

Title: Socialization of CEE Governments in the EU Environment - Who Shapes the Norms?

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work in progress

The paper focus on the effect of socialization of selected government parties in the CEE region after past elections in the Czech Republic (2013), Poland (2011 and 2015), and Slovakia (2012). After the year 2004 comes the drop in these positive perceptions and a shift toward the model of a daily struggle with European matters. At the same time, a gradual growth (measured in time) of socialization toward party actors in the European political arena is occurring and there exists a presumption that their stances are subsequently reflected in party programs and activities. How current governing political parties consider the level of their socialization on the European political arena? Does the European environment shape their perception of national interests towards the EU or it is the a opposite way?

With the entrance into the EU, countries in the CEE regions reached a so-called *Return to Europe*. While this moment is often perceived as having only just achieved political and economic success, a great part of getting closer to Europe began only after the year 2004. To the direct actors, entrance into the EU meant the climax of getting closer to the so-called old EU countries. After the year 2004 began the much more difficult process- accepting the norms of the functions of the EU and of the European political arena as well as their socialization. A common part of the political discourse in the CEE states was the normative perception of the region as different or "more frozen" than the old member states of the EU.

Speaking about the framework of socialization, two dimensions have to be considered. Firstly, the arenas of socialization, in this case the effect of European arena on national level in terms of penetration by norms, ideas, and habits. Secondly, the effects of norms uploaded by individual parties to the arena. Paciorek-Herrmann (2012)¹ defines this process as a “doing” and “socialization” where she distinguishes between the arena and practices of (changing)

¹ Paciorek-Herrmann Dagmara (2012): ‘Doing Socialization’ after Accession, in Matthias Waechter, François Bafail, Europeanisation after EU Accession: Transformation, Reform and Compliance in Recent EU Member States, pp. 343- 358.

environment. At the same time, she puts strong emphasis on the change of the arena (environment) through new bunch of players (parties) after the 2004 and 2007 EU enlargement. Paciorek-Herrmann argues that the attention should be paid to process as such in terms of “analytical emphasis on the reflexive, practical process and the “socialization” (...) to analyse the effects of the process”. This enables to analyse the arena from bottom up and horizontal perspective. In other words, we consider this approach useful due to the fact that we pay attention to the time period after the states became members of the EU and do not consider the European arena as a static, but as constantly developing. Therefore, the practice – in terms of routinized manner – of policy making results in norm change (Paciorek-Herrmann 2012, 2).

Using this framework the research aims to explore the influence of party's penetration into the EU institutional structure on the (anti)nationalistic rhetoric of individual parties. To investigate the influence of process, however, is needed. Namely the causality whether deeper penetration of the political party in the EU institutional structure influences weakening of nationalistic tendencies, or vice versa.

Setting of the framework for the context of political parties in the V4 sticks to the logic of process/praxis of policy making in the European arena; in other words doing of socialization. The reason for following this argumentation lies in using the horizontal approach to the European political environment and perceiving the arena as space for top-down and bottom-up process at the same time. It means that we do not stick to one process with any preference. In this understanding, the arena is understood as a space of shared interest as well as policy making. Following Paciorek-Herrmann argumentation, the socialization is constantly executed through praxis. Therefore, norms are considered as *norms*² of players (i.e. political parties) as the institutionalized interests of players and (their) *identity*³ (i.e. policy priorities) as concept upon which the interests (influencing certain policy) rely.

European arena as a quasi-institutionalized space where actors push their interests and influence certain policy outcomes. This space is based on broad institutionalized structure – the institutions of the EU, the European political parties and interactions among them. The

² Katzenstein (1996, 5) understands norms as a collective expectations for the proper behavior of actors with given identity. See Katzenstein Peter J. (1996): Introduction: An Alternative Perspective on National Security, in *The Culture of National Security*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein, New York: Columbia University Press.

³ For definition of identity understading see eg <http://www.cceidentity.eu/news/how-understand>

meaning of the space is shaped by normative perception of the pro integration approach. At the same time, this opens opportunity for politicizing of the space and participation of anti-integration parties and movements. This composition creates rational choice theory based space where members of the space maximize their profit in meaning influencing policy outcomes, setting of structure of the space, and personal representation. At the same time, there absents the European based responsibility that remains on the national level. However, still the effect of socialization on individual actors by the normative pro integration coloured environment cannot be omitted. All these elements create complex of European and national arena of interests and divergent goals.

The European arena and its effects

The European arena is understood as normative one in terms of being integration supportive by definition. It consists of the European Parliament and Commission, Council of Regions, ECOSOC, and European Political Parties in terms of party members elected or nominated to the positions in mentioned institutions. This logic is supported also by the need of being supporter of the European integration as a one of conditions for new commissioners. Therefore, it is expected that parties that participate on the European level of politics will share EU positive attitudes. In other words that these parties will participate on the European level with greater extent than nationalistic ones. The normative substance of the EU institutions can be shown in case of those who create the normative environment in term of EU integration supportive. From broader perspective, those who perceive the EU institution as a positive thing and develop the EU supportive environment are the most relevant movers and shapers of the normative EU supporting environment. Those, who do not consider the institutions positive in terms of supporting of the EU integration, do not implement their activities in significant extend.

Influence of the EU arena

According the research conducted by Vít and Němeček (2015)⁴ on effects of socialization parliament parties in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia in the EU political arena and its effect on national identity and norms perception there exists following relationship: the

⁴ Vít Michal, Němeček Miroslav (2015): Attitudes towards nationalism and European integration: Are political parties behaving consistently in the European arena and within the nation state? (in review)

parties promoting the international cooperation, further European integration and are not using nationalistic rhetoric are also occupying more position within the EU structures by their nominees. This relationship works also the opposite way, and the parties promoting importance of preserving of national sovereignty and refusing any form of transnational cooperation are disposing by the opposite tendencies in their integration into the structures of European institutions. Speaking about period 2004 – 2013 we have not witnessed systematic tendencies of parties emphasizing nationalism to penetrate the EU structures in order to support their attitudes on the European level.

If we look at recent development in the CEE region, we experience continual rise of single party national governments. To analyze their uploading policy priorities on the EU level and way how they are influenced by that environment at the same time, we can have a look on Slovak and Czech governing political parties. To lesser extend also to Polish ones, but due to the fact that new government was constituted recently, we can only try to predict the PiS activates in this regard. Comparable data for Hungary are missing; therefore, only broader social and political patterns can be compared.

Governing parties influenced by the EU arena

The Czech governing parties (ČSSD, KDU-ČSL) showed that with their bigger participation on the EU decision. This can be demonstrated in terms of softening their nationalistic policies and adopting rhetoric for international cooperation in their election manifestos. This was also the case of Slovak government party Smer – SD that has softened its rhetoric in the past the 2013 election manifesto. And lastly, also Polish government parties PO and PSL from the period 2011 – 2015 proved softening of national colored mentions in the manifestos. If we consider the current political reality of the CEE region, these results can serve as a helping tool for further analysis. The recent rhetoric of Smer-SD against immigrants to defend proclaimed Slovak national interests in the EU is in sharp contrast with the track of cooperation in the EU arena. Although comparable data on Hungary parties are missing, the long track of significant cooperation on the EU arena does not look as having effect on Fidesz policies claiming to *defend national interests*. The effect of newly elected PiS government is not possible to evaluate. Nevertheless, the data shows that PiS is reluctant to redefine its national friendly rhetoric even if its representatives participate on the EU political area extensively.

Number of nationalism negative and positive codes included in the election manifestos (only government parties)⁵

Party	Year	NAT_positive	No. changes	NAT_negative	No. changes
ANO	2013	2	-	1	-
CSSD	2006	1	-	1	-
CSSD	2010	4	3	1	0
CSSD	2013	3	1	0	1
KDU	2006	2	-	0	-
KDU	2010	7	5	2	2
KDU	2013	3	4	1	1
PSL	2005	0	-	0	-
PSL	2007	1	1	4	4
PSL	2011	2	1	0	4
PO	2005	2	-	0	-
PO	2011	2	0	0	0
PiS	2005	0	-	5	-
PiS	2007	0	0	1	4
SMER	2006	1	-	1	-
SMER	2010	3	2	3	2
SMER	2012	2	1	0	3

Source: author

Since 2015, three V4 countries are represented by single party government that either does not prove and sing of influence of the EU environment or its rhetoric is in sharp contrast to claimed policy in the election manifesto. At the same time, PiS, Smer-SD, and Fidesz have long track record of participation in the EU political arena. This can be understood as declining interest on the EU politics as well as active contributing to the shared norms and goals. From different perspective, we should ask what does it mean for shaping of shared EU norms and praxis, while developing self-oriented policy towards the EU takes place? And, most importantly, if the socialization process throw above mentioned *doing* and *socialization* is, still, an effective tool how to shape shared EU perception and norms. What is even more interesting from perspective of long term development is the outlook of cooperation of self-interests oriented governments on policy making. Do they justify developing shared interest without shared normative and socialization framework of the EU? One possible way of development will be to observe how the European arena will be reshaped by political parties that consider the current integration supporting one as not relevant.

⁵ For more methodological details see www.cceidentity.eu

