

Political Elite Rhetorical Approaches Toward Immigration:
An Empirical Study of Rhetorical Approaches of Political Elites in
Hungary and Croatia

By

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Abstract

The present thesis studies what factors influence the choice of political elite rhetoric in Hungary and Croatia when addressing the immigration issue. Through a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of press releases on government websites during the period from May until October 2015, I demonstrate an existence of two diverging rhetorical approaches – *cautious* in the case of Croatia and *autonomous* in the case of Hungary. Following the evidence of political elite quotes and the elites' respective actions, I develop an explanatory framework which uncovers the factors behind the existence of such rhetorical divergence, highlighting the importance of three *rhetoric-situating factors*: the elites' stance toward the European Union, the analysis shows it to be highly euro-sceptic in the Hungarian case as opposed to highly pan-European in the Croatian case; the political response to a historical event of an ethnic suppression which is shown to matter extensively in the Hungarian contemporary domestic politics, while in Croatia, it is pronounced with warnings about the lessons from history; and party ideology and competition, as the Hungarian right-centre Fidesz government is shown to deal with the left-wing opposition as well as the far-right Jobbik party, while the Croatian SDP-led centre-left leaning government faces the right-leaning HDZ-led opposition, from which SDP tries to differentiate itself through more cautious rhetoric. The rhetorical divergence is further illustrated through the dimension of *rhetoric-justifying themes*, which includes cultural and religious appeals and appeals to safety or threat of immigration that become politicised in order to suit a preferred rhetorical approach.

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Introduction

This thesis addresses the key research question: *What factors influence the preferred style of political elites' rhetoric when dealing with the issue of immigration* in two of the new immigration transit states, Hungary and Croatia. The research on the issue of immigration and the challenges it poses for the receiving states in terms of problems with integration, market-related discrepancies and other issues of domestic functioning, has become a widely researched area within the main social science disciplines.¹ Most immigration studies, however, largely emphasise major target states of immigration, i.e. the Western countries, including the United Kingdom, Germany, the United States, Canada, and so on.² This line of thinking thus requires a greater attention directed toward new prime recipients of the twenty-first century immigration waves – the transit countries on the external borders of the European Union (EU).

Following the expansion of the EU, and employment of more restrictive visa schemes by the major immigration recipients, the countries on the external borders of the EU have been confronted with a challenge of coping with unprecedented immigration influxes. In particular, challenges have been strongly pronounced when dealing with a vulnerable group of individuals – refugees fleeing the conflicts of the Middle Eastern region, most often through irregular and thus illegal means of transportation. The countries on the external borders of the EU have thus been positioned into the role of immigration primary recipients under the EU regulatory framework, despite their lack of similar experience in this matter. In addition, the distinctive political and cultural heritage associated with post-communist history and more nation-oriented culture are often invoked as characteristics in countries with a more adversarial approach to immigration based on their national identity politics.³ The challenges of safeguarding effective

¹ These disciplines among others include perspectives from the fields of political and social economy, political communication, social psychology, sociology and history. See for example the following research into the immigration theory: Christian Dustmann and Ian Preston, "Economic and Social Influences on Attitudes to Refugees in Europe" (Immigration Workshop, Sciences Po, University College London, Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration, February 22, 2016), http://www.ucl.ac.uk/~uctp100/SciencesPo_slides.pdf; Anastasia Gorodzeisky, "Who Are the Europeans That Europeans Prefer? Economic Conditions and Exclusionary Views toward European Immigrants," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 52, no. 1–2 (February 1, 2011): 100–113, doi:10.1177/0020715210377158; Ruud Koopmans et al., "Introduction: The Contentious Politics Of Immigration And Ethnic Relations," in *Contested Citizenship: Immigration And Cultural Diversity In Europe*, vol. 2005 (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2005); Gary P. Freeman, "Modes of Immigration Politics in Liberal Democratic States," *International Migration Review* 29, no. 4 (1995): 881, doi:10.2307/2547729; Pontus Odman and Tim Bale, "Immigration into the Mainstream: Conflicting Ideological Streams, Strategic Reasoning and Party Competition," *Macmillan Publishers Ltd*, 2015, palgrave journals; Alejandro Portes, "Immigration Theory for a New Century: Some Problems and Opportunities," *International Migration Review: Special Issue: Immigrant Adaptation and Native-Born Responses in the Making of Americans* 31, no. 4 (1997): 799–825, doi:10.2307/2547415.

² Koopmans et al., "Introduction: The Contentious Politics Of Immigration And Ethnic Relations."

³ Oxana Shevel, "Postcommunism, Nationalism, and Refugees," in *Migration, Refugee Policy, and State Building in Postcommunist Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), http://assets.cambridge.org/97805217/64797/excerpt/9780521764797_excerpt.pdf.

rule of law institutions and human rights guarantees have been subject to a long-term development in these countries, especially considering their short existence as member States of the EU. This raises the question of how do they manage to cope with immigration, an issue which has for long mostly concerned Western states.

According to the Eurobarometer evaluation of public attitudes in the EU, three categories of countries could be differentiated in their attitudes toward both intra-EU and from outside of the EU migration.⁴ Surprisingly, two post-communist, neighbouring countries – Hungary and Croatia – appear in the contradicting categories, with the former being most welcoming toward immigration, following only after Sweden, among the countries currently in the fore of the immigration issue, while the latter being within the category of the most negative attitudes toward immigration (as can be seen from Figure 1 below). This finding challenges the wider existing stereotypes and generalisations made about countries in the Central and Eastern European region as being generally more hostile toward immigration and thus multiculturalism than the Western states.⁵ This crucial finding, therefore, guides the present thesis, as its implications extend the existing research in a number of significant respects.

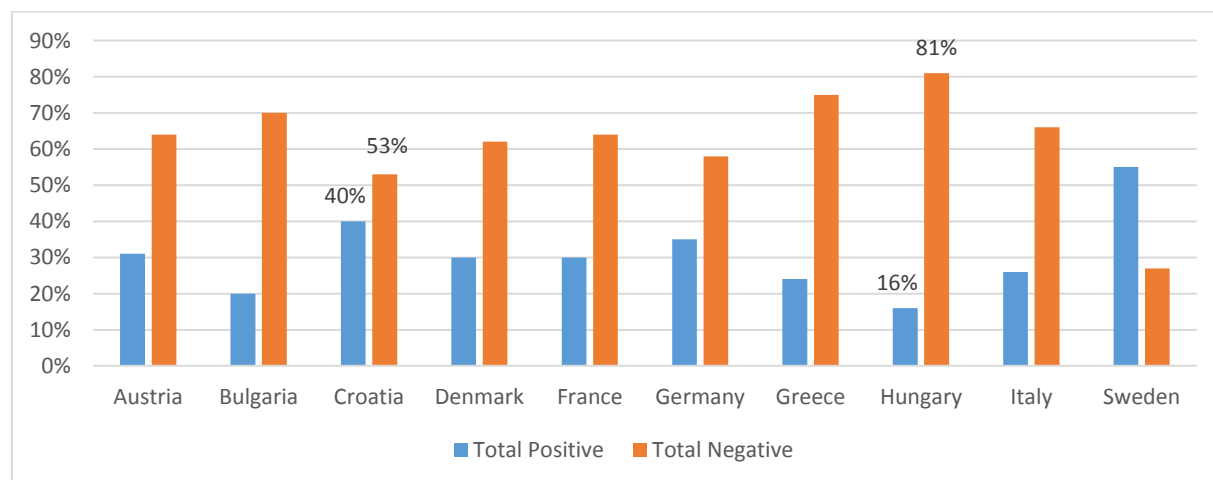


Figure 1 Eurobarometer: Public Attitudes toward immigration of people from outside the EU (11/2015)

Source: European Commission website: Eurobarometer interactive search⁶

The present thesis, thus, aims to address the handling of the current wave of immigration – a concept employed to refer and encompass all immigration of people from outside of the EU,

⁴ “Standard Eurobarometer 83- Spring 2015- ‘Public Opinion in the European Union’” (European Commission, May 2015), http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb83/eb83_publ_en.pdf.

⁵ Shevel, “Postcommunism, Nationalism, and Refugees.”

⁶ “Please Tell Me Whether Each of the Following Statements Evokes a Positive or Negative Feeling for You. Immigration of People from Outside the EU (11/2015),” European Commission, November 2015, <http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/PublicOpinion/index.cfm/Chart/getChart/themeKy/59/groupKy/279/chartType/barChart/savFile/646>.

i.e. also the flight of refugees – by two countries which represent new actors on this issue – Hungary and Croatia, through the study of political elite rhetoric. The influence of political rhetoric on public attitudes has been thoroughly researched within the different fields of social sciences. In particular the field of *framing politics*⁷ has especially focused on the defining processes of articulating and perceiving sensitive issues, such as immigration. Although much has become known about the inter-related effects of the *influentials*, a term employed by Watts and Dodds,⁸ the choices political elites have in pursuing their respective rhetorical styles, especially by elites from the new immigration recipient countries of EU's external borders offers a space for further research. Following an extensive research within the field of framing politics which highlights political elite agency as crucial in the formulation of public attitudes,⁹ the thesis accepts this knowledge in the context of public opinion research and rather looks at the different choices of political elites which translate into their subsequent and decisive rhetoric.

The crucial stage of articulation of the political elites' respective positions is during the initial period of the increasing immigration during which the media attention – the salience of the issue – emerges. As research highlights, this stage also represents the critical stage of public attitudes formation.¹⁰ Therefore, the period under research is during the most salient period from May until October 2015, to account for the evolving situation, whereby both countries under research became directly affected, following the closure of the Hungarian external border with Serbia and redirecting the route through Croatia in September 2015.¹¹

Through a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of press releases available on respective countries' official government websites the project ultimately uncovers the existence of two diverging rhetorical styles employed by the political elite actors in Hungary and Croatia

⁷ Jörg Matthes and Matthias Kohring, "The Content Analysis of Media Frames: Toward Improving Reliability and Validity," *Journal of Communication* 58, no. 2 (Jún 2008): 258–79, doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.2008.00384.x. Jörg Matthes, "What's in a Frame? A Content Analysis of Media Framing Studies in the World's Leading Communication Journals, 1990-2005," *American Behavioral Scientist* 86, no. 2 (June 1, 2009): 349–67, doi:10.1177/107769900908600206.

⁸ Duncan J. Watts and Peter Sheridan Dodds, "Influentials, Networks, and Public Opinion Formation," *Journal of Consumer Research* 34, no. 4 (2007): 441–58.

⁹ Andrea Bohman, "Articulated Antipathies: Political Influence on Anti-Immigrant Attitudes," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 52, no. 6 (December 1, 2011): 457–77, doi:10.1177/0020715211428182.

Rima Wilkes, Neil Guppy, and Lily Farris, "Comment on Semyonov, Rajjman, and Gorodzeisky, ASR, June 2006: Right-Wing Parties and Anti-Foreigner Sentiment in Europe" 72, no. 5 (October 2007): 831–40.

¹⁰ Daniel Katz, "Supplement: Attitude Formation and Public Opinion," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 367, no. The New Immigration (September 1966): 150–62.

¹¹ Marton Dunai, "Hungary to Fence off Border with Serbia to Stop Migrants," *Reuters*, June 18, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-hungary-immigration-idUSKBN0OX17I20150618>.

when addressing the issue of immigration. The findings show that while Croatian political elites' preferred style of rhetoric which resembles a *cautious* approach, the Hungarian elites, on the other hand, employed a more *autonomous* approach. The empirical results thus demonstrate how political elites in Hungary often situated their rhetoric within a highly Eurosceptic tone on the one side, supported by nationalist language on the other. Although Hungarian leaders also advocated for defence of Schengen through the security of Hungarian borders, which does not appear as Eurosceptic, they nevertheless more often blamed the emergence of the crisis on EU norms, in particular, the dogma of the European left. Croatian political actors, on the contrary, situated their rhetoric with a highly pan-European tone of rhetoric with scepticism over any antagonistic measures pursued by its neighbours, including Hungary, which questioned the humanitarian character of the crisis.

Based on such acquired evidence, this thesis thus continues with the formulation of an explanatory framework for the study of political elite rhetoric, upon an identification of two contrasting political rhetorical styles in Hungary and Croatia, which I term *cautious* and *autonomous*. A *cautious* rhetorical approach refers to the use of language which plays in accord with international and European standards. It relies on referrals to human rights and humanitarian responsibility through religious justifications, as well as appeals to safety, i.e. to the issue as a non-threatening phenomenon. On the other hand, the *autonomous* rhetoric refers to a highly Eurosceptic, nationalist driven language and appeals to the security of the nation and protection from the external threat associated with different culture and religion associating the issue with the rising threat of terrorism.

The framework ultimately differentiates between three key factors – independent variables which moderately explain the choice of either *cautious* or *autonomous* political rhetoric style. The first of these factors is the political elites' position toward the EU. The political actors' position toward the EU was either articulated through calls for more cooperation in the matter and pan-European appeals to EU advantages and European laws and norms in the case of *cautious* rhetoric, or through calls for the need to return to sovereign decision-making as well as blame-shifting toward the European norms of liberalism and free movement, in the case of *autonomous* style.

The second factor which can explain the style of political rhetoric is the political elites' response to the events in the history of the nation, in the case of the countries under research – the political response to a historical experience of an ethnic suppression. The political response

to an ethnic suppression experienced by both countries with the consequences of 1920 Treaty of Trianon for Hungary¹² and the Yugoslav war of 1991-1995 for Croatia¹³ upon which a substantial amount of ethnic populations were significantly affected seem to determine the contemporary domestic politics of the selected countries. These political responses are thus shown to be either articulated through an indirect use of careful appeals to the safety of the situation, as in the case of the *cautious* rhetoric of Croatian leaders, or through the use of nationalist appeals, as in the case of *autonomous* rhetoric of Hungarian leaders.

The last factor determining the political elite rhetoric is the political party ideology and party competition present within the countries as an essential aspect of the opportunity to pursue either of the rhetorical styles. Political ideology as determined by the right-left orientation, seems to matter for the choice of rhetorical approach to immigration. I argue that while the right-centre-leaning Fidesz' government has embarked on stringent policies toward immigration for its conservative political ideology, it also did so with the intention to stem the popular support away from its opposition right-wing Jobbik party. On the other hand, the Social Democratic Party heading the Croatian governing coalition, essentially identifies itself as centre-left-leaning with the opposition from right-leaning HDZ party that SDP essentially tries to differentiate itself from.

Ultimately, the above three factors are categorised as rhetoric-situating factors, as political elite rhetoric becomes ultimately determined by these aspects of domestic political conduct. I then also identify two key dimensions as rhetoric-justifying themes through a political choice of politicising particular narratives, which act to justify a preferred style of elite rhetoric. When dealing with the issue of immigration, these themes in particular include religious and cultural appeals, and appeals to safety and a well-handled situations in *cautious* rhetorical style *versus* warnings of danger and threat of terrorism in *autonomous* rhetorical style.

Ultimately, the project proceeds as follows. The first chapter offers a conceptual debate and clarification of main themes and concepts employed within this thesis, especially what is meant by the notion of political elite rhetoric and why it is important to study it. It also offers a clear explanation of the methodology employed within the present research as well as its

¹² Frank Koszorus, Jr., "Trianon: A Relic of the Past or a Continuing Tragedy?" (The American Hungarian Federation, June 3, 2010), http://www.americanhungarianfederation.org/docs/AHF_2010_Trianon.pdf.

¹³ Anthony Oberschall, "The Manipulation of Ethnicity: From Ethnic Cooperation to Violence and War in Yugoslavia - 014198700750018388," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, December 7, 2010, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/014198700750018388>.

limitations. The second chapter offers an empirical analysis and presents findings of the proposed content analysis, complemented with examples and discussion of government action behind the respective rhetorical styles, which clearly demonstrate the existence of divergence in rhetorical approaches of Hungarian and Croatian political actors. The third chapter then further elaborates on the similarities and differences behind the selected countries under research through the formulation of an explanatory framework for the study of political elite rhetoric, as outlined above. The last part offers then discusses the key findings of the research and their implications.

Chapter 1

Conceptual Debate and Methodology

The first chapter formulates the conceptual framework which is guiding arguments presented in this thesis. First of all, the chapter reinforces the importance of the study clarifying the angles for analysis following the existing available research in the field of immigration studies. In particular, it outlines the role of political elite rhetoric in constructing public attitudes through an elaboration of modern political philosophy and the existing research on the role of political language, especially the field of framing politics. The chapter also offers an explanation of the methodology employed within the present research as well as its limitations.

1.1 Conceptualisation of the immigration crisis

First of all, it is important to clarify some of the key terminology employed throughout the study. In the public discourse, various terms such as ‘migration crisis’ or ‘refugee crisis’ are used interchangeably to characterize the current wave of immigration. The present-day wave of immigration was largely sparked by the ongoing conflict in Syria, which has forced a large number of people to flee their homes in the need of finding refuge abroad.¹⁴ Although most affected countries by this movement lie within the close proximity of the Syrian region, for instance Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt,¹⁵ during the past couple of years, the movement expanded rapidly to encompass the territories of the European states as well.

Essentially, there are currently three crucial routes to Europe most under use for the immigration movement (see Figure 2 on the following page). The “Eastern Mediterranean and Western Balkan route” has become used extensively during the first half of 2015, when as many

¹⁴ Refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria), however, represent only, although the biggest, a fraction of the arriving refugees to the EU, with great numbers arriving from countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo, Albania, Pakistan, Eritrea, Iran or Ukraine and others as well. For the latest numbers and information see data at <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php>

¹⁵ OECD, “Is This Humanitarian Migration Crisis Different?,” Migration Policy Debates (OECD, September 2015), <http://www.oecd.org/migration/is-this-refugee-crisis-different.pdf>.

as 200,000 people crossed the Mediterranean between Turkey and Greece.¹⁶ Many of them headed to Hungary, where illegal border entries subsequently intensified. This is where the two countries under research come into the picture, with Hungary being the main transit zone for the secondary EU entrants (via Greece) until its controversial border closure in September 2015, when the route was re-directed toward its neighbour's – Croatian – territory. The second most common route is the "Central Mediterranean route" from Libya to Italy, where refugees have been arriving by boats with as many as 116,000 arrivals by the end of August 2015. Lastly, there is the "Western Mediterranean route," which goes mainly through the Strait of Gibraltar but which due to tighter border controls and co-operation with the Moroccan authorities, has become less accessible.¹⁷ The understanding of different routes serves to situate the two countries under research, as essentially not the target but rather transit states for immigration.

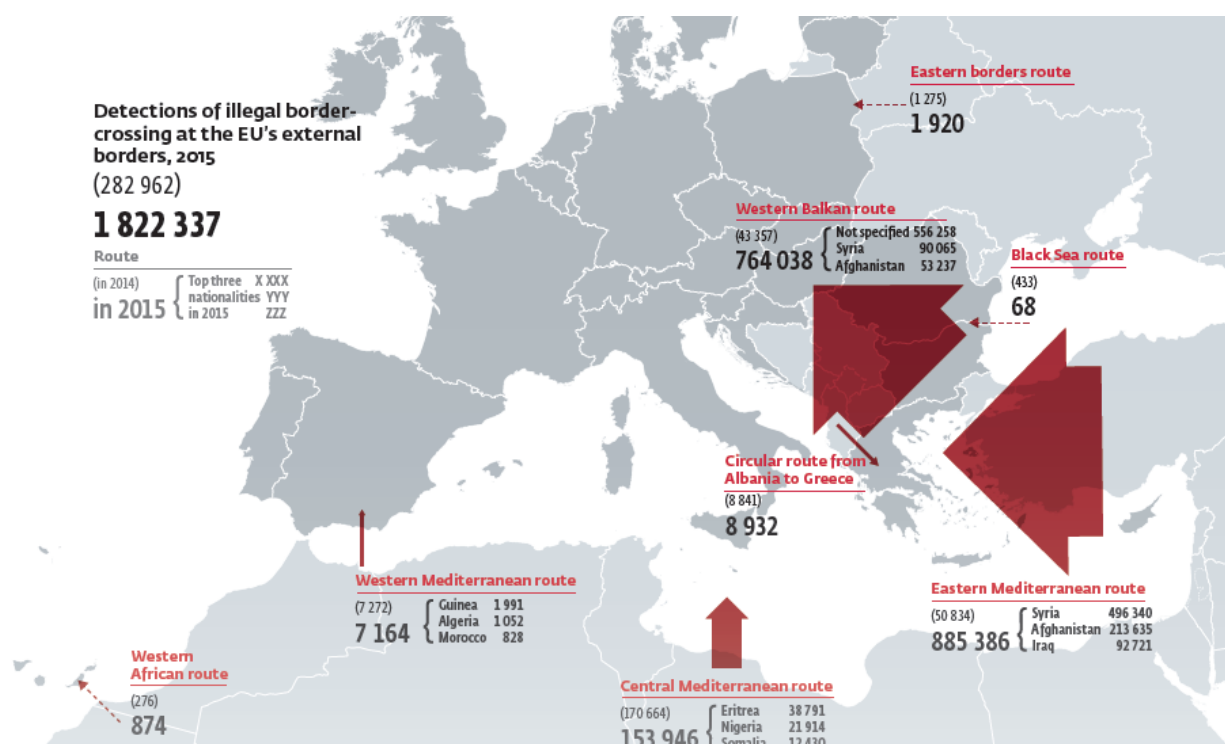


Figure 2 Detections of illegal border-crossing at the EU's external borders, 2015

Source: Frontex, Risk Analysis for 2016, p. 16.

¹⁶ Ibid., 4.

¹⁷ "Risk Analysis for 2016" (Warsaw: Frontex, March 2016), http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Annula_Risk_Analysis_2016.pdf.

With the intention to avoid terminological contention, the present thesis employs the general meaning of the word immigration, which refers to a process of both legal and illegal, inward and transit movement of foreigners, into and through the territories of the countries under research. Although, naturally, out of all of those who enter the EU, not everyone claims asylum, and, of those who do, only a part are actually granted refugee status, this thesis proceeds with the generic meaning of immigration for the sake of consistency with the findings of wider existing research and the designation employed by main statistical and media sources. Nevertheless, it needs to be brought to the reader's attention that the current wave of immigration remains to be widely acknowledged as a 'refugee' or 'asylum seeker crisis', as it mainly concerns the capacities of the European asylum system.

1.2 Political elite agency through the art of rhetoric

When dealing with the issue of immigration, political elites often pursue a lot of autonomy in their decision-making. That is why political elite rhetoric comes to play a large role in the matter of immigration management and ultimately in aiding general public attitudes. The art of political rhetoric has a long legacy of a crucial role in the conduct of public life. Contemporary political and international relations theory writers such as Carl Schmidt, Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben and their commentaries, have donated a lot of attention to the study of the importance of language for the act of decision-making. In brief, they have called for an awareness of the constructive powers of sovereign decisions in terms of affecting individual lives. In particular, it has been argued that sovereignty transcends into private life of ordinary citizens in most significant way, influencing one's personal attitudes.¹⁸ Especially, the issue of

¹⁸ Giorgio Agamben, "The Politicization of Life," in *Homo Sacer Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998), 119, <http://media.library.ku.edu.tr/reserve/resspring06/CIVL%20202%20O.%20N.%20Serin/Q2-Homo%20Sacer.pdf>; Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005); Andreas Kalyvas, "The Sovereign Weaver - Beyond the Camp," in *Politics, Metaphysics, and Death: Essays on Giorgio Agamben's Homo Sacer*, 2nd ed. (Duke University Press, 2005), 107–34; Judith Butler, "Indefinite Detention," in *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London and New York: Verso Books, 2004).

immigration allows for the re-enforcement of the sovereign constructive capacity, through rhetorical differentiating between us (citizens) and them (others), delimiting clear boundaries between nation and those outside of it that threaten its unity.¹⁹ Such an articulation of sovereignty becomes a crucial starting point for anyone wishing to comprehend the state's capacities and the role (i.e. non-role) of the international, and even domestic law, when it comes to making a decision for the sake of the security and well-being of the nation.

The power of language – in particular, through the political elite rhetoric – is crucially connected to the notion of sovereignty. Rhetoric has long been the primary means used to manipulate the masses. From various propaganda materials used during the world wars, to the every-day media influence on people's lives in reproducing political statements, constructing and imposing powerful simplified frames which get picked up by the public and translated into their attitudes. Although public distrust with politicians and official institutions might have been rising in the recent decades, with lower popular participation rates in the political processes,²⁰ it seems that when it comes to issues sensitive to the idea of nationality and the national identity, framing politics via exclusive and inclusive rhetoric, plays a significant role in constructing public attitudes.

Judith Butler further reinforces the significance of language in her famous thesis *Precarious Life*. Butler proposes an elaboration of the public sphere after 9/11 as a culture of fear and control through different modes of invisible censorship preventing any opposition to the great Western idea of the 'war on terror'. The concept of the 'war on terror', according to Butler, has served as a means of silencing some, while encouraging others. This differentiation

¹⁹ Matthew J. Gibney, *The Ethics and Politics of Asylum: Liberal Democracy and the Response to Refugees* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Koopmans et al., "Introduction: The Contentious Politics Of Immigration And Ethnic Relations."

²⁰ Peter Mair, "Ruling the void? The Hollowing of Western Democracy," *New Left Review*, December 2006, 25–51; Béla Greskovits, "The Hollowing and Backsliding of Democracy in East Central Europe," *Global Policy* Volume 6, no. Supplement 1 (June 2015).

between ‘us’ and ‘them’ has now become a powerful tool for de-humanisation of certain groups of people – Arabic – and in the present case – a certain religion – Islam – altogether.²¹

I thus proceed in this thesis with the definition of political elite rhetoric, as the language employed by the official political leaders when dealing with the issue of immigration, brought to the public through the main government online sources. Based on the above elaborated assumptions, I aim to highlight the factors which determine the political elite rhetoric, understanding of which is important, considering the crucial role of language in the conduct of public life.

1.3 Framing politics

The study on the influential role of political elite rhetoric has conceptualised into a specific field of *framing politics*. Generally, the practice of *framing* refers to a process of defining and structuring main ideas, beliefs and information about a particular issue by key actors, such as political leaders, media, non-state actors and members of the public themselves. Existing findings from the framing politics field, especially research of Jörg Matthes, highlight framing as an integrative process, whereby one actor cannot be simply disintegrated as more influential than others.²² For instance, the field of political communication strongly attributes the framing power to the mass media which have the ability to transform and reinterpret political elite rhetoric into more easily comprehensible, and thus largely reduced frames imposed onto the public through the repetitive media coverage.²³ Logically, an interactive relation exists between wider actors in the political and social life and even beyond the domestic

²¹ Butler, “Indefinite Detention.”

²² Jörg Matthes, “Framing Politics: An Integrative Approach,” *American Behavioral Scientist*, December 15, 2011, 0002764211426324, doi:10.1177/0002764211426324.

²³ Matthes, “What’s in a Frame? A Content Analysis of Media Framing Studies in the World’s Leading Communication Journals, 1990-2005”; Matthes and Kohring, “The Content Analysis of Media Frames”; Audun Beyer and Jörg Matthes, “Public Perceptions of the Media Coverage of Irregular Immigration Comparative Insights From France, the United States, and Norway,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 59, no. 7 (June 1, 2015): 839–57, doi:10.1177/0002764215573253.

sphere – in particular the EU – that adds further level to the process of public opinion formation. Although a great deal of research into has been conducted to demonstrate the fundamental role of political elite agency in constructing public attitudes, the present thesis aims to look at the framing process behind the political elite rhetoric influence and look for an explanation of determinants for a specific kind of political rhetoric. The following part outlines the methodology for the study of framing political elite rhetoric when addressing the issue of immigration.

1.4 Country selection for the research

As briefly outlined in the introduction, the finding about contrasting public attitudes toward immigration in two neighbouring countries, Hungary and Croatia is what essentially sparked the interest in the present study. It is especially interesting as both countries, Hungary and Croatia, found themselves on the main transit route during the current wave of immigration to the EU. With the increasing magnitude of the Syrian conflict and rising networks of the human traffickers, refugees began arriving in great numbers through dangerous irregular means – by boats across the Mediterranean Sea. Following the existing EU Common Asylum System,²⁴ and upon some conditions, the Member State of first entry becomes responsible for the determination of asylum applications. With the insufficient capacities of the Greek authorities to process with the large number of incoming refugees, and with the help of European illegal human traffickers, refugees reached territories of secondary-entry-point countries – Hungary and Croatia. In addition, following the *N.S. and M.E. v Greece* judgment by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU),²⁵ any transfers back to Greece were deemed against the fundamental human right of protection from degrading and inhuman

²⁴ “A Common European Asylum System - CEAS Factsheet” (Publications Office of the European Union, 2014), http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/docs/ceas-fact-sheets/ceas_factsheet_en.pdf.

²⁵ Judgment of the Court (Grand Chamber) of 21 December 2011. *N. S. (C-411/10) v Secretary of State for the Home Department and M. E. and Others (C-493/10) v Refugee Applications Commissioner and Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform.*, EUR-Lex (The Court of Justice of the European Union 2011).

treatment and punishment. As conditions in Greek detention centres sharply deteriorated with the large influx, the Court decided that such conditions do not suffice to protect individual safety and the dignity of incoming refugees.

The second-entry countries, thus, effectively became the countries responsible for asylum determination in the EU. The magnitude of immigration was, however, at first different between Hungary and Croatia during the selected period, with the former experiencing a greater number of refugees than the latter. Hungary was first to chiefly experience the immigration influx and with a much greater degree, especially as it became the number one transit country for the refugees entering the EU at the beginning of 2015. Nevertheless, this changed immediately when Hungary took the decision in June 2015 to build a wire fence on its external border with Serbia, which was completed in September 2015.²⁶ The result was an immediate re-direction of the immigration route through its southern neighbour's territory, when Croatia was faced with unprecedented magnitude of arrivals on a daily basis (see Figure 3 on the following page for the general overview of arrivals in the countries of Central and South Europe by November 2015).²⁷ Hence the selection of the research period extends from May until the end of October 2015 in order to account for the rapid immigration waves experienced by both countries under research.²⁸ The geographical position of Croatia, however, made it clear from the beginning of the immigration wave, that it would eventually become the main transit territory following the early Hungarian announcement of border closure.

²⁶ Dunai, "Hungary to Fence off Border with Serbia to Stop Migrants."

²⁷ Maja Zuvela, "Croatia Overwhelmed by Flood of Migrants, EU Calls Summit," *Reuters*, September 17, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-idUSKCN0RD0P420150917>.

²⁸ I wish to highlight that much of the ado about the refugee numbers arriving in both countries is conflicted with the actual number of asylum applications processed and grants of some form of protection status, which suggest that the real number of refugees who stayed in the countries is significantly lower than suggested, especially as both countries have largely played a role of transit rather than targets for settlement.

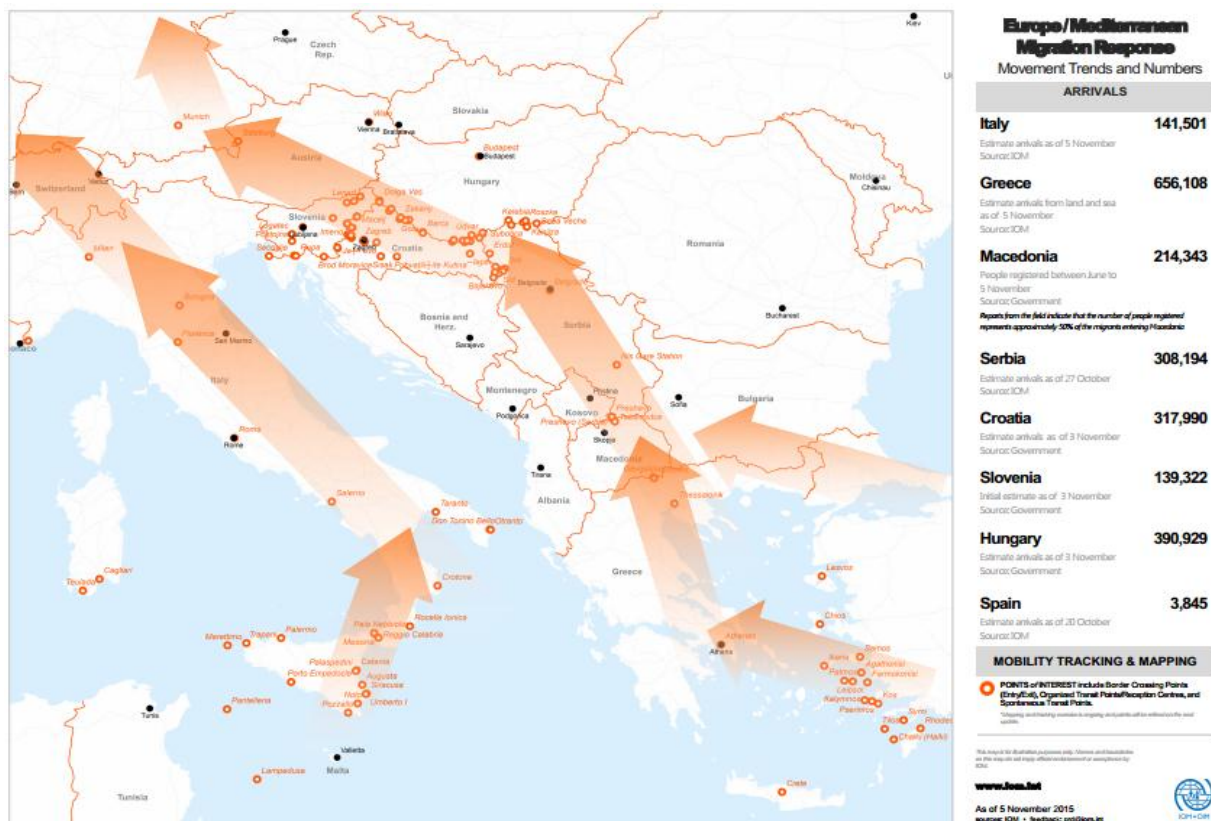


Figure 3 Europe/ Mediterranean Migration Response: Movement Trends and Numbers: Arrivals as of 5 November 2015

Source: IMO, November 2015²⁹

Both countries were, therefore, in the same position to act on behalf of the nation and deal with the unprecedented levels of immigration. The geographical, demographic, ethnic and cultural, as well as political similarities between the countries further deem these cases highly comparable for their choice of political elite rhetoric when dealing with the issue (see Table 1 on the following page for a basic country-comparison in terms of its demographic, ethnic and religious composition and the magnitude of the experienced immigration during the examined period). This table serves essentially as a country comparison and a further justification for the selection of these countries based on their similarity.

²⁹ International Migration Organisation, "Europe / Mediterranean Migration Response Movement Trends and Numbers" (Relief Web, November 5, 2015), <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Map%20from%20Europe-Med-Migration-Response-Sitrep-6-5-Nov-2015-Final.pdf>.

Table 1 Hungary-Croatia Country Comparison

	Hungary	Croatia
Population	9,897,541 (July 2015 est.)	4,284,889 (2011 est.)
Ethnic division	Hungarian 85.6%, Roma 3.2%, German 1.9%, other 2.6%, unspecified 14.1% ³⁰	Croat 90.4%, Serb 4.4%, other 4.4% (incl. Bosniak, Hungarian, Slovene, Czech, and Roma), unspecified 0.8% (2011 est.)
Religious division	Catholic (Roman and Greek) 39%, None 18.8%, (2011 est.) Calvinist 11.6%, Lutheran 2.7%, other 1.7%, Unspecified 27.6%	Roman Catholic 86.3%, Orthodox 4.4%, Muslim 1.5%, None 4.6%, other 3.2% (2011 est.)
Economic situation	Hungary achieved GDP growth of 2.9%.	Following a six-year recession, Croatia first GDP growth of 0.2% since 2008.
Immigration impact	390,929 estimated refugee and migrant arrivals (by 5 Nov. 2015)	317,990 estimated refugee and migrant arrivals (by 5 Nov. 2015)

Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office – Hungary;³¹ Digitalni informacijsko-dokumentacijski ured Vlade RH – Croatia³², International Migration Organisation website, 2015³³

1.5 Methodology

The empirical analysis of political elite agency – through its rhetoric – is conducted via both, quantitative as well as qualitative content analysis of primary sources of statements and news coverage on the official government websites for both respective countries. The aim is to outline main frames articulated in relation to immigration put across to the public. The use of both quantitative and qualitative evidence serves to underscore the relevance of emerging themes and to articulate the explanatory variables for the divergence in political actors' rhetoric.

The primary sources of government websites offer official press releases and news on relevant political action, speeches and other statements, as most suitable sources for the first-

³⁰ Note: percentages add up to more than 100 because respondents were able to identify more than one ethnic group (2011 est.) more info on CIA World Fact Book – Hungary at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/hu.html>

³¹ “Hungarian Central Statistical Office,” accessed May 30, 2016, http://www.ksh.hu/more_key_figures.

³² “Opći Podaci O Republici Hrvatskoj,” *Digitalni Informacijsko-Dokumentacijski Ured Vlade RH*, accessed May 30, 2016, <http://www.digured.hr/Adresari-i-imenici/Adresar-tijela-javne-vlasti/Opci-podaci-o-RH>.

³³ International Migration Organisation, “Europe / Mediterranean Migration Response Movement Trends and Numbers.”

hand information on political rhetoric of the countries' officials. For the purposes of this thesis, and especially due to my Hungarian and Croatian language-proficiency limitations, only the content available in English is taken into consideration for the analysis. Nevertheless, both websites offer a substantive amount of English news releases during the period under research which forms a representative sample for the present study.

Upon a careful first reading of all available content in English during the period under research on the countries' government websites, a total of 238 government publications for both Hungarian and Croatian government websites (133 and 105 respectively) was selected that dealt directly with the issue of immigration. From this sample, a total of 421 direct quotes was extracted (223 for Hungary and 188 for Croatia) from ministers who addressed the issue of immigration more than three times, in order to determine the central political actors, during the period under research – from May 2015 until October 2015 – when the attention toward the issue of immigration significantly increased throughout the world, and especially in the EU (see Figure 4 and 5 below for the break-down of the amount of references made by specific ministries).

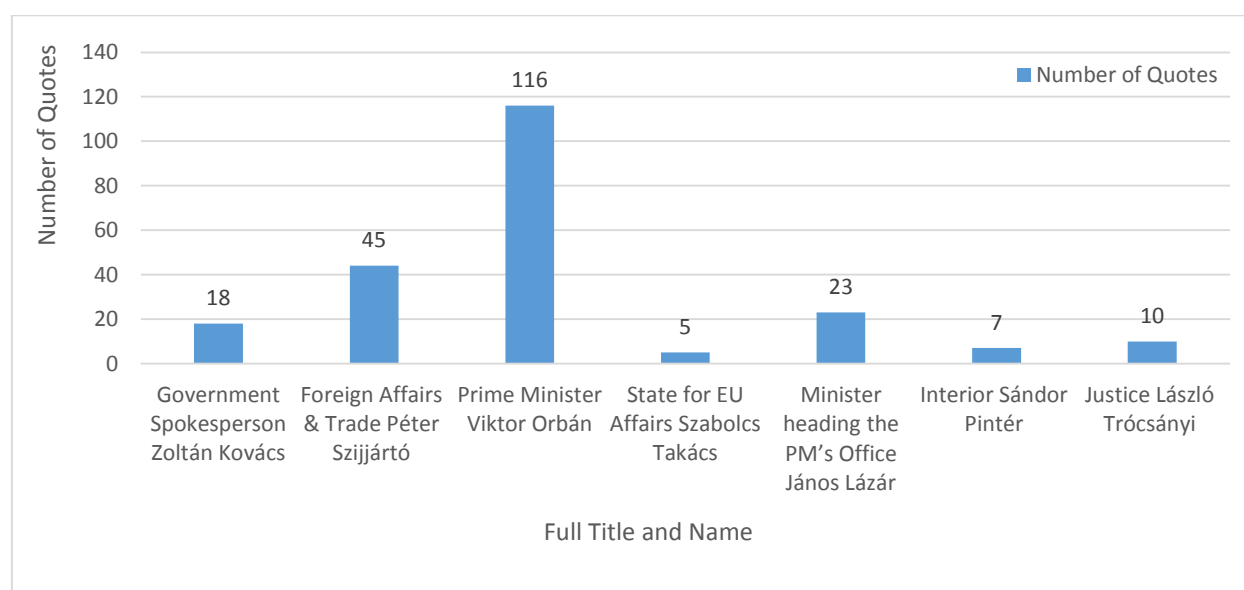


Figure 4 Hungary: Frequency of Quotes by Ministry

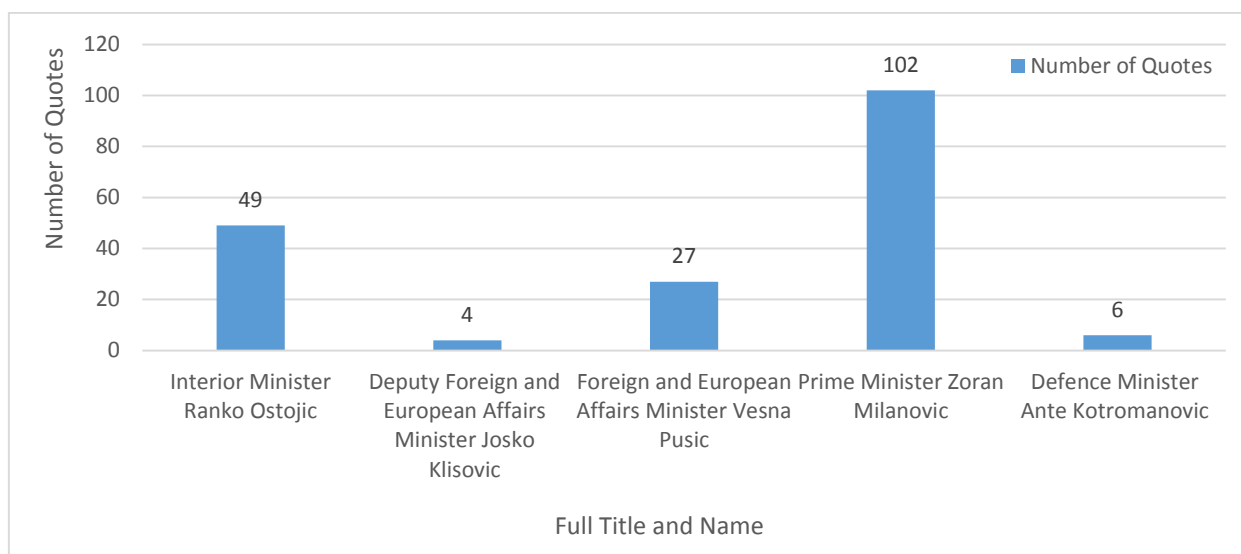


Figure 5 Croatia: Frequency of Quotes by Ministry

In particular, in the case of Hungary, from the collected material, as many as seven members of the Hungarian political elite expressed their position toward the issue more than three times within the sample, while the number for the case of Croatia was five government representatives. Prime Ministers and Ministers of Foreign Affairs were unsurprisingly in the forefront of addressing the immigration situation in both cases, while in Croatia also the representative from the Ministry of Interior was also one of the key figures.

Upon the collection and extraction of entire quotes (paragraphs) and statements available in the form of government press releases, I conducted a manual coding using Excel software. I took into consideration all recurring themes, in order to allow for both deductive as well as inductive assessment. I thus developed a set of ten recurring themes for the case of Hungary, while in the case of Croatia as many as nine themes could be identified. This first part essentially represents the quantitative element of the content analysis, where the number of references to particular frames is compared and contrasted in order to demonstrate the occurrence of themes characteristic for each of the political elite rhetoric approaches of elites in Hungary and Croatia.

The second, qualitative part of the analysis aims to situate these themes within a context as used by political actors in order to highlight the diverging use of similar themes by the two

governments when addressing the issue of immigration. Every claim, therefore, will be supported by an exemplary quote by one of the key political actors that addressed the issue of immigration during the selected period under research and complemented by examples of respective government actions in dealing with the issue. The two analyses aim to complement each other in order to provide for the reliability and validity of the findings.

The conceptual and theoretical context has been formulated in the present chapter in order to situate the topic within the wider existing research and explain the importance of looking at the factors which shape political elite rhetoric in the first place. The chapter has also provided a detailed methodology that is employed in order to demonstrate the existence of divergence within rhetorical styles employed by elites in Hungary and Croatia when dealing with the issue of immigration. The following chapter proceeds with the actual demonstration of these findings with examples of specific government actions in addressing immigration which are characteristic for respective rhetorical styles.

Chapter 2

What lies behind the words?

Content Analysis of Political Elite Rhetoric

The conceptual discussion in the previous chapter serves to situate the topic and the importance of the present study within the wider available research. As explained, political elite rhetoric has a long-standing recognition for its constructive capacity. It remains to be acknowledged, however, that even political rhetoric is not indeterminate. There are wider structural forces which determine a preferred rhetorical style employed by political elite actors. In this chapter, I present the acquired evidence from the content analysis of political elite rhetoric as outlined in the previous chapter. The first part provides a general quantitative overview of the recognised patterns, supported by a selection of qualitative evidence in the form of quotes within the context of the rhetoric. The second part then illustrates the rhetorical approaches with examples of actions behind the words.

2.1 Political elite rhetorical approaches: general overview

The main research question that this thesis aims to address is what factors influence the preferred style of political elites' rhetoric when dealing with the issue of immigration in selected cases– Hungary and Croatia, following the finding of different public attitudes toward immigration and the existing research on the importance of political rhetoric in formulating public opinion. This finding, therefore, guides an assumption that there should also exist a divergence in the political elite rhetoric within the countries under research. Based on the conducted content analysis of the political elite rhetoric, the findings generally support the assumption that political representatives from the countries under study – Hungary and Croatia – ultimately pursued a contrasting rhetorical style (see the breakdown of the sets of themes for both countries as portrayed in Figure 6 on the following page).

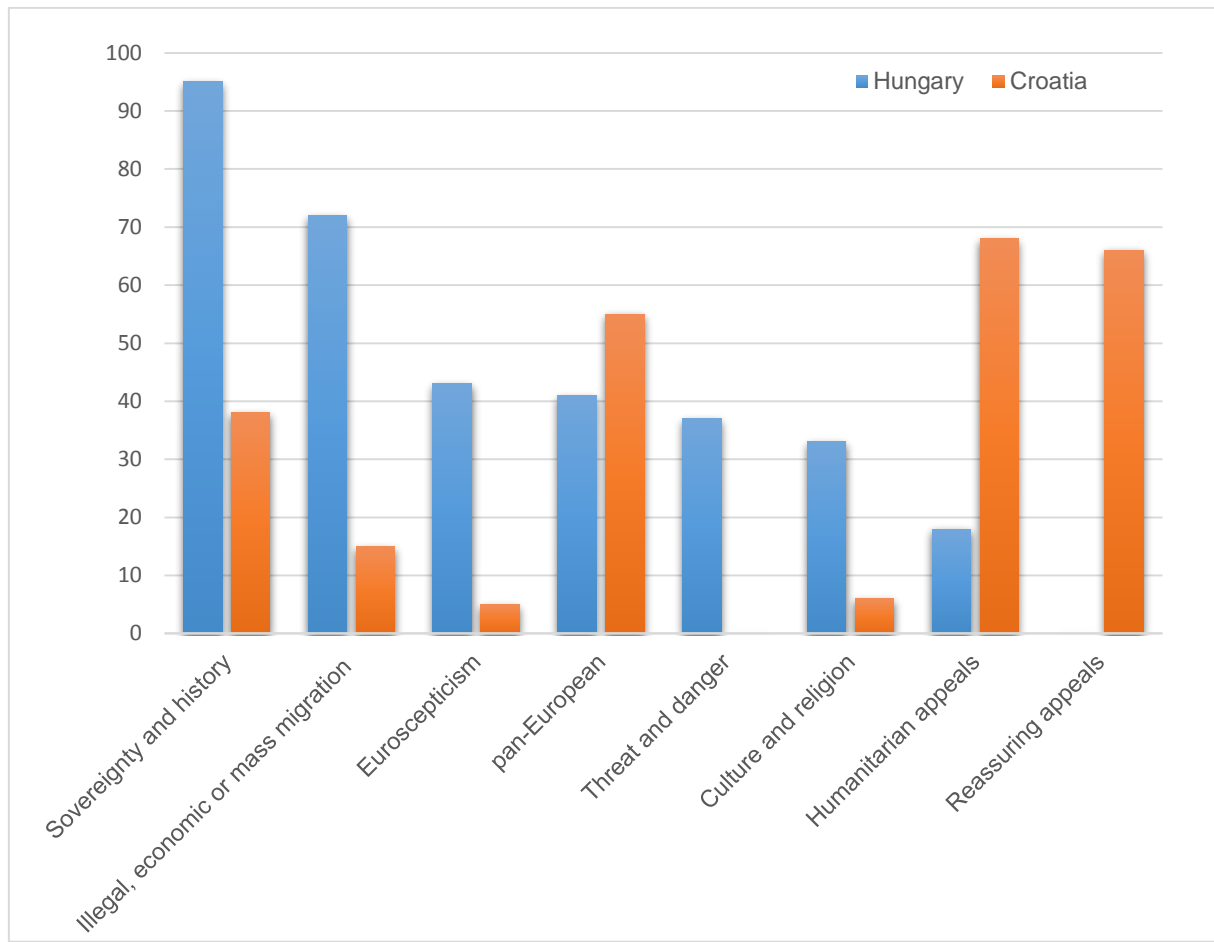


Figure 6 Hungary and Croatia; Themes and Their Frequency

The quantitative break-down seems to support the existence of two styles of rhetorical approaches toward the issue of immigration employed by the leaders in the countries under research. In particular, in the case of Hungary, leaders among others positioned their rhetoric around the sovereign tone of deciding on behalf of the protection and security of the country, together with the referrals to illegal, economic or mass migration that results from a criminal activity of human trafficking across Europe. With a highly Eurosceptic tone, the leaders pointed out EU's poor handling of the issue collectively, and often blamed the EU for being responsible for the emergence of the crisis in the first place, due to the dominant European liberal and welcoming dogma. In particular, for instance, Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orbán stated this position very clearly during his speech at the celebrations of his five-years in the office:

Those here today all know that right now we have serious disagreements with EU bureaucrats. We have to talk about that, too. The issue at hand is immigration. We are among those countries which are most critical of the new immigration regulations that Brussels is trying to impose on

Hungary and other countries. We hope that in Brussels they will listen to and understand our reasoning. Anyone who wants to take away my fundamental right to choose who I should let into my house, my home and my country does not wish me well, but wishes me harm. They want to deprive me of my most basic means of self-preservation. And just as we should not deprive individuals of their most basic rights, neither should we do this with a community. This is our concern, our question, our future and our country, and it is we who must decide about the future.³⁴

In addition, Orbán and his colleagues further framed the issue of immigration not as a refugee crisis but as a crisis of an illegal, economic migration, which is endangering the whole of Europe, as the Prime Minister declared:

First of all, dear Friends, what we have been facing is not a refugee crisis. This is a migratory movement composed of economic migrants, refugees and also foreign fighters. This is an uncontrolled and unregulated process. I would like to remind you that free choice of a host country is not included in the international law. I also want to underline that there is an unlimited source of supply of people, after Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Africa is now also on the move. The dimension and the volume of the danger is well above our expectations.³⁵

On the other hand, in the Croatian case, the government representatives positioned their rhetoric within a particularly recurring language of humanitarian crisis and need for solidarity, which goes hand in hand with pan-European appeals for importance of cooperation and joint solution. Croatian rhetorical style was further complemented with references to having the issue under control and statements about good treatment of refugees. In particular, Croatian side has always portrayed an issue as a humanitarian disaster not as a danger or threat to the security of the nation. To cite an example, Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic stated clearly "We in Croatia, who have always lived on borders, know what is dangerous and what is not. This is not a danger."³⁶ The consistent use of such rhetoric further appears, as Minister of the Interior Ranko Ostojic highlighted on numerous occasions:

Over the past 34 days we have experienced a lot; I am glad that we have not had any casualties during the refugee crisis, there were no epidemic outbreaks, everything is organised as far as that is possible. Croatia will not feel the consequences of the crisis except financial and we

³⁴ "Viktor Orbán's Speech at the Conference 'Five Years of Governance,'" *Kormany.hu*, May 29, 2015, <http://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/viktor-orban-s-speech-at-the-conference-five-years-of-governance>.

³⁵ "Speech of Viktor Orbán at the EPP Congress," *Kormany.hu*, October 26, 2015, <http://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/speech-of-viktor-orban-at-the-epp-congress20151024>.

³⁶ "Government of the Republic of Croatia - PM Milanovic: Wire Fences Are Not the Solution, Croatia Will Take Care of Its Interests," *Vlada.gov.hr*, October 4, 2015, <https://vlada.gov.hr/news/pm-milanovic-wire-fences-are-not-the-solution-croatia-will-take-care-of-its-interests/17851>.

expect that to be resolved with the EU, but what is important is that nobody's life is disrupted because of this.³⁷

The Deputy Foreign and European Affairs Minister Josko Klisovic also added that what Croatia was doing is in its pan-European interest, a remark which clearly positions the Croatian rhetoric as within highly pro-European tone, as his words demonstrate: “Croatia will fulfil its obligations. We are and we want to be a reliable EU member state and in that sense we will respect our share of the commitments.”³⁸

2.2 Actions behind the words

To underscore their respective rhetorical approaches, the governments of both countries pursued a number of corresponding policies that featured their preferred style of addressing the issue of immigration.

The Hungarian Fidesz-led conservative government most ostensibly put across three key actions that resemble its rhetorical style. First of all, the protectionist and nationalist language of the Fidesz’ government was translated into a decision to hold a ‘national consultation on immigration and terrorism’ aimed to gather and clearly manipulate citizens’ perspective on the matter. This action has been criticised extensively not only by domestic organisations and researchers but especially from abroad.³⁹ The national consultation was accompanied by the government’s poster campaign which brought to the fore three slogans worded as “*If you come to Hungary, you must respect our laws*”, “*If you come to Hungary, you must respect our culture*” and “*If you come to Hungary, you must not take the jobs of the Hungarians,*” at the

³⁷ “Government of the Republic of Croatia - Minister Ostojic Says Refugee Situation under Control,” *Vlada.gov.hr*, October 21, 2015, <https://www.vlada.hr/news/minister-ostojic-says-refugee-situation-under-control/17966>.

³⁸ “Government of the Republic of Croatia - Croatia Treating Asylum Seekers in Accordance with Conventions, Says Minister Milanovic,” *Vlada.gov.hr*, May 13, 2015, <https://vlada.gov.hr/news/croatia-treating-asylum-seekers-in-accordance-with-conventions-says-minister-milanovic/16964>.

³⁹ Attila Juhász and Péter Krekó, “Desperate Search for the Lost Popularity: Governmental Campaign against Refugees and Migrants in Hungary,” *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Budapest*, May 2015, <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/budapest/11351.pdf>.

cost of one million Euro.⁴⁰ The political elites utilised the results of this campaign and consultation into justifying their even more controversial and imperative actions that followed.

The second type of action which translated from the nationalist and protectionist rhetoric was the government's decision to bring strict border control with the construction of the first wired fence on the Hungarian borders with Serbia. On 17 June 2015, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó announced that the Government has ordered closure of the Hungarian-Serbian border, which was to be achieved by building a four-metre-high fence.⁴¹ While Hungary took this resolute step, it did so with claims of protecting not only national interests and security, but also that of the whole EU through the protection of Schengen borders. Indeed, the rhetoric has been consistent on this matter, with claims such as that of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán during his interview for national TV2 on 17 September 2015, when he proclaimed that:

Every one of the countries which signed the agreement referred to as “Schengen” agreed to use their own resources in protecting their external Schengen borders; this is what it says in the agreement. Consequently, if they criticised Hungary earlier for not being able to enforce the Schengen Agreement, they had every right to do so. But when they criticised us for seeking to enforce the terms of an agreement which we all signed up to, it is unfair and unjust.⁴²

The Hungarian officials invoked their sovereign right to take such decisions in order to prevent economic migration, which according to the elites does not constitute a human right and therefore the border closure would not constitute a breach of Hungary's international or

⁴⁰ Boldizsár Nagy, “Parallel Realities: Refugees Seeking Asylum in Europe and Hungary's Reaction – EU Immigration and Asylum Law and Policy,” *Eu Migration Law Blog*, November 4, 2015, <http://eumigrationlawblog.eu/parallel-realities-refugees-seeking-asylum-in-europe-and-hungarys-reaction/>; Nick Thorpe, “Hungary's Poster War on Immigration,” *BBC News*, June 14, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33091597>.

⁴¹ “The Minister of the Interior Has Been Instructed to Prepare for Closure of the Hungarian-Serbian Border,” *Government*, June 17, 2015, <http://www.kormany.hu/en/ministry-of-foreign-affairs-and-trade/news/the-minister-of-the-interior-has-been-instructed-to-prepare-for-closure-of-the-hungarian-serbian-border>.

⁴² “Interview with Prime Minister Viktor Orbán on Commercial Station tv2's ‘Facts – Evening’ Television Programme,” *Kormany.hu*, September 17, 2015, 2, <http://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/interview-with-prime-minister-viktor-orban-on-commercial-station-tv2-s-facts-evening-television-programme>.

European obligations. And although border closure might pass as not a breach of its international obligations, the following action indeed qualifies as such.

The Hungarian rhetoric was interpreted into the third imperative action by the Hungarian government in the form of legislative amendments of the Hungarian asylum legislation as well as the country's Penal Code. As Boldizsár Nagy, professor at Central European University in Budapest, explains, the first such a crucial change came across with the parliament's entitlement of the government to adopt a list of safe third countries, based on which two identical lists of safe third countries and safe countries of origin were adopted, among which Serbia was also included.⁴³ The second crucial legislative change was taken in the refugee status determination procedure with the aim of accelerating the procedure in line with the proposed build-up of a wired fence. In force from 1 August, this amendment joint the safe third country rule with a procedure conducted and completed at the borders in specific settings, designated as transit zones. This was in September followed by another amendment which designated the fence at the Serbian-Hungarian border, as a "temporary security border closure", the illegal crossing of which was made a criminal act.⁴⁴ Although these legislative amendments attracted a lot of domestic as well as international crisis,⁴⁵ they ultimately allowed as well as further justified the autonomous rhetoric and actions of the Hungarian government.

Within such an environment serious concerns emerged that stem from the Hungarian government actions as well as from its general pursuit of stringent rhetoric toward immigration. For the government action in the form of 'national consultation', the key concerns related to its highly selective and manipulative questions, which include: "*We hear different views on the*

⁴³ For an overview of the legislative amendments that took place in Hungary during last year Nagy, "Parallel Realities."

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Hungarian Helsinki Committee, "No Country for Refugees – New Asylum Rules Deny Protection to Refugees and Lead to Unprecedented Human Rights Violations in Hungary: Information Note" (Asylum in Europe), accessed May 26, 2016, http://www.asylumineurope.org/sites/default/files/resources/hhc_no_country_for_refugees.pdf; Human Rights Watch | 350 Fifth Avenue, 34th Floor | New York, and NY 10118-3299 USA | t 1.212.290.4700, "Hungary: New Border Regime Threatens Asylum Seekers," *Human Rights Watch*, September 19, 2015, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/09/19/hungary-new-border-regime-threatens-asylum-seekers>.

*issue of immigration. There are some who think that economic migrants jeopardise the jobs and livelihoods of Hungarians. Do you agree?"; "There are some who think that mismanagement of the immigration question by Brussels may have something to do with increased terrorism. Do you agree with this view?" or "Would you support the Hungarian government in the introduction of more stringent regulations, according to which migrants illegally crossing the Hungarian border could be taken into custody?"*⁴⁶ Most of the above identified themes put to the fore by Hungarian political elite rhetoric, such as references to economic or illegal migration, threat and danger to the security of Europe, making links between immigration and terrorism, and even highlighting the costs of immigration for Hungary, also appear within the questionnaires distributed to the public and are ultimately highly manipulative of public perceptions on the issue.

It ought to be highlighted, however, that evidence shows a great depth of xenophobia prevailing in the Hungarian society, building on which any anti-immigration political campaign is likely to witness a great success, as researches from *Political Capital Institute*, a think-tank in Budapest, Juhász and Krekó explain. The authors point out three main reasons why such attitudes persist in the society with a lack of concrete experience with immigration. The reasons include: "the fear of the Unknown, the abstract image of the immigrants as it is presented by the media, and the increasingly strong anti-immigrant political rhetorics."⁴⁷

The Croatian Social Democratic party government, similarly, pursued policies in line with its rhetorical approach. At least two distinctive actions can be identified in the Croatian case. First, such action relates to the Croatian government's acceptance of EU quotas on distribution of asylum seekers among EU Member States, with which Croatia willingly agreed. The

⁴⁶ "NATIONAL CONSULTATION on Immigration and Terrorism" (Prime Minister's Office, April 2015), [kormany.hu, http://www.kormany.hu/download/9/a3/50000/Nemzetikonzultacio_mmkornel.docx](http://www.kormany.hu/download/9/a3/50000/Nemzetikonzultacio_mmkornel.docx).

⁴⁷ Juhász and Krekó, "Desperate Search for the Lost Popularity: Governmental Campaign against Refugees and Migrants in Hungary," 5.

relocation scheme that was proposed by the EU in the spring of 2015, whereby a distribution of persons in clear need of international protection would take place among Member States based on a set of four criteria: a) the size of the population (40%) as it reflects the capacity to absorb a certain number of refugees; b) total GDP (40%) as it reflects the absolute wealth of a country and is thus indicative for the capacity of an economy to absorb and integrate refugees; c) average number of spontaneous asylum applications and the number of resettled refugees per 1 million inhabitants over the period 2010-2014 (10%) as it reflects the efforts made by Member States in the recent past; and d) the unemployment rate (10%) as an indicator reflecting the capacity to integrate refugees.⁴⁸ The respective state would then become responsible for the determination of the asylum procedure.

The relocation plan was met with a lot of criticism and rejection from several Member States, in particular the countries of the so called Visegrad Four group – Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, Croatian government took a decision to accept the quota plan and it initially agreed only to a relocation of a small number of 550 refugees, as Prime Minister Milanovic pointed out: "Croatia is prepared, for humanitarian reasons, to accept a smaller number of people, but we cannot go beyond that".⁵⁰ Nevertheless, Croatian leaders later agreed to increase the initial agreement to accept as many as 1,650 people,⁵¹ even once the country became a direct transit zone with a great number of people arriving on a daily basis.

⁴⁸ "Communication on the European Agenda on Migration - Annex" (European Commission, Spring 2015), [ec.europa.eu, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication_on_the_european_agenda_on_migration_annex_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication_on_the_european_agenda_on_migration_annex_en.pdf).

⁴⁹ "V4 Sa Dohodla Na Spoločnom Odmietnutí Kvót Pre Migrantov - Declaration of V4 Countries on Migration in View of June European Council | Úrad Vlády SR," *Vlada.gov.sk*, June 23, 2015, <http://www.vlada.gov.sk/v4-sa-dohodla-na-spolocnom-odmietnuti-kvot-pre-migrantov/>.

⁵⁰ "PM Milanovic: Croatia Is Ready to Accept Smaller Number of Refugees," *Vlada.gov.hr*, June 26, 2015, <https://vlada.gov.hr/news/pm-milanovic-croatia-is-ready-to-accept-smaller-number-of-refugees/17226>.

⁵¹ "Government of the Republic of Croatia - Interior Minister Ostojic Says Croatia Proves It Is a Humane and Civilised Country," *Vlada.gov.hr*, October 6, 2015, <https://vlada.gov.hr/news/interior-minister-ostojic-says-croatia-proves-it-is-a-humane-and-civilised-country/17875>.

The second identifiable action that goes in line with the Croatian political elite rhetoric, is the government's policy on transport of refugees. The transport system that was initiated immediately, when the immigration route became redirected through the Croatian territory aimed at enabling an organised, safe and quick transport of people from their point of entry in Croatia toward the borders of its neighbours – Hungary and Slovenia in order to enable their passage to their target countries of Western Europe, especially Germany and Austria. The transport system thus refers to the Croatian government decision to provide transport services to those migrants wishing to continue in their journey toward the Western Europe. Croatian government pursued agreements with Slovenia, Austria and Germany on that matter, and highlighted that as long as Austria and Germany were willing to accept refugees, Croatia was willing to assist them in the safest and quickest possible journey,⁵² even advising on most suitable points of entry that would represent easier route for refugees,⁵³ i.e. through its northern borders rather than entering from the south where mountainous region would mean a more complicated journey ahead.

The political actors' rhetoric related to the transport policy initially reflected referrals to cooperation with these countries (Austria and Germany and even Slovenia), whereby the officials often cited the support from German and Austrian chancellors. In addition, the Croatian leaders justified their action through the highly anti-fence rhetoric and language of anti-border closure measures employed by the neighbouring Hungary, as Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic proclaimed:

Orban is talking about a threat against Christian values in Europe. As if, I don't know, Muslim hordes which are less worthy were coming. However, one per mile of the European population is coming and they are people very motivated to succeed and be here and that's evident. They

⁵² "Government of the Republic of Croatia - Interior Minister Ostojic Says Croatia Moving on to Plan C," October 16, 2015, <https://vlada.gov.hr/news/interior-minister-ostojic-says-croatia-moving-on-to-plan-c/17943>.

⁵³ "Government of the Republic of Croatia - PM Milanovic: No Refugee Reception Centre Planned in Dubrovnik Area," *Vlada.gov.hr*, September 28, 2015, <https://vlada.gov.hr/news/pm-milanovic-no-refugee-reception-centre-planned-in-dubrovnik-area/17797>.

are dying for a chance at success. I don't believe in fences. They aren't the enemy and the wall won't help Hungary at all. People will go around it.⁵⁴

The Croatian leaders further pursued and justified the transport policy with the rhetoric of an organised and controlled management of the situation, which does not affect the lives of Croatian citizens and is also not a burden on the Croatian budget. Milanovic reiterated this approach further when he declared:

We are receiving people in a very, very organised way and transporting them to several border crossings, organised at the state's cost, but take a look at what Serbia is, or rather, is not doing. That's total chaos. I wouldn't mention this had we not come across the clamour of nationalists, those guys are always the same, they are everywhere.⁵⁵

Although the transport system was not a unique governmental action in dealing with immigration only present in Croatian case, indeed Hungarian government also resorted to this step following the strand-up of refugees at the Keleti train station in Budapest at the beginning of September 2015 and the subsequent march on the highway toward the Austrian borders.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, the transport system in Hungary differed not only for being an act of the last resort after the stressful situation emerged, but also within the elite rhetoric. While Hungarian government highlighted the costs of such transport for the Hungarian population, in Croatian case, the leaders emphasised the transport system as a priority policy, one which is beneficial for the refugees who do not wish to stay in Croatia, it is well-organised and thus safe and one which is in line with agreements with Western partners who were willing to accept arriving refugees.

⁵⁴ "Government of the Republic of Croatia - Prime Minister Milanovic Says Refugee Quotas Acceptable, Walls Not," *Vlada.gov.hr*, September 4, 2015, <https://vlada.gov.hr/news/prime-minister-milanovic-says-refugee-quotas-acceptable-walls-not/17609>.

⁵⁵ "Government of the Republic of Croatia - PM: Refugee Crisis Should Be Solved in Turkey and Greece," *Vlada.gov.hr*, September 23, 2015, <https://vlada.gov.hr/news/pm-refugee-crisis-should-be-solved-in-turkey-and-greece/17779>.

⁵⁶ Barbara Piazza-Georgi, "Living Our Values, Preserving Our Values: Hungary's Response to the 2015 European Migrant Crisis – Part I," *Hungarian Review* 7, no. 2 (March 10, 2016), http://www.hungarianreview.com/article/20160310_living_our_values_preserving_our_values_hungary_s_response_to_the_2015_european_migrant_crisis_part_i; Barbara Piazza-Georgi, "Living Our Values, Preserving Our Values: Hungary's Response to the 2015 European Migrant Crisis – Part II - Hungarian Review" 7, no. 3 (May 12, 2016), http://www.hungarianreview.com/article/20160512_living_our_values_preserving_our_values_hungary_s_response_to_the_2015_european_migrant_crisis_part_ii.

This chapter outlined a general overview of patterns that characterise the rhetorical approaches of political elites in Hungary and Croatia when they addressed the issue of immigration during the studied period. The respective rhetoric was further demonstrated also with examples of government actions which underscored the existence of rhetorical divergence in the two countries. In the following chapter, I proceed with the articulation of an explanatory framework that aims to clarify the existence of such divergence in the use of different rhetorical styles by political elites in Hungary and Croatia.

Chapter 3

Explanatory Framework for Political Elite Rhetorical Divergence

Based on the acquired quantitative as well as qualitative evidence as presented in the previous chapter, a set of three key representative themes derives for the rhetorical approaches employed to address the issue of immigration by political actors in Hungary and Croatia (see Table 2 below). This division is what guides the formulation of the framework elaborated in this chapter, which aims to explain the rhetorical difference in the countries under research.

Table 2 Most frequent use of themes countries comparison

HUNGARY	CROATIA
Sovereign and historical appeals to the need for nationalist stand toward immigration	Humanitarian appeals to the need for solidarity and protection of vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers
Framing the crisis as an illegal, economic or mass migration	Reassuring appeals to an organised situation under control and with good treatment without any danger to the society
Euroscepticism over the inadequate EU system, blaming the EU and its liberal dogma for the crisis emergence	Pan-European appeals to the need for cooperation and common EU solution as well as pro-western appeals to liberalism

Table 2 outlines the three most frequent themes for each country which arise within the rhetoric of political elites during the period under research. The respective phrasing of the themes is based on a careful reading and coding of the acquired contents from government websites. The first and thus also most frequent category in the case of Hungary – *sovereign and historical appeals* – refers to the rhetorical use of autonomous language characterised with appeals to protection and security of the nation and its interests, and closely connected to which are also appeals to the country’s respective historical role and achievements in pursuing such rhetoric. The most frequent category in the case of Croatia – humanitarian appeals – refers to the language of the need for solidarity, human responsibility to help, as well as references to a

refugee and asylum seeker crisis rather than to an issue of mass, economic or illegal migration, which represents the second category in Hungarian political elite rhetoric. The second most frequent category of themes for Croatia is represented by reassuring appeals, i.e. elites' reassurances with statements about 'situation under control' 'not a threat/danger' and even appeals to the good treatment of refugees by Croatian authorities. The last most frequent category of themes for the two countries is their position toward the EU. Hungarian elites positioned their rhetoric as highly Eurosceptic, with references to EU's inadequacy of handling the crisis as well as being one of the causes for the issue in the first place. On the other hand, Croatian elites positioned themselves with pan-European appeals to the need for a joint action and need for cooperation, as well as with references to Croatia as a rightful member of the Western community with its humane stance and handling of the issue.

It needs to be acknowledged at this stage, however, that a lot of similar pan-European rhetoric was also pursued by Hungarian political actors, especially through claims of protecting the EU and Schengen and adhering to Hungarian obligations under these systems. Nevertheless, much more often, statements such as "European blah-blah-blah"⁵⁷ and "Good-for-nothing liberal European immigration policy! Let us boldly state that liberal foreign policy at the world political level is nothing more or less than organized hypocrisy"⁵⁸ override Hungarian semi-pan-European appeals through claiming EU's protection interests.

Similarly, Croatian elites in government at the time under research, were not completely unidimensional in their rhetoric toward the EU either, especially as Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic himself proclaimed that he has "never been an advocate of an ever growing Union, which means more bureaucracy in the European Commission (...). If we continue like that, we

⁵⁷ "Border Fence Is the Only Effective Means of Defence," *Kormany.hu*, September 17, 2015, <http://www.kormany.hu/en/prime-minister-s-office/news/border-fence-is-the-only-effective-means-of-defence>.

⁵⁸ "Viktor Orbán's Speech at the 14th Kötse Civil Picnic," *Kormany.hu*, September 17, 2015, <http://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/viktor-orban-s-speech-at-the-14th-kotse-civil-picnic>.

will not have to go to elections anymore because all decisions will be made by the Commission."⁵⁹ Nevertheless, even within their slightly Eurosceptic rhetoric, a much more cautious approach is visibly employed by Croatian political actors.

Following this categorisation, I therefore differentiate between two kinds of political actors' rhetorical approaches, in this case especially when addressing the issue of immigration, which could be referred to as *cautious* and *autonomous* political elite rhetoric. A *cautious* (Croatian) rhetorical approach refers to the use of language which plays in accord with international and European standards. It ultimately relies on referrals to human rights and humanitarian responsibility through the use of other themes which justify such rhetorical style, such as safety and religious appeals. On the other hand, the *autonomous* (Hungarian) rhetoric refers to a highly nationalist-leaning language of protection of national interests and security, using other themes as justification, which might include appeals and warnings about the external threat associated with different religion of the immigrating people and the threat of terrorism.

The following framework aims to explain the factors behind political actors' preference toward either of these rhetorical styles. The two rhetorical approaches are characterised by a set *rhetoric-situating factors* which determine them and a set of *rhetoric-justifying themes* which characterise them. The three most frequent categories of themes as shown above, essentially represent crosscutting references which are often used in conjunction with other themes that substantiate the tone of rhetoric. I thus argue that there are three key factors which are *rhetoric-situating*, based on which the preferred style of political rhetoric becomes conveyed.

⁵⁹ "Prime Minister Milanovic: Croatia Has Been Managing the Migrant Crisis in an Organised Way," *Vlada.gov.hr*, October 1, 2015, <https://vlada.gov.hr/news/prime-minister-milanovic-croatia-has-been-managing-the-migrant-crisis-in-an-organised-way/17841>.

The rhetoric-situating factors include the political actors' stance toward the EU as either Eurosceptic or pan-European; the politicisation, in other words, political response to a historical experience of an ethnic suppression and the party ideology and party competition which determine the use of *rhetoric-justifying themes*. The *rhetoric-justifying themes*, therefore represent dimensions of the identified rhetorical approaches which through a matter of a political choice become employed and politicised with different aims as themes ultimately justifying elite's preferred rhetorical approach. In the case of immigration, and following the empirical findings, these themes include religious, cultural and safety versus threat appeals. The political choice over using these themes therefore overall characterises (justifies) the political actors' rhetorical approach (see Figure 7 below for an outline of this framework). The following part proceeds with an elaboration in detail of the reasons behind such classification.

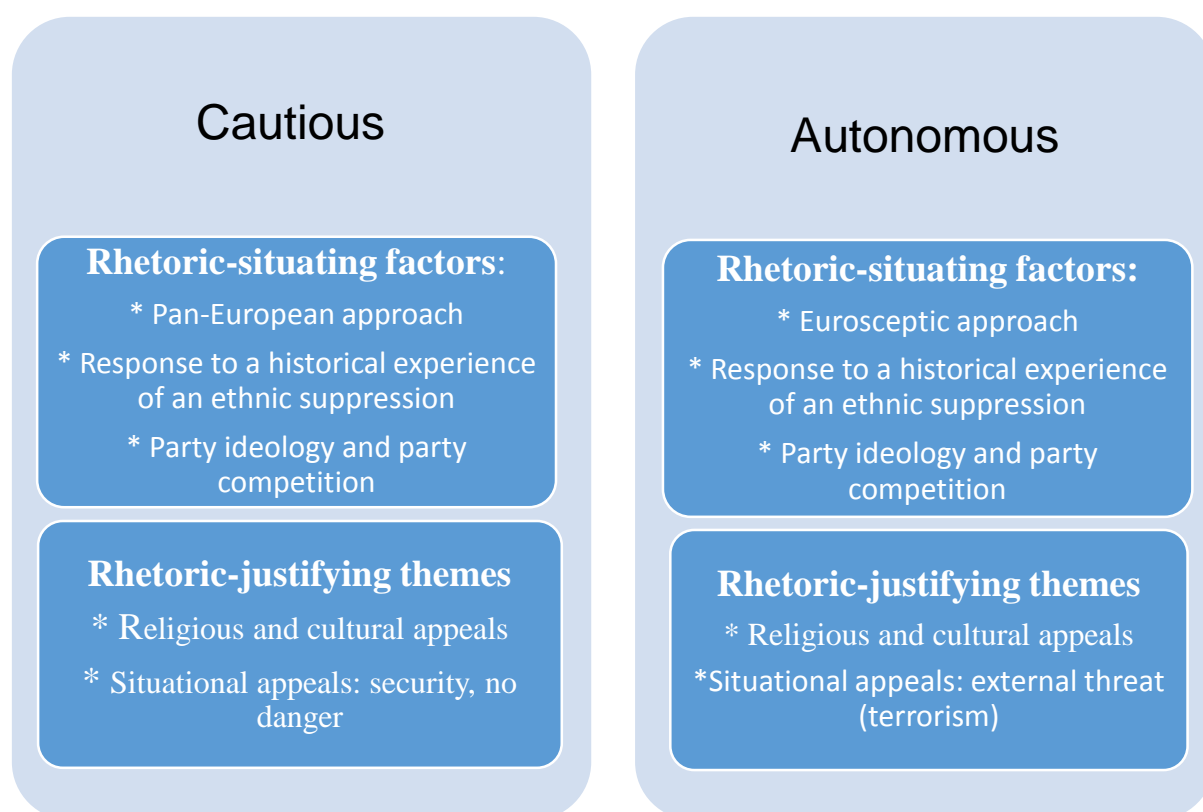


Figure 7 Political actors' rhetorical approaches toward the issue of immigration

3.1 The rhetoric-situating factors

I term the first category of factors influencing the style of political elite rhetoric *as rhetoric-situating factors*, as these essentially situate political actors' preferred approach to dealing with certain issues that stem from international and European obligations, such as is the case with the issue of immigration. The three rhetoric-situating factors therefore include the political actors' stance toward the EU as either Eurosceptic or pan-European, the extent of politicisation or, in other words, the kind of political response to a historical experience of an ethnic suppression that indeed plays a significant role on the current conduct of domestic politics, either through a direct reference to the past experience or through the indirect result into nationalist versus pan-European domestic politics. Lastly, the role of political party ideology and competition underline these two preceding factors as determinants for preferred rhetoric.

3.1.1 Political elites' stance toward the European Union

The political actors' stance toward the European Union emerges as a central factor of dealing with the current wave of immigration, not the least because of the European Common Asylum System that has been established by a sequence of regulations and directives that manage and determine the responsible states, their competencies, procedures and other aspects. The EU, therefore, represents the first crucial factor situating the political actors' rhetorical style. The large body of existing literature on rising Euroscepticism in European politics, as for instance demonstrated by leading researchers Kopecný and Mudde, and Taggart and Szczerbiak.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Petr Kopecný and Cas Mudde, "The Two Sides of Euroscepticism Party Positions on European Integration in East Central Europe," *European Union Politics* 3, no. 3 (September 1, 2002): 297–326, doi:10.1177/1465116502003003002; Paul Taggart and Aleks Szczerbiak, "The Party Politics of Euroscepticism in EU Member and Candidate States," *SEI Working Paper*, no. 51 (April 2002), <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/webteam/gateway/file.php?name=sei-working-paper-no-51.pdf&site=266>.

There are a number of reasons to assume the influence of domestic political actors' stance toward the EU on their rhetorical (and thus policy) approach toward immigration, beyond the empirics from the previous chapter.

First of all, indeed, both countries under research are members of the Union and thus also subject to its rules and regulations in conducting their respective domestic affairs. However, while Hungary entered the Union earlier – in 2004 – Croatia represents the youngest Member State with its entry only in 2013. Although Croatia, applied for the EU membership already in 2003, the accession talks were postponed until 2005, especially as significant difficulties continued in the field of organised crime and other violence in the country. At the same time, a territorial dispute between Croatia and Slovenia over sea and land borderlines persists which all created obstacles to Croatia's EU accession process.⁶¹ For a long time Croatia's economy experienced severe problems, especially due to the high levels of the governing Democratic Union (Hrvatska demokratska zajednica, HDZ) party corruption. As a result, pan-European politicians entered the arena of Croatian politics in the election rounds of 2000, which allowed for several constitutional amendments intended to disperse power from the president to the parliament.⁶² Although, the country experienced relative economic growth, it nonetheless also fell prey to the global financial crisis of 2008-9 and continued to struggle with deep economic recession for subsequent six years.⁶³ Although, both countries were hit significantly by the global financial crash of 2008/09, the situation differed in the two countries in a number of respects.

⁶¹ Kevin Koerner and Maria Laura Lanzeni, "Croatia Facing Challenges on the EU's Doorstep: Research Briefing Emerging Markets" (Deutsche Bank DB Research, June 18, 2013), 2, https://www.dbresearch.com/PROD/DBR_INTERNET_EN-PROD/PROD000000000315539/Croatia_facing_challenges_on_the_EU%E2%80%99s_doorstep.pdf.

⁶² "Croatia Country Profile," *BBC*, January 23, 2012, sec. Country profiles, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country_profiles/1097128.stm.

⁶³ Zdravko Petak and William Barlett, "2014 Croatia Country Report," ed. Frank Bönker, *Bertelsmann Stiftung and Sustainable Governance Indicators*, 2014, http://www.sgi-network.org/docs/2014/country/SGI2014_Croatia.pdf.

Hungary as a member of the EU prior to the crisis and as a result of a large-scale and long-term private and state borrowing, was forced to turn to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Central Bank (ECB) with a request of large loans needed to deflect the threat of national economic collapse. The inadequate handling of the country's economy by the centre-left government, generated a great deal of public dissatisfaction, resulting in the rise of the right-wing nationalist party Jobbik.⁶⁴ The general move of the Hungarian electorate toward more authoritarian right became clear with the 2010 and subsequent 2014 parliamentary elections results, in which the conservative Fidesz party won the government.⁶⁵ The victory of the current Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán allowed his government to pursue radical legislative and constitutional changes which have caused a lot of criticism from EU institutions for being against the main principle of the rule of law.⁶⁶

On the other hand, the setting of Croatia's accession to the Union created unfavourable conditions for immediate beneficial economic effects for the country, which citizens as well as the government understood as special circumstances, aiding their hope for future progress stemming from the membership.⁶⁷ As Samardzija writes, Croatia assumed a positive stance toward the EU from the moment of its accession, as it led a leading role in stabilizing relations within the Balkan region, as well as in a number of other pan-European initiatives, for which the country also received positive feedback from the institution.⁶⁸

In addition, following the large body of research into the EU 'sticks and carrots' policy toward candidate states and the importance of EU conditionality upon the eventual accession,

⁶⁴ András Bíró-Nagy, Tamás Boros, and Áron Varga, "Right-Wing Extremism in Hungary," *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and International Policy Analysis*, December 2012, <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id-moe/09566.pdf>.

⁶⁵ Gábor Györi, "Hungarian Politics in 2014," ed. András Bíró-Nagy, *Friedrich Ebert Foundation and Policy Solutions Policy Solutions* (2015), <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/budapest/11166.pdf>.

⁶⁶ Bojan Bugarić, "Protecting Democracy and the Rule of Law in the European Union: The Hungarian Challenge," *LSE "Europe in Question" Discussion Paper Series 74* (July 2014): 1–39; Györi, "Hungarian Politics in 2014."

⁶⁷ Visnja Samardzija, "'Croatia's First Year of EU Membership: Have the Expectations Been Fulfilled?'" *Tepsa Policy Paper*, July 2014, <http://www.tepsa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Visnja-Samardzija-TEPSA-Policy-Paper-July-2014-Final.pdf>.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 3–4.

evidence suggests new EU member states tend to follow and comply with EU obligations more consistently than older, more prominent EU member states, which enjoy a higher bargaining power in the EU institutions.⁶⁹ Croatia as the newest member of the Union continues to be subject to the EU close scrutiny during its transition period and thus experiences a level of pressure for living up to European standards that have long been imposed on the country through various EU conditionality measures in relation to the preparation of Croatia for the EU accession.⁷⁰

Lastly, Croatia is not a member of the Schengen area. One of the conditions for becoming a member of the Schengen, is an effective protection of external borders and application of Schengen rules and regulations in order to safeguard the common standards for free movement.⁷¹ Croatia, with the proposal to join Schengen, is obliged to follow the so called Schengen *acquis* in order to proceed with its accession, which actually began during the period under the research. It can, therefore, be expected that EU advantages would have a strong impact on the handling of the immigration crisis in Croatia. Hungary, as a member of the EU and Schengen area since 2004, differs considerably on this aspect from Croatia.

It follows from this discussion that both countries under research are thus subject to different degrees of dependence as well as experience with the Union, which positions them within different levels of EU influence and thus allows for the variance in political actors' stance toward the institution. The governments' stance toward the EU therefore represents the key factor situating the political elite rhetorical approach via the use of either pan-European – in the case of *cautious* (Croatian)– or Euro-sceptic appeals – in the case of *autonomous* (Hungarian)

⁶⁹ Frank Schimmelfennig and Florian Trauner, "Post-Accession Compliance in the EU's New Member States - Issue," *European Integration Online Papers* Special Issue 2, no. Volume 13 (2009), <http://www.ies.be/files/issue.pdf>.

⁷⁰ Gitta Glöpker, "Effectiveness of EU Conditionality in the Western Balkans: Minority Rights and the Fight Against Corruption in Croatia and Macedonia," *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 9, no. 2 (April 22, 2013), <http://www.jcer.net/index.php/jcer/article/view/417>.

⁷¹ "DGs - Migration and Home Affairs - What We Do - ...Schengen, Borders & Visas - Schengen Area," accessed March 1, 2016, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen/index_en.htm.

rhetoric, including appeals to mutual efforts and solutions to the issue of immigration, solidarity and references to European and international obligations in the case of the former, and blaming the European liberalism and the common system for the latter case. This thesis, however, argues beyond the mere pan-European versus Eurosceptic political preferences, in that it takes into consideration the following crucial rhetoric-situating factor – response to a historical experience of an ethnic suppression– that aids the use of either *cautious* or *autonomous* rhetorical approach.

3.1.2 Political response to an ethnic suppression

The second rhetoric-situating factor is defined as a political response to a historical experience of an ethnic suppression. For the purposes of the present thesis, the concept refers to the *political response* to a memory of an “attack” on the ethnic and cultural values of the nation, not necessarily depending on the actual facts of the event itself. Ethnic suppression is thus understood as a loss or other mistreatment of a significant portion of a national population due to external forces. In the case of countries under research, the historical element appears on several aspects. Both countries under research were in the past subjected to such suppression (not necessarily through an armed attack) of their ethnicity. In order to understand the extent of the political response to such past experience, it is necessary to briefly outline the magnitude as well as importance of the event to the contemporary character of the countries under research.

The dismemberment of the centuries-long dual Austro-Hungarian Monarchy at the end of World War I, with the Treaty of Trianon (signed on 4 June 1920) created a pattern for the future Hungarian domestic and international politics. The event of Trianon, which fundamentally redrew the borders within the region resulted into a completely disturbed ethnic composition of the dominant Hungarian kingdom in Central and Eastern Europe.⁷² Hungary experienced not only significant losses of its territory, but more so of its ethnic population, with

⁷² Koszorus, Jr., “Trianon: A Relic of the Past or a Continuing Tragedy?”

more than three million ethnic Hungarians becoming dispersed among the newly established neighbouring states.⁷³ The consequences of Trianon have thus articulated into a nationalist drive in Hungarian politics, even invoked as a ‘moral obligation’ to “‘compensate the Hungarian minorities that had suffered discrimination during decades of communism, yet maintained their identity,’”⁷⁴ with a large number of ethnic Hungarians living dispersed throughout the neighbouring states, which bears a conflict among Hungary and its neighbours.⁷⁵

The issue of Hungarian ethnic suppression thus became politicised into a new form of ‘mobilising nationalism,’ as Gergely Egedy explains, which puts priority on nation-building over state-building, ever since its profound articulation by the currently governing Fidesz party in the late 1990s, following the dissolution of the communist system in the region. As Boldizsar Nagy, however highlights, several notions characteristic of such nationalist drive, including the most recent Status Law, which attributed several benefits to Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries, while not those living elsewhere in the world, on the basis of mere cultural association with the Hungarian nationality, have turned nationality into a “‘stigma’”.⁷⁶ This confirms the importance of national politics in Hungarian domestic sphere, explaining the reliance on *autonomous* language and policies when approaching the nation-sensitive issue of immigration.

⁷³ Gergely Egedy, “Conservatism And Nation-Models In Hungary,” *Hungarian Review: Essays* 4, no. 3, accessed May 28, 2016, http://www.hungarianreview.com/article/conservatism_and_nation_models_in_hungary.

⁷⁴ Zsuzsa Csergő and James M. Goldgeier, “The European Union, the Post-Communist World, and the Shaping of National Agendas,” (Conference or Workshop Item, 2005), <http://aei.pitt.edu/3004/>.

⁷⁵ Stephen Bela-Vardy, “The Trianon Syndrome in Today’s Hungary,” *Hungarian Studies Review* 24, no. 1–2 (Spring-Fall 1997), http://epa.oszk.hu/00000/00010/00031/pdf/HSR_1997_1-2_073-079.pdf; Béla Lipták, “The Cancer of Central Europe: Trianon,” *Hunsor Info Media- HHRW*, accessed May 23, 2016, <http://www.hunsor.se/dosszie/thecancerofcentraleurope.pdf>; Dani, “Minority Hungarian Management of Conflicting Cultural Identities in Post - Trianon Intercultural Romania as Reflected in Literature,” *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 3, no. 6 (Special Issue) (April 2013): 316–26; Eva Kovacs, “Jeder Nachkrieg Ist Ein Vorkrieg. On the Traumatic Memory of Trianon,” trans. Ferenc Laczo (Élet és Irodalom, October 1, 2010), http://www.cultures-of-history.uni-jena.de/fileadmin/editorial/articles/Laczo-The_Trianon_Debate/PDF/Jeder_Nachkrieg_ist_ein_Vorkrieg.pdf.

⁷⁶ Boldizsár Nagy, “Nationality as a Stigma: The Drawbacks of Nationality (What Do I Have to Do with Book-Burners?),” *Corvinus Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 5, no. 2 (2014): 31–64, doi:10.14267/cjssp.2014.02.02.

Similarly, Croatia has experienced a set of significant events during the twentieth century which ultimately defined its contemporary character.⁷⁷ Croatia declared its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, which was followed by an ethnic armed conflict between the Yugoslav republics from 1991-1995. The event also forced indigenous people of these nations to flee their homes and settle elsewhere.⁷⁸ Croatia's involvement in the war further escalated with its support of the Bosnian Croats against the Bosnian Serbs, then against the Bosniaks (Muslims) in Bosnia-Herzegovina from 1992-5.⁷⁹ Following the UN interference, the war was eventually brought to an end with the Dayton peace agreement of 1995, when Croatia regained three of its four lost areas. The last piece of territory occupied by the Serbs was not returned to Croatian jurisdiction until 1998.⁸⁰

It took nearly a decade for the country to shake off its war-time legacy and apply for the EU membership in 2003, which Croatia entered only in 2013, as already elaborated above. Since its EU membership, however, Croatia embarked on a leadership role within its region, receiving positive feedback from the EU for its initiatives in cooperation with Serbia and other EU candidate states.⁸¹ This positive approach toward the EU, as already elaborated above is closely linked to the political response to the experience of ethnic suppression in the region, with the increased understanding of the role of xenophobia in channelling dangerous attitudes and thus actions. Especially, as the memory of an ethnic war in Croatia represents a much more recent point in the country's history, which persists within the consciousness of the Croatian population as the sense of responsibility of preventing the emergence of xenophobic attitudes

⁷⁷ For a detailed account of the Croatia's history and its contemporary consciousness see Ivo Banac, "Independent Croatia: History, Issues and Policy," *Délkelet Európa - South East Europe* 2, no. 1 (Spring 2011), http://www.southeast-europe.org/pdf/05/DKE_05_A_B_IB.pdf.

⁷⁸ "Modern Conflicts: Conflict Profile Croatia (1991 - 1995)" (Political Economy Research Institute), accessed March 3, 2016, <http://www.peri.umass.edu/fileadmin/pdf/Croatia.pdf>.

⁷⁹ "Croatia Profile - Timeline," *BBC News*, accessed April 27, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17217954>.

⁸⁰ Banac, "Independent Croatia: History, Issues and Policy"; John Ashbrook, "Elitism, Traditional Identities, and the European Union: The Case of Croatia" (IREX, January 2015), <https://www.irex.org/sites/default/files/IREX%20Research%20Brief%20Ashbrook-UPDATED.pdf>.

⁸¹ Samardzija, "Croatia's First Year of EU Membership: Have the Expectations Been Fulfilled?"

in the region. As Professor Ivo Banac of Yale University writes, the question of nationalism remains very contentious in the contemporary Croat consciousness: ‘There is no doubt that the belief in the common Croat ancestry and the nineteenth and twentieth century movements for autonomy and independence created the modern Croat identity. Yet, the concept of nationalism is avoided in contemporary Croatia as it triggers unwelcome associations.’⁸²

The existing debate about the impact of a troubling past on the conduct of present-day politics suggests that this factor may be a matter of political choice, become politicised into contrasting political action in the contemporary affairs. Such political response to a historical experience of an ethnic suppression can, on the one hand, contribute to a reinforcement of public fears of ethnic diversity and thus acts as a stimulus for greater pride in the national identity.⁸³ Indeed, this has been shown to be the case of Hungary, where historical legacy of an ethnic or territorial suppression resulted in more nationalist, protectionist – *autonomous* – political elite rhetoric when dealing with such a nation-sensitive issue like immigration. On the other hand, however, precisely this historical legacy of an ethnic suppression witnessed the opposite political response in the form of *cautious* political elite rhetoric as well as government actions in the conduct of domestic and international affairs, as was the case in Croatia when addressing the issue of immigration, during the period under research.

3.1.3 Political party ideology and party competition

Hloušek and Kopeček explain the specificities of studying party politics in East and Central Europe by stressing the importance of party families within the ideological and programmatic identification.⁸⁴ The left-right political ideology spectrum is most easily

⁸² Banac, “Independent Croatia: History, Issues and Policy,” 2.

⁸³ Michael Edward Brown et al., *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict: An International Security Reader* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2001).

⁸⁴ For a sound account of the theory and practice of party politics in East and Central Europe see Vít Hloušek and Lubomír Kopeček, “Types of Political Parties and Party Families,” in *Origin, Ideology and Transformation of Political Parties: East-Central and Western Europe Compared* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2010), 1–15.

comprehensible determination of party and voter preferences and it has largely determined the conduct of politics, especially after the end of the feudal and patronage systems in Europe. Prominent twentieth century scholars such as Maurice Duverger, Giovanni Sartori, Daniel Louis Seiler or Klaus von Beyme touched upon ideological classification of political parties, although using different designations.⁸⁵ Due to the limited scope of the present research, this part only aims to highlight and illustrate the importance of party ideology and party competition within the countries under research, as key determinants not only for the elites' approach toward immigration issue but also as determining the above mentioned factors of leaders' position toward the EU and their respective political responses to a historical experiences of an ethnic suppression. Therefore, the first two factors although highly situating the respective elite rhetoric in Hungary and Croatia, then ultimately depend on the last factor – the political party ideology of the governing coalitions closely interlinked with the party competition structure present in the countries under research at the time of the crisis.

The governing party Fidesz (Aliance of Young Democrats – Hungarian Civic Union) emerged as clear winners of the 2014 general election (see Table 3 on the following page for a general overview of the election results). The left-wing opposition suffered its second defeat in this election round, while the far-right Jobbik party retained its position within the opposition. As Győri writes, the part of the electorate disappointed in Fidesz largely opted to support Jobbik. This resulted into “the anti-Orbán camp split into two blocks of roughly equal size, a left consisting of several parties and a united far right”⁸⁶ which according to the author is actually “an ideal framework for Fidesz to become a hegemonic political actor in Hungary.”⁸⁷ Overall, thus, party competition in Hungary can be described as centrifugal, 'conductive to

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Győri, “Hungarian Politics in 2014,” 12.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 27.

immoderate or extremist politics'⁸⁸, given that the left-wing alliance remains to experience internal fragmentation and the right-wing Jobbik's approaches have been largely adopted by Fidesz in order to stem its popular support towards itself.⁸⁹ As Juhász and Krekó highlight the real motivation for politicising the issue of immigration lies in domestic politics in order to mobilise voters against the main party rival – Jobbik – and by fighting with “external enemies”: the illegal immigrants and the EU that is unable to provide a solution.⁹⁰ This competition together with the government's political ideology both allow Fidesz to employ more autonomous rhetoric and policies toward immigration in line with its position toward the EU and political response to the past experience of ethnic suppression.

Table 3 Table 3 Parliamentary Election Results in Hungary April 2014

Coalitions	No of votes	% of votes	Number of seats
FIDESZ-MPP (Hungarian Civic Union)-KDNP (Christian Democratic People's Party) party alliance	4,430,122	66.83	133
MSZP (Hungarian Socialist Party) EGYÜTT (Together – Party for a New Era) DK (Democratic Coalition) PM (Dialogue for Hungary) MLP (Hungarian Liberal Party)	2,608,685	19.1	38
JOBBIK (Movement for a Better Hungary)	2,021,113	23	23
LMP (Politics Can be Different)	513,605	2.51	5

Source: http://www.valasztas.hu/en/ogyv2014/416/416_0_index.html

On the other hand, the situation in Croatian politics differed on several aspects, especially with the upcoming parliamentary elections in November 2015. If we take into account the profiles and positioning of relevant political parties in Croatia, it can be observed that party competition is centripetal, i.e. based in the center of the left-right political spectrum (see Table

⁸⁸ Hans Daadler, “In Search of the Center of European Party Systems,” in *State Formation, Parties and Democracy: Studies in Comparative European Politics*, ed. Dario Castiglione and Vincent Hoffman-Martinot, 2nd ed. (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2011), 146, http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/daal024stat01_01/daal024stat01_01.pdf.

⁸⁹ Juhász and Krekó, “Desperate Search for the Lost Popularity: Governmental Campaign against Refugees and Migrants in Hungary”; Bíró-Nagy, Boros, and Varga, “Right-Wing Extremism in Hungary.”

⁹⁰ Juhász and Krekó, “Desperate Search for the Lost Popularity: Governmental Campaign against Refugees and Migrants in Hungary,” 7.

4 on the following page for the break-down of 2011 elections results). Ruling Kukuriku coalition is led by the SDP (Social Democratic Party) which identifies itself as a center-left party, while the opposition was led by the HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union) - center-right party. Accordingly, pursued policies of the ruling coalition are naturally more centrist and moderate, consistent with the pursuit of cautious rhetoric and policies when addressing the issue of immigration as well.

Table 4 Parliamentary Election Results in Croatia December 2011

Coalitions	Number of votes	% of votes	Number of seats
Kukuriku Coalition (SDP Social Democratic Party, HNS Croatian Peoples Party, HSU Croatian Pensioners Party, IDS Istrian Democratic Assembly)	958,318	41,08	81
HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union)– HGS (Croatian Civic Party) DC (Democratic Centre) coalition	548,194	23,5	44
Others	873,697	35,32	26

Source: <http://www.izbori.hr/2011Sabor/rezultati/rezultati.html>

The issue of political ideology and party competition and its influence on the preferred rhetorical as well as policy approach toward immigration is highly connected to the notion of uncertainty in the conduct of political affairs, both domestic as well as international. As Juhász and Krekó highlight, the key concern that stems from Fidesz' rhetoric and policies, relates to the implications these approaches can have for the future of the Hungarian society in the following respects. It can generate more frequent display of xenophobic attitudes both by Hungarian citizens as well as within the Hungarian institutions in pursuing and applying discriminatory measures.⁹¹ It can channel voter support toward the far-right party Jobbik, through the primarily anti-Jobbik strategy of the Fidesz government although with adopting

⁹¹ Ibid., 8.

similar positions and policies while portraying Jobbik as ‘neo-nazi’. This can essentially contribute to the development of highly authoritarian and extremist and long-term tendencies within public and private life of the Hungarian society. Eventually, similar government strategy does certainly have an impact on Hungary’s standing in the international arena, whereby on the one hand more stringent policies can be applied against Hungarian migrants to the Western Europe, and on the other hand great criticism and scepticism for cooperation from the essential partners in the EU and Hungary’s “political marginalisation.”⁹²

Similarly, in Croatian case, the choice of preferred approach of the government toward the issue of immigration was a matter of political uncertainty, even more with the upcoming general elections in November, in which SDP indeed lost out, even though mainly due to the structure of the electoral system more than due to the lack of popular support.⁹³ Nonetheless, the factor of party competition arises within the Croatian rhetoric, not only *vis-à-vis* its domestic opposition, but also toward its neighbouring rivals in Hungary and Croatia with SDP’s consistent attempts to differentiate itself from these actors and their actions, in highly anti-fence rhetoric and attempts to associate itself with the Western Europe and partners in Austria and Germany. This political choice was thus a matter of both party ideology of the left-leaning government as well as the party competition against the right-leaning opposition domestically as well as abroad.

Following the knowledge about the effects of party competition and party ideology on policy preferences and approaches, the preferred style of political rhetoric – *autonomous* in the case of Hungary and *cautious* in the case of Croatia becomes even clearer. The patterns in the Slovak or Czech cases, however, act to question such determination, as largely Social-

⁹² Ibid., 9.

⁹³ Krešimir Macan et al., “Croatian Parliamentary Elections 2015: Expert Reactions,” *EUROPP*, November 10, 2015, <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/euoppblog/2015/11/10/croatian-parliamentary-elections-2015-expert-reactions/>.

Democratic coalitions also pursued highly stringent immigration policies and rhetoric during the crisis. Such fact therefore highlights the importance of the other two identified factors in divergence of the rhetorical approaches by elites in Hungary and Croatia. The more detailed comparison with these cases is, however, beyond the scope of the present research and thus remains to be tested whether this framework would apply on other cases in the region as well. Nonetheless, this part aimed to show how party ideology and party competition are largely underscoring the above two factors in determining the preferred rhetorical styles, rather than acting as prerequisites of it. The following part illustrates two key dimensions of the identified rhetorical approaches, designated as rhetoric-justifying themes, which can be politicised in either *cautious* or *autonomous* manner, depending on the hereafter described factors determining the choice of preferred rhetorical style.

3.2 The rhetoric-justifying themes

A dimension of political rhetoric can be characterised through a set of politicised themes within either *cautious* or *autonomous* rhetorical style. These themes thus relate closely to the above identified factors. These themes are likely to variate over time, yet they can be employed as justifications for the preferred rhetorical approach. The following themes characteristic of the identified political elites' rhetorical styles in Hungary and Croatia only represent examples – dimensions – of the ways of politicising certain narratives in order to justify a preferred rhetorical approach. This means that these factors are likely to represent different narratives in the future, when dealing with a different issue at hand, as well as by other countries. Nevertheless, there is always a way of politicising such narratives either within *cautious* or within *autonomous* rhetorical approach as defined above.

The first such rhetoric-justifying theme in the case of immigration, is the use of religious and cultural appeals. Based on the existing literature, as argued by Andrea Bohman and Mikael Hjerm in their study of religious context influence on the attitudes toward immigration,

ethnically and religiously homogeneous societies, and especially post-communist societies – continue to preserve tendencies of greater resistance to multiculturalism resulting in inclination toward xenophobic attitudes.⁹⁴ Culture and religion indeed occurred considerably within the rhetoric of leaders of both countries as shown by the content analysis evidence.

The use of religious appeals is not only characteristic for the issue of immigration, however. Political campaigns have successively resorted to appeal to religious-minded electorate. Jennings for instance demonstrates how the effectiveness of such religious rhetoric largely depends on the level of the citizens' 'religious motivation,' a concept the author employs to refer to the place religion has in one's private life.⁹⁵ And with the awareness of uses and effects of religious rhetoric, it remains to be highlighted that these ultimately represent a dimension of a political choice of rhetoric.⁹⁶ Religious and cultural themes might be utilised within both *cautious* and *autonomous* rhetorical styles by political actors. On the one hand, religious and cultural appeals can be put across through *cautious* rhetorical appeals to religious duty to help and assist the vulnerable, as was demonstrated by Croatian references to refugee or humanitarian crisis rather than an immigration or illegal migration crisis, with specific appeals toward religious – Christian duty to offer help to those in need. As Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic put forth:

150 refugees entered Croatia yesterday or overnight. And we won't stop those people to reach where they want to go with wires or walls. We will, above all, have Croatian interests in mind, Croatian safety, but we shall not forget that we are human, mostly Christians, and that the Pope said that every Christian parish should receive one family. Many in Europe who claim to live according to Christian values are conducting themselves in a completely opposite way. Fortunately, even more people are conducting themselves as Christians, as humans, and we will

⁹⁴ Andrea Bohman and Mikael Hjerm, "How the Religious Context Affects the Relationship between Religiosity and Attitudes towards Immigration," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37, no. 6 (May 12, 2014): 937–57, doi:10.1080/01419870.2012.748210; Jay T. Jennings, "Mixed Reactions How Religious Motivation Explains Responses to Religious Rhetoric in Politics," *Political Research Quarterly*, March 14, 2016, 1065912916636690, doi:10.1177/1065912916636690.

⁹⁵ Jennings, "Mixed Reactions How Religious Motivation Explains Responses to Religious Rhetoric in Politics."

⁹⁶ Butler, "Indefinite Detention."

never forget that. To conclude, Croatia is completely ready. We are thinking about this issue all the time, working on it and preparing for it.⁹⁷

On the other hand, however, religious appeals also appear as a matter of political choice in the Hungarian *autonomous* style of rhetoric, through the use of references to the need of protecting and preserving traditional religious and cultural values of the European society, and linking these with frame of a threat of multiculturalism. To cite an example of one of the Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's common statements:

People arriving in Europe now come from a different way of life and a different culture. They hold different views, and lead a different way of life. If you say Islam, and I say Christianity (...) These are different ways of life, and we can observe that those who came here in large numbers continue to pursue their own lifestyles, rather than the European one. It is a liberal dream – or I don't know what to call it, an illusion – to believe that European values are so attractive to others that they cannot wait to seize the opportunity to transform their own personal and family lives, and to live like we do. They do not want to live like we do, because they hold different views on the world, they think differently about the place they occupy in the world, about how they relate with God, other people, and the economic system. (...) If we allow a competition to evolve between two civilisations here, in Europe, we Christians will lose.⁹⁸

What I refer to as *cautious* and *autonomous* political elite rhetoric, can, thus, be justified by a way of political choice through politicising religious and cultural appeals. Hand in hand goes the second theme which can become politicised as a way of justifying either of the political rhetorical styles – appeals to safety and well-managed situation *versus* warnings of threat to the security of the nation as well as the whole of the EU, often linked closely with religious and cultural appeals, hence the reason I categorise these two together. The immigration crisis has sparked a lot of xenophobia in Europe, not the least for the rhetorical manipulations of the political and media actors, through dangerous, often unidimensional framing of the issue.⁹⁹

As the findings highlight, the *autonomous* political rhetoric of Hungarian elites relies on framing the issue as a threat not only to European value-system, it also highlights a growing

⁹⁷ "Government of the Republic of Croatia - Milanovic: Fences Which Are Being Erected Won't Stop Anyone and They Are Only Sending a Terrible and Dangerous Message," *Vlada.gov.hr*, September 16, 2015, <https://vlada.gov.hr/news/milanovic-fences-which-are-being-erected-won-t-stop-anyone-and-they-are-only-sending-a-terrible-and-dangerous-message/17684>.

⁹⁸ "Interview with Prime Minister Viktor Orbán on Commercial Station tv2's 'Facts – Evening' Television Programme."

⁹⁹ Vedran Obucina, "European Islamophobia Report 2015: ISLAMOPHOBIA IN CROATIA NATIONAL REPORT 2015" (Ankara: SETA Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research, 2016), Islamophobia Europe, http://www.islamophobiaeurope.com/reports/2015/en/EIR_2015_CROATIA.pdf.

threat of terrorism and makes associations between immigration and raising crime levels, as well as using references to uncooperativeness and dangerousness of migrants. To such politicisation of the theme, the *cautious* Croatian rhetorical approach, however, largely becomes justified through references against the Hungarian autonomous policies and language, as for instance Milanovic stated:

Orban is talking about a threat against Christian values in Europe. As if, I don't know, Muslim hordes which are less worthy were coming. However, one per mile of the European population is coming and they are people very motivated to succeed and be here and that's evident. They are dying for a chance at success. I don't believe in fences. They aren't the enemy and the wall won't help Hungary at all. People will go around it.¹⁰⁰

This last dimension of rhetorical styles serves to further illustrate the existence of diverging politicisation of the immigration issue. Overall, the present chapter proposed and demonstrated an explanatory framework for the study of divergence in political elite rhetorical styles in Hungary and Croatia with the introduction of two contrasting categories – *cautious* and *autonomous* rhetorical approaches. The subsequent factors which determine the preferred style of rhetoric – the stance toward the EU, the political response to a historical experience of an ethnic suppression and political party ideology and competition largely situate the rhetoric, were presented as explanatory variables for the existence of diverging rhetoric in Hungary and Croatia when addressing the issue of immigration. The dimension for rhetoric justification in the form of politicisation of certain narratives such as religious and cultural themes and appeals to safety or threats – was presented as characteristic uses for such divergence. The last part of the thesis concludes with a brief discussion on the main findings and the implications these rhetorical styles have had on the political development in the aftermath of the studied period.

¹⁰⁰ “Government of the Republic of Croatia - Prime Minister Milanovic Says Refugee Quotas Acceptable, Walls Not.”

Conclusion

This thesis, inspired by the crucial finding of public attitudes difference between Hungary and Croatia, demonstrated the existence of diverging rhetorical approaches of political elites in the two countries during the period from May until October 2015. Following the existing evidence on how political elite rhetoric influences public attitudes, I conducted a detailed content analysis of press releases on official government websites during this period in order to illustrate the rhetorical styles employed by Hungarian and Croatian elites.

Three key themes emerged from the large sample of extracted quotes characterising the styles of political rhetoric in the two countries. In the case of Hungary these themes included sovereign and historical appeals to nationality, security of the nation as well as the importance of return to the basics of sovereign decision-making. This theme was complemented by the framing of the immigration issues not as a humanitarian, refugee situation but rather with connotations of economic, illiberal or mass migration, which threatens not only the cultural set-up of the European region, but also the economy and safety of the region. The third complementary cross-cutting theme was identified as Eurosceptic appeals by Hungarian leaders, which further reinforced its largely nationalist-protectionist-driven Hungarian elite rhetoric.

On the other hand, the Croatian leaders' rhetoric became characterised also by a set of three cross-cutting but different themes which highly distinguish the Croatian political rhetorical approach from that of the Hungarian. The first such theme was identified as references and framing of the issue in terms of humanitarian, refugee and asylum seeker connotations, which were complemented by appeals to the need for a humane response in the form of helping the vulnerable people fleeing the zones of conflict and danger to seek refuge in the European region. The second identified, cross-cutting theme thus was one of reassuring

appeals by Croatian elites, through statements about the well-handled situation with an organised and humane system of policies. The last identified theme was categorised as pan-European appeals, which were put across with references to the need for European cooperation on the issue, but also appeals to European values and norms which require to help in this humanitarian situation.

Based on these findings, I have formulated an explanatory framework for the study of the divergence in rhetorical approaches of leaders in Hungary and Croatia consisting of two categories of rhetorical approaches – *autonomous* (as identified in Hungarian case) and *cautious* (as identified in Croatian case). These rhetorical approaches are ultimately determined by a set of three *rhetoric-situating factors* and characterised by a set of two *rhetoric-justifying themes*. The former refers to a group of three key factors which situate political elite rhetoric as either *cautious* or *autonomous*. These factors include – the government's position toward the EU; the political response to a historical experience of an ethnic suppression and the extent and situation of party ideology and party competition present in the governing body. The rhetoric-justifying themes were put together to illustrate different dimensions of politicising certain narratives as a way of justifying either of preferred rhetorical approaches. These themes in the case of immigration included cultural and religious appeals as well as appeals of safety versus threat due to the crisis, employed to suit the preferred style. Through a detailed elaboration of each of these aspects, it becomes clear how and why the leaders in the two countries resorted to diverging rhetorical approaches when addressing the issue of immigration during the studied period.

There are certain aspects which I wish to highlight at the end of this research, however, which may come across as points of criticism for my explanatory framework. First of all, the key limitation of the current thesis is the very recent character of the studied phenomenon, conditions of which alter very quickly and so do political responses to it. Indeed, the situation

has evolved considerably since October 2015, with many EU member states ultimately resorting to protectionist actions. The hallmark of the development of the situation was the deal between the EU and Turkey on the transfer of refugees from Greece to Turkey,¹⁰¹ despite the condemnations by international and European human rights organisations for violating the principles of the international refugee system, mainly that of non-refoulement to a country where one would face a serious risk of violations of a person's rights, as indeed is the case in Turkey, with allegations of Turkey returning refugees to Syria.¹⁰² Therefore, to understand or argue what European values and norms actually mean and represent at this point becomes a nearly unattainable task, one which indeed is subject for a large revision in the upcoming years within both, the academic and professional fields.

Second, the choice of preferred rhetorical styles of political elites is a matter of political uncertainty as already highlighted. This political uncertainty can be characterised by aspects of political risks and opportunities within both domestic and international spheres. Indeed, The Hungarian Prime Minister embarked on the *autonomous* approach with a view of prioritising domestic over international (European) affairs, in order to secure not only the Fidesz' ruling legitimacy but also to deter its competition over the risk of its international standing. On the other hand, the Croatian Prime Minister pursued a largely pan-European *cautious* approach, which saw opportunities of Croatia's role within the EU setting and its reputation on the international arena but perhaps underestimated the risks of opposition voices of the right-leaning HDZ party, which indeed formed the government following the November 2015 election round. The role of political uncertainty, therefore, indeed comes into play with

¹⁰¹ "EU-Turkey Agreement: Questions and Answers" (European Commission, March 19, 2016), https://www.google.hu/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwj4zbylg_3MAhXLAXoKHZWfAiIQFggaMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Feuropa.eu%2Frapid%2Fpress-release_MEMO-16-963_en.pdf&usq=AFQjCNGTTkxOGG-ctuR5khujd_PHxhNWAaw&sig2=Gj0JPcXP7UaAV82A8iJFCQ&bvm=bv.123325700,d.d2s.

¹⁰² Steve Peers, "The Final EU/Turkey Refugee Deal: A Legal Assessment," *EU Law Analysis*, March 18, 2016, <http://eulawanalysis.blogspot.com/2016/03/the-final-euturkey-refugee-deal-legal.html>.

appropriating either of identified rhetorical and policy approaches when dealing with the issue of immigration.

This study, however, does not aim to attribute any normative characteristics toward either of the preferred rhetorical approaches of political elites in Hungary and Croatia. Its aim is rather to highlight this divergence and the factors which determine it. This does not mean that the question of correct (or appropriate) handling of the current immigration wave does not matter. Indeed, international and European standards which have been established in order to provide and safeguard human rights guarantees to the most vulnerable people – refugees, faced with risks of statelessness and direct threats to their life and liberty – ever more become subject to double standards through the role of geographic proximity and other elements, and it remains to be seen how elites essentially responsible for determining future development of so called European values of protecting human rights norms, will act in this respect. This will undoubtedly become a topic of a great debate in the upcoming years. It is now when it becomes even more pressing to remember the consequences of such double standards and the dangerousness of stereotyping or otherwise manipulatively framing certain issues for the peace and security of the whole world.

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