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IDEOLOGY, EVOLUTION AND ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE OF EXTREME RIGHT PARTIES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: FOCUSING ON JOBBIK (HUNGARY) AND L'SNS (SLOVAKIA)

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Abstract

During the last decade, far-right (extreme and radical) parties have experienced significant success in Central and Eastern Europe. Transition problems and genuine prejudices gave far right parties the opportunity to rise. But which parties? Explaining the difference between radicalism and extremism, it is possible to define the concept of the extreme right party family in CEE. Drawing upon historical legacies and contemporary factors this thesis tries to interpret the recent rise of extreme right parties. Moreover this thesis identifies the key ideological features of this party family and focuses on the cases of Jobbik in Hungary and L'SLS in Slovakia. Jobbik is the most successful extreme right party having reached 20% of the votes in 2014, while L'SNS shocked Slovakia in 2016 entering the parliament for the first time. Providing information about their history, ideology, evolution, leadership, their electoral performance and intra-party relations, this thesis constructs the party profile. Particular idiosyncrasies in Hungary and Slovakia are taking into account in order to explain support for extreme right parties and demand for right-wing extremism.

Ideology, Evolution and Electoral Performance of Extreme Right Parties in Central and Eastern Europe: Focusing on Jobbik (Hungary) and L'SNS (Slovakia)

1. Introduction

During the last decade CEE countries have experienced a move of their mainstream political agenda towards the right-wing. In Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, instead of countering the arguments of extreme right parties, mainstream parties have shifted to the right as well, in an attempt to recapture voters (Yilmaz, 2012). Electoral success of extreme right parties across the region, have made citizens and scholars realize that the extreme right is not be regarded exclusively as a fringe phenomenon but as a force that can penetrate mainstream democratic politics (Anastasakis, 2001, p.15).

Since the 2000s the radical right party family is the fastest growing party family in Europe (Mudde, 2007), and thus drawing attention of scholars, after a decade of transition-oriented literature, to the study of right-wing extremism. Based on the flourishing literature on far-, radical-, or extreme-right, this thesis will try to provide an adequate definition regarding the party family and the core ideological features focusing on two of these parties; *Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom* (Movement for a Better Hungary, Jobbik) in Hungary; and *Kotleba – Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko* (Kotleba – People's Party Our Slovakia, L'SNS) in Slovakia. Details about their organization, statements from party officials and specific acts are important in order to understand how these parties operate.

Jobbik is the most successful extreme right party in CEE having reached 20.7% in the parliamentary elections of April 2014, while L'SNS shocked Slovakia when it took 8% of the votes in 2016, entering the parliament for the first time. Investigation of both parties is explorative in nature as they are relatively new in their respective political arenas, thus scientific literature is very limited and especially for L'SNS almost non-existent. Therefore, comparative analysis of the two parties is based not only on material and information from journal articles and books but also from interviews, websites and newspaper articles.

Historical Legacies that have shaped popular support for the extreme right and generated antidemocratic, xenophobic and nationalistic attitudes and feelings among people are considered essential in this thesis. Other historical roots for the emergence of such political parties and the re-emergence of right-wing extremists are also pinpointed.

Furthermore this thesis provides information about the basic political system in Hungary and Slovakia after communism, its critical junctures and questions the role of movements towards the development of extreme right parties in their respective countries.

2. Defining the Party Family: Extreme Right or Radical Right?

Trying to approach a definition that describes better the party family of Jobbik and L'SNS, relative literature is convoluted but also rich and fruitful.

Despite the growing prominence of studies regarding far right, there is still a lack of a commonly accepted definition, and quite a lot of conceptual confusion regarding the terms extreme-right and radical-right (Mieriņa & Koroļeva, 2015, p.185). Democracy and radicalism in general, and extremism in particular, are based upon fundamentally opposed values, however much of the literature makes no distinction between the two terms, something obviously incorrect (Mudde, 2010, p.1168).

The most commonly accepted definition regarding radicalism and extremism comes from the German tradition, where the two terms are used to describe a certain view *vis-à-vis* democracy; extremism is opposed to the constitution (*verfassungwidrig*), whereas radicalism is hostile towards the constitution (*verfassungsfeindlich*) and so extremist parties are extensively watched by authorities and can even be banned, while radical parties are free from this control (Mudde, 2000b, p.12). In other words, radicalism accepts democracy, whereas extremism does not, defining here democracy in a minimal or procedural way (Mudde, 2010, p.1168). In regard to political parties, the dividing line between extreme right and radical right is difficult to discern, since they have similar ideological features and they often have incentives to hide their extremism, for example in order to avoid legal repercussions (Golder, 2016, p.478)

Reviewing the literature this thesis also observes a shift regarding the categorization of the aforementioned parties. In the early 2000s, when these parties were marginal, most of the literature referred to them as extreme right (Anastasakis 2001, Ignazi 2003, Mudde 2000a; 2000b; 2005). After the mid-2000s and their electoral success and entrance into national parliaments, the term radical right was used more frequently (Bustikova 2014, Minkenberg 2015, Mudde 2007; 2010, Pirro 2015). But does entrance into national parliaments i.e. being active in a democratic system, suggest that these parties accept democracy, or they just hide their extremism in order to avoid bans and/or maximize their electoral performance? Relevant studies remind us that extreme right

parties often possess two distinct ideologies; "one presented for the masses and one provided for insiders" (Enyedi, 2016, p.17).

3. The Ideology of Extreme Right

In order to understand, the concept of the extreme right, it is important to identify the key ideological features of the party family.

Party ideology is defined as "a party's body of normative-related ideas about the nature of man and society as well as the organization and purposes of society" (Mudde, 2000b, p.19) and also activities and statements from party members reflect party's ideology.

Cas Mudde (2000b) argues that the term 'extreme-right parties' refers to political parties with a core ideology that includes the key features of nationalism, xenophobia, welfare chauvinism, and law and order.

Michael Minkenberg (2015) includes the "extremist right" in a broader radical right party family. He argues that the extremist or fascist-autocratic right is usually antidemocratic, includes the features of racism or xenophobia, it often approves violence as a political means' and has a strong quest for internal homogeneity of the nation.

Based on some of the most prominent scholars regarding extreme and radical right (Minkenberg, 2002; 2015; Mudde, 2000a; 2000b; 2007; Pirro, 2015), it is possible to compile a list with key and important features of the extreme right ideology (in alphabetic order):

- **Anti-Semitism**: The belief that the Jewish race or ethnic community is in its entirety bad; variants of a Jewish-led world conspiracy with the conclusion that Jews ('they') are essentially against the 'own group' ('us');

- **Authoritarianism/law-and-order**: The belief in order and authority, accompanied by the demand for strong punishment of breach of the rules (e.g. high sentence, sober prison conditions, capital punishment); to maintain order the state should have a strong police force in terms of personnel, equipment and competencies;

- **Ethnocentrism**: The belief in the superiority of the 'own group' between groups of people in the basis of cultural and economic achievements (developmental differenciation);

- **Heterophobia**: Intolerance to deviation from mainstream norms (rejection of morally "others", also within own ethnicity);

- **Militarism**: The call for a strong army to protect the national interests; serving in the army as the highest honor; war is consider the natural condition; peace is considered an artificial period between wars; war is considered more than a means to pursue the 'national will' as it is the ultimate goal. Positive and unique attributes are ascribed to war and the soldier functions as a role model;

- **Nationalism**: The belief that the political unit (the state) and the cultural unit (the nation or ethnic community) should be congruent;

- **Nativism**: The belief that the state should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group ("the nation") and that nonnative elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogenous nation-state;

- **Populism, anti-establishment**: It considers society to be divided into two homogenous and antagonistic camps (i.e 'pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite') arguing that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* of the people;

- **Racism**: The belief in natural (hereditary) and permanent differences between groups of people with the centrality of a hierarchy of races;

- **Religiocentrism/Fundamentalism**: The belief in the superiority of the 'own group' on the basis of a particular faith and with exclusionary access to "truth";

- **Welfare chauvinism**: Socioeconomic policy should be directed first and foremost to the 'own group'. Priority in jobs and social benefits for the own people. State protection of certain areas of the national economy against foreign competition;

- **Xenophobia**: Fear, hate or hostility with regard to groups that are perceived as 'alien' or 'strange', such as foreigners, immigrants, asylum-seeker, etc. The idea that anything 'alien' is threatening.

Extreme right parties are often characterized by strong and undisputed leadership according to the *führerprinzip* i.e. one person is gifted by nature with the qualities that good leadership requires; the leader is the heart of the (ethnic) community and has absolute power while his leadership is above discussion, as he is the only one able to decide what is good and bad for the (ethnic) community (Mudde, 2000b).

The ideology of contemporary extreme right parties may originate from the pre-communist, the communist or the post-communist era (Mudde, 2000a).

4. Historical Legacies, Contemporary Factors and the Extreme Right in CEE

This chapter will try to analyze the role of historical legacies towards the emergence and support of extreme right parties, as well as the contemporary idiosyncrasies and peculiarities of CEE countries. Scholars and academics quote about a 'double authoritarian legacy' (Anastasakis, 2001) referring from one hand to the interwar era, and from the other to the communist period. Others are emphasizing more in the role of communism and the type of communist regimes (Bustikova & Kitshelt, 2009; Milkenberg, 2009; Ishiyama, 2009). Certainly, it is not possible to exclude post-communist issues, such as transition-oriented problems, the existence of ethnic minorities and migrants, corruption and EU convergence.

4.1. Pre-Communist Legacies

It is argued that there is a direct connection between extreme right parties in CEE and the interwar era (Anastasakis, 2001, p.18). Such parties exist in various CEE countries and they look for inspiration in ideas of the pre-communist period (Mudde, 2000a, p.8). It is believed that the suppressed nationalism during the communist era which had reignited after the fall of communism (Brubaker, 1996) has its roots back in the 19th and early 20th century.

During the interwar and in the aftermath of WWI and the 1919 peace treaties, almost all CEE countries had strong fascist movements and regimes. Tries from the victorious allies (of WWI) to introduce democracy proved unsuccessful as the establishment of a constitutional democracy was related to the Bolshevik Revolution and the threat of a Semitic conspiracy both directed against national interests (Fischer-Galati, 2002). In Hungary, Poland and Romania these connections/relations favored the rise of the right (extremist and moderate) whose rhetoric was based on deeply anti-communist, anti-Semitic, and ultra-nationalistic slogans and statements. Today "almost all extreme right parties of Eastern Europe make a direct claim to the legacy of an inter-war fascist or pro-Nazi movement, all of which were strongly anti-communist" (Bustikova, 2009, p.230).

The cases of Hungary and Slovakia, which this thesis is analyzing in the following chapters, breed particular interest. Especially for the Magyars, the ultimate

national goal of recovering the lost territories after the Treaty of Trianon is expressed constantly by the extreme right.

4.2. Communist Legacies

Extreme right parties that draw their ideology from the Communist era are often referred to as 'red-brown' coalition and combine features of both communist and fascist ideas (Mudde, 2000a, p.14). Ishiyama (2009), finds that "the most important legacy variable that affects the red-brown phenomenon is the legacy of the previous communist regime", while Bustikova & Kitschelt (2009) distinguish and identify the role of three types of legacies: the legacy of national-accommodative communism, the legacy of patrimonial communism and the legacy of bureaucratic-authoritarian communism.
Moreover, Anastasakis (2001, p.19) points out:

> "What remains relatively unexplored is the nationalistic and authoritarian legacy of communism, as a point of rupture or continuation with the extreme and the other nationalistic forces of the inter-war period. Communism did initially suppress and contain the nationalistic and fascistic tendencies, as a result of its military victory over fascism, its fundamental ideological opposition with the fascist discourse and the officially held belief of internationalism over nationalism. However, in practice, many communist elites favored a model of national communism strongly influenced by ethnic stereotypes and nationalist demagogy, as a way to secure legitimacy and escape the totality of Soviet domination. In many cases, like Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia, and in many ways there has been a blend between nationalist and communist forces."

Despite this blend of nationalism and communism, during the Soviet era the extreme right was marginal and existed without hope for the future (Karsai, 1999, p.134).

4.3. Post-Communist and Contemporary Factors

Post-Communist issues like, dissatisfaction with the development of democracy and liberal market after transition (high expectations – low results), ethnic minorities, corruption, immigration and EU integration that were absent from the pre-1989 political debate, aid the political agenda of extreme right parties.
More specifically, changes in social provision – recreation, housing, welfare, working conditions – coupled with economic crisis and with significant decline in

standards of living, along with deprivation, poverty, and unemployment have all tended to encourage the development of extreme right thinking and prejudices towards the perceived origins of the crisis – ethnic minorities, immigrants and foreigners. (Williams, 1999, p.33)

Furthermore, the technocratic and bureaucratic process of EU accession and conditionality, which was accompanied by declining effects in the quality of governance, contributed to a 'vacuum' effect in the policy space that led to party competition based on identity-based appeals, such as ethnic hatred, and set the stage for the success of the extreme right in Eastern Europe (Bustikova, 2009, p.223). It is argued that the "inflated expectations concerning EU membership and fatigue from long-lasting austerity measures" (Smilov & Krastev, 2008, p.9) can provide the extreme right with more supporters.

Regarding corruption Pirro (2015, p.43) argues:

"The transition process that started in 1989 is also linked to a new form of corruption stemming from the liberalization and privatization of national assets. Corruption certainly represents a crucial question in post-communist countries, and the success of the populist radical right has also been understood as a reaction to corruption and political unaccountability. The issue, as addressed by populist radical right parties in the region, lends itself to the populist and anti-communist aspects of their ideology. On the one hand, it would be the principal vehicle for populism by framing the political world in dualist terms – that is, 'the pure people' against 'the corrupt elite'. On the other hand, corruption qualifies as a post-communist issue for its ability to create a break with the communist past."

In general, ethnic nationalism, along with financial problems and economic insecurity are considered important in generating xenophobic and exclusionist attitudes, and they are at least partly responsible for the high prevalence of anti-migrant sentiments in CEE (Mieriņa & Koroļeva, 2015, p.184).

5. Historical Origins of the Extreme Right in Hungary and Slovakia

5.1. Hungary

5.1.1. Austria-Hungary and the Treaty of Trianon

The origins of Hungarian nationalism can be traced back in the years of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867-1918) where Hungary citizens were deeply divided by nationality, religion and class.

As Hungary was given more autonomy within the dualist monarchy, local ethnic minorities challenge the Hungarian hegemony and started to demand minority rights and sharing of political power. In response, many of the Hungarian political elite grew obsessed with ethnic conflict and devising linguistic and educational policies in order to guarantee Magyar supremacy. (Hanebrink, 2006, p.29)

Towards the end of Austria-Hungary, nationalistic and anti-Semitic feelings were cultivated among ethnic Magyars and the start of WWI was greeted with enthusiasm. The end of the war found Hungary defeated. The dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was ratified by the Treaty of Trianon in Versailles, 1920. The peace treaty deprived Hungary of two/thirds of its former territory and nearly 60% of its population, including 30% of ethnic Hungarians – Austria, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Romania, the Serb-Croat-Slovene Kingdom and Poland obtained part of its former territory and the population reduced from 18.2 million to only 7.6 million inhabitants.

Kontler (2002, p.344) quotes about the Treaty of Trianon:

> "If Hungarian Policies in the dualist period poisoned ethnic relations in
> Central Europe, the post-war settlement did nothing to heal them, but
> served to keep, with tragic consequences, the nationalist agenda in its
> nineteenth-century form awake into the late twentieth, and quite possibly
> into the twenty-first century."

5.1.2. Interwar Fascism and the Arrow Cross Party

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, ultranationalists in Hungary kept alive their hopes of a national redemption and a purified nation from the "Judeo-Bolshevik spirit that have ruined their country" (Hanebrink, 2006, p.138). The moderate right government resisted the transformation of the country into a copy of Fascist Italy or Nazi Germany but it was unable to control opportunistic and pro-Hitler elites who joined the extreme right which advocated the establishment of a totalitarian state, the elimination of Jews from national life, a drastic land reform, and a general redistribution of national wealth (Fischer-Galati, 2002, p.68).

The most important extreme right organization was Ferenc Szálasi's Arrow Cross Party (*Nyilaskeresztes Párt*) which grew quickly from political obscurity into the largest opposition party in the country by the late 1930s (Hanebrink, 2006, p.139). The Arrow Cross represented a genuine, local, sociopolitical phenomenon (Cohen, 1987) counting more than 250,000 members during 1939-40. . The Arrow Cross coalition did receive

25% in the fairly genuine Hungarian election of 1939, while other parties took the combined "radical rightist" vote well over 50 percent. Since only Hungarian men over age twenty-six and women over thirty could vote, and young people were more fascist, these percentages must understate their popular support (Mann, 2004, p.238).

Though, it was only in October 1944 and with the support and collaboration of Nazi Germany, that the Arrow Cross Party seized power. Szálasi's party was responsible for the mass deportation of Hungarian Jews from the countryside and during its reign, from 1944 to early 1945, for the mass shooting of Budapest Jews into the river Danube (Szôcs, 1998, p.1102).

5.2. Slovakia

During the era of Austria-Hungary and pressed by a continuous process of assimilation and Magyarization by the Hungarian government, the Slovaks organized into a national movement. The 19th century awakening of Slovak national identity was marked not only by an ethnic, but also a cultural – linguistic – aspect (Pytlas, 2013, p.167). Gradually, the *Slovenska Narodna Strana* (Slovak National Party, SNS) began to form and remained the principal political party of the Slovaks until the Formation of Czechoslovakia in 1918 (Toma & Kováč, 2001, p.40).

During the period of the democratic Czechoslovak Republic (1918 – 1938), Slovak ultranationalists had united against 'Czechoslovakism' which according to them "was invented in order to allow the Czechs dominate the Slovaks". Andrej Hlinka a catholic priest of authoritarian, national-conservative and populist political orientation founded the Slovak People's Party (*Slovenska Ľudová strana*), later Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (HSL'S) and became one of the political leaders of the Slovak nation. The party leadership, later joined by Jozef Tiso – also a catholic priest, embraced fascist rhetoric and ideology and by 1939 HSL'S became a political ally of Nazi Germany;

"Between 1939 and 1945, HSL'S was the dominant force of the independent Slovak's state totalitarian regime, adopting racial legislation inspired by the Nuremberg Race Laws of 1935 and actively collaborating with Hitler's Germany in carrying out the Holocaust (by which we mean 'aryanizing Jewish property, depriving the Jews of their civil rights, and subsequently deporting them to Nazi extermination camps outside Slovakian territory)."

(Gyárfášová & Mesežnikov, 2015, p.231)

6. The Basic Political System and the Extreme Right after 1989

6.1. Hungary

      6.1.1. The Political System

During the Communist era, the extreme right in Hungary was marginal, existing without hope for the future and played no part in causing the communist regime to collapse (Karsai, 1999, p.134).

      The changing of the political system in Hungary started during 1987, with the foundation of *Magyar Demokrata Fórum* (Hungarian Democratic Forum, MDF) by both reformists within the ruling *Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt* (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, MSZMP) and nationally-minded intellectuals. MDF primarily criticized the ruling internationalist communists (MSZMP) of not caring about Hungarians living in the former Hungarian territories lost by the treaty of Trianon and opened public discussion about formerly forbidden topics like the 1956 revolution and the Soviet-Hungarian relations (Karsai, 1999, p.134).

By the end of 1989 new democratic parties have created and intended to discard communist policies and embrace a new free market democracy (Saltman, 2011, p.116). The political party spectrum was now divided into three political camps; the left, the liberals and the Christian-conservatives. The left was rhetorically linked with MSZMP and its successor *Magyar Szocialista Párt* (Hungarian Socialist Party, MSZP). The liberals were represented by *Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége* (Alliance of Free Democrats, SZDSZ) and Viktor Orbán's *Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége* (Alliance of Young Democrats, Fidesz), campaigning for quick and drastic reforms and transformations. The Christian conservative camp consisted of the MDF, the *Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt* (Christian Democratic People's Party, KDNP) and the *Független Kisgazdapárt* (Independent Smallholders' Party, FKgP) preferred a more gradual approach to economic transformation. In the elections of 1990, the Christian conservative bloc with MDF at the helm defeated both MSZP and the liberals.

The next two decades, Hungary saw a transformation from a three-bloc and six parties to a two-block party system and by 2010 to a two-party contest between Fidesz and MSZP:

> "…the three parties (MDF, KDNP, FKgP) failed to develop a consistent
> centre–right programme; and both the bloc and its constituent parties fell
> apart over the next decade. Fidesz, one of the two liberal parties,
> responded by adopting a right-populist stance and became the leading
> party on the right by the 1998 elections. On the left, the Hungarian
> Socialist Party (MSzP), the successor of the former communist regime

party, established itself as the dominant force when it triumphed in the
1994 elections. Its offer of an alliance to the liberal Alliance of Free
Democrats (SzDSz) established the centre–left bloc and a pattern of
enduring bipolar centrifugal competition. By the 2010 election, this two-
bloc contest had been reduced to a two-party contest between Fidesz and
MSzP; four of the original six parties had failed, as had one new splinter
party which only won representation once (the Justice and Life Party,
MIÉP)."

(Bakke & Sitter, 2013, p.212)

The electoral breakthrough of Jobbik since 2010 altered again the equilibrium of the political party spectrum in Hungary. In the 2014 parliamentary election Fidesz allied with KDNP won 44.67% of the votes, the left coalition led by MSZP took 25.57%, Jobbik took 20.22% and lastly the green-liberal LMP with 5.34%.

6.1.2. MIÉP and the Early Years of Extreme Right

Although during the Communist era, the extreme right was marginal, without supporters, they did manage to reorganize themselves by the late 1980's. The reactivation of the extreme right *milieux* during the late 1980's, under the liberal environment ('goulash communism') of János Kádár, was directly relevant with the interwar legacy (Pirro, 2015, p.67). Transition to democracy and the free press provided to far rightists the possibility to organize and propagate their ideas which were closely connected with the Arrow Cross Party (Karsai, 1999, p.134).

In autumn 1992, there was a mobilization of the 'new right', led by István Csurka, mixing populism, anti-Semitism and anti-communist sentiments (Saltman, 2011, p. 116). In 1993 Istvan Csurka, until then vice-president of MDF, was expelled along with other parliament members from the party and founded the *Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártjá* (Hungarian Justice and Life Party, MIÉP) which has dominated the far right camp during the 1990's.

Although MIÉP cannot be considered an extreme right party, it has exhibited racist and xenophobic ideology and according to Minkenberg (2015) it qualifies for the ethnocentrist right under a broader radical right party umbrella that also includes the extremist right, the populist right and the religious-fundamentalists. The MIÉP promoted anti-Semitic and biological-nativist views (Csurka openly spoke about 'a worldwide Judeo-liberal-cosmopolitan conspiracy', targeting the IMF, the World Bank, and Hungarian-American of Jewish origin George Soros) and was also calling for the revision of the Trianon Treaty (Pirro, 2015, p.68). After nine years (1993-2002) of parliamentary

representation, MIÉP failed to enter the parliament and gradually vanished as political power, culminating with the death of Csurka in 2012 (Pytlas & Kossack, 2015).

6.2. Slovakia

6.2.1. The Political System

Following the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Czechoslovak Communist Party decided to step down in December 1989, after weeks of demonstrations across the country. The *Občanské Fórum* (Civic Forum, OF) in the Czech lands and *Verejnosť Proti Násiliu* (Public Against Violence, VPN) in Slovakia – both civic movements, led by intellectuals, anti-communists and ex-leaders of the 1968 Prague Spring – took responsibility of leading the country to democratic elections in June 1990; both civic movements won the elections in their respective republics within the federal state but they were unable to conduct reforms due to the peculiar tripartite structure of the parliament and eventually fragmented in 1991 (Deegan-Krause, 2012, p.183). The next elections in 1992, saw *Občanská Demokratická Strana* (Civic Democratic Party, ODS) the liberal conservative offspring of OF, winning in the Czech lands, while in Slovakia the *Hnutie za Demokratické Slovensko* (Movement for a Democratic Slovakia, HZDS), formerly a nationalist faction within VPN, took office. Immediately after the elections, negotiation for the split of Czechoslovakia had started, leading quickly in a peaceful agreement between ODS leader Vaclav Haus and HZDS leader Vladimir Mečiar. On 1 January 1993 Mečiar automatically became the first prime minister of the newly independent Slovak Republic.

The evolution of the political party system and party competition in Slovakia over the years is portrayed concisely by Bakke & Sitter (2013, p.213):

> "…the party system stabilized partially around a set of five parties in the
> mid-1990s in a pattern of competition largely centred on support for or
> opposition to Vladimír Mečiar's governments. Mečiar's own Movement
> for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) and the Slovak National Party (SNS)
> were pitted against the ex-communist Democratic Left party (SDL'), the
> Christian Democratic Movement (KDH), and the Hungarian Coalition
> (SMK). After the turn of the Millennium, party competition stabilised
> along a left–right dimension, with Smer Social Democrats (Smer-SD) as
> the dominant party on the left, and (until 2012) the Slovak Democratic and
> Christian Union (SDKÚ-DS) on the right. Of the original five parties, the
> SDL' failed in the 2002 election, the SMK and HZDS fell below the

electoral threshold in 2010, while the SNS failed in 2002, made a come-
back in 2006, and failed again in 2012. The conservative Democratic Party
(DS) and the Slovak Greens (SZS) won representation because of the
lower 3% threshold in 1990, but failed to cross the higher 5% threshold in
1992. Both returned (temporarily) as a part of the Slovak Democratic
Coalition (SDK) in 1998, as did the liberal Democratic
Union (DÚ). In addition, four parties entered parliament in one election,
only to disappear in the next: the leftist Labor Union of Slovakia (ZRS);
the Communist Party (KSS); the populist Party of Civic Understanding
(SOP); and the Alliance for the New Citizen (ANO). Consequently, with a
total of 11, Slovakia has the largest number of parties that fell below the
electoral threshold."

Robert Fico's SMER-SD won an absolute majority of seats in the 2012 parliamentary
election. In the 2016 election SMER-SD remained the strongest party, loosing though its
majority while the failure and collapse of SDKÚ-DS, have signaled the emergence of the
extremist L'SNS and the return of the radical-right SNS.

6.2.2. SNS – From Extreme Right towards Mainstream

The *Slovenská Národná Strana* (Slovak National Party, SNS) was established in
December 1989, claiming direct links with the historical SNS – the first Slovak political
party, active from 1871 to 1938 (Pirro, 2015, p.86). Following the Velvet Revolution,
few could predict the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in the upcoming years. In fact,
among Slovak political parties, only the SNS ran in separatist platform in the early 1990s
(Koev, 2015, p.651). Since the Slovak independence, the SNS changed its political
agenda from anti-Czech and anti-federal towards anti-Hungarian and anti-Roma
discourse and participated in coalition governments in 1992, 1994, 2006 and 2016.
Cibulka (1999, p.116) quotes about SNS:

"This dynamic party has been characterized by its ethnonationalistic
orientation, frequent changes in its leadership and primary targets, while
retaining a consistently harsh political rhetoric. After a militant beginning
in 1990, the party eschewed violence and cannot be labeled as fascist. Its
current leader Ján Slota, who has also served as the mayor of Zilina in
central Slovakia, has at times lapsed into undisguised fascist rhetoric, but
the party's ultraright radicalism has to some extend been moderated
through its participation in the government."

Gyárfášová and Mesežnikov (2015) consider nowadays SNS a 'mainstream' nationalist party which belongs among the 'populist radical right parties' à la Mudde, with an ideology mixing nationalism, xenophobia and populism, and they describe how the SNS has penetrated the Slovak political system:

> "In the period between 1990 and 2012, the SNS which has claimed to be a genuine representative of 'the national aspiration of Slovaks,' constituted the integral part of Slovakia's party system. The position of this party, based on its electoral support, shaped the overall configuration of the Slovakian party system over the years, and its programmatic background influenced the process of policy implementation in some important areas of the social sphere while also impacting the public discourse. As a typical clientelist formation, this party used its participation in power (i.e., central government or local self-governance authorities) to gain material benefits for the party leadership and their cronies."

The extreme right in contemporary Slovakia has been limited in extra-parliamentary organizations (People Against Racism/Milo, 2005) and only in 2016 achieved significant electoral support with L'SNS entering the parliament for the first time.

7. Extreme Right Parties in Hungary and Slovakia – Jobbik and L'SNS

Since 1989 extreme right organizations and groups have been active in Hungary and Slovakia but were unable to form political parties; In some exceptional cases where extreme right parties were founded, they eventually collapsed due to run-ins with the law and marginal electoral results – parties like the *Magyar Népjóléti Szövetség* (Hungarian Welfare Association, MNSZ) or the *Slovenská L'udová Strana* (Slovak People's Party, SL'S) fall into this category (Bernáth, Miklósi & Mudde, 2005; People Against Racism/Milo, 2005). In fact, the extreme right was able to have parliamentary representation only after the electoral breakthrough of Jobbik in 2010 and L'SNS in 2016.

7.1. Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom

Jobbik is undoubtedly the most successful extreme right party in CEE, reaching 20.2% of the overall votes in the last parliamentary election in 2014.

Having started as a university students' association in 1999, it transformed gradually in a political party characterized by its extremist right orientation. More specifically, Jobbik was founded in 1999, as a movement of Christian conservative students of Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) under the name *Jobboldali Ifjúsági Közösség* (Right-Wing Youth Association, JOBBIK) with primary goal of preventing the socialist MSZP from winning the elections and ensuring the continuation of the Fidesz-led government (Pirro, 2015, p.68). Until the elections of 2002, Jobbik offered its services to the right-wing-parties and invited Fidesz, MIÉP and MDF politicians to deliver speeches at their university (Bíró-Nagy & Rona, 2013, p.2).

After the win of the Socialists in the 2002 election, the relationship between Jobbik and Fidesz fell short. According to Jobbik, "the crippled state of the conservatives following the unexpected defeat of the 2002 elections and the failure of the entire Hungarian political elite in managing the political and economic transition in the 90's played a role in the transformation of Jobbik into a party"[1]. Thereafter *Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom* (Movement for a better Hungary, Jobbik) was re-founded in October 2003 as an independent political party.

7.1.1. "Öszöd Speech" and the Rise of Jobbik

The first years of Jobbik were characterized by insignificant support and organizational limitations that restricted the party to compete in the 2004 European elections. It contested for the first time in April 2006 parliamentary elections in a coalition with MIÉP, gaining only 2.2% of the votes. Although Jobbik failed in the elections, the year 2006 has marked the breakthrough of the party into Hungary's mainstream politics.

In particular, Jobbik and its members were among the basic actors in the fierce protests that took place in Budapest and other Hungarian cities after the leak of Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány's notorious "Öszöd speech" in September 2006 (Pirro, 2015, p.69; Bíró-Nagy & Rona, 2013, p.3). In that speech Gyurcsány used a particularly pejorative language in describing the political and economic situation of Hungary, and directly acknowledged that the, Gyurcsány-led, MSZP government had been continuously lying in order to win the elections (Petsinis, 2015, p.279). The situation in the streets of Budapest and the penetration of Jobbik representatives into the protests are accurately described by Mihai Varga (2014, p.795):

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[1] http://jobbik.com/short_summary_about_jobbik

"The recording sparked violent protests and skirmishes with the police in September and October 2006; on 18 September far-right demonstrators defeated police forces and briefly seized and devastated the headquarters of the national television station (less violent protests went on for at least a weak); barricades were set ablaze in Budapest on 23 October. Tens of thousands of supporters of center-right and far-right political formations took part in the demonstrations. Already on the first day of the demonstrations they rejected the representative of Hungary's old far-right party, The Hungarian Life and Truth Party (MIÉP): party president István Csurka was met with hostility and cries of "No more Csurka" when he attempted to address the crowds. Instead, the demonstrations provided an excellent arena for newer organizations of the far-right, showing that these can help coordinate and organize protests. In the words of Tamás Molnár, the Jobbik member playing a central role in the protests: "A new right wing emerged right there on Kossuth-square, setting itself goals such as solidarity, integration [among far-right groups], a new transformation, a fourth republic". The protests represented a turning point for Jobbik, whose activists took part in the skirmishes with the riot police, and later on also in coordinating the protests taking place in Budapest. The protests became a central event for Jobbik, because they allowed it to directly connect with the wider radical nationalist movement and speak in its name. And it interpreted the actions of the Socialist government as a betrayal of the people, deeming the government illegitimate, with one Jobbik activist openly arguing that the Socialists were driving the country toward civil war."

Thereafter, through constructing an ideology blending irredentist and ethnic nationalism, xenophobia, racism and anti-Semitism and not avoiding provocative public actions and the use of interwar symbols as well as recruiting young intellectuals, Jobbik became popular among the youth and the people leaving in the countryside (Halasz, 2009, p.493). The presence of the Roma minority provided Jobbik an additional issue in order to maximize support. The foundation of the paramilitary-like organization *Magyar Gárda* (Hungarian Guard) by Jobbik's leader Gábor Vona proved to be crucial for the party's popularity as its violent actions, mainly against Roma people, draw the media attention. At the same time Hungary was undergoing a period of economic austerity which intensified with the outbreak of the global financial crisis, spreading anxiety to pensioners, unemployed and residents of the periphery and further dissatisfaction with the socialist government. Jobbik tried to capitalize on people's dissatisfaction and the suspicious public perceptions towards Roma people, continuously organizing events,

rallies and meetings. The growing attention and support improved also the organizational strength of the party; at the beginning of 2008 Jobbik had 70 local organizations, whereas by 2009 it counted 249 organizations and 3000 active members (Bíró-Nagy & Róna, 2013, p.4).

Eventually, in the 2009 European elections Jobbik achieved the remarkable 14.77% vote share, electing three representatives to the European Parliament, while the following year, in parliamentary elections, consolidated its position as the third political force behind Fidesz and MSZP (Pirro, 2015, p.69)

7.1.2. Ideology

Jobbik is self-described as "a value –centered, conservative, patriotic Christian party with radical methodology"…"laying its political foundations on the protection of national values and interests"[2]. In practice though, the core features lying in Jobbik's ideology combine authoritarianism, racism (particularly against Roma, Jews as well as the LGBT community), ultra-nationalism, religiocentrism, anti-establishment attitudes, populism, Euroscepticism and anti-communism, and often through its paramilitary organization i.e. the Hungarian Guard, approves the use of violence as political means:

- **Anti-communism:** Jobbik is very hostile towards communism and the communist successor party MSZP and threatens openly former communist members**.** Relevant statements exist in the party's program and manifesto; **"**We will exclude Communist leaders from the political sphere, we will revoke their luxurious pensions. We will also publish the list of Communist secret police informants and we will hold culprits accountable for their crimes, along with the politicians who have committed criminal acts in the past 24 years; The primary challenge for Jobbik Movement for a Better Hungary is to remove the successors of the Communist party and the extremist liberals, who are inextricably entwined with them, from the political power";

- **Anti-establishment attitudes & populism**: Anti-establishment has always been one of Jobbik's favorite themes; using expressions like 'neoliberal fake-democracy' or 'politician crime' (Bíró-Nagy & Róna, 2013, p.8), and generally anti-corruption discourse, the party tries to divide the 'corrupt elite' from the 'pure people'. Jobbik officials argue that "the deep crisis of politics lies in the

enormous gap between the words and the actions of political parties. Consequently, today's Hungarian political life is characterized by unfulfilled promises, turncoats, lies and corruption … it is the party's duty to justify its words with its actions"[3];

- **Authoritarianism/law-and-order**: Jobbik believes in a strictly ordered society with tough measures and hard punishments. It advocates the introduction and use of the death penalty, while supports the establishment of forced labor for criminals (Enyedi, 2016, pp.16-17). Its public security program[4] states: "We will put an end to the violent criminal acts against senior citizens, women and children"; "We will reinforce the police and establish a municipal police force"; "We will abolish parliamentary immunity, subject MPs to being recalled, and we will double the punishment ranges of politicians compared to ordinary citizens" and "pass legislation to enable the Hungarian Guard to operate in compliance with the appropriate regulation";

- **Eurosceptisism**: Holding a referendum regarding the country's EU membership is among the programmatic policies of the party; although Jobbik was not rejecting the EU, it was rather critical and negative towards European integration, until the outbreak of the Hungarian economic crisis which was followed by controversial constitutional and economic reforms; since then the party adopted fierce anti-EU rhetoric; the latest refugee and immigrant waves arriving across Europe have strengthened even more Jobbik's anti-EU agenda; since 2012 the party position would qualify as 'Euroreject' (Bíró-Nágy, Boros & Vasali, 2013, p.235; Pirro, 2015, p.84);

- **Militarism**: Among Jobbik's intentions is to redesign an as-strong-as possible army. In fact, the party's home defence program mentions; "We will put an end to home defence underfunding and rebuild the entire home defence system, relying on the Hungarian industry", "Considering the sacrifice they make, we will create the legislative framework for participants of voluntary home defence training to enjoy certain benefits, assistance for their later education or finding a job" and "We will increase the headcount of the army to 50 thousand persons from the current 23950";

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[3] http://jobbik.com/manifesto_0
[4] http://jobbik.com/policies

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- **Nationalism**: Issues like the revision of Trianon Treaty and the restoration of Greater Hungary's borders and external population, lie at the core of Hungarian Nationalism. Irredentist aspirations cannot lack from Jobbik's political agenda; Jobbik officials promote efforts for the self-determination of Hungarian communities living abroad and demand the highest possible autonomy for Hungarians living especially in Serbia and Ukraine[5]. "The party primarily aims at the cultural and economic reunification of the 'territorially maimed' nation" (Pirro, 2015, p.74);

- **Nativism/Turanism**: Jobbik officials believe that Hungarians are the 'grandchildren of Attila, the descendants of a warrior Turanic people' originating from inner Asia and inhabited Hungary 1600 years ago; thus an important element of Jobbik's support towards a general opening of Hungary to Asia and away from Europe and the West is the concept of Turanism; one of the characteristics of Hungarian Fascism, the idea of Turanism is little more than a myth, but for Jobbik the opening to the East is quite real; Jobbik leadership is convinced that the roots of the Hungarian nation are in the East where the country has to return; therefore it considers Iran, Russia and Turkey as its principal allies (Detke, 2014, p.21; Enyedi, 2016, p.17; Kyriazi, 2016, p.5);

- **Racism/anti-Roma/anti-Semitism**: In the 2007 pre-election campaign, Jobbik officials repeatedly used the racist noun 'gypsycrime' to suggest that Roma people are genetically prone to illegal actions (Human Rights First, 2015). Also the establishment of *Magyar Gárda* which systematically targets and terrorizes the Roma community empowers Jobbik's racist profile. Jobbik considers the coexistence of ethnic Hungarians and the Roma minority as one of the severest problems in Hungarian society. Anti-Semitism is also a well-known characteristic of Jobbik representatives marked by statements like "MTK is a Jewish team, this is why we don't like it" – regarding one of the oldest football teams in Budapest (Bíró-Nagy & Róna, 2013, p.11);

- **Religiocentrism/Fundamentalism**: The party considers religion as an essential part of its ideology. Jobbik's manifesto mentions: "We believe that our nation cannot strengthen morally unless such improvement is based on the teaching of Christ, and we wish to employ our means as a political party to contribute to the

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[5] http://jobbik.com/policies

accomplishment of this goal. Our Christian churches and communities shall have a key role in this renewal since they have proven for centuries, in good times and in bad that they can serve as the final spiritual, mental and cultural strongholds of our nation. In our view, national identity and Christianity are inseparable concepts"[6];

- **Welfare chauvinism**: Jobbik adopts a social-national agenda in regard to economic policy. Its economic program mentions: "We will oblige multinational companies of the commercial and service sector to provide at least 80 per cent of Western European salaries for their Hungarian employees; We will turn the Hungarian National Bank into a truly patriotic institution, we will eliminate the interests on banks' reserve requirement, thus saving taxpayers an annual expenditure of 30 billion HUF; In addition to a strong market protection, we will conduct an intensive marketing campaign for special Hungarian trademark products, so that they could achieve a higher market penetration in Western and Eastern countries alike; We will prevent multinational companies and banks from transferring the burdens of their special sectoral surtaxes to consumers"[7].

7.1.3. Extremist Rhetoric and Statements

Although Jobbik officially denies accusations of extremist and racist discource[8], several statements from party officials suggest the opposite:

- ➢ Gábor Vona, Jobbik Chairman, May 2013: "The Israeli conquerors, these investors, should look for another country in the world for themselves, because Hungary is not for sale"[9].

- ➢ Enikö Hegedüs, Jobbik MP, May 2011: "Now is the time to finally say; Israeli occupation is ongoing in our homeland. This is a fact, for evidence we need only to think about the overwhelming dominance of Israeli capital investments, property developments in Hungary; and the Gypsies are a biological weapon of this; they use them as tools against the Hungarian people".

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[6] http://jobbik.com/manifesto_0
[7] http://www.jobbik.com/policies

[8] http://jobbik.com/frequently_refuted_lies
[9] http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/jobbik-world-jewish-congress-budapest-hungary-464620

➤ Márton Gyöngyösi, Jobbik MP, Nov. 2012: "I think now is the time to assess how many people of Jewish origin there are here, and especially in the Hungarian parliament and the Hungarian government, who pose a national security threat to Hungary"[10].

➤ Márton Gyöngyösi, Jobbik MP, Feb. 2014: "Dual citizenship is a risk. It's a national security risk. I want to be sure that a Hungarian parliamentarian, member of government or civil servant is 100% loyal and 100% committed to my nation when they are making laws or executing them. Everyone in the world thinks the same. In Israel double citizens are excluded from the Knesset. If Israel does that, then why are they hurt if I demand the same thing for Hungary? . . . With Hungarian-Israeli double citizenship I think this risk is even higher than with Zimbabwean-Hungarian double citizenship, because we have heard of malicious intentions from Mr. Shimon Perez when he spoke about the colonization of Hungary by financial and economic means"[11].

➤ Elöd Novák, Jobbik MP: "There are national tendencies, there are greatest tragedies, striking Hungarians the widest, the deepest, and this is Gypsy-crime… We need to talk about this, about who is killing Hungarian people, who is stealing their wealth, their crops... We need to talk about this, because these are the real problems".

7.1.4. Leadership - Gábor Vona

Jobbik as a typical extreme right party is characterized by strong, undisputed leadership. 38-year-old Gábor Vona is the party co-founder and chairman since 2006, having reelected as its leader in 2016. Vona was also the founder of Jobbik's paramilitary organization *Magyar Gárda* and since then has achieved movie-star status among the party's supporters. Having studied history and psychology at ELTE University in Budapest, Vona became interested in Hungarian culture early on, reclaiming his grandfather's name, Vona, to replace Zázrivecz, a Russian name handed down from his step-grandfather[12]. Vona has directed the party's ideology of militant ethno-nationalism mixed with anti-Semitism and anti-Roma racism; under his leadership Jobbik has

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[10] http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/11/27/the-old-school-anti-semitism-of-hungarys-far-right/
[11] http://budapesttimes.hu/2014/02/22/jobbik-to-wilders-and-le-pen-liberalism-and-zionism-are-the-enemies-not-islam/
[12] http://www.ozy.com/provocateurs/hungarys-minister-of-hate/4894

advocated for Roma "deviants" to be put into labor camps and called Jews a "national security risk"; he advocates restricting voting rights based on education while he has reportedly worked shifts as a waiter, a construction worker, and other minimum wage jobs to show he is connected to the people[13]

7.1.5. The Magyar Gárda

After the leak of the Öszöd Speech followed by the riots of 2006, Jobbik established the *Magyar Gárda* (Hungarian Guard), "an organization claiming to be mobilizing the public around ideas of law and order, self-help in case of natural disasters and humanitarian interventions" (Varga, 2014, p.795). A series of incidents between ethnic Hungarians and members of the Roma minority that made the headlines of national media provided Garda the opportunity to present itself and gain popularity. Members of the Garda wore military uniforms, including armbands similar to those of Arrow Cross officers responsible for Hungary's 'reign of terror' of 1944-1945; guardsmen held intimidating military-style rallies throughout Hungary, particularly targeting villages with large Romani populations; and much of their rhetoric was centered around protecting ethnic Hungarians from so-called 'Gypsy criminality'[14] (LeBor, 2008, p.34).

Thereafter the organization was stigmatized as a neo-fascist group and was disbanded by court ruling in 2009 "on the grounds that its activities represented a breach of the human rights of Hungarian minorities" (Pirro, 2015, p.69). However, neither the socialist government of MSZP, in power until 2010, nor its right-wing successor Fidesz were capable of enforcing the court's decision because the Garda deployed legal tricks and regrouped under a new name; the decision was eventually enforced in 2011, after the incidents in the village of Gyöngyöspata where the local Roma community were terrorized by Garda's uniformed members (Feischmidt & Szombati, 2016, p.12). In 2013 the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ratified the decision, after the appeal of Gábor Vona against the disbandment, stating:

> "A movement created by Mr Vona's association had led to demonstrations
> conveying a message of racial division, which, reminiscent of the
> Hungarian Nazi Movement (Arrow Cross), had had an intimidating effect
> on the Roma minority… Indeed, such paramilitary marches had gone
> beyond the mere expression of a disturbing or offensive idea, which is

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[13] http://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/g%C3%A1bor-vona
[14] http://www.errc.org/article/vona-v-hungary/4158

> protected under the Convention, given the physical presence of a threatening group of organized activists. Therefore, the only way to effectively eliminate the threat posed by the movement had been to remove the organisational backup provided by the association"[15].

Since its disbandment though, the organization tries to 'refashion' and 'reform' itself under new names and legal norms (Petsinis, 2015, p.284).

7.1.6. Electoral Performance

Jobbik continuous rise and increased support can be displayed by the party's electoral results in both national and European elections.

Jobbik contested its first national elections, without any success, in 2006, allied with MIÉP and gaining 2.2% of the votes. The year 2010 has marked the electoral breakthrough of the party and its establishment as an important actor in Hungarian politics; it won 16.7% of the total votes. In the last parliamentary elections in 2014, Jobbik won the support of 20.2% Hungarian voters while consolidated its place as the third biggest party in the country behind Fidesz and MSZP.[16]

In respect to the European Elections Jobbik contested for the first time in 2009 when it won 14.77% of the votes. Five years later, in 2014, it gained 14.67%.[17]

Table 1. Performance of Jobbik in comparison to major Parties in national and European elections[18]

	2006 national	2009 European	2010 national	2014 national	2014 European
Fidesz[19]	42.0% 164 seats	56.36% 14 seats	52.7% 263 seats	44.9% 133 seats	51.48% 12 seats
MSZP	43.2% 190 seats	17.37% 4 seats	19.3% 59 seats	25.6%[20] 38 seats	10.90% 4 seats
Jobbik	2.2%[21] -	14.77% 3 seats	16.7% 47 seats	20.2% 23 seats	14.67% 3 seats
LMP	-	2.61% -	7.5% 16 seats	5.3% 5 seats	5.04% -

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[15] http://www.euronews.com/2013/07/09/banning-hungarian-far-right-group-was-legal-says-echr
[16] http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/hungary.html
[17] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-hu-2014.html
[18] The unicameral body of the Hungarian Parliament had consisted of 386 members until 2014. Since then it consists of 199 members.
[19] In a coalition with KDNP since 2006
[20] In the 2014 national elections MSZP formed a coalition with DK, E14, PM and MLP
[21] In alliance with MIÉP

The rise of Jobbik in national politics is also portrayed at the local level where party members had elected as mayors across the country (Feischmid & Szombati, 2016).

7.1.7. Jobbik-Fidesz relationship

Jobbik electoral success in 2010 was also accompanied by the impressive reemergence of Fidesz and Viktor Orbán in Hungary's government. Fidesz-KDNP coalition won 52.7% of the votes, capturing 263 out of 386 parliamentary seats and since then

> "Orbán immediately introduced fundamental changes to the constitutional order. The ideology behind it was the 'insufficient transition' that, in different forms, frequently appears in governmental statements, and resonates with the myth of the 'stolen transition' that had been introduced into the public discourse by István Csurka and forms a core of Jobbik's ideology and rhetoric as well. The convergence of the mainstream and the extreme in the form of a shared interpretation of the transition had remarkable results. Approaching 2010 and even afterwards, Orbán and other leading Fidesz politicians effectively tried to use subtle forms of the myth of the 'stolen transition' to prove the necessity of transforming the post- transitional institutional system. The government also began to lay the foundations for such a process by forming the dominant narrative of the transition: the government formed the Research Centre on Transition, and appointed Zoltán Bíró as its first leader, an advocate of anti- globalization conspiracy theories, a former member of MSZMP, a founder of MDF, and in previous years a columnist for the chauvinist daily *Magyar Hírlap*."

(Krekó & Mayer, 2015, pp.194-195)

Since 2010, it is evident that Fidesz has "implemented several policy proposals stemming originally from Jobbik in order to co-opt the agenda of the radical right and appeal to its voters" (Pytlas & Kossack, 2015, p.114). In fact;

> "Fidesz has taken over Jobbik's use of the term 'criminal politicians'. With regard to the 'Roma problem', Fidesz demands compulsory work in return for social benefits… Politically, it is critical of EU norms and organizations, and it adopts a pro-Eastern alignment in matters of international trade. In legal matters, it seeks to reinstate the death penalty

and demands stricter regulations on abortion. For the most part, these
demands reflect those typical of Jobbik."

<div align="right">(Bíró-Nagy, Boros & Vasali, 2013, p.248)</div>

Today Fidesz considers Jobbik as an important opponent capable of attracting support
from its own electorate.

7.2. Kotleba – Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko

The recent parliamentary elections in Slovakia have marked the electoral breakthrough of
a new extreme right party i.e. the L'SNS. Having been established in early 2010, the
party contested its first parliamentary elections in 2010 and then in 2012, without any
success. The turning point in the fortunes of L'SNS was the regional elections of 2013
where Marián Kotleba, leader of the party, was elected governor of Banská Bystrica
region gaining popularity which eventually capitalized in the 2016 national elections.
Although L'SNS was officially re-established in 2011, in fact it is the direct successor of
SP-NS which had been formed by the extremist civic association *Slovenská Pospolitost'*
(Slovak Togetherness, SP), founded back in 1995.

7.2.1. The role of Slovenská Pospolitost'

SP was founded at the beginning of 1995; having strong ties with neo-fascist
organizations, it registered at the Ministry of Interior as a civic association and started to
organize rallies and demonstrations mainly against NATO, while its members wore black
uniforms resembling those of *Hlinkova Garda* (Hlinka's Guard), the paramilitary units
that operated during the wartime Slovak State (People Against Racism/Milo, 2005,
p.201).

Although SP has been active since 1995, it did not penetrate public awareness
until 2003; the aftermath of 2002 national elections and SNS failure entering the
parliament provided SP the opportunity to present itself in a broader audience (Nociar,
2012, p.4). Based on the *führerprinzip* the association was able to organize and form a
political party under the name *Slovenská Pospolitost' – Národná Strana* (Slovak
Togetherness – National Party, SP-NS) and the leadership of Marián Kotleba. The party's
openly anti-democratic program combined nationalism, racism, anti-Semitism, neo-
fascism and in some aspects neo-Nazism (Nociar, 2012, p.4). However, just before the
2006 elections SP-NS was dissolved by the Supreme Court of the Slovak Republic in the

basis of its program which violated civil and human rights and encouraged xenophobic and anti-Semitic sentiments (Kluknavská & Smolík, 2016, p.4).

SP though continued its activities and attracted again attention in 2008 when the authorities tried to dissolve also, the civic association;

> "Repeated media coverage led to a mobilisation of sympathisers. SP leaders, encouraged by this failed attempt to dissolve the association, formally declared their rejection of the dissolution of the SP-NS and tried to revive political activity in the run-up to the municipal and parliamentary elections. The modification of its strategy, whereby the SP shifted its main focus from nostalgia for the fascist regime to a stronger anti-Roma stance, brought an increase in popularity. This can be linked with the series of actions against 'Gypsy crime' which they co-organised in the summer of 2009. Popular support encouraged the SP to organise further mobilisation actions, mostly with an anti-Roma theme, and it has continued to organise such campaigns to this day. Encouraged by popular support, Marian Kotleba, the former leader of the SP-NS became one of the leading figures in these demonstrations. In line with the declared aim of the 'renewed' SP-NS to run for election again, he decided to run for president in the Banská Bystrica self-governing region. Heavy anti-Roma rhetoric together with broad media coverage of these actions brought Marian Kotleba almost 14,000 votes as an independent candidate. With 10.03 percent of the votes this meant he was the fourth-strongest candidate. This can be considered the best electoral result of the extra-parliamentary far right in Slovak history."

(Nociar, 2012, p.4)

Eventually the 'renewed SPNS' has managed to reborn under a new name, the L'SNS. SP still exists as a civic association, continuing its activities in a close co-operation with L'SNS

7.2.2. Ideology

L'SNS identifies itself as national, Christian and social party. Indeed, since the establishment of the party in 2011, Kotleba and party officials have replaced the nazi-like uniforms with blazers and their neo-fascist discourse with anti-Roma, anti-immigration and anti-corruption rhetoric, criticizing the EU and NATO as well. At this point, we should not forget that extreme right parties often have incentives to hide their extremism

mainly to avoid bans and also attract voters from mainstream parties. Having its predecessor (SP-NS) disbanded, L'SNS has now the experience to maneuver in order to be protected from legal persecutions. Still, the party's website provides useful information, in order to shape L'SNS extreme right ideology; [22] [23]

- **<u>Anti-establishment attitudes & populism</u>**: Anti-corruption and sometimes anti-democratic discourse have important place in the party's political agenda; according to L'SNS, politicians are all "thieves, liars and crooks" who "have plundered the state's assets…devastated, destroyed Slovakia… endlessly waste our money, living luxurious life" (Kluknavská, 2014, p.60). Additionally, the party's program mentions; "We will force the politicians to take full responsibility for their decisions, so that high politics is no more the most organized criminal profession. We will introduce criminal liability for politicians and high state officials for abusing their power, even negligently" and "the salaries of politicians and high government officials will be dependent on the level of minimum wage. We will reduce the number of parliament deputies from the current 150 to 100. We will cancel the positions of government plenipotentiaries and stop financing of political parties from the state budget"; finally it points out that L'SNS "is the only real alternative and opposition to the corrupted and criminal 'democratic' system and the current parliamentary parties, which all have been more or less participating in stealing the treasures of our country and in betraying and selling out our nation";

- **<u>Authoritarianism/law-and-order & pro-violence</u>**: As typical extreme right party, L'SNS is an advocate of a strictly ordered and militant society. Its program, the 'ten commandments', states; "We will establish a domestic-militia and volunteers among decent people will be given the opportunity to actively protect the lives and property of themselves and their loved ones. We will expand the right to protect life and property to include protection by a gun. The age for criminal responsibility shall be reduced to 12 years and the criminal and penitentiary system will be adjusted so that everyone, including politicians and social parasites, will think twice whether they would prefer honest work or stealing and plundering";

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[22] http://www.naseslovensko.net/en/about-us/
[23] http://www.naseslovensko.net/en/our-program/

- **Eurosceptisism & anti-globalism**: L'SNS continuously expresses dissatisfaction towards EU policies and just like Jobbik, its position qualifies as Euro-reject. In fact they want to re-establish the Slovak crown as national currency arguing also that "we put Slovak interests above the dictate of Brussels and therefore we refuse to restrict the sovereignty of member states of the European Union. We will never support any form of state aid to irresponsible private banks or foreign governments" and they intend Slovakia to be "politically independent and economically self-sufficient so that we are not controlled by the European Union, international financiers and multinational corporations". L'SNS considers NATO a 'terrorist pact' where USA and Israel implement their 'criminal policies';

- **Militarism**: It has been already mentioned that L'SNS intends to establish 'domestic-militia' in order to empower the protection of citizens. Moreover the party's program underlines that "we will not allow any violation of Slovakian territorial integrity and we will strengthen the defense of the country" and "voluntary military training will be available for all candidates";

- **Nationalism**: L'SNS is self-identified as a national party that aims to transform Slovakia into a 'national' state where "the Slovaks are in control and not in the service of foreigners, immigrants and ethnic minorities", adding that "we are determined to sacrifice ourselves for Slovakia – for God and for the nation";

- **Racism/anti-Roma/anti-Semitism/homophobia**: The so-called Roma issue is a dominant feature in the political agenda of L'SNS (Gyárfášová & Mesežnikov, 2015, p.239), while it combines anti-Semitic and homophobic discourse; the party program refers to non-Slovaks and Roma community as 'parasites' and 'gypsy parasites'; it considers that all members of LGBT community have 'sexual deviations' and rejects "registered partnerships and adoption of children by gay couples"; the party considers, pro-Nazis and fierce persecutors of Jews, Andrej Hlinka and Jozef Tiso as national heroes. An incident in 2016 involving Milan Mazurek, L'SNS MP, highlights the racist sentiments; Mazurek had, reportedly, showed aggression against a Muslim family, making comments abusing the sexuality of Muslim women, linking them with terrorism, and generally targeting the Islamic identity of the family[24];

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[24] http://tellmamauk.org/slovak-neo-nazi-mp/

- **Religiocentrism/fundamentalism**: According to the party's official website, L'SNS "aims to reshape Slovakia with the goal to become Christian and morally preserved so that traditional Christian values are applied instead of western liberalism which encourages atheism, materialism, consumerism, dangerous sects and sexual deviations", while "the education of youth will be built on Christian principles and values";

- **Welfare chauvinism**: In regard to socioeconomic policy it is pinpointed that "social policy will be built on principle of equity and we will put a stop to the preferential treatment of all social parasites, including gypsy parasites. Parasites who will refuse to work, will receive nothing for free – no housing or other benefits and allowances", the 'decent citizens' i.e. ethnic Slovaks will all have "work, fair wage, enough food, and a healthy home" while domestic products will be "the basis of the economy".

7.2.3. Extremist Rhetoric and Statements

Several statements reflecting racist, neo-fascist and pro-nazi ideology have been made by L'SNS officials;

- Marián Magat, L'SNS candidate, April 2013 on facebook: "124 years ago Adolf Hitler was born… the Reich Chancellor… was great economist, orator, and a man with a heart in the right place. Whoever reads his speeches will understand that it was a wonderful person; Honor his memory"[25];

- Marián Kotleba, L'SNS leader, March 2009: "We are here to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Slovak State. On qualms about the persecution of Jews I can say one thing: We are a Slovak nation, not a Jewish nation. Therefore we don't care about the Jewish question" and "A nation-wide spiritual and moral crisis is here not since last autumn nor came from America. The deep and persistent crisis reached Slovakia on 29 August 1944, when a treacherous part of the Slovak nation opposed their own state and their sole and very good president, dr. Jozef Tiso".[26]

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[25] http://stopfasizmu.sk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/2.1.jpg
[26] http://stopfasizmu.sk/4-rasizmus-antisemitimus/

- Peter Krupa, Ľ'SNS MP, 19 Jan. 2012 on facebook: "We must secure the existence of our race and a future for white children";

- Ľ'SNS about Roma people: "A group of gypsies with axes in hands threatened a white citizen", "Gypsy terror; Raging gypsy extremists terrorize the whole village. They steal, beat and kill decent people on a daily basis" and "Gypsy extremists destroy our land and people, who have a right to live here. White children are afraid to go to school, because Gypsy kids beat, torture and bully them" (Kluknavská, 2014, pp.60-61).

- In March 2016, Krupa came to the parliament with a gun[27].

7.2.4. Leadership – Marián Kotleba

Marián Kotleba is the central figure behind Ľ'SNS and the party's undisputed leader. Kotleba was born in Banska Bystica in 1977. From teenage years, he specialized in sports and after finishing school he enrolled in the Matej Bel University in Banska Bystica, receiving a diploma in pedagogics and a master's degree in Economics. He was leader and founding member of extremist SP-NS which was disbanded by authorities and in 2010 he managed to found Ľ'SNS, SP-NS successor. In the 2013 regional elections he was elected governor of his hometown. Influenced by Andrej Hlinka's *Hlinkova Slovenská Ľudová Strana* (Hlinka's Slovak People's Party) he renamed the party in 2015 to *Kotleba - Ľudová Strana Naše Slovensko* (Kotleba – People's Party Our Slovakia) reflecting the *führerprinzip* as well. International press has described Kotleba as neo-Nazi, fascist and homophobe[28] but he denies such allegations. Since 2013 and his election as governor of Banska Bystrica, he has adopted a more moderate profile, replacing racist/fascist/pro-Nazi discourse with anti-EU, anti-NATO, xenophobic and anti-establishment rhetoric.

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[27] http://www.teraz.sk/slovensko/poslanec-lsns-peter-krupa-prisiel-do-p/187982-clanok.html
[28] http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-37120830,
http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2013/11/slovakia,
http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2016/0629/Why-does-the-extreme-right-appeal-in-Europe-Slovakia-offers-troubling-clues, http://spectator.sme.sk/c/20245383/homophobe-of-the-year-is-marian-kotleba.html

7.2.5. Factors behind the rise of L'SNS

The electoral breakthrough of L'SNS in 2016 can be attributed to a combination of factors; anti-Roma sentiments within the Slovak society, economic problems, media attention, corruption scandals, chameleonic ability from L'SNS leadership and a general public dissatisfaction with the established political system (Kluknavská & Smolík, 2016). Gyárfášová & Mesežnikov, (2015, pp.239-240) describe:

"The victory of a right- wing extremist politician in the Banská Bystrica
region has become a widely discussed topic. The debate has taken a few
directions, which sought to identify the reasons for the unexpected success
of right- wing extremism: popular discontent with the country's socioeconomic
development in recent years; the so- called Roma issue, traditionally
used by extremists as one of their most efficient mobilization tools;
voters' disappointment with the established political parties, which have
been unable to respond to the people's demands; a weakening of traditional
nationalist forces (namely, the SNS); the ambiguous stances of some
representatives of the center- right parties who did not adopt a clear and
distinct negative position with regard to Kotleba and did not appeal to their voters to
support Kotleba's leftist rival; as well as an overall strengthening
of xenophobic and racist sentiments among the population. Kotleba's
victory in the regional elections and the media coverage of his initial
activities as an elected governor have led to an increase in the level of
L'SNS popularity. According to a public opinion poll in January 2014, the
party would have received 4.7 percent of the vote were a national election
called"

7.2.6. Electoral Performance

The first years of L'SNS were marked by marginal electoral results and minimal growth in support. In the 2013 regional elections, the electoral breakthrough of Marián Kotleba in Banska Bystrica had gathered media attention and gave him the opportunity to present himself in the broader public, leading eventually in the electoral breakthrough of L'SNS in the 2016 national elections.

L'SNS contested its first elections in 2010 gaining the marginal 1.33%. The same pattern appears again in the 2012 national elections where it took only 1.58% of the votes. In the 2014 European elections it won 1.73% while two years later in the 2016 parliamentary elections it skyrocketed at 8% entering the parliament for the first time.

Table 2. Performance of L'SNS and the political party spectrum in national and European elections since 2010[29]

	2010 national	2012 National	2014 European	2016 National
SMER-SD	34.8% 62 seats	44.4% 83 seats	24.09% 4 seats	28.3% 49 seats
SAS	12.1% 22 seats	5.9% 11 seats	6.66% 1 seat	12.1% 21 seats
OL'aNO-NOVA	-	8.6%[30] 16 seats	14.29%[31] 2 seats	11.0% 19 seats
SNS	5.1% 9 seats	4.6% -	3.61% -	8.6% 15 seats
L'SNS	1.33% -	1.58% -	1.73% -	8.0% 14 seats
SME-RODINA	-	-	-	6.6% 11 seats
MH	8.1% 14 seats	6.9% 13 seats	5.83% 1 seat	6.5% 11 seats
SIEŤ	-	-	-	5.6% 10 seats
KDH	8.5% 15 seats	8.8% 16 seats	13.21% 2 seats	4.9% -
SDKU-DS	15.4% 28 seats	6.1% 11 seats	7.75% 2 seats	0.3% -

8. Explaining Demand for Right-Wing Extremism in Hungary and Slovakia

The rise of Jobbik and L'SNS can be easily identified as a rise in demand for right-wing extremism in Hungary and Slovakia. Based on the profile of potential voters and their demand for right-wing extremism, it is possible to extract useful information about the rise of extreme right parties. For this purpose, the thesis uses the DEREX index (**DE**mand for **R**ight-wing **EX**tremism).

DEREX devides demand for right-wing extremism into four categories; prejudices and welfare chauvinism, anti-establishment attitudes, right-wing value orientation, and lastly fear, distrust and pessimism. According to the designers[32]:

> "Our definition of right-wing extremism is thus based upon both ideological and psychological elements. The first three sub-indices (prejudice and welfare chauvinism, right-wing value orientation and anti-establishment attitudes) are inherent parts of extreme right-wing ideology

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[29] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-sk-2014.html, http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/slovakia2.html

[30] OL'aNO only

[31] In separate formations; OL'aNO took 7.46% and 1 seat, NOVA took 6.83 and 1 seat

[32] http://derexindex.eu/About_DEREX

according to practically every author who studied the subject. The fourth (fear, distrust and pessimism) includes emotional factors that typically fuel the first three components, according to previous research. Right-wing extremism is therefore defined by these four qualities; however, we define an individual as a potential right-wing extremist if his answers to the ESS survey questions evince attitudes and ideas that meet the criteria for at least three of the four categories."

The results of the DEREX survey are described as follows:

8.1. Hungary

Although the overall demand for right-wing extremism is around 10%, the Hungarian society scores very high, above 50%, in the category of prejudices and welfare chauvinism. Anti-establishment attitudes have deteriorated around 20% along with right-wing value orientation. Fear, distrust and pessimism ranks low among Hungarians, around 15%.

Having a closer look at *chart 1,* we can see that in the period 2008-2009 anti-establishment attitudes reached their peak with 46%. This can be attributed to the general dissatisfaction towards the ruling political elite MSZP in the aftermath of the *'Oszöd Speech'.* In the 2010 national elections, this dissatisfaction has manifested into heavy defeat for MSZP, autocratic win for Victor Orban and Fidesz and the electoral breakthrough of Jobbik. Using populist, anti-establishment and anti-Roma rhetoric, Jobbik managed to improve its electoral performance as supply met demand.

According to surveys regarding the Roma minority in Hungary, 60% of the responders share the view that "the inclination to criminality is in the blood of Gypsies", 82% declared that the Roma people's problems would end "when they started working", 42% would agree if clubs and pubs forbid Roma access and around 66% of ethnic Hungarians would not allow their children to become friend with a Roma child (Human Rights First, 2015).

The latest referendum regarding the Hungarian refugee quota, although invalid due to the low 43.8% turnout (needed at least 50%), showed that the Hungarian society is deeply affected by anti-immigrant and welfare-chauvinistic sentiments, as 3.5 million people vote against the quota and the 'refugee invasion'[33].

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[33] https://www.rt.com/news/361390-hungary-referendum-migrant-quotas/

Chart 1. DEREX index (Hungary)[34]
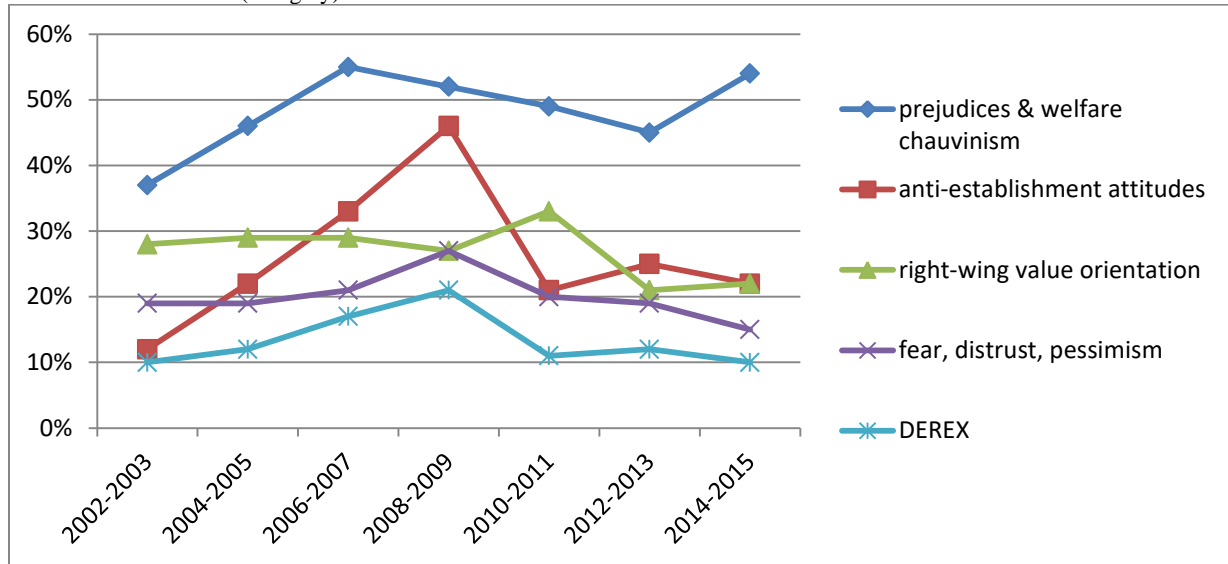
8.2. *Slovakia*

Data from DEREX index about Slovakia are not up-to-date and do not allow to compare with the recent electoral breakthrough of L'SNS. However based on the trends it is possible to shape the overview of extreme right demand in the Slovak society.

Prejudices and welfare chauvinism ranks high in Slovakia and may be over 40% today according to the trend. Additionally, the Slovak society can be characterized by a rising right-wing value orientation and high anti-establishment attitudes, both above 30% while negative feeling (fear, distrust, pessimism) ranked at 20% in 2012-2013. The overall demand for right wing extremism reached 13.3% in 2013. The positive trends in the three basic categories and overall DEREX index have expressed with the electoral breakthrough of extreme right party L'SNS and the re-emergence of radical right SNS.
Deepening of the social and economic problems, continuing the political turbulences around situation with Roma minority, public's fatigue with the old, established parties and nourishing the racist discourse in public life has acted in favor of L'SNS (Mesežnikov, 2013, pp.5-6), which has built its rhetoric on anti-Roma and populist, anti-establishment positions.
Relevant public opinion surveys in Slovakia reflect demand for right-wing extremism; Patyi & Levická (2014) using a sample from Eastern Slovakia (Prešov, Košice and

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Sabinov, with significant Roma population) found out that "71% of the respondents have a negative experience with the Roma minority", "up to 75% of the population expressed the view that the state provides the Roma minority high social benefits and the economic burden of the working group", while "58% think that crime in the region is mainly committed by the Roma minority" and "57% of the respondents perceived physical threat from the Roma minority"; Open Society Foundation (2012) found out that 69.7% of the population disapprove allowing Muslims to practice their faith and 37.2% of the population "agreed that the when the state is unable to guarantee order, people ought to do it themselves, even if by employing violence".

Chart 2. DEREX index (Slovakia)[35]
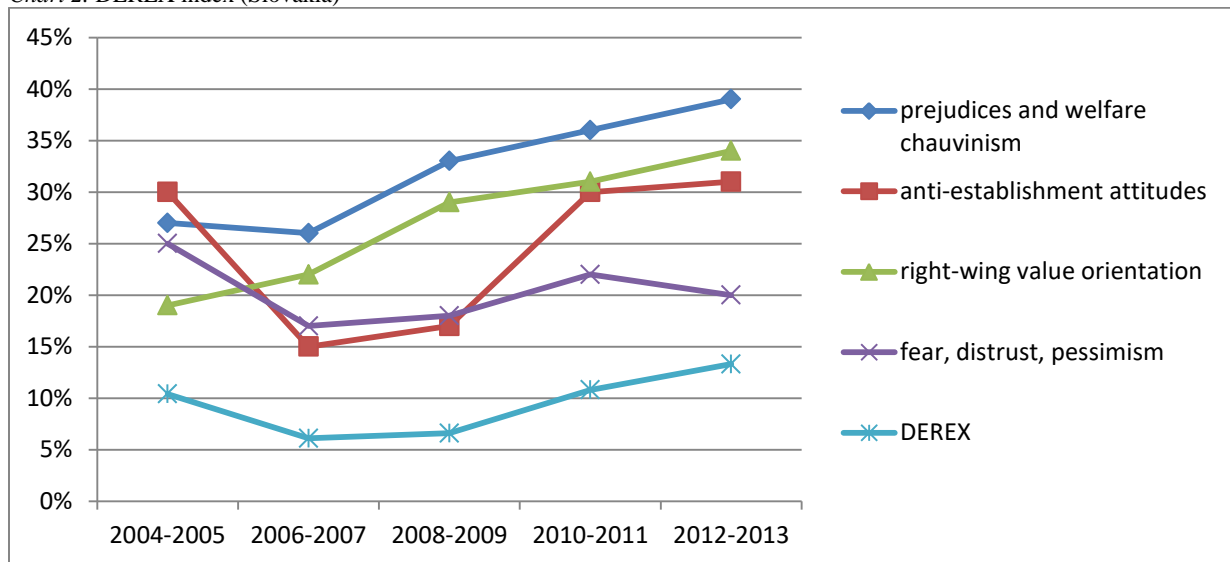
9. Conclusions

This thesis has as basic goal to reveal the real ideology of the extreme right party family focusing on the cases of Jobbik and L'SNS and their particular idiosyncrasies.

   The vast majority of the literature is concentrated around the concept of radical right or the à-la-Mudde populist radical right, while most of the relevant studies consider Jobbik as part of this party family. Although it is still early, and no important studies have been published, applying the same pattern to L'SNS, it is possible to direct us in a radical right categorization as its ideology combines nationalism, authoritarianism and populism

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[35] http://derexindex.eu/countries/Slovakia#Slovakia

and it operates within the parliamentary democratic framework, thus accepting democracy.

However, this thesis, based on a combination of ideological features, statements, present and past activities and their historical evolution and background, considers Jobbik and L'SNS as extreme right parties with anti-democratic orientation;

i. Penetrating the parliament does not suggest acceptance of democracy, as extreme right formations and parties tend to hide their extremism in order to operate without legal restrictions. In fact, the predecessor of L'SNS, SP-NS led again by Marián Kotleba was disbanded due its openly anti-democratic and extremist electoral program; L'SNS though was able to compete despite the fact that its leader declared "I am the same Kotleba and I will also forever"[36] clearly pointing out his extreme right ideology;

ii. The presence of paramilitary groups (Magyar Garda and SP) founded and supported openly by the parties implies strong commitment to right-wing extremism;

iii. Building their political agenda on endogenous issues like corruption and the presence of ethnic minorities and based on society's prejudices, dissatisfaction and authoritarian values, they are able to mobilize support, keeping though extremist, sometimes neo-fascist and pro-Nazi, discourse for hardcore supporters and members in undisclosed rallies;

iv. Direct references from Jobbik and L'SNS officials to the interwar fascist regimes of Horthy and Hlinka/Tiso respectively, reflect party ideology;

v. Another important factor that boosts the position of extreme right parties arises from the level of political interaction. Mainstream political actors co-opt with the extreme right political agenda in order to appeal on its voters, and thus legitimizing extremist discourse.

As it has been portrayed Jobbik and L'SNS draw and base their ideology and rhetoric on contemporary issues such as transition problems, ethnic minorities, corruption, immigration and EU integration therefore can qualify as "post-Communist ERPs". According to Mudde (2000a, p.25), who has forecasted their success since 2000: "only

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[36] http://stopfasizmu.sk/5-stale-ten-isty-kotleba/

those ERPs that situate their party identity in the post-Communist period – that address contemporary issues and provide contemporary solutions – will be able to succeed electoraly". Demand for such solution is high in Hungary and Slovakia as has been showed through the DEREX index.

Having consolidated its position as the third biggest country in Hungary with continuous rising in electoral performance Jobbik experienced a decrease in electoral gains for the first time in the 2014 European elections. This can be attributed to electoral fatigue and voter fatigue that also expressed through the 2016 'refugee quota' referendum and its low turnout. In order to regain supprters and capture new mainly from Fidesz, a potential turn towards mainstream politics seems possible. In fact this has been portrayed by Vona's removal of the three most extremist deputies from the party leadership[37].

In respect to L'SNS, it is still early trying to forecast, but early signs show its chameleonic ability that gave the opportunity to penetrate democracy and parliament. But the political party spectrum is different in Slovakia. To the left of L'SNS lies the radical right SNS, approximately with the same electoral support (8% for L'SNS & 8.6% for SNS) and similar electorate. It remains to be seen which strategies they are going to implement in the battle for electoral gains.

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[37] http://hungarianspectrum.org/2016/04/21/gabor-vona-of-jobbik-cleans-house/

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