Anti-immigrant far-right parties in the Visegrad countries: representation, political success and ideological positioning

The article is devoted to consideration and comparison of representativeness, political (electoral, parliamentary and governmental) successes and ideological positioning of anti-immigrant parties in the Visegrad countries. The researcher explained that the formation of anti-immigrant parties in the region has passed several stages that were conditioned with significant events of their development, but reckoned that the electoral successes of anti-immigrant parties are distinctive. It was found that anti-immigrant parties in the countries of Visegrad group ideologically are the products of post-materialistic society. The author also stated that the rhetoric of anti-immigrant parties in the region gained publicity and relevance after 2010, when the problems of migration policy of the European Union appeared to be the most dangerous. Generally speaking, it was argued that ideological issues of migration policy are the cornerstone of ideological and political positioning of anti-immigrant parties, but they are not sufficient to warrant their positioning as a separate ideological family of parties.

Keywords: party, anti-immigrant party, “new right” parties, “new” policy, the Visegrad countries.
позиціонування антиіммігрантських партій. Але це не є достатньою підставою їхнього позиціонування як ідеологічної сім’ї партій.

**Ключові слова:** партія, антиіммігрантська партія, «нові праві» партії, «нова» політика, країни Вишеградської групи.

The issue of migration policy in the Visegrad countries found its representation in constructing one of the divisions of the "new" policy, which combined issues concerning protection of ethnic community's rights and liberties in certain countries, as well as solutions of migration problems and preservation of national heritage. It is incorporated in the fact that since the 90s of the 20th century, however mainly in 2003-2016 some "new" far-right political parties in Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic started positioning themselves as straightforwardly anti-immigrant, consequently this phenomenon (first of all on the ground of supplementing experience of anti-immigrant parties in Western European countries) was generalized and substantiated in political science. It revealed in the fact that the main attribute and distinctive marker of anti-immigrant parties became their mainly populist and even xenophobic trend against immigrants. Therefore, it is quite urgent and topical in political science to specify and systematize knowledge on history of formation, representativeness, ideological positioning and political (electoral and governmental) successes of anti-immigrant parties, in particular on the instance of the Visegrad countries, which over 2015-2017 were the ones, which to the biggest extent faced the problems of the migration crisis in Europe.

Current range of problems has found its theoretical and methodological justification in the works by such scholars as I. Androshchuk, D. Art, J. Berg, L. Bustikova, M. Fennema, B. Filatov, G. Harris, J. Hainmueller and M. Hiscox, C. Keller, M. Krtolica,
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R. Kunovich, G. Lahav, L. McLaren, L. Quillian, J. Rovny, S. Schneider, I. Sletaune, N. van de Walle. However, appealing to them does not generate a systemized logical frame and diversified image concerning understanding of the anti-immigrant parties' phenomenon in the Visegrad countries, which is a key task of the current research.

It is historically known, that anti-immigrant political parties in the Visegrad group started their formation in the late 80s and early 90s of the 20th century. During this period were formed such parties as: “The Coalition for Republic – Republicans” and “The Right Bloc” (Pravý Blok, PB) – in the Czech Republic; the Slovak National Party (Slovenská národná strana, SNS) and the People’s Party “Our Slovakia” (Ludová strana Naše Slovensko, LSNS) – in Slovakia; “The Party for Justice and Life” (Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja, MIÉP) – in Hungary; the National Party (Stronnictwo Narodowe, SN), “The Party X” (Partia X Patriotów Polskich, X), the Polish National Community (Polska Wspólnota Narodowa, PWN), “The Polish National Front” (Polski Front Narodowy, PFN), “Fatherland” (Ojczyzna, O), “Action Poland” (Akcja Polska, AP), The Catholic-National Movement (Ruch Katolicko-Narodowy, RKN) and “The Polish Accord” (Porozumienie Polskie, PrP) – in Poland.


And finally since 2010 the third stage of anti-immigrant parties formation in the Visegrad group has started, as at that time were formed such political forces as: “The Congress of New Rights” (Kongres Nowej Prawicy, KNP), “The National Movement” (Ruch Narodowy, RN) and Kukiz’15 (Kukiz’15, K) – in Poland; “We are Family” (Sme Rodina, SR) and “The Nation and Justice” – “Our Party” (Národ a spravodlivos – Naša strana, NaS-NS) – in Slovakia; “The Czech Sovereignty” (Česká suverenita, ČS) – in the Czech Republic.

Generally, it allows us to summarize that historically the biggest number of anti-immigrant parties over the whole period after the collapse of the Warsaw Treaty system, among the analyzed countries, were formed in Poland, while the lowest number appeared in Hungary. Initially, formation of anti-immigrant parties was presupposed by the Euro-integration processes in the region, later it was the result of joining the EU, and now it is the consequence of the European migration crisis. Along with that, it is notable that not all of the abovementioned parties are functioning nowadays, as many of them (in detail see Table 1) at different times stopped their activity. Moreover, not all anti-immigrant parties are equally politically (electorally and governmentally) successful.

In this context, i.e. in the light of electoral and governmental successes of anti-immigrant parties, there are good reasons to divide all countries of the region into three groups. The first group is represented by the Czech Republic, where the impact of the “new right” parties is rather slight/transitional, though earlier it was characterized by their popularity (as in case of the political force “The Coalition for Republic – Republicans” (SPR/RSC), in particular their presence in the parliament. To the second group belong Poland and Hungary, where anti-immigrant parties are represented in legislature (as of 2017 in Poland it is Kukiz’15, and before it was “The League of Polish Families” (LPR), in Hungary – “The Movement for Better Hungary” (Jobbik), earlier it was “The Party for Justice and Life” (MIEP)), though traditionally (with some exceptions) they do not participate in government formation. Finally, to the third group belongs Slovakia, where anti-immigrant parties are permanently represented in legislature (as of 2017 there are 3 such parties, namely the Slovak National Party (SNS), the People’s Party “Our Slovakia” (LSNS) and “We are Family” (SR)), and some of them (in particular the Slovak National Party) occasionally take part in formation of governmental cabinets (in detail see Table 1).

In general, it makes the ground for the conclusion that the most influential “new right” anti-immigrant parties in the Visegrad countries since the 80s of the 20th century were and are (in descending order of political successes) such political forces as “The Slovak National Party” (SNS), “The Movement for Better Hungary” (Jobbik), “The League of Polish Families” (LPR), Kukiz’15 (K), “The Party for Justice and Life” (MIEP) and “The Coalition for Republic – The Republic Party of Czechoslovakia” (SPR-RSC), The People’s Party “Our Slovakia” (LSNS) and “We are Family” (SR).
Table 1. Anti-immigrant parties (and movements/associations which are equivalent to them) in the Visegrad countries: ideological positioning and political successes (1989–2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name of the party/electoral bloc: ideological positioning</th>
<th>Year of the party formation</th>
<th>Maximum number of electorate, %</th>
<th>Maximum number of parliamentary mandates</th>
<th>Parliamentary representation (number of times)</th>
<th>Maximum number of votes at the elections to the EP %</th>
<th>Maximum number of MEP</th>
<th>Representation in the EP</th>
<th>Governmental party (number of times)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The National Movement (Ruch Narodowy, RN): national-conservatism, nationalism, euro-scepticism</td>
<td>2007 – effective</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>1 (2015)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,4</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kukiz’15 (Kukiz’15, K): nationalism, right populism, euro-scepticism</td>
<td>2015 – effective</td>
<td>8,8</td>
<td>42 (2015)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The People’s Party “Our Slovakia” (Euróvá strana Naše Slovensko, LEVS): Slovak nationalism, euro-scepticism, right populism, national-conservatism, social-conservatism, anti-globalism</td>
<td>2000 – effective</td>
<td>8,0</td>
<td>14 (2016)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“We are Family” (Smé Rodina, SR): conservatism, right populism, euro-scepticism</td>
<td>2015 – effective</td>
<td>6,6</td>
<td>11 (2016)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other anti-immigrant parties in the Visegrad countries

Erstwhile politically (electorally and governmentally) unsuccessful parties:


Currently existing and electorally (electorally and governmentally) unsuccessful parties:


The peculiarity of the Slovak National Party is that it is permanently represented in the Slovak legislature and several times participated in the governmental cabinet formation. As to its ideological positioning it is a social-national party, which in its rhetoric quite often uses ultranationalist extremist slogans, concerning Hungarians, Roma and homosexualists, which
allows us to define it as neo-racial\textsuperscript{20}. This political party is notable for the 2008 events, when on its official website in the section for discussing party issues was published a map, where the territory of Hungary was divided between two countries – Slovakia and Austria. After public disclosure the map was deleted, and the party denied its implication to the accident. Along with that, numerous misunderstandings are caused by the background of one of the party leaders J. Slovy, in particular concerning “aggression” against the Hungarians. It was revealed, for example, in the fact that he repeatedly called the fascist leader J. Tiso “one of the most outstanding sons of the Slovak nation”\textsuperscript{21}. Being a member of the government the party often demands the position of the Minister of human rights and national minorities. In their turn, ideological attributes of the People’s Party “Our Slovakia” (LSNS) and the party “We are Family” (SR) are Slovak nationalism, euro-scepticism, right populism, national-conservatism, social-conservatism and anti-globalism.

In reference to the most representative and successful anti-immigrant party in Hungary – “The Movement for Better Hungary” (Jobbik) we may say that this political force is conventionally interpreted by political scientists as radical-nationalistic, fascist or neo-fascist, anti-Semitic, anti-Roma and homophobic\textsuperscript{22}. Quite interesting is the fact that the party interprets itself as a “principled, conservative and radically patriotic Christian force”, whose main task is to protect Hungarian values and interests. Nowadays, the party positions itself as one of the largest (electoral successes) in Hungary, however it is in opposition. Furthermore, the party is represented in the European parliament (according to the results of 2009 and 2014 elections). Another “new” anti-immigrant right party of Hungary (which was successful earlier) is “The Party for Justice and Life” (MIÉP), which was mainly characterized as anti-Semitic. In 2005 this party joined the ranks of Jobbik forming “The Alliance of Parties of Third position” (MIEP–Jobbik). Consequently, only the former of the analyzed Hungarian “new” right anti-immigrant parties enjoys electoral successes now.

The peculiarity of anti-immigrant parties in Poland is the fact that their number in the country is the highest in the region, however only one of them, namely “The League of Polish Families” (LPR), was earlier characterized as the most successful far-right anti-immigrant political force in the Visegrad countries. It revealed in the fact that in due times this party was


represented in the government (twice in 2006-2007). In reference to its ideological positioning political scientists have some divergences. However, it is typically described as a populist, clerical and nationalist political force. For example, A. Michlic gives characteristics of the groups which participated in formation of the party calling them chauvinistic, xenophobic and anti-Semitic. Among the most interesting ideas, which laid the foundation to the party’s programs at different times were the following: legalization of “soft drugs”, legalization of abortions, euthanasia as well as same-sex marriages; introduction of death penalty; publication of the secret police’s archives over the period of communistic development in Poland (“absolute decommunization”). However, even despite such position the party gained its representation in the European parliament in 2004. On the other hand, its popularity significantly decreased after 2007. In 2015 appeared its electoral substitution – the party (association) Kukiz’15 (K), which on the basis of nationalism, right populism, euro-scepticism and republicanism, managed to lead more than 40 deputies into the Polish Seim and as a result became the most parliamentary successful anti-immigrant political force in the history of the post-communist Poland.

Finally, in the Czech Republic anti-immigrant political parties usually are not electorally and parliamentary and governmentally successful and are numerically insignificant. The exception is “The Coalition for Republic – Republicans” (SPR/RSC), which in the late 90s of the 20th century was represented by almost 10% of members of the Chamber of Deputies. This party is quite interesting as it was formed in 1989 within the boundaries of the then Czechoslovakia. After that it changed its format and even was banned for several times, however in due course of time it restarted its activity. This is a national-conservative, republican, Roma-phobia, anti-Germans, anti-Semitic, anti-immigrant and euro-sceptical far-right party, which adheres to the principles of the Austrian school of economics. It is in harsh opposition to the European Union, NATO and current Czech migration policy. Besides, it is important that at proper time SPR/RSC gained its additional popularity due to clear and strict anti-immigrant rhetoric, aimed first of all against the Vietnamese, who worked in the Czech Republic on the basis of the agreements between the communistic countries, as well as its position against Roma. It is quite notable, that anti-immigrant rhetoric to a much smaller degree is present in activity of such political forces in the Czech Republic as: “Dawn of Direct Democracy” (UPD), later renamed

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into “Dawn – National Coalition” (Úsvit – Národní koalice, UNK), on the basis of which then appeared the party “Freedom and Direct Democracy” (Svoboda a přímá demokracie, SPD). This is a euro-sceptical political force, which adheres to the ideological fundamentals of national-liberalism, right populism, anti-immigrant/anti-Islamic rhetoric and is mainly focused on the problems of direct democracy and patriotism. In average and on the grounds of the analysis of program concepts and slogans of the above-mentioned parties it is obvious that anti-immigrant political forces in the Czech Republic are first of all far-right, as they focus on the established problems and issues of the Czech social and political development, namely: anti-Roma public mood in regions of an escalated interethnic tension26; criticism of migration processes, incorporated in potential moderate Islamophobia27 (many anti-immigrant organizations in the Czech Republic support Islamic struggle against Israel and the USA, and thus interpret anti-Semitism as anti-Zionism).

Generally speaking, referring to the ideological positioning of anti-immigrant parties in the Visegrad countries, we may state the abovementioned conclusion that the analyzed political forces are the products of the post-materialistic society and are based on the market economy and parliamentary democracy. However, they are characterized by the desire to strengthen national identity, protect national culture, in particular by means of isolation and reinforcement of national homogeneity, preserving high level of living standards, intensification of security concerning home-national life, limitation of immigration, reduction of taxes and state expenditures, reinforcement of the state’s role in terms of maintaining law and order, protection of traditional family values. Therefore, on the example of such parties we can observe formation of a “new” independent family of right parties, which differ from the family of traditional right parties. The conclusion is that ideologically we cannot interpret such political forces as exclusively anti-immigrant ones; however the question of migration policy is at any rate a cornerstone of their ideological and political positioning.

In general it is noted that the main political and ideological principles of anti-immigrant parties in the Visegrad countries, especially in Slovakia, Poland and Hungary, a bit less in the Czech Republic, are euro-scepticism, anti-globalism, mono-nationalism and its predominant position over the ethnic, religious and sex diversity (in Poland concerning the Jewish minority; in Slovakia – as to Hungarians, Roma and sexual minorities; in Hungary – as to people of Hebrew origin, Roma, representatives of sexual minorities; in the Czech Republic – as to Roma), radicalism, extremism, chauvinism, xenophobia, neo-Nazism and populism. In Poland one can clearly observe clerical tendencies of the “new right” parties: nevertheless “The League of Polish Families” stands for legalization of “soft” drugs, abortions, euthanasia, same-sex marriages and death penalty. It is also notable, that rhetoric of anti-immigrant parties in the countries of the

26 M. Mareš, National and right-wing radicalism in the new democracies: Czech Republic, Paper for the workshop of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation on „Right-wing extremism and its impact on young democracies in the CEE countries“, Budapest, November 19, 2010, s. 11-12.
region became quite popular and urgent only after 2010, when to the greatest possible extent revealed problems of the EU migration policy, to which the Visegrad countries belong as well. At the same time, anti-immigrant parties in the region are distinctive. Thus, in Poland the distinguished parties tend to the ideas and principles of nationalism, national-radicalism, national-conservatism, national-Catholicism, Christian democracy, solidarism, protectionism, anti-globalism and euro-scepticism. In the Czech Republic and Slovakia anti-immigrant parties traditionally function on the grounds of nationalism, national-conservatism, national-socialism, republicanism, euro-scepticism, right populism, anti-Semitism, anti-globalism and neo-Nazism. Finally, Hungarian anti-immigrant parties are conventionally established on the ideas of Hungarian nationalism, irredentism, social-conservatism, euro-scepticism, anti-globalism, anti-Zionism, neo-Nazism and extremism.

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