Bartek Pytlas and Oliver Kossack

Lighting the Fuse: the Impact of Radical Right Parties on Party Competition in Central and Eastern Europe

Chair of Comparative Politics
Faculty of Social and Cultural Sciences
European University Viadrina
Große Scharrnstr. 59
15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

pytlas@europa-uni.de
kossack@europa-uni.de

Submitted for the
23rd IPSA World Congress of Political Science

Please do not cite, quote or circulate without the authors’ permission!
Introduction

Democracies in Central and Eastern Europe continuously struggle against the upsurge of radical right political parties. Research on these parties in post-communist Europe, however, has mostly focused on the description of party development or agenda (Szayna 1997; Ramet 1999; Hainsworth 2000; Bayer 2002; Mudde 2005b; Segert 2006; Mesežnikov 2008; Frusetta and Glont 2009), as well as providing demand- and supply-side explanations for radical right parties’ success (Beichelt and Minkenberg 2002; Minkenberg 2002b; Mudde 2007; Bustikova and Kitschelt 2009; de Lange and Guerra 2009; Biró-Nagy and Róna 2013).

While the primary interest in electoral results seems natural given their straightforward visibility, the continuing lack of analytical focus on the impact of radical right parties is puzzling. This is particularly true for the – still understudied – Central Eastern European countries. There, the electoral fortune of radical right parties has been much more in flux compared to Western Europe whereas radical right influence on public and party discourses, as well as on parliamentary policy-making, has been much more profound (Mudde 2005a: 281; also Segert 2006: 70; Minkenberg, this volume; Pytlas 2014). In Central and Eastern Europe, highly salient and polarizing socio-cultural conflicts around issues and policies related to notions of geopolitical strategies, national self-understanding, collective belonging, and value priorities (Pytlas 2013: 164; also: Ágh 2001; Zubrzycki 2001; Blokker 2005) formed a set of political and discursive opportunity structures (Koopmans et al. 2005, Giugni et al. 2005) favorable especially for the radical right (Minkenberg 2002a, this volume). The resulting public resonance and legitimacy of questions concerning the nature and direction of state and nation building in the context of the post-communist transformation could explain why, on the one hand, radical right parties were able to introduce their own resonant narratives in various fields relevant to identity issues, such as morality or minority politics (cf. Pytlas 2013, 2014). On the other hand, this might further illustrate why mainstream parties tend to demonstrate less hesitation to engage in competition over identity issues and their radical right interpretations than their West European counterparts (cf. Segert 2006: 70). In effect, this perspective highlights the role of radical right impact on the societal and political transformation in Central and Eastern Europe after the fall of the Iron Curtain.

Yet, besides these empirical observations, no attempt has been made to analyze the impact of the Central and East European radical right in detail. This paper therefore aims to develop an analytical model of radical right impact on post-communist party systems and provide stimuli for future studies on the impact of the radical right, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe. Departing from empirical observations of party competition between radical right parties and their mainstream competitors, this contribution asks about the impact of the radical right on party systems in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia in the 2000s.

In order to analyze this aspect of radical right impact, a two-step model shall be applied. It shall be shown that a viable threat of radical right parties induces two types of shifts of their competitors along the socio-cultural conflict dimension: On the one hand, the classical notion of spatial shifts will highlight changing party positions on issues or policies. The notion of narrative shifts, on the other hand, shall be introduced to depict changes of narratives legitimizing given issues or policies. The main argument is that a radical right threat will lead to either a rightward shift in the party system as a whole or to increasing polarization between a left and a right camp (see Minkenberg 2002a), while the nearby competitors of the radical right always shift towards the right following a strategy of issue and frame co-optation. Furthermore, the decline of radical right parties is accompanied by a convergence of the
mainstream parties. Therefore, the impact of the radical right is believed to lie in its potential to ‘light the fuse’ of dormant conflicts on socio-cultural issues.

**Radical Right Impact on Party Systems**

Even regarding Western Europe, the impact of radical right parties has only rarely and rather recently attracted scientific attention (Heinisch 2003; Bale 2003; Rydgren 2003; Meguid 2005; Bale et al. 2010; van Spanje 2010; de Lange 2012; Akkerman 2012; Akkerman and de Lange 2012). In spite of the crucial importance of these parties as agents of identity-based party competition, only few authors have attempted to model radical right impact in a more comprehensive and comparative fashion (see e.g. Minkenberg 1998, 2002a, this volume; Schain 2006; Williams 2006). Existing approaches identify three general levels of impact, i.e. policy impact, impact on party competition and societal impact¹ (cf. Mudde 2007). A brief look at the empirical findings in this field indicates that direct the radical right’s impact on national-level policy-making is rather mediated and indirect (Minkenberg 2002a; Schain 2006; Williams 2006; Mudde 2007; van Spanje 2010; Biró-Nagy and Róna 2013; Mayer and Krekó, this volume) given the overall still somewhat limited opportunities for radical right parties to take part in government and their often lacking capability to govern (Minkenberg 2001; Heinisch 2003; Akkerman and de Lange 2012). Nonetheless, “there is a widely held belief that populist radical right parties have had a significant impact on the policy positions of other parties” (Mudde 2007: 284). Such a view is supported by empirical findings pointing to varying effects such as rightward shifts by nearby competitors of the radical right as well as the party system in general or increasing polarization between a left and a right camp when facing a viable threat from a radical right party (Minkenberg 2002a, Meguid 2005; Schain 2006; van Spanje 2010; de Lange 2012). At the same time, Williams concludes in her comparative cross-country analysis that the impact of radical right parties on West European party systems in relation to the immigration issue is “both weak and complex” (Williams 2006: 69).

When it comes to other dimensions, it is even harder to credit certain changes directly and only to the radical right. Nevertheless, radical right parties are shown to have affected party competition and society in several interrelated ways: They influenced the political agenda, positions and strategic behaviour of competing parties (Minkenberg 2002a; Bale 2003; Rydgren 2003; Bale et al. 2010; van Spanje 2010; de Lange 2012; Pirro, this volume). They altered public discourse and opinion as well as the public salience of their socio-cultural core issues (Rydgren 2003). Finally, they provoked counter-activities by the state and civil society (Minkenberg 2002a, Schain 2006, Williams 2006; Mudde 2007; Bertelsmann-Stiftung 2009). Impact therefore should be analyzed from a dynamic perspective that takes into account the interdependency of the radical right, its competitors as well as their social and institutional environment (Minkenberg, this volume). Both the indirect, mediated nature of large parts of radical right impact and its “interconnectivity” (Kasprowicz, this volume) contribute to the complexity of the phenomenon which may account for the often rather tentative findings.

Nevertheless, recent studies provide significant improvement of both theoretical models and empirical findings – particularly with regard to policy and party system impact. Looking at policy impact, Tjitske Akkerman developed an index suitable for comparative assessment of radical right impact on governments’ immigration policies (Akkerman 2012; Akkerman and

---

¹ Michelle H. Williams (2006) adds further institutional impact, comprising not only the party system but also institutions of the political system in general, e.g. the electoral system.
de Lange 2012). Akkerman’s analysis finds that right-wing governments are eager to tighten immigration policies facing a viable threat of a radical right party regardless of the radical right’s position in government or opposition. These results suggest that radical right parties might already stimulate other parties to alter their position (particularly towards the right) prior to changes in policy-making and legislation are made. Given this insight, our analysis will turn its focus to mechanisms of radical right impact on party competition over issue positions and related narratives and frames.

Party competition is intrinsic to party systems (Dahl 1966; Sartori 1976; Mair 1996). At the same time, several authors have pointed out that the dynamic and extent of spatial competition among mainstream and radical right political actors is one of the crucial factors influencing radical right electoral fortune (Kitschelt and McGann 1995; Bale 2003; Ivarsflaten 2003; Eatwell et al. 2004; Carter 2005; Meguid 2005, 2008; Schain 2006; Art 2007; Kitschelt 2007). Benoit and Laver (2009) outline basic concepts of the dimensional understanding of political competition. Notions of ‘position’, ‘space’ and ‘distance’ can serve as measures of difference between particular parties (Benoit and Laver 2009: 11). Tenets such as ‘movement’ and ‘direction’ (moving towards or apart of each other) allow for the addition of a dynamic component to the study of party competition (Benoit and Laver 2009: 11). Therefore, the spatial metaphor provides not just the possibility to pinpoint political interests. The observation of spatial shifts within the party system also helps to draw a map of relationship and interactions within the party system in question. Mainstream parties can further choose from three particular competition modes while approaching issues presented by the radical right: the dismissive, the adversarial, and the accommodative strategy (Meguid 2008: 24f.): The dismissive strategy aims at rhetorically ignoring the competitor and its issues. The adversarial strategy actively opposes radical right positions and issues. The accommodative strategy is characterized by a move towards the position of the radical right competitor. As a result, mainstream parties aim to co-opt radical right issues as part of their own agenda.

Admittedly, scholarship on the dynamics and mechanics of party competition and competitive strategies vis-à-vis the radical right is still in its infancy (Mudde 2007), but, as the analysis will show, party strategies towards the radical right as an aspect of spatial competition can be perceived as one of the most visible dimensions of radical right impact on the shape and dynamics of Central and East European party systems.

A Mixed-methods Approach

The abovementioned complexity and rather indirect nature of the impact of radical right parties on party competition makes high demands on attempts to model this influence. In order to track down the impact of radical right parties, we propose a mixed methods approach that looks at two supplementing shifts within the party system, i.e. spatial and narrative shifts. By spatial shifts, we refer to the aforementioned classical notion of changes in spatial positions and the distance between parties. By looking at this dimension, we therefore aim initially to analyze the relationship between the presence of relevant radical right parties and the positional adjustments of other parties within the party system. Narrative shifts, on the other hand, are defined as shifts of frames legitimizing particular policies and issues (cf. Pytlas 2014). This second dimension aims to support the initial analysis and take it one step further by examining the exact mechanisms, timing and narrative emphasis behind spatial shifts.

In light of the salience of socio-cultural conflicts in Central and Eastern Europe and their crucial importance for the radical right, our model of the impact of radical right parties on
party systems shall focus on issue competition of mainstream competitors with regard to identity politics. By so doing, the following analysis attempts to find general patterns of spatial as well as narrative shifts linked to the agency of radical right parties. In spite of different issues shaping value-related politics in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Romania, this chapter holds that a viable threat of radical right parties induces their nearby competitors to shift towards the right pole of the socio-cultural conflict dimension. When broadening the scope, these rightward shifts often occur among the other competitors as well resulting in a general rightward shift of the party system towards the right. Sometimes, however, the socio-culturally left parties intensify their oppositional stances vis-à-vis a radical right threat leading to growing polarization of the party system along the socio-cultural conflict dimension. As these assumptions suggest, we deem radical right parties to force other parties to react to their threat. Hence, they are assumed to be capable of influencing the salience of conflicts along the socio-cultural dimension and, thus, of ‘arming’ and ‘disarming’ this area of conflict.

By applying an approach that moves from the general to the particular, we first attempt to supplement existing empirical findings on radical right impact on European party systems and, second, offer a more detailed insight into the way radical right parties influence the positions of their competitors. Furthermore, an inclusion of the new dimension of narrative shifts next to traditional observation of spatial shifts shall allow us to not look solely at the direction of party competition. It also turns our attention to its content with regard to particular ideological narratives or frames. This perspective therefore supplements the view on ‘what’ strategies are followed with the dimension of ‘how’ these strategies are shaped and implemented (Pytlas 2014).

Measuring Spatial and Narrative Shifts

A prerequisite for the analysis of spatial shifts in the party system is the identification of parties’ positional stances. The most frequently used methods to measure party positions are expert surveys and the comparative analysis of party manifestos (Volkens et al. 2012). General validity and reliability of the data has been attested to both methods. Nonetheless, they each come with specific advantages and disadvantages (cf. Benoit and Laver 2009; Kitschelt 2007; Marks et al. 2007; Budge 2013). The empirical analysis in this study shall be based on data from expert surveys. Unlike the Comparative Manifesto dataset, expert surveys provide an assessment of party positions by relying not only on publications but further taking into account the parties’ activities. In other words, they “[combine] what parties say and what parties do” (Netjes and Binnema 2007, quoted in Bakker et al. 2012: 7). Hence, they can balance the incongruity between publicly expressed positions and secretly pursued goals of parties – an issue of particular concern when dealing with radical right parties (Mudde 2007; cf. Kitschelt 2007). Our analysis will draw on the 2002, 2006 and 2010 waves of the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys (Hooghe et al. 2010, Bakker et al. 2012) since they include relevant data for three different points in time.

Given the high salience of identity-related issues in Central and Eastern Europe in general and for the radical right in particular, we will focus on party positions along the socio-cultural conflict dimension as the most likely area to find radical right impact. Thus, our analysis of spatial shifts shall rely on the general position of parties on socio-cultural issues. These positions shall be traced on the so called ‘GAL/TAN scale’ introduced by Hooghe et al. 2002. Similar to a general Left/Right continuum, the GAL/TAN scale measures party positions on the socio-cultural conflict dimension between a left ‘Green-Alternative-Libertarian’ and a
right ‘Traditionalist-Authoritarian-Nationalist’ pole (for details and operationalization see Hooghe et al. 2002). Although some authors suggest drawing on minority politics as the most relevant issue for all Central and East European radical right parties (see Pirro, this volume) we prefer this approach because there are some countries to which this issue does not apply due to the lack of a significant minority population (see Minkenberg, this volume: Table 2.5).

In Poland, for instance, the minority issue is on the agenda of hardly any party. Moreover, in Hungary, next to the discourse on the Roma minority, there are also other highly salient issues within the field of identity politics, for instance the issue of nemzetpolitika\(^2\) (see Pytlas 2013). These examples indicate why a single-issue analysis might not account for the whole range of identity-based party competition with the radical right – both within a country over time or in a cross-country comparison. It rather seems that the ‘other’, i.e. the target of radical right exclusionist politics, has indeed become increasingly multi-faceted in Central and East European countries over recent years (see Bustikova, this volume).

Following and supplementing the analysis of spatial shifts, the second step will apply a more specific perspective and carry out a qualitative evaluation of the dynamic of framing efforts (Snow et al. 1986; also Snow and Benford 1988; Gamson 1988; Gamson and Meyer 1996; Zald 1996; Benford and Snow 2000) between radical right parties and their mainstream competitors.\(^3\) Frame competition, as a constitutive mechanism of any party competition process, is relevant not only on the level of public discourse but also in the area of policy making, as remarked upon most notably by Frank Fischer (Fischer 1980, 2003). In both cases, frames understood as narratives articulated by political actors, guide collective action as well as help to organize, explain, justify, and legitimate political agency. In other words: “The frame suggests what the issue is about” (Gamson 1988: 222). Therefore, parties compete not only with regard to their general positions relating to particular issues (spatial shifts) but also with respect to narrative legitimization of these issues via particular frames. Hence, the analysis of frame competition aims to provide qualitative indices of radical right impact on narrative shifts within party systems.

The framing approach has hitherto largely lacked an established methodological framework that would allow a systematic identification of frames and verifiable measurement of framing mechanisms (Johnston 1995: 217, 2002; also Matthes 2007: 44). The application of computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) for frame measurement within the discourse analytical method (cf. König 2004a, 2004b) can help to tackle this challenge. Here, the analysis is performed by means of text segment coding and the evaluation of absolute and relative frequencies of the identified codes as well as their mutual relationship, among other their co-occurrence or textual nearness (Kuckartz 2004, 2007; also König 2004a; König 2004b; Bazeley 2003). For the frame analysis, we look at cases in which the empirical analysis of spatial shifts pointed to particularly strong accommodative strategies of major government parties in regard to radical right narratives: Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. Having previously noted the strong activity of radical right parties along socio-cultural conflict dimension (cf. Minkenberg 2003; also Bornschier 2010), the researched discourse was narrowed down to party policies related to questions of national identity and values, again expected to be most likely cases for the observation of radical right impact on narrative shifts.

---

\(^2\) Nemzetpolitika, or national politics, describes a field of policies regarding Hungarian minorities living outside their kin-state, especially in neighbouring countries. This specific Hungarian policy field is one of the clearest examples of nationalizing identity policies focusing on „external homelands“ (cf. Brubaker 1996).

\(^3\) For the methodological background, description of the data sample, and detailed analysis, see Pytlas 2014.
of mainstream competitors within the respective country.\(^4\) In all cases the material shall include statements of radical right parties and their nearest mainstream competitor (LPR and PiS in Poland; SNS and SMER in Slovakia; Fidesz and Jobbik in Hungary). In each case, online news reports from most circulated daily newspapers were mined based on particular party name and the description of the issue as keywords. The gathered textual data material was then coded and evaluated non-automatically\(^5\) using CAQDAS (MaxQDA Version 11.0) to produce the results.\(^6\)

**Spatial Shifts in Central and East European Party Systems**

*Bulgaria*

Beginning with the 2001 elections, the Bulgarian party system witnessed a significant change. Regular bipartisan alternation in government between the communist successor Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) and the oppositional Union of Democratic Forces (SDS) gave way to multi-party competition that immediately witnessed the emergence of new strong parties (Smilov 2010; Karasimeonov 2010). This development took place in the context of a high degree of populism still symptomatic of the Bulgarian party system (Cholova and De Waele 2011; Avramov, this volume). Despite such a favorable breeding ground for the radical right in Bulgaria (see also Beichelt and Minkenberg 2002), no significant radical right party emerged until 2005, when ATAKA entered parliament immediately after its formation.

In 2001, however, the newly established National Movement Simeon II (NDSV) – founded by and named after Simeon II, the returned pre-World War II Tsar of Bulgaria – appealed to large parts of the electorate by campaigning against the establishment in a highly populist fashion. After its remarkable breakthrough and two subsequent terms in government the party could not fulfill the voters’ expectations and consequently suffered dramatic losses in the 2005 elections and even more in the subsequent elections in 2009 (Karasimeonov 2010; Cholova and de Waele 2011). However, it was not only ATAKA that benefited from the decline of NDSV but also another populist party, the Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria (GERB). While Simeon II and his party followed at least a somewhat liberal agenda, the latter parties, especially ATAKA, took more rightward stances on the socio-cultural dimension (Avramov, this volume). While Simeon II emphasized the more liberal and “European” nature of both himself and his party, GERB’s leader Boyko Borisov portrayed himself as the advocate of the Bulgarian people simultaneously marking Simeon II as a foreigner not belonging to it (Cholova and de Waele 2011).

By taking over government with almost 40 percent of the vote in the 2009 elections, GERB has become a functional equivalent to NDSV in 2001 (see also Smilov 2010; Cholova and de Waele 2011). Regarding their positions on socio-cultural issues, however, the difference between both parties has not only been emphasized by analysts and party leaders alike but is

---

\(^4\) In Poland, the evaluation focused on debates around question of reproductive rights (abortion) and sexual minorities. In Slovakia it looked at ethnic minority policies. In Hungary, it analyzed nemzetpolitika-debates surrounding dual citizenship legislation for Hungarians living in adjacent countries. For a detailed description and analysis of the debates see Pytlaš 2013, 2014.

\(^5\) The codes were not applied by a simple automatic string search of keywords, but instead placed manually dependent on the context.

\(^6\) The text was mapped with marker codings ('year' and 'actor') as well as content codings (metaphorical fields). The codings were then cross-analysed in regard to their co-occurrence within the text.
also apparent in Figure 5.1, which shows party positions along the socio-cultural dimension. The 2002 data indicates that, in the absence of a radical right party, competition on identity politics took place in the left and right center. Until 2006, the parties have been moving even further to the center in spite of ATAKA’s breakthrough in the political arena in the course of both the 2005 national and the 2006 presidential election campaigns. Founded as an electoral coalition of several radical right parties and organizations, ATAKA merged into a single party after the 2005 elections. The internal struggles of the party during its first period in parliament (Meznik 2011) combined with a dismissive strategy might account for the convergence indicated by the data for 2006. In other words, it seems that ATAKA lacked the power to fuel party competition over its core issues in the very first years of its existence.7

Following the stabilization of ATAKA, however, the 2010 figures indicate a clear shift to the right within the Bulgarian party system as the three major players – GERB, BSP and ATAKA (as well as the other smaller parliamentary parties) find themselves clearly on the national-authoritarian (TAN) side of the spectrum. At the same time, both socio-culturally center-left parties, NDSV and SDS, suffered a drastic electoral decline and lost parliamentary representation. Thus, the 2010 spatial positions of Bulgarian parliamentary parties display a clear rightward shift of the party system vis-à-vis a more consolidated radical right party in its second term in the national parliament – though this state of consolidation did not continue for very long (Avramov, this volume).

Hungary
For a long time, Hungary was considered one of the most consolidated Central and Eastern European democracies with stable and regularly alternating governments led by the conservative Fidesz or the social democratic Hungarian Socialist Party (MSzP). Nevertheless, the Hungarian parliament has also witnessed the rise of two radical right parties. One of them, the Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIÉP), had crossed the 5 percent threshold by 1998, campaigning on a rather old-fashioned platform centered on anti-Semitism and anti-imperialism based on conspiracy theory (Bock 2002; Krekó and Mayer, this volume). After one period in parliament, however, MIÉP did not reach the threshold for re-entry and thereafter gradually vanished as a political power, culminating with the death of its unquestioned leader István Csurka in 2012. The second significant radical right party, Jobbik, emerged after the post-electoral riots that resulted from the Ősződ speech of socialist prime minister Ferenc Gyurcsány in 20068 and gained a landslide success in the 2009 EP and the 2010 national elections with 12 and 16 percent of the votes respectively (Biró-Nagy and Róna 2013; Mayer and Krekó, this volume). The situation of 2006 marks not only the emergence of Jobbik and its affiliated Hungarian Guard as the new key player of the radical right but also brought the equilibrium between the left and right camp to an end with Fidesz reaping the benefits in the form of a two-thirds majority in parliament in 2010.

[FIGURE 5.2 ABOUT HERE]

---

7 This is even more evident in the 2006 data on minority politics, ATAKA’s core issue, with BSP (4.67), SDS (4.67) and NDSV (4.75) all occupying a position in the very center. Only DPS (2.08), as the unofficial representative of the Turkish minority, and ATAKA (8.17) took clear pro-/anti-minority stances (see also Pirro, this volume).

8 After the 2006 elections, a Hungarian radio station broadcasted an internal speech of Ferenc Gyurcsány, known as the “Ősződ speech”, in which he admitted lying to the electorate in order to win the elections (Cf. Lendvai 2010: 149-152.). The leaked speech caused long-lasting and in places violent protests against the MSzP government.
The ups and downs of Hungary’s radical right parties are also mirrored in the data presented in Figure 5.2. In 2002, towards the end of MIÉP’s presence in parliament, the data indicates polarized party competition between the liberal camp consisting of MSzP and the Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz) and the conservative Fidesz with its satellite party KDNP completed by MIÉP on the very right fringe. During the legislative period between 1998 and 2002, the Fidesz government already introduced measures weakening liberal democratic institutions and deepened its national conservative ideological platform. These changes met the support of MIÉP, although Fidesz officially distanced from the radical right (Bayer 2005).

The 2006 data then symbolize a phase without a viable radical right threat as Jobbik not yet been on the rise but MIÉP already in decline. This development is mirrored by a convergence of party positions on identity-based issues in Hungary in that period. The fact that Fidesz has lost a competitor on the right may at least in part account for the party’s centripetal movement since there is no serious danger of losing the votes of the right fringe to another party.

The 2010 data then represent the period of right-wing dominance in Hungary spelled out by the landslide electoral successes of both Fidesz and Jobbik – though each party within its own scope. Although the 2010 elections equipped Fidesz with a two-thirds majority of seats in parliament, the party implemented several policy proposals stemming originally from Jobbik (Verseck 2013; Biró-Nagy et al. 2013; Krekó and Mayer, this volume) in order to co-opt the agenda of the radical right and appeal to its voters.\(^9\) Given the authoritarian and nationalist legislation of the Fidesz government after its inauguration in 2010, it is surprising that the respective GAL/TAN value for Fidesz changes only slightly. Furthermore, the data for MSzP does not indicate a strong opposition to the party either remaining more or less at the 2006 value. Significant changes are only visible on the margins of the oppositional side. Not only have the new Green party LMP and Gyurcsány’s Democratic Coalition (Demokratikus Koalíció) emerged as new political forces on the liberal end of the spectrum but so also have certain social movements like Milla, Szolidaritás, or 4K! What is more, some time after the 2010 election former prime minister Gordon Bajnai formed the Together 2014 movement (Együtt 2014) representing a clear-cut opposition to the national conservative and authoritarian government of Fidesz as well as an attempt to unite opposition forces.

Contrary to empirical observations, the expert survey data shows little visible impact in terms of spatial shifts (cf. Pytlas 2014). The qualitative analysis will therefore attempt to shed more light on the impact of Jobbik, particularly within the field of nemzetpolitika. In light of the findings of policy and discursive impact quoted above, we assume we shall observe some impact in that field.

**Poland**

The Polish case shows certain similarities to the Hungarian one as there is also quite significant polarization of the party system along the socio-cultural conflict dimension. The radical right League of Polish Families (LPR) appeared in the political arena on the eve of the 2001 elections and experienced a head-start by entering the Sejm with almost eight percent of the votes. Even though internal differences characterized the first legislature, the party was able to stabilize organizationally as well as ideologically and consolidate itself as an important force of the Polish right during the first half of the 2000s. The influential ultra-Catholic radio station *Radio Maryja* certainly contributed to the rise of LPR in the early years by overt on air

\[^9\] Public opinion surveys in late 2011 and early 2012 reveal that the radical right threat toward Fidesz further increased after the 2010 elections (see Mayer and Krekó, this volume).
support for the party (Pankowski and Kornak 2005; also de Lange and Guerra 2009; Pankowski 2010).

During its first term in parliament LPR was able to consolidate and establish itself as a serious political competitor on the far right which was answered by conservative Law and Justice (PiS), the nearby competitor of the LPR, with a strategy of accommodation. The ideological approximation of both parties was formally initiated with the manifesto for the ‘Fourth Republic’, ultimately published by PiS during the 2005 election campaign (Millard 2010; cf. Pytlas 2014). After the election, PiS became the strongest party in parliament and formed a LPR-supported minority government which was later turned into a formal coalition also including the party Self Defence (Millard 2010; also Grün and Stankiewicz 2006). Once in government, however, LPR suffered from several scandals and internal conflicts which finally resulted in the collapse of the right-wing government (Millard 2010; Kasprowicz, this volume). Moreover, LPR subsequently lost credibility and a large share of its electorate to PiS (Pacewicz 2007 quoted in Pytlas 2009) indicating the success of its accommodative strategy. In the following years, PiS has undoubtedly become the hegemonic party of the right enjoying the support of large parts of the national-Catholic milieu, not least Radio Maryja. On the other side of the socio-cultural spectrum, the Civic Platform emerged as PiS’ main competitor after the social democratic Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) has been struggling since the first half of the 2000s.

[FIGURE 5.3 ABOUT HERE]

The outlined development of the Polish party competition vis-à-vis the radical right in the 2000s is mirrored by the data presented in Figure 5.3. In 2002, PiS, LPR and SO are positioned on the right side of the socio-cultural spectrum while SLD and PO occupy left and center-left positions. PiS as the nearby competitor of the LPR is still somewhat distanced from the radical possibly indicating a phase of establishing a strategy for dealing with a growing radical right threat.

In 2006, then, PiS clearly shifts toward the national-conservative (TAN) end of the spectrum signalling an increasing Catholic-nationalist appeal in order to obtain issue space and electoral support from the LPR. Moreover, PiS not only undertakes a significant spatial shift but moves further to the right than any other nearby competitor in our sample. Even after the threat from the radical right had disappeared, PiS did not move significantly towards the center.

However, the data not only show the spatial shifts of PiS but are equally telling about the liberal parties SLD and PO. Both distance themselves significantly from the conservative camp with a peak of polarization during the time of the coalition government of PiS, LPR and SO. Nevertheless, PO’s shift towards the left-liberal (GAL) end of the spectrum in 2006 seems slightly exaggerated, most likely due to its perception as the ‘arch-enemy’ of PiS in the largely bipartisan competition in the second half of the 2000s. After the electoral decline of LPR in 2007 there is a clear tendency of convergence, though overall further to the right than in 2002. PO is now even situated just to the right of the center.

This rightward shift of the Polish party system not only outlived the radical right LPR but also opened up issue space on the left-liberal end of the spectrum which has been occupied by the Palikot Movement (recently renamed Your Movement, Twój Ruch) which entered parliament with ten percent of the popular vote immediately after its foundation in 2011.
Romania

Romania witnessed an active radical right party scene during the 1990s. The Romanian National Unity Party (PUNR) and the Greater Romania Party (PRM) even participated in a government coalition between 1994 and 1995. In the mid-to-late 1990s both parties competed for hegemony on the right fringe of the party spectrum. The PRM indisputably prevailed in this struggle. PUNR, in contrast, slowly vanished and party leader Gheorghe Funar – among others – even defected to the PRM (Shafir 1999; also Andreescu 2005). Being the only relevant radical right party in Romania thereafter, PRM achieved a landslide success in the 2000 parliamentary elections with almost 20 percent of the votes – still the highest turnout of all radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe. In the following elections four years later the party again received a considerable result at the polls with more than 10 percent.

Nevertheless, PRM’s decline had already begun. After the millennium the other parties refused to co-operate with the radical right for the first time, as the EU made clear that maintaining a distance from an openly anti-Semitic, anti-European and racist party like PRM by the political elite would be a necessary condition for Romania’s quick EU accession. As a result of this isolation, the leading figure of the PRM, Corneliu Vadim Tudor, decided to tone down his and the party’s message, which caused internal struggles and a loss of credibility among the party’s supporters. As a result, the PRM dropped out of parliament with only 3.2 percent of the vote in 2008 and has yet to recover (Ţurcanu 2010; Cînpoes 2013).

[FIGURE 5.4 ABOUT HERE]

Figure 5.4 illustrates that the demise of the PRM is paralleled by a clear trend of convergence of the mainstream parties on the socio-cultural dimension. The data already indicate only a moderate level of polarization in 2002 which is constantly decreasing the more PRM loses power. After the party’s dropout from parliament, the 2010 figure even shows a convergence of all other mainstream parties within one point from the center. Apparently, by losing influence and finally even representation in parliament, the PRM also lost the power to fuel party competition on identity politics and place their core issues like minority politics on the agenda. In 2006 and 2010, the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys also cover the minority issue as a separate variable. Party positions on that issue emphasize further the decreasing impact of the PRM on the other parties. The mainstream also converge in the center and even the party of the Hungarian minority, the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR), moves almost 2 points away from the pro-minority pole between 2006 and 2010 (from a value of 0 to 1.81) and thus occupies a quite ‘centrist’ position for a political representative of a minority group. This development suggests that parliamentary representation of radical right parties indeed seems to influence their capacity to place issues on the agenda, induce spatial shifts among their competitors and, thus, impact the dynamics of party competition.

Slovakia

During the 1990s party competition in Slovakia has to be seen in light of the autocratic regime under Prime Minister Vladimir Mečiar. His autocratic and populist ‘catch all’ Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) ruled the country from its independence until 1998 in a coalition with one of Central and Eastern Europe’s most constant radical right parties, the Slovak National Party (SNS). It took nothing less than a broad coalition of parties consisting of the social democratic Party of the Democratic Left (SDL), the conservative parties Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKÚ) and Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) as well as the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK) to bring about a change of government. When they finally did so in 1998, the consequences were a re-democratization and a rapid orientation towards the EU (Haughton and Rybář 2009).
At this point in time, a new party, Direction (SMER), slowly emerged as an established competitor in the political arena of Slovakia. Founded by Robert Fico in 1999, a highly popular former politician of SDL’, SMER at first focused mostly on a vague platform of ‘non-ideological’ political pragmatism (Marušiak 2006), law and order policies as well as establishment and redistributive populism (cf. Pytlas 2013: 169). After the electoral demise of the SDL’, the former hegemonic party of the left, in the 2002 elections SMER successfully occupied the place as the major force of the socio-economic left by the mid 2000s, though with a somewhat more centrist position regarding the socio-cultural conflict dimension.

In the same year, the SNS failed to enter the national parliament for the first time due to a party split resulting from internal differences between the party’s most famous figure and long-term party leader Ján Slota and the then-leader Anna Belousovová. After re-uniting in 2003 the party entered parliament again in 2006 and could even have become junior partner of the SMER-led government. However, despite the best turnout in its history (11.6 percent), SNS was not able to negotiate the aspired ministerial posts and thus influence its most important policy fields directly (Haughton and Rybář 2009). Following their participation in the coalition government, the party lost dramatically in the 2010 elections and even dropped out of parliament in the early elections of 2012 (see also Gyárfášová and Mesežnikov, this volume).

[FIGURE 5.5 ABOUT HERE]

The data in Figure 5.5 shows a somewhat polarized party competition on the socio-cultural dimension in 2002 which is likely to be a leftover consequence of the highly antagonistic situation during the Mečiar era. Between 2002 and 2006, a trend of convergence of the mainstream parties on the socio-cultural conflict dimension is clearly visible since all parties are positioned within the range of two points, the only exception being the Christian Democrats. This indicates a decreasing salience of identity politics during the time the SNS were not in parliament. The constant center-left position of SMER regarding identity politics suggested by the data from 2002 and 2006 seems to represent the obscure positioning until then.

After 2006, however, the data signal a shift of SMER to the right which is also in line with the party’s choice of HZDS and SNS as coalition partners after the national elections in that year. Most analysts even claim that SMER’s positional shift on the socio-cultural dimension during and after the 2006 election campaign was even stronger than the data indicate, particularly with regard to the interpretation of Slovak history and the anti-Hungarian rhetoric (see Mesežnikov 2008; also Gyárfášová and Mesežnikov, this volume). Thus, both the data and the analysis suggest that SMER applied a strategy of accommodation regarding identity politics in order to take back voters from a strengthened SNS after the 2006 elections.

Such a rightward shift between 2006 is not only visible in the case of SMER. In fact, the data reveal that by 2010 not one of the established parties occupied a position on the left-liberal side of the spectrum. Thus, the return of the SNS into parliament in 2006 has altered the other parties’ spatial positions inasmuch as there has been a rightward shift of the whole party system (Gyárfášová and Mesežnikov, this volume). After its time in government, the initially center-left SMER is perceived also to have abandoned its undefined socio-cultural profile and peaks even higher than the moderate conservative SDKÚ, a result indeed questioning SMER’s self-ascribed label of a social democratic party (Mesežnikov 2008).
Summary
The analysis of spatial shifts in five different countries has revealed some interesting patterns. Facing a viable threat from a radical right party, nearby competitors tend to react with an accommodative strategy as was the case in Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia (and to some extent Bulgaria when also considering the emergence of the new party GERB as a strategy to attract voters from the radical right). On the oppositional side, the picture is less clear. Some liberal and center-left parties tend to intensify their oppositional stance (Poland, Hungary) while others make use of the growing issue space and move further to the right as well (Slovakia, Bulgaria). Being confronted with a decreasing threat from the radical right, however, there is a clear trend of convergence as those cases where radical right parties dropped out of parliament illustrate (Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Romania). Nevertheless, only in Romania did the parties converge exactly in the center while in the other countries, a slight imbalance toward the right has remained (particularly visible in Poland).

Narrative shifts in Central and East European party systems
Given the dynamic focus on issue competition with the radical right, the following qualitative analysis will look in more detail at the Polish, Hungarian, and Slovak cases, where we found clear signs of accommodative strategies by the mainstream competitors of the radical right. This step will shed further light on the mechanisms behind the observed spatial shifts.

Poland
In the case of Poland, the "highly conflicted" (Dillon 1996: 26) issue of reproductive rights appeared on the Sejm’s agenda already shortly after the onset of the post-communist transition and remained a pat situation in a conflict between left-liberal and conservative-nationalist political forces. The law adopted in 1993 (cf. Hennig 2012) constituted a largely conservative ‘abortion compromise’ (kompromis aborcyjny) that, despite several subsequent attempts (Hennig 2012), has remained fundamentally untouched.11 Also, with regard to bills on equality for same-sex civil partnerships, fierce debates started in 2001, polarized during the years 2005-2007, and failed to end in the successful adoption of a binding law (Hennig 2010).

The most prominent radical right narrative in this regard touched upon the question of a threat to the fabric of Polish identity, Catholic faith, “traditional Polish values” and the role of the traditional family as the nucleus of Polish society, seen as a vehicle for transmission of identity, patriotism and faith (cf. Giertych 2006, quoted in Minkenberg and Pytlas 2012: 218). Opposition to liberalization attempts with regard to issues of moral politics were depicted by the LPR as counter-modernization rhetoric. Therein, ‘the West’ – most notably the European Union, one of the main, if not the crucial issue owned by this religious-fundamentalist party (cf. de Lange and Guerra 2009) – were depicted as decadent, debaucherous, immoral and godless, and therefore incompatible with Poland’s cultural and historical tradition, and thus a threat to its national identity and sovereignty.

The distribution of those narratives by the LPR and its nearby competitor PiS presented in Figure 5.6 confirm the findings of the analysis of spatial shifts. Over time, PiS turned its attention to the issue of moral politics and shifted towards the application of radical right frames. As the name suggests, in the early years, the party’s main issue was law and order

10 Although this has not happened to ATAKA so far, the data initial to its presence do not indicate a high level of polarization along the socio-cultural conflict dimension either.
11 The last amendment to make it through to the third reading was a conservative constitutional amendment proposed by the PIS/LPR/Samoobrona government in 2007. A liberal amendment submitted by Ruch Palikota in 2012 did not even make it through the first reading.
(legalist issues such as tightening the penal code, anti-corruption, implementation of the death penalty) which rose to importance via corresponding anti-crime measures of a highly popular President of Warsaw, Lech Kaczyński, the future President of Poland. Any references to national identity were rather clad in the robes of patriotism derived from historical independence struggles and traditions (PiS 2001 in Słodkowska 2002: 92) and articulated as real-political raison d’état. The data confirms this finding, as in the period of 2002-2003 radical right frames relating to Catholic, traditional Polish values, and the traditional family are not prominently represented. If anything, they were articulated in singular debates on the issue, particularly by the rightmost wing of the party personified by Marek Jurek and Artur Zawisza.  

Nonetheless, as again visible in Fig. 5.6, ever since since the 2005 elections, PiS readily started to feature narratives along the lines of a threat to Catholic, Polish traditional values and the traditional family. In 2005, PiS published a separate document called ‘The Catholic Brochure’ (authored mostly by the aforementioned rightmost fringe of the party) that described religion, as a “fundamental fact of our national life” (PiS 2005: 7) and the necessity to defend it arising from the allegedly increasing threat of modern “moral relativism” and “revolution aimed at the pillars of our civilization” (PiS 2005: 9). In that period, the salience of the EU-issue helped the hard euro-sceptic LPR to repeatedly enter parliament. After 2005, the issue lost its salience, giving way to socio-economic issues and the PiS-induced polarization between ‘social’ and ‘liberal’ Poland (de Lange and Guerra 2009: 537; also Minkenberg and Pytlas 2012: 218). In this context, PiS successfully completed its narrative shift and obtained ownership over the LPR narratives of threat to Catholic values, applying them to their liberal internal counterparts, the Civic Platform, and their voters (Pytlas 2009; Minkenberg and Pytlas 2012: 219).

With the LPR vanishing from Parliament and Polish political life, PiS kept its religious-fundamentalist profile, no longer on the fringes, but at the center of the party ideology. Whereas in the years 2008-2009 the extent of its use was reduced by the diminished salience of this issue, the parliamentary elections of 2011 again reinforced the latent liberal-traditionalist conflict. The issue salience of religiously derived narratives was further enhanced by the growing popularity of the left-liberal Palikot Movement with its anti-clerical and liberal moral politics stances. As visible in Figure 5.6, since 2010 PiS not only upheld its positional shift, but enhanced it to the religious-fundamentalist right. This finding, assumed also in the quantitative part of the analysis, clearly confirms the enduring impact of the parliamentary presence of radical right parties on the Polish party system. As of 2013, the liberal-traditionalist conflict remains one of the most crucial axes of ideological division in Polish politics still including the adapted frames once introduced by the radical right in the middle of the 2000s.

Slovakia

In Slovakia, the issue of minority politics has been widely associated with the Hungarian community living mostly in the southern parts of the country. Due to historical legacies of Hungarian domination over Slovak lands during the time of the Hungarian Kingdom and the Habsburg Empire, the issue of the relationships between the ethnic majority and minority in

---

12 Both politicians left the party in 2007 over the dispute surrounding the failed attempt to introduce a ban on abortion into the constitution. The politicians later formed the splinter party Prawica Rzeczpospolitej. In 2012, Artur Zawisza became one of the leaders of the extreme right National Movement (Ruch Narodowy).
the country has been crucial for the radical right SNS. Ján Slota and his party have regularly used radical right narratives to depict the Hungarian minority as a ‘fifth column’ within Slovak borders. In a radicalized and non-differentiating fashion, he accused the Hungarian minority and the Hungarian state of perpetuating the imperialism of the Habsburg era and warned of the threat to Slovak sovereignty coming from alleged hidden irredentist and revanchist goals of the Hungarian minority and the Hungarian state (Mesežnikov 2008; also Pytlas 2013: 173).

After 2006, the social-populist SMER – still ascribing to the social-democratic tradition – intensified its narrative shift toward radical right value positions (Mesežnikov 2008: 31). In 2003, expert surveys placed SMER nine percentage points below the party mean for support of nationalism whereas surveys conducted after 2006 saw this indicator rise to 13 percentage points above the mean (Rybář and Deegan-Krause 2008: 511). This fact is confirmed by the CAQDA analysis depicted in Figure 5.7. In a similar vein, the expert survey data used in this study also indicates a socio-cultural rightward shift of SMER in the second half of the decade.

Since 2006, the ratio of SMER’s articulation of notions related to Hungarian historical dominance, irredentism and threat to Slovak sovereignty in debates on the Hungarian minority has followed the trend of the SNS. In the year 2008 – in the wake of the adoption of the notorious Slovak Language Law that came into force in 2009 (cf. Pytlas 2013: 171-176) – SMER even topped the ratio of similar SNS statements with over 50 percent of all articulated party frames in this field. Before the Hungarian and Slovak elections in 2010 and 2011 and in the course of the adoption of the Hungarian Dual Citizenship Law in 2010, the ratio of SMER’s radical right rhetoric peaked again. As it turns out, SMER used the frames of the SNS far more punctually and strategically than PiS in the Polish case (Pytlas 2014). This is surely in part due to the fact that Fico and SMER both wanted to retain their social-democratic label, on the national as well as the European level of party politics. Nonetheless, the figure provides proof of the impact of SNS on the rhetoric of SMER with regard to the Hungarian minority issue, traditional for the radical right parties in Slovakia.

**Hungary**

In Hungary, the question of the Hungarian diaspora living in adjacent countries as a result of the Trianon peace treaty after World War I constitutes a long-term and crucial part of the country’s foreign policy, or rather its specific, unique facet of nemzetpolitika (cf. Pytlas 2013: 176-181). In contrast to the cases of Poland and Slovakia, Fidesz has pursued a strong traditionalist stance on this issue at least since their volte-face from a liberal to a national-conservative party in the mid-1990s (Kiss 2002). In 2001, the first Fidesz government adopted a legislation known as Status Law, granting the Hungarian diaspora the status of Hungarian ethnic affiliation, along with numerous social benefits. In a follow up action in 2004, Fidesz – now in opposition – engaged in a referendum to grant dual citizenship to Hungarians living abroad. The referendum failed as a result of low turn-out, but – especially due to the campaign of the MSzP against the adoption of dual citizenship legislation – remained a legitimizing tool for party competition in the field of national politics between the left-liberal and national-conservative camps (Pytlas 2013: 178). Jobbik, founded in 2003, has already taken an active part in the pro-referendum debate. After the failed plebiscite, Jobbik accentuated – more or less directly depending on the context – its radical rhetoric on the revision of Trianon and the reunification of Hungary’s diaspora within the borders of historical Greater Hungary.
Thus, as Figure 5.8 shows, historical overlaying narratives referring to the need to abolish the Trianon treaty became more important to Jobbik, especially in the election year of 2010. Another unique feature visible in Fig. 5.8 was the extensive use of martyrology narratives (notions such as historical suffering, humiliation, a ‘wound’ the body of the organically imagined nation continues to bear) related to the ‘Trianon trauma’ experienced by the Hungarian diaspora living outside the borders of the ‘Motherland’, again peaking in 2010. In this regard, the 2004 referendum has been portrayed as a ‘second’ or ‘spiritual’ Trianon and a further act to wound the Nation, this time by the Socialists (cf. Jobbik 2004; also Barikad 2008). With the growing street visibility of Jobbik and the Magyar Gárda, together with its success in the 2009 elections to the European Parliament, these notions became much more resonant in the public sphere – especially among the significant public anti-Socialist mood against the government of Ferenc Gyurcsány.

Figure 5.9 shows the impact of the aforementioned narratives on the narrative shift of Fidesz. Assumed by the analysis of spatial shifts but still not visible in the survey data, the CAQDA analysis clearly confirms a considerably strong impact of Jobbik on the shift of Fidesz further to the national-conservative position in the electoral year of 2010. The distribution of Fidesz’ narratives with regard to the organic or spiritual imagination of the Hungarian nation remains stable. This indicates that Fidesz has previously argued strongly along the lines of ultranationalist, organic or cultural ethnic identity of the Hungarian diaspora in the region. Nonetheless, the rightward shift of Fidesz is noticeable by their growing co-optation of ultranationalist narratives articulated by Jobbik in relation to Trianon as well as martyrological visions of the suffering of the Hungarian diaspora. Here, Fidesz together with its satellite party KDNP has – among other things (cf. Biró-Nagy et al. 2013) – adopted the Jobbik interpretation of the failed referendum as the ‘second Trianon trauma’ brought upon the nation by the Socialists (Magyar Nemzet 2010; Orbán 2011, 2012; cf. Pytlas 2013). Therefore, already prior to its entry into the national parliament, and if only by means of street visibility and electoral success on the European level, Jobbik had a profound impact on the narrative shift of Fidesz toward even more rightist positions. Furthermore, the already virulent polarization of the political scene between national-conservative and left-libertarian parties has not only been fuelled by the socio-economic field, but has also increasingly bridged the socio-cultural dimension related to ‘national politics’ (Pytlas 2014). In this matter, the primary, direct impact of Jobbik has been the introduction of these polarizing narratives into the public discourse, as well as their adoption and legitimization by Fidesz.

Concluding Remarks: Radical Right Parties as ignition for identity conflicts?

This study has attempted to analyze the impact of radical right parties on spatial and narrative shifts in Central and East European party systems. Concerning spatial shifts we have found that radical right parties yield substantial impact on party competition in Central and Eastern Europe. As in Western Europe, their presence is accompanied by increased polarization between the left-liberal (GAL) and the national-conservative (TAN) camp or a general rightward shift of the party system. In that regard, the latter trend is not only prevailing in the Western part of Europe, but also in the post-Communist part as well. Looking at competition between the radical right and its nearby competitors, the analysis has shown that they
unequivocally moved towards the right when facing a viable threat from radical right parties, in particular their presence in parliament. This phenomenon can have long-term effects on the party system, as is the case in Poland.

At the same time, the decrease of such a threat goes along with a centripetal shift not only of the nearby competitors but also the other parties. In other words, the decline of radical right parties is associated with a clear trend of convergence of the party system as a whole. Such a trend is best visible in Romania where the radical right was constantly losing support throughout the 2000s while mainstream parties simultaneously converged towards the center of the GAL/TAN dimension. Since convergence suggests that there is not much controversial debate about the issue dimension in question, it indeed appears to be the radical right that ‘lights the fuse’ of dormant conflicts on socio-cultural issues.

The analysis of narrative shifts supplements these findings with regard to party competition between the radical right and their nearby competitors. In Poland, a clear adoption of radical right narratives can be observed for the conservative PiS and, despite a slight, strategic trend of convergence after the lost elections, between 2007 and 2009, so the effect of LPR’s electoral success for the rightward ideological turn of PiS appears to be long-lasting. In Slovakia, the analysis also confirms a clear accommodative strategy of SMER and a takeover of the minority issue and respective radical right frames from the scandal-weakened SNS. Here, partly due to the trade-off between their social-democratic self-ascription and their rhetoric, the narrative takeover is rather punctual and opportunistic, coinciding with thematically related debates or elections. In contrast to Poland, it could thus be argued, that SMER used radical right narratives strategically rather than making them a central part of its own ideological platform. In Hungary on the other hand, the analysis of the spatial positions showed only a slight shift of Fidesz vis-à-vis the threat of Jobbik. The anti-liberal and nationalist legislation the Fidesz government adopted after 2010 suggested, however, a stronger shift than indicated by the GAL/TAN data. This assumption has been confirmed by the CAQDA data which have revealed a much stronger accommodative strategy of Fidesz in regard to Jobbik narratives concerning their ultranationalist framing regarding the issue of nemzetpolitika. It has thus further contextualized the conclusions drawn from the analysis of spatial shifts.

The combined findings of this proposed mixed-method analysis thus suggest that radical right parties seem to be able to place their issues, such as ultranationalism, (religious) traditionalism, restriction of minority rights or law and order on the political agenda and force other parties to react in order to compete over the electorate on the right fringe. Their impact is most visible here, as they seem to ‘ignite’ conflicts on identity politics, otherwise rather diffused when a party system is lacking a radical right party. As it turns out, these reactions mostly took the form of accommodative framing strategies and thus resulted in spatial and narrative shifts towards the national-conservative end of the conflict, in particular among the nearby competitors.

The approach proved very useful for looking at the complex and dynamic area of spatial and ideological competition between radical right and mainstream parties. The observation of spatial shifts along the socio-cultural dimension provided a useful proxy for comparative analysis of party impact and allowed us to identify general patterns of party strategies vis-à-vis a radical right threat. When zooming in from the systemic perspective and taking a closer look at the mechanisms behind the shifts, frame analysis can point to the importance of the ideological dimension of party competition. The detailed analysis of the adaptation of radical right frames by mainstream parties and the timing of these narrative shifts not only sheds light on
on the mechanism of party competition in general. Path dependency indicated between the articulation of particular narratives of radical right parties and positional shifts of their nearby competitors suggests a strong connection between both phenomena. Therefore, the mixed-methods approach grants us with a comprehensive new look on the impact of radical right parties both on the direction and the content of positional shifts within party systems. It thus presents a viable improvement of the existing models of impact analysis that is able to grasp the complexity of the phenomenon and present more than only correlations between the presence of radical right parties and positional shifts of other parties within a party system.

Putting these results into perspective, it becomes clear that radical right parties have been influencing the transformation of the post-Communist democracies and are highly likely to continue doing so in the future. Especially when they are successful at the polls or establish a viable threat by means of street activity, they have the power to set their core issues of identity politics on the agenda, frame them according to their ideology and force other parties’ to react and position themselves on these issues.
References


http://orbanviktor.hu/beszéd/le_kell_zarni_a_posztkommunista_korszakot.


Appendix

Figure 5.1: Spatial shifts along the GAL/TAN dimension in the Bulgarian party system (2002–2010)


Figure 5.2: Spatial shifts along the GAL/TAN dimension in the Hungarian party system (2002–2010)

Figure 5.3: Spatial shifts along the GAL/TAN dimension in the Polish party system (2002–2010)


Figure 5.4: Spatial shifts along the GAL/TAN dimension in the Romanian party system (2002–2010)

Figure 5.5: Spatial shifts along the GAL/TAN dimension within the Slovak party system (2002–2010)


Figure 5.6: Distribution of summarized narratives of ‘Threat’ to ‘Catholic Values’, ‘Traditional Polish Values’, and ‘Traditional Family’ among LPR and PiS, in percent of total party statements in the Polish moral politics debates.

Source: CAQDA database of radical right identity policy frames in Central Eastern Europe (Pytlas 2014).
Figure 5.7: Distribution of summarized narratives of ‘Irredentism’, ‘Historical Dominance’, as well as ‘Threat’ to ‘Sovereignty’ among SNS and SMER, in percent of total party statements in the Slovak debates on the Hungarian minority

Source: CAQDA database of radical right identity policy frames in Central Eastern Europe (Pytlas 2014).

Figure 5.8: Distribution of summarized ‘Historical/Mythic’, ‘Martyrology/Trauma’ and ‘Organic/Spiritual’ national identity narratives of Jobbik, in percent of total Jobbik statements in the Hungarian debate on dual citizenship

Source: CAQDA database of radical right identity policy frames in Central-Eastern Europe (Pytlas 2014).
Figure 5.9: Distribution of summarized ‘Historical/Mythic’, ‘Martyrology/Trauma’ and ‘Organic/Spiritual’ national identity narratives of Fidesz, in percent of total Fidesz statements in the Hungarian debate on dual citizenship

Source: CAQDA database of radical right identity policy frames in Central-Eastern Europe (Pytlas 2014).