

The many-faced nationalism in Europe:
Comparative analysis of Hungary and the United Kingdom

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Abstract

This paper discovers the dynamics of politicization of the European Union in domestic politics based on postfunctionalism and nested identity theory. It took up the case studies of Hungary and the United Kingdom and based on the same identity-based criteria it compared the similarities and differences of how the image of the European Union is utilized politically in both countries. The criteria defined by the author were the following: the image of the nation (sovereignty, strength and exceptionalism), value-based ideas (Christianity, multiculturalism and European values) and the notion of external threats and security (immigration and integration issues). The case studies proved that the politicization of European identity is always strongly connected to the national context, so emerging the Eurosceptic nationalism cannot be seen as one comprehensive transnational movement, although there are similarities in the language and objects of politicization.

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Introduction

Many journalists and scholars tend to interpret the emergence of nationalism, populism and Euroscepticism as one comprehensive, transnational tendency that drags European countries back to their dark, nationalist past. Others talk about the utter failure of the European project, claiming the future for nation-states instead of multiculturalism and supranational integrations. The relationship between national and European identity and the politicization of these relations, however, is a much more complicated problem than different representations of the same phenomenon. This thesis will focus on emerging nationalism and argues that although these tendencies can be observed all over Europe, their motives and mechanisms are rather different in each country and region. This can be traced back to different political, cultural and historical backgrounds, domestic political environment and structure and economic systems. This paper will concentrate on the interplay between different layers of identity defined by nested identity theory and mainly studies how these different layers are contrasted and reinterpreted during the process of politicization.

The first section of the paper will give an overview on how different understandings of identity are presented in nationalism literature, concentrating on the idea of nested identities, introduced by Díez Medrano and Gutiérrez¹ and Herb and Kaplan.² After studying the interplays between different layers on the theoretical level, the next section will examine how interactions and assumed contradiction between the European and the national identity is used in domestic politics. This section will be based on the postfunctionalist approach, discussed by Hooghe and Marks³. The main goal of the thesis is to discover how different layers of identity are used to politicize the European Union and to reinterpret national identity in relation with Europeanness. In the second

¹ Juan Díez Medrano and Paula Gutiérrez, "Nested Identities: National and European Identity in Spain," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24., no. 5. (2001): 753–778.

² Guntram H. Herb and David H. Kaplan, eds., *Nested Identities. Nationalism, Territory, and Scale* (New York, USA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., 1999).

³ Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, "A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus," *British Journal of Political Science* 39. (2008): 1–23.

section these findings will be contrasted with the case studies of Hungary and the United Kingdom. The two countries will be compared based on how three groups of defining elements (image of the nation,⁴ value-based ideas⁵ and the notion of external threats and security⁶). were used to politicize national and European identity. These case studies will be completed with other examples from other European countries to point out the phenomenon's significance all over Europe. At the end of the paper the main findings will be summarized, focusing on the further possibilities of the EU to get a better understanding of the tensions between different identities that is boosted by politicians and how to possibly decode those conflicts.

By this thesis the academic community can gain more insights about how political forces utilizes multiple identities interacting with each other. It also has a contribution to the general understanding of nationalism through illustrating that elements of national and supranational identities can be interpreted and performed according to political preference. Apart from the theoretical level this paper offers a more practical approach by examining the current politicization of identities and the EU in different national contexts all over Europe. The achievements of this research also give a new understanding of the recent striking events in European politics, but it does not necessarily mean that we can apply these results to the next tricky political challenge that Europe faces.

Due to factual and spatial limitations this paper cannot go into details about the history of European identity and its influence on how the EU presents itself. The paper uses general concepts of nationalism and identity, but did not use constructivist IR theory because the focus is not on the consequences of social constructions or normativity, but more on how different components are politicized. The approach that is introduced in the paper is building on post-structuralist ideas by seeing identity as a performed act, but also proposes some changes by arguing that identity has

⁴ Meaning sovereignty, strength and exceptionalism

⁵ Christianity, multiculturalism and European values

⁶ Immigration and social security

some components that are always decisive about its content, but those components are very fluid and open to interpretation.

1. Methodology

As this thesis will analyze a contemporary phenomenon, and aims to observe dynamics of intensifying nationalism through politicization of identity, after a theoretical introduction there will be a comparative case study of Hungary and the United Kingdom. These countries' inner dynamics and their relationship with the EU sets a revealing example to illustrate that politicization of the EU and European identity interplays with national and subnational levels of identities and is always open to interpretation.

The case studies of Hungary and the United Kingdom will be taken up as primary revelatory cases, but the arguments of the paper will be supported by other examples to illustrate further similarities and differences all over Europe. In Hungary the governing force is a right-wing conservative party with populist rhetoric and a charismatic leader who puts his beliefs into the concept of illiberal democracy and the supremacy of national sovereignty. Historically the country experienced oppression by foreign forces many times, and always had an attempt to catch upon the West, but constantly pulled back by the East. Based on Eurostat and other sources this paper will compare the changes in the level of Euroscepticism and the different measurements of European identity in each country to discover the ambivalent relations of the people and the governments towards Europeanness and national identity. Then based on pre-determined criteria it will compare Hungary to the United Kingdom, examining the politicization of basic elements of identity.

The case of the UK completes this framework because it has a completely different historical and national tradition, and yet the logic of politicization is very similar to Hungary. The issue of Euroscepticism was always present and it has always been embedded in the sense of a

unique British identity, but there was a reawakening of nationalism in the Brexit campaign⁷. Based on cultural and historical differences studying the UK would shed light to different drivers of Similarly to Hungary, the United Kingdom has also ambivalent relationship towards Europe, but for different reasons. The UK was more oriented towards the USA and the Commonwealth countries, whereas Hungary was either part of an empire or belonged to a great power's sphere of influence, leading to a very different perception of the European integration.

To be able to support this argument some statements will be connected to other European countries: Poland, France and the Netherlands. This gives us a chance to recognize that although there are similarities between European countries, we cannot talk about one comprehensive wave of nationalism, because politicization is rooted in diverse local specialties.

2. Nested identities

According to Herb and Kaplan, the theory of nested identities is built on the idea that identities are not fixed nor exclusive, and territory-based identities are just some of the multiple identities one individual can possess at the same time. Moreover, territory-based identity can also have different dimensions and layers, defined by a hierarchy of geographical scale.⁸ Namely, national identity that exists in most cases on the state level constantly interplays with the levels that are above and below the state level, and but are similarly defined by territory (e. g. regions, minorities, a community of countries or a continent). Díez Medrano and Gutiérrez⁹ define nested identities as “*lower- and higher order identities such that the latter encompass the former*” and make the claim that scholars often tend to treat nested identities as incompatible, even if it is not explicitly stated. This paper, on the other hand will argue that the different levels of nested identities are intertwined and have a hold on each other, but the main point is the mutuality of these influences and the (limited) inclusiveness of different identity layers. These layers are presented not only on the levels

⁷ Ailsa Henderson et al., “England, Englishness and Brexit,” *The Political Quarterly* 87., no. 2. (June 2016): 187–199.

⁸ Herb and Kaplan, *Nested Identities. Nationalism, Territory, and Scale*. p. 1-5.

⁹ Díez Medrano and Gutiérrez, “Nested Identities: National and European Identity in Spain.” p. 757.

of European and national identities, but in some cases regional identities also come into play (e. g. Scottish and English identity in the case of the UK). By incorporating the theories on nested identities this paper argues that there are different layers of identity that mutually influence each other, and that the hierarchical order between these layers can easily change based on individual or social preferences. Moreover, if these identity layers are politicized, parties can win political gains, and as the clash between European and national identity becomes dominant in the political discourse, the whole domestic political sphere changes. These domestic changes can modify the country's foreign policy too.¹⁰

The identity concept this paper uses is based on the theories of nested identity, coming up with the idea that there are core elements that build up a nation's identity (e. g. historical turning points, religious affiliation, notions of exceptionalism, language etc.) but these core elements are vulnerable as they are open to politicization any time. The paper incorporates individual identity formation and takes up the assumption that national identity is influenced by associations of the individuals and vice versa. The paper mainly concentrates on collective identities (e. g. national or European) and takes them as an amount of individual identities and a preexisting unit on the national level simultaneously. The approach presented here is closer to post-structuralist theories than constructivism in a sense because it rather sees identity performatively than simply as an outcome of social construction and interactions. Attachment to a certain identity can be fluid, so the circumstances that cause individuals to be associated with another social group than before is definitely worth studying.¹¹

Another possible understanding of the interplay between the different layers of identity can be examined through multi-level governance that is built on functionalist assumptions and is

¹⁰ For example, since the emerging anti-democratic tendencies the "traditional" Western orientation seems to be questioned, as Prime Minister Viktor Orban and his government gets closer to Russia and Turkey instead of Western European partners. Due to spatial limitations this paper cannot go into more details about the dynamics between domestic politics and external relations, but it is important to note the magnitude of the changes described above.

¹¹ Of course, these changes do not come out of a conscious choice.

focused on bargaining between different levels.¹² Since the Maastricht Treaty, multi-level governance is introduced to more and more areas, creating a complicated system of bargaining between supranational, national and subnational governmental levels. In many cases multi-level governance caused the national governments to lose power and sovereignty over certain issues that can lead to tensions as the nation-state has to find new ways to maintain its legitimacy. This legitimacy can be recognized in two ways: procedural legitimacy means the process of creating and implementing policies, and performative legitimacy refers to the citizens' acceptance and expectations of the goods provided by a central authority. When the state's authority is reduced in any of these fields then it may sense that its legitimacy is destabilized, so national governments are pushed to find new ways to reclaim that legitimacy.¹³ This can be seen in the newly emerged nationalistic tendencies as one of the central arguments in all of the case studies (UK, France, Poland and Hungary) is the decline of national sovereignty and the right of member states to make their own decisions without external pressure.¹⁴

Another factor that can be connected to legitimacy is the right to represent the citizens in international relations.¹⁵ This is an act that usually belongs to the state as a monopoly, but is challenged by multi-level governance by shifting power towards both the European and regional level. One possible interpretation is that the state interprets these processes as a threat and reacts by protesting against further integration, especially when the changes are sensed by an average citizen in everyday life. This seems to explain why the European Union was politicized in those countries that were hit the hardest by the financial crisis after 2010, but fails to explain why the precise differences in different regions.

¹² Carolyn Dudek, "EU Challenges to Domestic Politics: A Regional Nationalist Response," *The SAIS Europe Journal of International Affairs* 8., no. 2. (2005): 109–122.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ The sovereignty argument in each case will be discussed in more details later on.

¹⁵ Hooghe and Marks, "A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus."

All in all, nested identity theory helps to understand how the different layers of identity can be played against each other for political gains. Nested identities help us to trace down these clashes and to understand how in the case of identity, everything is interconnected. Nested identities help us to understand how European and national identities are utilized in domestic politics, but to be able to discover the motives behind these moves, we need to dig deeper into each country's history and political culture. After further theoretical discussion about nationalism and European identity, the paper will move on to illustrate the domestic politicization of the European Union on a general level. In the second section these general assumptions will be examined on the case studies of Hungary and the United Kingdom.

3. Nationalism – what do we mean by that?

Talking about nationalism in International Relations is crucial for various reasons. There is no doubt that the international sphere has supranational, international, subnational and non-state actors, but the fact that nation-states are still the decisive players of the game cannot be seriously questioned. Therefore examination of identity changes on the national level is important, in which the significance of emerging nationalism is outstanding. There is a massive confusion surrounding right-wing populism and nationalism that appeared in the last few years at many places from Greece to the United Kingdom, from the USA to Poland. In the next section the conceptual meaning of nationalism will be clarified, because nationalism provides the wide framework for different interpretations of national identity.

When it comes to contemporary appearances of nationalism, both public debates and scholarly attention tends to give more attention to extremities and far-right populist movements, while less radical, more nuanced versions of nationalism are often overlooked.¹⁶ So it is very important to have well-formulated definitions, categories and barriers to be able to understand that

¹⁶ Josip Kešić and Jan Willem Duyvendak, "Anti-Nationalist Nationalism: The Paradox of Dutch National Identity," *Nations and Nationalism* 22., no. 3. (2016): 581–597.

there are core differences between their dynamics, tools and motives. This paper aims to provide a comparative analysis between European countries to get a grasp on the main differences and similarities.

Examining the origins of nationalism Todorova¹⁷ quotes that Gellner argued that nationalism is strongly connected to modernity, the popularization of education and language. He originated nationalism from modernity, so his theory later on was criticized because he was not able to explain nationalism in pre-industrial contexts. Hobsbawm states that nation is not a primary nor an unchanging social entity given by some higher power, but it is strongly connected to a certain kind of territorial state, the nation-state. He contradicts Gellner's idea about modernization from above, and focuses more on the processes in everyday life. This approach mainly concentrates not on the governments or spokesmen of nationalist movements, but on the ordinary people who are object to their actions and propaganda. He also talks about nesting identities, saying that we cannot assume that for most people national identification - when it exists - excludes or is always or ever superior to other identifications. In fact, national identity is always combined with identifications of another kind, even when it is felt to be superior to them. His most important point for my research is that national identification can change and shift in time, even in the course of quite short periods.¹⁸

Galtung¹⁹ connects nationalism to Self-Other relations. He broadens the scope of these relations as he talks about both positive and negative Self and Other understandings, and describing how these different contexts shape the characteristics of nationalism. He also names the most important elements that build up nationalism based on the collective (sub)conscious: cultures, embedded in social structures and interests and institutions that help the ideologies crystallize. An

¹⁷ Maria Todorova, "The Trap of Backwardness: Modernity, Temporality, and the Study of Eastern European Nationalism," *Slavic Review* 64, no. 1. (2005): 140–164.

¹⁸ E. G. E. Zuelow, "Review on Hobsbawm, Eric J. Nations and Nationalism Since 1780." (Cambridge University Press, The Nationalism Project: Nationalism Studies Information Clearinghouse., n. d.), <http://www.nationalismproject.org/what.htm>.

¹⁹ Johan Galtung, "The Emerging European Supernationalism," *International Journal of Sociology* 24, no. 2/3 (1994): 148–165.

additional fourth element can be the individual character of a community, and the interplay between these factors define characteristics of nationalism.

After defining the basic understanding of nationalism as a concept, we can ask the question if this ideology can differ in certain geographic regions, namely is Eastern European nationalism so different from the original, Western European ideology. This question is important because in the public debate nationalism tends to be considered as a backward, oriental phenomenon, while in reality it is presented all over Europe, but may have different meanings in various regions. The notion of backwardness can be seen in the fact that most of the times Eastern European processes are measured with a Western scale, not with their own measurements and timings, and this makes them seem like they lag behind.²⁰ There is a common belief that Eastern Europe constructed a mimicry about Western nationalism without an organic root, just like it did with modernization or industrialization. This paper will argue that due to social and political differences nationalism evolved differently in Western and Eastern Europe, but this does not mean that Eastern Europe is underdeveloped politically or that Western Europe “overcame” nationalist ideology. Right-wing populist movements can mobilize significant amount of people in both regions, but this success is always deeply rooted in regional differences.

A very common distinction could be civic nationalism and ethnic nationalism that also contains a moral judgment, because civic shows that something is more civilized and calm, while ethnic implies that this kind of nationalism is more inherent and tense. After discussing the major differences between the two regions, Todorova²¹ highlights that these two variations of nationalism can be understood only together.

²⁰ Todorova, “The Trap of Backwardness: Modernity, Temporality, and the Study of Eastern European Nationalism.”

²¹ Ibid.

4. European identity

This section will talk about two major topics: first it will look into the differences between the sensation of belonging to Europe and the sense of attachment towards the European Union, focusing on how the later was artificially created through Euronationalism, and how it can be connected to historical understandings of Europeanness, understood differently in the context of various nation-states. When one refers to European identity one may be referring to at least two different things: the development of a sense of belonging to Europe or the development of a collective sense of what it means to be European. It is also possible to be associated with European identity and yet does not believe in the European integration project.²² Although I am fully aware of the significance of the difference between European identity and attachment with the European Union, but the phrase “European identity” will be used for the identity connected to the European Union.

The political discourse often mixes up these different notions that makes it easier for some political forces to misrepresent or modify them according to their interests or understandings. In some cases nationalism includes Europeanness (e. g. identitarian movements²³) whereas in other cases national identity is connected to Euroscepticism, as we will see in the British case. Another defining point for the European integration was European nationalism from the start, as apart from economic cooperation the organization also aimed to overcome the conflicts of World War II. In a sense, *“The ‘defining other’ to the European Union is Europe – the Europe of the past”*.²⁴ This would presuppose a controversial relationship between nationalism and the European integration that will be discussed later in more details.

²² Díez Medrano and Gutiérrez, “Nested Identities: National and European Identity in Spain.” p. 754.

²³ These movements started in France, but they are present in Hungary, Austria and Germany too. As the movement is fairly new, their common ideology is still formulating, but their baseline idea is to preserve national and European identities from immigrants from different cultures and from multiculturalist ideologies as well. However, they are not to be confused with far-right movements as they reject antisemitism and For more details, see Matthew Bell, “Meet the Identitarians, Europe’s ‘New Right,’” *Public Radio International*, December 19, 2016, <https://www.pri.org/stories/2016-12-19/meet-identitarians-europes-new-right>.

²⁴ Anton Pelinka, “The European Union as an Alternative to the Nation-State,” *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 24., no. 1/2. (2011): 21–30. p. 24.

If we accept the assumption that identities can be altered, or we accept the famous idea of nations being “imagined communities”²⁵, it is also possible to artificially build nation-like identities on the supranational, European level, and the process is called Euronationalism. Building its own identity, the European Union started to introduce “nationalistic” tools to encourage the citizens’ to engage in the European idea. In 1985 the heads of states agreed to introduce Beethoven’s Ode to joy as the official anthem of the then European Community, although the idea was around since the 1950s. The well-known flag was designed in 1955, and officially launched by the Council of Europe as a symbol for Europe as a whole. The Council of Europe pushed it to be accepted by other European organizations, and in 1985 the European Economic Community adopted it as its own flag. Along with the invention of these nationalistic symbols there were serious intentions in 2004-2005 to create a Constitutional Treaty. Ironically, this never came into power due to the resistance of the French and Dutch voters. However, the European Union got a legal personality in 2009 with the Treaty of Lisbon that was supposed to replace the Constitutional Treaty. The common European identity that is built by these processes is there²⁶, but the tempo of such changes is much slower than legal adjustments, causing a tension between rapid legislative changes and relatively stable identities.²⁷

Hooghe and Marks make a distinction between symbolist and constructivist approaches towards European identity: the symbolist approach questions the importance and even the existence of European identity and attaches greater importance to national identity, whereas the constructivist approach argues that (national, and for that matter European) identities are constructed by the political elite to strengthen their power and maintain legitimacy.²⁸ In the

²⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 3. (London: Verso, 2006).

²⁶ These provisions can be understood as acts of identity-building in the constructivist sense, coordinated by the political elites. Due to spatial limitations the paper cannot go into details about the theoretical background or the practicalities of these processes, so only the significance of the symbolic outcomes are highlighted.

²⁷ Hooghe and Marks, “A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus.”

²⁸ Eleonóra Szanyi-F., “Az Európai Identitás Értelmezésének Új Lehetőségei,” The Possibilities of New Interpretations of European Identity) *Szociológiai Szemle* 1. (2008): 146–149.

politicization process both approaches can be used: the former can be used to identify the objects of politicization, while the latter can be helpful to understand the process.

Common institutions are essential parts of the integration process, as they represent cooperation and leadership at the same time. Even though they are widely criticized because of the democratic deficit or the fact that they can impose sanctions on member states. In this sense they are a symbolic representation of the integration. However, they should not be mixed up with identity-building, and Euronationalism cannot be measured with the scope and domain of supranational institutions, as they perform different functions, and do not necessarily represent harmony of opinions.²⁹ Apart from institutions, common policies and shared values can serve a very similar purpose in identity-building as not only they are referred as a common ground between all members of the group, but anybody who wants to join the integration must approximate to these norms.

Although the European Union tries to build its own identity by using the same tools as national movements, there are obstacles this identity-building faces, because it differs from national identity. Wellings and Power³⁰ quote Montserrat Guibernau's argument about the '*non-emotional*' nature of European identity, arguing that the identity that was created in the 1940s was deeply, but not widely held, and after this initial phase it transformed into more rational, but weaker identity than the national one.

5. The use of the European Union in domestic politics

Issues surrounding the European integration were largely neutral for wider public for a long time, as the integration did not have a directly noticeable influence on peoples' everyday lives.³¹ The following section will provide an oversight on the history and the dynamics of how the

²⁹ Johan Galtung, "The Emerging European Supranationalism."

³⁰ Ben Wellings and Ben Power, "Euro-Myth: Nationalism, War and the Legitimacy of the European Union," *National Identities* 18., no. 2. (2016): 157–177. p. 157.

³¹ Hooghe and Marks, "A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus."

European question is utilized in domestic politics. It will mostly focus on the arguments that are connected to identity and will rely on postfunctionalist theory and its applicability for the politicization of the EU. It is important to note that politicization of the EU means more than Euroscepticism, as there are political forces that want to paint a positive picture about the EU, utilizing some elements of the above-described constructed common identity or achievements of European projects. In many cases these representations are just as exaggerated as some Eurosceptic arguments, but from the opposite angle. Together with achievements, dysfunctional common policies can also serve as a tool in domestic politics for the political force that is more critical for the EU. We could see these criticisms evolve recently in the case of the Eurozone crisis or the Dublin system that emerged to be central topics in both European and domestic politics in most of the member states.

This section will introduce the logic of politicization, mostly based on theories of the EU integration. Then it will give an overview on the possible topics that can be dragged into the domestic political discussions. At the end, there will be a discussion about the possible reasons and expected gains of different political forces from utilizing the European issue in domestic political struggles and how can the European Union handle the gravity of the situation.

Even though politicization of the European Union is a widely-discussed topic in recent years, it is still hard to come up with a uniform definition of measurement of the phenomenon.³² This paper will build on the definition given by De Wilde and Zürn³³ who claim that politicization means to transfer issues from the non-political space to the political, or to bring a political regulation into the public debate. Hurrelmann, Gora and Wagner³⁴ make a distinction between different areas of political discourse, saying that each type has its own rules that structure

³² Achim Hurrelmann, Anna Gora, and Andrea Wagner, "The Politicization of European Integration: More than an Elite Affair?" (IPSA XXII World Congress of Political Science, Madrid, July 8, 2012), http://paperroom.ipsa.org/papers/paper_10602.pdf. p. 2.

³³ Pieter De Wilde and Michael Zürn, "Can the Politicization of European Integration Be Reversed?," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 50., no. 1. (2012): 137–153. p. 139.

³⁴ Hurrelmann, Gora, and Wagner, "The Politicization of European Integration: More than an Elite Affair?" p. 3.

communication and politicization accordingly. On this basis, it is always vital to study the audience politicization is addressed to, as in many cases European issues are presented vastly differently to domestic audiences than to the European or to the international community. For instance, the Hungarian government's anti-Brussels campaign ran simultaneously with everyday political and diplomatic cooperation for a very long time, showing contradictory intentions. But by analyzing how these issues are connected to different identities in different contexts, we might get a closer understanding on those intentions too.

Of course, the image of the EU used for different political purposes also depends on the perception of the EU's influence on that country or region and its position in distribution of resources. It is also worth studying the influence of EU policies on (domestic) politics as they slowly became a defining factor.³⁵ Europe also provides a "new space for competition" so in a sense it is a new "political stage" for politicians to compete for votes while they represent their countries' or parties' interests.³⁶ Moreover, the importance of Europe within domestic politics has caused political parties to incorporate EU issues into their own political agendas and to adapt to the pressures and benefits of the EU.

Neumayer³⁷ starts off from Bordieu's assumption that ideology and strategy are closely related as ideology is created by politicians to divide themselves from other political forces and to gain political capital. She states that the EU was dragged into domestic political competitions from the 1990s and was used in many different contexts even before the accession: Hooghe and Marks³⁸ agree on the starting point, and discover three independent processes as a driving force of politicization: deepening of the integration brought common policies to the scope of domestic

³⁵ Dudek, "EU Challenges to Domestic Politics: A Regional Nationalist Response."

³⁶ Dudek quotes Stephano Bartolini, "Political Representation in Loosely Bounded Territories. Between Europe and the Nation-State" (Conference on Multi-level party systems. Europeanization and the reshaping of national political representation, Florence, December 16, 1999).

³⁷ Laure Neumayer, "Euroscepticism as a Political Label: The Use of European Union Issues in Political Competition in the New Member States," *European Journal of Political Research* 47. (2008): 135–160.

³⁸ Hooghe and Marks, "A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus."

politics, territorial identification of Europe became more important as a result of the planned enlargements and increasing Europeanization started to play into cleavages concerning identity.³⁹ In the Eastern European context the EU was first used in a normative and idealistic manner, then it became instrumentalised and a pragmatic aim for Central and Eastern European countries (the era of “Eurorealism”)⁴⁰

Hooghe and Marks claim that the right-left division gets a different meaning at the European level because of the redistribution dynamics are different between member states than within a state.⁴¹ By the end of the twentieth century the central struggle for redistribution turned into an issue about the borders of the (political) community, namely, who belongs to Europe and who doesn't. So the new conflict emerged between green/alternative/libertarian (or gal) and traditionalism/authority/nationalist/ (tan) parties.⁴² These divisions can be interpreted only restrictively for Hungary and the United Kingdom, but it is notable that in both cases European identity became a decisive issue in party divisions and in the public discourse as well.

Some scholars ask if politicization of the EU is a strictly elite-based phenomenon or can it be tracked down with the broader public.⁴³ Based on a focus group research conducted with EU citizens in four member states, Hurrelmann et. al.⁴⁴ show that for most citizens, only the fundamentals of European integration have gained political saliency, while the EU's day-to-day activities remain largely non-politicized. In addition, patterns of politicization in the European population are conditioned by significant knowledge deficits. This relates to the problem of democratic deficit that crops up in almost every critique of the EU.⁴⁵

³⁹ Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse, “Revisiting the Nature of the Beast - Politicization, European Identity, and Postfunctionalism: A Comment on Hooghe and Marks,” *British Journal of Political Science* 39., no. 1. (2009): 217–220.

⁴⁰ Neumayer Neumayer, “Euroscepticism as a Political Label: The Use of European Union Issues in Political Competition in the New Member States.” p. 136.

⁴¹ Hooghe and Marks, “A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus.”

⁴² Ibid. p. 16.

⁴³ Hurrelmann, Gora, and Wagner, “The Politicization of European Integration: More than an Elite Affair?” p. 1.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Dudek, “EU Challenges to Domestic Politics: A Regional Nationalist Response.”

According to Hooghe and Marks, European integration has become politicized in elections and referendums where politicians were pushed to get the public engaged in the discussion. Consequently, the preferences of the public and of political parties have become decisive for jurisdictional outcomes, and identity becomes crucial in shaping contestation on Europe.⁴⁶ This seems to support that there was a shift towards wider public debate about Europeanness as it can be clearly seen in the Brexit referendum and in the quota referendum in Hungary.

Vermeersch^{47,48} also wrote on how the image of Europe was used in domestic political competition can offer important lessons on the bigger picture behind political opportunism to gain more support by pulling an external figure into domestic politics. In this sense criticism towards the EU should always be examined in the context of domestic political competition, not simply regarding to the member state's relations towards the Union.⁴⁹ Hence he claims that the growth of anti-EU rhetoric arguments do not necessarily mean that people's rejection of dissatisfaction towards the EU expanded. Vermeersch⁵⁰ also quotes a paper by Vachudova and Hooghe on the changes that happened in Central and Eastern European party systems after the EU accession where she argues that the EU accession process had an impact on party competition in the region as the opportunities for party competition broadened, opening up political space for Euroscepticism. This change moved political parties to reconstruct their position along an axis that distinguishes defenders of the national institutions from proponents of supranational governance, causing nationalism an important new discourse of political differentiation.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Hooghe and Marks, "A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus."

⁴⁷ Peter Vermeersch, "Contesting Europe: Strategies and Legacies in Polish Political Competition," *Europe-Asia Studies* 62., no. 3. (May 2010): 503–522.

⁴⁸ Peter Vermeersch, "Nationalism and Political Competition in Central Europe: The Case of Poland," *Nationalist Papers* 41., no. 1. (2013): 128–145.

⁴⁹ Vermeersch, "Contesting Europe: Strategies and Legacies in Polish Political Competition."

⁵⁰ Ibid. 2010 p. 505.

⁵¹ Jon Fox and Peter Vermeersch, "Backdoor Nationalism: EU Accession and the Reinvention of Nationalism in Hungary and Poland," April 1, 2009.

To sum up, politicization of the EU and its increasing involvement as a domestic political issue can be explained with various factors (e. g. the public debate over the defining treaties⁵² or the increasing authority of the EU,⁵³ identities, interests or strategies, ideologies), but most scholars claim that the processes that started are irreversible. As Börzel and Risse put it, “the current effort by European elites to put the genie back into the bottle will fail”⁵⁴ and every political party will have to live up to the fact of politicization. The two authors suggest that to be able to secure the achievements of European integration and to undertake the electoral battles pro-EU political forces should pursue the left-right cleavage and frame the discussions in the terms of European policies, and not about the core questions on integration. Politicization of integration is definitely moving forward and it will not stick to the representation of fundamental issues of membership or constitutional treaties, but will make a shift towards common policies and institutional debates.⁵⁵

5.1. *The objects of politicization*

After giving a summary on the possible reasons of politicization, this section will offer an overview on some possible topics that can be politicized in the domestic discourse, and then in the case study section they will be analyzed in more details, connecting the topics with the local context. Hurrelmann et al⁵⁶ mark out 3 possible objects for politicization: the characteristics and functioning the EU system, the principles and objectives of the integration and the political community of the Europeans.

In the current political situation it can be claimed that issues related to European identity started to emerge as a main object of politicization, although it is often connected to common policy areas to frame the critique in a more concrete sense. In the case of Hungary and Poland,

⁵² Hooghe and Marks, “A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus.”

⁵³ De Wilde and Zürn, “Can the Politicization of European Integration Be Reversed?” p. 137.

⁵⁴ Börzel and Risse, “Revisiting the Nature of the Beast - Politicization, European Identity, and Postfunctionalism: A Comment on Hooghe and Marks.” p. 220.

⁵⁵ Hurrelmann, Gora, and Wagner, “The Politicization of European Integration: More than an Elite Affair?”

⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 3

refusal of the quota system about the relocation of refugees is framed as a criticism towards a policy area, but the criticism is justified by arguments concerning European identity. At the moment it is hard to tell if these arguments are targeted against common policies and arguments connected to identity just serve a rhetorical question, or these countries actually express criticism on the current understanding of European identity by saying that European borders should be secured from people who do not share the same culture (and religion) as European citizens. This brings us to the question of belonging that closely relates to identity, self-other relations and even distribution of resources.

Another aspect of migration policies were present in the case of “older” member states, as in their case immigration from new member states became a central issue in domestic politics, as EU membership was taken to imply more immigration to the country as they look attractive for people from new member states because of the welfare system or higher living standards.⁵⁷ In the case of the Brexit campaign problems with immigrations were clearly misrepresented⁵⁸ and economic arguments were mixed with identity issues.

As a critique of Hooghe and Marks’s works, Börzel and Risse⁵⁹ state that postfunctionalism is an applicable tool when the aim is to analyze the politicization when constitutional issues are concerned. However, they suggest that the scope of postfunctionalism could be broadened with the public debates over European policies (e. g. social policies versus neoliberalism, common migration or environmental policy etc.) that are also often dragged into domestic political struggles. By bringing in mass politics to the picture, postfunctionalism also manages to get away from the elite-focused approaches.⁶⁰ As we have seen before, expanding common policies is a possible tool

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Asa Bennett, “Did Britain Really Vote Brexit to Cut Immigration?,” *The Telegraph*, June 29, 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/29/did-britain-really-vote-brexit-to-cut-immigration/>.

⁵⁹ Börzel and Risse, “Revisiting the Nature of the Beast - Politicization, European Identity, and Postfunctionalism: A Comment on Hooghe and Marks.”

⁶⁰ József Péter Martin, “Az Euroszepticismus Útjai Magyarországon: Gazdaságpolitika És Európai Unió Percepciók Válságkörülmények Között,” (The Ways of Euroscepticism in Hungary: Economic Policies and the Perception of the European Union in Times of Crisis) *Competitio* 1. (2013): 5–23. p. 8-9.

for Euronationalism, and with the deepening of the integration, common policies also have greater impacts on EU citizens' everyday lives. This can lead us to the assumption that the issues that people are more familiar with are easier to include in the domestic political discourse. This argument seems to be proven right by the wide publicity surrounding the crisis management after the financial crisis or during the refugee crisis, as these issues seemed to directly influence citizens' lives, even if they did not have first-hand experience. Börzel and Risse⁶¹ also add that politicization of these issues is not necessarily a bad thing for the EU on the longer term, because even though it slows down the integration process, but domestic discussions increase the legitimacy of the common policies and of the integration as a whole.

When talking about politicization of the EU, one cannot leave out the issue of Euroscepticism. This issue is often blended with the emergence of nationalism, as the rhetoric that is used with each is quite similar.⁶² It is also important to distinguish critical thinking about the functioning of the integration (soft Euroscepticism) and the complete dismissal of the supranational integration (hard Euroscepticism).⁶³ According to Neumayer⁶⁴ Euroscepticism can be understood as a tool for political classification rather than an analytical notion as parties often use the EU to distinguish themselves from their opponents. In this sense Euroscepticism in Central and Eastern Europe does not necessarily mean that a party directly opposes EU membership, as these movements can show different degrees of opposition or criticism towards the European project. Euroscepticism is a buzzword that can be used both in academia and in politics on a very wide range. This can be observed in the case of Hungary by the controversies of presenting the EU in international and domestic politics that will be discussed later in more details.

⁶¹ Börzel and Risse, "Revisiting the Nature of the Beast - Politicization, European Identity, and Postfunctionalism: A Comment on Hooghe and Marks."

⁶² This paper does not go into details about the theories on Euroscepticism, just touches on some understandings that are important to get a closer look on the main differences between the main variations of the phenomenon and their representation in different contexts.

⁶³ Neumayer, "Euroscepticism as a Political Label: The Use of European Union Issues in Political Competition in the New Member States." p. 139.

⁶⁴ Neumayer Ibid.

After introducing the main dynamics behind politicization of the EU it is important to assess the implications and outcomes on how it affects the EU and the nation-states. Some scholars say that these processes support democratization and further institutional development, and encourage further political competition⁶⁵ while others claim that on the shorter term these processes stand in the way of deeper integration or institutional reforms, but strengthens the EU's legitimacy on the longer terms⁶⁶ The research on politicization mostly focused on to prove politicization's presence, but did not distinguish between the different spaces where politicization could occur, not did it examine if politicization is and elite-based phenomenon or more general.⁶⁷

Another, slightly self-explanatory explanation would be that parties politicize the EU when they assume that they can win more votes by doing so. In the case of Hungary this can be connected to the tendency that hostile rhetoric and othering do win votes for parties as we could see with the election of the second Orban government. Hooghe and Marks⁶⁸ claim that apart from the creation of multi-level governance, referendums on vital issues (enlargement, accession or deeper integration) changed the game because they have fundamental effects on a country's behavior towards the EU even on the longer terms. Moreover, by definition the political elites needed to get people involved on the issues they were voting about and that necessarily means that European affairs gained a wider representation in party politics. These events point towards a postfunctionalist framework that gets over the traditional functionalist and elite-focused functionalist theories and claims that the efficiency-based rationales and bargaining between elite groups is becoming "less useful" when studying the current developments in the European

⁶⁵ Simon Hix, *What's Wrong with the European Union - and How to Fix It* (Cambridge: Polity, 2008).

⁶⁶ Hooghe and Marks, "A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus."

⁶⁷ Hurrelmann, Gora, and Wagner, "The Politicization of European Integration: More than an Elite Affair?"

⁶⁸ Hooghe and Marks, "A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus."

Union.⁶⁹ The theory, developed by Hooghe and Marks⁷⁰ states that the current circumstances are more defined by the politicization of the European question by engaging mass publics and extending the issue into the area of domestic politics and party competition.

5.2. *The consequences*

The academic community is quite divided where it comes to the possible reactions of the EU. There are two defining parties, one calls for faster and deeper integration,⁷² while the other party argues that further integration is not advisable and the Union should suspend further integration for shorter⁷³ or longer terms. Other scholars suggest a common ground or a third way. After describing the strengths and weaknesses of existing scenarios that he calls Eurotopia and nationalism, Wahl offers a third possible way to go that he calls “differentiated integration”.⁷⁴ This model is very similar to what we know as multi-speed Europe, only it would more opened in its external relations and would have more internal democratic legitimacy. De Grauwe puts emphasis on the economic well-being of the member states as a guarantee for the maintenance of the integration, and gives recommendations to revise current economic policies.⁷⁵

These writings do not really react on the politicization of European and national identity, but pay more attention to institutional developments or the costs and benefits analysis of further cooperation. Besides a more comprehensive approach towards “alternative” voices the EU has to make further steps to engage its citizens and pay more attention to identity-based politicization.

⁶⁹ Frank Schimmelfennig, “European Integration in the Euro Crisis: The Limits of Postfunctionalism,” *Journal of European Integration* 36., no. 3. (2014): 321–337.

⁷⁰ Hooghe and Marks, “A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus.”

⁷¹ Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, “Types of Multi-Level Governance,” *European Integration Online Papers* 5., no. 11. (2001).

⁷² Marek Dabrowski, “The Future of the European Union: Towards a Functional Federalism,” *Acta Oeconomica* 66., no. S1. (2016): 21–48.

⁷³ Paul De Grauwe, “What Future for the EU after Brexit?” (Centre for European Policy Studies, 2016), https://www.ceps.eu/system/files/IEForum52016_1.pdf.

⁷⁴ Peter Wahl, “Between Eurotopia and Nationalism: A Third Way for the Future of the EU,” *Globalizations* 14., no. 1. (2017): 157–163.

⁷⁵ De Grauwe, “What Future for the EU after Brexit?”

There is no need to talk about “stopping” the emergence of nationalism, but rather how the expressed critiques could be used in a way that changes the whole integration for the better.

It is clear that the European Union is facing problems on multiple social, economic and political levels, but we must also see that the main problem is not with nationalism itself. Nationalism can work within the frameworks of the European Union, as national identity does not necessarily contradicts European identity, only if it is politicized that way. The EU needs a more complex understanding of its partners, which is not incompatible with a strong and coordinated Union.

According to De Wilde and Zürn⁷⁶ politicization not only leads to rejection of EU institutions and policies but increased utilization of those institutions. However, politicization should not be seen as a linear process that is perfectly parallel with the increasing authorities of the EU, but rather fluctuating, shaped by the upcoming political opportunity structures and external challenges. The differences between these political opportunity structures lead to different types and levels of politicization in various member states. These structures are influenced by national narratives about European integration and its relations towards national history and national political aims. These factors are open to interpretation according to current political preferences, but they also represent some kind of stability in the interactions. Discovering the usage of these stabile elements and their dynamic interpretations will formulate a central element of this paper.

6. Case studies

Following the theoretical introduction of the dynamics and possible causes of politicization, it is needed to contrast our findings with particular cases of politicization in practice. The basic assumption throughout these case studies is that nations have different approaches towards the idea of European integration, and sometimes it coincides with the historic idea of Europe, sometimes it does not. The whole approach of this paper is derived from the statements of Thomas

⁷⁶ De Wilde and Zürn, “Can the Politicization of European Integration Be Reversed?” p. 139.

Risse who claims that “Europeanness” and “becoming European” is gradually rooted in the understandings of national identities.⁷⁷ This paper aims to discover how this difference is twisted and used in politics, contradicting national identity with some elements of European identity while claiming to defend other elements.

In both cases the study focuses on the period after the climax of the financial crisis because many scholars claim that criticism on the EU started to intensify when the EU proved to be ineffective in handling the crisis.⁷⁸⁷⁹ In the case of Hungary I will focus on the second and the third Orban government, while in the case of the UK the examination is concentrated on the Brexit campaign after 2013 and its aftermath.

The criteria for comparison are all connected to the different elements of identity and the notions of a nation, or to the notion of Europe from different angles. Moreover, these elements were present in political dialogue in both the pre-Brexit period and in Hungarian politics too, since the financial crisis. The analysis will be executed from three main viewpoints: first it will incorporate the elements that are connected to the image of the nation (sovereignty, strength and exceptionalism), then it will talk about value-based ideas (Christianity⁸⁰, multiculturalism and European values) and finally about the notion of external threats and security, that is mostly represented in securing the welfare system and refusing immigration. In both countries the migration issue is highly securitized⁸¹, but studying that would require a whole thesis so due to spatial limitations this paper cannot analyze the whole process of securitization. The economic

⁷⁷ Hooghe and Marks, “A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus.” p. 14. Quotes Thomas Risse, “Neofunctionalism, European identity and the Puzzles of European Integration,” *Journal of European Public Policy*, 13 (2006), 291-309. p. 305

⁷⁸ Fabio Serrichio, Myrto Tsakatika, and Lucia Quaglia, “Eurocepticism and the Global Financial Crisis,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 51., no. 1. (2013): 51–64.

⁷⁹ Anna Molnár, “Economic Crisis and Euroscepticism: A Comparative Study of the Hungarian and the Italian Case (1990-2013),” *Politics in Central Europe* 12., no. 3. (2016): 51–82.

⁸⁰ When the paper talks about Christian identity of a country, the main point is not to tell how religious people are, but to tell how important the notion of Christianity is for certain countries’ collective identity and how widely it is represented in the political discourse.

⁸¹ András Szalai and Gabriella Göbl, “Securitizing Migration in Contemporary Hungary” (Center for European Neighborhood Studies, 2016), <https://cens.ceu.edu/sites/cens.ceu.edu/files/attachment/event/573/szalai-goblmigrationpaper.final.pdf>.

costs and benefits will also be mentioned as the material argument comes up quite often in both cases. Then these criteria will be expanded to other countries to get a more sensitive and detailed evaluation. The comparison presented here will show the major differences between the cases, underpinning the fact that we cannot talk about one transnational wave of nationalism in Europe. An important difference between Hungary and the UK is that in the British case there was a referendum about EU messages which allows a more direct public debate about the EU, whereas in the case of Hungary the EU is less directly involved in the debates, and yet the concept is highly politicized.

6.1. Hungary

Hungary joined the European Union alongside 9 other, mainly former socialist countries during the so-called “big bang enlargement” in 2004. After the collapse of the socialist regime the country clearly expressed the will for Western orientation and integration to the most important Euro-Atlantic organizations: NATO and the European Community and later the European Union. According to opinion polls EU accession had the highest support in Hungary compared to the Czech Republic and Poland around 2000.⁸² According to another opinion poll taken in 2002, 40% of Hungarians did not have concrete idea about the EU and they were not familiar with the economic and social consequences about the accession, and yet twice as many people were supportive about joining the EU.⁸³ The accession in 2004 was also supported by a successful referendum in 2003. Similarly to Poland, in Hungary European integration was connected to the promise of Western living standards and welfare system.⁸⁴ The public support for EU membership slightly increased after the EU accession, and Eurosceptic voices got louder⁸⁵, but the significant

⁸² Central European Opinion Research Group, “Az Európai Unió Csatlakozás Lakossági Megítélése. Kelet-Közép-Európai Összehasonlítás,” May 2000, <http://www.tarki.hu/adatbank-h/kutjel/pdf/a544.pdf>.

⁸³ Katalin Pörzse, “Közvélemény Az EU-Tagságról a Csatlakozást Megelőző Években,” (Public opinion about EU Membership in the Years Prior to Accession) *Jel-Kép* 4. (2004): 3–12.

⁸⁴ Nóra Lázár, “Euroscepticism in Hungary and Poland: A Comparative Analysis of Jobbik and the Law and Justice Parties,” *Politika* 33. (2015): 215–233. p. 226.

⁸⁵ András Bíró Nagy, Tamás Boros, and Áron Varga, “Euroszeptikizmus Magyarországon. A Policy Solutions Politikai Elemzése a Friedrich Ebert Alapítvány Számára” (Euroscepticism in Hungary. Analysis from Policy Solutions for the

turn in public discourse came only after 2012. Based on public opinion surveys Lengyel and Göncz⁸⁶ found that in the case of Hungary the existence of European identity is positively interconnected with the Union's public support, and that apart from cultural factors, material arguments can also influence European identity in a positive direction.

In recent years, Hungarian society and the political sphere became extremely polarized, and the European Union as a topic hold a high importance because it is framed as an issue of identity, not an issue of policy. Opposed to this, British politics and society do not face the same level of polarization, as the electorate usually prefers centrist options to extremists, and the traditional governing parties chose quite moderate leaders since the 1990s. Electoral turnouts and general satisfaction with politicians, however, started to decrease, as moderate centrist politicians ran a stable, but frozen political system.⁸⁷ The emergence of UK Independence Party (UKIP) started a whirlwind in this fatigue and scored 12,6%⁸⁸ at the 2015 general elections⁸⁹, but they could not rearrange the political map at the longer term, as it is possible that their popularity will significantly drop. All in all, the politicization of the EU indicated polarization to some extent in both cases, but in Hungary it had stronger influence on voters' party preferences.

It can be argued that a strong national attachment does not necessarily exclude a positive attitude towards European integration, this relationship is mostly dependent on if the individual identity is inclusive or exclusive of other territorial identities. This brings us to the theories of nested identities that strongly underpins that nationalism does not contradict European integration at an

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung) (Policy Solutions, June 2012), http://www.policysolutions.hu/userfiles/elemzes/27/euroszkepticizmus_magyarorszagon.pdf.

⁸⁶ György Lengyel and Borbála Göncz, "Integráció És Identitás: Hogyan Ítélik Meg a Magyar Társadalmi Csoportok Az Európai Integrációt És a Szupranacionális Identitást?," (Integration and Identity: How do Hungarian Social Groups Feel About European Integration and Supranational identity?) in *A Magyarok Bemenetele. Tagállamként a Bővülő Európai Unióban*, (*The Incoming of Hungarians. Being a Member State in the Expanding European Union*) ed. István Hegedűs (Budapest: Demokrácia Kutatások Magyar Központja Alapítvány, Corvinus University of Budapest, 2006).

⁸⁷ Rob Ford, "In America, Polarization Is a Problem. In Britain, It Could Be a Solution," *The Washington Post*, February 20, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/02/20/in-america-polarization-is-a-problem-in-britain-it-could-be-a-solution/?utm_term=.b424f8fce9ba.

⁸⁸ This result is 9,5% more than their share at the 2011 elections.

⁸⁹ BBC News, "Election Results 2015," May 8, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/election/2015/results>.

ontological level at all. Eurobarometer polls taken in 2016 suggest the same: in the case of Hungary 30% of the population claims to be only Hungarian whereas 68% is attached to both Hungarian and European identity to some extent. The representation of these multiple identities is way above the EU average.⁹⁰ These numbers were vastly different in 2014, when 46% of the respondents claimed to be only Hungarian, 44% said that they were Hungarian and European, 8% said that they were European and Hungarian, and only 2% claimed to be only European. In the detailed time-series data (see Figure 1 in the Appendix) an increasing tendency can be observed in the number of people that claim to be Hungarian and European. Parallel to this, both exclusive category decreased, and the share of the “only European” category remained insignificant. Hungarians have a more neutral attitude and less negative towards the EU than the EU average⁹¹ The latest Standard Eurobarometer survey on Hungary also shows that the general trust in EU as an institution did not reduce compared to the results a year before, although it is still lower than people’s trust in public institutions they face in their everyday lives (police, army, public authorities) and is at similar level as to media. This level of trust is still higher than the EU average. Although Hungarians generally trust the EU, more respondents think that the EU does not take into account Hungary’s interests than in the last report. Furthermore, people are more satisfied with the state of democracy in Hungary⁹² and both in the EU.⁹³

Apart from European identity there are data on how the people think about the EU. In the 2001 -2009 period, the rate of those citizens who regarded the EU as a bad thing increased from 7% to 22%, the neutrals from 23% to 42% and the rate of those ones who thought the membership to be disadvantageous also increased from 13% to 52%. With these results the Hungarian attitudes reached the traditionally Eurosceptic British level of pessimism towards the EU in 2009. It is

⁹⁰ European Commission, 2016, European Commission, “Standard Eurobarométer 86. Nemzeti Jelentés: Magyarország,” Spring 2016.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Their proportion grew from 34% to 42%

⁹³ Their share changed from (from 43% to 49%)

important to note that although the pragmatic/utilitarian opinions diminished crucially, the symbolic bonding towards the Union stayed above the EU average.⁹⁴

One central issue that structures the debate about identity is about protecting Europe's "true" spiritual heritage and European values. Hungary's Europeanness is not questioned at all, only the government has a different view on how Europe should look like and behave, and their goal is to have an equal say in the integration's future. The nation-state based vision is present in Poland too, as in the 2000s, right-wing conservative Law and Justice party (PiS) supported EU membership and they strongly argued in favour of a "*Europe of nation states*" where Poland cannot be a second-class member.⁹⁵

There is clear reference about Hungary's Christian identity in the preamble of the country's constitution that states that since the first king, Saint Stephen the country is part of Christian Europe, and "*recognizes the role of Christianity in preserving nationhood*"⁹⁶ As the current Fundamental Law was written and ratified in 2011, under the same government that the country currently has, it can be relied as a major source about the "official" reflections about national identity. Apart from Christianity, the preamble makes it unquestionable that the country is an integral part of Europe by stating that "*We believe that our national culture is a rich contribution to the diversity of European unity.*"⁹⁷ The sense of belonging is completed with highlighting the importance of Hungary for Europe as a defender of the common values: "*We are proud that our people has over the centuries defended Europe in a series of struggles and enriched Europe's common values with its talent and diligence.*"⁹⁸ This sentence is an often-used argument in EU-related public debates, and contains a strong notion of Hungarian exceptionalism in European history. So it is clear that nationalism in the Orbanian sense does not exclude Europeanness, only wants an equal say to define what European is. The sense of belonging

⁹⁴ Lázár, "Euroscepticism in Hungary and Poland: A Comparative Analysis of Jobbik and the Law and Justice Parties," 2015.

⁹⁵ Lázár, Ibid.

⁹⁶ "The Fundamental Law of Hungary, Preamble," April 25, 2011, <http://www.kormany.hu/download/e/02/00000/The%20New%20Fundamental%20Law%20of%20Hungary.pdf>.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

to Europe is often used as a tool from the side of the opposition that took up Western orientation and highlighting the positive sides of the EU as ultimate critics on the government. But it is important to note that the picture that the opposition paints about the EU is just as exaggerated as the image projected by Fidesz, only it is biased towards the positive sides. This will be problematized later in more details.

Viktor Orbán talks about the morality of Christian Europe is that even though these people are victims of war and lost their home,

“But considering them victims must not turn ourselves into being victims. Just because we do not consider them enemies we must not act against ourselves. Our moral responsibility is to give back these people their homes and their countries. It can’t be our objective to provide them with a new European life. ... neither the German, Austrian nor the Hungarian way of life is a basic right of all people on the Earth. It is only a right of those ones who have contributed to it. ... We have to help them to get back their own lives with dignity and we have to send them back to their own countries.”⁹⁹

This shows a clear idea of the responsibility of Christian Europe and the insuperable difference between European lifestyle and the lifestyle of the newcomers, who must return to their own homes to operate among their own rules.

Apart from Christianity, the issues of democracy and European values are risen quite often in the political discourse. Similarly to Christian values, these concepts are also very much open to interpretation. European values are very much politicized and relativized by all political forces. Opposition parties contrast the actions of the Orbán government with European values, highlighting the importance of the country’s European identity and dismissing the government’s Oriental methods and affiliations.

⁹⁹ Viktor Orbán, “Speech at the EPP Congress” (Congress of the European Peoples’ Party, Madrid, October 22, 2015), <http://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/speech-of-viktor-orban-at-the-epp-congress20151024>.

Mr Orbán also relativizes European values, as sometimes he paints them to be a list of demands from Brussels that are somewhat alien to the region, some other times he talks about Hungary's unquestionable affiliation with "Western" values like liberty and liberal democracy. Most of the times he talks about every country's right to shape those values, stating that Eastern Europe should not be a passive recipient of Western influence but should be a defining factor not only in common decision-making, but in values too. On the Congress of the Slovenian Democratic Party Mr Orbán stated the following:

*"[European values are] not in Brussels, but in the hearts of European citizens: in the hearts of Slovenes, Hungarians, Poles, Germans, French, Slovaks. They are in the hearts of European citizens, because European values are not carved in lifeless stone, but into beating hearts: in each nation's own language, in line with its own culture. Previously we didn't need to talk about this. When we joined the European Union this was still clear. We must see, however, that in Europe today many are looking for different reference points. Many believe that Europe is in Brussels, and that from there they can tell the Member States who should do what. This way of thinking has led to consequences."*¹⁰⁰

This clearly shows the idea that European values belong to the nation-states, not to the supranational bureaucratic body symbolized by Brussels, so in a way Mr Orbán's rhetoric contradicts "true" European values with the integration itself. Another example for relativizing European values was at a press conference in 2015 after the European Parliament had a debate on migration policy¹⁰¹. During the debate about lex CEU, treatment of migrants, the hostile propaganda against the EU and the proposed NGO law in the European Parliament that "We

¹⁰⁰ Viktor Orbán, "Speech at the 11th Congress of the Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS)" (11th Congress of the Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS), Maribor, May 20, 2017), Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's speech at the 11th Congress of the Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS).

¹⁰¹ Viktor Orbán, Every value can and must be open to debate. Press conference in Strasbourg following a European Parliament (EP) debate on Hungarian stances on migration and death penalty., May 20, 2016, <http://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/news/every-value-can-and-must-be-open-to-debate>.

Hungarians believe that we deserve recognition, rather than attacks.”¹⁰² He again called Europe’s attention to the uniqueness and unrecognized nature of Hungarian actions.

Interestingly, in the case of Hungary people are very much engaged when sovereignty and self-determination become central to the political discourse. The sovereignty-based campaign against Brussels started off in 2010 when Fidesz was “fighting” for the country’s right to resist the EU’s financial crisis management methods. The main communication messages were built on the right of self-determination, and were merging Brussels with banks and multinational companies that “caused” the financial crisis. The EU was pictured as a colonial empire with the campaign messages like *“We will not be a colony”*¹⁰³ or *“More respect for Hungarians”*. This was parallel to similar rhetoric fight against banks, NGOs and the IMF. At the same time, the country received extensive international critique due to the new media law, the new political goal of creating an “illiberal democracy”¹⁰⁴ and other policies.¹⁰⁵ The same ‘freedom fighter rhetoric’ stayed at place afterwards, only the enemy was changing, but the messages not so much. In the case of the UK self-determination is more about the freedom to make decisions “the British way”, as in British identity is determined by being a center of an empire, not about fighting oppression.

Reflecting on conflicts in the past, the EU is often portrayed as a foreign power that wants to interfere into Hungarian affairs by questioning the achievements of the country (e. g. cheaper energy prices, more effective border control etc.) or overruling Hungarian interests and norms. This interplays with the so-called internal¹⁰⁶ side of sovereignty and self-determination, whereas

¹⁰² Viktor Orbán, “Viktor Orbán’s Reply in the European Parliament” (Brussels, April 27, 2017), <http://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/viktor-orban-s-reply-in-the-european-parliament>.

¹⁰³ Orbán Viktor: “Nem Leszünk Gyarmat!”, (We will not be a colony!) 2012.03.15. Kossuth Tér, Budapest, n.d., https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_yVAobI2d0.

¹⁰⁴ Viktor Orbán, “A Munkaalapú Állam Korszaka Következik” (The age of work-based society has come.) (speech, 25th Bálványos Summer Free University and Student Camp, Tusnádfürdő, July 26, 2014), Transcript available: <https://mno.hu/belfold/orban-viktor-teljes-beszede-1239645>.

¹⁰⁵ Dániel Ács, “Magyarország 9 Vadiúj Ellensége,” (Hungary’s 9 brand new enemies) *444.Hu*, December 1, 2014, <https://444.hu/2014/12/01/magyarorszag-9-vadonatuj-ellensege>.

¹⁰⁶ Raia Prokhovnik, “Internal/External: The State of Sovereignty,” *Contemporary Politics* 2., no. 3. (1996): 7–20.

arguments about the country's right to protect its borders are closer to the external side.¹⁰⁷ The Preamble of the Hungarian Fundamental Law (aka. Constitution) also provides some understanding on the significance of self-determination of the county by stating that *"We date the restoration of our country's self-determination, lost on the nineteenth day of March 1944, from the second day of May 1990, when the first freely elected organ of popular representation was formed."* This proposes the idea that Hungary was denied from its sovereignty for decades so it should not be given up again by an influence of any foreign power. Connected to self-determination another frequently used argument is that Hungary should have an equal say in European affairs as any other state, and should not be forced to adapt its views to bigger players in Europe (e. g. Germany). For instance, prior to the European Parliamentary elections in 2014 the government demanded *"More respect for Hungarians"* on both international and domestic forums from Brussels and attracted majority of the voters by playing on national pride. Before the financial crisis, the influence of the EU was mostly visible through the projects and renovation it supported, and its perception deteriorated a bit after 2002, becoming one of the lowest among the "pragmatic supporters" of the integration.¹⁰⁸ The EU did appear in the news before 2010 but not that much. The change happened because of the usual combatting rhetoric of Fidesz and Orban that was amplified with the significant popularity loss of the previous government and the unfolding of the financial crisis.

The image of freedom fight is deeply rooted in Hungarian collective memory as the country lost its autonomy to greater powers many times throughout the centuries, and it lived through numerous – moderately successful – revolutions. These turning points, especially the revolutions in 1848-49 and in 1956 are very much present in modern political discourse, as they are used as parallels to various situations to gain political support for some policies. The latest example for this hostile rhetoric is the campaign before the so-called quota referendum in October 2016 and the

¹⁰⁷ Due to spatial limitations this paper does not aim to give a more comprehensive description about the theories on sovereignty or how the external and internal sides are conceptualized. For further information see Jens Bartelson, *Sovereignty as a Symbolic Form* (New York, USA: Routledge, 2014). or

¹⁰⁸ Borbála Göncz, "Az Európai Unió Megítélése Magyarországon" (PhD thesis, Corvinus University of Budapest, 2010), http://phd.lib.uni-corvinus.hu/542/1/goncz_borbala.pdf. p. 12-13.

“Let us stop Brussels” campaign that was launched in spring 2017 (Image 1). Brussels as a symbol of an influential foreign power works because the general knowledge of people about the EU is quite low. Together with the modification of the Law on Higher Education – also known as Lex CEU – this campaign provoked wide international attention and serious reactions from the European Union and many others like the USA. From April 2017 the government’s domestic communication about “Brussels” became even more paradoxical as internationally Mr Orban tries to appear as a trustworthy and cooperative partner while in domestic communication he claims to “defeat” Brussel and its demands over and over again.

Arguments about sovereignty can also be connected to Dudek’s notion¹⁰⁹ that the nation-state has its own legitimacy of representing people is questioned by the supranational authority, so the nation-state is pushed to seek for new ways to reclaim it. Fidesz and Jobbik mastered the populist rhetoric of representing people’s will. The constant demonstration of strength through campaigns and national consultations can be seen as an attempt not only to win votes, but to reclaim legitimacy from the supranational level. These attempts can be used for coalition building in the EU, as similar tendencies and common statements can be observed with other V4 countries. Protests in spring 2017 on the other hand take up EU symbols to “prove” that the nation wants to belong to the EU, expressing criticism on the government’s authoritarian moves. So the EU as a symbol is dragged into domestic political competition, leading to further polarization.

After analyzing the governmental rhetoric that builds on sovereignty let us take a look at the opposition’s reaction to these campaigns. The political discourse is clearly defined by Fidesz as a governing party with major influence on media and advertisement, so in most cases the opposition parties need to follow its lead. So while the government claims to protect the country from the EU, the opposition also “found” an external force to fight: Russia. Their actions against the emerging Russian influence follows a very similar logic to the anti-EU messages as they also

¹⁰⁹ Dudek, “EU Challenges to Domestic Politics: A Regional Nationalist Response.”

want to appear as the defenders of the country's sovereignty from Russia that can invoke bad historical memories and get more votes for those who help to contain the external threat.¹¹⁰

Another characteristic that can be connected to sovereignty is the historical memories of belonging to an empire or being a decisive regional power. Hungary was part of the Habsburg Empire and then the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy for centuries, and this era simultaneously meant oppression and being an important political force inside one of Europe's greatest powers. The sense of oppression weakened a bit after 1867 when Hungarians became a constituent nation in the Empire, winning privileges over other nations of the Empire. The sense of great power status was completely destroyed with the Treaty of Trianon in 1920 when the country lost 2/3 of its territory and the population reduced from 20,8 million to 7 million.¹¹¹ Since then, the notion of a once-great nation that was stroke by horrible injustices is a returning element in nationalistic discourse.

Last, but not least we need to talk about the more concrete perceptions of external dangers, namely immigration that is represented as cultural, religious, material and physical threat at the same time. The crisis reached its climax in summer 2015 when according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) the number of apprehended irregular migrants at its external borders with 411,515 crossings during the year of 2015 only.¹¹² The issue of migration was a hot topic in both Hungarian and European politics, and many were unsatisfied with the European Union's answers to the challenges proposed by this vast increase in numbers of refugees and asylum seekers. This paper does not wish to analyze the effectiveness of EU policies in the field, but focuses only on the representation of migration in the political discourse.

¹¹⁰ It is not for this paper to evaluate the level of Russian influence as a proposed threat, it is mentioned as a politicized counterpart of the European Union as an external influential actor. For further information see Yury E. Fedorov, "Continuity and Change in Russia's Policy toward Central and Eastern Europe," *Special Issue: Reconfiguration in Central and Eastern Europe: International Security, Foreign Policy, and Political Economy, Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 46., no. 3. (2013): 315–326.

¹¹¹ http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Treaty_of_Trianon

¹¹² International Organization for Migration, "Migration Issues in Hungary," June 15, 2016, <http://www.iom.hu/migration-issues-hungary>.

The public debate on the issue of migration and refugees emerged after the government made the controversial decision to build a fence on the Serbian border to prevent irregular immigration in July 2015. In May 2015 Jobbik leader Gabor Vona proposed the idea of a referendum on the EU's so-called quota system. The idea was taken up by Fidesz, and the referendum took place in October 2016. In the campaign migration was securitized to an extreme level by the governmental side¹¹³, merging the 'threats' that are posed by migrants with the incompetence of Brussels to address the problem, expressing criticism on a concrete policy. However, securitization was based on the 'necessary' clash between Hungarian-Christian identity, that in this situation embodies European identity against an external, non-Christian threatening other. So national and European identity were contradicted and merged at the same time to generate hostility against a new, external, non-European identity.

6.2. *United Kingdom*

Historically the country always had a controversial relation towards continental Europe that can be explained with many factors from the strong Transatlantic orientation to the heritage of the British Empire and the tight economic and cultural relations towards the Commonwealth. The United Kingdom was always competing with its neighbors for sea dominance but never wanted to be a dominant power in Europe, and the country was rather playing on balancing the competing powers in the region. Díez Medrano¹¹⁴ argues that British national narrative has always been torn between European integration being a threat to sovereignty and great power status and being a necessity for economic development and a geopolitical partner. The country entered the European integration in 1973, and the accession was confirmed by a referendum in 1975. Baker, Gamble, Randall and Seawright¹¹⁵ say that in the United Kingdom wide varieties of Euroscepticism were

¹¹³ Szalai and Göbl, "Securitizing Migration in Contemporary Hungary."

¹¹⁴ Juan Díez Medrano, *Framing Europe: Attitudes to European Integration on Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003). As mentioned in De Wilde and Zürn, "Can the Politicization of European Integration Be Reversed?" p. 144.

¹¹⁵ David Baker et al., "Euroscepticism in the British Party System: 'A Source of Fascination, Perplexity, and Sometimes Frustration,'" in *Opposing Europe? The Comparative Party Politics of Euroscepticism*, ed. Aleks Szczerbiak and Paul Taggart, vol. Volume 1: Case Studies and Country Surveys (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2008). p. 115.

present within both major and peripheral parties, from single-issue Eurosceptic parties (UKIP) to the EU as being present in party politics in general. Unlike Hungary, the European question was very much present in public discourse quite early, during the Thatcher era (1979-1990), but the Iron Lady only opposed the federalist developments of the EC, not the idea of integration itself.

In the 2000s there was a striking dilemma about the European Union in British political thinking, particularly among Conservatives, as they wanted to balance between political distancing and economic convergence, especially during the Cameron administration.¹¹⁶ When David Cameron proposed to have a referendum on EU membership in 2013, he brought the European question to the very center of public discourse, giving the opportunity to UKIP to transform the debate into an identity-based form instead of policy-based discussion.

Wellings and Baxendale¹¹⁷ reflex on the idea of the Anglosphere that shows up as an alternative to the United Kingdom's affiliation with the European Union. The concept is deeply rooted in the political tradition that oriented the country away from Europe to other political communities, namely the Commonwealth countries. The idea then became an alternative for Eurosceptic political forces and it has been reworked for a postcolonial, global era. These visions clearly show centrality of British identity as opposed to European identity and represents a long-standing historical dilemma of British politics. An extended understanding of Anglosphere would include all the English-speaking people that brings us to the conclusion that we are talking about and English, rather than a British phenomenon.¹¹⁸ Kumar¹¹⁹ contrasts English identity with British identity by saying that Englishness is disentangled from the overarching imperial identity in both the early 'inner British empire' era and the 'larger' overseas empire too. So the idea of Anglosphere

¹¹⁶ Mark I. Vail, "Between One-Nation Toryism and Neoliberalism: The Dilemmas of British Conservatism and Britain's Evolving Place in Europe," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 53., no. 1. (2015): 106–122. p. 109.

¹¹⁷ Ben Wellings and Helen Baxendale, "Euroscepticism and the Anglosphere: Traditions and Dilemmas in Contemporary English Nationalism," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 53., no. 1. (2015): 123–139.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Krishan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge University Press, 2003).

is more connected to British identity that in this sense operates on a more global level, whereas English, Scottish or Welsh identity has more meaning internally.

When it comes to the examination of the politicization of the EU and its connection to emerging nationalism it is inevitable to include the Brexit vote. This paper does not intend to seek detailed explanation for the outcome of the referendum, or analyze the social background of people voted for Brexit, trying to find a socially-based explanation. Rather, the paper aims to study the EU's usage in the campaign from both sides, focusing on the elements that can be connected to conflicting identities. Of course, the outcome of the vote was influenced with many other economic, social and other factor, not only identity, but as the paper focuses on identity-related comparison. I will not include any other factor.

Another interesting factor is the interplay between different identities, namely Britishness and English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish identities, and their relations towards European identity. Henderson, Jeffery, Liñeira, Scully, Wincott and Wyn Jones¹²⁰ talk about the emergence of English nationalism during the campaign, clashing with British or Scottish nationalism. Pearce and Kenny¹²¹ argue that the forms of patriotism expressed across the UK are not necessarily incompatible with wider commitments and plural identities, notably European identity. Although Scottish nationalism was the most visible for the people due to the devolution process and the independence referendum in 2014, English nationalism has also been growing as a cultural and political identity to the point when it became influential in British politics. During the Scottish independence referendum campaign the argument about the EU membership played a significant role in the *Better together* campaign, and on the Brexit referendum majority of Scotland voted for remaining in the EU. This clearly shows regional differences regarding the EU's perception, and due to increased politicization of belonging, this perception is slowly incorporated to the identity discourse.

¹²⁰ Henderson et al., "England, Englishness and Brexit."

¹²¹ Nick Pearce and Michael Kenny, "The Empire Strikes Back," *New Statesman* 146., no. 5350. (January 20, 2017): 34–39.

Although issues concerning identity played an important role in the Brexit vote, it is far from being the explaining factor.¹²²

In the case of the UK, Christianity does not seem to be that important as it was in the case of Hungary. The Anglican Church historically symbolizes the sovereignty of the country, but although there were religious leaders who express their opinions on the issue, the notion of religion did not get into the political discussions. In a more individualistic society like the British religion appears more as a personal guidance for believers, not as a universal system of values.

After giving a short overview of some defining criteria of British identity, let us take a closer look on how these identity elements were used in the Brexit campaign. For the “Leave” campaign “taking back control” was a key element to their campaign, mostly focusing on sovereign decision-making, border control and wider economic freedom.¹²³ These messages communicate with the image of a greater past when Britain had more power – the people need not only power, but they want to take control *back* – assuming that the pre-EU era provided more independence and possibility to handle its affairs “in the British way”. According to the Leave campaign, this regained sovereignty would also mean greater influence in international affairs that also refers back to the glory of the past. The greater sovereignty also proposes a stronger country not only international, but domestic affairs as well.

The Remain campaign’s main message is that Britain is “stronger, safer and better off in Europe” than we would be out on our own.¹²⁴ These arguments are built on the same basis of national pride and exceptionalism as the other side’s arguments: the “promised” power that would come from the proposed greater sovereignty is counterbalanced in the Remain campaign with the promises of safety, stability and strength. The “*Don’t leave it, lead it*” slogan even proposes that the

¹²² Pearce and Kenny Ibid.

¹²³ The main messages are from the Leave campaign’s website, Available: http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/why_vote_leave.html

¹²⁴ Krishnadev Calamur, “The ‘Brexit’ Campaign: A Cheat Sheet,” *The Atlantic*, June 23, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/06/uk-brexit-guide/482730/>.

UK can be a leading power in the framework of the EU, thus this message aims to contradict the sovereignty equals strength logic. The promise of stability and safety is much in line with the Better together campaign before the Scottish independence referendum. These arguments are supported by the promise of economic benefits and welfare (e. g. lower prices and more jobs) that are not strongly identity-related, yet contribute to the ‘strength of the nation’.

From Standard Eurobarometer data concerning European citizenship (see Figure 3 in the Appendix) it can be seen that more than half of British people are associated with national identity only, while association with EU identity is significantly lower than the EU average. These proportions did not change significantly over time.¹²⁵ It is very interesting to notice that the data from Autumn 2016 – the first survey executed after the Brexit vote – shows a significant shift towards association with the UK and the EU at the same time, while the “only British” category significantly decreased. This can be caused by the direct shock after the referendum results, but as there are no more surveys available yet it cannot be said if these results start a new tendency or the results will return to their “usual” shape. It is hard to make deductions about political decisions based on opinion polls about identity, so these results are only to illustrate the assumed detachment of British people from European identity.

In the British case immigration and integration of the people arrived from foreign places was a long-standing issue throughout its history, mostly because there were always people coming from the colonies to the British Isles. For this reason, the UK has a lot of experience with integrating a huge number of immigrants, although sometimes there can be complicated social problems surrounding immigrant people. Many see these shortcomings as a failure of multiculturalism and this issue is very much present in British public debates but are almost completely lacking in the case of Hungary.

¹²⁵ This kind of data is only available from 2013, this is why this paper cannot give an evaluation on a broader timeframe.

According to the 2017 Aurora Humanitarian Index survey¹²⁶ more than half of the respondents believe that their culture is threatened by the ethnic minorities living in the UK, 24% felt migrants took jobs away but half believed their impact was neutral. 34% of the respondents thought that migrants took more from society than they contributed to it. Moreover, the majority thinks that the UK will be less capable in addressing the migration crisis effectively after Brexit than it was before. This result gives an extremely interesting prospect to the fact that one of the main messages of the Brexit campaign was that without the EU the UK will be able to “take back control” of its own borders and will be able to prevent mass migration to the country.

Focusing on the role of civic identity and citizenship in the Brexit vote, Pearce and Kenny¹²⁷ make a parallel with the times – during the Chamberlain-era – when the colonial empire was falling apart and the country was faced with the question of who belongs to the nation. This can explain the distinction in the public image of immigration. Interestingly enough, the campaign used the images of the flood of refugees coming from the Middle East and the immigration from other current or future member states. The former group is painted more like a cultural and physical threat through references on terrorism and the Cologne incident. This culturally-based racist campaign can be best illustrated with the famous UKIP billboard with a crowd on it, assumingly refugees with the text “Breaking point. The EU has failed us all.” (See Image 1.) This poster was condemned by several political leaders and was reported to the police with a complaint that it initiates racial hatred and thus violates the UK’s race law.¹²⁸

The representation of European immigrants is more connected to economic welfare, competition for jobs and less about cultural differences. As UKIP leader Nigel Farage expressed it

¹²⁶ The original full report was not available on the Aurora Prize website, so this part is based on the following article that summarizes the main findings of the report: Press Association, “Majority of Britons Think Minorities Threaten UK Culture, Report Says,” *The Guardian*, May 25, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/may/25/majority-of-britons-think-minorities-threaten-uk-culture-report-says>.

¹²⁷ Pearce and Kenny, “The Empire Strikes Back.” p. 4.

¹²⁸ Heather Stewart and Rowena Mason, “Nigel Farage’s Anti-Migrant Poster Reported to Police,” *The Guardian*, June 16, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/16/nigel-farage-defends-ukip-breaking-point-poster-queue-of-migrants#img-1>.

in an interview, immigration is not a [macro]economic issue, it is more connected to welfare and the access to social benefits.¹²⁹ The last decade nevertheless differs markedly because of high levels of net immigration, a surge generated in large part by sustained economic growth for the last 15 years. Since 2004, immigration levels have been boosted by an unprecedented wave of mobility from Eastern European countries, particularly Poland, whose citizens gained free movement and labor rights following the EU enlargement. Parallel to this, public anxiety about immigration started to grow as immigration generated wide media attention. In this context of rising numbers and anxieties, UK policymakers tried to introduce new policies to manage migration, implementing a Points-Based System for Migration and a new institutional system. But they continue to face a complex set of challenges, mainly to convince the public that government is in control to meeting labor market needs and immigrant integration.¹³⁰ So it is important to see that migration has been a highly politicized issue in British politics, only it was not strongly connected to EU membership before.

All in all, even though there are massive differences between the historical background and the political culture of Hungary and the UK, major similarities can be discovered in how parties politicize Europeanness through criticism on common policies and changing the meaning of basic elements of identity.

6.3. *Outlook at other cases*

After comparing two respective case studies in details, we should examine the same criteria in other cases as well, contradicting our findings with the different elements and representations of identities throughout Europe. To illustrate that although there are interactions between the different cases they are not interconnected as one transnational wave of nationalism. In the next section there will be some insights on France, Poland and the Netherlands to indicate more details

¹²⁹ *Eddie Izzard vs Nigel Farage on Immigration - BBC News*, n.d., https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECDrYfNvj_o.

¹³⁰ Will Somerville, Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah, and Maria Latorre, "United Kingdom: A Reluctant Country of Immigration" (Washington DC, USA: Migration Policy Institute, 2009).

on how the perceived forms and layers of identity shapes the domestic discourse about Europe and the common policies.

Historically France has always been a great power in Europe based on its territory, population and cultural influence. The modern French identity – and, to some, national identity as an idea – was born during the great French Revolution that has an outstanding role in the national mythology, bringing along the notion of great power status and exceptionalism. France was also a centre of a colonial empire and tried to maintain its influence through language and culture. In the case of France there is a wide range of literature about the differences and clashes between ethnic and civic nationalism. When describing¹³¹ the basic elements of the nationalist ideology of the National Front, Rydgren talks about the tensions between “essence and “real” France (as equal to ethnic nationalism) versus “legal” France that equals civic nationalism.¹³² This duality can be examined through the lenses of nested identities, but the nature of the connection to layers is very different in the French case than it is in the UK. Both countries faced similar challenges of integration as former colonial powers, but the French civic approach to citizenship was explicitly more inclusive on a legal level. Regional identities also hold significance in France, and similarly to the British case, they can be examined through nested identity theory. In the case of the UK, however, regional identities are stronger as they are perceived as national identities that together construct British identity.

Similarly to its neighbors, Poland has been always in a struggle between the West and the East, and shares the experience of foreign occupation as the country completely lost its sovereignty several times, causing constant fear of foreign influence and occupation even during the accession process.¹³³ Poland is very close to Hungary in its political culture and history, but the population

¹³¹ Stewart and Mason, “Nigel Farage’s Anti-Migrant Poster Reported to Police.”

¹³² Jens Rydgren, *The Populist Challenge. Political Protest and Ethno-Nationalist Mobilization in France*, 1. (United Kingdom: Berghahn Books, 2004). p. 138.

¹³³ Lázár, “Euroscpticism in Hungary and Poland: A Comparative Analysis of Jobbik and the Law and Justice Parties,” 2015. p. 222.

has stronger ties towards the Catholic church that is more present in public affairs. Another striking difference is that the fear from foreign influence is much stronger in Poland from the start of the accession period. For instance, it was a common belief that Germans want to annex the country again under the auspices of the EU¹³⁴ This phenomenon is still present in the 2005-2007 PiS government that often argued that sovereignty is harmed by deeper integration. Another consequence of this general fear is that Poland is much more resistant against Russian influence than Hungary, as the historic memory of occupations have a stronger hold on current national identity. Analyzing the current situation, it is also important to note that unlike Fidesz-KDNP does not have competition in representing right-wing conservatism, in the Polish party system there are other conservative parties apart from PiS, many of them are Eurosceptic, out of which Solidarity Poland represents harder Euroscepticism than Kaczynsky's party.

In the case of the Netherlands, colonial past also plays an important role in identity formation, but not the same way as in France or in the UK. Kešić and Duyvendak¹³⁵ talk about the concept of anti-nationalist nationalism that was developed among progressive intellectuals in the Netherlands. By trying to find the difference between “good” and “bad” nationalism they created an idea proposing that Dutch identity is built on inclusiveness and the “lack of national identity” and a sense of self-abasement for the colonial past. Even though the official approach to civic identity would presume inclusiveness towards the people from former colonies, there are problems with facing the past and integration people who might come to the Netherlands from outside of Europe. Right-wing populist nationalism is also present in the country in the form of Party for Freedom (PVV) that gained increased popularity since 2006 with its anti-immigration ideas that are supposed to help to maintain Europe's Judeo-Christian and humanist traditions. The party's ideology also incorporates some more progressive elements of Dutch identity – as being

¹³⁴Lázár, Nóra Lázár, “Euroscepticism in Hungary and Poland: A Comparative Analysis of Jobbik and the Law and Justice Parties,” *Politeja* 33. (2015): 215–233.

¹³⁵ Kešić and Duyvendak, “Anti-Nationalist Nationalism: The Paradox of Dutch National Identity,” p. 589. quotes De Swaan, Abram “Over het misverstand dat de Nederlanders geen eigen identiteit hebben.” *De Gids* 167. 5/6. (2004) 451-2.

progressive and open-minded is claimed to be an inherent part of Dutchness¹³⁶ – by condemning Antisemitism and anti-LGBT behavior that is pretty unusual from a far right party. At the last elections this year the party got second by winning 20 seats in the Parliament, holding a strong position for xenophobic nationalism in Dutch society.¹³⁷

Conclusion

Based on the theory of nested identities this paper reinvented the increased process of politicization of the European Union in domestic politics that started after the climax of the financial crisis and the migration crisis from 2015 onwards. Starting from the 2010 dysfunctionalities of the EU became more visible for average citizens that presented an opportunity for political parties to take up the European question and – concentrating their arguments on European and national identity – try to win political gains by making criticism on the EU a baseline in domestic politics. These processes clearly show that although there are some elements – like religion, history or political culture - that play a decisive role in constructing national identities, they are open to interpretation by various political forces. By using the idea of nested identities this thesis tracked down how these elements are reinterpreted on different (national, European and subnational) levels, constantly formulating each other.

After introducing nested identity theory the paper offered an overview on basic theories of nationalism, then it summarized the differences between European and European Union identity and introduced the concept of Euronationalism as a tool for the EU to build its own identity. Then the next substantive part discovered that the current politicization of the European integration can be best explained with postfunctionalist theory that states that functionalist, policy-based ideas cannot explain the recent developments (e. g. the rise of right-wing populism or the outcome of the Brexit vote) of the EU, so scholars should incorporate more on identity-based argumentations

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Chris Graham, “Who Won the Dutch Election and What Does It Mean for Geert Wilders and the Far-Right in the Netherlands and Europe?,” *The Telegraph*, March 16, 2017, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/03/16/won-dutch-election-does-mean-geert-wilders-far-right-netherlands/>.

in the public discourse and they should study the interaction between the reactions of the European public more carefully.

In the second half of the paper these findings on politicization were introduced on the case studies of Hungary and the United Kingdom by a comparison that was based on crucial elements of identity formation. These two cases were chosen to justify the relevance of the issue Europe-wide but at the same time to uncover national or regional images of Europeanness that serve different functions for various political forces in various contexts. In the case of Hungary the research was mostly focused on the second and third (current) terms of the Orban administration from 2010, and attempted to explain how Fidesz politicizes Hungarian and European identities mostly through the principles of sovereignty, self-determination, a notion of exceptionalism and Christian European values. These principles are often revoked in Hungarian politics, but Fidesz managed to create a love-hate rhetoric relationship with European identity by twisting the same principles according to its own political goals. As the governing party clearly dominates the political discourse the opposition has to follow the same logic.

In the British case the notion of exceptionalism was even more decisive as it originated from the former colonial empire and the great power status the colonies guaranteed and became inherent part of British, but not English or Scottish identities. These latter mentioned identities give an extra layer. A notable difference is that Christianity does not play a significant role in the British case as in Hungary. As the campaign prior to the Brexit referendum was directly about EU membership, economic arguments counterbalanced the direct identity arguments, but both the Remain and the Leave campaign used the above-mentioned elements of British identity to achieve its own goals. The biggest similarities could be discovered in the representation of non-European immigration, although in the British context immigrants from other EU member states were pictured differently, giving a new, economic aspect to identity-based xenophobia. Then at the end the two case studies were completed with other examples for politicization of identities from the

Netherlands, Poland and France. The differences uncovered by this thesis prove the main argument of the paper that emerging nationalism cannot be interpreted as a transnational movement because politicization of identity only works if it is strongly rooted in local political culture and history.

Although this paper briefly mentions other examples apart from the UK and Hungary, it would be very interesting to expand the scope of the case studies to other European countries, based on the introduced criteria to get a deeper understanding on the dynamics of politicization of identity in different contexts. It would be also interesting to study how party systems changed throughout Europe with the emergence of Euroscepticism and with the EU becoming a more central issue in domestic politics. This paper mostly focused on the current events, but a broader analysis about the history of national identities would give a much deeper understanding on how identity is politicized.

Appendix

YEAR	ONLY HUN	HUN AND EU	EU AND HUN	ONLY EU
2013/1.	43%	49%	5%	1%
2013/2.	46%	45%	5%	2%
2014/1.	46%	44%	8%	2%
2014/2.	39%	48%	10%	2%
2015/1.	37%	51%	10%	2%
2015/2.	33%	56%	9%	1%
2016/1.	37%	53%	9%	1%
2016/2.	30%	60%	8%	0%

Figure 1: The sense of European citizenship in Hungary (2013-2016) Source: European Commission: Standard Eurobarometer Survey 79-86. Accessed: <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/STANDARD/surveyKy/1123>

YEAR	ONLY (NATIONALITY)	(NATIONALITY) AND EUROPEAN	EUROPEAN AND (NATIONALITY)	ONLY EUROPEAN
2013/1.	35%	49%	7%	3%
2013/2.	42%	47%	5%	2%
2014/1.	39%	51%	6%	2%
2014/2.	39%	51%	6%	2%
2015/1.	38%	52%	6%	2%
2015/2.	41%	51%	6%	1%
2016/1.	39%	51%	6%	2%
2016/2.	37%	52%	6%	2%

Figure 2: The sense of European citizenship on EU average (2013-2016) Source: European Commission: Standard Eurobarometer Survey 79-86. Accessed: <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/STANDARD/surveyKy/1123>

YEAR	ONLY UK	UK AND EU	EU AND UK	ONLY EU
2013/1.	65%	27%	3%	2%
2013/2.	63%	29%	3%	1%
2014/1.	64%	30%	2%	1%
2014/2.	58%	33%	4%	2%
2015/1.	64%	31%	2%	1%
2015/2.	66%	29%	3%	1%
2016/1.	62%	31%	3%	1%
2016/2.	45%	41%	6%	2%

Figure 1: The sense of European citizenship in the UK (2013-2016) Source: European Commission: Standard Eurobarometer Survey 79-86. Accessed: <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/STANDARD/surveyKy/1123>



Image 1: Let us stop Brussels! sign. Photo: MTI Fotó/Noémi Bruzák. Source: http://www.portfolio.hu/gazdasag/kifakadt_brusszel_a_magyar_kormany_legujabb_buzasai_miatt.246709.html



Image 2: Nigel Farage with the controversial Breaking point poster, 16/06/2016. Photograph: Mark Thomas/Rex/Shutterstock Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/16/nigel-farage-defends-ukip-breaking-point-poster-queue-of-migrants#img-1>

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