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**ТРАНСФОРМАЦИЯ
ПАРТИЙНО-ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОГО
ЛАНДШАФТА
В СТРАНАХ ЕВРОСОЮЗА
В УСЛОВИЯХ КРИЗИСА**

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исследуют политические тенденции в четырёх странах Евросоюза –
Болгарии, Великобритании, Германии и Польше, уделяя особое вни-
мание росту популярности праворадикальных политических партий и
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**TRANSFORMATION OF THE PARTY
AND POLITICAL LANDSCAPE
IN EUROPEAN UNION COUNTRIES
IN THE PERIOD OF CRISIS**

Part II.

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№ 338**

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Аннотация

Сборник посвящён анализу трансформации партийно-политической системы в странах Евросоюза за последние годы. Авторы исследуют политические тенденции в четырёх странах Евросоюза – Болгарии, Великобритании, Германии и Польше, уделяя особое внимание росту популярности праворадикальных политических партий и движений. Обсуждаются также возможные варианты дальнейшего развития этих процессов в ближайшей и отдалённой перспективе, а также их влияние на формирование представительных и исполнительных органов власти в этих странах и их политический курс. Сборник статей издан в рамках проекта Жана Моннэ «Трансформация партийно-политического ландшафта в странах Евросоюза в условиях кризиса» (сентябрь 2015 г. – февраль 2017 г.), бенефициаром которого выступал Институт Европы РАН.

Annotation

This collection of articles presents the analysis of the party and political systems' transformation in EU countries in recent years. The authors study political tendencies in four EU countries: Bulgaria, Germany, Poland, and the United Kingdom, focusing on the growing popularity of right-wing political parties and movements. Possible options for development of these processes in the short and long-term perspective as well as their impact on the formation of representative and executive authorities in these countries and their policies are discussed. The collection of articles is based on the results of the «Transformation of the Party and Political Landscape in the European Union Countries in the Period of Crisis' Jean Monnet Project» (September 2015 – February 2017), a beneficiary of which was the Institute of Europe, RAS.

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1. ROUND TABLE IN PASSAU, GERMANY

*H. Oberreuter, S. Haring**

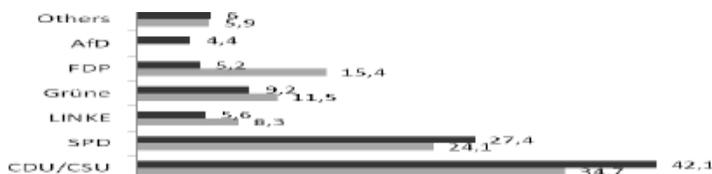
THE GERMAN POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM SINCE 2008 – DYNAMICS AND CHALLENGES

I. Dynamics

There is a lot of mobility within the German party system, starting with the unification of the two Germanys. This statement, however, already leads us to a first, very important, question: is there one German party system at all? The answer is: not at all. Since 1990, we are faced with two party-systems, an East German and a West German one. There are still two political cultures, depending on different political generations and historical life-experiences. Their respective feelings and attitudes have grown closer to one another, but they evolve more slowly than we thought in the beginning of the 1990's.

Graph 1

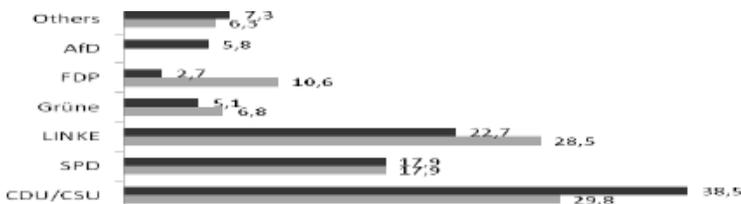
General elections 2013 in West Germany (percentage points)



(Data: Der Bundeswahlleiter/FAZ)

Graph 2

General elections 2013 in East Germany (percentage points)



(Data: Der Bundeswahlleiter/ FAZ)

* Heinrich Oberreuter, PhD, Professor of Passau University; Sophie Haring, Research Fellow, University of Passau, Germany.

The second question: Is there a power shift between the two big parties in the first decade of this century – also important for the development since 2008? Yes, there is.

The former stalemate of CDU/CSU and SPD since 2005 has been ended by the growing dominance of the C-parties. Merkel's lead highly increased in 2009 to 10,8% and in the last elections 2013 to 15,8% – disastrous for the Social Democrats. Nearly through all of 2016, the C-parties lead polls by 10-13% – in spite of losses chancellor Merkel had to endure due to the refugee-crisis. There is no chance for the SPD to gain the top in the competition, despite impressive gains in the last few weeks. These reduced the Christian Democrats' advantage to some 8%.

A third question: Is there a change in the political culture? Yes, there is. This change does not affect the basic values – orientations towards democracy, pluralism, rule of law. However, we can see that the way Germans understand these orientations and put them into practice in day to day life have changed. Nowadays, we are driven by the questions of German identity and the challenges it has to meet due to the refugee stream coming from very different cultures. To defend a specific German culture: is that a politically incorrect, maybe even an extremist right-wing position? A lot of people feel challenged and criticize that the established political parties do not give ready answers. This is the main reason for the AfD's gains in recent polls and in regional elections: a relatively new populist party on the right of the political spectrum, now between 10 and 15% at the federal level– not at all near 30%, nor even beyond 20% as in France or other European countries. The nazi past still moderates right-wing extremism in Germany. But presently, the situation does represent a challenge to all the established parties, especially since a growing percentage of the population perceives a blank in conservative positions. In the latest polls, a majority saw the Merkel-CDU left of the center of the political party system. Only the Bavarian CSU and especially the new AfD are placed on the right.

What I have just described is a «Merkel-problem», one that has sparked serious debates within her own party; not only because of her «welcome culture policy». Merkel is not taking any measures to support or shape her party's traditional base. On the other hand,

there are fractions within the CDU (conservatives, catholics, middle class, and business people) that feel marginalized vis à vis the dominance of the chancellor. She – and therefore the party – opposes neither value shifts (as for instance gay marriage) nor socio-political overreaching. The media call this the social-democratization of the conservatives. Before the arrival of the AfD on the political stage, Merkel’s reasoning obviously was that traditionalists within the CDU had no alternative. Now that the AfD seems to have gained momentum, this calculation is no longer valid. Merkel’s reputation suffered immensely, the party had lost 7% in the polls by the end of 2015. This rather roughly sketched picture nevertheless shows that the German party system is characterized by a high degree of dynamics and mobility.

This mobility shapes developments in German society, processes of pluralization and individualization – moving away from the old social structural criteria. For instance, two thirds of trade union oriented employees vote for the SPD, but their share of votes makes up only some 7% of the party’s electorate. 75% of church-going Catholics vote for the CDU/CSU. Their share of the total number of votes: only 7%. Hence, neither labor nor Christian groups are strong enough to carry a large party. Concentration on core members would be counterproductive. Meaning that Merkel might be right – in principle. But to ignore 7% could be ineffective, too, because that could cost the party the top position in the ballots.

These processes of dealignment in the party system cause mobility, swing votes and thus, fluidity in the elections. It is not ideology, not class-consciousness – «It’s the economy, stupid» (Bill Clinton): prosperity, welfare, lifestyle. One could certainly understand the current situation in Germany as an «atypical» one, challenging in terms of culture and welfare. If this were the case, then the success of the populist AfD would perhaps be an indicator of realignment – and we would currently be faced with two opposing trends: dealignment and realignment. If this were true – what would be the outcome?

II. The Catch-all Party: Victim of the Orientation Shift?

As far as political culture is concerned, we must have a look at current conditions within which German parties act, and how these conditions affect their positions and reputation within society. We

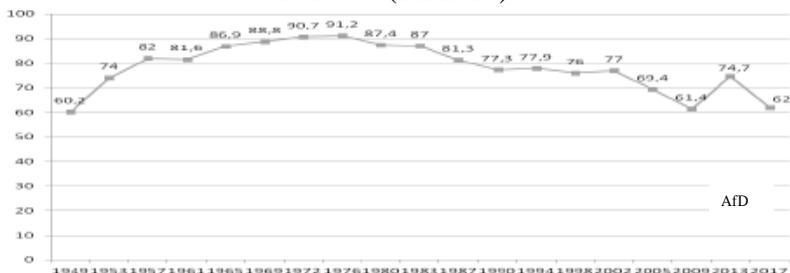
see symptoms of a crisis – especially the decline of catch-all parties that have been very important for the development and stability of the political system in the post-war period. Their orientation has been one toward compromise and consensus building. Maybe in the future we will face coalition-building processes like those in the Netherlands, Denmark or Sweden.

Generally, it is beneficial to hold on to the increasingly anachronistic demand for pragmatically-oriented «catch-all parties». It serves the representation of a wider spectrum of interests and orientations or at least makes us assume so. As in the past, the other approach remains the option for smaller and mid-sized parties.

These parties signify, virtually, the orientation shift in society, moving away from the old social structural criteria. They have long since been gaining in popularity while catch-all parties have been decreasing in representation for four decades.

Graph 3

Percentage won by two main parties (CDU/CSU and SPD); 2017:
Forecast (2.2.2017)



This shift in orientation demands that politics project a more extensive expression of individuals’ personal goals and lifestyle, and it is already strong enough to open parliaments’ doors to new parties.

The classic example of this is the Free Democratic Party (FDP), a party of liberal, middle-class, individualist, and state-regulated citizenship. It is a group established as a party, but never a catch-all party. In 2013, the German Liberals suffered a decisive defeat, when they could not surpass the Bundestag’s 5%-threshold. As a consequence, they lost all their seats in Parliament. The example of the FDP supports the depiction of the German political party system as two-fold: While it could attract more than 5% of the voters in near-

ly all of the Western Bundesländer, the party's result in all of the Eastern districts stayed below that threshold. The FDP lost its parliamentary representation in East Germany.

At the same time, Germans feel the need for a liberal party and accord with liberal political ideas: In a survey taken in the autumn of 2013, between 64% and 20% supported limiting the state, protecting civil freedoms, defending the market economy and relying on individual responsibility. They did not, however, link these values to the FDP who could not score in its core topics. While 27% accorded that Germany needs a liberal party, only 19% thought it needs the FDP. If this party can make a come-back and fill the gap between widespread liberal values and their representation on a political level will depend to an important degree on its ability to develop a modern concept of liberalism that can be communicated successfully.

The «new» is represented by the Greens as an expression of ecologically-minded voters and participatory lifestyle. After entering the Bundestag in the 1980s, they are and will be well-established in the federal parliament. They are similarly well represented in state parliaments. Representatives of a political generation and its lifestyle, rooted in the 1970s and 1980s, they still primarily stand for ecological issues and the socio-political «left».

In the 1990s, the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS)-now The Left (Die LINKE)-began representing what can be clearly seen as the social interest of a significant part of East German voters. In the former GDR states, the Left is nearly as strong as the CDU and SPD, but in Western Germany the party is nearly meaningless. Its popularity is driven by its efforts for social equality of Eastern Germany.

The Pirate Party has made it into four state parliaments out of nowhere—with moderate political competences. It is the party of the Internet generation lifestyle, lacking professional access to institutions and procedures of representative democracy. Therefore it is now vanishing, thus being a very good example of mobility and fluidity.

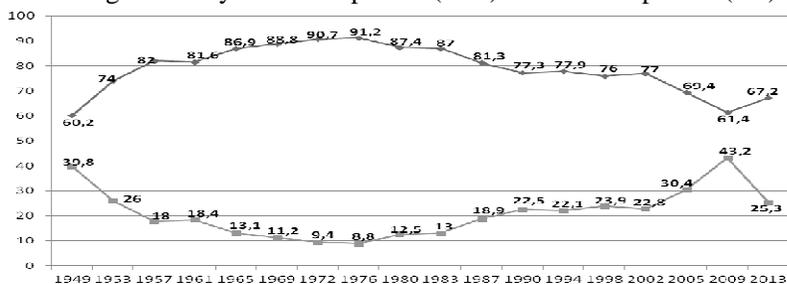
Another new party is skeptical of the euro. The AfD was originally nearly a single issue movement: anti-Euro. Nowadays, its image and position are (extremely) conservative, leaning towards right-wing populism.

Other than the FDP, all these parties address specific, circum-

stantial, and generational issues that are not focal points to the catch-all parties—ecology, social challenges of reunification, «liquid democracy», and the Euro crisis, accompanied by challenges to national identity. As parties of specific political generations and their experiences they garnish their «brand core» rather incidentally with additional topics and competencies—or pseudo-competencies. Unlike the two large parties that represent general interests by maximizing the issues and social spectrum they cover, these parties basically do not pursue a comprehensive, coordinated offering across all political fields.

Graph 4

Percentages won by two main parties (blue) and smaller parties (red)



The appeal of the comprehensive party platforms espoused by the large parties used to be typical of certain generations—typical of the founding and consolidating generations of the Federal Republic that faced basic challenges and broad alternatives. Their accomplishments have created the opportunity for more focused orientations and topics, specifications that do not question the basic consensus in the core, but do cultivate the political competition with alternatives. Election outcomes support this dynamic.

III. The AfD: Challenging established politics from the right

The AfD successfully inserted itself into the political party system, more often than not gaining important percentages of the popular vote in parliamentary elections at regional level (Landtagswahlen). While the «Alternative» could not enter the Bundestag in 2013, its success in 2017 seems inevitable. In forecasts, the new party is said to be the third biggest faction in national parliament after General Elections in 2017. This is, without any doubt, the consequence of recent politics, but is rooted in the above-mentioned change

in political culture.

Germany is thus suffering what we can call a general crisis of political parties in the Western democracies, even though its party system is still one of the relatively stable ones, if not even the most stable one. One symptom of said crisis is that, come election day, non-voters still form the biggest «party» in relation to the general electorate.

The major parties have been ignorant of this development. Maybe they had to be, since it defies their self-concept. Decades ago, the Greens were able to profit from the development we have described so far by dint of their specific political program. Later on, so did the (eastern) LINKE, mainly representing the GDR's practices of daily life, as well as the falling star of party politics, the Pirates.

The latest phenomenon in this string is, without any doubt, the AfD. In 2013, the Alternative narrowly missed the bar for entering parliament in the general elections with 4,7% – even though it gained 5,8% in East Germany. In 2016, the party succeeded in occupying third place, and not only in the eastern part of the country (where, in Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania, they came in second, leaving the CDU in third place), but also in the West, as shown by the election results in Baden-Württemberg and by polls. This is not exclusively attributable to the «migrant crisis» of 2015/16, but that crisis has been an important factor in the party's rise.

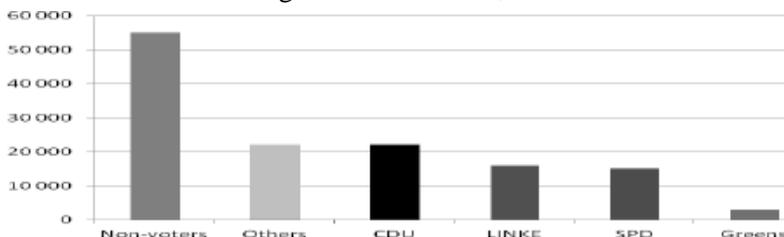
The AfD does represent a certain «milieu», as well as a longing for identity, a conservative and national perspective and way of life. Modernization and globalization chastened this group and its feelings, political parties ignored it – in instances, deliberately so. They also turned their back on «enlightened patriotism», while, on the other hand, advocating gender-discourses and liberal views on sexuality and relationships in a nearly moralizing way, aware of these stances' intellectual superiority. Especially those who invoked such a moral supremacy are now, in reaction to the election results of 2016, quick to criticize it. As refers to a side-lined patriotism, some conservatives cautioned a decade ago that such a void might give space to dubitable forces. That is what happened in 2016, provoking well-justified critical inquiries into the AfD. Within this party, a battle is being fought between conservatives and reactionaries influenced by

racist ideas.

Just to what degree the AfD profits from the aforementioned societal changes becomes obvious when we examine more closely which part of the electorate it has been able to attract. The voter migration towards the party can be exemplified by the elections to Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania's regional parliament in September 2016.

Graph 5

Voter migration towards the AfD, Elections to Landtag, Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania, 04.09.2016



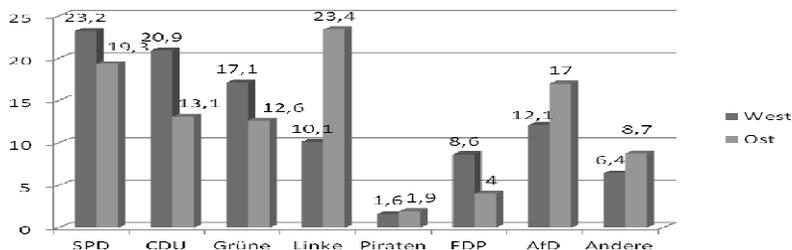
The most important gains originated from the group of former non-voters. That allows us to deduce that the AfD activates citizens, who in turn see the party as a political offer that takes into account their attitudes. Furthermore, the AfD also attracts former voters of all other political parties, not only those that have voted for the conservative middle-class or rightist part of the political landscape, but also voters of the left, greens and SPD, and even the pirates. When discussing the AfD's supporters, we thus cannot globally characterize them as rightist conservatives or old-fashioned reactionaries. The majority votes for this particular party because none of the other ones takes into account these voters' topics – and the parties refuse to listen. This behavior inevitably leads to representational gaps that are being closed by the AfD. Following the developments of 2016, the AfD will form part of parliament after 2017's election. This will bring about challenges to forming a stable coalition, especially since in the polls and in regional elections, the FDP seems to be ready to make a comeback to parliament.

2016's regional elections supported our picture of two separate constituencies in Germany, one in the eastern, the other in the western part. They stem from different political socialization and life ex-

periences. The persistence of a mentality specific to the German East can also be noted. The elections to the Berlin senate in 2016 are a fine example.

Graph 6

Result of the Senate Elections, Berlin West und East
The far-reaching changes that people in East Germany experien-



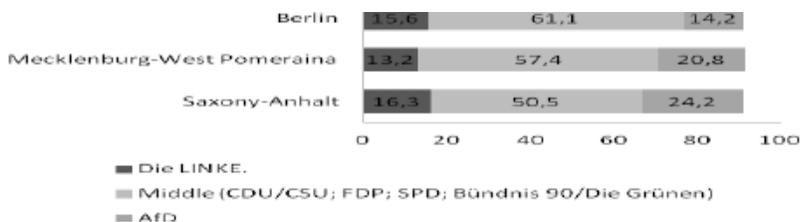
ced after 1990 dampens their enthusiasm when it comes to further innovation and societal change. This is another reason for the fact that the AfD registered a stronger ascent. In 2016, CDU, SPD and LINKE together represent between 57 and 63% of votes. In the western regions, SPD and CDU still have dominant positions, though these have grown weaker. Among these two, the CDU clearly plays a leading role. The smaller parties usually represent between 6 and 13%.

At regional level, these smaller parties stand quite good chances of ascending. This becomes clear when taking into account that the LINKE provides the head of government in Thuringia since 2014, as do the Greens in Baden-Württemberg since 2011 (re-elected with gains in 2016). The fact that the AfD came in second in the regional elections in Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania is an instance of the regional successes for smaller parties, which, nevertheless, represent totally different milieus. Another point that differs is how much people trust their respective abilities to govern. This trust, however, has been growing, as the result of the middle-class GRÜNE in the parliament of Baden-Württemberg and that of the LINKE in Thuringia – of whom we may think as «domesticated» – show. Even though these smaller parties, that represent very specific groups and lifestyles, can surpass the major Volksparteien in votes, this does not represent a general trend, yet. What is more interesting is another tendency: the center (if we conceptualize it as CDU/CSU –SPD –

GRÜNE) is being put under strain by Die LINKE from the left and the AfD from the right. That, however, has been a German trauma ever since the breakdown of the Weimar Republic.

Graph 7

Left – Center – Right in votes in selected regional elections 2016



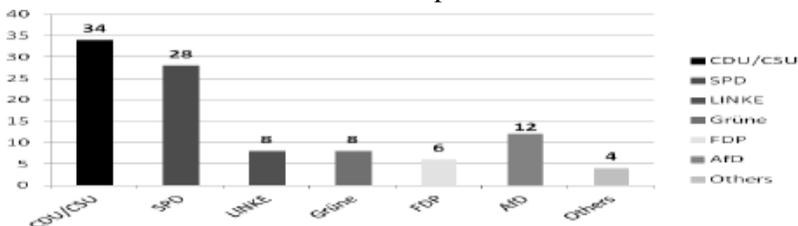
That said, the most important characteristics of the future of the German political party system will be mobility and a high degree of uncertainty, especially after the developments we in 2016.

IV. General Elections 2017: An outlook

Future developments along these lines promise to shape the general elections 2017. Some shifts in all of 2016 continued in the first months of 2017: One general trend in the past 12 months has been the continuation of a slow, but steady decline in the public’s intentions to vote for one of the two major parties: at the beginning of 2016, 39% intended to vote for the Christian Democrats, 24% would have given their vote to the SPD, had it been the week of general elections. In the first polls of 2017, 37% of voters voiced their intention to vote for CDU/CSU, while the Social Democrats could secure only 20% of intended votes. However, one week later, this number had shot up by 8%, while the Christian Democrats had lost 3%.

Graph 8

The results of exit polls, 2016



This rather dramatic change was, without any doubt, brought

about in large amount by the announcement of Martin Schulz as the SPD's candidate for the office of chancellor.

Martin Schulz, former president of the European Parliament, has been presented as an alternative to Angela Merkel's fourth term in office. The current chancellor has often been criticized personally for political decisions that affected the societal changes discussed above, as well as she has been targeted for dominating her own party. In public debates and demonstrations by groups such as PEGIDA, a slogan voiced openly was «Merkel has to leave». Now, M. Schulz seems to be an alternative as for the person leading the German government. Without any doubt, he benefits from the fact that so far, he is not part of the current government, but can still look back on a successful political career that allows to portrait him as an experienced politician. In the poll taken on the 2nd of February 2017, 50% of the participants would vote for Schulz, if the election of the German Chancellor were a direct one, while only 34% said the same for Merkel.

This, however, also shows that, no matter how much the importance might be attributed to the «personal factor» in political communication and especially, in the campaign, it is not the decisive point in the voters' decision: despite a strong candidate, the SPD cannot secure a majority.

In the same survey, 12% of respondents expressed their intention to vote for the AfD, 8% for the Greens and Linke, respectively, and 6% would vote for the liberals, thus enabling the FDP to enter parliament again. These numbers underline what we have stated before: in the end, Bundestag will be composed of oscillating majorities, and composing a stable coalition in order to govern will be the prime challenge to the parties' leaders.

Given the circumstances we have discussed so far, Germany is sure to face a highly competitive, at times fierce, campaign leading up to the general elections in September. This will certainly be intensified by the three regional elections that will be held before the ones on the national level, namely Saarland in March and Schleswig-Holstein and North Rhine-Westphalia (both in May). Campaign and political discourse in the past months in other countries caution against a political environment that seems to gravitate towards populist arguments, negative campaigning, demeaning presentation of the

opponent as the «enemy» and even the acceptance of «hate speech» in social media. Whatever the result of elections, an erosion of a carefully groomed democratic political culture should be unacceptable to all political parties.

2. ROUND TABLE IN LONDON, UK

*B. Donnelly**

MRS MAY, THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY AND BREXIT: THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although during the first half of this year Mrs. May was a tepid advocate of continuing British membership of the European Union, since she became Prime Minister she has missed no occasion to proclaim her commitment to British withdrawal from the Union¹. Her dramatic but unsurprising volte-face represents the culmination of a process whereby the internal management of their party has for 25 years been the most important determinant of Britain's European policy for Conservative Prime Ministers. Mrs. May has apparently concluded that there is no point in trying to appease the radical Euro-sceptics in her party. She has decided to join them instead.

Although the former Conservative leader Sir John Major played a well-publicized role in urging a «Remain» vote at last June's EU referendum in the UK, it was under Sir John's premiership in the 1990s that the foundations were laid for the contemporary hostility of his party towards the European Union. When he became leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister in 1990, the Party was unambiguously the pro-EU party of British politics, the one that wished to be «at the heart of Europe»². The Conservative Euro-sceptics were then a small fringe of irreconcilables, united principally by

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¹ Notably in her speech to the Conservative Party Conference 2016 <https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/political-parties/conservative-party/news/79517/read-full-theresa-mays-conservative>.

² Notably in his speech to the Conservative Party Conference 1992 <http://www.britishpoliticalspeech.org/speech-archive.htm?speech=138>.

grief for their deposed heroine, Mrs. Thatcher. By the time Sir John left office, all this had changed. Sir John's premiership between 1990 and 1997 increasingly marked out the course for ever-growing British estrangement from its European neighbours. Although, to the displeasure of a small minority in his party, he signed the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, his defence of that treaty was so uncertain and implausible that it simply invited opposition and contradiction.

Rather than acting as a vigorous advocate for the EU and Britain's future position within it, Sir John simply sought to establish during his time in office a lowest common denominator for the European policy of his fractious party. This temporization allowed his opponents to move irrevocably the internal discourse of the party in the Eurosceptic direction. The only occasional and feeble attempts at resistance from the remaining pro-Europeans in his own party, together with the reluctance of New Labour in government after 1997 to be more than an «anti-anti-European» party, created in the first decade of the century a political vacuum on European issues gleefully filled by UKIP and its objective allies in the Conservative Party.

After Sir John was roundly defeated in 1997, it was not until 2010 that another Conservative became Prime Minister. Not the least of the reasons why the Party was unelectable for so long was its increasing obsession with the European issue to the exclusion of almost all others. When he became Prime Minister in 2010, David Cameron had at first some limited success in damping down internal debate within his party on European issues. He was able initially to blame his Liberal Democrat coalition partners for his inability to take the radically anti-EU line his zealots in the party wished. Nevertheless, in his rhetoric Mr. Cameron was always willing to echo the now conventional view of his party that the EU was an organization which had reached and probably exceeded the level of acceptable political integration among its members. With the support of the Liberal Democrats, Mr. Cameron passed in 2011 the European Union Act, designed to prevent by the calling of referendums future British participation in deeper European integration³. He attempted in December 2011 unsuccessfully to block decisions by the rest of the European Council to improve the functioning of the Eurozone. It

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/eu-speech-at-bloomberg>.

was indicative of the profound anti-EU agenda of by now many in his party that all this was insufficient to protect Mr. Cameron from increasing criticism of his European policy.

In late 2012, it became clear to Mr. Cameron that he would be unable to maintain even the precarious appearance of Conservative unity on the European issue until the General Election of 2015. The Bloomberg speech of January 2013 was his initially ingenious but eventually counter-productive way of appeasing his critics⁴. By postponing and claiming to redefine the European issue in the distant future, Mr. Cameron created a bridge over which his party could cross in some semblance of unity until the General Election of 2015. The fragility of the planks in this bridge only became generally apparent after the Conservative Party had won its narrow majority in May 2015. There was never any chance of the rest of the EU «reforming» itself in the way the Conservatives would have wished; the Prime Minister would be an implausible and ineffectual advocate of remaining in a EU that he had spent so much time disparaging for the preceding ten years; and Mr. Cameron altogether underestimated opposition to the general concept of British membership in the EU within his party.

Even among Conservative MPs, Mr. Cameron was able in 2016 to gain only a bare majority to support his call to remain within a «reformed» EU. That bare majority was entirely dependent upon the payroll vote of Ministers and others holding governmental posts, many of whom will have joined the «Remain» side simply as an act of governmental loyalty or personal ambition. Like Mrs. May, these individuals have found little difficulty in transferring after the referendum result their allegiance to the reassuring mantra of «making Brexit work». The radical Eurosceptic wing of the Conservative Party has always shown itself to be bolder, more ruthless and better organized than its hesitant opponents, who have spent the past 25 years hoping in vain that the Eurosceptic Conservative tsunami could be halted in its tracks with only minimal effort on their part. Pressure from radical Eurosceptics within her Conservative Party will be an important constraint upon Mrs. May in her attempts to negotiate a

⁴ <https://www.judiciary.gov.uk/judgments/r-miller-v-secretary-of-state-for-exiting-the-european-union/>

smooth British exit from the EU and an advantageous future relationship between the European Union and the United Kingdom.

Mrs. May's referendum mandate

It was the initial intention of Mrs. May to invoke Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty without seeking the approval of Parliament. In justifying this unexpectedly autocratic path, the Prime Minister and her advisers relied on two arguments, one legal and one political. The first was that the renunciation of treaties, such as the Treaty of Rome, is under the UK's largely unwritten constitution an executive privilege of government. The High Court in November 2016 decisively rejected this claim by the government, and the government's appeal against the High Court's decision is currently has been considered by the British Supreme Court⁵. Whatever the decision of the higher court on the strictly legal issue, it will leave open the broader and perhaps more democratically significant question of the political and ethical appropriateness of the British government's seeking to leave the European Union without Parliamentary sanction. In response to this challenge, the British government regularly deploys its second, political argument, that the British people have spoken in the referendum of 23rd June, their decision to leave the European Union is irrevocable and those who seek to reverse it are themselves acting undemocratically. This latter claim is widely accepted by commentators and politicians in the United Kingdom. It deserves however more critical scrutiny than it typically receives in the British debate. It is far from obvious that the referendum of 23rd June, with its narrow majority in favour of ill-defined revolutionary change, constitutes a mandatory basis for whatever action the government decides it wished to take in interpretation of that referendum outcome.

Contrary to an oft-asserted argument of the government's supporters, the referendum held on 23rd June was not a legally binding one. If it had been, it would have specifically contained within itself provisions binding on the government in the event of a «Leave» vote. The legislation of 2010 introducing the binding referendum on AV stipulated for instance that in the event of a vote for changing the electoral system the election of 2015 would be held under the new

⁵ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/eu-referendum-nigel-farage-remain-edge-it-brexite-ukip-a7098526.html>.

system. No similar provisions can be found in the legislation concerning the EU referendum in June of this year. To talk of «instructions» given to Parliament or the government by the referendum is therefore misleading, a misconception exacerbated by the fact that within the «Leave» camp a number of quite different conceptions existed of what was being voted for. Not merely the concept of last June's referendum as a source of «instructions» is questionable; it is also entirely unclear what the content of these instructions might have been. The vocabulary moreover of «instructions» to Parliament sits oddly with the traditional concept of Parliamentary sovereignty which many of those who voted «Leave» last June thought they were voting to reassert. It is one thing to argue that Parliament has the duty to take account of the result of a referendum, but quite another to claim that it must passively endure as a mere spectator governmental action supposedly based upon that result. The High Court in its November ruling pleased many observers by firmly placing its legal decision in the context of maintaining Parliamentary sovereignty. It is a striking irony of the Brexit process that it was a private citizen appealing to the courts who brought about this striking reaffirmation of Parliamentary sovereignty rather than a cowed Parliament itself.

Referendums in the UK

It is unsurprising that confusion should persist about the precise status of the referendum decision taken on 23rd June. There is a total absence in the British constitution of any underlying legal or philosophical principles relating to referendums. Other countries have detailed legal and constitutional provisions about referendums, the subjects on which and the circumstances in which they may be held, their binding or non-binding nature, the role of government and Parliament in their organization. None of that exists in the British practice. National referendums usually take place simply in order to solve a problem that the government of the day sees no other way of solving. That was the genesis of the European referendum of 1975 and it was conspicuously true of the referendum on 23rd June, through which Mr. Cameron hoped to cure the long active cancer within his party of divisions on the European question. Neither he nor his opponents in the Conservative Party had any interest in holding a referendum as an exercise in consultative democracy. Mr. Cameron wis-

hed to muzzle and then silence his internal critics. His opponents saw a referendum as the only way in which they could achieve an outcome which they knew they could never achieve by Parliamentary means. This murky background of Conservative political infighting must influence any political or constitutional assessment of the result achieved on 23rd June. It is worth pointing out in this connection that on the evening of the referendum Nigel Farage, the leader of UKIP made clear that he would not accept an outcome against his own preferences, an attitude echoing those of his sympathizers who for forty years refused to accept the crushing referendum result in 1975⁶.

More generally, in the General Election of May 2015, the Labour Party lost to the Conservative Party by a larger majority in the popular vote (some 6,5%) than the majority the «Leave» side achieved in the June referendum. Very few commentators concluded on that basis that the Labour Party should desist from its criticism of and opposition to the Conservative policies which figured in the winning manifesto. There is no obvious reason why a similar analysis should not apply in the case of Brexit. It is understandable that the Conservative government should point to the result of the European referendum as a justification for doing what most Conservatives have long wished to do, namely leave the European Union. But those Parliamentarians of a different view are surely equally entitled to continue to argue that leaving the European Union is a mistake that should be reversed, a mistake based on a questionable franchise for the referendum of 23rd June, a dishonest referendum campaign by the winning side and self-delusion about the real alternatives to British membership of the Union.

Continued commitment to British membership of the Union by Parliamentarians who believe that leaving the European Union is a reckless threat to British economic, political and constitutional well-being ought in traditional British political practice and theory to be accepted and respected as part of the continuing democratic and Parliamentary debate. If Parliamentarians tolerate in Westminster and elsewhere a European debate which is only about what kind of Brexit takes place, they will be leaving unrepresented the 48% of voters who believed on 23rd June that the national interest demanded

⁶ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-38168942>.

and demands continued British membership of the EU.

Will Brexit happen?

To many observers, momentum behind the process of British withdrawal from the European Union (Brexit) has seemed since the referendum of 23rd June unstoppable. Mrs. May and her colleagues would however do well to remember that «normality» has been a poor guide to the course of British politics over the past twelve months, particularly where European issues are concerned. The early days of December 2016 provided three vivid illustrations of this proposition, in the unexpected acknowledgement by David Davis, the Minister for Brexit, that the United Kingdom might need to pay an entrance fee for access to the European single market; in the extraordinary victory for the Liberal Democrats at a by-election where European issues were at the centre of the debate; and in the opening sessions of the Supreme Court hearings.

The remarks of D. Davis are particularly striking⁷. It was an oft-repeated claim of those arguing for Brexit in the British referendum that no negative economic consequences would follow for the UK from its leaving the EU. Much was made during the referendum campaign of the deficit in traded goods that the United Kingdom exhibits with the rest of the European Union. The pro-Brexit campaigners argued, the UK's trading partners in continental Europe would recognize the economic logic of maintaining the closest possible commercial ties with the important British market.

The remarks of Mr. Davis about the possibility of British payments for access to the European single market represent a first, reluctant recognition of the fundamental inaccuracy of such expectations. Far from advocating concessions under pressure from German car-makers, Mrs. Merkel has been vocal in stressing that any long-term arrangement arrived at with the UK would need to be demonstrably inferior to the arrangements in force between member states of the Union. Against this background, it is highly significant that Mr. Davis should now be striking a more realistic note. In September, he told the House of Commons that the United Kingdom would probably be leaving the single European market, because the terms

⁷ <http://www.politics.co.uk/news/2016/11/15/john-mcdonnell-backs-brexit-enormous-opportunity-britain>.

for remaining within it would be unacceptable. This war-like utterance seems to have not survived first contact with the enemy. The willingness of Mr. Davis to envisage costs arising from Brexit can be seen as a first official disavowal of the elaborate structure of wishful thinking and outright deception that characterized much of the successful referendum campaign with which he was associated. The unexpected victory of the Liberal Democrats in the Richmond Park by-election on 1st December opens at least the possibility that existing and perhaps growing hostility to the realized implications of Brexit may find effective political and electoral expression.

It has rightly been argued that Richmond Park was in many ways an unusually favourable environment for an experiment in pro-Remain politics. Even so, it would be a rash enthusiast for Brexit who failed to understand the potential danger posed to the Conservative government and its plans for leaving the E.U. by what happened in the Richmond by-election. Unusually for by-elections, a number of national parties did not contest the Richmond Park by-election. The electoral contest in Richmond Park was unambiguously one between the political forces favouring Brexit and their opponents. The Labour Party, which had insisted on running its own candidate despite suggestions before the by-election that it should support a single «pro-Remain» candidate, was punished by the voters, receiving less than four percent of the votes cast. Richmond Park strongly suggests that in the right circumstances «Remain» voters are prepared to coalesce in support of a single candidate who shares their hostility to the pro-Brexit policies of the current Conservative government.

Brexit in the house of commons

The forthcoming debates in the House of Commons on the triggering of Article 50 of the Lisbon may well act as a favourable background against which those wishing the UK to remain in the EU can sharpen their political lobbying. In the Richmond Park by-election, the major Party of opposition in Westminster, the Labour Party, was handicapped by its inability to articulate publicly a clear message on Europe. Some of its leaders seem to be indifferent, or even welcoming towards the prospect of a rapid British exit from the EU; some Labour MPs have said they will vote against the invocation of Article 50 in all circumstances; yet others, perhaps the majority of the

Parliamentary Labour Party, say they accept the result of the referendum but proclaim their dissatisfaction with the way in which the government is going about the process of taking the UK out of the EU. The Parliamentary debates of the coming months are unlikely entirely to resolve these divisions within the Labour Party. There is however some reason to believe that the Party is now laying down conditions and markers against which it will judge the outcome of the negotiations into which Mrs. May's government will be entering with the rest of the EU over the next two years. It is clearly in the mind of some leading Labour pro-Europeans that there will be more political scope for them to refuse to endorse the outcome of the Article 50 negotiations than there is now for them to oppose their initiation.

Sir J. Major has recently argued that a second referendum on the «terms of Brexit» might be necessary and politically appropriate after Mrs. May's government has concluded its negotiations. Unsurprisingly, this was rejected by many members of his Party as an illegitimate attempt to reverse the outcome of a referendum lost by Sir John and his sympathizers. More subtly, it was argued by others that the terms of Article 50 in effect preclude any such second referendum. If the electorate or House of Commons reject the terms for exit agreed by Mrs. May's government, this will not prevent the UK from leaving the European Union. It will only ensure that in accordance with the automatic workings of Article 50 the UK leaves the EU without an exit agreement in the greatest possible confusion and rancour two years after the Article is triggered.

But the provisions and workings of Article 50 need not prove an insurmountable barrier to the holding of a second British referendum, if there is substantial political momentum behind the initiative. By early 2019, the British government and electorate will have a much clearer idea than they do now of the likely economic and trading relationship between themselves and the EU after Brexit. In particular, they will be much better placed to form a global judgement on the crucial questions of access to the single European market and the Customs Union in the longer term, even if details of this new relationship can only be agreed after further painful negotiation. A second referendum would give the British public the opportunity not merely to make a judgement on the technical issues of the

Brexit terms but to accept or reject the real alternative to continuing British membership, as clarified in the course of the Article 50 negotiations. There is every reason to believe that this clarified choice will be a less attractive and appealing one than that presented by the «Leave» campaign this summer.

Nor should it be taken for granted that a second referendum which rejected the Article 50 terms would be without effect on Britain's leaving the EU. The government which had accepted these rejected terms could scarcely be expected to survive and its successor would have a wide range of options open to it, whether to hold a General Election, to withdraw the invocation of Article 50, or to ask for an extension of the two year negotiating period for British exit terms. If the United Kingdom's partners saw such an extension as being the probable prelude to the country's remaining in the EU, it is unlikely that they would be unwilling to grant it. The expectation that the UK will inevitably leave the European Union before the next General Election due in 2020 is predicated on the assumption that a Conservative government, probably led by Mrs. May, remains in power over that period. A rejection in a second referendum of that government's negotiated terms for Brexit would destroy any such assumption.

In truth, two radically different plausible paths present themselves for the evolution of the European political debate in the UK over the next two years. One sees the current government being able to hold fast to its course of taking the UK out of the EU by the middle of 2019, with minimal economic disruption either before or after the moment of Brexit, helped in this maintenance of relative economic stability by the willingness of its European partners to accommodate British demands about the future relationship between the two parties. In such circumstances, the chances of rejection of the Brexit terms, whether by Parliament or a second referendum, are not high. An equally plausible perspective however paints a very different picture, of increasing economic difficulty as national and international economic actors understand the real implications of Brexit; as the UK's partners remain unyielding in their refusal to compromise with what they see as unreasonable British demands; and as public and political opinion evolves in the direction of asking whether the real Brexit on offer is as alluring a prospect as the mirage offered to the

voters by most utterances of the «Leave» campaign.

Pro-Europeans in the United Kingdom have an unimpressive record as tacticians and strategists. Events over the next two years may however provide them with a final opportunity to eradicate the consequences of repeated past mistakes. They should perhaps however reflect that in politics as in much of life it is often too early to take action until suddenly it is too late.

It is Mrs. May believes that by adopting the slogans and attitudes of the «Brexiters» she will establish for herself greater credibility within her party on the European issue and therefore greater freedom of manoeuvre when formal negotiations with the EU-27 begin next year. Should she entertain some such thought, all the recent history of the Conservative Party speaks against it. Like Sir J. Major, Mrs. May has only a small majority in Parliament. The original limited number of early Eurosceptics in the Conservative Party have worked hard and effectively to capture the party over the past decades and they understandably now wish to savour their victory to the full. Mrs. May is highly unlikely to be allowed by her party to pursue a path to Brexit which is orderly, consensual and constructive. A British departure from the EU which is divisive, disruptive and bad-tempered is a much more likely alternative. If and when international markets fully take fright about the likely consequences of a disorderly Brexit, the political and economic implications could be immense. In such circumstances, even the most Eurosceptic government might reconsider its capacity to carry out Brexit, however much it wished to do so.

*B. Pilbeam**

THE UK EU REFERENDUM: A REVOLT AGAINST THE ELITES?

The purpose of this chapter is not to examine the process of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union (EU), or the various options that may be open to it in renegotiating its position vis-à-vis the institution. Instead, the focus will be upon the referendum that led to «Brexit» and what it tells us about British society in the 21st century,

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the state of the major political parties, and the relationships between the two. What will be argued is that the unexpected result produced by the referendum may legitimately be characterized as a revolt from below against the elites that govern British society. At the very least, it was a result that threw all of the major parties into serious turmoil, sparking severe internal crises from which none has yet fully recovered.

The Referendum

The referendum on Britain's membership of the EU took place on 23 June 2016. The first point to be noted about the referendum is that the decision to hold it was taken for essentially political reasons. Calls for a referendum regarding the UK's relationship with the EU had been heard since the early 1990s, following the transformation of the European Community (EC) into the EU by the Maastricht Treaty of 1992. For example, this was the *raison d'être* behind the creation of the Referendum Party in 1994 (which disbanded in 1997). Similarly, it became a central demand of the UK Independence Party (UKIP) – founded in 1991 as the Anti-Federalist League, renamed in 1993.

Yet why was the decision to hold one taken when it was? The Prime Minister who granted proponents of a referendum their wish, David Cameron, had in 2010 achieved what no Conservative Party leader had since 1992: «won» a general election – though the Conservative Party did not win a majority in Parliament, it became the single largest party and formed a government in coalition with the Liberal Democrats. Yet the fact that the Conservatives did not have an overall majority, together with the serious divisions that existed (and still exist) within the party over EU membership, meant that Cameron's position was far from secure.

In June 2012, Cameron in fact rejected the call for an «in or out» referendum by many of his own MPs. However, six months later, in January 2013, he promised just this – on the proviso that the Conservatives won a majority at the next election in 2015. It thus became a part of the party's manifesto for that election.

The reason for this seeming U-turn was relatively straightforward: it was an attempt by Cameron to appease the Eurosceptic wing of his own party and gain their support in fighting the next

election under his leadership. While a significant proportion of the parliamentary party had long been Eurosceptic, by some estimates the 2010 intake of MPs was the most Eurosceptic in its history. According to Tim Montgomerie, Conservative activist and long-time party watcher, speaking in 2011: «a third of those now on the Conservative benches would like to see a fundamental renegotiation of the UK's relationship with Europe, and another third would like Britain to come out altogether»⁸.

Thus, given the strong potential for internal revolt the parliamentary party's composition created, and the possibility of losing the next election as a divided party, Cameron's calling of the referendum can be understood as a means of dealing with a short-term, party political problem – regardless of the long-term consequences. In any case, Cameron's expectation was that supporters of remaining in the EU would win any referendum, not least because he believed he would be able to renegotiate Britain's terms of membership such that Britain would be exempt from further moves towards European political integration and that some powers might be «repatriated». (In reality, Cameron's efforts at renegotiation with the EU in 2015 failed to deliver significant concessions, certainly nothing sufficient to satisfy Eurosceptics.)

After winning the 2015 election – this time, with a Conservative majority – Cameron followed through on his promise and the referendum was included in the Queen's Speech, and the European Union Referendum Act was subsequently passed in December. Important, though, was that the referendum would be non-binding: there would be no requirement that the government would have to implement the result.

The referendum question settled on, after some revision, was (deceptively) simple: Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?

As critics pointed out, the wording of the question left many others unanswered. For example, it makes no mention of the European Economic Area (EEA) – thus, would it be legitimate to interpret a vote for leaving the EU as also meaning a vote for leaving the

⁸ BBC News, «Euroscepticism among Conservative MPs», 17 October 2011, URL: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-15291712 – accessed 15 January 2017.

EEA? Moreover, the question offered no middle ground, such as remaining a member of the EU if the institution were reformed (or at least, that the conditions of the UK's membership were revised).

The Brexit campaign itself was an unedifying affair. Both sides, Leave and Remain, engaged in what may be dubbed «post-truth politics»⁹. That is, both used often hyperbolic, emotionally driven claims that frequently had scant factual basis, relying instead on fear-mongering and distortion to attempt to persuade voters. As a report of the House of Commons Treasury Committee, published during the campaign, concluded: «public debate is being poorly served by inconsistent, unqualified and, in some cases, misleading claims and counter-claims»¹⁰. For example, the Leave campaign's claim that Britain pays £350 million a week to the EU – which could instead be spent on the National Health Service (NHS) – did not take into account Britain's rebate (negotiated by Margaret Thatcher) and payments (such as agricultural subsidies) that return to the UK. On the other side, Chancellor George Osborne's claim that British families would be £4,300 worse off as a result of leaving the EU was also strongly questioned.

Most significant is that the overheated, «populist» appeals of political figures on both sides were largely driven by their own narrow, self-interested concerns. As A. Crines observed during the campaign, this meant that «The electorate is left in the middle, still mostly disconnected from the whole thing»¹¹.

The Result

Before turning to the actual result of the referendum, it is worth reflecting on what polls and expert were predicting beforehand. The National Centre for Social Research organized «poll of polls» of referendum voting intentions, based on the average share of votes for Leave and Remain in polls conducted by six major polling firms, from October 2015 to June 2016. This «poll of polls» shows that although support for each side fluctuated over time, the Remain cam-

⁹ Suiter J. «Post-Truth Politics». *Political Insight*, 2016, 7 (3). P. 25-27.

¹⁰ House of Commons Treasury Committee, «The Economic and Financial Costs and Benefits of the UK's EU membership», 27 May 2016.

¹¹ Crines A. «The Rhetoric of the EU Referendum Campaign», 14 April 2016, URL: www.psa.ac.uk/insight-plus/blog/rhetoric-eu-referendum-campaign - accessed 15 January 2017.

campaign appeared to be ahead for most of this period – even if often by only a very slender margin – with Leave taking the lead only on three dates. The final average, based on polls conducted from 16 to 22 June (the day before the referendum), gave Remain 52% and Leave 48%. Given this data, most commentators believed that Remain would win, though it would likely be a close result.

A useful insight into the views of experts is revealed by Figure 1. On 3 June 2016, the British Political Studies Association (PSA) published a survey of 596 experts – including academics, pollsters and journalists – as to what the referendum result would be. As Figure 1 shows, all groups overwhelmingly believed that Remain would win. Moreover, when asked to predict the share of the vote for each side, the average prediction was of a ten point lead for Remain, with 55% voting Remain, 45% Leave¹².

Figure 1

	<i>Overall</i>	<i>Academics</i>	<i>Pollsters</i>	<i>Journalists</i>	<i>Other</i>
Remain	87	87	92	97	84
Leave	5	5	0	3	2
Both sides have an exactly equal chance	8	7	8	0	14

W. Jennings and S. Fisher, «Expert Predictions of the 2016 EU Referendum»; www.psa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/PSA%20EU2016%20Report.pdf.

Of course, in the event, many of the polls and experts were proven wrong by Leave’s victory. In terms of polls that failed to predict the result correctly, specific methodological failings may have been responsible – for example, over-representing graduates and under-representing working class voters in their samples¹³. In the case of experts, their predictions were likely coloured by their own preferences for Remain. Yet as the authors of the PSA survey conclude, given the «decent sized lead» predicted by experts for Remain, if they turned out to be wrong, this would likely «shake confidence in the wisdom of pollsters, pundits and political scientists (and perhaps

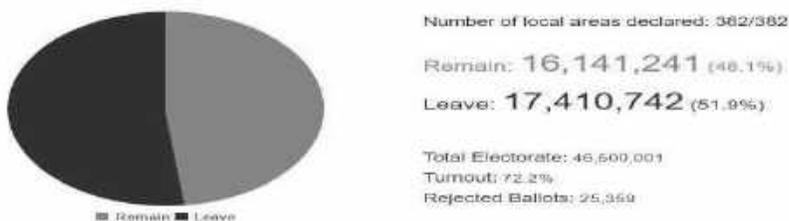
¹² Jennings W., Fisher S. «Expert Predictions of the 2016 EU Referendum», URL: www.psa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/PSA%20EU2016%20Report.pdf – accessed 15 January 2017.

¹³ For a useful discussion of such issues see A. Wells «What We Can Learn from the Referendum Polling», 19 July 2016, URL: <http://ukpollingreport.co.uk/blog/archives/9738> – accessed 15 January 2017.

the confidence of these people too)»¹⁴. The triumph of Leave was not just damaging for many within the political elite, therefore, but within the «intellectual» elite as well.

The referendum result is shown in Figure 2, which shows that Leave won a definite, but slim, victory: 51,9% for Leave versus 48,1% for Remain. Yet another point that is highlighted concerns turnout. As in many advanced democracies, the UK has witnessed a notable decline in voter turnout in recent times. Yet the EU referendum demonstrated a significant upturn, with a turnout of 72,2%. By comparison, turnout in the 2015 general election was 66,1%; in 2010, it was 65,1%; in 2005, it was 61,4%; and in 2001, it was 59,4%¹⁵. In 1997, turnout was 71,4%, but not since 1992 has turnout been higher in a national UK vote (when it was 77,7%). This reveals that, pace many discussions of voter apathy and disengagement, voters are willing to make the effort to turn out to vote if they believe they are being given the chance to have a say on matters that make a real difference in their lives, which they may not always feel in relation to the choice of candidates offered to them at elections by the main political parties.

Figure 2



The Electoral Commission, 'EU Referendum Results', www.electoralcommission.org.uk/

However, the overall vote for «Brexit» also disguised significant variations by:

- Region;
- Age

¹⁴ Jennings W., Fisher S. «Expert Predictions of the 2016 EU Referendum», URL: www.psa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/PSA%20EU2016%20Report.pdf – accessed 15 January 2017.

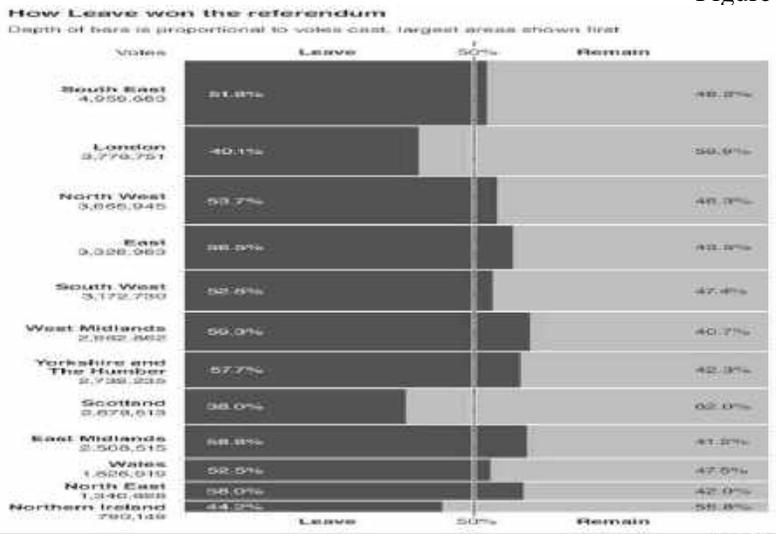
¹⁵ UK Political Info, «General Election Turnout 1945–2015». URL: www.ukpolitical.info/Turnout45.htm – accessed 15 January 2017.

- Social Class
- Education
- Race
- Religion

In terms of the first of these, Figure 3 shows the geographical breakdown of voting. The key victories for Leave were in the North and Midlands of England, and in Wales – whereas Remain secured its best results in London, Scotland and Northern Ireland. For Leave, it was large cities in the North (like Sheffield) and the Midlands (like Birmingham) that helped it to achieve victory.

A particularly significant implication of this geographical divide relates to Scotland. The strong backing shown in Scotland for EU membership may have helped bolster support for Scottish independence, as it suggested that Scotland was at odds with majority opinion in the rest of the UK. A referendum over independence had occurred only two years previously (in 2014), when 45% of the population had voted in favour of becoming an independent nation. The EU referendum may well have increased that percentage, as well as pressure for a second independence referendum.

Figure 3

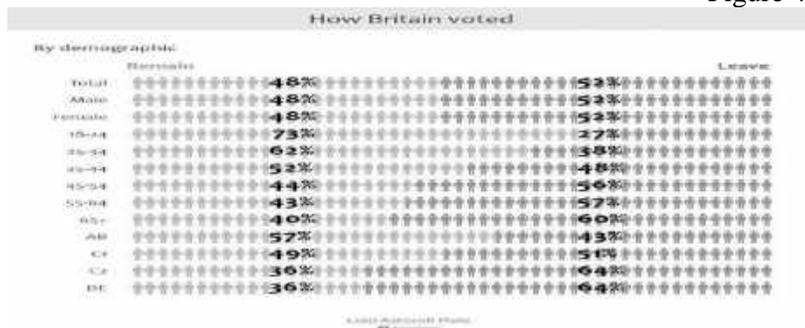


BBC News, «EU Referendum: The Result in Maps and Charts», www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-36616028.

However, to return to the theme emphasized in the introduction, what shows the extent to which the referendum may be viewed as a revolt against elites is other crucial demographic data. Some of this data is shown in Figure 4, which was compiled by Lord Ashcroft Polls from a survey of 12,369 people carried out on referendum day. This shows, first of all, that gender was not a factor in voters' decision-making, as men and women voted in the same proportions for Remain and Leave. Yet both age and social class were.

In terms of age, the older voters were, more likely to vote Leave. While majorities among those aged 18-44 voted Remain (including 73% of 18-24 year olds), this pattern was reversed among those aged 45 and above (with 60% of those aged 65 and older voting Leave).

Figure 4



Lord Ashcroft Polls, «How the United Kingdom Voted on Thursday... and Why», 24 June 2016, URL: www.lordashcrofthpolls.com/2016/06/how-the-united-kingdom-voted-and-why/

In terms of social class, the poll employs the commonly used UK classification system of NRS grades, whereby AB refers to higher managerial and professional occupations; C1 to supervisory, clerical and lower professional occupations; C2 to manual occupations; and DE to semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, and the unemployed. Defining and measuring class is fraught with difficulties, yet the poll nonetheless gives a relatively clear picture of the social and economic divide between referendum voters. Thus, only AB voters – those in the highest economic occupations – voted by a majority for Remain. Of the rest, C1 voters were relatively evenly split (if tending slightly Leave). Yet both C2 and DE voters – the working

class and the unemployed – very strongly supported Leave, with nearly two-thirds in both categories supporting this position.

The same poll also revealed other valuable information about demographic categories¹⁶. In terms of education, 57% of voters with a university degree, and 81% in full-time education, voted Remain; while among those with no education higher than secondary school, a majority voted Leave. In terms of race, 53% of white voters voted Leave, while 67% of Asian voters, and 73% of black voters, voted Remain. In terms of religion, 58% of Christians voted Leave, while 70% of Muslims voted Remain.

Upon this basis, it is possible to see Britain as a divided nation – perhaps even, in a sense, two nations. Such an idea has a long pedigree. For example, Benjamin Disraeli in the 19th century talked of Britain as being two nations, rich and poor. Might another, similar division be evident in the 21st?

At any rate, voters in the referendum may well be divisible into two distinct camps (whether or not they are truly separate nations). Their broad profiles appear to be:

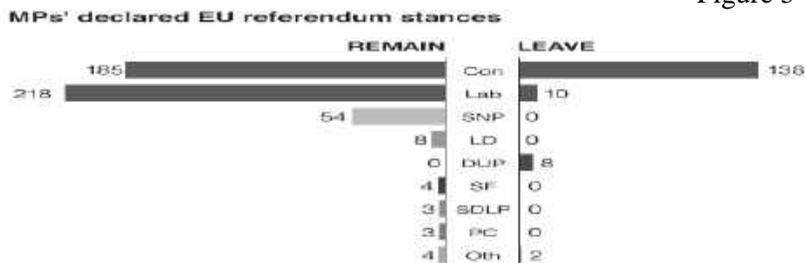
LEAVE	REMAIN
- Older	- Younger
- Lower class	- Middle Class
- Less educated	- More educated
- Less racially diverse	- More racially diverse
- Centred in the old industrial heartlands	- Centred in London, Scotland and N. Ireland

What is also useful to note is the difference between the views of the political establishment and the country at large. Figure 5 shows the declared intentions of MPs the day before the referendum occurred (though not all declared their intentions). This shows a large majority of MPs supporting Remain: with 479 MPs (75%) for Remain and 158 MPs (25%) for Leave. Certainly, there is clear variation between the parties – the Conservatives plainly being the strongest supporters of Leave – and such figures should be treated with caution. In particular, stated declarations may have underestimated Conservative support for Leave, as many Conservative MPs may simply have been unwilling (at least publicly) to go against their own

¹⁶ Lord Ashcroft Polls «How the United Kingdom Voted on Thursday... and Why», 24 June 2016. URL: www.lordashcroftpolls.com/2016/06/how-the-united-kingdom-voted-and-why – accessed 15 January 2017.

Prime Minister. Nonetheless, they do show a Parliament apparently sharply at odds with the majority of the population it represents.

Figure 5



As of 22 June 2016. Does not include those who have not declared their position.
 BBC News, «EU Vote: Where the Cabinet and Other MPs Stand», URL: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-36616028.

Upon the basis of the above evidence, it is therefore possible to see the referendum as revealing a distinct divide between the views of ordinary/lower class voters and all types of elites: the intellectual elite (including academics and journalists), the social/economic elite (the «Abs»), and the political elite (MPs).

An instructive historical comparison may also be drawn. In 1975, a referendum was held concerning the UK's relationship with the European Community (EC), following the UK's accession in 1973 (the question put to the general public then was, «Do you think the UK should remain in the European Community?»). The «Remain» camp at this time was similarly supported by both main parties' leaderships (and much of business, including the Confederation of British Industry). Yet in 1975, Remain won the support of 67,2% of voters.

It would, of course, be invidious to draw too many parallels between the two referenda – the EC as it was in 1975 and the EU as it exists today are very different institutions, and the campaigns run by supporters and critics of Britain's membership were also quite different in the two time periods. Nonetheless, there are significant differences between the UK in 2016 and 1975 that may suggest a decline in respect for, or deference to, the political establishment that may help explain why voters were less ready to follow the wishes of the elite. One indicator has already been touched on, declining voter turnout at elections, which points to a declining faith in political parties. There has, too, been a decline in party membership – only 1,6%

of the electorate today are members of the three main parties (compared to 3,8% in 1983)¹⁷. Moreover, social surveys reveal declining levels of trust in British politics – for example, a 2015 British Social Attitudes survey found that only 17% of voters trust governments most of the time, compared to 38% in 1986¹⁸. All of these factors suggest why voters may be less receptive to the arguments of their political leaders, and more to the views of critics and those who present themselves as «outsiders» (like UKIP).

In terms of the issues that motivated voters, there are no easy answers. Much of the media commentary after the referendum characterized it as largely being a vote against uncontrolled (EU) immigration. However, the evidence here is conflicting. For example, an Ipsos Mori poll conducted over 21-22 June 2016 found that among Leave voters the issues they cited as most important for their decision were: immigration (54%), the ability of Britain to pass its own laws (32%), the economy (19%) and jobs (9%)¹⁹. By contrast, Lord Ashcroft Polls, using data collected from 21-23 June 2016, asked Leave voters to rank their reasons for voting Leave in order of importance and found that national sovereignty came first (49%), followed by immigration (33%), concerns about the EU's expanding membership (13%) and the economy (6%)²⁰.

In truth, it is probably not possible to separate out the issues that motivated voters in a way that can easily be captured by polls: for many voters, issues of sovereignty (and democracy) were intimately bound up with the issue of immigration, as were economic concerns, so it is somewhat meaningless to attempt to rank them in order of importance. Yet what may be argued is that older, poorer and less educated voters had a strong feeling of being «left behind» in an in-

¹⁷ Keen R., Audickas L. Membership of UK Political Parties, 2016, URL: researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN05125/SN05125.pdf – accessed 15 January 2017.

¹⁸ Phillips M., Simpson I. British Social Attitudes 32, National Centre for Social Research. URL: www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/media/38978/bsa32politics.pdf – accessed 15 January 2017.

¹⁹ Ipsos MORI. «Ipsos MORI Political Monitor June 2016 – EU Referendum», URL: www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Polls/jun2_2016webV4.pdf – accessed 15 January 2017.

²⁰ Lord Ashcroft Polls. URL: lordashcrofthpolls.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/How-the-UK-voted-Full-tables-1.pdf – accessed 15 January 2017.

creasingly globalized, cosmopolitan world, and that their concerns were not being heard, or listened to, by political, economic and social elites (who might, by contrast, benefit from contemporary economic and social trends). In this sense, the EU and immigration were largely proxy issues for deeper concerns about the lack of jobs, educational and social opportunities that many communities have experienced in recent decades. In other words, it would be unfair to characterize Leave voters simply as small-minded and bigoted «Little Englanders», but rather, as those who feel ignored and disenfranchised by mainstream British politics.

The Fallout for UK Political Parties

It is worth, then, considering the impact that the «bloody nose» voters delivered to elites has had upon four of the main parties: the Conservatives, Labour, UKIP, and the Scottish National Party (SNP).

i) The Conservative Party

Well before the Brexit vote, long-standing splits over Europe, dating back to the 1980s, had undermined successive Conservative leaders. This included two previous Prime Ministers, Margaret Thatcher and John Major, both of whose downfalls were in part thanks to party in-fighting over Europe.

David Cameron had been attempting to defuse the potential for Europe to split his party apart since becoming leader in 2005. As part of the process of «modernizing» the Conservative Party and distance it from some of its less appealing policies and attitudes of the past, he used his first party conference speech in 2006 to tell Conservatives to stop «banging on about Europe», as the constant raising of the issue was alienating to voters²¹. Yet he never achieved this goal, and Eurosceptics remained a thorn in Cameron's side throughout his premiership.

In relation to the referendum, Cameron's authority was fatally undermined by the loss and he announced his resignation the day of the result, another Conservative Prime Minister to be brought down by the issue of Europe. Yet the party's divisions have not been healed. Much of the referendum campaign involved vicious «blue-on-blue»' attacks between Conservatives, and even though the Euro-sceptic wing of the part may appear to have won, it did not settle

²¹ The Guardian, 2 October 2006.

many crucial questions.

After Theresa May succeeded Cameron as Prime Minister, all the difficult questions around when and how Brexit would occur were left to be resolved. She appointed a number of important Leave supporters to key government posts (including Boris Johnson as Foreign Secretary, Liam Fox as Secretary of State for International Trade, and David Davis as Secretary of State for Exiting the EU). Yet supporters of Remain, even if a minority within the party overall, are still present. For example, Ken Clarke, former Chancellor under Margaret Thatcher, delivered a blistering attack on the government and his own party regarding its handling of Brexit, and strongly defended the benefits of EU membership, during the House of Commons debate on triggering Article 50 (of the Lisbon treaty)²².

Even more significant, the Conservatives will be in power when Britain finally leaves the EU, so will likely take the blame for any negative economic and political consequences that may follow.

ii) The Labour Party

The Labour Party has also long had its own divisions over Europe. During the 1975 referendum campaign, the party was deeply split over which side to take. While Prime Minister Harold Wilson supported remaining in the EC, he allowed his cabinet to campaign according to their consciences. Many left-wing MPs, including leading figures like Tony Benn and Michael Foot, viewed the EC as a «capitalist club», created to promote the interests of capitalists over workers, and so campaigned for withdrawal; so, too, did many of the trade unions that supported the party.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the party gradually evolved into one that largely supported EC (and subsequently EU) membership, and did not suffer the same damaging divisions over the issue during this period as the Conservatives. Even so, there was far from complete unity – for example, during the 1990s, even when in government, the party’s leaders were divided over whether or not Britain should join the single currency.

Yet the EU referendum caused major dilemmas for the party. While left-leaning elites (within the Labour party itself, as well as the media and intellectual circles) were strongly in favour of Rema-

²² The Times, 2 February 2017.

in, Labour's traditional constituency – the white, northern working class – proved to be the core of Leave support. This caused particular problems for the parliamentary Labour Party. As Figure 6 shows, the vast majority of Labour MPs supported Remain – while many of their own constituents, who had voted them into Parliament, supported Leave. Their leader, Jeremy Corbyn, found himself in the most difficult of positions. The official party line was to support Remain, yet his roots in the politics of Labour's traditional left (he had voted to leave the EC in 1975) meant that his support for the EU was decidedly lukewarm, and he presented very little enthusiasm for it during the campaign (criticising it, for example, for its lack of democratic accountability)²³.

Regardless, the disconnect between the majority of the Labour party elite and its own political base have continued to cause it problems. Since the referendum, it has failed to present a coherent position on Brexit, almost paralysed by the tension between the facts that many of its voters support it, while many of its own MPs do not²⁴. Re-establishing connections with its own supporters will be one of the party's major challenges in the years ahead.

iii) UKIP

While both the Conservatives and Labour have been divided over Europe, UKIP has always had the advantage of being united on the issue. Moreover, on the surface, it would appear to be the clearest victor from the referendum result, having achieved its most important, and salient, policy goal: British withdrawal from the EU.

Yet winning can bring its own problems. First, having secured its defining policy (Brexit), the party may simply be defunct. Although it has attempted to present itself as more than just a single-issue party, it has struggled to convince voters that it remains relevant in the post-referendum era. Thus, poll ratings of those who said they intended to vote for it at the next general election halved from a high of 12% in February 2016 (four months before the referendum) to 6% in October 2016 (four months afterwards)²⁵.

Second, it may face the common problem of successful populist

²³ The Telegraph, 14 April 2016.

²⁴ The Guardian, 25 January 2017.

²⁵ Ipsos MORI. «Ipsos MORI Political Monitor October 2016». URL: www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Polls/pm-october-2016-charts.pdf – accessed 15 January 2017.

parties – having raised expectations among supporters (that an independent UK will mean more jobs, prosperity, money for the NHS etc.), it may face a backlash if these benefits do not materialise.

Third, the party has been riven by in-fighting. In many respects, it was a one-man party, with few figures beyond its leader, Nigel Farage, having a significant national profile. Yet after his departure in July 2016, it struggled to find a replacement – its first post-Farage leader, Diane James, lasted only 18 days before resigning, forcing Farage to return (temporarily) to the leadership post.

iv) The Scottish National Party (SNP)

The UK's third largest party (with 54 MPs), the SNP was also one of the strongest supporters of Remain. EU membership has long been a central plank of SNP policy, as it sees strong links with Europe as vital for an independent Scotland to thrive after breaking away from the rest of the UK.

In a sense, therefore, its position may appear to have been the mirror-image of UKIP's, and it could be seen as one of the biggest «losers» of the referendum result. However, also like UKIP, it was at least in tune with a majority of its own supporters – with nearly two-thirds of Scottish voters in the referendum supporting Remain, the SNP did not therefore find itself at odds with its own base in the way that the Labour Party did.

Even so, it has struggled to provide any convincing answers to supporters angry that Scotland will have to leave the EU alongside the rest of the UK. Its leader, Nicola Sturgeon, tried to argue that it would be possible to negotiate a deal that would allow Scotland to remain within the EU, but this is extremely unlikely to happen. Not only is this not supported by the British government, but nor is it by many other EU ones – some, like France and Spain, very quickly rejected the idea publicly (mindful, no doubt, of the dangers of making such concessions lest they bolster independence movements in their own countries)²⁶.

Consequently, a second independence referendum for Scotland may have been made more likely, if Scottish supporters of EU membership believe that there is no way for their demands to be met while within the UK – though this would require the consent of West-

²⁶ The Telegraph, 29 June 2016.

minster, which may not be forthcoming. Yet even were such a referendum to be granted, there would be major obstacles in the way of Scotland rejoining the EU as an independent nation (such as being required to join the euro, despite the many difficulties the currency has faced and desire among many Scottish people to retain the pound). As such, it remains unclear what course the SNP can chart that would obtain the result of a Scotland within the EU it desires.

Conclusion

The EU referendum should not be seen as the sole cause of the present problems of the UK political system, especially those of authority – in many ways, rather, it was a consequence, referendums «from above» so often being instruments of politicians who have failed to assuage dissent to their policies through conventional mechanisms. Moreover, factors such as declining trust in politicians and a growing disconnect between many of the parties' leaderships and their own constituencies (most notable, the Labour Party and working-class voters) long predate the referendum. Nonetheless, the political turmoil the referendum has produced – including the swift departure of the Prime Minister, and a state of seemingly permanent crisis within the Opposition – has undoubtedly exacerbated the dilemmas facing the British political establishment. Furthermore, many of the issues exposed by the referendum go beyond just politics – for example, the clear gulf between the beliefs and values of many ordinary citizens and elites within every sphere (economic and social, as well as political). Whether this gulf will continue to widen, to the extent that it may provoke fundamental challenges to the authority of elites within British society and politics, only time will tell.

*I. Rycerska**

THE POLITICAL PARTIES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AT LOCAL LEVEL AFTER THE ELECTION OF 2014 AND 2015

The Conservative Party and the Labour Party are the main UK political parties, which win in elections and they are able to form go-

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vernment at central level. It is interesting to analyse also the situation concerning main political powers not only at central stage but also at local level of the UK.

The United Kingdom parties system is recognised as two-party system. The UK is not quite only two-party system, because there are some other parties, which have significant support²⁷. The Liberal Democrats had been the third largest party until the 2015 general election. They had 57 seats before the 2015 election and after this election they took only 8 seats. The third party of the UK Parliament became the Scottish National Party, which took 56 seats. Also the Democratic Unionist Party took 8 seats in the 2015 general election. Other results the Sinn Féin – 4 seats, Plaid Cymru – Party of Wales and the Social Democratic and Labour Party – 3 seats, the Ulster Unionist Party – 2 seats, the UK Independence Party and the Green Party England and Wales – 1 seat²⁸. The other parties which took part in the 2015 general election were: the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland, the Scottish Green Party, the NI21²⁹, the Green Party in Northern Ireland, Traditional Unionist Voice. They didn't able any seats.

The list of political parties contains also a lot of minor parties like: 17 miscellaneous UK parties, about 25 UK left or far-left parties, 5 UK far-right parties, 4 UK religious parties, 21 English Parties, 9 Scottish parties, 3 Welsh parties, 7 Northern Ireland parties, 6 joke/satirical parties. There were a lot of historical parties, that functioned in history as: 6 English parties, 31 Scottish parties, 10 Welsh parties, 18 Northern Ireland parties, 41 left-wing parties, 33 far-right parties, 10 joke/satirical parties³⁰.

Some of those parties took seats in different representation bodies at different levels (table 1). Only the two biggest parties – the

²⁷ About political parties in the UK: Cole M. & Deighan H. *Political Parties in Britain*. Edinburgh, University Press, 2012.

²⁸ Election 2015 Results. The United Kingdom parties system is recognised as two-party system. The United Kingdom parties system is recognised as two-party system. URL: <http://www.bbc.com/news/election/2015/results>, retrieved 24 March 2016.

²⁹ NI21 is a political party in Northern Ireland. It was founded in 2013 by ex-Ulster Unionist Party MLAs Basil McCrea and John McCallister and holds one seat in the Northern Ireland Assembly.

³⁰ List of political parties in the United Kingdom, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_political_parties_in_the_United_Kingdom#cite_note-Local-10, retrieved 24 March 2016.

Table 1

Political parties with elected representation in the Westminster,
the devolved and European Parliaments

Party	Political position	UK House of Com-mons	Scottish Parlia-ment	National Assem-bly for Wales	Northern Ireland Assembly	London Assem-bly	Euro-pean Parlia-ment	Local Govern-ment	UK vote Share % 2015 General Election
Conservative and Unionist Party	Centre-right	331	15	14	0	9	20	8779 ³¹	36,9
Labour Party	Centre-left	230	37	30	N/A	12	20	6885 ³²	30,4
Scottish National Party	Centre-left	56	69	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	416 ³³	4,7
Liberal Demo-crats	Centre	8	5	5	N/A	2	1	1809 ³⁴	7,9
Democratic Unionist Party	Right-wing	8	N/A	N/A	38	N/A	1	104	0,6
Sinn Fein	Left-wing	4	N/A	N/A	29	N/A	1	105	0,6
Plaid Cymru – Party of Wales	Left-wing	3	N/A	11	N/A	N/A	1	170 ³⁵	0,6
Social Democratic and Labour Party	Centre-left	3	N/A	N/A	14	N/A	0	66	0,3
Ulster Unionist Party	Centre-right	2	N/A	N/A	14	N/A	1	87	0,4
UK Independence Party	Right-wing	1	0	0	1	0	23	496 ³⁶	12,6
Green Party of England and Wales	Left-wing	1	N/A	0	N/A	2	3	180 ³⁷	3,8
Alliance Party of North-ern Ireland	Centre	0	N/A	N/A	8	N/A	0	32	0,2
Scottish Green Party	Left-wing	0	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	14	
NI21	Centre	0	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	0	1	
Green Party in Northern Ireland	Left-wing	0	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	0	4	
Traditional Unionist Voice	Right-wing	0	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	0	13	0,1

Sources: List of political parties in the United Kingdom, URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_political_parties_in_the_United_Kingdom#cite_note-Local-10, retrieved 24 March 2016.

³¹ Local Council Political Compositions. URL: <http://www.gwydir.demon.co.uk/uklocalgov/makeup.htm>, Retrieved 29 March 2016.

³² As above.

³³ As above

³⁴ As above.

³⁵ As above.

³⁶ As above.

³⁷ As above.

Conservative and the Labour Party have their representatives in almost all representative bodies except Northern Ireland Assembly. They are present in the UK House of Commons – the Conservative Party has 331 seats there, the Labour Party – 230, in the Parliament the Labour Party has more seats – 37 and Conservative Party has only 15 seats there, in the National Assembly for Wales also more popular is the Labour Party, that has 30 seats and the Conservative Party has 14 seats. The similar situation is at the London Assembly where the the Labour Party, has 12 seats and the Conservative Party has 9 seats. The representation of those parties is equal in the European Parliament, both have 20 seats. It is necessary to mention, that the Conservative Party and the Labour Party have greatest representation at the local level. The Conservative Party has 8779 representatives in Local government bodies and the Labour Party has 6885 seats at this level. The third power at local level is the party of the Liberal Democrats – 1809 seats.

It's necessary to mention, that there are some political parties, that are elected at local government level only (table 2). We should mention here: the Independents for Frome which has 17 seats, the Liberal Party 13 seats, Llais Gwynedd and Residents for Uttlesford have 10 seats, the East Devon Alliance took 9 seats. The next one is the «Independent Community and Health Concern» 5 seats, the Democratic Independent Group also 5 seats, «TUSC Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition» has 4 seats, as Mebyon Kernow (The Party for Cornwall) and the Respect Party. The Social Democratic Party and «Independence from Europe» took 3 seats. The Scottish Socialist Party and the British National Party have 1 seat. Both of them are «extreme» parties: the Scottish Socialist Party is left-wing to far-left (it wants to establish of an independent socialist Scotland) and the British National Party is far-right neo-fascist, White nationalist, Euro-sceptic party. It means that British voters at local level do not support far parties.

The system of regional and local authorities of the UK is complicated, because there is no single type of the local authority system in the whole country. Each historical part of the UK: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales has its own system of administrative division and local authority system, in spite the fact, that

Table 2

Political parties with elected representation
at local government level only

Party	Political position	Government members	Notes
Independents for Frome	Local issues	17 ³⁸	Frome-based localism agenda
Liberal Party	Centre	13 ³⁹	Liberal Eurosceptic party
Llais Gwynedd	Centre-left	10 ⁴⁰	Welsh nationalist local party
Residents for Uttlesford	Centre	10 ⁴¹	Essex-based localism agenda
East Devon Alliance	Local issues	9 ⁴²	Formed as a group in April 2013 to campaign for improved democracy, accountability and honesty in local government; became a party in February 2015 in order to have a common banner to fight the EDDC elections in May 2015 ⁴³
Independent Community and Health Concern	NHS & local issues	5 ⁴⁴	Mainly local party campaigns on NHS and local issues
Democratic Independent Group	Local Issues	5 ⁴⁵	The group was formed when five UKIP councillors defected over allegations that the leader of the council prevented the reopening of Manston Airport
TUSC (Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition)	Far-left	4 ⁴⁶	Socialist electoral alliance
Mebyon Kernow (The Party for Cornwall)	Centre-left	4 ⁴⁷	Cornish nationalist part
Respect Party	Left-wing	4 ⁴⁸	Democratic Socialist, Trade Unionist, Eurosceptic party
Social Democratic Party	Centre-left	3 ⁴⁹	Social democratic and Euro-sceptic party

³⁸ Frome Town Council Elections 2015, URL <http://www.frometowncouncil.gov.uk/elections-2015/>, Retrieved 29 March 2016.

³⁹ Local Council Political Compositions.

⁴⁰ Gwynedd Council, (PDF), Retrieved 29 March 2016.

⁴¹ Your Residents for Uttlesford Councillors. URL: <http://www.residents4u.org/uttlesford-district-councillors-and-candidates/> Retrieved 29 March 2016.

⁴² East Devon District Council Elections 2015, (PDF), Retrieved 29 March 2016.

⁴³ East Devon Alliance History, URL: <http://www.eastdevonalliance.org.uk/about/history/>, Retrieved 29 March 2016.

⁴⁴ Local Council Political Compositions.

⁴⁵ Thanet District Council. Modern Gov Your Councillors, [thanet.gov.uk](http://democracy.thanet.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?FN=PARTY&VW=LIST&PIC=0). URL: <http://democracy.thanet.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?FN=PARTY&VW=LIST&PIC=0>. Retrieved 29 March 2016.

⁴⁶ Local Council Political Compositions.

⁴⁷ As above.

⁴⁸ As above.

⁴⁹ Bridlington, Old Town Ward – Parish election results, eastriding.gov.uk. URL:

Independence from Europe	Right Wing	3 ⁵⁰	Euro-sceptic party
Scottish Socialist Party	Left-wing to Far-left	1 ⁵¹	Campaigns for an independent socialist Scotland
British National Party	Far-right	1 ⁵²	Neo-fascist, White nationalist, Eurosceptic party

Source: List of political parties in the United Kingdom, URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_political_parties_in_the_United_Kingdom#cite_note-Local-10, retrieved 24 March 2016.

the UK is a unitary state.

The main feature of UK system of government is devolution. It is a form of decentralization of power. Devolved areas have a possibility to form a legislative power on its territory. It means, that devolved territories have their own parliaments or assemblies. Northern Ireland was the first part of the UK that was granted devolved government under the Government of Ireland Act 1920. It had continued until the Parliament of Northern Ireland was suspended in 1972. During the ethno-nationalist conflict in Northern Ireland in the late 20th century, Westminster government managed direct rule there. The current Northern Ireland Assembly was established in 1998, and is at this time in operation following a number of periods of suspension. Scotland and Wales have also their subnational Assemblies. Only England has no devolved national legislature or government.

Historically, the subnational divisions of the UK have been the county and ecclesiastical parish. There is no place for increasing the local government issue, but it is necessary to mention the administrative units in the particular parts of the state.

Legislation concerning Local government in England is passed by the Parliament of the United Kingdom, because England does not have a devolved parliament or regional assemblies, outside Greater London.

Thus England since 1944 is divided into nine regions that are

<http://www2.eastriding.gov.uk/council/elections-and-voting/election-results-2015/parish/bridlington-old-town-ward-parish-election-results>, Retrieved 29 March 2016.

⁵⁰ Your Councillors by Party, Lincolnshire County Council. URL: <http://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?FN=PARTY&VW=LIST&PIC=0>, Retrieved: 29th March 2016.

⁵¹ Local Council Political Compositions.

⁵² Councillor Brian Parker, Pendle Borough Council, http://www.pendle.gov.uk/councillors/35/brian_parker, Retrieved 29th March 2016.

the highest level subdivisions of this territory. The London region is named Greater London and is further divided into the City of London and 32 boroughs. They are administrated by the Greater London authority including the directly elected London Assembly. The other regions are divided into 57 «single tier» authorities: 55 unitary authorities, The City of London Corporation, The Council of the Isles of Scilly. There are 34 «upper tier» authorities: 6 metropolitan co-unities, 27 non-metropolitan counties and The Greater London Authority. The counties are further divided into districts (which are called cities, boroughs, royal boroughs, metropolitan boroughs or districts). Those units are 209 «lower tier» authorities. There are: 201 non-metropolitan districts, 36 metropolitan boroughs, 32 London boroughs. The unitary authorities effectively join the functions of counties and districts.

The lowest level, below the districts are civil parishes, though not uniformly. Parish or town councils exist in villages and small towns; they only rarely exist in communities within urban areas. They do not exist within Greater London.

It is necessary to mention, that England's geography is divided into ceremonial counties, which are not administrative units, but they in most areas closely mirror the traditional counties. Each ceremonial county has a Lord Lieutenant, who is the monarch's representative.

The councils elected in particular units combine executive and legislative power. Functions are vested in the council itself and then exercised usually by committees or subcommittees of the council. The councils have a leader, but with no special authority. Under section 15 the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, committees must roughly reflect the political party composition of the council; earlier it was permitted for a party with control of the council to «pack» committees with their own members. This pattern was based on the one established for municipal boroughs by the Municipal Corporations Act 1835, and then later adopted for county councils and rural districts.

In 2000, Parliament passed the Local Government Act 2000. In accordance with it, councils have to change to an executive-based system, also with the council leader and a cabinet that is an executive authority, or with a directly elected mayor – with either having a

cabinet consisting of the councillors – or a mayor and council manager. Only smaller district councils with population of less than 85,000 can adopt a modified committee system. Most councils used the council leader and cabinet option, while 52 smaller councils were allowed to propose alternative arrangements based on the older system (Section 31 of the Act), and Brighton and Hove invoked a similar provision (Section 27(2)(b)) when a referendum to move to a directly elected mayor was defeated. In 2012, principle councils began returning to Committee systems, under the Localism Act 2011.

There are 16 directly elected mayors, in those districts where a referendum was in favour of them. Since May 2002 only a few referenda have been held, and they mostly have been negative.

In the election of councils a system known as the multi-member plurality system or plurality at large voting is used: for example, if four candidates from the A-party poll 2,000 votes each, and four candidates from the B-party poll 1,750 votes each, all four A party candidates will be returned, and no B party candidates will. This has been said by some to be undemocratic⁵³.

Subdivisions in England (as of 2010) that have a principal local authority: two-tier non-metropolitan counties and their non-metropolitan districts; metropolitan boroughs; unitary authorities; London boroughs; and the *sui generis* City of London and Isles of Scilly.

Location	England	
	<i>Type</i>	<i>Number</i>
	Region	9
	Ceremonial county	48
Subdivisions	Metropolitan county	6
	Non-metropolitan county	77
	District	326
	Civil parish	≈4,500

Source: Subdivisions of England, URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subdivisions_of_England, Retrieved 4th April 2016.

Northern Ireland has the Northern Ireland Assembly and Northern Ireland Executive established under the Good Friday Agreement. During periods when the devolved institutions were suspended

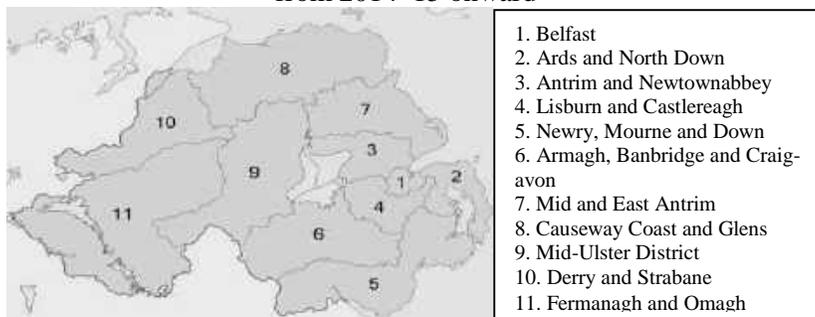
⁵³ Local government in England, URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_government_in_England. Retrieved: 4th April 2016.

ded, executive government in Northern Ireland was administered directly by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and laws made in the United Kingdom Parliament - known as «direct rule» in contrast to devolution.

Northern Ireland is divided into 11 districts for local government purposes, which are unitary authorities. This division was established on 1 April 2015. Councillors are elected for a four-year term of office under the single transferable vote (STV) system.

Figure 1

Eleven local government districts in Northern Ireland from 2014–15 onward



Source: Local Government Districts. URL: <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b7/NI11w.jpg>, Retrieved: 4th April 2016.

Northern Ireland is also divided into six traditional counties, but these no longer serve any administrative purpose. They were administrative counties from 1921 to 1973. They were subdivided into urban and rural districts and two county boroughs.

Scotland has a devolved legislature, the Scottish Parliament, with a government, known as the Scottish Government since 1999. Scotland is divided into 32 council areas (unitary authorities⁵⁴). Below this level of subdivision, there are varying levels of area committees in the larger rural council areas, and many small community councils throughout the country, although these are not universal. Scottish community councils have few if any powers beyond being a forum for raising issues of concern.

Wales has an elected, devolved assembly, the National Assembly

⁵⁴ In the United Kingdom the phrase «unitary authority» is used as a designation of specific local government areas.

for Wales and the Welsh Government that holds an executive power. Below the national level, Wales consists of 22 single-tier principal areas (unitary authorities): 10 county boroughs, 9 counties, and 3 cities. The elected councils are responsible for performing tasks at these areas. The lowest units are community councils, which have powers similar to those of English parish councils.

Wales is also divided into preserved counties, which are used for ceremonial purposes. They were used as the counties for local government between 1974 and 1996, and they have no administrative function now.

The Wales has a form of direct democracy, because the communities which are too small to have a council, may have a community meeting instead of a council.

The United Kingdom regional/local government units have elected councils, which perform the tasks provided by law. The councillors are usually members of political parties. The results of the election on 7 May 2015 in England to regional/local government bodies indicate that the majority in these bodies belongs to two biggest parties, which dominate on the national level.

The results of voting to county councils in England are contained in tables 3-7.

Legend: **Executive types shown for England (Local Government Act 2000)**: LC = Leader & Cabinet, MC = Mayor & Cabinet, AA = Alternative Arrangements under Section 31 (option for councils with less than 85,000 population at 30 June 1999), or Schedule 2 of the Localism Act 2011.

Parties shown in «Other» column:

ICHC = Independent Community & Health Concern, **Lib** = Liberal Party, **MK** = Mebyon Kernow – the Party for Cornwall, **RA** = Residents Assns, **Resp** = RESPECT, **SDP** = Social Democratic Party, **SSP** = Scottish Socialist Party, **TUSC** = Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (and affiliates). If not marked, they are «Ind», i.e. Independents and very local «parties», or have given no description either on the ballot paper or as council members.

Two other bodies, the Corporation of the City of London (25 aldermen, 130 councillors) and the Scilly Islands Council (21 councillors) do not have political groups, so they are not listed.

Table 3

The results of elections 2015 to 27 County Council in England

	Con	Labour	LibDem	UKIP	Green	Others
County Totals	941	381	249	131	20	89

Source: Local Council Political Compositions, URL: <http://www.gwydir.demon.co.uk/uklocalgov/makeup.htm>, Retrieved: 05.04.2016.

At the level of Counties voters elected mainly conservative councillors (Table 3). The Conservative Party controls 16 councils, the Labour Party controls only 2 councils (Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire counties). The rest of councils – 9 (in Cambridgeshire, Cumbria, East Sussex, Gloucestershire, Lancashire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire counties) do not have a ruling party because nobody got majority but the Conservative Party usually has the greatest amount of seats. The Liberal Democrats is the third party in most counties, only in 6 counties they are the fourth party. The third party is the UKIP in these counties. The Green party has 1-4 representatives in 10 counties. Other local parties do not have their councillors only in 4 counties. Totals results are: the Conservative Party has 941 councillors, the Labour Party – 381 members, The Liberal Democrats – 249 representatives, UKIP – 131, the Green Party – 20 and other parties – 89 representatives.

Table 4

The results of the 2015 election to 55 Unitary Authorities in England

	Con	Labour	LibDem	UKIP	Green	Others
Unitary Totals	1303	1147	300	66	38	243

Source: Local Council Political Compositions.

The most of the Unitary Authorities have a leader and cabinet system. Only 3 Unitary Authorities have a mayor and cabinet system. 2 of these units have an Alternative Arrangements system (Table 4). At the level of Unitary Authorities the voters are more divided than at the counties level. The Conservative party is the biggest party at this level, because it controls 21 councils, the Labour Party controls 18 councils, 16 councils do not have a ruling party because nobody got a majority but the Conservative Party and the Labour Party usually have the greatest amount of seats there. The Liberal Democrats is usually the third party in most Unitary Authorities, only in 6 units they are the fourth party. This party has a large representation in Cornwall, where it has 37 councillors, more than the

conservatives, which have 33 members there. The next party is the UKIP or the Green Party, which has 11 representatives in Brighton & Hove, 13 members in Bristol. Other local parties do not have their councillors in 19 Unitary Authorities. There are units, where local parties have quite a great representation. For example, in Cornwall these parties have 40 councillors. Totals results are: the Conservative Party has 1303 councillors, the Labour Party – 1147, The Liberal Democrats – 300 representatives, UKIP – 66, the Green Party – 38 councillors, and other parties – 243 representatives.

Table 5

The results of 2015 election to 32 London Borough Councils

	Con	Labour	LibDem	UKIP	Green	Others
London Totals	611	1061	117	12	4	46

Source: Local Council Political Compositions.

Most of the London Borough Councils have a leader and cabinet system. Only 3 of these units have a mayor and cabinet system (Table 6). In the London Borough Councils the voters elected Labour Party councillors, which is the largest party in these units. The Labour Party controls 21 councils, 1 council does not have a party in Havering, when 24 seats has the RA, the Labour Party has 22 seats there. In the London Borough Councils the Conservative Party controls 9 councils, 1 is controlled by the Liberal Democrats who are usually the third party in most London Borough Councils similar to other levels. The UKIP and the Green Party have their representatives in 7 London Borough Councils. Other local parties are present only in 4 unites (Harrow, Havering, Merton and Tower Hamlets). In the London Borough Councils the Labour Party has largest amount of councillors. Totals results are: the Conservative Party has 611 councillors, the Labour Party 1061 members, The Liberal Democrats 117 representatives, UKIP 12, the Green Party 4 councillors, and other parties 46 representatives.

Table 6

The results of 2015 election to 36 Metropolitan Borough Councils

	Con	Labour	LibDem	UKIP	Green	Others
Metropolitan Totals	389	1745	172	41	29	61

Source: Local Council Political Compositions.

Similar to former units the most of the Metropolitan Borough Councils (33) have a leader and cabinet system. Only 3 of these units

have a mayor and cabinet system (Table 6). In the Metropolitan Borough Councils voters elected mainly Labour Party councillors, which is also a largest party in these units. The Labour Party controls 30 councils, 4 councils do not have a ruling party, only 2 councils are controlled by the Conservative Party. The Liberal Democrats are the third party in the Metropolitan Borough Councils but they have their representatives only in 21 units. The UKIP has its members in 12 councils and the Green Party have their representatives in the 8 Metropolitan Borough Councils. Other local parties are present in 22 units. In the Metropolitan Borough Councils the Labour Party has most amount of councillors. Totals results are: the Conservative Party has 389 councillors, the Labour Party 1745 members, the Liberal Democrats 172 representatives, UKIP 41, the Green Party 29 councillors, and other parties 61 representatives.

Table 7

The results of 2015 election to 201 District Councils in England

	Con	Labour	LibDem	UKIP	Green	Others
District Totals	5322	1573	829	240	76	562

Source: Local Council Political Compositions.

Most of the District Councils (170) have a leader and cabinet system of local government, 30 units have an Alternative Arrangements system and only one unit has a mayor and cabinet system (Table 7). The election results to the District Councils in England indicate the domination of the Conservative Party. It won in elections to districts and it controls councils in 149 districts. The Labour Party controls only 32 districts. The Liberal Democrats have their representatives in 130 districts and they control 5 councils, one council is controlled by Independents (in Epsom & Ewell District), and one council is controlled by the coalition Labourites and Liberal Democrats (in Oadby & Wigston District). The UKIP has its members in 65 districts, the Green Party – 29 and other parties have their members in 135 district councils. At this level visible is a lack of the Labour Party councillors in 72 councils, while the Conservatives do not have their representatives only in 5 councils (Bolsover, Chesterfield, Oxford, Norwich and Mansfield). The domination of the Conservatives is visible, when we compare the total results of seats achieved by particular parties so total results are: the Conservative Party has 5322 councillors, the Labour Party – 1573 members, the Liberal Demo-

crats – 829 representatives, UKIP – 240, the Green Party – 76 co-councillors, and other parties – 562 seats.

Table 8

The results of 3th May 2012 election to 32 Scottish Unitary Authorities

	Con	Labour	LibDem	UKIP	Green	SNP	Others
Scotland Totals	114	398	70	0	13	416	212

Source: Local Council Political Compositions.

In the Scottish Unitary Authorities most of the councils (22) do not have a controlling party (Table 8). The Labour Party controls 4 councils, the Independents also control 4 councils, the Scottish National Party (SNP) controls 2 councils, and the Conservatives do not control any council. Total results in the Scottish Unitary Authorities are: SNP has the most amount of members in councils – 416, the second one is the Labour Party – 398 seats, the Conservative Party has 115 councillors, the Liberal Democrats – 70 representatives, UKIP – 0, the Green Party – 13 councillors, and other parties – 212 seats.

Table 9

The results of 1st May 2012 election to Welsh 22 Unitary Authorities

	Con	Labour	LibDem	UKIP	Green	Plaid	Others
Wales Totals	105	577	72	1	0	171	328

Source: Local Council Political Compositions.

In the Welsh Unitary Authorities the Labour Party controls 10 councils. 9 councils do not have a controlling party (Table 9), the Independents control 3 councils, the Plaid Cymru, in spite of 171 councillors and representatives in 16 councils, does not control any council, like the Conservatives. Total results in the Welsh Unitary Authorities are: the Labour Party SNP has most amount of members in councils – 577, the second one is Plaid Cymru – 171 seats, the Conservative Party has 105 councillors, the Liberal Democrats – 72 representatives, UKIP – 1, the Green Party does not have any councillors, and other parties have – 328 seats.

The data contained in Table 10 point that the Conservative Party has its representatives in the councils of 372 units, what makes 92%, the Labour Party members are present at 322 units, what makes 79,5%. The third group of parties acting in the councils of different levels of local government units are other parties. There are 272 other parties, what makes 67,1%. The Liberal Democrats have a little bit worse result. They are present at 261 units, what makes 64,4%.

Table 10

The amount of councils where parties are represented in particular unites of different part of the UK after the elections 2014–2015

Land, type of authorities	Parties and amo-unt of controlled councils by them	Con	Labo	Lib Dem	UKIP	Green	SNP	Plaid	Others
England									
Counties (27)	Con 16 Lab 2 No contr 9	27	27	26	20	12			23
Unitary Authorities (55)	Con 21 Lab 18 No contr 16	55	49	40	22	9			36
London Boroughs (32)	Lab 21 Con 9 Lib Dem 1 No contr 1	27	30	14	3	4			4
Metropolitan Boroughs (36)	Lab 30 Con 2 No contr 4	29	36	21	12	8			22
Districts (201)	Con 149 Lab 30 No contr 18 Indep 1 Lib Dem 2 Con+Lib Dem 1	196	129	130	65	29			135
Scottish Unitary Authorities (32)	No contr 22 Lab 4 SNP 2 Indep 1 Con 0	25	29	16		5	30		30
Welsh Unitary Authorities (22)	Lab 10 No contr 9 Indep 3 Con 0	14	22	14	1			16	22
Total (405)	Con 197 Lab 115 LibDem 3 Indep 5 Con+Lib 1 No contr 79 SNP 2	373	322	261	123	67	30	16	272
Total in %	Con 48 Lab 28,3 LibDem 0,74 Indep 1,23 Con+Lib 0,2 No contr 19,5	92	79,5	64,4	30,3	16,5	7,4	3,9	67,1

Source: Elaborated by author based on: Local Council Political Compositions.

The members of the UKIP are elected to 123 councils of different units (30,3%) and the Green Parties are present in 67 councils, what makes 16,5% units. The representatives of SNP and Plaid are present only in Scotland or Wales.

Summary results of the number of councillors in particular parts of the UK (Table 11) point, that the Conservative Party has the most number of councillors in all authorities. It has 8785 councillors, what

Table 11

The total results of 2014–2015 election in England, Scotland and Wales – number of councillors

Type of authorities	Con	Labour	LibDem	UKIP	Green	SNP	Plaid	Others
England								
Counties (1811)	941	381	249	131	20			89
In %	51,9	21	13,7	7,2	1,1			4,9
Unitary Authorities (3097)	1303	1147	300	66	38			243
In %	42	37	9,7	2,1	1,2			7,8
London Boroughs (1851)	611	1061	117	12	4			46
In %	33	57,3	6,3	0,6	0,2			2,5
Metropolitan Boroughs (2437)	389	1745	172	41	29			61
In %	15,9	71,6	7	1,7	1,2			2,5
Districts (8602)	5322	1573	829	240	76			562
In %	61,8	18,3	10,3	2,7	0,9			6,5
Scottish Unitary Authorities (1223)	114	398	70		13	416		212
In %	9,3	32,5	7,7		1	34		17,3
Welsh Unitary Authorities (1254)	105	577	72	1	0		171	328
In %	8,3	46	5,7	0,01			13,6	26,1
England, Scotland & Wales Totals (20 275)	8785	6882	1809	491	180	416	171	1541
Totals in %	43,3	33,9	8,9	2,42	0,88	2,05	0,84	7,6
Others comprise: Ind 1391, RA 115, Lib 15, TUSC 5, ICHC 4, MK 4, Resp 4, BNP 1, SSP 1, SDP 1								

Source: elaborated based on: Local Council Political Compositions.

makes 43,3%. The second largest party is the Labour Party which has 6882 seats, what makes 33,9%, next one is the Liberal Democrats Party with 1809 councillors and 8,9% of seats. Others parties have 1541 councillors what makes 7,6% of seats.

The parties in Northern Ireland districts are quite different, than parties in remaining parts of the UK. At local government level there are no typical British parties, so results of local elections in Northern Ireland have been pointed in separate table 12.

The results of the 2014 election to the District Councils in Nor-

thern Ireland indicate, that the main political parties (Lab and Con) of the UK practically are not present at the political stage of Northern Ireland (Table 12). Table 12 points that councillors of the DUP, the SDLP and the UUP are present in all 11 units of Northern Ireland. The representatives of the Independents are at 10 councils, SF has members in 9 units. The APNI, and the TUV are present in 7 councils and the Greens, the PUP, the UKIP have members in 2 coun-

Table 12

The Composition of District Councils in Northern Ireland after election of May 2014

Abbrev.: SF – Sinn Fein, DUP – Democratic Unionist Party, SDLP – Social Democratic and Labour Party, UUP – Ulster Unionist Party, APNI – Alliance Party of Northern Ireland, TUV – Traditional Unionist Voice, Green – Green Party in Northern Ireland, PUP – Progressive Unionist Party, UKIP – UK Independence Party, PBP – People Before Profit Alliance.

District	SF	DUP	SDLP	UUP	APNI	TUV	Green	PUP	UKIP	NI21	PBP	Independents	Total
Seats in councils	9	11	11	11	7	7	2	2	2	0	1	10	
Total seats	105	125	63	89	32	13	3	2	2	0	1	24	462/46

Source: Local government in Northern Ireland/ URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_government_in_Northern_Ireland, Retrieved: 5th April 2016.

cils and the PBP is present in 1 council. The total results point, that the DUP has most amount of councillors – 125, the second party is SF – 105 seats and the third one is UUP – 89.

Northern Ireland is a part of the UK, where mainly local parties take part in elections and typical parties which participate in elections at the national level or at the regional, local levels in other parts of UK practically are not present in this process. In England, Scotland, Wales all «national» parties have their members at regional or local level, in Scotland support for the Conservatives, Labour and SNP is greatest – after the 2015 election the Labourites won 398 seats, and in Wales the domination of the Labour Party is also visible – 577 seats.

In England the Conservative Party and the Labour Party have supremacy. The Conservatives are more supported at the level of districts, as it was mentioned above they control 149 councils and they have 5322 seats. The Conservatives have a supremacy at the

Unitary Authorities level, and traditionally they dominate at the County level, where they control 16 councils and they have 941 representatives – the Labour control only 2 councils and they have three times less representatives – 381.

The Labour Party has great results in the Metropolitan Borough Councils. It controls 30 councils and it has 1745 seats. The Labour dominate also in the London Borough Councils. They control 21 councils and they have 1061 seats, the Conservatives control 9 councils and they have 611 councillors what means almost two times less.

Summarising we can say, that the political stage in England, Scotland and Wales is quite similar to the one on national level. Local parties also present, but most of them are not able to win election, and control councils. Supremacy belongs to the Conservatives and the Labour. Only Northern Ireland is an exception. There are mainly local parties, with two largest: the Sinn Fein (SF) and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which took the most amount of seats in particular authorities of Northern Ireland.

3. ROUND TABLE IN VARNA, BULGARIA

*Z. Zahariev**

MODERN DEVELOPMENTS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND GLOBAL SECURITY

The rapid changes that the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union would experience following 1989 were bound to bring about fundamental corrections in those states' political, economic and intellectual identity. What is more, the ongoing, sometimes intensifying social agitation strongly indicates that little if any relief of the said public ferment could be reasonably expected in short terms. The new balance point for the variegated interests based on a national and social consensus, that is hoped for by the vast majority of the public, is but a vague distant objective out there. The public life of any of those states of «real socialism» is still marked, though quite specifically, by a «collision» of a retrogressive and ne-

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ver-ending past in terms of economics, politics and statesmanship, and social psychology as well, on the one hand, and with a hesitating consolidation of the elements of a sought-after and yet conceptually questionable democratic renovation, on the other.

The distance these nations have walked on their way to the proclaimed restructure of the totalitarian state machine into a highly humanitarian civil society has so far shown that it is unsustainable to count on ready-made algorithms in this regard. We are witnessing a social turning point of unprecedented scale and historical significance developing against the background of a global transition to a new stage of civilization and an emerging new culture in humanity. Therefore, for all the nation-specific nature of the change varying through these former socialist states because of their character and the availabilities, the change is but quite in accord to the laws of society. Prior to setting itself to a consolidated pattern and pace of advance in the indefinite future, at a crucial point of the progress of civilization, the course of history seems to be feeling the ground for producing a new, previously unknown form of social manifestation as an interim solution.

On these lines, while not understanding the subjective factor, we cannot allow ourselves to disregard the clearly objective nature of these changes in Central and Eastern Europe. The breakdown of the former USSR and the tremendous collapse of a whole system brought an end to evolutionary delusions and social utopias. The latter developments came to prove that civilization in its new stage of progress is groping for a principally new ground to stand on. This also necessitates an indispensable revalidation of the previous system of values, while not letting to schematize the latter in ideologies and so disclaiming the highly mythological and thus vulnerable opposition based on two dimensions of the social ideal still valid today.

The past decade has proved the hypothesis that complex public-and-economic notions of capitalism and socialism are losing their historic formalities, thus clearing the path to a new public reality, mainly streamlined by the ideology-free and politically independent revolution of science and technology. The whole process has been extremely challenging to both traditional and newly developed structures in public and social life. Regardless of their hectic efforts to

line up to the developments normally leaving them behind, to adapt and level up to the dynamic changes in public spiritual and social will, the issues on the agenda of today are far outrunning the speed of their response. Being caught in the nets of a mental structure highly dependent on ideologies and schemata, they are running ever shorter of their sensitivity to the contingencies of a vague tomorrow.

Therefore, even though a quarter of a century away from its historical bend to the ideals of the civil society, Eastern Europe is still at public crossroads. This is but so very natural – for all the dynamic pace of the historical process, to establish a new quality of reality, demands a far longer period of time to pass than is otherwise expected. Any and all effort to artificially rush up the change while failing to determine its specific parameters in the various areas of public life, are bound by nature to produce an effect contrary to expectations. This is equally true for legislative actions intended at a forced «decommunization of the public» and for the various attempts to apply certain ready-made formulae and models, all of which mechanically borrowed as «good practices» from Western Europe and the USA.

Still more dangerous are the «restitution» trends in Eastern Europe. The lack of democratic traditions, the questionable stability of parliamentarianism and the poor political awareness of civil society's objectives and behavioral norms, are all a favorable fundament for a nostalgic idealization of the prewar past, while also opening the door to ill-minded attempts for its restoration. A manifestation of the latter is the renaissance of the monarchist notion in the Balkans, an idealization of the political regimes of Pilsudski and Horti, respectively in Poland and Hungary, the round of speculations with reference to pre-revolutionary Russia, among others.

In line with the above-listed trends hampering democratic renovation, there are also the negative consequences of the social and economic crisis, as little objectively evasive as, regrettably, subjectively intensifying in a way. The unfailing companions of the crisis – large groups of the population progressively getting impoverished, the socially disadvantaged living in penury, high unemployment level, the unprecedented criminal «boom» – all generate a ragtag quality of life as well as a moral degradation of the public. The corresponding insecurity and poor efficiency of parliamentary democra-

cy are giving way to lowbrow populism, to chauvinism and xenophobia, while generating some good old antidemocratic psychological stereotypes in society such as those related to «order and security», the «tough hand», etc.

A negative impact on the democratization process in Eastern Europe is also produced by the controversial course of miscellaneous factors of a geopolitical nature. The end of the Yalta security system, built on a block-based division and a balance of powers, and more specifically, Germany's unification and the uncontrollable collapse of the Soviet Union would question the very essence of the postwar global picture. The processes going on throughout Europe as well as other positive trends in global politics were not yet in a position to adequately balance the growing destabilization. Newly constructed fundamental values of European and global security were proclaimed and yet are difficult to stand up for, and logically fail to drop the dramatic upheaval in geopolitics. Unsettled contradictions that were left open for decades, and many a contingent conflict previously counterpoised by the block-based policies, would start searching and finding relief from the destructive energy being piled up for generations. All this is fostering national egotism, restoring regional and imperial ambitions, boosting off-stage geopolitical machinations and is being harmful to the objectively advancing globalization process, thus also inducing a progressing uncertainty.

The global destabilization is further intensifying the crisis in the traditionally neuralgic regions of the planet. Moreover, there are many hot spots where time-worn tensions are set free anew or new local conflicts are generated. This in its turn brought about a new reality in terms of international politics largely and anxiously indefinite. Blinded for a short time because of the past ice-melting in relations between Moscow and Washington, which provided a good omen for peace, the world political leaders, mostly those of the developing countries, would become increasingly anxious about the growing uncertainty of tomorrow. Global issues of modernity have pushed them on the front stage of history as leading part actors in an unpredictable drama.

The above processes have a strong destabilizing impact on Central and Eastern Europe and the nations within the former Soviet Union. For all their social obscurity and the related economic and

political instability, not only are all negative outcomes of the post-war reality a major factor to play in them, they are becoming the main arena of a continental and geopolitical struggle. This state of affairs has been an aggravating factor hampering the provision of the necessary economic, scientific and technical support for the so-called «new democracies». It also has a retarding effect on their complete and all-in accession to the functioning Western-European and global economic, military and political systems of integration. On the other hand, in the former socialist states many a lobbyist party and formation have emerged, to serve foreign interests for the major part. Beyond any doubt this is a further destabilizing factor for their domestic political reality.

A specific manifestation of the latter destructive trends of foreign political nature in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as in former Soviet Union nations is the activation of ideological struggles. Leading conservative, clerical and liberal parties and their trans-European headquarters have considered the obscurity of East European democracies a good opportunity to make these democracies a region of their political influence so as to benefit from a considerable power they thus will obtain in the European and global decision-making process. Lost in such ambitions, these have unambiguously patronized political structures whose democratic attitude is only contained in their programed declarations; they have given political credit to personalities known for their obscure past and sick ambitions; they have established contact with groups unaware of professionalism or national responsibility values.

Paying the penalty to anticommunist stereotypes, the West-European and global conservatives and liberals failed to see the appearance and development in the specific climate of Eastern Europe under the cover of their own clichés, of some authoritarian powers and trends: they misunderstood that the decommunization slogans were only camouflaging the appetites to power and it gives advantage to marginal structures, close in terms of their social and political mentality to West-European and global upper right wing. There is an all-out offensive not only against the political left but also to the very fundamentals of civil society. This state of affairs could as well strike back as a boomerang to Western democracies. It is also a major

short-term intimidating factor to the European process in general, thus further questioning European and global security.

Life has shown that the made in the 1980s cult idea about the necessity of a new political thinking in a globalizing world as a heal-all against all geopolitical misfortunes cannot be anything more than an intellectual mirage. One can speak about such thinking in the real policy only if it is connected with the respond to new structures in co-existence and new correctives of the conduct in international affairs.

The basic about them would have to be the refusal of the caste division of the states and imperial claims. And this can be done only on the clarified correlation between purely human and closely state interests. Because the new thinking, accenting on the common, threatening with destruction the entire humanity, global problems of contemporaneity, by far do not abolish the objective laws on which the relations between the subjects in world policy are established. And they were and continue to be based on state interests combining in itself not only the reason of the purely human but also the inevitable arguments of power. Just this contradictory duplicity has to be mastered. And this is beyond the powers of the former system of security, playing in the best case the role of a muzzle on the nasty looking creaking teeth of national egoism.

The search for perspective decisions in these directions is not within the power of one international system, although of the biggest economic, military, scientific and technical potential. Even less real is its effectiveness under the dictates of one of world's superpowers. In a very polar world, which balance is possible only through the interests of more than one center of world policy, this can be achieved only in the framework of the institutional world dialogue. This fully and objectively requires the strengthening of the UN, expanding of the circle of its activities and creation of effective structures for action in the sphere of security able to guarantee its productivity.

An important step in this direction are regional integration efforts, foreign to the block opposition and open to the pragmatic, non-ideological process of globalization. This is just the middle working level in world policy able to guarantee both – painless transition from block division to polycentrism and approving a new code of relations in international affairs. The current political scene shows ambi-

guously that we are still in the beginning of the road to creating and recognizing these new imperatives of our time. We still anticipate their separate elements as is the force of the moral imperative, as is the inevitability of further developing economic integration into a political one, and, not lastly, the legal possibility for nations to look back and return to themselves, including the possibility for self-determination. But all this is still too abstract.

Let us not forget that most characteristic for every historical transition to the unknown is self-motion, which through its inherent logic predetermines certain limits. Any attempt to jump over them, to leave political passions to dominate over its objective laws, leads to cataclysms and calamities hardly to be foreseen.

*N. Tomov**

THE BULGARIAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 2016

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker in his congratulatory letter to newly elected President of Bulgaria Rumen Radev said: «I hope that the election and your personal commitment would ensure the political stability necessary to achieve ongoing economic and structural reforms and implementation of the common European agenda. Bulgaria has a central role in decision-making in the European Union».

«Your election comes at a crucial time for both your country and the EU», he underlined in his letter to Radev. «Today, as we face common challenges such as refugee crisis, the pursuit of energy security and creating sustainable jobs and economic growth it is important for us to work closely together to find the necessary solutions to all these challenges. I believe that your dedication and leadership will enable to maintain security, stability and excellent cooperation between Bulgaria and the EU».

We in Bulgaria these last years, became accustomed with GERB as one does with one's old, comfortable clothes. We took it for granted that this party and its leader are a constant political factor, we had accepted their ability to remain steadfast and almost eternal. Even

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after the words of Prime Minister Borisov that «if he puts up a donkey as presidential candidate, that donkey will be elected» we had begun to think that nothing surprisingly new could happen on the Bulgarian political scene.

And then suddenly, it happened – in the presidential elections the seemingly eternal GERB lost overwhelmingly to a completely unknown in political circles candidate – Gen. Rumen Radev, 53, a former non-partisan chief of Bulgarian Air Force, backed by the opposition Socialist Party. General Radev, 53, entered Bulgarian politics on a wave of discontent with Borisov's nearly 10-year rule, during which corruption remained deeply entrenched in society, as well as of concerns among voters over the refugee crisis and the situation in neighboring Turkey. As a former air force commander, Radev has always argued that Bulgaria needs to be pragmatic in balancing the requirements of its European Union and NATO memberships while seeking ways to benefit from a relationship with Moscow.

As he had promised, Borisov resigned, commenting on the loss of GERB with the words: «In this election, the people showed us that something is not as it should be. That our priorities may be good, but obviously there are better ones». That resignation, most likely, would lead to an early election, expected around April 2017. The time until then will be characterized by months of difficult coalition talks among several political groupings.

There are a few steps, which will be taken in between. According to the Constitution the president must and is offering the mandate to all the political forces represented in the present parliament with them all returning it. And early general elections will again be on the agenda. It turns out that according to the Constitution of Bulgaria a departing president, as is incumbent president R. Plevneliev, does not have the right to dissolve parliament. He can only appoint a caretaker government. And Radev, when he takes office, could deal with the parliament's dissolution and with calling new elections.

It is, however, unusual that an outgoing president would appoint a caretaker government which is expected to remain in place under a new president. In theory, Bulgaria could have a second caretaker government appointed by Radev after taking office on 22 January.

During his election campaign Radev kept on repeating that

«change is imminent». Well, change is already knocking on the door in the form of early elections, and the political concussions that accompany them. How will society react to these imminent changes? The present political crisis could bring new opportunities, but it could result also in many uncertainties and shocks. People expect the appearance or the creation of a new, more efficient, reformed government. With new, more moral and responsible leaders.

A lot is speculated about the geopolitical orientation of the new presidential course. Radev has been dubbed by the Western press as pro-Russian, and his election is seen as a blow to the country's western European allies, underscoring Moscow's growing influence in southeastern Europe. But Radev, who has studied also in the US military institutions, has insisted that he has no plans to change the geopolitical orientation and has reminded that as a military pilot, he has «risked everyday» his life for NATO.

Asked about the future of EU sanctions against Russia, Radev declared this is an issue to be discussed with the European Union partners and to be decided by the government. But he is in favour of lifting or limiting them. Commentators have said that in fact, Radev, who is not a socialist, is more of an anti-system candidate, similar to Donald Trump in the USA.

Speaking to the press after his election was announced, Radev said he hoped for good dialogue both with the United States and Russia and expressed hopes that with Donald Trump in Washington, there would be a decrease in confrontation between the West and Moscow.

«In his election campaign (Donald Trump), already elected, said clearly that he will work for a better dialogue with Russia. That gives us hope, a big hope, for a peaceful solution to the conflicts both in Syria and in Ukraine and for a decrease of the confrontation», Radev said.

When we look at the presidential elections we notice that they have outlined several clear trends that affect both the parties and the whole political system in Bulgaria. Here they are:

1. Red card for GERB. That became clear when in social media appeared a map of Bulgaria fully colored in red. It was cue and reminder to the chairman of the election headquarters of GERB Tsve-tan Tsvetanov, who only a year ago waved such a card, only in blue

that time, after the landslide victory of his party then in the local elections. Then GERB won the mayoral elections in 22 regional cities against none of BSP. This time, however, the situation dramatically reversed.

2. The battle between the two ethnic-oriented parties – «Movement for rights and freedoms» (MRF) and its recent split-off DOST. One sure thing can be said for MRF in these presidential elections – the movement did not participate in the vote to win it, but only to demonstrate that it can always make its voters go to the polls and to vote for a candidate pointed by the party. MRF decided to support the nomination of Plamen Oresharski in the middle of the election campaign and for a short time, without any trouble, managed to mobilize half of its voters from the last parliamentary vote – 253726 people. Oresharski as a result received most votes in three mixed regions where MRF had an impact – Kardzhali, Razgrad and Targovishte. It is therefore difficult to say whether there is an outflow from MRF after the split from early of 2016 and the creation of DOST by the former leader of MRF Lutfi Mestan.

3. The dismal state of the conglomerate of right oriented parties – the so-called Reformist bloc. Its fragmented state, illustrated by the year-long division between parties from the Bloc in the government, and such in opposition.

4. The election results of the «United nationalists» in 2016, in comparison with the last elections in 2014, have increased evenly in all regions of the country by an average of one-third.

5. Populism. All of the most important political projects since 2001 have been built on this basis and in their core they have been legitimized ... through delegitimation of the political elite at that moment. These projects usually appear in times of crisis (or perception of such), falling confidence in the existing parties and when there are new socio-political issues, such as migration or the issue of fuel prices at the moment.

But enough discussions about the elections. The main question now is what comes next, after the inevitable caretaker government? As we already mentioned constitutionally, general elections could be held at the earliest two months after the inauguration of the new head of state, which means by April. GERB will pull all its resources,

not least its strong presence in local government, to score another big win. BSP and the other parties will strive also.

The parliament will remain in session for another two months (it cannot be dissolved as a president's term is about to expire), the governing party will push for changes to electoral legislation in line with the referendum held parallel to the first round of the presidential polls. While the referendum was not valid because it failed to pass the turnout threshold, more than three million voted to introduce a majority voting system. With the possible exception of MRF, no other party but GERB shares an interest in such a radical change. But when they all gang up to block Borisov's proposals, he will no doubt play his well-rehearsed role of the authentic spokesman of the people battling the status quo.

For the inevitable spring elections two scenarios are possible. Voters can continue the trend of the last decade and return GERB as the largest party in parliament. Or the BSP and MRF could repeat what they did in the summer of 2013 – team up with smaller players to oust GERB from leadership. In other words, presuming the BSP could ride high in the polls on the back of Radev's victory, nationalists could turn out to be the kingmakers. If events of 2013 give us any clue, Borisov will face heat from MRF allies in the judiciary, such as the Prosecutor General Sotir Tsatsarov, and the powerful media group around tycoon Delyan Peevski. Such vested interests, as well as the MRF, have always been the bellwether in Bulgarian political life – they always bandwagon with the winner. But let's not write Borisov and GERB off. Nor BSP, which, to be sure, will strive to repeat the success it is ascribing in these presidential elections.

A commentary about Radev sums up the the little that is publicly known about him. Part of his success is that he sold himself as a non-party candidate (formally he was nominated by a group of citizens and only then backed by the BSP). Once in power, he might try to steer an independent course and the Socialists will have to rein him in. That seems to be the mission assigned to his running mate, Vice-President elect, Iliana Yotova, who in contrast to Radev, is a party insider. However, Bulgaria's recent history is replete with examples of presidents clashing with their own party so I don't expect it to be a problem-free relationship.

General Radev might even end up aligning or at least co-operating with Borisov, a General himself. Vain and macho, they can wheel and deal, leaving the Socialist leader Kornelia Ninova in the cold, then fight, then embrace one another yet again, in an endless cycle. Such a turn of events would not be without precedent: the love-hate relationship between Borisov and President Georgi Parvanov, the former BSP leader who held office between 2002–2012.

One thing to bear in mind is that Radev has little political experience – to play the game and survive in the Byzantine world of his country's politics he will have to learn the ropes quickly. Otherwise he will get caught in the cross-fire as seasoned and wily players such as Borisov, the MRF's honorary leader Ahmed Dogan, as well as an assortment of oligarchs, media bosses, ex-security services characters and magistrates of murky reputation start moving the figures on the chessboard.

Lastly, there is the question which we marked briefly: will Radev turn Bulgaria toward Russia? The answer is yes and no. The substance will not, however. Having won, Radev, an alumnus of the Air War College in Montgomery, Alabama, is sure to play his Western credentials. His message will be that Bulgaria can have its cake and eat it: i.e. be a loyal partner in the EU and NATO while reaching out to Russia. That is not very different from the position advocated by Borisov who also favours engagement.

In the run-up to NATO's Warsaw Summit, B. Borisov shunned a Romanian proposal for a permanent flotilla stationed in the Black Sea. He also restarted energy talks with Moscow – if only to create the impression that mega projects such as the Belene Nuclear Power Plant and South Stream could be resurrected (highly unlikely). At the last minute, Borisov tried to use scare tactics and paint Radev as Moscow's preferred choice (which he might well be) but the election outcome testifies to the futility of that move.

The EU will discuss whether to renew sanctions in December, before he comes into office. Once the issue resurfaces again in the summer of 2017, it will be up to the new prime minister, whatever his or her name is, to decide. Radev won't backpedal on initiatives such as the Bulgarian contribution to the multinational NATO brigade stationed next door in Romania. Nor will he be willing or able to pull the

plug on U.S. bases in the country (which date back to 2006 when the BSP was in government). There will be no shortage of drama in Bulgaria over the coming months, to be sure, but it will be driven by local forces not the geopolitical contest between Russia and the West.

*V. Gubalova**

THE FEAR OF MIGRATION AND THE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE CURRENT PARTY OUTLOOK IN SLOVAKIA: A SHORT OVERVIEW

Scholars studying the European Union (EU) in the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s suggested that one channel for the EU integration is the increasing importance of EU issues as part of the internal political discussions, especially during the election cycles of the member-states⁵⁵. In other words, external issues are more often internalized and local parties take varying stands in an attempt to gain power in their own countries. As a side effect, the domestic societies gain more knowledge and form educated opinions about the EU and, presumably, its advantages. This argument might be challenged regarding the suggested increase of overall EU integration. Nevertheless, the recent referendum in the UK («Brexite») showed that the EU and its issues are taking a center stage inside the member-states.

Based on this premise, the last parliamentary elections in Slovakia, in March 2016, had one main theme – migration. The choices made in the election campaign by different political parties regarding the issue of migration, resulted in unexpected consequences and a shift of the party symmetry.

The large wave of migrants into Europe is not an internal issue for Slovakia, but it is a major concern for the EU overall (and not only). In 2015, for example, there were 330 requests for asylum in

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⁵⁵ Cowles M., Caporaso J.A., Risse-Kappen T. 2001. *Transforming Europe: Europeanization and Domestic Change*. Cornell University Press; Marks G., Willson C.J., Ray L. 2002. «National Political Parties and European Integration». *American Journal of Political Science* 46(3): 585-594; Ladrech R. 1994. «Europeanization of Domestic Politics and Institutions: The Case of France». *Journal of Common Market Studies* 32(1): 69-88.

Slovakia⁵⁶. Additionally, Slovakia is not a transit route for those migrating to Western Europe. Two of its neighbors do experience migration pressures. Hungary was a major transit destination, especially in 2015. Together with Italy and Greece, Hungary was one of the initial entry destinations into the EU. In 2015 nearly 1800 migrants per 100000 local population have entered the country or over 750,000 migrants⁵⁷. While there is a large burden on the entry process, the vast majority of migrants continued towards other Western European countries. Austria is both a transit and a final destination. Last year 1030 migrants per 100000 local population have entered the country⁵⁸. Differently from Hungary, many migrants have chosen to stay in Austria. Over 85000 requests for asylum have been filed in 2015⁵⁹.

To attempt to deal with the number of migrants the European Commission proposed the quota system, where each member-state is required to accept some number of relocated migrants⁶⁰. Meanwhile, as this mechanism is so far unable to successfully work, different countries in the EU are taking matters in their own hands with internal state laws and regulations.

While Slovakia is not directly influenced by the issue of migration, this external for the country problem dominated the last parliamentary elections in March 2016. The perceived fear of newcomers was skillfully used by several parties in the campaign cycle. There were three main concerns discussed—protection of national identity, avoiding economic hardship, and security. I concentrate on the first two. First, there is an aspiration to protect *national identity*. I define

⁵⁶ Slovak Ministry of Interior. 2016b. «Yearbook 2000–2015: Statistical Overview of Legal and Illegal Migration in the Slovak Republic». Border and Alien Police. URL: <http://www.minv.sk/?rocenky>.

⁵⁷ BBC Europe. 2015. «Migrants Crisis: Slovakia “will Only Accept Christians”». BBC. Available Online: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33986738>; Frontex. 2016. «Risk Analysis for 2016». Frontex Publications. Institute for European Policy. 2015. «People’s Party-Our Slovakia». National Identity in Central-Eastern Europe. URL: <http://www.ceeidentity.eu/database/manifestoesoun/peoples-party>.

⁵⁸ BBC Europe. 2015. «Migrants Crisis: Slovakia “will Only Accept Christians”». BBC. Available Online: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33986738>.

⁵⁹ Eurostat. 2016b. «Asylum Statistics». European Commission. URL: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics.

⁶⁰ European Commission. 2015. «European Agenda on Migration». Legislative Documents. URL: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/index_en.htm.

national identity as the sense of unity and solidarity-based on cultural similarities-where people feel as equal⁶¹. Cultural commonalities include religion, language, and traditions among others. The definition suggests that governments promote the interests of the dominant ethnic group. Conditionally, they also prefer to accept others that carry cultural similarities.

The migrants entering the EU are ethnically and religiously different from the majority of the people living in Slovakia. Migrants who seek asylum, mostly, come from Syria with 29%, Afghanistan (14%), and Iraq with 10%⁶². In each country of origin there is a mix of ethnicities and religious beliefs. Predominantly, however, migrants from Syria and Iraq are Arab or Kurds. In Syria, for example, in 2006 it was estimated that 90.3% of the population is ethnically Arab⁶³. In Iraq it is estimated that around 75-80% are Arab and around 15-20% are Kurdish⁶⁴. There are no reliable statistics on the ethnic make-out of the Afghani population. The 2004 constitution recognizes 15 different ethnic groups⁶⁵. The new influx of migrants is ethnically different from the common ethnicity in Slovakia with Slovaks making up 80,7% and Hungarian 8,5%⁶⁶.

Difference in religion is also present. In each of the three main countries of origin-Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq – the main religion is Islam. In Syria, 87% of the population has been estimated in 2006, to be Muslim⁶⁷. In Afghanistan, the Muslim population accounts for 99,7% in 2009⁶⁸. Similarly, in Iraq 99% of the population is identified in 2010 as Muslim⁶⁹. To compare, the main religion in Slovakia is Roman Catholic with 62%, followed by Protestant, and

⁶¹ Shulman S. 2012. «What are Nations?». Lecture at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois.

⁶² Eurostat. 2016b. «Asylum Statistics». European Commission. URL: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics.

⁶³ Central Intelligence Agency. 2015a. «Ethnic Groups». The World Factbook. URL: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2075.html#sy>.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Central Intelligence Agency. 2011. «Slovakia». The World Factbook. URL: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/lo.html>.

⁶⁷ Central Intelligence Agency. 2015b. «Religions». The World Factbook. URL: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2075.html#sy>.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

Greek Catholic⁷⁰.

National identity is not purely understood in terms of ethnicity and religion. These factors, however, have a strong imprint in the decision to accept newcomers to already formed nation-states. Culturally similar populations-it is perceived-are more accepting⁷¹.

The second main concern with the large number of migrants arriving in Europe is the potential *economic hardship* placed on the local population. This is a two-part argument. One argument-advanced by labor protection institutions and organizations-is the potential danger for the local labor force to lose their jobs. The new wave of migrants, on average, is in their prime labor force age. More than 83% of the total migrant population is below 35 years old⁷². Men predominate with 55% of all migrants. Sizable inequality in gender is present in the group under 35 years old. Males account for 80% in this group⁷³.

Another argument-connected to the social wellbeing of the local population-is the spending the government needs to commit for the caring for the migrants on their territory. Governments are required to provide humane conditions to asylum-seekers, while their applications are processed. Any financing of accommodation and other necessary needs is, perceived as, endangering the stability and improvement of the social wellbeing of the local population.

Given this background, three parties in Slovakia concentrated their campaign efforts on the perceived dangers of migration. This was done regardless of the misbalance between facts about migration in Slovakia and hypothetical future scenarios of influx of migrants into the country.

The most interesting is the case of *Smer* (Direction). The party has been ruling unilaterally for four years from 2012 until 2016, while following a center-left ideology. Their platform for a long time has been based on social wellbeing. Initially most experts did not exclude the option for the party to continue its unilateral rule after the election in March 2016. However, instead of keeping to a social plat-

⁷⁰ Central Intelligence Agency. 2011. «Slovakia». The World Factbook. URL: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/lo.html>.

⁷¹ Mark, Noah P. 1998. «Birds of a Feather Sing Together». *Social Forces* 77:453-85.

⁷² Eurostat. 2016b. «Asylum Statistics». European Commission. URL: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics.

⁷³ Ibid.

form, the center-left party concentrated on assuring the Slovakian population that their country as they know it-Christian Slovakia-will stand unchanged. Their campaign ran on the slogan «Chránime Slovensko» (We are protecting Slovakia). In a rally in Bratislava, for example, the Prime Minister Robert Fico stated: «I can tell you we will never – under a quota system – bring one single Muslim to Slovakia... And we will never – not even voluntarily – create a self-contained Muslim community, because it would represent a serious security risk»⁷⁴.

Meanwhile, the traditionally nationalist party *Slovenska Narodna Strana* (Slovak National Party, SNS), as expected also concentrated on the perceived dangers of migration to the wellbeing of Slovakia. They proposed changes of the Slovak laws that focused on «protecting» Slovakia through a constitutional change about the Slovak national interests, new laws about the Slovak language, and a national program for protecting the sovereignty of Slovakia, including the «uncontrolled mass entry of illegal migrants».

A third, smaller fraction based their campaigning on the perceived fear of migration – *Ludova Strana Nase Slovensko* (People's Party Our Slovakia, LSNS). This far-right party has been suggested to be extreme-right⁷⁵. In 2014 the leader of the party Marian Kotleba gained the position of a governor of Banská Bystrica region- a largely symbolic position in Slovakia. Since then the party has been gaining supporters, regardless of them being publicly shamed by most politicians in power and in opposition and the mainstream media. The new wave of migrants in Europe provided an easy campaign focus. Their slogan «*Nase Slovensko*» (Our Slovakia) surprisingly resembles the slogan of Smer, the ruling at time center-left party. The platform of LSNS is based on three pillars: national, Christian, and social Slovakia⁷⁶.

⁷⁴ BBC Europe. 2016. «Slovak Election: PM Fico Sees Muslim “Threat”». *BBC*. Available Online: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35718831>.

⁷⁵ Kamil G., Medzihorsky J., Spac P., Skop M., Voda P. 2015. «Mechanism of Voter Mobilisation of LSNS and Marian Kotleba». Center for European and North Atlantic Affairs. Available Online: http://cenaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/ANALYZA_MECHANISM.pdf.

⁷⁶ Ludova Strana Nase Slovensko. 2016. «Volebný program politickej strany Kotleba – Ludová Strana Naše Slovensko». Program. URL: <http://www.naseslovensko.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Volebn%C3%BD-program-2016.pdf>.

On 5 March, 2016 in the parliamentary elections eight parties passed the 5% threshold to enter into the Slovak Parliament. Smer, the ruling center-left party, with its focus on migration gained only 28,3%. This put an end to their unilateral governing. The nationalist party SNS also entered the parliament with 8,6%. To the surprise of many, the far-right party LSNS received 8% of the total vote⁷⁷. At first it looked that Smer will not be able to create a coalition government, based on the lack of compatibility with enough coalition partners. Ultimately, however, the center-left party was able to gain the cooperation of the nationalist SNS and the Hungarian minority party Most-Hid-rather unlikely coalition partners, plus one small center-right partner, Siet’.

Several conclusions can be advanced, based on the election results in Slovakia. First, the choice made by Smer to build their campaign on the fear from migration and not on their traditional social wellbeing platform resulted in a loss of valuable votes. While they are still in the ruling coalition, the government seems fragile. Expected coalition government issues such as concessions to and oversight of the coalition partners are more likely to take away from the efficiency of the government. In addition, the makeup of the current government with a center-left party, a nationalist party, a minority party, and a center-right party, suggests for opposing priorities and platforms sought after by each coalition partner. Scholars already question the viability of the coalition for the next four years.

Second, the focus of migration by Smer, while it disadvantaged them, it provided for not intended benefits to the nationalist parties. Voters were often hearing and reading during the election campaign about the perceived dangers from migrants, aided by Smer’s vast campaigning. At the polls voters, however, connected the message to the platforms of the nationalist parties. The votes for SNS and LSNS were expressively higher in comparison to previous elections and to the predicted numbers by election analysts. In 2012 parliamentary elections SNS, for example received 4,55% (under the 5%

⁷⁷ Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic. 2012. «The Election to the Parliament of the Slovak Republic 2012». Elections and Referendums. Available Online: <http://volby.statistics.sk/nrsr/nrsr2012>; Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic. 2016. «The Election to the National Council of SR 2016». Elections and Referendums. URL: <http://volby.statistics.sk/nrsr/nrsr2016>.

threshold) and in 2016 the party received almost double – 8,6%. Even more telling is the comparison of the results for LSNS with 1,58% received in 2012 and 8% in the last elections in 2016⁷⁸.

Third, the constant presence of the issue of migration and the possible negative sentiments toward foreigners during the election campaign resonated in the ears of the Hungarian minority. In response they mobilized at the polls. Most-Hid received 6,5% and today is in the governing coalition and the other Hungarian minority party Strana Mad'arskej Koalicie (Hungarian Coalition Party, SMK) received 4,04% – one percent short to also enter the parliament (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic 2016).

The case of Slovakia and its last parliamentary elections shows that external issues are more often internalized in domestic politics, especially in the context of the EU. This exposure, however, can lead to unintended consequences. On the one hand a visible change in the local party symmetry is more likely to occur. On the other hand there is a viable opportunity for nationalist and far-right parties to take advantage.

*S. Zabelin**

THE CONTEMPORARY SITUATION IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

Events of the past almost twenty-five years have led to the displacement of many of the world's geopolitical realities. Since then the Wider Black Sea region has appeared on the map of Europe and became one of the centers of European and world politics. Having been relatively quiet and, to a certain extent, the peripheral before, the Black Sea region has become today a crossroads of geopolitical rivalry of the world powers and the number of countries involved in the region has increased significantly. Suffice is to mention that in 1990, when then-President of Turkey Turgut Ozal proposed a program of collaboration and cooperation between the Black Sea states, there were only four – the Soviet Union, Turkey, Romania and Bulgaria, whereas in 1992, the Treaty on the Black Sea Economic Co-

⁷⁸ Ibid.

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operation was signed by 11 countries, and today the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) has already 12 members and the same number of observer countries, including – Germany, France, USA, Italy and several other states.

The Black Sea region for a long time has been characterized by a diversity of civilizations, cultures and religions. The long history of the region defines the relationship between north and south, east and west. Empires and civilizations – Roman and Byzantine, Ottoman and Russian – have left their mark on the shores of the Black Sea. On the Northern Black Sea in ancient times the Great Silk Road from Asia to the Caucasus and South-Eastern Europe was laid, on which there was active trade between East and West.

Since then the situation has changed significantly. The Persian Gulf and the Middle East are now in the midst of existing or potential armed conflicts. Located between the Greater Middle East and United Europe the Black Sea region is feeling the pressure of multiple internal and external threats. Situated at the crossroads between the Islamic world, Russia and Europe, most of the Black Sea countries choose the European vector of foreign policy, but cannot quite get rid of its traditional «Eurasian» essence.

Political confrontation in the region was significantly complicated after the invasion in the Black Sea geopolitical space of large foreign players, especially the United States and the European Union.

According to materials of congressional hearings held in the early 2000s, the US strategic interests in the Black Sea-Caspian region correspond to: the possibility of access to alternative energy supplies from the Persian Gulf countries that are not members of OPEC; establishing links with countries with a predominantly Muslim population, as opposed to radical Islamism; support of the independence of the South Caucasus countries (and the Black Sea) and their progress towards democracy. At the same time adopted recommendations emphasized the need to step up diplomatic efforts and to encourage investment in order to direct the flow of Caspian energy resources through the Baku – Tbilisi – Ceyhan pipeline, obviously trying to limit the passage of oil through the territory of competitors, such as Russia and Iran.

Along with this strategy the gradual introduction of NATO into

the Black Sea countries is formed, directly related to the objectives of maintaining stability on the highway of oil and gas pipelines. In the framework of the approved «Concept of Strategic Security» on the Black Sea it is supposed to extend the anti-terrorist program «Active Endeavour» with reliance on Turkey, Romania and Bulgaria – members of the Alliance, as well as Georgia and Ukraine.

Back in late 2005, agreements with Romania and Bulgaria on the establishment of an American naval base on the Black Sea coast were signed; «in order to maintain communications with military factions in Iraq». On one of them, the aerodrome near Constanta, the East European Pentagon Task Force Headquarters has been already established.

In this way the United States met with opposition not only by Russia and Turkey, who used by the way its right of the convention Montreux during the August 2008 conflict and didn't let American large-cruisers to pass through into the Black Sea, but another regional power such as Iran. Today, Iran is seriously considering the possibility of large-scale investments (one billion dollars) into the economy of Georgia and Armenia. In this case, Iran could gain leverage not only economic, but also political influence in the region, which has now become the subject of fairly sharp criticism from the American side.

European Union for a long time has shown no interest in the Black Sea region, and only in November 1997 there was the first document – «Statement of the European Commission on regional cooperation in the Black Sea». Further bilateral agreements, the so called Action Plans, were signed for cooperation with a number of Black Sea countries, and these countries were included in the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). Right after the accession of Romania and Bulgaria into the EU (2007), the interest of the EU to the region increased substantially, and special projects of cooperation such as Black Sea Synergy and the Eastern Partnership have been developed.

Mentioned projects could not but attract attention of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), which steps up with an offer of cooperation with the EU in the framework of joint actions, primarily in the economic sphere, but only if BSEC would be offered the role of an equal partner, and not as an object of the EU regional po-

licy. Subsequently, a compromise on the mutual approval of specific projects was reached, mainly in the economic field, but the official adoption of the Eastern Partnership initiative in May 2009 slowed down again the development of cooperation, excluding Russia, as well as Turkey, from the sphere of regional cooperation. If this hadn't happened, the initiative could have become more effective and attractive to the member countries of the Eastern Partnership.

It is noteworthy that the cooperation of the Black Sea countries which was supported by the UN Economic Commission for Europe and other international organizations contributes to the solution of a number of practical problems: the implementation of energy and transport projects, the development of small and medium business. Currently, the EU is involved in the affairs of the Black Sea region by funding a number of regional programs. But the economic importance of the Black Sea region is determined primarily by the presence of the most profitable energy supply routes and transport corridors, connecting Europe and Asia. The EU's attention is being attracted increasingly by growing markets which are located in the region. Therefore the adoption of the EU's «Black Sea Strategy» in the Black Sea in January 2011, which was declared «partly European inland sea and geographically mostly European», wasn't accidental.

Black Sea countries are still under pressure of unstable regions of the Middle East; they are not yet ready for full integration into Europe and will undoubtedly need support. At the same time, these countries have much to offer to a united Europe. This is more than a vast market in which demand is far behind supply, and the labor market, both skilled and unskilled. Not to mention the fact that the region – in its broadest sense – has the world's second largest oil and gas reserves, as well as yet unexploited reserves of non-ferrous metals and minerals.

Today it is extremely important to count the specifics of interests and positions of each of the countries of the Black Sea basin. And the largest regional «players» are Turkey and Russia.

For many decades the Treaty of Montreux on the status of the Straits adopted in 1936 has been and remains the guarantor of stability in the Black Sea, and Turkey is the Treaty custodian. It appears that Ankara is concerned that the US insistence, who by the way are

not a member of the Treaty, may lead to a resumption of discussions on the revision of this article, limiting the tonnage and length of stay in the Black Sea for foreign military vessels.

Security in the Black Sea region at a whole cannot be separated from security in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. In this regard, any destabilization, any crisis here affects directly the states of the Black Sea region. After the collapse of the USSR, the Soviet fleet left the Mediterranean Sea, which led to the formation of a kind of vacuum of influence. And this vacuum was filled by NATO forces. Then there was the project «Union for the Mediterranean», led by France, which in fact failed. The US became the dominant power in the Mediterranean, which gave them unlimited opportunities for operational agility. In general, the adverse consequences of such a state of affairs have been already felt by a number of North African and Middle Eastern countries such as Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Syria in the wake of the «Arab Spring».

Russia and the Black Sea region is a vast and yet insufficiently developed theme. For centuries, the struggle for access via the Black Sea to the Mediterranean and then to the warm seas was the main line of Russian foreign policy. In the XVIII–XIX centuries it entailed a series of Russian-Turkish wars which ended up with territorial delimitation on the basis of agreements between the Russian and Ottoman empires, and after the First World War – the Versailles system of peace treaties. In general, it laid the foundation for the agreed policy in the Black Sea between Russia and Turkey, despite the subsequent, not always smooth nature of their relationship. One can say definitely that, historically, Turkey and Russia take mutual primary responsibility for the state of security in the Black Sea region, since Russia and Turkey are neighbors for over 300 years, and their fates are deeply intertwined. Suffice is to recall that the Russian and Ottoman empires have disappeared from the map of the world in about the same time. In the current environment Russia and Turkey have to deal with unique internal problems.

Today it is increasingly important for Russia to develop the southern direction of a balanced strategic course based on the realities of the economy and politics of other countries in the Black Sea region and external players. Cooperation between Russia as a major

European power and regional, European and Euro-Atlantic partners is essential for maintaining stability in the wider Black Sea region.

The current geopolitical situation in the Black Sea stays uncertain, which makes it possible to consider it as a «frontier» region, which is the condition of «inherent instability» generated by the mismatch of interests and deepening confrontation of internal and external forces. This contributes to the previous years of noticeable weakening of Russia regional activity against the the US and NA-TO background strengthening the position.

What ultimately will be the Black Sea region: of the scene regional cooperation or confrontation of internal and external forces? Whose presence in the Black Sea in the coming decades will be dominant? Answers to these questions have not yet been found, and the situation is difficult to predict, if we remember rapid development over the past two decades. We cannot, however, not to see that a key component of the stability strategy should be the counter-movement of Russia and its European and Euro-Atlantic partners, as well as respect for the legitimate interests of all states in the region. Peace and stability in the Black Sea region have dominated for a long time and shouldn't be allowed to be destroyed. If decisions are not taken today the threat of destabilization will be a real factor in the development of the Black Sea region in the years to come.

4. ROUND TABLE IN LUBLIN, POLAND

*J. Jaskiernia**

THE DYNAMICS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLISH POLITICAL PARTIES' SYSTEM IN LIGHT OF THE 2015 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION

1. Introduction

The Polish 2015 parliamentary election resulted in victory for a

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single party, Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, PiS)⁷⁹. For the first time in the history of democratic Poland, the winner was able to form government without having to negotiate with coalition partners. This was due not so much to significant switches in the preference of voters, but rather as result of a very high number of wasted votes (more than 16% of active votes) due to the 5% threshold for parties and party coalitions (8%). As a consequence, Gallagher disproportionality index surged to 11%. It is interesting to note that in three of seven previous parliamentary elections, the victorious party attracted a higher percentage of active voters than that achieved by PiS in 2015 (37,6%), but was unable to form a single-party government. It should be born in mind that the 2015 PiS party list also included candidates from two other parties, Poland Together (Polska Razem – PR) and Solidary Poland (Solidarna Polska – SP), and was in point of fact a three-party coalition⁸⁰.

Results of the 2015 parliamentary election create an important step in the development of political parties' system in Poland. This result might be interpreted as well in the context of broader tendencies of development of political parties' systems in post-communist Europe⁸¹.

2. Development of the Polish political parties' system since 1989

Upon historic changes in 1989 a new system of government was introduced in Poland based on the division of power, political pluralism and parliamentary-cabinet form of government with the position of the President stronger than in the classic model⁸². The development of the political parties' system had a crucial meaning to forming a democratic political system⁸³, stabilized by the Constitution

⁷⁹ Marcinkiewicz K., Stegmaier M. The Parliamentary Election in Poland, October 2015, *Electoral Studies* 2016, vol. 41. P. 223.

⁸⁰ Markowski R. The Polish Parliamentary Election of 2015: a Free and Fair Election that Results in Unfair Political Consequences, *West European Politics* 2016, vol. 39, № 6. P. 1311.

⁸¹ Tavits M. Party Organizational Strength and Party Unity in Post-Communist Europe, *European Political Science Review* 2012, vol. 4, №. 3. P. 429.

⁸² Jaskiernia J. The Presidential Model in the Republic of Poland – Constitutional Foundations and Political Practice in:] *Rethinking the Presidency: Challenges and Failures*, eds B. Řichová, R. Kubicki, A. Walter, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, Faculty of Social Sciences, Trnava 2015. P. 79.

⁸³ Szczerbiak A. Poles Together?: the Emergence and Development of Political

of the Republic of Poland of 2 April 1997⁸⁴, which was based on European democratic standards⁸⁵. This was however not an easy process⁸⁶. The functions of the political parties have developed during the process of transformation⁸⁷ and influenced the political practice of accountable government⁸⁸. Several factors of segmentation and unification appeared in the Polish political parties' system⁸⁹. The history of political transformation in Poland is an uninterrupted process of forming identifications along party lines, as well as of the political milieus' searching response to the question regarding the location of their own subjective space within the wider political sphere. The values and beliefs concealed in the 1980s, when the opposition belonged to the underground, have been permanently inscribed into the Polish political landscape. Religious and national values, as well as the historical and cultural issues, which emerged into the daylight, may be treated as the embryo of certain ideas, which in time, as result of public debates, have become fundamental determinants of many political parties⁹⁰.

There are several features characterizing the Polish political parties' system in context of the election processes. First, voter apathy in Poland is greatest among all the Central and East European countries. Second, the Poles do not have stable party preferences, and voters' fickleness seems infinite – hardly comparable to the values measured in established democracies. Third, the same instability is typical on the «supply side» – in every election politicians represent

Parties in Postcommunist Poland, CEU Press, Budapest-New York 2001. P. 36.

⁸⁴ Smolar A. Poland's Emerging Party System, *Journal of Democracy* 1998, vol. 9, №. 2. P. 132.

⁸⁵ Jaskiernia J. Influence of the European Democratic Standards on the Constitutional Development in Poland after 1989, *Armenian Journal of Political Science* 2015, № 1. P. 19.

⁸⁶ Grabowska M. Political Parties in Post-Communist Poland. Disenchantments and Uncertain Chances, *Sisyphus* 1993, № 1. P. 55.

⁸⁷ Żmigrodzki M., Sokół W. Functions of Political Parties in Poland at the Time of Systemic Transformation, *Polish Political Science* 1992/1993, № 22/23. P. 37.

⁸⁸ Rose-Ackerman S. From elections to democracy: building accountable government in Hungary and Poland, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2005. P. 48.

⁸⁹ Szczerbiak A. Poles together? : the emergence and development of political parties in postcommunist Poland, CEU, Budapest 2001. P. 78.

⁹⁰ Górka M., Dylematy i paradoksy identyfikacji ideologicznych w okresie transformacji, *Civitas. Studia z filozofii polityki* 2010, № 12. P. 77.

different positions. Not only are there no well-organized parties, but existing parties continuously change their manifesto promises and follow them only very loosely once they enter government. In addition, they have proven incapable of establishing stable coalitions⁹¹.

The period of political change began in Poland in 1989, after years without democratic institutions at the local level. For the first years after 1990 there was a certain «political vacuum» in the country, and only in the second half of the 1990s first signs of partnerships between local authorities and local communities have appeared. However, this «political vacuum» has already been filled with the activity of political parties, and since the end of the 1990s one can distinguish the social partners of local authorities⁹². It is worth to note recent successes of non-partisans (independents) in Polish local government. A majority of mayors and councilors remains unaffiliated with any party – in this respect Poland is an outlier among European countries. Those non-partisans' successes are primarily due to previous election results (the advantage of incumbency); a possible «partisan offensive» to colonize new resources in local politics is sluggish⁹³.

Accession to EU was not the only factor but was definitely one of the most important determinates of political parties' system in development Poland. It served as a lens on more fundamental dilemmas related to the role of state sovereignty, national identity, religion or individual rights⁹⁴. Three main factors explain public support for EU membership: utilitarian expectations, the role of values and ideas, and class partisanship. In the Polish case, public opinion polls and issues more specific to Poland, such as the role of the Catholic Church, populist political parties and profound Euroscepticism among farmers, suggest that although these theoretical explanations overlap, each of them has a different explanatory value. The econo-

⁹¹ Markowski R. Polish society, politics and elections, *The Analyst – Central and Eastern European Review – English Edition*, 2007, № 3. P. 46.

⁹² Wódz J., *New Social Partners of Local Power in Poland*, *International Social Science Journal* 2002, № 172. P. 244.

⁹³ Gędzwiłł A., Żółtak T. *Why Do Non-partisans Challenge Parties in Local Politics? The (Extreme) Case of Poland*, *Europe-Asia Studies* 2014, Vol. 66, № 7, P. 1122.

⁹⁴ Zuba K. *Through the Looking Glass: the Attitudes of Polish Political Parties Towards the EU Before and After Accession*, *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 2009, № 3. P. 329.

mic approach remains the best predictor of support for EU membership, and whereas values and identity are closely linked to and dependent upon economic expectations, the impact of national politics appears largely decoupled from Polish Euroscepticism⁹⁵. In many ways, however, «Europe» appears to have been assimilated successfully into the logic of Polish domestic party politics⁹⁶.

Despite strong political party unity in new democracies, many party systems in post-communist Central and Eastern Europe are «quasi-institutionalized» at best⁹⁷. At the onset of the development of democratic politics, the party system was characterized by instability and under-institutionalization. By the end of the second decade, it displayed strong signs of structural stabilization and some evidence of the stability of inter-party competition and party institutionalization, implying that the Polish party system is quasi-institutionalized⁹⁸. Political parties undermine, however, the governmental grip because of their limited cohesion and competitive coalition strategies⁹⁹.

Polish voters elect a bicameral parliament consisting of a 460-member lower house, Sejm and 100-member Senate. Both are elected for a four-year term. The former is elected under proportional representation according to the d'Hondt method whilst the latter is elected by majority vote in single-member districts. The transition from a mono-party communist regime to democracy and pluralism resulted in new political parties mushrooming in the early 1990s. After the first free parliamentary elections in 1991 (with no 5% threshold) seats in the Sejm were divided among more than a dozen dif-

⁹⁵ Surwillo I., K. Handerson, G. Lazaridis, *Between Euroscepticism and Euroscepticism: the attitudes of urban and rural populations in Poland 2000–2008*, *Europa-Asia Studies* 2010, vol. 62, № 8. P. 1522.

⁹⁶ Szczerbiak A. *When in Doubt, (Re-) Turn to Domestic Politics?: the (Non-) Impact of the EU on Party Politics in Poland*, Sussex European Institute, Brighton 2008. P. 35.

⁹⁷ Tunkis P.J. *The Ties that Bind: Do Group Associations among Legislatures Matter for Political Parties? Problems of Post-Communism*, 22 June 2016. P. 14.

⁹⁸ Gwiazda A. *Poland's quasi-institutionalized party system: the importance of elites and institutions*, *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 2009, vol. 10, № 3. P. 375.

⁹⁹ Zubek R. *Parties, Rules and Government Legislative Control in Central Europe: The Case of Poland*, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 2008, vol. 41, № 2. P. 159.

ferent parties. The existence of so many parties in the Sejm was seen by many as being counterproductive to the effectiveness of the parliament and a hindrance towards producing stable governments. It was one of the reasons for the collapse of the government of Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka after she was defeated in a vote of no-confidence and subsequently led to the dissolution of the Sejm by President Lech Wałęsa (1993)¹⁰⁰.

In the 1993 parliamentary elections several right-wing parties, representing almost 35% of votes, did not qualify to the Sejm, because they did not gain 5%. It opens the way for returning to power by former Communists (SLD-Democratic Left Alliance) with the 20,41% votes, but quite more seats because of the redistribution of seats not taken by parties which not reach the 5% threshold. Overrepresentation of left forces in the National Assembly has helped to pass the new Constitution of the Republic of Poland (2 April 1997).

In the 1997 parliamentary election several right-wing parties combined efforts under the umbrella of Election Action «Solidarity» (Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność – AWS) and won the election (33,83%), creating coalition government with the Freedom Union (UW). It introduced systemic reforms which in some part were hugely unpopular and diminished support for that government (in its last year it was a minority government once Freedom Union has left the ruling coalition).

In 2001 the bloc of the Democratic Left Alliance and Labour Union (SLD/UP) won elections (41,04%) and established a government with the Polish People's Party (PSL)¹⁰¹. The elections took place in a context of fresh upheavals in the configuration of political parties. The architects of the new electoral law aimed to reduce the

¹⁰⁰ Jasiewicz K. Dead Ends and New Beginnings: the Quest for a Procedural Republic of Poland, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 2000, № 1. P. 101; Jaskiernia J. Poland [in:] *Routledge Handbook of European Elections*, ed. Viola D. M., Routledge, London – New York 2015. P. 612.

¹⁰¹ Szczerbiak A. Poland's Unexpected Political Earthquake: The September 2001 Parliamentary Elections, *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 2002, vol. 18, № 3. P. 74; J. Jaskiernia. Transformacja system partyjno-politycznego w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej [in:] *Procesy społeczno-polityczne we współczesnej Europie Zachodniej*, eds Gołoś M., Sokołowski W. Wyższa Szkoła Stosunków Międzynarodowych i Komunikacji Społecznej w Chełmie, Chełm 2016. P. 21-23.

seats gained by social democrats and increase their own. They succeeded in the first aim by changing the electoral formula, forcing the victorious social democratic electoral coalition to seek a third coalition partner. They did not achieve the second aim, as their own failures in government drastically reduced their electoral support and facilitated the breakthrough of populist formations. The result had implications for party development and the composition and workings of both parliament and government. While representation was enhanced by a parliament more accurately reflecting the voters' choice, the impact appeared potentially harmful to Polish democracy as a whole¹⁰². This election accelerated upheaval in the party system. It saw the victory of a new left-wing electoral coalition led by the successor social democrats of the Democratic Left Alliance, the defeat of previous incumbents, and new entrants into parliament. The government lost because it was weak, divided and ineffective, while the opposition SLD appeared competent, professional and united. The fragmentation of the post-Solidarity right and centre provided opportunities for populist formations to make gains in a context of continuing transition-anxieties. The election marked the end of the historic division between the heirs of communism and the heirs of Solidarity¹⁰³.

As previously, the 2005 elections in Poland saw the defeat of the incumbent government¹⁰⁴, but unlike previous elections, it marked the end of the Solidarity-successor party divide that had characterized Polish politics since 1989. The near simultaneity of parliamentary and presidential election campaigns made the campaigns indistinguishable, and each interacted with the other¹⁰⁵. Party programs were similar; transition-related issues dominated the election. Its unexpected winner was Law and Justice (PiS), which sought a radical break with the trajectory of post-communist development and a

¹⁰² Millard F. Elections in Poland 2001: electoral manipulation and party upheaval, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 2003, vol. 36, № 1. P. 84.

¹⁰³ Millard F. The Parliamentary Elections in Poland, September 2001, *Electoral Studies* 2002, vol. 22, № 2. P. 372.

¹⁰⁴ Jaskiernia J. Wybory parlamentarne 2005 roku a tendencja do cofania legitymizacji partiom rządzącym w Polsce [in:] *Polacy wobec wyborów 2005 roku*, ed. A. Kasińska-Metryka, Wydawnictwo Akademii Świętokrzyskiej, Kielce 2007. P. 29.

¹⁰⁵ Millard F. The 2005 Parliamentary and Presidential Elections in Poland, *Electoral Studies* 2007, vol. 26, № 1. P. 212.

moral revolution in a new «Fourth Republic»¹⁰⁶. PiS successfully appropriated the welfare mantle of the discredited social democrats and mobilized traditional conservative and religious values. Despite formal plans for a PiS coalition with the Civic Platform (so called: POPiS), the election resulted unexpectedly in PiS's coalition with the radical parties Self-Defence and the League of Polish Families¹⁰⁷. The success of PiS was based on total criticism and a never-ending war declared on all political decisions and actions of the ruling government, especially in the domain of foreign and security policy¹⁰⁸. The contemporary practice of representative democracy in Poland fails to engage the electorate and functions to mediate the systemic exclusions produced by post-Socialist neoliberalism¹⁰⁹. Some observers argued that «social Poland» defeated «liberal Poland»¹¹⁰.

The dissolution of Parliament after the breaking of the the ruling coalition (Law and Justice – Self-Defence-Ligue of Polish Families) opened the way to an early election. The 2007 Polish parliamentary election is best understood as a plebiscite on the polarizing right-wing Law and Justice party-led government and its controversial «Fourth Republic» political project¹¹¹. The liberal-conservative Civic Platform opposition won because it was able to persuade Poles that voting for them was the most effective way of removing this government from office. The election also indicates that the «post-communist divide» that dominated and provided a structural order to the Polish political scene during the 1990s is passing into history and certainly means a more consolidated Polish party system. However,

¹⁰⁶ Markowski R. The Polish Elections od 2005: Pure Chaos or a Restructuring of the Party System, *West European Politics* 2006, vol. 29, №. 4. P. 831.

¹⁰⁷ Millard F. Poland's politics and the travails of transition after 2001 : the 2005 elections, *Europe-Asia Studies* 2006, vol. 58, №. 7. P. 1029.

¹⁰⁸ Bobrowski R. Poland's Wrong Choice: the Polish Political Scene and its Influence on the Creation of the Country's Foreign and Security Policy, *International Issues and Slovak Foreign Policy* 2007, vol. 16, №. 2. P. 72.

¹⁰⁹ Fleming M. The 2005 Parliamentary and Presidential Elections in Poland: The Geography of Abstention, *Debatte: Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* 2006, Vol. 14, №. 2. P. 91.

¹¹⁰ Szczerbiak A. «Social Poland» defeats «liberal Poland»? : the September-October 2005 Polish parliamentary and presidential elections, *Sussex European Institute*, Brighton 2006. P. 42.

¹¹¹ Markowski R. The 2007 Polish Parliamentary Election: Some Structuring, Still a Lot of Chaos, *West European Politics* 2008, v. 31, №. 5. P. 1059.

Poland still had very high levels of electoral volatility and low electoral turnout, together with low levels of party institutionalization and extremely weak links between parties and their supporters. It was suggested, however, that it is too early to say whether the election also marks the emergence of a stable Polish party system based on a new bipolar divide between two big centre-right groupings, with the confinement of the left to the status of a minor actor¹¹². This election exposed the configuration of the party political system around two parties from the right. This unusual situation was the result of the decline of the left and liberal parties in Poland and the shift of politics to the conservative right. The two main political parties shared many historical and programmatic commonalities, but also diverged on a number of crucial issues¹¹³.

After many changes and conflicts in the political scene, the two currently most important Polish parties emerged: Platforma Obywatelska (PO)/Civic Platform and Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS)/Law and Justice. The Civic Platform is the embodiment of liberal tendencies and Law and Justice of conservative tendencies in the post-Solidarity movements. Law and Justice seized power for a short time in 2005, but it lost in the early elections in 2007 to the Civic Platform. And then came the disaster which has shaken the Polish political scene. On April 10th, 2010, the presidential Tupolev airplane crashed near Smoleńsk in Russia during an official trip to a ceremony of commemoration for the Polish officers murdered in Katyń by the Soviets. Everybody on board died. The victims included president Lech Kaczyński (of the Law and Justice party, twin brother of the party's leader, Jarosław Kaczyński) and the first lady, all of the military chiefs of staff, the national bank governor, all the head army chaplains, and over 90 important political figures. This caused a major split in Polish politics. Jarosław Kaczyński and Law and Justice accused the Civic Platform and their leader and then Prime Minister Donald Tusk of treason. They claimed that the Civic Platform officials organized

¹¹² Szczerbiak A. The birth of a bi-polar party system or a referendum on a polarising government?: the October 2007 Polish parliamentary election, Sussex European Institute, Brighton 2008. P. 3.

¹¹³ Rae G. Two Rights Make a Wrong? The Remaking of Polish Politics after the 2007 Parliamentary Elections, Debate: Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe 2008, vol. 16, № 1. P. 82.

the presidential visit in a way that led to the disaster. The Civic Platform, on the other hand, claimed that Kaczyński and Law and Justice are crazies who believe in conspiracy theories and will start a war with Russia once they seize power. Thus began an endless fight over the Smoleńsk disaster. The Left, the nationalists, and libertarians tried to break through this dualist narrative, but the media have followed either of the two narratives, and the public followed the media. Law and Justice began losing elections, both presidential and parliamentary. The Civic Platform seized full power. They claimed to be a modernizing force that will turn Poland into a prosperous economy modeled on Western European countries, fully integrated with the European Union. They presented themselves as the enlightened liberal elite, which will end all politics and finally make Polish society as well-functioning as the idealized West. The entire mainstream media went into full support mode, on the one hand praising the government, on the other condemning Law and Justice as evil forces of reaction¹¹⁴.

At least three reasons make it plausible that the Smoleńsk catastrophe had a great impact on Polish politics. Firstly, the disaster had legal and constitutional consequences; the sudden death of a head of state always generates a number of specific actions, policy changes, and (most importantly from the perspective of this paper) determines the election calendar. Secondly, the disaster had psychological consequences; it caused a strong psychological shock for participants in the political process, which redefined political competition, public discourse, and the media coverage. Thirdly, narratives about the events preceding the crash and following it quickly became an important element of Polish politics, especially in the media and in the electoral campaign¹¹⁵.

Key to the centrist Civic Platform's victory in the 2011 Polish election, the first by an incumbent governing party in post-communist Poland, was its ability to generate fear about the possible consequences of the right-wing Law and Justice party returning to power. Although many of the Civic Platform's supporters were disap-

¹¹⁴ Ostrogniew J. The Polish Parliamentary Elections of 2015, www.counter-currents.com (access: 2.12.2016).

¹¹⁵ Czeźnik M. In the Shadow of the Smolensk Catastrophe – The 2010 Presidential Election in Poland, *East European Politics & Societies and Cultures* 2014, vol. 28, № 3. p. 523.

pointed with its slow progress in modernizing the country, most voters viewed the party as the better guarantor of stability at a time of crisis and continued to harbour deeply ingrained concerns about the main opposition party. The election appeared to provide further evidence of the consolidation and stabilization of the Polish party system around the Civic Platform-Law and Justice divide. However, other factors pointed to the dangers of declaring that the Polish party system was «frozen» around these two political blocs and suggested that it remained vulnerable to further shocks and re-alignments¹¹⁶.

The scandal of illegal phone tapping that started in June 2014 notably shook the party and destabilized the government which was led by Donald Tusk at the time. The weekly *Wprost* published recordings that revealed an agreement had been made in 2011 between the then Home Affairs Minister, Bartłomiej Sienkiewicz and the President of the Polish Central Bank, Marek Belka. The latter promised to support the government's economic policy if the Prime Minister accepted the dismissal of his Finance Minister Jacek Rostowski. After the scandal caused by these revelations Donald Tusk's government had to undergo a confidence vote which it finally won on 25th June 237 votes in support and 203 against. The investigation that followed the publication of these conversations led to the arrest of several people including a businessman who was said to have communicated the recordings to the weekly *Wprost* in revenge for restrictions set by the State on coal imports. These conversations significantly damaged the government's image and that of the Civic Platform¹¹⁷.

3. Results of the 2015 Parliamentary Elections

The paradox with the result of the 2015 parliamentary election is connected with an observation, that for the past few years, Poland has been enjoying good press, having become something of a poster child for economic success in the post-communist region. Poland's real GDP growth has been among the highest in Europe; it has minimal inflation, single-digit unemployment, declining inequality (at a

¹¹⁶ A. Szczerbiak. Poland (mainly) chooses stability and continuity: the October 2011 Polish parliamentary election, *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 2013, vol. 14, No. 4. P. 502.

¹¹⁷ Foundation of Robert Schuman. The conservative opposition running favourite in the upcoming parliamentary elections in Poland, *European Elections Monitor*, 25th October 2015. O. 2.

level about average for European countries) and healthy public finances with a budget deficit below 3% of GDP. The country has outpaced not only such regional neighbors as Hungary, but also some countries in «old» Europe. And it's not only the macro-level statistics: Much the same positive story emerges from surveys of individuals and households, which show across-the-board improvements in a variety of economic and human development indicators. And yet in the elections of Oct. 25, 2015, the ruling coalition of the centrist Civic Platform (PO) and the agrarian Polish People's Party (PSL), in power since 2007, suffered a resounding defeat. The new government was formed by an electoral alliance headed by the right-wing populist Law and Justice (PiS), the first since 1989 to win a majority of seats in the lower chamber of parliament. PiS also won 61 of the 100 seats in the Senate. And its candidate, Andrzej Duda, won the presidency in 2015. So does this mean that the Poles are turning away from liberal democracy? Analytics suggests that it's a mixed picture. PiS has won the majority of seats and unquestionably gained the mandate to form the next government. But its 37,6% of votes, when only about half (51%) of voters actually went to the polls, means it received the active support of only about 1 in 5 (19%) of all eligible voters, which does not add up to a mandate for overturning the constitutional order¹¹⁸.

Law and Justice (PiS), Poland's main opposition party, not only regained power but its electoral committee, composed also of three other minor parties (i.e. Solidary Poland, Poland Together, and the Right-wing of the Republic), obtained an absolute majority of parliamentary seats. This, coupled with PiS' candidate Andrzej Duda's victory in the presidential election, gave Jarosław Kaczyński's party unprecedented power in the country. Since then much has been said about the overnight redrawing of Poland's political landscape, the causes of PiS' «stunning victory» and the governing Civic Platform's humiliation despite its incomparable economic record, as well as the implications of PiS' victory for democracy in Poland or in Europe¹¹⁹.

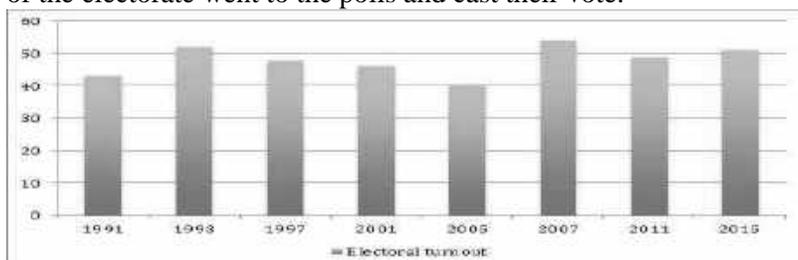
¹¹⁸ Tworzecki H., Markowski R. Did Poland just vote in an authoritarian government? The Washington Post, 3 November 2015.

¹¹⁹ Bertoa F.C. Polish Politics in 2015: All the Power to the Right, www.the-plot.org (access: 2.12.2016).

Results of October 25, 2015 elections to the lower house of parliament (the Sejm)					
Party	Votes	Votes (%)	Seats	Seats (%)	Seat change since 2011
Law and Justice (PiS)	5,711,687	37.58	235	51.09	+78
Civic Platform (PO)	3,661,474	24.09	138	30.00	-69
Kukiz'15	1,339,094	8.81	42	9.13	
Nowoczesna	1,155,370	7.60	28	6.09	
United Left	1,147,102	7.55			-67
Polish People's Party (PSL)	779,676	5.13	16	3.48	-12
Korwin	722,999	4.76			
Razem	550,349	3.62			
German Minority	27,530	0.18	1	0.22	no change
Other parties	105,191	0.68			
Total	15,200,671	100.00	460	100.00	

Total electorate: 30,629,160; turnout: 50.32%
 United Left did not win seats because, as a coalition, it needed to clear a higher threshold (8% rather than 5%)
 Threshold rules do not apply to parties of national minorities
 Source: Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza (www.pkw.gov.pl)

Half of Polish voters have preferred staying at home to participating in the electoral process. Thus, even though the last parliament has been the third most supported in Polish history, only 51% of the electorate went to the polls and cast their vote.



Source: IDEA.

This makes Poland, with an average turnout at elections of 48%, the most apathetic democracy not only in post-Communist Europe but in the European Union. And even if, as explained elsewhere, such low levels of electoral participation are not enough to question the legitimacy of the Polish democracy per se, it certainly confirms a tendency observed in most European countries: namely, the growing distance between citizens and their representatives. Moreover, it questions the extent to which a party system in which barely half of the citizens regularly exert their voting rights can be considered consolidated¹²⁰.

4. Explanations of the results of the 2015 Parliamentary Elections

There were several attempts to explain results of the 2015 Parlia-

¹²⁰ Ibid.

mentary election in Poland¹²¹. In almost all elections since the fall of Communism in 1989 (in 1993, 1997, 2001, 2005 and 2007) Polish voters have voted against incumbents. They finally brought themselves to re-elect a government in 2011 – but that seems to have made them all the more determined to boot it out in 2015. This tendency to vote against incumbents, no matter how well or poorly they govern, has also been observed in other post-communist countries. It persists because the region’s political parties still aren’t very good at representing their constituents’ interests. Indeed, in Poland and neighboring countries, parties remain at the very bottom of rankings of institutions in which the public has confidence. This tendency also suggests that voters in this part of the world find it difficult to hold governments accountable by objectively assessing their accomplishments and failures.

While Poland’s overall economic health was strong, some groups and some parts of the country were suffering. Youth unemployment was twice the national average. Good jobs were scarce in small towns and rural regions, especially in eastern Poland. Many people are working under short-term contracts that carry few protections or benefits. And although Poland was the only country in the EU to avoid a recession after the post-2008 global crisis (Prime Minister Donald Tusk often exposed himself in front of the map of the European Union where Poland is the only one «green island» without recession), that came at a cost. The government imposed austerity measures (including pay freezes for some public employees), while private businesses often imposed pay cuts and simultaneously demanding higher productivity. That’s why, in these elections, the incumbent PO party lost support even among younger, well-educated, urban voters who pushed it to its first victory back in 2007. It’s also why PiS was able to garner so much support beyond its religious, socially conservative strongholds in small towns and rural areas of eastern Poland, winning the plurality of votes in almost all regions and demographic categories.

To respond to the widely felt hardships and anxieties, PiS ran a

¹²¹ Tworzecki H., Markowski R. *Did Poland...* P. 2; Markowski R. *The Polish Parliamentary...* P. 1315; Jaskiernia J. *Transformacja...* P. 27; Marcinkiewicz K., Stegmaier M. *The Parliamentary...* P. 224.

campaign that called for vastly expanded public spending. It promised to increase the minimum wage and the personal income tax exemption; to offer new child support payments (program Family 500+), housing subsidies (program Hausing+), and free prescription drugs for seniors; and to lower the retirement age from the current 67 to 65 for men and 60 for women. In so doing – positioning itself as a culturally rightist but economically leftist party – PiS was able to attract voters who in the past may well have voted for the left. In this election the United Left (the latest incarnation of the former communists and assorted allies), failed to win any seats in parliament (do not reach 8% threshold for the coalitions). PiS backed its economic promises by a radical critique of the *status quo*. Rather than simply poking a few holes in the positive economic statistics, it went with the hyperbolic message of «Poland in ruins», through which it achieved its main goal of demobilizing the ruling parties' supporters, leading many of them to stay home on election day.

PiS also exploited the European migrant crisis which was especially visible in 2015. While the government dithered, PiS argued adamantly against the EU proposal for a quota system that would deliver a certain percentage of migrants to each country. PiS stoked fears that the refugees and migrants would threaten Poland's national security, religious and cultural identity, economic well-being and even public health. After World War II Poland became one of Europe's most ethnically and religiously homogeneous countries (87,5% of Poles identify themselves as Roman Catholic), which has meant that it has not had to confront the challenges of multiculturalism – although it did receive nearly 100,000 war refugees from Chechnya and, more recently, nearly half a million economic migrants from Ukraine with hardly anyone noticing. But the refugee crisis has dominated the news for much of the summer. Nevertheless, conditions were ripe for xenophobic appeals.

The incumbents ran a lackluster campaign that lacked a coherent message. The PO was started back in 2001 to appeal to the newly-emerging middle class. By 2015, the party has become a broadly centrist «party of power» worn out by eight years in government. Its longtime leader, Donald Tusk, left for a job of the President of European Council, leaving it weakened. The new leader, Ewa Kopacz

had not enough time to build her own prestige and reputation in the circumstances of divided PO, especially dealing with position of the potential leader, Grzegorz Schetyna. PO has been further weakened by a steady trickle of secret recordings of senior politicians dining at pricy restaurants, which – while falling short of revealing actual criminality – had a damaging undertone of sleaze and arrogance. Last but not least, the PO was not able to articulate effectively what it stood for and what it would do if reelected – except by promising to continue with necessary but mundane infrastructure improvements: building more roads and so forth. In the end, on election day many PO supporters stayed home and others – especially those in upper education and income brackets – opted for a new, more clearly market-liberal oriented party called Nowoczesna («Modern»), which won 7,6% of votes. According to exit polls, a huge 71% of Nowoczesna’s support came from those who had voted for PO in 2011¹²².

The Law and Justice Party, though considered «far-right» by many political scientists and experts, is hard to define with a straight-forward ideological label. The party calls for an increase in social spending, higher taxes on the wealthy, and re-nationalization of key sectors of the economy. The party leader, J. Kaczyński, also expressed that the Law and Justice party was opposed to immigrants, gays, feminists, liberals, and most foreigners. In addition, he has expressed that his goal is to create a Poland in which lives only one Polish nation, and not diverse nations. He has admitted that his goal has been to remain in power for life. This combination of liberal and conservative sentiments can be seen in other European countries, like Hungary for example. According to the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, «the era of liberal democracy is over». Simultaneously, he has worked to increase taxes of larger businesses and establish price controls on electricity. At the international stage he has also contributed to the rise of the rightist Law and Justice party in Poland. This category of issues is more complex, as it involves neighboring countries and other members of the European Union. What is most fascinating is that the EU, a body which touts a set of conditions for all of its member nations that are cemented in democratic

¹²² Tworzecki H., Markowski R. *Did Poland...* P. 2; Markowski R. *The Polish Parliamentary ...* P. 1317.

gains, is actually acting as a hindrance to the development of Poland as a democracy that ensures basic liberties and the oversight of government. Over time however the reputation of the EU as a powerhouse of democracy and strong socioeconomic gains for its member states has greatly diminished. It has been tarnished by the failure of member countries Poland and the EU to manage conflicts, like the influx of refugees recently¹²³.

5. Consequences of the 2015 parliamentary elections for the development of the Polish political parties' system

Political science has long held that rising prosperity would inoculate countries against the risk of authoritarian backsliding. But in its draft constitution and various other pronouncements PiS has made it clear that its ambition is to transform Poland's political institutions in ways similar in their illiberal spirit to those seen recently in Hungary under Prime Minister Viktor Orbán. Although PiS did not get the $\frac{2}{3}$ parliamentary majority required for it to make constitutional changes, it has won majorities in both chambers of parliament. With the presidency also in hand, PiS may be able to put many of its proposals into effect through a combination of ordinary legislation and determined political practice. A version of the Hungarian scenario is therefore possible. Going by the results of these elections, it is impossible to tell now whether Poland is experiencing illiberal backlash. At this point analytics suggest that Polish voters are reexamining the two fundamental democratic values: freedom and equality. Since the fall of Communism a quarter-century ago, the Poles have enjoyed an unprecedented expansion of liberties, not only of the political kind but also in social modes and lifestyles. Indeed, for the more traditionally inclined, the pace of cultural change has become threatening. At the same time the demand for economic equality hasn't been met. PiS achieved its victory by responding to this combination of fears and needs with promises to both increase economic redistribution toward the less well-off and protect traditional cultural values¹²⁴.

¹²³ Arntson M. Poland's Law and Justice Party: The European Union and Its Swing to the Right, Claremont-UC Undergraduate Research Conference on the European Union, Claremont McKenna College, 7 April 2016. P. 10-11.

¹²⁴ Tworzecki H., Markowski R. Did Poland... P. 2.

One of the first clear effects of the last parliamentary elections in Poland has been the end of the so-called «post-communist cleavage» which pitted post-communist parties (mainly SLD and PSL) against post-solidarity parties (including PO and PiS) and characterized Polish politics for most of its democratic history. Indeed, SLD's failure to secure any parliamentary seats in the new parliament constitutes the last strike to a political divide that started to fade away with the electoral and government coalition between SLD and UP in 2001, PSL's parliamentary support to Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz's (PiS) cabinet in 2005, and the PO and PSL coalition government in 2007. PiS's victory in almost all regions and across different socio-demographic groups (e.g. age, place of residence, education, gender), questions another feature of Polish politics which has so far been constant: the awareness of Poland's past. There seemed to be a clear cultural, economic and political division between the northwestern part of Poland, consisting of the territories that belonged to Germany before 1945, which were culturally more cosmopolitan, economically more developed and politically more liberal, and the southeastern part of the country, which was culturally more traditional, but also poorer and politically conservative. Indeed, from the first presidential election in 1990 until the last presidential contest in May 2015, throughout every single electoral contest – local, legislative, to the European Parliament – social-democratic (SLD until 2001) or liberal (PO from 2005) parties received more votes in the west than in the east, where voters are more inclined to support rightist (Solidarity and AWS until 1997; PiS from 2001) parties¹²⁵.

The last parliamentary elections have also demonstrated that forming a «successful» political party in Poland is a matter of months. Indeed, out of the eight parties that have more than 3% of the votes, half are new: the Coalition for the Renewal of the Republic-Liberty and Hope (KORWiN), Together (Razem), Modern (Nowoczesna) and Kukiz' 15. These latter two obtained one-sixth of the parliamentary seats but, interestingly enough, all of them were founded between January and May 2015. And even if this «party newness» is a characteristic common to all post-communist democracies, Poland is perhaps the only country where only one party (i.e. the Polish Peop-

¹²⁵ Bertoa F.C. Polish Politics... P. 1.

le's Party) has managed to obtain seats in all elections since 1989¹²⁶.

The main victor is, of course, the Law and Justice party. They are a great example of breaking through a seemingly hopeless situation. The Civic Platform had all power, full mainstream media support, and broad social support. Law and Justice seemed to be banished from the mainstream forever. However, they started creating their own channels of information: they revived small conservative newspapers, founded new magazines, created internet TV and YouTube channels, Facebook profiles, etc. Most importantly, these were not directly linked to the party but to so-called «independent» journalists with clear conservative tendencies. Every time there was a breach in the mainstream narrative, any time an actor, a performer, a journalist, or a writer has voiced a pro-Law and Justice opinion, he or she would immediately become a star of this alternative, conservative media. These media outlets began, of course, with crazy conspiracies about the Smoleńsk disaster. But with time they changed their strategy. They started showing the mistakes and plot-holes of the lengthy Russian and Polish investigations of the disaster. They blew the whistle every time there was an instance of corruption in the ruling party. They have emphasized every instance of hatred towards traditional Polish society among the mainstream media. They started presenting Civic Platform's «modernized Poland» as a lie and claimed that Poland was becoming a neo-colony of the West, from which only the politicians of the ruling parties can profit¹²⁷.

Law and Justice are usually denounced as nutty Catholic reactionary right-wingers by the chattering classes within Poland and around Europe. In fact they are a *sui generis* movement of truculent, carefully Eurosceptic étatist-patriots. They urge a «strong Poland», by which they mainly mean robust and sternly honest state institutions, and a square deal for state employees and pensioners. Latterly Law and Justice have made a successful effort to broaden their appeal towards small businesses and younger voters. But they are instinctively suspicious of big business and banks, and loath to do anything radical to reform state processes or advance privatization/deregulation. They are comfortable playing to conservative Catholic

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ostrognew J. The Polish Politics... P. 2.

instincts of older Polish voters, but they see the Catholic Church as a patriotic force: they are not religious zealots¹²⁸.

Why did the Civic Platform lose the elections? There are two main reasons: corruption and arrogance. One has to admit that they used to seem like a decent, typically Western centrist party. But once they seized full power, they lost contact with reality. It seems that they really started to believe what the mainstream journalists told them. As some insiders claim, many of the top politicians truly believed that they would never lose power. The other reason was corruption. They quickly began to create countless new government jobs and hired people from the party as well as family members. This is nothing new in Polish politics, but this time the scale was enormous. The public discontent grew, and when then Prime Minister and head of the Civic Platform, Donald Tusk, was promoted to the rank of the President of the European Council (as with most EU ranks and offices, the office has no real impact on actual events, but comes with great assets) in December 2014, the government and the mainstream media proclaimed it a great victory, but much of the public saw it as the biggest rat leaving a sinking ship¹²⁹.

The events in Poland show that strong economic success does not necessarily imply strong positive sentiments in a country. Though Poles believe that the election of the Law and Justice party will bring a refreshing change domestically, including a lower retirement age and a high minimum wage, its election might hinder the country internationally as countries shy away from a nation run by such a right-wing government. Poland's strong economic and diplomatic relationship with Germany will most likely suffer. This may lead to a weakening of the Polish economy, an economy that was so strong during the rule of the Civic Platform that has completely avoided the woes of the 2008 economic recession. Domestically, this election could also mean the return to social Conservatism and authoritative populism, further separating Poland from its historic allies and supporters. In addition, the election of the Law and Justice party will conclusively change it¹³⁰.

¹²⁸ Crawford C. Who are Poland's victorious Law and Justice party, and what do they want, *The Telegraph*, 26 October 2015.

¹²⁹ Ostrogniew J. *The Polish Politics...* P. 3.

¹³⁰ Arntson M. *Poland's Law and Justice...* P. 13.

The current composition of parliament in Poland reflects a crisis of traditional political forces in the country. The disappearance of entire sections of the Polish political spectrum (specifically, of post-socialist left-wing forces, as the Democratic Left Alliance) from the parliamentary structure is a sign of distrust in traditional political structures (the poor performance of another long-standing party, the Polish People's Party, which mustered just 3% of votes, is further proof of this). At the same time, parties that have built their rhetoric primarily around non-participation in the political system (such as Paweł Kukiz's union) have enjoyed huge success. It is worth noting here that 25% of the people who voted for P. Kukiz in 2015 had voted for Janusz Palikot in 2011. This is particularly interesting because, judging by his views, J. Palikot has little in common with P. Kukiz, a left-leaning liberal. The only thing uniting these parties and their leaders is the tendency towards scandalous behaviour and their anti-system stance. This means that a part of the Polish electorate (both Kukiz in 2015 and Palikot in 2011 relied on the youth vote) is prepared to cast their vote as a vote of protest, as they are dissatisfied with the state of Polish politics in principle and are ready to support any party that offers a clear alternative¹³¹. If this trend will continue in the next elections, it will have an important impact on the functioning of the Polish political parties' system.

6. Final remarks

The success of PiS in the 2015 Parliamentary election in Poland seems to be a result of the combination of several factors. It would be mistaken to portray an emerging situation as a simple rightist win. PiS to some extent represents social attitudes, typical for the socialist (social-democratic) parties, with some part of program including a populist message, but with the combination of conservative approach to several issues and nationalistic stand on perception of patriotic mood. The Catholic Church supports PiS, especially at the grassroots level. The ideological importance of nationalism in Poland makes it a vivid example of the interaction between conflicts of definition of political community, on the one hand, and parties' European

¹³¹ Kuvaldin S., A. Guschin, Poland 2015: A Year of Political Transformations, www.russia.council.ru (access: 3.12.2016).

attitudes, on the other¹³². The 2015 election results might be treated as well as proof of illiberal order growing in contemporary world¹³³. Populist tendencies are present in Poland as well as in other Central and Eastern European countries¹³⁴ and their credibility must be analyzed dealing with the responsiveness of established parties to peoples' expectations¹³⁵. Major resources of political knowledge have changed and political knowledge leads to changes in political interest, alienation, democratic attitudes and voting behavior¹³⁶. Growing importance, as shows the Standard Eurobarometer 84 Survey (EB84), conducted between 7 and 17 November 2015, has the refugee crisis¹³⁷.

The victory of PiS in 2015 elections and its forming the majority government have an important meaning for the functioning of the political parties' system in Poland. For the first time in Polish after 1989 history there was no balancing of power situation which the coalition governments brought about. The political parties, creating the opposition in parliament, must offer a new strategy of behavior in such circumstances, especially dealing with challenging the PiS policy to compromise a democratic system based on the 1997 Constitution, e.g. division of power, position of the Constitutional Tribunal and functioning of the judiciary. The political situation after the 2015 election has also opened the way to new civil society initiatives, as the Committee for the Defense of Democracy (Komitet Obrony Demokracji – KOD)¹³⁸. It could influence further development of political parties' system in Poland.

¹³² Pontes Meyer Resonde M. A Party Family Theory of Party Positions on European Integration: A Polish Case Study, London School of Economics and Political Science, London 2005. P. 12.

¹³³ Boyle M.J. The Coming Illiberal Order, *Survival* 2016, vol. 58, No. 2. P. 49.

¹³⁴ Lang K.-O. Populism in Central and Eastern Europe – a Threat to Democracy or Just Political Folklore? [in:] *Populism East and West*, eds K.-O. Lang, A. Bazóki, J. Bazalka, Prague 2005. P. 6.

¹³⁵ van Kessel S. A Matter of Supply and Demand: the Electoral Performance of Populist Parties in Three European Countries, *Government and Opposition* 2013, vol. 48, No. 2. P. 186.

¹³⁶ Kunovich R.M. Political Knowledge in Poland, Communist and Post-Communist Studies 2013, vo. 46, № 1. P. 75.

¹³⁷ Public Opinion in the European Union First Results, European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication, Brussels 2015. P. 12.

¹³⁸ Karolewski I.P. Protest and Participation in Post-Transformation Poland: The Case of the Committee for the Defense of Democracy (KOD), *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 2016, vol. 49, № 3. P. 265.

5. ROUND TABLE IN MOSCOW

*V. Gubalova**

THE CURRENT PARTY AND POLITICAL LANDSCAPE IN EUROPE: SOME OBSERVATIONS

Today, in general, there is a sense of uncertainty among the political elites and societies in Europe. This unsettlement streams from some possibly deep systematic shifts, related to the processes of international relations. Two issues, in particular, have emerged to the forefront in Europe—the state of the economy and the new migration wave. Consequentially, the attempts to respond to and resolve these two issues lead to a change in the party and the political landscape and to the emergence of the «protest vote».

Economy

Following the economic crisis in 2008 in the US, Europe soon saw negative influences to its markets and economic growth. Financial crises in Ireland, Spain, Portugal, and Greece, among others, threatened the stability and economic unity of the whole EU. In the countries, where the economy was at a standstill, current governments lost power (e.g. Greece and Spain). This added a political crisis to the economic problems. Eventually new governments had to enact strict austerity measures, in order to stabilize the economy in a long-term. In short-term, however, these measures brought discontent and unsettled the populations of the affected countries in Europe.

The economic crisis in some EU countries directly influenced the economy and the political situation in other member-countries. Other countries felt an economic slowdown, increase of unemployment, and pressure on their own governments. Triggered by the deep economic crisis in Greece—an EU member that uses the Euro as its currency—members of the Eurozone were setting up in 2012 the European Stability Mechanism, a «help fund» mechanism. This mechanism all Eurozone countries were to contribute to and in case a fellow member needs economic support, this «fund» is to be released to

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them¹³⁹. The logic was simple: to preserve the value and stability of the Euro currency. At the time the coalition government in Slovakia was led by the Slovak Democratic and the Christian Union-Democratic Party (SDKU-DS)-a center-right party. Other coalition partners were MOST-HID (Bridge)-a Hungarian minority party, Freedom and Solidarity (SaS) – an economic conservative center-right party, and Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) – a conservative center-right party. SaS disagreed to the financial participation of Slovakia through money contribution in the European Stability Mechanism. As they did not support the vote in the national Slovak parliament, the coalition government disassembled and early elections followed. In these elections, Smer (Direction), a center-left party, gained enough votes for a one-party government.

Migration

Economic migration into Europe, specifically into the well-developed Western parts of Europe, is not a novelty. Migrants from former colonies, for example, have been arriving to the UK, France, and the Netherlands at a steady pace for some years now. Economic disparities within the EU members have also led to increased movement from East to West of a large number of Eastern Europeans seeking better economic opportunities. What changed? The civil war in Syria since 2011, has destabilized the region. It created an opportunity for the emergence of ISIS, a radical organization that seeks the creation of a new caliphate under strict Islamic law. ISIS was successful to capture parts of Syria and Iraq. War brought about a large number of refugees. At first, Europe did not feel the effect. Refugees in millions fled to Turkey (3,1 million) and Lebanon (1 million)¹⁴⁰. Eventually routes towards Europe were established and large wave of migrants (both refugees and economic migrants) began to make their way mainly to Italy and Greece by sea, and through Turkey to Bulgaria and onwards by land. In 2015 Europe saw the largest num-

¹³⁹ European Council. 2012. «Treaty Establishing the European Stability Mechanism». Documents and Publications. URL: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/documents-publications/agreements-conventions/agreement/?aid=2012002>.

¹⁴⁰ European Commission. 2016. «Turkey: Refugee Crisis». Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection. URL: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/turkey_syrian_crisis_en.pdf; UNHCR. 2015. «Lebanon». Syria Regional Refugee Response. URL: <https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122>.

ber of migrants to enter the community, with 1,3 million asylum-seeking applications¹⁴¹. The routes attracted not only refugees but also numerous economic migrants from other countries, such as Afghanistan and some African countries.

There are numerous challenges associated with this influx that affect multiple spheres: the EU and its policies, the member states and their policies, the overall economy and the economies of the single countries, and the societies of the member states and the broader EU societies. There are three main concerns facing the governments of the member states due to the increasing number of migrants: protecting national identity, preventing economic hardship, and safeguarding safety and security. Each concern spans a complicated web of arguments based on a spectrum of principles-from openness to restriction-and involves multiple actors, including governmental institutions, leaders, and activists.

Party landscape

Both issues – the state of economy and the new migration wave – brought about a change in the party landscape in most European countries. Concerns about economic wellbeing and specifically economic social justice contributed to the emergence of far-left parties.

Perhaps, the experience of the rise of far-left parties is best shown in Greece. In the current parliament, after the 2015 elections, there are two far-left parties: the ruling party SYRIZA (35,5%) and the Communist Party of Greece (5,6%)¹⁴². SYRIZA was officially established in 2004 and until 2012 was participating in the parliament with no more than 5% of the people's vote¹⁴³. In the mist of the economic crisis, during the first 2012 parliamentary elections the party gained 16%-a significant gain and shortly after during the second parliamentary elections the same year SYRIZA has already gained 27% of the vote¹⁴⁴. While the recession in Greece continued, SYRI-

¹⁴¹ Eurostat. 2016. «Asylum Statistics». European Commission. URL: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics.

¹⁴² Greek Ministry of the Interior. 2015. «Parliamentary Elections 2015». Nationwide Results. URL: [http://ekloges.yves.gr/current/v/public/index.html?lang=en#{"cls":"main","params":{}}](http://ekloges.yves.gr/current/v/public/index.html?lang=en#{)

¹⁴³ BBC Europe. 2012. «Profile- Syriza Greece's Radical Coalition of the Left». URL: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17980954>.

¹⁴⁴ Greek Ministry of the Interior. 2015...

ZA was able to become a governing party in 2015. Granted, much of its radical left principles have softened since.

Perceptions of fear about migrants, who are coming from different cultural background, with different religious beliefs, and in large numbers, far-right parties sprung on the political scene.

Austria is both a transit and a final destination for new migrants. Last year 1030 migrants per 100000 local populations have entered the country¹⁴⁵. Many migrants have chosen to stay in Austria. Over 85000 requests for asylum have been filed in 2015¹⁴⁶. The presidential elections in 2016 have been an example of the ability of far-right movements to gain large support. In the first round Norbert Hofer supported by Freedom Party of Austria, a nationalist party, received most votes, followed by Alexander Van der Bellen, a member of the Greens but running as an Independent¹⁴⁷. The candidates of the major parties failed to qualify for the second round. In the second round Van der Bellen won but only marginally and only after counting all absentee votes¹⁴⁸. However, after a challenge the voting results were annulled and new vote was due on 4 December, 2016.

The large wave of migrants into Europe is not an internal issue for Slovakia. In 2015 there were only 330 requests for asylum in Slovakia¹⁴⁹. Additionally, Slovakia is not a transit route for those migrating to Western Europe. Slovak authorities and the population have not had much direct contact with the new coming migrants. Yet, in the last parliamentary elections in Slovakia, in March 2016, Ludova Strana Nase Slovensko (LSNS), a far right party active only since 2014, gained 8% and entered parliament (fifth out of eight parties)¹⁵⁰.

¹⁴⁵ BBC Europe. 2015a. «Migrant Crisis: Migration to Europe Explained in Seven Charts». URL: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34131911>.

¹⁴⁶ Eurostat. 2016b. «Asylum Statistics». European Commission. URL: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics.

¹⁴⁷ The Guardian. 2016. «Austrian far-right party wins first round of presidential election». Europe. URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/24/austrian-far-right-wins-first-round-presidential-election-norbert-hofer>.

¹⁴⁸ BBC Europe. 2016a. «Austria Far-right 'Narrowly Losses Poll, Electing Van der Bellen President». URL: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36362505>.

¹⁴⁹ Slovak Ministry of Interior. 2016a. «Statistics». Asylum and Migration. URL: <http://www.minv.sk/?statistiky-20>.

¹⁵⁰ Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic. 2016. «The Election to the National

Meanwhile, the mainstream parties have been caught in the middle between their ideological beliefs, hot issues concerning the society such as the economy and new migration, and their desire to be in power. There is a crisis of identity among the established parties. The far-left and far-right parties have been taking away votes, keeping up to simple ideology of anti-establishment and opposing economic austerity and the new migration influx. In order to prevent further erosion of their votes and to attract the undecided, the established old parties have begun to change their rhetoric as well, even if it was running counter to their ideology.

An interesting case is *Smer (Direction)* in Slovakia. The party has been ruling unilaterally for four years from 2012 until 2016, while following a center-left ideology. Their platform for a long time has been based on social wellbeing. Numerous changes were introduced including healthcare and transportation, for example, so that students and pensioners received advantages. Initially, pre-election analyses did not exclude the option for the party to continue its unilateral rule after the parliamentary elections in March 2016. However, instead of keeping to a social platform, the center-left party concentrated on assuring the Slovakian population that their country as they know it-Christian Slovakia-will stand unchanged. In August 2015 the interior minister of Slovakia Robert Kalinak, announced that the country will accept only Christian asylum-seekers. Explaining further the spokesman of the ministry noted that there are no mosques in Slovakia and integration of Muslim populations would be challenging¹⁵¹. *Smer* ran its campaign on the slogan «Chránime Slovensko» (We are protecting Slovakia). Interestingly, the slogan resembles the slogan of the far-right party LSNS «Nase Slovensko» (Our Slovakia). After the elections *Smer* had to accept three coalition partners in order to continue to be in government, as they lost valuable votes. Nevertheless, in October 2016 new billboards have been put up across Slovakia stating headlines such as «As we have promised: we are keeping you safe», and «NO to quotas».

Council of SR 2016». Elections and Referendums. Available Online: [http:// volby.statistics.sk/nrsr/nrsr2016](http://volby.statistics.sk/nrsr/nrsr2016).

¹⁵¹ BBC Europe. 2015b. «Migrants Crisis: Slovakia 'will Only Accept Christians». URL: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33986738>.

Political landscape

The issues of economic growth and wellbeing and the new migration influx, predispose the emergence of far-left and far-right parties. It also places an immense pressure on the old mainstream parties. In such conditions the political landscape is more likely to be filled with populist and nationalistic rhetoric. A certain rise of charismatic leaders can be observed.

Viktor Orban, the Prime Minister of Hungary since 2010 and a member of the ruling party Fidesz, has established himself as a strong populist and nationalist. Fidesz, a center-right party, with its elections partner the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP), overwhelmingly won a second time the parliamentary elections in 2014 with 66,8% of the parliamentary mandates¹⁵². For some time Hungary had the reputation of a steady developing country, attractive to foreign investment with its liberal regulations and open society that welcomes international organizations and NGOs. Fidesz's center-right ideology of free market and choice, however, started to be transformed and new regulations were introduced.

V. Orban, often on TV and in the media overall, forcefully argued the importance of family values, including more children born in a family, traditional marriage between a man and a woman, and more family time spent¹⁵³. In late 2014 the conservative Christian coalition partner KDNP was able to push through a new law that came into effect in March 2015. It introduced closures of large stores (predominantly foreign-own) on Sundays. Suddenly, access to goods on Sunday was limited not by free choice but by law. Large retailers (mainly foreign) and producers campaigned and lobbied against the new regulation, warning of job losses¹⁵⁴. Some started to close down their stores (e.g. Tesco) and prepare to pull from the Hungarian market. The broad public unpopularity of the law, up to 68%, did not

¹⁵² National Election Office. 2014. «The Composition of the Parliament». Parliamentary Elections 2014. URL: http://valasztas.hu/en/ogyv2014/416/416_0_index.html.

¹⁵³ Wagstyl S. 2014. «Hungary's Viktor Orbán defends family values in Berlin speech». Financial Times. URL: <https://www.ft.com/content/aca2521a-d6a6-11e3-b251-00144feabdc0>.

¹⁵⁴ Dilip M. 2014. «Hungary Bans People from Shopping on Sundays». International Business Times. URL: <http://www.ibtimes.co.in/hungary-prohibits-people-shopping-sundays-617596>.

subside¹⁵⁵. Just one year later the government announced a reversal of the law¹⁵⁶. In mid-2016 large signs «Open on Sundays» were placed on all stores.

The populist and nationalistic leadership of V. Orban, however, is best observed on the issue of migration. Hungary was a major transit destination in 2015. Together with Italy and Greece, Hungary was one of the initial entry destinations into the EU. In 2015 over 750000 migrants have entered the country¹⁵⁷. While there was a large burden on the entry process, the vast majority of migrants continued towards other Western European countries. The Hungarian government quickly took a restrictive stand on the issue of migration.

Early in 2015 the PM V. Orban stated on TV: «Economic immigration is a bad thing in Europe. One should not regard it as useful because it only brings trouble and dangers to the European people, therefore it has to be stopped-this is the Hungarian position... We do not want to have significant minorities with different cultural traits and backgrounds; we'd like to retain Hungary as Hungary»¹⁵⁸.

Meanwhile, as the EU Commission has enacted the quota system, for re-settlement of 120000 asylum-seekers from Italy and Greece to other EU countries¹⁵⁹, V. Orban has become the face of the opposition to the plan. He actively denounces the decisions made by the EU and is seeking a court ruling against the quota mandate¹⁶⁰. The mandate is for 1 294 refugees to be re-located in Hungary in the next two years¹⁶¹. Popular in his country, with daily appearances on

¹⁵⁵ Feher M. 2016. «Hungary's Government Moves to Lift Sunday Shopping Ban». The Wall Street Journal. URL: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/hungarys-government-moves-to-lift-sunday-shopping-ban-1460399216>.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Frontex. 2016. «Risk Analysis for 2016». Frontex Publications. Greek Ministry of the Interior. 2012. «Election Results». National Elections. URL: <http://www.ypes.gr/en/Elections/NationalElections/Results/>

¹⁵⁸ Nagy B. 2015. «Hungary's Hypocritical Migration Policy». Heinrich Boll Stiftung. URL: <https://www.boell.de/de/node/286411>.

¹⁵⁹ European Commission. 2015. «European Agenda on Migration». Legislative Documents. URL: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/index_en.htm.

¹⁶⁰ Traynor Ian. 2015. «EU braces for turbulent summit after divisive deal on refugee quotas». The Guardian. URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/23/eu-summit-brussels-divisive-deal-refugee-quotas>.

¹⁶¹ European Commission. 2015. «European Agenda on Migration». Legislative

TV, radio, and in the newspapers, and expecting an overwhelming support, he and his government advanced a national referendum in October 2016 with one question: «Do you want the European Union to be able to mandate the obligatory resettlement of non-Hungarian citizens into Hungary even without the approval of the National Assembly?». In preparation for the referendum V. Orban stated that the quota system would «redraw Hungary's and Europe's ethnic, cultural and religious identity, which no EU organ has the right to do»¹⁶². The referendum did not reach the necessary 50+% voting activity and did not have a legal consequence. Those who voted chose the answer «no» by 98%¹⁶³. The day after, a mass public campaign in billboards and adverts followed with the slogan: 98% of you said «no». Since the referendum a constitutional amendment has been introduced in parliament to prohibit the settlement of non-Hungarians without the explicit permission of the Hungarian government. In a twist the proposal did not pass by two votes as the far-right party Jobbik, did not support it. Jobbik themselves sought the repeal of a law allowing foreigners to settle into Hungary if they purchase national bonds in minimum of 300 000 euros. According to Jobbik more than 3 500 individuals have moved into Hungary through this law since it was introduced in 2013¹⁶⁴. Just a day later, after some negotiations, Jobbik announced that they will re-introduce the constitutional amendment with exactly the same language as Orban and his government did earlier¹⁶⁵.

Protest vote: Masses vs. Elites

Pressing issues, including the state of economy and the migration influx, give space to far-right and far-left parties to emerge and

Documents...

¹⁶² Magyar Nemzet. 2016. «Orbán: Népszavazás lesz a betelepítési kvótáról». Migráció. URL: <http://mno.hu/belfold/orban-nepszavazas-lesz-a-betelepitesi-kvotarol-1330246>.

¹⁶³ Alba P. and Hutcherson K. 2016. «Hungary Voters Reject EU Migrant-resettlement Plan, but Low Turnout Invalidates Results». CNN. URL: <http://www.edition.cnn.com/2016/10/02/europe/hungary-migrant-referendum/>.

¹⁶⁴ BBC Europe. 2016b. «Migrant Crisis: Hungary MPs Reject Orban Anti-refugee Bill». BBC. URL: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-37903194>.

¹⁶⁵ Dunai M. 2016. «Hungary's Jobbik to Resubmit Measure Banning Resettlement of Migrants». Reuters. URL: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-hungary-politics-jobbik-referendum-idUSKBN13911E>.

expose the crisis of identity among the mainstream parties. This situation also predisposes for the emergence of populist and nationalist charismatic leaders. The unsettlement and uncertainty in the societies leads to the increase of the «protest vote». The masses «punish» the elites (the «old», the established). It is not necessary a matter of ideology choice, but rather it is the choice for new faces in the crowd. Thus the charisma of some leaders with well-expressed populist rhetoric, possibly from the far-right and the far-left has been gaining strong support.

A quick look at the UK referendum on the EU-Brexit, the election of Donald Trump as the new president of the United States, and even the latest presidential elections in Bulgaria, suggest that the societies are seeking a bottom up approach of decision-making. They want a say-educated or not. Their votes seem to be allocated not by the usual ideological lines but on a very different spectrum of new/not-corrupted and old/ corrupted. Such political scene can be dangerously manipulated by certain rhetoric. Alternatively, it can be an opportunity for some charismatic leaders with intentions for the wellbeing of all, not just some segments of the population, to gain the support of the masses.

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