

# **Politics in Central Europe**

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**The Journal of the Central European Political Science Association**

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**Volume 7**

**Number 2**

**December 2011**

**Regional Politics in Central Eastern Europe**

**Next Issue:**

**Cultural Transformation in Central Europe**

*The articles published in this scientific review are placed also in SSOAR  
(Social Science Open Access Repository), <http://www.ssoar.info>*

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## ESSAYS

## The Role of Central European Political Parties in the Establishment and Operation of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group<sup>1</sup>

*Ladislav Cabada*

**Abstract:** *Central Eastern European political parties influenced and changed the ideological debate in the European parliament after the Eastern enlargement in 2004/2007 significantly. As the most influential ideological stream with a Central Eastern European “origin” or background we could observe the so-called Eurorealist (or Eurogovernmentalist) political parties such as the Polish Right and Justice (PiS) or Czech Civic Democratic Party (ODS). European Parliament deputies from these political parties joined, in 2003/2004, the internal debate in the European People’s Party about the present and future development of the European integration process and contributed to the division of the faction after the EP-elections in 2009. The aim of this article is to analyse the ideological motives for the division and establishment of a new European political party and EP group, namely, the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) Group. Specifically, the position and influence of Central Eastern European political parties will be stressed and analysed. Within the ECR, of the 10 political parties from 9 EU-member states with the total of 56 MEPs, Central Eastern Europe is represented by 6 parties (and 2 independent MEPs) with 27 MEPs, which is almost half of the total number of all faction members. Further to this, politicians from Central Eastern Europe are leading the faction (since March 2011 Jan Zahradil /ODS/, before him Michal Kamiński /PiS/) and so taking part in the important organisational and programmatic debate on EP-leadership. We examine how far the European Conservatives and Reformists Group represents specifically the “Central Eastern European” case; what are the programmatic basics of the group and the important national political parties and how far the faction has the potential to win over any new parties or individual members from both EU-member states and also candidate states.*

<sup>1</sup> This article was prepared as part of the grant project *Stranické systémy zemí středovýchodní Evropy* [Party Systems in Central Eastern Europe] (P408/10/0295) through the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic. The paper has been presented at the Annual Conference of Central European Political Science Association *Multi-level Politic: Intra- and Inter-level Comparative Politics* (Vienna, October 2011).

**Keywords:** *European political parties, Conservative Party Family, Conservatives and Reformists Group, Euroscepticism, Eurogovernmentalism, Right and Justice, Civic Democratic Party*

## Introduction

The conservative family of political parties represents a traditional and important group within the European political environment which had and still has a significant say in political events in the continental, or Union, context as well as in the majority of the European Union member states. This statement is valid despite the fact that conservatism had to be rebuilt again after 1989 in Central Eastern Europe, i.e. in the group of the so-called post-Communist countries. The renewal of conservative values in societies exposed to the massive dissolution of traditional cultural, social, economic, and political values and structures was, in our opinion, far more difficult compared to other political trends representing the other poles of the classical ideological triangle, i.e. liberalism and socialism, as well as compared to the so-called new ideologies and political players who represent them. The reason behind this discrepancy is actually one of the main characteristics of the conservative ideology and of those political players arising from this ideology, who rely on traditions and shared and passed on habits. These had been principally denied in the countries of the Eastern block and their enforcement became the reason for persecution so forceful and brutal that it could only be compared to dealing with the so-called enemy within of the Communist state parties and renegades from the Stalinist faith (Trotskyites, Titoists, etc.). It was these very conservative political parties, which were usually the first ones to be eliminated during the transition process to totalitarian regimes at the end of WWII and the years that followed; Czechoslovakia and its National Democratic Party, The Small Businessmen Party and The Republican (Agrarian) Party can serve as examples (Vodička – Cabada 2011: 66).

It should therefore not be surprising that the restoration – or a new establishment – of the conservative political parties in the countries of Central Eastern Europe was and often still is full of turbulence, factionalism, the seeking a new ideological platform as well as renewal, the search for or establishment of new “traditions”, “traditional values” etc. Observation of national political arenas in the so-called post-communist countries offers plenty of different, often very remarkable rivalries or, on the contrary, alliances. Liberal-conservative political parties that stress neoliberal economic axioms represent a significant group: e.g. the Czech Civic Democratic Party (*Občanská demokratická strana*, ODS), the Slovak Christian and Democratic Union – Democratic Party (*Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia – Demokratická strana*, SDKÚ–DS) or the Hungarian Democratic Forum (*Magyar*

*Demokrata Fórum*). Christian-Social conservative parties represent a similarly important group: e.g. Poland's Law and Justice (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, PiS) or Romania's Conservative Party (*Partidul Conservator*, PC), which creates an election coalition together with Romania's social democrats. The conservative parties in Central Eastern Europe do not seldom turn to populism stemming mainly from nationalistic positions; such tendencies can be observed with some of the above-mentioned entities as well as e.g. at the Latvian party For Fatherland and Freedom / The Latvian National Conservative Party (*Tēvzemei un Brīvībai / Latvijas Nacionālas Neatkarības Kustība*, TB/LNNK) (cf. Cabada – Hloušek et al. 2009).

Similarly as in the case of Western European conservative entities, the newly established conservative entities in the post-communist countries of Central Eastern Europe have been trying to solve the question of their relation to the Christian-Democratic party family within national political systems as well as at the European level. The border between conservative and Christian-oriented entities was drawn in some countries in relation to preserving the continuity of the Christian-defined subject parties that had already existed within the framework of the non-democratic communist system (the Czech and Polish people's parties); while elsewhere conservative and Christian-Democratic principles integrated within one entity Slovakia's Slovak Democratic and Christian Union – The Democratic Party (SDKÚ-DS) or Lithuania's Homeland Union – The Lithuanian Christian Democrats (*Tėvynės sąjunga – Lietuvos krikščionys demokratai*, TS-LKD).

The aim of this text is to analytically observe the integration of significant conservative political parties in the countries of Central Eastern Europe into broader European discussion about the position of conservative parties within the system of political families. We want to follow processes connected to the development of the relationship to the Christian-democratic countries, common topics of the conservative and Christian-democratic politics in a European context and the reasons behind the conflicts between both these political entities within European party federations (The European People's Party and European Democratic Union). Last but not least we want to concentrate on reasons and circumstances behind the diversion of part of the conservative entities from the institutional and program cooperation with the Christian Democrats. In this context we will observe namely the position of the Czech Republic's Civic Democratic Party (ODS) and Poland's Law and Justice (PiS) right before the Czech Republic's, Poland's, and other countries' entry to the EU in 2004, integration of these parties within EP groups and namely their cooperation during the preparation of the foundation of the independent European Conservatives and Reformists group.

## The development of relations between conservative and Christian-Democratic political parties at the European level

Cooperation between European Christian-Democratic parties was institutionalised during the period between the two World Wars and greatly strengthened after the end of WWII, also in connection with the preparation of integration processes in Europe and the important foundation of Christian Pan-European Movement. The important step towards establishing the “European” Christian-Democratic party became the foundation of the People’s Party – The Federation of Christian Democrats of the European Community, founded on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1976 in Luxembourg and which had been in formation since the beginning as a group of Christian-Democratic entities excluding „pure” conservative ones. However, gradually it begun integrating some conservative and like-minded political parties (the conservative pillar was significantly strengthened with the admission of Scandinavian conservatives); nevertheless, Christian-oriented political entities with a strongly positive approach to accelerating the European integration process still held the dominant position. In 1990s, Portugal’s Democratic and Social Centre (*Centro Democrático e Social*, CDP) (1993) and The Basque Nationalist Party (*Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea*, EAJ) (1999) were excluded from the EPP due to their critical attitude towards European integration (Fiala – Mareš – Sokol 2007: 25-30).

We can understand the pressure of the EPP laid on the conservative part of the member base to unilaterally support the strengthened transnational approach within the EC/EU structure as one of the main obstacles for the continuation of the institutional integration of the Christian-Democratic parties and the conservative party family. The effort of The European Democratic Union (EDU) to provide a platform for this cooperation or symbiosis even of the democratic right, which was projected into the creation of a common faction of Christian Democrats and Conservatives in the European Parliament (the EPP-ED group) was from the beginning of the 1990s being undermined between (ideologically speaking) the affirmative (the EPP) and the critical (the EDU or ED) approach toward the development of the European integration process.

The EDU in connection to the *cordon sanitaire* created by the EPP towards the (secular) conservative parties was founded in 1978, while its original goal was to overcome the fragmentation of the right at the European level given by the lack of interest of the EPP in the conservative parties which were considered too far-right. Nevertheless, the main ideological disputes between the EPP and EDU were resolved in the beginning of the 1990s, the indicator of which being the institutional integration within the European Parliament group EPP-ED (1999 and 2004). A number of conservative entities, however, kept their distance from this faction and some later took part in creation of The EP Group Alliance for the Europe of



Nations with clear ties to the political group The Union for the Europe of the Nations. Rather strong tendencies also existed within the ED group to create an independent conservative group, or European political party, and it should be noted Great Britain's Conservative Party played a key role in these talks. The fact that the British Conservatives were drawn to the idea of an independent conservative group within the European Parliament was significantly strengthened with David Cameron's election into the party leadership in 2005 (Fiala – Mareš – Sokol 2007: 51-61).

Conservative political parties established themselves in contemporary European history to the right from the Christian-oriented entities and left from the right-wing radicals or far-right extremists. The inclination of some conservative political parties to cooperate with Christian-Democratic centrists outlined within the EDU and EP group, EPP-ED, as their logical counterparts, called for search of alliance with subjects even more right-oriented than its own conservative family. The cooperation of conservatives with the right-wing radicals usually offering a mixture of anti-European and nationalist rhetoric – Fiala, Mareš a Sokol (2007: 59) usually indicate these parties as “principally moderately neo-populist” – was perceived as very negative by the euro-optimistic groups (dominantly by the Christian Democrats, along with the Socialists) in the framework of ideological debate. Nevertheless, if we see the whole thing without the glasses of ideology, then the logic of cooperation seems very similar to e.g. the strategy of The Party of European Socialists, which sought partner parties after 1989 in Central Eastern Europe, while sometimes agreeing to cooperate even with significantly populist and radical entities, the case of the Slovak party Direction (*Smer*) not being the only exception. The observer status of the far-right extremist Slovak National Party (*Slovenská národná strana*, SNS) within the Alliance for the Europe of the Nations can undoubtedly evoke an impression of a far-right extremist alliance, on the other hand we can hardly mark as such a group where the Union for France (*Rassemblement Pour La France*, RPF) and Italy's National Alliance (Alleanza Nazionale, AN) dominated and The Czech Civic Democratic Party or Israel's Likud had the status of observers (Fiala – Mareš – Sokol 2007: 60).

We believe that the Alliance for the Europe of the Nations can be profiled as a radical group of conservative and populist entities openly expressing disagreement with dominance of a supranational paradigm within the EU. This disagreement was expressed from a conservative-nationalist – and naturally also populist – rhetorical platform. This group is important for our analysis namely because up to a certain level it served as an incubator for the development and creation of a conservative group in the EP; Poland's Law and Justice and Latvia's For Fatherland and Freedom / The Latvian National Conservative Party can be found among

its members after 2004. Some other conservative parties which criticised the way how Christian-Democratic parties enforced supranational principles within the EU decided in the end to operate within the EPP-ED group in the EP during the election period 2004-2009.<sup>2</sup> They were looking for a platform to found their own conservative Eurorealist group. Three political parties with a strong position in the national political arena played a key role in this search – Great Britain’s Conservatives, Poland’s Law and Justice and The Czech Republic’s Civic Democratic Party.

## **Development towards European Conservatives and Reformists Group**

As we stated above, the relations between Christian-Democratic and conservative entities in the EP or at the European level went through turbulent changes even before the EU was founded. The acceleration of the European integration process after 1991 and a strong preference for a national/federal principle by the Christian Democrats and the EPP began expanding the gap between both ideological groups. This resulted in expulsion of two EPP member parties in the 1990s. However, this was not an end to the particularism of the right-wing European sphere. If the creation of the EP group Alliance for the Europe of the Nations after the 1999 elections could be considered as the separation of “anti-European”, populist right-wing radical parties, which did not play a key role in domestic politics, then the then approaching enlargement of the EU into Central Eastern Europe offered a rather different picture.

It was the Czech Republic’s Civic Democratic Party (ODS) and Poland’s Right and Justice (PiS), which clearly stated in their programmes, rhetoric and alliance preferences their lack of excitement over the idea of inclusion to an EPP controlled by federalist Christian Democrats. Both parties perceived Great Britain’s Conservatives as a key partner, and vice versa, the Conservatives – pushed to the edge by the Christian Democrats bearing the stigma of “Euro scepticism” – found in both parties strong at a national level, ODS and PiS, key partners for a more organised critique of the strengthening the supranational paradigm within the integration process stretching beyond the borders of one state.

Contacts between the Czech Civic Democrats and Britain’s Conservatives practically reach back to the very foundation of the ODS (1991); the party’s founder, Václav Klaus, belonged to the most diligent followers of Margaret Thatcher’s

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<sup>2</sup> Let us add that despite the conservative, Eurorealist – or, using more critical vocabulary, Euro sceptic – political parties led by Great Britain’s Conservatives within the EPP-ED, a centrist European Democratic Party was founded in 2004. The founders, led by France’s Union for French Democracy (Union pour la démocratie française, UDF) and the Italian party Democracy is Freedom – The Daisy (*Democrazia è Libertà- La Margherita*), criticised the conservative parties of the EPP-ED group for having denied the principles of federal Europe (Fiala – Mareš – Sokol 2007: 107).

liberal-conservative viewpoints, the same can be said about number of the current top party leaders. External observers relying principally on media clichés see ODS as a Eurosceptic party; however, in reality, it is a pragmatic, secular-conservative party; the nationalist tendencies within were notably toned down after V. Klaus has left the party's leadership and later the party itself. ODS accentuates its Eurorealist approach and disagreement with the EU's federalisation (Vodička – Cabada 2011: 267). Many observers consider the appointment of the former dissident Alexander Vondra as European Minister during the second government of Mirek Topolánek (2007–2009) as a key breaking point in the party's relationship to the EU. Instead of the aggressive Euroscepticism of V. Klaus, Vondra (Defense Minister in the current government lead by Petr Nečas) offered “a middle way between assertive ‘euro-realism’ ... and blanket enthusiasm for European intergation. A similar pragmatism informed Topolánek and Vondra's approach to the Lisbon Treaty” (Bale – Hanley – Sczerbiak 2001: 92).

Poland's PiS was founded a decade later during the decomposition of “the second Solidarity”<sup>3</sup>, nevertheless, similarly to ODS, it managed to create a stable support of approx. 30% of the electorate. PiS's programme is characteristic by its conservative-social direction, and the rhetoric of the party leaders often bears strong populist features towards the EU and big states (Germany and Russia). Hloušek (Cabada – Hloušek et al. 2009: 145) considers the party as a representative of national-conservative values and ruralism. Namely during election campaigns or, generally, in the effort to mobilise its electorate and those sympathetic towards the party's leadership – party leader Jarosław Kaczyński in particular – it doesn't hesitate to use radical rhetoric due to which the party is often marked as extremist. PiS earned strong criticism for a governmental alliance with two radical, even extremist, entities during 2005–2007. “PiS is tarred with the same brush as the LPR (League of Polish Families – note by the author) or with its other former coalition partner, the agrarian protest party, Self-Defence (*Samoobrona*) ... In any case, Law and Justice is by no means the only party in Europe – ‘old’ or ‘new’- to have shared government with apparently unsavoury and extremist partners: the Austrian and Italian components of the EPP ... spring immediately to mind” (Bale – Hanley – Sczerbiak 2001: 90).

In July 2003 – in connection with the preparations of the Central Eastern European countries to join the EU – the Conservatives, ODS and PiS issued a common declaration of their common interest to promote a Eurorealist policy – an alternative to the centralisation and federalisation of the Union. The so-called Prague appeal was targeted against the idea of the European constitution of a European superstate and

<sup>3</sup> Electoral Association Solidarity, AWS, won in the 1997 parliamentary elections only to fall apart again during the election period.

called for a voluntary cooperation of European nations and respect for national differences. The signatories of the appeal were the Conservative's Leader Iain Duncan Smith, ODS Chair M. Topolánek and PiS Deputy Chair Ludwik Dorn.<sup>4</sup> After the EP elections in 2004 doubts arose concerning whether the inclusion of all three parties to the EPP-ED group was suitable – these occurred during inner-party discussions as well as being projected in the relationship of the Christian-Democratic parties within EPP towards them – the parties answered these doubts differently. While the Conservatives and ODS – despite the growing disputes between the EPP and ED – integrated into the strongest right faction the EPP-ED, Poland's PiS decided to cooperate within the Alliance for the Europe of the Nations.

Not even this dispute laid obstacles to further cooperation shielded by the idea of the possible creation of an independent conservative Eurorealist EP group. A significant impulse for the completion of the alienation process of conservative parties from the EPP-ED was the change in the Conservatives leadership and David Cameron's appointment as the party leader. Despite Cameron refusing the immediate foundation of a new EP group – probably because it would be rather difficult to fulfill legal terms for the foundation of a new European political party (at least 25 MEPs from at least 7 EU member states), we cannot overlook the necessity to create a step towards a similar base in his own party. Nevertheless, in July 2006 the cooperation of the CP, ODS and PiS was strengthened by foundation of the Movement for European Reform (MER), with the CP and ODS as members.<sup>5</sup> The MER declared itself as a supranational alliance of centre-right conservative parties with a Eurorealist programme. The MER put a strong emphasis on transatlantic relations including the possibility of a transatlantic Free Trade area. The MER labelled itself as a preliminary structure, an incubator, from which a new EP group called European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) was to arise after the 2009 EP elections.<sup>6</sup>

All indicators point to ODS as the crucial energiser of the development towards the new Eurorealist EP group; on the contrary, D. Cameron and his Conservatives

<sup>4</sup> Available at [http://www.ods.cz/docs/listy/listy\\_04-2003.pdf](http://www.ods.cz/docs/listy/listy_04-2003.pdf) (26 October 2011).

<sup>5</sup> In March 2007, the Bulgarian Union of Democratic Forces announced its joining of the MER. The Presidency of the European People's Party (EPP) recommended later that the UDF be suspended from the EPP. In mid April 2007, the UDF backtracked and stated that it remained loyal to the EPP and that it would never leave the EPP section of the EPP-ED Group to join another Group. A month later, in the first-ever elections for the European Parliament in Bulgaria (20 May 2007), the UDF failed to win any seats. As a result, Petar Stoyanov - who was accused by his critics of making poor decisions during the campaign, including the MER choice - resigned as UDF leader. In September 2007, the UDF formally withdrew from the MER and re-affirmed its membership with the EPP. Available at [http://sofiaecho.com/2007/03/09/651120\\_epp-suggests-ceased-membership-for-bulgarias-udf](http://sofiaecho.com/2007/03/09/651120_epp-suggests-ceased-membership-for-bulgarias-udf); [http://www.thebulgariannews.com/view\\_news.php?id=79505](http://www.thebulgariannews.com/view_news.php?id=79505) (26 October 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Available at <http://www.conservatives.com/pdf/MovementforEuropeanReform.pdf> (26 October 2011).

seem to be the more careful and passive ones in this coalition of two conservative parties dominating in their national political arenas (it is the ODS and CP leaders who serve as Prime Ministers of both their respective EU countries). One of the closing resolutions of the 19th ODS congress in December 2008 in Prague, stated that the “creation of a new right-wing non-federalist faction at the EP ground must be one of the priorities of the ODS election campaign programme for the 2009 EP elections.” It was further stated at the congress that the majority of the leading representatives of the EP showed an inability to listen to ideas for alternative views on the EU, other than the leading euro-federalist idea. Furthermore, it was thought that these delegations try to put pressure on the sovereign, elected representatives of the Czech Parliament. The declaration also criticised the behaviour of the President of the EP during the meeting with the President of the Czech Republic (“President of the EP H. G. Pöttering was unable to guarantee a dignified level of discussion and exchange of opinions about EU issues”).<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, the preparation of the CP and ODS for the 2009 EP elections went hand-in-hand with the search for new partners for the upcoming project of the new EP group. In March 2009, *The Prague Declaration of Principles of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group in the European Parliament*, was settled and signed in Prague, which later became the basic programme document of the new EP group the ECR. We can see “sustainable, clear energy supply with an emphasis on energy security” (the ECR is considered an enforcer of nuclear energy and protagonist of reducing the energy reliability of Europe on Russia at the same time) among the main programme items, as well as; “the sovereign integrity of the nation state, opposition to EU federalism and a renewed respect for true subsidiarity”; “the overriding value of the transatlantic security relationship in a revitalised NATO, and support for young democracies across Europe”; “effectively controlled immigration and an end to the abuse of asylum procedures”; “respect and equitable treatment for all EU countries, new and old, large and small”.

Apart from the CP, ODS and PiS we can also see Belgium’s Lijst Dedecker, Latvia’s TB/LNNK, and Bulgaria’s Order, Law and Justice (*Red, zakonnost i spravedlivost*, RZS)<sup>8</sup> among the parties that joined the declaration. We can therefore see the fundamentals of the latter ECR, even though the main players behind its foundation hoped to gain more applicants for the new faction. As stated by the ECR group’s website, ODS in particular promoted the strategy to get as many member parties / MEPs as possible, the CP on the other hand did not want to cooperate with anti-immigrant parties, including the Danish People’s party and Lega Nord.

<sup>7</sup> Available at <http://zpravy.ods.cz/prispevek.php?ID=8685> (26 October 2011).

<sup>8</sup> In 2009 RZS entered the Bulgarian Parliament with 10 seats, however, it did not make it into the EP (Cabada – Hloušek 2009: 22)

After the EP elections, the CP, ODS, and PiS, which possessed the highest number of MEPs, became the foundation of the EP group, the ECR, and according to expectations, other member formations or individuals played an important role during keeping the legislative conditions for the setting up a new faction in particular. While fighting over post divisions inside the faction as well as the EP, one of the CP MEPs (Edward McMillan-Scott) decided to leave the CP and the faction and join the Liberals, in May 2011 David Campbell Bannerman left UKIP and joined the CP.<sup>9</sup> In 2010 a group calling itself Poland Comes First (*Polska Jest Najważniejsza*) split from the PiS but its MPs remained part of the ECR. At the moment the ECR holds 56 mandates in the EP and is pulling ropes over who will be the fourth strongest faction in the EP with the Greens.

Political parties from Central Eastern Europe play as important role in the group as they did in the process of its establishment. Both current chairmen of the faction represent the very Central European political entities ((Michal Kamiński from PiS, nowadays Poland Comes First, and Jan Zahradil from ODS), apart from the Czech Republic and Poland, three other so-called new democracies are represented. However, we cannot overlook the fact that without the contribution of ODS and PiS, the region would have no position in the group whatsoever. The Achilles heel of the ECR group is generally the high representation of entities with one MEP; if these small parties don't succeed in the next EP elections, the key players could fall into a situation where only an alliance with far more radical entities than themselves would save their position.

**Table 1: Parties of the EP group European Conservatives and Reformists**

Country	Party	Number of MEPs
Belgium	Libertarian, Direct, Democratic Party (formerly Lijst Dedecker)	1
The Czech Republic	Civic Democratic Party	9
Denmark	Independent MEP	1
Hungary	Hungarian Democratic Forum	1
Lithuania	Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania	1
Latvia	For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK	1
The Netherlands	Christian Union	1
Poland	Law and Justice	10

<sup>9</sup> Available at [http://www.conservatives.com/News/News\\_stories/2011/05/Conservative\\_Party\\_welcomes\\_David\\_Campbell\\_Bannerman\\_MEP.aspx](http://www.conservatives.com/News/News_stories/2011/05/Conservative_Party_welcomes_David_Campbell_Bannerman_MEP.aspx) (26 October 2011).

Poland	Poland Comes First	3
Poland	Independent MEPs	2
The United Kingdom	Conservative Party	25
The United Kingdom	Ulster Conservatives and Unionists-New Force	1

Source: Author

## Conclusion

At the beginning, the ECR group was marked as a Eurosceptic group, the main attacks on it logically coming from the EPP or a group of Christian-Democratic parties. Within the European and national context, it was the Conservatives who faced the strongest criticism, when they allegedly lost any important say at events at the European level after their separation from the EPP-ED and their joining with “the proudly ignorant parties of eastern Europe“, as the British Sunday paper The Observer called the Conservatives’ Central and Eastern European allies (Bale – Hanley – Sczerbiak 2001: 86). Such criticism was mainly based on emotions and completely lacked an analytical framework and rational reasoning.

When we look at the circumstances behind the ECR’s foundation with clear eyes, then we cannot overlook the fact that the group of conservative parties lead by Great Britain’s Conservatives was marginalised by the Christian Democrats at the European level and sometimes even ostracised way before the process of wider integration into Central Eastern Europe had even begun. The EPP’s character and its lack of interest in and – providing they were already members – disposal of conservative entities with non-federalist visions about European integration is an example of the abovedisputes between non-critical pro-federalist Christian Democrats, who unilaterally relied on the coalition with European Socialists, and those Conservatives, who perceived the acceleration of the European integration process as the wrong step forward, had increased in number during the last two decades and led the conservative parties to a crossroad. Already in 2004 many of the conservative parties hesitated whether to continue within the EPP-ED and some decided to look for other options including cooperation with right-wing radical entities.

The decision of Conservatives’ to cooperate with the like-minded parties from CEE instead of an uncertain and frustrating journey of the constant “naughty child” hand-in-hand with the EPP-ED was therefore, in our opinion, a logical and rational step. The ECR promotes itself as a conservative political formation with two main ideological pillars – liberal conservatives (The Conservatives ODS, Lijst Dedeckerand MDF) and conservative nationalists (PiS and TB/LNNK). These parties come from “politics where the boundaries between the right and the far right are admittedly sometimes more blurred than in Western Europe“ (Bale – Hanley

– Sczerbiak 2010: 97). The same statement about blurry boundaries between the political mainstream and the edge of party sphere is of course true in case of other party families including the Christian-Democratic and Socialist ones; as can be seen in Italy or Austria, not limited to the Central Eastern European countries.

The alleged euroscepticism is the strongest argument for criticism of the ECR. We personally believe that such a statement is false – calling for a stronger reflection on one of the two main paradigms of the European integration process, i.e. intergovernmentalism, cannot be presented as negative using political and media stigmata and clichés. The ECR offers completely legitimate alternative concepts for stronger federalism within the EU; these don't have to be agreed with but there is no professional relevance in labelling them as eurosceptical, i.e. unacceptable in reality.

If we look at the ECR programmatic from a pragmatic view then it contains a number of crucial points reflecting problematic spots of the European integration process. However, “setting the integration to reverse” should not always be the solution. Let's state the Common Foreign and Security Policy as an example. The key parties of today's ECR repeatedly criticised the CFSP's impotence when it comes to the absence of military sources. It was the alleged Europhobe Jaroslaw Kaczynski, who has already in 2004 “even called for the formation of 100,000-strong common European army” (Bale – Henley – Sczerbiak 2010: 91). We also understand the ECR effort to lead an unemotional debate on European energy security, decreasing the energy reliability of the EU on Russia and other utilisation of the nuclear energy. Again, we do not have to agree with such a solution; however, it's absurd to call it anti-European. The ECR supports the idea of further EU enlargement, despite its members differing in opinion about the particular countries (e.g. PiS stands against the idea of Turkey as an EU member state while the Conservatives and ODS support it).

Should we look at the foundation of the ECR without ideological glasses, then we can see a creation of a rather comprehensible EP group with inner coherence willing to carry out pragmatic politics (e.g. supporting the creation of the second Barroso Commission). Slowing down the integration acceleration, a flexible standpoint on some processes (e.g. the issue of a common European currency) and possibly even launching reverse processes are all part of such pragmatic politics. These ideas strongly correspond with the ideas of Europe à la carte, or resp. a multi-speed Europe. If such concepts can be part of professional typologies and debates then we should not perceive them as unacceptable in every-day politics and stigmatise them as “Eurosceptic”.

After two years of its existence, the ECR looks viable. The 2009 EP elections seem to be another key point of its further development, with the threat of the loss of smaller parties usually represented by only one MEP today. Undoubtedly



the group will have to continue evaluating the membership of other entities with stronger relevance also at the national level and able to complete the trinity of key players – the CP, ODS, and PiS. There were some notions towards the Danish People's Party and Italian Northern League (Bale – Hanley – Sczerbiak 2010: 97), which would in some respect weaken the position of the CEE parties within the group. However, stabilisation of the ECR at the European level could draw some conservative entities from CEE, e.g. Hungary's Fidesz-MPP. To conclude, we state that the image of the ECR as “a group of British Conservatives” (Bale – Hanley – Sczerbiak 2010) is not exact. Political parties from CEE are not some accessory to the group but relevant partners with a significant share of efforts in the functioning of the group and its political programme. In this respect ODS, PiS and other CEE parties found themselves in a more equal and stronger position than is the case in – perhaps only with the exception of the Greens and left-wing radicals – the majority of other EP groups.

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## Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Balkans<sup>1</sup>

*Michaela Ježová*

**Abstract:** *The paper focuses on Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans, its activities in the region and its relations with the main political actors in the Balkans. This article analyses the factors that affect Turkish regional politics towards the Balkans. The main factors considered to be the most influential are Turkish-American relations, Turkish-Greek relations, negotiations with the EU and the Turkish minorities among the Balkans. All these factors direct Turkey towards a more active role in politics in the Balkans and have made Turkey review its foreign policy. The factor of Neo-Ottomanism is recently apparent in Turkish policy towards the Balkans and raises the question of whether Turkey is planning to continue its multilateral policy towards the Balkans and place greater emphasis on multilateral action.*

**Keywords:** *Turkey, Balkans, Turkey minorities, Neo-Ottomanism, foreign policy, European Union, NATO*

### Introduction

The fall of the Berlin wall created the possibility of new perspectives in international politics. Since that time we can observe a great number of changes in the international politics of many countries. One of the most fascinating and most debated issues of today is that of Turkish regional politics towards the Balkans. Turkey revised its foreign policy rapidly after the fall of the Soviet Union and was initially unsure of its foreign orientation; however, in accordance with Turkey's power and strategic position, it ultimately adopted active foreign policy (Eroglu 2005:1). The post-Cold War era opened a new door to Turkey and Turkey became confident in its foreign policy. While in the years following Turkey's independence and the end of the Second World War, Turkey was following the ideology of secular Kemalism, and in recent times Neo-Ottomanism is the prevailing philosophy. Neo-Ottomanism became dominant in the Turkish vision of the Balkans. This article discusses the topic of Turkish regional politics in the Balkans and is focused on revealing Turkish interest in the Balkans.

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<sup>1</sup> This article was elaborated within the grant project financed by the Grant Agency of the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen (research grant no. SGS-2010-014, Trans-National Political Processes.

There are a number of explanations for Turkey's interest in this region. The most significant reason is the Turkish historical background and geographical association with the Balkans. The five hundred years of Turkish domination over the region influenced past as well as contemporary policy. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the debate over Turkish minorities in the Balkans was one of the most important issues affecting relations between the international communities and resulted in the Russo-Turkish wars as well as the Balkan wars.<sup>2</sup> Nowadays we can talk about the so called "reconciliation with history" (Eroglu 2005: 2).

The other reason that Turkey has such an active interest in the Balkans is the Turkish view of Europe. The Balkans has always presented a notional bridge between Europe and Asia. Since Turkey began to focus on its relations with Europe and try very hard in its aspiration to become a member of the European Union, the Balkans has become more important. With this goal in mind, we can also observe Turkish efforts to give the impression of a mediator in the Balkan's conflicts as well as the Middle East and Caucasus.

The Balkans plays an important role in Turkish security. The Balkans assumes the western eastern border of Turkey and during the Cold War was one of the biggest threats to it. The end of the war changed the attitude of the regional countries towards Turkey. They were searching for economic stability and Turkey was able to offer them economic cooperation. Currently Turkey is dependent on the stability of Balkans especially in light of these economic ties.

Finally we can also mention Turkish interest in Turkish and Muslim minorities in the Balkans. This significantly denotes Turkey's imperial past. Large Turkish as well as Muslim communities can be found throughout the Balkans. But in connection with the Balkan minorities Turkey has to focus also on the economic consequences. The surge in immigrants that migrated to Turkey in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (especially during the 1990s) brought economic strain.

The first opportunity for Turkey to show its new face was during the Gulf War (1990–1991) (Eroglu 2005:8). Turkey strengthened U.S. efforts to halt the Iraqi invasion in Kuwait and shut pipelines which were crucial for the export of Iraqi petroleum. Turkey also allowed the U.S. to use its military bases (Bahcheli 1994: 435). The decision to participate in the Gulf War was strongly advocated by the Turkish president Turgut Özal who believed that support of the U.S. coalition in the new almost unipolar international system would ensure Turkey's national security

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<sup>2</sup> The official domination of Turkey over the Balkans began in 1389 after the Battle of Kosovo. From the Balkans arose the first nationalist movements which strived for the independence of the Ottoman Empire. At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the sultan Ahmad III stopped recruiting new soldiers to the Janissary army. This decision caused a strong opposition among the Balkans (the Janissary army was made up of mostly men from the Balkan countries) (Vesely 1991: 50).

and build its reputation. While during the bipolar confrontation Turkey was considered only as an ally on the borders between East and West and was a so called *status quo* power, in the new world order Turkey could be more than that. The question of Turkey's new role was a topic of contention during the early 1990s (Robins 2003: 11–12). The disintegration of the Soviet Union resulted in a power vacuum in the Balkans, Caucasus and central Asia. It was during this time Turkey began to play with the idea of Neo-Ottomanism and to begin a redefinition of Kemalism.

### **Ottomanism – Kemalism – Neo-Ottomanism, a question of Turkish identity**

As mentioned, Turkey's current foreign policy towards the Balkans is extensively influenced by the ideology of Neo-Ottomanism. Neo-Ottomanism proceeds from Ottomanism which was the ideological base of the Ottoman Empire during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Ottomanism was mostly based on the view of a state where religion and political power are united in the personality of the sultan. Compared to Kemalism which points out the importance of the nation state, Ottomanism split society according to religious affiliation (Eligur 2010: 37–38).<sup>3</sup> The proponents of Ottomanism tried artificially to create a new nation: Ottomans. But this idea did not meet with a positive response from the ethnical groups in the Balkans as well as other parts of the Ottoman Empire. Nationalism within the Balkans proved to be the failure of the “big Ottoman nation”. Thus current Turkish activism in the Balkans can be analysed in the context of a substantial history (Rüma 2011: 134).

With the founding of the Republic of Turkey (1923) there originated the new idea of Kemalism. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk promoted a new Turkish national state in which the most important role is played by Turks. The republic should be strictly secular and Islam and the historical heritage of the Ottoman Empire forgotten. The Kemalists came with a process of modernisation, secularisation and westernisation. The concept of the new republic based on the principals of Kemalism was successful and an integral element of Turkish politics until the late 1980s. But with the new world order and Europe's hostile politics towards the Turkish idea of its integration into Europe, the spirit of Kemalism disappeared. With failure of Kemalism we can observe a transformation of domestic as well as foreign Turkish politics. The so called “military Kemalism” was replaced by the governance of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) (Zahedi – Bacik 2010).

<sup>3</sup> The Ottoman Empire was divided into *millet*s (religious communities). So we could find Muslim, Jewish as well as Orthodox *millet*s but never Turkish or Arab *millet*s because national identity was regarded as a threat to the unity of the Empire (Eligur 2010: 38).

The failure of Kemalism and its ideology of Pan-Turkism can be also found in the ethnic diversity of Turkey. Kurds constitute 18 percent of the population<sup>4</sup> and are no longer willing to be considered as prospective-Turks (Yegen 2009: 597). Compared to Kemalism, Neo-Ottomanism is also able to include Kurdish identity. As mentioned above, the success of Neo-Ottomanism was influenced by many factors: the importance of united identity, negotiation with the European Union and finally by the vision of Turkey as a new international power. Although Neo-Ottomanism brought ideological support of active Turkish politics, Ankara has been always highly interested in the Balkans (Rüma 2011: 134). During the Cold War its activities were controlled by the Soviet Union but after 1989, Turkey saw the Balkans as a good opportunity for a “comeback”. Over time, Neo-Ottomanism has emerged even among the ruling cadres (Çolak 2006: 587). But it would be a mistake to say that Turkey completely abandoned *realpolitik*. Ankara still has to allow for many circumstances such as its relations with the U.S., Europe and Greece (Eroglu 2005: 9–13).

A significant influence during the development of Turkish domestic and foreign policy during 1980s and 1990s was Turgut Özal.<sup>5</sup> In retrospect we could say that Özal’s influence embodied a positive dimension (Öniş 2004: 113). During the civil war and the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina, President Özal announced protection for the Bosnian Muslims and support for Bosnian refugees who escaped to Turkey during the war. The war in Bosnia was a good strategy for the Welfare Party (RP). Its leader Necmettin Erbakan tried to give the impression that Turkey was not protecting Islam but rather human rights in the Balkans. That was the “official” impression. But in reality public opinion was enthusiastic about the protection of Islam. This strategy was very successful and in 1995 Erbakan was elected Prime Minister (Amos 1993: 12–13).

The question is if Turkey only allows for *realpolitik* or also non-state actors in the Balkans as well. For now Turkey still asserts multilateral politics. Unilateral Turkish politics could cause not only mass migrations from the Balkans to Turkey but also an escalation of regional conflicts (Rüma 2011: 135). Although Turkey must be very cautious in its policy towards the Balkans, we can evaluate its efforts in the region as positive. A good example of successful Turkish foreign policy is Istanbul’s declaration from 2010.<sup>6</sup> Similarly to Özal’s initiatives towards the Balkans in the

<sup>4</sup> The WorldFactbook: available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tu.html> (18 August 2011).

<sup>5</sup> Turgut Özal is Prime Minister 1983–1989, President 1989–1993, founder of the Motherland Party (tur. *AvanatanPartisi*).

<sup>6</sup> The Istanbul Declaration on Peace and stability in the Balkans was signed in 2010 by the Presidents of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey. The Declaration applies to the declaration of Kosovo’s independence and also regional stability.

1990s, contemporary active politics in the Balkans has been initiated especially by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, currently Ahmet Davutoğlu from the AKP. During his speech in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2009 Davutoğlu said: “*The Ottoman centuries of the Balkans were a success story. Now we have to reinvent this. Turkey is back*” (Poulain – Sakellariou 2011). Recently, even active Turkish foreign policy is highly discussed, and the so called “new activism” remains consistent with a zero problem policy (Rüma 2011: 137).

### **European Union regional strategy and its impact on Turkey’s foreign policy**

The Balkans is closely related to the European Union (EU) and Turkey has to make compatible its regional politics with the EU’s regional strategy (Eroglu 2005: 6). The EU is dominant in the political as well as economic reform and transformation of the Balkans. Its position in the region influences Turkey’s relation with the Balkan countries. After The Luxemburg summit in 1997 which discussed the question of expansion of the EU, Turkey suspended political dialogue with the EU and some Turkish political parties started to take a distance *vis-à-vis* the Union (Ruysdael 2002: 89). Despite this temporary misunderstanding we can generally say that Turkey has always taken into consideration the EU’s interests. Turkey’s most important vision regarding westernisation is its accession to the EU and Turkey is prepared to do anything for it. Turkey participates in the regional stability initiatives of the EU as well as military missions like Althea (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Proxima (FYR Macedonia) and the European Union Police Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Aybet 2006: 78).

For the moment we can say that the partnership between Turkey and the Balkans is the most important because of its economic impact. The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and the enlargement of the EU are still moving European borders towards Turkey. Contemporary Turkey has borders with two of the EU’s members (Bulgaria and Greece). In 1994 Turkey signed an agreement on the trade union with the EU. The agreement was implemented in 1996 and strengthened the Turkish economic position in the Balkans. Between 2000 and 2008 the trade exchange increased by about 84 percent (Poulain – Sakellariou 2011). The economic impact is also one of the reasons why Turkey supported Bulgaria’s EU membership. With Bulgarian entry to the EU Turkey had the benefit of easier access to the EU market (Aybet 2006: 79). In 2007 another important trade partner of Turkey became a member of the EU, Romania. Romania is Turkey’s third biggest trade partner after Russia and the Black Sea region.

Step by step Turkey extends its economic power in the region and tries to extend its influence also over the financial sector. In 2008 Turkey opened a branch of Turk

Ekonomi Bankesi (TEB) in Kosovo. TEB is one of the most powerful financial institutions in Turkey.<sup>7</sup> One year later, Turkish Çalik Financial Services<sup>8</sup> bought 100 percent of the shares of the Albanian Banka Kombetare Traktare (BKT).<sup>9</sup> In recent times Ankara has given financial support especially to small and medium enterprises. Turkey is also attracted by the transportation sector and telecommunications. Ankara is trying very hard to take an advantage of the economic potential of the Balkans (Poulain – Sakellariou 2011).

The interconnection of the Balkans, the EU and Turkey does not only have an economic impact on Turkey but also a strong ideological influence. The ideological impact is primarily caused by the prolonged negotiations on Turkey's accession to the EU. In current times the question is if we can still really talk about the so called "*Europeanisation*" of Turkey or if it would be better to call the orientation of Turkish foreign policy as "*Easternisation*" (re-entry to the Middle East). During the Cold War era the dialogue between Turkey and Europe was hardly affected by Turkish military coups (1960, 1971, and 1980) of the Cyprus dispute and Turkey's intervention in Cyprus (1974). In 1999 Turkey was recognised as a candidate country of the EU. Despite initial enthusiasm, Turkey was very disappointed by the year 2006 when the EU decided not to open eight chapters. The fulfilling of the conditions of the Copenhagen criteria is crucial for Turkey's foreign as well as domestic policy. With the closing of the eight chapters Turkey began to understand that its path to the EU is still a long one.

That is a reason why more recently Turkey has focused on its traditional allies in the Middle East (see below). This new direction of Turkey's interest is promoted by the AKP. The AKP is attempting to find Turkey an "old-new" middle ground position in international politics (Abramowitz–Barkey 2009). Turkish impressions of the EU's hostile politics towards Turkey make it turn to its other strategic assets (Kibaroğlu – Oğuzlu 2009: 586–587). A highly discussed issue is energy security. Turkey can secure supplies of oil and gas from the Caucasus and Central Asia. In 2009 Turkey signed an agreement with Romania, Hungary, Austria and Bulgaria about the building of the Nabucco natural gas pipeline.<sup>10</sup> The Nabucco project raised Turkey's importance for the EU's energy security. At the same time Turkey cooperated with Russia to bring Russian gas to Europe. This cooperation began as early as 1997 when both countries agreed to build the subsea pipeline Bluestream, and the Russian company Gazprom and the Turkish BOTAŞ signed a contract

<sup>7</sup> TEB: available at <http://www.teb-kos.com/?id=10,0,0,1,e> (20 August 2011).

<sup>8</sup> Çalik-Seker Konsorsiyum Yatirim A.S.

<sup>9</sup> BKT: available at <http://www.bkt.com.al/main.aspx> (20 August 2011).

<sup>10</sup> Europe Gas Pipeline Deal Agreed: available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8147053.stm> (20 August 2011).



for the supply of gas from Russia.<sup>11</sup> The improvement of Turkish-Russian trade relations can also be seen as a Turkish effort to extend its economic and political influence (Abramowitz –Barkey 2009; Kibaroglu–Oğuzlu 2009). In 2008 Russia became Turkey’s largest trade partner with annual trade of around 40 billion dollars (McNamara – Cohen – Phillips 2010: 5).

Despite all these “negatives” of the EU-Turkish relationship, Turkey has been a good role model in implementing EU reforms while it has been part of Western institutions for the last 50 years (Aybet 2006: 81). Turkey also has another advantage in the Balkans and that is its position in transatlantic cooperation.

### **Turkey in NATO and its relation with U. S.**

The current Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans is barely influenced by Turkish-American relations. After the Cold War when the U.S. became a dominant player in the new world order, Turkey was a strong ally for the U.S. to promote its interests in the post-Soviet region (the Caucasus and the Balkans). The U.S. declared the importance of cooperation with the Central and Eastern European Countries. Turkey has always maintained cultural as well as religious ties with the Balkans. At the same time, Balkan countries use Turkey as a mediator to establish relations with the U.S. (Eroglu 2005: 9–11). The accession of the Balkan countries to the EU and NATO became a priority for U.S. foreign policy towards the Balkans. Turkey has enjoyed relative freedom from the U.S. to deal with countries in the region (Tesfa – Yohannes 2011). The cooperation of the EU, the U.S. and Turkey in the Balkans is based on their mutual interests such as energy security, regional stability and economic ties. But now Turkey distances itself from its allies and has aspirations to become an independent force in international affairs. After the Cold War, Turkey did not need U.S. military protection any longer (McNamara – Cohen – Phillips 2010: 1–3).

Turkey’s shift towards the U.S. after the Second World War was caused by Russia’s hostile policies. The dispute between the Soviet Union and Turkey over eastern Anatolian provinces (Kars and Ardahan) and especially over the Black Sea’s strategic area created a Turkish impression of a threat from the Soviet presence in the Balkans and the Middle East.<sup>12</sup> The U.S. rejected Soviet demands for the Straits (Bosporus and Dardanelles). The U.S. pledged to help Turkey, both financially and militarily through the Truman Doctrine (1947). In 1949 Turkey requested NATO membership which was accepted three years later in 1952 (Nizameddin 1999: 222).

<sup>11</sup> BOTAŞ Plan Hits Refusal by Gazprom: available at <http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/119676/bota%CB%9B-plan-hits-refusal-by-gazprom.html> (20 August 2011).

<sup>12</sup> At the same time the Soviet Union applied pressure on Iran. Iran’s foreign policy under the control of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was Western-oriented. Already by 1941, the Iranian Communist Party, Tuhed, had been created which was supported by Moscow as a strong opposition movement (Rosulek 2009: 57). The aim of Russia was to obtain an oil concession in Iran.

Surrounded by hostile communist countries, Turkey began to actively participate in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

Turkey, for example, participated in the Korean War which was seen by Turkish politicians as a first chance to achieve a good position in NATO (Athanasopoulou 1999: 181). During the Balkan Wars in the 1990s, Turkey was active in the UN's peacekeeping mission in the Balkans (UNPROFOR and UNMIBH in Bosnia-Herzegovina) as well as NATO's missions (SFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina, KFOR in Kosovo, Essential Harvest, Amber Fox and Allied Harmony in Macedonia) (McNamara – Cohen – Phillips 2010: 3). At the same time Turkey was also participating in the EU's police mission in the Balkans.<sup>13</sup> Turkey is a key ally for the U.S. and its army is the second largest military in NATO. But with the new ideology of Neo-Ottomanism we can find some difficulties in Turkish-American relations.

In 2003 during the allied invasion of Iraq, Iraqi freedom, the AKP refused to be involved. The reason of this Turkish decision was mainly caused by the Kurdish issue. One week before the invasion, Turkish president Abdullah Gül called a conference of the neighboring Arabic states in Istanbul to discuss the topic of Iraq. Despite the signing of the Istanbul Declaration which called for the invasion to be halted, it did not change American plans.<sup>14</sup> In 2008 Turkey also delayed U.S. assistance to Georgia after the Russian invasion. Another issue which damaged Turkish-Americas relations is Turkish support for Palestinians and its slow process of distancing itself from Israel. The castigation of Israeli intervention in the Gaza Strip (2009) and against the Turkish boats (2010) raised criticism among Turkish political circles. In 2010 the U.S. Congress described the killing of Armenians during the First World War as genocide (McNamara – Cohen – Phillips 2010: 4).

Just as the U.S. needs Turkey, Turkey needs the U.S. The question is if Turkey should not find a better economic and political partner that will be more loyal to Turkey's "new active policy". The Balkans can be good economic partners and at the same time offer Turkey an ideological background for Neo-Ottomanism.

### **Rivalry or stability in the Balkans? The Turkish and Greek role in the region**

Turkey and Greece are long-standing rivals. During the 1990s the dispute over Cyprus and Aegean Sea had also spread into the Balkans. The activities of both

<sup>13</sup> Turkey's Contribution to International Peacekeeping Activities: available at [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/ii\\_---turkey\\_s-contributions-to-international-peace-keeping-activities.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/ii_---turkey_s-contributions-to-international-peace-keeping-activities.en.mfa) (25 August 2011).

<sup>14</sup> The U.S. offered Turkey financial support (an advantageous loan of 15 billion dollars) and possibility to participate in the invasion. Despite this proposal Turkey did not allow the opening of a northern front to Iraq (Isyar 2005: 40).

countries in the Balkans created a new concept of the Turkish-Greek and Islam-Orthodox rivalry (Eroglu 2005: 12). Despite Turkey's cultural and religious ties, Greece had a great advantage: membership in the EU (since 1981). Through membership in the EU, Greece was able to promote the integration of the Balkan countries into the EU. At the same time Greece had a dominant administrative and economic presence in the Balkans and the relationship between Greece and the Balkans has been more balanced when compared to Turkish-Balkan relations (Anastasakis 2004: 49). After the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, Turkey decided to withdraw from the Balkans and the Middle East and focus on the secularisation of the country. While Turkey, during the Cold War, concentrated solely on the western allies and its cooperation with NATO, Greece in the same time pursued multilateral cooperation (Anastasakis 2004: 46, 49).

But can Turkey really be considered as a weaker player in the Balkans? Greece has good relations with the EU, however, in contrast, Turkey has strong ties with NATO and for years it has been its crucial partner. Turkey also has a stronger army and also a developing and growing economy. The Greek economic crisis and impending state bankruptcy make Greece weak in the Balkans. Greece has been a major investor in the Balkans and the Greek crisis could potentially spillover into to the region. Also the remittances by Greece to the Balkans financially support many families (Fotiadis, 2010). Concurrently the "privileged partnership" of Turkey in the EU is often discussed (Leggewie 2008). While Greek foreign policy towards the Balkans used the concept of national interest, Turkey pursued a more balanced regional policy. Despite both countries supporting the territorial *status quo* of Yugoslavia, after the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia Turkey was more flexible and soon recognised other newly created countries (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia) (Anastasakis 2004: 51–52).

Despite all these disputes, after the break-up of the former Yugoslavia it was a most important challenge to establish a balance of power in the region and Turkey along with Greece were among the most important players. For a while two axes formed in the Balkans. One of them was supported by Turkey and the second one by Greece. Turkey had close ties to Albania and Macedonia. Albania as well as Macedonia had at the same time very complicated relations with Greece. Turkish interest in Albania was due to the presence of the Muslim majority (70 percent)<sup>15</sup>. Also in Macedonia there could be found a considerable Turkish minority (3, 9 percent)<sup>16</sup>. Simultaneously, Turkey has supported Macedonian independence (1991)

<sup>15</sup> The World Factbook: available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/al.html> (20 August 2011).

<sup>16</sup> The World Factbook: available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mk.html> (20 August 2011).

while Greece recognised the country just two years later in 1993.<sup>17</sup> The second axis supported by Turkey was formed by the new Yugoslavia and Serbia. The Greek support of Yugoslavia is sometimes seen as an existence of pan-Orthodox sympathies. But both axes were short-lived and soon replaced with gradual cooperation (Turan – Barlas 1999: 480–481).

An important milestone in the relations of both countries towards the Balkans was the signing of the Dayton Agreement in 1995. Turkey had made a significant contribution towards the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Ankara cited that only military balance between Bosnia and Serbs could prevent another military confrontation between both sites. Turkey participated in the stabilisation force mission SFOR (Stabilisation Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1996–2004) and at the same time was the main partner in the U.S. train program of the Army of the Bosnian Federation (Kramer 2000: 151). Following the Dayton Agreement, the U.S. also attempted to resolve the Cyprus dispute. But this initiative was cut short in 1996 by the Kardak crisis. After the Kardak crisis, Ankara offered to the Greek government solutions and proposals concerning the problem of the Aegean Sea as well as Cyprus. This Turkish gesture was greatly commended by the U.S. site (Uslu 2004: 226–227). Turkey unified its foreign policy towards the Balkans with the EU after the Dayton Agreement. Greece also began to be more active in the EU's Balkan initiatives. This active policy of the both countries and their common interest in the Balkans resulted in closer cooperation in the region.

A new and broader balance was formed in the Balkans of which Turkish-Greek balance is a part (Turan – Barlas 1999: 483). This cooperation is highly influenced by economic ties as well. Likewise, Turkish and Greek presence in the Balkans can be seen as a rivalry, it can also be considered as a development of relations between both countries. This rapprochement was initiated in the late 1990s especially by the former ministers, İsmail Cem<sup>18</sup> (1997–2002) and George Papandreu<sup>19</sup> (1999–2004). For example the total trade between both countries considerably increased between 1999 and 2004 (from 694 million USD in 1999 to 1.765 Billion USD in 2004) (Tsarouhas 2009: 39–40, 45). Both countries also fear that the Balkan's conflicts could spill over into their own respective borders. This is one reason that

<sup>17</sup> The agreement was signed in 1993 in New York and Greece agreed to recognise Macedonia as The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). Despite the agreement the dispute between Greece and Macedonia over the name of the Republic of Macedonia lasts until today.

<sup>18</sup> Cem stood for the Turkish Democratic Left Party (DSP).

<sup>19</sup> Papandreu is also the current Greek Prime Minister. During his time as Minister of Foreign Affairs Papandreu was a supporter of Greek-Turkish reconciliation (Anastasakis 2004: 55). The initiative towards this began in the 1980s. Papandreu's father (Andreas Papandreu, Greek Prime Minister between 1981–1989) met Turgut Özal in 1988 in Davos to discuss the intensification of the bilateral contacts. The following process of rapprochement is usually called "the Davos Process" (Larrabee – Lesser 2003: 74). George Papandreu is the current leader of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK).

facilitates each country's cooperation, especially at the level of the security of the southern Balkans. Both countries participated in KFOR (Kosovo Force) and provided humanitarian aid to Kosovo's refugees. The fear of spreading of the conflicts made each country support the *status quo* in the Balkans. That has meant an effort to find a solution for the ethnic problems within the borders of each country (Anastasakis 2004: 55).

As mentioned, both countries were and still are involved in many of the Balkan's conflicts as mediators. Turkey was involved in the Bosnian war (1992–1995) during which it supported the claims of Bosnians and criticised the international organisation for its indecisiveness. In the end Turkey was a broker between the Bosnians and the Croats in 1993. This Turkish action contributed to the Washington Agreement in 1994 (Anastasakis 2004: 52). Last year Turkey pressurised Serbia to accept the Declaration of Srebrenica. In 2010 the Turkish President Recep Erdoğan expressed a wish to be a mediator between Serbia and Kosovo. An example of Turkish initiative can be observed in the signing of the Istanbul Declaration on Peace and Stability in the Balkans (2010). The declaration was signed by Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the declaration, Serbia pledged to respect the territorial integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina. At the same time Turkey also tried to calm the situation in Serbian Sandzak (Poullain – Sakellariou 2011).

Last but not least, it is necessary to mention the importance of the presence of Turkish and Greek minorities in the Balkans. The Greek minority in Albania<sup>20</sup> became one of the main Greek interests after the Cold War. Currently, Turkey also focuses its interest on Muslim and Turkish minorities among the Balkans.

### **Turkish minorities in the Balkans and the role of Islam**

Recently we can see Turkey drift towards its historical heritage and Islam. Turkey often uses the term “protection of Islam” as the agenda of its foreign policy. The Balkans has always been a region of confrontation between Islam and Christianity. Despite the possible justification of Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans, Islam does not define its policy. The question also remains whether or not the Muslim communities in the Balkans identify with Turkey.

Muslim communities can be found in Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia. In Serbia and Croatia there are only small Muslim communities. The largest and also most influential Turkish community is located in Bulgaria. Other Turkish communities can be found in Macedonia. For a better overview you

<sup>20</sup> The Greek minority represents 3 percent (in 2011) of the total population (2,994,667). But the estimates are very different (in 1989 the official Albanian statistics stated 1 percent of the Greek population while the Greek organisation stated 12 percent. The World Factbook: available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/al.html> (20 August 2011).

can find the percentage of the Muslim and Turkish minorities in The Balkans in the table below.<sup>21</sup>

**Table 1: Muslim and Turkish minorities in the Balkans**

State	Total population	Muslims	Turks
Albania	2,944,667	70%	X
Bosnia-Herzegovina	4,622,163	12,2%	X
Macedonia	2,077,328	33,3%	3,9%
Bulgaria	7,093,635	12,2%	9,6%
Montenegro	661,807	17,7%	X
Greece	10,760,136	1,3%	X <sup>22</sup>
Croatia	4,483,804	1,3%	X
Serbia	7,310,555	3,2%	X

Source: Author

### **Bulgaria**

For a long time the ethnic and religious minorities of Bulgaria were persecuted, and the relevant data on the ethnic diversity of Bulgaria was not available. When Todor Živkov came into the power, the act of building a cult of personality began. Živkov asserted nationalist politics which culminated in the 1980s (Rosůlek 2008a: 186). In the constitution from 1971, the minorities were not mentioned. In 1975 a new civic law was enacted which proclaimed the creation of a one nation state and the process of Bulgarisation began (Ortakovski 1998: 264). The Bulgarisation and forced assimilation of the Turkish minority was in motion during the 1980s (especially from 1984). People who did not change their Turkish names by 1985 were later not allowed to work in national enterprises and did not receive any government assistance. Religious practice was banned and many mosques were closed or destroyed. It was also forbidden to speak Turkish in public places (Ortakovski 1998: 276–278). The process of assimilation came to a head in 1989<sup>23</sup> when large

<sup>21</sup> All data is available at the World Factbook <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/> (25 August 2011). The statistics come from the different years. The population data is from the year 2011. The data about the minorities: Albania (2000) – the statistics about the population are only estimates since relevant information is not available; Bosnia-Herzegovina (2000); Bulgaria (2001); Macedonia (2002); Montenegro (2003); Greece (2001); Croatia (2001); and Serbia (2002).

<sup>22</sup> Greece does not provide statistics on ethnicity.

<sup>23</sup> In 1989 over 320,000 Turks left the country (Ortakovski 1998: 276).

communities of Bulgarian Turks were forced to move to Turkey (Hersham 2009). The Turkish minority consisted of at least 900,000 members before the exodus. In 1990 the Bulgarian National Assembly adopted a law which allowed the Turks and Pomaks to reinstate their Islamic names. Some people<sup>24</sup> who left during the 1980s came back but the majority chose to remain in Turkey. Although after 1990 religious practice was allowed and the minority officially regained its rights once more, there were still reports of violating the law of minorities during the 1990s. The Turks are concentrated in the southern regions Krdjali and Jablanovo. Some small Turkish communities can also be found in Dobrudja and Stara Planina (Ortakovski 1998: 276, 281).

By the end of 1989 a minority rights movement called the Democratic League of Human Rights under the leadership of Ahmet Doğan was re-established. A year later (1990) the Movement for Rights and Freedom (MRF) was established (Eroglu 2005: 38). The MRF was founded by Turks and Pomaks and its aim is the unity of Bulgarians regardless of ethnicity or religion (Rosulek 2008a: 194–195). During the second half of the 1990s the MRF party went through a crisis. The party had to contend with the problem of institutionalisation and the corruption of its leaders (Eroglu 2005: 43). Also the current leader of the MRF Ahmet Doğan was accused of taking a bribe but later was exonerated.<sup>25</sup> Despite the party's crisis during the 1990s, the MRF is at present the third largest party in Bulgaria and in the last elections in 2009 won 14.47 percent.<sup>26</sup> The MRF plays a very important role and continues to work on the prevention of tension between Bulgaria and Turkey (Eroglu 2005: 42).

### *Macedonia (FYROM)*

As with other countries that arose after the demise of Yugoslavia, Macedonia was characterised by a dominant communist party after the Second World War. After its independence in 1991, Macedonia made a great effort to improve the situation faced by the minorities. The majority of the Muslim community in Macedonia is ethnic Albanian. During the first half of 1980s there were big demonstrations by the Albanian minority in Tetovo which is located close to the border with Kosovo.<sup>27</sup> Depending on the nature of the demonstrations some restrictions were adapted to limit the activities of the minorities (in particular the Albanian minorities). Despite

<sup>24</sup> Around 110,000.

<sup>25</sup> Bulgarian's Anti-corruption Committee to Appeal Dogan's Case: available at [http://www.novinite.com/view\\_news.php?id=121253](http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=121253) (30 August 2011).

<sup>26</sup> Bulgaria Opposition Wins Election: available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8134851.stm> (30 August 2011).

<sup>27</sup> In 1981 there were large demonstrations of Albanians in Kosovo. The protesters demanded for the status of a Republic to be granted to Kosovo. These demonstrations spread over the borders into Macedonia (Ortakovski 1998: 350).

this the constitution adapted in 1991 guarantees the equality of citizens and provides protection for the ethnic and religious minorities, yet in the second half of the 1990s the ethnical conflict flared up (Ortakovski 1998: 343–352). As mentioned, the Albanian minority of Macedonia was and still is influenced by the Albanian majority in Kosovo. During the Kosovo crisis (1998–1999) over 300,000 Albanian refugees fled from Kosovo to Macedonia. The actions of the Albanians in Macedonia led to the conflict between Macedonians and Albanians and influenced the domestic political situation as well. The conflict was resolved through the Ohrid Agreement in 2001. On the basis of the Ohrid Agreement some constitutional changes were adapted that even today guarantee greater rights to the minorities in Macedonia (Rosulek 2008b: 339–341).

The population of the Turkish community greatly fluctuated as observed by the frequent emigration and immigration of large populations of Turks. Also some Turks decided to declare themselves as Albanians and *vice versa* (Ostrakovski 1998: 343–344). Turks in Macedonia are also active on the political stage of the country. The largest party representing the Turkish minority is the Turkish Democratic Party (TDP). The party formed in 1990 as the Turkish Democratic Union (Gangloff 2001: 43) under the leadership of Erdoğan Saraç and in 1992 changed its name to the TDP. Nevertheless many Turks in Macedonia support the Albanian political parties and are more successful and popular among the Albanian minority (Eroglu 2005: 46). After the Ohrid Agreement, the TDP also decided to change its political stance. Their new program was adapted in 2003 and puts emphasis on the social and cultural life of the Turkish minority. The current party leader is Kenan Hasip.<sup>28</sup> Despite the good relations between both countries, the DPT accuses the state of discrimination towards the Turkish minority and of the prevention of Turks from voting.

Macedonia is a prime example of Turkey's zero tolerance policy towards the Balkans. Although Turkey officially supports the Turkish minority, the fundamental interest for Turkey in Macedonia is its security concerns (Eroglu 2005: 45). After the establishment of Macedonia, Turkey appeared to be the sole regional country willing to cooperate with Macedonia. Both countries held a negative attitude towards Greece. The common interests of Ankara and Skopje galvanized Turkey's support of Macedonia's claim to sovereignty. Presently Turkey is the only country in NATO that recognises Macedonia under the name The Republic of Macedonia. When Greece imposed an embargo on Macedonia (1994), Turkey continued to support the country and offered some economic relief. Both countries initiated negotiations in the military sphere as well. Turkey was also active during the Kosovo crisis

<sup>28</sup> Makedonya Türk Dekratik Partisi: available at [http://www.tdp.org.mk/index.php?option=com\\_frontpage&Itemid=1](http://www.tdp.org.mk/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1) (30 August 2011).



and helped Macedonia with the problem of Kosovo's refugees (Gangloff 2001: 37–44).

The questions surrounding the issue of the Balkan regions refugees may also highlight Turkey's interest in the Balkans. Turkey offered asylum to the refugees, which represented a financial strain on Turkey's economy. The refugees were granted temporary 'visitors' status within Turkey and this action allowed its neighbours to reach a level of stability that would not be possible while tensions were still high between the different ethnicities within the region. After the situation normalised, Turkey would send the refugees back to their respective nations thus achieving their ultimate goal of maintaining security and stability in the Balkans and ignoring the underlying human rights violations. It is important to note that one fifth of Turkey's population consists of Turks with Balkan origins. This is due to the mass exodus of Turks from the Balkans because of the anti-Turkish views (anti-Ottoman views) held by the other ethnicities, a view generated when the Balkans were a part of the territory of the Ottoman Empire. This was seen during the 1950s, for example, when there were immigration waves from Albania and Bulgaria and during the 1990s from Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Turkey supported the refugees only to serve the purpose of stabilising the region whenever there was an outbreak of violence between the different ethnicities (Draculic 2009: 233–249; Eroglu 2005: 11–13; Glandoff 2000/2001: 91–93).

## **Conclusion**

The fall of the Iron Curtain changed the Turkish view of the Balkans as well as other post Soviet regions and was the period when the so called active Turkish policy towards this region came to fruition and spread rapidly, particularly during the 1990s. The stability of the Balkans became crucial for Turkey and its interests the region. During the 1990s the actions of Turkey towards the Balkans was mostly multilateral as evidenced by their cooperation with the European Union and NATO during this time. In recent years more unilateral actions can be observed such as the change to Neo-Ottomanism views. The position of multilateral politics is not supported even by the European Union as negotiations over this have been left unresolved. Despite Turkey's strong position in NATO and its relations with the United States, Turkey has the potential to be a dominant nation in the affairs of the Balkans and the Middle East if it goes against the wishes of its allies and enforces more unilateral policies, as can be seen in its Middle East policies. Turkey has understood that its location as a strategic position between the West and the East means that it does not need to become a member of the EU in order to be an influential player in the Balkans and the Middle East, which has resulted in a greater trend in unilateral policies. The continued success of the Turkish economy no longer depends solely

on its membership in the European Union. The question remains as to whether or not Turkey will maintain its relationship with the West or migrate towards developing new opportunities in the East.

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## Possibilities for and Limitations of Regional Party Development in the Czech Republic and Slovakia<sup>1</sup>

*Petr Jurek*

**Abstract:** *This article focuses on an analysis of regional partisanship in the Czech Republic and Slovakia from an institutionalist perspective. The main aim is to uncover and analyse the factors which promote and limit the development of regional political parties and review their presence in the Czech and Slovak cases. First, possible promoting and limiting factors behind regional political partisanship are introduced and analysed at a theoretical level. Then, the presence of regional parties in the national and regional party systems in the Czech Republic and Slovakia is evaluated. Finally, the presence or absence of important promoting and limiting factors (as identified in the first section) is reviewed in cases which have been researched.*

**Keywords:** *regional party, multilevel party system, political decentralisation, territorial cleavage, the Czech Republic, Slovakia*

### Introduction

Regional political parties have not been noteworthy phenomena in Czech and Slovak politics since the transition to democracy. Since 1989, there have been few attempts at establishing regional political parties and almost none have succeeded. So we can ask why it is so and what the main limiting factors behind the operation of regional parties are. At the same time, we can ask if this situation is going to persist or if there is any potential for future development of regional political parties in the Czech and Slovak party systems (e.g. in connection with the establishment of regional bodies for self-government). Searching for the answers to these questions from an institutionalist perspective is the main purpose of this article. Hence the aim of the article is to specify the institutional factors which support or limit the development of regional political parties in the Czech and Slovak party systems.

Before we proceed to the analysis of determining factors behind the presence of regional parties, we are going to define the term *regional political party*. We will use the concept of a multilevel party system in this definition. Then, we will try to

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<sup>1</sup> This article was prepared as part of the grant project *Stranické systémy zemí středovýchodní Evropy* [Party Systems in Central Eastern Europe] (P408/10/0295) through the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic. The paper has been presented at the conference *Regional Politics in Central Eastern Europe* (Pilsen, May 2011).

identify the main factors supporting or limiting the presence of regional political parties in a party system. After that we will proceed to an evaluation of the operation of regional political parties in the Czech and Slovak party systems, where we focus on the presence of regional political parties in regional assemblies and national parliaments in both countries. In the last section we will evaluate the determining factors behind the presence of regional political parties in the cases of the Czech and Slovak party systems.

### **Regional political partisanship – definition of the term**

The term *regional political party* is closely related to the concept of regionalism. By regionalism we understand an ideology which regards the region as an autonomous political space and demands a certain kind of self-governance for the region be granted by the state. The existence of regional political parties is interconnected with regionalism as an ideology.

Maxmilián Strmiska (2003) defines a regional political party as a partisan formation, whose ideological, programmatic and organizational identities are of a regional nature. For this and many other definitions of a regional party (e. g. Türsan 1998: 5; Dandoy 2010: 198) the interconnection between a political party and the interests of a certain region is crucial. The regional party has to represent the interests of a certain region, which has to be reflected in its political platform. Besides this (programmatic and ideological) component of the definition there is also an organisational aspect – a regional political party has to operate primarily at the regional level of a political system, but this does not preclude having a presence at the national level.

While the regional political party is closely connected to the characteristics of a region, we have to define this term too. For the purposes of this text we take a region as a certain spatial and political entity which is reflected in politics and which is situated just under the national level in a vertical division of state power. So we follow a definition which can be called political, because it supposes that a political system can be counted among the characteristics of a region in the way it offers the region a certain role in the vertical division of power or is at least part of political discussions. But we have to bear in mind that ethnic, linguistic, administrative or physical-geographic regions do not have to correspond to political regions.

Regional political partisanship has often been connected with ethnically or religiously defined parties (see e. g. Türsan 1998: 5). However, regional political parties have not always had an ethnic or regional base, in the same way that ethnic and religious parties are not always regional parties. An ethnic and religious party can differ from a regional one in the way that it defends the interests of a certain ethnic or religious group and ignores the interests of others on the same territory, while

a regional party is connected with a spatially defined region. So when an ethnic or religious party does not have a geographically concentrated electorate, we cannot describe it as a regional party.

The concept of the multilevel party system can help us to a better understanding of regional party operation in a political system. According to this concept, political parties choose one of several available strategies of operation. A party can operate primarily at a national level, or at national and regional levels simultaneously, or primarily at a regional level. Besides this division, we have to sort parties according to their presence in one region, in several regions or in all regions (Deschouwer 2006: 292–295). The choice of strategy always depends on programmatic and ideological factors, but it is also closely related to institutional factors. If the administrative division of the state respects the natural borders of a region, a regional political party will operate primarily in that region. However, regional parties are not excluded from the national level of politics, while participation in the national parliament and executive can also serve as a relevant strategy for reaching regional goals.

By a combination of the strategies mentioned above, we can delimit nine ideal types of political parties according to their strategies, whereas four of them can be described as possibly (but not exclusively) regional. Those are political parties operating only at regional level and only in one region, political parties operating only at regional level and in several regions<sup>2</sup>, political parties operating at national level and in one region and political parties operating at national level and in several regions.

The choice of strategy and the programmatic orientation of political parties<sup>3</sup> serve as key factors in the identification of regional parties in the Czech and Slovak party systems.

### **Factors supporting and limiting the development of regional political parties**

Regional political partisanship is valued for the strengthening of democratic principles, since it should provide representation for neglected interests (Brancati 2007: 135). On the other hand, regional political partisanship is regarded as a phenomenon responsible for the strengthening of ethnic and regional identities, which could lead to demands for a high degree of autonomy and possibly to secession. For

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<sup>2</sup> It could be the case if the borders of administrative regions do not respect the natural (religious, economic, linguistic and so on) borders of a region.

<sup>3</sup> We have searched for propositions propagating the ideology of regionalism and proclaiming the defence of regional interests (interests specific to a certain region).



these reasons, regional parties are purposely limited in some cases and proactively supported in others.

Interregional differences and the territorial cleavages behind them together with political decentralisation and other institutional factors are the main determinants supporting or limiting the presence of regional parties in political systems. In this section, we try to describe these factors and analyse their interrelations at a theoretical level.

### *Regional differences producing territorial cleavage*

In a traditional focus on regional political partisanship, regional differences are basic and necessary conditions for the development of regional political parties. It produces territorial cleavage,<sup>4</sup> from which regional parties derive their existence. In other words, there always have to exist some unique interests of certain region(s) which are neglected by national political parties. Territorial cleavage can have various bases – it can be created by the ethno-cultural or national differences in a certain region, and it can be produced by specificity of historical development<sup>5</sup> or economic differences<sup>6</sup> (Rokkan – Campbell – Torsvik – Valen 2009 [1970]: 120–126).

The existence of territorial cleavage has a significant impact on the development of regional parties, but in itself it is not sufficient. Regional political parties are often also present in political systems where territorial cleavage is weak. At the same time, strong territorial cleavage does not have to produce regional parties at any time. One very important role in the process of the assertion of regional political parties pertains to the configuration of certain political institutions which constrain party competition. Political decentralisation is the most important of these institutions (Brancati 2007: 136). It should generally support the development of regional political parties, because their presence in regional bodies gives regional parties the opportunity to promote certain interests within the region, to take a share of power and to gain publicity and resources for its operation.

However, regional political parties do not have to limit their activities to regional-level politics. They can try to gain representation at national level by participating in national elections and, if successful, they can promote regional interests at national level. In the case of bicameral parliaments, second chambers are often designed for the promotion of this type of interests. In other circumstances, a regional party can take advantage of a concentration of the electorate if the political system rewards it.

<sup>4</sup> We follow the concept of cleavages as formulated by Rokkan and Lipset (1967: 44–46).

<sup>5</sup> Especially the tradition of having one's own political administration.

<sup>6</sup> I. e. a certain region is notably more or less economically efficient than the country average or it has a different structure of economy from the rest of the country.

### *Political decentralisation*

Political decentralisation can be seen as the most important institutional prerequisite for the presence of regional political parties (Deschouwer 2006: 295). Political decentralisation stimulates politicians to create regional political parties, because they can gain a share of power and enforce their own platform through them. Political decentralisation also stimulates the electorate to cast votes for regional parties, because regional parties have a real chance of fulfilling their promises through the structures of political decentralisation.

Regional political parties can of course exist also in strictly centralized political systems, but there is the proposition that politicians will see the creation of a regional political party as much less effective, because there is usually no real chance of obtaining power or enforcing a platform. The ability of regional political parties to gain representation at the national level is usually limited by the rules of the electoral system which often eliminates smaller parties. So, the creation of regional political parties in centralised political systems seem quite a risky activity, since the party has to build new capacities and compete against established political parties with much wider electoral potential under conditions of an electoral system disadvantageous for smaller parties. The spatial concentration of electoral support is the only comparative advantage which regional political parties could utilise, but it depends on the particular make-up of an electoral system whether that really becomes advantageous.<sup>7</sup>

The presence of territorial cleavage can initiate the decentralisation process and in bodies created as a result of this process there can develop regional political partisanship. So a decentralised political system means a more suitable environment for regional political parties, and applies to their presence at both regional and national level. Regional political parties gain capacities, experiences, resources and publicity due to their participation in the regional electoral process and they can use them in national elections. Also if a regional political party is not successful in gaining seats in national elections, it can take advantage of making itself more familiar to voters. Sometimes regional parties use a national election exactly for that purpose and they participate in an electoral campaign even though they have no real chance of gaining representation.

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<sup>7</sup> A spatial concentration of votes cast can also be punished by the electoral system in some circumstances, e. g. if a nationwide legal threshold is applied.

### ***Causal linkages between regional political partisanship, territorial cleavages and political decentralisation***

While we are dealing with the limiting and advancing factors behind regional political partisanship, we need to investigate the presence of causal linkages between the existence of regional parties, territorial cleavages and political decentralisation. The traditional image of causality is that the existence of territorial cleavage leads to the development of regional political parties, which then demand political decentralisation. So regional parties are considered the engine of decentralisation. However, regional parties rarely have the opportunity to participate in any decision on decentralisation; they usually exert pressure on national political representation with the aim of starting the decentralisation process (De Winter 1998: 239). This causal scheme was derived from the experience of Western European countries (e. g. the United Kingdom, Spain, Belgium and so on), but it does not seem convincing. As has been mentioned above, territorial cleavage does not have to produce regional parties, as political decentralisation (besides other political institutions) can have a significant impact on the development of regional parties. Similarly, political decentralisation is not always the result of pressure from regional political forces (see e. g. Meguid 2009).

In sum, there is no definite model of causal relations between regional political partisanship, territorial cleavage and political decentralisation. Political decentralisation can be enforced by national political elites (without the participation of any regional forces) with the aim to increase the efficiency of bureaucracy, to create new offices for party members, to strengthen a national party in certain regions or to comply with the demands of international organisations (Masseti – Shakel 2011: 2). In some cases, political decentralisation is a colonial heritage.<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, research shows that political decentralisation enhances the probability of the presence of regional parties (Brancati 2007: 145; Deschouwer 2006: 295). Regional parties do not have to be the initiators of decentralisation; they can be a product of it. There is a significant level of coincidence of political decentralisation and regional political partisanship, but no certain causal linkage can be drawn. Territorial cleavage is the factor supporting the presence of regional parties, but it is again impossible to come to a clear conclusion about causality.

<sup>8</sup> E.g. former British colonies, where regional political elites which had autonomy in colonial times refused to give up their autonomous status after independence was declared.

### ***Other institutional factors influencing the development of regional political parties***

The conditions for the establishment of a new political party, the level of economic and political decentralisation, the timing of regional and national elections, the electoral systems for national bodies and the specific requirements of subjects participating in elections are often mentioned as significant factors influencing the presence or absence of regional political parties in a political system (Deschouwer 2006; Brancati 2007; Massetti – Schakel 2011).

The conditions for the establishment of a political party vary widely across political systems. We have to focus on how demanding the process is administratively and materially. A new political subject usually has to receive a certain level of public support for its existence and it has to document financial, material and personal preparedness. When these conditions are set too rigidly, the regional party (which is usually small) has a problem complying with them. An essential obstacle (often purposely created) to regional political party formation is the condition of wide territorial support to be demonstrated in the form of a petition signed by party followers in a certain number of administrative regions (sometimes in all of them).

In the case of decentralisation, the quality of it is important as well as its mere presence. A higher degree of political and economic decentralisation generally supports the development of regional parties (Deschouwer 2006: 295). Political regions without significant powers and resources are not an attractive object for politicians. On the other hand, an insufficient degree of decentralisation may cause a high level of regional political activity, if it was created as a response to the pressure of regional political forces.

The configuration of electoral cycles does indeed have a certain impact, but different examples show the differing quality of that impact. Coincidence of national and regional elections can limit the chances of regional parties, because the main focus is on the national electoral campaign and competition in national elections (dominated by national parties). The topics from a national campaign often spill over to a regional campaign. As the resources of regional political parties are limited, they cannot effectively face this challenge. A regional election midway through the term of a national parliament is more favourable to regional political parties, because it gives regional political parties the same chances as national parties (Deschouwer 2006: 296).

However, there is another interpretation of the impact of electoral cycles upon regional parties (Massetti – Schakel 2011: 15). Regional parties may take advantage of the concentration of national parties on national elections and they can address regional voters with their own topics. As national parties focus mainly on national

elections, regional parties have a significant chance of success. On the other hand, when a regional election takes place midway through the term of a national parliament, the chances for regional parties are limited. The reason is that national parties concentrate fully on a regional election and they have significant predominance in human, material and financial resources over regional parties. We cannot conclude which interpretation of the impact of electoral cycle design is accurate; instead, we are going to analyse specific circumstances and situations in particular cases.

The presence of regional parties at the national level of political systems is closely linked to the electoral system used for parliamentary elections. Some authors (e. g. Brancati 2007: 148) claim that a system of proportional representation is generally more favourable to regional parties than other types of electoral system. It points out the fact that regional parties are usually small-size parties and the system of proportional representation is kinder to small parties. However, it is true only in some cases (Masseti – Schakel 2011: 14), because we have to focus not only on the type of electoral system but also on important variables within the proportional system, especially on the size of electoral districts and legal threshold (if applied). Both variables can significantly increase the level of disproportionality in favour of major parties. Similarly, it is mistaken to generally describe the majority system as unfavourable for regional parties. Regional parties can take advantage of any spatial concentration of the electorate, so we have to closely review the structure of electoral districts in the context of opportunities for regional parties and only after that can we come to a clear conclusion about the impact of the majority system on the development of regional parties.

Moreover, electoral law can contain specific demands which limit the presence of regional parties. The most common is an obligation to put up candidates in a certain number of electoral districts (or in all of them).<sup>9</sup>

In the case of a first democratic election, it has been concluded that it generally constitutes an opportunity for regional parties, which can take advantage of the unconsolidated political environment. Political debate is mostly unstructured and it is favourable for regional issues (Brancati 2007: 149). In addition, regional parties can directly address the electorate due to its spatially limited character and the electorate could be more willing to elect those parties, because their real potential remains yet unknown.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Such a rule is applied e. g. in Turkey or in Mexico.

<sup>10</sup> Some other factors could be identified which influence the presence of regional parties in a political system, but we exclude them from our analysis because we do not see them as relevant for our purposes (an analysis of Czech and Slovak regional parties) or because we do not see them as relevant at all. E.g. Brancati (2007: 148) believes that a parliamentary form of government is more favourable to the development of regional parties than a presidential one. He argues that politics in presidential systems is often limited to two alternatives and so there is no space for

## Regional political parties in the Czech Republic and Slovakia<sup>11</sup>

The aim of this section is to demonstrate that regional partisanship is not an extensive phenomenon in the Czech and Slovak party systems. In doing so, we focus on the results of regional and national elections in both countries. Three rounds of regional elections have taken place in both countries. Besides this, we will analyse the results of elections to the Czech National Council (*Česká národní rada*) in 1990 and 1992, the House of Deputies (*Poslanecká sněmovna*) of the Czech Parliament in 1996, 1998, 2002, 2006 and 2010 and the Senate of the Czech Parliament from 1996 to the present. In the Slovak case, we will focus on the elections of the Slovak National Council (*Slovenská národná rada*) in 1990 and 1992 and the elections of the National Council of the Slovak Republic (*Národná rada Slovenskej republiky*) in 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006 and 2010.

### *Regional parties in regional elections in the Czech Republic*

The main arena of political competition at the regional level in the Czech Republic is constituted by the regional assemblies (*zastupitelsva krajů*). Regional self-government was anticipated by the Constitution of the Czech Republic (in force since 1<sup>st</sup> January 1993), but it started to operate seven years later, because it was hard to find a political consensus on a definite form and structure of self-government at the regional level. The first election of thirteen regional assemblies<sup>12</sup> took place in 2000. Since the electoral term amounts to four years, the next rounds of election were in 2004 and 2008.

The election in 2000 was dominated by national political parties. The regional bodies were at a starting point and many questions about their operation, power and significance thus remained unanswered, so the domination of national political parties and the lack of interest of voters were hardly surprising. The Independent Movement of Zlín (*Zlínské hnutí nezávislých*, est. 1998) was the only regional party which obtained seats in some of the regional assemblies.<sup>13</sup> It had 6 seats out of 45 in the assembly of the Zlín region (*Zlínský kraj*).

The election in 2004 was again dominated by national political parties. No regional party was able to obtain even one seat. The Union for Sport and Health in

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regional political parties. This hypothesis has not been empirically tested yet and we see it as a very speculative one, so we do not include it in our analysis.

<sup>11</sup> All the election results have been gathered from the websites of the Czech and Slovak statistics offices: Czech Statistical Office. [Election Server]: available at <http://www.volby.cz/index.htm> (10 April 2011); Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic. Election Statistics available at <http://portal.statistics.sk/showdoc.do?docid=30> (10 April 2011).

<sup>12</sup> The Capital City of Prague has special status. The assembly of Prague exercises power as both regional and local assembly, while it is elected together with local assemblies. For its specificity Prague is excluded from our analysis of elections of regional assemblies.

<sup>13</sup> Zlínské hnutí nezávislých [official web site]: available at <http://www.zhn-zlin.cz/> (15 May 2011).

the Liberec region (*Unie pro sport a zdraví v Libereckém kraji*)<sup>14</sup> was very close, and was less than one percent of votes cast short. This election did not support the proposition that the existence of regional assemblies has a supporting effect on the operation of regional parties.

The last regional election took place in 2008 and it was the most successful for regional parties yet, although the dominance of national parties persisted. The political party *Severočeši.cz*<sup>15</sup> won 8 seats out of 55 in the assembly of the Ústí nad Labem region (*Ústecký kraj*). The party Mayors for the Liberec region (*Starostové pro Liberecký kraj*, est. 2008)<sup>16</sup> got 6 out of 45 seats in the assembly of the Liberec region (*Liberecký kraj*). The Independent Movement of Zlín returned to the regional assembly of the Zlín region, having obtained 1 out of 45 seats.

### ***Regional parties in regional elections in Slovakia***

The setting-up of regional self-government in Slovakia was a similarly complicated process as it was in the Czech case. Discussion about delimitation and the power of political regions took a long time, so the first election to regional assemblies took place in 2001; the next rounds were held in 2005 and 2009.

The electoral results of the election in 2001 displayed the dominance of national political parties. The only exception was the success of the Hungarian Coalition Party (*Strana maďarskej koalície*, SMK), which obtained 14 out of 40 seats in the Trnava region (*Trnavský kraj*), 31 out of 52 seats in the Nitra region (*Nitranský kraj*), 15 out of 49 in the Banskobystrická region (*Banskobystrický kraj*) and several more within coalitions in other regional assemblies. The question is whether we can view the SMK as a regional party. According to the definitions mentioned above, the SMK is an example of an ethnic political party. Although it employs a strategy compatible with the definition of a regional party and it has a spatially concentrated electorate, the content of its platform deals more with ethnically-based issues than regional ones.<sup>17</sup> So we prefer to consider the SMK an ethnic party more than an ethno-regional one.

The 2005 regional election was again dominated by national parties. The Party of the Slovak Regions (*Strana regiónov Slovenska*)<sup>18</sup> gained 2 seats in the assembly

<sup>14</sup> Unie pro sport a zdraví [official web site]: available at <http://usz.cz/> (15 May 2011).

<sup>15</sup> A political party established in 2008, its primary goal is to take a share of the region's administration through its presence in the regional assembly. The main point of the platform is a critique of widespread corruption in the regional administration. (Severoces.cz [official website]: available at <http://www.severoces.cz>) (15 May 2011).

<sup>16</sup> Starostové pro Liberecký kraj [official web site]: available at <http://www.starostoveprolibereckykraj.cz/> (15 May 2011).

<sup>17</sup> Strana maďarskej koalície [official web site]: available at <http://www.mkp.sk/sk> (18 May 2011).

<sup>18</sup> A regional party promoting the interests of the economically underdeveloped eastern regions, the Košické region and the Prešov region (Strana regiónov Slovenska [official web site]: available at

of the Košice region (*Košický kraj*). Taken together, the ethnic party SMK obtained 53 seats in regional assemblies.

In 2009, no regional party obtained seats in any regional assembly. The ethnic party the SMK gained 35 seats in the assemblies of the southern regions. The Bridge (*Most-Híd*),<sup>19</sup> the other party defending the interests and rights of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, obtained one seat in the Bratislava region and the Trnava region.

The domination of national political parties and solid performance of independent candidates is a typical characteristic of regional elections in Slovakia. The possibility of candidature for independents may be taken as a factor limiting regional political partisanship in Slovakia, because regional politicians are not institutionally forced to create a political party in the struggle for a seat in the regional assembly.

### ***Regional political parties in national elections in the Czech Republic***

The election of the Czech National Council was the first national democratic election after the transition to democracy.<sup>20</sup> The Movement for Self-Governing Democracy – The Society for Moravia and Silesia (*Hnutí za samosprávnou demokracii – Společnost pro Moravu a Slezsko*, HSD-SMS)<sup>21</sup> obtained 22 out of 200 seats and was the third most successful party in the election. It maintained its presence in the Czech National Council in 1992, when it gained 14 out of 200 seats. After the 1992 election, the party lost electoral support because of intraparty disputes. In part, this development has been ascribed to a fear of a consequential disintegration of the country after the division of the Czechoslovak federation.

No other regional party has succeeded in gaining representation in the House of Deputies yet. The regional parties stood as candidates in each round of elections, but none was able to get over the legal threshold. Moravian political subjects are usually closest to the 5% share.

The Senate, the upper chamber of the Czech parliament, has existed since 1996. Senators are elected for six years; each two years one third of the seats is contested. The Senate provides the opportunity to use the spatial concentration of votes cast to gain a seat. There has only been one regional party which has yet been able to take advantage of the spatial concentration of its electoral support – *Severočeši.cz*. It obtained two seats in 2010 Senate election.

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<http://www.srske.sk/> (18 May 2011).

<sup>19</sup> The name of the party means “bridge” written in Slovak and Hungarian.

<sup>20</sup> The federal elections are not included in our analysis.

<sup>21</sup> It is a political party defending the political rights of the historical regions of Moravia and Silesia. The main aim was to enforce political decentralisation in a form respecting the existence of Moravia and Silesia as autonomous political units (Cabada – Šanc 2005: 208–209).



### ***Regional political parties at the national level in Slovakia***

Regional parties have not been present at the national level of the Slovak political system. Possible exceptions could be political parties representing the Hungarian minority. In 1990 it was Coexistence – the Hungarian Democratic Movement (*Spolužitie – Maďarské demokratické hnutí*); in 1992 it was the Hungarian Democratic Movement; from 1994 to 2010 it was the SMK (mentioned above) and in 2010 it was *Most – Híd*. All those parties have been ethnic in their nature, but they cannot be clearly described as regional. As we have stated above, a regional party connects its existence with the issues of a certain region. In the case of the Hungarian parties in Slovakia, they are connected with the issues of an ethnic minority. Although this minority is spatially concentrated in southern Slovakia, in our point of view the Hungarian parties cannot be defined as regional because spatial dimension is of lesser importance for them.

### **Promoting and limiting factors behind regional political partisanship in the Czech Republic and Slovakia**

In this section, we discuss the presence and quality of factors influencing regional political partisanship (defined above) in the cases of the Czech and Slovak political systems. Territorial cleavages, political decentralisation, conditions for the establishment of a political party, the configuration of electoral cycles and electoral systems for parliamentary elections are subsequently analysed.

#### ***Territorial cleavage in Czech and Slovak politics***

The Czech and Slovak cases differ with regard to territorial cleavage. Territorial cleavage has not gained long-term significance in the Czech party system. The Czech party system displays the one-dimensional pattern of party competition dominated by socio-economic division (Kopecký 2007: 120; Kopecký 2006b: 128). The regional level of the party system (with the few above-mentioned exceptions) follows a nationwide pattern. The potential for the development of regional cleavage can be seen in the division of the Czech Republic into three historical countries – Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. This cleavage appeared in the party system in the first half of the 1990s (Bureš – Just 2010: 56), but is no longer relevant, although political parties developing this cleavage still exist.

Other potential cleavage can originate from the economic base. Prague, as the region highly above average in terms of economic efficiency, could be the central point of regional cleavage. This potential is limited by the centrality of Prague in the political life of the Czech Republic. Prague has a central position in the focus

of all relevant national political parties and those parties are able to cover issues arising from the exceptional standing of Prague in the economy of the country.

Slovakia is an example of a multidimensional pattern of political competition (Kopecký 2007: 122; Kopecký 2006a: 156–157). Besides the socio-economic cleavage, there is also a national cleavage represented by, on one hand the Slovak National Party (*Slovenská národná strana*) promoting Slovak nationalism, and on the other by political parties focusing on the interests of the Hungarian minority (Kopeček 2006: 173, 214). The Hungarian minority makes up a 9.5% share of the population<sup>22</sup> and it is a quite strongly politically-mobilised group. This national cleavage has its spatial dimension as the Hungarian minority is concentrated in the southern part of Slovakia.

Owing to economic disparities, the position of Bratislava is quite similar to that of Prague in the Czech case. The thesis of the centrality of a country's capital in politics and thus the improbability of the development of regional cleavage of this manner can also be applied there. On the other hand, the Košice region and the Prešov region are at the centre of a possible cleavage arising from the underdevelopment of those regions.<sup>23</sup>

### ***Political decentralisation in the Czech Republic and Slovakia***

A regional level of government has been created in the past decade in both countries. Three rounds of regional elections have taken place in both cases. There are 13 self-governing regions (*kraje*) in the Czech Republic; the capital city Prague has special status.<sup>24</sup> Slovakia is divided into 8 regions (*kraje*). The capital city Bratislava has no extraordinary status, and is part of the Bratislava region.

Regional self-government has to face certain problems. Especially, citizens have not identified with the new regional structures yet. It can be seen in the very low level of turnout in regional elections. Regional elections in both countries exhibit all the main characteristics of second order elections – the turnout is low, governing parties are usually defeated, small parties are more successful than in national elections and the electoral campaign is concentrated on national topics instead of on regional ones.

Political decentralisation had similar motives in both cases. At first, it was a demonstration of a departure from the undemocratic principles of the administration. The absence of self-government is a significant characteristic of an undemocratic

<sup>22</sup> Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic [demographic composition of population]: available at <http://app.statistics.sk/vuc2009/info/infoSR.jsp?lang=sk> (10 May 2011).

<sup>23</sup> The Prešov region only manages 36% of the EU average in GDP per capita.

<sup>24</sup> According to Section 16 (2) of Law No. 131/2000 Collection of Laws, Prague disposes of the powers of municipality and region simultaneously.

regime, so the establishment of self-government was regarded as a symbolic confirmation of democratic development. So the political decentralisation was not the result of regionalist pressure, but it was based on the decision of national political elites (LaPlant – Baun – Lach – Marek 2004: 35–36).

However, the establishment of regional self-government was delayed. There was a feeling of necessity, but a consensus over the particular structure of regional self-government was missing. Moreover, the relationship of Czechs and Slovaks within one state was a more urgent issue. Discussion about the institutional factors behind regional decentralisation was postponed (Vodička – Cabada 2003: 284–285). The negotiations about the future form of the relationship between Czechs and Slovaks failed and the Czechoslovak federation was divided into two independent states. This development meant another delay in the realisation of regional self-government. In the Czech case, there was fear of division of the state, which could possibly lead to other secession attempts. In Slovakia, regional decentralisation was delayed because of fears of the influence of the Hungarian minority in regional politics in southern Slovakia. At this time, both states became applicant countries for EC/EU membership. As part of internal changes a regional level of self-government had to be created.<sup>25</sup> So, external pressure played an important part in the realisation of regional self-government (LaPlant – Baun – Lach – Marek 2004: 37).

Discussion about the number of regions, their borders and powers was quite intensive and full of controversies. The final shape of the regional structure became the object of considerable criticism. In the Czech case, the violation of several traditional borders was often mentioned (especially between Czech and Moravian territory) together with the outstanding asymmetry of particular regions in population and area. The critique of the Slovak regional settlement was connected with complaints about the delimitations of regions in southern Slovakia, which was found very disadvantageous for the Hungarian minority. In response to that critique and also some foreign pressure, the settlement was slightly modified in favour of representation of the Hungarian minority, but the Hungarian political elite was not content with the final design of regional self-government (Buček 2002: 151). We can say that the Hungarians have not fully accepted the regions as the natural arena for promoting their interests.

The regional settlements in both countries have in common very limited powers and weak fiscal autonomy. These facts have a limiting effect on the interest of political leaders for engagement in regional politics (LaPlant – Baun – Lach – Marek 2004:48–49; Buček 2002: 149).

<sup>25</sup> The creation of self-governmental structures based on direct election was preferred by the European Commission (it was recommended in the regular evaluation reports of the Commission).

## ***Legislative conditions of the formation of political parties in the Czech Republic and Slovakia***

In the Czech Republic, a political party can be established by three citizens with a minimum age of 18. The proposal for the formation of a political party must include the name of the party, its statute and a petition with 1,000 signatures of citizens supporting the formation of the party.<sup>26</sup> No other conditions for the petition are set; signatures can be collected in one region or even in one city. The statute of the new party has to comply fully with the constitutional framework of the Czech Republic, which means among other things that separatist political parties are not allowed.

In Slovakia, the rules of party formation were very similar until a new law was adopted in 2005. The registration of a new political party is made by the interior ministry (the same as in the Czech case). The statute of a new party has to be presented together with a petition, which has to include 10,000 signatures of party supporters.<sup>27</sup> So the procedure of party formation in the Slovak case is much stricter than in the Czech case. While the formation of a regional party in the Czech case does not have to face serious administrative obstacles, the formation of a regional party in Slovakia is considerably limited administratively.

## ***The timing of regional and parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic and Slovakia***

The electoral term lasts four years in regional and parliamentary elections in both countries. In both cases, the regional elections take place at the same time in all regions, which allows national parties to run a nationwide campaign.

In the Czech case, all regional elections have taken place roughly midway through the parliamentary electoral term. The electoral process is dominated by the national parties, although it is not overshadowed by the elections to the Chamber of Deputies. On the other hand, the regional elections coincide with the election of one third of senators, which enhances the focus of national political parties. A different pattern has been approved in Slovakia. Regional elections take place less than one year before the election of the national parliament. The national political parties consider them an opportunity for testing electoral preferences before the much more important national elections.

<sup>26</sup> Zákon č. 424/1991 Sb., o sdružování v politických stranách a v politických hnutích, ve znění pozdějších předpisů [the Law No. 424/1992 Collection of Laws, of association within political parties and political movements as amended].

<sup>27</sup> Zákon č. 85/2005 Z. z., o politických stranách a politických hnutiach, ve znění pozdějších předpisů [the Law No. 85/2005 Collection of Laws, of political parties and political movements as amended].

In sum, the situation is unfavourable for regional political parties in the present pattern in both cases. However, it can be changed by an early dissolution of national parliament (the Chamber of Deputies in the Czech case). It would be very interesting to analyse the impact of a change of electoral cycle.

### ***The electoral systems for parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic and Slovakia***

A system of proportional representation is used in the elections of the Czech Chamber of Deputies and Slovak National Council. A legal threshold of 5% of votes cast is used in both cases. Thus the electoral system eliminates parties with limited electoral support. There is no reward available for regional parties in connection with any spatial concentration of electoral potential.

Electoral districts in Czech elections are based on administrative region boundaries and it is possible that a party presents a slate only in one region. It could present an opportunity for regional parties, but we still have to bear in mind the 5% threshold which is hard to make with votes cast only in one region. In the Slovak case, the whole country forms one electoral district and it means that a party has to present a nationwide slate, which should be acceptable to the electorate throughout the country's territory. Regional parties are certainly disadvantaged by this system.

On the other hand, the two-round majority electoral system used in Czech senatorial elections provides certain opportunities for regional parties. Such a system effectively rewards any spatial concentration of electoral support and if there is a match between a senatorial district and such a concentration, it can give a regional party a solid chance of winning a seat. Moreover, the chance is increased by the lower level of interest shown by national parties and their voters in these elections. So, as for institutional design, it is more probable that a regional party will obtain representation in the Senate than in the Chamber of Deputies. It needs a high degree of spatial concentration of electorate and an strong candidate (as an important precondition for success in a majority vote).

### **Conclusion**

Czech and Slovak regional political parties are not distinctive phenomena. Only a few successful attempts by regional parties to gain representation can be noted. The major limit is the absence of clear territorial cleavage which could serve as the base for the formation of regional parties. However, there are possible issues which could act as the core of such cleavage (the existence of historical territories in the Czech case and the presence of a Hungarian minority and uneven economic development in the Slovak case).

As for the institutional environment, the Czech and Slovak cases show the uncertain impact of political decentralisation on the development of regional parties. Up till now, no significant increase in the activity of regional parties has been recorded. The hypothesis of a strong coincidence between regional parties and political decentralisation cannot be confirmed in the Czech and Slovak cases.

With regard to the promoting and limiting factors of regional partisanship mentioned above, we can say that there is some possibility of a future increase in the activity of regional parties at the regional level in both the Czech and Slovak political systems, in spite of the presence of certain notable limits (more significant in the Slovak case). As for the national level of the political system, opportunities for regional parties are effectively limited in both systems (with the possible exception of the Czech Senate).

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## **Reforming Local Governments in a New Democracy: Poland as a Case Study**

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**Abstract:** *The aim of this article is to study the development of local government in Poland after 1989. Acknowledging the fact that the evolution of Polish self-government is quite complicated and lengthy, I will study this process regarding all political, social, economic and other circumstances. I will first follow up this process and then analyze the reform of self-government as a political problem vis-à-vis the professional and political experiences of the reformers.*

**Keywords:** *local government, local politics, reform of local government, Poland*

### **Introduction**

When speaking about Polish politics after 1989, the institutions of local government seem to be a successful part of this. Ever since their establishment and consolidation, they have become an integral part of the Polish democratic system. Their development, however, was marked by a number of serious problems. Post-communist Poland can be characterized by a complexity in the development of local governments. Local governments were created in the course of a long time – and rather than at once, they were set up in stages. Moreover, they had to overcome many obstacles. In this paper, I will follow this process and highlight the main issues connected with the formation of local governments. I will also analyze the later reform of local governments as a political problem. In other words, I will examine both positive and negative factors of this process vis-à-vis the practical experience of its creators.

### **Reforming a regional structure: the bigger picture**

Reforming a regional structure has two levels: a theoretical one and a transformational one. From a theoretical perspective, it is part of a broader process of institutional reforms that have resulted from the development of political and institutional systems since the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Modern states and their institutions have been becoming increasingly complex and detached from reality when it comes to their openness to citizens and sensitivity to their needs. Their structure has become confusing and difficult to describe. It has been unclear who is influencing whom and who is responsible to whom. The number of semiofficial and semiprivate

institutions has grown and, what is more, the differences between these institutions have been vanishing. Convoluted collegiate institutions have emerged and multiplied, consisting of representatives of various groups and interests.

As a result of the aforementioned, criticism of contemporary political institutions and institutional systems has been growing. Political scientists James G. March and Johan P. Olsen identified three main aspects of this criticism: first, political institutions are rigid and incompetent. They are not able to flexibly adjust to changing surroundings. Second, political institutions are too powerful and activist. Third, political institutions increasingly serve organized (mainly economic) interest groups rather than the state itself and more weakly organized groups (March, Olsen 2005: 122–123). The increasing number of problems led to an increased need for finding a solution. Although the very idea of institutionalism has not been questioned, a number of reform options did appear. One of them focused on the decentralization of institutional systems; in other words, on the transfer of power to lower, local and regional, levels.

The second issue is connected with the democratization of political systems in a post-nondemocratic society. Democratic states are characterized – or should be characterized – by a degree of decentralization in the decision-making process. Local and regional authorities represent a key form of a citizen's participation in the political and public life of a society. Hence, a systematic change from a non-democratic to a democratic regime cannot avoid the issue of regionalism and local government. After the collapse of communism, all Central and Eastern European states dealt with the question of creating a new system of a democratic regional order in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In addition, in some countries a later reform of these institutions took place. Poland can serve as a case study of a new democracy that not only established a system of local governments but also reformed it.<sup>1</sup>

## **Poland and the development of its local governments**

### ***Situation before 1989***

In 1989, Poland was a country with nonexistent local government. Several legal norms – gradually adopted between 1972 and 1975 – introduced a highly centralized system of territorial administration. A two-level structure was established, formed by municipalities and voivodeships. The existing districts were abolished. Neither of these units had anything to do with local government and both were part of the state administration. As was the case during communism, freely and

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<sup>1</sup> The situation was different in the Czech Republic where only the (rather long and difficult) process of establishing regional self-government took place (see Kopeček 2010: 180-182).

directly elected bodies did not exist. A system of national councils was established, including two types of institutions: collegiate committees and single-headed institutions of municipality chiefs and voivodes in voivodeships (a *voivode* was the representative of the government in the region). In addition, until 1980, merging appeared – or at least personal links were established – with the local structures of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR).<sup>2</sup> Another characteristic feature of the former system of regional administration was that the administrative division of the country was made along regional rather than historical lines. Voivodeships were established around large cities, regardless of historical, cultural or social factors.<sup>3</sup>

What became clear in 1989 was that a transformation of the political system must also include a reform of the territorial administration and the introduction of local governments. This simple statement has proven to be very complicated in practice, and the whole process of establishing and reforming the system of local government lasted for many years. It can be divided into three main stages.

### ***Establishing local government in 1990***

The transformation of local administration in Poland began with the 1989 parliamentary elections. Specific steps were adopted in the spring of 1990 when the Sejm adopted a set of laws on local government. Two laws adopted on March 8, 1990 were crucial in this respect: the law on local government and the law on the elections to municipal councils (both from March 8, 1990). These two laws brought about the emergence of local government in the true sense and established a democratic electoral system with regard to local elections. The administrative structure was largely preserved, except for the City of Warsaw (Kuć 2004: 63–78).

The two-level system of municipalities and voivodeships was preserved. It was the status of municipalities that underwent a fundamental change. The supreme body of each municipality was now a council elected by direct universal suffrage. The authorities of the municipal government received broad competences in the management of local communities. Moreover, they now had communal property at their disposal and a new law strictly separated it from state ownership.

There were no elected bodies in voivodeships, only voivodeship parliaments consisting of representatives of municipal councils. These parliaments had only limited advisory functions. Power was concentrated in the hands of the voivode.

<sup>2</sup> Presidiums of national councils were headed by first secretaries of the PZPR of an appropriate level. Compare (Kallas 2003: 483-486).

<sup>3</sup> The economy was the key factor. This also applies to the previous period – after the communists took power in the 1940s. Compare (Slugocki 1991: 29-36). In 1975, Poland was divided into 49 small voivodeships and 2,327 large municipalities (Otok 1999: 80).

Since the voivode was appointed to office by the Polish Prime Minister, this office was subject to the national government.

It seemed that the distribution of power has shifted towards local governments after 1989. In reality, however, there were two factors that increased the influence of state institutions. First, there was the substantial financial dependence of municipalities on the state, and second was the role of state bodies, which had been “left behind” after the 1975 reform. These were the remains of district institutions that had existed before the reform. The numerous state institutions were subordinated to the voivodeship and operated at a lower level than the voivodeships. However, they were not included in the structure of communities. The result was a considerable reduction of the municipalities and distortions of their “sovereignty” (Wiatr 1998: 8–9).

The emergence of local governments in 1990 was an indisputable benefit for municipal politics. It paved the way for the development of local party structures and a variety of local communities (Siellawa-Kolbowska 2000: 239–241). However, as it brought decentralization and democratization of state governance and the emergence of genuine local governments only at the lowest level it was nothing more than a partial solution. Central institutions still had significant power over local governments (Jabłoński 1998: 158). In addition, the existing two-track structure of territorial administration and local government did not correspond with the expectations of a society that had not accepted the provinces created in 1975 and the abolition of districts and continued to retain traditional regional, i.e. district and voivodeship, ties and relations (Bartkowski 2003: 147).

### ***Great reform of self-government in 1998***

The years between 1991 and 1997 were a period of stagnation. An exception to this was the active right-wing government of Hanna Suchocka (1992–1993) who in 1993 drafted a reform concerning local governments. Due to the dissolution of both Houses of the Parliament and the announcement of early parliamentary elections in the same year the draft did not reach the Sejm.<sup>4</sup> The left-wing coalition established after the elections lacked the political will to continue the reform efforts. Only the government of Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz (1996–1997) showed some legislative initiative in this respect. However, because of disputes between the coalition parties (the Democratic Left Alliance and Polish People’s Party), the reform was not adopted (Kubát 1999: 97). Despite this, a gradual expansion of the powers of municipal governments occurred in this period, especially in the areas of primary education and health care (Bartkowski 2003: 148).

<sup>4</sup> It is estimated that the reform (existing already in the form of a law) was 60% completed (Regulski 2000: 133).

The political will to continue with the reforms reappeared only after the 1998 parliamentary elections. The right-wing government of Jerzy Buzek prepared a packet of four reforms, including one of local government. Following a number of political disputes, this reform was finally approved in 1998 and laws that introduced this reform came into force on January 1, 1999.<sup>5</sup> The 1998 reform was far-reaching. The most visible result was a change in the number and size of the provinces (there were now 16 provinces). This was, of course, not the only result of the reform. Voivodeships were now self-governing units and voivodeship parliaments were now elected by direct universal suffrage. Hence, voivodeships now ceased to be only a component of the government.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, a whole new level in the regional structure and system of government was established as well – self-governing districts with directly elected councils. Since then, neither the structure nor the competences of individual levels of self-government have significantly changed.<sup>7</sup>

### *Electing mayors and financing local governments*

Two issues dominated the subsequent political development: setting up city and municipality mayors and financing local governments. From a political standpoint, the most controversial reform was the one of the election of mayors. There had been a need to introduce direct and general elections for mayors of cities and municipalities ever since the very beginnings of the reform efforts. This goal was finally achieved in 2002. It was expected to be a major systematic change, one that would not only change the local political situation but the party system as well, reducing the dominance of local parties and generally improving the way local governments functioned.

It was expected that directly elected politicians would be accountable for their actions to the voters. Furthermore, this reform was supposed to help find new political elites. Politicians that were directly elected by citizens were supposed to have greater legitimacy and also have the potential to become leaders of local communities. These assumptions were supported by the fact that – at least according to opinion polls – up to 80% of citizens were awaiting this change. It is not surprising this also became the subject of the 2000 presidential election campaign and the 2001 parliamentary elections.

<sup>5</sup> For more on the issue of political and meritorious circumstances in the formation and adoption of reforms see (Sitek 2004: 152-172).

<sup>6</sup> They filled the role of a state authority at the same time.

<sup>7</sup> There were altogether 373 districts, including 308 rural and 65 urban ones (cities that were also districts). 2,489 municipalities were at the lowest level of the self-government (Sitek 2004: 99). New voivodeships and districts meant a return to the period before 1975. Around 85% of municipalities and 91.5% of the population were in voivodeships with the same center as in 1973. 93% of urban districts were the same as before the 1975 reform (Bartkowski 2003: 149)

The result of this step, however, did not always prove positive. Although there was a change in the way mayors were elected, their status remained largely unchanged. Mayors of cities and municipalities remained dependent on assemblies and councils. Directly elected mayors did not receive independent executive powers and councils continue to grant these rights.<sup>8</sup> Since directly elected mayors often come from a different political camp than most council members this began to cause problems in their relations (Chmielnicki 2004: 12–23).<sup>9</sup>

The second issue was the system of funding local governments. A new law was introduced in 2003, replacing the 1998 act. The main aim of this reform was to strengthen the financial autonomy of municipalities. Accordingly, their own resources and general subsidies were the main sources of funding while targeted subsidies were supposed to provide an additional source (Korolewska 2006: 47). The results of this financial reform did not meet expectations (Kubát 2006: 13–15).

### **The emergence and reform of local government: experience of a transition country<sup>10</sup>**

There was no territorial autonomy in Poland before 1989 and thus this needed to be built from scratch. A thorough reform of the regional arrangement is more than just the approval of a few laws. Having a legislative basis is of course necessary but the adoption process (and the problems associated with it) is just the beginning. It is therefore interesting to identify the main support pillars and obstacles in this process.

The most important factor is the political will of those in power. If you meet all other prerequisites for the implementation of reforms – consent or at least passivity of society, active service of people in the field and technical readiness of the reformers – but there is no political will; reforms will not be performed at all or only partially.

Changes in the government resulted in differences in how key constitutional and political institutions reflected the question of establishing and reforming local governments. The history of reform efforts in Poland in the 1990s confirms this. Waves of activity (1990, 1993 and 1998) and passivity (especially 1994–1997) alternated.

The highest state authorities, particularly the government and parliament, are usually understood as the “ruling” institutions. The Polish case study shows that a successful implementation and completion of a local government reform needs the support of a much wider community. Furthermore, resistance of individuals and

<sup>8</sup> This does not mean that no partial changes were introduced. For example, the number of representatives was reduced on average by 30% before the 2002 municipal elections (Kubát 2003: 78).

<sup>9</sup> There was positive feedback as well.

<sup>10</sup> This section is to a large extent based on information from the book (Regulski 2000).

institutions needs to be overcome. When carrying out such a far-reaching reform, a necessary conflict with property and power interests arises. It is here where opponents of the reform are often recruited from.

State bureaucracy is the natural opponent of any reform effort. This is understandable: decentralization leads to the limiting of power of civil servants, reducing their number and reducing their financial comfort. Moreover, decentralization also requires civil servants to change the style of their work, to learn how to perform new tasks and solve new problems. Through the 1990s the Polish bureaucracy – including the Office of the Council Ministers and its head – vehemently resisted any reform efforts. Initially, the main reason for this opposition was connected to the fact that many council members had been in office continuously from the communist period. A paradoxical situation occurred when the government and the Prime Minister (specifically Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki) met with the opposition of its own apparatus. A special case was the Ministry of Finance, which regardless of government policy strongly opposed any attempt to decentralize state finances.

The leaders of the ruling political parties also opposed decentralization. Restricting central power meant also limiting the power of those party leaders who were in office. Reforming local governments inevitably resulted in the loss of their political position in favor of new local politicians. A typical example was the attitude of the Polish People's Party (PSL) between 1993 and 1997, which at that time formed a coalition government with the post-communist Democratic Left Alliance (SLD). The reasons why the PSL opposed the reform were political in nature. The PSL is an agrarian political party whose membership and electoral base is primarily rural. This strong position of the party in the country was transmitted, in a centralized state, to its strong position in the center. Typical was its opposition against the introduction of self-government in voivodeships and the establishment of self-governing districts. The party benefited from the old model (valid until 1998), when the voivodeship parliaments were not elected by direct universal suffrage but instead consisted of delegates from municipal councils. Most municipalities in Poland have a rural character and that is where the PSL was (and still is) strong (Paluch 1995). Keeping rural communities meant that the PSL kept most of the delegates in provincial parliaments and thus also its political influence. The bigger the self-governing unit was, the weaker the position of PSL in it would also be. In other words, this party suited a model with a small number of municipalities and the absence of districts and the existence of small voivodeships lacking any form of self-government.

What also played a role was the division of the country into spheres of influence of political parties. Each party sought to strengthen its influence while in office. For

example, a minister who supports decentralization reduces his own power and acts not only against his own interests, but also against the interests of his subordinates and his political party.<sup>11</sup>

Other opponents of decentralization included directors of large state (or semi-state) companies, especially those which were subsidized and those which were supposed to be taken over by the new local governments. Since many local governments lacked the money needed to subsidize these companies further, to achieve some profitability a reorganization of these companies was carried out. These changes affected both corporate executives and employees.<sup>12</sup>

Poland's peculiarity was the trade unions that played a key role in the country's transition to democracy. They also opposed decentralization and the emergence of local governments – and they did so for a simple reason. Unions associate members according to professions. Hence, the bigger the company, the more important it was for them. This was where their political power stemmed from. Local governments group people according to their place of residence and, what is more, decentralization fragments the structure of an industry. This suggests a fundamental conflict of interest between local governments and major trade unions. Solidarity (*Solidarność*), as both a trade union and a significant political actor, did not support efforts to establish local governments and reform the regional order.

By looking at the list of the opponents of reform, it would seem that carrying out the reform was simply impossible. Yet it was carried out and not only that, it was carried out successfully. Hence a question arises: what was it that managed to enforce it? The list those who supported the reform was not negligible. Society played a great role in it. At the very beginning of the democratization process, Polish society could be characterized by a strong anti-state mentality. Newly-created local governments were therefore understood as an instrument of struggle against the state and its institutions (public administration). This negative feeling had a positive role mainly because people to a large extent accepted the institutions of local government. Furthermore, this acceptance prevailed with time.<sup>13</sup>

Local communities that are formed around local governments, including local political groups, supported reform of this kind. Many saw this as an opportunity to participate in governance and achieve both political and economic success. This, in return, motivated local politicians to get involved.<sup>14</sup> It was the participants themselves who transformed the process, once initiated, into a movement that

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<sup>11</sup> This also applied to the various governmental and semi-governmental institutions in Poland.

<sup>12</sup> The heavy loss-making transport companies are a typical example.

<sup>13</sup> This of course does not mean that people were not critical of the municipalities or that the municipalities worked flawlessly.

<sup>14</sup> Although society itself remained passive and expected activity from politicians (Dzwończyk 2009: 165).



encompassed not only political but also social, cultural, economic and other areas as well. This helped to expand the reform's circle of supporters and to increase the pressure to actually carry these reforms out.<sup>15</sup>

## Conclusion

Reform of the Polish regional arrangement was initiated and launched from above. This was done against the wishes of the existing local structures. Not only they did not welcome the emergence of local governments, but, what is more, opposed it as well. The reform was the initiative of a small group of people who had been professionally engaged in these issues, particularly in academic and scientific institutions. They not only needed to overcome opposition from the "old structures" (in the center and provinces) but also from some "new structures" which did not understand the need for reform and/or felt threatened by it. The local communities themselves were responsible for the later success of these reforms. Where they lacked competences of their own, they pressured the highest state institutions.

Two major reforms (one from 1990 and the other from 1998) illustrate the very interesting tactics with regard to their implementation. As I have mentioned earlier in this text, there was no political will to introduce these reforms before 1990 and then between 1991 and 1992 and between 1994 and 1997. Those who prepared and implemented reforms used this time of political passivity to study the issue.<sup>16</sup> Hence, in the rather short period when there was the political will to implement these reforms, they were able to implement fundamental and radical reform measures in a short time. This is an example of an interesting and judicious procedure that was divided into stages. Though the initiators of these reforms were convinced of the need to establish districts and municipalities at the level of the voivodeship, and though they also were eager to carry the reforms out, they had to wait for a more favorable period.

I wish to conclude my paper with a list of the main positive factors necessary for a successful reform. They were put together by the main inspiration and organizer

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<sup>15</sup> Financial assistance from abroad played a great role, especially as it contributed to greater awareness and the "education" of people in the area.

<sup>16</sup> The main actor of the whole process was the university professor Jerzy Regulski who was the principal researcher on the question of restoring local government between 1981 and 1989. As a representative of the anticommunist opposition he participated in the roundtable discussions and between 1989 and 1991 convened in the Polish Senate. At the same time he served as the plenipotentiary of the government on the question of the reform of local government. Later he served as the permanent representative of Poland to the Council of Europe (1992-1997). Between 1998 and 1999 he chaired the government's council for government reform issues. He received a number of awards for his contribution to the creation and development of local government in Poland. He has published over 200 research papers.

of the Polish regional and municipal reforms of the 1990s, Jerzy Regulski (2000: 388):

1. political will,
2. the support or at least passive consent of society,
3. the expertise of those who are supposed to implement the reform,
4. the work and engagement of a large group of people to implement the reforms, especially in the regions.

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## Consolidation of the Centre-Right Political Camp in Hungary (1989–2002), Nationalism and Populism<sup>1</sup>

Přemysl Rosůlek

**Abstract:** *The article firstly identifies cleavages in Eastern and Central European (ECE) countries and Hungary in particular; recognising that nationalist, cultural and economy-protected interests have played a significant role in post-communist Hungary. The text focuses on the consolidation of the centre-right camp of political parties in Hungary between 1987 and 2002 in relation to nationalism and populism. Further to this it analyses the declining tendencies, fall and final break-up of the moderate-conservative MDF and other right-wing parties such as the agrarian-conservative FKGP and the Christian-conservative KDNP as they were overshadowed by the FIDESZ's rise after its shift to the right in 1993. The strategic, nationalistic and populist tendencies within the ideology of the FIDESZ will be analysed in the text. The major goal of the article has been to uncover the development of interrelated strategies and ideologies of the FIDESZ with nationalist-populist appeal up until 2002. Nevertheless, admitting only the partial and limited symmetrical logic of the development of the centre-right in Hungary, new trends of development after 2006 have also been mentioned at the end of the text.*

**Keywords:** *societal cleavages, nationalism, populism, centre-right, MDF, FIDESZ, Hungary*

### Introduction

The shared history of Hungarians goes back to the centuries when the Hungarian monarchs extended their kingdoms over territories which belong now to Slovakia, Ruthenia, Transylvania, Croatia, and Slovenia and also to part of Austria. Due to the post First World War Trianon settlement, Hungarians lost two-thirds of their territory and the country one-third of its population (Kiss 2010: 390; Shawcross 1974: 26–28) which increased the fury and fiercely nationalistic attitudes among Hungarians in the interwar period and was not, subsequently, suppressed by the doctrine of proletarian internationalism during the communist era. On the contrary, soft-communism in Kádár's era (1956–1988) promoted policy which was a mixture

<sup>1</sup> The following text is processed as a part of the project of the UWB in Pilsen titled *Komparativní výzkum antiminoritní rétoriky vybraných protestních populisticky a/nebo nacionálně orientovaných stran východní a západní Evropy* [Comparative research on anti-minority rhetoric by selected populist and/or nationalist oriented political parties in western and eastern Europe] under the number SGS-2011-064.

of cosmopolitan westernisation, pragmatism, populism and patriotism. The cosmopolitan – national divide had already been present within the core of the Hungarian communists. After the gradual disappearance of communism in Hungary between 1985 and 1989, a policy of protecting Hungarian minorities abroad remained a sensitive issue, hardly avoidable by both centre-right and liberal oriented parties (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 296).

This essay believes that a significant role is still played by an appeal to national identity, of which the fundamental criteria are historical territory, shared myths and historical memory, common mass public culture and the rights and duties of all its members and also a common economy with territorial mobility for all (Smith 1991: 14). Despite not having lost its relevance at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the political parties' portfolio of the right-wing camps in Europe, national identity has been an ideological base increasingly supported by populist ideology and authoritarian tendencies across both Western and the ECE countries, with the Hungarian case no exception.

I will formulate the general assumption of the text as follows: that the MDF led by the government of the prime minister Jozsef Antall (1990–1994) failed to achieve a consensus on pragmatism and reliance on its national-democratic, non-controversial oriented policy, while the national-populist policy of Viktor Orbán's government in 1998–2002 succeeded on the right-wing scene for its choice of a radical strategy full of confrontation.

For the above mentioned thesis to be verified, there are two main areas to be analysed in the text. Firstly, the following text will seek an answer to the question of the development of the centre-right wing scene in Hungary. Starting with the MDF, through the FKGP and ending with the FIDESZ, the causes for the changing core of political parties on the right from the beginning of party pluralism in Hungary will be examined. Secondly and simultaneously, another main goal of the text is to identify nationalistic and populist elements within the ideologies of major political parties on the centre-right political camp in Hungary ranging from the crystallisation of party pluralism in 1987 to its consolidation in the year 2002.

To sum up, the major goal of the text is to analyse the effect of FIDESZ's emergence on the already semi-consolidated right wing camp in 1993, and to identify the causes of its successful growth towards consolidation and occupation of the right-wing camp. The FIDESZ's success will be reflected at both the strategic and ideological level in which the main focus will be aimed at its nationalist-populist tendencies.

The most relevant parties on the centre-right camp – mainly the MDF and the FIDESZ, and also partly also the FKGP – will be loosely examined on the cleavages implying nationalistic or populist appeal such as national – cosmopolitan,

economic populism – free market liberalism and the late 1990s’ emerging divide of euro-sceptics – euro-optimists.

## Societal cleavages and the ECE countries & Hungary

The theory of societal cleavages developed by the Norwegian political scientist Stein Rokkan belongs to a fundamental approach for understanding political systems within political science. Stein Rokkan applied the theory of societal cleavages to the western European countries and it could be discussed whether the six givens suggested by Rokkan for western societies could be applicable also for emerging party systems of the ECE countries after the fall of communism:

*Table 1: Stein Rokkan & the six givens which formed Western Societies*

(1)	The heritage of Roman Empire with consequences of a) supremacy of the Emperor, b) systematisation of legal rules and c) the idea of citizenship.
(2)	Supranational and cross-ethnic organisation of Catholic Church and its key role in challenging the monopoly of elite communication.
(3)	The Germanic kingdom as a tradition of legislative and juridical assemblies of free heads of families.
(4)	The rise of independent cities across Europe – a network reaching from Italy over Flanders to the Baltics. Such a city belt and its density have meant a difficulty in maintaining a central monopoly and control over a given territory.
(5)	The development and consolidation of feudal agrarian structures and consequent landholdings
(6)	The emergence of national languages and the fall of the Latin language as the dominant medium of cross-ethnic communication.

Source: Rokkan 1999

Most likely only several of the six pre-conditions outlined above are only reluctantly applicable to the ECE countries. Therefore, the pattern of Rokkan’s societal cleavages (a) reformation – counter-reformation, (b) state – church, (c) city – village, (d) employer – capital (or communism – capitalism) should be put into the question in the case the ECE countries (Rokkan 1999: 225–382).

In coincidence with the third wave of democratisation linked to the ECE countries and analogical to emerging party pluralism across the ECE after the fall of communist regimes, the societal cleavages introduced by Rokkan solely for western societies in late 1960s again started to attract the attention of researchers. Rokkan’s dividing lines have been verified by numerous researchers on the political systems in ECE countries (Toole 2007, Stýskalíková 2003). Unlike the opinion held by some contemporary researchers that the political space of the ECE societies has

been structured similarly to the western societies and the main structural cleavage have been formed in the ECE countries, as in the west, around the left-right and libertarianism-authoritarianism poles, many contemporary researchers have expressed a sceptical opinion on the ability to examine Rokkan's cleavages on the emerging party systems of the ECE. One group insists that the ECE countries must be reflected as a "non-structural political space", while the second one states that societal cleavages represent evolutionary process in the ECE countries. As was seen, in the first post-communist elections, a significant cleavage dividing the state and civil society emerged, later the centre-periphery dimension appeared and, thirdly, social-liberal cleavages were formed.

Herbert Kitschelt suggests that Rokkan's scheme lacks explanatory potential for the ECE countries and identifies additional divides which are shaping the political landscape in the ECE countries and are related to the communism/post-communism divide: 1) a regime divide – support or opposition to old communist regime, 2) an economic-distributive divide, related to the free market and state intervention, 3) a socio-cultural divide, formulating opinion on traditional institutions and libertarianism, 4) a national-cosmopolitan divide which reflects national identity or internationalism (Egedy 2009: 43).<sup>2</sup> Miroslav Novák and Klára Vlachová added further divides suitable for the ECE realm: a) secularity – religion (morality), b) libertarianism – authoritarianism, c) cosmopolitanism – national identity, d) eurosceptics – euro-optimists, e) economic populism – free market liberalism, f) national level – regional level, g) community – sub-community level (Novák – Vlachová 2001: 8).

In the Hungarian case, Stephen Whitefield suggests the political cleavages to be further determined by a) age, b) religiosity and c) class (urban-rural), education/class, settlement size, denomination (protestant) in the case of social division and by a) economic liberalism, pro/anti-West, b) social and political liberalism, Jews, c) social and political liberalism, nationalism in the case of ideology (Whitefield 2002: 188). Herbert Kitschelt stresses that due to relative ethnic homogeneity of Hungarian society, the centre-periphery element in Hungary is linked not to ethnic issues but to religion and mainly to the town and country dimension (Kitschelt 1992: 32).

In confrontation with non-existing ethnic parties in Hungarian politics, James Toole suggests that adequate attention should be paid to political parties combining nationalist ideologies and a Christian-democratic approach pointing to the FIDESZ which apparently prefers an economic and cultural national policy rather than Christian values though there have been attempts to activate the role of churches by

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from Kitschelt, H. – Mansfeldová, Z. – Markowski, R. – Tóka, H.: *Post-Communist Party Systems*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2006.

Orbán's government in 1998–2002 (Toole 2007: 566). Apart from recognising the importance of a national-cosmopolitan cleavage, Gergely Egedy emphasises the socio-cultural divide in forming the political identities and a party alignments in post-communist Hungary (Egedy 2009: 43).

**Table 2: Societal cleavages in Western & ECE countries & Hungary**

Political societies & party systems	author / date	societal cleavages	
Western	Stein Rokkan (1967)	(1) reformation – contra-reformation (2) state – church (3) city – village (4) employer – capital	
Post-communism	Herbert Kitschelt (1998)	(1) regime divide – support (or opposition to the old communist regime) (2) economic-distributive divide (free market and state intervention) (3) socio-cultural divide (traditional institutions and libertarianism) (4) national-cosmopolitan divide (national identity or internationalism)	
	Miroslav Novák and Klára Vlachová (2001)	(1) secularity – religion or morality (2) libertarianism – authoritarianism (3) cosmopolitanism – national identity (4) eurosceptics contra euro-optimists (5) economic populism – free market liberalism (6) national level – regional level (7) community – sub-community level	
Hungary	Gergely Egedy (2009)	(1) national-cosmopolitan (2) socio-cultural	
	Stephen Whitefield (2002)	(1) social level	(a) age
			(b) religiosity
			(c) class (urban-rural), education/class, settlement size, denomination (protestant)
(2) ideological level	(a) economic liberalism (pro/anti-West)		
	(b) social and political liberalism, Jews		
	(c) social and political liberalism, nationalism		

Sources: Rokkan 1967; Kitschelt 1998; Novák – Vlachová 2001; Egedy 2009; Whitefield 2002

### **Soft-communism in Hungary & emergence of party pluralism**

Intra-party pluralism could be identified even in the communist period at least since the death of J. V. Stalin. Two wings within the Hungarian Workers' Party



struggled and tried to discredit each other – nativists and Stalinists (Tamas 2007: 41). However, after the 1956 revolution, the both pro-reform nativists and neo-Stalinists failed to reach any hegemony over the party leadership. Kádár downplayed the communist roots of the party and shifted its discourse to “soft-communism”, and patriotism. The “materialistic and depoliticising” (Bozóki 2008: 193) policy of non-ideological pragmatism prevailed both in domestic and foreign matters in the period between 1956 and 1988 (Tamas 2007: 42–44).

The nativist wing of the communist party developed close ties with populist writers and artists and attempted to receive legitimacy in the eyes of a public while allowing writers to enjoy freedom of expression (Tamas 2007: 46). Hungary also enjoyed the westernisation of its economy in comparison with the other ECE countries. Foreign policy was more driven by pragmatic rather than ideological needs from the early 1980s when Hungary joined the IMF and WB organisations. The gradual reorientation of foreign policy towards semi-independent status was highlighted in late 1980s when Hungary established diplomatic relations with South Korea, opened the borders with Austria and participated in quadrilateral sub-regional co-operation with western countries (Kiss 2001: 388–389).

The Bibó Memorial Book published in 1981 represented the starting point and first mutual act of populists and opposition. In the publication there were the collected writings of prominent populist thinkers such as Gyulla Iiiyés, Sándor Csoóri and István Csurka (Tamas 2007: 76).<sup>3</sup>

In the middle of the 1980s, politics in Hungary started to be accompanied by a new language. Among the most frequented phrases appeared such new terms as “radical reform”, “human rights”, “civil society”, “democracy” and the “market economy”. The transformation hit the whole political scene not excluding the communists. Oppositional and semi-oppositional groups became more courageous in formulating their demands towards communist nomenclature (Bozóki 2008: 193).

Apart from (1) hard-line communists and (2) reformed communists, the other two other groups that could have been identified at that time – (3) opposition and (4) semi-oppositional populists were capable of collaborating with both the communists and the opposition (Tamas 2007: 76). Oppositional groups could also be differentiated by a) the “generation of 1956”; (b) the populist writers, and (c) democratic opposition (Bayer 2005: 130).

Another distinction line within the rising dissident community could be drawn between (a) “urbanities” and (b) “ruralists”. Staying rather calm towards the cultural and national issues, the urbanities were in fierce opposition to communism

<sup>3</sup> Csurka became the leader of the nationalist wing within the MDF, the dominant right-wing political party in 1990–1994. After leaving the MDF, Csurka co-founded and became the leader of the nationalist MIÉP.

and supported westernisation and modernisation. On the contrary, the ruralists have been usually referred to as populists because they – mostly writers and poets – were the rural intelligentsia linked to the idea of protecting and promoting the Hungarian nation and its culture and (Tamas 2007: 71).

**Table 3: The structure of society in the 80's before emergence of party system**

communists		(a) <sup>4</sup> hard-liners (conservatives)	Gyula Thürmer <sup>5</sup>
		(b) pragmatics (Kádárism)	János Kádár
		(c) soft-liners (reformers)	Miklos <i>Nemeth</i> , Imré Pozsgay
opposition	(1)	(d) the populist writers	Sándor Csoóri, István Csurka
		(e) democratic opposition	János Kis, János Kenedi
		(f) the “generation of 1956”	Ferenc Donáth, Miklós Vásárhelyi
	(2)	<i>Urbanities</i> – neutral to cultural and national issues, anti-communist, westernisation, modernisation	István Bibó
		<i>Ruralists</i> – populists, rural intelligentsia (writers, poets) for protecting Hungarian culture and nation	Sándor Csoóri, István Csurka

Sources: Author; Tamas 2007: 76, 71; Bayer 2005: 130

The Monor conference held in 1985 symbolised the breaking point and slow end of Kádárism. All major oppositional and semi-oppositional groups presented themselves there. Populist figures Sándor Csoóri and István Csurka belonged to group of main speakers. Csurka pointed at a cultural crisis and moral decay during communism. Csoóri demanded maintaining Hungarian cultural heritage and defending the rights of ethnic Hungarians in Romania and the other ECE countries (Tamas 2007: 76). In reality, all oppositional forces developed a strategy of not demanding the immediate replacement of the socialist regime but proclaimed their goals gradually. The opposition raised no anti-communist issues calling for autonomic civic society, implementation of democracy and the protection of human rights (Bayer 2005: 130).

The demise of Kádár in 1988 accelerated the process of the pluralisation of political life in Hungary. Within the next two years the opposition became more radical in formulating its demands aimed at the general transformation of political system. The opposition attempted to create a united umbrella movement against the communist

<sup>4</sup> The scale (a) to (f) represents two poles ranging from (a) hard communists to (f) anti-communists. The populist writers (d) cooperated with both (c) and (e) until at least 1989.

<sup>5</sup> After the break-up of communist party, Gyula Thürmer became the chairman of the pro-communist Hungarian Communist Workers' Party created in December 1989.

regime. Differentiating themselves from hard-liners, the reformed-communists desired to become a more respectable political group (Tamas 2007: 71).

The Hungarian party system developed well before the first elections held in May 1990. Organisations emerging in the 1980s parallel to the Hungarian Workers' Party had already transformed themselves into political organisations by 1987–1988. Despite not formulating a clear political program, the populists decided not to join other organisations emerging in that period but to found the first non-communist political organisation (Bayer 2005: 131; Tamas 2007: 78). The “populist” Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) was founded in the village of Lakitelek at the home of young populist writer Sándor Lezsák in September 1987. By the occasion of the founding meeting István Csurka presented a “Hungarian anti-catastrophe programme” and warned of a threats to the Hungarian nation, language and culture (Tamas 2007: 79).

In reaction to the formation of the nationalist-democratic MDF which was economically between capitalism and communism, a representative of the democratic opposition stream founded the Network of Free Initiatives in which also the liberal Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ) emerged. In the SZDSZ liberal dissidents gathered under the leadership of the philosopher János Kis (Bayer 2005: 132; Kitschelt 1992: 31; Bozóki – Karácsony 2002: 91). The SZDSZ profiled as cosmopolitan, urbanist, metropolitan, secular and morally libertarian as well as suspicious of authorities. Further, within the loose network of movements, the Young democrats became the first group formulating radical goals demanding the replacement of the communist's power monopoly with political pluralism. Such demands led to the foundation of the liberal FIDESZ (The Federation of Young Democrats) in March 1988. Finally, several historical parties also emerged: the Hungarian Social Democratic Party (MSZDP), the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) and the Independent Party of Smallholders (FKGP) (Bayer 2005: 132). In the meantime, the communist Hungarian Workers' Party fell into a deep crisis for not finding enough of a capability to transform itself and due to factional fighting between conservatives and reformists. The party renamed itself as the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) in October 1989 (Bayer 2005: 133).

The MDF emerged as a major challenge to the communist nomenclature but the MDF had no experience from party or practical politics. Unlike hard-core opposition led by sociologists and philosophers, the MDF was dominated by writers, artists and literary historians at least until the middle of 1989. The second group within the MDF recruited as new members those coming from cultural groups on both the local and central level. The third intra-party stream represented the right-wing minded intellectual circles from Budapest with historical and conservative

backgrounds. They were inspired by Horthy’s interwar regime and a shared mutual concern about the protection of Hungarian national identity (Tamas 2007: 81).

The MDF did not hesitate to join oppositional “petitions, publications, and meetings”. Nevertheless, the MFD organised by themselves numerous meetings, forums and manifestations, officially permitted by the communist government as mass demonstrations, in Budapest protesting against human rights violations in Rumania against the Hungarian minority.

In the first case, the MDF hoped to have enough potential to persuade bureaucrats to make changes in cultural policy. Somewhat later when the populists recorded rising popularity, they believed in gaining control over the key cultural posts of reformed government – the Ministry of culture, media, cultural organisations and the school system (Tamas 2007: 71). During important National Roundtable talks on the country’s future held in spring 1989 all parties agreed on the following transition.

**Table 4: Political parties towards the transition**

<b>Position towards the transition</b>	<b>political party (abbreviation)</b>	<b>characteristic</b>
<b>ultra-moderates</b>	Christian Democratic People’s Party (KDNP)	centre-right, historical party, confessional
<b>moderates</b>	Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF)	centrist, new party, ideologically mixed
	Independent Party of Smallholders (FKGP)	centre-right, historic party, agrarian-traditionalist
	Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP)	centre-left historical party internally divided
<b>self-restraining</b>	Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ)	centrist new party liberal former dissidents
<b>radicals</b>	Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESZ)	centrist, new party, liberals, young professionals

*Source: inspired by a table of Opposition parties and their position at the National Round table talks in 1989 (Bozóki – Karácsony 2002: 101)*

## **Elections 1990 – the emergence of tripolarism**

Anti-communism became the fundamental characteristic of the electoral campaign before the first parliamentary elections. Also the slogan “spring cleaning” appeared and the communist bureaucracy was afraid of being fired (Bayer 2005: 143).

In the first parliamentary elections in Hungary held in two rounds in March and April 1990, together six parties succeeded in crossing the 4% quota to enter parliament (Bayer 2005: 144).

The elections were won by the MDF, headed by conservative historian, József Antall who originated from the writers within the populists group (Tamas 2007: 127). Antall ignored the possibility to form a comfortable post-electoral coalition in which the conservative-national MDF could potentially join the left-liberal camp of parties – the post-communist MSZP (Kitschelt 1992: 32–33) and the liberal SZDSZ.

With 43% of the seats the MDF had a good opportunity to form a coalition government with two right-wing parties – the KDNP and the FKGP gaining together around 60% of parliamentary seats (Schiemann 2004: 134). Focused on populist and nationalist appeal enjoying support in provincial cities, as moderately conservative and religious with respect to authority (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 296), the MDF decided to form a centre-right “national-cultural” governmental coalition with the above mentioned “historical” parties – the rural FKGP and the KDNP (Fowler, 2004: 101; Egedy 2009: 44).

The FKGP and the KDNP were led by politicians active in the pre-communist era and applied for the support of a specific group of the “nationalist-populist” voters and relied also on the rather elderly electorate (Fowler 2004: 99).

Agrarian populism had its roots in the interwar period in which writers of peasant origin blamed Horthy’s regime for incompetence’s in dealing with the problems of landless peasants. The FKGP’s “plebeian radicalism” combined with loyalty to democracy represented an ideological approach between capitalism and socialism (Egedy 2009: 44). The FKGP stressed land reforms demanding all nationalised property to be returned to its pre-communist owners. The Smallholders further emphasised the reform of ownership in rural areas, radical privatisation, family values (Kitschelt 1992: 33) and Christian and national identity. The FKGP attracted the electorate also on “economic populism”, and performed with a strong anti-communist appeal (Fowler 2004: 100).

Naturally, the FKGP received more popularity in the countryside than in towns. The KDNP attracted predominantly religious voters (Kitschelt 1992: 33); in comparison to the FKGP, the KDNP was not as dependent on the country electorate.

Apart from above mentioned nationalist-populist camp under the leadership of the MDF, another two blocks – both in opposition – emerged in the parliament. Traditional left camp was headed by the MSZP while the liberal camp represented two libertarian and pro-market oriented parties – the SZDSZ and the FIDESZ (Schiemann 2004: 134; Kitschelt 1992: 32–33).

**Table 5: Results of the 1990 parliamentary elections in Hungary & the resulting political camps**

ranking	camp	political party (abbreviation)	proffilation	% (seats) <sup>6</sup>
(1)	C	Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF)	national-democratic	24.7 (164)
(2)	L	Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ)	liberal	21.4 (92)
(3)	C	Independent Party of Smallholders (FKGP)	anti-communist	11.7 (44)
(4)	S	Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP)	left-liberal	10.9 (33)
(5)	L	Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESZ)	liberal	8.6 (21)
(6)	C	Christian Democratic People's party (KDNP)	christian-conservative	6.5 (21)

*C – conservative camp, L – liberal camp, S – socialist camp*

Source: *Parties and Elections in Europe. Hungary*: available at <http://www.parties-and-elections.de/hungary2.html> (27 November 2011).

After winning the elections in 1990, the centre-right wing coalition of parties and movements turned to a liberal-conservative ideology and stressed its anti-communist appeal. The Prime Minister József Antall created the image of constitutional democracy performed by the natural “Christian right coalition” (Tamas 2007: 127). Antall presented his coalition as patriotic and proclaimed himself as the Prime Minister of all Hungarians. However, shortly after the 1990 parliamentary elections the MDF led coalition exhibited growing dissatisfaction not only with the resisting “communist nomenclature” and the, in general, non-patriotic left but also with the similarly cosmopolitan SZDSZ (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 300).

### **From the shared anti-communist appeal to a national-conservative – liberal-socialist divide**

In the initial period of political pluralism, the free marketisation, increase of privatisation and cutting of the welfare state was not an issue of constraints between right-liberal-left spectrum of parties not excluding even the MSZP (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 298).

The first tension among different non-communist political subjects emerged when the SZDSZ succeeded in a referendum initiative held for postponing the presidential elections. The MDF accepted the proposal formulated by MSZP that the president should be elected before the first free parliamentary elections (Kitschelt 1992: 31).

<sup>6</sup> Altogether there are 386 seats in the Hungarian parliament.

In fact, though sharing a similar fate in opposition against the post-communist MSZP until 1990, the liberal SZDSZ and the national-conservative MDF represented different platforms already at the time of the first parliamentary elections. The right camp around the MDF presented itself not only as anti-communist but rejected also cosmopolitan liberalism and libertarianism (Egedy 2009: 43).

The nationalist-conservative camp regarded leftists as unsatisfactory for the protection of national sovereignty. The post-communist MSZP was blamed for a) the revolutionary year 1956 and for b) not protecting the Hungarian national minority in Romania under Ceausescu's rule.

Suggestions for land restitution and compensation for the nationalisation process in the period of early communism demanded by the FKGP belonged also to the list of controversial issues for the leftists. Ongoing hot debates on retroactive justice demonstrated the anti-communism of conservative-nationalists on the centre-right while on the other hand it revealed the importance of legalism and constitutionalism demanded by both the MSZP and the SZDSZ. The latter lost its anti-communist rhetoric and gradually found its natural ally in the post-communist MSZP.

Another problematic topic for the left and liberal opposition was the question of compensation for the Catholic Church and the possibility of an increased role of the church and religion in public life. Unlike decentralist tendencies shared by both the SZDSZ and the MSZP, the MDF demanded more central control over the municipalities, education, media network and state-owned companies. The alienation of the SZDSZ from the national-conservative block was strengthened by the sharp rhetoric style of the government and its repeated attempts to take control over the media. Particularly Csurka's national wing of the MDF strongly required that the media network should be directed more at protecting Hungarian cultural values (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 298; Tamas 2007: 127).

The media war accelerated when the pro-liberal president Árpád Göncz decided to use his rights over appointments and dismissals to refuse replacements to the directorial posts of the TV and state radio which had already been approved by the government (Schiemann 2004: 135).

The governmental coalition also tried to bring state radio and television under the direct financial control of executive power. The media war accelerated when the pro-liberal President, Árpád Göncz, decided to use his rights over appointments and dismissals to refuse replacements to the directorial posts of the TV and state radio which had already been approved by the government. Moreover, the Constitutional Court supported the petition initiated by opposition deputies against the management of state radio and TV being under the control of coalition deputies only. Apart from the President, opposition and constitutional court, another complication for

governmental attempts to gain control over media could be found in the two-thirds majority requirement for passing a new law on media (Schiemann 2004: 135).

The growing tension between the centre-right governmental and left-liberal oppositional camps presented not the only one relevant dividing issue in the Hungarian party system after the first post-communist elections. Another three important factors strongly affected the whole party system's development and also the future fate of the right-wing camp.

Firstly, a serious intra-party crisis within the strongest party on the right appeared and paralysed the MDF's capacity for action.

Secondly, a significant inter-party crisis emerged among the parties of the governing coalition – the MDF-KDNP- FKGP.

Thirdly, on the right-wing scene emerged another party in 1993. The FIDESZ's shift from a liberal position and its arrival in the centre-right oriented camp between 1993 and 1994 affected strongly the right-wing camp and the whole party system. Therefore, FIDESZ's success in the consolidation and later occupation of the right-wing camp between 1994 and 2002, needs to be also analysed at both the ideological and strategic levels.

### **Antall and Csurka: conflicting ideologies within the MDF**

The MDF, led by Antall, from very beginning of political pluralism incorporated a conflicting mixture of ideologies – cultural tradition based on agrarian populism, “national” liberalism and Christian democracy while the party also put a stronger emphasis on the national-liberal legacy.

Antall conceived the end of communism as a starting point for “the restoration of the interrupted continuity of national history” and promoted an organic tradition emphasising the historical tradition of Hungarians. In the first post-communist period national history played an important role in forming the identity of patrician conservatism, which – unlike its populist variant promoted later by the FIDESZ – was very sceptical to mass societal movements (Egedy 2009: 44).

Antall combined the importance of national identity simultaneously with the value of political democracy, the rule of law and human and social rights. The mainstream current of the MDF party identified with the legal-civic approach to the nation as opposed to constitutional patriotism. Antall tried to uphold the nation and national identity with no intention to inflame nationalism and anti-minority policy (Egedy 2009: 45).

Antall's national idea was far from any chauvinistic or nationalistic and xenophobic orientation. Antall's conception of the nation was inclusive. He perceived national identity in civic terms as a matter of selection not excluding, for example,



the Jews living in Hungary. Having demanded a “European Hungary”, Antall also fully supported integration into European institutions (Egedy 2009: 46).

However, the policy of confrontation represented by an influential group within the MDF led by nationalist-populist István Csurka created the main dividing line within the MDF (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 300). The MDF had already started to lose the support of voters in 1991, which might be explained by disappointed secular voters and by the first wave of the negative impact of the economic recession (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 299). Csurka, backed by a significant core of MDF deputies, was able to take advantage of the declining support of the MDF and his radicalism grew stronger (Tamas 2007: 127).

Antall’s failure to conduct a “national spring cleaning” in order to make some contribution to the MDF faction led by the party’s vice-president István Csurka created brought about a first crisis within the MDF ranks as early as in 1991. Csurka also demanded that the media and cultural institutions should be more strongly programmed towards the reawakening of Hungarian cultural values (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 300). The intra-party crisis sharpened the decision of the liberal president Árpád Göncz to refuse replacements in the directorial posts of the TV and state radio which had been already approved by the right-wing government (Schiemann 2004: 135).

The pragmatic leader of right wing coalition, Antall, attempted to put up with the nationalist orientation of Csurka’s group as well as facing the reality of the situation when several MDF deputies questioned the legitimacy of the contemporary state borders and one demanded the territorial unification of ethnic Hungary to its pre-1920 borders. Csurka’s radical nationalist statements frequently discussed in the press not only complicated Prime Minister Antall’s ability to keep the governmental coalition together but worsened the image of the Hungarian government in the West (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 300; Tamas 2007: 138).

Csurka was able to spread his opinions through articles and essays published mainly in his *Magyar Fórum* newspaper (Tamas 2007: 127). The main crisis within the MDF in 1990–1994 erupted with Csurka’s editorial published on August 20, 1992 titled “A Few Thoughts on the Two Year Anniversary of the Regime Transformation in Regards to the Hungarian Democratic Forum’s New Program” known also as Csurka’s Tract.

According to Csurka, Hungary has been still dominated by the former Bolsheviks and contemporary liberals interconnected with the international banking network and financial interests. Csurka criticised Antall’s group saying that the speedy transformation policy was not the priority of the government but quite the opposite. Allegedly the main goal of Antall’s coalition was to preserve the power of the group

of people who had ruled from 1945. Csurka argued that the ex-communists became the real winners in the post-communist period (Schiemann 2004: 135).

Some liberal and social politicians in Hungary also distanced themselves from the Csurka Tract. Its immediate impact on the public was not clear as the MDF attracted in the following six months similar levels of support as in the previous period – around 11 % (Tamas 2007: 136).

Csurka's nationalist approach also became the unifying factor for the “anti-fascist” socialist-liberal front which further undermined MDF prospects for successful re-election in 1994 (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 300).

Interestingly, Csurka's critical points were often not addressed to the pro-liberal president Göncz or to the left-liberal opposition. But Prime Minister Antall from the MDF was recognised as most responsible for handing the country over to the communists, cosmopolitan liberals and international money directed by New York and Tel Aviv. Particularly, Csurka's points that the “dwarf minority (Jews) dominating over Hungary attracted the attention of the foreign press and politicians, including the US Congress, and led to them all being concerned regarding the anti-Semitism of Hungarian government officials (Tamas 2007: 136).

The tensions within the MDF party between the two competing factions – national-liberals and national-populists – intensified with new controversial statements of Csurka, such as the one regarding the unhealthy influence of foreign banks on Hungary, who should go its own way, or the other claim towards the non-Hungarian territories inhabited by compatriots.

The intra-party crisis culminated in the middle of 1993 when Csurka's group of nationalist-populist deputies was expelled from the MDF (Tamas 2007: 138).

Csurka founded the radical-nationalist MIÉP (Hungarian Justice and Life Party) which became a parliamentary faction.

The crisis and break-up of the MDF further prevented the already scattered right-wing scene from uniting before the coming parliamentary elections in 1994 (Tamas 2007: 167). On the other hand, by expelling Csurka's group, the MDF, headed by moderate conservatives, became a more reliable partner for potential coalitions on the centre-right political scene. Nevertheless, the party proved no capability for solving intra-party ideological, organisational and personal differences. More importantly, the MDF was further hit by Antall's sudden death in November 1993 and had not enough time to consolidate before the next parliamentary elections. Besides, the party lacked both a sufficient profile and image for voters (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 301). The MDF performed weakly in solving satisfactorily its successor crisis to elect an appropriate leader (Fowler 2004: 85).

## Crisis within the centre-right camp in coalition

The centre-right coalition government started to break-up from the very beginning of its formation after the 1990 parliamentary elections. To the apple of discord belonged foreign policy course, different opinions on restitutions and the already mentioned Christian-national influence over the mass media and social life (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 299).

Although the MDF demanded only gradual economic reforms right after the elections with a sensitive approach to social stability (Kitschelt 1992: 33), the consensus on economic reforms within the MDF-dominated coalition weakened from 1990. Oppositional parties, the MSZP and the SZDSZ but also the coalition partner the KDNP, pointed at rising authoritarian tendencies, clientelistic practises and corruption during privatisation. The KDNP and the MSZP stressed greater importance on social justice (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 301) and the MDF turned onto Christian-radical course responding to rising reluctance within society towards a free market economy (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 299).

The FKGP represented an additional negative element for the cohesion of Antall's governmental coalition in the period of 1990–1994. The FKGP's leader, Torgyán, was considered as a most troublesome and unacceptable figure on the right-wing scene. The FKGP suffered its first serious split in 1991 when the pro-government faction, which held the most seats, faced against the rebels gathered around the populist József Torgyán who was backed by the party's bureaucrats and the majority of its members (Fowler 2004: 84). During the conflict over privatisation and compensation the three ministers from the FKGP were replaced by others. The coalition suffered from the first serious disintegration of the FKGP breaking into two factions in 1992 when it had lost several deputies led by Torgyán (Schiemann 2004: 135). Torgyán left the coalition because of his disappointment over the government's failure to make radical land reform and also because Prime Minister Antall refused to appoint him to a ministerial post (Fowler 2004: 84).

While the parties of the scattered centre-right coalition executed power in the period of 1990–1994 and prepared themselves for 1994 parliamentary elections, the former liberal FIDESZ appeared on the right-wing scene (Fowler 2004: 86).

The emergence and rise of the FIDESZ on the centre-right had several phases both in ideological and strategic terms. As for ideology, the FIDESZ performed as a moderate centre-right political party after 1993. During the second phase of its transformation after 1998 the FIDESZ shifted towards populist conservatism enhancing the role of the masses (Fowler 2004: 86; Egedy 2009: 48).

After 1994 the FIDESZ started the policy of centre-right unification. Later with both the rising performers of the FIDESZ doing well in the polls and self-confidence it turned towards a policy of the dominance over the right-wing scene.

## **Emergence of the FIDESZ on the right**

### ***FIDESZ's shift from liberal to the right***

Founded in spring 1988, the FIDESZ represented the dissident movement at the end of communism. Though radical in its oppositional performance and language used against the socialist regime, in terms of ideology the FIDESZ could have been barely considered as anti-leftist (Tamas 2007: 85–86).

Three groups crystallised from the FIDESZ in its very initial phase. Firstly, law and economic students from the Rajk economic and Bibó law groups. Secondly, within organisation activities there developed roles for young sociologists from Budapest research institutes and libraries. The third and less influential group recruited from individuals and small groups scattered across the country who were taking advantage of the expansion of the group in its early period of growth. The FIDESZ was headed from the very beginning by a young and charismatic lawyer and former Bibó student named Viktor Orbán (Tamas 2007: 85–87).

Viktor Orbán became a cross-national politician and star among the Hungarian public during the reburial of Imre Nagy in 1989, which was widely seen on TV, when he gave a public and anti-communist speech. The FIDESZ was not characterised only by Orbán's radical anti-communist attitude. Gábor Fodor represented the liberal profile of the group hardly recognisable from the similarly liberal SZDSZ, though the liberalism of the latter had a socialist origin. There were two major currents within the FIDESZ – Orbánites and Fodorites (Tamas 2007: 183). In fact, during the first years of the FIDESZ the party held also an alternative image of “wearing blue jeans, not shaving, and not wearing socks” (Tamas 2007: 85–86) which was represented by the young politician Tamás Deutsch who attracted popularity among the youth, especially teenage girls (Tamas 2007: 107).

Confronted with the success of the MSZDP during the by-elections in 1991–93, some politicians from the FIDESZ suggested that the MSZDP become its natural ally in the future (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 302). On the contrary, Viktor Orbán was concerned that the FIDESZ had been ideologically too close to another liberal party – the SZDSZ (Tamas 2007: 183).

This dilemma was resolved in 1993 at the expense of the Fodorites. Orbánites achieved dominance over the party leadership and avoided any potential future internal struggles when Gábor Fodor's group left the party in 1993 (Fowler 2004: 108).

From 1993 Orbán started to transform the FIDESZ from a loose political organisation into a standard political party. Orbán built up the new identity of the FIDESZ departing from 1) the image of a young people’s organisation and 2) liberal party ideology (Tamas 2007: 185).

In 1993 the newly elected chairman of the FIDESZ, Viktor Orbán, gave a speech on creating a party with a sense for “national responsibility” (Tamas 2007: 175) which shifted the party more closely to cultural policy. The “citizen” and the “middle class” also became the main targets of the party (Tamas 2007: 185).

By early 1993 the FIDESZ dropped its left-liberal view on national and religious issues (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 302) and further strengthened its shift from a liberal to cultural ideology. The FIDESZ attempted to gain popularity with the voters through a mix of liberal ideology combined with Christian-democratic values and emphasising national identity (Egedy 2009: 47).

Regardless of the significant ideological shift, the FIDESZ suffered a loss at the parliamentary elections held in 1994.

**Table 6: Results of the 1994 parliamentary elections in Hungary & the resulting political camps**

ranking	camp	political party (abbreviation)	profilation	% (seats)
(1)	S-L	Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP)	welfare, free market	33,0 (209)
(2)	S-L	Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ)	liberal, cosmopolitan	19,7 (70)
(3)	C	Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF)	national-liberal	11,7 (37)
(4)	C	Independent Party of Smallholders (FKGP)	agrarian, populist	8,8 (26)
(5)	C	Christian Democratic People’s party (KDNP)	Christian-conservative	7,0 (22)
(6)	C	Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESZ)	national-liberal, Christian-conservative	7,0 (20)

**C - conservative camp, S-L – socialist-liberal camp**

Source: Fowler 2004: 81; *Parties and Elections in Europe. Hungary: available at*<http://www.parties-and-elections.de/hungary2.html> (28 November 2011).

The FIDESZ’s failure was a consequence of a) financial scandals within the party and b) its opposition to old-age pensions hikes and c) the expulsion of Csurka’s group from the MDF thwarted the FIDESZ’s hope for gathering moderate voters and MP’s from the declining MDF (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 302).

Despite the suggestion made by the left-liberal winning coalition, the FIDESZ rejected to join the post-electoral coalition led by the MSZP.

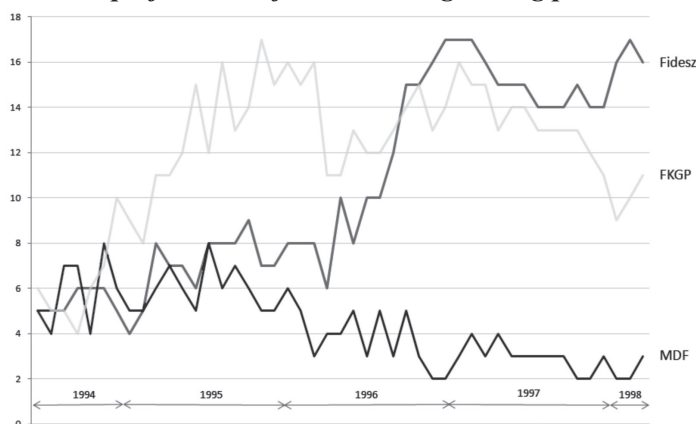
For a block of the centre-right parties major challenges emerged in 1994 as to how to a) find an answer for the sweeping success of the liberal-socialist wing, b) emulate the FIDESZ's emergence, c) solve rising animosities between the MDF and the FKGP, d) solve the internal crises within both the MDF and the FKGP, and finally and most importantly e) react upon the sharp decline of the MDF which used to dominate the centre-right space in 1990–1994. The decline of the MDF opened the space for competition over leadership on the right (Fowler 2004: 85)

After 1994 the FIDESZ's strategy proved to be the most effective both for unifying the centre-right parties and simultaneously marginalising its major competitors – the MDF, the KDNP and the FKGP (Egedy 2009: 47) which was the most popular right wing party until the end of 1996. Both the tactics and ideology of the FIDESZ's formation will be analysed in the following sections.

### ***The FIDESZ – from unification to occupation of the right-wing scene***

Since the polls revealed the declining popularity of the MDF, the FIDESZ shifted again more to the right (Egedy 2009: 47) and became a party gradually benefiting from the poor performance of the MDF (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 302). The FIDESZ struggled with the FKGP over leadership on the right-wing scene between 1994 and 1997. Until 1996 the FKGP, with Torgayán's group, played a leading role in a popularity share on the right wing scene. The FIDESZ took the leadership in opinion polls firstly at the end of 1996. Since then the party has not been overran by any other political organisation on the centre-right (Fowler 2004: 86–87).

***Figure 1: Electoral preferences of the centre-right wing parties 1994–1998***



Source: Author

The rise of the FIDESZ on the centre-right is partly explainable by the party's success in securing internal cohesion after the departure of the group led by the popular-liberal Gábor Fodor in 1993. With only one exception in 1994, there was no competition in the elections of a party leader in the FIDESZ. In 1995, 1997 and 1999 nobody important seriously disputed Orbán's leadership. With an intermezzo in 2000 and 2001, when Kővér and Pokorni took over the party leadership – but without a contest as retaining an image of inter-party consensus on the public was important – Orbán came back to head the party in 2002, likewise without experiencing any intra-party contest (Fowler 2004: 85, 107).

While the Orbánites took advantage and did not suffer a decline in their popularity, the internal splits from 1991 to 2001 significantly weakened the other three right-wing parties to the level of disappearance or of becoming satellites of the FIDESZ. The weakening MDF secured its survival until 2000 only through cooperation with the FIDESZ (Fowler 2004: 82) which launched a strategy of cooperation with other oppositional parties on the right-wing scene after the parliamentary elections in 1994. The FIDESZ launched the "Civic Alliance" initiative together with the MDF at the end of 1994 and started negotiation talks with the KDNP in order to extend the group (Fowler 2004: 82, 85–86).

Competition on the right was echoed by the FKGP who raised objectives to the FIDESZ project denying it as being too close to Antall's legacy and further criticised it for not including the whole right-wing camp. On the contrary, the FKGP launched a competitive project called "National Alliance" in 1995 calling for the MDF and the KDNP to join it (Fowler 2004: 86). The KDNP changed its leadership in 1995 but the party further struggled both in achieving internal cohesion (Fowler 2004: 88) and for emancipating the party from Antall's legacy. (Fowler 2004: 85). Despite its efforts the KDNP finally broke-up in 1997 just before the parliamentary elections (Fowler 2004: 82).

The more radical ex-KDNP party members joined the FKGP, being welcomed by Torgyán, while the more moderate fraction set up the Christian Democratic Alliance. Not having sufficient PM's to form an independent parliamentary group nor any real prospect of crossing the 5% quorum in the next elections, the Christian Democratic Alliance joined the FIDESZ which made the party the strongest opposition in parliament (Fowler 2004: 88–89).

Within the MDF leadership no major political fraction gained supremacy. The MDF changed its leadership in spring 1996 when the populist-national writer Sándor Lezsák won the party's presidency. But the party further struggled for desirable internal cohesion. The polls steadily revealed the poor performance of the MDF, and therefore Lezsák's decision to cooperate with the FIDESZ during 1996 was

nothing but an act of self-preservation. Cooperation with the MDF was accepted from the FIDESZ ranks. Both parties agreed on a pre-electoral coalition before the parliamentary elections in 1998 (Fowler 2004: 88, 109).

Facing the electoral system in the country, the smaller parties regarded cooperation as a pre-condition for success or salvation. The electoral system in Hungary combined three factors. The first factor, a single-member constituency, supports cooperation between parties and supports bipolarist tendencies and constitutes no privilege for the small parties.

Benefiting from the second – regional – factor and from the third – national – is conditional on passing the 5% threshold in the regional list. The electoral system in Hungary supports the majoritarian effect and therefore the smaller parties are determined by “the tyranny of the five per cent barrier” (Fowler 2004: 94–95).

The experience of smaller parties from the 1994 results heavily influenced their pre-election behaviour in 1998 and 2002. The FKGP and the MDF on the right scene and SZDSZ in the middle realised the necessity of joining a wider coalition. Gradually improving in the polls and since the end of 1996 taking the leadership of the centre-right camp at the expense of the FKGP, the FIDESZ fully profited from the concerns of small parties (Fowler 2004: 94).

***Table 7: Results of the 1998 parliamentary elections in Hungary & the resulting political camps***

ranking	camp	political party (abbreviation)	profilation	% (seats)
(1)	C	Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESZ)	national-conservative, populist, mobilizing	29,4 (148)
(2)	S-L	Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP)	welfare, free market	32,9 (134)
(3)	C	Independent Party of Smallholders (FKGP)	agrarian, populist	13,2 (48)
(4)	S-L	Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ)	liberal, cosmopolitan	6,9 (24)
(5)	C	Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF)	national-conservative	2,8 (17)
(6)	----	Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIÉP)	far right extremist, nationalist	5,5 (14)

***C - conservative camp, S-L – socialist-liberal camp***

*Source: Fowler 2004: 81; Parties and Elections in Europe. Hungary: available at <http://www.parties-and-elections.de/hungary2.html> (28 November 2011).*

The threshold condition offers at least a part explanation as to why the splinters from the KDNP and the FKGP preferred a self-preservation instinct and joined the



FIDESZ instead of undergoing the adventure of not being elected (Fowler 2004: 96).

After the KDNP was dissolved the FKGP retreated from taking such a risk and joined in cooperation with the FIDESZ (Fowler 2004: 91).

Particularly in second half of the electoral period of 1994–1998 in which a left-liberal government executed power, the right scene started to consolidate around the oppositional FIDESZ. Apart from an ideological consolidation, Orbán was able to use the crises within the competitor parties on the right. The MDF continued to split and the KDNP declined into a deep internal struggle over the party's leadership as it finally disintegrated in 1997 and its parliamentary deputies left the party for the FIDESZ (Schiemann 2004: 137).<sup>7</sup>

From 1997 until 2001 the FIDESZ cooperated with the FKGP more closely with both parties sharing the topic of “land ownership”. The FIDESZ launched pragmatic cooperation with the FKGP before the parliamentary elections in 1998 with the perspective of a future governmental coalition (Schiemann 2004: 137; Fowler 2004: 90).

Prior to the 1998 elections, the FIDESZ successfully negotiated also with the MDF (Schiemann 2004: 137). However, in 1998 pre-election campaign the FIDESZ's leader, Orbán, called for a purely civic government to be taken by FIDESZ politicians. But electoral results determined that he had to enter a coalition with the FKGP and the MDF (Bozóki 2008: 196).

The centre-right governmental coalition FIDESZ-MDF-FKGP enjoyed a majority of 55% seats and therefore there was no necessity for Orbán to seek cooperation with Csurka's extremist-right MIÉP party which had entered parliament for the first time (Schiemann 2004: 137).

Nevertheless, the FIDESZ led government in 1998–2002 lacked the fundamental principles of coalition. The satellite parties did not enjoy having the Deputy Prime Minister and there was no coalition agreement between all the parties. The FIDESZ managed ad hoc accords separately with either the FKGP or the MDF (Fowler 2004: 101). Due to strong party discipline in the FIDESZ and the leadership capabilities of Viktor Orbán in the post of the Prime Minister, the executive remained very strong. During 1998–2002 a gradual shift of authority from parliament to the government and the Prime Minister was accomplished (Schiemann 2004: 138).

After the 1998 parliamentary elections, the slow disintegration of the FKGP continued with the FIDESZ's assistance. Facing electoral results, the FKGP accepted a satellite role, and Torgyán managed to expel influential anti-FIDESZ party

<sup>7</sup> Taking into account the smaller parties, only the radical-right MIÉP ventured to candidate independently and passed tightly in 1998 but failed narrowly in 2002.

members. Nevertheless, a gradual fusion of the FKGP into the FIDESZ continued (Fowler 2004: 90). The process of the disintegration of the FKGP after 1998 reached its peak in 2000–2001 when the party faced several corruption scandals widely exposed in the media and once more split into pro-Torgyáns and anti-Torgyáns. After the forced resignation of the ministers from the FKGP and its disintegration, the coalition suffered a loss but the majority of its former deputies continued to vote with government (Schiemann 2004: 138).

Heading into deep internal crisis, the FKGP's popularity fell below 5% and the FIDESZ rejected cooperation with Torgyáns group and further weakened the party by integrating part of its ministers and MP's into itself (Fowler 2004: 91).

In fact, the FIDESZ's co-opting strategy aimed at elites coming from other centre-right parties became one of the decisive factors for monopolising the centre-right camp (Fowler 2004: 93). The FKGP finally broke up in 2001–2 just before the parliamentary elections (Fowler 2004: 82).

In the meantime, the last remaining small parliamentary party on the centre-right, the MDF, made a last effort to pursue an independent policy in 1999–2001 but afterwards accepted an electoral agreement with the FIDESZ before the parliamentary elections in 2002 (Fowler 2004: 91).

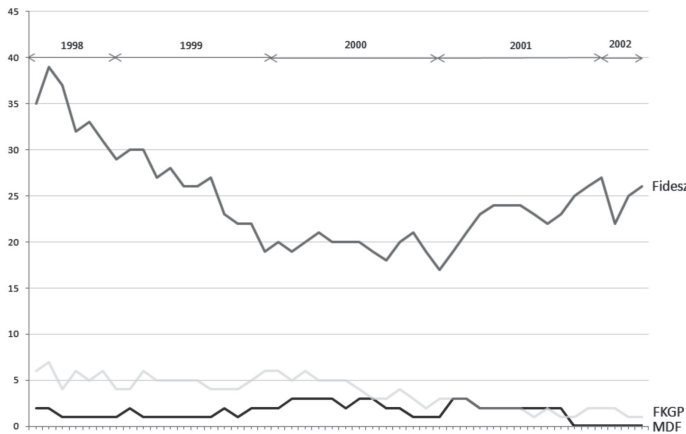
***Table 8: Results of the 2002 parliamentary elections in Hungary & the resulting political camps***

ranking	camp	political party (abbreviation)	proffilation	% (seats)
(1)	C	Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESZ) /Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF)/	national-populist, authoritarian, anti-European, / national-liberal/	41,1 (164) /24/
(2)	S-L	Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP)	welfare, free market	42,0 (178)
(3)	S-L	Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ)	liberal, cosmopolitan	5,6 (20)

***C - conservative camp, S-L – socialist-liberal camp***

*Source: Fowler 2004: 81; Parties and Elections in Europe. Hungary: available at <http://www.parties-and-elections.de/hungary2.html> (28 November 2011).*

Though having lost the 2002 parliamentary elections, the FIDESZ gained the dominant position on the centre-right by leaving its liberal platform from 1993 to consolidate and occupy the centre-right scene.

**Figure 2: Electoral preferences of the centre-right parties 1998-2002**

Source: Author

During its successful path towards gaining monopoly on the centre-right, the FIDESZ also worked on its ideological content. The ideology formation of the FIDESZ could be divided into two phases. The first ideological transition of the FIDESZ after 1994 led to a moderate centre-right party formation coining a bourgeois concept based upon the mixture of an “old” centre-right and moderate Christian-democratic thought (Fowler 2004: 86).

During the second transformation of the FIDESZ after 1998 the mass political party appeared to promote a specific variant of populist and mobilising conservatism (Egedy 2009: 48; (Fowler 2004: 82).

### ***Ideology formation of the FIDESZ 1994–2002***

During its first stage of transition from a liberal position to the right, the conservative ideology of the FIDESZ was formed around the civic, or bourgeois, concept (Egedy 2009: 47).

The FIDESZ constructed an ideology of *bourgeoisification* attractive for the masses coining key terms as *Polgári* (civic) and *polgár* (citizen) (Fowler 2004: 104). The *polgári* ideology presents something completely different. The term “change” served as a central point of the promised future. “Something new” and different must be attractive for voters (Fowler 2004: 105). The *polgári* ideology promised to secure the sinking middle class which had become the loser of the economic transition and had suffered under a left-liberal government with pure cosmopolitan ambitions (Egedy 2009: 47). The neo-liberal orientation of the liberal-socialist coalition has been accused of being empty. Moreover, the *polgári* ideology

manifested a right-wing way for modernisation through the “bourgeoisification” of Hungarian society (Fowler 2004: 105).

For the FIDESZ, attention should be paid to the middle class for being the upholder of moral and cultural values and respecting values such as work and family. Further, the *polgári* ideology focused on the bourgeois individual and on the family, promising a tax reduction helping the middle class and attracting the attention of those seeking greater stress on a protection policy (Fowler 2004: 105).

A strong state and a strong middle class belonged to Orbán’s programme agenda as a reaction to the negative aspects of globalisation dynamics. Instead of promoting an open economy, Orbán called for Hungarian society to be more protected (Egedy 2009: 50).

The *polgári* concept had two goals – it was against left-liberal government and also anti-elitist (Fowler 2004: 104).

Unlike Antall’s focus on elitist conservatism, Viktor Orbán stressed the role of mass democracy. He preferred its plebiscitarian character in which referendums became important political tools. The FIDESZ as an oppositional party successfully blocked the privatisation of hospitals by organising a referendum in the period 1994–1998 (Egedy 2009: 50).

However, after the FIDESZ won the elections in 1998, Orbán’s policy was not to completely reject Antall’s policy. Orbán promoted continuity with the 1990–1994 right-wing government coalition. But unlike the MDF in the early 1990s, Orbán continued in creating a bourgeois Hungarian society (Egedy 2009: 47).

After winning the parliamentary elections in 1998, Orbán explained the victory of the FIDESZ as a breaking point in the new history of Hungarians. New conservatism was linked to expectations and promises in the future and politics was shifted into the sphere of morality where FIDESZ’s role would be in protecting and saving the new order. Politics should be shifted into the realm of spirituality and a moralising political style should be considered as a mission (Egedy 2009: 49).

Politics turned into a spiritual revival of both Hungarian society and the state in which republican values should be built-up. Orbán’s vision was aimed at forming a cultural and moral community of Hungarians. Moreover, he promoted a spiritual nation reaching over borders which was to say that the government in Budapest belongs not only to Hungarians within the country borders but to all individuals belonging to the Hungarian people. The political community should be united with the cultural one (Bozóki 2008: 213).

The new right in Hungary encompassed economic nationalism, moralistic rhetoric linked to the idea of the nation, identifying communists, cosmopolitan intellectuals, powerful global corporations and the financial elite in general as national enemies.

During Orbán's rule importance was put on a cultural nation and its symbols – flag, state coat of arms, anthem and the traditional slogans “Go, Hungary!”, “Go, Hungarians!” became other symbols of Orbánism (Bozóki 2008: 224). But most importantly, meeting the changing expectations of voters in 1998, the FIDESZ chose to be both conservative and radical (Bozóki 2008: 198).

Apart from focusing on the new bourgeoisie and the country peasantry, the FIDESZ started a policy of confrontation. “Civic in its aims, radical in its mentality”, democratic policy started to be presented as game of win or lose. Under Orbán's rule state policy was dedicated only to “good” Hungarians. The new populism of the new right promoted a “second Hungary” and caused a “cold civil war”. Orbán constantly addressed the 15 million Hungarians, but in reality he referred only to the interests of citizens on the right wing scene willing to build up an imaginary cultural community (Bozóki 2008: 196, 217, 223–224).

Apart from successful consolidation of the right-wing scene, other challenges were no less important – changing norms, values and habits in society further alienated the cosmopolitan centre-left camp (Bozóki 2008: 223).

The “bad” citizens were the opposition and its supporters. Being “only” a Hungarian citizen was not enough any more; only the proper “Hungarianism” (i.e. being a “good” citizen) was satisfactory (Bozóki 2008: 217).

In summing up, *polgári* ideology promoted social and cultural conservatism and enhanced the role of the state in securing both the welfare system and economic regulation and, mainly, it supported the private property of the middle class. Such a concept became functional enough for the unification of the centre-right scene and for discrediting completely post-communist discourse (Fowler 2004: 106).

Another new aspect strongly appeared in Hungarian politics and in the FIDESZ in particular. A dramatic shift of attitudes within the FIDESZ's members towards EU membership happened after 2000. In 2000, 81% of FIDESZ voters would vote for EU membership. But next year the figure dropped to 74% and further declined to 54% in 2003. The issue of European membership emerged and became a frequented topic for the FIDESZ after 2000. A highly controversial status law involving special rights for the Hungarian diaspora which was approved by the absolute majority of deputies in the Hungarian parliament in June 2001 (Nemes 2001), and defended by Prime Minister Orbán, inflamed tensions with both Slovakia and the EU. Viktor Orbán alienated the Visegrád Four group of countries by calling for the cancellation of the Beneš Decrees during his Brussel's visit in February 2000.<sup>8</sup> The FIDESZ held even more radical attitudes after it lost the 2002 elections. Orbán

<sup>8</sup> Several laws passed by the Czechoslovakian president Edvard Beneš at the end of the Second World War which stripped millions of ethnic Germans and Hungarians in Czechoslovakia of their property.

supported the idea of the Europe of nation-states and preferred intergovernmentalism. Orbán introduced a distinction between “good” and “bad” membership and the FIDESZ attitude to the EU shifted to “Yes, but ...” Viktor Orbán suggested before the referendum on EU membership held in spring 2003 that Hungary should remain outside the EU. The eurosceptic position of the FIDESZ towards the EU never achieved the level held by the Czech president Václav Klaus or the eurosceptic camp of parties in Poland. The “EU issue” disappeared from the FIDESZ’s agenda in 2006. Behind Orbán’s criticism of the EU was also an effort to differentiate the party from clearly pro-European left-centrist government (Batory 2009: 427–446).

## **Conclusion**

For Kádárism, it was typical to have a relatively relaxed political landscape of “national-accommodative” (Egedy 2009: 43) and negotiated character in which patriotic and populist tendencies appeared through a proletarian-internationalist approach of communist ideology. Unlike the 1990 “anti-communist” pre-election atmosphere, in which the major party cleavage appeared between anti-communist and the still united front of oppositional parties the SZDSZ-FIDESZ-FGKP-KDNP-MDF and the post-communist MSZDP, socio-cultural and national cleavages caused the emergence of tripolarism in Hungary after the elections in 1990. Firstly, on the right wing scene appeared a national-conservative group of parties the MDF-FGKP-KDNP promoting mixed economic positions. Secondly, the liberal group was presented in two parties – the FIDESZ-SZDSZ and finally, the post-communist camp was led by the MSZDP (Egedy 2009: 43; Bayer 2005: 132). In fact, both the liberal and post-communist groups promoted equally a secular and market oriented model of the economy. Surprisingly, in the Hungarian case it also applied that universalist liberals shared with the post-communist left the idea of cosmopolitan internationalism.

Jozsef Antall’s decision not to join the left-liberal block of parties after the 1990 elections underlined the existence of socio-cultural and national cleavages and supported the tendency to bipolarism. Gradually, in the following year, a major dividing line emerged between the block of governmental parties the FGKP-KDNP-MDF against both the MSZDP and SZDSZ (Berglund – Ekman – Aarebrot 2004: 298). Therefore growing animosities between left-liberal and centre-right camp emerged because all parties on the right emphasised national and cultural issues (Fowler 2004: 99).

The emergence and rise of the FIDESZ on the right camp from 1993 helped to deepen right-left cleavages in the country alongside post-communism – anti-communism and cosmopolitan – national (Egedy 2009: 47) divides. After the 1994 elections the FIDESZ’s rejection to join the universalist-neoliberal left-liberal coalition underlined the left-liberal and centre-right division the same way as the

decision made by dissident liberals who joined the MSZDP led to a governmental coalition after the 1994 elections (Fowler 2004: 102).

In 1994 the Hungarian party system definitively completed its transformation into two hostile left-right blocks (Egedy 2009: 47) around the two strengthening poles – the FIDESZ on the right and the MSZDP on the left. The FIDESZ's growing performance in the parliamentary elections in 1994, 1998 and 2002 (7.0%; 29.4%; 41.1%) corresponded with the rising number of votes for the MSZDP in its comparable electoral results (33.0%; 32.9%; 42.0%). Both trends have been in process at the expense of the left and right wing satellite parties. The fall of the MDF was caused by its internal incapability to find feasible leadership and defend internal cohesion. The end of KDNP and the FGKP could be characterised similarly. But moreover, in case of the KDNP, the Christian-democratic agenda was taken by the FIDESZ and the anti-communist agenda of FGKP and its demands for land property lost its appeal in the late 1990s.

Unlike the national-democratic ideological approach used by Antall's MDF, Viktor Orbán combined nationalist-populist ideology with rising radicalism in order to attract enough voters for winning the 1998 elections. However, relying on the greater radicalisation of nationalist-populist appeal in 2002 elections, Orbán discouraged voters and lost the parliamentary elections in 2002. The fall of MIÉP in that election underlined the anti-nationalist trend within Hungarian society. Besides the strengthening of the cosmopolitan-national and also authoritarian-liberal divides, the FIDESZ created a new liberal-conservative cleavage by dividing the liberal world economy from the protection of Hungarian economic interests and the eurosceptics – euro-optimists divide.

## Afterword

Last but not least, after 2002 several important events happened which have denied the previous characteristics of the party system in Hungary described in this text. The MSZDP confirmed victory in 2006 and for the first time since 1990 the four-year regular left-right alternation has not happened. However, shortly after the elections the “habitual” left-liberal governmental coalition MSZDP-SZDSZ lost a great deal of its legitimacy after the news revealed that the Prime Minister, Ferenc Gyurcsany, had lied about the state of economy. For the first time after the fall of communism, massive demonstrations took place in Budapest but the spontaneous mobilisation of society was also accompanied by street violence. Declining economic conditions caused another new trend: in 2008 the SZDSZ left the government led by the strongly unpopular MSZDP. And, lastly, two profound changes appeared in the 2010 elections. Firstly, an overwhelming victory for the FIDESZ, reaching for the first time an absolute majority of deputies, enabled the party to

approve constitutional amendments with nationalistic content. And secondly, the far right Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik) appeared in parliament gaining 16.7% of votes and 47 deputies, which cannot be compared to any previous performance of the far-right MIÉP, which was reaching steadily between 2–6% from 1994 until 2006<sup>9</sup>. In fact, new tendencies are only confirming the deep divides along nationalist-liberal and national cultural-cosmopolitan cleavages but reveal also the capability of certain numbers of “fluid voters” oscillating between both camps, to regularly make decisions over the governmental coalitions.

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<sup>9</sup> The MIÉP entered the 2006 parliamentary elections in coalition with Jobbik.



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## DISCUSSION

### Regional European Integration of the Legal Protection of Industrial Property

*Ladislav Jaki*

**Abstract:** *The European harmonisation and integration process of the legal protection of industrial and further intellectual property was preceded by a worldwide process. After initial negotiations, the worldwide process started by concluding the “Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property” and “Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works”. In modern history, at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century, they were completed by a third international and universal agreement on “Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights”. The said basic international and universal conventions were followed by a number of international agreements. Some of them launched the premises for integration configuration, represented by international offices or other institutions.*

*Regional European harmonisation and integration in industrial property protection started in 1957, when agreements on the European Economic Community (the EES) and the European Atomic Energy Community (the EUROATOM) were signed. These agreements were followed by activities concerning a European patent. At the beginning of the 1970s seventies of the last century they led to a proposal of the “Convention on the Grant of European Patents” (the EPC) and the constitution of the European Patent Office in Munich (EPO). The EPO as an European institution provides for activities, connected with EPC activities. European Council Directive No. 40/94 started the harmonisation and integration process of trademarks. Within the framework of EU integration activities the Office for Harmonisation of Internal Market (the OHIM) in Alicante, Spain was established. It began to work in 1996. The Directive of the European Council No. 510/2006 started the harmonisation and integration process with regard to geographical indications and appellations of the origin of agricultural products and foodstuffs, leading to the registration system. According to this system, appellations of origin and geographical indications are registered in the Registry, conducted by the EU Commission.*

**Keywords:** *Harmonisation, integration, European integration, industrial property, intellectual property, patent, invention, industrial design, design, trademark, appellation of origin, geographical indication*

## **Introduction**

The present paper means by “integration” a voluntary assembling of the legal and economical systems of two or more independent states to such a degree that the control of such key fields of internal regulation is shifted to a supranational level, leading to a supranational or regional body.

The Integration process in industrial property protection means a fusion of activities of different regions or states into one entirety or execution thereof in one place (Jakl 2003: 175). As regards the legislation of integrated regions the harmonisation usually concerns legal regulations of the regions in question, followed by the integration of states activities, leading to the basic international agreements of the nature of integration. The agreements are further followed by other international agreements or by less formal acts such as working regulations, methodologies etc., regulating application of the principles contained in the basic agreements. The whole integration process usually starts by negotiations between future participants, leading to a conclusion of an international agreement. At the same time or a bit later a further agreement is concluded, establishing an institution that will realise the integration process.

The European harmonisation and integration process of legal protection of industrial and further intellectual property was preceded by a worldwide process, even if that began in Europe at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century. After initial negotiations the worldwide process started by concluding “The Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property” and “The Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works”. In modern history, at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century, they were completed by a third international universal agreement on “Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights”. The said basic international and universal conventions were followed by a number of international agreements. Some of them laid the foundations for integration configurations, represented by international offices or other institutions. In Europe it was, for example, the European Patent Office (residing in Munich), ensuring the protection of inventions, and the Office for the Harmonisation of Internal Market (residing in Alicante), ensuring the protection of trademarks and industrial designs.

## **Worldwide Harmonisation and Integration Process of Intellectual Property Protection**

The harmonisation and integration process of intellectual property protection led in 1883 to the conclusion of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property and in 1886 to the conclusion of Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works. At the beginning these two basic universal conventions

had a European impact only, but very soon they became an instrument for world-wide harmonisation and integration, as not only European states but states from other continents had started to join them.

### ***Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property***

Individual national laws for the protection of rights on indications and inventions were not sufficient with regard to the growing international cooperation and trade. Until the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century legal industrial protection of the transfer of goods, services and technologies inside individual states reposed mainly on the exclusivity thereof. Growing international trade together with development of science and technology and the globalisation of the market missed united rules at an international level, securing the transfer of goods and services between various countries without substantial risk. Efforts to set up certain international rules in this respect were growing as well as efforts to introduce them into the participating states.

The international exhibition of inventions and technical innovations in Vienna in 1883 initiated – besides other events – international negotiations, later leading to a conclusion of a convention. A number of invited foreign exporters refused to participate in the exhibition. They were afraid of insufficient legal protection of exhibited inventions and innovations. Therefore the Austrian government granted to all foreign exhibitors legal protection of their inventions, industrial designs and trademarks. A Patent Reform Congress took place in Vienna in the same year. The congress agreed on various principles for effective and useful patent protection, applicable in all parts of the world.

The Vienna congress was followed in 1883 by the International Congress on Industrial Property, which took place in Paris. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of March, 1883<sup>1</sup> the international diplomatic conference led to the signing of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property. It was signed by 11 states, namely Belgium, Brazil, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, Italy, The Netherlands, Portugal, Serbia, Spain and Switzerland. It came into force on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July, 1884 and at that date it was further signed by Great Britain, Tunisia and Ecuador. The Union for the Industrial Property Protection (Paris Union) originated from the said Convention and thus a basic system of legal protection of industrial property was created. The Convention concerned not only Europe, but also other parts of the world. Due to the development of science, technology, industry and trade and their globalisation, the basic principles of the Convention were broadened not only by revised wordings in Brussels (1900), Washington (1911), The Hague (1925), London (1934),

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<sup>1</sup> Published in the Decree No. 81/1985.

Lisbon (1958) and Stockholm (1967), but also by other multilateral international agreements.

The Paris Convention, after 130 years of existence is still valid, defines—amongst other things – what is a subject of industrial property protection. It introduces the priority claim (the so called union priority). On the ground thereof everybody, who duly files an application in one of the member countries, is entitled in due terms to claim priority in other member countries. Inventors' rights and the further basic principles of protection of industrial property subjects were also defined. The basic principles of the Paris Convention were completed after 100 years by an agreement on the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), concluded in 1994 as a consequence of globalisation of international trade and the development of science and technology.

### *The Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works*

In 1883 the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works was concluded. It was concerned with copyright. The Berne Union for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (Berne Union) was established at the same time. The Berne Convention gave rise to the protection of all kinds of literary, scientist and artistic works without regard to the method or form of their expression. In the course of years since it was substantially revised and today it is known as the Revised Berne Convention – RBC.<sup>2</sup> The Berne Convention conditions no longer require uniqueness of the work and therefore it is possible to protect by Copyright computer programs and databases and also works of utility arts, but other rights connected with Copyright are not protected. These are protected by the Rome Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organisations.<sup>3</sup>

In 1893 the secretariats of Berne Union and Paris Union were merged into a single office, the International Industrial Property Office (Bureaux Internationaux Réunis pour la Protection de la Propriété Intellectuelle – BIRPI), residing at Berne. In 1960 the Office moved to Geneva. In 1967 a diplomatic conference in Stockholm settled on a Convention establishing the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO Convention). As a consequence the Office was transformed into the present international organisation, The World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO),<sup>4</sup> and in 1960 moved to Geneva. This organisation represents an integration institution of worldwide impact.

<sup>2</sup> Published in the Decree No. 133/1980 Coll.

<sup>3</sup> Published in the Decree No. 195/1964 Coll.

<sup>4</sup> More than 190 member states.

### *Related International Agreements*

In 1891 two international agreements followed the Paris Convention. They concerned indication rights, namely the Madrid Agreement for the Repression of False or Deceptive Indications of Source on Goods and the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks.

In the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century they were followed by further international agreements, such as the Nice Agreement Concerning the International Classification of Goods and Services for the Purpose of the Registration of Marks (1957), the Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration, the Locarno Agreement Establishing an International Classification for Industrial Designs and Models (1968) and the Strasbourg Agreement Concerning International Patent Classification (1971).

Further corresponding agreements are as follows: the Budapest Treaty on the International Recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms for the Purpose of Patent Procedure (1977), the Patent Cooperation Treaty (1970), the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights – TRIPS (1994), the Trademark Law Treaty (1994) and Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks (1989) and as the newest Patent Law Treaty, which entered into force in 2005. All of them are based on the Paris Convention from 1883. The principles defined in 1883 are still valid.

A great number of international multilateral agreements were concluded in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, all of them within the framework of the WIPO. They tried to fulfil international trade requirements, broadening even outside European borders. One of the most important agreements was the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) which enables applicants to obtain patent protection on technical solutions in more than 150 member states.

The Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works from 1886 was completed in Paris (1896), revised in Berne (1908) and several more times in later years. It is known as the Revised Berne Convention– RBC. It was followed by a number of international agreements, such as the Universal Copyright Convention (1971),<sup>5</sup> the Treaty on International Registration of Audiovisual Works,<sup>6</sup> and the Rome Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organisations.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Decree No. 134/1980 Coll.

<sup>6</sup> Notification No. 365/1995 Coll.

<sup>7</sup> Decree No. 192/1964 Coll., in the wording of Notification No. 157/1965 Coll.

## *Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights* – *TRIPS*

During the conference on General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1994 in Marrakesh it was agreed to establish the World Trade Organisation (WTO), with the Czech Republic being one of the member states. Within the framework of the conference there were concluded 25 multilateral international agreements setting relations in international trade. One of them was an Agreement on the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights – TRIPS.

The basic aim of Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (known as the TRIPS agreement) was to decrease deformations and obstacles in international trade, to support effective and reasonable protection of intellectual property and to prevent measures for the protection of intellectual property from becoming obstacles to rightful trade.

The TRIPS agreement is not only based on the existing international industrial property treaties binding WTO members to follow them, but it also intensifies some parts of the said treaties. On the other hand TRIPS respects existing national systems of intellectual property protection and comes from the premises that intellectual property rights are private rights.

Parts of the TRIPS agreement, concerning general provisions and basic principles, state that their members in the internal home legislation are allowed, without any duty, to ensure a broader protection than is requested by the TRIPS agreement. The TRIPS agreement defines “intellectual property” more broadly than the Paris Convention. It is because intellectual property subjects also include unpublished information and topographies of semiconductors.

The principles of national treatment are strictly observed and concern not only citizens of the member states of previous WIPO international agreements, but also the citizens of WTO member states. Each member state is obliged to treat a citizen of other member states in the same manner as its own citizens. If one member state gives other member state an advantage of most favoured nations, it is obliged to give this advantage even to other member states. The National assimilation regime prevents discrimination between foreigners and domestic citizens. The advantage of most favoured nations prevents also discrimination between foreigners.

As far as accessibility, scope and utilisation of intellectual property rights are concerned, copyright protection emphasises principle not to award protection to ideas, processes, manufacturing methods or mathematical concepts as such, but only to expression thereof.

Member states are obliged to provide legal protection to computer programs both in source code and machine code in the manner equal to the protection of literary or

artistic works. In accordance with the aforesaid general principle enabling member states to provide broader protection than that given by the TRIPS agreement, there is a tendency to protect computer programs by patent protection, although so far in some cases only.

It can be said that as far as individual subjects of industrial property protection are concerned, the valid legislation of the Czech Republic is in compliance with TRIPS obligations.

### ***Patent Cooperation Treaty – PCT***

One of the most important treaties with worldwide impact, substantially affecting the harmonisation and integration of industrial property, is the Patent Cooperation Treaty, generally known as the PCT. It was signed in Washington on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June 1970 and amended in 1979, 1984 and again in 2001. The basic principles of the PCT were laid down by the Executive Board of the Paris Union for Industrially Property Protection in September 1966. An increase of newly filed patent applications was connected with a worldwide problem of filing parallel foreign patent applications for the same invention, their existence in several countries and how to provide the applicant with safety regarding filings and claiming priority in the respective countries. Due to this fact discussions began on the topic of the usefulness of a worldwide system, which would simplify and make more efficient the filing and granting procedure of patent applications for inventions.

The Patent Cooperation Treaty is rightly indicated as the most important international instrument in patent cooperation since the conclusion of the Paris Convention in 1883. The PCT is an international treaty, open to all countries, not only European ones. Its provisions put ground to international harmonisation and integration in filing and the examination steps of patent granting procedure and are closely connected with the respective provisions of the European Patent Convention. The PCT does not provide a worldwide patent granting procedure (sometimes it is incorrectly mentioned as a world patent, which does not exist), but offers a worldwide system of filing applications, centralised novelty searches, and should the need arise, even standpoints as to the patentability of the filed solutions.

PCT member states form a union for cooperation in the field of filing applications for the protection of inventions, searches, and examination and special technical services. This union is officially called the International Patent Cooperation Union. It is therefore an integration configuration with worldwide activity.

The Czech Republic entered the PCT in 1991, at that time as Czechoslovakia. The main aim of the PCT is to simplify, make more efficient and less expensive the filing of applications for inventions by filing a single application, obtaining



a novelty search and even a standpoint with regard to the patentability of the filed application. It concerns not only applicants, but also patent offices.

The PCT system means that filing a single international application in a single language has the same effects as filing national applications in all member states. An applicant is no more obliged to file separate applications within the priority term and thus to spend money for respective translations, representation, fees etc. These expenses, but to a lesser degree than in the case of national routes and with better chances, are due much later when entering into the national phase. The closing of the granting procedure is carried out by individual national industrial property offices designated by the applicant.

It therefore means that a single international PCT application has the same effect as the filing of parallel applications in a number of countries. An application is filed with the Receiving Office, which is usually a national home office of the applicant. All PCT member states can also use as a receiving office the International Office in Geneva. Citizens and residents of the member states of the European Patent Convention can also file the application with the European Patent Office in case they designate the application as a European application. The receiving Office takes over the application, assigns it the date and its number of international filing, carries out a formal examination and after a remedy of contingent faults and payment of fees sends it simultaneously to the International Office in Geneva and the International Searching Authority, which will carry out the international novelty search and if need be also provide a preliminary standpoint to the patentability of the filed application. Individual member states elect the International Searching Authority when entering the treaty. The Czech Republic elected the European Patent Office in Munich as the International Searching Authority. Thus the application can be filed in one of the official EPC languages: English, German, or French.

The substance of the PCT is as follows:

- Filing of a single international application with effect in all PCT member states instead of a bundle of national applications
- It is only one formal examination carried out by a single patent office
- An international search is carried out with respect to each international application
- The Publication of each international application is internationally centralised
- A preliminary international substantive examination is possible

The above mentioned steps form the so called international phase. This is followed by the so called national phase in countries, where the applicant demands the grant of a patent. The granting procedure is carried out by respective individual national patent offices (offices of designated countries). In case of a positive result

the procedure terminates by the granting and publication of a patent. The applicant shall enter the national phase within 30 months, and in the the Czech Republic within 31 months since the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2002.<sup>8</sup>

The filing of an application with the International Office in Geneva is followed by carrying out an international search and eventually the preliminary examination report (a standpoint as to the possibility of granting a patent on the respective application). Searches are carried out by the International Searching Authorities and preliminary examination reports are carried out by the International Preliminary Examining Authorities<sup>9</sup>. As a result of a novelty search, an International Search Report is issued and similarly an International Preliminary Examination Report as a result of a preliminary examination. They are sent to the applicant, who shall decide whether he wants to withdraw the application or continue in the national procedures and in which countries. It means that after receipt of a search report (or preliminary examination report) the applicant can definitely decide where he wants to obtain a patent. Such a PCT procedure gives the applicant the possibility to choose the further scope of protection with regard to reasonable expenses.

In the course of a preliminary examination the applicant can limit the scope of the protection, i.e. the scope of patent claims.

An applicant has quite a lot of advantages when filing patent applications by the PCT route. The decision to continue in the further granting procedures in individual countries is postponed till the receipt of the international search report, i.e. it is postponed by 20 months from the priority date. Only after that he is obliged to file with the offices of those countries where he insists on protection translations of specification and claims into the national languages. The International phase procedures are carried out in the official language of the elected searching or examining authorities. Official national fees are due only after the end of the international phase. Because national offices examine applications on the ground of the result of previous international search or examination, the national procedures are simpler and less expensive (Hošková 2010).

An international application may be filed with the admission office, usually the national patent office, by legal or natural persons having a domicile or an establishment on the territory of the member state. Such an office is called receiving office. In the Czech Republic international applications are filed with the Czech Industrial Property Office. In case the applicant is a citizen of the EPC, the Harare Protocol on Patents and Industrial Designs, or the Eurasian Patent Convention, he can file the

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<sup>8</sup> On the ground of the Decree No. 21/2001 Coll.

<sup>9</sup> They are the industrial property offices of Australia, China, Japan, The Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, The USA, Canada, South Korea and the European Patent Office.

application with the European Patent Office (EPO), the African Regional Industrial Property Organization (ARIPO) and with the Eurasian Patent Office (EAPO).

## **Regional European Harmonisation and Integration of Industrial Property**

The idea of a single European law and thus the harmonisation of industrial property protection arose at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century during the preparation for the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property. Germany revived this idea at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the creation of a unified European law and the centralisation of granting patents on technical solutions were discussed. In 1947 integration efforts led to the foundation of the International Patent Institute in The Hague. In 1950 the International Patent Institute started to carry out orders with regard to searches and novelty searches for those countries which did not carry out such searches. The International Patent Institute was one of the first integration institutions in the field of industrial property protection in Europe. Later on it participated in forming the European Patent Organisation and the European Patent Office in Munich and became the EPO branch office in The Hague.

It must also be said that integration efforts in patent protection were not limited to Europe only but started in Africa and the Eurasian region too.

After the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991, a Eurasian Patent Convention was concluded in 1995. As a consequence the Eurasian Patent Organization and the Eurasian Patent Office in Moscow were constituted. At present their members are Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, The Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. The Eurasian patent system is highly complied with the European patent system. The difference is that only a single patent is granted and that is automatically valid in all Eurasian member states. The official language is Russian.

The important regional integration groups in Africa are the OAPI (Organisation Africaine pour la Protection Intellectuelle), ensuring activities for French speaking countries since 1962, and the ARIPO (African Regional Industrial Property Organisation), ensuring industrial property activities for English speaking countries since 1976.

Both systems are being gradually harmonised with European system in order to simplify industrial property protection on the African continent.

## *European Harmonisation and Integration of the Legal Protection of Inventions*

Further progress on regional European harmonisation and integration in industrial property protection took place in 1957, when agreements on the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) were signed. These agreements were followed by activities concerning the so called European Patent and in 1962 led to a project of “European Patent Law Convention”. This convention presumed a constitution of a single European patent for EEC member states and a single common office, ensuring legal protection of technical solutions and a grant of a single patent. At that time political and economical integrations of EEC member states were not fully developed and therefore the project was not realised (Jenerál 1995; Jenerál 2007).

Nevertheless work continued in 1969 and at the beginning of the 1970s led to the proposal of the “Convention on the Grant of European Patents” (EPC). This convention harmonised conditions for granting legal protection to inventions and was signed at a diplomatic conference in Munich in October 1973. It entered into force on the 7<sup>th</sup> of October 1977 with effect in the first seven states.<sup>10</sup> The European Patent Office (EPO) was opened on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 1978. The EPO, as an integration institution, ensures activities connected with EPC activities. It means that the EPO receives European patent applications, carries out novelty and patentability searches of the filed applications, completes requested proceedings and grants European patents. In this respect there is a substantial difference with regard to the PCT system, where individual patents are granted individually in designated countries.

An applicant may file an application for a grant of a European patent in the designated EPC member countries either with the Industrial Property Office of any EPC member state or directly with the European Patent Office in Munich or with its branch office in The Hague. An application for a grant of a European patent shall contain those states, where the protection of the invention is requested.

A novelty search is carried out by the EPO after a formal examination. The application is then published together with a search report, usually within 18 months from the priority date. The application is published as filed (after the remedy of formal deficiencies). In case the search report was not ready at the time of publication, it will be published additionally. The applicant shall file a request for a substantive examination within 6 months from the date of publication in the European Official

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<sup>10</sup> The Convention on the Grant of European Patents entered into force on the 7<sup>th</sup> of October 1977 for Belgium, Great Britain, Luxemburg, The Netherlands, France, Germany and Switzerland. Other states entered in the convention later on; today its participants are the 27 states of the present European Union, including the Czech Republic (since the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, 2002). Some other states are considering entry into the European Union.

Bulletin and, of course, pay the due fee. If it is not done in the prescribed term, that European application is considered as withdrawn.

The European Patent Office shall carry out a full examination of the application to ensure that it meets the conditions for granting a patent laid down by the European Patent Convention<sup>11</sup>. If the EPC conditions for granting a patent have not been met, the Office shall invite the applicant to file observations within the due term. If the applicant does not remedy the defects, the application is considered as withdrawn. If the applicant does not succeed in rebutting EPO's objections against granting a European patent raised in the course of the observations, the application is rejected.

If the subject matter of the application satisfies the stipulated conditions, the European Patent Office shall issue a decision to grant a European patent provided the due fees are paid. The decision of grant of a patent enters into force on the date of its publication in the European Patent Bulletin. The European patent, containing specification of the invention, patent claims and drawings, is issued on the same date.

Within 9 months after publication of the grant of a European patent any party is entitled to file with the European Patent Office objections (often called opposition). Objections shall be filed in writing, with good reasons and they are considered as filed after payment of the due fee only. Objections concern the European patent in all designated countries (a bundle of European patents). Objections may be filed due to the fact that the patent does not meet conditions of patentability given by the EPC, that the patent specification is not disclosed so clearly and completely to be carried out by a person skilled in the art, and that the subject matter of the patent extends beyond the content of the application as filed.

Objections against a European patent as a whole (i.e. the whole bundle of patents for the same invention) are decided by the European Patent Office. In the course of the opposition proceedings objections may be revoked as groundless, or the Office may revoke the patent in full or the revocation may be partial only. The official decision may be appealed. Any appeal has a suspensor effect. The appeal is decided by the Board of Appeals of the European Patent Office. If in the course of appeal proceedings there appears an extraordinary grave question of consistent application of the law, such a question may be filed with the Great Board of Appeals. The standpoint of the Great Board of Appeals is legally binding for the Board of Appeals with regard to the proceedings in question (e.g. Hebltová 2010).

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<sup>11</sup> These conditions are practically identical with conditions of the Czech Act No. 527/1990 Coll. On Inventions and Rationalisation proposals.

After it has been granted the so called European patent is split into a bundle of national patents in the designated states. Such patents enter into force after the fulfilment of some further conditions, stipulated by the legislation of the said countries. Substantive conditions are the duty to file, in the due term, a translation of the patent specification, claims and abstract into the official language of the respective country and the payment of individual national maintenance fees.

A patent granted by the European Patent Office has, in all designated countries, the same effect as patents granted by national offices. A European patent shall have effect in the said countries as from the date of its publication in the European Patent Bulletin; the proprietor shall file within the due term (in the Czech Republic within 3 months) translations of the patent specification into the official national languages of the respective countries and pay the publication fees. If translations of the patent specification are not submitted in the due term and fees are not paid, the European patent shall be considered in the said countries as null and void from the outset.

The effects of European patent, granted by the European Patent Office, shall be considered in each EPC member state as having the same effect of patents granted by the national offices. It also must be said that the validity is not automatic as in the case of a Community trademark.

The European Patent Office issues decisions of an appeal or objections only when such an appeal or objections are filed within 9 months from the granting of the patent, but such decisions have an effect in all designated countries.

In case the European patent was not revoked by the European Patent Office in the appeal proceedings, its revocation in individual countries falls entirely within the jurisdiction of national industrial property offices or courts. Revocation in one country does not affect the validity in other countries.

In cases when the European Patent Office issues a decision to withdraw an application, revoke the application or revoke a patent, the applicant or proprietor of the European patent may, within 3 months, file a request to convert the European patent application into a national patent application or national utility model application.

After the national industrial property office receives such request, it shall invite the applicant to submit the translation of the European application into the national language (for example into Czech) within 3 months and to pay the fee for filing a patent application or a utility model application. If the applicant has met the conditions and the office has received the request for conversion of the European patent application within a period of 20 months from the date of priority, the office shall accord the national application the rights of a priority deriving from the European patent application as filed. The converted application then proceeds as a national patent application or a utility model application.

*London Agreement Concerning Translations of European Patents*

The London Agreement tries to overcome the disadvantage of the EPC laying in the duty to validate the European patent in individual countries. Such validation requires an applicant to submit within the due term (usually 3 months) a translation of the specification and claims into the official language of the national industrial property office, provided such a language is other than one of the EPO's official languages (English, German and French).

The London Agreement, officially an Agreement on the Application of Article 65 of the Convention on the Grant of European Patents<sup>12</sup> is an independent international agreement between EPC member states, based upon a voluntary principle and reducing substantially the requirements pursuant to Article 65 of the EPC concerning translations of European patent specification into the official languages of EPC member states, needed for the validation of EPC patents in the EPC member states.

Article 1, par. 1 of the London Agreement binds each EPC member state with an official language identical with one of the EPC official languages, i.e. English, German or French, to give up the right to require, pursuant to Article 65 of the EPC, a translation into their own language regardless of the language of the grant. With regard to the fact that claims of a European patent are published in all three EPC official languages, it is assured that claims are understandable in their official language.

Article 1, par. 2 and 3 bind each participant of the London Agreement to not having the same official language(s) as the EPO to give up the right, pursuant to EPC Article 65, to require translation of the European patent issued or translated into the EPO's official language(s), into their own official language, with exceptions of claims. Such states may further request the translation of claims into their official languages. Article 2 enables participants of the London Agreement to impose, in the case of a law suit, upon the proprietor of a European patent a duty to submit translation of the whole specification and claims. The patentee shall provide the translation at his own expense and present it at the disposal of the possible infringer or the court (e.g. Čada 2010).

The London Agreement entered into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2008. At present there are 15 participants from 36 EPC member states and they are as follows: Denmark, France, Hungary, Germany, Lichtenstein, Luxemburg, Monaco, The Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, The United Kingdom, Croatia, Iceland, Latvia and Slovenia. These countries do not require, for validation of European patents, translations of the whole specification of the invention. It is sufficient to submit translations of

<sup>12</sup> Available at: [http://documents.epo.org/projects/babylon/eponet.nsf/0/7FD20618D28E9FBFC125743900678657/\\$File/London\\_Agreement.pdf](http://documents.epo.org/projects/babylon/eponet.nsf/0/7FD20618D28E9FBFC125743900678657/$File/London_Agreement.pdf) (27 November 2011).

claims only. Moreover, countries with an official language corresponding to one of the EPO's official languages do not require the translation of claims (some participants require no translations).

### *Community Patent and European Union Patent*

The Convention for the European Patent for the Common Market was concluded in the framework of European Community alongside the Convention on the Grant of European Patents. On the request of Great Britain the convention was signed in Luxembourg on the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 1975 by 9 member states of the EES. It is therefore usually called "The Luxembourg Convention" or "The Community Patent Convention" (CPC).

The purpose of the convention consisted in broadening and shifting the European system for granting patents to the granting of a single patent with an effect in all member states of the European community. In other words, the Community patent should be automatically valid in all member states of European Union at the date of it being granted in contrast to the present European patent. The European patent is centrally granted by the European Patent Office in Munich, but it is effective in designated states only after the fulfilment of the conditions stipulated by individual member states, for example after the submission of a translation of the patent specification.

So far the Community Patent Convention has not come into force as it had not been ratified by a sufficient number of states. However, the European Patent Convention as well as the Community Patent Convention has led to the harmonisation of patent laws of European countries.

The idea of the legal protection of inventions by a single patent, automatically valid in all 27 Union states, was revived after the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. So far, despite a number of negotiations, such a patent was not unanimously agreed on, especially with regard to the question of languages. A new convention for European Union patents was proposed for those states which would be willing to accept the principle of translations being in official EPO languages only, i.e. English, German and French. So far such a proposal was accepted by 25 member states of EU, with only Italy and Spain as exceptions.

### ***European Harmonisation and Integration of Indication and Design Rights***

Besides inventions, the European community started also the process of harmonisation and integration in the field of indication rights, i.e. trademarks, appellations of origin, geographical indications and industrial designs.



*Harmonisation and Integration of Trademarks and Industrial Designs*

Directive No. 40/94 of the European Council started the harmonisation and integration process of trademarks. In 1996, under the framework of European Community, the activities of the Office for the Harmonisation of Internal Market (OHIM) begun in Alicante, Spain.

On the ground of the above Directive a trademark applicant can file a trademark application even by the route called the Trademark of European Community route (i.e. a Community trademark).

The Community trademark application shall be filed with the national industrial property office or directly with the OHIM in Alicante. Registrability of the indication as filed is examined by the OHIM. Trademark proceedings are similar to the national trademark proceedings. The Community trademark application relates to all EU states and similarly a registered Community trademark is automatically valid in all member states.<sup>13</sup>

A Community trademark application may be filed by applicants having an industrial or business enterprise or by citizens of the member states of the European Union, the Paris Convention or signatories of the Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organisation (the WTO Agreement). Applicants not residing in any EU state shall be represented by a trademark agent or attorney at law of the EU member state.

In case the Community trademark application has been rejected, withdrawn or considered as withdrawn or the effects of the Community trademark application cease to exist, the applicant is entitled to request a conversion of the Community trademark to a national trademark with a priority claim of the Community trademark.

Since the entry of the Czech Republic to the European Union the Community trademark application may be filed not only with the OHIM in Alicante, but also with the national offices of the member states, including the Czech Industrial Property Office. National offices allot the trademark the date of filing and then transfer it to the regional office (the OHIM).

After the accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union, the Community trademarks have, on Czech territory, the same effects as they had had at the time of their registration by the OHIM without regard to the fact that they could not have been opposed by the proprietors of earlier trademarks registered in the Czech Republic by a national or international route. Collisions between nationally or internationally registered trademarks are solved in such a manner, that the proprietor,

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<sup>13</sup> Directive No. 40/1994 of the European Council on Community trademarks stipulates provisions for filing trademarks. It was changed by Directive No. 3288/1994 of the European Council.

filing the application bona fide, is entitled to defend the use of a Community trademark on the territory of the Czech Republic, including the compensation of damage (e.g. Pipková 2007).

The proceedings of industrial designs are stipulated by the Directive of the European Council No. 6/2002 on Community industrial designs and are similar to trademark proceedings. Applications for the registration of a design are to be filed either with the national industrial property offices or with the OHIM. The OHIM examines the formal part of the application only and after the registration in the Design Registry the design is automatically valid in all EU member states.

Litigation with regard to Community trademarks or Community designs are decided in the first instance by the Municipal Court in Prague.

### *Harmonisation and Integration of Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications*

The directive of the European Council No. 510/2006 stipulates the harmonisation and integration process with regard to geographical indications and appellations of origin of agricultural products and foodstuffs.

An application for the registration of a Community appellation of origin concerning agricultural products or foodstuffs produced, manufactured or prepared on the territory of the Czech Republic and there used in connection with the agricultural product or foodstuff shall be filed with the Czech Industrial Property Office. After the remedy of eventual defects and judgement proceedings the Office shall submit the application to the European Commission, residing in Brussels,<sup>14</sup> for further proceedings in order to enter the indication in the Registry of protected appellations of origin and protected geographical indications, conducted by the said Commission.

The European Commission in Brussels shall examine whether the application fulfils the conditions stipulated by Directive No. 510/2006. If affirmative, the application and specification are published in the Official Bulletin of the European Union. If negative the Commission shall decide to reject the application. Within 6 months from the date of publication each member state or a third party may file duly justified objections against the proposed registration. Objections filed after the expiration of 6 months are not allowed.

Each economic subject which puts onto the market agricultural products or foodstuffs corresponding to the specification of the indication is entitled to use the registered name. Products, coming from the Community and put onto the market under the name registered in the Community Registry, shall be provided with the

<sup>14</sup> Article 211 to 219 of the Treaty Establishing the European Community.

denomination “protected appellation of origin” or “protected geographical indication” and with Community symbols.

Agricultural products and foodstuffs coming from third-party countries may bear such indications and symbols provided they are put onto the market under the name registered in the EU Registry.

In case there occurred, in the course of use, a change of the original registered Community appellation of origin or registered geographical indication, usually due to developments in an area of scientific and technical knowledge or as a result of a new definition of territory, the applicant may ask the national office (in our case the Czech Industrial Property Office) for amendments to the specification. An application for the change of the specification proceeds in the same manner as the original application, including any objection and examination proceedings before the EU Commission.

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## A Political-Geographic Map of Poland before the 2011 Election

*Tadeusz Siwek*

**Abstract:** *The topic of this paper is the situation in the political scene in Poland before the election in autumn 2011. Today's situation is a consequence of many historical processes, and so the paper, as a result of this, starts by describing the communist era in Poland. This paper will focus on the conflict between two ideologically very similar right-wing parties of Poland who became the respective winners of the last two elections. In spite of the ideological similarity (the only one difference is the greater liberalism of Civic Platform and the greater conservatism of Law and Justice) their differences reach the depths of hate, on the basis of personal antipathy and the rivalry between their leaders – the former Prime Minister, Jarosław Kaczyński, and the recent Prime Minister, Donald Tusk. The rivalry is projected into all levels of Polish society, so some commentators even speak of two Polish nations – traditional-conservative and modern-liberal that are not only different socially but also territorially. Any positive possibility for the future of the Polish political system seems to be in its future transformation into a more stable two-right-wing-party system, like the one in the United States of America.*

**Keywords:** *Poland, electoral geography, liberals, conservatives, two Polish nations*

### Poland in the Communist Era 1944–1989

In the years 1944–1989, the political scene in Poland was distorted by the non-democratic communist regime. The communist-type ruling party was the Polish United Workers' Party, which held a power monopoly, even though there were two other smaller parties in Poland (The United People's Party and The Democratic Party), whose purpose was to give an impression of democracy to the people under the regime. In reality, they were both subordinate to the ruling party. The majority of Poles perceived communism as a system forced upon them from the outside. Many of them rejected it because, among other reasons, it was imported from Russia, a state that was (along with Germany), considered one of the two main enemies of Poland. The communist ideology was seen as a tool for Russian expansion even among the Polish workers, who could theoretically have been supporters of the left-wing parties. Before the war, Poles oriented to the left were scarce. It was caused also by the fact that before the war the activity of the Polish Communist Party was illegal (Davies 2005).

The tension between the left-wing government; which was supported only by a small part of the citizens, and these were usually Polish, who did not want communism; led several times to open protest in the form of strikes and demonstrations. These were suppressed by the force of the ruling party. It meant not only crushing the demonstrations but also gunfire with a few dozen of victims. Such crises, which usually led to the rotation of the main representatives of the Polish ruling party, happened in 1956, 1968, 1970, 1976 and 1980-81 (the Solidarity Movement- see Ash 2002).

The Polish ruling party's position was weaker than in other communist countries. Not only did they have to face a mass of inhabitants, who were not organised, but they also faced the organisation of the Polish Catholic Church, which was completely independent from state power and was supported by the majority of Polish society. That is also why private ownership was never completely suppressed in Poland. There were smaller private businessmen and craftsmen and three quarters of farmland was also in private ownership. This situation was not true of any other country of the Soviet bloc (Davis 2005). Also, among the officials of the Polish United Workers' Party, there were some supporters of reforms and dialogue with the opposition, much more than in other countries. Some variants like "Spanish", "Korean" etc. were (unofficially) disputed (Ost 1990).

The strikes in 1988, the collapse of the economy (in which almost everything was rationed from 1981 onwards), and awareness that the Soviet Union, under the leadership of Gorbachev, would not intervene again, led to an agreement between the ruling party and the opposition. From February to April 1989, the so called *Round Table Talks* took place, resulting in the partial democratisation of Poland (Ash 1993). The Polish communists gave up part of the share of power and hoped that it would primarily help to improve the economic situation.

The agreement contained a passage about a partly free election in June 1989. It was not yet open to everybody, but it did not accredit all the seats to one ballot any longer, as was usual in all communist countries until then. The agreement determined the division of the seats into three parts: a third went to the communist Polish United Workers' Party, another third to small parties, the previous allies of the Polish communists, and the final third was open to all (Ash 1993).

The Polish opposition, centred on the leader of the Solidarity movement, Lech Wałęsa, took advantage of this situation to the full extent: they decided not to split their forces and not to compete for the one third of the seats which the Round Table Agreement offered for free competition, and they built only one ballot. This ballot gained one third of the seats and after that pulled the Democratic and People's parties to their side. Suddenly, the party had a two-third majority and could form the

first non-communist government in the Soviet Union, with Tadeusz Mazowiecki as the leader (Ash 1993).

### The Polish Political Scene after the Fall of Communism

At the moment of the renewal of democracy, there were only two seemingly homogeneous groups: the previously ruling communist (left-wing), and the united opposition (right-wing). However, the left-wing, as it was losing power, was falling apart and the opposition, which was united only for pragmatic reasons, was, upon closer inspection, divided into different streams: there were the democrats, who objected to the lack of freedom; the Catholics and believers from other churches; the convinced right-wingers; left-wing supporters of the current system and non-ideological supporters of the western lifestyle.

The previous anticommunist opposition was soon split into several parties, which could be defined as ranging from central left-wing, centre and central right-wing to explicit right-wing. In the first 15 years after the fall of communism, a quick turnover of ministers was typical (only one “served” the whole four years: Jerzy Buzek), as well as shortening the election period as a result of the early election (Kubát 2003). Also, there was quick return to power of the renamed communists (1993–1997 and 2001–2005).

**Table 1: Turnover of Prime Ministers in Poland during the post-communist period 1989-2005**

VIII 1989 – XII 1990	TadeuszMazowiecki (no party, Solidarity)
I – XII 1991	Jan Krzysztof Bielecki (Liberal Democratic Congress)
election (electoral term 2 years shorter)	
XII 1991 – VI 1992	Jan Olszewski (Agreement Centre)
VI – VII 1992	Waldemar Pawlak (Polish People’s Party)
VII 1992 – X 1993	Hanna Suchocka (Democratic Union)
election (electoral term 1 year shorter)	
X 1993 – III 1995	WaldemarPawlak (Polish People’s Party)
III 1995 – II 1996	Józef Oleksy (Democratic Left Alliance)
II 1996 – X 1997	WłodzimierzCimoszewicz (Democratic Left Alliance)
election (proper term)	
X 1997 – X 2001	Jerzy Buzek (Solidarity Electoral Action)

election (proper term)	
X 2001 – V 2004	Leszek Miller (Democratic Left Alliance)
V 2004 – XI 2005	Marek Belka (no party, designated by the Democratic Left Alliance)

Source: Author

### The Key Election in 2005: Victory and the Following Rift between the Polish Right-Wing Parties

After the period of left-wing government in the years 2001-2005, during which there were several scandals and the Prime Minister was ousted and another came in, there was a longing in Polish society to return to right-wing values. In the election of 2005, two new right-wing parties were in the leading places in the pre-election polls. It was Civic Platform with Donald Tusk and Law and Justice with Jarosław Kaczyński. It seemed that both parties would clearly win the election and create a coalition that would have a major superiority over the remaining small parties. The election held on 25 September 2005 showed these expectations to be true (Markowski 2006).

**Table 2: Result of parliamentary election in Poland in 2005**

	votes (%)	seats (%)
<b>Law and Justice</b>	26.99	33.7
<b>Civic Platform</b>	24.14	28.9
<b>Self-Defence of the Republic</b>	11.41	12.2
<b>Democratic Left Alliance</b>	11.31	12.0
<b>League of Polish Families</b>	7.97	7.4
<b>Polish People's Party</b>	6.96	5.4

Source: *Wybory 2005*

However, the presumed coalition of the election winners that could have had 62,6% of the seats, was not created. There was a rift between the winners, which probably was more of a personal than ideological nature. The winning party of the Kaczyński brothers finally made a coalition with the two populist parties Self-Defence of the Republic (Chairman Andrzej Lepper) and The League of Polish Families (Chairman Roman Giertych), which relied on the support of the conservative, religiously oriented voters from the countryside and also small town workers.



They promoted generous donations, the complete banning of abortions, but also, for example, stronger discipline in schools in the form of promoting almost compulsory religious education, the introduction of school uniforms etc. Jarosław Kaczyński, Chairman of the winning party, was not appointed Prime Minister, but the previously rather unknown, Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz, who was suggested by Kaczyński, was instead (Millard 2008).

The rift between the two strongest right-wing parties was deepened in October 2005, in the time of the presidential election. Their favourite, Donald Tusk, surprisingly lost along with the second brother of the Kaczyński twins, Lech. It was probably the nationalist voters who decided the result, because while Lech Kaczyński is the representative of a typical Polish family and has a typically Polish name and surname, Donald Tusk is a member of the small minority of Kashubians. Furthermore, his name does not sound Polish and his rivals published the fact that his grandfather shortly served in the German Armed Forces during the war, in 1944. His explanation that this service was involuntary and that his grandfather deserted after three months and served in the Polish Armed Forces on the Western Front until the end of the war did not help.

In the summer of 2006, Jarosław Kaczyński removed from office the surprised Prime Minister Marcinkiewicz; who was quite successful in his function and who was gaining more and more popularity; and he took his place. The Kaczyński brothers suddenly held both of the highest positions in the country. However, their anachronistic style of governance soon frustrated even many of the Poles that gave them their vote in 2005. Then, when there was a conflict among the incalculable coalition partners, the government fell, and in the autumn of 2007, there was another parliamentary election.

### **Election in 2007 – Kaczyński Brothers’ Defeat**

In this election, the situation turned and Civic Platform won convincingly over Law and Justice with flying colours. The discredited coalition partners of Law and Justice did not get into parliament at all. The left-wing did not take advantage of the right-wing parties’ rivalry, because its own crisis continued. Not even the notable rejuvenation of the Chairmanship (when Wojciech Olejniczak and Grzegorz Napieralski, both in their thirties, having been born in 1974, subsequently took over as leaders) could help. The election was decided mainly by the young and more educated voters, who were getting sick of the old-fashioned restraint from the previous government.

**Table 3: Result of parliamentary election in Poland in 2007**

	votes (%)	seats (%)
<b>Civic Platform</b>	41.51	45.43
<b>Law and Justice</b>	32.11	36.09
<b>Left and Democrats</b>	13.15	11.52
<b>Polish People's Party</b>	8.91	6.74
<b>Self-defence of the Republic</b>	1.53	0
<b>League of Polish Families</b>	1.30	0

Source: *Wybory 2007*

The government in the electoral period 2007-2011 was formed by **Civic Platform** (Prime Minister Donald Tusk) and the **Polish People's Party** (ex-Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak, as its leader, who became the Vice-Prime Minister). The opposition was formed by **Law and Justice** (right-wing – ex-prime minister Jarosław Kaczyński) and the **Democratic Left Alliance** (left-wing – Grzegorz Napieralski). A more sophisticated analysis of the structure of the Polish parliament was described by Monika Turyna (2010) in this journal.

The Kaczyński brothers took the defeat badly and they saw a conspiracy of enemy powers in these events. Then, after the president Lech Kaczyński died at the end of his administration in the government air-plane crash near Smolensk, his brother Jarosław accused his political enemies from Civic Platform of being indirectly responsible for the death of his brother and 96 prominent representatives of Polish political life. He did this despite the fact that there were the representatives of all the Polish parliamentary parties on board. It was a national delegation.

The tragically deceased president's position was later assumed by Donald Tusk's close associate, Bronisław Komorowski. Donald Tusk did not run for the position himself, although his position as the Prime Minister was unshakable. His government is by no means perfect in the economic sphere, but it still manages better than the ruling parties in most other European countries. Poland was the only EU country which was spared from the crisis of 2009-2010. Tusk decided not to aspire to the formally highest post in the country and to keep the real power of the Prime Minister. He probably did not want to risk a possible second defeat that would certainly damage his image.

The results of the rift were projected into Polish society as well – nowadays, some commentators even speak of two Polish nations (Markowski 2010). This split is thought of as mostly a social differentiation, but it is also geographical one. The

voters' platform of the two large Polish parties is both socially and territorially differentiated. It is a collision of two right-wing concepts: liberal and conservative. The liberals vote for Civic Platform. They live mostly in cities, they have a higher level of education, are rather younger, and have a positive yet not exaggerated attitude towards the church. The conservatives vote for Law and Justice. They live mostly in the country, have often a lower level of education, are rather older and have a very positive attitude towards the church with a tendency towards fundamentalism. The voters' platform also varies according to areas: the voters of Civic Platform live mostly in the North-West Poland, while the voters of Law and Justice are centred in the South-East. Such a political map of Poland has been forming for several decades (Kowalski (2000) and sometimes it is a consequence of earlier historical and regional differences (Zarycki 1998). In these circumstances the split of Polish voters into two separate electorates of two antagonistic right-wing parties could not only be non-territorial (like the former Austrian curial system, see Höbelt 1992) but also territorial and the two lands could form a new "federation".

### **The situation in Poland before the 2011 Election**

In the autumn of 2011, there will be another parliamentary election in Poland. If nothing irregular happens, the result from 2007 will probably be repeated. At least this is what is being suggested by almost all of the pre-election prognoses. Donald Tusk could then have a chance to become, historically, the first Prime Minister since 1989 who would be re-elected. Nowadays, he is (after Jerzy Buzek) only the second Prime Minister who has finished a whole electoral term. Even that is quite a success, considering the unstable Polish political scene.

There is emerging a more civilised scenario: a shift towards stability. The Polish political scene could establish a system in which two strong right-wing parties would take "turns" in power. That would be an analogy of the Democrats and the Republicans in the USA, and a rather unusual situation in Europe. It seems to be possible, but a necessary condition is the elimination of personal aversions among the leaders of the largest parties – these are nowadays often the main factors determining their respective strategies. Presently it is impossible and it might be taken into account only in the future, when there will be a generation exchange in the leadership of both Polish right-wing parties.

However, even after fulfilling this condition, the chances for creating a stable two-party system are not certain. The hitherto marginalised left-wing could be empowered. If the economic crisis returns, this time it would probably affect Poland as well, and this could be profitable for the left-wing campaign. The present tradition of European parliamentarianism suggests this scenario too, since parties that have been in opposition for a long time are often brought back. In the case of a presumed

defeat in 2011, the left-wing would have to stay in opposition at least until 2015, which means a full 10 years. And that is the optimal period for its return. After this year's election everything will be much clearer.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Petr Jurek*<sup>1</sup>

### **The Czech Republic and the European Union**

Significant attention has been paid to the topic of the eastward enlargement of the European Union. After a number of studies devoted to the general characteristics of this “wave of enlargement”, works dealing with national specifics of the enlargement process have started to prevail in the literature. The book entitled *The Czech Republic and the European Union* is very interesting and in many ways a valuable example of this approach. The book was published at the beginning of 2011 by Routledge. The team of authors consists of David Marek and Michael Baun who also published together the monograph *EU Cohesion Policy after Enlargement* in 2008. The book constitutes part of the Routledge edition *Europe and the Nation State*.

The aim of the book is to analyse the interrelations between the Czech Republic and the European Union. Two main questions posted at the beginning of the book are, “How has EU accession and membership affected the Czech Republic – what has the EU’s impact been on Czech governing institutions, public policies, and politics?” And, “How has the Czech Republic behaved as a new member state – how has it sought to influence EU decision making and policies, and how successful has it been?” (p. 1).

The book is divided into seven parts, excluding the introduction and the conclusion. In the introduction, the concept of Europeanisation, serving as a basic frame for thinking about the relationship between the Czech Republic and the European Union, is briefly introduced. The chosen theoretical framework suits the topic of the analysis and has been utilised in a proper way, especially in connection with the first of the questions mentioned above.

The first chapter is devoted to the period from 1989 to 2004 (from the so-called Velvet Revolution to EU admission). Except for the short introduction about historical consequences (the fall of the communist regime, the division of Czechoslovakia), the main part of this chapter is formed of a chronological examination of relationships between the Czech Republic and the European Community/European Union. Special importance is given to agreements of cooperation, the application for membership and subsequent process of evaluation, and the accession treaty

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signed in 2003. Those and other important matters are presented in the context of internal Czech political development. The authors emphasise the problematic points of accession negotiations for which they use the evaluation reports regularly drawn up by the European Commission.

In the subsequent chapter, the authors concentrate their attention on domestic Czech politics. They reflect on the relationship between Czech national identity and European integration and especially examine sources of Czech euro-scepticism. The next part of this chapter is devoted to Czech public opinion toward the European Union, especially issues of Czech admission and the satisfaction with membership. The authors are trying to find and evaluate the main pros and cons of Czech membership as seen by the public. Then, attitudes toward European integration of the relevant Czech political parties are mentioned. In the case of all political parties, the basic position on European integration is followed by their opinion of two important issues of the last decade – the treaty establishing a constitution for Europe and the Lisbon Treaty. The resulting classification presented on page 45 seems somewhat oversimplified. The last part of the chapter introduces the two main political figures of the post-communist era in Czech politics – Václav Havel and Václav Klaus – and examines their opposite views on European issues.

The third chapter deals with one of the most important aspects of Europeanisation, the adaptation of the main Czech political institutions, state administration and regional governance for membership of the European Union. The authors introduce each individual institution and the changes which occurred in them because of adaptation for membership. Thus, the Czech national government, both chambers of the national parliament, the judiciary and regional governance are examined. The authors properly consider the creation of a regional degree of self-government as a key point which they see as the major display of Europeanisation in the Czech polity. On the other hand, local self-government and the deep systemic changes that occurred in it are almost excluded from the analysis.

The economic impact of membership of the European Union on the Czech Republic is the object of interest in the subsequent chapter. Membership of the European Union gave the Czech Republic many opportunities, but at the same time produced many risks and challenges. The authors try to evaluate the economic development of the Czech Republic and find how the structure and efficiency of the Czech economy changed in connection with membership of the European Union. Some related social issues such as unemployment or economic migration are mentioned as well. One of the main points of this chapter is that the Czech Republic is one of the biggest net recipients from the European budget. The authors also mention the issue of the euro and its potential adoption in the Czech Republic.

The purpose of the next chapter is to demonstrate changes in public policy in connection with accession to the European Union. The authors chose three areas in which they examine the impact of European rules – environmental policy, agricultural policy and regional policy. Structural changes in these areas serve as an example of the deep and complex impact of the Union's agenda on domestic policy. The part devoted to regional policy is the most sophisticated one, whereas the part devoted to agricultural policy could be more detailed.

The next chapter introduces the position of the Czech Republic as a policymaker. It deals with the Czech presence in European Union organs and institutions. Attention is devoted to the Czech representation in the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council of the European Union. The operation of all Czech commissioners is briefly described. The activity and influence of Czech deputies in the European Parliament is evaluated. In connection with the European Parliament, the character of euro-elections as second-order elections is confirmed in the case of the Czech Republic. The second part of the chapter introduces Czech proclivities toward the most important European issues. Special attention is devoted to the foreign policy orientation of the European Union, especially the relationship with the United States of America. The Czech Republic made itself visible by bilateral talks with the USA about the allocation of radar systems (one part of a new planned anti-missile defence system) on its land.

The last-but-one chapter is thematically connected with the previous one. It deals with the Czech presidency of the European Union which occurred in the first half of 2009. The authors describe the preparations and the six-month term of presidency, and focus especially on certain problems in international politics (the gas crisis, the Middle East situation) and difficulties in Czech domestic politics (the fall of the government) which made carrying out the presidency very difficult. In connection with that, the authors conclude that the Czech presidency was unable to make significant progress in fields marked as priorities. Several arguments why that happened are presented.

In the concluding chapter, the authors summarise their previous argumentation and try to answer the question they had put in the introduction. Among other points, they come to the conclusion that the case of the Czech Republic confirms the general findings of Europeanisation literature, except in the realm of domestic politics.

The authors presuppose that the book should be of interest to students and scholars of the European Union. This presumption can be confirmed. The book can serve as a valuable source of basic information and arguments about the topic for students and scholars especially outside the Czech Republic itself. All the topics treated in the book are given in the broad context of Czech political and socio-economic reality which allows easy orientation in the authors' argumentation. The book was



based on a variety of Czech and English sources and its bibliography can serve as a very complete *recherché* on a given topic. On the other hand, the book mostly remains at a considerably ordinary level of argumentation, so the main purpose of the book appears to be to provide a general survey and not to discover new interpretations and consequences.

*Marek, Dan – Baun, Michael (2011): The Czech Republic and the European Union. New York, Routledge. 201 pages.*

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## **RESEARCH REPORTS AND PAPERS FROM CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS:**

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