Extremism vs. Democracy in Central Europe
Issues, Experiences, Challenges

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Editors
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INTRODUCTION

POLITICAL EXTREMISM IN CENTRAL EUROPE: MANIFESTATIONS, PROSPECTS, CHALLENGES TO DEMOCRATIC FORCES

1. THE FATE OF EXTREMISTS IN EUROPE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The effect of radical political forces proved such a significant historical factor that brought, at one point in the 20th century, Europe on the brink of, if not literally physical, then virtually civilizational extinction. Many countries in Europe fell hostage of political forces that subscribed to totalitarian extremist ideologies. Two of those, Germany and the Soviet Union, initially tried to divide Europe by force, perhaps counting on an ability to do the same on global scale. Yet circumstances placed them on opposing sides of the barricade that was the World War II.

Nazism in Germany and its fascist allies in Europe were defeated eventually. During WWII the Soviet Union with its Communist rule was forced to join Western democracies. Following the war it did expand geopolitically, though, five decades later, it ended up crashing under the weight of its own existential challenges, which it proved unable to resolve and thus preserve itself.

The defeat of Nazism and fascism in Europe and the demise of Communism in USSR opened most favourable conditions for the development of liberal democracy across Europe. It did not, however, automatically warrant the eradication of political radicalism, in its extreme nationalist or racist form, from Europe's public life.

The virus of extremism continued to live latently within the societies in a number of states. From time to time, when conditions are right, it resurfaces in places. Auspiciously, the social malady has not grown viral to a point that it would turn into European pandemic as was the case in the 1920s and 1930s; even though the events in the Balkans in the 1990s were in nature comparable with the hitherto epidemic.
2. FERTILE SOIL FOR THE RADICALS

The developments over the past two-to-three decades in Europe and in the vicinity prevented the fertile soil for political extremism from drying out. The post-Communist transformation in Central and Eastern Europe was accompanied with discord and, at times, even resistance by some public groups. This was used by nationalists, who were often the politically rebranded former Communists. There are multiple factors that contribute to the comfort zone for the bearers of radical nationalist messages, or at least which help them keep their heads above water. They include issues related to ethnic and faith minorities that opened space for representatives of different nationally and faith-oriented streams. Most recently, there is also the influx of immigrants from the Middle East and North Africa, the armed conflict between in Ukraine, and the Russian machinery of media propaganda against liberal democratic values, European integration and the democratic West.

Concerns that the entry in the European Union by the post-Communist countries of Central Europe lead to dramatic rise of nationalism and extremism across the continent have not proved true. The united Europe has certainly not become more xenophobic and nationalist as a result of the EU enlargement. The democratic transformation of the post-Communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe and its unequivocal course have, on the one hand, opened gates for the radical nationalist forces. On the other hand, the overall success of the transformation, particularly its speed and the ability of reformers to come to terms – literally on the go – with complex social issues, prevented the extremist political groupings from gaining momentum and taking over the situation, thus becoming dominant players to determine the developments in their countries.

The essentially favourable assessment does not, however, imply an absence or insignificance of extremism and political radicalism in party politics and public discourse in Europe. On the contrary, their presence (albeit in different intensity and depth) affects public attitudes, poses barriers to the democratic context, poisons the overall atmosphere within the society, and generates a risk (including security risks) for some public groups. Those vulnerable include ethnic, faith and gender minorities (LGBTI), individuals who subscribe to alternative (postmodern,
cosmopolitan, non-traditional) lifestyle, or opponents to extremists and nationalists.

3. THE SITUATION IN THE V4 MEMBER STATES

Recent years of experience in the Visegrad group illustrate the manifestations and trends in radical politics and extremist political thought, and their implications.

Political extremism has its wider historical and social context. There are both specific and shared factors in each of the V4 countries – Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Slovakia – that serve as the basis for manifestations of extremism on public and political life. They include the aforementioned experience with democratic transformation after the fall of the Communist totalitarian regimes. The list of place-specific features of local political landscape include, *inter alia*, hyperboles in the politics of national symbols, ambiguous or even conflicting reading of the past, and revanchist attitude among some segments of the society, the tradition of nationalist politics, tensions characteristic for multi-ethnic societies that had lived for years under restricted and closed regimes, and confessional conflicts. Additional factors include the fuelling and exploitation of isolationist, anti-European or indeed Euro-phobic sentiments, and visceral anti-Americanism that are essentially based on resistance to the liberal democratic West. That is recently exacerbated with the aid of various conspiracy narratives produced by the Russian propaganda.

4. CASE OF SLOVAKIA: NATIONALISM, HISTORICAL REVISIONISM, CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Similarly to other new EU member states in the recent years, Slovakia faces attempts by radical and nationalist forces keen on expanding their sphere of influence, and to draw wider public response and support. Slovakia is quite a conducive place for the presence and political development of radical nationalism. That is the result of a range of factors, namely the multi-ethnic composition of the society, complicated relations between the Slovak majority and minorities, the history of authoritarian nationalism and fascism in its clerical version, attempts to mythol-
ogise historical consciousness, negative effect of economic reforms on some social strata in the early stages of the transformation, challenges arising from the status of the Roma population, lasting race prejudice, and nationalist stereotypes.

The assessment of history plays a particular role in Slovakia. The long period of Communist dictatorship prevented objective and unbiased coming to terms with the period of World War II, when Slovakia was a totalitarian puppet state of the Nazi Germany. Twenty six years after the demise of Communism in Czechoslovakia historians and opinion-makers seem unable to reach consensus on the issue.

Following the collapse of Communism, the second free elections in 1992 gave rise to those political forces that led the Czechoslovak federation to a peaceful split. Nevertheless, they failed to use democratic institutions to guide the process. In retrospective, analysts repeatedly argue that the public was not given an opportunity to comment on the intention of the key political forces at the time to split the then federation.

That significantly enhanced historical revisionism in Slovakia about the 20th century. Nationalists considered the Slovak Republic of the 1939 – 1945 period a successful constitutional model. They tended to relativise and lessen its totalitarian character and practical limitations to human rights and liberties, including the crimes against humanity particularly the annihilation of its own Jewish citizens. Those aspects remain, as yet, unaccounted for in social and individual ethics. The difficult issues were deemed as relative and historically determined, hence referred to historians. Moral authorities among opinion-makers and institutions that enjoyed natural clout have not assumed any clear and joint position. They never clearly condemned the politics of the Slovak government of 1939 – 1945.

Direct successors of the national-populist propaganda and historiography were determined in their support to the nationalist spectrum in its positive assessment of attitudes and activities of the political leadership of the Hlinka’s Slovak Peoples’s Party and particularly President Jozef Tiso. That turned historical relativism into a political stream inspired by the idea of Christian national socialism subscribed to by the Slovak Republic of the 1939 – 1945 period. The 1990s saw a rise of informal as well as form interest groups and political parties that openly identified with the legacy of Jozef Tiso and the state he presided over. Positive re-
view of the deportations of Jews proved to be no exception. In its political agenda an extremist organization Slovak Community also openly subscribed to the principle of corporatist state. The 1990s also brought an increased use of symbols used by paramilitary organisations between 1930 and 1945. Autonomous, yet still operating within the puppet state of the Third Reich, the groups manifestly and actively practiced racism, anti-Semitism, totalitarianism and national chauvinism.

The above scope has been recently expanded by the revival of conspiracy theories disseminated via the internet, social networks and modern media. Packaged in attractive covers, the conspiracy arguments and pseudoscientific myths reach audiences through alternative information and communication channels. Such information and communication context deems each view to be equal and legitimate: everyone is potentially right – both the bearer of the critically acquitted information through study, research, discoveries and examination, as well as the disseminators of what is clear delusions and obscure hand-made theories.

The root causes of the spread of conspiracy theories in Slovakia and elsewhere in the post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe lay in the limited transparency of governance, closed nature of political élites, changes brought by malpractice in advocacy of economic and other corporatist interests at political level, nepotism among political stakeholders attempting to gain democratic legitimacy, including interest groups (industrial, financial, sectoral) aiming to influence political decision-making – well know phenomenon of “state capture”.

Paradoxically, one of the factors that help fuel the conspiracy discourse may be related to greater openness of the former Communist countries to the outside world, including their membership in the EU and other international organisations, such as NATO and the OECD. The recent decade had brought closer ties between these countries and the outside world. Global problems that call for a thorough analysis and elucidation are often simplistically interpreted. They are then presented as the result of decision-making by narrow groups in banking and international financial institutions that aim to benefit themselves to the detriment of everyone else.
5. VISEGRAD STORIES

The studies presented in this volume offer perspectives on radical nationalist and extremist forces within the Visegrad Group, placing them within the wider framework, as well as country-specific context affected by local cultural, historical, confessional and other factors.

The chapter *Right-Wing Extremism in Hungary* by political analyst Gábor Csomor explores the phenomenon of right-wing radical and extremist politics in Hungary. Particular focus is on Jobbik. Even though it does not represent the entire discourse of political extremism and its partisan form in Hungary, Jobbik is, at the time of publishing this volume, perhaps the strongest political party of the kind in Central Europe.

Csomor explores the transformation of Jobbik from the originally marginal to a significant political force, its voter mobilisation strategies, and the basic socio-demographic and cultural characteristics of its electorate. He highlights the success of Jobbik as parliamentary opposition party in getting through draft bills by exerting pressure on the parties in the Government that fear the loss of nationally-oriented electorate.

In his chapter *Extremism in Poland: Radical Movements and Social Attitudes as a Phenomenon of Political Extremism*, Wojciech Wcisł examines the conceptual vantage points of extremism as political and ideological stream and its characteristics. He highlights historical preconditions and circumstances affecting the emergence and activities of the radical nationalist and extremist groups in Poland. He focuses on the factors that contribute to the survival – albeit in quite a marginal position – of the radical groups in contemporary Polish politics. The positions of proponents of the Polish radical nationalist and extremist scene are explored within the context of the key societal issues in the after the fall of Communism. Attention is also drawn to the position of the Polish Roman Catholic Church on extremism. The study also offers examples of anti-extremist activities by the Polish civil society.

Michal Vít, in his chapter *Nationalism in Czech Politics* addresses the specific character of the manifestations of nationalism and radicalism in Czech party politics and in public discourse. They are found among a number of political groups, not merely the radical right-wing and extremist ones, plus in different public initiatives. The positions are fuelled by historical resentments, such as the issue of the Sudeten Germans, by
the notorious anti-Roma racism and by some contemporary trends, such as the Isamo-phobic attitudes riding on the wave of resistance to the migration into the EU from the Middle East. Vít examines the attitudes by three political parties: the “orthodox” Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia, the nationalist populist Dawn of Direct Democracy led by Tomio Okamura, and the right-wing radical Workers' Party of Social Justice which, within the Czech context, most closely falls within the definition of an extremist party. The chapter also focuses on the new movement of “discontented citizens” that aims to transformed itself a political party, the initiative We Do Not Want Islam in the Czech Republic. The analysis approaches the theme from the perspective of three key issues in Czech public discourse: the Sudeten Germans, the Roma, and migration. It argues that the contest between the different radical and extremist groups makes them block each other. Hence it helps defuse the potential of dramatic rise of extremism in Czech public and political life.

Chapter History in the Service of Revival of Right-Wing Extremism: Case of Slovakia, is written by two Slovak co-authors, Miroslav Kocúr and Grigorij Mesežnikov.

Miroslav Kocúr focuses on interpretation of Slovak mid-20th century history and on the assessment of the role played at the time by the Slovak Roman Catholic Church. He sees them to be substantial factors related to contemporary extremist discourse in Slovakia. Kocúr explores the historical context in order to highlight different levels of interpretation of the history of the Slovak Republic between 1939 and 1945. He argues that the overlap results from the inability to differentiate between philosophical, historical, emotional and political accounts of the period. The Roman Catholic Church plays a significant role here. The President of the Slovak Republic between 1939 and 1945 was Roman Catholic priest Jozef Tiso. Apart from being politically active for some time during the democratic Czechoslovak Republic established in 1918, Tiso, as member of clergy, embodied a powerful symbolic legacy. Historic revisionism helped to legitimise the radical nationalist stream when, after 1989, the extremist agenda was part of the political struggle within the democratic society. It culminated in Autumn of 2013 with the election of Marián Kotleba as Chairman of the Banská Bystrica self-governing region. Mr Kotleba openly presented his positions within the eventually barred political party the Slovak Community. Once he founded a new party, the People's Party – Our Slovakia, he and his views became an of-
ficial part of a democratic institution, the local self-government. The process, its key or illustrative moments are therefore subjected to scrutiny when addressing the overarching leitmotif of the presented volume from the Slovak perspective. Kocúr approaches the challenge from the position of a theologian able to reflect the issue from within the Church. His analysis shows the effect of the Christian context and contemporary interpretations of the developments and their contribution to both explicit and indirect reception of extremist political ideas.

Grigorij Mesežnikov describes set of social factors encouraging right-wing extremists to intensify their activities as well as new political tactics applied by the members of radical groups in recent years. He analyses the nationalist discourse in the context of overall domestic political development. Findings from DEREX (Demand for right-wing extremism) project, mentioned in the chapter, show potential public support for extremist politics in Slovakia.

6. CHALLENGES FOR DEMOCRATIC FORCES

The conditions for the peoples of Central Europe, including the Czechs, Hungarians, Poles and Slovaks have never been more favourable than during the decade following their accession to the EU and NATO. Freedom, democracy, free movement of people across borders to study and/or work wherever desired, be it home or abroad, peace, regional stability, largely positive economic development, security guarantees – all that stands in contrast with the previous decades and centuries that have seen hostility, armed conflicts, ethnic purges, poverty, a lack of freedom, political oppression, insularity, and subjection to outside powers. These powers were those to decide the fate of the smaller nations instead of leaving it to the latter. That, it seems, is now a matter of the past. In order for that to remain the case, however, people in Central Europe ought to be able to protect and nurture the fruit of their remarkable labour.

If the values of liberty, democracy and human rights fail to become properly rooted in Central Europe in order to protect the region from their enemies, and if these values fail to draw significant support to permit long-term governance by political forces which represent the model of liberal democracy, then radicals and extremists might well
grasp the initiative. That is a major challenge particularly to the democratic politicians within the mainstream for the parties left and right of the centre. It ought to be their agenda to actively resist manifestations of intolerance, racism, xenophobia, or anti-Semitism— in sum, all that creates the ground for extremist politics. The safeguards against them ought to further include candid democratic governance, fight against corruption, raising credibility of democratic institutions, and engaging people in public life. It would prevent their sense of detachment, and resultant impression of being governed by alien, hidden forces that aim to destroy the very existence of nations, their culture, traditions, customs, and to subject the peoples to supranational global entities.

Open and transparent governance, categorical rejection of nationalism, accommodating minority policies, coming to terms with the past, effective civic education, development of public atmosphere conducive of tolerance and mutual respect, defence of those who are targeted by intolerant individuals or groups— all these are the prerequisites of the success of democratic forces in their struggle against extremists and their public mobilisation.

* * *

The project, which includes this publication, has also involved meetings with students aged 14 to 18 across Slovakia, with particular focus on regional centres. Discussions in Košice, Prešov, Žilina, Martin, Nitra, Trenčín, Trnava Bratislava, and Banská Bystrica brought together nearly 1,000 students. Ján Bartoš and Miroslav Kocúr from the Institute for Public Affairs led the discussions which consisted of a presentation and debate, an effective format in addressing the theme with the target group: the future first-time voters. In preparing for electoral choices in the 2016 parliamentary elections, it is feasible to highlight different trends that lead to extremist attitudes that may offer easy solutions for complex challenges faced on the break of 2015 and 2016 by the people in Central Europe, including Slovakia. The particular test for the new democracies and EU member states is the refugee crisis. The matter-of-fact atmosphere of the student discussions drew such interest in extremism, its causes and possible solutions that could not be fully satisfied given the time available within the scope of the current project. Hence a need for further project of working with and meeting meetings secondary school students.
The presented volume *Extremism vs. Democracy in Central Europe: Issues, Experiences, Challenges* is the latest addition to the range of publications by the Institute of Public Affairs (IVO). IVO analysts and guest specialists have been long examining different aspects of radical nationalist politics, extremism and populism, the context of the ongoing political transformation, and democratic consolidation in the post-Communist countries of Central Europe.

IVO has a history of examination of the wider societal background to populist politics that aid the radical actors on the political scene to more effectively address sympathisers and affect public opinion.

In 2008 IVO published two volumes dedicated to the theme: *Populist Politics and Liberal Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe* (eds. Grigorij Mesežnikov, Oľga Gyárfášova and Daniel Smilov) and *National Populism in Slovakia* (Grigorij Mesežnikov and Oľga Gyárfašová). Three additional publications were focused on the context of populist and nationalist politics: *Democracy and Populism in Central Europe: The Visegrad Elections and Their Aftermath* (eds. Martin Bútora, Oľga Gyárfašová, Grigorij Mesežnikov and Thomas W. Skladony, 2007) and *Alternative Politics? The Rise of New Political Parties in Central Europe* (eds. Grigorij Mesežnikov, Oľga Gyárfašová and Zora Bútorová, 2013). The latter two publications were supported by the International Visegrad Fund. The studies by IVO into nationalism, the radical right and extremism were also published as monographs and comprehensive volumes by Routledge, the Centre of European Studies, as well as project-related volumes arising from IVO cooperation with project partners, including the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and the Political Capital Institute (Budapest).

The presented volume contributes to the study of the factors of politics of extremism in the Visegrad Group. The findings may also assist a wider spectrum of stakeholders – specialists, policymakers, civic activists, journalists and anyone wishing to see the peoples in the Visegrad countries thrive as decent, free and democratic societies.
RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM IN HUNGARY

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past few years right-wing extremism (hereinafter RWE) has been on the rise in several EU countries. One of those has been Hungary, where the political party Jobbik became the strongest force in parliamentary opposition in 2014. This paper highlights some of the most common manifestations of RWE and is meant to help to understand Hungarian RWE in the Central-East European (CEE) context. The review focuses on Jobbik and other actors of the RWE scene in Hungary between 2003 and 2014. It does not address earlier RWE parties (such as MIÉP) in Hungary, or ethnic Hungarian movements outside Hungary (e.g. in Transylvania or among immigrant communities in the US).

Section one offers a theoretical background to RWE and explains the nature of extremism of Jobbik with particular attention to the EU and CEE context. Section two describes the origin, electoral results and communication strategy of Jobbik, and proceeds in presenting other key media and civil actors of the RWE scene in Hungary. Section three highlights the influence of RWE activities in four aspects of public life, namely public discourse on Roma, the governmental political agenda, local administration and paramilitary activism. Section four describes Jobbik constituency in terms of available demographic and socio-economic data. Section five offers attempt to explain the breakthrough of Jobbik in the 2009 – 2010 Hungarian national elections by focusing on such factors as popular attitudes, ongoing political crises and the role of the internet. The conclusion summarises the findings.1

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1 The author wishes to thank Balázs Váradi, Lőránt Győri, Attila Juhász and Julianna Orsós for their help, input and feedback on earlier versions of this paper, written under the aegis of the Budapest Institute for Policy Research of Budapest, Hungary.
2. DEFINITIONS AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM

Defining RWE parties is a challenging task. On one hand, the self-reference of extremist parties is characterised by the Orwellian “double-speak” as they often define themselves by conventional political ideas such as “national,” “democratic” or “progressive,” but they do not necessarily interpret these ideas similarly to mainstream parties. On the other hand, there is a considerable disagreement among political scientists as to how to refer to RWE parties and whether they can be grouped under the same party family. Pippa Norris notes that standard reference works use diverse labels categorising parties as “far” or “extreme” right, “new right,” “anti-immigrant,” “authoritarian,” “anti-government,” “ultranationalist” and so on (Norris, 2005, p. 44). Because of the diversity of labels and ideological orientation, it is probably more useful to think of RWE as of a number of sub-groups or clusters of RWE party families, rather than as of a single party family.

Cas Mudde has attempted to classify RWE parties according to their political ideologies (Mudde, 1995). He identified five ideological features that were most often used to describe RWE parties (nationalism, racism, xenophobia, anti-democracy, and a preference for a strong state) and found that the 26 scholars who used these features came up with just as many combinations as is their number. Also, scholars have typically offered a different combination of features, depending on the scientific methodology used: whether it was qualitative, quantitative, or a combination of the two. Mudde concluded that there was no objective ground to define what combination of ideological features constituted RWE and, instead of further refining this conceptual criteria, he emphasised it more important for scholars to acquire a more in-depth insight into the ideologies of the alleged RWE parties (Mudde, 1995, p. 219).

The main RWE party in Hungary, Jobbik – the Movement for Better Hungary (Jobbik Magyarországgért Mozgalom) has been casually described (also by the author of this paper) rather simplistically as “extremist” or “radical,” but both of these labels are, to an extent, vague. “Extremist” carries a popular and negative connotation, which actually only

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2 RWE parties which define themselves in these terms include, e.g. the People’s Party Our Slovakia, the National Democratic Party in Germany, or the Progress Party in Norway.
means that the party is beyond the right wing political parties, but says nothing about the content of its ideology. Similarly, Jobbik’s preferred label for itself “national-radical” only communicates, though more positively than the “extremism”, that the party is more radical in its nationalism, more conservative than the mainstream conservative Fidesz, but it leaves one wondering what it is that the party actually wishes to preserve. A way out from this theoretical conundrum is offered by Dániel Róna, who suggests to understand that Jobbik as an anti-establishment party. This typology more clearly identifies the party relationship to the democratic system and other political actors within (Rona, 2014, pp. 25 – 44).

Image 1. Members of the Hungarian Guard take their oath of allegiance on Hero Square, Budapest

Róna identifies three main dimensions, according to which Jobbik can be considered anti-establishment party. The first consists of the means the party uses to achieve its goals. An obvious case is the creation of the Hungarian Guard, self-defence movement, which engages in paramilitary training and, by its existence, questions the party attitude to the principle of states monopoly on violence. Although the Guard is unarmed, as the Constitution forbids political parties to establish their own
armed units, Gábor Vona, the chairman of Jobbik, argues that intention of his party is to eventually incorporate the Guard into the national police forces.

The second dimension is the party approach to fundamental democratic principles, including the rights and dignity of members of minority communities such as the Roma and Jews. While phrases such as “Gypsy terror”, “Gypsy breeding” and “procreation for social benefits” (i.e. child-breeding for the sake to entitlement to social benefits; megélhetési népszaporulat) are part of Jobbik vocabulary when talking about the Roma on local for, other expressions, such as “Gypsy-crime” have proved so successful that they have been adopted and have become widely established in mainstream public discourse (see sec. 4 on Activities). Regarding Jews, Jobbik members have repeatedly expressed statements which marginalised the Holocaust either in terms of the number of victims, or in terms of Hungary’s responsibility for collaborating with the Nazi Germany in organising exterminations. In 2012, a Jobbik MP, Márton Gyöngyösi, labelled Hungarian Jews in the Parliament to be “national security risks” and called for the listing of Jews with dual citizenship. Despite the international controversy that surrounded the statement, Jobbik did not officially distance itself from the statement and Gyöngyösi faced no sanctions in the party either.

Thirdly, Jobbik has unconventional understanding of political rights. It intends to restrict voting rights of adults who have not completed elementary education in order to limit political influence of the illiterate and poorest strata: it is known that the Roma are overrepresented among them (Miért nem vagyunk, 2012). Such interpretation of political rights goes against the conventional principles of democracy and universal suffrage.

It ought to be noted that there are also certain dimensions according to which Jobbik does conform to democratic principles. For example, Jobbik accepts the minimalist conception of democracy³ (Schumpeter,

³ The minimalist conception views democracy as merely an electoral process in which citizens vote for the purpose of selecting competing elites (Schumpeter 1942, Ch. XXI). This conception defies more substantive ones, which assert that democracy is a system that promotes either a particular notion of public good (Rousseauian tradition) or embodies a certain combination of liberal and egalitarian values (Rawlsian tradition).
and, at least since its presence in European Parliament and the Hungarian Parliament, it does not question the fairness and legitimacy of electoral results. The party also respects and plays to the “rules of the game” (Linz – Stepan, 1996, pp. 3 – 38): when the first formation of the Hungarian Guard was banned by the court, the Party dissolved the movement and paid all fines levied upon the party members associated with the movement. These features deserve a mention as they enable us to distinguish Jobbik from more radical political entities, such as the neo-Nazi parties and their terror cells in Germany, which openly subscribe to Nazi ideology (white supremacy, eugenics) and engage in criminal activities.

On the other side of the spectrum, Jobbik also differs from conventional conservative parties precisely because of its idiosyncratic understanding of democracy, verbal aggression towards minorities, and the maintenance of a paramilitary organisation. It is these features that best define the content of Jobbik’s anti-establishment position on the conservative – extreme – neo-Nazi spectrum. This paper will use this understanding when applying the term RWE to Jobbik.

Placing the Hungarian case in an international context, a few commonalities between Jobbik and the current RWE parties elsewhere in Europe can be identified (Ökopolisz, n.d., pp. 7 – 8; Róna, 2014 sec.2). Ethnocentrism is the most important and general feature of RWE parties. It incorporates aspects of both traditional nationalism and anti-minority position, although nowadays ethnocentric parties are not as antagonised by rivalry between different nation-states, but rather by the presence of cultural minorities in their own country. While the “other” cultural group is usually represented by Muslim minorities in the West, it is often the Roma in the East. Yet the type of exclusionary tactics used against them are quite similar in both cases. The repertoire includes calling for tougher “law and order” policies to protect the majority population from the high crime rates allegedly observed among minority groups, anti-elitism against mainstream parties that exercise a too permissive, liberal policy towards minorities, and Euroscepticism to prioritise the nation’s right to self-determination vis-à-vis external interference.

Beyond these general features, there are a number of distinctions between RWE parties that one can observe particularly across the traditional East-West divide (Gimes – Juhász – Kiss – Krekó, 2009 sec. 8; Róna, 2014 sec. 2). Due to the legacy of Communism, most CEE countries
still experience high popular demand for paternalism and a strong state that takes care of citizens. The parties in the region have accommodated themselves to these electoral needs and rarely advocate the virtues of market economy and self-reliance similarly to, for instance, the libertarian RWEs do in Scandinavia. They also tend to be morally more conservative towards such issues as drugs, abortion, homosexuality. In this context it would be probably much more difficult to conceive that an openly homosexual politician would have a real chance to become a party leader, as it was the case of Pim Fortuyn List in the Netherlands. The anti-establishment attitude is also differently interpreted: while in the West it is usually directed against the political elite, in the East it defies the whole democratic framework. A good example here is the proliferation of self-defence/paramilitary movements in the east, which are almost unprecedented in the West. Their aim is not merely to reform or strengthen the police corps, but to replace them. Finally, it is worth noting that differences exist even within the CEE such as in attitudes towards the previous Communist regime. Since counter-culture in Hungary was traditionally a right-wing phenomenon and a number of RWE party members (or their ancestors) were systematically persecuted during the previous regime, the RWE parties are fiercely anti-Communist in Hungary.

3. ACTORS

RWE in Hungary consists of much more than Jobbik. Since the early years of this millennium a number of RWE organisations and movements have sprung up and strengthened with Jobbik, creating together a large network of traditional and online media, heritage organisations, paramilitary groups, festivals, national rock bands, college (Attila Király Népfőiskola) and online shops. This infrastructure caters to the identity of members of the subculture and provides them with anything from clothes to leisure activities and a sense of community. The following section provides a brief overview about Jobbik and (its relationship to) some of the main organisations on the RWE landscape.
3.1. Jobbik, the Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom)

The party of Jobbik was founded in 2003. It grew out of a student movement called Right-Wing Youth Association (Jobboldali Ifjúsági Közösség), which was founded by university students in humanities in Budapest in 1999. The party defines itself as conservative, Christian and national-radical. Its Founding Document (Jobbik, 2003) states that one of the aims is to accomplish regime change in Hungary, as the party believes that, in spite of the fall of Communism in 1989, political change had only happened partially: the same crony networks continued to rule the country as did the ones under Communism, and all political parties served foreign rather than national interests (Jobbik, 2003). Jobbik rejects the allegation that it is an extremist party. Its representatives consider other neoliberal parties in the Parliament to be “extremists,” that, in their interpretation, pursue “anti-national politics contradictory to Hungarian interests, culture and values” (Exkluzív, n.d.).

The party first competed unsuccessfully in the national elections in 2006, in an electoral coalition together with, then already weakening, right-wing extremist force, the Hungarian Justice and Life Party (Magyar Igazság és Élet pártja – MIÉP) which had its heyday in the 1990s. The breakthrough of Jobbik occurred in 2009, when it ran alone in the elections for the European Parliament and won 14.8% of votes, what allowed it to send three representatives to the EP. The staggering results of Jobbik were unexpected and had been underestimated by public opinion polls prior to the elections, which might be attributable to the initially associated stigma with Jobbik (Rudas, 2010). In national elections in 2010, the party gained 16.7% of the regional votes.

That firmly established Jobbik as a major force on the Hungarian political scene. In the most recent national elections, in 2014, the party managed to further increase its support base and gained 20.7% of votes.

Since 2003, Jobbik has developed communication strategy with three main strengths:5

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4 See Jobbik’s website at: http://jobbik.hu/
5 The author is grateful to Attila Juhász, senior analyst at Political Capital Institute, for giving these insights in an earlier interview in the framework of the Citizens Beyond Borders project on 22 May 2014.
• The first is anti-establishment politics. The party has never been in power at the national level and its members can credibly present themselves to the electorate as “clean” of the dirty business of politics. It is also telling that Jobbik prefers to refer to itself as a movement rather than a party – a label perceived as having certain negative connotations – and its representatives are very active at the local level by organising public fora and maintaining direct contact with the population. All of these features help to reinforce the idea that Jobbik is different from mainstream political parties.

• The second strength is its thematic focus on Roma, addressing a serious and complex social problem. To achieve improvement in that area by effective inclusion policies would require significant budget resources and political courage in countering the widespread anti-Roma racism. Therefore, mainstream Hungarian parties prefer not to talk too much about the issue. In contrast, the representatives of Jobbik pride themselves in electoral campaign posters such as the “We say it out loud and solve it” slogan which clearly refers to taboo issues, including the conflicts between non-Roma and Roma (Jobbik választási program, 2014).

• The third strength is anti-Semitism, which serves as an all-explaining worldview for the core Jobbik adherents. The conspiracy theories pertaining to Jews have perhaps been most succinctly articulated by the Protestant Evangelical pastor, Hegedűs Loránt Jr, who said that “‘Gypsy-crime’ was a biological weapon in the hands of Zionists” (A cigányság biológiai fegyver, 2014). This is a tenet that certainly not all Jobbik voters believe. Therefore, the party officials are careful to voice these views only on certain closed platforms, such as rural local fora. Nevertheless, the anti-Semitic worldview serves as an all-explaining ideology and rounds up well the core believes promoted by Jobbik. It is these three positions together – the anti-establishment politics, anti-Roma and anti-Semitic that most clearly differentiate Jobbik from other parties in Hungary.
Table 1. Election results of Jobbik

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of regional list votes</th>
<th>% of votes</th>
<th>Number of mandates</th>
<th>% of mandates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006 national⁶</td>
<td>119 007</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009 EP</td>
<td>427 773</td>
<td>14.77%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 national</td>
<td>855 436</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>12.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 EP</td>
<td>340 287</td>
<td>14.67%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 national</td>
<td>1 017 550</td>
<td>20.69%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11.56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The discrepancy between the proportion of votes and mandates in national elections can be attributed to a series of amendments in the electoral law passed by the 2nd Fidesz government (2010 – 2014), which reduced by half the number of available seats in the Parliament and introduced a stronger majoritarian model for turning votes into mandates.

Source: National Election Office: http://valasztas.hu/

3.2. Media

Jobbik has a few weekly (Barikád) and bi-monthly (Hazai pálya) print periodicals. Yet its real presence is online. It operates a web-based radio channel (Szent-Korona Rádió) and a video channel (N1TV), and has been remarkably active on various news portals (alfahir.hu), blogs (Bombagyár) and social network sites.⁷ The online space represents a massive capital for Jobbik, as it enables the party to keep their voters constantly updated at a very low cost, something that would have been impossible for the party through mainstream media. The online sites not only provide instant updates on party activities, but are also a depository for a host of conspiracy theories on various historical events and literary themes, such as Hungarian pre-history [őstörténet], the Treaty of Trianon, the Second World War, ideologies of nationalism, and the terror of Communism.

While the news portal alfahir.hu serves as the mouthpiece of Jobbik, it is not the main online platform of RWE. The Kuruc.info website, maintained by a Hungarian-American on US servers and featuring radi-
cal Hungarian news content has a much larger audience. In 2014, it was estimated to have 60,000 individual page visitors per day (Szabó – Bene, 2015, p. 127). Kuruc.info features less PC content which the party or its associates are unwilling to publish under their own name. Indeed, all entries are published under pseudonyms. Its style is highly slanted and it categorises, inter alia, news content under such headings as “Gypsy-crime,” “Jewish-crime,” “politician-crime” and “anti-Hungarianism”. The site has been controversial because it incites violence and repeatedly violated personal data protection laws. It took part in the coordination of the 2006 riots in Budapest, and published the names, addresses, phone numbers of police officers and judges involved in the subsequent legal cases, calling upon readers to harass them (Athena Institute, n.d.). Because of hate speech and privacy violations, Hungarian governments have tried to shut down the website, but their attempts were rejected by the US Government based on the First Amendment of the US Constitution, addressing freedom of speech.

A major reason behind Jobbik’s strong online presence is that the party was ignored by mainstream media from its inception until at least 2010, and to some extent until 2010 – 2014. It had no choice but to learn to use alternative media. The party has initiated a number of legal cases against media channels, arguing that it has received biased or disproportionately limited coverage in comparison to other parties. In some of the cases, Jobbik’s complaint was supported by the National Media Authority, and respective media channels were fined or requested to apologise (A Jobbik pártján, 2013). While media did engage with some of the topics that were raised by RWE, it usually did so in the absence of RWE representatives until 2014 (Szabó – Bene, 2015). This trend seems to have been changed as of national elections in 2014, when Jobbik representatives have started to appear in talk shows in the media, left and right alike, where previously they were considered personae non gratae. It seems that the mainstream media has changed a strategy and realised that they can no longer continue to ignore a party that has 20% in public support.

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8 This was also confirmed by alexa.com web traffic data which, at the time of writing of this report, ranked kuruc.info as the 97th most popular Hungarian website in contrast to barikad.hu, which was ranked 171th (Accessed 2015-05-25).
3.3. Paramilitary and other organisations

There is relatively little objective information available about paramilitary organisations in academic literature. The three main organisations close to Jobbik include the Sixty-Four Counties Youth Movement ("Hatvannégy Vármegye Ifjúsági Mozgalom" – HVIM), The Hungarian Guard [Magyar Gárda] and its various splinter organisations, and the Outlaws’ Army [Betyársereg]. Among these, the oldest is the HVIM established in 2001 by a RWE cult figure, László Toroczkai, the current mayor of the village of Ásotthalom (Csongrád County, Southern Hungary). The name of the organisation, HVIM, refers to the number of administrative districts of the Kingdom of Hungary prior to the Treaty of Trianon (1920). It is the most active paramilitary movement in neighbouring countries inhabited by Hungarian ethnic minorities. The movement has about 60 members and is the main convenor of the Hungarian Sziget, a nationalist alternative to the Budapest Sziget Festival (Athena Institute, n.d.).

Another and perhaps most infamous organisation, the Hungarian Guard, was established by Gábor Vona, the chairman of Jobbik, in 2007. The aim is “physical, spiritual and intellectual self-defence of Hungarians.” The Budapest District Court disbanded the Guard in 2009, after an incident in Tatárszentgyörgy, where the organisation members paraded in a Roma settlement. A part of the Court argument was that the Guard did not confirm to the objectives stipulated in its founding declaration. The verdict also noted that the movement “abused the right to free association, questioned the state monopoly over the legitimate use of force, and threatened the rights of Roma” (Feloszlatták, 2008). A few weeks after the dissolution, the Guard was re-established with slightly modified objectives and the same leadership under the title of New Hungarian Guard. It ought to be noted that, apart from organising street demonstrations against Roma, Jews and homosexuals, the Guard has been involved in various social activities, such as charity or humanitarian disaster management, where the state has either failed or been present only marginally. This type of activism has greatly contributed to the positive popular image of the movement.

The third organisation, the Outlaws’ Army, emerged in 2008 from one of the many splinter groups of the banned Hungarian Guard. It is illegal and represents the more radical fraction of self-defence groups. It has about 60 members, who bear arms and engage in activities meant to
intimidate the Roma. The Hungarian paramilitary organisations, including the HVIM, the New Hungarian Guard (and presumably the Outlaws’ Army, too) signed a cooperation agreement with Jobbik in June 2009 (Tudta?, 2011). Their common denominator is that they are all ultranationalist and intolerant towards minorities, be they Roma, Jews or homosexuals.

Image 2. The Outlaws’ Army demanding “justice for Hungary” during a protest

![Outlaws’ Army protest](http://www.merites.hu)

Source: http://www.merites.hu

Finally, there is a third important group of miscellaneous actors on the RWE scene that does not quite fit into any categories. This includes a wide network of civil actors from entertainment (“national rock bands”) to business agents (“National Taxi” or “National Dating Site”) and knowledge generation (“King Attila College”). This network, in the literature commonly referred to as “identity infrastructure” (Feischmidt, 2014), is an integral part of the RWE in Hungary. Together with Jobbik and RWE media they help popularising nationalist culture in all walks of life.

4. ACTIVITIES

The following part shall address some of the main activities of RWE by focusing on four themes: influence on public discourse, setting the na-
tional government agenda, a new model for local level politics, and instigating conflicts by paramilitary activism. The number of the themes and individual illustrative cases are selective and by far not comprehensive. They serve to demonstrate some of those aspects of Hungarian public life where RWE has had the most visible impact in the past few years.

4.1. Setting the political agenda

Jobbik has been in opposition since 2010 and had little influence on legislative process in the parliament. The Fidesz government had a 2/3 supermajority in the House which enabled it to pass laws without the need to negotiate or request the support of other parties. Having said that, when looking at the Jobbik manifesto, there is a striking similarity in what the party has proposed and what laws the Fidesz government has passed.

In its 2010 electoral programme, Jobbik proposed the first ten measures to adopt once in power. Since then, Fidesz has fulfilled eight out of ten (Balogh, n.d.; Bíró Nagy – Boros – Varga, 2012, pp. 8 – 9). Jobbik promised to cut taxes, rescue foreign-currency debtors, reduce public utility fees, tax multinational companies, cut the pensions of former Communist prominent figures, tie social assistance to public work, prevent foreign ownership of land, and award Hungarian citizenship to Hungarians living in neighbouring countries. The only demands which have not been met, were the abolition of parliamentary immunity (point 1) and the establishment of gendarmerie (point 9).

Apart from the ten measures, other well-known demands of Jobbik have also been satisfied by the Fidesz government. In more detailed electoral programmes in 2010 and 2014, as well as in various public statements Jobbik representatives have demanded to base the Constitution on Christian values, protect traditional forms of marriage, reintroduce grading and failure in elementary schools, rename public spaces associated with “negative historical figures” or “events,” nationalise private

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9 Fidesz government lost its supermajority in the Parliament in February 2015, after a defeat of its candidate in a by-election in the town of Veszprém

10 A few public spaces in Budapest that Fidesz renamed in Spring 2011 include Moscow Square to Széll Kálmán square, Republic Square to John Paul II Square, Roosevelt Square to István Széchenyi Square.
pension funds, make the anniversary of the Treaty of Trianon a national memorial day, adopt a tougher attitude towards Brussels, counterbalance the Euro-Atlantic orientation of the country with stronger ties with Eastern countries,\textsuperscript{11} – the list can go on.\textsuperscript{12} As mentioned above, the result is that, by 2015, a staggering number of Jobbik demands or proposals have been realised by the 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} Fidesz government.

Adopting items from Jobbik’s programme might be Fidesz’s strategy to lure some of the less radical voters of Jobbik. As a consequence of Jobbik’s agenda setting function, the politics of Hungary has increasingly radicalised, making the conservative Fidesz to shift further right.\textsuperscript{13}

4.2. Influence on public discourse: the spread of the expression “Gypsy-crime”

Public discourse is another area where RWE actors have left their imprint. By pushing the Roma topic, Jobbik has not only managed to set the public agenda, but also re-define how Roma are talked about. Juhász shows how the expression “Gypsy-crime” was an unknown connotation before 2005, and became mainstream as a result of RWE activism coupled with the inability of other parties to adequately respond to it.\textsuperscript{14}

Juhász traces the origin of the term “Gypsy-crime” to a legal-criminal-police discourse, a rather narrow professional circle in the 1970s and 1980s, but notes that, after the fall of Communism, the term was not used for a long time in the public discourse, let alone the political debate. The term was first reintroduced to public consciousness when Tamás Polgár, a Hungarian blogger who became renown under the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} The countries Jobbik sees as favourable foreign policy partners are China, India, Russia, Kazakhstan and Turkey. After 2010, Viktor Orbán PM visited all these countries and with Péter Szijjártó, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade started the so-called Eastern Opening government strategy.
\item \textsuperscript{12} An extensive list of Jobbik’s demands and Fidesz’s responses up to 2012 was collected by Andras Bíró Nagy and his colleagues in \textit{Right-wing extremism in Hungary} (2012). Since then the list has been continued by journalists in the media. The most recent update has been collected by tebege (2015).
\item \textsuperscript{13} At the same time, one can currently observe a strategy whereby Jobbik attempts to become more mainstream and to address less radical voters. A good example for is Jobbik “pet campaign” prior to the 2014 national elections, where it tried to communicate a much softer image of itself than four years ago. See e.g. the 2014 Jobbik electoral campaign film \textit{The Future cannot be stopped}.
\item \textsuperscript{14} What follows, is a summary of juhasz_attila (2010).
\end{itemize}
nickname Tom Cat, went on a TV debate show to publically defend a computer game entitled Olah Action, simulating the extermination of Roma. At the show and in the following months, Polgár argued that certain groups of Roma were “determined to be criminal” and sought to underpin his claim with incarceration statistics. The incident spurred a heated public debate and the term “Gypsy-crime” first time got out of the narrow criminological vocabulary as RWE blogs and forums started to spread it.

Jobbik first picked up the term after the lynching of Olaszliszka, when a Hungarian driver, thought to have hit a child, was killed by a Roma mob. In response to the incident, the party set up a website called ciganybunozes.com (meaning Gypsy-crime) and started to intentionally use the term in campaigns and party manifesto whenever a negative event associated with Roma and non-Roma cohabitation occurred. Graph 1 maps frequency of the use of the term “gypsy-crime” at the time of major news events arising in connection with the Roma in Hungary.

Graph 1. Frequency of the expression “Gypsy-crime” used by media, 2005 – 2009

Source: http://www.riskandforecast.com/
At this time, Juhász claims, there was an important change in the meaning of Roma stereotypes. In addition to the previous popular images referring to stupidity, chicken theft, unemployment and other relatively less ominous stereotypes, a new one emerged that represented Roma as dangerous, aggressive and murderous. It is telling in this respect that the now defunct Hungarian Guard also justified its existence and demonstrations with the need to protect the majority population from the Roma. “So as Jobbik by its campaigns has amplified the threats and ethnic conflicts in relation to Roma, with the establishment of Hungarian Guard, it has seemingly also offered a solution to these serious problems” (juhasz_attila, 2010). Depending on the forum they were presented on, there developed a variety of shades, more and less radical formulations of the Roma problem in Jobbik rhetoric. It was particularly important that the party voiced out loud, for the first time in recent Hungarian politics, what had hitherto been a taboo: they claimed that there was such a thing as “Gypsy-crime.” It was such a powerfully framed concept that other political and media actors, and opinion makers could not defy it and largely accepted it. Had they objected to it, it was not usually because of the meaning of the term, but rather due to the desirability of its use, which spurred a debate further perpetuating the use of the term (Vidra – Fox, 2012, p. 19). The spread of the term “Gypsy-crime” and the subsequent acceptance of its implicit attributes served as a symbol of credibility for Jobbik, and greatly strengthened its image as a party that dares to voice topics that are neglected by other political parties.

4.3. Paramilitary activism – Power demonstration in Gyöngyöspata

Gyöngyöspata is a small town in Heves County in North-Eastern Hungary. In the 2011 National Census it had 2,586 inhabitants out of which 318 (12.3%) identified themselves as members of the Roma community. The town became nationally known as a result of the escalating ethnic conflict in Spring 2011 between the local Roma and RWE paramilitary groups. Margit Feischmidt and Kristóf Szombati (2013) describe the unfolding of events as follows:

The Civil Guard for Better Future (at that time, a wing of the New Hungarian Guard) started patrolling the streets of Gyöngyöspata after an old man from the village blamed Roma for bullying him and committed suicide in 22 February 2011. Two days later, Jobbik’s television
channel, Barikád TV, broadcasted a report about the village with the title “Gypsy-terror – Heves County on the brink of civil war.” Jobbik organised a public demonstration in the main square of the village to which they recruited people with leaflets calling on the public to join a “demonstration against Gypsy-terror”. The demonstration was attended by some 1500-2000 locals and activists bussed in. After the speech, Jobbik leaders, accompanied by activists dressed in military uniforms visited the Roma area in the village and handed over a *Regulation for orderly cohabitation* (Együttélési szabályzat) to the representatives of the Local Roma Self-Government.

After the demonstration the Civil Guard kept patrolling the village for ten more days, and new paramilitary organisations, such as the Outlaw Army, arrived as well. The tension between the Roma population and RWE activists rose from day to day. Police was also present in increased numbers, but, apart from performing identity checks on the foreigners, it was claimed they were not entitled to intervene, because the Civil Guard members did not wear the symbols of banned Hungarian Guard. Amidst the rising tensions the mayor resigned and new elections were called. There were seven candidates: a few local public leaders, a newcomer supported by Jobbik, and a few newcomers backed by the paramilitary organisations. In the end, the candidate supported by Jobbik, Oszkár Juhász, won (by 33.8%). Amidst the high ethnic tensions, he was able to present himself as representing “radical, but common sense and just politics.” After his inauguration, Juhász introduced the “Érpatak model” (see below) and some 60 – 70 Roma emigrated from the town to Canada possibly as a result of the developments.

Margit Feischmidt and Kristóf Szombati provide a detailed account of the spiralling conflict in Gyöngyöspata. They claim that both sides had long-term grievances, which had paved the way for the conflict. While many Roma had been frustrated by the local elite, which backed segregation polices in housing and education, the majority population was annoyed by some of the petty theft and provocations by certain members of the Roma community. Both communities faced a difficult economic situation given that the town is located in a disadvantaged region. Until 2010, however, the approach of municipality towards Roma was characterised by “consensual silence.” This changed after the appearance of RWE organisations on the spot and the spread of “Gypsy-crime” narrative in public discourse. The mayor was put under pressure, and a
candidate without any previous experience in politics, but enjoying the backing of Jobbik, could easily take over the municipality. The case of Győngyöspata is a prime local level example of how Jobbik can use paramilitary organisations to aggravate ethnic conflicts and make political capital out of the event.

4.4. The Érpatak Model

Érpatak is a village in North-East Hungary (the Szabolcs-Szatmár Bereg county), which became known for its administrative model relying on strict law enforcement and intimidation of local population. The model has been developed by Mihály Zoltán Orosz, mayor of Érpatak, who became an inspiration for many municipalities since 2005.

Image 3. Mihály Zoltán Orosz talking to residents in Érpatak.

Orosz has a simplified concept of human nature (Robbanáshoz vezethet, 2011). He differentiates between constructive [építő] and subversive [romboló] members of society, and maintains that “the most subversive” members need to be punished harshly, so that the “weaker ones” know the standards they needed to abide by. He perceives the task of municipality to fight “subversives” continuously, as long as they do not “change,
leave, or are not put into prison.” Examples of tough measures in Érpaták include such regulations that gardens of local residents were not allowed to have weed, or must be in the fridge of households with children. Punishment for smaller offences may result in withdrawal of social benefits or even incarceration.

While the mayor makes no secret of his view that it is Roma individuals who caused the most problems in the village, he insists that his approach does not differentiate between Roma and non-Roma, only between cooperative and subversive members of society. It has been widely reported in the media that crime rates in the village have dropped dramatically since the establishment of the model. Locals (mostly Roma) are active in public work programmes where they cultivate the countryside, work on the maintenance of the cemetery and the canals. The village is planning to establish a new NGO for local community work. Clubs, they say, are sprouting in the village (karate, cooking, signing), and there are even charity events organised for the poorest (Aki nem érti, 2011). For all these signs of prosperity, Érpaták has become a model of sorts for radical-leaning local authorities. Currently, there are about twelve municipalities in the National Network of Érpaták, the purpose of which is to disseminate principles and know-how (Érpataki Modell Országos, n.d.).

There is no available academic analysis about the sustainability and effectivity of the model in terms of Roma integration. As a social worker pointed out in one of the articles, many believe that the Érpaták model is only a symptomatic treatment of deeper structural problems (unequal access to education, no way out from public work, and so on) that high fines and daily surveillance might be insufficient to solve. Moreover, a model based on intimidation might compel people to cooperate, but it does not help them understand why it is beneficial to do so (Robbanáshoz vezethet, 2011).

5. CONSTITUENCY

Let us look closer at Jobbik constituency in terms of its demographic and socio-economic characteristics.15

15 Unless noted otherwise, the data in this section is from Rudas (2010).
Age: Jobbik constituency is remarkably young. In 2010, 21.2% of its voters were aged 20 – 29 (in contrast to average voter, where this share is 15.4%), and as the age group of voters increases, the share of Jobbik voters gradually decreases. In the oldest cohort, aged above 69, the proportion of Jobbik voters was a mere 3.9% (average: 11.6%) (Rudas, 2010). Many of the young voters were first time voters, who had not even necessarily graduated from college. The youth of its supporters clearly differentiates Jobbik from most other RWE parties in Europe, where only the Austrian FPÖ and the Greek Golden Dawn have similarly young support base (Róna, 2014, p. 149).

Gender: Similarly to other RWE parties, Jobbik is a traditional “male party.” In 2010, there were twice as many men (13.2%) who voted for Jobbik then women (6.6%) (Rudas, 2010, p. 515). The gender gap is a classical feature of far right parties, especially if they engage in the cult of militarism. This one-sided masculinised image of RWE has been qualified by the work of Anikó Félix, who revealed that women fulfil some important roles within Hungarian extremist sub-culture, for example, acting as “spiritual healers” who mix paganism with nationalist ideologies (Félix, 2012).

Religious beliefs: While most of Jobbik supporters are religious “according to the teaching of the Church” (7.0%) or “in their own way” (54.9%), the proportion of atheists is higher (33.0%) among Jobbik voters than among others (25.6%), which is an interesting finding, given that the party officially defines itself as Christian.

Education: Jobbik voters tend to have average educational attainment. In 2010, 76.9% of its voters had some type of secondary education, be it vocational or high school (average 60.4%) (Rudas, 2010, p. 516). The party had somewhat fewer university graduates than other parties, but also only half the share of voters with elementary education at most than the average of all voters.

Employment: Given the age structure of Jobbik voters, there were fewer pensioners (16.7%) than among all other party voters in average (28.1%). While there were slightly more unemployed Jobbik voters than among mainstream voters, this was counter-balanced by a strong representation of employees (50.6% vs other voters: 40.9%) and entrepreneurs (7.3% vs other voters: 5.4%) in Jobbik.
Income: It is difficult to measure because people are often unwilling to report exact figures about their income. Using a crude binary indicator, Tamás Rudas found that among Jobbik voters there were slightly more people (56.3%) with a monthly personal income above a Euros 233 threshold than among respondents who voted for all other parties on average (54.8%). In absence of more detailed data on voter’s economic positions, Rudas compiled a bundle of resources (such as ownership and size of property, insurance, savings, ownership of various household equipment, and so on) and found that Jobbik voters were consistently better positioned in society than other voters. These and the preceding two characteristics (employment status and education) led Rudas to argue that Jobbik voters cannot be the “losers” in economic transformation, who lost out in the process of modernisation and now have turned to radicalism because of deprivation and unemployment. There are certainly people in much worse situation in society than RWE voters: the undereducated, people who were employed in low value-added economic activities, the elderly, the Roma, the unemployed (see e.g. Ferge, 1996; Kolosi – Tóth, 2008) – they are the real losers of transition, and data indicates that Jobbik voters as such do not belong to the same socio-economic class.

Geographic region: The above conclusion is somewhat qualified by András Kovács, who disaggregated party preferences according to regions (Kovács, 2013). He observed that in 2010, there were considerable regional differences in the distribution of Jobbik votes in the Hungary: in some regions the party gained much better results than other parties. In the North-Eastern regions of Hungary, where there is high unemployment and a significant Roma population, Jobbik received 23-27% of votes and was the second strongest party. In the Western regions it obtained less than 15%, whereas in the capital 11% of votes made it the smallest party which passed the parliamentary threshold. Kovács found that in the East, Jobbik voters tended to be more affluent then their peers, but in the Western part of Hungary most of them came from a poorer and working class background (Kovács, 2013, p. 230). All in all, the electorate of Jobbik is highly differentiated, which suggests there might be more than one story as to why one comes to support Jobbik with a particular socio-demographic background.
6. COMPETING EXPLANATIONS FOR THE RISE OF JOBBIK

One of the most researched, though still vexing questions about RWE parties, is why their popularity rises at one point in time but not at another. The question is even more puzzling in the CEE context as many of the factors most frequently cited causing the rise of RWE, such as economic crises and sizeable Roma population, seem to be similarly present in the case of other countries in the region as well, while the degree of support for RWE parties varies considerably. This section provides an overview of factors that have been researched with respect to the rise of Jobbik in 2009 and 2010, and focus on prejudice in society, political crises, the role of media and the internet.

Surveys have indicated that the level of prejudice towards minorities is very high in Hungary. Anikó Bernát and her colleagues surveyed public attitudes towards Roma from 1994 to 2011 (Bernát, 2013). Their findings show that most people agreed with the statement that “inclination to criminality is in the blood of Gypsies” (between 53-64%), or that “the problem of Gypsies would be solved if they finally started working” (78-89%). What is conspicuous about these results is not only the high share of people agreeing with anti-Roma statements, but, as the minimum values indicate in the brackets, the resilience of these attitudes over time. Péter Krekó and his colleagues also confirm in their study the high proportion of Hungarian prejudice in the European context (Krekó, 2012).

The authors use European Social Survey (ESS) data to compare different countries, and find that the level of prejudice and welfare chauvinism was one of the highest (52%) in Hungary in 2009.16 Table 2 shows the proportion of prejudice and welfare chauvinism in Hungary, although fluctuates but is higher than in the other Visegrad countries.

16 Prejudice refers to homosexuals and was measured by the question: “Gay and lesbian women should be left as free as possible to live their own lives as they wish.” The welfare chauvinism indicator refers to attitudes towards immigrants and was measured by a series of questions whether “letting immigrants into the country enriches the culture?” or “How many foreigners of non-Hungarian ethnicity would you allow to settle in the country?” etc. The ESS questions do not refer to Roma because they do not live everywhere in Europe and therefore it would be difficult to compare results. The attitude towards the migrants index shows well the degree of “This country belongs to X nation” way of thinking.
Table 2. Prejudice and Welfare Chauvinism in Visegrad Group (V4) countries

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<td>Slovakia</td>
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</table>

Source: DEREX Index: http://derexindex.eu/

While the level of prejudice towards minorities might be a good indicator of people’s receptivity to RWE attitudes in the country, it tells us very little about why the breakthrough of Jobbik happened in 2009. Classical theories often associate the rise of the far right with the economic decline or the crisis of welfare state. The argument suggests that in times of crises and high unemployment, impoverished people tend to choose radical parties who promise better future and more just society (Bell, 1955; Lipset, 1960). In consent with these assumptions some authors (e.g. Grajczjár – Tóth, 2011) emphasise the role of the economic and financial crisis – which just culminated in 2009 – in the rise of support for Jobbik. But given our knowledge about the electorate of Jobbik, the majority of whom have a better standard of living than the average and do not tend to be undereducated, it can be suggested that the economic thesis should be treated with caution. What differentiated Hungary from other countries in the region was that, between 2006 and 2010, there was also an acute political crisis. This started with an infamous speech at Balatonőszöd, an internal meeting where Ferenc Gyurcsány, PM and the leader of the socialist MSZP party admitted to members of his parliamentary party that they had lied to people. The speech leaked in the media and led to a scandal which culminated in riots and the siege of the headquarters of the state television in 2006, an event in the organisation of which prominent RWE leaders took an active part. The leadership of MSZP faced some further corruption cases and had to pass austerity measures counter to their electoral promises in the government. It resulted in the popularity of the PM plunging from 55% in 2006 to 16% in 2009, a drop which has been described as the greatest fall of voter confidence in the history of Hungary since the regime change (Beck – Bíró Nagy – Róna, 2011, p. 205). The dramatic decline of the left created a vacuum in the previous two-party system in Hunga-
ry, and a window of opportunity for smaller parties to vie for the support of disenchanted voters.\textsuperscript{17} Moreover, there was not only dissatisfaction among socialist voters, but a wider distrust in the population and a growth of anti-establishment attitudes towards public institutions and the political system in general. As Graph 2 shows, anti-establishment attitudes had been constantly on the rise since 2002 to culminate in 2009 (at 46%).\textsuperscript{18} The fermenting dissatisfaction of the system created a fertile ground for Jobbik, which represented a strong anti-establishment position among political parties.\textsuperscript{19}

**Graph 2. Anti-establishment attitudes in V4 countries, 2003 – 2013**

![Graph showing anti-establishment attitudes in V4 countries, 2003–2013](source: DEREX Index: http://derexindex.eu/)

Up to 2009, there were a number of conflicts, even homicides between Roma and non-Roma that were widely medialised. In 2006 at

\textsuperscript{17} According to Median Opinion and Market Research Institute about 14-26\% of Jobbik voters in 2009 had voted in 2006 for the socialist MSZP party (Utóítélet, 2009).

\textsuperscript{18} The anti-establishment indicator is composed of questions that measure trust and satisfaction in the political system, international bodies (EU, UN), law enforcement bodies and the political elite (Krekó – Juhász – Molnár, 2012).

\textsuperscript{19} Politics Can Be Different (Lehet Más a Politika – LMP) was another anti-establishment party that emerged on the left at the time (2009). Their support, however, remained lower (between 5-7\%). One of the reasons might be that in Hungary, progressive leftism has weaker tradition than national-conservatism.
Olaszliszka (a small village in Borsod county) a Hungarian driver accidentally hit a Roma child by car, after which an angry Roma crowd killed him out of revenge. One year later Jobbik (still a marginal party) established the Hungarian Guard with the stated purpose of ensuring order and security by eliminating or deterring criminals. In 2009 January, the police chief in Miskolc said that the majority of criminals were Roma. The Minister of the Interior removed him from office, but, sensing growing public dissatisfaction with the removal of a popular police chief, the Minister rehabilitated him. The most salient event, as indicated by Graph 1 on “Gypsy-crime” (sec. 4), happened a month later, when Marian Cozma, a popular handball player, was killed by few Roma in a disco in Veszprém. In the same month, a Roma family was attacked in Tatárszentgyörgy (small village in the Borsod county): the father and his five-year-old son were killed by Hungarian perpetrators. These assassinations received enormous media coverage and put the Roma issue into the spotlight in Hungary. It was quite favourable to Jobbik, even though their representatives received very little coverage.

Examining the agenda-setting function of the leading media outlets, Gergely Karácsony and Dániel Róna show the increasing salience of Roma issues in the mainstream media between 2006 and 2009. Their findings are all the more interesting because the coverage of these events was largely liberally framed (emphasising poverty and human rights issues rather than scapegoating), though the framing had little impact on public deep-seated prejudice and preconception about Roma. The authors confirm a classical tenet of media theory (“secondary agenda setting function”), namely that the media “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling people what to think about” (Cohen, 1963). Hence, whenever the media picked up the Roma topic, Karácsony and Róna argue, they benefited Jobbik, because the party created ownership over the issue (Karácsony - Róna 2011).20

The lack of Jobbik’s presence in mainstream media proved to be both a curse and blessing for the party. It was established in the early

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20 In 2009, 19% of people believed Jobbik was the party that could best handle the Roma issue (in contrast to Fidesz: 56%, MSZP: 8%), whereas only 8% of people said they would vote for it (Fidesz: 56%, MSZP: 8%), which shows that the popularity of Jobbik Roma policy went well beyond that of the party (Karácsony – Róna, 2011, p. 78).
2003, just at the time when the internet boom started. Because the party representatives were excluded from the mainstream media, they were forced from very early on to create alternative publicity for which the internet offered excellent opportunities. Using network analysis, Judit Bakó and her colleagues show how previously isolated RWE online communities found each other online and increased with Jobbik over time (Bakó, 2012). The authors map a wide network of some 300 actors, including, in addition to RWE political actors, news and history, rock music bands and publishing companies, online shops and fashion sites, which constitute a closed world, where the sites only link to each other. Bakó and her colleagues argue that in the case of RWE, the internet did not open up communities towards the outside world and establish a more democratic society. Quite on the contrary, the self-referentially cross-linked and increasingly diversified contents created an even more closely knit, “colourful but externally closed micro-world” (Bakó, 2012, p. 98). This process was more of a self-generating one and certainly not created by Jobbik, but consciously or intuitively, they managed to exploit very well the potential in these sprawling networks.

This section has argued that the key factors that facilitated the breakthrough of Jobbik in 2009 were a high level of prejudice in society, ongoing political crises, and the role of mainstream and alternative media. We do not discuss classical modernisation theories here, partly, because Jobbik voters are not the poorest in society, and partly, because an emphasis on the economic crises would not help us understand what made Hungary different from other CEE countries also affected by the global economic crises. The section relied mostly on demands-centred theories (voter attitudes) and tried, to an extent, to incorporate supply-centred ones (availability of parties) as well.

7. CONCLUSION

The case study highlights the characteristic features of Hungarian RWE between 2003 – 2014. Where comparative data was available, it notes national specificities in the EU and CEE context.

21 The only exception from these are the category of online shops, where market competition between rival outlets overwrites ideological agreement (Bakó, Tóth, & Bakó, 2012, p. 95).
The main findings are as follows:

RWE is an ambiguous concept. What best characterises the ideology of Jobbik is its anti-establishment position, which is reflected both in its maintenance of a paramilitary organisation and vocal aggression towards the Roma minority. Paramilitary organisations and paternalism are key features that differentiate RWE in CEE from its Western counterparts. Anti-minority rhetoric, on the other hand, is a feature that is shared across all other EU RWE, just as is law and order and anti-EU position.

The political party Jobbik was founded in 2003 and grew out of a university student movement founded in Budapest in 1999. It first passed the Parliamentary threshold in 2010 (16.7% of votes), and further increased in popularity (to 20%) in 2014. Gábor Vona, the chairman of Jobbik, established the Hungarian Guard, a paramilitary organisation in 2007 with a stated aim to deter or eliminate criminals. Because it was involved in instigating anti-Roma violence, the Hungarian Guard was banned by court decision in 2009, but immediately reconstituted itself under slightly different name (New Hungarian Guard). Partly due to the exclusion from the mainstream media, Jobbik and RWE actors were forced to develop a strong online presence. The most popular RWE news portal, kuruc.info, has a long track record of hate speech and privacy violations. Yet the site cannot be shut down because it is operated on US servers and enjoys extensive protection of freedom of speech. The cases of the Hungarian Guard and kuruc.info demonstrate the limited capacity of legal means to effectively counter RWE.

The strong presence of RWE has exerted a significant influence on Hungarian public life. Although Jobbik is in the opposition, it managed to set the political agenda for the Fidesz government since 2010. Eight out of the first ten measures on Jobbik electoral programme in 2010 have already been implemented by Fidesz. RWE has redefined the way Roma are talked about and mainstreamed the expression “Gypsy-crime” in Hungarian public discourse. On a local level a strict law-and-order-based approach have been popularised in RWE-controlled municipalities, and paramilitary organisations are used for intimidating Roma in the rural areas, where law enforcement is weak or has failed. By all these activities Jobbik and related RWE organisations have contributed to the radicalisation of Hungarian politics.
Jobbik electorate is remarkably young and relatively well off, which seems to differentiate it from most RWE parties in Europe. Jobbik voters are overrepresented in the age cohort of 20 – 29. They tend to be educated at an average level, more likely to be employed than other voters with slightly higher income. Geographically, the party enjoys the highest support in the North-East of Hungary, characterised by high unemployment and a significant Roma population. Demographic data thus provide a mixed picture about Jobbik appeal for the electorate. On one hand, the party seems to be popular in poorer areas, with is greater competition for scarce resources. On the other hand, the national voter base of party is clearly more complex, as it involves many young, middle class and educated people as well.

The breakthrough of Jobbik in 2009 can be best explained by the high level of prejudice in society and the political (rather than economic) crises the country underwent from 2006 on. The demise of the left not only created a vacuum in the political system, but increased general distrust and anti-establishment values in the society, both of which were quite favourable to Jobbik. The media coverage of Roma conflicts helped to prime people about the importance of Jobbik favourite item on agenda, and despite limited coverage Jobbik officials received in mainstream media, they were effective at keeping in touch with their electorate through alternative media channels.

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EXTREMISM IN POLAND: RADICAL MOVEMENTS AND SOCIAL ATTITUDES AS A PHENOMENON OF POLITICAL EXTREMISM

1. INTRODUCTION

The Report on Security Situation in Poland published in September 2014 by the Ministry of Internal Affairs assessed the threat posed by Polish extremist organisations, which promoted radical ideology, as “relatively low”. Among the causes identified by the Ministry were organisational weaknesses, the leaders’ inability to find a compromise, as well as “predominance of verbal radicalism over actions” (Raport o stanie..., 2014). Nevertheless, recent years have shown an increase in activity of such milieus and their significance within Polish society. Is it a permanent change?

The last two decades of the 20th century were a period of transformation for the countries of Central and East Europe (CEE). It was the time of critical socio-political shifts accompanied by turbulent debates, social tensions, but also important changes that brought a renaissance of radical right-wing movements. The new democracy brought along political pluralism, allowing for the development of not only major political parties, but also those that incorporated in their official programmes elements of xenophobia, racism and aversion towards foreigners. Moreover, these platforms now also attract a significant number of followers, which is reflected by the representation of right-wing extremist groups in various parliaments across Europe (Drobczyński, 2007). Understanding the range, methods of operation, as well as the ideology of these groups, enables proper assessment and identification of the threats that might be potentially brought by the extremists particularly to structural safety. It
is defined as socio-political status which ensures that the mechanisms of the established political system encompassing its laws and values are respected and effectively safeguarded (Fehler, p. 179).

Is it true that the end of the 20th century shaped Polish political scene in a way that it is now profoundly different from other Central and East European countries? Did the so-called political extremism movements experience revival also in Poland as a result of political transformation? If that is the case, how do they influence the political scene? What is the scope of their activity and do they pose real danger for the reborn 25-year old democracy?

In order to answer these questions, the notions of extremism and political extremism ought to be defined, as do similarities and differences between right- and left-wing forms of extremism. Then examples of political parties and movements associated with the broadly defined adherence to extremism can be offered.

2. EXTREMISM – POLISH DEFINITIONS

According to Polish *Słownik Wyrazów Obcych* [Dictionary of Foreign Words] (Tokarski, p. 181) the word extremism etymologically comes from the Latin extremus, meaning “the most distant, the last; the farthest point”. According to another dictionary, it is understood as acting in favour of radical views on a given issue; extremeness; also, using extreme means to reach a political or ideological aim. Jan Tokarski defines an extremist as an individual in the grip of extreme views, an advocate of definitive measures (Tokarski, p. 181). He also points out that extremism can be defined as various forms of radical mindsets, which are based on extreme means of actions, although it does not mean that they are always directed towards extreme aims. With respect to that, a form of thought and means of action are part of the essence of definition of extremism, while the aims and actions themselves are not necessarily part of it. Extremism, therefore, is not a standing, absolute or universal concept. On the contrary, extremism is relative and subject to broad interpretation. It means that what may be considered the ultimate extremism for one individual, may also be treated as moderation by another. Roman Tokarczyk defines an extremist as someone who advocates extremism by favouring extreme views on given issues (Tokarczyk, pp. 15-16).
Such individuals are likely to reach for extreme, the ultimate means in their activity, including violence, rebellion or terror in order to achieve their goals. They may be of ideological, social, religious, political, economic or extremist nature. Tokarczyk also notices that, if the definition of an extremist is applied to a group of people, particularly to an organised social structure or a political party, a notion of extreme is suitable, i.e. party extreme (Tokarczyk, pp. 15-16). Franciszek Ryszka, in turn, defines extremism as a generalised measure of deviation from the current political norm and a specific tendency to violate the regulations of the standard (Ryszka, pp. 12-13)

Extremism is primarily characterised by the following:

1. It is a notion that encompasses sets of various forms of thought, means and aims, understood altogether as extreme, ultimate, marginal and peripheral;

2. It is common in liberal, democratic and pluralistic societies, where a wide spectrum of political orientations is entertained;

3. It is collective, since it serves the interests of a particular group making some less or more justifiable demands, supported by the use of force, if required;

4. Demarcations between extremists, radicals, terrorists, fundamentalists, fanatics, and more importantly non-conformists and eccentrics are questionable, especially from the point of view of different social sciences;

5. Extremist group is characterised by self-isolation, its own way of thinking and use of language, original symbolism, the inability to engage in a constructive discourse and inclination to particularly type of knowledge, i.e. conspiracy theories;

6. As a result of separation from the rest of the society, extremists consider themselves to be a minority or even an élite; they are unable to critically correct themselves, but are capable of compensating failures by extreme violence of actions;

7. Extremist activity mostly, but not always, resorts to violence;

8. Extremists often take advantage of given opportunities in order to infiltrate a legal democratic state, leading to undermining or even destruction of its institutions;
9. extremists act in the name of social development or progress defined in some way (Tokarczyk, pp. 17-18).

According to Krzysztof Karolczak, the following features define any type of extremism:

1. over-simplification of worldview and its perspectives, Manichean way of perceiving reality;
2. monocasual association of evil with “natural enemy” or with regards to specific place and time: foreignism, communism, fascism, liberalism, “lower races”, other religion, etc.;
3. the use of linguistic devices such as “common good” or “securing nation’s fundamental interests”, which serve as a disguise for totalitarian aims;
4. idealization of social and cultural traditions of societies, where the extremist agenda is cultivated;
5. highlighting the special role (“destiny”) of the extremist ideology and its followers in the development of societies and transformations of contemporary world;
6. using all accessible means (primarily social engineering methods, but also those not refraining from forceful solutions) in order to popularize own agenda (Karolczak, p. 42).

It needs to be noted that “many phenomena exist in public life, which are deemed extreme or politically radical” (Jakubowska, p. 11). It is not an infrequent practice to use these terms interchangeably. Yet some studies link the notion of extremism to political right-wing, while that of radicalism is associated with left-wing movements (Jakubowska, p. 11). Such distinction sometimes proves helpful in crafting a more precise definition of a given movement or idea, and polarising it on a political spectrum (Mazurczak, 2009).

3. POLITICAL EXTREMISM

Not only are extremities present in politics, but they also occur in other significant areas of human activity, such as religion (often connected with politics) or economics. Hence, they stand for a fixed element of so-
Extremism in Poland
cio-political life, usually residing at its periphery (Mazurczak, 2009). Political extremism is a multi-faceted phenomenon usually placed at a dichotomic axis, which allows for seeking relations to what is considered i.e. ultimate, radical, fundamental and fanatical (Tomaszewski, p. 47). This type of extremism can be described as a “set of forms of political ideas and consequent political actions, situated at far ends of the axis, which reflect the complete, varied political spectrum of specific time and place, with its centre serving as the point of reference” (Tokarczyk, p. 25). It is worth mentioning that extremists never represent a mass political movement; it does not bare the hallmarks of a social movement either. On one hand, extremists use ideas and ideologies, which are characterised by small degree of rationalisation, bursting, at the same time with emotional elements, which are used in their course of action. On the other hand, they use means rooted in physical and psychological coercion, what leads to bloodshed and spreads fear. There is a lack of adequacy between the use of means and the achievement of the set goals. Political extremism also features a phenomenon of relativism in time and space. “What is considered to be political extremism in one place and/or time, need not be the same in other circumstances. The factor is the extreme position or positions of extremism on the spectrum reflecting the real balance of power, relative to its political centre” (Tokarczyk, p. 25).

Political extremism can manifest itself in the form of ideology, attitudes or political actions. Its core characteristic is antidemocratic position (Jakubowska, p. 11). Urszula Jakubowska also suggests that, for the individuals showing extremist attitudes, it is common to:

1. regard their worldview as the only valid one;
2. resist deviating from values and norms established by the adhered ideology;
3. be convinced that the surrounding world, or at least their close social environment should be run by their rules and norms;
4. prioritise own ideologies and convictions;
5. deny other people their distinctness and freedom of opinion, values and lifestyle (Jakubowska, p. 11).

Krzysztof Karolczak mentions the following sources of contemporary political extremism: economic, political, ideological, religious and psy-
chological. With respect to economic causes, he mentions uneven development of productive forces resulting in changes in the production process and its relationships, poverty, scarcity of resources, starvation, unemployment, and homelessness. In turn, political sources of political extremism result from repressive character of the state, the tradition of political struggle, discriminating policies against certain social groups. The author defines radical policy-making as the ideological cause. Religious causes, as a source of political extremism, reside in religion itself. As it becomes politicised it may become the basis for extremist attitudes. Psychological causes, being one of the sources of contemporary political extremism, stem from the human nature, specifically from the revolting attitudes against the established social order. Karolczak refers to Albert Camus, attempting to explain this particular phenomenon: “a revolt […] is a movement, in which a man rises against his own fate and the world. […] A slave protests against his slavery, rebellious in a metaphysical way against his own destiny as a man.” (Karolczak, p. 41).

4. LEFT- AND RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM

Both far-left and far-right forms of extremism date back to French Revolution of 1789. The notion of far-left extremism primarily encompasses anarchistic practices of autonomous groups and various forms of communism (Tokarczyk, pp. 28-29). Anarchism can be understood as a socio-political movement antagonising all types of national organisation, postulating the abolishment of the state with the intention of replacing it with vaguely defined relationships between producers and consumers (Tokarski, p. 32). In their activity, autonomous groups refer to the right of making independent decisions about their own issues; they deny all authority. Yet they do address various forms of communism with different degrees of intensity, the ideologies of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, Mao Tse-Tung, less frequently Che Guevara and Fidel Castro (Tokarczyk, p. 29).

The collective notion of far-right extremism mainly embraces two types of political thought and practice, namely fascism and nationalism. Racism is only occasionally affiliated with this type of extremism. Political parties or movements associated with political extremism come under the umbrella term of ultra-right-wing (Tokarczyk, p. 29). Stefan Stepień emphasises that political extremism is often equated with “right-
wing populism”, “right-wing radicalism”, “neo-fascism” and “neo-Nazism” (Stępień, p. 296). Stępień also summons the views of Anna Wolf-Powęska, who claims that extremist right-wing movements are directed towards the mobilisation of Vox Populi. Their core ideology revolves around populism and nationalism (Drobczyński, 2007). What distinguishes them from other right-wing groups is “the negation of political parties and representative democracy” (Wolf-Powęska, p. 488).

If extremism negates the fundamental principle of social equality, it is defined as right-wing extremism. Yet if it stretches the same principle across all aspects of life, meanwhile repressing the idea of individual freedom, it is recognised as left-wing extremism in the form of communism (Tokarczyk, p. 29). What sets these two systems apart is the fact that the former is anti-democratic and pro-capitalistic, while the latter is anti-capitalistic and not necessarily democratic. Nevertheless, they share common ground and some similarities:

1. claiming the right to exclusive representation of whole societies;
2. negation of pluralistic-democratic systems, strong inclination towards abolishment of democratic institutions in a given state (Jakubowska, p. 49);
3. dogmatism;
4. binary worldview (friend – enemy; good – bad);
5. fanaticism, which justifies any means to an end (Jakubowska, p. 49).

Both forms of authoritarianism, left- and right-wing, are characterised by a specific syndrome of attitudes, which make an individual prone to react in the same, generalised manner to a certain group of stimuli. Authoritarianism is defined by three categories of attitudes: authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression and conventionalism (Jakubowska, p. 49).

5. EXTREMISM IN POLAND – CASE STUDIES

In the 21st century the extremist movements in Poland have been operating or still operate, acting according to the patterns adopted yet in the 1990’s. Among the right-wing political parties and movements classified
as of extremist character, the most notable ones are Polska Wspólnota Narodowa (Polish National Commonwealth), Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski (National Renascence of Poland) and Organizacja Polityczna Narodu (Political Organisation of the Nation).

5.1. Polska Wspólnota Narodowa

Polska Wspólnota Narodowa (PWN) is regarded as strongly nationalist. It was formed in 1990 as a result of transformation of Polski Związek Wspólnoty Narodowej (Polish Union of the National Commonwealth). Bolesław Tejkowski was the president from its early beginnings. In 1990 – 1991 PWN was the publisher of the monthly periodical Myśl Narodowa Polska (The Polish National Thought). Between 1993 and 1996, the party used a dyadic name PWN-PSN (Polska Wspólnota Narodowa – Polskie Stronnictwo Narodowe/Polski National Commonwealth – Polish National Alliance). From 1998 to 2005 PWN was engaged in publishing another monthly periodical Community. Fierce opposition against the European Union and NATO was incorporated in its agenda along with strong anticlerical notes. It advocated economic and political independence from the EU, NATO and the USA, yet it popularised the idea of cooperation with Slavic states, particularly Russia. PWN joined the Pan-Slavic Council. It manifesto states that: “The Polish Nation needs its own moral grounds, particularly in the present era, as they stand for the uniting force of the Nation, now being divided and dispersed. They stand for the force of entrenchment and improvement of the Nation, now being eviscerated and partitioned. They stand for the force of continuation and distinction of the Nation, now losing its identity and being denationalised. They stand for the force of creativity and self-sufficiency of the Nation, now being restrained from creation and enslaved. They stand as the force of pride and dignity of the Nation, now demeaning itself and being humiliated. They fill the Nation with own internal motivation to achieve greater collective good, protecting from external violence, which acts as an agent of foreign intrigues” (www.pwn.waw.pl). The platform contains allusions to God, Nation and Family – The National Moral Code stems from the superiority of righteousness and interconnected national system of values that are deemed to be crucial for man: God, Nation, Family and Creative Community (www.pwn.waw.pl). The analysis of a leaflet presented by PWN-PSN in 1991 (which appeared as a reprint in Myśl Narodowa Polska, vol. 5) allows narrowing
down some important directives related to the functioning of the state, according to the premises of the party:

1. Aspiration to create a nation state;

2. Every individual in the new state will be required to disclose their national identity;

3. Restriction of political liberties for ethnic minorities occupying the new state; however, the protection of race and culture is guaranteed;

4. Ethnic minorities will be deprived of the right to hold governmental seats (in national Parliament, Government or administrative apparatus); these minorities will only be allowed to perform advisory, propounding and consultative roles in self-governing organs;

5. State apparatus has to be structured in accordance with uniformity of power and elitism; in order to perform executive functions one needs to be an alumnus of Wszechnica Narodowa, the superior political university;

6. In terms of economy, Poland has to be an autarkic nation, isolated from the Western states by high tariffs;

7. Development of social role of the state: elimination of unemployment, full employment, increased salaries, introduction of a six-hour workday; family-friendly policy

8. Rejection of both communism and capitalism and defining a “third-way-state”

9. Negation of political and economic system developed under the 3rd Republic of Poland (Stępień, pp. 297-299).

The PWN never achieved success in parliamentary elections, not even in 1991, 1993 and 1997. At the time the party ran for the parliament as PWN-PSN, gaining support respectively of 5,262 (0.05%), 14,989 (0.1%) and 8,590 (0.07%) votes. In the 2005 elections it did not register a single list. In cooperation with Polskie Stronnictwo Narodowe it formed a coalition of nationalist parties – Polski Komitet Narodowy (Polish National Committee). Together they aimed at running for the Parliament. A sub-
stantial majority of PWN members participated in youth counterculture, the Skinheads (Drobczyński, 2007).

5.2. National Renascence of Poland

National Renascence of Poland (NOP) was founded in 1981, yet it only arrived at its present values and ideals after the NOP registered as a political party in 1992. The NOP builds on the national-radical heritage of such organisations as the National Radical Camp and its ABC branch, the National Radical Movement Falanga, Group Szaniec, or, the Confederation of the Nation. The nature of the nexus of national-religious values in the NOP allows to classify this national-radical representative under Christian nationalism (Grott, 1999). The grouping concerned can also be regarded as the “third positionist”, since it unifies thoughts of a Catholic integrist, nationalism, Gilbert Keith Chesterton’s and Hillary Belloc’s distributionism, as well as a radical conservatism (especially integral traditionalism of Julius Evola and René Guenon). Consequently, the Third Position can be referred to as a traditional nationalism which continues the ideological legacy of the interwar national-radical and Christian movements, e.g. the José Antonio Primo’s Falanga, the Corneliu Zelea Codreanu’s Legion of the Archangel Michael, or the aforementioned Polish national-radical movement. The inspirations and ideals are lauded by the NOP, which makes it a representative of right-wing nationalism (Karczewski, 2012).

Among many values subscribed to by the NOP, focusing on the nation and on the God deserve a particular mention. The two form a strong hierarchical structure, with God being superior to the nation, holding the primacy over it. It stemmed from the main tenet of Christian nationalism: the Absolute, the eternal, perfect and a temporal God stands above the worldly material nation. That merges nationalist and conservative thought in which the sacred is superordinate to the profane. These core values are addressed in Ideological Principles of Nationalism, one of the two key documents of the NOP. The first statement of the manifesto asserts the imperative of prioritising the objectives: a conscious life of each individual ought to prioritise the achievement of goals arranged by the hierarchy of values and their interdependence within a system, together with the achievement of the ultimate goal (Zasady Ideoowe Nacjonalizmu, p. 5).
The aforementioned “ultimate goal” is God himself, both in individual and social sphere (Zasady Ideowe Nacjonalizmu, p. 5), since He is a solid, time-independent value and from Him norms and regulations derive for an individual and commonwealth (Zasady Ideowe Nacjonalizmu, p. 5), as the national radicals claim. These legal rules, in turn, fall under natural law. In the above document, the existence of the nation stems from the social nature of humankind meaning that “human cannot develop beyond a human community” (Zasady Ideowe Nacjonalizmu, p. 5). This introduces communities as natural and organic phenomenon, since they are not a sum of individuals, but integrity which allows an individual to maintain his own ultimate goal and to enrich his life for seeing other people’s achievements (Zasady Ideowe Nacjonalizmu, p. 5).

Communities are thus seen as the path to salvation. Moreover, participation in the community entails both rights and obligations: community exists to enrich individual lives and to secure their rights while enforcing their obligations (Zasady Ideowe Nacjonalizmu, p. 5), (and the most important of all the human communities, “the highest order community – being the natural community” (Zasady Ideowe Nacjonalizmu, p. 5), is, of course, the national community, which makes the NOP fully mirror Christian-nationalist views on God and nation. The former is seen as the absolute value for humankind and the goal in itself, while the latter is the means of salvation, thus a benefit for the nation. The latter, in turn, is only the supreme value in worldly existence. The document also provides a more detailed definition of the nation: nation is a voluntary relation built upon common psychological bonds and moral connections of people sharing cultural identity they wish to maintain and develop, as has been passed on through their common ancestry and historical tradition (Zasady Ideowe Nacjonalizmu, p. 5).

National community is, then, a communion based first and foremost on the spiritual bonds entrenched in culture and Roman-Catholic tradition, rather than on blood ties or territorial integrity. It is typical of the NOP that religion operates on traditional foundations, as opposed to the legacy of the Second Vatican Council, which further highlights the party right-wing orientation (Karczewski, 2012).

Some of the NOP strong statements:
1. political decentralisation with significant influence by local communities in structuring the Popular Rule – the genuine national power;

2. in terms of economy, it claims the equality of capital and labour as well as the spread of private ownership on the base of corporatist model;

3. Opposition to concentration of ownership in the hands of either the state or the faceless capital;

4. Rejection of a false democratic system, as it results in moral relativism and entrusts people’s future into the hands of the corrupt political élites;

5. Anticipation of threats to the State from the European Union, with a strong voice of the NOP’s opposition to the elimination of Polish statehood;

6. The imperative of eradication of demo-liberal (or liberal democratic) system through the National Revolution understood as a complete socioeconomic and political shakeup in accordance with the lasting values of Latin Civilisation.

NOP activities also embrace:

1. anti-Zionism, as the Zionist movement manifests Jewish imperialism; according to NOP, the Jewry have always been one of the corrupters of Christian-founded European civilisation, as well as a threat to national interests of Poland, its sovereignty and independence;

2. Proclamation of the National Revolution including the moulding of a “New Man” able to discriminate between Truth, Good, Right, and Falsehood, Bad, Wrong – with the qualities being all-pervasive today. The “New Man” would strive to achieve what he believes to be the ultimate goal for himself and the society: God being “the Giver of norms and regulations” (Zasady ideowe nacjonalizmu, p. 300-301).

The NOP activists advocate:

1. Popular Rule – against false democratic system;

2. self-determination – against centralisation of the State;
3. Polish corporatism – against communisation and liberalisation;
4. social solidarity – against class struggle;
5. general enfranchisement – against sales of economic resources;
6. workplaces for the Poles – against immigration;
7. inviolability of Western borders – against the German “fifth column”;
8. defending the Eastern Borderlands – against post-Soviet barbarism;
9. Europe of Free Nations – against the EU and NATO;
10. strong army – against impunity of criminals;
11. effective legal system – against impunity of criminals;
12. pro-life – against genocide;
13. revival of local communities – against atomisation of society;
14. plurality and individuality – against uniformity;

The NOP has meanwhile always paid particular attention to education of its members and supporters, ever since it was set up. To do so, it has organised course cycles on socio-political, economic, religious and historical issues (Drobczyński, 2007).

5.3. Political Organisation of the Nation

Political Organisation of the Nation (OPN) is one of extremist national groupings established by Jan E. Dziżyński, Tadeusz Prus-Maciński, Kazimierz Kurasiewicz and Mirosław Żochowski in 1992 (Tokarz, p. 299). In the mind of its activists, post-1989 Poland has fallen under the regime of “enemy within” – the Jewish Masons. Jews or those whom they influence are in the chair in all of Polish political parties (Stępień, p. 299).
5.4. National Party

National Party (SN) is a political party founded in 1999, a merger of the “senioral” National Party and the National-Democratic Party. The SN(s) was formed (reactivated) in 1989, as an heir to the National Party of 1928 (Sokół, Żmigrodzki, p. 250). Inspired by Sebastian Wojciechowski, one of the areas the party addresses is the identification of foes for the sake of security of Polish interests (Wojciechowski, p. 111). So far, these have been the communists, the religious and non-religious left, minorities (mainly Jews), cosmopolitans (Jews and the Masons), and finally foreigners as regards people, consultants, investors and the capital (Wojciechowski, p. 111).

5.5. National Party The Fatherland

National Party The Fatherland (SN”O”) is a political party was formed in 1992, after a split within the National Party, and represented left-wing national movement of the urban lower middle classes. In December 1996 the SN”O” annexed the National-Democratic Party (renamed the National Party since December 1999), (Sokół – Żmigrodzki, op. cit.). According to Krystyna Paszkiewicz, the organisation advocated fierce xenophobia and antisemitism. Furthermore, the leader Bogusław Rybicki, promoted conspiracy theory about secret communication between the Germans and the Jews, which the two use to seize power over Europe (Paszkiewicz, p. 111).

5.6. National Workers’ Party

National Workers’ Party (NPR) existed for a very short time, being founded in 1993, however many of its statements still draw supporters. The movement’s postulates include:

1. Call for National Revolution that would lead to a rapid collapse of the mainstream politico-economic system;
2. Limitations to rights of minorities in Poland;
3. Withdrawal of civil and political rights to Jews and everyone of Jewish descent;
4. Ceding all public offices to Poles;
5. Prohibition of any activities by communist and liberal organisations;

6. Exhortation to join Aryan Revolution – consequently, Aryan descendants will have a powerful voice in the “new” Poland (Tołkarz, p. 156).

5.7. Polish National Commonwealth - Polish National Party

Polish National Commonwealth – Polish National Party (PWN-PSN) envisages nationalism in a different way, especially with regard to its relationship with religion, not based on Christian nationalism, which also makes the PWN-PWN hard to classify to either the left or the right. For a long time the grouping was considered to be radically right-wing, although its manifesto advocated some elements of dedicated social radicalism that were even stronger than in, for instance, the NOP. Moreover, since the beginning of the 20th century political thought of the organisation proclaims leftist views in particular, such as social justice, equal opportunities, importance of trade unions, defence of state property and the concept of “production communities” (Odezwa do społeczeństwa polskiego, pp. 4-5). Furthermore, the PWN-PSN does not draw inspirations either from specific organisations or from any forms of Polish nationalism, but rather seeks reference to Polish national movement in general. In this area, the party originates from the rebellion of the Polish Nation in 1956 against the imposed socialism and communism, as well as from moral obligation to fight for independent Poland and the free Poles, and to establish a strong, just and rich Polish State. “The basis of our heritage is the Polish national movement we creatively continue and deliver anew today. We are the continuers of the Polish Union of the National Commonwealth founded in 1955” (Założenia ideowe, p. 3).

PWN-PSN pays significant attention to its ideas about the nation. This key value in nationalist ideas is described as “the most important and supreme human culture-making community. It's a permanent and conscious community of people of one Race and Culture who share history and goals. (...) Common background and feeling of kinship together with common history and values give the strongest relation and will of acting together to the people of the Nation, which is the best of creative communities. Only Nation creates Culture. (...) It unleashes the strongest feelings and creative forces in human. (...) Everyone belongs to one Nation by birth.” (Założenia ideowe, p. 3) The definition of nation is far
distinct from that of the radical nationalist NOP. Here, the nation is created by culture, tradition, common history, language, blood lines and origins. PWN-PSN stands out among other nationalist organisations of Poland between the two world wars and now because nationalism was mostly defined as the communion of spirit focusing on the cultural aspects in defining the identity which distinguished it from, for example, German nationalism that glorified bloodlines and birth as the defining element of national identity. PWN-PSN binds those traditions to some extent by accentuating the role of culture just as bloodlines, which is vital when defining Polish citizenship.

To PWN-PSN the state has a national character, thus the Polish nation is its only host. The nation creates the state as its political organisation with certain tasks. The party claims in its Ideological Premise that: “The Nation has its State as a means of organising its life. The State is an expression of Nation's will, it organises its common actions, it protects its well-being, it grants its safety and defence, it fulfils its needs and goals. The State as the superior political organisation of the Nation is a necessary prerequisite of its independence, strength and development.” PWN-PSN presents typical nationalist vision of the state as a guardian and guarantor of its identity and security of national community by facilitating its development. The strong accent focuses on culture, especially the role of the state in its preservation and development: “We need to nurse the Nation's shape, independence and strength of our State which helps the Nation to effectively develop it culture and achieve greatness”. Legitimisation of state power comes from the nation whose will the state is to represent, what brings some democratic element to the case. Therefore such political system could be called 'nationcracy' – the power of the Polish nation, a system, which grants each member of the nation the right to influence the decisions of the state. There is no sacralisation of power and attachment to any religion as NOP does.

The extremism connected with the groups mentioned above is not limited only to their views, but also to aggressive acts against those targeted as the anti-national elements. Stefan Stępień offers a few examples of such acts which confirm putting the ideas to practice:

1. The acts carried out in the 1990s by skinheads from PWN-PSN. Most of their demonstrations have ended in clashes with the police or political opponents: anarchists, the youth of the Polish Socialist Party or Labour Union and pacifists.
2. The Polish National Front (political party registered in 1991), had a well-maintained youth movement – the Polish Legion, which repeatedly engaged in military group activities. Their members were trained in violence during special camps. The greatest scandal about PNF took place in 1994 when three Polish Legion activists had beaten about 20 homeless people, two of whom died. It was just after the camp near Śniardwy lake which they attended.

The main characteristics of attitudes among the Polish extremist nationalist movements may be identified by:

1. aspiration to build a homogenous nation state;
2. relating national state to Roman-Catholic state; Roman-Catholic ethics as the basis for national ethics;
3. using slogans such as "Poland for Poles" and "Polish-Catholic";
4. anti-Semitism and anti-Germanism;
5. negative or aggressive attitude to people of ideological norms different from nationalists;
6. Catholic integrism; criticising changes in the Church after the Second Vatican Council;
7. rejection of communism and liberal-democratic systems;
8. opting for political solutions known as the 'Third Position' or the 'Third Way'
9. deprecation for political and economic system of the Third Polish Republic
10. opposition to NATO and EU;
11. repetition of populist slogans;
12. radical assessment of the current civilisation, it's in the state of deep crisis caused by modernism and other dangerous currents;
13. a need to restore traditional values and raise new people with respect for those values;
14. execution of national revolution.
The 2013 report by the Ministry of Interior on security in Poland mentioned that there were incidents with members and followers of those organisations, though “most were committed acts of vandalism”\(^1\). The examples include brawls during the Independence Day Marches on 11 November. Some extremist organisations have military groups used for, *inter alia*, physical fight against opponent organisations. According to the Ministry, until now, there were “single cases” of sentencing their members for founding leading and participating in organised crime. Report estimates that the tendency of 'mixing of extremist nationalist groups, organized crime and sport hooligans communities will not change.

According to the Ministry of Interior, vital element of the activity of some radical right-wing communities is to become official political reality. The awareness of their organisational and financial limits results in treating political campaigns as an opportunity to present their anti-system agenda in the media. Radical left groups focus mainly on propaganda and informational activity. The confrontations between the followers of the radical right are occasional.

The Ministry of Interior informs that “particularly disturbing is the growth in number of racist incidents in last few years.” Extremist groups are characterised by contestation of political and social reality, supporting aggression and conspiracy theories. They also question democratic system due to ideological systems, referring to works: German Nazism, Italian fascism, racist and neopagan theories, anarchism or revolutionary Marxism.

The factor which accelerates engaging in such activities might be the economic problems of the country, which – according to the Ministry: “might lead to the rise of social disorder and anti-capitalistic, anti-state or anti-globalist actions”.

The report also indicates that sports hooligans mix with extremist right more often. Hooligans “use extremely nationalist, racist, antisemitic and homophobic” Extremist right-wing groups organise meetings and concerts by Nazi-rock bands which helps distribution of CDs with neo-Nazi content. “The scale of such activity might lead to the development

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\(^1\) All quotations in this section are from: *Raport o stanie bezpieczeństwa w Polsce* [Report on security situation in Poland] (2014).
Extremism in Poland

of an international web of distribution of propaganda content”, warns the report. The report further highlights anti-Islamic activity: ”The danger of extremism driven by racial and religious hatred might lead to conflicts between the Muslim community and xenophobic movements.” Anti-Islamic activity currently focuses on propaganda on the internet.

According to police sources, in 2013 there were more legal actions connected with extremist incidents than in 2012. There were over 87% more incidents that involved the use of violence or illegal threats with national, ethnic, racial, political, or religious background (24 in 2012 and 45 in 2013). Incidents involving promotion of fascism or totalitarianism grew by 30% (117 and 390). Public offense against groups of people of various ideologies, nationalities and races doubled (98 and 196).

The Internal Defence Bureau continued five investigations in 2013 that were connected to extremism and opened four new cases. All in all, six people were brought to court. Furthermore, according to the Supreme Court, in recent years there was growth in number of investigations connected to crimes with racial background. In 2013 there were 835 cases: 719 were new incidents. 284 people were brought to court in 157 cases. 19 people were arrested. There were 5 petitions for conditional extinction of the case and 111 indictments. In 2013 there were more closed cases due to failure in identifying the offender: 298 (110 in 2012).

In 2013 people were mostly attacked on the grounds of their nationality, ethnicity, race or religion (332 cases); incitement to hatred on national, ethnic, racial, religious basis (316), using violence against an individual (56), bodily harm (37), violation of physical integrity (27), beating by more than one person (21) and arson (4). Over 30% of cases were connected to the use of the Internet. 218 were connected to racist texts (5 of which were on Jew cemeteries). The most common targets were Jews (199), blacks (95), Muslims (85), Roma (62), Arabs (30), Christians (23), Russians (19) and Chechens (12).

According to Supreme Prosecutor Office in 2013 there were 61 judgments against the defendants (50 in 2012). 87 people were convicted (59 in 2012); 9 cases were conditionally put ad acta 7 people were found innocent.
6. EXAMPLES OF ANTI-EXTREMIST ACTIVITIES IN POLAND

As extremist organisations grow stronger in Poland, the organizations that oppose them are established or reactivated. Sociologists indicate that growing interest in the extreme right is related to increasing social frustration and a lack of humanistic values in business, which focuses on profit and not social sustainability. Another cause is that Centre-Left and Social-Democratic parties are ineffective in fighting social inequalities which stem from placing economic competitiveness and profit above quality of life and working conditions. Socialist and Social-Democratic parties that are in the Parliament accept the rule that economic performance is more important than representing the interest of working people. The radical left is incapable of presenting a holistic vision of new social order, as it is too weak organisationally and financially to be a political alternative. (Prawicowy ekstremizm na poziomie lokalnym, p.7).

Nevertheless, there are examples of activities often inspired by non-governmental organisations and grassroots initiatives, which counterweight extremist activities in Poland. According to The European Democracy Institute, the most interesting are:

6.1. Music against Racism initiative

The campaign Never Again involving all sorts of music genres focused on youth. The association, which ultimately aims to prevent racism, xenophobia and intolerance, managed to convince artists, who are responsive to cases of chauvinism in socio-political life, to include the logo of the campaign on their CDs and to promote the idea of the campaign in interviews etc. Two compilation albums were released as the part of the campaign Music against Racism and One Race Human Race. The campaign was very popular among artists, with over 500 engaged.2

6.2. Brown Book

The Never Again association also publishes Brown Book. It is documentation of monitoring crimes committed by neo-fascists, the extreme right, and incidents related to racism, xenophobia and discrimination in Poland. Brown Book is continuously published since 1996. It includes in-

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2 See: http://www.nigdywiecej.org/muzyka-przeciwko-rasizmowi
formation from the Never Again correspondents and representatives of partner organisations. Sources of information also include press articles, TV and radio programmes, books, online publications and reports from national and international organisations that address prejudice and discrimination. The Brown Book is the broadest and most reliable study on xenophobic violence in Poland, which is often used by media and international organisations. Each information is carefully verified before it is published.³

6.3. Media boycott

Media is very important communication channel. They form awareness of the world and the information they present reaches mass audiences. That is why media should prevent dissemination of the content that encourages intolerance or offends any social group. Boycott is an example of influencing media. There have been several successful boycotts in Polish media:

1. In 2007: during the primary elections in Wrzesnia, one of the conservative-liberal politicians Janusz Korwin-Mikke, spoke against integrated classes claiming that healthy children can be infected with disability when they go to class with disabled children. MP Katarzyna Piekarska (Alliance of Democratic Left, SLD) said: “There is no excuse for such action. There is no place for such person in public life. Korwin-Mikke should withdraw from public life, media should not invite him, I cannot imagine speaking to him. I would not shake his hand.”⁴ The topic was discussed in the media without Korwin-Mikke.

2. In 2013: after repeated acts of devastation and aggression during The Independence March commemorating Polish national holiday on 11 November organised by nationalists and the radical right, a journalist Eliza Michalik appealed to the media not to invite representatives of national and extremist movements, and the radical right to TV programmes and newspapers. She said: “Let’s not treat fascism and the use of violence as an equal voice

³ See: http://www.nigdywiecej.org/475-20
in public debate. As we don’t invite a paedophile, thief, murderer or psychopath to explain their point of view, let’s not invite people who don’t value life and health of others, public good and civil rights. Don’t jeopardise our democracy. Don’t legitimise fascists” (Michalik, 2013).

3. In 2014: politicians of different political parties invited to the Polish Public Television programme refused to take part in it with the leader of The New Right Wing (Nowa Prawica) Janusz Korwin-Mikke who is known for his controversial views. The station withdrew an invitation to Korwin-Mikke and the programme was recorded without him.

7. ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH ABOUT EXTREMISM

The Polish Church does not often address the issue of extremism. Sometimes bishops comment on current events. Their views are mostly based on opinions from the Vatican. One of such official statements was the address given by Archbishop Bernardito Auza to the UN Security Council. He said that young people are an easy target for extremists to spread their ideologies. Therefore, their intrusive recruitment must be stopped by families, governments and through religions involvement. The papal diplomat highlighted that all kinds of crises, including personal or economic, make young people vulnerable to extremist ideas. Other factors include globalisation and development of new ways of communication.

The representative of the Holy See in the UN said that, in order to prevent youths from being recruited by the extremists, action needs to be taken on many levels. It is most important to support families in raising their children in openness to dialogue and respect to others. Furthermore, governments should not block public debate. Avoiding the issue is counter-productive. Supporting public debate gives an opportunity to young people to vent their frustrations and to create public policy. Archbishop Auza highlighted the importance of religion. When governments or schools try to minimise their role, young people may

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feel uprooted and left out, what gives way to extremism. Extremists often use distorted religious and cultural values to deceive young people. That is why religious leaders need to firmly condemn those who separate faith from reason and use religion to justify violence.\(^7\)

## 8. Societal Demand for Right-Wing Extremism in Poland

Popularity of the radical-right parties has been clearly increasing in the recent years in Europe. Additionally, the growing number of migrants and refugees coming to the European Union enhance tolerance for populist movements with anti-migration, intolerant and radical slogans. It can be observed in their growing support in national and European elections. On the other hand, there are no enough efficient tools in social studies to comprehensively examine current political situation and to check it against other European regions (Winiewski – Stefaniak). The Political Capital Institute analysed data from five consecutive European Social Surveys (2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2010). The survey is carried out in 30 countries to establish whether European societies are willing to support radical-right ideas.\(^8\) The broad gamut of variables and diverse questions makes the ESS a rich source of data on attitudes towards politics, religion or moral issues. The Political Capital Institute developed DEREX (Demand for Right-Wing Extremism), an index which describes demand for radical political and ideological solutions in a given society. Authors of the index claim that political radicalisation in societies is caused by at least several reasons that together can be the source of rejection of democratic institutions and accepting radical solutions (Winiewski – Stefaniak, 2012). DEREX incorporates four basic dimensions. They can generate or facilitate a need for radical right extremism according to severity. Those are:

1. Economical prejudice and chauvinism, negative attitudes towards minorities, which include attitudes to immigration policy,

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\(^7\) Ibid.

\(^8\) Political Capital Institute, http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org. European Social Survey (ESS) is a research project whereby there are regular surveys among citizens of Europe. The main aim is to monitor changes in attitudes, moods, values and behavior of European societies.
the role of immigrants in the society and attitudes to sexual minorities.

2. Negative attitudes towards the ruling élites which combines a lack of trust in democratic institutions, both national and international, discontent with political system, dissatisfaction and distrust towards people in power, legal system and police. As those attitudes grow stronger, the functioning of the state can be weakened or even curbed.

3. A set of right-wing attitudes consisting of voicing right-wing political convictions, strong need for order and subjection to authority, traditional inclination and participation in religious practices.

4. General social discontent with own material situation, a sense of insecurity, distrust and suspicion of others and general dissatisfaction with life. A lack of satisfaction and anxiety may stimulate changes in the society, whilst, however, it may also encourage politicians to radicalise and promote populist ideas.

**DEREX** main goal is to identify and describe the social segment which is influenced by extremist ideas especially the right-wing. It was constructed in a way that a respondent should be considered as biased towards right-wing after agreeing completely or excessively (depending on question, they are one or two last answers) with most of the diagnostic statements within a given category. For example, in the category Prejudice and Chauvinism it will be five out of six statements. The comprehensive index is calculated by estimating the proportion of people who meet the criterion of radicalism in at least three out of four categories. That is crucial, according to the authors, because it is not enough for a single higher criterion (for example, prejudice towards immigrants in Western Europe) to diagnose right-wing extremism. It implies that, unlike Eastern Europe, Western Europe is not threatened by right-wing extremism just because other elements that constitute higher probability of right-wing extremism are not that high there (Winiewski – Stefaniak, 2012).

The index shows the proportion of the society that can potentially support radical-right movements, parties and political circles. Those people are very discontent with their lives, subscribe to anti-equality values, do not believe in the political system, do not trust institutions and
people in power, are biased about strangers (such as immigrants and refugees) and otherness, and are economically frustrated. The results show that today the number of people who support anti-immigration and anti-equality policy along with those who believe in the values of the radical right has been growing, especially in Europe and in its Eastern part.9

8.1. DEREX in Poland 2003 – 2013

Poland scored 15th in the 2010 DEREX which placed it among the countries with the highest probability of radical right support (among 26 countries that were assessed in 2010). A repetition of the study with consecutive waves of ESS with 2-year breaks allows to observe the dynamic of changes in the DEREX index value in Poland. In 2003 the index included 10% of the society, then grew significantly in 2005 to 15%, and then fell to 6.5% in 2006. Since then, the index has remained at the 5-6% level. Comparing the index value in Poland to other 16 countries that were examined in all cycles gives reason to optimism.10 Even though the results from 2003 and 2005 were significantly higher than the average (approx. 4%), a drop in the index value since 2007 ranks Poland among the countries with relatively low probability of support to the radical right.

The analysis of the changes (see Graph 1) indicates a correlation between them and economic and socio-political situation in Poland. Out of four dimensions of the index, that which is connected with support to right-wing values dominates in Poland. This dimension is at 30% (meaning that one-third of Polish society agrees with right-wing and conservative values) and is more or less consistent, no matter the year of the study. The other three dimensions vary, however, the most dynamic is the one that describes negative attitudes towards national governments and institutions (Winiewski - Stefaniak, 2012).

9 This occurs with growing distrust of the state and its institutions.
10 In all four waves of ESS following countries were included: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Great Britain. The average DEREX index for these countries: 2003 – 4%; 2005 – 4.7%; 2007 – 4.2%; 2009 – 4.2%. See: Winiewski, Stefaniak,
8.2. Fluctuations in DEREX according to the context of political situation

From 2003 to 2005 there has been an increase of the impact of the extreme right-wing slogans. Its decrease during 2007 can be interpreted as the outcome of the Polish socio-political situation at the time. An important factor in 2001 was the launch of the political party Law and Justice (PiS), whose one of the main proposals was raising the level of control in Poland, in order to fight crime and corruption. The turning point was the so-called Rywingate affair in 2002 connected with the passing of the legislation favouring one of the most prominent broadcasting groups. As one of the major corruption scandals in Polish history, the Rywingate was the source of political storm. One of its results, further enforced by political rhetoric, was a sense that every aspect of life in Poland was plagued by corruption, as is shown by the data from polls by the Centre for Public Opinion Research (CBOS), see Graph 2. The data show that the attitude towards corruption in Poland has changed, going to extreme positions. The major change occurred between 2000 and 2001: majority of people who stated that corruption was a “rather big”
problem in 2000 shifted into considering corruption a “big problem” in 2001. It was not until 2009 that people in Poland thought of corruption differently, i.e. as a lesser problem.

**Graph 2. Is corruption a big problem in Poland?** (data collected from a representative sample of adult citizens of Poland - about one thousand respondents)

![Graph showing changes in public perception of corruption]


As the outcome of media broadly discussing political scandals and the overall lack of credit of authorities at that time, the governing party, the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) not only lost its leadership during the election of 2005, but also was marginalised with 11% of votes (almost 30% less than during the victorious election of 2001). The inversion of people’s political choices was very indicative at that time.

Public opinion polls make clear that Polish people do not trust state institutions and consider their services unsatisfactory. The institution with particularly negative opinion is the lower house of the Polish Parliament (Sejm). Among these negative opinions, during the last 15 years there have been periods in which Sejm has been negatively evaluated in general (Winiewski - Stefaniak, 2012, see Graph 3)

Graph 3 shows the proportion of people who described the services of the lower house of the Polish Parliament (Sejm) as either good or bad. The red vertical lines mark the date of parliamentary elections, the blue vertical lines mark when the data was collected (for particular cycles of ESS – European Social Survey).
Graph 3. The proportion of people describing the services of the lower house of the Polish Parliament (Sejm) as either good or bad (data collected from a representative sample of adult citizens of Poland - about one thousand respondents)


In 2001 – 2002, prejudice and anti-migrant attitudes were fuelled by the increase of unemployment (see Graph 4) and slower global economic growth. These factors gave rise to the increase of the extremist attitudes. Numerous empirical tests confirm a connection between the intensity of the relative deprivation (crisis and unemployment and deterioration of the quality of life are the factors that stimulate such sentiment) and the increase of prejudice. The notion of relative deprivation is a subjective sense of being deprived of some goods that, from the perspective of an individual, should be catered for the person, connected with the sense that other people do have these goods. That is individual relative deprivation. There is also a group relative deprivation: a sense that our group is in a more adverse situation than some other group. Both individual and group relative deprivation (the latter to a greater extent) fuel prejudices against towards foreigners. That has been proven by Pettigrew & Associates through the three prominent, representative polls conducted in three different European countries (see Pettigrew et. al., pp. 385 – 401).
When data for the second cycle of ESS (ESS2, 2004) were collected, i.e. at the end of 2004, opinions on the Sejm were clearly negative (similarly to the opinions on state institutions presented in reports from CBOS and OBOP, conducted at the same time). It was the period that preceded the elections in which the Democratic Left Alliance lost power, and marked the end of administration of this party.

**Graph 4. Unemployment rate (registered unemployment) in Poland**

[Graph showing unemployment rate from 1999 to 2012]

Source: Central Statistical Office.

Moderately high DEREX index in 2003 and 2005, derived from the high level of its three components, i.e. prejudice, the sense of insecurity and anti-establishment attitudes, stems from the political situation in those years. The high level of relative deprivation was the result of the financial crisis, high level of unemployment and, eventually, deterioration of living standards. It level is connected with intensification of prejudice. Political conflicts, harsh rhetoric during public debates, corruption and criminal affairs among those the governing elites have probably played a significant role in increasing the sense of self-doubt and insecurity, and the rise of negative attitude towards authority and establishment. The decrease in the level of DEREX during the following years can be ascribed to the stabilisation of politics and economy. When the survey was conducted in 2006, the government was run by the right-wing Law and Justice party, in coalition with the conservative and utterly right-wing League of Polish Families (LPR) and the populist people’s party, Self-Defence (Samoobrona). The coalition could have decreased the extreme right-wing supporters’ negative attitude towards establishment, resulting in decreasing DEREX. The following cycles of ESS (in the periods of 2008 to 2009, and 2010 to 2011) were conducted when Poland was stable in terms of economy and politics. Thus, the potential
of supporting extreme movements was significantly lower than before (Winiewski - Stefaniak, 2012).

9. THE POTENTIAL OF RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM

Although the aforementioned prejudice, overall lack of trust, pessimism and negative attitudes towards authorities seem to be highly contextual, the last aspect, i.e. identification with right-wing values is related to certain lasting beliefs and is not subject to contextual factors. Components parts of right-wing position include advocating political choices of respondents (people who claim to be right-wing supporters), regular participation in religious practices and adherence to a peculiar system of values. These values include respect to obedience, adherence to rules, following the will of the majority, respect for tradition and religion, and the need for a powerful country defending its civilians. A part of the questions corresponds, to a various degree, to the concepts of social studies. Among them, the most prominent concepts are the concept of authoritarian personality and the theory of right-wing authoritarianism by Bob Altemeyer. The former was criticised, on the grounds of the connotation to psychoanalysis and methodological inadequacies. Yet it gave rise to studies of personality, paying attention to predispositions to follow extreme right-wing values. The concept of right-wing authoritarianism by Altemeyer (who derived his concept mostly from the work of Theodor Adorno and his colleagues) states that authoritarianism consists of three components: authoritarian subordination (virtually thoughtless subjection to authorities), authoritarian aggression (targeting any deviation from the order, such as sexual minorities, or immigrants), and conventionalism (strong subservience to the social paradigm with a conviction that every person in a given society should be subservient to it as well). In both theories, following right-wing values is considered to be a result of some peculiar characteristics of personality, including the permanent beliefs of a person. Studies in Poland show that the proportion of people that criterion is 30% remains constant regardless of the cycles of the study. Owing to that, even the most favourable political situation does not alter the opinions and values subscribed to by right-wing supporters (Winiewski - Stefaniak, 2012)

DEREX shows that the role of extreme right-wing rhetoric in Poland is diminishing; notwithstanding, the number of right-wing supporters
remains unchanged. This may seem unsettling, especially when all forecasts about the slower economic growth and waves of recession are not optimistic. As suggested before, Polish society is strongly dependent on the current political situation (Winiewski - Stefaniak, 2012).

10. CONCLUSIONS

The mentioned examples of political parties, right-wing organisations and social trends make it clear that Poland takes part in the European trend of the existence and operation of right-wing political extremism. Similarly to other Central and East European countries, Poland has seen the emergence or renascence of such movements as a result of the economic, social or political changes of the 1980s and 1990s. What makes Poland different from other European countries is that those parties and organisations have never held seats in the Polish Parliament: they are marginal without political prominence. What is similar for the Central and East countries, including Poland, is the presence of xenophobia, racism and antisemitism. As pointed out by Wojciech Stankiewicz, the blame for this can be put on the government and the society being passive, as well as the open ground for the flourishing existence of the international racist organisations in Poland. As evidence Stankiewicz mentions the unrestricted manner of publishers and distributors of racist materials; a fine example is the distribution of nationalist and anti-Semitic materials in bookstores and newsstands. Some of them are even published by the state-owned company RUCH.11 The owners defy accusations by drawing attention to the gaps in the Polish legal system (Drobczyński, 2007).

Extremism, as a phenomenon present in contemporary Europe, affects Poland as well. It is necessary to assume that extremism can be a serious threat to the democratic constitution of the country and should be firmly opposed. Apart from right-wing political extremist movements, political extremism develops as a result of the legal system filled with gaps that allow registration of such movements and their activity, and apparent indoctrination of newcomers (via training, neo-Nazi rock concerts and nationalist flash mobs). Extreme movements and attitudes in

11 RUCH S.A. is one of the most prominent press distributor in Poland, servicing over 10 million people monthly.
Poland should be perceived bearing in mind acts of racist and antisemitic banditry, delinquency and crime (including murders committed by “fighters” from extreme right-wing formations. Why do right-wing movements, connected with political extremism, develop in Poland? Giovanni Sartori offers an answer: “Every generation wants to be new and original; every generation wants to say something that has not been said before and challenges the claims of previous generations. Otherwise life would be pointless and history would lack flux.” (Sartori, 1994). A glance at Poland with particular focus on extremism is enough to see that the country is no exception in this context, compared to Europe. Moreover, the existence of extreme movements is an inseparable element of democracy, as one of its roots is political pluralism that may include such extreme attitudes. Democracy, however, should have efficient potential to protect itself against such extremes.

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Wojciech Wcisł

NATIONALISM IN CZECH POLITICS

1. INTRODUCTION

The relevance of nationalism in its extreme form in the Czech politics is not stepping out of political marginalisation in terms of marked electoral success. Although there are political formations that play the nationalism card in their manifestations, this approach does not cause significant rise of extremism. This was the case of the Úsvit [Dawn] movement, emphasising the Roma issue, and KSČM (Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy, the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia), playing the card of the Sudeten Germans repeatedly. The political relevance of the extremist grouping, the DSSS (Dělnická strana sociální spravedlnosti, the Workers’ Party of Social Justice), is very low with exception of few specific locations such as the town of Duchcov in Northern Bohemia. Yet, there are para-political movements that thematise “Islamisation” of the Czech Republic and oppose immigration. Still, these movements do not have a clear structure.

The issue of nationalism, however, is repeatedly used in broader political discourse, for instance the blaming of the Roma for abusing the system of social benefits, blaming Germans for their alleged historical guilt or the fear of Islamisation.

This chapter focuses on the three key issues and positions of the most relevant political groupings regarding nationalism and extremism: the Sudeten Germans, the Roma, and immigration seen respectively by the KSČM, Úsvit and the far right DSSS.

Study also presents the results of survey of parliamentary parties’ positions on national identity and nationalism related issues. As far as data used for this analysis are concerned, public speeches of politicians were transcribed verbatim. All texts were repeatedly reviewed in order to identify dominant topics associated with the nation, nationhood and national identity. In course of this initial analysis three dominant topics for each party were identified. The analysis focuses on the strategies of
communication of the topics, their re-production and re-interpretation by particular party. In each of the identified topics only relevant party discourse is mentioned. The focus is placed on content-based ideological statements.

The main sources included public speeches, official party documents, blogs by party members, and Facebook.

The focus is given on the party language, if the party:
- Sets an agenda for public discourse,
- Creates a new policy issue (for instance within election campaign),
- Has to defend itself against political opponents,
- Deliberately develops nationalism-related-issues as part of party strategy

2. NATIONALISM AND POLITICS

Within the context of political parties shaping nationalism discourse, the term nationalism connected with the most radical forms of political extremism covers a wide scope of definitions that focus mostly on nation-building and its use in political discourse. The current discussion on the term nationalism focuses on critical societal and academic issues. Yet, it is difficult to draw a clear line between nationalism, extremism and national identity, and their application in political process (e.g. in the case of elections). Therefore, the term national identity/nationalism with extremist connotations can be more appropriate as a political tool that represents specific environment of particular territory. The strength of employing the nationally tinted tools depends on specific national circumstances (e.g. national minorities, historical experience), external influences or economic conditions.

For analysis of the perception of nationalism among the political parties, one can follow areas of public policy and trends in public opinion, putting the questions:
- how parties use issues related to national identity;
• how and whether they enhance the sense of unity;
• whether unity is their goal at all;
• do they evoke a sense of existential threat and danger;
• do they employ national mythology to create a sense of unity;
• do they use the national symbols, including national heroes;
• do they develop national myths and a clear understanding of the nation's boundaries;
• do they develop national culture and traditions that are vigilant against external influences;
• do they see the state serving all citizens and endorse equality of cultures without prejudice to any specific one;
• do they support cultural and ethnic diversity within society and cooperation with other nations;
• do they claim that this is not because of their certain strategy but rather a result of certain cultural and societal context in which they operate.

The role of political parties is not only to represent the interests of its voters. It is also vice versa: political parties shape public discourse. The assumption is that relationship is not an inherent trait and that a person's national identity also results from the shared reference points in people's daily lives: national symbols, language, national colours, national history etc. (see, e.g. Billing, 1995).

3. NATIONALISM IN CZECH POLITICS SINCE 2010

The economic crisis followed by budgetary cuts between 2008 and 2011 made by the Czech government increased sensibility to external influence scapegoating particular parts of the society for the feeble economic performance. During the administration of the centre-right coalition
(ODS, TOP 09, VV/LIDEM) it was particularly the Roma who were portrayed as those who abuse the system of social benefits. The negative perception reached its peak in the summer of 2013 during the electoral campaign. Several riots were organised, the major one being held in July 2013 in České Budějovice and in Duchcov, Northern Bohemia. The new feature of the riots was that they were primarily attended not by the far-right extremists, but by the so-called ordinary people. These participants proclaimed their non-affiliation to any extremist fraction. Surprisingly, these riots have not been thematically verbalised during the 2013 election camping. The fact that they were used by the Úsvit movement and DSSS cannot be seen as successful strategy leading to victory. In other words, the riots increased public sensitivity towards the Roma, but did not significantly facilitate the rise of extremist movements.

The second issue that repeatedly appears in Czech politics is that of the Sudeten Germans. This shows the still unclear attitude of some Czech political leaders to what happened to Germans in Czechoslovakia after WW II. This rhetoric was again picked up during the Czech Presidential electoral campaign by the current President Miloš Zeman. Even if the issue does not play significant role in Czech politics, it has its own sensitivity and a potential of being used again.

An overview of the priorities among the parliamentary parties might be helpful when examining the Czech political parties from the perspective of the issues relevant to extremism and nationalism. Table 1 shows that the relevant political parties do not represent any extreme positions towards nationalism-related issues. This supports the more general observation that no significant rise of extremist movement in terms of nationalism is likely to occur in mid-term perspective. The Czech internal intelligence agency (Security Intelligence Service/Bezpečnostní informační služba, BIS), according to its annual report on extremism, does not perceive any significant threat connected with potential rise of extremism in the Czech Republic.³

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¹ Civic Democratic Party/Občanská demokratická strana, ODS; Tradition, Responsibility, and Prosperity 2009/Tradice, Odpovědnost,Prosperita 2009, TOP09; Public Affairs/Věci veřejné, VV; Liberal Democracy/Liberální Demokracie, LIDEM.
² Workers Party of Social Justice/Dělnická strana sociální spravedlnosti, DSSS.
³ See the 2013 annual report: http://www.bis.cz/2013-1q-zprava-extremismus.html
The table below summarises the results of a survey distributed among parliamentary political parties between 2013 and 2014 within the framework of the project *National Identities in the CEE*. The questions covered such issues as deeper integration of the EU, relations with neighbouring countries, relations to minorities as well as immigrants, and the use of history and national symbols in party' activities.

**Table 1. Positioning of parliamentary parties and their perception of national identity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Right-left scale</th>
<th>Integration of the EU</th>
<th>Symbols, patriotism, citizenship</th>
<th>Minorities, immigrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KDU</td>
<td>centre-right</td>
<td>very positive</td>
<td>rather negative to use</td>
<td>not special attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KSČM</td>
<td>left</td>
<td>rather positive</td>
<td>moderate using</td>
<td>not special attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODS</td>
<td>right</td>
<td>rather negative</td>
<td>rather negative to use</td>
<td>not special attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANO</td>
<td>centre-right</td>
<td>neutral</td>
<td>rather negative to use</td>
<td>not special attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Úsvit</td>
<td>populist</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>extensive using</td>
<td>immigrants must be controlled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOP 09</td>
<td>centre-right</td>
<td>very positive</td>
<td>rather negative to use</td>
<td>not special attitude</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Author, based on research conducted in the 2014 within the project *CEE Identity* (ceeidentity.eu).

Looking back at the 2013 election manifestos, one can define two fundamental issues that touch upon nationalism and potentially also extremism: the EU and the perception of populism. Yet, the electoral discourse was shaped by different issues that were not reflected in the manifestos. Although the EU was discussed as an issue that strongly divided the parties, none of the mainstream parties (except Úsvit) strictly opposed the integration process. On the other hand, there is a clear lack of consensus on European integration. Both new movements – Úsvit and ANO – did not elaborate their EU policy in details. Especially in the case
of the Úsvit movement, its populism was evident. Similarly, European policy of KSČM was always more cloud than clear sky. Nonetheless, EU dimension is not the main issue of relevance for the Czech political strata, as has been evidenced by the electoral campaign.

If one considers the anti-Roma riots in summer 2013, the parties failed to respond to the issue completely. Only the Greens reflected the event both in their election manifesto and in official party channels. TOP 09, the Greens, ANO were the only parties to mention explicitly social inclusion. This is interesting with regard to the left-wing parties, with the exception of the Greens, probably decided not to speak with the voice of the excluded for tactical reasons. Although two new political movements passed the 5% threshold, the political discourse did not change substantially in the direction of strengthening the populist sentiment. The only parliamentary party, Úsvit, that focused on accusing the Roma for misusing of social system and strictly opposed immigration, suffered from internal tension in March 2015 and practically lost its strong political influence. Although leader of the movement, Tomio Okamura, is still de iure the party chairman and currently the leader of the new successor movement (Movement for Freedom and Direct Democracy), his influence on agenda setting is very low. Hence there is no party in the parliament that targets Roma and immigration issues among its priorities. Surprisingly, even the extremist version of anti-Roma and anti-immigration policy has not acquired any significant support, as has been seen in the 2014 local elections. Several far-right movements tried to win their support on the basis of anti-Roma rhetoric in Northern Bohemia and the Moravian-Silesian region. Only in individual cases (such as in Duchcov with support of 13.3%) they passed the 5% threshold needed for entering the local councils. Again, the real impact on their support, such as in case of DSSS, was very low.

An example of using the Roma issue in electoral campaign can be found in the 2014 local elections. Generally, the issues verbalised by the parties show that almost all parties do not attempt to artificially create

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4 I follow the definition of populism presented by Margaret Canovan (see: Canovan, 2002).
5 Election manifestos of individual parties for the 2013 general elections.
the issue of social exclusion in the campaign. Yet, there were local exceptions, for instance in Ostrava. The political movement Tories (Toryové) lead by Dalibor Madej, built up a campaign with slogans such as “Ostrava should not be black/Ostrava nemusí být černá” or “Finally a solution/Konečně řešení” targeting the Roma and accusing them of responsibility for the problematic security situation in Ostrava. Although the movement tried to mobilise voters defining themselves as non-radical, the movement failed to gain significant support. Still, the mainstream arguments in the electoral campaign do not follow ethnic principle but rather try to approach the Roma issue as a social problem. In other words, the logic of political exclusion targets social status, but not primarily the identification with a particular ethnic group. Nevertheless, some less relevant political movements use ethnicity-based rhetoric.

It is interesting why this is not the case of politics at the national level, where social exclusion or targeting Roma minority is often used. Data collected in field research in local electoral campaign in Jeseník and Bruntál districts help explain why national and local levels of politics differ so fundamentally. The role of the identification with individual places as well as a sense of belonging play crucial role on local level. Therefore, the understanding of the city (e.g. in case of a small size city with up to 23,000 inhabitants in Jeseník and Bruntál districts) as a community of shared sense of identification with particular place is a crucial factor in non-identification with the issue of social exclusion as social and political topic to be thematised.

When comparing the results of radical and populist movements such as Úsvit, an interesting paradox emerges: Úsvit reached around 9% gain in the 2013 general elections in both districts. In the Ústecký region, which has been regularly affected by anti-Roma riots, Úsvit gained average national result. In the regional elections the movement failed in both regions. Contrary to this, the extreme-right DSSS succeed in the city Duchcov (13.3%) in Ústecký region, but without any significant ef-

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7 See here: http://www.toryove.cz/ostrava and here
8 The movement gained 1.81 % of votes,
http://volby.cz/pls/kv2014/kv1111?xjazyk=CZ&amp;xid=0&amp;xdz=3&amp;xnumnuns=8106&amp;xobe
c=554821&amp;xstat=0&amp;xvyber=0
fect on the level of regional and/or national politics. Still, even if the anti-Roma politics brings short term gains to the parties at the national level, local politics is driven by different issues, such as local identification. This prevents any significant radicalisation of political landscape, at least at the local level.

The current political debate on receiving immigrants from Syria and the introduction of quotas on immigrants may serve as useful analytical framework on possible development of the issue. The recent rhetoric by representatives of individual parties proved that, at the time of writing this paper the topic is not becoming relevant in political debate. More important is the fact that this issue is not the key one that will convince people to express their support to Úsvit. This can be shown in case of the former members of Úsvit (currently of Movement for Freedom and Direct Democracy represented by Tomio Okamura, and the movement National Interests represented by Petr Adam) that pushed forward the anti-immigrant agenda, but without success. Even the far-right DSSS did not use this issue as the key element of party activities yet (see the section on DSSS).

According to Ivan Gabal, the leading expert on Roma integration and current MP elected on the list of KDU-ČSL, a significant proportion of society that might be representing rather extreme positions on Roma and immigrant integration do not participate in elections. In this regard, no political formation aimed to mobilise this group. One of the reasons is that no one knows how to approach this potential electorate. Furthermore these people do not participate in demonstrations and protests that rarely happen.

The three issues below represent the most relevant elements when public and political debate starts to move towards radicalisation. The focus shall be on three parties, the KSČM, Úsvit and its successor, and DSSS. In case of the issue of immigration, the movement “We don't want Islam in the Czech Republic” (Islám v České republice nechceme,

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10 Priorities of the new movement led by Tomio Okamura: http://spd.cz/program/
IvČRN) was chosen in light of its aspiration to transform itself into political formation. Yet each party has different priorities in regard to the issues, therefore their profiles do not have the same extent.

4. ISSUE 1: SUDETen REGION

Prior to World War II, one third of the territory of Czechoslovakia (mainly borderlands with Germany, called the Sudeten) was mostly populated by ethnic Germans, in amounting to cca. 5 million. Only a small proportion of ethnic Czechs lived in these before the World War II.

The so-called German issue plays minor role in the Czech politics and in political and societal mainstream. The above areas were re-settled by a wide group of ethnic Czechs, Roma and Slovaks from other region of Czechoslovakia. The places located high in the mountains lost their traditional agrarian and industrial character. Moreover, the area bordered with Germany, not with Poland as it is today. Many districts that were within the Sudeten region experience, until these days, a lack of identification of local population with these places which are still seen as newly inhabited (by the current population).

It was surprising that the issue of post-war displacement of the German minority appeared again and became one of the key campaign issues in the 2013 Presidential election. Miloš Zeman, the current Czech President, repeatedly accused Karel Schwarzenberg, the leader of political party TOP 09 and presidential candidate, for supporting Germans in their demands to regain their property. As recently as in May 2015, the issue was again picked up by the prominent representatives of ČSSD, Michal Hašek and Zdeněk Škromach. As far as Brno municipal council initiative to apologise for the deportation of ethnic Germans from Brno shortly after WWII in 1945 is concerned, Michal Hašek called this as an inappropriate in regard to crimes and deportations committed by Germans before and during the war.12 This statement was again followed by the wave of anti-German sentiments. It shows that, although the issue was closed by the Czech-German Declaration signed in the 1997 and was

losing its potency as a topic in political debate, the anti-German sentiments can easily mobilise a significant part of the society. Nevertheless, the real effect remains only as a rhetoric exercise. The focal point became the issue of the so-called Beneš Decrees\textsuperscript{13} connected to the nationalisation of property belonging to ethnic Germans after WWII. Although it was clearly declared that restitution of the property concerned was hardly possible today, it is still used as tool for getting political credit.\textsuperscript{14}

### 4.1. Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM)

Although the Sudeten issue does not play a key role in the Czech politics, the Communist party uses it as a policy to challenge the public on every possible occasion, as it happened for example during the official visit of Bavarian Prime Minister in December 2014. Nonetheless, the KSČM policy shows its emphasis on international equality of all minorities what, however, stands in stark contrast to its anti-German policy. To get the complete picture of the constituting policy of the party, the official explanation says that the party has been adhering to this position for a long period. This implies that the Communist party did not change its view towards the Sudeten Germans since 1945. This case is among the hot issues for the party, as is illustrated by the contributions by a considerable number of party members in their party friendly newspaper *Haló noviny*, in local party newsletters, or in public events.

The electoral manifestos of the party in the 2006, 2010, and 2013 elections showed a high degree of animosity to foreign interest groups, such as the Sudetendeutschen Landsmanschaft and any efforts to revise the post-WWII order, including the so-called Beneš Decrees.\textsuperscript{15} KSČM also calls for the closing of the office of the Landsmanschaft in Prague, which may be explained in line with the sovereignty principle. Yet it is not particularly friendly towards other nations and ethnic groups either, nor is it in line with the principles of multicultural society that KSČM promotes.

\textsuperscript{13} More on Beneš Decrees see: http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ct24/exkluzivne-nact24/historie-cs/112973-benesovy-dekryty/


\textsuperscript{15} For more details on KSČM see: http://www.ceeidentity.eu/database/manifestoescoun/communist-party
The party rhetoric is based on following argumentation:

1. Opposition to the so-called Europeanisation of the Sudeten issue in the EU. The reason is that Sudeten Germans will be able to advocate their right of self-determination and to regain their property in the former Czechoslovakia and cause destabilisation of Europe as a whole. As MEP Jiří Maštálka points out “... the right to self-determination of certain national groups will lead to transformation of ethnic and national issues into collective law that will counter the EU integration. From the long-term perspective this process can cause revision of state borders. Hence nationalism is dangerous for European integration as is its sophisticated form – the right to self-determination of national groups.” Another MEP, Miroslav Ransdorf, argued that the rigid European federalisation can enable opening of the Sudeten issue within the context of the Lisbon Treaty. He pointed out that “the road of Sudeten Germans back to the Sudeten region is possible in the federalised EU”.

2. Defence of national interests against Sudeten Germans demands refusal rejection of any kind of rapprochement between Germany and the Czech Republic. From this perspective, the Communist MPs strongly opposed the 2010 visit of Bernd Posselt in Lidice, Czech village completely destroyed by the German occupiers during the WWII. and the speech given by Prime Minister Petr Nečas in May 2013 in Munich. In case of Posselt’s visit to Lidice, where he apologised for the Nazi crimes during WWII, Marta Semelová, MP, questioned the government: “How is it possible that in Prague there are officially accepted representatives namely Mr. Posselt that force the right to regain their former property ... Who defends the national interests of the Czech Republic?” Petr Nečas, former Prime Minister, surprised many by his very open speech on Czech-German relations. In Prague, he was criticised among others by Vojtěch Filip, the leader of the Communist party: “Petr Nečas does not defend national interests of the Czech Republic... his conduct is inappropriate in regard to Czech histo-

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17 See: http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/program/porady/1126672097/text/209452801380001_1.txt
ry, state sovereignty and war veterans. He does not respect the Constitution and vilifies his own people”.

3. Karel Schwarzenberg, the leader of the Conservative party TOP 09 and Presidential candidate in the 2013 elections, was being labelled by members of the Communist party as German collaborator, “pro-Vaticanists” (or aristocrat). The Communist party used this term during the Presidential electoral campaign on various levels by its officials, members, and local groups such as the Club of the Czech Borderlands (Klub českého pohraničí). The Sudeten German issue emerged during the second round of the Presidential elections and was heavily supported by tabloid newspaper *Blesk*. Karel Schwarzenberg was described as the leading figure of the Sudeten German movement defending their interests in the Czech Republic instead of the Czech ones. KSČM argued that Schwarzenberg betrayed national interests and therefore should resign from his then post of Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The deep-rooted policy position is well described in an answer given by Kateřina Konečná, MEP (KČSM), regarding the question “How does KSČM see Bernd Posselt’s activities in the Czech Republic?” Konečná answered that they perceive them “negatively, because the party has held this view so for such a long time”. Yet the party does not mention the reason behind the policy position in any documents and speeches. One ought to focus on the role of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia after 1945, when it held strong anti-German position. The reason for the swing, when the party stresses internationalist brotherhood among nations, was that West Germany that time, during the Communist regime, was pictured as instigator of war crimes.

The party does not develop its Sudeten German policy directly by using policy argumentation or its substantiation. This is an ideal case for developing the myth of the threat coming from outside. Such rhetoric is the supportive tools for development of myths about threats to national interests.

The party has developed three-stage typology:

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External influence keen on defending interests against nation state. European integration is seen as a revisionist platform; in this understanding the integration is generally perceived with a detachment using national history in favour of the party’s goals. Referring to the historical “truth” that Germans caused the war and therefore they had to be punished properly – so did the Sudeten Germans. The explanatory role of history is presented as an issue of national interest.

Personification; describing the presidential candidate Karel Schwarzenberg as representative of interests whose goal is to damage the Czech national interest. This was used during the presidential campaign and was one of the decisive factors of Miloš Zeman’s victory. The personification of Czech citizen defending other than Czech interests has been used for the first time since 1989.

5. ISSUE 2: ROMA MINORITY

Although the topic of societal status of Roma minority is widely discussed in public, political parties reflect this issue marginally. During the summer months of 2013, a number of anti-Roma protests took place (mainly in Northern Bohemia and in several regional centres such as České Budějovice or Ostrava). The protests in České Budějovice on 22 July, 2013 and in Ostrava a month later particularly radicalised the Czech public. The riots were attended not only by right-wing radicals, but by many the “decent people” as well.

The public discussion is characterised by term that describes the people dependent on social benefits as those who abuse the taxes paid by “ordinary people”. It often targets the Roma minority as evidence of misusing the state social benefits.

That was, for instance, the case of Úsvit. It targeted the Roma minority calling on them to found their own national state in India. Úsvit neutralised, to some extent, the rise of the extreme right party DSSS. According to electoral results, the DSSS achieved its highest gains only in Northern Bohemia with 2%, whilst Úsvit with its populist rhetoric won 6.8% in the 2013 general elections. Yet the latter was unable to repeat
the success in the 2014 European elections, receiving just 3.1% of votes.\(^{20}\)

The Roma issue is a long-term issue, as yet, unsolved societal and political problem, albeit during the administration of the centre-right cabinet (2006 – 2009) it has been moved up in the priorities within the agenda. For instance, the Ministry for Human Rights in cooperation with the Greens introduced the related topics into public discourse. Nonetheless, at the same time Jiří Čunek, the leader of Christian Democrats, and mayor of the city of Vsetín, decided to move the Roma people out of the city centre or even resettle them to small villages in the borderlands. Paradoxically, he was member of the same government as the Greens. Therefore, the effect of the policy of the Greens was limited just in the very beginning.

As the Roma issue was highly relevant in time of the 2013 electoral campaign, some statements by contenders during the election debate deserve a mention. The centre-right parties (TOP 09, ODS, KDU-ČSL) defined the recent anti-Roma riots as a societal problem but not an ethnic issue. During the campaign all politicians agreed that the state social benefits are abused by the majority society as well. In this regard, KSČM stated that the budgetary cuts by the centre-right government between 2010 – 2013 increased the tensions in the difficult regions such as Northern Bohemia.

Although ČSSD positions represent social and minority-friendly policies in the Czech politics, Jaroslav Foldyna, the leader of ČSSD in Ústí nad Labem, said that the proportion of people who parasite on social benefits is the highest among Roma. The case of ČSSD shows how the party touches upon liberal attitudes to show that it does not exclude minorities and that the statements come from local party representatives.\(^{21}\)

In addition to mainstream parties, the Czech Television broadcast a debate with radical party DSSS and Úsvit. During the discussion, the host, Martin Veselovský, asked the DSSS leader about the statement that the Jewish culture belongs to the Czech cultural heritage as well. Tomáš Vandas, the leader of DSSS, claimed that his message was against immi-

\(^{20}\) See final results of the 2014 EP elections:  

\(^{21}\) See the entire debate :  
http://www.rozhlas.cz/radiozurnal/dvacetminut/_zprava/1264531
grants that refuse to assimilate in the Czech Republic. Yet Veselovský insisted on the question whether Jewish culture is part of Czech historical and cultural heritage. Tomio Okamura, the leader of Úsvit přímé demokracie, tried to express his anti-immigrant statements as well. Similarly to Vandas, he was unable to respond adequately. Veselovský asked him, which sources Okamura used to support his claims that foreigners are abusing the Czech social system. Okamura replied that he asked for such data only in one employment agency in Prague.22

5.1. Dawn Of Direct Democracy (Úsvit Přímé Demokracie)

Before Tomio Okamura, the leader of Úsvit movement, decided to run in parliamentary elections, he created a “big success story” around his personality. He devised selected policy fields in order to assure their public significance in time. This was the case of the Roma issue as well.

During the anti-Roma riots in the summer of 2013, Okamura appeared in public with plans how to solve the situation. Although he presented himself as a mediator of both groups, all his proposals were perceived as weak or unrealistic. Nevertheless, his initial intention was to gain publicity, and not to actually solve the problem. Placing the activities of Úsvit in context, is a good vantage point for further analysis.

Contrary to other parties, Okamura did not have any ideological standpoint. His political profile perfectly meets the definition of populist movement. Therefore, he started his parliamentary electoral campaign in the summer precisely with this issue. His rhetoric included three basic elements:

1. Right to self-determination for national minorities: as Úsvit argues, all ethnic minorities should have the right to live in their own state. “The Gypsies should wake up their elites... and to fight for their own state. The right to self-determination is the right of every nation and therefore the Czech Republic should support this endeavour to create conditions to settle back to their India, their country of origin”.23 The reality seems to be more simplistic. In order to attract voters, the representatives of Úsvit did not

22 See the debate here: http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/1096898594-udalosti-komentare/213411000371014/video/285366
23 See: http://okamura.blog.idnes.cz/c/328881/Socialni-programy-vyrabi-podvodniky-a-lenochy.html#t2
even elaborate the idea, though the goal was reached: they entered the public discourse, one MP has confirmed this intention off record by saying that “we had to promise something to the people”.

2. Equal principle in social benefits: as Úsvit argues, the Roma are very successful in accessing and receiving social benefits even if they have the right to them. Therefore, Úsvit proposes to address the benefits specifically or to enlarge the possibility to withdraw the payments of the benefits if the prerequisites for their entitlement are not met, for instance if people lose the entitlement because of using gambling machines or spend the benefits on alcohol. Úsvit does not oppose social inclusion as such. Nevertheless, the message delivered by the elections is that individuals must respect the rules and customs of the majority. Second, Okamura rejects the entitlement of 20 year-old Roma to social benefits: “The 20 year-olds should work as bricklayers or helpers... or participate in forest jobs during summer”.24 Similarly to the previous case, Úsvit did not publish any proposal how to implement these ideas. Even the MPs interviewed for this study acknowledged that such no such proposal existed.

3. The multicultural myth promoted by Brussels: Úsvit refuses to be labelled as xenophobic or populist in sense of refusing immigration or allowing the Roma minority to develop their own culture. Whilst it does not emphasise negative attitudes against multiculturalism, it made some statements that its principles should be observed with caution. Two weeks after the elections, Radim Fiala, MP (Úsvit) published an article on his blog listing a whole volume of counter-arguments such as: “immigrants can be good for the society... but often it is exactly the opposite. (...) I would follow the fundamental principle that we are here at home. If an immigrant wants to be part of our society, he/she has to show that they will be beneficial for our society and will respect our rules (...) otherwise, it would lead to the destabilisation of the society. (...) We do not have to follow the liberal principles only because of Brussels” (Fiala, 2013).

Radim Fiala does not define any policy or procedures. He tries to delimit himself against the EU-wide immigrant policy. It seems that Úsvit tried to find a policy that would resonate in the Czech society. After all, Úsvit gained 8 MPs and they have a great possibility to utilise this opportunity.

It is extremely hard to analyse any kind of ideological credo of Úsvit. The only identifiable line is that the purpose of the party policies is to attract voters. On the other side, this approach demonstrates how Úsvit acts as “public” wish. Therefore, it opens sensitive issues without thinking of their possible effect.

Úsvit operates with the following tools:

- Exclusion of the disadvantaged groups: One particular (minority) group is given advantage to the majority; in this respect, Úsvit rejects the others that do not follow the majority rules.

- The multicultural policy brought from abroad is not accepted by the people in the country. This terminology is used as an accusation of external influence that can be easily cruised but hard to be involved. Regarding the party international cooperation, the movement does not intend to focus on explaining how the things in the EU work.

The electoral manifesto that Tomio Okamura presented picks up the issues that resonate in the society without deeper anchoring in any intellectual basis. Although he speaks publicly about the need for strengthening direct democracy, the manifesto shows many signs of populism. First, the EU integration process should not include integration of tax and budgetary powers. The Czech Republic should transfer no further competences to Brussels. Second, regarding economic policy, Úsvit focuses on support to the traditional national industries. Therefore the Czech energy sources should be used internally and not exported or even be sold to foreign investors. The manifesto does not contain issues of immigration and Roma used by Okamura during the campaign (ceeidentity.eu 2014b).

Nevertheless, the nationalism-sensitive issues such as the exclusion of the Roma minority, or the issue of postmodern values imported from Brussels, still do not resonate in the Czech political and public discourse. It might be suggested that the representatives of Úsvit did not have
enough motivation to build up a well-functioning populist movement once present in the parliament. The movement and Okamura himself never addressed any issue completely, such as, for instance, that of Roma minority. After the anti-Roma riots calmed down, Okamura shifted his interest towards immigrants. In same respect, the interest was shifted to the critique of multiculturalism and Brussels (Fiala, 2013). None of these issues have been elaborated with an intention to create cleavage in society, even if Radim Fiala in his blog repeatedly used whole list of simplifications regarding the EU.

Since the spilt of Úsvit in the early 2015 into two smaller political formations, the influence of both in the Roma issue dropped dramatically. Okamura's aim to drive public discussion weakened as he lost credibility among his voters. According to the recent polls, less than 1.5% of voters would vote for him instead of 6.9% in the 2013 parliamentary elections.

6. ISSUE 3: IMMIGRATION

Political debate on immigration created new gap in Czech politics. Recent discussion on immigration quotas accelerated the positioning of political parties on immigration. Although it was on the agenda in the previous years already, it never appeared relevant for electoral campaign or scoring political points. Even if it might be perceived as a highly relevant issue in past months, the more detailed picture is significantly different. Table 2 shows the positions of political parties on immigration, namely the answers to “Should the process of awarding Czech citizenship be simplified?” The question was part of the survey on party positions on national-identity-related issues distributed among parties between 2013 and 2014. The scale indicates whether the issue is relevant for the party (1 not relevant, 10 most relevant).

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Table 2. Parliamentary parties and the issue of immigration (as for the 2014 EP elections)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Party attitude</th>
<th>Relevance scale</th>
<th>Current position on quotas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KDU-ČSL</td>
<td>Immigration that will not threaten social unity</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>only limited immigration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KSČM</td>
<td>Current procedures are sufficient</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>against</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODS</td>
<td>Current procedures are sufficient</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>against</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANO</td>
<td>Control over persons making business in the Czech Republic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>no specific position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Úsvit</td>
<td>Focus on individuals applying for citizenship</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>against</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOP 09</td>
<td>Current procedures are sufficient</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ČSSD*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * - ČSSD refused to participate on survey.
Source: Author, 2014.

The party positions show that even rising significance of immigration-related topics does not mean that parties will inevitably devise essentially divergent positions. This is illustrated by a view of prominent MP (ČSSD), Jeroným Tejc that there is no need for active role of state in preparing the society for the rising diversity.27

As the recent political debate on immigrant quotas showed (May 2015), the high level of social relevance does not meet wider political debate. Still, in terms of ethnic and cultural composition the Czech society is very homogeneous, with foreigners constituting 5% of the population.28 Since the Czech Republic is not the final destination for migrants from the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa, this issue is not a relevant topic to the majority of the public. This corresponds with the positions of all parliamentary parties (with the exception of TOP 09). According

27 According the interview made on 15 February 2014.
to the statements by representatives of these parties, the immigration quotas should be generally rejected. Surprisingly, the left and right wing parties (KSČM and ODS) manifest very similar argumentation. It focuses mainly on weakening national sovereignty, transferring powers to Brussels, as well as the threat to possible deeper integration. The most prominent populist in the parliament, Tomio Okamura, concentrated on social impact of immigration, mainly on “forcing Czech women to wear head scarf and eat kebab.” TOP 09 is the only parliamentary party that counterbalances these anti-immigration attitudes. The chairman, Karel Schwarzenberg, calls for solidarity with the states that are most affected by immigration.

Again, the immigration issue has only limited sources to become a significant topic for parliamentary political parties at least in mid-term perspective. As Ivan Gabal argues, the Czech society is rather accommodating when its rules are being observed. This is the case of the Vietnam minority in the Czech Republic that has been living there since the era of Communism. Gabal points out that the Vietnamese are accepted by the majority population because the former aim to be integrated. The inability of Úsvit (and its successors) as the main proponents of the issue of immigration) to set anti-immigration agenda in Czech politics, it shows that the issue is still too marginal to create a significant gap in politics.

Nevertheless, the possibilities of the rise of extreme movements cannot be marginalised. For the purpose of this study, its potential can be illustrated by the strategy of the anti-Islam movement IvČRN (Islám v České republice nechceme/We don’t want Islam in the Czech Republic) and their aim to mobilise the public. This Facebook-based-movement aims to represent those members of the public who do not subscribe to extremist attitudes. It tries to be perceived as a cross-confessional movement. The group collects information on violations on the part of Islam that target mainly the Christians, but not on Islam as a global confession. Although it is still a non-political movement, according to unof-
ficial information, the leader, Martin Konvička, negotiates with the for-
mer ČSSD political representative Jana Volfová who is publicly known
for her emphasis on sovereignty and the anti-Brussels positions. She was
previously associated with the former MEP Jana Bobošíková. Yet the co-
operation is unlikely to achieve significant success. Further politicisation
of anti-immigration policy may, however, affect wider social debate. As it
was mentioned before, it seems that the Czech society is unlikely to be
shifted towards the extreme radical narratives, no least in mid-term per-
spective.

The debate on immigration showed that the far-right parties, such as
the most prominent DSSS and other xenophobic movements, did not
shift the debate towards further extreme. Although some of these
movements cooperate with public figures and politicians, their effect is
rather limited. This is the case of Jaroslav Doubrava, member of the
Senate elected on behalf of the movement severocesi.cz. He openly sup-
ports conspiracy theories and the need to defend the Czech Republic
against immigration (Tarant 2014, p. 80). Adam Bartoš, the prominent
and open anti-Semite linked to the former President Václav Klaus, estab-
lished, for the elections to the European Parliament, political movement
Ne Bruselu – národní demokracie/No to Brussels – National Democra-
cy.32 It only drew 0.46% of votes.33 Though Bartoš enjoyed certain sup-
port, the overall result is insignificant.

6.1. Workers’ Party of Social Justice (DSSS)

The DSSS is unable to define its own strong theme that it would devel-
op. The anti-immigration rhetoric is covered by Tomio Okamura, the
IvČRN, and, in somewhat lighter manner, the parliamentary parties
(such as ODS).34 The DSSS softened its extreme rhetoric demonstrated
in the past decade. The issues that are verbalised include the failure of
multiculturalism, uprising of nations, a portrayal of the EU as a source
of leftist multicultural ideas, exclusion of socially vulnerable individuals,
particularly the Roma.35 Nonetheless, these topics are well covered by

32 For full party profile see: http://narodnidemokracie.cz/
34 More on IvČRN strategy see: http://denikreferendum.cz/clanek/19674lzi-martina-
konvicky-v-primem-prenosu
35 See the debate on the Czech TV with the party leader Tomáš Vadas at
http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/10116287760-politicke-
movements that either enjoy attention as parliamentary parties (such as Tomio Okamura) or develop a long-term single issue such as the rejection of Islam by IvČRN. DSSS thus lacks audience for mobilisation. The party documents by DSSS, Tomio Okamura and IvČRN, are virtually identical. Hence, the extreme right suffers from disintegration and inability to identify issues that would resonate within the wider public.

The DSSS does not push extremist rhetoric in its public output. Instead it uses various misinterpretations of the available evidence on immigration. Similarly to other movements against immigration and Islam, the DSSS use a language that does not significantly differ from Tomio Okamura or IvČRN.

DSSS develops its argumentation guided by the following logics. First, the Czech Republic is threatened by anti-Christian immigration. Second, the EU should defend its boarders more effectively and use marines against this threat. Third, the USA, as hegemonic power in world politics, can be blamed for the eruption of the immigrant wave that has hit Europe. Moreover, DSSS describes the EU as an institution that supports Islamisation of Europe. Yet it itself does not use extremist statements directly, leaving that to its supporters. For example, in the comments to a Facebook post on immigrants in Italy the popular statement was “Use sharks to kill them all in the sea”. Those are not regulated by the administrator and remain available on Facebook.

6.2. Movement “We Don’t Want Islam in the Czech Republic” (IVČRN)

IVČRN carefully develops its profile as a civic movement without political aspirations. Its main goal is to develop a broad network of supporters that will participate in its activities such as the petition against immigrant quotas, monitoring of the spread of halal products, or educational activities. The main target of its activities is based on Facebook fan page with more than 120,000 followers. The movement speaks a similar lan-
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language to the DSSS: the Czech Republic and Europe are threatened by immigration and the aggressive Islam, political representation has to be blamed for the rising danger of immigrants and for the general disappointment with national and European political élites. Contrary to DSSS, IVČRN focuses on developing a wide network of supporters using the petition strategy against the introduction of the quota on immigrants for each country as it was proposed and later approved by the European Commission. Civic profile of IVČRN serves as a proof of legitimacy for the relevance of the issue. In a televised debate in January 2015 the IVČRN leader Martin Konvička, did not use opportunity to make a significant step towards the transformation of his movement into a political party. His role in the debate was deemed weak as he lacked knowledge on the immigration flow to Europe. According to the recent observations, IVČRN incorporated the former far-right extremists. Still, it relies on financial support from its supporters and lacks stable institutional structure. According to insider information from IVČRN, the main advantage of the movement is its own network, either for technical assistance or fundraising for various activities. It mobilises some segments of the society, but still lacks public figures and a clear strategy of its political development. Further research has to be done in regard the IVČRN target groups, and whether it also mobilises notorious non-voters.

IVČRN was eventually transformed into political party (Blok proti islámu/Block against Islam) in June 2015 with the aim to challenge parliamentary political parties in the next general elections. It started to cooperate with the splinter party of Úsvit, the Úsvit národní koalice (Dawn of National Coalition) led by a former soldier Miroslav Lidinský.

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39 Position on the EU strategy against illegal immigration: http://www.ivcrn.cz/dnes-se-v-bruselu-jedna-o-budoucnosti-cr/
40 See the whole debate here: http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/specialy/hydepark/28.01.2015/
41 For more details see: http://www.blisty.cz/art/77595.html
43 More about the movement and its policies: http://www.usvitnarodnikoalice.cz/program-hnuti/
Nevertheless, public support for the new party is very low and does not meet public demand.\textsuperscript{44}

7. CONCLUSIONS

The three most relevant issues reveal the possibilities for further development in terms of policy development and from the perspective of political parties. There is no extremist movement that can serve as a challenger to the current established political parties. This is the case of the DSSS party and the IvČRN movement. Their success in any elections is highly unlikely. Yet it does not mean that the issue of immigration, in particular, would be less salient and would soon be marginalised by the media. The current parliamentary parties cover the main opinion streams within the Czech society. It is difficult for the movements to convince members of the public that they are not represented. The average voter turnout is 55\% (in local, regional and parliamentary elections, and the elections to the European Parliament).\textsuperscript{45} Almost a half of the public is resistant to political participation.\textsuperscript{46} Furthermore it is unclear what kind of mobilisation may bring this part of the public to participate in elections. Yet, this is not an issue only faced by the Czech Republic. It is one of the most crucial issues that can bring significant support to movements which play on exclusion and operate within the radical framework. Finally, there is also an absence of a reliable research on the possibilities of mobilisation of this part of the public.

Each of the three studied topics offers a different outlook of development in regard to political representation and shifting them into mainstream of political discussion.

The Sudeten issue will not become the most relevant topic in Czech politics in regard to national identity. Hence the issue will not be verbalised in greater extent. Yet the anti-German sentiments will remain an integral part of the Czech politics. No rise in relevance can be expected in

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Survey on political parties support (June 2015): http://www.stem.cz/clanek/3063
\item This argument is further developed by study conducted by Centre for Civic Education, published in june 2015, see: http://www.obcanskevzdelavani.cz/obcanska-angazovanost-2015-novy-vyzkum
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
terms of being one of the key issues of party activities or of public demand to blame the Germans for the WWII. The issue was still firmly grasped by Miloš Zeman in the presidential elections. He enjoyed support of KSČM voters. On the other side, KSČM is the only party that retains the issue in public mainstream without using hate speech or explicitly attacking the Germans. This helped the party to remain a significant parliamentary force without tending to use strongly ethnic anti-German rhetoric. Therefore, the balanced approach in responding to the demands by its voters and refraining from hate speech proved successful for the KSČM.

The relevance of the Roma issue increased significantly since 2010. It reached its peak in the 2013 parliamentary elections and was used extensively by Tomio Okamura's movement. Their campaign for the 2013 and 2014 elections targeted the Roma. At the same time, the movement lost issues to that would make it agenda setter and its credibility questioned by the media and its voters. Yet, two years since its breakthrough in the parliamentary elections, the movement has split into two formations; the leaders are no longer able to set the anti-Roma agenda. This was followed by the dramatic decline in Okamura's electoral support.

The performance of Úsvit as an anti-establishment formation shows the perspective of building a single-issue-movement without any significant personal and institutional background. Okamura succeeded to radicalise the public debate on Roma integration, but he did not offer any solution to be implemented. The language used by him destroyed the plans of the extreme DSSS that aims to soften the language towards Roma. With the exception of the 2013 general elections, Okamura did not enjoy any electoral success. Regarding the voter turnout, he may increase the share of non-voters in the next elections. He used relatively soft extremist rhetoric. Yet, the likelihood that the Roma issue will be used in a highly radical manner and will target the notorious non-voters cannot be dismissed. Therefore, the long-term strategy has to be devised. According to public authorities (the Czech Ministry of Interior), there is currently no evidence that such radical movement would emerge.

Since the autumn of 2015 the immigration issue is becoming significant in Czech politics, as evidenced by two examples. First, with the exception of TOP 09, all parliamentary parties are very reluctant to come up with a clear position towards the current wave of immigration from the Mediterranean basin. None of the parliamentary parties openly sup-
ports the increasing share of immigration. Second, there is clear evidence of radicalisation of the non-partisan IvČRN that keeps continuously developing its anti-Islamic and anti-immigration profile. In this regard, the extremist DSSS searches for topics to address. When examining DSSS manifestations, its radical rhetoric is very similar to IvČRN. DSSS seems to be, however, reluctant to use hate speech in broader extent.

From the point of view political parties, the rise of single-issue political movement is unlikely. Public demand for such movements is not high enough to facilitate the establishment of a relevant extremist party. Both studied groups lack financial resources and public figures. In his last TV appearance the IvČRN representative Martin Konvička proved to be uninformed about the Czech Muslim community and about the composition of immigrants arriving in Europe. So far, he de facto excluded himself from political aspirations as a political leader. Moreover he proved inept in engaging in cooperation with public figures or other movements.

The DSSS seems to be unable to turn its topics into agenda because all such topics are covered by others. The DSSS thus employs a more radical rhetoric towards immigrants. According to its outputs since November 2014, it identifies immigration as one of the most crucial issues. Apart from the individual successes on local level, the DSSS is not increasing its relevance in political and public discourse, however, changes are not excluded in light of the refuge crisis that emerged in Europe on Autumn 2015.

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HISTORY IN THE SERVICE OF THE REVIVAL OF RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM: CASE OF SLOVAKIA

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the main sources of Slovak political movements which tend to represent in the current political debate the ideas of extremism is the historical period of the existence of the Slovak Republic 1939 – 1945 which was a totalitarian state. President of this state, Jozef Tiso, was a doctor of theology and a catholic priest. In spite of the historical and political responsibility for atrocities committed by the Slovak Republic 1939 – 1945 the Roman Catholic Church has not been so far able to clearly acknowledge the institutional responsibility of the Roman Catholic Church for the false interpretation of the so-called Christian national socialism which was the official ideology of Tiso’s regime. The official Church never condemned publicly anti-Semitic interpretations of Tiso’s regime. On the contrary, Church officials at different occasions present Jozef Tiso as a positive political figure. This revisionist interpretation of Tiso’s politics and the state, satellite of the Third Reich, causes main confusion in the interpretation of the extremist tendencies in current nationalistic movements which connect Christianity and national identity seeing the inspiration for their current politics in the politics of the fascist state.

On the outside, religiously defined communities that dwell within civil society cannot be distinguished from other social organisations, associations or societies. On the inside, though, they are glued together by the supernatural element of shared belief in deity.

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1 Sections 1 – 9 and 14 of this chapter are written by Miroslav Kocúr, sections 10 – 13 are written by Grigorij Mesežnikov.
2 In the context of Slovakia, the text refers primarily to Christian communities; based on my own background, I shall be methodologically limited to my experience with Roman Catholic, Protestant and Evangelical Christianity.
The level of discussion is very often connected to the historical context and its interpretation. Public discussion on the historical role of the Church, in Slovakia particularly on the Roman Catholic church, never occurs, since the analysis and appreciation of specific historical periods is very much connected to individual positions of the participants. The measure of the one’s loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church directly influences the depth and the scale of capacity of critical thinking.

Internal order of faith based communities is derived directly from the Bible or secondary religious literature by notable figures in Church history. Besides organisational purpose, these regulations are supposed to lead community members to moral integrity and impeccability. Based on precisely stipulated sanctions, their observance of the internal order may even be enforced to a certain degree, although rather limited by now. Even the greatest sanction today that in some cases may amount to excommunication is hardly comparable to coercive measures used at times of Giordano Bruno or Jan Hus.

2. REVISIONIST TENDENCIES AS A SOURCE OF EXTREMIST DISCOURSE

Especially on specific topics of Slovak history we experience special caution of different authors since, on one hand there is a tendency to idealise the past and, on the other hand, position is criticised. For the issue of right wing extremism the discerning subject is the period of existence of Slovak Republic 1939 – 1945. It was a puppet state of the Third Reich, based on the idea of the first independent Slovak statehood. The ruling Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party (Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana, HSĽS) was a popular party based on the contemporary level of interpretation of the idea of the Christian and national exclusivity that was quite common for the first half of the twentieth century.

The distinguishing feature of the party was a strong accent on the interpretation of religious superiority of Christianity towards Biblical Judaism in connection to current interpretation of Biblical narrative. From this interpretation the popular piety and Christian interpretation draw, from contemporary perspective, false, at those times however wide spread conclusions about historical failure of Jewish people to recognise their Messiah. In this perspective Jews are still responsible for Jesus’s
crucifixion and death. Of course, this is not official Christian theological position, however, popular piety and perception make quite often the use of this argument.

Such religious interpretation was enhanced by sociological and economical misinterpretations of responsibility of Jews for different socio-economic tensions and difficulties. The political system thus succeeded to convince general public and to acquire its support in accepting political and other repressive measures which ultimately led to the extermination of Jewish minority in Slovakia.

This pattern in evaluation of current socio-economic development caused by economic crisis, military conflicts, ethnic fights and geopolitical changes is obvious. The problem to deal with this phenomenon was complicated by the fact, that the interpretation of period of Slovak Republic 1939 – 1945 was not elaborated from the perspective of civil and democratic society.

The fact, that the Roman Catholic Church was unable to produce a clear and public assessment of the presidency of Dr. Jozef Tiso, made him historically an ambivalent figure. The assessment of his official positions and his activities during the period of 1939 – 1945 were left to individuals.

Under these circumstances when the leading figure of antidemocratic movement and afterwards a president of an authoritarian state which caused social exclusion and consequently the death of citizens of Jewish origin\(^3\) in the Nazi extermination camps could be seen from different perspective. As the Slovak Republic 1939 – 1945 and its representatives have not been listed among the extremist movements, the space opened wide for historical revisionism and relativisation of their political and moral responsibility.

Extremist movements and groupings increasingly won public acceptance. In December 2013 de facto leader of an extremist party Slovenská Pospolitost (Slovak Community) Marián Kotleba became the

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\(^3\) Alongside with political opponents and Roma the Jewish population was exclusively persecuted and this persecution was supported even by official Slovak parliament and by the decisions and decrees of Slovak government led by Jozef Tiso, especially the decree about the legal status of Jews (*198/1941 Sl.z. Nariadenie zo dňa 9. septembra 1941 o právnom postavení Židov*) published on September 9th, 1941.
Chairman of the Banská Bystrica regional self-government. The Slovak Constitutional Court dissolved his former party on the grounds of its antidemocratic and anti-constitutional nature.

Yet, the Church officials manifested public support to this extremist group and its leaders on many occasions. Members of Slovak Community took part in different religious ceremonies especially on different occasions while commemorating the anniversaries of Dr. Jozef Tiso, his death or the date of the founding of Slovak Republic, 14 March. Cardinal Ján Chrysostom Korec and Archbishop Ján Sokol were among those to be particularly supportive and they publicly legitimised the extremist movements and their leaders, presented the regime of Jozef Tiso as the glorious period of Slovak history and underscored some its allegedly positive features.

This created the atmosphere of public acceptance of the newly founded political party named People’s Party – Our Slovakia (Ľudová strana – Naše Slovensko) and Marián Kotleba won regional elections in competition with social-democratic candidate in the second round. Extremist agenda was visible especially in public assessment of World War II and some contemporary phenomena regarding especially minority right groups. The influential personalities of the authoritarian Slovak Republic 1939 – 1945, especially Dr. Jozef Tiso, have become role models for potential first voters in parliamentary elections 2016 who see the period of Slovak Republic 1939 – 1945 from revisionist perspective. Their political and moral responsibility especially for the atrocities against the Jews began to be seen from the so-called historical perspective in order to limit this responsibility and thus not to hold them accountable for all what has been happening in Slovakia, governed following the example of Adolf Hitler.

The case of election of the representative of overt political extremism to public office draw the attention of politicians to the political agenda of Marián Kotleba. Mainstream politicians tried to present his election as an act of political delusion. Yet, they themselves attempted to incorporate the extremist agenda using anti-Roma and anti-European sentiments in political campaign and public debate in order to win similar electorate. Thus the elements of extremism became more visible and increasingly present in political discourse.
The period between episodic emergence and the broader public acceptance of the extremist agenda has been quite long. The most decisive fact proved to be the ambivalent attitude towards historically problematic period of the Slovak Republic 1939 – 1945 which as a satellite of the Third Reich has not been listed among extremist formations and while different extremist groupings have been seen and supervised as potentially extremist movements, Slovak nationalists and their favouritism of Slovak authoritarian regime and its antidemocratic nature have not been listed among extremists at all. Even though these groups often overlapped and they were marching on different occasions under the same or similar symbols and flags.

Especially controversial were different ceremonies marking the foundation of the Slovak Republic on 14 March or different anniversaries of key politicians and figures of the then regime. Members of Marián Kotleba’s parties are usually wearing uniforms similar to those of military units of People’s Party militia and at the same time they are using symbols, flags and uniforms with slight alteration of colours in order to avoid charges of promotion of Nazism. Religious ceremonies are the utmost acts of symbolic approval of their activities. In April 2008 the groups with the paraphernalia of the war-time Slovak Republic participated at a mass commemorating event of Dr. Jozef Tiso. Their members stood guard by his portrait. The mass was celebrated by the Archbishop Ján Sokol. On a number of occasions he expressed his deep admiration towards the Slovak Republic and its President, having earned praise by the extremist media.

3. CHURCHES IN CIVIL SOCIETY

Deep emotional, political and human connection granted by religious ceremonies and activities of religious leaders to this kind of extremism makes the subject quite complex, posing a challenge for civil society.

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4 Those listed in official documents of Slovak government and Ministry of Interior.
5 The symbols of the Slovak Republic and, particularly, of its security forces similar to SS are still qualified as neutral and they are not considered as extremist symbols even though the Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party (HSLŠ) was its Rapid Units of Hlinka Guards (Pohotovostné oddiel Hlinkovej gardy) as their military organization to persecute political opposition and, above all, to assist the deportations of Jews to concentration camps.
Under the circumstances caused by the humanitarian crisis when thousands of refugees are arriving from different parts of Asia and Africa to Europe the attitude of different communities reflects a range of deep-rooted prejudice against those seen as foreigners marching down European roads.

In civil society, church membership is perceived as a voluntary and a matter of free choice by its individual members. Yet primary social networks of church members largely stem from the shared religious beliefs. The moral dimension of religious belief ensuing from being organized in a faith community, including the Church, and its ethical implications may have unexpected consequences for church members and for the life of the civic society as well. The Government respects the internal order of faith communities and refrains from interfering in any way even with regulations whose nature may be discriminatory in terms of civil legislation. They are simply considered to be internal regulations of faith communities that are accepted by their members based on their conviction.

The interaction between society and faith communities is virtually in-existent as both parties live their own, largely separate lives. Nevertheless, the ethical requirements of churches and faith communities are regularly confronted by legislative needs by the wider society in certain specific areas. The requirements of churches come in Slovakia to the

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6 Good examples in this respect include the status of women within churches, the position on homosexual relations, the right to hold clerical posts, etc.

7 For example, on 22 September 2013 some 80,000 Pro Life activists participated on public March for Life (Pochod za život) in Košice (the second largest city in Slovakia). This was the biggest public gathering in the 25 years after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Since then a discussion on National Strategy on Human Rights became increasingly present in the public as a divisive issue between non-governmental organizations with religious, however mostly Roman Catholic background (the Alliance for the Family – Aliancia za rodinu was their common platform) and other mostly liberal NGOs. The climax of this polarised discussion has been reached in referendum named Referendum about Family (Referendum o rodine) in February 2015. 892,719 voters fully supported ideas which were supposed to protect and support families. The referendum has not, however, reached the 50% threshold required to validate it (the turnout was 21.41%). On 20 September 2015 another public was held in order to change abortion legislation. Pro-life activists tend to gain public support in order to draw legislation that would lead to the abolition of laws allowing abortion in Slovak healthcare system. According to their religious conviction, each abortion is a murder and thus should be forbidden by the democratic legislation. All these three events
fore especially during debates on national budget. Here, the churches are directly concerned about the government contributions to financing clergymen’s salaries, church headquarters and, indirectly, also educational, social care and medical enterprises. Slovak educational, social care and health service system features a considerable proportion of institutions operated by churches that provide pre-school, primary, secondary, and university education, as well as social and medical services.

The voice of faith communities can hardly be ignored. With varying intensity and success, all post-November administrations in Slovakia solicited support by churches per se, or at least by their decisive and leading segments. This was manifested by their willingness to listen to the voice of church representatives in drafting legislation on restitution of church property that was nationalised after 1950, indemnification of victims of political persecution and paving the way towards actual rather than declaratory religious freedom.8

It was these areas that most legislative changes in education, health service, social care or cultural institutions focused on. The churches gradually became an important partner, their views taken into account when formulating election programmes by political parties, and drafting Government manifestos.

Explicitly or implicitly, requirements and expectations of church headquarters played an increasingly important role on various occasions. Three major public events between September 2013 and 2015 set a framework for this development of public debate. In terms of content, they were inspired by the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. Its moral teaching on family, contraception and rights of sexual minorities thus directly interferes with the current secular state legislation. This confessionally conditioned teaching of the Roman Catholic Church is about to be enforced by the means of democratic procedure based on the will expressed by the majority of voters. This presents a serious challenge to that part of political spectrum which does not accept Church were largely supported and co-sponsored by the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia (Konferencia biskupov Slovenska, KBS). The Conference supported these events organizationally and with personnel.

8 During his meeting with representatives of churches in Slovakia in January 2008, Prime Minister Robert Fico referred to the state and church as the father and the mother, and to their children – the Slovak citizens (Fico: Cirkev matkou, štát otcom, 2008).
teaching on certain matters and thus challenges them. The way such influence of the church reflects upon other socio-political developments might be derived from when the church officials influence the Roman Catholic public by the means of Catholic press, television, radio and effective public relations methods. Slovak history offers some lessons on how the approach of the church communities to political and moral challenges can mislead the society as such.

4. HISTORICAL ROLE MODELS AS THE POINT OF DEPARTURE OF EXTREMISM

At the same time the same institution, the Roman Catholic Church, was most reluctant to clearly denounce the atrocities committed by the authoritarian regime of President Jozef Tiso, and to hold him, as a person and Roman Catholic priest and theologian, accountable for all that happened under his leadership. A clear statement and its consequences should involve accepting accountability for the institutional responsibility for political development after 14 March 1939 under the Presidency of the Roman Catholic priest who has never plead guilty for his acts as a President for anti-Jewish legislation and its implementation according to Canon Law in front of the Church authorities and he was never persecuted according to Roman Catholic Church legislation. Thus the person of Jozef Tiso as a priest remained without reproach in the eyes of a significant proportion of Roman Catholic public in Slovakia. In the context of Communist persecutions of Roman Catholic activists Jozef Tiso was presented by some Slovak historians of the period in question as a victim of Communist anti-Church propaganda. In a certain measure it was the result of ideological Communist propaganda which over interpreted the period of Tiso’s Presidency and neglected the fact of active presence of members of the Roman Catholic Church and some priests and higher clergy in anti-Fascist movement. The aim of Communist propaganda was to compromise the Roman Catholic Church and thus eliminate its influence during the Communist totalitarian regime between 1948 and 1989. The period of Tiso’s Presidency, his active cooperation with the Nazi Germany and the fact that he was a Catholic priest has been an easy qualification in manipulating the public against the Roman Catholic Church. On the other hand, the Roman Catholic community was unable to distinguish Jozef Tiso and his Presidency from the later development.
Wrong general idea and the interpretation which identifies Tiso’s political failure with the general failure of Christian Churches prevent the Roman Catholic Church from critical thinking and assessment of the President of the authoritarian state.

This hesitant approach still prevents many Roman Catholics in Slovakia from critical moral evaluation of the period. This opens space for historical revisionism to persist not only regarding Jozef Tiso (“he did not know what happened to the deported Slovak Jews”) but also regarding this period as such. Especially among the extremists this approach created a grey zone of interpretation of the comfortable escape. Neo-Nazi extremism was immediately recognised as such, while symbols of the wartime Slovak Republic and their revival are from the criminal point of view still acceptable. They are not seen as extremist, even though in the period of 1939 they were clearly connected to paramilitary organizations which were persecuting political opponents, lead to restriction of human rights of certain groups of the population because of their religion, race or ethnic origin.

Thus in the history of Slovakia, the single most relevant example of amalgamating national and religious principles in administering the state was the period of 1939 – 1945. This picture would be even more complete if its beginning was moved to 6 October 1938, when Slovakia proclaimed its autonomy and began to adopt concrete measures aimed at obtaining full independence. During this period, the political regime defined itself as Christian national socialism. Its ideological advocate was Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party (HSĽS) led by ThDr. Jozef Tiso who was appointed the head of the autonomous cabinet and subsequently became the president of the Slovak Republic, a puppet state of the Third Reich.

14 March 1939 will always be connected to the name of Jozef Tiso. He was a man whose political career spanned almost quarter of a century. He was member of the Czechoslovak Parliament and a member of the central government (Minister of Health Care). For many years, Tiso was politically active within the HSĽS where he held noteworthy posts. He was in the centre of actions to such an extent that he was able to shape political reality and put his personal stamp onto it.

In 1941, the HSĽS Publishing House in Bratislava published a book authored by senior lecturer Štefan Polakovič called Tiso’s Teachings.
sova náuka]. In its six chapters symptomatically entitled Nation – State – Party – Religion – Social Issue – National Socialism, Polakovič summarised the doctrine of President Tiso. He lets him speak while he merely connects and edits his texts into particular chapters. On Slovak nationalism it says: “Such nationalism loves its own but must not hate other’s; it builds its own but does not destroy other’s and strengthens its own without disassembling the whole” (Polakovič, p. 27).

In view of the period and the context, we should perhaps let Jozef Tiso speak for himself: “A nation must take precedence over all personal relations and cravings. We must realise this truth and spread it like a seed that will take roots in every Slovak soul” (Polakovič, p. 76). In the shadow of the Third Reich, Tiso’s apparent ambition was to build a Christian state on national and social foundations. “We are building Slovakia of the people in compliance with guidelines of national socialism [...] We do so not only out of grateful affection for the Great German Empire and its magnanimous Fuhrer Adolf Hitler, but out of well-understood interest in our national and state life [...] In line with National Socialism, we do not subscribe to state totalitarianism but to national totalitarianism” (Polakovič, p. 157). National socialism was supposed to become a barrier against “godless” socialism and liberal-Marxist, but also against capitalist ideology. Such socialism would thus be Christian and based on “love for one’s own, willingness to work and sacrifice for the ideal”.

Unfortunately, these seemingly noble ideals began to accentuate a false fortissimo that foreshadowed a fatal finale for many Slovak citizens. The doom of this endeavour was adumbrated by efforts to reconcile the irreconcilable: “On the first glimpse it seems as if Catholicism and nationalism represented two opposite poles that can never level out or meet. And yet, nationalism finds its culmination point in Catholicism” (Polakovič, p. 27).

5. EPISODES LEADING TO INCREASED GENERAL ACCEPTANCE OF EXTREMISM

Over the past twenty years, the Roman Catholic Church proved to be the most vocal advocate of the demands by churches in Slovakia, the most influential faith community in the country both numerically and
historically. Other faith communities merely copied and adapted their own demands to what the Roman Catholic Church had managed to accomplish. Such *modus operandi* was quite logical and well within ordinary parameters given the scope of transformation of Czechoslovakia after November 1989.

Public perception of social activities pursued by churches in Slovakia is largely determined by the perception of social activities pursued by the most influential player: in case of Christian communities, the Roman Catholic Church.

Instead of addressing manifestations of extremism inspired by the authoritarian regime of Slovakia and Tiso’s leadership in public life, particular church leaders in Slovakia focused on maintaining unity vis-à-vis government in furthering their own interests. On practical level, the attitude was shown through solidary reticence of church leaders about actual problems or even scandals within other churches. When it comes to collaboration of church officials with the Communist secret police or to restitution issues, the mutual tolerance is not difficult to comprehend. Situations differ from one case to another and should not be measured by identical standards.

The most recent example of the pragmatic connection and cooperation came at a conference in the city of Trnava in September 2015, when the Prime Minister Robert Fico openly expressed interest in stable and proper relationship with churches. Emblematically this statement has been issued during the conference organised by the Lutheran Church (*Fico odmíta odluku ..., 2015*). Fico expressed his desire in cooperation with the churches especially in connection to humanitarian crisis connected to thousands of immigrants coming to European continent from challenged regions of Africa and Asia.

With respect to the Slovak Republic 1939 – 1945 though, Slovak churches had ample opportunities to adopt an unambiguous Christian position that would render impossible any effort to question or relativise what was perpetrated in Slovakia in the name of Christian national socialism between 1939 and 1945. Christians and their clergy had many chances to take a stance, especially with respect to activities by some

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9 The following paragraphs are partially based and further develop earlier arguments presented by the author in: Kocúr, pp. 211-234.
representatives of the Catholic Church who publicly subscribed to the ideological legacy of the period of 1939 – 1945, or other public statements that carried a strong stamp of ethnic intolerance and fell within the line of increasing extremist manifestations.

There have been many examples of such activities and/or statements; the chosen ones leave little or no space to doubt that certain interpretations of Christian universalism in public debate gave way to extremism and provided seemingly relevant arguments to support it. Not only did these plainly anti-Christian attitudes remain uncommented by Christian leaders but some of their protagonists could even rely on strong moral support from church officials. This attitude might mislead increasing number of the less informed public especially among first time voters. The moral authority and influence of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in general public, among politician and its influence even in other Christian church communities increase the impact of its official statements, interpretations, positions and its direct or indirect political aspiration. According to last census more than 63% of Slovak citizens are members of Roman Catholic Church and more than 80% of the population are Christians.

6. PRESENCE AND PAST OF JOZEF TISO

In post-Communist Slovakia, the attitude to Jozef Tiso, as well as the existence and regime of the Slovak State was shaped shortly after the fall of Communism. As a result of the earlier taboo of the period by Communist historians, this controversial subject was uncritically idealised in early stages after 1989. Before the public was even able to learn about objective historical truth of the 1930s and 1940s, this period began to be celebrated and HSĽS representatives and Slovak government officials of the period began to be glorified. Historians living in exile such as František Vnuk or Milan S. Ďurica played a pivotal role in this process. In the 1990s, Vnuk was a Professor of Church History at the Roman Catholic Theological Faculty in Bratislava.

Cardinal Ján Chryzostom Korec made an impression that he sympathised with the Slovak State and its President, as was apparent from his views and public statements in the early 1990s. In July 1990, Cardinal Korec attended the unveiling of Tiso’s commemorative plaque in
Bánovce nad Bebravou. His sympathizers considered public statements by Cardinal Korec to be unambiguous endorsement and moral support to their activities. That happened despite the reservations at the Vatican about Tiso’s presidency. The reservations were documented by correspondence of Mons. Giuseppe Burzio, Papal Nuncio in Bratislava during Slovak Republic 1939 – 1945.

In view of Ján Chryzostom Korec’s moral authority that resulted from his long-term persecution by the Communist regime and his strongly anti-Communist profile, the relativisation of the Slovak State began even before the facts about it were openly available to objective scrutiny.

The efforts of Communist historiography to use President Tiso’s vocational background for the purpose of anti-Church propaganda gradually became counterproductive. The expedient assessment of Jozef Tiso’s political activity from the outset of his long political career and presenting him exclusively in the negative light has led to equally expedient endeavour to portray him as the martyr of Czech centralism or even the rising Communism.

In recent years, the endeavour to amalgamate national and Christian principles was led by Ján Sokol, the emeritus Archbishop of Trnava. Besides attending political rallies organised by the Slovak Community, a political party that was, in the meantime, barred on account of its racist and anti-democratic nature, Sokol repeatedly made excusatory comments on Jozef Tiso for broadcast on TV and radio as well as for print media. This leads to wide spread relativisation of the political and moral responsibility Jozef Tiso for the atrocities of the regime he represented and governed. The idea that he helped to save the nation prevailed. The

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10 Symptomatically, František Tondra, the Head of the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia at the time, said it was impossible to take an unambiguous stance on Slovak President Jozef Tiso. “There are arguments for as well as against,” he said. “Perhaps the greatest ‘sin’ of Tiso was the fact that he was a Catholic priest” (Tondra: Hriechom Tisa bolo ..., 2007).

11 The political career of Jozef Tiso spanned almost a quarter of a century. He was a member of the Czechoslovak Parliament and member of the central government (Minister of Health Care). For many years, he was politically active within the HLES where he did held significant posts. He was indeed in the centre of its activities to an extent that he was able to shape the political reality and put his personal stamp onto it.
facts on deportation and persecution of his opponents\textsuperscript{12} based on racism, anti-Semitism and chauvinism are being at the same time systematically downplayed and even denied.

It was Sokol’s public statements that stirred public opinion the most. During the Christmas season of 2006 he spoke for TV news channel TA3, recollecting the times of plenty in Slovakia during World War II. Sokol attributed the fact that Slovaks “lived on a reasonable level” to good work of President Jozef Tiso. His tactless omission of deportations of 70,000 Jews and oppressions of other minorities created a furore within civil society. Others interpreted it as moral endorsement of national populism at the highest places.

Archbishop Sokol celebrated annual requiem masses on the anniversary of Tiso’s execution that regularly turned into manifestations of sympathies with the Slovak State. Public resistance to Sokol’s endeavour took on various forms, including a civic initiative endorsed by almost 2000 signatories who resolutely rejected his efforts to combine requiem masses in honour of Jozef Tiso with an apologetic attitude to the regime he led (see: \textit{Otvorený list OI Nechceme sa prizerať}, 2008).

After the initiative held a public rally called No to Fascisation of Slovakia [Nie fašizácií Slovenska] on 11 September 2008, national populist sentiments began to radicalise at the highest places in the legislative and executive. The offensive anti-Semitic statements made by Justice Minister Štefan Harabin and the former Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar, by then Member of Parliament on behalf of his Movement for Democratic Slovakia, MP addressed to Daniel Lipšic, MP (at that time Christian Democratic Movement) went not only beyond the limit of political correctness but even that of elementary human decency.

On 10 February 2007, František Tondra, the Head of the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia (KBS) made part of the informed public uneasy by an interview for \textit{Sme} daily. When asked about Sokol’s statements regarding his reverence for President Jozef Tiso and the alleged affluence during WWII, Tondra responded by saying he was not happy that Sokol “let himself go on about the subject”. When addressing the Tiso issue, Tondra said the subject was so complicated that it was virtually impossible to assume an unambiguous position. “There are advocates and there

\textsuperscript{12} Especially Slovak citizens of Jewish faith.
are critics,” he said. “There are arguments in favour of founding the Slovak State. One should distinguish between founding a state and its president. I am not a historian, but everything I know tells me the Slovak State had to be established, if we were to maintain independence.”

The greatest outrage caused the passage in which Tondra argued that representatives of the Jewish community had visited Tiso and tried to persuade him not to give up his office. According to Tondra, when Tiso learned about the consequences of deportations of Slovak Jews he wanted to give up the Presidency, but the Jews convinced him otherwise. Tondra also believed that a memorial was raised in Tiso’s honour in 1967 in Jerusalem. In this context, he used a chance to rebuff unjustified criticism aimed at the Catholic Church. “Tiso was neither authorised by the Church nor was he the President of the country on its behalf,” he said. “The Vatican was against it and so were many priests in Slovakia.” In light to its factual nature, the response by representatives of the Jewish community is cited in full.13

13 In response to these statements, Sme daily published, on 12 February, 2007 a commentary Tiso, socha a Jeruzalem” [Tiso, Statue and Jerusalem] by Peter Salner and Jaroslav Franek, in which the representatives of the Jewish faith community: argued: “Recently, the Slovak public resumed lively public debate on the first Slovak Republic and its president Jozef Tiso. It is interesting to see some of its participants helping resurrect the myths about the controversial politician. The statements by František Tondra, at that time Head of the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia are illustrative of the developments. [Mr. Tondra’s] views regarding Jozef Tiso and the wartime Slovak State were presented in two articles published by Sme on Tuesday, 6 February (“What about the Nation’s Memory”), and on Saturday, 10 February (“The Past of the Priest Past Shall be Judged by the Lord”). Some of his assertions compel us to react.” “One of standard [clerical] myths is the assertion that ‘Jewish rabbis asked that President Tiso remained in office.’ This nonsense was analysed in detail and dismissed by Professor Y. A. Jelinek in his article published in the conference-related volume from The Tragedy of Slovak Jews, an eponymous international symposium held in Banská Bystrica on 25 – 27 March 1992 (pp. 121 – 124). Even more absurd is the invented argument (quoted by Mr Tondra) according to which a statue was supposed to be unveiled in honour of Jozef Tiso in Jerusalem (!!!). With respect to the assertion, we would like to express astonishment that a person of such a social status and a professor is able to subscribe publicly to a nonsense of such calibre.” “The story about “Tiso’s statue in Jerusalem” has many mutations. The first reference to it appeared during the Communist régime when the 1986 yearbook published by the Association of Anti-Fascist Warriors reprinted an article from exile press on page 134. By the late 1990s, the myth was fully resurrected in Slovakia. In response, the Jerusalem Magistrate published a statement on behalf of Ehud Olmert (then Mayor of
These are examples how influential figures in the Roman Catholic Church influence public perception of the rise of extremist groups that draw their spiritual and political inspiration from the legacy of President Tiso and his political deeds, particularly his discriminatory approach towards the Slovak Jews.

In term of its official position on the Holocaust (Shoah), the KBS published a statement that reflects the official position of the Vatican and the responsibility of the Catholic Church for what took place during the Shoah. It was a KBS declaration regarding the Vatican document on the Holocaust We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah. The document concludes with a paragraph in which the KBS offers apology to those who have been harmed by its insensitivity in the past: “At this time of penance inspired by Pope John Paul II, we, the Slovak Catholic bishops associated in the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia ask our Jewish brothers and sisters for forgiveness and call upon all Catholic believers, as well as all Christians and people of good will to join us and to overcome all prejudice. We sincerely believe that the act of apology to the Jewish nation in terms of ‘moral and religious memory’ shall be understood as the act of repentance, as the act of love for the Crucified, which is our peace.” (Vyhlášenie KBS k vatikánskemu dokumentu o holokauste, 1988).

Jerusalem and now Israeli Prime Minister) that 'there is no publicly displayed statue or plaque in honour of Jozef Tiso on the territory of greater Jerusalem'. We are prepared to present a copy of this document.”

“The Head of the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia, Mr Tondra argues that Tiso is criticised essentially because he was a [Roman] Catholic priest. The truth is that Jozef Tiso was convicted and his sentence continues to apply on moral as well as the legal level. He is criticised until the present day as the top official of the fascist state, as President, political leader and one of the most loyal collaborators of (or accomplices to) the German Nazism and its leader Adolf Hitler. Bishop Tondra’s statement turns the entire matter ‘upside down’. Tiso is not being criticised because he was a [Roman] Catholic priest; quite on the contrary, that is why the Catholic Church defends him. For the same reason, the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia is unable to assume a critical position to the period of Slovak fascism during which the Catholic Church enjoyed suprastandard relations (including personal ties) with the government bodies.”

“We are sorry that officials of an organisation that exerts tremendous influence over (perhaps) millions of believers are unable to condemn Fascism in concrete Slovak context; instead, they stubbornly strive to glorify its top representative in Slovakia.”
Alas, practical measures and public statements by Ján Sokol, Ján Chryzostom Korec and some other representatives of the Roman Catholic Church who regularly revere Jozef Tiso in public utterly ignore the text of the document. Moreover, some officials of the Roman Catholic Church in Slovakia repeatedly attempt to relativise and marginalise the gravity of the Slovak State. Such this disparaging positions thus negatively affect public sensitivity to manifestations of ethnic intolerance and other forms of intolerance.

7. DIFFERENT VIEW OF THE SUCCESSOR

In June 2009, the news service of the SITA news agency published an article that was subsequently reprinted by all key Slovak dailies (Bezák kritizuje Sokola ..., 2007). The article presented the views of the new Archbishop of Trnava Róbert Bezák on Tiso’s activities from the time of his Presidency, and Bezák's responses to public statements by his predecessor in office, Ján Sokol.

To Bezák, the emerging independent Slovak State in 1939 was a historically logical consequence of political developments in Czechoslovakia. He said that what followed was equally important. He pointed out the first registered Nazi transport dispatched from Slovakia in March 1942 that brought 990 Jewish women to Auschwitz. “That is worse. 990 people, women, are not easily lost. A question to me is whether, in 1942, a person that happened to be a Catholic priest should have not responded, perhaps even by saying: 'I shall abdicate. Whenever anyone around me is wronged, I am wronged myself.' It is not something by which I would have been intact,” stressed the newly appointed Archbishop.

Bezák also criticised statements by his predecessor Ján Sokol about the economic affluence during the Slovak State: “I ask how can a six year-old boy evaluate the standard of living,” “When one is born in 1933, can he really judge the years 1939 to 1942? When I look back at the time I was six or seven, I cannot tell whether I was well off. To say that we were all right because we had something to eat while others had nothing, hence we were better off, is most unfortunate. As a Christian, I would not dare using such assessment criteria” (Bezák kritizuje Sokola ..., 2007).
This was the first time when a high official of the Catholic Church in Slovakia publicly presented an unambiguously critical opinion regarding President Jozef Tiso’s responsibility. All those who examine the issue politically, historically or as civic activists, accepted the Bezák’s statement with sympathies and satisfaction.

In order to illustrate the complexity of the situation within the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia it is necessary to mention, that this archbishop in Trnava as Ján Sokol’s successor showed too high degree of nonconformist approach on different fields of his public activity. After non-transparent process of investigation after allegation which were never proven Mons. Róbert Bezák stepped down and since 2 July 2012 he is not in the office anymore. His successor Ján Orosch is former close supporter of archbishop Ján Sokol.

8. EXTREMIST ATTITUDES TOWARDS ETHNIC MINORITIES AND THEIR RIGHTS

The following two cases illustrate how far are extremist positions present in the activities of established public or political institutions. Certain stereotypes are present in different procedures that reflect arbitrary approach to individuals or communities, and they are based on the fact, that certain rights and privileged treatment are limited only to majority. These can hardly be considered straightforward extremist positions, however they might be a phenomenon that once generally accepted can decrease the capacity of majority to perceive and to anticipate how extremist positions on certain issues might develop into different and real forms of political extremism.

Acting within the framework of European values of freedom and dignity means to be sensitive to every process which might acquire different dimension once it involves broader public and gains moral acceptance supported by the silence or open cooperation of those who are expected to be moral authorities. Especially different minorities, their
dignity and rights are generally first and easy targets of public opinion which nurtures prejudice and historical myths.\textsuperscript{14}

In January 2009, the Chairman of the Party of Hungarian Coalition Pál Csáky made repeated public statements that ethnic Hungarian Catholics in Slovakia should have their own bishop. According to Csáky an elegant solution would be if one diocese was led by a bishop of Hungarian origin who would be member of the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia. (KBS). “The Slovak Catholic Church must begin to contemplate pastoral duties with respect to [ethnic] Hungarians in the 21st century,” Csáky said. “I expect it to examine modern pastoral methods and search for the way to treat believers of other ethnic affiliation” (Csákyho biskupa cirkev nechce, 2009).

According to some authors, ethnic Hungarian Catholics in Slovakia have shown significant activity aimed at solving their pastoral and spiritual needs. In the meantime, they abandoned the original demand to establish a separate diocese. Instead, they repeatedly demanded the KBS to appoint a bishop that would take care of the needs of ethnic Hungarian believers. They also submitted a demand to the Archbishops of Bratislava and Trnava. According to György Herdics and János Zsidó, the initiative was supported by 50,000 petitioners whose signatures have been sent to the Pope (Herdics – Zsidó, p. 418).

As media reported, the KBS was convinced that ethnic Hungarian believers in Slovakia are taken good care of as they have priests and bishop vicars who speak fluent Hungarian. “A chairman of political party should not enter this territory,” said KBS spokesman Jozef Kováčik. “It is rather about scoring political points than about a true effort to tackle certain problems” (Csákyho biskupa cirkev nechce, 2009).

On a different occasion, Kováčik commented on public demands to appoint a Hungarian bishop for ethnic Hungarian believers by saying that “such opinions should not be [presented] through media but should be conveyed directly to the bishops”. According to Kováčik, Catholic believers who live in Slovakia are part of the Catholic Church in Slovakia that is not divided by nationality. “In Slovakia, there is no exclusively Hungarian territory that would not have a single Slovak among its pa-

\textsuperscript{14} In Slovakia this particularly concerns the Hungarian and Roma minorities. Think tank INESS offers an insight and analysis of the so-called Roma’s myth (see: Dinga – Ďurana, pp. 23-24).
rishioners,” he said. “Besides, the Church has Bishops who speak fluent Hungarian and who regularly tend to pastoral needs of believers in the mixed territories” (Csáky sa opäť vracia k biskupovi maďarskej národnosti, 2009).

These statements by the KBS spokesman and other public figures, as well as the general atmosphere in this area illustrate a rather reluctant attitude to tackling this issue in an accommodating fashion. In one of his statements, Kováčik even said that the KBS had not been informed about the need that was publicly brought up by Csáky. The public debate on the issue was also joined by the then President Ivan Gašparovič who said that believers should not care about the language in which they turn to God. This also documents little understanding for what believers in parishes that consist largely of ethnic Hungarians or are based in the ethnically mixed territories expect from the clergy.

9. BETWEEN HISTORY AND MYTHOLOGY

On 5 July 2009, a public meeting was held at the Devín Castle near Bratislava on the occasion of the public holiday to commemorate that missionaries of Slavs St. Constantine and St. Methodius. In his address the Prime Minister Robert Fico spoke of the recently adopted amendment to the Act on the State Language in connection with the alleged Hungarian irredentism (Fico na oslavách varoval ..., 2009). He argued that the protection of state language must be “the fundamental pillar of every Slovak administration. Fico suggested that it was the way “to protect ourselves against dangerous irredentism that blows increasingly from across the Danube River.” (Fico na oslavách varoval ..., 2009; P. Paška: Slováci sa v histórii nenechali poraziť ..., 2009). The platform was decorated by stylised portraits of the saints while a number of clergymen were present in the audience.

Cardinal Korec who attended a similar rally in 2008 praised mutual cooperation of the supreme Constitutional officials in encouraging national consciousness and pride. Prime Minister Premier Fico said in his keynote speech that national solidarity must be built as “a firm barrier against activities of the peculiar sort of adventurers who undermine Slovakia’s spiritual integrity” (Štátnici vyzvali na cyrilometodskej oslave ..., 2008).
Nevertheless, Fico’s coalition partner and the radical nationalist Chairman of the Slovak National Party (SNS) Ján Slota has a peculiar way of cementing Slovakia’s spiritual integrity. On 5 October 2008, Slota visited a village of Pavlovce in the district of Vranov nad Topľou to celebrate planting a concrete double cross, state symbol of Slovakia. Having admitted of being under the influence of wine, he gave an emotional speech to the audience of two or three hundred, using militant vocabulary when speaking of Slovakia’s southern neighbour. First, he stated that Slovakia used to be the centre of Christian Europe. He went on, using offensive language, to speak of Hungary’s Foreign Minister, ridiculing Hungarian history and slandering Hungary’s national cultural symbols (Slota posilnený domácim ..., 2008).

Although Slota repeatedly said that SNS officials did not mean to offend anybody by planting double crosses around Slovakia, in his short speech he repeatedly did just that. In this particular case, the combination of vulgar national populism and Christian beliefs was amplified by the representatives of the Church assisting the unveiling of a commemorative plaque and the ceremony of consecrating the cross. That lent a sacred dimension to the event.

Human rights activists subsequently filed a motion to prosecute Slota on grounds of defamation of the nation, race and conviction. The Office of Regional Attorney in Prešov rejected the motion, reasoning that the facts of the case did not indicate that the crime had been perpetrated. The judgement argued that this kind of verbal communication was natural and standard for Ján Slota. In its official statement, the Office of Regional Attorney pointed out that Ján Slota, a politician and Chairman of a political party, was known for his virulent public speeches.

Leading representatives of the Roman Catholic Church have not yet publicly dissociated themselves from the attempts to combine Christian motives, symbols and even Church ceremonies of consecrating symbolic paraphernalia, buildings or sites with extremist forms of expression. The general understanding of the freedom of speech leads indirectly to processes which may be eventually afterwards difficult to control.

How this perception of national and Christian identity based on idealized historical interpretations is still highly relevant for our presence shows the recent development connected to the massive influx of refugees from Africa and Asia to Europe. Since summer of 2015 Europe fac-
es the wave of refugees from different cultures, races and religions. Hundreds of thousands cross the EU borders heading mainly to Germany and Scandinavia. Nevertheless the general public and political representatives especially in V4 countries showed in surprisingly high level of unwillingness to share the responsibility with the rest of the EU. The decision of the older EU member states, in particular Germany’s openness to accept all refugees, led to increased interest to arrive to Europe. Some politicians created the atmosphere of general anxiety and fear among the population. The generalisation prevailing in public discussions depicting refugees as a danger from cultural, religious, economic and security reasons.

Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico presented willingness to accept preferably Christians, at the most one hundred refugees from Syria. On 17 September 2015 he asked the Slovak Parliament for support and a mandate to reject the quotas on refugees which the EU member states have to accept. 115 out of 119 MPs supported his request. National interest and the general fear of cultural and religious incompatibility are in this situation the most often quoted reason of refusal to be a part of the common European strategy.

10. POLITICAL CONTEXT OF RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM

Activities of nationalist, populist, xenophobic and extremist forces in any country should be considered in their authentic contexts. In Western Europe the influx of high number of immigrants from the countries with the different cultural and confessional background and the difficulties that accompanied (and are still accompanying) migrants’ integration into the “majority” society provoked strong anti-immigrant feelings on the side of some segments of local population. Xenophobic and isolationist political forces are trying to strengthen themselves politically and electorally on the wave of these feelings. In Central and Eastern Europe, however, one can identify some other reasons behind activities of the populist, nationalist or openly extremist groupings.

Collapse of the communist regimes in Central Eastern European countries at the end of 80s created favourable conditions for implementing thorough systemic changes within society – in political, social and economic areas as well as in the area of interethnic relations. Reintro-
ducing the model of pluralist democracy along with practical implementation of fundamental human rights and civil liberties provided upholders of various ideological concepts with the possibility of expressing them freely, establishing social organizations (including political parties and civic associations) based on commonly shared views, values and visions and aspiring after public support (including an ambition to participate on political power) within limits stipulated by the constitution and laws.

Immediately after the fall of the communism, the newly restored free socio-political discourse included representatives of an opinion stream that in various proportions combined ethnic nationalism, historic revisionism, xenophobia, non-liberal concepts of power execution, anti-minority sentiments, isolationism, etc. Some of them tried to get incorporated into the regular political system (i.e. the political ‘mainstream’) and portray themselves as genuine upholders of “national patriotism”; activities of others were rather on the border between the official landscape and the ‘forbidden area’, i.e. in some kind of “grey zone”, using the existing legislative framework and founding civic associations or political parties to advertise their views and concepts that were in clear contradiction with liberal-democratic principles and often with the law; the most radical category of nationalist views’ supporters embraced an activist approach, promulgating racial intolerance, subscribing to international fascism/Nazism and to its national, domestic historical legacy, using radical and extremist methods including intimidation, violence and physical assaults on members of ethnic, racial and religious minorities, foreigners, proponents of another ideologies.

In Slovakia a set of social pre-conditions exists that creates the context of activities of the extreme right. The universal, common pre-conditions include particularly factors related to the transformation of the society and its effects on lives of large segments of the population. People who, for various reasons, had been unable to adapt to the new social conditions after the fall of the communist regime and the introduction of market economy, may perceive the “quick” and “easy” solutions offered by the extremist nationalist politicians as worthy their sympathy and support. There are also specific factors encouraging extremist politics that derive from peculiarities of the historical development of the country. They include traditions of authoritarian nationalist politics from the interwar period and ideological heritage of pro-Nazi collabora-
tionist regime that existed in Slovakia during World War II. The country’s multi-ethnic composition of the population offer to nationally oriented forces an opportunity to use the so-called “ethnic” card for voters’ mobilization. Long-term problems associated with the situation of the Roma minority, especially in the areas where Roma and non-Roma citizens live in close neighbourhood create the breeding ground for anti-Roma racial prejudice, discriminatory sentiments and practices. These problems serve the extremist groups as justification of their radical stances and proposals gaining certain support from the part of local population.

Slovakia’s accession to the EU increased the degree of its openness and led to a growing numbers of immigrants from geographical areas with different cultural and religious characteristics. That encourages radicals and extremists to spread their isolationist xenophobic agenda.

11. NATIONALISM AS A TOOL OF MOBILIZATION

The social transformation following the fall of communism caused dramatic changes in society’s development, particularly in the population’s socio-economic structure; it changed the social status and living conditions of large population groups and catalysed people’s different reactions, ranging from endorsement and active support through passive acceptance to overt opposition and protest.

In this situation, nationalism serves as a classic mobilization tool. To more moderate upholders of the ‘nationally-oriented’ opinion stream, it gives a chance to capitalize on various population groups’ discontent to gain political influence and participate in official power; for radicals, extremists, overt racists, fascists and neo-Nazis, it means an opportunity to strengthen their ranks, recruit new members, penetrate particular socio-demographic groups more deeply or step up their activities in those localities where social problems caused by the transition process or the combination of newly-emerged and old but long-neglected social problems create a breeding ground for local communities’ ad hoc endorsement of solutions advocated and proposed by the extremists.

Success of any political force in political competition is dependent of number of factors: country’s socio-economic situation, public perception of policies, system of value orientations of the population, country’s his-
toric and ideological legacy, prevailing patterns of political culture, state of inter-ethnic and inter-faith relations in society with multi-cultural and poly-ethnic character, professionalism of party’s leadership etc. The case of anti-systemic, antidemocratic political forces (extremists, fascists, or neo-Nazis) is a specific one. As their programs, proposals and activities contradict the basic principles and values of liberal democracy, aiming to destroy its fundaments and to replace it by non-democratic regime, society needs to work out system of self-protection, resistance against malicious political elements and to neutralize possible consequences of their activities. This system should include arrangements and measures in the areas of legislation, prosecution and education.

12. NEW POLITICAL TACTICS OF EXTREMISTS

Few years ago the members of extremist and ultra-nationalist groupings, surfing on the waves of the nationalist discourse in the country’s public and political life, and parasitizing on the existent social problems in some country’s regions, namely in remote areas of the eastern Slovakia (bad infrastructure, lower living standards, high rate of unemployment, criminality, social deprivation/exclusion of Roma population), members of have come up few years ago with the new tactics.

They started to communicate directly with their potential supporters in localities organizing public events (rallies, manifestations, marches, pre-electoral meetings) in reaction to strong disappointment of substantial portion of local population with social conditions of life and inability of authorities to solve disturbing problems existing in relations between Roma and non-Roma population. Clashes between police and extremists during these public events offered the latter opportunity to propagate their views, presenting themselves as martyrs fighting for “national justice”. In May 2010 members of neo-Nazi groups disrupted program of Gay Pride Parade in Bratislava. Demonstrating unusual self-confidence and behaviour, marked by open intolerance and vulgar homophobia, they physically attacked participants of the event and only severe measures of policemen (however conducted with certain delay) prevented development toward worse situation. Anniversaries of select events of national history and other symbolic communication events (for example, commemoration of anniversaries of WWII fascist collaborationist state or public instalments of “nationally” or ethnically-related-artefacts – stat-
ues of heroes of national mythology) also created opportunities for extremists groups to deliver their messages to potential constituency as well as to general public.

Evidently, the of extremists’ goal was to become the legitimate and officially recognized competitor to established nationalist political forces, to be a piece of main-stream “political puzzles”. Extremist and revisionist party Ľudová strana – Naše Slovensko (People’s Party – Our Slovakia), known also under the original name of Slovenská pospolitost’ (Slovak Community) ran in two recent parliamentary elections – in 2010 and 2012. Party, however, failed to overcome 5-percent-threshold to qualify into the parliament as well as to overcome 3-percent-threshold for getting money from state budget for reimbursement of expenses for participation in elections. Nevertheless, it has shown the best result ultranationalist and extremist political formations reached in electoral history of modern democratic Slovakia ever.

In 2006 – 2010, during the government of Direction – Social Democracy (Smer-SD), Slovak National Party (SNS) and Movement for Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), police in Slovakia in many cases was inactive against extremist activities, starting to act only after criminal acts were committed and aftermath publicized by the media (similar approach of police was typical for period of 1994 – 2000). Extremists, feeling the evident decline in police commitment to fight extremism and to protect its possible targets, comparing to period 2000 – 2006, started again organizing public events, including manifestations and concerts of neo-Nazi rock-groups. Under the criticism and pressure of NGOs and independent media police conducted several spectacular actions against extremists (mostly during the mentioned public events), however without serious legal consequences. That encouraged extremists to be even more assertive. In 2006 – 2010, country’s strong nationalist public and political discourse as well as the government doctrine of boosting “Slovak patriotism” played in favour of extremists and radical nationalists, giving them opportunity to present themselves as the authentic part of the “patriotic” trend.

Centre-right coalition government formed in 2010 by Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKÚ-DS), Freedom and Solidarity party (SaS), Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) and Bridge party (Most-Híd), led by Iveta Radičová, included provisions on necessity to intensify the fight against extremism into its program manifesto. By doing so the
government has recognized the importance of the issue. Formulations of provisions indicated the effort to interlink legal, human right and social aspects in approach to the issue. In March 2012 Iveta Radičová multiparty cabinet was replaced after the earlier elections by single-party government of Smer-SD, led by Robert Fico.

In some Slovakia’s regions police units launched educative projects in cooperation with NGOs, schools and organs of local and regional self-government. The projects were aimed to increase knowledge about racism and extremism among youth (pupils, students) and teachers, to improve abilities of policemen and public administration officials in fighting extremists), however the tendency to prefer repression over prevention and education still prevail in approach of state organs, including police. Indication of this tendency could be the fact the core of anti-extremist activities is still laying upon the Ministry of Interior and its repressive organs, not upon other ministries relevant for dealing with the issue (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs). In some cases the repressive measures conducted by police against extremists’ actions deserved criticism from independent experts due to insufficient level of professionalism, poor coordination and management that at the end enabled extremists to present their image of unjustly oppressed fighters for ideas and needs of ordinary people. The problem seems to be also low efficiency of prosecution of expressions of verbal racism and antisemitism by fans/hooligans during football matches or public rallies of extremists, when police does not intervene against verbal expressions of racial hatred and offensive racist remarks addressed to different groups of people (minorities, ethnic and religious communities) which constitute the violation of Penal Code, while extremists do not commit direct physical assaults against police or citizens.

Analysing the question of public acceptance of extremists it need to take into account the declared public attitude to extremism and extremists' activities (findings from public opinion polls), but also the adherence of population to different types of political culture, attitude toward minorities, liberal democratic values, level of people’s tolerance to society’s diversity. Factor increasing the public acceptance of racists and extremists is undoubtedly the high level of social distance of the population toward Roma as well as existent racial prejudices against Roma. Inability of authorities to improve social situation of Roma and to protect non-Roma local people from the consequences of law-breaking activities
of some Roma inhabitants can also play in favour of higher acceptance of extremists. Historic revisionism and positive attitude to the war-time collaborationist Slovak state, demonstrated by some public figures (nationalist politicians, hierarchs of the Catholic Church, “nationally oriented” historians etc.), creates opportunities to extremists to identify themselves with this trend.

Similarly as in other countries, extremism in Slovakia is anti-systemic in its substance – it is antidemocratic, illiberal, hostile to any opponents, violent and possessing direct risks for certain groups of the population (ethnic, racial and confessional minorities, persons with anti-racist and anti-fascist views).

13. POTENTIAL PUBLIC SUPPORT OF EXTREMISM – EMPIRICAL FINDINGS


Table 1. DEREX scores – Slovakia

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prejudices and welfare chauvinism</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-establishment attitudes</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right-wing value orientation</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear, distrust, pessimism</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEREX</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: European Social Survey, 2013.

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15 This section is a shortened and updated version of the part of: Mesežnikov, 2013.
Slovakia experienced remarkable developments during these cycles. In 2010 – 2011 its DEREX index returned to the “starting” position from 2004 – 2005, when the overall DEREX value reached 10.8%. In 2012 – 2013 it increased up to 13.3% (see table 1)

The findings of the DEREX survey in 2012 – 2013 mean that more than 13% of Slovakia’s population today represents potential supporters of the right-wing extremist forces. In surveys conducted in 2006 – 2007 and 2008 – 2009, Slovakia’s index oscillated around 6.1% and 6.6% respectively. A question arises within this context about what could have caused that in these years the index indicating the extent of the potential support to right-wing extremist politics significantly decreased, while after 2010 it has raised again to its original value and even higher?

In seeking the answers it should be noted that value of DEREX is generated by processing a number of indicators. It is a result of the different, often contradictory trends in particular areas of inquiry.

Slovakia offers an example of such controversial development. In 2006 – 2010 country was governed by the national-populist coalition comprised of Smer-SD, SNS and HZDS that inflamed the nationalist discourse. Individual government parties de facto competed with each other in taking the more radical anti-minority (especially anti-Hungarian) positions both in the rhetoric and in terms of practical policies. At that time Slovakia’s DEREX, however, fell to 6%.

Is it possible to offer a rational explanation to the decline in the readiness for potential support to the right-wing extremism in the atmosphere of the strong nationalism? Deeper analysis shows that it is possible and the rational explanation for such strange phenomenon does exist.

Decline of DEREX in 2006 – 2009 was caused by a significant – almost 50% – drop in anti-establishment attitudes (from 30% to 15% and 17% respectively), and by a significant drop in the category of fears, distrust and pessimism (from 25% to 17% and 18% respectively). However, in this period an increase was noted in the category of prejudices and welfare chauvinism – from 27% to 33% and in the support to right-wing value orientations – from 19% to 29% (see Graph Chart 1).
Comparison of dynamism of particular categories (as well as the value of DEREX per se) during 2004 – 2013 shows a worrying trend of strong and stable (even rising) support to the value factors (e.g. social prejudices and chauvinism) and to a certain type of approaches to the organization of the society (calling for strong social order, respect for traditions etc.) that strongly influence the political preferences in the population. Decline in the category of anti-establishment attitudes and in that of fears, distrust and pessimism in 2006 – 2009 has a simple explanation: supporters of Smer-SD, SNS and HZDS, among which the nationally oriented voters are represented in higher degree compared to an average, finally after 8 years of the rule of moderate centre-right parties, “appreciated” their party’s participation in the government by increasing their confidence to the institutions dominated by this party (parliament, government, president). In the previous years this part of electorate felt deprived, alienated from the power. Due to disagreement with pro-market liberal socio-economic reforms, advocated by the centre-right parties, voters of the national populist parties manifested their distrust to social order and democratic institutions. The results of the 2006 parliamentary elections changed the situation in a sense that voters of these parties moderated their critical attitude to democratic values and
the functioning of democratic institutions as the representatives of centre-right parties did not lead these institutions anymore. This attitude of the electorate decreased the overall level of anti-establishment attitudes and the extent of fears and social pessimism. The change has resulted in the overall decline of DEREX. Moreover, for SNS voters their own demand for radical nationalist politics was de facto fulfilled in 2006 – 2010 by the participation of their party in the government and by implementation of its nationalist policies in the fields of education, minority issues, interpretation of national history, etc. After the defeat of the national-populist grouping in the 2010 parliamentary elections and the subsequent formation of the conservative-liberal coalition of SDKÚ-DS, SaS, KDH and Most-Hid, the distrust of the voters of the national-populist parties in democratic institutions increased and the sentiment against the political establishment strengthened. Compared to the last years the rate of pessimism and fear also increased. All this led in 2011 to the rise of DEREX to the pre-2006 level. Since 2012, when country started to be governed by single-party cabinet of Smer-SD, survey disclosed an evident deterioration of attitudes in all four categories influencing the demand for extremist politics.

Based on the evaluation of the findings of DEREX survey it can be argued that certain pattern exists that affects the inclination of the population in Slovakia to potential support to politics that are close to radical nationalist and right-wing extremist scene. It is a kind of mutual “counter-balancing” of two trends:

1. situational (according to the ongoing development of party politics and electoral performance of individual parties) changes in trust in the institutions and in the extent of social pessimism,

2. long-term trends of deepening prejudices, anti-immigration sentiments and authoritarian values.

Such “counter-balancing” is, of course, purely statistical and ultimately does not neutralize the undesirable authoritarian and xenophobic sentiments and ideas. Such situation is likely to persist as long as the supporters of political parties (in this case, especially the voters of Smer-SD and other formations close to it) derive their trust in the democratic order and democratic institutions from the very fact that the representatives of these parties work either in the government or in the opposition.
Data from the DEREX project confirmed that Slovakia is among those EU countries where the demand for right-wing extremist politics represents a significant factor of the overall political development. Public demand for such politics is not at all negligible. It covers today more than 13% of the population. Fortunately, the offer from the extremist political actors still does not fully correspond to this demand.

The nationalist SNS failed to qualify into the parliament in the 2012 elections. A lot of the SNS voters were attracted by the left-oriented state-interventionist and paternalist Smer-SD whose “national” agenda seemed to be more credible to these voters than that of the SNS. However, the public support to the SNS, measured in opinion polls, was oscillating in 2015 above 5 percent of electoral threshold. That gives SNS real chance for political comeback.

The extremist Peoples Party – Our Slovakia (ĽS-NS), the political offshoot of the notorious Slovak Community association, slightly improved its electoral results in recent years (1.33% in 2010, 1.58% in 2012). In 2013 de facto leader of the party Marian Kotleba succeeded to be elected governor in Banská Bystrica region. However, party is failing yet to convince its potential supporters that it is a genuine keeper of the “national” agenda. Its intellectual and professional potential as well as mental characteristics of its leaders remain fixed somewhere at the level of street thug gangs manifesting their malicious anti-Semitic, racist, homophobic and xenophobic instincts at anti-Roma rallies, through physical assaults against the participants at LGBT events or through anonymous web chats. Moreover, all efforts to establish the united extremist political block embracing numerous far right groups and movements, failed.

Nevertheless a question arises about how long such a situation in Slovakia will last, when the significant part of the potential voters of the extremist parties is effectively addressed by the less radical, mainstream nationalist political forces. Deepening of the social and economic problems, continuing the political turbulences around situation with Roma minority, the public fatigue from the old, established parties, the expected wave of migrants and nourishing the racist discourse in public life can act in favour of extremists who have prepared long ago their own recipes of the “quick” and “easy” solutions: to abolish social benefits for the Roma, to expel all foreigners from Slovakia, to introduce the discriminatory measures against homosexuals, to close the country to the outside world, to leave the EU and NATO, to establish corporatist politi-
cal system instead of the democratic one. The practical implementation of all these (and other similar) “solutions” proposed by the extremists should have adverse effect on the country’s development. The mainstream democratic parties should therefore seek ways of real neutralization of the factors working in favour of the right-wing extremists and their radical-nationalist rhetoric. These parties would attempt to increase the level of unconditional trust in democratic institutions and to reduce the nationalist and racial prejudices in their own voter environment.

10. CONCLUSIONS

Ideas of Slovak right wing extremism, which present their traditions in the continuity with the politics of Jozef Tiso offers relatively simple and mobilizing solutions without making any demands of its supporters, particularly in the time of complicated societal processes; however, the idea of this continuity with Christian national socialism of the Slovak Republic 1939 – 1945 has its value profile as well as the actual price that must eventually be paid by its upholders, victims of their manipulation and the entire society, including Christians who fail to reject this pragmatic attitude that flies in the face of Christian values while it is still in its embryonic stage.

At later stages, it evolves into a destructive social force that is difficult to manage and is even likely to receive support from a democratic system. To paraphrase Burke, it is enough if decent people don’t do anything when they see the seeds of evil and injustice around them.

From this perspective the story of Marián Kotleba who showed a very strong will to enter into a democratic competition through democratic election became very instructive case study of how marginalized outsider can increase his influence in democratic society. At the same time as he is using democratic procedures, Kotleba openly questions the very nature of democracy as a European value. His extremist positions have enough supporters to keep him in respected public office and thus give them the perspective of continuation of his politics. Politician who have been laughing at him when he entered into a public debate and started to use the frustration of his potential voters in order to be their spokesman and representative in public life. His story at this stage is an important milestone of neglected interest in those problems he managed
to address and to convince his voters that himself and his extremist party would solve.

Discussions in different regions of Slovakia and meetings with students at schools\textsuperscript{16} provide us with the experience that young people will listen to those who will come and spend some time with them answering their questions and addressing their needs. Real contact with the people and the critical presentation of facts which are based on facts is probably the most efficient way how to make out of the challenges of the current economic, humanitarian and sociological problems and great opportunity to change our ways of dealing with people and their acute problems. We should look for appropriate solutions and ideas in mutual dialogue and respect for others.

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\textit{Csáky sa opäť vracia k biskupovi maďarskej národnosti} [Csaky is speaking again about bishop of Hungarian origin] (2009) at:


\textsuperscript{16} Important part of this project were discussions in schools. Over 900 student participated in discussions on extremism and its today’s manifestations in Košice, Prešov, Žilina, Banská Bystrica, Martin, Trenčín, Nitra, Trnava and Bratislava.
History in the Service of the Revival of Right-Wing Extremism: Case of Slovakia


Miroslav Kocúr – Grigorij Mesežnikov

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