

The CEU Center for EU Enlargement Studies (CENS), and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation cordially invite you to the conference:

“The Radical Right in East Central Europe: Yesterday and Today”

May 10th (Thursday) 2012 at 11 am – approx. 2pm
CEU, Monument Building, Popper Room

Welcome remarks and chair:

Péter Balázs, Director of CENS,
former Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs

Keynote speaker:

Prof. Gert Weisskirchen, Lecturer, Willy Brandt Graduate
School of Public Policy, University Erfurt

Speakers:

Grigorij Mesežnikov (Slovakia, IVO)
Gábor Egry (Hungary, Political History Institute)
Mark Littler (United Kingdom, DEMOS)
Jan Charvát (Czech Republic, Charles University)
Áron Szele (Hungary, CENS)

Please confirm your participation by 8th June to:
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Abstracts:

Gert Weisskirchen: The radical right and democracy in Europe

In times of ongoing crises, ideologies of the extremist right seem to find spots in unstable sections of societies in which they can grow. Although in reality, the goals, the practices and the views of right extremists are contradictory in local, national and continental settings, they are in a first stage aiming at to overthrow democracy in Europe. A new form of fascism is in the making. Its hard core unfolds the old prejudice, that humanity, liberty and universality are existential enemies of the 'traditional' authoritarian order, rooted inside the primordial dominance of races. Anti-Semitism, Anti-Zyganism and Xenophobia are therefore the commonly shared patterns of any right extremist. The new emerging extreme right in Europe is also working against the existing paradigm shift towards an era of multiple modernity's by reorganizing fascism on national and European levels through expressing its effort to reconstitute an ideology of 'white supremacy'. It is high time to analyze by all scientific methods available that dangerous rebellion against European values, to create preventive political tools to foster democracy and to strengthen civil societies in their fight against this evil before this enemy gains too much ground.

Grigorij Mesežnikov: The European discourse of the right in Slovakia

European discourse in Slovakia in the last two years was marked by political discussions around common currency issue and country's participation in mechanism of euro stabilization. Eventually, the collapse of the center-right government of Iveta Radičová in October 2011 and early parliamentary election in March 2012 represented the consequences of immediate penetration of EU policies/EU agenda into Slovak domestic politics. Pre-election campaign offered political forces, including radical nationalists and extremists, opportunity to present their stances on European integration, EU and its policies. For radical nationalist Slovak National Party (SNS) 2012 elections result meant fiasco: party dropped out from the parliament with 4.55% of votes. Extra-parliamentary far-right extremist party ĽS-NS (People Party – Our Slovakia, alias Slovenská pospolitost' /Slovak Community) succeeded to increase its gain compare to the previous elections (from 1.33% to 1.58%). Indeed, no European agenda was the main factor that influenced the outputs of elections, including results of SNS and ĽS-NS, both playing ethnic card (Hungarian and Roma), however, the radical nationalists and extremists again demonstrated their undeniably hostile attitude to European norms and values. They remained as xeno- and Europhobic as before.

Egry Gábor: A colony forever? Economic nationalism, national sovereignty and economic integration in the discourse of the political right in Hungary

The idea of Europe is increasingly bound to economic integration, a process of transforming national economies into a European economic sphere and this way relocating sovereignty from nation states to the EU. National sovereignty is one of the key issues of nationalist discourses and economic nationalism can't be but relational as its aim is to establish a self-sustaining economy of the nation. Thus, radical nationalist discourses necessarily tackle the issue of economic independence and an important tenet of their economic discourse is an attempt to define the national economy's relationship with the EU. The paper's aim is to map

these discourses in the Hungarian context, not limited strictly to the radical right, as such ideas can be found throughout the political spectrum. My approach is based on the concept and traditions of economic nationalism. Several forms of this current of thinking appeared in the 20th century, making a thorough analysis of continuity and its disruption crucial for understanding this phenomenon.

Jan Charvát: Akce DOST - against the European Union and the Anti-Discrimination Act

Akce DOST (Enough) represents relatively new phenomenon on the Czech far right. Akce DOST was established in 2007, first as an initiative protesting against the adoption Anti-Discrimination law and also against the Lisbon Treaty. Its founders came from conservative-authoritarian right-wing and Catholic orthodoxy milieu, which is not very typical within the Czech far right. The main theme of the Akce DOST is a long-term resistance to the European Union, allowing common ground not just with others subjects of the political right (not just far right), but also with Czech President Vaclav Klaus. Akce DOST is not associated with traditional structures of "extreme" right (neo-Nazism), which enables it to report to the legacy of Czech patriotism, and anticommunism and conservatism. With the support of President Klaus Akce DOST is the most successful subject of Czech far right today.

Szele Áron: Radical visions of Europe in 20-21st century Hungary

The presentation shall focus on a historical comparison between the attitude displayed by Hungarian radical right wing movements toward supranational construction and the European idea. Through the use of ethnicism, geopolitics and socio-economic populism, radical right wing parties and movements not only display a critical stance toward Europe, but also construct alternative visions of it. The European question is one they could not eschew in the past or at present times. My presentation shall focus on the main critical points and the alternative constructions of "the Europe of nations", and the attempt of radical right wing parties to find international support and fellow travelers.

Mark Littler: Quantifying the populist right: Findings from a quantitative study of the English Defence League

The growth of far-right and populist activity in Europe has been accompanied by a growth in academic research interest, much of which has sought to use qualitative approaches to understand the demographics and attitudes of populist group's members. The lack of publicly available membership listings has hampered the development of similar quantitative research, however the significant levels of social media usage by such groups presents a means of addressing these difficulties. Presenting the findings from a large-scale Demos survey of EDL members in the United Kingdom, this presentation will seek to offer an insight into the group's demographic and attitudinal attributes, alongside a discussion of the research opportunities presented by the far-right's extensive use of social media.