en.pdf](https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2004/10/11/1df262f2-260c-486f-b414-dbf8dc112b6b/publishable_en.pdf).
6. European Union Global Strategy 2016. "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy." Brussels: European External Action Service. [http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top\\_stories/pdf/eugs\\_review\\_web.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf).
7. Keohane, D. And Mölling, Ch. (2016). "Conservative, Comprehensive, Ambitious, or Realistic? Assessing EU Defense Strategy Approaches. " Policy Brief No. 41, 2016. <https://www.gmfus.org/publications/conservative-comprehensive-ambitious-or-realistic-assessing-eu-defense-strategy>.
8. Kissinger, H.(2017). *Dyplomacja* [Diplomacy], Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Bellona.
9. Koziej, S. (2017). "Strategia globalna UE: szanse i dalsze wyzwania wdrożeniowe" [EU Global Strategy: Opportunities and Challenges of Further Implementation]. Pułaski Policy Paper. Warszawa: Fundacja im. Kazimierza Pułaskiego. [https://pulaski.pl/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Pulaski\\_Policy\\_Papers\\_Nr\\_3\\_17.pdf](https://pulaski.pl/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Pulaski_Policy_Papers_Nr_3_17.pdf).



10. Koziej, S. (2018). "Ewolucja i scenariusze kształtowania się środowiska bezpieczeństwa europejskiego" [Evolution and Scenarios of Shaping of the European Security Environment]. In *Bezpieczeństwo Europy w globalnym świecie. Szanse i zagrożenia przyszłości w warunkach przesilenia cywilizacyjnych* [Europe's Security in the Global World. Opportunities and threats of the future in conditions of civilizational solstice], edited by KLEER, Jerzy And PRANDECKI, Konrad, 280–309. Warszawa: Polska Akademia Nauk.
11. Koziej, S. (2018a). "Ewolucja strategii bezpieczeństwa Unii Europejskiej" [European Union Security Strategy Evolution]. *Myśl Ekonomiczna i Polityczna*, 2(61), 197–230. doi:10.26399/meip.2(61).2018.23/s.koziej.
12. Koziej, S. And Brzozowski, A. (2015). "Strategie bezpieczeństwa narodowego RP 1990–2014. Refleksja na ćwierćwiecze" [National Security Strategies of the Republic of Poland 1990–2014. Quarter Century Reflection]. In *Strategia bezpieczeństwa narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Pierwsze 25 lat* [National security strategy of the Republic of Poland. First 25 years], edited by KUPIECKI, Robert, 17–54. Warszawa: Wojskowe Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej.
13. Koziej, S. And Brzozowski, A. (2016). "25 lat polskiej strategii bezpieczeństwa" [25 Years of Polish Security Strategy]. *Bezpieczeństwo Narodowe*, II-2014/30, 11–40. <http://www.bbn.gov.pl/download/1/17028/11-40sSKoziejABrzozowski.pdf>.
14. Krastev, I. (2017). *After Europe*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
15. Krumm, R., Dienes, A., Weiß, S., Starystach, S., Schröder, H. and Bär, S. (2019). "Wake-up Call for Europe!" Vienna (Austria): FES Regional Office for Cooperation and Peace in Europe. <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/wien/15176-20190412.pdf>.
16. "National Security Strategy Of The Republic Of Poland 2007". <https://www.msz.gov.pl/resource/7d18e04d-8f23-4128-84b9-4f426346a112>.
17. "National Security Strategy Of The Republic Of Poland 2014". from <https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/SBN%20RP.pdf>.
18. "National Security Strategy Of The Republic Of Poland 2020". [https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dokumenty/National\\_Security\\_Strategy\\_of\\_the\\_Republic\\_of\\_Poland\\_2020.pdf](https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dokumenty/National_Security_Strategy_of_the_Republic_of_Poland_2020.pdf).
19. Piskorska, B. (2018). "Globalna strategia a redefinicja polityki Unii Europejskiej w jej sąsiedztwie" [Global Strategy and Redefinition of European Union Policy in its



- Neighborhood]. *Roczniki Nauk Społecznych*, 10(46), 67–90. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18290/rns.2018.46.1-4>.
20. Public Opiniom Research Centre. (2018). "Polacy o NATO i bezpieczeństwie międzynarodowym. Komunikat z badań nr 71/2018" [Poles about NATO and International Security. Research report no. 71/2018 9]. Warszawa: Fundacja Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej. [https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2018/K\\_071\\_18.PDF](https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2018/K_071_18.PDF).
21. Smura, T. (2018). "Polityka zagraniczna i bezpieczeństwo zewnętrzne Polski – badanie opinii publicznej" [Poland's Foreign Policy and External Security – Public Opinion Polling]. Warszawa: Fundacja im. Kazimierza Pułaskiego, Selectivv Mobile House. <https://pulaski.pl/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/e661d35d4de1cc10d22db11bfa2e4a07.pdf>.
22. Terlikowski, M. (2015). "Navigating Through Threat Perceptions in Europe." Zürich: Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich. <https://css.ethz.ch/en/services/digital-library/articles/article.html/195270/pdf>.
23. "The Global Risks Report 2019". 14th Edition. Geneva: World Economic Forum. from [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Global\\_Risks\\_Report\\_2019.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Risks_Report_2019.pdf).
24. Wróblewska-Łysik, M. (2016). "Europejska Strategia Globalna a możliwości współpracy Unii Europejskiej z NATO po szczycie w Warszawie" [European Global Strategy and the Possibilities of European Union Cooperation with NATO after the Warsaw Summit]. *Bezpieczeństwo Narodowe*, I–IV–2016/37–40, 67–83. [https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dok/03/37-40\\_KBN\\_Wroblewska.pdf](https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dok/03/37-40_KBN_Wroblewska.pdf).
25. Zięba, R. (2016). "Współczesne wyzwania i zagrożenia dla bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego" [Contemporary Challenges and Threats to International Security]. *Stosunki Międzynarodowe – International Relations*, 3(52), 9–31. doi: 10.7366/02090961320160.

## MODELS OF INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE ROLE THEORY ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

**Monika Maria BRZEZIŃSKA, PhD**

Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Poland

[m.brzezinska@uksw.edu.pl](mailto:m.brzezinska@uksw.edu.pl)

---

**Abstract:** *The article deals with the issue of the role theory as one of research methods concerning international leadership. It explains the concept of an international role and shows its influence on research devoted to international leadership: how it is defined, how specific models are constructed and how particular types are classified. It also indicates the interdependencies governing international roles and leaders and emphasizes the significance of the factors determining it: the conflict, quantitative and qualitative changes, significance and influence of the position and identity of other international actors on the nature of leadership. The aim of the article is to tie the role theory with the concept of leadership and to check how and to what extent this method remains effective today within the field of international relations. The article tries to verify what research questions the method answers and what questions it leaves unanswered. The theoretical research in this field will be backed up with some empirical examples referring to the case study of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). This actor constitutes a perfect exemplification of an international leader with a wide range of roles played and changed over the years. It is characterized not only by dynamics and reorientation of its foreign policy as a manifestation of the role it plays, but also by its range of adaptation skills conditioned, inter alia, by such processes as role-making, role-taking or role-learning.*

---

**Keywords:** international leadership, role theory, Germany, international relations

### Introduction

This article attempts to look at the role theory as one of numerous methods of analyzing international leadership. Although leadership itself enjoys great popularity among scientists, there are not many theoretical models allowing its analysis, especially in the area of international relations. The few existing ones usually concentrate on such concepts as “hegemony”, “superpower” or “power”, and yet there are leaders who play other, significant roles, such as the role of “a negotiator”, “an advocate” or “a facilitator”.

We can also observe the growing role of non-state actors, such as the European Union (EU) or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which are beginning to strongly shape and change the international environment. This phenomenon is so common that the entities primary to them: national states, seem to be pushed aside.

The aim of this analysis, thus, is, firstly to draw the readers' attention to state actors, both large and significant ones and medium-sized or smaller ones, and their role in the international environment. The second goal is to demonstrate to what extent and how the role theory remains an effective tool in research on leadership. The article also offers a contribution to the considerations over role of contemporary Germany in Europe and in the world, its power and identity, though, due to formal reasons, this issue shall remain only outlined in this paper. It may provide some impulse for further, in-depth research in this subject, even more so as the role of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRD) since the end of the World War Two, through the collapse of the Berlin wall, until the contemporary times, has always been not only significant but also dynamic.

The article is composed of two parallel parts and dimensions: theoretical and practical ones, whose reference to the structure of the paper determines further research methods adopted by the author. The first sphere of the analysis presents the role theory as a research approach concerning the issue of international leadership and to the role theory. It also constitutes an attempt at combining or indicating similarities (and differences) both within the roles played by states and the fact of being simultaneously a leader. Moreover, this article also attempts at explaining what the phenomenon of leadership in international relations is, what determines it and how it can be researched and analyzed in the contemporary times. The second part is a case study of the German model of leadership and exerting influence on other participants of international relations.

The research goal pursued in this article poses a few questions: How should we analyze international leadership? What types of international leaders can we distinguish and how can we classify them? What is the scope and detail of the role theory in research on leadership? Is the role theory a useful tool for forecasting the politics and activities of states? What research questions does it answer and what questions does it leave unanswered? In other words, what are its advantages and what are its drawbacks? And finally, is this the only and the best method of analyzing international leadership, influence, power and position of states?

### **International leadership as a role**

The concept of international leadership belongs to, inter alia, a category of international roles and dates back to the research on social behaviour. “A *social role* is a comprehensive pattern of behaviour and attitudes, constituting a strategy for coping with a recurrent set of situations, which is socially identified - more or less - as an entity” (Turner, 1990, p. 87). Moreover, as observed by Ralph H. Turner, the social roles we play are perceived by other actors and are a source of the constitutive knowledge concerning people in a group, organization or society, as well as their identification and location. Roles can be also perceived as some existing set of rights and obligations or expected behaviours (Turner, 1990, p. 87).

In the context of international relations, leadership is “a periodical international social structure (...) which requires winning appropriate support. From the theoretical perspective, leadership roles contain a multitude of single roles. Every composition of the leadership role determines not only the formation of a set of roles which concern the leader, but also determines the chances that the complimentary role of a follower shall be adopted” (Harnisch, 2014, p. 31). Thus international roles played by participants are associated not only with I (*I as individual disposition*) and Me (*Me as perception of position vis-à-vis others*), but most of all with the process of reification respecting behaviour and expectations of others (Harnisch, 2011, p. 11).

Originally, in the 1970s, research on international roles appeared as an element of the analysis of foreign policy and a result of considerations on the cold war, bi-polar distribution of power in the world. In time, however, as Sebastian Harnisch notices, the interest in this issue has grown considerably, especially in the scope of such social roles as: “leader”, “mediator”, “initiator” or “aggressor” or “ally”. Initially, the role theory concentrated on the perception of one’s own role and position of particular international actors in relation to others (*Me as perception of position vis-à-vis others*), and totally neglected the significance of behaviours and expectations of other participants of international relations (*behaviour and expectation of others*). Only in time the significance of these factors also started to be noticed (Harnisch, 2011, pp. 7-12).

The role theories refer to the organization of social behaviours, both individual and collective ones. They are also one of key elements in understanding relations occurring both in the micro, macro and intermediate sphere. The role theory as such is connected with, inter alia, structuralism, which assumes that roles are a result of the status occupied by role holders, they

depend on the status and may be in form of both collective rights and obligations and the expected, obligatory, optional or even forbidden behaviour (Turner, 2002, p. 223).

The imperfections of the structural theory, especially in the aspect of the occurring relationships and relations between actors and the roles they play, have led to the creation of the interactive role theory. It reflected, more than previous approaches, social relations of individuals and their evolution (Zajac, 2015, p. 131). The interaction approach perceived roles in a more dynamic way, as a process consisting in creating and modifying roles, thus referring not only to role-taking and role-playing, but also to role-making (Turner, 2002, p.235). States as international actors and leaders may simultaneously not only want and perform the role of, for example, a “hegemony”, but also try their best to construct it and transform it (adjustment) depending on conditions. They also aim at gaining acceptance of the international environment of the role they adopted for themselves and they learn to play it (role learning) on the basis of gathered experience (their observation and interpretation), developing their beliefs, skills, strategies and mechanism of their actions (Harnisch, 2011, p. 10).

### **The classification of roles and leaders**

Ralph H. Turner distinguished four primary categories of the roles we play: basic (for example “child”, “male”, rooted rather in the society than in particular organizations), structural (for example “director”, “servant”, referring to the occupied position and enjoyed status), functional (for example “mediator”, “devil’s advocate”, which are informal, but well-recognized in the cultural context) and judgmental (for example “hero”, “traitor”, which acknowledge or negate some values or sets of values) (1990, p. 88). This typology is very useful also in the area of international relations, and its particular concepts have found their way to the glossary describing the leadership roles of international actors. One could mention here, inter alia, such concepts as “emerging power”, “mediator”, “stabilizer”, “hegemony” or those referring to preferred values or attitude to them, such as “conservative”, “revisionist” and many others.

Admittedly, there are many more the typologies of roles and types of leaders. Kalevi Holsti himself classified as many as 972 roles in the research he conducted, but he finally narrowed them down to 17 (Holsti, 1970, p. 280 and p. 290). Similar research was conducted by Margaret and Charles Hermann, who distinguished 10 variations of international roles (Pietraś, 1989, pp. 30-31). Also, Piotr Bartosiewicz, in one of his papers, quotes the literature concerning the systematic

of international leader roles and proposes his own typology of them. He quotes there, for example, the concepts describing the types of roles played by states, “forged” by students, but nevertheless very vivid ones, such as: “Harry Potter of nations”, “brain vacuum cleaner” or “lord of the rings” (Bartosiewicz, 2007, pp. 10-14).

Anna Antczak, on the other hand, classifies roles hierarchically and divides them into synthetic ones (superior and most important) and subordinated ones, namely complimentary, synthetic-particular and detailed (Antczak, 2012, p. 181). For example, FRG is currently playing a synthetic role of a regional leader, a complimentary role of a leader within the EU and the synthetic-particular role of a non-military (“Zivilmacht”) and economic superpower, in addition to a series of other, smaller, particular roles, such as cultural leader or liberal player as far as its policy towards Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT+) is concerned, earning it the title of one of the most tolerant states in EU in this area.

An expanded, but interesting and aptly describing international leadership classification of roles was developed by a Polish scientist, Ziemowit Pietraś. He divided them along various criteria, namely (Pietraś, 1989, pp. 25-26):

- a. subjective, showing direction in which, the role was built (imposed or expected by others, or chosen by the actor itself),
- b. objective, concerning the plain or sphere in which it is manifested (political, economic, cultural),
- c. connected with the area in which it appears (local, regional, global),
- d. time-related (short-, medium- and long-term roles),
- e. presenting attitude to the world and its order (revolutionary, innovative, conservative),
- f. hierarchical, depicting the strategy of the state policy (general and specific),
- g. effective, resulting from the degree of the activities performed by the leader or their negligence (declared and actual).

This division can also be used to describe and analyze international leadership. One could mention here, for example, such three types as “hegemony”, “satellite state”, “economic leader” (tiger), “regional superpower”, “bastion of conservatism”, “activist” and “neutral state”, etc.

It is worth mentioning that single international actors are particularly predisposed to perform significant, or even historical roles, thus becoming the favourite subject of research, but

also typologies constructed for them. One could quote here the example of FRG which had long been perceived as “aggressor” leader and then, influenced by the policies of particular chancellors, gained the opinion of either “late nation” (H. Kohl’s policy), “political dwarf” (G. Schröder’s rule) (Wolff-Powęska, 2004, p. 50), or a “schizophrenic helper” (Angela Merkel’s strategy (Henkel and Starbatty, 2016, pp. 17-18). Recently, Germany has been named “half hegemony” (Geppert, 2013), “contested Hegemony” (Siddi, 2018) or “leader without hegemony” (Harnisch, 2014).

### **Leadership versus expected, declared and played roles**

A specificity of the role is to show oneself, one’s imagined and arranged image to others, thus “playing before someone” some primarily imagined role. In order to play it, the actor needs someone who will perform the role of the audience. The performance thus requires certain relations, a system of ties and interdependencies. There are no roles without relations, therefore, as observed by R. Turner, most of them exist in pairs or function in specific sets. “There could be no teacher role without a student role, no leader role without a follower role” (Turner, 2002, p. 235). Moreover, as emphasized by Lisbeth Aggestam “roles have multiple sources and (...) are not exclusively generated by the international distribution of power” (1999/8). They depend (similarly to international leadership) on a series of factors resulting, *inter alia*, from the trends in which the international environment evolves, the position occupied by the actors, their identity, structure and scope of international ties and legal and international ties of the country (Zajac, 2013, p. 18). Along with internal stimuli, namely geographical location, population or economic potential, socio-political system, quality and efficiency of the elites, etc., (Antczak-Burzan, 2014) they create complex structures, interdependent with each other, as communicating tubes. “This means that the determinants of the international environment, internal environment, the position of an entity on the international stage and its ideological values constitute a “filter” which precedes the choice of particular international role/roles, which, in turn, shape the foreign policy of a given entity” (Antczak-Burzan, 2013, p. 34).

Noticing the complexity of the above-mentioned relations, K. J. Holsti divides the roles into three categories: declared (*role conception*), played (*role performance*) and expected (*role prescription*) (Holsti, 1970, p. 239) as those stemming from the behaviour of individuals and groups. This opinion is also confirmed by independent research conducted by E. Aggestam, who classifies roles in a very similar way (Aggestam 1999/8): as those declared (*role conception*),

played (*role performance*), and expected (*role expectation*). They both also notice the correlation and influence of roles on shaping the foreign policy of a state (Holsti, 1970, p. 245; Aggestam, 1999/8). Similar conclusions were reached by already mentioned Z. Pietraś. Thus, these are such kinds of roles which seem most repetitive and determining both our own behaviour and our behaviour towards others.

Returning to the division: declared roles “are first of all associated with public announcement of the intentions and goals of external policy by political units in form of official documents. In practice, we can see that declared roles do not have to be identical with the roles that are really chosen” (Milczarek, 2003, p. 35). Moreover, declared roles have greater significance than expected roles, due to the fact that the process of their implementation has already been activated (though this does not mean that it will be completed). Expected roles, on the other hand, are totally outside the decision-making process and their future is hard to predict. An example of Germany’s declared role is the FRG’s support for Ukraine membership in the European Union (EU), but simultaneously making its feasibility dependent on Russia’s decision. It often (though not always) happens that declared roles remain (for various reasons) only in the sphere of promises, thus showing that they are not feasible, that they can be even absurd. It happens that the lack of their implementation by an international leader, despite their declaration of being ready in this matter, becomes a form of putting the blame on others. “Ukraine needs a perspective of the EU membership” (Sarrazin, 2014, pp. 29-30), though this cannot take place without any talks with Russia: “We are open to dialogue. We want a peaceful solution taking into account the interests of everybody”, said Maik Beermann in German Bundestag, which, in the context of Ukraine-Russia war (Beermann, 2014, p. 31) seems practically impossible.

Declared roles may also have some moral and supportive overtone, though they may not necessarily become roles played. They may also be roles that are internally incoherent (Germany supports cooperation and partnership with Poland while negating imperial and non-democratic methods of operation used by Russia on one hand, and on the other hand, concluding and executing contracts with Russia concerning Nord Stream, aimed in fact against Poland).

The expected role is the one which international actors or certain groups ascribe to another actor, expecting them to play it (Aggestam, 1999/8) taking into account, inter alia, the needs of “world opinion”, the structure of the prevailing system, the valid values, principles and agreements (Holsti, 1970, p. 245). The expectations concerning the role differ, for example, depending on the



degree of their generality, scope or span, clarity or uncertainty, degree of consensus between actors or whether they are formal or informal positions (Thies, 2009, p. 9). If expectations towards the role are unclear or ambiguous, the behaviour is less predictable and conducive to conflicts (Thies, 2014, pp. 5-6). In the context of leadership this may lead to misunderstandings and splits among allies, who often do not know or understand or who cease to understand the policy of the leader.

Expected roles may also be connected with weaker or stronger pressure of the environment. Concerning Germany, we increasingly often hear that Germany should take up the leadership role in Europe, as called for by Radosław Sikorski in 2011: "(...) I urge Germany - for your benefit and for our benefit – to help the Euro zone survive and prosper. You know very well that nobody else is able to do it. (...) I am less afraid of the German power than of the German idleness. (...) You cannot afford to fail the leadership" (2011). A similar opinion was recently expressed by Lech Wałęsa, who spoke at the rally of the European People's Party (EPP) in Munich: "I am asking you to take responsibility for Europe. Start proposing solutions" (En, Mnie, 2019).

The roles played seem to be the most significant roles, defined as decisions and actions of government and political decision-makers both referring to their own country (*I* and *Me* as declared role) and to the international environment (*Me* and *perception of behaviour and expectation of others* as manifestation of the expected role). Since they concern the state's foreign policy, they are, according to K. J. Holsti, inseparably connected with the position of an international actor (Holsti, 1970, p. 245). An international leader *Hus*, taking into account their vision of the role they declare, reflecting one's own position towards other international actors (and thus one's possibilities and limitations as for the influence they can exert on others) and their expectations towards themselves, formulates their own strategy of action and foreign policy.

Moreover, as observed by K. J. Holsti, the basis for creating roles in the foreign policy of a state comprises such factors, as, *inter alia*: political ambitions, the country potential and its position, national values, public opinion, socio-economic needs or the adopted ideology. On the other hand, concerning the expected roles, the international environment takes into account such parameters as the structure of the system, a broadly understood system of values and adopted legal rules and norms, including agreements and treaties and informal agreements and the world opinion (Holsti, 1970, p. 245). Therefore, social structures (including roles and leadership) exist not only in the heads of actors or in their material possibilities, but constitute a process happening in reality.

They are real, objective and consist of knowledge, material resources and practices (Wendt, 1995, pp. 73-74).

Joseph Nye would add the so-called “smart power” or sensible strategy plays a key role in effective leadership (Nye, 2012, p. 15). In the behavioural context it is defined as an ability to influence others in some important area (field), using coercion, reward or attractiveness in order to achieve the desired results (Nye, 2012, p. 37). Thus, the role performed by an international actor and leader depends not only on their own imagination (*declared role*) confronted with expectations of others (*expected role*) and occupied position, but also on the power of the influence it exerts.

### **The influence of the role conflict on international leadership**

Contemporary international actors more and more often play many roles simultaneously, the roles which overlap. However, it happens that an actor, in order to gain greater effectiveness and efficiency of their activity, modifies the roles (adopting instruments and strategies), as a result of which role not only change, but some expire and are replaced by others. If the changes between declared roles and expected or played role are not synchronized, a conflict may arise between them. S. Harnisch divides roles into those conflicted internally (*intra-role conflicts*) and externally (*inter-role conflict*) (2011, p. 256).

The lack of internal cohesion of roles (between *I* and *Me*), or the deficit of its compatibility in creation stems from the appearance of different norms, rules and values preferred by the actor which, in turn, lead to the revision of the declared role. For the internally conflicted leader this may bring about two consequences: it may offer an opportunity to improve their own position (Harnisch, 2011, p. 256) or lead to their failure. A good example of *intra-role conflicts* and an internally conflicted leader is A. Merkel in the sphere of the migration policy. The policy of “open doors” promoted by her, welcoming immigrants regardless of any limits, opening a beneficial offer of social allowances for them resulted in massive inflow of refugees to the FRG. As a result, Germans work for the usually unemployed immigrants, who often cause social unrest or violate the public security rules. The objection of some political elites to “blind” help led in Germany to a debate on the limits of “openness” and to the redefinition of values concerning provided help and resulted in a conflict between “sister” parties Christlich Soziale Union (CSU) and Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (CDU). It also accounted for the growth of support for anti-immigration Alternative für Deutschland (AfD). The effects of this conflict have and will have

their short-, medium- and long-term consequences in the area of various roles, both in the micro and the macro-scale.

*Inter-role conflict* on the other hand, has its source in misunderstandings appearing between the role player and other international actors (*Me* and *the others*). It originates in the differences in the declared role and the international order. What is more, it often negatively affects internal roles of the actor, frequently leading to *intra-role conflicts* (Harnisch, 2011, p. 256).

If the declared role differs from the expected one, the actor or the leader should verify or modify their behaviour. It happens, though, that the role conflict is ignored, which does not help to solve it (Thewes, 2001, p. 29). A perfect example of ignoring the source of the role conflict is the already mentioned policy of open doors implemented by A. Merkel. In spite of numerous acts of violence in Germany with participation of immigrants, the “mutiny” of Bavaria which puts immigrants to buses and sends them to Berlin, or the words of Horst Seehofer that “migration is the mother of all problems” (LIE, DPA, 2018) the German chancellor still insists that “We will manage” (“Wir schaffen das!”). Due to the internal conflict and the split in the decision process of German elites, it seems that the political career of A. Merkel as a national and European leader is coming to an end (Greven, 2018).

Writing about the conflict of roles played by Germany, Henning Thewes predicts that one of possible solutions will be to merge roles (*merger role*). The played and conflicting roles then become a compromise and lead to the change of behaviour and the shaping of a new, concentrated role. However, if this strategy does not work and the old role does not transform into a new one, structural changes appear then (Thewes, 2001, p. 29), which are deep, and which entail greater costs. For example, if A. Merkel ignores or does not take effective political action in the national sphere, thus eliminating the role conflict in the “Willkommenspolitik”, this may mean the end of her tenure. Taking into account the position of Germany in the international environment and their leadership role in the region and in the EU, this may also lead to reorientation of the roles of other international leaders. It may also turn out that the conflict, finding attractive background among some European countries (mostly Poland and Hungary), will bring changes to the distribution of power in the EU, which will affect the European migration policy.

The conflict may also force the appearance of quite new international roles, not based on the concentration. Iver B. Neumann and Benjamin de Carvalho claim that weaker actors, who do not have anything but prestige, constitute perfect moral leaders, using their advantage in the field

of authority and prestige (Neumann and de Carvalho, 2015, p. 2). Strong leaders therefore need smaller powers, even as mediators. The FRG does not have any chances of playing such a role for numerous reasons. First of all, the international opinion still holds a vivid picture of Germany as an “aggressor”, secondly, due to its current power (mostly in Europe) it may arise justified fears concerning the coercion or instrumental activities forcing other actors to behave in a particular way or some political decisions.

The role conflict does not only change the roles or structures themselves. It may also result in their transformation, though it is a long-lasting process (Thewes, 2001, p. 30) and leads to the appearance of a new type of a leader: namely a transformation leader. As far as Germany is concerned, an example of such a role would be the strategy adopted by the FRG after the Unification, consisting in multi-layer adjustment of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) to the structures of West Germany. The German state (internal policy of Helmut Kohl) then played a role of a transformation leader. This role was not free from tensions and conflicts, nevertheless, as a leader, H. Kohl was able to use it to build and consolidate his own, strong position in the country and abroad.

### **The dynamics of international roles and international leadership**

International roles are dynamic and change over time, influenced by various factors. They can end and new ones can be created. One could quote here an example of Germany as an “advocate” of Poland in the process of its application for the membership in the European Union. This role appeared along with the declaration of the Polish government that it wanted to join the structures of the European Communities (EC) and ended with Poland’s accession. Roles are thus more or less durable. For example, since the end of the World War Two Germany adopted the role of the “peace promoter” - the role still performed and manifested by the country in many areas. One could refer here to the migration policy or non-military activity during the Russia-Ukraine war. This role is also revealed through “soft” leadership, which consciously resigns from using military power for the benefit of wide-reaching and developed networks of cultural influences. This is perfectly presented by the so-called “soft power” coefficients, which ranked the FRG third in Europe in 2018. It should also be noted that Germany is continuously moving upward the index (The Soft Power 30a).

According to S. Harnisch, changes within roles may occur in two ways: through the process of adaptation and through learning. Adaptation concerns changes within the strategy and instruments necessary to play the role (Harnisch, 2011, p. 10). These are also goals, norms and values (Zajac, 2015, p. 130). Both approaches referring to political systems were combined by Z. Pietraś (2000, p. 59).

Thus, adopting the criteria of activity of international actors and basing on the adaptation models created by Z. Pietraś, we can distinguish three types of leaders. The first type are passive (weak) actors, easily influenced by others. Such leaders easily yield to pressure of the external environment, changing the structure and the function of their system and tailoring their own internal and external policies to the pressure of other international actors with greater potential. They often see the priority of their activities in development (through development of science and absorption of foreign and new system elements), while ignoring or downgrading their own identity in the hierarchy of preferred values (Pietraś 2000, p. 59). Randall Schweller defined such type of leadership as passive “Sheep”, who become “easy prey” to other international actors as they are ready for concessions and eagerly join others, more powerful actors (*bandwagon*), they do not attempt any revisionism, but they are troubled with numerous deficits and internal conflicts (cultural, political, ethical, etc.) (Schweller, 1994, p. 102).

An active leader, on the other hand, in opposition to the first type, dominates over others, has great potential and established international position. It also imposes its values, interests and goals to others. Such a dominant leader forces other players to passively subordinate themselves and to receive the output impulses it generates. It is a type of an actor with “rigid” decision-making process and tight political system, closed to any input stimuli. This accounts for the fact that in the foreign policy it creates and implements, it values preservation of one’s identity rather than development (Pietraś 2000, p. 59). This is the type of a defensive “Lion”, determining rules of the game, norms and principles (Schweller, 1994, p. 102).

The most strategic leader in its international activity is the creative leader, combining the features of both previous models, but able to “filter” various impulses, seeking balance between the internal and the external environment (Pietraś, 2000, p. 59). This is a leader accepting significant risks, ready to pay a high price, but also ready to bear considerable costs in defending its values. If this actor is dissatisfied with the position it occupies, it uses every opportunity to

change it. It is a typical “Jackal”, joining one or another international leader, depending on the favourable circumstances (Schweller, 1994, p. 102).

Referring to the Dynamics of international roles, a “Lion” may become a “Sheep”, a “Jackal” or an aggressive, “Wolf” which desires power and risks its own life, putting everything on the line (Schweller, 1994, p. 102). An example of such dynamics of the role changing in the initial phase positions and potentials of other international actors was Germany during the World War Two and after it. From the model “Wolf” it became a “Sheep” and then, in the process of *role learning*, adapting to post-war international circumstances, determined by stronger international actors, totally change the role it played and to become the model “Lion” as far as setting the rules is concerned, combining the elements of a “Wolf”, expanding its influences, but in a sheep skin, declaring its peaceful attitude to others.

Being a leader thus does not consist only in accepting this task and its performance but is also associated with own contribution and involvement in its implementation. It is not only the role-making, but also the role learning. Taking the example of the FRG, we could venture to say that Germany does not only accept and modernize its roles, but also learns them continuously. A leader must analyze and verify its political decisions and activities, learns reactions of other international actors to them and the operating mechanisms in the ever-changing conditions of the international system (thus attempting to adapt to internal and external factors), choosing the most beneficial ones, and repeating them in its future decision-making process. A. Merkel, for example, has a custom of speaking on behalf of the European Union, but before she does so and starts the official decision-making procedure, she consults directly and informally important issues concerning the EU with its main leaders (Kwiatkowska-Drożdż, 2012, pp. 158-159). This is the result of the experience stemming from at least two facts: firstly, the need to justify the decision-making process (the fewer countries involved in it, the faster the procedure), and secondly, proposing initially developed and confirmed solutions eliminates the need for a long debate over them. Moreover, Germany has already “learnt” that it is expected, as the regional superpower, to take responsibility for others and to lead in key issues.

Taking into account the dynamics and the evaluation of international roles (*role-taking*, *role-playing*, and *role-making*), R. Turner emphasizes the significance of such features they demonstrate as: functionality, representativeness, permanence and resistance (2002, pp. 236-241). Functionality stems from the occupied position and, according to him, is tied to the possessed

potential (Turner, 2002, p. 237). Justyna Zajac, on the other hand, points at the importance of effectiveness, by which she understands “the effectiveness in the accomplishment of the set goal, taking into account expenses (costs)” (2014, p. 50), which also affects the position of a leader and its potential. The more effective the leader is in its activity and in playing its roles, the greater approval it will enjoy among the international environment and other participants of international relations. The effectiveness also grows along with the compatibility of declared, real and expected roles. The lack of harmony in their implementation results in lower effectiveness (Zajac, 2014, p. 51) and the loss of prestige, affecting then the whole structure of the roles played by the actor and its position and potential as an international leader. An example of the loss of the potential of Germany is the diesel scandal revealed in 2015. As a result of the falsification of the exhaust fume emissions in Volkswagen cars, in spite of the declared but not real activities of A. Merkel in this area, the political image of Germany, and especially its quality brand (“deutsche Qualität”) deteriorated significantly. Moreover, the chancellor was accused of the incoherence of the climate and environment protection policy promoted by her and the divergence of the roles she played - as a national and international leader: “As a physicist, she knows perfectly well, that there are alternative technologies and materials, thanks to which cars are more environment-friendly. On the other hand, as a politician, she has to fight for the votes” - stated Süddeutsche Zeitung (Gammelin, 2017).

Roles may also change in a quantitative way as a result of decreasing obligations or rights, but also due to developing or losing power and prestige (Turner 1990, p. 88). The greater power of influence an international leader has, the greater the range of roles played by it. Coming back to the example of Germany, Since the end of the World War Two, the number of roles played by Germany, along with its power, has been constantly changing. The country is today perceived as, inter alia, “civil superpower” (“Zivilmacht”) (H. Maull), “economic power drive” and “smart leader” (4<sup>th</sup> place in the ranking of The Soft Power 30b), “arbitrator” (Russia-Ukraine war), advocate (Poland’s membership in the EU) and “promoter of the weak” (a wide humanitarian campaign, for example in Africa), “promoter of culture” (4<sup>th</sup> place in the ranking of The Soft Power 30b) and science (2<sup>nd</sup> place in the world according to The Soft Power 30b), “diplomatic strategist” and “efficient leader” (negotiations within the EU), “initiator of European integration processes” (the construction of the EU), “the Euro zone saviour (crisis), “the European sponsor” (the biggest payer to the EU budget), or recently “immigrants defender” (“Willkommenspolitik”).



International roles also evolve qualitatively through changes to their specific elements or components or through re-interpretation of their meaning. If one (or more) role the actor plays is transformed, the modification will affect the whole system of international roles (Turner, 1990, p. 88). Therefore the model of leadership is also subjected to transformation. If initially the migration policy of the German chancellor, A. Merkel, was perceived as a manifestation of solidarity with those in need and found supporters in France, Italy, Spain or Malta, the resistance of Hungary and Poland in this matter led to significant revision of the policy of “open doors” (“Willkommenspolitik”) and the leadership of Germany was redefined from the role of the European “helper” (Henkel and Starbatty, 2016, pp. 17-18) to that of “self-destructor” (Henkel and Starbatty, 2016, p. 19-20), and even “a suicide” (Sarrazin, 2010). Another spectacular example of the dynamics of the leadership role of Germany is the movement from the position of the “European superpower” through adopting the role of an “aggressor” (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> world war) until the status of the “fallen leader”. Thus, within the whole system of roles, including their ties and elements, the role of Germany changed along with the roles of other countries. Their positions were modified: from “victims” and “losers” they became “winners” (though they remained the victims of the Third Reich), except for Poland, which both during the war and after it performed the same role of a “victim”.

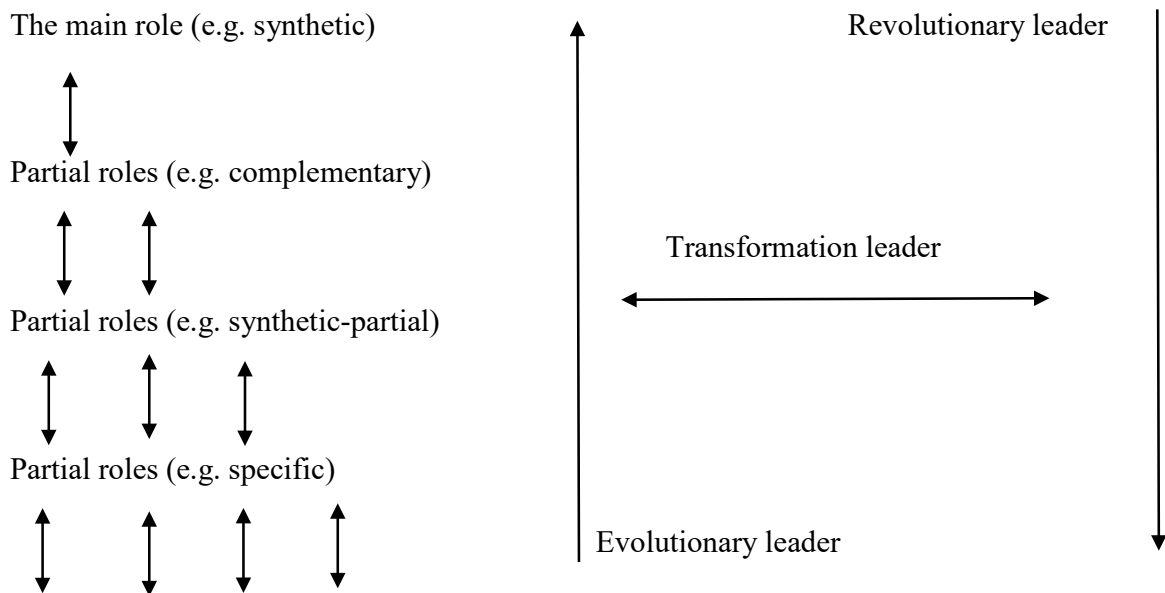
The quantitative and qualitative changes within particular roles bring about changes to leadership. This is well depicted by the hierarchical classification of roles. If an international leader modifies its main role, changes will also affect its partial roles. If partial roles change, this will affect its main role. In other words, the more important the roles (the higher they are in the hierarchy), the fewer of them, the change will occur more slowly, but it will be more visible. The lower the roles in the hierarchy, the more of them, they are easier to change, but their effects in the context of the main role are smaller.

Horizontal changes thus evoke vertical ones, and the other way round. For the leadership, the easiest and the most gentle procedure is that of bottom-up, vertical changes (evolution of leadership) and slightly more complicated procedure of horizontal changes (transformation of leadership). A more difficult and simultaneously “deeper” change is the top-bottom vertical change of role (revolution of leadership). On the other hand, both horizontal and vertical changes are considered the most violent and radical ones. Such revolutionary change of leadership occurred



after the World War Two, when the FRG role changed from that of an “aggressor” into “peace promoter”.

**Figure 1.** The hierarchy and number of performer roles and the direction of changes and the type of leadership



Source: *Own elaboration*

We should bear in mind that the type of leadership is not only influenced by the hierarchy of roles. They are also determined by a number of other factors. J. Zajac divides them into objective and subjective both in the internal and external dimensions (2010, p. 27), reflecting also the influence of the structure and scope of international and legal international ties between countries and trends in which the international environment evolves (2013, p. 18). The author observes, however, that in the sphere of international relations the most important elements are the position occupied by the state and its identity. The former is affected, in her opinion, by: geographic environment, population potential, economic and scientific and technical potential, military potential, socio-political system, quality of foreign service and the state diplomacy (Zajac, 2013, p. 18). The latter is determined by historical, political, economic, social and cultural factors. Taking into account the scale of today’s interdependencies, the international identity of other states is also important (Zajac, 2013, p. 18). Every leader thus shapes their own identity also in “feedback

with other participants of international life”, which is manifested in its degree and intensity (Bieleń, 2015, p. 155-157).

### **Final conclusions**

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that the role theory is one of many, along with the narration analysis, system analysis or decision-making process analysis, methods of analyzing international leadership. Its unquestionable advantage is not only its interdisciplinary nature (combination of sociological, psychological, historical, legal and political science approaches), but also impressive practical “flexibility” concerning the connection of the research with time and space. It can be used both with reference to the past, the present and, on some conditions, to the future, as an attempt at diagnosing behaviours, positions or identities of international leaders. This is particularly visible in the context of Germany, which has evolved significantly, from the role of an “aggressor” to that of “promoter of peace solutions”.

It is possible to predict political decisions of a leader and their activities, taking into account the process of dynamics. Roles are never finite and are subject to constant redefinition (Turner, 2002, pp. 235-236, p. 253), though it is very difficult to change them (Nabers, 2012, p. 80). Germany is a perfect example of this, as it performs a number of roles on various levels, e.g. the role of the European integration engine or that of a technology innovator in the world. The coherence of the specific and synthetic-partial roles played by the leader allows us to outline its future place and role in the international political stage quite easily.

The role theory as a method of research on international leadership, looking through the prism of “images” of the analysis of international relations developed by Kenneth Waltz, refers to all three spheres he proposed. It takes into account the international system, understood as a structure composed of particular actors who are in mutual relations with each other, of the state (Waltz, 2001, p.12) and an individual. It is thus a holistic approach, though it could be equally well used only with reference to one or two spheres (as, for example, realists do).

The role theory allows us to examine leadership as a dynamic process connected with the analysis of its role-making, role-taking and role-learning. Moreover, it reflects not only qualitative changes (types of roles played) and quantitative ones (their number), but also covers their evolution, transformation and revolution, being the effect of both internal and external factors.

The type and typology of leadership is determined by circumstances, conditions, other leaders and the process of role dynamics. They overlap and never occur in “pure” form. The more roles played by an international actor, the better the actor is prepared for the requirements of the environment. Moreover, taking on a large number of roles is beneficial, since it combines and synchronizes it with other leaders in various areas of the society and closely integrates it with various social norms. As observed by Cameron Thies, the “trained” and experienced leader stands a greater chance of performing effective activities than a “rookie”, who adopts a few new roles (2009, p. 5). These often, due to the lack of experience, may be conflicting or incoherent on the specific level, which accounts for the fact that the complementary (main) role of a leader becomes diluted.

The role theory takes into consideration a series of analytical factors, namely social structures, the system of values, goals and norms preferred by the leader, including international agreements and treaties, formal and informal agreements, political ambitions or socio-economic needs. The application of the role theory to the research on international leadership allows us quite freely (depending on the needs) to examine the analyzed content through entering into or combining micro and macro spheres in the research, and also the transnational sphere, examples of which are the emigration or climate policies of Germany, which shape the actions of the EU.

What is equally important, the role theory (contrary to, for example, the assumptions of the realism theory) does not neglect small and medium-sized international actors, regarding all entities of international relations as important and making their individual contributions. Therefore it is possible to conduct analyses of both strong leaders of “dominant” type, average ones, such as “bridges” or small “negotiators”.

Thanks to the role theory researchers may explain not only the type and dynamics of leadership, but also its permanence and coherence. The analysis of “faithfulness” and compatibility in selected and played roles and the resulting assumptions of foreign policy allows us to state how much and to what extent it is a stable and credible (coherent) leader and to what extent it is not. The unquestionable proof of the implementation of this role is Germany, which has built its superpower status since the end of the WW2. Initially it aimed at regaining its international credibility and position in international structures (Konrad Adenauer), then it focused on internal uniformity (Helmut Kohl), to finally speak as the voice of the EU (Angela Merkel).

Moreover, the role theory gives a broad range of typologies of leadership and allows us to construct various, even individual models. Within it the researcher may concentrate on the interesting aspects they have selected, which, in cognitive terms or due to the assumed research goals, remain central to their research, for example, analyzing the leadership of Germany in the context of bilateral relations with Poland or building Germany-France decision-making tandem in Europe.

The role theory as a method of analyzing international leadership obviously has some disadvantages, for example we cannot exclude, as rightly pointed out by J. Zajac, that some leaders play their roles totally unaware of them or in the way which is not fully defined (2013, p. 17). The lack of transparency in this matter makes such a leader a difficult object of analysis and sometimes it is simply impossible to examine due to the lack of predictability of its roles. Also due to the number of internal and external conditions that international roles are subjected to, conducting research may turn out not only difficult, but also incomplete and separated from reality.

Roles are usually examined through the analysis of the foreign policy of international actors (*I, Me and the others*) and through the prism of its reception by others (*behaviour and expectation of the others*). It is often known only fragmentarily due to the strategy adopted by some leaders, consisting in hiding or disguising their actual political goals or even by applying the policy of intentional disinformation. Moreover, leaders who are “recipients” of roles usually have no access to the decision process of leaders who are “creators” of roles. This means that some roles are “played” based on speculations or predictions, which may additionally mislead and result in turbulences in the international sphere and deform the expected role (*role expectation*), introducing the element of conflict between it and the declared role (*role conception*) of the leader.

In spite of its numerous advantages and unquestionable drawbacks, the role theory as a research method is very rich and offers great contribution to the research on international leadership. Its flexibility and openness both to a series of various, interdisciplinary dependable and independent variables, taking into account statistical and dynamic categories in the micro, macro and supranational dimensions, as well as vertical and horizontal spheres, provides researchers with a lot of space and opportunities for conducting research. It also constitutes a huge intellectual challenge and a fascinating adventure with the phenomenon of international leadership. This is evidence by the amount of research in this area. On one portal where scientists upload their publications, we can find over half a million articles on “Germany’s political role”.

## References

1. Aggestam, L. (1999) Role Conceptions and the Politics of Identity in Foreign Policy, *ARENA Working Papers WP 99/8*. [Online]. Available from: [https://www.sv.uio.no/arena/english/research/publications/arena-working-papers/1994-2000/1999/wp99\\_8.htm](https://www.sv.uio.no/arena/english/research/publications/arena-working-papers/1994-2000/1999/wp99_8.htm) [Accessed 29/05/ 2019].
2. Antczak, A. (2012) *Role międzynarodowe Unii Europejskiej. Aspekty teoretyczne*, Warszawa: Vizja Press & IT.
3. Antczak-Burzan, A. (2013) Role Unii Europejskiej wobec Afryki Subsaharyjskiej, *Studia Europejskie*, nr 4, pp. 31-48.
4. Bartosiewicz, P. (2007) Zagadnienie ról międzynarodowych państw w internacjologii, *Polityka i Społeczeństwo*, 4/2007, pp. 7-15.
5. Beermann, M. (2014) *Plenarprotokoll 18/034*, Deutscher Bundestag, Stenografischer Bericht, 34. Sitzung, Berlin den. 9/05/2014.
6. Bieleń, S. (2015) Tożsamość uczestników stosunków międzynarodowych. In Zięba, R., Bieleń, S. And Zając, J. (eds.): *Teorie i podejścia badawcze w nauce o stosunkach międzynarodowych*, Warszawa: Wydział Dziennikarstwa i Nauk Politycznych Uniwersytet Warszawski, pp. 153-176.
7. Borkowski, P. J. (2009) Tożsamość międzynarodowa Unii w świetle koncepcji ról międzynarodowych, *Przegląd Europejski* nr 1, pp. 69-84.
8. En, Mnie (2019) Wałęsa wzywa Niemcy do prowadzenia Europy. *TVPINFO*. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.tvp.info/42783391/walesa-wzywa-niemcy-do-prowadzenia-europy> [Accessed 29/05/2019].
9. Gammel, C. (2017) Merkel ist die Schutzheilige der Autobranche. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/abgas-skandal-merkel-ist-die-schutzheilige-der-autobranche-1.3653658> [Accessed 27/05/2019].
10. Geppert, D. (2013) Halbe Hegemonie: Das deutsche Dilemma - Essay, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 6-7/2013, pp. 11-16.
11. Greven, L. (2018) Merkels Abschied. *Zeit On Line*. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2018-01/bundestkanzlerin-angela-merkel-karriere-cdu-sondierungsgespraeche-regierungsbildung/komplettansicht> [Accessed 31/05/ 2019].

12. Harnisch, S. (2011) Role theory. Operationalization of key concept. In Harnisch, S., Frank, C. And Maull, H. W. (eds.): *Role theory in International Relations*, New York: Routledge, pp. 7-15.
13. Harnisch, S. (2014) Przywództwo bez hegemonii. Rola Niemiec w czasie kryzysu euro. In SZLAJFER, H. (ed.): *Niemcy w Europie i w świecie, Sprawy Międzynarodowe* nr 2/2-14, pp. 27-51.
14. Henkel, H.-O. and Starbatty, J. (2016) *Niemcy na kozetkę! Dlaczego Angela Merkel ratuje świat, rujnując swój kraj?*, Warszawa: Kurhaus Publishing .
15. Holsti, K. J. (1970) National Role Conception in the Study of Foreign Policy, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 233-309.
16. Kane, J. (2016) Leadership and International politics, *Georgetown Journal of Asian Affairs*, pp. 5-13.
17. Kwiatkowska-Drożdż, A. (2012) Mocarstwo pragmatyczne, *Nowa Europa* 1 (12), pp. 155-167.
18. Lie, Dpa (2018), Mutter aller Probleme ist die Migration. *Spiegel Online*. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/horst-seehofer-laut-medienberichten-mutter-aller-probleme-ist-die-migration-a-1226724.html> [Accessed 31/05/2019].
19. Milczarek, D. (2003) Rola międzynarodowa Unii Europejskiej jako „mocarstwa niewojkowego”, *Studia Europejskie* nr 1., Centrum Europejskie Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, pp. 33-54.
20. Morgenthau, H. J. (2010) *Polityka między narodami. Walka o potęgę i pokój*, Warszawa: Difin.
21. Nabers, D. (2012) Identity and role change in international politics. In Harnisch, S., Frank, C. And Maull, H. M. (eds.): *Role theory in International relations*, New York: Routledge, pp. 74-92.
22. Neumann, I. B. and De Carvalho, B. (2015) Small states and status. In Neumann, I. B. and De Carvalho, B. (eds.): *Small States and Status Seeking. Norway's Quest for Higher Standing*, London - New York: Routledge, pp. 1-21.
23. Nye, J. S. (2012) *Przyszłość siły*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
24. Pietraś, Z. J. (1989) *Pojęcie i klasyfikacja ról międzynarodowych*, Lublin: UMCS.

25. Pietraś, Z. J. (2000), *Decydowanie polityczne*, Warszawa-Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
26. Rosenau, J. (2018) Pretorie i teorie polityki zagranicznej. In Schreiber, H. And Wojciuk, A. (eds.): *Stosunki międzynarodowe. Antologia tekstów źródłowych. Tom 1 korzenie dyscypliny- do 1989 roku*, Warszawa: WNPiSM UW, pp. 133-151.
27. Sarrazin, M. (2014) *Plenarprotokoll 18/034*, Deutscher Bundestag, Stenografischer Bericht, 34. Sitzung, Berlin den. 09/05/ 2014.
28. Sarrazin, T. (2010) *Deutschland schafft sich ab: Wie wir unser Land aufs Spiel setzen*, Berlin: DVA.
29. Schweller R. (1994) Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In, *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 72-107.
30. Siddi, M. (2018) A Contested Hegemon? Germany's Leadership in EU Relations with Russia, *German Politics*, pp. 1-23, DOI: 10.1080 / 09644008.2018.1551485.
31. Sikorski, R. (2011) Polska a przyszłość Unii Europejskiej, Przemówienie Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych na forum Niemieckiego Towarzystwa Polityki Zagranicznej. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.msz.gov.pl/resource/c2a33d88-7b8d-4fa5-8680-a67a4b2b38af:JCR> [Accessed 29/05/ 2019].
32. The Soft Power 30a (2019). [Online]. Available from: <https://softpower30.com/country/germany/> [Accessed 21/02/2019].
33. The Soft Power 30b (2019). [Online]. Available from: [https://softpower30.com/country/germany/?country\\_years=2016%2C2017%2C2018](https://softpower30.com/country/germany/?country_years=2016%2C2017%2C2018) [Accessed 21/02/ 2019].
34. Thewes H. (2001), *Germany, Civilian Power and the New Europe: Enlarging NATO and the European Union*, Springer.
35. Thies, C. (2009) Role theory and Foreign Policy, International Studies Association Compendium Project, *Foreign Policy Analysis section*. [Online]. Available from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228985348\\_Role\\_Theory\\_and\\_Foreign\\_Policy](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228985348_Role_Theory_and_Foreign_Policy) [Accessed 02/06/2019].
36. Thies, C. (2017) Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis in Latin America, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, pp. 662-681.

37. Turner R. H. (2002) *Handbook of Sociological Theory*, New York: Kluwer Academic.
38. Turner, R. H. (1990) Role change, *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 16, 87-110.
39. Waltz, K. N. (2001) *Man, the State and War. A theoretical analysis*, New York: Columbia University Press.
40. Wendt, A. (1995) Constructing International Politics, *International Security*, Vol. 20 No. 1, pp. 71-81.
41. Wolff-Powęska, A. (2004) Polska-Niemcy. Partnerstwo z dystansu, *Nauka* 4/2004, Poznań, pp. 49-64.
42. Zając, J. (2010) *Role Unii Europejskiej Afryki Północnej i Bliskiego Wschodu*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo UW.
43. Zając, J. (2013) Role międzynarodowe państwa średniego - aspekty teoretyczne. In Cziomer, E. (ed.): *Strategiczne wyzwania międzynarodowej roli Polski w drugiej dekadzie XXI w.*, *Krakowskie Studia Międzynarodowe*, nr 4 (X), Kraków, pp. 15-27.
44. Zając, J. (2014) Efektywność ról międzynarodowych Unii Europejskiej, *Rocznik Integracji Europejskiej* nr 8, pp. 49-61, DOI: 10.14746/rie.2014.8.4.
45. Zając, J. (2015) Teoria ról międzynarodowych. In Zięba, R., Bieleń, S. and Zając, J. (eds.): *Teorie i podejścia badawcze w nauce o stosunkach międzynarodowych*, Warszawa: Wydział Dziennikarstwa i Nauk Politycznych Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego.



DOI: 10.24193/OJMNE.2020.33.09

## DENOUNCING CORRUPTION THROUGH VISUAL MEANS: CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVES IN POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIA

**Alexandra OPREA, PhD candidate**

Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Bucharest, Romania  
École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, France  
[oprea.alexandra@fspub.unibuc.ro](mailto:oprea.alexandra@fspub.unibuc.ro)

---

**Abstract:** *In the context of the anti-corruption social movements in post-communist Romania, what role do local civil society associations, and more specifically activism play in the articulation of corruption as a public problem? This translates into the desire to overcome the idea of corruption as a heavy Balkan heritage that explains the existence of a contestation movement only through external pressure. Therefore, this study argues that through a specific form of activism, Funky Citizens, a very active NGO on the anti-corruption stage, is an example of a modernizing agent in post-communist Romania. To do so, this socio-historical study uses concepts and perspectives borrowed from the theoretical field of pragmatic sociology instrumentalized for the pursuit of apprehending artistic activism mobilized in the anti-corruption fight. The argument put forward is that the specificity of the Romanian case can be grasped through visual means of expression of actors that promote this specific modernizing project. So, this research reveals a new attitude towards corruption, different from that present during the first 20 years after the revolution, which implies the need to investigate its references to the recent past. Finally, this contribution reflects on the usefulness of activism as a new language to channel ideas, in the pursuit of contributing to the articulation of a certain type of public memory of communism.*

---

**Keywords** Post-communism, Romania, Modernizing Agents, Anti-Corruption, Activism.

### Introduction

This article analyzes the visual strategies of a Romanian NGO, engaged in the local anti-corruption civil society movement that emerged in the last decade. A lot has been written during the past years in an attempt to better apprehend the phenomenon of political corruption. Our approach has grown out of a basic dissatisfaction with two dominant approaches on the matter, the culturalist perspective on corruption and the legal one. The latter focuses on anti-corruption laws and policies as indicators of progress in this field while the former considers corruption a “cultural pathology inherited from a long history” (Engels et al., 2017, 5).

So, if corruption is a “normalized” phenomenon in Romanian society, how can we explain that some people find it “abnormal”? A key to understanding lies in the dominant assumption that the condemnation of corruption would be an effect of the external pressure of the European Union in this direction. This is the thesis of external conditionality (Hein, 2015; Bratu, 2018; Văduva 2016). This research favors another approach, which is that of an endogenous transformation of the Romanian society, according to which the change does not take place exclusively under external pressure. On the contrary, we consider that local initiatives do exist and that they contribute to the crystallization of corruption as a problem on the public agenda.

By adopting a Durkheimian vision of corruption, which implies considering it a social phenomenon that presents certain regularity, and therefore certain “normalcy” (Durkheim, 1960, 65-72), we aim to grasp the local critique of the phenomenon of corruption. So, what are the operations through which local actors contribute to the process of denormalization of corruption? From a pragmatic point of view, to increase their visibility social actors need mediation. So, to apprehend this local color of anti-corruption, we analyze the work of a Romanian NGO, Funky Citizens, and two of their artistic initiatives to approach politics through visual representations, namely *Mari Corupți* (Big Corrupti Figures) and *Galeria trocului electoral* (The Gallery of electoral barter). This article argues that through a specific form of *artivism*, Funky Citizens, a very active actor on the anti-corruption stage, is an example of a certain type of *modernizing agent* (Blitstein & Lemieux, 2018) in post-communist Romania.

Artivism can be briefly defined as “a hybrid neologism that signifies work created by individuals who see an organic relationship between art and activism.” (Sandoval & Latorre, 2008:82). By evaluating art as a transformative experience, Suzanne Nossel describes these means of expression as a “valid tool for change” (2016, 104). Sharing this same belief, this socio-historical study uses concepts and perspectives borrowed from the theoretical field of pragmatic sociology instrumentalized for the pursuit of apprehending artistic activism mobilized in the anti-corruption fight. Therefore, this essay analyzes the visual means used by this association to publicly denounce corruption, by presenting it as an *abnormal* phenomenon. Funky Citizens is an openly committed apolitical association, that was never involved in the organization of street anti-corruption movements in Bucharest. Thus, their invitation to action is channeled through alternative means of expression that focus more on education. The two projects mentioned above are relevant for the present study due to their *modus operandi*. This refers to collaborations with

visual artists in order to instrumentalize new languages to channel the anti-corruption project, which is an original approach in the field. Further on, perceiving this social actor as a modernizing agent allows us to investigate its references to the recent past and its attempt to contribute to the articulation of a certain type of public memory, understood as a critical approach to memorial practices. This involves a certain dynamic of the artistic remembrance, always subject to reinterpretations and public affirmation.

The data used to answer our research question was collected during ethnographic observation at this association's headquarters but also on different sites of their projects, in Bucharest, between January 2019 and February 2020. Additionally, this field research allowed us to conduct interviews with the president of the association and some other members responsible for the projects. The empirical evidence was obtained, besides interviews with the NGO members, from the press articles around the launch of the two projects. Furthermore, two Romanian post-revolutionary publications were analyzed, the first Romanian political science journal, *Sfera Politicii*, and a newspaper, *Revista 22*. This was a publication associated with the first NGO officially recognized after the 1989 Revolution, *Grupul de Dialog Social (The Social Dialog Group)*, a civil society association that aimed to examine the challenges confronting the new democracy. Despite their reduced popularity, the two publications offer a space for intellectual debate towards the main emerging social problems, which prompts us to claim the possibility of questioning the place of corruption within the framework of their publishing agenda. Both of them were available in paper format at that time and are digitalized today. The first part of the study uses this data as a support of our attempt to present the historicity of corruption in Romania.

The approach this article follows to address these issues can be structured in three main parts. The first part starts with an overview of the anti-corruption fight in post-communist Romania. This section exposes the endogenous buildup of corruption as a social problem, identifying three approaches of the phenomenon, presented chronologically. This historicity of corruption will allow, in the second section of this study, to illustrate why conceiving anti-corruption fight as a conflict between different types of modernity allows for a better understanding of local specificities. The third part focuses on the analysis of two projects promoted by Funky Citizens through the use of activism in the anti-corruption fight.

### **The local build-up of a public problem**

The 1990s were marked in ex-communist countries by the slow privatization of the state's property. This privatization is considered to be "the primary source of corruption" (Chiriac, 1997, 3) to which are added, "the subordinate economy, tax evasion, influence peddling and clientelism" (Chiriac, 1997, 3). The Romanian case makes no exception. During the first years after the Revolution, corruption was treated as a general state of affairs in post-communist Romania. We can, therefore, refer to it, as Ernesto Laclau would have said, as a *floating signifier* (Laclau, 2008).

A thorough examination of the media discourse during the 1990s in Romania points at a general attitude that makes corruption a defining trait of Romanian culture and history. Overall, two types of approaches to this phenomenon can be identified in the media. One can be summed up by this quotation: an "abstract notion, a state of affairs of a society, we have always had corruption, but we have never really had corrupt figures." (Chiriac, 1997, 3). Thus, corruption was seen as a second nature of parliamentarians, bankers, capitalists, politicians of the government party, ministers, and politicians of coalition parties. This phenomenon was therefore presented as a standard of normality for the transitional period, which was supposed to be quickly overpassed. So, the press this investigation analyzed regarded corruption as reminiscence of the communist era; often understood as nepotism, or another threat to democracy. However, this observation is not followed by an attempt to define the phenomenon, it always remains a reality with an axiomatic value. As a consequence, this first post-communist approach of corruption in the media can be conceptualized in terms of normalcy, since it describes corruption as the product of a burdensome heritage, specific to the Balkan region, that societies cannot escape from.

By the end of 1996, when general elections were organized, corruption became more and more visible in the media. The alternation in power, marked by the victory of the *Democratic Convention*<sup>1</sup>, brought forward a new president, Emil Constantinescu, who openly assumed the fight against corruption as the main objective of his mandate. From 1997 on, the subject received greater media coverage, which led to a more critical approach of the matter.

From this moment on, corruption was associated with people, more precisely politicians and businessmen. One discourse emphasized the existence of a so-called "republic of cousins"

---

<sup>1</sup> A grand coalition of former so called "historical" parties, of center-right orientation.

(Hurezeanu, 1996, 3), perpetuated after the Revolution through, the FSN<sup>2</sup> governance first, followed by FDSN and PSD<sup>3</sup>, and commissioned by local barons. This formula refers to the communist clientele system, which, through the characters and structures inherited by the National Salvation Front, managed to find a place in the new democratic republic.

This brings us to the second approach of corruption, which comes up against the normalizing one. It's what we call the *fatalistic* attitude towards corruption, a political and social phenomenon that Romania cannot escape from. Even though this subject gradually finds its place on the public agenda, the way of conceiving and explaining the existence of this phenomenon remains always linked to culturalism. Criticism of corrupt politicians does not, therefore, go hand in hand with an attempt to define and understand the phenomenon. On the contrary, the fatalistic attitude is adopted to explain the lack of solutions in this area of anti-corruption.

Starting from the 2000s, a change in approaching the matter has been noticed. Thus, corruption gradually acquired momentum to cause scandal and to mobilize the masses. In 2004, Traian Băsescu won the presidential elections, on a program focused on the anti-corruption theme. On October the 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015, the death of a police officer, member of Gabriel Oprea's escort, the minister of internal affairs at the time, provoked the emergence of a contestation movement, denouncing the existence of the minister's clandestine agenda and the use of his escort for private interests. "Say no to the abuse of power" was the motto that followed this scandal, used in public sphere to denounce this type of corruption.

Then, on October the 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015, the fire that started at a nightclub, *Colectiv*, resulting in 64 victims and 147 injured, led to a series of public protests with one common goal: fighting corruption. Under the catchy slogan "Corruption kills", that shows a new attitude toward this phenomenon, civil society denounced politicians who had been found guilty of endangering the lives of citizens by authorizing the operation of a nightclub that did not meet safety standards. The following big street protests ultimately led to the overthrow of the social-democratic government of Victor Ponta. This crescendo culminated in 2017, when Romania witnessed the biggest street

---

<sup>2</sup> National Salvation Front, the party of President Ion Iliescu, who is in power until the organization of the first free elections, associated by opponents with the former communist nomenklatura.

<sup>3</sup>In 1992, there was a split within the FSN, following which a faction of those members how were close to Ion Iliescu formed a new political party, the National Salvation Democratic Front (FDSN). This political formation changed its name again in 1993 to become the Party of Social Democracy in Romania (PDSR) and thus to assume more openly the social-democratic character. It was the forerunner of the current Social Democratic Party.

protests since the 1989 Revolution. Hundreds of thousands of Romanians took to the streets to protest the decrees of the social democratic government that were adopted clandestinely in January 2017, during nighttime, to dismantle the laws of justice. In this case, the main claims of manifestations concerned the fight against corrupt political elites, and more specifically a reaction to the government's decisions to slow down the fight against corruption.<sup>4</sup> These protests are considered to be very unusual, in the context of a country where this type of phenomenon has been marginal until very recently (Iancu, 2018, 392).

Scientific studies that consider culture an irreducible element of the development of a certain human behavior (Rozin, 2006, 158) arrive at fairly *fatalistic* conclusions trying to come up with explanations for the strong civic engagement of recent years in the Romanian anti-corruption fight. This is the case of Michael Hein, among others, who, in 2015, noted how the progress made in recent years in anti-corruption had been only reflected in standards, but not in practices. According to his main hypothesis,

*“the configuration of formal rules and the dynamics of formal institutions significantly influences the consequences of anti-corruption efforts, but not (or not materially) the extent of corruption. The latter can primarily be explained by informal factors such as political culture, persistent patrimonial networks, historical legacies, poor economic capacities and high economic inequality.”* (2015, 772)

While corruption appears to be systemic throughout society, it is also denounced by certain social categories of the same group. Therefore, the question arises if the anti-corruption social movements are only caused by the existence of an external standard, imposed after the accession to the European Union, or is it rather a criticism endogenous to society? These are some of the challenges that we have in mind in our attempt to see if the virulent anti-corruption criticism of the past few years has been generated only under external pressure, or there has been a local discourse, or maybe both.

---

<sup>4</sup> Key events impactful for the anti-corruption movement were identified by Jens Ivo Engels, Silvia Marton and Frédéric Monier, in “Des politiques blancscommeneige”, *La Vie des Idées*, 2017, p. 6

### **The cut down of the social space**

After the 1989 Revolutions, the main cleavage that dominated the political scene in all the emergent eastern democracies did not fit the well-known “right-left” dichotomy. As Anthony Todorov points out, during the 1990s, the main cleavage in these countries revolved around such notions as *neo-communist* and *anti-communist* (2019, 35). This founding cleavage of the new political regime plays the role of a substitute for any other ideological positioning. Thus, according to Cristian Preda, this cleavage was defined as opposition in terms of legitimacy, in the context in which the parties that emerged after 1989 claimed, on one hand the Revolutionary heritage, and on the other hand the tradition or the Romanian historical legacy (2005, 71-74). An ethnographic study conducted in the early 2000s came to similar conclusions. More precisely, it claims that *neo-communism* versus *anti-communism* cleavage remains a central benchmark around which new forms of conceiving Romanian political identities are articulated (Zirelli, 2013, 212–229).

This same phenomenon can be observed in the press of the 1990s. From this point of view, in order to sum up, considering the initial complexity of the Romanian post-revolutionary political scene, the opinion formulated by Alexandru Radu seems quite relevant and revealing. He considers legitimate to speak of “a Romanian specificity of the communist-anticommunist dichotomy, a dichotomy that did not exist before 1989, and then manifested itself through the opposition between *the neo-communist revolutionaries of the FSN* and *the historical parties*” (2010).

This founding cleavage of the post-revolutionary democratic political life, which revolved around ties to the communist political regime, was transformed, in the absence of any right-left ideological crystallization, into a new type of rhetoric. As scientific research has shown, this cleavage slowly shifted, by the end of the 1990s, only to make room for a new one that gravitated around the theme of corruption.

*“Despite the reformist drive, the new anti-corruption discourse did not entail visible outcomes, but produced rather a division within the political system between the ‘conservatives’ (those skeptical of the political neutrality of such policies) vs. the ‘reformists’, now rebranded as exponents of ‘Europeanism’”* (Iancu, 2018, 404).

This article leaves behind the approach that makes the fight against corruption a theme that, from the end of the 1990s, opposed “conservatives” to “reformists”. Instead, a socio-historical



approach of this matter makes it possible to conceive corruption as a *source of conflict*, which leads to an extreme simplification of the social space, by opposing two camps, two social groups, therefore two types of *modernity*.

By using the term *modernity*, we do not adhere to the most developed paradigms that have historically instrumentalized the word. Thus, this concept is not attached to the evolutionist paradigm, neither to the post-colonial visions on modernity. In contrast, it is used according to a relatively new research program that emerged more recently, by the end of 2010, and whose main characteristics were presented in a special number of the scientific magazine *Politix* (Blistein & Lemieux, 2018). In this sense, modernity doesn't have any ontological attribute, but a pure methodological utility. Therefore, it is an instrument that helps social scientists in their research.

Briefly, the idea of modernity is understood here as a collective idealization of what a society should be (Blitstein, 2018). As a consequence, the task of the researcher is to identify the *conflicts* that occur between these different ideals which are closely linked to the social groups that produce and promote them (Lemieux, 2018, 127). This involves the existence in a given society of *modernizing agents*, who can be any type of agent who has developed the consciousness that a historical rupture has taken place and therefore wants a social transformation to occur, according to a determined project of society (Blistein & Lemieux, 2018, 20). Their account is worth quoting at length.

*“The modernizing agents have in common the development of an awareness of living in a society which has experienced a break with its past and which now aims to reach a certain ideal of society. Such awareness based on the idea of a "project" of society, as such resolutely oriented towards the future, is radically different from the mentality specific to societies in which normative references are anchored in a mythical past and where political obsession, far from being a change, is its limitation and sometimes even its denial”* (Blitstein & Lemieux, 2018, 19)

Nevertheless, imagining the future supposes a certain stance towards the past. For that reason, in analyzing different types of modernizing agents we find it important to investigate their approach to *public memory*. Johann Michel argues that "memories can be the subject of controversy, of disputes in public arenas which can refer to grammars (to tell, to argue, to interpret ...) which are instantiated in a situation to justify one memory order rather than another" (Michel,



2015, 2). Thus, we adhere to this opinion that uses the concept of public memory to design a more reflexive approach of the social actors to the past. This means that remembrance practices are always subject to change and reinterpretation (Oprea, 2019).

Opposing conservatives to progressives is a very common attitude in the political field. However, according to Cyril Lemieux, this is a limiting approach because it denies to one social group the ambition to define their vision on the future, hence, to embody a modernizing ideal. (2018, 134). This change of view produces, in the Romanian case, new categories. The first type of modernity that can be identified is what we call *post-revolutionary modernity* produced by the FSN, that considers corruption an external emanation, a false problem imposed by the European Union standard. Thus, the future of Romanian democracy would not be influenced by the presence or absence of this political phenomenon. The second project was the *anti-communist modernity* that slowly shifted into the anti-corruption one. For these modernizing agents, corruption, as communism, is a major threat to democracy and to social justice. To promote their values, they take the European standard as a source of legitimacy. As mentioned earlier, this study argues that through a specific form of *artivism*, Funky Citizens is an exponent of this anti-corruption modernizing agent.

### **Artivism as a form of political art**

In this context, artivism practices that engage with anti-corruption discourses in Romania can be thought of in relation to the modernizing agent perspective. According to Sarah Mekdjian, “artivism brings together diverse creations, whether they take the form of verbal or visual signs, graffiti, maps, installations or performances, that all have social change as their political purpose.” (2018, 1).

If political art is art that addresses political subjects, in striking contrast,

“‘activist art’ also explores political topics but is distinguished from political art in its greater concern with the politics involved in both the creation and the reception of the art. Activist artists actively seek public participation in both areas, and generally do not make a sharp distinction between the process or creating work and the product. Activist art is, therefore, political in two senses, while political art is political only in its subject matter.” (Mullin, 2003)

To put it short, as Lucy Lippard observes in her *Trojan Horses: Activist Art and Power*, “‘Political’ art tends to be socially concerned and ‘activist’ art tends to be socially involved - not a value judgment so much as a personal choice. The former’s work is commentary or analysis, while the latter’s artworks within its context, with its audience” (1984, 6). This perspective is useful to this study as it emphasizes the fundamental role played by action in this relationship, where art and activism empower each other. For Lippard, art has a “pragmatic nature” and therefore activism is not necessarily a means of expression for professional artists, but a means of expression and creation for all those who have an ideal for the future of their society.

A joint research project of the University of Madrid and the University of Nottingham-Trent that explored the educational potential of activism concluded that this form of political participation is a “new language”, or a “way of channeling ideas” (Aladro-Vico et al, 2018, 12).

*“After several weeks working with activists and young university students, activism turned out to be a fundamental educational form, in addition to a language and way of communicating and expressing autonomy, dissidence, and opposition” (14)*

Selmin Kara & Camilla Møhring Reestorff, referring to documentary activism, explain that this form of activism “adapts ‘symbols or mechanisms created by the media’ to gain a voice and visibility in the public sphere.” (2015, 4). When it comes to the audience, engaging with it in open dialogue is an important characteristic that activism has in common with all other types of activism, and that overcomes aesthetic values.

Mindi Rhoades (2015) underlines reflective qualities of activism, by defining it as “an art based critical civic praxis”. More specifically, “building a community of care around common concerns” (321), building connections and critical consciousness of the individual power of agency, are the vital components of activism that will also guide this present study.

### **The activist element in the anti-corruption fight**

Having seen how activist practices can engage with political themes, this section turns to the case study, a very active association on the Romanian anti-corruption scene, Funky Citizens. This NGO was founded in 2012 by its current president - a former member of Transparency International. She laid the foundations of the NGO with the financial support of the Embassy of the United States of America, in Bucharest, after winning a competition for citizen anti-corruption

initiatives and institutional transparency. So, this organization has the ambition to be a “grass-rooted”<sup>5</sup> organization that is active in the field of transparency (Open Government, Open Data), anti-corruption and justice. Their target audience is mainly made of:

*“young people, which means less than 45 years old, very active, coming from the urban environment, educated, hipsters, young professionals, middle class, but not from an economic point of view, or not only from an economic point of view but rather from their interests’ point of view. It means people who are not worried about tomorrow, and because of that, we think they should be interested in public affairs, in the well-being of society. We often wonder if our approach is not too elitist but, after all, our resources are too limited... Our philosophy is therefore to invest in these people to whom we come more easily, so that they become our partners. Then, once they are convinced, and well equipped, they can pass the information on to their families, friends, relatives, in communities that otherwise would have been inaccessible to us.”*<sup>6</sup>

During the past two years an opening up to a younger public can be noticed, mainly students, through civic education programs. These are high school students, under the age of 18, but also students under the age of 22-23. More precisely, this organization focuses mainly on civic education and development of critical thinking of the target public described above. Thus, their main objective is to create a network of individuals that can, later on, become their contacts and partners. In the beginning, their actions focused on the public in Bucharest, mainly because of a lack of resources, but in 2019 they tried to spread their network. *Caravana Civică (The Civic Caravan)* is a project that allowed this NGO to travel to 21 Romanian smaller towns. While their public remains urban, this expansion allowed them to grasp different types of local themes and to articulate their national ones in other cities than Bucharest.

To help make this discussion more concrete, we will focus on two examples of public visual articulation of the anti-corruption discourse. *Mari Corupti* (Big Corrupt Figures) is Funky Citizens’ initiative to transform all notorious political figures investigated for corruption by the National Anticorruption Directorate (DNA) into playing cards. In addition, this project offers an educational platform that explains, in an accessible way, what corruption is (from a legal point of

---

<sup>5</sup>Interview with the association’s president - October 27, 2019.

<sup>6</sup>Idem.

view). By keeping track of big corruption scandals, it also aims to offer an image of the impact of this phenomenon in Romania, contributing to the endogenous history of anticorruption<sup>7</sup>. Hence, they created the website - a database - that came out of the need to keep track of all mandatory sentences given by the anti-corruption Prosecutor's office (DNA)<sup>8</sup>. Moreover, in collaboration with Wanda Hutira, a graphic artist, they designed The *Big corrupt figures kit*, a series of collectible cards with an album (in the form of a metaphorical prison) that were commercialized together with the DoR (*Decât o Revistă*)<sup>9</sup> magazine in the pilot phase. Afterwards, the kit remained available for purchase on the website. The official release of this project took place at an Urban Art Festival in Bucharest, called Street Delivery, between the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> of June 2015.

Figure 1: The Sticker's Structure



Source: Facebook Page of Mari Corupti.

Some visual representations of the project are worth discussing so as to understand the strategies used. In Figure 1, one can notice an example of one of these collectible cards, part of an initial 20-piece set. The card illustrates a graphic representation of a “great corrupt figure”, the

<sup>7</sup> <https://maricorupti.ro>

<sup>8</sup> Direcția Națională Anticorupție (National Anticorruption Directorate).

<sup>9</sup> This kit was distributed with number 21 of this magazine, June 2015, <https://www.dor.ro/ce-inseamna-sa-fii-abonat-la-dor/>

office he/she held at the time of committing the crime, the initial duration of the sentence (without counting the later requests for probation), party affiliation and a small symbol representing the act of corruption. This set of cards is accompanied by a legend, where each act of corruption is ironically represented by a symbol, that together make up a small, illustrated dictionary of corruption. In the example above, the symbol stands for complicity in giving and receiving a bribe. Two shaking hands symbolize complicity, while the bribe is showed by a slice of cheese, a Romanian slang term for money.



Source: <https://www.libertatea.ro/stiri/galeria-trocului-electoral-expozitie-a-mitei-date-de-partide-in-campanii-2783136>

The idea of this visual format of the database was to present the main project in a more humorous manner, and to infuse the anti-corruption theme with a pop-culture flavor (Pojoranu, 2015).

*Galeria trocului electoral* (The Gallery of electoral barter - Figure 2) was exhibited in a hub in Bucharest, showcasing many objects used as electoral bribes, part of another project of the NGO called *Vot nu troc* (Vote not barter). This project aimed to combat the phenomenon of electoral barter through a network of independent electoral observers for the presidential elections that took place on November 10 and 24, 2019. This project had two parts. "A gallery which exhibits many objects that constituted the raw material for electoral barter. The purpose was to show how easy it is to buy a vote and, therefore, how important it is to observe the elections" (VotNuTroc -

Fii cu ochii pe vot, 2020). This gallery opened its doors on October 22 and closed on November 2 – taking place during the electoral campaign for the first round of the 2019 presidential elections.

Form the very beginning the visitor of the gallery was well prepared for the experience that he/she was about to have. A short note, displayed at the entrance, read:

*“Vote = barter? No. But that’s what the candidates think. We have identified hundreds of cases of electoral barter in the past 30 years. From lighters, to pens, slippers or boots, phones, drugs, food, prescription glasses, bedspread, pantyhose or even underwear and the list goes on. We have selected the most common ones; we have interpreted them as installation art, and we welcome you to the Gallery of electoral bribe!”*

As the welcome note shows, this was a space that had the ambition to create a temporary anti-electoral corruption museum<sup>10</sup> aiming to provoke social commitment. Therefore, this gallery was supplemented by the second part of this project that dealt with the actual electoral observation, through a network of observers. As this article limits its scope to visual representations of anti-corruption practices, the analysis only takes into account the first part of the project.

### **A new language to channel the anti-corruption project**

The work of Funky Citizens can be thought of as an example of activism, although discursively, the members of this association don’t describe themselves as artists. They collaborate though, with several visual artists that help them illustrate some of their ideas and reach out to their audience. Thus, activism can, in this specific case, become an instrument that helps explain, analyze and most importantly show the universality of a certain type of human action.

For the *Mari Corrupti project*, Funky Citizens collaborated with several illustrators that took care of the visual part of the project, to make it more attractive, more appealing to a non-expert public and easier to remember. They also have an open ongoing call for future collaboration with possible interested graphic artists. Moreover, their exhibition makes use of artistic means of expression in two different ways. First of all, the NGO collaborates with artists for setting out the actual space of the gallery. Secondly, a gift shop was set up as part of the project, and “artists such

---

<sup>10</sup>Here you can find a virtual guide of the gallery: <https://ocurus.com/tour/Mzg1MA==>

as Dan Perjovschi, Wanda Hutira, Diana Papuc, Victor Firan, George Popa donated reinterpreted objects of the electoral exchange as they were imagining it.” (Oprea, 2019). This helps elucidate the relationship that is established in this case between activism and art. To a great degree, this NGO instrumentalizes artistic means because they facilitate, as Girma Negash writes, “the comprehension of political abstraction because of the vocabulary that is availed to us in the tools and modes we have borrowed from myth, symbols, and figures of speech” (2004, 197). Moreover, this association takes advantage of artistic means of creation and expression in the interest of mobilizing citizens.

*“We started from a real tension: the electoral barter cannot be stopped by the average citizen, but we could encourage a type of valuable community and social behavior: participating as an observer at elections, something that would help a clean vote. I believe very much in the value of the small good: each one of us (realistically, if as many of us) would do a small good deed, then a bigger good deed would happen. Precisely of this type of thinking we wanted to talk about in our campaign for recruiting observers for Funky Citizens” (Chirițescu, 2019).*

As the head of strategy for the campaign puts it, art can have a pragmatic role. It is used here as a means of raising awareness of the spread of the electoral barter as political behavior in the pursuit of social support for electoral observation. Even more, art is deployed as a device to provide financial aid. Commercializing *the Big corrupt figures kit* is, for one of the members of the association, a source of income, meant to ensure the financial independence of the association. It can also be, later on, reinvested in other anti-corruption projects (Pojoranu, 2015). The artworks sold in the gift shop of the gallery are intended to help raise money for ensuring support for the electoral observers during the election day.

If activism is a new language, what types of ideas is it channeling and what other type of action it encourages? Funky Citizens is, as we argued, an example of anticorruption modernizing agent, therefore, the time has come to identify the main characteristic of its modernizing project.

Above all, it signals a change in attitude towards corruption. If compared to the normalizing and fatalistic approach, that marked, as we argue, the first post-communist decade in Romania, this new way of seeing the phenomenon is a less passive one. More precisely, this modernizing project involves action, with the long-term aim of social change, of making corruption an abnormal



political behavior. In this sense, *the Big Corrupt figures* was conceived as an homage to the National Anticorruption Directorate, to show their support and help include one day this critique in the public grammar (Lemieux, 2018). There was a time in Romania, not so long ago, when one could have felt powerless facing the spread of this type of behavior among politicians. Nowadays, the activist world shows there are plenty of things that you can do, all you need is perseverance (Pojoranu, 2015).

No less interesting, this project describes corruption as a source of conflict that implies positioning. Thus, an ideal society is liberated from this burden, where unjust politicians and public figures are punished accordingly. Although positioning has a political ring attached, in this case, the anti-corruption fight transcends political parties and old ideologies. While openly assuming where they stand, for Funky Citizens it is very important to publicly emphasize their antipathy to any political affiliation. They have no political color, they are on the citizens' side, trying to leave behind a memorial of corruption, during the eternal transition from totalitarianism to democracy (Maricorupti - Despre, 2020). This reinforces our hypothesis that this new political cleavage that gravitates around the theme of corruption goes beyond the existing partisan affiliation or ideologies. In the constant challenge to understand this anti-corruption modernizing ideal, this fragment shows us the extent of what we have just identified as a preeminent feature.

*“Why would someone collect corrupt figures?”*

*Because you like the way they are drawn, because ‘you’re not on the bear’s side’, but on the anti-corruption fighters’ side, like all decent people are, so you’re happy to see a ‘Dan Voiculescu’ card with ‘10 years’ written on it. And also, because one day you’ll have grandchildren, and you’ll like to be able to show them this insectarium that displays all the country’s ‘pests’” (Pojoranu, 2015)*

Last but not least, this anti-corruption program is an educational one. More precisely, this is consistent to the desire to contribute through alternative education means to the build-up of active citizenship, as mentioned at the beginning of this sub-section. Overall, education is a primordial objective of this NGO in all their projects. In the selected cases this rhymes with a desire to contribute to the articulation of a certain type of public memory. The examples previously quoted back up this statement. Besides this openly assumed pledge, imagining the present situation



as an insectarium shows the desire to make sure that corrupt politicians will become a memory, yet an unforgettable one.

*“We collect big corrupt figures to remember this historical moment because 5 years ago we weren’t able to imagine that mister Adrian Năstase or mister George Copos will ever be convicted. They couldn’t imagine it either and here they are today facing this uncomfortable reality.”* (Pojoranu, 2015)

This vocation is clearer in the case of the *Gallery of the electoral barter*, perceived since the beginning, both by the public and by the participants as an original type of museum. “Funky Citizens organized a ‘museum’ of the electoral bribe. So, it becomes history” (Bunea, 2019). This is a simple and concise statement that sums up another attempt of this organization to contribute to the writing of a history of corruption in Romania. Therefore, to this NGO, corruption is not a defining trait of the Romanian culture, but more likely a threat to democracy that needs to be acknowledged. Progress in this direction has been made, so their role is to keep track of the achievements while trying to convince more citizens to support of their modernizing ideal.

### **Concluding remarks and future leads**

In conclusion, it might be worth restating the general argument of this article. In attempting to grasp the actions through which local Romanian actors contribute to the process of de-normalization of corruption, this study argued that through a specific form of *artivism*, Funky Citizens is an example of *modernizing agent* in post-communist Romania. Having used a socio-historical method to address this question, this research aimed to challenge the dominant approach on the matter. This translates into the desire to overcome the idea of corruption as a heavy Balkan heritage that explains the existence of a contestation movement only through external pressure. The argument put forward was that the specificity of the Romanian case could be grasped through the consideration of activist means of expression of the actors that promote this modernizing project.

From a theoretical perspective, we argued that the example of this NGO showed the usefulness of the modernizing agent framework of analysis. More precisely, it allows the

consideration of all types of Romanian political specificities, by overcoming more common analytical categories such as “right” and “left”, “conservatives” and “progressives”, and so on. This shows that the theme of corruption is a new source of conflict that produces new cleavages.

It is necessary to start by saying that this contribution focused, through the example of Funky Citizens, only on the anti-communist, later on anti-corruption modernity project (detailed in the second section of this article). The stretch of this endeavor is such that it showcased the actions of this type of actor, mobilized in the attempt to publicly denounce corruption as an “abnormal” political behavior, a shift in paradigm compared to the 90’s and the early 2000. Therefore, the analysis of the local built-up of corruption as a public problem served as a basis for the description of the emergence and the dynamic of this modernizing ideal for the Romanian Society. On the basis of the presented evidence, what kinds of preliminary conclusions seem warranted regarding the operations through which Funky Citizens contribute to the denormalization of corruption?

In attempting to use artistic means of expression to deindividualize corruption in Romania, this NGO promotes the central idea of the existence of a systemic problem. Shortly, Funky Citizens proposes a central modernizing vector, that focuses on blaming the systemic corruption for social injustice and malfunctions. It creates thus, a space for collective reflection and debate through their projects, that have an educational vocation. First of all, this art based critical civic praxis puts forward the individual capacity of agency, in the relationship with the state’s institutions but also on day to day basis. This goes hand in hand with the consolidation of certain type of public memory of corruption expressed via the idea of museum and gallery. Therefore, these initiatives not only have a growing importance when it comes to displaying the spread of this phenomenon, but they also keep track of all the work that has been done for the achievement of the modernizing ideal.

This type of artistic anti-corruption project is far from being unique. The anti-corruption museum in Bangkok, the unofficial Ukrainian museum of corruption, *El Museo de la Corruptción* in Paraguay are only a few well-known examples. Therefore, the present study does not claim the Romanian initiatives in this respect to be standalone. However, taking into account the activist scene, the intention was to show the specificities of the endogenous articulation of this type of project, against forced generalizations.

Girma Negash argued that “intellectuals and artists everywhere assume a critical role in society because of their privileged position, and they possess the imagination and skills to create

narratives, pictures, and images that construct and reconstruct political ideas and meaning” (2004, 191). Being guided by the same conviction, this study considered activist art a manifestation of this local color. Yet, this doesn’t exclude the possibility of certain variety of anti-corruption movements. On the contrary, this transnational perspective could reveal certain similarities and even more specificities and provide material for some preliminary comparative reflections.

### Acknowledgement

This research was supported by a grant of Ministry of Research and Innovation, CNCS – UEFISCDI, project number PN-III-P1-1.1 – TE 2016 – 0346, within PNCDI III.

### References

1. Aladro-Vico, E., Jivkova-Semova, D. and Bailey, O., 2018. Artivism: A new educative language for transformative social action. *Comunicar*, 26(57), pp. 09-18.
2. Blitstein, P. and Lemieux, C., 2018. Comment rouvrir la question de la modernité? *Politix*, 123(3), pp. 7-33.
3. Blitstein, P., 2018. L’opération typologique. *Politix*, 123(3), pp. 63-86.
4. Bratu R., 2018, Corruption, Informality and Entrepreneurship in Romania. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.
5. Bunea, I., 2019. GALERIE FOTO. Funky Citizens A Făcut Un Fel De „Muzeu” Al Mitei Electorale - „Galeria Trocului Electoral”. Ca Să Devină Istorie. [online] Available at: <<https://www.paginademediei.ro/2019/10/vot-nu-troc-galerie#comentarii>> [Accessed 9 January 2020].
6. Chiriac, M., 1997. Corupția nu mai e doar un concept. *Revista 22*, p. 2.
7. Chirițescu, Ș., 2019. Kubis Launched The Campaign “Vot, Nu Troc” - Available at: <<https://www.adhugger.net/2019/10/28/kubis-launched-the-campaign-vot-nu-troc/>> [Accessed 10 January 2020].
8. Durkheim, E., Weber, F., Berthelot, J. and Mucchielli, L., 1960. *Les Règles De La Méthode Sociologique*. Paris, France: PUF.
9. Engles, J.I., Marton, S., Monier, F., 2017. Des politiques blancs comme neige. [online] Available at : <https://laviedesidees.fr/Des-politiques-blancs-comme-neige.html> [Accessed 14 April 2020].

10. Hein, M., 2015. The Fight Against Government Corruption in Romania: Irreversible Results or Sisyphean Challenge? *Europe-Asia Studies*, 67(5), pp. 747-776.
11. Hurezeanu, E., 1996. Little Big Man - despre corupție. *Revista 22*, p. 13.
12. Iancu, A. and Todorov, A., 2018. *Reforms, Democratization And Anti-Corruption In Romania And Bulgaria*. București: Editura Universității din București.
13. Iancu, A., 2018. Questioning Anticorruption in Postcommunist Contexts. Romanian MPs from Commitment to Contestation. *Südosteuropa*, 66(3), pp. 392-417.
14. Ionașcu, A., 2006. The evolution of parties supporting government forms of patronage in post-communist Romania. *Sfera Politicii*, pp. 123-124.
15. Kara, S. and Reestorff, C., 2015. Introduction: unruly documentary activism. *Studies in Documentary Film*, 9(1), pp. 1-9.
16. Laclau, E., 2008. *La Raison Populiste*. Paris, France: Seuil.
17. Lemieux, C., 2018. *La Sociologie Pragmatique*. Paris, France: La Decouverte.
18. Lemieux, C., 2018. Paradoxe de la modernisation. *Politix*, 123(3), pp. 115-144.
19. Lippard, L., 1984. Trojan Horses: Activist Art And Power. [online] Available at: <<https://voidnetwork.gr/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Trojan-Horses-Activist-Art-and-Power-Lucy-Lippard.pdf>> [Accessed 4 April 2020].
20. Michel, J., 2015. Mémoire Publique Et Mémoire Collective De L'Esclavage.[online] Espacestemps.net. Available at: <<https://www.espacestemps.net/en/articles/memoire-publique-et-memoire-collective-de-lesclavage-2/>> [Accessed 5 March 2020].
21. Mullin, A., 2003. Feminist Art and the Political Imagination. *Hypatia*, 18(4), pp. 189-213.
22. Mekdjian, S., 2018. Urban activism and migrations. Disrupting spatial and political segregation of migrants in European cities. *Cities*, 77, pp. 39-48.
23. Negash, G., 2004. Art Invoked: A Mode of Understanding and Shaping the Political. *International Political Science Review*, 25(2), pp. 185-201.
24. Nossel, S., 2016. Introduction: On "Artivism", or Art's Utility in Activism. *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, 83(1), 103-105. <https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/620871>.
25. Oprea, A., 2019. Cinéma, mémoire et critique de la corruption dans la Roumanie et la Bulgarie postcommunistes. *Etudes Balkaniques*, 4, pp. 649-669

26. Oprea, R., 2019. *Kubis Launched The Campaign "Vot, Nu Troc"* [online] AdHugger. Available at: <<https://www.adhugger.net/2019/10/28/kubis-launched-the-campaign-vot-nu-troc/>> [Accessed 14 April 2020].
27. Porojanu, C., 2015. Kitul Marilor Corupți Și Dicționarul Explicativ Al Infrațiunilor. [online] Available at: <<https://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate/politica/kitul-marilor-corupti-si-dictionarul-explicativ-al-infracțiunilor-403810>> [Accessed 15 April 2020].
28. Preda, C., 2005. *Partide și Alegeri în România Postcomunistă*. București, România: Nemira.
29. Radu, A., 2010. Reforma partidelor. Cazul PSD si PNL. *Sfera Politicii*, 145.
30. Rhoades M., 2012. LGBTQ Youth + Video Artivism: Arts-Based Critical Civic Praxis. *Studies in Art Education*, 53(4), pp. 317–329.
31. Rozin, P. (2006). Le concept de culturalisme dans les sciences anthropologiques : de Tylor à Lowie. *Le Philosophoire*, 27(2), 151-176. doi:10.3917/phoir.027.0151.
32. Sandoval C. and Latorre G., 2008. "Chicana/o Artivism: Judy Baca's Digital Work with Youth of Color". In Everett, A. (ed.) *Learning Race and Ethnicity: Youth and Digital Media*. Cambridge: MIT.
33. Sheikh, S., 2009. *Positively Trojan Horses Revisited - Journal #9 October 2009 - E-Flux*. [online] E-flux.com. Available at: <<https://www.e-flux.com/journal/09/61372/positively-trojan-horses-revisited/>> [Accessed 1 March 2020].
34. Văduva S. et al., 2016. *From Corruption to Modernity. The Evolution of Romania's Entrepreneurship Culture*, UK, London: Springer.
35. Votnutroc.ro, 2020. *Votnutroc - Fii Cu Ochii Pe Vot*. [online] Available at: <<https://votnutroc.ro>> [Accessed 14 April 2020].
36. Zerilli, F., 2013. Corruption and anti-corruption local discourses and international practices in post-socialist Romania. *Human Affairs*, 23(2).