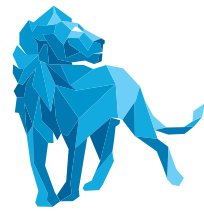




IMMIGRATION, JUSTICE AND SOCIETY



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# UNDERSTANDING CONSERVATISM

# New Direction



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# THE UNSOLVABLE PROBLEMS OF LIBERALISM

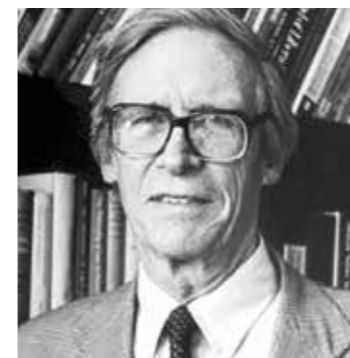
*Alvydas Jokubaitis*

Conservatism is a paradoxical phenomenon. Conservatives defend their beliefs, which sometimes are unmodern, but to defend them they are engaged in discussions which are necessarily modern. Conservatives are well known for their critique of ideologies but they themselves are ideologues. They are engaged in modern ideological discussions, but do not believe that these discussions have any serious meaning. Once conservatives become adherents to ideological thought, their situation becomes even worse. From its very beginning conservatism is a reactionary ideology, and for this reason conservatives should not follow the path of their opponents. Their calling is to show

the problems of their opponents. By attempting to stay relevant in contemporary political discussions, conservatives have to fulfill two tasks: (1) to show the weak spots in the positions of their opponents and (2) to prove that the attempt to solve modern problems requires conservatism. The purpose of this article is to present a new challenge to the political philosophy of liberalism. This challenge should serve be useful in attempts to rethink conservatism. The contemporary problems about the identity of liberalism are also the problems of conservatism. While the identity of political liberalism remains unclear, the identity of conservatism also seems destined to remain unclear.

## TWO PARADOXES OF LIBERALISM

Today the political philosophy of liberalism faces a situation that Hans Christian Andersen told in his tale *The Emperor's New Clothes*. Since the publication of John Rawls's *Political Liberalism*, it has become clear that a liberal society cannot be built on moral liberalism. This means that liberalism cannot be the basis of a liberal society. The idea that a society should defend only liberals is a misunderstanding because common principles of liberalism have to



be defended by individuals who are not liberals. If liberals want to be consistent, they have to reject the concept of liberal society. Respect for moral pluralism does not mean that society as a whole should be called a

'liberal society'. It is clear that when a society agrees on the principles of political justice (as postulated by Rawls's theory), it cannot be designated as 'liberal' because the agreement is valid to all members of society, even to those who hold the most antiliberal convictions. It would be absurd to call fascists 'liberals' because they live in a society which is built on the

principles of political liberalism. However, according to Rawls, we can have no serious objections against calling them liberals.

Rawls's works demand us to reconsider the identity of the philosophy of liberalism. The American philosopher developed a theory of liberalism, according to which liberals are equal to nonliberals in a liberal society. More than 20 years have passed since the publication of *Political Liberalism*; however, no one seems to have explained why a society that is composed of a considerable number of people who are opposed to the doctrine of liberalism is called a 'liberal society'. Liberals cannot apply their moral philosophy to liberal politics. Such an application would destroy their commitment to fairness. Political liberalism can only be defended when liberals admit that their philosophy of morality cannot be enforced politically. Liberals and anti-liberals have to be treated as equal members of a liberal society. The advocates of political liberalism cannot claim that the moral philosophy of liberalism has to become the ruling philosophy of the liberal regime. They can reasonably expect to be called moral liberals, but they cannot seriously think that all citizens of a liberal regime should be called liberals. This is the coping stone of Rawls's political liberalism. Liberal and nonliberal citizens have to live their daily political lives according



to the same principles of justice. Political liberalism cannot exist if it is recognised only by liberals. In order to exist it has to be recognised by citizens who can privately reject the doctrine of liberalism. Political liberalism can exist only if it is recognised by individuals who do not hold themselves to be liberals. Liberals have no stable or unchanging identity that would allow us to distinguish them from nonliberals. Since the regime of political liberalism has to be recognized by citizens who are not liberals, we have no reason to call this regime 'liberal'. The struggle for a liberal identity that has lasted for a few hundred years seems to have ended as a failure. Liberals have to base their political identity on the same foundations as nonliberals.

According to the German jurist and political philosopher Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde, a liberal state cannot survive without moral resources that are not liberal. He states the same thing as Rawls – political liberalism cannot stand on its own legs without the help of individuals who are not liberals. Political liberalism does not necessarily follow from moral liberalism. Even the most antiliberal political philosophies can be reached from the starting point of moral individualism. Since its very birth liberalism has remained a defensive philosophy that's useful when defending the rights of citizens but is useless once one tries to establish a moral order. In their attempts to establish morality, liberals are forced to borrow from other traditions of moral thought. The most important among them are religious traditions.

Liberals focus their view on guarding the rights of citizens. Such a narrowing of perspective makes them incapable of grounding any sort of ethics that would be directed toward moral perfection. This necessarily follows from the premise that the status of moral choice is the same as that of the choice between different kinds of ice cream, shoes or cars. This trait of liberalism proves the truth of Böckenförde's insight that the very existence of liberal regimes depends on moral resources that are not liberal.

Rawls proposes a form of liberalism that unites liberals and nonliberals. Political liberalism is not inseparable from the moral philosophy of liberalism. It can function without the support of liberal morality. Political liberalism can be (and has to be) defended by the opponents of moral liberalism. Nonliberal citizens can freely live according to their convictions in liberal regimes. However, there are limits to their freedoms, and these limits are set politically by liberals. This is not the only paradox to be found in Rawls's philosophy. In formulating his conception of political liberalism, Rawls implies that liberals have some kind of shared moral identity. The readers of *Political Liberalism* are led to believe that all problems of identity of liberalism can be solved on the level of morality. This is the unproven assumption of liberalism. Moral liberalism is as paradoxical as political liberalism. For this very reason it cannot become a ground of liberal identity. The moral philosophy of liberalism could collapse as soon as someone shouted 'the emperor is naked'.

## MORAL PHILOSOPHY WITHOUT MORALITY

Liberals cannot ground their identity in the field of politics. They are also incapable of doing this in the field of morality. Most liberals tend to take moral liberalism for granted. However, there is no moral philosophy of liberalism. Liberals could never agree on principles of morality that could be codified. If we admit that their moral philosophy is essentially a critique of other systems of moralities, we would have to see Joseph de Maistre as a more consistent liberal than John Stewart Mill because de Maistre was a much sharper critic than Mill. Critique is incapable of grounding a common identity of the moral philosophy of liberalism. According to the traditional understanding, a liberal is someone who takes a critical stance towards conservatives. If de Maistre had criticized the conservatives he would be regarded as a liberal thinker; however, he criticized the French revolutionaries and today is held to be an enemy of liberalism. When a person takes a stance against abortions, he is called a conservative; however, when he takes a stance against abortions and adds the statement that in the end everything depends on the choice of the individual, he becomes a liberal.

A few explanations can help us to understand why it might seem that liberals do have a code of morality. First of all, liberals and nonliberals are familiar with traditional virtues – speaking the truth, self-respect, forgiveness, friendship and justice. Secondly, they like to dispute with people who are not liberals. It is hard to believe that people who like to discuss on the themes of morality do not have their own conception of morality. Only when we take a closer look does

it become clear that the so-called morality of liberalism is not a system of virtues but merely the right to criticize any code of morality. Liberals feel obliged to revise all moral codes and this critical revision is the essence of their moral philosophy. By asserting the right of individuals to criticize any conviction, liberals reveal the strange status of their own moral convictions. Their conception of morality is a repetition of the matrix of political liberalism. When someone argues that abortions should be made illegal, liberals say that the admissibility of abortions has

to be left to the decision of a freely acting individual. This means that Catholics cannot become liberals as long as their catechism opposes the legalization of abortions.

The contemporary popular idea of the end of morality allows us to gain a better understanding of the moral philosophy of liberalism. Alasdair MacIntyre is right to state that what traditionally was understood to be morality has disappeared during some

point of modernity. In his words, 'We possess indeed simulacra of morality, we continue to use many of the key expressions. But we have – very largely, if not entirely – lost our comprehension, both theoretical and practical, of morality'. This statement provides an important insight into the problem of the moral philosophy of liberalism. What liberals hold to be their morality on closer inspection proves to be only a simulacrum of morality. The arguments presented in MacIntyre's *After Virtue* allow us to say that liberals continue to talk about morality but all their discourses are dependent on moral vocabularies inherited from the past. According to MacIntyre, the classical conception of morality had three elements:



1. the conception of untutored human nature,
2. the conception of the precepts of rational ethics, and
3. the conception of human-nature-as-it-could-be-if-it-realized-its-*telos*. Liberal morality (or simulacra of it) has only two elements. It does not have any conception of human nature.

Liberals cannot explain what makes *homo sapiens* into a human being. They cannot present us with any coherent understanding of a morally educated human being. Everything is left to the free decision of the individual. Liberals do not consider abortions to be something good, but proposals to ban them are seen as being something bad. This is another mystery of liberalism.

We could not find any purely liberal virtue even in the longest list of virtues. 'Liberal virtues' come into existence only when the predicate 'liberal' is added to traditional virtues – liberal justice, liberal toleration, liberal faith, liberal commitment, liberal openness. The identity of the moral philosophy of liberalism is not to be found in any list of virtues. We have to look at the liberal relationship with virtues. The choice of a freely acting individual is of much more importance to liberals than the virtues are. This means that the same virtue can have a liberal and anti-liberal meaning. Everything depends on the choice of the individual. When liberals attempt to understand ethics, they do not attempt to understand the moral meaning of virtues. A true liberal can be lustful on Monday and chaste on Tuesday. Liberals like to discuss moral questions but they cannot find anything new to say which they would not have said on the political level. When a question arises whether some kind of disputed action should be prohibited, liberals tell us that every individual should decide for himself or herself. This is a political and not a moral answer. Liberals discuss the problems of abortions, euthanasia or same-sex marriage in the same way that they would discuss any other political questions.

Liberals become 'philosophers of morality' by criticizing convictions of their opponents. They can even hold convictions that seem to be opposed

to liberalism; they only need to say that these convictions are the result of their critical reasoning. It is impossible to distinguish moral and political liberalism. Even before serious inquiry concerning moral problems had begun, liberals already knew that abortions and euthanasia had to be approved. This reveals another paradox of their philosophy. Liberals argue that their philosophical identity has to be found on the level of morality; however, moral liberalism only repeats the political principles of their doctrine. This way of thinking is based on a logical error of circular reasoning. When liberals discuss political questions, they state that morality is a private matter. When morality is discussed as a private matter, liberals propose to look for answers on the political level. The moral philosophy of liberalism is similar to a train that leaves one station but never arrives at another: it is always stuck somewhere between the two stations.

Nonliberal convictions are essential for the survival of liberal philosophy. These convictions are criticized, rejected or neutralized. Liberals know that it is impossible to reach a universal agreement concerning morality. This is why they propose to agree on political principles that are seen to be the most important thing in finding solutions to major disagreements on questions concerning morality. When a moral problem arises, liberals propose a political solution – free choice for abortion or euthanasia. Even free rejection of abortion or euthanasia as long as it is a free choice of the individual. People who think that liberals have their own morality need to prove that liberals can tell us something more about the virtues than the adherents of the positions that are criticized could tell us. It seems that liberals cannot say anything that we would not know at the beginning of discussion. When such an authoritative liberal as Thomas Nagel in his book *Mortal Questions* writes that the evaluation of homosexuality has the same status as evaluations concerning works of art, his statement reveals more about the state of contemporary art than it does about morality. Nagel gives a lecture on aesthetics to people who want to learn about ethics. His statement is similar to the notion that people who are interested in ethics should be given a lecture on problems of art or biology.

## SHAM PHILOSOPHY

Liberal political philosophy is a hostage of a philosophy of history that can be described as having a doubtful reputation. Liberals see the practical realization of their doctrine as a mark of social and political progress. The importance of history for the moral identity of the individual is not among the themes that liberals like to talk about. However, their political philosophy is inseparable from the political faith of historical progress. The belief that history is working on the side of liberalism is taken for granted. This allows us to see liberalism as a secular substitute for religion. According to Rousseau, theirs is a "purely *civil* profession of faith'. Despite their much promulgated respect for freedom, liberals are dogmatists. The liberal individual is a substitute for the God of monotheistic religions, moral codes are substituted for the free choice of the individual and the main dogma becomes the search for novelty. In the words of Carl Schmitt, 'Freedom replaces Reason, and Novelty replaces Freedom'.

Liberals cannot prove the superiority of their doctrine on the plane of philosophy. Novelty does not mean progress. However, contemporary liberalism is based on the belief that freedom for new and unusual things is the most important goal for individuals and society. Since the writings of Mill, liberal philosophers talk about experimental morals and politics. One can reasonably state that they are applying the principle that Paul Feyerabend formulated on a very different occasion – *anything goes*. Precisely this principle creates insurmountable difficulties in the quest to find the identity of liberalism. When the principle *anything goes* is admitted, liberals and their opponents can argue that the rejection of liberalism is as meaningful as the affirmation of liberalism. Liberals cannot be called philosophers because

philosophers do not know the answers before their inquiries have even begun. Liberals know that their doctrine is the true one without any serious discussion. Philosophers strive for wisdom despite knowing that complete wisdom is beyond human capacities. Liberals promise to reveal a philosophical truth, but they can only come up with a political truth. This can only be called a deception – philosophy is substituted by secular faith.

The conclusions of a free philosophical inquiry do not have to coincide with the teachings of liberalism. The history of philosophy only proves that serious philosophical reflections can lead to positions that are completely opposed to those of liberalism. The almost unlimited flexibility of the liberal mind makes it seemingly impossible to find the identity of liberalism. A liberal philosopher worthy of a philosopher's name would have to transcend all opinions, beliefs, moral codes and political theories. Submission to the opinions of society is the end of philosophy. In this aspect liberalism is only a simulacrum of free thought. The so-called liberal philosophers only pretend to be freethinkers. They can criticize any dogma, be it their own or that of their opponents; however, their critique cannot be so far reaching that it would destroy all

marks of liberalism. Liberals have to put a stop to their critical capacities at a certain point. Schmitt thought that liberals do not have their own conception of politics and are satisfied with being critics of politics. After the works of Rawls, it has become clear that they are faced with even deeper problems. Political liberalism is incapable of grounding the identity of liberalism. Liberals put too much faith in philosophical attempts to find the basis of their identity. They can save their identity only by transforming philosophy into ideology.



To historians of philosophy the identity of liberalism seems to be an unsolvable riddle. However, this theoretical problem can easily be solved on the level of political practice when citizens declare their loyalty to the liberal ideology. Liberal philosophers have always strived for something more than a mere ideology, but serious philosophical reflection would mark the end of liberal identity. The final word to all problems of liberalism is 'you'd better believe it'. Behind the philosophy of liberalism we will always find some of civil religion. Permanent criticism would end in the dissolution of liberal identity, and this is why the help of ideology is essential. The identity of liberalism faces unsolvable problems because liberals have not managed to develop an independent moral and political philosophy. In the case of political liberalism, liberals share the same principles with citizens who are opposed to liberalism. In the case of moral liberalism, we do not find any list of liberal virtues.

The political philosophy of liberalism is faced with four seemingly insurmountable paradoxes. First of all, Rawlsian political liberalism shows that the distinction between liberals and nonliberals disappears, and it becomes impossible to understand the difference between liberal and nonliberal political positions. Secondly, from the starting point of moral liberalism, we can arrive at any political conclusions, even at the most antiliberal ones. Liberalism can justify its name only when citizens of a liberal society are allowed

to not be liberals. Thirdly, liberal moral philosophy is incapable of providing any positive morality. It has to borrow virtues from traditions of moral thought that are unliberal. Fourthly, the attempts to create a liberal political philosophy at some point have to petrify into an ideology. Liberal political philosophy does not rest on superior arguments. It is based on political faith. What goes by the name of political philosophy is just a civil religion.

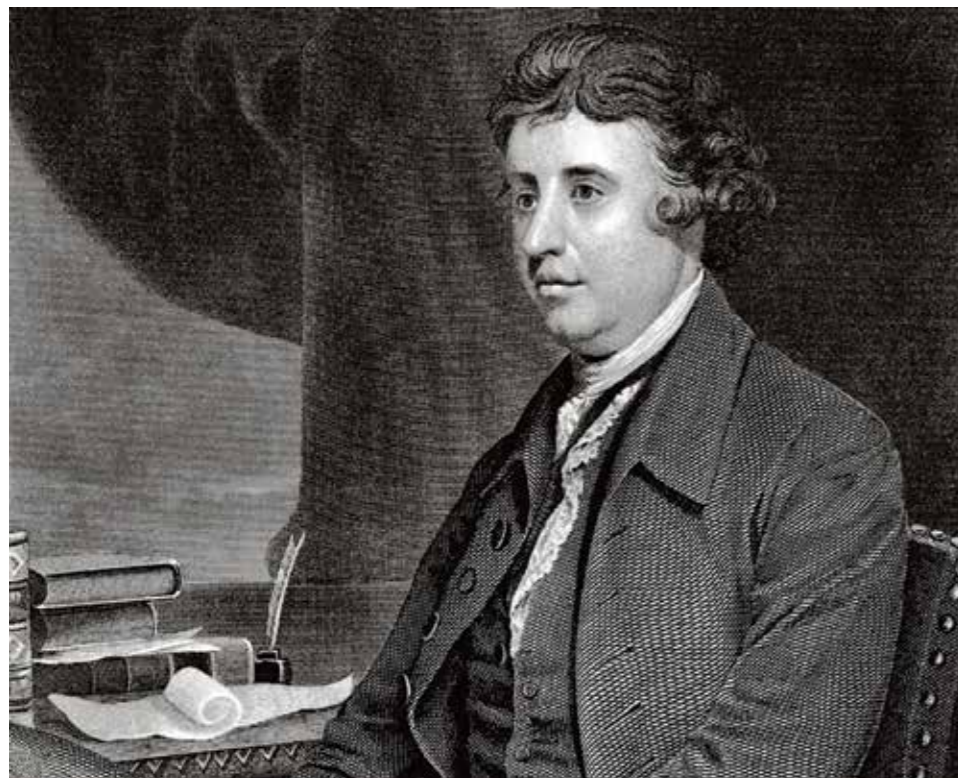
Liberals can solve all paradoxes only on the level of practice by allying themselves to the most powerful political forces that represent liberal ideology. They cannot prove the superiority of their doctrine in a free and open philosophical discussion. It seems that no one can explain where liberalism begins and where it ends. Liberals who believe that political liberalism is built on the philosophical strength of its arguments are gravely mistaken. 'Liberal philosophy' is a perplexing mixture of free thought and dogmatic loyalty to ideology. At the bottom of all liberal philosophical discourses we will always find political dogmas. The philosophy of liberalism is as dogmatic as the most antiliberal philosophies. Liberals like to speak about freedom; however, in truth they are defending a political *credo* according to which they distinguish what is free thought and what is not. They are much closer to doctrinaire ideologists than to philosophers who engage in open discussions. Only by remaining silent on their political faith can liberals

create an illusion of a completely free and open discussion. One can easily notice that liberal reasoning reminds the argumentation of theologians – confession of faith (which in the case of liberals is not declared openly) – comes before any philosophical inquiry and guides it towards conclusions that are known in advance.

Liberals cannot give a coherent account of their identity on the level of morality or politics. However, it would be naive to think

that liberals would say 'goodbye, liberalism'. Force of habit hides from us the fact that there is no necessary connection between being a free person and being a liberal. Freedom is not the answer to all problems of the human condition. It is merely the presupposition to all answers concerning morality. It might surprise many that liberal philosophers have labored so long and only managed to turn their philosophy into the handmaid of ideology. The time has come to reject the faith of liberal 'philosophy'. Just like in Andersen's tale we have to admit that the emperor has no clothes. This observation should not be a cause for critics of liberalism to rejoice. On the contrary, this should make the critics deeply concerned. The problems of liberalism reveal that all civil religions are just as vulnerable. Conservatism also is neither a philosophy nor an ideology. Any attempt by conservatives to

create their own version of political justice would face the same problems as the ones that the liberals are facing. Liberals need conservatives. However, the most urgent task for conservatives is to find their own solid ground and not to remain polemically dependent on liberalism. For the first time since Edmund Burke, conservatives are challenged to rethink their position because of the many uncertainties of liberalism. When the identity of liberalism is almost unidentifiable, conservatives lose their main opponent. Since the French Revolution modern conservatism is a reaction to the deficiencies of liberalism. Once this opponent seems to vanish, conservatives have to take the place of liberalism in the 'liberal democracy'. However, they are reactionaries, and this position is not for them. The only other option seems to be to find a new opponent. •



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# CONSERVATISM: TRUE AND FALSE

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Everywhere in Europe and the US, the popularity of so-called 'populist' politicians and parties is growing, many of which call themselves conservative. So at first sight, conservatism seems to be on the rise and doing well. But that is a misconception. Calling the populist parties conservative is like calling a cat a dog. There are some superficial resemblances, but in reality these are two very different animals. Most apparently, the populist parties are in favor of more direct democracy – they believe that the *populus* is virtuous and must stop the corrupt elite. Conservatism, on the other hand, is skeptical of the political acuteness of the common man and believes that the *populus* needs to be guided by a virtuous elite. Or isn't that the conservative position? What, if anything, is conservatism really? Let us go back in time and remind ourselves where exactly conservatism comes from, how it developed and where it stands now.

The word 'conservatism' goes back no further than about one hundred years. It was first used, to my knowledge, by Lord Hugh Cecil, who in 1912 published a book with the title *Conservatism*.<sup>1</sup> The famous eleventh edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, which dates from 1911-12, has no lemma for the word. (It does for socialism and liberalism.)<sup>2</sup> With the exception of Britain, however, the word initially did not gain wide currency on the European continent or in the USA. If it was used, it was as a term of abuse. It was only after Barry Goldwater and his followers began to use it as a self-description in the 1960s that it gradually gained currency in the US. On the European continent, on the other hand, it is still in the process of becoming ordinary and respectable. As yet it has not become as normal and accepted a word as socialism and liberalism. The lineage of the word 'conservatism' is hence quite modest. And if words and things



are connected, one would have to conclude that conservatism is something of the post-1960s era. And as far as the eastern part of Europe is concerned, conservatism is something of the post-1989 era. But let's be generous and say that conservatism as we know it is a post-War phenomenon that began with the publication of Quentin Hogg's *The Case for Conservatism* in 1947 and Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind* in 1953.

Of course, like many people with modest roots, contemporary conservatives traverse the past looking for relatives that might make their lineage more respectable. The opinion of these genealogists differ somewhat, but all agree that Edmund Burke is the founding father of conservatism, and his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) is its Gospel. So the general picture, which has acquired wide currency, is that there is one conservative tradition running from Burke to the present.

However, such general pictures with wide currency have one thing in common: they are usually not true. In reality Burke's views have little or nothing in common with contemporary, post-war conservatism. If we aspire to a true understanding of the history

of conservatism, we have to start making a few distinctions. Even if we limit ourselves to the last two centuries – which is anything but self-evident<sup>3</sup> – we encounter not one but three types of conservatism that differ greatly. So greatly in fact that the question arises if including them all under the same denominator isn't self-deceit.

The first conservative tradition was counterrevolutionary, and it reached its zenith in the period from 1790 (Burke) to the 1830s. In its second period, conservatism was a liberal-conservative or

<sup>1</sup> In the same year J. H. Robinson published a book entitled *New History*, the eighth chapter of which bears the title 'The spirit of conservatism in the light of history'.

<sup>2</sup> The adjective goes back to the 1830s. In 1832 Peel rechristened the Tory Party Conservative Party. The related word 'conservateur' is still older. In 1818 Chateaubriand started a journal with that name. Even before that, in 1799, after his coup d'état on the '18th Brumaire', Napoleon established a Sénat Conservateur, whose task was to 'conserve' the Constitution.

<sup>3</sup> The implicit message of Leo Strauss's phenomenal *Natural Right and History* (1953) is that conservatives should not take Burke as their point of departure, but rather 'classic natural right', i.e. the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle.



conservative-liberal tradition that came into existence after World War II and is still with us. And finally, there is also a type of conservatism in which the ideas of the counterrevolution are 'aufgehoben' in the Hegelian sense, i.e. annulled, preserved and brought to a higher level. 'Philosophic' or 'Platonic' conservatism would be an appropriate name for this type. It predominates in the period from the 1830s to World War II, but there are several precursory figures, and it is still around. It is sometimes called 'traditionalism', or 'anti-modernism'. This, in my view, is the true or the best type of conservatism. Its ideas are more acute than ever in the present time.

The counterrevolution is the exact antipode of the French and American revolutionary ideas.<sup>4</sup> Politically, the revolution stood for a (more or less) democratic republic of free and equal citizens. The counterrevolution stood for a traditional mixed regime

(*regimen mixtum*) of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, i.e. king, nobility and commoners. Socially, the revolution stood for a society of individuals who are equal before the law, the counterrevolution for a *société des ordres*, i.e. a ranked society of hierarchical families, communities and orders. Economically the revolution stood for a free market system, with full ownership rights and freedom of contract. The counterrevolution stood for a corporatist system based on guilds with limited ownership rights and freedom of contract. Religiously the revolution stood for secularism, i.e. religion as a private matter, separated from the government or, in its extreme variety, for atheism and a total rejection of Christianity. The counterrevolution stood for the fusion of church and state and the 'establishment' of (one type of) Christianity as the official creed, preferably shared by everyone. In short, the counterrevolution wanted to restore the *antediluvium* and go back to the *ancien régime*, or to

the Middle Ages. This was also Burke's position. But there are evidently very few conservatives in the world today who share these ideas, notwithstanding Burke's aura as founding father of conservatism.

Most conservatives today are liberals of a kind. Hence the name liberal conservatism or conservative liberalism. This type of conservatism came into existence after World War II. Politically it embraces the idea of a democratic republic of free and equal citizens. Socially it stands for a society of individuals who are equal before the law. Economically it favors a free market system with full rights of ownership and freedom of contract. And religiously it approves of the principle of the separation of church and state in so far as it regards religion as a private matter.

Hence, if we compare the positions it takes with those of the counterrevolution and the revolution in the early nineteenth century, the verdict is clear. Contemporary conservatism is a child of the revolution, not of the counterrevolution. Burke is not its founding father, but Burke's opponent Tom Paine. To associate contemporary conservatism in any way with Burke and the counterrevolution is preposterous. Its closest historical ancestor is the classical liberalism of the period from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. The tradition runs from Adam

Smith to Friedrich Hayek. Contemporary conservatism is really a kind of liberalism.

Why then the fuzzy terms liberal conservatism or conservative liberalism? For the single reason that there is a different social philosophy around – it's the dominant ideology at the moment, at least in the West—that also lays a claim to the name liberalism, but is of quite another nature: progressive liberalism or liberal progressivism. Contemporary conservatism and progressivism are both children of the revolution. They both embrace the revolutionary principles of liberty and equality as the highest principles there are, which makes them both liberal. But they rank these principles differently. For progressives equality is more important than liberty. For conservatives it is the other way round.

Equality usually does not come naturally. It has to be enforced. For that the government is necessary, enforcing the laws that make people more equal. Such laws by definition reduce individual liberty. Moreover, if true equality is to rule, the laws need to be the same for everyone, i.e. general laws made by the central government. Hence the quest for equality also leads to an ever-increasing centralization. Liberal progressives are in favor of big, centralized government, whereas liberal conservatives prefer small, decentralized government.

<sup>4</sup> Contemporary conservatives often believe the myth, going back to Burke, that the American Revolution was a conservative revolution like the Glorious Revolution in England in 1688, which was merely concerned with a defense of 'the rights of Englishmen'. That is nonsensical. See e.g. Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, Alfred Knopf, 1992. After Burke had created a great stir with the publication of his *Reflections*, many of his friends and acquaintances pointed out to him that if he hated the French Revolution so much, he should also hate the American Revolution because the two were inspired by the same ideas. Burke, up till the very end of his life, never replied to his critics and never set out why he saw the American Revolution as a different animal. In a letter dated 12 February 1797, a few months before his death, Burke wrote to William Windham that 'these Gentlemen put the case of France and America exactly on a Par, and always have done so. I leave them to rejoice in that discovery and in my inconsistency, and the antidote they have found in one part of my writings against the poison that exists in another'. See Harvey Mansfield (ed.), *Selected Letters of Edmund Burke*, University of Chicago Press, 1984, p. 240. The most likely explanation of the riddle is that Burke, even though he defended it in Parliament and served as a paid agent for the State of New York for some years, did not know much about the American Revolution and never bothered to familiarize himself with its specifics. Caught up as he was in British politics and history, and lacking in knowledge, he depicted the unknown in terms of the known—the Glorious Revolution. A mistake that is often made. Hence, when the French Revolution broke out, it was all new to him and gave him a great scare.

Take human rights – or as it's known in America, civil rights. From a conservative interpretation these are rights against the government that preserve the liberty of the individual, groups and organizations in society. From the progressive interpretation, they are rights of the individual vis-à-vis other individuals, groups and organizations in society to guard equality; they are rights that need to be enforced by the government.

The difference between the liberal progressives and the liberal conservatives involves not only the ranking of liberty and equality. It is also the result of a different interpretation of each. In general, equality and liberty to liberal conservatives means what it meant to the classical liberals of the nineteenth century: equality before the law and (principally) freedom from government interference and surveillance. Limited government is sufficient. Liberal progressives on the other hand see equality and liberty as something much broader, including (a degree of) social and economic equality and the freedom from want, fear, social pressure and religious 'indoctrination'. Obviously, to establish equality and liberty in such a broad sense, massive government interference and surveillance is needed.

In sum: the differences between liberal progressivism and liberal conservatism are big and real enough. But they are similar to the differences between de Girardin and the Jacobin Party, or between Adams and Jefferson during respectively the French and the American Revolution. On the level of fundamental principles they are at one. For both of them liberty and equality are the highest values. Anything that goes counter to these is ultimately regarded as indefensible and must go. This is bound to result in some serious blind spots.

What about the third type of conservatism that came into existence in the 1830s and dominated the right until World War II? It is the heir of the counterrevolution, the essence of which is opposition to the revolutionary principles of freedom and equality. Instead of equality, it upheld hierarchy as a fundamental principle in the cosmos, in society and in the soul. Equality it held to be unnatural, and so it followed a hierarchy in which what ought to obey rules and what ought to rule obeys. Both principles are unstable and bound to disintegrate. Instead of liberty, the counterrevolution stood for discipline and duty towards God, the community, family and



oneself. Liberty in the sense extolled by the revolution was called license (*licentia*) and regarded as a vice. The idea was that a society where license ruled and discipline and duty had a bad name is bound to crumble and fall apart or be destroyed from the outside. The third type of conservatism is the heir of these counterrevolutionary principles of hierarchy, discipline and duty. But this conservatism is more abstract and philosophical than its predecessor.

It points out the need not for a return to the mixed regime of old, but for a political order that is a balance between the various elements of society: rich and poor, educated and uneducated, town and country, etc. Instead of defending the *société des ordres*, it vindicates the necessity and usefulness of virtuous elites in society. Instead of defending corporatism and the feudal order, it stresses the need for cooperation alongside of competition and market regulation, not from the central government above, but by stakeholders themselves. Instead of the clergy and the established church, it defends the indispensability of religion in general and Christianity in particular, not as a private matter, but as a mainstay of public peace, order and happiness.

In opposition to the revolution, it argues that a good society is not a collection of atomic individuals, but of organic communities, first and foremost (traditional) families. In opposition to cosmopolitical

ideas – the counterpart of individualism – it stresses the importance of neighborhood, locality, region and nation. In opposition to the ideas that the purpose of life is to satisfy as many desires as possible, or to seek and be oneself, it highlights the importance of sacrifice, duty, virtue, discipline, self-renunciation, etc.

All of which is inherent in the counterrevolution, of course. But the counterrevolution presented it in a way that had become wholly unconvincing, if not utterly incomprehensible to most people. What the philosophic conservatism of the period from the 1830s to World War II did was to detach what was essential and of timeless value in the counterrevolutionary ideas from what was secondary and historically contingent.

In doing that, this philosophic conservatism did something that had been done before, most importantly by Plato in his struggle against the democratic revolution of Athens – which had also extolled liberty and equality. It called for people to think through the case against these principles, to think through what principles a society really needs to function well and to serve the *bonum commune*. Hence, it is fitting to call this philosophic conservatism 'Platonic' conservatism.

Whatever name we give it, this third type of conservatism clearly is the most important of the

three. It calls attention to a whole range of things that are crucial for a good society, many of which have been forgotten and disregarded in the post-war era and especially in the past few decades. Liberal conservatism certainly does not draw attention to them. It isn't even aware of them, which is hardly surprising of course in view of the fact that it shares the revolutionary principles of equality and liberty.

In conclusion, what contemporary conservatism needs most of all is a renewed consideration of the ideas of the conservatism of the period from the 1830s until the 1930s. For even in the unlikely case that contemporary conservatism vanquishes liberal progressivism, the resulting world would still not be to our liking. It would still be a liberal world of sorts, and so be a *contra naturam*, a valley of tears, since some of the most important preconditions for happiness, fulfillment, peace and joy would still not be met.

You want names? I will give you some: Thomas Carlyle, Alexis de Tocqueville, G. W. F. Hegel, John Henry Newman, Wilhelm Röpke, Matthew Arnold, G. K. Chesterton, Irving Babbitt, T. S. Eliot, Romano Guardini, Denis de Rougemont, Otto Friedrich Bollnow, Dietrich von Hildebrand, Nicolai Hartmann, Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin. But this is just the tip of the iceberg. Seek and you will find. •

3

# VERITAS, REALISM AND THE CONSERVATIVES

*András Láncki*

There was a time in European history when the word 'conservative' did not have any special meaning other than the original Latin one claiming 'to preserve or protect' something. As it is known, it was Edmund Burke, the meaning of whose works could be summarized later by his followers like Chateaubriand as 'conservative' despite the fact that Burke himself did not use the word 'conservative'. Thus even the founder of modern conservatism, Edmund Burke was not aware of what he was doing, i.e. establishing political conservatism. And this is a point, namely, that conservatism is best served and used if we do not regard it as part of the modern project focused on abstract 'liberty', individual 'rights' and 'progress' in a virtual sense. Political conservatism was formed as a reaction to some political ideas that initiated the modern era with all its dogmas, including the basic ideas of modern Enlightenment. All modern claims are directed at negating nature in her all qualities and tradition in its most precise meaning: to hand over the best and most delicate experience of earlier generations. Before the Enlightenment there had been no conservatism because there was no need for it. When people lived the lives they mainly inherited from their predecessors, there was no need to justify why they lived as they did or the reasons for their lifestyle, or as it was later on called 'culture'. They did not know that they lived in a culture. All they knew was that they had rules and traditions that they had to follow. It was the Enlightenment that divided time into two halves resembling or challenging the birth of Jesus Christ. This divided human existence into a pre-Enlightenment period (also called classical or ancient times) and the new or modern period, which wished to detach itself from its own past because it was thought to be the cause of human retardation and the impediment of development. Whereas man in the past regarded nature as the ultimate source of judgment and understanding of human possibilities, modern attitudes changed the meaning of nature from the concept of character to the concept of construction of all meanings. The consequence of this is that humans can aspire to be creatures of complete self-assertion and construction, as if they are an exception to the creation of all living entities. Even if they are, it does not justify why humans can do whatever they think fit or be subject to mere compromises among men.

It is strange but important to note that the original meaning of conservatism today is reduced to the 'preserving' aspect, although the original included a second meaning too, which is 'defending'. Less

attention has been paid to this aspect of the original meaning of conservatism, though it is also relevant. To protect implies responsibility, courage, love and self-sacrifice. This is why the idea of conservatism is more than a re-action to modern political ideas. It is also a concept of the good life and the appropriate way of conduct for both a community and the individual. And I believe this is why conservatives are not doomed to adapt to the politico-ideological programs of others, for they alone do not need programs or projects because their ontological-political view claims that politics is not a plan that must be implemented. Realism, common sense and the search for truth are enough to act without falling into the trap of ideological dogmatism and intrusion into others' lives. Being reactionary means that modern critical thought must not be reduced to any aspect of human thinking and action. Conservatives are the only protector of the original meaning of philosophy, i.e. lover of wisdom.

The concept of nature is vital and crucial in understanding the meaning and practice of what we call 'conservatism'. The moment that man believes to be capable of emancipating himself from under the rule and power of nature, man can assume that he can do anything that he thinks to be logical, which he believes to be identical with truth. If the logical is the truth, then man's action should only be matched to logical conclusions – all other considerations are meaningless to the holders of logical truth. The major problem is that today most scientists believe that they are holders of the logical; therefore, they are the bearers of truth. But this is not and cannot be true. The case of conservatism begins where intellectual developments started to neglect the natural but invisible barriers of human thought. This was superbly recognized by those who contrasted the ancient and the modern answers to man's fundamental problems. We have two major pools of answers to these issues, i.e. what are the best responses to man's recurring questions, primarily 'how should we or I live?' So the basic issue is not what conservatism is, what the conservatives should do or if they can be identified at all, but whether man's modern aspirations can be or should be endorsed or not. Conservatives say a definite 'no' to this question. It is a misleading concept that the conservatives (who oppose the modernists including the remnants of the Marxian leftists, social democrats and the progressive liberals) simply serve as the natural counterbalance of the modernists or progressives. No, the real conservative or more precisely the reactionary opposes the modern



progressives who still believe that man's problems can be finally solved and all we need is infinite progress in terms of technological development. This is why I suggest that we focus upon progressives and reactionaries. Not all progressives are leftists, and not all reactionaries are conservatives. The dividing line is somewhere between what was once between the ancients and moderns between the 16th and 18th centuries. It has not been taken for granted that the modern solution to man's fundamental issues is superior to the one of the ancients. The issue is the judgment of the concept of nature and the resulting question of we should live. Western man seems to have already answered this question: economic well-being based on free entrepreneurship, politics should be entrusted to institutional arrangements rather than any personal leadership, it is the individual rather than communities which are to be preferred in dubious cases, the conflict of faith and reason ultimately tilted towards modern reason.

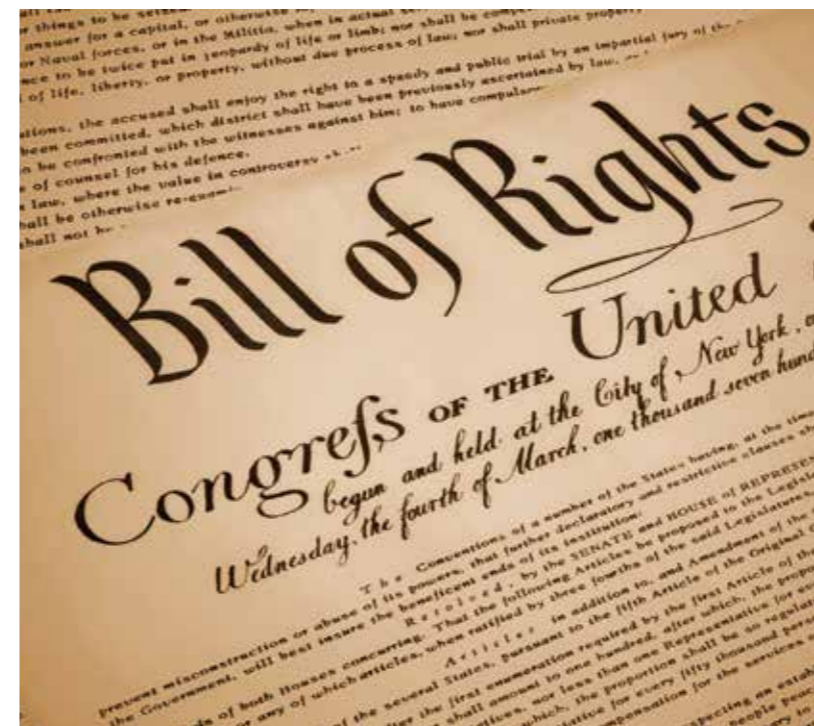
The ultimate issue from the conservative perspective is whether we have to accommodate ourselves to natural laws or to the laws of human reason (usually simplified as logic). All controversies between modernists and reactionaries or conservatives can be reduced to this issue: the way we live can be, or what is more, should be confined to the mere skills and strengths of human reason. And we should be vigilant to the boundaries of human nature or character, i.e. we should not exceed certain limits. But what is nature? It is nothing else than the basic character of every single being, i.e. what exists is characterized by development and unavoidable decline. Flourishing is

necessarily followed by the loss of internal energy and the diminishing will to fulfill one's original intent. The modern meaning of nature has deprived the major and original qualities of nature of her basic asset, that it can maintain action and active decisions. Nature, in its original meaning, was a source of strength and energy, and not an obstacle to human action. In modernity nature became an enemy, a condition that must be changed and replaced by human reason. Modernity claims the victory of human reason over the indifferent nature. Indifference means enmity that must be controlled. Even if we accept that nature's indifference might cause serious damages to man, we cannot really assert that man can be changed to follow his collective or individual reason alone. Man is a creature of at least two uncompromising tendencies – the one that demands him to be a meek creature to follow what is available to him through experience and the other that spurs him to think whatever he wants without limits and realize his ideas indiscriminately.

Today nature has been under conquest for a long time. The modernists' reaction to this is raising the 'green issue', which has nothing to do with the conservative insight about nature. The contemporary migration crisis has at least two roots. The more important one is the West's ideology about individual human rights, which are a latent invitation to every human being to come to Europe or America; the second one is the distortion in the availability of natural resources between various parts of the world. At the same time, migration has become a comprehensive term for all the relevant conflicts that have accumulated over modernity. The shadow of colonization, modern slavery and imperialism; the belief in infinite economic and technological development that requires world-wide expansion of trade; production and financial procedures – all of these have long lasting effects designating our own sphere of action. Migration is perhaps the most complex issue for we have to make decisions on an everyday basis. The conservative response is founded on historical experience: the distinction of things which are often confused to the extent that our final judgments are embarrassing, blurring and paralyzing our thinking, and making us lose faith and the ability to distinguish what is relevant and what is not.

I have been entangled in a crucial problem that has attracted my intellectual capacity for a long time. I am sure that what European-American conservatives have represented for about two centuries is the key

to the understanding of our current civilization. It is not about who is right or wrong but who is closer to what we can call reality as an ultimate concept of what we may even think of. In other words, reality is a dividing line between those who glorify man's infinite capacity of what we can dream of achieving as human creatures, and those who think that man's capacity is limited; therefore, it is to his detriment if some of us would like to destroy the barriers that separate us from infinite qualities like 'progress' or 'the conquest of nature'. We must remind ourselves of the never-ending debate between the ancients and moderns on the issue of whether it is the moderns or the ancients who have better solutions to man's problems. This issue, like most relevant ones, cannot be decided like a problem of mathematics. There have always been voices that stress that man is basically a communal being; therefore, all issues of man must be discussed on the grounds of this basic insight. If, however, one can bracket this insight and consider man as an individual entity, we can imagine a world of the home of man being completely free, detached from all commitments and seeking only self-fulfillment. Man has always been torn apart between his utopian imagination and his earth-bound conditions of how he can live. If we wish to understand the stance and possible aspirations of man, we must understand the boundary between what is real and what is utopian. Recent conservative thought, as I understand, is to appreciate reality more than ever. Modern progressivism has lost a lot of its previous power of interpretation of the contemporary conditions of man.



This diminishing influence gives the conservatives a wider range to become more visible or simply more understandable concerning what they have been saying for so long.

One thing must be clear: the aim is to find the best answers to the issues of 'good life' or 'good order'. There is nothing new in it. This is the first issue of all in the European culture. Good, reason and virtue were recommended by ancient authors; reason, utility and human rights are offered by the moderns. There is a significant difference between the two offers. The ancient or classical one, including Christianity and its wisdom, concentrates on natural laws, i.e. laws which guide human life irrespective of whether the individual is capable of understanding them or deciding man's fate, which is real and not a figment of human imagination or failing reason. We have a character as human beings, and thus we are under the impact of laws that are the products or will of some higher reason or intention we cannot know, and perhaps should not know. If we want to know, we shall destroy not only ourselves but our conditions too. Progressives do not believe that there is any limit to human progress, but the reactionaries have ample reason and arguments to say that there are always limits. And if they are correct, every single trespass will have its own punishment.

We have a history long concerned about what man is capable of achieving without causing more harm than advantage. The moderns are not afraid of anything – life is something mysterious, but once it is here and tangible, there is no need for any worry. Some of us do not accept or understand that just because of routines and the power of inductive logic, there might be a disastrous end to the human being. It is not enough to preserve; we have to practice defending and keeping our mind concentrated on seeking truth in our 'post-truth' world. This is why we have to reinvigorate and re-open the scope of education and research at universities. Perhaps it is the university, among very few other institutions, which still relies on and organizes its work for seeking *veritas*, i.e. truth. What conservatives can offer is this, the preservation of wisdom, which is the highest concept of human thought and last resort of human happiness. That our culture is in trouble can be seen through the habit of self-denial, principled negation of its own past, traditions and experience, and the neglect of what was once called wisdom. ●

4

# CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS OF THE EU AND TO THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGES TAKING PLACE IN MAJOR EU MEMBER STATES AND IN THE US

Miłowit Kuniński

Both supporters and opponents of deeper political integration within the EU agree that the Union does experience crises from time to time. As a result, EU crises are often considered a permanent feature or a peculiar characteristic of its evolution, which is supposed to take place as a result of encountering serious difficulties that trigger a crisis and are subsequently overcome by the Union's leaders, i.e. primarily the European Commission, and in fact as a result of the decisions made by major Member States (Germany and France together with Italy and Spain) in the Council of the European Union, with a certain role for the European Parliament and behind-the-scenes arrangements. In some cases this is done by adopting another treaty, which, as becomes evident when the Treaty of Nice is compared with the Treaty of Lisbon, is another step towards the institutional centralisation of decision-making in the Union. It also strengthens the role of those states that have had a strong economic and political position for years, but, in the case of certain procedures and bodies, they were once forced to

respect the principle of equal voting power for the Member States (the one country, one vote principle).<sup>5</sup>

In the 2004 Treaty of Nice, a rule for calculating the qualified majority was introduced, which took roughly into account the population of each country represented in the Council of the EU: Germany, France and the UK had 29 votes each, Poland and Spain had 27 votes each, and e.g. Romania had 14 votes. This rule was subsequently replaced with the supposedly even more democratic one of weighting votes, which took into account the demographic strength of individual Member States, i.e. their population as a share of that in the entire Union. This rule provides for making legislative decisions in the Council of the European Union by a qualified majority that is calculated using the double majority method: 55% of Member States representing at least 65% of the total EU population.<sup>6</sup> It entered into force on 1 April 2017, and it gives a clear advantage to large and influential EU countries, primarily Germany and France.



<sup>5</sup> Cf. e.g. J. M. Fiszer, 'Kryzys integracji europejskiej czy kryzys Unii Europejskiej? Przesłanki i skutki', *Przegląd Europejski*, 3 (37), 2015; T. Kamiński, 'Wpływ kryzysu gospodarczego w Europie na politykę zewnętrzną Unii Europejskiej', Warszawa 2013, *Zeszyty Natolińskie*, No. 52; J. Kłoczkowski, O. Krutlika, A. Wołek (eds.), *Kryzys Unii Europejskiej*, Kraków 2012; A. Kosiński, 'Unia Europejska rozwija się od kryzysu do kryzysu', *Polska The Times*, 18 April 2014 (<http://www.polskatimes.pl/arttykul/3407375,unia-europejska-rozwija-sie-od-kryzysu-do-kryzysu,id,t.html>); accessed on 30 March 2017); M. Magierowski, *Zmęczona. Rzecz o kryzysie Unii Europejskiej*, Kraków 2013; *Kryzysy w procesie integracji europejskiej i sposoby ich przewyżyczenia*, K. A. Wojtaszczyk and J. Nadolska (eds.), Uniwersytet Warszawski, Wydział Dziennikarstwa i Nauk Politycznych, Instytut Europeistyki, Warszawa 2015 (<https://depot.ceon.pl/bitstream/handle/123456789/8674/Witkowska%20-%202015%20-%20Kryzys%20demokracji%20w%20UE-przyczyny%2c%20uwarunkowania%2c%20scenariusze.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>); accessed on 30 March 2017); M. Stolarczyk, 'Implikacje kryzysu Unii Europejskiej dla dalszego procesu integracji', *Krakowskie Studia Międzynarodowe, Krakowska Akademia im. Andrzeja Frycza Modrzewskiego*, Kraków, IX: 2012 No. 3; D. Sobków, 'Unia Europejska: od kryzysu do kryzysu', *Wolna Polska* (<http://wolnapolska.pl/index.php/Gospodarka/2012010315057/unia-europejska-od-kryzysu-do-kryzysu-menu-id-175.html>); accessed on 30 March 2017); H. Tendera-Właszczuk (ed.), *Kryzys Unii czy kryzys w Unii? Kierunki dyskusji nad przyszłością integracji europejskiej*, Warszawa 2014; eadem, 'Przyszłość integracji w świetle analizy źródeł kryzysu idei europejskiej', *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska, Lublin* 2015, Vol. XLIX, 2; J. Zielonka, translated by E. Gołębiowska, *Koniec Unii Europejskiej?*, Warszawa 2014 (title of the English original: *Is the EU doomed?* Cambridge 2014).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. the 'Rada UE' ['The Council of the EU'], 'System głosowania' ['Voting system'] and 'Większość kwalifikowana' ['Qualified Majority'] entries (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/pl/council-eu/voting-system/>; <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/pl/council-eu/voting-system/qualified-majority/>); accessed on 8 April 2017).

Some advocates of deeper political integration believe that Jean Monnet, one of the EU's founding fathers, considered crises to be an inevitable consequence of conscious integration efforts at the economic and legal levels. Theoretically these crises are supposed to force political adjustment processes that make it possible to overcome them. In other words, political integration was to be achieved indirectly as a necessary consequence of non-political crises. The introduction of the euro resulted in a hindrance to political integration since it created a distinct group of Member States that adopted the single currency. But subsequent crises (e.g. the financial, energy or migration ones) were impulses that, on the one hand, necessitated institutional reforms. On the other hand, they also provided an opportunity to promote closer political integration and the centralisation of Union management, which is one possible way to introduce such reforms but not the only one. Meanwhile external factors, such as Russia's aggressive policy (especially in eastern Ukraine) or China's economic and political expansion, have provided arguments for strengthening the common foreign and defence policy.

However, the problem lies in the fact that in this case as well, differences in interests between the largest (and at the same time old) and the new Member States of the EU emerge; on some issues, however, the latter are joined by the old EU Member States, such as Austria in the case of the Union's policy towards migrants, who are generally referred to as refugees. In addition, it is quite clear that tensions between France and Germany, which are caused by their rivalry for political domination within the complicated EU decision-making system, provide the background for subsequent crises. The awareness that mutual cooperation is required clashes with the awareness of differences in interests, both economic and financial, and with the divergent political goals pursued in the international arena. In the latter area, Germany and France aim, primarily in their relations with Russia and China, to reduce the influence of the US in world politics. This is especially the case in Eastern Europe

where Poland, the Baltic States and Romania wish for a strong US military and economic presence. The aforementioned major EU countries seek to expand the scope of an independent Union policy, particularly vis-à-vis Russia, and to limit American influence at the same time.

In this manner, Monnet's method becomes applicable again, irrespective of whether the crises are an unpredictable result of the decisions being made or whether they are treated as a tool to enable significant institutional and structural changes.<sup>7</sup> As seen by theorists such as Jürgen Habermas or Gerard Delanty, closer political integration is associated with the need for post-national citizenship and for a post-national identity. And with profound institutional and mental changes, permanent European attitudes will form a European identity.<sup>8</sup> However, the question should be asked whether such changes in identity are at all possible at the level of individual communities that certainly perceive themselves in civic categories. Or should they be made at the national (nation-state) level, for the supranational identity is a vague concept and the post-national one is an abstract idea that is devoid of all content and emotional substance.<sup>9</sup>

Doubts of this kind underpin the concept of integration understood as cooperation between national states within a non-federal EU. Proponents of this concept often point out that the founding fathers of the Union, and especially Jean Monnet, envisaged precisely this model of integration. In this way they set the original integration concepts and the early stage of their practical implementation against the current phase of EU development from the Treaty of Lisbon until today.

In the area of political programmes and their practical implementation, one can see the impact of different and contradictory concepts of integration – from deep integration that results in the creation of a supranational federal state to shallow integration that is based on ties between sovereign nation states and



on a limited framework of supranational institutional linkages defined by treaties.

As concerns the position of the current main opposition party (the Civic Platform [Platforma Obywatelska], which was part of the ruling coalition from 2007 to 2015 together with the Polish People's Party [Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe]), it was leaning towards the deep integration concept, although with some reservations related to the objections raised by the Polish People's Party. Prime Minister Donald Tusk's 2008 declaration about joining the single currency zone in 2011, although never implemented, clearly indicated that the then-Polish government was determined to make Poland part of the decision-making process that led to the faster and deeper integration of some Member States through joining the so-called hard core of the EU.

In the period preceding Poland's EU membership, the political milieu of the Freedom Union [Unia Wolności] party, from which the Civic Platform was to emerge later as a result of internal disputes, formulated its position towards European integration cautiously and with certain reservations. In 2002, Tadeusz Mazowiecki stressed the importance of national

diversity, which undermined the sense of creating a top-down supranational state-like framework. He pointed out that 'the imperfect shape of the Union' was determined by Europe's historical and current diversity, as well as in terms of differences in development levels. He also recalled Charles de Gaulle's motto 'Europe of homelands' and emphasised that what was meant in essence was 'Europe of states'.<sup>10</sup>

During the First Krzysztof Skubiszewski Symposium devoted to Poland's foreign policy ten years later, Tadeusz Mazowiecki recalled the de Gaulle formula and its meaning. He referred to Jacques Delors' claim that the Union is a *sui generis* creation since it is a federation of states.<sup>11</sup> The evolution of Mazowiecki's position on the issue of political integration within the Union, which probably took place as a result of his observing the processes that took place in the EU and the relations that formed between Poland and the Union within its institutional framework, consisted in recognising community ties as more advantageous for Poland than intergovernmental ones since they enabled Poland to participate in decision-making on EU matters. The limit to communitarisation was supposed to be the total renunciation of sovereignty.

7 Cf. A. Smolar's statement for Polska The Times, 'Kryzysy od dawna stymulują Unię' (<http://www.polskatimes.pl/artykul/3407375,unia-europejska-rozwija-sie-od-kryzysu-do-kryzysu,id,t.html>; accessed on 30 March 2017). Strictly speaking, Monnet's method consists in gradually achieving political integration between European states as a result of developing ever closer economic cooperation, especially after the establishment of the single market (T. G. Grosse, *Walka z kryzysem strefy euro i o władzę w Europie (2010–2012)* [in:] J. Kłoczkowski et al. (eds.), *Kryzys Unii Europejskiej*, op. cit., p. 36.)

8 Cf. G. Delanty, *Odkrywanie Europy. Idea, tożsamość, rzeczywistość*, Warszawa-Kraków 1999, J. Habermas, *Obywatelstwo a tożsamość narodowa. Rozważania nad przyszłością Europy*, translated by B. Markiewicz, Warszawa 1993.

9 Cf. M. Kuniński, *Czy Europejczycy mogą być dobrymi obywatelami Unii?* A. Nogał, *Czy potrzebny nam jest naród europejski?*, J. E. Ziółkowska, *Czy Europejczyk ma szansę stać się obywatelem Europy? Problem europejskiej tożsamości i postnarodowego obywatelstwa* [in:] B. Markiewicz, R. Wonicki (eds.), *Kryzys tożsamości politycznej a proces integracji europejskiej*, Warszawa 2006.

10 'Oversimplistic visions of a superstate suit that could supposedly be easily donned by this diverse continent may result in negative reactions to the integration process. Europe's national diversity demands recognition. Outbreaks of separatism on our continent testify to the danger of disregarding this diversity. Therefore I would say that in an imaginable time horizon, the European Union will remain a union of states, societies and regions rather than a superstate, some 'United States of Europe'. I consider this unfinished shape of the Union to be both its strength and its weakness. It is a strength because this unfinished state is the result of the need to respect the diversity of European past and present as well as differences in development levels. (T. Mazowiecki, 'Europa, jakiej chcemy', *Więź*, 2002, Nos. 8–9 ([laboratorium.wiez.pl/2017/03/24/europa-jakiej-chcemy/](http://laboratorium.wiez.pl/2017/03/24/europa-jakiej-chcemy/)); accessed on 31 March 2017).

11 R. Kuźniar, T. Mazowiecki, *Między Europą ojczyzn a federacją – wprowadzenie do sympozjum* (<http://www.skubi.net/kuzniar-mazowiecki.html>); accessed on 31 March 2017).



On the other hand, the boundary at the other end of the continuum between a supranational federation and the Europe of homelands/states was 'highly separatist, nationalistic and xenophobic anti-European tendencies'.<sup>12</sup>

Ultimately, it can be stated that the Civic Platform's position recognises processes of tighter political and financial (strengthening ties within the euro area) integration as ones that are inevitable and, consequently, will define the direction of Polish policy given that such direction of changes prevails in the Union. In this sense, it can be concluded that the party's position is basically consistent with the viewpoint presented by Tadeusz Mazowiecki a few years earlier. If the changes that are taking place are perceived by this party and its supporters as more beneficial for the largest EU countries, it is stressed that Poland must necessarily participate in them, since staying on the margins of the ongoing integration processes will be harmful for it. The 2014 statement on Polish foreign policy directions in the Polish Parliament by Radosław Sikorski, who was Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, reflected the conviction among Civic Platform leaders that deepened political

integration within the Union was important from the point of view of Polish security. Just as Donald Tusk earlier, Sikorski pointed out that 'the possible decision on adopting the single currency will have not only a financial and economic dimension, but above all a political one, also related to our security'.<sup>13</sup>

In turn, current statements by leading politicians of the Civic Platform as an opposition party testify to the radicalisation of its leaders' and members' views on integration; it appears that this shift has been mainly caused by the need to highlight their distinctiveness from the ruling Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość) party, which is sceptical about political integration and masks this scepticism with indecision. This can be seen by their demand that a European army be formed and undermining this project by seeking (largely successfully) the permanent presence of NATO troops in Poland.

The position of Law and Justice and of the government of the Republic of Poland formed as a result of the party's 2015 electoral win on the political integration of the Union is closer to those concepts that emphasise the permanence of nation states.

Contrary to expectations, position has not atrophied but has become even stronger in some cases.<sup>14</sup> In this situation, deepened political integration, whether forced by the membership of the euro area or as a result of the migration crisis, makes it possible to put political and financial pressure on the countries that do not agree to accept migrants from the Middle East and Africa. There is a narrow group of Member States that dominate the Union and have double majority in the Council of the EU, which allows them to impose their will upon those resisting countries.

The Law and Justice party, which pointed in its programme to the need to adopt a law on the exercise of state sovereignty, emphasises the importance of this sovereignty for Poland's foreign policy and for the implementation of the principle of subsidiarity in relations between Poland and the EU as well as for the implementation of the principle of the primacy of national competences in relations with international organisations. Stressing the importance of external sovereignty within the EU, this programme rejects the concept of deepened EU integration in the form of a federal state, since sovereign states cannot be included in a federation.<sup>15</sup> It should be added that in the case of the Federal Republic of Germany, were a EU federal state to emerge, a strange construct would be created with federal states that would have certain characteristics of sovereign states, while the Federal Republic itself would lose such characteristics to the Union.

Summing up these preliminary remarks, it may be claimed that crises in the EU are precipitated primarily by the crisis of the European culture. In this sense the crisis of the EU is one of Europe and of its identity, whose Christian foundations have been steadily undermined at least since the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the

fundamental ideas of the Enlightenment developed. This process rapidly accelerated in the 1960s. A second very important factor underlying the crises is the very nature of political action, which involves rivalry as well as cooperation. Rivalry and competition both are conditioned by the manner in which political and economic interests of individual countries or their groups are understood. It is true that the EU is largely trying to implement a consensual policy model that is rooted in law and limits the use of force; using Robert Kagan's distinction,<sup>16</sup> EU politics are apparently more in the spirit of Kant than that of Hobbes. In the latter's politics, especially in the international area, a domain of rivalry is pursued when necessary with the use of force, and its goal is dominance. However, this does not change the nature of politics in the EU since rivalry, while it does not lead to armed hostilities, is present within it. And because individual states' strength, whether political (expressed in demographic terms) or economic, is unequal, some states gain dominance by way of legal procedures in situations where the interests of individual states or groups of states diverge.

The crises caused by the crisis of culture and those resulting from political rivalry overlap with those triggered by the structural and procedural defects of the EU institutional system. They are also caused by wrong political, economic or institutional decisions, which are often attempts to overcome other crises or are dictated by certain guiding principles; the latter boil down to a gradual, and in some circumstances accelerated, implementation of the Union's federal nature.

Taking into account the nature of politics, the manner in which it is practiced within the EU's institutional structure, the formal and informal rules of decision-making, the defects of the Union's legal

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Priorytety polskiej polityki zagranicznej (<http://www.platforma.org/aktualnosc/37382/priorytety-polskiej-polityki-zagranicznej>; accessed on 8 April 2017). The official Civic Platform website does not contain the party's programme. The study authored by Michał Boni, Paweł Bochniarz and others, entitled Polska 2030. Wyzwania rozwojowe [Poland 2030. Development Challenges] (<http://www.platforma.org/pliki/35/polska2030.pdf>; accessed on 8 April 2017), contains many economic, infrastructural and social analyses and predictions but does not present a coherent programme or vision of integration adopted by the party that came to power in Poland shortly before its publication.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. e.g. J. E. Ziółkowska, Państwo narodowe w perspektywie wspólnoty europejskiej, Warszawa 2009.

<sup>15</sup> 'Poland is a sovereign member state of an international organisation – the EU. The purpose of this membership is to bring benefits to Poland as well as to the entire organisation. It must not be a road towards building a federal state framework (federation), since components of a federation are not states from the point of view of international law. As soon as such a state is created, its constituent entities will necessarily lose their independence. The EU is, and must remain, an international organisation; it is no more and no less than an international organisation, and, therefore, an association of sovereign, i.e. independent, states. The Constitution of the Republic of Poland is the act that allows the application of EU law in the territory of Poland. Therefore, the Constitution, which is the supreme law pursuant to its Article 8, para. 1, stipulates the scope of, and rules for, the application of EU law. Its provisions provide models with which all regulations, both domestic and external, which are applicable in its territory, must comply. We consider the adoption of law on the exercise of state sovereignty, which will be particularly important within the framework of European policy, to be among the foundations of the new legal order adopted in order to achieve the goals of Polish foreign policy. Its purpose will be to provide practical guarantees for the implementation of the subsidiarity principle in relationships between Poland and the EU. It will also provide the principle of the primacy of national competences in relations with international organisations according to the formula adopted in the treaties that 'the competence to determine competences always remains with the nation state'. Poland, which aspires to participate in the debate on the future of Europe, must act according to the principle that holds in other major European countries. This uniting principle states that the further the process of European integration progresses, the more it is necessary to strengthen the powers of state authorities with respect to European policy in order to maintain control over integration processes within the Union. Thus each transfer of competences to the EU level must be balanced by an appropriate increase in supervision over these competences by the Polish government and parliament. (Zdrowie-Praca-Rodzina. Program Prawa i Sprawiedliwości, Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, Warszawa 2014, p. 150-151; accessed on 8 April 2017).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. R. Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', Policy Review June-July 2002.

and institutional system and the nature of the crises that plague the EU, one can try to define the limits of acceptance for the way in which the Union operates from a conservative point of view.

First of all, it is not possible for conservatives to accept any transformation of the EU into a federal state. If conservatism involves political realism, then it is difficult to accept an institutional structure that dominates over nation states as feasible, since this will reduce the role of these states and prevent the public definition of interests of individual national communities. (These interests will not disappear, but will become more difficult to articulate since this will involve multiple procedures.) On the other hand, it appears that these Member States that have so far had an advantage in the Union will maintain their dominant position in the new institutional framework and in the process of making decisions that are important for a federal Union, albeit in a different form, which obscures its real nature. It is difficult to assume that German, French or Italian politicians will lose their sense of identity shaped under conditions of nation state politics and will adopt a federalist identity instead. The potential nature of the government of such a federal state is also unclear at the moment. It is difficult to imagine that such a function could be performed by the European Commission, since its members are currently appointed indirectly and the Commission is not subject to a procedure of democratic control similar to those applied in national parliaments. Additionally it would be difficult to accept the Commission as a body with the exclusive prerogative to draw up proposals for new EU legislation, because if the functions of the European Parliament are to be treated seriously, then it should not be deprived of the right of legislative initiative.

Some crises, as I have already mentioned, are the result of ambiguities concerning the competences of various Union bodies. Will the creation of a federal state prevent the competences of the European Commission, the European Council and the Council of the European Union from overlapping? Is the existence of these three bodies necessary for the proper functioning of the Union or are they obstacles? These are rhetorical questions since it is already clear that the competences of these bodies and the manner in which they make decisions (and these have consequences for the Union as a whole as well as for individual Member States) are vaguely defined and lead to chaos. At the same time they

blur their responsibility, allowing behind-the-scenes politics to be pursued by strong states or groups of such states. Proponents of a federal state perhaps think about equipping it with new institutions. In this case, conservatives may be concerned that these institutions will be designed in a constructivist manner and, therefore, will not fit political and social realities. It is also a good time to ask the question whether it makes sense for the European Parliament to have two seats in both Brussels and Strasbourg, irrespective of whether a federal Union is established or not.

It also appears that it is already necessary to give citizens of Member States more control over the European Parliament and over institutions and bodies of the Union. Elections to the European Parliament are insufficient for this purpose – control over European legislation by national parliaments is necessary, including without limitation control over the competences granted by law to Union bodies, which involves reducing the competences of national parliaments. Conservatives would point out that any such reductions require the consent of these parliaments. Consequently, the relationship between national parliaments and the European Parliament should first be defined with respect to the scope of competences granted, and the manner in which the European Parliament exercises control over Union institutions and bodies should only be determined afterwards.

The issue of civic control over the Union's bodies is related to restoring due importance to the subsidiarity principle, which was viewed as one of the Union's pillars in the period preceding the accession of the new Member States, i.e. in the 1990s. In recent years, especially since the adoption of the Treaty of Lisbon, there has been a clear trend towards centralising the decision-making process in the Union. This process is being done by bodies with an indirect democratic mandate, while the principle of subsidiarity is being side-lined as a guiding principle and in the Union's practice at various structural levels.

The Union's institutions are operating and the efforts aimed at transforming it into a federal state are being redoubled in a peculiar cultural climate in which ideas compete, with liberal and leftist thinking clearly gaining the upper hand. The question arises as to whether conservative thinking and potential practical actions can affect the current ideological and political trend, or whether they are doomed to become marginalised or yield to dominant tendencies?



Conservative politics are generally seen as reactive. From time to time, however, there are circumstances in which action is required in order to achieve change – a conservative revolution of sorts, although not one like the German or American conservative revolutions. I think that this revolution can be understood as striving to expand the sphere of freedom that is defined by a system of values, such as the common good, the good of local communities, the good of the family, the good of individuals and the good of the disabled and the defenceless, including the unborn. Basic sources of these values are religions, including especially Judaism and Christianity, and perhaps some varieties of Islam as well. Some of these values may in certain cases be shared and subscribed to in societies that have been secularised but have a long history of Christian influence. These values have traditionally been supported by long-term institutions, such as churches, universities, associations and local communities, and conservatism manifests itself in caring for them. Conservatism appreciates the social importance of a free market understood as a space for

unfettered activity within the framework of the rule of law, but it does not refrain from actions that correct market failures in order to support economically and socially disadvantaged groups. However, it avoids the legal sanctioning of any preferences for individuals and minorities, since such institutionalised preferences have an adverse effect on the social fabric and undermine the existing hierarchy of social norms and institutions.

Conservatism defends the hierarchy of ancient institutions (monogamous marriage between a man and a woman in Euro-American culture) as the foundation of moral and social order, and opposes tendencies to treat other forms of relationships between people on an equal footing. At the same time, as we well know, contemporary conservatism understood as a political party programme and its actual actions may accept liberal demands. They justify them with the desire to strengthen the institution of marriage, although completely redefined, as was the case in the UK where the

conservative government passed a bill in parliament that enabled marriages to be concluded by persons of the same sex and endowed them with all the rights of heterosexual marriages from the end of March 2014. As concerns the right to adopt children, homosexual partnerships in the UK gained it in 2005, and two years later a law came into force that prohibited Catholic adoption agencies from refusing to allow such couples to adopt children, as this would be tantamount to discriminating against them.

The migration crisis has with some reason been perceived as caused not only by the very influx of thousands of people from the Middle East, North Africa and some countries of the African interior fleeing hostilities and internal conflicts that are turning into civil wars, but it has also been caused by declarations by leaders of major EU countries and the open borders policy they have pursued without taking into account the foreseeable effects of the arrival of large numbers of migrants. After some time the inflow of tens of thousands of people from a different culture that originated from Islam led to a shift in the hitherto pro-immigrant mood and intensified anti-immigrant attitudes among the public in those countries; political parties and social movements that expressed clearly anti-immigration slogans (although not necessarily chauvinistic and xenophobic ones) have been strengthened. The question arises whether such circumstances favour conservatives or rather undermine their position owing to the strong influence of the dominant liberal current in European politics. This has created convergence between once diverse political currents and the blurring of differences between liberal and conservative programmes and practice, i.e. between social democracy and Christian democracy, especially in the western part of Europe.

It cannot be ruled out that the new circumstances will have a beneficial effect on the conservatives' position. However, an important condition must be met, i.e. the conservatives' ability to distinguish between measures that are introduced to support people in extremely difficult conditions (war) from politics that are supposedly based on compassion and moral principles (the Pope's position and evangelical principles in general are cited in countries that are largely secularised), but rather are motivated mainly by economic considerations and, in the case of the

Union as a whole, by the conviction that the strongest countries of the EU, using EU institutions such as the European Commission, have the right to impose their will on other Member States.

The reluctance among some European societies to receive enormous numbers of immigrants, who are additionally not subjected to effective checks, may be a factor that will boost support for conservative parties. There are concerns, however, that this support may be short-lived since other demands that accompany anti-immigrant slogans may not be palatable to some people with conservative leanings, certain conservative parties or their supporters (e.g. they may not accept xenophobia targeted more broadly against various immigrant groups, especially those that are culturally closer to the host societies). Certain social movements and right-wing parties (not necessarily conservative) that are gaining support among some groups in the host society because they oppose admitting migrants<sup>17</sup> may come to believe that other elements of their political programmes are accepted as well. They may consider this a mandate to conduct foreign policy different than the one pursued to date, which may be perceived as an unfavourable phenomenon by other European countries (e.g. the attitude of the French National Front towards Russia's policy vis-à-vis its neighbours).

In these circumstances, we see parallel processes of conservative and liberal programmes and policies converging; at the same time, in response to the migration crisis, right-wing parties and new right-wing movements formulate slogans that oppose the ruling parties' official policies. In Germany, this is the case with the Alternative für Deutschland and with the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU) of the Bavarian Prime Minister Horst Seehofer, which remains in coalition with Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU). In the US, the



Republican Party took over after President Barack Obama's two terms in office; in presidential elections, the Republicans supported the candidacy of Donald Trump, who campaigned on, amongst other things, a clearly anti-immigrant platform. Before the last US presidential election, one could have had the impression that differences between both European and American conservatives and liberals were getting blurred. This lack of distinction appeared to be due to conservatism having become weak. However, the situation in Europe differs from that in the US.

In Europe, the differences between traditional liberal parties and conservative ones are not as deep as one might think because conservatism is a primarily new social movement and right-wing parties that strongly express the concerns about the influx of migrants that are felt by a steadily growing percentage of the public in EU Member States. In Western Europe, some right-wing parties use anti-immigrant slogans while at the same time endorsing a culturally liberal platform (e.g. the Freedom Party of Geert Wilders). During the presidential campaign in the US, the Republican Party initially found itself in a difficult position after subsequent candidates competing for party nomination lost to Donald Trump despite being less controversial. Clear divisions appeared within the party, but nevertheless Trump was finally nominated and he won the election, defeating his rival Hillary Clinton. Trump's programme gained the support of ordinary Americans (mainly from the so-called lower middle class) not because it was anti-immigrant, but rather because it promised to improve economic conditions by a shift towards developing the US manufacturing capacity and a departure from an economy based on the use of cheap workforce abroad (outsourcing). Anti-immigration slogans were part of this broader platform.

In connection with the processes that are taking place in European and American politics, the importance of relations with the US for conservative politics in both parts of Europe (Western and Eastern) should be considered.

As we know, the relationship between Europe, or more precisely the EU, and the US has not been free of tensions and rivalry. Undoubtedly the role of Germany in Europe has been growing for many years. But is Germany capable of leading the European Western world? Is it the main partner for the US in Europe or its rival in the foreign policy arena? It is difficult to

offer an equivocal assessment at the moment. The immigrant crisis appears to indicate that Germany has lost this ability, although it cannot be ruled out that appropriate conclusions will be drawn from this negative experience. Right now we are witnessing a change in the language related to admitting migrants, which can be explained by the imminent general elections in Germany and the fact that part of German society clearly opposes the *Willkommenspolitik*. Will this change of language be accompanied by a real change in the political direction of a party that describes itself as Christian and moderately conservative (the Christian Democratic Union)? The future will answer these questions.

Bearing in mind the policy objectives defined from the national perspective, conservative circles in various European countries may interpret relations between the major EU Member States and the US differently. Central Europe is more willing to seek greater US engagement in Europe, not only for military reasons, but in order to counterbalance the strength of certain European countries (Germany, France and Italy), especially in connection with the Brexit procedure having commenced. Germany, on the one hand, competes with the US, but it does not forget the importance of the US for Europe's military and economic security. The future attitude of the new American administration towards Europe is unclear at the moment: we do not know whether the US will choose the isolationist path or engage on terms other than before. More than a year has passed since the inauguration of President Donald Trump, and the international policy he pursues appears to indicate that the US, defining its *raison d'état* under the new circumstances, does not intend to allow either Russia or China to dominate international relations. The US will thus push major EU countries to look beyond their interests and those of the Union as a whole and take into account the long-term effects of their actions on the stability of the world order, which is a necessary condition for maintaining world peace and furthering



<sup>17</sup> It is worth noting that some of the Muslims living in France claimed to actually have voted for the National Front in order to oppose jihadists!

the development of civilisation. It doesn't appear that the current 'conservative' leadership of Germany wishes to radically change its course vis-à-vis the US, although there are too many unknowns that make it impossible to accurately predict major trends in both countries' politics.

Additionally, Germany's future policy towards the aggressive Russia will remain unclear until the outcome of next year's German elections is known: whether the CDU performs well or emerges weakened and more dependent on its future coalition partner, i.e. the SPD. The strengthening of the CSU's position at the expense of the CDU is conceivable as well. In turn, the direction of future US foreign policy has not been clearly defined yet, and it will have an impact on Germany's foreign policy, especially with respect to Russia. If Chancellor Angela Merkel wins another term, we may assume that Germany's policy will remain moderately conservative, which means correct relations with the US. However, should the SPD win under the leadership of Martin Schulz, these relations may deteriorate if Schulz considers US hegemony both worldwide and in Europe to be harmful for Germany and for the Union as well. He may deem good relations with Russia to be beneficial and see no threat of Russian domination. The SPD thinks that Russia's close economic ties with Germany and with the western part of the Union will allow it to be controlled and will fulfil Germany's long-held dream of persuading Russia's political class to accept so-called European values.

Conservatism, whether European or American, may become the basis for political programmes, which will in turn provide foundations for new policies should conservative parties come to power. However, conservatism as meant here is a set of ideas, values and attitudes whose main characteristic is their opposition to constructivism, i.e. creating from scratch social institutions that provide an alternative to those rooted in tradition, opposition to the conscious or unconscious breaking of cultural continuity and the often deliberate transformation of the identity of both communities and individuals. Understood in this way, conservatism means thinking about the foundations of social life, and it is based on appealing to people's common sense, their critical thinking skills, multi-generational local experience and rules of social conduct that have been shaped during the lives of families and communities at various levels.



In order for conservatism to have an impact, the measures taken should be considered long-term ones, but need to be prioritised nevertheless.

Undoubtedly, of the most importance here are changes related to broadly understood culture, i.e. intellectual, artistic and moral ones. Here, however, any support from state institutions, especially in Central European countries where private patronage is poorly developed, must be well thought out, since an effort to strengthen the public's preferences for conservative values may easily take the form of ideological propaganda and become counter-effective as a result.

The essence of such efforts is to preserve the axiological foundations of our culture, i.e. moral law and the respect for it. For the state to fulfil its role in this area requires, on the one hand, determination and, on the other hand, sensitive and skilful action. The role of a state guided by conservative principles is to give patriotism a priority that not only requires respect for symbols in the public sphere, but also the restoration, in the case of Poland, to the collective

memory of all those who contributed to the nation's survival despite the military defeat in World War II and continued their struggle under the extremely unfavourable conditions of German and Soviet occupation and later fought the system of communist oppression in various ways. A conservative state should also be in favour of principles of natural law, i.e. respect for life and its protection. The policy of such a state must, moreover, include proper care for the content of education in order to educate and train people who are not only able to find their place in the labour market and ensure a proper standard of living for their families, but above all act as citizens engaged in the affairs of their local communities and of the national community.

Moreover, in Poland – and there are reasons to believe that in other post-communist countries as well, there is an urgent need to strengthen state institutions while modernising their structures. There is no doubt that state institutions in Western European countries operate much more efficiently because of a long formative period (from the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century approximately) of states with a strong

administrative structure capable of enforcing laws and government regulations using their judicial and police systems and maintaining control over their finances. On the other hand, in the countries that were until recently controlled by Soviet Russia, functional state structures based on the rule of law were destroyed during the communist period.

Many elements of the communist system survived the transformation process and some of them were perpetuated deliberately or because of a lack of political will or because of organisational inertia. Currently in some Central European countries we can observe more or less determined actions by conservative parties (regardless of all the differences between them), which are focused on finally eliminating the remains of the communist system. In Hungary and Poland in particular, the existing institutions sanctioned by the new constitutions and statutes adopted after 1989, are now subject to thorough overhaul. They are subordinated to the political will of those in power, and this in practice means personal changes. Paradoxically, the strengthening of state structures must begin with





the political will to introduce the necessary changes in policymaking positions. However, the question remains whether this political will can successfully transform and strengthen state institutions so that they are able to act relatively independently – or will it be limited to replacing the persons in key positions and to make institutional changes that will make them merely passive executors of political decisions made by the central authority? In states with strong institutional frameworks, the durability of such structures is based on a stable civil service, which operates according to some relatively neutral bureaucratic rules, and this makes it possible to achieve the political goals set by the elected executive. Poland, and it appears that other post-communist states as well, has bureaucratic institutional structures, but these are often staffed by people of the previous system. Even if a generational change has occurred, the new staff was often shaped by the inert culture of institutions that had been founded under the undemocratic state. In some cases, the people working within these structures were associated with the secret services of the communist system. Another important factor that hinders the efficiency of state institutions is the difficulty in ensuring that they are supplied with civil servants who have been formed in the spirit of service to the state and remain loyal to successive governments.

As it has been already mentioned, conservative parties in Central Europe differ in terms of their programmes. This is not at all surprising, since conservatism grows out of local experience, which is diverse owing to the different histories of individual communities, and it contains this experience (which has been partially transformed by reflection); a significant part of this multi-generational experience is not fully articulated, but rather embedded in social institutions and in moral rules. In the case of fundamental changes related to the transformation process, which, as many commentators have pointed out, have not been carried out entirely consistently, the doubts voiced at the outset of post-1989 changes arise again: can a deep and revolutionary systemic change be considered at all feasible, and is it consistent with the conservative understanding of change as a result of long-term processes? For example, can a communist state be liquidated completely and a democratic one based on the rule of law be built from scratch in its place, which would prevent the perpetuation of various elements of the

previous system? The example of Czechoslovakia and later of the Czech Republic demonstrates that decommunisation, even carried out more consistently than in Poland, does not entirely eliminate the elements of the communist system and the influence of the people who were associated with it. Even the extremely deep decommunisation process carried out in East Germany did not result in the removal from political life of the people involved in operation of the GDR regime, although the institutional changes introduced there were the most far-reaching among all post-communist countries. The changes that have been taking place in Hungary and in Poland for some time (in the latter country these are partly a continuation of the initial reforms introduced by the Law and Justice party, which first formed a minority government and then ruled in coalition with the Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland and the National Parliamentary Group in the years 2005–2007) are convincing proof that the decommunisation process was shallow and inconsistent, since more than 20 years after the collapse of the communist system, personal and institutional changes must be introduced in order to achieve an acceptable state of affairs in conjunction with conservative reforms of the law and of state institutions.

Western states, which have been strongly centralised for centuries now, managed to create institutional structures and an institutional memory that ensured a stable political system, which could be adjusted and adapted to changing conditions if required. In countries where totalitarian state institutions functioned for several decades, regardless of all local differences, there was a period of reaction to the ubiquity of the communist state. This involved a radical limitation of the sphere of state intervention in a supposedly liberal spirit while at the same time the effectiveness of government agencies was undermined. Now it appears the phase of restoring the state institutions' effectiveness has begun. But, as it has already been stated above, if the primary factor behind making the state and its agencies more effective in the long run remains solely political, will the rebuilding of institutions, stipulating stable rules of their functioning and ensuring the stability of the civil service be short-lived? After the parliamentary majority and the government change again, the current political direction will be replaced by another one. This may change the political goals of the government and the institutions that are subordinated to it, but it will not strengthen state institutions. •

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# THE FUTURE OF CONSERVATIVE POLITICS IN EUROPE – A CENTRAL- EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

*Ferenc Hörcher*

## DÉBUT

To speak about the future is almost impossible. To speak about the future in politics is flatly impossible. An essay with the above title, therefore, is nothing more than an act of *hybris*. And yet, to arrive somewhere one needs to plan where to go and how to get there. Therefore, I think that the idea of the Centre for Political Thought in Krakow to ask European intellectuals with a conservative bias to offer their views of the prospects of conservatism as a political ideal and as a practical political reality is legitimate. This essay is meant to address some of the questions posed by the Centre.

The title of the present essay is not meant to claim that this paper can describe the future of Europe and the role conservatives can play in it. It is not more than a draft drawn from an individual perspective – from the perspective of a Central-European academic

educated in the history of political thought and political philosophy – on the challenges facing Europe and the possibilities opened up by these challenges for conservatism.

It consists of three parts. First, it lists some of the most important recent events in global politics that might have an effect on the future of Europe. This enumeration, though recalling well-known facts, is necessary because we shall surely miss our target if we cannot define correctly our present location. Second, it will take note of some of the existing answers offered by political powers associated with conservatism on these challenges. Finally, it will provide its own proposals of how to confront these challenges according to the best – British-style, Aristotelian and republican – conservative standards.

## IS CONSERVATISM STILL ALIVE?

But before all else, let us first think about the question whether conservatism is still a valid notion of/in politics today? There are radical views which hold that all the modern political ideologies are dead by now. After all, we are living in a postmodern age, in media-democracies, where popular choices are made following rather pragmatic considerations of popularity; and, therefore, all the value-laden theoretical presuppositions are no more than simple ballasts for the actual political agents in the day-to-day business of making politics.

This essay does not share these sceptical, sometimes even cynical worries. Political ideologies are not meant to hog-tie politicians in order to hibernate political action. Marx claimed that ideas are dependent on existence, particularly on the existence of the particular agent. As John Lukacs so eloquently wrote, ideas in fact have the function to facilitate political action. Lukacs

argued that the causal link is missed by Marx: we can only do whatever is opened up for us by our way of thinking. Ideas work for actions as the track for the locomotive: the latter cannot move but in the direction determined by the former. In other words our ways of thinking mark off the horizon of our imagination, which on its part determines

our particular decisions in individual cases. We surely will not do what we do not imagine as doable.

If we accept that ideologies are still important parts of the repertoire of politics today, there is a further question: is conservatism still among the relevant political ideologies? One of the possible



ways to discredit it is to stress that conservatism is a retroactive kind of ideology, which aims to keep under control the effects of another ideology, namely progressive liberalism. What if liberalism is not a risk today and, therefore, there is no need for a counterbalance? A further counterargument may ask whether it is logically possible to expect a future for an ideology that turns away already from the present and has more interest in the past than in anything else. And finally, why should we regard conservatism as still a viable alternative in the age of mass

democracy and populist politics, when conservatism – as we learnt it at school – is an elitist ideology of nostalgia and gentlemanly behaviour?

This essay does not deny the force of these dilemmas. However, it claims that all of them rest on a rather naïve, simplified interpretation of conservatism. This essay would like to offer an alternative reading of the main characteristics of this ideology. It aims to show that it is not liable to the above criticisms and that we can associate it with our European future.

## ‘EARTHQUAKES’ OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM

The new millennium surprised the world with a number of political earthquakes. No doubt the first globally important point was 11 September. With the fall of the twin-towers, Americans lost their granite-hard conviction that the US, the only superpower of the new millennium and the safeguard of global peace, is itself vulnerable. With it the whole world lost its belief of a stable world-order, controlled by the superpower whose main ideology was and remained ever since that of defending freedom globally. With the loss of these two beliefs, we entered a new age of universal uncertainties and irregularities.

A second blow of our global political comfort zone was the financial crisis of the late 2000s. Once again starting out from the US, it shook trust in a stable world and eliminated our expectations that the basis of global economy is itself rock-solid.

This was a kind of dramatic overture of the new millennium. And yet it was not yet over, even if leading Western powers were able to momentarily calm down passions raised by these two earthquakes among their populaces and on the markets.

The second wave of challenges was perhaps even more devastating than the first one. It also consisted of two steps. The first one was the exit vote from the EU by the majority of British voters, which exercised an unprecedented blow on the European project. And we cannot see as yet the end of the tunnel. So far it is

surely the loudest criticism of the failures of European policy-makers to reach out and address voters in a convincing way. But the effects of Brexit were doubled by a further surprise within Western politics. American voters proved their determinacy and, in spite of the tremendous campaign of the mainstream media and the intellectuals of progressive university campuses against him, they elected Trump as president in 2017.



Brexit and Trump's presidency got interpreted together, and this brought about a landslide within Western public discourse. Why? Well, earlier both of these facts lay outside of the terrain of what people thought was politically possible or even imaginable. In a way the two choices – both of them the decisions

of the electorate, and, therefore, the legitimacy of them unquestionable – opened up political discourse and political action before what was earlier hardly feasible. This way they signalled the end of an era and encouraged politicians to turn once again towards their electorate.

## CONSERVATIVE REVOLUTION? NO, THANK YOU!

In one reading of the story, this turn is a conservative revolution. In another one it results in the phenomenon that is ridiculed by its opponents as ‘populism’. Left-liberals make all efforts to discredit the winners of this new trend. Labelling it as populism, they try to delegitimize these moves. It is perhaps more surprising that for a part of conservative-minded voters and members of the conservative elite, these shocking moves also represent a rather gloomy prospect for what they had known as conservatism earlier. To turn away from Europe in Britain or from the standards of mainstream professional politics in America is not something conservatives would have identified earlier as part of the conservative identity. Some of them feel it is in fact a corruption of conservative principles.

European conservatives are certainly saturated by what is called European culture, and, therefore, they try to defend a culture-based notion of conservatism, though the Brexit-vote and Trump's victory both signal the takeover of a plebeian conservatism that targets the less educated part of the conservative electorate. This is a fatal conceit on the part of populist conservatives. According to the premises of the conservatism this paper calls for, there is no future, and particularly no conservative future without concentrating huge powers on the education of our children.

And again, most American conservatives are not ready to give up their self-perception as opposing personality-cults and the sort of voluntarism which is fuelled by animosities and violent passions instead of the practical common sense one gets from practical experience and from learning how

to take responsibility for others, in accordance with local habits and general customs of the political culture of one's community. They do not believe in turning things upside-down without hesitation, as revolutionary politicians used to do.

To understand the present moment and the real urgency of it, one needs to recall that Brexit and the Trump-phenomenon are still not the whole story. The new situation we confront is greatly determined by the migrant crisis of Europe. This is an issue that directly belongs on the conservative agenda.



## THE KEYS OF THE FUTURE: MIGRATION AND DEMOGRAPHY

Migration is not a new phenomenon in Europe. The continent has been open to recurring waves of invaders for thousand years. However, since the Turkish invasion in the early modern period, there was no experience of a massive incursion that threatened the existing system of states. This is only true, of course, if we take the Russian invasion of Eastern Europe as done by a European superpower and not by an external force. The new flux has been building for years by now, but a breakthrough happened in 2015 when the number of illegal migrants jumped to an unprecedented level. And if the news is true, millions of migrants are already waiting to cross the Mediterranean and enter European borders, legally and illegally.

European states as well as EU institutions were rather slow to react to the new pressure on their borders from the south and the east and to understand the stakes. The two countries in the centre of the siege were Italy and Greece, and both countries were near to state bankruptcy. Germany was keen to strengthen its own position, and the Greeks also had their share in the financial aspect of the growing crisis.

Although Merkel could negotiate a pact with Turkey, by now the whole European public sphere was dominated by the discussion about the migration issue. Once again the left and the right were radically divided in their answers to it, and once again the political elites of the eastern and the western part of the continent react differently. Until the EU could make a long-term deal with the Turks, there was a constant fear of a breakthrough. The Italians introduced a stricter border regime, and the countries on the migration route built out their legal and physical barricades. In spite of all these measures, for months large crowds of uncontrolled migrant groups travelled across Europe, causing an exceptionally loud safety-alarm among the populace.

Germany's Angela Merkel was a key proponent of what was called *Willkommenskultur*, a policy of liberal migration-regime. The policy let people in if they claimed to have arrived from countries where their life could have been directly at risk according to the protocol of the EU or the UN. She was supported by the liberally dominated German media and by the majority of European public intellectuals, while a lot of the electorate, fuelled by radical and 'populist' political powers, became frustrated by the situation. Their frustration caused a remarkable shift in the voting tendencies in Europe and for a time also in Germany. Merkel succeeded to pacify her camp, and she is back in popularity with a strategy to calm down passions about the migration issue.

Although there is a momentary rest in the migration crisis, it still remains a time bomb, which needs to be directly tackled, like by a common European policy of humanitarian intervention, border policy and the rise of the defence and security capacities on a European as well as national level, if we want to avoid catastrophe. Conservatives should remind mainstream politics of the inherent dangers of the situation and returning to the issue that is of primary importance for the future of Europe. However, they should also avoid harsh, awe-inspiring and hectoring rhetoric. All in all the migration crisis is an unprecedented political burden on Europe, which is experiencing once again a political crisis as a result of it. But in times of crisis, calm heads and clear words are a must.

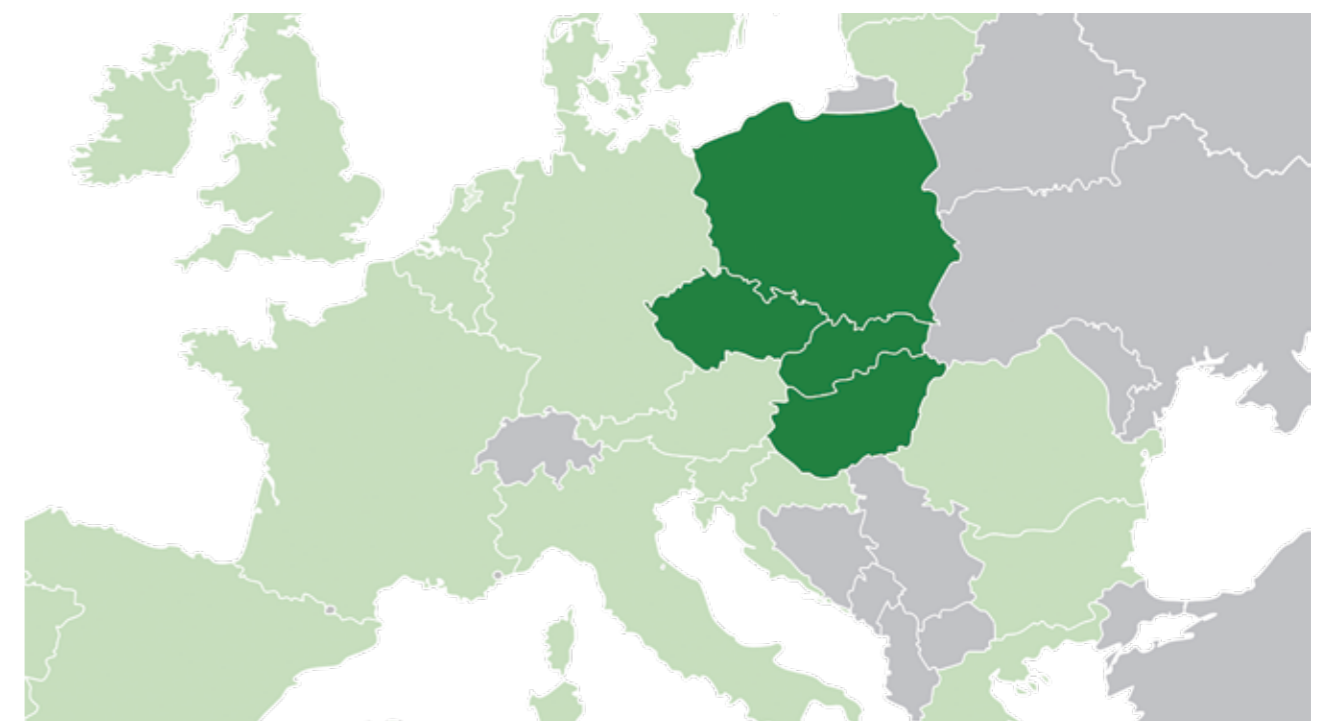
A further strategic point connected to the migration issue is, of course, the declining demographic trends in the population figures of most European countries. This makes the external threat the more provocative and harder to resist. There is no space here to go into details about this long-range problem, but it needs to be clearly stated that there is no satisfactory solution to the migration crisis without European nations once again recovering their demographic potential.

## CENTRAL EUROPE IN THE CENTRE

A further development of the migration issue and the unexpected Brexit vote is the strengthening of the power and voice of the V4 countries, the elite of the eastern European bloc earlier under Soviet occupation. The V4 is now a power-group representing the political interests of its member states in the European orchestra. The organisational framework of the V4 countries was for long simply a formal arrangement without political substance. But after Brexit and as a result of the migration crisis, there is a lacuna in European politics: the dissenting voice of the Euro-realists, who do not accept the tacit European agreement of being kind and very humanitarian to external forces and strictly adhering to the liberal jargon of political correctness internally. The role of the bad boy can be filled in by the coalition of the V4 countries, who have a wholly different experimental horizon than most members of the Western elites, for they have a rather serious inferiority complex due to the historical traumas caused and suffered by their countries.

Although all the four partners of the V4 countries are independent players with their own European

strategies, in all of them a hard-line policy against illegal migration seems to promise very good returns in electoral votes. This is obvious from the fact that independently of the colour of the government, in all four of these countries we find a version of this hard-liner position pursued. One should also note, that this hard-line position is echoed among the electorate of some Western European countries, which makes the issue the more sensitive, as Western politicians might become frightened by the prospect of a coalition between VF political elites and a wider European electorate. All in all, the strengthening presence of Central Europe for the moment causes more dilemmas than it solves. This means that Europe needs to tackle the issue rather soon if it hopes for a viable strategy for survival. Otherwise a division of Europe along the earlier iron curtain is still a realistic option. However, a tough power-policy of sanctioning culprits might not be fruitful, as it can turn out counter-productive among the voters. Germany and France, however, started a tactical game of *divide et impera*, which might bring its fruits.



## THE RUSSIAN LEADER AS A TRADITIONALIST CELEBRITY

And now that we had a look at the major political issues that divide Europe and impact its policies, let us see how European conservatives react on the issue. This paper has no chance to give a full account of the different conservative forces in Europe. Instead of that enumeration, it picks out two paradigmatic ways of reaction. It needs to be premised that from the perspective of the present paper, neither of the two seem to be too promising, as both of them seem to disregard traditional conservative values. In any case, both of them represent a rather strong provocation against the ruling political style in Europe. And both of them come from the earlier Soviet bloc part of Europe, which leads to a conclusion that if Europe wants a long-standing solution, there is a need for the pacification of this periphery.

The first reaction to the new crises of Europe among conservatives is a kind of 'authoritarian or Eastern turn'. According to the narrative that propagates this solution, the European identity is in an awful condition: the European intelligentsia, including the political elite, has forgotten the traditional European values of marriage, family, patria and religion. To heal this loss and to regain identity, inspiration can come from the East, where all these values are still highly appreciated. A key figure in this regard is the Russian president, Vladimir Putin. Partly by his own political talent, partly due to the very successful activity of the Russian secret agencies and the official Russian state-media, the Russian president is highly appreciated among European Conservatives. Wiping out of his fans' memory of his rather uncomfortable KGB-past, Putin poses now as the only Christian ruler of Europe, the defender of religion and conservative values, a real hero and Christian knight and the last representative of traditionalism in Europe.

Obviously, this is a constructed image that has nothing to do with historical reality, and yet he is quite popular among his own voters as well as among many Europeans. Believers in the Putin-model would

return to an earlier, interwar example of leadership in Central-Europe, like that of Piłsudski and Horthy in Poland and Hungary respectively. To manipulate public perception, the migration issue provides opportunity for politicians to show their heroic quality. After all, the authoritarian model of conservatism is based on the assumption that a heroic leader will be followed by its fans, irrespective of particular wrong decisions he or she might have made time after time.



## THE POPULIST TURN

The second reaction of conservatives to the dilemmas of the day is the 'populist turn'. While conservatism used to be elite-oriented and refused to accept even the ideas of democracy and egalitarianism, the new trend among conservatives is to win over the majoritarian principle of democracy and to run for the majority. Given the fact that there is a democratic deficit in Western Europe in the relationship called the 'Brussels bureaucracy' and the European citizenry, and most Western leaders are too comfortable to fight for majorities, conservative leaders are right to sense a chance to win the populace for their causes.

This aim is made easier to achieve by the different technological innovations of the digital age. Politically alert media-messages can easily reach and directly address not only social groups but individuals outside of the realm of mainstream media too. As

a consequence, it is possible for leaders who have been discredited by the media elite and the circle of politically active public intellectuals to avoid their influence. Instead they can rely on a door-to-door campaign to turn directly to the electorate. As a result, a new generation of conservative politicians have an unprecedented popularity among politically active citizens due to the fact of their direct approach and their decision to quit earlier tacit agreements, including the hypocrisy of political correctness. Their success is also due to a technique of negative campaigning, which results in a loss of trust among the populace in the power holders of the European status quo. This gives an opportunity for outsiders to enter the political stage. There is, therefore, widespread fear in the European political and media-elites that the newcomers can take over their positions.

## THE RETURN TO COMMON SENSE

Although authoritarian and populist tendencies promise some success, this paper wants to argue that conservatives should not rely on them to win in the political competition. Although conservatism at its best is never doctrinaire, one cannot envisage a powerful conservative renaissance without firm grounds in established values and accepted ways of political behaviour. Neither an authoritarian nor a populist kind of politics promises to provide these grounds. While populism is explicitly denying the importance of such value-presuppositions, the authoritarian trend simply sacrifices European-style constitutional and rule-of-law traditions in order to build up a working regime of effective centralised government.

There are those who claim that there is no alternative but these harsh measures if we want to overcome the non-realistic left-liberal elites, causing real problems in Europe since their takeover in the after-1968 political climate. They are pushing societies towards unnatural targets, so there is good reason to get rid of their dominance in politics, the media and in the academic world whatever the means. This paper will argue, however, that there is an alternative solution to tackle the issue: a more modest, less overwhelming way that, however, allows us to preserve the values conservatives cherish while helping us to win the case.

# COMMON SENSE VERSUS ALT-RIGHT AND POLITICAL REALIST CONSERVATISM

The type of conservatism this paper promotes as the alternative is a common sense, republican kind of conservatism. In the last bit of the paper, therefore, we need to elaborate these two concepts: what does the adjective common sense and republican stand for here?

Let us start with the idea of common sense. In order to explain it this paper distinguishes it from two other types of conservatism. Common sense conservatism should be distinguished first of all from the ideological fundamentalist type of conservatism, covered in recent years by the alt-right in the US. Their provocative and outrageous ideas are regarded by common sense conservatives as neither conceptually verifiable nor sustainable on the long run. On the contrary, they regard the aggressive negative campaign used by the alt-right as purely a marketing strategy, which has its *raison d'être* in campaign time, but they cannot provide the theoretical foundations for conservatism.

A second distinction concerns the sort of political realism that is usually associated with the representatives of the American neoconservative movement. The neocons, as they are usually labelled, went through a political transformation, leaving the camp of the non-Stalinist left in order to join the camp of American conservatism. Most of them relied on the sometimes non-explicit political teachings of their father figure, Leo Strauss, a German-Jewish philosopher of the first rank, who emigrated to the US in 1937 to escape Hitler's anti-Semitic policy. He taught at the New School in Manhattan, New York, and later at the University of Chicago, exercising a tremendous influence, especially among New York based Jewish intellectuals, and winning them over to the case of conservatism.

The neocons had a very explicit foreign policy,

and were theoretically most active in international relations during the presidency of G. W. Bush, striving both practically and theoretically for what can be regarded as American exceptionalism, a kind of global leadership towards the realm of absolute human rights. They were the most keen to encourage the intervention in Iraq.

Apparently neoconservative ideology has its admirers in Central Europe as well. András Láncki, for example, one of the former advisers of Viktor Orbán, is a researcher and admirer of Leo Strauss. Another ideologist of right wing politics in Hungary is Gábor G. Fodor, whose pronouncements, like the one he apparently took from the 17<sup>th</sup> century prelate Cardinal de Retz ('There is nothing in this world that does not have a decisive moment and the masterpiece of good ruling is to know and seize this moment') or the famous slogan of 'civic Hungary' (*polgári Magyarország*) are simply political products that sound like an adoption of neocon slogans. They never fail to stir up emotions and resentment even within the conservative camp. These neocon ideologists might be behind the main policy line of Orbán's 2017 Kötöcsé-speech, arguing for an activist foreign policy and economic strategy for Hungary and targeting an ideal of Hungary growing into the role of a 'middle state', a term which is rather difficult to make sense of.

If alt-right and neocon influences are visible in Central Europe today (and I do not venture to make any pronouncements about the ideological backing behind the present Polish government of Beata Szydło), this paper would present its common sense conservatism as an alternative of that direction. Although the President Trump has already in his Republican campaign called himself a common sense conservative, clearly it is a notion that cannot easily be associated with the Trump regime. On the contrary, it is mostly associated with the old Whig statesman,

founder of modern conservatism, Edmund Burke, who held that one of the greatest political virtues is to moderate one's passion and try to listen to the advice of common sense, or *recta ratio*, understood in accordance with Cicero as human rationality in harmony with nature.

The common sense conservative is not taking the elitist route of the intellectual conservative. She is happy to keep both conservatism's language and logic on the level of ordinary people without becoming 'populist', i.e. giving in to, or even less, relying on popular political passions. It is realist in the sense of not trying to imitate leftist politics by destroying social frameworks and building monuments instead of useful architecture. It tries to solve the everyday problems of everyday people, listening to the complaints of the voters and addressing particular local contexts instead of the whole of the populace. It does not want to destroy its enemies, and it does not rely, therefore, on a

culture war 'psychosis' but concentrates on internal politics. In foreign policy issues, it is not naïve, but it is not dreaming about 'grandeur'. Rather it tries to be more like a fox, and only in rare moments does it attempt to imitate the lion. All in all, this is a conception of the statesman's role, which is more modest and relies more heavily on what is called in the Aristotelian tradition political prudence, the wisdom of the ruler to act in accordance with the demands of the moment without giving up one's basic principles and highest values.

The common sense politician is by definition closer to everyday reality and the common voters than most of his political competitors, particularly the doctrinaire liberals and the fundamentalist conservatives. He relies more heavily on the political contribution of the citizens than the believers of representative democracy would expect. In this sense common sense conservatism is close to what this paper calls conservative republicanism.

## CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICANISM

The political philosophy of republicanism became quite trendy a few decades ago, and it was mainly advocated by leftist intellectuals as a kind of criticism of the individualist liberal framework of authors, like Rawls and Dworkin. As opposed to the main ideas of people like Skinner and Pettit, conservative republicanism proposes to build conservatism on the actual experiences of smaller social units that work well, especially on the traditional governance of European towns.

Urban republicanism is a living tradition in Europe, which worked as an incubator of large-scale political structures, like states, in the early modern period. Cities were quite useful for would be politicians to test their abilities, and learn in practice rather than in theory the skills of the profession. City governance was not possible without a larger portion of the citizenry getting actively involved in running the city. In this way, cities were much more experienced

in how to regulate their populace by means of the procedurally circumscribed regulations of that very populace than any other forms – think about the republicanism of Kant, who was a longstanding admirer of republics and a devoted citizen of his native town, Königsberg.

Unfortunately, while the theory of the modern state has been delineated by great authors in very detailed treatises over a long period of time, theories of the city were less fashionable, as sponsors were lacking for a long time. By the time the academic disciplines of the theory of the state, government or political science were established, the level of the state was taken as the standard scale for political theory. Although there were influential theories of self-governance (think about Tocqueville) and in the modern framework of state administration, cities needed their local office-holders, who required proper materials to learn. Not much energy was lost to think about it in a systematic fashion.

Even more significantly, conservatives were usually less enthusiastic about cities, claiming that their supporters tend to reside in rural areas, while big cities are by definition politically progressive in their political climate. While sometimes even this generalisation might be challenged, the point this paper wants to make is that conservatism as a theoretical enterprise and also as a political reality should concentrate on the scale of the political community of the city. This choice is confirmed by the fact that neoliberalism tends to turn public discourse

towards the realm of supranational institutions, global networks and global justice in general. If the state is taken over by populist pragmatists, and at the supranational level by Brussels bureaucrats, global firms and neoliberal ideology, conservatives have a natural choice to concentrate their efforts on the level of the city, which can be won one after the other, without the need to overinvest into the struggle. This is, at least, the message conservative republicans want to spread.

## CONCLUSION: A PLEA FOR A COMMON SENSE, REPUBLICAN CONSERVATISM

As we saw in this paper, Europe and the West in general are experiencing a shocking line of political crises and explosions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. September 11, the financial crisis, the Brexit vote, the unexpected election of Trump to presidency, the migration crisis and the rise of the V4 countries each individually could have a major impact on a Europe that is politically not really in full swing. Obviously, the European political infrastructure did not react properly to this fusion of crises, and, therefore, Europe as a political force is constantly and very rapidly losing its weight and authority in the world.

This paper wanted to argue that although some sort of gain has been realised from the dysfunction of the European institutions, mainly in Central European conservative politics, the sort of conservatism that could capitalise on it is not yet on stage. The paper pointed at two conservative types that can bring momentary success but no long-term breakthrough: conservatism with an authoritarian bent and populist conservatism. Both of them, or a combination of them might be performing quite well in the political competition of a chaotic present, however, great prices have to be paid for that. No doubt, the label conservative was dropped by some of these leaders because they realised that

major conservative values had to be sacrificed on the altar of electoral efficiency.

This paper, therefore, presents an alternative version of conservatism based on two traditional values: a common sense approach to politics and republicanism, meaning in this case not more than a participatory vision of political community. The main thesis of the paper is that a common sense approach is viable even in this critical moment, and it claims that it can avoid the pitfalls of giving up basic values (like political realism does) or of becoming doctrinaire (like a radically ideological type of alt-right conservatism does). On the other hand, the republican element of this conservatism means an encouragement of the active participation of the citizenry, to raise the legitimacy of conservatism by the democratic principle. This participatory model is based on the long-standing tradition of the governance of European cities, which were the incubators of democratic policy-making. According to the model proposed, conservatism can manage to remain close to common sense and encourage active participation and a political culture of responsible governance. This way, it is argued, conservatism can remain up-to-date and yet loyal to its venerable tradition. •



6

# CONSERVATISM: TRUTH AND MODERATENESS

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The right/left scale is an old toolkit by which political philosophies are introduced to freshmen at universities. There is nothing generally wrong with it. Moreover, it combines two ideas in a felicitous way, namely, the idea of comparing particular political philosophies to one another in terms of their content (what constitutes leftist and rightist thinking) and the idea of intensity (radical/moderate politics). Evidently, party programs and ideologies do not necessarily correspond to political philosophies, yet the latter are its intellectual sources.

On the scale, conservatism has usually been considered to be a rightist political philosophy, closer to the center than radical rightist ideologies. On the far left, Marxism and other socialist philosophies have been placed, whereas liberalism has been interpreted as being closer to the center, near to conservatism. Now there is nothing generally wrong with this textbook presentation. However, contemporary political debates and struggles suggest that a significant shift of balance has occurred. Liberalism has become dominated and permeated by an extreme sort of absolutist egalitarianism to the extent that it has almost completely abandoned its core ideas, its commitment to protecting private and public liberty and to the tradition of moderate governing. In fact, absolutist egalitarianism is on the march to occupy and conquer conservatism as well. The former construction of a balance consisting of two extreme and two moderate forces appears to be on the verge of falling. At the same time, we are also witnessing a resurgence of ideological thinking on both sides of the scale, and the growing radicalization of politics, which means that extreme thinking and practice begins,

once again in modern Western history, to exert an unruly influence on the center.

Classical conservatism is the archenemy of political radicalism of any sort. I do not think there is any cogent reason for conservatives to abandon this conviction, which, on the one hand, secures its position in the center and, on the other hand, helps it to resist ideological absolutism. Since liberalism seems to have denied its classical, moderate traditions and succumbed to ideological absolutism, conservatism has now to bear the extraordinary political responsibility of sustaining moral realism, political sobriety and moderate government in the center. Since it has been traditionally hostile to political ideologies and 'isms' in general, it has the potential, flexibility and credibility to take on this responsibility. Since it rests on solid philosophical grounds on the basic truths about human nature and society, and since it possesses enormous critical resources to reject radical, simplifying, utopian and absolutist thinking (leftist and rightist alike), conservatism has and is able to fulfill a critical role in political thinking and practice today.<sup>18</sup>

In what follows, I shall enlarge on this thesis by citing and briefly analyzing what appear to me some major ideological struggles today fought in terms of absolutist conceptions having radical political consequences. There is no assumption here in terms of priorities, and it goes without saying that there will be overlaps between the various arguments. Nonetheless, they are distinct or can be rendered meaningful without explicitly invoking the others. Out of each brief analysis, there will emerge a constructive conservative point.

<sup>18</sup> I am indebted to John Kekes and to his *A Case for Conservatism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001) for his lucid argumentation. He places conservatism in between pairs of extreme attitudinal-philosophical positions, an approach this essay has much in common with.

## CONSCIENCE

Contemporary liberalism has been rapidly moving toward what Carl Schmitt once called the tyranny of values.<sup>19</sup> In many leading liberal journals on ethics and moral philosophy, a vast portion of discussion has increasingly been either on subtleties of justice, equality, respect and human rights (liberty or freedom, the root concept of liberalism, is usually a terrain of republicanism today), or on the search for the ultimate principle. Though Kantianism flourishes, disagreements are mostly on whether it is the Categorical Imperative or the Universal Respect for Persons that is the truly ultimate principle.<sup>20</sup> Act Utilitarianism is replaced by Rule Utilitarianism and other kinds of contractualist, rational-choice based ethics that are similarly zealous about their search for the ultimate principle or value.<sup>21</sup> What is more, even virtue ethics has been absorbed and duly digested by liberal theorists. Almost invariably, discussions of particular virtues end up being interpreted in a way that they are shown to be reducible to equality, respect or the absolute worth of human persons.

At the other extreme we find relativists, genealogists and all sorts of post-Nietzschean skeptics who do not deny the social importance of values or a belief in them, but they constantly remind us of their historical and cultural contingency. And as is often the case with extremes, they can forge political alliances. On the one hand, fervent believers in equality or respect, for instance, may share the skepticism of relativists and deny the objective nature of values, lest they need to defend the primacy of their own chosen value. Some would argue further that there is a human and personal need for faith and strong beliefs. Working and fighting for social justice, for instance, may be a personal choice, a form of political activism, a way of

self-fulfillment. On the other hand, hardcore relativists may doubt the absolute value of respect, for instance, and yet be jealously defending the universal right of doubt and argue that this is in what respect consists. Such apparently inconsistent argumentations are not infrequent. Relativist absolutists and absolutist relativists have much in common.

Conservatives need to face both challenges and point out such inconsistencies. But they can also make a constructive step as well by recalling and re-invoking the old and practically forgotten concept and a real component of the human nature: this is conscience. Conservatives can and should point out that no value or principle can be declared to be absolute by philosophy. Moral philosophical speculations themselves have only limited value. Much of morality is given and has been handed over to us in terms of explicit prohibitions and unwritten laws that are written in the human heart. This is not a mystery. Notwithstanding the changing nature of *mores* or of the *Sitten*, there are universal wrongs that conscience warns us of. There are and can be all sorts of mitigating circumstances, social preconditions, persistent bad habits and corrupt institutions which confuse conscience, yet we are free to resist them. An embracement of relativism and contingency, a belief in some freely chosen cause does not eliminate conscience. Nor do subjective and often erroneous speculations about how to impose a single value or principle over the conscience make it infallible. Conservatives need to stress the dignity of informed conscience that is independent both of historical and subjective contingencies. If conscience is truly taken seriously, it will speak in an audible and authoritative voice, which is now being suppressed by moral tyrants and moral anarchists alike.

<sup>19</sup> Schmitt, Carl. *The Tyranny of Values*. Translated and edited by Simona Draghici. Washington, DC: Plutarch Press, 1996.

<sup>20</sup> For the Kantian dilemma, see Korsgaard, Christine: *The Sources of Normativity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>21</sup> Derek Parfit, arguably one of the greatest synthetic minds in contemporary moral theory, proposed that Kantianism, Utilitarianism and Contractualism are unifiable and that there is a single last principle of all ethical theories: *On What Matters*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, 2017.

## THE AUTHORITY OF MORALITY

Closely related to the tyranny of values is the liberal advocacy of morality over politics and possibly over all human affairs.<sup>22</sup> After the devastating moral consequences of totalitarian ideologies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is hardly surprising that many people concluded that morality should come first everywhere and always, especially in politics. The social and moral emancipation movements of the '60s, the interpretation of the problems of the Third World as being caused by immorality and the successful revolutions against dictatorships brought about by civil and human rights movements produced a climate of global moralizing. Issues such as capitalism, inequality, environment protection, global warming, gender inequalities, intergenerational, international justice and so on are considered to be mostly ethical problems that politics need to address directly, for legislation needs

to answer these challenges in the first place. This urgency is coupled with a general moral guilt culture, where guilt must be felt for all sorts of historical crimes (often starting from the Crusades) and for domination and exploitation of any kind. The priority of morality, conceived in these positive (values, principles, right causes) and negative (guilt) terms, is imposed upon universities and university policies, upon courts (including Constitutional and Supreme Courts), mass media, social media, churches, on the prevailing *comme il faut* political discourse and so on.

In opposition to this we can also witness an increasing general skepticism over morality and the moral dimension of politics. Some of those who share this skeptical attitude point out the reality of power behind moralism. Others only sense and complain about the practical impossibility of talking in a



<sup>22</sup> Arguably, the most well known exponent of this view was Bernard Williams (for the locus classicus see his *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, Fontana Books, London; Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1985). But he does not share the view that there is any objective moral order. The view that morality is not an absolute ruler of the human world (nor should it be) yet morality is an objective part of reality see the phenomenological ethics of Aurel Kolnai, another great conservative thinker.

different tone and with a different conviction. Again, others take a positively power-centered position, arguing that there is no point in discoursing about discourses if implicit or explicit barriers, such as political correctness, filter out topics beyond the morality-first consensus. For instance, followers of the alternative right and identitarianism often take the strategy of provocation and other kinds of direct actions that unmask the realities of power. In a more radical form, some believe the news is nothing but manipulated, faked and dishonestly interpreted reports. They believe this entitles them to do the same. It is only power that counts, after all.

In the midst of such absolutist positions, conservatives need to be moral realists who admit the objective and authoritative nature of the moral order. But they must also deny that it needs and can be imposed on humanity and society in an absolutist way. Conservatives must be fully aware of the fact that moral authority in human hands is liable to be misused.

First, the objectivity of the moral order is that man was created a moral animal, which means that our actions, decisions, emotions and even thoughts have a moral aspect and whatever we think, feel and do may be in need of moral justification. If our conscience is silent, it will be our fellowmen who demand justification. Morality cannot be ignored for long.

## LIBERTY

Leaving moral issues behind, liberals and other leftist thinkers are concerned, even worried about what they call autocratic and populist tendencies not only in some remote corners of the world, but within the core countries of Western democracies as well. The basic argument is simple: new autocracies or autocratic movements justify themselves in terms of democracy, but what they call democracy is really nothing but populism (anti-elitism, the rejection of institutions, the checks and balances, and the favoring of direct, immediate, acclamatory voting). Autocracies are non-democratic because democracy entails liberalism, constitutional constraints, separation of powers and so on. Those who oppose liberalism like to

Secondly, however, this is distinct from pan-moralism and its absolutist consequences. The moral aspect does not emerge as an always-overriding authority. Much of our lives consist of doing things that we consider generally good outside of a specifically moral sense. It does not occur very frequently that morality or the authority of morality commands us *to do* something. In fact, in probably most cases it commands us *not to do* something. The authority of morality is restrictive and prohibitive, rather than a prescriptive, goal-oriented agent. Liberals are right to emphasize that morality is important, but it is important mainly in this restrictive sense and within this restricted scope. Third, those who reject liberal moralism are right to point out that there is an aggressive power dimension often behind it; that liberalism has become (to the dismay of the handful remaining classical liberals) an ideology that enforces its moral ideals on behalf of the authority of morality upon politics, institutions, even private associations and persons. Conservatives know that since morality *is* real and stands on objective grounds, it *does* have a certain coercive aspect. This is why it can be misused, even abused in political discourse and action. Such abuses must be uncovered and resisted. However, no abuse of morality in the form of pan-moralism exempts us from the authority of morality, the moral order or from the validity of moral prohibitions entrenched in our culture or, as conservatives are bound to believe, grounded in human nature.

point out that democracy is by definition 'populist' and that when liberals defend democracy, it is their rule, rather than the interest of the people, that they want to preserve and protect. Democracy cannot and should not be constrained.

Debates of this kind tend to be murky and unhelpful. Conservatives can offer a more honest and straightforward view of democracy because they interpret it in terms of history and culture, taking Alexis de Tocqueville's insights about democracy seriously. On the one hand, they realize that populism as defined above has always been an organic part of any democracy. There is nothing new about

the popularity of populism in crises. This has ever been the rule, rather than the exception, of most democracies. Conservatives can, once again, refer to human nature. There is absolutely nothing striking about our strong emotional reactions to grave crises. Among such reactions, fear, hatred, anguish, agitation, as well the desire for immediate action, strong leadership and grand visions are the most prominent ones. Populism as defined above is a result of a deep-rooted urge that something has to be done immediately. Since contemporary democracies operate on a rather short-term basis (elections are held quite often), since its basic principles include the universal suffrage and the equal weight of votes, and since modern states run by elected officials have competences and powers unprecedented in history, populism is an inevitable feature of any democracy. Democracies are naturally closer to autocratic rule than liberals would like to admit.

On the other hand, the reason why democracies are in need of restraining and disciplining is precisely because of such populist urges. Yet contrary to liberals, conservatives must and can point out that the constraints and limitations of democracy are what they are, namely, constraints and limitations. They can comfortably argue that history teaches us that democracy can be tyrannical and autocratic, against the interests and best intentions of its citizens, especially in absence of experience and self-imposed discipline. What is very often required is less and not more democracy.

It is not impossible to argue forcefully and convincingly why and how less democracy serves the public interest. Conservatives can argue that it is both public and private liberty that is in need of protection against the unconstrained will of the changing majority. If liberals abandon the protection of freedom in favor of other values (see the introduction), then conservatives of today should undertake this job. They can point out that crises are natural parts of human history and that they can be overcome by wisdom and competence rather than by prophets and gurus; by patience and good governance rather than by will, pressure and passions; by social and political efforts concerted by institutions and routines rather than by visions and miracles; by virtuous, strong and determined people rather than by all-powerful, loud, dictatorial leaders. Prophets, visionaries, dictators, impatient masses, strong desires, agitation and such reactions not only may deepen crises, but they may also threaten public and private freedom.



# CIVILIZATION

Once upon a time, much of the globe was dominated by empires embedded in the Atlantic civilization. These empires up to the Modern Age were transnational and transcultural, that is, having a dynasty, a public service and administration, usually an army and an intellectual elite that was committed to its own task within the empire, rarely making serious efforts to integrate these distinct parts into a unified and homogenous state, and much less aiming at forming and forging a single nation. Empires had religious legitimacy, some natural and rational justification (the common good), sometimes certain universal and missionary ideals, various professional codes of virtue, a hierarchy of partly hereditary social and political positions, and more or less institutionalized separation of powers. These empires were politically more abstract and rationalist than contemporary nations are, yet more concrete, distinctive and well shaped in terms of functions, social and political roles, ethics and even ethnicities.

It is not suggested that these empires (the last one, the Danube monarchy was dissolved as late as in 1918) were perfect. Nothing is perfect in this world, yet history does commend them as examples of sophisticated, efficient, enduring, yet non-tyrannical and moderate governing.

After the decline of these empires and the rise of modern nation states (some of which began to abuse the concept of empire, as in the cases of the French and the German Empires), formerly separated functions, powers and competences were rapidly unified and nationalized. Natural hierarchies were largely abolished. Theological and rationalist legitimacy was replaced by emotions and subjectivist philosophies. Ideals became identity-based. The malaise of such nation states revealed first by and in the Great War to horrendous extents prompted liberals to proclaim a crusade against this development. Though liberals do not realize it, the abolishment of nation states has a very antimodernist and almost traditionalist inspiration: old empires are sometimes (romantically) cited as examples of tolerance and cultural openness (especially

the emphatically non-Christian Hellenistic and Arab cultures). The liberal abolishment of the nation state is, however, still a progressive and absolutist ideal. For the antidote to nationalism and the alternative to the nation state is, according to the mainstream liberal thinking, a homogenously conceived multiculturalism and multiethnicism, a sort of a patchwork world that



is, however, organized and run efficiently by some supranational or superstate structure on which no cultural, religious or national tradition as embedded in and nurtured by the Atlantic civilization can have formative influence. This system is constructed according to an abstract dichotomy of individuals who care about only their personal identities or are in need of protection (liberals and other leftist ideologies, including radical socialists and communists differ mainly on which groups or what kind of individuals are need of protection in the first place), and the unified superstructure ruled by the enlightened elite. There are no intermediary organizations (NGOs are meant to spread and promulgate the ideals of the elite and recruit its members), there is no real separation of powers, no separation of social roles (not to mention hierarchies) and ethical codes; ideally, not only separations but also distinctions are eliminated. The dictatorial consequences of such objectives and of such a world need to be pointed out by conservatives relentlessly.

No wonder that these tendencies and such thinking have provoked strong reactions on the far right. Though Nazism and the unconstrained exaltation of national egoism are still rather unpopular in Europe and in the Western world, making the interest of the nation first and above any other political principle, issue and even the common good is an increasingly influential position. It often comes in the form of

a rejection of globalization, the invisible forces of capitalism or the conspiring elites – of the harsh criticism of the European Union as an administrative and non-elected superstate, and not in an honest and sincere defense of the moral and rational superiority of the nation-state. However, what lies behind these criticisms is usually nothing but the nationalization of the global state, the totality of local power, the particularistic version of the liberal ideal of non-separation, non-distinction and the perfect unity of citizens and leaders or elites. Needless to say that such regimes have similar dictatorial consequences, liable to the criticism of conservatives.

There is no chance to return to the world of transnational and transcultural empires. Conservatives should not take such ideas seriously, as they need to be political realists. Yet the criticism of both the globalist and the localist or nationalist absolutisms does recall and point to the virtues of empires, the greatest of which was the prevention of dictatorships and totalitarian ideologies and regimes. What seems to be still applicable and feasible from their practice is the real separation of powers, the concern over values of the Atlantic civilization and high culture, including aesthetical and religious ones, as well as the protection of the autonomy of non-state organizations, especially those that have deep roots in history and tradition.

# HISTORY AND THE PRESENT

Finally, conservatives face two equally absolutist alternatives with regard to history and historical thinking. The one originates in the traditional progressive belief in the future, in the perfectibility of mankind, in the utopian unity of all nations. It needs to be added that this belief, indeed, faith has usually been held in a qualified sense. Mankind has serious challenges to face; a concentrated and concerted effort must be made to overcome them (such as the climate change); a simple mistake may launch a nuclear war threatening ultimate destruction and so on. This is, in fact, what justifies the promotion of moralism, the search for the magic formula of ethics, enlightened democracy, perennial peace and happiness secured by a world government.

The other side is arguing that the Day of Judgment is imminent. The decline of Western civilization is almost unstoppable, social cohesion is on the verge of cessation; demographic tendencies and migration will soon bring about the collapse. This argumentation is similarly qualified: there are some last chances and forces remaining to block the demolition, although despair is the reasonable reaction to the modern world.

Conservatives, once again, stress the historical lessons about human nature and human communities that have produced the greatest evils and the finest personalities of mankind alike. No doubt doomsday scenarios cannot be ruled out, and it is true that

civilizations can be extinguished or may wane due to their inner weaknesses. However, political and collective actions aiming at ultimate goals, perfect solutions, once-and-for-all turns and the like are misguided and contribute to, rather than mitigate, the calamities. Hence, grand schemes to save the world or the globe by political force need to be avoided. Similarly, apocalyptic politics is to be suspected because it may easily justify exceptions, states of emergencies, the concentration of power to resist the enemy and so forth. They are often symptoms of

weakness rather than sources of strength. In short, both totalistic-utopian and apocalyptic-hysterical politics and politicians should be sharply criticized by conservatives. They need to be sensitive to both instincts, responsive to concerns over the future and over the past, yet, paradoxically perhaps, they ought to be the realists of today, the heroes of the present, rather than of the past. They can rely firmly on the eternal truths about humanity and the human condition; and they do not need to cling either to the future or to the past.

## CONCLUSION

As far as I see it, contemporary conservatism needs to be critical of both leftist and rightist ideological aberrations and extremisms. It can and must be a voice of moderation in times of crises, especially in democracies that are apt to embrace extremisms of all kinds all too easily. However, conservatism does not need to be exclusively critical. In fact, a purely critical stance is always deficient in terms of persuasiveness and credibility. Therefore, I offered a few constructive points in virtue of which conservatives can tell not only what they criticize but also why they do so. Conscience is a vitally important faculty of human beings, which gives them responsibility and autonomy, yet holds them accountable efficiently. Conservatives should more strongly than ever defend conscience. They should also defend the authority of morality but point out how it can be abused politically. Since liberals have largely abandoned the concept and value of liberty as traditionally understood, conservatives have a mission to promote it in a meaningful and sensible way, protecting it against all sorts of tyrannies. Conservatives should, again, speak up for the reality of Atlantic civilization and reject both national egoism and globalist superstructures. Finally, conservatives should focus on the political needs and issues of the day, standing firmly on the timeless truths of human nature and reject fantasies of a perfect future and the hysterical accounts of history alike.

I have no intention to make practical political proposals or make extensive comments on the

current European political tendencies here. It should be sufficient to say that conservatives as principled moderates should resist both the onslaught of egalitarian, utopian, absolutist thinking and policy programs, including those about migration, social justice, bureaucratic governance and the seduction of authoritarian, power-centred, mystically and egoistically nationalistic etatist parties and programs. Moreover, there are signs of a sound and robust sort of conservative policy getting solidified and even popular in Austria, Germany and France (notwithstanding the electoral defeat of F. Fillon: the dramatically rapid loss of popularity of the leftist-liberal E. Macron is a grave warning to the left). Even what is called right extremism in Scandinavia has – especially in Norway and Denmark – come closer to the center. Eastern Central European countries have different party trajectories, yet moderate conservatism is alive in them. Though these parties often have various, even strenuous relations to their natural home parties. This is certainly true in Hungary where the governing party has been increasingly criticized by conservatives, myself included, for slipping toward the extreme (whereas the Jobbik, a noted extremist party, has done enormous efforts to get closer to the centre). There is, I conclude, a natural demand for a credible and convincing policy of moderation which conservatives, unlike mere realists, opportunists, politically and intellectually weightless personalities can and should advance and represent in a principled and philosophically sound way. •



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# CENTRAL EUROPE, CONSERVATISM AND BREXIT

**John O'Sullivan**

Cracow, 11 December 2016

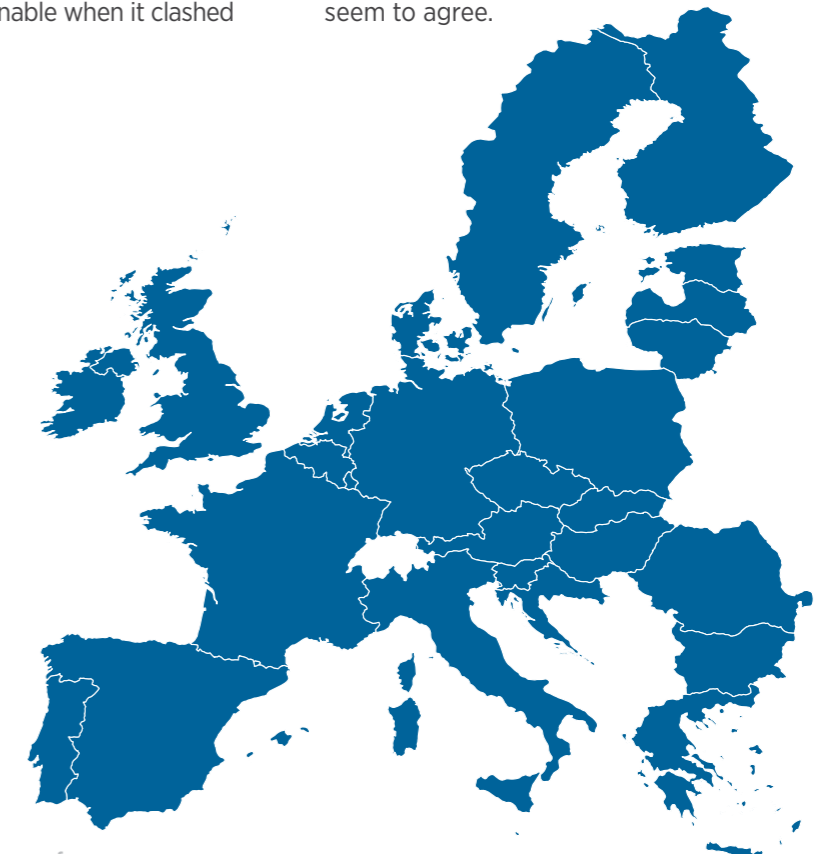
Mr. Chairman, distinguished scholars, ladies and gentlemen,

*[ Many thanks for your kind invitation and generous hospitality at this conference. My colleagues at the Danube Institute, notably its director Gerald Frost who is here on the platform with me, are delighted both to be your partners in holding this conference and the beneficiaries of your good judgment in publishing a Polish language edition of our own book on Viktor Orban and Orbanism here today. Gerald and I both hope that we can continue this cooperation with future conferences and mutual publications. It is not only the world that is getting smaller under today's fast and universal system of communications. Central Europe is getting smaller too, and people of similar views and goodwill should cooperate more, not least because people of similar views and bad will from Vladimir Putin to ISIS jihadists are certainly doing so. ]*

I have been asked to deal with the dilemmas conservatives face in dealing with a EU that in general is purposefully moving towards greater uniformity – ‘More Europe’ you might say – in its treaty obligations and other regulatory and mutual arrangements. But it's worth making the point at the outset that Europe's 28 member states are of such social variety and such differing levels of development that the main response to all these dilemmas has got to be ‘Less Europe’. After all the three most serious crises now facing Europe are the direct result of imposing a uniformity on all 28 members that proved unsustainable when it clashed with reality. Those crises are the refugee crisis, the Euro crisis and the Brexit crisis (which itself resulted from the EU's refusal to contemplate allowing Britain to derogate from the free movement of labour above all other issues.) Europe's handling of both the Euro and the refugee crises has aggravated rather than solved them. And it has created ill will between different EU members – see in particular its impact on the Greco-German relationship – that outweighs any gains from the uniformity that drives it.

The theory underlying this uniformity was once summed up by the distinguished British historian, Sir Noel Malcolm, as the idea that there are such things as overriding Finno-Portuguese interests covering all of Europe. He found the idea fanciful. Why not then move away from uniformity and restore powers from Brussels to national parliaments, allowing countries to choose different levels of European integration? The case for this was laid out by Margaret Thatcher in a 1991 speech in The Hague not long after she left the prime ministership. ‘The larger Europe grows, the more diverse must be the forms of cooperation it requires,’ she said. ‘Instead of a centralized bureaucracy, the model should be a market – not only a market of individuals and companies, but also a market in which the players are governments [that] compete with each other for foreign investments, top management and high earners through lower taxes and less regulation.’

This kind of Europe has had several names. Some refer to it as a ‘variable-geometry’ Europe, or Europe a la carte. Its essential underlying idea is that the EU would have more success and less conflict if it allowed different countries to adopt different levels of integration on different policy areas. Instead of ‘more Europe for all’, we could have ‘More Europe for some, less Europe for others.’ I think this would be a sensible response to the existing crises and to the future evolution of the EU. But the Commission, the Parliament, France, Benelux and Germany don't as yet seem to agree.





Let us take Sir Noel's insight a little further, away from economics, however, and ask if there might possibly be an overriding Finno-Portuguese consensus on moral, historical, cultural, religious and national questions in Europe. It seems to me that this question answers itself—and that the answer is 'No.' The hostility of the German intellectual establishment to the concept of the nation-state is not shared throughout Europe, especially in Central Europe. The French establishment's insistence on laïcité clashes with Poland's concept of itself as a Catholic nation – and, as Ryszard Legutko has pointed out scathingly in his recent book on liberal democracy, complete state neutrality towards religion ends up in practice as discrimination against it. The Swedish opposition to parental rights in education, amplified very often by the European Parliament even though this matter is outside its official competences, is resisted in other European states. There is no consensus at all on how to deal with the growth of Euro-Islam. One could list such clashes indefinitely—though it is generally the case that centralized European institutions are firmly on the side of moral and cultural radicalism or a false moral neutrality at best.

So the answer to your first question is very straightforward:

***What are the limits of compromise for the conservatives vis-à-vis the actual functioning of the EU?***

Quite simply we have to restore the ability of European national governments to choose their own laws. And that means reducing the power and scope of central European institutions. Obviously Brexit is

the extreme method of doing so because it requires leaving all the main EU institutions. For that reason, unlike some other Brexiteers, I do not suggest this course for other countries unless they independently seek it for reasons of their own. Brexit reflects the fact that, as De Gaulle recognized, Britain has a unique set of distinctive liberal institutions, trading patterns and national myths that made it uniquely uncomfortable within the centralized EU. Denmark, Holland and Portugal might feel the same tug of individuality in due course. But not many EU member-states will want to be outside the EU entirely. What Poland and other Central European countries want—or, as I feel, should want—is the Europe a la carte described above. The V4's problem, therefore, is to get legal/constitutional reforms that make subsidiarity something real that would prevent Brussels, especially the European court system, from imposing new regulations upon them. Ultimately you want Europe to be a system of opt-ins rather than opt-outs. As yet we are a long way distant from that.

***How can we be conservatives in the cultural and ideological realities of the contemporary society and political systems together with their actual practical politics (e.g., media democracy, post-democracy, pop-democracy, etc.)?***

There is no alternative to our getting involved in those cultural and ideological realities ourselves. That's not difficult. If the left dominates the theatre, for instance, then we should not only commission, write and perform plays, but we should also establish ourselves as theatre critics, not only in magazines and newspapers, but also as pioneering exponents of debates with those who direct and perform the theatre of the Left. That could become a form of theatre in itself, attracting audiences for critiques of new plays and new productions of established works. But in time it would also inspire new conservative plays too. Roger Scruton has shown the way here, writing novels, plays and operas. Interestingly, the Left's response to this has been to ignore him, but when he gets young audiences, that response breaks down. They have to respond to Roger or lose the argument. Conservatives are the main social critics of today's society, and many social and cultural institutions are failing or acting perversely (i.e. contrary to their published intentions.) Those background facts give us many good opportunities. Our liberal intellectual oligarchies are ripe for satire and mockery. Picking a director of a national theatre



is, therefore, one of the most important decisions a government can make. He must be both brilliantly imaginative and politically brave, and he must be willing to answer the liberal critical establishment back. That said, we can't rely on state institutions; we have to create our own. And they should include new media as well as traditional forms.

***Are the conservatives doomed to adapt to the politico-ideological programs of different social groups and their political representations?***

Not in the slightest? See my previous answer. In fact the conservative wing of the cultural-cum-philosophical sector of society (the concept that John Paul II made one of the three independent sectors of society in *Centesimus Annus*) must maintain a certain independence from its political and social allies, including the Church. John Paul II made the Church a broad canopy protecting all intellectual factions, including the atheistic left. We should be confident enough to do the same. We should bring the cultural left into the room when we launch a new idea, project

or institution to demonstrate our seriousness and self-assurance. We can't cultivate an audience for our version of cultural modernity unless we expose it to criticism.

***Is the contemporary immigration crisis and the civil discontent or even disobedience towards the establishment politics of the governments in most of the EU countries an opportunity for the conservatives to strengthen their position in politics?***

Yes, an enormous opportunity, and we should not be afraid to say so. Nor should we be afraid of pointing out how the various left ideologies are unable either to analyse the refugee crisis or to defend their societies against cultural attack. The idea of patriotism is key here. Patriotism is currently both the left's most vulnerable point and a stronghold of conservatism which any intelligent conservative should find easy to defend. Leftists used to be the strongest defenders of community; now they deny its reality at the national level or in the form of respectable society. (Respectability and the

vacuous character of left bohemianism are other good topics for the conservative imagination.) A play about how a left party has to throw itself into contortions in order to defend its 'welcome' position could be a most glorious farce. At the same time the conservative defence of patriotism must include a decent moral solution for the refugees that makes distinctions between them and others with different motives.

***Are the conservatives able to put forward an alternative political program and to remain conservative when there is a strong tendency towards mutual imitation among different political currents?***

Yes. It requires hard thought, of course: both a clear-headed analysis of the risks of staking out bold cultural positions and a good foreknowledge of the foundational arguments we will cite in response to attacks. Put simply, we have to know what we are talking about. We must invest intellectually in arguments to persuade doubtful voters of the virtues of the most controversial politics in the mix – and we must do so long before the election. Mrs. Thatcher made the case for Thatcherism between becoming party leader in 1975 and winning the election in 1979. She had to convert her party before she could convert the voters and – last of all – her cabinet colleagues from the Heath wing of the Tory party. There's an old American saying that captures this point: 'You can't fatten a pig on market day.'

We must also take into account the structure of political and electoral systems when we are deciding what issues to highlight in our thinking and campaigning. The temptation to move towards an unprincipled 'centre ground' is strongest when there are only two major parties. Principled politicians in a two-party system have to think very carefully how to produce an attractive 'mix' of policies that will include their win a majority of voters. In systems of proportional representation, the conservative vote is maximized by being sought by several parties emphasizing different strands of conservative ideology – social, religious, economic, cultural, national – which, after the election, negotiate on forming a new government and negotiating an agreed programme.

***Should the conservatives concentrate on a certain domain like the state, the culture or the economy, which is crucial from the conservative point of view and at the same time offers the prospect of a success?***

Yes. It is common sense to focus on those important issues on which the majority of voters are instinctively on the same side as conservatives. Of course what those issues are will differ on every particular occasion and in every national debate depending on particular circumstances. Politics is much more a practical activity than an intellectual one. As a result political leaders need to use imagination to craft an appealing mix of policies rather than pure logic to write an advanced thesis.



***Are the different histories and contemporary political and social realities responsible for the diverse understanding of conservatism in Central European countries like Hungary and Poland and in Anglo-Saxon societies?***

Broadly speaking, yes. One way of looking at conservatism is as the belief that the state should conform to society rather than society conforming to the state. That means we have to adapt to any particular nation's 'deep' cultural patterns, in particular—as Emmanuel Todd has discovered and as James C. Bennett and Michael Lotus have applied to the Anglosphere and continental Europe—to the continuing influence of different family structures.

Thus, as Bennett and Lotus argue, following Todd, there are three family structural types in principal cultures of Europe:

- The Authoritarian Family system of Central Europe ('AF'), particularly Germany, in which traditional families live in large extended families under the rule of the patriarch, the father or eldest brother; inheritance is unequal, with the oldest male child inheriting all of the land while the younger brothers can either hang on as workers, obeying the patriarch and having their living guaranteed in turn, or make their way in the world and hope to obtain land and become their own patriarch. When industrialization took place under Bismarck in Germany, the state took on the role of patriarch, demanding obedience and delivering benefits.
- In central France, the Egalitarian Nuclear Family ('ENF') arose, in which all male children enjoyed the right to an equal share of the family land, but they were expected to go off and form their own nuclear family once they had obtained it. The French state at the time of industrialisation assured the égalité of an equal, fair start. It provided a thoroughly homogenous school system with an absolutely identical curriculum for every child. It was a meritocratic system with exams to enter a large civil bureaucracy, but it accepted unequal outcomes once the children had graduated and taken their civil service exams.
- In England and in the wider Anglosphere, the Absolute Nuclear Family ('ANF') arose. In the ANF most people lived in nuclear families and land was inherited entirely at the pleasure of the parents.

Any child could be dispossessed; every child was due an education or training into a profession or trade, or a dowry for women. On reaching adulthood, however, a child was entirely free to do as he or she pleased, due no support, and in return had no obligation to support their parents, siblings or anybody else. Unlike the case of other family systems, therefore, the move to the cities in the Industrial Revolution was relatively less traumatic. In the ANF, there was no real transfer of emotional loyalties or expectations to the state. In due course, the English settlers in North America transmitted the ANF to the US. ANF Anglo-Americans seemed like anarchists to members of other cultures. Hegel made the shocked remark that 'the State barely exists in America'.

Bennett and Lotus argue that family systems analysis explains some of the complexity of Central and Eastern European politics. I'm not going to follow them there; it doesn't seem sensible for me to tell you how your families are organized and how that influences your political formations and loyalties. But I will observe that this theory of the political consequences of different family structures seems to explain a great deal.

Why Yugoslavia fell apart for instance.

Why the French view Anglo-Saxon inheritance laws as cold and unjust since heirs are deprived of what French law regards as their due reward.

Why almost everyone else regards the English as cold-hearted, mechanical, calculating and dishonourable.

Why risk-taking is seen in Anglo-America as praiseworthy and not as reckless.

Why regard for the state is higher in countries with more patriarchal families, such as in both Germany and France and not in Anglosphere countries.

Why American corporations are surprised to find that management rules that work in Detroit fail in Denmark.

It finally explains why Hayek's distinction between different forms of liberalism—a constructivist directing liberalism of the French tradition and an evolutionary adaptive liberalism of the Anglo-American one—is a valid and explanatory one. In that last sentence,

moreover, the word conservatism can be exchanged for liberalism without any very profound change of meaning. Continental liberalism is more statist than Anglo-American liberalism, but both liberalisms are responding in a conservative manner to the deep structures of their respective societies. As communications improve and cultures interpenetrate each other, we can expect these cultural differences to shrink but never to disappear.

***Is the old question of the thorough ('revolutionary') change of the state structures in the post-communist countries as incompatible with the conservative principles still open? And what do the Anglo-Saxon conservatives think about this contradiction? Is it real or seeming?***

This is a hard question. My guess is that change which occurs slowly in the sentiments of people through their exposure to new ideas, new experiences, new opportunities, new prospects of gain (to be crude) etc., is likely to be more long-lasting than a change which is imposed by force or state compulsion. Soviet Man never really appeared except at the Commissar level; Turkey's cultural makeover at the hands of Kemal Ataturk has proved vulnerable to the fact that 98% of Turks remain Muslim. It is now on the verge of being reversed completely. Slow cultural exchange takes even if it goes underground for a while under hostile governments. 'Forced march' economic change doesn't last. It produces a workforce that says, 'They pretend to pay us and we pretend to work.'

An objection sometimes raised to that argument is as follows: Hungary enjoyed cultural change towards somewhat greater market liberty and entrepreneurship under Kádár so that by 1989 it seemed to be in a better position than Poland. As we know, however, Poland underwent shock therapy after 1989, soon overtook Hungary, and has notably outperformed most of its neighbours in recent years. Does this tell us anything about cultural change versus economic shocks? It's a complex matter and I would welcome a contribution from both Hungarians and Poles on it. But we should begin by recognizing that 'shock therapy' was itself a form of cultural change rather than state compulsion; essentially the state withdrew many of the protections that it had erected to protect industries and favoured sectors of the economy in the previous forty years. In effect it exposed workers and enterprises to economic reality. It was not an interventionist policy since it involved nothing like quotas or direction of labour, but instead it relied on incentives and disincentives. What then was the basic difference between shock therapy and Kadarism if both were essentially cultural and incentive-based?

I think it's something like this: Hungary under Kadar adapted not to reality, as the Poles did, but to a version of reality modified by the illusion that a better life could be funded by external loans if not indefinitely, then at least for a long time. They were, therefore, less willing to make painful changes in their work practices so that they gradually became relatively less productive and efficient over time.



Poles, on the other hand, adapted to the reality that a better life could only be achieved by harder work, ending inflation and delivering better efficiency. Shock therapy drove home this lesson with particular harshness, and adaptation was accordingly quicker and more thorough. Shock therapy also taught other lessons: that the need to attract foreign investment shapes popular attitudes favourable to prosperity; that foreign direct investment brings with it economic disciplines and managerial methods that directly improve productivity; and that government loans, even when well-managed, are less likely than FDI to foster necessary and disruptive change but more likely to protect existing methods.

One might argue, therefore, that both Hungary and Poland after 1989 were responding to both economic and cultural signals, except that the signals pointed in different directions and offered different incentives. The different performances of the two economies are, therefore, instructive and helpful.

***What is the importance of transatlantic relations from the point of view of the European conservative circles vis-à-vis the situation in Europe and the US?***

There are two ways in which good transatlantic relations are important to European conservatives. The first, obviously, is security, especially in the age of Trump and Putin. For Central Europe that means not only supporting NATO in the most practical way by spending more on defence (Poland is one of a few NATO members who meet but few others do), but also by shaping Europe's other policies to avoid serious disputes with the US. In Hilaire Belloc's rhyming motto:

“ So always keep a hold of nurse  
For fear of finding something worse.

The second way is to consult America's experiences in policy as we should consult those of other European countries. We are a common civilization. Even though we are divided by national frontiers, a wide ocean and the cultural differences explored by Todd and by Bennett and Lotus, we understand each other well enough to be able to learn from each others' successes and mistakes. America is especially rich in policy experimentation because its system of government is federal and allows the individual states to test new policies. And the 'democratic' atmosphere of public life means that a wider range of policy



solutions and moral arguments are seriously explored in its universities and think tanks. Conservatives who visit the US often find themselves marvelling at the fact that conservative arguments that would never be considered in the social democratic bureaucracies of Europe influence private practices and government policies in some states and cities. My very different examples are home schooling, gun control and a form of welfare that is rooted in workfare.

Indeed, we should look beyond America at times, especially when other countries seem to have solved technical or financial problems on our behalf. Both Chile and Singapore have adopted (two different) systems of tax-based private pensions that seem to have solved one of the most formidable problems facing European governments: namely, funding state pension obligations. When we look at the world, conservatism of some kind is advancing in large parts of it.

And, finally, when we examine those countries that are in a deep or perennial crisis, we almost always find that they have extreme socialist governments of one kind or another. Venezuela is the latest example, Cuba another one. There is no real alternative to market democracy as a system of prudent government. One of the paradoxes of social democracy, indeed, is that its moderate adherents either believe—or act as if they believe—that capitalism can bear any burden they place upon it in terms of tax and regulation and still deliver the goods. That explains why European social democratic states tend to have a series of small fiscal crises as they zigzag between over-spending and high deficits. As Mrs. Thatcher said, the facts of life are conservative.

She might have added that even if there is no case for optimism, there is a strong case for hope. •

8

# THE FUTURE OF CONSERVATISM IN SLOVAKIA

*Juraj Šúst*

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In his new book *The Benedict Option*, Rod Dreher, an American conservative, argues that conservatives have lost the cultural war in American politics and for this reason they should withdraw:

“Today we can see that we’ve lost on every front and that the swift and relentless currents of secularism have overwhelmed our flimsy barriers. Hostile secular nihilism has won the day in our nation’s government, and the culture has turned powerfully against traditional Christians... The U.S. Supreme Court’s Obergefell decision declaring a constitutional right to same-sex marriage was the Waterloo of religious conservatism. It was the moment that the Sexual Revolution triumphed decisively, and the culture war, as we have known it since the 1960s, came to an end. In the wake of Obergefell, Christian beliefs about the sexual complementarity of marriage are considered to be abominable prejudice - and in a growing number of cases, punishable. The public square has been lost.”<sup>23</sup>

According to Dreher, conservative Christians in the US should admit that they live in exile in their own country. Instead of the vain attempt to change their country through legislation, they should strive to build a counter-culture: conservative institutions and culture on the local level with the aim to preserve Christianity for the generations to come.

We faithful orthodox Christians didn’t ask for internal exile from a country we thought was our own, but that’s where we find ourselves. We are a minority now, so let’s be a creative one, offering warm, living, light-filled alternatives to a Word growing cold, dead, and dark. We will be increasingly without influence, but let’s be guided by monastic wisdom and welcome this humbly as an opportunity sent by God for our purification and sanctification. Losing political power might just be the thing that saves the church’s soul.<sup>24</sup>

A similar diagnosis, but a different treatment than Dreher’s, is offered by the authors of the ‘Paris Statement’ (Bénéton, Brague, Delsol, Joch, András, Legutko, *et al.*). They claim that our contemporary Europe is dominated by the so-called ‘false Europe’, which suffocates ‘the real Europe’ that stems from Christian roots.

“The patrons of the false Europe are bewitched by superstitions of inevitable progress... Sunk in prejudice, superstition and ignorance, and blinded by vain, self-congratulating visions of a utopian future, the false Europe reflexively stifles dissent. This is done, of course, in the name of freedom and tolerance. We are reaching a dead-end. The greatest threat to the future of Europe is neither Russian adventurism



<sup>23</sup> Dreher, Rod, *The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in the Post-Christian World*, Sentinel, 2017, p 9.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, p 99.

nor Muslim immigration. The true Europe is at risk because of the suffocating grip that the false Europe has over our imaginations. Our nations and shared culture are being hollowed out by illusions and self-deceptions about what Europe is and should be.<sup>25</sup>

Contrary to Dreher, the authors of the 'Paris Statement' do not advise us to accept the status of the exiled in our own country. Instead they urge us to fight: 'Europe belongs to us, and we belong to Europe. We pledge to resist this threat to our future. We will defend, sustain and champion the real Europe, the Europe to which we all in truth belong.'<sup>26</sup>

Dreher and the authors of the 'Paris Statement' are similar in their evaluation of the culture and politics in the US and Europe; however, they do differ in their solutions. The authors do not ask people to accept being exile, but they encourage us to fight against the false Europe. While such an attitude surely appears to be more manly than Dreher's position, encouraging European conservatives to fight somewhat resembles a voice crying in the wilderness. They lack greater support from traditional European societies. It seems nowadays

that within Europe, and in particular in countries like France or the UK, the conservative voice is exiled. There is no sign that the uncontrolled migration of the last years has activated the almost dead conservative elements in European society.

There are nonetheless some countries even in Europe that don't follow mainstream trends: it is first and foremost Poland and then Slovakia, for both of them are mostly Catholic countries. Thought at the same time these two countries belong more to the European periphery today than to the centre—which is truer for Slovakia than Poland. Both countries went through tragic historical events, especially in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, perhaps even thanks to certain cultural isolation, these two countries have the potential to become the most active proponents of the conservative movement in Europe.

After a closer look at Slovakia, I am far from thinking that Slovak conservatives (and far less those in Poland) should give up the political fight on the state level, as proposed by Dreher. Rather they should concentrate on creating local institutions. So far there has been no decisive clash between conservatism and the current European secularism in Slovakia. Even



<sup>25</sup> The Paris Statement: A Europe we can believe in. <https://thetrueeurope.eu/a-europe-we-can-believe-in/>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.



though the 2015 failed referendum on marriage was a defeat of Slovak conservatism, I don't perceive it as its decisive defeat (analogical to the US Supreme Court's decision on marriage). I take it to be a sign – along with mass marches for life (in recent years, two such marches took place in Slovakia each of them attracting a total of eighty thousand people) – of significant conservative elements in Slovak society which are slowly being awakened.

By the same token, it is true that these conservative elements are presently unformed. The basic characteristic of Slovak conservatism is its resistance against the current liberal and secular culture and politics (gender theory, same-sex marriage, multiculturalism, acceptance of mass migration, etc.), but it lacks higher cultural character and a constructive vision of its own alternative. This results from the fact that there are not sufficiently developed cultural forms in Slovakia that would facilitate the cultural and political development of a conservative environment. Although Slovakia is rather a conservative country, it has only one relevant conservative newspaper, *Postoj*, which regularly comments on public life. Academics, clubs, festivals, Christian entrepreneurs, artists, schools and media which, by means of their cultural activity, would form the conservative elements in society, are missing. With the exception of the Ladislav Hanus Fellowship and the Collegium of Anton Neuwirth,

such an intellectual formation focused on culture and public life is done by no other institution. The Church, with exception of pro-life and pro-marriage issues, is mainly oriented towards the basic catechesis, teaching the foundations of Christian faith, and it deals only marginally with the encounter of faith with socio-cultural life of present day society in which conservative citizens feel marginalized. Many of them adopt its liberal forms and ways of reasoning; a small number of them are radicalised. The major Slovak conservatism remains in families and social media, sometimes it makes itself known in elections. However, in reality it hardly forms the current dominant public culture and society.

At the same time, it holds true that European secularism (contrary to Western countries) is not dear to the heart of the majority of Slovak society. In my opinion Slovakia is currently in a period of cultural transition. Either it succeeds in cultivating its conservative foundations or it loses them gradually and assimilates to the dominant culture of European liberal secularism. It is for this reason that I think that in today's Slovakia, there is room and opportunity for an authentic fight for the real Slovakia and real Europe, and the fight needs to take place simultaneously in culture and politics. Hand in hand with cultural engagement, we must also start to ponder upon a political conservative vision of this country.

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base this conviction on three reasons. First, Slovakia by nature is already today a politically conservative country, though it doesn't presently possess a formulated convincing vision of conservative politics. Secondly, there have never been better circumstances in its history than now to develop Christian culture

and conservative politics in Slovakia. Thirdly, the generation of the people who are currently in their thirties and forties are better disposed (social capital, education, faith) to articulate the conservative vision than the previous generations.

## CONSERVATIVE SLOVAKIA

In reality, Slovakia is more conservative than it appears from its politics and legislation. This can be also observed in the politics of the ruling political party SMER<sup>27</sup> – social democracy that is a pragmatic socialist post-communist party. Although its rule doesn't deal with current challenges of Slovak politics, and many political institutions gradually fall apart due to the influence of corruption and clientelism, Fico's government is very careful not to get into conflict with the Church. Despite its moral decadence, in the course of its previous four-year mandate, it even passed the constitutional law on the marriage of one man and one woman with the support of the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) from the opposition. This was an unprecedented act on the side of a socialist party and was likely unprecedented in the history of social democracy itself. And if it wasn't enough that Slovak socialists must rule in conservative and Christian Slovakia and fight against the quotas for migrants from the EU (again, being the only social democratic party in Europe in doing so), they also find themselves facing the challenge of being in government with the Slovak National Party. The Slovak National Party was a former nationalist party, but it has now transformed into a quasi-business party with nationalist marketing and politics with politics similar to Schultz, the socialist, were he currently governing with AFD in Germany. Mass marches for life, almost a million of voters in the referendum for the marriage of one man and one woman and the populistically conservative politics of Slovak socialists indicate that, within Europe, Slovakia (alongside with Poland) is one of the most conservative countries of the EU.

Slovakia is not ruled by progressive European liberalism. The Freedom and Solidarity Party (SAS), the most influential Slovak liberals are negatively regarded by the Slovak liberal elite as uncultured nationalists who oppose the EU and migrants but support state-funded sterilisation of Roma women. But Slovakia also is not ruled by Christian conservatism. Though limited aspects of conservatism are possessed by almost all political parties in Slovakia and some of them, at times, find their way into legislation (as it was the case with marriage), no current political party has in reality a relevant conservative vision for Slovakia. Philosophical political thinking in Slovakia is almost absent. Out of the few publicists who have insight into the history of political thought, only a small number are conservative. It is not surprising, then, that political parties are fumbling and their programmes are of minor importance. Moreover, more conservative parties have not seemed to need a more meaningful political programme in recent years. They either made a reference to some



<sup>27</sup> The word 'smer' means 'direction' in English.

recycled euro-phrases about the significance of the unity of European nations and mutual solidarity or they made do with an activist anti-corruption rhetoric in opposition to the ruling party. It has not always been this way. In the first conservative generation after the Revolution of 1989, there were politicians like Ján Čarnogurský, Vladimír Palko or František Mikloško (all of them were members of the Christian Democratic Movement, KDH) who had vision for Slovakia, and they fought a great fight to try to realise it. However, they did not manage to inspire enough followers for their understanding of conservative

politics and, nowadays, none of them is an active member of the Movement. Today's disintegration of political parties with conservative agendas, the absence of political thinking and the defeat of intellectuals in the KDH – historically the most renowned Slovak conservative party – this all shows that the political, intellectual and conservative potential of Slovakia has not yet been realised. A positive ideal of conservative politics is missing. How this ideal is to be realised anew in the Slovak context and how to articulate it attractively is the most crucial challenge for Slovak political conservatism.

## THE BEST CONDITIONS IN THE LAST TWO HUNDRED YEARS

In spite of the testimonies from the West about the post-Christian society that has begun to persecute Christians, I believe that in today's Slovakia we have the best conditions in the last 200 years for creating an authentically human culture that could draw on the tradition of European civilization and on our Christian heritage. Such an assertion may seem surprising, but a brief overview of our historical milestones shows that there have indeed never been better political conditions in Slovakia than in the present.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Slovakia was part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy without any real opportunity to become independent. Not all efforts of Slovak nationalists, Catholics and Protestants were always met with understanding from the Church, not to mention unfavourable political circumstances in the monarchy. After 1848, when revolutions in Europe were defeated, two of the leaders of the Slovak endeavours for political autonomy ended up being executed, while others were surveyed by police forces.

Heroic battles were fought by Slovak politicians in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Before World War I they faced a fierce Magyarization, and, after the formation of Czechoslovakia, they were confronted by attempts of secularisation coming from Prague. Although during World War II Hitler granted the Slovaks their own state, it occurred in the circumstance of the rising pressure of fascism and communism. One of the

consequences of this pressure was the fact that our Slovak political representatives flirted with a Catholic version of fascism, and, in their effort for a pragmatic *modus vivendi* with the Germans, they tolerated and even actively participated in persecutions against their own citizens, primarily of Jewish origin.

Nor was it easier for the generations in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The political generation, which stood up against communism after 1948, was either exiled out of the country or imprisoned. Similarly the optimism of the generation engaged in 1968 was suppressed by the grey normalization, supported by the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. Authentic life was possible only on social margins, and the



freest professions were boilerman, doorkeeper, crane operator or mathematician at the Academy of Sciences.

But not even the revolutionary generation of 1989 found itself in favourable circumstances. Understandably, it was not prepared for such a change, and, as a result, it soon lost its firm grip on the reins of the revolution. For ten years since 1989, this generation was engaged in a fierce fight not only against liberals but also against the mafia-like practices of the so-called 'mečiarism' (named after the then MP Vladimír Mečiar), a post-communist nationalist regime during which Slovakia was in danger of following in Belarus' footsteps. In 1993 Czechoslovakia fell apart in the midst of these affairs, and the same year marks the establishment of the Slovak Republic.

The troubles of past generations point at the fact that today's political conditions are more favourable for the formation of an authentically human culture and of conservative politics than those of the past. The state doesn't forbid Christianity or, by and large, Christians from living a conservative lifestyle and cultivating Christian culture. However, there is no support from the state for it, and the state rather often places many bigger and smaller stumbling blocks in its path. But



so far the state hasn't restrained it efficiently. On the contrary, the state is more or less loyal to Christianity – though such a loyalty is more of a declaratory nature and it is not reflected in many of its policies, which are indeed harmful to an authentic Christian culture. But this situation, far from ideal from a Christian or conservative view, is still rather unprecedented in the Slovak context. It is as if history itself has gotten tired and is allowing the current generation the time to take a deep breath and sow.

## FORMATION OF THE CONSERVATIVE VISION

The challenge for Slovak conservatism is to find the middle ground between two extremes: to shut off the world which promotes the values of 'the false Europe' and to be excessively open to the world at the cost of losing a part of one's own identity. To catch up with the West has become one of the goals of the post-communist countries after 1989. Slovak conservative politicians of the first post-1989 generation came quickly to understand that present day European culture is hostile to an authentic Christian culture. At the same time, though, they perceived no alternative for Slovakia to being part of the Western world. The second generation of Christian politicians, which arrived to the scene after

the defeat of 'mečiarism' in the 1998 elections, has seen merit in Slovakia's accession to the NATO and the EU, yet it does not possess such a clear vision of conservative Christian politics as the first generation. Their goal was chiefly to catch up as soon as possible with the West in terms of the increase of the quality of life standard. Despite this the Christian democrats (KDH), together with socialists from SMER, inserted the definition of marriage as one man and one woman into the constitution, and Anna Záborská (KDH) is even today one of the strongest pro-life voices in the EU parliament. But today both of these generations – with a few exceptions – are no longer politically active. The third generation of Christian conservative

politicians is not yet in possession of a strong and persuasive conservative vision: Slovakia is already part of the European structures and its life standard is gradually increasing. The third generation either defines itself too narrowly, confessionally putting itself into the position of a defender of Christian values against the secularised West, or, in contrast, it is willing to adopt only the generally accepted goals like the fight against corruption, and they leave 'value-infused and ethical' issues aside. The greatest challenge of this generation is, therefore, to formulate a conservative vision for Slovakia.

The formulation of the vision of conservative politics seems to be an oxymoron. Conservatism is after all not interested in constructing a fabulous future but in protecting the good that is already there. The problem of Slovakia is that the 20<sup>th</sup> century repeatedly interrupted its cultural continuity, so passing on the tradition is extraordinarily difficult. We need to start rediscovering, so to speak, our national as well as the European civilizational tradition. It is certainly not about inventing new and revolutionary views of human nature. What is to be done is to re-insert our tradition in a new way into the culture of current generations. The rising generation is better equipped than its predecessors to accomplish this task since it has the time and possibility to study and develop its Christian and conservative culture. It is for this reason that it bears the greatest responsibility for the formation and realisation of that vision.

By way of conclusion let me offer a sketch of this vision. This vision of conservative politics is not to be fundamentally new, and, in reality, it is not anything different from the re-actualisation of Plato's call to find a just ordering of diverse interests. Even today the vision of conservative politics should be about a just evaluation of social interests and conflicts and about a subsequent restoration of social trust. This is the foundation for the creation and maintenance of conditions for a virtuous, Christian life and for civil friendship.

I agree that the current formulation of this vision is not an easy thing since it must inevitably conflict with the present individualistic understanding of human freedom as a sphere of the widest freedom where people base their lives exclusively on their own decisions. However, conservative politics should endeavour to show citizens that their individual story is always part of a larger common story. We can afford



to ignore this story only at the cost of impoverishing our lives by cutting it off from the source of our social freedom. We share this common story not only with our fellow citizens but also with the previous generation and with those to come. It is a shared story of a community of people who govern their homeland together.

What is the story? The Slovak story is about a country which is constantly trying to be freed from something which enslaves it (from barbarism, lack of education and of cultural character, from different addictions and poverty, from unjust oppression by the rich and powerful), though it is not successful. The many Slovaks feel they are not given what other nations are or that someone is unjustly taking something which is theirs. However, a true politician should not foster emotions of resistance and resentment but must emphasize the responsibility each person has for their own destiny. Such a politician should show how each and every citizen is an important co-author of this story.

Slovak conservatism should, therefore, accept anew the value of freedom. Today it is considered to be one of the essential liberal values, but I think it should also be the central value of conservative and Christian politics. As a matter of fact, Christianity brought to people a new freedom won by Christ, and Christians in politics likewise should be the bearers and advocates of this freedom. This surely means a reinterpretation of the liberal freedom. The real freedom consists in the opportunity and ability



to do what is morally good. It doesn't mean to be allowed to do whatever one wishes regardless of the moral order. Freedom is also intimately related with the value of moral autonomy. This is not to be understood in the liberal sense as a possession of private space which no one, not even the state, is legally permitted to interfere with. It needs a conservative interpretation. To be an autonomous agent means to be capable of freely choosing the good and bearing the responsibility for it.

Another aspect of the conservative vision should be centred on creating conditions for the best management of freedom. The challenge for conservative politics is to bring into society an ideal

of good life and restore shared moral culture. The priorities of conservative politics should be persistent and appealing articulation of the ideals of marriage and family and educational reforms that would bring to life the ideal of virtuous life in accordance with classical and Christian models. In addition to these priorities, conservatives should restore the value of Christianity and religious respect in society. And, lastly, of the utmost importance to conservative politics in Slovakia is to finally begin to protect human lives of all citizens equally, including those of the unborn.

Respect for individual freedom, true understanding of equality, renovated moral culture and education would lead, in turn, to greater democratisation

and more limited government. Nowadays we can observe, in particular in the EU, both the passing of democratic competences on supranational institutions and the restraining of democracy. But democratic politics, and also the historical story of Slovakia, require that people are trusted to be able to handle their problems on their own. This will bestow upon individuals and local communities their dignity. As a consequence the state should grant more freedom to small communities so that they can participate in the search for the common good. This would make the more limited state less tempted to get into debt. At the same time, the fact that people should solve problems they are capable of solving by themselves is indeed in harmony with human dignity.

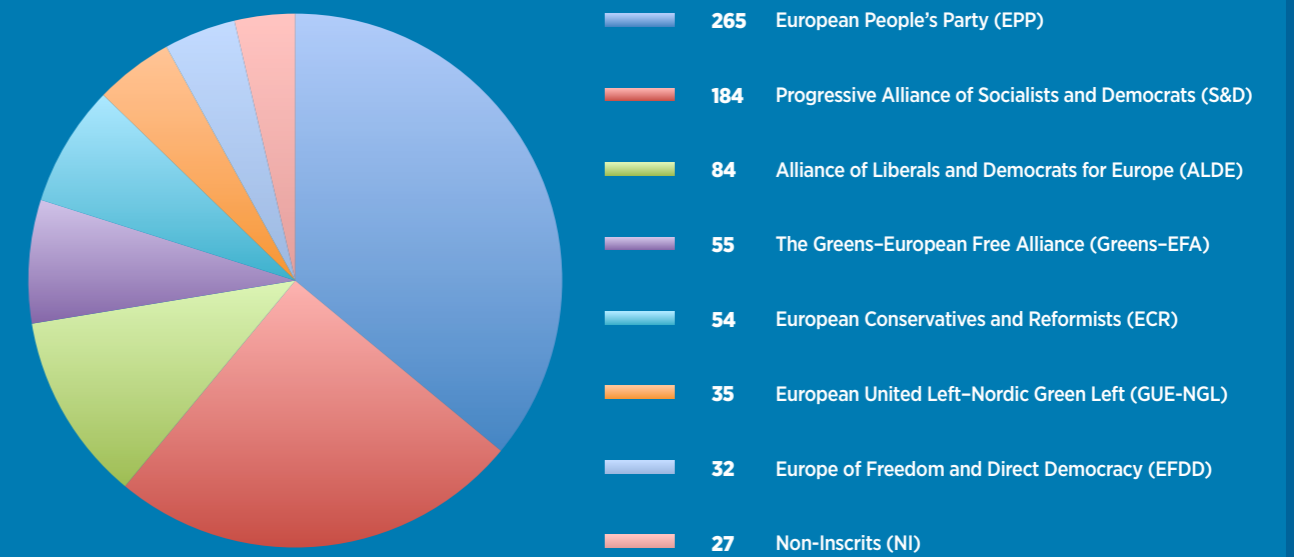
Though the conservative vision is not presently formulated in an attractive way, the thesis of my essay is that the conservative thinking and politics in Slovakia, thanks to the Christian character of the country, has some still existing conservative elements in society. In this respect Slovakia differs from the West. The challenge for our conservative and Christian politicians in the upcoming years is to allow themselves to be inspired by European conservative thought, formulate a conservative vision for Slovakia and actualise Slovak conservative elements in society. This is where the hope not only for Slovakia but also perhaps for Europe itself lies. •



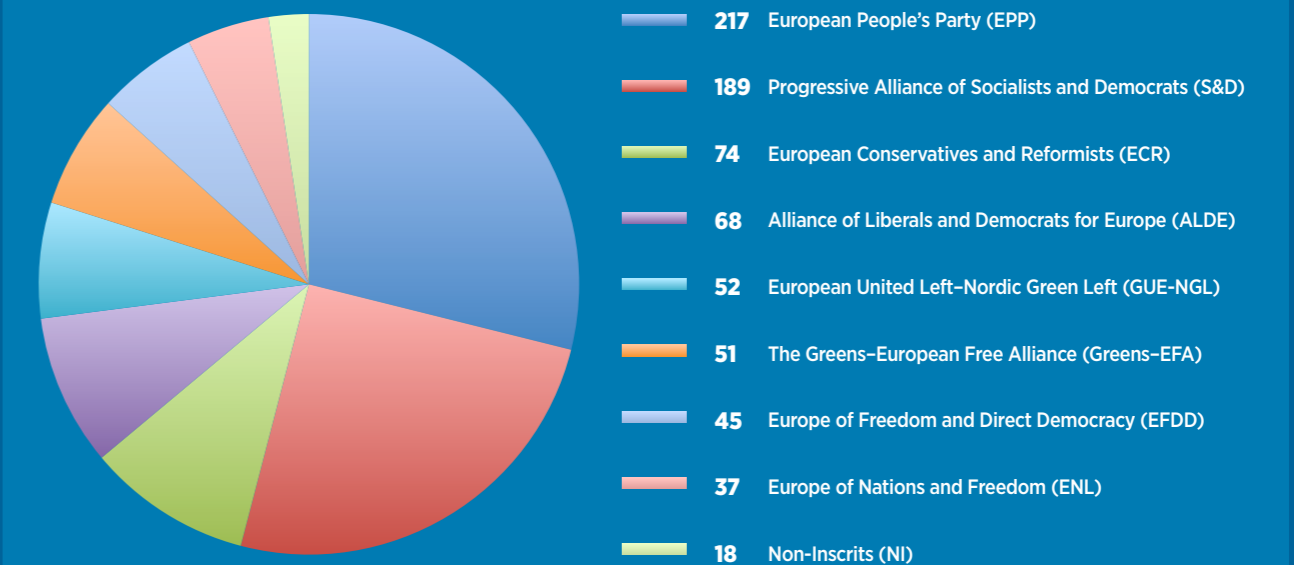
# APPENDIX



## European Parliament Groups in 2009-2014



## European Parliament Groups in 2014-2019



# EUROPEAN CONSERVATIVES AND REFORMISTS GROUP

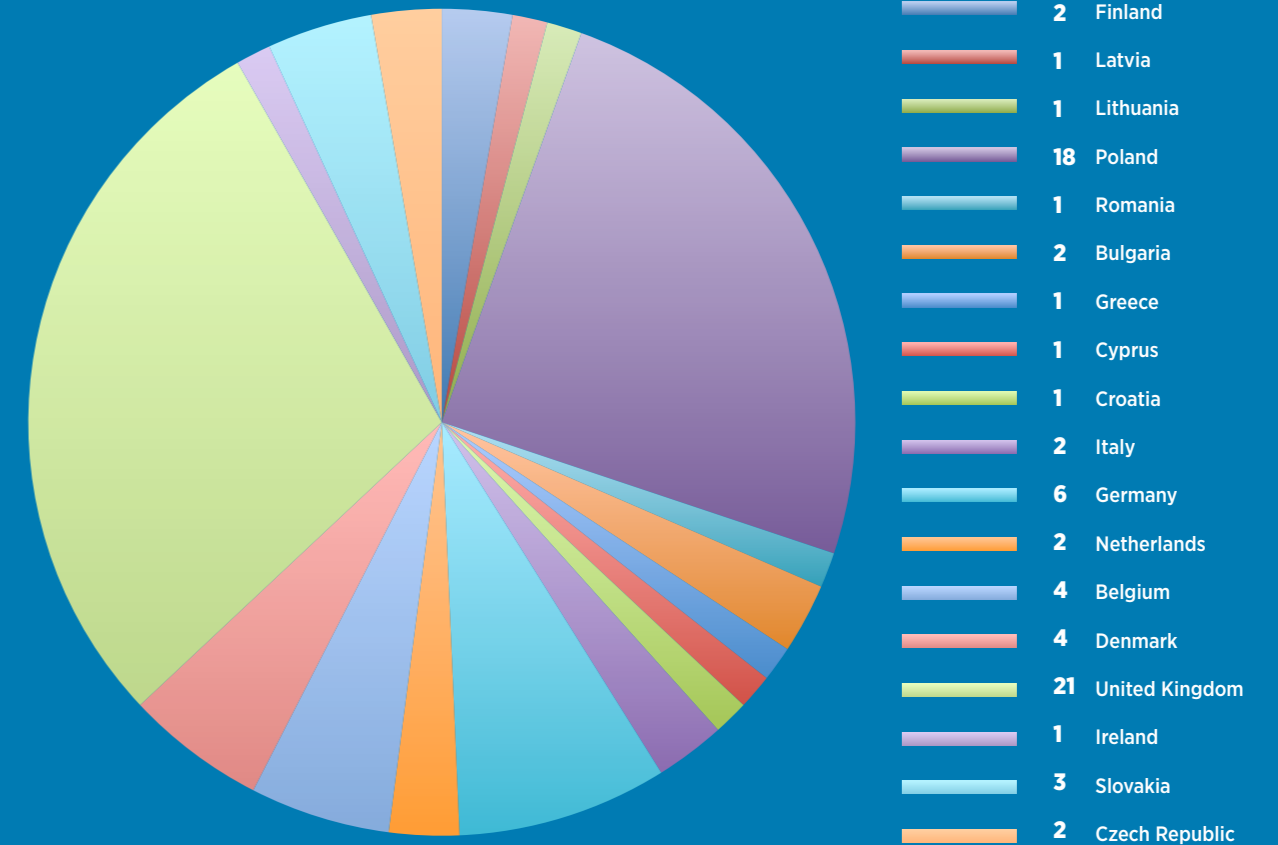


Country	National party
Belgium	New Flemish Alliance (Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie)
Bulgaria	Bulgarian National Movement – IMRO
Bulgaria	Reload Bulgaria
Croatia	The Croatian Conservative Party
Cyprus	Solidarity
Czech Republic	Civic Democratic Party (Občanská demokratická strana)
Denmark	Danish People’s Party (Dansk Folkeparti, DF)
Denmark	Independent
Finland	Finns Party (Perussuomalaiset)
Germany	Family Party of Germany (Familien-Partei Deutschlands)
Germany	Liberal Conservative Reformists (Liberal-Konservative Reformer)
Greece	Independent MEPs
Ireland	Fianna Fáil
Italy	Direzione Italia
Latvia	For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK(Tēvzemei un Brīvībai/LNNK)
Lithuania	Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania (Lietuvos lenkų rinkimų akcija)
Netherlands	ChristianUnion (ChristenUnie)
Netherlands	Dutch Reformed Party (Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij)
Poland	Law and Justice Party (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość)
Poland	Right Wing of the Republic (Prawica Rzeczypospolitej)
Romania	Partidul M10
Slovakia	Freedom and Solidarity (Sloboda a Solidarita)
Slovakia	New Majority (Nová väčšina, Nova)
Slovakia	Ordinary People and Independent Personalities (Obyčajní Ľudia a nezávislé osobnosti, OĽaNO)
United Kingdom	Conservative Party
United Kingdom	Ulster Unionist Party

# EUROPEAN CONSERVATIVES AND REFORMISTS GROUP



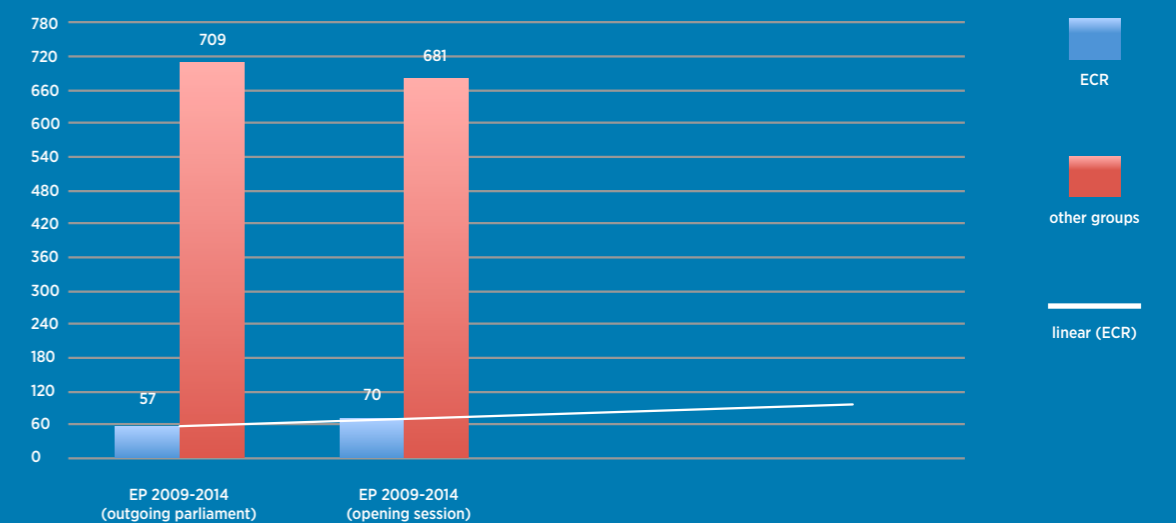
## ECR member countries and their MEPs



## ECR’s parties in national governments

Country	Coalition	Election
Belgium	New Flemish Alliance, Christian Democratic and Flemish, Reform Movement, Open VLD	2014
Finland	Finns Party, Centre Party, National Coalition Party	2015
Ireland	Fine Gael (Minority government with Fianna Fail confidence and supply agreement)	2016
Poland	Law and Justice, Poland Together, United Poland	2015
United Kingdom	Conservative Party (Minority government with DUP confidence and supply agreement)	2017

## European Conservatives and Reformists Group in European Parliament





## European Parliament election in 2009

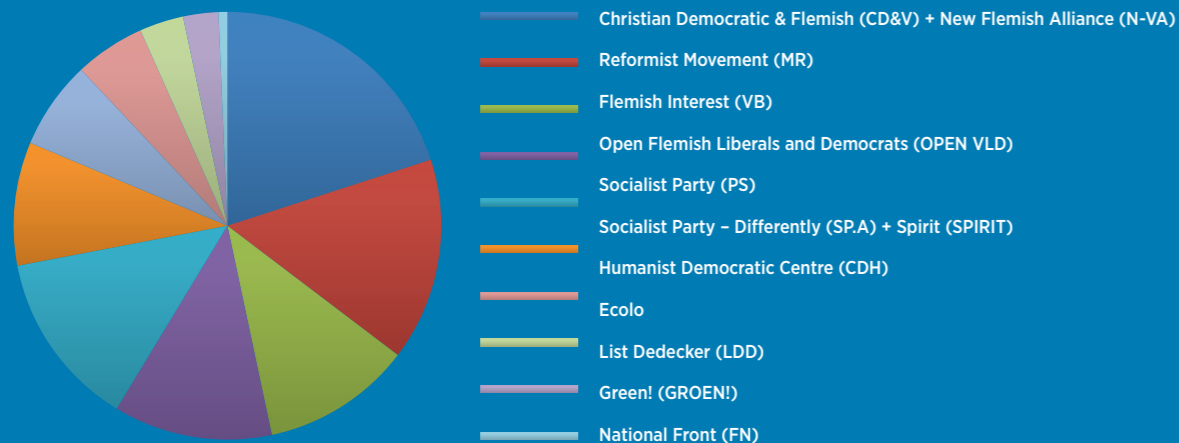
National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Christian Democratic & Flemish (CD&V)	3/22	948,123	European People's Party
Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats (OPEN VLD)	3/22	837,884	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Socialist Party (PS)	3/22	714,947	Party of European Socialists
Flemish Interest (VB)	2/22	647,170	None
Reformist Movement (MR)	2/22	640,092	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Ecology Party (ECOLO)	2/22	562,081	European Green Party
Socialist Party - Differently (SPA)	2/22	539,393	Party of European Socialists
New Flemish Alliance (N-VA)	1/22	402,545	European Free Alliance
Humanist Democratic Centre (CDH)	1/22	327,824	European People's Party
Green! (GROEN!)	1/22	322,149	European Green Party
List Dedecker (LDD)	1/22	296,699	Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe
Christian Social Party (CSP)	1/22	12,475	European People's Party

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-be-2009.html>

## Parliamentary election in 2005

National party	Seats	Votes
Christian Democratic & Flemish (CD&V) + New Flemish Alliance (N-VA)	30	1,234,950
Reformist Movement (MR)	23	835,073
Flemish Interest (VB)	17	799,844
Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats (OPEN VLD)	18	789,455
Socialist Party (PS)	20	724,787
Socialist Party - Differently (SPA) + Spirit (SPIRIT)	14	684,390
Humanist Democratic Centre (CDH)	10	404,077
Ecolo	8	340,378
List Dedecker (LDD)	5	268,648
Green! (GROEN!)	4	265,828
National Front (FN)	1	131,385

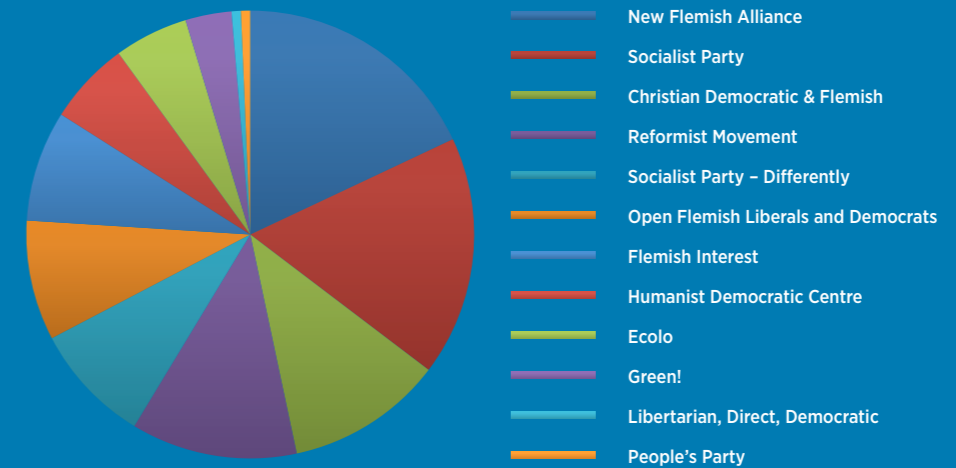
## Election to Chamber of Representatives in 2005



## Parliamentary election election in 2010

Party	Seats	Votes
New Flemish Alliance	27	1,135,617
Socialist Party	26	894,543
Christian Democratic & Flemish	17	707,986
Reformist Movement	18	605,617
Socialist Party - Differently	13	602,867
Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats	13	563,873
Flemish Interest	12	506,697
Humanist Democratic Centre	9	360,441
Ecolo	8	313,047
Green!	5	285,989
Libertarian, Direct, Democratic	1	150,577
People's Party	1	84,005

## Election to Chamber of Representatives in 2010



## European Parliament election in 2014

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
New Flemish Alliance (N-VA)	4/21	1,123,027	European Conservatives and Reformists
Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats (OPEN VLD)	3/21	858,872	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Christian Democratic & Flemish (CD&V)	2/21	840,594	European People's Party
Socialist Party (PS)	3/21	713,375	Party of European Socialists
Reformist Movement (MR)	3/21	660,118	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Socialist Party Different (SPA)	1/21	555,008	Party of European Socialists
Green (GROEN)	1/21	447,449	European Green Party
Flemish Interest (VB)	1/21	284,891	None
Ecolo (ECOLO)	1/21	284,656	European Green Party
Humanist Democratic Centre (CDH)	1/21	276,879	European People's Party
Christian Social Party (CSP)	1/21	11,739	European People's Party

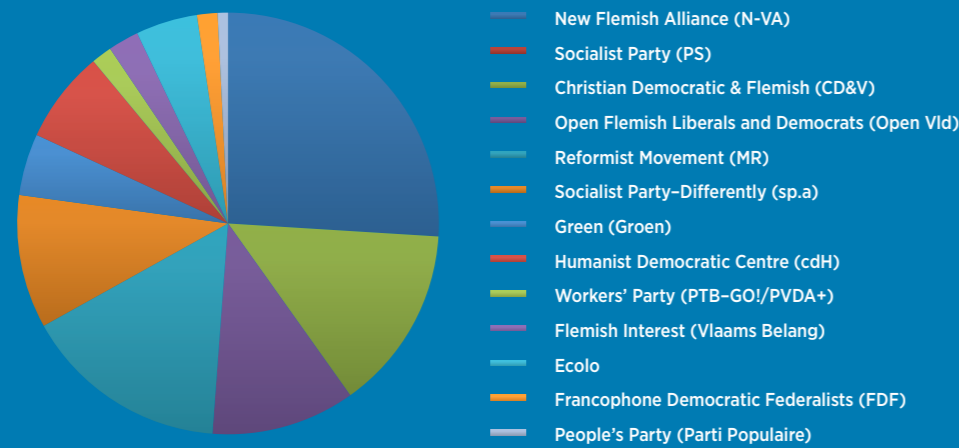
Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-be-2014.html>



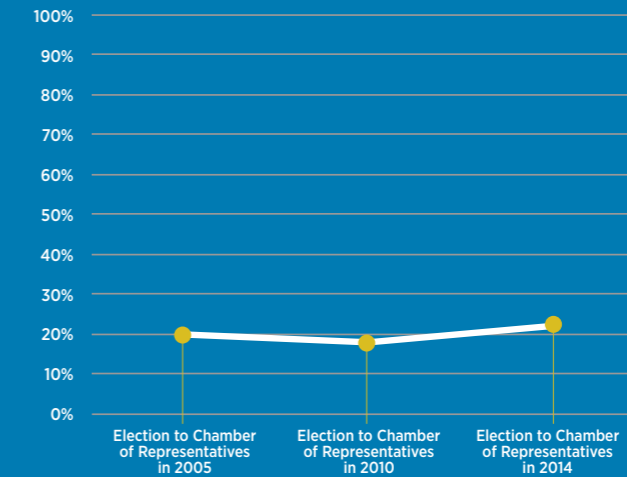
# Parliamentary election election in 2014

Party	Seats	Votes
New Flemish Alliance (N-VA)	33	1,366,414
Socialist Party (PS)	23	787,165
Christian Democratic & Flemish (CD&V)	18	783,060
Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats (Open Vld)	14	659,582
Reformist Movement (MR)	20	650,290
Socialist Party-Differently (sp.a)	13	595,486
Green (Groen)	6	358,947
Humanist Democratic Centre (cdH)	9	336,281
Workers' Party (PTB-GOI/PVDA+)	2	251,289
Flemish Interest (Vlaams Belang)	3	247,746
Ecolo	6	222,551
Francophone Democratic Federalists (FDF)	2	121,403
People's Party (Parti Populaire)	1	102,599

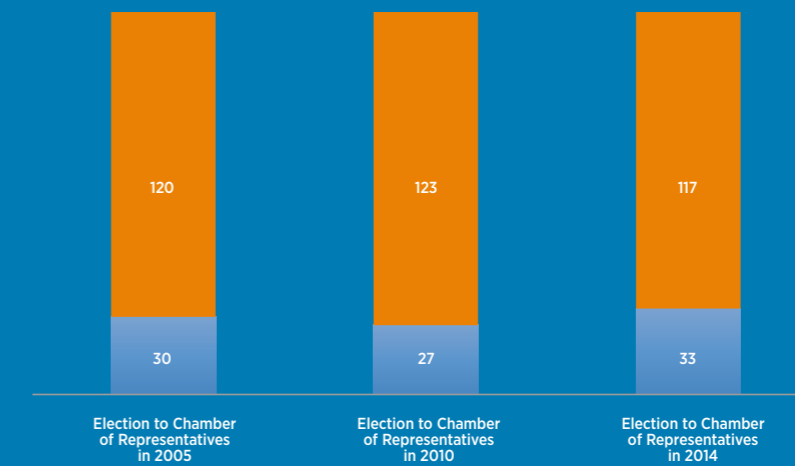
## Election to Chamber of Representatives in 2014



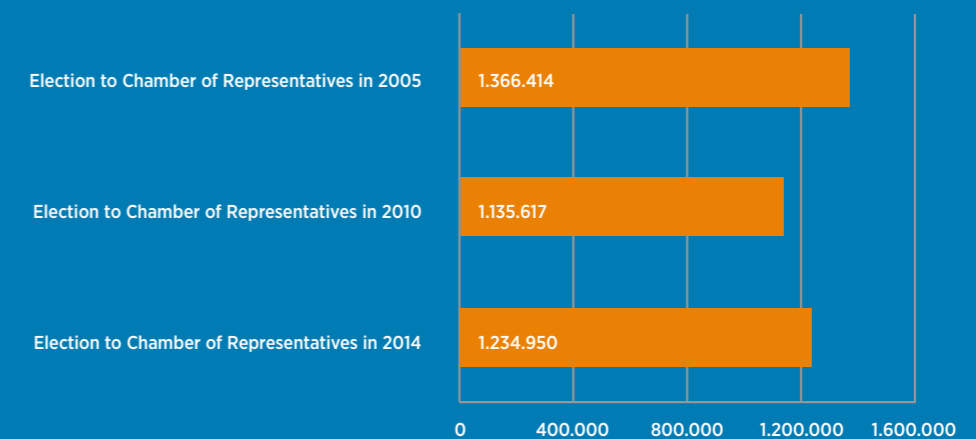
## % of mandates of New Flemish Alliance party in elections

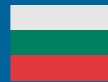


## Mandates of New Flemish Alliance party in elections



## Votes for New Flemish Alliance party





## European Parliament election in 2009

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
GERB	5/17	627,693	European People's Party
Coalition for Bulgaria (KB)	4/17	476,618	Party of European Socialists
Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS)	3/17	364,197	European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party
Attack (PPA)	2/17	308,052	Non – Inscrits
National Movement for Stability and Progress (NDSV)	2/17	205,146	European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party
Blue Coalition (SK)	1/17	204,817	European People's Party

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-bg-2009.html>

## European Parliament election in 2014

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
GERB	6/17	680,838	European People's Party
Coalition for Bulgaria (KB)	4/17	424,037	Party of European Socialists
Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS)	4/17	286,725	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party
Bulgaria Without Censorship (BBT)	2/17	238,629	European Conservatives and Reformists
Reformist Bloc (RB)	1/17	144,532	European People's Party

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-bg-2014.html>



## European Parliament election in 2014

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Croatian Democratic Union	4/11		European People's Party
Croatian Peasant Party	1/11	381,844	European People's Party
Croatian Party of Rights	1/11	(HDZ coalition)	Conservatives and Reformists
Bloc of United Pensioners	0/11		None
Social Democratic Party	2/11		Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
Croatian People's Party – Liberal Democrats	1/11	275,904	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Istrian Democratic Assembly	1/11	(Kukuriku coalition)	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Croatian Party of Pensioners	0/11		None
Independent Democratic Serb Party	0/11		None
Sustainable Development of Croatia	1/11	10	None

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-hr-2014.html>



## European Parliament election in 2009

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Democratic Rally (DISY)	2/6	109,209	European People's Party
Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL)	2/6	106,922	Party of the European Left
Democratic Party (DIKO)	1/6	37,635	None
Movement for Social Democracy (EDEK)	1/6	30,169	Party of European Socialists

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-cy-2009.html>

## European Parliament election in 2014

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Democratic Rally (DISY) - EVROKO	2/6	97,732	European People's Party
Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL)	2/6	69,852	Party of the European Left
Democratic Party (DIKO)	1/6	28,044	None
Movement for Social Democracy (EDEK) – Green Party	1/6	19,894	Party of European Socialists/ European Green Party

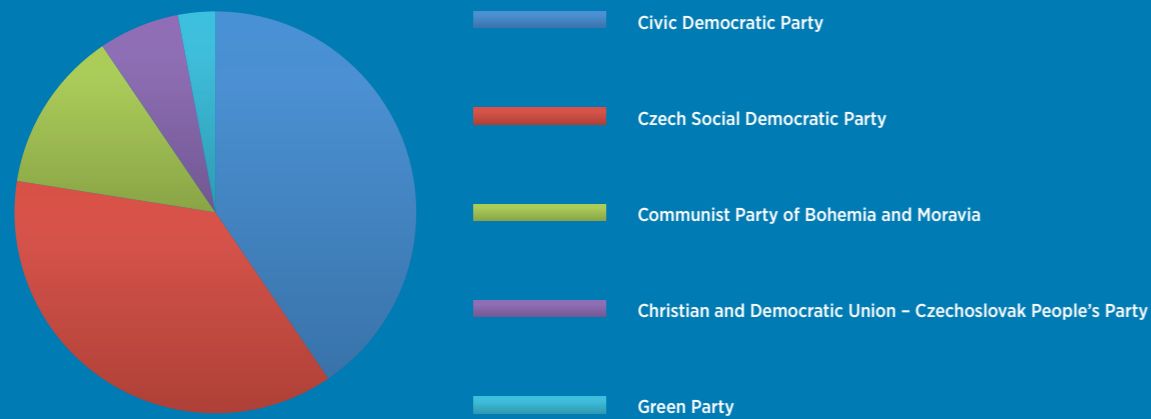
Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-cy-2014.html>



## Parliamentary election in 2006

Party	Votes	Seats
Civic Democratic Party	1,892,475	81
Czech Social Democratic Party	1,728,827	74
Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia	685,328	26
Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party	386,706	13
Green Party	336,487	6

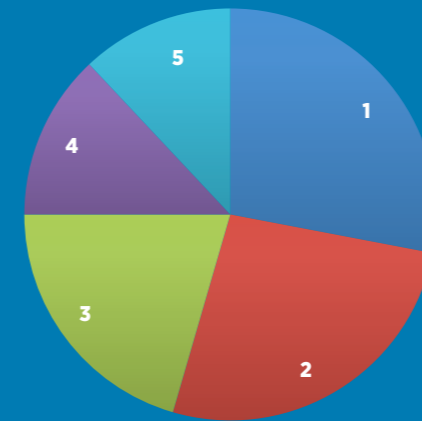
### Legislative election in 2006



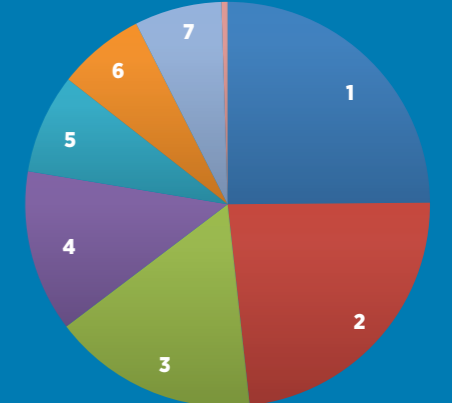
## Parliamentary election in 2010

Party	Votes	Seats
1 Czech Social Democratic Party	1,155,267	56
2 Civic Democratic Party	1,057,792	53
3 TOP 09	873,833	41
4 Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia	589,765	26
5 Public Affairs	569,127	24

### Legislative election in 2006



### Legislative election in 2013



## Parliamentary election in 2013

Party	Votes	Seats
1 Czech Social Democratic Party	1,016,829	50
2 ANO 2011	927,240	47
3 Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia	741,044	33
4 TOP 09	596,357	26
5 Civic Democratic Party	384,174	16
6 Dawn of Direct Democracy	342,339	14
7 Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party	336,970	14
8 Civic Democratic Party – KC	7,783	1

## European Parliament election in 2009

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Civic Democratic Party	9/22	741,946	Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe
Social Democratic Party	7/22	528,132	Party of European Socialists
Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia	4/22	334,577	Party of the European Left (observer)
Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia	2/22	180,451	European People's Party

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-cz-2009.html>



# European Parliament election in 2014

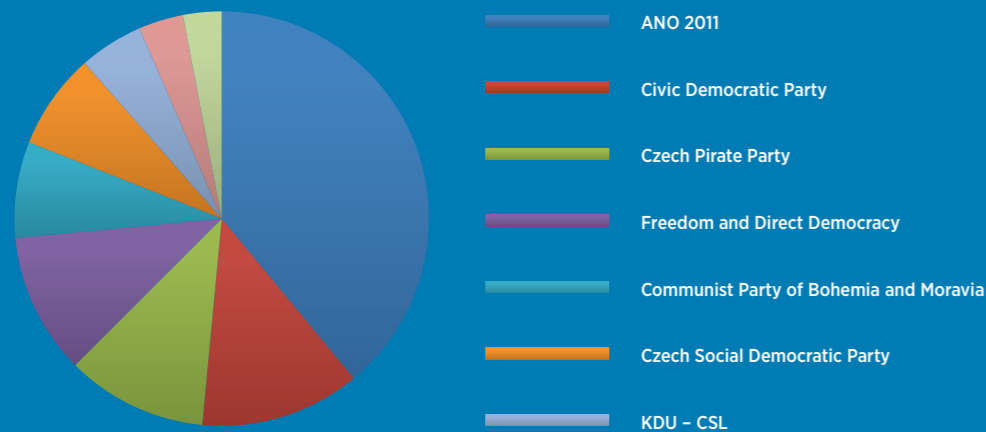
National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
ANO 2011	4/21	244,501	ALDE Party
TOP 09 with STAN	3/21 1/21	241,747	European People's Party
Czech Social Democratic Party	4/21	214,800	Party of European Socialists
Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia	3/21	166,478	Party of the European Left
Christian and Democratic Union - Czechoslovak People's Party	3/21	150,792	European People's Party
<b>Civic Democratic Party</b>	<b>2/21</b>	<b>116,398</b>	<b>Alliance of European Conservatives and Reformists</b>
Party of Free Citizens	1/21	79,540	Alliance for Direct Democracy in Europe

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-cz-2014.html>

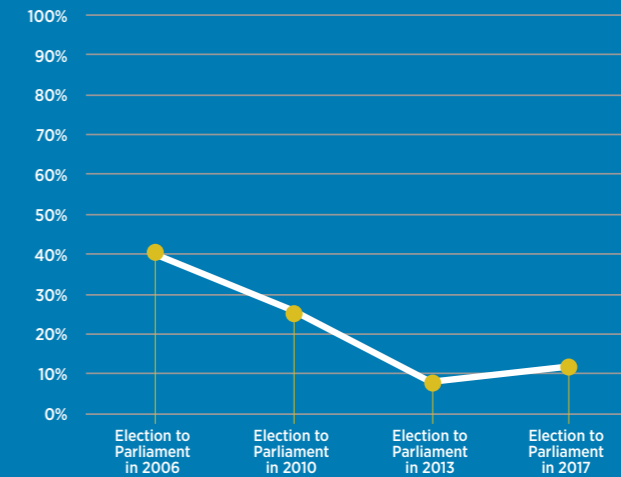
# Parliamentary election in 2017

Party	Votes	Seats
ANO 2011	1,500,113	78
<b>Civic Democratic Party</b>	<b>572,962</b>	<b>25</b>
Czech Pirate Party	546,393	22
Freedom and Direct Democracy	538,574	22
Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia	393,100	15
Czech Social Democratic Party	368,347	15
KDU - CSL	293,643	10
TOP 09	268,811	7
Mayors and independents	262,157	6

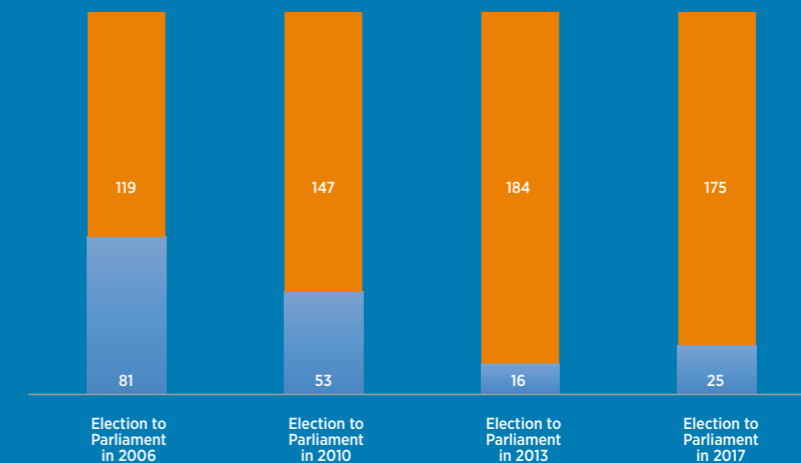
# Legislative election in 2017



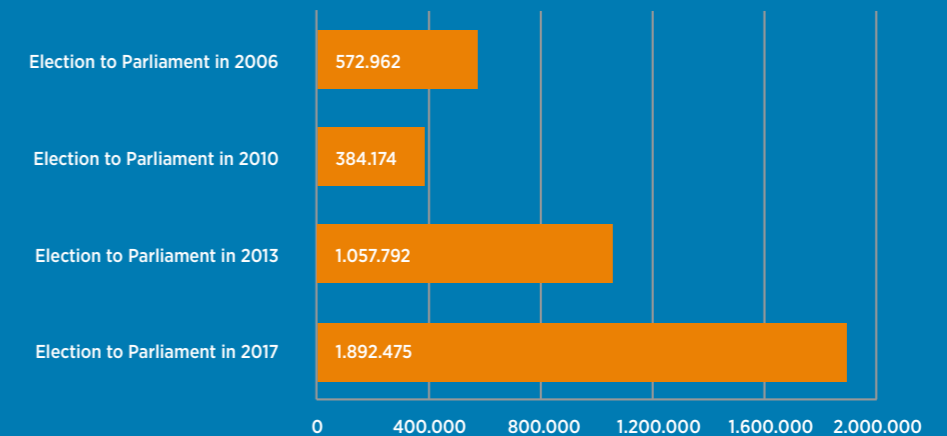
# % of mandates of Civic Democratic Party in elections



# Mandates of Civic Democratic Party in elections



# Votes for Civic Democratic Party

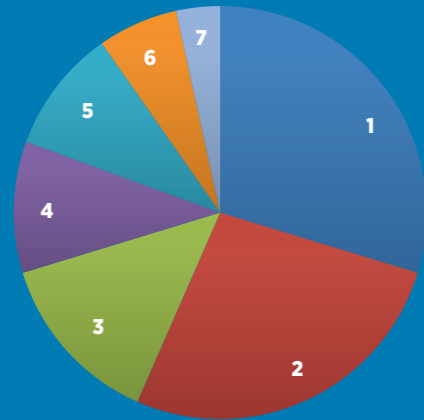




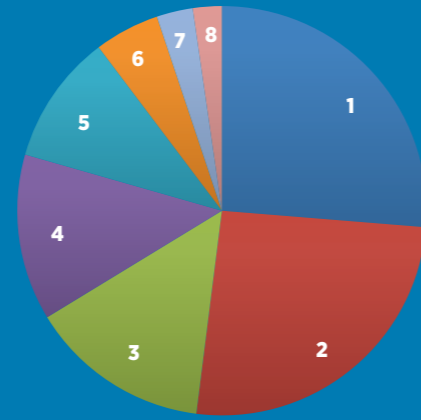
## Parliamentary election in 2005

Party	Votes	%	Seats
1 Venstre	974,636	29,0	52
2 Social Democratic Party	867,349	25,8	47
3 <b>Danish People's Party</b>	<b>444,947</b>	<b>13,4</b>	<b>24</b>
4 Conservative People's Party	344,886	10,3	18
5 Danish Social Liberal Party	308,212	9,2	17
6 Socialist People's Party	201,047	6,0	11
7 Red Green Alliance	114,123	3,4	6

Election to parliament in 2005



Election to parliament in 2007



## Parliamentary election in 2007

Party	Votes	%	Seats
1 Venstre	908,472	%	46
2 Social Democrats	881,037	26,2	45
3 <b>Danish People's Party</b>	<b>479,532</b>	<b>25,5</b>	<b>25</b>
4 Socialist People's Party	450,975	13,9	23
5 Conservative People's Party	359,404	13,0	18
6 Danish Social Liberal Party	177,161	10,4	9
7 New Alliance	97,295	5,1	5
8 Red Green Alliance	74,982	2,8	4



## European Parliament election in 2009

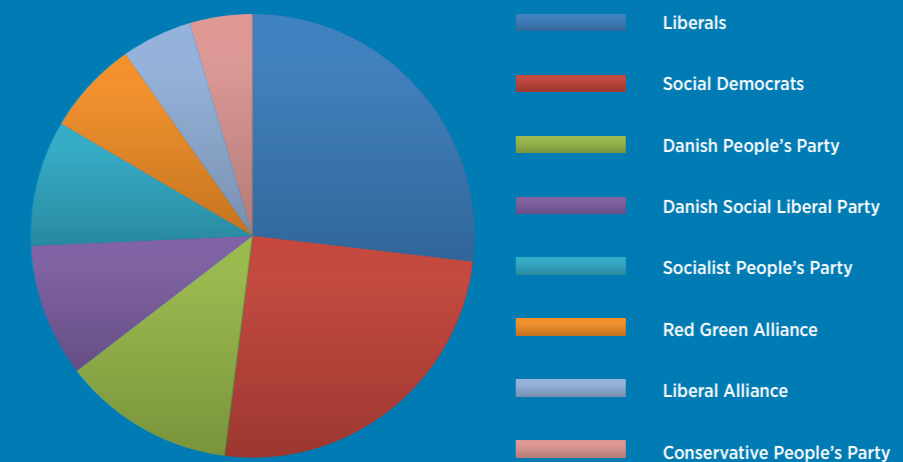
National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Social Democrats	4/13	503,439	Party of European Socialist
Liberals	3/13	474,041	European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party
Socialist People's Party	2/13	371,603	European Green Party (observer)
<b>Danish People's Party</b>	<b>2/13</b>	<b>357,942</b>	<b>Alliance for Europe of the Nations</b>
Conservative People's Party	1/13	297,199	European People's Party
People's Movement against the EU	1/13	168,555	None

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-dk-2009.html>

## Parliamentary election in 2011

Party	Votes	%	Seats
Liberals	947,725	26,7	47
Social Democrats	879,615	24,8	44
<b>Danish People's Party</b>	<b>436,726</b>	<b>12,3</b>	<b>22</b>
Danish Social Liberal Party	336,698	9,5	17
Socialist People's Party	326,192	9,2	16
Red Green Alliance	236,860	6,7	12
Liberal Alliance	176,585	5,0	9
Conservative People's Party	175,047	4,9	8

Election to parliament in 2011





## European Parliament election in 2014

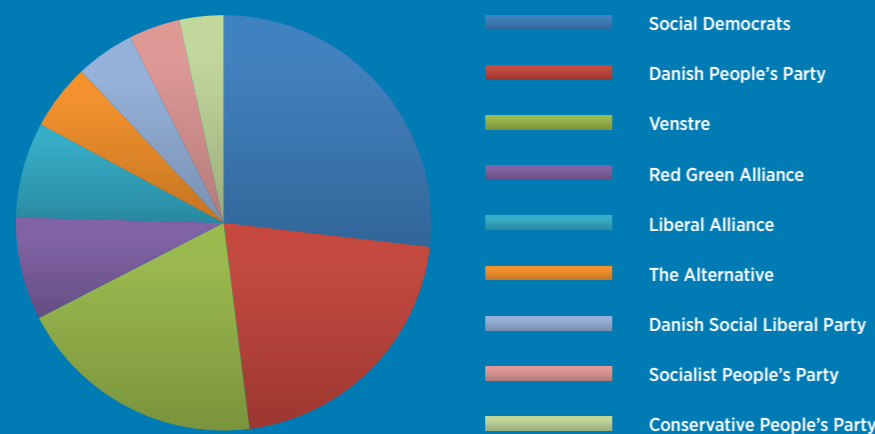
National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Danish People's Party	4/13	605,889	European Conservatives and Reformists
Social Democrats	3/13	435,245	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
Venstre	2/13	379,840	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Group
Socialist People's Party	1/13	249,305	The Greens – European Free Alliance
Conservative People's Party	1/13	208,262	European People's Party
People's Movement against the EU	1/13	183,724	European United Left – Nordic Green Left
Danish Social Liberal Party	1/13	148,949	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Group

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-dk-2014.html>

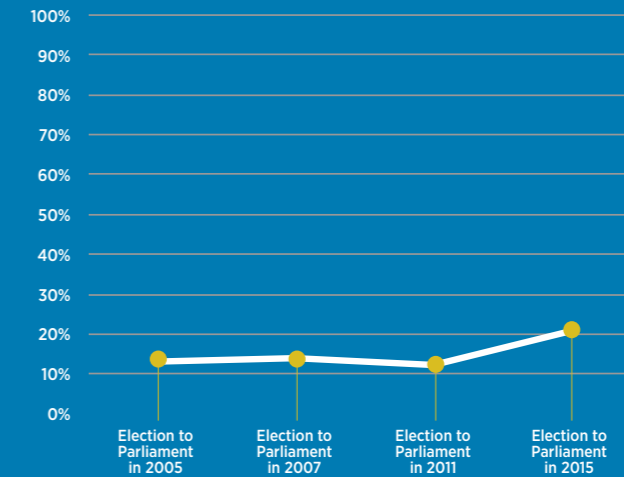
## Parliamentary election in 2015

Party	Votes	%	Seats
Social Democrats	924,940	26,3	47
Danish People's Party	741,746	20,7	37
Venstre	685,188	19,5	34
Red Green Alliance	274,463	7,8	14
Liberal Alliance	265,129	7,5	13
The Alternative	168,788	4,8	9
Danish Social Liberal Party	161,009	4,6	8
Socialist People's Party	147,578	4,2	7
Conservative People's Party	118,003	3,4	6

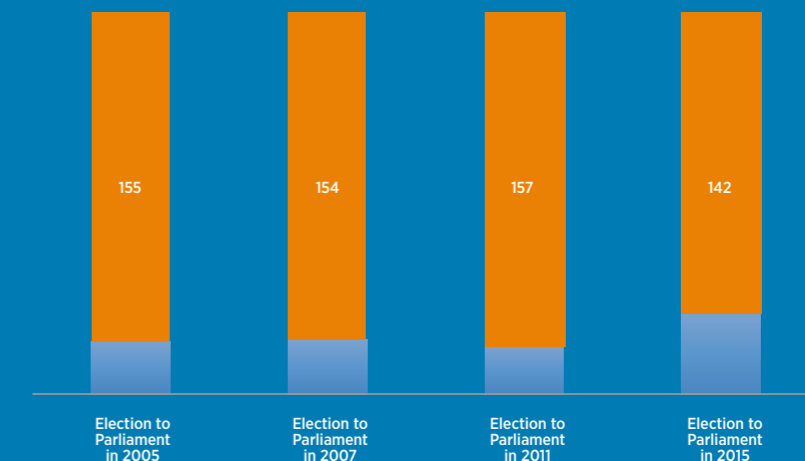
### Election to parliament in 2015



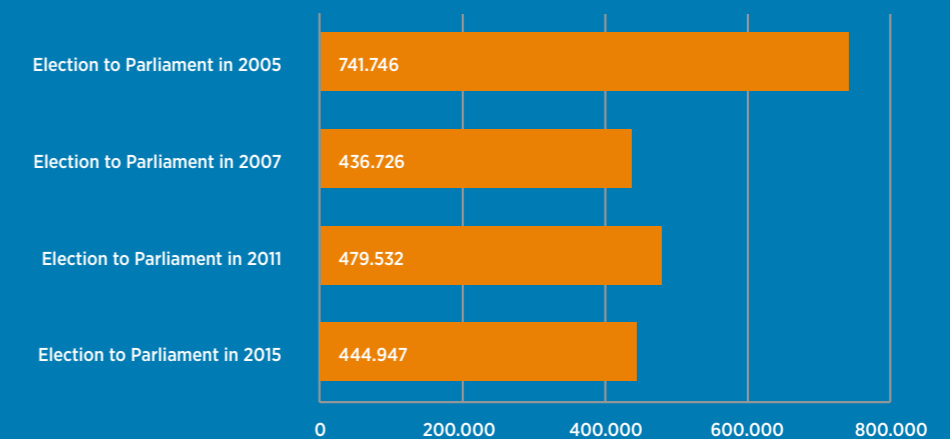
### % of mandates of Danish People's Party in elections



### Danish People's Party in elections



### Votes for Danish People's Party





## European Parliament election in 2009

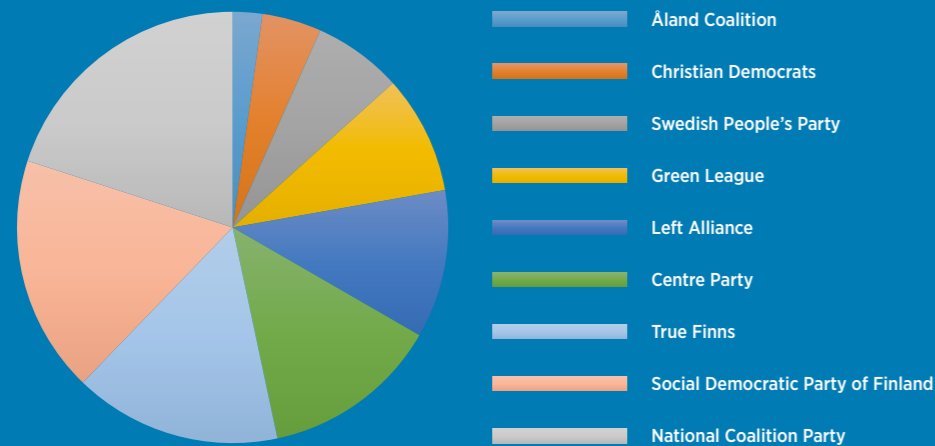
National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
National Coalition Party (KOK)	3/13	386,416	European People's Party
Centre Party (KESK)	3/13	316,798	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party
Social Democratic Party (SDP)	2/13	292,051	Party of European Socialists
Green League (VIHR)	2/13	206,439	European Green Party
True Finns (PS)	1/13	162,930	None
Swedish People's Party (SFP)	1/13	101,453	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party
Christian Democrats (KD)	1/13	69,458	None

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-fi-2009.html>

## Parliamentary election in 2011

Party	Votes	%	Seats
National Coalition Party	599,138	20.4	44
Social Democratic Party of Finland	561,558	19.1	42
True Finns	560,075	19.1	39
Centre Party	463,266	15.8	35
Left Alliance	239,039	8.1	14
Green League	213,172	7.3	10
Swedish People's Party	125,785	4.3	9
Christian Democrats	118,453	4.0	6
Åland Coalition	8,546	0.3	1

### Election to parliament in 2011

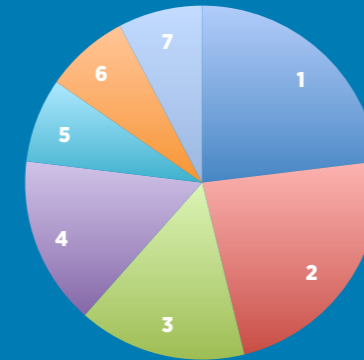


## European Parliament election in 2014

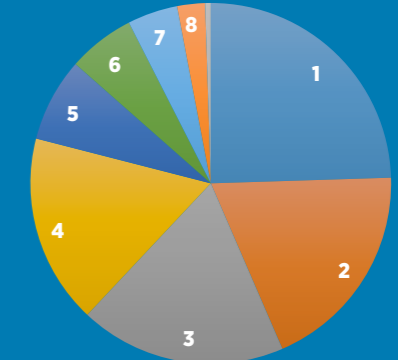
National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
1 National Coalition Party (KOK)	3/13	390,376	European People's Party
2 Centre Party (KESK)	3/13	339,895	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party
3 Finns Party (PS)	2/13	222,457	European Conservatives and Reformists
4 Social Democratic Party (SDP)	2/13	212,781	Party of European Socialists
5 Green League (VIHR)	1/13	161,263	European Green Party
6 Left Alliance (V)	1/13	161,074	Nordic Green Left Alliance/Party of the European Left
7 Swedish People's Party (SFP)	1/13	116,747	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-fi-2014.html>

### European Parliament election in 2014



### Election to parliament in 2015



## Parliamentary election in 2015

Party	Votes	%	Seats
1 Centre Party	626,218	21.10	49
2 Finns Party	524,054	17.65	38
3 National Coalition Party	540,212	18.20	37
4 Social Democratic Party	490,102	16.51	34
5 Green League	253,102	8.53	15
6 Left Alliance	211,702	7.13	12
7 Swedish People's Party of Finland	144,802	4.88	9
8 Christian Democrats	105,134	3.54	5
9 Åland Coalition	10,910	0.37	1

### Finns Party in election





## European Parliament election in 2009

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Christian Democratic Union + Christian Social Union	42/99	9,968,153	European People's Party
Christian Democratic Union	34/99	8,071,391	European People's Party
Social Democratic Party	23/99	5,472,566	Party of European Socialists
Alliance '90/ The Greens	14/99	3,194,509	European Green Party
Free Democratic Party	12/99	2,888,084	Alliance of Liberal and Democrats for Europe Party
The Left	8/99	1,969,239	Party of the European Left
Christian Social Union of Bavaria	8/99	1,896,762	European People's Party

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-de-2009.html>

## European Parliament election in 2014

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Christian Democratic Union + Christian Social Union	34/96	10,374,758	European People's Party
Christian Democratic Union	29/96	8,807,500	European People's Party
Social Democratic Party	27/96	7,999,955	Party of European Socialist
Alliance '90/ The Greens	11/96	3,138,201	European Green Party
The Left	7/96	2,167,641	Party of the European Left
Alternative for Germany	7/96	2,065,162	European Conservatives and Reformists*
Christian Social Union of Bavaria	5/96	1,567,258	European People's Party
Free Democratic Party	3/96	986,253	Alliance of Liberal and Democrats for Europe Party
Free Voters	1/96	428,524	European Democratic Party
Pirate Party	1/96	424,510	None
Human Environment Animal Protection	1/96	366,303	None
National Democratic Party of Germany	1/96	300,815	European National Front
Family Party of Germany	1/96	202,871	European Conservatives and Reformists
Ecological Democratic Party	1/96	185,119	None
Die PARTEI	1/96	184,525	None

\*Excluded from ECR in 2016 Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-de-2014.html>



## European Parliament election in 2009

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Panhellenic Socialist Movement	8/22	1,878,859	Party of European Socialists
New Democracy	8/22	1,655,636	European People's Party Group
Communist Party	2/22	428,283	European United Left – Nordic Green Left
Popular Orthodox Rally	2/22	366,616	Independence/ Democracy
Coalition of the Radical Left	1/22	240,898	European United Left – Nordic Green Left
Ecologist Greens	1/22	178,964	The Greens – European Free Alliance

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-el-2009.html>

## European Parliament election in 2014

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Coalition of the Radical Left	6/21	1,518,608	European United Left – Nordic Green Left
New Democracy	5/21	1,298,713	European People's Party
Golden Dawn	3/21	536,910	Non – Inscrits
Olive Tree	2/21	458,403	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
The River	2/21	377,438	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
Communist Party of Greece	2/21	349,255	Non – Inscrits
Independent Greeks	1/21	197,701	European Conservatives and Reformists

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-el-2014.html>



## European Parliament election in 2009

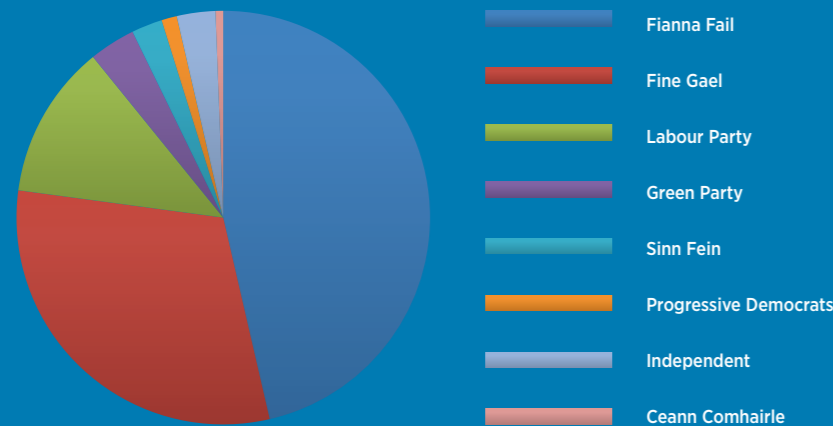
National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Fine Gael	4/12	532,889	European People's Party
Fianna Fáil	3/12	440,562	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Labour Party	3/12	254,669	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
Socialist Party	1/12	50,510	European United Left/Nordic Green Left
Independents	1/12	210,776	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-ie-2009.html>

## Parliamentary election election in 2007

National party	Seats	Votes
Fianna Fail	77	858,565
Fine Gael	51	564,428
Labour Party	20	209,175
Green Party	6	96,936
Sinn Fein	4	143,410
Progressive Democrats	2	56,396
Independent	5	106,429
Ceann Comhairle	1	-

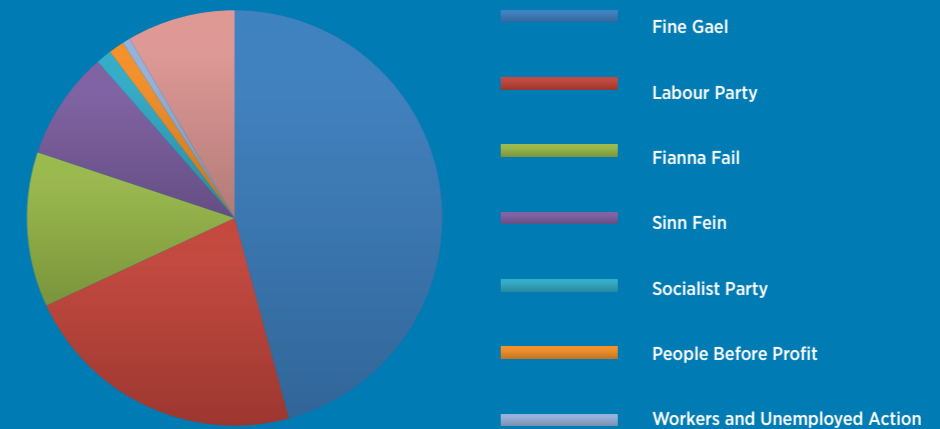
### Election to Parliament in 2007



## Parliamentary election election in 2011

National party	Seats	Votes
Fine Gael	76	801,628
Labour Party	37	431,796
Fianna Fail	20	387,358
Sinn Fein	14	220,661
Socialist Party	2	26,770
People Before Profit	2	21,551
Workers and Unemployed Action	1	8,818
Independent	14	269,703

### Election to Parliament in 2011



## European Parliament election in 2014

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Fine Gael	4/11	369,120	European People's Party
Sinn Féin	3/11	323,300	The Greens/European Free Alliance
Fianna Fáil	1/11	369,545	European Conservatives and Reformists
Independents	3/11	328,766	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe; Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats; The Greens/European Free Alliance

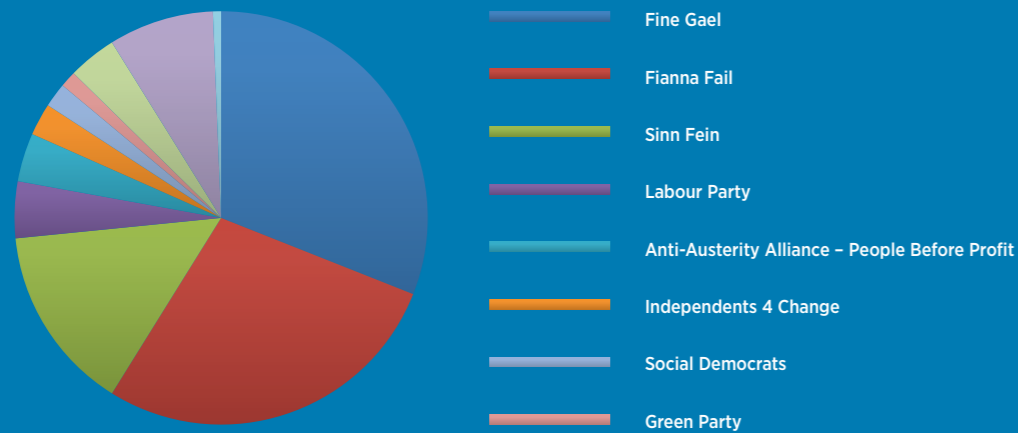
Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-lv-2014.html>



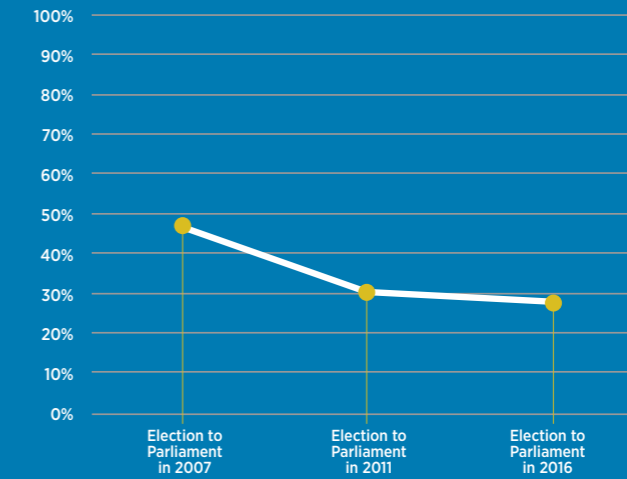
## Parliamentary election election in 2016

National party	Seats	Votes
Fine Gael	49	544,140
<b>Fianna Fail</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>519,356</b>
Sinn Fein	23	295,319
Labour Party	7	140,898
Anti-Austerity Alliance – People Before Profit	6	84,168
Independents 4 Change	4	31,365
Social Democrats	3	64,094
Green Party	2	57,999
Independent Alliance	6	88,930
Independent	13	249,285
Ceann Comhairle	1	18,398

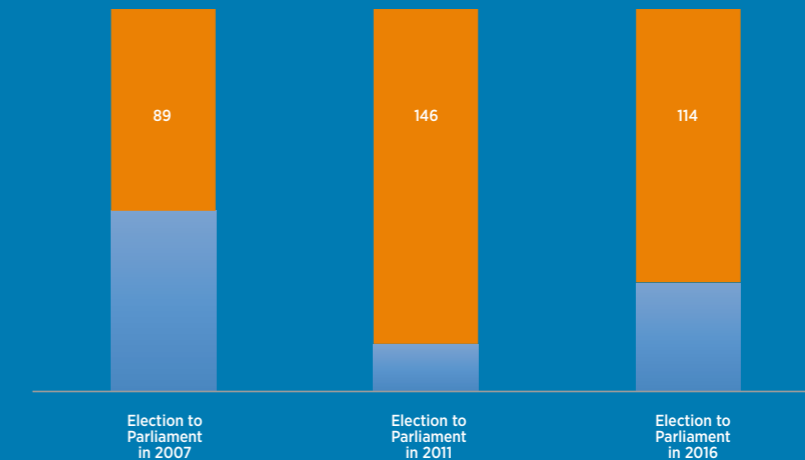
### Election to Parliament in 2016



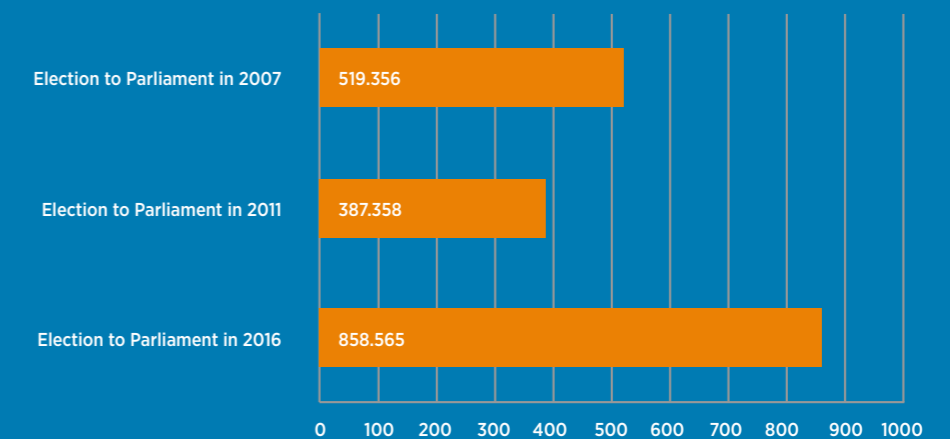
### % of mandates of Fianna Fail party in elections



### Mandates of Fianna Fail party in elections



### Votes for Fianna Fail party





## European Parliament election in 2009

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
The People of Freedom	29/72	10,797,296	European People's Party
Democratic Party	21/72	7,999,476	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
Northern League	9/72	3,126,181	Europe of Freedom and Democracy
Italy of Values	7/72	2,450,643	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Union of the Centre	5/72	1,995,021	European People's Party
South Tyrolean People's Party	1/72	143,509	European People's Party

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-it-2009.html>

## European Parliament election in 2014

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Democratic Party	31/73	11,203,231	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
Five Star Movement	17/73	5,807,362	Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy
Forza Italia	13/73	4,614,364	European People's Party
Northern League	5/73	1,688,197	Non-Inscrits
New Centre-Right - Union of the Centre	3/73	1,202,350	European People's Party
The Other Europe	3/73	1,108,457	European United Left-Nordic Green Left
South Tyrolean People's Party	1/73	138,037	European People's Party

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-it-2014.html>



## European Parliament election in 2009

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Civic Union	2/8	192,537	European People's Party
Harmony Centre	2/8	154,894	none
For Human Rights in United Latvia	1/8	76,436	European Free Alliance
Latvia's First Party/Latvian Way	1/8	59,326	European Liberal Democratic and Reform Party
For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK	1/8	58,991	Alliance for Europe of the Nations
New Era Party	1/8	52,751	European People's Party

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-lv-2009.html>

## European Parliament election in 2014

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Unity	4/8	504,979	European People's Party
National Alliance	1/8	63,229	European Conservatives and Reformists
Harmony	1/8	57,863	Party of European Socialists
Union of Greens and Farmers	1/8	36,637	European Green Partys
Latvian Russian Union	1/8	28,303	European United Left - Nordic Green Left

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-lv-2014.html>



## European Parliament election in 2009

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Homeland Union – Christian Democrats (TS-LKD)	4/12	147,756	European People's Party
Social Democratic Party of Lithuania (LSDP)	3/12	102,347	Party of European Socialists
Order and Justice (TT)	2/12	67,237	None
Labour Party (DP)	1/12	48,368	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania (AWPL)	1/12	46,293	Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe
Liberal Movement (LS)	1/12	40,502	Non-Inscrits

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-uk-2009.html>

## European Parliament election in 2014

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Homeland Union	2/11	199,393	European People's Party
Social Democratic Party of Lithuania (LSDP)	2/11	197,477	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament
Liberal Movement (LS)	2/11	189,373	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Order and Justice (TT)	2/11	163,049	Europe of freedom and direct democracy Group
Labour Party (DP)	1/11	146,607	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania (AWPL)	1/11	92,108	Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe
Lithuanian Peasant and Greens Union	1/11	75,643	The Greens/European Free Alliance

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-lt-2014.html>



## European Parliament election in 2009

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Christian Democratic Appeal	5/25	913,233	European People's Party Group
Party for Freedom	4/25	772,746	Non Inscrits
Labour Party	3/25	548,691	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
People's Party for Freedom and Democracy	3/25	518,643	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Group
Democrats 66	3/25	515,422	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Group
GreenLeft	3/25	404,020	The Greens European Free Alliance
Socialist Party	2/25	323,269	European United Left – Nordic Green Left
Christian Union – Reformed Political Party	2/25	310,540	European Conservatives and Reformists

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-nl-2009.html>

## European Parliament election in 2014

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Democrats 66 – ALDE	4/26	735,825	Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Group
CDA – European People's Party	5/26	721,766	European People's Party Group
PVV (Party for Freedom)	4/26	633,114	Europe of Nations and Freedom
VVD	3/26	571,176	Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Group
SP (Socialist Party)	2/26	458,079	European United Left – Nordic Green Left
P.v.d.A./European Social Democrats	3/26	446,763	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
Christian Union-SGP	2/26	364,843	European Conservatives and Reformists
GREENLEFT	2/26	331,594	The Greens – European Free Alliance
Party for the Animals	1/26	200,254	European United Left – Nordic Green Left

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-nl-2014.html>



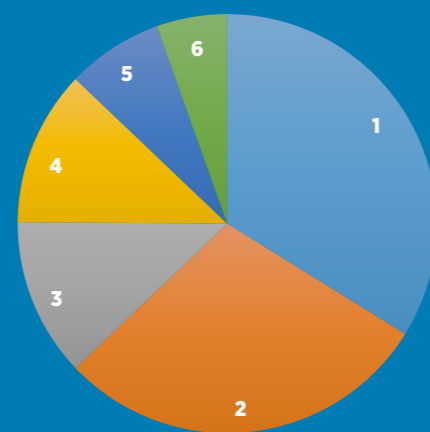
## European Parliament election in 2004

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
1 Civic Platform (PO)	15/54	1,467,775	European People's Party
2 League of Polish Families(LPR)	10/54	969,689	Alliance for Europe of the Nations
3 Law and Justice (PiS)	7/54	771,858	Alliance for Europe of the Nations
4 Sense Defense-of the Republic of Poland (SoRP)	6/54	656,782	Alliance for Europe of the Nations + Party of European Socialists
5 Democratic Left Alliance – Labour Union (SLD-UP)	5/54	561,311	Party of European Socialists
6 Freedom Union (UW)	4/54	446,549	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
7 People's Party (PSL)	4/54	386,340	European People's Party
8 Social Democracy (SDLP)	3/54	324,707	Party of European Socialists

European Parliament election in 2004



Election to Sejm in 2005



## Parliamentary election in 2005

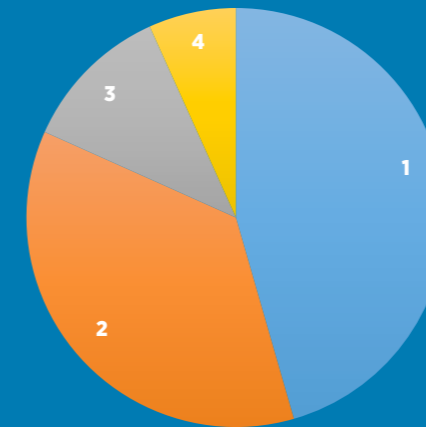
Party	Votes	Mandates (Sejm)	Mandates (Senate)
1 Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość)	3 185 714	155	49
2 Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska)	2 849 259	133	34
3 Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland (Samoobrona RP)	1 347 355	56	3
4 Democratic Left Alliance (Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej)	1 335 257	55	-
5 League of Polish Families (Liga Polskich Rodzin)	940 726	34	7
6 Polish People's Party (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe)	821 656	25	2
7 Independents	-	-	5



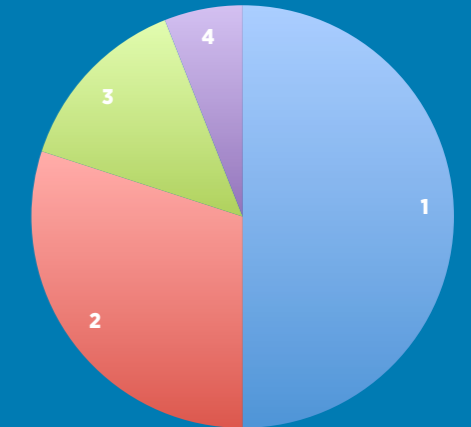
## Parliamentary election in 2007

Party	Votes	Mandates (Sejm)	Mandates (Senate)
1 Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska)	6 701 010	209	49
2 Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość)	5 183 477	166	34
3 Left and Democrats (Lewica i Demokraci)	2 122 981	53	3
4 Polish People's Party (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe)	1 437 638	31	-
5 Independents	-	-	1

Election to Sejm in 2007



European Parliament election in 2009



## European Parliament election in 2009

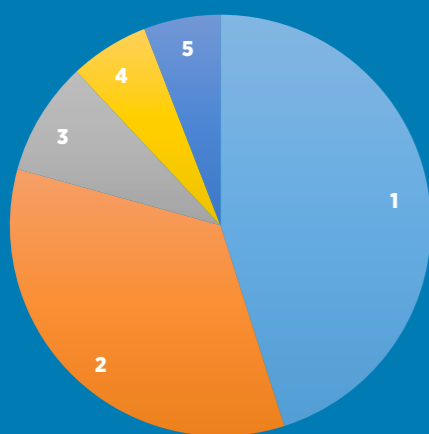
National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
1 Civic Platform (PO)	25 / 50	3,271,852	European People's Party
2 Law and Justice (PiS)	15 / 50	2,017,607	Alliance for Europe of the Nations
3 Democratic Left Alliance – Labor Union (SLD-UP)	7 / 50	908,765	Party of European Socialists
4 People's Party (PSL)	3 / 50	516,146	European People's Party



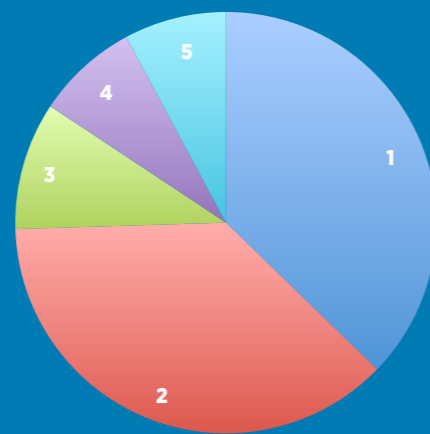
## Parliamentary election in 2011

Party	Votes	Mandates (Sejm)	Mandates (Senate)
1 Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska)	5 629 773	207	63
2 Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość)	4 295 016	157	31
3 Palikot's Movement (Ruch Palikota RP)	1 439 490	40	-
4 Polish People's Party (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe)	1 201 628	28	2
5 Democratic Left Alliance (Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej)	1 184 303	27	-
6 Independents	-	-	3
7 Citizens to the Senate (OdS)	-	-	1

### Election to Sejm in 2011



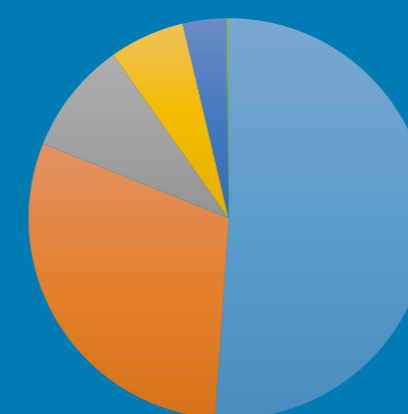
### European Parliament election in 2014



## Parliamentary election in 2015

Party	Votes	Mandates (Sejm)	Mandates (Senate)
Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość)	5 711 687	235	61
Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska)	3 661 474	138	34
Kukiz'15 (K'15)	1 339 094	42	-
Modern (Nowoczesna)	1 155 370	28	-
Polish People's Party (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe)	779 875	16	1
Independents	-	-	4
German Minority (Mniejszość Niemiecka)	27 530	1	-

### Election to Sejm in 2015

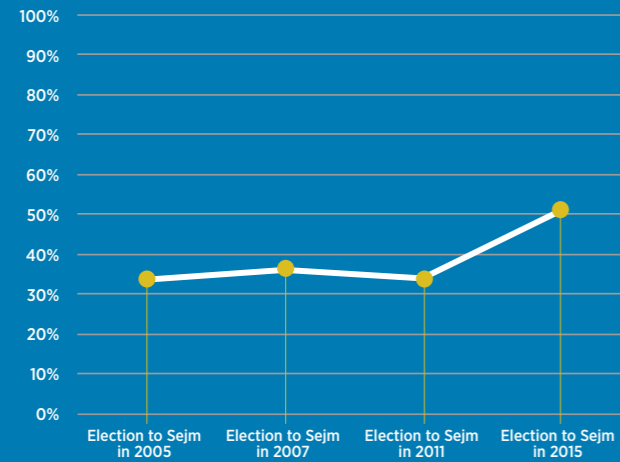


## European Parliament election in 2014

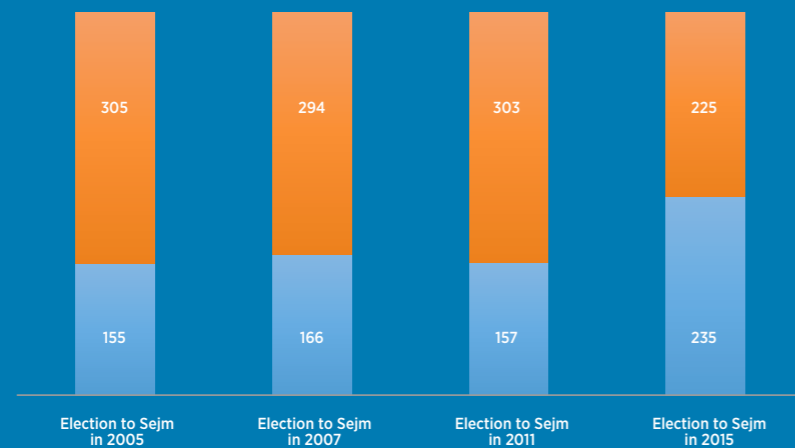
National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
1 Civic Platform (PO)	19/51	2,271,215	European People's Party
2 Law and Justice (PiS)	19/51	2,246,870	European Conservative and Reformists
3 Democratic Left Alliance – Labour Union (SLD-UP)	5/51	667,319	Socialist and Democrats
4 Congress of the New Right (KNP)	4/51	505,586	-
5 People's Party (PSL)	4/51	480,846	European People's Party



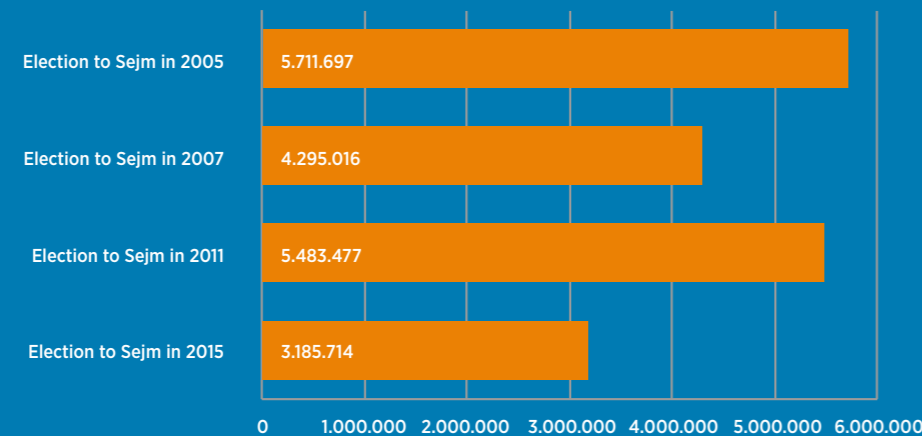
### Mandates of Law and Justice party in elections



### Mandates of Law and Justice party in elections



### Votes for Law and Justice party



### European Parliament election in 2009

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Direction - Social Democracy (SMER)	5/13	264,722	Party of European Socialists
Democratic and Christian Union - Democratic Party (SDKÚ-DS)	2/13	140,426	European People's Party
Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK)	2/13	93,750	European People's Party
Christian Democratic Movement (KDH)	2/13	89,905	European People's Party
People's Party - Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (ĽS-HZDS)	1/13	74,241	European Democratic Party
National Party (SNS)	1/13	45,960	None

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-sk-2009.html>

### European Parliament election in 2014

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
Direction - Social Democracy (SMER)	4/13	135,089	Party of European Socialists
Christian Democratic Movement (KDH)	2/13	74,108	European People's Party
Democratic and Christian Union - Democratic Party (SDKÚ-DS)	2/13	43,467	European People's Party
Ordinary People and Independent Personalities (OĽaNO)	1/13	41,829	European Conservatives and Reformists
New Majority (NOVA) + Conservative Democrats (KDS) + Civic Conservative Party (OKS)	1/13	38,316	European Conservatives and Reformists
Freedom and Solidarity (SaS)	1/13	37,376	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party
Party of the Hungarian Community (SMK-MKP)	1/13	36,629	European People's Party
Most - Hid (Most)	1/13	32,708	European People's Party

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-sk-2014.html>



## Parliamentary election in 2005

National party	Seats	Votes
Labour	355	9,552,436
<b>Conservative</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>8,784,915</b>
Liberal Democrat	62	5,985,454
Scottish National Party	6	412,267
Democratic Unionist Party	9	241,856
Plaid Cymru	3	174,838
Sinn Fein	5	174,530
Ulster Unionist Party	1	127,414
Social Democratic & Labour Party	3	125,626
Independent	1	122,416
Respect	1	68,094
Health Concern	1	18,739
Speaker	1	15,153

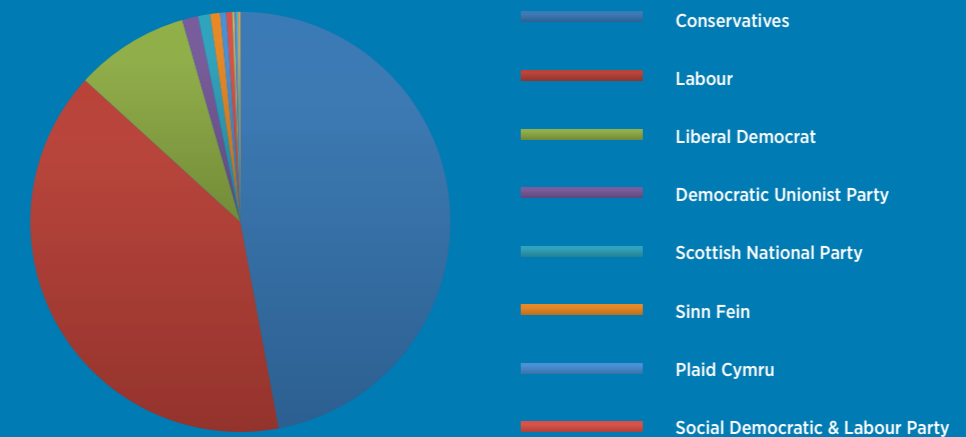
### Election to House of Commons in 2005



## Parliamentary election in 2010

National party	Seats	Votes
<b>Conservatives</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>10,703,754</b>
Labour	258	8,609,527
Liberal Democrat	57	6,836,825
Democratic Unionist Party	8	168,216
Scottish National Party	6	491,386
Sinn Fein	5	171,942
Plaid Cymru	3	165,394
Social Democratic & Labour Party	3	110,970
Green Party	1	285,616
Alliance	1	42,762
Speaker	1	22,860
Independent	1	21,181

### Election to House of Commons in 2010



## European Parliament election in 2009

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
<b>Conservative</b>	<b>26/72</b>	<b>4,281,286</b>	<b>European Conservatives and Reformists</b>
UKIP	13/72	2,498,226	Europe of Freedom and Democracy
Labour	13/72	2,381,760	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
Liberal Democrats	11/72	2,080,613	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Green	2/72	1,223,303	The Greens-European Free Alliance
British National Party	2/72	943,598	Non-Inscrits
Scottish National Party	2/72	321,007	The Greens-European Free Alliance

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-uk-2009.html>

## European Parliament election in 2014

National party	Seats	Votes	EP group
UK Independence Party	24/73	4,376,635	Alliance for Direct Democracy in Europe
Labour Party	20/73	4,020,646	Party of European Socialists
<b>Conservative Party</b>	<b>19/73</b>	<b>3,792,549</b>	<b>Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe</b>
Green Party of England and Wales	3/73	1,136,670	European Green Party
Scottish National Party	2/73	389,503	European Free Alliance
Liberal Democrats	1/73	1,087,633	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Sinn Féin	1/73	159,813	None
Democratic Unionist Party	1/73	131,163	None
Plaid Cymru	1/73	111,864	European Free Alliance
<b>Ulster Unionist Party</b>	<b>1/73</b>	<b>83,438</b>	<b>European Conservatives and Reformists</b>

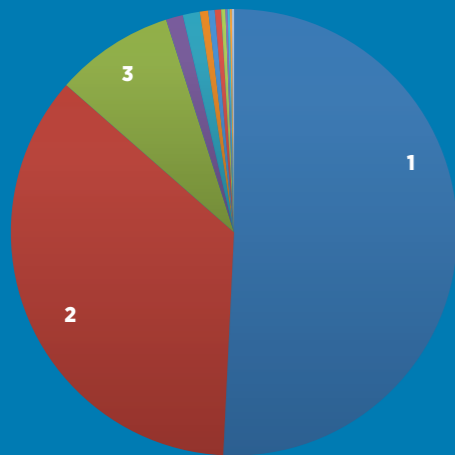
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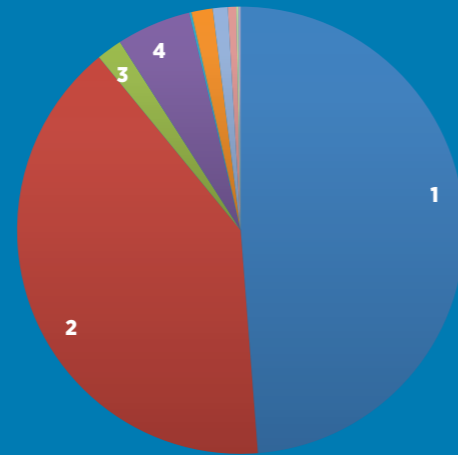
## Parliamentary election election in 2015

National party		Seats	Votes
1	Conservatives	330	11,299,609
2	Labour	232	9,347,273
3	Scottish National Party	56	1,454,436
4	Liberal Democrat	8	2,415,916
5	Democratic Unionist Party	8	184,260
6	Sinn Fein	4	176,232
7	Plaid Cymru	3	181,704
8	Social Democratic & Labour Party	3	99,809
9	Ulster Unionist Party	2	114,935
10	UK Independence Party	1	3,881,099
11	Green Party	1	1,111,603
12	Speaker	1	34,617
13	Independent Unionist	1	17,689

### Election to House of Commons in 2015



### Election to House of Commons in 2017

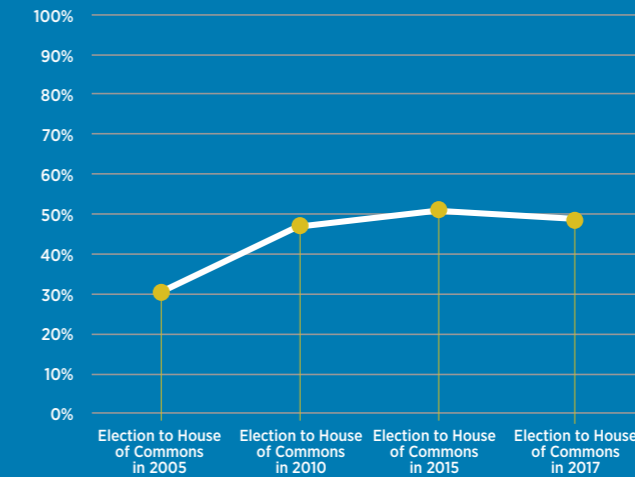


## Parliamentary election election in 2017

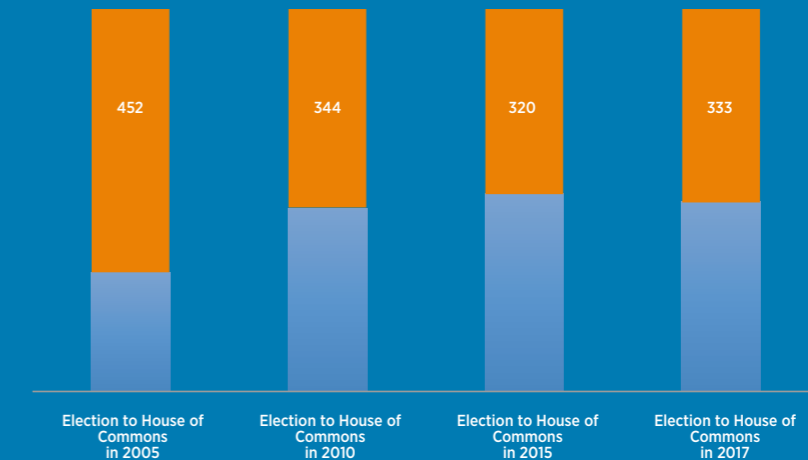
National party		Seats	Votes
1	Conservatives	317	13,636,684
2	Labour	262	12,877,858
3	Liberal Democrat	12	2,371,861
4	Scottish National Party	35	977,568
5	Green Party of England and Wales	1	512,327
6	Democratic Unionist Party	10	292,316
7	Sinn Fein	7	238,915
8	Plaid Cymru	4	164,466
9	Independents	1	151,471
10	Speaker	1	34,299



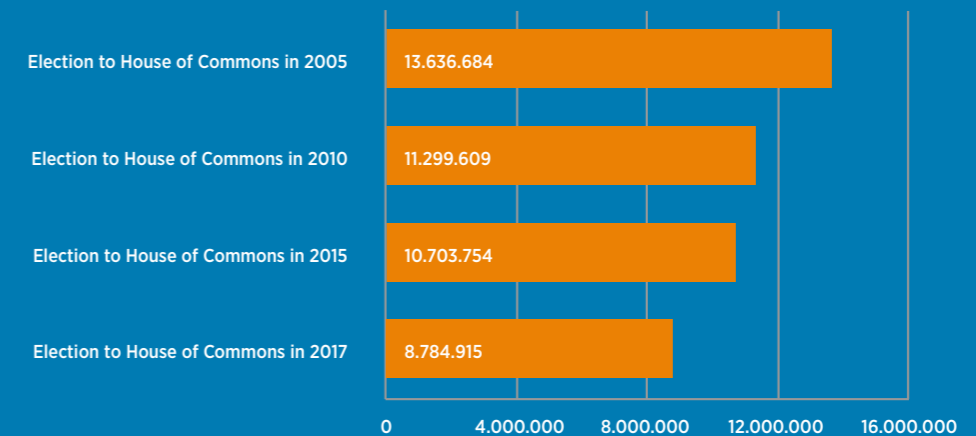
## % of mandates of Conservative party in elections



## Mandates of Conservative party in elections



## Votes for Conservative party







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