

**THE RISE OF FAR-RIGHT AND ILLIBERAL DEMOCRACY IN THE
EUROPEAN UNION: COMPARATIVE CASES OF HUNGARY, POLAND,
AND SLOVAKIA**



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YEDİTEPE UNIVERSITY

DECEMBER, 2019

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AND SLOVAKIA**



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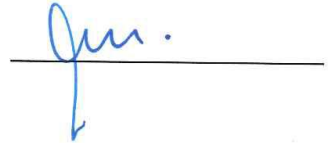
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ÖZET

Bu tez, Macaristan, Polonya ve Slovakya’da demokrasinin mevcut durumunu anlamaya yönelik olarak tasarlanmış olup demokrasinin kusurlu türlerinin detaylı bir analizini amaçlamaktadır. Tezin çıkış noktası, “yeni sağ anlayışının seçilen Orta Avrupa ülkelerindeki demokrasi tasavvurları üzerindeki rolü nedir? sorusudur. İncelenen olguların boylamsal olmasından ve ikincil veriler kullanılmasından dolayı, çalışmada birincil metodolojik tercih olarak nitel araştırma yaklaşımı seçilmiştir. Araştırmada, aşırı sağ partilerin, ideolojik prensiplerini illiberal demokrasi prensiplerine aktararak başarılı olma süreçleri analiz edilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, adı geçen üç ülkeden seçilen, iktidardaki üç ana-akım partisi (ki Slovakya’daki Smer-SD partisi aslında bir ana-akım partisi değildir) ve üç yeni sağ/aşırı sağ muhalefet partisi örnek olay olarak alınmıştır. Seçilen partilerin Avrupa Birliği üyeliği (2004) sonrası parti manifestolarında illiberal demokrasi ve yeni sağ parametrelerinin varlığı ve ilişkisi araştırılmıştır. Bu amaçla, öncelikle, yeni sağ ve illiberal demokrasi literatürü kritik söylem analizi yardımıyla analiz edilerek ana temaların altındaki ilgili temalar (parametreler) ve alt temalar belirlenerek araştırma modelimiz oluşturulmuştur. İngilizce olarak ulaşılan parti manifestoları NVivo 12 yazılımı yardımıyla analiz edilmiştir. Yapılan analizler sonucunda, seçilen ülkelerdeki demokrasi türüne ilişkin koşulların, o ülkedeki siyasi sistem ve siyasi partilerle ilişkili olduğu görülmüştür. Genel olarak, parti manifestolarının analizi, bize, farklı düzeylerde olsa da her üç ülkede, neo-liberal ve demokratik değerlerin erozyona uğramakta olduğunu göstermektedir. Sonuç olarak, örnek olaylar bağlamındaki yeni sağ parametreleriyle başarılan demokrasi düzeyi arasında derinliğine ilişkiler olduğu bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *İlliberal demokrasi, yeni sağ, parti manifestoları, Orta Avrupa Ülkeleri.*

ABSTRACT

The thesis deals with assessing the states of democracy in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, and it is aimed to offer a more detailed assessment and analysis of defective forms of democracy. The thesis seeks to elaborate on the research question of “What is the role of the new right on the understanding of democracy in selected CEC countries?”. The primary methodological preference of the thesis is qualitative as the topic is longitudinal and also secondary data is used. The study analyses how successful far-right parties achieve translating the far-right ideological principles into illiberal democracy principles. In this study three mainstream parties (including Smer-SD which is not a mainstream party but in power in Slovakia) and three new right/far-right parties are selected from Hungary, Poland and Slovakia to analyse their party manifestos to examine the parameters of illiberal democracy and new right principles. The data collection covers the term between 2004 and the present. We critically reviewed the literature on the new right and illiberal democracy to determine the themes (parameters) creating the relationship of two research variables leading to our proposed research model. The model and the main themes, themes and sub-themes are derived from the literature review process of new right and illiberal democracy using CDA perspective. All the party manifestos in English were analysed by using NVivo 12. The analysis shows that the conditions of the type of democracy may have links to the political system and political parties in selected case countries. In general, the analysis of the manifestos of the sampled parties shows that there has been a tendency towards eroding some neo-liberal and democratic values. By looking at case studies from three CECs, in conclusion, there appeared to be in-depth relationships of the new right parameters and the level of the democracy succeeded in a country.

Keywords: *Illiberal democracy, new right, party manifestos, CECs.*

To my beloved uncle who passed away,

Şerafettin Mengi

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CHAPTER 1:

Introduction

The end of the Communism is one of the most striking incidents of the 20th century, after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the Soviet Union was broken into 15 independent states in a short time. Most of these post-communist countries joined in the European Union in 2004 as it is called the Eastern enlargement. On the 1st of May 2004 totally 10 countries, 8 post-communist nations (Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, and Slovenia) with Cyprus and Malta joined the European Union. In 2007 Romania and Bulgaria and in 2013 Croatia became the new members. The enlargement process was quite a challenge for the new members as well as the old members as their historical, economic, cultural and political backgrounds were so different. So, enlargement, or from the other side, transition, should be well analysed, especially with the substantial side-effects of the communist administration days. It was especially challenging for the new member states as they entered the most democratic group in the world. There was a particular group of newcomers; including Hungary, Czechia, Slovakia, and Poland those are called as Visegrád Group (Visegrád Four or V4), which founded in 1991 with three countries and Slovakia joined in 1993. Historically V4 members always have been tightly integrated historically as well as their cultural and religious common features. The aim of the group is to co-operate in their European Union integration efforts as well as enhancing their mutual understanding of universal values in different areas such as culture, education and science and exchange of information.

1.1 Central European Enlargement of the European Union and the Transition Period

Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia have been members of the European Union (since 2004) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Poland and Hungary since 1999 and Slovakia since 2004). International authorities such as the Council of Europe, EU, NATO, WTO, and others have their specific rules to be obeyed by the member countries. These rules limit the boundaries of liberal democratic policy-making processes. “A severe result of these circumstances is the convergence of programmes of various central parties to an alarming degree, and consequently the disappearance of differences among them in the eyes of voters” (Smilov and Krastev, 2008, p.10). According to a large number of Europeans, the elites of mainstream parties are helpless in the face of two important shifts in authority in the second half of the twentieth century. Those are “the transfer of authority from nation-states to supranational organizations like the EU and the International Monetary Fund as well as from elected politicians to non-elected technocrats and bureaucrats like central bankers and judges (Mudde, 2016a, p.27).

European integration analyses the relationship between nation and state. European integration threatens the traditional identity of the nation-state as sovereignty, territory, nationality. Populist parties used these weaknesses quite well to influence the voters for maintaining the independence of the nation. However, the result is slightly misleading as the actual solutions do not work well, on the other hand, they could be harmful. Most of the far-right parties in the Central Europe region seemed to be supporting the membership status of the EU, but after achieving the full

membership, they suffered from the old illnesses of the communist era such as nativism and xenophobia.

Today, in the light of the Euro crisis and the arrival of refugees, populism seems to be working for extremist parties (Greven, 2016, p.2). According to Mudde, populism is everywhere, an ideology that separates society into two homogeneous and hostile groups, “the pure people” and “the corrupt elite,” and this situation makes the politics as a principle of “the general will” of the people” (Mudde, 2016a, p.25-28).

The relationship between the rise of both illiberal democracy and nationalism are reviewed by Hunyadi and Molnar (2016, p.1). The authors analysed the xenophobic sentiment within the Central Europe Region, discussing the reasons within the recent refugee problems within the European countries. Even mainstream parties of Western European countries used the anti-immigrant rhetoric to legitimize their xenophobic perceptions. However, it should be noted that there is a danger for any extremist party exploiting this situation. Especially populist far-right parties used this opportunity quite well. The recent incidents of the rise of the refugee crisis well served this fear of xenophobia in line with the growth of the populist far-right parties. “Also Islamophobia which substituted anti-Semitism characterizes right-wing populists’ positions regarding the immigration and integration of Muslims everywhere” (Hunyadi and Molnar, 2016, p.5).

Migration and anti-immigration sentiments constitute significant factors in far-right parties’ ideologies and the economic crisis conditions of Europe starting from 2008 boosted the xenophobia and anti-immigration due to increasing unemployment and economic problems (Öner, 2014, p.165). The CEC countries resisted the demand from the European Union that all the members should take in a comparable number of refugees to the members including Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. As a result of this

resistance, the EU punished this disobedience with some precautions including lawsuits filed for both countries at the European Court of Justice. The populist leaders of both countries benefited from this crisis exploiting the xenophobic and Eurosceptic sentiments of the people,: “Hungary’s ruling Fidesz party and Slovakia’s Smer experienced an upsurge in opinion surveys, and the crisis dominated political discourse in both countries” (Schenkkan, 2016, p.6).

1.2 Defective forms of democracy: Competitive authoritarianism and illiberal democracies

In the nineteenth century, many political theorists noted the relationship between a market economy and democracy (Lipset, 1992, p.2). Lipset (1959, p.71), defined democracy as “a political system which provides regular constitutional opportunities for changing government officials ... and permits the largest possible part of the population to influence decisions through their ability to choose among alternative contenders for political office”. Lipset's definition of democracy illustrates the term's contemporary interpretation. Lipset (1959) used a dichotomous classification, based on his own judgement, into democracies and dictatorships, but he thought that the criteria of democracy might differ in different political areas. Sartori also believes that the distinction between democracy and non-democracy should be treated as dichotomous (1962, p.150-52; 1987, p.156, 1991, p.248-49). Hence, the essential initial task is to establish exhaustive and mutually exclusive categories of democracy and non-democracy (1987, p.182-85).

As a political dichotomy, between autocracy and democracy, there are some areas what we can call the ‘grey zone’ (Moraski, 2007, p.536) or ‘embedded democracy’ (Merkel, 2004, p.36) or “defective democracies” (Merkel, 2004, p.49).

Politically grey zone refers to hybrid regimes which are used to indicate the placement of states on a scale that lies between "full-fledged democracy and outright dictatorship" (Diamond, 2002, p.23). In the more general classification, democracies are grouped as liberal, neo-liberal and illiberal between democracy and autocracy. Defective democracies are sub-types of liberal democracies. Merkel (2004, p.49) explained the concept of 'defective democracies' as the reflection of the grey zone. Merkel (2004, p.49), starts from the root concept of embedded democracies, which consists of five interdependent partial regimes (electoral regime, political rights, civil rights, horizontal accountability, and adequate power to govern) and he further distinguishes between four diminished subtypes of defective democracy: exclusive democracy, illiberal democracy, deliberative democracy and tutelary democracy. Lijphart (1999) also contributed to the understanding and measuring the quality of democracy and hence defective forms of democracy. Lijphart (1999) developed a quantitative comparative strategy drawing on Dahl's concept of oligarchy (civil rights, participation, and competition) but also included different indicators such as female representation, electoral assistance, satisfaction with democracy, and corruption.

The term illiberal democracy was first proposed by Zakaria (1997, p.5) that within the system, the civil liberties and the rights of the citizens are limited even though elections take place. There are many countries "that are categorized as neither 'free' nor 'not free,' but as 'probably free,' falling somewhere between democratic and nondemocratic regimes" (O'Neill 2010, p.162-163). This situation may be explained as there is always a constitution even in autocracies, but civil liberties are limited or even do not exist. In other words, there is a formal democracy in some countries and even regular elections, but they are not liberal or free at all. Zakaria addresses that in

the West, electoral democracy and civil liberties (of speech, religion, etc.) support each other. On the other hand, in developing parts of the world or in the Eastern regions, democracy and liberal values hardly integrate. He argues that “democracy without constitutional liberalism is producing centralized regimes, the erosion of liberty, ethnic competition, conflict, and war” and he believes that “constitutional liberalism can bring democracy, but not vice versa” (Zakaria, 2007, p.6).

Illiberal democratic governments may think that the most crucial function of democracies is the regular elections, but this is an incomplete understanding of democracy. Lack of some liberties like freedoms of assembly and speech may limit having opposition role in a democracy. Regular elections do not guarantee fair elections, as voting may represent only a formal activity of the citizens and they may not reflect their demands freely for the administrative positions.

The theorists argue that liberal democracies, in contrast to electoral democracies, consist of three dimensions: the dimension of vertical legitimacy, the dimension of the rule of law and liberal constitutionalism and the dimension of effective agenda control (Zakaria, 2007, p.3). Different types of defective democracy may be sub-grouped as exclusive democracy, domain democracy, illiberal democracy and deliberative democracy (Zakaria, 2007). According to deliberative democracy, the substance of democracy is to establish a free and public debate and negotiation as involving the participation of all the possible actors prior to decision-making, the outcome of which will result in a consensus regarding policy-making (Coppedge et al., 2011, p.253). For example, Freedom House’s “electoral democracy” classification is different from classical “liberal democracy,” and according to *Freedom in the World*, most free countries could be considered liberal democracies, while some Partly Free nations might qualify as electoral, but not liberal, democracies

(<https://freedomhouse.org/report/methodology-freedom-world-2018>). The minimal requirement for a state to be listed as democratic by Freedom House is that of so-called ‘electoral democracy’. However, the fairness of any election is always difficult to assess and the term electoral democracy is therefore theoretically incomplete and analytically not very useful (Merkel, 2004, p.34). Thus the classification in the Freedom House methodology, the terminologies of liberal, semi-liberal and illiberal democracies are used in this study as more comprehensive and decisive categories of contemporary liberal systems today

“Competitive authoritarianism is a definition of a model of an intermediate form which is between well-known, and well-defined terms of democracy and full authoritarianism and some other concepts emerged as well: semi-democracy, the illiberal democracy, electoral authoritarianism and hegemonic party system” (Levitsky and Way, 2002, p.52). Levitsky and Way opposed to the usage of the term “illiberal democracy” of Zakaria (1997) and they “coined a new concept and not using democracy with its positive image, instead coined a new term closer to authoritarianism not to democracy: *competitive authoritarianism*” (Levitsky and Way, 2010, p.52). In this context, Bustikova and Guasti, (2017, p.167-168) defined the Central European countries’ freedom levels as “illiberal swerves (temporary illiberal democracy) as Hungary has an illiberal democracy which seems to be permanent; while Poland and Slovakia have only illiberal swerves.

As the thesis deals with assessing the states of democracy in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, and it is aimed to offer a more detailed assessment and analysis of defective forms of democracy. As the Slovakian democratization process is entirely different from others and one explanation for his situation is that civil society organisations are stronger in Slovakia (Malová, 2017b, p.14). However, the reformist

government of Poland with Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice Party, PiS), gained its absolute majority only recently in October 2015. Hungary's Fidesz Party under the leadership of Orbán won the elections in 2010 on a joint list with the Christian Democratic People's Party, Slovakian Smer-SD Party had to share the power with other parties as a coalition government. These differences will be further analysed by the empirical findings.

1.3 The rise of the New right and far-right parties in the EU

The three principal concerns of the “new right” are law and order, public morality and national identity. The new right stems from two ideological traditions: Neoliberalism and neo-conservatism and the new right is a “form of “authoritarian populism,” reflecting and responding to widespread popular anxiety about the relaxation of moral standards and the weakening of authority in society” (Pelinka, 2013, p.7).

The new right politics and populism support each other. “Although populism is not necessarily anti-democratic, it is essentially illiberal, especially in its disregard for minority rights, pluralism, and the rule of law” (Mudde, 2016a, p.28). We can fully understand the context of rising far-right and illiberal democracy with the synchronous rise of the new right. New right paradigm weakened some European values such as human rights, democracy, and plurality. The New Right approach is based on two pillars of as “the rejection of the Keynesian model” and “principles of neo-conservatism”. Although Reaganism in the US and Thatcherism in the UK were considered as successful, their politics were also based on populist discourses (Harvey, 2005, p.42). The conservatism of the Central European countries was rather case-specific within the culture of the post-communist countries, as the combination

of traditionalism, the trinity of "family, and God" is mixed with statism as well. This kind of mixture of the political elements was apparent in most post-communist countries including Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia.

Recently, there appeared a new trend of the “new authoritarianism” or illiberal democracy in Central European Countries (CEC): “New authoritarianism may be labelled as the hybrid form of government, which maintains competitive elections and “democracy”, yet the rule of law has been swallowed by the executive branch and the media is largely controlled by the ruling party” (Wiatr, 2017, p.838). It seems that Hungary, Poland and recently Slovakia have been weakening their connection with European values as they are turning into illiberal democracies.

The literature on the issues related to far-right parties in the region has been neglected. As most of the political arguments have mostly focused on the countries especially from the West European Region (De Lange and Mudde, 2005, p.480). Until recently, scholars have often ignored this region (Pirro, 2015; Pytlas, 2016; Minkenberg, 2015, 2017). Therefore, the significance of this study is right here to present valuable data to the literature on politics in CCE countries with special reference to far-right parties’ approach to the European integration of their countries.

1.4 Political Life and Political Parties in Selected Case Countries

Far-right parties are quite successful in Hungary and Poland, but in Slovakia, the situation is rather different, as there is a coalition consisted of a leading party of the Social Democrats supported by nationalist, liberal conservatives and Christian Democrats. There have been autocratic and populist tendencies in post-communist Central European countries. Hungary and Poland may be classified in the category of “illiberal democracies”, a rather ambiguous term suggested by Zakaria (1997). Similar

tendencies have been present, although in weaker forms, in Slovakia. Some pessimist authors believe that “we are facing now a wave of ‘new authoritarianism’ in Central Europe as for twenty five years politics in Central Europe was dominated by political elites which came to power in the early stages of the transition and were mostly composed of the leaders of the democratic opposition and reformists from the former regime” (Wiatr, 2017, p.838). Populist political parties are in power in the region as they challenge the ruling parties and propose that they are the alternative to the government.

Far right parties are quite successful in exploiting the old fears of the people inherited from the communist era. The increasing economic crises and problems also helped to support the rise of the populist political parties of CEC.

1.4.1 Hungarian Case: Although, separation of powers is the fundamental condition of liberal democracy, however in Hungary, the discourses and policies of political leaders showed that the constitutional courts are not objective, and they define their degeneration as their power usage is presented as the “people’s choice. However, Fidesz was founded by young lawyers and was expected to be lawful in its policies. By 2014, however, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán had called the system of checks and balances as the “U.S. invention that for some reason of intellectual mediocrity Europe decided to adopt,” and presented an innovative form of the democracy: “illiberal democracy” (Kirchick, 2017, p.59). Fidesz party leader Viktor Orbán was successful in “polarizing the political sphere in an “us against them” fashion, constantly questioning the legitimacy of the transition elites and constitutional arrangements resulting from the transition compromises”¹ (Uitz, 2008, p.40). Fidesz’s messages were well received by the voters that voting for Fidesz

¹The main slogan of Fidesz for the 1998 elections was “more than a change in government – less than a regime change” (több mint kormányváltás, kevesebb mint rendszerváltás). Date of Access: 24.03.2018

means that you love your country and you are a good patriot. Fidesz convinces people that this party is the sole representative of national and local values while condemning others and continuously creating enemies within and abroad.

1.4.2 Polish Case: After the communist period, the Polish political system created a dynamic party system. As they adopted the proportional representation (PR), the election results gave an opportunity for the small political parties to be represented in the parliament. PR is an electoral system in which parties gain seats in proportion to the number of votes cast for them. Historically there were two competing groups (camps) before the 2001 European Parliament elections. The aim of both of the parties was the same; to be successful in the transition to the EU, they aimed at the full membership of the EU. Their vote percentage was about 10 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively. In 2005, their electoral performance was about the same level. Polish People's Party was Agrarian, and Christian Democrat as well as conservative and they did not use populist discourses until that period. The leader of Self-Defence, Andrzej Lepper, started using the term of populism for the first time as a means of “endless challenge against the corrupted political structure defending the citizens and their national interest” (Jasiewicz, 2008, p.14). The Social Democrats were the 1st party and set up a centre-left government, but it was seen as an unsuccessful government as well as having corruption problems. “It soon became Poland’s most unpopular government since the transition to democracy” (Szczurbiak, 2007, p.207). “According to surveys, the voters carried on believing in political corruption and dishonesty of the politicians as well as considering politicians as unreliable and care only for their own interests even after the elections” (CBOS, 2003, p.4). “As a result, in the subsequent parliamentary election of 2005, the most important single reason for Poles to vote for

a party concerned the honesty and reliability of their preferred party” (CBOS, 2005, p.2-3). As the political culture and atmosphere were suitable for the parties that use populist discourses, the Law and Justice Party (PiS) won the elections. The manifesto of PiS seemed to be successful for conveying the message to the voters: “for well over a decade liberal reforms had wreaked havoc on the fortunes of ordinary folk” (Millard, 2010, p.146). The coalition was not successful as it started tumbling in 2007, “but the government refrained from radical austerity measures, unemployment was falling, and the government received credit for its anti-corruption measures” (Szczerbiak, 2008, p.418). Law and Justice Party lost the leadership to the Civic Platform of Donald Tusk in the elections of 2007 and 2011. However, the party was influential in the Polish political life. The roots of PiS were in the post-communist era of Poland and in 2015 elections PiS won the elections by using populist and illiberal discourses. Another vital point is that Hungary and Poland have been supporting each other against the EU threats. Orbán’s leadership was then followed by the Polish politicians that two countries supported each other’s illiberal democratic policies.

1.4.3 Slovakian Case: The political system of Slovakia may be labelled as mixed and not institutionalized, and their connection to the civil society was weak. “The weak institutionalization and low stability of individual parties have frequently challenged the consolidation of liberal democracy in Slovakia” (Malová, 2017a, p.1). In Slovakia, populist left-wing party Smer’s leader and PM, later on, Robert Fico, with his racist and Islamophobic statements such as “Islam has no place in Slovakia”² showed extreme right characteristics of his party. The leading party in Slovakia’s ruling coalition, Smer, unfortunately, imports the far-right populist discourses during the elections. Their political standing was rather patriotic as well as populist, and their

²<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/islam-has-no-place-in-this-country-says-slovakian-prime-minister-weeks-before-it-takes-over-eu-a7052506.html>. Date of Access:30.03.2018

attitudes of xenophobia and Islamophobia were apparent. Right-wing extremism poses a threat to democracy. Therefore, more attention should be paid to developing anti-extremist policies (Abbass et al., 2011, p.1).

1.5 The Research Question and the Hypothesis

This study frames its research question as well as the central hypothesis as follows:

Research Question:

What is the role of the new right on the understanding of democracy in selected CEC countries?

The Hypothesis:

The parameters of the new right influence the understanding of democracy in selected CEC countries.

The main argument of our thesis is that the changes in the understanding of democracy in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia is influenced by the changes in the parameters of the new right.

In this thesis, by analysing case studies of three CECs, it is found out whether the simultaneous rise of far-right parties and the new right is linked to “the end of politics” and “the representation crisis of democracies” creating authoritarian and defective forms of democracy, in other words, “illiberal democracy”.

1.6 Methodology

The primary methodological preference of the thesis is qualitative as the topic is longitudinal and also secondary data is used. The phases of the field research are explained in detail in the related chapter.

Data Collection: This research is mainly an analytical study including a historical perspective. Even though the post-communist era of Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia are at our focus, since our thesis concerns itself with the ways in which the

New Right arises, and illiberal democracy is constituted, we employ a limited comparative model. As a data set, party and party manifestos would show the followers and to the public what kinds of policies are promised and announced by the party. For our thesis, looking at the far right-parties' reports, articles and newspapers published in English are also useful and important materials in order to shed some light on the reasons of why and how those parties have been able to gain people's support.

Some projects within and for the European Union used similar methodological approaches to understand and position the political systems of EU members, and in this sense, a useful Project on Visegrád countries and Germany is the 'CEE Identity' which has been carried out by EUROPEUM (Institute for European Policy)³. Some reports are used from several prominent institutions such as Freedom House rankings, Human Rights Watch, and reports, Amnesty International and Reporters without Borders reports and EU-based and EU-supported individual reports on the research framework.

Freedom House published its recent "Nations in Transit 2018" report clarifying that liberal democracy is on decline especially in Central Europe and Eurasia. The title of the report (Confronting Illiberalism) is also implying the democratic progress of the countries in general. It was found that especially in Central Europe, illiberalism has been rising in line with the general democratic trend. The democracy score, in general, has declined for 12 years in a row, including political institutions, processes, and habits⁴. For instance, democracy scores of Hungary are 3.71 (3.54 for 2017), Poland 2.89 (2.57 for 2017) and Slovakia 2.61 (2.61 for 2017)

³<http://www.cceidentity.eu>. Date of Access:15.04.2018

⁴ https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FH_NIT2016_Final_FWeb.pdf. Date of Access:10.04.2018

for 2018 according to Freedom House (1 most democratic and 7 least democratic)⁵.

The Democracy Barometer is a new index of democracy⁶. It aims to overcome the conceptual and methodological shortcomings of existing measures, in order to measure the subtle differences in the quality of established democracies. The index aims at distinguishing democratic regime from non-democratic ones. The Democracy Barometer is therefore based on a quality of democracy approach and includes freedom, equality and control as core values: “The starting point is the premise that a democratic system tries to establish a good balance between the normative, interdependent values of freedom and equality and that this requires control”⁷. In order to guarantee these three core values for the quality of democracy, nine democratic functions are selected having several sub-components and indicators.

The Economist Intelligence Unit also categorizes countries based on some economic, social and political parameters. Political outlook report may be useful to see the recent trends in the democratic performance of the selected countries⁸.

Manifesto Project-MARPOR⁹ is another useful and relevant Project database that may be used as they content-analysed all the manifestos of the political parties in the OECD (our sample is also included). We may use especially the MARPOR dataset that consists exclusively of party manifestos and focuses on policy priorities.

Sampling Procedures: Our case selection for testing our hypothesis on the analysis of illiberal democracy included three Central European countries: Hungary,

⁵ <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2018>. Date of Access:10.04.2018

⁶ <http://www.democracybarometer.org/index.html>. Date of Access:25.09.2018

⁷ http://www.democracybarometer.org/concept_en.html. Date of Access:25.09.2018

⁸ <https://store.eiu.com/product/political-outlook-report>. Date of Access:25.09.2018

⁹ www.manifesto-wzb.eu. Date of Access:15.04.2018

Poland, and Slovakia. These countries were chosen as they have similar characteristics that all three countries in the political-economic alliance of the Visegrád Group are high-income countries with a very high Human Development Index and have enjoyed more or less steady economic growth for over a century. Besides these economic similarities, these countries also share similar and to some extent common political and demographic backgrounds: Visegrád Countries are post-communist countries that started evolving into democracies in the 1990s. They all joined the European Union in 2004. They are also homogenous in population subgroups, with little immigration into these countries. These similarities make these countries eligible for case selections of the political parties. In this study three mainstream parties (including Smer-SD which is not a mainstream party but in power in Slovakia) and three new right/far-right parties are selected from Hungary, Poland and Slovakia to analyse their manifestos and party programmes to examine the parameters of illiberal democracy and new right principles. The data collection covers the term between 2004 and the present.

Sampled political parties;

Hungary: Fidesz (Hungarian Civic Union)/National Conservatism

Jobbik (Movement for a Better Hungary)/Nationalism-Far-right Politics

Poland: PiS (Law and Justice Party)/National Conservatism-Social Conservatism

PO (Civic Platform)/Liberal Conservatism-Christian Democracy

Slovakia: Smer-SD (Direction-Social Democracy)/Social Democracy

SNS (Slovak National Party)/Nationalism/Far-right Politics

In this study three mainstream parties (however Smer-SD is not a mainstream party) and three new right/far-right parties are selected from Hungary, Poland and Slovakia to analyse their manifestos, party programmes and fundamental programmes after 2004 and then they are analysed by using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework offered by Van Dijk (1993). The promises and arguments in the manifestos are the demand variables and more straightforward to measure and operationalize (van Kessel, 2013, p.198). The *themes* produced from the literature as well as *actions* will be found through the CDA process and compared to see the priorities of the sampled political parties. Through this field research, the political party manifestos and party programmes show some of the New Right's core ideological elements as well as illiberal democracy parameters. For example, the parameter of xenophobia may consist of some sub-categories (items) such as anti-immigration, Anti-Roma, Islamophobia and Anti-Semitism. The xenophobia parameter will be used in the qualitative analysis, but the sub-categories are also used for the discussion of the findings.

We employ the CDA framework in the following sequence: identifying the unit of analysis, choosing a set of categories, coding the material, tabulating the material and illustrating the material, interpreting the material. NVivo 12 qualitative analysis software is used to analyse the party manifestos with the support of the CDA framework.

Reliability and Validity: A central idea in CDA is that the many words of the text are classified into fewer and more meaningful content categories. The concepts of 'reliability' and 'validity' are essential in this context. The CDA uses a set of

procedures to make valid and reliable inferences from the text. The data is evaluated consistently and systematically not only on the surface but also in-depth in CDA.

1.7 Contribution to the Literature

The focus of this thesis is to explore different philosophy and practices of the democracy and authoritarianism within the European Union with particular reference given to the three Central European countries that joined in the EU in 2004. We review the political developments in the three countries as sampling the mainstream party (including Smer-SD as a social democratic party in nature) and the opposition party. The analysis shows that the conditions of the type of democracy may have links to the political system and political parties in selected case countries. Furthermore, tackling a subject that has not been studied in Turkish academia indicates the originality of our thesis.

1.8 Chapter overview

Chapter one starts with reviewing the context of the research framework as the enlargement and transition process of the EU by considering the social, political economic and cultural perspectives. Then it summarises different forms of democracy including liberal, neo-liberal and illiberal democracy within the concept of the European Union and especially from the perspectives of the Central European countries. New right movement and populist far-right political systems will be discussed and ultimately the question of ‘to what extent illiberal democracies and authoritarian tendencies are created by the philosophy of the new right perspectives’ will be answered. **Chapter two** summarises the features of the political life and political parties in selected case countries to enable us to develop our research model

to analyse and to interpret the data in our field research. **Chapter three** begins by outlining the theoretical framework of the study. After clarifying the aims of the qualitative research, data on party manifestos are collected from three countries, and then some analyses and comparisons are made to test the hypothesis of the study. Finally, based on the interpretation of the data, and the preliminary findings obtained by the principal analysis, the differences as well as similarities between the case countries in terms of the research questions and hypotheses are proposed.



2. DEFECTIVE FORMS OF democracy within the EU Context

Introduction

The 20th century was a different era in which two World Wars and a Cold-War period took place seriously influencing the history of mankind. The First World War caused radical changes such as bringing the end and the collapse of great empires and the birth of the nation-states. As a result of this process; democratic, communist, national socialist and fascist regimes were created. However, these new systems were not stabilized; hence the tension resulted in the Second World War between democratic and communist systems and national socialist and fascist regimes from 1939 to 1945. As a result of the 2nd World War, the world was divided into a bipolar political system, liberal democratic systems versus communist and socialist systems.

The military and political tension created the 'cold war' and also resulted in the confrontation of US-led liberal Western Bloc with Soviet-led communist Eastern Bloc. The cold war period was contained different areas of the society from culture to economy, military and even sports (for instance one side boycotted when the other side hosted the Olympic Games).

In this chapter, different forms of democratic regimes are summarized to understand the relationship between liberalism and democracy. The rise of the new right and then far right within Europe should be analysed to understand the context of illiberal democracies within the European Union. New right movement and far right versions of the political systems are discussed, and ultimately the question of 'to what extent illiberal democracies are influenced by the philosophy of the new right perspectives' is answered.

2.1 CEC enlargement period from the historical perspectives

The aim of the European Union was not only the economic integration in Europe but monitoring the security issues and maintaining the peace within Europe were also other major objectives. The EU structure started with the three relatively small countries known as Benelux countries that are namely Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. This process and structure were carried out by the foundation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) after the Treaty of Paris in 1951. After then Germany, France and Italy were included, and the mutual cooperation resulted in the European Economic Community (EEC). The Economic community was primarily a 'customs union' then became a 'common market'. As the Community was also a political entity, some politically neutral countries like Switzerland, Austria and Sweden were not able to enter the EEC. They decided to found a new economic integration platform later on known as the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Initially, Denmark, Norway and the UK with Portugal strengthened the EFTA, but in 1973, the UK with its neighbours Ireland and Denmark decided to join the EEC. Then, Greece was accepted as the full member in 1981, and then Spain and Portugal became full members in 1986 and Austria, Sweden and Finland joined the EU in 1996. The Eastern and the most significant enlargement occurred in 2004 when eight Central and Eastern European countries alongside Malta and Cyprus, became the member. CEC countries were Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia. Romania and Bulgaria joined in 2007. Then lastly Croatia joined in 2013, and there are some countries in the queue such as Turkey, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia.

For the Eastern and mainly CEC enlargement process, the EU had to make a decision on whether or not to expand the boundaries of the EU to Eastern Europe,

mostly former USSR countries as the culture, economy and understanding of the rule of law of these countries were very different from the Western members of the EU. Historically these former communist countries “did not have stable and functioning democracies, had limited experience with the market economy, and even less experience with respect of human rights and the rule of law” (Emmert and Petrovic, 2013, p.1374). The most important issue with CEC for the EU accession process was the negative and long-lasting effects of the long socialist years as the Soviet Regime deformed the economies, politics, social relations and also the minds of the individuals in the CEC. Heavy control of the state as the command economy approach was taken and the populist, oppressive and non-democratic political life was maintained by the pro-communist politicians within the satellite countries. The accession period to the EU was carried out by the member states under these negative conditions. Their applications for the full membership were made possible after the meeting of the European Council in Copenhagen in June 1993. The authorized committees declared that, with the consent of the European Council, some Eastern Europe countries including some CEC countries should be members of the EU. The Copenhagen Criteria in 1993 were accepted as the member states would have to meet the requirements “as the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union” (Grabbe, 2002, p.251).

Members of the European Union considered the capacity of the Union to absorb new members without decreasing the democratic standards of the Union, as well as maintaining the European integration. As it was labelled, the Great Eastern Enlargement was a real challenge for the EU, but especially CEC were keen on

becoming the full member of the Union, and hence they transformed their societies in terms of economy, politics, law and culture in a relatively short time. However, some authors would argue that the European Commission did not apply all the rules and conditions of the Copenhagen Criteria to the CEC as the Commission decided that each candidate would be assessed on its own merits (Regatta approach). The negotiations started with the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, and Estonia, as implying that other candidates needed more reforms in their economic, legal, and political infrastructure. This was a new system applied for the Eastern European applicants to the Union as all the administrative, legal and financial systems of the countries screened by the European Commission. The EU prepared a roadmap and timetable for the candidate countries, and the aim was to complete the accession procedures by the June 2004 European Parliament elections. Negotiations with Cyprus, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Malta, Slovenia, and Latvia were concluded in December 2002, eight CECs and two Mediterranean Islands joined the EU on 1 May 2004, and thus the total number of the EU increased from 15 to 25. Bulgaria and Romania needed three years more for the accession procedures, and finally, they joined in 2007.

For over twenty years, the majority of CEC voters have consistently demonstrated high degrees of consent to the EU as a supranational anchor of Visegrád democracies, in spite of several structural shortcomings, a bumpy transition to market economy and liberal democracy, a corrupt political elite (Malová, 2017a, p.10). Yet, the consistently high degree of corruption (Holmes, 2017, p.111) translated into the lower popular trust in democracy and national political institutions, and more recently the EU's stabilizing effect has been eroded. "Corruption being the first thing that comes to mind regarding CECs is no coincidence" (Kostadinova, 2012, p.5). "Major corruption scandals resulted in declining popularity of CEC mainstream parties and governments and the increasing apathy, mass protests, radicalism and Euro-scepticism

of the population, generating a huge gulf of trust between the elite and citizens” (Ágh, 2016a, p.9). For long years of the communist period, CEC countries were heavily influenced by a political and social discourses as they had believed capitalism as a bad thing. It was a long process to maintain a smooth transition to the market economy. Moreover, the question that has frequently been discussed for Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia today is to what extent it is possible to change political culture and mind-set through the legislative transformation? Those three countries used to be presented as the success stories of Europeanization by means of the change in their economic, political and especially judiciary systems. But there are now several political and social developments implying that the political mind-set of those countries has not been “Europeanized”. We look at this issue from the political parties’ perspectives as well.

2.2 Central and Eastern European Enlargement of the European Union and the Transition Period

EU was founded with six members in Western Europe (Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands) primarily for the economic cooperation. The peace attempts of the post-war period and the new Union aimed at preventing new world wars. In 1973, Denmark, Ireland, and the United Kingdom joined the new organization as named the "European Community. Greece, Portugal and Spain then joined the Union within ten or fifteen years not only for the economic cooperation but also for the democratic developments of their countries.

The most famous incident happened in Europe’s post-war period was the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1990, and the establishment of the European Union in 1992 with the Maastricht Treaty may be considered as the turning point of the new political and economic cooperation process all over the European continent. The USSR and

Yugoslavia Federation were broken into several countries, and East and West Germany reunified. The promising aspects of the integrating states within a democratic and liberal Union were not only a significant challenge but also a great opportunity, especially for the post-Communist countries. Hence, the integration efforts of the EU proved that the process of enlargement has been at the centre of the development process of the Union. Especially economic benefits of the Union attracted other countries outside. The European Community and then the European Union (after 1993) declared the Article 237 of the Treaty of Rome as “any European State might apply to become a member of the Community”. Then the principle of the enlargement changed by Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union as: Any European State which respects the principles set out in Article 6 (1) may apply to become a member of the Union. It shall address its application to the Council, which shall act unanimously after consulting the Commission and after receiving the consent of the European Parliament, which shall act by an absolute majority of its component members. The conditions of admission and the adjustments to the Treaties on which the Union is founded, which such admission entails, shall be the subject of an agreement between the Member States and the Applicant State. This agreement shall be submitted for ratification by all the contracting States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements” (European Communities-Commission, 1987, p.413).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of communism in 1989, liberal democratic regimes began flourishing in CECs. Following the political regime change in Eastern Europe in the early 1990s, the former socialist countries aimed to join the integrative organisations of Western Europe (such as OECD, NATO and the EU). There was a common belief that liberal democracy and active civil society could

be transplanted directly to the CEC conditions. In line with that, a large number of experts tended to describe the CEC transformation as primarily an evolutionary process, that is to say, lacking consideration of the growing gap between the existence of formal and legal processes of democratization and the absence or shortcoming of social consolidation. Despite the fact that the signs of regression in the consolidation process were already visible in the early 2000s, “these worries were swept away by EU-euphoria and over-optimism that EU membership with all its ‘automatic’ effects would resolve the basic contradictions between and within economic, political and social developments” (Ágh, 2016a, p.12). The broad agreement was in favour of accession to EU in almost all contexts. Despite the fact that several people lost their jobs and neoliberal policies imposed by the IMF made people’s lives more precarious and uncertain, no severe protests or resistance came from the streets.

Aiming for more wealth and freedom, CECs started EU accession process as well as signing up for IMF programs with the aim of transition to market economy. However, the neoliberal policies promoted by the IMF and the global markets created a perfect unique environment for the far right to grow.

There has been a clear and strong correlation of the accession progress levels, and also the success and failures of the CEC countries as the literature has focused on the transition process (see e.g. Pridham, 2001; Bideleux, 2001; Vachudova, 2005; Grabbe, 2006; Schimmelfennig et al., 2006; Schimmelfennig 2008). As the literature on the European Union and EU enlargement has shown, a change in policy and attitude of states is explained differently by academics. Moravcsik and Vachudova (2005, p.198) indicate that “enlargement is a calculated move, in which the costs and benefits are also evaluated beforehand”. Policy changes after EU membership are therefore subject to new rational cost-benefit decisions. Other authors, like

Schimmelfennig (2005, p.598), make use of a constructivist approach based on norms and values: “As new member states will adopt more norms and values, they will be more likely to enter institutionalized relations with European regional organizations”. A third important theory by March and Olsen (2006, p.24) is that of rational choice institutionalism. The theory states that “actors functioning within an institution take a certain course of action due to certain constraints provided by this institution”.

Europeanization has a significant influence on Central and Eastern Europe. EU enlargement is a project of modernisation and democratisation in Western Europe. The debate on Europe and Europeanization links with the question of how it will influence sovereignty. The anxieties of protecting national borders as well as national identity are still significant in CEC countries. There has been a fear amongst the EU members that CEC countries are fundamentally different from the Western World. Thus, they can influence the entire European integration.

“Conditionality has played a crucial role in ensuring the implementation of political and economic reforms by the governments that succeeded the illiberal rulers in power” (Bunce et al., 2009, p.99). The conditionality of the EU forced Eurosceptic politicians to follow through extensive reforms to be eligible for the EU accession. In 1998, Slovak party leaders worked to correct the political transgressions of the previous regime and catch up with CEC front-runners in the negotiations in order to join the EU in the first wave in 2004. The EU’s leverage compels all governments to tackle specific politically tricky and inconvenient reforms, such as creating an independent civil service, reforming the judiciary system, or accelerating privatization, and to stick to the rules over time. Ultimately the pre-accession process is centred on a strategy of gate-keeping: if a candidate does not comply with the regulations, it can be held back from the next stage in the process. For the first eight

post-communist candidates, the main steps were as follows (Bunce et al., 2009, p.99): (1) beginning screening; (2) opening negotiations after satisfying the Copenhagen Criteria; (3) closing particular chapters in the negotiations; and (4) completing the talks. A candidate could move up thanks to accelerated reform or slip back as a sanction for unfulfilled promises to implement change – although toward the end of the process the decision to admit eight post-communist states all at once in 2004 was a political decision. For Bulgaria and Romania, a fifth step has been added consisting of a final evaluation of their administrative capabilities with the possibility of postponing accession by one year

The most significant enlargement of the EU was the 2004 Eastern Enlargement. Many people in the “old” EU Member States still think that the EU has not yet successfully digested the 2004 enlargement. They feel that the addition of the Central and Eastern European countries has changed the nature of the Union. According to most comments on the 2004 enlargement, it has been a great success (Emmert and Petrovi, 2014, p.1382-83)

2.3 Key Issues of CEC Enlargement within the EU

European integration questions the relationship between nation and state. European integration undermines the traditional identity among sovereignty, territory, nationality, and function that is the essence of the traditional nation-state. It is often argued that the European Union suffers from a lack of democracy and seems inaccessible to the ordinary citizen since its methods of operating are so complicated. In order to emphasize this weak link between the EU organs and citizens, “the term democratic deficit has been used to define the social legitimacy crises, and in this

respect, European Union is said to have the legitimacy crises” (Moravcsik, 2004, p.348).

Within the literature on enlargement and especially the EU integration process, there are different dimensions of the issue. These dimensions are related to the politics of the EU on enlargement strategies, and might be summarised as follows: “(1) applicants’ enlargement politics, (2) member state’s enlargement politics, and (3) EU enlargement politics and (4) the impact of enlargement (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2005, p.6). The European integration process has been influential on the sensitivity of the party systems of the CEC suggest that “there is a possibility for a more robust EU influence in the region than in Western Europe” (Enyedi, 2007, p.64).

In response to these failures, populist politicians used this opportunity quite well to influence the voters for restoring the nation’s historical sovereignty. However, the actual solutions offered by nationalist parties have little practical value, and could indeed be quite destructive. The ill-considered nature of such programs was on full display in the campaign to withdraw Britain from the European Union (Brexit). The economic arguments for leaving the EU have been debunked by a majority of economists. Most of the far-right parties in CEC were in favour of accession to the EU, but after successfully becoming the full member, they did not keep their promises, and it resulted in serious problems such as nativism and xenophobia (Schenkkan, 2016, p.6).

There are some points to be considered to understand the democratic deficits within the EU as a whole. First, there is a lack of accountability within the Community as criticizing the EU decision-making system as voters cannot change the government in the EU, unlike democratic countries. “Since power is divided between the Council, the Commission and the EP and the EP is the only elected component in

the legislative process, a change in the Parliament's composition through European elections will not necessarily lead to any major shift in EU policy" (Craig and De Burca, 2011, p.152). This is due to the fact that the Commission is not accountable to the Member States, only to the European Parliament but as a collective body and the Council of Ministers is not accountable as the collective institution. The second dimension of the democracy deficit is about "executive dominance". The transfer of competence to the Community increases the power of the executive at the expense of the national parliaments. Another aspect the Community powers over policy areas have been transferred from the nation-state to Brussels, or in other words, there appears to be the "distance issue". It may create different problems as the central EU structure is distant from member states and also the local citizens may not represent their issues openly. One of the most critical democracy deficit problems is the issue of the transparency as most of the decision-making processes occur within meeting rooms and behind closed doors. Also, some decisions taken by the EU authorities may be very complicated and may not be understood by the ordinary citizens. These were *formal* legitimacy problems.

There are also *social* legitimacy problems. Although most of the institutions are to some extent democratized, there seems to be a lacking some democratic processes. Most democracy theories, because of its state orientation, presume that the system they assess is based upon certain peoplehood or demos (Weiler et al., 1995, p.12). However, some authors would claim the existence of democratic deficit within the EU, and hence there is a lack of democratic legitimacy at European level as "the most fundamental source of the EU's legitimacy lies in the democratic accountability of national governments" (Moravcsik, 2002, p.619). This is due to the fact that the EU

is not a state and shall not be compared to any national democracy as that is the case in most of the analyses made by researchers.

Post-communism and Russian Effect: The fall of the Communist regimes remains one of the most influential developments of the 20th century. After the Berlin Wall collapsed in 1989, the Communist Soviet Union was broken into 15 independent states in a few years. These states were wandering around as there has been a cold-war period between the East and the West in Europe for a long time. Most of the post-communist countries joined in the European Union in 2004 as it is called as the Eastern enlargement. On 1st of May 2004, 8 post-communist nations (Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovenia), as well as Cyprus and Malta, were announced as the new members of the EU. In 2007 Romania and Bulgaria and in 2013 Croatia became the new members. The enlargement process was challenging for both the old members and the newcomers as cultural, historical, economic and political frameworks were entirely different. The new members have been in a transition period for a long time, but they had massive effects on the long communist administration days as well.

The transition can be understood as the process of regime changes itself when the authoritarian system gives way to new democratic institutions and procedures. Although they had their unique cultural infrastructure, they had adopted the communist principles and practices by force. Thus, after becoming a new member of the most popular league in the world, their policies started to diverge in different directions. A group of the regional and historical members including Hungary, Czechia, Slovakia and Poland are called as Visegrád Group (Visegrád Four or V4)¹⁰. Visegrád Group was formed in 1991 and Slovakia joined in 1993, reflects the efforts of the countries of the Central European region to work together in a number of fields of common interest within the all-European integration. “Visegrád co-operation assumed specific dimensions, and with the ethos of its dissident-intellectual founders,

¹⁰<http://www.Visegrádgroup.eu>

it also had clear ideological content and meaningful identity” (Fawn, 2001, p.52). These countries have always been part of a group historically as sharing cultural and intellectual values and religious traditions. The aim of the group is to co-operate in their European Union integration efforts as well as enhancing their solidarity for imparting of values in the fields of culture, education, science and exchange of information. The Visegrád Countries had seen very successful economic transitions and were consolidated democracies by the time they received invitations to start negotiations with the EU (Bunce et al., 2009, p.67)

It was argued that the authoritarian culture creates a required context for the authoritarian political system for a country. This idea was considered as real for Russia as the Russian culture and history are claimed to support the modes of authority, and no opposition was possible. The people did not participate in the decision-making system, but they were the passive receivers of the orders from the above. Especially CEC enlargement was a real challenge as they had the culture of absolute obedience without asking or criticizing anything. So countries have political systems comply with their political and cultural backgrounds. The assumption behind much of the literature is the political system of the CECs was heavily influenced and shaped by the Russian political system.

Populism: It is quite challenging to define populism as a single phenomenon because, according to Houwen (2013, p.77) “populism refers to other political, polemic, and contested concepts, such as ‘the people’ and ‘democracy’”. As democracy has different meanings and different understandings of different people, populism may refer to different concepts in different cultures. Hence the term “populism” has been used to define defending some people or groups against the others and “democracies in CECs are not about to collapse because of the rise of populism. Nevertheless, the populist challenge to liberal democracy has to be taken seriously” (Bugarič, 2008, p.192). Mudde (2004, p.543) takes populism as an ideology as the opposite of both elitism

and pluralism. Populism has been represented by answering the demands of the people, but in most cases, populism is seen as an anti-democratic phenomenon, but this is not the case as there was a leftist populism in the history. Hence, populism has a negative image today as it has not been the case that democracy and populism may be integrated.

“Contemporary European populism is not actually against the democratic system, but it is inherently illiberal” (Martinelli, 2016, p.23). As liberal democracies are in power in most of the European countries, the populist trend within Europe is not just a demand for more democracy; it is a protest against some contextual variables such as human rights and the effects of globalization created by liberal democracies in the Western world.

Recently, in the light of the Euro crisis and the arrival of refugees, “populism has been working well for right-wing far and extremist parties” (Greven, 2016, p.2). Unfortunately, mainstream parties have not been able to develop strategies to counter this populism effectively. “For right-wing populists, immigration is not simply a question of economic competition, but it constitutes a threat against the constructed identity of the people and their traditional values” (Greven, 2016, p.5). According to Mudde, populism is everywhere, an ideology that separates society into two homogeneous and hostile groups, “the pure people” and “the corrupt elite,” and this situation makes the politics as a principle of “the general will” of the people” (Mudde, 2016a, p.25-28).

While illiberal populist democracy or competitive authoritarianism rose in Europe, with Central European leaders closing borders and denouncing refugees as a threat to the nation, financial pressures brought about by falling oil prices and worker remittances undermined the economies of Russia and most former Soviet states. The

risk is that these separate developments could converge, with the collapse of Eurasian countries adding to Europe's growing list of troubles. Since 1995, *Nations in Transit* has tracked the progress and regression of democracy in CECs, the Balkans, and Eurasia. Data from the last decade present an annoying portrait of decline. The region has had more falls than improvements every year since 2007. The whole post-communist countries experienced the decline in democracy scores since 2011. European institutions have faced a growing crisis of confidence since 2008, triggered first by the ongoing struggle to wind down the Eurozone crisis. But the increased flow of refugees and migrants from the Middle East and North Africa in 2015 presented the European Union and its leading governments with an emergency that could not be contained with half-measures or delay.

Immigration: "Migration and immigration play a critical role in far-right parties' ideologies and in their electoral platforms" (Öner, 2014, p.164). The European Union's demand that member countries share the burden by accepting a proportional quota of refugees -from 803 for Slovakia to about 7,000 for Poland was faced significant resistances in Central Europe, including lawsuits filed by Slovakia and Hungary at the European Court of Justice. Political leaders also exploited the crisis to strengthen their populist appeal, disregarding fundamental humanitarian principles and the ideals of democratic pluralism for the short-term partisan gain. "Hungary's ruling Fidesz party and Slovakia's Smer experienced an upsurge in opinion surveys, and the crisis dominated political discourse in both countries" (Schenkkan, 2016, p.6).

Especially CECs are more susceptible to illiberal democratic regimes, as one cause may be the "exogenous shock" of immigrants. Leading politicians in CEC, backed by some counterparts in Western Europe, embraced xenophobia and

nationalism, positioning themselves as protectors of their countries' Christian identity against an "invasion" of Muslims. The challenge to Europe for years has been embodied by the strong illiberalism of Hungary's Viktor Orbán is no longer concentrated in a single country; it is becoming the preferred approach among the states that joined the EU after 2004 and Poland, then Slovakia seems to be influenced by Hungarian political culture.

"The negative stance taken by CEC countries on the refugee situation can be traced not only to elitist politics but to a prevailing mindset; the increasingly negative mood of these states is anchored both in their heritage and in the experience of the socio-economic crisis among the vast majority of CEC populations" (Ágh, 2017, p.14-15).

Discrimination and minority rights: According to Newton and Van Deth (2005, p.24), human rights mean; "the innate, inalienable and inviolable right of humans to free movement and self-determination". These rights cannot be sold, stopped, limited or changed. Some of the human rights are; freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, the right to equal protection of the law, the law against discrimination and minority rights.

An important issue within discrimination and minority rights is xenophobia which is related to the otherness. The other may be anybody, a foreigner, black people, women, any member of any religion. The diversity issue is an inevitable possible problem source for modern societies. This fact is a result of the feeling of oneself less secure in terms of the social status. Xenophobia is, in most cases, combined with nationalism especially in the case of far-right populism as far-right political parties use populism to cover the authoritarian and totalitarian tendencies.

Xenophobia has increased all over Europe due to the refugee and migrant crises. “Although Central European countries lack significant foreign-born populations and have mainly been unaffected by the crisis, the xenophobic sentiment is widespread in the region” (Betz, 1993, p.416). In a Freedom House Survey, it was found that “attitudes towards migration are unrelated to personal experiences. A significant feature of xenophobia in the Visegrád Region is that anti-immigrant sentiment in these countries is not based on actual experience with foreigners” (Hunyadi and Molnar, 2016, p.3). For instance, “since October 2015, because of the fence built along the southern border of Hungary, the inflow of migrants into Hungary has ceased, yet at the same time the government’s anti-immigrant campaign has been still going strong (with the second Paris terrorist attack supplying the campaign with new ammunition); it is therefore not surprising that by 2016 the “thinkers” lost to the xenophobes, and the xenophiles all but disappeared” (Bori and Anikó, 2016, p.44). Many people in post-communist societies “fear the appearance of more vulnerable “foreign” groups will lead to a decrease in social status and social transfers” (Hunyadi and Molnar 2016, p.2). “Islamophobia which substituted anti-Semitism characterizes right-wing populists’ positions regarding the immigration and integration of Muslims everywhere” (Greven, 2016, p.5).

The relationship between the rise of this illiberal democratic trend and the rise of nationalism in CECs is examined by Hunyadi and Molnar (2016, p.1). They reviewed the xenophobic sentiment in Central Europe, discussing the reasons behind historically high levels, as well as its increase with the European refugee crisis. Unlike in Western Europe, anti-immigrant rhetoric comes from the very centre of the political space in Central Europe, exerting a “supply-side effect” and legitimizing xenophobia. While some mainstream populist politicians have been successful in

exploiting these feelings, there is a danger that in the long run, it will be extremist parties that benefit from this paradigm.” EU leaders are facing a European refugee crisis and must address it as a typical European challenge, consistent with their collective and individual member state responsibilities to refugees (Guild et al., 2015, p.2).

2.4 The Europeanization of the CECs

The concept of “Europeanization” has been accepted as the standards for measuring that are imposed by the EU for the candidate countries, and it puts heavy pressure on the candidates in the forms of technical and political conditionality. “Europeanization” is a useful term, but also a potentially misleading one (Grabbe, 2006, p.4). It is a term used in the literature on European integration to mean both the ‘downloading’ of EU policy into the national polity, and sometimes also the ‘uploading’ of national preferences to EU level (Bürzel, 1999). In the case of the CEC countries, “the asymmetrical power relationship that they had with the Union as applicants for membership meant that they were mainly downloading policy, with few opportunities for uploading” (Grabbe, 2006, p.4). In other words, it may be called as the process of “EU-action”, as a means of the meeting of minimum requirements for accession and the adoption of EU norms and policies as well as a process of post-communist transition period and modernisation. As the EU played an important role in the economic and political transformation of the CEC countries, Europeanization is seen as equal to liberalization and democratization. Thus, in most of the CEC countries, those who were more enthusiastic about democratization and market liberalization also supported the EU and furthermore, “an individual’s evaluation of democratization and market liberalization becomes a powerful link to support for

European integration” (Cichowski, 2000, p.1270). The transformative power of the EU has been assessed within the recent literature that “the EU’s ‘transformative power’ is at its highest when deciding to open accession negotiations” (Haughton, 2007, p.233).

During the process of Eastern enlargement in the last 20 years assuming that the process of Europeanization started almost together with the democratic changes in the CEC in 1989, the group of 10 new countries were affected by transformation and democratisation in the context of Europeanization. The outcomes of these processes which could be observed today in the CEC region are different, yet somehow parallel. As empirical research shows, “the process of enlargement had a clearly visible impact on the CEC countries as regards politics, institutions and social life” (Góra and Mach, 2010, p.12).

Many of the phenomena identified in the Europeanization literature can also be seen emerging in CEC, but the EU’s influence on applicants has the added dimensions of conditionality and accession negotiations. The *acquis communautaire* has to be adopted by the candidates concerning with deciding on how much of it should be implemented prior to accession and which parts of the *acquis* will be subject to a transitional period after joining. *Acquis communautaire* is the term used to refer to all the real and potential rights and obligations of the EU system, and its institutional framework (Grabbe, 2001, p.1030) and the accession *acquis* is the whole body of EU law and practice (Grabbe, 2006, p.209).

Hungary, Poland and Slovakia have been members of the European Union (since 2004) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Poland and Hungary since 1999 and Slovakia since 2004). As Bozóki claimed (2008, p.4), “democratization and Europeanization went on hand-in-hand in CECs”. The concept of “Europeanization”

has become a useful tool to analyse the candidates for the EU and has been used for the ‘technical’ (legislative) as well as the mainly ‘political’ dimensions. “The literature on ‘Europeanization’ has analysed the effects of membership on new members, but mainly in single case studies or comparisons between new and ‘old’ member states. Only recently have their insights been applied to study the pre-accession effects on candidate countries” (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier, 2005, p.9).

Europeanization required some significant liberalization and transformation efforts in political, economic and social areas and in the field of political liberalization the candidates, in general, seemed to be successful and this process was used to ensure that the equality based on religion, sex, ethnic or origin race was maintained. However, these improvements could not conceal the problems of the CECs especially Roma issue, anti-immigrants and populist tendencies.

However, some scholars argue that there have been some tendencies in especially CECs as a means of creating defective forms of democracy or illiberal democracy (for instance, Pirro, 2015; Kornai, 2015; Krasztev and Van Til, 2015; Pap, 2017). Liberalisation and justice have not been troubled only in Hungary but also in Poland, Slovakia and other CECs. These problems of liberalism are related to the elitism, populism and other related issues. In Hungary, Fidesz has been populist right as well as representing national-conservatism, and the direction seems to be the far right and illiberal democracy. In Poland, the PiS (Law and Justice) coalition government created a tension against the generous dimensions of Europeanization and the PO slowed down the liberalization efforts. Although Slovakia has been quite successful in economic integration with the EU, the liberal developments within the Slovakian political system have been in slow-motioned as there were populist

reactions. These examples show that events present evidence that “Europeanization and liberalization may not go hand in hand and that the latter can be challenged as a result of progress in the former” (Korkut, 2012, p.4).

According to some scholars, there are two conditionality levels within the EU; firstly, they point out the normative conditionality established by the Copenhagen European Council in December 1993, known as ‘Copenhagen conditions’ as the first pre-accession strategy of the European Union. Secondly, they stress the ‘technical’ preconditions for the candidate countries to accelerate the adoption by fulfilling the criterion proposed by the *acquis* for the full membership. The conditions were formulated as much to reassure reluctant member-states as to guide CECs, and this dual purpose to conditionality continued to be playing a fundamental role in the politics of accession within the EU (Laermans and Roosens, 2010, p.403).

According to the Copenhagen Conditions of 1993, “EU membership requires¹¹;

- that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities,
- the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union.
- Membership presupposes the candidate’s ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of the political, economic and monetary union.
- the Union’s capacity to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration, is also an important consideration in the general interest of both the Union and the candidate countries.

¹¹https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/glossary/terms/accession-criteria_en. Date of Access:25.05.2018

However, in order to do this, certain obligations had to be fulfilled, in the form of 30 chapters of the *acquis communautaire*. This is “the body of common rights and obligations that are binding on all the EU member states” (European Commission, *Acquis* (version 6 December 2016))

It is controversial whether EU conditionality has positive or negative effects on the Central and Eastern European countries. Hughes et al. (2005, p.10) propose that “conditionality has operated as a factor that has potential to frustrate moves toward greater European integration in the medium term because conditionality involves costs to the CECs in the implementation of what is essentially a ‘moving target’ within an ‘evolving process that is highly politicized, especially on the EU side’”. There is a consensus among these studies that the conditionality for the adoption of the *acquis* has strong causal effects in the steering of policy and institutional change in the CECs (Hughes et al., 2005, p.10-11). Nevertheless, “what we need to specify is a causal mechanism through which the EC’s values and norms asserted themselves against self-interested national preferences and bargaining behaviour” (Schimmelfennig, 2001, p.62).

Previous research has paid little attention to CEC's transformation into the democracy as there has been a process of deviation from democracy towards more authoritarian regimes. What is currently witnessed in CECs such as Poland, Hungary, and recently Slovakia is that they are becoming more authoritarian in terms of their political systems. Generally, analysis of CECs on democratic transformation was mostly based on the dual concepts of Europeanization and democratization. Yet, “nowadays an opposite trend where de-Europeanization and de-democratization replaced the former two is apparent in the above-mentioned countries” (Ágh, 2016a, p.7). As a result of the transition process, domestic politics of the new member

countries of the CEC placed EU-related issues on top of their agendas. Hence, “the leaders and politicians from these countries “became part of the EU political space, which gave those incentives to behave as willing partners to the existing Member States, and socialized them into the political discourse of the Union” (Grabbe, 2006, p.4).

The Europeanization and “modernization” procedures of those countries by the IMF and the EU enabled their advancement to the EU standards in legal and technical terms. However, it is hard to say the same about the political culture and mind-set of those countries. The rapid erosion of human rights has been the main problem faced by most countries today. Moreover, EU lost its function of transformative power in the topics of democracy and human rights for “new EU members” after Brexit, refugee crisis and the economic crisis in 2008 (Malová, 2017a, p.3). The threat of terrorism and anxiety about a massive wave of immigrants from the Muslim world, coupled with the widespread belief that “the EU hinders rather than helps when it comes to such problems”, have created a perfect opportunity for right-wing populists in CECs. "Since the beginning of the economic and financial crisis, both the “fear factor” and the level of dissatisfaction have grown, which contributes the rise of far-right” (Nagy et al., 2012, p.1).

In CECs, established liberal/central parties failed to reach the voters. International organizations like the NATO, the Council of Europe, WTO, and the EU have their norms which should be taken into serious consideration by domestic authorities. These constraints decrease the autonomy of liberal democratic policy-making. “A severe result of these circumstances is the convergence of programmes of various central parties to an alarming degree, and consequently the disappearance of differences among them in the eyes of voters” (Smilov and Krastev, 2008, p.10). This

led to the emergence of so-called TINA politics – “TINA” which stands for “There is no alternative” and first coined by Margaret Thatcher. The issue of Europeanization as similar to liberalization also centred around the rhetoric of the “there is no alternative” of the political and economic elites in the CECs after the 1990s onward” (Korkut, 2012, p.13). According to a large number of Europeans, the elites of mainstream parties are helpless in the face of two important shifts in authority in the second half of the twentieth century. Those are “the transfer of authority from nation-states to supranational organizations like the EU and the International Monetary Fund as well as from elected politicians to non-elected technocrats and bureaucrats like central bankers and judges” (Mudde, 2016a, p.27).

2.5 Key Challenges of the European Union

The European Union is seen as a structure to maintain the stability and prosperity in Europe. However, the European Union have been facing some challenges at present such as slow growth and the burden of some poor member countries as well as high unemployment rates in most of the EU countries. Another critical issue is the rise of populist political parties, some of them are far-right in the scale with “Eurosceptic” sentiments. These factors are only some examples of the internal and external challenges the EU has been facing. “A sequence of violently transformative events ranging from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine to spectacular Islamist terrorist attacks, along with more transformative phenomena such as Britain’s exit from the EU and the rise of “illiberal democracy” in places like Hungary and Poland, has put the continent’s future stability in serious doubt” (Kirchick, 2017, p.3-4). There are some main challenges that may threaten the integrity and prosperity of

the EU in the future, and these challenges are related to the economic, political and cultural issues that the EU should deal with:

Ongoing Economic Difficulties: The European economies, in general, have been heavily affected by the Eurozone debt crisis and especially the 2008-2009 global recession. This crisis experience resulted in higher unemployment rates and naturally lower growth rates in the most of the EU countries as a means of a risky situation for the banking system in Europe (Archick, 2016, p.5). These negative effects of the crisis forced some governments in Europe to take serious measures to overcome the problems of the public debt and budget deficits. In order to overcome the negative effects of the Eurozone crisis, some countries including Portugal, Ireland, Ireland, Cyprus and Greece asked for the European Union and International assistance for the financial difficulties. Although there had been some recovery signs, especially middle to lower-income EU members still had higher youth unemployment as well as lower growth rates with general dissatisfaction of the citizens.

Economic crises and problems created tension between the sensitive economies of the lower-income countries and powerful developed economies. Some CECs rejected the financial aid program for Greece as Greece has been a gateway for the refugee's issue as their economies were not strong enough to overcome migratory problems. It has been proposed by some researchers that supporting the economic growth efforts of the poor EU members could solve the current problems of the EU.

The Eurozone crisis: The Eurozone crisis has been coming to an end as the economic growth is rising and the unemployment rate is declining. Through the Eurozone crisis, European member states have torn apart the core founding myth that integration leads to stability and growth for all (countries and citizens) (Statham and Trezz, 2015, p.13). Today the member countries are more careful about the economic

conjuncture than ever. Another problem still influential is the income inequality that has increased to two-thirds of EU members. EU's competitive advantage is still under attack of the globalization.

The refugee crisis: The refugee crisis within the Union started earlier but raised in 2015 as a result of the political instability in the Middle East and Africa. It created tension and anxiety throughout Europe. In both 2015 and 2016, around 1.3 million annual applications for asylum were distributed amongst the 28 member states, a severe rise of the figures as compared with 2014 (625,000) and 2013 (430,000). Although some countries (Germany, Italy, Sweden etc.) are more reluctant to intake refugees, some countries opposed the decisions of refugee intake number for all the members, and these countries were mainly the CECs. “European Union needs a fundamental rethink premised on the ethical and practical importance of avoiding excessive coercion of asylum seekers and refugees” (Guild et al., 2015, p.13).

Brexit: On 23 June 2016, the UK became the first country to finish the membership of the EU with the supporting percentage of 51.9% of voters in a referendum supported Brexit as most of the Britons were anxious about immigration. The Brexit decision influenced some of the new members of the Union, especially post-communist countries that suffer from the adaptation process. The implications of an unexpected move have not been clear yet. As the UK has been known as a promoter of democracy, the Brexit process will have effects on the European Union. “There are economic benefits from European integration, but obtaining these benefits comes at the political cost of giving up some sovereignty. Inside or outside the EU, this trade-off is inescapable” (Dhingra and Sampson, 2016, p.1). It was a historical incident that for the first time in the history of the EU, a country decided to leave the

Union. The vote has a symbolic value that how the citizens perceive the future of the EU.

The rise of "Eurosceptic" or Anti-EU Political Parties: Another challenge which the EU should face is the contextual factors that supported to create the populist right (anti-EU) parties. As Western European countries are attractive to the asylum-seekers, there has been the growth of radical parties that are hostile to the EU and believed to be threatening to the countries' sovereignty. The populist radical right parties are more influential on the political culture of the countries. In recent years, they have joined governing coalitions in some EU member states. Over the last several years, many EU countries have seen a rise in support for populist, nationalist, anti-establishment political parties. These parties are often termed "Eurosceptic" because many have also been worried about whether Brussels has been controlling their national sovereignty. "Although not a completely new phenomenon in the EU, the recent uptick in support for such parties largely began in response to Europe's economic stagnation, austerity measures, and the Eurozone crisis" (Archick, 2016, p.6). However, the rising figures of the refugee inflows and the historical fears about foreigners enabled some Eurosceptic parties with populist policies to come to the power. Global challenges as a risk of losing their own identities have also boosted the success of the populist parties.

Successful Eurosceptic and populist parties have been dominant in some countries within the EU including the UK, Poland, Germany, France, Austria, Finland, Denmark, Hungary, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and Sweden. The success of the Eurosceptic and populist was proved especially as they gained 752 seats (about 25% of the seats) in the 2014 EP elections. These parties were also successful in their respective countries. For example, the Law and Justice Party (PiS)

managed to win the majority seats in the parliamentary elections of Poland in 2015 (Markowski, 2016, p.4).

These parties have been influential on mainstream political actors imposing some principles including slowing down the European integration and controlling immigration regimes. The Brexit decision of the UK was heavily affected by the Eurosceptic. Also, some CECs including Hungary and Poland have faced some conflicts over the main democratic norms and EU values.

It should be noted that the further success of the Eurosceptic parties may lead to the danger of slowing down or reversing some dimensions of the European integration. If Marine Le Pen, the well-known far-right leader, wins the next presidential election in France, she has promised to take France out of the Eurozone as well as holding a referendum on France's decision to stay or leave from the EU membership within six months. Another example is Freedom Party (PVV) of the Netherlands which is known as a successful far-right party is doing well in their national elections and in Germany, Alternative for Germany (AfD) party with right-wing and the Eurosceptic principles have been working hard to win the federal elections to enter the National Parliament (Arzheimer, 2015, p.2).

Populist right-wing parties in CECs are also sceptical on the EU membership, but there has not been any hard rejection of the membership with the exception of MIÉP in Hungary. The priority of the CECs has been special protection for economic sectors especially agriculture. Euroscepticism “expresses the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration” (Taggart, 1998, p.366; Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002, p.9).

An illiberal drift in the CECs: A significant threat to the EU comes from competitive autocracies within the Union. In Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, the rule of law and democratic norms are being challenged by authoritarian governments. Some CECs have been sliding back towards authoritarianism. “There is little available information about ‘what prevents full democracies from sliding back to partial democracies or autocracies, and what prevents partial democracies from sliding back to autocracy’ and that ‘the determinants of the behaviour of the partial democracies elude our understanding’ (Morlino, 2009, p.273). This issue will be analysed in detail.

A legitimacy crisis: A natural result of these challenges is the democratic deficit at the heart of the Union. There was a fall in trust in governing elites and integration. It was also argued that shortcomings in public engagement and political accountability at the EU level, resulted in the democratic deficit.

Thus, the future and possible character of the union have been consistently questioned. Some of the EU supporters propose that the integration process, as well as enlargement, should be slowed down or stopped. Some others, in turn, defend that the EU integration should carry on with further political and economic integration as they aim at creating a union with a superb state power of the world (Laermans and Roosens, 2010, p.398).

A post-accession crisis: The enlargement process of the EU has slowed down after 2013, but especially with the 2004 Eastern expansion or enlargement of the EU were risky as looking from different perspectives. CECs transformed their economies, political systems and their cultures reasonably rapidly, as they were relatively successful in economic, political and legal infrastructure modernization. But the question of how they coped with the cultural transformation or the mind-change in the brains of the citizens has not answered adequately. The Copenhagen criteria were not

applied to all the candidate countries, as the enlargement is not only a technical issue but mostly a political issue (Pridham, 2008). “Indeed, since their EU accession, economic and political liberalization, accompanying Europeanization, have faced a conservative backlash in the new EU member states, such as Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia, to significant degrees” (Korkut, 2012, p.14).

2.6 Different Forms of Democracy

For the definition of democracy, we can start by remembering the question of Giovanni Sartori “Can democracy be anything?” According to the Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought, democracy is an “Ancient political term, with its original meaning, in Classical Athens, of people’s rule, demos’ rule” (Miller et al., 1987, p.153). This definition considers people and demos (Greek equivalent of “people”). Furthermore, the famous definition of American president Abraham Lincoln is well-known but only gives a general understanding of the term: “Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, for the people”¹². Defining democracy as “government by and for the people” brings out a question of “Who will do the governing and to whose interests should the government be responsive when the people are in disagreement and have different preferences”? One answer to this dilemma is the majority of the people and alternatively “as many people as possible” (Ljiphart, 2012, p.1-2).

There are different conceptualisations of the terms related to democracy as considering the different factors contributing to the democratization process (Huntington, 1991, p.13). There are different definitions of democracy by many authors. Schumpeter defines the classical doctrine of democracy as follows: “the democratic method is that institutional

¹²http://en.thinkexist.com/quotation/Democracy_is_the_government_of_the_peopleby_the/6959.html

arrangement for arriving at political decisions which realizes the common good by making the people itself decide issues through the election of individuals who are to assemble in order to carry out its will” (Schumpeter, 2003, p.250). J. S. Mill (1993, p.302–3) claims that “the pure idea of democracy is the government of the whole people by the whole people, equally represented” which requires proportional representation, so a minority is not denied by government representatives.

In the nineteenth century, many political theorists noted the relationship between a market economy and democracy (Lipset 1992, p.2). Lipset (1959, p.71), defined democracy as “a political system which provides regular constitutional opportunities for changing government officials ... and permits the largest possible part of the population to influence decisions through their ability to choose among alternative contenders for political office”. M. Lipset’s definition of democracy illustrates the term’s contemporary interpretation. Lipset (1959) used a dichotomous classification, based on his own judgement, into democracies and dictatorships, but he thought that the criteria of democracy might differ in different political areas. Sartori also believes that the distinction between democracy and non-democracy should be treated as dichotomous (1962, p.150–52; 1987, p.156, 1991, p.248–49). Hence, the essential initial task is to establish exhaustive and mutually exclusive categories of democracy and non-democracy (1987, p.182–85).

Diamond and his colleagues (1995, p.6-7) offer a more extended but similar definition: “a system of government that meets three essential conditions: meaningful and extensive competition among individuals and organized groups (especially political parties) for all effective positions of governmental power, at regular intervals and excluding the use of force; a ‘highly inclusive’ level of political participation in the selections of leaders and policies, at least through regular and fair elections, such

that no major (adult) social group is excluded; and a level of civil and political liberties -freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations- sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation”. The difference of Sartori’s definition of democracy is that he focuses more on a system of majority rule limited by minority rights (Sartori, 1987, p.24). Lijphart (2012, p.2) proposes two types of democracy namely majoritarian (close to Sartori’s typology) and consensus type democracies.

Huntington proposed a well-known definition as “a twentieth-century political system as democratic to the extent that its most powerful collective decision makers are selected through fair, honest, and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote” (Huntington, 2012, p.7). Most of the definitions refer to democracy as a system of Government. For instance, Lipset (1995, p.iv) proposed a sound definition of democracy as a system of government: “First, competition exists for government positions, and fair elections for public office occur. Second, citizens participate in selecting their leaders and forming policies. Third, civil and political liberties exist to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation”. Democracy is a dynamic concept as it transforms over time or we can talk about the degree of democracy as full, partial or not (as it is called as authoritarianism): “In pursuance of the theory of egalitarian democracy, it is the citizens’ legal, political, as well as the possible greatest social and economic equality that provide identical weight to the citizens, and render a regime democratic” (Coppedge et al. 2011, p.254).

Democracy has four main types according to most writers on democracy: constitutional, substantive, procedural, and process-oriented (Collier and Levitsky, 1997, p.43; Tilly, 2007, p.7; Coppedge et al. 2011, p.254; Bühlmann and Kriesi, 2013,

p.44). A constitutional approach considers political activities from the legislative perspective. The regimes of the countries historically may be classified as oligarchies, monarchies and republics. For the historical comparison, constitutional criteria may be a useful tool to understand and analyse the regimes. According to the second type of democracy, substantive approaches deal mainly with living conditions as the regime has human welfare, freedom of speech, equity, justice and other fundamental rights for the democratic regimes. However, two types of democracy may be conflicting as any country has fundamental democratic rights regardless of its constitution and in that case, can we call it a democratic country? Also, as in theory, democracy promotes positive outcomes for the citizens and how can we measure it? These are some points to be considered. The third type of democracy concentrates on regulatory practices to determine whether a regime may be considered as democratic. The procedural approach may be misleading as it only focuses on free elections and participation of the free citizens. This type of democracy is closer to the Freedom House's approach to electoral democracy and concentrates on political rights and civil liberties: "1. A competitive, multiparty political system 2. Universal adult suffrage for all citizens (with exceptions for restrictions that states may legitimately place on citizens for criminal offences) 3. Regularly contested elections conducted in conditions of ballot secrecy, reasonable ballot security, and in the absence of massive voter fraud that yields results that are unrepresentative of the public will 4. Significant public access of major political parties to the electorate through the media and through generally open political campaigning" (Piano and Puddington, 2004, p.716). Lastly, process-oriented approaches to democracy are different from other three types of democracy as the constitutional, substantive, and procedural approaches propose a

set of conditions for a country to be qualified as a democratic country (Kitschelt, 1992).

As Collier and Levitsky (1997, p.19) and later on Rupnik and Zielonka (2013, p.6) argue that, “the term of democracy has been extensively used by many writers with some pre-fixes including liberal, illiberal, façade, representative, participatory, hybrid and electoral as well as defining democracy with Western, Eastern or Islamic definitions” (Pap, 2017, p.162). Some authors refer to electoral or competitive autocracies within the literature (Levitsky and Way 2010, p.5). Following Huntington (2012) and Mill (1993), democracy and liberalism have been seen as interconnected conditions for good governance. In this definition, democracy has been taken as the rule of the majority and liberalism as a means of separation of powers as well as the state preserves the rights of the individuals including property rights of the citizens (Csillag and Szelényi, 2015, p.21-22). The writers only address the term of the illiberal democracy as a means of the distinctive features of the post-communist systems politically. It is claimed that illiberal democracies are possible as the election processes operate as well the government is elected, but the legitimacy crisis of the illiberal democracy prevails. They use the concept of “post-communist managed illiberal democracy, where property relations shift from private property and market capitalism to neo-patrimonial and eventually neo-prebendal property relations, they argue that the core distinguishing feature is this ideology, which they call post-communist traditionalist or neoconservative”. Furthermore, Csillag and Szelényi (2015, p.27) claim that there is always a danger of illiberalism as travelling democracy to autocracy and while “illiberalism does not necessarily eliminate democracy, it creates conditions (given the weakness of Constitutional Courts and the legislative branch) for particularly powerful political leaders to flirt with abandoning

democratic procedures if they may sense their electoral support eroded and they may not win the next elections”.

Among a variety of definitions of democracy, the following definition offered by Diamond (2002) seems like the most comprehensive one encompassing the fundamental principles is that “Democracy requires not only free, fair, and competitive elections, but also the freedoms that make them truly meaningful (such as freedom of organization and freedom of expression), alternative sources of information, and institutions to ensure that government policies depend on the votes and preferences of citizens” (Diamond, 2002, p.21). Huntington (1991, p.11–12) proposed that “the political world should be classified simply into democratic and nondemocratic categories”. So, “as a political dichotomy, between the levels of autocracy and democracy, there are some areas that may be labelled as the ‘grey zone’ (Wigell, 2008, p.230; Frederiksen and Knudsen, 2015, p.1-21) or ‘in-between’ or “defective forms of democracy” (Diamond, 2002, p.21). Pridham (2000, p.23) calls these states “hybrid regimes,” and notes that they pose real problems for external actors interested in advancing a broader or more entire notion of democracy. While elections were used to justify authoritarian rule in the past, the “grey zone” between democracy and authoritarianism has become overwhelmed with the number of regimes employing elections that are something more than shams, but something less than free and fair (Moraski, 2007, p.536). Politically speaking, “the grey zone” refers to hybrid regimes which are used to indicate the placement of states in a scale that between “full-fledged democracy and outright dictatorship” (Carothers, 2002, p.18). In general, “countries of the grey zone show numerous democratic features, such as “sufficient room” for the organization of parties and civil society, the existence of a

democratic Constitution, the institution of regularly held elections, yet the operation of the system is full of deficits” (Böcskei, 2016, p.417).

In the literature, different democracy forms are classified as liberal, neo-liberal and illiberal as the concepts are offered to reflect the specific equal level that is between democracy and autocracy. The concept of liberal democracy is also called “embedded democracy” by Merkel (2004, p.36). He also proposed the concept of ‘defective democracies’ as defining the political systems in the grey zone which is between democracy and autocracy. Merkel (2004, p.35) further classified different forms of democracy starting from the root concept of embedded democracy containing five interdependent partial regimes (electoral regime, political rights, civil rights, horizontal accountability, and adequate power to govern) as he proposed different subtypes of defective democracy: exclusive democracy, illiberal democracy, deliberative democracy and tutelary democracy.

2.7 Liberal Democracy Theories

The analysis made on the question of “what is a democracy”? by Sartori is proved with the fall of communism that liberal democracy is the only sensible, rational, humane and in consequence-free, of the political being (Viveros and Mesa, 2015, p.3). In the 1970s, the previously dominant and comparatively statist economic paradigms -Keynesianism in the West and Soviet-style state capitalism- were consistently under pressure as a result of two critical points: Firstly, “the concentration of capital, having seemingly reached an apex in the national monopolies of the mid-twentieth century, was advancing increasingly at the trans-national scale” (Dale, 2004, p.35). As a result of this process, the multinational companies (MNCs) were created as a means of the dominant type of enterprise, creating different understanding and hence new standards in cost, efficiency and market power. This

paradigm shift resulted in a competitive advantage over other MNCs. MNCs were using economies of scale advantages as well as maintaining the global mobility of the goods, people, technology and innovations. Secondly, another reason was the failure of Keynesian policies to overcome the low-growth economic figures and the unstable economic performance. The problem of low profitability and fierce international rivalry pushed through the reformist welfare systems. These aggressive policies were generally justified pragmatically and with a particular reference given to specific strategic positioning (e.g., monetarism).

As a result, liberalism is best understood as 'a political programme or ideology whose goals include most prominently the diffusion, deepening and preservation of constitutional democracy, limited government, individual liberty, and those basic human and civil rights which are instrumental to any decent human existence' (Thorsen and Lie, 2006, p.7).

Neoliberalism has thus come to the analytical and political status, albeit from a vantage point in the midst of the crisis (Peck et al., 2010, p.95). "Oft-invoked but the ill-defined concept in the social sciences" (Mudge, 2008, p.703), neoliberalism's crisis may have arrived before there was even a shared understanding of the term's meaning." Neoliberalism has been supported by globalization, but it may have different forms in different cultures.

2.7.1 Classical liberal Democracy

Classical liberals do not accept the idea of traditional government, but they give particular importance to individual freedom. This idea is borrowed from conservative ideas. It has five main arguments that are a limited state power, parliamentary government (and division of powers), optimistic view of human nature, slow reform by individual action and free trade (Newton and Van Deth, 2005, p.245-248). Classical liberal democracy may be defined as "the form of democracy that tries

to combine the powers of democratic government with liberal values about the freedom of the individual" (ibid, p.248).

Liberal thought has been developed through last two centuries, and two primary schools were created; The first school claimed that the classical view of the individual rights as maximization vs minimization of the state inference. The second school proposed that the realisation of some freedoms require the support of the state. This school believes that the state should create suitable conditions and hence enable individuals to enjoy the liberties. Classical liberalism believes in "laissez-faire" of economics as a means of free trade. It is in favour of market economics consistent with the idea of the limited state. Hence individuals may make their own decisions freely (Keynes, 2010).

Classical liberalism is often associated with the belief that the state ought to be *minimal*, which means that practically everything except armed forces, law enforcement and other 'non-excludable goods' ought to be left to the free dealings of its citizens, and the organisations they freely choose to establish and take part in (Thorsen and Lie, 2006, p.4).

2.7.2 Neo-Liberal Democracy

The main ideas of classical liberalism have been revised in the late twentieth century by the *neo-liberals*, and they claim that the inference of the state should be minimised with deregulation and privatisation policies. In this manner, these ideas of the neoliberalism were well used by some conservative politicians, namely Margaret Thatcher in Britain and Ronald Reagan in the USA.

As Saad-Filho and Johnston pointed out that (2005, p.1), "we live in the age of neoliberalism". Neoliberalism has been the leading and most successful ideology in the world as, making it the most successful and ruthless ideology in world history.

The guiding principles of neo-liberalization are based on Hayek (1973) and Friedman's (1995) market-based ideas. Neoliberalism has many definitions within the literature. According to Brown (2015, p.9), neoliberalism “created democracy’s conceptual and theoretical norms”. As a result of this process, individuals and multinational corporations “wreak havoc on much of the world's population by not only ruthlessly destroying resources, nature, and the working classes but also by creating human cast-offs by pushing social groups and whole nations into collective neglect” (Harnecker, 2007, p.1). Neoliberalism has been linked to the globalization, international competition, and new communication technologies. “Neoliberalism has moved beyond a set of hegemonic discourses and practices to achieve the status of a doxa, or an accepted worldview” (Patrick, 2013, p.1).

2.7.3 Illiberal Democracy

In this context, the relationship between liberalism and democracy should be analysed. This debate was stressed by Tocqueville, Sartori and other political theorists. Sharing Tocqueville's ideas on this relationship, Sartori (1987) equals “liberalism primarily with the protection of individual freedoms and democracy with equality”, and he means not just political equality but also social and economic equality. Within the literature, “in the nineteenth century, the liberal element prevailed over the democratic, while in the twentieth century, “the pendulum” has swung and today it is the democratic component that prevails over the liberal” (Cunningham, 2002, p.30). Sartori presented the idea that, the political life creates two interesting situations “a democracy *within* liberalism, and democracy *without* liberalism” (1987, p.386–7). In order to understand defective democratic forms and various degrees of liberalist forms of democracy, it is clear that Sartori did not only point out the ingredients of liberal democracy, but also the *relationship* between its liberal and

democratic dimensions. In other words, Sartori reminded that the non-liberal (illiberal) forms of democracy might be seen in different countries.

The term illiberal democracy was first introduced by Fareed Zakaria (1997) as a means of a political system in which although elections take place; the civil liberties of the citizens are limited. This definition may be more meaningful today, as there are many countries that are categorized as neither “free” nor “not free”, but as “probably free”, falling somewhere between democratic and nondemocratic regimes (O’Neill, 2010, p.162-3). This dilemma may be explained as there is always a constitution even in autocracies, but civil liberties are limited or even do not exist. In other words, there is a formal democracy in some countries and even regular elections, but they are not liberal or free at all. “The concept of “illiberal” may be considered as a common point between an autocracy and a constitutional democracy, or in other words, although the political and constitutional conditions are available on the surface, there is always a legitimacy crisis in the scene” (Pap, 2017, p.161).

Zakaria addressed that in the West, electoral democracy and civil liberties (of speech, religion, etc.) support each other. But in developing parts of the world or in the Eastern regions, democracy and liberal values hardly integrate. He argues that “democracy without constitutional liberalism is producing centralized regimes, the erosion of liberty, the abuse of power, ethnic divisions, and even war” (Zakaria, 1997, p.42-43) and he believes that “constitutional liberalism can bring democracy, but not vice versa” (Zakaria, 2007, p.6).

Zakaria (1997, p.40) believes that illiberal democratic governments mostly focus on holding regular elections. However, “elections are an important virtue of governance, but they are not the only virtue”. Lacks of liberties including “freedom of

speech” and “freedom of assembly” support the government to have the full control of the power. The media is also controlled centrally making the opposition harder.

The theorists argue that liberal democracies, in contrast to electoral democracies, consist of three dimensions: the dimension of vertical legitimacy, the dimension of the rule of law and liberal constitutionalism and the dimension of effective agenda control (Zakaria, 2007, p.3). “In compliance with the concept of embedded democracy, four sub-types of defective democracies can be distinguished, namely exclusive democracy, domain democracy, illiberal democracy and deliberative democracy” (Merkel, 2004, p.18). For instance, Freedom House’s understanding of “electoral democracy” concept is totally different from “liberal democracy,” as “liberal democracy also covers a wider perspective of democratic and civil liberties. In *Freedom in the World*, most free countries could be considered liberal democracies, while some Partly Free countries might qualify as electoral, but not liberal, democracies” (freedomhouse.org/report/methodology-freedom-world-2018). The minimal requirement for a state to be listed as democratic by Freedom House is that of so-called electoral democracy: “A political system whose leaders are elected in competitive multi-party and multi-candidate processes” (freedomhouse.org). In other words, electoral democracy deals with the process of elections emphasizing the political rights and focuses on providing minimum standards and rights, and according to some definitions as Freedom House, it is considered as a type of democracy.

In general, the fairness and correct execution of elections is difficult to determine empirically. “The term electoral democracy is therefore theoretically incomplete and analytically not very helpful” (Merkel, 2004, p.2). In Freedom House analysis, the terms of liberal, semi-liberal and illiberal democracies are used. For the

developing democracies, notably, Freedom House and other independent institutions carried out freedom and democracy evaluations showing some evidence on the upcoming signs of authoritarianism. The argument pioneered by Zakaria was also supported by Tilly (2007) since historically, many countries have undergone democratization while others de-democratized by either becoming more liberal or less liberal. Democracy may not be the perfect government system, but it allows the citizens to participate and freely express themselves and choose their leader through fair elections. Dahl claimed that “having some democratic institutions which include elected officials; free, fair and frequent elections; freedom of expression; alternative sources of information; associational autonomy and inclusive citizenship prove that there is a democracy” (Tilly, 2007, p.10). However, Dahl's understanding of democracy may be criticized as firstly, he describes a minimum level of democratic institutions thus resulting in some confusion of classifying and ranking countries as being more democratic or not as it should be a set of continuous variables; secondly his principles operate within significant limits as there may be some conflicts between the principles. Before the twentieth century, this criterion was unacceptable to most advocates of democracy. (Dahl, 1998, p.37-38). Hence, Dahl's model describes an interlocking set of political processes. To sum up, Tilly proposed that (2007, p.13-14); “A regime is democratic to the degree that political relations between the state and its citizens feature broad, equal, protected and mutually binding consultation”. In this model of Tilly (2007, p.14-15), there is a taxonomy of the authoritarian and democratic regimes on a spectrum, and there are four kinds of the relationship between the state and people: “a) the degree of inclusivity of the ‘citizen’ category (breadth) b) the extent to which citizens are equal/unequal in relation to both each other and treated as such by the state (equality) c) the degree to which citizens are

protected from arbitrary action from the state (protection) d) the extent to which there are mechanisms of binding consultation (consultation)” (Pinto, 2015, p.4).

2.8 Authoritarianism

After the end of the Cold War, democratic regimes started to spread all around the world. As a result of the cultural and contextual factors, democratic regimes have been created specifically for post-communist countries that diverged from the Western paradigm of democracy. Authoritarianism and totalitarianism shifted their forms and applications over time, but the core was always the same, opposition and restrictions on civil rights and human rights. The understanding of the totalitarianism has changed over time, like the 1950s, it was meant to use the extensive usage of illegitimate power. In the 1970s and 1980s post-totalitarianism era, the process has become the means of obedience and acceptance through discriminative despotism (Rupnik, 2010, p.138). For the 1990s and 2000s, authoritarianism has new masks and new names. Authoritarianism was meant to be legitimized by different regimes under different names as culturally-speaking, different trajectories of democracy and authoritarianism mean different things in different cultures. The experience of post-communist countries may be seen as instead of the fast democratization process. However, in some countries authoritarianism prevails. There are different typologies of authoritarianism, and it is crucial to explain different variations and concepts within the framework of authoritarianism.

2.8.1 Conceptualisations of Authoritarianism

Most of the literature (e.g. Przeworski et al. 2000; Levitsky and Way, 2010:5-6; Svoblik, 2012, p.22-23), take the terms authoritarianism, dictatorship, and autocracy

as interchangeable concepts, as a means of “a political system that concentrates power in the hands of a leader or a small elite that is not constitutionally responsible to the body of the people” (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2014)¹³. Authoritarianism or totalitarianism is the opposite of democracy in general: it was institutionally and structurally monistic rather than pluralistic, and, far from the free-wheeling marketplace of ideas that characterized democratic competition, “there is an exclusive, autonomous... ideology...” (Linz, 1985, p.70). However, there seems to be a disagreement over whether authoritarianism may be taken as a matter of kind (categorically speaking) or degree (as an ordinal variable). Svolik, very much sees it as a case of “either/or”, arguing that authoritarian regimes are those 4 which fail to a) “hold free and competitive elections”, and b) “to have an executive that is either elected directly in free and competitive presidential elections or indirectly by a legislature in parliamentary systems” (Svolik 2012, p.22). As considering authoritarianism by taking South Korea as an example, Kelsall (2014, p.4) argues that “where one draws the line between authoritarianism and democracy has a big impact on how one perceives the relationship of authoritarianism to economic growth”. Binary perspective, it is difficult to draw the line between two opposing philosophy. However, authoritarianism has rather more failure stories than the success stories. Authoritarianism may be understood if one of the criteria is not met: Free and competitive elections and the administration accountable to the citizens. To understand the fundamental principles of authoritarianism, the following definition seems quite useful as “authoritarian regimes permit least pluralism, typically banning political parties (all or but the ruling one) and most forms of political organization and competition, while being more repressive than liberal in their level of civil and

¹³www.britannica.com. Date of Access:18.06.2018

political freedom” (Diamond et al., 1995). Authoritarianism, the belief in a strictly ordered society in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely (Mudde, 2007, p.23), is a feature not even exclusive to the core of the populist radical right ideology.

Authoritarianism is seen as a negative concept which does not comply with the criteria of democracy. Autocratic regimes are somewhat heterogeneous groups having different characteristics. These different characteristics would create different outputs and different regime settings. Within the literature, there are some authors claimed that some authoritarian regime types are more stable than others (Geddes, 1999; Hadenius and Teorell, 2007; Brownlee, 2007, p.30), produce more economic growth (Wright 2008; Kelsall, 2014, p.4) or better quality of government (Charron and Lapuente, 2011, p.397). Several typologies exist for scholars interested in researching the differences between various authoritarian regime types (Cheibub et al. 2010, p.84, Geddes et al. 2012, p.27-29). Much of this data has been made publically available and covers long periods of time. Although these resources can be beneficial for a large variety of research projects, scholars must pay close attention to the theoretical and methodological peculiarities embedded in these different typologies.

2.8.2 Different forms of authoritarianism

Within the literature, the concepts of autocracy and democracy are classified by some sub-types. Levitsky and Way (2010, p.6) propose that democracy means “free, fair, and competitive elections, full adult suffrage, broad protection of civil liberties, and the absence of non-elective constraints on elected officials’ power to govern, and then add a fifth attribute: the existence of a reasonably level playing field between incumbents and opposition”. When regimes more or less fulfil the first four

conditions but not the fifth, they are, according to Levitsky and Way, ‘competitive authoritarian’. Other authors talk of “semi-authoritarian” or “soft-authoritarian” regimes, ‘flawed democracies’ or ‘transitional democracies’ (for example Przeworski et al. 2000; Levitsky and Way 2010; Svoboda 2012, p.23). Understanding authoritarianism with some sub-types enables us to have a better understanding of the relationship between authoritarianism and other variables. However where the line is drawn between autocracy and democracy is still vague. Taking democracy and authoritarianism as a means of degree is also problematic as the degrees of the competitiveness of political participation, the openness and competitiveness of executive recruitment are difficult to measure. In political rankings, “there is no ‘necessary’ condition for treating a polity as democratic-democracy is a variable” (Marshall and Jaggers 2002, p.14).

There are different types of authoritarian regimes according to three different modes of maintaining political power (Hadenius and Toerel, 2007, p.146): (1) hereditary succession, or lineage, (2) the actual or threatened use of military force and (3) popular elections”. These three different variations of power usage created different generic types of regimes: monarchies, military regimes and electoral regimes. It is argued that “the military regime type was the least stable version of authoritarianism” (Geddes, 1999, p.121). There are different forms of electoral regimes, depending on varying institutionalisation of competition. Electoral regimes create different variations such as multiparty regimes, no-party regimes or one-party regimes. There are two points to be considered in this classification is that the focus of the classification is on the institutional setup of a regime. In this analysis, the perceived legitimisation and the real legitimisation of the authoritarian regimes are neglected. Also, this primary classification is based on generalisations and qualitative

analysis of the authoritarian and democratic measurements. Electoral regimes may be a part of a democratic, semi-democratic or multi-party authoritarian regimes. Based on this criticism on the existing typologies of authoritarian regimes, Wahman et al. (2013, p.31) proposed a quantitative analysis for a political system to be assessed as an authoritarian regime or any other defective democratic regimes.

After the era of the Cold War, most of the authoritarian regimes started arranging elections, and this situation has been called “electoral authoritarianism” by Schedler (2002, p.47). Electoral authoritarianism means the political systems those are authoritarian in nature but need legitimisation of the systems by multiparty elections but just on the surface. In electoral authoritarianism minimum competition of the elections and some opposing parties are allowed into the elections. Multiparty authoritarian regimes would typically have more than one party represented in the parliament, but it may not be the case for some political systems due to the boycott of the opposition. Several authors thoroughly analysed these authoritarian regimes (e.g. Brownlee 2007, Gandhi and Lust Okar 2009, Levitsky and Way 2010, p.7). However, an increasing number of studies claimed that the unfair elections in those regimes would expand the boundaries of democratic regimes (Howard and Roessler 2006, p.412; Terrell and Hadenius 2008, p.5).

Some authors argue that there are three pillars of an autocratic regime to survive (Way, 2009, p.230-235). In the Soviet regime, the ruling party was dominant and was supported through some mechanisms and ideological and cultural artefacts. The state was dominant both in economic and military terms. The first pillar of the authoritarianism is the “strength of the ruling party”. Ruling party strength has been one key source of authoritarian durability. An example of this statement is the case of Russia where Putin in the early 2000s maintained a strong government and ruling

party as they have the full control over the Duma, the Russian Parliament, and also regional governments of the Federation. Strong ruling parties support and maintain the authoritarian system in different ways. Strong ruling parties control the political system and allocate the distribution of the power in the society ensuring that the elites will be loyal to the ruling party. A second pillar of the durability of authoritarianism is the state coercive capacity which is “the autocrat’s command over an extensive, cohesive, well-funded, and experienced coercive apparatus that can reliably harass regime opposition and put down protest” (Way, 2009, p.232). The Soviet collapse left post-Soviet autocrats in the early 1990s with mixed levels of coercive strength. The third pillar of the authoritarianism is the state control over wealth as authoritarian durability has been maintained by discretionary control of the political leaders over wealth. Discretionary wealth control means the economic and political control of the opposition as well as having a considerable number of supporters because of the economic relationships even in the financial crises.

2.8.3 Competitive Authoritarianism

There appeared to be an argument on assessing any political system from the democracy dimension or from the authoritarianism point of view. Zakaria’s illiberal democracy looks at the issue from democracy side assuming that illiberal democracy is closer to democracy and it still is a democratic regime. Another perspective would be, assessing a political system from the authoritarianism side which implies that the broken democratic system is closer to authoritarianism. This analysis calls out for another argument that “whether democracy is a continuous or a dichotomous variable” (Collier and Adcock, 1999; Elkins, 2000; Munck and Verkuilen, 2002). This argument does not have a certain answer, but one might look at the issue from two different perspectives. The first view proposes that democracy is related to

institutional quality and hence is a matter of degree. In this way, for example multiparty regimes should be placed on a democratic continuum, where the label 'authoritarian multiparty' is placed on the other end of the continuum and "this usually is the way the dependent variable is specified when changes in the relative level of democracy in various countries are under study (Teorell, 2010, p.32). The second view may be labelled as a dichotomous view as there appeared to be a transition from authoritarianism to democracy and the differences of both systems are qualitative only. It is a difficult task to measure the theoretical and methodological merits of democracy.

Competitive authoritarianism is defined as "a model of an intermediate form which is between well-known and well-defined terms of democracy and full authoritarianism, and some other concepts emerged as well: semi-democracy, the illiberal democracy, electoral authoritarianism and hegemonic party system". Levitsky and Way (2002, p.52) proposed the term of competitive authoritarianism instead of the concept of illiberal democracy, as stressing that to be a democratic country, the existence of opposition parties as well as free and independent media is essential. Levitsky and Way (2002, p.52-53) argue that states such as Serbia and Yugoslavia under Slobodan Milošević, Zimbabwe, and post-Soviet Russia, were never truly democratic and not developing toward democracy, but were instead tending toward authoritarian behaviour, despite having elections (which were sometimes sharply contested). Thus, Levitsky and Way (2002) proposed a new concept as not using democracy with its positive image, instead coined a new term closer to authoritarianism as *competitive authoritarianism* (Levitsky and Way, 2002, p.52-54).

Competitive authoritarianism is one of the new emerging terms that is still not well-determined, but also it corresponds to real life situations which are currently being experienced in many developing liberal democracies. The argument proposes that the democratization of competitive authoritarian regimes has become possible through the close relationship with Western democracy. “Where state and ruling party structures were well organized and cohesive, a regime was able to remain stable and authoritarian; where these underdeveloped or lacked cohesion, regimes were unstable, but they were rarely democratized” (Levitsky and Way, 2010, p.5).

As well-defined by Levitsky and Way (2010, p.5), “competitive authoritarian regimes are civilian regimes in which formal democratic institutions exist and are widely viewed as the primary means of gaining power, but in which incumbents' abuse of the state places them at a significant advantage vis-à-vis their opponents”. Such regimes are competitive in a way that opposition parties use democratic institutions to contest seriously for power, but they are not democratic because the playing fields are heavily skewed in favour of incumbents. There are some basic instruments which demonstrate the place of the competitive authoritarian regime between liberal democracy and full authoritarianism. According to Levitsky and Way (2002, p.55-58), competitive authoritarianism has the following distinctive features:

Elections: Elections are one of the major units of democracy. In democracies, opponents may have direct access to resources and media which increases the competitiveness while the elections are either non-competitive or not exist in full authoritarian regimes. “One-party system, military regimes, and personal dictatorships suppressed both competition and participation” (Huntington, 2012, p.111). In competitive authoritarian regimes, elections exist, but the fairness and competitiveness of the elections are questionable to some extent.

Civil Liberties: The other basic unit to measure the level of democracy and authoritarianism is the perception and field of civil liberties which covers the free speech, free press and free association. In liberal democracies, these liberties almost never violated. As mentioned earlier, the situation of competitive authoritarian regimes being placed in the grey zone between consolidated democracies and open authoritarianism. “In some competitive authoritarian regimes overt repression - consisting of arresting opposition leaders, the killing of activists and the violent repression of protest- leading regimes to approach to full authoritarianism border” (Levitsky and Way, 2002, p.8). However, the most frequent area of the violation of civil liberties is to control free press with the reason of contradiction to the law. The emerging and development of competitive authoritarian regimes stem from four main resources. These are the consolidation of voters under the successful, charismatic leadership, control of media, exploitation of law and order system and the economic power. Competitive authoritarian regimes come out with an election triumph that actually makes it necessary to have a charismatic figure that can control the societal dynamism to maintain the power.

Media: The control of media and communication is the fundamental instrument of competitive authoritarian regimes as it promotes, strengthens and maintains the power of the regime. State-run media are also useful tools for marginalizing any potential political opposition or any political movement. In competitive authoritarian regimes, the dominant power controls most of the mass media and their policy. “In many competitive authoritarian regimes, the state controls all television and most -if not all- radio broadcasting” (Levitsky and Way, 2002, p.11).

Rule of Law: Rule of Law system is one of the main elements in liberal democratic systems. It works as a supervisor of other main elements, legislation and execution and it may be also included in the law and order system. The regimes which could not balance the jurisdiction, legislation and execution have the threat to turn into authoritarian/totalitarian regimes. The legal and constitutional protections guarantee the civil liberties and political rights of citizens. In competitive authoritarian regimes, the law system exists in a way that “formal rules and agencies designed to constrain governments were frequently circumvented, manipulated, or dismantled by those governments” (Levitsky and Way, 2002, p.79). The politicization of law and the diminishing trust in law cause the insecurity and distrust of people about themselves and their future.

2.9 Neo-conservatism

The neoliberalism is considered by several authors as the dominant ideology shaping our world today (e.g. Saad-Filho and Johnston, 2005). It is true that neoliberalism is a new paradigm of economic theory and policy-making which replaces Keynesian welfare state economics. In popular usage, neoliberalism is equated with a radically free market: “maximized competition and free trade achieved through economic deregulation, elimination of tariffs, and a range of monetary and social policies favourable to business and indifferent toward poverty, social deracination, cultural decimation, long-term resource depletion, and environmental destruction” (Brown, 2003, p.38).

As Conservatism is pragmatic, it may be argued that it is not a proper ideology. That may be considered as a systematic set of standard principles. It first includes the social and political life as well as economic issues. However, unlike the West, post-communist Central and Eastern Europe may be much more receptive to

that type of conservatism which combines traditionalism, the trinity of “family, Patria and God” with some version of statism. Such an ideology is appealing in the whole region. Many elements of the statist neo-conservatism/traditionalism could be spotted as early as the 1990s including Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. Successful examples of Reagan and Thatcher also were influential, but political parties never stopped using populist discourses.

2.10 New Right Movement

The “new right” is a broad term which opposes liberal policies on taxes, abortion, and affirmative action. The three principal concerns of the new right are with law and order, public morality and national identity. We share the view that the new right is a marriage between two apparently contrasting ideological traditions: Neoliberalism and neo-conservatism. Thus, the new right attempts to fuse economic libertarianism with state and social authoritarianism. The new right paradigm has been labelled as a form of “authoritarian populism”, expressing widespread popular anxiety about the weakness of the moral standards and authority in society”.

The literature on the issues related to far-right parties in the region has been neglected. As most of the political arguments have mostly focused on the countries especially from the West European Region (De Lange and Mudde, 2005, p.480). Until recently, “scholars have often ignored this region” (Pirro, 2015; Pytlas, 2016; Minkenberg, 2015, 2017). The new right has opened the path for populism and subsequently the reduction of politics to populism itself. “Although populism is not necessarily anti-democratic, it is essentially illiberal, especially in its disregard for minority rights, pluralism, and the rule of law” (Mudde, 2016a, p.28). It does not seem possible to hamper the rise of the far-right and illiberal democracy without understanding the hegemony of the new right. EU values and ideals such as human

and minority rights, democracy, gender equality, unity in diversity, and the plurality are also under massive attack of the new right. The New Right is founded upon two main principles. The first is the rejection of the Keynesian model that advocated the weighty presence of the public sector in the market. The second is the neo-conservatism that aspires a return to traditional values and demands the reconsolidation of social authority around traditional institutions including family, religions, and nation.

It is not surprising that the right-wing extremists gained strength in a time when values and ideals of the new right have been on the rise. The poor performance that the mainstream parties of CECs show great interest in issues such as corruption, unemployment, xenophobia, Muslim immigration and anti-EU views provides a suitable ground for far-right parties that are supported through collective frustrations and anxieties.

2.11 Far right movement

Right-wing politics can be categorized into three phases: The first phase takes the fascist parties emerging in Europe during the 1920s and 1930s. The second phase started during the 1960s when new parties like the National Democratic Party of Germany or the Poujadists in France emerged. While they had apparent ties to a fascist past on both an ideological and a personal level, they could no longer be classified as fascist parties, because they did not seek a violent overthrow of the existing democratic order. New terms, like right-wing radicalism, or right-wing extremism, were coined to describe the ideology of those parties. “While the term extremism is associated with the complete rejection of liberal democracy, and anti-parliamentary and anti-constitutional goals, a term with negative connotations, the

terms radicalism and radical reflect are more a path of action which may or may not be anti-democratic” (Kopecek, 2007, p.284).

“The third wave of post-war right-wing extremism in Europe is without a doubt the most successful period in both the electoral and ideological sense in Western Europe, and starting in the 1990s, also in Eastern Europe” (Mudde, 2000, p.6). It is during this time that the extreme right has transformed from an ‘Old’ to a ‘New Right’, denied the ties with fascism and racism, and has become more influential in European politics. The beginning of this third wave can be traced back to the electoral breakthrough of the National Front (FN) in France during the elections of 1984. “Far right understood that biological racism, anti-Semitism and radical critique of the political system were harmful, and they replaced those ideological markers of the ‘Old Right’ with ethnopluralism, moderated nationalism, and anti-establishment populism” (Rydgren, 2005, p.432). Ethno-pluralism means that in order to preserve the unique national characters of different people, they are not necessarily superior or inferior, only different and incompatible. In a second step, the New Right changed the radical nationalism into some patriotic ideas. Also, the patterns of populism have permitted New Right parties to pose serious critiques on contemporary democratic systems. Betz (1993, p.417) describes the New Right more accurately when he writes that “it opposes current culture in Western democracies without attacking its foundations”. Mudde (2000, p.5) provides the best approach to defining the New Right philosophy with four elements: Nationalism, Xenophobia, Law and Order, and Welfare Chauvinism. Mudde (2007, p.19) comprises these elements into nativism (combining nationalism and xenophobia), authoritarianism, and populism. While Mudde describes populism as an ideology, others see “populism lacks core values and that it is ‘chameleonic’ since the ideological colour it adopts depends on

context and the values of the 'heartland' it appeals to" (van Kessel, 2014, p.105). Populism has separated the society into two groups as the people vs corrupt elite (Mudde, 2004, p.543). Populism has been exploited by some left-wing (e.g. Smer in Slovakia) and even by conservative parties (PiS in Poland and Fidesz in Hungary).

"Far-right parties rejected European integration as the symbol of liberalism" (Neumayer, 2008, p.147). Far right parties are radical in their rejection of the current political systems; they are right-wing in their rejection of the social equality, their anti-immigrant policies; and they are populist in their exploitation of the national sentiments and anxiety (Betz, 1993, p.413). Ignazi (2003, p.31) proposed three criteria to be met by in order to be included in the group of far-right parties: "First, they must be located at the right end of the left-right continuum, with no party located more to the right. Second, it should have an ideological link with Fascist mythology and principles. Third, it must express values, issues and policies rejecting (and delegitimizing) the democratic system". If any party meet the first and the third criteria, the party may be defined as an 'anti-systemic party referring to the traditional concept by Sartori (1976) of an anti-system party, as opposed to principle to the political system. Another explanation for the far right parties is made by Betz (2003). He prefers the term "right-wing populist parties". According to Betz far-right parties reject the current political and cultural systems, but they do not attack directly to these values. Far right parties consider the societies as homogenous as neglecting the cultural diversity of the society. They stress "our own people" over "foreigners" (immigrants), and this perception may easily slip into the xenophobia (Betz, 2003, p.195). They defend the traditional values, and they are against immigrants, against corrupted state and against feminist ideologies: "They are highly centralized and hierarchically structured, use populism to get votes, and are able to make effective use

of political marketing” (Hloušek and Kopeček, 2016, p.185). Another well-known definition of far-right parties is made by Fennema and his colleagues (Fennema 1997; Van Der Brug et al., 2000; Fennema and Van Der Brug, 2003) and they explain the term according to their opposition to immigration as they prefer using the term “anti-immigrant parties”. However, it would not fit well the examples of far-right party typologies as; “they have attempted to mobilize votes on the basis of anti-immigrant sentiments, and they are stigmatized by the mainstream political Parties” (Van Der Brug et al., 2000, p.83). As Mudde (2000) explored the minimalist definition of the far-right parties within Western Europe that “the common ideological core combines four elements: nationalism, xenophobia, law and order, and welfare chauvinism (Mudde 2000, p.169-184). The far-right parties have a heavy emphasis on the police control and punishment systems governed by the state. As the state should protect the rights and benefits of their “own people” only, not of “aliens”. Mudde (2010, p.1174) argued that “[t]he argument is that key aspects of populist radical [r]ight ideology are shared by the mainstream, both at the elite and mass levels, albeit often in a more moderate form”.

2.12 The rise of the populist far-right parties in the EU

In recent years, populism has been used in conjunction with far-right ideologies. The new successful parties within the EU may be defined as populist in most cases, but they may not be rightist. There are even differences between the far right parties and their ideologies. The radical parties are mostly legacies of the fascist ideology, and generally, they are authoritarian and racist. Populist parties are not necessarily anti-democratic, but they have mostly anti-immigrant features. Populism is generally related to the issues of immigration and multiculturalism. Populism as an

ideology may be perceived as degeneration of representative democracy. Most of the political parties tend to use populist items in their political agendas. While populism is ‘a shadow cast by democracy’ (Canovan, 1999, p.3) and populists see themselves as true democrats, it is important to keep in mind that their ‘thin’ ideology implies quite a specific ‘illiberal vision of democracy’ (Kriesi and Pappas, 2015, p.5). We can identify three illiberal components of the populist vision of democracy: “it takes ‘government by the people’ literally and rejects liberal checks and balances; it is hostile to intermediaries between the people and the decision-makers, especially to political parties, and pleads for a more direct linkage of the masses to the elites” (ibid, p.5).

Populism may only be a marginal feature in the West (Mudde, 2016b, p.67), but it has been the leading party development trend in Central and Eastern Europe, where governments have failed to meet the high expectations of new member states’ populations (Ágh, 2015, p.28). It was claimed that “as a reaction to the global economic crisis, “Countries like Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic appeared to take a ‘populist turn’ . . . the incidents of threats to the EU’s democratic principles and values have increased,” (EPC, Balfour and Stratulat, 2012, p.2). Unlike in the West, some mainstream parties in the CECs may have populist and Eurosceptic leanings. Moreover, they may advocate extreme views with a protest profile as the Law and Justice Party (PiS) in Poland does, and other mainstream CEC parties are soft-Eurosceptic parties, like Fidesz (Ágh, 2015, p.30).

“In recent years, one of the most significant and controversial developments in European politics has been the electoral rise of Radical Right parties” (Norris 2005; Givens 2005; Mudde 2007, p.208). In France, Le Pen’s National Front achieved its first breakthrough in the 1984 European elections, scoring 4.1 per cent. In the first

round of the 2002 presidential elections, Le Pen came second after Chirac with 16.9 per cent of the national vote. In Austria, the Austrian Freedom Party grew in vote share after Jörg Haider became its leader in 1986. Its national score increased from 9.7 per cent in 1986 to 26.9 per cent in 1999, which led the party to become a coalition partner. In Belgium, the vote share of the Flemish Bloc increased from less than 2 per cent during the late 1970s and mid-1980s to 7.8 per cent in 1995 and 11.6 per cent in 2003. These electoral successes of right parties resulted in the perception by the public that extreme parties also have a chance to have the governing power of a country. These electoral successes also increased the popularity of the subject as an academic interest, and there were questions to clarify; what really is far-right as it was in the past, during the war and cold-war years and what is the difference between new-right and modern or post-industrialist (Ignazi, 2003, p.219-221) far-right political parties?

New Right Parties do not comfortably fit into any particular theoretical model or typology. Studies commonly argue that the contemporary New Right differs from the interwar era right-wing parties due to two main reasons: they do not support biological racism, and they do not oppose democratic regimes. Hence the name “New” Right is used to differentiate them from fascist parties. However, a large number of studies have focused on exploring the specific context for increasing the chances of the New Right Parties for electoral success. There are two sides of the coin: demand and supply-side conditions (Guiso et al., 2017, p.4-5). Demand-side includes socio-demographic socio-political, and socio-economic changes that subsequently create a newly formed demand towards far-right parties. As the recent electoral success of some far-right parties may be connected to different factors including unemployment rates (Jackman and Volpert, 1996, p.508) and "the growth of

public dissatisfaction with the mainstream parties" (Mair, 2002, p.84). Furthermore, the problem of immigration and cultural protectionism has also been influential as "with respect to integration, radical right parties value cultural assimilation and loyalty to the nation" (Akkerman, 2015, p.58). The second group factors are related to the supply-side variables. These variables are concerned with the capacity of a party of the New Right to convert the existing political interest of the voters into numbers of actual votes. Rydgren (2007, p.252) proposed a model considering supply-side conditions with three different sub-groups. The external variables are proposed as the first group as a means of the common expression of 'political opportunity structures' in the literature. The next two groups second and third groups consist of internal conditions. The effectiveness of the leadership of the party is another concern for New Right preferences. Yet there is another aspect of leadership - "internal leadership" (Mudde, 2007, p.263-264) - whose influence is somewhat easier to trace. Internal leadership refers primarily to the ability to build a party organization, to recruit capable and talented individuals, and to moderate factionalism. (Art, 2011, p.57). Lastly, there is a body of literature that examines the parties' transnational networks, their policies on the issue of Europeanization, and parties' performances in coalition governments. Until the late 1990s, most scholars paid more attention to demand-side variables only. However, these variables are not considered sufficient to explain the different results of the elections in different countries with similar demand-side variables. For example, in Lithuania, NRPs have never been successful, but they are strong players in neighbouring Latvia and Estonia. Parties of the New Right seem to have a lot in common: They are populist, proudly emphasizing their status as new entrants into the political system, and accusing the mainstream parties of both the Left and the Right as being disconnected from voter's concerns and needs; their ideological

profile displays, to varying degrees, a mix of nationalism, xenophobia, and support of law and order approach in the criminal justice system. Also, it is interesting to note that Great Britain remains as the only country accepting immigration for such a long time in Western Europe and the far right parties have never been successful. The United Kingdom Party (UKIP) is thriving at the European, not the national level; the British National Party (BNP) remains unsuccessful both nationally and internationally but has some regional strongholds.

Both right-wing and left-wing parties have been under the pressure of the new right, and this prevents them from offering alternative politics and policies. To some extent, the new right understanding obstructed the practice of politics: “The far-right, at this juncture, is the product of the end of politics” (Mouffe, 2005, p.54-56), hence of the new right.

Most of the CECs have recently witnessed the success of the far-right parties. This situation may be explained with historical links as well as economic and social transformation processes. At the beginning of the century, Minkenberg (2002, p.361) wrote: “Studying the radical right in transformation countries in Central and Eastern Europe not only resembles shooting at a moving target but also shooting with clouded vision”. In this context, the success of far-right parties is a reaction to the modernization process imposed by the European Union. Second, from the cultural perspective, “the result of the re-emergence of deeply, culturally ingrained perception of social belonging, and of the foundations of the polity, in which the social whole is considered prior to the individual, and in which local culture is valued differently from Western culture” (Blokker, 2005, p.371). As it was explained earlier, there appear to be some similarities between pre-war far-right parties and current far-right parties at some intervals because of the communist period.

In Hungary, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán from the centre-right national conservative Fidesz Party (Hungarian Civic Union), has been under pressure from the nationalist and far-right Jobbik Party (Movement for a better Hungary). In Poland, the right-wing PiS (Law and Justice) Party is in power and has been trying to change the constitution to control the judicial system. In Slovakia, fourteen MPs from an outright fascist party and another fifteen MPs from the cleaned up right-wing Slovak National Party put pressure on the mainstream, with the socialist Prime Minister Robert Fico winning the March 2016 election on a platform of the slogan of "not one Muslim" and denying the quota system imposed by the EU. He has taken the Slovak National Party into a coalition government. Historically, right-wing parties have always existed in Western Europe as a heritage from the fascist period of Mussolini and Hitler, but their power was limited. After the 1980s, their importance started increasing in the late 1980s. In countries like Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland, "strong right-wing parties have influenced their national governments by forming governing coalitions and agitating for political agendas, and they are shaping their countries' foreign and national security policies" (Liang, 2007, p.2). Right-wing parties have defended principles of the Christian Democratic tradition as being against the communism, as well as gaining economic benefits (Lewis and Mansfeldová, 2007, p.67).

Why Radical Right Parties have become successful in the Eastern Europe Countries in recent years? To answer this question, we can take the League of Polish Families (LPR) initiative as an example. The rapid rise of the LPR seems closely related to the emergence of European integration as a salient political issue. "On the basis of a qualitative content analysis of the LPR manifestos (2001, 2005, and 2007) and speeches of leading LPR politicians pointed out three core ideological traits

(Catholic conservatism, nationalism, and populism), as well as two omnibus issues (anti-communism and Euroscepticism), can be identified” (De Lange and Guarre, 2009, p.538). Catholic conservatism means the ideology of the Catholic faith for Polish identity as well as defending the traditionalist values. They naturally opposed abortion, euthanasia, gay rights, and drugs usage and they label the people that are out of the Catholic circle (non-Catholic) as “other”. They are anti-Semitic and against minority rights. LRP used the paradigm as it will be the discourse for the radical right parties and their motto was “the family, the nation and the God”.

Nationalism is also a central tenet of the LRP in the forms of xenophobia and Euro-scepticism. “Xenophobia includes rejection of everything “foreign” such as the cultural values of other communities, and perhaps homosexuals or leftists as well” (Mudde, 2000, p.172). They defended the idea that immigration poses a real threat to the Polish identity. Populism is another dimension of the far right ideologies that the three ideological characteristics, Catholic conservatism, nationalism, and populism, come together with anti-communism and Euroscepticism. However, LRP and PiS defended the EU membership throughout the process. Interestingly, “Euroscepticism well served the LPR as defending the idea that EU poses some threats to Poland's identity as a Catholic nation” (Riishøj, 2007, p.26). Second, the EU has been seen as a threat to the Polish sovereignty as well as EU forcing the member states to intake more immigrants to the country as creating another risk for the Polish cultural homogeneity. "The Polish historical legacy has created a fertile ground for anti-liberal sentiments and movements that promote nationalism and populism" (De Lange and Guerra, 2009, p.531). The globalization and the integration of the European Union processes supported the transition to democracy as these processes enhanced the

awareness of being a Polish. This process also resulted in the rise of the nationalist sentiments and the rise of populist far-right parties.

Far right movements in Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and other CECs may be seen as local far-right typologies as nationalism has been influential over the years and linked to the xenophobia. Fidesz used the nation motto instead of country and excluded the Roma people with hostility living in Hungary. It was a legacy from the Hungarian Justice, and Life Party (MIÉP) to Jobbik as Hungarians living outside the national boundaries are included, but other foreigners are excluded. In Poland, LPR tradition has existed as some populist parties use xenophobia in the political discourses. Slovak National Party (SNS) discriminated against Hungarians and the Roma people (Fisher, 2006).

An explanation of the recent success of populist far-right parties within the EU and especially in the CECs may be made as follows; the first explanation is from the social and economic perspectives: The structural changes within the internal and external environment supported the political parties to adopt populist and new right politics. Most sectors of the national economies are under threat of the international competition. Some New Radical Right parties use a combination of neo-liberal values with authoritarian ideas. As the workers feel insecure because of the immigrants and fierce international rivalry as the populist parties' appeal of immigration and even xenophobia are shared by the public (Art, 2011).

The political factors are also influential on the success of the populist far-right parties. When there is a convergence between the left and traditional right parties, most of the voters would prefer new right-wing parties as the political factor has been quite crucial for the success. "This view takes it for granted that the new right parties just respond to a new demand" (Akkerman, 2003, p.153). Most of the populist far-

right parties have changed some issues as a radical or sometimes swift policy. They have been using communication strategies to persuade voters.

Most of the political parties adjust their party programmes and policies over time. Especially Central and Eastern European countries where there has been a transformation of party politics and party systems set a good example. The political life is dynamic in CECs that are in a democratic transition period. For example, the Slovak SNS well managed the transformation period with success.

2.13 Illiberal Democracies within the EU Context

There are some structural problems of the new members of the EU that are corruption, populism, anti-individualism, political intolerance, the adverse effects of the Communism period and defective democracies. At the demand side of politics, we witness some negative trends: a decrease in social trust in democratic institutions and procedures (including politicians, political parties, as well as legal systems), as well as declining voting percentages, increasing electoral volatility and as a result of this process the gap between the citizens and politics, have widened.

In the past few years, there has been a growing global trend of countries moving to illiberal democracy. This is especially alarming among member countries of the European Union, where membership was meant to bring social and economic liberalization. Despite membership, however, middle-income countries are beginning to doubt the mission and goals of the European Union. Countries such as Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia are prime examples of this worrying trend. “All of these countries were former states in the Soviet Union, and have been undergoing transition into more democratic governments and liberal markets since the 1990s. “For many observers, the ‘return to Europe’ signalled the ultimate victory of

democracy and the rule of law over the legacy of totalitarianism in these countries” (Bugarič, 2008, p.198).

In 1991, Central European leaders were committed to democratic principles and cooperation with the democratic West European countries after the end of the communist system. In 2015, they preferred common problem-solving techniques and believing in the supranational institutions. "Twenty-five years after the founding of the Visegrád Group, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia have become the building blocks of a Europe that is more nationalistic and more inward-looking than at any other time in the past two decades" (Schenkkan 2016, p.6) and today, they are considered as illiberal democracies.

Today, there appears to be a wave of new authoritarianism and illiberal democracy in CECs. “New authoritarianism is a hybrid form of government, which maintains competitive elections and “democracy”, yet the rule of law has been swallowed by the executive branch and the media is largely controlled by the ruling party” (Wiatr, 2017, p.838). Hungary, Poland and recently Slovakia have been swiftly moving away from European values and turning into illiberal democracies.

These countries may be able to escape from the side-effects of the authoritarian regimes as their democratic progress would be limited compared to the old members of the EU. As these countries may maintain powerful domestic support from their citizens, it may be considered as a process whereby the democratic system will be digested. As the EU values are more concrete in terms of liberal and democratic perspectives with the multi-party system, free elections, free media and civil society, the EU may find it more difficult to deal with the defective democracies of the CECs. The main argument of the membership to the EU is how far the full demands of conditionality can be pushed against candidate countries as they are

considered partially democratic or progressing in terms of democracy. Conditionality was the critical mechanism for the EU control upon enlargement process as a mixture of positive (being a member of the EU) and negative (delaying accession date and/or withholding of EU funds) strategies. Three case study countries had to take the conditionality tests in full as a means of the smart power of the EU. However, it also shows that the general motivation of the European integration was sometimes insufficient to influence the potential candidate countries. In other words, "for such a process to be successful, it has to incentivize key groups and not just rely on the presumption that what is good for the country is also good for them" (Bunce et al., 2009, p.73).

In CECs; Poland, Hungary and to some degree Slovakia may be considered as to some extent 'democratic', and this perception is supported by the political discourses of the leaders. It appears that, in the case study countries, having opposition is to some degree free and there are to some extent strong civil society organizations, minority rights are roughly protected, free media and constitution are protected by law. Kubicek (2004, p.2-3) "calls these states as "reluctant democratizers," as for where democratic consolidation has been seriously delayed and/or never really gotten off the ground". However, as it may be seen from the Freedom House's annual surveys that especially Slovakia has made considerable progress as having higher scores.

Among CECs most striking example for illiberal democracy in Hungary, where the governing party (Fidesz) and the largest opposition party (Jobbik) are both populists. After 2010, Orbán has systematically transformed Hungary into what he defined in a 2014 statement as "an illiberal new state based on national foundations" where the government willingly marginalizes forces of opposition by means of

weakening the existing state institutions (including the courts) and founding novel, mostly autonomous governing bodies and infusing them with loyal Fidesz supporters” (Mudde, 2016a, p.26-28). As a result of this process; the opposition has weakened and even disappeared, the silence has grown, and the rise of populist illiberalism has been supported by even mainstream parties. “The governing Fidesz party, enjoying a qualified majority, has unilaterally voted on a new constitution; substantially weakened the balance of power, tightened its grip on public and commercial media; restricted popular initiatives, the freedom of the press, social rights, and civil liberties; and cut social benefits” (Krasztev and Van Til, 2015, p.3). In other words, “Fidesz is a genuinely popular political force, and it was able to ram a host of illiberal measures into law because it holds an overwhelming parliamentary majority, sustained in two democratic elections” (Kirchick, 2017, p.57).

In Poland, the ultra-nationalist and anti-pluralist Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc (Law and Justice Party, or PiS), founded in 2001 by the twin brothers Lech and Jarosław Kaczyński. “PiS party has benefitted from a combination of agrarian traditions, the strength of Catholicism, decades of authoritarianism, as well as disaffection with democracy and the EU and the resulting low voter turnout. PiS is not generally considered extreme but national conservative, however, the PiS government is also moving towards illiberal authoritarianism” (Kucharczyk and Wysocka, 2008). It no longer recognizes the rulings of the constitutional court and has weakened the free media. In Eastern Europe, PiS and Fidesz have continued to attack the post-communist elites as if those still ran the country, but they also have attacked the EU and mostly Germany. In recent years, right-wing extremism has emerged in the EU countries. Right-wing extremists are extraordinarily successful in influencing society during the financial crisis process. The right-wing extremists exploit the sentiments of

the people such as insecurity and fear. Right-wing extremism poses a threat to democracy. Therefore, more attention should be paid to developing anti-extremist policies (Abbass et al., 2011, p.1).

After the defeat of Meciar in Slovakian parliamentary elections of 1998; the innovative democratic model of Slovakia was applied in a number of competitive authoritarian regimes containing some principles such as; “the formation of a cohesive opposition; pressures on election commissions to improve their procedures and render them more transparent; ambitious campaigns to register voters, advertise the costs of the incumbent regime, and get out the vote; and the deployment of both domestic and international election monitoring, as well as exit polls, to provide quick feedback on turnout during election day, to catalogue election-day abuses by the regime, and to provide evidence of actual voter preferences” (Bunce et al, 2009, p.40).

In Slovakia, although there is a coalition government, the majority party of Smer-SD is Social Democrat in nature, but they share the common ground of some principles with nationalist and conservative parties. In Slovakia, both the HZDS and Smer adapted far right discourses, with their focus on the Hungarian minority in Slovakia. As they will be analysed in detail in the following chapters; the political parties in Slovakia do not fit well the narrow definitions of far-right parties as their foundations, and the nature of their rhetoric and discourses are entirely different. Although they held the leadership of the EU Parliament recently, it is claimed that they are following Hungary closely with their illiberal democracy practices. They use some patriotic and populist discourses as their attitudes of xenophobia and Islamophobia were apparent.

After the new right hegemony in World politics, the parties and their policies seemed to be having similar features as there were populist policies mixed with

nationalist and xenophobic and anti-immigrant strategies of the country. Nationalism is based on the idea that “our” country should be mono-cultural. “This ethnic nationalism is sometimes accompanied by state nationalism founded on the idea of inclusion of all members of the ethnic community within one state” (Hloušek and Kopeček, 2016, p.187). Things look even worse in Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia although they are EU member countries. “While illiberal tendencies could be observed in the region for some time, the migration crisis served as a catalyst for a discursive clash between members of Eastern European establishments on the one hand and actors in European institutions and Western European member states on the other” (Kazharski, 2017, p.2). Hence the integration, enlargement and transition processes for the CECs should be analysed to understand the roots of the illiberal tendencies within case study countries.

As the aim of this thesis is to assess the states of democracy in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia and is planned to offer a more detailed assessment and categorisation of different democracy forms. For instance, Slovakian democratization is entirely different from others. This is due to the fact that the reformist government of Poland with Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS) (Law and Justice) party, which initially gained its absolute majority in only October 2015. Hungary’s Fidesz Party under the leadership of Orbán won the elections in 2010 on a joint list with the Christian Democratic People’s Party, Slovakian Smer-SD party had to share the power with other parties as a coalition government. In this thesis, the relationship of liberalism with democracy categorisations will be reviewed as it is quite essential for our analysis of the dissertations. Specific features of different countries and hence different political, cultural environments will be analysed in detail in the following chapters.

2.15 Chapter overview

Chapter one summarises different forms of democracy including liberal, neo-liberal and illiberal democracy as well as authoritarian regimes including competitive authoritarianism within the framework of the European Union and especially from the perspectives of the CEC countries. Chapter one also deals with the enlargement process of the EU from different perspectives. One of the most challenging issues within the EU may be seen as the rise of illiberal democracy or backsliding in democracy in other terms. New right movement and populist far-right political systems are critically reviewed and ultimately the impact of new right on the understanding of democracy is going to be answered by the arguments developed by the following chapters.

3. Political Life and Political Parties In Selected CEcs

Introduction

Visegrád Group, formed in 1991 and Slovakia joined in 1993, reflects the efforts of the countries of the Central European region to work together in a number of fields of common interest within the all-European integration. These countries have always been part of a group historically as sharing cultural and intellectual values and religious traditions (Dangerfield, 2009, p.1737). The aim of the group is to co-operate in their European Union integration efforts as well as enhancing their solidarity for imparting of values in the fields of culture, education, science and exchange of information. The Visegrád countries (including Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Slovakia) has made efforts for the EU membership with the transformation from state socialism to free-market principles that are considered as fundamental market transitions triggered by external shocks (Baláz et al., 2017). After their accession to the EU, the Prime Ministers of Visegrád Group countries declared that their Visegrád Group activities are aimed at strengthening the identity of the Central European region”¹⁴. Visegrád Group countries well-performed before the accession in terms of economic liberalisation and democratic scores according to Freedom House standards (Vachudova, 2008, p.86).

This chapter summarises the features of the political life and political parties in selected case countries to enable us to develop our research model and to analyse and to interpret the data collected in our field research. We analyse the manifesto of political parties in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia to see to what extent the political systems of the three EU members has been sliding towards authoritarianism, as there are “the greatest threats to democracy in Europe stemmed from the EU’s own

¹⁴ <http://www.visegradgroup.org> Declaration of prime ministers of the Czech Republic, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Poland, and the Slovak Republic on cooperation of VG countries after their accession to the European Union, Prague, 12 May 2004,

democratic shortcomings” (Kelemen, 2017, p.212). Three governments have been critical of most of the EU policies and also in most cases, confronted with EU institutions on different matters.

3.1 Hungary: Background and Context

Historically, Hungary has been a great civilisation, and after the Turkish invasion in the 16th century, Hungary was a relatively autonomous part of the Habsburg Empire with its own Constitution. As it has great legacies of the past, after the Trianon Treaty in 1920, the country was smaller in size, and its population was decreased by 4 million Hungarians who had to live in neighbour countries after the treaty (Wolin, 2011:58). This issue was then used as a discourse exploited by right-wing populist parties. There was a relatively moderate authoritarian regime as some voting rights were restricted at some parliamentary elections. After World War II the Yalta and the Paris Treaties stated that Hungary was a part of the USSR between 1949 and 1989 and it was the only member state of the Soviet rule that planned an uprising (revolution) in 1956 and it was oppressed by the Red Army. However, the Hungarian resistance to the Soviet regime carried out by the government of Kádár as the new party leader to found liberal state socialism in the CEC countries.

Hungary has been creating a consolidated democratic system with the help of the Hungarian political parties. Through this democratization process, “although, Hungarian parties have the same organizational weaknesses and small membership base like the other new democracies, they have a very low electoral volatility and big stability unlike the other parties in the new democracies” (Ágh, 2010, p.185). In Hungary, a well-organized mainstream party successfully employed populist, Eurosceptic and anti-immigration discourses. Hungary has been rather a closed society and also unsatisfied with the EU integration process as a means of the

capitalist development, and their corruption problem has never ended as their admiration to the political leaders is well known historically (Pap, 2017 173). As Hungary was a great civilisation, they introduced a market economy to some degree. We look at the political life in Hungary before and after 2004 comparatively to see the foundations and the actors of the illiberal democratic system.

3.1.1 Hungarian Political Life before 2004

In Hungary, the transformation of the political system started as early as 1987. During the communist days, there were both far right, and far left parties existed, but they were not effective. Multi-party democracy after 1989 enabled them to use anti-communist discourses. Hungarian Democratic Forum was found by some left-wing writers and reformist politicians from the MSZMP (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party). "Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) was established as a democratic, centrist organization committed to Hungarian tradition, and in support of a competitive market economy" (Korkut, 2012:35). In the year 1990, the MDF (Hungarian Democratic Forum) was the biggest party in Hungary. The Forum was not right-wing at the beginning, but it had some nationalist tendencies as they criticized the regime as being internationalist communists and not caring about the Hungarians who live out of Hungary. As MDF "turned into a Christian-Democratic and conservative party, but conflicts between its liberal and populist, moderate and radical right-wing groups have wracked the party throughout its career" (Lewis and Mansfeldová, 2007, p.64). The party could only survive with the support of Fidesz. Hungarian Democratic Forum claimed to be the only inheritor of the national values, the far right movement hid under the wings of the Democratic Forum, and they stated that "if you do not vote for the Forum, you are not a Hungarian".

The new president of the Forum and the Prime Minister, Antall, removed the right-

wing politicians from the Forum saying that they had the aim of building a 'Christian and National Hungary' excluding socialists, internationalists and liberals. This idea was first represented by an early Prime Minister Horthy (1920-1944) who had anti-Semitic, chauvinistic and xenophobic policies. Antall as a PM (1990-1993) was slow to react the far right ideas within the Forum, represented by Csurka and his followers, but in 1992 he decided to get rid of the people who had conservative ideas from the party. The Trianon Agreement of 1920 was a real tragedy for the Hungarians as their borders were radically changed and many Hungarians forced to live in different territories. Far right parties always have dreams to change the borders, or they use the discourse of the 'nation', not the 'country'.

Hungary was on the transit of the significant migration routes throughout the history. The immigrants, mainly Hungarian Gypsies, were difficult to assimilate and control. This fact supported the xenophobic sentiments of the people, and this opportunity was well-exploited by the far-right parties. "In the vocabulary of the Hungarian radical right, xenophobia equals the love of Hungarians" (Karsai, 1999, p.137). Csurka awoke the nation's legacies and old illnesses such as nationalism, xenophobia and anti-immigration and other customs. Csurka and his extreme right ideas were shared with the majority of the people as they used the national sentiments of the Hungarians. They claimed that all the Hungarians are in a war to defend their cultures and their souls. The radical right parties have not come forward with a severe economic programme, and their political discourses are mainly based on taking out of the Jews from the economic life. They tried to create a Christian-national, and pure-blooded Hungarians and Antall was a recent founder of the right-wing politics in Hungary. The radical right would like to preserve the national capital and national wealth from the others.

The resurrection of the far right within the post-communist CECs was created by the fear of the old era but also was shaped by the economic, social and political changes. The Hungarian far-right movement may be seen as the “back to the roots” as it was derived from the conservative Hungarian Democratic Forum under the leadership of István Csurka. Csurka claimed to revitalise the old Hungary as stating that they will resurrect a “Christian-national Hungary” (Karsai 1999, p.135). In 1993 Csurka’s wing of the Forum departed from the Democratic Hungarian Forum to form the MIÉP (Hungarian Justice and Life Party). The MIÉP entered the parliament in 1998 after an unsuccessful performance in the 1994 elections. The main argument of the MIÉP was the revision of the Trianon Treaty which shrank Hungarian land by two-thirds and left millions of ethnic Hungarians as a minority in neighbouring countries.

The MIÉP’s nationalism was characterized by the slogan “Hungary for the Hungarians”, as they exclude liberals and national traitors as they are accused of selling out the nation. The nationalism naturally included the xenophobia (Karsai 1999, p.137). The Gypsies became the party’s main target as they defended that national wealth should be distributed to the real Hungarians only. In 2002 and 2006, the MIÉP failed to enter the parliament as their identical twin, the Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik Party) was in the political scene as a powerful opposition party, and they won the European elections of 2009 with nearly 15% of the votes. In many ways, Jobbik was resembled MIÉP ideologically, as they also share the same sentiments through anti-Gypsy and anti-Semitic issues. An example was the demand “only” for the recognition of autonomy for Hungarian minorities living in neighbouring countries (Jobbik, 2010, p.21). Jobbik’s features and characteristics are analysed in detail in the following sections.

In the eighties, the democratization process has started, and free elections and opposition parties emerged. In 1987 the first opposition party, the national-conservative Hungarian Democratic Forum (Magyar Demokrata Fórum, MDF), was created as well as two liberal parties followed in 1988: the Alliance of Free Democrats (Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége, SZDSZ), the Alliance of Young Democrats (Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége, Fidesz). Within the same period, two old parties also started actively, and these are the Smallholders Party (KisgazdaPárt, FKGP) and Christian Democratic People's Party (KereszténydemokrataNéppárt, KDNP). "So Hungarian political system was founded by 1989 with reformist Hungarian Socialist Party (Magyar SzocialistaPárt, MSZP). Although the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) was founded in 1989, its origins date to 1948, when the Hungarian Social Democratic Party merged into what was first called the Hungarian Workers' Party and then, following the attempted revolution against the communist government in 1956, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (Magyar SzocialistaMunkáspárt, MSZMP) which ruled Hungary in the period 1956-1989"¹⁵. In 1989 the party renounced Marxism. In 2002 the MSZP and its ally, the Alliance of Free Democrats, won a narrow majority in the legislature and formed a coalition government; the coalition was re-elected in 2006.

As the communist era ended in 1989-1990, the Hungarian democratization carried on especially on 13 June 1989 as the National Roundtable was convened. Within this convention there were the representatives of the ruling party, the opposition parties and some NGO's and the Convention signed an agreement on September 17, 1989, for democratic transition then created the new Constitution on October 23, 1989. The first free elections held in Hungary in 1990.

¹⁵http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/country/hungary/parties.html. Date of Access:29.05.2018

The Hungarian society was on the move, and the civil society organizations were dynamic. The Hungarians asked for the change to the ruling party peacefully and transition period started. As a result of the demands and transition period, the Hungarian political system set up with a weak, representative president and an active prime minister. The political system was instead the German type (a “chancellor’s democracy”), and it was used to stabilize the democratization process. The Constitution has been amended more than twenty times, but the necessary legislation in the Hungarian parliament has remained constant that the important acts still need a two-thirds majority vote for their amendment.

The Hungarian political system was usually based on extended “checks and balances” system. The Constitutional Court was quite powerful the judiciary was independent, with both the Supreme Court and the State Procurator Office separated from the Ministry of Justice. The same applies to the National Bank, responsible for monetary policy and is supervised by parliament (Ágh, 2010, p.188). The implementation of the budget is monitored by the independent State Audit Office, which has regularly presented its reports to parliament. These were positive steps towards the democratization of the political system of Hungary including the multiparty system.

The Hungarian electoral system seems to be well balanced as there are personally-elected and party-elected MPs. There was a stable political system in Hungary, as elections were held in every four years and there have been no early elections. This political stability has been proven by the fact that recently the three parties on the Right namely MDF, Fidesz and KDNP, have electoral coalition from time to time. The first fully democratic municipal elections in Hungary were held in 1990. However, the entry to the European Union created a political tension in the

Hungarian political life as there were pressures both from the external and domestic factors. Internally there has been pressure from the society as they were tired of changes and reforms in recent years. Externally The EU insisted on carrying out further democratization efforts to be made and also financial problems as the massive cutbacks in the budget before Eurozone was being formed. Post-accession crises were created as the post-accession democratization programs were closely followed by the governments as well as other political parties. However Hungary's democratization efforts were for short-term membership purposes only, there is a lack of consistency in the strategies created by the governments. "The emptying of democracy by 2010 was the best background for the emerging Fidesz-world, that is, for the transition to the authoritarian rule" (Ágh, 2016b, p.4).

According to Ágh (2010, p.202), the main characteristics of the Hungarian parties are as follows: "(1) they have been 'small size mass parties' or catch-all parties, since the people have not joined parties in great numbers as earlier in the West, so the parties have a 'head', but they do not have a 'body'; (2) they can be qualified, therefore, as 'office-seeking' cadre parties, since the small membership is just enough to provide the political elite; (3) their structuring principle has much more based on cultural than on socio-economic cleavages, since cultural traditions and 'camps' matter; (4) they have still been much more politically-ideologically than policy-oriented, hence the necessity of dealing with the EU policy universe by entering the EU has caused severe problems for them, and finally (5) there has been a more significant divide between Left and Right or between the pro-EU and Euro-sceptic parties than in the West". Lipset and Rokkan (1967) proposed their model on party cleavages to refer to conflict groups based on perceptions of association in opposition to other such groupings among large segments of a population (Zuckerman

1975, p.234). Lipset-Rokkan model proposes the main political cleavages in European democracies as products of two revolutions: national and industrial. The national revolution was at the origin of the church(es) vs government and centre vs periphery cleavages (subject vs dominant culture), while the industrial revolution created to urban vs rural (primary vs secondary economy) and employers vs employees cleavages (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967, p.3-4).

3.1.2 Hungarian Political Life after 2004

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and Communism, Hungary was one of the countries having political, economic and social changes. The Third Republic of Hungary was established in October 1989. With the regime transformation, there were attempts to change the constitution by several governments. Although the MSZP-SZDSZ government of 1994-1998 had the majority and hence the opportunity to change the constitution, it did not happen due to internal disputes and other problems. The political situation changed radically with Fidesz--KDNP government in 2010 as they ensured two-thirds majority and they decided to amend the constitution. Most of the opposition parties refused to take part in the constitution-making process, and Jobbik voted against the new constitution. The new Hungarian Constitution was accepted in parliament in 2011. The new Constitution reflected the conservative-Christian values. Although there are fundamental similarities with the 1989 version, there are significant changes in the constitution especially on the political interests of the forces in power. The name of the Hungarian regime is still a parliamentary democracy.

2011 constitution amendments and other law changes were influential as the new electoral law of 2011. It reduced the MP numbers from 386 to 199. According to

the Hungarian Constitution, the Prime Minister has no authority to dissolve Parliament, and the President's power, in this case, is limited. "Under the 2011 Constitution the President can dissolve Parliament under two conditions: (a) if, in the event of a termination of the government's mandate, the candidate for Prime Minister as recommended by the Head of State is not elected by Parliament within forty days of the first personal recommendation being made, (b) the President can dissolve Parliament, if the legislative body has not approved the central budget for the given year by March 31st¹⁶. So the dissolution of Parliament in Hungary is only possible through the majority of the parliament that is democratic. As for the stability of the Hungarian political system, it should be noted that no dissolution decision has been approved since 1990. A necessary caution is that the Hungarian Parliament has been working as a legislation factory and this trend was increased after 2010 by the Fidesz-KDNP government. The Fidesz-KDNP government elected to power in 2010 has, with its two-thirds' majority, been able to implement changes in virtually all fields.

The Hungarian government, dominated by the role of the Prime Minister, is not only the leading executive authority but also has the most critical role in the entire institutional system. As stated earlier, The Hungarian Head of State has insufficient power. The Head of State proposes a prime ministerial candidate,

Hungary has a somewhat dynamic political system as the exception of 2006, every government lost the following elections, whether right-wing (Antall, Boross, Orbán), or left-wing (Horn, Bajnai) (White et al., 2013, p.24). The Hungarian system has been changing as with the Orbán governments the authorities of the Prime Ministers have been expanded as it was called as "presidentialisation" Viktor Orbán leads a centralized, disciplined, singularly driven government, which not only directs

¹⁶http://www-archiv.parlament.hu/fotitkar/angol/book_2011.pdf. Date of Access:31.05.2018

Parliament but also dominates the entire institutional system. It is interesting that the Prime Minister has a stronger power than the presidents and semi-presidents as the Prime Minister has the final say in the whole political system of Hungary.

The Hungarian judicial system is four-tiered. Its highest body, the former Supreme Court (renamed after 2012 as Curia), the president of which shall be nominated by the President of the Republic and elected by parliament for 6 years. The Fidesz-KDNP government selected in 2010 has brought about significant changes to the judicial system: it has abolished the National Judicial Council and reassigned its responsibilities to the President of the newly-formed National Judicial Office. The move caused significant political and international debate. The Constitutional Court was created independently of judicial hierarchy and currently operates in Hungary.

The Hungarian party system has changed a great deal in recent years. One of the essential characteristics of the Hungarian political system is that the left wing and the right wing primarily represent an ideological-cultural dimension and then as an economical-distributional dimension. For instance, Liberal Fidesz became more and more right-wing, indeed eventually coming to dominate this side of the political spectrum. The inclusion of the new far-right party Jobbik shows that there is a tendency towards right-wing politics in Hungary. It is important to note that in the 2002 and 2006 elections the two parties won 80% of the total votes altogether. This shows that in a short time, the Hungarian Party System transformed from a reasonable, multi-party system to a bipolar, virtually two-party state (Ágh, 2016b).

3.1.3 Hungarian Political Parties

After 1989, the old parties still existed, and the party system of Hungary was quite stable. An example of this situation is that the definitions of right and left are very similar to today's understanding. However, strongly polarized quasi-two party

system was evolved from the low fragmented party system (Lewis and Mansfeldová, 2007, p.64). Hungarian political parties namely are; Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Union; FKGP – Independent Smallholders‘ Party; Jobbik – Movement for a Better Hungary; KDNP – Christian Democratic People’s Party; LMP – Politics Can Be Different; MDF – Hungarian Democratic Forum; MIÉP – Hungarian Justice and Life Party; MSZMP – Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party; MSZP – Hungarian Socialist Party; SZDSZ – Alliance of Free Democrats.

According to the Comparative Manifesto Project (Vulcans et al., 2010), Fidesz is a right-wing conservative (average score 10.9 out of 100), and Jobbik is a far-right nationalist party (average rating 22.8 out of 100). As these two parties are our sampled cases, some detailed information on their positioning towards the EU democratization and illiberal democracy is discussed in this section.

3.1.3.1 Fidesz (Hungarian Civic Union)

Fidesz (the Federation of Young Democrats) was founded in 1988 as an anti-communist party that promoted the development of a market economy and European integration. More recently, Fidesz has been the largest right-wing party within the Hungarian party system. Although Fidesz is considered as a conservative and culturally right-wing party, it is seen as a centrist party with economic policies as well as using populist and anti-communist and mostly nationalist rhetoric (Lewis and Mansfeldová, 2006, p.64). “Fidesz has been a distinct actor in Hungarian politics, among many, first with its radical youth activism pursuing liberalization and later with its relentless criticism of the same process” (Kiss 2002, p.750). Initially, membership was restricted to those aged 35 or younger, though this restriction was eliminated in 1993. In 1995 the party appended the name Hungarian Civic Party to its

shortened form (altered to Hungarian Civic Alliance in 2003). In 1997 members of a Christian Democratic group that had dissolved, joined Fidesz in the National Assembly, enabling the collective group to form the largest bloc. The following year Fidesz became the single largest party in the National Assembly¹⁷.

Fidesz well used the instruments of the populism as well as using modern political communication methods for the 1998 elections. Within the elections of 2002, their discourse of “return to the Past” in national-conservative terms did not work well as they lost by a small percentage. Fidesz started using populism and civil society gatherings and big street demonstrations to put pressure on the government. As “populist parties are required for a populist turn, actors displaying the antithesis between the elite and the people – from the early 2000s, this has been displayed by Fidesz (Hungarian acronym for Alliance of Young Democrats), politicizing in the spirit of “plebeian anti-communism”, and have started preparing the turn (back)” (Böcskei, 2016, p.419). They used the term ‘nation’ instead of ‘country’ including Hungarians living in neighbour countries. Viktor Orbán claimed to be the leader of all Hungarian origins as they well used the Hungarian legacies. This situation created a new paradox as there appeared to be mobilized and polarized society, but the participation rates for the political activities are quite low. “Mass street demonstrations moved the party through far right” (Uitz, 2008, p.61). The party declared it as to be a liberal as the farthest point to the communism, but also they were heavily affected by the communism days: “However, Fidesz decided to preserve some of their former communist structures, positions and networks as a means of achieving the democratic consolidation” (Kiss 2002, p.754).

¹⁷http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/country/hungary/parties.html

Fidesz lost the 2006 elections, again, and started attacking the government in the parliament as well as in the streets. They well used Hungarian populism and supported the radical right organizing violent actions as a means of the national-social populist public discourse. “In addition, Fidesz has kept a constant public discourse going regarding “police brutality” against the demonstrators, although just to the contrary, it is the demonstrations that have been very brutal and in all cases, many more policeman than extreme right demonstrators have been wounded” (Agh, 2010, p.16).

These incidents showed that the main danger now for the democratization of the Hungarian political system came from populism and Euroscepticism combined. As Taggart and Szczerbiak (2001, p.13) proposed that “hard Euroscepticism is likely to be less evident than soft Euroscepticism in the candidate states”. EU membership was important for the country. Even extreme right and left parties did not hamper the EU membership process. This created tension for political parties: “The main difficulty in Hungary is that the typical Western actors have not yet been formed, well as the Europeanized rightist party because Fidesz has not been able to avoid the dual trap of national-social populism and Euro-scepticism” (Ágh, 2010, p.202). Fidesz supported the EU membership “abroad” but behaved like a soft euro-sceptic party “at home”. Street protests were a great danger for the Hungarian democracy. “Despite people’s demonstrated willingness to take the streets, Fidesz’s clear lead in the polls and the rise in Viktor Orbán’s popularity...” (Uitz, 2008, p.62).

Although, Fidesz, founded by young lawyers and stressed the importance of constitutional limits in the 1990s; however, by 2014, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán had called checks and balances as a “U.S. invention that for some reason of intellectual mediocrity Europe decided to adopt,” and argued that Hungarians

“welcomed illiberal democracy” (Kirchik, 2017, p.59). “Fidesz, the conservative populist party leader, Viktor Orbán succeeded in polarizing the political sphere in an “us against them” fashion, constantly questioning the legitimacy of the transition elites and constitutional arrangements resulting from the transition compromises”¹⁸ (Uitz, 2008, p.40). Fidesz exploited the national and populist sentiments of the people claiming that they are defending the national interests as others are not national and thus foreigners. “The success of Fidesz and Orbánization is not inevitable, although authoritarian regimes do tend to present an aura of invulnerability” (Wilkin, 2018, p.29). According to Freedom House Report (2008) on Hungary “The main political parties are the MSZP and the conservative Fidesz, which has moved in an increasingly nationalist direction. (...) the opposition leader, Fidesz’s Viktor Orbán, stressed populist themes”.¹⁹ In sum, “Prime Minister Viktor Orbán’s policies are based on the pillars of “national unification,” the “central arena of power,” the change of the elites, power politics, and the era of “revolutionary circumstances” (Bozóki, 2012, p.9).

As sliding to the right-wing in the political system, Fidesz used some values including faith, nation, order, work, respect for human dignity and family, in their political discourse. Also, “Orbán described values such as liberty, equality, fraternity, and progress as belonging to the other camp and responded to them with slogans such as God, family, fatherland, and an extensive identification with the mentality and interests of the countryside” (Enyedi, 2005, p.705). Fidesz consistently claimed that the tradition of liberalism had been alien to Hungarian culture as the years of economic difficulties and hardship supported Fidesz.

¹⁸The main slogan of Fidesz for the 1998 elections was “more than a change in government – less than a regime change”. Date of Access:24.05.2018

¹⁹ <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2008/hungary>. Date of Access:24.05.2018

In Hungary, after the 2006 EU parliament elections, the Prime Minister acknowledged that within the election campaign they lied about the real state of the economy. After this statement, some protests started by the right-wing groups and parties and then joined by extreme groups such as Anti-Semitic and fascist groups. Their aim was to force the government to step down and, to show just how little the party of the former Prime Minister Viktor Orbán cared about democratic and parliamentary procedures. According to Uitz (2008, p.66) populist Fidesz party has been successful as “the charismatic leadership of Viktor Orbán is key to the political and electoral success of Fidesz, and to its mobilizing potential”.

The revolution of Fidesz was expressed as the “revolution of ballot boxes” (Korkut, 2012, p.161) and started just after the successful general elections in April 2010. The Fidesz and more correctly Orbán’s period since 2010 election victory there have been many examples of the authoritarian and illiberal democracy tendencies in Hungary. In the words of Orbán, “the constitutional revolution of Fidesz is a citizen/bourgeois revolution; not a bloody one like the Bolshevik Revolution, but aimed at ensuring that revolutionary morale is anchored in Hungarian democracy” (Korkut, 2017, p.86). After the 2010 elections, Fidesz systematically focused on re-organization of the Hungarian society in every possible detail through social engineering. “By ruling out oppositional actors and their historical narratives from the public sphere, Fidesz presents itself as the primary champion of Hungarian national sovereignty” (Benazzo, 2017, p.198).

Orbán and Fidesz used cardinal laws of the Parliament to by-pass the Constitutional Court in some related areas of economic factors of the country such as budget management, tax, pension, and child support programs. “In his own words, Orbán tied the hands of his ten successors” (Korkut, 2012, p.176). Orbán’s Fidesz as

having the majority of two-thirds enabling them to make their presidents appointed as well as having the power of vetoing the budget. The Constitutional Court with a higher number of members lost its legislative and auditing power over the government. Orbán's rhetoric was influential as they could find partners to defend for their backsliding of the liberal democracy in Hungary. These were all signs of the coming illiberal democracy of Orbán.

More recently, in the latest elections on 8th of April 2018, Hungary's incumbent Fidesz-KDNP alliance managed to preserve their two-thirds supermajority in parliament, three times in a row²⁰. The coalition received nearly %50 of the total seats in the Parliament. The main opposition Party, Jobbik could win about %20 of the places. Voter turnout level reached about 70 per cent, its highest level since 2002. It appears that the illiberal democracy will be carried out in the CECs as a sign of a contagion effect. "It is the danger of a more regressive and illiberal Europe – a Europe in which key values, orientations, norms, and principles are being undermined" (Emmanouilidis and Zuleeg, 2016, p.25).

3.1.3.2 Jobbik

The origins of Jobbik date back to 1999, when a group of nationalist university students gathered at Budapest's ELTE University as the Right-wing Youth Movement (Jobbik). Then Jobbik was a right-wing conservative reaction to liberalization. "Extreme-right political organizations and parties have been fundamental components of Hungarian politics since the early twentieth century" (Korkut, 2012, p.185-186). Following the defeat of MIÉP in the 2002 general elections, Jobbik party was founded in 2003 as an extreme nationalist far-right party. They used social media extensively as creating some important internet sites, such as barikad.hu and kuruc.info, to be able

²⁰<http://abouthungary.hu/elections-2018/>. Date of Access:24.05.2018

to reach the younger voters. This strategy of Jobbik proved to be successful. Jobbik's language and discourse attracted the youth, and their specific problems were related to globalization, individualism, and elitism (Korkut, 2012, p.187). At the time, it had 1,200 self-proclaimed members. According to its founding manifesto, the party described itself as a 'conservative', 'national-Christian', 'radical' organisation, whose ultimate aim was to 'complete' the regime change of 1989 and 'to create a more right and just society'. In the 2006 general elections, it formed an electoral alliance with MIÉP, but only got 2.2 per cent and thus failed to get into parliament. The agreement was broken shortly afterwards following internal disagreements. However, since then, the party has risen rapidly through the polls. They won about 15 % of the total votes in the June 2009 European Parliament elections, but they were accused of campaigning on an anti-Jewish and anti-Roma platform. In 2007, the Jobbik established the Hungarian Guard (Magyar Garda), a black-uniformed paramilitary organization. "The group was banned during 2009 by a Budapest court but was later reconstituted under a different name (New Hungarian Guard)" (Varga, 2014, p.797).

Jobbik became increasingly popular, exploiting populist discourses and anti-Roma sentiment managed to receive 14.77 per cent of the votes behind Fidesz and MSZP. Since then, Jobbik party attracted the interest of some voters in 2010 general elections as 16.67 per cent and in 201 general polls as 20.22 per cent, behind the ruling Fidesz-KDNP coalition. Jobbik's rapid rise in Hungarian political life may be explained by three factors: "1) the failure of neoliberal restructuring since in the last 25 years; 2) the demise of liberal democracy (and the centre-left who were its most ardent supporters); and 3) the ability of Jobbik to present itself as 'new' political force, offering 'radical' solutions to Hungary's economic, political and social malaise". Thus "the success of Jobbik is not a one-factor phenomenon and thus cannot

be derived merely from antipathy toward the EU, Gypsies, Jews, or any other single social grouping. (Tóth and Grajczjár, 2015, p.153).

After the regime change in 1989, free market capitalism and liberal democracy were options for the CECs. Some writers saw this opportunity as a means of boosting economic growth as well as having higher living standards for the citizens. Although this economic and political transformation created some excellent results, it also negatively affected the income distribution. Unemployment rates increased dramatically as almost one-third of Hungarians living in poverty as creating an 'underclass' without any food, shelter, education, health and other basic human needs. The situation of the Roma population was worse. Roma people even today face discrimination policies of the political parties and governments as well as direct threats from the populist and extremist parties and their followers. During the global crisis of 2007-2008, the Hungarian economy as other CECs was profoundly affected by the great recession of the EU.

These adverse and poor conditions of the Hungarian economy forced people to hope that regime changes would save the nation and they will regain their credibility in a short period of time. These conditions enabled some parties to promote themselves as they are ready to protect them with radical, populist and even paramilitarist (with the formation of Hungarian Guard by Jobbik) as well as anti-Roma racism and anti-Semitism.

Jobbik's ideology was first presented by the party's founding document in 2003 as it was repeated before the 2010 and 2014 general party manifestos and it strongly supports the far right ideas, "shows a strong ideological continuity with the basic ideas and principles that have characterised the Hungarian far right ever since the late 19th and early 20th century". The party claimed to be anti-communist and anti-

liberal and approved neither the 1989 revolution nor the communist regime. Jobbik refuses to legitimate the free market capitalism, liberal democracy and loyalty to the 'western world'. Jobbik considers itself a Euro-realist party, not a Euro-sceptic party. Jobbik claims that "Hungarians are the most westerly of the Eastern people" and they are the grand-children of Attila as they are able to millions of the same ethnic origin as an alliance and a great power"²¹. Hence, Jobbik's ultimate vision is to 'complete' the regime change of 1989 and 'to create a real and juster society'. The party used radicalism as a means of a perspective, not an ideology. In sum, The rhetoric of Jobbik is "our homeland is under attack" as their aim is to awake the national consciousness and transform "lower levels of morality in Hungary" with the sincere belief in national superiority with the outcomes of the elimination of aliens including Gypsies, Jews, LGBTs and all the minorities from the body of the nation (Korkut, 2012, p.189).

The second principle of Jobbik is the idea of 'national rejuvenation', which is to be achieved through the revival of 'national self-determination', the restoration of law and order, and the pursuit of nationalist economic policies aimed at increasing productivity. "Jobbik's radicalism goes against globalization and the free market and is aimed at the revolutionary transformation of society and the building of a strong national state for national rejuvenation and redemption" (Tóth and Grajczjár, 2015, p.156) "In terms of foreign policy, this takes the form of aggressive nationalism, which demands the 'reunification of a Hungarian nation unjustly torn apart during the course of the 20th century.'" (Jobbik, 2010, p.20).

According to Jobbik, communist and liberal elites betrayed the country and "national interests" but also rather interestingly, unemployed, underemployed,

²¹<http://www.jobbik.com/jobbik-announcements/3198.html>. Date of Access:12.06.2018

pensioners, the sick and the poor, public sector workers, intellectuals and artists also betrayed Hungary. But the Jews and Roma citizens are also traitors as they are the ultimate enemies of any fascist regime. “Since members of the Gárda showed up in black uniforms and waved flags seen for the last time in Hungarian politics in the hands of interwar fascists, most observers saw the establishment of the Gárda as a great danger for democracy in Hungary, and as a step telling of Jobbik’s fascism” (Varga, 2014, p.795). The paramilitary group was banned in July 2009 but came back under a different name as the New Hungarian Guard. Jobbik has constantly denied the idea that they were racist and anti-Semites. Jobbik also opposed to the Gypsy crime as it was stated in the 2010 electoral manifesto that “[t]he coexistence and cohesion of Magyar and Gypsy is one of the severest problems facing Hungarian society’, which, if left unresolved, allegedly risked pulling Hungary into ‘a state of virtual civil war’. In order to combat what it describes as ‘gypsy-crime,’ the manifesto calls for ‘the strengthening of the established police’ and the foundation of dedicated rural police service, or Gendarmerie” (Jobbik, 2010, p.11). The rise of Jobbik has been accompanied by increasing physical attacks on Roma people. In economic terms, Jobbik defends the Hungarian national economy for the national interests, and only a strong state can implement these policies, the party advocates for the return of a ‘strong’ state. However, “the media proved a great success in communicating with the people “what to think about” rather than “what to think” (Korkut, 2012, p.188).

An empirical analysis of Jobbik’s voters gives some clues on the social background of the party. More men than women (63 to 37 per cent), young (18-29 years old) and educated voters are 29 per cent of all the Jobbik voters. 70 percent of the party’s voters were either old Fidesz-KDNP or MIÉP-Jobbik voters (51 and 19 percent respectively), while the remaining 30 percent were former MSZP voters. Jobbik Party won about 30 percent of the votes in the 2014 general elections.

In summary, the success factors of Jobbik Party are well presented by Kovács (2013, p.97) as well as historically characteristic features of the far right in Hungary (anti-establishment, law and order, nationalism, racism and anti-immigration etc.): “...One of the main reasons for Jobbik being so successful is that it has managed to achieve that the Roma-case is not a taboo anymore and they also monopolized this topic in politics”. The electoral success of the Hungarian far-right in the 2009 EP elections and in the 2010 and 2014 national elections serve as further evidence for far-right strength also in Central Eastern Europe. “The Hungarian Guard actions receiving most media attention were the marches organized in response to “Gipsy crime,” which were marches and events organized outside of Budapest (CEC)” (Varga, 2014, p.796).

In the beginning, the Jobbik was a conservative party with a moderate national focus. Recently the political system of Hungary was dominated by Fidesz (Civic Democratic Union) and MSZP (Hungarian Socialist Party). According to the results of the 2014 elections, Jobbik was the third biggest party with 20.54% of the total votes in Hungary. Jobbik achieved this success in a relatively short time: “Jobbik has been particularly efficient in coordinating its socio-psychological campaign and mobilizing a series of social grievances for its political benefit” (Petsinis, 2015, p.273).

Studies show that xenophobia is considerably strong in the Hungarian Society (Korkut 2014). “Therefore, a distinctive feature in Jobbik’s rhetoric is that the functions of stereotyping and ‘otherisation’ have been reserved for a segment of the population that has been residing in Hungary for centuries, namely, the Hungarian Roma” (Petsinis, 2015, p.276). Also, the pure Hungarians living outside Hungary has a central role in Jobbik’s ideology as may be seen from the manifesto of Jobbik (Jobbik, 2010). Further along the same text, “the party deplores the alleged

democratic deficit within the EU-institutions and argues that the EU has “...far from solved the question of the Hungarian and other national minorities living within its boundaries” (Jobbik, 2010, p.21). European integration was seen as a major threat to Hungary as a fundamental principle of the extreme right (Neumayer 2008, p.147). Jobbik leader, Gábor Vona stated in his speech of the commemoration of the 1848-49 revolution, “If Hungary’s freedom is threatened by the EU, there is a need to fight against the EU which colonizes the country and enslaves Hungarians”.²² Jobbik followers politicized as they vote as well as they attack the minorities in the street, especially with New Hungary Guards para-military forces. “Violence may also be justified as a political means if it leads to the right outcome” (Bartlett et al. 2012, p.39–40). Especially “Gypsy crime’ is introduced as a separate category and the programme acknowledges that ‘... certain criminological phenomena are predominantly and overwhelmingly associated with this minority” (Jobbik, 2010, p.11). In Jobbik, the ‘Gypsy question’ is mainly mentioned together with crime, in addition to a strong focus on the alleged ‘overpopulation’ of Roma (Félix, 2015, p.173).

3.1.4 Illiberal Democracy in Hungary

Within the post-accession period of Hungary, external pressures of the EU and the demands of the people intimately affect the democratization and Europeanization processes. As Europeanization presupposed the conditionality and other structural reforms to be achieved, Hungarian people demanded democratic rights. The democratization process started with the constitution-making through the end of the

²²Vona urges fight against EU which colonizes and enslaves Hungarians. jobbik.com, 29.03.2012

(http://www.jobbik.com/vona_urges_fight_against_eu_which_colonizes_and_enslaves_hungarians).
Date of Access:24.06.2018

Communist system. Other legislative changes also occurred after the new constitution and in the parliamentary elections of 1990, the voters were free, and it was a multiparty election for the first time. As explained earlier, mainly national-conservative parties won the elections. Liberal Fidesz party was in opposition. As government stability has been influential in Hungary, between 1998 and 2002, Viktor Orbán won the elections and became the prime minister of a new national-conservative government (Fidesz, FKGP and MDF) as Fidesz changed its pace from market liberalism to national conservatism. As Fidesz lost the next elections, there was again a socialist-liberal coalition (MSZP and SZDSZ). During this time, Hungary's efforts to become a member of the EU were impressive. Within the third government (1998-2002) the primary job of the Orbán government was to manage the EU accession negotiations, and it was successful as Hungary became the member of the EU on 1st of May 2004.

EU membership was a primary target for most of the Hungarian political parties (especially MDF, Fidesz, MSZP and SZDSZ) and other parties except Fidesz carried on favouring the EU membership as well as accepting EU norms and legislation. This was also the case for Fidesz until the late 1990s as the party located itself on the right wing after the periods of left-libertarian (1988–90) times as well as mainstream liberal (1990–94) years. The extreme right MIÉP and the extreme left Labour were the only parties that opposed Hungary's integration with NATO and the EU, a position derived from their common radical stand against the influence of multi-national corporations" (Lewis and Mansfeldová, 2007, p.67).

"The electoral history of the new democracies in Eastern and Central Europe has been described as a move from general mobilization to demobilization, resulting in low electoral participation and/or in non-representative elections" (Ágh, 2010,

p.191). The primary weakness of the Hungarian parties is that they are ‘small size mass parties’.

The party landscape in the EU gives the background of characterisation of ‘New Left’ and ‘New Right’ parties as fundamental transformations in party politics. “The New Left has differed from the Old Left because of its rejection of class-based politics and because it has embraced the participatory and decentralized forms of party membership” (Ágh, 2010, p.193). On the other hand, the main principles of the New Right have been taxation, immigration and national populism.

As we stated earlier, Hungarian Political parties have been created under external and internal pressures. According to Ágh (2010, p.197), “... the Hungarian parties can be described according to the two axes of Left and Right on one side, and Europeanization and Nation-centrism (or Traditionalism) on the other. This typology gives us four basic types of Hungarian parties: Europeanized Left and Europeanized Right, and Nation-centric Left and Nation-centric Right”. However, more recently Hungarian political system is somewhat bipolar as only two parties are substantial: the Europeanized Left (MSZP) is under leadership of Ferenc Gyurcsány who is called as ‘impatient modernizer’ and the Nation-centric Right (Fidesz) is under the leadership of Viktor Orbán (Fidesz) who is called as ‘the populist leader’.

The Hungarian society was divided into two tendencies as “Hungarisation” and “Westernization-Europeanization”. Political parties exploited these tendencies especially Fidesz, and Jobbik used the Hungarisation thesis. So the concepts of Europe and nation are used in political discourses as competing identities. This tendency was more stressed by Fidesz recently as now Fidesz is the leading party on the Right. The accession to the EU, Fidesz was on the European side, but after the accession, they moved to the opposition of Europeanization, as being Eurosceptic, and

claiming to be caring about national interests as a national populist discourse. Csillag and Szelényi (2015, p.23) claimed that Orbán used “liberalism” as a means of neglecting the national interest with the emphasis put on individual interest. In a well-known quotation, Orbán claimed that “Hungary could also have a life outside the EU”. Basically, Fidesz managed to ensure that the party guaranteed the Eurosceptic vote as well as protecting its mainstream image. Today, the Hungarian Left is in favour of the EU integration as stronger than right-wing parties. The fact is that always the winner parties supported the Europeanization discourse. It is interesting to note that, “...the economics decision-making sphere is rather restricted in Hungary, and the two large parties do not differ characteristically in their economic policy” (Uitz, 2008, p.60). Political parties in Hungary are caught different sentiments of over-participation of political life and the economic difficulties of the citizens.

The deepening crisis of democracies in most countries resulted in different tendencies of democracy. Within CECs, as it was argued earlier, defective forms of democracy; illiberal democracy (Zakaria, 1997) or competitive authoritarianism (Levitski and Way, 2002) are used by the governments. Hungary is the pioneer of this tendency towards illiberal democracy with a particular reference given to Orbán and Fidesz Party. The illiberal democracy in Hungary has been reviewed and analysed by many researchers before the Orbán regime. However, the first time the concept of “illiberal democracy” was pioneered by PM Viktor Orbán’s Speech at the 25th Bálványos Summer Free University and Student Camp on 26th of July 2014: “...sense the new state that we are constructing in Hungary is an illiberal state, a non-liberal state. It does not reject the fundamental principles of liberalism such as freedom, and I could list a few more, but it does not make this ideology the central

element of the state organisation, but instead includes a different, special, national approach”²³.

The illusion of liberal democracy was negatively affected by the former PM Gyurcsány’s confession on his pre-election lies on economic facts. “These reforms, along with Prime Minister Gyurcsány’s confession that he had lied to the public before the elections and, like his predecessors, had concealed the real need for reforms, provoked mass demonstrations and riots and further increased the strong political polarization of Hungarian society” (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2009, p.2). However there were tendencies to authoritarianism in different countries and the crisis transformed the Hungarian liberal democracy into a populist, right-wing illiberal democracy. Pew Research Centre (2009) found as a result of the comparative research that 94% of the people in CECs saw their economy as bad. Hungarian people were not also happy with the politics as 77% of Hungarians were dissatisfied by the operation of the democracy in their countries. Euro-scepticism was too high in Hungary as more than favouring the EU membership, 28% stated their dislike of the EU membership. This trend was still valid in recent years (2017) with the rise in figures of Euroscepticism, anti-immigration and disapproving Brexit decision of the UK in the EU countries including Hungary and Poland²⁴.

As a result of the dissatisfaction of the citizens, the vote rates of the centre-left parties (Hungarian Socialist Party) fell in dramatic figures. This was due to mass corruption scandals of the governments as well as continually breaking the electoral promises. Fidesz and especially Jobbik parties well used the widespread public

²³<http://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/prime-minister-viktor-Orbán-s-speech-at-the-25th-balvanyos-summer-free-university-and-student-camp>. Date of Access:04.05.2018

²⁴<http://www.pewglobal.org/files/2016/06/Pew-Research-Center-Brexit-Report-FINAL-June-7-2016.pdf>

demand for the regime change in Hungary. The governments of Fidesz exploited this situation by applying illiberal forms of democracy. “Led by Orbán, the ruling party, Fidesz, has succeeded in destroying the components of consensus-based liberal democracy in the name of a majoritarian democracy” (Bozóki, 2012, p.1). It is discussed that the “Hungarian illiberal democracy” is a unique form of the defective democracies as not being a form of constitutional philosophy, not being a constitutional design principle and it is definitely considered as illiberal as a means of the interpretation of the Hungarian political theory” (Pap, 2017, p.161). It is a specific regime that the context of Hungary and socio-economic, political and cultural conditions has created. It may be seen as a generic model imported to Poland, Slovakia and other CECs. According to Enyedi (2016, p.9), “the two Hungarian parties Fidesz and Jobbik, (our case study parties), exhibit features of ‘paternalist populism’ and ‘illiberal elitism’ while offering different responses to the challenges typically confronted by authoritarian populist movements”. Bozóki (2011, p.650) argues that the “system of national cooperation,” pioneered by Viktor Orbán, that it is declared that the “Hungarian illiberal democracy,” has appeared to be one of the alternatives of the liberal democracy. “The morphosis of this Hungarian model for illiberal democracy manifests itself normatively through value preferences expressed in the new constitution, as well as in a quasi-normative political declaration that serves as a manifesto for the new political community it envisages” (Pap, 2017, p.171).

Illiberal democracy experience of Hungary may be seen as a democratic backsliding as after 2010 elections as Fidesz won more than two thirds, “supermajority “of the parliamentary seats and was granted the power to amend the Hungarian constitution. “This supermajority has enabled Prime Minister Viktor

Orbán's government to pass a new constitution -criticized by the Council of Europe's Venice Commission in June 2011- and numerous statutes" (Sedelmeier, 2014, p.106). Orbán served previously as PM between 1998 and 2002 during the accession to the European Union. It was not predicted before the 2010 election that Orbán would roll back democracy in Hungary as it means challenging the EU's conditions for the accession. The constitutional revolution was followed by the introduction of Cardinal Laws as Fidesz government pass or make any amendment on this legislation by their majority in the parliament. They basically eliminate the "check and balance" system as well as controlling everything possible in Hungary. The Fidesz government attacked the media, NGO's, opposition by introducing new legislation on virtually everything. The case of Hungary may be seen as "imperfect democracy" (Juhász et al., 2015, p.15-16)

The independent judiciary system was targeted by the Orbán regime, first changed the structure of constitutional court by the election of the judges by the government and also in 2011 the number of the members of the Court expanded to 15 with new appointments from the government. The new Hungarian Constitution of 2012 appeared as an example of the social engineering process with cardinal legislation used to interfere with the private sphere as well as influencing the social policy, especially bearing in mind the impact of cardinal laws in effect to social policy and work (Korkut, 2012, p.183). The Constitutional Court continued to oppose the unethical and illegal legislation of the government, and after the 2013 constitution amendment to limit the power of the Constitutional Court. This unlawful and illiberal tendencies also reported by the Venice Commission of the European Union (Venice Commission, 2011, 2013 and 2016). "Hungary is not only amongst the group of

lowest performing the EU Member States but also lags behind most regional peers” (European Commission, 2017a, p.34).

The turning point in democracy in Hungary was that “Orbán declared in July 2014 that he intended to abandon *liberal* democracy in favour of building an ‘illiberal state’, citing China, Russia, Singapore and Turkey as role models” (Kelemen, 2017, p.223; Simon, 2014). Orbán government started creating tension and conflict with the EU over the refugee crisis as they rejected the refugee relocation scheme proposed by the European Council While taking these steps as well as denying any criticism from EU institutions. Following its usual approach, Fidesz has reacted to this crisis with a hate campaign; it has always excelled in the use of negative communication strategies identifying “enemies.” (Ágh, 2016b, p.7). However Hungary’s financial relationships with the EU was fragile as “Orbán’s government was in fact highly dependent on fiscal transfers from Brussels. EU spending in Hungary amounted to more than 6 per cent of its gross national income, and more than 95 per cent of all public investments in Hungary were being co-financed by the EU” (Kelemen, 2015)²⁵. “In Hungary, conservative policies aimed at a new understanding of the Hungarian democracy with the intervention of the state into socioeconomic and socio-political areas decreasing the democracy quality in Hungary” (Korkut, 2012, p.193).

The EU has insufficient measures to be taken to force Orbán government to stepback, as “the European Commission did launch a series of infringement proceedings against Hungary before the European Court of Justice (ECJ), focusing on specific violations of EU directives and regulations by the Orbán government” (Kelemen, 2017, p.223). This strategy worked well up to a point where the Orbán government had to compromise in some critical policies, but they used the legislative

²⁵ <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/europe/2015-09-20/europes-hungary-problem>

gaps. The pressure from EU only slowed down the illiberal democracy tendencies as Orbán continued to consolidate power.

Illiberal democracy of Hungary was initiated and then supported by some other members especially Poland starting from 2015, and more recently, to some degree, Slovakia backed the Hungarian policies against the EU and provided a shelter for Orbán to escape from the pressure of the EU. Even the centre-right Euro-party of which Orbán's Fidesz party is a member did not take any action against Fidesz's illiberal democracy steps (Kelemen, 2015)²⁶. In the interest of party loyalty, Euro-party tolerated Orbán's violations of fundamental human rights (De la Baume, 2015)²⁷.

Another warning is from Korkut (2012, p.177) as stating that; "Fidesz pragmatically and constructively supports EU integration as long as it fits in with its conservative value orientation and does not resort to a fully Euro-sceptical political strategy". As a final note, "in keeping with scholarship on the role of rentierism in supporting local authoritarians, the Orbán regime relies heavily on financial transfers from Brussels to finance his regime even as he thumbs his nose at the EU's democratic values" (Kelemen, 2017, p.227). However, further EU actions may be taken against Hungary in the future (Staes, 2016).

Hungary was quite successful in the EU's economic and political transition periods as they established a political system ensuring that rule of law, fundamental rights and a constitutional democracy. As a successful role model for other CECs that have been in the transition periods, Hungary has also been influential with their democratic backsliding as becoming the pioneer of the illiberal democracy with their

²⁶ <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/europe/2015-09-20/europes-hungary-problem>

²⁷ www.politico.eu/article/black-sheep-in-the-european-parliament-viktor-Orbán-epp-mep/. Date of Access:18.06.2018

authoritarian policies. “This backsliding of democracy or “democratic regression” has come as a surprise for most analysts who defined democracy very narrowly, as just the establishment of the formal institutions in the young democracies” (Ágh, 2016b, p.2). Hungary’s stable political system was supported by their well-established constitutional democracy. That was the main reason why the EU reacted against Hungary’s illiberal democratic policies. The struggle with the democratization for Hungary was similar to other CECs. They needed to make a system change as establishing a nation-state, having a market economy, having civil society organizations as a means of a democratic transformation. As argued earlier, especially Fidesz under the leadership of Orbán transformed the Hungarian Political System into a unique example of an illiberal democracy as Zakaria (1997) labelled. He further stated that “the line that separated Western and Eastern Christendom in 1500 today divides successful liberal regimes from unsuccessful, illiberal ones. Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, which were most securely a part of Europe, are furthest along in consolidating their democracies” (Zakaria, 2007, p.19). 2010 elections was a negative turning point in Hungary’s political history that Orbán, the head of Fidesz, defined 2010 elections as “revolution of the ballot boxes.” Because Fidesz had the political power to make any changes to accelerate the illiberal democracy in Hungary. This tendency continued after the 2014 and 2018 elections. Orbán’s dream was basically putting the Fidesz and Orbán at the centre of the political life in Hungary, and after the new constitution and various amendments the political system has been sliding to authoritarianism or in the words of Levitsky and Way (2002, p.52-54) as “competitive authoritarianism”. As Fidesz has been losing some of its power (as happened in 2015); Jobbik has been rising as a means of far-right movement that supports and ensure the illiberal democracy in Hungary: “ The enemies of liberal

democracy still enjoy the support of the overwhelming majority of the voters, who are not concerned about the backsliding of constitutionalism” (Halmai, 2017, p.7). Jenne and Mudde (2012, p.154) proposed that “international pressure must be accompanied by sufficient political resistance from below to oust or contain the Fidesz government”.

3.2 Poland: Background and Context

After the transition to the democracy, Poland, that used to have an instable party system during the communism era, the proportional representation as the electoral system was adapted with a new dynamic party system. Election results were volatile, as the low level of party identity behaviour of the citizens. Before the transition period there were two main groups were visible as they believed that some efforts to be made in order to succeed in transition to democracy, apparently through the full membership of the European Union: the communist successor camp, emerging out of the former Communist Party, and the post-Solidarity camp, arising out of the main opposition force to the communist regime (Van Kessel, 2013, p.185). These two dominant political forces were the fundamentals of modern Polish political system as a post-communist country. The two groups were differentiated in some perspectives as their philosophy is different for the communist past as well as moral and cultural issues. However, the groups have some features in common in terms of international relations and socioeconomic issues. Both groups were in favour of EU membership, but Eurosceptic sentiments have never been powerful. As a result, the old communist politicians founded a new party (social democratic party), and two other parties were also established: the liberal-conservative Civic Platform (Platforma

Obywatelska, PO) and Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, PiS), a party headed by twin brothers Jarosław and Lech Kaczyński.

In 2001 elections, these parties managed to enter the Parliament around 10 per cent and 8 per cent of the total votes, and in the next election after 4 years the results were quite similar. Polish People's Party was Agrarian, and Christian Democrat as their ideas and policies were conservative same-sex marriage as abortion issues. But the party was not successful in 2011 and 2015 elections. The leader of Self-Defence, Andrzej Lepper, started using the term of populism for the first time as a means of an endless challenge against the corrupted political structure defending the citizens and their national interest (Jasiewicz, 2008, p.14). Despite the lack of a clearly developed programme, Self-Defence movement did not have a clear party programme, but it may be regarded as a left-wing party with some populist socioeconomic policies. In general, both radical parties exploited the bad economic circumstances as well as the dissatisfaction of the people with the Polish political elite. Low level of economic growth resulted in higher unemployment rate made the Polish voters dissatisfied as they were not happy with the clientelism and corruption at the beginning of the twenty-first century. "...Lech Kaczyński had carved out a niche for himself as an uncompromising enemy of corruption and crime (Szczurbiak 2004, p.67). Before the 2001 Parliament elections, the anti-establishment mood was influential (Szczurbiak 2002, p.72). All populist parties including, Law and Justice Party (PiS), the League of Polish Families as well as Self-Defence also benefited from this political mood. Although the Social Democrats were successful in the 2001 elections, the centre-left government that had corruption scandals, it soon turned into the most unpopular government of Poland in the post-communist era (Szczurbiak 2007, p.207). After the elections according to surveys, the voters carried on believing in political corruption

and dishonesty of the politicians as well as they are seen as caring only for their own interests and are unreliable (CBOS 2003, p.4). So, in the next parliamentary elections in 2005, the Polish voters concerned with honesty and the reliability of the parties (CBOS 2005, p.2-3). As a result of these political circumstances, the election climate thus seemed very suitable for the parties, and Law and Justice Party (PiS) used the populist discourses and had the majority in the parliament. They were quite successful in capturing the sentiments of the voters, although the corruption problem still existed. The manifesto of PiS reflected a distinct message for the voters, and it seemed that their policy or strategy worked out well (Millard, 2010, p.146). There is a question whether PiS became a populist party that is difficult to answer. Another point is that a very popular Catholic radio station 'Radio Maryja' started supporting PiS instead of League of Polish Families. As a result of this process, Law and Justice Party gained 27 per cent of the total votes in the 2005 elections resulted in a majority coalition government by the supports of the two radical parties in May 2006. The government led by Prime Minister of Jaroslaw Kaczyński had significant arguments with two radical parties and could not be stable. In Poland, the emerging government of the Kaczyński brothers in 2005 resulted in significant internal problems as well as the international isolation of the country. There was a political crisis, and hence the political reforms were slowed down. The public platform of political parties within the League of Polish Families won the elections, and the climate was changed.

The rumours and scandals of corruption, as well as lousy press, are defined as the corruption days have never come to an end (Millard 2010, p.146). The coalition was eventually tumbled in the summer of 2007, but the government ceased serious measures, with the effect of lower unemployment the government started dealing with the anti-corruption problems (Szczurbiak 2008, p.418), Law and Justice Party

preserved its place in the eyes of the voters. Although PiS could not win the elections of 2007 and 2011, losing the government leadership to Civic Platform of Donald Tusk, PiS was still a powerful actor of the Polish political life. Instead of a newly founded populist party, it was Law and Justice, with influences and roots from the post-communist era, prevailed in the political life. In 2015 elections PiS was quite successful as they used illiberal and populist discourses. Another important point is that Hungary and Poland have been supporting each other against the EU threats.

3.2.1 Polish Political Life before 2004

The process of political transformation in Poland was started in 1989 as the partly-free parliamentary elections were conducted. After Solidarity under the leadership of Lech Wałęsa who had significant electoral success in partially free elections in 1989, Poland's last communist president, General Jaruzelski was forced to appoint Mazowiecki, as prime minister. The government were set up to manage the economic transition of Poland, but in return, strict economic policies caused poor economic conditions and higher unemployment rates for the citizens. At the end of 1989, the Communist Party was closed. The name of Polish People's Republic was changed to the Republic of Poland, and after one year later Jaruzelski was replaced by Lech Wałęsa in the first democratic elections of Poland. At the end of 1990, Jarosław Kaczyński was on the Lech Wałęsa's side but later accused him of being a communist president. These events resulted in the split of Solidarity into two rival parties in 2001: Civic Platform (led by Donald Tusk), and Law and Justice (led by the Kaczyńskis, Jarosław and his twin brother, Lech). The political transformation accelerated within a few years. However, the preparations of the new Constitution took some time, and a transitional act was passed on 17 October 1992. It was called

the Small Constitution as it implemented a principle of division of power and the principle of a free representative mandate. The political transformation of Poland was completed with the passing of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. The Constitution regulated the whole political system of the state, ensuring the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual as well as the relationships between parliament, government and president. The system gives the Prime Minister a strong position as weakening the location of the president.

The Constitution of the Republic of Poland was passed after some time of the Small Constitution and adopted in the national referendum on 25 May 1997. Its passing was preceded by an extended interim period. Article 10 of The Polish constitution is as follows: 1. The system of the Republic of Poland is based on the division and the balance of the legislative branch, the executive branch and the judiciary branch. 2. Sejm²⁸ and Senate exercise the legislative branch, the President of the Republic of Poland and the Council of Ministers use the executive branch, and the judiciary branch is applied by courts and tribunals". Bodies of the legislative branch were treated by the Polish constitution as representatives of the nation; the constitution specified the President as the highest representative of the Republic of Poland and the guarantor of the continuity of the authority of the state. It was a positional power of the Prime Minister was strengthened. The system may be heavily influenced by the German chancellorial system.

Poland enjoys a parliamentary democracy under the strong leadership of the Prime Minister. Since 1990 the President of Poland is also chosen by the nation in the regular, direct general election. The President has some symbolic authorities but also

²⁸The *Sejm* plays a vital role in the governmental system of *Poland* and it is the lower house of the Polish parliament. It consists of 460 deputies elected. The senate has 100 members. Date of Access:01.07.2018

the President is seen as the arbitrator with following responsibilities; limited abilities to shorten the term of office of the parliament; right to manage referenda (with the consent of the Senate); the power of legislative veto; and the power of referring legislation to the Constitutional Tribunal. With the new Constitution, the ability of the head of state is limited.

According, to the Polish constitution (Art. 95, sec. 1), the Sejm and Senate exclusively exercise the legislative power in Poland. The Senate takes part in passing bills as the consultative body and has a limited role scope in government appointments. The Sejm and Senate are able to act at all times. The organization and rules of operation of the Sejm and Senate are very similar.

The Polish Judiciary System consists of courts and two separate and independent bodies with special powers (the State Tribunal and the Constitutional Tribunal). The most fundamental level of the judiciary is the great courts which exercise judicial powers in all cases.

In Poland, a functional party system is a fundamental principle of political pluralism as stated in the constitution. Membership is voluntary and open. The most important document of a political party is its statutes. It contains all the information about a party, its aims and its internal organization. Polish parties are mostly catch-all parties, often merely serving as a power base for their leaders. Their objective is to become organizations similar to their counterparts in Europe. The party system is comparatively competitive and pragmatic, but at present, there is a state of moderate pluralism with two main parties (PiS and PO). Political parties differ mainly over minor social matters or attachment to tradition or certain political ideals. As there has been political instability in Poland, after 1993, as there are party families and lower quantity of parties in the parliament. Polish parties are divided according to their

position towards communism. As the Polish voters are tired of politics, there is a low voting rate. There are coalition governments created based on common pasts of the parties, not the collective future.

Poland's democracy journey started with the democratic transition of 1989 with Hungary and other CEC, but also ended up like Hungary as a means of democratic backsliding after PiS won the parliamentary elections in October 2015 (Karolewski and Wilga, 2018, p.28).

3.2.2 Polish Political Life after 2004

In 2005, Law and Justice Party won both the parliamentary and the presidential elections. Jarosław Kaczyński became Prime Minister as the head of the coalition government, and Lech Kaczyński became President of the Republic until he died in a plane crash in 2010. There was a conspiracy theory on his death as it happened while he was in Russia. In the coalition government, PiS (Law and Justice Party) was supported by Self Defence Party and the nationalist-religious League of Polish Families (LPR). The coalition came to an end as the Civic Platform of Donald Tusk won the next elections, and he became the Prime Minister. Law and Justice Party won the next elections with Jarosław Kaczyński in 2015 and declared that they would establish the fourth republic with some significant changes within the constitutional system. This meant that the end of the politics and Kaczyński became the sole and ultimate leader not to be accountable for any of his actions. As he initiated Orbán in Hungary, Law and Justice Party (Kaczyński in reality) published a manifesto summarising vision of Law and Justice Party and then Kaczyński announced himself as the ultimate leader in 2011. The lengthy document was very similar to Orbán's manifestos repeating the same populist discourses. For example, as Orbán stated for Hungary in 2009, Kaczyński stated in the same manner that 'a well-

ordered Poland should have a 'centre of political direction'. The political system tailored for Poland very identical to one planned for Hungary: the illiberal democracy. It was based on major constitution amendments and revolutionary regime changes diminishing checks and balances system. However, the difference of Kaczyński's PiS-led coalition government from Orbán's sole Fidesz government was that the Law and Justice Party was not able to have 2/3 majority in the parliament. So instead of constitution amendment, they preferred to disregard the Constitution of 1997. Basically, they started with the Constitutional Tribunal, that they had annulled some primary legislation of the PiS government as the government increased the numbers of the judges to control the Constitutional Tribunal. As Muller (2016) succinctly puts it, "as early as 2011, Kaczyński wanted to create Budapest in Warsaw"²⁹. Andrzej Duda became the new President of Poland, and the new Sejm (Lower Parliament) elected 5 new judges and made their oath overnight for the Constitutional Tribunal just after new legislation accepted as the Law on the Constitutional Tribunal. The Constitutional Tribunal ruled out 2 new judges' appointments as finding that unconstitutional. PiS government made another amendment on the Law on the Constitutional Tribunal as the decisions to be taken with 2/3 majority which enabled the Constitutional Tribunal to make any intervention to the PiS for building an illiberal democracy like Hungary.

The challenge of the Constitutional Tribunal did not finish as they announced that all the legislation concerning the Constitutional Tribunal was invalid, but the government did not publish this ruling so that it would not come to effect (Kisilowski, 2015)³⁰. The General Assembly of Poland's Supreme Court judges

²⁹<http://www.nybooks.com/daily/2016/02/11/kaczynski-eu-problem-with-poland>. Date of Access:12.07.2018

³⁰www.politico.eu/article/law-vs-justice-poland-constitution-judges/. Date of Access:12.07.2018

announced that the judgments of the Constitutional Tribunal should be obeyed. So there was a deadlock over the constitutional amendments towards illiberal democracy.

Kaczyński, then as identical to Orbán's methodology, attacked on the free media as with the first amendment of the Law on Radio and Television Broadcasting. The government had the authority over the whole media system in Poland in 2016. Then the government established the National Media Council for supervision of the media activities. An interesting rule for the media was their obligation to broadcast the news on the Polish parliament, government and president, as well as respecting 'Christian values and universal ethical principles'. The Council of Europe warned Poland for these illiberal amendments to the law, so the government postponed the draft law. As another step to illiberal democracy in Poland, like Hungary, the PiS government politicized the civil service. Also, following on the Orbán's agenda, Poland started to be a surveillance state. European Parliament criticized Poland on a number of occasions by the Venice Commission. Kaczyński stated that the PiS government would like to change the 1997 Constitution as saying that: "the constitution must be verified every twenty years". Immediately the Polish President Andrzej Duda agreed to this view. But as critics argue, "PiS does not really need a new constitution because what they have been doing since the fall of 2015 is already a *de facto* change of the constitution through sub-constitutional laws. This is what Wojciech Sadurski calls a constitutional coup d'état." (Halmai, 2017, p.12).

3.2.3 Polish Political Parties

Polish political parties may be placed on a two or three-dimensional space. The differentiation of the parties is related to the socio-cultural and also secular/religious continuum. The Polish party system has become a sample of the national party systems (Caramani, 2004), although there have been some influences

by the EU membership process. However, in 2001 elections an economic liberal and populist continuum were in effect as the EU integration was on the agenda to influence the voters' choices. After the first free elections of 1991, just one party namely the PSL (Polish Peasant Party) firstly entered into the parliament after 2015. Most of the political parties, in the post-communist era, have changed their names, but most of the leaders have still been leading new parties.

At present the most essential and popular political parties are: Civic Platform (PO), Law and Justice (PiS), Palikot's Movement, Polish People's Party, Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), Polish Workers' Party (PPR), Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), Left and Democrats (LiD); Polish People's Party (PSL). Civic Platform (PO) was founded in 2001 as a split from Solidarity Electoral Action as a centre-right political party. Lewis and Mansfeldová (2007, p.131) divides Polish political parties as follows: "The classification of Polish parties by the general 'family' they belong to might help in comprehending what they stand for: SLD is a classic social democracy; PSL is peasant/agrarian; UW is liberal; PD is liberal/left; PO is liberal/right, although close to conservative; PiS is conservative in nature, but increasingly populist recently (especially during the 2005 campaign and later on); LPR is religious/ nationalist (on occasion xenophobic), and SRP is left/populist". Also, there are the central-liberal parties: Civic Platform (PO) and Freedom Union/Democratic Party (UW/PD)

Another classification of the Polish political parties is based on the position of the party on the EU accession as a continuum of being Eurosceptic or Euro-enthusiast. EU integration was an issue for the first time in the 2001 elections. The support for membership to the EU was about 80% in favour of accession in the mid-1990s, but through the pre-referendum period, it was decreased to about 50 per cent. The same pattern was observed in different CEC states. Only Self-Defence of the Republic of

Poland (SRP) and League of Polish Families (LPR) were clearly Eurosceptic. Polish People's Party (PSL) and PiS had some reservations as being pro-European. SLD and UW/PD were openly Euro-enthusiastic. Commenting on the position of PO is more difficult as it was pro-EU since its foundation in 2001 and during the accession referendum. However, the party put some reservations about some of the EU policies and other issues (Riishøj, 2010, p.8).

However, being on the left or right in the political continuum has different meanings in Poland (Górka, 2013, p.188). The dichotomy of left and right does not mean that they are entirely different in their agendas. "The concepts of right-left are so capacious that they may contain in themselves contradictory political demands". Most of the political parties in Poland may be labelled as conservative, rightist, from moderately to strongly traditionalist and nationalist, as well as statist. Their liberal prefix is different from Western European type of liberal parties in terms of free-market orientation. Their connection with the Church is generally very close, and the Church was supportive of the EU membership. For example, Pope John Paul II called Polish citizens to vote in favour of the EU as a means of Poland's returning to Europe vision. However, some priests did not read the Pope's message on Sunday Service before the referendum. Another example is that the religious broad-casting station Radio Maryja, owned by a priest named Tadeusz Rydzyk, and was against the EU Membership and Euro-sceptic.

PSL combines liberal discourses on the economy with social conservative dialogues on social and ethical issues. In the 2001 parliamentary election party became the largest party in opposition to the government and PO remained the second-largest party at the 2005 election, but this time behind the national conservative Law and Justice Party, PiS. In 2007, PO overtook PiS, now established

as the two dominant parties, and formed a coalition government with the support of PSL and PO party leader has been appointed as the Prime Minister of Poland. PiS is a national conservative political party which was founded by the Kaczyński twins, Lech and Jarosław, in 2001. The party won the 2005 election, while Lech Kaczyński won the presidency. His brother Jarosław served as Prime Minister, before calling elections in 2007, in which the party came second to PO. The party programme is dominated by anti-corruption, conservative, law and order agenda. It has embraced economic interventionism with traditional perspectives. PiS is the less supportive of European integration. The party is soft Eurosceptic and opposes a federal Europe (Jaskiernia, 2017).

The Polish far-right tradition well developed over the years and exploited the communist era legacies. An example of this situation is during the Communism regime, some top officials were Jewish, but in 1968 the Communist-state of Poland organized a mass anti-Semitic campaign, and this discourse has been influential in Poland since then, and some political parties were established on the grounds of xenophobia and anti-Semitism through the end of the 1980s. Polish National Community and then the Polish National Party organized violent attacks on foreigners. The far-right movement in Poland may be started with the establishment of Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN) proposing state independence, one-nation, radical anti-Communism, and anti-Soviet regime. The party managed to receive about 10 per cent of the votes in the 1991 elections to be represented in the Parliament as well as in 1993. The KPN is regarded as an early example of the Polish far-right movement as the Party defended state nationalism vigorously. However, the party was not xenophobic as opposed to Mudde's definition of far right (2007).

Another example of the far right parties in Poland is the case of the League of Polish Families (LPR) as it is explained in Chapter 1. The LPR has transformed over time, but their counter view on the EU membership did not change. Their religious discourse has always been influential on the party politics. According to LPR's party programmes, the party is a Christian-national party, with far-right features.

As PiS and PO Parties are our sampled cases, some detailed information on their positioning towards the EU democratization and illiberal democracy is discussed in this section.

3.2.3.1 Law and Justice Party (PiS)

One of the most influential parties of Poland in the post-communism and after EU accession period, the Law and Justice Party (PiS) was set up in 2001 under the leadership of twin brothers Lech and Jaroslaw Kaczyński. Moreover, from its inception as a party in 2001, PiS has levelled a harsh critique of the political order following the transition as being rife with holdovers from the communist era and political corruption (Szczerbiak, 2007, 2008). Most of the party members were from a former political group called the Solidarity Electoral Action. The most famous figure of the party was Lech Kaczyński who was then the Ministry of Justice in the AWS government. In 2002, he was the mayor of Warsaw, and in 2005, then the President of Poland. His twin brother, Jaroslaw Kaczyński, became the party leader. The party was conservative in nature and was defending traditional values, the principle of law and order, statism as well as and the fight against crime and corruption. In its 2005 "Justice for All" manifesto, Law and Justice promised to decrease employment in the state administration and "to purge the state of the communist past and communist clientelism."³¹ Economically, the party supports a state-guaranteed minimum social

³¹www.pis.org. Date of Access: 12.07.2018

security and a degree of state intervention in the economy within market economy bounds. On 25 September 2005 Law and Justice (PiS) won parliamentary elections winning 27% of the vote in the Parliament. The liberal Civic Platform (PO) was the second party just after PiS with 24.1% of the votes. These two major political parties of the Polish Political system could not agree on power-sharing to form the government. PiS also won the presidential elections with Lech Kaczyński until his death because of a plane crash in Russia. The conspiracy theories on the plane crash in Smolensk in Russia influenced the political life in Poland as it was used as a means of important material in election campaigns and media coverage (Jaskiernia, 2017, p.241). “As a result, in the subsequent parliamentary election of 2005, the most important single reason for Poles to vote for a party concerned the honesty and reliability of their preferred party” (CBOS 2005, p.2-3). The political culture and atmosphere were suitable for the parties that use populist discourses (Jasiewicz, 2008) and the Law and Justice Party (PiS) used this instrument very well and won the elections. The manifesto of PiS seemed to be successful for conveying the message to the voters: for well over a decade liberal reforms had wreaked havoc on the fortunes of ordinary folk” (Millard, 2010, p.146). Law and Justice Party lost the leadership to the Civic Platform of Donald Tusk in the elections of 2007 and 2011. However, the party was influential in the Polish political life. “Law and Justice (PiS), the governing party between 2005 and 2007, is a conservative party which espouses traditional values, more ‘solidaristic’ policies and close Church-State relations” (Slomczynski and Shabad, 2012, p.92). As a result of their successful political messages for the voters; elections PiS won the 2015 elections by using populist and illiberal discourses. “The recent developments in Poland also call for an in-depth theoretical explanation of how nationalist-populist political options gain in strength in spite of the apparently

unpromising context of social progress and economic success” (Markowski, 2016, p.11). Another explanation for the success of PiS was not only the rise of the far right in CECs but also other political and economic factors as well as the effect of the Catholic Church in Poland. “PiS to some extent represents a social attitude, typical for the socialist (social-democratic) parties, with some part of the program including a populist message, but with the combination of a conservative approach to several issues and nationalistic stand on the perception of patriotic mood” (Jaskiernia, 2017, p.242). PiS was able to create the first single-party government since the post-communist period. Recently the PiS attempts to extend its power over the judiciary, just following the Hungarian example, with the adoption of the new law which weakens the Constitutional Court. The party also tends to politically control the public media as well as controlling civil services. “These changes put Poland on the same trajectory as Viktor Orbán's Hungary” (Marcinkiewicz and Stegmaier, 2016, p.4). Another vital point is that Hungary and Poland have been supporting each other against EU policies and threats. Orbán’s leadership was then followed by the Polish politicians that two countries supported each other’s illiberal democratic propositions.

There are some challenges Law and Justice Party must face in the future that the policies of PiS had support from the public as they initiated a robust economic development, low taxes, higher minimum wages and pension schemes. However, with the declining figures for economic indicators, the party may lose some of its credits as some adverse effects of the economic crisis as well as political conflicts inside and outside of Poland. The trend of illiberal democracy started from Hungary may have an adverse impact on Poland as the country seemed to follow the pathways of Hungary and the EU may take further actions against Poland (European Commission, 2017b).

3.2.3.2 Civic Platform (PO)

Within the post-communist period, there have been new parties established in Poland, but the leaders were generally the old communist leaders. As the 1990s' multi-polar party system transformed into a bipolar political system, and the Law and Justice Party (PiS) and Civic Platform (PO) differed significantly in their ideological stances. PO is more ideologically heterogeneous and has been categorized as a 'liberal-conservative' or centre-right party: economically liberal and socially conservative. As a result of the fact that religious cleavage and then the post-communist systemic fracture started losing its importance and "two different right-wing projects dominant with the solidarity Poland (PolskaSolidarna), represented by Law and Justice Party (PiS) confronting liberal Poland (Polskaliberal) represented by the Civic Platform (PO)" (Riishøj, 2010, p.4).

Civic Platform (PO) has been the main competitor of the PiS in Poland and won the 2007 election and then 2011 elections just after a few years of its establishment. Civic Platform (PO) is one of the new parties in Poland, established in 2001 with liberal stances. However, the profile of the party has changed over time especially after the unexpected election triumph in 2007. Civic Platform was formed after a severe crisis within the Democratic Union (UD) as Donald Tusk lost the position of the party chairman and PO was built endogenously after the conflicts within Democratic Union and most parties in CECs were established in a similar process. The election victories of PO may be explained by some authors as "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" (Jaskiernia, 2017, p.230).

PO was an example of the new liberal parties in other CECs. The party was established in a short time and transformed into a cadre party targeting at and well-educated young citizens as they had a weak tie with the communist days. The PO is starting attracting the voters with the “widespread protest against the partyist type of democracy” that had evolved in the first decade of transition to “release the energy of the Polish people” (Riishøj, 2010, p.7). However, this popularity was not reflected in the elections in 2001 as the SLD-UP together with the Peasant Party (PSL) made a coalition government. Before the competition of Civic Platform with Law and Justice Party, they tried to form a coalition together, and there was no success due to the power-sharing issues in 2007. Civic Platform’s “bad politics” campaign was based on the evoking of the sentiments of hatred against the corruption of the elites. PO also stressed the national interests as well as using Christian values. In the beginning, especially in the European Parliament elections, PO represented some modern and secular European values. The initial party programme of PO used liberal principles with the aspiration of the minimal state intervention as well as reminding of some moral and religious values. They defended the principles of the Fundamental Law including freedom, tradition and Christianity. Civic Platform moved to liberal and conservatism position within the political continuum and more recently, “on the policy and programme level the Civic Platform (PO) developed into a centre-right soft “Thatcherite” liberal, anti-communist, soft Christian national and soft Eurosceptic and populist party” (Riishøj, 2010, p.8). They have some similarities with the Hungarian Fidesz party as both parties experienced similar transformation processes.

The party’s elections promises including low taxes were quite influential. After the 2001 elections PO was seen as a significant substitution for the government as the popularity of the SLD was in decline. The party had some policies similar to

PiS policies such as significant amendments in the constitution and the demand for new election law with elections in individual constituencies. They defended changes as proposed by PiS that are less number of parliament members, no immunity to the parliaments, abolishment of the Senate and empowering the president.

At the 2005 election, Poland seemed to be divided by two different camps namely “traditionalist”, vs “modern”: “The old post-communist divisions that had impacted Polish politics in the 1990s were gradually passing into history” (Szczerbiak, 2008:428). As a result of the 2005 elections, PiS gained the majority and was followed closely by PO. In 2007, The “key political slogans concentrated on the deepening of European integration, introduction of market economy, competitive and efficient economy, rural development, support to families, respect for historical traditions and Polish patriotism, in short, traditionalist-liberal slogans added soft right-traditionalism (Riishøj, 2010, p.16). Then the Law and Justice Party (PiS) became the largest party and also won the presidential elections. The Civic Platform (PO) became the major opposition party against PiS as aiming to answer the allegations over the idea that “PO was blocking efforts to fight corruption and reform of the state” as claimed by PiS. The liberal dimension of PO started weakening with more centralized decision-making system in the party politics (as converging with Fidesz way) and Donald Tusk gained more politically charismatic image and the party placed itself somewhere between liberal and social-solidaristic dimensions, arguing that the party supported a “liberal economic policy and a solidaristic social policy” (Szczerbiak, 2008:422-423). In the 2007 elections, PO won 41.5 per cent of the votes and established a coalition government with the Farmers' Party (PSL). As the president was the PiS leader Lech Kaczyński, the disagreement and tension was inevitable between the government and the presidency. Civic Platform party was an anti-system

party and then became a leader-driven party. After the 2005 election (Poland) and the 2010 election (Hungary), the political scene became dominated by the right, in Poland the PO versus the PiS, in Hungary Fidesz versus Jobbik, and without the bipolar party system format known at previous elections. After 2015 elections, PO started lagging behind PiS as being a significant opposition party in Poland.

3.2.4 Illiberal Democracy in Poland

Although there have been signs of the Polish democratic backsliding in political history, some incidents that happened more recently should be reviewed. As it was explained in the previous sections, PiS contributed the most to the booming and intensifying examples of the illiberal democracy in Poland. Law and Justice Party won the 2015 Polish parliamentary elections; they maintained the absolute majority of the seats of the Polish Parliament. As it was argued earlier PiS party was an ultra-conservative and nationalist-populist party. A new face for the party, Beata Szydło became the PM after leading the electoral campaign successfully. However the core ideas of the party have not changed; “but in fact, PiS remained firmly under the grip of its ultra-conservative co-founder and former prime minister, Jarosław Kaczyński” (Foy, 2016)³². Kaczyński followed his counterpart in Hungary, Viktor Orbán, very closely as he once stated in 2011 that “Viktor Orbán gave us an example of how we can win. The day will come when we will succeed, and we will have Budapest in Warsaw” (Buckley and Foy, 2016)³³.

Just after taking office, the new government of Law and Justice Party (PiS) started attacks towards on the independence of the Constitutional Tribunal and the free media of Poland as a follower of Orbán. It well complied with the Fidesz’s

³² <https://www.ft.com/content/8238e15a-db46-11e5-a72f-1e7744c66818>. Date of Access:15.07.2018

³³ <https://www.ft.com/content/0a3c7d44-b48e-11e5-8358-9a82b43f6b2f>. Date of Access:15.07.2018

manifesto items one by one (Buckley and Foy, 2016; Kelemen 2016; Ost 2016). PiS, as well as President Andrzej Duda, challenged the authority of the Constitutional Tribunal to architect their illiberal democracy, so they “attempted to pack it with loyalist judges and passed legislation designed to weaken it further” (Cienski, 2016³⁴; Kisilowski, 2015³⁵) The long process between the parliament and the president and the Constitutional Tribunal peaked at the time, in March 2016, “the Constitutional Tribunal struck down these reforms (legislative amendments) as unconstitutional, but the PiS government maintains that the court has no authority to rule on the law and refuses to recognize its judgement” (Cienski, 2016³⁶). The constitutional crisis has been an important issue as the European Parliament had to intervene in some cases. “The Council of Europe’s Venice Commission, its advisory group on constitutional matters, released a report on a report condemning the PiS government’s reforms of the Constitutional Tribunal as a threat to ‘not only the rule of law but also the functioning of the democratic system’”(Venice Commission, 2016, p.101). Kaczyński openly admitted that they were trying to get rid of the Constitution Tribunal as he “denounced the Tribunal as a ‘band of cronies’ that sought to block PiS from pursuing its policy agenda” (Agence France Presse, 2015)³⁷.

Another strategy of PiS was to attack the media as they passed new legislation “giving all the authority to the treasury minister to hire and fire the management of public television and genuine democracy” (Rankin, 2016)³⁸. With the new legislation in effect in January 2016, “the managers and supervisory board members of Poland’s

³⁴www.politico.eu/article/polish-government-vs-judiciary-round-2/. Date of Access:15.07.2018

³⁵www.politico.eu/article/law-vs-justice-poland-constitution-judges/. Date of Access:15.07.2018

³⁶www.politico.eu/article/polish-government-vs-judiciary-round-2/. Date of Access:15.07.2018

³⁷<https://www.yahoo.com/news/polish-ex-pm-kaczynski-slams-top-court-pro-203715219.html>. Date of Access:19.07.2018

³⁸<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/13/ec-to-investigate-polish-governments-controversial-new-laws> 19.07.2018

public broadcasters were fired with *immediate effect* – with the PiS moving to replace them with party loyalists” (Guardian, 2016)³⁹.

It may be seen clearly from the PiS attacks on the judiciary system, and media that were similar policies as the Orbán government did. The interesting point is that the EU has intervened in Poland that it has been to Hungary for the last 5 years. As a result of this policy change of the EU, “the Rule of Law Framework procedure was launched against Polish government in January 2016, less than two months after PiS had launched its attacks on the judiciary and the media” (De la Baume, 2016⁴⁰; Rankin, 2016). In June 2016, “the Commission issued a formal Rule of Law opinion and by late July it triggered stage two of the framework, issuing a ‘Rule of Law Recommendation’ and calling on Poland to take remedial actions within three months or face the threat that the Article 7 procedure would be launched against it” (European Commission, 2016)⁴¹. “There continues to be a systemic threat to the rule of law in Poland, and the Polish justice system suffers from lengthy proceedings and contract enforcement. This ongoing crisis undermines trust in the Polish legal system” (European Commission, 2017b)⁴². The EU reacted to the illiberal democratic applications in Hungary and Poland differently probably because of the size and strategic importance of Poland, and they did not let Poland slide into illiberal democracy as Hungary did. Another explanation of the case may be the super majority of Hungarian government enabled them to amend the constitution, but it was not possible in Poland. It is also possible that “Fidesz enjoys the protection of the

³⁹www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/07/poland-president-signs-bill-putting-state-media-under-government-control. 19.07.2018

⁴⁰www.politico.eu/article/black-sheep-in-the-european-parliament-viktor-Orbán-epp-mep/ 21.07.2018

⁴¹<http://www.lisbon-treaty.org/wcm/the-lisbon-treaty/treaty-on-european-union-and-comments/title-1-common-provisions/7-article-7.html> 19.07.2018

⁴²https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2017-european-semester-country-report-hungary-en_1.pdf 19.07.2018

powerful centre-right EPP group whereas the PiS does not” (Zalan, 2016)⁴³. The European People’s Party (EPP) group is the largest party as represented in the in the European Commission as well as European Parliament as PiS has a member of a smaller and less effective party group, European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR). “Namely, Article 7 of TEU empowers the Council to determine whether there is a clear risk of a serious breach by a Member state of the values referred to in Article 2” (Bugarič, 2014, p.3). “Hungary has already announced that it would use its veto to block any sanctions against Poland” (Cienski and De la Baume, 2016)⁴⁴. Both countries are regarded as the EU authorities and experts as illiberal democratic countries; they have been backing each other, so this is another challenge that the EU must face (European Commission, 2017b).

As a result, under the PiS government, the quality of democracy in Poland has greatly suffered. Following the Hungarian example, the first activities of the new government targeted the Constitutional Tribunal, the public media and the civil service. While the government has not changed the electoral law so far, it has tried to weaken independent private media by urging state-owned enterprises to place advertisements in certain outlets and to sell certain newspapers. “The conflict between the government and the Constitutional Tribunal has led to a situation of legal uncertainty in which the courts can either follow the government’s interpretation or that of the Constitutional Tribunal and other important judicial institutions” (Śledzińska, 2015)⁴⁵. “The quality of democracy has also suffered from the strong discourse launched by the government against Muslims, the LGBT community and

⁴³ <https://euobserver.com/political/131723>. Date of Access:26.07.2018

⁴⁴ <https://www.politico.eu/article/poland-strikes-back-at-eu-on-media-law-frans-timmermans-stepkowski-andrzej-duda/>. Date of Access:26.07.2018

⁴⁵ <http://verfassungsblog.de/midnight-judges-polands-constitutionaltribunal-caught-between-political-fronts/>. Date of Access:26.07.2018

“gender-ideology,” the increasing corruption and cronyism in state-owned enterprises and rising political polarization”. Since 2015, following Hungary and Orbán very closely, Poland and the EU have a battle over the refugee's intake issue as there was a Polish resistance to the relocation scheme of the EU's refugee and migrant policy⁴⁶. Polish domestic policies and their convergence of illiberal democracy to the Fidesz way are heavily criticized by the EU and international media and independent research bodies.

3.3 Slovakia: Background and Context

After the dissolution of Czechoslovakia into two independent states in 1993, the independent Slovak Republic diverged into the non-democratic stream. Vladimír Mečiar was the Prime Minister between 1992 and 1998, and he adapted a semi-autocratic political system that resulted in the rejection of Slovakia from the EU membership process. As Slovakia could not enter the first negotiations of the European Union membership process, Slovakia was not accepted into NATO. However, the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary were accepted into NATO. The government of Mečiar had problematic relationships with the president, independent media, churches, opposition parties, NGOs, and ethnic minorities. The government had also conflicted with the Constitutional Court as some of the Court's decisions were disregarded. There was a high degree of political and cultural polarization with the defenders of democracy and followers of autocratic tendencies. In the 1998 parliamentary elections, all the opposition groups created an anti-Mečiar alliance to transform the semi-authoritarian regime. As a result of this democratic coalition of the society, Slovakia turned into the democratic consolidation path as well as EU integration: “most dramatically Slovakia had made substantial progress in catching up

⁴⁶ <https://www.dw.com/en/poland-hungary-say-eu-migration-policy-has-failed/a-42016262>. Date of Access: 26.07.2018

with the early reformers with political and economic reform” (Vachudova, 2010, p.86). Another point is that “Slovakia’s civil society is relatively well differentiated and organised” (Malová, 2017b, p.14). The new government under the leadership of Mikuláš Dzurinda radically turned to the international integration policy of Slovakia based on the membership applications to the NATO, the European Union and the OECD. The government started new structural reforms including tax system change, healthcare systems and other precautions taken just after the 2002 elections. The reform package was supported by most of the parties, NGOs and public in general and Slovakian economy realised a big growth rate in 2006. However, health care reforms were not found to be as effective as other problems resulted in the rise of the anti-reformist Smer-SD party. The coalition government was established with the parties of the left (Smer-SD), and the nationalistic parties (the People’s Party - Movement for Democratic Slovakia and the Slovak National Party). Smer-SD led by Robert Fico as the governing party in the coalition was conservative and aimed at expanding the power of the state in the national economy. However, the coalition government carried on the economic measurements and policies started by the previous government as they accepted using Euro in 2009. However, the budget deficit of the Slovakian economy increased dramatically through 2010. This was mainly due to the economic crisis of Slovakia in 2009, and the government’s welfare policies were unsuccessful as they were not planned systematically. Another reason for the economic crisis was the anti-democratic policies of the government. The government made major mistakes in disregarding the free media, judicial independence and continual discrimination, as well as corruption, were supported. For instance, the government issued a new press law in 2008 that was regarded as anti-democratic. Also, the tension with Hungary increased with the effects of the nationalist coalition

partner SNS. As the government policies threatened the public, in the 2010 elections, extremist parties fell out of the parliament with the victory of the right and central parties. Fico government's poor performance resulted in the popular dissatisfaction. Although Smer-SD had the largest proportion of total votes (nearly 35 per cent), Smer-SD was out of the government. Another coalition government was designed with the leadership of Democratic Party and Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKU) with the participation of the liberal Freedom and Solidarity party (SaS) with Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) well as Hungarian minority party (Most-Híd) in 2010. The new government was formed with the leadership of Radičová until the disagreement over the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) in only 2012. Thus, as a result of this short period in office, Radičová's government "failed to pass needed reform measures such as the unification of tax and payroll-levy systems, changes to local government finances, the transformation of state hospitals and amendments to laws on citizenship" (Malová and Učeň, 2012, p.286-287). In this relatively short period, as Slovakia has a strong civil society structure; the quality of democracy improved over time, and it is different from the trajectories of Hungary and Poland. However, in 2012 elections, the Smer- SD party (Smer- Social Democracy) won a great victory by taking 44% of the total votes in the elections. Fico successfully sent messages to the left-wing voters as the members of the former government, especially the SDKU-DS, had corruption scandals and the most famous scandal was the "Gorilla" scandal which was interestingly leaked to the media just before the elections.

Almost three decades of transformation have produced a somewhat mixed political system in Slovakia. The party system is weakly institutionalized but never closed to the civil society. According to Malová (2017a, p.1), "the transformation in

Slovakia can be divided into four periods distinguished according to the dominant structuring issues: (1) democracy and nation-state (1989–1998); (2) EU accession and international recognition (1998–2002); (3) adjusting the market economy and social state (2006–2015); and (4) corruption and clientelism (since 2016)”.

Generally, high levels of corruption and populism in CECs were disregarded due to the economic and migration crises. The European Union concentrated mainly on the democratic consolidation of the new members. Thus the social dimension including corruption problems has been neglected. The weak institutionalization and low stability of individual parties have frequently challenged the consolidation of liberal democracy in Slovakia (Malová, 2017a, p.11). The party system format remained predominantly moderate multipolar as it was the case for most of the CECs. In Slovakia, the party system in the 1990s was highly polarized and unstable and the political system to a large extent illiberal marked by pragmatic and populist politics, several party divisions as today there are more than 60 political parties. After the communism era, thus, in the late 1990s, there was a concept of “blocked consolidation of democracy” or “Meciarisation”. Socio-economic cleavages rather than ideological cleavages played a more important role at the 2006 and 2010 elections. Vladimir Meciar’s Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) ran election campaigns that were a textbook mixture of left-wing economic populism and xenophobic nationalism (Fisher, 2006, p.210), but especially with the 2009 economic crisis within Europe, the government changed radically. In Slovakia, after the 2006 elections, the coalition was formed between SMER (social democrats) and HZDS (populist) and SNS (far-right party). SNS was a fascist and an anti-Semitic party

In Slovakia, prime minister and populist left-wing party Smer-SD’s leader Robert Fico, with his racist and Islamophobic statements such as “Islam has no place

in Slovakia”⁴⁷ showed the far-right characteristic of his party. In Slovakia, we also witness the rise of one fascist party called Kotleba -The People's Party-Our Slovakia (ĽSNS) -. This extreme right party in Slovakia openly uses Nazi salutes, blames all crime on gipsies and considers NATO as a terrorist group. In the parliamentary elections, Kotleba won almost 10 percent of the votes, openly admires the Nazi puppet state which Slovakia was during the Second World War and -unlike other far-right parties in Europe- celebrates Nazi imagery that “references to Italian Fascism or German Nazism, also to a certain extent affect the extreme right in the post-communist countries (Kluknavská, 2014, p.43-44). The leader of the ĽSNS Marian Kotleba has attracted the media despite (or thanks to) his radical nature, at first by organising marches through Slovak towns that were seen as neo-Nazi or extremist. Thus, “Stereotyping of the Roma in public discourse and putting the minority into a certain ethnic scheme affect the attitudes towards the Roma minority and can create the favourable ground for extreme right parties, leading to their electoral successes” (Kluknavská, 2014, p.47). The leading party in Slovakia's ruling coalition, Smer, applies the far-right populist discourses during the elections.

Within the post-communist period, the Slovak party system has been changing and the stabilization period of the political system has been paused in every five to ten years' time. This trend has been regarded as a threatening point that the quality of democracy is in decline. For instance, the results of the 2016 elections have been even characterized as a political earthquake (Rybář and Spáč, 2017, p.153). Still, some studies reveal interdependence between the deepening of democratisation and Europeanisation in Slovakia (Harris, 2004, p.186) as well as between Europeanisation

⁴⁷<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/islam-has-no-place-in-this-country-says-slovakian-prime-minister-weeks-before-it-takes-over-eu-a7052506.html>

and party system changes at the Slovakian national level (Henderson, 2005, p.3)⁴⁸. The Slovakian case has been a unique case that within the transition period, Slovakia stuck in the conditions of the EU integration outside as well as adapting populist far-right politics inside. The increased salience of refugees strengthened right-wing parties (Bustikova and Guasti, 2017, p.172)

3.3.1 Slovakian Political Life before 2004

The political system of Slovakia was different from other Visegrád Group countries as Slovakia became independent in 1993. Slovakia has been in the process of state-building with the constitution and other political institutions. In Slovakia, there were question marks on the necessity of democracy consolidation at the beginning of the transition period as there were some deviations through illiberal administration practices mainly in the years between 1994 and 1998 during the third government led by Vladimir Mečiar.

There were examples of fundamental breaches of democracy as well as disregarding the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic on many occasions. This violation of rules of the law and the increasing power of the president resulted in adverse reactions from the EU as well as the international community. In this period, Slovakia was considered as a hybrid regime within the grey zone as Slovakia has followed a more difficult transition path (Szomolányi, 2004, p.151) or “a fragile democracy” (Quigley, 1997, p.62) or “semi-authoritarian regime” (Szomolányi, 1997, p.14). These labels may be true for the era of Mečiar. However, it may be early to talk about an authoritarian regime as the marginalization of the opposition has never been realised in Slovakia. The parliamentary democracy has been prevailed as well as

⁴⁸aei.pitt.edu/3201/02/Austin%2CHenderson.doc

pluralism and the existence of –partially- free media. Therefore, the Slovakian case between the years of 1994 and 1998 may be regarded as illiberal democracy as “routinely ignoring constitutional limits on their powers and depriving their citizens of basic rights and freedoms” (Zakaria, 1997, p.22).

After the parliamentary elections in 1998 “Slovakia made a significant step towards the consolidation of democracy”, and in 2004 the country became a member of NATO and the EU (Bútorá and Bútorová, 1999, p.83). The ethnic diversity of the population of Slovakia made it more difficult as there were ethnic Hungarians and Roma people as making Slovakia with the highest percentage of the ethnic minorities within the Visegrád Group countries.

The Slovak Republic has been a parliamentary democracy as an independent country from 1992, and the Constitution stressed the Slovak nation, the Slovak territory and the status of the Slovak language as being the “state language”. The Slovakian society was ethnically mixed, and thus the nationalist sentiments have always been high. The issue of Hungarian minorities in Slovakia has been influential within the relationships with Hungary, and the Slovakian government passed a law stating that “each citizen of Slovakia who actively pursues the citizenship of another country loses Slovak citizenship”, and some Hungarian-originated Slovak citizens lost their Slovakian citizenship. The legislative body of Slovakia is Slovak National Council as the representatives of citizens. However, during 1994-1998 Mečiar government there was a severe breach of the fundamental rights.

The executive in Slovakia has a dualistic character as the head of the State, President and the head of the government, Prime Minister, share the power. However, the Constitution declared that the government is the supreme body of executive power, but on the other hand, the constitutional position of President is, in fact,

dominant compared with the legal status of Government. The role of the president in Slovakia is determined not only by the Constitution, but also by the power of the political personality holding the office and, even more, by his or her relationship with the government and the parliamentary majority. In Slovakia, mostly coalition governments are in the office with the exception of HZDS government between 1992 and 1993. The political life is pluralist, and there seems to be a democratic culture in Slovakia. However, some politicians such as Mečiar and Fico tended to follow illiberal democratic paths due to populist and pragmatic concerns.

According to Szomolányi (2004), the third government of Mečiar (1994-1998) may be seen as turmoil for the democratic consolidation in Slovakia. Authoritarian tendencies of this government supported by HZDS and SNS (coalition partner) and this situation resulted in the exclusion from the EU and NATO membership negotiations as we stated earlier. The close relationships with Russia also negatively affected the country's democratic consolidation process. Slovakia's political discourse may be explained by Taggart (1998, p.365-366) as "bi-polar pro- and anti-integration discourse provides the closest description/can be used as the closest description of European discussion within the Slovak society". This bi-polarity of the Slovak political life even continued after the 1998 elections.

Another aspect which should be evaluated to understand the democratic consolidation level of Slovakia is the judiciary system. The judicial branch in Slovakia is divided into the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic and the regular jurisprudence. As the Constitutional Court started with 13 judges in 1993, the arguments over the effects and the size of the Court have never stopped as the problems, and the tension with the Meciar government have continued from 1994 to 1998.

3.3.2 Slovakian Political Life after 2004

After the early elections in June 2006, the minority coalition government was established with Smer-SD, HZDS and SNS. This coalition had stable support in the parliament but ended in 2011, and in the early elections of 2012, Smer-SD party led by Robert Fico won the victory and established the government with the help of SNS which was not a coalition partner.

While Prime Minister Robert Fico preserved his leadership in the parliamentary elections held in March 2016. Smer-SD party led by Fico used the slogan of “We protect Slovakia” as awakening the fears of migrants and terrorism and also the revitalisation of the Islamophobic discourse as presented in the statement that “there is no place for Islam in Slovakia⁴⁹.” However, Smer-SD’s populist and nationalist discourses for the election campaign failed as three right-wing parties namely the neo-Nazi L’SNS, the populist Sme Rodina (We Family) and the conservative-nationalist Slovak National Party (SNS) won the real victory. Also, liberals won more votes. In order to sustain the government of Smer, they proposed the coalition with SNS and Most-híd. After this compulsory coalition government with far-right democracy has declined with increasing problems of corruption, discrimination of the minorities especially Roma, refugee crisis and Islamophobia. There have been corruption scandals, and the tension and dispute between the government and the president Kiska deepened the democracy crisis over time. Interestingly the central issue of the disagreement was on the topics related to the Constitutional Court.

The economic performance of the government was satisfied with 3% growth rates 3 years in a row. As a result of the strong economic policies, unemployment rates fell,

⁴⁹<http://media1.naukaidrustvo.org/2017/08/7-djoric.pdf> Date of Access: 03.08.2018

and the fiscal system of Slovakia was strengthened. However, there appeared very little reform initiatives in the public sector (Malová, 2017a, p.10).

The government of Smer-SD issued a new party manifesto mostly repeating the previous promises. “Although it comprises around 70 pages, it has remained rather vague” (Malová, 2017b:10). However, the success of Smer-SD was based solely on the leadership of Robert Fico as well as using the parliamentary majority. However, Smer-SD governments have been accused of lacking transparency. Especially as the coalition partners are far-right, the policies of the governments diverged into more illiberal paths. In the second half of 2016, Slovakia took over the EU presidency for the first time. The presidency got more complicated by on the Greek debt crisis, relations to Russia and the refugee issue as well as the reactions and strategies by the Fico government. This stance made it difficult for Fico to be accepted as an “honest broker” by the other EU members⁵⁰.

3.3.3 Slovakian Political Parties

Slovakian political life has been based on continuous coalition governments and minority coalition governments. There have been six elections that three of them are early elections. Political parties are an essential part of the political system of Slovakia, and the political system of Slovakia may be regarded as unstable since the single-party government is almost impossible. There have been many political parties in such a small country as a symbol of pluralism, and the political system may be defined as multi-plural democracy. Main political parties are⁵¹; VPN (Public against Violence), then changed its name as ODU since 1991; KDH (Christian Democratic

⁵⁰<http://www.sgi-network.org/2017/Slovakia>. Date of Access:05.08 2018

⁵¹http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/country/slovakia/parties.html. Date of Access:05.08 2018

movement); DS (Democratic Party); DÚ (Democratic Union); SDK (Slovak Democratic Coalition); SDKÚ-DS (Slovak Democratic and Christian Union-Democratic Party); SĽ (Party of the Democratic Left); KSS (Communist Party of Slovakia); SOP (Civic Understanding Party); Smer (Direction-Social Democracy); HZDS (Movement for a Democratic Slovakia); SNS (Slovak National Party); SMK (Party of the Hungarian Coalition).

The system of the political parties in Slovakia has experienced various changes and is quite unstable. In spite of the fact that there has been a pluralist party system in Slovakia since 1989 and the main feature of the Slovak party system is its non-consolidation and frequent changes of the political parties' landscape. The parties are generally built top-down (Ondria et al., 2010). The volatility of the voters' loyalty is quite high as political parties may experience great falls and rises in a short time. The transformed Party of the Democratic Left (post-communist party, SĽ) in Slovakia could not become as successful as its counterparts in Poland (SLD) and Hungary (MSZP). The most influential leader of the Slovakian political life is Vladimir Mečiar who was the Prime Minister of Slovakia in 1990 -1991. He established a new national-populist Movement for Democratic Slovakia (HDZS) which then became the strongest political party in Slovakia. The party well managed the split process of Slovakia from the Czech Republic. However, as discussed earlier, Mečiar was in favour of centralization of power which created the party's image as the anti-system party in power, and he was accused of polarizing the Slovakian society. However, "the 1998 change of government resulted in compliance with the EU's political conditions and the broad coalition government led by Mikuláš Dzurinda (1998-2002) fully focused on EU accession" (Malová, 2017, p.4). In other words, "...newly elected Dzurinda government made every effort to overcome the

stain on the country's international image by giving top priority to meeting the EU's political conditions (Pridham, 2002, p.214).

After the early parliamentary elections, HZDS declined dramatically as the first social democrat party's victory of Slovakia happened. Smer-SD started a coalition government with SNS and HZDS that resulted in more polarization of the Slovakian political life due to a partnership with a far-right party, SNS. The new right-liberal party Most-Hid and another new liberal party, Freedom and Solidarity (SaS) were established and joined the coalition government after the 2010 elections. New coalition government emerged with four centre-right parties (SDKU-DS, KDH, SaS, Most-Hid), and for the first time in Slovakian history a woman, Iveta Radičová (SDKU-DS) became the Prime Minister. The coalition faced with a new crisis which resulted in the first single-party government by Smer-SD in the early elections in March 2012.

As the examples from the six parliamentary elections in Slovakia tells us that the level of consolidation of the political party system in Slovakia and its institutional stability is shallow. The bi-polarized political system created the situation that the "predominant party" was very often in the opposition (HZDS in 1994 and 1998 – 2006 or Smer-SD in 2010 – 2012). Now the political system of Slovakia is rather multi-plural, and this may be seen as a positive feature for the democratic consolidation as Slovakia may be still defined as a parliamentary democracy

As these two parties are our sampled cases, some detailed information on their positioning towards the EU democratization and illiberal democracy is discussed in this section.

3.3.3.1 Smer-SD (Slovakian Democracy Party)

Smer (Direction)-SD was established by Robert Fico as he withdrew from his former party, SDL, in 1999. The party was non-ideological at the beginning, but later on, Smer claimed to be a social-democratic party. In 2004 Smer merged with SDL and other minor social-democratic parties and changed its name to Smer-SD (Direction-Social Democracy). They wanted to form an alternative political party as there have been difficulties in terms of democratic consolidation in Slovakia. As demand from the society, the popularity of the party rose exceptionally successful as becoming the biggest party in the parliament elections in 2006. SMER-SD stated some values of the Socialist International in their manifesto as “the principles of freedom, democracy, equality, social justice, solidarity and environmental responsibility through parliamentary and direct democracy”. Since Smer-SD is the largest party in Slovakia, with stable support, its appeals are mostly traditional left as well as being populist. The leader of the party is Robert Fico is an uncontested leader like Orbán, Kaczyński and other examples. “Smer-SD is, in terms of its rhetoric, a traditional socialist party, speaking to the poorer strata, advocating a welfare state, but in reality, the party pursues fairly strict austerity policies with occasional social packages”. (Malová, 2017b, p.15). Like other case studies (Hungary and Poland), Smer-SD leaders are keen on using national and populist discourses. Smer-SD was social-democratic and left-wing in ideology, but it was transformed into a catch-all party with centrist appeals. Its party manifestos are inconsistent and may use practical means of winning the elections. “The weakest points in the public perception of the party are Smer-SD’s murky relations with oligarchs and high levels of corruption” (Malová, 2017a, p.1).

Although Smer-SD expressed its support for EU and NATO membership, its leader voted in the parliament against the amendment of the Constitution with Euro-sceptic sentiments. Early Euro-sceptical feelings were expressed Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar in the early days of independent Slovakia that he said “if we are not successful in the West, we will have to turn to the East”⁵², however, he was supporting the Europeanization on the official level.

The victory of the Smer-SD in 2012 was a result of the party being the primary alternative to the government from the left-wing. Robert Fico was a dominant personality shaping the politics of Smer-SD that was accused of using the “tyranny of majority” technique within in procedural issues. More recently the Smer-SD government has been pragmatic and populist as they started with economic growth and finance. The Slovakian economy has been doing well with lower unemployment rates, more taxes and more social contributions of the state. However, he faced heavy criticism from the opposition and the EU authorities. His populist policies did not work in the presidential elections in 2014, and Andrej Kiska became the President. Kiska was not a member of any political party and he applied as an independent candidate. He was also different from his predecessors as well as his rival Fico that he did not have the Communist Party membership anytime. As being a successful and rich businessman as well as was known as a philanthropist, Kiska was seen an alternative to the present candidates by the voters⁵³. He guaranteed to “counterbalance the government” and he kept his promise as he has been always supporting the policies of the government with higher approval ratings. “After EU accession in 2004

⁵²<https://spectator.sme.sk/c/20015124/how-would-you-summarize-slovak-politics-in-1996.html>. Date of Access:15.08 2018

⁵³In Slovakia in March 2014 Andrej Kiska was elected against Robert Fico as a “protest president”, or independent honest person. The Guardian has described him as “millionaire turned philanthropist”, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/30/slovakia-elects-andrej-kiska-president-robert-fico>. Date of Access:15.08 2018

and with a new government in power since 2006, Slovakia seems to shift back into the very habits of cronyism, clientelism and favouritism that were characteristic of the post-communist years of the 1990s". (Pawelke, 2010, p.3). The Slovak economy was able to recover from the recession. However, the major challenges as the government had to face were reducing the unemployment rates as well creating new jobs in the economy. The second Fico cabinet seemed to be having fewer troubles with civil society organizations and the media.

The case of Kiska's presidency since 2014 is a compelling case as he was not attached to any political party and he was a public-figure, businessman and philanthropist, won the elections and this situation helps Slovakia to maintain the checks and balances system. In the 2018 elections Smer led coalition government was established with the support of Most-Hid and SNS, but this time Fico is not in office as he had resigned over allegations and protests over the killing of a journalist and his fiancée⁵⁴.

3.3.3.2 Slovak National Party (SNS)

Slovak National Party (SNS) founded in 1990 but claimed to be the oldest political entity with a continuous existence since the 19th century⁵⁵. However, the old SNS, had different features, so Slovak National Party is a different and a new party. SNS is a far-right nationalist party. SNS concentrates on the sovereignty of the Slovak Republic and defends to establish a nation-state. In most Slovakian parties there have been internal splits or party mergers. SNS could not enter into the parliament in 2002, but in 2006 the party was quite successful (11, 73 %) and became a part of the coalition government.

⁵⁴<http://www.dw.com/en/new-slovak-government-wins-confidence-vote-amid-ongoing-protests/a-43146389>. Date of Access:15.08 2018

⁵⁵www.sns.sk. Date of Access:15.08 2018

Although the support of the party to the EU accession appeared in party programmes, the party leaders discredited the EU membership stressing some economic and national risks involved in the integration. The sovereignty of the Slovak Republic was at the core of the criticism (reference).

The SNS was the leading party in the 1990 Czechoslovak elections calling for an independent Slovak state. SNS was in the government after the 1992 and 1998 elections. Vladimír Mečiar's Movement for a Democratic Slovakia presented a problem for the SNS in 1991 as they are also defending the sovereignty which meant severe competition for SNS. However, SNS' strategy of radical nationalism worked well in the 1998 elections when SNS used the motto in the election campaign: "Vote for a Slovakia without parasites" (meaning without ethnic Hungarians) (Vermeersch, 2006, p.98). Especially Hungarians living in Slovakia and Roman people were under attack (Meseznikov and Gyarfasova, 2008).

In the beginning, SNS designed its strategies based on anti-Roma and anti-Hungarian nationalism and xenophobia. Economic matters were secondary for SNS party. The party even used populism in the election campaigns. However, when SNS started using radical nationalism, it worked well, and SNS was in the coalition government.

3.3.4 Illiberal Democracy in Slovakia

Vladimir Mečiar played a central role in the course of Slovakia's political development, but political parties and their leaders do not appear from anywhere and do not stay in power without public support. Mečiar, for his part, remained Slovakia's most popular politician for the entire decade of the 1990s.

Slovakia is an obvious case to include among reluctant democratizers that the country's Visegrád neighbours of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary moved

ahead with their democratization programs and had joined NATO, Slovakia suffered under the rule of Vladimir Mečiar and his Movement for a Democratic Slovakia. The country's democratic shortcomings became especially notable after 1994 parliamentary elections, after which Mečiar spear-headed an effort to concentrate executive power in his hands, economic reform was compromised by clientelistic practices, the independent media and the Hungarian minority found themselves under assault by state policy, and state administration became extremely politicized. In 1997, the country's problems on this front precipitated the EU to single it out as the only post-communist applicant for membership which failed to meet the political criteria of Copenhagen. Arguably, this decision, which promised to exclude Slovakia from EU enlargement, galvanized Mečiar's opponents and led to his defeat in 1998. Since then, Slovakia has made significant democratic progress, and the country is now a member of NATO and joined the EU in 2004.

Slovakia has a sound system complying with the EU standards to monitor the civil rights performance are well established. "Today, Fico and Orbán agree on many positions in foreign policy, especially on how to respond to the migration crisis, although Fico has recently distanced himself from Orbán's harsh criticism of the EU" (Jancarikova, 2017)⁵⁶. The most challenging dilemma of the society is the Roma minority issue that several discrimination and code of conduct breeches were reported even by the state institutions including police and the labour market. The biggest responsibility of ensuring the equal treatment for the Roma Minority is carried out by human rights watchdogs of Slovakia as the majority of the society has negative perceptions of the ethnic minorities. Ethnic plurality has been proved to be a concept that some political elites (mainly SMER-SD and their former coalition partner Slovak

⁵⁶<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-slovakia-politics-eu/slovakias-future-is-with-core-eu-not-eurosceptic-easternnations-pm-idUSKCN1AV1YY> Date of Access:20.08.2018

National Party) refuse as it poses a risk of the state's authority fragmentation. Ethnic homogeneity is thus a norm that some political elites strive to achieve. Refugee crisis profoundly influenced the political life in Slovakia as Smer-SD and SNS are the most sensitive political parties for the issues related to migration and refugee crisis (Mihálik and Jankoľa, 2016, p.22).

Vachudova (2005, p.37-38) claimed that there has been a recent illiberal tendency in the political change process of Slovakia, as well as other CECs that: 'the main factor is the lack of the strong opposition in Slovakia, as Slovakia supported a political climate of governments with no opposition. Populist politicians of Slovakia managed to influence the voters with the economic uncertainties created by the economic reforms and political uncertainties created by the new political identity of the Slovak nation. According to Malová (2017a, p.7), two critical challenges for the Slovakian democracy is populism and clientelism.

3.4 Illiberal Democracies in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia

In his infamous speech in Romania, Viktor Orbán declared that Hungary would be no longer a liberal democratic country as citing China, Russia, Singapore, India and Turkey as models, Orbán argued that "the liberal-democratic model had performed poorly compared to authoritarian states and illiberal democracies during the financial crisis in 2008" (Csaba, 2014)⁵⁷. He also added that it was illiberal states - as he put it, 'systems that are not Western, not liberal, not liberal democracies, maybe not even democracies' -which proved more successful in responding to global economic turmoil (Boyle, 2016, p.35). Orbán argued that it was important for states to cut themselves loose of the legal restrictions imposed by liberal democracy and to

⁵⁷<http://budapestbeacon.com/public-policy/full-text-of-viktorOrbáns-speech-at-baile-tusnad-tusnadfurdo-of-26-july-2014/10592>. Date of Access:25.08.2018

engage in a new type of economic nationalism to ensure that their interests were protected in the global economy. Orbán's remarks were opposed by the European Union, and remarks were made expressing Hungary's slide into liberal democracy as Zakaria (1997, p.22) indicated earlier (Kester, 2014)⁵⁸. The examples of Fidesz and Orbán proved that there had been serious attacks to liberal democracy by Orbán. The recent economic crisis, as well as the Greek debt crisis and refugee problems, started in 2015 boosted the electoral performance of the far-right parties within the EU. Many right-wing parties are now openly questioning the liberal-democratic model and attacking those institutions, notably the EU, wedded to that model (Boyle, 2016, p.36). After Orbán's pioneering illiberal actions, in 2015 Law and Justice Party of Poland won the elections with the promises of wiping out liberalism out of the country.

Freedom House published their recent "Nations in Transit 2018" report clarifying that liberal democracy is on decline especially in Central Europe and Eurasia. The title of the report (Confronting Illiberalism) is also explaining the democratic progress of the countries in general. It was found that especially in Central Europe, illiberalism has been rising in line with the general democratic trend. According to the key findings of the report⁵⁹:

- "In 2018, Nations in Transit registered the most score declines in the project's 23-year history: 19 of the 29 countries had declines in their overall Democracy Scores. For the second year in a row, there are more Consolidated Authoritarian Regimes than Consolidated Democracies.

⁵⁸<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/0574f7f2-17f3-11e4-b842-00144feabdc0.html#axzz40tuZhy3e>. Date of Access:25.08.2018

⁵⁹ <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2018>. Date of Access:29.08.2018

- Poland recorded the most significant category declines and the second-largest Democracy Score decline in the history of the report. The government's takeover of the judicial system, the politicization of public media, smear campaigns against nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and violations of ordinary parliamentary procedure has resulted in a dramatic decline in the quality of Polish democracy.
- Hungary has registered the most significant cumulative decline in Nations in Transit history after its score has fallen for 10 consecutive years.

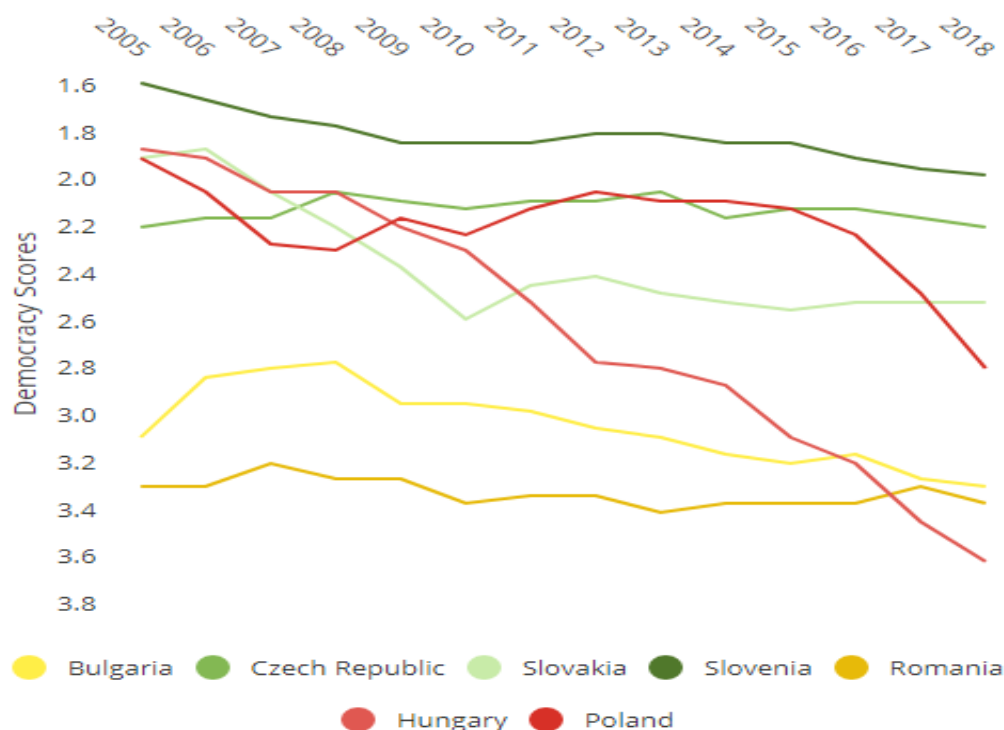
The democracy score has declined for 12 years in a row, including the fact that from 2007 the trend of decline was more visible including political institutions, processes, and habits⁶⁰. Furthermore, democracy scores of Hungary are 3.71 (3.54 for 2017), Poland 2.89 (2.57 for 2017) and Slovakia 2.61 (2.61 for 2017) for 2018 according to Freedom House⁶¹. The general trend of the decline in democracy scores of three case study countries may be seen from the figure below⁶²:

⁶⁰ https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FH_NIT2016_Final_FWeb.pdf. Date of Access:29.08.2018

⁶¹ <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2018>. Date of Access:29.08.2018

⁶² <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2018>. Date of Access:29.08.2018

Central European Countries' Democracy Scores Since Nations in Transit 2005



nationsintransit.org

Figure 1: CEC Democracy Scores between 2005 and 2018.

More recently there is a debate on the democratic deficit and backsliding as a means of the low level of public engagement and political accountability at the EU level and the absence of a standard public sphere or common *demos* characteristic of national democracies (Kelemen, 2017, p.211). It is argued that some EU member countries have recently been sliding towards authoritarianism. The Democracy Score of every country in Central Europe has declined since 2008, with the most significant setbacks in the media, the judiciary, and the functioning of national democratic institutions like parliaments and presidencies⁶³. Hungary is no longer considered as “Consolidated Democracies,” and Poland is near the threshold for leaving the category, having suffered the most abundant category score declines in the history of

⁶³ <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2018> Date of Access: 29.08.2018

the survey⁶⁴. Slovakia just managed to protect its illiberal position. In 2018, 19 of the 29 countries in the report recorded declines in their Democracy Scores-more than in any previous edition of *Nations in Transit*.

“Much research on the EU’s democratic deficit sees the EU as sui generis – an idiosyncratic entity that cannot be compared to national polities” (Zweifel, 2002, p.813). The reason for the stagnation of democratization processes is that the modernisation project within the liberal paradigm has been reduced to procedural democracy, and without a change of culture, citizens of states professing an interest in it have turned away from institutional democracy (Rupnik, 2007, p.17).

From the foundation of the EU, it was regarded as a union of democracies, and with the Copenhagen Criteria it was explicitly announced that candidate states would have to have some conditions ensured as ‘stable institutions guaranteeing the rule of law, human rights, democracy, and respect for and protection of minorities’⁶⁵. The enlargement process of the EU has been expanded to partially democratic post-communist countries especially with the 2004 Eastern enlargement. As there are varying degrees of democracies across the European continent, EU institutions would not force any candidate to be in any specific democratic system. Although, EU member countries made a serious commitment to stick to some general rules of the EU to have the core values of the Union (democracy, human rights, human dignity, justice, the rule of law, pluralism so on); “they established a mechanism by the Treaty of European Union (in Article 7) to sanction states that breached these democratic values in serious and persistent ways”⁶⁶.

⁶⁴ Schenkan, N. (2018) Confronting Illiberalism. Overview Essay.
<https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2018> Date of Access: 31.08.2018

⁶⁵ Copenhagen Criteria http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/policy/conditions-membership/index_en.htm.
 Date of Access: 31.08.2018

⁶⁶ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-Content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:12012M/TXT&from=en>. Date of Access: 31.08.2018

As it was labelled as “democratic backsliding” within the literature, there are core Union values were seen under threat in some post-communist new EU member states including Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and some other EU member states. Bermeo (2016, p.5) clearly defines democratic backsliding as “the state-led debilitation or elimination of any of the political institutions that sustain an existing democracy”. The European Union plays an important role in balancing between democracy and the rule of law in member states.

There has been some criticism on the recent backsliding in Hungary since 2010, in Poland since 2015 and in Slovakia more recently. “The European Union should support democracy in new member states, but there is a concept of reentierism as “why financial support from the EU can help sustain regimes even as they erode the rule of law and democracy in effect subsidizing authoritarianism and the EU is trapped in “authoritarian equilibrium” (Kelemen, 2017, p.218). In illiberal democracies as our case studies, EU conditionality and post-accession requirements should be aligned with the agendas of political parties in power, and hence the democracy progress toward the EU standards was slow. “By influencing the information and the institutional environment, however, EU leverage helped to create what the illiberal democracies were missing at the moment of transition: coherent and moderate opposition, and an open and pluralistic political arena” (Vachudova, 2008, p.864). In the opinion of Ekiert (2012, p.6), “consequently, one could assume that slower economic growth and persistent wealth disparities in Europe may generate adverse consequences for democratic politics in new member states”. This explanation seemed to be right considering our case study countries. Slovakia’s public administration is being modernised, and the justice system has received great attention, but “Slovak citizens generally seem to perceive corruption as a major

problem” (Pawelke, 2010, p.3). Improving the effectiveness and the independence of the justice system is still a challenge for Slovakia as the concerns about the independence of the judiciary remain. Corruption still constitutes a major challenge for Slovakia. “Control mechanisms and the enforcement of anti-corruption rules still appear inadequate, and policy initiatives on whistle blowing and letterbox companies may not be enough to resolve the problem” (European Commission, 2017c, p.3).

In this illiberal system, the institutions of a constitutional state (Constitutional Court, ombudsman, judicial or media councils) still exist, but their power is sharply limited. Also, as in many illiberal regimes, fundamental rights are listed in the constitutions, but the institutional guarantees of these rights are endangered through the lack of independent judiciary and Constitutional Court/Tribunal. As many scholars noted, that “some regimes were not able to fully adopt democracy and “something” was missing, or even that some authoritarian pattern remained in the new regime. These regimes were known in the past as hybrid regimes and define a system that is in the middle of authoritarian and democratic regimes” (Žúborová, 2017, p.2). Countries in this “grey zone” inspired a lot of concepts, which were created to capture the mixed nature of these regimes. As argued earlier, Levitsky and Way (2010, p.3) introduced the term “competitive authoritarianism” “for a distinctive type of “hybrid” regimes in which formal democratic institutions exist and are widely viewed as the primary means of gaining power, but in which incumbents’ abuse of the state places them at a significant advantage vis-à-vis their opponents”. The hybridity of Hungarian and Polish political systems is clear as they have free elections, plural democracy and basic rights of the citizens are protected by law; liberal but democratic. Bustikova and Guasti, (2017, p.167) defined this situation of the CEC’s free levels as “illiberal swerves (temporary illiberal democracy) as Hungary has an illiberal democracy which

seems to be permanent; Poland and Slovakia have only illiberal swerves. The real problems of the illiberal democracies of Hungary, Poland and partially Slovakia are the fact that they are the EU members. These “hybrid” forms between democracy and authoritarianism may also be explained with the term and concept of “populist democracy” (Pappas, 2014, p.5). The illiberal discourses and policies of Hungary were supported by the other three Visegrád countries. It shows that being the full member of the EU does not guarantee to be a liberal democracy for any nation.

Fidesz Party and Orbán’s governments appeared to have a three-step master plan for populist concerns that are; “full capture of all state machinery from the secret services to the public media; the dismantling of checks -and -balances institutions with pressure on judges and control gained over intermediary institutions to ensure they represented government interests and the final step as the de-politicisation of society through attacks on civil society to destroy all forms of civic autonomy and through a “Putinisation” branding all those with international connections as “foreign agents” (Bárd, 2017). As stated earlier, Orbán government, after winning the elections in 2010, pretended to be formally following the EU rules but some examples proved that Hungarian government has been doing the opposite of the law, or what Orbán publicly called the “peacock dance in the EU⁶⁷”. The populist regime in Hungary has been transforming Hungary “from a weak democracy into a stable autocratic regime, reducing the democratic structure to a mere electoral democracy in which its re-election would be secured by means from constitutional devices to the soft power of mediatised politics” (Ágh, 2017, p.19). Zalan (2016)⁶⁸ claims that Orbán’s illiberal democracy set an example for most of the CECs and especially Poland was influenced

⁶⁷https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_Orbán_3.0_what_to_expect_next Date of Access: 31.08.2018

⁶⁸ <https://euobserver.com/political/131723> Date of Access: 31.08.2018

by the Hungarian experiences. Orbán's playbook has provided a blueprint for the other V4 countries, particularly for Poland and the guidebook for an illiberal democracy consists of these following steps: win elections promising glory, dismantle courts, modify the constitution, take over the state media, eliminate the power of foreign investors, discredit the opposition and the civil society, change the electoral rules (Zalan, 2016)⁶⁹.

Far-right parties are quite successful in Hungary and Poland, but in Slovakia, there have been mostly coalition government consisted of a leading party of Social democrats supported by nationalist, liberal conservatism, Christian Democrats as well as minority interests. There have been authoritarian and populist tendencies in several states of the CEC where democracy had been established on the ashes of the communist regimes (Ágh, 2018b). Hungary, and recently Poland can now be placed in the category of "illiberal democracies" to use a somewhat ambiguous term suggested by Fareed Zakaria (1997, p.34). Similar tendencies have been present, although in weaker forms, in Slovakia. We must not forget that the position of the political left is stronger in the Czech Republic (and Slovakia) than in Poland and Hungary (Riishøj, 2010, p.30). Pessimists believe that we are facing now a wave of 'new authoritarianism' in Central Europe (Wiatr, 2017, p.838).

"There are many sufficient causes leading to populism, but only three of them are necessary: crises, failure of the old elites and a charismatic leader" (Skolkay, 2000, p.18). Paradoxically, most of the populist parties are de facto neoliberal in economic terms. The populism of Fidesz is different from other EU members, but there were other examples of populism before Hungary. There are identical features of the ideology of Fidesz in Hungary and PiS in Poland that; "although PiS did not go

⁶⁹ <https://euobserver.com/political/131723> Date of Access: 31.08.2018

as far on the track of austerity as Fidesz did. However, what started with PiS is that populist parties in the new EU member states have begun to assess the regime change since 1989 as corrupt, degenerate, and unsuccessful” (Korkut 2009, p.572). Similar to Fidesz and PiS, Smer-SD of Slovakia won the elections of 2006 as they gave populist promises of returning to neoliberal politics, but they had the coalition government with a nationalist party, so they had to discriminate the minorities such as Hungarians in Slovakia. Afterwards, Smer acted like a complete populist party as they tried to meet the conditionality requirements and external pressures from the EU bodies, the citizens were not happy with their policies. All the examples of PiS, Fidesz, and Smer-SD show that if conservative populist governments have the political power, the political and economic liberalization performance may decline and also they can slide back to illiberal forms of democracy. Several populist parties demand "redistribution" of the exploits of the transition, yet such demands usually imply that certain elites are to be penalized due to corruption (PiS in Poland, Smer-SD in Slovakia). In that respect, redistribution foresees “anti-corruption” measures rather than economic policies. Populists have no vision of alternative economic systems. Therefore, populism in Eastern and Central Europe can be characterized as anti-egalitarian and meritocratic in a somewhat paradoxical manner. Populism in Central Europe is wishing for new elites (Smilov and Krastev, 2008, p.10).

For twenty-five years politics in Central Europe was dominated by political elites which came to power in the early stages of the transition and were mostly composed of the leaders of the democratic opposition and reformists from the former regime (Wiatr, 2017, p.838). Populists in the region appeal to the “people as a whole”, as opposed to “corrupt” and “impotent” political elites. To put differently, they introduce themselves not as just another challenger of ruling parties and governments

within the system but as the alternative to the established representative system altogether. Populists “challenge” some, if not all, “taboos,” defy the “political correctness” of liberal culture, and provide the citizens with a chance to talk about problems that have been “bracketed out” by the mainstream parties (Smilov and Krastev, 2008, p.7). They tried to defame the new democratic elite as a “the same as communists” or even as allies of communists. An essential part of their propaganda is a negative attitude towards some national minorities (mostly Romans in Hungary and Slovakia), and in Hungary, they also have irredentist demands. The strong anti-irredentism is typical of Poland (against German irredentism) and Slovakia (against Hungarian irredentism). The right-wing extremists reject the Europeanization because of alleged the “anti-national” character of the EU (Mares, 2008, p.9).

The political parties of the CECs were weak in structure, but as the civil society was also weak in these countries, with the exception of Slovakia, the parties exploited a significant degree of power on decision-making processes. This situation resulted in a weaker form of democracy, as presented in detail within this thesis, labelled as an illiberal democracy. Today one-party regimes are over in most countries, but in some so-called democratic countries, political parties and opposition groups are limited and oppressed by the ruling party. Political parties of the CECs focused on implementing the pre-accession conditions of the EU; hence could not deal with the future vision of education, social security, housing, scientific research and other areas of the social life. The unstable party systems created successful anti-system parties, and they combined typical far-right policies (Nationalism, minority issues, anti-immigrant and xenophobia) with populism across Europe. This situation was an implication of the weaknesses of the left-wing parties within the CEC region. CECs had to experience and digest three significant transformations at the same time;

economic transition, political transition and the transition to globalisation. The difficult times of transition negatively affected the citizens as very few people benefited from the economic and social transition the majority of the citizens lost out. This is another explanation of the success of anti-system parties and far-right parties within the CEC region. After the fall of the Communist system, old communist parties of the CEC became as social-democratic parties that they were also favours of the EU membership. The process was all different for each country depending on the internal and external factors. After the accession to the EU, these parties were represented in the governments. However, after the 2000s, as the increasing corruption incidents and elite politicians attracted the hostility towards social democrats verse and change has set in. The electoral defeats of the social democrats started such as Polish SLD. One of the reasons why social democratic parties failed after the 2000s is that most of the social democratic parties have failed to develop a left-wing culture. They acted as if they are the legacies of the communist parties and copied the communist organisational structures and it was the end of communism era. They could not meet the requirements of the citizens as they could not give the right messages that they supported the citizens' rights during the transition period. When they are a part of the government, they had to compromise in order to manage the European integration. So they left the area for the populist right-wing parties as it explains the situation within CECs. The success of populist parties, in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia is related to the weaknesses of the left as well as their populist discourses and policies.

In fact, the far-right has no definite program but only a discursive tactic based on the notions of the "other" or the "enemy". Perhaps it is apt to say that the only consistent feature of its policy is populism. The far-right feed on collective fears and anxieties such as corruption problems, mass unemployment, economic insecurity,

identity crisis caused by globalization, and the distrust towards established political parties (Malová, 2017b). But they exploit these fears and anxieties without really making out political solutions to their problems. As this is the case, its power increased with the deepening economic and political crises in Europe.

The rise of populist far-right parties in CECs became more critical in recent years after the Brexit case and due “Trump effect”, as the ‘populist’ emphasise of far-right parties have been increasing. This “populist eruption” has been fiercest in the Central and Eastern European region, and it was seen as alienation of the new member states from the EU (Ágh, 2018a, p.47). Starting first with the Hungarian and Polish cases, populist politics have been expanded through CECs. “These populist regimes in Poland and Hungary have been engaged in serious conflicts with the EU, and the other NMS (New Member States) countries have also been conflicting to a great extent with the EU’s rules and values in the recent crisis period” (Ágh, 2018a, p.47). “Once the paradigmatic example of the transition to liberal democracy and market economies, the Visegrád Four are slowly becoming models of regression to illiberal democracy and economic autarky” (Kirchick, 2017, p.66). However, this trend faced heavy criticism and action from the EPP party family and Fidesz, since the Orbán government with the huge campaign “Let’s stop Brussels” has crossed the red line of tolerance in the Western centre-right parties. “The EPP Presidency sent a clear message to Prime Minister Orbán and his party, Fidesz that we will not accept that any basic freedoms are restricted, or the rule of law disregarded. (...) The EPP has also made it clear to our Hungarian partners that the blatant anti-EU rhetoric of the ‘let’s stop Brussels’ consultation is unacceptable. The constant attacks on Europe, which Fidesz has launched for years, have reached a level we cannot tolerate” (EPP, 2017)⁷⁰. This has been the most serious crisis between the far-right parties in the

⁷⁰<http://www.epp.eu/press-releases/prime-minister-Orbán-to-comply-with-eu-lawsand-epp-values-following-meeting-with-epp-presidency/> Date of Access: 31.08.2018

CECs and the European party system as showing some signs of De-Europeanization and De-Democratization in CECs.

3.6 Chapter overview

Chapter two deals with the political life and systems of three case study countries. Hungarian, Polish and Slovakian legislative frameworks and political experiences were explained before and after the accession to the EU. Then six political parties in case study countries were summarised with special reference to their major policies and strategies and one mainstream party (including Smer-SD as not being a mainstream party) and one far-right party selected from each of three CECs. Examples and experiences of the illiberal democracies in three case study countries were critically analysed to give insight into the conditions and factors of the illiberal democracy. Chapter three focuses on the methodology of the research and presents data from party manifestos with comprehensive qualitative analysis.

4 .A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ON THE RISE OF FAR RIGHT AND ILLIBERALISM IN THREE CASE STUDY COUNTRIES

Introduction

This chapter begins with outlining the methodological framework of the research. After clarifying the aims of the research, the qualitative data collected from party programmes/manifestos of selected political parties in three countries, the critical discourse analysis is conducted on those documents. Relevant analyses and comparisons are made to test the research hypotheses. Then the findings derived from the principal analysis are presented with a special emphasis and relevant interpretations on major aspects, as well as highlighting the differences and similarities between selected political parties and political systems of the case study countries, in terms of the research question and the hypothesis.

4.1 The Aim of the Study

The focus of this thesis is to explore different philosophy and practices of the democracy within the European Union with particular reference given to the three Central European countries that joined in the EU in 2004. The political developments in the three CECs are analysed through a process of sampling two political parties (as examples of the mainstream and opposition parties) from each of the three countries. The analysis shows that the conditions of the type of the democracy may have links to nature of the political system and approaches, strategies and policies of political parties as well as the attitude towards the EU membership in selected case countries.

The ambition of adequately differentiating the theories of democracy and practices in democratic systems goes beyond the length and scope of this study. The

intention of this study is to provide an extensive and well-documented diagnosis and background of the research framework and then a research model to test and formulate the related cases. Diagnosis and treatment as well as determining social, political and cultural conditions that triggered the transformations of the system are three different fields of scientific research (Kornai, 2015, p.46). However it would be too broad and idealistic to assume that this study finds all the answers. Such a diagnosis is nevertheless quite useful to deepen our knowledge to understand the Hungarian, Polish and Slovakian cases fully. Thus this study seeks to fill the above-mentioned gaps in the literature and also to identify the extent to which agency, or party output, facilitates the success of the New Right in a political system whether it is liberal or illiberal.

Another original contribution of this study to the literature is to present a conceptualization of illiberal democracies within the new right framework.

4.2 Methodology

The primary methodological preference of the thesis is qualitative as the research topic is longitudinal and also secondary data is used. The phases of the field research are explained in detail.

4.3 Case Study Research

Six political parties selected as unique cases from three CECs. By taking all of the samples as case studies, we look at the data analyses to capture the similarities and differences of the cases by country as well as by ideologies of the selected political parties. Thus we aim at exploring the trajectories of the illiberal democracies as considering political discourses as signs of the reality. This research is a multidisciplinary project which requires a methodology that explores and enables

emergent themes from the cases. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) provides such an analytical framework and makes a significant contribution to addressing the research question as considering the political discourse nature of the research framework

4.4 Research Question and the Hypothesis

In the theoretical sections of this study, the influential factors of the rise of the far-right parties and illiberal democracy in Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia are examined. A comprehensive review and revealing analysis are presented to the question “How is the gearing towards illiberal democracy in these three countries linked to the hegemony of the new right?”. Additionally, the factors drifting those countries, which were highly enthusiastic about EU membership, away from European norms and values nowadays, are critically discussed.

This study frames its research question with dependent and independent variables by defining the hypothesis as follows:

Research Question:

What is the role of the new right on the understanding of democracy in selected CECs?

The Hypothesis:

The parameters of the new right influence the understanding of democracy in selected CECs

The main argument of our thesis is that the changes in the understanding of democracy in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia is influenced by the changes in the parameters of the new right. In this thesis, by analysing case studies of three CECs, it is found out whether the simultaneous rise of far-right parties and the new right is

linked to “the end of politics” and “the representation crisis of democracies” creating authoritarian and defective forms of democracy, in other words, “illiberal democracy”.

4.5 Sampling

Our case selection for testing our hypothesis on the analysis of illiberal democracy included three Central European countries; Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. These countries were chosen as they have similar characteristics that all three countries in the political-economic alliance of the Visegrád Group are high-income countries with a very high Human Development Index score and have enjoyed more or less steady economic growth for over a century. Besides economic similarities, these countries also share political and demographic resemblances. All of these countries are post-communist countries and became democracies in the 1990s. They all joined the European Union in 2004. They are also homogenous in population sub-groups, with little immigration into these countries. These similarities make these countries useful for case selections of the political parties. In this study three mainstream parties (including Smer-SD which is not a mainstream party in Slovakia) and three new right/far-right parties are selected from Hungary, Poland and Slovakia to analyse their manifesto and party programmes to explore the themes of the new right and illiberal democracy. The collected data covers the period after 2004 to the present. Case study parties and the years of the manifesto declared (in brackets) from three countries are as follows:

Table 1 :*Sampled political parties of the Research*

Country	Main Governing Party and Party Type	Main Opposition Party and Party Type (Manifestos)
Hungary	Fidesz (Hungarian Civic Union) (2007-2016) National Conservatism	Jobbik (Movement for a Better Hungary) (2003-2010-2014) Nationalism/Far-right Politics
Poland	PiS (Law and Justice Party) (2007-2011-2014) National Conservatism Social Conservatism	PO (Civic Platform) (2007-2011) Liberal Conservatism Christian Democracy
Slovakia	Smer-SD (Direction Social Democracy) (2006-2010) Social Democracy	SNS (Slovak Nationalist Party) (2006-2010-2016) Nationalism/Far-right Politics European Christian Values

All the manifestos of the six political parties published or translated by research centres or researchers in English after 2004 are analysed to reach the intended and satisfactory findings on our research framework.

4.6 Data collection and analysis

This research is mainly an analytical study with the addition of a historical outlook. Our focus of the research framework is at the post-Communism era (post-1989) of Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia including their pre-accession, accession and post-accession periods to the EU. Since our thesis concerns itself with the ways in which the New Right arises, and illiberal democracy is constituted, we employ a

limited comparative model. As a data set, party programmes would show the followers and to the public what kinds of policies are promised and announced by their parties. Party programmes can be criticised on the ground of their reality as they are mostly formed with tactical and populist considerations thus they do not reveal the real intention of the parties. Especially party programmes are created to aim for the attraction of voters, and they may not be the case. Also, electoral campaigns and the speeches of the party leaders may be useful to categorise the parties' position as well as the published documents and printed media in English.

Today, social media is a platform effectively used by all political parties. Far right and extreme right parties have relatively more coverage in mainstream media today. Nevertheless, their anti-Semitic, racist and sexist rhetoric is still a factor that puts them behind mainstream parties in terms of public and media visibility. Internet, in this context, provides them with a perfect opportunity to circulate the extreme parties' racist, fascist, anti-LGBT, and anti-sexist messages. Thus, social media plays a particularly important role for far-right parties to transmit their messages given the restrictions they face in the mainstream media. This thesis pays attention to the far-right parties' statements on the media including newspapers which published or broadcasted in English.

The majority of the voters do not read party manifestos but are influenced by all means of communication and media. Political parties are also accountable for all their published manifestos, promises and policies. Party manifestos are more general and abstract, on the other hand, electoral commitments and policies are more concrete and definite. Systematic analysis of the party manifestos may be a suitable and ideal set of data to understand the paradigms of the illiberal democratic framework.

Some projects within and for the European Union used similar methodologies to understand and position the political systems of EU members, and in this sense, a useful Project on Visegrád countries and Germany has been carried out by EUROPEUM (Institute for European Policy)⁷¹.

Manifesto Project-MARPOR is a handy and relevant Project database that may be used as they content-analysed all the manifestos of the political parties in the OECD (our sample is also included)⁷². Another useful database is Chapel Hill Expert Survey-CHES⁷³. The CHES database provides information about the positioning of political parties on political ideology, European integration, and various policy areas. The survey covers political parties in 31 countries, including all European Union member states, plus Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. Both datasets are very useful for sizeable cross-national research, in which political parties are one of the (independent) variables of interest, but have more limited value for narrower studies in which specific parties are the primary focus. The MARPOR dataset may be useful in our research that consists exclusively of party manifestos and focuses on policy priorities.

Another dataset may be derived from Sustainable Government Indicators (SGI) of Bertelsmann Stiftung Foundation and especially cross-national Quality of Democracy Index containing 4 main criterion and some indicators under them as 1) Electoral processes (Candidacy processes, media access, voting and registration rights, party financing, popular decision making); 2) Access of Information (Media freedom, media pluralism, access to government information); 3) Civil Rights and Political liberties (Civil rights, political liberties, non-discrimination); and 4) the rule

⁷¹<http://www.cceidentity.eu> Date of Access: 01.09.2018

⁷²<http://www.manifesto-wzb.eu> Date of Access: 01.09.2018

⁷³<http://www.chesdata.eu> Date of Access: 01.09.2018

of law (Legal certainty, judicial review, appointment of justices, corruption prevention)⁷⁴. Quality of democracy scores for case study countries are; Hungary 3.7, Poland 5.9 and Slovakia 6.9 for 2017 (Out of 10),

4.7 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

As the theoretical and methodological preferences of this study are the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), some fundamental concepts and philosophical assumptions of CDA is reviewed. Introducing the philosophical assumptions guiding the research process and methodology is essential as theoretical concepts guide this study, and philosophical assumptions underpin the choice of methodology and data collection and analysis methods. Some concepts are explained including the concept of discourse, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the difference of CDA from the content analysis as many studies adapted content analysis in social sciences and especially in political sciences.

4.7.1 Discourse

The term ‘discourse’ is central to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). “Basically ‘discourse’ is language in real contexts of use” (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p.20). In other words, “discourse operates above the level of grammar and semantics to capture what happens when these language forms are played out in different social, political and cultural arenas” (Simpson and Mayr, 2009, p.5). In CDA the broader ideas communicated by text are referred to as ‘discourses’ (see van Dijk, 1993; Wodak, 2001). According to van Dijk, the discourse has three primary domains: “(a) language use, (b) the communication of beliefs (cognition), and (c) interaction in the social situation” (van Dijk, 1997). The coexistence of these domains urges the necessity to analyse discourse from a multidisciplinary perspective. These definitions

⁷⁴www.sgi-network.org Date of Access: 01.09.2018

have some points in common in terms of discourse that is understood as “an element of social life which is closely interconnected with other elements” (Fairclough, 2003, p.3).

4.7.2 CDA and Content Analysis

The content analysis takes its place within a more substantial body of social and cultural research that is concerned with the production of meaning through talk and texts (Neuendorf and Kumar, 2015, p.2). Theoretical background of qualitative content analysis is based on different fields in social sciences such as sociology, politics, international relations, linguistics, philosophy, literature, media, psychology and all areas of social science.

Content analysis is perhaps the most widely used method in the social sciences including political sciences and international relations, increasingly in combination with other methods such as surveys, focus groups, and experiments. Since the 1950s, its use has included the examination of political contents in news media, speeches, advertisements, and campaigns, and recently social media and blogs. Content analysis has been defined as the systematic, objective, qualitative and quantitative analysis of message characteristics (Luborsky, 1994). Thus, content analysis is a powerful means for familiarizing the researcher with the data collected and also useful for simplifying the data for further analysis. A central idea in content analysis is that the many words of the text are classified into much fewer content categories.

The difference between CDA and content analysis arises from the nature of the analysed dataset as political texts, political speeches and media are our research data, and they are all political and ideological discourses. CDA is a different linguistic method analysing cohesion (components of the textual surface) as well as coherence (meaning constituting in texts) and (Tischer et al., 2002, p.227). However, the content

analysis focuses only on coherence as an extension of the non-linguistic tradition (Krippendorff, 2004). According to Tischer et al. (2002, p.9), content analysts use a system of categories to classify textual elements as uniformly as possible”. Content analysis may be considered as more limited compared to the CDA process in terms of its focus. “As content analysis focuses on denotational dictionary meanings or connotations from extended meaning evoked by literal messages, its weakness is the common practice of only small coding portions and facets of discourse, thereby omitting many important themes and nuances, and limiting examination on meanings” (Graber and Smith, 2005, p.492). As a result, CDA is able to provide a complete picture of any phenomenon being investigated as a means of the social construction process. As content analysis will only mean to explore the surface of the realities, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was selected in this research to analyse the data to capture the realities in-depth. Another reason to use CDA framework is the fact that the NVivo 12 qualitative software is also content analyses and gives frequencies of the most repeated words in the text. It is thought that this research strategy enables us to deepen our knowledge of the research framework.

4.7.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) has attracted considerable attention over several years, usually as an approach to language which is concerned with the critique of relations of power and ideology in society at large (O'Regan and Betzel, 2016, p.283). The roots of the Discourse Theory could be traced back to the works of Gramsci (1971), and Laclau and Mouffe (1985). Fairclough pioneered and made an invaluable contribution to CDA literature with a series of works (1992, 1995, 2001, 2003), CDA is a form of “textually oriented discourse analysis,” meaning that “it

focuses on specific features of texts as they relate to social and political forces”. Discourse Theory “is unable to explain which social forces have a greater capacity to effect articulatory changes and why” (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999, p.125). This study borrows some terms from the theorists of the CDA. In epistemological terms, CDA represents a stronger interpretation of the relationships of the discourse and its social context. Fairclough (1993) summarises CDA as follows: “Discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony” (Fairclough, 1993, p.135).

The justification of the preference of the qualitative methods and specifically CDA needs further explanation. The most pragmatic reason for our choice is that the political parties’ manifestos and other sources would reflect the pieces of the reality to be used in answering the research questions. Furthermore, nature and the relative sensitivity of the topic needs an in-depth analysis not just of the words used in texts but also the meanings hidden, and they may only be produced through more critical analysis. Thus CDA framework of Fairclough (2003) was chosen as the most appropriate method for our research framework. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a methodological framework is concerned with discourses as the instruments of power and control. “The basic assumption of critical discourses (CD) is that there is a dialectical relationship between discursive events and the context in which they are embedded and through discourse, social actors constitute knowledge, situations, social

roles as well as identities and interpersonal relations between social actors” (de Cillia et al., 1999, p.157). Discourse analysis is not necessarily critical. Maingueneau (2006, p.230), on the other hand, differentiate the “strong” and “weak” discourse analysis forms as content analysis means a simpler form of the definitions of talks and texts; CDA focuses more on the analysis of the relationship of discourse with social structures. In this context, being critical means not only identifying hidden relationships but also, implications for interventions (Fairclough, 1992:9). “It is a fact that CDA follows a different and a critical approach to problems since it endeavours to make specific power relationships which are frequently hidden, and thereby to derive results which are of practical relevance (Meyer, 2001, p.15).

From the political sciences perspective, “CDA attempts to explain the dynamics of power, ideology and knowledge surrounding discursive processes (Phillips and Hardy, 2002:20). Moreover, “CDA explores the nature of persuasion, ideology, and conflict” (Elliot, 1996; Fairclough, 1995; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Phillips and Hardy, 2002; van Dijk, 1996). Also, “CDA aims to analyse the “dialogical struggle (or struggles) as reflected in the privileging of a particular discourse and the marginalization of others” (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p.25). As a result, CDA is seen as a useful tool for analysis of the communicative strategies that are shaped by and also shape political contexts. This approach is very relevant to our study of the factors influencing the rise of far-right within CECs and its effects on illiberal democracy formations.

There are studies regarding CDA applications of News and Media, (e.g. Fairclough 1995). Racism (van Dijk 1991, Wodak and Matouschek, 1993), Immigration (van Leeuwen and Wodak, 1999), Gender Issues, Education, Business etc. There is also a wide variety of methodological approaches to the discourse

fragments analysed. There is not a uniquely accurate methodology to do CDA, and this has been one of many debated aspects of CDA (Widdowson, 1995).

4.7.4 Political Discourse Analysis (PDA)

Van Dijk (1993) takes discourse analysis as an ideology analysis, and he also underlines that political discourse analysis should include political discourse together with the *critical enterprise*. The political discourse is one of the most salient discourses, where power and ideology are omnipresent (Skenderi, 2014, p.15). As van Dijk (1997) claims, “Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) contributes not only to discourse studies but also to political sciences and the social sciences in general”. Van Dijk (1997) offers some preliminary criteria that discourse has to fulfil to be considered as a Political Discourse. Some of the criteria are as follows (van Dijk, 1997). The main actors of the political discourses are politicians such as ministers, prime ministers, or presidents are the actors or authors of the political discourse. The context of the discourses should be political as the party programmes, manifestos or the statements of the political leaders are all political in nature.

4.7.5 Units of Analysis

CDA uses a set of procedures to make valid and reliable inferences from the text. There are a number of units, including words, themes, characters, paragraphs, concept, actions, categories and semantics that can be considered in context analysis. Within the scope of this thesis following units of CDA will be used:

Themes: Holsti (1969) defines a theme as “a unit of text having no more than one of the following elements, p.1) the perceiver; 2) the perceived or agent of action; 3) the

action; 4) the target of the action. Themes (labels) are defined in Luborsky's (1994, p.195) terms as "the manifest generalized statements by informants about beliefs, attitudes, values or sentiments". Boyatzis (1998, p.vii) adds that "a theme is a pattern found in the information that at a minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and at minimum interprets aspects of the phenomenon". In the CDA process, the themes derived from the critical literature review are identified not just for the surface meaning but also the identification of the in-depth meaning of the themes

Actions: For our purposes, action means the mental (cognitive) or physical process and/or activities to actualize the themes pointed by the text. This may be used primarily for the political discourses as the political actors may reflect some concepts from their sub-conscious level with a hidden agenda.

Patterns: The term pattern may be used to describe findings as clusters of information possessing similar characteristics. These are built from the research process, and the patterns are similar forms of units of content analysis classified under different topics.

In this study as three mainstream parties (including Smer-SD although it is not a mainstream party) and three new right/far-right parties are selected from Hungary, Poland and Slovakia to analyse their manifestos, party programmes and fundamental programmes after 2004 and they are analysed by using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework offered by Van Dijk (1993). The promises and arguments in the manifestos are the demand variables and more accessible to measure and operationalize (van Kessel, 2013, p.198). The *themes* from the CDA process as well as *actions* will be found and compared to see the priorities of the sampled political parties as a result of the CDA framework. Through this field research, the political

party manifestos and party programmes would show some of the New Right's core ideological elements as well as illiberal democracy parameters. For example, the parameter of xenophobia may consist of some sub-categories (items) such as anti-immigration, Anti-Roma, Islamophobia and Anti-Semitism. Thus, the xenophobia parameter is used in the qualitative analysis with the sub-themes of foreign, others, Muslim, Islamophobia, immigrants, anti-Roman and so on.

The analysis employs CDA framework in the following sequence: identifying the unit of analysis (data), choosing a set of categories (derived from the literature), coding the material, tabulating the material and illustrating the material, interpreting the material, comparing the theoretical and practical items.

In this thesis, the units of analysis are parties and their manifestos, programmes, leader speeches and other media in English. The study analyses how successful far-right parties achieve translating the far right ideological principles into illiberal democracy principles. Far Right parties in the Central and Eastern Europe countries need to fill this gap with a message that they are on the mainstream (they are not extreme in ideological terms) and may form coalitions with other parties. Using party manifestos, as well as statements on party websites, this thesis seeks to find the elements in a party's core messages that are complying with the literature.

In the case of the intersections of the changes in the parameters of the new right and the understanding of democracy in selected three CECs, our analysis involves the following six steps:

- 1) Reading the text critically examining the assumptions of far-right and illiberal democracy as well as concepts related to accession to the EU (with the assumption that criticality is necessary).

- 2) Pre-coding what is believed to be present, backgrounded, and presupposed (through suggestion); describing what is presupposed (through assumption) and absent.
- 3) Reading intersectional (and as possible, transdisciplinary) text or texts which shed light on the discourse and their degrees of presence and absence (i.e. intertextual reading).
- 4) Re-coding what is believed to be present, backgrounded, and pre-supposed (through suggestion); describing what is pre-supposed (through assumption) and absent.
- 5) Comparing the discourses with the facts.
- 6) Suggesting interpretations and testing the hypothesis.

4.7.6 CDA Analysis Process

The data containing the themes (parameters) of the new right and the understanding of democracy in the selected CECs is analysed by using NVivo 12 qualitative software to find out the trends and interconnections of the concepts.

4.7.7 Reliability and Validity

The concepts of ‘reliability’ and ‘validity’ are essential in CDA research. CDA critically analyses the data on the bases of discourses as producing a set of procedures to make valid and reliable inferences from the text. The data is evaluated consistently and systematically as the reliability and validity issues in qualitative research are different from quantitative research. In this research, the data, themes and actions are created by the researcher and controlled by the supervisor to ensure the reliability and validity issues.

4.8 Research Model

We critically reviewed the literature on the new right and illiberal democracy to determine the themes (parameters) creating the relationship of two research framework leading to our proposed research model. The model and the main themes, themes and sub-themes are derived from the literature review process of new right and illiberal democracy using CDA perspective. The relationship of new right and illiberal democracy is analysed on the data of the selected party manifestos of three CECs.

To determine the themes under the main themes (of the new right and illiberal democracy), the critical literature review has been made. As stated earlier, the new right and democracy/illiberal democracy literature have been dominantly using some concepts as useful for developing our main argument points within the research framework. The relevant literature that has been critically reviewed before will only be summarized here;

The literature of the new right paradigm claims that there should be some primary values to be considered as the new right has been expanded by the far-right. New right paradigm weakened some European values such as **human rights**, democracy, and plurality. Mudde (2000) proposed the basic features of the Far-right parties in Europe that are **law and order, xenophobia, nationalism (national identity)** and welfare chauvinism (Mudde, 2000, p.169-184). **Populism** has been a primary feature of the new right politics that “populism may be democratic but illiberal at the same time as it neglects the pluralism, the rule of law and minority rights” (Mudde, 2016a, p.28). Most distinctive features of far-right paradigm may be combined with together, such as xenophobia may be used with nationalism as well as using the populist discourses. The **Euro-sceptic** sentiments have risen as a result of

the arguments on their sovereignty and national identity and especially with the recent European refugee crisis. Another feature of the new right and far-right has been the **radicalism**, and it may or may not be anti-democratic" (Kopecek, 2007, p.284). Far right parties well exploited the old fears of the Communism days including **corruption** (anti-corruption policies), economic instability and unemployment.

On the issue of the conditions of democracy, Zakaria (1997, p.40) claimed that most illiberal governments focused only on regular elections. **Elections** should be fair and competitive as we have other human rights (civil liberties) including free media, 'freedom of assembly', and 'freedom of speech' (Levitsky and Way (2002, p.55-58). **Media freedom** is the most vulnerable and the most violated area in human rights. **Rule of Law** system has been one of the pillars of the liberal democracies including law, jurisdiction, constitution and the independence of the legislative systems.

Through this field research, the political party manifestos and party programmes show some of the new right's and illiberal democracies' core ideological elements as the themes were captured through the CDA process. As can be seen from the research model below, the main themes of the research are the "new right" and "illiberal democracy. The themes placed under the main themes are; "Law & Order", "National Identity", "Radicalism", "Euro-Scepticism" (European Values), "Xenophobia", "Free Elections", "Free Media", "Corruption" (Anti-corruption), "Populism" (Anti-populism), "Rule of Law" and "Human Rights". The frequencies of the sub-themes are evaluated by NVivo 12 programme, and they are also classified under the themes they are related to.

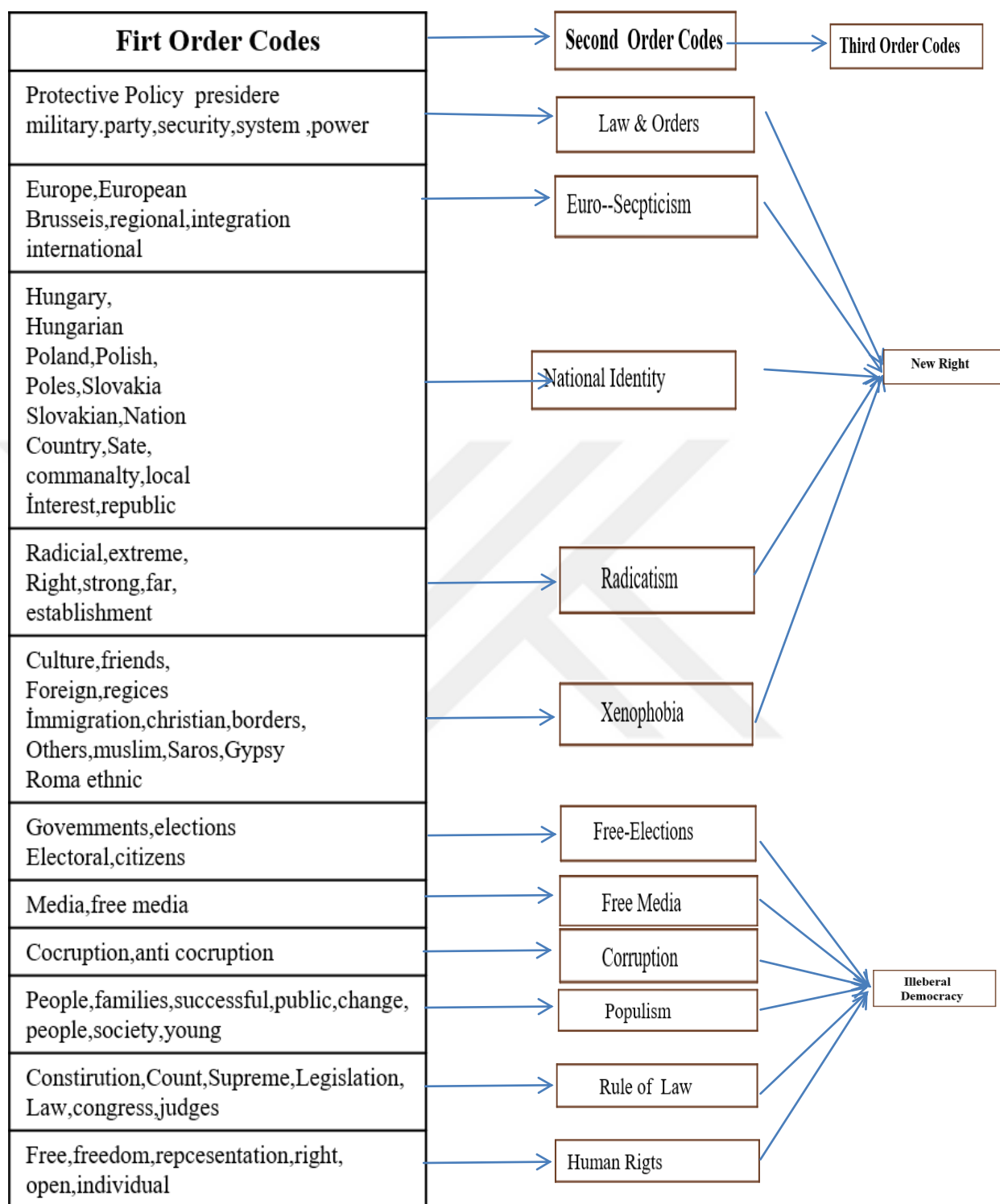


Figure 2: The Research Model

4.9 Qualitative analysis of the main groups of mainstream and new-right parties in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia

All the party manifestos in English were analysed by using NVivo 12. It was not possible to find most of the manifestos in English on the internet at the beginning, only a few were found. The process of providing the party manifestos was difficult, and after so many efforts made, we provided 15 manifestos of the 6 political parties (out of 18 manifestos). Within this process, various researchers working on the related topics and research institutions were contacted through e-mails and after explaining the dissertation topic, they were asked to share their party manifestos with the researcher. Especially MAR-POR and CEE Identity Project researchers contributed into this process. As a result, we have a dataset containing 2 types of parties (a mainstream party and a far-right party) from Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

NVivo analysis may be conducted in a comparison of the same country's parties' data as two datasets as the mainstream party and the opposition party to have some findings not only country-based (for Hungary, Poland and Slovakia), but also a comparative analysis of the mainstream and opposition parties. The selection was made possible with critical discourse analysis (CDA) as from the literature on the new right and illiberal democracy. The meaningful and most relevant concepts used in both literatures were selected as 10 key themes (parameters) to be used for the qualitative analysis. The nodes (sub-themes), sub-groups (themes) and groups (main themes) have been produced from the NVivo analysis. In this way, we have the required data and the relationships to comment on our main research framework of the dissertation.

The data analysis work flow may be summarised as follows;

- 1) Party manifestos were imported (uploaded) into the programme,
- 2) Mainstream party manifestos (although Smer-SD is not a mainstream party and then opposition party manifestos) were selected for three countries,
- 3) The query was made for the word frequencies (with 100 most frequent words), and NVivo analysed the data for recurring codes and themes,
- 4) Researcher reviewed codes and themes identified by NVivo to determine if they are beneficial. Irrelevant words were eliminated from the tree map, and the relevancy was tested with checking the data,
- 5) Further queries were made, and the final themes will be displayed through charts, graphs and a matrix created in NVivo. The supervisor of this project also reviewed the themes, and the agreed themes were included in the study.
- 6) Data have been reviewed and reported, and sample quotations are extracted from the manifestos to give evidence for each theme.

As a result of the NVivo analysis, the outputs are word frequency table, word tree and word cloud. The word frequency table is basically a content analysis giving the relative importance of the terms respectively, and the words are filtered by using CDA mentality for some irrelevant words such as conjunctions and prepositions. The researcher employed NVivo 12 programme to capture the most repetitive words in the manifestos and the results of the word query frequency function ensured that with the words identified may be used as a tool to answer the research questions. This function of the word tree gives the relationships of the words with each other. Word cloud is basically a visual image representing the frequency results of the manifestos.

The researcher has run the analysis multiple times with NVivo 12 programme in order to ensure the internal and external validity of the data.

4.10 Findings of the Study

In this section general findings of the research are presented with the results of the word frequency analysis and the graphs illustrating comparative results for each country as well as general comparisons of the mainstream and opposition parties in three CECs are made and shown as graphs.

In the first table, the frequency of the themes created under the main themes of the new right and illiberal democracy was presented. In the second table, contents of the word frequency results were presented to show examples and evidence of the theme captured.

Table 2

Comparative Word Frequencies of the Party Manifestos

	NEW RIGHT and ILLIBERAL DEMOCRACY					
	HUNGARY		POLAND		SLOVAKIA	
THEMES	FIDESZ	JOBBIK	PiS	PO	SD	SNS
LAW & ORDER	436	1143	2817	863	795	1018
NATIONAL IDENTITY	1106	2343	3541	928	591	1752
RADICALISM	245	420	454	57	45	115
EURO-SCEPTICISM	618	526	826	658	869	510
XENOPHOBIA	398	382	377	188	130	503
FREE ELECTIONS	206	325	1167	271	995	269
MEDIA	13	92	184	30	1	24
CORRUPTION	6	33	65	10	13	7
POPULISM	416	786	1367	379	230	317
HUMAN RIGHTS	239	358	793	343	309	216
RULE OF LAW	110	239	1895	152	208	285

As it may be seen from table 2; frequencies of the themes of the manifestos illustrated the main differences of the rhetoric of the mainstream parties (including Smer-SD, a powerful social democratic party in Slovakia) and opposition parties in three CECs.

The themes are mostly in line with the literature in terms of the discourses and principles of the mainstream and opposition parties. Although the length and word

counts of the manifestos are different, it is interesting to note that the distinctive perspectives of the mainstream and opposition parties were clearly reflected by the word frequencies. Comparative word frequencies of the parties based on the country are summarized and illustrated below;

Hungary: Fidesz (Hungarian Civic Union)/Mainstream Party/National Conservatism
 Jobbik (Movement for a Better Hungary)/Opposition Party/Nationalism-Far-right
 Politics

The mainstream party, Fidesz and the opposition party, Jobbik, well reflected their discourses with the comparative word frequencies in 11 themes, under the main themes of new right and illiberal democracy. Jobbik seems to be more concentrating on law and order, national identity, radicalism, corruption (in the sense of anti-corruption), populism and their critiques of human rights and rule of law as the main and an influential opposition party in Hungary. Fidesz is seen as more Euro-Sceptic in the sense of considering the European Values as the main actor for the EU relations. Their xenophobic stance is well presented by their concern of the immigration issues which is just above the Jobbik figures. It is arguable whether Fidesz is still a National Conservative Party and as parallel to the criticism made by the Freedom House reports as presented before, it may be claimed that Fidesz has been sliding towards the far-right of the political continuum. Far-right dimensions as illustrated by the themes have been on the rise, especially, with higher anti-immigration or xenophobia dimensions as well as Euro-sceptic sentiments that are stronger in recent years. Also, the themes that may be taken as the main principles of the liberal democracy have been declining in frequencies including less interest in free elections, rule of law and human rights themes. This situation may be explained by the fact that the liberal

democracy understanding of Fidesz has been eroding in terms of levels in comparison of the EU members. Fidesz leader, Orbán, also declared that Hungary has been consciously transforming to be an illiberal democracy. The findings of the analysis constitute a supporting framework for such claims made by the literature as reviewed in the earlier chapters. Figure 3 shows the comparative results for Hungarian mainstream and opposition parties.

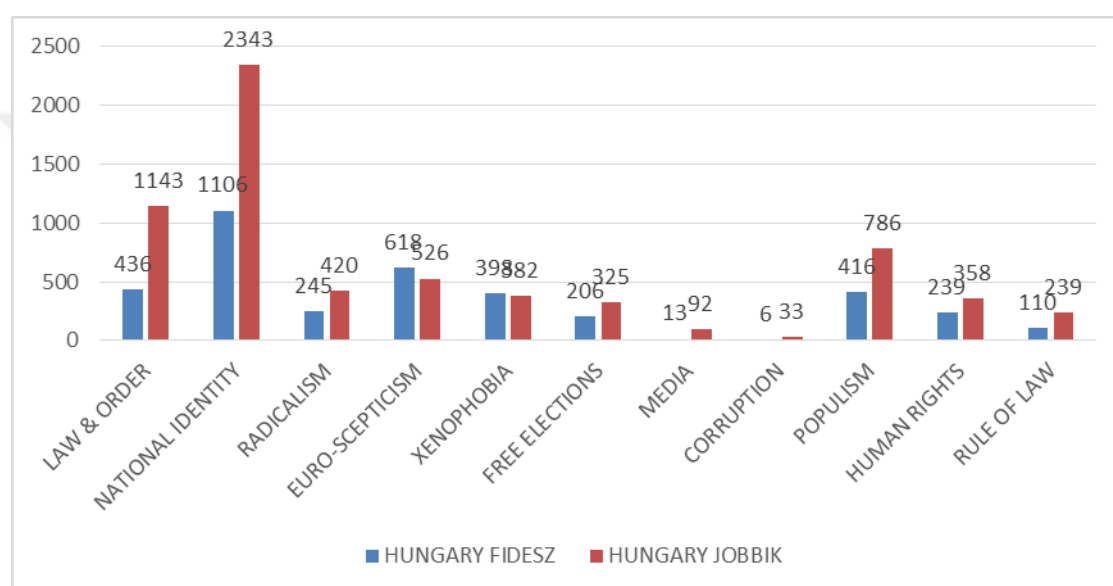


Figure 3 Comparison of Mainstream and Opposition Parties in Hungary

Poland: PiS (Law and Justice Party)/National Conservatism-Social Conservatism

PO (Civic Platform)/Liberal Conservatism-Christian Democracy

Although PiS was a National Conservative Party at the beginning, there were claims of the party as sliding towards the far-right direction similar to Fidesz. The Far-right dimensions (themes) of PiS has been considerably interesting, as the frequencies are clearly higher than all the other parties of this research process, including far-right parties. Law and order, national identity, radicalism, Euro-scepticism and xenophobic sentiments are very strong as well as their emphasis on the democracy dimensions is much higher. PO has been a Liberal Democratic party with Christian values as their frequencies are generally lower than PiS as a result of the evident erosion of the democracy led by the mainstream party in Poland. This result is also complying with the literature that Poland has been back-sliding towards more defective forms of democracy as Poland supports Hungary and also is backed by Hungary against the EU policies. Figure 4 shows the comparative results for Polish mainstream and opposition parties.

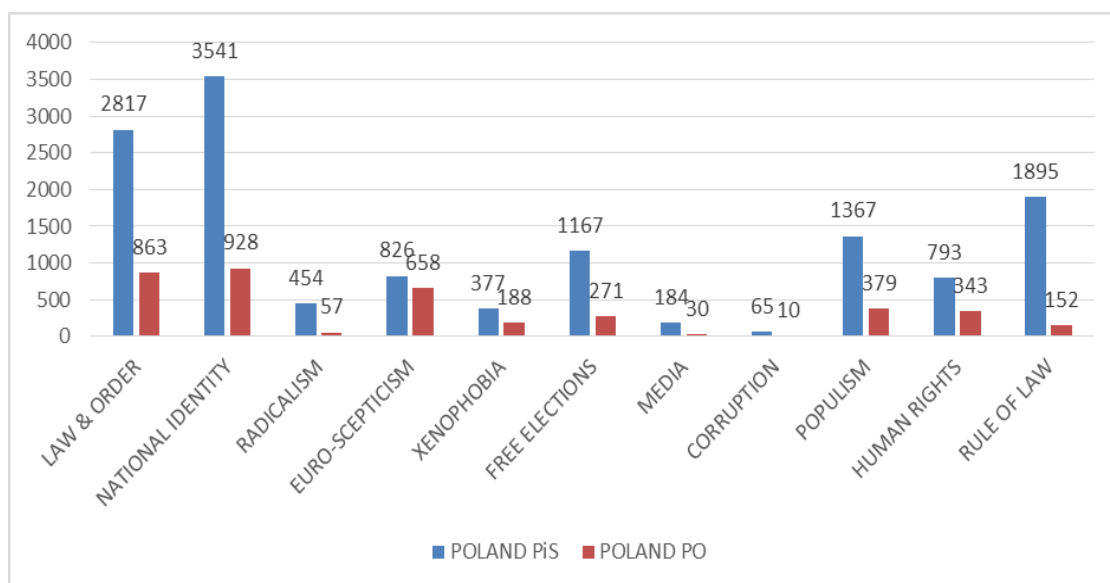


Figure 4 Comparison of Mainstream and Opposition Parties in Poland

Slovakia: Smer-SD (Direction-Social Democracy)/Social Democracy

SNS (Slovak National Party)/Nationalism/Far-right Politics

In Slovakia, SD was a Social Democratic party at the beginning, and their experience in terms of sliding towards far-right ideology and also towards illiberal democracy has been completely different as pointed out by the literature. They have higher figures of law and order as well as rule of law themes. The nationalist and far-right opposition party, SNS, emphasized the right-wing and illiberal democratic discourses more strongly than SD-Smer party. The higher frequencies for SNS discourses including law and order, national identity, radicalism, xenophobia have proven that SNS party has been settled in the far-right ideology strongly and their understanding of democracy has been sliding towards illiberal forms of democracy. The populist discourses well served the erosion of the liberal dimensions of the democracy in Slovakia.

Figure 5 shows the comparative results for Slovakian mainstream and opposition parties.

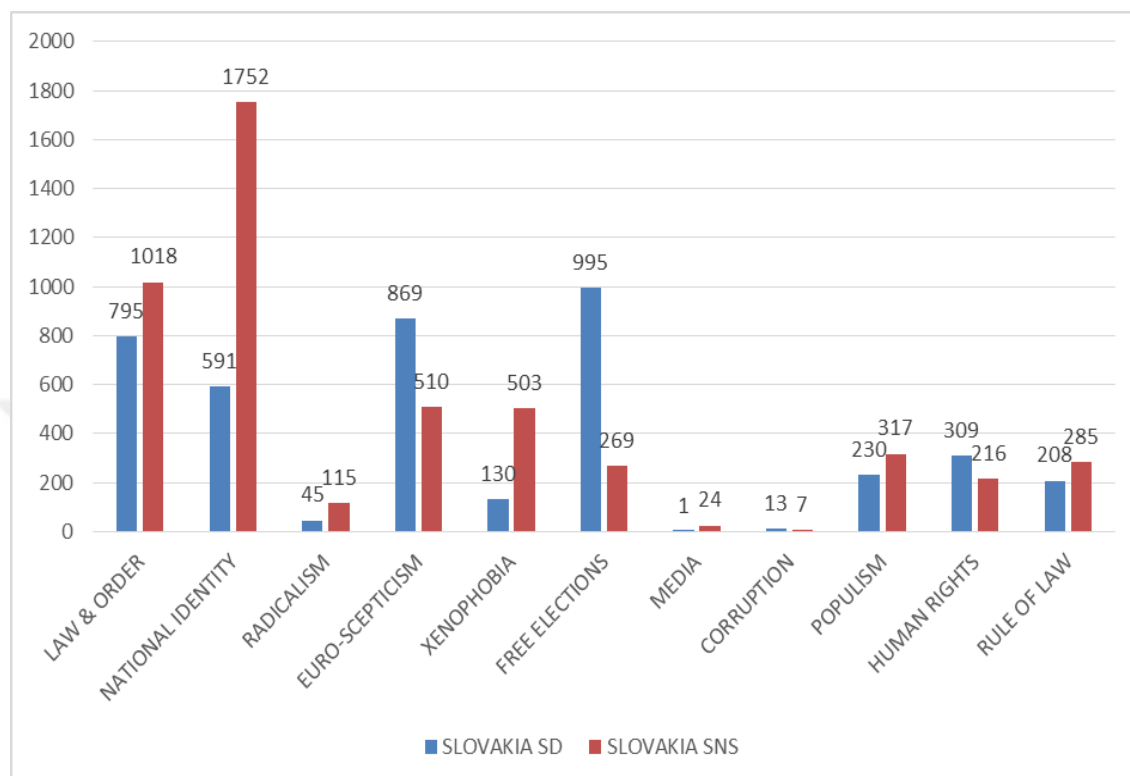


Figure 5 Comparison of Mainstream and Opposition Parties in Slovakia

In general, the analysis of the manifestos of the sampled parties shows that there has been a tendency towards eroding some neo-liberal and democratic values. This statement is true especially for the populist mainstream parties excluding SD-Smer as the only Social Democratic party possessing paradigm and values different from the conservative and far-right parties. Mostly far-right parties including Jobbik and SNS emphasise especially law and order, national identity and populism whereas Fidesz and PiS seemed to be oriented more illiberal as well as the nationalist and far-right parties of Jobbik and SNS. PO does not look like an opposition party in the sense that their frequencies for the themes of right-wing and illiberal democracy are

generally low. The general trend in emphasizing democratic values is also interesting that in terms of free elections, media freedom, rule of law and human rights, Fidesz looks like a far-right party in opposition whereas SD seemed to be defending some democratic values including human rights and free elections. PiS party seemed to be the most dominant party with their populist rhetoric having far-right party features including law and order and national identity, radicalism, Euro-scepticism and xenophobia as well as pretending to represent the dimensions of the democratic system with their strong emphasis of human rights, free elections, media freedom and anti-corruption. However, the populist perspective has been the most evident feature of the PiS party.

Figure 6 shows the general comparative results for three mainstream parties versus three opposition parties in three selected CECs.

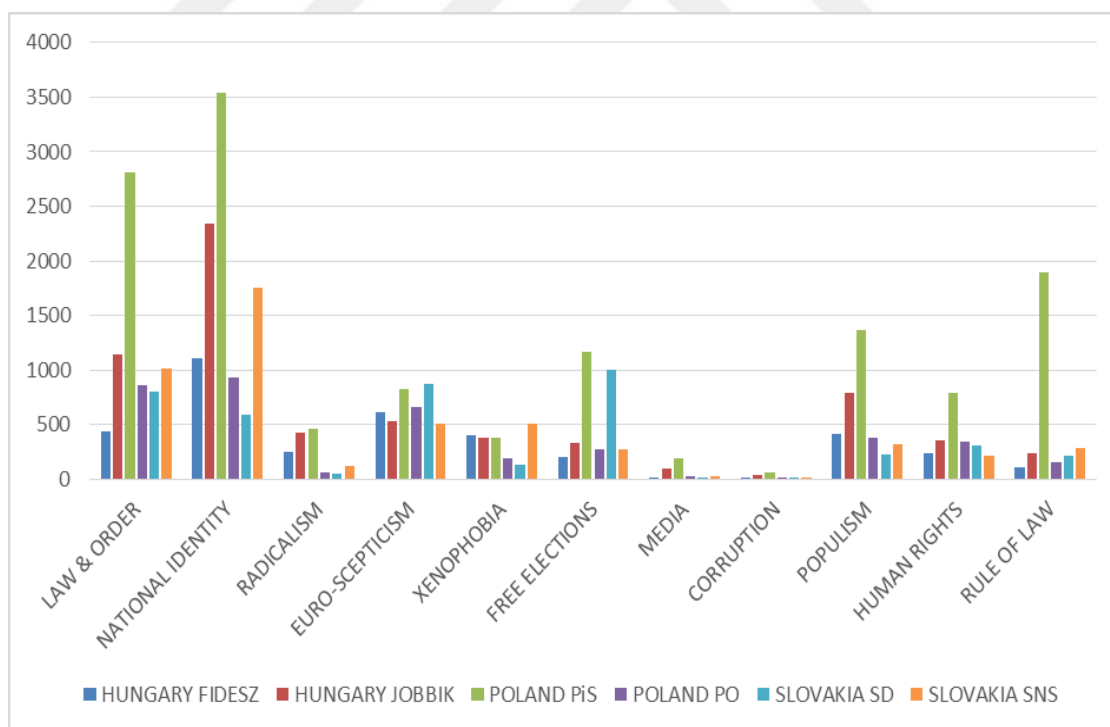


Figure 6 Comparison of Mainstream and Opposition Parties in Three Selected CECs

Having analysed the word frequencies of the manifestos of the six parties, the contents of the themes are extracted from the manifestos, and one quotation for each of the themes are sampled from each manifesto. By this way, the argumentation is developed to explore the relationships of the far right and illiberal discourses of the political parties.

Table 3 *Hu_Mainstream: Contents of the Themes (Fidezs)*

	Evidences (Quotations) from the Manifestos
THEMES	ACTIONS
LAW & ORDER	According to our philosophy, national security rests on two pillars: the powers of the Hungarian nation itself, and Euro-Atlantic integration (or international co-operation) (Fidesz, 2007, p.15). Hungary is also strengthened by being part of stable alliances, as a member of the European Union's huge single market and also of NATO, the world's largest military power (Fidesz, 2017).
NATIONAL IDENTITY	We regard it as crucial that Hungary, as a reliable party within the alliance, fulfils her international obligations; therefore we will also restore Hungary's reputation and credibility in international politics once we are back in a position to govern the country (Fidesz, 2007). We believe that the Hungarian spirit can support anything and survive anything (Fidesz, 2017).
RADICALISM	According to Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Union, there is a need for more rigorous control and greater transparency in the use of government funds (Fidesz, 2007). No one shall be able to move freely – no one shall be able to enter the territory of Hungary and move freely – until we have established their identity, their reasons for arrival and their intentions, and until we have decided whether or not they can enter the European Union through the gateway of Hungary (Fidesz, 2017).
EURO-SCEPTICISM	Hungary has been closely tied to Christian culture and European values of the West for more than a thousand years (Fidesz, 2007). The members of this alliance are the Brussels bureaucrats and their political elite, and the system that may be described as the Soros Empire (Fidesz, 2017).
XENOPHOBIA	The integration and advancement of Roma citizens is a common cause for all (Fidesz, 2007). This is a migratory movement composed of economic migrants, refugees and also foreign fighters (Fidesz, 2015).

FREE ELECTIONS	For us the regaining of independence meant the hope that national interests would be strongly represented and the Hungarian government would always respect the interests of the people of Hungary when making decisions (Fidesz, 2007). I would like to inform you that it has become commonplace in Hungary in the past decade to regularly ask for the opinion of our citizens (Fidesz, 2017).
MEDIA	Nurturing local ethnic traditions, the promotion of relations with the mother country and her culture, the promotion of local and national media appearances, the presentation of the objective and living values of ethnic cultures are very important government tasks (Fidesz, 2007). I would never have thought that I would be standing here, and would find myself having to say that freedom of thought, speech and the media in Hungary is wider, deeper and more diverse than in countries to the west of Hungary (Fidesz, 2016).
CORRUPTION	We will stand up to corruption by introducing stricter penalties and expanding the scope of crimes punishable by forfeiture of property (Fidesz, 2007). There are not enough positions, benefits, sinecures, tips and bribes – not even in the whole of Europe; that is something only our opponents – especially those nourished from communist roots – believe (Fidesz, 2016).
POPULISM	The ultimate goal of our economic policy is to improve people's welfare and hence create the foundations for Hungary's convergence (Fidesz, 2007). They understand it well, and therefore they've invented the magic word "populism" to describe all that is national, popular, Christian and civic (Fidesz, 2017).
HUMAN RIGHTS	Today the present political powers do not ensure the free exercise of fundamental civic rights and cannot guarantee real public safety for citizens (Fidesz, 2007). We can live in freedom and prosperity, in our own cultural environment (Fidesz, 2017).
RULE OF LAW	For this reason, the letter and the spirit of the law must be enforced (Fidesz, 2007). I am glad to inform you that as a result of this we have been able to conclude – by mutual consent – such complicated issues as media regulation, the new Hungarian constitution, the transformation of the judicial system, or the development of nuclear energy (Fidesz, 2017).

Table 4 *Hu_Opposition: Contents of the Themes (Jobbik)*

THEMES	Evidences (Quotations) from the Manifestos ACTIONS
LAW & ORDER	Jobbik Movement for a Better Hungary aims to complete the change of the political system and create a more just society than the current one (Jobbik, 2003). Jobbik's law and order objective, is to free the citizens of our country from all three (Jobbik, 2010). As long as our basic national treasures are threatened by the avoidance of the Hungarian property, we have to concentrate all our powers to protect them (Jobbik, 2014).
NATIONAL IDENTITY	We want a better, more liveable country that ensures, promotes and incentivizes the spiritual, mental and material growth of the Hungarian nation in an increasingly tense and insecure world (Jobbik, 2003). We will guarantee every Hungarian the right to Hungarian citizenship, and thus, to have their voices heard in matters concerning the national interest (Jobbik, 2010). We, Jobbik, therefore want to open a new chapter for Hungary and the Hungarian people (Jobbik, 2014).
RADICALISM	Considering its methodology, Jobbik Movement for a Better Hungary is a radical organization because we have been focusing on real issues and real solutions in terms of our political activity (Jobbik, 2003). Jobbik desires a robust state (Jobbik, 2010). There is a need for a radical change and a changing approach if we want to be a country where youth-based issues are not "yet another policy" (Jobbik, 2014).
EURO-SCEPTICISM	Hungary does not want anything to do with the dead-end Western European multiculturalism, we categorically object to it being forced on us, and we will defend our cultural identity developed over our history (Jobbik, 2003). Europe and the European Union are not one and the same (Jobbik, 2010). If the EU is not willing to accept a vital land for the Hungarian future, as a kind of national feature that cannot be admitted, it proves only that the European Union is not a community of 48 nations, but a Multinational capital dominated by dictatorship (Jobbik, 2014).
XENOPHOBIA	The failure of the foreign policy agendas or the Gypsy integration programmes was mainly caused by the fact that the allocated funds typically enriched groups of individuals with friendly ties to the reigning governments (Jobbik, 2003). The most pressing of these issues is undeniably the halting of

	gypsy crime, for which the strengthening of the established police, and the foundation of a dedicated rural police service, or Gendarmerie, is required (Jobbik, 2010). This is one of our philosophy, and we are building up the bridge of Hungarian Gypsy-related program (Jobbik, 2014).
FREE ELECTIONS	The TTIP's (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) provision to allow corporations to turn to an arbitration court and sue national states for their regulations is a lethal blow to national states as well as any democracy built on free elections (Jobbik, 2003). Jobbik's most important constitutional principles, are: the return of the Doctrine of the Holy Crown to its fitting and honourable position, the authoring of a new constitution approved by referendum, the constitutional introduction of the dissolution of parliament and calling of new elections... (Jobbik, 2010). In serious cases, there should also be political accountability among the elections (Jobbik, 2014).
MEDIA	What we have had since 1990 cannot yet be considered as a real democracy, as there is no natural, competency-based selection in the economy, the media and the cultural life; these areas are still interwoven with a web of old political, business and kinship strings attached (Jobbik, 2003). Jobbik will pass media legislation, which will create new principled public-service broadcasting, whose operations will be anchored in key criteria such as: the development of national identity, the provision of a variety of contrasting opinions, and balanced news reporting (Jobbik, 2010). Our goal is to create real media pluralism, and to begin the development of fair media outlets against the dictatorships of opinion (Jobbik, 2014).
CORRUPTION	Finally, in its political practice, Jobbik will manage its tasks with clean hands, which means that our political efforts are not motivated by individual interests or enrichment, let alone a corrupt use of power but by transparency and a sense of duty (Jobbik, 2003). We will also radically toughen up those punishments which are incurred as a result of acts of corruption (Jobbik, 2010). Many people do not know that a large part of the political corruption is not the desks, but the great majority (Jobbik, 2014).
POPULISM	Our policy is for the people, i.e., our government will work with the support of the people, together with the people and representing the people for the entire nation, for the cross-border community of Hungarians (Jobbik, 2003). In concert with the Hungarian people's industriousness, politics must – both financial and morally – re-establish the position of

	decency that work should hold, while also developing an economic and taxation climate which both stimulates and facilitates job creation (Jobbik, 2010). We believe that in today's fast-paced world, the values which can be given to people in the community, the nation, who are enriching their knowledge of the country, but a road can distinguish good and bad value and worthlessness (Jobbik, 2014).
HUMAN RIGHTS	Jobbik represents a human-centred political approach where people are individuals with freedom, rights and dignity as well as members of a community with responsibilities, duties and solidarity at the same time (Jobbik, 2003). Recognizing the fact that during the course of our history, a succession of struggles to return the rule of law, and revolutions in the cause of freedom, have all fundamentally been fought in order to secure the human rights we should now enjoy (Jobbik, 2010). The fair and legitimate housing and good faith is a fundamental human right (Jobbik, 2014).
RULE OF LAW	Our party is a Christian, value-centred movement so the source of our words, actions and each element of our operation is our faith in divine laws and universal human values (Jobbik, 2003). It is a combination of the Hungarian constitutional spirit (the Holy Crown principle) and the constitutional statutes (cardinal laws) that together would provide true constitutional authority. The historical purpose of constitutions has always been to provide an equally and fairly distributed, controlled, and balanced division and exercising of power (Jobbik, 2010). The Hungarian constitution cannot be separated from the institution of the Holy Crown in any way (Jobbik, 2014).

Table 5*PI_Mainstream: Contents of the Themes (PiS)*

	Evidences (Quotations) from the Manifestos
THEMES	ACTIONS
LAW & ORDER	We want to go further to give the poles a sense of security, to build a modern administration for the 21st century (PiS, 2007). Improved sense of citizens' security, increased social confidence in the Police, decreased number of crimes (PiS, 2011). The protection of State security and the maintenance of public order, the prevention of natural disasters and other exceptional threats (PiS, 2014).
NATIONAL IDENTITY	Poles are a wonderful nation that often proved that they can face adversity and make wise choices (PiS, 2007). Poland is facing an opportunity great leap of civilization (PiS, 2011). Poles and Poland need a new policy which will be built on clear values derived from our tradition ... (PiS, 2014).
RADICALISM	The introduction of radical changes in the organisation of public finances is important to combat the clutter, corruption and wastefulness of taxpayers' money (PiS, 2007). Their aim will be to promote the careers of the judges, well-prepared professionally and ruthlessly honest, and a radical improvement of the work of the courts (PiS, 2011). In the longer term, we are preparing to make a radical change (PiS, 2014).
EURO-SCEPTICISM	Poland wants and can become an important European country (PiS, 2007). In some way it's also about the exclusion of effective forms of democratic control in matters relating to the European Union (PiS, 2011). Poland is a sovereign Member State of the international organization, which is the European Union (PiS, 2014).
XENOPHOBIA	In some foreign media, false information about Poland, such as accusations of homophobia, anti-Semitism, participation in genocide, co-responsibility for the Holocaust or fascism... (PiS, 2007). We repeat: the majority of society, because regardless of the amount of the metropolis to develop (given there are different data), and even with a significant increase in the number of their people for a very long time to be in them live only a minority of Polish of society (PiS, 2011). There are people like that in Poland, but they are a minority (PiS, 2014).
FREE ELECTIONS	We will introduce a mixed ordination (the so-called personalised proportional system) in elections to the Sejm (PiS, 2007). Equal rights of political parties must be actual, not only formal (PiS, 2011).

	...the introduction of fully democratic elections ... (PiS, 2014).
MEDIA	Poland has become the target of aggressive and unfair campaigns in some media overseas (PiS, 2007). For our Governments almost disappeared from public life, no longer be pets of the media, many of them went abroad (PiS, 2011). Similarly large-scale manipulation is only possible with the support of interest groups, which directly or indirectly have the media (PiS, 2014).
CORRUPTION	Transparency in the administration is the cornerstone of effective control and the fight against corruption (PiS, 2007). Meanwhile, events such as an offset of the young prosecutors involved in the fight against corruption at the highest levels... (PiS, 2011). CBA (The Central Office Of The Anti-corruption)become specialized service responsible for the protection of the economic interests of the Member States and the fight against corruption and money laundering (PiS, 2014).
POPULISM	We are building a knowledge-based society ((PiS, 2007). The school, which aims to comprehensive development of students, including educating them to the right people and good Poles (PiS, 2011). The most important Polish political movements—the insurrectionist, national, populist, and social democratic movements—played a huge role in this process (PiS, 2014).
HUMAN RIGHTS	We share and participate, in the name of the Polish state, in the missions conducted for the spread of freedom and the maintenance of peace ((PiS, 2007). Without the creation of a fair and clear legal rules, without deregulation of areas that absolutely do not require legal regulation, our social and economic life to be sick (PiS, 2011). The democratic mechanism, which consists of electoral procedures, citizens' rights and media pluralism, has been severely disturbed from the beginning (PiS, 2014).
RULE OF LAW	Therefore, we will continue to reform the judiciary and fight corruption without considering who is allowed to do so (PiS, 2007). Constitution and the law not only limits the public authority, but also commit it to the effective protection of the freedoms and rights citizens (PiS, 2011). In particular, congested courts will be strengthened, and some of the issues currently in the jurisdiction of these courts will be transferred to the less busy courts (PiS, 2014).

Table 6 *Pl_Opposition: Contents of the Themes (PO)*

	Evidences (Quotations) from the Manifestos
THEMES	ACTIONS
LAW & ORDER	The ideal of the state as the common good and effective guardian of justice and security (PO, 2007). This is important because it demonstrates, on the one hand, care about the security of Polish, on the other-to provide good conditions for soldiers (PO, 2011).
NATIONAL IDENTITY	Hence the love and dedication to the homeland , the knowledge of Polish history and culture, and finally the conscious transfer of national and family tradition – this is particularly important tasks for our generation (PO, 2007). I ask you to support, because I want to with you to create the modern Polish history (PO, 2011).
RADICALISM	This will lead to a rationalisation of resources, an increase of competence and a radical reduction of administrative costs (PO, 2007). Such State accepts the complexity of reality, rejects political radicalism and violence, weapons, so what remains for us the next-meeting of freedom and solidarity under the rule of law (PO, 2011).
EURO-SCEPTICISM	The presence of Poland in the process of building the European Union is treated as a postulate resulting from an in-depth understanding of the Polish national interest in the modern world and the reasons for our state (PO, 2007). We need to build our creativity a habit of cooperation, interaction for the good of the community, the local, national and European (PO, 2011).
XENOPHOBIA	And after all, culture is a laboratory of the future, variability, diversity, pluralism, individuality, cultural diversity and dialogue between cultures, as well as a factor in building social cohesion, a tool to combat exclusion (PO, 2007). Work with Italy and the Holy Vatican we aim at the protection of the rights of Christians in the world (PO, 2011).
FREE ELECTIONS	We create a political party to be able to participate together in democratic elections to the parliament and local government (PO, 2007). This will speed up free citizen and efficient State proceedings, to simplify procedures and reduce costs (PO, 2011).
MEDIA	Civic Platform appreciates the role of public media in a democratic State (PO, 2007). Respect for the laws and institutions of the State to respect the constitutional separation of powers, the role of the media and independent control bodies (PO, 2011).
CORRUPTION	We will create a centralized and coordinated system to tackle the most serious threats to state security, especially organized crime, corruption , espionage and terrorism (PO, 2007).

	Free citizen and efficient State and this is happening while improving the index of perception of corruption Transparency International (PO, 2011).
POPULISM	To reach this objective is primarily, but not only, a change in funding mechanisms of science, avoiding populism and standards that hurt the ambitious and hard-working students (PO, 2007). We will present a new type of leadership: brave defending our interests, but not aggressive that I and my Government will work with all my strength for the benefit of the quality of life of the Citizens and the poles (PO, 2011).
HUMAN RIGHTS	The right to property is, in addition to the right to life and freedom , one of the fundamental human rights and forms the basis for legal, economic and social governance (PO, 2007). Such State accepts the complexity of reality, rejects political radicalism and violence, weapons, so what remains for us the next-meeting of freedom and solidarity under the rule of law (PO, 2011).
RULE OF LAW	Fundamental values and principles in the knowledge sector the fundamental values of shaping the knowledge sector are set out in the Polish Constitution (PO, 2007). ... while maintaining the priority of Polish jurisdiction (PO, 2011).

Table 7 *Sk_Mainstream: Contents of the Themes (SD-Smer)*

	Evidences (Quotations) from the Manifestos
THEMES	ACTIONS
LAW & ORDER	The safety of citizens in the fight against crime will be the other direction ... (SD, 2006). ... a commitment has been made to strengthen internal order and security and to achieve significant qualitative changes in this area from the previous period (SD, 2010).
NATIONAL IDENTITY	We have never been to the principles of the welfare State in Slovakia weakened as at present (SD, 2006). Social democracy will ensure the unity of the economic, social and environmental development of Slovakia (SD, 2010).
RADICALISM	The so-called health care reform requires the most radical right-wing government interventions on the part of the new Government coalition (SD, 2006). ... which recognize the principle of democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and the rule of law, human rights and freedoms, reject the manifestations of extremism ... (SD, 2010).
EURO-SCEPTICISM	Direction-social democracy as an option fully accepts that the European identity is built right on the value of human dignity

	(SD, 2006). The government respects that the EU, under the Lisbon Treaty, seeks to sustain Europe's sustainable development, based on balanced economic growth and price stability (SD, 2010).
XENOPHOBIA	Direction – social democracy's perception of the status of the Roma national minority to be incompatible with the position of the Slovak Republic in Europe (SD, 2006). At the same time, the oversee of road traffic, which is an essential prerequisite for security, continues to lead to uncompromising fight against any manifestations of extremism, racism, intolerance, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and aggressive nationalism (SD, 2010).
FREE ELECTIONS	Direction – social democracy wants its practical policy in the case of participation in the Government formed on the basis of the results of the elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic (SD, 2006). Support for more than a third of the population in the system of several parliamentary political parties is evidence of the need to maintain the continuity of the social orientation of the government (SD, 2010).
MEDIA	... with the involvement of the State and its bodies, public media, regional and local government, non-governmental organizations and the public will form the basis of criminal policy of the party direction – social democracy in the case of participation in Government (SD, 2006). The manifesto of SD in 2010 did not mention about media.
CORRUPTION	Patiently and resolutely expose and penalize large cases of economic crime and political corruption... (SD, 2006). The Government will consistently promote preventive and punitive measures to combat corruption and thus minimize the amount of corrupt opportunities and set an effective sanctioning system (SD, 2010).
POPULISM	Economic growth can only serve a minority and lead to a further deepening of differences between people and regions, to poverty and unemployment (SD, 2006). Social democracy is clearly the most popular Party throughout the government period, and people trust its policy and its representatives... (SD, 2010).
HUMAN RIGHTS	... to protect their lives, health, freedom, property, and the other rights and ensure elemental equality before the law (SD, 2006). Each democratic and legal State shall protect the internal order and security as important attributes of the building of a organised company in which the illegality is replaced by compliance with the law and in which the lives, health, property, rights and freedoms of citizens (SD, 2010).
RULE OF LAW	Direction – social democracy advocates kick off processes that

	support the compatibility between constitutional and fair form of market economy (SD, 2006). Important constitutional institutes have become part of a government programme... (SD, 2010).
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Table 8 *Sk_Mainstream: Contents of the Themes (SNS)*

	Evidences (Quotations) from the Manifestos
THEMES	ACTIONS
LAW & ORDER	The Slovak national party is convinced that the only possible future for the functioning of the European Union are strong and sovereign nation States, not artificially created, and preferred the grouping of European regions (SNS, 2006). and the use of the broad spectrum and the security of citizens, the country and allied within the meaning of the Treaty of Lisbon (SNS, 2010) It may create additional armed forces on a civil voluntary basis for their security needs (SNS, 2016).
NATIONAL IDENTITY	SNS as a national, Christian and Social party aims to elevate Slovakia and the Slovak nation's cultural, social, economical and strengthening its dignity (SNS, 2006). The law reinforces the effect of unifying Slovaks as "all citizens of Slovakia regardless of their ethnicity" (SNS, 2010). As much as we do, we love, we build and protect our homeland, nationalists, our Slovakia (SNS, 2016).
RADICALISM	So far, however, it still holds true that the national States are entering into international politics as the most important institution (SNS, 2006). As the first political entity in Slovakia, we have opened the idea of patriotism (SNS, 2010). ... stop the radical political agenda of LGBT persons belonging to minorities to accept a new law (SNS, 2016).
EURO-SCEPTICISM	Because, for the social and socio-economic development of Slovakia and its successful integration into the EU and thus to the world economy... (SNS, 2006). Slovak Republic to be limited to the increasing impact of the destination with a tendency to create globalized and Europeanized... (SNS, 2010). Many Europeans at the time of their lost identity rely on Slovakia, which is still a healthy heart (SNS, 2016).
XENOPHOBIA	CIS rejects any discrimination against national interests, the rights of individuals, or of persons belonging to minority communities, including national and ethnic minorities (SNS, 2006). ... guaranteeing the equality of citizens with obligation of respect

	and do not allow the threat of personal security, manifestations of racism, discrimination and xenophobia (SNS, 2010). ... consistent protection of the State borders of the Slovak Republic before the mass and acceptable invasion of illegal migrants, in particular with regard to our membership in the European Union and the Schengen area, registration and control of refugees ... (SNS, 2016).
FREE ELECTIONS	The Parliament is based on democratic elections, by the political parties, where each party presents their election program (SNS, 2006). By changing the election legislation, a combined electoral order for all the citizens of Slovak Republic (SNS, 2010). The Slovak Republic guarantees its citizens freedom of choice and decision-making, in the underlying issues of the development of the State in the field of constitutional establishment, economy, society, the occupational safety and the environment (SNS, 2016).
MEDIA	Therefore, in the framework of the principles of its media policy will the SNS as a priority to promote the following. -ensure that a true, objective and rigorous legislation timely provision of information in the entire structure of the media, to improve the quality and increase the responsibilities of media activities in Slovakia ... (SNS, 2006). The manifesto of SNS in 2010 did not mention about media. The Slovak Republic supports the development of free creation and critical thinking, in particular through public and new media (SNS, 2016).
CORRUPTION	In the economic field, we will focus mainly on the fight against unnecessary bureaucracy, corruption, clientelism and abuse of political and economic power for closely group interests (SNS, 2006). Guide me about stability and clarity of the legislative proposals "and strengthen its action in the passport against corruption, clientelism (SNS, 2010). The Slovak Republic will develop and systematically improve the legal framework for the motivation of fair and legal action by effectively fighting with corruption (SNS, 2016).
POPULISM	The political environment and political culture are misrepresented, democracy serves power and not people (SNS, 2006). Young people are our future (SNS, 2010). The Slovak Republic creates conditions for the development of a culture of national minorities and promotes the cultural diversity of the State and its citizens (SNS, 2016).
HUMAN RIGHTS	The Slovak national party, as the oldest political party based in the area of human rights by the rich historical experience of the struggle of the Slovak nation on the basic law and to the heritage and values of the Western civilization, Christian Europe which

	the human rights and freedoms (SNS, 2006). In a given context, SNS respects citizens in conscience, freedom of expression and association, protection cultural needs, protection of identity with the possibility to participate in public and political life. (SNS, 2010). We will ensure a better procedural position and greater protection of the rights suffered in criminal proceedings (SNS, 2016).
RULE OF LAW	In practice, SNS will consistently enforce the constitutional principle of equality of people before the law in their rights and obligations (SNS, 2006). To secure the constitutional system to make the territory of the Slovak Republic a single political indivisible unit (SNS, 2010). We will take constitutional law about the national interests of the Slovak nation and national interests of the Slovak Republic (SNS, 2016).

4.12 Interpreting the data

Interpretation of the data means “attaching significance to what was found, making sense of the findings, offering explanations . . . and drawing conclusions” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p.219). As Marshall and Rossman (2011) suggested, in interpreting the data, the researcher evaluates the data for its usefulness regarding the topic of interest. The analysis of the data was interpreted to give meaning to the information collected during this study.

4.13 Discussion and Conclusion

We critically reviewed the literature on the new right and illiberal democracy and produced the themes (parameters) of our research model. As our qualitative analysis reflected some points to be considered for the research framework, the main findings of the research are discussed in this section. The findings will be compared to the critical literature review as well as the results of the previous surveys including Freedom House and Democracy Barometer Index.

As the literature suggested that new right paradigm influenced some values including the emphasis on law and order and national identity as well as the rising sentiments of Euro-scepticism, radicalism and xenophobia. The Euro-sceptic sentiments have always been high as a result of the cultural reflexes of maintaining their sovereignty as well as preserving national identity. The national identity of three countries seemed to be historically driven with a strong emphasis on the superiority of the nation-state.

The conditions of the democracy concept in three countries have been different, although there has been a general decline in the democracy scores as reported by Freedom House. In line with the idea of Zakaria (1997, p.40) as claiming that illiberal governments mostly focus only on regular elections as a sign of democratic system was the common theme for our sample party manifestos, not considering the fairness of the elections. Most parties sampled including mainstream parties seemed to be caring for the regular elections. However, rule of law as well as other human rights including free media, and competitive elections have been neglected by the practices of the governments, especially in Hungary and Poland. Rule of Law system has been under heavy control of the Fidesz and PiS governments weakening the independence of the legislative systems.

Economic instability and unemployment problems have always been on the top of the political agenda of the parties as a result of the structural problems of the CECs. However, we have not included them in the analysis as they are common problems of the sampled countries as well as the issue has been raised as a populist political tool in most cases.

Comparative analysis of the party manifestos shows that in CECs, not only mainstream parties but also opposition parties have demonstrated the features of the

new right as well as an illiberal democracy. Thus we gave the contents of the manifestos for each theme as evidence of the far right and illiberal tendencies found in the party manifestos.

The comparison of the word frequency results for the mainstream and opposition parties may be explained with different factors in different countries. In Hungary, Jobbik has higher frequencies of the themes related to far-right paradigm than those of Fidesz, except xenophobia, and this situation may be taken as evidence of the relationship of far-right with illiberal democracy. Fidesz has not considered democratic principles as much as Jobbik, which is known as being the far-right and nationalist opposition party. In this relationship, populism seemed to be the critical factor in a way that populist discourses are used to disguise the far right discourses with the heavy but artificial emphasis of the democratic values. In the Hungarian case, we can claim that our pre-assumptions of the impact of the far right values on the understanding of the democracy seemed to be strongly correct.

The Polish case is totally different as the mainstream party, PiS, scored higher both in far right and democratic principles than other parties including far-right and nationalist parties. PiS has been a close ally, and a follower of the Fidesz or rather Orbán as the party heavily reflected the far-right discourses as well as pretending to defend the democratic values, and PiS has been the top populist party of our sample. In the Polish case, our hypothesis is also seemed to be proven.

The Slovakian case has been considered differently in the literature as the mainstream party has been social-democratic party being utterly different from other mainstream parties. Smer-SD has been a more stable party in terms of representing a sound and logical distribution of the probably leftist discourses and in this sense Smer-SD cannot be considered as a typical mainstream party. SNS as a far-right and

nationalist opposition party has been defending right-wing principles as Jobbik, but also it seemed to be a populist party. The Slovakian case may be seen as a newly established and rather a larger country in terms of illiberal democracy. The most distinctive feature of the highest xenophobic sentiments is in Slovakia, although they are not influenced by the recent migration crisis of the EU as much as other case countries. It may be based on the historical and cultural roots as they separated from the former Czech Republic. In the Slovakian case, the hypothesis seemed to be valid explicitly for SNS. SD-Smer case also validated our hypothesis with the falsification logic as the non-existence of the far right paradigm in power, the emphasis on the liberal democracy parameters are higher.

Our findings have some similarities with the Freedom House's "Nations in Transit 2018" report as the title of the report, "Confronting Illiberalism" drew attention to the general decline in democracy indexes as pointing out that especially CECs have been back-sliding towards illiberalism. The democracy score, in general, has declined for 12 years in a row, including political institutions, processes, and habits⁷⁵. Only Slovakia seemed to slow down the decline in democracy as pointed out by our findings as well as Freedom House reports. This situation may illustrate the difference of Slovakia having relatively higher democratic standards as the literature asserted, or in other words, Slovakia has been a follower of the illiberal democracy of Hungary and Poland.

Our findings are also similar to those found by the Democracy Barometer index as the quality of democracy including freedom, equality and control as core values. The spider graphs illustrated the nine dimensions of democracy including Rule

⁷⁵ For instance, democracy scores of Hungary is 3.71 (3.54 for 2017), Poland 2.89 (2.57 for 2017) and Slovakia 2.61 (2.61 for 2017) for 2018 according to Freedom House (1 most democratic and 7 least democratic)

of Law, Public Sphere, Individual Liberties, Competition, Participation Governmental Capability, Mutual Constraints, Representation, and Transparency. Hungary and Poland have been in decline in recent years as Slovakia managed to hold on the present level and even has been evolving in terms of transparency and representation⁷⁶.

As a general analysis of the three cases together, it may be claimed that the close relationship of far right and illiberal democracy is evident in the manifestos of the parties. Although the context and conditions of the countries are different, there has been a divergence of the far-right and illiberal democratic discourses in the sampled party manifestos.

The main argument of our thesis is to find out the impact of the new right paradigm on the understanding of different democracy paradigms in Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. By looking at case studies from three CECs, we found out that the simultaneous rise of the new right and far-right parties are linked to the “end of politics” (Mouffe, 2005) and the representation crisis of democracies is creating authoritarian (Levitsky and Way, 2002) and defective forms of democracy (Merkel, 2004), namely illiberal democracy (Zakaria, 1997) found to be evident in these three CECs.

The focus of this study is to analyse different understanding and trajectories of the democracy within the CECs that joined the EU in 2004. The political life and the background of the sample parties extended our knowledge on the relationship of new right with different defective democracy forms, namely illiberal democracy. Our findings revealed that the nature and contextual factors of the political parties have a considerable impact on the understanding of democracy in a specific country. This

⁷⁶ http://www.democracybarometer.org/concept_en.html. Date of Access:04.12.2018

relationship has been more complicated with the actors of the new right/far-right discourses as well as the influences of the EU membership. In this study, a detailed analysis of the ideologies of the new right parties enabled us to create a research model to test the relationships with the parameters of democratic discourse. The analysis of the manifestos deepened our knowledge to understand the Hungarian, Polish and Slovakian political systems specifically from the new right and democracy perspectives.

In this study, as a result of the analysis of the party manifestos, it was found that populist far-right parties have achieved electoral success by translating the far right ideological principles like national identity, “exclusion of others” and xenophobic, anti-minority, anti-immigrant, nationalist and populist messages to the public and attract their support to vote for them. Far Right parties in both Eastern and Western Europe exploited this opportunity with a message that they are in the mainstream path and hence may form coalitions with other parties. Using party manifestos, this thesis found that the elements in a party's core messages have been mostly complying with the literature.

The reason for the far-right parties becoming successful is the low performance of the mainstream parties within Central and Eastern European region as they still have problems from the communist era that are Euro-scepticism, unemployment, corruption, xenophobia, Muslim immigration and so on. The populist and far-right parties use the old fears and anxieties of the citizens including weak economic conditions, high unemployment rates and corruption problems. It is the case that the recent financial crises, regional and EU-related problems boosted the rise of the populist political parties of CEC.

Our study adopted the illiberal democracy discourse of Zakaria that, in the West, electoral democracy and civil liberties (of speech, religion, etc.) support each other. However, in the CECs far-right discourse created a specific type of democracy which is not integrated with liberal values as Zakaria addressed as “illiberal democracy”. In the light of the findings, it may be claimed that the new right/far-right discourse and parameters as found in the party manifestos have been impacts on the understanding of the democracy in the case study countries.

In conclusion, there appeared to be in-depth relationships of the new right parameters and the level of the democracy succeeded in a country. Party manifestos may only give some clues to understand such relationships and more concrete efforts to be made to deepen our knowledge on the research framework. Although there were some limitations of the research, this study constitutes an original contribution of attempting the conceptualization of illiberal democracies within the new right framework. Besides, tackling a subject that has not been studied in Turkish academia until now strengthens the originality of our thesis

4.14 Recommendations for future research

This study sought to explore the relationships of two main discourses with qualitative research techniques. This study could be extended to all members of the European Union and a comparative perspective of Western Europe versus Eastern Europe research framework could be taken. Also, the research data could be included in their original languages with the support of local researchers. Only manifestos are used in this study and other political sources including parliament papers, talks of the politicians and especially real opinions of the local people could be considered for more detailed analysis. However, language barriers forced us to use the English texts of the manifestos only.

This study also intends to use the findings of the case studies to understand recent changes and developments of the Turkish political system which was experienced under the Justice and Development Party government since 2002. In recent years, Turkey has often been criticized and even threatened by the EU with the suspension of negotiations on the basis of its tendency towards authoritarianism. Investigating the EU members Hungary, Poland, Slovakia whose names are increasingly associated with illiberal democracy more recently, would help to understand developments of the Turkish political system.



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