

Comparative analysis of political regimes in Eastern European Countries: correlation of hybrid and authoritarian political practices (1991-2016)

The article is dedicated to comparative analyzing political regimes in Eastern European countries and making correlation of their hybrid and authoritarian political practices in 1991-2016. The researcher used such methods of analysis of political regimes as “Freedom in the World”, “Nations in Transit”, Vanhanen scheme, Democracy Index of “The Economist Intelligence Unit”, project “Polity IV” and so on. As a result it was mapped all received effective data of divergent comparative methods of democracy and autocracy assessment, on the basis of which the author held their correlation in terms of common and distinctive findings and displayed adjacent/coupled design for understanding political regimes in Eastern Europe.

Keywords: political regime, democracy, autocracy, authoritarianism, hybrid regime, Eastern Europe.

ПОРІВНЯЛЬНИЙ АНАЛІЗ ПОЛІТИЧНИХ РЕЖИМІВ У КРАЇНАХ СХІДНОЇ ЄВРОПИ: КОРЕЛЯЦІЯ ГІБРИДНИХ ТА АВТОРИТАРНИХ ПОЛІТИЧНИХ ПРАКТИК (1991-2016)

У статті порівняльно проаналізовано політичні режими у країнах Східної Європи і здійснено кореляцію їхніх гібридних та авторитарних політичних практик у 1991-2016 рр. Для цього автором використано такі методики аналізу політичних режимів, як «Свобода у світі», «Нації в транзиті», схема Т. Ванханена, індекс демократії «The Economist Intelligence Unit», проект «Polity IV» тощо. В результаті зіставлено усі отримані результативні дані розбіжних порівняльних методик оцінювання демократії і автократії, проведено їхню кореляцію на предмет спільних і відмінних висновків та виведено суміжну/спарену конструкцію розуміння політичних режимів у Східній Європі.

Ключові слова: політичний режим, демократія, автократія, авторитаризм, гібридний режим, Східна Європа.

Modern political systems in the institutional perspective (in particular within the context of inter-institutional relations in the triangular “head of the state – government – parliament”) function not only in with regard to the form and systems of public administration,

but also in respect of various types of political regime. It institutionalizes that any political regime influences the form and the public administration system, as well as the form and the system of public administration have impact on the political regime. The point is that a political regime is an institutionalized set of main formal and informal regulations and practices, which structure mutual relationship in the “core” of political authority (horizontal relations) and its interrelation with a society (vertical relations). To outline horizontal relations one usually applies interrelation between branches of government, while to determine vertical relations one analyzes ways of accession to power, mechanisms of implementation and restriction. Varied combinations of relations within the political system become a reason for formation of different types of political regimes, and therefore various positioning of basic institutions, which function within the political system. From this point of view Eastern European region – Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova Russia and Ukraine – is not the exception, and categorization of three “wide” types of political regimes – democratic, hybrid and authoritarian – is applied to them, however distinguishing the countries in different ways. Thus, the task of the research is a multifold taxonomy of political regimes in Eastern European countries, in particular on the basis of applying various comparative methods and distinctions, as well as making an average-general conclusion, concerning the types of political systems in the region.

The abovementioned topic is not a new one, as it has been partially described in a number of works by such scholars as S. Levitsky and L. Way¹, H. Chehabi and J. Linz², L. Diamond³, K. Collins⁴, H. Hale⁵, J. Linde and J. Ekman⁶, V. Bunce and S. Wolchik⁷, K. Dawisha and B. Parrott⁸, J. Ishiyama⁹,

¹ S. Levitsky, L. Way, *Competitive authoritarianism: hybrid regime change in Peru and Ukraine in comparative perspective*, Wyd. University of Strathclyde 2001.; S. Levitsky, L. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2010.; S. Levitsky, L. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: International Linkage, Organizational Power, and the Fate of Hybrid Regimes*, Paper prepared for the Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, August 30 - September 2, 2006.; S. Levitsky, L. Way, *The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism*, “Journal of Democracy”, 2002, vol 13, nr 2, s. 51-65.; L. Way, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution: Kuchma's Failed Authoritarianism*, “Journal of Democracy”, 2005, vol 16, nr 2, s. 131-145.

² H. Chehabi, J. Linz, *Sultanistic Regimes*, Wyd. Johns Hopkins University Press 1998.

³ L. Diamond, *Thinking About Hybrid Regimes*, “Journal of Democracy”, 2002, vol 13, nr 2, s. 21-35.

⁴ K. Collins, *Clan politics and regime transition in Central Asia*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2006.; K. Collins, *Clans, Pacts and Politics in Central Asia*, “Journal of Democracy”, 2002, Vol 13, nr 2, s. 137-152.

⁵ H. Hale, *Regime Cycles: Democracy, Autocracy, and Revolution in Post-Soviet Eurasia*, “World Politics”, 2005, vol 58, nr 1, s. 133-165.; H. Hale, *Why Not Parties? Electoral Markets, Party Substitutes, and Stalled Democratization in Russia*, “Comparative Politics”, 2005, vol 37, nr 2, s. 147-166.; H. Hale, *Why Not Parties in Russia? Democracy, Federalism and the State*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2006.

⁶ J. Linde, J. Ekman, *Patterns of Stability and Performance in Post-Communist Hybrid Regimes*, [w:] E. Bakke, P. Ingo (eds.), *20 Years Since the Fall of the Berlin Wall: Transitions, State-Breakup and Democratic Politics in Central Europe and Germany*, Wyd. Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag 2011, s. 97-120.

⁷ V. Bunce, S. Wolchik, *Defeating Authoritarian Leaders in Post-communist Countries*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2011.

⁸ K. Dawisha, B. Parrott, *Democratic changes and authoritarian reactions in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1997.

⁹ J. Ishiyama, *Political Party Development and Party ‘Gravity’ in Semi-Authoritarian States. The Cases of Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan*, “Taiwan Journal of Democracy”, 2008, vol 4, nr 1, s. 33-53.; J. Ishiyama, *Neopatrimonialism and the Prospects for Democratization in the Central Asian Republics*, [w:] S. Cummings (ed.), *Power and Change in Central Asia*, Wyd. Routledge 2002, s. 42-58.

E. Korosteleva¹⁰, S. Eke and T. Kuzio¹¹, M. Ottaway¹², M. McFaul¹³, D. Beacháin¹⁴, D. Greenberg¹⁵, J. Hellman¹⁶, T. L. Karl and P. Schmitter¹⁷, J. Wedel¹⁸, S. White, G. Gill and D. Slider¹⁹ and others. However, the problem of political regimes, especially in some Eastern European countries is quite transient, and therefore requires permanent refreshment, what in fact lies in the focus of the current research.

It is necessary to refresh and verify the scientific position, according to which in Eastern Europe there are no democratic political regimes, but exist only hybrid and authoritarian ones. To check/prove the fact that today (namely as of 2015/2016) in Eastern Europe there are just hybrid and authoritarian regimes (i.e. there are no liberal representative democracies in the region) it was decided to employ approaches prevailing in comparative political science, concerning practical evaluation of modern (or non-existent) political regimes, which in accordance with a generally accepted classification must be divided into democratic and autocratic, while the latter comprises authoritarian and totalitarian regimes.

However, before comparing political regimes in Eastern European countries, it should be mentioned that there are two peculiar classificatory curves as to the ways how democratic or in general other regime changes (as a matter of form after the collapse of the USSR the countries of the region declared their wish to make their political regimes democratic) take place: 1) linear (on the grounds of evaluation of political regimes' attributes changing and samples of countries in the course of time); 2) non-linear (as a result of the democracy level assessment, or as in case of autocratic changes in specific countries or samples of countries at a given time). Since in our research we deal with the political systems of the post-Soviet countries in Eastern Europe, it should be pointed out that the concepts of linear-mode or vector-mode development of democracy were premature. Moreover, even much doubt can be thrown upon the notion of transference or transition, as some of the post-Soviet countries do not "transfer" at all and just create new patterns of consolidated, but at the same time non-democratic political regimes

¹⁰ E. Korosteleva, *Democratic authoritarianism: public preferences in Belarus and its neighbors*, "Northwestern Journal of International Affairs", 2003, vol 5, s. 31-39.; E. Korosteleva, *Is Belarus a demagogical democracy?*, "Cambridge Review of International Affairs", 2003, vol 16, nr 3, s. 527-535.; E. Korosteleva, *The quality of democracy in Belarus and Ukraine*, "Journal of communist Studies and Transition Politics", 2004, vol 20, nr 1, s. 122-143.

¹¹ S. Eke, T. Kuzio, *Sultanism in Eastern Europe: The Socio-Political Roots of Authoritarian Populism in Belarus*, "Europe-Asia Studies", 2000, vol 52, nr 3, s. 523-547.

¹² M. Ottaway, *Democracy challenged: the rise of semi-authoritarianism*, Wyd. Carnegie Endowment 2003.

¹³ M. McFaul, *The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Non-cooperative Transitions in the Post-communist World*, "World Politics", 2002, vol 54, nr 2, s. 212-244.

¹⁴ D. Beacháin, *The color revolutions in the former Soviet republics: successes and failures*, Wyd. Taylor & Francis 2010.

¹⁵ D. Greenberg, *Constitutionalism and Democracy: Transitions in the Contemporary World*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 1993.

¹⁶ J. Hellman, *Winners Take All: The Politics of Partial Reform in Postcommunist Transitions*, "World Politics", 1998, vol 50, nr 2, s. 203-234.; J. Hellman, *Constitutions and Economic Reform in the Post-Communist Transitions*, "East European Constitutional Review", 1996, vol 1, nr 5, s. 46-53.

¹⁷ T. L. Karl, P. Schmitter, *From Iron Curtain to Paper Curtain: Grounding Transitologists for Students of Post-communism?*, "Slavic Review", 1995, vol 54, nr 4, s. 965-978.; T. L. Karl, P. Schmitter, *The Conceptual Travels of Transitologists and Consolidologists: How Far to the East Should They Attempt to Go?*, "Slavic Review", 1994, vol 53, nr 1, s. 173-185.

¹⁸ J. Wedel, *Clans, Cliques and Captured States: Rethinking "Transition" in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*, "Journal of International Development", 2003, vol 15, s. 427-440.

¹⁹ S. White, G. Gill, D. Slider, *The politics of transition: shaping a post-Soviet future*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 1993.

and practices. With bitter irony we conceive those definitions of democratic transit, which are often declared by political elites from the post-socialistic countries in Eastern Europe, like a “wide grey zone”, “defective democracy”, “hybrid democracy”. The point is that 20-25 years ago in most post-Soviet countries (not only in Eastern European countries) there was an outburst of an unprecedented political activity, the society broke free of communistic ideology, for the first time people started getting interested in political news and participating in political life. However, in 5-7 years people “got tired” or how some scientists suppose just “became undeceived” from the illusions. Protest energy if not exhausted is supported not by beliefs in democratic transformations, but by non-acceptance of “unfair government”. Consequently, it is absolutely obvious that in many cases post-communist transformations have not grown into transit towards democracy. In fact, we deal with authoritarian regimes, aimed at strengthening their autocracy, thus at a maximal neutralization of any “offences against power” on the part of the society (not even mentioning the official definition of opposition). The abovementioned fully refers to all Eastern European countries under analysis – just to different extents or time paradigms. As a result it is necessary to study peculiarities of various political regimes’ development stage-by-stage and from various methodological angles, as well as its consequences in the comparative context. With this end in view we offer analysis and empirical interpretation of various estimating methods of democratic or authoritarian development (political regimes) in Eastern European countries (and there is a great deal of them in modern comparative political science) – linear and non-linear.

The former directly concerns the moment, dealing with the development of political rights and civil liberties of a person and citizen. The technique, offered by “Freedom House” has been implemented since 1972 under the name “Freedom in the World” (speaking of Eastern European countries it covers the year of 1991, when the countries became independent). “Freedom in the World” is an annual comparative assessment of political rights and civil liberties. According to the methodology, each country is assigned a numerical rating based on a 1 to 7 scale for political rights and political liberties. “1” point assigns a high level of freedom and “7” points – the lowest possible degree for civil liberties. In general, these ratings describes whether the country is classified as “free”, “partly free”, “not free”. “Free country” as to the indices of rights and liberties receives an overall index within 1-2.5 points, “partly free country” gets 3-5 points, “not free country” – 5.5-7 points. In Eastern Europe the situation is the following:

Table 1. Level of Freedom in Eastern European Countries According to the Project “Freedom in the World” by “Freedom House” (1991–2015)²⁰

Country	1991		1992		1993		1994		1995	
	PR	CL	PR	CL	PR	CL	PR	CL	PR	CL
Azerbaijan	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	6
Belarus	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	5	5
Armenia	5	5	4	3	3	4	3	4	4	4
Georgia	6	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5
Moldova	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4
Russia	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4
Ukraine	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	4
Country	1996		1997		1998		1999		2000	
Azerbaijan	6	5	6	4	6	4	6	4	6	5
Belarus	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Armenia	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Georgia	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	4
Moldova	3	4	3	4	2	4	2	4	2	4
Russia	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	5	5	5
Ukraine	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	4
Country	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
Azerbaijan	6	5	6	5	6	5	6	5	6	5
Belarus	6	6	6	6	6	6	7	6	7	6
Armenia	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4
Georgia	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	3
Moldova	2	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4
Russia	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	5	6	5
Ukraine	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2
Country	2006		2007		2008		2009		2010	
Azerbaijan	6	5	6	5	6	5	6	5	6	5
Belarus	7	6	7	6	7	6	7	6	7	6
Armenia	5	4	5	4	6	4	6	4	6	4
Georgia	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3
Moldova	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	3
Russia	6	5	6	5	6	5	6	5	6	5
Ukraine	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	3
Country	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
Azerbaijan	6	5	6	5	6	6	6	6	7	6
Belarus	7	6	7	6	7	6	7	6	7	6
Armenia	6	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	5	4
Georgia	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Moldova	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Russia	6	5	6	5	6	5	6	6	6	6
Ukraine	4	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3

Źródło: *Freedom in the World 2016: Anxious Dictators, Wavering Democracies: Global Freedom under Pressure*, źródło: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2016> [odczyt: 1 listopada 2016].

²⁰ Table symbols: PR – political rights; CL – civil liberties.

According to the given data Azerbaijan is assigned as a “partly free country” during 1991–1992, and from 1997 to 2002. Over the rest of the period it is determined as “not free”. Belarus, on the basis of “Freedom House” ratings is named “partly free” over 1991 – 1995, and since then it is designated as “not free” (what is actual nowadays). Over the period of 1991 – 2015 Armenia has been assigned as “partly free” and its status has not been categorically changed. In 1991 Georgia was “not free”, however since 1992 it belongs to the category of “partly free” countries. Moldova, similarly to Armenia in 1991 – 2015 has been determined as “partly free”. Russia over 1991 – 2003 is assigned as “partly free”, however since 2004 it has become “not free”. From the perspective of liberties development the biggest achievements have been demonstrated by Ukraine, as over the period of 1991 – 2015 its status has not been lower than “partly free”, and in 2005 – 2009 it was even defined as a “free” country. However, due to a chain of events happening since 2010 Ukraine has been again assigned and still is “partly free” (though since 2014 the index has been improving). Analyzing liberties on the basis of the methods offered by “Freedom House” we may conclude that among Eastern European countries, according to 2015 data, only Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine (with liberty index 3.0) can be called electoral democracies, however being partly free countries. Armenia got index 4.5 and is partly free, though it is not an electoral democracy. Belarus, Azerbaijan and Russia are characterized by the lowest overall indices – 6.5, 6.5 and 6.0 correspondingly.

Another method, offered by “Freedom House” in 1997, we believe to be even more advanced. It is called “Nations in Transit” and refers to 29 countries. This method evaluates progress and setbacks of democratic processes from Central Eastern European countries to the Eurasian part of the former USSR. The rating covers 7 indices: National Democratic Governance (NDG²¹), Electoral Process (EP²²), Civil Society (CS²³), Independent Media (IM²⁴), Local Democratic Governance (self-government) (LDG²⁵), Judicial Framework and Independence (JFI²⁶), Corruption (C²⁷). Each country is assigned certain numerical rating from “1” to “7” points in respect of each indicator. “1” point shows a high level of democracy, while “7” points is the lowest degree of democracy. The ratings follow a quarter-point scale (“0.25” points). The

²¹ National Democratic Governance (NDG). Considers the democratic character and stability of the governmental system; the independence, effectiveness, and accountability of legislative and executive branches.

²² Electoral Process (EP). Examines national executive and legislative elections, electoral processes, the development of multiparty systems, and popular participation in the political process.

²³ Civil Society (CS). Assesses the growth of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), their organizational capacity and financial sustainability, and the legal and political environment in which they function; the development of free trade unions; and interest group participation in the policy process.

²⁴ Independent Media (IM). Addresses the current state of press freedom, including libel laws, harassment of journalists, and editorial independence; the emergence of a financially viable private press; and internet access for private citizens.

²⁵ Local Democratic Governance (LDG). Considers the decentralization of power; the responsibilities, election, and capacity of local governmental bodies; and the transparency and accountability of local authorities.

²⁶ Judicial Framework and Independence (JFI). Highlights constitutional reform, human rights protections, criminal code reform, judicial independence, the status of ethnic minority rights, guarantees of equality before the law, treatment of suspects and prisoners, and compliance with judicial decisions.

²⁷ Corruption (C). Looks at public perceptions of corruption, the business interests of top policymakers, laws on financial disclosure and conflict of interest, and the efficacy of anticorruption initiatives.

rating itself is based on expert reviews. As a result we receive an overall rating of democratic processes within such groups of political regimes: 1) consolidated democracies (1–3 points); 2) semi-consolidated democracies (3–4 points); 3) transitional systems/hybrid regimes (4–5 points); 4) semi-consolidated authoritarian regimes (5–6 points); 5) consolidated authoritarian regimes (6–7 points). According to 2015 data (calculated in 2016) the situation in Eastern European countries is the following:

Table 2. Level of Democracy in Eastern European Countries. According to the Project “Nations in Transit” by “Freedom House” (as of 2015)

Country	EP	CS	IM	NDG	LDG	JFI	C	Total
Azerbaijan	7,00	7,00	7,00	6,75	6,50	7,00	6,75	6,86
Belarus	6,75	6,25	6,75	6,75	6,75	7,00	6,25	6,64
Armenia	5,75	3,75	5,75	5,75	5,75	5,50	5,25	5,36
Georgia	4,50	3,75	4,00	5,50	5,25	4,75	4,50	4,61
Moldova	4,00	3,25	5,00	5,75	5,50	4,75	6,00	4,89
Russia	6,75	6,25	6,50	6,75	6,25	6,25	6,75	6,50
Ukraine	3,50	2,25	4,00	5,75	5,25	6,00	6,00	4,68

Źródło: *Nations in Transit 2016*, źródło: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2016> [odczyt: 1 listopada 2016].

It can be seen that in Eastern Europe there are no democratic countries. Mainly, we have to speak of authoritarian political regimes: 1) consolidated in – Azerbaijan, Belarus and Russia; 2) semi-consolidated in Armenia. Besides, three countries of the region as of 2015 are determined as transitional regimes, namely Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. In general, in linear representation the process of democratization in Eastern European countries over the period of 2001 – 2015 is as follows:

Table 3. Level of Democracy in Eastern European Countries. According to the Project “Nations in Transit” by “Freedom House” (2001 – 2015)

Country	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Azerbaijan	5,54	5,46	5,63	5,86	5,93	6,00	6,00	6,25
Belarus	6,38	6,46	6,54	6,64	6,71	6,68	6,71	6,57
Armenia	4,83	4,92	5,00	5,18	5,14	5,21	5,21	5,39
Georgia	4,58	4,83	4,83	4,96	4,86	4,68	4,79	4,93
Moldova	4,50	4,71	4,88	5,07	4,96	4,96	5,00	5,07
Russia	5,00	4,96	5,25	5,61	5,75	5,86	5,96	6,11
Ukraine	4,92	4,71	4,88	4,50	4,21	4,25	4,25	4,39
Country	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Change
Azerbaijan	6,39	6,46	6,57	6,64	6,68	6,75	6,86	↓
Belarus	6,50	6,57	6,68	6,71	6,71	6,71	6,64	=
Armenia	5,39	5,43	5,39	5,36	5,36	5,36	5,36	↓
Georgia	4,93	4,86	4,82	4,75	4,68	4,64	4,61	=

Country	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Moldova	5,14	4,96	4,89	4,82	4,86	4,86	4,89	=
Russia	6,14	6,18	6,18	6,21	6,29	6,46	6,50	↓
Ukraine	4,39	4,61	4,82	4,86	4,93	4,75	4,68	↑

Źródło: *Nations in Transit 2016*, źródło: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2016> [odczyt: 1 listopada 2016].

Comparing data of 2001 and 2015 we draw the following conclusions: 1) in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia is observed a gradual decrease in indices of democratic development; 2) the most significant decline is peculiar of Azerbaijan and Russia; 3) in Belarus we observe stable prevalence of authoritarian tendencies with very low indices; 4) in Georgia and Moldova the indices have almost remained the same and the countries are determined as hybrid regimes; 5) Ukraine over the period of 2001 – 2015 is evaluated as a stable transitional system/hybrid regime (with the best indices in 2005 – 2009; nowadays Georgia and Moldova have come near Ukrainian indices).

One of non-linear methods of democracy/autocracy evaluation is a model, offered by J. A. Cheibub, J. Gandhi, R. Vreeland. The method, elaborated by these scholars, suggests evaluating each country under analysis as a democracy or non-democracy. Democracy is a case, when executive and legislative branches are directly or indirectly elected on the basis of a general election law, there is a multiparty system, and in power (particularly in parliament) there are parties which do not belong to the political regime. These are also the cases which are indistinctive of dominant parties and elites consolidation: there are no instances of non-constitutional exclusion from representation in legislature, as well as instances of president staying in power as a result of postponement of scheduled elections. From this perspective among Eastern European countries we may single out the following democracies: 1) Armenia (since 1991); 2) Georgia (since 2004); 3) Moldova (since 1991); 4) Ukraine (since 1991 p.). Other countries (Azerbaijan, Belarus and Russia) over a period of 1991 – 2015 (though starting at different years) cannot be evaluated as democratic.

Quite extended and formalized index of democratization is T. Vanhanen's model/theoretical scheme, which defines democratization on the basis of two perspectives: competition and participation. In such a case competition is assessed as a percent of votes, which are not given to the biggest party, as a result of the elections. Participation is even more formalized, as it is a direct voter turnout for the electoral campaign. Then these figures are summed up and the result is divided by "100" to obtain the index, which hypothetically can change from "0" (complete absence of democracy) up to "100" (full democracy). The indices of Eastern European countries over 1991 – 2014 are provided in Table 4.

As we can observe, over the period of 1991 – 2014 the level of democracy in the region first of all has lowered in Russia and Georgia, and increased in Belarus, Armenia and Moldova, and has been permanently or temporary stable in Ukraine and Azerbaijan. At the same time,

any growth or decline in the level of democracy does not fully speak for the type of the political regime, as the lowest level of democracy (the highest level of autocracy) as of 2014 has been peculiar of Azerbaijan and Belarus, a bit higher it was in Georgia, Russia and Armenia, while Ukraine and Moldova were characterized by the highest level.

Table 4. Index of Democracy in Eastern Europe. According to T. Vanhanen's Model (1991–2014)

Year	Azerbaijan	Belarus	Armenia	Georgia	Moldova	Russia	Ukraine
1991	3,0	5,9	16,6	17,2	7,6	18,2	22,3
1992	10,3	5,9	14,6	19,8	7,6	15,3	22,3
1993	3,2	5,9	14,6	19,8	7,6	42,0	22,3
1994	2,9	7,2	14,6	19,8	11,0	27,0	30,1
1995	2,6	8,0	14,3	19,8	9,8	29,9	30,1
1996	2,3	8,0	17,4	19,8	18,5	29,9	30,1
1997	2,3	7,2	17,4	19,8	18,5	29,9	30,1
1998	6,9	7,2	18,0	19,8	22,0	29,9	29,9
1999	6,9	7,2	16,2	13,8	22,0	28,8	29,8
2000	11,7	7,2	16,2	13,7	22,0	29,4	32,6
2001	11,7	14,8	16,2	13,7	10,3	29,4	29,8
2002	11,7	14,8	16,2	13,7	10,3	29,4	30,2
2003	17,3	14,8	23,4	13,7	10,3	22,2	30,2
2004	17,3	16,0	20,9	6,6	10,3	17,3	33,2
2005	17,3	14,8	23,4	6,6	20,0	17,3	33,2
2006	17,3	11,1	20,9	6,6	20,0	17,3	32,6
2007	9,3	11,1	18,5	6,6	20,0	15,4	30,7
2008	8,9	11,1	24,3	15,4	20,0	16,6	30,7
2009	10,2	11,1	24,3	13,7	19,5	16,6	30,7
2010	9,2	13,7	24,3	13,7	24,2	16,6	29,8
2011	9,2	13,7	24,3	13,7	24,2	23,6	29,8
2012	9,2	13,7	37,0	21,3	24,2	18,9	32,4
2013	6,0	13,7	20,6	13,8	24,2	18,9	32,4
2014	6,0	13,7	20,6	13,8	32,2	18,9	23,6

Źródło: T. Vanhanen, *Measures of Democracy 1810–2014 [dataset]: Version 7.0 (2016–05–30)*, Finnish Social Science Data Archive, 2015, źródło: <http://www.fsd.uta.fi/en/data/catalogue/FSD1289/mef1289e.html> [odczyt: 1 listopada 2016].

Another index of democracy development, elaborated by the company Economist Intelligence Unit, is quite wide, as it consists of 60 markers, combined in basic indicators: 1) CL – civil liberties (freedom of speech, expression and the press; freedom of religion; freedom of assembly and association; and the right to a fair judicial process); 2) DPC – democratic political culture (social consensus concerning functioning and sustainability of democratic principles); 3) EPP – electoral process and pluralism (category, which describes situation concerning free and fair competitive elections and reflects satisfaction with the level of political freedom); 4) FG – functioning of government (shows the extent to which the institutions are controlled by the elected

representatives at the parliamentary level; competence of the state service and inclination to corruption); 5) PP – political participation (evaluates the number of women in parliament, freedom of participation in political parties etc.). Each category is evaluated from “0” to “10” in the respect of improving the categorical index of democracy development. As a result, the project singles out several types of political regimes: 1) full democracies (in average 8–10); 2) flawed democracies (6–8); 3) hybrid regimes (4–6); 4) authoritarian regimes (1–4). On this ground an overall index of democracy in Eastern European countries has been elaborated:

Table 5. Level of Democracy Development in Eastern Europe. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit (2010–2015)

Country	2010	2015						
		EPP	FG	PP	DPC	CL	Average	Regime
Azerbaijan	3,15	0,50	2,14	3,33	3,75	3,82	2,71	Authoritarian
Belarus	3,34	1,75	3,57	3,89	6,25	2,65	3,62	Authoritarian
Armenia	4,09	4,33	2,86	4,44	2,50	5,88	4,00	Hybrid
Georgia	4,59	8,67	4,29	5,56	5,00	5,88	5,88	Hybrid
Moldova	6,33	7,92	4,29	6,67	4,38	8,53	6,35	Flawed democracy
Russia	4,26	2,67	2,86	5,00	2,50	3,53	3,31	Hybrid
Ukraine	6,30	5,83	3,93	6,67	5,00	7,06	5,70	Hybrid

Źródło: *Democracy Index*, Wikipedia.org, źródło: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy_Index [odczyt: 1 listopada 2016].; *Democracy Index 2015: Democracy in an age of anxiety*, The Economist Intelligence Unit, źródło: http://www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=DemocracyIndex2015 [odczyt: 1 listopada 2016].

As we can see, the most significant indices of democracy development as of 2015 were shown by Moldova. The lowest degrees were characteristic of Belarus, Azerbaijan and Russia. The first one was assigned as a flawed democracy, two other as authoritarian regimes. Finally, Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine were determined as hybrid regimes. Quite interesting is the fact that in comparison with 2010 data, the overall level of democracy in Eastern European countries has lowered in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Russia and Ukraine, and on contrary it has grown in Belarus, Georgia and Moldova.

Another index of democracy/types of political regimes evaluation is a combined level of polity development, offered in the project “Polity IV” (currently the project “Polity V” is being elaborated). This index is based on the markers of institutionalized democracy and institutionalized autocracy. While evaluating democracy the following indicators are taken into account: 1) the presence of institutions and procedures through which citizens can express preferences about alternative policies and alternative political leaders; 2) the existence of institutionalized constraints on the power of the executive; 3) the guarantee of civil liberties to all citizens in everyday life as well as in acts of political participation. During the process of its evaluation autocracy is defined as the absence of regular dimensions of political competitiveness and failure to provide political liberties, while democracy is measured by positive versions of the same

indices. Each of two dimensions is measured according to the scale from “0” to “10” points. The combined index of polity development is calculated as a difference between the democratic and autocratic levels. Thus, the regimes may vary from “+10” up to “-10” points. In the context of Eastern European countries over the period of 1991 – 2015 the situation is the following:

Table 6. Combined Level of Polity Development in Eastern Europe. According to the Project “Polity IV” (1991-2015)

Year	Azerbaijan	Belarus	Armenia	Georgia	Moldova	Russia	Ukraine
1991	-3	+7	+7	+4	+5	-	+6
1992	+1	+7	+7	+4	+5	+5	+6
1993	-3	+7	+7	+4	+7	+3	+5
1994	-3	+7	+7	+4	+7	+3	+7
1995	-6	0	+3	+5	+7	+3	+7
1996	-6	-7	-6	+5	+7	+3	+7
1997	-6	-7	-6	+5	+7	+3	+7
1998	-7	-7	+5	+5	+7	+3	+7
1999	-7	-7	+5	+5	+7	+3	+7
2000	-7	-7	+5	+5	+7	+6	+6
2001	-7	-7	+5	+5	+8	+6	+6
2002	-7	-7	+5	+5	+8	+6	+6
2003	-7	-7	+5	+5	+8	+6	+6
2004	-7	-7	+5	+7	+8	+6	+6
2005	-7	-7	+5	+7	+9	+6	+6
2006	-7	-7	+5	+7	+9	+6	+7
2007	-7	-7	+5	+6	+9	+4	+7
2008	-7	-7	+5	+6	+9	+4	+7
2009	-7	-7	+5	+6	+9	+4	+7
2010	-7	-7	+5	+6	+9	+4	+6
2011	-7	-7	+5	+6	+9	+4	+6
2012	-7	-7	+5	+6	+9	+4	+6
2013	-7	-7	+5	+7	+9	+4	+6
2014	-7	-7	+5	+7	+9	+4	+4
2015	-7	-7	+5	+7	+9	+4	+4

Źródło: *The Polity Project*, Systemicpeace.org, źródło: <http://www.systemicpeace.org/polityproject.html> [odczyt: 1 listopada 2016].

As the results of the evaluation show, in Eastern Europe Moldova and Georgia belong to more democratic countries, transient/anocratic variant (more democratic than authoritarian) is characteristic of Ukraine, Armenia and Russia; authoritarian variant is represented by Azerbaijan and Belarus. In general, the situation (most but not all) is correlated with the results represented by other methods.

However, there is a question, introduced at the beginning of the research, how the final decisions concerning political regimes in Eastern Europe should be taken (at least at the time of conducting the research). To answer the question we compare all the results obtained in

the course of evaluation due to various comparative methods of assessing democracy and autocracy, correlate them to draw common and varying conclusions and elaborate contiguous/paired construction of interpretation of political regimes in the region. We suppose that the more coincidence are, the more obvious it is that such cases must be treated as political regimes, which compose the most quantitative instances, referring to specific countries.

Table 7. Correlation of Political Regimes in Eastern European Countries. According to Various Comparative Methods (as of 2015)

Project	Azerbaijan	Belarus	Armenia	Georgia	Moldova	Russia	Ukraine
«Freedom in the World»	Not free country	Not free country	Partly free country	Partly free country	Partly free country	Not free country	Partly free country
«Nations in Transit»	Consolidated authoritarianism	Consolidated authoritarianism	Semi-consolidated authoritarianism	Hybrid regime	Hybrid regime	Consolidated authoritarianism	Hybrid regime
CGV Model ²⁸	Autocratic regime	Autocratic regime	Democratic regime	Democratic regime	Democratic regime	Autocratic regime	Democratic regime
V Model ²⁹	Less democratic	Less democratic	More democratic	Less democratic	More democratic	Less democratic	More democratic
EIU Model ³⁰	Authoritarian regime	Authoritarian regime	Hybrid regime	Hybrid regime	Flawed democracy	Hybrid regime	Hybrid regime
Polity IV	Authoritarian regime	Authoritarian regime	Anocratic regime	Democratic regime	Democratic regime	Anocratic regime	Anocratic regime
More common	Authoritarian regime	Authoritarian regime	Hybrid regime	Hybrid regime	Hybrid/ democratic regime	Authoritarian regime	Hybrid regime

Appliance of the abovementioned comparative methods and their comparison (in the form of correlation) demonstrate the following conclusions: 1) the most democratic country in the region is Moldova (electoral and flawed democracy); 2) less democratic countries in the region are Georgia and Ukraine (electoral democracies, but hybrid regimes); 3) a bit less democratic country of the region is Armenia (hybrid regime, but not electoral democracy); 3) the least democratic countries of the region are Azerbaijan, Belarus and Russia (authoritarian regimes, electoral autocracy). But as electoral and flawed democracies are not equal to liberal (full) democracy, it has been decided to single out two groups of Eastern European countries: authoritarian regimes – Azerbaijan, Belarus and Russia; and transitional (in linear representation of democracy) hybrid regimes – Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. This mainly proves the conclusions, drawn by the projects “Freedom in the World” and “Polity IV”.

However, there are other (which have both common features and differences) approaches to classification of modern political regimes. One was offered by S. Levitsky and L. Way and is called the concept of “competitive authoritarianism”³¹. The scientists interpret these political

²⁸ CGV model – J. A. Cheibub, J. Gandhi, R. Vreeland's model.

²⁹ V model – T. Vanhanen's model.

³⁰ EIU model – The Economist Intelligence Unit model.

³¹ S. Levitsky, L. Way, *Competitive authoritarianism: hybrid regime change in Peru and Ukraine in comparative perspective*, Wyd. University of Strathclyde 2001.; S. Levitsky, L. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2010.; S. Levitsky, L. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: International Linkage, Organizational Power, and the Fate of Hybrid Regimes*, Paper prepared for the Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, August 30 - September 2, 2006.; S. Levitsky, L. Way, *The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism*, “Journal of Democracy”, 2002, vol 13, nr 2, s. 51-65.; L. Way, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution: Kuchma's Failed Authoritarianism*, “Journal of Democracy”, 2005, vol 16, nr 2, s. 131-145.

regimes within the frame of hybrid political regimes. The point is that competitive authoritarianism (or competitive authoritarian regime) is a civil (civic) political regime in which formal democratic institutions are widely viewed as the primary means of gaining power, but in which there is abuse of power on the part of political parties and leaders in power, concerning their administrative and political preferences over the opponents. Such regimes are competitive in that oppositional parties/leaders use democratic institutions for gaining power. But they are not democratic, as the political playing field is skewed to the advantage of the power actors. Competitiveness in this way is real, but unfair. Consequently, competitive authoritarianism is a hybrid regime, which characterizes both autocracy and democracy. Within the practical field one must speak of regularity of elections, oppositional parties and leaders' participation in them. On the other hand, in favor of authoritarianism may testify: 1) absence of free elections; 2) absence of a broad protection of civil liberties; 3) uneven playing field for political competitiveness. In case of the analyzed Eastern European countries (in fact it concerns various time periods) the authors assume that competitive authoritarianism is characteristic of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. However, there is a fine line between them (both institutional and contextual).

Combination of various attributive elements of evaluation of competitive types of authoritarian regimes leads to distinguishing their procedural kinds: thus, competitive authoritarian regimes may function within three main directions: 1) democratization (free and fair elections, broad protection of civil rights and liberties, equality of competitive conditions for political struggle); 2) non-stable authorization (process of several political transformations, which in general do not result in democracy – change of leaders of the authoritarian type took place just once); 3) stable authoritarianization (absence of transformational changes, permanent staying of successive authoritarian leaders in power). Taking this into consideration, for the last ten years movement towards democratization has been noticed only in case of Ukraine (however, one can say that this country is characteristic of non-stable dynamics of regime development), Georgia and Moldova. At the same time, non-stable authorization is peculiar of Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Armenia (though to a lesser degree, than movement towards democratization). Finally, stable authoritarianization is observed in Belarus, Azerbaijan and Russia.

To conclude, let us state that if authoritarianism is to be interpreted as a stable dynamics of authoritarian political regime development, then it is obvious that in Eastern Europe authoritarian regimes (less competitive) are represented by Azerbaijan, Belarus and Russia. If correlation between authoritarianism and democracy is treated as “pure authoritarianism”, then all other countries of the region are characterized by hybrid/changeable dynamics of political regime development (as they are more competitive, than “pure authoritarian regimes”). And this proves our previous conclusion, predetermined by the correlation of types of political regimes in Eastern European countries.

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