

Schmidt Andrea

University of Pecs, Faculty of Humanities

CHALLENGES OF THE ILLIBERAL DEMOCRACY IN HUNGARY. SOME ASPECTS TO THE 2018 ELECTIONS

DOI: 10.2478/ppsr-2018-0014

Author

Andrea Schmidt PhD is a political scientist and an Associate Professor at the University of Pecs, Hungary, Department of Political Sciences, and International Studies and former Visiting Lecturer and the Josai Institute for Central European Studies Josai International University, Tokyo, Japan, and Visiting Lecturer at Ivan Franko National University in L'viv, Ukraine. She specializes on International Political Economy and Comparative Political Studies of the Central and Eastern European region. She did her habilitation on International Relations focusing on Geo-economics.

ORCID no. 0000-0002-1276-8557

e-mail: schmidt.andrea@pte.hu

Abstract

Political transformation reached Hungary in parallel with other Central and Eastern European countries at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s. The core of the events, the year of 1989, the so called “annus mirabilis” when, within one year almost the entire Central and Eastern European region stepped onto the path of changes. The actors adopted Western patterns within a short period, institutions of new political systems were established, and a new political power verified and consolidated its legitimacy by free elections. As a final proof of transformation, most of former socialist bloc member states joined both the NATO and the European Union. Hungary had the chance to enter in the 21st century under radically changed and much more favourable conditions than it ever had before. This smooth transformation interrupted by political and economic crisis that finally led to the victory of the opposition that managed to repeat the next elections and implemented the Programme of National Cooperation. The aim of the paper is to analyse why the adoption of the new system enjoys wide support from different social groups and how the old fixations and obsessions persisted in society. This paper also gives a brief explanation about the nature of illiberal democracy in a wider scope and link it with the history of the Hungarian democracy, the (dis) functioning institutions, and confirms the argumentation with some statistical data explaining the correlation between the support of the government and the living standards. It investigates, if the Hungarian illiberal democratic regime interpreted as consequence of the troublesome system changes or if it is rooted in the distorted political system.

Keywords: transformation, illiberal democracy, political culture, elections

Introduction

“Democracy... is a charming form of government, full of variety and disorder; and dispensing a sort of equality to equals and unequals alike” (Plato)

Political transformation reached Hungary in parallel with other Central and Eastern European countries at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s. The core of the events, the year of 1989 was referred to as the “annus mirabilis” (Kornai, 2005) because within one year

almost the entire Central and Eastern European region stepped onto the path of changes. Transformation into market economies and the establishment of democratic states and further social and cultural changes could take place within new political framework. The year of 1989 seemed to be affected by the conviction of the global triumph of world capitalism and the rule of law based on democratic concepts. (Tölgyessy, 2017) This optimistic approach was based on the dominance of the principles of the Western civilisation both in economic policy and in the political systems determined by the competition of different parties. The contributing partners adopted Western patterns within a short period, institutions of the new political systems were established, and the new political power verified and consolidated its legitimacy by means of free elections. (Schmidt, 2016). Fifteen years later the transformation came to an end as most of former socialist bloc member states joined the European Union.

All these changes took place in Hungary peacefully and without a single shot being fired. These changes calmed the fears of sceptical analysts and, together with Poland; Hungary was treated as one the best examples of a smooth and rapid transformation. (Berend 1999, 2010, Szelényi, 2004, Kornai 2005, Bohle – Gerskovits, 2012) Hungary had the chance to enter in the 21st century under radically changed and much more favourable conditions than it ever had before. However, two years after joining the European Union the events that followed the elections in 2006 and the consequences of the 2008 economic crisis have rewritten the optimistic expectations. In spring 2006, for the first time in the Hungarian post-socialist history, the ruling coalition managed to repeat electoral victory and remained in power. The opposition experienced a mental shock, but a couple of months later, in September 2006, three weeks before the municipal elections, the streets of Budapest resembled a battlefield, as frequent demonstrations disturbed the everyday life. This political uncertainty accompanied with the economic crisis and its consequence in 2009, altogether undermined the legitimacy of the government. The acting prime minister abdicated, while a new technocrat government was forced to concentrate on rapid crisis management. One year later, in 2010, the opposition parties gained power, and, for the second time since 1998, Viktor Orbán was elected as Prime Minister. Since 2010 he and his party won two further elections. Benefiting from this advantage, the Programme of National Cooperation (NER= Nemzeti Együttműködés Rendszere) has been implemented. Nowadays the Hungarian political system seems to be far from the ideas that determined the early 1990s. Several critical arguments follow every step of the Hungarian government, while the Hungarian model recalls various negative remarks.

The aim of the paper is to analyse why and how this new system enjoys wide support from different social groups and how the old fixations and obsessions persisted in society. In order to strengthen the arguments, it is our intention to give a brief explanation about the nature of illiberal democracy and link it with the history of the Hungarian democracy, the (dis)functioning institutions, and confirm the argumentation with some statistical data explaining the correlation between the support of the government and the living standards. Finally, we would like to indicate whether the Hungarian illiberal democratic regime can be explained as a consequence of the troublesome system changes or if it is rooted in the distorted political system.

The History of the Fragile Hungarian Democracy

Although Hungary served as a symbol of a smooth and peaceful transformation, Hungarian citizens had an only limited experience of democratic institutions in the previous centuries. Being an integral part of the Habsburg Monarchy, the peaceful coexistence determined the functioning of the political institutions from the second part of the 19th century. In 1848, on the basis of the successful revolution, the newly established Hungarian National Assembly worked out the basis of a new state system, still within the framework of the Habsburg Monarchy. The Act on Election from 1848, grounded the terms of a new legislative power by giving roughly 7.5 % of the population the right to vote. The new National Assembly had the first session with 377 representatives, from whom around a quarter belonged to the bourgeoisie.¹ The Hungarian Act on Election was modified twice prior to the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy, but the share of the population having elective right had not changed significantly.² Participation in elections in Hungary was thus the privileged position only for a select group of people, in particular the nobility.

The first Hungarian democratic experiment (Góralczyk, 2002) was extinguished at first with the lost War of Independence in 1849 due to the Austrian and Russian supremacy, and for the second time in 1867, based on the Compromise.³ The Interwar period introduced a system that could be identified somewhat with the principles of the *competitive authoritarian* regime. (Levitsky and Way, 2002) These types of regime dominated in the majority of the Central and Eastern European new independent states at that time with Czechoslovakia as the only exception.⁴

The Horthy regime that was named after the acting governor, Miklós Horthy, lasted from 1920 to 1944. The system itself was referred to in various ways; it was called conservative, Christian-nationalist, authoritarian, or even fascist.⁵ In the first decade after the Trianon treaty, that resulted in territorial and economic loss for Hungary, the government was focusing on political consolidation. The acting prime minister, István Bethlen was in troublesome situation facing the childhood diseases of democracy, such as anarchy, the

¹ This 7.5 percent seems a bit weak, but according to the practice in the 19th century, the Hungarian Act on Election was quite liberal. 1848.5. Act on Election, http://mnl.gov.hu/a_het_dokumentuma/kepviselovalasztas_1848ban.html

² In the Western European countries the situation was just the opposite. By the end of the First World War, a greater share of the population received the possibility of exercising voting rights, while in Hungary, this share was even cut.

³ The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was a well-functioning regional integration focusing on common economic policy with free trade, a common currency, and the elimination of the customs frontiers within the Monarchy; but as a political system, it remained a dynastic empire with limited democratic elements. The Hungarian parties were divided according to the question of whether they accepted the dualist system or denied it.

⁴ That corresponds with Linz's argumentation (Linz, 1975), in which he identifies authoritarian regimes according to the following elements: limited, not responsible political pluralism, without an elaborate and guiding ideology, but with distinctive mentalities, without extensive nor intensive political mobilization except at some points in their development; a leader, or occasionally a small group exercises power within formally ill-defined limits but actually quite predictable ones. Linz, J.J.: *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, 1975

⁵ Based on the events of 1918 and 1919, the dissolution of the historical Hungarian state with the threats towards the loss of the majority of its territories and the two revolutions; in 1918 and in 1919, the entire political system could be characterized with destroying, it was a natural claim to establish a strong government.

weak state and “mass democracy”. As Bethlen emphasized, Hungary was still not ready for mass democracy, as it could lead to anarchy, disintegration, and dictatorship. (Turbucz, 2007) He also had to concentrate on integration and internal cohesion that were key elements in the Hungarian mentality; in particular the territorial loss that determined the Hungarian political discourse. The interwar years in Hungary were thus influenced by the idea of peaceful (or, from the late 1930s, even violent) territorial revision. Every single political decision was saturated by the territorial claims. The efforts to gain back the lost territories assisted in the decision that determined Hungary entering the Second World War on the side of Germany.

A relatively short phase of democratization in Hungary took place between 1945 and 1948; however that freedom was limited and was controlled by the Soviet Union. This democratic experiment lasted only until 1948 and ended with the transformation into a totalitarian regime. Hungary rapidly followed the Stalinist directives and ideology that was interrupted firstly in 1953 with the first Imre Nagy government established after Stalin's death, and secondly, with the 1956 revolution and War of Independence, Hungary gained at least a psychical victory.⁶ The Soviet tanks destroyed the Hungarian democratic ambitions but the Soviet politicians found a politician suitable for the Hungarian needs. Kádár János successfully embodied the myth of the Hungarian “forgotten man” and founded a regime valid and justified for approximately three decades.

The Birth of “Homo Kadaricus”

According to Huntington, the survival and legitimacy of authoritarian regimes depends heavily on their economic performance, that is, their output. The legitimacy of democracies, by contrast, is based mainly on input: shared ideas about what the political system represents and relatively durable electoral procedures that assure the representation of citizens' interests. Hybrid regimes aspire to achieve a balance between output and input elements of legitimacy, but ‘the coexistence of democratic rules and autocratic methods aimed at keeping incumbents in power creates an inherent source of instability’. (Mazepus et al, 2016) Or, there are those states that have undergone democratic erosion, where existing democratic institutions are undermined (e. g. through vote rigging), horizontal accountability is damaged in favour of expanding executive power, and the rights of citizens and the opposition are restricted. (Levitsky and Way 2002, Mazepus et al, 2016, Kneuer, 2017) Moreover, rulers in hybrid regimes often adjust to external circumstances and adapt their legitimation patterns to various democratization pressures, for example, popular demands or external events (Finkel and Brudny 2012, Mazepus, 2016).

The Kádár regime was an excellent example of the legitimacy of authoritarian regimes. Being appointed by the Soviet politicians representing the head of the state and gaining power on the ruins of a defeated war of independence, being responsible for the execution of the emblematic figures of the 1956 events, Kádár focused on keeping citizens far from any violent event. Kádár's power was based on the presence of the Soviet army and the ability to supply his citizens' needs. (Berend, 1999, Romsics, 2001) In order to avoid conflicts, he focused on compromise in internal policy and consumption in economic policy,

⁶ Milovan Djilas, the Yugoslavian Communist politicians had a similar comment on the Hungarian events. „The wound which the Hungarian Revolution inflicted on communism can never be completely healed.” (Swain et al. Eastern Europe since 1945)

even if this policy led Hungary into a debt trap in the 1980s. (Vigvári, Romsics, 2001, Lengyel et Surányi, 2013, Schmidt, 2014, Oplatka, 2014)

Consumption, or at least, the ability for consumption, served an important element of the mentality of the society. Based on the findings of Hofstede's Institute and the World Value Survey, Hungarians rather belong to the followers of secular-rational values versus traditional family values. Hungarian society is rather tolerant, or at least places less emphasis on religion, traditional family values, and authority. In other words, economic and physical security is considered as the most important value for the citizens. This latter is also linked with a relatively ethnocentric outlook and low levels of trust and tolerance.⁷ Hofstede's Institute examines the different countries upon six factors; power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty or avoidance, long-term orientation, and indulgence.⁸ Hungarian society belonged to the group of individualist societies with a high preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families only. In such societies, offence causes guilt and a loss of self-esteem; the employer/employee relationship is a contract based on mutual advantage; hiring and promotion decisions are supposed to be based on merit only; management is the management of individuals.⁹

Stability of these values was also determined by the fact that Hungarian society had to face a sequence of regime changes. The entire 20th century resulted in a rapid change in the political system. Since 1945 a special dualistic value represented the Hungarian society. Nationalisation of the land interrupted the wealthy aristocracy's and the Catholic Church's ability to keep hold of the financial basis of their survival. With the disappearance of these post-feudalist social groups, new views were transferred by the communist politicians returning back from the Soviet Union. As they represented two different worlds, obviously both groups viewed each other with suspicion. (Hankiss, 1988, Ungváry, 2014) The elimination of the thousand-year-old evidence that the wealth could be represented by the church and secular estates, or the appearance of the, previously not tolerated, communist values, the changes in the composition of the civil servants and the communist influence on it, caused confusion. Suspension of the clubs and other civic organisations in the late 1940s also led to the isolation of society.¹⁰

Andrew C. Janos writes about redistribution shock that characterized Central and Eastern European societies. He explains the asymmetry between economic development, or economic performance and political participation, arguing that, while in the Western European countries the extension of the civil rights followed the economic development, in the Central and Eastern European region this happened in the opposite way. The economic inequalities served as an obstacle to the popularity of the democratic values. (Janos, 2004)

Within a time-frame of 130 years, Hungarian society survived five waves of redistribution crisis that also determined both the position of the social classes and the values they shared. (Lengyel, 2016) As shown in figure 1, the translocation of assets and their redistribution resulted in the inclusion of new social groups with different values.

⁷ <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp>

⁸ <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country/hungary/>

⁹ <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country/hungary/>

¹⁰ In the 1930s and 1940s, there existed around 13,000–14,000 clubs in Hungary, while by 1950s as a result of the drastic order, less than 1,000 NGOs remained. Even most of them were involved in the political activity. <http://www.korall.org/hu/node/1718>

Table 1. The Steps of the Redistribution Crisis in Hungary

1.	1880–1918	Translocation of land assets to capital assets with the participation of the Jewish elite
2.	1938–1944	Translocation of the assets based on the Holocaust
3.	1946–1949	Nationalization of the private assets
4.	1987–1989	The first phase of privatization, from national to multinational ownership
5.	Since 2010	Redistribution of the assets; translocation from private to state-owned, from local to central, and from foreign to national ownership

Source: Lengyel, 2016, edited by the author

In the past century, within less than one hundred years, Hungary also experienced nine different system changes and only the last of these was peaceful, as the previous ones were all the result of violent events.¹¹ These cataclysms followed each other so rapidly that Hungarian society was forced to develop a special defensive mechanism that allowed them to overcome smoothly the sequence of shocks they had to face. This strategy embodied adaptability and survivability. The Hungarian reaction did not stop with these abilities, but their behaviour was influenced by the deficit of the trust towards the institutions bringing to the fore their personal interests. The following elements can be treated as the survival of these mechanisms:

1. Trust towards politicians and political institutions
2. Lack of self-confidence
3. Relation to the external environment

The geopolitical reality also served as an obstacle and an additional factor. While with the collapse of the bipolar system there was no doubt that Hungary belongs to Western culture, there was not a single dispute about where to orientate in the 1990s. There was the desire of many Eastern and Central Europeans to “shake off the colonial dependency implicit in the very project of Westernization.” (Appelbaum, 2018, Krastev, 2018)¹²

Value preference of Hungarian society was examined several times. Regarding the outcomes, most experts believe that these data are still influenced by the troubles in value changes inherited from 1945. (Hankiss, 1988, Ungváry, 2014, Tóth, 2017 Lengyel, 2016)¹³ The results of these polls proved that Hungarians were the least able to identify their close environment beyond the family members, a so-called atomized society (Hankiss, 1988, Körösi, 2015) that usually had the susceptibility to accept the way of social justice

¹¹ These are the following: 1. The Aster (or Chrysanthemum) Revolution in 1918, 2. The Hungarian Soviet Republic in 1919 spring, 3. The Horthy Regime in 1920, 4. The Szálasi coup d'état in 1944, 5. Democratic Transformation in 1945, 6. The Rákosi System in 1949, 7. The 1956 Revolution, 8. Kádár Regime, 9. The negotiated transformation in 1989. Csizmadia mentions nine types of regime changes (Csizmadia, 2018), while Tölgyessy counts eleven. (Tölgyessy, 2017)

¹² For two decades after 1989, the political philosophy of post-communist Central and Eastern Europe could be summarized in a single imperative: Imitate the West! The process was called by different names—democratization, liberalization, enlargement, convergence, integration, Europeanization—but the goal pursued by postcommunist reformers was simple. They wished their countries to become „normal”, which meant like the West... Imitation was widely understood to be the shortest pathway to freedom and prosperity. <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/article/explaining-eastern-europe-imitation-and-its-discontents>

¹³ Such surveys regarding value preferences were made in the 1980s, too; however, as Tóth remarked, the results were never published due to their harsh criticism towards the existing regime. (Tóth, 2017)

as a zero-sum game (Karácsony, 2007). The essence of this game means that the price of somebody's success can be measured by the failure of another. In other words, voters were sure that the price of their better condition is the worsening circumstances of others. "Homo Kadaricus" thus represents the abandoned man, who is less keen on criticism and trusts the state and the government, whose dreams are concentrated on small necessities, and leaves political participation to politicians. (Figyelő, 2007)

Regarding value preference, security (or financial security) was treated the most important value of the society as is shown in Figure 2. The present fear from unknown migrants or refugees who could threaten this security and take the jobs and goods determined that the communication of the government was beneficial.

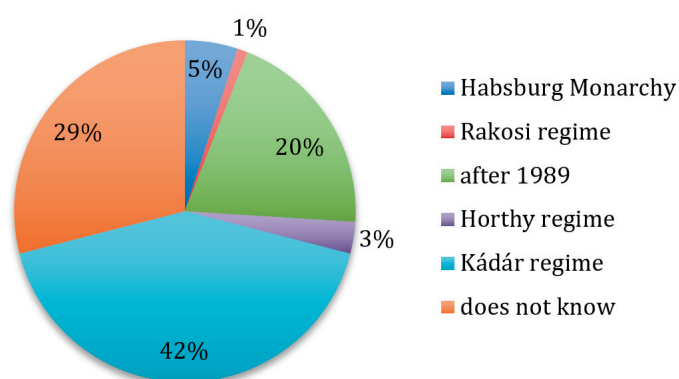
Table 2. Changes in Values from 1986 to 2007

	Values in 1986	Values in Kadar regime (2007)
1.	Financial security	Safety of workplace, no unemployment
2.	Freedom	Financial security
3.	Safety	Predictability

Source: Figyelő, 2007, edited by the author

Focusing on wellbeing also resulted the lack of interest in political behaviour. There was silent agreement among politicians and the citizens that "We shall guarantee your well-being and you don't have to deal with politics." The government let the people earn money (after the early 1980s they even needed to work hard to maintain the standard of living). Citizens tried to find their own ways for well being, "Homo Kadaricus" added another layer; it symbolised the quintessence of the Kádár regime: trust towards the promises. A politician's task was the increase of the standard of living using such tools that would not disturb the daily routine of the citizens. (Pető, 2012) Or, in other words, "the basis of the governance even within the democratic circumstances remained the same; the centre knows what to do and the guarantee of the success of the reforms is based on the exclusion of interference to the central division." (Figyelő, 2007)

Figure 1. Best time for Hungarians



Source: https://www.policysolutions.hu/userfiles/elemzes/275/magyar_alom_web.pdf [edited]

Hungarian society's value structure rests on rational yet closed thinking, a relatively weak commitment to democracy, distrust, a lack of tolerance and a demand for strong state intervention (Tóth, 2009). The systemic changes, the transition to a market economy and a period of privatisation notwithstanding, demand for state intervention, along with the desire to escape social instability, remained key aspects of the national preferences.

The weakest trust towards the transformation was measured in Hungary in 1997 and in 2009. In both years this distrust was in accordance with the Hungarian economic performance. The effects of the Hungarian shock therapy (Bokros package) towards the living standards a year later, met dissatisfaction, while in 2009 the consequences of the economic crisis and the uncertainty of the future of the mortgage loans paid in foreign currency again increased the level of distrust towards the government.¹⁴ Presuming that the trust towards the regime is strongly connected with its citizens' own financial conditions, there is nothing to be surprised at in the decrease in the support. Apart from the missing reforms, a general cleavage appeared within Hungarian society. The Hungarian left-wing parties experienced a massive decline in the general support, while society itself also underwent a dramatic neurosis. (Lengyel, 2008) Right before the financial crisis, Hungarian democracy reached a turning point in 2006 that Lengyel calls "Annus Miserabilis".¹⁵ The left orientated society broke into small elements while the streets of Budapest became full of disappointed violent citizens in 2006 who felt themselves cheated. Local elections, that followed the parliamentary elections, expressed the distrust of voters towards the government.

The Road to Illiberal Democracy

The past years political systems were referred to in various ways. The following definitions appeared in academic writings; "hybrid regime" but also "semi-democracy," "virtual democracy," "electoral democracy," "pseudo-democracy," "illiberal democracy," "semi-authoritarianism," "soft authoritarianism" and "electoral authoritarianism." (Levitsky and Way, 2002) According to Fareed Zakaria's definition "democratically elected regimes, often ones that have been re-elected or reaffirmed through referenda, are routinely ignoring constitutional limits on their power and depriving their citizens of basic rights and freedoms." (Fareed Zakaria, 1997). In illiberal democracies, political power is increasingly centralized while the freedom of people is concurrently eroded. Depending on the degree of centralisation, the character of an illiberal democracy can range from "nearly liberal" to "openly autocratic". Accepting the explanation of Tölgyessy, or Gyulai and Stein-Zalai (Gyulai – Stein-Zalai, 2016) the transformation in Central and Eastern Europe was influenced by democratization. However, the dissolution of the authoritarian regimes is not necessarily followed by the building up of pure democratic systems. Even

¹⁴ By 2009 roughly 90 % of mortgage loans were based on foreign currency. With the economic and financial crisis, more than 50,000 families became insolvent due to the increasing costs of monthly installments and the loss of job security. <http://www.origo.hu/gazdasag/hirek/20110822-hogyan-terjedt-el-a-devizahitelez-es-ki-a-felelos-erte.html> The Hungarian government had to struggle with twin deficit and ask for financial assistance from the IMF. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2008/oct/29/hungary-economy-imf-eu-world-bank>

¹⁵ That is a distinction from 1989 that was called Annus Mirabilis. The scandalous speech, the so-called Öszöd speech, made by Ferenc Gyurcsány confessing the lies the government had told to pretend governing provoked general dissatisfaction.

the authoritarian regimes could widen the participation of their citizens. In other words; it was hardly assumed that the direction from authoritarian regime to democratic system could be functioning in the opposite way. While the Great Recession made matters worse, democratic decline was already underway, because the number of countries that could call themselves democracies in good standing began to drop before the economic crisis hit. (Scheppelle)¹⁶

Gyulai and Stein-Zalai identify a so-called “grey zone” between democratic and authoritarian regimes, while Bozóki and Hegedűs use a “triple structure” instead. (Bozóki – Hegedűs, 2017) According to their argumentation, this grey zone, or middle zone is wide enough to identify certain models. The most important element of their analysis is the problem of whether these mixed types can create a different, intermediate system between democracy and dictatorship, or, if they are the limited versions of these latter systems. The Hungarian example is a proof that even consolidated democratic systems can be transformed to hybrid regimes; however, as the authors remark, the Hungarian case is a unique phenomenon demonstrating that such a system can exist within the democratic European Union. There is a further question related to the narrow path between “illiberal” and “antidemocratic”, that focuses on the problem whether this distinction still exists. (Muller, 2016) Regarding Hungary’s position related to democratic element, from among the 28 European Union member states, Hungary is in the weakest position according to Freedom House Report. (Bogaards, 2018)

Following Zakaria's argumentation, it is worth examining why Hungary’s political system is also identified as an example of an illiberal democracy. According to his perception, illiberal systems were not hybrid regimes any more, but the roots of democratic systems that are expecting a longer time frame for consolidation. Hybrid, or mixed regimes, such as illiberal democracies can be characterised as competitive authoritarianisms (Levitsky and Way, 2002), where the following democratic elements are still present, but the system favours the governing party, or “the competition is real, but not fair”. (Bozóki – Hegedűs, 2017) Ungváry came to a similar finding observing the elections in 2014 (Ungváry, 2014) According to Levitzky and Way, the following elements can be recognised; elections with limited freedom and transparency, with limited civil rights, transparent media, defects in the separation of power; the oppositional groups have to face more obstacles and the ruling parties can hardly loose the elections. Illiberal democracies are dynamically changing hybrid systems. (Bozóki-Hegedűs, 2017) In these mixed regimes political competition is still affordable; however in general the political institutions are in favor of the ruling groups. Hungary thus can be characterized as displaying the onset of autocratic, crypto-dictatorial trends, a slide towards semi dictatorship, or elected autocracy, or even an operetta dictatorship or a hybrid regime, or, as the deconsolidation of democracy, democratic backsliding, populist democracy, or selective democracy. (Bogaards, 2018)

In 2010 Viktor Orbán managed to gain the power for the second time after 1998 and four years later he repeated his victory. In a speech delivered at the 25th Bálványos Free Summer University, located in Romania's Transylvania region, in front of an audience primarily made up of ethnic Hungarians, Orbán declared that Hungary had abandoned the liberal principles of social organisation and, inspired by today's “international stars” such

¹⁶ <https://lawreview.uchicago.edu/publication/autocratic-legalism>

as China, Singapore, Turkey, and Russia, would adopt an illiberal form of governance (Orbán, 2014). He was emphasizing the Asian model, by which he means high levels of social discipline and low levels of public dissent. (Biró-Nagy, 2017) As he noted in his speech, he envisages a work-based society in which holding down a job will be paramount, implying that those who cannot or do not want to work will forfeit certain rights.

In an authoritarian system, the constitution proclaims institutional checks and balances but the constitutional powers are utterly unbalanced. The executive branch—especially the head of the executive: the president, the prime minister, or the *de facto* head of government—is not only superior in power but, in the legal sense, enjoys unchecked power. (Tóth, 2018) Buried within the general phenomenon of democratic decline is a set of cases in which charismatic new leaders are elected by democratic publics and then use their electoral mandates to dismantle by law the constitutional systems they inherited. These leaders aim to consolidate power and to remain in office indefinitely, eventually eliminating the ability of the public to exercise their basic democratic rights, to hold leaders accountable, and to change their leaders peacefully. (Scheppele) The new constitution has limited the opportunities for direct democracy making it more difficult for citizens to circumvent the Fidesz-controlled parliament.

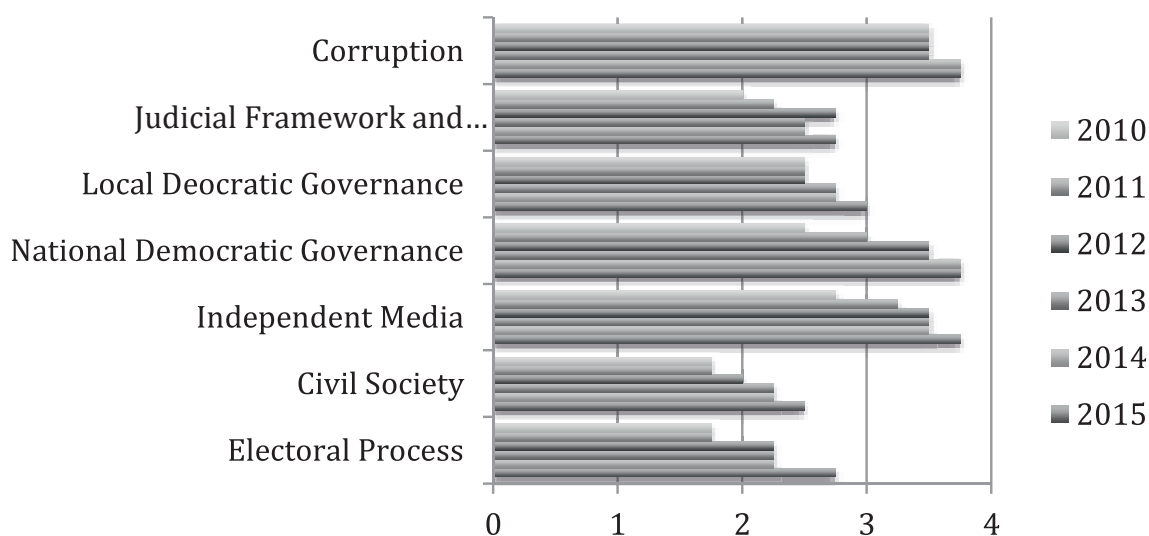
The new government also succeeded in destroying the components of consensus-based liberal democracy in the name of democracy. (Bozóki, 2012) The opening of the “illiberal democracy” was followed with the elimination of the independent institutions. It is beyond dispute that since 2010 Hungary has been experiencing an additional regime change. There is only a doubt as to since when this new system can be calculated. (Hegedűs, 2018, Juhász-László- Zgut, 2016)

From the beginning, Orbán's attack on Hungarian democracy was explicitly designed to not attract too much attention abroad. His tactic was to push the boundaries, wait for the response from EU structures, take a step back—and then push the boundaries again. He thus managed to stay within the EU and to continue receiving EU subsidies and benefits, even while adopting legislation that put him well outside European norms. (Biro-Nagy, 2017) Orbán did not just borrow *from* others; he also bequeathed his own tactics *to* others.

Its components focused on changes of the functioning of several institutions, rewriting the constitution; since 2011 at least seven modifications were implemented. The Fundamental Law of Hungary was a good example of the expansion of the ruling power by composing such a constitution that also represents the dominance of the ruling political power.¹⁷ Although the constitutional structures of authoritarian states inevitably consist of the three main parts—the legislative, the executive, and the judicial branches of government—they are not based upon the principles of checks and balances. (Tóth, 2018)

¹⁷ Authoritarian systems constitutionally retain multiparty elections and provide scope for the activities of opposition movements. What makes them distinctive is that the election is managed so as to deny opposition candidates a fair chance. Legal norms and practices ensure the dominance of the ruling party. The governing party may enjoy undue advantage because of partisan changes in election law, unequal suffrage, gerrymandering of electoral districts, restrictive campaign regulations, far from independent assessment of the election, and biased media coverage that blurs the separation between political party and the state (e.g. Hungary). (Tóth, 2018)

Figure 2.



Source: Freedom House Report, edited by the author

According to the Freedom House report on Hungary, the level of democratic progress in Hungary was in questionable position after 2015.¹⁸ It appears in the figure 3, that between 2010 and 2015 a harsh decline is visible in democratic values. Based on surveys led by Táarki in 2013, the researchers focused on four different aspects by analyzing Hungarian society.¹⁹ They found that there was a decline in the importance of democracy between 2009 and 2013. However, it has to be emphasized that the perception of democracy also changed according to the political beliefs of the questioned citizens. The 2009 economic and political crisis in Hungary resulted in the increase of distrust towards the political system and one year later, with the new Fidesz government, a general optimism was visible. Between 2012 and 2013, a new wave of distrust was recognizable, which demonstrates the fragility of the political regime. In the newest report the threat of corruption and the freedom of expression of belief a got even a lower score. The latter one is in connection with the high level of centralization of the media and the amendments to the Act on Higher Education that put the position of the Central European University in Budapest into question. The freedom of expression of belief cannot rely on a better position, since after the centralization of the higher education with the establishing of the positions of the university chancellors who became responsible for the management, and as all the financial affairs at the universities are centralized in their hands, the rectors' freedom of competence in decision making became shortened and indirectly that led to the reduction of the autonomy of the higher education. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences became the next step in the increase of control by depriving them of their autonomous status and putting them under the control of the Ministry of Innovation and Technology.²⁰

¹⁸ The democracy scores and regime ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the highest level of democratic progress and 7 the lowest.

¹⁹ Trust, following the norms, evaluation of the role of the state and the importance of democratic principles.

²⁰ <https://merce.hu/2018/09/11/palkovics-innovacios-miniszteriuma-feldarabolna-az-mta-t/> The Hungarian Academy of Sciences experienced the greatest loss in January. Right now it is still questionable

The partial regime of political participation rights is measured through two criteria: freedom of association and freedom of opinion, press and information. (Bogaards, 2018) The centralization of the media was carried out in parallel with the cutting of the financial resources of the independent media in the advertising market. This reduction and the changes in the ownership of non-governmental media resulted in the suspension of one of the most prestigious Hungarian daily newspapers, the *Népszabadság*, the closing of a weekly magazine, the *Heti Válasz* and the transformation of *Figyelő*, another weekly magazine, thanks to the changes in ownership. By 2018, roughly 80% of the total population had the chance to get information either from the Fidesz oriented newspapers or government controlled TV or radio channels.

For the first time since the end of socialism, a Hungarian magazine, “Figyelő” published the names of more than 200 people, claiming that they were part of a group that Prime Minister Viktor Orbán called “mercenaries” allegedly paid by U.S. Hungarian billionaire, George Soros, to topple the government.²¹ Those listed by the weekly *Figyelő* included members of rights organizations such as Amnesty International, the anti-corruption watchdog Transparency International, refugee advocates, investigative journalists and the members of the faculty from the, Soros-founded, Central European University. Some names on the list belonged to by that time, dead persons.

Another element of the centralization policy was the attack against the civil society. In 2014, May, the EEA Grants and Norwegian Grants were suspended because of the intervention in the activity of the NGOs that participated in the selection of the beneficiaries of EEA grants. The suspension was lifted in December 2015. The total sum of money Hungary got between 2009 and 2014 was 153.3 million EUR. Lack of transparency in procurement was also an element of corruption that was criticized several times by various actors.²² In February 2018 a new legislative package was discussed in the parliament. This proposal appeared under the name “Stop Soros”; the legislative package restricted the functioning of such NGOs that could be suspected of “supporting migration”. Based on the text, any organisation that does not comply, risks severe financial penalty, withdrawal of its tax number, or even closure.²³

Experiences from the 2018 Election

In the 2010 elections the Fidesz-KDNP (Christian Democratic Party) coalition achieved 53% of the votes that resulted in a constitutional majority with 68.13% of the mandates. Four year later, in 2014, based on the new Act on Election, the coalition repeated the same share of the votes. Thanks to the new system, the compensation and the votes from Hungarians living outside in the territory of the historical Hungary, all together less than 45% of the votes were enough to reach 68.83% of the mandates. The oppositional parties did

as to whether the scientific institutions belonging to the HAS can survive or if they will be suspended.

²¹ <https://www.euronews.com/2018/04/12/alarm-in-hungary-over-intimidatory-list-of-soros-mercenaries->

²² <https://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/hungary/>, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-global-corruption/hungary-slides-deeper-down-corruption-index-watchdog-says-idUSKCN1G52E6>

²³ <https://www.ecre.org/global-outcry-against-attack-on-civil-society-in-hungary/> This law requires organisations that receive more than 7.2 million HUF (approximately 24,000 EUR) in foreign donations per year to register as civil society organisations funded from abroad

not expect victory; only the level of the Fidesz majority was in question, as thanks to the basis of the new proportional electoral system, the supremacy of the governing parties was not an issue.

The oppositional groups faced dual challenges. Firstly, the constituency districts changed before the 2014 elections by location and by the size of the population. This Gerrymandering was explained away by several reasons, among others the necessity of less district because of the reduction of the number of constituencies from 386 to 199, and partly because of the demographic changes. In the old system the population of the smallest constituency was 33,077, while the population of the largest one was 98,167, which meant that the constituency vote of people living in larger constituencies was worth 3 times less than of those living in smaller ones.²⁴

Secondly, the compensation system also helped the ruling coalition to win the elections. Throughout the rancorous campaign, opposition parties criticized recent changes to electoral legislation, including rules that facilitated the creation of *instant parties*, or *fake parties* splitting the anti-government vote. As is visible from figure 4 and figure 5, these instant parties caused difficulties in voting, partly because of the number of candidates and party lists, and partly because of the similarities in the names of the parties. As since 1990 the financing of the parties and through them, the budget of the campaigns is still not transparent, the election campaign usually serves as fundraising occasions, sometimes with the participation of organised crime. Most of these grievances were echoed by critical assessments from international transparency watchdogs and an Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) election-monitoring delegation, which also pointed to strong government influence over media and advertising outlets and grossly unequal financial resources.

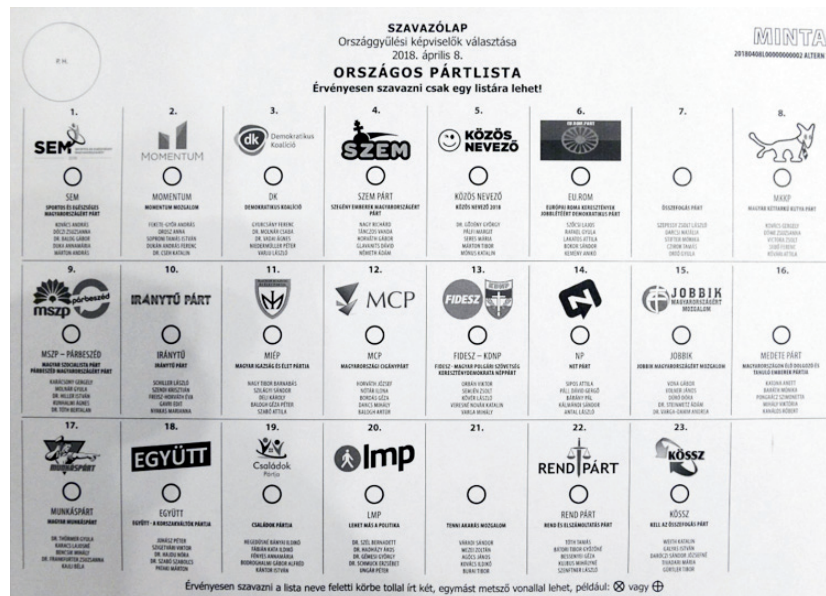
And finally, the dual system for foreign voters, under which ethnic Hungarians who have been awarded citizenship but have never lived in the country, can register and vote more easily than native Hungarian citizens living abroad.²⁵ Hungarians, living beyond the political borders, but within the historical borders of Hungary had the right to vote by post; however Hungarians, having a Hungarian address but working or studying abroad were forced to vote either in Hungary or at the polling stations abroad, such as in embassies or consulates. Participation in the election caused extra expense and the lack of Hungarian Representations in certain countries, required an extra trip to a third country.²⁶

²⁴ Az új választókerületek népeség arányai. <http://mindigis.blogspot.com/2012/02/az-uj-valasztoke-ruletek-nepesseg.html>

²⁵ <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/hungary>

²⁶ Although Malta is the member of the European Union, not having Representation in Valletta, the Hungarian voters could travel either to Italy, or to Tunisia to vote. <https://merce.hu/2018/02/27/tamas-aki-maltarol-tuneziaba-utazik-hogy-szavazhasson-aprilis-8-nan/>

Figure 3. Empty Ballot for the 2018 Elections



Source: <https://atlatzso.hu/2018/03/21/itt-a-lista-olvasoink-szerint-ezek-a-kamupartok-csaltak-az-alaira-saikkal/>

Figure 4. Empty Ballot with the Fake Parties



Source: <https://atlatzso.hu/2018/03/21/itt-a-lista-olvasoink-szerint-ezek-a-kamupartok-csaltak-az-alaira-saikkal/>

The other questionable issue was the percentage of those eligible who cast a vote. Based on the experience from the past elections since 1990, the electoral turnout in Budapest and

in the bigger cities was always at a higher level than in the rural regions, particularly in the Eastern counties. In previous elections the higher turnout was in favour of the liberal or left-wing parties, so as the observed data showed increased activity, it generated optimism among the opposition. Turnout reached 70.22%, which was 8.49% higher than the past election in 2014, but the Fidesz-KDNP coalition gained a landslide victory.²⁷ Naturally, after the first shock several theories were born regarding the results. These theories blamed, among other things the Act itself, or the presence of fake parties. Undoubtedly, altogether fictitious parties appeared on the ballot and sometimes caused confusion among the participants as some of them had similar names to those of “real” parties. The Fidesz-KDNP with 49.27% of the votes gained 66.83%, of the seats. The 2018 elections were suspected of suffering from gerrymandering; however the lack of the ability for a coalition among the oppositional candidates was also advantageous for the winners. Obviously, it is hard to calculate exactly how many mandates were given to the Fidesz-KDNP because of the lack of such cooperation.

There is another phenomenon that could also have influenced the results. The Hungarian Statistical Office annually publishes reports about the richest and poorest regions of Hungary. The Hungarian weekly magazine, the HVG (Heti Világgazdaság) reported the correlation between the poorest regions of Hungary and the share of the votes at the elections. Analysing the statistical data of the PPS (Purchasing Power Standard) in the ten poorest settlements of Hungary, the victory of the Fidesz-KDNP with a relatively big majority was a surprise.²⁸ The highest support for the reigning government came from such districts, which originally belonged to the left-wing party supporters.

Table 3. The Correlation between PPS and the Support of the Government in the Ten Poorest Villages in Hungary

	Name	Frequency (%)	First position		Second position		Third position	
1.	Gadna	79	Fidesz	90%	Jobbik	8%	Mo-i Cigánypárt	2%
2.	Rimabesenyő	65	Fidesz	81%	Családok Pártja	4%	Jobbik	3%
3.	Szakácsi	78	Fidesz	97%	MSZP-P	1.5%	Együtt	1.5%
4.	Abaújszolnok	51	Fidesz	61%	MSZP-P	29%	Jobbik	3%
5.	Uzka	61	Fidesz	74%	LMP	18%	MSZP-P	4%
6.	Fáj	83	Fidesz	99%	MSZP-P	0.5%	Mo-i Cigánypárt	0.5%
7.	Kispalád	49	Fidesz	77%	MSZP-P	10%	Jobbik	5%
8.	Kőkút	47	Fidesz	75%	MSZP-P	6%	DK, Jobbik	5% 5%
9.	Tornanádaska	71	Fidesz	90%	Mo-i Cigánypárt	5%	Jobbik	2%
10.	Csenyété	48	Fidesz	79%	Mo-i Cigánypárt	18%	Jobbik	1%

Source: <https://g7.hu/allam/20180409/a-legszegegyebb-magyarok-kozott-tobb-mint-80-szazalekot-szerzett-a-fidesz/> edited by the author

²⁷ <http://www.valasztas.hu/en/ogy2018>

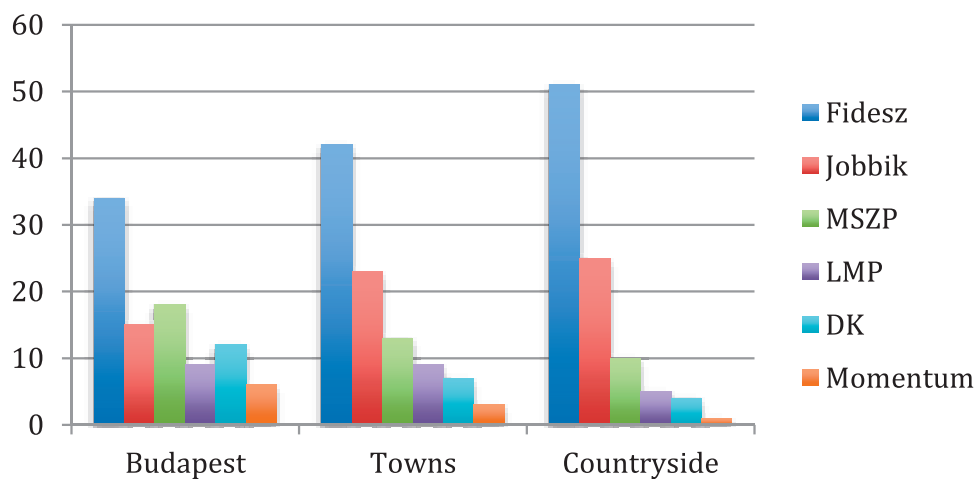
²⁸ https://hvg.hu/gazdasag/20180409_Tarolt_a_Fidesz_az_oroszag_legszegegyebb_falvaiban

It was strengthened by statistical data that the governing parties got the greatest support in the poorest regions. Apart from the fear of immigration the presence of *public works* also helped the governing coalition into victory. In these backward settlements this is the only real possibility of finding employment. Not having alternative options, the majority of the inhabitants of these depressed regions are strongly dependent on public works. Although these jobs are financed by the state budget, the only persons who the participants of the public works can identify are the mayors of the settlements, who depend on the local members of the parliament. Public works are those benefits that the Fidesz-KDNP government introduced by reducing the other varieties. The system has been functioning since 2011 and reached its peak five years later. In 2016, roughly 200,000 citizens were participating in the public work programme.²⁹

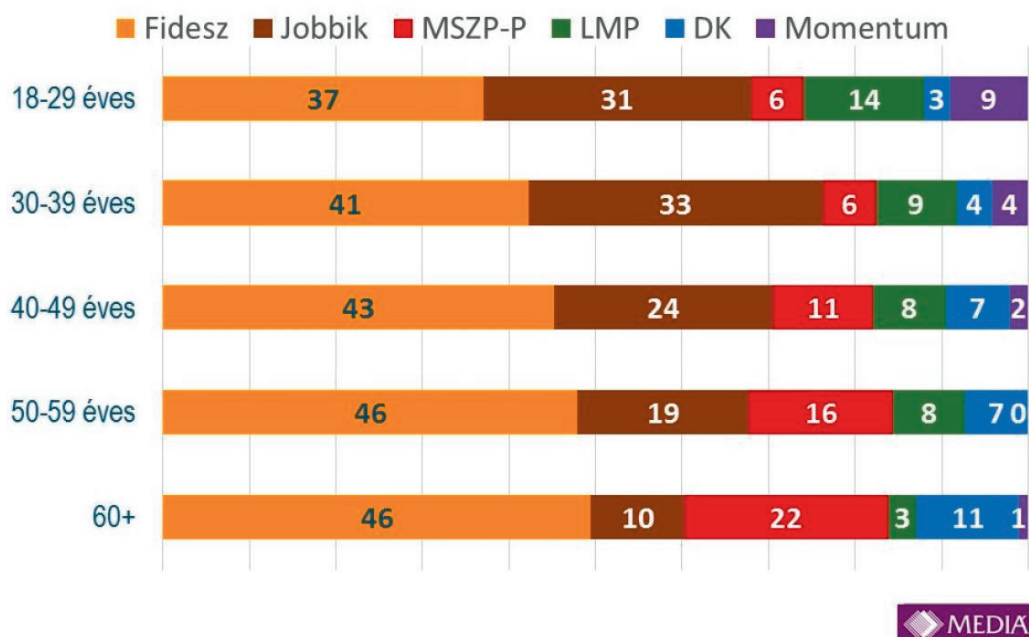
The reason for the victory of the Fidesz and KDNP thus can be explained with various reasons. In an interview, the former president of the Central European University, John Shattuck, formulated a further opinion. He remarked that several groups within the Hungarian society are still living in isolation, in a specific language prison, as only a small share of Hungarians speaks a foreign language. The lack of the knowledge of foreign languages also closes off them from information, while the centrally controlled media can easily supply them with fake news. It is a tendency in Central and Eastern Europe that being excluded from the alternative sources of information can easily lead to the acceptance of such information that Snyder calls a “Medium-Size Lie” (Appelbaum, 2018). These social groups are ready to engage, at least part of the time, with an alternative reality. Sometimes that alternative reality has developed organically; more often, it’s been carefully formulated, with the help of modern marketing techniques, audience segmentation, and social-media campaigns. A medium-size lie, or in other words, a conspiracy theory, is propagated first by a political party as the central plank of its election campaign, and then by a ruling party, with the full force of a modern, centralized state apparatus behind it. The core figure of the conspiracy theory is the Hungarian born Jewish billionaire, George Soros, who was identified as the greatest supporter of the import of migrants and the target of the governmental propaganda; but regarding the position of Jews in Hungary the latest surveys prove the presence of such theories.³⁰ The message of the election campaign of the Fidesz emphasized the threats from (practically non-existent) migrants. The Figure 6 and 7 show the spread of voters in different settlements and the party preference according to age group. Fidesz originally is an abbreviation of the Alliance of Young Democrats (Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége), but paradoxically the majority of its supporters come from rural areas and belong to the older generation.

²⁹ The total sum of the active population reached 4,500,000 in 2016, while the number of unemployed decreased from 466,000 (2011) to 191,000 (2017). With public works the unemployment rate decreased from 11–13% to 7–8%, however, public works do not cover 12 months per year, but they can modify the data. This data are based on the annual report of the Central Statistical Office. http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat_eves/i_qlf010.html

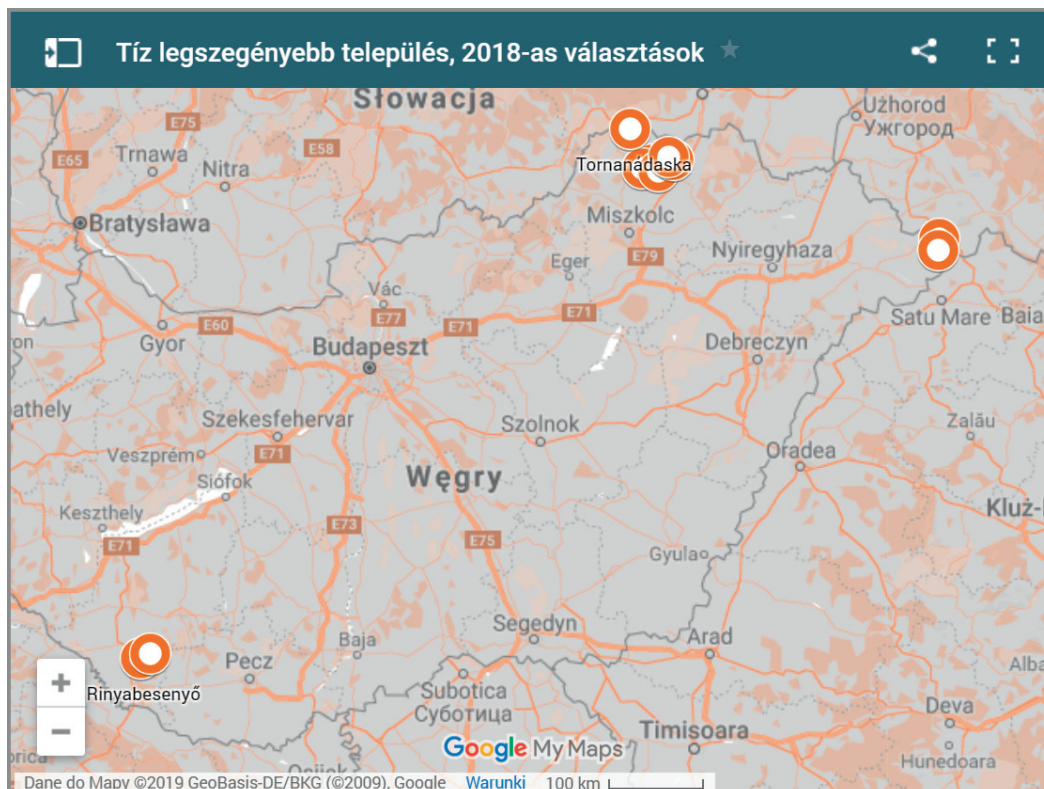
³⁰ Soros is portrayed as a puppet master manipulating opposition politicians or using NGOs to import millions of Muslim migrants into Hungary to change the demographic balance of the country. Caricatures of Soros as a malevolent wizard—or even as some kind of literally reptilian monster—tap into a rich vein of European anti-Semitic imagery. (Abramowitz- Schenkkan) <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/central-europe/2018-04-06/how-illiberal-leaders-attack-civil-society> Based on a poll made in the Visegrad Group states, roughly 40% of respondents think that Jews have too much power and the ability to control governments and institutions around the world. That was the among the core findings of the GLOBSEC survey in 2018. <https://www.globsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/GLOBSEC-Trends-2018.pdf>

Figure 5. Share of Votes in 2018

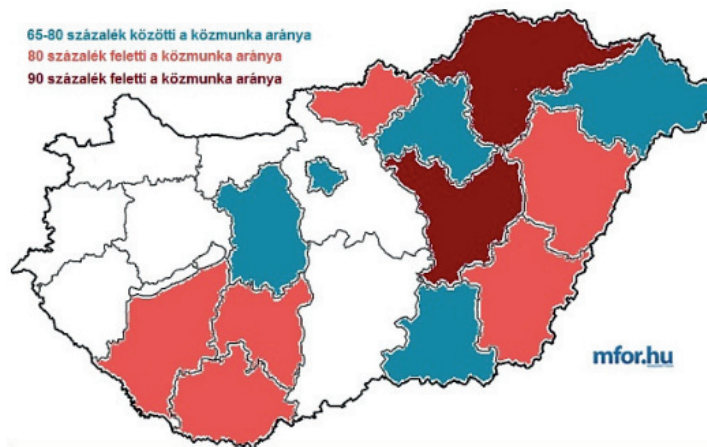
Source: Median, edited by the author https://444.hu/2018/04/10/a-fiatalok-kozott-a-leggyengobb-a-fidesz?utm_source=mandiner&&utm_source=mandiner&utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=mandiner_201810;utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=mandiner_201804?utm_source=mandiner&utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=mandiner_201804

Figure 6. The Share of Votes upon Age Groups

Source: https://444.hu/2018/04/10/a-fiatalok-kozott-a-leggyengobb-a-fidesz?utm_source=mandiner&&utm_source=mandiner&utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=mandiner_201810;utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=mandiner_201804?utm_source=mandiner&utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=mandiner_201804

Figure 7. Location of the Poorest Regions in Hungary with the Highest Support of Fidesz-KDNP

Source: <https://g7.hu/allam/20180409/a-legszegényebb-magyarok-kozott-tobb-mint-80-szazalekot-szerzett-a-fidesz/>

Figure 8. Share of Public Works in Hungary Calculated on Active Population

Source: <https://mfor.hu>

Conclusion

The results of the 2018 election were viewed in Hungary and in Europe as being controversial. Influenced by a heightened state of emotion, two large demonstrations were held in Budapest shortly after the elections. The number of Hungarian migrants did not increase significantly; however, distrust towards the old/new government became an added reason

of their search for new opportunities abroad.³¹ In 2018, the government continued the introduction of new illiberal reforms, but until the very first weeks of 2019, there was no decline in Fidesz support. Based on empirical investigation the sympathisers of the illiberal regime in Hungary have various motivations in their preference. The background of their reaction is based on three types of fears. One of them can be termed as the economic aspect, as people are anxious about losing their jobs and suffering from a decline in living standards. Many blue-collar workers can shift from the moderate left to the extreme right, and joining the populist forces of reaction. The second aspect is based on the cultural rebellion, or "security rebellion". People can have fears from terrorism and crime and can be stimulated and fanned by politicians into great hostility towards minorities, refugees, migrants, and foreigners, developing virulent xenophobia. Conspiracy theories can also attract dozens of people. And finally, experience from the historical past including belated embourgeoisement, the feeling of being isolated, neglected, trapped and victimised, can also lead to such tendencies. The Hungarian transformation in 1990 missed the experience of catharsis. Hungarian citizens did not have the feeling of happiness towards the new system, partly because there was no need for compensation. Hungarians did not experience military occupation or terror, did not gain independence. Transformation did not follow martial law like in Poland, and finally, there was no need for the compensation of giving back the civil rights as they were not restricted, or the restriction affected only a small group of people. Until the 2010s there was not even change in the elite, as the representatives of the technocratic elite were also in support of the changes. Hungarian society thus survived a sequence of regime changes within a short period and they had to accommodate the frequently changing outside world. The unusual insistence in a strong state and the limited willingness of political participation can be explained by various reasons.

References

- Appelbaum, (2018): A Warning from Europe: The Worst is yet to Come, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/10/poland-polarization/568324/>
- Berend, Iván (1997): *Central and Eastern Europe 1944–1993*, Cambridge University Press
- Berend, Iván (2010): *Europe since 1980*, Cambridge University Press
- Biro-Nagy, András (2017): Illiberal democracy in Hungary. The social background and practical steps of building an illiberal state. In: Morillas, Pol (ed.): *Illiberal democracies in the EU. The Visegrad Group and the risk of disintegration*. CIDOB: Barcelona,
- Bogaards, Matthijs: (2018) De-democratization in Hungary: diffusely defective democracy, *Democratization*, 25:8,1481–1499,
- Bohle, Dorothea – Gerskovits, Bela (2012): *Capitalist Diversity on Europe's Periphery*, Cornell University Press
- Bozóki (2012): The Transition from Liberal Democracy, <http://mediationsjournal.org/articles/the-transition-from-liberal-democracy>
- Bozóki András – Hegedűs Dániel: A kívülről korlátozott hibrid rendszer. *Politikatudományi Szemle* 2017/2. 7–34.

³¹ <https://magyarnarancs.hu/belpol/az-en-kisfiamnak-csak-jobb-elete-lehet-itt-mint-otthon-akik-aprilis-8-utan-eldontottek-hogy-elhagyjak-magyarorszagot-112354>

- Csizmadia, Ervin (2018): A Magyar rendszerváltás és az ellenzék, <https://24.hu/poszt-itt/2018/08/20/csizmadia-ervin-a-magyar-rendszervaltasok-es-az-ellenzek-tanulokepessege/>
- Fareed Zakaria (1997): *The Illiberal Democracy*, *Foreign Affairs*,
- Finkel, Evgeny & Brudny, Yitzhak M. (2012) No more colour! Authoritarian regimes and colour revolutions in Eurasia, *Democratization*, 19:1, 1–14,
- Góralczyk, Bogdan (2002): *Magyar törésvonalak*, Helikon
- Gyulai Attila – Stein-Zalai Juliane: Hibrid rezsimek és a szürke zóna: új válaszok a politikai rezsimek rendszertanának örök kérdéseire. *Metszetek*, 5. évf. (2016) 2. sz. 42–59
- Hankiss, Elemér: (1988): *Kelet-európai alternatívák*, Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó
- Janos, A. C.: *Haladás, hanyatlás, hegemonia Kelet-Közép-Európában*, Helikon
- Juhász, Attila, László, Róbert, Zgut, Edit: Consequences of an Illiberal Vision up to the Present Day <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/budapest/12522.pdf>
- Kneuer, Marianne, Demmelhuber, Thomas (2017): Gravity centres of authoritarian rule: a conceptual approach, *Democratization*, 23.5
- Kornai, János (2005): Közép-Kelet-Európa nagy átalakulása: Siker és csalódás, *Közgazdasági Szemle*, 52/12
- Lengyel László (2016): *Halott ország*, Helikon
- Lengyel László et al (2008): *Merre tovább Magyarország? Reformkérdések, kérdéses reformok*, Új Palatinus
- Levitsky and Way (2002): Elections Without Democracy, the Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism, *Journal of Democracy*. 2002;13 (2)
- Linz (2000): Linz, J.J.: *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, Lynne Riennes Publishers,
- Mazepus, Honorata, Veenendaal Wouter, McCarthy-Jones, Anthea & Trak Vásquez, Juan Manuel (2016) A comparative study of legitimation strategies in hybrid regimes, *Policy Studies*, 37:4
- Németh György (2014): Képviselőválasztás 1848-ban In:http://mnl.gov.hu/a_het_dokumentuma/kepviselovalasztas_1848ban.html
- Pető, Iván (2012) : Kádár élt, Kádár él... <https://m.magyararancs.hu/belpol/kadar-elt-kadar-el-80156>
- Romsics, Ignác (2001): *Magyarország a XX. században*, Budapest, Osiris Tankönyvek
- Scheppele, Kim Lane: Autocratic legalism, <https://lawreview.uchicago.edu/publication/autocratic-legalism>
- Schmidt, Andrea (2014): The Economic Transformation in Hungary, Detour or Impasse, *Politeja*, 2014/28
- Schmidt, Andrea (2016): *The course of transition into a democratic system in Hungary* In: Beata Pająk-Patkowska, Marcin Rachwał (ed.) *Hungary and Poland in Times of Political Transition. Selected Issues*. Poznan: Adam Mickiewicz University Press, Faculty of Political Science and Journalism
- Swain et al.,(1993): *Eastern Europe Since 1945*. Series: The making of the modern world. Palgrave Macmillian
- Szelényi, Iván (2004): Kapitalizmusok szocializmus után, *Egyenlítő* 2004/2
- Tóth István György (2017): Turánbánya? Értékválasztások, beidegződések és az illiberalizmusra való fogadókészség Magyarországon, In: *Hegymenet (Társadalmi és politikai kihívások Magyarországon)*, ed. Jakab, András, Urbán, László, Osiris
- Tölgyessy, Péter (2017): Kompország reményei, In: *Hegymenet (Társadalmi és politikai kihívások Magyarországon)*, ed. Jakab, András, Urbán, László, Osiris

- Turbucz, Dávid: (2007): A politikai rendszer jellege a Horthy-korszak első tíz évében, *MÚLTUNK – POLITIKATÖRTÉNETI FOLYÓIRAT* 52:(4)
- Ungváry, Rudolf (2014): A láthatatlan valóság: a fasisztoid mutáció a mai Magyarországon, Kalligram, Pozsony,
- Vigvári, András (2008): Reform és rendszerváltás Magyarországon, *Rubicon*, 3.
<http://mindigis.blogspot.com/2012/02/az-uj-valasztokeruletek-nepesseg.html>
<http://www.korall.org/hu/node/1718>
http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat_eves/i_qlf010.html
<http://www.origo.hu/gazdasag/hirek/20110822-hogyan-terjedt-el-a-devizahitelezes-es-ki-a-felelos-erte.html>
<http://www.valasztas.hu/en/ogy2018>
<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSCContents.jsp>
https://444.hu/2018/04/10/a-fiatalok-kozott-a-leggyengobb-a-fidesz?utm_source=mandiner&&utm_source=mandiner&utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=mandiner_201810;utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=mandiner_201804?utm_source=-mandiner&utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=mandiner_201804
<https://atlatszo.hu/2018/03/21/itt-a-lista-olvasoink-szerint-ezek-a-kamupartok-csaltak-az-alairasaikkal/>
<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/hungary>
<https://g7.hu/allam/20180409/a-legszegenyebb-magyarok-kozott-tobb-mint-80-szazalekot-szerzett-a-fidesz/>
https://hvg.hu/gazdasag/20180409_Tarolt_a_Fidesz_az_orosz_legszegenyebb_falvaiban
<https://magyarnarancs.hu/belpol/az-en-kisfiamnak-csak-jobb-elete-lehet-itt-mint-otthon-akik-aprilis-8-utan-eldontottek-hogy-elhagyjak-magyarorszagot-112354>
<https://merce.hu/2018/02/27/tamas-aki-maltarol-tuneziaba-utazik-hogy-szavazhason-aprilis-8-nan/>
<https://merce.hu/2018/09/11/palkovics-innovacios-miniszteriuma-feldarabolna-az-mta-t/>
<https://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/hungary/>, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-global-corruption/hungary-slides-deeper-down-corruption-index-watchdog-says-idUSKCN1G52E6>
<https://www.ecre.org/global-outcry-against-attack-on-civil-society-in-hungary/>
<https://www.euronews.com/2018/04/12/alarm-in-hungary-over-intimidatory-list-of-so-ros-mercenaries->
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/central-europe/2018-04-06/how-illiberal-leaders-attack-civil-society>
<https://www.globsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/GLOBSEC-Trends-2018.pdf>
<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country/hungary/>
<https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/article/explaining-eastern-europe-imitation-and-its-discontents>
https://www.policysolutions.hu/userfiles/elemzes/275/magyar_alom_web.pdf
<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2008/oct/29/hungary-economy-imf-eu-world-bank>