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Novel technologies and Geopolitical Strategies: Disinformation Narratives in the Countries of the Visegrád Group

LILLA SAROLTA BÁNKUTY-BALOGH

sciendo

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Abstract: *In the current media environment of growing information disorder and social media platforms emerging as primary news sources, the creation and spread of disinformation is becoming increasingly easy and cost-effective. The projection of strategic narratives through disinformation campaigns is an important geopolitical tool in the global competition for power and status. We have analysed close to 1,000 individual news pieces from more than 60 different online sources containing disinformation, which originally appeared in one of the V4 languages, using a natural language processing algorithm. We have assessed the frequency of recurring themes within the articles and their relationship structure, to see whether consistent disinformation narratives were to be found among them. Through frequency analysis and relationship charting, we have been able to uncover individual storylines connected to more than ten overarching disinformation narratives. We have also exposed five key meta-narratives present in all Visegrád Countries, which fed into a coherent system of beliefs, such as the envisioned collapse of the European Union or the establishment of a system of Neo-Atlantism, which would permanently divide the continent.*

Key words: ***novel technologies, geopolitics, disinformation, strategic narratives, Visegrád Group***

Introduction

Political polarisation, opinion echo chambers and filter bubbles seem to have become the buzzwords of the past years, not only in the political conversation

but also within the popular discourse. The widespread interest in documentaries such as 'The Social Dilemma' (Orlowski 2020), a movie premiered in 2020 that takes a critical look at technology platforms influencing human behaviour, showcases the simultaneous fascination and concern over political and social trends enhanced by digital technologies increasingly shaping our realities. The Oxford English Dictionary chose the word *post-truth* as the word of the year in 2016 (OUP 2016). The selection seeks to represent the 'ethos, mood, or preoccupations of a particular year' that has 'lasting potential as a word of cultural significance' (OUP 2020). The term post-truth has gone from being a peripheral term to a widely recognised notion in headlines, publications and the cultural mainstream within the course of a year, largely in relation to the Brexit referendum in the United Kingdom and the 2016 United States presidential elections, with the most important association of the term being *post-truth politics*. The 'post' prefix in the expression 'post-truth' articulates the meaning of truth as a concept becoming unimportant, dated or irrelevant in the contemporary political context (ibid.).

Critics of data-centric technologies claimed more than a decade ago that *ideological silos* (Sunstein 2007) could be created through growing personalisation powered by digital technologies. The increasing authority of the consumer to filter what kind of information they encounter on a daily basis has the potential to skew people's perceptions regarding tendencies in news and public affairs. Simple search engine results can vary by personal and regional (location-bound) characteristics, while social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter or Reddit operate custom newsfeeds to enhance user experience. Internet users – through algorithmic decision-making and as a result of personal network connections – increasingly only encounter information that does not challenge their original beliefs but typically reinforces their pre-existing convictions (EPRS 2019a). Such digitally enabled distortion of shared realities can result in voices gradually becoming more radical.

This leads us to the so-called (social media) *echo chamber* phenomenon or the emergence of homophilic clusters of individuals who reinforce and amplify each other's opinions, creating a bubble where no opinion challenge can occur (Garret 2009). Echo chambers can come to life thanks to the human tendency to seek information adhering to pre-existing opinions and values, generally referred to as an unconscious exercise of *confirmation bias*. Confirmation bias is the human tendency to seek information that one considers supportive of their favoured hypotheses or existing beliefs, and to simultaneously interpret information in ways that are partial to those (Nickerson 1998). Such selective exposure to opinions and the (self-)isolation from a diverse range of arguments naturally pushes people toward more extreme attitudes (Sunstein 2007). Polarisation of views may account for growing partisan divides among political affiliations and ever greater ideological gaps being created within society (ibid.). Social media network

dynamics therefore play a crucial role in influencing political processes as social platforms have become the agorae of not only political campaigning but also of sharing information (EPRS 2019a). According to Sunstein (2007: 8–9), the growing power of consumers to filter what they see and hear decreases the probability of unplanned, unanticipated encounters that constitute shared experiences in an otherwise heterogenous society. If such tendencies exceed a certain threshold, they could inhibit the creation of a general consensus on core questions that are central to addressing social problems and the functioning of democracy itself (ibid.).

Although the extent to which consumer selection and algorithmic decision-making respectively contribute to the creation of social media echo chambers and filter bubbles is still debated in the literature, we find ourselves in a chicken-and-egg situation where regardless of the exact structure of causalities, the human-machine interaction seems to create a mutually reinforcing dynamic. Zimmer and others (2019) make a point about human accountability when they argue that algorithms and their mechanisms to form filter bubbles, do not create online communities on their own, but rather amplify users' existing behaviours. They reflect on cognitive patterns, such as non-argumentative or off-topic behaviour, denial, moral outrage, meta-comments, insults, satire and creation of a new rumour that could all contribute to the emergence of echo chambers. John and Dvir-Gvirsam (2015) also point to the human factor, when presenting empirical evidence that politically motivated unfriending on Facebook became a common practice in the Israel-Gaza conflict of 2014. Such ideologically-based unfriending affected weak ties in the network, which are precisely those connections that would with a higher probability expose users to a diverse range of opinions. On the other hand, Cinelli et. al. (2021), by analysing the interactions of more than one million active users on Facebook, Twitter, Reddit and Gab, have concluded that while the former two platforms presented clear-cut echo chambers, the latter two did not, suggesting that different platforms offer different interaction paradigms to users, triggering different social dynamics. Particularly, platforms organised around social networks and news feed algorithms, seem to favour the emergence of echo chambers (ibid.). Cohen (2018) makes a similar observation, stating that algorithm-based personalised feeds create an immersive media environment that permits users to consume unique media feeds that may affect civic actions and democracy by tailoring cultural artefacts to the individual user. Irrespective of the exact share of human and machine bias in the equation, as automation and algorithms become more embedded in civic life, we have to assess the role of technology in deepening social divides and how we might be able to counter undesirable tendencies (EPRS 2019a). Responding to the effects of social media enabled polarisation could entail a top-down approach of interrogating digital media structures, platform capitalism, algorithm design and methods of data collection, as well as a bottom-up move from the consumers' perspective, to transition beyond

traditional media literacy, understanding the multiple ways user actions are converted into algorithmic decision-making (Cohen 2018).

Computational propaganda and disinformation campaigns

Not long ago, most academic research and public attention on cyber power focused on the possibilities of affecting the physical world via digital threats, such as cybercrime, data theft or damage to critical infrastructure. Today computational propaganda is gradually taking centre stage (Bradshaw – Howard 2018). Computational propaganda as defined by Howard and Woolley (2016:4886) is 'the assemblage of social media platforms, autonomous agents, and big data tasked with the manipulation of public opinion'. The blueprint of computational propaganda entails autonomous agents acting based on big data collected on people's behaviour in order to advance certain ideological projects. Computational propaganda, therefore, can be regarded as a technical strategy to use information technology for social control (ibid.). Cases such as the Cambridge Analytica scandal have shown the vulnerabilities of social platforms and how their business model could be exploited in order to manipulate citizens (EPRS 2019a). Computational propaganda, as known from everyday life, includes the spread of disinformation, automated amplification with bots and fake accounts, the suppression of opposition with hate speech and trolling and the infiltration of political groups and events (ibid.). Social media manipulation is already available to a large proportion of internet users at relatively low costs; however, as innovations in artificial intelligence, machine learning and big data analytics advance, weapons of computational propaganda will become even more effective and sophisticated (Bradshaw – Howard 2018).

Current levels of online mis- and disinformation, commonly described as 'fake news', already pose serious threats to the workings of democracy by casting a shadow of doubt on democratic election outcomes. With that said we have to point out that we still lack a thorough understanding on how much impact computational propaganda has on actual voter behaviour. Recent examples of disinformation campaigns undermining public trust and impeding the formation of a general consensus on election outcomes include the UK Brexit referendum and the 2016 United States presidential elections (EPRS 2019b), which shows that the actual or perceived effects of computational propaganda are already manifesting themselves in real life outcomes.

In order to maintain clarity of terminology, it is important to distinguish between distinct categories of information disorder used in computational propaganda, and define mis-, dis- and malinformation, instead of vaguely referring to them collectively as 'fake news'. According to the classification used by Wardle and Derakhshan (2017: 5), differences among the three categories are to be found along the dimensions of *intention to cause harm* and *falseness of*

information. As stated by their definition, *misinformation* refers to false information being shared, where no harm was meant, while *disinformation* refers to false information being shared knowingly, with the precise intention to cause harm. Conversely, *malinformation* refers to genuine information being shared to intentionally cause harm, by spreading private information in the public space. The European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS 2019b: 1) has identified five key drivers behind the rapid and pervasive spread of online mis- and disinformation campaigns in recent years:

- *Online propaganda and for-profit websites* that specifically spread disinformation with the goal of deepening societal divides and influencing political outcomes based on a particular ideological stance.
- *Post-truth politics*, whereby politicians and political parties propagate misleading claims to frame key public issues in a way that is beneficial politically, ignoring factual evidence.
- *Partisan media and poor-quality journalism,* which is aimed at feeding echo chambers, by using highly divisive language and partisan reporting, often overlooking factual inaccuracies.
- *Polarised crowds* created through personal selection of content and extrapolated by algorithmic decision-making, which are characterised by biased content sharing and the creation of hyper-partisan groups.
- *Technological particularities* of advertising algorithms and the business model of social platforms, which can contribute to the promotion of online misinformation through search engine optimisation, personalised social feeds and the monetisation of micro-targeted advertising.

Online misinformation and disinformation are not limited to Facebook and Twitter, but affect all social media platforms and even mobile applications, with the most prominent ones being YouTube, Reddit, 4Chan, 8Chan, WhatsApp, Discord and Telegram (EPRS 2019b). The logic of the disinformation lifecycle is built around a self-reinforcing dynamic, whereby the creation and propagation of disinformation is supported through intentional amplification strategies. Successful disinformation campaigns tend to build on the emotive power of stories and images that have the capacity to invoke an emotional response in readers and boost online engagement. Disinformation campaigns often aim to harness the power of a network of websites that post similar distortive content to reinforce each other and enhance credibility. The impact of disinformation is ensured by its 'shareability factor' on social media, meaning that the content by itself has the ability to become trending due to its sensationalist or emotionally charged nature. Such targeted disinformation news pieces typically play on social divisions, such as political or religious beliefs and include digital elements that increase visibility and engagement through the use of memes, false images, false footage and misleading content (ibid.).

Along with genuine propagation, artificial amplification and spread of disinformation through fake profiles and groups also play a crucial role in heightening perceived importance. Artificial propagation of content can include the use of bots, trolls, sockpuppets or even simple targeted advertisements (Bastos – Mercea 2018). *Bots* are automatic posting protocols that scrape data from internet sources and post them via social media platforms to artificially inflate the popularity of certain content. *Trolls* are (semi-automated) supervised accounts, commonly understood as hostile, malign actors on social media, who promote extremist opinions, disseminate fake news or distort conversations. *Sockpuppets* are fictitious online identities used to manipulate public opinion through deception (ibid.). The wide spectrum of coordinated inauthentic behaviour on social platforms serves the purpose of steering and shaping public conversation in a desired way. *Astroturfing*, in particular, is a technique to mimic grass-roots initiatives in online communities to create the appearance of a genuine group of people who provide credibility to a certain cause. Such fake groups are used to lure unsuspecting users, who will be presented information that purposefully distort facts to fit specific narratives, display a biased view of events or even express a specific call to action (Kovic et al. 2018).

Disinformation and strategic narratives in the V4 region

Successful disinformation campaigns are often targeted at existing societal grievances and fissures to create discord among the members of a group or society (Jankowicz 2020). Storytelling, based on narratives coloured by emotions, has great potential to incite certain group behaviour, create new social identities and drive polarisation (Rosůlek 2018). Miskimmon et. al. (2013) argue that the study of strategic narratives is necessary in the novel media environment to understand complexities of international politics. Discursive framing of local, regional and global occurrences can determine who gets to construct the *experience of international events* (ibid:103). Livingston et al. (2018) also argue that a strategic narratives framework is key to capturing the complexities and purposes of transnational struggles over meaning. The study of strategic narratives has been applied to wide-reaching topics from analysing public support for the deployment of military troops by national governments (Ringsmose – Børgesen 2011; Dimitriu – de Graaf 2016; Coticchia – De Simone 2016), mitigating the effects of climate change (Bushell et al. 2017; Bevan et al. 2020), construing the international system from emerging countries' perspective (van Noort 2017) and even in the realm of business, regarding how managers can construct future-oriented narratives for companies (Kaplan – Orlikowski 2014; Bonchek 2016).

Purposeful deception and disinformation campaigns in the international media space can be effective through the use of narratives, because engaged audiences become willing but unaware collaborators who help achieve fraudulent

campaigners' goals (Bastos – Mercea 2018). When analysing disinformation campaigns in the V4 region, we have decided to focus on recurring narratives and meta-narratives potentially emerging from individual disinformation news pieces in order to distil information that could be considered supportive of a coherent system of beliefs or a certain world view. We know that the Visegrád Group has managed to profile itself internationally as a significant collective actor, both through its individual member states being NATO and EU members and the group itself, as a region that holds increased geopolitical importance from a perspective of security, primarily in the energy sector and recently also in cyber security (Cabada – Waisová 2018). This gives reason to believe that the Visegrád Group and its member states could be worthy targets of disinformation campaigns aimed at manipulating public opinion. When seeking out inherent strategic narratives in disinformation news pieces targeted at the region, we relied on Miskimmon and others' (2013) definition on identifying constructed identity claims and articulated positions on specific issues that seek to shape perceptions and actions of domestic and international audiences.

Recent studies conducted on disinformation campaigns in the countries of the V4 region and beyond have used a similar framework when assessing the role of narratives communicated. Deverell et al. (2020) have conducted a comparative narrative analysis on how the news platform Sputnik narrated Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden between 2014 and 2019, and have found that Sputnik News utilised a mix of standard strategies and tailor-made narratives to destruct Nordic countries. They have been able to identify differences among how Sputnik narrated the countries of the region, with Sweden and Denmark being portrayed more negatively than Norway and Finland. They have concluded that the identified narratives served the purpose of dividing and weakening the Nordics and the EU, as well as undermining the international reputation of the countries involved. A Izak (2019) has focused on the presentation of the European Union in Slovak pro-Kremlin media, with the main objective of identifying basic narratives via qualitative discourse analysis, and has concluded that media manipulation regarding the image of the EU could be considered a tool in a broader scheme of hybrid warfare. Wenerski (2017) examined disinformation campaigns as a method of creating geopolitical influence by distorting public perception of people, events and even entire institutions such as the EU or the NATO. Wenerski argues that an alternative version of events at the Euromaidan, the war in Donbas and Syria has been created by disinformation sources that seek to destabilise the local political situation by supporting one political side and simultaneously discrediting the other. Kuczyńska-Zonik and Tatarenko (2019) have studied the problem of information security and propaganda in Central and Eastern European countries since 2000, and have concluded that information war in the CEE region is not directed toward the countries of the region but rather aims to weaken the West, especially the European Union.

Hinck et al. (2018) examined strategic narratives embedded in Russian broadcast and news media, by analysing 1016 broadcast and online news segments from 17 different sources representing governmental and official news sites, oppositional sites and independent news sources. They have found that narratives help construct Russian identity in building domestic cohesion while fending off criticisms by Western nations. Khaldarova (2016) has concluded that Russia employed strategic narratives to construct activities, themes and messages in a compelling story line during its conflict with Ukraine. She also identified differences in narratives on Russian television when broadcasted to domestic and foreign audiences.

Hypotheses

Based on the examined literature – especially Deverell et al. (2020), Hinck et al. (2018) and Khaldarova (2016) – our first hypothesis for the analysis was that among disinformation news pieces targeted at the Visegrád countries, we would be able to identify recurring topics, and that based on these key topics it would be possible to establish prevailing narratives and meta-narratives of disinformation campaigns targeted at the V4 region. A topic would be considered *recurring* based on its relative frequency of mentions and its overarching presence in various or all four datasets. Our second hypothesis was that if so – similarly to Izak (2019), Kuczyńska-Zonik and Tatarenko (2019) and Wenerski (2017) – we would be able to structure those narratives and meta-narratives into a coherent system that portrays an underlying logic or world view.

Data and methodology

In order to investigate potential disinformation campaigns directed at the V4 region, we have gathered and analysed close to one thousand individual disinformation news pieces from over 60 different sources collected from the EUvsDisinfo Database (EUvsDisinfo 2020a). This database is an open-source repository that has been created by and is under the curatorship of the EUvsDisinfo Project, established in 2015 by the European Union External Action Service's East StratCom Task Force. The East StratCom Task Force supports EU efforts at strengthening the media environment, particularly in the Eastern Partnership region of the Union, by publishing reports and analyses regarding disinformation trends affecting the European Union and its Member States (EEAS 2018). The EUvsDisinfo Project has the core objective of exposing disinformation narratives and media manipulation, with special focus on messages in the international information space that are identified as 'providing a partial, distorted, or false depiction of reality' (EUvsDisinfo 2020b). Although the aim of the EUvsDisinfo Project is to increase public awareness particularly around

misleading content that could be classified as disseminating pro-Kremlin disinformation narratives, it is important to note that their selection of news pieces 'does not imply, that a given news outlet is linked to the Kremlin or editorially pro-Kremlin or that it has intentionally sought to disinform' (ibid.). Within the scope of our analysis, we have accepted the classification used by the EUvsDisinfo Database in determining whether a certain news piece contained disinformation, and have not performed further evaluation regarding the accuracy of claims presented in the articles.[1]

The EUvsDisinfo Database (EUvsDisinfo 2020a) is compiled through media monitoring performed in 15 different languages and is updated on a weekly basis. At the time of the retrieval of the data[2], the Database contained more than 10,000 pieces of individual news items, with 943 news pieces that originally appeared in one of the V4 languages. The collection included 458 Czech, 285 Polish, 160 Hungarian and 40 Slovak language articles that appeared between January of 2015 and November of 2020, which we have retrieved and saved for the purpose of our analysis. The news pieces were originally compiled from more than 60 different online sources (predominantly news sites and blogs), with the majority of the articles originating from Sputnik News Czech Republic, American European News (Czech Republic), Sputnik News Poland, News Front Hungary and Zem & Vek (Slovakia). The rationale behind selecting news pieces that first appeared in one of the V4 languages was to identify pieces of disinformation that were specifically targeted at the internet users of the V4 countries. Although there are limitations to that assumption, as news pieces published in other widely spoken second languages in the region – for example English or German – could also be targeted towards V4 countries, it is a reasonable assumption to part from that those news pieces that were originally published in one of the four languages were the ones that have been specifically directed towards V4 readers. By retrieving the 943 news items, we have created our own database, which contained the publication date of the articles, the original language of publication, the titles of the articles, the URL or place of publication and the summary of the contents of each news item. Both the titles of the articles and

1 The EUvsDisinfo Database is compiled through professional systematic media monitoring services, covering different channels of communication and a wide array of news outlets, particularly but not exclusively focusing on sources that are external to the EU and might spread key pro-Kremlin messages. In accordance with the EU Code of Practice on Disinformation (EC 2016), disinformation is defined as verifiably false or misleading information that is created, presented and disseminated for economic gain or to intentionally deceive the public. Verifying the falseness of information listed in the database is performed on a case-by-case basis, in which the editors of the database include a 'disproofs' section to each news item that explains the components that make a certain claim disinformation, using publicly available official documents and statements, academic reports and studies, findings of fact-checkers and reporting of international media. To ensure provability, links are provided to the original disinformation messages and their archived versions (EUvsDisinfo 2020c).

2 The data was retrieved between the 5th and 17th of November from the EUvsDisinfo (2020a) online database.

the summary of contents were provided in English language in the repository, which we have used for the purpose of our analysis.

In order to perform content analysis on such a large amount of natural language data, we have used a Natural Language Processing (NLP) algorithm[3] to extract information and categorise recurring topics within the individual news pieces. The use of NLP algorithms in (political) discourse analysis and specifically misinformation campaigns or 'fake news' is a field within social sciences that has been gaining increased attention in recent years. Zhou et al. (2019) have found that the explosive growth of fake news and its erosive effect on democracy make the study of misinformation an interdisciplinary topic, which requires joint expertise in computer and information science, political science, journalism, social science, psychology and economics. They have approached the problem from the perspective of news content and information in social networks, techniques in data mining, machine learning, natural language processing, information retrieval and social search to devise a holistic and automatic tool for the detection of fake news. Ibrishimova and Li (2020) have likewise used a framework for fake news detection based on a machine learning model to define and automate the detection process of fake news. Díaz-García et al. (2020) have presented a solution based on Text Mining that identified text patterns related to Twitter tweets that refer to fake news, using a pre-labelled dataset of fake and real tweets during the United States presidential election of 2016. Oshikawa et al. (2018) have highlighted the importance of NLP solutions for fake news detection, notwithstanding limitations and challenges involved, given the massive amount of web content produced daily. Farrell (2019) has utilised natural language processing and approximate string matching on a large collection of data to examine the relationship between the large-scale climate misinformation movement and philanthropy. Rashkin et al. (2017) have compared the language of real news with that of satire, hoaxes and propaganda to find linguistic characteristics of untrustworthy text using computational linguistics. Aletras et al. (2016) have built a predictive model based on natural language processing and machine learning to unveil patterns driving judicial decisions in the European Court of Human Rights cases, based solely on textual content.

After examining analytical methods utilised in the cited literature, we decided to perform a text mining exercise on our database containing all 943 news items. We instructed the NLP algorithm to return the individual frequency of mentions of recurring topics and their relationship structure, based on co-mentions. We performed this exercise, both on an overall V4 and an individual country-level,

3 The NLP solution used for our analysis is a proprietary algorithm designed by Neticle Plc. with unique language capabilities to understand text data with human-level precision. More information on the NLP solution is available at the Zurvey.io online platform.

for the datasets of the four languages. The frequency analysis method helped us unify insights and uncover tendencies and outliers in the datasets. To optimise search results, we manually incorporated theme-specific expressions and keywords into the NLP algorithm, and created custom queries to search for specific themes within the textual data. We used data-labelling connected to the custom queries to establish categories among the recurring topics, to group them into distinct subject matters and compare their relative frequency among the datasets of the four countries. Some custom queries required only a few keywords to maximise search accuracy (e.g., in the case of a renowned person's name), while some other themes appeared in the news articles in various and often imprecise contexts. In these cases, relevant expressions had to be collected and incorporated into the NLP algorithm manually, as mentioned above.

Table 1: Categories and custom queries created for the algorithmic analysis

Data labels	Custom queries (examples)	Keywords / Context for custom query (examples)
Person	Vladimir Putin	Putin
	Donald Trump	Trump
	Angela Merkel	Merkel
Country	Russian Federation	Russia, Moscow, Kremlin
	United States	United States, The US, USA, Washington, America, White House
	Germany	Germany, Berlin
Geographic location	Eastern Ukraine and Crimea	Eastern Ukraine, Donetsk, Donbass, Luhansk, Crimea, Crimean
	Nagorno-Karabakh	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh, Nagorno
Concept	Information War	disinformation, fake news, information war, hybrid war, propaganda, fake news, hybrid threat
	Gas Market	gas, pipeline, Nord Stream, LNG, energy, Gazprom
Organisation	EU	EU, Schengen, EP, Brussels, European Council, European Parliament, European Union, Council of Europe
	Deep State	deep state, global capital, shadow state, shadow government
	CIA	CIA, Central Intelligence Agency, American Intelligence Agency, American foreign intelligence
Event	MH17	MH17, Boeing, Crash, MH-17
	Brexit	Brexit
Ideology, Belief	Russophobia	anti-Russian, Russophobia, anti-Russia, against Russia, against Slavs, anti-Slav, war with Russia
	Bolshevism	Bolshevism, Bolshevik

Source: Own elaboration

As seen in Table 1., we have ordered the queries into seven main categories according to their context of use within the articles. The defined categories were: Person; Country; Geographic location; Concept; Organisation; Event; and Ideology, Belief. We must highlight that the categorisation of themes and keywords used for the custom queries within the scope of this study have been established exclusively based on their fit with the original language used in the articles, in order to optimise search results and uncover their frequency of mentions. Accordingly, categories and keywords used do not represent a statement of value or opinion in any way, but merely serve analytical purposes. The context of certain expressions and synonyms used within the articles predefined how these same expressions could be identified algorithmically within the analysed texts. For example, countries tended to be represented as individual actors, and as such, were often referred to by their capital city (e.g., 'Berlin' in order to denote Germany) or iconic place (e.g., 'White House' to refer to the United States). Similarly, geographic locations (e.g., Europe) were often used interchangeably with an acting organisation (e.g., the European Union). In order to resolve this inconsistency, we created two separate categories: 'Country' and 'Geographic location'. In the former, we listed themes that referred to countries as *actors* in the international arena, while in the latter we compiled *locations* where particular events have taken place. 'Organisation' by itself is a dual category, as the articles tended to refer to both legitimate international organisations, such as NATO and unclear actors such as the 'Deep State' in an equally axiomatic way. Therefore, in order to maintain the logic of the analysis, we had to include these qualitatively different concepts under the same category, as an organisation or group of people independently acting within the international space. In certain cases, we had to accept loose wording among synonyms for the queries to find relevant mentions in the text, as, for example, the European Union as an acting entity has been referred to in the articles in various ways, from 'Schengen' to 'Brussels' and 'EP'; of course, these denominations technically cannot be considered correct terms for representing the EU; however, from specific textual contexts, their intended meaning was clear. Such ambiguities in wording within the queries performed – some of which have also been listed above – are entirely attributed to using wording from the articles for the sake of finding relevant mentions within the data. Certain categorisations may seem arbitrary as global events, such as the Cold War in specific contexts could also be considered a concept rather than an event (e.g., 'Cold War logic'). Conversely, Crimea, primarily a geographic location, could be paraphrased as an event (e.g., 'the Crimean crisis'). Perhaps the most controversial ones are the themes within the 'Ideology, Belief' category as they include both religious beliefs (e.g., Islam), sentiments (e.g., Russophobia) and political ideologies (e.g., 'Nazism') that are difficult to delineate precisely. It is important to note that the reason for creating a categorisation of themes was primarily to be able

to perform comparative analysis on their frequency of mention, and uncover hidden trends within and between datasets. For this purpose, we have decided to use the predominant textual contexts of themes as they originally appeared in the articles, without evaluating other possible interpretations of wordings that were not relevant for the scope of our analysis.

Results and discussion

To establish recurring narratives and uncover outliers among the results returned by the NLP algorithm, we first looked at the distribution and frequency of mentions of the seven categories. We found that the category *Country* among the seven main categories showed overwhelming frequency both on a V4 average and an individual country level. On an overall V4 level, news items featuring countries made up 79% of the selection, showing a strong bias towards narratives that depict countries as main actors in the international arena and personifying nation states as entities that have their own will and act on their own motivation. The second category in terms of frequency on a V4 level was *Organisation*, with 37% of mentions, followed by *Concept* with 30%, *Geographic location* at 26%, *Ideologies and Beliefs* at 22%, *Person* at 15% and *Event* at 14%. Please note that the sum of individual category frequencies exceeds one hundred percent, as naturally there were co-mentions in the text among the different categories. By contrasting the frequency of mentions of the different categories among the four datasets, we were able to identify where we should look for discrepancies, as an excess or lack of mentions of a certain topic. Based on the outliers in data, we could identify both common themes and country-specific differences regarding narratives unfolding from the articles. We ordered our investigation around narratives pertinent to the seven main categories, moving from the most significant category in terms of frequency of mentions, which was *Country*, to the least cited one, *Event*.

News articles corresponding to the *Country* category made up 73–76% of the selection for Hungarian, Czech and Slovak language items respectively, while 92% of Polish language articles contained country-related mentions. The distribution of specific countries mentioned within the different datasets showed some commonalities but also considerable differences. Among country mentions for all V4 countries, we found both Russia and the United States in the top-three of countries cited for every data set, with numerous co-mentions of the two countries. Narratives concerning Russia showed significant commonalities in the four countries. The predominant narrative was not regarding Russia's strength or grandeur but rather depicting Russia as a victim of Russophobia and unfounded aggression originating both from its western neighbouring countries, and, most importantly, directed from the United States. We found that the majority of news articles described the deterioration of relations

Table 2: Frequency of mentions of the seven main categories on an individual country and V4 average level

Category	Polish language (%)	Hungarian language (%)	Slovak language (%)	Czech language (%)	V4 average (%)
Country	92	74	75	73	**79**
Organisation	29	36	50	41	**37**
Concept	21	33	20	36	**30**
Geographic location	22	37	15	26	**26**
Ideology, Belief	30	17	23	19	**22**
Person	12	13	8	19	**15**
Event	27	12	3	9	**14**

Source: Own elaboration

between Russia and the US, the EU, Poland, the Baltic States and Ukraine. The articles were mostly concerned with speculative American interests in reinstating Cold War-like circumstances, where Russia would become economically, politically and ideologically isolated from the West. The underlying argument was two-fold: both economic interests and ideological animosity between the two powers were identified. The mentioned economic interests involved European defence industry purchases from US suppliers and the promotion of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) imported to Europe from the United States. According to the identified narrative, this entails pushing Russia out of the European gas market and obstructing the Nord Stream 2 project, a system of offshore natural gas pipelines connecting Russia with Germany. The ideological hostility, as stated by the news pieces, manifests itself in attempts to defame Russia by fuelling anti-Russian sentiment through disseminating fake information.

The main focus of supposed western disinformation campaigns against Russia involved the Skripal and Navalny cases, insinuating Russian involvement in the United States presidential elections and *re-writing* or *falsifying* Second World War history in a way that depicts Russia as an aggressor. Narratives identified from the articles concerning Russia were overarching for all V4 countries; however, differences could be found in the frequency of mentions among them on a country-to-country basis. For example, the narrative regarding the *falsification of WWII history* was particularly strong among Polish language articles, where more than 50 articles of the 285 analysed occurred with such mentions, compared to a total of 8 articles in the other three languages combined. The articles claimed that the *liberation* of Poland by the Red Army is being increasingly narrated as an *invasion* by contemporary Polish politicians who actively

serve US interests. Furthermore, the articles stated that Red Army monuments in Poland were at threat of being vandalised or destroyed as a sign of growing Russophobia in the country. Comparatively, in the Hungarian language articles concerning Russia, country-specific emphasis was on the instances of Ukrainian aggression towards Russia and the Navalny case, as a theoretically CIA-led operation to sabotage Russian access to the European gas market through the provocation of economic sanctions. Czech and Slovak language articles frequently featured alleged FBI and CIA involvement in manipulating local media to spread anti-Russian sentiment with particular focus on the Skripal case.

Examining the articles mentioning the United States, we were also able to uncover a consistent geopolitical strategy narrative present in all four datasets. To a varying degree, the articles conveyed that the United States is gradually preparing to engage in economic warfare or even armed conflict with the Russian Federation in order to eliminate its rival and eventually gain access to Russia's natural resources. The United States, theoretically, is increasing its political influence, secret service operations and military presence in Europe, particularly in the Eastern and Baltic States. According to the related narrative, the US is actively supporting the creation of a North-South belt of federal states between Germany and the Russian Federation, which would be both anti-Russian and Eurosceptic. This would divide spheres of influence between the West and the East, and restrict both the expansion of Russia and the creation of a strong and united Europe. The tools for achieving this goal, according to the news pieces, range from underground operations of destabilising Post-Soviet territories, for instance by supporting the protests in Belarus or provoking conflicts such as the Ukrainian Maidan and the Nagorno-crisis, to performing false-flag operations, including the Skripal and Navalny cases, and even the Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 (MH17) disaster over Ukraine.

The narrative concerning the United States, claims that according to the American national security strategy, there exists no alternative to the leading role of the US globally, and therefore a multipolar world order shall not emerge. Therefore, the US needs to defend its interests militarily around the globe and cause *directed chaos* in a number of hot spots worldwide, whenever US supremacy gets questioned. The idea of a North-South cooperation among countries in Central Europe is, of course, nothing new under the sun. The current Three Seas Initiative (TSI), which brings together 12 states across Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans in the area between the Black, Baltic and Adriatic Seas can be seen as the modern embodiment of the pre-WWII concept of Międzymorze (Intermarium) introduced by Józef Piłsudski in the interwar period (Gorka 2018). However, the articles suggest that recent American support for the TSI could be key to transforming Euro-Atlantic relations. The construction of the Via Carpathia North-South highway and the creation of Liquefied Natural Gas infrastructure, with sea terminals in Poland and Croatia

connected via pipeline, could advance American interests in the region while hindering Russia's influence. Within the grand scheme of creating a federal group of Central European states to counter Russian power and simultaneously weaken the EU, Poland is portrayed as a *vanguard of American interests*, which is why Poland's leadership role in the TSI project is crucial from an American standpoint, according to the news pieces.

This brings us to the rationale behind why country-related mentions were so overrepresented in the case of Polish language articles. The excess of country mentions – more than 20% difference compared to other V4 countries – in the case of Polish language articles was largely a result of mentions concerning Poland itself. Most of the narratives we have identified fed into previously listed topics; however, they occurred with a higher frequency, and they focused on Poland's role as a *vessel for US interests* in Europe and the country's strategic position in a system of *Post-Atlantism* or *Neo-Atlantism*. Poland's intended role within the geopolitical meta-narrative would entail the obstruction of Russian--European energy cooperation. There were several mentions of assumed Russophobia among the Polish political elite and the intentional *falsification of WWII history*, along with the *war on (Red Army) monuments*. The articles showed particular concern regarding Poland's role in the Belarusian protests, stating that Polish political elites try to interfere with Belarusian domestic affairs, supporting the Belarusian opposition in order to extend Poland's sphere of influence and destabilise the post-Soviet region. Another segment of Polish language articles introduced a different narrative which we have not found in the other datasets. This line of narrative stated that Polish nationals were increasingly dissatisfied with their own country's leadership due to economic problems, and that recent pro-choice demonstrations in Poland had been, in reality, anti-government protests, exposing growing political discontent among Polish citizens. Articles concerning Poland that originally appeared in the Polish language made up 60% of the respective dataset, compared to only 21% of articles on the Czech Republic that appeared in the Czech language, 13% on Slovakia in Slovakian and merely 3% on Hungary in Hungarian. Regarding the latter three, common recurring narratives included threats posed at the countries by the European migration crisis and foreign (Western) secret service operations, as well as the oppression and economic exploitation of the states in the *second tier of Europe* by *Brussels*, but we have not identified anti-government narratives as in the case of Poland. We have, however, identified a unique same--language country discourse concerning the doubted independence of Czech media from foreign influence.

A further instance of overrepresentation in the frequency of mentions of a specific country was the case of articles on Ukraine in the Hungarian language news. More than one third of the Hungarian dataset contained mentions on Ukraine, making it the number one country cited in the dataset (before even

the United States and Russia, with 32% and 28% of mentions respectively). In comparison, only 17% of Polish, 14% of Czech and 5% of Slovak language articles contained news on Ukraine. Common narratives for the four countries included the hypothesised role of the United States in organising the Euromaidan, a wave of demonstrations in Ukraine which began in Maidan Nezalezhnosti (Independence Square) in Kyiv, later on followed by the Crimean crisis. The supposed rationale of the US was the provocation of Russian involvement in the Crimean crisis and ultimately the incitement of economic sanctions against Russia as well as nurturing Russophobia in neighbouring countries. The MH17 disaster was also linked as a planned incident to *punish* the Russian Federation for the annexation of Crimea. In both the Hungarian and Czech language news, the Nagorno-crisis has been connected to Ukraine as well, with the alleged support of Kyiv to Azerbaijan during the conflict. It was described as a gesture to Turkey, an ally of Azerbaijan, for opposing the Russian annexation of Crimea. In the Hungarian language news specifically, we found mentions of adverse economic and living circumstances in Transcarpathia – the bordering Ukrainian region with a significant Hungarian ethnic minority – as well as the envisioned disintegration of Ukraine and the annexation of its territories to neighbouring countries.

The second most frequently mentioned category on a V4 level was *Organisation*, with 50% of mentions in Slovak language articles, 41% for Czech, 36% for Hungarian and 29% for Polish. The top two organisations mentioned for all four datasets were the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The EU was mentioned in 20% of Slovakian, 18% of Czech, 14% of Polish and 13% of Hungarian language articles. Common V4 narratives regarding the EU included the suspected manifestation of vested American interests behind the EU instituting sanctions against Russia – and particularly the Russian gas business – as well as an unrealistic fear of Russia stemming from the leaders of the European Union. It has been stated multiple times in the articles that the EU is not a democratic institution but a *club led by Germany* or *Berlin ruling the continent*, always in accordance with US interests. Brussels' role in *forcing* and *organising* migration to the continent has also been a common V4 narrative as well as the *exploitation* of Eastern European countries by old member states and the intentional conservation of a *two-speed Europe*, which is economically unbeneficial for newer members and weakens the integrity of Central Eastern Europe. The EU was named an *imperialistic regime* that would soon dissolve, as showcased by its *inability* to deal with the Coronavirus epidemic. Country specific narratives regarding the EU were found in the case of Poland and Hungary. In Polish language articles, we found references of Poland losing its sovereignty to the European Union and claims that recent Polish protests had been supported by Brussels in order to remove the conservative political elite, who refused to act in line with United States interests. Hungarian language

articles contained mentions of EU leaders supporting Ukrainian aggression towards Russia.

Mentions of the NATO were present in 18% of Slovakian, 11% of Polish, 10% of Czech and 9% of Hungarian articles, which presented a consistent narrative overarching all four datasets. NATO was described as a *Cold War relic* that is a *tool for US interventions* around the globe and an *ally of the American military-industrial complex*. NATO supposedly continues to see an enemy in Russia and, therefore, is preparing for war at Russia's western borders by deploying military bases and equipment in Central Europe and the Baltics as well as expanding its operations to countries such as Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, despite earlier consensuses. Central European states, according to the narrative, serve as *stationary aircraft carriers of NATO* and shall be involved in anti-Russian provocation. NATO, therefore, is a threat to the national security of Central European states, as according to the articles, these countries would be sacrificed by Western powers in a (nuclear) confrontation with Russia.

The third most important organisation in terms of frequency of mentions was the Islamic State (ISIS), which has been cited in 13% of Slovakian, 8% of Hungarian and 5% of Czech language articles. Interestingly, only 1% of Polish articles cited ISIS. We could not identify a cohesive narrative, except for the United States being behind the creation or supporting the Islamic State. However, the alleged reasons for doing so varied from hindering the peace process in Syria in order to destabilise the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and trying to destroy Europe by fuelling the migration crisis, to buying cheap oil from ISIS, with Turkey and the NATO acting as intermediaries. Further organisations mentioned in the articles with an average of 1–4% frequency included the CIA, the FBI, 'the West', 'NGOs', the United Nations, the White Helmets and the 'Deep State'. These organisations did not carry a particular narrative, but were rather mentioned in connection to previously described discourses, as a reinforcement regarding theories on alleged underground operations.

The category *Concept* has been established to be able to identify narratives around phenomena that cannot be linked to one particular event, specific country or geography, but hold significant importance in constituting narratives. Such concepts have been mentioned in 36% of Czech, 33% of Hungarian, 21% of Polish and 20% of Slovak language articles. 'Terror' has been the number one concept for the Hungarian, Slovak and Czech language datasets, with a relatively consistent distribution of mentions, at 16%, 15% and 11% respectively. In Polish language articles, terror was not among the top three concepts, with merely 1% of mentions. The prevailing narrative around 'terror' in all datasets concerned the United States allegedly managing global terrorism, and recent terrorist attacks in Europe being staged. The supporting arguments and rationale for the account remain unclear, except for the supposed desire of the US to exercise power around the globe and further its geopolitical strategies. The

Hungarian dataset, in particular, contained a number of mentions on 'terror' in the context of Ukraine. However, we could not establish a specific narrative in this case, as the term 'terror' and 'terrorist' have been used to describe both a pejorative propaganda term allegedly used by the Ukrainian leadership to label pro-Russian separatists, as well as to denote the Ukrainian regime as a form of *state terrorism* itself. Juxtaposing the different meanings, we have concluded that the mentions on 'terror' in the context of Ukraine in Hungarian language articles, albeit numerous, were mostly used as a tool to express offensive language and no clear narrative could be established from it.

'Migration' was mentioned in 11% of Hungarian and 10% of Czech news pieces, making it the second most frequently cited concept in the two languages, while we have found only one pertinent article in the Polish and Slovakian datasets. The focus was on the European migration crisis, which was described as a planned operation of the United States in order to undermine the European Union, transform its demographics and eventually destroy European culture. The articles contained references to the economic burden of supporting refugees, the prospects of refugee family reunification and deteriorating crime rates in Western Europe. In comparison, the second most frequently cited concept in Polish and Slovak language articles was 'information war', with 4% and 5% of mentions respectively, mainly referring to anti-Russian propaganda and attempted falsification of WWII history performed by the 'the West'. Distinctively, the number one concept for Polish language articles was 'gas' with 5% of mentions, which was not a frequently cited concept in other datasets. The emphasis again was on Poland's strategic position in advancing American economic interests and pushing Russia out of the European gas market, feeding into previously mentioned narratives. The Skripal and Navalny cases were linked to the matter, as well as claimed CIA involvement in them. 'Coup d'état' was another mutual theme, with 2–4% of mentions, ranking third or fourth place among concepts in Czech, Polish and Hungarian news. The articles identified the United States as the suspected organiser behind the recent upheavals in Ukraine, Turkey, Syria and the Greek coup of 1967 as well as a planned take-over of power in the Czech Republic and Armenia.

Within the *Geographical location* category, we have gathered localities that do not belong to the *Country* category because they tend to denote a specific location where events have taken place, rather than representing an acting entity. Geographical locations have been mentioned in 37% of Hungarian, 26% of Czech, 22% of Polish and 15% of Slovakian articles. The top three locations mentioned in the four datasets were Europe; Eastern Ukraine and Crimea; and the Middle East. The narratives around 'Europe' included both narratives on the European Union and on Europe's geopolitical situation (vis-à-vis the United States) that have already been described above. The term 'Europe' has been used rather freely in the articles to refer to both the continent, the people of Europe

and the European Union, which is why mentions of 'Europe' as a geographic location is difficult to strictly outline.

The Middle East was cited in a relatively high percentage of Hungarian and Czech language articles, with 14% and 11% of mentions respectively, while it was quoted in only 5% of Slovakian and 1% of Polish language articles. Narratives on the Middle East were consistent among datasets. The American involvement in the Syrian civil war was portrayed as an instance of *directed chaos*, which is supposed to be a tool to justify the presence of the United States as *world police* in the region. Whereas, according to the articles, it is indeed the US who is behind supporting terrorists in the Middle East with the help of the White Helmets, a volunteer organisation of Syrian civil defence. It was stated that while Russia propagates peace, American interests lie in maintaining an *impenetrable zone of conflict* even at the price of risking the outbreak of a third world war. We found a unique line of narrative in Czech language articles that stated that the European Union is preparing the establishment of a *European Empire*, which would spread to North-Africa and the Middle East, which is why European leaders are supposedly facilitating migration to Europe from countries in the region.

References to Eastern Ukraine and Crimea were found in 15% of Hungarian, 5% Polish and 4% of Czech news pieces, while no relevant mentions were identified in Slovakian articles. Common narratives emphasised the democratic legitimacy of the 2014 Crimean status referendum, assessing the local population's political will whether Crimea should join the Russian Federation as a federal subject. It was also expressed that ever since its annexation to Russia, Crimea supposedly enjoyed greater infrastructural and economic development than the rest of Ukraine, and could provide better quality of life for its citizens. This piece of information was presented as evidence regarding the assumption that sanctions against Russia due to the Crimean Crisis had been purely based on excuses. In Czech and Hungarian language news, we found mentions of supposed groundworks of planned NATO bases in the Donbass region of Ukraine, specifically in Sievierodonetsk and Mariupol, with the aim of threatening Crimea and the Russian Federation itself. In Hungarian articles, Crimean events were linked to the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict, with an expected Ukrainian-Turkish alliance against Russia and the support of the Crimean Tatar autonomist ethnic minority by Turkey.

The category *Ideologies and Beliefs* has been established jointly, as the articles convoked ideological and religious beliefs in similar contexts. They were presented as governing world views that can explain certain events and underlying motivations both in domestic affairs and international relations. Ideologies and religions were mentioned in 30% of Polish, 23% of Slovakian, 19% of Czech and 17% percent of Hungarian articles. 'Russophobia' came up as the most often cited ideology in Polish, Czech and Hungarian language news with 18% and 6–6% of mentions respectively, while it reached second place in Slovakian

articles with 8% frequency. A sentiment of increasing Russophobia was cited in connection to a previously mentioned geopolitical meta-narrative of Neo- or Post-Atlantism, and the economic sanctions introduced against Russia after the Crimean Crisis. The media campaign against Russia concerning the Navalny case, as well as inferred censorship efforts of Russian news sites on American social media platforms were linked to anti-Russian attitudes as well. Russophobia was described as a form of xenophobia and intentional dehumanisation of a group of people because of their nationality. Russophobia was a very important meta-narrative in constituting the general world view expressed by the articles. It was connected to the falsification of WWII events, destruction of Red Army monuments, and the retrospective portrayal of Russia as an aggressor in the Second World War. Russophobia, along these lines, was linked to Nazism, the second most cited ideology with 10% of mentions in Polish and Slovak language news and 4% percent frequency in Czech and Hungarian articles. 'The West', the European Union and Ukraine were all labelled Fascists or Nazis in their adversarial tendencies with Russia. Russophobia and Nazism were co-mentioned as two sides of the same coin.

In comparison, 'Islam', the third most frequent topic in the category was featured only in 5% of Slovakian, 3% of Hungarian and Czech and 1% of Polish language articles. It was referred to in relation to the migration crisis, as a threat to European culture. Other ideologies mentioned included 'multicultural', 'open-society', 'gender', 'capitalist', 'democratic', 'socialist' and 'anti-establishment', albeit with a very low incidence. The gap in the frequency of mentions among Russophobia and Nazism contrasted with all other ideologies cited showcases where the dominant dividing lines lie according to the meta-narratives outlined by the news pieces.

Person-related narratives were featured with a noticeably lower frequency than narratives concerning nation states or organisations. This underlines the inherent geopolitical thinking behind notions unfolding from the narratives and meta-narratives uncovered above. The *Person* category reached 19% of mentions in Czech, 13% in Hungarian, 12% in Polish and 8% in Slovak language articles. Articles featuring renowned people tended not to carry specific storylines related to the persons quoted, but rather, individuals mentioned were linked to previous narratives and allocated to the righteous or sinister side of events, as an indication of their character, or more precisely of how they were intended to be portrayed. It is also interesting to note that those news pieces that were more openly citing conspiracy theory-like ideas were overrepresented in this category. In Czech, Hungarian and Polish articles, Vladimir Putin consistently ranked among the top people quoted, with 3–4% of mentions. The Russian president was described as someone whose main aim is to protect peace, while being under constant threat from foreign powers and secret services as well as a victim of bad publicity directed towards him from international media. Among

American politicians, we predominantly found mentions of Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and Donald Trump, albeit with a generally lower frequency of below 3%, and with no mentions in the Slovakian dataset. While all three politicians were linked to some extent to furthering American geopolitical strategies with potentially devious tools, President Trump was occasionally also portrayed as someone open to establishing friendlier relationships with Russia, though he is unfortunately controlled by the 'Deep State'. Polish president Andrzej Duda were mentioned uniquely in Polish language articles, with a comparable frequency of mentions to President Trump, at 2% within the respective dataset. President Duda was linked to Poland serving US and NATO interests in Europe. George Soros received a noticeable share of mentions in Slovakian, Hungarian and Czech news, with 5%, 3% and 2% respectively. Soros' name was brought up in relation to non-governmental organisation activities in Europe, reportedly supporting anti-establishment protests in Central Europe and managing organised migration. Angela Merkel received 1–3% of mentions across the four datasets, mostly referring to American geopolitical grand strategy in Europe. Alexei Navalny was mentioned in the Czech, Hungarian and Polish datasets with 1–2% frequency, in relation to the poisoning being faked with possible CIA involvement, in order to create an atmosphere of international distrust towards Russia.

Events or occurrences have been cited with the lowest frequency among all categories, with 27% of Polish, 12% of Hungarian, 9% Czech and only 3% of Slovakian articles. This tendency underlines the logic of unfolding meta-narratives that mainly focus on actors in the international arena and their general, rather static stances towards each other. This gives little attention to passing events and expresses a logic of Cold War-like frozen conflict, where animosity seems constant. Nevertheless, we have found some distinct tendencies among countries, with the Second World War as an event being overrepresented at 20% of mentions in Polish language news, compared to 1–3% in the other three datasets, and the MH17 disaster cited with a salient 9% frequency in Hungarian articles, compared to 0–1% in other languages. Both of these themes respectively account for the higher share of events mentioned in Polish and Hungarian language news. A common occurrence brought up in the Polish, Czech and Hungarian datasets, albeit with a fairly low frequency of 2–4%, was the Coronavirus epidemic. The relatively low rate of mentions is, of course, also due to the fact that references to the Coronavirus appeared only in 2020, while articles in the dataset include news pieces starting from 2015. Articles on the COVID-19 pandemic mostly focused on the *inability* of the European Union to deal with the epidemic that puts an end to *500 years of global domination of Europe*. The dissolution of the European Union was envisioned following the crisis caused by the pandemic. There were references to attempts in worldwide media to create bad publicity for the Sputnik V vaccine developed in Russia as well as

to undervalue international aid provided by Russia to other countries during the crisis. The creation of the Coronavirus itself has been occasionally linked to the United States, according to the narrative, as an attempt to defame China.

Narratives and Meta-narratives

By systematically examining the narrative structure outlined by the thematic analysis of the close to one thousand news pieces examined, using frequency analysis and mapping relationship structures among topics, we were able to uncover not only overarching narratives but also meta-narratives unfolding from the articles that were present in multiple datasets. Meta-narratives provide larger explanations to individual narratives and construct a big picture view of the world organised around questions concerning power relations, political order, ideological divisions, historical consciousness and cultural identity. They play an integrative role in structuring individual occurrences and socio-economic contexts into a universal pattern of understanding that can shape people's views and attribute meaning to their subjective experiences. As Jankowicz (2020) points out, the most successful narratives in disinformation campaigns are the ones that are grounded in 'truth' – whether objective facts or perceived realities of life – as they can effectively sow doubt, distrust and discontent in targeted groups of society. While country-specific narratives identified in the disinformation news pieces aimed at distinctive vulnerabilities, such as historical remembrance of WWII events in Poland, views on Ukrainian nationalism in Hungary or media independence in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, overarching meta-narratives sought to weaponize emotions exploiting fissures in general attitudes and cultural identity of V4 countries.

As described in Table 3., we have identified 5 meta-narratives that united 16 standalone narratives in an umbrella-like fashion that were reinforced by about 25 supporting discourses. The five meta-narratives identified were: (1) growing Russophobia in the West; (2) the preparation of a war against Russia by the US and NATO; (3) the United States seeking global hegemony; (4) the establishment of a system of Post-/Neo-Atlantism by dividing Europe; and (5) the envisioned collapse of the European Union. Meta-narratives used polarising framing to play on deep-rooted issues like V4 nations' preference for a strong NATO presence in the continent, the legacy of Soviet geopolitical dominance in Eastern Europe and its interplay with Euro-Atlantic relations, or the Visegrád countries' position on economic sanctions against Russia. We can also recognise emphasis on potential pain points around the economic centre-periphery relationship and balance of power among the Franco-German EU core and newer member states, as well as the debate on moving toward a less integrated Europe with stronger nation states and emerging regional alliances. Meta-narratives recognisably used these existing cultural-historical references as

Table 3.: Narratives, meta-narratives and supporting discourses identified from the thematic analysis

Meta-narratives	Narratives	Supporting discourses
GROWING RUSSOPHOBIA	• Falsification of WWII history events • Destruction of Red Army monuments • Disinformation campaigns directed by the US to defame Russia	• Anti-Russian sentiments growing in neighbouring states • Ukrainian involvement in Nagorno-crisis • Turkey supports Crimean Tatar autonomy • Czech media is being influenced by the CIA • Navalny and Skripal cases were staged
THE US AND THE NATO PREPARE FOR WAR WITH RUSSIA	• Crimean crisis was provoked intentionally • NATO bases being established in Central and Eastern Europe • Destabilisation of the CIS region	• Ukrainian Maidan organised by the CIA • Legitimacy of the Crimean referendum • Living conditions in Crimea have improved • MH17 disaster was a false flag operation • US wants to get hold of Russia's natural resources • Intentional creation of zone of conflict in the Middle East
AMERICAN GLOBAL HEGEMONY	• A multipolar world order cannot emerge • The US wants to keep Russia in isolation • The US wants to destroy Europe • The US wants to defame China	• The US manages global terrorism • Hot-spots of US intervention around the globe • The US organises coups against democratically elected governments • The US and the NATO buys oil from the ISIS • Organised migration supported by the US • Coronavirus invented by the US
POST- / NEO-ATLANTISM	• American support for the TSI project • Poland is a vanguard of American interests • Fight over access to the European gas market	• North-South belt of Central European States to divide the continent • Polish involvement in Belarusian affairs • Skripal and Navalny cases fabricated to uphold sanctions against Russia
THE EUROPEAN UNION IS DISMANTLING	• The EU is unable to deal with the COVID-crisis • Two-speed Europe • EU leaders support organised migration	• Brussels bureaucracy hinders member states • The EU is a club led by Germany • Economic exploitation of newer member states • Central European states loose sovereignty • Western culture is under attack

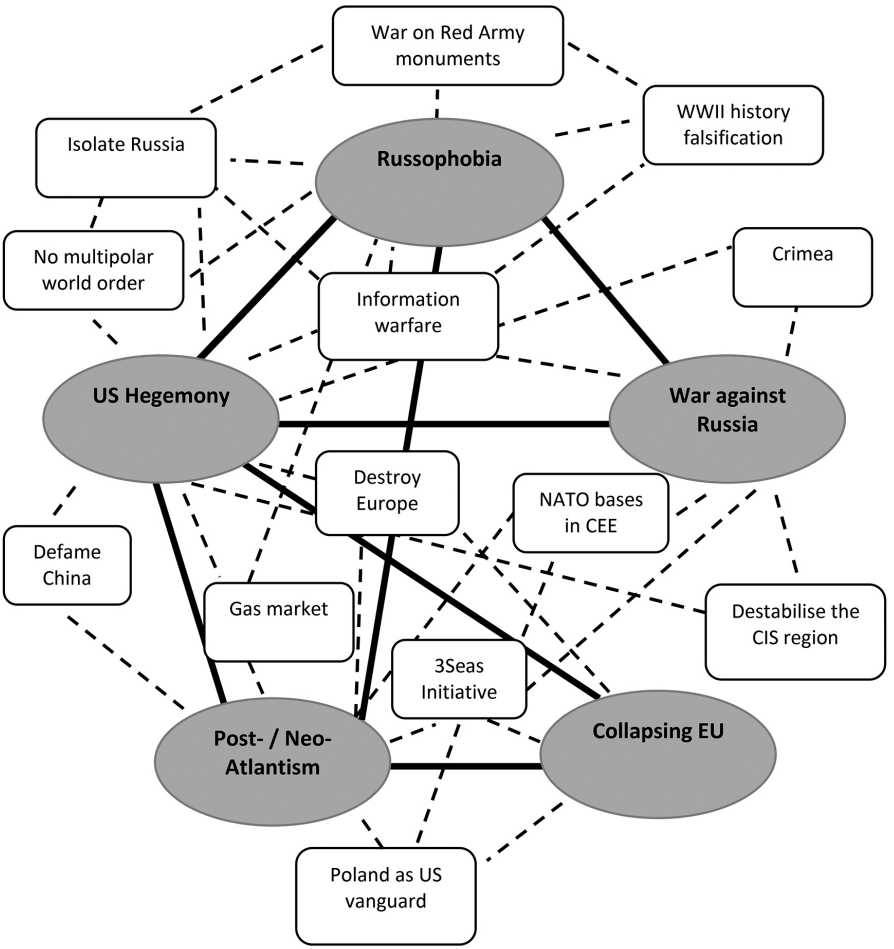
Source: Own elaboration

groundworks to communicate a grand scheme of affairs that reaches beyond the Central-European region. The five meta-narratives described a coherent system pertaining to a world view that follows a very much Cold War-like logic, with the long-standing ideological animosity between two great powers, the United States and the Russian Federation being the most important defining tendency in the current state of global affairs. All other 'circumstantial phenomena', such as the dismantling of the European Union, the war in the Middle East, the migration crisis, the Coronavirus epidemic essentially somehow play into the meta-narrative of a frozen but now reheating conflict, where everything happens for a reason that can be linked to the geopolitical motives and ideological convictions of great powers luring in the background.

According to the meta-narratives, the United States seeking global hegemony seems to be the root cause of Russophobia being fuelled in the West, that can serve as rationalisation for the intentional isolation of Russia, and in the longer--term war against Russia led by NATO. Meta-narratives point at a divide-and--conquer strategy employed by the US in the European continent, through the establishment of a Post-/Neo-Atlantist system that would inevitably entail the break-up of the European Union, and at the same time present an opportunity for the creation of an anti-Russian stronghold in Central and Eastern Europe. To illustrate the interplay among topics, we have generated a network displaying pro-Kremlin disinformation narratives affecting the V4 countries, which seeks to visualise the connections between the most important meta-narratives and narratives that create a system of mutually reinforcing storylines.

While we have no evidence to assume any coordination of efforts or clearly defined motivations behind narratives being communicated through possibly pro-Kremlin disinformation news sources in the V4 region, it calls for further investigation to uncover what benefits could be attributed to the spread of these particular narratives and meta-narratives in relation to the Visegrád Countries. Overall, the framing of events, even if it mostly employs a victim narrative (e.g., Russophobia), calls attention to Russia's grandeur as the sole true enemy of the most powerful country in the world, the United States. We could argue that it also seeks to plant seeds of discontent and suspicion among citizens of V4 countries, in some cases toward their own country's leadership (e.g., in the case of Poland), toward their neighbouring countries (e.g., in the case of Hungary and Ukraine) and in general toward the leadership, institutions and older member states of the European Union. Finally, it also questions the motives behind the grand strategy of the United States in the continent and the long-term faith of the Central European region as hypothetically devised by the US. To appreciate the significance of disinformation narratives being planted via computational propaganda, further research directions should focus on uncovering the actual effects that these narratives have on people's perceptions and attitudes in the V4 region, and how it might be possible to combat such effects.

Figure 1: Network of potential pro-Kremlin disinformation narratives in the V4 region



Source: Own elaboration

Conclusion

Selective exposure to news content facilitated by modern digital technologies has the potential to drive people toward more extreme attitudes and increase the polarisation in our societies (EPRS 2019a; Rosůlek 2018; Sunstein 2007). As automation and algorithms become more embedded in day-to-day life, we must make sure that we can maintain our capacity to establish a general consensus on questions pertinent to a healthy functioning of democracy (Sunstein

2007). Disinformation and purposeful deception work through the unwitting participation of individuals who readily accept and share content that seeks to influence based on instinctive emotions instead of rational arguments or scientific facts (Bastos – Mercea 2018). If we can identify tools of storytelling used to create powerful messages to incite certain group behaviour and aggravate existing societal grievances, perhaps we will be better equipped to protect ourselves from malevolent disinformation campaigns intentionally targeted to create discord (Jankowicz 2020; Rosůlek 2018). The Visegrád Group has managed to profile itself internationally as a significant collective actor (Cabada – Waisová 2018), and as such, should expect to become the target of disinformation campaigns aimed at manipulating public opinion. Within the scope of this study, we have employed a sophisticated research design on a large amount of textual data, using a natural language processing algorithm to examine the frequency and relationship between recurring topics in disinformation news pieces and identify overarching narratives and meta-narratives communicated through them. By analysing close to one thousand disinformation news pieces from more than 60 different online sources that originally appeared in the languages of the V4 countries, collected by the EUvsDisinfo database (2020a), we were able to identify consistent narratives and meta-narratives that feed into a coherent system of beliefs. We have uncovered 5 meta-narratives: (1) growing Russophobia in the West; (2) the preparation of a war against Russia by the US and NATO; (3) the United States seeking global hegemony; (4) the establishment of a system of Post-/Neo-Atlantism by dividing Europe; and (5) the envisioned collapse of the European Union. These meta-narratives were constructed through 16 standalone narratives and supported by around 25 individual discourses. While we cannot assume coordination or intentionality behind the narrative structure unfolding from the news pieces analysed, further research might be able to unveil the potential consequences of what could be understood as a possible endeavour to create discontent and suspicion among citizens of the V4 countries toward the current European political and economic system, particularly the European Union, and the stance of the United States and NATO in the continent. Information warfare is a powerful geopolitical tool that could negatively affect any Central European state or the European Union itself, and it remains a challenge to protect our societies from it. The evaluation of the effectiveness of such disinformation campaigns in transforming citizens' attitudes calls for further research, including how education plays a part in improving critical thinking and providing tools for people to recognise intentional disinformation patterns.

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Riders on the storm: the role of populism in the global crisis of democracy and in the functioning of electoral autocracies[1]

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We believe that it is important that populist parties, to the extent that they are inimical to democracy, should be revealed as such, treated accordingly and, if necessary, isolated from power. Indeed, it is one of the lessons democrats can learn from Schmitt that the proper identification of the enemy is an essential part of the art of politics.

Koen Abts and Stefan Rummens

Abstract: *It is my contention that* populism *could be an appropriate framework to describe, explain and connect the phenomena of* global crisis of democracy *and functioning of* electoral autocracies*. In order to substantiate this claim, with the method of literature review, I examine first the characteristics of these phenomena. Then I focus on the nature of the relationship between them, in particular on the complex system of new types of autocracies' stability, in which populism could play a crucial role. Populism, understood as* an *autocratic (re-)interpretation of democracy and representation, could be a particularly dangerous Trojan Horse for democracy. First and foremost, because its idea of a single, homogeneous and authentic people that can be legitimately represented only by the populist leader is a moralised form of antipluralism which is contrary to the pluralist approach of democracy (i.e. polyarchy). For precisely this reason, populism could play a key role in autocracies, especial in electoral autocracies which may use its core elements. Namely, the Manichean worldview, the image of a homogeneous peo-*

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ple, people-centrism and the autocratic notion of representation are very compatible with electoral autocracies, since these regimes hold general elections and their power is built largely upon the alleged will of the people. By using populism, it is possible for these regimes to camouflage and even legitimise their autocratic trends and exercise of power behind the formally multi-party but not fair elections and democratic façade. As a radical turn towards closed autocracies (without de facto multiparty elections) would be too expensive, electoral autocrats need manipulated multi-party elections and other plebiscite techniques that could serve as quasi-democratic legitimation. Because of this, they tend to use the political logic of populism which could transform political contestation to a life-and-death struggle and provides quasi-democratic legitimation and other important cognitive functions. Therefore, populist electoral autocracies*, as a paradigmatic type of* electoral autocracies*, could remain with us for a long time, giving more and more tasks to researchers, especially in the Central and Eastern European region.*

Keywords: ***democracy, autocracy, populism, representation, legitimacy***

Introduction

The aim of this study is to explore the phenomena of the global crisis of democracy, populism, and new types of autocracies, in particular regarding the nature of the relationship among them. I argue that the causes of emergence of these phenomena lie partly in the reciprocal reinforcing and mutually strengthening nature of the relationship among them. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the academic discourse on these phenomena roughly simultaneously emerged after 1989. The optimistic assumptions of transitology rapidly turned into scepticism about new democratic transitions and Fukuyama's (1992) thesis of the 'end of history'. Therefore, in the last few decades, most of the work in comparative politics, democracy theory and research on democratisation has approached more pessimistically the internal and external challenges of liberal democracy, as well as the emerging populism and the spread of new types of autocracies.

Firstly, in connection with the growing internal tensions in democracies, well-known authors have pointed out tendencies such as serious intransparency of democratic politics due to overly complex and intricate procedures (Canovan 2002; Reybrouck 2010, 2016), citizen passivity and political apathy with massive depolitisation (as *un*political democracy) (Rosanvallon 2008), and the diminished role of parties and decline of party democracy (Mair 2002, 2013). Liberal democracy has been strongly criticised for its post-political and institutional nature (Mouffe 1993; Ranciere 1999), why populism can be seen as a response to 'undemocratic liberalism' (Mudde – Rovira Kaltwasser 2017)

and to institutionally 'constrained democracy' and 'liberal technocracy' (Müller 2016). Similarly, seminal works focus on phenomena such as the growing personalisation, tabloidisation and mediatisation of politics, which has led to a significant erosion in citizens' perception of democracy's daily working. In short, the electoral game seems to be an empty image-struggle in a political theatre for many people (Manin 1994, 1997; Crouch 2004; Körösényi et al. 2020).

Secondly, in addition to internal tensions of democracy, among its external challenges, the focus is primarily on the contemporary process of autocratisation (Lührmann – Lindberg 2019) – understood as counter-wave in democratisation (Huntington 1991) – and its results, namely the rise in the number of hybrid regimes and electoral autocracies (Lührmann – Tannenberg – Lindberg 2018). Research on the changing nature of traditional (closed) autocracies and their stabilisation mechanisms has multiplied since the 1990s (Karl 1995; O'Donnell 1996; Zakaria 1997; Diamond 2002, 2019; Carothers 2002; Morlino 2009; Bogaards 2009; Levitsky – Way 2002, 2010; Schedler 2002, 2013; Cassani 2014; Foa 2018; Guriev – Treisman 2015, 2019). This extremely diffuse literature examines in particular the regime strategies for limiting political contestation and the lack of institutional 'forbearance' (self-restraint) (Levitsky – Ziblatt 2018), and more recently, much attention has also been paid to the issue of 'autocratic legitimacy' (Gerschewski 2018; Dukalskis – Gerschewski 2017; von Haldenwang 2017; von Soest – Grauvogel 2017; Debre – Morgenbesser 2017; Cassani 2017; Backes – Kailitz 2015).

Thirdly, it is telling that the literature on populism has also significantly increased in volume since the 1990s (e.g. Urbinati 1998, 2013; Canovan 1999, 2002; Mény – Surel 2002; Mudde 2004; Laclau 2005; Abts – Rummens 2007), and has become perhaps the most researched topic in political science in the last decade (e.g. Reybrouck 2010; Urbinati 2013; Mudde – Rovira Kaltwasser 2017; Moffitt – Tormey 2014; Moffitt 2016; Pappas 2014, 2018; Judis 2016; Müller 2016; Rovira Kaltwasser et al. 2017; de la Torre 2018). Although there is an open debate on what exactly populism means, most researchers agree that populism can be particularly dangerous for democracies, due to its anti-pluralist nature, and its moral, hence irrefutable claim to exclusive representation (Müller 2016). This can easily lead to a degree of extreme polarisation that can undermine the minimum consensus that is required for the functioning of democracy, and which may be compatible with autocratic tendencies, which is referred to as 'authoritarian populism' (Norris – Inglehart 2019, Bugaric – Kuhelj 2018, Bugaric 2019) or 'populist authoritarianism' (Butler 2018). In my opinion, this is precisely where the above-mentioned phenomena, namely challenges of contemporary democracies and the rise of electoral autocracies can be linked with the concept of populism.

In this paper, I argue that these phenomena are closely related to each other, and populism can be the link, and can provide an appropriate framework for

better understanding the global crisis of democracy, and the rise and functioning of electoral autocracies. In order to substantiate this claim, with the method of literature review, I examine first the characteristics of these phenomena. Then, I focus on the nature of the relationship between them, in particular with regard to the complex system of new types of autocracies' stability, in which, I think, populism plays a key role. Finally, in addition to summarising and drawing conclusions, I will address some possible areas of further research.

The waves of the storm

Global crisis of contemporary democracies

In the last few decades, many studies have been published on the multiplying challenges to the legitimacy of representative democracies. First and foremost, the critics are targeting the over-institutionalised, over-bureaucratised, and over-technocratised nature of democratic politics and procedures, which could be seen as a response to the terrible experiences of unbridled popular sovereignty in the pre-1945 world. In parallel with the growing dominance of institutions, there has been a significant blurring of the ideological and programmatic identities of mainstream parties, leading to a situation in which citizens see little, if any, difference between them and in which there are no real alternative political visions (Mair 2002; Mouffe 2018). Moreover, after 1989, democracy lost its arch-enemy with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and 'real existing democracies' are now being increasingly compared unfavourably to theoretical models. This fact, and the better educated and more emancipated citizens as a consequence of egalitarianism, mean that people today expect more from politicians and their political system in general (Mudde 2004).

The increasing international institutional complexity of the day-to-day politics erodes state sovereignty, which seems to blur the territorial boundaries of polities, and increases the inherent tension between two essential democratic principles, namely 'power emanates from the people' and 'power of nobody' (Canovan 2002; Lefort 1986). Similarly, in his seminal work, Rosanvallon (2008) argued that the institutional side of democracy alone is insufficient; hence, it should be complemented with institutionalised forms of democratic distrust, such as powers of oversight, forms of prevention and testing of judgments. These could create a *counter-democracy* which is not only able to complement traditional formal institutions, but also to extend their influence. However, it would require active citizenship with attitudes of watchfulness and criticism. Instead, liberal democracy is facing deep crises of legitimacy and declining citizens' confidence in its functioning (Manin 1997; Mair 2013), resulting in a build-up of frustration and so previous apathy and trust is turned into passion and distrust (Reybrouck 2016). These difficulties are reinforced by the fact that

there is a trade-off between transparency to ordinary citizens and institutions that allow them access to politics, a situation which can be exploited by populists who provide a solution to this problem with the promise of a combination of transparency and empowerment by themself (Canovan 2002). Similarly, the increasing institutional complexity reduces the visibility of decision-makers, hence it may prejudice accountability, to which the populist answer is questioning the whole institutional accountability (Papadopoulos 2002).

In addition, there is the issue of increasing political polarisation that can undermine citizens' and politicians' spirit of compromise and the unity of demos, hence, the very foundations of democracy. Extreme polarisation can kill democracies, since it can shake not only their institutional order switching them to military logic, but can also break the 'soft guardrails' of democracy, namely, norms of toleration and restraint. It means that 'partisan rivals become enemies, political competition descends into warfare, and our institutions turn into weapon', resulting in a 'system hovering constantly on the brink of crisis' (Levitsky – Ziblatt 2018: 212). In other words, extreme polarisation lets the genie out of the bottle by generating antagonistic and no-holds-barred conflicts from agonistic and ordinary conflicts, which is hardly compatible with democracy.

The global crisis of democracy is being further deepened by accelerating globalisation and neoliberalism, since they put nation state democracies under enormous pressure (Merkel 2014). In connection with globalisation, Colin Crouch (2004) introduced the concept of 'post-democracy', which refers to the 'other side of the parabola of democracy' and its symptoms such as passive, quiescent and apathetic citizens on one hand, and private interactions between elected governments and elites which overwhelmingly represent business interests behind the spectacle of the electoral game politics on the other. He points out that 'democracy has simply not kept pace with capitalism's rush to the global' (Crouch 2004: 29). Dani Rodrik (2000) approached this 'gap problem' by formulating his famous trilemma in the dimensions of international economic integration, the nation-state and mass politics: it is impossible to achieve hyper-globalisation, national sovereignty and democracy at the same time, because only two of these things can be attained simultaneously. As an epochal economic transition, globalisation constitutes a means of limiting the power of national elites, which weakens the capacity of democracies to act, and fuels populists' critics.

The problem with globalisation is that it upset the balance of post-1945 'embedded liberalism', which is a 'compromise between the goals of free trade and the domestic control of social and economic development by democratic states' and, it is 'dis-embedding of markets from national control' (Bruszt – Langbein 2017: 298). Key institutions are no more welfare states but global firms and corporations (Crouch 2004), which are out of direct democratic political control

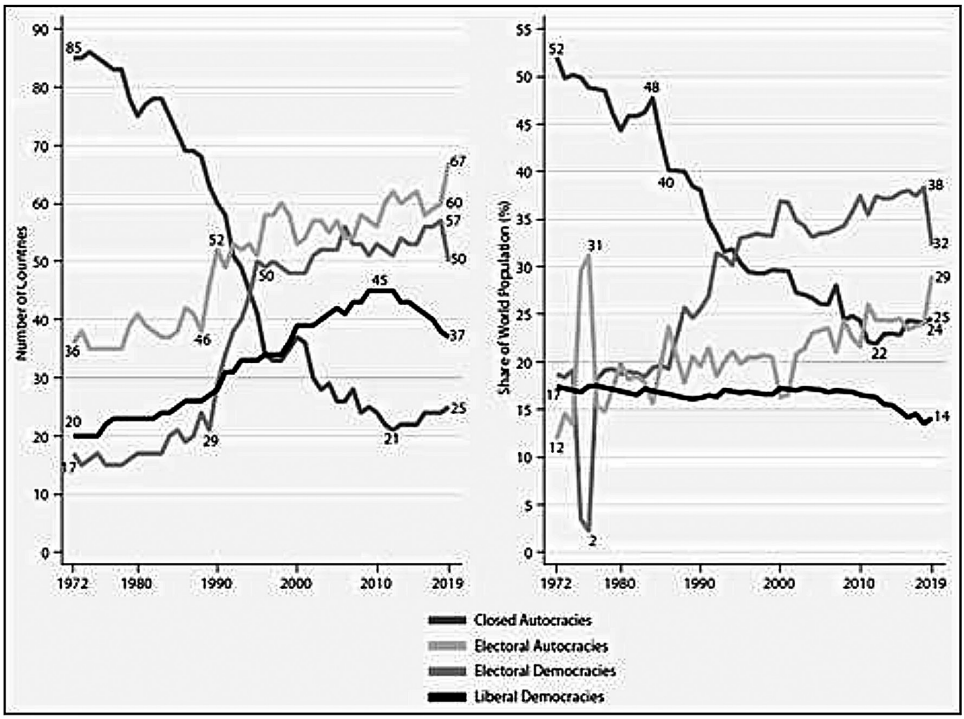
(Bruff 2016). Hence, neoliberalism tends to undermine national sovereignty, 'to the point where the parliaments of putatively independent nations no longer have power over their own policy decisions', but are governed by undemocratic international institutions with 'remote-control power' (Hickel 2016). Although globalisation has also positive impacts, for example in the field of digitisation or citizens' communication opportunities, it is also responsible for the extreme concentration and unequal distribution of wealth, which causes social and economic instability, and massive inequality (Piketty 2014). It generates a 'global precariat' with millions around the world without an anchor of stability (Standing 2011), which generates masses of 'left-behind' people who are receptive to populism (Judis 2016).

The rise of electoral autocracies

In addition to internal challenges, democracies are also faced with the fact that the disappearance of classical dictatorships has been replaced by the rise of *electoral autocracies* (*Figure1*). The last few decades have been an era of proliferation of 'intermediate' categories: the growing proportion of electoral autocracies (1972: 23%, 2019: 37%) and electoral democracies (1972: 11%, 2019: 28%) have become a significant majority not only together but also separately, on their own sides of regime types. It is noteworthy that in the last few years, the proportion of autocracies has grown so spectacularly that in 2019, for the first time since 2001, their proportion became higher (51% of countries, 54% of global population) than that of democracies.

The term electoral autocracies is generally understood to mean that, compared to closed autocracies, their 'modern' predecessors in the 20th century, these new regimes are 'electoral' primarily because they exercise their autocratic political power under conditions and (more or less managed) risks of (de facto) multi-party elections based on universal suffrage. They are no longer primarily aiming at stabilising their power by means of narrowing voting rights, open lack of pluralistic competition (i.e. one-party systems) or direct physical violence, although they could also move in these directions, of course. Instead, these regimes prefer to limit political competition by systematically distorting the conditions of contestation (making an uneven playing field) which, in practice, means that the democratic polity is completely bypassed, occupied, hollowed and reshaped by autocrats. According to Schedler, the manipulated elections do not ensure political competition (and thus the democratic quality of this regime), but they are quasi-authorisations on the façade of quasi-democracies. Due to their electoral nature, and people-centrist (quasi-democratic) legitimation claims, these regimes are often populist, but – like Singapore – not always.

Figure1: Number of countries per regime type (left) and share of population (right).



Source: Lührmann et al. 2020: 13.

In parallel with the spread of these electoral autocracies, transitological optimism of post-1989 and the euphoria of the early 1990s has vanished in a few years: democracy is no longer 'the only game in town' in global trends, and it has become less dominant in the world. However, formally almost everyone sees themself as the champion of democracy, but substantively raise serious doubts as to the genuine commitment to democratic principles of lots of political leaders. Latin America, Africa and Eurasia (especially the post-communist and post-soviet regions) provide countless examples of stagnated or even reversed democratisation (de-democratisation) and autocratisation (Cassani – Tomini 2018; Lührmann – Lindberg 2019). As a result, the Millennium was already marked by reckoning with transitology (Carothers 2002) and rising literature on hybridisation (Diamond 2002).

The developments of the last two decades are well illustrated by the fact that the description of the 'gray zone' and 'mixed regimes' between full-fledged democracies and classical dictatorships started mainly from the direction of 'democracy with adjectives' (Collier – Levitsky 1997), and it has been in-

creasingly supplemented by concepts derived from autocracy (Gerschewski – Schmotz 2011), which has, by the way, created a vague 'terminological babel' (Armony – Schamis 2005). In order to grasp these regimes, researchers have developed concepts and models such as delegative democracy (O'Donnell 1994), illiberal democracy (Zakaria 1997), defective democracy (Merkel 2004) or managed democracy (Wolin 2008). On the other hand, the autocratic nature is more emphasised by terms such as semi-authoritarianism (Ottaway 2003), liberal autocracy (Zakaria 1997; Diamond 2003), competitive authoritarianism (Levitsky – Way 2002, 2010) and electoral authoritarianism (Schedler 2002, 2013).

The basic dilemma of this literature is whether these regimes are sui generis regime types or they are only (diminished) subtypes of two main categories (democracy and autocracy/dictatorship) (Cassani 2014; Procházka – Cabada 2020). The answer to this question partly depends on the authors' definitions of democracy and its counter-concept and, more broadly, on the nature of opposition between them. Giovanni Sartori, in his seminal book (1987) distinguishes between *contrary* and *contradictory* nature of oppositions, the former for opposites that are not contradictories and the latter for two terms that are not only mutually exclusive but also completely exclusive (Sartori 1987: 182). Only the latter refers to an opposition and a clear definition where no third possibility exists (tertium non datur). Therefore, Sartori identifies democracy via its contradictory counter-concept, namely autocracy, where the essential difference is the different nature of investiture (empowerment):

'Autocracy means auto-investiture, that someone proclaims himself ruler or has hereditary right to it. By contrast, democracy stands for a system that hinges on the principle that no one can proclaim himself ruler, and political power cannot be inherited. As you can see, the contrast between democracy and autocracy brings into play the principle of investiture and legitimacy of power. However, the principle of investiture does not vary by degrees: there is no transition between the different options. Moreover, the principle of democratic investiture is the reverse of the autocratic investiture. And the test (on-the-spot) is easy: it is the elections. Any regime, whose »controlling« political staff is chosen through free, competitive, and non-fraudulent elections, has to be classified as democracy' (Sartori 1993: 83, translation my own). Following this, 'the autocratic principle is repudiated, the democratic axiom is that man's power over man can only be granted by others-and this always and only on a revocable basis (for otherwise the grantors of power would, at the same time, renounce their power). Henceforth, leaders must result from a free, unfettered designation of those who are to be led. That is equally to say that whenever this empowering *others* to designate *you* is being tampered with or counterfeited – either because dissent is impeded or alternatives are not offered – democracy is killed at its inception' (Sartori 1987: 206).

In order to avoid counterfeiting of dissent, argues Sartori, guarantees are needed: 'electoral power per se is the mechanical guarantee of democracy; but the substantive guarantee is given by the conditions under which the citizen gets the information and is exposed to the pressure of opinion makers. (...). When all is said, we say that elections must be free. This is true, but it is not enough; for opinion too must be, in some basic sense, free. Free elections with unfree opinion express nothing. We say that the people must be sovereign. But an empty sovereign who has nothing to say, without opinions of his own, is a mere ratifier, a sovereign of nothing' (Sartori 1987: 86–87). To the paradox of a democratic façade that can mask autocratic rule, according to Sartori, 'literal democracy' (rule of the people *per se*) cannot answer, since 'while elections and representation are necessary instruments of large-scale democracy, they are also its Achilles' heel. He who delegates his power can also lose it; elections are not necessarily free; and representation is not necessarily genuine' (Ibid. 30–31.). The remedy and the safeguard against this situation for Sartori is the normative or prescriptive definition of democracy. In this sense, democracy is not only elective polyarchy (descriptive definition) but *selective polyarchy* or a *polyarchy of merit*. Therefore, democracy is a 'system in which no one can choose himself, no one can invest himself with the power to rule and, therefore, no one can arrogate to himself unconditional and unlimited power', and the 'principle »all power to the people« must be gradually modified, as a democracy develops itself, into the principle »all power to nobody«' (Ibid. 206, 72). Examining these principles – embodied only in liberal-democratic states – in any regime, we are able to test its democratic quality in a dichotomic way (yes or no), although the issue of degree of democracy remains important.

In the hybrid regime literature, the question of the nature of democracy's counter-concept comes up in the difference between *dual* and *trial* approaches. Illustrative in this respect are the two, perhaps most used concepts of this research field, namely competitive authoritarianism (Levitsky – Way 2002, 2010) and electoral autocracy (Schedler 2002, 2013). The former, with its triple division (democracy, hybrid regime, dictatorship), is an example of *tertium datur*, where simultaneously important characteristics of both democracy and authoritarianism exist. The autocratic criterion for Levitsky and Way is evidence of 'centrally coordinated or tolerated' electoral manipulation, systematic civil-liberties violations, or an uneven playing field (access to resources, media and the law of opposition). Regimes with these features have formal democratic institutions which 'are widely viewed as the primary means of gaining power, but in which incumbents' abuse of the state places them at a significant advantage vis-à-vis their opponents. "Such regimes are competitive in that opposition parties use democratic institutions to contest seriously for power, but they are not democratic because the playing field is heavily skewed in favor of incumbents. Competition is thus real but unfair" (Levitsky – Way 2010: 5).

In contrast, Andreas Schedler's typology distinguishes basically democratic regimes (liberal democracy and electoral democracy) from non-democratic regimes (electoral authoritarianism and closed authoritarianism), which is a clear example of Sartori's category of *tertium non datur*. The boundary between democracy and autocracy lies on the borderline between electoral democracies and electoral autocracies. Importantly, Schedler notes 'when »democratic defects« cancel the democratic essence of electoral regimes, we should call the animal by its name: autocracy. (...). When we conceptualize non-democratic regimes as instances of democracy, however deficient, we stumble into the methodological pitfall of »conceptual stretching« (Sartori 1984)' (Schedler 2013: 80). Contrary to Levitsky and Way, in Schedler's view, the differentia specifica is not the existence of elections but the genuineness of political competition. Electoral autocracies 'establish the entire set of formally representative institutions that characterize liberal democracy', but 'unlike electoral democracies, they subject these institutions to severe and systematic manipulation' (Schedler 2013: 6). Moreover, while the approach of Levitsky and Way sees elections as competitive because of their multi-party nature, according to Schedler these manipulated elections do not ensure political competition (and thus the democratic quality of this regime), but they are quasi-authorisations on the façade of quasi-democracies. Therefore, 'representative institutions make for lovely decorations in the shop windows of authoritarian regimes' (Schedler 2013: 69).

The riders on the storm

In the second part of this study, after a brief conceptualisation of populism, I will demonstrate, firstly, that populism understood as an autocratic interpretation of democracy and representation, could be a particularly dangerous Trojan horse for democracy. Above all, because its idea of a single, homogeneous and authentic people that can be genuinely represented only by populists, a representative claim which is a moralised form of antipluralism. Secondly, I will argue that populism could also be an important feature of electoral autocracies. By means of populism, it is possible for these regimes to hide and even legitimise their autocratic trends and exercise of power behind their formally multi-party elections and democratic façade, as well as the creation of an uneven playing field for political competition.

Populism as a dangerous impostor of democracy

Firstly, I sketch my 2x2 regime typology and the concept of democracy based on Robert A. Dahl, Giovanni Sartori, Andreas Schedler and the V-Dem project. In this approach, there are two subtypes of autocracies [1) closed autocracies, 2) electoral autocracies], and two subtypes of democracies [3) electoral democra-

cies, 4) liberal democracies]. In closed autocracies, 'the chief executive is either not subjected to elections or there is no meaningful, de-facto competition in elections. Electoral autocracies hold de-facto multiparty elections for the chief executive, but they fall short of democratic standards due to significant irregularities, limitations on party competition or other violations of Dahl's institutional requisites for democracies' (Lührmann – Tannenberg – Lindberg 2018: 61).

To be counted as (electoral) democracies, 'countries not only have to hold de facto free and fair and multiparty elections, but also – based on Robert Dahl's famous articulation of "Polyarchy" as electoral democracy – achieve a sufficient level of institutional guarantees of democracy such as freedom of association, suffrage, clean elections, an elected executive, and freedom of expression. A liberal democracy is, in addition, characterized by its having effective legislative and judicial oversight of the executive as well as protection of individual liberties and the rule of law' (Ibid.).

Regarding the relationship between populism and representative democracy, I have previously distinguished three main approaches in the mainstream populism literature (Benedek 2019). The first approach (populism as 'opportunity') identifies populism as a Schmittian concept of political *logic*. It proclaims a necessary and desirable populist turn of democracy and politics in general, seeing it as an opportunity for emancipatory politics and democracy which neither radicalise nor eliminate political conflicts (Laclau 2005; Mouffe 2018). However, interpreting populism *as* political ultimately means that all political actors are more or less populist, which makes the term quite redundant and unusable for describing politics. Namely, if the term of populism tries to explain everything, it explains nothing.

The second and mainstream approach of populism defines *per se* democracy in a minimalist way, and typically interprets it with a paradoxical tension between the democratic-populist and liberal-constitutional pillar. In this sense, populism is an ideology 'that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, «the pure people« versus »the corrupt elite«, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the volonté générale (general will) of the people' (Mudde 2004: 562). Therefore, populism used to be seen as a 'signal' of diseases and dysfunctions of liberal democracy, and as a not always reprehensible democratic answer to the predominance and prevalence of the liberal pillar (Mény – Surel 2002; Mudde 2004; Mudde – Rovira Kaltwasser 2013; Pappas 2014; Judis 2016). However, the focus of this view of populism is not on the harsh anti-pluralism and political exclusion of populism, which remains a demagogy-like term, which is still far too broad a concept to be really useful. The latter means that with this approach it is particularly difficult to say exactly who are populists and who are not, since nowadays almost every politician often speaks in the name of *the* people, and criticises loudly (domestic or international) elites and political opponents.

Therefore, populism refers to a kind of vague border between the mainstream centre-right and centre-left parties and politicians on one hand, and their 'challengers' on the other. Hence, populism has become a rather arbitrary term for separating Angela Merkel, Sebastian Kurz and Joe Biden from Matteo Salvini, Viktor Orbán and Donald Trump. It is not surprising that many politicians and parties are borderline cases, moving in and out of the populist category from researcher to researcher and from time to time, such as Bernie Sanders, Emmanuel Macron or Jeremy Corbyn. Finally, it often seems that politicians of the populist side of the boundary are slowly constituting the majority, inflating the stretching term populism, and making it easy to accuse the users of this term of political-ideological bias and overtone.

For these reasons, I propose the narrowest and strictest approach to populism which sees in it a clear *danger* for democracy. Democracy is understood here as a more robust concept with inherent features of the liberal-constitutional pillar, while populism can be seen as an unequivocal danger for it (Abts – Rummens 2007; Müller 2016; Urbinati 2013). From this point of view, populism is a manipulated way (like a Trojan Horse) for new political players 'to acquire power quickly, without waiting for increasing popularity through times and electoral competitions' (Urbinati 2013: 153), and which exploits social distress and democratic dysfunctions. In this study, I am following Sartori's above mentioned definition of democracy as an *electoral and selective polyarchy* which can be characterised by the principles of popular sovereignty and limited power. I consider it very useful to supplement this approach by the analysis of French philosopher Claude Lefort. He defines democracy as a system where the *locus of power is an empty place* (Lefort 1988: 17–19, 224–235). While in the pre-modern times, the locus of power was embodied by the king, in modern democracies 'they only hold public offices on a temporary basis, subject to a regular political and electoral competition' (Abts – Rummens 2007: 412). The unity of a political community refers no longer to the organic unity of a homogeneous body but the unity of the *political stage* (i.e. essential pluralism). Therefore, in a democracy, the identity of the political community and the will of the people can 'never receive a final interpretation and the democratic process can never come to a closure' (Ibid. 413).

According to Lefort, the original logic of the empty place of power can be degenerated in both ways of *diversity-in-itself* and *unity-in-itself*: '(…) when power appears to have sunk to the level of reality and to be no more than an instrument for the promotion of the interests and appetites of vulgar ambition and when, in a word, it appears *in* society, and when at the same time society appears to be fragmented, then we see the development of the fantasy of the People-as-One, the beginnings of a quest for a substantial identity, for a social body which is welded to its head, for an embodying power, for a state free from division' (Lefort 1988: 19–20). The predominance of liberal logic and institutions reduces

political struggle 'to a mere struggle between particular interests, where no reference is made to the idea of the "common good" or the idea of democracy as a common project' and fails to grasp 'the way in which the political stage allows for the symbolic integration of society', where society is threatened with disintegration. On the other hand, the 'opposite illusion of *unity-in-itself*, where the need for a representation of the unity of society is met with the imaginary fiction of the *people-as-one*. (...). This fictional belief in the homogeneous unity of the political community generates a logic which disregards the idea of otherness at the heart of democracy and aims at the suppression of diversity within society. This logic thus implies the closure of the locus of power and imposes the sovereign rule of the people-as-one' (Abts – Rummens 2007: 413–414). The interpretation of democracy as a political regime where the locus of power is an empty place is very useful to understand populism as a desire for a closure of this empty place. Therefore, this essential anti-pluralist nature of populism is not compatible with modern democracies, at least as I conceptualised them before, following the approach of pluralist democracy based on Dahl's concept of polyarchy. Lastly, in Table I you can see my short conceptualisation of populism, which goes beyond the mainstream approach, since this puts more emphasis on such characteristics like claim of unlimited power (in the name of people), inherent antipluralism, extreme polarisation and autocratic representation.

Table 1: List of items of populism

Item	Description
Manichean worldview	Clash between bad and good, crisis, friend-enemy logic (polarization)
People-centrism	Aim of politics is to enforce the will of the people against the enemies of the people, absolutization of the will of the people, rejecting limits of power
Imagination of homogeneous people	Genuine people and its will are united (inherent antipluralism)
Autocratic representation	Moral, exclusive and acclamative representation

Populism as antidemocrats' Trojan Horse

To understand the relationship of populism and democracy (conceptualised previously) it is necessary to recall that populism is above all a moralistic imagination of politics. A 'way of perceiving the political world that sets a morally pure and fully unified (...) people against elites who are deemed corrupt or in some other way morally inferior' (Müller 2016: 19–20). In this sense, elite-critique is

a necessary but not sufficient condition to qualify someone as a real populist, as the latter is not only anti-elitist but always antipluralist, claiming that *they, and only they* can legitimately represent the people. I think this *political exclusion* is the point. In the case of populists, 'other political competitors are just part of the immoral, corrupt elite, or so populists say, while not having power themselves; when in government, they will not recognize anything like a legitimate opposition'. The populist core claim also implies that whoever does not really support populist parties might not be part of the proper people to begin with. In the words of Lefort (1988: 20), 'the supposedly real people first has to be »extracted« from the sum total of actual citizens'. Therefore, 'populists are no longer ordinary adversaries, but political enemies who hold an incompatible view of the symbolic structure of the locus of power itself' (Abts – Rummens 2007: 422). Employing a *pars pro toto* logic, populists interpret the part of real people as the whole of the political community. They involve antagonistic oppositions creating impenetrable cleavages in the society, which undermines the possibility of even a minimal political consensus, which would be an essential condition for democracy. Illustrative in this respect is the fact that given their moralised antipluralism, populists frequently oppose the outcomes of elections, particularly when the numerical calculus does not justify their extraordinary and charismatic political role. One need only think of Donald Trump's speech, after (and while) losing the 2020 US presidential elections, in which he tried to undermine the legitimacy of elections; or there is the message of Viktor Orbán after losing the 2002 Hungarian elections: 'the nation cannot be in opposition'. Shortly, the problem is never the populist's failure to represent the people's will, rather, 'it's always the institutions that somehow produce the wrong outcomes' (Müller 2016: 32).

This kind of antipluralist notion of the people is articulated by Carl Schmitt's famous critiques of liberalism and parliamentarianism (Schmitt 1988). He claimed that liberalism was an outdated ideology and parliaments were a mere façade for special interests, and electoral accountability is peculiar to the market rather than politics. In contrast, the people are the real sovereign and popular will could be represented only by (personal) leaders and not by procedures. Therefore, 'the public manifestation of the consent of the people in the form of identification with and acclamation of its leader is the only valid accountability because it is the truly political one, not procedural and formal, not mediated but immediate' (Urbinati 2019: 122). According to Schmitt, 'the unanimous opinion of one hundred million private persons is neither the will of the people nor public opinion. The will of the people can be expressed just as well and perhaps better through acclamation, through something taken for granted, an obvious and unchallenged presence, than through the statistical apparatus (...). Compared to a democracy that is direct, not only in the technical sense but also in a vital sense, parliament appears an artificial machinery,

produced by liberal reasoning, while dictatorial and Caesaristic methods not only can produce the acclamation of the people but can also be a direct expression of democratic substance and power' (Schmitt 1988: 16–17). Since '*volonté générale* cannot be constructed or discovered through extensive deliberative processes, but manifests itself directly by means of popular acclamation', the legitimacy of the leader is based on the fact that he participates in the common and homogeneous identity of the political community and articulates the general will of the people (Abts – Rummens 2007: 416). In this sense, that kind of representation is rather *presentation* or *embodiment* than democratic representation. Therefore, one of my core arguments is that acclamation does not belong to the democratic investiture (which means free, fair and competitive elections) but to the Sartorian auto-investiture, in which someone proclaims himself as ruler and the only legitimate articulation of popular will, while the rights of being legitimate representatives of the political community of any other rivals are denied. When a populist leader declares that he is the only true representative of the people's will even beyond and outside the electoral mandate, he 'calls into question not simply a bad or corrupt performance of state institutions but electoral politics itself, its advocacy character' (Urbinati 2013: 153).

In doing so, populists use extreme forms of political polarisation creating antagonistic moralised cleavages. Thus, they divide society into mutually delegitimising and excluding tribes and undermine democratic principles of norms of toleration and restraint which served as the 'soft guardrails of democracy' (Levitsky – Ziblatt 2018). Without guardrails and any mutual respect of people we cannot talk about a common political stage that would be required for democracy. If 'politics is primarily conflict over the existence of a common stage and over the existence and status of those present on it' (Rancière 1999: 26–27), democracy could be seen as a special kind of political stage, where recognition of pluralism as diversity of individuals, and as legitimate competition of various political actors and as well as a distribution and separation of power (such in polyarchy) are essential. In this sense, democracy is a regime where the pluralistic conception of politics is vital and where power is limited and belongs to no one, hence it is an empty place. Indeed, 'those who exercise power do not possess it; that they do not, indeed, embody it; that the exercise of power requires a periodic and repeated contest; that the authority of those vested with power is created and re-created as a result of the manifestation of the will of the people (...). The reference to an empty place, on the other hand, implies a reference to a society without any positive determination, which cannot be represented by the figure of a community' (Lefort 1988: 225–226). By contrast, populism runs starkly counter to these principles. Populists try to give a final and substantive interpretation of the will and the identity of the people with a phantasmal image of the organic unity of the political community, which means a substantive closure of the originally open and endless democratic pro-

cess. The logic generated by this closure of the empty place of power and identity constitutes the very logic of populism, which therefore should be understood as an *autocratic interpretation of democracy and representation,* and not, as the mainstream literature on populism alleges, one of the two pillars of democracy.

An election, to be democratic, needs to allow the expression of dissent. This is why democracy implies the rule of majority, not that of unanimity. However, acclamation 'does not allow, or does not appreciate, the expression of dissent', because 'in a populist assembly there is no need to count votes and acknowledge minorities, because the leader will be a leader of the whole, not simply of the majority' (Urbinati 1998: 119). The populist leader must be charismatic, which means he is endowed with extraordinary gifts: he has a 'superior capacity to discern the common good, as judged by the people' (Müller 2016: 33). Hence, the substance of the mandate (i.e. the will of the people), and the crisis (as state of exception) which legitimises populist politics, only depends on the arbitrary interpretation of a populist leader (as the sovereign). Therefore, contrary to democratic accountability, a populist leader is free from any mandate on the part of the people and he is accountable only to himself, hence the outcome of elections could be questionable (in democracies) and could have only ritualistic functions (in autocracies). In this logic, the populist leader is the alpha and the omega of politics, while the mass of citizens are only destined to be a passive audience of the leader's performance, and only to *re*flect the will of people interpreted by the leader and approve his blank-cheque authorisation. The populist claim is ultimately tautological, as it says, 'if you do not agree with the will of the people *as interpreted by myself*, and do not recognize me as the only legitimate leader who can articulate this will as popular sovereignty, you are not the part of the (real) people'. Therefore, elections without free alternatives became 'nothing more than the people's periodic renunciation of their sovereignty. If presumed representation is insecure, election without choice is fraudulent' (Sartori 1987: 30). In summary, 'if one does not want to renounce a notion of democracy that incorporates the limitation of power, a bill of rights, and discussion as the peculiar form of political life, one is forced to conclude that populism is not an expression of democracy' (Urbinati 1998: 122).

However, as I have already mentioned, democracy, as a logic of the empty place of power, can be subverted not only in the populist direction, where this place of power is occupied and closed by a substantive image of the people as a homogeneous unity, but also in the way of the logic of liberalism. This liberal illusion of *diversity-in-itself* means reducing power to an instrumental function, and the people to a fiction, and it regards only individuals and coalitions of interests and opinions as real, hence the very notion of society is denied (Lefort 1988: 232–233). This kind of institutionalisation, where power disappears and is replaced by a totally anonymous rule of law, could be seen as the opposite form of distortion of democracy, where the populist illusion of people-as-one

is replaced with another undemocratic imaginary fiction. In that sense, in part Cas Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser are right when they say that 'in a world that is dominated by democracy and liberalism, populism has essentially become an illiberal democratic response to undemocratic liberalism' (Mudde – Rovira Kaltwasser 2017: 116); however, it would be more precise to say that populism is an illiberal and *quasi*-democratic response to over-institutionalised world.

As we have seen, one of the core elements of the global crisis of democracy is this kind of liberal depolitisation, which has triggered populism. Populists attacks liberal democracy and further increases its legitimacy crisis with anti--institutionalist messages and extreme forms of polarisation, undermining citizen's trust in democracy. They promise to raise democracy to the highest level and give back the control to the people (to the 'silent majority'), who are the principal sources of sovereignty, hence populism always has a democracy--creator or rebuilder myth and rhetoric. With the antagonistic and polarising way of politics, they are able to both increase citizens' depolitisation, passivity and resentment, thanks to emerging negative views and attitudes towards the everyday functioning of democracy, and on the other hand, repolitise and activate people in the name of a better life. Therefore, populism both triggers and embodies the global crisis of democracy, and it is both a consequence and symptom of the latter. For that reason, 'the danger is populism – a degraded form of democracy that promises to make good on democracy's highest ideals (»Let the people rule!«). The danger comes, in other words, from within the democratic world – the political actors posing the danger speak the language of democratic values' (Müller 2016: 6). Consequently, populism should be seen as a Trojan Horse of antidemocrats who want to acquire power formally in the name of people but want to exercise it de facto without them. In sum, real populists are a small but very dangerous group to democracy. e.g. Bernie Sanders or Sebastian Kurz are not included because they do not claim that they and they alone could represent legitimately the people, contrary to Donald Trump and Viktor Orbán.

Populism as electoral autocracies' fig leaf

In the final part of my study, I would like to present populism in the framework of electoral autocracies where it could be an essential element of them. Namely, the characteristics of populism (Manichean worldview, image of a homogeneous people, people-centrism and autocratic notion of representation) are very compatible with electoral autocracies, since these regimes hold general elections and their power is built upon the alleged will of the people. These regimes are able to camouflage or even legitimise their systematically distorted and limited competitive nature, and new repressive tendencies with populism which could be a fig leaf covering up the autocratic exercise of power behind the formally

multi-party but not fair elections and democratic façade. As we have seen, in the autocratic (re)interpretation of democracy and representation, populism not only absolutises the will of people but also expropriates the right of determination of its content exclusively for the populist leader. Thus, democracy's battle cry 'all power to us' is not converted gradually into the principle that *nobody* should have *all* power, which is to 'simply bring a reinforced absolutism back to life' which fulfils the criteria of a perfectionist's betrayal of democratic principles (Sartori 1987: 72). It is especially important to see that populism is not only an anti-elitist promise of ensuring the will of homogeneous people without any (liberal) constraint but also a cognitive software which is able to create continuously antagonistic dichotomies. In these political cleavages, one is either an obedient follower of a populist leader or belongs to the enemy's camp which needs to be overcome at all costs and, hence it is regarded, often explicitly, as a morally inferior antithesis of the in-group. Indeed, if legitimate opponents turn into illegitimate enemies of the people (and of the leader) in this Manichean worldview, then the most serious steps to eliminate them could also be justified. Therefore, this view of politics and democracy is highly compatible with autocrats' intentions to preserve and strengthen their power.

In view of the above, although populism may play different roles in different types of regimes, in all cases it fundamentally strengthens the processes of autocratisation. Hence, as opposed to a mainstream (minimalist) approach to populism research, I do not think that populism (as I have conceptualised) could have a positive effect on the quality of democracy and democratisation even during the processes of autocratic deconsolidation and democratic transition (cf. Mudde – Kaltwasser, 2017: 86–93). Instead, (1) in democracies, populism, by *spreading* an autocratic (re-)interpretation of democracy and representation, can pose a significant threat and could trigger autocratisation. As we have seen, this interpretation seeks to replace the essentially pluralistic approach of democracy (based on limited power and the principle of majority) with an exclusionary, irrefutable and moral claim of representation and articulation of common good. Good examples of this are politicians like Viktor Orbán after 2002, Jarosław Kaczyński after 2005 or Donald Trump after 2016, and their parties.

Secondly, (2) populism in power (still in democracies) seeks to contribute in several ways to a successful regime change (autocratic transition) with the help of government and state's resources, through a massive, centrally controlled and managed autocratic (re-)interpretation of democracy. Such contributions include populism as a source of legitimacy and a form of justification; as a tool of moral and cognitive intimidation and demobilisation of dissidents and protesters by extreme exclusionary logic; or populism as a creator and maintainer of favourable political environment and cleavages for autocratic steps. Each of the aforementioned persons in power sought to increase their capacity to act by straining and dismantling safeguards of democracy. Although not all of them have

achieved successful autocratic transition, upgrading the intensity of populism (using the resources of governments and states) is a common feature of them.

Finally, (3) populism in autocracies – as an already hegemonic, autocratically (re-) interpreted notion of democracy and distinct political logic – can make a valuable contribution to addressing the uncertainties affecting the regime. Contemporary examples are Vladimir Putin's Russia, or Viktor Orbán's Hungary, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Turkey and Rodrigo Duterte's Philippines, countries with autocratic transitions in the 2010s. Although significant differences can be observed between these countries, these are electoral autocracies in the approach of this study (de facto multiparty elections without sufficiently achieving the criteria of polyarchy) and in the light of V-Dem's data (Lührmann et al. 2020) in which populism plays a crucial role. In this case, populism already fulfils a key role of autocratic regime stability. Hence, unlike (traditional) closed autocracies who essentially justify their leadership based on transcendent, hereditary, output-oriented or doctrinaire ideological ways, electoral autocracies use, inter alia, a massive pseudo-democratic legitimacy (i.e. ruling in the name of people), which is highly compatible with populism. Therefore, they exercise autocratic power behind a democratic façade, especially under conditions of formally multi-party elections and other plebiscite techniques. To minimise the risk of unsuccessful popular feedback they limit political competition by creating an uneven playing field on one hand, and often use the populist interpretation of democracy and representation on the other hand. Consequently, they typically supplement the traditional autocratic toolbox (repression and co-optation) with a quasi-democratic software that can mask or even justify moral and political inequality. Hence, *populist electoral autocracies are the paradigmatic type of electoral autocracies, which means a symbiosis between autocratic hardware and populist software.* In this regime type, the tricky autocratic auto-investiture is masked by the pseudo-democratic language of populism and its political consequences. On the part of the autocratic hardware, the populist software receives significant resources, both public and private, for maintain polarising mechanisms (which continues the development of enemy images), and in the opposite direction, an autocratic regime can gain much-needed pseudo-democratic legitimacy and justification of (sometimes even openly declared authoritarian) rule, and an arbitrarily exercise of power, provided by populism.

Tannenberg et al. (2021) examined regime legitimation strategies for 183 countries in the world from 1900 to 2019. Building on Max Weber's three classical ideal types of legitimation (charismatic, traditional, rational-legal), they differentiated four types of justification, namely rules based on *performance*, the person of the *leader*, rational-legal *procedures*, and *ideology*. They found that electoral autocracies tend to rely on leader and ideology. The final reference point in electoral autocracies is often explicitly the person (and party) of the leader whose right to power is either acknowledged properly through elections,

or the problem is somewhere in the representative institutions. In my opinion, this is (the person of leader) where electoral autocracies can be easily linked to populism. Tannenberg et al. proved that leader-based claims to the right to rule are significantly more typical in the case of populists (in Latin-America and Europe between 1995 and 2018) than non-populists. In the light of legitimation, we can say that populist electoral autocracies basically rely on the person of the leader and elections, although these are not fair elections.

This can bring us closer to a more complex approach of stability and legitimacy mechanisms of new autocracies, which is an increasingly researched field of current political science (Gerschewski 2013, 2018; Dukalskis – Gerschewski 2017; Mazepus 2017; Morgenbesser 2017, 2020). In my opinion, this kind of complexity is the key element to understand the flexibility and adaptability of those regimes which are responsibly for sometimes quite an astounding level of resilience. The stability of autocratic regimes is based on three, mutually reinforcing pillars of *repression, co-optation* and *legitimation* (Schedler 2013, Gerschewski 2013). These pillars are capable of counteracting the risk of regime collapse, which could come from the directions of the disobedience of citizens, from organised resistance by actors of opposition and, from a division within the elite (Morgenbesser 2017). Repression seeks to 'make disloyalty a less attractive option for political elites and collective action more difficult for citizens' (Ibid. 208), while formal and informal co-optation 'make it easier to persuade a significant »stakeholder« not to exercise his power to obstruct' (Shleifer – Treisman, 2000: 8–9.). However, electoral autocrats cannot rely in the longer term entirely on strategies of repression and co-optation. Therefore, they also have to and want to gain legitimacy (Gerschewski 2018; Dukalskis – Gerschewski 2017; von Haldenwang 2017; von Soest – Grauvogel 2017; Debre – Morgenbesser 2017; Cassani 2017; Backes – Kailitz 2015), especially pseudo-democratic legitimacy. This is very useful to make their rule less costly, and elicit a proper response of the citizenry, from active consent to compliance with the rules, or from passive obedience to mere toleration. They use elections to strengthen their legitimacy and justify their right to rule, and to gain a 'moral windfall that is otherwise unavailable to them' (Morgenbesser, 2017: 209).

In the stabilisation mechanisms of electoral autocracies, populism could play a key constitutive role in every dimension. As a specific form of repression, populism, with its delegitimising nature and political exclusion against every possible opponent of the regime, is able to limit the very existence and impact of political alternatives. Hence it could be seen as cognitive violence and repression which engenders acquiescence through the generation of fear in thought-world, making it fearful to belong to the out-group (i.e. enemy) of the people. In a different perspective, populism could also be a strategy of co-optation, since the motivation of co-opted actors could be not only the fear but a utilitarian cost-benefit calculus of consequences of being a victim of populist political

exclusion. Finally, populism could serve an autocratic regime as a source of legitimation in many ways. Especially, the autocratic leader is able by means of populism to use a pseudo-democratic language and to speak effectively in the name of the people, thereby to play the role of a democratic elected and legitimised leader. On the other hand, populist autocrats could conceal, and even legitimise or justify their absolutistic nature of exercise of power, the uneven playing field of political competition, the moral inferiority of the opposition and autocratic tendencies on the basis of the alleged will of people articulated by the leader. Moreover, the populist claim of exclusive and moral representation gives some kind of charismatic legitimacy beyond the legal and electoral system. Indeed, populist autocrats transform themselves from ordinary politicians to prophets who have a holy mission. In addition, populism constantly requires and constructs crises and extraordinary situations so as to legitimise themselves as a strong leader in the waves of a permanent storm, which is a very attractive trait of populism in the eye of autocracies. Overall, populism could be seen as a paradigmatic type of autocratic auto-investiture, hence it is very compatible with electoral autocracies.

Following this, elections and other plebiscitary techniques are crucial in populist electoral autocracies, since the successful acclamation and authorisation of populist autocrats is implemented through these institutions which are available to obtain people's recognition as an approved (legitimate) leader. Contrary to democracies where uncertainty appears in connection with the identity of the winner in a fair and roughly balanced political competition, electoral autocracies want to contain the uncertainty of electoral outcomes and to prevent the uncertainties of regime change. Therefore, the main goal of their bricolage-style polity, especially electoral institutions, is to limit or even eliminate the risk of fall from power. Hence, they 'establish the entire set of formal representative institutions we associate with liberal democracy – while deploying a broad range of manipulative strategies that prevent them from being effective' (Schedler 2013: 54). Populist electoral autocracies, as electoral autocracies in general, exercise their autocratic power behind the institutional façades of democracy, using various strategies of repression, co-optation and legitimation. These institutional manipulations occur in formal institutions' power (legislature, courts and decentralisation) and pluralism (elections, parties, media and civil society) (Ibid. 54–76), which aim to break the Dahlian concept of a 'chain of democratic choice'. The seven elements of this chain (empowerment, freedom of supply, freedom of demand, inclusion, insulation, integrity and decisiveness) are responsible for elections 'fulfill the promise of effective democratic choice', and importantly, they, 'like a real chain, hold together only so long as each of its links remains whole and unbroken', which implies 'that elections may be considered democratic if and only if they fulfill each of them' (Ibid. 83, 86). Develop the autocratic toolbox for breaking this

democratic chain and play unfair is an open-ended 'sport', leaving room for new 'inventions' (Schedler 2013, Morgenbesser 2020). Schedler presents examples from disempowerment strategies through supply- and demand-side restrictions to such external interferences like intimidation and corruption.

My main point here is that populism, as a software (or more accurately a malware, like a Trojan Horse) of autocratic (re-)interpretation of democracy and representation, is fully compatible with these hardware-like techniques. Populists in office, seek to moralise political conflict as much as possible, therefore, 'there is never a dearth of enemies – and these are always nothing less than enemies of the people as a whole' (Müller 2016: 42). The life-and-death struggle of populists from an alleged underdog position could take place from a hegemonic position too, where populists actually become the new elites of the regime (and they turn often to internal enemies). Enemies always form a network in which formal and informal domestic and global actors are intertwined and consistently serve the interests of each other. Ultimately, governance of populist autocrats is a permanent campaign in well-constructed images of crisis, which could conceal or even legitimise state capture, the absence of an effective system of checks and balances, mass clientelism and corruption, and the suppression of critical civil society. They establish a populist constitution, 'in both the sense of a new sociopolitical settlement and a new set of rules for the political game' (Müller 2016: 62), in order to institutionalise the uneven playing field of political competition.

As a radical turn towards traditional (closed) forms of autocracies (without de facto multiparty elections) would be too expensive, electoral autocrats need manipulated multi-party elections and other plebiscite techniques that could serve as quasi-democratic legitimation, as well as populism that could transform political contestation to a life-and-death struggle and provides other important cognitive functions. Moreover, populism could be a political reality-shaping tool in the hands of autocracies, making it easier to deal with possible challenges, as it makes the perception of political reality of citizens more flexible. The latter is especially crucial, as the tribal logic created by extreme forms of polarisation is able to put in brackets the actual content of daily political conflicts, because the point is the mere antagonistic political confrontation and identification with the in-group and its leader. Therefore, populist autocracy, as a paradigmatic type of electoral autocracies, will remain with us for a long time, giving more and more tasks to researchers involved in them, especially in Central and Eastern Europe.

Summary and conclusion

In this study, I have argued that populism could be an appropriate framework to describe, explain and connect the phenomena of the global crisis of democracy and functioning of electoral autocracies. I have conceptualised democracy as

a term of polyarchy and presented my regime typology (closed autocracy, electoral autocracy, electoral democracy, liberal democracy) based on seminal works of Robert A. Dahl, Giovanni Sartori, Andreas Schedler and the V-Dem project. My concept of populism (Table I) goes beyond the mainstream approach of populism research, since this puts more emphasis on such characteristics as claim of unlimited power (in the name of people), inherent antipluralism, extreme polarisation and autocratic representation. I have demonstrated that in contrast to principles of pluralist democracy the populist idea of a single, homogeneous and authentic people that can be legitimately represented only by populists is a moralised form of antipluralism and political exclusion. The populist notion of representation is presentation or embodiment rather than democratic representation; therefore, one of my core arguments is that acclamation does not belong to the democratic investiture (free, fair and competitive elections) but to the Sartorian auto-investiture. In the latter someone proclaims himself as ruler and the only legitimate articulation of popular will, while the rights of being legitimate representatives of political community of any other rivals are denied. With the antagonistic and polarising way of politics, populists are able to both increase citizens' depolitisation, passivity and resentment, thanks to emerging negative views and attitudes towards the everyday function of democracy, and on other hand, repolitise and activate people in the name of a better life. Therefore, populism both triggers and embodies the global crisis of democracy, and it is both a consequence and symptom of the latter. Consequently, populism should be seen as a Trojan Horse of antidemocrats who want to acquire power formally in the name of the people but want to exercise it de facto without them. In sum, real populists are a small but very dangerous group to democracy.

Following this, populism could not have a positive effect on the quality of democracy and democratisation even during the processes of autocratic deconsolidation and democratic transition. Instead, in democracies, populism, by spreading an autocratic (re-)interpretation of democracy and representation, can pose a significant threat and could trigger autocratisation. When populists come to power in democracies, they seek to contribute in several ways to a successful autocratic transition with the help of the government and state's resources. Finally, populism in autocracies can make a valuable contribution to addressing the uncertainties affecting the regime. To minimise the risk of unsuccessful popular feedback of electoral autocrats, they limit political competition by creating an uneven playing field on one hand, and often use a populist interpretation of democracy and representation on the other hand. Hence, they typically supplement the traditional autocratic toolbox with a quasi-democratic software that can mask or even justify moral and political inequality. Therefore, populist electoral autocracies are the paradigmatic type of electoral autocracies, which means a symbiosis between autocratic hardware and populist software. On the part of the autocratic hardware, the populist software

receives significant resources, both public and private, to maintain polarising mechanisms and in the opposite direction, autocratic regimes can gain much-needed pseudo-democratic legitimacy and justification of rule, and an arbitrary exercise of power provided by populism. In addition, in the stabilisation mechanisms of electoral autocracies, populism has a key role. Populism could serve as cognitive violence and repression making it fearful to belong to the out-group (i.e. enemy) of the people, or as a regime strategy for co-optation (utilitarian calculus of potential actors of opposition for being a victim of populist political exclusion). In the aspect of legitimation, autocrats using populism could gain pseudo-democratic legitimation, moreover the populist claim of exclusive and moral representation gives them some kind of charismatic legitimacy beyond the legal and electoral system. Finally, populism could be a political reality-shaping tool in the hands of autocrats, as the tribal logic created by extreme forms of polarisation is able to put in brackets the actual contents of daily political conflicts, because the point is the mere antagonistic political confrontation and identification with the in-group and its leader.

The relationship between the rise to power of person- and leader-centred populism and the day-to-day functioning of contemporary (electoral) autocracies has already been noticed in the literature (e.g. Bugaric 2019; Norris – Inglehart 2019; Peters – Pierre 2020). The combined phenomenon of populism and processes of autocratisation provides more and more empirical examples in Latin America (Levitsky – Loxton 2013; Balderacchi 2018) and Central and Eastern Europe (Bugaric 2019; Peters – Pierre 2020). Here important questions could arise, for example: can we explore some patterns and special trajectories (analytical, historical, territorial and regional, etc.) relating to cases and, consequently, can we eventually predict to a certain extent some possible future scenarios? It could be particularly useful to identify cases in which populism accompanies and serves a complete regime change and processes of autocratisation from opposition to power in democracies, and later, beyond a successful autocratic transition, plays as a constitutive part in electoral autocracies. As I see it, today's world provides countless potential empirical cases, even in the European Union and our region, in Central and Eastern Europe.

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Who spends more? Party Ideology and Public Spending in 16 Post-Socialist Countries

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sciendo

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Abstract: *The article is revisiting a never-concluded debate about the partisan effect on public spending. It explores the impact of the ruling parties' ideological orientation, operationalised in a single-dimensional left-right scale, on budget expenditures in Central and Eastern Europe. The research is conducted within an expanded time series covering the complete period since the fall of one-party regimes in sixteen former socialist countries, where the issue has remained under-studied, especially in comparison with a number of similar studies focusing mostly on developed Western democracies. The findings moderately support the main hypothesis demonstrating that, although an ideology matters, there are also other more significant predictors of the spending among political, economic or other contextual variables related to a specific transitional framework of the countries in question. The same conclusion applies to the total consumption, as well as to the examined budget segments of social transfers and education, while the environmental spending seems to be completely unrelated to the partisan variable.*

Keywords: ***party ideology, public spending, left-right scale, economic policy, Central and Eastern Europe***

Introduction

With the breakdown of socialism in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), the paradigm of an omnipresent state providing its citizens with a widespread access to various aspects of welfare, from heavily subsidised education and healthcare to housing and employment, ended abruptly. The whole socialist concept of the society changed rapidly, with a significant withdrawal of the state from economic

affairs. Political changes ran in parallel with the economic transition. They included the dissolution of the authoritarian single-party regimes and their transition to democracy, primarily through a formation of a multiparty system and, within this process, subsequent positioning of newly formed parties along the ideological spectrum.

Similar to Western democracies, a most common denominator of these new party systems was manifested in the left-right cleavage. The genesis of the left--right dichotomy famously dates back to the times of the French Revolution. Although the concepts of left and right have evolved since, the basic logic of their distinction has persisted: the left is concerned with the idea of equality; while the right is dedicated to the principles of hierarchy and social continuity (Bobio 1996: 29–45). Translated to a field of economy, left-wing parties are addressing social inequalities, advocating an active interventionist state in ensuring full employment along with a network of social services. The right, on the other hand, promotes reducing regulation and restricting redistributive policies in favour of a free market. A socioeconomic line of cleavage is the basis for ideological profiling of the parties in Western democracies. Budge and Robertson (1987) analysed electoral manifestos in twenty democracies, identifying an evident divide between left and right in the area of economic policies. It manifested itself as a conflict between state regulation and free market. Some authors believe this division has become a 'super-issue', summarising all political positions and attitudes, even though its socioeconomic aspect might have been expanded in order to include certain post-materialist values (Dalton 2014: 124–127). Moreover, several authors have identified the development of a left--right socioeconomic divide in early stages of the formation of post-socialist party systems (Kitschelt 1995; Markus 1996).

Our study is operationalising the left-right divide in former socialist countries, utilising it to examine the impact of party ideology on public spending. We consider public spending to be the main indicator of the conflicting socioeconomic policies of left and right. Moreover, it is arguably a most indicative area for exploring different effects of party ideology, since the size and composition of the government expenditures clearly indicate the effects of state intervention, presumably depending on programmatic preferences of left or right governments. Namely, because of their pursuit towards social equality, we assume that the left governments would strive for a higher level of intervention in the economy, increasing social transfers and other services – which would ultimately be manifested in expanded public expenditure. The opposite is expected from the right parties in power: programmatic commitment towards deregulation, privatisation, marketisation and fiscal conservatism, suggesting that these parties would strive towards lower spending. Our aim is to establish whether the assumed ideological positions of ruling parties in CEE would translate to expected policy outcomes.

Theoretical Framework and the Ongoing Debate

The relationship between party ideology and public spending has been often examined, albeit mostly in countries with longer democratic traditions. One of the pioneering studies was the work of David Cameron (1978), who analysed trends of the government expenditure in 18 developed Western democracies, from 1960 to 1975. Cameron noted a positive correlation between participation of left parties in the government and increases in total spending. Later that year, Bruno Frey (1978) came up with similar findings in two cases he had examined: the UK and the West Germany. In a comparative study covering the OECD countries between 1970 and 1980, Murrell (1985) employed a similar dependent variable: instead of public spending, he analysed the number of public employees, identifying a strong positive correlation between the strength of socialist parties and the size of the public sector.

Hicks and Swank (1984) examined spending patterns in 18 developed democracies, finding a strong link between ideological variables and a level of social transfers. Their results underline the importance of segmenting the individual budget components in order to further explore the correlation. Almost two decades later, similar research was conducted by Kittel and Obinger (2003), who explored the effects on social transfers in European countries. The findings indicated a strong effect of ideology on expenditure patterns in Western Europe during the 1980s, with a weakening tendency in the last decade of the 20th century. The study also identified a strong influence of other economic predictors, such as openness of the economy, GDP growth and unemployment rates, asserting their importance in explaining the expenditure levels. Contrary to Kittel and Obinger, Potrafke (2011) found a significant effect of the leftist parties on spending surges even in the period after 1990.

Several authors examined the impact of ideology in the USA. Berry and Lowery (1987) analysed spending fluctuations over four decades after the Second World War, identifying increased transfers when Democrats were in power and budget cuts when Republicans ruled. Similar findings were published by Lewis-Beck and Rice (1985), who investigated the period from 1930–1980, while Golden and Poterba (1980) calculated a 10 percent cutback in government spending during Republican administrations.

In one of the first studies that differentiated centre parties from both left and right, Duane Swank (1988) examined the levels of public spending in 18 liberal democracies. The results confirmed presumed hypotheses on the party impact. Similar was found by Comiskey (1993), who identified furthermore strong effects of the electoral budget cycle and of the age structure, concluding that older populations put pressure on governments to spend more on social transfers.

Devising further previous findings, three authors directly tested the effect of the right and left-wing on public spending in 15 Western countries, find-

ing significant increases in expenditure when the left parties exercised power (Blais et al. 1993). They also found a strong positive impact of rising unemployment rates on spending growth, indicating that higher unemployment leads to an expansion of social safety net. A slightly more complex model was provided by Pickering and Rockey (2011), who tested the impact of ideology on the budget spending in 17 developed democracies. They concluded that correlation demonstrates a strong positive coefficient. Finally, a 2013 research examined the effect of ruling party ideology on different components of spending in 22 countries between 1988 and 2008, once again confirming a significant increase in social transfers over the periods of leftist governments (Bove – Efthyvoulou 2013).

There is also conflicting evidence. Imbeau et al. (2001) famously conducted a meta-analysis of the studies dealing with the left-right government composition and its policy outputs, identifying a significant partisan effect in only 37% of the studies testing either total spending or the size of the state. Naturally, analysing hundreds of papers, they did not specify the context of every individual research, classifying them only in several basic categories. For example, they cited Solano (1983), who had tested an impact of the left-wing governments on spending in 16 democracies, as one of the authors who very early in the debate disproved the importance of the partisan effect. However, it should be noted that Solano's study was limited to only a single year of analysis – 1968, indicating a need to conduct a longitudinal research in order to prove continuous partisan influence.

In contrast to the number of researchers examining the correlation in Western democracies, similar studies focused on Central and Eastern Europe have remained scarce. One of the few was the work of Careja and Emmenegger (2009), who tested not just total government spending, but also specific areas of budgetary expenditure in 12 countries over the first decade of the transition. Their findings imply that the impact of the government composition is statistically the most significant factor in explaining spending levels, along with a strong positive correlation between participation of the left-wing parties in the government and increases in not only total spending, but also in social transfers. Tavits and Letki (2009) argued the opposite, surprisingly claiming that the leftist parties had stronger incentives and better opportunities to cut spending during transition because of a more cohesive electorate, the need to demonstrate distancing from socialist policies and objective demands stemming from supranational economic and political integration. The rightist parties, they also asserted, were subjected to populist pressure to provide expanded social spending. This was illustrated with case studies from Hungary and Poland, particularly emphasising the neoliberal reforms conducted by the nominally leftist Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), especially over the 1994–1998 term. Aware that MSZP could be an isolated case with no broader implications for the

rest of the transitional countries, the authors further corroborated the claim by testing the partisan influence on spending in 13 post-socialist countries, for the period from 1989 to 2004. However, their work was heavily criticised by Coman (2019), who stated that the manifesto-based measure of ideology employed by Tavits and Letki was not suitable for this kind of analysis, primarily because of the time-bias – explaining that ideological positions being mapped in this way might not be mutually comparable in a time series. Moreover, Coman claimed that spending levels were mostly the result of external constraints CEE countries faced during the transition and EU integration, and not of the party ideology. In a recent study, Pavlović and Bešić (2019) examined the impact of various political variables on fiscal policies in 15 former socialist European countries, concluding that ideology is not a significant predictor. It should be noted that the formation of partisan variable in this research could be subjected to the same criticism Coman had stated earlier. Namely, the two authors also used the Manifesto Project, and moreover, determined the positions of coalitions on a left-right scale employing only the manifesto-based position of cabinet's median agent.

There is clearly conflicting evidence regarding variables affecting spending in CEE countries. Expanding on the work of the cited authors, our study investigates if there is a significant correlation between party ideology and the level of public spending with a more comprehensive model of variables, sampling every parliamentary democracy from Central and Eastern Europe over the complete period since the fall of socialism.

Research Design

This study covers a period of 28 years (1990 to 2017) in 16 former socialist states of Central and Eastern Europe, selected mainly according to the criteria of democracy (Marshall 2013) and parliamentary or premier-presidential systems (Shugart 2005: 333–341). The institutional outline of these systems allows us to determine the direct influence of parliamentary-elected cabinets on spending policies. The 16 countries are: Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Slovenia, Croatia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania. Several observations for these countries are excluded from the sample for two reasons: 1) the period of participation in larger federations (Czechoslovakia, former Yugoslav countries, former Soviet countries), mainly because of the complexity of division of budgetary competences between the federal and republic levels; as well as 2) the duration of active armed conflicts, due to a changed cost structure during the wartime. The hypotheses are tested in a regression statistical model with the ideological position of ruling parties serving as the main independent variable.

Hypotheses

To construct a suitable framework for the analysis, several groups of hypotheses are formed. The first group is dedicated to determining the impact of party ideology and other alternative explanators on public spending. The second group refers to the specific impact of left, right or centre parties and coalitions on spending fluctuations. Finally, the third group concerns the manifestation of ideology effect within the expenditure structure, specifying several components of the budget in which the effect of ideology is expected to be demonstrated.

> Hypothesis 1a: *The ideology of ruling parties has the strongest effect on the level of public spending in former socialist countries.*

This claim places the ideology on one side of the explanation, with all other possible factors on the other, in the form of alternative explanatory variables. The complex nature of public spending, its formation and trends, can be objectively influenced by a number of factors. Through alternative hypotheses, we assume the impact of four additional groups of variables:

> Hypothesis 1b: *Economic factors have the strongest effect on the level of public spending in former socialist countries.*

> Hypothesis 1c: *A design of the political system has the strongest effect on the level of public spending in former socialist countries.*

> Hypothesis 1d: *Demographic factors have the strongest effect on the level of public spending in former socialist countries.*

> Hypothesis 1e: *Contextual factors of the transitional period have the strongest effect on the level of public spending in former socialist countries.*

Contextual factors, as it will be explained later in more detail, include the level of transformation, a history of armed conflicts during the transition, and the achieved level of EU accession.

The following group of hypotheses aims to establish the trends in spending in relation to the party ideology. The hypothesis relating to the centre parties does not presume that these governments will maintain expenditures at the same levels as their leftist or rightist predecessors, nor will they try to balance the budgets between the left and right governments. Rather, the position of the centre is derivative, assuming that they will not produce statistically significant expenditure trends, and meaning that the centre does not have a systematic position on the issue. This claim is consistent with the composition of the

centre field in CEE countries, which can include Christian democratic parties; former left-wing parties which adopted a third-way approach and compromised with free market liberalism; a number of catch-all populist parties with no firm ideological roots; but also different regionalist or minority interest parties.

Hypothesis 2a. *There is an increase in public spending when left-wing governments are in power in former socialist countries.*

Hypothesis 2b. *There is a decrease in public spending when right-wing governments are in power in former socialist countries.*

Hypothesis 2c. *There is no statistically significant change in public spending when centre governments are in power in former socialist countries.*

Finally, the third group of hypotheses assumes the manifestation of the partisan effect along specific budget components. These expectations are based on the traditional leftist interest in elimination of social injustices; hence, the increase in spending during their governments can be expected in segments affecting the amelioration of inequality. Some of these proposals have already been tested in the aforementioned studies of Western democracies. The budget components in question include social transfers (Hicks – Swank 1984; Comiskey 1993; Blais et al. 1993; Kittel – Obinger 2003; Potrafke 2011; Bove – Efthyvoulou 2013); environmental protection, not only because of the green parties' traditional left-wing orientation (Bahro 1984), but also due to the right-wing tendency to deregulate this area; as well as education (Careja – Emmenegger 2009; Potrafke 2011; Jungblut 2014).

Hypothesis 3a. *There is an increase in social transfers when left-wing governments are in power in former socialist countries.*

Hypothesis 3b. *There is an increase in spending in the budget component of environmental protection when left-wing governments are in power in former socialist countries.*

Hypothesis 3c. *There is an increase in spending in the budget component of education when left-wing governments are in power in former socialist countries.*

Variables

The main dependent variable is the annual level of public spending, regarded as a sum of value of all goods and services, including compensation of employees, purchased from the state budget (Careja – Emmenegger 2009: 173), and

expressed as a percentage of GDP (World Bank 2018). Other dependent variables relate to selected segments of public spending: the annual expenditure on social transfers, which include pensions, unemployment benefits, family benefits, health benefits, education and housing subsidies, and the social assistance (Eurostat 2018); the consumption for the entire environmental protection component (Eurostat 2018); and the expenditure on education, which includes all the expenses for all levels from pre-school to higher education (World Bank 2018). These variables have also been expressed as a percentage of GDP.

The main independent variable is the ideological position of the government, expressed in three distinctive categories: left, right and centre. A number of the authors examining the relationship between ideologies and spending used a one-dimensional spatial model, that is, the left-right scale (Cameron 1978; Frey 1978; Hicks – Swank 1984; Swank 1988; Comiskey 1993; Blais et al. 1993; Crepaz 1996; Tavits – Letki 2009; Pickering – Rockey 2011). Reduction of usually complex spaces of ideological competition to a single dimension is sometimes recognised as a problem, especially in the CEE context, which includes less programmatic political parties, a confusing structure of cleavages, and socio-cultural dimensions of ideology influencing the general left-right position of parties. While arguing in favour of a one-dimensional scale, Ian Budge (2013) claims that, despite a wide variety of values constituting party ideology, the constructs of these values are by no means accidental – but derived from common development and further embedded in categories of left and right. Several authors have tested the positions of parties on various dimensions, concluding their tendency to be interrelated to a general context of the dominant left-right divide (Kitschelt 1994; Hooghe et al. 2002; Marks et al. 2006). As one of the conclusions of their extensive study, Benoit and Laver (2006: 157–159) stated that it was possible to predict precisely the position of the parties on a one-dimensional scale in relation to their position on individual policy dimensions, implying that the left-right scale contains the sum of all ideological divisions of a party system. In addition, the findings of our study could also contribute to the debate, providing new evidence on policy outcomes of left and right.

The independent variable was derived from an expert survey of the ruling parties and coalitions in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Bursać 2018). The surveys such as Manifesto Project or Chapel Hill have not been used primarily because of the missing data on the number of years for the sample countries, but also, in the case of the Manifesto Project, due to the salience theory. Namely, the Manifesto Research Group treats election manifestos as isolated documents without any analysis of other party features relevant to measuring the ideology. Some critics believe that electoral programmes should be understood more as indicators of the current affairs in the society or as signals to the electorate, rather than a relatively permanent ideological position of the party (Franzmann – Kaiser 2006: 165). The employed dataset has been

retrieved from an expert survey which included a multinational panel of 273 experts for CEE party systems, asking the respondents to locate each party on a single ordinal left-right scale, ranging from the value 0 (extreme left) to the value 10 (extreme right). The dataset also includes average ideology of every government, calculated as a weighted mean of member parties, in relation to their parliamentary strength. On that basis, we have extrapolated three positions: left (the values ranging from 0 to 4), centre (from 4.01 to 5.99) and right (6 to 10). Ultimately, this gave us a total of 373 observations, with the unit of analysis being a single fiscal year for every of the 16 countries sampled. In 79 of these cases the leftist governments were in power, 129 cases belonged to the centre governments, and 165 to the right-wing cabinets.

Since investigation of the public spending determinants is one of the most prominent questions of both economics and political sciences, a number of studies have been produced to tackle the issue. The partisan approach we accepted stipulates that ideological preferences determine fluctuations of public spending. However, government expenditure includes different functions of the state and could be influenced by a variety of factors, prompting us to consider an inclusion of other potential determinants in the model. Not all of the surveyed studies include the same set of controls and alternatives, but there are certain variables that are traditionally a part of the model. They most notably include economic factors and demographic data, but also several variables that are connected with political institutions. These factors can also cause spending levels to change, so we must evaluate their effect to ensure a proper estimation of the party impact. Moreover, due to the specific framework of the sampled countries, we have constructed three additional variables that can alter the spending levels, with regard to a conflict history, EU accession and a level of transformation of former socialist societies. Bearing in mind the limitations of the previous studies, it is important to assemble a comprehensive model, as well as a large data set. Following a common practice, we estimate the models using ordinary least squares regression with panel corrected standard errors and controls for autocorrelation and multicollinearity.

As stated earlier, we also employ four groups of alternative predictors in the model. The economic group includes variables such as unemployment rate (World Bank 2018). Based on several studies (Rice 1986; Kittel – Obinger 2003), we expect to find a positive relationship between high unemployment and an increase in expenditure, especially social transfers (Blais et al. 1993; Careja – Emmenegger 2009), assuming that governments tend to spend more in order to strengthen the social safety net when high unemployment occurs. We also assume that the rate of GDP growth (World Bank 2018) would have a positive effect on spending, with governments pursuing expansionary policies in the years of economic growth (Crepaz 1996; Kittel – Obinger 2003; Holzner 2010). Moreover, we predict a similar positive coefficient with respect to the

level of the public debt (IMF 2018), assuming that governments would borrow partially to finance a higher spending (Battaglini – Coate 2008). On the other hand, GDP per capita (World Bank 2018) is used as an indicator of a general standard (Easterlin 2000: 7–10), with expectation to demonstrate the differences in spending preferences in the countries with a higher standard of living, especially when it comes to education and environment. The final economic variable is constructed as binary and refers to the existence of arrangement with the International Monetary Fund in a given year (IMF 2018). We expect a negative coefficient of this relation, because such arrangements usually require structural adjustments that almost always involve certain cuts in consumption (Nooruddin – Simmons 2006).

The political variable group includes several characteristics of the party system and institutional design. The electoral year variable indicates the government in the last year of their terms, with the expectation of more expansive fiscal policies from those cabinets, in accordance with the political budget cycle theory (Klomp – de Haan 2013; Aaskoven – Lassen 2017). The electoral system as predictor is reduced to examination of the effect of a closed-list proportional system. In this way, we have set a distinction between closed systems on one side, and all other more personalised variations of electoral systems in use in CEE countries over the last three decades (which include different variants of open list, mixed member or majority voting). We are expecting that the use of closed lists results in lower spending, because of the limited number of funding requests made by the autonomous political actors chosen relatively independently from the centralised party bodies. In more open versions of the seat allocation, we presume there is a motivation for members of parliaments to fight for a share in budgetary allocation in order to satisfy their electorate, causing an increase in spending. Similar logic is employed in construction of coalition size variable, presuming that more veto players cause raises in spending (Pavlović – Bešić 2014). Furthermore, we expect a positive coefficient for bicameral systems in which the upper houses have budgetary competences, because of an additional veto player in the budget process. We also test the effect of minority governments, bearing in mind that previous findings on the issue have been conflicting (Edin – Ohlsson 1991; Towliat 2014).

We expect a positive coefficient from demographic variables, a third group of alternative predictors. We test the effect of the share of the people under 15 and over 65 in the general population (World Bank 2018). In both cases, we assume that a larger share of these groups would cause an increase in spending, especially in social transfers (Rice 1986; Pampel – Williamson 1988; Comiskey 1993); but also in the segment of education, in relation to the younger population.

The final group of contextual variables is constructed to include three potential predictors. Bearing in mind that most indicators related to the level of openness of the economy, democratic transformation, the rule of law or the success

of transition are mutually collinear, we created a new variable: the transformation level. This composite variable includes the Corruption Perceptions Index, (Transparency International 2018), the Bertelsmann Foundation's Transformation Index (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018), as well as the indicators of the openness of the economy: a share of foreign trade in GDP, foreign direct investment and a share of tertiary sector in GDP (World Bank 2018). However, due to the missing data in individual databases, the application of the new variable narrowed the initial sample to only 180 observations. Although this figure alone could be sufficient to draw conclusions about the effects on public spending, we nevertheless employ two different regression models. One of them, with a smaller number of observations, includes the new variable; the other does not. We expect a positive coefficient from the transformation level, with several authors arguing that integration of a country into the global economy is accompanied by the expansion of social programs in order to compensate the risks of global competition in the labour market (Cameron 1978; Ruggie 1983). Other contextual variables include a binary variable of conflict legacy, assuming rise in spending in countries where armed conflicts have occurred lately; and the binary variable of EU negotiations, believing that candidate countries allocate more financial resources in the process of adaptation to EU regulations and standards, especially in areas such as the environment (Sciberras 2002).

Findings

Hypotheses regarding the fluctuations in the levels of general spending were tested in four similar models (see: Table 1). Models 1 and 2 differ only in the ideological category of right and left whereas the results of the coefficients of other predictors remain identical in both. Models 3 and 4 include an additional variable: the transformation level. As mentioned earlier, the inclusion of this predictor significantly increases the percentage of explained variance, but to the detriment of the number of observations.

The correlation between party ideology and the level of spending is expected and statistically significant, but it is important to notice that ideology is not the main predictor. The impact of particular political, demographic and contextual variables proves to be more robust. Nevertheless, the partisan variable is following the presumed logic: the left-wing governments have a positive effect, and vice versa, the right-wing cabinets cause lower levels of government consumption. Regarding the ideological centre, the results suggest that these governments, when significant, also tend to cut spending – sometimes even in a greater scope than rightist parties and coalitions. The qualitative analysis of centre governments' composition in CEE implies that many centre parties that were cutting spending came from the leftist tradition, as former left-wing parties which, after the first period of 1990s transition, ideologically moved

Table 1: Impact of party ideology (and other predictors) on general public spending

	model 1	model 2	model 3	model 4
(constant)	23.012** (.547)	23.824** (.620)	20.825** (.454)	22.115** (.558)
Left government	.812+ (.417)		1.289** (.417)	
Centre government	-.101 (.331)	-.913* (.461)	.308 (.294)	-.981* (.456)
Right government		-.812+ (.417)		-1.289** (.417)
Unemployment rate	-.031 (.026)	-.031 (.026)	-.051* (.025)	-.051* (.025)
GDP growth	-.157** (.038)	-.157** (.038)	-.116** (.030)	-.116** (.030)
Public debt	-.038** (.007)	-.038** (.007)	-.001 (.007)	-.001 (.007)
IMF	-.028 (.313)	-.028 (.313)	-.396 (.285)	-.396 (.285)
Electoral year	-.163 (.282)	-.163 (.282)	-.030 (.246)	-.030 (.246)
Closed list PR	-2.415** (.467)	-2.415** (.467)	-3.075** (.444)	-3.075** (.444)
Coalition size	-.226* (.084)	-.226* (.084)	-0.86 (.071)	-0.86 (.071)
Minority government	-1.709** (.412)	-1.709** (.412)	-1.020** (.365)	-1.020** (.365)
Upper house	-.331 (.372)	-.331 (.372)	1.024** (.352)	1.024** (.352)
Population below 15	2.100** (.549)	2.100** (.549)	2.835** (.533)	2.835** (.533)
Population above 65	-3.690** (1.138)	-3.690** (1.138)	-4.967** (1.026)	-4.967** (1.026)
EU negotiations	1.596** (.336)	1.596** (.336)	-.220 (.443)	-.220 (.443)
Post-conflict	3.343** (.514)	3.343** (.514)	4.507** (.529)	4.507** (.529)
Transformation level			.533** (.145)	.533** (.145)
R^2	.396	.396	.685	.685
CI	12.673	14.621	12.535	15.723
N	297	297	183	183

Dependent variable: public spending as percentage of GDP
+p < 0.1; *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01

closer to the centre, similarly to the transformation process of socialists and social democrats to third way parties in Western democracies. We can identify such spending trends with the governments of the Social Democratic Party of Croatia, the Bulgarian Socialist Party, the Socialist Party of Albania and sometimes with Fico's Smer cabinet in Slovakia and the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia's cabinets. These parties have slightly moved towards the centre over the last two decades. Moreover, some of the left-wing parties also reduced spending levels when in centrist coalitions with conservative or liberal parties, which was the case with Sobotka's cabinet (Czech Social Democratic Party), Ponta cabinet (Social Democratic Party of Romania) and some of the coalition governments led by the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania. This also stands for a part of social conservative centre governments in position to push for reform after periods of stagnation, such as Dzurinda's first cabinet in Slovakia or various centre right coalitions in Baltic countries.

The closed list system proves to be a major negative predictor. A reduced number of local or autonomous veto players inherent to this electoral system results in a significant reduction of spending in all four models. In this sense, we can argue that the centralisation of intra-party decision-making strongly affects the efficiency of fiscal allocation. Minority cabinet is also an important negative predictor according to all four models, which is in accordance with a study claiming that these governments tend to pursue restrictive fiscal policies (Towliat 2014).

Demography also demonstrates a strong relation to the dependent variable. And while the impact of the population under the age of 15 is positive and expected, the population over 65 produced a surprising result, seemingly causing the levels of spending to drop. One possible explanation for this anomaly could be the departure of state employees into retirement, in the course of the continuous shrinking of the public sectors in CEE countries over the last three decades. If this outflow could reduce spending, it implies that pension costs in the sampled countries would be notably lower than the expenditures for public sector wages (Holzmann – Guven 2009). Additionally, in some of these countries the second and third pillars of the pension system help reduce the pressure on state funded pension costs. Of course, this result could prove to be a methodological anomaly, although we tested correlations separately and received similar coefficients. Nevertheless, a more detailed exploration of these findings would require a separate study.

Some of the other variables also seem to be important predictors of spending. Post-conflict legacy yields the single strongest positive coefficient in the whole model, indicating that countries affected by armed conflicts allocate significantly higher resources, presumably to support humanitarian issues and reconstruction. It must be noted that post-conflict spending is relevant only for a limited part of our sample. Moreover, it naturally decreases over time,

taking into consideration that the last armed conflict in the sampled countries happened in North Macedonia in 2001, with programs aimed at alleviation of war consequences in these countries coming to an end. Expected positive effects regarding the transformation level and EU accession are also confirmed. However, these two variables tend to display a certain, albeit statistically unimportant level of collinearity in constructed models, which seems logical, as the EU accession process ran in parallel with transformation of these societies and their opening to the World.

Spending Structure

Similar to general spending, the hypotheses concerning three budget components – social transfers, environmental protection and education – are also tested within two models, depending on the inclusion of the transformation level variable (see: Table 2)

The party ideology demonstrates a strong impact on social transfers, and, to a lesser extent, on education budgets. On the other hand, the results suggest that ideological preferences have no effect on environmental spending, raising the issue of green politics' viability in CEE. It seems that post-materialist values in transitional countries have not been sufficiently embedded yet in party systems or in the social cleavage structure. The claim is further supported by the modest success of environmentalist parties in post-socialist countries. Over the last three decades, only a handful have managed to participate in ruling coalitions as minor partners, in the Czech Republic (2006–2010), Romania (1991–1992 and 1996–2000) and Slovenia (1992–1993). There are two notable exceptions. After being a minority partner in multiple governments in the 1990s, the Latvian Green Party merged into the agrarian Union of Greens and Farmers, participating in almost every government since 2002, and in 2004 appointing the first prime minister from a nominally green party anywhere in the World (Van Haute 2016: 118). The second are the Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union, which emerged as a winner in the 2016 election and has been leading the ruling coalition since. However, despite their official title, these two parties are often described as populist, nationalist or conservative, marginalising the environmental aspects of their party programs (Auers 2012; Ramonaite 2020). The socially conservative values of these parties are different from the core ideology of green parties in the rest of Europe, sometimes even resulting in their mutual alienation. For example, the Latvian Union of Greens and Farmers has not been a member of either of the green groups during their stint in the European Parliament, while the Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union became a member of Greens – European Free Alliance group only in 2014, after years of affiliation with populist Eurosceptics. Nevertheless, these exceptions do not have much impact on the correlation between ideology and environmental spending in CEE.

Table 2: Impact of party ideology (and other predictors) on selected budget components

	social transfers		environment		education	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
(constant)	11.945** (.564)	11.759** (.672)	.444** (.102)	.524** (.115)	5.530** (.355)	5.837** (.398)
Left government	.697+ (.404)	1.597** (.550)	.015 (.064)	.053 (.085)	.413* (.194)	.610* (.258)
Centre government	.344 (.297)	-.237 (.340)	.021 (.045)	-.084 (.052)	-.385* (.177)	-.297 (.197)
Unemployment rate	.059 (.038)	.027 (.048)				
GDP growth	-.141** (.035)	-.131** (.033)	-.005 (.005)	-.003 (.005)	-.035+ (.019)	-.030 (.019)
Public debt	.063** (.007)	.073** (.008)	.000 (.001)	.001 (.001)	-.016** (.004)	-.008+ (.005)
GDP per capita			-.000 (.000)	-.000* (.000)	-.000 (.000)	-.000+ (.000)
IMF	-.394 (.334)	-.760 (.485)	-.152** (.052)	-.130* (.064)	-.207 (.186)	-.611* (.261)
Electoral year	-.169 (.264)	-.092 (.295)	-.021 (.042)	-.034 (.048)	-.117 (.152)	-.062 (.171)
Closed list PR	-2.412** (.473)	-.677 (.609)			-.364 (.275)	-.803* (.340)
Coalition size	-.211 (1.019)	-1.554 (.982)	.056** (.021)	.100** (.025)		
Minority government	-.558 (.357)	.292 (.395)				
Upper house	.656* (.309)	-.086 (.382)				
Population below 15	-.774 (.644)	.050 (.823)	.293* (.127)	.331* (.157)	.043 (.391)	.339 (.464)
Population above 65	-3.008** (1.096)	-2.361+ (1.351)				
EU negotiations	-.238 (.328)	-.359 (.636)	-.011 (.053)	-.055 (.082)		
Post-conflict	1.820** (.586)	-.072 (.833)	-.433** (.065)	-.520** (.080)	1.548** (.291)	1.609** (.348)
Transformation level		-.338* (.169)		-.023 (.025)		.373** (.102)
R^2	.536	.669	.362	.468	.265	.485
CI	13.821	15.208	14.560	14.528	13.664	13.978
N	216	131	153	100	212	122

Dependent variable: public spending as percentage of GDP
+p < 0.1; *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01

We have hypothesised that GDP per capita variable could display differences in spending patterns in the countries with higher living standards, especially with regard to the acceptance of post-materialist values, but the expectation proves to be unfounded – the effect of this variable is virtually non-existent. On the other hand, negative coefficients of the IMF variable indicate that education and environment spending are among those to be cut during the structural adjustment arrangements.

As for the variables affecting social transfer spending, a statistically significant negative coefficient is found in relation to GDP growth. One potential explanation for this result is that the increase in transfers is governments' mechanism to combat social problems in the years of the economic crises, which are characterised by declining GDP. Namely, the average spending on social transfers in CEE countries rose to 14.34% of GDP during the Great Recession maximum (2008 to 2010), a notable increase from the average 13.17% over the previous two decades (World Bank 2018). Correspondingly, after 2010 the levels of social spending were again in decline. These changes might also be a function of fluctuations in GDP levels, bearing in mind that spending levels are operationalised as relative to GDP. This would cause social spending to rise when GDP drops during the crisis, and correspondingly, to fall due to the rebound of the economy after 2010. The separate analysis of the GDP data demonstrates that in many countries social spending in absolute numbers increased or at least remained at the similar levels during the period of the economic crisis, giving grounds for an explanation of expenditure levels that is based on policy actions of the governments, and not methodological anomaly. The share of population above 65 is repeating similar coefficients as in the previous section, exhibiting effects as a negative predictor. Closed list PR is another negative predictor, for both social and education spending. In this electoral system, the electorate demands for a higher level of distribution can be more easily declined, since the party heads have more control over MPs, while the connection between representatives and the electorate is much weaker. Finally, the transformation level variable does not corroborate the presumed theory: even though we anticipated that integration into the global economy would be accompanied by an increase in social benefits, this was not confirmed.

In regard to environmental spending, the population under 15 has a positive effect: we can conclude that a larger share of younger populations puts more pressure on governments to deal with pollution and climate issues. The result is in accordance with Inglehart (1997: 133–137), who found that a fundamental change in values of a society, especially in terms of adoption of post-materialist worldviews, occurs when the younger population starts to replace the elderly in the share of adults.

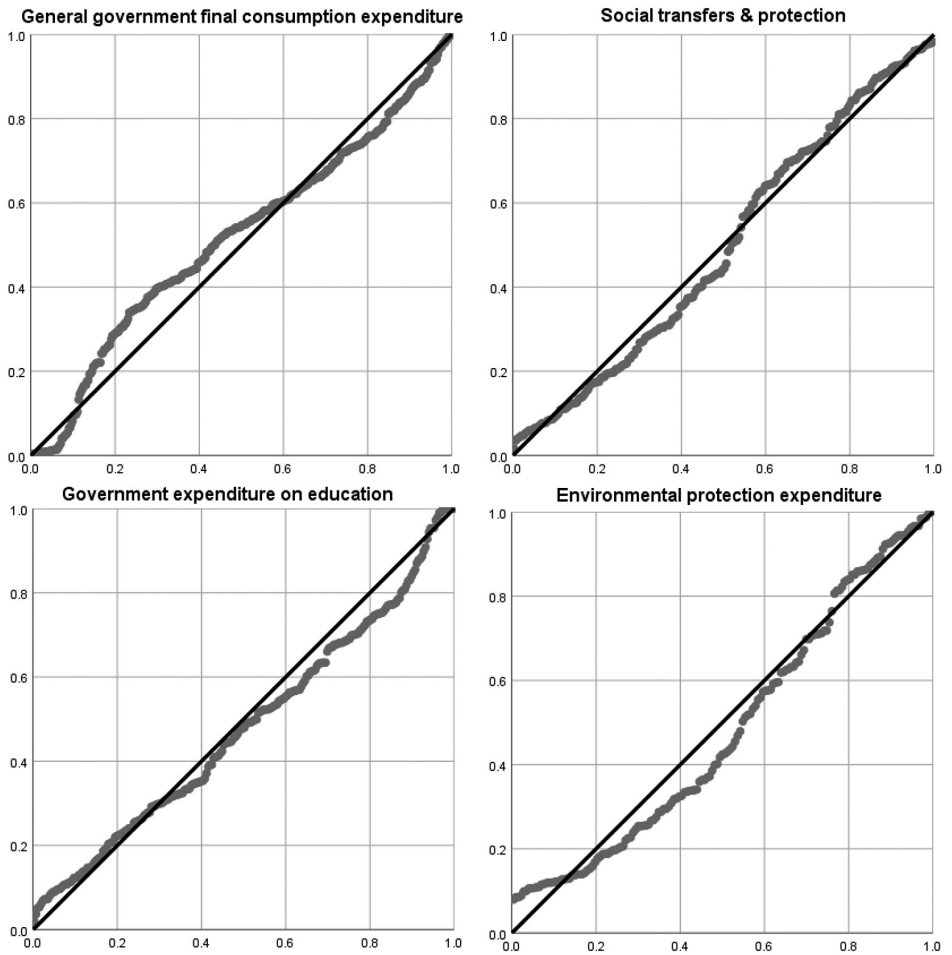
As with the general spending, post-conflict legacy seems to be the most important predictor in explaining the levels of expenditure in the analysed budget components. We found a significant increase in social and education

spending in conflict-ridden countries, presumably caused by humanitarian issues, integration and reconstruction of the infrastructure. On the contrary, environmental spending decreases in conflict areas. The post-conflict societies may be dominated by other topics and not concerned with the environment, with the budget funds being nominally allocated to other, presumably more urgent domains of spending in war-torn countries.

Robustness

Robustness of the results was ratified in several ways. Firstly, normality is demonstrated through predicted probability plots (see: Figure 1), determining a relatively normal distribution in all four cases, in relation to four outcome

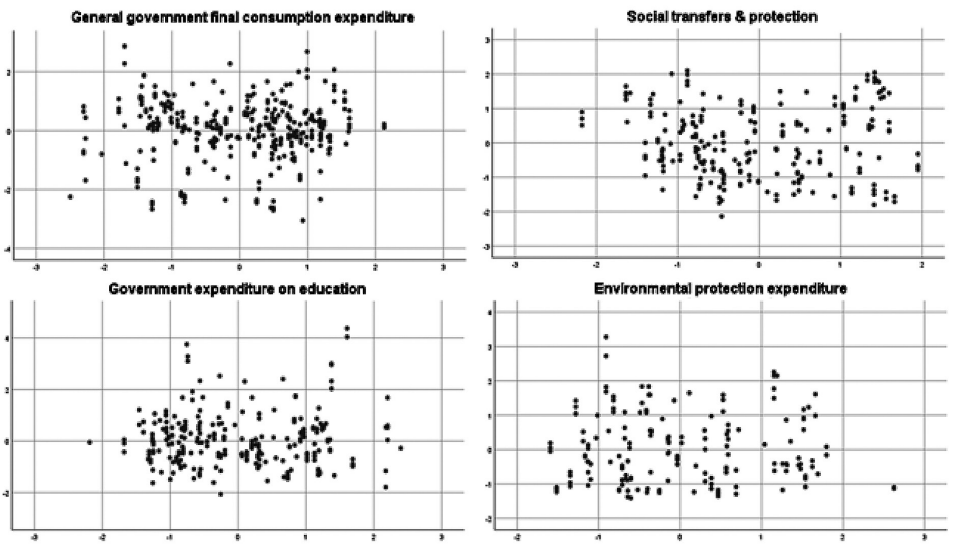
Figure 1: Normality tests of four dependent variables



variables: general expenditure, social transfers, expenditure on education and environmental spending. In order to test whether our observations are mutually independent, we apply two methods. Namely, the condition indices (CI, see above: Table 1; Table 2) are below or slightly above the referent values, as expected with models including such a large number of variables. This suggests absent or very weak multicollinearity within the models. Because we are dealing with data in a time series, autocorrelation is further examined with the Durbin-Watson test, whose coefficients fall within the rule of thumb values for all four dependent variables (general expenditure DW=1.752; social transfers DW=1.822; education expenditure DW=2.086; environmental expenditure DW=1.968).

Furthermore, we plotted predicted values along with residuals to test the homoscedasticity of the linear regression model. Roughly rectangular patterns of four scatterplots indicate equal distribution of residuals and unbiased results. Finally, stationarity of the data was validated manually, through segmentation of the data in separate models testing the correlation in different decades. The results did not differ significantly, despite some deviations concerning alternative predictors, which could be attributed to circumstances of different periods of time.

Figure 2. Homoscedasticity tests of four dependent variables



Conclusion

In this article we wonder how party ideology affects public spending in the post-socialist countries of Europe. Despite mixed evidence from previous studies, especially in the literature concerning public spending in CEE, we are able to

demonstrate that ideology influences public spending to certain extent, meaning that ideology matters, but only moderately. Several other potential determinants prove to be critical in explaining the fluctuations of government spending, resulting in stronger effects regarding both general expenditure and specific budget components. In countries that endured armed conflict during the transition, spending stands at a higher level; while those countries implementing a closed-list electoral system have lower spending levels, most likely because of elimination or at least reduction of independent actors in the budget process. Other political, demographic or contextual variables also display moderate effects on the outcome variable.

Although some results regarding alternative predictors are ambiguous, this should not warrant their dismissal, but a further research of these dimensions. Such questions stemming from our study are related to the negative effect of older demographics, which was originally presumed to put more pressure on social budgets; to spending structure in post-conflict societies; as well as to connections of GDP fluctuations with the expenditure levels, which could provide further explanations about governments' actions during and after the waves of economic crises.

General trends of spending in relation to party ideology are proving to be as expected. We identify the rise in expenditures over the periods of leftist governments, and vice versa, the drop during right cabinets, meaning that the second group of hypotheses is confirmed. The third group refers to specific budget components. While social transfers and education expenditure levels also tend to display a similar connection with the party variable, the impact on environmental spending is not identified. This result brings into question the place of green values in the framework of former socialist countries. The environmental budgets seem to be completely unrelated to ideological struggle, which is no surprise given the very modest success of green parties in CEE. With the changes in population, infusion of post-materialist values and global rise of awareness about environmental problems, this correlation should be revisited in the future.

Some data problems are inherent to these types of studies, employing pooled data across countries and decades. Possible limitations could include serial correlation and heteroscedasticity, which we try to control. The models include a large number of variables, adding to possible issues in terms of the precision of their construction and different data sources. This could be the case with the main predictor. Namely, party ideology data was taken from an expert survey, which was assessed as the best fit method for the construction of variables that could summarise party systems of 16 countries over three decades, but could imply potential bias of surveyed responders, as well as the issues of post-hoc measurement precision, especially regarding the time distance which could alter perceptions of certain parties and their policies in a historical perspective.

The expert survey database also calculated government ideological positions in relation to parliamentary strength of the member parties, while some other studies chose different methods, including the position of median agent, the prime minister's party or weighing cabinet seats. Moreover, grouping of scaled ideological positions from the survey database into three broad ideological categories suitable for our analysis certainly causes the loss of some nuances in assessing the partisan effect. Finally, as we said, the pooled data include parties from 16 countries from 1990 to 2017, which may differ significantly among themselves. Even though they share general post-socialist framework, Moldova in 1993 and Czech Republic in 2016 could potentially assign quite different meanings to the terms of right and left, although the left-right divide is estimated to be the most common denominator of these party systems.

Our findings call for further exploration of the substance and effects of left and right ideological positions, contributing to the debate on party systems of new democracies. It seems that political parties in former socialist countries tend to follow their proclaimed ideological position on the single dimensional divide, at least in the first decades of the transition and regarding the socioeconomic domain. The parties in CEE thus comply with the theoretically presupposed policy positions already seen in the studies examining Western democracies. This is expected considering the early formation of Eastern European parties. Some of them started out as reformers from the ruling parties, while others were anti-communist, evolving from different opposition groups which either tried to revive historical parties or tried to emulate party programs from Western democracies. In either case, the left-right divide was there from the beginning, and clearly manifested itself in policy outcomes.

But the question remains how this division will exhibit in the future. As we have seen, governments positioned in centre field already demonstrate effects closer to those of the right-wing, although many of them are led by parties nominally representing socialist or social democratic traditions. Along with further exploration of the meaning and outcomes of the centre position, the issue of the sustainability of the left also appeared over the course of our study. Namely, in the years after the economic crisis, the number of left-wing ruling parties in CEE plummeted, which seems to be a global trend. In many countries, these parties either lost popularity or made a compromise with other programmatic positions, moving away from the traditional leftist positions. The crisis of the left, along with the highlighted social-conservative dimension of the right and the rise of new populists, could be a sign of a permanent alteration of the left-right divide in CEE. If the competition moves permanently to other policy dimensions, this ideological division could become unimportant, making the correlation we have just examined relevant for historical perspective of these party systems and countries in general, but meaningless for future exploration and prediction.

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The Disintegration of Czech Parliamentary Parties: The Network Analysis of Co-Voting Strategies of the Parliamentary Party 'Renegades'[1]

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Abstract: *The main objective of this study is to capture and analyse the dynamics of the co-voting ties among the members of the parliamentary political party groups in two specific Czech cases, where some members of these parliamentary groups left their former party and joined new political entities. The study is of a quantitative nature, but the main findings are connected to qualitative insights as well. Network approach and methods were used for the analysis. The emphasis was put on the detection of possible rivalling communities in the constructed network of co-voting between deputies belonging to the analysed parliamentary party groups in respective periods. The co-voting was treated as a proxy indicator of possible relationship indicating either co-operation or rivalry between the deputies belonging to the political party suffering from an internal crisis. The primary outcome of the study was the identification of the co-voting strategies and dynamics of the co-voting between deputies who stayed in their former party, and renegades who switched.*

Keywords: ***legislative networks; the internal crisis of political party; Czech political parties; exit, voice, loyalty, neglect; co-voting.***

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Introduction

Political parties often suffer from an internal crisis. Such crises can be devastating, especially when the crisis hits a parliamentary party that is part of the governmental coalition. The main question that this study wants to address is what effect the internal crisis has on members of the party when it comes to voting in the parliament. Especially those party members who were displeased with the party's situation and consequently left their former party and founded a new one – were they loyal and did they vote cohesively with their other colleagues before the crisis escalated in full? Did they show any disapproval with the party situation before the party split during the parliamentary voting? And how did their co-voting with former party colleagues look after they established a new political platform or party? These are the main questions that this study aims to address.

For the purpose of this study, I have chosen two specific cases from Czech political history after the end of the communists' era in 1989. In both analysed cases, (the split of Civic Democrats in 1997 and the disintegration of Public Affairs in 2012) the investigated parties suffered from several severe internal crises that escalated in the middle of the parliamentary term. Both these parties were part of a ruling coalition, and their split had a major impact on the government. The split of Civic Democrats in autumn 1997 caused the fall of the government and led to premature parliamentary elections that took place six months after the party split. In the case of the disintegration of the political party Public Affairs, the government was able to survive with the support of the Public Affairs' 'renegades' who left the party and founded a new political platform LIDEM (Liberal Democrats). However, this government did not survive much longer as it suffered from other scandals and internal problems of its coalition members. The role of the government ended in July 2013, only a year after the dissolution of Public Affairs.

It should be stressed that even though the selected cases have in common the governmental position of the analysed parties, which were undergoing internal crises, there are several things that were specific for each party. The Civic Democratic Party was a successor of the Civic Forum – a political movement which was the main opponent of the communists' regime that emerged during the Velvet Revolution (Kopeček 2010: 200). Whereas Public Affairs was a small local party reshaped into a business-firm party (Havlík – Hloušek, 2014: 553). Moreover, the Civic Democratic Party and Public Affairs reached different levels of institutionalisation, they differed in terms of member numbers or in experience with previous parliamentary engagement.

The study will focus on the voting behaviour of the deputies who were members of these parties (Civic Democratic Party and Public Affairs) in their respective parliamentary terms. Emphasis will be put on the co-voting rates of those

deputies who left their party and joined new political platforms or parties and their former colleagues. The goal is to investigate voting strategies of the deputies who left their former party (in the study also called 'renegades').

The theoretical part of this paper provides the underlying rationale behind the possible scenarios of voting behaviour that the deputies that have left the party could have chosen. The theoretical framework draws heavily from the EVLN (exit, voice, loyalty, neglect) models connected to the theory of party unity also explained in the theoretical section of the paper. From the methodological perspective, the study relies on the legislative networks approaches and methods. These methods were explicitly chosen due to the relational nature of the co-voting behaviour between the MPs. The study also draws from the previous papers of the author (Brabec 2019; 2020), who focused on the co-voting behaviour of the Czech MPs in different periods and under different setups. The parliamentary roll-calls were fundamental for the quantitative analysis. The study also connects its quantitative results with the qualitative insights about the dynamic of the crisis that escalated into the dissolution of investigated political parties and tries to investigate which of the suggested scenarios of renegades' voting behaviour had more dramatic effects.

Theoretical background

Party Unity

The study aims to investigate the dynamics of co-voting behaviour of those deputies who were members of parliamentary political party group that split during the ongoing parliamentary term. The fact that these political parties split during an ongoing parliamentary term suggests that changes in the co-voting behaviour of those MPs who were dissatisfied with the situation or the politics of the political party for which they were elected could be present. This assumption builds on the theory of party unity elaborated by Ozbundun (1970) and later revised by Hazan (2003).

According to the theory of party unity – every political party and its members should pursue uniform acting (at least to some extent), especially when it comes to the voting in the parliament. This argument stems from the underlying concept of ideological cohesion based on the assumption that party colleagues tend to vote together because of their shared views and opinions and concept of party discipline. This suggests that the political party or its leaderships pressures the members of the party to act as the party requires (Hazan 2003: 3–4).

These theoretical frameworks were already explored by other researchers, such as Linek and Lacina (2011), Linek and Rakušanová (2002) and Dvořák (2017) who proved that the members of Czech political parties tend to act cohesively when it comes to voting in the parliament. However, most interestingly,

Dvořák (2017) points out that the cohesion of the political party decreases when the party suffers from an internal crisis.

Especially Dvořák's (2017) findings are the key incentives for further analysis of the co-voting behaviour of members of political party groups that split during the parliamentary term. Compared to the previous research on party unity of the Czech political parties, this study adds another dimension – the identification of specific subgroups inside parliamentary party groups that emerged from dissatisfied deputies. But what was the driving mechanism of the decision to leave the party?

Exit, Voice, Loyalty and Neglect Model

According to the theory of exit, voice and loyalty presented by Albert O. Hirschman (1970), dissatisfied members of an organisation have several options (or strategies) they can choose from. The concept of exit represents an active strategy where a dissatisfied member of the organisation decides to leave instantaneously or thinks about leaving (Rusbult et al. 1988). Voice is also an active strategy where a dissatisfied member of the organisation chooses to remain in the organisation while trying to change the situation he/she is displeased with either with a positive (Luchak 2003) or negative (Turnley – Feldman 1999) attitude. The concept of loyalty could be labelled as a factor (or passive strategy) which is taken by those members of the organisation who wait and support the organisation until the situation is improved (Rusbult et al. 1988; McShane 2006). Another possible strategy of neglect was later added by Rusbult (1982) and her colleagues. Neglect as well as the exit is labelled as a destructive strategy, and similarly to loyalty, it is also considered as a passive one. Those members who choose the neglect strategy doesn't positively contribute to the improvement of the situation in the organisation and tend to put less effort towards the activities that they would do under normal circumstances – such as less working effort, reduced productivity etc (Rusbult – Zembrodt – Gunn 1982; Farrell 1983).[2] As Withey and Cooper (1989: 522) point out, the concepts represented by the EVLN (exit, voice, loyalty, neglect) model are empirically and conceptually distinguishable, but the boundaries between them may be imprecise.[3]

2 A study of Aravopoulou, Mitsakis and Malone (2017) provides an extensive literature review on the topic of the exit, voice, loyalty and neglect model, as well as it points out limitations and challenges connected to this model.

3 EVLN models were also used by political scientists such as Lyons and Lowery (1986), who were investigating citizens responses to dissatisfaction in urban communities or more recent study of Nonnenmacher and Rohrbach (2019), who used EVLN models for explanation of decline of party membership in Germany.

Legislative Purposiveness

Connected to the theoretical framework of party unity and in concert with EVLN models, Owens (2003: 2) stresses that the logic of legislators' behaviour is purposive. Following this logic, deputies could be tempted to switch political parties if the benefits of switching exceed the costs of this decision (Owens 2003: 12). In other words, they are perceived as rational actors who have the ability to adapt to a situation such as long-lasting intra-party crises with regards to the previously mentioned EVLN strategies.

Scenarios and hypothesis

The above-mentioned theories combined, offer a cohesive view on the deputies' co-voting behaviour in times of intra-party crisis. The purposive behaviour of deputies adds the importance of the rational acting of the deputies to the theory of party unity. Moreover, the rationality of the deputies' behaviour is a necessary assumption for the implementation of the EVLN framework. As a result, the theories and the EVLN framework bring me to possible scenarios of deputies' co-voting behaviour.

Firstly, let's start with presenting the general EVLN models of deputies' behaviour connected to our selected cases. The general models will then be followed by the introduction of case specific research scenarios. Based on the EVLN framework, those deputies who were disappointed with the internal situation of their political party or its politics, consequently leaving their former party and joining newly founded political platform, have chosen the strategy of exit. This strategy would manifest itself in the data as a situation, where the 'renegades' (those deputies who left their former party) would have higher rates of co-voting with their former colleagues before they'd have decided to leave the party. After their departure from the former party, they would have noticeably lower rates of co-voting with their former colleagues (but it is also possible that they would retain higher co-voting rates even after their departure, indicating their strategy was induced by other than political motives). The voice strategy would possibly manifest in the data as lower co-voting rates between those deputies who were dissatisfied with the situation of their former party and their other colleagues but once the crisis was over, their co-voting rates would increase again.

The potential pitfalls come together with passive strategies. Loyalty would be the scenario where the dissatisfied deputies would always retain high co--voting rates with their colleagues, no matter the situation in their party. But how would the neglect strategy manifest itself? It is quite possible that those deputies who would act according to the neglect strategy would behave in the same way as their loyal colleagues. That means that co-voting rates between them and their colleagues would be stable. As both the loyalty and neglect are

passive strategies, meaning that the dissatisfied members don't act explicitly, it would be necessary to investigate other factors that would indicate which of the passive strategies the actors are making use of. When it comes to the deputies co-voting, it could be beneficial to look at their attendance during the votings in the parliament. One could suggest that those deputies dissatisfied with the situation in their party but who still vote the same as the rest of his colleagues and maintain high attendance during the votings behaves loyally. Whereas the deputy who also votes like his colleagues but has a problem with attendance neglects his responsibilities towards the party. Nevertheless, indicators such as attendance do not always have to be valid (what if the deputy suffers from a chronic disease, etc?).

Since the selected cases of the political party that split have already happened, it is easier to navigate throughout all the possible scenarios of the dynamics of the deputies' co-voting. As the result of the intraparty tension in the selected cases was the split of the political party group (the political party itself), the three specific scenarios seem most probable (with a fourth scenario also theoretically possible but not that probable since the drafts the deputies are voting on usually covers lot of different issues).

Scenario 1: *Deputies who were dissatisfied and left their party when the opportunity came and had higher co-voting rates with their former colleagues before the departure. However, after their exit from the party, they had lower rates of co-voting with their former colleagues. This scenario would indicate that their motivation for a change was of a political nature.*

Scenario 2: *Deputies who were dissatisfied and left their party when the opportunity came, had low co-voting rates with their former colleagues before the departure, and retained lower rates of co-voting with their former colleagues even after their exit. This scenario would indicate that their motivation for a change was of a political nature.*

Scenario 3: *Deputies who were dissatisfied, leaving their party when the opportunity came, had higher co-voting rates with their former colleagues before the departure and retained high rates of co-voting with their former colleagues even after their exit. This scenario would indicate that their motivation for a change was of a nature different than political.*

Scenario 4: *Deputies who were dissatisfied, leaving their party when the opportunity came, had low co-voting rates with their former colleagues before the departure but high rates of co-voting with their former colleagues after their exit. This scenario would probably indicate that their motivation for a change was of a political nature and that the subject of voting changed drastically once they left their former party.*

These scenarios are also linked to the following hypothesis: *Scenarios in which the deputies' behaviour was driven by political motives for a change of party would have more dramatic consequences for the affected political parties*.

Methodology

The study aims to capture and compare the co-voting behaviour of the so-called party renegades' (those deputies who left their former party and joined a newly founded one) in two different cases. The first case will focus on the division of the Civic Democrats' political party group that took place in fall 1997 and escalated into the establishment of the new centre-right liberal party called Freedom Union that split from the Civic Democratic Party. The second case will investigate the division of the Public Affairs' political party group occurring in April 2012, following with the emergence on the new political platform (the political party LIDEM) founded by one of the former Public Affairs' deputies Karolína Peake).

When investigating both above-mentioned cases, I will follow the same research logic and apply the same methods so that both cases can be compared. The analysis of the co-voting behaviour of the deputies belonging to the mentioned political parties will heavily rely on the methods that are used for studying legislative networks. Networks are often used when researching patterns of interactions between a set of actors, in our case co-voting of deputies of a political party, that suffered from internal crises followed by a split of the political party. It is quite hard to obtain all the information about the actors (deputies) and their relations (i.e., phone calls, email communication, transcription of their mutual communication) that would possibly capture their dissatisfaction with the political party situation and further intentions to leave the party. Due to these obstacles, the study will rely on the data that are both publicly available and reliable. Those will be the roll-call data. Each of the analysed deputies at least once voted in the Chamber of Deputies which means that the deputy showed his preference towards the legislative draft he was voting on. The preference expressed by a vote constitutes a direct relationship between the legislative draft and the deputy. There is only one exception and that is when the MP is not present during the voting. In such a case, there is no relationship between the MP and the draft as the deputy could not express his preference.

One of the main benefits of using the roll-call data for the network construction is that these data without a doubt represent a relationship between the deputy and the legislative draft he/she was voting on. This is quite important because when talking about the co-voting of the deputies, no one can say to what extent the voting behaviour of the pair of deputies is co-ordinated or random. As the deputies vote on thousands of legislative drafts, it could be expected that even the deputies from different parties or opposing blocks will sometimes show the same preference towards certain drafts. However, it does not mean

that they were co-ordinating these steps together and that there is a co-voting relationship between them. On the other hand, if the pair of deputies have high rates of co-voting, a higher probability of co-operation between them is expected. Conversely, when there is a lower rate of co-voting between a pair of MPs, a relationship such as a rivalry could be expected. Because of the lack of data capturing all interactions between deputies, legislative actors often tend to use data such as roll-calls as proxies of social relations (Ringe et al. 2017: 8).[4]

As the roll-calls data contain the information about each deputy expressing his preference on the submitted drafts, it enables the construction of a bipartite network capturing the relations (votes) between the deputies and legislative drafts. Bipartite networks are unique in a way that they capture the ties between actors that are of different entities (ties between deputies and the drafts) but not among the actors of the same entity (ties between deputies or legislative drafts themselves) (Borgatti et al. 2013). Still, the main focus of the study is to analyse the co-voting behaviour of the deputies between themselves. In order to obtain network capturing co-voting of deputies, the bipartite network has to be converted. This operation is called the one-mode projection of bipartite (affiliation) or as Leifeld (2017: 311) calls it, the congruence network. These projected networks capture the relationship between the chosen actors (in our case the deputies) where the strength of their relationship represents the rate of their mutual co-voting. This strength of a relationship is represented by the number of legislative drafts on which the pair of deputies voted the same. It is necessary to differentiate how the MPs voted on the drafts. If it were not done, the strength of the relationship between MPs would capture only the number of legislative drafts each pair of deputies voted on, but it would not consider the preference of each of the deputies towards each of the legislative drafts. For the purpose of the analysis, I will differentiate whether a MP expressed positive preference (voted yes) or negative preference (voted no or abstained from the vote[5]). This will result in obtaining several bipartite networks (networks capturing positive voting on drafts and networks capturing negative voting on drafts) that will be consequently projected into one-mode networks (with deputies as actors). This method will ensure that the co-voting between MPs will be captured but there will not be any distortion caused by the fact that the MPs were simply voting on the same legislative drafts (Leifeld 2017: 313). It is important to stress that due to the different levels of activity of the actors (number of times they were present or absent during the votings), normalisation methods have to be ap-

4 The studies of Arnold, Deen and Patterson (2000) or Cohen and Malloy (2014) were dealing with the legislative networks with the use of roll-call data as well.

5 Abstention from the vote does not have to represent a negative expression of the deputy per se (as the deputy could have other reasons than political why he didn't express his opinion). But the impact of the abstention has negative consequences towards the threshold for the legislative draft to be succesfully accepted.

plied so that the co-voting behaviour could be compared across all the analysed pairs of deputies (Leifeld 2017: 313).

The study uses a Jaccard index of similarity as the normalisation tool. This index divides the intersection of common votes between a pair of MPs by the union of their total votes (number of drafts each of the deputies voted on).[6] The final value of the index lies in the interval 0–1 (however, due to the limitations of the software I was using for the analysis, I had to calculate the index in the whole, not decimal numbers).[7] The higher the value of the index, the more similar the voting behaviour of the pair of deputies (higher rates of co-voting).

Once the value of the index is calculated for each of the pair of MPs, all the bipartite networks could be re-created so that the strength of the ties between the deputies could be replaced by the value of the index. After this step, the projected one-mode networks capturing the co-voting behaviour of the deputies can be aggregated into one final network.

The final aggregated one-mode network capturing the co-voting between all analysed MPs will serve as a foundation for the further analysis of MPs behaviour – a tendency to form co-voting subgroups. For this purpose, a community detection tool (namely modularity) for identification of subgroups will be used in the networks. Modularity identifies possible subgroups in the network using the layout of the ties and their strength between the actors present in the network.[8] As there are different algorithms for the calculation of modularity, I will make use of the Louvain method designed by Blondel, Guillaume, Lambiotte and Lefebvre (2008) because of its ability to take into account not only the layout of the ties between the deputies in the network but also the strength of the ties between the actors. The identified subgroups in the network should have dense interconnections between its members (these connections should also be stronger, representing higher rates of co-voting) but at the same time, different subgroups should have fewer connections which should also be weaker between each other (representing lower rates of co-voting between members of different subgroups in the network).

This procedure should capture what the co-voting behaviour of the analysed deputies looked like in the chosen time periods (the selection and logic behind the identification of the different time periods will be elaborated on in the Data section of the article). Comparing these time periods and possible differences in the setup of the created networks and present subgroups of the networks should help to explain the dynamics of the co-voting behaviour of the deputies belonging to the political party group that split.

6 See Leydesdorff (2008: 3) for mathematical explanation of the Jaccard index of similarity.

7 Gephi, version 0. 9. 2 was used for the purposes of the network analysis.

8 See Newman (2006) for further explanation of modularity.

Data

As has already been said, the study heavily relies on roll-call data. The records of voting of all members of parliament were collected by the Chamber of Deputies. Its database, covering all deputies' voting in the second and sixth parliamentary term, served as the foundation for the empirical part of the study.

The dataset contained information about several thousands of votings in each parliamentary term (4998 votings in the second parliamentary term and 5928 votings in the sixth parliamentary term). But highly consensual votings were excluded from the final analysis. Specifically, those votings where 95% or more of the present deputies voted for, against or abstained from voting were not included in the final analysis.[9]

Each of the analysed parliamentary terms was further divided so that I could investigate what, if any, effects the division of a parliamentary party group had on the co-voting behaviour of the deputies that were elected to the Chamber of Deputies as representatives of a single political party. In the second parliamentary term (1996–1998), the first analysed time-period starts with the formation of a newly elected House of Commons after the parliamentary elections at the turn of May and June 1996 and ends with the last voting that took place in 1997 – as the division of the Civic Democrats' political party group started in fall 1997 and escalated in January 1998 with the foundation of the new political party called Freedom Union (Strašíková 2009). The second analysed time period of the second parliamentary term starts with the first voting in 1998 and ends with the last voting that took place in the 2nd parliamentary election period of the Chamber of Deputies.

In the sixth parliamentary term (2010–2013), the first analysed time period also starts with the formation of a newly elected House of Commons after the parliamentary elections in May 2010 and ends with the last voting that took place in the first quartal of 2012 – the division of the political party group Public Affairs culminated on the 17th of April, 2012 when during a surprising press conference, Karolína Peake (former member of Public Affairs) announced that she was leaving the party and that she was founding a new political party called LIDEM (Pálková – Golis 2012). The second analysed time period of the sixth parliamentary term starts with the first voting in the second quartal in 2012 (first voting in April 2012) and ends with the last voting that took place in the 6th parliamentary election period of the Chamber of Deputies in 2013.

The empirical analysis will heavily focus on roll-call data from which the co-voting rates of the pairs of deputies will be derived. At this point, it is necessary to introduce the contextual background of both selected cases.

9 For each analysed time period approximately 25 – 33% of votings were disqualified as highly consensual.

Contextual background

Split of Civic Democratic Party in fall 1997

The Civic Democratic Party was a successor of Civic Forum, an anti-communist political movement which in its last congress in February 1991 assumed creation of two new independent political parties (Civic Democratic Party and Civic Movement). The Civic Democratic Party led by Václav Klaus inherited most of the district and regional structures of Civic Forum which helped Civic Democrats succeed in the upcoming elections in 1992 (Kopeček 2010, 205). In the elections of 1992, the Civic Democratic Party became the strongest political party leading the newly formed government. In the next elections in 1996, the Civic Democrats also won but together with their coalition partners they were not able to form a majority cabinet. However, thanks to the intervention of President Václav Havel, the coalition led by the Civic Democrats got the 'silent' support of its main political rival the Czech Social Democratic Party led by Miloš Zeman. Despite that, the overall situation was not favourable for the newly formed minority cabinet as the Czech Republic faced economic problems related to the socio-economic transition from the communist era (Hanley 2004, 29–30).

From the intra-party perspective – the tensions inside the Civic Democratic Party between 1996 and 1997 were caused by many more or less serious reasons. The relationships between Civic Democrats and their coalition partners got tense, the leadership of the party (Josef Zieleniec, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister Václav Klaus) had different views on the future political direction and programme orientation of the party; and the party leadership was not able to explain some of the financial transactions of the party (Pšeja 2005: 70–72). The crisis escalated in November 1997 with the identification of the true sponsor of the party and because of the suspicions that the Civic Democrats had a hidden bank account in Switzerland that only the party leadership knew about (Pšeja 2005: 74–77). Shortly after the exposure of this essential information, party deputy chairmen Ivan Pilip and Jan Ruml demanded the resignation of the chairman of the Civic Democrats Václav Klaus (who was also prime minister at the time). Also, the ministers of the Civic Democrats' coalition partners resigned, which led to the fall of the cabinet. Despite this situation, Klaus did defend his position as a leader of the Civic Democrats at the party congress that took place on December 14 and 15, 1997 (Pšeja 2005: 77; Cabada – Šanc 2005: 187). However, a new political fraction inside the Civic Democratic Party was established by I. Pilip and J. Ruml (who also ran for the office of the Civic Democrats chairman at the party congress). The tense intra-party situation did not calm down as 'the representatives of Ruml's political faction accepted, contrary to the statements of the ODS leadership, the position in the caretaker government of Josef Tošovský (Cabada – Šanc 2005: 187). On January 4, 1998,

the leadership of the Civic Democrats demanded their immediate resignation from the designated caretaker government or their departure from the party. Shortly after, the representatives of Ruml's political fraction started to leave the party. These 'renegades' then joined the newly founded political party Freedom Union led by Pilip and Ruml. As Cabada and Šanc (2005: 198) point out: 'In contrast to Civic Democrats, The Freedom Union defined itself by "a new political style and decency". However, when it comes to specific points of the political programme of the party, it did not differ much from the Civic Democrats'.

The Split of Public Affairs in spring 2012

Public Affairs started as a local political initiative which was created in a district of Prague in 2001. This initiative was registered as a political party in July 2002. In the early years of its existence, Public Affairs focused mainly on local politics in Prague (Havlík – Hloušek 2014, 556). In 2009, Public Affairs announced that they would compete in an early parliamentary election that should have taken place in autumn 2009 with Radek John, a popular investigative journalist, as the party leader (Havlík – Hloušek 2014, 557). The party presented itself as an alternative to the other established political parties, taking advantage of the current political crisis as the early elections in autumn 2009 were cancelled and followed by standard elections in 2010 (Havlík 2010). The main pre-election rhetoric was focused on fighting the corruption and emphasising the need for implementing the tools of direct democracy into the Czech Republic. As Havlík and Hloušek (2014, 557) sum up, Public Affairs did not have any clear ideological profiling as the party substituted it with the populists' rhetoric based on anti-establishment appeal and the need of various measures of direct democracy.

In the parliamentary election in 2010, Public Affairs obtained almost 11 % of votes and got to the Czech parliament for the first time in history. With its 24 deputies, Public Affairs was able to participate in a governmental coalition with the Civic Democrats and TOP 09. However, as Hloušek (2012: 330) points out: 'The involvement of the Public Affairs in the government was accompanied by a series of political crises, mainly due to their populist program and the political inexperience of its leaders'. In December 2010, the criticism of Public Affairs' leaders towards the proposed governmental reforms escalated. The leaders of the party took advantage of the opposition initiative which tried to overthrow the government and pressured its government partners with their own political program demands. This tense situation was managed with the contribution of the Czech President who acted as a mediator between the coalition partners (Hloušek 2012: 330). Another set of severe disputes between Civic Democrats and Public Affairs about appointed ministers followed in 2011 (Hloušek 2012: 331). However, the biggest scandal that damaged Public Affairs was connected to the incrimination of Vít Bárta (one of Public Affairs'

leaders) who was accused of bribing his own colleagues in exchange for their co-operation and loyalty (Kundra – Svobodová 2011). Bárta defended himself with proclamations that the group centred around his party colleagues Kateřina Kočí and Jaroslav Škárka (Public Affairs' deputy who had raised charges against Bárta) had been trying to break the party from within since 2011 to reshape the coalition government of the three parties in the cabinet of ODS and TOP 09 supported by them. According to Bárta, Kočí had o-ordinated these moves with Civic Democrats. This wave of accusations destabilised the governing coalition. Public Affairs submitted several demands under which they would still support the government. Both coalition partners refused these demands, stating that the resignation of the Public Affairs' ministers would cause the collapse of the government, followed by premature parliamentary elections. But this tense situation between Public Affairs and its coalition partners as well as the tensions in its own centre resulted in the split of its parliamentary party group (Hloušek 2012: 331–332).

The group of Public Affairs' deputies centred around Karolína Peake wanted to continue to support the government. In the end, formation of this group led to the establishment a new political platform (latter called as LIDEM) led by Peake. This platform consisting of Public Affairs' 'renegades' guaranteed the preservation of the governing coalition (Hloušek 2012: 332–333). The rest of the former Public Affairs deputies led by their chairman Radek John terminated the coalition agreement, resulting in Public Affairs becoming an opposition party (ČTK 2012).

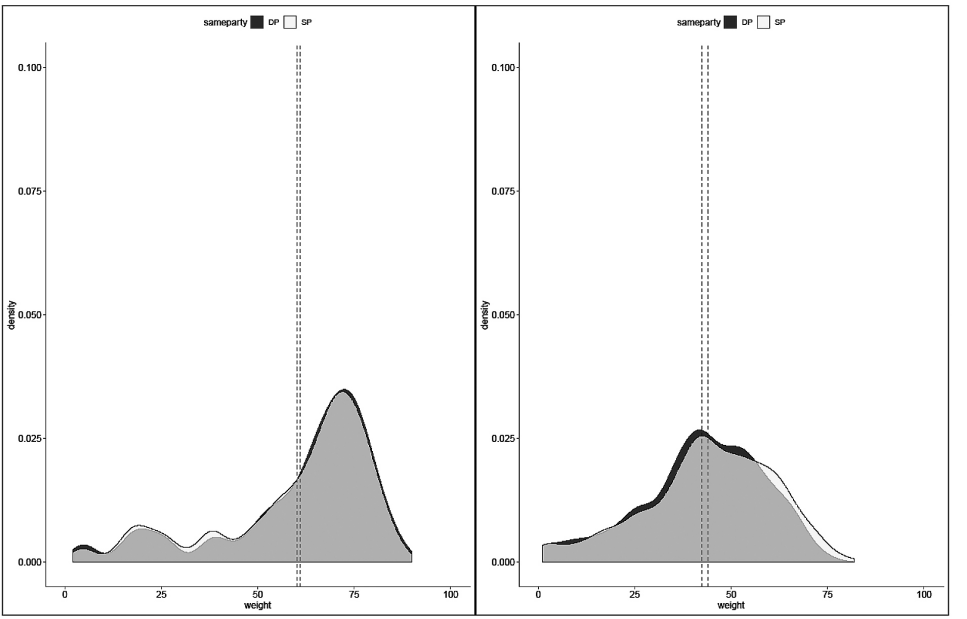
Analysis of co-voting behaviour

Second parliamentary term – Split of Civic Democratic Party

Let's begin with the analysis of the co-voting behaviour of the deputies elected for the Civic Democratic Party at the turn of May and June 1996. The following graphs capture the distribution of values of the Jaccard index of similarity for each pair of the Civic Democrats' deputies.

Figure 1 represents the rates of co-voting between the Civic Democrats' deputies in the first period (from the first voting in the newly elected Chamber of Deputies in 1997 until the last voting in 1997). Figure 2 also shows the rates of co-voting between analysed deputies but for the second time period which took place from the first voting in 1998 until the end of the second parliamentary term. It is evident that in the first scrutinised period, the average value of the similarity index was higher than in the second time period. The average value of the Jaccard index of similarity for the first time period was 60.5, whereas only 43.5 in the second analysed time period. This demonstrates that before the internal crisis that escalated in fall 1997 inside the Civic Democratic Party,

Figure 1 and Figure 2: Probability density functions of values of Jaccard index of similarity for pairs of deputies in both analysed time periods (Figure 1 captures period before the end of 1997; Figure 2 captures the period since the beginning of 1998). Dark grey represents the distribution of values of the index for different party (DP) pairs; light grey represents the distribution of values for the same party (SP) pairs. Dotted lines represent the average values for both SP and DP distributions.



Source: Author, based on own calculations.

the unity of the party was quite high. But once the crisis escalated in full, the co-voting rates of the Civic Democrats dropped.

Both figures capture another trend. I differentiated whether the pair of deputies consisted of MPs who were both members of the same party – SP (either the Civic Democratic Party or Freedom Union) or members of different parties – DP (those pair of deputies consisting of a Freedom Union member and member of the Civic Democrats). Eventually, the Freedom Union was founded in January 1998 but for sakes of comparability, those deputies who joined this party were identified and labelled as members of the Freedom Union even in the first time period even though this party didn't exist yet. It is quite interesting that both distributions (for the same party and different party pairs) in both time periods overlap almost perfectly. This captures the fact that the rates of co-voting between the SP and DP pairs were very similar. Therefore, there is no major

difference in voting even if the pair of deputies consisted of a Freedom Union member and member of the Civic Democratic Party.

To confirm these findings, I constructed networks consisting of members of the former Civic Democrats parliamentary party group for each of the analysed time periods and applied the modularity measure.[10] In both time periods, the algorithm identified several communities reflecting the rates of co-voting between pairs of deputies. The specific communities (or subgraphs) consisted of those deputies who had similar co-voting rates among each other inside its own groups and different co-voting rates with the member of other communities. The algorithm therefore divided the whole network into subgraphs based on the similarity of the voting behaviour of the deputies. The first one represents the community of those deputies who had lower co-voting rates with a majority of their colleagues, the second one constitutes those deputies who had higher co-voting rates with a majority of their colleagues and the last one represents those who were somewhere in the middle. However, substantially these communities (or subgraphs) did not reflect the party affiliation of the deputies. This verifies the claim that there is no significant difference in the co-voting behaviour between pairs consisting of the Civic Democrats' deputies and deputies of Freedom Union.

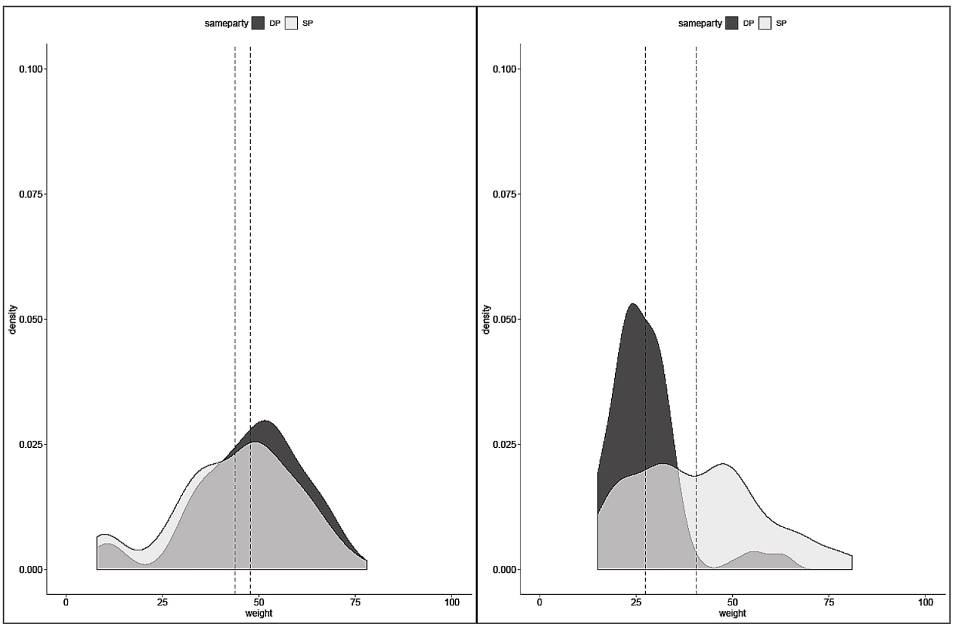
Sixth parliamentary term – Split of Public Affairs

For the sixth parliamentary term, the same figures with the same logic as in the first case were constructed.

Figure 3 represents the rates of co-voting between the Public Affairs' deputies in the first period (from the first voting in the newly elected Chamber of Deputies in 2010 until the last voting that took place in the first quartal of 2012). Figure 4 also shows the rates of co-voting between Public Affairs' deputies but for the second time period which takes place from the first voting in the second quartal in 2012 (first voting in April 2012) and ends with the last voting that took place in the 6th parliamentary election period of Chamber of Deputies in 2013. As in the first case, it is evident that in the first time period the average rate of co-voting was higher than in the second period. The average value of the Jaccard index of similarity for the first time period was 45.8, whereas only 33.9 for the second analysed time period. It shows the same scenario as in the previous case. After the escalation of the intra-party crisis, the rate of co-voting between the members who were originally elected for Public Affairs dropped significantly.

10 For the calculation, Louvain algorithm was chosen. Weights of the edges were included in the calculations. Resolution of the algorithm = 1; Number of iterations = 1000; Number of restarts = 10.

Figure 3 and Figure 4: Probability density functions of values of Jaccard index of similarity for pairs of deputies in both analysed time periods (Figure 3 captures period before the end of March 2012; Figure 4 captures the period since the beginning of April 2012). Dark grey represents the distribution of values of the index for different party (DP) pairs; light grey represents the distribution of values for the same party (SP) pairs. Dotted lines represent the average values for both SP and DP distributions.



Source: Author, based on own calculations.

Both figures also differentiate between pairs of deputies who belong to the same party (SP) and different party (DP). As in the first case, LIDEM was a political platform that was founded in spring 2012 but for the sake of comparability, the members who joined this party were labelled as members of LIDEM even though they were elected to parliament for Public Affairs. It is evident that in the first time period both distributions for SP pairs and DP pairs almost overlap, which indicates that the co-voting between pairs constituted of members of the same party as well as a different party didn't differ. However, Figure 4 suggests a different trend. A significant difference in the rates of co-voting (similarity index values) is visible between those deputy pairs that were constituted of SP and DP members. On average, the values of the similarity index for pairs constituted of same party members had higher values (40.5) than those of the pairs constituted from different party members (27.4). This indicates that the

members of the newly founded political party LIDEM voted differently than their former colleagues from Public Affairs in the second analysed time period.

According to the modularity measure, the algorithm identified two different subgroups in the first time period. Similar to the first case, these communities consisted of those MPs who had similar co-voting rates among the members of their communities and different co-voting rates with the members of the other community. One subgroup consisted of those deputies that had lower co-voting rates with the majority of their colleagues, the other subgroup consisted of those MPs who had high co-voting rates with the majority of their colleagues.

However, in the second analysed period the algorithm uncovered a different trend. It also uncovered two different communities, but this time these communities reflected the party affiliation of the MPs. That means that the deputies who left Public Affairs and joined LIDEM voted significantly differently than their former colleagues.[11]

Results of the analysis

Even though the selected cases had a somewhat similar setup (parties were members of the governing coalition; went through an internal crisis that escalated due to the financial scandals), the outcome of the quantitative analysis differs.

In both compared cases, the future 'renegades' had higher rates of co-voting with their former-party colleagues before they left the party. However, in the case of the split of the Civic Democratic Party in 1997, those deputies who left the Civic Democrats and founded Freedom Union still had quite high co-voting rates with their former colleagues from the Civic Democratic Party until the end of the parliamentary term in June 1998. This result illustrates the fact that the political orientation of the Freedom Union did not differ at all from the political orientation held by Civic Democrats. This claim is also supported by the self-identification of Freedom Union which defined itself as a party pursuing a 'new political style and decency'. It is evident that those deputies who left the Civic Democrats were mainly dissatisfied with the internal situation of the party but not with its overall political orientation.

Deputies who left Public Affairs in 2012 and created the political platform called LIDEM had lower co-voting rates with their former colleagues after their departure from the party. When the platform led by Peake announced its intentions to leave Public Affairs while still supporting the ruling coalition, the rest of Public Affairs decided to become an opposition party. This resulted in the lower rates of co-voting between the deputies who were members of Public Affairs and those who were members of LIDEM as both parties held a different political direction.

11 There were few exceptions, such as deputies Šťovíček or Škarka, who was identified as a member of LIDEM community, even though they did not join this party. But both deputies were excluded from the Public Affairs anyway.

It is obvious that the motivation for the renegades to switch parties differed in the selected cases. The consequences of the split for both parties differed as well in the short-term. The split of Freedom Union from the Civic Democratic Party resulted in their relative success in the early parliamentary elections in 1998 where Freedom Union obtained 8,6% of the votes. The Civic Democrats led by Klaus recovered from the intra-party crisis by gaining 27,7% of the votes (in comparison to 29,6% in the 1996 elections). Even though the centre-right political parties[12] obtained a theoretical majority of parliamentary seats which would enable them to form a majority cabinet, the Civic Democrats' chairman Václav Klaus surprisingly opted to allow a minority government formed by Social Democrats and signed the 'Opposition Agreement' pact (Hanley 2004, 30–31). In the second analysed case of Public Affairs, neither Public Affairs nor LIDEM ran in the election in 2013 as both parties were already fragmented.

It is quite conclusive that in the second analysed case where renegades left Public Affairs due to political motives, the consequences were more dramatic. Both parties, Public Affairs and LIDEM, dissolved. Whereas in the first analysed case of the Civic Democratic Party and Freedom Union we can talk about the split of the Civic Democrats into two more or less successful political parties.

Conclusion

The main aim of the study was to investigate the dynamics of the co-voting behaviour of those deputies who left their former party and joined a newly founded one during one parliamentary term. For this purpose, two cases from Czech history after 1989 were selected.

Due to the relational nature of the co-voting data with the parliamentary roll-calls as a fundament of the quantitative analysis, the paper draws heavily from the legislative networks approaches and methods.

The analysis of the co-voting behaviour of the deputies verified the occurrence of the theoretically based scenarios stemming from the exit, voice, loyalty, neglect (EVLN) models connected to the theory of party unity. Based on the EVLN models, four different scenarios of possible renegades' co-voting behaviour towards their former colleagues were identified. In the empirical section of the paper the analysed cases were linked to the specific scenario. The first case investigated the co-voting behaviour of the deputies of the Civic Democratic Party in the second parliamentary term. The analysis identified that the co-voting between renegades and their former colleagues didn't change much, indicating that the split of the Civic Democrats into two separate parties was not driven by different political perspectives of the renegades. However, the second case,

12 Those parties were the Civic Democratic Party, Freedom Union and the Christian and Democratic Union – the Czechoslovak People's Party together obtaining 102 seats in the Czech Chamber of Deputies.

where the co-voting behaviour of the deputies elected for Public Affairs in the sixth parliamentary term was assessed, showed a different trend. According to the analysis of the co-voting inside Public Affairs' parliamentary party group, the renegades had different political perspectives than their former colleagues as they wanted to remain in support of the governing coalition. This fact resulted in the dissolution of the party. The results of the analysis are in correlation with the hypothesis that those cases where the motivation to switch parties was of a political nature had more dramatic impacts on the political party (either the former, the new one or both).

Of course, the motivation of the renegades to switch parties is not the only variable that decides whether the former political party will split or dissolve. Other variables that can have a decisive effect could be the level of party institutionalisation, number of members, political 'maturity' of the party leadership, etc. To assess and investigate all mentioned variables was not the goal of this paper as it focused solely on the dynamics of co-voting behaviour inside the parliamentary party group suffering from an intra-party crisis related to the motivation of the party renegades to switch parties. On the other hand, research dedicated specifically to the mechanisms of a split or dissolution of established political parties suffering from an internal crisis would be both beneficial and needed.

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Parties and Linkages in the Slovak Party System: An Overview

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Abstract: *This study acknowledges Kitschelt's inspiration by understanding party linkage as a mechanism closely pertaining to the relationships of accountability and responsiveness between political parties and voters. Three key linkages – programmatic, charismatic and clientelistic – are scrutinized. The authors identify the "linkage profiles" of relevant political parties in the history of Slovak party competition and use the results of an experts' survey (from the DALP project) as a (limited) test of the authors' expert judgement. The study then reflects on the latest developments in political linkages in a period when anti-establishment and anti-system political parties are gaining strength. The paper concludes that clientelism as a linkage played a significantly smaller role than predicted in the 1990s, while charisma – even though we define it differently from some mainstream approaches – manifested a stronger than expected influence on party competition. Also, combinations of charismatic and programmatic linkages seem to be attractive for a number of relevant Slovak parties. Finally, programmatic competition informed Slovak politics for longer and more successfully than Kitschelt's model would suggest.*

Keywords: ***linkages, party competition, Kitschelt, Slovakia.***

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Introduction: parties and linkages – parties as linkages

The notion that political parties create or mediate a connection between various parts of the political system – primarily the people and the state – has been present in the party literature in some form for a long time. In particular most of the "party functions" identified in accounts of the normative approach to political parties refer to this linking capacity. Yet although the term linkage has been used in relation to political parties for a considerable time, it has been used in a rather subjective way and without a generally agreed definition.

In the 1980s Kay Lawson popularized the notion of the party as a linkage between citizens and the state (Lawson 1980). Her approach was inductive in nature, stemming from observation of what political parties do within the political system. She originally identified four linkages: participatory, responsive, clientelistic and coercive. Later, after editing her five-volume book on political parties, which had a global scope, she added two more linkages – revolutionary and market (Lawson 2010). Lawson considered linkage as "the key function ascribed to parties: linking citizens to the state... Parties can connect the public with government by serving as agencies for citizen participation, by providing avenues for the representation of citizens' views, by returning favours for votes or by manipulating and controlling constituents. (In this model, parties play linkage roles even in non-competitive and coercive political systems.)" (Lawson – Poguntke 2004: 254). Over time Lawson developed the notion of linkage as an interactive process and as a mechanism created by various intermediaries or "agencies of connection" (Lawson – Merkl 1988: 14). For Lawson "the political party is the one agency that can claim to have as its very *raison d'être* the creation of an entire linkage chain, a chain of connections that runs from the voters through the candidates and the electoral process to the officials of government" (Lawson – Merkl 1988: 16).

While her work on parties as linkages attracted some attention, it would be an exaggeration to say it reshaped the field of party research. Part of the reason was that while "linkage" managed to establish itself as a term in party literature, it has never been a clearly defined concept. Those who adopted the term after Lawson continued to use it in a rather fuzzy way. Their approach, like Lawson's, has largely been a variation on the theme of party functions, which had been present in the literature since the 1950s.[2]

To give an example, relatively recently R. J. Dalton, D. M. Farrell and I. McAllister (2011) used data from the Comparative Study of Electoral System

2 The party functions approach refers to a normative notion of the role of parties in democracy based on a set of functions parties are supposed to exercise in a party system. The appropriate and successful execution of these functions constitutes parties' desirable (normative) contribution to democracy on the national level (Sartori 2005). Along with the "responsible party model" (APSA 1950) and the party government model (Katz 1987), the party functions approach constitutes the essence of the normative package through which party theory has been approached for several decades since the 1950s.

(CSES) to conceptualize the notion of party government differently, looking at the (roughly chronological) chain of linkages that political parties create within the electoral process and consequently in the process of governing (see Figure 1.1 in Dalton *et al.* 2011: 7). They state that their approach "is based on the party government model of democracy, in which political parties provide a linkage between citizens, government, and policy outputs. Such a reliance on parties is widely seen as the key in ensuring representative democracy really represents and is really democratic" (Dalton *et al.* 2011: viii). They acknowledged that they have been inspired by Lawson who "[i]nstead of talking about functions… uses the term "linkage" to distinguish political parties from other organizations, marking them as the primary representative agents between citizens and the state. As she puts it, this is why linkage is often used as a synonym for representation" (Dalton *et al.* 2011: 6).

Dalton *et al.* identified five main forms of linkage between parties and voters, namely:

- **Campaign linkage**: parties recruit candidates and set the parameters of the electoral process;
- **Participatory linkage**: parties activate citizens during elections and mobilize them to vote;
- **Ideological linkage**: parties inform voters about policy choices in elections and voters strongly base their voting preference on these policy alternatives;
- **Representative linkage**: elections achieve a good congruence between citizen policy preferences and the policies of the parties represented in parliament and the government; and
- **Policy linkage**: parties deliver on the policies they advocated in the election (Dalton et al. 2011: 6–7).

Strong connections between the linkages are seen as advantageous: "When there is a strong connection between each of these linkages in the chain of party government, then representative government can function well as a means to connect citizens' preferences to the outcomes of the government. But when one or more of these linkages deteriorates, the model of party government suffers" (Dalton *et al.* 2011: 7). While the authors characterized Lawson's approach as "[i]n practical terms… very similar to the functional roles in other party government theories" (Dalton et al. 2011: 6), their own list is even closer to any of the classic lists of "party functions" than Lawson's was. So, their reconceptualization of party government in terms of linkage may be somewhat less interesting than the authors suggest. While descriptively refreshing, their approach was hardly novel in the research on party government. Other authors, such as Katz (1990) or Poguntke (2002), employed the term linkage in relation to political parties but they were basing the capacity

of parties to create linkages within the political system primarily on their internal organizational capacities.

The early 1990s witnessed the emergence of political pluralism in the former Communist countries of East Central Europe and post-Soviet Eurasia. This development presented researchers with an opportunity for testing some Western-centric assumptions about the emergence of democratic party competition. One such key assumption was a normative preference for programmatic competition as a pre-requisite for the healthy development of new democracies. This was largely the consequence of transposing the "responsible party model" paradigm to the situation of early post-communist pluralism. In terms of linkages, it meant that the normatively desirable dominance of the so-called programmatic linkage was seen as the best way for parties to contribute to building democracy at the national level. Herbert Kitschelt's work (Kitschelt, 2000; Kitschelt *et al.* 1999) challenged this assumption by suggesting that the existence of other linkage mechanisms related to political parties was not only a matter of fact but that they also had the potential to play a role in establishing meaningful relationships within the party system. This is particularly true when linkage is understood in terms of accountability and responsiveness.

In Kitschelt's approach, most of the previous thinking on parties as linkages falls under what is typically called the programmatic linkage, namely the expectation that "linkages of accountability and responsiveness between voters and political elites work through politicians' programmatic appeals and policy achievements" (Kitschelt 2000: 845). He considered this kind of emphasis an incomplete analysis, and using the example of post-communist party systems, among others, he argued that politicians (as people with charisma) and networks for the direct exchange of material advantages between parties and individuals (clientelism) should also be considered relevant linkage mechanisms between parties and voters.

The notable advantage of Kitschelt's approach is that, unlike most of the previously mentioned approaches, it is not a semi-direct derivative of the party functions approach. In providing a conceptualization of its own, Kitschelt draws on Aldrich's ideas about problem solving by political parties (Aldrich 1995), looking at their focus on, and investment in, solving the problems of collective action and social choice (Kitschelt 2000: 847–848). Based on the emphasis parties put on these two elements of problem solving, Kitschelt constructs a typology which results in three types of linkage. According to Kitschelt, this is a result which cannot be applied in democratic conditions.

In this account, the dominance of charismatic linkage is accompanied by a lack of investment both in parties' organizational capacity and in mechanisms for building some kind of policy consensus. (Kitschelt considers the situation where parties invest only in interest aggregation but not in administrative capacity to be typical for competitive oligarchies, so he omits it from his analysis

Table 1: Ideal types of linkage mechanisms by political parties

Investment	Challenge		Linkage
	Collective Action (e.g. organizational structure)	***Social Choice*** (e.g. interest aggregation)	
	NO	NO	Charismatic
	NO	YES	na*
	YES	NO	Clientelistic
	YES	YES	Programmatic

*Note: *It does not occur in democracies.*
Source: Adapted from Kitschelt 2000: 249-253.

of democracies.) Similarly, if a party invests primarily in its organizational capacity and not in interest aggregation mechanisms, the clientelistic linkage will be dominant. Lastly, the programmatic linkage can flourish in situations where parties prioritize both their collective action capacity as well as their social choice potential. In such cases "the constitutive element of programmatic political linkage is that parties solve their problems of social choice through the development of policy packages that make it possible to map issues onto underlying simple competitive dimensions" (Kitschelt 2000: 850).

An indispensable part of the model is the observation that these ideal types never completely exhaust the characteristics of individual parties. Indeed, in practice parties try to combine more appeals and linkages whenever they see it fit. Their combinability is influenced by a variety of factors, but what is important is that it is not possible to maximize all three linkage mechanisms at the same time. At a certain point they clash, and some kind of trade off becomes necessary: "The incompatibilities between charismatic, clientelist, and programmatic linkages are not absolute. At low dosages, all linkage mechanisms may be compatible. As politicians intensify their cultivation of a particular type of linkage, however, they reach a production possibility frontier at which further intensifications of one linkage mechanism can occur only at the expense of toning down other linkage mechanisms" (Kitschelt 2000: 855).

Purpose and objective of the analysis

This text acknowledges the "Kitscheltian" inspiration insofar as it understands party linkage – or "party as a linkage" – as a mechanism intimately connected to the relationships of accountability and responsiveness between political parties and voters. In other words, *we see party linkages as the proposals from the parties towards voters, as to what should be the basis on which voters consider the parties' appeal prior to elections and evaluate their record in government retrospectively*. Our

own research and experience suggest that Kitschelt's claim about the relevance of alternative linkages (charismatic and clientelistic) is valid in the analysis of politics in the post-communist region in general and in Slovakia in particular.

The reasoning about party competition described above was applied in a comparative analysis of four post-communist countries by Kitschelt, Mansfeldová, Markowski and Tóka in the second half of the 1990s (Kitschelt et al. 1999). This work represented an important milestone in the analysis of post-communist party politics. The essence of the conclusion reached by Kitschelt and his collaborators was that "the extent to which party competition in Eastern European countries is programmatically structured (rather than based on clientelism or around leaders' charismatic features) should vary according to legacies of pre--communist and communist rule." (Wineroither – Seeber 2018) The prevalence of programmatic party competition in party platforms that are largely socio--economic, accompanied by the adoption of a programmatic linkage by the parties, presents a considerably better prospect for democratic consolidation in general and party system stability in particular.

Even though Slovakia was not an object of analysis in the book, the idea that there is a connection between the type of competition as expressed in linkages used by parties to make connections to their base and the legacy of the type of the communist regime previously present in the country generated certain expectations about Slovakia as well. If we accept the analytic power of their typology, the consequence is that in the case of Slovakia, which was gaining its democratic experience under a mixed legacy of national-accommodative and patrimonial Communism, we should expect the clientelistic linkage to have quite a strong presence in the country's party system (Kitschelt et al. 1999: 39). The prospect for programmatic linkage would therefore most likely be weak, complemented or overshadowed by a strong clientelist one. Consequently, democratic consolidation and party system stability could be harder to achieve than in countries with less unfavourable legacies from the Communist period. Inspired by Kitschelt's approach, we want to confront the (indirect) predictions stemming from his analysis regarding the prospects for programmatic competition in Slovakia. With the benefit of two decades of hindsight, we want to compare what would have been predicted with the actual development of party competition in the country.

In order to achieve this objective, we firstly provide an overview of the development of party competition in Slovakia since 1989, which in a very general way summarizes earlier studies and empirical surveys over the last three decades. We focus on party linkage strategies as specified in the introduction to this article. It reflects on the latest developments of political linkages at a time when there is a rise in anti-establishment and anti-system political parties which base their appeals on charisma rather than programmes – thus challenging and undermining programmatic linkage, which has been assumed to be a precondition for

democratic consolidation. Secondly, we propose our own set of "linkage profiles" for relevant political parties in the history of Slovak party competition. Finally, referring to more recent work in the Kitscheltian tradition, that of Wineroither and Seeber (2018), we check whether the results of their linkage-based typology of parties matches the Slovak situation during the three decades of democratic development. We do this by considering the results of the unique Democratic Accountability and Linkages Project (DALP 2008–2009) database. We focus on country specific outcomes for Slovakia and confront them with the generalizations for Central European political parties made by Wineroither and Seeber on the basis of the same dataset.

The linkage-based account of party competition in Slovakia

In this section we provide a roughly chronological account of the development of Slovak party politics, focusing on the linkage strategies of the relevant parties and the way they shaped party competition.

Shaping the state with charisma and clientelism in the 1990s

In the early and mid-1990s, party competition was defined by the remarkable charismatic appeal of Vladimír Mečiar, who was three times prime minister between 1990 and 1998, as well as by the operation of his powerful clientelistic network. We can hypothesize that the increasing authoritarianism of this period motivated some in the opposition to consider programmatic appeals as a useful way of both countering Mečiar's politics and distancing themselves from them, not least as a means of identifying with the Western ways of doing politics. We can see this in the formation of the opposition coalition and later electoral party Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK) in 1997. However, all this was happening in the context of an all-consuming battle to define the parameters of the emergent Slovak statehood. The established cliché describes Mečiar's Slovakia as a 'fight over the rules of the game'.

In 1998, fear of the regime's growing authoritarianism and its consequences for the prospect of the EU membership helped to topple Mečiar's illiberal coalition. A tentative programmatic emphasis characterized the three actors of the new winning coalition: SDK; the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH); and the Party of the Democratic Left (SDĽ). The remaining partner, the Party of Civic Understanding (SOP), was a new party and a harbinger of the series of challengers to follow. Its appeals were largely moralistic, and it shied away from mention of public policy measures.[3]

3 For the characteristics of this first generation of challengers in the Slovak party system – also termed "self-professed depolarizers" – see Gyárfášová – Učeň (2020a).

While it is far from clear to what extent the programmatic linkage contributed to anti-regime mobilisation, for the new government it became a trademark to be successfully sold to their international partners in the process of the EU accession.

Programmatic competition in full swing

In 1999 and 2000 two important things happened: first, the electoral party SDK turned into a distinct party organization, the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union-Democratic Party (SDKÚ-DS), which in terms of socio-economic policies adopted the stance of a market-liberal modernizer as its emblematic appeal. The programmatic linkage offered to voters had thereby acquired an unwavering champion. Second, a new challenger party was created around former SDĽ functionary Robert Fico and some new cadres from the broader challenger, anti-establishment milieu. Fico's Direction (Smer) party was originally created as an anti-establishment challenger criticizing both the "old ways" of Mečiar as well as the "new ways" of the anti-Mečiar coalition in power.

Smer in its early stages, like SOP before, formulated its appeals in moralistic rather than public policy terms. It took failure in the 2002 elections to motivate Smer first to openly move to the socio-economically left side of the political spectrum, and second to accept the rules of the game set by SDKÚ-DS. The party soon changed its name to Direction-Social Democracy (Smer-SD) and started to present itself, depending on the context, as a social, socialist or social democratic alternative to the neoliberal governance represented by SDKÚ-DS. As a consequence, the period 2002 – 2006 was the heyday of the programmatic offer (linkage) in Slovak politics, with this dimension of competition supported by the joint efforts of the two largest political parties. As we will illustrate later, the DALP findings indicate that programmatic competition continued at least until 2009/2010.

For example, when in 2002 a new challenger, the New Citizen Alliance (ANO), appeared, it also presented itself as the champion of a policy programme – uncompromising market liberalism – which they combined with moralistic criticisms of the "conflictual politics" incited by SDKÚ and Smer-SD. The remaining ruling coalition partners, KDH and the recently united political party of the Hungarian minority, the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK), also found the emphasis on programmatic competition convenient, particularly for the purpose of assuring EU accession, although their own appeals to their voter base may not necessarily have been programmatic.[4] ANO was eventually

4 In fact, the combination of programmatic and clientelistic linkage was always quite pronounced in the case of the parties of the Hungarian minority, which included a typically strong emphasis on regional politics and promises of bringing development and investment to the regions with large minority populations.

destroyed by internal frictions as their programmatic image did not coincide with the actual dealings of the party leader, which were blatantly clientelistic.

Analysis of public opinion in this period also suggests that voters largely accepted the dominant programmatic positioning of the main parties along a single dimension which was *de facto* the local equivalent of the Western socio-economic left-right axis. Signs of voters' aligning with the programmatic logic could be observed in the frequent self-classification of Smer-SD supporters as belonging to the lower societal strata (although in 1999 Smer had started as a party of educated urban people). Similarly, supporters of SDKÚ-DS more frequently self-identified as belonging to the higher social classes, which was traditionally a very unusual self-identification in Slovakia (Gyárfášová – Krivý 2013: 282–283). In addition, the 2006 election was the only one in independent Slovakia in which no new party created shortly before the elections succeeded in entering parliament. This can be explained by the dominance of the programmatic competitive dimension: a new party could not compete with Smer-SD and SDKÚ-DS on this dimension, while there were not enough available voters to be gained on any other competitive lines.

The dominance of the programmatic linkage as the most successful way of securing voters and as an accountability mechanism started to weaken slowly around 2005 when both SDKÚ-DS and ANO started to succumb to internal dissent and public resentment about their "loss of integrity" (read: corruption). Also, following the 2006 elections, Smer-SD entered into a new illiberal coalition government with the Slovak National Party (SNS) and Mečiar's Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), which was now in steep decline, having lost many of its voters to Smer-SD. While Smer-SD never abandoned its self-declared social democratic public stance, its appeal changed as the essence of the coalition's politics was the division of spoils and organized elite-level clientelism. While Smer-SD kept its programmatic linkage alive, portraying itself as a social democratic party with the mission of fighting the consequences of the former "anti-people government of the right", additional elements had been added to its appeal. Incrementally, party leader and prime minister Robert Fico updated his subtle social populism to secure the edge over coalition partners, who on occasion resorted to various forms of social demagogy (Učeň 2011). Nationalist elements were also added to the party appeal. This was due in part to the presence of SNS in the coalition, but it was mainly designed to make its appeal more flexible as Fico felt the appeal of the programmatic linkage had been declining among voters. He was therefore creating scope to enlarge his voter base by supplementing the programmatic linkage with other ways of linking with the electorate. This was a unique situation where we witnessed the combination of all three linkages in the appeal of a pivotal party.

The rise of new challengers and Smer-SD's pretence of programmatic offer

The 2010 elections nevertheless led to the end of the Smer-SD-led coalition. The vote for the former opposition parties – SDKÚ-DS, KDH and the newly created interethnic splinter from SMK, the Bridge party[5] – was fortified by the emergence of a new challenger party, Freedom and Solidarity (SaS). SaS broke through as the anti-corruption, anti-establishment challenger to the "old ways" of Smer-SD and SDKÚ-DS, yet was non-charismatic and regarded clientelism as an anathema.

The new but short-lived government coalition meant the rejuvenation of a programmatic linkage, similar to that of the 2002–2006 centre-right government, since SaS, while critical of SDKÚ's conduct in power, approved of its emphasis on programmatic competition. Often called "market liberal", SaS was actually more a "pro-business" party and as such it soon became part of the mainstream in terms of its preference for programmatic linkage in its appeals. However, it has always tended to treat people engaged in private enterprise as the "collective client" of the party. This has specifically informed the party's appeal: election manifestoes have traditionally featured the "business environment" as the common denominator.

Within its strong anti-corruption dimension, SaS in 2010 co-opted four members of the Ordinary People (OĽ) movement led by Igor Matovič. Following the elections OĽ became part of the SaS parliamentary caucus, and while they were perfectly compatible regarding their strong anti-corruption stance, differences in the intensity and character of their anti-establishment posture soon became very clear. In 2011 SaS expelled Matovič from the parliamentary caucus for the voting against the government. Following the fall of the government in November 2011, Matovič successfully ran in the 2012 parliamentary elections with his new electoral vehicle, Ordinary People and Independent Personalities (OĽaNO).[6]

The essence of OĽaNO is a distinct and intensely anti-establishment bearing. Its anti-corruption appeals are of a moralistic nature, in contrast to the more technocratic approach of SaS. While SOP, ANO, Smer-SD and SaS may have been harbingers of an appeal based on the charisma of righteous ideas, OĽaNO was the embodiment of such an appeal, expressed in its radical moralistic criticism of the establishment and its conduct. Programmatic linkage was not particularly important for OĽaNO, while the clientelistic linkage was an anathema, just as it was for SaS. Also, importantly, OĽaNO, has ostensibly

5 The official name of the new interethnic party was Most-Híd. Both words mean "bridge", in Slovak and Hungarian respectively. We use Bridge as the acronym in this text.

6 For a more detailed treatment of the second generation of challengers – "the champions of integrity" – see Gyárfášová – Učeň (2020a).

been acting as an anti-party, insofar as it presented itself the electoral vehicle for independent candidates – hence the name Ordinary People and Independent Personalities. In fact, OĽaNO does not mind operating as a party when in public office but refuses partisan logic when it comes to the remaining faces of party organization – the party on the ground and at party headquarters. The reason for this is both ideological (the anti-party persuasion is indeed very strong) and pragmatic (they see party organizations as a factor constraining the operation of their political project).

The 2012 snap election ushered in the single-party government of Smer-SD, the decline of its former coalition partners and disunity among the opposition. There was a great degree of distrust among the opposition parties, who traded accusations about who was to blame for the fall of their government in 2011. Also, the established opposition refusal to contemplate governing with Smer-SD started to weaken as both KDH and Bridge were clearly toying with the idea, while SaS and OĽaNO continued to abhor it. In terms of linkages, Smer-SD pushed the notion of "unipolar" programmatic competition, which presented their party as the only source of any meaningful public policy programme and denied any programmatic potential whatsoever among the opposition parties.

The radicalization of challengers, breakdown of old competitive lines and the decline of programmatic competition

Both the trend of opposition disunity regarding cooperation with Smer-SD and the latter's "defence" of the programmatic linkage vis-à-vis "moralizing" challengers continued during Smer-SD's single-party government. The opposition split culminated in the aftermath of the 2016 elections when the victorious Smer-SD forged a coalition with the nationalist SNS and the Hungarian minority Bridge party, which finally crossed the coalition-opposition divide. The clientelistic practices of Smer-SD and SNS, which focus on both elite and mass clients, intensified. Bridge, as an ethnic and in part a regional party, had always had a discernible clientelistic element, so they could align with their new partners. Meanwhile, the opposition world was shaken by the failure of KDH to enter parliament, matched by the ascent of the anti-systemic far-right People's Party Our Slovakia[7] and the emergence of a new right-wing anti-establishment challenger, We are Family (SR), both of whom succeeded in entering parliament for the first time.

We are Family represented a nominally right-wing and conservative attempt to base party appeal on the charisma of the leader combined with the appeal of a righteous anti-establishment posture. Like OĽaNO four years earlier, the party

7 The party is currently called Kotlebovci – People's Party Our Slovakia after they added the leader's surname to the party's name. "Kotlebovci" means the retinue of Marián Kotleba.

was generically anti-corruption and critical of the misconduct of the elites, but unlike it, the new party presented voters less with the "charisma of righteous ideas" and rather more with the charisma of party leader Boris Kollár, who "was like the people" – in spite of the fact that he was far from the ordinary person when it came to his wealth, media celebrity and highly unconventional private life. In this case, the essence of the charismatic appeal launched at the voter base was Kollár's willingness to defend the "ordinariness" of the people and to dignify the aspects of their lives which other politicians would likely consider base and ignoble.[8]

Smer-SD's "unipolar programmatic competition" continued to dominate the government's discourse after 2016, but there was a notable increase in collective clientelistic appeals and practices, mainly towards the end of the term (2018–2020). These took the form of handouts for specific groups of the electorate, such as pensioners, students or employees, generously financed by the state budget, or rather a deficit in the state budget. These were largely pre-emptive measures aimed at buying the favour of large groups of population in the face of increasing resentment about government corruption and suspected protection of criminal activities of the ruling parties' cronies. The government, or rather Smer-SD, justified its handouts by claiming it was paying people a premium resulting from the success of the government's policies.

The murder of the investigative journalist Ján Kuciak in February 2018 mobilized society in protest against what was perceived as the governing parties' complicity in concealing the suspected mastermind behind the murder and encouraging the system of privileges which produced the milieu capable of organizing the murder. The ensuing investigation uncovered alarming facts about the governing parties' involvement in illicit activities that undermined the work of state institutions such as the police and state prosecutors, as well as high-profile corruption in the judiciary. Pressure on the government intensified as did the frequency and volume of its social handouts. These did not, however, prevent a dramatic decline in the governing parties' popularity and the return of the opposition to power in 2020. A new ruling coalition was formed by OĽaNO, We are Family, SaS and the new For the People party (ZĽ).

In terms of linkages, the urgency of the fight against corruption and state capture resulted in a further decline in programmatic competition within the party system. Under enormous pressure, Smer-SD divided into two wings. One, led by former PM Peter Pellegrini, felt they were less threatened by investigations into corruption and aimed at further cultivating the programmatic (social-democratic type) appeal to voters. Another wing around another former

8 Along with the far-right ĽSNS, We are Family can be considered a member of the third generation of challengers – "democracy's cynics" – that have appeared in the Slovak party system. See Gyárfášová and Učeň (2020a).

PM Róbert Fico perceived themselves to be in enormous personal danger from corruption investigations and resorted to radical forms of voter mobilization, including anti-systemic rhetoric and conspiratorial explanations for the developments that had led to the defeat of Smer-SD in 2020 elections. The party finally split in late 2020 and the new party Voice – Social Democracy (HLAS-SD) was created by Pellegrini's wing.

Prior to the February 2020 elections, opposition appeals were also influenced by the increasing vulnerability of Smer-SD and its assumed complicity in undermining the institutions of state. OĽaNO and SR visibly intensified their anti-corruption appeals. OĽaNO in particular was successful in turning this into the defining topic of elections and increased its support fivefold in the four months prior to the elections by means of intense and masterful emotional manipulation of the topic of the governing elite's moral corruption.

Two new, potentially relevant parties contested elections. These were Progressive Slovakia (PS), which ran in coalition with the smaller Together (Spolu) party, and For the People (ZĽ). PS was established by a frustrated progressive and largely urban constituency, which has been feeling unrepresented for some time. ZĽ was formed by former President Andrej Kiska, who was a staunch opponent of prime minister Fico. Both could be characterized as a new kind of challenger, since unlike many of their predecessors they posed a "challenge by moderation".[9] Although belonging to a new generation of challengers in the Slovak party system, they preserve the strong anti-corruption stance and criticism of the conduct of the ruling elites. However, they did not propose particularly radical counter-measures. Instead, they mostly suggested the remedy of returning to the rules of moderate and consensual policy making. In terms of linkages, their preference may potentially lie in the programmatic area, but they consider "virtuous ideas" (read: anti-corruption) to be the most urgent necessity, and this influenced their appeals prior to the 2020 elections. SaS, in the meantime, has become a quite ordinary mainstream party with a largely programmatic (linkage) profile.

The new HLAS party has so far been rather unclear as to the preferred accountability mechanism to be suggested to their voters, and they manoeuvre around the topic quite a lot. In principle, they would prefer a programmatic linkage and would be willing to assume the role of the leftist contender in the competition of policy programmes, thus replacing their mother party, Smer-SD, in this capacity. As they are not completely immune to the threat of ongoing criminal investigation, their willingness to participate in the "programmatic game" may be determined by the readiness of future partners to guarantee some kind of impunity for them. This kind of assumption is, however, very tentative in

9 A more detailed description of profiles of these parties and their competitive strategies can be found in Gyárfášová and Učeň (2020b).

the current Slovak party system, where the only real achievement the post-2020 government can claim is the fact that they have abandoned political control over the police and prosecutors so that these institutions can now run extensive politically sensitive criminal investigations completely unhindered. Any kind of political guarantees to HLAS, perhaps aimed at securing the prospect of a partnership based on programmatic linkage at some point in the future – would be a betrayal of the government's legacy.

Moreover, the dominant government party OĽaNO and its reliable tactical partner within the coalition, SR, have no interest in solidifying the programmatic linkage in the party system, as they never relied on it in their relationships with voters in the first place. They rely on charisma as the best way of attracting voters and will continue to do so. Similarly, they will continue to suggest that living up to expectations of morally dignified political conduct by politicians who "are like us" should be the preferred accountability mechanism by which the voters should judge them.

What kind of linkage patterns?

Wineroither and Seeber (2018) see linkages as mechanisms of democratic accountability proposed by parties or politicians to their (targeted) constituencies. We subscribe to a similar view, in which parties choose linkages and suggest them to their supporters as an appropriate form of accountability – thus encouraging voters to keep them accountable on this basis. Such accountability includes both future and retrospective assessment as the basis for electoral choice. As for future voting choices, in some cases the type of linkage suggested by the party may influence electoral choice, especially in cases when the proposed linkage differs from all other parties' offer and the affected voter group considers it more appropriate for the problems society is facing.

Methodologically, when analysing party politics in terms of party linkages it is necessary to recognize that practically all parties combine more than one linkage in their efforts to approach voters (Kitschelt 2000; Wineroither – Seeber 2018). We therefore rarely observe a party adopting only one linkage in such an exclusive way that it exhausts its "essence". Related to this, linkages do not constitute party types or, vice versa, *conceptual* party types should not be based on an analysis of the linkages employed by parties. Wineroither and Seeber (2018) identified several *empirical* types of political parties based on their use of linkage mechanisms as a form of democratic accountability, but none of these types was based on the exclusive usage of one specific linkage by the parties involved.

Their linkage-based typology of political parties in Western and Eastern Europe is based on analysis of the exceptional "Dataset of the Democratic Accountability and Linkages Project – DALP", covering the variety of instrumental

and emotional modes of linkage building (Kitschelt et al. 2009). DALP data are based on expert surveys of 15–50 jury members per country covering the period 2008–2009. As stated in its mission statement, "DALP data make it possible to study not just individual linkage strategies of parties, but the complex 'profiles' of linkage efforts that parties deploy in the pursuit of votes and office" (DALP 2008–9). Using these data, Wineroither and Seeber analyse groups of parties according to their West-South-East Europe location combined with the party families to which they belong (Socialist, Social Democrat, Christian Democratic, Liberal, Greens etc.) The DALP database is organized according to individual countries so we could identify how Slovak parties were classified according to their linkage building for the period 2008–2009, when the survey was implemented.

The expert evaluation of linkages has been operationalized by following indicators:

1. CHARISMATIC linkage: to what extent do parties seek to mobilize electoral support by featuring a party leader's charismatic personality?
2. PROGRAMMATIC linkage: to what extent do parties seek to mobilize electoral support by emphasizing the attractiveness of the party's positions on policy issues?
3. CLIENTELISTIC linkage: to what extent do parties seek to mobilize electoral support by emphasizing the capacity of the party to deliver targeted material benefits to its electoral supporters?
4. PID (Party Identification): to what extent parties drawn on and appeal to voters long-term partisan loyalty ("party identification"). Parties may involve their historical origins or the achievements of historical leaders. They may feature party symbols and rituals to reinvigorate party identification.
5. POLICY COMPETENCE: to what extent parties seek to mobilize electoral support by emphasizing their general competence to govern and bring about or maintain economic, social and political stability (DALP Dataset Codebook 2008–9: 153, Kitschelt et al. 2009: 752).[10]

As shown in Table 2, based on multilevel statistical analysis Wineroither and Seeber identify three clusters of political parties in Eastern Europe with typical linkage profiles. The empirical typology clearly shows that there is nothing like a clear programmatic, charismatic or clientelistic type. They argue that in general the model-based analysis results in three clusters, where party identification effort does not account for the distinctiveness of the subgroups. Boundaries are primarily drawn by rankings on programmatic and clientelistic efforts. For

10 Each of these dimensions has been evaluated on a four-points scale 1= not at all/very little to 4=to a great extent/very strongly.

the Eastern European countries, "members of cluster 1 represent the universal pole and those of cluster 2 the particularistic pole of competitive strategies, cluster 3 takes an intermediate stance on this axis in addition to low scores on valence effort" (Wineroither – Seeber 2018: 15–17).

Table 2: Linkage profiles of empirical party clusters

	Clientelism	Programmaticism	Charisma	PID	Competence to govern
No 1 cluster – East	Low	High	High	Medium	High
No 2 cluster – East	High	Low	High	Medium	High
No 3 cluster – East	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	Low

Source: Wineroither-Seeber 2018: 17, adapted by authors.

Table 3 illustrates averages for the six Slovak political parties which were relevant at the time of the data collection (2008–2009).

Table 3: Six Slovak political parties included in the DALP experts' evaluation (2008-2009)[11]

	Clientelism	Programmaticism	Charisma	PID	Competence to govern
SDKÚ-DS	2.5	3.6	2.6	2.9	4.0
Smer-SD	2.9	3.2	3.7	2.0	3.7
SMK	2.5	2.9	1.6	3.8	2.5
SNS	2.5	2.8	3.3	3.3	2.3
KDH	2.3	2.7	1.5	3.5	2.8
HZDS	2.8	1.8	3.7	3.6	2.7

Note: Averages on the 4-point scale 1=very little/not at all ….4=very strongly. Higher values (over 3.0) are highlighted.
Source: DALP DATA (https://duke.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eLPpbYbmOrnxyOp?Q_JFE=qdg).

For these six political parties we see that the differences in scores for clientelism were very small. Thus in the view of participating experts, all Slovak parties were very similar regarding the employment of the clientelist linkage.

11 These include Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS, led by Vladimír Mečiar), Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKÚ-DS, led by Mikuláš Dzurinda); Party of Hungarian Coalition (SMK, led by Béla Bugár), Slovak National Sarty (SNS, led by Ján Slota), Christian Democratic Movement (KDH, led by Pavol Hrušovský) and Direction – Social Democracy (Smer-SD, led by Robert Fico). In the years 2008-2009 the nationalist-left leaning government coalition was composed of Smer-SD, SNS and HZDS, while the centre-right parties SDKÚ-DS, KDH and SMK were in opposition.

The populist–nationalists HZDS and SNS were characterized by a strong charismatic linkage and strong appeals to identity (3.7 and 3.3 for charisma and 3.6 and 3.3 for identity). The Party of the Hungarian Coalition and the Christian Democratic Movement demonstrated above-average values on party identification as they appeal to long-term partisan loyalty that is backed by voters' ethnic or religious identity (3.8 and 3.5).

The other two parties – Smer-SD and SDKÚ-DS – best represent the programmatic linkage, but we see significant differences between them in other respects. Whereas SDKÚ-DS combined strong programmatic (3.6) and competence appeals (4.0), Smer-SD was seen as uniting charisma (3.7) with a slightly lower, but still comparatively strong, programmatic one (3.2), supported by competence to govern (3.7). This combination was the main reason for the party's long-term viability and dominance in the party system. As discussed in our analysis of this period in the next section, these scores underline the fact that Smer-SD was seen – and presented itself – as a competent party with a charismatic leader, backed by clientelist mechanisms. It was precisely in this period that Smer-SD attempted to "maximize" all three linkage mechanisms at the same time.

Comparing the Slovak political parties with Wineroither's and Seeber's empirical clusters in Table 2, we see that programmatic and charismatic linkages tend to occur together. The high level of PID in the cases of SMK, SNS, KDH and HZDS refers to identity politics, which used to be typical for Slovak political parties.

The strong programmatic linkage characteristics attributed to SDKÚ-DS and Smer-SD by DALP data are in agreement with our expert judgement on linkage profiles of Slovak parties during the three decades of democracy. (As DALP covers only two years of that period, it provides a limited check of the accuracy of our reasoning.) It certainly confirms our thesis that the 2000s were the heyday of programmatic competition, fostered by exactly these two parties. As for other parties and other periods of party system development, our analysis generally concurs with Wineroither and Seeber's (2018) conclusion that "[P]arties in the East had initially been characterized by low programmatic identity before they would gradually start to crystallize around an emergent socioeconomic structure of competition, a process that was supposed to have created additional leverage for leadership-based campaigning" (Wineroither – Seeber 2018: 2). Our analysis described some of the reasons behind these developments.

Capitalizing on the account above and the conceptualizations mentioned in the introduction, a list of linkage mechanisms employed in Slovak party politics can be offered with the following linkage profiles:

1. **Programmatic – committed**: This describes the situation when political parties primarily rely on programmatic linkage as the appeal to attract and retain a sizeable voter base. This was mainly the case of **SDKÚ-DS** and **Smer-SD**, but also **SaS** after 2016.

2. **Programmatic – pragmatic**: This characteristic applies to those parties which for certain reasons found it useful to present their programmes as their primary appeal but combined it with identity appeals. This was mostly the case of **KDH** and the **Hungarian** ethic parties, which for most of the time may have preferred the programmatic image in addition to their appeal to Christian and ethnic identities respectively. The reason for this might have been the normative influence of the West in the political competition of late 1990s based on arguments according to which charisma and clientelism were perceived as inferior (populist) or even morally reprehensible "ways of doing politics".
3. **Clientelistic**: In contrast with "Kitscheltian" expectations, clientelism played a much smaller role as a party linkage mechanism than foretold in his 1999 book. While clientelism as a governing practice was widespread, and all parties engaged in it, clientelism as an appeal and linkage with voters was mostly hidden and more or less subtly articulated in the case of collective clients such as ethnic groups – Slovaks in case of HZDS and SNS and Hungarians in the case of SMK.
4. **Charismatic**: Contrary to expectations, charisma played a more salient role than the Kitscheltian model from the 1990s assumed. It was more widespread and took a different form from the traditional notion of a political leader's charisma, and it was notable that it was compatible with programmatic appeals. Most importantly, in the Slovak case we consider it useful to distinguish between the charisma of the political leader, which was undoubtedly the case of Mečiar (and to a lesser extent also Fico), and what we call the ***charisma of righteous or virtuous ideas***. Here we included various stances usually described as anti-corruption or anti-establishment appeals. We consider that appeals related to criticism of the establishment and the conduct of the political class could be subsumed under the umbrella of charismatic appeals. They typically manifest a transformative ambition and include calls for integrity and competence in public office and claims of competence to rule based on moral arguments – namely, anti-corruption. The most evident proponents of the charisma of virtuous ideas in Slovak politics were, apart from Smer-SD before 2002 have primarily been **OĽaNO** and **We are Family**.
5. **Mixed charismatic-programmatic**: Here we are talking about a combination of programmatic appeals and the charisma of virtuous ideas (morally-based criticism of political conduct). Here we identify **ANO** and **early SaS** (before the 2016 elections) as the clearest examples.

Kotlebovci – People's Party Our Slovakia (**ĽSNS**) poses a challenge in terms of linkages. This is related to the more general problem of what linkage far-right anti-systemic parties offer voters as an accountability mechanism, especially if

they have gained and defended parliamentary representation. If one emphasises the anti-systemic character of a party such as ĽSNS, the accountability criterion could be its capacity to undermine the system of party interactions within the polity. There are, however, strong doubts that this would be its endgame as the party seems to have accommodated itself in the party system quite cosily, and it is certainly motivated to support the continuation of the democratic game for its own advantage. Another possibility is to highlight its far-right ideology and consider ĽSNS an extreme form of the appeal of the charisma of the righteous ideas. By providing voters with the possibility to vent their anger at what is perceived to be an extremely unfair, rigged system, the party has established a strong emotional link with its supporters. This suggests that supporters judge the party by its capacity to take revenge on the treacherous political class – though not necessarily by terminating democracy in the country. Thus, in terms of the concepts that inspired this text, it may be most appropriate to look at **party identification** – in a situation of perceived betrayal by the rest of the political class – as the "linkage" between ĽSNS and its voters.

Conclusion

The purpose of this text was to confront, with the benefit of the hindsight, the expectations originating in Kitschelt's late 1990s analysis of the determinants of party competition in post-communist states (Kitschelt et al. 1999) with the actual development of the Slovak party system.

Expectations hold true through part of the 1990s: the charisma of Vladimír Mečiar was the dominant means of making connections to a sizeable part of electorate, who considered him the father of the nation. Also, clientelism was a primary tool for creating the aspiring regime's own economic and political base, including new elites. Overall, the space for programmatic competition was almost non-existent as the dominant political conflict was fought over the character of the regime to be created in the newly independent state, and the rules of the democratic game to be played within its boundaries.

However, the success of Mečiar's strategy also provoked a radical political response on the elite level in the late 1990s. Part of this response was publicly identifying with the Western style of politics, including the programmatic linkage as the primary competitive line of party competition. This was seen by the opposition as an effective tool for distancing themselves from Mečiar's style of politics in the eyes of domestic and foreign audiences. The success of such a "programmatic strategy" was ultimately assisted by the prospect of EU membership. After receiving clear signals from the EU and the broader international community that EU membership was incompatible with Mečiar's increasingly illiberal regime, electoral support for the "father of the nation" eventually decreased to the extent that his party could be left out of the government formation process in 1998.

The Slovak opposition managed not only to defeat Mečiar electorally, but also to develop the first set of policy measures that was accepted by a sizeable part of the population and which, when executed, for the first time brought relative prosperity to Slovakia's aspiring middle class, at least in the western part of the country. (It also contributed to the successful inclusion of the Slovak export-oriented economy into the larger international trade system and attracted a remarkable amount of foreign direct investment.) However, it also helped to create its own nemesis in the form of the new party Smer-SD.

Smer-SD was originally a largely non-ideological anti-establishment party. Its rise to political prominence was marked by the acceptance of the ruling logic of programmatic competition and creating its own programmatic offer. Following the 2002 elections Smer-SD presented itself as the left-wing, "social" pole of competing programmes alternatives, which was the opposite of its neoliberal counterparts in the government. The 2000s thus became the golden decade for Slovak programmatic competition, when two of its most important proponents, SDKÚ-DS and Smer-SD, ruled for the entire decade. In the second half of the decade, however, the dominance of programmatic competition started to fade when Smer-SD – like SDKÚ-DS before them – began to lose its trustworthiness and integrity in the eyes of their supporters.

Prior to the 2010 elections, when Smer-SD was in the "illiberal" coalition with SNS and HZDS, the Slovak party system witnessed a rare situation in which the pivotal party employed all three linkage mechanisms at the same time. While the programmatic linkage continued to be the flagship one, clientelism – in elite-level exchanges – and populist-charismatic appeals were used to compensate for the party's incremental loss of integrity. The decade of programmatic competition in Slovakia ended with the Great Recession, which manifested itself in Slovakia later that in many other European countries. It roughly coincided with the aftermath of the 2010 election. In this contest Smer-SD lost is pivotal position and was ousted from government, which among other things illustrates the strategic limits of maximizing all three linkages.

Smer-SD was deposed by the opposition coalition, which also included the new challenger party, SaS, which itself included members of the future radical charismatic challenger, OĽaNO. These two parties embodied the new spirit of charismatic linkage, although in the case of SaS this was combined with programmatic appeals (market liberal purifier). The new spirit was not, however, based on the charisma of an individual political leader, but the charisma of virtuous ideas (namely, anti-corruption ones). In this arrangement OĽaNO clearly represented the radical version of the charisma of righteous ideas and opened this avenue for followers in years to come. Once such charisma re-established itself as a factor in informing voter choice in Slovakia after 2010, programmatic competition never regained an impact comparable to the 2000s.

After the centre-right coalition lost power in snap elections in 2012 due to its strategic failures, Smer-SD again appeared to be the dominant party and was able to form a single-party government. This time, however, the hegemon came with only a semblance of programmatic competition. This was another quite unique situation in which the dominant party presented itself as the sole source of programmatic offer in the party system, thus suggesting that programmatic competition was unipolar.

Another important trend following the 2010 election was the rise of the radical challengers to mainstream political conduct, namely OĽaNO in 2012 and We are Family and People's Party – Our Slovakia in 2016. These parties competed exclusively on charismatic and moralistic appeals and therefore, even though SaS had in the meantime transformed into a largely programmatic party, the dominance of programmatic offers in the system has been never recovered.

The late 2010s also witnessed an attempt by the ruling parties, Smer-SD, SNS and Bridge, to employ clientelistic linkages, this time targeting selected audiences with collective benefits from public policy measures. The clientelistic linkage was for the first time presented as a legitimate one, since Smer-SD interpreted its social handouts as benefits that stemmed from its sound policy choices. This differed from the past, when the clientelistic linkage as a mechanism of accountability has been largely absent, with the possible exception of the ethnic Hungarian parties.

The 2020 elections ended the era of purported programmatic competition and promoted "righteous political conduct" as the dominant competitive line in Slovak politics. This has been unequivocally illustrated by the way in which the struggling anti-establishment challenger, OĽaNO, managed to quadruple its electoral support in the four months prior to the elections by running an emotional campaign targeting corruption and the country's degeneration into an "oligarchic state" (Gyárfášová – Učeň 2020b). The longevity of such a trend, however, cannot be assessed since the main proponent of the charisma of virtuous ideas, OĽaNO, lost a greater part of its popular support within a year of coming into office. This loss was mainly the consequence of their (mis)conduct in government in the tumultuous era of "Corona governance". The splinter party from Smer-SD, HLAS, emerged as the new champion of popular support, capturing approximately a quarter of the electorate. While HLAS is clearly a "programmatic wannabe", their true commitment to programmatic competition has been hinging on too many assumptions to be taken for granted.

The main findings of this account are that (1) clientelism as a linkage has played a considerably smaller role than predicted, while (2) charisma – even though we define it differently from some mainstream approaches – has manifested a much stronger than expected influence on party competition. Overall, charisma clearly outweighs clientelism as a linkage mechanism. In addition (3) the various combinations of charismatic and programmatic linkages seem to

be attractive for a number of relevant Slovak parties. Finally, (4) programmatic competition has shaped Slovak politics more successfully and for longer than Kitschelt's model would suggest.

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Participation of the Czech Republic in NATO Peace Support Operations: Analysis of Necessary and Sufficient Conditions

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Abstract: *NATO, as one of the most important security organisations, has been involved in a large number of operations of all kinds since its establishment. Peace Support Operations are the most common type, as they include conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, peace enforcement and humanitarian operations. Some states participate in these operations very often, others only rarely. This study aims to examine the participation of the Czech Republic, a small state that has a small but well-trained and specialised army. The research aims to determine the most common reasons for Czech participation in NATO's Peace Support Operations. The work uses qualitative comparative analysis to determine the necessary reasons or sufficient conditions for the participation of this state. Five types of reasons – political reasons, security reasons, economic reasons, institutional reasons and normative reasons are tested. The analysis points to the fact that security reasons are the most important reasons.*

Keywords: ***Czech Republic; NATO; Participation; Peace Support Operations; Security***

NATO and Czech Participation

NATO was founded in 1949 and the main goal of this organisation was to protect its members. This organisation has undergone a long transformative development. In 1989, NATO began to engage outside the territory of member states. This has been accompanied by the development of theories and procedures for

the use of force in response to new forms of threats and the need to ensure security and stability in the area of interest (Zůna 2002: 9–10). Once NATO became involved in Peace Support Operations (PSOs), the territorial scope of the member states was expanded and a new indoctrination was created. The key was the adoption of the new Strategic Concept in 1991, where it was stated that security must be ensured through partnership and cooperation with former adversaries (NATO 2006: 20–21). In 1992, NATO's support was provided in the framework of peacekeeping operations under a United Nations (UN) and Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mandate. This process was finalised during a meeting in Athens in 1993. Agreed-upon principles and conditions were established under which NATO would provide support for peace operations. The guiding principle was that the doctrine of NATO's peace operations must be in line with the UN Charter and that all other activities of NATO must be conducted based on a mandate from the UN Security Council (Zůna 2002: 8). The term Peace Support Operations has been used within NATO since 1995 when peacekeeping operations doctrines were transcribed. Three doctrines were created – NATO Multinational Joint Operational Doctrine, ACE Doctrine for Peace Support Operations and the Functional Planning Guide for PSO. The current Peace Support Operations are also based on these pillars. The process itself was completed in 2000, when several other documents, including, for example, AJP – 3-4-1 NATO Peace Support Operations and AJP 3-4-1-1 Tactics Techniques and Procedures for NATO Peace Support Operations were finalised (NATO 2019a: 37–44).

NATO Peace Support Operations are defined as multifunctional operations that are impartial, involving military forces and diplomatic and humanitarian agencies. This includes a wide range of operations using various tools such as situation monitoring, consultancy or humanitarian aid. All PSO activities can be defined as peacekeeping, peace enforcement, conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacebuilding and humanitarian relief (NATO 2019b: 2–9). Peace Support Operation, therefore, covers a wide range of activities. The basic principles of the PSO include impartiality, transparency and the principle of consensus of the parties to the conflict. Unlike the UN, NATO does not further restrict the use of force to only self-defence and this does not even presuppose the passive nature of forces. These operations are also affected by other principles such as the coordination of military and civilian activities, cooperation with national authorities and the principle of sustained effort and multifunctionality (NATO 2001: 3–9).

The Czech Republic (CR) has been actively participating in NATO missions and operations since joining the Alliance. NATO's first mission with a huge Czech Republic involvement was the Allied Force mission in 1999. However, the launch of an air operation against the Serbian regime was criticised by both political leaders and the general public in the Czech Republic. The Czech

Republic sent contradictory signals when, on the one hand, it accepted the operation (but after a very close vote in favour of the operation) and approved overflights and rail transport through the territory of the Czech Republic, but on the other hand, the public and politicians were split on the issue, and there was criticism from all sides (Eichler 2012: 12–24). Nevertheless, the Czech Republic subsequently joined other operations in the Balkans. As of today, it can be stated that the Czech army has been involved in more than thirty NATO operations that took place in Europe, Asia and Africa.

This study aims to examine the reasons for the involvement of the Czech army in PSOs and to analyse what primarily shapes the decision as to whether Czech soldiers will be involved in operations of NATO or not. Unlike its large coalition partners such as France, Germany and the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic was not involved with any other state outside Europe by colonialism or other historical ties. This state is a relatively small state, located in the middle of Europe, where quite good security conditions prevail.[1] The army consists of about 23,000 military personnel (Army CR 2020). Two of the neighboring states (Poland and Germany) have armies that are several times larger. Neighboring states which are closer to the Czech Republic in terms of population and landmass (Austria and Slovakia), have slightly smaller armies (International Institute for Strategic Studies 2019: 2–14). The key is to examine what shapes the decision to involve Czech soldiers and whether there are some necessary conditions for participation or not. The research seeks to answer the question of what the necessary and sufficient conditions are for the involvement of the CR in NATO's PSOs. Qualitative comparative analysis is used for these purposes. So far, very little research has been conducted on NATO's PSOs involvement. Most research focuses on UN missions and the motives of large states. This research should therefore complement and expand existing knowledge about the motives of small states.[2] The text first defines the theoretical model on which the research is based and clearly defines the individual categories of motives. This includes economic, political, security, institutional and normative reasons. A description of the qualitative comparative analysis and coding process follows. The main part of the text is devoted to the analysis of the participation of the Czech Republic in PSOs. In conclusion, the results that are the product of the analysis are clarified and summarised.

1 Good security conditions mean, in particular, that there has been no armed conflict in Central Europe for several decades (Egry 2018: 1–6).

2 A small state is most often defined on the basis of population size. Sometimes other quantitative criteria are used, such as the size of the area or GNP values (Maass 2009: 70–73). The size of the army is very much related to the size of the population. The size of the army and technological capacity are used to measure the strength of the state. According to most of the mentioned criteria, the Czech Republic is one of the small states (Maass 2009: 71–76).

Theoretical Framework

Several expert studies have been written about the participation of large countries such as France and Germany. An example is a text written by Marianne Takle, which deals with German participation in international military operations. She describes the change that Germany has undergone since the 1990s when it was unwilling to participate in foreign military operations. At the same time, it provides several reasons for a change, like government political changes or generational changes (Takle 2010: 1–3). Another similar work is an article written by Torsten Stein, who describes Germany's constitution and participation in international peacekeeping operations (Stein 2010: 33–40). An example of research focused on France is the work of Manuel Lafont-Rapnouil, who focuses on the reasons for the involvement of French soldiers in UN peacekeeping operations in Africa (Lafont-Rapnouil 2013: 2–4).

Attention is paid mainly to large states, but several studies also focus on the motives of small states' participation. The small European States have played a key role in several foreign operations and were considered equal partners to large states, as they contributed large numbers of soldiers and equipment to the operations. This is the case of the KFOR peacekeeping mission in Kosovo, where Austria, Hungary and Slovenia are among the most represented countries (Arquivo 2019). Studies focusing on small and medium-sized countries mostly include some selected countries of southern Europe such as Portugal and Greece or some Central European countries, in particular Slovenia and Hungary. This is also the case of the work of Maria Do Céu Pinto Arena, who focuses on the rationale of small and medium-sized states for involvement in the PSOs, specifically Italy and Portugal (Pinto Arena 2017: 1–4). She points out that the reasons for small and medium-sized states to participate in missions do not differ and the attitude of Portugal and Italy to the public service obligation can be explained by the use of the constructivist theory of changing norms and the logic of proportionality. Their involvement is based primarily on the a priori mainstreaming of specific values and beliefs about international security enshrined in the doctrine and practice of organisations. According to her, security reasons are the most important (Pinto Arena 2017: 8–10). Dimitrov (2009) shares a similar view, describing Bulgaria's involvement in NATO operations as primarily for security reasons. Bulgaria's main reason, which is publicly declared, is to protect the home country from threats that are far beyond its territorial borders (Dimitrov 2009: 1–8). Hungary's involvement in peacekeeping operations in Africa is described in a study by Besenyo (2013). He also argues that security reasons and gaining new experience are crucial in making decisions about the deployment in the mission (Besenyo 2013: 2–13). On the other hand, Zupančič (2015) comes to different conclusions. According to him, small states strive to enter international society as credible actors in inter-

national relations. A well-deserved place in the international community can be achieved by becoming a credible member of NATO. This includes participating in missions and demonstrating one's abilities (Zupančič 2015: 463–468). From this, it can be concluded that, according to him, international commitment is crucial in Slovenia's decision to participate in the missions.

Some authors who have sought to explore the reasons for Germany's involvement in PSOs use the theory of the logic of appropriateness and logic of consequences, which controls the so-called logic of action (Čapovová 2015: 19–23). This theory, formulated by March and Olsen, argues that the logic of consequences focuses on interest, the promotion of interest should lead to the desired consequence (March and Olsen 1998: 951–954). States are seen as rational actors and interests are primarily security and economic goals. The logic of appropriateness is governed by a rule that determines what is appropriate. It should be added that the rules increase the competence and effectiveness of action and at the same time reduce uncertainty in the political environment (March and Olsen 1998: 952–956). The actions of the actors are thus considered to be based on rules (respectively norms), which are considered natural and legitimate. However, identity membership in political groups and institutions also plays an important role in shaping human behavior. Thus, acting according to the rules of the logic of appropriateness involves accepting an identity or role and then adapting the obligations of that identity or role to a specific situation. This theory has also been used in other research. It was applied to the motives for the involvement of the CR in UN peacekeeping operations by Urbanovská (2016: 3–4). She concludes that the logic of consequences is more applicable than the logic of appropriateness. In the case of the logic of consequences, security interests are most important for the Czech Republic (Urbanovská 2016: 3–4). However, this theoretical framework is outdated and the two logics very often overlap, which is also noted by Urbanovská.

Chand, who focuses on the motives of Asian states for UN peacekeeping operations, uses a completely different theoretical framework. He argues that there are four categories of reasons. Political interests, economic interests, domestic factors and international factors (Chand 2019: 82–100). The main problem of his work is the unclear definition of some categories. According to him, domestic factors include political history, humanitarian reasons or efforts to support the UN. International factors include UN principles and efforts to influence the functioning of the organisation. The author does not define the first two categories, and efforts to support and influence the functioning of the UN overlap (Chand 2019: 82–100).

The most specific theory that can be applied across cases has been described by Bellamy and Williams (2013). They examined fourteen (large and medium-sized) states between 2000 and 2013 and concluded that there are five reasons why states participate in foreign operations (Bellamy and Williams 2013:

423–425). These five rational reasons are currently the most relevant and comprehensive model to explain states' motivations. This approach is the most comprehensive, based on real cases, and was able to cover all the cases examined during Bellamy and Williams' research. The model covers the so-called United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO), so far it has not been applied exclusively to NATO-led PSOs. However, for reasons of complexity, this model is used in this research. For each of the five reasons, the authors described several motives that lead to participation, but also inhibitors that can reduce the chance of participation. For this research, it is crucial to determine which motives most often shape the decision of the Czech Republic to participate in the PSOs. The following table summarises all five reasons.

Table 1: Reasons for state's participation

REASONS	MOTIVATION
POLITICAL	• *National prestige* • *To influence international affairs* • *Other foreign policy goals*
ECONOMIC	• *Financial rewards (individuals, companies, states, ministries, and militaries)*
SECURITY	• *Contribute to global peace* • *Resolve regional conflict*
INSTITUTIONAL	• *Gain operational experience* • *Improve interoperability* • *Legitimized armed forces*
NORMATIVE	• *Humanitarian motives* • *Support NATO/UN system*

Source: Bellamy and Williams (2013, p. 423).

This theory is also used by some other authors. An example is a work of Fauzia (2018), which seeks to analyse Indonesia's motives for participation in UN Peacekeeping Operations. Based on the analysis of all Indonesian cases, she concludes that previous studies tended to address this phenomenon in one dimension, creating a gap in the comprehensive understanding of the government's decision-making process. However, this conceptual framework can provide a comprehensive understanding and cover all cases (Fauzia 2018: 69). For these reasons, the theory is considered the most appropriate.

Definition of Reasons

The five reasons for deployment in missions are defined in this chapter. Security reasons can be one of the reasons for the Czech Republic's participation in the PSOs. At the end of the Cold War, the international environment changed dra-

matically, new threats and a new world order arose. Wars have been transformed accordingly. There has been a rapid decline in interstate wars and, conversely, an increase in domestic wars, in which various non-state actors are involved, such as warlords, terrorist groups and insurgencies (Coleman 2007: 5). The security of regional security complexes seems to be very important, but globalisation also brings together actors who were not so close before. New threats such as cyber-attacks, misinformation and propaganda can hit anywhere. Ensuring security is therefore very difficult for states and increases their potential areas of involvement in new spheres. New threats also include conflict spillovers, which can spread across regions and destabilise several states (Bosker and de Ree 2009: 2–7). States can try to prevent this destabilisation through the PSO. In recent years, moreover, there has been a rapid migration of refugees from African and Asian countries to EU countries. Hosting refugees and migrants brings, directly and indirectly, some security, economic and health problems to European states, so they could be trying to suppress these migratory waves by providing better security conditions in the migrants' home state. All these motivations in order to stop or eliminate security threats and to end and resolve the conflict or to supervise the peaceful implementation of agreements and post-conflict settlements belong to security reasons for involvement in missions. If the conflicts are located in the geographical vicinity of the Czech Republic, or the last few years there has been an increase in the threat to the Czech Republic in connection with the region/state (e.g. increase in terrorist attacks, a rapid increase in illegal migrants and asylum seekers in the Czech Republic), these reasons were evaluated as present.

Political reasons may be another motive for deployment in operations. Participation in operations can be seen as a tool to achieve political goals. States hope to increase their national prestige and influence in international affairs through their participation. It can also be important to gain allies in the international environment or to establish completely new relations. These motives can sometimes be difficult to detect before or during operations (Bellamy and Williams 2013: 418–419). However, to determine whether the political motives have been met, the subsequent political relations and cooperation between the Czech Republic and the state where the PSOs took place will be examined. In the case of deepening relations or a new form of political cooperation, it can be assumed that political reasons were present. A deepening of the national prestige can be expected for each PSO, therefore no attention is paid to it.

Peace is an important prerequisite for economic development. Economic interests can also be a reason for participation. The goal of each country in our international capitalist pre-set is economic prosperity, access to international markets, or the import of strategic natural resources. Medium-strength EU countries in terms of military capabilities (the Czech Republic included) may be interested in maintaining the status quo, as maintaining this status will bring

them relative prosperity and influence (Neack 1995: 181–196). The emergence or development of business relationships or new markets is one of the positive outcomes of the PSO. This can generate profit and thus fulfill the national interests of the participating states. For participating states, the possibility of awarding various types of contracts and investments of an economic nature in the countries where the mission was conducted also opens up (Neack 1995: 181–196). These reasons are very difficult to observe. However, it is possible to focus, for example, on the current state of imports and exports, and how closely the countries are linked in this field. Import and export, therefore, play an important role in qualitative comparative analysis, based on which it was decided if the condition was met or not.

The fourth category is institutional reasons. Civil-military relations influence the state's decision to participate in the PSO. The state is more likely to participate when a military institution can use this contribution; for example, if the armed forces think that a given PSO provides its soldiers with vast international experience, the state can send more peacekeeping forces. This is often a better choice than letting soldiers interfere in internal affairs and be politicised (Bellamy and Williams 2013: 20). For Peace Support Operations for which it was officially declared that the goal was gaining new experience or deepening the existing experience, institutional reasons were present. This can also be said about PSOs which took place in the 1990s because at that time the Czech Republic did not have much experience with deployment in foreign operations.

Normative reasons most often include humanitarian motives. States see participation in a PSO as a strategic way to deepen their ideology of a good humanitarian state. The state, as a sovereign actor, exists, among other things, to provide protection for the fundamental human rights to its citizens and to prevent crimes against humanity. If they do not receive this protection, the international community has the right to intervene and protect the citizens of that state (Nardin – Williams 2006: 1–20). Human rights violations are key in this case. Intervention can in some cases be considered a moral obligation of states. However, a humanitarian catastrophe may not only be caused by the policy of the state concerned, but also by a natural disaster. Besides, there is a wide-ranging debate that these foreign interventions do not improve the human rights situation but, on the contrary, worsen it (Nardin – Williams 2006: 1–13). However, normative reasons may include pressure from allies and the organisation itself. In this case, there may be pressure from the whole organisation. Following Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, it is stated that an attack against one member of the alliance is considered an attack against all. This does not apply to their allies and areas of interest outside the territory of member states (NATO 2006: 2–10). This legal pressure should therefore not be justified. The second type of pressure may be pressure from a Member State. This is very difficult to classify. It is assumed that if the members of the government spoke about international

partners' pressure and requirements or the need of the Czech Republic to meet the expectations placed on it, the situation was assessed as present.

Qualitative Comparative Analysis

Most authors do not distinguish between EU-led missions, NATO-led missions or missions under the auspices of the United Nations. This research focuses on NATO-led Peace Support Operations, as it represents most of the operations in which the Czech Republic has participated over the years (Army CR 2020). The aim is to examine the PSOs that took place with the Czech participation and those that did not. Qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) is used to determine whether there are necessary or sufficient conditions for the participation of the Czech Republic. This method was chosen because it is the most objective method which can examine a medium number of cases (20–40) that can be affected by several variables (Ragin 2008: 4–12). The dependent variable has two values – the Czech Republic's participation in NATO's PSOs (code 1, the fulfillment of the condition) or no participation of the Czech Republic in NATO's PSOs (code 0, non-compliance). The Czech Republic's participation in NATO's PSOs is defined as personnel or material support of the mission. Five independent variables (conditions) were coded – economic reasons, security reasons, political reasons, normative reasons and institutional reasons. If the condition was present, it was assigned a value of 1, otherwise a value of 0. The period is limited to years from 1995 (the first mission the Czech Republic participated in) to 2019.

The five mentioned conditions defined in the theoretical part can be considered as specific reasons for deployment in missions. If state exports and imports make up at least 1% of the total volume or the given states maintain further trade ties, the condition of economic reasons has been met. In the case of normative reasons, the humanitarian crisis was considered. This includes the value of the freedom house, which, if it was low or the state required humanitarian aid, these reasons were met. Besides, normative reasons included when pressure from alliance partners or organisations was publicised. The condition of security reasons was fulfilled if the given state is located in the immediate vicinity of the Czech Republic, there is a rapid migration from this state to the Czech Republic (related asylum applications) or it poses a threat from the point of view of terrorism. Political reasons were assessed based on cultural, trade and political cooperation between the states. If these conditions were developed and deepened during and several years after the mission, these conditions were met. Institutional reasons were present if the CR officially declared its intention to gain new experience or deepen its existing experience. This also applied to operations which took place in the 1990s, because at that time the Czech Republic did not have much experience with deployment in foreign operations.

Subsequently, the analysis itself was performed. In the first step, an analysis of the necessary conditions was created. This is because if any of the conditions are classified as necessary they must be part of the most sufficient output combinations. This analysis determines the consistency and coverage of the conditions. Consistency determines the extent to which the output is a subset of the necessary conditions (the ratio of cases with output and condition and cases with only given output). Ideally, it has a value of 1. In practice, there is usually a threshold of 0. 9. Coverage represents the relevance of the necessary condition (ratio of cases with output and condition to cases only with the condition without output). If a given condition exceeds a specified consistency threshold, it is assumed to have a high coverage value. If this is not the case, the condition is trivial, the set of conditions is greater than the set of output. Subsequently, a truth table was created in the program. Then, an analysis of sufficient conditions was performed. The consistency threshold for a condition to be declared a sufficient condition is 0.75 (Ragin 2008: 39). The so-called parsimonious solution was used. This solution has lately been preferred by most scientists. Toshkov (2020) describes the reasons why a parsimonious solution should be preferred over a complex one. He argues that only a parsimonious solution can provide a causal conclusion from QCA data in a standard social ontology, due to the monotony of the relation of necessity and sufficiency (Toshkov 2020). An interesting contribution to the debate is the work of Baumgartner and Thiem (2017), who provided a comprehensive evaluation of all three types of solutions in their work. In all their sets of inverse search tests, the intermediate and complex solutions proved to be unsuitable. Both of these types of solutions often committed causal delusions of varying degrees by presenting conclusions that violated the causal structure itself. For complex solutions the errors were in the range of 12% – 82%, which in practice meant that the accuracy of the solution sometimes did not exceed 10% (Baumgartner and Thiem 2017: 19–20). For these reasons, this research uses a parsimonious solution.

Participation of the Czech Republic in PSOs

The Czech Republic has been a member of NATO since 1999, when, together with Poland and Hungary, it became the first country in the former Eastern bloc (the former Warsaw Pact, the former main enemy of NATO) to join the alliance (NATO 2020). The membership has numerous benefits for the CR, but it certainly also has obligations towards the alliance.[3] This includes the necessary budget for defense or partnership under the Partnership for Peace and Training program. The key legal documents on the issue of the participation of

3 The advantages are mainly security. NATO has an integrated air defense system, inventory management by sharing resources and the Nuclear Sharing Agreement (NATO 2020).

units of the Army of the Czech Republic (hereinafter ACR) in foreign missions are the Constitution and constitutional laws. According to Articles 39 and 43 of the Constitution of the Czech Republic (hereinafter the Constitution), the government decides on the deployment of armed forces outside the state as well as on the placement of armed forces of other states in its territory, both for a maximum of 60 days. In cases of more than 60 days, government decisions are subsequently subject to approval by both chambers of parliament. At the same time, the government is obliged to immediately inform both chambers of the parliament of its decision. The government's position must then be confirmed by the consent of an absolute majority of all deputies as well as an absolute majority of all senators of the upper house. Parliamentary assent, therefore, requires the consent of the absolute majority of the representatives of both chambers of parliament (Parliament of the Czech Republic 1993).

Over the past two decades, soldiers of the Army of the Czech Republic (ACR) have become active and frequent participants in military operations outside the territory of the Czech Republic. Deployment of soldiers in areas from the former Yugoslavia to Afghanistan has gradually become a commonplace part of Czech foreign policy and has been mostly perceived as beneficial. However, at the same time military missions have often been the subject of serious, sometimes intense and widely publicised political discussions which became an important part of Czech public discourse. Every year, the Center for Public Opinion Research organises a survey of the Czech Republic's views on NATO and the Czech Republic's activities in this organisation. Public opinion has generally been constant over the last ten years, with around 59% of the population satisfied with the Czech Republic's activity in NATO (Aktuálně 2019). There are debates among politicians regarding the participation of the CR in the PSOs, especially in the Chamber of Deputies, whose hearings are open to the public. Sometimes there is a conflict of interest and disagreement with the mission. Participation in the KFOR mission in Kosovo and the deployment of an anti-chemical unit to Kuwait in 2003 (not a PSO of NATO) can be considered the most controversial missions (Karásek 2010: 29–49). Politicians most often cite ethical reasons, different interests of the Czech Republic or non-initiation by local authorities where the mission took place as reasons against participation. In the case of deployment in Kosovo, some politicians considered it a problem that NATO lacked a clearly defined and valid UN Security Council authorisation (Karásek 2010: ibid).

If we focus on the geographical area where the PSOs with Czech participation took place or are taking place, in the vast majority of cases these are geographically close areas. The largest number of missions took place in Europe, specifically in Kosovo, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Army CR 2020). Some operations have taken place in the Middle East, notably Afghanistan. Only a very small number of operations took place outside these areas. Thus,

the Czech Republic usually tries to select geographically close areas. Last year (2020), soldiers participated in only one mission, namely the ISAF/RSM mission in Afghanistan, which involved more than 2,000 soldiers (Army CR 2020). In addition to the PSOs, the Czech Republic sends soldiers abroad for training, education and support. They have been sent, for example, to the USA, Lithuania or Latvia. The Czech Republic also participates in UN and EU missions.

The following table shows PSOs with Czech participation, and at the same time for the need for qualitative comparative analysis, missions without Czech participation were also selected. For all these missions, five conditions were coded – economic reasons (eco), security reasons (sec), political reasons (pol), institutional reasons (inst) and normative reasons (norm). The fsQCA 3.0 software was used to evaluate the necessary and sufficient conditions. All five conditions, their presence and their absence were included in the analysis. The necessary conditions are those whose consistency limit is higher than 0. 9. At the same time, the value of coverage, which should also be relatively high is also important.

Table 2: Participation and non-participation of the Czech Republic in PSOs

Case	Eco	Sec	Pol	Inst	Norm	Participation
Essential Harvest (Macedonia)	0	0	1	0	0	1
ISAF (Afghanistan)	0	1	0	0	1	1
AMIS (Sudan)	0	1	0	0	1	1
Eagle Eye (Kosovo)	0	1	1	1	1	1
Allied Harbour (Kosovo)	0	1	1	1	1	1
Joint Guardian (Kosovo)	0	1	1	1	1	1
Joint Enterprise (Kosovo)	0	1	1	0	1	1
Joint Endeavour (BiH)	0	1	1	1	1	1
Joint Guard (BiH)	0	1	1	1	1	1
Joint Forge (BiH)	0	1	1	1	1	1
Resolute Support Mission (Afghanistan)	0	1	0	0	1	1
NTM (Iraq)	0	1	0	0	1	1
Active Fence (Turkey)	0	1	0	0	1	1
Deny Flight (BiH)	0	1	1	1	0	0
Sea Guardian (Mediterranean Sea)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Amber Fox (Macedonia)	0	0	1	0	0	0
Allied Harmony (Macedonia)	0	0	1	0	0	0
Joint Guarantor (Kosovo)	0	1	1	1	0	0
Unified Protector (Libya)	0	0	0	0	1	0

Case	Eco	Sec	Pol	Inst	Norm	Participation
NATO support for the AU mission in Somalia	0	0	0	0	1	0
Ocean Shield (Somalia)	1	0	0	0	1	0
Allied Protector (Gulf of Aden)	1	0	0	0	1	0
Allied Provider (Gulf of Aden)	1	0	0	0	1	0
Active Endeavour (Mediterranean Sea)	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Army of the Czech Republic (2019), BusinessInfo (2021), MZV (2021), Natoauktual (2021), etc.

In table n.2, the reasons why the Czech Republic as a small state actively contributes to NATO-led military operations are coded. Certain motives are often mentioned in the literature, but they cannot be examined in more detail. Small states certainly seek to improve their status and reputation to remain relevant and gain protection (Pedersen 2019: 16–32). So there is a certain logic of prestige, although it is also very much related to security reasons. Thus, rather than the selection of specific operations, this type explains why small states are generally involved, but it no longer explains the specific selection of operations. Moreover, states gain a certain form of prestige during all foreign operations.

Table 3: Necessary conditions

Condition	Consistency	Coverage
Sec	0.923077	0.857143
~Sec	0.076923	0.100000
Eco	0.000000	0.000000
~Eco	1.000000	0.619048
Pol	0.615385	0.666667
~Pol	0.384615	0.416667
Inst	0.461538	0.750000
~Inst	0.538462	0.437500
Norm	0.923077	0.705882
~Norm	0.076923	0.142857

Source: Own

The analysis of the necessary conditions for the deployment in missions revealed that one of the given conditions, specifically ~Eco (no economic reasons), can be considered a necessary condition from the point of value of consistency which is one – the ideal value that the necessary condition should have. On the other hand, the value of coverage is 0.6, so this condition cannot be considered nec-

essary. From a logical and theoretical point of view, this result is also not justified, it can be assumed that it is rather a banal condition (Ragin 2008: 31–42). On the contrary, the value of consistency for security reasons and normative reasons is high. This value is on the breaking line because in practice a value higher than 0.9 is mostly sufficient for the condition to be declared necessary. The coverage value of security reasons is also very good in this case (over 0.8), so this condition can be considered a necessary condition. It follows from the logic of values that there are some cases for which this condition does not apply, but this is very common in practice (Ragin 2008: 33–39). There is only one case where this condition was present and the Czech Republic did not participate in the PSO, which is the case of Deny Flight (BiH). In this case, it can be assumed that the result was affected by the timing of the mission. The mission took place between 1993 and 1995 and at that time, the CR was not ready to participate in the mission. The first involvement of the CR in foreign operations was only in 1995 (Army CR 2019). The second case to which this condition (sec) cannot be applied is Essential Harvest (Macedonia), where security reasons were not present, but the CR still participated in the PSO. In this case, the political reasons were present, these reasons were probably combined with some other reasons that the chosen theoretical framework was not able to capture. The decision to join the PSO could have, for example, been influenced by the fact that Czech soldiers were already present in the area and had experience with similar operations (Natoaktual 2021). Normative reasons have a high consistency value; however, the value of the coverage is not enough, as it is only 0. 7. For these reasons, normative reasons cannot be considered a necessary condition.

Analysis of sufficient conditions revealed one configuration. The same results were obtained by a complex solution after reduction. The analysis makes it clear that security and normative reasons are the most important. The solution coverage is 0.923077, as the results are not able to explain the deployment in Operation Essential Harvest (Macedonia). The primary reasons for deployment in Macedonia are not entirely clear. It can only be concluded that it was about prestige, training and establishing relationships. Czech soldiers participated in the mission at the request of the Macedonian president (Natoaktual 2021). The results of the analysis are also confirmed by very good coverage values for individual sufficient conditions and overall consistency coverage. There is no case when the conditions for deployment in the mission were present and the Czech Republic did not participate in the mission.

The parsimonious solution provides only one configuration that leads to the deployment of Czech soldiers. The configuration includes the presence of security reasons and normative reasons. This configuration has high coverage and explains almost all operations involving the Czech Republic. All PSOs, except one in the Balkans, are explained by this combination. In the 1990s, there was a rapid increase in migration from the Balkan states to the Czech Republic

Table 4: Sufficient conditions

Parsimonious solution			
Configuration	**Raw Coverage**	**Unique Coverage**	**Consistency**
Sec*Norm	0.923077	0.923077	1
Solution coverage: 0.923077			
Consistency coverage: 1			

Source: Own

(Wlodarczyk 2013: 24–64). During the war in Yugoslavia, the Czech Republic granted asylum to more than 6,000 people, which is the highest number in the history of the modern Czech Republic (Encyclopedia of Migration 2017). There are several reasons why the Czech Republic was the destination for migrants. These reasons could be cultural or linguistic proximity, as well as present family. Also, the Balkans are geographically relatively close to the Czech Republic. All these reasons shaped decisions. With the war in Yugoslavia and, subsequently, in the newly independent states, a large part of the population was hit by a humanitarian crisis. Some cases involved the pressure of international allies, as with Turkey and Afghanistan. From a security perspective, Afghanistan posed a threat to Europe in terms of terrorism. Also, there has been and is a rapid increase in migration from this country to the EU (Mixed Migration Platform 2017). In the case of Turkey, migration also played a role. In this case, it was not citizens of Turkey, but other Middle Eastern states who lived in refugee camps in Turkey. In the case of the Czech Republic's deployment in Afghanistan, indirect pressure from the USA is often mentioned (Natoaktual 2018). In the case of Turkey, President Erdogan has openly called on the EU on several occasions to increase financial contributions to refugees in Turkey. He mentioned several times that he would send refugees from Turkey to Europe if his demands were not met (Aljazeera 2020). This put pressure on the Allies to address the issue of refugees in Turkey.

From the above analysis, it is clear that security reasons appear to be the most important and what shapes the Czech Republic's decision to participate in missions. In most cases, normative reasons including pressure from Allies and humanitarian motives also play a role. However, unlike security reasons, normative reasons cannot be considered a necessary condition. On the contrary, economic reasons are completely irrelevant. Besides, the analysis of sufficient conditions confirmed that the absence of economic reasons is not a necessary condition. This was already proven by low coverage values. Political and institutional reasons are very common, but these reasons influence the final decision only to a very limited extent. The analysis revealed that neither political nor institutional reasons can be considered a necessary or sufficient condition for Czech participation in NATO's PSOs.

Concluding Remarks

The Czech Republic regularly participates in the PSOs under the leadership of NATO, the EU, the UN and its allies. Czechoslovak soldiers gained their first experience with missions abroad in 1990 in the first Gulf War. This confirms that the newly formed states of Central and Eastern Europe had to prove to NATO membership that they would be full-fledged members, not passive consumers of security. Their involvement in the missions continued in the following years, even before the Czech Republic became part of NATO. They joined the Joint Endeavor and Joint Guard operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina throughout 1995 and 1996. After joining NATO in 1999, the number of operations increased rapidly and they were present not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina but also in Kosovo and Macedonia. The geographical proximity of states was important for the Czech Republic, but with the transformation and growth of new global threats, there was also involvement in more remote areas such as Afghanistan and Iraq.

An important task of this article was to reveal the reasons based on which the Czech Republic decides which PSOs to actively participate in. Even though the Czech Republic participated in a large number of PSOs under the leadership of NATO (thirteen operations) there is also a similarly large number of operations in which the Czech Republic did not participate. Based on Bellamy and Williams' theory, five conditions have been defined. As a qualitative comparative analysis was used to examine the conditions, this number of conditions seems to be appropriate to a given number of examined cases. Also, if a higher number of conditions were used, distortion and inaccurate estimation would occur. These five conditions are security reasons, economic reasons, political reasons, institutional reasons and normative reasons. The analysis revealed that there is a necessary condition for participation – security reasons. Security reasons achieved very good values of coverage (0.923077) and consistency (0.857143), so this can be considered as the most important. Besides, this condition occurred in all cases where the Czech army was involved in the PSOs, except for one case, the Essential Harvest (Macedonia). In the case of Macedonia, it can be concluded that the political reasons and the presence and experience of the Czech army in the area were important. Also, this analysis confirmed the conclusions of other authors who dealt with the motivations of small states and considered security reasons to be the most important. The conclusions are identical with Pinto Arena's study, which cited security reasons as Portugal's main reason in foreign operations (Pinto Arena 2017: 8–10). Dimitrov reached the same conclusions in the case of Bulgaria, and Besenyo in the case of Hungary (Dimitrov 2009: 1–8; Besenyo 2013: 2–13).

There is only one configuration – a sufficient condition which, in the case of the Czech Republic, leads to deployment in the mission. It is a combination of security reasons and normative reasons, which has caused the majority of

cases of Czech deployment in missions. That explains PSOs in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq or Sudan. This configuration has coverage of 0.923077, which in practice means that it explains all the cases where the Czech army was involved except for one case (Essential Harvest Macedonia). The value of coverage is very good – 1, which in practice means that this configuration did not occur in any case where there was no deployment of Czech soldiers. The conclusions can therefore be considered valid and relevant.

The analysis of the reasons revealed that security reasons are the most important, and indeed it is an aspect that primarily formulates the Czech decision. On the contrary, economic motivation is completely irrelevant for a small state like the Czech Republic. There may be several reasons why economic reasons do not play a leading role, but this should be explored in more detail. We can only assume that the lucrative nature of the state can affect the decision – most PSOs took place in countries that are not economically attractive (there are no natural resources such as oil or natural gas, there are no headquarters of large corporations, etc.). The reason may also be the economic stability and prosperity of the state participating in the operation. The state may consider its current economic relations to be sufficient and does not long for new expansion opportunities. We can find some reasons, but this is only hypothetical. Other reasons described by Bellamy and Williams (2013) in their work – normative, institutional, political and security reasons – were present in a large number of cases; however, not all can be considered important and necessary for the final decision (Bellamy and Williams 2013: 423–425). From these results, it can be concluded that this theory does not apply in all cases, especially in those of small states such as the Czech Republic. For a more comprehensive assessment of the theory, it would be appropriate to apply this analysis to other small countries, such as Austria or Slovakia.

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Experts and Questions: Exploring Perceptions of Corruption[1]

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Abstract: *This article is a contribution to the 'know your data' approach to the issue of measuring corruption, in two specific areas: the impact of the way questions are formulated on the results of surveys on corruption perception; and the potential pitfalls of using businesspeople as expert respondents in surveys measuring corruption. The article first presents and analyses the sources of two most frequently used indicators to measure corruption perceptions – the Corruption Perception Index and the Control of Corruption, one of the Worldwide Governance Indicators. Based on this analysis, hypotheses are posed on how the formulation of the questions will influence the outcomes of surveys, and what differences there will be between studies conducted on the general public and businesspeople. These are tested using data obtained from two original survey experiments conducted concurrently, one on a representative sample of the public and another on businesspeople.*

Keywords: ***Measuring Corruption Perceptions; Bribery; Corruption; Experts; Survey Experiment***

Introduction

Political corruption is a topic that has long resonated in society, politics and academia – indeed, its resonance may be permanent. At the same time, it ranks among the social phenomena that we will probably never be able to measure satisfactorily. Corruption is largely a contextual, culturally conditioned phenom-

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enon, and is usually clandestine. The question, then, is not just how to measure corruption, but what exactly are we to measure? As Alina Mungui-Pippidi (2015: 27) puts it: *'How can an insidious phenomenon, where academics only agree that the boundaries inherent to any definition are culturally and historically specific, be measured in a valid, precise, and reliable way so as to allow comparisons across space and time, leading to the elaboration of a comprehensive theory?'*

Despite, or perhaps because of, this, we have at our disposal an extensive toolkit that directly or indirectly measures corruption. Unlike the 1990s, when the question of corruption and subsequently also of its measurement became of political and scholarly interest, today we can no longer refer to a lack of surveys, indices or indicators concerned precisely with this issue.

The easier availability of instruments for measuring corruption also increases the risk of their incorrect use. More than any time before, it is essential today to know our data, that is, to understand what exactly it is that the available instruments are measuring, and what their limits and possible biases are.

This issue seems to be especially relevant in post-communist countries, including those in Central Europe. Economic and social transformation provided ample opportunities for corruption, including (at least seemingly) brand new forms of corruption not generally known in communist societies, economies and political system, such as collusion cartels. Simultaneously, the newfound freedom of the press in many formerly communist countries exacerbated perceptions that corruption is growing or has grown with the regime's change (see Karklins 2005, Naxera 2015, Pinková 2016). In recent years, the rise of protest and populist parties with their anti-corruption appeals (and frequent corruption scandals) added another layer of complications for those trying to measure corruption levels in post-communist countries. The relationship between post-communism and (perceptions of) corruption has been explored in depth from many angles (see, e.g. Holmes 2003, 2006, Karklins 2002, Krastev 2004, Naxera 2012, Obydenkova – Libman 2014). Yet relatively few works focus on the specifics of measuring corruption in the region (for exceptions, see, e.g. Knack 2006 or Naxera 2015). Apart from the general contribution to the 'know your data' approach in corruption research, we hope that our study, conducted in the Czech Republic, will also help to move forward on this path. Even if we are not concerned with our case's specifics compared to other countries, we hope that our data could serve for such purpose in the future.

In this paper, we focus on two specific issues: the use of experts – especially businesspeople – as respondents to corruption-measuring surveys, and the formulation of survey questions. Both are particularly relevant to instruments for measuring the perceptions of corruption, including the two most commonly used ones, Transparency

International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) and the World Bank's Control of Corruption (CC), part of its Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI).

Beyond a discussion of both issues based on available literature and sources, we present the results of two original survey experiments, one conducted on a representative sample of general population, the second on businesspeople. We compare the perceptions of businesspeople and public and for both groups compare the answers to variously formulated questions. The results of the two surveys and their mutual comparison yields new information about how the formulation of the questions influences the results of corruption perception measurements, the differences in perception between the general population and businesspeople, and businesspeople's expertise as concerned with corruption.

Indices, Indicators, Surveys…

Social sciences, economics, business, the public sphere and indeed the general public have today at their disposal a range of indicators that measure various social phenomena. These indicators are popular for their apparent simplicity and the possibility of comparing across time and space. Although these advantages often counterbalance (or overshadow) the disadvantages of single-number indicators, their limits are well described in current literature (for an overview, see, e.g. Engle Merry et al. 2015; Arndt – Oman 2006). These are particularly evident with complex yet vague phenomena such as corruption.

The notion of corruption itself can be considered as *'too broad and vague to measure meaningfully via one number'* (Zaman – Rahim 2008: 5). Likewise, the evaluation of a whole country by a single number represents a major simplification, because the level of corruption can vary significantly across the regions and sectors of the economy (Heywood 2018a). There is also the rather obvious problem that those involved in corruption are typically interested in concealing their actions. Despite these notorious problems with measuring corruption, there is certainly no shortage of efforts to evaluate or even to quantify the phenomenon. Today there are dozens of tools (indicators, reports and statistics) that measure corruption or that can be used as proxy indicators for measuring corruption indirectly, such as measures of transparency, the rule of law, etc.[2]

Over the past years, a classification of corruption-measuring tools into several generations has become established in the literature (e.g. Heinrich – Hodess 2011; Johnston 2000; Chabova 2016). The first generation includes (mostly composite or aggregated) tools focused on corruption perception, such as CPI and CC WGI, mentioned above. The second generation consists of indicators based on respondent experience, of which the best known are Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) and the International Crime Victim Surveys. The third generation includes the so-called disaggregated

2 A (no doubt incomplete) list of tools measuring corruption is available online on http://polit.fss.muni.cz/pinkova-ciirml/.

indicators (Heinrich – Hodess 2011: 22), which aim to evaluate the quality of anti-corruption tools or the anti-corruption environment.

Many authors argue that the first generation of indicators is outdated (Heinrich – Hodess 2011) or misleading (Kurtz – Shrank 2007; Razafindrakoto – Raubaud 2006). An evident and perhaps the most often mentioned problem is the very choice of corruption perception as a proxy indicator for the real level of corruption in the given area (typically a country). As Rose (2018a: 172) points out, there is nothing intrinsically wrong about a perception-based evaluation of corruption, as *'citizens of a country have directly lived experiences of the level of corruption in their own country'.* A problem arises, however, when the country's main issue is not street-level corruption, but, for example, state capture or corruption in public procurement. In such a case, we can assume that most respondents form their notion of the level of corruption based not on their personal experience, but the information they have at their disposal: rumours; what has been made available by judicial and police authorities; and from the media coverage of corruption broadly.

Although gossip can be an essential tool for creating social capital, it does not provide an ideal basis for creating indices that are later taken to be precise. Only uncovered cases of corruption, meanwhile, make it to trial; judicial statistics, therefore, do not tell us much about the level of corruption or the effectiveness of its prosecution, because we do not know how many cases of corruption go undetected. In some countries, official statistics could also suffer from the fact that they are controlled by the authorities (Miller et al. 2001). The role of the media is perhaps the most problematic. They certainly have essential influence over how corruption is perceived (an interesting view of this issue as it relates to CPI is given in e.g. Brown et al. 2010; for the media influence over individual perception formation, see e.g. Rizzica – Tonello 2016). The manner and frequency of presentation of corruption in the media, the actual level of corruption and the perception of corruption levels are intertwined and confront us with the Gordian knot of causality.

It is not only the choice of topics and selection of cases reported in the media that influences readers' perceptions of corruption. Perhaps even more importantly, when journalists use abstract concepts such as corruption, they co-construct their meaning for the mass audience (Bratu – Kažoka, 2018). Unfortunately, journalists are unlikely to convey a nuanced understanding of the many forms corruption can take[3], given that even academic research habitually fails to differentiate between different forms of corruption (Heywood, 2017). It is, however, necessary to bear in mind that the media influence not only per-

3 Indeed, in their research on the use of corruption metaphors in seven European countries, Bratu and Kažoka found out that in most corruption-related newspaper articles, corruption was treated as a 'free-floating abstract entity whose meaning was self-evident' (Bratu – Kažoka 2018: 65), without any elaboration on what the concept of corruption means or could mean.

ceptions of corruption levels but also the way we (often no doubt intuitively) interpret the concept itself.

Beyond available information, the perception of corruption is or may be influenced by a range of other factors, the study of which is so far relatively undeveloped (Zaman – Rahim 2008). These may include education, partisanship and relationship with the government party, ideology or socioeconomic status (Maeda – Ziegfeld 2015; Melgar et al. 2010; Rose 2018b).[4]

In addition to the issue of using perceptions, first-generation indicators suffer from many other limitations, which have been widely investigated in the literature (for a detailed discussion see e.g. Heywood 2018a; Chabova 2016; Lambsdorff 2006), often specifically in the context of CPI and CC WGI, the best-known and influential instances of such indicators. The major points of criticism, of which some are concerned with perception surveys in general and some with CPI and CC WGI in particular, can be summarised as follows:[5]

a) **The perception problem**. As noted above, perceptions are not objective. Among other things, the perceptions of corruption in a country may be influenced by the indicators themselves, especially CPI, which has been given widespread media attention (see e.g. Akech 2015). This 'problem of perception' is often compounded by the often-incorrect ways in which perception-based indicators are used. This is true not just of political and media debates, as we might assume, but also of academia, where they are often used as indicators of the level of corruption without an explicit avowal that a proxy indicator is used, and often without noting the limitations of the approach.[6]
b) **The construct validity problem**. Lack of conceptual precision is typical of measuring corruption (Arndt – Oman 2006; Andersson – Heywood 2009, Heywood 2017). Questions about perceptions are usually formulated more vaguely than questions on experience.[7] Thus, if a sufficiently clear defini-

4 Most of these factors may also influence individual experience of corruption.

5 Literature also contains many other interesting findings, such that indicators based on perception tend to reflect absolute, not relative number of corruption cases, and that this disadvantages large countries (Donchev – Ujhelyi 2014).

6 A search for the term 'Corruption Perception Index' on the Web of Science's Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) database (http://apps.webofknowledge.com/WOS_GeneralSearch_input.do?product=WOS & search_mode=GeneralSearch & SID=C3dcHEBvmyBo1niKjUP & preferencesSaved=), limited to two publication years (2017 and 2018) produces 36 results. Of these 36 articles, 11 used CPI as a proxy indicator for the actual level of corruption, and only in one case did the article contain at least a brief discussion of the limitations of this approach. In three cases, CPI itself was even used as an independent variable, without a detailed explanation given. Only one article used CPI as an indicator of corruption perception, that is, the variable observed was the manner in which corruption is perceived. Eight articles focused directly on the issues of measuring corruption, seven used CPI as a proxy for another phenomenon (e.g. governance, transparency, control of corruption). In the remaining cases, CPI was simply mentioned, or the combination of search words appeared randomly in the text.

7 For instance, the GCB survey contains the following two questions. Perception: 'In your opinion, over the past year, has the level of corruption in this country increased, decreased, or stayed the same?"

tion of corruption is not included in the survey, it is not evident what the respondents consider as corruption (Heywood 2018b). A frequent, but, as we shall see below, no longer entirely justified, critique of CPI and CC WGI is that though both indicators claim to measure corruption, their sources are primarily focused on bribery (Andersson – Heywood 2009, Heywood – Rose 2014).

c) **The reliability problem**. Changeable and complicated methodologies of composite indicators such as CPI and CC WGI, different sources used in the countries examined, and a lack of publicly available information about some source surveys decrease the reliability and transparency of both indicators (Heywood 2018b, Treisman 2007, Hawken – Munck 2009).

d) **The interpretation problem**. Some aspects of CPI and CC WGI are conducive to incorrect interpretation. In the media as well as in academia, one encounters interpretations of perception as an objective indicator of the level of corruption (see footnote 4 above); the interpretation of composite indicators according to their publication date, not the time when the initial data were collected; and interpretations of relative changes in countries' ranking as changes in the absolute values of corruption perception. In the case of CPI, the problematic presentations may be facilitated by the 0–100 scale that is used, as it misleadingly creates the impression of high precision (Andersson – Heywood 2009). Specific risk is posed by the fact that most sources are based on expert surveys or evaluations, and as such cannot be interpreted as corruption perception by the population.

e) **The subjective scales problem**. Respondents typically evaluate the level of corruption on subjective scales. What is a low measure of corruption for one, might be high for another; furthermore, with some questions it is unclear whether respondents are evaluating the number of corruption cases, their importance, the extent of the damage created, or something else (Heywood 2018b, Andersson – Heywood 2009, Knack 2006).

f) **The external validity problem**. Perception-based surveys often work with samples of convenience (businesspeople and experts), or even an established network of experts or collaborators. The willingness to cooperate (whether over the long term or simply by filling in a questionnaire) might be correlated with factors that are also related to the perception of corruption itself (for example, the position towards the non-profit sector, whose organisations often conduct the surveys, or interest in politics).

Experience: "In the past 12 months have you had contact with a government official?" Followed by: "And how often, if ever, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favour for a government official in order to get the document you needed?' (Transparency International 2020).

Despite all these problems, the first-generation tools, especially CPI and CC WGI, remain the best-known and most used methods of measuring corruption (Mungui-Pippidi 2015), mainly because the alternatives suffer from substantial limitations themselves. Second-generation tools, such as the Global Corruption Barometer (GCB), focused on respondent experience, primarily reflect street--level bribery, which an ordinary citizen/respondent is most likely to encounter. Where respondents are businesspeople or public officials who are more likely to be actively involved in corruption networks, we can assume that they might be less willing to admit it (or even take part in the survey at all). Surveys focused on experience generally find it difficult to capture other forms of corruption than bribery. Furthermore, some of the limitations typically linked with first--generation tools apply to the second generation too.[8] Above all, there is the construct validity problem, where most surveys focused on the experience of corruption in reality measure the experience of bribery.

Third-generation tools do not observe the incidence of corruption or its perceptions but evaluate the quality of the anti-corruption environment. This effort is qualitative, mostly taking the form of reports or verbal evaluations, or focused on specific aspects of preventing and suppressing corruption, for example, the level of transparency. Using third-generation tools as proxy indicators for the level of corruption is equally, if not more disputable than the use of perception--based indices because with the third-generation tools the relationship with the level of corruption is ambiguous. Specifically, in cases of countries undergoing a top-down reform, typically performed under pressure from the international community (e.g. Moldova), some third-generation indicators could lead to overestimates of the success rate in combatting corruption.

Irrespective of the problems linked with CPI and CC WGI, their strong suit is that they are published by renowned institutions; they have long--term global coverage; and they quantify corruption, albeit problematically. Despite significant criticism, these indicators have become the *'norm in the field… [it is] due mainly to three mutually reinforcing reasons: validation by correlation, validation through impact and legitimacy through use'* (Razafindrakoto – Roubaud 2006: 6).[9] It would be unrealistic to assume that second- and third-generation tools could supplant CPI and CC WGI (and other first--generation tools) in the near future. Rather than rejecting them entirely, it seems appropriate to make an effort to understand them better (see also

8 In the case of CPI, it is often and mostly in vain pointed out (even by the CPI team themselves) that it should not be used for time series research (Heywood and Rose 2014). The same is, however, true for most of GCB, due to changes in country coverage, changes in how the questions are formulated and high non-response rates (Mungui-Pippidi 2015).

9 The correlation argument is problematic when made about the sources of indices such as CPI and CC WGI, given that they are largely based on the same sources (see e.g. Chabova 2016; Razafindrakoto – Roubaud 2006; Andersson – Heywood 2009).

UNDP 2008; Heywood 2018a; Razafindrakoto – Roubaud 2006), which is what we hope to accomplish here.

CPI and CC WGI are well known today, but Table 1 provides more detailed information about their sources.[10] Given that in a subsequent section of the paper we present the results of a survey experiment conducted in the Czech Republic, here too we present the sources used by both indicators for the countries of Central Europe as of 2018.[11] For this region CPI was based on ten sources, CC WGI on 14 sources; they shared nine sources. For each source we indicate whether it measured perception (P) or experience (E), whether the respondents were experts (e) or the public (p) and who the experts were. The category of experts' perceptions (P/e) includes both traditional expert surveys and evaluations by, for instance, in-house experts, which we ultimately also consider as perceptions.

The columns of the table classify the survey questions according to what exactly they were about. The category 'specifically bribery' includes questions focused directly on the giving or taking of bribes, which may be described in various ways (bribes, favours, unofficial payments, etc.). The category 'tends to bribery' includes cases where the respondents are asked about unspecified corruption, but the question follows one concerned with bribery.[12] We assume that if the respondents were not presented with a definition of corruption and they recently answered a question about bribery, they will tend to take corruption and bribery as synonyms. The categories 'any corruption' and 'public sector corruption' include questions about corruption which were preceded by a definition of corruption, or explanation and examples of what respondents should consider corrupt acts. If the definition of corruption or the formulation of the questions themselves is aimed at public officials, these are included under 'public sector corruption'; if not, under 'any corruption'. The penultimate category includes questions about corruption where no definition, examples or context are given as guidance as to how to understand corruption. The last category includes third-generation tools, i.e. evaluations of the quality of anti-corruption measures.

10 Basic information is available from Transparency International (2018a) and World Bank Group (2019a).

11 The following CC WGI sources are, therefore, not included: African Development Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessments (ABD), Afrobarometer (AFR), Asian Development Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessments (ASD), Freedom House Countries at the Crossroads (CCR), IFAD Rural Sector Performance Assessments (IFD), Latinobarometro (LBO), World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessments (PIA), Political Economic Risk Consultancy Corruption in Asia Survey (PRC) and Vanderbilt University Americas Barometer (VAB).

12 The Institutional Profiles Database is an exception to this: the respondents are asked about corruption involving two types of actor (e.g. administrations and local businesses). This procedure primes respondents for an understanding of corruption as bribery, because other forms of corruption do not require the participation of two actors.

Table 1: WGI CC 2018 and PCI 2018 Sources (Relevant for Central Europe)

Data source	*Used for*	*What is measured:*					
		Specifically bribery	Tends to bribery	Any corruption	Public sector corruption	Corruption (no definition, clarification or context)	Quality of anti-corruption measures
Bertelsmann Stiftung Sustainable Governance Indicators 2017 (SGI)	CPI	P/e					
		Experts: Local and foreign academics (+ qualitative sources)					
Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index (BTI)	CPI WGI				P/e		
		Experts: Local and foreign academics					
Business Enterprise Environment Survey- (BPS)	WGI	E/e + P/p	P/e				
		Experts: Business owners and top managers, companies with 5 or more employees					
Economist Intelligence Unit Country Risk Service (EIU)	CPI WGI	P/e			P/e		
		Experts: In-house analysts					
Freedom House Nations in Transit (FRH NT)	CPI WGI				P/e		
		Experts: Independent researches from academia, journalism, and civil society					
Global Corruption Barometer Survey (GCB)	WGI	E/p				P/p	
		Public: Household survey					
Global Competitiveness Report (GCS) / Executive Opinion Survey (WEF)	CPI WGI	P/e	P/e				
		Experts: Businessf of various sizes					

Notes: P/e = PERCEPTIONS of experts, P/p = public PERCEPTIONS, E/e = EXPERIENCE of experts, E/p = EXPERIENCE of public.
Source: Authors.

What are the questions?

One of the critical questions concerned with indicators and surveys of corruption (or indeed any other phenomenon) is whether they genuinely measure what they ought to. In the case of corruption, the situation is made more complicated by the fact that corruption-measuring instruments are often presented in scholarly literature without indicating the definition of corruption on which the sources are based (see footnote 4 above), and some sources do not indicate this information themselves (see Table 1). The last-mentioned problem does not concern CPI or CC WGI, however. The CPI team define corruption generally as the *'abuse of entrusted power for private gain'* (Transparency International 2018b); however, CPI is presented as a measure of how corrupt public sectors seem to be (Transparency International 2018a). From this, we infer that for the purposes of CPI, corruption is understood as the *'abuse of public power for private gain'*. For WGI, the World Bank understands corruption as *'the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as "capture" of the state by elites and private interests'* (World Bank Group 2019b).

Though the World Bank's definition is the more detailed one, in essence, it understands corruption in the same way as Transparency International. The part about the capture of the state by private interests may be an exception to this, as that does not necessarily fall under the heading of the abuse of entrusted power. But because even state capture by private interests requires the cooperation of elected or appointed state officials, who do thereby abuse the power entrusted to them, we do not consider this a fundamental difference.

The understanding of corruption among CPI and CC WGI sources varies, yet in none of the cases observed is the understanding of corruption outright contradictory to the definitions based on which Transparency International and World Bank proceed. In the past, CPI and, to a lesser extent, CC WGI were frequently criticised for focusing too much on bribery (Heywood 2016). Table 1 shows that questions directly concerned with bribery or formulated in a way that focuses respondents' attention on bribery, are lacking in only two of the sources observed. Furthermore, four sources have solely questions of this type.

For that reason, we believe it is useful to ascertain how respondents' answers differ if they are asked about corruption and bribery respectively. In the academic world, bribery is generally considered one of many forms of corruption but in some languages (including Czech) the two words can be used as synonyms in an ordinary debate. Our survey experiment verifies multiple hypotheses that will allow us to ascertain whether respondents distinguish between these two terms.

H1: The bribery level will be assessed as lower than the corruption level.

We proceed on the assumption that respondents are aware of the difference between bribery as a narrower concept and corruption as a concept that includes bribery and other phenomena.

H2: When a definition of corruption is given, the corruption level will be assessed as higher.

In languages where the terms 'bribery' and 'corruption' are commonly used as synonyms, respondents may see corruption as bribery. The citing of a *corruption definition* therefore draws respondents' attention to the fact that corruption entails a broader range of phenomena, and this should lead to increased perceptions of corruption, compared to the question variant where corruption is undefined.

H3: When, in addition to a definition, examples of corruption are given, the corruption level will be assessed as the highest.

We proceed from the assumption that providing examples will give the respondents a concrete idea of the forms corruption may take. Some of these phenomena, such as nepotism, cronyism and embezzlement, might not fit with their ordinary notion of what corruption is; the inclusion of the examples therefore should increase the gamut of phenomena that respondents assess as corruption.

Who are the experts?

A substantial part of the sources used to measure corruption are expert surveys. Experts are expected to have more information, more in-depth understanding and broader familiarity with the subject. At first glance, they seem an ideal source of information about many complicated social phenomena, including political corruption. Yet the use of experts also entails certain risks. Compared to the general population, for example, they are more likely to influence each other (Knack 2006; Razafindrakoto – Roubaud 2006) and they are more likely to be aware of and influenced by the evaluated country's previous scores and ratings (Lambsdorff 2005 as quoted in Andersson – Heywood 2009). This problem can be particularly serious with indices which have long collaborated with a small group of experts, or where the experts are in-house analysts. Moreover, we cannot know if seemingly independent sources did not use the same experts and the problem of selection bias is likely to be greater than in population-based surveys (Razafindrakoto – Roubaud 2006). Usually, we have very little information about how these samples of convenience are constructed (for example, the response rate when experts are approached) and what the criteria are for choosing the experts, for example, from among academics.

In general, we can encounter four types of experts in corruption research: academics, NGO and IGO staffers, government officials and businesspeople. The last, or more precisely their perception of levels of corruption, represent a relatively important source (six of the 15 sources of CPI in 2018 relied partially or exclusively on businesspeople as a source of information).

The presentation of businesspeople as experts on corruption can be problematic, especially in a situation where the respondents are chosen from firms of various sizes, including so-called micro-firms with fewer than nine employees (e.g. UNODC 2018) or even smaller businesses (e.g. Business Enterprise Environment Survey). Businesspeople might have more experience with (potentially) corrupt situations than randomly chosen respondents from the general population because they come into contact with officials more often. Larger businesses are more likely to bid for public contracts or find themselves in other situations where corruption might arise. But in most cases, this advantage as compared to the general population is nevertheless limited to the sector in which the businessperson operates. The assumption that businesspeople are better informed about the corruption rate in other fields of government, society or the economy is not sufficiently justified, theoretically or empirically.

Likewise, it remains unproven that businesspeople have a better-than-average understanding of the phenomenon of corruption (for example, what can be considered forms of political corruption) or that they are less influenced by media reflection of corruption, or moods in the population. Foreign businesspeople operating in the country under study might also not be able to notice some of the more subtle or sophisticated forms of corruption apart from bribery (Erlingsson – Kristinsson 2016).

Comparison of our two survey experiments should produce insights into this alleged expertise of businesspeople. Because experts (by definition) should have a greater understanding of the subject, they should be more aware of the various forms corruption can take, and how questions are formulated should, therefore, have a more significant impact on them. In our survey, we verified whether this was true of Czech businesspeople. We have formulated the following hypothesis.

> *H4: The difference in assessments of corruption and bribery levels will be higher among businesspeople than among the general population.*

If experts-businesspeople have a deeper understanding of corruption issues, then the experimental effect should be greater among businesspeople than in the population-based experiment.

Irrespective of whether businesspeople are or are not experts on corruption issues, surveys among them form an essential part of corruption-measuring tools. We are also interested in whether, and if so how, their perceptions of cor-

ruption differ from those of other groups in society, or the general population. There is partial evidence that some social groups show systematic bias in relation to corruption perception (for more detail, see Maeda – Ziegfeld 2015) and that 'some evaluators are stricter than others in their criteria' (Heywood – Rose 2014). But there is not – at least to our knowledge – systematic information available about the possible bias of businesspeople.[13] It is well known that there are significant discrepancies between expert perceptions and popular experience (Heywood – Rose 2014; Treisman 2007), but the explanatory value of this finding is comparatively low. It might be due to the bias of experts or the population (or both); or it might as well reflect the fact that many forms of corruption (and often it is the most serious ones) do not touch citizens directly, who therefore have no personal experience with them. Although phenomena such as state capture or corrupt major public contracts can have massive repercussions for governance and the economy, very few citizens will have a direct experience of them. The questions in experience-focused surveys, furthermore, often fail to grasp this type of corruption for the simple reason that they primarily ask about bribery.

From this point of view, studies that focus on the relationship between expert and public perceptions, often by comparing results of CPI and GCB and similar household surveys (e.g. Lin – Yu 2014; Yu 2016; Chabova 2016), are more interesting. There is a problem, though: as a rule, authors typically compare the CPI, which is a composite index with various types of sources (including a household survey with questions on experience) with a single survey, such as GCB. A comparison of two survey experiments conducted concurrently using the same formulation of questions should, therefore, have a substantially higher explanatory value. The last hypothesis that we will be verifying is the following:

H5: Businesspeople and the general public perceive the corruption level differently.

Our data

In this paper, we work with two original survey experiments, conducted concurrently in June 2019 in the Czech language. The first was an online survey conducted on a representative selective sample of the Czech population, carried out by an established agency[14] based on a survey prepared for this study (n = 1002, criteria including gender, age, education, municipality size and region). Each of the 1002 respondents was randomly assigned to one of the four conditions. In every condition, two questions were asked concerned with politicians and

13 Erlingsson and Kristinsson (2016), for example, conducted and compared three parallel surveys focused on the public, experts and local councillors. However, in their study, the experts were not businesspeople, but members of the Public Administration Association in Iceland.

14 Focus Marketing & Social Research Agency (https://www.focus-agency.cz/).

public servants, that is, the key actors in public sector corruption. Questions used in those conditions use different formulations, based on the questions that often appear in corruption perception surveys.[15] Perceptions of corruption were measured for all questions on a 0–10 scale (0 = none, 10 = all), which is also employed by many corruption surveys.

Condition 1 (*corruption simple*):
a) How many Czech politicians do you believe to be presently involved in corruption?
b) How many Czech public servants do you believe to be presently involved in corruption?

Condition 2 (*corruption definition*):
a) How many Czech politicians do you believe to be presently involved in corruption? By corruption, we mean any abuse of public power for private gain.
b) How many Czech public servants do you believe to be presently involved in corruption? By corruption, we mean any abuse of public power for private gain.

Condition 3 (*corruption examples*):
a) How many Czech politicians do you believe to be presently involved in corruption? By corruption, we mean any abuse of public power for private gain, that is, for example, favouring friends, acquaintances or family, bribery, embezzlement, clientelism or misuse of confidential information.
b) How many Czech public servants do you believe to be presently involved in corruption? By corruption, we mean any abuse of public power for private gain, that is, for example, favouring friends, acquaintances or family, bribery, embezzlement, clientelism or misuse of confidential information.

Condition 4 (*bribery*):
a) How many Czech politicians do you believe to be presently involved in bribery?
b) How many Czech public servants do you believe to be presently involved in bribery?

The second was an online survey conducted on businesspeople who were members of the Union of Industry and Transport of the Czech Republic (SPČR) or the Association of Small and Medium Size Enterprises and Sole Traders of the Czech Republic (AMSP ČR). An email was sent to 1,100 randomly chosen mem-

15 E.g. Global Corruption Barometer (Transparency International 2020): *'How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?'*; World Justice Project (2017): *'Corruption exists in all countries and societies in some form or another. How many of the following people in [COUNTRY] do you think are involved in corrupt practices'.*

bers of both organisations asking them to fill in a short questionnaire with two questions. The first half of businesspeople (that is, 550 potential respondents) received a variant identical with Condition 1 (*corruption simple*); 40 answers were received. The second half received a variant identical with Condition 4 (*bribery*) and 56 answers were received. The very low response rate and the related self-selection bias of the respondents are evident problems of this part of our study. We assume, however, that other surveys of corruption perception among businesspeople face similar issues (and this might be the reason that response rates or criteria for selecting businesspeople as respondents routinely are not indicated). While it is technically a random purposive sample, the final group of respondents probably has a character of samples of convenience due to the expected high selection bias. While this does not pose a problem for the survey experiment itself, it is something that needs to be borne in mind when comparing the results of surveys between businesspeople and the general population. We expected a low response rate and hence the low number of questionnaires completed, and this was why we only included two conditions in the second survey experiment (*corruption simple* and *bribery*).

Results

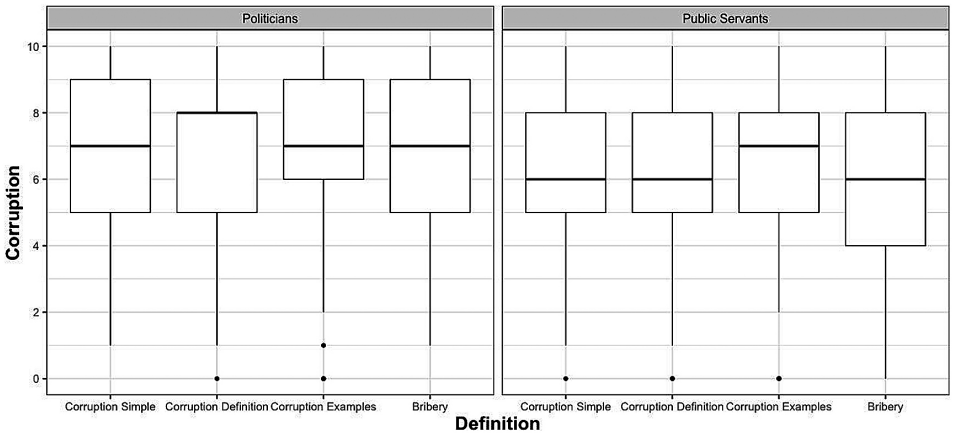
To analyse the results of both experiments, we use the primary descriptive findings and the ANOVA analysis or t-test, depending on how many categories we used in the given model. While regression analysis is often used in this case, we follow the recommendation of Mutz (2011) and others, who see it as unnecessary since control variables are randomly distributed in the experiment (Scherer – Curry 2010; Mutz – Pemantle 2015).[16]

Public perception of politicians' and public servants' corruption: a survey experiment

There are two boxplots presented in Figure 1: the first one represents the scores of politicians' corruption for each condition as perceived by the public; the second one deals with perceived corruption of public servants. In both cases, the middleboxes overlap each other. The spread of scores in the first boxplot was reasonably similar in all conditions, although the *'corruption definition'* median is higher than the median in any other group. The three other groups have the same median score (7).

16 Assessment scores for none of the experimental group tested below were not normally distributed, as reported by Shapiro-Wilk's test ($p < 0.05$). Since we expect this to be caused by large sample size, we proceeded with the analysis.

Figure 1: Boxplots of corruption scores assessed by public (politicians and public servants)



Note: The boxplots show distribution of scores provided by the public, depending on the definition of corruption that was randomly assigned to them. Respondents were to assess the corruption of politicians and public servants.
Source: Own calculations.

Compared with the second boxplot, it is clear that the distribution of scores is situated lower than in the first case. However, medians of three of the four groups *('corruption simple'*, *'corruption definition'* and *'bribery'*) are again at the same level. All in all, inter-quartile ranges representing 50% of scores for the groups in both boxplots are relatively similar in size and position. However, the lines of the first boxplots upper quartiles are generally higher.

Table 2: Public perception of politicians' corruption (survey experiment)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Corruption Simple	244	6.87	2.186	.140	6.60	7.15	1	10
Corruption Definition	233	6.88	2.320	.152	6.58	7.18	0	10
Corruption Examples	224	7.07	2.216	.148	6.78	7.36	0	10
Bribery	237	6.74	2.352	.153	6.44	7.04	1	10
Total	938	6.89	2.269	.074	6.74	7.03	0	10

Note: Do not know / Do not want to answer n = 63.
Source: Own calculations.

Table 3: ANOVA results (1)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.616	3	4.205	.817	.485
Within Groups	4809.853	934	5.150		
Total	4822.469	937			

Source: Own calculations.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted twice to determine whether the perception of various groups of participants was different for groups with different definitions of corruption or bribery, related first to politicians (Tables 2 and 3) and then public servants (Tables 4 and 5). Levene's test of homogeneity of variances ($p = 0.395$ for politicians, $p = 0.139$ for public servants) determined and confirmed homogeneity of variances. Regarding perceptions of politicians, the score increased only very slightly from *'bribery'* ($M = 6.74$, $SD = 2.35$) to *'corruption simple'* ($M = 6.87$, $SD = 2.19$), *'corruption definition'* ($M = 6.88$, $SD = 2.32$) and *'corruption examples'* ($M = 7.07$, $SD = 2.22$) and the differences between the groups were not statistically significant, $F(3, 934) = 0.817$, $p = 0.485$.[17]

For public servants, the score again very slightly increased from *'corruption definition'* ($M = 5.97$, $SD = 2.20$) to *'bribery'* ($M = 5.98$, $SD = 2.35$), *'corruption simple'* ($M = 6.04$, $SD = 2.25$) and *'corruption examples'* ($M = 6.45$, $SD = 2.16$) and the differences were not statistically significant, $F(3, 937) = 2.316$, $p = 0.074$. For hypothesis H1, H2 and H3, the null hypotheses cannot be rejected.

Table 4: Public perception of public servants' corruption (survey experiment)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Corruption Simple	240	6.04	2.248	.145	5.76	6.33	0	10
Corruption Definition	237	5.97	2.199	.143	5.69	6.25	0	10
Corruption Examples	224	6.45	2.157	.144	6.16	6.73	0	10
Bribery	240	5.98	2.354	.152	5.68	6.28	0	10
Total	941	6.11	2.247	.073	5.96	6.25	0	10

Note: Do not know / Do not want to answer n = 60.
Source: Own calculations.

17 In accordance with the prevailing practice, we cite statistical significance, even if we are working with a representative sample of the population.

Table 5: ANOVA results (2)

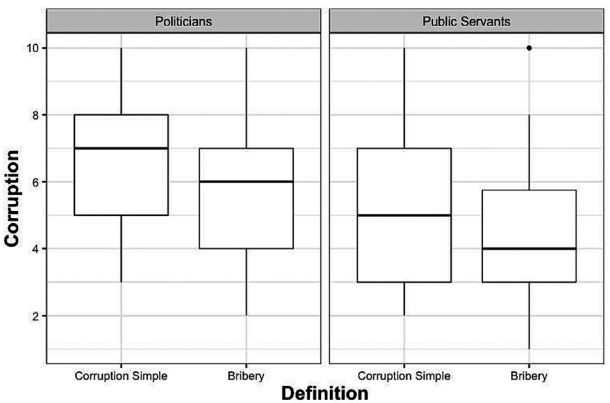
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	34.917	3	11.639	2.316	.074
Within Groups	4709.667	937	5.026		
Total	4744.584	940			

Source: Own calculations.

Businesspeople's perception of politicians' and public servants' corruption: a survey experiment

Figure 2 provides two boxplots depicting perceived corruption of politicians and public servants, respectively. In the case of politicians, the size of inter-quartile boxes is identical. On the other hand, there is a difference in their position – we can see that the box of *'corruption simple'* definition is placed exactly one point higher than the box of *'bribery'* definition.

Figure 2: Boxplots of corruption scores assessed by businesspeople (politicians and public servants)



Note: The boxplots show distribution of scores provided by the businesspeople, depending on the definition of corruption that was randomly assigned to them. Respondents were to assess the corruption of politicians and public servants.
Source: Own calculations.

The second boxplot (on the right) dealing with corruption of public servants confirms the general trend that middleboxes overlap each other. However, the spread of the scores is different, as the whiskers of *'corruption simple'* group are positioned higher up the graph. In other words, the businesspeople were assessing the situation related to public servants as worse when asked about corruption compared to bribery. Comparing both of the actors that were evalu-

ated (politicians and public servants), the median scores of the groups were always higher for politicians (7 and 6, respectively) than for public servants (5 and 4, respectively) and the level of the median was always higher in the case of *'corruption simple'* definition (7 and 5, respectively) than in the *'bribery'* definition (6 and 4, respectively).

Two independent-samples t-tests were run to determine if there were differences in assessing corruption or bribery among politicians (Tables 6 and 7) and civil servants (Tables 8 and 9), for two experimental groups, *'corruption simple'* and *'bribery'*. There was homogeneity of variances in both cases, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances (p = 0.740 for politicians, p = 0.169 for civil servants). As expected, the average result was higher for *'corruption simple'* (M = 6.40, SD = 2.32) than *'bribery'* M = 5.92, SD = 2.30), indicating that businesspeople at least somewhat differentiate between corruption and bribery. However, the test did not find a statistically significant difference, M = 0.482, 95% CI [–0.54, 1.50], t (73.06) = 0.943, p = 0.349.

Table 6: Businesspeople's perception of politicians' corruption (survey experiment)

	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Politicians	Corruption Simple	35	6.40	2.316	.392
	Bribery	49	5.92	2.299	.328

Note: Do not know / Do not want to answer n = 12.
Source: Own calculations.

Table 7: Independent samples t-test results (1)

	Levene's Test Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
							Lower	Upper
Politicians	.111	.740	.944	82	.348	.482 (.510)	-.534	1.497
			.943	73.06	.349	.482 (.511)	-.537	1.500

Note: Values in brackets represent Standard Error Difference. In the first row, equal variances are assumed; in the second row, equal variances are not assumed.
Source: Own calculations.

The results were similar regarding public servants: The assessment was higher for corruption (M = 5.03, SD = 2.37) than bribery of public servants (M = 4.67, SD = 2.07), however without a statistically significant difference, M = 0.356, 95% CI [–0.67, 1.38], t (63.171) = 0.696, p = 0.489. As we have failed to identify significant differences in either of the two survey experiments (one on the public and one on businesspeople), we cannot reject the null hypotheses for hypotheses H4.

Table 8: Businesspeople's perception of public servants' corruption (survey experiment)

	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Public Servants	Corruption Simple	33	5.03	2.365	.412
	Bribery	46	4.67	2.066	.305

Note: Do not know / Do not want to answer n = 17.
Source: Own calculations.

Table 9: Independent samples t-test results (2)

	Levene's Test Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
							Lower	Upper
Public Servants	1.926	.169	.712	77	.479	.356 (.501)	-.641	1.354
			.696	63.171	.489	.356 (.512)	-.667	1.380

Note: Values in brackets represent Standard Error Difference. In the first row, equal variances are assumed; in the second row, equal variances are not assumed.
Source: Own calculations.

A comparison of perceptions of businesspeople and the general public

The comparison of results from both surveys presented in Table 10 and 11 indicates that businesspeople consistently assessed corruption and bribery as less common compared to the results of the public survey. Moreover (and as expected), they showed a slightly better differentiation between the levels of

bribery and corruption than members of the public[18] – the difference in assessment for businesspeople was 0.48 compared to 0.15 in the evaluation of the public (when speaking about politicians) and 0.36 compared to 0.06 (when talking about public servants).

Table 10: Comparison of perception results regarding politicians from both surveys (public and businesspeople)

	BRIBERY*			CORRUPTION**		
Respondents	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Businesspeople	49	5.92	2.299	35	6.40	2.316
Public	237	6.74	2.352	244	6.87	2.186

Note: Do not know / Do not want to answer: * n = 25; ** n = 17.
Source: Own calculations.

Table 11: Comparison of perception results regarding public servants from both surveys (public and businesspeople)

	BRIBERY*			CORRUPTION**		
Respondents	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Businesspeople	46	4.67	2.066	33	5.03	2.365
Public	240	5.98	2.354	240	6.04	2.248

Note: Do not know / Do not want to answer: * n = 25; ** n = 33.
Source: Own calculations.

Discussion

Both of the survey experiments conducted produced similar results: although the averages for the individual groups at first glance do confirm our assumptions (lowest average score for questions asking about bribery, highest average score for questions including a definition and examples of corruption), the differences are very small for the general public and businesspeople alike. In no case was the difference statistically significant (again we remind the reader that we worked with a representative sample of the population). None of the first three

18 As stated earlier, the definition of corruption here is consistent with the condition *'corruption simple'* as described above.

hypotheses tested can, therefore, be confirmed. In both of our surveys, the way the questions were formulated had minimal or no influence on the assessment of corruption levels.

Three interpretations can be proposed to explain these results. The first, somewhat unlikely, explanation is that the respondents believed that Czech politicians and public servants were not involved in any form of corruption other than bribery. The second explanation is that the respondents believed bribery to be so widespread a type of corruption that it was committed by (virtually) all politicians and public servants who were involved in corrupt practices. In other words, if people were committing other forms of corruption, such as clientelism, nepotism, etc., they engaged in bribery as well. This too seems rather unlikely, given that most Czech people have relatively little experience of bribery[19]. The third explanation, which we believe to be the most likely, is that respondents' assessments were significantly influenced by their overall (dis-)satisfaction with the work of politicians and public servants, which might have played a more significant role than real information about their corrupt activities. In such a case, how exactly the questions are formulated would not exercise a major influence.

The practical finding of this comparison, therefore, is that in Czechia at least, the citing of a corruption definition, or conversely asking a question focused on bribery, is unlikely to influence the results of the survey (the comparison in the means of most different categories '*corruption examples'* and *'bribery'* was 0.33 points when talking about politicians and 0.47 points for public servants, while using a 10-point scale). Our results also suggest that since the exact wording of questions seems to have little impact, language (specifically, the understanding of corruption that is common in the given language) might not influence the assessments as much as could be expected at first sight.

A theoretically relevant contribution of our study is that it provides further support for the argument that corruption perception is influenced by more factors than just the respondent's knowledge about the level of corruption in the given country. In other words, the use of corruption perception as a proxy variable for the actual level of corruption might often be inevitable, but it is far from an ideal solution.

The survey experiment among businesspeople also failed to prove that the formulation of the question would substantially influence the assessment of the level of corruption. If we accept the premise that other forms of public sector corruption apart from bribery are widespread in the Czech Republic, then our results confirm our doubts that businesspeople can be considered experts on corruption issues. This does not mean, however, that to use them as respond-

19 During the 2016 GCB survey, 9% of respondents reported that they or somebody in their household had experience with bribery of public officials in the last 12 months (Transparency International 2016).

ents is a misstep. Even if we do not assume that businesspeople understand the problem of corruption better than the general public, we can still argue that, given their more frequent contact with politicians and public servants, they can better assess the incidence of corruption in the public sector. After all, the results (although statistically insignificant) showed that the difference in the evaluation of two categories (corruption simple and bribery) was bigger among businesspeople than it was the public – the average difference in assessment for businesspeople was 0.42 compared to 0.11 for the public. However, we need to be aware of the limitations of this approach. In particular, the level of corruption may differ across sectors, and businesspeople will primarily have an idea about the situation in their industry. This is particularly important in evaluating surveys and sources that are based on evaluations of a relatively small number of 'experts' – businesspeople.

It also emerged that businesspeople tended to assess the level of public sector corruption as lower than the general public. Again, there are several possible explanations for this difference, of which only some are mutually exclusive. The first is that businesspeople encounter corrupt action less frequently than the rest of the population. This is rather unlikely, given that businesspeople typically more regularly find themselves in situations where there is a potential for corruption. The second explanation is that, precisely because they are in more frequent contact with politicians and public servants, they have a more accurate view of the level of public sector corruption, which they assess as (somewhat) lower than the population does. In other words, the popular notions of how many politicians and public servants are corrupt are (somewhat) overestimated. Another option is that, compared to the general public, businesspeople are more or less influenced by the overall (dis-)satisfaction with the work of politicians and public servants than the general public. Possibly, they could also be somewhat less dissatisfied with their work than the general public is (for instance, because businesspeople have better knowledge about the level of corruption in other countries). Nor can we exclude the option that businesspeople are more involved in certain forms of corruption (especially bribery) than the rest of the population, which might influence their answers. Socialisation, too, may play a role, making certain types of corrupt behaviour seem common practice and therefore not considered corruption by the participants.

Whatever the causes for the different perceptions of corruption by businesspeople and the general population, it is evident that, in the Czech Republic at least, businesspeople see corruption as less widespread than the general population, though the difference is not great. This confirms the premise of businesspeople's systemic bias and complicates the use of businesspeople's perceptions as a proxy indicator for popular perceptions, mainly because we do not know how significant the bias is and which way it is directed in various countries.

Conclusion: Summing Up and Moving Forward?

The measuring of corruption will always face difficult challenges. This applies to the so far most prevalent, so-called first-generation indicators, of which CPI and CC WGI are perhaps the most influential. One of the challenges is the construct validity problem, consisting of an unclear, conflicting and often missing definition of what the survey authors consider as corruption – the subject on which they are questioning their respondents. However, our study suggests that this might not have as fundamental consequences for the measured perceptions of corruption as one might initially expect. It seems likely that the perceptions tend to reflect overall satisfaction with the work of politicians and public servants rather than respondents' actual awareness of corrupt acts.

Our findings could also support the view professed by many (Arndt – Oman 2006; Andersson – Heywood 2009, Heywood 2017, Heywood – Rose 2014) that attempts to measure corruption often suffer from a construct validity problem. We do not dispute that a large part of the blame rests with how both survey questionnaires and indexes themselves are constructed, often failing to provide a clear definition of corruption. However, if we are right in our supposition that people tend to be influenced by their overall satisfaction (or the lack thereof) with the performance of the political system, then adjusting the questionnaires and providing more comprehensive commentary to the indexes would do little to improve the situation.

Case oriented, psychosocial research is, of course, necessary to explain the lack of differences between our experimental groups. A survey experiment does not provide us with the data needed to explain how people formulate their perceptions of the levels of corruption. At the same time, the findings of our study could be used as the basis for further research focused on the way individuals perceive corruption and establish their perceptions.

It is increasingly disputed whether one-number indicators should continue to be used in academic research. Our results support the view that using the public's perceptions of corruption as proxy indicators of actual levels of corruption is problematic, especially in variable-oriented studies that frequently fail to adequately reflect the limits of their data (see footnote five above). Importantly, this relates not only to first-generation composite indicators such as CPI or CC WGI but also to any survey questions asking respondents about their general perceptions of corruption. These are included in second-generation indicators such as GBC or Eurobarometer too.

A way forward has been suggested by Paul Heywood (2017) in his article 'Rethinking Corruption: Hocus-Pocus, Locus and Focus'. Heywood convincingly argues that we should attempt to disaggregate corruption in more specific types, focus research on particular sectors with specifics constellations of actors, distinguish between levels of corruption and start giving more attention to dif-

ferent contests of corruption. This does not necessarily mean that the time of one-number indicators and perception-based survey questions is over. Even if we abandon them as instruments measuring corruption, they can still provide valuable data on public attitudes towards the political system, political elites or even regimes. Rather than being proxy indicators of corruption, perception--based indices could be seen as proxy indicators of institutional trust.

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Relations Between Turkey and Hungary in the Democratic Party Period (1950–1960)

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Abstract: *The decennium historical process in Turkish political history between 1950 and 1960 is called the Democratic Party (DP) era. During this period, important issues took place in Turkish foreign policy. Our aim is to reveal the political, commercial and social relations between Turkey and Hungary in the light of archive documents within the scope of important events in Turkish foreign policy. The aim of this article is to emphasise how the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 affected the relations between the two countries and to prove with documents that Turkey supported Hungary during the revolution. This study has been created by benefiting from archive documents, national newspapers and copyrights from both target countries. The study also commemorates the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, which erupted 65 years ago this year. Finally, this article entitled Relations between Turkey and Hungary during the Democratic Party Period (1950–1960) is a qualitative study prepared using the document analysis technique.*

Keywords: ***Democratic Party; Diplomacy; Hungary; Commerce; 1956; Turkey.***

Introduction

This study dealing with the relations between Turkey and Hungary during the DP period is divided into two parts. In the first part, the period from 1923, which was the proclamation of the Republic, to 1950 is examined. From the point of view of the examined topic, it is essential to explore all the historical and diplomatic antecedents that led to the flourishing of Turkish-Hungarian relations during the rule of the Democratic Party. In this chapter, the diplomatic, commercial and political relations between the two countries have been

revealed with contemporary records. In the second part, documents have been put forward on what kinds of measures were taken by the two countries to improve the nexus between Turkey and Hungary during the DP period between 1950 and 1960.

Turkish-Hungarian relations are based on a deep antiquity in historical terms. The first of these is the results of the studies carried out by Hungarian scientists representing various disciplines on the ethnic origins of Hungarians, their homeland and their historical past. The second is the nature of the connection between Hungarian and Turkish languages in terms of language structure (Korkmaz 2012: 154; Pavlina 2019: 132–133). Hungary has had deeply rooted relations with both the Ottomans and Turkey since the establishment of the Turkish Republic (Bodó 2016: 97–98). In particular, relations with Hungarians who lived under Turkish rule for one and a half centuries during the Ottoman Empire period (1541–1686) has become stronger in the cultural context due to the research started in the scientific field in the 21st century (Çolak 2000: 415). After the defeat of the freedom struggles of the Hungarian people, the current Turkish state granted asylum to the forced refugees at all times. Thus, after defeat in the Rákóczi War of Independence (1703–1711), Ferenc Rákóczi II., Imre Thököly, Ilona Zrínyi and the Transylvanian princely court fled to Turkey, and so the first Hungarian civil government minister, Lajos Kossuth, arrived in Turkey in 1849. Hungary, in return, contributed to Turkey's development in the field of natural sciences and industrial development. Few know that during the Ottoman siege of Constantinople (1453), several Hungarian legacies were present in the Turkish camp, negotiating for the sake of the city, and the largest of the cannons destroying the city walls were made for the sultan by a Hungarian from Transylvania named Orbán (Finkel 2005: 48). Ibrahim Müteferrika (Cluj-Napoca, c. 1674 – c. 1745) of Hungarian origin, was the founder of the first Turkish printing house (Hopp 1974: 126–131) and is also worth mentioning. Count Ödön Széchenyi (Bratislava, 14 December 1839 – Istanbul, 24 March 1922), the organiser of the fire brigade in Hungary and Turkey, was the son of István Széchenyi, who held the position of Minister of Transport in the first independent Hungarian civilian government, the Batthyány-government. Successive Turkish sultans valued his work, he received several honors and he was the first Christian to receive the title of pasha without having to leave his faith. Széchenyi served as commander of the Turkish Fire Brigade as a 'firepasha', a lieutenant general (Rocsik, 1938). All of these examples prove that, despite the wars between them, their relationship is based on mutual respect for each other and their intertwined historical past.

This situation as explained above clearly reveals the serious and deep relations that have long existed between Turks and Hungarians. Following the establishment of the Turkish Republic by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881 – 10 November 1938) on 23 October 1923 (Doğan, 2003) which went through a dif-

ficult economic process after the Turkish War of Independence, apart from its political and cultural relations with Turkey, the Hungarian Government also established economic relations. Hungary, which was politically alone in Europe especially during World War I, had realised that it was difficult to cooperate with other countries and had further strengthened political and economic relations with the new state called Turkey (Tunç – Şahin 2017: 156). Thus, it can be said that the necessary environment had been created for the cooperation between Hungary and Turkey to reach a remarkable level in the field of economy as well as political and cultural affairs since the first years of the Republic.

At the end of World War II, in which the Turks did not join, Turkey started a multi-party life, and important steps were taken towards democracy. The DP, which emerged as a new party after leaving the Republican People's Party (RPP) in 1946, succeeded in becoming the ruler alone by taking the power from the RPP with the elections in 1950. The DP, which remained in power for 10 consecutive years from 1950 to 1960, left its mark on Turkish political life (Tunç – Şahin 2017: 156). During this period, very important developments took place in Turkish foreign policy. Turkey became a member of numerous international organisations, and the most cardinal of these was to achieve NATO membership.

As in previous periods, strong diplomatic relations with Hungarians were paid attention to during the DP era. During this period, serious steps were taken to develop social connections as well as commercial and political relations with Hungary. Particularly during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, Turkey's support for the Hungarian people brought the two countries closer to each other.

The aim of this study, entitled Relations between Turkey and Hungary in the Democratic Party Period (1950–1960), is to contribute to the scientific studies previously conducted on the relations between the two countries. There are articles, books and theses on the relations between the two countries concerning the first years of the Republic. However, it has been determined that there are no studies specifically related to the relations between the two countries during the DP period. With this article, we aim to overcome this deficiency and to contribute to scientists working in this field.

Relations with Hungary before the Democratic Party Period

After the Turkish Republic was established on 29 October 1923, a Friendship Treaty was signed with the Kingdom of Hungary on 18 December 1923. In this agreement, it was stated that necessary steps would be taken for the establishment of good relations between the two countries and for the happiness and welfare of both states. The treaty in question was signed in Istanbul and put into effect by being published in the Official Gazette on 7 April 1924 (Official Gazette, 7 April 1924, 68: 3). The agreement guaranteed each other's citizens 'full freedom of movement and establishment, free trade and industry, legal

protection, the most favourable treatment with regard to the acquisition of movable and immovable property, and equality with nationals in the payment of taxes' (Dávid 2004: 13). The fact that Hungary was among the countries with which Turkey signed the first friendship treaty immediately after the foundation of the Republic, clearly reveals the importance of the new state to Hungary and that it wanted to establish good relations.

As of 1926, bilateral relations between Turkey and Hungary became more regular. The reason for this is that in 1926 Turkey appointed Vasif Bey as the envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Budapest, the capital of Hungary (Saral 2019: 159–171). Subsequently, a new commercial agreement was made between the two countries. However, due to some bureaucratic problems, the agreement in question could only be put into effect in September 1927 (Özgiray 1997: 76–77). The compliance with the Lausanne Trade Agreement of the Trade Agreement which entered into force in 1927 enabled the trade potential between the two countries to increase.

Hungary's participation in industry and infrastructure development was the highest it had ever been. According to a report by the ambassador dated 1927, there were 1000–1200 Hungarians living in Turkey in that year, of whom 300–400 arrived during 1926. Most of them were construction workers and worked as day laborers. The most influential Hungarians, also mentioned by name by the ambassador, were Béla Kriszt, the chief engineer of the Chemin de Fer Orientaux and the president of the Hungarian Association, and Béla Vondra, the director general of civil engineering at the Ankara Ministry of Public Works. The report also mentioned that there were no Hungarian schools at that time, no Hungarian teachers and no Hungarian-language newspapers (Hungarian National Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Repertoire, Presidential Department 1 / S Papers /OL K60/ 1927–I/7, 2490/kig) 1927). In 1927, further job opportunities were opened up for Hungarians, as the minister of commerce informed the Budapest Chamber of Engineers at the beginning of the year that engineers and metalworkers were being sought at the Yerköy and Kirlekale ammunition factories in Turkey (OL K60 1927–I/7, 72010/II. 1927).

The Turkish Ambassador to Hungary Nurettin Ferruh Bey (Alkent), negotiated with the Hungarian government for the neutrality and reconciliation agreement signed between Hungary and the Italian government in 1928. Nurettin Ferruh Bey was authorised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to carry out these transactions (Prime Ministry Republic Archive (PMRA), Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 1. 4. 4.). This situation reveals that Hungary attaches importance to Turkey in its foreign relations and acts jointly with Turkey on some issues.

In order to further develop the existing friendship and relations between Turkey and the Kingdom of Hungary, it was decided to sign a neutrality, compromise and arbitration agreement in 1929. The Turkish ambassador to Hungary Behiç Bey (Erkin) and the foreign affairs minister of the Kingdom of Hungary Lajos

Walko was appointed to carry out these transactions (Official Gazette, 17 April 1929, 1170: 6948). As well as with many countries, after this agreement, steps were taken to develop trade with Hungary and to further increase the existing potential. Zekai Bey, Mustafa Şeref Bey and Menemenli Numan Bey were assigned to perform this task (Official Gazette, 17 April 1929, 1170: 6948). These agreements and delegations are important in terms of showing what steps have been taken in the seventh year of the establishment of the Turkish Republic to further develop the relations between the two countries in many aspects.

By 1930, several stores had been established between Turkey and Hungary and there had been several exchanges of letters in this regard. In this context, numerous sheep and goats were purchased from Hungary on 20 January 1930 (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 8. 3. 9.). Later on, many breeding animals were also purchased in Hungary in accordance with the agreement signed with Austria and Hungary on 3 September 1930 (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 13. 57. 5.). Veterinarians had been assigned for the examination of animals purchased from Hungary (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 14. 62. 11.). In 1930, when trade between Hungary and Turkey was increased, and in this context, on 2 September 1930, Hungarian Prime Minister Count István Bethlen made an official visit to Turkey (PMRA, Code: 30. 10. 0.0; Place No: 232.564.11).

The purpose of Bethlen's visit was to recruit Turkey against Petite (Little) Entente. Bethlen, who met with President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, stated that they intended to avenge the loss of the previous war against the entente but the biggest obstacle was the Paris Agreement. On the other hand, the Turkish president declared that Turkey could not support Hungary in this matter and requested information about the thoughts of the Kingdom of Hungary regarding the Balkan Union which was planned to be established. Turkey's Prime Minister İsmet Pasa, who attended this meeting enunciated that the relations between Turkey and France were particularly good and that it would be preserved, also Bethlen expressed the benefits of the cooperation between Hungary and Italy (Çolak 2009: 37–38). Bethlen's visit to Turkey shows the importance of the further development of the relations between the two countries, but also clearly demonstrates that the two nations had different views on some issues, especially those concerning the Petite (Little) Entente.

After the negotiations of the Hungarian Prime Minister Count István Bethlen in Turkey, Prime Minister İsmet Pasa made an official visit to Budapest, Hungary on 11 October 1931. In conjunction with this visit of Ismet Pasa, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Tevfik Rüştü Bey and Turkey's ambassador to Hungary Behiç Bey (Ergun) also took part (PMRA, Code: 30. 10. 0.0; Place No:220.481. 15.). The purpose of İsmet İnönü's visit was to give profitability to Count Bethlen's visit to Turkey (Özyürek 2018: 12). During the meetings held there, the issues of establishing relations between Turkey and Italy and the process of joining the Turkish League of Nations were discussed (Duran – Çalik Orhun 2017: 564). It can be

interpreted that the official visits made by both countries at the highest level, one year apart, show that Turkey and Hungary worked to establish strong relations.

In 1932 there was a change of government in Hungary. In the letter sent by the new government established by Gyula Gömbös to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it was reported that the necessary actions would be carried out for the continuation and development of relations with the new Hungarian government as in the previous period. The same wish was expressed in the reply letter sent by Turkey, and it was emphasised that relations with Hungary would be further improved (PMRA, Code: 30. 10. 0.0; Place No: 232.564. 19.).

In 1933 both Hungarian Prime Minister Gyula Gömbös, and Minister of Internal Affairs Ferenc Keresztes-Fischer made official visits to Turkey (Pesti Hírlap 21 October 1933, 55 /223–248/: 3). During the meetings held by the prime minister's visit to Turkey, existing relations were further strengthened (Çolak 2019: 177). Ferenc Keresztes-Fischer, who informed the press about his visits to Turkey, stated that Hungary's aim was to reach an agreement between Turkey and Bulgaria to draw a new map of Europe (PMRA, Code: 30. 10. 0.0; Place No: 232.566. 4.). This can be interpreted as Turkey and Hungary acting jointly in some foreign policies.

In 1934 two important decisions were made between Turkey and Hungary. One of these decisions was to extend the duration of a law adopted in 1932 with the support of the Kingdom of Hungary. In this context, the Agreement on Extradition and Legal Aid signed between the two countries on 29 May 1932 was reaffirmed on 6 May 1934 (Official Gazette 10 May 1934, 2697: 3762). The second concerned actions aimed at strengthening the commercial, cultural and social relations between the two countries. In this context it was decided to establish delegations to improve commercial, cultural and social cooperation between Turkey and Hungary, and to include representatives of the Ministries of National Education, Agriculture, Customs and Monopoly and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs among these delegations (PMRA, Code: 30. 10. 0.0; Place No: 232.566. 16.). This decision can be interpreted as important in terms of showing that serious steps were taken by the two countries in order to ensure comprehensive cooperation between Turkey and Hungary in many fields in the first years of the Republic.

The year 1934 was fruitful in collaborations. The Hungarian Nitrochemistry plant received an order worth 1.5 million pengős from the Turkish army to transport trotyl explosives and to build a factory producing such materials. Builders János Dávid and his son, together with a Turkish company, won the tender set by the city of Ankara for the construction of a large-scale stadium and a modern horse racing ground worth 3 million pengős. The engineering design of these buildings was also entrusted to a Hungarian, László Kovács. It was a great step forward that, as a result of the amendment of the trade agreement between the two countries, increased the framework of Hungary's trade in goods by 1

million pengős during the year (OL K63 1935-32/1, 2/pol. 14 January 1935). Also in 1935, the operation of the Hungarian Nitrochemistry Factory in Turkey, which produced explosives for the Turkish army, was extended for another 1–1.5 years. Another positive feature is the construction of the Ganz-Danubius Factory's power plants in Diyarbakir and Ödemiş. As a result of close cooperation in the energy sector, six other Anatolian cities' power generators were built and equipped by Hungarian companies before World War II (Dávid 2004: 13). It is understood that in 1935 necessary actions were carried out for the extension of two previous agreements with Hungary. In this context, the agreement between Turkey and Hungary signed in 1933 and extended in 1934, was extended again on 22 July 1935 (Magyar Gyáripar February 1934, 25 (1–12): 19). Similarly, as a result of the negotiations made in Budapest for a new trade agreement with the Hungarians on 1 September 1935, the 1934 Turkish-Hungarian Trade Agreement was extended again for a certain period (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 58. 75. 20.).

Attaching great importance to the development of cultural relations with Hungary, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk took a very important step in 1935. The step-in question was the opening of the Hungarian Language and Literature (Hungarology) Department at the Faculty of Language, History and Geography in Ankara University. In this context, a well-known Turcologist in Hungary, László Rásonyi, was invited to Turkey and appointed a professor in the same department (Duran 2020: 2769). László Rásonyi wrote inter alia the 'Onomasticon Turcicum. Turkic Personal Names' (Rásonyi 2007). The opening of this department which is an extremely important thing in terms of the recognition of Hungarian culture and literature in Turkey can be considered beneficial for the Turkish people to know Hungarians well.

According to the documents obtained from the Presidential Archives of the Republic of Turkey and the Hungarian National Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Repertoire, Presidential Department Papers, it is understood that there are continuous commercial agreements between Turkey and Hungary and that the existing agreements were extended. In this context, the duration of the two previous trade agreements made in 1937 was extended and a new trade agreement was signed (Közgazdasági és Közlekedési Tudósító 7 April 1937, 10/1–23/). Negotiations for a new trade agreement between the delegations were made and, the Turkish – Hungarian Trade and Disbursement Agreement was signed on 1 July 1937 (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 80. 96. 13.). The practical Hungarian contribution to the development of the economy was realised in the fact that the Hungarian State Machine Factory, despite very large German competitors, received an order to build seven iron bridges in Turkey (OL K63 1938-32/1, 31/pol. 1937., 1938).

As it is understood from the documents, agriculture and husbandry constituted a very important part of the trade between the two countries. Having made

serious efforts for the development of agriculture and husbandry in the first years of the Republic, Turkey imported many breeding animals from Hungary and established farms to breed them. Breeding shops between 1925 and 1935 had a turnover of more than 3,000,000 pengős (Dávid 2004:16). For example, in 1934 alone, 650 horses were transported from Hungary to Turkey (OL K63 1935-32/1, 2/pol., 14 January 1935). Dr. Ferenc Csiky was at the forefront of the continuous maintenance of the business relations in this field. He was the director general of the Turkish state studs on 100,000 hectares. It was also to his merit that by preparing an expert opinion on Turkish animal husbandry, a Hungarian, the rector of the Budapest University of Veterinary Medicine, Oszkár Wellmann, was appointed (Dávid 2004: 13).

In the first years of the Republic, several Hungarian experts were invited to Turkey and employed in various jobs, mostly within agriculture between 1937 and 1942. In this context, Hungarian experts consisting of 23 people in total were employed in the Ankara High Agricultural Institute, the Ankara Agricultural Tools Factory, the Karacabey Stud Farm, the Karacabey Merinos Breeding Farm, Sultan Suyu Stud and State Agricultural Enterprises in order to improve the agricultural areas and raise quality animals from 1937. In addition, Hungarian experts were occupied in other fields as well, especially in railway construction and science works (Yıldırım 2012: 136).

On 20 December 1939 the Judicial Induction and Consular Agreement was signed between Turkey and Hungary. One of the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Numan Menemencioğlu, delegated on behalf of Turkey, and Zoltán Máriássy, exceptional negotiator and ambassador of Hungary to Ankara, delegated on behalf of the Kingdom of Hungary (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 84. 63. 12.). This agreement was signed as a result of the delegation's actions under the chair of the aforementioned persons determined by the two countries. With the agreement in question, both parties undertook to accept the other party's chief consuls and deputy consuls in their respective countries (Official Gazette 27 December 1939, 4395: 13021). For this reason, the signing of the Judicial Induction and Consular Contract facilitated the opening of an embassy and diplomatic work for both sides.

On 1 May 1940 in Budapest, the magazine *Honi Ipar* reported on page 19 that 'The Hungarian-Turkish trade is in balance' (Honi Ipar 1 May 1940, 33/1–13/: 19). In 1941, a trade agreement was signed between Turkey and Kingdom of Hungary. Before this agreement, Hungary's ambassador to Turkey was changed. In this context János Vörnle was appointed to replace the current ambassador Zoltán Máriássy (PMRA, Code: 30. 10. 0.0; Place No: 130.933. 16.). Meanwhile, in 1939, Ruşen Eşref Günaydın was appointed to replace Turkish Hungarian ambassador Behiç Erkin. A further Trade and Payment Agreement was signed between the two countries on 22 September 1941 during the terms of both new ambassadors. With this agreement, the import and export products to be

made between the two countries were determined and the policies to be applied in this regard were also regulated (Official Gazette 25 September 1941, 4921: 1737–1738).

There was no conflict between Turkey and Hungary during World War II. As it is known, Hungary participated in this war from 1941 with the compulsion of Germany, and Turkey which did not enter the war, and continued its politics based on peace. During World War II, dignitaries and leading names in Hungary who supported war and who objected it both intended to attract Turkey to their side to achieve their objectives. An article in *Magyar Szemle* in 1943 by Lajos Fekete specifically drew attention to the paramount importance of historical research in the Balkans and Turkey (Fekete 1943: 140–144). In this very year, on 25 April 1943, the *Közgazdasági Értesítő* informed readers on page 562, 'that the circular 478 of the Hungarian National Bank dated April 1943 states that a new agreement has been concluded between the two governments on the regulation of Hungarian-Turkish commodity cereals and the payments arising thereof. It enters into force on 22 March 1941 and maintains the provisions of a similar agreement in force until 1 June 1941, which entered into force until 1 June 1941, with the exception of minor derogations' (Közgazdasági Értesítő 25 April 1943, 38/1–26/: 562). In Budapest on 20 July 1944, *Magyar Gyáripar* on pages 12 and 14 also published news related to Turkey on three topics: 'The new Hungarian-Turkish exchange and payment agreement entered into force on the 1st of the current month, which in principle contains the data of the contract in force last year. The National Association of Hungarian Manufacturers is happy to provide further information'; 'In Turkey, natural resources have never been systematically searched for so far. During soil exploration, rich chromium, coal and iron deposits have now been discovered in Asia Minor. In addition, oil, as was later found, huge tungsten ore deposits fell under the picks of the researchers. Impeccable tungsten was found along the Istanbul-Ankara railway line'; and 'The Turkish Ministry of Economy is studying plans for a cement plant to be built next to Adana, which would produce 100 tons of cement per day' (Magyar Gyáripar 20 July 1944, 35/1–8/: 12, 14).

Seeing the approaching German and Russian danger, some Hungarian statesmen sought ways to reach an agreement with the allies and had secret negotiations with the British in Istanbul. Learning about these events, the Axis Countries occupied Hungary on 19 March 1944, and deposed Prime Minister Miklós Kállay, who wanted to be arrested after the occupation, and took refuge in the Turkish Embassy in Budapest. After the Soviet Army entered Budapest in 15 February 1945, members of the Turkish embassy and citizens arrived at Istanbul in April 1945 by the train allocated by the Soviet Union (Saral 2006: 138–139). This information also suggests that the Republic of Turkey did not have a bad diplomatic relationship with Hungary before or during the war period, and struggled to improve relations as much as possible.

Therefore, with the developments after World War II, Turkey temporarily suspended diplomatic relations with Hungary from 1 April 1945. However, as the two countries did not want to stop the cooperation, the relations continued from where they left as a result of the step taken by Hungary. In particular, new Prime Minister Zoltán Tildy emphasised in the government program that existing political relations with Turkey should be initiated as soon as possible (Çalik 2015: 38). For this purpose Turkey appointed an ambassador, Agah Aksel, to Hungary again in on 1 January 1946 (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 111. 53. 20.). Likewise, it was decided by the Hungarian government to appoint Rudolf Joó as the ambassador to Turkey (PMRA, Code: 30. 10. 0.0; Place No: 131.941. 3.).

On 2 May 1949 the new Turkish – Hungarian Trade and Payment Agreement was signed by Turkey and Hungary, depending on the resumption of diplomatic relations (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 119. 43. 15.). Making the trade agreement in question can be considered to be of serious importance in the context of increasing trade volume and developing relations between the two countries which had been doing well since the early years of the Republic.

Relations in the Democratic Party Period

On 1 January 1950 Celal Hazım Tepeyran was appointed Turkish ambassador to Hungary in the first era of the DP. The office of Tepeayran continued until 1954 (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 121. 96. 9; Şimşir 2006: 35). During the DP period Andreas Bertalan Schwarz, professor of law at the University of Budapest, was appointed chair of the Civil Law Department of the Faculty of Law of Istanbul University for a five-year period on 1 September 1950 (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 124. 85. 3; Özkorkut 2019: 491). Having stayed in Turkey for many years and studied articles, Schwarz made serious contributions to the development of both Turkish law and articles of Turkey.

During the DP period, publications from some countries including Hungary were banned, as was their entry into Turkey. The main reason for this was the allegations that these publications created communist propaganda. That is why it could have happened that some publications in 1951 from Romania and Hungary which were sent to Turkey were sent back (Yılmaz – Doğaner 2006: 158). With a decision taken by the Council of Ministers on 14 December 1951 within the scope of one of the DP's policies and efforts to prevent the spread of communism in Turkey, the entry of Romanian and Hungarian publications to Turkey was absolutely prohibited. In particular, the pamphlet entitled "1 May", which was published by the Communist Party in Hungary and which praised communism, was prohibited from entering and being published in Turkey (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 127. 91. 13.). In addition, the import and distribution of the newspaper *Hungarian People's Republic* published in Hungary

in Turkish, which was considered to praise communism was also prohibited (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 127. 95. 9.).

It is understood that during the DP period, emphasis was placed especially on Hungarian experts to be employed in Turkey in important fields. In this context Béla Offeri, a telecommunication expert, who was invited from Hungary, was allowed to be employed within the General Directorate of the Post Office (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 125. 28. 15.). In Turkey in the early years of the Republic many Hungarian experts were employed in different business areas during the DP period. This contributed to both the improvement in Turkish business industries and the development of relations between Turkey and Hungary.

Hungarian scientists contributed to the development of Turkish universities and to progress in scientific fields. Hungarian researchers, who were assigned to both Ankara and Istanbul universities during these periods, helped both universities develop in scientific fields. In this context a Hungarian academician was appointed to the Faculty of Literature in 1952, just like the appointment made to the Istanbul Faculty of Law in 1951. The name of this person was Dr. János Eckmann, a specialist in Turkish Language and Literature (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 128. 7. 3.). From the date Eckmann was appointed to Istanbul University until 1961, he played an important role in Turkey both in terms of his studies on the development of the Turkish language and in terms of training many experts in the field of Turkish linguistics (Sertkaya 1973: 2). As explained above, in the early years of the DP, Hungarian experts were employed in some fields, especially in universities. It can be thought that this had positive results for the two countries, because Hungarian experts working in Turkey were valued as cultural ambassadors between the two countries and brought the Turkish and Hungarian states closer to each other.

In 1953, it was decided to increase the credit margins determined in the trade and payment agreements with Turkey and Hungary. In this context, in accordance with the decision taken by the Council of Ministers on 5 November 1953, the loan margin with Hungary was increased to 2 million dollars. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was authorised to sign the agreement draft on behalf of the government by making mutual correspondence with the representatives of the countries of Poland and Israel (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 133. 87. 10.). Increasing the credit margin with Hungary was important in terms of showing that the trade volume between the two countries was improved.

By 1953, the relationship between Hungary and the Soviet Union had become even more tense and problematic. The first mobility from the Hungarian side to Turkey in this period was the official visit of Sándor Rónai, who served as President of the National Assembly of Hungary. Due to the Peace Offensive initiated by the USSR after the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953 (Zubok, 1995), Ronai made an official visit to Turkey, and tried to emphasise that they had good relations with Turkey. During his visit, Ronai invited the Turkish Parlia-

mentary Council to Hungary to revive the traditional cooperation between the two countries (Çalik 2015: 39).

Trade relations between the two countries were also intensified. The loan margin was determined to be USD 500,000 in Article 5 of the Payments Agreement signed between Turkey and Hungary in Ankara on 12 May 1949. Since the said date, it was stated that the existing credit share was not sufficient, especially since the developments in the economic industry of Turkey increased the exchange opportunities with Hungary and therefore it was increased in 1953. In 1954, it became obvious that the current loan margin was the main reason for the decrease in Turkish exports to Hungary. In order to solve this problem, an additional protocol was signed between Turkey and Hungary on 9 February 1954 to increase the loan margin again. It was ensured that the loan margin would further be increased in commercial relations between the two countries (Official Gazette 27 April 1954, 8698: 9093). This information and these agreements played an important role in the diplomatic relations between Hungary and Turkey in the DP period as before the DP era.

As in the first periods of the Republic, many Hungarian refugees were hosted during the DP period, and some of them held high positions in governmental offices. In this sense, it was decided on 18 June 1956 that Electrical Telecommunications Specialist Pál Belati, one of the Hungarian refugees, would work for a fee of 10,000 Turkish Liras at the Istanbul University Faculty of Electricity for a certain period of time (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 140. 60. 5.). The postings show that Hungarian experts were occupied by Turkey and refugees of Hungarian origin were supported. This was not only between Turkish and Hungarian political and commercial terms, but it was also evaluated as contributing to the development of social relations. In 1950, the year the DP came to power, Cemal Hazım Tepeyran was appointed ambassador to Hungary. In 1956 there was a change in the Turkish ambassador to Hungary.

On 17 January 1956 former Kabul ambassador Cemal Yeşil was appointed envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 141.112. 10.). Yeşil, who continued in this post until the end of the DP rule in 1960, served during the 1956 revolution in Hungary.

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 was influential in the development of relations between Turkey and Hungary. In order to understand the subject, brief information should be given about the events. The fact that the 1956 revolution which started with a great mobilisation of intellectuals, students and workers in Hungary, and which was administered by the ruling group formed by the workers, had a 'spontaneous' feature along with the boundaries of the revolution. The outbreak of the Hungarian Revolution on 23 October 1956 saw Imre Nagy elevated to the position of prime minister on 24 October as a central demand of the revolutionaries and common people. Nagy's reformist faction gained full control of the government, admitted non-communist politicians, dissolved

the ÁVH secret police, promised democratic reforms and unilaterally withdrew Hungary from the Warsaw Pact on 1 November. The Soviet Union launched a massive military invasion of Hungary on 4 November, which Hungarians still remember as a national day of mourning.

The 1956 Hungarian Revolution turned into a war of freedom over time, and the resistance of the Hungarians was followed with great interest by the Turkish people. The Turkish, who previously supported the honourable struggle of the Hungarians, they provided assistance to the Hungarians again in 1956. During these days when Cemal Yeşil served as the ambassador, the Turkish press, especially *Milliyet*, followed the events in Hungary with great interest and constantly published supporting messages (Yağcı Aksel 2014: 96–100). Other than *Milliyet*, newspapers *Hürriyet* and *Zafer* also continued to support the justified demands of the Hungarians with their headlines.

Selim Sarper, the permanent delegate of the United Nations representing the Turkish Republic at the meeting of the United Nations Council on the occasion of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, stated that he condemned the incidents carried out by the USSR Army in Hungary on behalf of Turkey and heavily criticised the Soviet delegate who was his counterpart. He also declared that he supported the application made by the Hungarian government to the United Nations Security Council regarding the situation. It was not just the ruling DP, but other political parties, notably the Freedom Party, also supported the Hungarian people. Apart from the ruling and opposition parties, many non-governmental organisations throughout the country organised various activities to support the people of Hungary. Not content with these, the Turkish government opened its gates to the Hungarian nation who struggled for their freedom and had to leave their country (Çalik 2015: 40).

On 21 November 1956 the Hungarian Relief Activity Initiative Committee, which was active in Germany at the time when the Turkish people supported the revolution in Hungary, wrote a letter to Prime Minister Adnan Menderes in which Hungarian people requested help from the Turkish government. It asked for the monetary relief to be sent to the International Red Cross Society in Geneva under the name of aid collected for the Hungarian people as a result of the efforts conducted in Turkey (PMRA, Code: 30. 1. 0.0; Place No: 6. 31. 29.). As stated above, Turkey supported the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the resistance of the Hungarian people, as Hungary was described as a sister country from the very beginning, and this message was constantly sent.

Within the scope of the efforts to help the Hungarian people, the Turkish Red Crescent started its activities in order to meet the needs of 500 refugees, and decided to carry out joint activities with the General Directorate of Land and Settlement. Refugee camps were established in the Sirkeci, Pendik and Zeytinburnu districts in Istanbul, especially for those who fled Hungary and became refugee in Turkey. The Turkish government officials, who saw the Hun-

garian refugees as guests in Turkey, made the necessary arrangement for their comfort, and signed an agreement with the Free Hungarian Association. They also assigned cooks to prepare national Hungarian dishes for the Hungarian refugees. The number of Hungarians arriving at Turkey from the first days of 1957 gradually increased, and as of 27 February 1957, the number of Hungarian refugees living in Turkey reached 507 (Çalik 2015: 41).

A letter of thanks was sent to Fahrettin Kerim Gökay, the governor and mayor of Istanbul by United Nations High Commissioner James M. Read for acceptance and assistance of Hungarian refugees. Read declared that he was grateful that Hungarian refugees were assisted and hosted in Istanbul (PMRA, Code: 30. 1. 0.0; Place No: 116.734. 26.). It can be interpreted that Turkey, who intended to play an important role in the development of the relations between the two nations, attracted the attention of the world, and was supported by the United Nations.

On 31 July 1957, a letter of thanks was sent to President Celal Bayar by István Fáy, the president of the Hungarian Liberation Society, which operated in Argentina. In this letter, István Fáy stated that the great sympathy and aid given to Hungary by the Turkish government and the Turkish nation during the resistance of the Hungarian people against the Soviet Union, was a source of consolation for the people in difficulties and therefore they were grateful to Turkey (PMRA, Code: 30. 1. 0.0; Place No: 41.244. 21.). It is revealed from this letter that Turkey gave Hungarians all the help it could during the revolution and provided material and immaterial supports as well.

After the revolution, commercial relations between Turkey and Hungary resumed and some activities were carried out by the Turkish government. In this context, with the article published in the *Official Gazette* on 17 August 1957, additions were made to the existing foreign trade regime regarding the goods to be imported from Hungary and the loans for the goods to be purchased were redefined (Official Gazette 26 October 1957, 9742: 18078). The regulation shows that both the commercial life in Hungary returned to normal and commercial relations with Turkey and Hungary were resuming from where they were left.

On 10 April 1959 the *Heti Hírmondó* reported that President of the Turkish Republic Celal Bayar sent greetings for Hungary's national holiday on the commemoration of Liberation Day (4 April), the date Hungary was occupied by the Soviet Union (Heti Hírmondó 10 April 1959, 3/15/: 2). Like the resumption of commercial relations with Hungarians after the revolution, it was seen that Hungarian professionals had also started to arrive in Turkey again and they were assigned to various institutions. For example, Artúr Stern, one of the Hungarian medical professionals, was assigned to Ankara Hospital on 5 September 1959 (PMRA, Code: 30. 18. 1.2; Place No: 153. 51. 5.). Likewise, with a decision taken on 20 January 1960, M.Sc. Mihály Búza was assigned under the command of the General Directorate of Mineral Research and Exploration

to a so called "MTA". In March 1960 in Budapest, *Külkereskedelem* magazine reported that Hungarian-Turkish trade in goods was growing. Negotiations governing the 1960 trade in goods took place in Ankara between the Hungarian People's Republic and Turkey. As a result of the negotiations, a protocol regulating the trade of the two countries in 1960 was signed, which provides a way to increase the trade turnover of the two countries. Hungary mainly supplied chemicals, pharmaceuticals, various hardware and instruments to Turkey, where it mainly bought agricultural products, tobacco, cotton, leather, and citrus fruits. According to the advertisement on the last page of the magazine, the Hungarian KLM-MALÉV airlines connected **Budapest directly** to Istanbul by that time (Külkereskedelem March, 1960, 4(1–12): 23).

The 'softening' between the states that started in 1960, the last year of the DP, and which was a result of normalisation process in Turkish-Russian cooperation, positively affected the diplomatic relations of Hungary. With the missions raised to the embassy level on 8 September 1967, political relations were enhanced to a higher level and the relations were further improved (Çalik 2015: 41).

Conclusion

The Ottoman-Hungarian and then Turkish-Hungarian relations had a profound effect on the language, culture and history of both peoples. This close relationship and mutual sympathy was also manifested when before the proclamation of the Turkish Republic a struggle for independence was fought in Turkey and the Republic was declared after a difficult period. Especially strong connections were established in the field of diplomacy and finance, which brought the two nations closer together in the cultural field as well.

This situation has continued increasingly since the proclamation of the Republic which was accordingly the establishment of the new Turkish state. One of the countries where the Turkish Republic established its first embassy was Hungary. However, until 1960 Turkey was not represented at the ministerial level in Hungary, but only as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary. With the appointment of the first envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Hungary in 1926, commercial agreements were made immediately between the two countries, and Turkey started to both export to and import from Hungary. It is necessary to highlight the import activity in the field of animal husbandry.

In the first years of the Republic, governmental visits were made at the highest level in order to further develop relations between the two countries, especially diplomacy and trade. First, the Hungarian president visited Turkey and then the Turkish prime minister went to Hungary. During both visits, various agreements were made in the field of trade and politics. Meanwhile, Hungary joined the war alongside the Axis countries, but Turkey chose not to.

This situation, however, did not harm the relations between the two countries, and Turkey and Hungary continued their friendly relations.

During the Democratic Party era revolutionary innovations were made in several fields in Turkey and numerous official structures were established. In these new institutions, especially foreign professionals were employed and among them a remarkably large number of Hungarians.

In Turkey, there was a power change in 1950 with the DP coming to power after 27 years of single party rule. In this new era there were some alterations in Turkish foreign policy. The Turkish Republic, which is a member of many international organisations, most notably NATO, continued its good relations with Hungary. As in the first periods of the Republic, commercial, political and social cooperation with the Hungarian government were further developed in the DP era. Hungarian academics appointed to engineering and medical faculties of universities in Istanbul, made serious contributions to the advancement of these universities. In addition, Hungarian lecturers working in the field of Turkish Language and Literature in the Faculty contributed scientifically to revealing the origin of the Turkish language with their research.

The terms of the commercial agreements made with Hungary in the first years of the Republic were extended during the DP period and new agreements were made in addition to these. This situation continued until 1956. However, due to the revolution in Hungary in 1956, commercial relations had to be suspended for a short time. The Hungarian people, who experienced difficult times due to the Soviet Union, had serious problems in foreign policy in this period, and despite the fact that there were no conflicts of interest between them, cooperation had to be suspended with Turkey under Soviet pressure. During the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 the Turkish people and the Turkish government expressed their solidarity with and supported Hungarian people.

During the Hungarian Revolution, letters of thanks were written to the Turkish government and people for the support given. Relief associations operating for Hungarian freedom fighters, especially in Germany, Argentina and other countries, wrote letters to both President Celal Bayar and Prime Minister Adnan Menderes in order to express their gratitude for the assistance. In addition, official letters of thanks were sent to Turkey by the United Nations for helping the Hungarians. These documents in the Presidential Republic Archive can be considered proof of the support given to the Hungarian people by Turkey.

After 1956 many people had to flee their homeland or were exiled. Following this process closely, the Turkish Republic opened its gates to many Hungarian refugees and hosted them in Istanbul. Aid campaigns were initiated by the Turkish Red Crescent and non-governmental organisations for the refugees who were placed in camps established in various parts of Istanbul, and all the needs of the refugees were met during their stay in Turkey.

With the end of the revolution in Hungary, official relations between the Turkish and Hungarian governments were restarted and various agreements were made to normalise relations, particularly trade. Inter-state relations especially improved in 1960, the last year of the DP government, due to the political conjectural situation in the world, and stable political relations were established between Turkey and the Soviet Union, which positively affected the cooperation between Turkey and Hungary. Relations based on mutual respect and friendship between the two countries continues to this day.

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Bush's 'Beyond Containment' strategy toward the Eastern Bloc in 1989 within the US Foreign Policy context [1]

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Abstract: *This paper explores the foreign policy of US President George H. W. Bush and his administration towards the Soviet Union and the other countries of the Warsaw Pact. The article also focuses on two historically significant American foreign policy strategies that were implemented during the earlier years of the Cold War: containment and détente. The rapidly changing international environment and Bush's Beyond Containment policy which, aimed to respond to these changes, became the basis for the following research questions: 1) How did American conception of foreign policy approach to Eastern Bloc countries such as Hungary or Poland change under the Bush administration in 1989 in comparison to the period of implementation of the containment or détente? 2) How did the American perception of the retreating Soviet power within the bipolar international structure affect American diplomatic relations with the Eastern European governments? The aim of the paper is to put Bush's foreign policy in his first year in office in the American 'Cold War' foreign policy context and to compare the classical American political strategies with Bush's foreign policy in 1989.*

Keywords: ***George H. W. Bush, U. S: Foreign Policy, Eastern Bloc, Beyond Containment, Containment, Détente***

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Introduction

On December 31, 1989, George Bush wrote: '*It's been some year – a fascinating year of change. I end the year with more confidence*' (Bush 1999: 451). The role of US President George H. W. Bush and the foreign policy of his administration in the revolutionary events in Eastern and Central Europe in 1989 is often overlooked by both scholars and society at large. Far more attention is paid to his predecessor in the position of US President Ronald Reagan, or to the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, in the analysis of the fall of communist regimes. However, the Bush presidency (1989–1993) should not be neglected. It was Bush who led the United States at the time when the Eastern Bloc and the entire Soviet Union was disintegrating. Henry Kissinger even subsequently described Bush's presidency as *'the most tumultuous four years since Truman's reign'* (Meacham 2015: 354).

The geopolitical development during the Bush presidency was markedly different from the previous more than forty post-war years which were characterised by a clear bipolar structure of the world order of the two rival powers during the Cold War. Back in the second half of the 1970s, shortly after Henry Kissinger's resignation as Secretary of State and the gradual retardation of détente policy in US-Soviet relations, Corin Bell (1977: 27) described the West's hopes for the Cold War development as follows: *'An optimistic American vision of the Cold War would assume that the USSR could weaken as a political power, allowing Eastern Europe to regain its autonomy, and end the military threat and possibility of Soviet influence expansion overseas'.* She herself considered these hopes to be *'highly unrealistic*' (Bell 1977: 27).

However, during the Bush presidency, the original bipolar order completely disintegrated, optimistic visions of the West began to come true and the United States was heading for the dream of 'a unipolar moment in its history'. Bush became president in January 1989, at a time when the change in the Soviet perception of its foreign policy and Gorbachev's rejection of Brezhnev's doctrine significantly affected the countries of Eastern Europe. The gradual loosening of Soviet oversight of its 'satellite countries' led to the fall of the communist regimes in those countries and the eventual fall of the 'Iron Curtain' in 1989. The second superpower of the bipolar structure, the United States, sought to respond to these rapid changes overseas.

This paper focuses on the newly created American foreign policy, called 'Beyond Containment', as introduced by President Bush in the first half of 1989. The paper deals with the development of Bush policy towards the rapidly changing situation in the Warsaw Pact countries, especially in Hungary and Poland. The research goal of the paper is a comparative analysis of the ideological shift in American foreign policy in the form of the newly created foreign policy concept

of the Bush administration in comparison with previous important concepts of American foreign policy – the strategy of containment and détente.

Of course, it is not our intention here to shed light on all theories of American foreign policy approach to the Soviet Union, but to focus only on the fundamental points of those concepts that played a crucial role in creating the American position towards the Eastern Bloc. George F. Kennan's containment policy that provided the fundaments of Bush's later strategy and the policy of détente, which was promoted by the United States, especially during Henry Kissinger's tenure as National Security Adviser and then Secretary of State, was chosen for comparison. On the contrary, the paper omits Cold War strategies that, despite their undeniable importance, did not settle into American foreign policy discourse to a significant extent.[2]

American post-war foreign policy concepts

The strategy of containment

> *'The question is whether to think of the world as a deadly struggle between those who call themselves communists and those who do not. This fight could eventually lead to the complete destruction of one or both'* (Kennan 1964: 41).

The most successful American post-war foreign policy theory in terms of its later implementation in real politics has proven to be the policy of containment. This foreign policy strategy, based on the post-war views of George F. Kennan, then an employee of the US Embassy in Moscow, became a fundamental pillar of US foreign policy toward communist countries in the following decades and was also strongly embedded in the Truman Doctrine. However, Kennan's work, which was based on a historical approach together with an elaborate realistic perspective following the ideas of Hans J. Morgenthau, had to, as well as later strategies, react to current world events, and not only be fixed to its own ideological base (Blažek – Pšeja 2005: 36).

Given the danger represented by the Soviet Union at the time, the basic principle of this strategy was containment of Soviet foreign expansionism which would cause the structural problems of this empire to turn inwards into the Soviet system resulting in provoking possible changes within the Soviet Union itself (Guzzini 2004: 70). In his strategy, Kennan perceived the USSR foreign policy as a patient and pragmatic form of power policy that does not follow ethical norms and has no respect for international law (Guzzini 2004: 72). He further argued that the United States was seen as an imperialist power

2 For example, Johnson's 'Building Bridges' strategy.

from the Soviet perspective, and that seen from the inside of the Soviet Union, confrontation was inevitable. He said the United States had to prepare for this inevitability by putting its containment strategy into practice. Kennan (1951: 119): *'We must have a policy of resolute containment that is designed so that the Russians, wherever they tend to disrupt the interests of a peaceful and stable world, face steadfast counter-pressure'.*

As a self-proclaimed realist, Kennan obviously also focused on the question of balance of power. In the case of Soviet expansion into other countries, he recommended creating pressure that would elicit a change in the internal policy of the Soviet Union and, at the same time, help the United States to establish a stable balance of power. According to him, the Soviets were more willing to retreat on individual parts of the diplomatic front in this case, but only if they felt that the diplomatic pressure was too strong (Kennan 1951: 118–119). On the contrary, he recommended American restraint in areas that were already definitely a territory of Soviet security interests for him. The ultimate goal was to bring about changes in the Soviet perception of international relations that would be more beneficial to the United States (Guzzini 2004: 73). What was therefore a significant factor in foreign policy toward the USSR was a policy that is pragmatic and protects American inviolable spheres of influence.

Kennan's concept was introduced at a time of significant post-war changes in American politics and was linked to the beginning of the Cold War. Truman's fear that the Soviet Union might attempt an early attack on the United States led him to believe that Kennan's containment strategy needed to be put into practice through what later became known as the 'Truman Doctrine'. However, after the Eisenhower administration took office in 1953, many concepts of this doctrine were criticised. In particular, the then-Secretary of State John Foster Dulles considered the containment too moderate and generally proposed a more forceful approach to communist countries.

Although the focus of the containment strategy lay primarily on the relationship with the Soviet Union, Kennan also touched on the issue of Central and Eastern Europe in his deliberations. Here, too, he followed his realistic view, when, despite his opposition to the Stalinist system, he considered the actions of the Soviet Union in Central Europe to be logical, because according to him, the USSR only legitimately sought to secure its position and its own security in the international system (Hanuš 2015: 157–159). It was this premise that was unacceptable to Dulles. According to him, the United States should not automatically accept Eastern Europe as a territory of Soviet influence but seek a policy of 'liberation of captured countries'. Kennan, on the other hand, considered the most dangerous moment for world security to be the possible weakening influence of the Soviets on their satellites in Europe, which could lead Soviet leaders to a desperate reaction (Hanuš 2015: 157–159). In the following periods, containment retained its unquestionable influence, even though

Kennan himself saw the Soviet-Chinese rift, as evidence of the invalidation of his original concept.[3]

Efforts to replace the policy of containment and the search for new approaches in relation to the USSR

Although the bipolar post-war international system was rather rigid and essentially unchanged, especially the growth of Soviet military power and the associated greater geopolitical demands of the Soviets gradually forced Americans to seek new strategic approaches to their main challenger and overcome the policy of containment. This effort was most pronounced in the context of the détente policy. Nixon's presidency (1969–1974) marked a significant foreign policy milestone, which also significantly affected US-Soviet relations.

In addition to the already mentioned impact of the growth of the Soviet armed forces and the American economic difficulties, it is necessary to mention two other topics that contributed to the enforcement of the détente policy – American participation in the Vietnam War and the Sino-Soviet split. The military presence in Vietnam had decreased the number of usable US forces in order to carry out firm containment, and therefore has been one of the reasons for modifying this strategy. By contrast, China's disputes with the Soviet Union, especially in the border areas of those countries, forced both communist powers to turn to the long-hated United States and agree to a process of easing tensions with the West. It is therefore obvious that emergence of the containment strategy thus took place under completely different geopolitical conditions than détente. Now the Soviets claimed that *'the United States and the USSR have a common goal, to stop Chinese expansion'* (Ferguson 2015: 736).

In this constellation, and at a time when the Soviet Union had essentially managed to achieve a strategic balance with the West, the then-National Security Adviser and later Secretary of State Henry Kissinger became determinated to pursue a policy of détente. As the name of this strategy suggests, the main feature was the effort to replace the current confrontational style in relation to the Soviets with mutual cooperation and greater involvement of the USSR in political and economic ties with the West. Efforts to improve US-Soviet relations could already be seen during Lyndon Johnson's previous government as part of his 'Building Bridges' strategy. However, it had never achieved the success of the détente policy. In essence, Kissinger suggested that the United States be willing to accept the USSR as an equal international player in exchange for some moderation of aggressive Soviet foreign policy and then use this balance to its advantage (Guzzini 2004: 113).

3 He considered this rift to be proof that the communist movement was no longer united and its strategy no longer needed to be applied (Suchý 2005: 59).

Given the fact that the forces of the two great powers were almost equal in terms of military readiness, in Kissinger's view it was no longer possible to continue to sharpen mutual US-Soviet relations. On the contrary, it was necessary to move towards reducing political tensions. So Kissinger, like Kennan before, relied heavily on the concept of power balance. He also connected with Kennan in that he, unlike the conservative wing of the Republican Party, refused to demonise the Soviet Union. He held on to the opinion that although there would be no reconciliation between the two great powers in the near future, the Soviet Union did not intend to attack the United States militarily, and it was therefore possible to make mutual concessions (Kissinger 1997: 795).

Although containment strategy and détente are considered to be realistic theories, several contradictions can be found. Above all, it is necessary to emphasise Kissinger's milder view of negotiations with the Soviet Union, as well as partial confidence that cooperation with the Soviets is possible and desirable in view of the then world order. However, it is not possible to separate the two strategies, because détente also has its ideological roots partially in Kennan's strategy. The common features of both theories were, in particular, the presence of de-ideologisation, the concept of containment of Soviet expansive tendencies, but also an attempt to partially pacify the Soviet Union, without using the concept of reconciliation (Guzzini 2004: 126).[4]

In real politics, for example, this policy has been reflected in negotiations on the Strategic Arms Limitation (SALT). According to many, the SALT agreement has become the most prominent point of the détente policy (Litera et al. 2000: 506). What no less marked the international scene during the Kissinger strategy was the so-called 'Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe', which subsequently acted in the following years as a means of pressure from the United States on the Soviet Union, especially in the field of human rights, and is considered to be an important element in reducing tensions during this phase of the Cold War. This act enabled the West to criticise the actions of the Soviet leadership in relation to Soviet and Eastern European citizens when the USSR in the following years often did not follow the resolutions of this act.

According to many experts, détente became the culmination of the policy of containment and took over as the new most important American foreign policy strategy (Guzzini 2004: 126). Although it later faced criticism for giving way back to Soviet demands, it happened to be the least hostile period between the two superpowers since the end of World War II during Nixon's tenure (Litera et al. 2000: 507). Détente, which developed during Nixon's reign under the leadership of Henry Kissinger, was not abandoned even after the

4 Kissinger (1982: 241–242) described the connection of his policy to the containment as follows: ‚A détente policy is dangerous if it does not include a strategy of containment, but containment is unsustainable if it is not linked to a vision of peace'. Peace was, in his eyes, connected precisely with the effects of the détente.

resignation of the president in 1974. His successor Gerald Ford, although he despised the word détente itself, continued to support the most important features of the policy.[5]

The end of Reagan's term and the dawn of Bush's administration

At the time of his inauguration, George H. W. Bush was well informed of the Soviet political changes in the policy of Perestroika and Glasnost, as he had participated several times directly in previous negotiations between Reagan and Gorbachev as Vice President. The last summit of the two presidents on Governors Island in December 1988, shortly before Bush took office, was particularly important to him. Here, Bush, although still only in the position of 'President Elect', already played a dominant role and Reagan was rather a passive participant. The importance of the meeting was increased by the fact that Gorbachev delivered his famous speech at the UN before the summit. Gorbachev, for example, announced the change of Soviet doctrine which had become rather defensive (C-Span 1988).[6]

Gorbachev's statements before the summit were ground-breaking for the Cold War rhetoric and could be seen as a significant step towards the US-Soviet agreements that the Soviets wanted to finish with the new US administration. Bush believed that if Gorbachev did live up to his promise, he could begin political talks leading to a more stable international environment (Sununu 2015: 94). At the same time, Gorbachev's emphasis on announcing the threat of force no longer playing an important role in the international environment was understood in such a way that the Eastern Bloc countries could decide the direction of their 'reconstruction' themselves without any pressure from Moscow (Engel 2017: 65). This belief subsequently played an important role in shaping the American foreign policy towards Hungary and Poland.

Although Bush, as Vice President of the previous government, was expected to follow the foreign policy of the Reagan administration, his actions began to take a different path from Reagan's approach. From the beginning of his candidacy, Bush was disappointed that his policy was widely assumed to be a mere clone of Reagan's policy. He therefore set himself the goal of creating his own identity and defining himself against the previous policy while keeping in mind that Reagan and his policy should not be discarded in any way. Above all, the newly elected president believed that Reagan had become too trusting of Gor-

5 According to Kissinger himself, the détente was ended only by Reagan's rhetoric in his first term of office (Kissinger 1997: 802).

6 Gorbachev also opposed arms races or reported a reduction in the number of Soviet troops in other Warsaw Pact countries (Gorbachev 2014: 406–407). This reduction included the promise of the early withdrawal of fifty thousand soldiers and five thousand tanks from East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Hungary (Sebestyen 2011: 245).

bachev and had put all faith in change of the Soviet Union into him, which he considered to be wrong and dangerous (Engel 2017: 48). In the domestic policy, Bush's policies were greatly influenced by the country's economic situation, which he inherited from the Reagan administration. Low taxes coupled with Reagan's economic policy and enormous military spending had put significant pressure on the US budget deficit. Economic problems subsequently manifested themselves in policy towards the Eastern Bloc and in insufficient financial assistance to democratizing countries.[7]

When Bush took office, he was clear about the many challenges his administration would have to face in foreign policy. However, the turbulent times eventually somehow shifted priorities, and so the main problems of Bush's foreign policy were the events in China (especially the situation after the military intervention in Tiananmen Square), Latin America (especially in Central America--Panama and Nicaragua), the Soviet Union/ Eastern Europe and the Gulf War. But Bush was sure of what he wanted to do in office. In his inaugural speech, he stated that *'freedom works… we know how to ensure a prosperous life for man: through the free market, freedom of speech and a free choice' (*Engel 2017: 72). For him, a possible triumph in the Cold War meant the victory of democracy over all other systems and was thus the central goal of his foreign policy.

National Security Policy Review

In the first months of Bush's presidency, a typical question for the new president was when the administration would determine a major initiative to set the direction for US policy on the Eastern Bloc. Bush's response then mostly turned to the need to rethink foreign policy toward the Soviet Union, which he said needed more time and patience.

After several weeks of considering the situation and under the influence of his colleagues, the new president decided on the 15th of February to draw up a summary of foreign policy towards the USSR with a possible outlook for the future. Bush had his subordinates draft a National Security Review which was primarily intended to answer questions that would determine his policy toward the Soviets. Brent Scowcroft and his team were mainly responsible for the elaboration. The aim of the report was to seek answers to the question of the likelihood of success of Gorbachev's changes – should we continue to count on Gorbachev, or will he be overthrown by conservative circles in the leadership of the Soviet Union?

It was still a popular opinion in the administration that Gorbachev was acting in order to restore the strength of the Soviet economy and army and, consequently, to attempt to take global dominance. These fears led the admin-

7 In addition, Bush faced the most unanimous opposition of all 20th-century American presidents in Congress, which inevitably led him to replace Reagan's confrontational policy toward Democrats with a policy of bipartism.

istration to refuse to make cuts in military spending, which, according to the Americans, could be taken advantage of by the Soviet Union. Although the US president was criticised for his restraint during this period, which was sometimes presented to the media as a sign of weakness, Bush saw the more positive side of his policies. He defended his policy as a negotiation from a position of power while considering the USSR as a weakening power that can only wait for American initiatives (Greene 2000: 91).

The National Security Review (NSR), which was completed in mid-March, in a way confirmed with the final wording of the document the criticism that Bush received in the first months from the media or the opposition for his reactionary approach to events behind the 'Iron Curtain'.[8] Secretary of State Baker, who wanted to see a more active role for the United States in the Eastern Bloc, criticised the report as weak, and US Ambassador to Moscow Jack Matlock described the main message of the report as *'do nothing, stand where you are'* (Engel 2017: 133, Green 2000: 90).

Due to his restraint, Bush subsequently came under pressure from his allies. For example, Canadian Prime Minister Mulroney told Bush personally that he was highly critical of the US position: *'The Russians have withdrawn from Afghanistan, making unilateral restrictions in Eastern Europe. The United States must take the initiative, or the Soviets will gain a strategic advantage'* (Engel 2017: 98). Bush eventually agreed with this view, but at the same time understood from the results of the NSR report that his colleagues, including National Security Council staff, are more sceptical of Gorbachev and his plans than himself, and claimed that a rapid response to his actions could jeopardise not only security of the US, but also their allies (Sununu 2015: 95).

It was clear, however, that the Bush administration was yet been interested in taking the initiative in talks with the Soviets and taking full advantage of the opportunities offered by the newly formed Soviet foreign policy. Henry Kissinger himself was a critical voice on cautious policy in the Bush advisory team. Given his political and academic background, it was no surprise that in those days he sought to emphasise the need for a 'big strategy' for US foreign policy (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 26). At the time, however, members of the US administration continued to care essentially only about the status quo and its protection in relations with the Soviets and the Eastern bloc.

The main points of the NSR report were the recommendation that the administration should do everything to succeed on the domestic scene and thus strengthen the American image abroad. In the field of foreign policy, the report proposed further support of alliance ties within NATO and emphasise its de-

8 Garthoff (1994: 380) described the report as follows: *'The result that emerged from the NSR was, in fact, still embarrassingly narrowly profiled in terms of relations with the Soviet Union and possible American initiatives'.*

terrent nature, preparations for negotiations on the START agreement or improvement of the relations with the Eastern Bloc through economic agreements (Bush – Scowcroft 1999: 40). One of the reasons for choosing a more cautious approach was the fear that excessive changes and American support for such changes could result in Gorbachev's unseat by the conservatives in the USSR. The success of perestroika was evaluated by American experts at 50/50 and they differed greatly on what would happen next in the Soviet Union (Engel 2017: 133). Of course, these reports did not help Bush in any way to find the promised invention in bilateral relations, and only underscored the widespread criticism of the new administration's inaction at the time.

Although the Soviet Union's approach to its 'satellites' was undergoing unprecedented changes, US policy under Bush remained strategically cautious in the first months, building on earlier US Cold War concepts. The NSC still included American policy as part of its containment policy. This meant, above all, promoting American interests, not giving in to the Soviet Union and gaining clear support from Germany for the NATO policy (Ehler 2006: 16). The problem for Bush was that this cautious policy toward the Soviet Union also became criticised within the Republican Party, especially in the Conservative wing of the party which believed that Bush was not making sufficient use of the current Soviet weakness (Greene 2000: 92). It was the Conservatives and the far-right wing of the GOP that had previously criticised all concepts that sought to establish better diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, especially in the case of Kissinger's détente. A partial change in this approach took place during the second term of office of President Reagan, who was able to defend his open policy towards the USSR from the Conservatives. These Conservatives now expected the same from Bush.

Gorbachev was therefore rather sceptical about Bush's first months in office. He wanted to return to the previous US-Soviet détente policy, and at first Bush's cautious approach made him more nervous. He subsequently stated that he was surprised by a 'pause' (Greene 2000: 91). The fact that the new American political representation did not initially know how far it should go in the negotiations is evidenced by the fact that the administration also expressed the opinion that American policy should focus on changing the behaviour of Soviets not only abroad due to Soviet economic problems, but also within the Soviet system itself (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 41). That was the opposite view from what the NSC originally had, and such an approach would then mean a significant shift away from classical American foreign policy concepts during the Cold War, especially the already-mentioned Kennan's containment policy. Although these proposals were not initially accepted by the administration, they soon became one of the foundations of American 'Beyond Containment' policy.

Bush, like many analysts, was deeply dissatisfied with the conclusions of the original NSR report and instructed Scowcroft to draw up further, more detailed

reports. From this initiative, a new report NIE 11–4–89[9] emerged, which was already more detailed and was more optimistic about Soviet action (Sebestyen 2011: 260). Among other things, a National Security Directive 23 (NSD 23) report was issued in March, directly commenting on the approach to containment policy, which led to George Bush's May speech at the University of Texas (Bush 2009: 34). The report argued that the policy of containment had never really ended, and that perhaps only now was the time to move through containment to an active US policy that would help integrate the USSR into the international system (Beschloss 1993: 24–26, 33–34, 43–45). This report represented a significant shift in the US side's perception of Soviet political change, with the proposed strategy not only going beyond the policy of containment, but its message pushing the cooperation between the two powers even further than the détente policy.

Gorbachev still believed that his proposals would make Bush's actions clearer (Wilson Centre 1988).[10] Thus, although it initially seemed that Gorbachev's concessions offered in his speech to the United Nations would not be enough to change Bush's vigilance on mutual relations, they ultimately helped American foreign policy toward the USSR take the direction of a greater willingness and confidence in the then Soviet leadership. The main lesson from the 'pause' was that the United States had to be more active in its own initiatives, in supporting reforms in Eastern Europe and in pushing the withdrawal of Soviet troops from other Warsaw Pact countries (Bush – Scowcroft, 1998: 43). At the same time, over time, it became clear that under the influence of these reports, in relation to the USSR, Bush's goal was the Soviet renunciation of Brezhnev's doctrine, the plurality of Eastern European communities and the liberalisation of the economies of the Eastern bloc countries (Ehler 2006: 19).

University speeches and change of style

After a long pause in the new US administration's activities toward the Eastern Bloc, when American politics began to appear to shift from Reagan's active foreign policy back to isolationism, a series of Bush's speeches at American universities set the course of new US foreign policy priorities. Each speech aimed at a different foreign policy theme. Bush gradually announced policies towards Eastern Europe, Western Europe, the Soviet Union and finally disarmament negotiations. Although these speeches were again somewhat cautious and measured in their content, they were able to name what the new administration had as its goals in the field of foreign policy.

9 Soviet Policy Toward the West: The Gorbachev Challenge. The National Security Archive [online]. USA, 1989 [2019-04-23]. Available from: https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB261/us11.pdf.

10 Gorbachev's proposals included the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the Soviet-Chinese border, a 20 percent reduction in Soviet nuclear weapons in Europe and a 14 % reduction in the military budget.

Just before the speeches at universities, Bush revealed his new vision of foreign policy in mid-April 1989 in Hamtramck in a speech to local citizens. This speech was particularly important for the reform movement in Eastern Europe. Hamtramck was chosen because of its large Polish minority, and Bush's goal was to clarify the strategy for the Eastern Bloc countries, especially Poland, and to appreciate Jaruzelski's approach to reform. In this speech, Bush announced America's willingness to support Poland's efforts to liberalise politics and the economy.[11]

Gorbachev also wanted to support the US government's more accommodating policy towards the Eastern Bloc when he offered to remove 500 tactical nuclear weapons from Eastern Europe during Baker's visit to Moscow, sparking controversy within the US administration (Garthoff 1994: 378). For the sceptical Scowcroft, it was a gesture aimed primarily at creating a division within NATO and strengthening those who wanted to declare the Cold War over. While for other members of the administration, it was just more proof that Gorbachev's proposals should be taken seriously and that the Americans should take serious action (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 133).

Announcement of the Beyond Containment Policy

Following Gorbachev's actions, Bush subsequently decided to uncover the results of the promised NSR report in a speech at Texas A & M University in May 1989. The main vision of this speech was to move beyond containment towards a broader access to the USSR. According to Sununu, the main goal of this strategy was to show the Soviets that they had the full support of the United States to continue reforms (Sununu 2015: 108). Bush's speech showed a friendlier face in the newly formulated approach to the Soviet Union than many feared. One of the goals was to move from the old Cold War policy, represented mainly by arms control talks, to a broader concept of relations that would lead to peace between the two countries. The content of the newly formulated strategy was hence clearly revolutionary within the American Cold War approaches.

At the beginning of the speech, Bush spoke at length about the policy of containment itself, praising Kennan and President Truman, and addressing its impact on US-Soviet relations: *'Containment has worked and it worked because democratic principles, institutions and values are right and always have been. It worked because our alliances are and have been strong, and because the dominance of a free society and a free market is triumphing over stagnant socialism. This is undeniable' (*Bush 2009: 34). Subsequently, Bush also focused on the principles of how this policy should be transformed in the American way, in the situation of

11 For example, the then American administration planned to help liberalisation by proposing to the Allies that they reorganise Polish debts and support loans to Poland from international institutions (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 51).

large-scale and accelerated changes in the world at the time. The positive views on Kennan's strategy prevailed across the Bush administration. Scowcroft, who helped create the new concept, considered Kennan's original containment tactics to be a strategy that had succeeded *'above all expectations'*, but now needed to be moved further (Engel 2017: 134). Opinions on the permanence of the Kennan strategy, however, differed within the Bush administration. For example, the then-Secretary of Defense Cheney remained cautious. He argued that containment itself still made sense, and that the Soviets had not changed enough to guide its pleasing actions in US defence policy (Engel 2017: 137).

But Bush himself no longer shared Cheney's scepticism. In his speech, he announced that it was no longer the main goal of the US to curb communism, but instead, America intended to help accept the Soviet Union into the community of nations (Sununu 2015: 107, Bush 2009: 34–35). According to Bush, Moscow should have shown more sincerity in their actions and work together on regional conflicts in the world to be welcomed in a new world order (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 53). As part of the 'beyond containment' policy, Bush also called on the USSR to take constructive steps, especially in the area of limiting conventional forces in Eastern Europe, which the United States might follow up with its concessions (Sununu 201: 108). Bush's speech also mentioned the call for the Soviets to be more open and accountable to the international community.

However, the basis remained to continue and, at best, to multiply the positive steps of recent months. The Americans were primarily concerned with the reduction of the number of Soviet troops in Eastern Europe and ceasing Soviet support for communist forces in Latin America. Subsequent speeches[12], although partially different, carried a similar basic message – Bush welcomed the changes taking place in the USSR and at the same time called for a reduction in the number of troops in Europe. He also addressed nuclear weapons, stressing that the United States wants to keep nuclear weapons just as a deterrent, but also mentioning that it will seek to reduce the number of nuclear weapons in order to help *'stable world peace'* (Sununu 2015: 108). In the field of nuclear weapons, Bush was a smooth follow-up to earlier American concepts, including détente policy, which considered nuclear weapons to be a means of deterrence rather than an offensive weapon.

In his speeches, the American president further focused on the fact that even though the reforms in the Soviet Union are significant, the change is far from complete and it is therefore necessary to continue working to reduce the militarisation of Europe. Therefore, in his closing talk on arms control and disarmament, Bush presented his goal of reducing the threat of war in Europe. According to him, this could be achieved if Gorbachev kept his promises to unilaterally reduce conventional forces and turned the Warsaw Pact strategy into

12 On 21st May at Boston University and on 24th May on Coast Guard Academy in Connecticut.

a defensive alliance (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 55). At the same time, Bush called on him to do so.[13] According to Scowcroft, the United States had thus moved from the old patterns of arms control to a dialogue that was to bring peace to the world (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 56).

'Beyond containment' thus became the key to Bush's policy, which no longer included only arms reduction negotiations with the Soviet Union, but also focused on supporting reform efforts in the Warsaw Pact countries. Bush had decided to approach these states individually, with the countries where the most rapid political or economic reforms deserved the most support (Sununu 2015: 101). However, according to Bush, it still had to be a proportionate and prudent support that would not provoke the possibility of violent clashes. Bush soon received a response from Gorbachev to his speeches when the Soviet leader accepted the vision of the Soviet Union as an integrated entity in the international community in his speech in Strasbourg and also came up with the idea of the Common European House and rejected the Cold War concepts that, according to him, had transformed Europe into an arena of confrontation (Sununu 2015: 108–109). Gorbachev's conciliatory approach subsequently helped Bush to present his new policy to the Eastern Bloc in his speeches on visits to Poland and Hungary.

Bush's plan in the first months of the presidency was certainly not to approach Reagan's hard position in his early years in office, but at the same time to be far more cautious about Soviet action than Reagan was in his second term (Greene 2000: 90), especially when it came to the field of arms control. The above-described long-standing American distrust of Soviet action caused by forty years of Cold War and fears of the speed of change in Eastern Europe were subsequently expressed in a moderate version, even during Bush's subsequent visits to the Eastern Bloc.

Official visit to Poland and Hungary

Throughout 1989, Moscow gave political freedom to the changes taking place in the Eastern Bloc, and this initiative was taken up mainly by Poland and Hungary. The shift in the perception of these countries by the American administration can be best illustrated precisely in the case of Bush's visit to Warsaw and Budapest. What Kennan wrote in 1964 about socialist countries, namely that discipline and unity were of key importance to the development of Marxist socialism, and that it was necessary for Eastern European countries to blindly obey orders from Moscow, was now obsolete (Kennan 1964: 38). Throughout May and June 1989, the borders between Hungary and Austria gradually began to open, followed by partially free elections in Poland won by Solidarity.

13 The implementation of the new US government strategy can be considered, for example, the NATO Declaration of May 1990, which proclaimed the goal of easing economic restrictions on the USSR, offering financial assistance and allowing membership in international institutions (Ehler 2006: 88).

Hungary and Poland thus became the most prominent aspirants for George Bush's first official presidential visit in the Eastern Bloc countries[14]. A clear indication of how the US view of Soviet influence within the Warsaw Pact countries had shifted since the first months of Bush's presidency was that Bush began to believe that these changes would cause a reassessment of typical US Cold War policy priorities from arms control to new concepts focused primarily on promoting change in the Eastern Bloc countries (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 38). At that time, the American president already believed that Poland could be at the forefront of these reform tendencies. Among the steps that the American president appreciated in the Polish communist leadership was, for example, Jaruzelski's decision, which led to the legalisation of Solidarity. Although Bush was enthusiastic about the changes taking place in Poland, he was also aware of the economic problems in the country and feared that a poorly structured and inefficient economy could collapse (Bush 1999: 432). Despite his internal doubts, however, when visiting the Eastern Bloc, he primarily wanted to show that the United States *'supports democracy, human rights, and a free economy'* (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 63).

The aim of this visit was therefore primarily to support the reform efforts of these countries, both rhetorically and by promising financial assistance as an incentive for further change. At that time, significant changes were taking place in Poland associated with the so-called round table negotiations.[15] In the case of Poland, the American president wanted to point out that progress cannot take place without significant political and economic liberalisation, and that aid from the West would come only if this liberalisation took place (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 51). At the same time, he did not want to encourage the revolutionary mood too much in his speeches with his rhetoric, as he feared that this could cause a possible intervention by the Soviet army. These fears accompanied Bush, despite Gorbachev's announcement that he did not intend to take any action against the changes taking place in Poland and Hungary.

Bush's meeting with Jaruzelski in Warsaw was so impressive that the American President subsequently supported Jaruzelski in the fight for the presidency in order to maintain stability. Surprisingly, Jaruzelski became the person who connected Gorbachev with Bush. Both leaders expressed support for his reform efforts. Bush's support for Jaruzelski was very surprising, especially from the American perspective. *'There was an American president sitting here who supported the Communist in his struggle for the presidency'* (Sununu 2015: 123). However, Bush's support for Jaruzelski's reforms had already been evident since his

14 The visit itself took place as a part of Bush's trip to Paris for a meeting of G-7 leaders where changes in the Eastern Bloc were to play an important role in joint discussions.

15 The result of these negotiations was, among other things, the approval of elections, which subsequently brought Solidarity a clear victory, which led to the appointment of the first non-communist prime minister in the Eastern Bloc (Wegs – Ladrech 2002: 244).

speech in Hamtramck, where he conditioned his financial support for Poland on the continuation of these reforms (Greene 2000: 96). For Bush, Jaruzelski was a *'force for stability'* that could protect Eastern Europe from the outbreak of anarchy (Sebestyen 2011: 293).

After visiting Poland and supporting Jaruzelski's reforms, Bush moved to another country that was making significant progress towards reforms – Hungary. Although the Hungarian reforms were not yet as high as in Poland, the desire for change was also visible among the local communists. During his speech in Budapest, Bush once again praised the local communist leaders and the changes they were making in Hungary and then, during the internal meeting, Bush revealed a financial offer for Hungary if it pursued a reform policy. Although, according to both the American and Hungarian sides, this offer was not enough, Bush could not afford to offer better financial assistance due to American budget problems.

After visiting the two Eastern Bloc countries, Bush and Baker realised that the key to political and economic liberalisation for Eastern and Central European countries was to support the reform process, not to oppose it (Garthoff 1994: 381). Scowcroft, who had long been sceptical, was the one who wrote in his memoirs about this insight: *'I realized that something significant was happening, something that could not be denied. Reforms now seemed inevitable'* (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 126). Bush subsequently pushed for economic aid to Poland and Hungary at the G-7 meeting in July 1989 with French support. However, there were still significant discrepancies within the US administration regarding the amount of financial support. For example, economic aid from the United States seemed insufficient to Scowcroft, and he considered the package to be politically weak.[16] However, the US Secretary of the Treasury Nicholas F. Brady spoke clearly against the increase in financial aid, when he declared: *'We can no longer throw state money into that bottomless pit'* (Sebestyen 2011: 294). Bush eventually came up with his own option, where Poland was to be provided with $ 1 billion, but where only $ 200 million came from the US budget and the rest from other states and institutions (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 140).

In his subsequent assessment of his stay in Poland and Hungary, Bush again focused on the need for caution: *'We entered Poland and Hungary cautiously, avoiding the anger of the Soviets, whose military presence is still present… I understand that the pressure on Gorbachev hardliners would otherwise rise again' (*Meacham 2015: 376). As for the most significant result of the visit, Bush considered it to be the decision that the United States had to start approaching the satellites more individually. In earlier years, the United States preferred those satellites

16 The US administration came up with a draft package that included postponing Poland's $ 39 billion debt and requesting another $ 325 million in new loans from the World Bank, while Poland requested $ 10 billion (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 114). Hungary received an even lower aid offer from the US – $ 25 million to support private enterprises and $ 5 million to support regions (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 124).

that showed the most independence from the USSR, which, for example, led to support for the Romanian regime. Now the main criterion was the speed of the process of liberalisation of the system.

Containment and Beyond Containment

The view of Kennan's strategy and its use in US foreign policy over the past 40 years has been relatively clear within the Bush administration. Already during the first meeting of the President with the expert group on Eastern Europe, it was generally accepted that the policy of containment was a successful policy that resulted in the then revolutionary events in Eastern Europe. One of Bush's most important foreign policy makers, Brent Scowcroft, argued that America's post-war policy toward Europe and the USSR was successful because Western Europe prospered while the Soviet Union was held back (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 42). But what the Bush administration said was further needed was to move beyond the containment policy and to expand relations with the Soviet Union. Secretary of State Baker agreed with Bush's view when, for example, he declared in 1989 that the United States now had a historic chance to move beyond the containment and find *'points of understanding'* while not succumbing to false optimism (Garthoff 1994: 187).

It was from this impulse that a policy called *'beyond containment'* arose. However, Baker's mention of not succumbing to false optimism remained ubiquitous in the administration. Scowcroft or Cheney, who perceived the Soviet Union as well as Kennan from Russia's historical perspective, from a realistic point of view and within Soviet expansionist tendencies, pressured the president to replace the optimism about the Soviets with caution. It was a pragmatic approach to the USSR that much of Bush's surroundings shared with Kennan.

Strategic approach to the countries of the Eastern Bloc

The changed international situation, created by the new approach of the Soviet leadership to its role on the international scene, was also reflected in the fact that under the Bush presidency, the United States began to take an active interest in countries that were the so-called Soviet satellites. This was in contrast to the actions of previous US administrations, which based their relationship with their main rival primarily on arms control issues, and their policy toward satellite countries remained rather marginal. It was unacceptable for Kennan himself for the United States to enter politically or militarily into the countries of the Eastern Bloc, which he had already attributed to the Soviet Union in his strategies (Gaddis 2012: 515). He called the situation in these countries as *'finality'* and recommended restraint to the American government in its approach to them (Hanuš 2015: 160).

Kennan went so far in his approach that even later, when martial law was declared in Poland in 1981, he advised the United States to fully respect this decision, as he considered it the right response by Moscow and Warsaw to its security concerns (Hanuš 2015: 161). According to him, it was absolutely unimaginable that US policy should be interested in the integral parts of the Soviet Union, which included the Baltic States. Nevertheless, during Bush's presidency, it was not just countries such as Hungary and Poland in 1989, but also Lithuania two years later that became the focus of American foreign policy.

It was Bush's trip to Poland and Hungary, including speeches to the locals, that was the most visible sign of a new relationship between the two great powers and the affirmation of a policy beyond containment. Bush no longer sought to prevent communist forces from moving further West, but instead encouraged liberal forces within the Warsaw Pact countries to take more progressive and liberal steps at the economic and political levels. However, he was also aware of the historical realities of the Cold War and the reality of earlier Soviet military interventions in Eastern Bloc countries that deviated from the course pursued by Moscow in their policies. For this reason, Bush's speeches and calls for Eastern European politicians were still rather cautious.

In relation to the liberalising countries of the Eastern Bloc, economic policy played an irreplaceable role in 1989. It was in the economic field that the governments of Hungary and Poland wished Bush to follow up on the results of Kennan's containment policy after World War II, which resulted in financial assistance under the so-called Marshall Plan. This policy, within the Truman Doctrine, based on Kennan's reasoning, aimed to provide strong economic support to help European countries rebuild their devastated national economies in the post-war period. Its primary strategic goal was to protect European countries from the communist takeover.

According to the representatives of Hungary and Poland, during the Bush era, similar financial assistance could avert the confusion after the transition of these countries from communist-led economies to a free-market economy and at the same time help liberal efforts to rebuild state institutions. However, Bush was in a situation where he was unable to meet such a commitment due to internal pressures from the US budget deficit and offered these countries significantly lower financial means than it was expected (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 48).

At the same time, this financial support was not uniform for all Eastern Bloc countries. During his first year in office, Bush decided to apply different benchmarks to various Eastern Bloc countries. While he supported more liberal regimes, he did not offer help to rigid communist regimes. It was the different relations with various countries under Soviet influence and the support of these countries in opposition to the way in which Soviet Union behaved internally and externally that Kennan saw in his time as a problematic but realistic scenario

for the West (Kennan 1964: 50–51). Nevertheless, Kennan argued that for the independence of Eastern European countries, it was necessary for the United States to show due respect for Soviet security interests (Hanuš 2015: 162). Bush, although in a much more welcoming international situation, was aware of this fact and tried to be as careful as possible during his visit to Eastern Europe precisely so as not to endanger Soviet security interests.

In the framework of the mentioned speeches, the American president, for instance, did not yet touch on the possibility of changing the membership in the military alliances of these countries and the withdrawal of Hungary and Poland from the Warsaw Pact, which subsequently took place two years later. On the contrary, as for most of his presidency, he based his actions on a premise similar to Kennan, and believed that gradual and limited goals towards the Soviets were more advantageous than hasty or revolutionary steps. This manifested itself not only in the visits to the Eastern Bloc, but also, for example, in urging Kohl's patience in German unification, in support of Gorbachev and his reforms, instead of Yeltsin's more radical approach, and subsequently in a cautious response to Soviet armed action against autonomous efforts in Lithuania.

Détente and Beyond Containment

The classic division within American foreign policy dividing the American politicians into a camp of isolationists and interventionists, of course, also touched on the tradition within the Republican Party. The original concepts associated with the conservative movement led by Robert Taft, which favoured post-war isolationism, gradually changed, after several of Taft's unsuccessful candidacies for the Republican nomination for president, and through the policy of easing tensions led by Kissinger and Nixon, the Republican Party's foreign policy finally shifted to a markedly proactive international policy under Ronald Reagan.

As part of this ideological division, we can include, among the isolationists in the Bush administration, for example, a group of experts within the National Security Council, headed by Brent Scowcroft, the Chief National Security Adviser. The aim of this group in the first months of the new administration's government was to persuade the president to pursue a cautious policy and not to interfere too much in what was happening in the Eastern Bloc. Foreign Minister Baker, on the other hand, held a much more proactive, and therefore interventionist, position. Above all, Bush tried to balance both principles when he tried to enter actively into international affairs through personal diplomacy, but at the same time, at certain stages of his presidency, he was somewhat passive, especially in relation to the USSR. This was mainly due to his need for a careful reassessment of the foreign strategy and the subsequent effort to avoid a decision that would cause either chaos or bloody repression by the Soviet side in Eastern Europe. Thus, especially in the first year of his tenure in the negotiations

with the Soviets, Bush's policy was more in line with Kennan's earlier concept, which was more reluctant to negotiate than to the détente policy.

However, the situation had changed since the Malta summit[17], and over the next two years, Bush was more in favour of Kissinger's original idea of the need for frequent diplomatic relations between the two countries. It should also be borne in mind that Kissinger, as Bush's foreign policy adviser, had a direct influence on the direction of his decision-making in relation to the Soviets. However, there was no consensus within the Bush administration on the merits of Kissinger's original détente policy. While Kissinger himself was invited by Bush to advise the team and was even sent to Moscow to meet with Gorbachev, which was a sign of Bush's confidence in him and his views, according to Scowcroft, the détente was an unfavourable policy that favoured the Soviet Union for many years (Bush – Scowcroft 1998: 112).[18]

Yet it is beyond doubt that Kissinger's tenure as Secretary of State was largely a positive period for US-Soviet relations, which was inevitably reflected in America's foreign policy vis-à-vis the satellite countries of the Eastern bloc. Kissinger's policy of détente was characterised by an effort to achieve at least partial cooperation between the two powers of the then bipolar world. However, the geopolitical situation during the implementation of Kissinger's policy was very different from that of Bush's presidency, especially in view of his counterpart in the Soviet Union and the situation in which the USSR found itself.

During the period of détente, the US government had to negotiate with Soviet politicians mainly represented by Brezhnev and Gromyko. Those leaders were certainly not idealists as were those of the later administration around Gorbachev and Shevardnadze. They did not see improving relations with the US as a commitment to universal human values, but rather as a necessary response to the geopolitical situation at that time and the threat posed by the Soviet dispute with China, and the possible resurfacing of Russia's historical fear of a combined hostile siege from the West and the East. The most significant difference in an understanding of American strategies towards the Soviet Union was therefore a definition of the geopolitical power of the American arch-rival of the time. Nixon and Kissinger responded, in particular to the geopolitical position of the USSR and the gradual strategic alignment of forces within the bipolar structure of international relations, while Bush and Baker faced a more declining power that was no longer the global equal of the United States.

We can consider Kissinger's policy of détente from many perspectives. If, however, we look for the positives that it brought to the Americans, we mostly find them in the palpable outcomes of discussions on the restriction of strategic

17 Meeting between Bush and Gorbachev (December 2–3, 1989).

18 This statement is particularly interesting in view of the fact that Scowcroft himself was already Kissinger's collaborator at the time of his work in the Nixon administration, and thus at the time of détente policy-making.

weapons (SALT) or in the bilateral signing of the Helsinki Final Act on security and cooperation in Europe (CSCE). However, similarly positive results of cooperation agreements did not appear in all areas. It is important to remember that the 'Jackson-Vanik' addendum, which resulted in the restriction of bilateral trade and subsequently became one of the most contentious points of negotiations between the USA and the USSR under the Bush administration, and between the USA and other countries of the Warsaw Pact, was approved when Kissinger was at the Department of State. In spite of these problematic points, however, it was the policy of détente that Gorbachev wanted to return to, particularly during the 'pause' accompanied by Bush, and which would in his view have benefited not only the USSR, but other Eastern European countries too.

It was at the time of the 'pause' described above, just after Bush entered office, that the prevailing feeling in the new American government was that any significant concessions to the Soviet Union could harm the United States geopolitically over the long-term. Nevertheless, once the Bush administration had assessed new foreign policy strategy at the end of the spring of 1989 and following the university speeches that resulted in a policy of 'beyond containment', it was clear that Bush's aim would be to partly draw on Kissinger's policy. The principal aim of détente, i.e. greater involvement of the Soviet Union in economic and political ties with the West and a reduction in tensions, subsequently became one of the main objectives of American foreign policy even in the landmark year of 1989 as well as during the following years. The results that Bush's policy brought eventually outstripped the successes of the policy of the first half of the 1970s quite significantly. The Bush government was then able to add remarkable successes primarily in the issue of the Soviet satellites and in the gradual tying of those countries to Western military, economic and other structures during the 1990s.

Strategic approach to the countries of the Eastern bloc

Kissinger, who was initially strongly influenced by idealism from his academic career, gradually inclined more towards a realistic view of international relations in his policy, which was manifested, for example, in the fact that he somewhat neglected the influence of ideology in Soviet foreign policy. This was also seen in the fact that he considered Soviet policy to be almost purely opportunistic (Kissinger 1979: 119). In this view he concurred with the vast majority of the Bush administration. The policy of détente sought to prevent the Soviet opportunism by seeking to create an international environment in which the balance of power between the US and the USSR would work. The power of diplomacy was to have been a major part of achieving this goal. Kissinger considered this to be an essential accompaniment to the balance of power (Guzzini 2004: 113). Bush picked up on this view and dedicated much of his presidency to diplomatic

relations, attempting to win allies for his policies around the world using the 'art of diplomacy'.

But what made the use of diplomatic relations within the Nixon and later the Bush government different was precisely the countries at which diplomacy was directed. While diplomatic relations at the highest level under the Nixon administration, and subsequently the Ford government, were focused mainly on bilateral meetings of the representatives of the great powers themselves,[19] Bush's diplomacy was able to focus more on summits with the leaders of the then more progressive governments of other Eastern bloc countries and multilateral meetings with European allies, mostly within the NATO summits. This trend began with Bush's visit to Poland and Hungary and a meeting with Jaruzelski or Grósz, which was symbolically held even before Bush's first meeting with Gorbachev in Malta.

The issues that could be discussed with representatives of the 'satellite countries' during talks also differed significantly. These issues stemmed not only from the Soviet Union's more accommodating policy towards the satellite countries and the soviet renunciation of Brezhnev's doctrine, but also from the gradual development of opinion within the Bush administration. Bush was not overly inclined to discuss broader issues with the Eastern bloc countries until announcing the 'Beyond Containment' strategy. This opinion chimed with the mentality of the Cold War, which Kennan and Kissinger, among others, had brought to American foreign-policy considerations from the 1950s to the 1970s. Although Kissinger generally tried to reduce tension in relations with the Soviet Union, his policy toward the Soviets also showed a certain mistrust of the moves made by the Soviet leadership. This policy was linked to awareness of the long-term opportunism in Soviet moves and the strong legacy of the policy of containment in American foreign policy. This 'inherited mistrust' was mainly reflected in those around Bush in the attitudes of Scowcroft and Cheney, who opposed possible concessions to Gorbachev in the belief that such action would necessarily be abused.

This view partly changed only in 1989 when it was already clear that the Soviet Union, under its by-now reformist leadership, had renounced the 'Brezhnev doctrine' and was not intent on violent intervention against ongoing changes in the countries of the Eastern bloc. The following year confirmed this trend, and the Cold War was considered by many politicians and experts to be over. Even those who had not yet committed to such statements, however, had to recognise the undeniable significant reduction in tension in mutual relations. According to Garthoff (1994: 426), for example, US-Soviet relations in the year 1990 reached the equal level of cooperation as in 1972–1973. In hindsight, even this view might be considered relatively conservative, because the relations from the early 1970s were in many ways surpassed during the Bush presidency.

19 Summits in Washington 1973, Moscow 1974, Vladivostok 1974, etc.

While the policies of the Nixon and Ford administrations are rightly interpreted as policies of reducing tension within the two blocs of power of the time, it should be stressed that, in relation to the 'lost countries' of the Eastern bloc, the United States had proceeded under Henry Kissinger almost as cautiously as it had done before under the influence of the Kennan strategy in the 1950s. The main reason for this was an attempt not to disrupt improving relations with the USSR by trying to interfere in the Soviet sphere of influence. The most significant initiative of the policy of détente toward the communist Eastern European satellite countries was therefore the Helsinki Conference, which resulted in a partial surge of East European dissent.

During the Bush presidency, however, American policy was now able to focus on a deeper reform of its relations with the countries in the Soviet sphere of influence. This was demonstrated, for example, in a direct meeting with representatives of Solidarity and particularly in economic issues. Although the ongoing talks on financial assistance to the Eastern bloc did not proceed as Gorbachev would have imagined, even partial concessions and compromises by the Americans were until-then unprecedented. In particular, Bush's offer of financial assistance to the countries of the still-existing Warsaw Pact, the allocation of most favoured nation status[20] to Hungary, and pressure on West Germany and international institutions to offer financial assistance to the Soviet economy were a strong sign of the new bilateral relations and, in their scope, a further outstripping of Kissinger's policy of détente.

Positive geopolitical development for the United States in the late 1980s was also visible in the difference in perceiving the Soviet Union as a bitter geopolitical rival. In the 1970s, owing to the Soviet Union's strength at that time, Kissinger recommended that the US approach the USSR as an equal partner in negotiations in order to secure some benefits within the international bipolar system of that time, characterised by the balance of power. This situation, however, no longer applied under President Bush. The Soviet Union began to crumble and lose its strength on the international stage, particularly during the second half of Bush's mandate. Although Bush favoured a balance of power over anarchy in the international environment, given the weakening of the Soviet Union, he was now able to take decisions on many matters from a position of strength. Kissinger's earlier policy of détente, based on an awareness of the military parity of the two powers, was no longer decisive for the Bush administration, meaning that the United States could start looking for new means in its approach to the Soviet Union in the knowledge of being in the clear strategic ascendancy. Bush then found himself in the situation of a unipolar world order, with the United States having the indisputable leading position, on which he

20 Countries, that were received 'most favoured nation status' gained more favourable trade conditions with the United States.

based his strategic decisions for the rest of his presidential mandate. This was subsequently also reflected in relation to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the establishment of unprecedented diplomatic relations after 1989.

Conclusion

This paper has compared the most important American foreign-policy concepts during the Cold War with the policy of the George Bush administration toward the countries of the Eastern bloc in 1989. These concepts were influenced by those that created these strategies as well as by the times that accompanied the policy. Kennan's original containment policy made a significant contribution to American post-war policy and helped curb the spread of communism, and in some areas stop it altogether. But to the Eastern bloc and satellite countries under the Soviet Union's control, the policy was uncompromising, recommending no American military or political interference in their internal affairs. This opinion in some cases even differed from the views of prominent government figures at the time, in particular from those of Secretary of State in Eisenhower's government John Foster Dulles, who promoted more significant aid to the 'lost countries' and even fired Kennan from the Department of State for his views (Kinzer 2016: 170).

This, however, does not change the fact that the containment strategy left significant marks on American foreign policy toward communist countries even after Kennan's departure from the Department. A policy that gained comparable status to the Kennan strategy in its importance was the policy of détente during the Nixon era. The fact that Kennan was able to draw on the relatively safe position of the United States within the international structure at that time when creating his article shortly after the Second World War, given the fact that the USA was the only nuclear power until 1949, played a significant part in the need in the early 1970s to come up with a new strategy. The proliferation of nuclear weapons to other parts of the world and awareness of Soviet-American military parity led to a gradual effort to reduce global tension. Both Kennan's and Kissinger's strategies can be considered successful, especially because both largely succeeded in achieving their main goal. In the case of containment policy, to contribute to halting the global spread of communism and, in the case of the policy of détente, to reduce the significant American-Soviet tensions of the previous two decades.

However, the success of Bush's foreign policy strategy is easier to assess than in the previous two cases, given the geopolitical circumstances of the day. Bush's policy, though often hard to defend, especially within his own party, helped in the smooth transition of most Eastern European political systems to a democratic arrangement and the strategic move of those countries away from the Soviet sphere of influence. The concept of the balance of power and

not interfering in each other's spheres of influence promoted by Kennan and Kissinger had already lost its meaning by that time and was gradually phased out by Bush in 1989. This phasing-out of Cold-War concepts was subsequently completed by the announcement of the 'Beyond Containment' policy, which meant a more proactive policy toward the Eastern bloc and helped Eastern European countries move from communist to democratic establishment and from a centrally-run economy to the free market, and as a result free themselves from the power of the disintegrating Soviet Union.

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BOOK REVIEW

Europe Thirty Years after 1989

KASPARS ZELLIS[1]

The book, edited by Tomas Kavaliauskas, PhD, senior researcher of the Department of Philosophy and the Center for Social and Political Critique of Vytautas Magnus University (Kaunas, Lithuania), addresses a very relevant topic that permeates both modern discussions and a significant part of the public and political discourse of the population of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). The four parts of the monograph ('Part 1 Values, Memory, Identity'; 'Part 2 In Search of European Home and Hospitality'; 'Part 3 The Role of Intellectuals and Dissidents'; 'Part 4 Political Travelogues') consists of eleven chapters written and prepared by sixteen scientists. This book is the result of joint efforts of scientists from Spain, Lithuania, Latvia, Bulgaria, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Croatia and Belgium.

The general theme of the monograph is related to historical, political and cultural processes centred around the year 1989, which, as the editor of the book notes in the abstract: '*has symbolized a European annus mirabilis, standing for such events as the fall of the Berlin Wall and the impending collapse of the Soviet Union*'. In fact, for the authors of the articles, this date is the key point in history, which opens a new page for the political context and new forms of identification of Europe. Although the editor of the book has introduced the concept of Europe in its title, it is important to warn the reader: it is about the phenomenon of the countries of CEE, for which the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s has become the most important historical milestone that determines the deep evolutionary processes. It is obvious from the title of the book that the editor has deliberately linked its content with the indivisible historical regions of Europe, precisely because the authors of the articles recognise the priority of its integrity as an intellectual reference point. In this, it seems, there was an application for an active dialogue with other regions of

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Europe – Western, Northern, Southern, presenting their potential readers with the thesis: post-communist countries are also Europe.

This thesis, in my opinion, significantly concretises the direction of the book. In the article by Ladislav Cabada 'East-Central Europe Searching for (European) Values: How to Be More Than the "Proud Periphery?"' he raises general methodological questions about the commonality of historical transformations in the CEE countries to Western European liberal values. At the same time, they talk about the unfinished modernisation in these countries, the power of traditionalism, the victim syndrome of historical circumstances, etc. The author shows the visible presence of superficiality in the modernisation projects of these societies, in which the 'technical' aspect of modernisation has become much more important, rather than the value aspect associated with the ideology of liberal democracy. The chapter by Tomas Kavaliauskas 'Thirty Years in Search for Identity in Central Europe', which focuses on the demand for nationalist values in these societies, as well as the article by Nicolas Hayoz and Magdalena Solska 'Conservative Assertiveness in Central and Eastern Europe: Case Studies from Poland and Hungary', which talks about the conservative turn in a number of Eastern European countries, is close to this consideration. The significant place of symbols of the socialist past in the modern social and historical memory of Croatian society is described in the article 'Croatia after 1989: Memories of Socialism in Post-socialist Times' by Josip Zanki and Nevena Škrbić Alempijević. Incomplete modernisation also has a visible split within the national consciousness and historical memory, which lies largely along the lines of the primordial division of ethno-cultural identities, especially in those CEE countries characterised by very strong ethno-cultural pluralism (article by Deniss Hanovs and Vladislav Volkov 'Types of Social Memory and the Subordination of Identities of Ethnic Minorities in Latvia'). The growth of social pessimism in the public consciousness is also associated with the failures of liberalisation in these countries (Valentina Gueorguieva, Galina Goncharova, Slavka Karakusheva '"A Home for Our Children": The Bulgarian (Dis)illusion with Democratic Society Thirty Years Later'). Some of the authors of the articles pay special attention to the new challenges of the global world (for example, waves of migration and refugees) faced by the CEE countries, including the nationalist reaction (Rūta Bagdanavičiūtė 'The Ideal of Absolute Hospitality and the Reality of Anti-migrant Fences'). The growth of public confusion actualises the appeal of the authors of the monograph to the topic that has defined the public consciousness of the modernising CEE societies over the past two centuries. This is the special role of intellectuals in the formation of liberal, democratic and modernist values. The appeal to the scientific, creative, intellectual heritage and life trajectories of intellectuals shows the increased need for a significant rethinking of the experience of liberalisation after the fall of communist regimes since the late 1980s (Maria Mälksoo 'Envisioning Europe from

the East: À la recherche du temps perdu with Václav Havel and Lennart Meri'; Gintautas Mažeikis 'The Rise of the Public Relations Man and the Decline of the Soviet "Intelligentsia" after 1989'; Almantas Samalavičius 'From Ideology of Culture to Cultural Critique: Kultūros barai Journal and the Changing Roles of Lithuanian Intellectuals' *(1989–2019)*). But while most researchers from CEE dwell on the difficulties of modernisation in their countries over the past decades, for Catalan researcher Jordi Arrufat-Agramunt, the experience of the Baltic countries is encouraging ('From the Baltic Way to the #CatalanReferendum Achieving Statehood through Peaceful Protest: Two European Models Face to Face with 30 Years between Them').

As the materials of this monograph, as well as numerous historical, sociological and political studies, show, the current stage of modernisation of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe requires more careful attention of the scientific community throughout Europe.

Kavaliauskas T. (ed.): *Europe Thirty Years after 1989. Transformations of Values, Memory, and Identity*. (Central European Value Studies, Volume: 359.) Leiden, Boston: Brill, Rodopi, 2021.

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Politics in Central Europe publishes original, peer-reviewed manuscripts that provide scientific essays focusing on issues in comparative politics, policy analysis, international relations and other sub-disciplines of political science, as well as original theoretical or conceptual analyses. All essays must contribute to a broad understanding of the region of Central Europe.

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Each issue the *Politics in Central Europe* focuses on one main topic or theme. This theme is indicated in advance, at the latest in the previous issue. Besides essays focused on the current issue, essays with other themes are welcomed too.

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- a list of up to six keywords suitable for indexing and abstracting purposes
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- a full postal and e-mail address, as well as telephone and fax numbers of the author. If the manuscript is co-authored, then please provide the requested information about the second author.

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Dates should be in the form of 1 November 2005; 1994–1998; or the 1990s.

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In the text, refer to the author(s) name(s) (without initials, unless there are two authors with the same name) and year of publication. Unpublished data and personal communications (interviews etc.) should include initials and year. Publications which have not yet appeared are given a probable year of publication and should be checked at the proofing stage on an author query sheet. For example:

Since Bull (1977) has shown that. This is in results attained later (Buzan – Jones – Little 1993: 117). As contemporary research shows (Wendt 1992), are states the.

Publications by the same author(s) in the same year should be identified with a, b, c (2005a, 2005 b) closed up to the year and separated by commas. Publications in references that include different authors should be separated by a semicolon: (Miller 1994a: 32, 1994 b; Gordon 1976). If the year of first publication by a particular author is important, use the form: (e.g. Bull 1977/2002: 34). If there are two authors of a publication, separate the names by '–' (not 'and' or '&'). If there are more than two authors, put the name of the first author followed by '*et al.*', or write all names separated with '–' (four authors maximum).

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- If the reviewed book is the result of a particular event (a conference, workshop, etc.), then this should be mentioned in the introductory part of the review
- Review authors should describe the topic of the book under consideration, but not at the expense of providing an evaluation of the book and its potential contribution to the relevant field of research. In other words, the review should provide a balance between description and critical evaluation. The potential audience of the reviewed work should also be identified
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