

Territoriality and Eurosceptic Parties in V4 Countries

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Abstract

This text analyzes the ways in which Euroscepticism is reflected in party politics, and presents a partial typology of party euroscepticism. It also indicates some theoretical, methodological, and empirical problems inevitably linked to the importation of the concept from Western Europe into Central Europe. Analyzing data on election support for Eurosceptic parties in the V4 countries, it examines the effectiveness of mainstream research on the dynamics and territorial aspects of voter support for the Eurosceptic parties, especially in contrast with the limited heuristic capacity of the concept of "second-order elections" often used in Western political science to analyze European elections.

1. Introduction

Recent elections to the European Parliament and in particular the process of ratifying the European constitution showed that the term "Euroscepticism" has become one of the most frequently-used terms not only in political science, but in political discourse itself. It is often used to refer to unrelated or conflicting phenomena; it is a term often abused, used generally in vague and misleading ways. This text on Euroscepticism in political parties of the 4 Visegrad countries (V4) attempts to identify the source of this confusion and point out the problems in applying the concept in the context of the Central European environment. Presenting some substantive findings on electoral support for Eurosceptic parties in the V4 countries, we will go on to show that the transfer of the concepts dealing with European-level politics from West European system of territorial-political pluralism to the context of Central European politics continues to be a methodologically risky operation.

2. Definition of Euroscepticism

Research on party Euroscepticism represents a relatively new element in political research. The term Euroscepticism was first examined in political science by Paul Taggart in 1998, where he defined it as an expression of incidental or deep-rooted opposition to European integration. Taggart also identified four different forms of Eurosceptic parties (Taggart 1998: 368 – 369).

The first are "single-issue" Eurosceptic parties. Taggart defines these as groups for which opposition to the EU is their main reason for existence. They are there to mobilize the voters on the issue of European integration, often acting as part of an ad-hoc coalition. Taggart points to Denmark's *People's Movement against the EU*.

According to Taggart, the second type consists of protest parties that express opposition to the EU as a logical part of their general opposition to the political system. They are usually politically distant from the governing parties, and the possibility of their being part of a coalition is low. Taggart's example is the Swedish *Green Party* or the French Communists.

The third group is composed of established parties that take a Eurosceptic position and are part of governments, or parties that have a good possibility of being included in one.

Taggart's last group consists of the Eurosceptic factions of parties that support European integration. Taggart admits that this group of Eurosceptics is difficult to systematically identify and study.

Other research done by Taggart together with Aleks Szczerbiak and the critical reflections of other authors (Kopecký, Mudde 2002, Flood 2003, Conti, Verzichelli 2002) resulted in the now relatively accepted division of Euroscepticism into "soft" and "hard". Taggart and Szczerbiak had presented their dual concept of Euroscepticism earlier; they redefined their term in reaction to comments by the colleagues shown above.

In the revised concept the "hard" Euroscepticism represents: "opposition in principle to the project of European integration in the form of the EU, especially in the sense of rejection of transfer of powers to supra-national institutions" (Szczerbiak, Taggart 2003: 12).

The second type of Euroscepticism, the soft variant, is "...the absence of principled criticism of the EU, but the presence of opposition to the current or planned trajectory, the content of which is growth in the powers and sovereignty of the EU" (Szczerbiak, Taggart 2003: 12).

The division of the concept of Euroscepticism into "soft" and "hard" variants is not the only valid conceptualization of the phenomenon. At present, however, it is one of the most often referred-to typologies¹, capable of capturing the nuances of the political parties' critical attitudes toward European integration.

3. Euroscepticism in Central Europe

In researching the Central European manifestation of Euroscepticism through the prism of Western European concepts, a few remarks must be made about the specific characteristics of this region. Although as time goes by the "standard" system of *cleavages* from the perspective of the West European party system can be said to be slowly developing (labor vs. capital, church vs. state, town vs. country and center vs. periphery), and although the local specifics are to a certain extent modified, the level of interest in the topic of Europe has long been lower in the recent new members than in the older member states of the EU. The main reason was apparently a fundamental consensus of the political elites on the necessity of joining the European integration process, which meant that any conflicts over European issues were not hotly disputed (see Bielasiak 2004: 2).

The continuing European integration process, especially continuation of the process of expansion, challenged this consensus, and led to the creation of new areas of inquiry leading to intensification and differentiation of the previously one-sidedly "pro-European" discussion. As shown by Taggart and Szczerbiak (2004: 1), accession talks introduced new dividing lines (not lines of conflict – cleavages) and new political parties into domestic politics in the candidate countries, and individual state and domestic actors took advantage of the opportunity to take opposing positions toward the EU, and toward the process of European integration in general.

One of the many conditions for successful expansion was the fulfilling of certain criteria on the part of the member states, which required the implementation of important constitutional, economic, and social reforms. This complex process, which produced not only positive results but some less-than-positive ones (economic stagnation, high inflation, unemployment), presented the candidate countries with a new situation which led to a modification of originally positive attitudes toward European integration both among the elites, and at the level of public opinion. As the expansion process went forward, new issues appeared sensitive enough to stir up political debate in each country. As the changes took shape and accession began to approach, the discussion became more specific, more tangible, and more politically attractive.

The "European" dimension, however, does not appear to be more relevant level in the researched countries than in the original EU member states. The low priority of the European issue on the level of domestic political systems of countries of Central Europe is also due to the fact that the newly joining countries had only undergone a single European Parliament election campaign. In the new arena of political competition in the studied countries, only political actors that had previously been active on the national or regional

¹ Czech political science often works with the typology of N. Conti, which also takes into account the positive attitudes towards European integration. Conti's typology defining Euroscepticism also takes Taggart and Szczerbiak's lead in working with the concepts of "soft" and "hard" Euroscepticism.

level took part and were successful in political competition. In other words, in the countries of Central Europe no political party was successful by staking its identity exclusively on its position on the integration process.² On the other hand there were successful formations for which attitude on European integration represented an important element of identity, both critical (Selfdefence in Poland) and positive (the Czech SNK – European Democrats) of the European integration process.

As compared with the previous European enlargements, Taggart and Szczerbiak (2001: 6) consider a possible increase in opposition to the European integration process as more likely in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, basing their conclusions on the character of the so-called eastward expansion. The latest wave of expansion was more dragged out than previous enlargements, which may have produced a negative reaction in the candidate countries. According to Taggart and Szczerbiak (2001: 12-13), as the entry date approached, and with it the growing probability that it would actually take place, consideration of the costs and advantages deriving from membership contributed to the growth of Euroscepticism. While costs became ever more clearly defined, potential benefits seemed vague and abstract in comparison.

Mudde also argued that the new member countries of Central and Eastern Europe contain a larger potential for possible political conflict over European issues than the older member countries. According to Mudde (2000: 3), who sees the European conflict line as a variant of the center-periphery conflict, this is due to the following factors:

1) the elites and the electorates of the new member states were less involved in the entire process of European integration, and EU entry occurred after the substantial implementation of the integration process (in the sense of a shift toward a supra-national model); this presented a suitable object for Eurosceptic criticism of both hard and soft types;

2) the European issue was more politicized in the environment of the new member states, especially by a series of referendums on entry;

3) a large part of the population and part of the elite supported joining the EU because "there was no other choice".

Although we can say that with the so-called eastward enlargement the question of the EU became part of the domestic political debate in the new member states, there is no evidence of the existence of a European cleavage on the issue (see Hloušek 2000, Hloušek, Kopeček 2004).

The limited relevance of the European issue in Central and Eastern Europe has significant implications for the character of academic research on Euroscepticism. In this context it is necessary to keep in mind two factors: the first is the general issue of political science research on Euroscepticism, and the second is the reflection of a Central Europe's regional difference stemming from its history and recent incorporation into integration structures.

Political science research on Euroscepticism is a relatively new field that has gained momentum with the increased importance of the European integration process beginning in the early 1990s (see Kopeček 2004: 241). Although research on Euroscepticism is no longer in its infancy, it is still a long way from being a fully developed field in the case of political party systems for example. Research efforts undertaken mostly in the environment of "Western" political science have yet to come up with a satisfactory definition or description of Euroscepticism. A similar problem, unfortunately, must be said to exist in regard to research on Euroscepticism or, in broader terms, in the research undertaken by political scientists of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe on attitudes of political parties toward European integration.

² The situation is different in the Scandinavian countries, for example, where single-issue anti-European groups like the People's Movement Against the EU or the June Movement in Denmark, or the July Ballot in Sweden have repeatedly ran in elections to the European Parliament (see Havlík 2004, 2005a, 2005b, Kaniok 2004, 2005).

A fundamental problem that can be seen in the context of research on Euroscepticism is the question of defining what European integration actually is. The development of the ES/EU in the 1980s and 90s took place mainly within the supra-national paradigm; that is, simultaneous deepening and broadening of integration: it was all but enshrined in political discourse as the only possible form of the integration process. The question is whether political science should treat the character of European integration in the 1980s and 90s as the one and only correct path, and whether every show of opposition against, say, the growing power of the European Commission, can be considered an act of Euroscepticism. A broader definition of the term "European integration" would be very useful, minimizing the risk of constantly redefining methodological concepts depending on changes in the character of the integration process. Another question is whether Western European political science, in the grip of the impression of the EU as a political good-in-itself, is open to and capable of reflecting upon the concept of European integration. The question seems legitimate to analysts and scholars not burdened by the long-time "consensus of tolerance" that dominated the field of European integration in the member countries.

The situation in Central Europe is also complicated by historical factors, and by the recent "eastward expansion". From the transition period to the present, the entering countries gradually began to find themselves in a qualitatively completely new situation following the 1.5.2004, the EU entry date. While the attitudes of the political parties toward European integration up until 2004 can be described as rather specific (in comparison to the "old" member states) in view of the transitory nature of the period (the need to "return to Europe"), the period since 2004 has placed the former applicant states practically on the same level as the "fifteen", but without their historical experience.

This seemingly banal observation takes on another hue with the realization that the majority of the research carried out on Euroscepticism was not only carried out by West European (the previous EU member states) political science institutes, but also reflected a situation in a political party environment in the EU member states which differs from the situation of the new members. While political parties in the original member states were classified "within" the system, parties from the candidate countries were considered outside its boundaries. With EU entry the party systems of Central and Eastern Europe became similar to those prevailing in the member states (in terms of membership of individual political parties in European federations, holding of elections to the EP, etc.); still, it must be kept in mind that these new member countries have still been in the EU a relatively short time.

4. Eurosceptic parties in Central Europe

Despite the reservations, however, it is possible to classify these parties to a certain extent. Taggart and Szczerbiak's division between "soft" and "hard" Euroscepticism in the case of Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia was used as a methodological approach by the editors and authors of the volume "Euroscepticism and the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe" (Havlík, Kaniok 2006).³ Their analysis of the various party programs is shown in table 1.

³ Because the case studies were also aimed at the genesis of Euroscepticism in Central Europe, parties that are no longer relevant today were also studied (for example the SPR – RSC in Czech). These parties will be ignored for purposes of this text.

Table 1. *Eurosceptic parties in Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia*

| COUNTRY | HARD EUROSCEPTICISM | SOFT EUROSCEPTICISM |
|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Czech Republic | | ODS, KSČM |
| Hungary | | Fidesz-MPP |
| Poland | LPR | Selfdefence, PiS |
| Slovakia | | SNS, KSS, KDH |

Source: Authors in Havlík, Kaniok 2006: 98

In their study, P. Taggart and A. Szczerbiak formulated a number of hypotheses about the distribution and dimensions of hard and soft Euroscepticism in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Taggart, Szczerbiak 2002b: 32). First, they described the former candidate countries as a region with a higher incidence of party Euroscepticism. Both authors also registered a much higher incidence of the "soft" variety of Euroscepticism; its bearers were identified as more important actors within their party systems than such parties at that time in the member countries. According to Taggart and Szczerbiak, the ideological distribution of Euroscepticism differs as well. While in the Central European countries Euroscepticism is found mostly on the right, in Western Europe it is found all along the right-left line.

Not all of these observations have proven durable. The conclusions of the case studies showed that the ideological distribution of Euroscepticism on the left-right line is basically in harmony with the trend in the "older" member states. Representatives of most party families can be found among the Eurosceptic parties; their position in the party systems also varies. One example is the liberal conservative ODS, in the opposition at the time of the study; another is the Polish PiS, part of the Polish ruling coalition.

Statements about significant support for "soft" Eurosceptic parties in Central Europe are difficult to confirm or refute. Classifying any given party or parties as "softly" Eurosceptic can prove somewhat vague (with the [above-mentioned HZDS for example]). The category of "soft" Euroscepticism is in itself questionable, difficult to use, and will probably have to be redefined. In the countries studied, several fundamentally pro-European parties that criticize a few isolated problems in European integration wound up being classified as Eurosceptic. This leads back to the question of whether any criticism of the EU (or the supra-national paradigm) is an expression of Euroscepticism; or, whether a soft Euroscepticism so defined can even be useful for political science. A possible way out of the dead end of "soft" Euroscepticism may be a more precise definition of the criticism of some aspects of European integration (such as the European Constitution, the common currency, common agricultural policy, etc.) that could be considered as indicators. But this approach cannot be considered foolproof, either, in view of the unlikelihood of find common elements in some specific indicators: i.e., is it really possible to consider criticism of the common agricultural policy as an expression of Euroscepticism? Another approach, perhaps offering a clearer perspective in evaluating Euroscepticism (soft and hard) would be to focus on criticism of the supra-national tendency of European integration as one of the defining marks of Euroscepticism.

If in the context of the Central European region it is possible to make some longer-term and clearer conclusions, these would have mainly to do with "hard" Euroscepticism. Its advocates are mainly extremist parties on the fringes of the ideological spectrum, hovering below the threshold of relevance. In their case, Euroscepticism is a corollary of their general opposition to the democratic political system. "Hard" Euroscepticism has a marginal, but stable presence in the party systems of Central Europe. This applies to all the countries examined in the study.

On the other hand, there are a number of doubts about the term "soft" Euroscepticism. There is no doubt that it exists: that is, there are parties that do not fully support today's model of European integration. It is also unquestionable that a number of

mainstream democratic parties in Central Europe criticize and question in a sophisticated and constructive manner some aspects of the integration process. What these countries have in common is that this is the result of a process that can be called "coming to terms with European integration". What they also share is that "soft" Euroscepticism is found mainly in opposition parties, and may to a certain extent be a sign of the natural polarity between government and the opposition. Basically, however, soft Euroscepticism is an expression of a different idea of the integration process, or its tempo.

Research on party Euroscepticism is often linked to analysis of the performance of Eurosceptic parties in national or European elections. As we will attempt to show, here too the mechanical import of concepts from West European political science to the Central European environment is methodologically very risky.

5.1. Elections to the European Parliament and territoriality

Analysis of elections to the EP in the West European countries is most often linked in political science to the *concept of second order elections*, which was put into practice by German political scientists Karlheinz Reif and Hermann Schmitt (Reif – Schmitt 1980). Their original text was one of the first studies of Europeanization in the party politics and institutional-political systems of the national states. In it they classified elections to the EP in 1979 as being "*second order national elections*". This definition 1) assumes the existence of first-order national elections (typically to the national Parliaments); 2) assumes that voters view the logic of other elections (the "second-order elections") with the same logic as the political contests in first-order elections; and, 3) in their voting they seek to generate effects in the arena of first-order national elections. Reif and Schmitt observe this effect especially with governing parties that arose out of first-order elections. In their opinion, second-order elections voters are influenced by the fact that they are not choosing a government, and therefore voters tend to use their vote to grade the performance of the governing parties. Here they use both *sincere voting*, and also *strategic voting* (or strategic non-voting). Also important for Reif and Schmitt is the phase of the political cycle, in relation to first-order elections, in which the second-order elections are being held. Voters have a tendency to produce the strongest negative effects for governing parties in the middle of the regular term in office of the elected body coming out of elections in the main political arena. This process has several other accompanying phenomenon: for example, good results for smaller political parties (opposition or non-Parliament) and worse results for the larger parties; decreased voter participation (especially as a result of strategic non-participation on the part of voters), and transfers of voter support from moderate to extreme parties. In 1998 Michael Marsh empirically tested the concept of second-order elections (Marsh 1998), while slightly modifying the concept, especially in the dimensions that tracked normative characteristics (especially problematic and difficult to operate, according to Marsh, was the category of extremist parties). The result of Marsh's research in the West European context generally confirmed the original thesis by Reif and Schmitt.

At the same time it is noteworthy that mainstream research into two consecutive elections in a single (typically – but not necessarily – national) level of government was working with completely different analytical categories than research on European elections. The focus of research on the dynamic of electoral competition and electoral changes was often its *territorial*, not its *functional* aspects. Three factors have gradually (Jones-Mainwaring 2003, Caramani 2004, Morgenstern-Polthoff 2005) come to the fore: *volatility*, or the change in structure of party support within the studied electoral units as a whole between elections, *party nationalization*, or degree of homogeneity/heterogeneity in party support within the framework of the component territorial sub-units of electoral competition, typically election districts, but also regions, provinces, etc.); and *district-time effect*, the degree of uniformity in the distribution of changes in patterns of electoral support between

two subsequent elections within the same election district. Morgenstern and Polthoff were the first to theoretically and empirically identify volatility, party nationalization, and district-time effect as three analytically different factors that in a methodological sense can be assumed a priori to be absolutely mutually independent of one another.

No research on elections to the EP (whether of one country or comparatively) that we know of has dealt with all three of these territorial aspects of electoral competition systematically, and the independent research on European elections in the Central European countries in 2004 was also given very little attention (exception: Chan 2005). In the following passages, therefore, we will examine the suitability of transferring the concept of second-order elections to Central European election competition for analysis of election support of Eurosceptic parties in the V4 countries for the EP elections in 2004; we will also suggest some possibilities for expansion of research on territorial dimensions of electoral support.

5.2. Data, methods

We included in the research the 8 political parties from the V4 countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia) most often identified with hard or soft Euroscepticism. The CR is represented by the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) and the Communist Party of Czech and Moravia (KSCM); Hungary by the Union of Young Democrats (FIDESZ-MMP); Poland by SelfDefence (SO), Law and Justice (PiS) and the League of Polish Families (LPR); Slovakia by the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia-People's Party (HZDS-ĽS) and the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH). Only parties that won seats in elections to the EP were included in the study.

We examined the results for these parties in the EP elections of June 2004 in light of results from previous elections to the lower house of parliament (Poland 2001; Hungary, Slovakia 2002). To maintain synchronic and diachronic comparability (comparison of territorial aspects of election at two levels of government), we consider examination the following three factors as being the *sine qua non* of research design:

1. electoral systems used
2. size of electoral district
3. problems specific to various electorates (size, composition).

For elections to national parliaments and to the EP, various systems are used in the individual countries studied: (see Tab.2)

Table 2. *Comparison of electoral systems to national parliaments and the EP in the V4 countries.*

| Country | Type of election | Electoral system | Total mandates | Electoral districts | Size of electoral districts | Average size of electoral districts | Electoral threshold for awarding of seats, electoral formula |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Czech Republic | Lower house | list proportional | 200 | 14 | 6-25 | 14,3 | 5%, d'Hondt |
| | EP | list proportional | 24 | 1 | 24 | 24 | 5%, d'Hondt |
| Hungary | Lower house | super-mixed (only average element) | 386 | 20 | 4-28 | 7,6 | 5%, Hagenbach-Bischoff |
| | EP | list proportional | 24 | 1 | 24 | 24 | 5%, d'Hondt |
| Poland | Lower house | list proportional | 460 | 41 | 4-19 | 11,2 | 5%, modified St-Lagüe |
| | EP | list proportional | 54 | 13 | 3-13 | 4,1 | 5%, d'Hondt, mandates allocated on the basis of national results |
| Slovakia | lower house | list proportional | 150 | 1 | 150 | 150 | 5%, Hagenbach-Bischoff, highest remainder |
| | EP | list proportional | 14 | 1 | 14 | 14 | 5%, Droop quota |

Source: Chytilek-Sedo 2004, authors' archive.

With some simplification it can be said that the mechanics of electoral systems for elections to the EP are more permissive (i.e. voters are less often forced to vote for other than their most preferred party) in the Czech Republic and Hungary, and also in Poland, where allocation of mandates is based on national-level returns. Less permissive is Slovakia, because of the smaller size of electoral districts. This difference in electoral system permissivity is theoretically less pronounced in the CR, Slovakia, and Poland; in Hungary it may give some support to the smaller parties, which are somewhat disadvantaged under the election regime to the lower chamber.

A condition for research on territorial aspects of changes in the electorate is identifying comparable territorial electoral units. In our research in the case of the CR we examined support for parties in 14 regions, in 19 counties and the capital of Budapest in Hungary, 13 electoral units in Poland comparable to the EP electoral districts and more or less match the counties, and in 8 regions in Slovakia.⁴ The size of units was selected so as to 1) assure the availability of electoral results and 2) to allow for methodologically correct

⁴ Specifically these territories: CR – Capital city of Prague and regions Central Bohemia, Pilsen, South Bohemia, Karlovy Vary, Liberec, Ústí nad Labem, Hradec Králové, Pardubice, Czech-Moravian Highlands, South Moravia, Olomouc, Moravia-Silesia, and Zlín. Hungary – capital city of Budapest and districts Baranya, Bács-Kiskun, Békés, Borsod, Csongrád, Fejér, Győr-Moson-Sopron, Hajdú-Bihar, Heves, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok, Nógrád, Pest, Somogy, Szabolcz-Szatmár-Bereg, Tolna, Vas, Veszprém, Zala. Poland – election districts Gdansk, Bydgoszcz, Olsztyn, Warsaw I, Warsaw II, Lodz, Poznan, Lublin, Rzeszow, Krakow, Katowice, Wroclaw, Gorzow. SR – regions Bratislava, Trnava, Nitra, Žilina, Trenčín, Banská Bystrica, Prešov, Košice.

comparability between countries, guaranteed by convergence in the number of electoral districts.⁵

Comparing different elections and electorates presents a serious problem. Here we can disregard the fairly marginal number of citizens of one member state who vote and run for office in a different country where they have permanent residence (this privilege does not always extend to the lower chamber of parliament). The real problem is marked differences in participation in European and national elections (Tab.3)

Table 3. *Participation in subsequent elections to lower houses of parliament and the EP*

| Country/voter turnout | Lower house (%) | EP (%) |
|-----------------------|-----------------|--------|
| CR | 58 | 29.7 |
| Hungary | 70,5 | 38.5 |
| Poland | 46,3 | 20.4 |
| SR | 70 | 16.7 |

Source: authors' archive.

Differences in voter turnout have a fairly marked effect on party volatility if we assume (like Reif and Schmitt) that the motivations of the voter pool of individual parties are dissimilar to those in the European elections. The influence of lower turnout on party nationalization and the district time effect are less direct, and it can be assumed that it does not distort the substantive conclusions of the research.⁶

In view of the fact that the research compared party entities of different sizes, we used their standardized values for the degree of volatility of individual parties (absolute values of difference between result in parliamentary elections and elections to the EP). For calculation of party nationalization we used the Gini index, which has proven of pivotal value in work on the topic (Jones-Mainwaring 2003, Bochsler 2005). As an indicator of the degree of uniformity in electoral changes on the level of sub-state territorial units, we found for each party in each territorial unit the relationship between result in parliamentary elections and elections to the EP, and calculated a standard deviation for the set of relationships for each party. In each of the three dimensions we then created on the basis of geometric average a dichotomic variable low/high. This created 8 (2x2x2) analytic categories mapping out the possible configurations of territorial support for Eurosceptic parties.

5.3. Substantive findings

The hypotheses of Reif and Schmitt on the concept of second-order elections applies almost always to national-level elections, not to the local district level; therefore even in the case of the Eurosceptic parties, results from the national level are used (see Tab.4).

⁵ Daniele Caramani (Caramani 2004) points out a methodological problem with synchronic comparison between elections if each of the units is represented by a significantly different number of districts (because of quantitative regression towards average).

⁶ For this effect to be significant, voter turnout must change non-uniformly in the individual districts.

Table 4. *Visegrad 4 countries. Share of vote for Eurosceptic parties in parliamentary elections taking place before elections to EP and in elections to EP.*

| Party | Position before elections to EP | Share of vote for parliament (%) | Share of vote to EP (%) |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| KSČM | opposition | 18,5 | 20,3 |
| ODS | opposition | 24,5 | 30,0 |
| FIDESZ-MMP | opposition | 41,1 | 47,4 |
| LPR | opposition | 7,9 | 15,9 |
| PiS | opposition | 9,5 | 12,7 |
| SO | opposition | 10,2 | 10,7 |
| HZDS-ĽS | opposition | 19,5 | 17,0 |
| KDH | governing | 8,2 | 16,2 |

Source: authors' archive.

Comparison of results shows that applying the concept of "second-order elections" with all its characteristics to the V4 countries is probably not completely possible. The prediction of lower voter turnout was the only one fulfilled; in the case of gains for government parties and losses for opposition parties, only the Czech, Hungarian, and Polish parties fulfill the prognosis of the German authors, while the formula was reversed in Slovakia (the government KDH gained, while the opposition HZDS-ĽS lost). Most problematic is the prediction of gain by small parties and loss for big parties: in the elections support also grew for the big parties FIDESZ-MMP and ODS, each of which represents one of the main poles of party competition on its national level. Also remarkable are the gains by the Polish opposition parties, even though the country was not in the middle of but three quarters of the way through the electoral cycle. This overview is not exhaustive; the example of the Eurosceptic parties in the V4 countries indicates, however, that Reif and Schmitt's original definition of the characteristics of second-order elections represented more of an empirical generalization of the situation in Western Europe, and has significantly limited heuristic potential for elections in the new member states.⁷ The main reasons are the (so far) much more volatile and generally unstable conditions in Eastern Europe, which do not allow Reif and Schmitt's concept, based as it is on electoral near-stasis, to be fully developed.⁸

Examining the territorial aspects of party support is a more fruitful operation. While the degree of volatility was low with some parties (SO, KSČM), with others (KDH, LPR) there were marked changes in electoral support. Results from the territorial units also show that degree of nationalization of Eurosceptic parties varies. While Hungarian and Czech parties can be described as highly nationalized⁹, the Slovak and Polish parties showed significantly lower values for party nationalization¹⁰, while in the case of the Polish SO there was actually a marked *denationalization* of party support compared to the previous parliamentary elections.

Likewise for the district-time effect, the Czech and Hungarian parties show high uniformity of change on the level of electoral districts, while the HZDS-ĽS in Slovakia also tends in that direction. The Polish parties and the KDH, on the other hand, show highly

⁷ Our argument is also defensible after analytic expansion of the concept of second-order elections outside the Eurosceptic parties. For example, in Slovakia the parties of the governing coalition made general gains, while the opposition parties lost support.

⁸ Reif and Schmitt implicitly assume that government parties will react to election results with changes in the area of *policy*. The results are limited to small changes in subsequent first-order elections.

⁹ Index of nationalization (I-G) was, in elections to the EP: 0.94 in the case of FIDESZ-MMP, 0.93 in the case of the ODS, and 0.92 with the KSČM. Also noteworthy is the fact that the degree of nationalization of all three parties was greater than in previous elections, which would correspond to the conclusion of D. Caramani that levels of party nationalization tend to increase over time.

¹⁰ Index of nationalization for the HZDS-ĽS and KDH was 0.84, for the LPR 0.86, for the PiS 0.84, for the SO only 0.80.

uneven changes in distribution within the electoral districts.¹¹ The data also show an interesting anomaly linked to the development of electoral support in the capital cities, the trend of which in the cases of the ODS, FIDESZ, HZDS-ĽS, and all three Polish parties was different from that of the rest of the country; only the KSCM and the KDH did not deviate from the average.¹² This finding could indicate some specific electoral behavior by the voters in the metropolitan areas in relation to the Eurosceptic parties.

On the basis of these three variables (volatility, district-time effect, and party nationalization), the parties under study could be classified in regard to their support in the territorial dimension (see Tab. 5).

Table 5. *Classification of parties according to dimensions of electoral change*

| | | High volatility | | Low volatility | |
|---|------|---------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-----------|
| | | Degree of nationalization | | Degree of nationalization | |
| | | high | low | high | low |
| Uniformity of electoral change within electoral districts | high | | | FIDESZ ODS KSCM | HZDS-ĽS |
| | low | | LPR KDH | | SO PiS |

According to Morgenstern-Polthoff 2005

While the CR and Hungary are in terms of distribution of support of party Euroscepticism territorially very homogeneous, Slovakia and Poland are territorially very heterogeneous in support for Eurosceptic parties. In the case of Poland this situation is especially interesting, where the LPR acts as a territorially “floating” party; the share of the vote for the PiS and SO in the two elections saw little change in support on a national level, but significant changes in the character of distribution of support within the electoral districts, which took place in a territorially heterogeneous manner.

5.4. Discussion. Conclusion

On the basis of the results presented here in the context of three dimensions, it would be tempting to expand our conclusion to say that in both territorially non-homogenous (in terms of distribution of party Euroscepticism) states, there exist on the electoral level territorially-defined *substate* identities, which vary in degree of support for Euroscepticism.

However, this conclusion is open to dispute both empirically and methodologically. Karen Henderson does so implicitly in case studies of Slovakia (Henderson 2004), as does Aleks Szczerbiak in the case of Poland (Szczerbiak 2004); they show that in none of the countries under study was the European question a prominent part of the election campaign, and that nearly all of the political parties in the running took very similar positions on the

¹¹ The PiS, for example, in the election districts of Gdansk and Krakow, lost support compared to the 2001 elections, while in the district of Rzeszów it more than doubled its result. Similar anomalies occurred with other Polish parties, and to a certain degree the KDH in Slovakia as well.

¹² In the European elections the ODS in Prague saw a similar result as in parliamentary elections; on the contrary, FIDESZ got more support in Budapest than in the rest of the country; the HZDS-ĽS gained in Bratislava while losing in the other regions; In Warsaw the SO lost support while tending to gain in the rest of the country, and the PiS and LPR experienced smaller gains than in the rest of Poland.

issues¹³. In the case of Poland it is possible to explain the territorially heterogeneous reaction of the electorate by noting that there was extensive reformulation of program identity in 2001-2004 by all three of the parties being studied (see Palovský 2006: 51-58, Strmiska-Hloušek-Kopeček-Chytilek 2005: 520-526); also, in all of the individual district the parties presented a new list of candidates.¹⁴

The methodology of political science research on territorial fluctuations in party support is in its infancy. Richard Webber (Webber 2006) for example distinguishes between four types of factors that contribute to territorially heterogeneous electoral changes (Tab. 6)

Table 6. *Factors that contribute to territorially non-uniform electoral changes*

| Type of factor | Indicators |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Political | Intensity of campaign Personality of candidate Changes in party program or ideological orientation Changed status of party in district on another level of government |
| Social | Changed reaction of social groups to political message Change in local media market |
| Geographic, demographic | Change in unemployment rate Migration Local industrial situation |
| Systemic | Voter turnout Constellation of parties in district |

Webber 2006, abbreviated.

On top of this multi-factor concept, Webber stresses the necessity for study over a longer period than just two elections as a necessary condition for determining the relative strength of these individual factors. It is probable then that the possible causes of the two anomalies we have identified in our text (the case of Poland, and electoral support for Eurosceptic parties in the capitals) will be better clarified after the next sequence of national and EP elections, which will provide an impetus for further research on the relationship between European and national elections as concerns party politics.

¹³ In the case of Slovakia all the parties pledged to “defend national interests” in the EP, while, in the case of Poland the right-wing opposition largely supported the hard-line position of the leftist government toward the EU during pre-accession talks. The Polish campaign was then dominated by the ongoing government crisis and speculation about early elections, i.e., domestic political issues (see. Sczerbiak 2004).

¹⁴ On the contrary, in the CR, Hungary, and Slovakia national ballots were used for elections to the EP.

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