

Nagy Attila

**The Conflict of the 2015 European Migration
Crisis**

A Multi-Level Analysis in Austria and Hungary

Doctoral School of International Relations and Political Science

Supervisor: József Dúró, PhD
Board of Referees:

© Nagy Attila

Corvinus University of Budapest

Doctoral School of International Relations and Political Science

Political Science Doctoral Program

**The Conflict of the 2015 European Migration Crisis
A Multi-Level Analysis in Austria and Hungary**

Doctoral Dissertation

Nagy Attila

Budapest, 2025.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	10
1 THE 2015 MIGRATION WAVE.....	13
1.1 The Relevance of Migration.....	13
1.2 Key Conceptual Elements of Migration.....	19
1.3 Migration Wave of 2015	23
2 THEORIES OF POLITICAL CLEAVAGES	51
2.1 The Traditionalist Approach: The Relevance of Socio-Demographic and Economic Backgrounds.....	51
2.2 The First Wave Revisionism: The Significance of Values and the Political Parties.....	54
2.3 The New Wave of Revisionism: The Importance of the Intermediate Normative Level	60
2.4 Evaluation of the Literature: Research Question(s) and Hypotheses.....	68
2.5 Spatial and Temporal Focus of the Research with Methodological Framework.....	76
2.6 The Relevance of the Research	78
3 POLITICAL CLEAVAGE LINES IN AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY	81
3.1 Political Cleavage Lines in Hungary (1990-2018).....	81
3.2 Political Cleavage Lines in Austria (1990-2018).....	93
3.3 Comparative Summary.....	101
4 THE 2015 EUROPEAN MIGRATION CRISIS IN AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY	103
4.1 Historical Overview of Immigration in Austria and Hungary.....	103
4.2 Public Attitudes toward Immigration in Austria and Hungary.....	111
5 THE RELEVANCE AND TRANSFORMATION OF PARTY SYSTEMS IN AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY	121
5.1 Political Engagement: Turnout and Party Membership	121
5.2 Electoral Volatility.....	124
5.3 Effective Number of Political Parties.....	129
5.4 Comparative Reflections and Key Findings.....	132
6 POSITIONS OF POLITICAL PARTIES TOWARD IMMIGRATION IN AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY	135
6.1 Election Programs in Austria and Hungary – The Manifesto Project	135
6.2 Rhetoric in Political Parties' Communication in Austria and Hungary – The Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES)	147
6.3 Ideological Positions of Political Parties: Associations with Stances Toward Immigration.....	167

7	POSITIONS OF VOTERS TOWARD IMMIGRATION IN AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY	179
7.1	Analytical Framework and Variable Operationalisation.....	179
7.2	Results and Findings.....	188
8	PARTY AFFILIATION AND ATTITUDES TOWARD IMMIGRATION.....	207
8.1	Analytical Framework and Variable Operationalisations	207
8.2	The Impact of Immigration Attitudes on Party Choice: The Hungarian Case	209
8.3	The Impact of Immigration Attitudes on Party Choice: The Austrian Case	214
8.4	Comparative Summary	221
9	CONCLUSION.....	223
	References	230
	Appendices.....	246
	Appendix A. Detailed Response Distribution for Figure 17.....	246
	Appendix B. Detailed Response Distribution for Figure 18.....	247
	Appendix C. Detailed Response Distribution for Figure 19.....	248
	Appendix D. Detailed Response Distribution for Figure 20-21	249
	Appendix E. Detailed Response Distribution for Figure 20-21.....	250
	Appendix F. Detailed Response Distribution for Figure 20-21	251
	Appendix G. Overview of Party Manifestos and Substitutes in Austria, 2013-2019..	252
	Appendix H. Overview of Party Manifestos and Substitutes in Hungary, 2010-2018	253
	Appendix I. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 54 –Governing TAN (Fidesz-KDNP)	254
	Appendix J. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 55 –Right-Wing Opposition (TAN)	254
	Appendix K. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 56 – Left-Wing Opposition (GAL)	255
	Appendix L. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 57 –FPÖ (TAN).....	255
	Appendix M. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 58 –ÖVP (TAN)	256
	Appendix N. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 59 –SPÖ (GAL)	256
	Appendix O. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 60 –die Grünen (GAL)	257
	Appendix P. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 61 –NEOS (GAL)	257

List of Figures

Figure 1. Global migration trends and future projections (1990–2050)	18
Figure 2. Trends in international migrant stock and EU population growth (1960–2020), highlighting key events such as enlargements and Brexit.....	26
Figure 3. International migrant stock in the world (1990-2020)	27
Figure 4. Trends in the total number of refugees and annual asylum applications in the EU (2008-2022) ..	29
Figure 5. Refugee population in the world (1990-2022)	31
Figure 6. Number of illegal border crossings, EU (2009 - 2023).....	33
Figure 7. Number of illegal crossings into the EU by highlighted regions (2009 - 2023)	34
Figure 8. Origin of asylum-seekers in the EU (2013-2023)	35
Figure 9. Trends in illegal crossings into the EU by immigration routes (2009–2023).....	36
Figure 10. Academic interest in migration-related terms within the social sciences (1990–2024)	46
Figure 11. Academic focus on 'migration crisis' and 'refugee crisis' in the social sciences (1990–2024) ..	47
Figure 12. The bidirectional interactions between voters, normative identities, and political parties	71
Figure 13. Ethnic composition of the Austrian population by country/region of birth (2011-2020)	105
Figure 14. International migrant stock in Austria and Hungary (1960-2020)	108
Figure 15. Trends in number of refugees in Austria and Hungary (1960-2022)	109
Figure 16. Trends in number of asylum-applications in Austria and Hungary (2008-2022).....	110
Figure 17. Allow immigrants of same race/ethnic from majority - Austria and Hungary (2002-2024) ...	113
Figure 18. Allow immigrants of different race/ethnic from majority - Austria and Hungary (2002-2024)	115
Figure 19. Allow immigrants from a poorer country outside Europe - Austria and Hungary (2002-2024)	116
Figure 20. Trends in attitudes toward immigration in Hungary (2002–2024).....	117
Figure 21. Trends in attitudes toward immigration in Austria (2002-2024).....	118
Figure 22. Trends in turnout and non-voters in parliamentary elections in Austria and Hungary (1956-2022)	122
Figure 23. Trends in political party membership in Austria (1945-2014)	123
Figure 24. Trends in political party membership in Hungary (1990-2014).....	124
Figure 25. Trends in electoral volatility in parliamentary elections in Austria and Hungary (1956-2019)	126
Figure 26. Realignment in Austria (1956-2019).....	127
Figure 27. Dealignment and realignment in Hungary (1990-2022)	129
Figure 28. Trends in effective electoral numbers in Austria and Hungary (1956-2019)	130
Figure 29. Trends in political parties' negative positions toward immigration in Hungary (2014-2018). ..	136
Figure 30. Trends in political parties' positive position toward immigration in Hungary (2014-2018) ...	139
Figure 31. Trends in political parties' negative positions toward immigration in Austria (2013–2019)... ..	140
Figure 32. Trends in political parties' positive positions toward immigration in Austria (2013–2019)....	143
Figure 33. Trends in political parties' positions on immigration policy in Hungary (2010-2019)	149
Figure 34. Political parties' positions toward EU asylum policy in Hungary (2019)	154
Figure 35. Positions of the Hungarian political parties on multiculturalism (2010-2019)	155
Figure 36. Trends in political parties' positions on immigration policy in Austria (2010-2019).....	157
Figure 37. Trends in political parties' positions on EU asylum policy in Austria (2019).....	161
Figure 38. Trends in political parties' positions on multiculturalism in Austria (2010-2019)	163
Figure 39. Ideological positions of political parties on the general Left-Right scale in Hungary (2010-2019)	168
Figure 40. Ideological positions of political parties on the general Left-Right scale in Austria (2010-2019)	169
Figure 41. Alternative ideological positions of political parties on the Green-Alternative-Libertarian vs. Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist scale in Hungary (2010-2019)	171
Figure 42. Alternative ideological positions of political parties on the Green-Alternative-Libertarian vs. Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist scale in Austria (2010-2019).....	173
Figure 43. Relationship between ideological stance and position towards immigration across political parties in Hungary and Austria (2010-2019).....	174
Figure 44. Schwartz's Higher Order Values (HOVs) – a four-dimensional value typology.....	187
Figure 45. Trends in attitudes toward immigration in Austria and Hungary (2002-2023)	189
Figure 46. Association between conservatism and position toward immigration	192
Figure 47. Non-linear association between self-transcendence and immigration attitudes	194
Figure 48. Association between openness and position toward immigration	195
Figure 49. Association between self-enhancement and position toward immigration	197

Figure 50. Association between Social Trust Scale and positions toward immigration.....	198
Figure 51. Association between subjective security and positions toward immigration.....	199
Figure 52. Association between satisfaction with governance/public services and position toward immigration.....	201
Figure 53. Association between left and right scale and position toward immigration	203
Figure 54. Relevance of immigration in supporting governing TAN (Fidesz)	211
Figure 55. Relevance of immigration in supporting opposition TAN (Jobbik).....	212
Figure 56. Relevance of immigration in supporting GAL parties (left-wing opposition).....	213
Figure 57. Relevance of immigration in supporting FPÖ (TAN)	215
Figure 58. Relevance of immigration in supporting ÖVP (TAN)	217
Figure 59. Relevance of immigration in supporting SPÖ (GAL)	218
Figure 60. Relevance of immigration in supporting GRÜNE (GAL).....	219
Figure 61. Relevance of immigration in supporting NEOS (GAL).....	220

List of Tables:

Table 1. Forms of Migration	22
Table 2. Alignment, dealignment, and realignment: A summary of cleavage theories	67
Table 3. Hypothesis framework based on Kevin Deegan-Krause's typology	75
Table 4. Evaluation of hypotheses following the analysis of political parties' position on immigration..	165
Table 5. Evaluation of hypotheses following the analysis of political parties' position in relation to their ideological position on immigration.....	176
Table 6. Schwartz's ten value types and their underlying motivational goals	185
Table 7. The ten fundamental human values based on Schwartz's theory, as computed from the ESS dataset	186
Table 8. Multilevel regression estimates predicting immigration attitudes	190
Table 9. Final evaluation of hypotheses following the analysis of individual respondents' position on immigration	206

INTRODUCTION

The 2015 European migration crisis marked a significant turning point in contemporary European politics, highlighting widespread societal and political tensions across the continent. The unprecedented influx of refugees and migrants, particularly from the Middle East and North Africa, posed complex challenges for European states, both in terms of governance and public perception. This crisis generated immediate humanitarian and political responses and may have reshaped long-term political discourse, electoral dynamics, and social attitudes toward migration.

As a consequence of the intense migratory pressure, the crisis led to profound societal and political conflicts, as migration became a highly polarising issue, influencing party politics, policy-making, and public debates. The extent and nature of these conflicts varied across countries, reflecting differences in historical, economic, and political contexts. This divergence highlights the dual nature of immigration, presenting it both as an economic and cultural opportunity and as a security and identity challenge. While some political parties pursued policies of openness and humanitarian support, others prioritised border protection and national sovereignty, contributing to a fragmented European response.

To analyse political and social conflicts, cleavage theories serve as one of the most prominent theoretical frameworks. The traditional approach (e.g. Lipset & Rokkan, 1967) argues that party choice and party strategies are primarily shaped by socio-demographic factors, which determine voters' position on public policy issues ('bottom up' causality direction). In contrast, the revisionist perspective (e.g. Lijphart, 1984) suggests that political parties shape voters' value preferences through their strategies, and these value preferences influence both party affiliation and positions on public policy issues ('top-down' causality direction). In parallel, the new revisionist approach extends the framework of cleavage theories by highlighting the significance of the normative level, which includes both normative identities and value preferences. According to the theorists of this perspective, the normative level serves as a mediating level between voters' socio-demographic factors and political parties' strategies (Bartolini & Mair, 1990; Deegan-Krause, 2009).

As the migration-related political conflict has intensified and persisted, it is crucial to examine whether the conflicts arising from the migration crisis can be classified as a

cleavage-level conflict. If this hypothesis is confirmed, which existing patterns of political and social divisions align with it? Conversely, if the conflict cannot be qualified as a cleavage-level conflict, the study aims to identify alternative forms of political and social conflict to understand better how migration-related conflicts interact with existing social and institutional structures.

To address these questions, the research employs a three-level analytical model, examining the voter, normative, and party levels. The study focuses on Hungary, while Austria serves as a reference country for comparative purposes. In terms of methodological aspects, the research analyses political parties' position toward immigration based on their party manifestos (Manifesto Project Database - MPD) and rhetoric (Chapel Hill Expert Survey – CHES) by crosstabulation and correlation analysis. The model employs voter-level analysis using European Social Survey (ESS) data and multi-level regression analysis to examine attitudes toward migration. Because of the data availability, the time frame varies by level of analysis: party-level analysis covers the period from 2014 to 2018, capturing shifts in party positions before and after the migration crisis, while voter-level analysis examines the period between 2002 and 2018 to assess long-term attitudinal changes. Thus, the analysis can be classified as a time-series cross-sectional (TSCS; Gerring, 2004).

The analysis begins with an empirical overview of the 2015 European migration crisis, using statistical data to illustrate the scale and the impact of the crisis. Then, the research focuses on cleavage theories, outlining the traditional, the revisionist and the new revisionist perspectives, followed by an examination of cleavages in Austria and Hungary. Subsequently, the study investigates the country-specific impact of immigration and the public perceptions of immigration. Finally, the analysis focuses on political parties' positions and voters' attitudes toward immigration, considering their ideological alignment. The research seeks to contribute to the broader understanding of migration-related conflicts and their potential role in shaping contemporary political conflicts.

1 THE 2015 MIGRATION WAVE

The 2015 migrant wave marked a defining moment for Europe, challenging its political, social, and humanitarian frameworks. Understanding the magnitude of the phenomenon, it necessitates an initial exploration through a historical and descriptive lens, highlighting the complex, often dual-edged nature of migration. This chapter assumes that the 2015 migration wave evolved into a migration crisis within the EU. During the process, to ensure a common understanding, the initial section of the chapter presents the key terminologies and concepts relating to migration. Building on this foundation, the research employs time-series comparative statistical analyses to measure the characteristics of the crisis and explore its broader dynamics.

1.1 The Relevance of Migration

Migration has been a permanent feature of human history. Since prehistoric times, both tribes and other forms of communities, even individuals, have been migrating. In accordance with the current state of scientific knowledge, to seek better living conditions, humanity conquered Africa and migrated to Australia, Asia and Europe, thus populating the Earth after the rise of Homo sapiens. From 728 BC, the expansion of Greek city-states, which lasted for nearly 250 years, also involved migration. During this period, Greek culture, economic and commercial practices expanded throughout the Mediterranean. The Roman Empire also experienced several waves of immigration and emigration. In historical terms, the empire expanded steadily, which also involved the expansion of Roman citizens and their culture. Furthermore, the infrastructural advancements associated with the Roman culture resulted in improved economic conditions, which attracted populations from rural areas and beyond; leading to a significant level of urbanisation. However, both the colonising Greeks and the conquering Romans were perceived as invaders from the perspective of the native populations, raising security concerns among them. During the 4th and 5th centuries, various nomadic groups, such as the Goths, Vandals, and later the Huns, reached the external border of the Roman Empire, threatening the emperor and his legacy with regular raids.

As expansions of the Vikings from the north, the Hungarians from the east and the Arabs from the south, the ethnic composition of Europe had changed significantly by the 10th century. One illustrative example of the transformation is the establishment of the

Kingdom of Hungary. After centuries of prosperity, the Hungarian Kingdom suffered significant losses as a result of wars. For example, the Mongol invasion (1241-42) resulted in the death of approximately half of the ethnic Hungarian population (Katona, 1981). To supplement the remained population and labour force, several ethnic groups were settled and immigrated into the Hungarian Kingdom. On the one hand, the influx boosted the reconstruction activity, but on the other hand, it altered the demographic conditions in the region, reducing the proportion of Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. Over the centuries, the proportions of ethnic groups in the population continued to change, leading to political, social and ethnic conflicts in the region.

In addition to the aforementioned examples, masses of people were forced to leave their homeland because of environmental disasters, epidemics, war conflicts or other external factors as well. As the former president of the American Historical Association (AHA), David Herlihy (1997) elaborated in his book *'The Black Death and the Transformation of the West'*, people were forced to displace their residents during the Black Death in Florence: it was depopulated; the wealthy members of the society emigrated to rural estates, the plebs sought shelter in deserted places; and the social structures had collapsed. Moving forward in the historical scale, during the Second World War, ten thousand of Polish soldier and citizen escaped to Hungary and Romania because Poland was occupied in 1938 by the Nazi and Soviet armies. The Hungarian population and the government welcomed the refugees, providing them shelter and supporting their social needs. Despite the initial hospitality, the situation worsened because of the rising German influence, especially following the German occupation of Hungary in 1944 (Kelemen and Zessin-Jurek, 2022). Furthermore, environmental disasters such as the Irish Potato Famine could serve as an illustrative historical example of migration. In the middle of the 19th century, approximately a quarter of the Irish population died or emigrated because a potato blight, *Phytophthora infestans*, devastated Ireland's primary food source, the potato. The famine drastically reduced the population and led to an immigration wave into the USA, Canada, Great Britain and Australia (Gráda, 1985; Kinealy, 1994; Landy-Gyebnár, 2024).

In the modern 21st-century European history, labour migration became general: among others, labour forces from Eastern European member states migrate to Western and Southern European countries to secure their financial needs. Furthermore, in 1987, the European Economic Community (EEC, now the European Union, EU) introduced an educational exchange programme, called Erasmus. As a result of the initiative, more than

13 million students have had the opportunity to move temporarily to study in another member state. The aim of the program is not only to share scientific knowledge, but also to spread cultural knowledge and a common European identity.

As illustrated, migration is indeed a phenomenon that has accompanied human history throughout. This evidence provides a foundation for theorists who argue for the relevance of historical perspectives and interpret migration within a historical framework. As novel representative of historical narrative, McNeill and Adams (1978) stress the fundamental historical role of migration as part of human existence '*from the remote past to the present and on into the future*' (King, 2012: 4). Migration is derived by the human nature to seek for better living conditions: searching for food, pasture, resources to fulfil the human needs. As the cited examples show, migration can be cooperative, encompassing travelling and exploring (e.g. Erasmus Program), and it can be involuntary due to external pressures (e.g. forced displacement). In recent decades, as an aftermath of globalisation and the robust development of telecommunication technologies, a new wave of migration emerged. Humanity entered an era where everyone seems to be '*on the move*' (Cresswell, 2006), and social structures have been complemented by another factor: mobility (Urry, 2007). These concepts correspond to the theory of Stephen Castles and Mark Miller (2009: 10) who argue that we live in the '*Age of Migration*', in a period which international migration has accelerated, feminised, diversified and became not only globalised but also significantly politicised.¹

Despite its significance, migration does not have a universally accepted theory. As King noted, the theoretical understanding of migration is weak, primarily because migration itself is a highly diverse and multifaceted phenomenon that cannot be adequately explained by a single theory. The various interpretations and the multitude of migration types are so extensive that '*there is insufficient space*' (2012: 11) to present the wide range of theoretical perspectives in detail, and the existing theoretical frameworks often fail to connect with one another due to their diversity. Sándor Gallai (2020) reached a similar conclusion during his research relating the theoretical approaches to migration. However, as Gallai noted, most theories aim to find and explain the leading causes and the conditions of migration. While some theories analyse migration on a macro level (e.g.

¹ The antithesis of '*Age of Migration*' is known as '*immobility paradox*' which was defined – among others - by Gunnar Malmberg (1997: 21-22). The theory focuses attention on the majority of people who do not migrate, although according to the '*push*' and '*pull*' factors of economic models, such as unemployment rate and low-level of income, they should be stimulated to migrate.

dual market theory (Piore, 1979), neoclassical macro theory (Dustmann et al, 2003), world system theory (Wallerstein, 2011), others explain it on micro-level (e.g. human capital theory (Delbecq – Waldorf, 2010)), behavioural model (Epstein and Gang, 2004) or on meso-level (e.g. the pull-push theory (Fussel, 2012)). As King argued, despite the incoherency of migration theories, examining migration is crucial because it has the potential to reshape societies, making them more diverse and complex. However, changes to well-known and generally accepted social structures can lead to conflicting interests and values. As King argued, migration creates '*sharp divisions*' within the host society because one half of the host society favours migration, while the other half opposes it. In this sense, migration can be interpreted as a phenomenon which is able to enhance cultural diversity, stimulate and develop economic life and offer a solution for demographic crisis. For example, as Boubtane and Dumont (2013) highlight, most of the younger immigrants in the European Union were better educated than nearing retirement natives before 2014. As a result, the authors argued that promoting migration was crucial to boost the working-age population, thus the economic performance. Additionally, migrants were able to contribute to labour-market flexibility and technological progress and fill niches in fast-growing and declining economic sectors. In this sense, migration contributes to a better cultural, economic, and social life in general for the receiving country; as a result, a higher level of immigration is able to lead to a higher degree of prosperity.

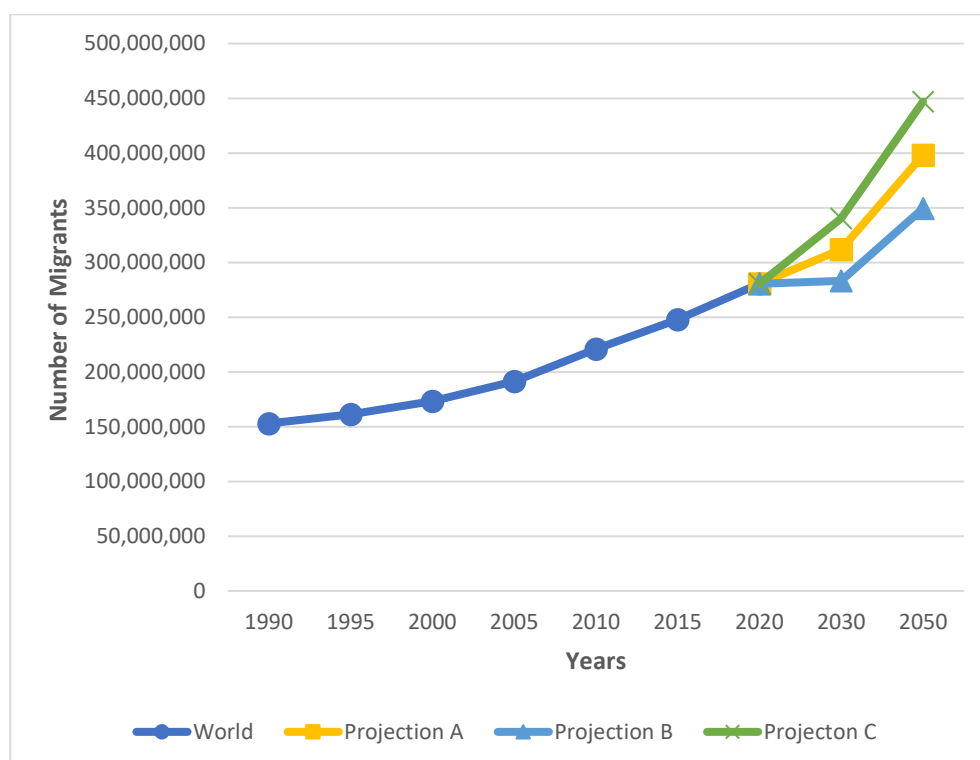
On the other hand, migration is seen as a security challenge as well: it is able to threaten the cultural homogeneity, the traditions, and the social welfare system of the receiving country. Sceptical voices stress that most of the immigrants are economic immigrants and not refugees in the world, who are not persecuted because of their identity – as a result, they do not need protection. Moreover, economic immigrants often have a lower level of educational attainment, which may limit their ability to perform high-value-added work. Besides, because of their lower level of education, most of the immigrants live unemployed in the society and rely on the social welfare system. However, when immigrants take jobs, they can take the jobs away from the national population, potentially leading to economic hardship for some members of the nation (e.g. von Rosen, 2019).

As the evidence presented demonstrates, migration has been a significant factor for humanity not only in the past but also in the present. It appears logical that it will continue to play a crucial role in the future in the society. To determine its future relevance, various research networks have conducted projections. As Sander, Abel and Riosmena (2013)

presented in their paper, *'The future of international migration: Developing expert-based assumptions for global population projections'*, immigration will still be a relevant factor in the future. The research was designed to test two different *'what-if'* scenarios. The scenario *'Rise of the East'* (RE) posits the assumption that economic stagnation in Europe and North America will lead to restrictive migration policies. Consequently, South and Southeast Asia will become increasingly attractive destinations, resulting in a shift in global migration patterns. The *'Intensifying Global Competition'* (IGC) scenario assumes dynamic economic and social development, which will intensify the competition, including governments and businesses, for skilled labour and natural resources. The growth of the global economy in developing countries will contribute to increased international mobility. The projection calculates with factors of economic development (1), climate change (2), demographic factors (3), the potential cost of future migration (4) and possible migration policies (5). While the RE scenario implies approximately 30 million migrants globally every 5 years by 2060, the IGC projects 50 million. Both models show that the societies most affected by immigration will be North Africa, West Asia, and Europe. In this sense, while the former estimates 210 million migrants globally by 2060, the latter projects 350 million.

Besides the economic-based forecast, a study conducted by the Institute for Economics & Peace (2020), an international think tank, indicates that if environmental disasters occur with the same frequency as in recent decades, the number of people forcibly displaced from their homes could exceed 1.2 billion by 2050. According to the forecast, future migration will be primarily driven by environmental change, as well as interstate and intra-state armed conflicts. The countries most affected may be India, Pakistan, Chad, Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. According to the projection, half of the world's population will experience extreme water stress, and approximately 3.5 billion people might suffer from food insecurity, which will increase the likelihood of civil unrest and mass displacements. Besides, the United Nations (UN IOM, 2024a) has also forecast that there could be between 25 million and one billion migrants by 2050, while the most moderate estimates indicate that there will be 200 million migrants by 2050 (Bassetti, 2019). In addition to the aforementioned projections, the United Nations (UN IOM, 2024a) has also forecast that there could be between 25 million and one billion migrants by 2050, while the most moderate estimates indicate that there will be 200 million migrants by 2050 (Bassetti, 2019).

Figure 1. Global migration trends and future projections (1990–2050)



Source: Own calculations and illustration based on Buxton's Methodology (2008); UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2024); *International Migrant Stock*; Sander, Abel and Riosmena (2013); Bassetti (2019); Institute for Economics & Peace (2020).

Based on the UN database, the research also carried out its own projections for the years 2030 and 2050 to supplement the presented projections and contribute to estimating the relevance of migration for the future. To comprehend trends and tendencies in percentage change over time, linear regression analysis is employed (Buxton, 2008). Simple linear regression is a straightforward tool for predicting quantitative outcomes Y on the basis of a single predictor variable X . The equation for simple linear regression is the following: $y = \beta^0 + \beta^1 x$, where y refers to the predicted value of the dependent variable, which is the change of percentage in the current case. The X is the independent variable, which refers to time (years). The slope of the line is indicated by $\beta^1 x$. Additionally, β^0 represents the y-intercept, in other words, the point where the value of y and x is zero. By analysing trends and tendencies (slope and Beta coefficient), the model is also able to predict possible future values. Based on the database, the linear regression model predicts that there will be an estimated 311 million migrants in the world by 2030 (with a range of 283-340 million) and 398 million migrants by 2050 (with a range of 349-446 million).

Regardless of which projection is given greater credence, the results should be interpreted with reservations. It is evident that the range of unknown variables in such an

analysis is wide. Furthermore, each analysis focuses on different explanatory aspects. However, whether economic (Sander et al, 2013) or environmental (IEP, 2020) factors are taken into account, or even migration data from the past 30 years (Figure 1), one conclusion can be drawn: as the projections indicate, migration will remain a determining factor in the future.

Based on the presented insights, it is evident that migration is a crucial aspect of human societies. Drawing upon the outlined facts and theories, it becomes apparent that migration is a double-edged phenomenon (1). On the one hand, it holds the potential to foster prosperity; on the other hand, it poses a security challenge. Furthermore, the results of the projection indicate that migration will remain a key factor for human society in the future, which assumes that the political weight of the topic will persist as a stable and crucial factor (2). Therefore, both society and the political sphere have to reflect on this phenomenon, which poses an interesting research issue for political science (3). However, the discussed aspects lead to the following question: What does the migration wave of 2015 signify? What distinguishes the year of migration from others? Why is it regarded as a relevant issue for political science? Before delving into such an analysis to find answers to these questions, it is essential to grasp the fundamental definitions relating to migration. To develop a common understanding, the following segment of the analysis elucidates the key terminology associated with migration.

1.2 Key Conceptual Elements of Migration²

The concept of '*migrant*' is an umbrella term which is not universally defined under international laws. According to the International Organization for Migration (UN IMO, 2023), a migrant is generally considered to be a person who moves from his or her habitual place of residence, whether temporarily or permanently, within a particular state or across international borders, for various reasons. As the term migrant refers to the movement of people between their place of residence and their destination, the literature distinguishes between the terms '*immigrant*' and '*emigrant*'.

The United Nations (UN) terminology base defines immigrants from the perspective of the destination country. In this sense, the term immigrant is conceptualized as a person who moves to a country other than his or her country of origin or usual residence - making the

² The presented terminology includes relevant concepts to the research. Further concepts and definitions are introduced and explained in the respective sections where they are applied. All terms can be found on the International Organization for Migration (IOM) website (<https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>).

destination country his or her new usual residence. The definition distinguishes between short-term and long-term immigrants. The '*short-term immigrant*' refers to individuals who relocate for recreational, private or professional purposes. In contrast, the concept of '*long-term immigrant*' refers to individuals who stay in the destination country for at least 12 months. From the point of the destination country, the act of moving to a country other than the individual's country of origin is referred to as immigration, and the destination country becomes the immigrant's new country of residence. The term '*immigration*' refers to the act of immigrants moving into another country. The definition of '*emigrant*' can be simply derived from the term immigrant. In this sense, an emigrant is a person who moves from her or his country of origin or usual residence to another foreign country.

In addition to the distinction of immigration and emigration, migration can be classified as either '*internal*' or '*international*'. Internal migration, also known as domestic migration, and it occurs when people migrate within a particular country and establish a new temporary or permanent residence in their country (Lee et al, 2015). In contrast, international migration describes the phenomenon of people moving from their original country of residence to a country of which they are not nationals.

Considering the reasons for migration, it can be explained by several factors, including economic, social, political, environmental and - obviously – personal reasons. In this sense, migration can be '*voluntary*', such as in the case of economic and labour migration, or '*involuntary*', when people are forced to leave their residence due to conflict, persecution, natural disasters or other external factors. The latter term is related to the concept of '*refugee*'. According to the Geneva Refugee Convention (UN General Assembly, 1951), refugee refers to an individual who is outside their country of origin due to a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, affiliation to a particular social group or political conviction and who is not able or is unwilling to avail the protection of their country. Otherwise, a refugee may be a person without citizenship who, as a consequence of the circumstances mentioned above, is outside the borders of their country of origin and is unable or unwilling to return to their place of origin due to such fear. Armed conflicts, lack of stable statehood, overpopulation, environmental impacts, climate change, economic insecurity, technological development or any other form of duress able to affect migratory movements.

Depending on the number of immigrants, a distinction can be made between '*individual*' and '*mass*' migration. Individual (or small-scale) migration involves independent border crossings for the purposes of tourism, employment or student

exchange programs. In contrast, mass migration refers to large groups of individuals from one or more geographical areas (such as countries) crossing an inland or external border. It is essential to underline that mass migration is generally a consequence of forced, involuntary migration such as military conflicts (i.e. interstate wars, civil wars), human disasters (i.e. famine, deportation, genocide) or other economic factors (i.e. shortage, national bankruptcy, hyperinflation). Mass migration can also be managed by illegal groups engaged in human trafficking and by a high level of illegal crossings, usually posing a security challenge to the country of destination.

From the point of legal context, an alternative categorisation may be implemented. Focusing on the legality of migration, the act of '*regular*' and '*irregular*' forms is identified. The UN defines irregular migrants as undocumented persons who do not meet '*the requirements established by the country of destination to enter, stay or exercise an economic activity*' (UN ILO, 1999). It is crucial to note that, there is a terminological debate relating to terms of regular and irregular migration. Certain politicians and representatives of governmental or non-governmental organisations - including the UN and certain members of the European Parliament - argue against the usage of the term '*illegal*'. According to the argumentation, '*illegal*' has a negative connotation, which carries a prejudice against immigrants. To preclude and minimise prejudice, opponents of '*illegal*' term usage suggest using the term '*irregular*' or '*undocumented*' migrants as the proper word choice. However, legal documents and authorities use both the terminology pairs of '*illegal-legal*' and '*irregular-regular*'—often interchangeably. In certain cases, determining the proper terminology falls exclusively within the academic field of law—for example, in cases of illegal border-crossing (see Frontex)—making it reasonable and logical to apply the terminology of the law. Nevertheless, in the political sphere, where terms such as '*undocumented*' and '*illegal*' immigration are frequently referred to as '*irregular*,' the latter term has become much more widely accepted. In parallel, the term '*regular migrant*' refers to individuals who have moved from one country to another, claimed asylum and have fulfilled the necessary requirements of the destination country, such as visas, permits and other documents, to obtain permission to reside, work or study. In the subsequent stages of the research, to ensure the preservation of precise terminological content, the applied source determines whether the '*legal-illegal*' or the '*regular-irregular*' pairing is used.

Based on the presented dimensions and attributes, the following table summarises the potential forms of categorisation:

Table 1. Forms of Migration

Dimension		Attributes	
1.	Spatial	National	International
2.	Orientalional	Immigration	Emigration
3.	Temporal	Short-term	Long-term
4.	Motivational	Voluntary	Involuntary
5.	Extent	Individual	Mass
6.	Juridical	Regular	Irregular

The analysis of the terms of migration has led to the confirmation of the typologies of migration proposed by Cohen (1996) and King (2002; 2012). As they noted, migration can be expressed and qualified in dualities. Based on their argumentation, migration can, among other things, be internal or international, temporary or permanent, regular or irregular, voluntary or forced. These terms are useful for categorising migration in general. Nevertheless, in certain instances, numerous migrants do not neatly align with these forms of categorisation. For instance, guest workers reside in a host country for a limited time before returning to their place of origin (Castles et al. 1984). Additionally, irregular migrants may be regularised (Fakiolas, 2003).

Taking these limitations into account, and in the context of the typology presented (Table 1), the research assumes that the migration wave of 2015

- can be described as an immigration wave from the point of the European destination countries (1),
- can be classified as international, as the majority of immigrants fled into the European Union from countries outside Europe (2),
- can be qualified as partly involuntary, as the majority of immigrants came from countries or regions affected by military conflicts or other political instability (3),
- can be defined as mass migration, given the influx of refugees in substantial numbers rather than as individuals or small groups (4),

- can be characterised as a long-term (lasting more than 12 months) process (5),
- can be identified as a migration predominantly characterised by irregular patterns (6).

In the subsequent section, the research endeavours to find answers to the formulated questions, as well as to the hypotheses related to the migration of 2015. In the pursuit of elucidating this matter, the analysis avails itself of the rich reservoirs of statistical data provided by esteemed entities such as the United Nations, Frontex, Eurostat and national statistical offices. By drawing upon these reputable sources, the investigation endeavours to forge a comprehensive understanding rooted in empirical evidence, thereby fostering a scholarly discourse informed by authoritative data. The research employs both descriptive and trend-based comparative analysis.

1.3 Migration Wave of 2015

In 2015, a significant migration tension reached the European Union. During this year, approximately 4.7 million people immigrated to one of the 28 EU Member states. More than half of the arrivals were citizens of a non-EU countries, and approximately 19,000 were classified as '*stateless*' migrants, lacking any recognised citizenship or legal status in any country (Pew Research Centre, 2016). However, merely presenting raw data without contextualization may obscure the real significance of the mass influx. As an illustrative instance, 10 immigrated individuals may seem significant in a population of 20 (50%). However, in a population of 1,000 individuals, they may seem less significant (1%). Therefore, evaluating the relevance and the impact of the 2015 immigration wave, the analysis adopts time-series and comparative methodological frameworks. For this reason, the current section of the analysis has primarily adopted the UN database, because of its international recognition and the availability of historical datasets for the period from 1960 to 2022.

However, as Russell King (2012: 6-7) highlights in his widely cited publication, '*Theories and Typologies of Migration: An Overview and A Primer*', there are certain methodological drawbacks that must be considered regarding the statistical data on migration. On the one hand, the number of migrants is generally based on estimations. There is no indisputable methodology which is able to calculate the exact number of migrants in the world. Naturally, the question arises as to how it is possible that we cannot

measure a crucial factor such as the number of migrants. The answer, as is often the case, can be simple: in the context of migration, there are an exceptionally high number of unknown factors (e.g. unrecorded illegal border crossings), and therefore statistical calculations of the numbers of migrants can only be carried out based on widely accepted estimations and criteria. As another problematic aspect, countries' administrative practices and legal frameworks often differ in how to define who is a migrant. As King argues, the issue of the so-called '*second generation*' could serve as a remarkable example to illustrate the problem. In this case, people who were born in the host country can be classified as non-citizens and identified as '*foreign*' or '*immigrant*' during the estimation, even if they have not immigrated into the country. According to King, the second weakness in these methodologies is the category of '*unknown*', which comprehend the '*undocumented*', '*irregular*' immigrants, who are sometimes called '*illegal immigrants*'. As King highlights, the number of irregular immigrants is skyrocketing, and the growing rate of this group is higher than in the case of legal immigrants. Based on this chain of ideas, the reason for growth can be explained by legal factors, because undocumented migrants are sometimes preferred more than immigrants from certain countries.

To enhance the reliability of the examination, it is recommended to carry out some preliminary calculations before starting the analysis. The UN dataset refers to the EU unit as the value of the 27 EU Member States and does not reflect the changes in the EU population. Using this value in calculations could lead to misleading results, because the EU did not always consist of 27 Member States. To avoid deceptive results, the analysis introduces a new unit for the EU that reflects its changing membership and population due to enlargements and Brexit.

As a starting point, it is proposed that the measure of the number of migrants be interpreted. Using the UN terminology base, the international immigrant stock (IMS) seems to be an appropriate tool to express the number of migrants within a given society. The term refers to the estimated total number of international migrants present in a given country at a particular point in time (UN DESA, 2012). It is crucial to underline that, according to the UN Recommendation on Statistics of International Migration (1998), which is accepted by the measurement of the international migrant stock, the term of international migrant is defined as '*any person who changes his or her country of usual residence*' (UN DESA 2012: 2-3). In this sense, temporary travels abroad for personal reasons, '*purposes of recreation, holiday, business, medical treatment or religious reasons do not entail ... a change of usual residence*' (UN DESA, 2012: 2-3). The indicator collects

data on (1) persons who have lived for at least 12 months in a foreign country (so-called foreign-born), and (2) the number of persons whose nationality is different from the country where they live (known as foreigners). In certain cases, the term '*second-generation immigrants*' is used to refer to the children of immigrants who are also counted as foreigners, while the foreign-born individuals are not. The data are collected through national statistics, population censuses, population registers, and nationally representative surveys. To estimate the growth rate between two data points (years), the UN Methodological Report calculates as follows:

$$r = \ln(M1/M0) / (t1 - t0)$$

where M0 represents the migrant stock in year 0 and M1 represents the number of migrants in year 1. The variables t1 and t0 denote the analysed year (1) and the previous year (0), respectively. To address missing data, alternative calculations are used, such as adjusting the total migrant stock based on the estimated size of the total population. Additionally, the growth rate of migrants by sex is determined by the estimated sex change in the total population. If empirical data are unavailable for a certain period, the growth rate is assumed to remain constant based on the available adjacent time periods.

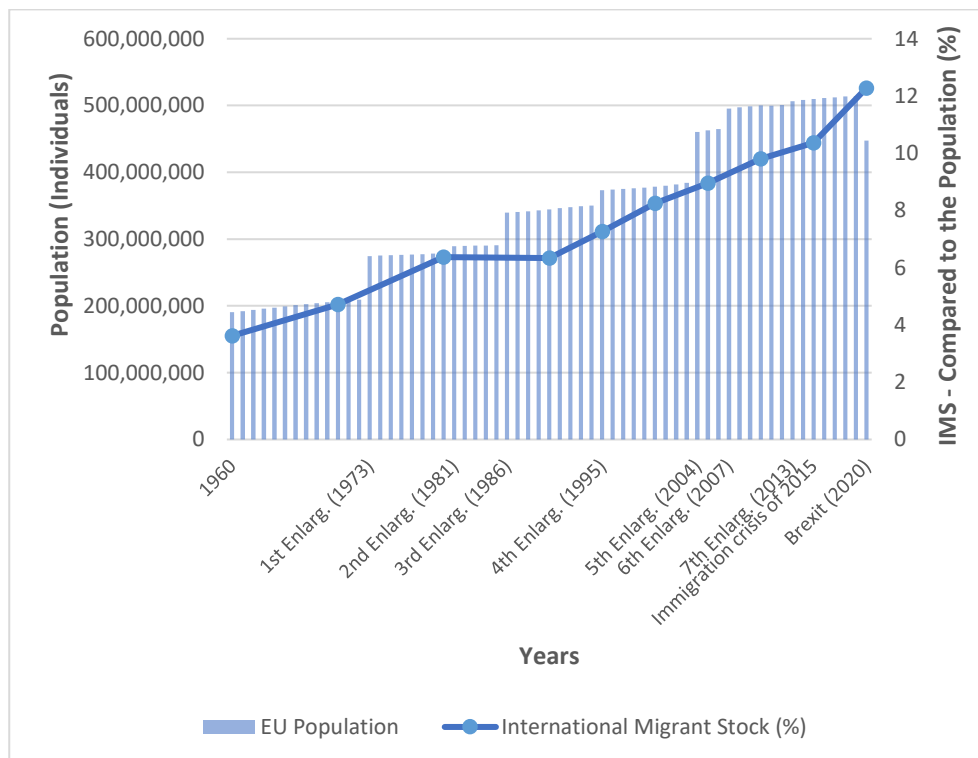
To demonstrate the significance of the change in the migrant population in the EU, the analysis compares the number of international migrants with the historical EU population (Figure 2). According to the United Nations database, the number of international migrants within the European Union has steadily increased since its establishment. In the early 1960s, when the EU population (the Six Founders, European Coal and Steel Community, ESCS) was over 190 million, the number of international immigrants reached almost 7 million, which was approximately equal to 3.5% of the EU population. The rate of international migrants in the EU has increased:

- to 4,8% in the 1970s (EU population: 206 million, IMS: 9.75 million),
- to 6,3% in the 1980s (EU population: 278 million, IMS: 17.7 million),
- to 6,3% in the 1990s (EU population: 344 million, IMS: 21.8 million),
- to 8.3% in the 2000s (EU population: 378 million, IMS: 31.2 million),
- to 9.8% in the 2010s (EU population: 500 million, IMS: 49 million),
- and to 12.3% in the 2020s (EU population: 447 million, IMS: 54.9 million).

By 2020, the number of migrants in the EU was nearly equivalent to the population of Italy (approx. 59.5 million), which is the third most populous country in the

Community. Between 1960 and 2020, the value of the stock tripled, indicating the growing significance of the migrant population in the EU. The data shows that by 2020, every fifth migrant in the world lived in the EU. After Brexit (2020), the population of the EU decreased by 67 million. In parallel, the number of immigrants was 9.3 million in the UK. However, in relative terms, Brexit does not affect significantly to the share of international migrants in the EU population, which would be approximately 12.5% without Brexit (EU population: 514.5 million, IMS: 64.3 million). The population of migrants sharply increased between 2010 and 2015 (+3.8 million, +7.7% growth compared to 2010) and between 2015 and 2020 (+2.1 million, +4% increase from 2015).

Figure 2. Trends in international migrant stock and EU population growth (1960–2020), highlighting key events such as enlargements and Brexit

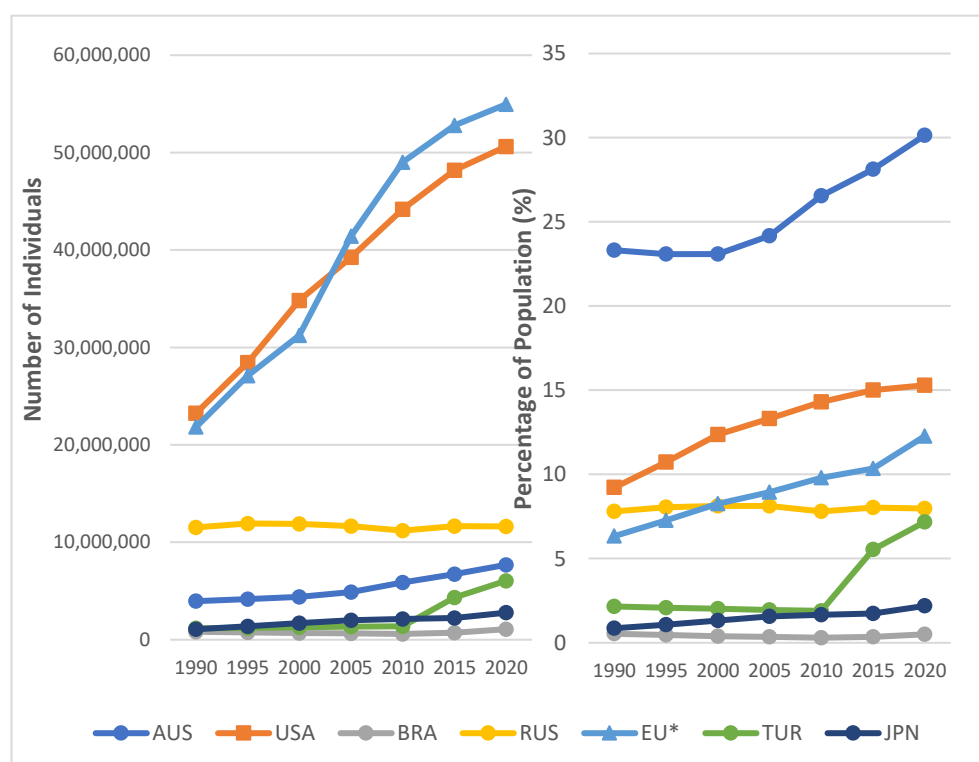


Source: Own calculations based on UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2024; *Population, International Migrant Stock*).

The change can be captured through an international comprehensive analysis as well (Figure 3). According to the United Nations, the level of IMS also increased gradually in the US, reaching more than 50 million by 2020, which equals 14.5% of the total US population. It is an indisputable fact that the proportion of international migrants in the population was higher in the US than in the EU (12.3% in 2020). However, a more striking increase can be observed in the EU, in both absolute and relative terms. During the five-

year period between 2015 and 2020, the number of international immigrants rose by 10 million in the EU, which shows a 22% rise since 2015. In contrast, in the US, a 2.5 million rise can be observed in IMS, representing only a modest growth of 5%. Compared to this, the international migrant population in the Russian Federation and Japan remained relatively stable, whereas Brazil experienced a gradual decline. Alongside the EU and the US, both Australia and Turkey have shown an upward trend in IMS. The analysis indicates that the EU has emerged as the primary recipient of refugees on a global scale. In absolute terms, the EU took the leading position from the USA between 2000 and 2005. Meanwhile, the EU and the USA have by far higher IMS compared to the other analysed countries, but Australia has experienced the most substantial growth rate since 2005 (30%). Furthermore, the ratio of refugees to the population is also rising in Turkey, where the peak can be observed between 2010 and 2015, but the curve began to flatten from 2015, and the rate of increase fell behind the EU rate.

Figure 3. Trends in international migrant stock by country/region (1990–2020)



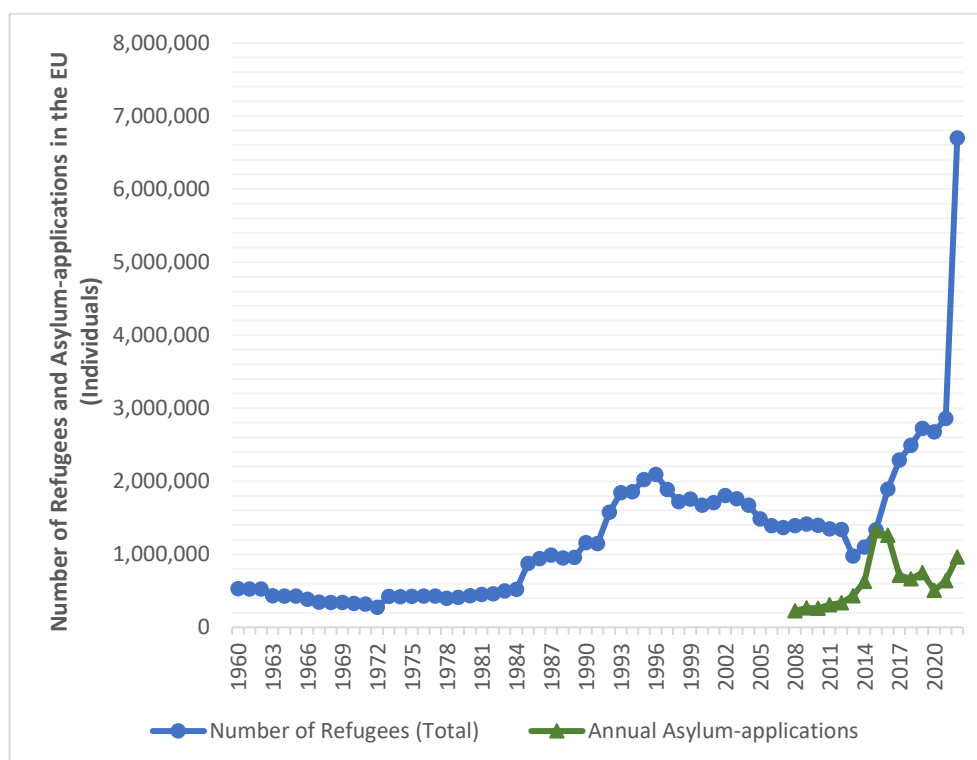
Source: Own illustration based on UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2024; *Population, International Migrant Stock*).

As Figures 2 and 3 show, the number and the rate of international migrants have been growing to varying degrees over the past 60 years. It can be observed that the increase of IMS within the EU is remarkable both from a historical perspective and in terms of international comparison. Nonetheless, it is important to note that refugees are also

considered international migrants according to the UN terminology base. Because of their special status under international law, both national and international entities, including agencies, also monitor the presence of refugees in the world separately.

A significant increase can also be observed in the number of refugees in the EU (Figure 4). From the 1960s to the mid-1980s, the average number of refugees was approximately 400,000. Since 1985, the refugee population has been on the rise, reaching more than 2 million by 1995. It seems reasonable to assume that the growth can be explained by the war in Yugoslavia between 1991 and 1995 and by the democratic regime changes in Central and Eastern European countries. Since the mid-1990s, there has been a gradual decline, decreasing to less than one million by 2013. The significant change may be attributed to various factors. Among others, the end of the war in Yugoslavia and the political and economic stabilisation of the new democracies on the continent, as well as the enlargement of the EU (see: enlargements in 2004, 2007 and 2013) have strengthened the stability of the European continent. Furthermore, several European countries that were previously under Soviet influence have joined the European Union and become members of the '*club of democracies*'. However, the refugee population has experienced renewed growth due to political and social instability in Africa and Western Asia. Conflicts, such as the South Sudan Civil War (2013-2018), the Yemen Civil War (2014-present) and the Boko Haram Insurgency (2009-present) have also contributed to the gradual increase in their numbers. In 2022, the rise sharply spiked following the Russian invasion of Ukraine (2014-present). However, despite the multiple factors, the number of refugees exceeded 1% of the EU population only in 2022. This indicates that the relative weight of the refugee communities in the EU is extremely low.

Figure 4. Trends in the total number of refugees and annual asylum applications in the EU (2008-2022)



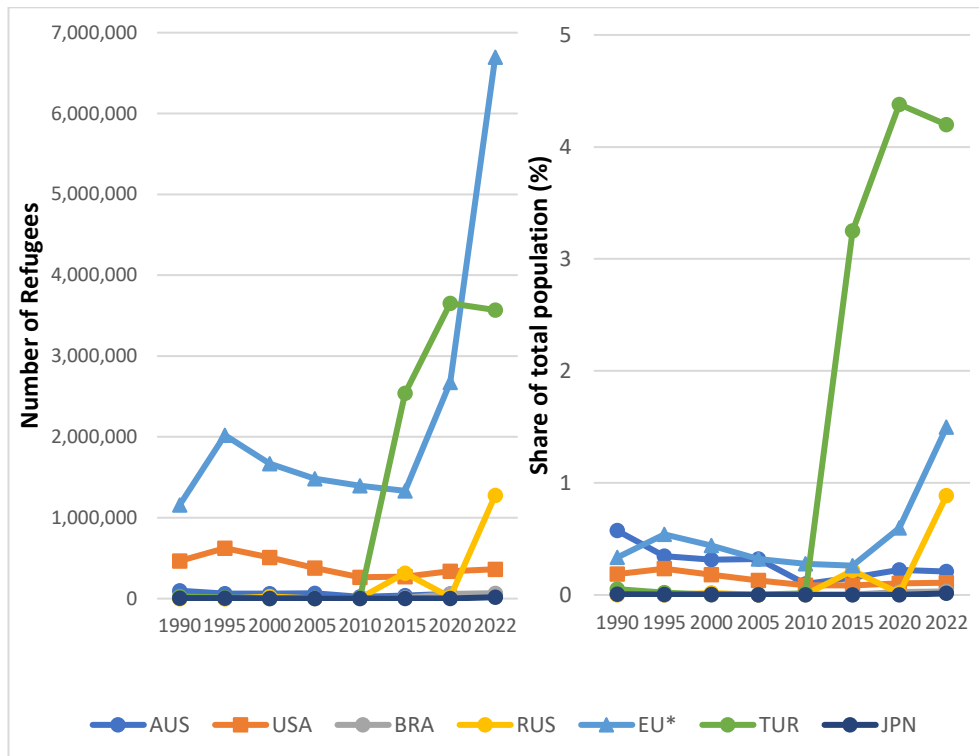
Source: Own illustration based on UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2024; *refugees*, including people in refugee-like situation) and Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat, 2025; *migr_asyappctza*).

Apart from international migrant stock and the number of refugees, the volume of asylum seekers could be a further valuable indicator to measure the relevance of the 2015 migration. Refugees are immigrants whose application for asylum has been approved. In this sense, the number of asylum applications shows the potential future growth of the number of refugees. To demonstrate the tendency, the research applied the Eurostat database (2025; *migr_asyappctza*). Because the data are recorded on a monthly basis, the values were aggregated into years. Within the dataset, the earliest available year was 2008, when the number of asylum-seekers was slightly over 225,000. To demonstrate tendencies, the current descriptive analysis accepts this year as the base year. Generally, it can be stated that the number of asylum applications rose gradually and was over 335,000 by 2012, which shows an average annual increase of 10%. However, the tendency was getting more intensive: the number of applications was more than 431,000 in 2013, indicating an increase of over 100,000 in a single year (+28%). In 2014, approximately 627,000 claims were registered (45% increase compared to 2013), which means that the number of asylum-seekers almost tripled in six years (278% growth

compared to 2008). The growth rate intensified even further, reaching over 1.3 million applications by 2015 - this means that the number of applications has increased by almost six times in less than ten years. A slight decrease was observed in 2016 (to approx. 1.2 million applications), which was followed by a radical drop in 2017 (to slightly over 712,000). From 2017 to 2020, the volume of asylum applications fluctuated between 500,000 and 960,000. As the presented data shows, the number of asylum applications reached an exceptionally high level at its peak in 2015. Nevertheless, similarly to the refugee statistics, the number of asylum-seekers was extremely low compared to the EU population. However, in this case, the proportion of asylum-seekers in the EU population was significantly lower than 1% each year.

By analysing the number of refugees, it can be concluded that the rate of growth of refugees in the EU is unprecedented in the selected countries (Figure 5). Since 2015, the number of refugees in the EU has skyrocketed; thus, the EU has become the primary destination for refugees. The rate of refugees per capita reached 1.5% by 2022, which value is over the average in the case of the analysed countries. In relative population terms, Turkey was the only country with a higher per capita presence of refugees than the EU (over 4%). However, tendencies indicate that the gap between the EU and the selected countries will increase.

Figure 5. Trends in the global refugee population (1990–2022)



Source: Own illustration based on UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2024; *Refugees*, including people in refugee-like situation).

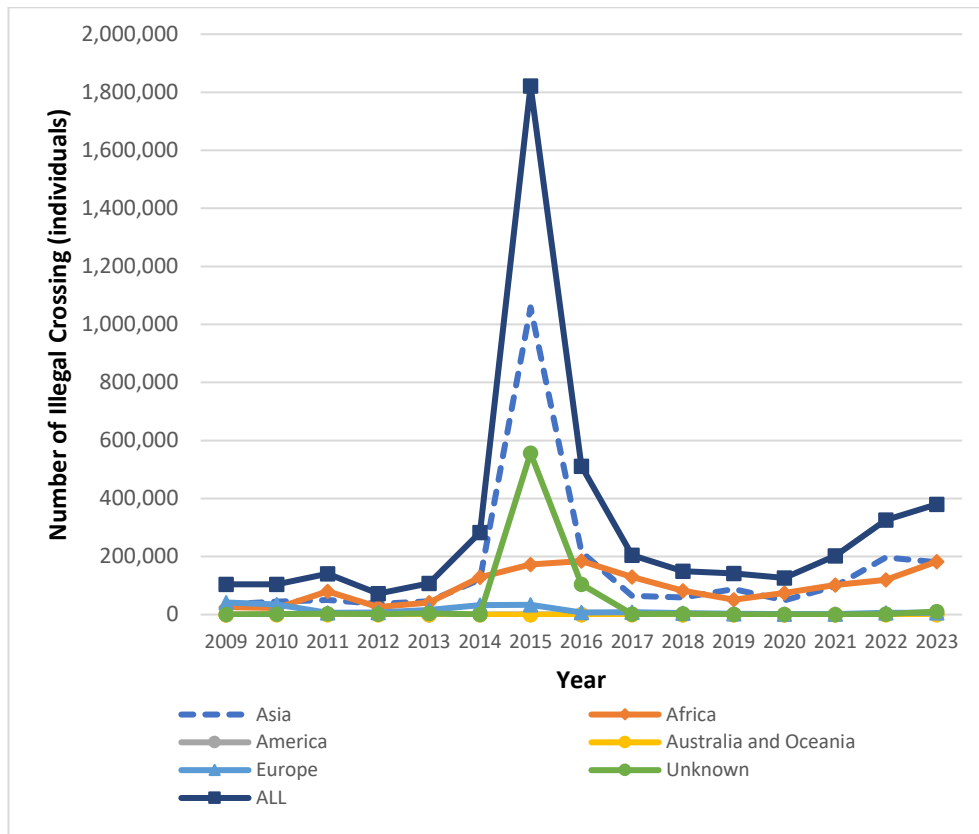
Due to the disparate data processing methodologies which are employed by the selected countries, it is not feasible to make a direct and reliable comparison of the number of asylum-seekers³. For instance, while some countries report only first-time asylum applications (e.g. Russia), other authorities distinguish between first and second asylum applications (e.g. EU), or provide information on the cumulative value of the two types of applications (e.g. Australia). As a result, only historical trends within the EU can be reliably considered when analysing changes in the number of asylum seekers. Nonetheless, the sharp increase in 2015 stands out prominently (see Figure 4).

Besides international migrants, refugees and asylum applicants, a significant number of individuals from outside the EU attempted to enter the EU, bypassing official processes. According to the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex, 2024), approximately 1,800,000 migrants entered the European Union illegally between 2014 and 2015. As Figure 6 shows, an extremely high number of people attempted to immigrate illegally into the European Union that year. To underscore the significance of this measure, the present research utilised data extracted from the Frontex database spanning

³ The difficulties experienced during data collection support King's view (2012: 6-7) on the challenges of comparing migration statistics.

the period from 2009 to 2023. These data are published on a monthly basis; therefore, they have been aggregated into years to provide a transparent and comprehensive analysis. Based on the results, it can be stated that there was a notable spike between 2014 and 2017. The number of illegal crossings has already begun to increase in 2014 (263% increase compared to 2013 and 267% increase compared to the average quantity between 2009 and 2013). The highest number of illegal crossings was registered in 2015, when the aforementioned 1,800,000 million cases were recorded. In the year of 2016, a sharp decrease was observed in the number of illegal crossings compared to 2015 (dropping to only 28% of 2015), and it continued with a moderate reduction in 2017 (reduced to 40% of 2016). From 2018 to 2020, the average number of illegal border crossings remained relatively stable and gradually decreased to a level close to the average of the period between 2009 and 2013. However, since 2020, there has been a gradual increase in the registered cases. Considering the fact that the Frontex database includes only documented cases, it can be assumed that the actual number of illegal crossings into EU may be even higher than is reflected in the official records.

Figure 6. Number of illegal border crossings, EU (2009 - 2023)



Source: Own calculations and illustration based on European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex, 2024).

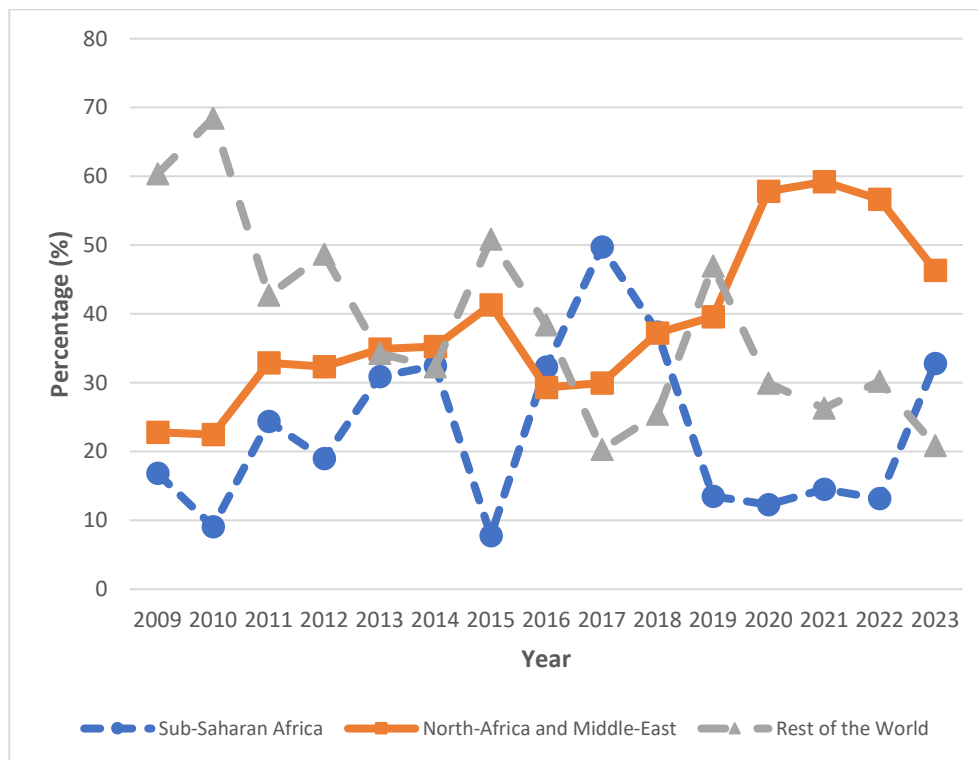
Note: Trends highlight the significance of 2015 immigration wave.

The Frontex database recorded not only the number of immigrants but also the country of their origin. Because the listed countries reached 150, they have been aggregated into world regions to allow for comparison. For this purpose, the analysis used a classification based on the United Nations list of regions. As a result, the data have been categorized into Asia, Africa, America, Australia and Oceania, and Europe. The origin of a certain number of individuals labelled as '*unknown*', '*stateless*', or '*third country*'. They have been aggregated into the category '*unknown*'. As Figure 6 shows, between 2009 and 2013, illegal arrivals came in roughly equal proportions from Africa, Asia, and other non-EU European countries. However, since 2014, there has been a sharp increase in the number of Asian individuals (approximately eight times more than in 2014) and a moderate rise in the number of African nationals (33% increase of 2014). In addition, there had been a significant rise in the number of people with unknown origin in 2015 – approximately 550,000 people attempted to cross the EU border without any documents⁴.

⁴ The statistical data support King's claim about the increasing number of undocumented, unknown, and stateless immigrants.

The number of illegal border crossings fell by 2017 (approximately 200,000 people, dropping to 11% of 2015), but it is important to note that the origin of the illegal immigrants has changed: the African and Asian countries became the primary countries of their origin (Figure 7).

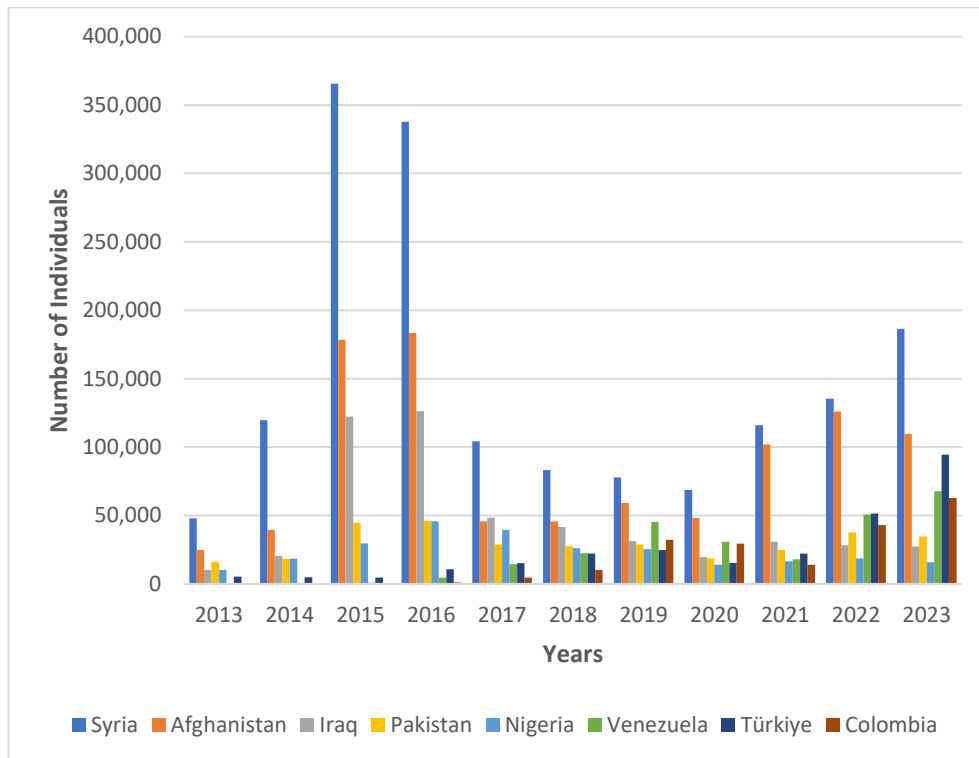
Figure 7. Number of illegal crossings into the EU by highlighted regions (2009 - 2023)



Source: Own calculations and illustration based on European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex, 2024).

The origin of asylum-seekers shows similar patterns. According to the Eurostat dataset (2025; *migr_asysappctza*), the majority of applicants originated from Western Asian or African countries, such as Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Pakistan – all of them were affected by military conflicts. As Figure 8 shows, there was a spike in the number of asylum applicants in 2015 and 2016, when the rate of Syrian and Afghan applicants skyrocketed. However, their numbers have fallen since 2016, although they remain dominant. In recent years, there has been a notable increase in the number of refugees and migrants originating from countries such as Venezuela, Colombia and Turkey. This trend can be attributed to a combination of factors, including political instability (corruption), economic crisis (such as inflation) and other conflicts (cartel conflicts).

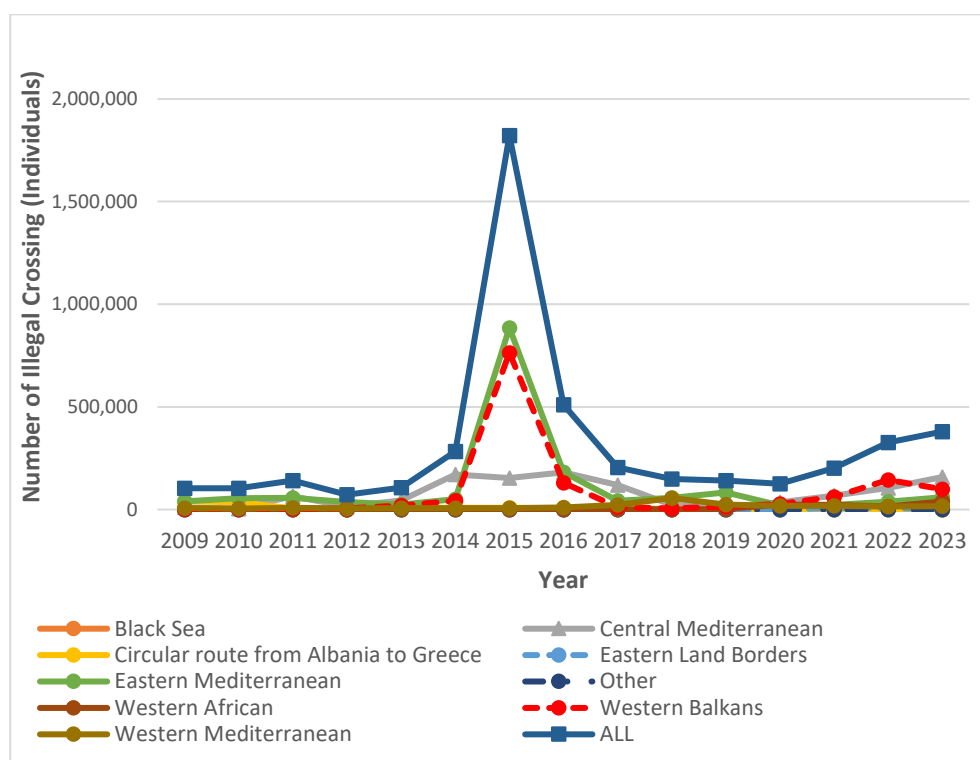
Figure 8. Origin of asylum-seekers in the EU (2013-2023)



Source: Own calculations and illustration based on European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex ,2024).

Returning to the Frontex database, eight different immigration routes lead into the EU: there is the Eastern (1), Central (2), and Western (3) Mediterranean, the Western African (4), the Western Balkans (5), the Black Sea routes (6), furthermore the Eastern Land Borders (7), and the so-called Circular route from Albania to Greece (8). The Black Sea route includes sea borders between Bulgaria and Romania, while the Western Balkans route passes through Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, and Croatia. The circular route from Albania to Greece involves Greece's common land borders with Albania and North Macedonia. Besides, the Western African route leads to the Canary Islands in Spain. The Western Mediterranean routes reach the EU through Spain's land and sea borders. In parallel, the Eastern Mediterranean route goes through the sea border between Cyprus and Greece and the land borders between Greece and Bulgaria with Turkey. The so-called Eastern Land borders are constituted by the land borders of Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, and Norway land borders with the Eastern non-EU countries (Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, and the Russian Federation). The Central Mediterranean immigration routes affect Italy and Malta's sea borders. The Frontex database also refers to the Baltic Sea and North Sea routes, but they are labelled as '*other*' routes, because they seem less relevant in terms of the number of illegal border crossings.

Figure 9. Trends in illegal crossings into the EU by immigration routes (2009–2023)



Source: Own calculations and illustration based on European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex ,2024).

Note: The figure highlights the relevance of the Central Mediterranean, Western Balkans, and Eastern Mediterranean routes.

As Figure 9 shows, during the period of the 2015 migration wave (2014-2017), the Eastern Mediterranean and the Western Balkans route became the major focal point of illegal border crossings. According to the database, 9 out of 10 illegal border crossings were recorded on these two routes. Additionally, the Central Mediterranean route was also preferred, but it became a less relevant route for illegal immigrants. However, the pressure on these borders significantly decreased after 2015. After a brief period of stagnation, the migratory tensions at the external borders of the EU have been increasing again since the early 2020s: the Western Balkan and the Central Mediterranean migrant routes are once again becoming significant for the illegal border crossings.

By interpreting the presented statistical data, the following findings can be stated:

- even considering international trends, the number of refugees in the European Union has increased significantly since 2015 (Figure 4-5),
- the number of registered asylum applications in the European Union also has increased steadily, reaching a peak in 2015 (Figure 4),
- from a historical point of view, the international migrant stock has been on an upward trend in both absolute and relative terms in the European Union, but the rate of growth has accelerated since 2015 (Figure 2-3),
- the number of illegal border crossings reached an above-average level between 2014 and 2017, with a peak in 2015 (Figure 6),
- the majority of illegal border crossings occurred along the Balkan route and the Eastern Mediterranean migrant route (Figure 9), which directly affected the countries of external EU borders,
- based on the examination of illegal border crossings and asylum applications, it can be inferred that the majority of individuals arriving in the European Union originate from regions outside Europe, predominantly conflict from the Middle East, African and Asian countries (Figure 6-8),
- the presented projections allow for the assumption that migration will be a pivotal factor in the 21st century (Figure 1), which will probably affect the European Union as well.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the number of individuals, especially the outlier values, unequivocally indicates that the phenomenon is not isolated or small-scale but rather constitutes a mass migration – millions of people have left their homes to immigrate into the EU. The IMS value indicates continuous growth in both absolute and relative terms, suggesting that the issue can be considered as long-term migration. Based on the presented data, it cannot be conclusively stated that the migration was irregular in nature. On the one hand, a significant number of asylum applications were submitted; however, on the other hand, there were also considerable instances of illegal border crossings. As a result, the migration exhibited irregular characteristics, but not exclusively. Furthermore, as the analysis of the origin of refugees has revealed that the majority of immigrants originate from countries outside Europe, thereby demonstrating that migration was an international migratory phenomenon.

In the earlier stages of the research, the question was raised: What distinguishes the year of 2015 in terms of migration from the others? Drawing on the findings presented, the analysis argues that the wave of immigration in 2015 has created migratory pressure, which has affected the member states differently. The primary aim of the migrant mass was to reach a Western European or a continental-Scandinavian country to apply for asylum at the local authorities. Nevertheless, the asylum seekers did not disperse equally in the European Union. According to the UNHCR registrations, more than 442,000 asylum applications were recorded only in 2015 in Germany, which was one of the leading destination countries for immigrants. While some countries, such as Ireland, received 70 asylum applications per 100,000 inhabitants, others, such as Luxembourg, registered even more, 420 in 2015. However, the highest number of asylum applications per 100,000 inhabitants was registered in Hungary with the result of 1,770, which means 174,000 applications in a single year (Pew Research Center, 2016).

To illustrate the magnitude of their size, it is worth interpreting the phenomenon in the Hungarian demographic context: 174,000 people represent almost 2% of the country's total population, which is more than the entire population of Szeged (approximately 158,000 in 2024; KSH, 2024a), the third largest city in Hungary. Moreover, approximately 800,000 migrants reached the European Union through the Balkan routes, where Hungary is located. This indicates that a number of people equivalent to 8% of the Hungarian domestic population (KSH, 2024b) attempted to cross the Hungarian borders legally or illegally to travel further through Austria or Slovakia and the Czech Republic to Germany. Despite the high number of asylum applications, the Central and Eastern European countries, including Hungary, primarily functioned as transit states for migrants on their journey to Western Europe.

In light of the exceptional peaks shown in migration-related data, it is necessary to investigate the roots of the crisis, beginning with the wave of uprisings known as the Arab Spring. On December 17, 2010, a young Tunisian street vendor set himself on fire in protest against police harassment. Within days, a revolutionary movement had emerged and spread rapidly across the Middle East and North Africa, challenging long-standing authoritarian regimes. After 23 years of authoritarian rule, then-President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali fled to Saudi Arabia, as the first Arab leader to be overthrown by popular protest. The fall of Ben Ali inspired a revolutionary wave throughout the region. In January 2011, tens of thousands of Egyptian citizens marched in protest, demanding the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak, who had ruled the country for nearly three decades. The

protesting crowds swelled to several million participants, resulting in Mubarak's resignation, which was followed by a military administration. However, the 2012 elections brought a government affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood to power. This new regime was changed by a military coup in 2013. In the following year, General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi was elected as the president. Similarly to Tunisia and Egypt, protests erupted in Libya, where the country's leader, Muammar Gaddafi, called for violent suppression of demonstrators. The conflict escalated into a civil war, which eventually led to humanitarian intervention by French, British, and American forces. Gaddafi was captured and executed by rebel groups, and the country fragmented into eastern and western administrations. Syria also descended into state failure. On March 6, 2011, protests against President Bashar al-Assad evolved into a civil war. Assad eventually fled to Moscow, and the country became divided among pro-government forces, Kurdish militias, and various terrorist groups. The weakening of state capacities also affected Iraq, where the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS/ISIL) launched genocidal attacks against minority populations. The group's spread throughout the Muslim world further destabilised the emerging democratic regimes. Similar uprisings occurred in Bahrain, where government forces violently dispersed demonstrators, resulting in numerous deaths and injuries. In Yemen, after a year of protests, then-President Ali Abdullah Saleh transferred power to his deputy, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi. However, demonstrations in Yemen also escalated into violent conflict. Tunisia remains the only country where regime change occurred through free political elections—the so-called Jasmine Revolution.

As Robinson and Merrow (2020) point out, the success of democratic transitions in the region remains highly contested. Democratic progress has largely failed across the Arab world: previously stable regimes transformed into unstable and non-democratic ones. Although temporary democratic changes occurred in Egypt and Libya, efforts at democratic transformation ultimately weakened the institutional foundations of democracy. The sole exception is Tunisia, where Freedom House has recorded significant improvements in democratic indicators. Nonetheless, even Tunisia's success has been undermined by declining living standards and rising unemployment. Although corruption has decreased and women's rights have improved in the country, empirical data indicate an overall decline in societal well-being.

The armed conflicts that emerged during the Arab Spring, combined with a sharp decline in living standards, functioned as major push factors, significantly increasing the number of displaced people. While Syria, Yemen, and Libya were among the most

directly affected countries, other military developments outside the Arab Spring also contributed to displacement. These include, among others, the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan, which was followed by the return of Taliban rule; armed conflicts in the Sahel region, such as in Sudan; and the expansion of anti-Western terrorist organisations like Boko Haram in Nigeria.

The migration pressure illustrated by statistical data has posed significant challenges to the governing capacity of states, which revealed a more profound crisis concerning statehood and sovereignty (see, among others, Figure 6 on illegal border crossings), in which political actors are increasingly losing control of their territorial boundaries (Bigo, 2002: 65). The crisis of sovereignty is closely associated with a number of other security-related concerns, including terrorism, globalisation, climate change, disease management, and the challenges posed by international human trafficking. As a result, divergent public policy responses have been formulated to manage the crisis.

Those politicians and political parties who highlight the soft-power characteristics of the EU in the world, argue that the EU's responsibility and duty to protect immigrants, for example, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) in Germany, France Unbowed (LFI) in France or the New Austria and Liberal Forum (NEOS) in Austria or migrant-led NGOs and CSOs. The supporters argued that the EU is responsible for upholding humanitarian principles worldwide, including protecting human rights. In this context, accepting immigrants and refugees is often justified by legal obligations and moral imperatives, emphasising the need to safeguard the fundamental rights and dignity of individuals fleeing conflict, persecution, or other crises. In this context, by legalising immigration, the EU could reduce the number of illegal border crossings (see Figure 6) and take action against human smugglers and traffickers, who pose significant threats to the rights and lives of migrants (see e.g. Becucci, 2024). Besides the protection of human rights, migration could contribute to the solution to the challenges of demographic crisis and an efficient tool against the declining competitiveness of the European Union. Based on economic considerations, the main arguments in favour of intense inflow are that immigrants can contribute to economic growth by filling labour shortages, starting businesses and paying taxes. Furthermore, in cultural terms, migration may enrich the European Union by bringing in new cultures, languages, and ideas that harmonise with the motto of the EU: *'unite in diversity'*. A key expression of the pro-migration stance is Angela Merkel's concept of Willkommenskultur (*'culture of welcome'*; see Mushaben, 2017), which portrays the European community as a hospitable and tolerant environment

for refugees and foreign workers. This welcoming culture has not only served as a normative framework for refugee reception, but it has also functioned as a push factor in migration itself, encouraging individuals to seek a new life within the EU's open and inclusive societies.

Concurrently, those political parties that perceived migration management as a potential threat to national self-determination stress the negative consequences and risks of mass immigration. In an attempt to protect or regain state sovereignty, sovereigntists have sought to reassert authority by promoting the securitisation of migration. According to this narrative, rapid mass migration is a threat to security, which has challenged the social cohesion of the destination countries and has led to parallel societies, posing political, cultural and security risks. The securitisation of migration became more unambiguous in the aftermath of terrorist attacks, which were committed by foreign immigrants from outside the EU (see, among others, terrorist attacks in Paris in 2015, in Brussels in 2016, in Spain in 2017 or in Vienna in 2020). Beyond the thematisation of migrant-related terrorism, anti-immigrant rhetoric often draws attention to the economic and welfare-related critiques of migration. According to this perspective, most immigrants are unemployed and have low educational attainment, which leads to increased pressure on public services. Even in cases where immigrants are employed, they are portrayed as foreigners who exert downward pressure on wages.

One of the most common and notable characteristics of anti-immigrant political parties is their populist communication style. Within their narrative, sovereigntists seek to protect the European culture and traditional way of life against the so-called imperialist globalism. According to this ideological framework, '*we, the European*' are positioned in opposition to the '*multiculturalist, globalist, liberal elite*', while populist leaders are portrayed as the only actors capable of protecting the native European communities. As Müller and Gebauer (2021) highlighted, this process is in line with the Copenhagen school's securitization theory (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998), which argued that, security is not limited to traditional military threats between states; rather, it is a socially constructed concept that can be expanded to include non-military sectors such as migration, the environment, or public health. Through a process known as securitisation, an issue is framed as an existential threat, thereby justifying extraordinary political measures. As a consequence of populist rhetoric combined with the securitization of migration, support for anti-immigrant political parties — such as the National Rally (RN) in France, the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) in Germany, or the Alliance of Young

Democrats in Hungary (Fidesz) — have significantly increased their support in recent electoral results.

Both anti-immigrant populists and proponents of liberal immigration policies recognise the issue as a matter of European concern. Consequently, it is widely acknowledged that the crisis should be addressed at the European level. However, because of the different interpretative frameworks of political identities, politicians offer alternative solutions to the problem. Supporters of immigration suggest mechanisms to reduce administrative burden and improve integration, which lead to more rapid answers for demographic and competitive challenges. In contrast, opponents of mass immigration qualify irregular immigration and relocation mechanisms as a violation of sovereignty and argue in favour of a more coherent and permanent border control of the outer part of Europe (e.g. Viktor Orbán). In practice, as a response to the migratory wave, some EU member states—such as Germany, Austria, and Slovenia—temporarily closed their borders, thereby suspending the free movement of individuals within the Schengen Zone, a fundamental principle of the EU's *acquis communautaire*.

The political conflict surrounding state sovereignty has also drawn attention to the conceptual drawbacks of the European migratory and asylum system (see Dublin III). As Gyeney (2018) noted, the management of the migration crisis has given rise to disputes over competences, and the key question is which areas fall under the EU's decision-making authority and which remain within the sovereignty of individual member states. Immigration, encompassing economic migration and family reunification, largely remains a national competence, particularly in determining admission quotas. In contrast, asylum policy, focused on providing international protection, requires a harmonised EU framework, including principles such as non-refoulement and mechanisms for the distribution of asylum seekers. Furthermore, as Tálas highlighted (2016), the regulation places the responsibility for border protection, registration, and the processing of asylum claims predominantly on Schengen border countries. However, these states often lack the necessary resources to manage large-scale refugee influxes at the borders or to prevent the onward movement of asylum seekers to other destination countries during the asylum process. Efforts to address these deficiencies, including the proposal for a permanent relocation mechanism (commonly referred to as the '*quota system*'), have faced considerable resistance (Friedery-Molnár, 2024: 130). The relocation mechanism suggests sharing the responsibility for accommodating refugees and migrants. In this

sense, a certain number or percentage of migrants or refugees has to be redistributed among all the EU member states (European Parliament, 2015).

During the securitisation of immigration, the framing of political parties has had an impact on the mediatization of migration as well. As Cantat, Pécoud, and Thiollet (2023) highlighted, political parties and media showed less robust attention on migration until the mid-2010s despite the rising immigration numbers. Their analysis focused on crisis-related words in newspapers in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom between the end of the 1990s and 2022⁵. Based on their findings, well before the 2015 migration crisis, Europe witnessed several episodes of migration waves, which were statistically similar or even more robust (e.g., Germany experienced an intense inflow of newcomers since the 1990s). Still, those were not qualified as a crisis. The volume of crisis-related articles was relatively low during this period, and did not exceed 100 in any of the three countries. This shows that the issue has not yet been mediated. In contrast, since 2014 and especially in 2015, the number of crisis-related articles skyrocketed, reaching nearly 1,400 in France, 1,600 in Germany, and over 3,000 in the UK, demonstrating a drastic shift. A similar increase in media attention can be observed in countries such as Hungary (e.g. Sik and Simonovits, 2019) or Austria (e.g. Müller and Gebauer, 2021).

With the rise in media attention, two distinct narratives have emerged, mirroring the political polarisation surrounding migration. On the one hand, the humanitarian perspective emphasises the importance of human rights and advocates for protecting refugees, often portraying them as vulnerable individuals in need of support and legal protection. On the other hand, a security-oriented perspective interprets migration through the lens of national security, public order, and border control (see, among others, Cantat, Pécoud, and Thiollet, 2023).

In this sense, Hungary is a specific case, where the thematisation of migration persisted even when statistical indicators showed a decline in the intensity of the migration crisis. As Sik and Simonovits (2019) analysed the online articles published in Hungary between January 2015 and April 2018, they observed similar patterns to those of Cantat, Pécoud and Thiolett in French, German and British media, where the public

⁵ The findings are based on the number of articles containing key terms related to migration and asylum crises, identified through keyword searches in major national newspapers in three countries. For France: *crise migratoire*, *crise de l'asile*, *crise des migrants*, *crise des réfugiés* in *Le Figaro*, *Le Monde*, *Libération*, *Les Echos*, *Le Parisien*, and *La Croix*; for Germany: *Migrationkrise* and *Flüchtlingskrise* in *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Tageszeitung*; and for the UK: *migration crisis*, *migrant crisis*, *refugee crisis*, and *asylum crisis* in *The Guardian*, *The Times*, and *Daily Mail*.

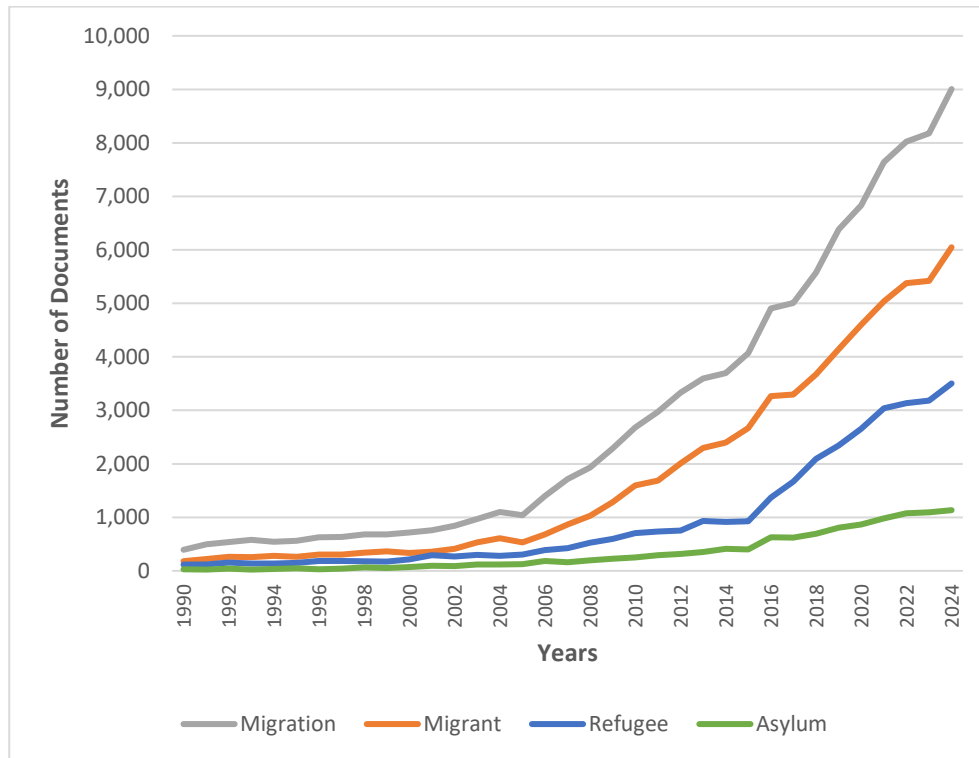
awareness of immigration increased significantly. Their analysis makes a distinction between government-affiliated media outlets (such as Origo, Magyar Idők, and Pesti Srácok) and independent or opposition-aligned platforms (Index, 444, Népszava). According to the content analysis, terms such as *'illegal'*, *'invasion'*, *'danger'*, *'border protection'*, *'terrorist'*, *'(migrant)flood'* and *'migrant'* appeared significantly more often in pro-government media. In contrast, terms like *'refugee'*, *'assistance'*, *'human rights'* and *'crisis'* were more prevalent in non-governmental outlets. Furthermore, sentiment analysis revealed that the five most common positive sentiments associated with migration were *'good'* (14%), *'important'* (11%), *'well'* (10%), *'free'* (9%), and *'successful'* (6%), while the most frequent negative sentiments were *'illegal'* (19%), *'scared'* (8%), *'crisis'* (7%), *'problem'* (6%), and *'bad'* (6%). These positive sentiments were more often found in liberal media sources, while negative framing dominated the government-aligned press. The disproportionate use of the term *'illegal'* in pro-government outlets, alongside the increased prevalence of the term *'migration'*, highlights the role of political influence in shaping media discourse. The term *'refugee'* appeared less frequently in government-affiliated media compared to independent sources, whereas the term *'migrant'* was employed more often by the former. This discrepancy is not merely stylistic but reflects a deliberate narrative strategy: *'migrant'* tends to carry more dehumanising and criminalising connotations, while *'refugee'* evokes empathy and humanitarian concern. The conscious lexical choices suggest a politically motivated attempt to construct a specific narrative, which reaffirms notions (e.g. Illés, Körösnéyi and Metz, 2018) that the migration crisis is not merely a statistically measurable issue, but also a profoundly political one. These findings imply that the prominence of migration in public discourse was not driven exclusively by empirical reality, but rather sustained through subjective elements, like deliberating agenda-setting and narrative extension in line with political objectives (see, among others, national consultation on immigration – a point the research returns to later).

The growing importance of migration is evident even in the increasing number of academic publications. Following the methodological approach outlined by Cantat, Pécoud, and Thirollet (2023), this research, with certain modifications, investigates how migration issues have been represented in academic discourse. Originally, Cantat, Pécoud and Thirollet quantified the occurrences of the terms *'migration crisis'* and *'asylum crisis'* in the titles, abstracts, and keywords of journal articles and books indexed in Scopus from 1990 to 2022. Their analysis focused on works published in the fields of social sciences

and humanities, including Economics, Econometrics and Finance, Environmental Science, and Psychology. The findings revealed a significant upward trend in relevance over time: while the number of migration-related publications remained below 200 per year before the 2010s, it surged to over 1,400 by 2022. On the one hand, this methodological framework seems useful in highlighting the main trends in the relevance of migration-related publications in academic discourse. However, it seems inappropriate in some aspects. First of all, the research analysed exclusively crisis-related terms, opting out of the generally increasing relevance of migration. To answer this disadvantage, the terms '*migration*', '*migrant*', '*refugee*' and '*asylum*' were quantified, thus the relevance of migration in general terms could also be analysed and compared to the crisis-related discourse. Secondly, the genres of publications were also too strict, risking the exclusion of relevant sources. As a consequence, not only books and journal articles, but also book chapters and conference papers were analysed during the current research. Lastly, adopting the so-called humanities fields can be misleading because of their broad and diverse range of research areas; thus, the current analysis limited the scope to the social sciences. Besides the abovementioned reasons, the temporal scope was extended to 2024 to ensure the data's highest possible currency.

Figure 10 confirms the upward trend of academic interest in the four migration-related terms within the social sciences between 1990 and 2024. Among them, the term '*migration*' received the highest number of mentions, followed by '*migrant*' and '*refugee*', while '*asylum*' remained relatively lower, with more than 1,000 documents by 2024 yearly. Generally speaking, the figure reveals a gradual increase since the middle of the 2000s, which was followed by a steep rise from the middle of the 2010s. Notably, the number of refugees began to rise sharply after 2015, probably reflecting the impact of the humanitarian aspects of the migration crisis. In contrast, the term '*asylum*' displays only a moderate increase, suggesting that this term is relevant but shows a comparatively less significant role in the broader migration discourse.

Figure 10. Academic interest in migration-related terms within the social sciences (1990–2024)

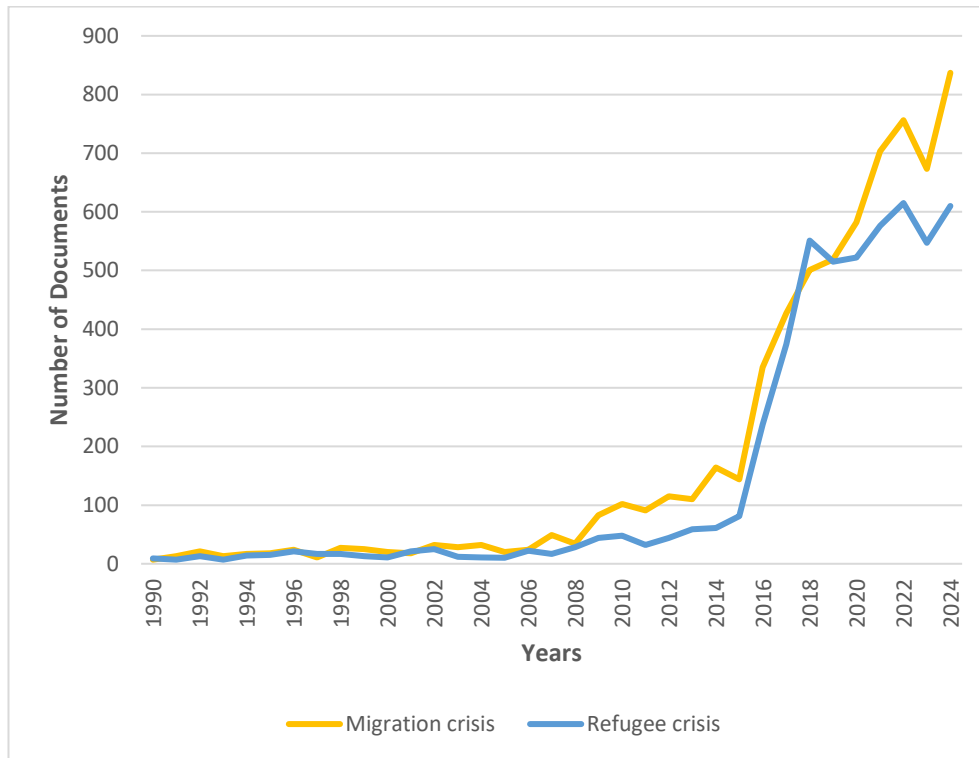


Source: Own calculations based on Scopus (2025).

Note: The figure shows the number of academic documents including terms '*migration*', '*migrant*', '*refugee*' or '*asylum*' in their title, abstract, or keywords from 1990 to 2024 in social sciences journals, books, book chapters and conference papers.

Compared to the general migration-related discourse, the focus on the specific '*migration crisis*' and '*refugee crisis*' shows a markedly different pattern. As illustrated in Figure 11, crisis-related terms remained relatively low in the 2010s, with fewer than 200 documents. However, there has been a sharp and unprecedented increase in the number of publications using these terms after the 2015 migration crisis. This suggests that the academic framing of migration underwent a significant shift, showing more interest in crisis-oriented analyses. In contrast with the steady and gradual growth of terms like '*migration*', '*migrant*' or '*asylum*', the crisis-related terminology shows a sudden and reactive spike, probably reflecting a period of heightened political and media attention. Furthermore, the term '*migration crisis*' surpasses '*refugee crisis*' in frequency, suggesting that the issue was rather interpreted as a crisis, in a negative connotation, rather than a humanitarian issue. These findings underscore not only the growing scholarly attention to migration but also indicate a transformation in how the crisis was conceptualised within the social sciences.

Figure 11. Academic focus on 'migration crisis' and 'refugee crisis' in the social sciences (1990–2024)



Source: Own calculations based on Scopus (2025).

Note: The figure shows the number of academic documents in social sciences journals, books, book chapters and conference papers include the terms '*migration crisis*' or '*refugee crisis*' in their title, abstract, or keywords from 1990 to 2024.

Due to the divergent narratives, a broad spectrum of terminology has emerged to describe the migration-related crisis. One plausible reason for this diversity is that the different terms function as descriptive labels and expressions of particular interpretations of reality. Beyond their political implications, terminological choice has also become a focal point in media representation. For instance, the BBC has highlighted the importance of distinguishing between different categories of migrants: those fleeing war-torn countries, who are likely to qualify for refugee status, and those seeking employment opportunities, often called '*economic migrants*'. This distinction reflects a more nuanced understanding of migration's legal and humanitarian dimensions. In contrast, Al Jazeera English (AJE) has argued that the term migrant is inappropriate in the context of forced displacement. According to AJE, the use of '*refugee*' is more accurate and ethically responsible, as it better captures the circumstances of individuals fleeing conflict, persecution, or violence (Cantat, Pécoud and Thiollett, 2023). Furthermore, the need to analyse different narrative frameworks has also gained prominence in academic discourse well before the 2015 crisis. Accordingly, scholarly literature has referred to the

phenomenon well before the 2015 crisis. In this sense, the crisis was labelled as '*asylum migration*' (Koser, 2018), '*crisis migration*' (van Hollifield et al., 2013) or even '*survival migration*' (Betts, 2013). In the 2015 migration, the so-called '*refugee crisis*' (see NGOs, CSOs, AJE) was preferred, however, it is applicable only when the vast majority of individuals arriving in the European Union are granted refugee status (Tálas, 2016: 89). Nevertheless, the presented data clearly illustrate a substantial disparity between the number of asylum applications submitted and those approved. While the number of refugees has indeed increased significantly (see Figure 4), the majority of submitted applications were not accepted (see, for example, Boston University, 2023. Further statistical data provided on the website of Frontex or Eurostat). Nevertheless, the European Parliament (2015) has repeatedly advocated using the term '*refugee crisis*', emphasising the importance of the humanitarian dimensions of migration. Despite the ongoing debate, it can be stated that migration of such magnitude inherently carries a series of humanitarian crises. For the sake of simplicity, during the analysis, the phenomenon of the 2015 crisis will be referred to as a '*migration*' or '*immigration*' crisis, which also encompasses its humanitarian dimensions.

Considering the political, legal, and humanitarian consequences of the migration wave in 2015, it can be stated that migratory pressure led to a so-called '*migration crisis*'. Thus, the question '*what does the migration wave of 2015 signify?*' has also been answered. The term refers to a phenomenon that involves a significant and abrupt rise in the number of migrants crossings the border of a given country or region in a high-intensity, massive, uncontrolled and irregular way, which may undermine the functioning of migration and asylum management systems (European Commission, 2024) and pose a humanitarian threat to the migrant individuals (UN IOM, 2024b). It is crucial to note that the crisis is shaped by both external and internal factors. Externally, it is rooted in destabilising events such as the Arab Spring and other regional conflicts (push factors); internally, it is driven by political thematisation (e.g., the '*Willkommenskultur*' as a pull factor) and the securitisation of migration. Furthermore, the migration crisis comprises objective and subjective dimensions: while statistical data reflect the measurable intensity of migratory flows in numerical terms, narratives and media representations contribute to the cognitive construction of the crisis.

In light of the fluctuations in the number of migrants and the thematisation of the issue, three distinct periods can be distinguished. The first period, which can be defined as the pre-migration crisis period, covers the years preceding 2014. During these years,

the statistical data show relatively stable migration into the European Union, and a lower level of thematisation by the political sphere and the media. The second period, which can be identified as the crisis period, encompasses the years between 2014 and 2017. During the second period, migration was becoming more intense and reached a historically high level. In point of fact, the peak was observed in 2015, but the growth commenced in 2014, and the immediate end of the crisis can be dated to 2017. During this period, the political thematisation of migration became high. The third period, which is characterised as the post-migration-crisis period, shows the normalisation of migration at a lower level, yet the issue remains a salient component of political discourse and strategic policymaking.

However, the migratory pressure has lost its intensity in statistical terms - probably temporarily (see migratory projections) — the issue remains a central topic within the European Union (e.g. the foundation of Patriots) and its member states (e.g. national election in France in 2024)). It seems migration continues to be a relevant and contentious subject in European politics, significantly shaping debates and policy-making processes. The complexity of societal and political responses to migration highlights the multifaceted nature and the double-edged characteristics of migration. Furthermore, the crisis revealed the presence of deeper conflicts within societies, reflecting tensions not only about migration itself but also about broader social and political questions (e.g., identity). As the crisis led to social and political conflicts, it has presumably become another source of division. In this way, the research also addressed the question: Why is the 2015 European migration crisis regarded as a relevant issue for political science? Understanding these tensions requires a theoretical framework which is capable of capturing the structural dimensions of societal and political conflicts. In this context, the following section introduces the theories of political cleavages, which serve as foundational frameworks, offering critical insights into the enduring fault lines that may shape public and political responses to migration.

2 THEORIES OF POLITICAL CLEAVAGES

The relevance of cleavages can be inferred from the fact that party systems, along with their structure and characteristics, often reflect the social conflicts of a given community. As this chapter demonstrates, political cleavages can be defined as qualified conflicts. Given the substantial body of literature on political cleavages, there is a diverse range of interpretations regarding their concepts. Traditionalist scholars, such as Lipset and Rokkan (1967), argue that political fragmentation arises as a consequence of social conflicts. This perspective suggests that conflicts emerge at the socio-demographic and economic level and shape the position of the political parties. This approach reflects a '*bottom-up*' association. However, other researchers, such as Inglehart (1977), contend that political parties, by managing the political value preferences, exclusively shape the social conflicts in a '*top-down*' way. Examining both the traditional and revisionist perspectives, Bartolini and Mair (1990) rejected the exclusivity of either the '*bottom up*' or '*top-down*' approaches. Instead, they emphasise that political cleavages are shaped by both socio-demographic and economic backgrounds, as well as by the strategies of political parties, which are interconnected through shared normative-ideological characteristics.

The aim of this chapter is to present the theoretical frameworks of cleavages in detail. The research argues that there is not a single scientific theoretical concept of framework which can fully explain reality; however, cleavages theories may offer valuable insights into understanding events, such as the conflict derived from the 2015 migration crisis.

2.1 The Traditionalist Approach: The Relevance of Socio-Demographic and Economic Backgrounds

According to the researchers of the traditionalist model, political fragmentation arises as a result of social conflicts. However, not all social conflicts possess the necessary characteristics to transform into cleavages. As outlined in Lipset and Rokkan's theoretical framework, a conflict must meet three preconditions to develop into a cleavage. Firstly, a conflict has to involve social divisions generally based on socio-economic or socio-cultural backgrounds (1). Secondly, on the ground of social divisions, people have to be self-aware of their collective identity and act on the basis of it (2). Finally, these divisions and identities are expressed at the level of organisations, for instance, in the form of

political parties and other interest groups (3). It means that conflicts are based on socio-demographic and economic backgrounds, which determine the political elite's strategy, leading to a '*bottom-up*' causality direction. The criterion of cleavage is that a conflict has to possess all the above-mentioned three preconditions. If a conflict is not able to fulfil these criteria, then it is qualified as a fragmentation on different levels of society.

As the traditionalists argue, the socio-demographic and socio-economic backgrounds are the core roots of the political fragmentation and identity. It also means that politicians and political institutions (e.g. parties) do not have the ability to identify themselves without recognising and cooperating with the social cleavages. Drawing on this causal chain, the identities of political parties are directed by socio-demographic and economic backgrounds. As a result, the structure of the party system (Y) serves as a reflection of the socio-demographic/economic conflicts (X).

Moreover, according to the historical approach of Lipset and Rokkan (1967), these backgrounds and the formation of the cleavages are determined by two different types of revolutions. On the one hand, European societies have experienced an era known as national revolutions. During this period, the centralised state took over political roles that had formerly been assigned to religious or decentralised communities. These historical national revolutions created two societal and political cleavages, which are based on the centre versus periphery and state versus church conflicts. While the centre versus periphery conflict denotes the establishment of modern national-states, where states systematically aimed to assimilate minorities into the majority nation, the state versus church conflict reflects the aftermath of opposition between the religious and the secular groups within a given society. On the other hand, the Industrial Revolution also generated two persistent cleavages: a class-based division between owners and workers, and a spatial divide between urban and rural populations. Lipset and Rokkan assume that, with the general, universal suffrage and the developed cleavages, the institutionalised party systems have solidified along the lines of divisions (frozen party systems). Thus, the Western European party system's structures became less or more permanent. To summarise this chain of ideas, the traditionalist approach argues that a voter from the working class prefers a party that represents the working-class values and interests. This causality applies to other socio-demographically or economically developed divisions and assumes that voters and their parties are aligned within shared communities around specific issues.

The party choice and positions on public issues based on group affiliation align with the theoretical framework of the Sociological Model. As Lazarsfeld et al. (1944) argue, voters' political preferences are rooted in group affiliation, which means that voters adopt the position of their communities. In this sense, social communities shape the values and interests of their individuals. If these communities and their characteristics remain unchanged, voters' choice and electoral participation also remain stable and continuous. This line of reasoning leads to the Michigan Model, another theory of voters' choice (e.g. Converse, 1964). This model is based on sociological and party identification factors. It posits that voters, through causal funnels, develop strong attachments both to political parties and to the positions these parties represent. Consequently, party identification is cemented by circumstances, such as sociological factors (race, ethnicity, gender), social status (social class, occupation), and parental characteristics (values and partisanship). These factors determine voters' candidate preferences and create an attitude toward public issues.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to underscore that Lipset and Rokkan (1967) did not provide a clear conceptualisation of cleavages in real terms. The initial theory posits only that conflicts are fundamentally rooted in the socio-demographic and economic structures of the society. In order to fill this gap, academic scholars from various perspectives attempt to define the concept of cleavages. However, during this period of time, the common point of these studies remains unchanged: the origins of conflict were assumed to be based on social patterns.

Rae and Taylor (1970) also adopted the main ideas from Lipset and Rokkan's theory. In this sense, they argue that cleavages have the capacity to divide communities into distinct groups with different values and interests. Furthermore, these values and interests are determined by socio-demographic backgrounds. Thus, socio-demographic-based cleavages have the ability to determine the party systems themselves. However, Rae and Taylor seek to address the scientific gap by defining three different types of cleavages in *The Analysis of Political Cleavages* (Rae and Taylor, 1970: 22). According to their analysis, a cleavage can be categorized as trait (1), attitude (2) and behaviour (3) based. On the one hand, a trait-based cleavage refers to a specific division rooted in particular socio-demographic characteristics, such as ethnicity, age, or social class. On the other hand, an attitude-based cleavage highlights the significance of voters' attitudes, which may be shaped by political ideologies, religious beliefs, and social norms. Furthermore,

a behaviour-based cleavage originates from individuals' actions, such as voting patterns, political participation, or political affiliation with specific social or political groups.

Besides, Neto and Cox (1997) argue that cleavages represent long-standing social differences. However, as they noted, these differences can only gain relevance on the political agenda through the representative capacity of political parties. Without their activation, such differences remain politically inactive. The political significance of social differences depends on their ability to become organised in political terms.

This form of social conflict is also characterised by alignment, which refers to the strong connection between social groups and political parties. Stable alignments indicate an unaltered partisan balance over a series of elections, reflecting long-term support for different political parties. In this sense, electoral volatility is low and stable (1), traditional political parties remain dominant (2), no new challenger parties with significant support emerge (3), voter turnout is stable (4), and the proportion of invalid or spoiled ballots is low (5). According to Kitschelt et al. (2010: 56), this phase can be described as a programmatic party system. In this context, the differences between opposing parties are clear, and party programs function as alternatives to each other (Carreras et al, 2015: 672-673).

However, different groups of scholars argue that the acceptability of the socio-demographic-economic based approach has devalued, and the explanatory power of alignment has dissolved. Moreover, critics claim that the framework and terminology of the traditional model are flawed and fail to accurately represent the characteristics of political-social conflicts. Those scholars who critically challenge the traditional model of political cleavages are often referred to as revisionist theorists.

2.2 The First Wave Revisionism: The Significance of Values and the Political Parties

Following World War II, the economic and technological advancements led to significant social transformations. On the one hand, the relevance of agricultural and industrial sectors declined, while the service sector emerged as the dominant one. On the other hand, the increasing number of individuals with higher educational qualifications contributed to the strengthening of urbanisation and the expansion of the middle class. These processes, accompanied by the rise of communication technologies, resulted in the loosening of traditional communities. Consequently, individualism gained prominence over collective interests.

This period is described as dealignment, which is the antithesis of Lipset and Rokkan's frozen party system. It signifies the weakening of voter orientations and identities based on traditional socio-demographic and economic backgrounds, alongside an increase in the fluidity of party systems. This phase is also known as the '*Period of Change*' (see Carreras et al., 2015: 673-674). During this stage, the strength of the established political parties and their coalitions erodes (1) because of the declining trust and loyalty, and voter turnout also decreases (2). At the same time, the proportion of invalid votes rises (3). Simultaneously, new political parties emerge (4), and the electoral volatility intensifies (5). This change can be driven by social developments or the emergence of a new political issue that has not yet been integrated into the party system.

Based on social developments, revisionist scholars emphasise that socio-demographic and economic backgrounds, thus the class struggles, have become less relevant in shaping the party system's structures. The revisionists argue that, instead of socio-economic patterns, political parties became the relevant actors to create and sustain subjective class consciousness. This implies that parties are not the consequence of social classes, rooted in socio-demographic and economic backgrounds; rather, political parties construct the identity and consciousness of social classes (Sartori, 1969). This perspective contrasts sharply with the viewpoint of the traditionalists: as the causalities are described as '*top-down*', in contrast to the '*bottom-up*' perspective. Since the logic of conflict has been changed, the motivation of social and political groups to participate in politics has also been altered. In this paradigm, the significance of individual interests became the focal point of the political affiliation and the political conflicts, which are managed by the political parties.

Ronald Inglehart's influential research on the relevance of value preferences is one of the most important contributions to our understanding of cultural and societal change. As Inglehart highlights (1977), socio-demographic backgrounds lost their relevance in the context of cleavages and political fragmentations. Instead, value-based generational cleavages have become dominant. In this context, Inglehart created the theory of Generational Replacement, which argues that intergenerational values shift from materialist to post-materialist. In line with this, modernisation and evolutionary modernisation theories were further developed, arguing that economic and welfare development reshapes human motivations. As a result, the formerly dominant motivations, such as security, lost their relevance in the new generations of society. Instead, post-materialist issues – such as gender roles, the relevance of human rights, and

the spread of democracy – become more dominant. Those who lived during the World Wars grew up in poverty (in the 1920s-1940s), thus the older generation prioritises physical and financial security (materialist values). In contrast, the younger generations were socialised in a more developed society with a higher quality of welfare system, resulting in prioritising post-materialist values (born in the 1960s or 1970s). The existence of post-materialist values has been confirmed through research on generational analysis. According to the recent research, Generation Y shows a significant political interest in issues such as health, education and labour policies, while emphasising the relevance of climate change and the fight against poverty. In parallel, tolerance toward individual rights, such as those related to same-sex orientation, has become an important issue, which seems to be generally accepted by the majority (see Kadlót, 2016: 19-21).

As motivations can shape the value preferences and positions on political issues and party affiliation, need-based theories have become increasingly relevant. Inglehart's framework strongly refers to Maslow's concept of the hierarchy of needs. As Maslow (1943) argued, voters are influenced by the needs, which determine voters' motivations and values. Maslow uses the terms '*physiological*' (1), '*safety*' (2), '*belonging and love*' (3), '*social needs – esteem*' (4) and '*self-actualisation*' (5) to describe the pattern of human motivations⁶. In order to introduce Maslow's theory, the core concept of his thoughts can be simplified as follows: when a lower stage of needs is satisfied, individuals are able to progress to the next stage in the hierarchy of needs. Hypothetically, the individuals aim to attain the fifth level of the hierarchy, namely the status of self-actualisation. When a need is fulfilled, it creates a new goal and a new motivational demand. As needs evolve, previously existing conflicts lose their significance, and new conflicts emerge based on the newly formed needs. However, motivational demands vary from individual to individual, and because of adverse environmental consequences, a downward shift on the motivational hierarchy is also possible. It can be observed that motivations of need have the capacity to influence and determine voters' values and orientations. This may result in periodic membership within a value-oriented community. In this sense, as motivational needs change, members of similar value-oriented communities also change – sometimes even from issue to issue (issue-voting). Furthermore, needs and motivations can modify

⁶ The numbers represent the hierarchical structure of needs, where physiological needs (1) are the most fundamental for survival, and self-actualisation (5) represents the most post-material values on the scale. This simplification does not capture all the mechanisms of Maslow's theory. For more details, see: A Theory of Human Motivation (Maslow, 1943).

the quality of an existing conflict. As the structure and the strength of motivational needs change, a conflict can gain or lose its relevance within a given society.⁷ According to critics, the hierarchy of needs should be revised to take into account cultural and societal norms and structures. The concept of '*need*' itself has not been adequately defined, and Maslow did not propose an empirical methodology to support his theory (Wahba and Bridwell, 1976). Furthermore, the need hierarchy cannot be considered hierarchical and linear; instead, it can be described as flexible, adapting to the environment and individual life circumstances (Kenrick et al., 2010: 292–314). Moreover, while some researchers have suggested reducing the number of needs, such as the dual-level hierarchy of needs (Wahba and Bridwell, 1976: 235–236), which categorizes needs as maintenance or growth needs; while the maintenance needs refer to physiological and security needs, the growth needs focus on belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. The dual-level concept was also formulated by Maslow (1954) during the revision of his need hierarchy by highlighting the hypothetical existence of deficiency needs and growth needs. In contrast, other researchers have emphasised expanding the need hierarchy by incorporating elements such as parenting, mate retention, mate acquisition, status/esteem, affiliation, self-protection, or immediate physiological needs (Kenrick et al., 2010: 293).

Building on the motivational needs that determine individuals' orientations, Converse's (1964) concept about the causal funnel fits into the revisionist framework as well. His argument is that values, as the building blocks, can underlie political ideologies, creating a social cognition framework rooted in psychological needs and generating differences in political orientation. According to his research, individuals use values to determine whether an action or event is supported or opposed. However, this type of orientation does not equal a common political identity. Voters organise and prioritise their beliefs and feelings toward political issues, affecting their attitudes toward political decisions (Schwartz, 2006). The theoretical findings indicate that these processes also operate within a hierarchical structure of value preferences and beliefs, contributing to the creation of a framework for understanding politics, which may lead to the formation of different narratives of reality.

Similar to the aforementioned concept of the revisionist, Dahl (1969) argues that political attitudes and participation have weak causalities with socio-demographic and

⁷ For a detailed description of the characteristics of the Baby Boomer (1946-1965), Generation X (1966-1979), Generation Y (1970-1995), and Generation Z (1996-2010), see Szabó-Szentgróti et al., 2019: 78-80. For a more detailed discussion on intergenerational conflicts, refer to Szabó and Kiss (2013).

economic differentiations. Instead, cleavages emerge when a conflict generates long-standing, intensive divisions in the given society. From this perspective, differences generally appear in political positions and participation, which are determined and managed by political parties. In this context, political parties determine their positions on public affairs by managing and shaping voters' values (*'top-down'*).

Besides the aforementioned concepts, Lijphart (1984: 78-87) identified two additional forms of differentiation. According to Lijphart's findings, one of the most significant factors between 1945 and 1996 was the socio-economic dimension, although its relevance significantly declined from the 1960s onwards. Furthermore, religiosity also served as a relevant factor from a historical perspective. As Lijphart observed, the presence of religious conflicts was confirmed in 18 of the 36 countries; however, in the European countries, either the significance of religiosity diminished, or religious groups reconciled and formed common political alliances. The main distinction between religious and secular communities primarily arose in relation to moral issues, such as abortion. Additionally, Lijphart noted that cultural-ethnic conflicts were observable in all heterogeneous societies, but their salience has also decreased. Even the urban-rural dimension was present in all the studied societies; similarly to the other previously mentioned socio-demographic related aspects, its relevance has faded, partly due to social development, the depopulation of the rural areas, and the central positioning of agrarian parties. In contrast, the materialist versus post-materialist dimension developed into a significant issue, highlighting the relevance of participatory democracy and environmentalism (see the growing support for green parties). According to Lijphart, Inglehart's post-materialist conflict became a new source of division in the party systems of developed societies. In parallel, support for the democratic regime evolved into a form of differentiation. During this period, mainly the communist parties opposed the Western-style democratic regime. Furthermore, positions on foreign policy issues, including NATO or European Union membership, became relevant. To summarise Lijphart's thoughts, it can be concluded that, while the relevance of former socio-demographic patterns has declined, the importance of post-materialist values, positions toward democracy, and foreign policy issues has increased.

As voters make their decisions based on their value preferences (see Inglehart, 1977; or Lijphart, 1984), and these preferences are determined and shaped by political parties (see Dahl, Flanagan and Beck, 1969, or Enyedi, 2004), the question arises: what determines voters' party choice? Dalton (1984) explains it by the Downsian model of

party choice (see Downs, 1957): according to the rational choice theory, voters choose the party that aligns most closely with their own preferences. As a result, voters assume that the selected party is able to assert the voters' preferences and interests.

Dalton (1984) also argues that new politics (or dealignment) gain relevance because voters' political attitudes toward political issues and choices depend on value preferences rather than social backgrounds. In this sense, voters make their decisions based on their political party affiliation to ensure the fulfilment of their preferences. However, as previously mentioned, these values are strongly shaped by the political elite itself.

Based on the theoretical concepts of revisionists, it makes sense that the effect of socio-demographic and economic backgrounds is often overemphasised and oversimplified to solely represent and explain the patterns of the social and political conflicts. The main disadvantage of both traditionalists and revisionists is that they examine the social and political complexity from a single perspective. On the one hand, the revisionists argue for the relevance of preferences dominated by the party system. In this context, voters develop their own values, which are modified and activated by the political parties (*'top-down'* causality direction). In this sense, only political parties have the capacity to determine which differences can develop into cleavages. On the other hand, traditionalists argue that voters, by their socio-demographic backgrounds, determine the political parties and the party system (*'bottom-up'* causality direction). This means that socio-demographic and economic cleavages determine the characteristics and positions of political parties on public issues within the party system. Based on the arguments presented, it seems logical to assume that the two models represent the two sides of the same coin. From this perspective, political parties and voters exist in a political symbiosis. In this sense, voters and politicians are also able to influence each other – without either of them, the other cannot operate and achieve its objectives.

It seems logical that socio-demographic and economic backgrounds are key factors of political conflicts – more so than revisionists argue, but less so than traditionalists suggest. While socio-demographic and economic backgrounds can determine voters' basic value preferences and identity, they also define the potential characteristics of political parties and their positions on specific public issues. As a result, socio-demographic and economic backgrounds can indicate the parties' scope in determining what may become cleavages and what may not. However, without the contribution of the political elite, voters' preferences could not evolve solely into a cleavage. In parallel, political parties are not dominant enough to define voters' preferences without aligning

with their positions. This issue is widely discussed among researchers who highlight the relevance of the normative level, which represents the third theoretical wave of cleavages. As Róna referred to it, this school can be called the revision of the revision. (Róna, 2008: 129).

2.3 The New Wave of Revisionism: The Importance of the Intermediate Normative Level

Scholars of this paradigm argue that political cleavages have not frozen, but their variability has increased because of the intensification of social dynamics. This led to the process of dealignment, where parties lost their direct influence over their voters' preferences. However, despite the dissolution of the relationship between parties and voters, cleavage-based voting has created new structures and alignments between parties and their supporters, which can also be described as the process of realignment. This phase is referred to as the permanent redistribution of the party system (Carreras et al., 2015: 673-674). After a period of decline, the volatility increases (1), voter turnout stabilises and may even increase (2). At the same time, support for new parties grows (3), the popularity of established parties decreases and stabilises at a lower level (4), and the proportion of invalid or spoiled ballots remains consistently low (5).

In this context, socio-demographic and economic background-based cleavages remain active; however, their features and relevance have evolved. While traditionalists argue that the owner vs. worker conflict can create a cleavage, the so-called new revisionists contend that this framework is inadequate and outdated. Instead, the new revisionists argue that differences in job position, income, and education level are far more significant – in certain ways, they also replace the earlier cleavage structures.

Education reshapes how individuals view the world and interpret social and political processes, encouraging more empathetic and inclusive perspectives. While individuals with higher educational qualifications are generally more libertarian and left-wing oriented, those with a lower level of education are probably more authoritarian and right-wing oriented (Stubager, 2010). By a higher level of tolerance and a lower level of prejudice (see: Margaryan, Paul and Siedler, 2018), individuals with higher educational levels are more cosmopolitan, pro-immigrant and pro-European than their less educated counterparts. Education has the ability to strengthen secularisation and boost social mobility. Thus, the motivational needs of individuals with a higher educational level also change, which may influence their position on political issues. Furthermore, it has an

effect on party affiliation as well: new political parties with green or social-liberal characteristics are more popular in the higher educational groups (Stubager, 2010). In contrast, the probability to support a right-wing, anti-establishment, Eurosceptic is higher by those with lower-educational level, because racial and cultural prejudices are higher in their case (Dustmann and Preston, 2007). Nevertheless, the association between educational level and position on political parties and public issues seems to be influenced by spatial factors as well. Educational differences are more pronounced in Western and Northern European countries, such as Belgium or Austria, where cleavage lines are fully developed. In contrast, the association is the weakest among the 20 analysed countries in the Southern and Eastern European countries (Wille and Bovens, 2017). Additionally, Nagy and Dúró (2025) confirmed the relevance of educational qualifications in shaping attitudes toward immigration in Hungary. However, the explanatory power of education was influenced by both ideological self-placement on the left-right scale and age. Among respondents with higher levels of education, those identifying as left-wing were strong supporters of immigration, whereas a more right-leaning orientation among individuals with higher educational levels increased the rejection of immigration. In parallel, the association between age groups and education shows a U-shaped pattern. Accordingly, educational level was a significant factor in shaping attitudes toward immigration: younger and older age groups were more supportive, whereas the middle-aged cohort tended to adopt a more oppositional stance, presumably due to perceived risks in the labour market. The question of the labour market leads to another potential cleavage, which refers to occupation and income; however, these factors are probably highly correlates with educational level. Based on this logic, individuals with more stable financial situations are likely to exhibit more tolerant and open attitudes, similar to those with higher educational qualifications, who are more likely to hold white-collar positions. As the presented association network demonstrates, these factors influence each other.

Besides the potentially existing educational and occupational cleavages, the question of gender-based cleavages is also a topic of debate in the literature (e.g. Brooks, Nieuwbeerta and Manza, 2006; Cowel-Meyers, Evans and Shin, 2020). The argument for the cleavage created along the lines of gender identity has often been rejected due to the lack of historical analysis. Sass and Kuhnle (2023) attempted to address this shortcoming and shed new light on the conflict, focusing on the question of gender identity. According to their view, the contrast between male and female genders aligns with the concept of cleavages, as it fundamentally shapes societal mechanisms in the long term (1), results in

significant polarization in society along structural-economic (2) and cultural-ideological (3) dimensions, and leads to the establishment of organizations aimed at representing the interests and values of the genders (4). In their study, the authors compared legislative results from Norway, Germany, and Sweden, as well as the outcomes of U.S. presidential elections. In the case of national elections, they analysed the gender-based support for specific political parties, while for U.S. presidential elections, they examined gender-based support in relation to presidential candidates. Another segment of their research involved analysing the activities of organisations and movements advocating for women's interests, which they compared with ideological and value-based voter attitudes. However, as Son (2024) stated, gender cleavage is not translated into political party structures. As no explicitly male or female parties have emerged at the level of the political parties, this cleavage is not institutionalised within the party structures. Instead, differences can only be observed in the level of support for parties across genders, which rather indicates fragmentation based on socio-demographic patterns.

Returning to the perspective of the new revisionist model, similarly to the two aforementioned models, the third framework also attributes special significance to cleavages. In this context, social divisions are necessary for the emergence of a cleavage. However, political parties have the capacity to transform differences into cleavages; thereby, the model recognises the active integrative capabilities of political parties as well. Besides the two levels, a third one is also required: the so-called normative level, which means a shared identity between voters and the political elite.

In this context, political parties need to have the ability to track the changes in social divisions. If political divisions closely follow the changes and demands of social differences, it leads to a cleavage-based conflict (segmental cleavages; Eckstein, 1966), where the opposing groups have their own ideology and objectives with their own identities. For the purpose of differentiating identity-related political conflicts from the non-identity-related ones, Allardt and Pesonen (1967) differentiated the non-structural and the structural cleavages from each other, where the former refers to simple social divisions, and the latter refers to solidarity and group cohesion-based identity.

Based on the assumptions of Eckstein (1966) and Allardt and Pesonen (1967), Bartolini and Mair (1990) developed a three-level cleavage theory. The three levels represent three different preconditions which are necessary to confirm the existence of a conflict as a cleavage. In this sense, they argue that cleavages are characterised by three elements: empirical (1), normative (2), and organisational (3). The empirical level focuses

on voters' socio-demographic and economic backgrounds. The normative level refers to values and ideologies shaped by the identities of social groups and political parties. The organisational level represents the institutionalised relationship between voters and the political elite (e.g. political parties). According to Bartolini and Mair, the precondition for a cleavage is the presence of a conflict, which coexists across the three levels. Consequently, any conflict can develop into a cleavage if it is capable of dividing society at the level of voters (empirical), parties (organisational), and generating opposing identities (normative). In line with this, Whitefield (2002) also sees that cleavages mean a certain type of division, which lies among politically relevant persons and is rooted in longstanding and structured sociological and ideological conflicts. Moreover, as Knutsen and Scarbrough (1998) argue, voters do not feel a common identity with everyone who shares their values - they handle it as a similar value orientation (special definition of normative level). As a result, a supporter and an opponent of one issue may be partners in the case of other issues. Similar to the concept of Bartolini and Mair, Knutsen and Scarbrough (1998: 494) also qualified cleavage as a three-level political conflict, where society is characterised by opposing groups. The division becomes persistent as the group members share common values – and not a common identity –, which are institutionalised within specific organisations – such as political parties.

According to the new revisionists, the normative level can be characterised by ideological differences. Based on social and ideological conflicts –represented by voters and political parties –, various political normative systems have emerged. In order to clarify the differences among these separated frameworks within a given society, political science has identified some heuristic devices. One of the most well-known tools for assessing political normativity is the scale of political left and right. This theoretical framework is generally accepted because it allows for reducing the complexity of the political world to a one-dimensional scale. Besides, political positions and preferences are generally expressed in left/right terms. Thereby, both voters and the political elite are able to identify themselves on the scale. As Fuchs and Klingemann expressed, '*view the left/right schema as a mechanism for the reduction of complexity, which serves primarily to provide an orientation function for individuals and a communication function for the political system*' (1990: 205). Thus, political left and right scale works as a one-dimensional, heuristic device to highlight political divisions and classify communities with different orientations and identities. However, the main drawback of the left-right scale is that the meaning of the left and right is changeable: it has different concepts in

different places and ages (see Bobbio, 1996 or Giebler, Meyer and Wagner, 2021). Besides, most questionnaires do not define the exact content of the left-right scale during the fieldwork, which may lead to reliability problems, because respondents interpret the left-right content from their own perspective. Furthermore, in high-rate, respondents avoid sharing their position on the normative left-right scale, thus they pick a moderate position on the scale.

Thus, alternative normative scales have been published to moderate the disadvantages of the left-right scale. In this context, the previously discussed division between materialist and post-materialist conflicts (see Inglehart, 1977) is also a widely accepted method of measuring normative positions. Besides, the so-called GAL-TAN-based scale classifies society and political parties on the Green-Alternative-Libertarian vs. Traditional-Authoritarian- Nationalist spectrum (e.g. Hogghe, Marks and Wilson, 2002; Bakker, Jolly and Polk, 2012). In addition to the aforementioned ideologies and value systems, the division can also be measured by the Schwartz Value Scale, which differentiates respondents' values into ten distinct sub-categories: power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security. The common advantage of the alternative normative scales is that these dimensions include well-defined values, allowing the preferences to be measured in a more direct way. In certain cases, the questionnaire interprets the meaning of the specific values (see the Schwartz Value Scale, Schmidt et al, 2015), thus minimising any differences in interpretation of the values by respondents. However, these alternatives are not as widely adopted in surveys or in the categorisation of political parties. In some cases, scales can be constructed at the level of respondents, while in other cases, due to the missing information, scales can be measured indirectly – provided that some data are available – by posing specific issues to respondents. In contrast, the left-right normative scale is almost universally accepted; as a result, most research adopts this division.

Among these alternatives, the GAL-TAN dimension has been particularly prominent in studies examining recent political transformation in Europe. Marks, Attewell, Rovny and Hooghe (2021) argue that, as a consequence of the Eurocrisis, migration, and Brexit, a new political conflict has emerged, which they term the transnational cleavage. From a historical perspective, transnationalism has fostered open societies in the Western world, both culturally and economically, transforming the architecture of political life. As a result, political choice is increasingly shaped by conflicts over immigration, trade, and European integration. Within this framework, TAN (traditionalist–authoritarian–

nationalist) parties, characterized by nationalist orientations, mobilise strong opposition against immigration and the European integration, whereas GAL (green–alternative–libertarian) parties advocate in favour of transnationalist positions. In the course of this process, new political parties have emerged with distinctive social constituencies that reflect the evolving lines of conflicts. The traditional left–right axis has been supplemented, in many respects, by the GAL–TAN dimension. Marks et al. (2021) contend that the transnational cleavage builds upon pre-existing societal conflicts, amplifying some, giving rise to new ones, while allowing others to recede. These dynamic challenges the '*frozen conflicts*' thesis, as social cleavages are shown to be in a state of continual evolution. To test the existence and structure of this new cleavage, the authors compare socio-demographic factors—educational attainment, occupation, place of residence, religiosity, and gender—across eight waves of the European Social Survey. Their findings indicate that these socio-demographic variables remain relevant, however their statistical significance has diminished substantially over time.

From a critical point of view, it can be noted that the term transnational cleavage may be misleading, as most historically significant social cleavages have also transcended national boundaries, albeit shaped by local socio-economic and cultural contexts. Conflicts such as church–state, urban–rural, labour–capital, and the rise of national states emerged across multiple countries, each manifesting in nationally specific forms. What distinguishes the contemporary divide is not merely its cross-national scope, but rather its substantive content: disputes over globalisation, European integration and migration all fundamentally concern the distribution of decision-making authority between the nation-state and supranational or global governance structures. In this sense, the cleavage could be more precisely characterised as a globalist–sovereignist conflict, as this terminology more directly captures the normative core of the political struggle. Secondly, while Marks, et al. (2021) identify European integration, Brexit, and migration as key catalysts of the contemporary divide, other salient political issues may also reinforce or reshape the globalist–sovereignist conflict. Climate change provides a pertinent example: policy responses to this challenge frequently require coordinated international action, supranational regulation, and the redistribution of resources across borders. As such, climate policy often aligns with the preferences of globalist actors advocating for multilateral governance, while prompting resistance from sovereignist actors concerned with preserving national autonomy over environmental and economic policy. The inclusion of such issue dimensions highlights that the cleavage is not limited to the factors

emphasised by the authors, but may evolve to encompass a wider range of conflicts rooted in the tension between global cooperation and national sovereignty.

Furthermore, the authors acknowledge that mobilisation on the TAN side has been considerably stronger than on the GAL side. However, it is important to note that, this difference cannot be explained solely by the social structures of different normative identities. Political-strategic factors such as media access, party organisation, and campaign financing are probably playing a substantial role in shaping the capacity for mobilisation. The dynamics of the cleavage may be altered significantly by external factors – for example, through regulatory frameworks or the availability of resources. This suggests that the persistence of the divide cannot be explained exclusively by socio-demographic alignment. Although Marks et al (2021) reference earlier cleavages, the study provides limited comparative analysis of how the transnational—or, more precisely, globalist–sovereigntist—divide parallels previous historical conflicts, such as the protectionism versus free trade debates of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Exploring such historical processes could offer a more detailed understanding of the structural and ideological continuities.

Similarly to the first revisionists, according to the third model, the responsibility to integrate and manage issues into the existing political conflicts lies with the political parties (Bartolin and Mair, 1990). This becomes the most evident, when social and political structures deviate from the conventional processes. Well before Bartolini and Mair, Schattschneider and Adamany (1975) noticed that political parties align themselves sociologically and ideologically with the already existing political divisions embedded in the given party system. Consequently, they do not address new issues that could create further divisions in society: the parties position themselves and their opponents on the existing lines of political conflicts. However, when a new policy issue emerges, it is able to generate instability by creating ideological and identity inconsistencies at the normative level. When the issue persists and remains high on the political agenda, both political parties and their voters need to resolve their ideological inconsistencies.

After reviewing the models of cleavages, the following table offers a summarised overview of their classifications and characteristics:

Table 2. Alignment, dealignment, and realignment: A summary of cleavage theories

Model	Traditionalist Model	Revisionist Model	New Revisionist Model
Frameworks	Alignment (Old Politics)	Dealignment (New Politics)	Realignment (Renewing Old Politics with New Politics)
Dynamism	Stability	Period of Change	Redistribution
Support of Established Parties	High and stable	Decreasing	Stabilising on a new level
Support of New Parties	Low	Increasing	Stabilising the new parties
Voter Turnout	Stable	Decreasing	Stable or increasing
Volatility	Low and stable	Increasing	Periodically increasing, then gradually decreasing
Invalid votes	Low and stable	Increasing	Low and stable
Main Characteristics of Cleavages	Socio-demographic and economic background conflicts	Value-based conflicts	Renewed socio- demographic and economic patterns with value-based conflicts
Direction of Association	Bottom-Up	Top-Down	Intermediate normative Level
Examples of Cleavages	Class, religion, urban-rural, ethnicity	Materialist vs. post-materialist, generational, foreign policy, system supporters vs. system opponents	Education level, occupation, value orientations
Voter Behaviour	Sociological and party-identification model	Rational choice model	Sociological and rational choice model

Source: This table is an extended and refined version of Róna's summary table on political cleavages (see Róna, 2008: 133).

2.4 Evaluation of the Literature: Research Question(s) and Hypotheses

Following the exploration of cleavage theories and concepts, one of the first conclusions is that the interpretive framework of cleavages has evolved through theoretical debates. This diversity can presumably be traced back to the historical significance of cleavages. Considering that the theoretical framework initially relied on social classes and groups, which later transformed into a model emphasising individual's value preferences under the influence of individualism, which further developed because of the social and technological advancements, into a theoretical framework encompassing the triad of voters, parties and values, it can be concluded that cleavage theories are indeed a dynamic model of social and political conflicts.

In the light of the advantages of three-level research models, the current analysis argues that concepts based on traditional and revisionist approaches should not be entirely dismissed. However, relying exclusively on any single level provides a fragmented analytical perspective and thus fails to facilitate a nuanced understanding of political and social phenomena. In contrast, the neo-revisionist perspective, which supports the adaptation of three-level models, seeks to address this limitation by expanding the interpretive framework. This expanded framework incorporates the normative ideological dimension alongside social communities and political parties. The strength of this approach lies in its understanding of normative identity as a connecting element between voters and party organisations, thereby further enriching the framework used to interpret social and political processes.

However, in the light of the three-level theoretical models, it is also crucial to highlight the nature of these three-levels. Although it is typically conceptualised as a structure with three components, in practice, the framework may in practice function with two active levels and a passive – mediating – level. First, social communities are composed of individuals with identical or at least similar socio-demographic and economic backgrounds, and organise themselves based on their shared interests and values. These forms of organisation may include informal gatherings or individual associations to more institutionalised forms, such as NGOs, CSOs, or even political parties. These groups are considered active because they are, to varying degrees, capable of participating actively in political or social conflicts. One of the most apparent manifestations of this activism is the expression of political opinion by individuals, which takes its most ceremonial form through participation in elections. On the other hand, the

strategic capacity of political parties also reflects this activism, most tangibly expressed through political campaigns.

In parallel, the passive level between voters and political parties is the normative level, which consists of values and perceptions. As highlighted in the theoretical foundations of normative identities, ideological profiles serve as frameworks that support their members in describing and qualifying the social, economic and political progress. Based on this value system, ideological characteristics function indeed as heuristic tools for determining positions toward political candidates, alternatives, events, and issues. From another perspective, these ideological profiles can also act as key drivers of political action: for instance, when individuals and political parties perceive a particular issue as involving risk, it may motivate them to take part in activism in order to minimise the risks and increase the overall well-being.

This chain of ideas leads us to another characteristic of cleavage theories, specifically to offer misleading, oversimplified causal explanations. While traditionalists argue that the primacy of social and political structures is based on the social-demographic and economic characteristics, where political parties are only passive followers of the social patterns and demands, revisionists argue that the dominance of political parties, which influence voters' positions by their value-orientations. Even the three-level models, which argue that the mediating normative level is the major catalyst of the political conflicts, can be misleading.

From a critical perspective, recent research argues that the three levels – voters, normative ideologies, and political parties - coexist in a symbiotic relationship. Within this framework, political parties have a specific role in shaping political conflicts, which is a point acknowledged by all three theoretical models. Through strategic actions, parties are capable of increasing the political salience of existing social divisions and even creating new structural cleavages (Posner, 2001). However, based on the assumption that political parties aim to maximise their electoral support, they cannot dismiss the newly salient issue as well. Instead, parties attempt to integrate these issues into their existing ideological profiles (e.g. left/right orientations). By doing this, they aim to ensure ideological consistency, which also serve to minimise electoral risk. This process illustrates the dynamic nature of political identities and values, which are shaped by both external (e.g. the rise of a new issue) and internal factors (e.g. the integration of these issues into the formerly established frameworks).

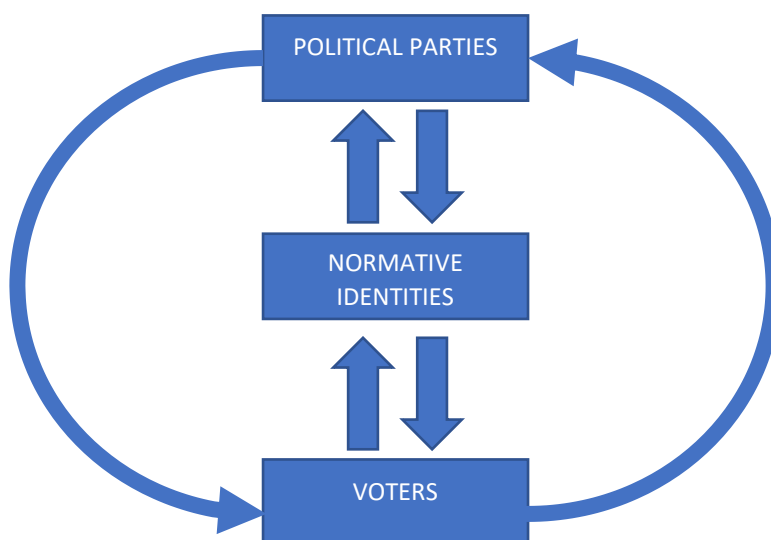
In addition, political parties are able to influence the content of the normative level by shaping political ideologies and voters' value preferences. Thus, they are able to determine voters' positions on specific issues and (re)define the content of normativity, including moral codes, belief systems, and value structures. In doing so, political parties do not only reflect existing societal divisions but also actively contribute to political mobilisation.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that as political parties can influence voters and the normative level, these factors also influence parties. Firstly, since the primary objective of parties is vote maximisation, making strategies that contradict either their own ideological position or the preferences of their potential voter base, seems illogical. For example, a labour party whose supporters predominantly consist of low-educated blue collar workers—based on socio-demographic characteristics—would probably act against its own vote-maximisation strategy, if it campaigned in favour of restricting labour rights. Therefore, in order to maintain their electoral support, parties are compelled to take into account the socio-demographic composition of their voter base, as well as the values and interests present by them. This also implies that a high level of strategic awareness is expected from parties: they must possess detailed knowledge about the socio-demographic patterns of their supporters and opponents, along with the values and interests associated with these political communities.

Secondly, political parties must also possess extensive knowledge of the normative identities of other political actors within the party system in order to position themselves effectively. In terms of political parties and normative ideologies, parties can be understood as independent brands (Lilleker, 2006: 43), similar to business enterprises, each with its own ethos, ideology, and set of beliefs. In the process of political competition, and in line with their goal of vote maximisation, parties cannot depart from this political identity, which has been constructed over a long period of time. Therefore, similar to the socio-demographic level, the normative level also serves as both a limiting and guiding factor for parties: it defines the set of possible responses that are most applicable to their voter base and their normative profile in the context of electoral competition. At the same time, similar dynamics can be assumed in the case of voter groups as well. Since social groups possess distinct sets of values, these influence the formation of the group's normative identity. Conversely, this normative identity also serves as a kind of compass for evaluating political alternatives and guiding political action (e.g., voting).

In conclusion, theoretical approaches that emphasise the explanatory primacy exclusively to one element within the triad of voters, normative ideologies, and political parties can be considered inadequate. As demonstrated in the logical relationships outlined above, causal channels in social and political conflicts are inherently bidirectional: the actions of political parties influence both voter preferences and normative ideologies (1), while normative ideologies and the voter base simultaneously define and constrain the range of responses available to parties (2). Furthermore, the normative level is shaped by the communication strategies employed by parties (3), as well as by the value systems and interests of the social groups associated with a given ideological-political identity (4). At the same time, social communities can themselves be shaped by political parties (5) and normative ideologies (6). As this illustrates, all three levels have a dual function: they act both as constraints and as guiders, because they collectively determine the scope of political action. The mutual and bidirectional relationships outlined above are illustrated in the following figure:

Figure 12. The bidirectional interactions between voters, normative identities, and political parties



Source: Own illustration.

Based on the systemic causal relationships presented above, it can be assumed that all three theoretical models contain valid insights. In the context of social and political conflict, the socio-demographic dimension emphasised by traditionalists, the strategic role of political parties highlighted by revisionists, and the mediating function of normative identity emphasised by neo-revisionists may each represent relevant explanatory factors. However, it is important to recognise that these influences are not

mutually exclusive but rather reciprocal in nature (see Figure 12). Depending on the specific conflict, different levels may become more dominant, and this may further be shaped by temporal, spatial, and cultural dimensions. This aligns with Marks, Attewell, Rovyn and Hooghe's argument (2021) that transnational cleavages build upon pre-existing societal conflicts, amplifying particular conflicts, giving rise to new ones, while allowing others to recede. In this view, the '*frozen conflicts*' theory seems to be inadequate, as societal cleavages are in a state of continuous evolution.

As a consequence, in light of the above considerations, methodological caution is advisable when attempting to determine causal relationships. In the case of a given conflict, determining causal relationships proves to be fluid and uncertain, as it cannot be clearly established whether the process was initially triggered by a party's strategy, voter demands, or developments rooted in normative values and identities. This dilemma is a classic example of the well-known '*chicken or egg*' paradox: it is impossible to determine which came first, and as a result, the causal relationship between the elements cannot be unambiguously identified⁸. As a result, a definite causal relationship cannot be identified within the context of social and political conflicts. This limitation highlights the inherent complexity of political and social conflicts, in which causal pathways are often interdependent, circular, or context-specific.

A similar conclusion was drawn by Deegan-Krause (2009) in his critique of classical cleavage theories. Without assuming a fixed causal hierarchy, his model acknowledges the fluidity and bidirectionality of political dynamics and avoids the oversimplification that often characterises deterministic causal claims. Deegan-Krause contends that there is no unidirectional relationship between the three levels, as social structures, ideologies, and institutions continuously interact with and influence one another. Furthermore, most conflicts are inherently context-dependent, shaped by specific temporal, spatial, and cultural conditions. Given this complexity, deterministic causal explanations are likely to oversimplify reality. Consequently, the model shifts analytical attention from causality to how conflicts manifest across levels.

In this regard, Deegan-Krause (2009) recognises that conflicts may take forms other than cleavages. His typology provides a valuable framework for classifying seven distinct types of political and social conflict by identifying the levels at which a given conflict

⁸ To conduct a reliable analysis of the causal relationship among party preferences, media consumption, socio-demographic factors and attitudes toward immigration, a more topic specific survey, which is currently not available, would be required.

manifests — whether among voters, within normative ideological frameworks, or at the level of political parties. In this sense, a conflict can manifest as a cleavage, division, or difference. A conflict qualifies as a cleavage when it appears across all the three levels: empirical, normative, and organisational. Conversely, it is considered a division when the conflict is present in two of these three levels. Finally, a conflict is classified as a difference when it manifests in only one of the three levels. Both levels of division and difference can be further categorised into three subtypes. Position Division (1) refers to a conflict that is stable at both the empirical and normative levels but does not materialise at the level of political organisations, such as political parties or elites. Census Division (2) occurs when a social group votes for a party, but there are no shared preferences between the group and the party. Lastly, Issue Division (3) describes a situation in which voters share common preferences with a political party but do not share common social characteristics. Similarly, a difference can be structural, attitudinal, or institutional. At the voter level, the conflict can be classified as a structural difference. If the conflict emerges exclusively at the normative level, it can be classified as an attitudinal difference. Furthermore, a conflict can be qualified as an institutional difference when it emerges exclusively at the level of political parties.

Based on this typology, the primary analytical strength of the model lies in its classificatory potential. By distinguishing between cleavages, divisions, and differences, the framework allows for a nuanced mapping of political conflict. Furthermore, its binary logic (the conflict either appears at a level or it does not) provides clear operational criteria for classification, enhancing analytical clarity. However, this simplicity may be understood as a limitation as well—especially given the model's inability to identify initiating actors or causal sequences. Rather than impose potentially misleading causal narratives, the model embraces the complexity and context-dependence of political life, offering scholars a pragmatic tool for identifying and comparing conflicts.

The practical relevance and methodological robustness of Deegan-Krause's typology are further affirmed by recent empirical applications. A notable example is a study examining the cleavage structure surrounding the populist/anti-populist divide in Latin America (Hallin, Kitzberger, Palos-Pons, 2025). In this analysis, Deegan-Krause's classification is applied to argue that cleavages are not merely reflections of objective social structures but are also shaped by elite agency and strategic political action. This perspective—aligned with the constructivist tradition and works by Przeworski and Sprague (1988) as well as Torcal and Mainwaring (2003)—resonates with Deegan-

Krause's emphasis on the constructed, fluid, and context-dependent nature of political conflict. The authors highlight the typology's analytical strength in capturing multi-dimensional cleavages: even if the organisational level (e.g., formal party alignment) is weak or unstable, the simultaneous presence of structural foundations (e.g., class or ethnicity) and normative identities (e.g., values and cultural alignment) still supports the classification of populism versus anti-populism as a full cleavage. In doing so, the study offers a positive reinterpretation of Deegan-Krause's model, particularly in emphasising elite-led conflict construction—a dynamic especially relevant in Latin American contexts, where political cleavages often do not emerge evolutionary from social structures, but are strategically articulated by political actors. Beyond its analytical use, the typology is also valued for its methodological contribution. By drawing attention to the global diversity of cleavage patterns, the authors highlight Deegan-Krause's argument that no universal or natural cleavage structures exist. Instead, political divisions must be uncovered through detailed, context-sensitive analysis—or '*thick description*'—that avoids the application of Western models. In this way, the study contributes to the ongoing effort to '*de-provincialise*' cleavage theory, expanding its utility beyond Western Europe and reaffirming the flexibility and cross-contextual relevance of Deegan-Krause's approach.

This theoretical foundation highlights the conceptual and methodological flexibility offered by three-level cleavage frameworks—particularly Deegan-Krause's typology—in identifying and classifying political conflicts beyond traditional models. By accommodating variation in structural bases, normative attachments, and organisational articulation, this approach provides a versatile analytical lens capable of capturing complex, multi-dimensional conflicts.

Building on this, the present research adopts Deegan-Krause's framework to explore a contemporary European case: the political and societal conflicts relating to the 2015 migration crisis. While existing literature has extensively documented the crisis's impact on party systems, public opinion, and normative discourses, less attention has been paid to the extent to which these conflicts fulfil the criteria of a fully developed political cleavage.

In light of the theoretical and logical considerations outlined above, the present analysis seeks to answer the following questions:

Whether the conflicts arising from the migration crisis can be classified as a cleavage-level conflict?

If so, does it represent an independent cleavage, or is it a conflict integrated into the existing cleavage lines? Alternatively, if it does not qualify as a cleavage, what classification would the conflict most appropriately fall under?

To address this question, the conflicts caused by the 2015 migration crisis will be evaluated using the three-level interpretive models, specifically the typology introduced by Kevin Deegan-Krause (2007). The hypothesis framework developed based on this classification is presented in the following table:

Table 3. Hypothesis framework based on Kevin Deegan-Krause's typology

Hypothesis	Statement
H0	The 2015 European migration crisis did not manifest as a conflict at any of the three levels : the voter level, the normative level, or the level of the political parties.
H1	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged across all three levels, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a cleavage-level conflict .
H2	The 2015 European migration crisis did not emerge across all three levels , and therefore, the conflict cannot be classified as a cleavage-level conflict.
H2.1	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged at the voter level and the normative level, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a position division .
H2.2.	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged at the voter level and the level of political parties, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a census division .
H2.3.	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged at the normative level and the level of political parties, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as an issue division .
H2.4	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged exclusively at the voter level, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a structural difference .
H2.5	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged exclusively at the normative level, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as an attitudinal difference .
H2.6	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged exclusively at the level of political parties, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as an institutional difference .

It is important to clarify that, based on the aforementioned mutual association, the present research does not aim to determine definite causal relationships between the three levels of cleavage theories. While the theoretical framework acknowledges the possibility

of mutual and bidirectional causal influences among voters, normative ideologies, and parties, the empirical analysis does not aim to identify or measure them. Instead, the study focuses on detecting whether conflict manifests at these levels or not. This approach reflects the inherent limitations of observational data and aligns with the epistemological complexity often associated with cleavage theory.

In addition to determining the classification of the conflict, the analysis may also offer insights into the structural patterns of existing cleavages. Based on the identified levels of manifestation, the research may reveal whether the migration crisis has contributed to the strengthening of established cleavages (e.g. cultural or economic lines), or whether it reflects the emergence of a novel, independent dimension of political conflict. Consequently, the findings could help clarify whether migration-related conflicts signify a new axis of contestation or a reconfiguration of older cleavage structures.

Furthermore, based on the theoretical overview, it can be assumed that the framework of alignment, dealignment and realignment are only capable of describing specific periods of social and political processes. However, it seems logical that these periods alternate over time. The dealignment phase that follows alignment is eventually replaced by a state of realignment, when the relationships between voters and parties are restructured. However, as a result of this process, the new structure itself may become stable, potentially leading to a new state of alignment if it persists over time – naturally, this could once again transition into dealignment, which will probably be followed by realignment.

2.5 Spatial and Temporal Focus of the Research with Methodological Framework

To address the research question, the spatial dimension of the research focuses on Hungary and Austria. While Hungary serves as the primary case, Austria is included as a reference country to provide a comparative perspective to qualify the results. Both countries have approximately similar population sizes, are members of the Western world, and lie along the previously discussed Balkan migratory route (see Figure 9). However, their experiences with migration differ significantly. Hungarian society has had minimal exposure to non-European migration, whereas Austrian society has a historical background of such experiences. Consequently, it can be assumed that the 2015 European migration crisis had differing impacts on the two countries. Furthermore, Austria is

widely recognised as a classic example of societal cleavages, whereas in the case of Hungary, the literature describes cleavages as only partially present.⁹

The formal units of the research consist of the actors identified at the two active levels of social-political cleavages. In this context, the analysis examines divisions regarding immigration at the levels of voters and political parties, while also considering the normative characteristics of these units.

To analyse the conflict that is assumed to exist in relation to the 2015 European migration crisis at the voter level, the research utilises datasets from the European Social Survey (ESS). In parallel, the analysis of political parties relies on data from the Manifesto Project Database (MPD)¹⁰ and the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES). The independent variable of the research is the position toward immigration. The analysis of political parties' positions on immigration is conducted using crosstabulation and correlation analysis. Voters' attitudes toward immigration are examined through a multi-level regression approach (Heck, Thomas and Tabata, 2014: 75-166).¹¹

Based on the statistical findings of the immigration wave (see Figure 2-9), furthermore, the analysis of migration-related narratives in media (see Figure 10) and academic discourse (see Figure 11), the research identifies a pre-crisis period (before 2015), a crisis period (around 2015) and a quasi '*beyond-the-horizon-of-the-crisis*' (after 2015) period. This methodological approach enables the research to explore and demonstrate the effects of the 2015 migration crisis on the political sphere in a tendency-based way. Furthermore, it is crucial to note that, during the research, no consistent data on political parties' positions on immigration were available in CHES or the Manifesto Project before 2014 and after 2019. As a result, the temporal scope of the analysis had to be limited to the period between 2014 and 2018 for political parties, while a broader timeframe between 2004 and 2024 was available to analyse social groups. Based on Gerring's Covariational Typology (2004), the research qualified as a time-series cross-sectional (TSCS) analysis.

⁹ For further details, see the chapter '*Political Cleavages Lines in Austria and Hungary*'.

¹⁰ Throughout the research, the term '*Manifesto Project*' is used.

¹¹ The detailed description of each database will be presented in the respective analytical section.

2.6 The Relevance of the Research

The significance of this research is substantial. The dissertation aims to conduct a three-level analysis—empirical, normative, and organisational—in the context of two European Union member states: Austria and Hungary. This multi-level approach, coupled with a methodology that integrates both qualitative and quantitative sources, allows for a deeper and more nuanced exploration of the findings.

The 2015 European migration crisis serves as a particularly relevant topic. As Figures 2-11 illustrate, this crisis generated significant migration-related tension within the European Union, reshaping the political landscape. The crisis underscored a new wave of political differentiation across Europe, highlighting deep divisions and alternative responses both at the EU level and within the member states. These responses not only aim to address the immediate challenges posed by migration but also amplify existing disagreements, reflecting broader debates on issues such as demographic crises, the allocation of competencies between the EU and its member states, and the future trajectory of the European Union.

In addition, the research makes a valuable contribution to theoretical discussions. As the literature review presents, the topic of political cleavages is a central concern among scholars. On the one hand, understanding the relevance of political cleavages is essential to grasping the enduring structure of political competition. Cleavages are not temporary or superficial disputes—they reflect deep-rooted social divisions that shape political identities, influence partisan alignments, and drive long-term electoral behaviour. In this sense, determining whether the migration crisis constitutes a cleavage is of more than academic interest: it helps assess the extent to which the issue has become embedded in the political landscape, thereby affecting political structures beyond the immediate crisis context. Furthermore, distinguishing cleavages from other types of political conflict also enhances conceptual clarity. While many political controversies are transient or issue-specific, cleavages are characterised by persistent group-based identities and structural depth. Making this analytical distinction allows for a more accurate assessment of the duration, intensity, and impact of a given political conflict. Moreover, classifying political conflicts systematically allows scholars and practitioners to compare societal divisions across time and space. Nevertheless, it supports the development of political strategies and policymaking by providing insight into which issues resonate structurally with the

electorate and which do not. In this way, the cleavage framework serves both theoretical inquiry and applied analysis.

However, among others, Francis Fukuyama has questioned the relevance and persistence of cleavages in the Central European region. In his '*end of history*' thesis, he argued that the liberal-democratic victory in the Cold War marked the cessation of ideological competition, rendering liberalism the '*only game in town*' (Fukuyama, 2006: 418). Nevertheless, as Bobbio (1966: 03) emphasised, '*the ideologies of the past have merely been replaced by others which are new or claim to be new. The ideological tree is always green*'. While the ideologies as normative identities correlate with voters and political parties' positions, it can be assumed that, besides the ideological tree, political and social conflicts remain a constant element of societal development. As Hooghe and Marks (2018) observe, when political or identity-based inconsistencies intensify, new parties often emerge. Even prior to the migration crisis, existing political parties were compelled to integrate salient issues, such as climate change, into their profiles. This indicates that cleavages and party systems are far from static; they may remain active and dynamic even during the migration crisis.

Beyond its theoretical significance, this research also makes a valuable contribution to applied science. The methodological approach, particularly the multi-level regression analysis, is not only well-suited for academic inquiry but also offers practical applications for applied science. Additionally, the research extensively utilizes and presents international scientific and statistical databases, including the European Social Survey (ESS), the Manifesto Project (MPD), the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES), the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat), the United Nations – Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the United Nations – International Labour Organization (UN ILO), the United Nations – International Organization for Migration (UN IOM), the Member and Activists of Political Parties (MAPP), the Who Govern Europe database, and data from the Austrian and Hungarian national statistical offices. By understanding the structures of cleavages, the findings can serve as useful tools for marketing strategies and campaigns as well. This makes the results valuable not only for political parties in their strategy development, but also for economic actors, such as companies, aiming to adapt their strategies to better align with societal dynamics.

3 POLITICAL CLEAVAGE LINES IN AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY

Building on the theoretical framework of cleavages, this chapter aims to examine and outline the principal societal and political divisions within Austria and Hungary. By identifying these cleavages, it offers a comparative perspective, setting the groundwork for the subsequent discussion, which will focus on public attitudes and political discourse related to migration.

3.1 Political Cleavage Lines in Hungary (1990-2018)

As the theoretical review highlights, according to the founding fathers of the political cleavage theories, Lipset and Rokkan (1967) argue, the existence and the development of cleavages could be traced back to different types of revolutions. On the one hand, European societies experienced an era of so-called national revolutions, when the centralised state took over political roles and privileges that had formerly been assigned to religious or decentralised communities. During this period of time, these historical national revolutions created two societal and political cleavage lines, which are based on the centre versus periphery and state versus church conflict.

The centre versus periphery cleavage is the creation of modern national-states, where state systematically tries to assimilate a type of minority into the majority nation. Regarding Hungary, this form of cleavage had a crucial role during the 19th and 20th centuries, when the population of the Hungarian Kingdom was heterogeneous. According to the official census (Klinger et al., 1992) in 1910, more than 54% of the population reported using Hungarian as their mother language in everyday life, which also means that approximately the other half of the population used a different one. The authenticity of the census result was questioned several times by the separatist ethnic groups and their successor states, arguing it was modified by ideological and ethnic interest. However, this discussion does not alter the fact that, during this period, the Kingdom of Hungary was a genuinely multi-ethnic and multilingual country. While those national groups, which had felt oppressed by the Hungarians, claimed sovereignty, the determining part of the Hungarian political elite made efforts to ensure the majority for Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. The opposition between the different interests caused a majority-minority related cleavage in the Kingdom.

However, after the First World War, the nature of the conflict has changed. In the context of the Treaty of Trianon (1920 (2010)), Hungary's territory was reduced to less than one-third, and it lost almost 60% of its population. The Treaty fulfilled the demands of the separatist national groups, referring to the principle of self-determination, as was articulated by the United States President, Woodrow Wilson, in his Fourteen Points (National WWI Museum and Memorial, 2025). By the terms of the Treaty, Czechoslovakia received Upper Hungary, sub-Carpathian Ruthenia, the region of Pressburg (Bratislava (SK), Pozsony (HU)), Austria took the western part of Hungary (Burgenland), and Yugoslavia received Croatia-Slavonia and a part of the Banat. Romania took the other part of Banat, the Partium and all the territory of Transylvania; furthermore, Italy expanded its territory with Fiume. As a consequence of the territorial changes, more than three million Hungarians (approximately 30%) became a minority in the new state structures, while the ethnic composition of Hungary also changed. As the successor state of the Hungarian Kingdom, the new country became less heterogeneous – only 10% of its population defined themselves as non-Hungarian. The ratio of the ethnic minorities decreased further due to the centralised assimilation (Magyarization), the disproportional exchanges of the population (see Slovakia), the Hungarian immigration from the neighbouring countries and the emigration of the non-Hungarians, furthermore due to the Holocaust and the deportation of the German ethnicity after the Second World War. These chains of actions have shifted Hungary from a heterogeneous kingdom into a homogeneous republic. However, as a result of the border changes, hundreds of thousands of Hungarians living in the territories of neighbouring states became members of minority populations.

Despite the homogeneous ethnic composition, the centre versus periphery cleavage line is still relevant in Hungary. However, the nature and the general interest of the conflict have changed. According to Evans and Whitefield (1995), after the democratic transformation, one of the most prominent cleavage lines in Hungary reflects the status of the Hungarian minorities in the Carpathian Basin. Thus, the objects of the conflict generally reflect outside of the current borders of the country. The question of Hungarian minorities in the neighbouring states is still significant and divides not only the Hungarian political elite, but also the Hungarian society Tóka and Popa (2013) characterised the conflict as the nationalist-cosmopolitan division. According to their research, after the regime change in Hungary, the Hungarian Democratic Forum (Magyar Demokrata Fórum, MDF), the Hungarian People's Party (Magyar Néppárt), and the Smallholders

Party (FKgP) constituted the so-called '*national*' (nemzeti) block, the pro-Soviet Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP) and the pro-Western Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ); furthermore, the Free and Young Democrats (Fidesz) constituted the anti-nationalist pole. However, this time of period, the national '*issue*' primarily focused on the protection of the Hungarian minorities living in neighbouring countries and the political–economical shift from the Soviet-bloc. As a result, arguing in favour of the national '*issue*' was not only the right-wing' absolute practice, but it also fitted the liberal ideological framework.

The conflict reappeared in 2004, at the referendum on Hungarian dual citizenship, when citizens could decide whether the Hungarian Parliament should pass a law to grant Hungarian citizenship to ethnic Hungarians with non-Hungarian citizenship and residence¹². While right-wing political parties, such as Fidesz and MDF, supported the referendum, left-wing political parties, for instance MSZP and SZDSZ, were against the initiative (Origo, 2018). The division appeared at the level of voters and the political elite as well, and it is still relevant in the present day. After 2010, one of the first measures of the new government led by Fidesz was to ensure dual citizenship to Hungarians living outside of the Hungarian state. This type of extraterritorial citizenship grants suffrage to the Hungarian kin minorities. While the Democratic Coalition (Demokratikus Koalíció, DK), as a left-wing political party, was against the Act, and would eliminate the Hungarian kin minorities' right to vote in the Hungarian parliamentary election, until the Hungarian Socialist Party (Magyar Szocialista Párt, MSZP) have changed its attitude toward the issue and would protect this political institution (Mérce, 2017).

Besides the statues of the Hungarian minorities, Evans and Whitefield (1995) argued that the centre-periphery conflict was determined by a further factor, notably the attitudes toward the Hungarian Roma ethnicity. According to the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH, 2011), 85% of the population identified themselves as Hungarian in 2011. Of the thirteen historical minorities, the largest ethnic group is the Roma (more than 300,000 people, approximately 2-3% of the total population). Still, they do not have a vote entitled representation in the Hungarian legislative body. Besides the general elections, the electoral law allows the so-called ethnic-minority lists, which ensure the right of the minorities to elect their own representatives to the National Assembly. Based on the size of their population, only the Roma and the Germans have the opportunity to

¹² Discussed in detail in the chapter titled '*Trends and Public Perceptions in Austria and Hungary*'

reach the needed 5% threshold to gain a seat in the parliament. The remaining eleven minorities could send their own minority spokesman to the National Assembly, who has the right to speak but not to vote¹³. Despite the relatively large number of the Roma population, only the Germans (approximately 100,000 people in 2022, less than 1% of the total population (KSH, 2024b)) could gain a vote entitled representative seat in the parliament, which suggests the lack of organisation and the collective identity of the Roma communities.

In contrast to the national census results, Péntzes and Pásztor (2014) found that more than 800,000 Roma people lived in Hungary between 2010 and 2013. Based on their research, 71% of the Roma speak Hungarian as the first language (Hungarian Roma, Romungro), 21% identified themselves as Vlach Roma (oláh), and 8% lived as Boyash (beás). From a territorial perspective, Roma communities live in the north-eastern and the south-western parts of Hungary. Approximately 55% of the Hungarian Roma live in villages or small towns, and the level of unemployment is the highest among them in Hungary. The lower-level of education and high unemployment rate lead to a lower-level of social development. The negative social dynamics led to a growing and deepening division between the Hungarian majority and the Roma minority.

Based on the aforementioned social tension, the Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom, Jobbik) thematised the topic of '*Roma/Gypsy crimes*' (Karácsony and Róna, 2010). The party was originally established in 2002 by a group of Catholic and Protestant university students (Christian Youth Community). Jobbik made an electoral alliance in 2006 with the irredentist Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIÉP), which showed anti-communist, highly nationalist attitudes. The demographic features differed from other right-wing parties: it was overrepresented by men, and its supporters were predominantly younger age groups with higher social status (Tóka and Popa, 2013).

While the party described itself as a conservative, national radical and Christian one, the media organs and its political opponent labelled it as an anti-establishment, anti-Semitic, homophobic and anti-Roma political organisation (Tóka and Popa, 2013). In 2006, a Hungarian teacher was killed by Roma people in Eastern Hungary (HVG, 2007). Despite the presence of the public authorities - as the only official law enforcement bodies in the country -, Jobbik created '*national guards*' (nemzeti gárdák) to '*protect the local*

¹³ Act CCIII of 2011 on the Election of Members of Parliament (§18), and Act XXXVI of 2012 on the National Assembly (§13, §§22, 29-29/A)

Hungarian communities against the Roma crimes'. In 2007, Gábor Vona, the then-leader of the party, founded the organisation of the Hungarian Guard (Magyar Gárda) to maintain the public order and strengthen the capacity of the national self-defence (Krónika Online, 2007). The Guard organised demonstrative marches in villages where conflicts appeared (e.g. in Gyöngyöspata; Szombati and Feischmidt, 2012). Referring to the Constitution of Hungary, the Metropolitan Court of Appeal disbanded the Movement, as well as its later reestablishment, to defend the rights of the Roma minorities.

According to Bíró Nagy and Róna (2011), Jobbik broke with the consensus of the political elite and widespread anti-Roma sentiments in the electorate, which gave a distinctive feature of the party. However, this popularity was temporary, and it was based on the anti-Roma campaign. In the course of time, the radical wing of the party left the community, and Jobbik shifted from a far-right nationalist party into a people's party. It is an undeniable fact that the party carried out the reorientation— see the electoral alliance with the left-wing parties during the general parliamentary election in 2022 - but the support of the political party has reduced radically. While in 2010, the party gained the third most votes during the general election, the support behind Jobbik almost entirely disappeared (approximately 2% of the total population; Economx, 2023). The party lost its overrepresented position among young, male and rural supporters. The thematisation of the '*Roma crimes*' also lost its relevance. However, the conflict between the Roma and the non-Roma communities in Hungary does not emerge as an entirely accepted cleavage line, as the most prominent ethnic minority of Hungary, the situation of the Roma communities still works as a sub-line of the previously mentioned central vs. peripheral axis.

However, probably in an effort to broaden its support base, Jobbik has altered its political characteristics, aiming to transform into a people's party. As a consequence, the party moderated its radical rhetoric (such as anti-Roma) and adopted certain liberal traits (e.g. Molnár, 2020). This shift resulted in the fragmentation of the party's political elite. The radical leaders of the party founded the Our Homeland Movement (Mi Hazánk Mozgalom) in 2018, which became the main political identity on the radical right-wing. According to the party, it has nationalist, anti-immigration, national conservative and traditionalist values. However, opponents of the party described it as an anti-Semitic, anti-Roma, neo-fascist threat (Bhabha and Matache, 2020). The party formed an alliance with the Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIÉP) and the agrarian Independent Smallholders, Agrarian Workers and Civic Party (FKGP) in 2019 (Narancs.hu, 2019). Thus, the party

argues to present the interests and values of the agrarian and rural areas in the political agenda. The anti-establishment attitude is also a crucial characteristic of the party, which appeared sharply during the COVID-19 anti-vaccination campaign (Reuters, 2022). According to surveys, the party's strongest support comes from right-wing voters, particularly those under the age of 40 (53%), residents of rural towns (49%) and villages (37%), individuals with primary (51%) or secondary (32%) education, and those who are active in the labour market (73%). A significant proportion of its supporters had previously voted for right-wing parties such as Jobbik (37%) or Fidesz (22%), while 17% had abstained from voting altogether (IDEA, 2023).

The other cleavage line, which was created by the waves of the national revolutions, is the state versus church conflict, which lies between the religious and the secular parts of the society. In Hungary, this division does not appear as a major cleavage. However, Körösenyi, Török and Tóth (2003) find that people with a political right-wing orientation more often go to church and attend a service than people from the political left-wing. In this context, Christian Democratic People's Party (Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt, KDNP) has the most religious characteristic in the political system from the 1990s, highly supported by the older, deeply religious individuals of the society. Tóka and Popa (2013) confirmed that the constituencies of political parties on the left (e.g. MSZMP, MSZP, SZDSZ) are much more secular than the voters of the political parties on the right (e.g. KDNP, FKG). However, compared to the MSZP supporters, voters of the SZDSZ were moderately religious. After 2010, the governing Fidesz (Fidesz - Hungarian Civic Party, Fidesz – Magyar Polgári Szövetség) had also embraced the issue of religiosity. It appears through communication, in programs (for instance, Hungary Helps Program) and at the level of policies (e.g. increasing the rate of church-run schools). As the Political Director of the Hungarian Prime Minister, Balázs Orbán expressed his view in '*The Basics of Hungarian Strategic Thinking*', the Judeo-Christian cultural traditions involved the fundamental values which are essential to make a successful strategy in Hungary. The Hungarian culture is founded on the Judeo-Christian traditions (Orbán, 2020). This indicates that, from an ideological perspective, Fidesz-KDNP places significant emphasis on its Christian ideology, striving to distinguish itself from other parties. However, it is

essential to emphasise that, at the voter level, religiosity is not exclusively associated with the right wing.¹⁴

Besides the national revolutions, Lipset and Rokkan (1967) argued that the industrial revolution also generated two persistent cleavage lines: the owner versus worker and the urban versus rural conflict. However, according to the empirical analyses (e.g. Körösenyi, Török and Tóth 2003; Tóka and Popa, 2013), the owner-worker differences do not create a cleavage line in Hungary. There is no coherent socio-demographic pattern that could affirm any form of division relating to this type of conflicts. On the level of the political parties, only the Hungarian Workers' Party (Magyar Munkáspárt) refers to itself as the representatives of the worker classes and their families. During the last thirty years, the Workers' Party has not received enough votes in the general elections to gain representation in the National Assembly, but it still participates as a candidate party from election to election. The party and its members identified themselves as the successor of the former Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP). Consequently, the Workers' Party is highly featured by its anti-Western attitudes. Furthermore, the support of the party is generally based on the older generations, which restricts its further support base as well. The party refuses any initiatives toward the Western-oriented integration of Hungary. This attitude was also reflected when the leader of the party, Gyula Thürmer, published his book with the following title: '*We do not need NATO!*' (Thürmer, 1995). Besides the fact that there is no popular workers' party in Hungary, during the campaign period, attempts to appeal to working-class groups - at least rhetorically - have become a common practice among political parties.

Instead of the classical forms of the owner versus worker cleavage, the attitude toward the Socialist Era and toward the Communist – Socialist Party became relevant. According to Robert Rohrschneider and Stephen Whitefield (2009), there was only one determinative cleavage line, which divided the society and the political elite after the democratic transition: notably, the judgement of the liberal regime change. Membership in the communist political-administrative system generates a special division in Hungary. The soviet system was almost half a century long dominant in the region. After the Iron

¹⁴ In a submitted manuscript, Dúró and Nagy (2025) found that while religiosity is primarily associated with the governing party (Fidesz-KDNP) and the right-wing opposition (Jobbik), 15% of highly religious individuals identified with a left-wing opposition party. This proportion increases to 20% among those with moderate religiosity, 27% among those with an average level, 34% among those with low religiosity, and 42% among those with very low religiosity. A clear correlation can be observed: the more religious an individual is, the more likely they vote for a right-wing party. However, religiosity cannot be regarded as an exclusively right-wing attribute (Data source: ESS10).

Curtain came down, all non-communist parties and political organisations ceased to exist until the 1990s (Tóka and Popa 2013). As a result, the membership of the Socialist Party has evolved into a long-standing political cleavage in the Hungarian society. Members of the socialist nomenclature and the membership of the Communist – Socialist Party generate a pro-socialist and anti-liberal orientation. In contrast, anti-communists were formed by the pre-communist elite, the middle class, persecuted individuals, and the new generation of the political elite, who emerged from their previously oppressed status during the transition process (Körösenyi, Török and Tóth, 2003).

The Hungarian opposition also represented differing attitudes toward the democratic transition. While the leaders and the clientele of the previous regime argued in favour of a gradual regime change, the opposition – who had been oppressed during the socialist era – demanded a radical cultural, economic and political transformation. Tóka and Popa (2013: 295) stated that the anti-communist division was represented by the orthodox communist block (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt, MSZMP) and its' inherit party (Hungarian Socialist Party, Magyar Szocialista Párt, MSZP) against the liberals (The Alliance of Free Democrats, Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége, SZDSZ, The Federation of Young Democrats – Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége, Fidesz).

Instead of a clear opposition between the owners and workers, the contrast between urban-rural relations takes a sharper form. After the transition in Hungary, the Independent Smallholders Party (Független Kisgazda Párt, also known as FKgP) represented agrarian, rural interests. Due to the effective representation, more than 50% of the party's votership lived in the countryside (Körösenyi, Török and Tóth, 2003). Besides these characteristic features of the party, the popularity among the older, lower-class population was also significant. The party and its community had an anti-communist and nationalist orientation. (Tóka and Popa, 2013). However, Fidesz successfully embraced the issue of ruralism; as a result, the FKgP lost its rural support and its representative ability. According to Körösenyi, Török and Tóth (2003), the urban–rural conflict is still relevant in Hungary and generates a cleavage line in the society. They argued that, while the urban citizens determined themselves with higher probability as liberals (e.g. MSZP, SZDSZ), the rural voters identified themselves with a higher chance as conservatives on the political scale (e.g. Fidesz). After 2010, the left-wing pillar of the two-party system collapsed, and the Fidesz-KDNP coalition gained a two-thirds majority during the general election. As a consequence, from 2010 to 2022, the governing parties

won the general parliamentary elections not only in the rural part of the country, but also in almost every urban electoral district. The opposition won only in Szeged (2014, 2018, 2022), in Budapest (2014, 2018, 2022), in Pécs (2022) and in some other urban districts. In regard to Budapest, the United Opposition won 16 out of Budapest's 18 urban constituencies in 2022 (NVI, 2022b). The results suggest that the urban-rural conflict may shifted into a Budapest vs. Countryside opposition (Forman, 2022) which conflict reflects on the Budapest centralist and decentralist approaches. In parallel, the right-wing political parties, as the Our Homeland Movement, compete against the dominance of Fidesz in the rural territories of the country to strengthen their votership.

Besides the aforementioned cleavage lines, Tóka and Popa (2013) identify the division between the pro-market and the social protection political camps. While the latter was conducted by the SZDSZ, Fidesz, and the KDNP, the former interest group was represented by the MSZP, the MDF and the FKgP, which were more in favour of pro-market policies, with full embrace of the privatisation. After the first coalition agreement between the MSZP-SZDSZ (1994), the political block created a pro-market platform. In the early 1990s, Fidesz was labelled as a young, cosmopolitan, liberal and secular political party. In the course of time, due to the party's ideological shift, Fidesz became a conservative and ascended political party on the right-wing by 2002. The constituency of the party also changed: anti-communism, nationalism, religiosity and the pro-market.

After the historical electoral wins of Fidesz in 2010, the political characteristics of the party have also changed. On the one hand, based on the nationalist – cosmopolitan opposition, the party periodically identified international treaties for the national interest. In this sense, different opponents appeared by foreign bureaucracy and bank system (since 2008), by the danger of illegal, mass immigration (since 2015), by the threat of the so-called Soros-plan (since 2013) and because of the Hungarian opposition. The political alertness and identification of the nation's enemy became a general tactic of the governing Fidesz – KDNP coalition. But the Hungarian opposition parties also have tried to operate with an extreme communication style: among others, Viktor Orbán's long-term aim to lead Hungary out of the European Union (HUXIT) and make an eastward reorientation of the country (e.g. Népszava, 2023). These changes may suggest that the worker-capitalist division has, in some sense, intertwined with a global-local conflict, where localists highlights the relevance of national interests and emphasize the challenges posed by international actors, such as NGOs, supranational-like institutions, and the international capitalist banking system— see the anti-NATO book by the leader of the

Workers' Party (Thürmer, 1999); conversely, globalists underscore the necessity and advantages of Hungary's integration into the international system.

The critique of liberalism is also a significant element of Hungarian political discourse, which may be embedded within the broader global-local conflict. In 2014, the Prime Minister of Hungary, Viktor Orbán (Fidesz), declared the so-called '*illiberal democracy*'. The speech was not only a stressed point in the case of the relationship between Fidesz and the European Union, but also was an anti-declaration of Fukuyama's theory (2006) about the end of the cleavages. This new ideological approach of the Hungarian conservative elite became sharply different from the standpoint of the European Union. The Hungarian government not only rejected the EU migrant quotas system and argued in favour of a nuclear-friendly position in the field of climate policy, but also represented a national-state-based integration policy in the European Union.¹⁵ According to the public opinion polls, in 2021, Fidesz became the most popular political party in almost every social group in Hungary. However, the older and the rural segments of the population favoured the party the most (approximately two-thirds of the respondents). The party cannot reach an absolute majority only in Budapest, where the opposition parties are more favoured, which bolsters the presence of the urban-rural conflict (21 Research Center and Projekt: Polska).¹⁶

Besides the steady support of the Fidesz, one of the most stable political parties in the Hungarian political system after 2010, is the Democratic Coalition. The leader of the party is Ferenc Gyurcsány, who was the former Minister President of Hungary between 2004 and 2009. However, at that time, the politician was a member of the Hungarian Socialist Party. After the so-called *őszödi beszéd* (BBC, 2006), when Gyurcsány accused his fellow party members of lying and incompetence, furthermore criticised the party leaders for misleading voters during the election. Although the speech was confidential,

¹⁵ In 2022, the pro-market stance of the party has changed with regard to price caps temporarily (see Reuters, 2023)

¹⁶ In the submitted manuscript, Dúró and Nagy (2025) found that the governing Fidesz-KDNP enjoys broad and balanced support across genders (65% for both men and women). By place of residence, support for the party is stronger in rural towns (60%) and villages (65%). In the capital, the likelihood of support is 42% - while the probability to vote for the left-wing opposition is 45%. Regarding age, Fidesz-KDNP remains dominant across all age groups, with its support increasing progressively among older cohorts (53% among those in their 20s and 71% among those in their 60s). The party also holds the highest level of support among both Roma (73%) and non-Roma (65%) communities. In terms of education, Fidesz-KDNP is the most supported party at all levels: vocational education (68%), secondary education (65%), and tertiary education (58%). Although it remains dominant among those with only primary education, its support steadily declines with age in this group, shifting in favour of the left-wing opposition bloc (15%). Source: ESS10. The percentages represent the probability of voting for the party.

it was leaked and caused a nationwide political crisis. The political scandal led to the resignation of Ferenc Gyurcsány, who wanted to establish a new political platform within the Hungarian Socialist Party. However, due to the inner conflicts of MSZP, the supporters of the new platform declared their independence and founded a party under the name of Democratic Coalition in 2011. The party demonstrates itself as a pro-European, social liberalist party, which supports the European federalist ambitions and the tolerance toward different sexual and racial minorities. In contrast, their opponents often characterised it as communist, imperialist and a party which serves foreign interests (e.g. Origo, 2022). The party represents the most cosmopolitan, western attitudes with urban support in contrast to the sharply traditionalist, nationalist, rural Fidesz.

The Politics Can Be Different (also known as The Hungary's Green Party or as the Green Party of Hungary, LMP) is the only explicitly liberal-green political party in Hungary. The party was founded in 2009 and won four mandates in the 2010 legislative election for the National Assembly. LMP shares the well-known international green-party ideologies, such as sustainable development, anti-corruption, environmental protection and the '*think globally, act locally*' form of local-patriotism. The party's voters were called '*critical mass generation*' because of their critical attitudes toward the politicians and the political system (Szabó and Kern 2011). According to Keil (2012), the supporters of the party were young, mainly women, liberal, highly educated, urban voters. The most relevant topics of the respondents who would choose the LMP during the election were the government-opposition, Roma-anti-Roma conflicts and the gap between wealthier and less fortunate segments of society. Furthermore, Together2014, which was led by Gordon Bajnai, the successor of the ex-Prime Minister of Ferenc Gyurcsány, suggests that LMP join them. The request created conflict within LMP, which led to secession. The leaving members founded the Dialogue for Hungary (Párbeszéd Magyarország, PM), which represented mainly the liberal values within the LMP. However, the Dialogue for Hungary never achieved the needed 5% of the votes to gain a mandate individually; nevertheless, the party leader of Dialogue became the mayor of Budapest as the candidate of the electoral alliance of the opposition. In parallel, LMP lost its support and became an under 2% party.

In addition to the aforementioned political parties, Momentum, founded in 2017, gained prominence through its NOlimpia campaign, which aimed to initiate a referendum to withdraw Hungary's application to host the Olympic Games. Momentum articulated its anti-government, anti-corruption, pro-European, and pro-liberal stance within the

Hungarian political landscape. Although the party initially declared to boycott any form of cooperation with previously existing political parties, during the campaign, its representatives collaborated with the left-wing opposition (Király, 2018; Medián, 2018; Momentum, 2018b). The anti-Olympic campaign received significant public support, ultimately leading to the government's withdrawal of Hungary's Olympic application (Magyar Idők, 2017). Officially, the party aims to mobilise young, urban voters who uphold European values, a strategy supported by surveys related to its youth organisation (Angyal, Fellner and Fényes 2023). This may explain the party's relatively high level of support (close to 20%) among voters living abroad (Momentum, 2018a). Although the party's initial support grew significantly, it secured only 3.1% of the votes in the 2018 elections. In the 2022 elections, it gained parliamentary representation as part of the opposition electoral alliance¹⁷, winning 10 mandates, which accounted for only 5% of the seats secured by the opposition.¹⁸

As the findings show, the traditional explanatory model of cleavage lines seems less acceptable in Hungary. However, the state – church opposition seems stable, and the rural-urban conflicts are getting more significant, and the parties also reflect on these values and interests. Similar trends are perceptible in the case of the kin-Hungarian minorities, which involves a special, country-related social tension in Hungary. However, special political conflicts, like communist-post-communist and nationalist-cosmopolitan divisions, highlight the importance of value preferences. According to the findings of the literature, these conflicts are primarily determined by the political elite in Hungary. In this sense, the socio-demographic and social-economic characteristics have fewer explanatory effects (Tóka and Popa 2013). As Redžić and Everett (2020, 244) called the nationalist – cosmopolitan opposition, the division between the liberal and anti-liberal camps emerged solely through the main political parties (see: Fidesz vs. DK). Furthermore, over the past decade, the Hungarian voters have moved further to the right on the left-right spectrum

¹⁷ For a more detailed analysis of the election results, see Tóka (2022a; 2022b).

¹⁸ As a result of the 2024 European Parliament elections, the party lost its EP mandates, receiving only 3.7% of the votes (NVI, 2024).

(Dúró and Nagy, 2025)¹⁹. Despite the declaration of the Hungarian Prime Minister's doctrine about illiberalism, according to public opinion polls, Fidesz maintained its leading position in almost all socio-demographic groups. There is a consensus among scholars regarding the validity of Lipset and Rokkan's socio-demographic, economist-centric theory. However, the liberal-antiliberal conflict, which seems to align closely with the nationalist-cosmopolitan (or globalist-localist) division, has gained significant influence in the political system, further reinforcing the party-dominated mechanism in Hungary.

3.2 Political Cleavage Lines in Austria (1990-2018)

According to Lipset and Rokkan's assumption, with the general, universal suffrage and the developed cleavages, the institutionalised party systems freeze along the lines of the previously formed divisions. Thus, the Western European party system structures became less or more, but permanent. According to Luther (1989), the Austrian party system was exceptionally stable and served as an example of the freezing hypothesis. The dominant political parties of the Second Republic were continuations of the pre-war, nineteenth-century political movements (Csíkhelyi et al, 2004). On the left-wing political side, the anti-clerical Social Democratic and Workers Party (SDAP) represented class struggle, the nationalisation of relevant corporations, and the taxation of the wealthy. On the political right-wing, the prominent anti-capitalist, clerical political force was the Christian Social Party (CSP). The party appealed to the interests of conservative, rural farmers, artisans and the petite-bourgeoisie with the support of the Catholic Church (Maderthaner and Müller, 1996). All political parties reached a high level of organisational density and had the capacity for large-scale voter mobilisation (Kurt, 1999). Besides, the origin of the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP, established in 1945) can be traced back to the clerical and anti-capitalist Christian Social Party (CSP), which represented the Catholic-conservative subcultures. Meanwhile, the forerunner of today's Social Democratic Party of Austria (Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreich – SPÖ,

¹⁹ In the submitted manuscript, Dúró and Nagy (2025) found that the average position on the left-right scale in Hungary was 4.95 in 2002, increasing to 5.79 by 2021. During this period, there were two peaks: one in 2010, reaching 5.97 toward the right-wing, and another in 2017, with a score of 5.84. The scale ranges from 0 to 10, where 0 represents the most left-wing position and 10 the most right-wing position. Source: ESS Rounds. In Austria, political self-identification among respondents aged 16 and older reveals a notable rightward tendency. According to survey data, 14% of respondents place themselves on the left, 25% in the center, and 40% identify as rather right-wing. This distribution suggests a political landscape where right-leaning ideologies are more prevalent among the population, while centrist and left-leaning perspectives hold a smaller share (IMAS, 2021).

established in 1889) was the Social Democratic and Workers' Party. In parallel, the third political movement emerged among the German nationalists, whose primary political aim was to fulfil the nationalist aspiration, notably the unification of Germany and Austria (Anschluss). The political community consisted of anti-clerical and anti-socialist white-collar employees. In this period of time, the antisemitic and anti-clerical movement remained weak due to its radical characteristics and limited the party's mobilisation capacity, securing only 6% of the votes in the 1919 elections.

When the Habsburg Monarchy collapsed in 1918, Austrian parties sought close cooperation with Germany. However, the Allies prohibited the unification of the two German states; thus, the Socialists and the Christian Socials established the First Austrian Republic. In the early period of the Republic, political culture was characterised by cooperative coalitions. However, the economic conditions became depressed, leading to an increasing popularity of radical opinions. The social and political tension reached a level when the government suspended the parliament and banned both the communist (KPÖ) and the conservative political forces (Luther, 1999). Therefore, the conservative and the socialist forces organised their own militias, and the antagonistic confrontation transformed into an agonistic one. The conflict ended with the victory of the conservatives, who outlawed all the socialist related organisations in Austria. At the end of the hard conflict, the bourgeois declared a one-party dictatorship. However, the authoritarian system lasted until 1938, when the German nationalist reached their aim and put the Anschluss (Austrian-German unification) into force.

After the Second World War, the Austrian political elite re-adopted the constitution of the First Republic. The subcultures preserved their relevance, and the new republic operated by the pre-war political parties (Simon, 1966). Due to the discreditation of the pan-German movements and the stabilising economic effect of the Marshall Plan, the Austrian political elite developed a desire for sovereign statehood. After the Soviet occupation of the country's eastern territories and the Soviet-supported authoritarian regime changes in the neighbouring countries, the communist party lost its support in Austria. Furthermore, on the political right-wing, the Austrian People's Party (Österreichische Volkspartei, ÖVP) was founded in 1945, as the successor of the Christian Social Party. The party was supported by small business owners, Catholic groups and rural voters. The religious cleavage became dominant in the 1950s and 1960s, dividing Catholics and non-religious. Additionally, a welfare state cleavage emerged between

white-collar and blue-collar workers, while another majority-minority cleavage developed between the Austrian and the German identities.

Building on these cleavages, the Austrian political system evolved into a highly pillarized structure. The term pillarization means '*vertical integration of subcultural communities in a system of political representation*' (Badie, Berg-Schlosser and Morlino, 2011 :1860); in other words, political and cultural sub-milieus formed around various types of cleavages, characterised by a relatively high level of internal cohesion and external autonomy. Thus, the individuals live as members of their political and cultural networks. According to Luther (1999), Austria has had one of the highest rates of pillarization in Western Europe. The different subcultures were created by the political parties from the late nineteenth century and covered almost all the segments of the Austrian society. These milieus are called '*Lagers*' in Austria, which originally means an armed camp, reflecting the inter-war paramilitary conflicts during the First Republic. As the Lager-theorist Wandruszka (1954) argued, there are three distinct Lagers, which represent different political subcultures in Austria. The two dominant political parties – SPÖ and ÖVP – maintained exceptionally high levels of mass membership, reaching around 12% of the total population at their peak (Luther, 1999). The common subculture mentality, shaped by the Lagers, is highly suited to the frozen cleavage line theories.

This high level of party membership may be explained by another integrative factor of the Austrian political system, by the so-called *proporz* system. The *proporz* system serves the two main political parties (SPÖ, ÖVP), by distributing key public sector positions and resources between their representatives and party members (Luther, 1992, 1999). In practice, the proportional system provided advantages to its members—such as employment opportunities, housing, and other privileges—which were allocated among members based on the election results. This system not only offered positions but also provided material benefits and favours in proportion to the election outcomes. Consequently, membership was motivated not solely by political interests but also by the practical benefits (Diesler and Winkler, 1982). Thus, SPÖ and ÖVP were able not only to stabilise their support, but they also prevented the success of a new political party or organisation's integration into society. In other words, the *proporz* system blocked the newcomer parties from influencing the Austrian political-cultural life and stabilised the two major parties' privileges. Besides the pillarization and the *proporz* system, the political parties' close association with the lobby organisation works as a further special characteristic of Austrian political culture. The main corporatist interest groups are linked

to one of the two main Lagers and they become their partners during the campaigns and policy implementation. The obligatory membership of the interest group further increased the already high membership (Luther, 1999).

Since the 1970s, the process of depillarization has begun. The Lagers' loyalty was weakened drastically. According to Luther (1999), the main reasons for the depillarization are linked to technological and societal development: the occupational structures have changed, the accelerating process of urbanisation, the increasing geographical and social mobilisation and the secularisation of the educational system. By this, the Lager socio-demographic characterisation lost its relevance – the encapsulation of the subcultures decreased. As Plasser, Ulram and Grausgruber (1992) determined, the social network of the dominant parties gradually reduced. Furthermore, the development of telecommunication abolished the exclusive media privileges of the SPÖ and ÖVP: the parties' related newspaper consumption share dropped from 39% (1952) to 9% (1988) (Müller, 1992). But the partisanship also reduced drastically. In the case of SPÖ, it fell from 81% (1954) to 43% reduction. Relating the ÖVP, the decrease was also significant from 82% to 47%. In parallel, the dissatisfaction increased toward the parties (Plasser, Ulram and Grausburger, 1992), while the party identity also decreased (Ulram, 1997). As a consequence, the ÖVP and the SPÖ lost their ideological dominance (Plasser et al, 1992). The level of voters' volatility has also increased, and the dealignment has strengthened.²⁰

Because of the de-pillarization and the proliferation of new political parties, the political landscape has transformed. On the left-wing of the political scale, the Green Party (Grüne) and the anti-immigration party, the FPÖ, have increasingly challenged the traditional Christian-democratic, conservative and the liberalist, socialist political identities. As Carmen Durrer de la Sota, Amory Gehtin and Clara Martínez-Toledano (2021) argue, the emergence of the new political movements and ideologies has changed the social and political conflict in Western Europe. Their research analysed the evolution of political cleavages in the case of Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Austria over the past fifty years. Although the cases' democratic political culture has remained cooperative – see the political parties' co-operating strategy in contrast to the antagonistic blocks of different interests within – the political cleavages' dynamic evolution has

²⁰ A detailed analysis of the structure and development of the party system, including an examination of electoral volatility, is provided in the chapter titled '*The Relevance of Political Parties in Austria and Hungary*'.

changed the content of the social conflicts. The previously stable political communities, the Lagers (camps), are still relevant in Austria, but they have lost their exclusiveness in the political processes. While the religious and the welfare state-related cleavages were represented by the SPÖ and the ÖVP, the majority-minority conflict was highlighted by the FPÖ. However, the party identification has lost its relevance and the number of '*late deciders*' has increased, leading to a significant decrease in class-voting relevance (Plasser and Ulram, 2008).

While the significance of traditional–historical cleavages has devalued, the new political movements have led to the emergence of new political divergences that have transformed the political party systems (O’Leary, 2019). By the 1980s, SPÖ and ÖVP had lost their long-standing support in the Austrian political system. As a result of the dealignment, the dominant political parties lost their previously natural condition, and new parties have emerged. Furthermore, while the relevance of the socio-demographic characteristics decreased, the candidate-centric campaigns became general. As a consequence of the declining popularity of the traditional parties and the rise of the new opponents of the bipolar party system, a new, multi-elite party system emerged in Austria – a point I return to later.

According to Durrer de la Sota, Amory Gehtin and Martínez-Toledano (2021), the support for green and left-wing parties among the highly educated voters and for anti-immigration parties among the less educated has grown, while top-income earners have remained supportive of the right-wing political parties. From the left, the green parties, and from the right, the anti-immigration parties have significantly challenged the ideological framework of conservatism, liberalism, social democracy, socialism and Christian-democratic ideological context. The reversal of the education cleavage and the emergence of the so-called '*multi-elite party systems*' mean one of the most conspicuous transformations. While the political right-wing is still supported by the top-income voters, it has gradually lost its support among the highest-educated voters, who shifted their political interest toward the political left-wing. In this context, Piketty (2018) argues that, besides the rise of the new political streams (see: green and anti-immigration parties), the transformation of the old political parties determined the changes relating to the highly educated voters' preferences.

The founders of the FPÖ were previously members of the Federation of Independents (Verband der Unabhängigen, VdU), which was a direct successor of the Nazi Party (NSDAP). As an aftermath of the failure of the First Republic (Riedlsperger, 1978), the

Austrian political elite aimed to avoid the extremist political-ideological polarisation. Thus, the SPÖ and ÖVP strategy was to isolate the FPÖ from the national governmental position (see *proporz* system, boycotting coalitions). However, the FPÖ had the capacity to break the political isolation: in the 1980s, by opposing the *proporz* system and highlighting the failures of the coalition governments (e.g. corruption), the popularity of the FPÖ increased significantly. Besides, the party highlighted issues like the negative effects of mass immigration, the internal and external security challenges and presented a negative attitude toward further integration of the European Union (euroscepticism) (Hajdú -Kurtán, 2020). In 1999, the party made a coalition with the ÖVP, known as the Schwarz coalition. However, the support of the party has significantly decreased as an aftermath of the cooperation. The rise of the FPÖ showed a real threat to the ÖVP on the political right-wing. While the SPÖ and the ÖVP lost their popularity, the FPÖ increased it among the blue-collar workers and the younger population. Since 2008, the party presentation has normalised and threatened the dominance of the ÖVP and SPÖ in *Burgenland*, Upper Austria and in *Wien*. Furthermore, the party was getting able to present the centralist voters' values and interests. By the increasing popularity, the party became capable of 'blackmailing' the governing political party. Moreover, due to the party's strengthening influence, the party became able to polarise and influence the Austrian political structure. The moderate members split from the FPÖ and established the Alliance for the Future of Austria (*Bündnis Zukunft Österreich*, BZÖ) – creating a coalition partnership with ÖVP.

On the political centrist-liberal, NEOS - The New Austria and Liberal Forum (NEOS-Das Neue Österreich und Liberales Forum) was founded in 2014 following the merger of the Liberals into NEOS. The party gained more than 8% of the votes and 15 seats during the legislative election in 2019 (ORF, 2019). According to David Johann, Marcelo Jenny and Sylvia Kritzingner (2016), the NEOS present the classic centre party. The program of the party and its support can be put between the ÖVP and the Greens. The party argues in favour of equality, sustainability and diversity.

According to the Austrian political attitude surveys, the relevance of the socio-demographic characteristics decreased further between 2013 and 2017 (Durrer de la Sota, Gethin and Martínez-Toledano, 2021). The analysis focused on the dimension of the education (primary, secondary, tertiary), the income (bottom 50%, middle 40% and top 10%), the location (urban, rural) and concentrated on the religion (no religion, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim).

Based on the evidence of the results, a third of the primary educated voters support SPÖ/KPÖ (33%), another third (31%) prefer ÖVP and a quarter (25%) favour FPÖ/BZÖ. The responses show similar patterns in the case of the respondent with secondary education degree (SPÖ/KPÖ 29%; ÖVP 31%; FPÖ/BZÖ 26%). In parallel, a third of the respondents with tertiary education also prefer ÖVP (34%); thus, the party is equally supported on every educational level. Besides that, a quarter of highly educated people align with SPÖ/KPÖ (26%), which means that highly educated respondents prefer the socialist party less. In contrast, FPÖ/BZÖ became the most denied political party for the higher educated respondents – only 5% of them sympathise with the radical right-wing party. However, a fifth of them (21%) prefer the Greens, which means that the party is mostly supported by the higher educated respondents. Furthermore, approximately one in ten tertiary-educated voters supports NEOS, which also constitutes an overrepresentation.

The issue of income also shows significant fractionalization of the respondents. Low-incomers predominantly align mostly with SPÖ/KPÖ (35%), while party support decreases as income levels rise, reaching 20% among higher-income groups. The correlation is more complex in the case of ÖVP: almost third of the respondents (27%) from the bottom 50%, and 32% from the middle 40% supported the party. Relating to FPÖ/BZÖ, less than a quarter of the low-income and approximately a quarter of the middle class sympathise with FPÖ, while this ratio is 14% among the respondents with higher income. The Greens (12%) and NEOS (8%) are also characterised by high-income respondents.

In parallel, parties on the political left-wing are generally supported by the urban citizens, while the right-wing political parties are mainly favoured in the rural territories of Austria. In detail, a third of the urban respondents support SPÖ/KPÖ, every tenth prefers the Greens and 7% of them the party NEOS. In contrast, 37% of the rural citizens prefer ÖVP, and a quarter of them align with FPÖ/BZÖ. In the case of SPÖ, almost a quarter of the rural respondent, relating to ÖVP, also every fourth urban, and in respect of FPÖ/BZÖ, a fifth of the urban questionnaires show their sympathy.

The religiousness also shows special characteristics of the parties and the party system (Durrer de la Sota, Gethin and Martínez-Toledano, 2021). The SPÖ/KPÖ still shows the most anti-clerical attitude – approximately 40% of the non-religious respondents show sympathy for the party. However, 66% of the Muslim respondents also support the SPÖ/KPÖ. In contrast, approximately a quarter of the Catholics and a third of the Protestants favour the party. This means that, besides the atheist dominance, the

party gained religious character, but it is non-Christian. Further 18% of the Muslims support the NEOS, and almost every tenth the ÖVP (10%). The irreligious (21%), the Catholic (23%) and the Protestant (23%) respondents more or less equally support the FPÖ/BZÖ, but among the Muslims, besides the Greens (2%), it is the least popular political party (4%). The Greens are also preferred by the non-religious (14%) and the Protestants (10%). The ÖVP could preserve its religious characteristics. Besides that, almost 40% of the Catholics support the party, and the ÖVP is also popular among the Protestants (25%). Further special characters are that the Green and the Liberal Forum voters come from the younger age cohorts. These parties are highly preferred by women, people with anti-clerical attitudes, higher levels of education, and a significant proportion of the votership is white-collar employees (Luther, 1999).

In recent decades, the population of Austria has shifted into a heterogeneous one. In 2008, approximately 17% of the population had a migrant background. This ratio increased to 26% by 2022. In this sense, every fourth citizen has non-Austrian background. According to the statistical surveys, the Germans and Romanians are the largest groups of foreigners in Austria (Statistics Austria, 2024b). In parallel, Islam became the second most practised religion after Roman Catholicism in the country (approximately 8% (Statistics Austria, 2024a)). According to Eurostat (2011), more than 1,2 million foreign-born people lived in Austria in 2010, which was 15% of the total population. This ratio also increased to 19% by 2018 (Eurostat, 2018). These members of the society primarily live in the central cities of the country. Besides, the so-called Autonomous Province of Bolzano- South Tyrol (Provincia Autonoma di Bolzani) is an autonomous territory within Austria. Approximately 60% of the total population is German-speakers, every fourth is Italian, who live together with the Ladin ethno-linguistic groups (4.5%). In 2017, the Austrian Government (ÖVP-FPÖ) made reforms to favour the acquisition of dual citizenship by Germans and Ladins in South Tyrol. The FPÖ made a draft law previously in 2009, but it was rejected then by the Austrian parliament. In 2017, Councillors from South Tyrolean sent a letter to the FPÖ and ÖVP, claiming that they would lose their Austrian citizenship due to the annexation of South Tyrol by Italy. The issue generates diplomatic tension between Austria and Italy (italyspractice.info, 2018). The conflict emerged further differentiation between the political left-(against) and right-wing (support) in Austria.

As the presented references show, the socio-demographic-related alignment of the Austrian society has historical, evolutionary backgrounds. Since the 18th century, the

party system was highly characterised by the different social classes and their interests. Based on the socio-demographic differentiation, the society emerged parallel social structures, functioning alongside one another. For a long time, the mechanisms of these Lagers have served as the instruments of democratic political culture, tracing back to their roots to foster stability in the society. By the pillarization, two political blocs were established, which represented approximately 90% of the class interest within the Austrian society. In this sense, the traditionalist model of Lipset-Rokkan proved to be valid during this period of time. However, after the Second World War, ÖVP and SPÖ sought to manage the political party system in a way that excluded the '*newcomers*' from participation (see: propoz system). Thus, the dominant political parties strengthened the stability of the socio-demographic-based alignment, and freezing the political party system became their own political interest.

However, by the social and technological modernisation, the anti-establishment became stronger. While on the political right-wing, the FPÖ argued sharply in favour of the anti-immigrant policy and addressed political messages to the centric and Christian voters; on the political left-wing, the Greens presented the post-materialist agenda. The party argued in favour of environmental and climate protection, gender equality and the process of democratisation. These chains of mechanisms led to diminish not only the socio-demographic significance, but also the privileges of the rotation governing for the ÖVP and SPÖ. By the 1980s, the bipolar political system in Austria gradually shifted into a multi-polar system, which challenges the well-known structures of the alignments – a point the research returns to later. As the public opinions show (e.g. Durrer de la Sota, Gethin and Martínez-Toledano, 2021), the relevance of certain socio-demographics traits (e.g. education) became negligible relating to the ÖVP and SPÖ, but in the case of the small parties, it serves as one of the main distinctive marks (e.g. tertiary educated voters of the Greens). In parallel, the relevant parties are continuously losing their exclusiveness to represent certain social classes, and the post-materialist political parties take a share of their support, which shows the presence of realignment. In this sense, socio-demographic characteristics and post-material values appear to complement each other in the Austrian political system.

3.3 Comparative Summary

The analysis of political cleavage lines in Hungary and Austria reveals both structural parallels and fundamental divergences, rooted in distinct historical and institutional

trajectories. While in Hungary, cleavages are less rooted in socio-demographic structures and more strongly influenced by elite-driven ideological and symbolic conflicts, Austria historically exhibited a highly institutionalised cleavage system embedded in subcultural Lager, though this structure has eroded in recent decades.

In Hungary, traditional cleavage dimensions—such as class or religious affiliation—have had relatively limited explanatory power. Instead, the most persistent and polarising divisions have been constructed by political elites, notably the nationalist vs. cosmopolitan and liberal vs. anti-liberal oppositions. While some socio-demographic trends (e.g. urban vs. rural, religious vs. secular) persist, their influence is often mediated by ideological framing and party discourse rather than stable group-based identity.

Austria, by contrast, long represented a textbook case of cleavage stability, especially in the post-war decades. Austria's traditional cleavages—religious vs. secular, worker vs. owner, and urban vs. rural—have historically been deeply embedded within a pillarised political culture. These Lager subcultures, reinforced by the Proporz system and corporatist networks, ensured stable partisan identification and class-based political representation throughout much of the post-war period. Although Austria has experienced de-pillarisation and the rise of new issue-based divisions (e.g. post-materialist values or anti-immigration sentiment), these have not entirely replaced the legacy of the traditional cleavage structure. The emergence of new parties (e.g. Greens, FPÖ, NEOS) have introduced a more fragmented and competitive political landscape, where socio-demographic indicators still matter, but are no longer determinative.

In sum, while Austria has evolved from a structured, subculture-based system toward a fragmented, multi-elite party landscape, Hungary has developed into a party system in which cleavage lines and other forms of political conflicts are increasingly shaped by elite-driven ideological mobilisation rather than rooted social structure.

After introducing the main cleavages and the political parties representing the conflicts, along with their supporters, the research shifts its focus to the processes of the 2015 European migration crisis in Austria and Hungary. In this context, as a first step, the study examines the historical experiences with immigration and the public attitudes toward immigration by analysing ESS datasets in both countries.

4 THE 2015 EUROPEAN MIGRATION CRISIS IN AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY

4.1 Historical Overview of Immigration in Austria and Hungary

In the context of social and political cleavages, the role of ethnic communities in majority-minority conflicts has already been discussed²¹. However, in order to assess public perceptions of immigration, it is essential to conduct a detailed examination of the historical processes of migration, which exhibit distinct patterns in the cases of Hungary and Austria.

Historically, Austrian society had significant experience with immigration and refugee movements well before 2015. One year after the Austrian adoption of the 1951 Geneva Convention, the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 led to the arrival of approximately 200,000 Hungarian refugees. Similarly, the Prague Spring in 1968 resulted in an influx of nearly 100,000 refugees into the country. During 1980–1981, the rise of the Solidarity mass movement in Poland and the subsequent challenge to the authority of the Polish United Workers' Party prompted another wave of influx. According to a 1981 issue of *The New York Times*, Austria's then-press representative of the Interior Ministry, Gabriele Neugebauer (SPÖ), referred to these refugees as the '*victims of oppression*' fleeing from socialist regimes (*The New York Times*, 1981)²². The minister emphasised that Austria represented the first free country on their westward journey and stressed the need for humanitarian support to refugees, even to those arriving from distant parts of the world.

Due to the emigration of Austrian workers, primarily to Germany and Switzerland, Austria faced a significant labour shortage. To mitigate this issue, Austria attempted to address the construction sector's labour shortfall by recruiting workers from Italy in 1961. The recruitment framework agreement was later extended to Spain (1962), Turkey (1963) and to Yugoslavia (1966). In 1973, the global oil crisis led many Austrian citizens who had been working abroad to lose their jobs and return to Austria. As a result, foreign workers on the Austrian labour market are perceived as undesirable competitors for

²¹ For further details, see the chapter titled '*Political Cleavage Lines in Austria and Hungary*'

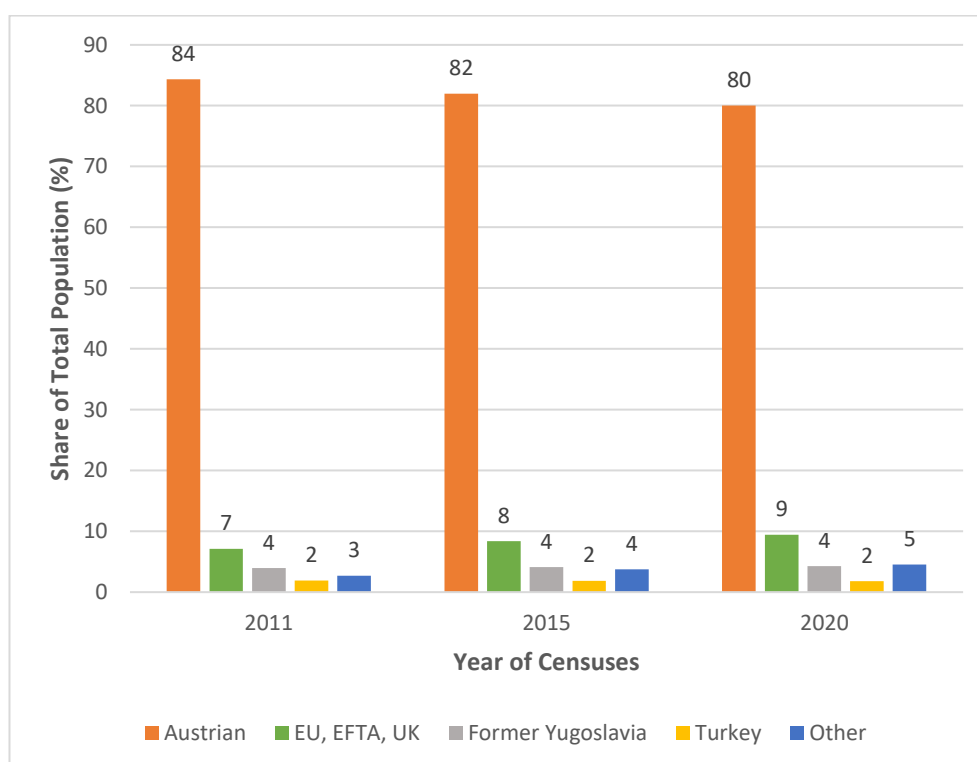
²² According to contemporary reports, the refugee issue generated significant tensions in Austrian domestic politics, primarily due to the unexpectedly high costs of accommodation and support. Initial estimates projected expenditures of \$20 million, but actual costs surged to \$53 million by 1981. To mitigate this challenge, the Austrian government actively lobbied for an increase in refugee quotas among Western bloc nations (see *The New York Times*, 1982).

returning Austrian workers. Thus, the foreign recruitment was discontinued in 1975, and a legal framework was introduced to prioritise Austrian workers over foreign ones. Additionally, approximately 55,000 foreign workers' residence permits were revoked (Perchinig, 2010). However, a significant number of these immigrants did not leave the country when their labour was no longer required, or when the conflicts in their home countries, which initially prompted their migration, had ended. Instead, they settled, started families, and aimed to build new lives in Austria, and the family reunification programs sustained the number of immigrants in Austria (Castles and Miller, 2009: 123). While the Cold War positioned Austria as a key transit country for refugees fleeing the Socialist bloc to the Western World, by the 1980s, Austria had become a destination country (Schumacher and Peyrl 2006, 185). This shift led to political conflicts regarding Austria's evolving role in immigration policy. The FPÖ (Freedom Party of Austria) emphasised the presence of so-called '*economic refugees*' who were deemed ineligible for refugee status, and advocated against integrating new immigrants to simplify their eventual repatriation to their countries of origin. In contrast, the Greens and the international NGOs thematised the status of refugees from the point of human rights and emphasised the need for integration of refugees (Genner 2012, 88-93).

As an aftermath of the fall of the Iron Curtain in the 1990s and the dissolution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the number of European immigrants and refugees gradually increased in Austria. For a brief period, the majority of the foreign labour force came from Germany (2001). However, the 'Big Bang' enlargement of the European Union in 2004, and the accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007 and Croatia in 2013, led to a rise in migration from these new EU member states. Although the former member states of the EU implemented temporary restrictions on workers from the new member countries to protect their national labour market, these measures were eventually lifted. For the countries that joined the EU in 2004, the restrictions expired in 2011, marking a shift towards full labour market integration for the new member states within the European Union (European Commission, 2011). Immigration in Austria occurs in varying waves each year, but it also holds significant historical importance. The number of immigrants entering the country exceeds the number of emigrants, contributing to the growth of Austrian society.²³

²³ Austria's fertility rate is 1.4 (Eurostat, 2022), indicating that the population would not sustain itself. However, its society demonstrates annual population growth, which may primarily be driven by the high level of immigration.

Figure 13. Ethnic composition of the Austrian population by country/region of birth (2011-2020)



Source: Own illustration based on Statistik Austria (2024b).

Note: Distribution of the Austrian population by nationality in the years 2011, 2015, and 2020, based on census data. The majority of the population is Austrian, followed by minorities from the EU, EFTA, the UK, Former Yugoslavia, Turkey, and other regions.

As Figure 13 shows, the Austrian-born population decreased over time: 84% was in 2011; 82% in 2015; and 80% in 2020. This trend reflects a gradual increase in the share of foreign-born residents as well. The largest non-Austrian group comes from the EU/EFTA/UK region - their share increased: 7% was in 2011; 8% in 2015; and 9% in 2020. The proportion of individuals born in the Former Yugoslavia remains consistent at 4%; similarly, the Turkish-born population maintains a stable share of 2%. In parallel, the 'Other' category slightly grew from 3% in 2011 to 4% in 2015 and 5% in 2020. The latter may be explained by the immigration wave in 2015, when most of the immigrants came from the Arab world. Although the Austrian-born population remains the majority, the increasing share of foreign-born groups indicates that Austria is transforming into a more ethnically diverse society. Besides the number of immigrant individuals, approximately half a million Austrian-born citizens were recorded as individuals with an immigration background in 2015 (second-generation immigrants), representing more than 5% of the total population. By 2020, this number had increased to over 600,000, accounting for nearly 7% of the total population (Statistics Austria, 2024). Before the migration crisis,

most immigrants were recorded as coming from Germany (170,000), Romania (73,000), and Turkey (110,000). By 2024, these numbers had risen to 232,000 (German), 153,000 (Romanian), and 124,000 (Turkish), respectively. Significant increases were also observed among Hungarian citizens, rising from 55,000 to 107,000, and Syrians, growing from 11,000 to 95,000. Ukrainian citizens increased dramatically from 8,500 to 80,000, while the Afghan population tripled from 16,000 to just under 50,000 during the same period. In addition, Austria is home to six autochthonous ethnic groups (Bundeskanleramt, 2024): the Burgenland Croats (approximately 19,000), Slovenes (approximately 25,000), Hungarians (approximately 40,000), Czechs (approximately 18,000), Slovaks (slightly over 10,000), and Roma (more than 6,000) (Szoťák, 2012: 124).²⁴

The Hungarian population is decreasing gradually. The total population of the country was over 10 million between 1965 and 2010²⁵. However, since the 1970s, the population has been decreasing continuously, and it has dropped below 10 million between 2010 and 2015, marking a significant demographic milestone. This decline reflects broader trends such as ageing, low birth rates²⁶, and emigration, which have shaped the country's demographic landscape over recent decades. In Hungary, 13 historically recognised nationalities can be identified: Bulgarian, Roma, Greek, Croatian, Polish, German, Armenian, Romanian, Rusyn, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian, and Ukrainian²⁷. Among these population groups, the German and Roma minorities are the most significant. Despite that, the German minority accounts for approximately 1% of the total population (around 62,000 in 2001; slightly over 131,000 in 2011; and fewer than 100,000 in 2022), while the Roma minority represents 2–3% of the population (slightly under 190,000 in 2001; more than 300,000 in 2011; and approximately 200,000 in 2022). The majority of first-generation immigrants in Hungary come from Hungarian minority communities in neighbouring countries (Péti, Szabó and Szabó, 2017: 311). Most of them are from Romania, Ukraine, Serbia, and Slovakia (Péti, Szabó and Szabó, 2017: 316–317). Considering that 3–6% of the population belongs to historical national minorities,

²⁴ The most recent survey dates back to 2001.

²⁵ The population increase can be partly explained by the growing number of the so-called Ratkó Children. The '*Ratkó children*' refer to the generation born during the early 1950s in Hungary, named after Anna Ratkó, the Minister of Health at the time. The term is associated with the pro-natalist policies implemented during her tenure, which included strict abortion bans and measures to encourage childbirth (Pető and Svégel, 2024: 5).

²⁶ According to Eurostat (2022), the fertility rate has been under 2 since the 1970s. In 2022, it was 1.56.

²⁷ Section 42 of Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities.

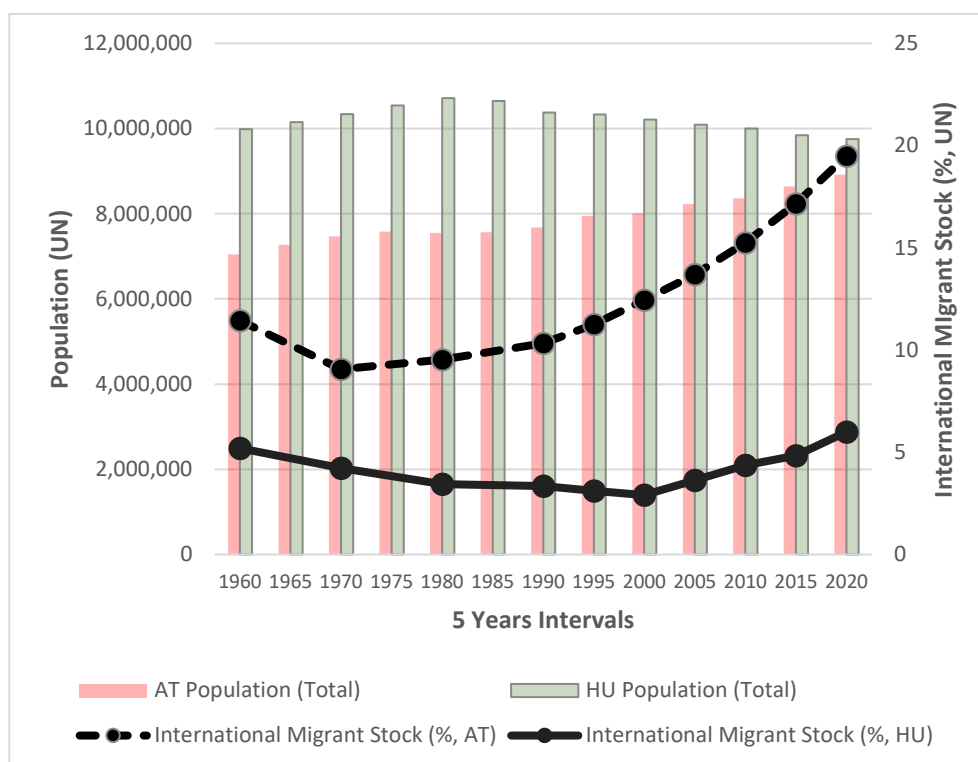
and the number of individuals belonging to other minority groups is not significant (approximately 16,000 in 2001; 47,000 in 2011; and more than 66,000 in 2022), Hungarian society can be called relatively homogeneous – more than 90% of the country identified itself as Hungarian, with Hungarian ancestors. In the country, after the political transition in 1990, the largest wave of refugees arrived in 1992, with over 72,000 individuals in a single year. Nonetheless, the majority of these refugees also came from Hungarian communities in neighbouring countries.

In the case of Hungary, emigration shows a more robust challenge than in the case of Austria. As Niamh Howley (2021) highlighted, a demographic crisis threatens the Central-Eastern European region. The main push factors of emigration are the better work opportunities and higher quality of social institutions in Western European countries. Most emigrants from Hungary are highly educated and skilled younger males. Due to the higher life expectancy, the lower fertility rates and the emigration, a dramatic shift in demographic structures can be observed. On the one hand, this leads to an increased old-age dependency ratio, characterised by a smaller workforce and reduced economic activity, which may contribute to declining tax revenues. In parallel, with the shrinking budgetary framework, the ageing population places growing pressure on the healthcare system and the pension payments, which are expected to represent a more significant share of GDP (Howley, 2021: 77-81). Recognising the issue, since 2010, the Hungarian government has introduced a family support system designed to encourage childbearing. This system includes tax reliefs, privileged loans, and non-repayable subsidies tied to commitments to have children, such as purchasing a house or a family car. Besides that, as Hungary approached full employment, the intensive recruitment of foreign workers began in 2022, primarily targeting countries in Far-East Asia, such as Indonesia. As a result of the initiative, approximately 81,000 foreign workers lived in Hungary by 2022 (G7, 2023).

Analysing the UN database, it can be stated that compared to the total population, the numbers of international migrants seem less significant in Hungary than in Austria or in the EU, despite the fact that the number of international migrants increased gradually in Hungary since the 2000s. In 2010, approximately 436,000 international migrants lived in Hungary, which increased continuously, surpassing 475,000 by 2015 and 580,000 by 2020. However, the measure of growth in population slightly surpassed the 7%, which shows a relatively low level of IMS. Compared to Hungary, the number of international migrants in Austria has been rising since the 1970s, approaching 20% of the total

population by 2020. In absolute terms, it was 676,000 in the 1970s, which rose gradually to 1.7 million by 2020. A significant rise can be observed in the 2010s: IMS increased by almost 500,000, mainly in the second half of the decade (after 2015). As Figure 14 shows, a high level of IMS rate growth can be observed in Austria, even though the population is growing steadily, reaching 9 million people. Despite the migration crisis in 2015, the IMS number does not show a significant deviation in percentage. If the values of the EU are considered as average, then in terms of IMS, Austria has above-average population per capita, while Hungary has below-average values.

Figure 14. International migrant stock in Austria and Hungary (1960-2020)

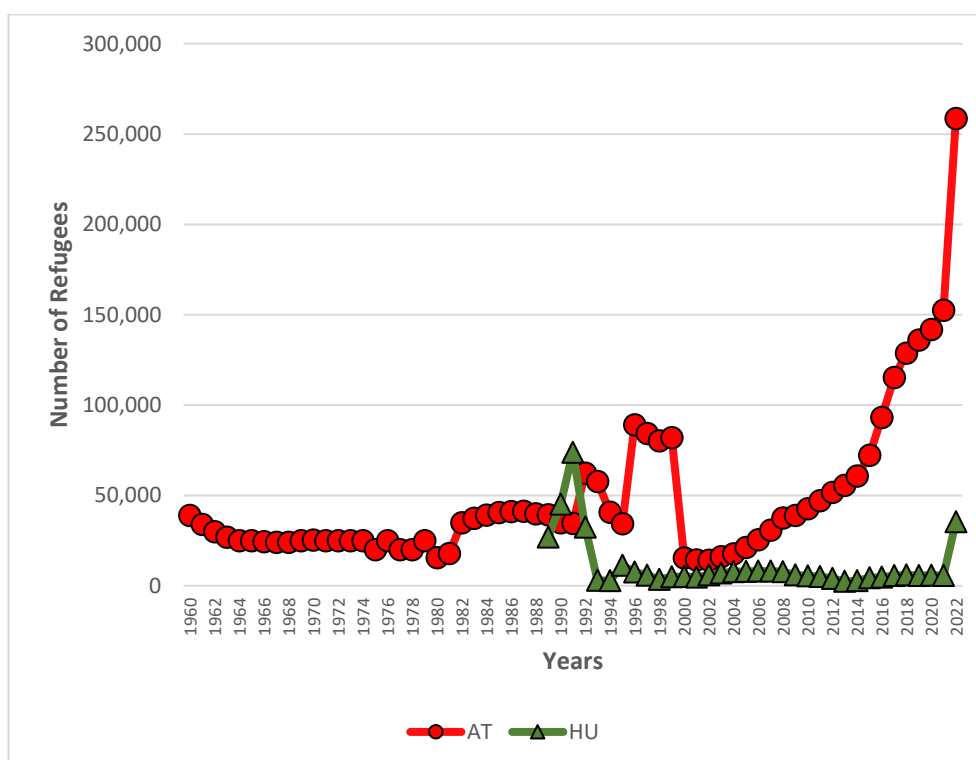


Source: Own illustration based on UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2024).

Furthermore, there is a notable contrast in the number of refugees. On the one hand, with the exception of the refugee wave following the regime change between 1989 and 1990, the population of refugees has only increased as a consequence of the war in Ukraine (2022). This presents that the 2015 migration crisis had almost no impact on the number of refugees admitted. The refugee population decreased continuously till 2013 (2,422 individuals) and probably as an aftermath of the migration crisis IMS tracked back to over 5,000. However, this population is considerably lower than 75,000 refugees in the period of regime change and 35,000 in 2022. The difference probably can be explained by the strict stance of the Hungarian government towards immigrants outside Europe. As

the Prime Minister of Viktor Orbán said in an interview with the German daily Bild newspaper: *'We do not see these people as Muslim refugees. We see them as Muslim invaders'*²⁸ (DW,2018b). It can give a logical explanation of the fact that, despite the high number of asylum applications in Hungary (see Figure 15), the increase in the refugee population was low compared to Austria and the EU.

Figure 15. Trends in number of refugees in Austria and Hungary (1960-2022)



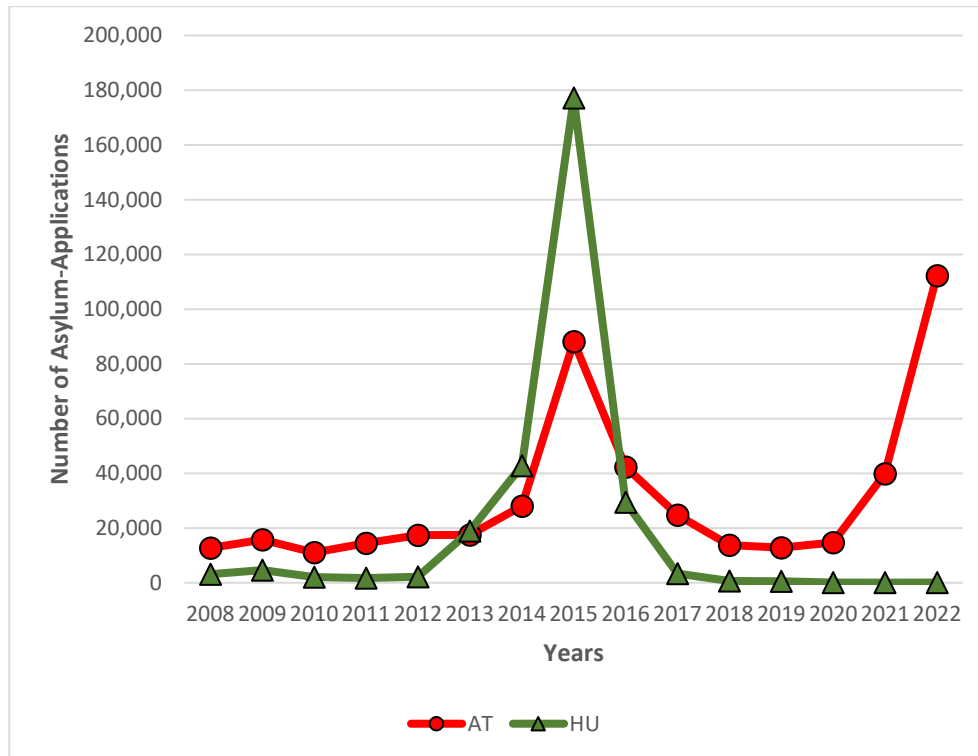
Source: Own illustration based on UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2024).
Note: The figure shows a notable shift after the 2015 immigration crisis.

Despite the low number of refugees in Hungary, the volume of asylum requests submitted between 2014 and 2015 exceeded the number of those in Austria. Hungary experienced a dramatic spike in asylum applications in 2015, reaching its peak at approximately 180,000 during the height of the European migration crisis. However, as a consequence of the low rate of approvals and the implementation of strict border enforcement policies, the number of submitted applications dropped to nearly zero in the subsequent year. In contrast, Austria experienced a gradual increase in asylum applications until 2015, with a peak that was smaller than Hungary's, reaching approximately 90,000 applications, which decreased gradually after the crisis. However, the Russian-Ukrainian military conflict led to a noticeable increase in asylum applications

²⁸ Original text (in Hungarian): *'Mi nem muszlim menekülteknek látjuk ezeket az embereket. Hanem muszlim hódítóknak'*

by 2022 (Figure 16). The consistently higher levels of asylum applications in Austria, particularly in recent years, may be explained by its comparatively more open immigration policies in contrast to the Hungarian restrictive approach.

Figure 16. Trends in number of asylum-applications in Austria and Hungary (2008-2022)



Source: Own illustration based on UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2024).
Note: The figure shows a notable shift after the 2015 immigration crisis.

As the presented results show, while the Austrian population has been gradually increasing, the Hungarian population has declined significantly. Furthermore, Austria has become more ethnically diverse, whereas Hungary remains a relatively homogeneous community in the Carpathian Basin. The relatively high proportion of first- and second-generation immigrants, as well as the continuous increase in the number of immigrants, suggests that Austrian society may be experiencing social and political conflicts along majority-minority lines, which could also be closely linked to a church vs state. Statistical findings further support this assumption, as Islam has become the second most common religion in Austria (1). Additionally, within the Austrian political system, a particular party, namely the SPÖ, has gained significant support among Muslim communities (66%), indicating the institutional presence of the social division (2). These demographic and historical differences probably contribute to the distinct attitudes toward immigration observed in the two countries. On the one hand, Austria's long-standing tradition of

receiving immigrants, combined with its growing diversity, may foster a more accepting environment. On the other hand, Hungary has a relatively homogeneous demographic composition and its historical experiences with migration may result in a less favourable attitude.

Based on the presented analysis, the question arises: Did the 2015 European migration wave alter public perception toward immigration in Austria and Hungary? Drawing on these trends, three sub-hypotheses are proposed:

- (1) the Hungarian respondents are less supportive of immigration,
- (2) compared to the Hungarian attitudes, Austrian respondents demonstrate a more favourable attitude toward immigration, and
- (3) the 2015 migration crisis has negatively affected the public perceptions of migration, particularly in Hungary.

4.2 Public Attitudes toward Immigration in Austria and Hungary

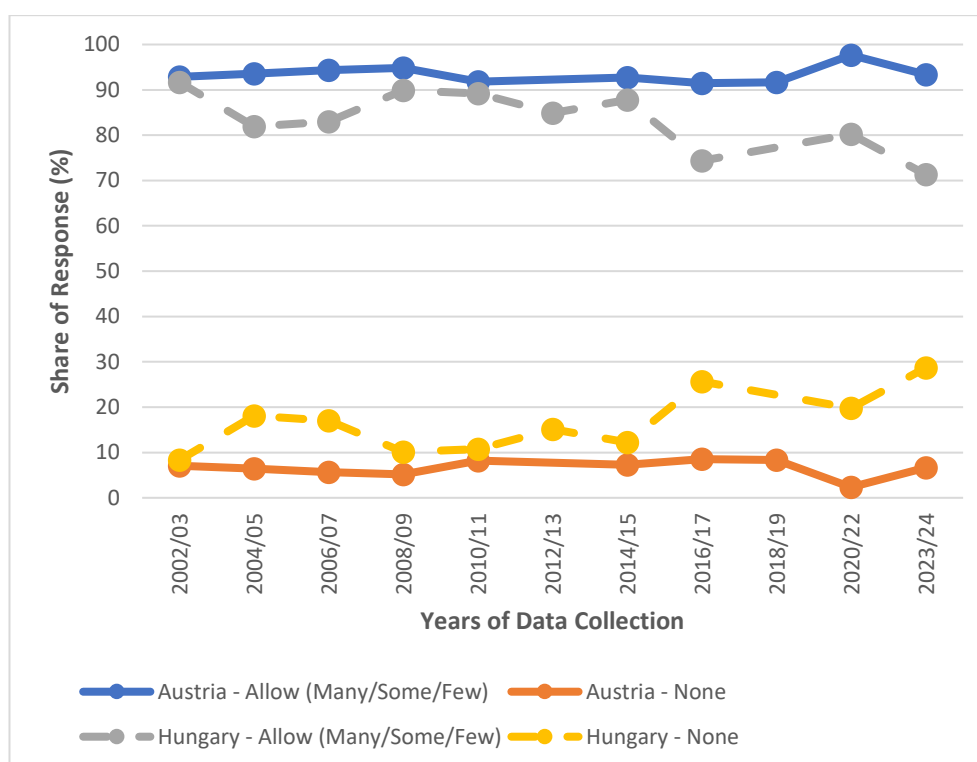
In order to capture public attitudes toward immigration, the current analysis adopts the database of ESS (2004-2024), which measures respondents' opinions on the acceptance of immigrants as well as the economic, cultural, and general societal impacts of immigration in the given country. The ESS distinguishes three different immigrant groups regarding their acceptance. These groups are categorised by their defining characteristics: (1) immigrants of the same race or ethnic background as the majority population in a given country; (2) immigrants of a different race or ethnic background from the majority population; and (3) immigrants from poorer countries outside Europe. Analysing attitudes toward different immigrant groups provides an opportunity to explore various aspects of societal perceptions.

In the case of immigrants of the same ethnicity, Austrian respondents overwhelmingly support their acceptance (Figure 17). More than 90% of respondents expressed some level of approval for admitting such individuals. On average, 2 out of 10 respondents believed it would be advisable to accept as many people of the same ethnicity as possible - exceptions being the 2020 (11%) and 2016 (16%) surveys. In the former case, this could likely be attributed to concerns about protecting the Austrian labour market, whereas the 2016 results may partly reflect the impact of the migration crisis. In contrast, the level of rejection ranged between 2% and 8.5%, showing no significant spikes throughout the examined period.

In contrast, a significant fluctuation can be observed in the case of the Hungarian position, which may be explained by the divisive opinions regarding the citizenship of ethnic Hungarian minorities living beyond the Hungarian borders. The question of granting simplified citizenship procedures for ethnic Hungarians became a central campaign topic. While the then-opposition Fidesz and other right-wing parties predominantly supported the 'Yes' vote, the governing socialist, liberal coalition, represented by MSZP and SZDSZ, opposed it, arguing that the success of the referendum would lead to a mass influx into the Hungarian welfare system and labour market. Although 51% of referendum participants voted in favour of the proposal, voter turnout was only around 37.5%. As a result, the referendum failed to meet the 25% threshold of 'Yes' votes required for a valid outcome (Bakk, 2005). Following the failure of the referendum, the negative stance toward acceptance moderated slightly to over 10%. However, during the second Orbán government in 2010, the citizenship law was amended, granting rights to ethnic Hungarians living beyond the borders to acquire Hungarian citizenship through a simplified process. This process required applicants to prove that one of their ancestors had been a Hungarian citizen, or to demonstrate their Hungarian origin and proficiency in the Hungarian language, while also ensuring they did not pose a national security or public safety risk. The amendment received support even from the majority of opposition representatives (Index, 2010). In subsequent years, a recurring criticism emerged that the majority of ethnic Hungarians living abroad tended to vote for Fidesz. In the 2014 elections, 95% of their votes went to the governing party (NVI, 2014b); in 2018, this proportion was 96% (NVI, 2018); and in 2022, 94% (NVI, 2022a). Consequently, the critical stance on dual citizenship became more pronounced, particularly among opposition voters. It appears possible that the 2015 migration crisis generally reduced the willingness to accept newcomers, leading to an increase in rejection rates to 26% by 2016, which was slightly decreased to 20% by 2020. However, as a consequence of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the number of refugees increased further. Despite the fact that, according to the most recent census (HHRF, 2024), approximately 156,000 Hungarian citizens resided in Ukraine. During this period, one in three respondents opposed accepting individuals of the same ethnicity in Hungary, which shows a highly negative stance even toward ethnic Hungarians who flee the war in Ukraine. Between 2002 and 2022, there were significant shifts in attitudes toward acceptance. While approximately 20–30% of respondents initially supported the '*Allow many*' option, this view had declined to below 10% by 2020. The most extraordinary

polarisation was observed during the 2016 survey, when respondents were nearly evenly divided across all four response options, with distribution rates ranging from 22% to 29%. Based on this, it can be assumed that the 2015 migration crisis divided Hungarian society.

Figure 17. Allow immigrants of same race/ethnic from majority - Austria and Hungary (2002-2024)



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

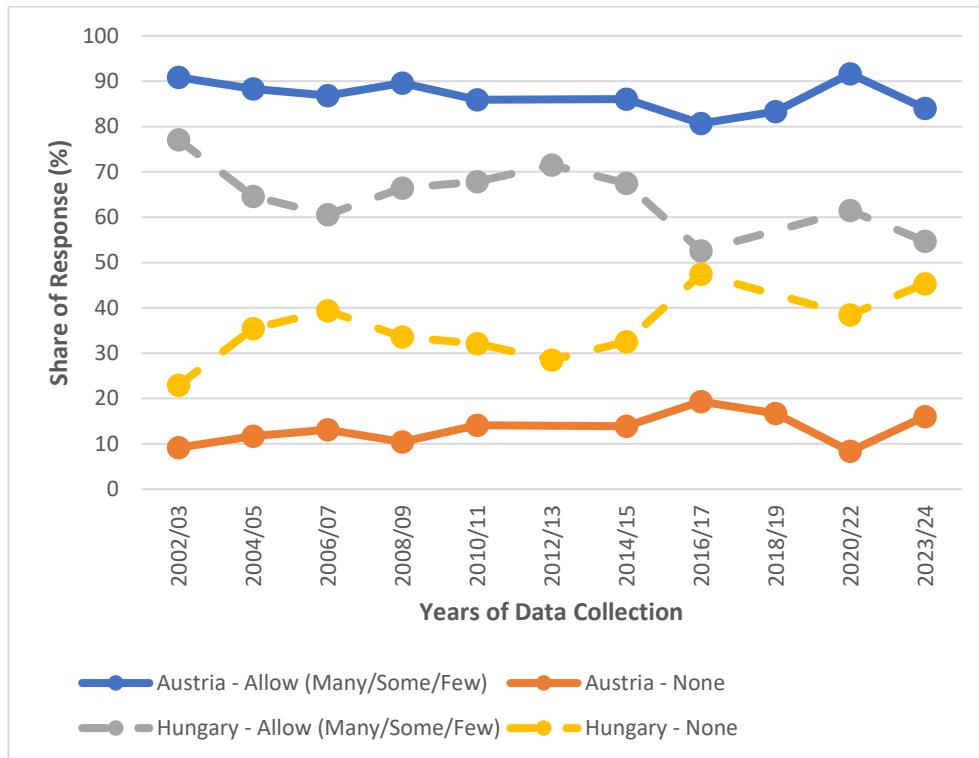
Note: The original response categories ('Allow many', 'Allow some', 'Allow a few', and 'Allow none') were aggregated into two groups for visualisation purposes: 'Allow many/some/few' and 'Allow none'. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding effects. Detailed response distributions can be found in Appendix A.

Analysing attitudes toward immigrants from a different race or ethnic group, the results show a different position both in Austria and Hungary (Figure 18). According to the findings, the Austrian responses show a high level of acceptance: between 2002 and 2024, over 80% of the respondents indicated some willingness to allow immigrants from different races or ethnic groups into the country. The proportion of respondents supporting 'Allow many to come and live here' fluctuates between 8.2% and 13%, while the proportion endorsing 'Allow none' ranges from 8.4% to 19.3%. The highest level of opposition was observed during the 2016/17 period, reflecting a significant 5% increase compared to the previous survey. This change can probably be explained by the effects of the 2015 migration crisis (ESS Round 8): as the number of immigrants increased, so did the degree of rejection. As the influx decreased, the level of rejection moderated (see

2021, ESS Round 10). As an aftermath of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, the number of immigrant individuals increased as well (by 2023; ESS Round 11).

Based on the survey responses, the Hungarian society appears to be less accepting of individuals from different ethnic backgrounds compared to the Austrian society. While the majority of respondents expressed some level of support (55-77%) for the acceptance of immigration between 2002-2024, the detailed results indicate a moderate stance. In contrast to the Austrian response, the proportion of Hungarian respondents who chose the option '*Allow many to come and live here*' remained below 10%. Meanwhile, the percentage of those who selected '*Allow a few*' fluctuated between 39% and 63%, indicating that respondents were predominantly willing to accept only a limited number of immigrants of different ethnic backgrounds into the country. The proportion of respondents selecting '*Allow none*' ranged from 23% to 47%, which is significantly higher than in the case of Austrian responses. The findings underscore a fundamentally more negative stance within Hungarian society regarding the acceptance of immigrants from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. This sentiment became particularly pronounced during the migration crisis, when nearly half of the respondents (47%) expressed that such immigrants should not be admitted into the country. While this negative attitude has moderated in subsequent years (39%), it is likely to have resurged as a result of the Russian-Ukrainian war (45%).

Figure 18. Allow immigrants of different race/ethnic from majority - Austria and Hungary (2002-2024)

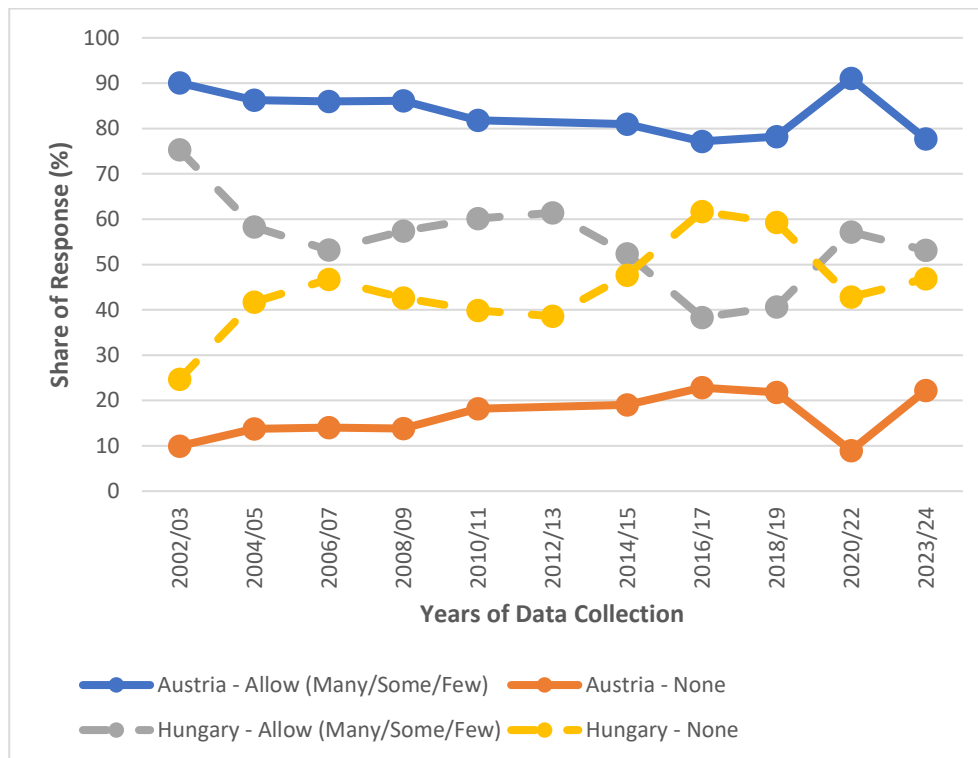


Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Note: The original response categories ('Allow many', 'Allow some', 'Allow a few', and 'Allow none') were aggregated into two groups for visualisation purposes: 'Allow many/some/few' and 'Allow none'. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding effects. Detailed response distributions can be found in Appendix B.

Attitudes toward immigrants from outside Europe indicate that Austrian respondents show a similar acceptance pattern to that observed for immigrants of different ethnic backgrounds (see Figures 18 and 19). However, it is worth noting that positive responses indicate approximately 1-6% less support for the acceptance of immigrants from outside Europe compared to immigrants of a different race or ethnicity. In contrast, Hungarian responses before the 2015 migration crisis also indicated a similar fluctuation regarding the acceptance of immigrants of differing ethnic backgrounds; however, the peak of the negative position was higher. Following the crisis, a majority of respondents expressed their opposition stance to accepting poorer immigrants from outside Europe. In 2016 and 2018, approximately 6 out of 10 respondents rejected the acceptance of such immigrants, while the rejection rate for immigration from different racial backgrounds was around 5 out of 10 during this period. By 2020, the level of rejection decreased, reflecting a trend similar to that observed in attitudes toward immigrants of differing ethnic backgrounds, albeit at a slightly lower level.

Figure 19. Allow immigrants from a poorer country outside Europe - Austria and Hungary (2002-2024)

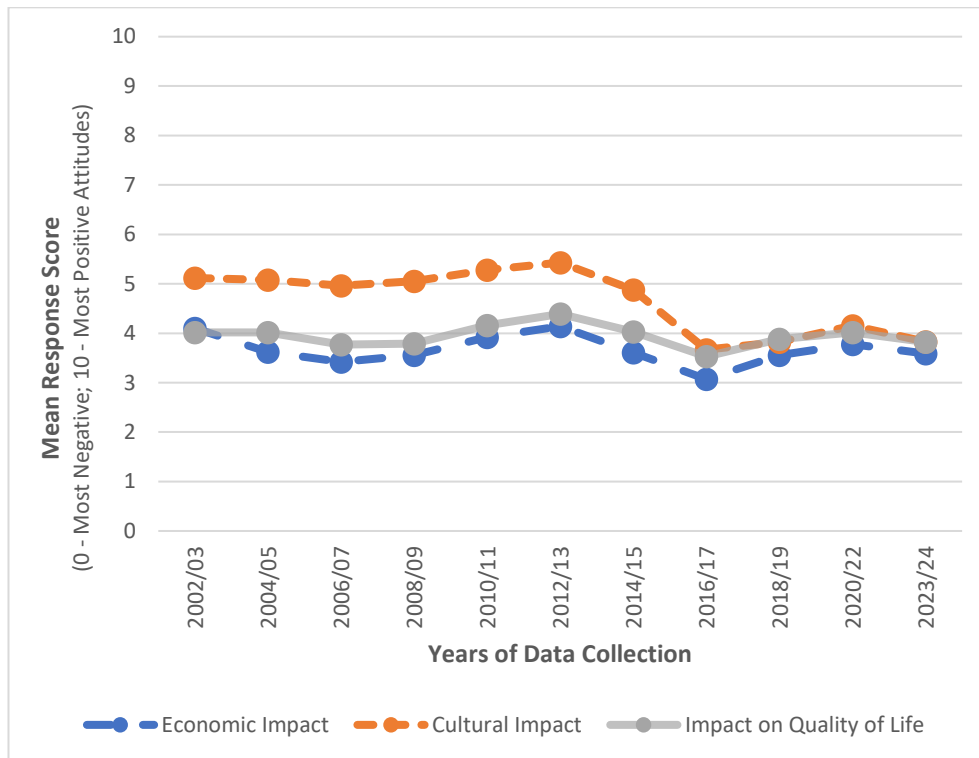


Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Note: The original response categories ('Allow many', 'Allow some', 'Allow a few', and 'Allow none') were aggregated into two groups for visualisation purposes: 'Allow many/some/few' and 'Allow none'. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding effects. Detailed response distributions can be found in Appendix C.

In summary, attitudes toward acceptance reveal notable differences between Austrian and Hungarian respondents. Among Austrians, the response 'Allow some' was predominant when considering immigrants of the same nationality, while 'Allow few' was more common for those of different nationalities or from poorer non-European countries. This suggests that Austrian society generally holds a more inclusive stance toward immigration. Although the positive attitude has slightly declined following the 2015 migration crisis, the majority of Austrians remain relatively supportive. In contrast, Hungarian respondents exhibited lower willingness to accept even members of their own ethnic group. The willingness to accept immigrants deteriorated drastically after the 2015 crisis, particularly toward those of different ethnicities or from non-European regions, with nearly half of the respondents opposing their acceptance.

Figure 20. Trends in attitudes toward immigration in Hungary (2002–2024)



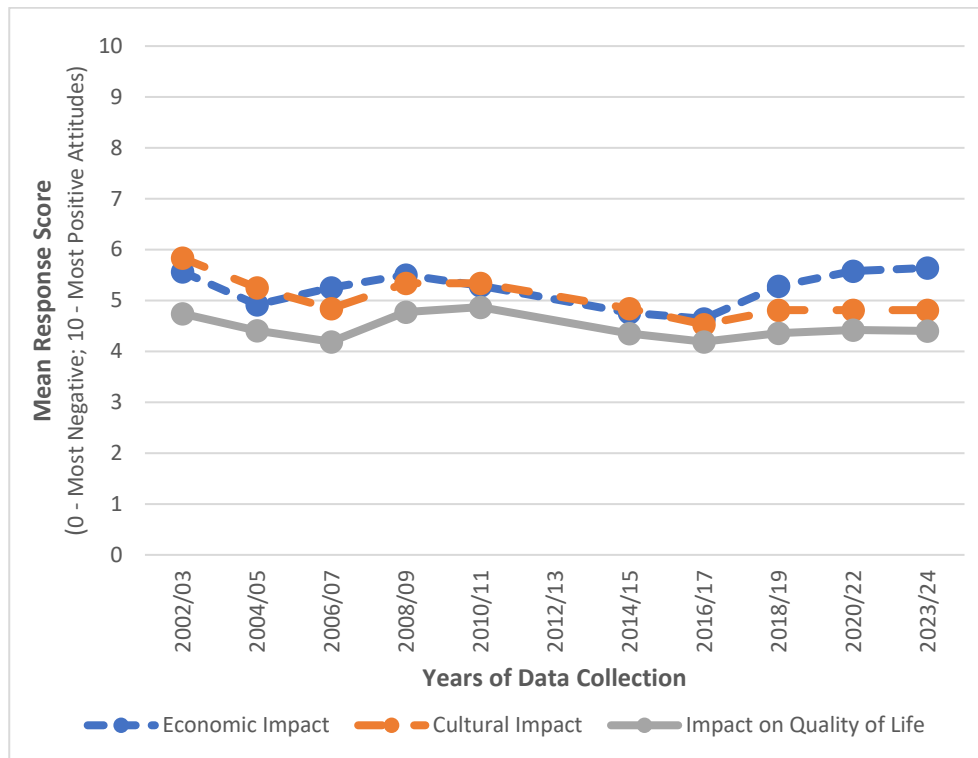
Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Note: Figure 20 illustrates the mean response scores for attitudes toward immigration across three dimensions: cultural impact, economic impact, and impact on quality of life in Hungary between 2002 and 2024. The scale ranges from 0 (most negative attitudes) to 10 (most positive attitudes). A comprehensive cross-tabulation analysis is provided in Appendices D–F.).

Both Hungarian and Austrian respondents assessed immigration with the ESS variables, which measure the economic, cultural, and overall impacts of immigration on a scale from 0 to 10. The lowest point on the scale (0) represents the most negative perspective, while the highest point (10) indicates the most positive. As Figures 20 and 21 illustrate, two distinct periods can be observed regarding both the Hungarian and Austrian responses: a pre-2015 migration crisis period and a post-2015 period. During the pre-crisis period, immigration was qualified most positively in cultural terms. However, the average values of responses indicate that this perspective largely reflected a neutral stance. By contrast, lower average scores were recorded for the perceived economic and general life impacts of immigration, with minimal differences between the two. This similarity suggests that Hungarian respondents predominantly evaluated immigration through an economic lens during this period. In the post-2015 migration crisis period, the cultural assessment of immigration significantly declined, aligning closely with the perceived impact on general life. These results indicate a shift in the evaluation of immigration, where cultural considerations became more dominant than economic ones, although economic factors remained relevant. Considering the average

values, it is evident that Hungarian society continues to exhibit a predominantly neutral or negative stance toward immigration.

Figure 21. Trends in attitudes toward immigration in Austria (2002-2024)



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Note: Figure 21 illustrates the mean response scores for attitudes toward immigration across three dimensions: cultural impact, economic impact, and impact on quality of life in Austria between 2002 and 2024. The scale ranges from 0 (most negative attitudes) to 10 (most positive attitudes). A comprehensive cross-tabulation analysis is provided in Appendices D–F.

As Figure 21 illustrates, the Austrian respondents tend to assess immigration more positively in terms of economic and cultural impacts compared to its perceived effects on everyday life. Before the 2015 migration crisis, the average responses based on economic and cultural aspects reflected a generally positive or neutral stance, whereas the impact on everyday life was perceived more neutrally or slightly negatively. Following the 2015 crisis, the assessments of economic and cultural impacts began to diverge: while immigration was increasingly viewed positively from an economic perspective, the Austrian society became more critical in cultural terms. Regarding the perceived effects on everyday life, only minimal improvement is observed, suggesting stagnation rather than a clear trend of change.

As the findings indicate, the 2015 migration crisis can indeed be characterised as a mass migration crisis (see Figure 2-9), which was significant in scale for both Hungary and Austria (see Figures 14-16). The crisis had a shock-like impact on society, which was

also reflected in public perception (see Figure 17-21): during the crisis period, acceptance of immigration declined in both countries. While the more inclusive Austrian society primarily experienced a decrease in acceptance and a rise in rejection, the already more resistant Hungarian public adopted an even more exclusionary stance toward different races. The negative trend was even more pronounced toward immigrants arriving from a poorer country outside Europe. During the examined period, perceptions of immigration followed different trajectories in Austria and Hungary. In Austria, economic arguments for immigration strengthened, while cultural considerations declined. In contrast, in Hungary, cultural considerations deteriorated the most in perception of immigration.

As the public opinion on immigration has shifted, the subsequent stages of the research examine how the immigration crisis manifested within the three-level cleavage theory. The analysis first examines the significance of political parties, defining the scope of the parties considered for examination. Then, the research explores the positions of the relevant parties on immigration, analysing the relationship between their stance on immigration and their ideological orientation. Subsequently, the focus shifts to voter attitudes toward immigration, considering their socio-demographic and ideological factors, and their party preferences.

5 THE RELEVANCE AND TRANSFORMATION OF PARTY SYSTEMS IN AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY

As the literature review presented, the relevance of political parties has also been called into doubt. One of the most prominent critics of parties' relevance is Peter Mair. According to Mair (2005), modernisation, individualism, and cognitive mobilisation have led to a detachment of individuals from political parties. Social and technological advancements have altered the societal and political needs of citizens, resulting in a decline in party affiliation and the dissolution of party identity. Consequently, parties are no longer capable of fulfilling functions that were once their exclusive responsibility, such as representation and legitimation. This has led to the loss of contact between political parties and citizens, contributing to processes of depoliticisation and disenchantment (Mair and Thomassen, 2010).

The measurement of party relevance in the academic literature is typically based on voter turnout, party membership, electoral volatility, the degree of party identification, and the assessment of anti-party sentiments. Critics describe the process of dealignment as characterised by increasing levels of electoral volatility, declining voter turnout, a reduction in the number of parties participating in elections, and the decreasing relevance of party affiliation along socio-demographic lines (Enyedi, 2014).

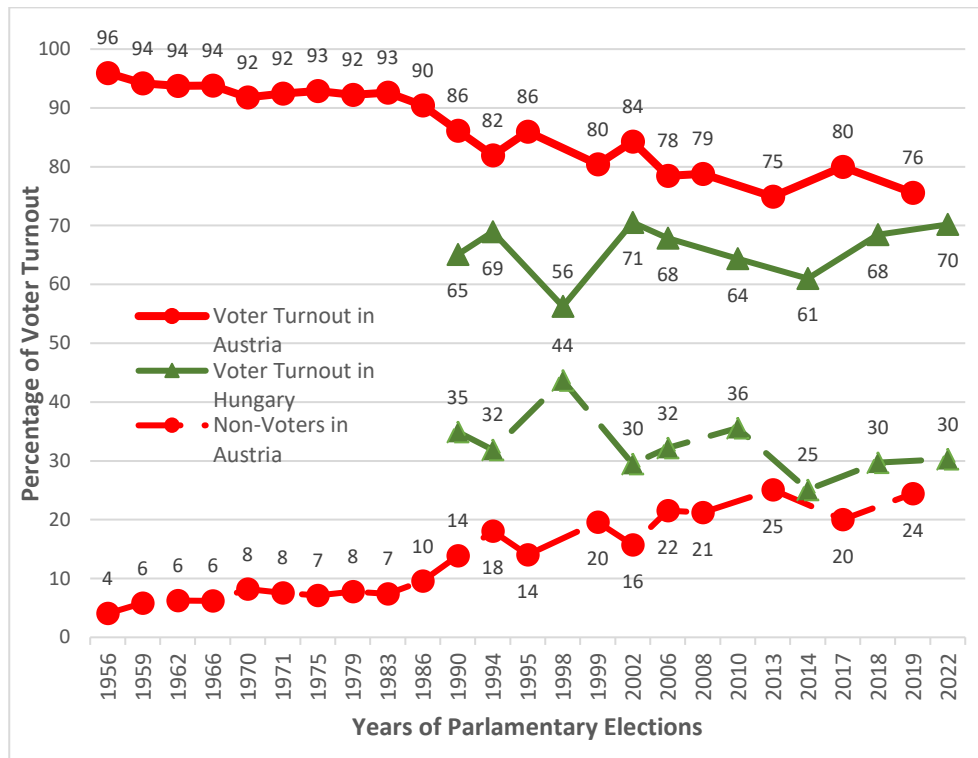
5.1 Political Engagement: Turnout and Party Membership

As shown in Figure 22, voter turnout has steadily declined in long term in Austria, while in Hungary, it has fluctuated over time. Indeed, these changes could be linked to societal and technological developments or the rise of individualism, as suggested by the critics. However, country-specific events also may play an important role²⁹. Regardless of the extent to which explanations can be assessed, high voter turnout indicates that a

²⁹ Note: The aim of this chapter is not to provide an answer to the question of what influenced voter turnout in the elections. However, some practical examples illustrate the diversity of factors that can affect voter behaviour. For example, in post-transition Hungary, nearly 70% of eligible voters participated in the first democratic elections. This period can be seen as a learning phase for the democratic electoral system (Stumpf, 1996: 139), where voters explored their own values and the available parties. Many shifted their choices from one election to another. At the same time, privatisation and economic restructuring led to significant declines in welfare standards, which likely contributed to temporary disillusionment with party politics. This may explain the low voter turnout of around 56% in 1998. In Austria, the popularity of FPÖ may have contributed to higher turnout rates, driven partly by FPÖ's mobilisation efforts and partly by the activation of voters opposing FPÖ. Further examples can be found in the chapter '*Political Cleavages Lines in Austria and Hungary*'.

connection between voters and political parties persists, suggesting that political parties still retain their legitimacy. The findings for Austria and Hungary reveal no decline in voter turnout significant enough to call into question the legitimacy of political parties, which underscores their continued relevance.

Figure 22. Trends in turnout and non-voters in parliamentary elections in Austria and Hungary (1956-2022)



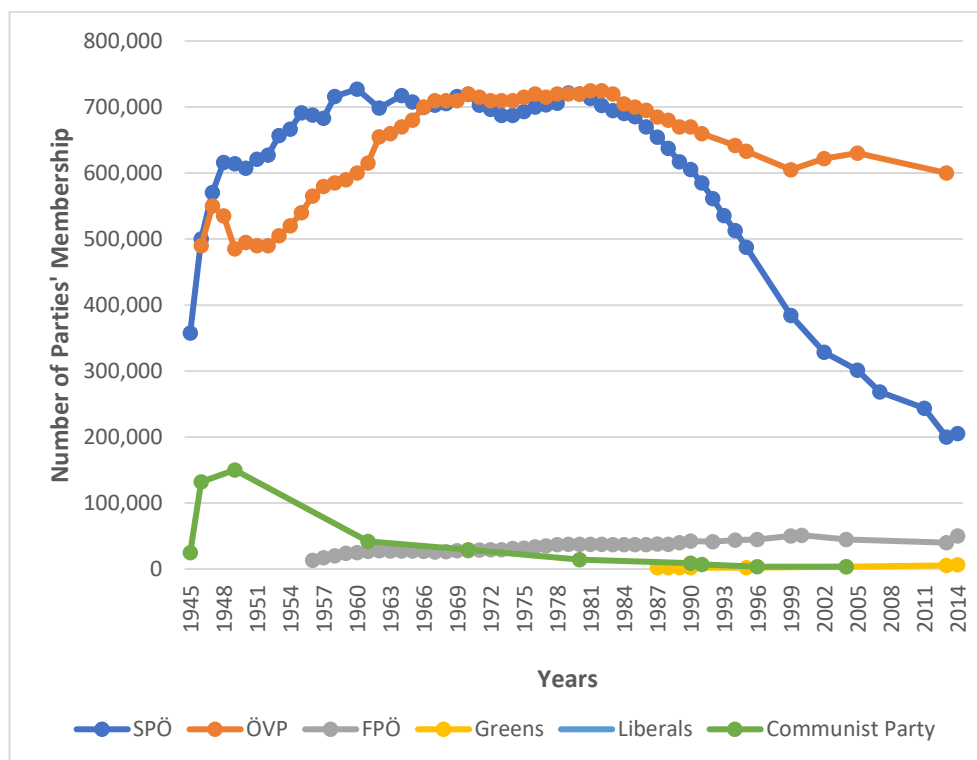
Source: Own calculations based on the Hungarian National Election Office (NVI, 2025), and Federal Ministry of the Interior of Austria (Bundesministerium für Inneres. 2025).

Note: As the sum of voters and non-voters approaches 100%, this indicates that the number of invalid votes is minimal. For better visualisation, only the election years are displayed on the X-axis.

Beyond voter turnout, another key indicator of party relevance is party membership. In this regard, a notable divergence can be observed between Austria and Hungary. As the data show (Figures 23 and 24), this form of party identification is more prevalent in Austria than in Hungary. While the major Austrian political parties have hundreds of thousands of members, Hungarian parties—with the exception of FKgP—do not even reach the threshold of one hundred thousand members. However, as the figure illustrates, only ÖVP has managed to maintain its high level of membership (approximately 600,000 members), whereas the SPÖ has experienced a steady decline since the 1980s. At the same time, competitors of the traditional Austrian political parties, including the FPÖ, exhibit much lower levels of membership. In the Hungarian political system, even the

most popular parties have only around 40,000 members, constituting less than 1% of the eligible voters.

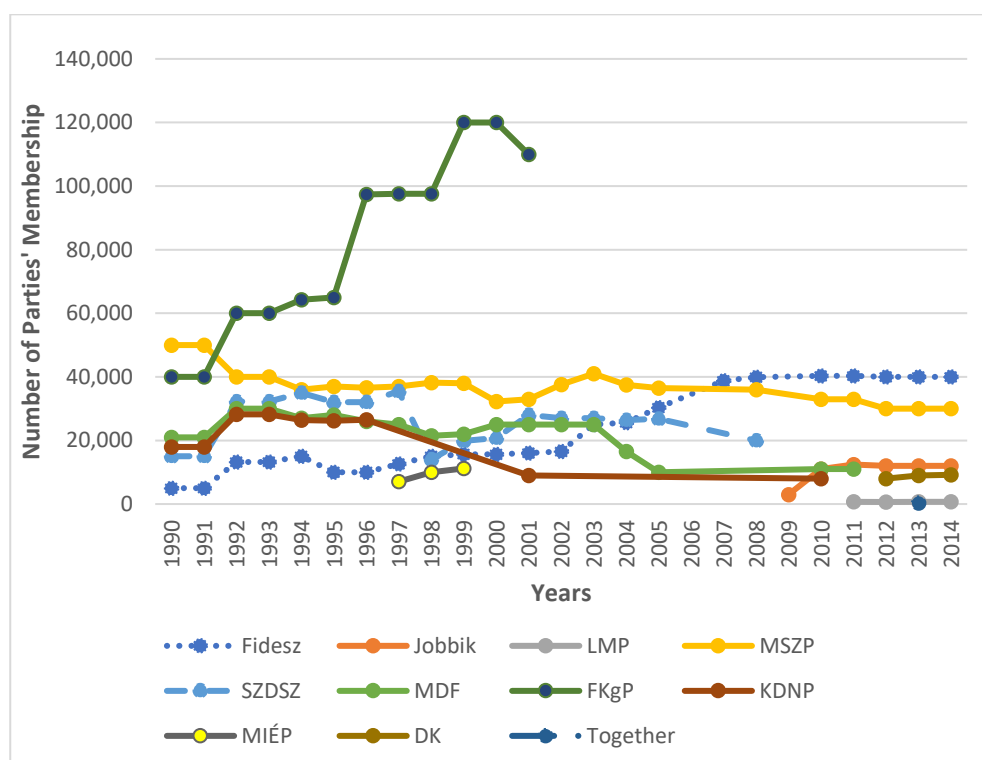
Figure 23. Trends in political party membership in Austria (1945-2014)



Source: Own illustration based on Members and Activists of Political Parties (MAPP Dataset, 2016).

These empirical trends reinforce earlier observations about the structural foundations of party identification in both countries. In Austria, the exceptionally high levels of party membership during the post-war decades were not merely a reflection of political engagement but were rooted in the broader institutional context of pillarization and the Proporz system. As shown earlier, membership in ÖVP and SPÖ was often tied to social benefits, employment, and corporatist integration—creating a system in which party affiliation was both socially embedded and materially incentivised. The subsequent depillarization process—driven by urbanisation, educational secularisation, and the decline of party-controlled media—correlates with the steady fall in SPÖ membership seen in Figure 23. Meanwhile, ÖVP’s more resilient membership figures may reflect stronger organisational networks or deeper rural anchoring. By contrast, Hungary has not developed such institutionally reinforced subcultural blocs. As seen in Figure 24, even during peak political mobilisation, party membership remained low. This supports earlier arguments that the Hungarian party's identity is weaker, less institutionalised, and more susceptible to elite-driven volatility than in Austria.

Figure 24. Trends in political party membership in Hungary (1990-2014)



Source: Own calculations based on Members and Activists of Political Parties (MAPP Dataset, 2016).

5.2 Electoral Volatility

According to the literature, beyond voter turnout and party membership, fluctuations in electoral behaviour also serve as a valuable measure of the relevance of political parties. One of the most well-known indicators to measure electoral volatility is the so-called Pedersen Index³⁰. As Pedersen referred to Ascher and Tarrow's thought (1975: 480-81), electoral volatility means '*the net change within the electoral party system resulting from individual vote transfers*'. By measuring the change in the number of parties, and the relative distribution of electoral strength Pedersen formulated two hypotheses: the first hypothesis assumes that the greater number of contesting political parties in the elections leads to higher rate of volatility (H1) and if the number of competing parties change between elections electoral volatility will tend to increase (H2) (Pedersen, 1979: 16). Both hypotheses were confirmed, which highlights the sensitivity of the index as well. In this

³⁰ Note: In the 1970s, Pedersen observed that the previously stable political structures had changed considerably. In this period of time, the number of competing parties increased and the distribution of electoral strength altered in unpredictable ways in the Northern countries, which were rather stable and predictable in the 1960s. It seemed the relationship between voters and parties declined, and theories of party identification lost their explanatory relevance. The unconventional political behaviour became more general, and large portions of the electorate defected from older parties to new parties. To analyse the change of parties, Pedersen examined the electorate level of the party competition by comparing their electoral volatility (see Pedersen 1979).

sense, the number of competing parties and the newcomers in the party system (X) affects the electoral volatility (Y). A major advantage of the index is its simplicity. The rate of change in the party system is measured by election to election in the following manner:

$$Total\ Net\ Change\ (TNC_t) = \sum_{i=1}^n |\Delta p_{i,t}|$$

$P_{i,t}$ denotes the percentage of the vote obtained by party i at election t . The change in the strength of party i since the previous election. Where n is the total number of parties competing in the analysed and the previous election. Based on the equation, the net gains for winning parties numerically equal the net losses of the parties that were defeated in the election. As a result, the scale of TNC is between 0 and 200, where zero expresses that no difference in results was observed, while 200 shows that all parties from the previous election lost their support, as voters opted exclusively for newcomers. Volatility can be determined by dividing the results of TNC by two. In this sense, neutralising the distortion caused by the TNC, volatility counts only half of the gains and losses of the net changes. Because the range of volatility is between 0 and 100, the calculation results can be expressed in terms of percentage. The equation of volatility is the following:

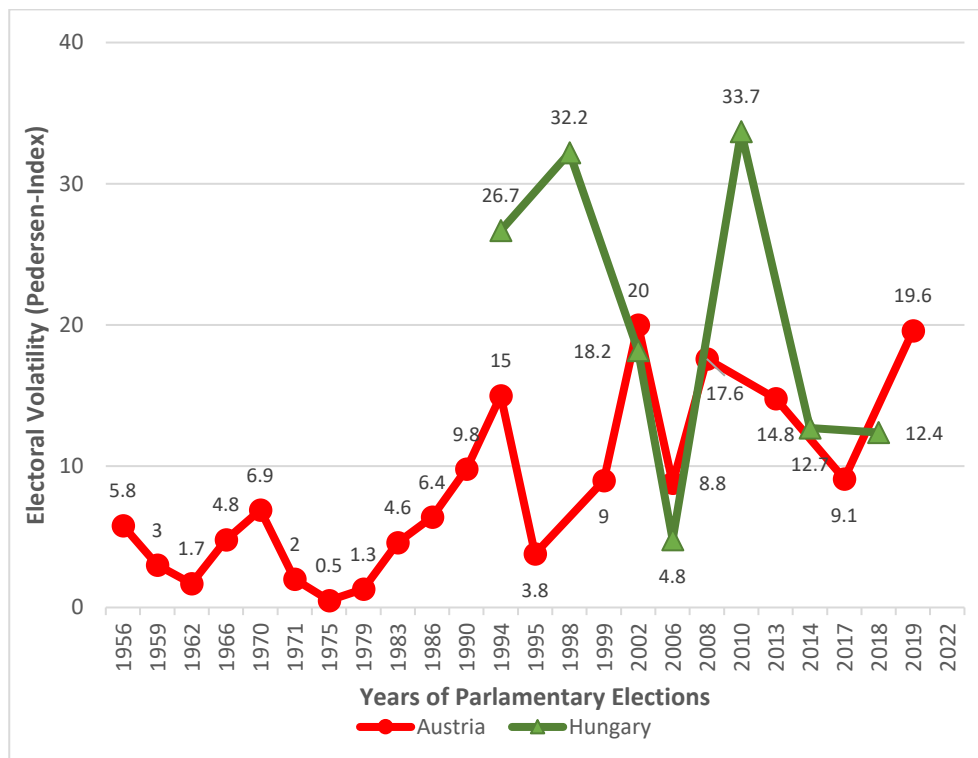
$$Volatility\ (V_t) = TNC * 0,5$$

The Pedersen Index demonstrates relatively low and stable electoral volatility in Austria, indicating a strong voter-party linkage. However, since the 1990s, the level of volatility has surpassed previous values, showing a weakening connection between voters and the two traditional parties, the ÖVP and SPÖ. From this period onward, fluctuations became more pronounced: approximately 15% of voters switched parties in the 1994 elections (driven by the rise of the FPÖ and new alternative parties), 20% in 2002 (following the decline of the FPÖ), nearly 15% in 2008 (as the FPÖ regained strength), and almost 20% in the 2019 Austrian elections (due to the Ibiza affair). Each of these peaks in volatility was followed by periods of relative stability, during which the level of voters' fluctuations decreased for a few electoral cycles.

In Hungary, as previously mentioned, the learning phase of the democratic electoral system led to significant volatility, particularly during the 1994 and 1998 elections. Party support began to stabilise by 2002, marking the development of a bipolar political system. However, the '*Őszöd speech*' and subsequent economic and political crises led to a resurgence in voter fluctuation. While left-wing parties suffered significant losses (MSZP,

SZDSZ)³¹, the Fidesz-KDNP alliance experienced a surge in support. Concurrently, voter turnout declined slightly (by approximately 4%) between 2006 and 2010. Following the 2010 elections, Hungary witnessed an increase in voter turnout (reaching approximately 70%) and a decline in volatility (around 10%), indicating greater stability in the relationship between parties and voters. These trends suggest that while dealignment is present, it tends to manifest periodically rather than persistently. In contrast, realignment appears to be the dominant process: voters are more likely to shift their party allegiance than to disengage entirely from the party system. As the results show, the measure of volatility fluctuates (Figure 25).

Figure 25. Trends in electoral volatility in parliamentary elections in Austria and Hungary (1956-2019)



Source: Own calculations based on Database of Who Governs Europe (2024).

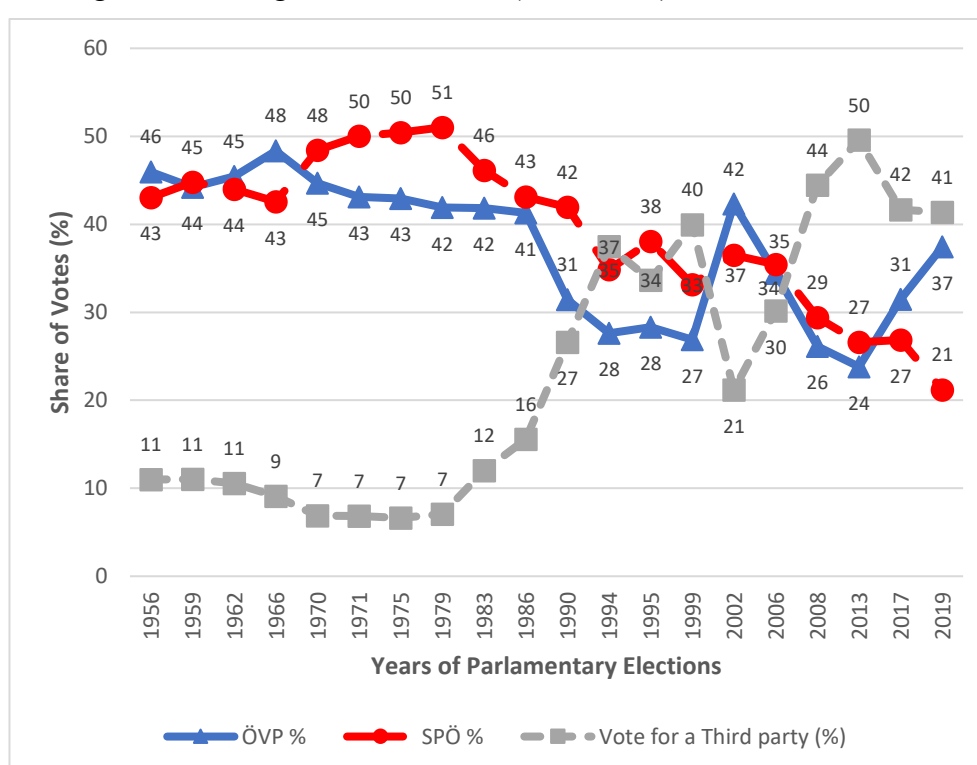
Note: For better visualisation, only the election years are displayed on the X-axis.

After determining the extent of volatility, the question arises regarding the direction of voter '*migration*'. Examining the distribution of votes (Figure 26), it can be observed that in Austria, voter fluctuation was not primarily between the two dominant parties of the party system, the SPÖ and ÖVP. This suggests that voters were primarily oriented

³¹ To fill the political space on the political left, and in response to the lack of a popular left-wing political party, some civil organisations attempted to step into the role of them to advocating their own interests (see Together2014 in Dúró, 2023). However, in terms of party support, these attempts failed.

toward third parties. One of the primary beneficiaries of the volatility has been FPÖ, which has become a stable third pole. In parallel, the support of liberal NEOS and the Greens has also grown, but less significantly compared to FPÖ. While the Austrian parliamentary system frequently witnesses the emergence of new parties, many fail to surpass the parliamentary threshold (4%). The trend indicates that traditional parliamentary parties have indeed lost their influence, while the majority of voters have cast their ballots for alternative parties opposing the traditional ones. This suggests the formation of new party affiliations and the multi-polarisation of the Austrian party system.

Figure 26. Realignment in Austria (1956-2019)



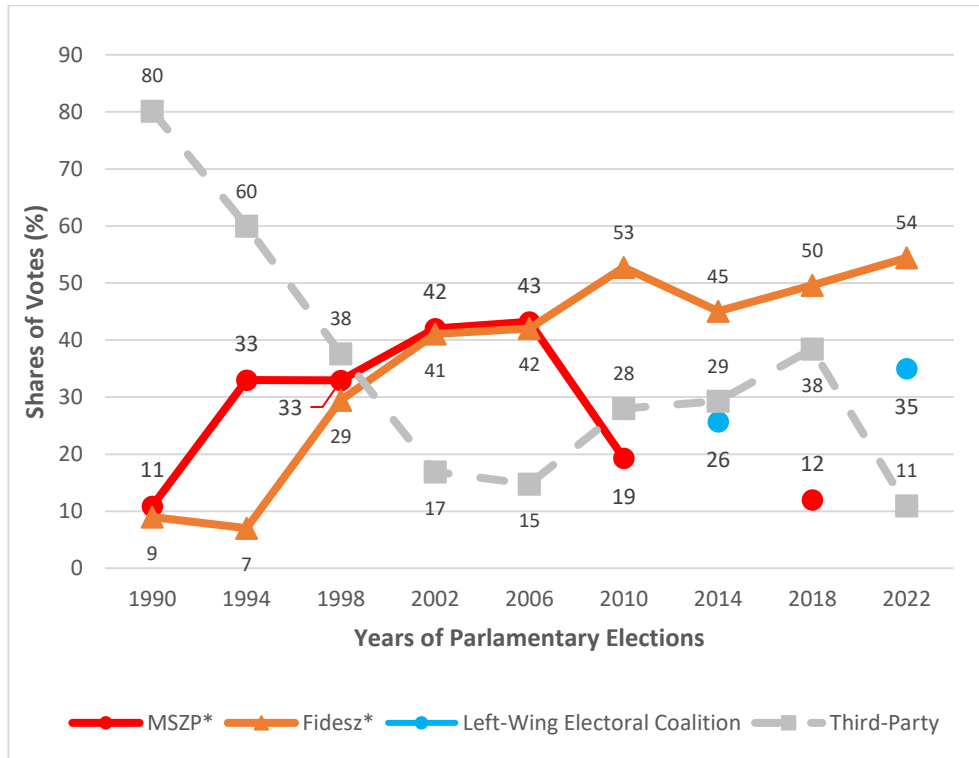
Source: Own illustration based on Bundesministerium für Österreich (2024)

Note: For better visualisation, only the election years are displayed on the X-axis.

In Hungary, as illustrated by Figure 27, the initial direction of volatility favoured the Socialist Party, which is the official successor to the socialist MSZMP. The increasing support of MSZP could partly be explained by the nostalgic sentiments about the welfare standards of the socialist regime. During this period, Hungarian society experienced the challenges of the transition - marked by privatisation and inflation - predominantly as negative. By the 1998 elections, Fidesz and its coalition partner (MDF) had secured nearly one-third of the votes. Between 2002 and 2006, volatility was relatively low, suggesting that the party identification was probably high (bipolar system). The 2010 elections

marked the collapse of the left-wing bloc led by MSZP. From this point onward, despite a temporary decline in 2014, Fidesz, alongside its ally KDNP, reached 54% of support by 2022. IN 2014, smaller left-wing parties formed an electoral coalition, but even in coalition, they failed to approach the MSZP's previous levels of support. In the 2018 elections, MSZP, in alliance with Dialogue 2014, reached only 12% of the votes. The improved performance of the left in the 2022 elections can be explained mainly by the temporarily emerging new left-wing parties (e.g. Momentum) and by the inclusion of the former right-wing opposition party, Jobbik, into the left-wing coalition. Notably, 11% of the opposition votes went to parties outside the coalition, such as the Two-Tailed Dog Party or the Our Homeland Movement. The results indicate that the process of dealignment is observable among left-wing parties. At the same time, left-wing voters similarly explore new parties on the left (e.g. LMP, Momentum, DK), as citizens explored parties during the transitional period in the 1990s. This shows a periodic attempt at realignment on the political left. However, since the 2010s, voter turnout has increased, while volatility stabilised at a consistent level of 10-15%. While the realignment toward Fidesz seems to be stable, patterns of fragmentation and periodic weakening can be observed within the left-wing bloc. This form of dealignment on the political left appears to be episodic, yet significant enough to shape the political era.

Figure 27. Dealignment and realignment in Hungary (1990-2022)



Source: Own illustration based on the Hungarian National Election Office (NVI, 2024)

Note: For better visualisation, only the election years are displayed on the X-axis.

*Party and its coalition partners (if the party was the dominant party of the coalition).

5.3 Effective Number of Political Parties

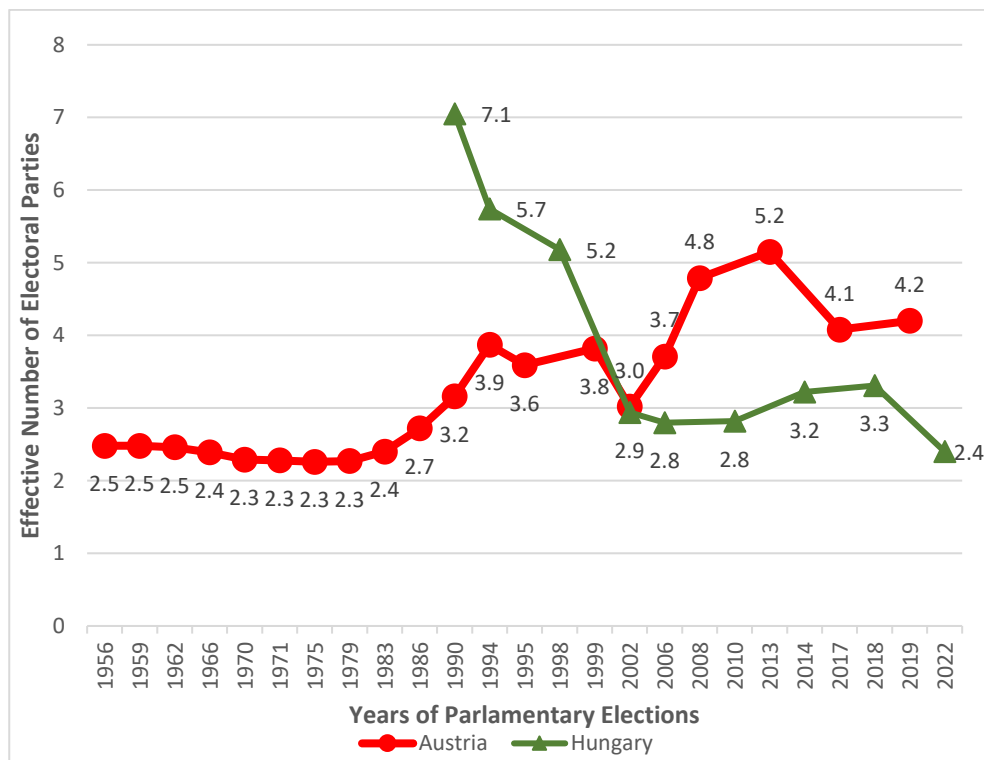
The so-called indicator of effective parties (Laakso and Taagepera, 1979) is a metric which is able to indicate the relevant political parties within an examined political party system. The indicator counts the number of parties by weighting their relative vote or mandate-related strength. Thus, the concept is able to measure the effective number of electoral parties (ENEP) and the effective number of parliamentary parties (ENPP). The number of effective parties is computed by the following equation:

$$N = 1 / \sum p_i^2$$

In order to determine the value of the index, the results of the analysed elections have to be converted into percentages, both in the case of votes and mandates. After this preparation step, the calculation rises to the second (p_i^2) of those political parties' results, which gained at least one vote or mandate during the election. The third step is to summate the results of the square values ($\sum$) and use the result as the reciprocal ($=1/x$). According to the scientific arguments, the metric is highly suitable to measure not only a single political party system, but also to carry comparative, tendency-based analyses out (Blais

and Carty, 1991; Golosov, 2010; Horváth, 2021). The interpretation of the metric is the following: a higher number of effective political parties means a less concentrated (fragmented) one. The number of the effective parties (N) corresponds to the number of the political parties, if every party has an equal share of votes or mandates. Relating to Hungary and Austria, the analysis made a tendency-based evaluation of the observed party systems. Due to the distorting effect of the electoral systems (see the discussion about the electoral system proportionality and disproportionality, e.g. Gallagher, 1991), the research argues for calculating the effective number of electoral parties. The ENEP is based on the shares of the direct votes of the political parties, thus it could minimise the distorting effects of the electoral systems' institutional aspects (Szoboszlai and Wiener, 2016). The Austrian and Hungarian results of the sub-analyses are conducted in the following chart:

Figure 28. Trends in effective electoral numbers in Austria and Hungary (1956-2019)



Source: Own illustration based on Who Governs Europe (2024).

Note: For better visualisation, only the election years are displayed on the X-axis.

The result of the analyses strengthens the points of the theoretical references (Figure 28). In the case of Austria, the bipolar, two-party system was dominant until the 1980s, as Luther (1999) pointed out. This period of time was labelled with the grand coalitions of ÖVP and SPÖ. The dominance of the traditional political parties was broken by new

political identities (FPÖ, Greens, NEOS), and the shift into the multi-elite political system became gradual, confirming the claims of Durrer de la Sota, Gethin and Martínez-Toledano (2021). In contrast, the Hungarian political party system became concentrated and from the 1990s, the multi-party system gradually shifted into a quasi-bipolar one by 2002 – validating Tóth's claims (2015). According to the indicator, the system shows the features of the tripolar system after 2010, because the governing political parties gained approximately 50% of the votes, but the governing bloc has a left-wing and a right-wing opposition bloc as well, supporting Csizmadia's assertions (2018).

In 2010, the Fidesz-KDNP gained its first two-thirds majority in the election. The Hungarian Socialist Party lost its weight after the scandal of the '*Őszöd speech*' and the previously mentioned economic and political circumstances. In contrast, while the radical right-wing Jobbik became the third pole of the political system, the first declared green party, the LMP had gained electoral seats (NVI, 2010). In this structure, the governing party-coalition became the central actor of the centripetal force in Hungary. In 2014, the alliance of the Fidesz-KDNP on the right-wing, the so-called Unity (Összefogás), with another name Left Unity (Baloldali összefogás) on the left-wing, competed for political power (NVI, 2014a). The Unity was conducted by the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), the Together 2014 (Együtt 2014), the Democratic Coalition (Demokratikus Koalíció), the Dialogue for Hungary (Párbeszéd Magyarország, PM) and the Hungarian Liberal Party (Magyar Liberális Párt, MLP). Besides the two blocks, the radical right-wing Jobbik and the green LMP competed for the electoral seats. In 2018, the Fidesz-KDNP, the Jobbik, the MSZP, the LMP and the DK reached at least 5% of the votes (parliamentary threshold; NVI, 2018). However, the indicator shows that the first three most supported parties are the effective units of the political system (3.31). However, it reduced to a two-and-a-half party system by 2022, because of the right-wing opposition Jobbik aimed to shift into a people's party, which, in practice, rather led to a closer affiliation with the left-wing opposition.

In the case of Austria, the number of effective electoral parties was five in 2008 (4.79), and in 2013 (5.15), and it was reduced to four by 2017 (4.08). During this period of time, the socialist SPÖ (2008; 2013; 2017), the Christian ÖVP (2008; 2013; 2017), the radical right-wing FPÖ (2008; 2013; 2017) and the fourth and fifth force, the localist Greens (2008; 2013), the radical BZÖ (2008; 2013) and the NEOS (2017) were qualified as effective parties. The so-called Team Stronach (Euro-sceptic, right-wing populist party) existed only for one term, and its members joined the other right-wing parties (ÖVP,

FPÖ). The Liste Pilz (JETZT) reached 4.4% of total vote shares, gaining eight mandates in the parliament in 2017, but it lost its parliamentary seats by the 2019 election (1.9%).

5.4 Comparative Reflections and Key Findings

Based on the findings, it seems that the majority of voters still regard political parties as the primary form of interest representation (see Figure 22). However, it is also evident that voters shifted their support from one party to another (see Figure 25), which reflects the weakening of party alignment (dealignment). The shift led to the formation of new political identities (realignment, marked by voting for other parties): while the Austrian party system is becoming increasingly multipolar, the Hungarian party system demonstrates a trend toward concentration (see Figure 28). In Austria, there has been a noticeable turn away from traditional parties (see Figure 26), whereas in Hungary, Fidesz, which can be defined as a traditionalist party, has significantly strengthened its vote share (see Figure 27). However, the traditional parties on the left lost their weight in the Hungarian political system. At the same time, both party systems have witnessed the rise of new political parties, but most of them were unable to secure a consistent support to ensure governmental capacities in the countries' political landscape. Besides the listed findings, as it was presented relating to the patronage system in Austria, party membership (see Figures 23-24)³² is still a crucial factor in the Austrian political system, primarily in the case of the traditional parties. However, as it was noted, the SPÖ drastically lost its membership since the 1980s, while ÖVP could maintain the number of party membership. In contrast, membership is a less commonly accepted form of political alignment in the Hungarian political system, where, among the indicators examined, electoral participation appears to be a more significant form of expressing party attachment. These findings support the assumption that political parties remain key actors in the representation of political interests, despite ongoing changes in the relationship between voters and parties.³³

As illustrated by the presented figures and analyses, certain fluctuations can be observed in voter turnout and the support for individual parties. However, political parties remain key actors in both the Austrian and Hungarian party systems. Instead of a process

³² Presented in relation to the patronage system in Austria, within the chapter *'Political Cleavages Lines in Austria and Hungary'*.

³³ Answering the question of whether political parties shape voters' behaviour and value preferences, or conversely, voters influence the positions of political parties, is not the aim of this research. The primary objective of the subanalysis was to confirm the existence of a relationship between political parties and voters.

of dealignment, a trend toward realignment has occurred and seemed dominant: in Austria, this is reflected in the rise of the FPÖ, the Greens, and NEOS, while in Hungary, it begins with Fidesz's 2010 electoral victory, with the subsequent period (up to 2022) signalling the stabilization of the new alignments. After confirming the existence of a relationship between political parties and voters, the following section of this chapter examines the positions of individual parties on immigration, based on their election programs (Manifesto Project) and rhetoric (CHES). By this, the analysis can qualify the position of parties relating to the 2015 migration crisis.

6 POSITIONS OF POLITICAL PARTIES TOWARD IMMIGRATION IN AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY

6.1 Election Programs in Austria and Hungary – The Manifesto Project

In order to analyse political parties' positions on immigration, the current analysis relies on the database of the Manifesto Project. The project systematically examines the electoral results for the lower house and presidential elections, as well as the electoral programmes of political parties on a wide range of policy areas.³⁴ Although the Manifesto Project gauges the extent to which specific issues are featured in a given party's programme³⁵, the positions of parties are not captured on a single unified scale; instead of this, positive and negative stances are measured separately. In the case of immigration, negative stance (per601_2) captures the presence of statements advocating restrictions on immigration. These statements frame immigration as a threat to national interests and sovereignty, often arguing in favour of the introduction of migration quotas. In parallel, a positive stance towards immigration (per602_2) is captured by statements supporting new immigrants, arguing against further restrictions and quotas, and rejecting the '*The boat is full!*' argument³⁶.

For variables labelled '*per*' the results represent the relative share of statements for each category in relation to all statements in the manifesto. The scale ranges from 0 (not mentioned) to 100 (exclusively focused on the issue). A value of 5 means that 5% of the party's manifesto relates to immigration. If this occurs in the case of the variable representing negative stances on immigration, it implies that 5% of the manifesto content addresses immigration negatively.

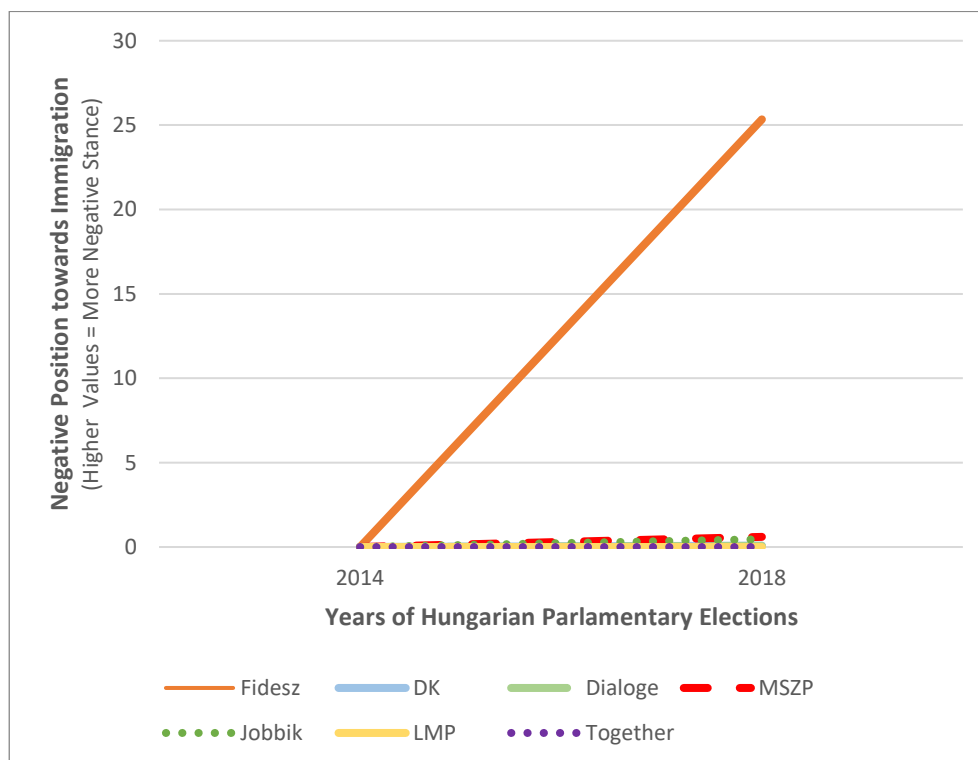
³⁴ As a result, the database captures parties' stance on international affairs (e.g. anti-imperialist stance); freedom and democracy (e.g. importance of personal freedom); prevailing political system (e.g. corruption, the significance of decentralisation/centralisation); economic orientation (e.g. relevance of free-market economy); welfare issues (e.g. welfare state expansion); structure of society (e.g. multiculturalism); and position on different social groups (e.g. attitudes toward labour or agrarian groups).

³⁵ Manifesto Project analyses regular party programmes. In the case of missing regular election programmes, it examines substitute documents, which are functional equivalents of parties' programmes. Because of the absence of regular election programs, general statements were analysed for Fidesz during the 2010 elections in Hungary and for Team Stronach during the 2013 election in Austria. During the Hungarian parliamentary elections in 2014 and 2018, Fidesz's main political slogan was '*We will keep on!*' (2014; translated by Nanasi, 2017) and '*For us, it's Hungary first*' (Cabinet Office of the Prime Minister, 2018). Without any regular or general election programmes, other functionally equivalent documents, such as documented interviews and statements, were analysed. (see *proctype* variable in the Manifesto Project). The parties and party programmes examined in this analysis are listed in Appendix G and Appendix H.

³⁶ The phrase '*The boat is full!*' is a metaphor commonly employed in anti-immigration rhetoric, suggesting that a country's capacity to accommodate new immigrants has been exhausted (see Wodak 2017).

Analysing the results, it can be stated that immigration was a relatively neutral issue during the 2014 election campaign. In Hungary, none of the parties thematised it on the level of party programmes. In this sense, immigration was a primarily depolarised topic during this period of time³⁷. However, as illustrated in Figure 29, it emerged as a prominent electoral issue for Fidesz by the 2018 campaign. The sharp rise in Fidesz's anti-immigration position during the 2018 campaign is clearly evident. The governing party's stance on immigration was exclusively negative, with no positive statements (Figure 30). The governing party's anti-immigration stance reached an exceptionally high score of 25, which means that 25% of the analysed party documents framed immigration negatively.

Figure 29. Trends in political parties' negative positions toward immigration in Hungary (2014-2018)



Source: Own illustration based on Manifesto Project (2024)

Due to the lack of an exact party program of Fidesz, the qualification focuses on the speeches of the Hungarian Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán, who regularly summarises in his speeches the main points of Fidesz's direction. The Prime Minister highlighted the following practical actions taken by the party regarding the migration crisis: stopping the first major wave of immigration, rejecting the mandatory resettlement quota, and

³⁷ The political parties had previously dealt with the issue of dual citizenship of ethnic Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin and with the issue of emigration. However, based on the party programs analysed during the examined period, these two topics appeared to be less relevant compared to immigration.

advocating for the protection of the fence constructed in 2015 along Hungary's southern border as a response to prevent illegal, mass immigration (Manifesto Project, 2024)³⁸.

According to the corpus of the Manifesto Project, the Democratic Coalition highlighted the security risks associated with the residency bond programme, which was launched by the Fidesz-led government in 2013. As the program granted permanent residency in Hungary, it also provided access to free movement within the European Union for wealthy foreigners.³⁹ Furthermore, besides the Democratic Coalition, Dialogue, and LMP called for the convening of Parliament's National Security Committee to address concerns related to the residency bond scheme (Budapest Business Journal, 2018), which shows the parties' similar positions on the issue.

Beyond the residency bond, the Manifesto Project highlighted that the Hungarian Socialist Party argued in favour of the border fence in its party programme. As it articulated: '*...as long as the Hungarian people live in fear, the fence that has been built will stand...*'⁴⁰ (MSZP, 2018:4). However, the Manifesto Project did not find any corpus in the case of other left-wing parties relating to the border fence - probably the issue was less relevant to emphasized it in their party programmes. However, in their communication, parties such as LMP (24.hu, 2018), DK, Momentum, Together, and Dialogue argued that the physical fence at the southern border is necessary; only the Liberals opposed its existence (444.hu, 2017). Nevertheless, it is important to note that the near-unified stance of the left-wing opposition parties on the border fence, which had emerged by 2018, contrasted with their initial opposition to the government's measure. Following the announcement of the border fence in 2015, the Democratic Coalition issued a statement calling on the government to dismantle the border fence (Demokratikus Koalíció, 2015), but as it seems, the issue was not significant enough to be included in the party's programme.

³⁸ The corpora are open to the public on the Manifesto Project website. Source: https://visuals.manifesto-project.wzb.eu/mpdb-shiny/cmp_dashboard_corpus_doc/.

³⁹ The residency bond scheme was launched in 2013, and it was discontinued in 2017. During this period of time, approximately 20,000 foreigners obtained permanent residency in Hungary. The threshold for purchasing a residency was initially set at EUR 250,000, and later it was raised to EUR 300,000. In 2023, a similar program was relaunched under the amended law on aliens (see Act XC of 2023 on the General Rules for the Entry and Residence of Third-Country Nationals). The amendment was adopted by the National Assembly on December 12, 2023, and announced on December 21, 2023 (International Labour Organization, 2023).

⁴⁰ Original text (in Hungarian): '*...míg a magyar emberekben félelem van, addig a megépített kerítés állni fog*'.

In addition to MSZP, the only opposition party which reflected on its party program on the southern border fence was Jobbik. As highlighted in the Manifesto corpus, Jobbik also identified a security challenge in residency bonds programme and referred to it as being contrary to the interest of the European people (Jobbik, 2018: 19). Furthermore, the party's programme stresses out that the original proponent of the border fence was the Jobbik itself (Jobbik, 2018: 58). Nonetheless, Jobbik provided the necessary support for the government to pass the legislation enabling the construction of the border fence. Based on its election programme, Jobbik opposed the immigration of both wealthy and non-wealthy individuals (Jobbik, 2018: 58), as well as immigration of foreign labour forces (Jobbik, 2018: 64).

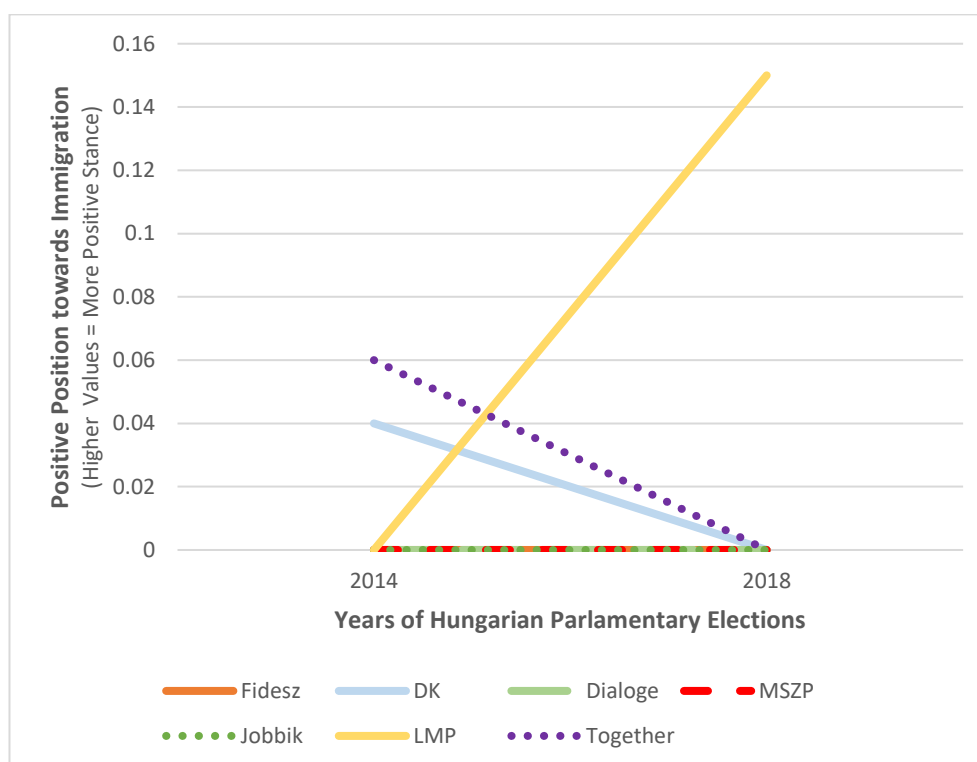
Despite the fact that both MSZP and Jobbik addressed the negative aspects of immigration at the level of their party programmes, the negative perception of immigration holds minimal weight in the programmes of opposition parties. Specifically, 0.6% of MSZP's party programme and 0.46% of Jobbik's programme present a negative stance on immigration.

Similarly, limited attention can be observed in the case of opposition party programmes that express a positive stance on migration: positive statements relating to immigration were almost entirely undetected. In 2014, Together (0.06) and DK (0.04) showed minimal tendencies toward a positive stance toward immigration, but these weak positions were entirely neutralised following the migration crisis. LMP was the sole party in Hungary that attempted to adopt a more favourable narrative on the issue. The party expressed their aim to take the lead in developing a long-term strategy to handle the refugee crisis. In this sense, the party emphasised the need for a comprehensive reform of the Dublin system (LMP, 2018: 8), which indicates that the party supports finding a European solution to the crisis rather than a national one. Although, the issue did not become a prominent one in the party's programme: less than 1% of the corpus focuses on immigration. This suggests that it was a reaction to the Fidesz-led anti-immigrant narratives rather than a genuine component of the party programme with practical actions.

Based on the results, it can be summarised that following the 2015 European migration crisis, Fidesz shifted into a negative position toward immigration, while political opposition remained primarily neutral in their party programmes. Fidesz thematised immigration and framed it in a predominantly negative way by the 2018

election⁴¹. As a consequence of the strategy employed by Fidesz, the issue of immigration became a significant source of polarisation at the level of political parties. In this context, the polarisation primarily manifested between the governing parties with an anti-immigration stance and the opposition with a more neutral position.

Figure 30. Trends in political parties' positive position toward immigration in Hungary (2014-2018)

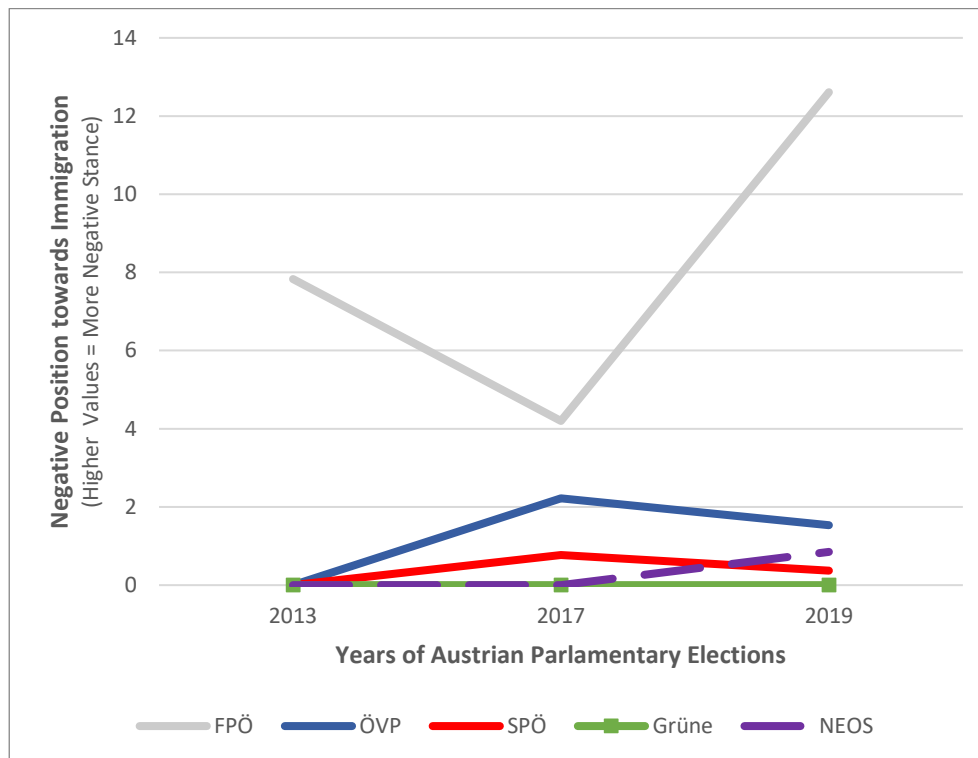


Source: Own illustration based on Manifesto Project (2024).

Analysing the positions of political parties in Austria, it can be observed that the political system demonstrates greater diversity in stance toward immigration than in Hungary. The Austrian Social Democratic Party appeared to advocate for a pro-integration stance in 2013. As highlighted by the corpora in the Manifesto, the party emphasised the importance of a well-developed immigration system that ensures fair and transparent procedures. Furthermore, the SPÖ underscored the significance of recognising scientific degrees and other certifications obtained from abroad. Based on these findings, it can be assumed that the party primarily evaluated immigration through the lens of economic considerations during this period.

⁴¹ This finding suggests that political parties remain active actors in influencing voter behaviour. Determining whether voters or parties have a stronger influence on each other, would require a research based on a specialised database.

Figure 31. Trends in political parties' negative positions toward immigration in Austria (2013–2019)



Source: Own illustration based on Manifesto Project (2024).

In contrast, after the migration crisis, the party drew attention to the sharply increasing number of immigrants and initiated the reduction of the number of refugees to improve the quality of the individuals' integration. The party emphasised in its party program (SPÖ, 2018: 144) the need to limit immigration to control the process of determining with whom Austrians would live. As a result, SPÖ proposed an upper limit on asylum applications. However, this limit was not explicitly defined as a precise number. Instead, the program suggested that the limit should correspond to the number of individuals whom Austrians would accept and integrate. As the Manifesto corpus shows, the party expressed that a large proportion of individuals who came to Europe, had not left their countries for any reasons, which are protected under the Geneva Refugee Convention. Based on their estimation, approximately 20% of these individuals were granted the right to international protection, which shows some critical arguments of the party relating to uncontrolled immigration.

By 2019, the SPÖ maintained its previous position, confirming the importance of the principle '*integration before immigration*' in its party program. However, the party opposed all forms of illegal immigration, advocating for its reduction to zero. The manifesto highlighted economic considerations regarding immigration, emphasising the

need to address wage pressure on the labour market caused by the influx of low-skilled immigrants. To mitigate this pressure, the party proposed allowing only key workers into the Austrian labour market. Furthermore, according to the SPÖ, the Austrian government should focus on educating foreign workers and facilitating their integration into the workforce. Analysing the trends, the party shifted from a neutral stance (with a positive score of 0.28) to a restricted negative position (scores of -0.77 in 2017 and -0.37 in 2019), primarily driven by economic considerations. However, as Figures 31 and 32 show, the relevance of immigration in SPÖ electoral programmes remained moderate in terms of their weight. Nevertheless, as the Manifesto project examined the program points, it can be observed that the party emphasised the importance of social integration for immigrants and prioritised economic policies over polarisation on immigration issues. However, it is important to emphasise that the majority of Austrian voters with immigrant backgrounds supported the SPÖ, which may have motivated the party to adopt this trajectory in its vote-maximisation efforts - 66% of Muslim respondents express support for the SPÖ (Durrer de la Sota, Gethin and Martínez-Toledano, 2021).

Similarly to SPÖ, the Österreichische Volkspartei also interpreted immigration as an economic issue in 2013. According to the Manifesto Project, ÖVP not only advocated for the expansion of the Red-White-Red (RWR) Card but also expressed the need to foster a welcoming culture in Austria (ÖVP, 2017: 59). Furthermore, in 2017, the party proposed to simplify the application process for the RWR Card and prioritise the recruitment of highly qualified workers in those key sectors, where the country's domestic resources could not meet the demands of the labour market. By the election of 2019, the party programme of ÖVP clearly stated that the primary source for labour market supplementation should be member states of the European Union. Labour market resources from third countries may only be utilised if the shortage cannot be addressed through the labour market of the European Union.

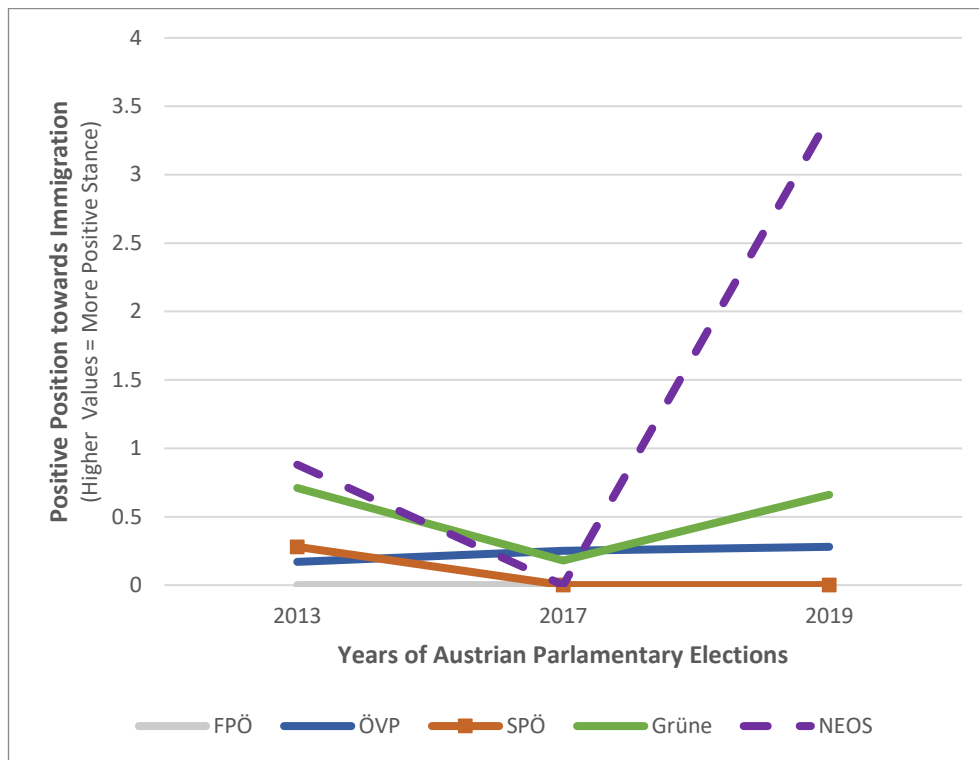
In 2013, the ÖVP did not include any negative statements regarding immigration in its party program. However, in the aftermath of the migration crisis, the party's position shifted significantly. Its focus turned to the financial and welfare implications of immigration. The 2017 election program emphasised the need to minimise immigrants from the social welfare system by highlighting the financial burdens associated with mass immigration. The party opposed uncontrolled immigration and aimed to reduce its upper limit to zero, prioritising highly educated European guest workers. As part of the strategy, which relates to stop illegal immigration, the party underscored the importance of closing

the Balkan and Mediterranean migration routes. Furthermore, ÖVP proposed a reorganisation of the European Union's asylum system in its party programme. This included the construction of rescue centres outside the EU and the establishment of protection centres in third countries. Based on the proposal, those immigrants who are unwilling to participate in these programs would be returned to their countries of origin. Additionally, the party criticised the existing integration system as well, arguing that it undermined the country's immigration policy.

By 2019, the party emphasised its ongoing commitment to tackling illegal immigration. The migration-related section of the party program continued to underscore the importance of fighting against human trafficking and minimising incentives for irregular migrants. Reflecting Austria's European Council Presidency, the program shifted its focus from welfare expenditures to the role of the European Union. ÖVP called for measures to protect the Dublin Agreement, strengthen Frontex, and proposed the need for adopting a new EU treaty to reduce the pressure of illegal immigration.

During the analysed period, the results show a moderate increase in the weight of negative statements between 2013 and 2017 (from 0 to 2.22). However, based on the analysis of the party programme, it can be stated that the ÖVP did not oppose skilled or highly educated workforce regular and permanent (see RWR Card) immigration into Austria. This indicates that economic aspects are crucial for ÖVP as well; however, irregular immigration was framed as an economic-financial threat to the welfare system of Austria.

Figure 32. Trends in political parties' positive positions toward immigration in Austria (2013–2019)



Source: Own illustration based on Manifesto Project (2024)

The program of the Greens did not include any negative initiatives related to immigration during the 2013–2019 period. On the contrary, in their 2013 program, the Greens referred to Austria as a country of immigration (Die Grünen, 2013: 112). In their narrative, immigration could provide a long-term solution to the social and economic challenges posed by declining birth rates and increasing life expectancy. The party criticised the discourse surrounding immigration, labelled as one-sided and predominantly driven by negative emotions (Die Grünen, 2013: 109). Acknowledging that immigration and emigration are global norms, they advocated for a proactive immigration policy. However, it is worth to note that the party recognised most immigrants at that time originated from the European Union (Die Grünen, 2013: 122) – which was two years before the 2015 migration crisis (positive score of 0.71) (Figure 32).

In 2017, their program emphasised the need to legalise migration processes and highlighted the relevance of educational programs aimed to reduce the linguistic and skill gaps (Die Grünen, 2017: 9). By 2019, similarly to SPÖ, the Greens also called for the establishment of a less complex, but more transparent asylum system. The program proposed simplifying immigration laws to reduce bureaucratic burdens and creating opportunities for young refugees in Austria to participate in the Red-White-Red (RWR)

program (Die Grünen, 2019: 49). By this, the party aimed to support the integration of young people and mitigate labour shortages, particularly in the caregiving sector, which was the most emphasized sector by the party (Die Grünen, 2019: 61). As a consequence of the pro-immigration initiatives, the weight of immigration increased in the party program from the score of 0.18 from 0.66 by 2019 (Figure 32). Nonetheless, this value still indicates that the relevance of the issue is relatively low.

Similarly to the Greens, the party programs of NEOS did not include any negative initiatives relating to immigration, neither in 2013 nor in 2017. However, by 2019, the situation had changed: the party acknowledged the increasing immigration pressure both on the EU and Austria (NEOS, 2019: 53). Nevertheless, the party identified the problem as the individual responses of EU member states, which led to uncoordinated immigration policies. Instead of this, the party argued for developing a common European strategy to solve the crisis. Despite these concerns, NEOS continued to support immigration in 2019, but expressed the need to return those individuals into their place of origine, who could not credibly demonstrate any valid reasons for asylum (NEOS, 2019: 61). It is important to note that, the shift is significant, because the party traditionally held a pro-immigration stance through time.

From economic aspects, in the 2013 election program of NEOS, the party called for a developed immigration system to attract well-qualified (NEOS, 2013: 33), skilled foreign workers (NEOS, 2013: 44). Additionally, the party highlighted the need the improvement of the recognition system for foreign educational qualifications to facilitate the integration of foreign workers (NEOS, 2013: 69). These initiatives show that, the party qualified immigration as an economic issue. Nevertheless, the weight of immigration temporarily lost its weight by 2017. Based on the findings of the Manifesto Project, the party did not focus on the issue of immigration, neither in negative nor in positive aspects, in that year.

However, by the election of 2019, the party's positive position became dominant - the score of the positive position increased from 0 to 3.42 (Figure 32). As a result, NEOS became the most pro-immigration party in Austria. Similarly to the Greens, NEOS stressed the need for a new immigration strategy, which includes reducing bureaucracy for foreign workers seeking jobs in Austria (NEOS, 2019: 40). Instead of the existing solutions, NEOS advocated for a new, sensible immigration strategy, which should be implemented at the European level. The party proposed that Austria should establish a platform where the companies would determine the required quantity and qualifications

of workers, which the state would integrate into its immigration policy (NEOS, 2019: 58-59). Additionally, NEOS suggested that Austrian universities should recruit students from third countries to graduate in Austria (NEOS, 2017: 60); thus, universities could support the integration of international students into the Austrian labour market.

Based on the data from the Manifesto Project, none of the three election programs of the FPÖ between 2013 and 2019 demonstrated a positive stance on immigration. The party strongly criticised the position of SPÖ, ÖVP and the Greens, emphasising the housing, employment and welfare needs of Austrian citizens above those of foreign guest workers and immigrants. The party advocated for closing the labour market to workers from East, including citizens of Eastern-European EU member states. Additionally, it proposed a temporary guest worker model, granting the state the right to repatriate workers in cases of permanent unemployment (FPÖ, 2013: 4). Besides, the party also opposed granting asylum to individuals arriving from safe third countries or those already were rejected in another safe country (FPÖ, 2013: 10).

In its 2017 election program, the FPÖ emphasised the rejection of any immigration to Austria, stating that the situation had become critical due to the new waves of migration (FPÖ, 2017: 2). Furthermore, the party opposed the concept of minimum income, arguing that it would incentivise further immigration to Austria. Instead of financial allowances provided in cash, FPÖ proposed that asylum applicants should receive services and other forms of material assistance. As an additional restrictive measure, FPÖ suggested that non-citizens should only be eligible for social benefits after five years of employment. The party program accused both the EU and the Austrian federal government of disregarding the Dublin Regulation; thus, both contributed to the migration crisis in the EU (FPÖ, 2017: 3). Furthermore, it criticised NGOs, describing them as active participants of the '*asylum industry*'. The party argued that the responsibility of the government and called for restrictions on the activities of NGOs (FPÖ, 2017: 15). To summarise the initiatives of the party, it can be noted that the central message of FPÖ is stopping immigration and initiating the deportation of '*bogus*' asylum seekers. According to the qualification of the Manifesto Project, the most critical sentiment of the Austrian party system was observed in the case of FPÖ. While the negative weight of the party program was 7.8 in 2013, it decreased temporarily to 4.2 by 2017, however it was skyrocketed to 12.6 by 2019 (Figure 31). FPÖ adopts a one-sided narrative that does not exhibit any elements of pro-immigration rhetoric. In this context, FPÖ - similarly to

Fidesz in Hungary - exclusively highlighted the negative aspects of immigration during the election periods.

By 2019, the party maintained that other Austrian parties had ignored the migration crisis (FPÖ, 2019: 3) and accused NGOs of involvement in smuggling activities. Furthermore, the election program emphasized the responsibility of the German politicians in contributing to the crisis (FPÖ, 2019: 5). FPÖ stressed the need for stricter asylum and immigration law (FPÖ, 2019: 1). The party maintained its position on protecting wages (FPÖ, 2019: 8) and highlighted that asylum is a temporary right, which does not apply to economic or climate refugees (FPÖ, 2019: 5).

Besides the presented parties, the party of Team Stronach, which competed for votes only in 2013, maintained a firm stance on immigration. It argued that immigration without contributing to the common Austrian welfare should be rejected. As it was emphasised in the election program, framing immigration as a tool to improve Austrian living conditions is outdated. According to the party, Austria requires a controlled immigration system (Team Stronach, 2013: 50), one that is guided by national economic needs (Team Stronach, 2013: 15). Another party, Liste Peter Pilz, was analysed in the Manifesto Project. However, according to the findings, the party did not place any focus on immigration in its program.

As the results show, the 2017 and 2019 elections appear as a key period of intensification, particularly for the FPÖ's negative rhetoric and NEOS's positive stance. According to the Manifesto Project, polarisation increased in Austria as well. FPÖ promoted anti-immigrant rhetoric more confidently, while parties like the Greens and NEOS attempt to provide counter-narratives with pro-immigration positions. The increase in positive statements made by NEOS surpassed all other parties. As the results show, the lack of presence in negative positions indicates that the party aimed to avoid anti-immigrant initiatives. In this context, NEOS seems to be the most active party in promoting a pro-immigrant narrative. Trends of divergence underscore the increasing political salience of immigration in Austria. However, it is crucial to highlight that the shift in Fidesz's position was the most drastic among political parties in both Hungary and Austria. Based on the findings, the issue of immigration seemed irrelevant in Hungary before the migration crisis. In contrast, in Austria, immigration was already a significant part of the political discourse before the migration crisis. While Austrian political parties present a more diverse spectrum, including pro-immigrant (NEOS, Greens), relatively neutral (ÖVP, SPÖ), and anti-immigrant (FPÖ) positions, the Hungarian political elite

became polarised between 2015 and 2017 due to the shift in Fidesz's stance. Based on election programs, another notable difference between Austria and Hungary lies in the framing of immigration. In the case of Austria, immigration is primarily conceptualised as an economic issue; only FPÖ framed it within a political and civilizational context. Nevertheless, in Hungary, the dominant discourse primarily revolves around political concerns, and the key elements of the immigration related discourse appear to be predominantly shaped by Fidesz.

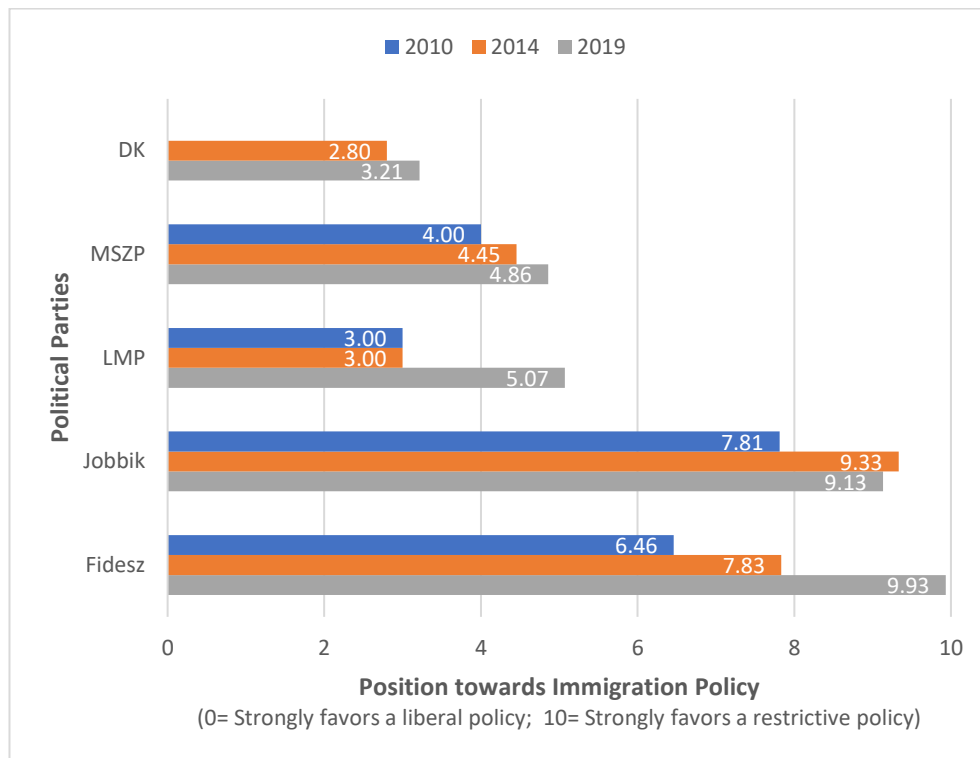
6.2 Rhetoric in Political Parties' Communication in Austria and Hungary – The Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES)

In addition to the Manifesto Project, the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) is also a widely known resource for the analysis of political parties. The two projects are complementary of each other: while the Manifesto Project qualifies official statements and documents, highlighting the weight and the context of issues in the given political party's manifesto; CHES evaluates parties' profiles based on their rhetoric and attitudes through experts' assessments. Both databases adopt indicators, which overlap in certain topics (e.g. immigration), but some sub-indicators differ from each other (e.g. EU Asylum policy can be found only in the database of CHES). Furthermore, the Manifesto Project focuses on election years, while CHES typically conducts its analysis every 2-5 years. Thus, examining both the Manifesto Project and CHES allows for more detailed research and a deeper understanding of trends. From the point of methodological perspective, experts' assessments in CHES may be subjective due to the qualitative nature of its methodology. In contrast, the Manifesto Project systematically quantifies political parties' manifestos, which provides a standardised analytical framework. However, the latter could lead to the loss of nuanced information by neglecting the examination of parties' rhetoric and actions. As a result, the current analysis uses CHES experts' evaluations as a supplementary source to complement the results based on the Manifesto Project.⁴²

⁴² CHES analyses parties that ran in the most recent election and gained enough votes to surpass the electoral thresholds. Those parties that either did not contest in the most recent election or failed to gain a mandate are coded as missing. In the case of coalitions, if information related to the distribution of votes within the coalition is unavailable, the vote percentage is calculated based on the proportion of seats held by the coalition (CHES, 2014: 18). Election results used by CHES were collected from the ParlGov database (Döring & Manow, 2024). In contrast, the Manifesto Project analyses parties, that have won at least one or two seats in the lower house. For presidential elections, the programs of parties receiving at least 5% of the vote are included in the analysis. If parties were previously as relevant actors, but no longer meet the selection criteria due to vote losses, they are still included in the analysis. The Manifesto Project also codes coalition manifestos; however, if a coalition program is unavailable, the manifestos of individual parties within the coalition are analysed instead (Manifesto Project, 2024: 2).

In Hungary, political parties' rhetoric and practical actions present a more diverse political landscape on immigration compared to their manifestos. DK is the only party that strongly favoured a liberal solution to the migration crisis (scores ranging between 2.8 and 3.2). In parallel, the Hungarian green party, LMP, shifted from a pro-liberal stance (score of 3) to a moderate one by 2019 (score of 5). Despite its transformation into a people's party, Jobbik maintained its negative rhetoric toward immigration (in 2010: 7.81; 2019: 9.13). Nevertheless, the shift of Fidesz's position in rhetoric is the most evident. According to CHES experts, Fidesz scored approximately 6.5 points on the scale in 2010, which indicates a moderately restrictive stance on immigration. By 2019, Fidesz's rhetoric strongly favoured a restrictive policy on immigration. This shift repositioned Fidesz, making the party as opposed to immigration in Hungary as the FPÖ is in Austria (see Figures 33 and 36).

Figure 33. Trends in political parties' positions on immigration policy in Hungary (2010-2019)



Source: Own illustration based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES, 2022)

During this period, the Fidesz-led government initiated both a national consultation and a referendum on immigration. The consultation, held in 2015⁴³, included 12 questions addressing topics such as immigration, economic migration, and terrorism (Kormány.hu, 2015). As Bocskor (2018) stated, through the text of the consultation, the Orbán government framed immigration as both an economic and a security threat. Furthermore, the party made a clear distinction between '*us*', the Hungarians who maintain the welfare system and '*them*', the immigrants who were labelled as '*criminals*' who want to enjoy '*our welfare system*' and take '*our employment opportunities*'⁴⁴. Bocskor (2018) qualified the issue by content analysis.

⁴³ The concept of a national consultation was first proposed by Viktor Orbán in 2005, during his time in opposition, as a means of establishing a direct link between '*politics and the people*' (index.hu, 2005). After Fidesz won the parliamentary election in 2010, the party announced the '*System of National Cooperation*' (Hungarian National Assembly, 2010: 10). The new framework heavily relies on national consultations. Since 2010, the government has launched fourteen different consultations on various topics: the pension system (2010), the new constitution (2011), social issues (2011), economic issues (2012), immigration (2015), relations with Brussels (2017), the so-called Soros Plan (2017), family support (2018), Covid-19 (2020), post-Covid reopening (2021), post-Covid life (2021), energy sanctions (2022), the protection of sovereignty (2023), and Hungary's new economic direction (2024).

⁴⁴ As shown in Figure 14-15, the number of asylum seekers and applicants in Hungary is relatively low.

In this sense, the first two questions addressed the relevance of terrorism in the respondents' lives and the possibility of an international terrorist attack targeting Hungary. Question number three highlighted the perceived connection between immigration and terrorism, implying a link between them. Question number four conflated economic and irregular migration, framing the situation as an invasion. Question number five suggested that '*economic migrants jeopardise the jobs and livelihoods of Hungarians*' (Bocskor, 2018: 563). Question number six focused on whether respondents agreed with Brussels' policies on immigration and terrorism or believed that the European Union required a new approach. Subsequent questions further developed the framing of a required new policy. In this context, question number seven asked about the need for stricter government measures against immigration. Question number eight proposed the detention of illegal border crossers, while question number nine suggested returning immigrants to their countries of origin. Question number ten raised the issue of whether economic migrants should bear the costs of their stay in Hungary. Question number eleven inquired whether the European Union should support immigrants' countries of origin, while the final question asked whether the Hungarian government should prioritise supporting Hungarian families and their children over financing immigration. Based on the results, Bocskor confirmed that anti-immigration campaigns typically adopt a '*rhetoric of crisis*' (Kallius, Monterescu and Rajaram, 2016), where asylum seekers are portrayed as culturally incompatible with Europeans (Nagy, 2016).

In parallel, the Hungarian Socialist Party argued that the consultation was xenophobic and that the campaign did not address the actual issues surrounding immigration. Instead, it aimed to create division within society. Leaders of Together encouraged their supporters to deface government anti-immigration posters. The Hungarian Liberal Party described the consultation and the campaign as a negative example of incitement to hatred. Dialogue referred to the initiative as a '*provocative campaign*', while the Democratic Coalition commented that the consultation fostered hostility toward vulnerable immigrants (Origo, 2016). During the 2015 migration crisis, Ferenc Gyurcsány, the leader of the Democratic Coalition, personally hosted refugees at his home (Blikk, 2015). Furthermore, his party initiated a charity campaign centred around the collection of consultation forms (24.hu, 2015b).

At the end of the campaign, approximately 1.3 million individuals completed the consultation (HVG, 2015). The results overwhelmingly supported the position of Fidesz (Kormány.hu, 2015). Based on the results, the government deemed that it had earned the

legitimacy to construct fences along the southern border. Following the significant success of Fidesz's mobilisation, the left-wing opposition sought to adopt a less positive and more neutral stance on immigration—probably in an attempt to maximise voter support. This approach was also evident during the 2016 referendum on immigration. By boycotting, the opposition parties aim to delegitimise the consultation.

As Gessler (2017) pointed out in his research on the 2016 referendum⁴⁵ in Hungary, Fidesz framed immigration as a security challenge. Viktor Orbán reflected on immigrants as people who *'come here with the intent of destroying European culture'* (Sata, 2023) and by the referendum, the party aimed to *'send a message to Brussels that they will understand'* (Daily Mail, 2016) regarding the mandatory quota system. The referendum posed the following question: *'Do you want the European Union to be entitled to prescribe the mandatory settlement of non-Hungarian citizens in Hungary without the consent of the National Assembly?'*⁴⁶ During the campaign, Fidesz sought to convince citizens to vote 'No' by framing immigration as a threat to European society. In this sense, the party highlighted the rising numbers of sexual harassment in countries with high immigrant populations and linked immigration to terrorism by highlighting the immigrant background of the Paris attackers. Additionally, representatives of the party directed attention to the existence of so-called *'no-go zones'* (also known as no-go areas)⁴⁷ in Western Europe. Besides Fidesz, Jobbik also supported the No-vote. However, the party labelled Fidesz as migrant-friendly, because of the residency bond programme. In contrast, there was no significant camp for voting 'Yes'. Only the Hungarian Liberal Party campaigned in favour of the quota system (Inforádió, 2016). Nevertheless, the party had limited support. It has not contested national elections independently; in 2014, it joined to the left-wing opposition alliance, Unity (Összefogás), and in 2018, it formed an electoral coalition with MSZP and Dialogue, gaining one parliamentary seat in both elections. In 2022, it participated in the national elections by supporting the Democratic Coalition but failed to win any mandates. In contrast, other left-wing parties, recognising

⁴⁵ A referendum in Hungary can be initiated either by the government or by 200,000 voters. If a proposal gathers the support of 100,000 citizens, the issue is placed on the parliamentary agenda, where Members of Parliament may opt to order a referendum or not. For validity, a minimum voter turnout of 50% is required. Government-initiated referenda have been rare, with notable exceptions during the process of regime change—allowing voters to participate on four specific issues (Renwick, 2002) and the referenda on EU and NATO membership.

⁴⁶ Original text (in Hungarian): *'Akarja-e, hogy az Európai Unió az Országgyűlés hozzájárulása nélkül előírhasa nem magyar állampolgárok Magyarországra történő kötelező betelepítését?'* (NVI, 2016: 2).

⁴⁷ According to the Migration Research Institute (2018), a think tank affiliated with the Hungarian government, the term *'no-go zones'* during the migration crisis referred to areas that are either not controlled or are difficult to control by public authorities.

the low likelihood of a victory for the 'Yes' votes, called on their supporters to boycott the referendum in order to render it invalid (Demokratikus Koalíció, 2016). The slogan '*Stay at Home, Stay in Europe*', articulated by the Democratic Coalition, highlights that the party labelled the referendum as an issue of the European integration.

According to the National Election Office, the number of valid votes was approximately 3.4 million, representing a voter turnout of nearly 41% in the referendum. Consequently, the referendum was invalid, as fewer than 50% of eligible voters participated. The number of 'Yes' votes was approximately 56,000, while over 3.3 million votes⁴⁸ were cast for 'No' (NVI, 2016:4). Since more than 98% of the valid votes were against the proposal, the government interpreted the outcome as a mandate to protect the southern border fence and reject the European quota system. Simultaneously, left-wing opposition parties, which had called for a boycott, also considered themselves victorious, arguing that the referendum's invalidation due to low turnout aligned with their objectives.

As the results indicate, immigration occupies a less prominent role in the Hungarian political parties' programs and initiatives -except for Fidesz, which seems to thematise the issue of immigration in Hungary. However, in terms of rhetoric, CHES analyses show that the Hungarian party system is also multiple-divided on this issue. Consequently, the Hungarian party system exhibits signs of differentiation, with parties supporting immigration (DK and LMP between 2010 and 2014), neutral stances (LMP in 2019 and MSZP), as well as parties supporting stronger anti-immigration policies (Jobbik and Fidesz).

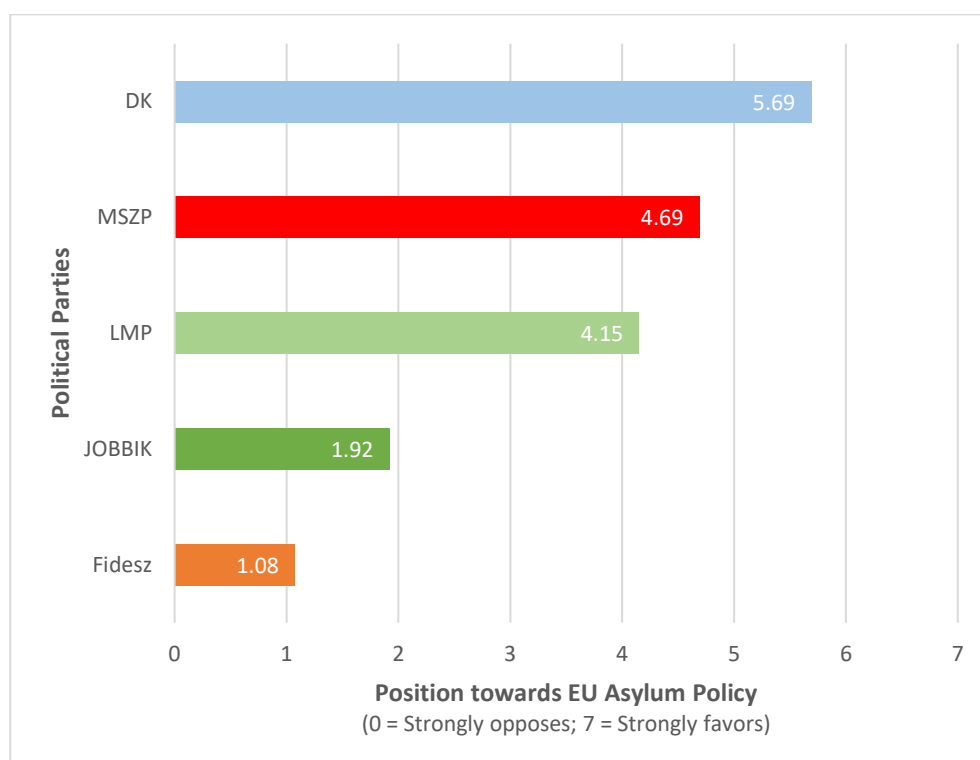
Besides immigration policies, the CHES survey qualified position toward the European Union's asylum policy (Figures 34 and 37). Analysing parties' positions toward immigration, this variable seems relevant because the issue is largely centred around the European Union's asylum system. One of the main arguments of those opposing hosting or the acceptance of refugees is that the majority of individuals reaching the EU borders are not refugees, but economic migrants (see Fidesz, FPÖ). Besides, refugees often pass through safe countries (such as Serbia or Turkey) before arriving at the Schengen borders. Parties that see expanding the powers of European Union institutions as a solution to the migration crisis usually support the EU's asylum and immigration policies and call for their reform to strengthen EU competencies over national sovereignty. In contrast, parties that show limited support for the European Union institutions' response to the migration

⁴⁸ For comparison, the number of eligible voters was slightly over 8.2 million in 2014 (NVI, 2014a: 4) and slightly over 8.3 million in 2018 (NVI, 2018:4).

crisis primarily emphasise the enforcement of existing legal obligations (e.g. the Dublin Regulation) and criticise the current EU asylum and immigration system (e.g. Fidesz, FPÖ).

As the results of the analysis show, the Democratic Coalition (DK), with a score of slightly under 6, emerges as the strongest supporter of the EU asylum policy. In parallel, while MSZP demonstrates moderate support, LMP suggests slightly above-neutral support compared to the rhetoric of the other parties. Regarding the EU asylum policy, Jobbik appears less opposed (with a score of 1.92) than Fidesz-KDNP, which scored approximately 1. The results reveal a stark division between the left-wing opposition, the right-wing opposition, and the governing Fidesz-KDNP. While left-wing parties demonstrate varying degrees of support, right-wing parties strongly oppose the policy. These findings may also be explained by the parties' stances toward European integration. While DK and MSZP are traditionally pro-EU parties, advocating for solidarity, including asylum policies, Fidesz-KDNP and Jobbik have exhibited Eurosceptic and anti-immigrant positions.

Figure 34. Political parties' positions toward EU asylum policy in Hungary (2019)

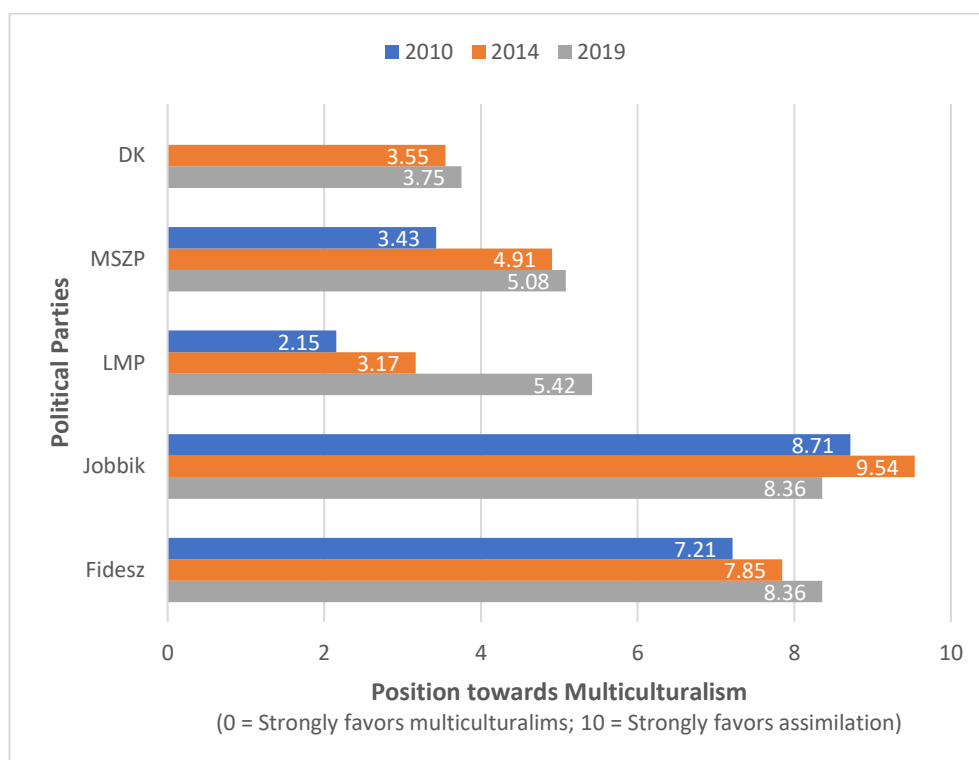


Source: Own illustration based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES, 2022)⁴⁹

Besides the judgment of EU asylum policy, the position towards multiculturalism is also relevant (see Figures 35 and 38). However, the Manifesto Project does not include any information relating to parties' position toward multiculturalism, neither in Austria nor in Hungary; its codebook specifies the definition of different positions toward multiculturalism. According to the Project, a positive position of multiculturalism can be captured by favourable statements regarding cultural diversity and plurality. It means that immigrant communities could gain autonomy to preserve their cultural heritages within the destination country. In contrast, negative positions toward multiculturalism capture statements which aim to enforce and encourage the cultural integration of immigrants (Manifesto Project, 2024: 21). Nevertheless, the CHES database includes results about parties' positions relating to multiculturalism, which is measured on a 10-point scale, where zero means strongly favour positions toward multiculturalism and 10 indicates strong support toward assimilation (CHES, 2024: 27).

⁴⁹ In the case of Hungary, data is only available for 2019.

Figure 35. Positions of the Hungarian political parties on multiculturalism (2010-2019)



Source: Own illustration based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES, 2022)

As indicated by the results of the CHES survey, the most positive stance in rhetoric toward multiculturalism was represented by the Democratic Coalition in 2014 and 2019 (slightly over 3.5 in both years). However, in 2010, LMP showed the most supportive rhetoric (with a score of 2). By 2014, the party's rhetoric moderated (3.17), and by the 2019 elections, following the 2015 migration crisis, it shifted to a more neutral position (reaching the score of approximately 5). Among left-wing parties, MSZP initially adopted a relatively positive stance in 2010, but it moved toward a more neutral rhetorical position by 2014 and 2019. Thus, among left-wing parties, only the Democratic Coalition maintained a predominantly positive stance towards multiculturalism, while a neutral position emerged among other left-wing parties that gained at least one independent mandate. The positive rhetoric of the Democratic Coalition may be explained by the alignment with neoliberal world values. According to its party manifesto, DK supports initiatives, which aimed to strengthen integration of immigrants and opposes all forms of discrimination (DK, 2018: 27). Furthermore, the party advocates for the protection of minority identities of immigrants (DK, 2018: 70) and supports the European quota system for refugee relocation (Mandiner, 2015). Additionally, DK has proposed developing Budapest, the capital of Hungary, into a multicultural city (DK, 2017: 39).

In contrast, right-wing parties adopted a strongly oppositional rhetoric toward multiculturalism. The right-wing opposition party, Jobbik, had opposed multicultural societies even before the 2015 migration crisis by thematising the so-called '*Gypsy crime*' (Karácsony and Rónai, 2010). However, moderation can be observed in Jobbik's rhetoric between 2014 and 2019, which probably can be explained by the party's attempt to transform into a people's party. During this process, the party consciously sought to reduce its' radical characteristic (Válasz Online, 2019). While Jobbik's rhetoric moderated, opposition to multiculturalism intensified in the case of Fidesz-KDNP. According to the CHES expert evaluations, the two parties held an equally opposing stance in 2019 (8.36). During the 2015 referendum campaign, the Fidesz-led government stated that '*If you come to Hungary, you cannot take Hungarians' jobs*'⁵⁰ (HVG, 2015) or '*If you come to Hungary, you must respect our culture*'⁵¹ (24.hu, 2015a). In 2015, Viktor Orbán argued that multiculturalism creates parallel societies, which undermine the validity of European values (Miniszterelnöki Kabinetiroda, 2015). In 2018, maintaining his earlier position, the Hungarian prime minister argued that every European nation has the right to reject multiculturalism and protect Christianity (Miniszterelnöki Kabinetiroda, 2018c). Furthermore, while the Democratic Coalition supports the European solution of the migration crisis (see petition campaign to support the European Union's asylum quota system (Népszava, 2015), Viktor Orban stated that during the 2019 campaign, '*the management of migration must be taken away from the Brussels bureaucrats and returned to the national governments*'⁵² (Fidesz, 2019).

As Figure 36 shows, in the case of Austria, rhetoric toward immigration policy follows a similar pattern to the positions outlined in the parties' manifestos. Between 2010 and 2019, FPÖ maintained its oppositional stance on immigration policy. However, the analysis of party programs indicates a slight positive shift during the 2017 election years, but this was probably temporary: the party's negative stance remained above nine on a 10-point scale, where 10 indicates a strong opposition to liberal immigration policies. In the case of ÖVP, anti-immigrant rhetoric was dominant both in 2010 and 2019. However, a temporal shift can be observed in this case as well: between 2010 and 2014, the score dropped from 8 to 6, which shows a temporal neutral position towards immigration policy.

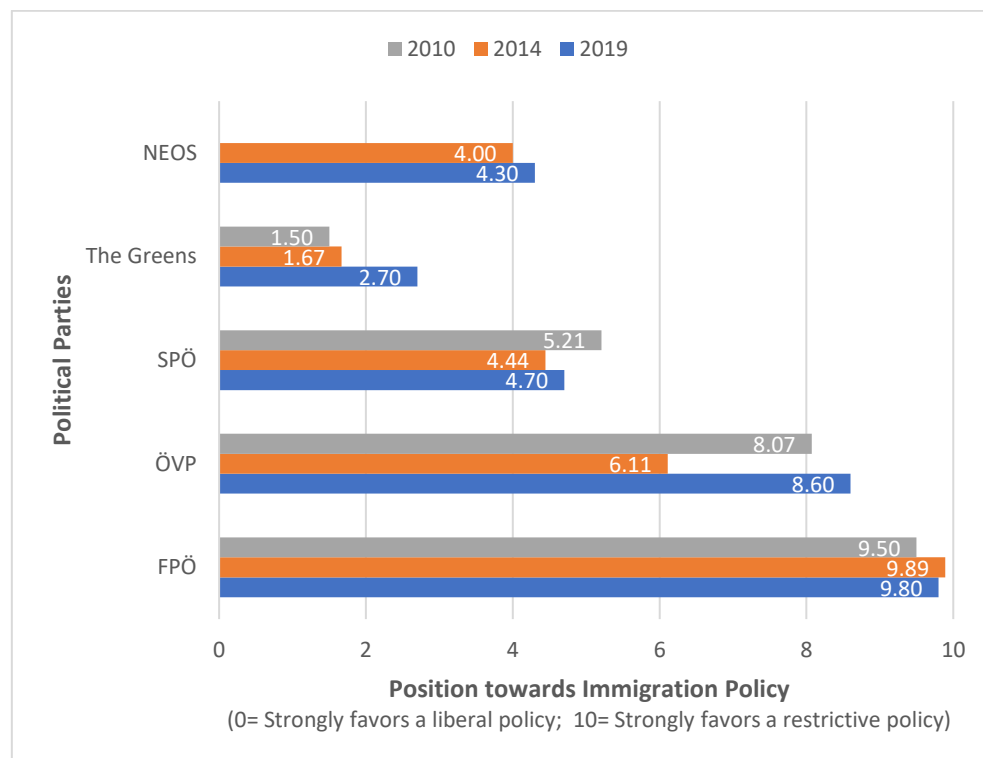
⁵⁰ Original text (in Hungarian): 'Ha Magyarországra jössz, nem veheted el a magyarok munkáját'.

⁵¹ Original text (in Hungarian): 'Ha Magyarországra jössz tiszteletben kell tartanod a kultúránkat'.

⁵² Original text (in Hungarian): '...a migráció kezelését el kell venni a brüsszeli bürokratáktól, és vissza kell adni a nemzeti kormányoknak.'

However, the party characterised 2015 as a '*shock*' for Austria from the aspect of immigration. Probably, as an aftermath of the European migration crisis and because of the coalition dynamics, the political communication had changed. Nonetheless, the measure of ÖVP rhetoric against liberal policy was more characteristic than anti-immigrant statements in the party's manifesto. This strengthens the assumption that ÖVP aimed to position itself as a moderate while attempting to persuade the voter base of FPÖ.

Figure 36. Trends in political parties' positions on immigration policy in Austria (2010-2019)



Source: Own illustration based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES, 2022).

The increasingly restrictive position of ÖVP between 2014 and 2019 can also be explained by the change of the party's leadership. Previously, as integration minister, Kurz published a 50-point plan, which offered initiatives across a wide range of policy areas, emphasising the relevance of language, law, and culturally value-oriented education of immigrants (Bundesministerium, 2015). Furthermore, he supported the reforms to the 1912 Islamic law in Austria, which resulted in the ban on foreign funding of mosques and imams (BBC, 2015). Under Sebastian Kurz's leadership, ÖVP argued in favour of strengthening Austria's role as a '*bridge*' between Germany and Hungary, and more broadly between Western- and Eastern Europe during the migration crisis. Kurz called for a European response to the migration crisis; however, he noted that this would

require a renewal of the EU's position, which lacked focus on relevant issues, such as immigration. As Kurz argued, even though the party has a coalition with the anti-EU FPÖ, the coalition holds a pro-European orientation (Politico, 2018). Kurz argued (TIME, 2017) that the Western Balkans route had become easy to cross, thereby creating a pull-effect for migratory flows. He acknowledged that Austria had already experienced a significant number of individuals seeking asylum, but qualified the current migration crisis as fundamentally different from previous ones. As he noted, this was the first time when the number of immigrants exceeded the Austrian admission capacities. Moreover, it was the first instance when individuals arrived from third countries after crossing multiple safe countries, including EU member states, before reaching Austria. Furthermore, Kurz also highlighted the unprecedented challenges posed by the integration of large numbers of individuals with distinct cultural backgrounds and lower levels of education. To solve the crisis, he emphasised the importance of regaining control over the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean migration routes. Besides that, he advocated for strengthening controls on the European Union's external borders and proposed returning illegal immigrants to their countries of origin. Additionally, Kurz recommended launching resettlement programs to provide refugees a legal pathway to Europe.

This transformation in both rhetoric and policy is often referred to as the '*Kurz-effect*', which denotes the ÖVP's ideological repositioning under the leadership of the young and charismatic Sebastian Kurz. By adopting a more restrictive migration agenda and emphasizing the relevance of cultural integration, Kurz successfully attracted right-leaning voters, including those previously aligned with the FPÖ.

As an aftermath of the so-called '*Ibiza affair*'⁵³, the governing coalition of ÖVP and FPÖ collapsed in 2019. The situation offered the opposition in Austria an opportunity to initiate a vote of no confidence against the Kurz administration. This motion was supported by the former coalition partner FPÖ, as well as by SPÖ and JETZT. As a result of the initiative, Kurz resigned from his position as Chancellor in May 2019. However, after winning the 2019 election, Kurz formed a new government in coalition with the

⁵³ The Ibiza affair (also known as Ibiza-gate or Ibiza-Affäre) refers to a scandal involving Heinz-Christian Strache, the Austrian Deputy Chancellor in the Kurz administration, and Johann Gudenus, the political leader of the FPÖ (the coalition partner of Kurz's party, the ÖVP), who offered lucrative public contracts in exchange for campaign support to a person seeking control of Kronen Zeitung, one of Austria's most popular daily newspapers.

Austrian Green Party, which lasted until 2021.⁵⁴ As a consequence of political scandals, ÖVP consistently avoided significant pro-immigrant rhetoric and aimed to maintain a neutral or moderately anti-immigrant position. On the one hand, ÖVP sought to persuade the moderate segment of voters from the right-wing FPÖ through less extreme anti-immigrant statements. However, as the party did not gain a majority in the elections, it had to maintain alternative coalition options with parties on the left that held neutral or pro-immigrant positions, which may have limited ÖVP's ability to adopt extreme anti-immigrant rhetoric. However, the party programme of ÖVP labelled irregular immigration as the source of many challenges (ÖVP, 2019).

FPÖ represented the most critical position in Austria. However, in 2002, the party temporarily adopted a relatively neutral stance, which might be explained by the attempt to become a moderate right-wing party⁵⁵. Nevertheless, by the time of the 2019 survey, FPÖ had taken a markedly critical position. The party opposed the acceptance of refugees and rejected the European Union's solidarity quota system, arguing that it poses a security risk to Austria (Reuters, 2024). One of the most well-known statements that exemplifies the FPÖ's position on the risk associated with immigration was made during the 2012 Tyrolean election. Gerald Hauser, then head of Tyrol's FPÖ chapter, referred to immigrants as '*Moroccan thieves*' and called on Morocco to take its '*criminals*' back from Austria. (Die Presse, 2012). Furthermore, FPÖ suggested mandatory X-rays to determine asylum-seekers' age for legal purposes (Politico, 2018). To reduce the threat, FPÖ argues against accepting further asylum applications, suggesting that asylum seekers should be returned to a safe country. Besides, it states that asylum should be temporary, which loses its validity when their countries of origin would qualify as safe again (Reuters, 2024). In 2018, the head of the Austrian Freedom Party suggested to place refugees in old army

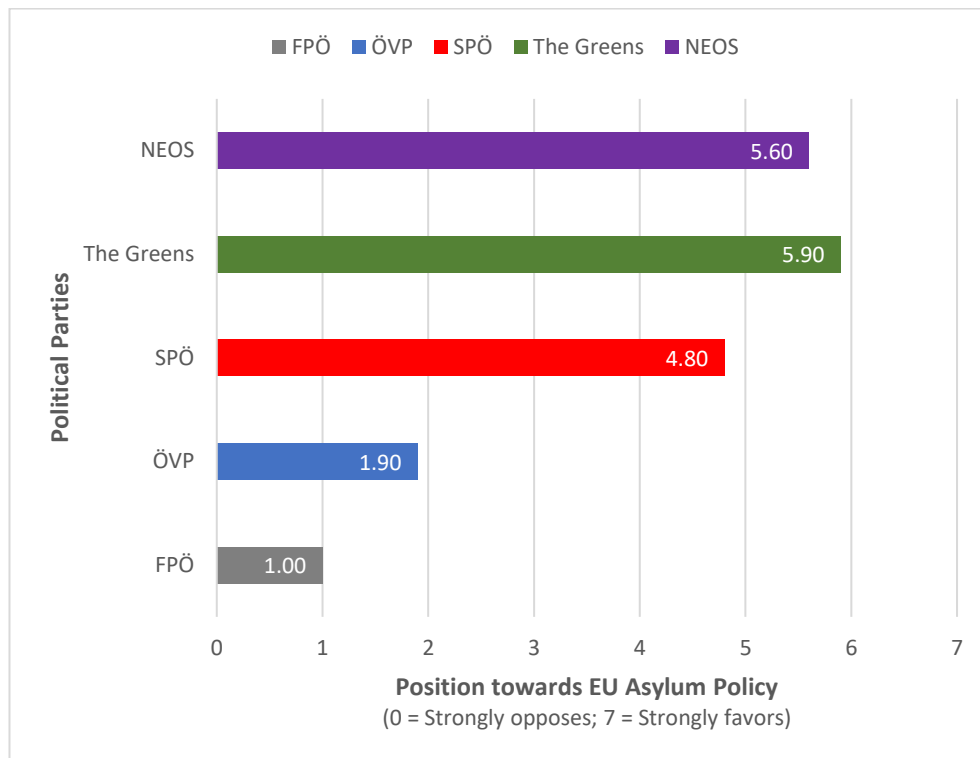
⁵⁴ In 2021, Kurz resigned as Chancellor after authorities launched an investigation against him on suspicion of misconduct. He later resigned from his party leadership position as well and subsequently withdrew from politics altogether.

⁵⁵ In 2000, ÖVP and FPÖ formed a coalition government (commonly referred as the Black-Blue Coalition). However, tensions arose within the coalition on issues of foreign policy, such as the EU's eastern enlargement, and economic matters, such as tax reform. A fundamental cause of these conflicts was the opposition from the radical faction of the FPÖ, because the party leader Jörg Haider attempted an ideological reform of the party. Internal division within the FPÖ ultimately led to a significant decline in voter support. In 2005, Haider and his moderate supporters left the FPÖ to establish Alliance for the Future of Austria (Bündnis Zukunft Österreich, BZÖ), weakening FPÖ's voter base further. Although BZÖ initially gained traction - in the 2008 elections, it secured 21 seats in Austria's 183-member National Council (SORA, 2024) - its transformation into a '*right-liberal*' party (Die Presse, 2009) eventually led to a significant decline in support, strengthening ÖVP's ability to draw votes from BZÖ (ÖVP-BZÖ coalition, 2005-2006). Meanwhile, following BZÖ's split, Heinz-Christian Strache led FPÖ further to the political right, marking a stark divergence in the trajectories of the two parties.

barracks until their asylum application process (DW, 2018a). The party introduced a new asylum law to restrict the existing one. According to the initiative, asylum seekers must hand over their cash and mobile phones when they submit an asylum claim to track their previous activity and fund the social welfare system (BBC, 2017).

In contrast, NEOS supported relatively liberal positions in its rhetoric, while the Greens took the most liberal stance on the issue. Similarly to the Greens' rhetoric, NEOS' program stated that Austria was born out of migration and rejection of immigration was because of xenophobic rhetoric. The party program highlights words as '*wave of refugees*' and '*over-foreignization*', or '*exploitation of the social system*' as statements, which are against the truth. As NEOS argued, Austria needs to de-emotionalise the discourse relating to immigration (NEOS, 2013: 67); furthermore, it emphasised that the party became dependent on qualified immigration (NEOS, 2019: 58). The Austrian Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) emphasized the importance of solidarity among EU member states in addressing migration issues. It advocated for the establishment of hotspots along the EU's external borders to process asylum claims efficiently. Furthermore, the SPÖ supported intensified cooperation with third countries, such as Turkey, and primary refugee-origin countries like Syria, to manage transit processes effectively. As then-candidate of SPÖ, Hundstorfer emphasised, Austria cannot host all the 60 million individuals fleeing conflict worldwide; however, the European Union cannot close its door to those escaping from war (Der Standard, 2016).

Figure 37. Trends in political parties' positions on EU asylum policy in Austria (2019)



Source: Own illustration based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES, 2022).

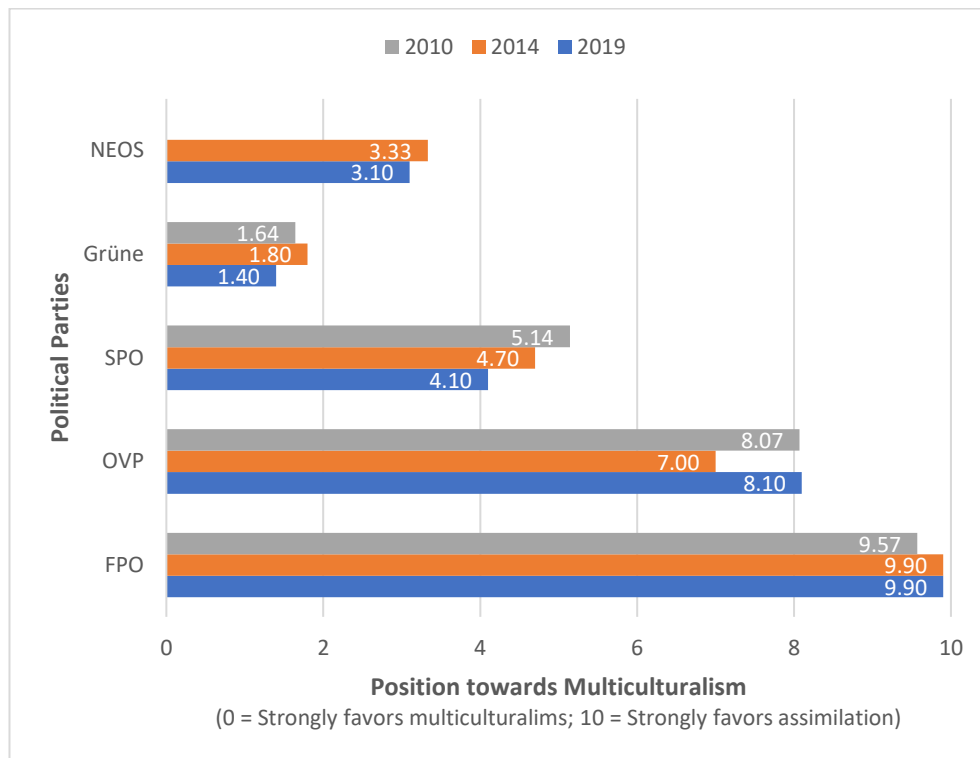
Note: In the case of Austria, data is available for 1999 and 2002 as well. Considering the significant time gap between these points and the more recent results from 2019, only the 2019 data is presented. This decision is further justified by the fact that the 2019 CHES evaluation is also available for Hungary, which enhances the comparability of the results between the countries.

As party manifestos also presented, left-wing political parties, especially the Greens and NEOS, strongly support the European solidarity-based solution for the migration crisis (Figure 37). NEOS advocated for the abolishment of the Dublin Regulation and proposed the creation of a unified European Asylum Procedure. This system would also be responsible for allocating asylum quotas to each member state. Those countries, which refuse to accept their assigned quotas would be obligated to pay a penalty fee to the EU (Virág and Mikecz, 2016: 27). However, the ÖVP also aimed to position itself as a party with pro-European sentiment, it aimed to restructure the European Asylum System. Furthermore, ÖVP proposed to deploy EU border guards in North Africa (Euromed Survey, n.d.). These initiatives may explain why CHES experts positioned ÖVP as a party with a negative stance toward the EU asylum policy. By 2018, Kurz supported a stricter asylum policy and the establishment of centres for housing and processing of asylum seekers, which would be set up outside Europe (Foreign Policy, 2018), closing the Balkan route. In contrast, FPÖ is against liberal EU asylum policy and aimed to restrict it (see the rejection of the EU quota system, the initiation of mandatory X-rays to determine

asylum-seekers' age, the proposal to return asylum seekers to a safe country, and the suggestion to make asylum status temporary). SPÖ was against the initiatives of FPÖ in favour of the restriction of the asylum application process. The party qualified these attempts as political failures of the FPÖ. Instead of interning individuals, SPÖ suggested to help those who come to the country in their needs (DW, 2018a). In parallel, SPÖ supported solutions at the level of the European Union; however, it was less enthusiastic about openness compared to the Greens and NEOS. The party advocated for solidarity within the EU asylum system, while also endorsing the strengthening of the EU's external border (Der Standard, 2016). This stance differentiated it from the positions held by the Greens and NEOS. Nevertheless, all three parties rather supported the EU asylum policy in 2019.

The issue of EU border protection is highly related to national border protection. In this sense, the construction of border fences became a contentious issue in Austria as well. Initially, plans focused on the Austrian-Slovenian border (DW, 2015), later extending to the Austrian-Italian (BBC, 2016) and Austrian-Hungarian borders (24.hu, 2016). Among these initiatives, only the Slovenian border fence was ultimately constructed. On this issue, SPÖ advocated for European-level solutions, whereas ÖVP and FPÖ called for restrictions through physical border closures (Rheindorf and Wodak, 2018). In contrast, NEOS (Daily Sabah, 2016) and the Greens (Der Standard, 2015) entirely rejected the idea of limiting immigration through physical barriers, citing humanitarian concerns and Austria's economic needs.

Figure 38. Trends in political parties' positions on multiculturalism in Austria (2010-2019)



Source: Own illustration based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES, 2022).

As Figure 38 shows, the Greens represent the most positive rhetoric toward multiculturalism (with a score ranging between 1.4 and 1.8). In parallel, NEOS presents a relatively positive stance in 2014, which slightly became stronger after the 2015 migration crisis. The position of NEOS is relatively stable (with a score of approximately 3). It is important to note that, both parties called Austria as a country of immigrants, which depends on the future inflows of individuals. According to CHES analysis, the Austrian Socialist Party presented a neutral position; however, it shifted into a more positive one by 2019 (with a score of approximately 4). SPÖ argued in favour of providing support to individuals as they entered the EU. The party advocated for the introduction of accelerated asylum procedures. As the party pointed out, the arrivals should be provided with access to language and cultural education, as well as opportunities to enter the labour market, supporting their integration (see ÖVP party's programs and Hundstorfer statements). In contrast, the right-wing parties favoured rather assimilation of immigrants. Sebastian Kurz took a strong stance against illegal immigration and proposed strict measures regarding immigration. One of the most controversial measures was the introduction of compulsory German language classes for students who did not meet the required level for integration. FPÖ's slogan was '*Homeland instead of Islam*' and

'Occident under Christian control' (DW, 2018b). The initiative to take asylum seekers into camps and deport illegal immigrants to their country of origin is able to capture, as an example, the negative rhetoric of FPÖ toward multiculturalism as well. Besides that, both FPÖ and ÖVP are against wearing headscarves in nurseries and elementary schools, and thus the right-wing government banned them. As Kurz told reporters, *'The veiling of small children should definitely have no place in our country'*.

Although, Hungarian opposition parties show minimal importance of the issue of immigration in their parties' programs, but a significant difference emerges between the left-wing and right-wing opposition regarding their rhetoric on immigration, the EU's asylum policy and the multiculturalism. The results indicate that the tripartite structure of the Hungarian party system (see Figure 28) persists in the context of immigration as well. Despite the fact that both Fidesz and Jobbik oppose immigration (see the results of CHES; Figures 33-35), one functions as the governing party while the other operates as an opposition party, making it logical to examine them separately. An additional argument is that immigration played a significant role in Fidesz's communication strategy (see the results of the Manifesto Project; Figures 29 and 30), which has become one of the party's distinguishing characteristics. In parallel, Austrian parties have taken obvious positions on immigration (see Figures 31-32). Regarding the analysis of the party system, the effective number of parties has evolved to between 4 and 5 (Figure 28). Based on the study of migration-related positions, it can be observed that, while NEOS and Greens primarily support immigration on ideological grounds, SPÖ justifies its support by arguing in favour of market interests. Meanwhile, ÖVP opposes illegal and large-scale immigration based on economic considerations, while FPÖ, which may predominantly rely on ideological arguments, demonstrates strong opposition to immigration (see Figures 36-38).

Based on the positions of political parties, it can be stated that immigration can indeed be described as a conflict at the level of political parties. Consequently, the null hypothesis must be rejected because the 2015 European migration crisis did manifest as a conflict at least on one level. Since the conflict became measurable at the party level, H2.1, which assumed a position division type of conflict, must also be rejected, as it presupposes that the division manifests at both the normative and voter levels. Furthermore, H2.4, which categorised the conflict as a structural difference, assumed that the conflict would exclusively appear at the socio-demographic level, has also been rejected. Similarly,

H2.5, which proposed an attitudinal difference manifesting exclusively at the normative level, has been rejected as well.

The following table presents an overview of the hypotheses after analysing political parties' positions on immigration. Of the eight hypotheses, four were rejected, as shown in the '*Evaluation*' column.

Table 4. Evaluation of hypotheses following the analysis of political parties' position on immigration

Hypothesis	Statement	Evaluation
H0	The 2015 European migration crisis did not manifest as a conflict at any of the three levels : the voter level, the normative level, or the level of the political parties.	<u>Rejected</u>
H1	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged across all three levels, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a cleavage-level conflict .	Retained
H2	The 2015 European migration crisis did not emerge across all three levels , and therefore, the conflict cannot be classified as a cleavage-level conflict.	Retained
H2.1	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged at the voter level and the normative level, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a position division .	<u>Rejected</u>
H2.2.	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged at the voter level and the level of political parties, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a census division .	Retained
H2.3.	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged at the normative level and the level of political parties, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as an issue division .	Retained
H2.4	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged exclusively at the voter level, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a structural difference .	<u>Rejected</u>
H2.5	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged exclusively at the normative level, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as an attitudinal difference .	<u>Rejected</u>
H2.6	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged exclusively at the level of political parties, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as an institutional difference .	Retained

Source: Own evaluation based on research findings.

Beyond the evaluation of the hypotheses, the qualitative character of party-level conflicts deserves further reflection. Interestingly, the findings deviate from the general assumption in the populism literature. According to Bayerlein (2021) the process of securitisation, framing immigration as an existential threat, is a typical rhetorical tool of populist parties in opposition. In this sense, this type of securitization may have effect on politics only in those party systems where populist actors are not in power. However, in their analysis, Müller and Gebauer (2021) highlighted that, the FPÖ initially framed

immigration as a threat while in opposition, and later was able to maintain this oppositional framing even as a junior coalition partner in coalition with ÖVP. Referring to Benford and Snow's (1988: 199-202) frame system, Müller and Gebauer (2021) identified three framing elements of the populist securitisation strategies: a threat frame (1), where populist leaders portray an international issue as a threat to security of '*the people*'; an anti-establishment frame (2), where populist rhetoric blame the established elite for the security crisis, and undermine the willingness and ability to effectively address these external threats, and a people-centric frame (3), where populists demonstrate themselves as authentic embodiments of the people, blurring the line between the representative and the represented, while simultaneously protecting '*the people*' from diagnosed threats by offering clear solutions and urgent calls for action.

However, the case of Fidesz contradicts this theoretical expectation. As a governing party, Fidesz was not only successful in thematising immigration but also actively securitised it through national consultations, media campaigns, and legislative actions. Furthermore, Fidesz was able to construct a discourse in which it positioned itself as the oppositional force confronting the globalist elite. Through its communication strategy, the party portrayed itself as the defender of sovereignty against external actors such as the so-called '*Soros network*' and '*Brussels*' or '*Brussels bureaucrats*'. This oppositional framing, despite being deployed from a position of power, enabled Fidesz to present itself as the sole protector of the Hungarian people against foreign influence. In other words, in the absence of a governmental rival to oppose, Fidesz was able to effectively redirect its confrontational stance toward international actors. As a result, Fidesz met the conditions outlined in the literature and, even while holding exclusive governing power, successfully framed immigration as a security challenge in a populist manner. The governing Fidesz was able to portray itself as a '*governing opposition to Brussels, the Soros network and the globalist elite*'. This interpretation adds a qualitative dimension to the findings and helps clarify how party-level conflict manifested in both discourse and positioning.

Returning to the classification of the conflict, as the presented findings show, four hypotheses were rejected (see Table 4). However, it is still unclear whether the conflict can be qualified as cleavage or as the other, retained forms of conflict. The following chapter of the research will seek to answer the question of whether this division on the level of political parties can also be captured at the normative-ideological level of the parties.

6.3 Ideological Positions of Political Parties: Associations with Stances Toward Immigration

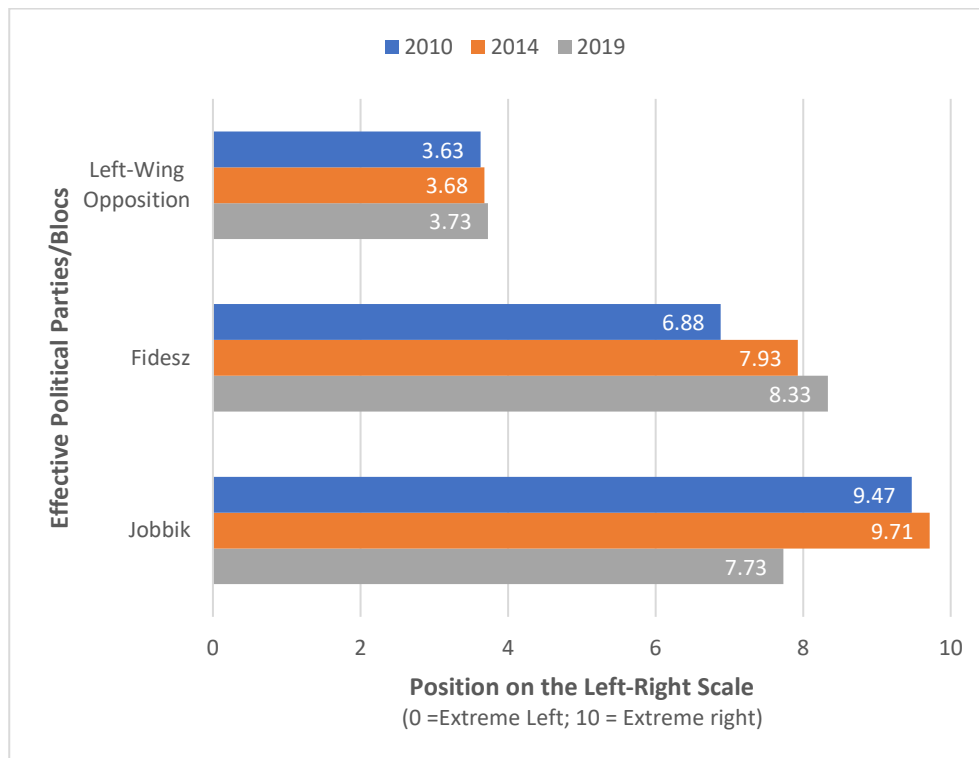
Besides the aforementioned aspects of migration, the CHES database analyses the political parties' positions on the left-right spectrum based on their overall ideological stance (*lrgen*). The scale ranges from 0 to 10, where 0 represents the extreme left and 10 represents the extreme right. As Figure 39 demonstrates, political parties in the Left-Wing Opposition in Hungary represent a more positive rhetorical stance toward immigration and tend to align with a predominantly left-wing orientation. The average position of the Left-Wing Opposition was slightly over 3.6 during the period from 2010 to 2019.⁵⁶ Besides that, the governing Fidesz shows an intensive shift toward an extreme right position: while the party was a moderately right-wing party in 2010 with a score of 6.88, it has increased to 8.33, which means that Fidesz became the most right-wing party in Hungary. This may be explained by the change of the party rhetoric, which can be captured among others in the case of immigration (see Figure 33), EU Asylum Policy (see Figure 34) or multiculturalism (see Figure 35), and by the attempt of transformation of Jobbik into a people's party. As the CHES analysis shows, Jobbik successfully moderated its position on the right-wing: the party was qualified as an extreme-right-wing party with a score of 9.47 in 2010 and 9.71 in 2014; however, it decreased to 7.73 by 2019. By analysing the correlation between the overall left-right position of political parties and their stance on immigration, a strong association can be observed in Hungary (Pearson Correlation, $r=-0.890$; $p<0.001$, two-tailed test). In this sense, the more right-wing a political party is, the more likely it is to oppose immigration. Similar results can be observed regarding the EU Asylum Policy ($r=0.890$; $p<0.001$ ⁵⁷) and multiculturalism ($r=-0.898$; $p<0.001$).⁵⁸

⁵⁶ The scores of the Left-Wing Opposition parties in detail are as follows: (1) LMP – 2010: 3.53; 2014: 4.29; 2019: 3.93; (2) MSZP – 2010: 3.35; 2014: 3.43; 2019: 3.40; (3) SZDSZ – 2010: 4.00; (4) DK – 2014: 3.36; 2019: 3.33; (5) Together 2014 – 2014: 3.64; 2019: 3.57; (6) MM – 2019: 4.40.

⁵⁷ In the case of the EU Asylum Policy variable, 0 indicates the most positive stance, while 7 represents the most negative stance toward EU Asylum Policy. The positive correlation coefficient reflects the reversed scaling of this variable compared to others, where 0 denotes the most supportive stance, and 10 denotes the most negative.

⁵⁸ Correlations for each year were calculated with the left-right position (*lrgen*) as the constant variable. In 2010: multiculturalism ($r=0.941$, $p<0.002$), immigration ($r=0.928$, $p<0.003$); in 2014: multiculturalism ($r=0.950$, $p<0.004$), immigration ($r=0.959$, $p<0.003$); and in 2019: multiculturalism ($r=0.864$, $p<0.012$), immigration ($r=0.936$, $p<0.002$), and EU asylum policy ($r=-0.935$, $p<0.002$). Note that, positions of the Hungarian political parties toward EU asylum policies were measured only in 2019.

Figure 39. Ideological positions of political parties on the general Left-Right scale in Hungary (2010-2019)

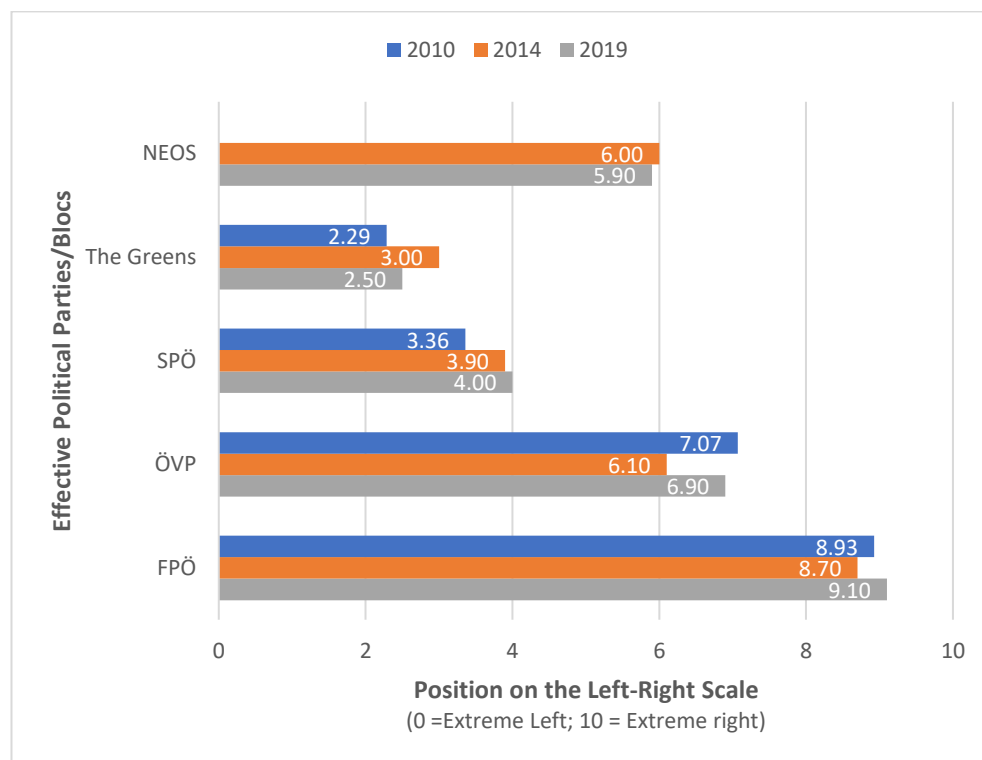


Source: Own illustration based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES, 2022; Irgen).

Analysing the Austrian political parties (Figure 40), it can be observed that the Greens have been identified as the most left-wing political party in Austria. Its position slightly fluctuated between 2.29 (2010) and 3 (2014), reaching a 2.5 score by 2019. In parallel, SPÖ was positioned as a left-wing party in 2010 with a score of 3.36, and gradually shifted towards a more center-left orientation, reaching a score of 4.00 by 2019. Despite these minor fluctuations, both the Greens and SPÖ maintained their primarily left-wing ideological orientations over the observed period. In contrast, the score of ÖVP reduced from the score of 7.07 in 2010 to 6.1 by 2014, and reoriented toward the right-wing by 2019 with the score of 6.9. These periodic fluctuations may be explained by the previously mentioned changes in the political leadership, particularly during the Kurz era, which marked a reorientation of the party's policies and ideological stance. Analysing FPÖ, it can be observed that the party was consistently identified as the most right-wing oriented in the Austrian political landscape during the analysed period. Based on the CHES qualification, the party's scores ranged from 8.93 in 2010 to 8.70 in 2014, reaching 9.10 by 2019. Despite the fact that NEOS identifies itself as a liberal party, it was classified as a right-leaning party by the CHES evaluation. According to the database, the party's ideological position was scored at 6.0 in 2014, which slightly decreased to 5.9 by

2019. Except for NEOS, a pattern similar to the Hungarian context can be observed in the correlation between the placement of the Austrian parties on the overall left-right scale and their positions toward immigration. Analysing the findings, a strong correlation can be observed between the left-right ideological positioning of parties and their stances on immigration ($r = 0.909$, $p < 0.001$), multiculturalism ($r = 0.916$, $p < 0.001$), and EU asylum policy ($r = -0.733^{59}$, $p < 0.002$).⁶⁰ Similarly to the Hungarian findings, the results indicate that parties positioned further to the right on the ideological spectrum are more likely to adopt restrictive stances on immigration, multiculturalism, and EU asylum policy.

Figure 40. Ideological positions of political parties on the general Left-Right scale in Austria (2010-2019)



Source: Own illustration based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES, 2022; *lrgen*).

⁵⁹ In the case of the EU Asylum Policy variable, 0 indicates the most positive stance, while 7 represents the most negative stance toward EU Asylum Policy. The positive correlation coefficient reflects the reversed scaling of this variable compared to others, where 0 denotes the most supportive stance, and 10 denotes the most negative.

⁶⁰ Correlations for each year were calculated with the left-right position (*lrgen*) as the constant variable. In 2010: multiculturalism ($r=0.960$; $p<0.002$), immigration ($r=0.955$; $p<0.003$); in 2014: multiculturalism ($r=0.895$; $p<0.007$), immigration ($r=0.936$; $p<0.002$); and in 2019: multiculturalism ($r=0.910$; $p<0.032$), immigration ($r=0.919$; $p<0.027$), and EU asylum policy ($r=-0.866$; $p<0.058$). Note that the positions of the Austrian political parties toward EU asylum policies are restricted to the year of 2019, because the variable was measured only in 2019 in Hungary.

However, it is important to note that NEOS deviates from this general pattern. This deviation suggests that an alternative, value-based analysis may be necessary to control for the party's placement on the left-right ideological spectrum. For such an alternative examination, the CHES dataset also conducts analyses using the GAL-TAN dimension, which may provide additional insights into the ideological orientation and policy preferences of political parties.

In practice, CHES defines GAL-TAN dimensions as the positioning of parties on social and cultural values. Parties classified as '*libertarian/post-materialist*' advocate for the expansion of personal freedoms, including abortion, divorce, and same-sex marriage. In contrast, '*traditional/authoritarian*' parties reject these ideas, emphasising order, tradition, and stability, while supporting a strong moral authority on social and cultural issues (CHES, 2024: 23).⁶¹

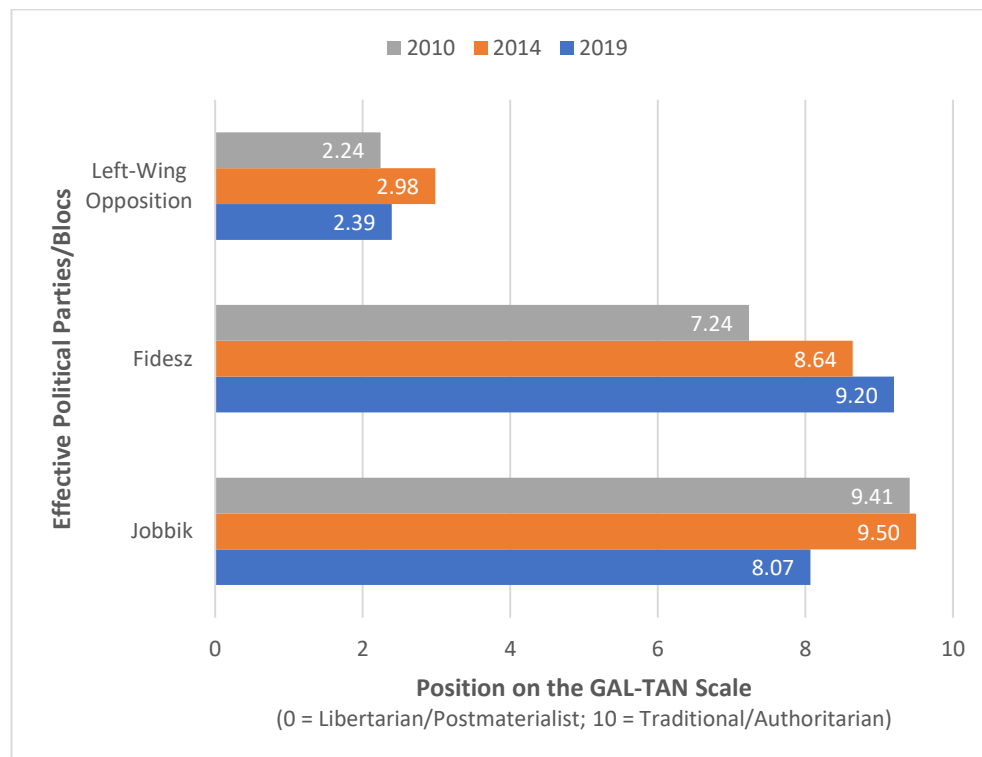
As Figure 41 shows, similarly to the overall left-right scale, the Left-Wing Opposition represents a strong association with the libertarian-postmaterialist position, with scores ranging between 2.2 and 3 between 2010 and 2019⁶². In parallel, Fidesz demonstrates a shift from a moderate stance on the traditional/authoritarian into an extreme position: its scores increased from 7.24 in 2010 to 8.64 by 2014, and 9.2 by 2019, indicating that the party developed a strong traditional/authoritarian characteristic over time in an ideological sense. The ideological reorientation of Jobbik also seems evident on the GAL-TAN dimension. The party's extreme rhetoric was reflected in its high scores of 9.41 in 2010 and 9.5 in 2014. However, by 2019, this moderated to 8.07, suggesting a shift in its ideological position. These findings highlight that Jobbik's reorientation has led to a noticeable change in the party's rhetoric on social and cultural issues. Analysing the associations, a strong correlation can be observed between the GAL-TAN positions and the Hungarian parties' position toward immigration ($r = 0.950$, $p < 0.001$),

⁶¹ Despite the fact that CHES appropriately defines the meaning of the GAL-TAN dimension, it applies a relatively simplified definition. For a more detailed explanation, see the previously discussed concepts, such as Hooghe, Marks and Wilson, 2002; Bakker et al., 2015 or Hooghe and Marks, 2018).

⁶² The scores of the Left-Wing Opposition parties in detail are as follows: (1) LMP – 2010: 1.41; 2014: 2.92; 2019: 3.06; (2) MSZP – 2010: 3.88; 2014: 4.07; 2019: 3.73; (3) SZDSZ – 2010: 1.42; (4) DK – 2014: 2.57; 2019: 2.13; (5) Together 2014 – 2014: 2.35; 2019: 1.42; (6) MM – 2019: 1.6.

multiculturalism ($r = 0.960$, $p < 0.001$), and EU asylum policy ($r = -0.914^{63}$, $p < 0.001$).⁶⁴ In this sense, the more libertarian/post-materialist a party is in Hungary, the greater the probability that it will support immigration, multiculturalism, and the EU asylum policy.

Figure 41. Alternative ideological positions of political parties on the Green-Alternative-Libertarian vs. Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist scale in Hungary (2010-2019)



Source: Own illustration based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES, 2022; *galtan*).

Note: The positions of the Austrian political parties toward EU asylum policies are restricted to the year of 2019, because the variable was measured only in 2019 in Hungary.

In contrast to the analysis of the overall left-right scale, the GAL-TAN dimension reveals a more coherent pattern in Austria (Figure 42). On the one hand, a similar pattern can be observed as in the case of the overall left-right scale: the most libertarian party is the Greens, with scores ranging between 1.4 and 1.67. Similarly, the left-wing SPÖ leans toward the libertarian pole, with scores ranging between 3.8 and 4.44. In the case of ÖVP

⁶³ In the case of the EU Asylum Policy variable, 0 indicates the most positive stance, while 7 represents the most negative stance toward the EU Asylum Policy. The positive correlation coefficient reflects the reversed scaling of this variable compared to others, where 0 denotes the most supportive stance, and 10 denotes the most negative.

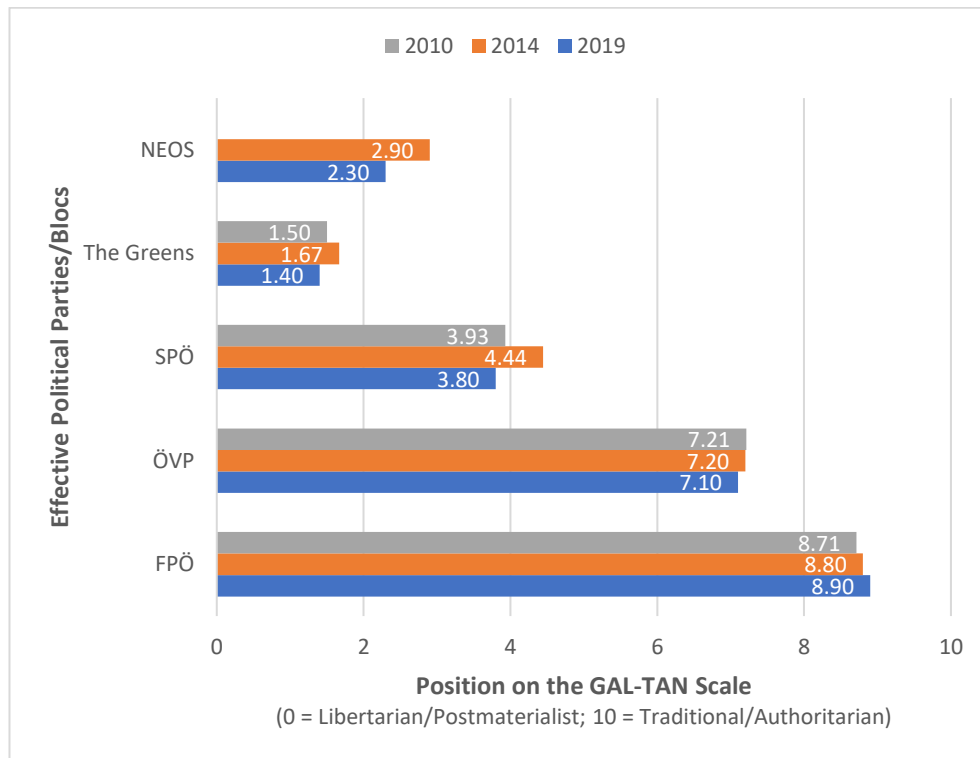
⁶⁴ Correlations for each year were calculated with GAL-TAN position (*galtan*) as the constant variable. In 2010: multiculturalism ($r=0.993$; $p<0.001$), immigration ($r=0.988$; $p<0.001$); in 2014: multiculturalism ($r=0.988$; $p<0.001$), immigration ($r=0.995$; $p<0.001$); and in 2019: multiculturalism ($r=0.960$; $p<0.001$), immigration ($r=0.993$; $p<0.001$), and EU asylum policy ($r=-0.982$; $p<0.001$). Note that, positions of the Hungarian political parties toward EU asylum policies were measured only in 2019.

a more moderate fluctuations can be observed - even in the Kurz-era: the score slightly decreased from 7.21 to 7.1 during the analysed period. Qualifying the FPÖ, the CHES recorded a slight move toward the traditional/authoritarian pole of the scale. In the case of ÖVP, a more moderate fluctuations can be observed, even during the Kurz era. The party's score slightly decreased from 7.21 to 7.1 over the analysed period; however, ÖVP remained a right-wing, rather traditional political party. Regarding the FPÖ, the CHES recorded a slight shift toward the traditional/authoritarian pole of the scale, with scores ranging between 8.71 and 8.9. However, on the other hand, it is worth noting that the right-lean liberal party, NEOS, was classified as a strongly libertarian, postmaterialist party: the score of NEOS decreased from 2.9 in 2014 to 2.3 by 2019, indicating that the party aligns more closely with liberal - left wing values on social and cultural issues, than right-wing values, as it might be assumed based on its position on the overall left-right scale. The findings reveal a strong correlation between the GAL-TAN ideological positioning of political parties and their stances on the issues of immigration ($r = 0.970$, $p < 0.001$), multiculturalism ($r = 0.991$, $p < 0.001$), and EU asylum policy⁶⁵ ($r = -0.685$, $p < 0.005$).⁶⁶

⁶⁵ In the case of the EU Asylum Policy variable, 0 indicates the most positive stance, while 7 represents the most negative stance toward the EU Asylum Policy. The positive correlation coefficient reflects the reversed scaling of this variable compared to others, where 0 denotes the most supportive stance, and 10 denotes the most negative.

⁶⁶ Correlations for each year were calculated with GAL-TAN position (*galtan*) as the constant variable. In 2010: multiculturalism ($r=0.994$; $p<0.001$), immigration ($r=0.992$; $p<0.001$); in 2014: multiculturalism ($r=0.986$; $p<0.001$), immigration ($r=0.953$; $p<0.001$); and in 2019: multiculturalism ($r=0.997$; $p<0.001$), immigration ($r=0.991$; $p<0.001$), and EU asylum policy ($r=-0.994$; $p<0.001$).

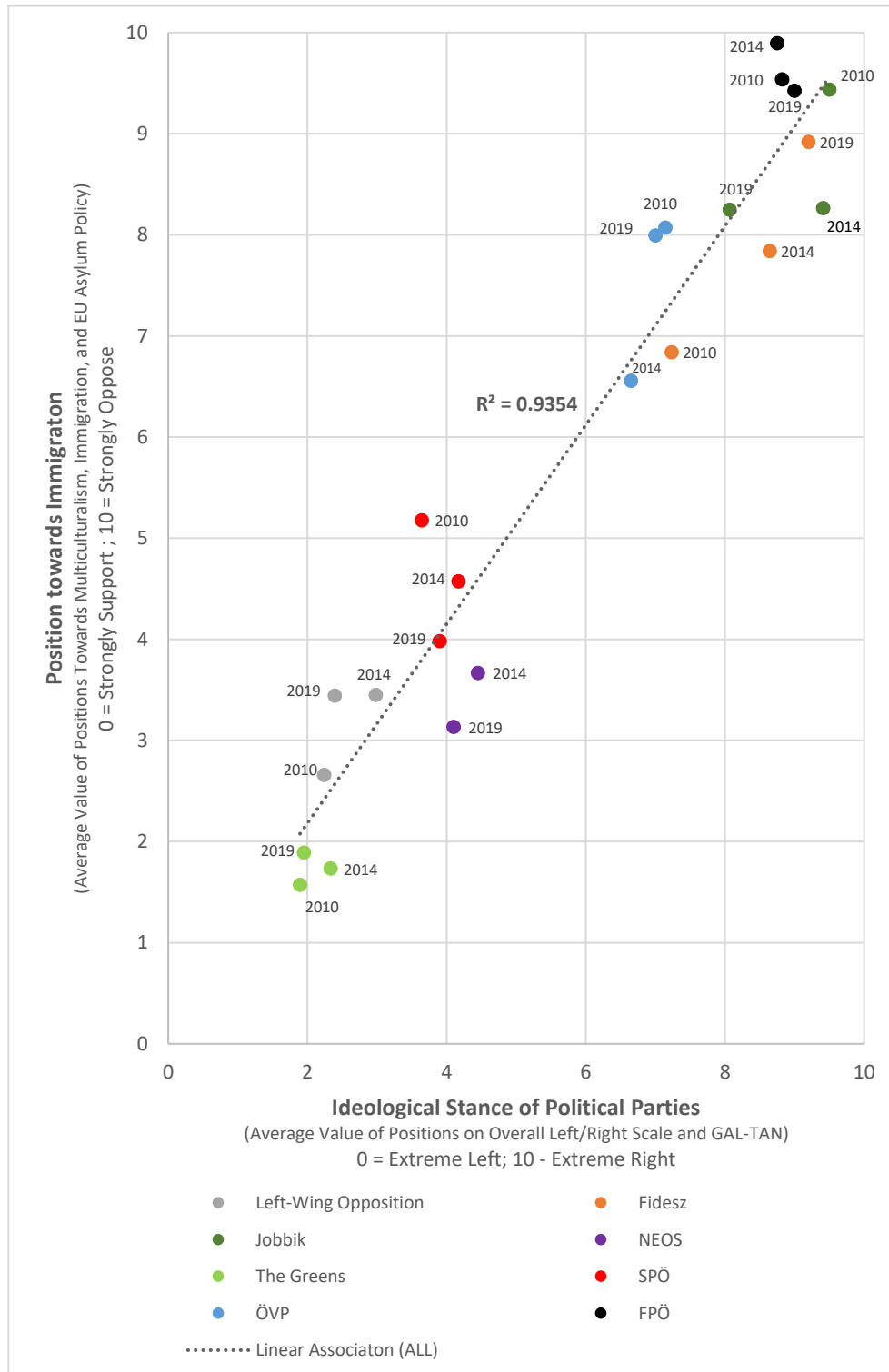
Figure 42. Alternative ideological positions of political parties on the Green-Alternative-Libertarian vs. Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist scale in Austria (2010-2019)



Source: Own illustration based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES, 2022; *galtan*).

As Figure 43 demonstrates, the findings indicate that the political conflict over immigration is closely aligned with the ideological positioning of political parties. In general, parties identified as being on the political left and oriented toward libertarian and post-materialist values tend to adopt more supportive stances on immigration. Conversely, right-wing parties characterised by traditional, authoritarian, and nationalist values are more likely to oppose and advocate for restrictions on immigration. The results demonstrate that differences at the party level are also reflected at the ideological level, and the association between the parties' ideological position and their position towards immigration in rhetoric is strong ($R^2=0.9354$).

Figure 43. Relationship between ideological stance and position towards immigration across political parties in Hungary and Austria (2010-2019)



Source: Own calculations based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES, 2022; *galtan, lrgen*). The selected parties are the effective ones.

Note: The scaling of the EU asylum policy variable is opposite to that of the immigration and multiculturalism variables. Therefore, the values of the EU asylum policy variable were reversed during the calculation of averages to align all variables in the same direction. Additionally, to ensure consistency, the EU asylum policy variable, originally measured on a 7-point scale, was rescaled to a 10-point scale.

The correlation can also be observed even in the case of parties whose ideological characteristics have changed: as Jobbik moderated its radical profile, the party's position towards immigration also eased. In parallel, as Fidesz shifted to the right and the TAN side of the ideological spectrum, its negative position on immigration intensified. A similar process can be observed in the case of ÖVP: a leftward, GAL-oriented moderation resulted in a more positive stance on immigration, which reverted to a more negative position following a subsequent ideological shift to the right, toward TAN. Despite the strong correlation, the relationship between ideological characteristics and positions toward immigration cannot be considered exclusive. As the example of the Greens in Austria demonstrates, the party's position toward immigration cannot solely be explained by positioning on the left-right and GAL-TAN scales, since in this case, ideological changes caused only minimal changes in their stance on migration. However, the case of the Greens could be qualified as temporary, as in the case of ÖVP. Nevertheless, as the case of SPÖ highlights, an increasing support for immigration can be observed despite minimal changes on the ideological scale. Given that the CHES examines party rhetoric, besides the ideological transformations, these changes may be explained by decisions of the given party's political elite.⁶⁷

Based on the findings, it can be hypothesised that differences regarding immigration are evident at both the party and ideological levels. In this sense, H2.2 must be rejected because the conflicts cannot be qualified as a census division, where conflict emerges exclusively at the level of political parties and voters. Furthermore, as a consequence of the presence of the ideological division (see Figure 43) among parties on immigration, the conflict in the form of institutional differences must also be rejected (H2.6).

⁶⁷ However, it is worth noting that the ideological shift itself may also be driven by the political elite itself (see: Jobbik).

Table 5. Evaluation of hypotheses following the analysis of political parties' position in relation to their ideological position on immigration

Hypothesis	Statement	Evaluation
H0	The 2015 European migration crisis did not manifest as a conflict at any of the three levels : the voter level, the normative level, or the level of the political parties.	Rejected
H1	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged across all three levels, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a cleavage-level conflict .	Retained
H2	The 2015 European migration crisis did not emerge across all three levels , and therefore, the conflict cannot be classified as a cleavage-level conflict.	Retained
H2.1	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged at the voter level and the normative level, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a position division .	Rejected
H2.2.	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged at the voter level and the level of political parties, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a census division .	<u>Rejected</u>
H2.3.	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged at the normative level and the level of political parties, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as an issue division .	Retained
H2.4	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged exclusively at the voter level, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a structural difference .	Rejected
H2.5	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged exclusively at the normative level, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as an attitudinal difference .	Rejected
H2.6	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged exclusively at the level of political parties, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as an institutional difference .	<u>Rejected</u>

Note: Newly rejected hypotheses in this section are underlined for clarity.

As Table 5 shows, only three hypotheses remain retained. In this sense, whether the immigration crisis emerged as a cleavage-qualified conflict, or another form, specifically, an issue-based division, remains an open question. To address this question, the following chapter shifts the focus of the research to the voter level.

Assuming the presence of party affiliation, it is reasonable to expect that individuals aligned with specific parties will adopt positions on immigration consistent with those of their respective parties. Consequently, the results may indicate the presence of a cleavage-defined conflict on the issue of immigration. To determine whether this ideological division relating to immigration extends to the individual level within normative frameworks and is reinforced by diffusive socio-demographic differences, the next chapter employs a time-series cross-sectional (TSCS) multi-level regression analysis in both countries. The analysis facilitates a quantitative examination of divisions regarding

immigration across three levels: political parties⁶⁸, voters, and the normative-ideological⁶⁹ dimension. The empirical analysis considers not only the socio-demographic elements characterised by general cleavages but also the specific cleavage characteristics unique to the countries under examination⁷⁰.

⁶⁸ Based on the Chapter of '*Positions of Political Parties*'.

⁶⁹ Based on the Chapter of '*Ideological Positions of Political Parties: Associations with Stances Toward Immigration*'.

⁷⁰ Based on the Chapter on '*Political Cleavage Lines in Hungary and Austria*'.

7 POSITIONS OF VOTERS TOWARD IMMIGRATION IN AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY

7.1 Analytical Framework and Variable Operationalisation

This chapter examines the social perception of immigration across different countries and time periods. Given the hierarchical structure of the data, with observations nested at both national and ESS-wave levels, a multilevel regression model is employed instead of a traditional linear regression approach, yielding more precise estimates of the relationships between variables (Heck, Thomas and Tabata, 2014). The research employs a unique identifier based on the examined countries (*cntry*= AT | HU) and the respective ESS survey rounds (*essrounds*). This approach allows for the analysis of individual and group-level attitudes toward immigration separately by country and survey year. Given the data collection covering the period from 2002 to 2024, the study is capable of tracking a 20-year trend in immigration-related positions. Based on the research, it can be determined whether conflicts related to immigration manifest at both the voter social-demographic and normative levels. The selection of independent variables is based on both theoretical and empirical considerations regarding social and political cleavages.

The dependent variable is a scale measuring attitudes toward immigration. It is constructed from the following variables of the European Social Survey (ESS): (1) Should many or few immigrants of a different race/ethnic group from the majority be allowed (*imdfetn*)?; (2) Should many or few immigrants from poorer countries outside Europe be allowed (*impcntr*)?; (3) Is immigration bad or good for the country's economy (*imbgeco*)?; (4) Does immigration undermine or enrich the country's cultural life (*imueclt*)?; and (5) Do immigrants make the country a worse or better place to live (*imwbcnt*)?. Attitudes toward immigrants of the same race and ethnicity are not examined, as this item does not fit the scale.⁷¹

The original concept of majority–minority conflict primarily referred to ethnic and national divisions within a given society, often centred around issues of state structure and autonomy. In contrast, the present analysis does not focus on these forms of ethnic minority conflicts in the traditional sense, as it examines attitudes toward immigration. Accordingly, the analysis explores whether the majority-minority cleavage can be applied

⁷¹ KMO test result is 0.809. Cronbach's Alpha is 0.884.

to the relationship between immigrants and natives. In this context, the term '*natives*' refers to individuals born in Austria and Hungary, respectively (*brncntr*)⁷². Those respondents who were not born in the survey country (first-generation immigrants), or whose father (*facntr*) or mother (*moenr*) was born in another country (second-generation immigrants), were coded as *immigrants*.

The urban–rural division may also influence public attitudes toward immigration. The ESS database categorises respondents' place of residence (*domicile*) into five categories: (1) big city, (2) suburbs or outskirts of a big city, (3) town or small city, (4) country village, and (5) farm or home in the countryside. For analytical purposes, and considering the distribution of responses, these were recoded into three broader groups: (1) urban areas combining the categories of big city and suburbs or outskirts of a big city; (2) towns or small cities; and (3) rural areas combining responses from village, farm, and countryside homes.

To measure religiosity, the ESS employs three variables. First, the questionnaire asks respondents about their level of religiosity (*rlgdgr*), which is rated on an 11-point scale ranging from 0 (not at all religious) to 10 (very religious). Furthermore, it measures religious practice through the question '*How often do you attend religious services apart from special occasions?*' (*rlgatnd*). The third variable captures private religious activity by asking, '*How often do you pray apart from at religious services?*' (*pray*). For the latter two questions, the response options are as follows: (1) every day, (2) more than once a week, (3) once a week, (4) at least once a month, (5) only on special holy days, (6) less often, and (7) never. To ensure comparability across the indicators, the variable measuring the level of religiosity (*rlgdgr*) was rescaled to a 11-point scale. As the factor analysis indicates, the three variables are strongly correlated.⁷³ Therefore, the analysis uses the mean value of the three items to construct a composite measure of religiosity.

As the neo-revisionists argue, the traditional capitalist-worker conflicts may still exist in modern societies; however, they have become more pronounced between different segments of the labour force. A commonly applied distinction in labour market analysis can be observed between blue-collar and white-collar workers. With regard to immigration, the question arises whether these groups hold differing views. Following the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88), the European Union

⁷² The variable has two categories: 0 = respondent was born in the country of interview, 1 = respondent was not born in the country of interview or at least one parent was born abroad.

⁷³ KMO test result is 0.716. Cronbach's Alpha is 0.826.

distinguishes four working groups: high-skilled white collar low-skilled white collar, high-skilled blue collar⁷⁴ and low-skilled blue collar⁷⁵ workers.⁷⁶ However, it is important to acknowledge that a significant portion of the population is inactive in terms of employment. This group includes unemployed people of active working age, pensioners, students, and even homemakers. To ensure that the multilevel regression model incorporates these groups, the following procedure was applied: those respondents who were employed at the time of the survey were classified as workers based on their occupation, while inactive individuals were assigned to specific categories: education, unemployed/housework/looking after children/others, and retired.⁷⁷

Besides the aforementioned factors, educational level may also play a crucial role in attitudes toward immigration. On the one hand, it may serve as a new form of socio-demographic cleavage, in which higher levels of education are associated with greater acceptance of immigration (see: Quinley and Glock 1979; Hainmueller and Hiscox, 2007; Van der Waal et al., 2010; Margaryan, Paul and Siedler 2018). Nagy and Dúró (2025) argue that attitudes toward immigration are significantly shaped by educational attainment: individuals with lower levels of education are more likely to hold negative attitudes toward immigration. Based on the ESS database, educational level was recoded into primary, secondary and tertiary categories (educational level).⁷⁸

As Cowel-Meyers, Evans and Shin (2020) argued, among others, gender may also function as a new form of political differentiation. To test this hypothesis in relation to attitudes toward immigration, the research includes gender (*gndr*) as an additional explanatory variable. The assumption behind gender-based differentiation can be illustrated by the often-cited phrase: '*Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*' by John

⁷⁴ Including skilled agricultural, fishery workers and craft and related trades workers.

⁷⁵ Including plant and machine operators, assemblers and elementary occupations.

⁷⁶ Employment status was determined based on the ISCO classification used in the respective ESS rounds. Due to data availability, in Rounds 1–5, the variable *iscoco* (based on ISCO-88) was used, while in Rounds 6–11, the variable *isco08* (based on ISCO-08) served as the basis for classification.

⁷⁷ The classification of inactive social groups was based on the variable *mnactic*, which includes the following categories: (1) paid work; (2) education; (3) unemployed, looking for job; (4) unemployed, not looking for job; (5) permanently sick or disabled; (6) retired; (7) community or military service; (8) housework, looking after children; (9) others. In the analysis, individuals in education, those engaged in housework or looking after children, retired or unemployed (whether looking for a job or not) and those permanently sick or disabled were also included. Following the ISCO classification guidelines, individuals performing community or military service were excluded from the analysis.

⁷⁸ Due to data availability, a different variable was used to analyse the highest level of educational attainment. For Austrian respondents, the variable *edulvlb* was used, which includes 16 response categories based on the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). The three-level categorisation (primary, secondary, tertiary) follows the international classification recommended by the European Union (Eurostat, n.d). The same ISCED-based grouping was applied to Hungarian respondents, based on the *edulvla* variable, which contains five response categories.

Gray (1993). In detail, according to Andreoni and Vesterlund (2001), women demonstrate a stronger orientation toward egalitarian and altruistic values, along with a greater capacity for empathy (Kobayashi and Tanaka, 2024). Therefore, in contexts where discourse often focuses on humanitarian concerns and the protection of immigrant rights, women are more likely than their male counterparts to support welcoming attitudes toward immigrants. Blinder (2015) and Knoll, Redlawsk, and Sanborn (2011) report that women tend to express greater support for increased immigration. However, the findings are not entirely consistent across the literature. Sides and Citrin (2007) find no significant gender-based differences in attitudes toward immigration, whereas Mayda (2006) and Facchini and Mayda (2009) observe that women are actually more likely than men to oppose further immigration.

Beyond the social differences presented, the research uses additional control variables that take into account individual experiences, which may override the frameworks of social conflicts. Following ESS instructions, the Social Trust Scale (Breyer, 2015) seems to be one of those potential individual-related factors that may influence the findings. The indicator is constructed from three variables: whether most people can be trusted or you cannot be too careful (*ppltrst*); and whether most people try to take advantage of you, or try to be fair (*pplfair*); and whether most of the time people are helpful or mostly looking out for themselves (*pplhlp*).⁷⁹ Furthermore, the analysis adopts the General Life Satisfaction Short Scale (Nießen et al, 2020), a validated single-item measure of overall life satisfaction. In line with previous findings highlighted by Nießen et al (2020), it can be assumed that individuals who are more satisfied with their life have a greater sense of security, and are therefore more likely to adopt positive attitudes toward immigration (*stflife*).⁸⁰ Besides that, subjective security, which is captured by the feeling of safety when walking alone in one's local area after dark (*aesfdrk*), may significantly affect respondents' positions.⁸¹ The reason for including this variable is that subjective feelings of safety are closely linked to social trust and perceived threats in society (Venetoklis, 2025). Individuals who feel unsafe in their own

⁷⁹ Each of the three variables is measured on an 11-point scale, ranging from 0 (most negative) to 10 (most positive). KMO test results is 0.809. Cronbach's Alpha is 0.814.

⁸⁰ Respondents were asked: 'How satisfied with life as a whole?' Answers were coded on an 11-point scale, where 0 equals 'extremely dissatisfied' and 10 means 'extremely satisfied'.

⁸¹ In order to ensure that all independent variables point in the same direction, the original variable measuring perceived safety was recoded. The initial response scale was: 1 – Very safe, 2 – Safe, 3 – Unsafe, 4 – Very unsafe. For consistency, it was recoded so that higher values indicate higher levels of perceived safety: 1 – Very unsafe, 2 – Unsafe, 3 – Safe, 4 – Very safe.

neighbourhood are more likely to experience higher levels of fear and insecurity, which can translate into more negative attitudes toward immigration. By contrast, those who report feeling safe may tend to have higher levels of trust in others and in social institutions, and are therefore more open and supportive toward immigration. The presented control variables can be complemented with satisfaction with governance and public institutions (*satgov*), which is assessed through indicators such as satisfaction with the state of the economy (*stfeco*), the education system (*stefdu*), the health care system (*stfhlth*), as well as satisfaction with the national government (*stfgov*) and the functioning of democracy (*stfdem*)⁸². It may suggest that higher institutional satisfaction often translates into a stronger sense of stability and trust in the system, which can in turn reduce perceived threats and influence how individuals approach issues such as immigration. The analysis also includes an additional control variable measuring acceptance of homosexuality. This variable serves as a proxy for attitudes toward 'otherness' providing further insight into respondents' general openness to diversity and social tolerance⁸³. Finally, age (*agea*) is included as a further control variable to account for potential generational differences.

Regarding the interpretation of the normative dimension, in addition to self-placement on the general left-right scale, the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) is applied, which serves as an alternative approach to the traditional left-right political spectrum. The methodology is based on the Schwartz Value Survey (SVS)⁸⁴. The PVQ identifies ten distinct value types, each defined by its underlying motivational goals reflecting core human aspirations and guiding principles. The survey includes 40 different verbal portraits, with their goals, aspirations, and wishes. For each portrait, respondents give an answer to the following question: '*How similar is this person to you?*' (Schmidt

⁸² KMO test result is 0.809. Cronbach's Alpha is 0.853.

⁸³ Respondents were asked: '*Gays and lesbians free to live life as they wish*'. Answers were coded on a 5-point scale, where 1 equals '*Agree strongly*' and 5 means '*Disagree strongly*'. For consistency, it was recoded so that higher values indicate higher levels of acceptance: 1 – Disagree strongly, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neither agree nor disagree, 4 – Agree, 5 – Agree strongly.

⁸⁴ Originally, the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) was derived from the Schwartz Value Survey (SVS), where Schwartz measured individuals' value preferences by a survey entailing 57 questions with two lists of value items. Out of the 57 questions, 45 were used to create the 10 different value categories, and the remaining 12 items were used during the standardisation. Respondents provided feedback on each value using a non-symmetrical scale ranging from -1 to 7. On this scale, 7 indicates '*extremely important*', 6 '*very important*', while 5 and 4 are unlabelled intermediate categories. A score of 3 corresponds to '*important*', and again, 2 and 1 are unlabelled intermediate values. A score of 0 indicates '*not important*', and -1 represents '*opposed to my values*'. The Portrait Values Orientation has been developed based on the SVS. During the redesign of the SVS, Schwartz emphasised the precise description and conceptual clarity of the SVS items, ensuring that each was clearly defined and thoroughly explained.

et al, 2007). The response options range between '*very similar*' (1), '*similar*' (2), '*rather similar*' (3), '*rather dissimilar*' (4), '*dissimilar*' (5), '*very dissimilar*' (6). A notable advantage of the SVS is its clarity and ease of interpretation: the questionnaire was specifically designed to be understandable for children aged 11 to 14, as well as for individuals with a lower educational level. Thus, in contrast to self-placement on the left-right scale, the PVQ helps to minimise the risk of misunderstandings that could lead to erroneous conclusions. The ten value types and their corresponding motivational goals are as follows:

Table 6. Schwartz's ten value types and their underlying motivational goals

Values	Motivational Goals
Power	Social status and prestige, control, or dominance over people and resources. (<i>Social power, authority, wealth, maintaining public image</i>)
Achievement	Personal success through the demonstration of competence according to social standards. (<i>Successful, capable, ambitious, influential</i>)
Hedonism	Pleasure and sensual gratification for oneself. (<i>Pleasure, enjoying life</i>)
Stimulation	Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life. (<i>Daring, a varied life, an exciting life</i>)
Self-Direction	Independent thought and action, creativity, and exploration. (<i>Creativity, freedom, independence, curiosity, choosing one's own goals</i>)
Universalism	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection of all people's and nature's welfare. (<i>Tolerance, wisdom, social justice, equality, a world at peace, a world of beauty, unity with nature, protecting the environment</i>)
Benevolence	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one has frequent personal contact. (<i>Helpful, honest, forgiving, loyal, responsible</i>)
Tradition	Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provides. (<i>Devout, accepting one's role in life, humble, respect for tradition, moderate</i>)
Conformity	Restraining actions, inclinations, and impulses that might upset or harm others or violate social norms and expectations. (<i>Politeness, obedience, self-discipline, respect for parents and elders</i>)
Security	Safety, harmony, and stability of society and relationships. (<i>Family security, national security, social order, cleanliness, not being indebted to anyone</i>)

Source: Own calculations based on Schmidt (2007: 262)

According to the theory, the ten values form a circular structure, in which five opposing pairs can be observed. The higher the importance of a value within the hierarchy, the more likely it is to influence opinions and positions. When one value becomes dominant, the relevance of the opposing value also increases. In other words, respondents' decisions are based on compromises between opposing values (e.g., security versus stimulation). As the relevance of certain values shifts, societal processes may also change. However, the causal direction may also be reversed, since major events or issues can in turn alter the hierarchy of values as well.

The Schwartz-based PVQ measurement is also implemented within the European Social Survey (ESS) framework. Similar to the PVQ, the ESS analyses 10 value types; however, in contrast to the PVQ methodology, it includes 21 items instead of 40. Based on the ESS database, the coding can be carried out as follows:

Table 7. The ten fundamental human values based on Schwartz's theory, as computed from the ESS dataset

Values	Item Number	Item description (item code)
Power	1	Important to be rich, have money and expensive things (<i>imprich</i>)
	2	Important to get respect from others (<i>iprspt</i>)
Achievement	1	Important to show abilities and be admired (<i>ipsabt</i>)
	2	Important to be successful and that people recognise achievements (<i>ipsuces</i>)
Hedonism	1	Important to have a good time (<i>ipgdtim</i>)
	2	Important to seek fun and things that give pleasure (<i>impfun</i>)
Stimulation	1	Important to try new and different things in life (<i>impdiff</i>)
	2	Important to seek adventures and have an exciting life (<i>ipadvnt</i>)
Self-direction	1	Important to think new ideas and being creative (<i>ipcertiv</i>)
	2	Important to make own decisions and be free (<i>impfree</i>)
Universalism	1	Important that people are treated equally and have equal opportunities (<i>ipeqopt</i>)
	2	Important to understand different people (<i>ipudrst</i>)
	3	Important to care for nature and environment (<i>impenv</i>)
Benevolence	1	Important to help people and care for others well-being (<i>iphlppla</i>)
	2	Important to be loyal to friends and devote to people close (<i>ipylfr</i>)
Tradition	1	Important to be humble and modest, not draw attention (<i>ipmodst</i>)
	2	Important to follow traditions and customs (<i>imptrad</i>)
Conformity	1	Important to do what is told and follow rules (<i>ipfrule</i>)
	2	Important to behave properly (<i>ipbhprp</i>)
Security	1	Important to live in secure and safe surroundings (<i>impsafe</i>)
	2	Important that government is strong and ensures safety (<i>ipstrgv</i>)

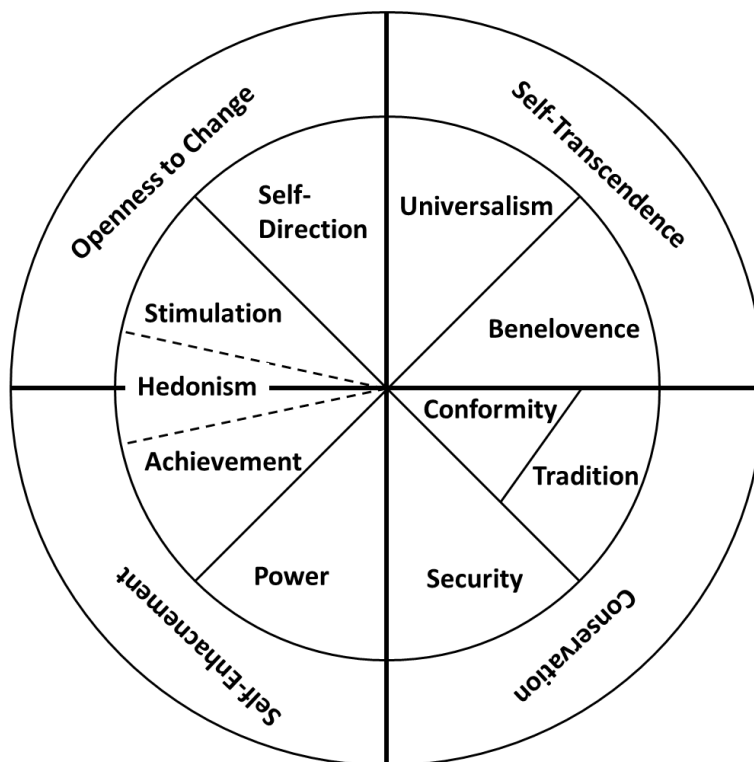
Source: Own illustration based on Schmidt (2007).

Note: In the case of some ESS rounds, alternative versions of the value items are used, indicated by an “-a” suffix (e.g., *impricha* instead of *imprich*). These variants are treated as equivalent and are included in the analysis where applicable.

The ESS-based PVQ measurement is regularly used in scientific studies (see: Miles, 2015; Houwelingen, Iedema, Dekker, 2019; Welsch and Kühling, 2020). However, as Schmidt et al. (2007) highlighted in their comparative empirical analysis, the applicability of the PVQ questionnaire in the ESS leads to a reduction of the original 10 profiles to 7, as the factor analyses revealed strong correlations between Benevolence and Universalism, Conformity and Tradition, as well as Power and Achievement. Among

others, Weckroth and Kemppainen (2016) as well as Rudnev, Magun, and Schwartz (2018) categorized the ten values into four overarching dimensions: Openness to Change (including self-direction, stimulation, and hedonism), Conservation (including security, tradition, and conformity), Self-Transcendence (including universalism, care for all people and nature, and benevolence), and Self-Enhancement (including power and achievement). Given the potential correlations between the individual values (see Schmidt et al., 2007) and the applicability of the fourfold typology established in the international literature (see, among others, Rudnev, Magun and Schwartz, 2018), the study implements the typology along the dimensions of the individual values as follows:

Figure 44. Schwartz's Higher Order Values (HOVs) – a four-dimensional value typology



Source: Rudnev, Magun and Schwartz (2018)

As the GAL–TAN framework cannot be fully operationalized using the available ESS data, the analysis adopts Schwartz's theory of basic human values to capture the normative foundations of respondents. The Schwartz value model offers a multidimensional approach, allowing the identification of core motivational goals (e.g., openness, conservation, self-transcendence) that may influence attitudes toward immigration more directly and comprehensively than traditional ideological scales.

7.2 Results and Findings

As the first step of the multilevel regression analysis, the null model was estimated. The null model estimates the Grand Mean based on all observational units, the variance between groups, and the variance at the individual level. Based on these results, it is possible to assess whether there are significant group-level differences between Hungarian and Austrian respondents across the study period. The so-called Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) indicates the proportion of the total variance attributable to group-level differences. The ICC is calculated according to the following formula:

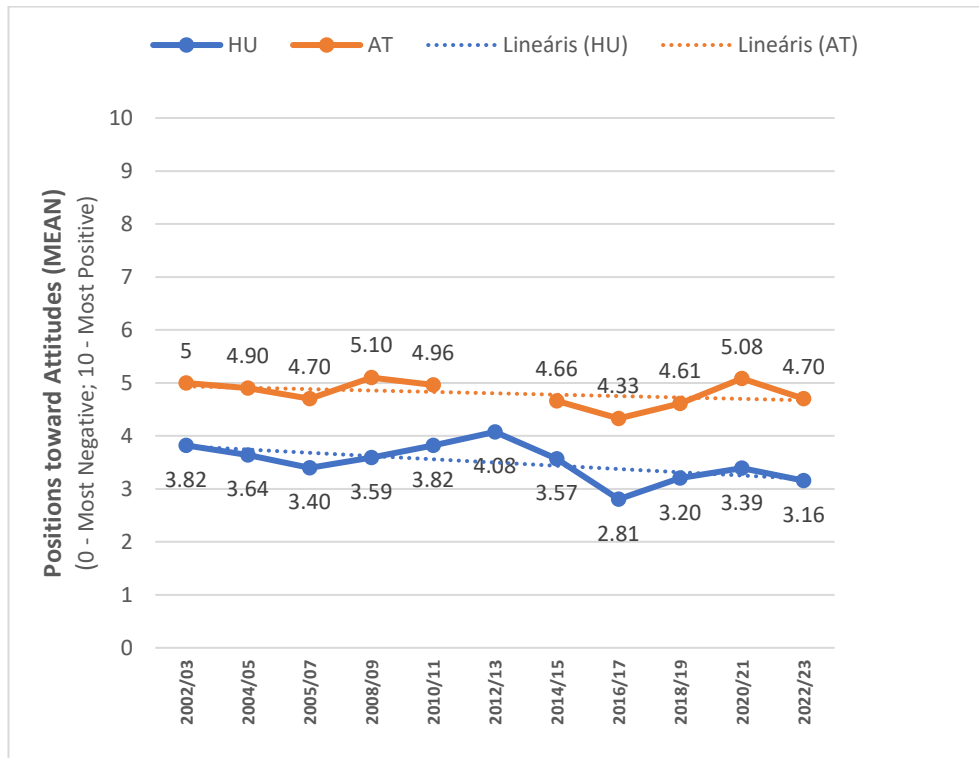
$$ICC = \frac{Variance\ Estimate}{(Variance\ Estimate + Residual\ Variance)}$$

Regarding the variance components, the residual variance was 4.375, and the between-group (*country * ESS round*) variance was 0.542. Based on these estimates, the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) was calculated as follows:

$$ICC = \frac{0.542415}{(0.542415 + 4.374832)} = 0.1103$$

The ICC indicates that approximately 11% of the total variance in immigration attitudes can be attributed to differences between countries and ESS rounds, while the remaining 89% is due to individual-level differences. This finding suggests that meaningful and statistically significant differences exist between Hungary and Austria throughout the ESS survey rounds. To illustrate this difference, Figure 45 presents the changing values for both countries during the analysed period.

Figure 45. Trends in attitudes toward immigration in Austria and Hungary (2002-2023)



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Before presenting the results of the multilevel regression model, it is useful to examine the overall trends in immigration attitudes in Austria and Hungary across the ESS survey rounds. Figure 45 displays the mean scores (0 = most negative, 10 = most positive) for each round, along with linear trend lines for both countries. The data reveal that Austrian respondents consistently report more positive attitudes toward immigration compared to Hungarian respondents. While the Austrian trend remains relatively stable over time, the Hungarian trend shows a gradual decline beginning after 2012/2013, with the lowest mean observed in 2016/2017 (ESS8), followed by a slight recovery. The gap between the two countries widened from around 1.2 scale points in 2002/2013 to more than 1.5 points in 2016/2017. This result is consistent with the descriptive analysis of mean scores based on the same ESS items (see Figures 20 and 21), which shows that Hungarian respondents generally report lower levels of acceptance toward immigration—a pattern that is also reflected in the model-based estimates from the multilevel regression analysis across the ESS rounds.

Building on the null model, the next step involved estimating a main-effects multilevel regression model including all predictors. This allows for assessing the statistical significance of each independent variable while controlling for the others. With the

exception of satisfaction with life (*stflife*), all predictors in the model reached statistical significance ($p < .05$). However, it is important to note that although socio-demographic variables are relevant, their effects are modest. By contrast, value-based explanatory factors—particularly the Schwartz values, specifically conservation and self-transcendence—show both statistical and substantive significance, indicating a more meaningful role in shaping attitudes toward immigration.

After estimating the null model and the main-effects specification, additional models were estimated to assess whether the inclusion of nonlinear terms and interaction effects would improve model fit. In order to evaluate their contribution, individual predictors were sequentially added to the model, and changes in the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) were used as a comparative metric. The model selection process indicated that certain predictors—particularly ideological orientation (left-right scale), welfare attitudes, and Schwartz values—substantially enhanced model fit. By contrast, variables such as age² and satisfaction with life did not contribute meaningfully and were therefore excluded from the final specification. On this basis, the final multilevel regression model was estimated with both linear and nonlinear terms, as well as selected cross-level interactions. This specification incorporates country and ESS-round differences, socio-demographic controls, and value-based predictors, while accounting for significant interactions and curvilinear effects where theoretically justified.

Table 8. Multilevel regression estimates predicting immigration attitudes

Estimates of Fixed Effects ^a				
Variable	Estimate	Std. Error	t-value	Sig.
Intercept	2,328	0,189	12,308	***
Country: Austria (ref. Hungary)	1,697	0,168	10,081	***
Gender: male (ref. female)	0,096	0,022	4,278	***
Immigration background (ref.: first or second generational immigration)	-0,569	0,032	-17,935	***
Place of residence: big cities or suburbs (ref. village)	0,255	0,025	9,995	***
Place of residence: towns or small cities (ref. village)	0,114	0,025	4,551	***
Educational level: primary (ref.: tertiary)	-0,412	0,080	-5,148	***
Educational level: secondary (ref.: tertiary)	-0,509	0,032	-15,775	***
Occupation: high-educated, white collar (ref.: retired)	0,220	0,077	2,859	***

Estimates of Fixed Effects^a (Continued)				
Variable	Estimate	Std. Error	t-value	Sig.
Occupation: low-educated, white collar (ref.: retired)	0,009	0,076	0,123	n.s.
Occupation: high-educated, blue collar (ref.: retired).	-0,123	0,078	-1,572	n.s.
Occupation: low-educated, blue collar (ref.: retired).	-0,130	0,077	-1,682	*
Occupation: students (ref.: retired)	0,337	0,092	3,668	***
Occupation: other non-working (ref.: retired)	-0,029	0,109	-0,262	n.s.
Age	-0,004	0,001	-5,740	***
Religiosity	0,041	0,004	9,298	***
Homosexuality	-0,218	0,009	-23,433	***
Left/Right alignment	0,029	0,032	0,899	n.s.
Left–right scale (squared)	-0,010	0,002	-5,167	***
Left/Right alignment in Austria (ref. Hungary)	-0,318	0,048	-6,650	***
Left–right scale (squared) in Austria (ref. Hungary)	0,009	0,003	2,875	***
Trust in people	0,182	0,006	32,072	***
Sat. with Governance and Public Institutions	0,148	0,009	17,126	***
Sat. with Governance and Public Institutions in Austria (ref.: Hungary)	0,041	0,012	3,494	***
Subjective Safety	-0,017	0,023	-0,721	n.s.
Subjective Safety in Austria (ref.: Hungary)	-0,183	0,029	-6,309	***
Schwartz values: Openness	0,418	0,067	6,284	***
Schwartz values: Openness (squared)	-0,074	0,011	-6,650	***
Schwartz values: Self-transcendence	-0,581	0,066	-8,785	***
Schwartz values: Self-transcendence (squared)	0,056	0,013	4,240	***
Schwartz values: Conservation	0,507	0,068	7,470	***
Schwartz values: Conservation (squared)	-0,007	0,012	-0,592	n.s.
Schwartz values: Self-enhancement	0,423	0,060	7,073	***
Schwartz values: Self-enhancement (squared)	-0,054	0,009	-6,041	***
p-value: * p < 0,1 ** p < 0,05 ***p < 0,01; n.s.= not significant				

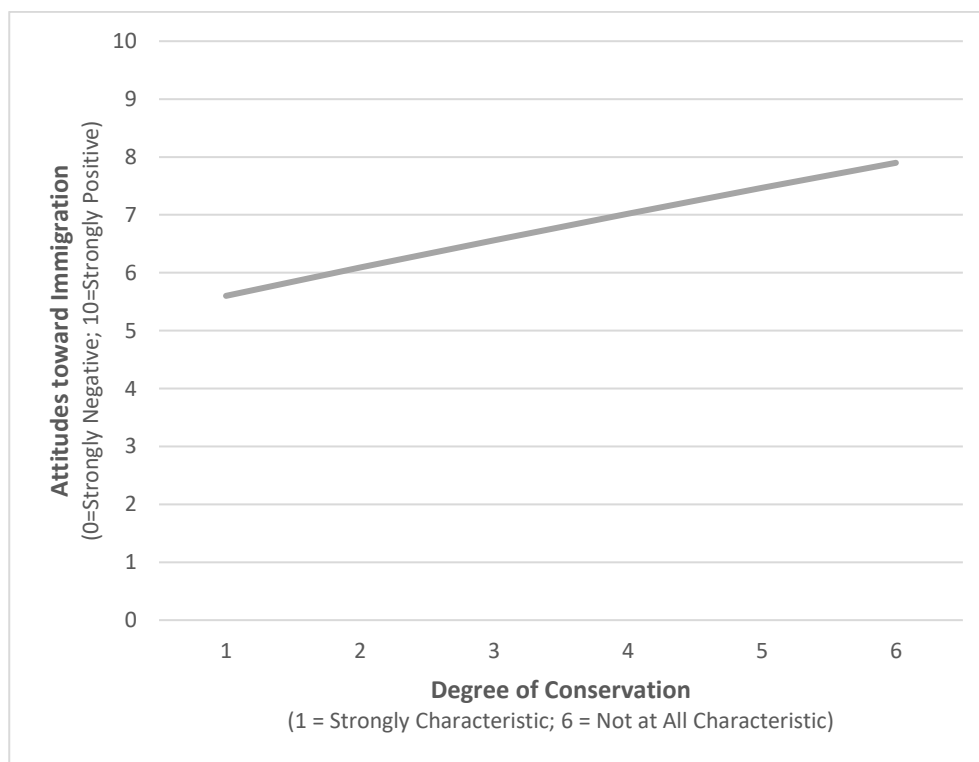
a. Dependent Variable: immigration.

Based on estimates from the mixed-effects model, predicted values were calculated by combining the intercept with the estimated coefficients, holding all control variables at their mean values. Continuous control variables were fixed at their sample means, while categorical variables were held at their modal values. This approach allows the partial

effect of the focal variable to be visualized while adjusting for the influence of all other covariates.

As Figure 46 illustrates the effect of conservation values on immigration attitudes. The relationship follows a clear and nearly linear pattern: respondents who strongly prioritise conservation express the least supportive positions toward immigration (around 5.6 on average), whereas those placing low importance on conservation values express considerably more positive attitudes (around 7.9). This strong gradient identifies conservation as one of the most influential predictors in the model. From a theoretical perspective, the finding indicates that prioritizing security, tradition, and conformity systematically correlates with more exclusionary positions toward immigration, underscoring the role of conservation as a core normative determinant of restrictive attitudes.

Figure 46. Association between conservation and position toward immigration



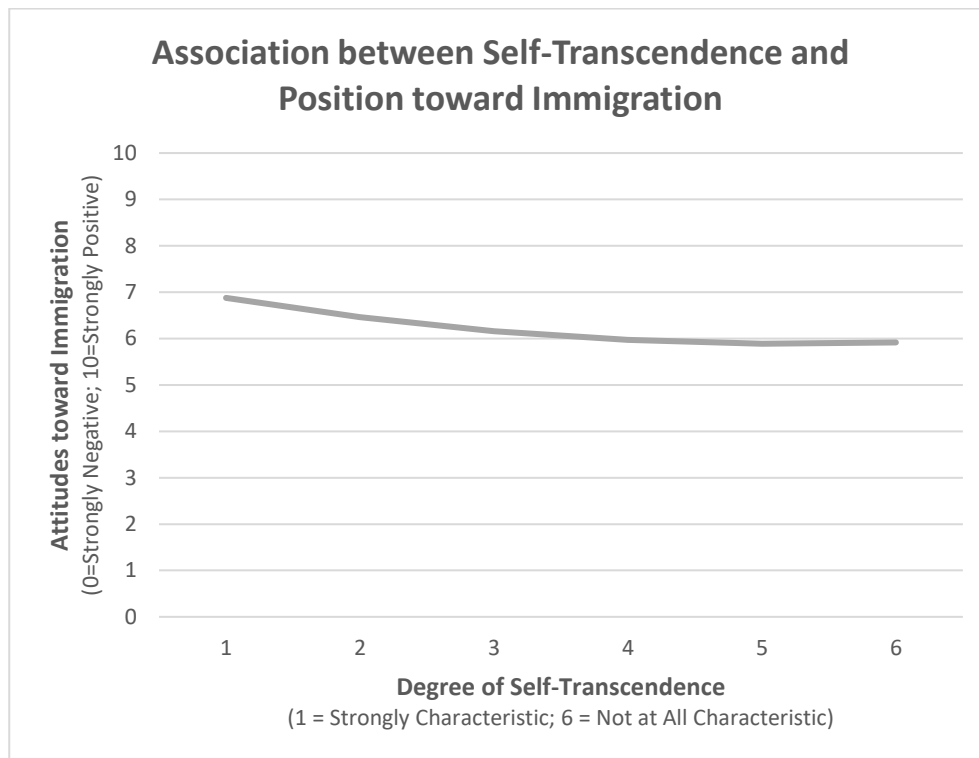
Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Analysis of mean scores for conservation across socio-demographic groups reveals clear and systematic differences. With respect to place of residence, respondents in the big city and their suburban areas ($M = 2.67$) report the lowest levels of conservation, while those in towns ($M = 2.60$) and especially rural areas ($M = 2.54$) assign greater importance to these values. Gender differences are also evident: women ($M = 2.55$)

prioritize conservation more strongly than men ($M = 2.66$). Respondents with an immigrant background ($M = 2.68$) attribute less importance to conservation than those without such a background ($M = 2.59$), indicating that the majority population holds these values more firmly. Educational differences display a marked gradient: individuals with primary education ($M = 2.30$) show the strongest emphasis on conservation, followed by those with secondary ($M = 2.60$) and tertiary education ($M = 2.67$), suggesting that higher levels of education correspond to weaker endorsement of these values. Occupational variation is also pronounced: retirees ($M = 2.33$), blue-collar workers ($M = 2.48$), and lower-skilled workers ($M = 2.50$) express the strongest support for conservation, while students ($M = 2.92$) and higher-status white-collar employees ($M = 2.60$ – 2.68) display the lowest levels. Overall, the findings highlight that conservation is most strongly endorsed among socially less advantaged and older groups, whereas younger, more highly educated, and higher-status respondents place comparatively less emphasis on these values.

Figure 47 illustrates the association between self-transcendence values and attitudes toward immigration. The pattern is curvilinear: respondents who strongly prioritize self-transcendence report clearly more supportive positions toward immigration (around 6.9 on average). At moderate levels of self-transcendence, however, attitudes are least favourable (around 5.9), while at the lowest levels the relationship flattens out, showing only a slight increase. This suggests that prosocial and humanitarian values shape immigration attitudes most decisively when they are highly prioritized, whereas at low or moderate importance their impact remains weak.

Figure 47. Non-linear association between self-transcendence and immigration attitudes



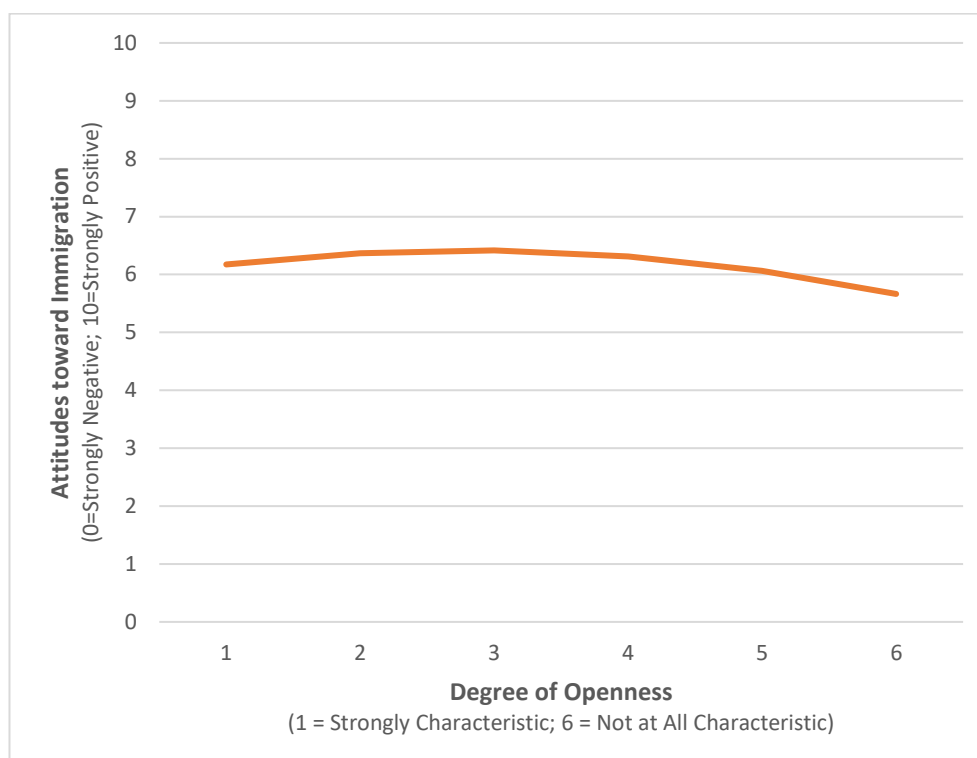
Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Mean scores of self-transcendence across socio-demographic groups reveal only modest differences, yet several patterns emerge. With respect to place of residence, respondents in big cities and their suburban areas ($M = 2.09$), towns ($M = 2.15$), and rural areas ($M = 2.13$) report virtually identical levels, suggesting minimal variation by settlement type. Gender differences are more visible: women ($M = 2.06$) assign greater importance to self-transcendence values than men ($M = 2.21$), indicating stronger prosocial and humanitarian orientations among female respondents. A similar pattern is observed regarding immigrant background: individuals with an immigrant background ($M = 2.04$) value self-transcendence more than those without such a background ($M = 2.14$). Educational differences display a clear linear trend: respondents with tertiary education ($M = 1.96$) report the strongest prioritization of self-transcendence, followed by those with secondary education ($M = 2.15$), while individuals with primary educational attainment ($M = 2.28$) place the least emphasis on these values. Occupational variation is also evident: students and white-collar professions show the strongest prioritization ($M \approx 2.0$), whereas retirees ($M = 2.25$), blue-collar workers ($M \approx 2.22$), and the unemployed or homemakers ($M = 2.22$) display comparatively weaker prosocial orientations. These findings indicate that socio-demographic factors play only a minor role in shaping self-

transcendence, though gender, education, and occupational status introduce some systematic variation.

As Figure 48 shows, the association between openness and attitudes toward immigration is modest. The curve peaks around the midpoint of the openness scale and shows a mild downward trend toward the higher end, indicating that extreme levels of openness do not lead to substantially more favourable attitudes toward immigration.

Figure 48. Association between openness and position toward immigration



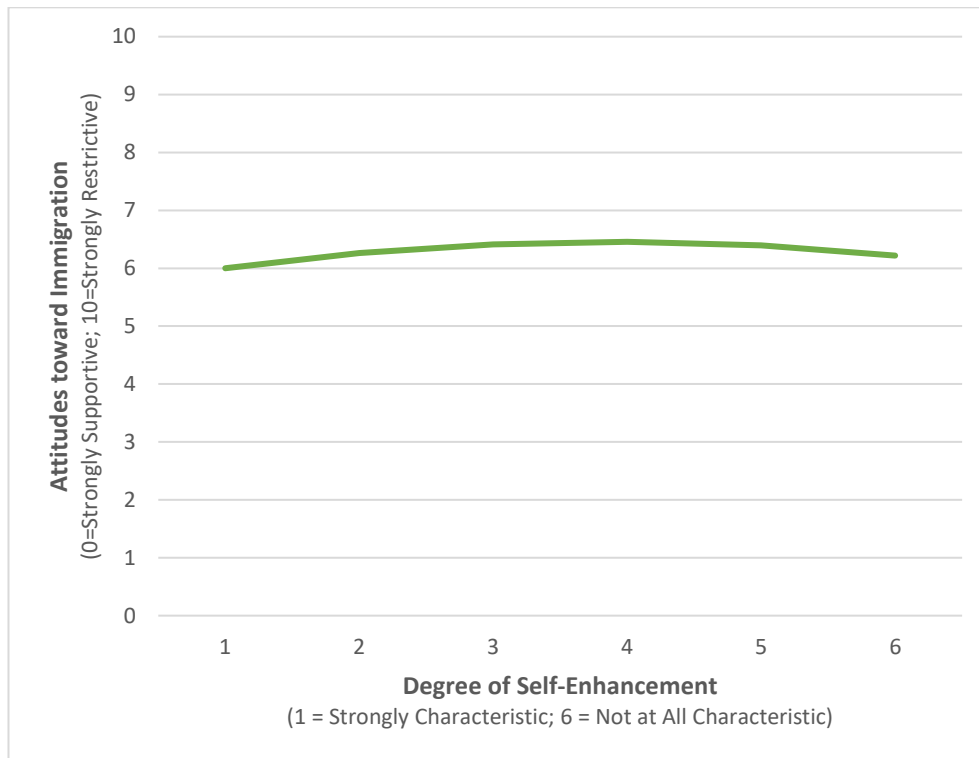
Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Additional analyses of mean scores of openness across socio-demographic categories reveal further nuances. No significant gender differences are observed (Men = 2.71; Women = 2.81). With respect to residential location, respondents living in the capital and its agglomeration report the lowest mean scores (2.68), followed by small-town residents (2.75), while rural residents show the highest (2.85), indicating a gradient of decreasing openness from big cities to rural areas. However, these differences are not substantial. Educational differences seem to be more influential: individuals with tertiary education are the most open (2.54), those with secondary education occupy a middle position (2.79), while respondents with the lowest educational attainment are the least open (3.44). Occupational variation is also notable: students stand out with the highest openness (2.18), followed by white-collar employees (2.61–2.76), whereas blue-collar workers

(2.87–3.01), the unemployed and homemakers (3.02), and especially retirees (3.34) exhibit comparatively lower levels of openness. Furthermore, individuals with an immigrant background (2.71) are somewhat more open than those without such a background (2.78). These findings highlight that openness is unevenly distributed across social and demographic lines: while certain factors such as education or occupation indicates modest but more consistent associations, others like gender or place of residence show insignificant differences. Nevertheless, the overall explanatory power of these factors remains limited compared to other value-based predictors.

Similarly to the value of openness, the effect of self-enhancement plays only a minimal role in shaping attitudes toward immigration. As Figure 49 illustrates, respondents with moderate levels of self-enhancement (values around 3–4) express a somewhat more favourable views toward immigration (averaging around 6.4), while both those with low (value = 1) and high (value = 6) self-enhancement show somewhat less supportive attitudes (around 6.0–6.2). However, it is worth noting, respondents who place the highest importance on self-enhancement (value = 1) display a somewhat more pronounced rejection of immigration compared to other groups, albeit the difference remains small.

Figure 49. Association between self-enhancement and position toward immigration

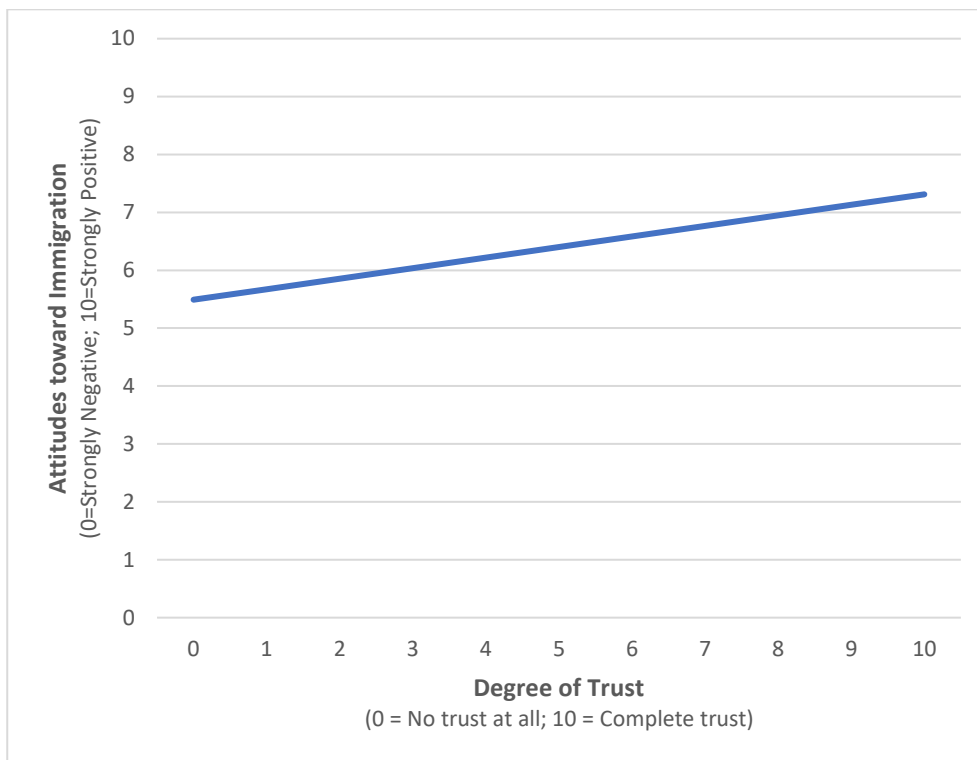


Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Examining socio-demographic variation in self-enhancement reveals several consistent patterns. While residential location, gender, and immigrant background show only minor differences — with mean values differing by a few hundredths — clearer patterns emerge along other dimensions. Educational differences, for instance, reveal a distinct gradient: individuals with tertiary education ($M = 2.84$) value self-enhancement the most, followed by those with secondary ($M = 3.09$) and primary education ($M = 3.57$). Occupational variation follows a similar trend: students ($M = 2.65$) and highly educated white-collar workers ($M = 2.93$) display the strongest emphasis on self-enhancement, whereas retirees ($M = 3.53$), blue-collar workers ($M = 3.27$), and the inactive population ($M = 3.29$) report considerably lower levels.

The Social Trust Scale appears to be a meaningful predictor of immigration attitudes. As Figure 50 shows, individuals with higher levels of interpersonal trust tend to express more favourable views toward immigration. This finding underscores the importance of personal dispositions and individual-level experiences in shaping attitudes, suggesting that generalized social trust may foster tolerance and reduce perceived social threat. In this sense, trust appears to support more inclusive views, potentially reflecting broader prosocial orientations and a lower tendency to perceive immigrants as an outgroup threat.

Figure 50. Association between Social Trust Scale and positions toward immigration

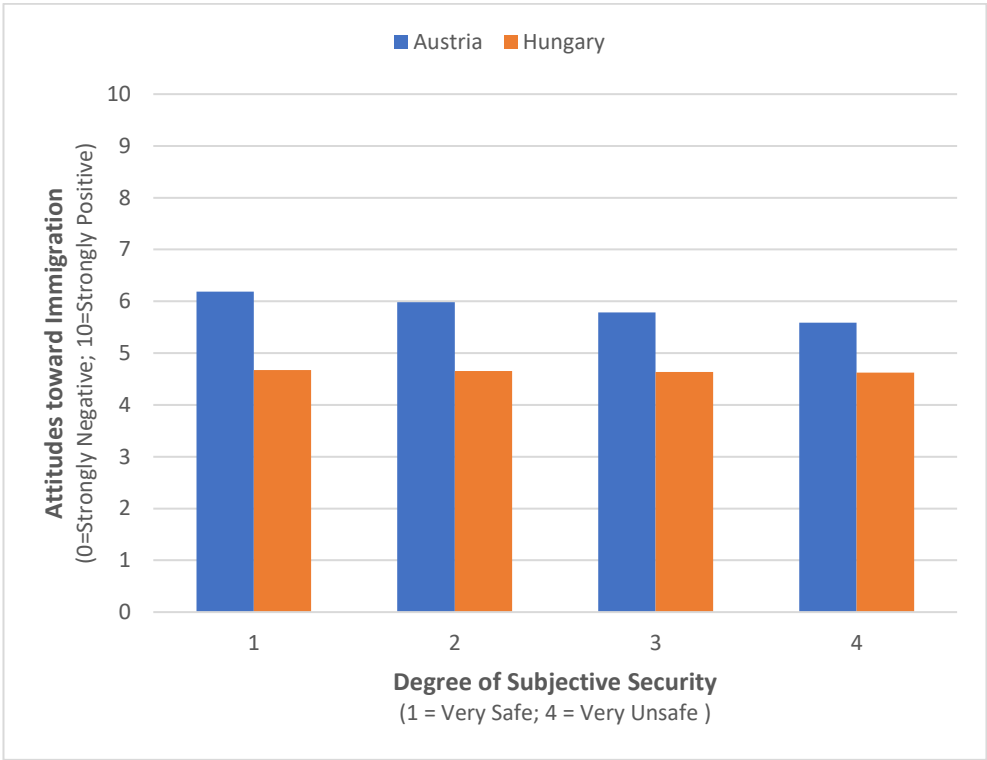


Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

In terms of settlement type, residents of large cities and suburban areas ($M = 5.14$) report slightly higher trust compared to those in towns ($M = 5.03$) and rural areas ($M = 5.12$), though the differences are minor. In parallel, gender differences are also negligible (women mean score = 5.12; men mean score = 5.07). However, a more pronounced pattern emerges with respect to immigrant background: individuals with an immigrant background report considerably higher levels of trust ($M = 5.25$) than those without ($M = 5.08$). Educational attainment shows a clear linear trend. Respondents with tertiary education display the highest levels of interpersonal trust ($M = 5.51$), followed by those with secondary ($M = 5.04$), while those with only primary education report the lowest trust levels ($M = 4.40$). This gradient indicates that interpersonal trust increases with formal education. Occupational differences reinforce this trend. The highest trust levels are found among students ($M = 5.56$) and highly educated white-collar professionals ($M = 5.43$), while the lowest scores appear among blue-collar workers ($M = 4.59$) and retirees ($M = 4.79$). Unemployed individuals and those engaged in domestic work also report relatively low trust levels ($M = 4.86$). These findings suggest that interpersonal trust is more prevalent among younger, more educated, and professionally active individuals, particularly those in high-status occupations.

Among the control variables related to personal experience, subjective perceptions of safety also yield noteworthy findings (Figure 51). While this variable shows no meaningful association with immigration attitudes in Hungary, it is significantly associated with attitudes in Austria. Specifically, lower perceived safety corresponds to more negative views toward immigration among Austrian respondents. In Austria, those individuals who feel less safe walking alone at night in their local area tend to express more negative views toward immigration.

Figure 51. Association between subjective security and positions toward immigration



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

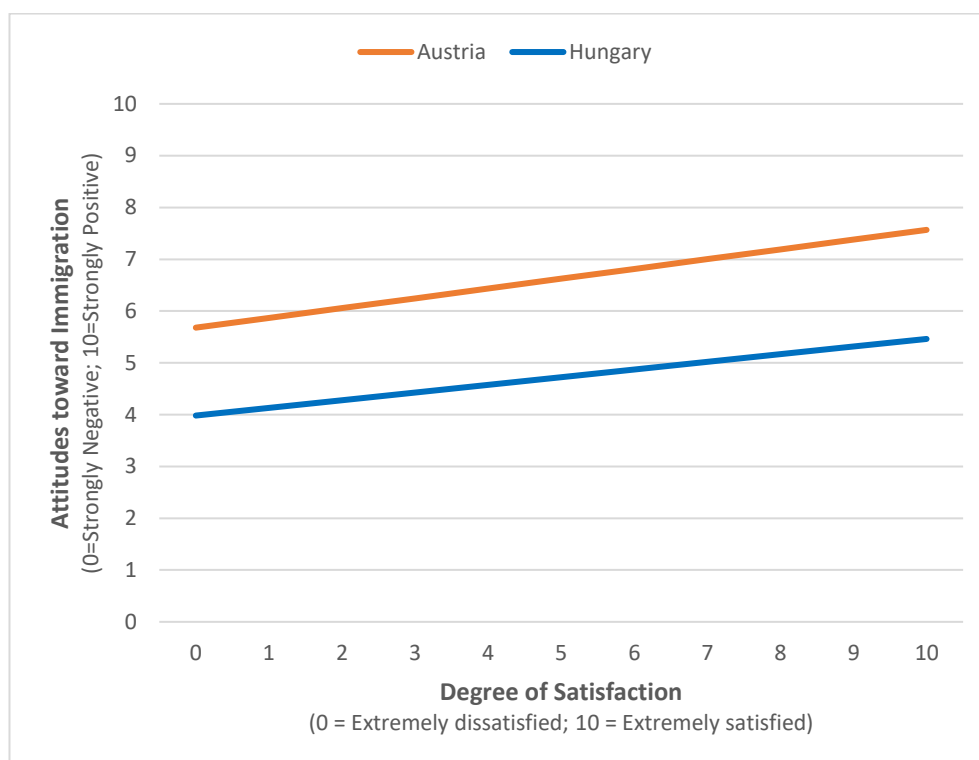
Note: In Austria lower perceived safety is associated with more negative views toward immigration, while no such association is observed in Hungary.

The descriptive results reveal notable sociodemographic patterns in subjective feelings of safety in Austria. Gender differences are particularly marked: while 31% of men feel 'very safe' walking alone in their local area after dark, this proportion drops to just 21% among women, who are also nearly twice as likely to feel 'very unsafe' (4.6% vs. 2.5%). Differences by residential location are more modest. Residents of big cities and their suburban report slightly lower perceived safety (21–22% 'very safe') than those in rural areas (31% 'very safe'), although the proportion reporting feeling 'unsafe' (36% vs 32%) 'very unsafe' (between 3-4%) remains similar across categories. Educational background shows a clearer gradient: among individuals with tertiary education, nearly 30% feel 'very

safe', compared to only 16% among those with primary education. The proportion of respondents who feel '*very unsafe*' is more than three times higher among the least educated (8.5%) than among the most educated (2.2%). Occupational differences are also pronounced. Students and highly educated white-collar workers show the highest levels of perceived safety, with about 30% feeling "very safe". In contrast, retirees, blue-collar workers, and the inactive population are overrepresented among those feeling '*unsafe*' or '*very unsafe*'. Finally, those with an immigrant background report slightly higher levels of perceived safety, with nearly 30% feeling '*very safe*', compared to 24.7% among those without such a background. However, these differences are relatively small.

Furthermore, as Figure 52 illustrates the association between satisfaction with governance and public institutions and attitudes toward immigration is significant. For this variable, country-level differences are particularly pronounced. The relationship is positive and approximately linear in both Austria and Hungary: higher levels of satisfaction are associated with more favourable attitudes toward immigration. However, the strength and meaning of this association differ across the two contexts. Among Austrian respondents, the relationship is notably stronger, with attitudes ranging from moderately reserved (5.2) at the lowest satisfaction levels to more positive (~7.2) at the highest. This pattern supports the interpretation that immigration is often framed in economic and institutional terms: individuals who are more satisfied with governance also tend to adopt more open and positive attitudes. The association remains positive in Hungary, but its magnitude is notably weaker. Beyond institutional satisfaction, this indicator may partly reflect political alignment with governing parties. Given the presence of pro-immigration actors in Austria's political landscape, the stronger association observed may be partially attributed to the congruence between respondents' attitudes and the dominant political narratives.

Figure 52. Association between satisfaction with governance/public services and position toward immigration



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

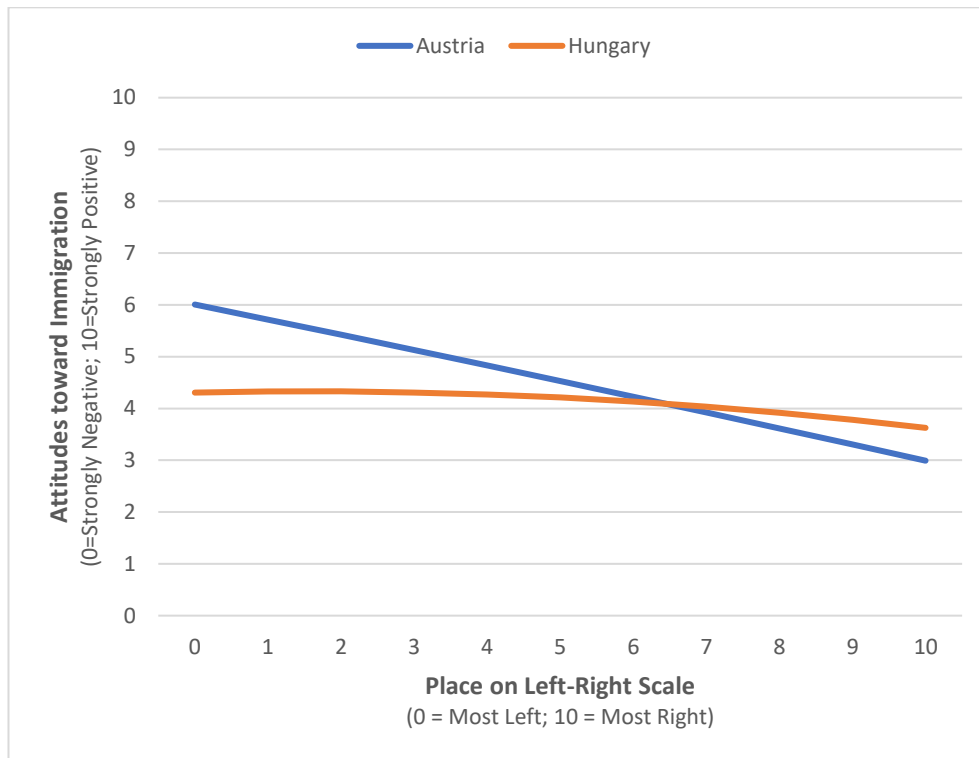
Note: The slope is notably steeper in Austria, indicating that satisfaction with governance is more strongly associated with pro-immigration attitudes.

Mean values show that respondents in rural areas are slightly more satisfied ($M = 5.01$) compared to those in cities ($M = 4.92$) and towns ($M = 4.87$). This suggests a mild settlement-based gradient, with rural populations indicating a more positive evaluation of public services and governance. Gender differences are minimal: men ($M = 4.98$) report marginally higher satisfaction than women ($M = 4.91$), indicating only a negligible gender gap in perceptions of institutional performance. More substantial variation is observed regarding immigrant background. Respondents with an immigrant background express considerably higher satisfaction ($M = 5.59$) than those without ($M = 4.85$), suggesting that first and second generational immigrant populations may evaluate public services more favourably—potentially reflecting differing expectations, integration experiences, or reference points. Educational differences are not linear, the association seems to be weak: those with secondary education report the highest satisfaction ($M = 4.96$), followed by respondents with primary ($M = 4.79$) and tertiary education ($M = 4.84$). Occupational differences show clearer patterns. Students ($M = 5.23$) and individuals engaged in domestic or unpaid work ($M = 5.24$) report the highest satisfaction, followed by retirees ($M = 5.08$) and white-collar professionals ($M = 5.08$). In contrast, blue-collar workers

report lower levels ($M = 4.58$), possibly indicating dissatisfaction with institutional performance or perceived lack of responsiveness to their needs. Overall, satisfaction with governance appears to be higher among immigrant groups, students, and non-working individuals, while it is lower among blue-collar workers and less-educated respondents.

The relationship between placement on the political left/right scale and attitudes toward immigration reveals a further significant cross-country variation (Figure 53). In Austria, a clear negative association emerges: individuals identifying further to the right on the ideological spectrum tend to express increasingly negative views on immigration. The slope of the curve is steep, indicating that left–right self-placement is a strong predictor of immigration attitudes. Conversely, in Hungary, the pattern is considerably weaker. The curve is flatter and even slightly curvilinear, suggesting that individuals at the ideological center express more positive attitudes than those at either end of the spectrum. This indicates that, unlike in Austria, left–right positioning in Hungary plays in substantive terms insignificant role in shaping opinions on immigration.

Figure 53. Association between left and right scale and position toward immigration



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Note: The relationship is negative in both countries, but steeper in Austria. Placement on the right is associated with more negative attitudes toward immigration.

Comparing average placement on the left-right ideological scale, a noticeable difference can be observed between Austria and Hungary. On the whole, Hungarian respondents tend to place themselves further to the right ($M = 5.49$) than Austrian respondents ($M = 4.70$), suggesting a generally more right-leaning political orientation in the Hungarian sample. Sociodemographic breakdowns further highlight these differences. Across residence types, Austrians show a modest increase in rightward self-placement from urban to rural areas ($M = 4.41$ to 4.95), while the Hungarian pattern follows a similar direction but starts from a higher baseline ($M = 5.34$ to 5.59). This indicates that while rurality is associated with more conservative positioning in both countries, overall ideological self-placement is shifted to the right in Hungary. Gender differences are minimal in both cases, with men reporting slightly more right-leaning views. Individuals with an immigrant background in Austria place themselves more to the left ($M = 4.31$) than the general population, while in Hungary this pattern is absent. Educational differences show mixed patterns, but again, Hungarian respondents consistently report higher right-wing placement across all groups. Among students, the difference is particularly striking: in Hungary, students report a right-leaning position ($M = 5.59$), while Austrian students show the most left-leaning placement among all subgroups ($M =$

4.02). This suggests that broader national political culture may influence ideological positioning even among younger, highly educated cohorts.

In addition to the key predictors discussed above, several other variables also show statistically significant associations with attitudes toward immigration, a pattern that is consistent with the mean value comparisons presented earlier. These include gender, age, religiosity, education, occupation, place of residence, and immigrant background. For instance, in general, men tend to be slightly more supportive of immigration than women, and younger individuals report more favourable attitudes than older respondents. A modest positive association is also observed for religiosity, suggesting that more religious individuals express somewhat more open views. Educational and occupational effects are likewise statistically significant, with higher educational levels and white-collar positions associated with more positive attitudes, albeit with limited substantive differences across categories. Urban residents report slightly more favourable attitudes than rural ones, and in Austria, individuals with an immigrant background tend to place themselves more to the left and hold more positive views on immigration—a pattern not observed in Hungary. Although these variables are statistically significant, their effects are relatively weak compared to values (e.g. conservation) and interpersonal trust, satisfaction with governance and public institutions, or left-right scale orientations. Thus, while sociodemographic characteristics provide some explanatory value, they appear secondary in shaping immigration attitudes compared to deeper attitudinal and ideological factors.

The findings of this chapter confirm that attitudes toward immigration are shaped by a complex interplay of socio-demographic characteristics, personal experiences, and underlying value orientations. While gender, education, occupation, and place of residence show statistically significant associations with immigration attitudes, their substantive explanatory power is limited. By contrast, normative dimensions—particularly those captured by Schwartz’s theory of basic human values—offer a much more powerful lens for understanding variations in public opinion. Most notably, conservation and self-transcendence emerge as one of the strongest predictors of restrictive attitudes.

Although the mean scores of Schwartz’s value dimensions do not reveal sharply defined socio-demographic cleavages, they do suggest modest and consistent patterns along lines of education, age, occupation, and residential status: respondents with higher educational attainment, urban residence, student status, or white-collar occupations tend to exhibit more openness and tolerance, whereas those with lower education levels, rural

backgrounds, blue-collar jobs, or retired/inactive status are more likely to prioritize conservation and express more reserved attitudes. However, it is important to note that in the case of occupational status, other factors—most notably age—may also play a role, as they are often closely intertwined. For instance, more conservative attitudes among retirees may reflect generational effects as much as current employment status.

These findings lend empirical support to the neo-revisionists and post-materialist thesis that values have become more salient and powerful explanatory factors in contemporary political and social conflicts than traditional socio-demographic cleavages. However, even normative orientations clearly outperform socio-demographic characteristics in their explanatory power, it would be misleading to treat these dimensions as entirely separate. This seems logical that socio-demographic variables and individual experiences—such as education, occupation, and perceptions of personal security—may exert their influence indirectly by shaping individuals' value orientations. In this sense, values such as openness to change, self-transcendence, self-enhancement, and conservation can be understood as normative reflections of accumulated life experiences and structural positions. These values are not randomly distributed in society but are formed and reinforced through processes of socialization, and personal interactions. Therefore, the apparent dominance of value-based predictors does not negate the relevance of demographic and experiential factors—it rather suggests that their effect is mediated through the internalization of value systems.

Taken together, the results highlight that the conflicts related to the 2015 European migration crisis can be captured even at the level of individual respondents, both in terms of value orientations and socio-demographic background. This means that hypothesis H2.3 must be rejected, as the conflict emerged not only at the level of political parties and their ideological positions, but also at the individual level. Consequently, hypothesis H2—which assumed that the conflict did not manifest across all three levels—must also be rejected. Since the conflict appeared at all three analytical levels, it meets the criteria of a cleavage, thereby confirming hypothesis H1.

This confirms that the migration issue is not merely a transient political controversy but represents a structured conflict embedded in society. It reflects long-term social divisions, is articulated by political actors, and internalized by individuals through stable value systems.

Table 9. Final evaluation of hypotheses following the analysis of individual respondents' position on immigration

Hypothesis	Statement	Evaluation
H0	The 2015 European migration crisis did not manifest as a conflict at any of the three levels : the voter level, the normative level, or the level of the political parties.	Rejected
H1	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged across all three levels, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a cleavage-level conflict .	Confirmed
H2	The 2015 European migration crisis did not emerge across all three levels , and therefore, the conflict cannot be classified as a cleavage-level conflict.	Rejected
H2.1	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged at the voter level and the normative level, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a position division .	Rejected
H2.2.	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged at the voter level and the level of political parties, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a census division .	<u>Rejected</u>
H2.3.	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged at the normative level and the level of political parties, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as an issue division .	Rejected
H2.4	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged exclusively at the voter level, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as a structural difference .	Rejected
H2.5	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged exclusively at the normative level, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as an attitudinal difference .	Rejected
H2.6	The 2015 European migration crisis emerged exclusively at the level of political parties, suggesting that the conflict can be classified as an institutional difference .	<u>Rejected</u>

Note: Newly rejected hypotheses in this section are underlined for clarity.

To further examine, the next section explores the relationship between immigration attitudes and party choice using multinomial regression analysis. This allows for a more precise understanding of whether, and how, voters' positions on immigration align with partisan preferences in Austria and Hungary.

8 PARTY AFFILIATION AND ATTITUDES TOWARD IMMIGRATION

8.1 Analytical Framework and Variable Operationalisations

Finally, as a control analysis, a model is introduced to examine how attitudes toward immigration have influenced party choice. In this model, the dependent variable is party choice, while the independent variables include attitudes toward immigration and a set of control variables that were aligned with those used in the previous multilevel regression model⁸⁵. Among these controls, the variable '*immigrant background*' (defined as the respondent or either parent born abroad) was included in all models except for one Hungarian case. In that instance—based on the ESS8 data—the variable had to be excluded due to an extremely low number of immigrant-background respondents in the voter group of Jobbik (only one case). To improve the reliability of the estimation, the variable was omitted from this model. However, it is important to note that, due to the lower level of second generational immigrants in the case of the Hungarian respondents, the exclusion did not meaningfully affect the model. Similarly, due to the low number of respondents with only primary education among supporters of smaller parties, the education variable was recoded into two categories: (1) respondents with at most secondary education (including those with only primary education), and (2) those with tertiary education. For similar reasons, the occupational variable was also recoded. Instead of using the original seven-category classification, a new five-category item was created, distinguishing between high-skilled white-collar (1), low-skilled white-collar (2), high-skilled blue-collar (3), low-skilled blue-collar (4), and non-working respondents (5).

In order to maximise the number of cases available for analysis, party affiliation was measured primarily using respondents' self-declared party proximity. In cases where this information was missing, party choice in the most recent national election was used as a proxy. This approach ensures a broader inclusion of respondents while preserving the analytical validity of the party affiliation variable. The combined measure was not only analytically motivated but also technically necessary. Similar to the problems encountered with the "*born in country*" variable, using the vote-only version of party affiliation led to

⁸⁵ Control variables include gender, immigration background, place of residence, educational level (recoded), occupation (recoded), age, religiosity, attitudes toward homosexuality, placement on the left–right scale, trust in people, satisfaction with life, satisfaction with public institutions and governance, subjective safety, openness to change, self-transcendence, conservation, and self-enhancement.

estimation issues in the NOMREG model, particularly due to sparse data in certain cross-categories. In contrast, the combined variable resulted in more balanced category distributions and enabled the model to converge successfully without returning singularity warnings.

Given the results of the multilevel regression analysis and the review of party manifestos, it can be concluded that attitudes toward immigration remained relatively stable before 2015. However, a significant shift occurred during the 2015 migration crisis. To capture the temporal dynamics of this shift, the analysis is structured across three time points: one representing the pre-crisis period, one during the crisis, and one following the crisis. Accordingly, multinomial logistic regression models are estimated separately for each wave of the European Survey, allowing for comparison over time. For Hungary, data from ESS6 (2012), ESS8 (2016) and ESS10 (2021) are used. However, for Austria, data from ESS6 are unavailable, thus the pre-crisis period is represented by ESS5 (2010). It is important to note that the ESS5 round in Austria and the ESS6 round in Hungary were the closest in time across the available survey waves.⁸⁶ Furthermore, during the Austrian ESS10 fieldwork, the variables forming the Schwartz value scale were replaced with items related to attitudes toward COVID-19. As a result, ESS11 was used instead of ESS10 in the analysis. This discrepancy is acknowledged in the analysis but does not undermine the overall logic of the temporal comparison, as the crisis-related turning point remains clearly identifiable.

Following the approach of Marks et. al. (2021), political parties were categorised along the GAL-TAN framework. The classification was based on the qualifications of CHES. Given the large number of parties present in the party systems, the analysis focuses on the most electorally relevant actors, thus the number of effective parties (see Figure 28). Therefore, in the case of Hungary, three categories were distinguished: a left-liberal opposition group (GAL), a right-wing governing party (TAN), and a right-wing opposition party (TAN). Since 2010, the Fidesz-KDNP coalition has held power and is classified as TAN according to the CHES scale. However, despite some rhetorical similarities (see Figures 33-35) with the right-wing opposition party, Jobbik, which was also categorised as TAN, they differ markedly in their strategies on immigration (see, among others, party manifestos in Figures 29 and 30). In Austria, five parties were

⁸⁶ Fieldwork periods by country: Hungary: ESS5: 6 September 2012 – 17 February 2013; ESS8: 14 May 2017 - 16 September 2017; ESS10: 10 June – 16 October 2021. Austria: ESS5: 25 May – 10 October 2013; ESS8: 19 September – 28 December 2016; ESS11: 13 June – 3 December 2023.

included in the analysis, corresponding to the effective number of political parties in the post-2010 period: die Grüne, the NEOS, and the SPÖ were classified as GAL parties, ÖVP and FPÖ were qualified as TAN.⁸⁷ Since NEOS did not exist as a measurable party during the ESS5 period, no data were available for this wave. Therefore, in the case of NEOS, the analysis focuses on two subsequent waves: ESS8, conducted near the crisis period, and ESS11, representing a more recent point in time.

To illustrate the predicted relationship between immigration attitudes and party preference, marginal predictions were generated across the full scale of the immigration variable (0–10), while holding all other predictors constant. Continuous control variables were fixed at their sample means, while categorical variables were held at their modal values. For each step, predicted values were computed using the multinomial regression estimates (intercept and coefficients). Predicted probabilities were calculated by applying the inverse logit transformation to the linear predictions obtained for each party. This involved taking the exponent of each party's score and dividing it by the sum of all exponentiated scores, yielding interpretable percentage probabilities. This approach allows for the interpretation of how changes in a single predictor (immigration attitudes) affect the probability of choosing a particular party, while keeping all other variables fixed at typical values. As the analysis was restricted to those who chose a party, the predicted probabilities apply only to respondents who indicated a party preference.

8.2 The Impact of Immigration Attitudes on Party Choice: The Hungarian Case

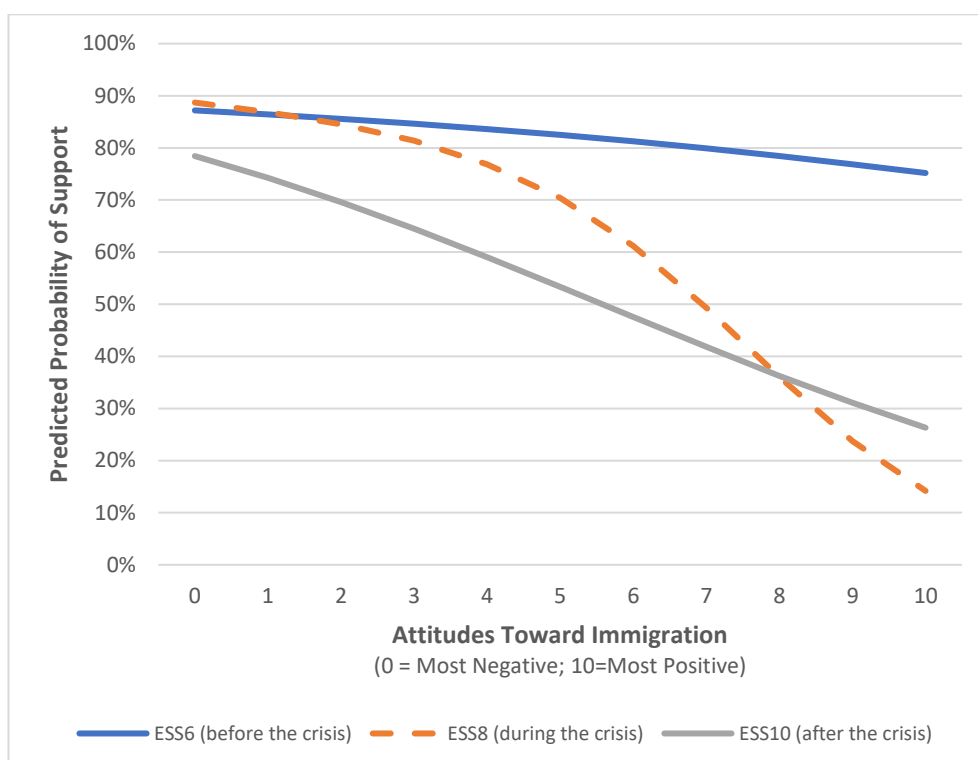
As Figure 54 shows, the predicted probability of supporting the governing Fidesz (TAN party) demonstrates a clear shift in the relevance of immigration attitudes over time. In the pre-crisis period (ESS6, 2012), the relationship between attitudes toward immigration and support for Fidesz was relatively weak. The probability for support remained high across the entire spectrum: among those with the most negative views toward immigration (score 0), the prediction probability of supporting Fidesz was approximately 87%, while even among the most pro-immigration respondents (score 10), the predicted probability remained at 75%. This modest decline of 13 percentage points across the scale suggests that immigration was not a salient dividing issue among Fidesz voters at this period.

⁸⁷ The ideological placement of parties on the GAL–TAN dimension is illustrated in Figures 39–43.

However, this has changed markedly during the migration crisis (ESS8, 2016). The slope of the association becomes significantly steeper, indicating a strong and polarising effect of immigration attitudes on party support. Individuals with the most negative stance toward immigration (score 0) had a predicted probability of supporting Fidesz at 88.7%. In contrast, among the most pro-immigration individuals (score 10), this probability dropped sharply to just 14.2%, which shows a dramatic decline of approximately 75 percentage points across the scale. These findings suggest that immigration had become a central political cleavage structuring party support during the peak of the crisis. The results suggest that Fidesz's migration related thematisation (see Figure 29) has been effective, as the party came to be perceived by voters as the political actor most strongly opposed to migration. This appears to confirm the earlier assumption that, despite being in government, Fidesz has been able to effectively engage in the negative, securitising framing of the migration issue.

However, in the post-crisis period (ESS10, 2021), the polarisation persists, albeit to a somewhat lesser extent. Among respondents with the most sceptical positions toward immigration (score 0), support for Fidesz remained high at 78.5%, while among those most supportive of immigration (score 10), it increased to 26%. Although this result still reflects a substantial difference (52.1%), the slope of the line is significantly less steep than during the crisis, indicating a partial decline in the strength of the association. However, immigration continues to matter for party choice, but its divisive power may have somewhat diminished compared to the peak of the crisis.

Figure 54. Relevance of immigration in supporting governing TAN (Fidesz)



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

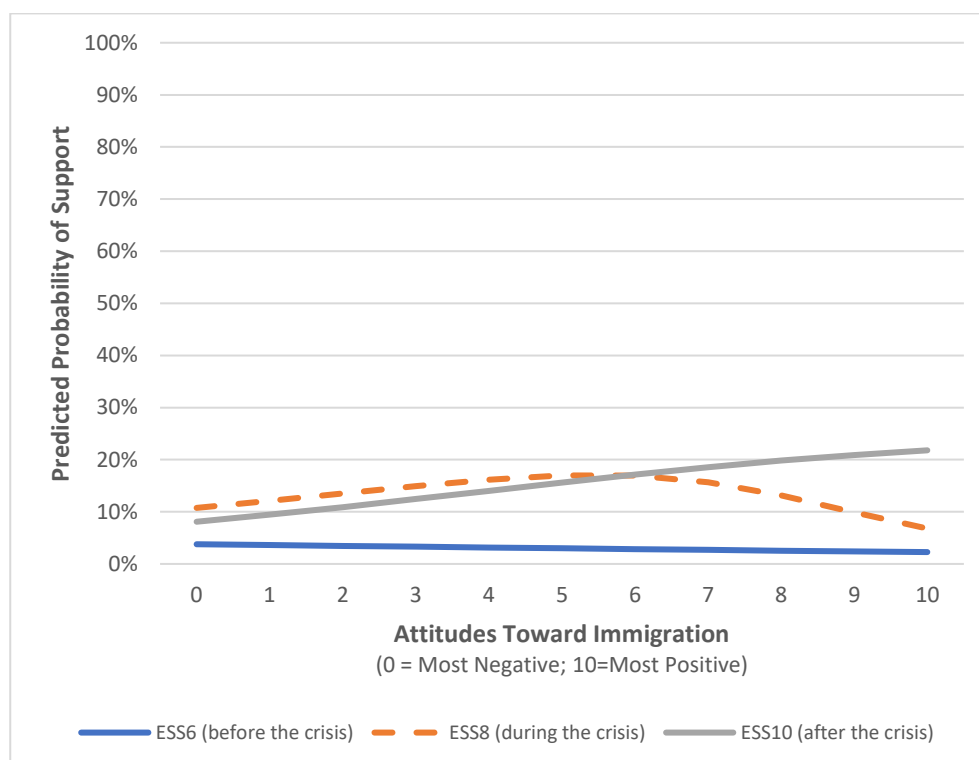
Note: Predicted values are based on multinomial logistic regression models estimated separately for ESS6, ESS8, and ESS10. Underlying predicted probabilities are available in the Appendix I.

In contrast to the governing TAN party, the relationship between immigration attitudes and support for the opposition TAN party (Jobbik) shows a notably different pattern over time in the period. In the pre-crisis period, the predicted probability of supporting Jobbik was low, ranging from 3.8% among the most immigration sceptical respondents to 2.3% among those with the most positive stance. The flat line suggests that immigration was not a defining issue for Jobbik supporters at that time.

During the crisis period, the relationship remains relatively weak. However, a slight upward curve appears, which means that the probability of supporting Jobbik peaked at 17% among those with mid-level immigration attitudes (score 5), creating an inverted U-shaped curve. This pattern suggests internal heterogeneity within the party's electorate or a lack of a coherent answer on the issue. While voters with extreme pro-immigration attitudes (score 10) showed only a 6.8% likelihood of supporting the party, those with highly negative attitudes (score 0) had a chance of 10.8%. As the results suggest, the opposition TAN party was not as successful in thematizing immigration as Fidesz, the governing TAN party (see Figure 29).

However, in the post-crisis period⁸⁸, a notable transformation can be observed. The relationship becomes more pronounced: the probability for support for Jobbik increased among those who represent positive attitudes toward immigration. Among respondents with the most pro-immigrant attitudes (score 10), the probability of voting for Jobbik was 21.8%; however, this chance dropped to 8.1% among those with the most negative positions (score 0). This shift is probably a consequence of the party's reposition strategy from a right-wing opposition party into a more centrist people's party. The findings show that Jobbik's voter base was not characterised as an anti-immigrant party, especially compared to the governing Fidesz. Moreover, the pattern of support increasingly resembles that of the left-wing GAL parties.

Figure 55. Relevance of immigration in supporting opposition TAN (Jobbik)



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Note: Predicted values are based on multinomial logistic regression models estimated separately for ESS6, ESS8, and ESS10. Underlying predicted probabilities are available in the Appendix J.

In the case of the Hungarian GAL parties, in the pre-crisis period, the analysis shows a modest but positive correlation between immigration attitudes and parties' support. The predicted probability of supporting a GAL party gradually increases from 9% among those with the most negative stance (score 0) to 22.5% among the most pro-immigration

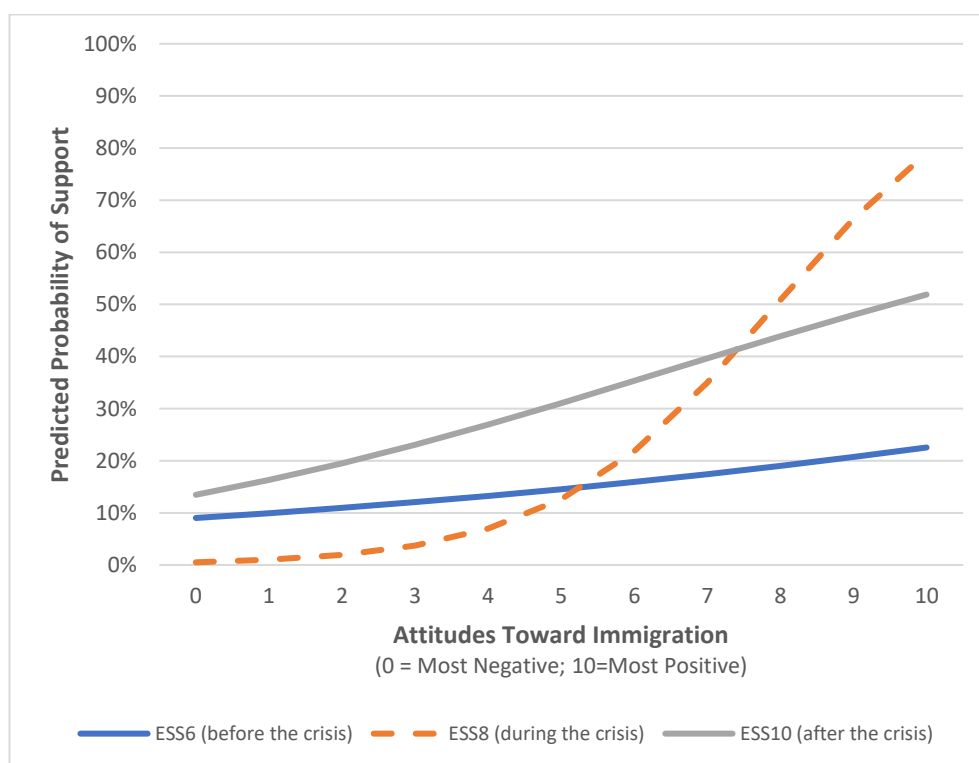
⁸⁸ In the ESS11 dataset, only eight respondents identified Mi Hazánk as the party they felt closest to (according to the variable "Which party feel closer to, Hungary? (prtelhhu). Given the insufficient number of cases, this party was excluded from the analysis.

respondents (score 10). This suggests that even before the migration crisis, GAL parties were highly supported by voters with humanitarian or inclusive views on immigration.

During the crisis period, this pattern intensifies significantly. The predicted probability of support increases sharply from just 0.5% at the most negative end of the scale to 79% among those with the most positive attitudes. This steep slope highlights how immigration became a key defining issue for GAL parties' support during the crisis, with a powerful appeal to pro-immigration voters.

In the post-crisis period, the relationship persists but becomes more moderate. Support starts at 13.5% among those with the most negative position toward immigration, and rises to 51.9% for respondents with the most positive stance., reflecting an approximately 38-percentage point gap. While this suggests a partial decline in polarisation compared to 2016, the association remains substantially stronger than in the pre-crisis period. Indicating that immigration continues to be a significant structuring factor in voter alignment.

Figure 56. Relevance of immigration in supporting GAL parties (left-wing opposition)



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Note: Predicted values are based on multinomial logistic regression models estimated separately for ESS6, ESS8, and ESS10. Underlying predicted probabilities are available in the Appendix K.

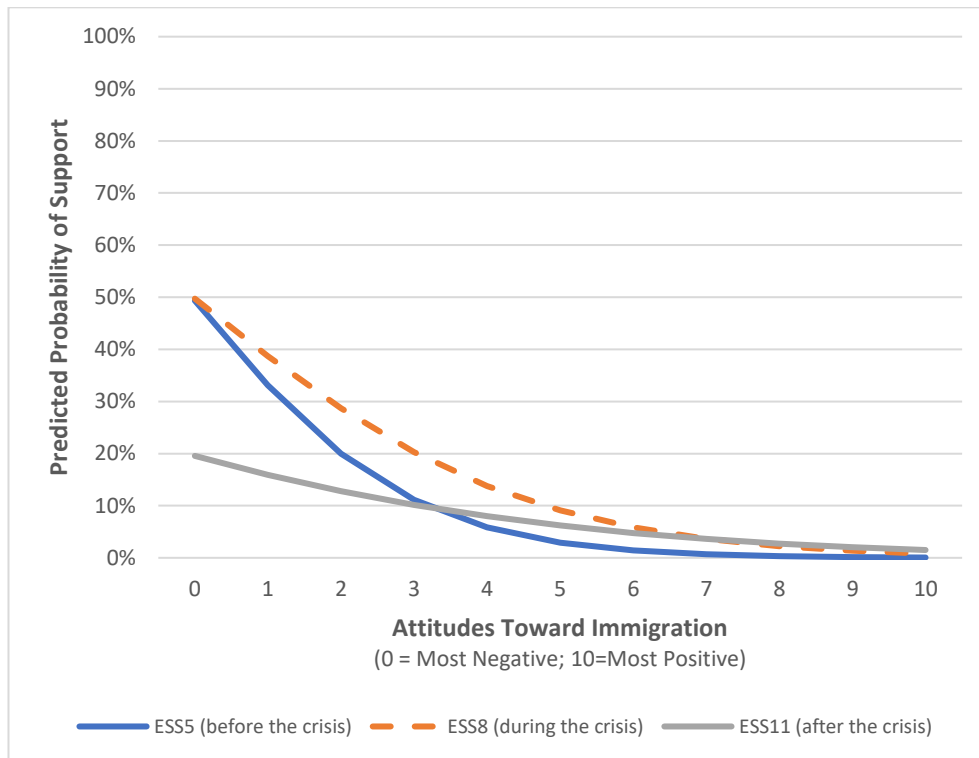
8.3 The Impact of Immigration Attitudes on Party Choice: The Austrian Case

As Figure 57 illustrates, before the 2015 migration crisis, the position toward immigration had already exhibited a clear association with support for the FPÖ. In this sense, individuals with the most negative views on immigration (score 0) had a predicted probability of FPÖ support of approximately 48.9%. This probability decreased sharply as attitudes became more positive, reaching just 0.1% among the individuals with the most positive attitudes (score 10). While immigration was evidently a relevant factor in shaping FPÖ support before the crisis, the overall magnitude of its influence was more modest compared to the crisis period.

During the crisis, the association between anti-immigration attitudes and FPÖ support intensified considerably. The predicted probability of support for those with the most negative positions (score 0) rose to nearly 50%, while this chance among the most pro-immigration (score 10) respondents remained extremely low (around 0.8%). This suggests that the party had become particularly attractive to individuals with exclusionary views during the migration crisis. These findings suggest that the crisis amplified the relevance of cultural and identity-based concerns, reinforcing the appeal of the FPÖ's anti-immigration platform.

However, after the crisis, the association between the position toward immigration and the FPÖ weakened considerably. The predicted probability for the most anti-immigration respondents (score 0) dropped to roughly 19.3%, with the change across the attitude scale becoming significantly flatter. While the association between immigration views and FPÖ support remained statistically present, it was far less pronounced. During this period, the anti-immigration characteristic of the party was primarily reflected in the fact that the probability to support the FPÖ among respondents who held the most positive position (score 10) toward immigration remained low – merely 1.5%.

Figure 57. Relevance of immigration in supporting FPÖ (TAN)



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Note: Predicted values are based on multinomial logistic regression models estimated separately for ESS5, ESS8, and ESS11. Underlying predicted probabilities are available in the Appendix L.

While the probability of voting for FPÖ among voters with a negative position toward immigration significantly declined in the ESS11 wave, as Figure 58 shows, the likelihood that these voters with negative positions would support the ÖVP increased markedly. While the probability of voting for the ÖVP was only 25.2% in 2013 (ESS5), it reduced to 23.8% in 2016 (ESS8) but it increased to 42% by 2021 (ESS11). These results may be explained, among others, by the shift in the ÖVP's stance on migration, as well as by the previously discussed '*Kurz-effect*' and the Ibiza scandal. While during the grand coalitions with the SPÖ, between 2010–2013 and 2013–2017, the ÖVP primarily represented a moderate position toward immigration (see Figures 31 and 32). However, the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition between 2017 and 2019 provided an opportunity for the party to appeal to voters who opposed immigration, yet held more moderate views than the FPÖ. Based on this change, it can be inferred that the FPÖ's approach to migration—see the section on party programs—did not align with the preferences of most respondents, whereas the ÖVP succeeded in positioning itself by promoting more moderate solutions to migration-related challenges.

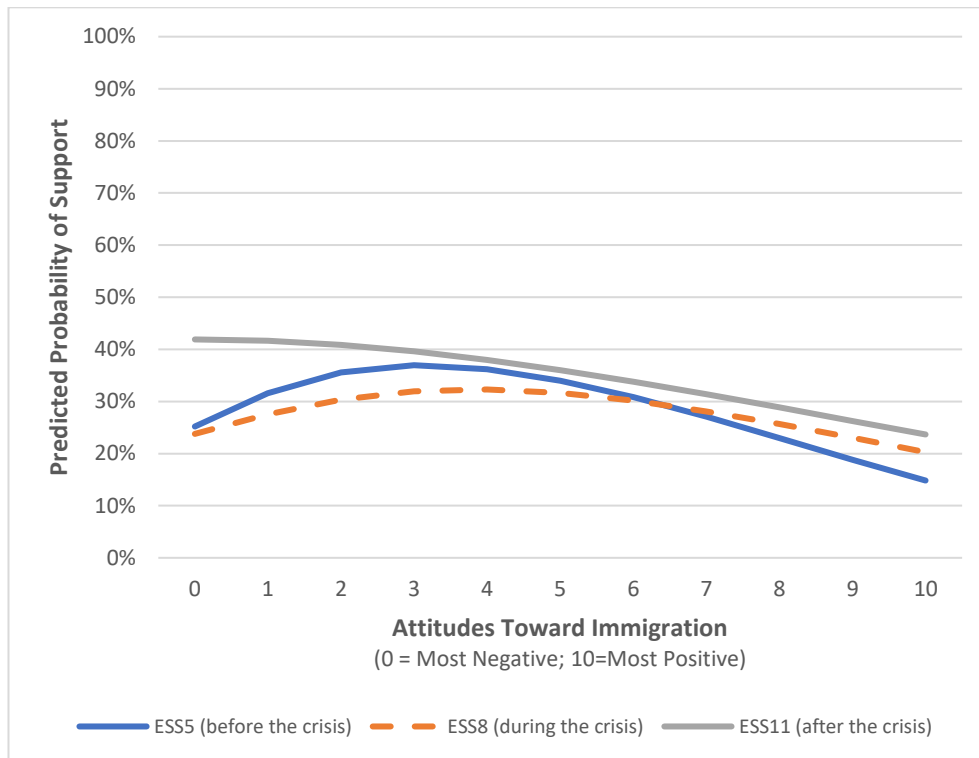
Before the crisis (ESS5), attitudes toward immigration had a relatively minor effect in shaping support for the ÖVP. The predicted probability of support was approximately

25.2% among those with the most negative positions toward immigration, rising to a peak of around 37% for those scoring three on the 0-10 scale, before declining to 14.8% among the most pro-immigration respondents. This result suggests a nonlinear, modest association, where voters with extreme views – either positive or negative – were less likely to support the ÖVP, compared to those with more moderate – primarily negative – positions.

During the crisis (ESS8), the association between immigration attitudes and support for the ÖVP followed an inverted U-shape pattern. The predicted probability of support increased among respondents with increasingly negative views on immigration, peaking at approximately 32% around score four on the 0-10 scale. However, among respondents with the most extreme anti-immigration attitudes (score 0-2), the chance to support was notably lower. This suggests that the ÖVP appealed most strongly to voters with moderate anti-immigration sentiments, rather than those with the most extreme anti-immigration views.

Following the crisis (ESS11), the relationship underwent a notable shift. The inverted U-shape association developed into a distinctly linear and negative one. The predicted probability of support was the highest (approximately 42%) among those with the most negative views on immigration and declined steadily across the attitude spectrum, down to 23.7% among the most positive respondents. These findings suggest that, in the post-crisis period, the ÖVP repositioned itself from a centrist actor to a more anti-immigrant party, probably attracting support from moderate segments of the FPÖ's electorate.

Figure 58. Relevance of immigration in supporting ÖVP (TAN)



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

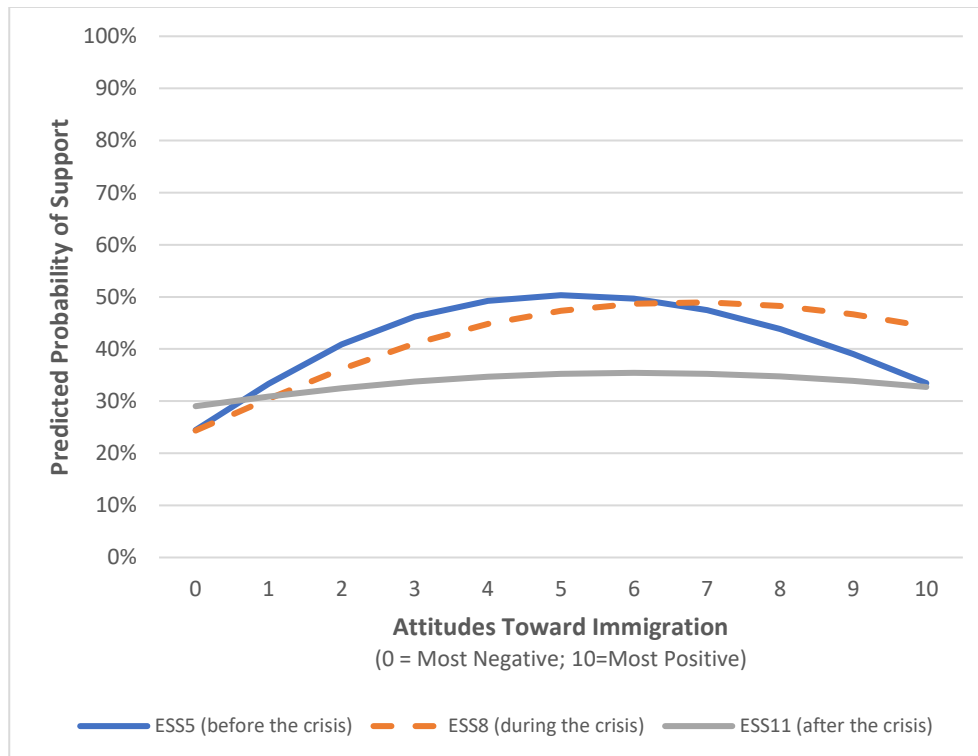
Note: Predicted values are based on multinomial logistic regression models estimated separately for ESS6, ESS8, and ESS10. Underlying predicted probabilities are available in the Appendix M.

In the case of SPÖ, before the 2015 migration crisis (ESS5), a strong and curvilinear association could be observed. In this sense, the predicted probability of support increased consistently most of the spectrum: from 24.5% among the most anti-immigrant respondents (score 0) to nearly 50% around scores 5-6. After this peak, the chance to support gradually declined toward the pro-immigration end of the spectrum, reaching 34% at score 10. This inverted U-shaped pattern indicates that the SPÖ attracted the highest levels of support from voters with centrist and moderately positive views on immigration, while the probability of support was weaker among those with either extreme attitude.

During the crisis (ESS8), the association became clearly positive and linear. In the ESS8 wave, the probability for supporting the SPÖ remained virtually unchanged among the most immigration sceptical respondents, at 24.4% (score 0), but it increased steadily across the rest of the spectrum, reaching 49% among those with moderately positive attitudes (score 7). Beyond that point, the probability of support declined slightly, reaching 44.4% among those with the most positive immigration views. This correlates with the party's position toward immigration, reflected in its rhetoric (see Figures 36-38) and manifestos (see Figures 31 and 32). Following the crisis, this association became

much weaker, nearly flat. The predicted probabilities ranged from 29% (score 0) to 32.7% (score 10), peaking at 35.4% for score 6. This indicates that attitudes toward immigration lost their explanatory power in predicting SPÖ support by 2021.

Figure 59. Relevance of immigration in supporting SPÖ (GAL)



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Note: Predicted values are based on multinomial logistic regression models estimated separately for ESS6, ESS8, and ESS10. Underlying predicted probabilities are available in the Appendix N.

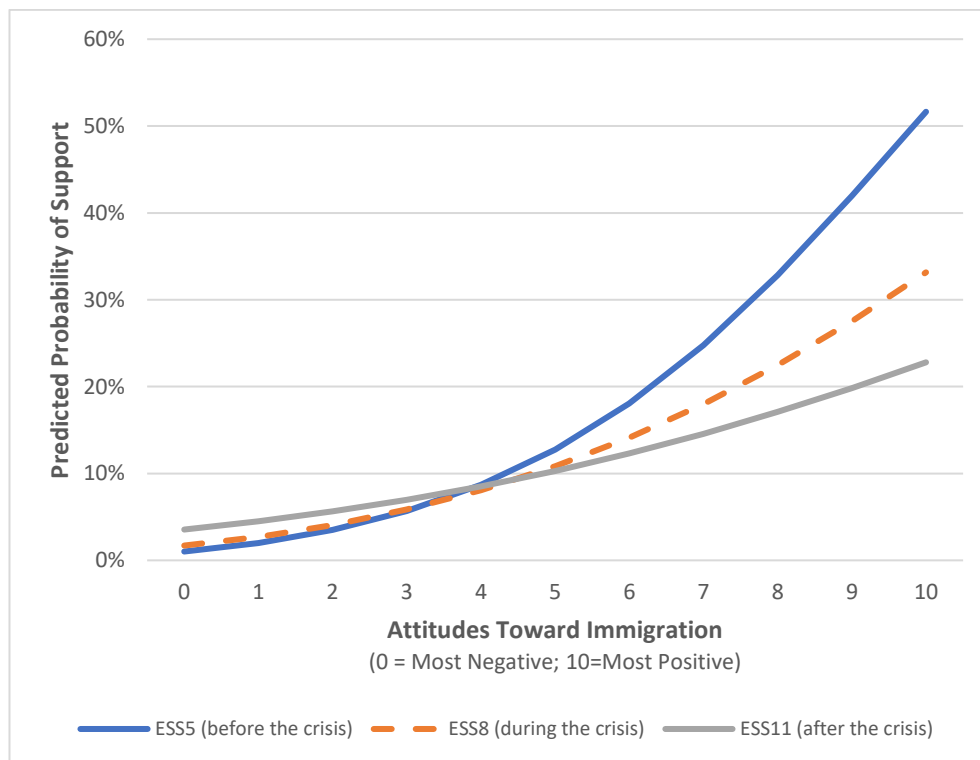
The probability for the Greens was strongly associated with pro-immigration attitudes. Before the crisis (ESS5), the predicted probability of support increased steadily: from approximately 1% among respondents with the most negative positions (score 0) to 51% among individuals with the most positive stance (score 10). This clear positive and non-linear relationship indicates that immigration was a highly salient factor in predicting the Green Party's support. The steep curve also suggests that the Green Party primarily was able to mobilise voters with strong pro-immigration preferences.

During the crisis (ESS8), the positive correlation between pro-immigration attitudes and support for the Greens remained. The predicted probability increased from 1.7% among the most immigration-sceptical respondents to 33.1% among the most supportive ones. While the direction of the relationship persisted, support among the most pro-immigration voters declined markedly, indicating not only a flatter curve but also a

relative loss of support in this segment. This could reflect competition from other GAL parties (e.g. SPÖ) or the general electoral volatility during this period of time.

The same strong positive association remained intact after the crisis, though at slightly higher baseline levels. Predicted support ranged from 3.6% to 22.8% across the spectrum. While support among respondents with pro-immigration attitudes (scores 8 -10) remained relatively higher than among other groups, the predicted probabilities in these categories declined substantially compared to 2013, indicating a weakening the party's core base. The relatively smooth and consistently upward slope indicates that attitudes toward immigration remained a relevant predictor of support for the Greens even after the crisis of 2015. However, the strength of this association appears to have weakened, which may be explained by the increasing competition with NEOS, potentially resulting in a fragmentation of the Green's voter base.

Figure 60. Relevance of immigration in supporting GRÜNE (GAL)



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

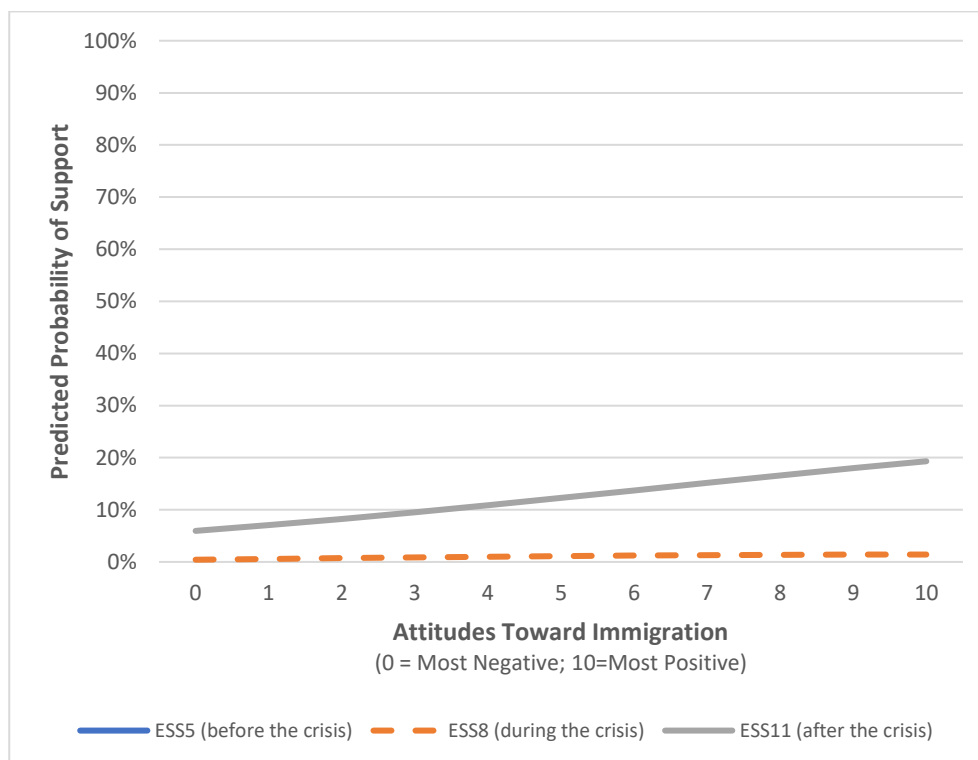
Note: Predicted values are based on multinomial logistic regression models estimated separately for ESS6, ESS8, and ESS10. Underlying predicted probabilities are available in the Appendix O.

Since NEOS was not included in the ESS questionnaire during the pre-crisis wave, no data are available for that period. During the crisis (ESS8), support for NEOS remained extremely low across the spectrum, with predicted probabilities ranging only from 0.4% (score 0) to 1.4% (score 10). Any observable trend was minimal and statistically

negligible suggesting that immigration attitudes were rather irrelevant in predicting NEOS support at this stage.

However, after the peak of the crisis (ESS11), a notable change occurred. Support for NEOS increased substantially, with predicted probabilities ranging from 6% among the most anti-immigration respondents to 19% among the most pro-immigration ones. The predicted relationship became more linear, suggesting that pro-immigration attitudes increasingly contributed to the likelihood of supporting NEOS. This shift suggests that NEOS had started to position itself more clearly as a GAL-oriented party—at least with regard to immigration—by attracting voters who favoured open and liberal immigration policies.

Figure 61. Relevance of immigration in supporting NEOS (GAL)



Source: Own calculations based on European Social Survey (ESS, 2024).

Note: Predicted values are based on multinomial logistic regression models estimated separately for ESS6, ESS8, and ESS10. Underlying predicted probabilities are available in the Appendix P.

8.4 Comparative Summary

The 2015 migration crisis significantly reshaped the relationship between party preferences and attitudes toward immigration in both Hungary and Austria, although the direction and magnitude of these changes varied across the two countries.

In Hungary, prior to the crisis, immigration was not a major source of political polarisation. The predicted probability to support Fidesz remained consistently high across the entire attitudinal spectrum. The gap between the two extreme scores (0 and 10) was 12 percentage, showing a slightly immigration-sceptical electorate. For the left-wing opposition (GAL parties), a similar but reversed pattern can be observed: the difference between the most negative and most positive respondents is 14 percentage, with the slope trending in a pro-immigration direction. In contrast, for the right-wing opposition, the difference between the two extremes was only about 1.5 percentage points. Overall, these results suggest that attitudes toward immigration played only a marginal role in shaping party support in the Hungarian party system before the crisis. During the crisis, however, support for Fidesz became strongly and positively associated with anti-immigration attitudes, whereas the GAL parties experienced a dramatic increase in support among pro-immigration voters. This marks a substantial shift: immigration attitudes emerged as a key determinant of party choice in Hungary. In the case of the right-wing opposition party Jobbik, no clear directional pattern in the predicted probability of support was evident before the crisis. During the crisis, however, immigration attitudes became more relevant, with the highest likelihood of support observed among voters with moderately positive views. In the post-crisis period, this pattern shifted further, with support levels becoming relatively higher among pro-immigration respondents. Although overall polarisation declined after the crisis, immigration remained a salient political cleavage, particularly between Fidesz (TAN) and the left-wing opposition parties (GAL).

In Austria, anti-immigration attitudes were already strongly linked to a higher predicted probability of supporting the FPÖ before the crisis, while the GAL parties (SPÖ, the Greens, and NEOS) attracted a larger share of voters with pro-immigration attitudes. During the crisis, the predicted probability of FPÖ support peaked among the most immigration-sceptical voters, while the Greens—and to a lesser extent the SPÖ—showed higher predicted support among the most pro-immigration segments. In the post-crisis period, the predicted probability of FPÖ support declined, whereas the ÖVP successfully captured a substantial share of moderately anti-immigration voters, consolidating its base

within this segment. Among the GAL parties, the positive association with pro-immigration attitudes persisted, although in a less pronounced form.

Overall, the shared pattern in both countries is that during the 2015 crisis, attitudes toward immigration emerged as a key political cleavage. While voters with pro-immigration views were more likely to support parties representing GAL values on the ideological spectrum, those opposing immigration were significantly more likely to support parties positioned on the TAN side. In Hungary, this divide was most visible between Fidesz and the GAL parties, while in Austria it was reflected both in the FPÖ–GAL party opposition and in the ÖVP’s strategic repositioning. Although the degree of polarisation decreased in the post-crisis period in both cases, immigration attitudes have remained a significant predictor of party preferences.

9 CONCLUSION

This dissertation investigates the significance of the 2015 European migration crisis, examining Hungary as one of the key transit countries, and Austria, as a neighbouring state that was also considerably impacted by migration, as a comparative reference. The central research question concerns the social and political nature of the conflicts surrounding the crisis. To address this question, the dissertation employs Kevin Deegan-Krause's typological framework, asking whether the conflicts triggered by the crisis can be understood as a cleavage-type conflict or constitute a different form of political and social division. Accepting the core concept of the neo-revisionist approach, the dissertation carried out a three-level analysis comprising voters, political parties, and the intermediating normative level. Since voters and parties are active participants in political conflicts, and normative identity plays a passive role, the analysis was conducted through the interaction between parties and the normative level, as well as voters and the normative level. In examining party positions on immigration, the research relies on the Manifesto Project, which analyses party programs, and employs the CHES database, which investigates the rhetoric of parties and their representatives. To explore the socio-demographic patterns and values of voters, a multi-level regression analysis was conducted, based on the European Social Survey. As a closing chapter, to validate the results, the dissertation implemented a multinomial regression analysis focusing on the association between attitudes toward immigration and party affiliation.

In summary, the conflict was manifested on all the three levels, thus fulfilling the criteria of a political cleavage. Furthermore, the findings suggest that the conflict surrounding the 2015 migration crisis is primarily aligned with the characteristics of transnational cleavages. As statistical results have shown, the direction and volume of migration, along with push factors such as the Arab Spring or other regional conflicts—which in some cases led to the emergence of failed states—confirm that the origin of the issue is external and that it had a shock-like impact on political and social communities. The external and shock-like nature of the crisis meets the primary criterion for a transnational conflict, as defined by Marks et al (2021). However, it is also worth noting that the European Union and several leaders of the EU member states, grappling with demographic decline and labour shortages, made efforts to create significant pull mechanisms, with the most well-known example being Angela Merkel's

'*Willkommenskultur*'. This suggests that the conflict is not only externally induced and sudden but is also perceived by politicians and other interest groups in the destination societies, qualified as a necessary and justified phenomenon. In other words, the process is shaped by a combination of external and internal influences, highlighting its complexity.

Further supporting evidence to the transnational characteristic of the conflict is the fact that, although the conflict extends beyond national borders and emerges in multiple countries, the debates on EU asylum policy, the EU quota system, and border protection frequently appear at national level, reflected in national party programs and political rhetoric (see Figures 29-33). Besides, the core of the conflict is most appropriately interpreted as a conflict between globalists and sovereignists, which, according to Marks et al. (2021), may intersect with debates about the scope of the European Union's competencies.

This form of conflict also manifests on the ideological scale: respondents characterised by liberal values, a higher degree of openness to change, and self-transcendent, as well as parties on the liberal, globalist GAL (Green-Alternative-Libertarian) side of the GAL-TAN spectrum, generally expressed more positive attitudes toward immigration. This is particularly relevant in Austria, where immigration has been a persistent social and political issue for generations. In Hungary, the topic of immigration was not integrated into the mainstream political programs of GAL parties, yet their rhetorical orientation remains identifiable. Conversely, those who prioritise conservation and self-enhancement, and those parties which are positioned on the traditional and nationalist TAN (Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist) side of the GAL-TAN spectrum, tend to oppose immigration. These ideological differences are also reflected in party preferences. Those respondents opposing immigration were more likely to support TAN parties (e.g., Fidesz in Hungary or FPÖ in Austria), while those with positive views on immigration had a higher chance of supporting GAL parties (see: Left-Wing Opposition in Hungary, or die Grünen or NEOS in Austria).

In this context, the positions of ÖVP and SPÖ deserve special attention. At the beginning of the crisis, both parties attempted to adopt a centrist stance and highlighted the economic benefits of immigration (see Figures 31-32 and 36). This may have raised the probability of support among voters with centrists or moderate views on immigration for both parties (see Figures 58 and 59). However, after the crisis, the SPÖ, emphasising the importance of human rights, became more popular among pro-immigration voters,

while the ÖVP, in competition with FPÖ for right-wing voters, partially reframed immigration as a security issue and succeeded in increasing support among respondents with negative views on immigration. These findings reinforce not only the transnational cleavage theory proposed by Marks et al. (2021), but also highlight the relevance of the normative ideological level within the tripartite cleavage model: a significant division was observed in the normative dimension of party's positions, and a strong correlation emerged between party choice and attitudes toward immigration along the GAL/TAN spectrum. This supports the hypothesis that the normative level plays an important mediating role between voters and political parties.

Nonetheless, as the multi-level regression analysis results indicate, the normative level's explanatory power is not exclusive. While substantive significance was observed concerning values associated with the normative level, their origin may be developed through individuals' socialisation and life experiences accumulated over time. Consequently, socio-demographic variables remain relevant, as statistical significance confirms, although their effect appears less pronounced. These results confirm the neo-revisionists approach relating the relevance of socio-demographic characteristics (e.g. Marks et al. (2021)).

Regarding explanatory effects, the presence of the previously discussed political symbiosis becomes visible. Based on an analysis of the Hungarian data, it can be observed that, before the crisis, the issue of immigration had relatively low significance. Among the political communities examined, Fidesz held a neutral to mildly negative position, Jobbik was initially opposed but later adopted a more neutral stance following political reorientation, while the left-wing opposition maintained a more moderate position. The measurements taken in the period following the crisis indicate that attitudes toward immigration became a significant predictor of voting for Fidesz: among respondents with anti-immigration attitudes, the probability of voting for Fidesz increased considerably (see Figure 54). At the same time, those with more positive views of immigration were more likely to vote for GAL parties (see Figure 56).

Examining the causal explanations behind this shift, it can be reasonably assumed that Fidesz strategically thematised immigration as a crisis in the political discourse for the purpose of vote maximisation. The negative public attitude toward immigration may have been a foundation for the negative thematisation. Survey data indicate that before the crisis, nearly one-third of Hungarian respondents held negative views toward immigration. In the post-crisis period, this proportion rose to almost 50%, and with

respect to non-European immigrants, it exceeded 60% in the 2016/2017 period (see Figures 18 and 19).

In Hungary, Fidesz was the only political party that actively framed the 2015 migration crisis. As illustrated by the Manifesto Project (see Figure 29), the party's programmatic content included a significant proportion—over 25%—of anti-immigration segments. The CHES database, which analyses parties' rhetoric, showed a similarly high level of anti-immigrant discourse (score: 9.93, 2019; see Figure 33), comparable to that of Austria's FPÖ (9.8, 2019; see Figure 36). The thematisation appeared at the level of the national consultation on immigration, political communication, and party manifestos as well.

The political success of Fidesz can be interpreted as ability to implement the narrative framing of the 2015 immigration crisis—following the populist-style strategy defined by Müller and Gebauer (2021) —from a full governmental position, while simultaneously portraying itself in a dual role: both as a party authorised with governmental power and as a sovereigntist '*opposition party*' defending the country and Europe against globalist forces. Thus, as confirmed by the study, it refutes those theories (see, among others, Bayerlein (2021)) that argue populist securitisation can only be realised from opposition. However, the success of the thematisation may have been predicated on the party's prior ideological character. On the one hand, Fidesz had previously opposed the establishment of supranational powers, strongly criticised the institutionalisation of the EU, and labelled various groups as representing global interests. For instance, it campaigned against banks during the economic crisis and against George Soros's international civil network. On the other hand, in alliance with KDNP, Fidesz placed a particular emphasis on defending the rural and Christian way of life and values. Thus, the party had a substantial rural and Christian voter base, which allowed it greater flexibility in developing its narrative and positioning itself against immigration.

The success of the party's framing strategy is also evidenced by electoral polarisation. Based on ESS8 data, the perception of immigration became a key factor: among those who completely rejected immigration, the probability of voting for Fidesz exceeded 80%, while among the most supportive, it was less than 14% (see Figure 54). Conversely, among GAL-oriented left-wing parties, the opposite trend was observed: among those most supportive of immigration, the probability of voting for a GAL party was 79%, while among those rejecting immigration, it was less than 9% (S-curve) (see Figure 56).

Regarding framing, it is important to note that no successful counter-narrative emerged in Hungary: the extent of program-level responses by opposition parties remained minimal. Rhetorical analyses show that left-wing parties had a more positive stance on immigration (see Figures 33-35), but their party programs did not provide appropriate counterproposals (see Figure 30). On this basis, it can be assumed that the probability of voting for GAL parties may increase due to votes opposing Fidesz's immigration narrative during the period between ESS6 and ESS8. This assumption is further supported by the findings on ESS10, which show a return to pre-crisis patterns; however, the degree of polarisation is deeper than in the pre-crisis period, which suggests that the perception of immigration has become durably embedded within the system of social and political conflicts.

Examining the Austrian results, it can be observed that immigration was a salient issue even before the 2015 European migration crisis. Based on analyses of party programs (see Figures 31-32), rhetoric (see Figures 36-38), and voter affiliation (see Figure 57), it can be noted that FPÖ had the most pronounced anti-immigration profile within the Austrian party system. The analysis of FPÖ's anti-immigration narrative confirmed the findings of Müller and Gebauer (2021), who argued that FPÖ sought to distinguish itself from other parties in the party system by maintaining a populist style of anti-immigration framing both in opposition and as a junior coalition partner.

At the same time, pro-immigration narratives were also evident in Austria. Immigration was interpreted as a driver of economic growth and cultural diversity. While SPÖ and ÖVP emphasised the relevance of economic benefits, die Grünen and NEOS also highlighted the importance of human rights and cultural pluralism. The presence of both positive and negative attitudes probably relates to Austria's extensive experience with immigration. Labour migration has been a long-standing phenomenon in the country, with both positive and negative consequences. Given the significant number and proportion of immigrant or immigrant-background communities (see Figures 13 and 14), it is assumed that certain parties—especially those with a more liberal characteristic—adopted a moderately positive or positive stance for vote maximisation. In contrast, FPÖ aimed to appeal to voters who experienced the negative consequences of foreign labour immigration and those concerned about their safety and the cohesion of their native communities. This perception probably may have been further intensified by terrorist attacks in Austria, reinforcing the assumption that both external and internal, unpredictable events can influence the salience of political and social conflicts.

The strategic repositioning of ÖVP is also noteworthy in the Austrian context. While initially moderate during the early phase of the crisis, the party later adopted a more negative stance. This realignment is likely a response to FPÖ's growing strength. It can be assumed that, to maximise votes, ÖVP increasingly articulated the need to limit immigration while preserving its economic usefulness. The success of the party was probably also supported by the fact that voters tend to be less sympathetic toward extreme responses to immigration, such as the proposal of the FPÖ to use X-ray scans on refugees. Additionally, as the primary representative of the right-wing TAN Lager, ÖVP may have had more political space to adopt a more pronounced anti-immigrant position than the parties on the GAL side.

At the same time, ÖVP's repositioning reveals a broader dynamic: the intensification of the 2015 European migration crisis challenged traditional Lager structures. Initially, FPÖ dominated the discourse from the right, threatening ÖVP's voter base, but after the crisis, support for die Grünen and NEOS significantly increased among pro-immigration voters (see Figures 57-61). Based on the number of effective parties and immigration-related dynamics, it can be concluded that the 2015 migration crisis became a sharpened segment of the development of the party system towards multipolarity among traditional parties and new political identities.

As demonstrated by the 2015 migration crisis, the levels of cleavage are interdependent, and the characteristics of cleavage are dynamic. On the one hand, Fidesz's framing strategy and thematisation exemplify how political party activism is indispensable in cleavage integration, while ÖVP's repositioning highlights both the opportunities and constraints in the party's integration strategies. However, whether parties initiate conflicts or merely follow them is only partially explained due to the mutually causal relationships discussed earlier. However, beyond party positions, probability analyses of party choice and immigration indicate that the relevance of specific issues—including immigration—may fluctuate, making the dynamics of political conflict continuous.

Nonetheless, further research is recommended for a better understanding. On the one hand, tracking changes related to immigration could offer valuable insights into the structural evolution of political cleavages, shifts in the dynamics of political conflicts, and their historical persistence. In light of the findings, additional studies could also address issues emerging along the globalist-sovereignist divide, such as climate change or the role of supranational institutional frameworks. In the context of the 2015 European

immigration crisis, further country-specific analysis would be particularly valuable. Relevant case studies, including Germany, as the primary destination country of the 2015 crisis, as well as Croatia, which, as an EU member state, served as another transit country during the crisis, and further non-EU member Balkan states with EU candidate status, also had a key transit role. Among these, the examination of Serbia, which shares a border with Hungary, thus with the EU as well, may lead to interesting insights. Expanding the temporal and geographic dimensions offers the opportunity for a deeper understanding of both international patterns and country-specific characteristics in migration-related political conflict.

References

- 21 Research Center and Projekt: Polska. (2021). *Minding the gap: Deepening political polarisation in Poland and Hungary*. https://21kutatokozpont.hu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/fnf_19.pdf
- 24.hu. (2015a). *Ha Magyarországra jössz, tiszteletben kell tartanod a kultúránkat*. <https://24.hu/belfold/2015/06/04/ha-magyarorszagra-jossz-tiszteletben-kell-tartanod-a-kulturankat/>
- 24.hu. (2015b). *Papírgyűjtést rendez a DK a nemzeti konzultáció kérdőíveiből*. <https://24.hu/belfold/2015/04/28/papirgyujtest-rendez-a-dk-a-nemzeti-konzultacio-kerdoiveibol/>
- 24.hu. (2016). *Kerítés épül az osztrák-magyar határon*. <https://24.hu/belfold/2016/04/07/kerites-epul-az-osztrak-magyar-hataron/>
- 24.hu. (2018). *Az LMP nem akarja lebontani a kerítést*. <https://24.hu/kozelet/2018/02/02/az-lmp-nem-akarja-lebontani-a-keritest/>
- 444.hu (2017). *Bárki nyer 2018-ban, szinte biztos, hogy marad a kerítés*. 444. <https://444.hu/2017/06/16/barki-nyer-2018-ban-szinte-biztos-hogy-marad-a-kerites>
- Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities (1993). <http://www.kisebbségiombudsman.hu/data/files/128317683.pdf>
- Allardt, E., & Pesonen, P. (1967). Cleavages in Finnish Politics. In *Lipset and Rokkan*.
- Andreoni, J., & Vesterlund, L. (2001). Which is the Fair Sex? Gender Differences in Altruism. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 116(1), 293–312. <https://doi.org/10.1162/003355301556419>
- Angyal E. É., Fellner Z., & Fényes C. (2023). Új kihívók. Politikai szocializációs utak a Momentum Mozgalomban. *Politikatudományi Szemle*. <https://poltudszemle.hu/articles/uj-kihivok-politikai-szocializacios-utak-a-momentum-mozgalomban/>
- Anti-Immigration Discourses in Hungary during the ‘Crisis’ Year: The Orbán Government’s ‘National Consultation’ Campaign of 2015—Ákos Bocskor, 2018*. (2018). Retrieved January 30, 2025, from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0038038518762081>
- Ascher, W., & Tarrow, S. (1975). *The Stability of Communist Electorates: Evidence from a Longitudinal Analysis of French and Italian Aggregate Data*. *American Journal of Political Science*, 19(3), 475. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2110540>
- Badie, B., Berg-Schlosser, D., & Morlino, L. (2011). *Encyclopedia of Political Science*.
- Bakk, M. (2005). *Kettős állampolgárság—Adatok, állásfoglalások, elemzések*. <https://kisebbségkutato.tk.hu/public/kettosallampolgarsag/kronologia.html>
- Bakker, R., De Vries, C., Edwards, E., Hooghe, L., Jolly, S., Marks, G., Polk, J., Rovny, J., Steenbergen, M., & Vachudova, M. A. (2015). Measuring party positions in Europe: The Chapel Hill expert survey trend file, 1999–2010. *Party Politics*, 21(1), 143–152. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068812462931>
- Bakker, R., Jolly, S., & Polk, J. (2012). Complexity in the European party space: Exploring dimensionality with experts. *European Union Politics*, 13(2), 219–245. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116512436995>
- Bartolini, S., & Mair, P. (with European Consortium for Political Research). (1990). *Identity, competition and electoral availability: The stabilisation of European electorates, 1885 - 1985* (1. publ. by the ECPR Press). ECPR Press.
- Bassetti, F. (2019). Environmental Migrants: Up to 1 Billion by 2050. *Foresight*. <https://www.climateforesight.eu/articles/environmental-migrants-up-to-1-billion-by-2050/>
- Bayerlein, M. (2021). Chasing the Other “Populist Zeitgeist”? Mainstream Parties and the Rise of Right-Wing Populism. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, 62(3), 411–433. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11615-021-00299-x>

- BBC. (2006). *Excerpts: Hungarian “lies” speech*. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/5359546.stm>
- BBC. (2015). *Austria passes controversial reforms to 1912 Islam law*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-31629543>
- BBC. (2016). Migration fears spark Italy-Austria border row at Brenner—BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36302422>
- BBC. (2017.). *Austria protest as far right Freedom Party tastes power*. Retrieved January 30, 2025, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-42396078>
- Becucci, S. (2024). *Smuggling and trafficking of migrants in southern Europe: Criminal actors, dynamics and migration policies*. Bristol University Press. <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781529222555>
- Benford, R. D., & Snow, D. A. (1988). Ideology, frame resonance, and participant mobilization. <https://users.ssc.wisc.edu/~oliver/SOC924/Articles/SnowBenfordIdeologyframeresonanceandparticipantmobilization.pdf>
- Betts, A. (2013). *Survival Migration: Failed Governance and the Crisis of Displacement*. Cornell University Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt32b5cd>
- Bhabha, J., & Matache, M. (2020, June 3). Anti-Roma hatred on streets of Budapest. EUobserver. <https://euobserver.com/eu-political/ar4c150b55>
- Bigo, D. (2002). Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 27(1_suppl), 63–92. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03043754020270S105>
- Bíró-Nagy A. (2015). Politikai lottóötös: A migráció jelentősége a magyar politikában,.
- Bíró-Nagy, A., & Róna, D. (2008). Tudatos Radikalizmus. A Jobbik útja a parlamentbe, 2003-2010. https://www.policysolutions.hu/userfiles/elemzes/52/biro_nagy_rona_tudatos_radikalizmus_vegso.pdf
- Blais, A., & Carty, R. K. (1991). The Psychological Impact of Electoral Laws: Measuring Duverger’s Elusive Factor. *British Journal of Political Science*, 21(1), 79–93.
- Blikk. (2015, October 14). *Menekülteket fogadott be otthonába Gyurcsány Ferenc*. Blikk. <https://www.blikk.hu/aktualis/politika/menekulteket-fogadott-be-otthonaba-gyurcsany-ferenc/0te41es>
- Blinder, S. (2015). Imagined Immigration: The Impact of Different Meanings of ‘Immigrants’ in Public Opinion and Policy Debates in Britain. *Political Studies*, 63(1), 80–100. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12053>
- Bobbio, N. (1996). *Left and right: The significance of a political distinction*. The University of Chicago Press. <http://choicereviews.org/review/10.5860/CHOICE.34-5919>
- Bornschier, S. (2010). The New Cultural Divide and the Two-Dimensional Political Space in Western Europe. *West European Politics*, 33(3), 419–444. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402381003654387>
- Boston University. (2023). The EU Continues To Fail Asylum Seekers and Violate Human Rights by Biden Wright | Center on Forced Displacement. <https://www.bu.edu/cfd/2023/01/25/the-eu-continues-to-fail-asylum-seekers-and-violate-human-rights-by-biden-wright/>
- Boubtane, E., & Dumont, J.-C. (2013). *Immigration and economic growth in the OECD countries 1986-2006: A panel data analysis*.
- Breyer, B. (2015). Social Trust Scale (ESS). ZIS - The Collection Items and Scales for the Social Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.6102/ZIS235>
- Brooks, C., Nieuwbeerta, P., & Manza, J. (2006). Cleavage-based voting behavior in cross-national perspective: Evidence from six postwar democracies. *Social Science Research*, 35(1), 88–128. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2004.06.005>
- Budapest Business Journal. (2018, September 11). *Russian elite got residency via bond program, report claims*. <https://bbj.hu/politics/foreign-affairs/intl-relations/russian-elite-got-residency-via-bond-program-report-claims/>
- Bundeskanzleramt. (2024). *National Ethnic Minority Groups—Federal Chancellery of Austria*.

<https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/en/topics/ethnic-groups.html>

- Bundesministerium. für Inneres (2015). *50 Punkte zur erfolgreichen Integration*. <https://www.bmeia.gv.at/ministerium/aktuelles/50-punkte-zur-erfolgreichen-integration>,
- Bundesministerium für Inneres. (2025). Nationalratswahlen. <https://www.bmi.gv.at/412/Nationalratswahlen/>
- Buzan, B., Waever, O., & Wilde, J. de. (2013). *Security: A new framework for analysis* (12. Nachdr). Lynne Rienner.
- Buxton, R. (2008). *SPSS: Simple Linear Regression*. <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/media/media/schoolanddepartments/mlsc/downloads/reg2.pdf>
- Cabinet Office of the Prime Minister (2015). *National consultation on immigration to begin*. Government. Retrieved January 30, 2025, from <https://2015-2019.kormany.hu/en/prime-minister-s-office/news/national-consultation-on-immigration-to-begin>
- Cabinet Office of the Prime Minister. (2018). “For us, it’s ‘Hungary First.’” <https://2015-2022.miniszterelnok.hu/for-us-its-hungary-first/>
- Cantat, C., Pécoud, A., & Thiollet, H. (2025). Migration as Crisis. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 69(6), 627–649. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00027642231182889>
- Carreras, M., Morgenstern, S., & Su, Y.-P. (2015). Refining the theory of partisan alignments: Evidence from Latin America. *Party Politics*, 21(5), 671–685. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068813491538>
- Castles, S., Booth, H., & Wallace, T. (1984). *Here for good: Western Europe’s new ethnic minorities*. Pluto Press.
- Castles, S., & Miller, M. J. (2009). *The age of migration: International population movements in the modern world* (4th ed., Rev. & updated). Guilford Press.
- CHES. (2012). Measuring party positions in Europe: The Chapel Hill expert survey trend file, 1999–2024. *Party Politics*, 21(1), 143–152. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068812462931>
- CHES. (2024). ParlGov 2024 Release (Version 1.0, pp. 7307264, 106797, 5308416, 7829, 1925238, 283337, 7171, 248194, 1243395, 1567278) [Application/octet-stream,text/markdown,application/octet-stream,text/tab-separated-values,text/tab-separated-values,text/tab-separated-values,text/plain,application/pdf,text/tab-separated-values,application/vnd.openxmlformats-officedocument.spreadsheetml.sheet]. Harvard Dataverse. <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/2VZ5ZC>
- Chhibber, P. (1999). *Democracy without Associations: Transformation of the Party System and Social Cleavages in India*. University of Michigan Press. <https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.23136>
- Cohen, R. (1996). *Theories of migration*. E. Elgar.
- Connor, P. (2016, August 2). Number of Refugees to Europe Surges to Record 1.3 Million in 2015. *Pew Research Center*. <https://www.pewresearch.org/global-migration-and-demography/2016/08/02/number-of-refugees-to-europe-surges-to-record-1-3-million-in-2015/>
- Converse, P. E. (1964). The nature of belief systems in mass publics (1964). *Critical Review*, 18(1–3), 1–74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08913810608443650>
- Cowell-Meyers, K. B., Evans, E., & Shin, K. (2020). Women’s Parties: A New Party Family. *Politics & Gender*, 16(1), 4–25. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X19000588>
- Cresswell, T. (2006). *On the move: Mobility in the modern Western world*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Csíkhegyi, L., Németh, I., Harsányi, I., Haskó, K., Szokolay, K., Bíró, L., & Juhász, J. (2004). *Európai politikai rendszerek*. Osiris kiadó.
- Csizmadia, E. (2018). Domináns pártrendszer: Miért ismétlődik Magyarországon? *PTIblog*.
- Dahl, R. A. (1969). Political Opposition in Western Democracies. In J. Blondel (Ed.), *Comparative Government* (pp. 229–234). Macmillan Education UK. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-15318-3_26
- Dalton, R. J., Flanagan, S. C., & Beck, P. A. (Eds.). (1984). *Electoral Change in Advanced Industrial*

- Democracies: Realignment or Dealignment?* Princeton University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1m323nh>
- Daily Mail. (2016, July 5). *Hungary to hold an EU referendum in October on Syrian migrant quotas*. Mail Online. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3675060/Hungary-hold-EU-referendum-October-Nation-decide-ignore-Brussels-diktat-accepting-quota-migrants.html>
- Deegan-Krause, K. (2009). New Dimensions of Political Cleavage. In R. J. Dalton & H. Klingemann (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior* (1st ed., pp. 538–556). Oxford University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199270125.003.0028>
- Delbecq, B. A., & Waldorf, B. S. (2010). *GOING WEST IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: MIGRATION AND EU ENLARGEMENT*. <https://doi.org/10.22004/AG.ECON.58946>
- Demokrata. (2014). „Too much spekulieren”. *Demokrata*.
https://demokrata.hu/cikk/bdquo_too_much_spekulierenrdquo_ndash_a_teljes_interju_orban_viktoral/
- Demokratikus Koalíció. (2013). *Európai Magyarországot! Demokráciát, biztonságot, fejlődést! Kongresszus*.
- Demokratikus Koalíció. (2015). *Közlemény: Állítsák le a kerítésépítést!*
<https://dkp.hu/hirek/660/kozlemeny--allitsak-le-a-keritesepitest->
- Demokratikus Koalíció. (2016). *Kvótareferendum—Az alaptörvény-módosítás bojkottjára szólított fel a DK*. <https://dkp.hu/hirek/1981/kvotarreferendum-az-alaptorveny-modositas-bojkottjara-szolított-fel-a-dk>
- Demokratikus Koalíció. (2017). *Sokak Magyarországa. A Demokratikus Koalíció programja*.
- Der Standard. (2015). *Glawischnig: “Ich halte nichts von einem linken Populismus.”* DER STANDARD.
<https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000025616529/ich-halte-nichts-von-einem-linken-populismus>
- Der Standard. (2016). *SPÖ-Kandidat Hundstorfer betont nötigen Zusammenhalt in Flüchtlingsfrage*. DER STANDARD.
<https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000029105205/spoe-gibt-praesidentschaftskandidaten-bekannt>
- Die Grünen. (2013). *Saubere umwelt. Saubere Politik. Wahlprogramm der Grünen Nationalratswahl 2013*. gruene.at
- Die Grünen. (2017). *Das ist Grün. Wahlprogramm der Grünen Nationalratswahl 2017*. gruene.at
- Die Grünen. (2019). *Wen würde unsere zukunft wählen? Wahlprogramm Nationalratswahl 2019*. gruene.at
- Die Presse. (2009). *BZÖ wird “rechtsliberal.”* Die Presse. <https://www.diepresse.com/515151/bzoe-wird-rechtsliberal>
- Die Presse. (2012). *Tiroler FP: “Lade Marokko ein, Kriminelle zurückzunehmen.”* Die Presse.
<https://www.diepresse.com/745578/tiroler-fp-lade-marokko-ein-kriminelle-zurueckzunehmen>
- Diesler, R., & Winkler, N. (1982). *Das politische Handeln der Österreicher*. Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik.
- Downs, A. (1957). *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. Harper.
- Dúró, J. (2023). *Civils in Opposition. CSOs in Party Politics after the 2010 Elections*. 5, 43–56.
- Dúró, J., & Nagy, A. (2025, manuscript). Repositioning the Radical Right: Voter Base Transformation in Hungary’s Jobbik Party. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*.
- Durrer de la Sota, C., Gethin, A., & Martínez-Toledano, C. (2021). *Party System Transformation and the Structure of Political Cleavages in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland, 1967-2019*.
- Dustmann, C., Casanova, M., Fertig, M., Preston, I., & Schmidt, C. M. (2003). *The impact of EU enlargement on migration flows*.
- Dustmann, C., & Preston, I. (2007). *Racial and economic factors in attitudes to immigration*.
- DW. (2015). *Austria erects fence on Slovenia border*. Dw.Com. <https://www.dw.com/en/austria-begins-erecting-fence-on-border-with-slovenia/a-18900764>
- DW. (2018a). *Austria shifts further to the right*. Dw.Com. <https://www.dw.com/en/austria-shifts-further-to-the-right-with-hardline-asylum-policy/a-43459994>

- DW. (2018b). *Viktor Orban's most controversial migration comments – DW – 01/09/2018*. Dw.Com. Retrieved January 30, 2025, from <https://www.dw.com/en/viktor-orbans-most-controversial-migration-comments/g-42086054>
- Eckstein, H. (1966). *Division and Cohesion in Democracy: A Study of Norway*. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt13x12vx>
- Economx. (2023). *Nagyot esett a Fidesz támogatottsága a választók körében*. Economx.hu. Retrieved January 29, 2025, from <https://www.economx.hu/belfold/fidesz-kormanypart-tamogatottsag-szavazo-valasztas-politika-partok.767871.html>
- Együtt2014. (2018). *Együtt. Európai élet az Együtt Magyarországn. Választási program 2018*.
- Együtt2014, PM (2014). *A te jövőd. Haza és haladás, szolidaritás és Európa*.
- Enyedi, Z. (2004). *A voluntarizmus tere. A pártok szerepe a törésvonalak kialakulásában*. <https://energy.ceu.edu/sites/default/files/publications/hu7.pdf>
- Enyedi, Z. (2014). The discreet charm of political parties. *Party Politics*, 20(2), 194–204. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068813519959>
- Epstein, G. S., & Gang, I. N. (2004). *The Influence of Others on Migration Plans*.
- ESS (European Social Survey). (2024). *Round 1-11* [Dataset].
- Euromed Survey. (n.d.). *The Securitisation of the EU's Migration Policies: What Consequences for Southern Mediterranean Countries and their Relations with the EU?* Retrieved January 30, 2025, from <https://www.iemed.org/publication/the-securitisation-of-the-eus-migration-policies-what-consequences-for-southern-mediterranean-countries-and-their-relations-with-the-eu/>
- Európai Parlament. (2015). *Elfogadott szövegek - Felkészülés a humanitárius csúcstalálkozóra: A humanitárius segítségnyújtás előtt álló kihívások és lehetőségek - 2015. december 16., Szerda*. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2015-0459_HU.html
- European Commission. (2011). *Free movement: Workers from eight Member States that joined EU in 2004 finally enjoy full rights*. European Commission - European Commission. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_11_506
- European Commission. (2024). *Terminology: Migration crisis*. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/european-migration-network-emn/emn-asylum-and-migration-glossary/glossary/migration-crisis_en
- European Parliament. (2015). *Refugee Crisis*. European Commission - European Commission. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_15_5596
- Eurostat. (2018). *Non-EU citizens: 4.4 % of the EU population in 2018*. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/ddn-20190315-1>
- Eurostat. (2022). *Fertility statistics*. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Fertility_statistics
- Eurostat. (2025). *Asylum applicants by type, citizenship, age and sex—Annual aggregated data* [Dataset]. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/migr_asyappctza/default/table
- Evans, G., & Whitefield, S. (1995). Social and ideological cleavage formation in post-communist Hungary. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 47(7), 1177–1204. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09668139508412314>
- Facchini, G., & Mayda, A. M. (2009). Does the Welfare State Affect Individual Attitudes toward Immigrants? Evidence across Countries. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 91(2), 295–314. <https://doi.org/10.1162/rest.91.2.295>
- Fakiolas, R. (2003). Regularising undocumented immigrants in Greece: Procedures and effects. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 29(3), 535–561. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830305614>
- Fidesz. (2010). *Nemzeti Ügyek Politikája. 2010*.
- Fidesz. (2014). *Folytassuk együtt a megkezdett munkát!* <http://moringjozsefattila.fidesz.hu/media/documents-file/314/1395071624-mjahl20140314.pdf>
- Fidesz.hu. (2019). *Orbán Viktor programot hirdetett a bevándorlás megállításaért*. <https://fidesz.hu/hirek/orban-viktor-programot-hirdetett-a-bevandorlas-megallitasaert>

- Foreign Policy. (2018). *The Future of Europe, for Better or Worse, Is Sebastian Kurz*. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/07/09/the-future-of-europe-for-better-or-worse-is-sebastian-kurz/>
- Forman, B. (2022). *Polarization between Rural-Urban Constituencies in the recent Hungarian Election*. RSA Main. <https://www.regionalstudies.org/rsa-blog/blog-21184/>
- FPÖ. (2013). *Liebe deine Nächsten. Für mich sind das unsere Österreicher*. www.fpoe.at
- FPÖ. (2017). *Österreicher verdienen FAIRNESS. Freiheitliches Wahlprogramm zur Nationalratswahl 2017*.
- FPÖ. (2019). *2019 – Freiheitliches Bildungsinstitut*. <https://www.fbi-politikschule.at/blauesoesterreich/wahlen/nationalratswahlen/2019/>
- Friedery, R., & Molnár, T. (2024). Az Európai Unió, valamint Magyarország migrációs és menekültügyi politikája a szabályozás tükrében: Leltár az uniós csatlakozás óta eltelt húsz évről. *Állam-És Jogtudomány*, 65(2), 120–146. <https://doi.org/10.51783/ajt.2024.2.06>
- Frontex. (2024). *Detections of illegal border-crossings statistics download (updated monthly)*. [Dataset]. <https://www.frontex.europa.eu/what-we-do/monitoring-and-risk-analysis/migratory-map/>
- Fuchs, D., & Klingemann, H. (1989). The Left-Right Schema. In M. K. Jennings & J. W. van Deth (Eds.), *Continuities in Political Action: A Longitudinal Study of Political Orientations in Three Western Democracies*. (p. 205). Walter de Gruyter.
- Fukuyama, F. (2006). *The End of History and the Last Man*. Free Press.
- Fussell, E. (2012). Space, Time, and Volition: Dimensions of Migration Theory. In M. R. Rosenblum & D. J. Tichenor (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of the Politics of International Migration* (1st ed., pp. 25–52). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195337228.013.0002>
- G7. (2023). *Egyre több az ázsiai vendégmunkás Magyarországon, a kormány szándékával egyezően—G7—Gazdasági sztorik érthetően*. <https://g7.hu/adat/20230514/egyre-tobb-az-azsiai-vendegmunkas-magyarorszag-a-kormany-szandekaval-egyezoen/>
- Gallagher, M. (1991). Proportionality, disproportionality and electoral systems. *Electoral Studies*, 10(1), 33–51. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0261-3794\(91\)90004-C](https://doi.org/10.1016/0261-3794(91)90004-C)
- Gallagher, M. (2024). *Election indices dataset*. http://www.tcd.ie/Political_Science/about/people/michael_gallagher/EISystems/index.php, accessed
- Gallai, S. (2020). *Migration trends and challenges in the Visegrad countries*. <https://www.unisci.es/migration-trends-and-challenges-in-the-visegrad-countries/>
- Gazsó, F., & Stumpf, I. (1998). *Választók és pártok a demokratikus átmenetben*.
- Genner, M. (2012). *Verleitung zum Aufstand. Ein Versuch über Widerstand und Antirassismus*. Mandelbaum.
- Gerring, J. (2004). What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good for? *American Political Science Review*, 98(2), 341–354. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055404001182>
- Gessler, T. (2017). The 2016 Referendum in Hungary. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3030867>
- Giebler, H., Meyer, T. M., & Wagner, M. (2021). The changing meaning of left and right: Supply- and demand-side effects on the perception of party positions. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*, 31(2), 243–262. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17457289.2019.1609001>
- Golosov, G. V. (2010). The Effective Number of Parties: A New Approach. *Party Politics*, 16(2), 171–192. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068809339538>
- Gráda, C. Ó. (2020). *Black '47 and Beyond: The Great Irish Famine in History, Economy, and Memory*. Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv14164pg>
- Gray, J. (1993). *Men are from Mars, women are from Venus: A practical guide for improving communication and getting what you want in your relationships* (1. ed). HarperCollins.
- Gyenyey L. (2018): *Kemény és puha jog az Unió beilleszkedési politikájában (IAS, 2018/4., 7-32. o.) | Szakcikk Adatbázis*. Retrieved January 30, 2025, from <https://szakcikkadatbazis.hu/doc/5700050>

- Hainmueller, J., & Hiscox, M. J. (2007). Educated Preferences: Explaining Attitudes Toward Immigration in Europe. *International Organization*, 61(2), 399–442. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818307070142>
- Hajdú, A., & Kurtán, S. (2020). Az ellenzékiesség és a kormányzás ciklikussága. Az Osztó Szabadságpárt menetelése a kormányzásért. In J. Dúró (Ed.), *Előzés jobbról? Radikális jobboldal Európában* (pp. 79–122). Mathias Corvinus Collegium Alapítvány.
- Hallin, D. C., Kitzberger, P., & Palos-Pons, M. (2025). Media anti-populism and political parallelism in Latin America. *Annals of the International Communication Association*, 49(2), 61–95. <https://doi.org/10.1093/anncom/wlaf003>
- Heck, R. H., Thomas, S. L., & Tabata, L. N. (2014). *Multilevel and Longitudinal Modeling with IBM SPSS. Quantitative Methodology Series*. (Second Edition). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Herlihy, D. (1997). *The Black Death and the Transformation of the West*. Harvard University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvjghwgp>
- HHRF. (2024). *The Situation of the Hungarian Minority in Ukraine*. <https://hhrf.org/on-our-radar/hungarians-in-ukraine/>
- Hollifield, J. F., Martin, P. L., & Orrenius, P. M. (Eds.). (2014). *Controlling immigration: A global perspective* (3rd edition). Stanford University Press.
- Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2018). Cleavage theory meets Europe's crises: Lipset, Rokkan, and the transnational cleavage. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 25(1), 109–135. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2017.1310279>
- Hooghe, L., Marks, G., & Wilson, C. J. (2002). Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions on European Integration? *Comparative Political Studies*, 35(8), 965–989. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001041402236310>
- Howley, N. (2021). *Eastern Europe's Demographic Crisis*. Retrieved January 30, 2025, from <https://www.tcd.ie/Economics/assets/pdf/SER/2021/eastern-eu-niamh-howley.pdf>
- HVG. (2007). *Vádemelési javaslat az olaszliszkai gyilkosság ügyében*. [hvg.hu](https://hvg.hu/itthon/20071005_olaszliszka_gyilkosság_ugyeszseg_szogi). https://hvg.hu/itthon/20071005_olaszliszka_gyilkosság_ugyeszseg_szogi
- HVG. (2015). *Itthon: "Nem veheted el a magyarok munkáját" – Orbánék erős szövegű plakáttal készülnek*. https://hvg.hu/itthon/20150602_Nem_veheted_el_a_magyarok_munkajat_Orba
- IDEA. (2023). *Mi Hazánk Mozgalom szavazói*. https://www.ideaintezet.hu/uploads/docs/37/mi-haza--nk-mozgalom_szavazo--ta--bor_2023_ma--rcius.pdf
- Illés, G., Körösenyi, A., & Metz, R. (2018). Broadening the limits of reconstructive leadership: Constructivist elements of Viktor Orbán's regime-building politics. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 20(4), 790–808. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1369148118775043>
- IMAS. (2021). *Politische Standorte und Positionen: Zwischen links und rechts—In der Krise geht es nach links*. <https://www.imas.at/news/politische-standorte-und-positionen-zwischen-links-und-rechts-in-der-krise-geht-es-nach-links>
- Index. (2007). *Bulvár—Nyolc vádlott az olaszliszkai lincselési ügyben*. <https://index.hu/bulvar/1112lszk/>
- Index. (2010). *Elfogadták a kettős állampolgárságot*. Retrieved January 30, 2025, from https://index.hu/belfold/2010/05/26/elfogadtak_a_kettos_allampolgarsagot/?token=54bd98092a5dc8e77a019383d8dc7e5a
- Inforádió. (2016). *Fodor Gábor: A mai napnak Magyarország a vesztese—Infostart.hu*. <https://infostart.hu/belfold/2016/10/02/fodor-gabor-a-mai-napnak-magyarorszag-a-vesztese>
- Inglehart, R. (1977). *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics*. Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400869589>
- Institute for Economics & Peace.(IEP) (2020). *Over one billion people at threat of being displaced by 2050 due to environmental change, conflict and civil unrest*. 2020. Retrieved January 27, 2025, from <https://www.economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Ecological-Threat-Register-Press-Release-27.08-FINAL.pdf>
- International Labour Organization. (2023). *XC of 2023. Law on the general rules for the entry and residence*

- of third-country nationals.
<https://natlex.ilo.org/dyn/natlex2/natlex2/files/download/117319/HUN-117319.pdf>
- Jobbik. (2010). *Radikális változás. A Jobbik országgyűlési választási programja a nemzeti önrendelkezésért és a társadalmi igazságosságért.*
- Jobbik. (2014). *Kimondjuk. Megoldjuk. A Jobbik országgyűlési választási programja a nemzet felemelkedéséért.*
- Jobbik. (2018). *Magyar Szívvel, Józan Ésszel, Tiszta Kézszel. A Jobbik 2018-as választási programja.*
- Johann, D., Jenny, M., & Kritzinger, S. (2016). Mehr Wettbewerb bei Österreichs Wahlen? Die neue Partei NEOS und ihre engsten Konkurrenten. *Zeitschrift Für Parlamentsfragen*, 47(4), 814–830. <https://doi.org/10.5771/0340-1758-2016-4-814>
- Jolly, S., Bakker, R., Hooghe, L., Marks, G., Polk, J., Rovny, J., Steenbergen, M., & Vachudova, M. A. (2022). Chapel Hill Expert Survey trend file, 1999–2019. *Electoral Studies*, 75, 102420. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2021.102420>
- Kadlót, T. (2016). *Az Y-generáció politikai értékrendje Magyarországon és a régióban. A Millennial Dialogue nemzetközi ifjúságkutatás magyar eredményei regionális összehasonlításban.* Polity Solutions. https://www.policysolutions.hu/userfiles/elemzes/242/y_generacio_politikai_ertekrend.pdf
- Kallius, A., Monterescu, D., & Rajaram, P. K. (2016). Immobilizing mobility: Border ethnography, illiberal democracy, and the politics of the “refugee crisis” in Hungary. *American Ethnologist*, 43(1), 25–37. <https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.12260>
- Karácsony G., & Róna D. (2010). *A JOBBIK TITKA A szélsőjobb magyarországi megerősödésének.* XIX(1), 31–63.
- Katona, T. (1981). *A tatárjárás emlékezete.* Magyar Helikon.
- Keil, A. (2012). *Adalékok a Critical Mass nemzetekdől: Az egyetemista-főiskolás LMP szavazók jellemzése.*
- Kenrick, D. T., Griskevicius, V., Neuberg, S. L., & Schaller, M. (2010). Renovating the Pyramid of Needs: Contemporary Extensions Built Upon Ancient Foundations. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5(3), 292–314. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610369469>
- Kinealy, C. (2006). *This Great Calamity: The Irish Famine 1845-52* (2nd ed). Gill Books.
- King, R. (2002). Towards a new map of European migration. *International Journal of Population Geography*, 8(2), 89–106. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ijpg.246>
- King, R. (2012). Theories and Typologies of Migration: An Overview and A Primer. *Malmö University*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/260096281_Theories_and_Typologies_of_Migration_An_Overview_and_A_Primer
- Király A. (2018, April 10). *A fiatalok között a leggyengébb a Fidesz.* 444. <https://444.hu/2018/04/10/a-fiatalok-kozott-a-leggyengebb-a-fidesz>
- Kitschelt, H., Hawkins, K. A., Luna, J. P., Rosas, G., & Zechmeister, E. J. (2010). *Latin American Party Systems* (1st ed.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511750311>
- Klinger, A., Csahók, I., Ehrlich, É., Fajth, G., Gyulay, F., Harcsa, I., & Kamarás, F. (Eds.). (1992). *Történeti statisztikai idősorok 1867-1992.: Vol. I.* Központi Statisztikai Hivatal.
- Knoll, B. R., Redlawsk, D. P., & Sanborn, H. (2011). Framing Labels and Immigration Policy Attitudes in the Iowa Caucuses: “Trying to Out-Tancredo Tancredo”. *Political Behavior*, 33(3), 433–454. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-010-9141-x>
- Knutsen, O., & Scarbrough, E. (1998). Cleavage Politics. In J. W. V. Deth & E. Scarbrough (Eds.), *The Impact of Values* (1st ed., pp. 492–524). Oxford University Press, Oxford. <https://doi.org/10.1093/0198294751.003.0018>
- Kobayashi, Y., & Tanaka, S. (2025). How gender shapes attitudes and concerns about immigration. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 13(3), 576–595. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2024.2378023>
- Kormány.hu. (2015). *Nemzeti konzultáció a bevándorlásról és a terrorizmusról (2015).* <https://2015-2019.kormany.hu/download/4/d3/c0000/Bev%20konzult%C3%A1ci%C3%B3%20eredm%C3%>

- Körösényi, A., Török, G., & Tóth, C. (2003). *A magyar politikai rendszer*. Osiris kiadó.
- Koser, K. (2018). *Asylum migration and implications for countries of origin*.
- Krónika Online. (2007.). *Megalakult a Magyar Gárda*. Retrieved January 29, 2025, from https://kronikaonline.ro/kulfold/megalakult_a_magyar_garda
- KSH. (2011). *National data, Population by nationality, mother tongue, language spoken with family members or friends and affinity with nationalities' cultural values*. https://www.ksh.hu/nepszamlalas/tables_regional_00
- KSH. (2024a). 22.1.1.26. *Magyarországra érkezett menedékkérők és a nemzetközi védelemben részesülők száma*. https://www.ksh.hu/stadat_files/nep/hu/nep0026.html
- KSH. (2024b). *Népszámlálási adatbázis*. https://nepszamlalas2022.ksh.hu/adatbazis/#/table/WBS003/N4IgFgpgghgJiBcBtEAVAkqWQKI H0AKWASmgPIAiIAugDQgDOAljBASikQKoAyOA4liQCsvWnQgBjAC4MA9gDtWqLDwD KALRwBBMppQiQAMwYAbSRABOdBKADWDOXHggMUA4haEOZPMMIVpDZMXAJi cg9beOcQFQhJDxAAAnyhjAFd_RQAmAAZMzKoAXxo2Th5-IQiQOwcEGLiE5LSMpBAACQ5C4qVVDW1dSuro2PjaRvSA5CxePjQEgb4sTsoCgqA===
- KSH. (2025). 22.1.1.2. *A népesség száma és átlagos életkora nem szerint*. https://www.ksh.hu/stadat_files/nep/hu/nep0002.html
- Laakso, M., & Taagepera, R. (1979). "Effective" Number of Parties: A Measure with Application to West Europe. *Comparative Political Studies*, 12(1), 3–27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001041407901200101>
- Landy-Gyebnár M. (2024, February 19). *A burgonyavész eredete* | *National Geographic*. <https://ng.24.hu/tudomany/2024/02/19/a-burgonyavesz-eredete/>
- Lazarsfeld, P. F., Berelson, B., & Gaudet, H. (1944). *The People's Choice: How the Voter Makes Up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign*. Columbia University Press.
- Lee, J. J. H., Cho, S., Guadagno, L., Wagner, A.-C., Takehana, Y., & International Organization for Migration (Eds.). (2015). *World migration report 2015: Migrants and cities: new partnerships to manage mobility*. International Organization for Migration.
- Lijphart, A. (1984). *Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries*. Yale University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1ww3w2t>
- Lilleker, D. (2006). *Key Concepts in Political Communication*. SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446212943>
- Lipset, S. M., & Rokkan, S. (1967). Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction. In *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, eds Lipset S.M. and Rokkan S. (pp. 1–64). Free Press.
- Liste Pilz. (2017). *Für unsere Heimat Österreich*.
- LMP. (2010). *A fenntartható jövő, a befogadó társadalom és a megújuló demokrácia stratégiája. A Lehet Más a Politika választási programja*. lehetmas.hu
- LMP. (2014). *Az LMP választási programja. 2014*.
- LMP. (2018). *Választási Program 2018*.
- Luther, K. R. (1989). Dimensions of party system change: The case of Austria. *West European Politics*, 12(4), 3–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402388908424760>
- Luther, K. R. (1992). Consociationalism, parties and the party system. *West European Politics*, 15(1), 45–98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402389208424892>
- Luther, K. R. (1999). Austria: From Moderate to Polarized Pluralism. In M. Donovan & M. Broughton (Eds.), *Changing Party Systems in Western Europe* (pp. 118–142). Pinter.
- Maderthaner, W., & Müller, W. C. (1996). Wolfgang Maderthaner, Wolfgang C. Müller (Hg.): *Die Organisation der österreichischen Sozialdemokratie 1889–1995*: Wien: Löcker Verlag 1996, 379 S., öS 248,-. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, 41(1), 166–167. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11615-000->

- Magyar Idők. (2017). *Magyarország visszalép az olimpiai pályázattól*. <https://www.magyaridok.hu/belfold/magyarorszag-visszalep-az-olimpiai-palyazattol-1434904/>
- Magyar Nemzet. (2014a). *Csak a Fidesz*. <https://magyarnemzet.hu/belfold-archivum/2014/04/csak-a-fidesz-1>
- Magyar Nemzet. (2014b). *Orbán Viktor beszéde a Fidesz választási nagygyűlésén*. <https://magyarnemzet.hu/belfold-archivum/2014/03/orban-viktor-beszede-a-fidesz-valasztasi-nagygyulesen>
- Mair, P. (2005). *Democracy Beyond Parties*. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3vs886v9>
- Mair, P., & Thomassen, J. (2010). Political representation and government in the European Union. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 17(1), 20–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501760903465132>
- Malmerg, G. (1997). *Time and Space in International Migration*.
- Mandiner. (2014). *A 2014-es évértékelő beszéd*. <https://mandiner.hu/velemenyt/2014/02/orban-viktor-a-2014-es-evertekelo-beszed>
- Manifesto Project Dataset. (2024). *Manifesto Project Dataset (version 2024a)* (Version 2024a) [Dataset]. Manifesto Project. <https://doi.org/10.25522/MANIFESTO.MPDS.2024A>
- MAPP Dataset. (2016). *Party systems* [Dataset]. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.61234>
- Margaryan, S., Paul, A., & Siedler, T. (2018). Does Education Affect Attitudes Towards Immigration? Evidence from Germany. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3301739>
- Maslow, A. H. (1954). *Motivation Personality* (1954th ed.).
- Marks, G., Attewell, D., Rovny, J., & Hooghe, L. (2021). Cleavage Theory. In M. Riddervold, J. Trondal, & A. Newsome (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of EU Crises* (pp. 173–193). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-51791-5_9
- Maslow, A. H. (1943, 2000). *A Theory of Human Motivation*. <https://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Maslow/motivation.htm>
- Mayda, A. M. (2006). Who Is Against Immigration? A Cross-Country Investigation of Individual Attitudes toward Immigrants. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 88(3), 510–530. <https://doi.org/10.1162/rest.88.3.510>
- McNeill, W. H., & Adams, R. S. (with American academy of arts and sciences). (1978). *Human migration: Patterns and policies*. Indiana university press.
- Medián. (2018, July 24). *Egészpályás feltámadás – Median*. <https://median.hu/2018/07/24/egeszpanyas-feltamadas/>
- Mérce. (2017). *Az MSZP sem ért egyet Gyurcsánnyal: Nem vennék el a kettős állampolgárok szavazati jogát « Mérce*. <https://merce.hu/2017/11/02/az-mszp-sem-ert-egyed-gyurcsannyal-nem-vennek-el-a-kettos-allampolgarok-szavazati-jogat/>
- Migration Research Institution. (2018). *Analysis 2018/4: By any other Name: No-go Zones, Rhetoric and Reality*. <https://migraciokutato.hu/en/2018/03/06/by-any-other-name-no-go-zones-rhetoric-and-reality/>
- Miles, A. (2015). The (Re)genesis of Values: Examining the Importance of Values for Action. *American Sociological Review*, 80(4), 680–704. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122415591800>
- Miniszterelnöki Kabinetiroda. (2014a). *Magyarország jobban teljesít az uniós átlagnál*. <https://www.miniszterelnok.hu/>
- Miniszterelnöki Kabinetiroda. (2014b). *Visszaszerezzük az országot a magyaroknak*. <https://www.miniszterelnok.hu/>
- Miniszterelnöki Kabinetiroda. (2015). *A multikulturalizmus párhuzamos társadalmakat hoz létre Európában*. Kormányzat. <https://2015-2019.kormany.hu/hu/a-miniszterelnok/hirek/a-multikulturalizmus-parhuzamos-tarsadalmakat-hoz-letre-europaban>
- Miniszterelnöki Kabinetiroda. (2018a). *Orbán Viktor a Kossuth Rádió „180 perc” című műsorában*.

<https://www.kormany.hu/hu/a-miniszterelnok/beszedek-publikaciok-interjuk/orban-viktor-a-kossuth-radio-180-perc-cimu-musoraban20180330>

- Miniszterelnöki Kabinetiroda. (2018b). *Orbán Viktor beszéde a Fidesz kampányzáró eseményén.*
- Miniszterelnöki Kabinetiroda. (2018c). *Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXIX. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetem és Diáktáborban.* Kormányzat. <https://2015-2019.kormany.hu/hu/a-miniszterelnok/beszedek-publikaciok-interjuk/orban-viktor-beszede-a-xxix-balvanyosi-nyari-szabadegyetem-es-diaktaborban>
- Molnár, C. (2020). Útkereső radikalizmus. A Jobbik az Országgyűlésben. In J. Dúró (Ed.), *Előzés jobbról? Radikális jobboldal Európában.* Mathias Corvinus Collegium Alapítvány.
- Momentum. (2018a). A külföldön szavazók 20-25%-a szavazhatott a Momentumra. *Momentum Mozgalom.* <https://momentum.hu/a-kulfoldon-szavazok-20-25-a-szavazhatott-a-momentumra/>
- Momentum. (2018b). Mérések igazolják: Tízből hat momentumos szavazó új az ellenzéki oldalon. *Momentum Mozgalom.* <https://momentum.hu/meresek-igazoljak-tizbol-hat-momentumos-szavazo-uj-az-ellenzeki-oldalon/>
- MSZP. (2010). *Nemzeti modernizáció, összetartó közösség. Ajálat a demokratikus oldal programjára.*
- MSZP. (2013). *Igazság, biztonság, szabadság, jólét. Az MSZP ajánlata Magyarországnak.*
- MSZP. (2018). *Tegyük igazságot! Választási program 2018.*
- Müller, P., & Gebauer, C. (2021). Austria and the Global Compact on Migration: The ‘populist securitization’ of foreign policy. *Comparative European Politics*, 19(6), 760–778. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41295-021-00260-7>
- Müller, W. C. (1992). Austrian governmental institutions: Do they matter? *West European Politics*, 15(1), 99–131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402389208424893>
- Mushaben, J. M. (2017). *Becoming Madam Chancellor: Angela Merkel and the Berlin Republic.* Cambridge university press.
- Nagy, A., & Dúró, J. (n.d.). *THE INFLUENCE OF EDUCATION ON HUNGARIAN ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRATION.*
- Nagy, Z. (2016). Repertoires of Contention and New Media: The Case of a Hungarian Anti-billboard Campaign. *Intersections. East European Journal of Society and Politics*, 2(4), Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.17356/ieejsp.v2i4.279>
- Napi Gazdaság. (2014). Orbán Viktor: A szavak helyett a tettek beszélnek. *Magyar Idők.* <https://www.magyaridok.hu/cikk/7999/>
- narancs.hu. (2019, February 20). *A Független Kisgazdapárt is csatlakozna a MIÉP és a Mi Hazánk Mozgalom együttműködéséhez.* MagyarNarancs.hu. <https://magyarnarancs.hu/belpol/a-fuggetlen-kisgazdapart-is-csatlakozna-a-miep-es-a-mi-hazank-mozgalom-egyuttmukodeséhez-117506>
- National WWI Museum and Memorial. (2025). *The Fourteen Points.* National WWI Museum and Memorial. <https://www.theworldwar.org/learn/peace/fourteen-points>
- NEOS. (2013). *Pläne für ein neues Österreich.*
- NEOS. (2017). *ZIELE. Welche haben Sie vor Augen? Erfahren Sie, wie Wir Gemeinsam etwas bewegen können. Das Zukunftsmanifest für ein neues Österreich.*
- NEOS. (2019). *Pläne von A bis Z.*
- Népszava. (2015). *DK: A magyarok márpedig a kvóták pártján Vannak Népszava* Retrieved January 29, 2025, from https://nepszava.hu/1076222_dk-a-magyarok-marpedig-a-kvotak-partjan-vannak
- Népszava. (2023). *A kiléptető rendszer: Európából már kivezetett Orbán Viktor, az EU-ból is ki fog?* Népszava. Retrieved January 29, 2025, from https://nepszava.hu/3184039_orban-viktor-magyarorszag-europai-unio-kilepes-lattmann-tamas-hann-endre-elemzes
- Neto, O. A., & Cox, G. W. (1997). Electoral Institutions, Cleavage Structures, and the Number of Parties. *American Journal of Political Science*, 41(1), 149. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2111712>

- Nießen, D., Partsch, M., & Groskurth, K. (2020). *Data for: An English-Language Adaptation of the General Life Satisfaction Short Scale (L-1)* (Version 1.0.0) [Dataset]. GESIS Data Archive. <https://doi.org/10.7802/2079>
- NVI. (2010). *2010. Évi Országgyűlési Képviselő Választás.* <https://static.valasztas.hu/dyn/pv10/outroot/vdin2/hu/eredind.htm>
- NVI. (2014a). *2014. Évi országgyűlési választások.* Nemzeti Választási Iroda. <https://www.valasztas.hu/48>
- NVI. (2014b). *A levélben leadott listás szavazatok megszámlálása.* <https://static.valasztas.hu/dyn/pv14/szavossz/hu/levjkv.html>
- NVI. (2018). *Levélszavazás jegyzőkönyve.* NVI. <https://www.valasztas.hu/levszavazas-jegyzokonyv>
- NVI. (2022a). *Nemzeti Választási Iroda—Országgyűlési Választás 2022.* <https://vtr.valasztas.hu/ogy2022/valasztasi-informaciok/levszavazas?tab=results>
- NVI. (2022b). *Országgyűlési képviselők választása 2022.* Nemzeti Választási Iroda. <https://www.valasztas.hu/ogy2022>
- NVI. (2025). *1990–2024—Nemzeti Választási Iroda.* https://www.valasztas.hu/1990-2024_eredmenyek
- O’Leary, B. (2019). Consociation in the Present. *Swiss Political Science Review*, 25(4), 556–574. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spsr.12385>
- Orbán, B. (2020). *A magyar stratégiai gondolkodás egyszeregye.* MCC.
- ORF, S. (2019, September 29). *Turbulenter Abend im Minutentakt.* news.ORF.at. <https://orf.at/live/5075/>
- Origo. (2016, May 17). *Ellenzéki bojkott készül a népszavazásra.* ORIGO. <https://www.origo.hu/itthon/2016/05/orban-viktor-fidesz-kdnp-nepszavazas-kvotareferendum-ellenzek>
- Origo. (2018). *14 éve árulta el a baloldal a határon túli magyarokat.* <https://www.origo.hu/itthon/2018/12/a-2004-december-5-i-nepszavazas-orok-memento-a-magyar-tortenelemben>
- Origo. (2022). *Gyurcsányék Amerika és Brüsszel segítségével akarnak visszatérni a hatalomba.* ORIGO. <https://www.origo.hu/itthon/2022/09/rotyis-balint-interju-14>
- ÖVP. (2013). *Zukunftsweisend. Österreich 2018: Das Programm der ÖVP zur Nationalratswahl 2013.*
- ÖVP. (2017). *Der neue Weg. Neure Gerechtigkeit & Verantwortung.*
- ÖVP. (2019). *Unser Weg für Österreich. 100 Projekte.*
- Pedersen, M. N. (1979). The dynamics of European party systems: Changing patterns of electoral volatility. *European Journal of Political Research*, 7(1), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.1979.tb01267.x>
- Pénzes, J., & Pásztor, I. Z. (2014). Romák Magyarországon. *A Földgömb*, 32.
- Perchinig, B. (2010). Chapter 1. All You Need To Know To Become An Austrian: Naturalisation Policy And Citizenship Testing In Austria. In R. Van Oers, E. Ersbøll, & D. Kostakopoulou (Eds.), *A Re-definition of Belonging?* (pp. 24–49). Brill | Nijhoff. <https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004175068.i-332.9>
- Pertile, M. (2018, September 27). The Diplomatic Row between Italy and Austria over Vienna’s Draft Laws on Dual Nationality and Consular Assistance for German- and Ladin-speaking South Tyroleans. *Italy’s Diplomatic and Parliamentary Practice on International Law.* <https://italyspractice.info/2018/09/27/the-diplomatic-row-between-italy-and-austria-over-viennas-draft-laws-on-dual-nationality-and-consular-assistance-for-german-and-ladin-speaking-south-tyroleans/>
- Péti M., Szabó B., & Szabó L. (2017). A Kárpát-medence országaiból Magyarországra áttelepült népesség területi mintázata. *Területi Statisztika*, 57(3), 311–350. <https://doi.org/10.15196/TS570304>
- Pető, A., & Svégl, F. (2024). Nationalism, Pronatalism, and the Guild of Gynecology: The Complex Legacy of Abortion Regulation in Hungary. *Central European History*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008938924000037>

- Piketty, T. (2018). *Brahmin Left vs Merchant Right: Rising Inequality and the Changing Structure of Political Conflict*.
- Piore, M. J. (1979). *Birds of Passage: Migrant Labor and Industrial Societies* (1st ed.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511572210>
- Plasser, F., & Ulram, P. A. (Eds.). (2008). *Electoral Change in Austria*. (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Plasser, F., Ulram, P. A., & Grausgruber, A. (1992). The decline of 'Lager mentality' and the new model of electoral competition in Austria. *West European Politics*, 15(1), 16–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402389208424891>
- PM. (2018). *Mindenki számít! Karácsony Gergely, a Párbeszéd miniszterelnök-jelöltjének programja*.
- Politico. (2012). *Austrian interior minister promises 'very, very tough asylum policies.'* POLITICO. <https://www.politico.eu/article/herbert-kickl-austrian-interior-minister-promises-very-very-tough-asylum-policies/>
- Politico. (2018). *Sebastian Kurz: EU lacks 'focus' on big issues.* POLITICO. <https://www.politico.eu/article/sebastian-kurz-eu-lacks-focus-on-big-issues/>
- Posner, D. N. (2007). Regime Change and Ethnic Cleavages in Africa. *Comparative Political Studies*, 40(11), 1302–1327. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414006291832>
- Przeworski, A., & Sprague, J. D. (1988). *Paper stones: A history of electoral socialism* (2. print). Univ. of Chicago Pr.
- Quinley, H. E., & Glock, C. Y. (1983). *Anti-semitism in America*. Transaction Books.
- Rae, D. W., & Taylor, M. (1970). *The analysis of political cleavages*. Yale University Press.
- Redžić, E., & Everett, J. (2020). Cleavages in the Post-Communist Countries of Europe: A Review. *Politics in Central Europe*, 16(1), 231–258. <https://doi.org/10.2478/pce-2020-0011>
- Renwick, A. (2002). The Role of Non-elite Forces in Hungary's Negotiated Revolution. In A. Bozóki (Ed.), *The Roundtable Talks of 1989* (pp. 191–210). Central European University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9789633865453-013>
- Reuters. (2022). *Anti-vaccine far-right rally attracts hundreds in Hungary | Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/anti-vaccine-far-right-rally-attracts-hundreds-hungary-2022-01-16/>
- Reuters. (2023, March 31). Hungary to phase out some of its price caps as inflation comes down -PM Orban. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/hungary-phase-out-some-its-price-caps-inflation-comes-down-pm-orban-2023-03-31/>
- Reuters. (2024, September 30). Far right wins Austria election, boosting European right-wing surge. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/austria-holds-tight-election-with-far-right-bidding-historic-win-2024-09-28/>
- Rheindorf, M., & Wodak, R. (2018). Borders, Fences, and Limits—Protecting Austria From Refugees: Metadiscursive Negotiation of Meaning in the Current Refugee Crisis. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 16(1–2), 15–38. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2017.1302032>
- Riedlsperger, M. E. (1978). *The lingering shadow of nazism: The Austrian Independent Party movement since 1945*. East European quarterly; distributed by Columbia University Press.
- Robinson, K., & Merrow, W. (n.d.). *The Arab Spring at Ten Years: What's the Legacy of the Uprisings? | Council on Foreign Relations*. Retrieved 28 August 2025, from <https://www.cfr.org/article/arab-spring-ten-years-whats-legacy-uprisings>
- Rohrschneider, R., & Whitefield, S. (2009). Understanding Cleavages in Party Systems: Issue Position and Issue Salience in 13 Post-Communist Democracies. *Comparative Political Studies*, 42(2), 280–313. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414008325285>
- Róna D. (2008). *A törésvonal fogalma a politikatudományban* Magyarország*.
- Rudnev, M., Magun, V., & Schwartz, S. (2018). Relations Among Higher Order Values Around the World. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 49(8), 1165–1182. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022118782644>

- Sander, N., Abel, G. J., & Riosmena, F. (2013). *The Future of International Migration. Developing Expert-Based Assumptions for Global Population Projections*. Federal Institute for Population Research. <https://www.bib.bund.de/Publikation/2013/The-Future-of-International-Migration.html?nn=1209660>
- Sartori, G. (1969). From the Sociology of Politics to Political Sociology. *Government and Opposition*, 4(2), 195–214. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-7053.1969.tb00173.x>
- Sass, K., & Kuhnle, S. (2023). The Gender Cleavage: Updating Rokkanian Theory for the Twenty-First Century. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 30(1), 188–210. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sp/jxac003>
- Sata, R. (2023). Performing crisis to create your enemy: Europe vs. the EU in Hungarian populist discourse. *Frontiers in Political Science*, 5, 1032470. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpos.2023.1032470>
- Schattschneider, E. E., & Adamany, D. (1975). *The semisovereign people: A realist's view of democracy in America* (Reissued). Wadsworth.
- Schmidt, P., Bamberg, S., Davidov, E., Herrmann, J., & Schwartz, S. H. (2007). Die Messung von Werten mit dem "Portraits Value Questionnaire." *Zeitschrift Für Sozialpsychologie*, 38(4), 261–275. <https://doi.org/10.1024/0044-3514.38.4.261>
- Schumacher, S., Peyrl, J., & Neugschwendtner, T. (2012). *Fremdenrecht: Asyl, Ausländerbeschäftigung, Einbürgerung, Einwanderung, Verwaltungsverfahren* (4., neu bearb. Aufl., Rechtsstand: 1. März 2012). ÖGB-Verl.
- Schwartz, S. H. (2006). *Basic Human Values: An Overview*. Scopus—Homepage. (2025). Retrieved 29 August 2025, from <https://www.scopus.com/pages/home?display=basic&zone=header&origin=#basic>
- Sides, J., & Citrin, J. (2007). European Opinion About Immigration: The Role of Identities, Interests and Information. *British Journal of Political Science*, 37(3), 477–504. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123407000257>
- Sik, E., & Simonovits, B. (n.d.). *The first results of the content analysis of the media in the course of migration crisis in Hungary* 1 2.
- Simon, W. B. (1966). *The Political Parties of Austria*.
- Son, K. (2024). *Gender cleavage and political parties in 19 welfare states, 1900–1975*. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13501763.2024.2439562#abstract>
- SORA. (2019). *National election results Austria 1919–2017 (OA edition)* [Dataset]. AUSSDA. <https://doi.org/10.11587/EQUDAL>
- SPÖ. (2013). *111 Projekte für Österreich. SPÖ-Wahlprogramm 2013*.
- SPÖ (2017). *Plan A. Ein Plan, Alle profitieren*.
- SPÖ. (2018). *Mit Sicherheit für Österreich: Fair. Sozial. Heimmattreu*.
- SPÖ. (2019). *Menschlichkeit Siegt. Mit diesem Programm zur Nationalratswahl 2019*.
- Statistics Austria. (2024). *Every fourth person living in Austria has a migration background*.
- Statistik Austria. (2024a). *Religious denomination*. STATISTICS AUSTRIA. Retrieved January 30, 2025, from <https://www.statistik.at/en/statistics/population-and-society/population/further-population-statistics/religious-denomination>
- Statistik Austria. (2024b). *Population by Nationality*. <https://statcube.at/statistik.at/ext/statcube/jsf/dataCatalogueExplorer.xhtml>
- Stubager, R. (2010). The Development of the Education Cleavage: Denmark as a Critical Case. *West European Politics*, 33(3), 505–533. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402381003654544>
- Stump I. (1996). *A választói magatartás hullámvázása*.
- Szabó, A., & Kern, T. (2011). *A magyar fiatalok politikai aktivitása*. Nemzeti Ifjúságkutató Intézet.
- Szabó, A., & Kiss B. (2013). *KONFLIKTUS ÉS GENERÁCIÓ. Politikatudományi Szemle*(XXII/4), 97–115.

- Szabó-Szentgróti, G., Gelencsér, M., Szabó-Szentgróti, E., & Berke, S. (2019). Generációs hatás a munkahelyi konfliktusokban. *Vezetéstudomány / Budapest Management Review*, 50(4), 77–88. <https://doi.org/10.14267/VEZTUD.2019.04.08>
- Szilvia S. (2012). *Az osztrák nyelv- és kisebbségpolitika legújabb diskurzusai*.
- Szoboszlai, G., & Wiener, G. (2016). *Választáspolitikológia*. Napvilág Kiadó.
- Szombati, K., & Feischmidt, M. (2012). *Gyöngyöspata 2011. A magyarországi szélsőjobboldal laboratóriuma. A politikai mozgósítás és az interetnikus konfliktus elemzése és tanulságai*. Ökopolisz Alapítvány. <https://real.mtak.hu/134825/1/Gyongyospata2011-HU.pdf>
- Szoták S. (2012). *Az osztrák nyelv- és kisebbségpolitika legújabb diskurzusai*.
- Tálas, P. (2016). Az európai migrációs válság értelmezési kereteiről. *Nemzet És Biztonság*, 2016(6), 86–115.
- Team Stronach. (2013). *Grundsatzprogramm*.
- The New York Times. (1982). *AUSTRIA FINDS POLISH INFLOW A BURDEN*. <https://www.nytimes.com/1982/01/10/world/austria-finds-polish-inflow-a-burden.html>
- Thürmer, G. (1995). *Nem kell NATO*. Progressio Kft.
- TIME. (2017). *Only By Regaining Control Can We Solve the Migration and Refugee Crisis*. TIME. <https://time.com/5068561/sebastian-kurz-austria-chancellor-migrant-crisis/>
- Tóka G. (2022a). A 2022-es országgyűlési választások: Adatok és meglepetések. In Kolosi T., Szelényi I., & Tóth I. G. (Eds.), *Társadalmi Riport* (pp. 371–388). TÁRKI Társadalomkutatói Intézet Zrt. <https://doi.org/10.61501/TRIP.2022.19>
- Tóka, G. (2022b, April 21). *Választási tanulságok: A Nemzeti Választási Iroda is tévedhet egy picit, hát még a közvélemény-kutatások*. Vox Populi. <https://voxpathuli.444.hu/2022/04/21/valasztasi-tanulsagok-a-nemzeti-valasztasi-iroda-is-tevedhet-egy-picit-hat-meg-a-kozvelemeney-kutatasok>
- Toka, G., & Popa, S. (2013). Hungary. In S. Berglund, J. Ekman, K. Deegan-Krause, & T. Knutsen (Eds.), *The Handbook of Political Change in Eastern Europe, Third Edition*. Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781782545880.00016>
- Torcal, M., & Mainwaring, S. (2003). The Political Recrafting of Social Bases of Party Competition: Chile, 1973–95. *British Journal of Political Science*, 33(1), 55–84. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123403000036>
- Tóth, C. (2015). Választási rendszer. In A. Körösi (Ed.), *A magyar politikai rendszer negyedszázad után*. Osiris kiadó-MTA.
- Treaty of Trianon (Treaty of Peace between the Allied and Associated Powers and Hungary)*. (2010, October 22). <https://www.dipublico.org/100759/treaty-of-trianon-treaty-of-peace-between-the-allied-and-associated-powers-and-hungary/>
- Ullrich, P. A. (1997). Politische Kultur der Bevölkerung. In H. Dachs, P. Gerlich, H. Gottweis, F. Horner, H. Kramer, V. Lauber, W. Müller, & Talos, Emmerich (Eds.), *Handbuch des politischen Systems Österreichs. Die zweite Republik*. Manz.
- UN DESA. (2024). *International Migrant Stock*. Retrieved January 30, 2025, from <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/international-migrant-stock>
- UN DESA. (2012). *Toolkit on International Migration*. https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/others/docs/toolkit_DESA_June%202012.pdf
- UN General Assembly. (1950, 2025). *Draft Convention relating to the Status of Refugees*. <https://www.refworld.org/legal/resolution/unga/1950/en/7683>
- UN ILO. (1999). *ILC87—Report III (1B) Migrant Workers*. <https://webapps.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc87/r3-1b4.htm>
- UN IMO. (2023). *Key Migration Terms*. International Organization for Migration. <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>
- UN IMO. (2024a). *A Complex Nexus*. International Organization for Migration.

<https://www.iom.int/complex-nexus>

- UN IMO. (2024b). *What is a migration crisis and how to address it integrally*. <https://lac.iom.int/en/blogs/what-migration-crisis-and-how-address-it-integrally>
- United Nations. (1998). *Statistical papers. 58: Series M Recommendations on statistics of international migration*.
- United Nations. (2018). *Why “Undocumented” or “Irregular”?* Retrieved January 27, 2025, from https://www.unhcr.org/cy/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2018/09/TerminologyLeaflet_EN_PICUM.pdf
- Urry, J. (2012). *Mobilities* (Reprint). Polity Press.
- Válasz Online. (2019). „A Jobbik sosem volt antiszemita” – az egykor „zsidólistázó” Gyöngyösi Márton a Válasznak. <https://www.valaszonline.hu/2019/02/19/jobbik-gyongyosi-marton-antiszemizmus/>
- Van Der Waal, J., Achterberg, P., Houtman, D., De Koster, W., & Manevska, K. (2010). ‘Some are more equal than others’: Economic egalitarianism and welfare chauvinism in the Netherlands. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 20(4), 350–363. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0958928710374376>
- Van Houwelingen, P., Iedema, J., & Dekker, P. (2019). Convergence on political values? A multi-level analysis of developments in 15 EU countries 2002-2016. *Journal of European Integration*, 41(5), 587–604. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2018.1537270>
- Venetoklis, T. (2025). The 2008 economic recession and the feeling of safety: Is anyone still afraid of walking outdoors after dark? *Quality & Quantity*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-025-02253-0>
- Virág, A., & Mikecz, D. (2016). The Hungarian quote referendum. In C. Tóth (Ed.), *Taking control of the debate: Liberal policies and communication strategies of migration in Central and Eastern Europe* (pp. 115–128). Republikon Institute. <https://republikon.hu/media/114219/Taking-control-of-the-debate.pdf>
- von Rosen, J. (2019). The Securitization of Migration as a Threat to Liberal, Democratic Societies. *Sicherheit Und Frieden (S+F) / Security and Peace*, 37(1), 35–40.
- Wahba, M. A., & Bridwell, L. G. (1976). Maslow reconsidered: A review of research on the need hierarchy theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 15(2), 212–240. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073\(76\)90038-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(76)90038-6)
- Wallerstein, I. M. (2011). *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. University of California Press. <https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520948570>
- Wandruszka, A. (1954). Österreichs politische Struktur. Die Entwicklung der Parteien und politischen Bewegungen. In H. Benedikt (Ed.), *Geschichte der Republik Österreich*.
- Weckroth, M., & Kemppainen, T. (2016). Human capital, cultural values and economic performance in European regions. *Regional Studies, Regional Science*, 3(1), 239–257. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21681376.2016.1177467>
- Welsch, H., & Kühling, J. (2018). How Green Self Image is Related to Subjective Well-Being: Pro-Environmental Values as a Social Norm. *Ecological Economics*, 149, 105–119. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2018.03.002>
- Whitefield, S. (2002). Political Cleavages and Post-Communist Politics. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 5(1), 181–200. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.5.112601.144242>
- WHO GOVERN EUROPE, F. (2024). *Database on WHO GOVERNS in Europe and beyond*, PSGo [Dataset]. whogoverns.eu
- Wille, A., & Bovens, M. (2017). Chapter 4: Education as Cleavage. In *Diploma Democracy: The Rise of Political Meritocracy*. Oxford University Press.
- Zessin-Jurek, L., & Katalin Kelemen, Á. (2022). Refugees Welcome to History and Memory: Polish (and Jewish) World War II Exiles in Hungary. *Hungarian Studies Review*, 49(1), 62–92. <https://doi.org/10.5325/hungarianstud.49.1.0062>
- Zuckerman, A. (1975). Political Cleavage: A Conceptual and Theoretical Analysis. *British Journal of Political Science*, 5(2), 231–248. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123400008140>

Appendices

Appendix A. Detailed Response Distribution for Figure 17

Allow Many/Few Immigrants of Same Race/Ethnic Group as Majority								
Years of Data Collection	Austria				Hungary			
	Allow many to come and live here	Allow some	Allow a few	Allow none	Allow many to come and live here	Allow some	Allow a few	Allow none
2002/03	10,8%	32,8%	49,3%	7,1%	21,20%	28,19%	42,28%	8,33%
2004/05	19,9%	46,2%	27,5%	6,4%	21,15%	27,54%	33,22%	18,10%
2006/07	18,2%	47,1%	29,0%	5,7%	23,15%	27,67%	32,12%	17,05%
2008/09	19,4%	47,0%	28,5%	5,1%	29,51%	33,15%	27,21%	10,13%
2010/11	18,7%	38,6%	34,5%	8,2%	32,80%	30,87%	25,55%	10,78%
2012/13	NA	NA	NA	NA	19,25%	28,77%	36,87%	15,12%
2014/15	20,2%	47,2%	25,3%	7,3%	20,93%	31,03%	35,80%	12,24%
2016/17	16,2%	43,9%	31,4%	8,5%	22,07%	28,89%	23,42%	25,61%
2018/19	21,4%	48,0%	22,2%	8,4%	NA	NA	NA	NA
2020/22	27,3%	54,0%	16,4%	2,3%	8,71%	31,53%	39,96%	19,81%
2023/24	23,7%	51,2%	18,4%	6,7%	5,96%	23,74%	41,61%	28,69%
Source: ESS. Name of the analysed variable: imsmetn								

Appendix B. Detailed Response Distribution for Figure 18

Allow Many/Few Immigrants of Different Race/Ethnic Group from Majority								
Years of Data Collection	Austria				Hungary			
	Allow many to come and live here	Allow some	Allow a few	Allow none	Allow many to come and live here	Allow some	Allow a few	Allow none
2002/03	8,5%	24,9%	57,4%	9,2%	3,02%	10,80%	63,28%	22,89%
2004/05	12,4%	35,8%	40,2%	11,7%	5,47%	13,42%	45,67%	35,44%
2006/07	8,8%	32,8%	45,2%	13,1%	4,80%	13,09%	42,70%	39,41%
2008/09	12,5%	37,6%	39,4%	10,4%	4,99%	14,63%	46,80%	33,58%
2010/11	12,0%	33,5%	40,4%	14,1%	5,99%	14,84%	47,04%	32,14%
2012/13	NA	NA	NA	NA	6,16%	19,20%	46,15%	28,48%
2014/15	10,8%	38,9%	36,4%	13,9%	3,95%	15,39%	48,11%	32,54%
2016/17	8,2%	31,6%	40,9%	19,3%	1,93%	11,34%	39,30%	47,42%
2018/19	9,4%	32,9%	41,0%	16,7%	NA	NA	NA	NA
2020/22	13,0%	41,5%	37,1%	8,4%	1,06%	14,73%	45,71%	38,49%
2023/24	10,2%	35,1%	38,7%	16,0%	1,54%	11,79%	41,34%	45,33%
Source: ESS. Name of the analysed variable: imdfetn								

Appendix C. Detailed Response Distribution for Figure 19

Allow Many/Few Immigrants from Poorer Countries Outside Europe								
Years of Data Collection	Austria				Hungary			
	Allow many to come and live here	Allow some	Allow a few	Allow none	Allow many to come and live here	Allow some	Allow a few	Allow none
2002/03	8,7%	25,5%	55,8%	9,9%	2,88%	9,10%	63,35%	24,67%
2004/05	12,3%	37,7%	36,3%	13,7%	4,76%	10,23%	43,28%	41,72%
2006/07	9,5%	33,9%	42,5%	14,0%	3,04%	9,39%	40,81%	46,75%
2008/09	12,8%	35,8%	37,5%	13,8%	4,24%	11,16%	41,96%	42,64%
2010/11	11,9%	29,6%	40,3%	18,2%	4,50%	11,61%	44,03%	39,87%
2012/13	NA	NA	NA	NA	4,33%	14,98%	42,12%	38,57%
2014/15	10,3%	32,3%	38,4%	19,0%	2,65%	10,06%	39,67%	47,62%
2016/17	8,0%	27,6%	41,6%	22,8%	0,39%	5,44%	32,51%	61,66%
2018/19	9,2%	29,1%	39,9%	21,8%	0,77%	7,26%	32,65%	59,32%
2020/22	12,9%	43,6%	34,5%	9,0%	1,01%	12,39%	43,75%	42,85%
2023/24	7,7%	29,6%	40,5%	22,2%	1,83%	11,19%	40,11%	46,88%
Source: ESS. Name of the analysed variable: impcntr								

Appendix D. Detailed Response Distribution for Figure 20-21

Immigration Bad or Good for Country's Economy												
Years of Data Collection	Analysed Countries	Bad for Economy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Good for Economy
2002/03	Austria	3,9%	2,5%	4,7%	6,8%	7,1%	28,0%	10,1%	14,2%	12,8%	5,7%	4,2%
	Hungary	8,8%	5,9%	8,4%	12,5%	11,6%	32,9%	8,5%	6,3%	3,2%	0,9%	1,1%
2004/05	Austria	6,1%	3,8%	7,2%	9,9%	11,7%	24,1%	10,7%	11,1%	8,7%	3,0%	3,8%
	Hungary	11,6%	9,2%	12,9%	15,8%	10,9%	22,1%	6,2%	5,1%	3,8%	0,9%	1,4%
2006/07	Austria	5,2%	4,1%	5,8%	8,0%	8,8%	24,1%	11,1%	13,2%	10,7%	4,1%	4,9%
	Hungary	17,1%	11,3%	12,3%	12,6%	8,0%	21,1%	5,0%	5,0%	4,2%	1,4%	1,9%
2008/09	Austria	4,3%	3,8%	5,6%	6,7%	9,4%	22,1%	10,9%	13,8%	11,6%	5,8%	6,1%
	Hungary	12,9%	10,4%	11,7%	13,1%	11,9%	22,8%	7,3%	4,8%	3,6%	0,4%	1,2%
2010/11	Austria	3,6%	3,1%	6,5%	8,8%	11,9%	22,3%	11,1%	12,5%	11,2%	5,5%	3,3%
	Hungary	10,4%	8,3%	9,8%	12,5%	10,9%	26,7%	9,6%	6,6%	3,0%	0,8%	1,4%
2012/13	Austria	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Hungary	10,6%	5,8%	9,3%	11,7%	10,8%	27,0%	9,0%	8,2%	4,3%	1,5%	1,7%
2014/15	Austria	8,9%	2,7%	7,6%	9,7%	9,6%	24,0%	11,7%	13,3%	7,7%	1,8%	2,9%
	Hungary	12,1%	6,4%	13,7%	16,0%	12,0%	24,2%	8,1%	2,9%	2,3%	0,4%	1,9%
2016/17	Austria	9,8%	4,5%	6,8%	9,5%	10,6%	22,9%	12,6%	10,4%	7,5%	2,6%	2,9%
	Hungary	21,5%	9,6%	10,3%	13,9%	12,5%	17,9%	8,1%	4,0%	1,1%	0,1%	0,9%
2018/19	Austria	6,1%	3,3%	5,4%	8,4%	8,3%	21,8%	14,2%	13,0%	10,8%	3,8%	4,9%
	Hungary	13,2%	6,9%	13,5%	15,3%	13,2%	20,4%	7,7%	5,0%	3,6%	0,5%	0,7%
2020/22	Austria	5,0%	3,1%	5,5%	7,0%	5,6%	24,5%	9,9%	14,5%	13,9%	3,8%	7,2%
	Hungary	10,7%	6,6%	11,1%	16,6%	11,3%	25,1%	8,0%	6,4%	2,8%	0,6%	0,8%
2023/24	Austria	4,6%	2,1%	4,9%	7,2%	7,0%	20,1%	17,2%	14,8%	11,0%	4,0%	7,1%
	Hungary	16,5%	8,3%	11,9%	13,1%	11,3%	17,1%	7,3%	6,9%	4,9%	1,3%	1,4%
Source: ESS. Name of the analysed variable: imbgeco												

Appendix E. Detailed Response Distribution for Figure 20-21

Country's Cultural Life Undermined or Enriched by Immigrants												
Years of Data Collection	Analysed Countries	Undermined	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Enriched
2002/03	Austria	3,2%	2,0%	3,8%	7,4%	7,5%	24,9%	10,8%	13,7%	12,5%	6,1%	8,2%
	Hungary	4,9%	3,2%	5,5%	7,6%	7,7%	33,3%	11,4%	11,6%	8,1%	3,3%	3,3%
2004/05	Austria	4,7%	3,4%	5,7%	10,4%	9,6%	24,6%	10,0%	11,4%	9,9%	3,3%	6,9%
	Hungary	4,6%	4,1%	6,2%	9,5%	9,0%	27,8%	11,8%	10,2%	10,1%	2,1%	4,6%
2006/07	Austria	6,7%	5,9%	7,9%	10,5%	9,3%	23,6%	8,2%	10,7%	8,0%	3,9%	5,4%
	Hungary	7,1%	5,5%	7,0%	10,1%	9,1%	21,6%	11,2%	9,3%	8,8%	3,7%	6,6%
2008/09	Austria	5,9%	4,3%	7,0%	8,7%	10,0%	20,4%	8,4%	10,3%	9,1%	7,1%	8,9%
	Hungary	5,0%	4,3%	7,2%	9,4%	10,6%	23,5%	11,6%	11,2%	9,2%	3,0%	5,0%
2010/11	Austria	3,6%	3,9%	7,5%	10,2%	9,8%	19,6%	10,7%	12,3%	10,8%	5,9%	5,7%
	Hungary	3,0%	3,8%	5,9%	8,6%	10,1%	25,9%	12,3%	12,9%	9,6%	2,9%	5,0%
2012/13	Austria	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Hungary	3,8%	2,4%	3,6%	6,4%	7,1%	31,4%	14,7%	13,8%	10,5%	3,0%	3,2%
2014/15	Austria	7,9%	3,4%	7,1%	11,6%	9,9%	23,1%	9,9%	12,2%	8,1%	2,4%	4,6%
	Hungary	4,5%	1,9%	7,7%	12,4%	10,8%	27,4%	12,7%	12,0%	5,7%	1,3%	3,7%
2016/17	Austria	9,7%	4,6%	7,5%	12,5%	11,9%	21,0%	9,4%	9,6%	7,5%	2,5%	3,7%
	Hungary	17,2%	6,4%	8,9%	13,2%	12,2%	19,9%	9,8%	6,9%	3,1%	0,4%	1,9%
2018/19	Austria	6,9%	4,5%	8,5%	12,5%	12,2%	18,5%	8,8%	10,7%	8,3%	3,6%	5,4%
	Hungary	12,9%	5,3%	12,2%	13,4%	13,5%	21,1%	9,5%	6,3%	3,1%	1,1%	1,7%
2020/22	Austria	9,0%	5,3%	9,1%	9,4%	8,0%	22,1%	8,4%	10,1%	8,8%	2,9%	6,9%
	Hungary	8,4%	5,5%	9,4%	14,1%	12,5%	25,9%	10,0%	7,7%	4,2%	1,5%	0,9%
2023/24	Austria	6,9%	4,1%	7,6%	9,4%	11,6%	26,4%	9,9%	9,2%	7,6%	2,9%	4,5%
	Hungary	14,0%	5,7%	10,8%	14,3%	12,5%	19,7%	7,9%	7,9%	4,4%	1,3%	1,5%
Source: ESS. Name of the analysed variable: imueclt												

Appendix F. Detailed Response Distribution for Figure 20-21

Immigrants Make Country Worse or Better Place to Live												
Years of Data Collection	Analysed Countries	Worse	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Better
2002/03	Austria	4,0%	4,2%	5,9%	10,8%	11,4%	39,0%	7,2%	6,9%	5,6%	1,7%	3,3%
	Hungary	9,5%	4,9%	8,9%	11,4%	10,5%	39,3%	6,7%	4,9%	2,7%	0,5%	0,6%
2004/05	Austria	7,2%	4,3%	7,9%	12,4%	12,4%	31,9%	8,1%	7,4%	4,2%	1,5%	2,7%
	Hungary	7,6%	6,5%	10,6%	13,6%	11,8%	33,4%	6,2%	3,9%	3,6%	1,0%	1,7%
2006/07	Austria	7,8%	6,3%	9,4%	12,4%	12,9%	30,2%	6,7%	6,3%	4,4%	1,4%	2,2%
	Hungary	12,8%	7,7%	11,1%	12,2%	9,5%	29,2%	7,2%	4,1%	3,2%	1,1%	2,0%
2008/09	Austria	6,2%	5,1%	7,6%	10,4%	11,4%	27,5%	8,4%	8,3%	6,5%	4,0%	4,5%
	Hungary	10,6%	6,7%	11,1%	13,3%	12,2%	30,4%	7,0%	4,4%	2,7%	0,6%	0,9%
2010/11	Austria	4,4%	5,1%	8,3%	10,2%	10,8%	25,9%	10,9%	9,4%	8,0%	3,4%	3,5%
	Hungary	7,1%	6,1%	7,6%	12,0%	13,3%	36,8%	7,3%	4,8%	3,4%	0,9%	1,0%
2012/13	Austria	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Hungary	7,4%	3,8%	7,7%	10,6%	10,7%	36,3%	9,9%	7,2%	4,5%	1,0%	0,8%
2014/15	Austria	8,5%	2,7%	8,2%	12,6%	12,9%	32,5%	7,5%	7,3%	4,5%	1,4%	2,0%
	Hungary	7,6%	3,7%	11,0%	14,4%	13,3%	32,3%	10,2%	4,2%	1,9%	0,5%	1,0%
2016/17	Austria	10,5%	4,8%	8,0%	12,6%	10,8%	31,2%	7,7%	6,2%	4,8%	1,8%	1,7%
	Hungary	14,0%	7,5%	9,9%	13,9%	12,9%	28,2%	6,9%	4,1%	1,7%	0,5%	0,3%
2018/19	Austria	7,8%	4,4%	9,3%	13,3%	11,6%	29,3%	7,8%	6,0%	6,0%	1,5%	3,0%
	Hungary	8,8%	4,8%	10,3%	15,3%	16,7%	26,8%	9,0%	4,8%	2,7%	0,5%	0,3%
2020/22	Austria	9,3%	4,6%	10,2%	10,8%	9,9%	28,8%	6,7%	6,9%	6,4%	1,8%	4,4%
	Hungary	7,7%	5,3%	9,1%	13,8%	14,2%	32,3%	9,3%	4,5%	2,9%	0,6%	0,3%
2023/24	Austria	8,1%	4,3%	7,9%	11,1%	15,2%	29,5%	7,1%	6,6%	5,4%	1,4%	3,4%
	Hungary	11,8%	5,2%	10,8%	15,2%	13,9%	24,5%	6,8%	5,9%	4,1%	1,0%	0,8%
Source: ESS. Name of the analysed variable: imwbent.												

Appendix G. Overview of Party Manifestos and Substitutes in Austria, 2013-2019. Source: Manifesto Project.

Party Name	Sources from the Manifesto Project (translated in English by the Author)	Source from the Manifesto Project (Original Language)
Die Grünen	Clean Environment. Clean Politics.	Sauber Umwelt. Saubere Politik. (Die Grünen, 2013)
Die Grünen	This is Green.	Das ist Grün. (Die Grünen, 2017)
Die Grünen	Who would Our Future Choose?	Wen würde Unsere Zukunft Wählen? (Die Grünen, 2019)
FPÖ	Love Your Neighbours.	Liebe deine Nächsten (FPÖ, 2013)
FPÖ	Austrians Deserve FAIRNESS.	Österreicher Verdienen FAIRNESS (FPÖ, 2017)
FPÖ	With Certainty for Austria: Fair. Social. Loyal to the Homeland.	Mit Sicherheit für Österreich: Fair. Sozial. Heimmattreu. (FPÖ, 2018)
Liste Pilz	For Our Homeland, Austria.	Für Unsere Heimat Österreich (Liste Pilz, 2017)
NEOS	Plans for a New Austria.	Pläne für ein Neues Österreich (NEOS, 2013)
NEOS	Goals.	Ziele (NEOS, 2017)
NEOS	Plans from A to Z.	Pläne von A bis Z (NEOS, 2019)
ÖVP	Shaping the Future. Austria 2018.	Zukunftsweisend. Österreich 2018 (ÖVP, 2013)
ÖVP	The New Path.	Der neue Weg (ÖVP, 2017)
ÖVP	Our Path for Austria. 100 Projects.	Unser Weg für Österreich. 100 Projekte. (ÖVP, 2018)
SPÖ	111 Projects for Austria.	111 Projekte für Österreich (SPÖ, 2013)
SPÖ	Plan A for Austria.	Plan A für Austria. (SPÖ, 2017)
SPÖ	Humanity Prevails.	Menslichkeit Siegt. (SPÖ, 2019)
Team Stornach	Core Principles Program.	Grundsatzprogramm (Team Stornach, 2013)

Note: Titles have been translated into English by the author. Original titles are provided in the third column for reference.

Appendix H. Overview of Party Manifestos and Substitutes in Hungary, 2010-2018. Source: Manifesto Project.

Party Name	Sources from the Manifesto Project (translated in English by the Author)	Source from the Manifesto Project (Original Language)
DK	European Hungary! Democracy, Security, Development!	Európai Magyarországot! Demokráciát, biztonságot, fejlődést! (DK, 2013)
DK	Hungary for Many,	Sokak Magyarországa (DK, 2018)
Együtt-PM	Your Future. Homeland and Progress, Solidarity and Europe.	A Te Jövőd. Haza és Haladás, Szolidaritás és Európa (Együtt PM, 2014)
Együtt	European Life in Together's Hungary.	Európai Élet az Együtt Magyarországon (Együtt, 2018)
Fidesz-KDNP	The Politics of National Affairs.	Nemzeti Ügyek Politikája (Fidesz-KDNP, 2010)
Fidesz-KDNP	2014 Annual Review Speech.	2014-es évvértékelő beszéd (Mandiner, 2014)
Fidesz-KDNP	What does Fidesz commit to? Fidesz continues its commitments from 2010.	Mit vállal a Fidesz? A Fidesz a 2010-ben tett vállalásait folytatja (Fidesz, 2014)
Fidesz-KDNP	Viktor Orbán: Actions speak louder than words (interview).	Orbán Viktor: a szavak helyett a tettek beszélnek (interjú) (Napi Gazdaság, 2014)
Fidesz-KDNP	We took the country back for the Hungarians (interview).	Visszaszereztük az országot a magyaroknak (interjú) (Miniszterelnöki Kabinetiroda, 2014b)
Fidesz-KDNP	Hungary outperforms the EU average (interview).	Magyarország jobban teljesít az uniós átlagnál (interjú) (Miniszterelnöki Kabinetiroda, 2014a)
Fidesz-KDNP	Viktor Orbán's speech at Fidesz's Grand Election Rally (Peach March Transcript).	Orbán Viktor beszéde a Fidesz választási nagygyűlésén (Békement átirata) (Magyar Nemzet, 2014b)
Fidesz-KDNP	'Too much Speculation' - interview with Viktor Orbán.	'Too much spekulieren' - interjú Orbán Viktorral (Demokrata, 2014)
Fidesz-KDNP	Only Fidesz. Viktor Orbán: Great Victory, Great Future; Small Victory, Small Future (interview).	Csak a Fidesz. Orbán Viktor: Nagy győzelem - nagy jövő, kis győzelem kis jövő (interjú) (Magyar Nemzet, 2014a)
Fidesz-KDNP	Viktor Orbán's speech at Fidesz's campaign closing event.	Orbán Viktor beszéde a Fidesz kampányzáró rendezvényén (Miniszterelnöki Kabinetiroda, 2018b)
Fidesz-KDNP	Viktor Orbán on the Kossuth Radio Program '180 Minutes'.	Orbán Viktor a Kossuth Rádió '180 perc' című műsorában (Miniszterelnöki Kabinetiroda, 2018a)
Jobbik	Radical Change.	Radikális változás (Jobbik, 2010)
Jobbik	We Speak the Truth. We Solve the Problems.	Kimondjuk. Megoldjuk. (Jobbik, 2014)
Jobbik	With a Hungarian Heart, Common Sense, and Clean Hands.	Magyar Szívvel, Józan Ésszel, Tiszta Kézszel. (Jobbik, 2018)
LMP	Strategy for a Sustainable Future, an Inclusive Society, and a Renewed Democracy.	A fenntartható jövő, a befogadó társadalom és a megújuló demokrácia stratégiája (LMP, 2010)
LMP	The Election Program of LMP.	Az LMP választási programja (LMP, 2014)
LMP	Election Program 2018.	Választási program 2018 (LMP, 2018)
MSZP	National Modernization, Cohesive Community.	Nemzeti modernizáció, összetartó közösség. (MSZP, 2010)
MSZP	Justice, Security, Freedom, Prosperity.	Igazság, Biztonság, Szabadság, Jólét (MSZP, 2013).
MSZP	Let's Do Justice!	Tegyünk Igazságot! (MSZP, 2018)
PM	Everyone Matters.	Mindenki számít (PM, 2018)

Note: Titles have been translated into English by the author. Original titles are provided in the third column for reference.

Appendix I. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 54 –Governing TAN (Fidesz-KDNP)

Immigration Attitudes (0 = most negative; 10 = most positive)	ESS6 (before the crisis)	ESS8 (during the crisis)	ESS10 (after the crisis)
0	87.20%	88.70%	78.43%
1	86.44%	86.88%	74.27%
2	85.59%	84.54%	69.62%
3	84.65%	81.37%	64.51%
4	83.62%	76.88%	59.05%
5	82.48%	70.37%	53.35%
6	81.24%	61.21%	47.55%
7	79.89%	49.33%	41.81%
8	78.44%	36.05%	36.28%
9	76.87%	23.70%	31.08%
10	75.18%	14.19%	26.31%

Note: Predicted probabilities are based on multinomial logistic regression models. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to exactly 100% across all party categories (e.g., Party A + Party B + Party C).

Appendix J. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 55 –Right-Wing Opposition (TAN)

Immigration Attitudes (0 = most negative; 10 = most positive)	ESS6 (before the crisis)	ESS8 (during the crisis)	ESS10 (after the crisis)
0	3.78%	10.79%	8.10%
1	3.62%	12.12%	9.45%
2	3.45%	13.52%	10.90%
3	3.30%	14.93%	12.44%
4	3.14%	16.17%	14.03%
5	2.99%	16.98%	15.61%
6	2.84%	16.94%	17.13%
7	2.70%	15.66%	18.55%
8	2.55%	13.12%	19.82%
9	2.41%	9.89%	20.91%
10	2.28%	6.79%	21.80%

Note: Predicted probabilities are based on multinomial logistic regression models. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to exactly 100% across all party categories (e.g., Party A + Party B + Party C).

Appendix K. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 56 – Left-Wing Opposition (GAL)

Immigration Attitudes (0 = most negative; 10 = most positive)	ESS6 (before the crisis)	ESS8 (during the crisis)	ESS10 (after the crisis)
0	9.02%	0.51%	13.47%
1	9.95%	1.00%	16.28%
2	10.96%	1.93%	19.48%
3	12.05%	3.70%	23.04%
4	13.24%	6.95%	26.92%
5	14.53%	12.64%	31.04%
6	15.92%	21.85%	35.32%
7	17.41%	35.01%	39.64%
8	19.01%	50.83%	43.90%
9	20.72%	66.41%	48.01%
10	22.54%	79.02%	51.89%

Note: Predicted probabilities are based on multinomial logistic regression models. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to exactly 100% across all party categories (e.g., Party A + Party B + Party C).

Appendix L. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 57 –FPÖ (TAN)

Immigration Attitudes (0 = most negative; 10 = most positive)	ESS5 (before the crisis)	ESS8 (during the crisis)	ESS11 (after the crisis)
0	49.35%	49.73%	19.56%
1	33.12%	38.74%	15.92%
2	20.00%	28.69%	12.79%
3	11.12%	20.29%	10.16%
4	5.83%	13.80%	7.98%
5	2.93%	9.09%	6.19%
6	1.42%	5.82%	4.76%
7	0.67%	3.65%	3.62%
8	0.30%	2.24%	2.73%
9	0.13%	1.35%	2.03%
10	0.06%	0.80%	1.50%

Note: Predicted probabilities are based on multinomial logistic regression models. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to exactly 100% across all party categories (e.g., Party A + Party B + Party C).

Appendix M. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 58 –ÖVP (TAN)

Immigration Attitudes (0 = most negative; 10 = most positive)	ESS5 (before the crisis)	ESS8 (during the crisis)	ESS11 (after the crisis)
0	25.18%	23.79%	41.90%
1	31.55%	27.56%	41.63%
2	35.59%	30.36%	40.85%
3	36.96%	31.94%	39.61%
4	36.21%	32.31%	37.98%
5	34.00%	31.63%	36.02%
6	30.84%	30.16%	33.80%
7	27.09%	28.11%	31.39%
8	23.00%	25.68%	28.86%
9	18.83%	23.03%	26.26%
10	14.83%	20.28%	23.67%

Note: Predicted probabilities are based on multinomial logistic regression models. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to exactly 100% across all party categories (e.g., Party A + Party B + Party C).

Appendix N. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 59 –SPÖ (GAL)

Immigration Attitudes (0 = most negative; 10 = most positive)	ESS5 (before the crisis)	ESS8 (during the crisis)	ESS11 (after the crisis)
0	24.45%	24.35%	29.03%
1	33.34%	30.44%	30.90%
2	40.91%	36.17%	32.49%
3	46.23%	41.06%	33.76%
4	49.27%	44.80%	34.68%
5	50.33%	47.33%	35.24%
6	49.68%	48.68%	35.43%
7	47.47%	48.95%	35.26%
8	43.85%	48.25%	34.73%
9	39.05%	46.68%	33.87%
10	33.47%	44.35%	32.71%

Note: Predicted probabilities are based on multinomial logistic regression models. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to exactly 100% across all party categories (e.g., Party A + Party B + Party C).

Appendix O. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 60 –die Grüne (GAL)

Immigration Attitudes (0 = most negative; 10 = most positive)	ESS5 (before the crisis)	ESS8 (during the crisis)	ESS11 (after the crisis)
0	1.02%	1.71%	3.55%
1	1.99%	2.70%	4.49%
2	3.50%	4.07%	5.62%
3	5.68%	5.85%	6.95%
4	8.69%	8.09%	8.50%
5	12.74%	10.83%	10.28%
6	18.06%	14.12%	12.31%
7	24.77%	17.99%	14.57%
8	32.84%	22.46%	17.09%
9	41.98%	27.54%	19.83%
10	51.64%	33.15%	22.80%

Note: Predicted probabilities are based on multinomial logistic regression models. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to exactly 100% across all party categories (e.g., Party A + Party B + Party C).

Appendix P. Predicted probabilities corresponding to Figure 61 –NEOS (GAL)

Immigration Attitudes (0 = most negative; 10 = most positive)	ESS5 (before the crisis)	ESS8 (during the crisis)	ESS11 (after the crisis)
0	No data available	0.43%	5.96%
1	No data available	0.57%	7.05%
2	No data available	0.72%	8.24%
3	No data available	0.86%	9.52%
4	No data available	1.00%	10.86%
5	No data available	1.12%	12.27%
6	No data available	1.22%	13.71%
7	No data available	1.31%	15.16%
8	No data available	1.37%	16.60%
9	No data available	1.41%	18.00%
10	No data available	1.42%	19.32%

Note: Predicted probabilities are based on multinomial logistic regression models. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to exactly 100% across all party categories (e.g., Party A + Party B + Party C).

List of the Author's Publications

- Nagy, A., & Dúró, J. (2025). The Influence of Education on Hungarian Attitudes towards Immigration. *Journal of Comparative Politics*.
- Dúró, J., & Nagy, A. (2025, forthcoming). *A jó, a rossz és a csúf - Koncentráció és ideológiai pózusképzés a pártrendszerben*. In: Gallai, S. (Ed.), book chapter, MCC.
- Dúró, J., & Nagy, A. (2025, forthcoming), *Jobbra át! A jobboldali pártrendszer létrejötte*. In: Gallai, S. (Ed.), book chapter, MCC.
- Nagy, A., & Dudlák, T. (Eds.) (2025, forthcoming). *Társadalmi mozaik. Eötvös Collegium*.
- Nagy, A., (2025, forthcoming). *Számítások a pártrendszer koncentrációjával kapcsolatban. Koncentrációs indikátorok relevanciája és alkalmazása*. In Nagy, A., & Dudlák, T. (Eds.).
- Nagy, A. (2023). A politikai törésvonalak dinamikája – Választói attitűdök az Európán kívülről érkező menekültekkel kapcsolatban. *XXVI. Tavaszi Szél Konferencia*, DOSZ, Miskolc.