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European perspective and legal framework of death penalty

Rudolf Hnidka*

Trnava University in Trnava, Faculty of philosophy and arts, Trnava, Slovakia

Abstract:

Purpose and Originality: The purpose of this research is to find out what is European union doing for the abolition of the death

Method: We used analytical and descriptive method and collected data mainly from EU's online official sources on legal framework of the death penalty and organized them in chronological order as they entered in to legislation in the following chapters.

Results: Based on the theoretical explanation of the issue of the death penalty and with outlining of basic international and European treaties on the death penalty, we concluded that the EU in the issue of the death penalty creates its own contracts and demarches and through their action plans and public statements is trying to regulate and gradually eliminate the death penalty from legislation of individual states.

Society: In the 21st century the death penalty is quite often used but also abused and it is important as far as it is possible to enlighten the public with this issue

Limitations / further research: It is close to impossible to gather direct sources especially from the states where this issue is of highest importance and the resources they are providing are distorted

Keywords: human rights, punishment, criminal policy, death penalty, abolition, European Union.

1 Introduction

During the past death penalty has been a common practice in many countries. Even though countries used it to varying degrees there was always controversy around the subject of death penalty. After a reduced use of death penalty, many countries stopped executing criminals altogether and others made conscious choice to continue their executions.

We think that the subject of death penalty is attractive and interesting both from political and legal standpoint as well as ethic, moral and philosophic point of view. Simultaneously, the death penalty is an exceptionally controversial topic which is one of the main reasons why we have chosen this subject.

In 2015 a major increase in death penalty execution was recorded in comparison with previous years despite the fact that number of international and non-governmental organisations fight for the abolition of death penalty.

This increase is concerning mainly due to the fact that there is an annual increase in number of countries which repealed the capital punishment from their legislative and joined the worldwide fight for the abolition of death penalty.

Despite the fact that many nations and states abolished the death penalty and declare the conviction that the capital punishment belongs to the past, there is still a considerable amount of states where the death penalty is still exercised and practised to this day. The reason for concern in this case is the fact, that throughout the world many historically dated methods of

* Korespondenčni avtor / Correspondence author

execution are performed. These methods of inhuman character include beheading, hanging or being stoned to death. Besides these methods, some states, including USA, incorporate modern technology and scientific knowledge into execution and perform death penalty in the form of electrocution or lethal injection.

In historic context, the death penalty was important for society, whether as a symbol of warning and deterrence or for achieving the sense of justice and restitution. However, in the present, modern society, we have reached the stage, when moral and ethic values should mean more than a sense of empty justice, not to mention the possibilities of real restitution of the convict either in the form of therapy or medication. The penal and judicial systems are not immaculate and it is already deplorable enough to condemn an innocent person to imprisonment, but to execute such person simply should not be possible.

In the opening of this thesis we examine the criminal policy and its legal definition. What is the function of criminal policy in society and what are its options and limitations. We also define punishment within the criminal policy and try to explain its importance for the society as a form of protection and for functioning of the state as such. We define the methods of punishment where we reach the important subject for us, the death penalty. What is the death penalty, what is its definition within criminal policy and what are its consequences. Why does the society intermittently open up the death about the possible establishment of the death penalty.

In the following segment we examine the documents and treaties important for international support of the human rights and the abolition of death penalty, how the legal definition of death penalty developed over time and we also mention treaties of purely regional character, which hold importance for EU exclusively and its position towards the death penalty.

This leads us to ask the question: “What is EU currently doing to ensure the worldwide abolition of the death penalty?”

2 Method

2.1 Criminal policy

In modern society, it is necessary to protect democratic and moral values, as well as the rights and the legitimate interests of individuals and legal entities, and last but not least, the establishment of a constitutional state. For this to happen criminal policy as part of the public policy was established. With the help of criminal policy, state is trying to create a system, which would lead to the effective protection of interests of the public and to prevent encroachment of the social coexistence. It is generally considered that the level of protection of fundamental human and civil rights and freedoms, which the state is willing and able to ensure is declared in its definition of criminal policy. Criminal policy of the states is influenced by several factors among which we may mention the economic advancement of the state, social environment, cultural traditions and the most important protection of the human rights.

Criminal policy of the state is given expression especially in its criminal legislation, the substantive and procedural systems, arrangement of bodies and institutions providing the application of criminal laws and the practical work of these bodies. For this paper we understand policy primarily as activity that leads to setting goals and forms of action in public affairs; we then understand criminal policy as an activity intended to create and use the means of criminal law.

P. Rock describes criminal policy (as cited Soľoníková, 2011) as an organized process, during which ideas of public actors and specialists are transformed into practical precautions executed in the system of criminal policy.

G. Kaiser defines criminal policy (as cited Soľoníková, 2011) as "criminal part of the social protection of legal goods", which uses mainly norms, principles and means of criminal law.

2.2 Punishment

Generally it can be stated that each society creates a certain set of sanctions in response to undesirable behavior, for violation of established norms and values of the said society. With the development of the law a similar system is created, the criminal justice system, which determines what socially harmful acts are crimes, while also establishes penalties for committing these crimes. Generally, with the punishment a compliance is enforced with certain social norms (Brooks, 2012).

Punishment is thus a particular tool of state enforcement, serving to protect society and at the same time, along with political and economic tools important for the proper performance of the functions of the state. Primarily punishment should meet the requirement of an effective and appropriate response to the crime committed.

„Punishment can be defined as a legal consequence of the crime, expressing a negative assessment of the offender and the offense, acting as a tool of achieving the purpose of criminal law, executed exclusively by criminal court, whose performance is enforceable by state power" (Kuchta, J. Schelle, K., 1982, p. 17).

In modern societies there are several kinds of penalties: imprisonment, house arrest, community service, forfeiture, fines, confiscation of assets, prohibition of activities, residence ban, loss of honorary titles and awards, loss of military rank and expulsion, but in some countries, in addition to the mentioned even today, there is also the death penalty, which can be executed in several possible forms.

2.3 Death penalty

The death penalty is irreversible and absolute punishment and in terms of both theory and practice is the highest form of punishment because there is no greater punishment than the death penalty.

The death penalty is usually applied in cases of the most serious crimes, but unfortunately many people in the world face the death penalty for absurd crimes such as political or religious beliefs - even for atheism, sexual orientation, etc., and often the execution of particularly brutal methods such as beheading, stoning, beating, hanging etc.

Death penalty is one of the possible punishments for the offender which was formed in the hundreds of years old development of the penal system and which has its place in the system

of criminal penalties until today even though the first abolition of the death penalty happened in ancient Rome. „In this often very complex system of criminal sanctions, death penalty played undoubtedly specific role as the maximum punishment or absolute punishment now referred to as exceptional punishment“ (Kuchta, J. Schelle, K., 1982, p. 22). Thus, it is known because of its finality – after the execution of the death penalty it is not possible for potential remedies in (the) case of a conviction of an innocent man, in the case of judicial error which often ends up as judicial murder

In many countries of the world during the 19th and 20th centuries death penalty has become totally or partially banned, or at least in practice not performed punishment of perpetrators of serious crimes. As stated by Kuchta and Schelle (1982) „It is generally recognized that, especially in unconsolidated societies criminal legislation can not abandon the death penalty if it does not wish to weaken their efficiency. It is through the death penalty that superiority of the state over its individuals can be best manifested“ (p.24).

"The question of the death penalty today is among the issues of criminal policy, as evidenced by the non-uniformed attitude of the countries worldwide. Generally it can be said that capital punishment meets with the rejection of large part of professionals, while rest of the society often favors the death penalty" (Navrátilová, J., 2010, p.256). In some states it even leads to its reintroduction, or to frequent debates over this possibility. Typically, if someone commits extremely brutal and violent crime, it revives a public debate whether it would be appropriate to reintroduce the death penalty as a legal means to punish these offenders.

2.4 International perception of the death penalty

The death penalty is in the attention of many international organizations and its legislation had to be established in international treaties. From the beginning these acts of international law were for recommendation purposes only and states governed by them at their discretion, but today they are mostly, for States acceding to them, mandatory.

Universal declaration of human rights is the most known document governing human rights and is a creation of the United Nations (UN), adopted by its General Assembly on December 10, 1948 in Paris.

The declaration does not directly modifies the death penalty, but contains important articles concerning the right to life and the refusal of the granting of cruel punishments.

Article no.3 claim that: „Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person“ (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). Then Article no. 5 claim: „No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.“ (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). Although the declaration does not explicitly mention the death penalty, it was an important step forward for its further international legislation.

Regarding the actual abolition of the death penalty there are these four most important international agreements

The first is the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which, together with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights follows the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights was adopted by the UN in 1966 in New York and for the contracting parties is not a mere act of an advisory nature, but already fully binding legal regulation. Its contents are only civil and political rights, as the name suggests, and in the context of civil rights is already covered legislation relating to the death penalty.

Article no. 6 of this document claim: „Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life... In countries which have not abolished the death penalty, sentence of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes in accordance with the law in force at the time of the commission of the crime“ (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966). The death penalty is prohibited for persons under 18 years of age and pregnant women and it is also prohibited for a situation that its execution means genocide in that case it can not be implemented under any circumstances. The following Article no. 7 claim: „No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In particular, no one shall be subjected without his free consent to medical or scientific experimentation“ (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966).

The second one is the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (hereinafter ICCPR), adopted by the General Assembly December 15, 1989 and effective as of July 11, 1991. This agreement is also the only one of global nature. It introduces the abolition of the death penalty but allows states to retain the option of imposing the death penalty in time of war, if they ask for such possibility in time of accession or ratification of the document. A party can become each Party of ICCPR (Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1989).

2.5 European perception of the death penalty – European Union and the death penalty

The following contracts are not of international nature but strictly European and are supportive contracts for the European Union.

Protocol no. 6 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms has effect on European soil and was adopted by the Member States of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg on April 28, 1983 and entered into force on April 1, 1985. This protocol abolishes the death penalty but, like the Second Optional Protocol of the ICCPR, leaves the possibility of exception: In the following situation Article no. 2 claim: „A State can make provision in its law for the death penalty in respects of acts committed in time of war or of imminent threat of war; such penalty shall be applied only in the instances laid down in the law and in accordance with its provisions. The State shall communicate to the secretary General of the council of Europe the relevant provisions of that law“ (European Convention on Human Rights Sixth Protocol to the Convention, 1983). Articles no. 3 and no. 4

respectively claims that no derogation or reservation from the provisions of this Protocol shall be made. Article no. 5 then claim that any State may specify the territory or territories to which this Protocol shall apply and any later day may any State extend the application of this Protocol to any other territory specified in the declaration (European Convention on Human Rights Sixth Protocol to the Convention, 1983).

It continued with protocol no. 13 to the European Convention on Human Rights, which was adopted by the Member States of the Council of Europe May 3, 2002 in Vilnius and is valid from July 1, 2003 and is abolishing the death penalty in all circumstances (Protocol no. 13 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, concerning the abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances, 2002).

In the founding documents of the EU, ie in primary law, until the Treaty of Lisbon we would find only very limited references to human rights protection. Since the protection of human rights were not among the original objectives and purposes, in which Community originated, we will hardly find any references to human rights in the founding documents (Šišková, N., 2008). Moreover, it is important to realize that since the beginning of the European integration efforts after the second world war the Council of Europe existed, for which, on the contrary, the protection of human rights has been the leading agenda.

The first significant shift on the issue of protection of human rights constituted the Single European Act in 1986 within which this commitment was contained in the preamble of this document. The biggest "boom" in the human rights policy of the EU are the 90th and 00th years. It is connected partly with changes in the international environment, but it also reflects the dynamics of the whole European integration.

In the Treaty on European Union (the Maastricht Treaty) was first mentioned some protection of the human rights contained directly in the text of the Treaty, but the issue of the death penalty has yet to be mention. Part of the Amsterdam revision is the Declaration on the abolition of the death penalty, which refers to the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. The statement notes that in the Member States, capital punishment has been ceased and the Union hereby encourages the Member States to its formal repeal.

In the year 2000 the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union was drafted. Its original legal binding was however nonexistent, because it was attached to the Nice Treaty as a non-binding political declaration. Thanks to Lisbon Treaty it later become the primary source of European Union law, however formally it is a separate document and not a part of Lisbon Treaty. Article 2 claim: Everyone has the right to life. No one shall be condemned to the death penalty, or executed (Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 2000). So here it is finally a legal regulation of absolute prohibition of the death penalty in all cases.

In the 2012 the EU's first Strategic Framework on the Human Rights and Democracy- sets out priorities was launched, principles and objectives designed to make better effectiveness and consistency of EU human right policy as a whole. With this new strategic frame work EU has confirmed its commitment to promote and protect all human rights. Guideline provides an

agreed base for collective effort which includes EU Memberstates and EU institutions (European Union Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, 2012).

In July 2015 a new action plan was adopted for the period 2015-2019 based on the examination of the first plan and the policy guidelines of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federici Mogherini. In both plans it is clearly defined that the EU will continue its long-standing campaign against the death penalty and also in the campaign against torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment through political and human rights dialogues, support to partner countries and independent national prevention mechanisms.

Under these measures EU will be working in close cooperation with the UN, regional organisations and civil society, promote the ratification and implementation of its Optional Protocol (OPCAT), and the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (European Union Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, 2015).

On the official website of the European Union- EUROPA all information about the attitude towards the death penalty is presented. The European Union holds a strong and principled position against the death penalty; its abolition is a key objective for the Union's human rights policy. Abolition is, of course, also a pre-condition for entry into the Union. Former EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission – Catherine Ashton declared: "Since 1983, when the European Parliament (EP) began adopting an annual report and resolution on human rights, this House (EP) has done more than any EU institution to focus on the issue. So while we may sometimes disagree about how best to champion the respect for human rights globally, we stand united in our aim: to see a freer world, where people's dignity is respected – wherever they may be from– and for the EU, and the External Action Service in particular, to play a key role in supporting people's struggle for their rights" (Ashton, C., 2012).

Member states of the European Union have identical opinion on the subject of the death penalty. European Unions argument about abolition of the death penalty is based on the basic dignity and the inviolability of the every human person.

2.6 European Union and Third world countries

Council of Ministers adopted the main lines of policy to this topic on the third of June 1998 in Luxemburg - Guidelines to EU policy Towards Third Countries on the death penalty (Schmidt, J. R., 2007, p. 126-127). This document is a key document for the European Union policy in the fight against death penalty. This document formulated the basic standpoint of the European Union, also expressed short and long term goals of the policy, assigned appropriate instruments for achieving these goals and determined the minimum standard. The document refers to the European Union activities in the framework of the United Nation and also in other international organizations, especially in organizations for regional development such as

Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. European Union did clearly included abolition of the death penalty in this document, because abolition of the death penalty will positively contribute to the developing of human dignity and progressive development of human rights. Its goal is defined as a universal abolition of death penalty in the long term whilst European Union will try to convince the states, where death penalty still exist, that its implementation should be limited and in accordance with the minimum standards that were precisely stated in attached document.

2.7 European Union policy in respect to death penalty in Third world countries

We can divide instruments of this policy into two groups, general and individual. The general instruments are demarches and public declarations while individual instruments are special demarches in individual cases (Clapham, A., 2002, p. 628). General demarches of European Union have the task to raise awareness about death penalty in the dialogue with third world countries and call them for abolition of death penalty or at least for moratorium of death penalty. In the case that country insists on persistence of death penalty European Union will promote demarche, so that the punishment will be transparent and in compliance with the minimum standards. General demarche is directed to a third world country even in the case of inconsistency within the death penalty policy of this country, end of moratorium is coming or in the case of re-introduction of death penalty into legislative. Demarches or public declaration are also issued when country is taking steps towards abolition of the death penalty as an appreciation of that process (Clapham, A., 2002, p. 627-683).

The individual demarches are focused on the possible misuse of the death penalty, which violates minimum standards. European Union is also pointing out the problem of death penalty in many other ways. For example the actions which are not aimed directly to the third world countries are: the support of international organizations, taking appropriate steps for persuasion of countries to ratify and compile international standards related to death penalty, submission of this issue in international forums, cooperation with civil society which includes legal information and similar (Clapham, A., 2002, p. 627-683).

2.8 Amnesty International death penalty - 2015

Highest number of executions in 25 years

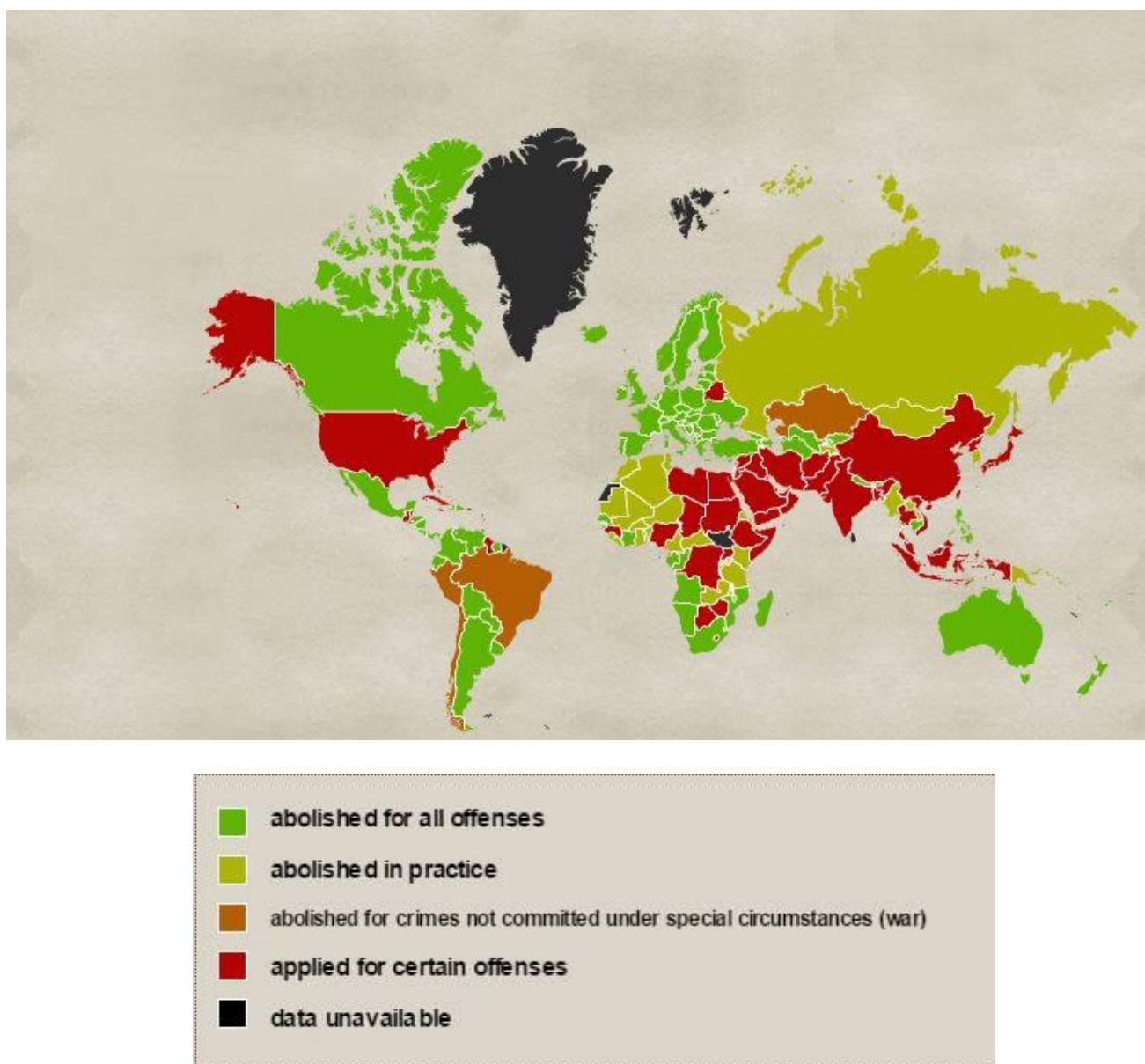
Amnesty International annual report recorded the highest number of death penalties in a quarter-century in 2015. Number rose by 54% compared to the year 2014 since 573 (1634 in total) more confirmed executions happened. It is essential to mention that China is excluded from these numbers because their executions remain as a state secret. China is also considered to be at the top of the charts considering executions. Out of 1634 confirmed executions 89% happened in 3 countries: Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. During the year 2015 four countries expunged the death penalty from their law books for good (sothat): Madagascar, Fiji, Suriname and Congo. Today more than half of the world countries are no longer executing people (in practice), but the number of countries that executed people rose from 22 in 2014 to 25 in 2015. 6 countries resumed executions as opposed to the year 2014: Bangladesh, Chad, India, Indonesia, Oman and South Sudan. Mongolia adopted a new Criminal Code outlawing

the death penalty for all crimes in December which will enter fully into law in September 2016. In confirmed executions Iran is the leader with the number of executions (is) 977, mainly for drug-related crimes.

Europe: Belarus remains the only country in the region to use the death penalty.

In 2015 no executions were recorded, at least two new death sentences were imposed. In 2016 Belarus has executed one person and condemned four more to death.

In 2015 almost 2000 people were sentenced to death and over 20 000 prisoners remain on death row at the end of the year 2015 (Amnesty International, 2016).



Picture: This map is representing attitude of the various states towards the death penalty (Amnesty International)

3 Results

With the analysis of international contracts between European Union and other organizations and States and the contracts concerning EU only, we can say that EU's policy about human rights and fundamental freedoms was present long before today, however the campaign towards global abolishment of the death penalty started recently. EU wants to expel the death penalty as a punishment for the crime and this cannot be explained in terms of economic gain because it is more likely that it will harm trade relations instead of improving them.

The EU considers that abolition of the death penalty contributes to the enhancement of human dignity and the progressive development of human rights. Where relevant, the European Union will raise the issue of the death penalty in its dialogues and consultations with the third world countries. Elements in these contacts will include:

- The EU's call for universal abolition of the death penalty, or at least for a moratorium.
- Where its use is maintained, the EU will emphasize that states should only use the death penalty in line with the provisions contained in the minimum standards based on the provisions contained in international human rights law

Where states insist on maintaining the death penalty, the EU considers it important that the following minimum standards should be met:

- Capital punishment may be imposed only for the most serious crimes; the death penalty should not be imposed for non-violent acts such as financial crimes, religious practice or expression of conscience.

Capital punishment may not be imposed on:

- Persons below 18 years of age at the time of the commission of their crime
- Pregnant women or new mothers;
- Persons who have become insane.

Anyone sentenced to death shall have an effective right to appeal to a court of higher jurisdiction. Where capital punishment occurs, it shall be carried out so as to inflict the minimum possible suffering. The death penalty should not be imposed as an act of political revenge.

EU uses general and individual instruments to abolish death penalty. General instruments are various demarches and public statements, which are addressed to the whole world and its role is to raise awareness about the death penalty and to conduct a dialog with the countries which uses the capital punishment. Individual instruments are specific demarches which are applied in factual (specific) cases

We reviewed the current state of the abuse of the death penalty based on the Amnesty International report. In the year 2015 they recorded substantial increase in the executions despite the fact, that currently more than half of the worlds countries are no longer executing people. Almost 2000 people were sentenced to death and over 20 000 prisoners remain on death row at the end of the year 2015.

4 Conclusion

This paper has discussed the role of criminal policy in modern society, what the punishment is used for and why it is important for maintaining smooth functioning of the state and to keep society safe. We mention various degrees of the punishments which brings us the topic of this paper, the death penalty. What is the importance of the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. We discussed what the European Union does to abolish the death penalty and why is it so important in a global measure. As it is written in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.”(Article 3). This is one of the most crucial statements concerning the death penalty.

The main question was “what is the European Union presently doing to abolish the death penalty globally and why?” The objectives of the EU concerning the death penalty abolition include: introducing a moratorium as a first step towards abolition; calling for the restrictions on death penalty where it is still used; the EU’s intervention on individual cases; allowing nongovernmental organizations to run campaigns for abolition of the capital punishment.

It should be noted that the EU is not the only actor in the campaign of the abolishment of the death penalty, international organizations like the Council of Europe, NGOs, other states and regional groups are also included and are actively promoting the human rights and abolishment of the death penalty

EU also is trying to make impact on other international organisation such as United Nations as it has special status in the UN meetings but it cannot act like one entity, instead its members states can decide to work together. EU had great contribution to the UN resolution on moratorium on the death penalty and its cooperation with the Council of Europe showed that abolition of death penalty is gradually accepted as an international standard. As a normative power EU is using mostly diplomatic and political instruments and incentives to exercise pressure on the addressed country and its government. These tools can be a promise of accession or association, institutionalisation through regional partnership and political dialogues at bilateral level.

As it is clear from the statistics of Amnesty International - despite successful efforts to reduce the number of countries carrying out the death penalty, the number of people executed increased in 2015 by more than 50% and it is therefore very important to continue in the efforts to abolish the death penalty globally.

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Rudolf Hnidka is a student in political science at Trnava University in Trnava, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts.

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The development and state regional policy in the V4 countries

Dominik Pristach*

Trnava University, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, Trnava, Hornopotočná 23, 917 01
dominik.pristach@gmail.com

Abstract:

- it provides an overview of the current state of development of regional policy in the European Union, which compares with developments in the countries of the Visegrad Group (Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland)
- it informs about the possibilities of regional, structural and cohesion European Union policy
- objectives and instruments of regional policy in the programming period 2007 – 2013
- What is NUTS regions and cohesion. in all countries analyzed evaluates and compares economic regions according to objective level verifiable indicators. They include gross domestic product (GDP) in purchasing power parity (PPP) 1 per capita and unemployment levels
- work describes the strategies, objectives, instruments, program and institutional framework of regional policy in individual countries.

Keywords: Regional Policy, Central European regional development, NUTS 2 regions, GDP at PPP, Visegrad Group

1 Introduction

The concept of regional policy is now in Slovakia, the often mentioned phrases. It is due to the fact that the term is associated with European issues and the European Union and Slovakia was only five years ago, on 1 May 2004 became a full member. This does not mean that there was no regional policy before, but systematically, the common solution to this long-term endeavor in particular States of the European Union. Slovakia now has the opportunity to draw on the experience of the "old" EU Member States to this issue and to use funds from its funds. The aim of this work is to clarify the development of regional policy of the European Union since the mid-20th century until 2009 and compare it with the evolution and current status in selected countries of Central Europe including Slovakia. We will try to specifically evaluate the national territory, taking into account the similar development of regional policy in the states so. Visegrad Group. This is a fairly large area, of which the States have a specific history and development of regional policy and development. Their development is similar especially from the 90s of the 20th century and continues even after the joint accession to the European Union in 2004. In the analysis, we deliberately have not included Germany, which regional policy would unduly broaden the scope of work. We will also address the regional, structural and cohesion policy and analysis on what the priorities are assigned in the programming period 2007 - 2013 and through which regional programs are implemented in the individual countries. We get what institutions redistribute money from EU funds, possible legislative framework of regional policy. Finally, we will attempt to explain and compare the economic level of regions and individual countries on the basis of objectively verifiable

* Korespondenčni avtor / Correspondence author

indicators. They are mainly economic indicators. As a main we chose the gross domestic product (GDP) respectively. Gross domestic product in purchasing power of the population (GDP at PPP). We will analyze and compare regional share of the total national GDP and created Moreover, unemployment or other indicators. The conclusion will try to compare the values of monitored indicators States themselves and with the average of European Union.

2. Regional and structural policy of the European Union

Under the regional policy can be understood management by the state and territorial institutions the scope of which tend towards the creation of favorable conditions for dynamic and versatile development of regions with maximum use of their geographic, human and economic potential (Rajčáková 2005). Regional policy is an integral part of macroeconomic policy State and is carried out in close coordination with sectoral policies, structural and urban policy, whilst itself as the regional dimension (Tvrdoň, Hamalová, Žárska 1995). Structural policy is one of the tools for achieving sustainable economic growth. Its objectives are conceived to support: macroeconomic stability and economic growth; increasing competitiveness of the economy; reduction the unemployment rate and improve the quality of life of citizens ([Http://www.vlada.gov.sk/infoservis_archiv.php?adm_action=13&ID=61](http://www.vlada.gov.sk/infoservis_archiv.php?adm_action=13&ID=61), 6.5.2008). Cohesion policy is a policy of economic and social cohesion. This policy brings the new Member States the benefits of cohesion, reducing disparities, increase competitiveness and improve the quality of life of their inhabitants.

2.1 Development of regional and structural policy

The beginnings of regional policy as we know it today dates back to 1957, when the founding states of the European Economic Community (France, Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg) signed the Treaty of Rome. The preamble of the document They are referring to the need "to strengthen the unity of their economies and to ensure their harmonious development reducing disparities between the various regions and the backwardness of disadvantaged Regions' (Delegation of the European Commission in Slovakia, 2002). The following year, 1958, on the basis of the Treaty, created the first two ministerial Funds: the European Social Fund (ESF European Social Fund) and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGF European Agricultural and Guarantee Fund)). The two funds are designed to promote the creation of common policies. At this time, part of the EU structural funds. These are instruments for the implementation of regional policy (Lipková, 2006). The most important institutions of regional policy based on the EEC Treaty, is without no doubt the European Investment Bank. The role of this institution is to contribute to the balanced and steady development of the common market. This is why EU regional policy in the 60s the last century, carried right through concessional loans from the European Investment Bank (Dudas, 2006).

In 1975 establishing the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF, European Regional Development Fund) for the purpose of allocating part of Member States' contributions to Budget poorer nations (Delegation of the European Commission in Slovakia, 2002), which were mostly newly acceding countries. To support the needs of defined regions lagging

behind in development: southern Italy, Ireland and even .; and regions in structural crisis following the decline of traditional Industry: regions of the United Kingdom and others. (Rajčáková, 2005). In 1986 was adopted the Single European Act, which laid the foundation for the unique cohesion policy aimed at removing barriers to the single market for southern countries and other disadvantaged regions (Delegation of the European Commission in Slovakia, 2002). In 1988, the Heads of State and Government adopted the proposal of the President of the Commission Jacques Delors action plan that provides for doubling the resources of the Structural Funds in the years 1987-1992 (Lipková, 2006). Structural assistance has been allocated 68 billion. ECU (at 1997 prices, Delegation of the European Commission in Slovakia, 2002). In 1989 it was launched the first reform of the Structural Funds. The reform approved the principle of multi-annual planning, prioritize development goals and has established partnerships with States as well as other economic entities (Lipková, 2006).

The shaping of the EU structural policy has contributed significantly and the Maastricht Treaty - The Treaty on European Union, which outlines the prospects for further development of the EC in the post Completing the single market with the major goals - strengthening economic and social Cohesion members of the European Community (Rajčáková, 2005). This agreement entered into force in 1993. On that basis was established by the Cohesion Fund (CF, Cohesion Fund - Cohesion Fund). The beneficiaries of the Cohesion Fund, in contrast to the Structural Funds There are regions, but the state. EU Treaty strengthened structural funds itself when it establishes a financing Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG). It strengthens the institutional and regional coverage policy by the EU Treaty based Committee of the Regions. This consultative body established in 1994, representatives of individual EU regions under it say in European Lawmaking (Dudas, 2006).

In 1997 the European Commission adopted an Action Agenda 2000, which He presented the most important problems related to EU enlargement, the political reform and financial perspective. ([Http://www.euroinfo.gov.sk/index/go.php?id=1129](http://www.euroinfo.gov.sk/index/go.php?id=1129), 28.3.2009). In 1997, was also signed Treaty of Amsterdam confirmed the importance cohesion and stressed the need for cooperation in reducing unemployment (Delegation of the European Commission in Slovakia, 2002). In March 1999, the Heads of State and Government at the Summit in Berlin, a second reform of the Structural Funds (after the first in 1989). Priority objectives are redefined and reduced in three groups, while the item is directed to the benefit of least developed regions and social groups (Lipková, 2006). European Council The Berlin meeting, in addition to reform of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund approved for the period 2000 - 2006 and the Pre-Accession Instrument for Structural Policies (ISPA) Special Accession Instrument for Agriculture and Rural Development (SAPARD) which complement the PHARE program and have been identified as so-called. Pre-accession assistance to candidate Central and Eastern Europe (Rajčáková, 2005). In specific areas of operations were complemented by the structural funds and so-called. Community initiatives, which included: INTERREG - border support Regions; URBAN - encouraging the development of urban centers; LEADER - encouraging the development; EQUAL - support for eliminating the causes of inequality and discrimination in the labor market others. In March 2000 the Lisbon

Strategy was adopted. Heads of State and Government agreed on an ambitious goal: making the EU "the most competitive by 2010 and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" ([Http://www.europskaunia.sk/lisabonska_strategia](http://www.europskaunia.sk/lisabonska_strategia), 28.3.2009). When it became clear that this ambition is unrealistic, EU leaders in the Lisbon strategy 2005 review. Its priorities are already talking only about ensuring growth and jobs together with an emphasis on the social dimension of the economy (<http://www.euractiv.sk/lisabonskastrategia/clanok/barroso-lisabonska-strategia-funguje>, 28.3.2009).

2.2 Regional and structural policy in the period 2007-2013

Period 2007 - 2013 marks the modification of regional policy instruments, creation of strategic guidelines for regional policy and the adoption of new innovative financial initiatives. Identify the basic features of the regional policy of the European Union, reducing disparities based on innovation and knowledge, improving the continuity of the core and peripheral regions and increase internal cohesion of the European Union (Ivaničková, 2007).

2.2.1 The objective of regional policy in the period 2007-2013

In the programming period 2007 - 2013 are the main objectives of cohesion and regional policy:

- Objective 1: Convergence
- Objective 2: Regional Competitiveness and Employment
- Objective 3: European Territorial Cooperation

For regions and Member States eligible for support from the EU Structural Funds under new "Convergence" objective, the key intention to stimulate growth potential. Strategy objective focuses on investments and collective services which require long-term competitiveness, job creation and sustainable development. Main strategic plans that aim are basic infrastructure and its modernization, scientific, research, innovation and information and communication technologies and human resources development (Ivaničková, 2007). To achieve this objective are assigned to lagging regions whose GDP per capita for the period 2000 - 2002 is less than 75 percent of GDP on average capita in developed EU countries. For funding from the Cohesion Fund eligible Member States whose gross national income (GNI expressed in PPS) per capita, calculated on the basis of the EU for the period 2001 - 2003, it is less than 90% GNP EU25 (Ivaničková, 2007). Regions with GDP above 75% of EU-25 fall under the second of the "Regional Competitiveness and Employment ". One aims at strengthening competitiveness and attractiveness. Also, to support employment, two ways.

Development programs that can help the region realize and promote economic change through innovation and the promotion of the knowledge society, entrepreneurship, environmental protection and the improvement of their accessibility.

Development of new and better jobs by adapting the workforce and investing in human resources. In the third objective "European Territorial (territorial) cooperation 'should be to achieve the strengthening:

- Cross-border cooperation through joint local and regional initiatives,
- Transnational cooperation to integrated territorial development,
- Interregional cooperation and exchange of experience across the EU.

To finance cross-border cooperation, the regions of the Community level NUTS 3 along all internal and certain external land borders and all NUTS 3 regions along maritime borders separated generally 150 km, taking into account potential adjustments needed to ensure the coherence and continuity of cooperation (Ivaničková, 2007). Within these three main target groups are allocated to the regions, which are applies so. transitional support, respectively. Regions with transitional support. Such regions are (Ivaničková, 2007).

The regions 'phasing-out' - they are NUTS level 2 regions affected by the so-called. Statistical effect due to a reduction in the Community average following the enlargement of the European Union. This regions should by 2013 provide strong support to complete its process convergence.

The regions 'phasing-in' - they are NUTS level 2 regions, which were the subject in 2006 full Objective 1 and whose nominal GDP level per capita exceeds already 75% the average GDP of the EU15. These regions are eligible for the specific and transitional funding from the Structural Funds under the Regional competitiveness and employment.

Member States eligible for funding from the Cohesion Fund in 2006 which would be continue to be eligible had the eligibility threshold remained at 90% of the GNP of countries EU15 and EU25 countries or not. EU27. These states are eligible for the transitional and specific funding from the Cohesion Fund under the Convergence objective. 3.2.2 Regional policy instruments in the period 2007-2013 Structural Funds, Cohesion Fund and Community Initiatives continue to be tools for achieving priority goals of EU regional policy. Objective 1 is financed by ERDF, ESF and the Cohesion Fund Objective 2 from the ERDF and ESF Objective 3 and also from the ERDF. For the period 2007 - 2013 prepared by the European Commission together with the European financial institutions, new financial instruments which serve to make use of Cohesion and Structural Funds. Their aim is to ensure effective absorption funds provided by the EU budget. New financial initiatives are:

- JASPERS - to prepare major infrastructure projects financed by the European funds;
- JEREMIE - improving the access of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to financing;
- JESSICA - for urban renewal and social housing (Ivaničková, 2007).

Management of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund is implemented through programming documents, which are:

1. National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF)
2. Strategies, priorities and objectives of the NSRF are implemented through operational programs

2.3 Planning regions, regional and structural policy Union

Since the early 70s the countries of the Commonwealth uses a unified and coherent five-level categorization system territorial statistical territorial units - Planning NUTS respectively. LAU. These regions have been established in cooperation between EU statistical office, the national statistical institutes of the Member States and the European Commission. This division does not necessarily correspond to the administrative division of the state. NUTS 1, NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 shall apply to regional, regions LAU LAU I and II the local level. NUTS level 2, having generally from 800 thousand. 3 million. residents are essential for the application of the principles of consistency and application tools structural policy (Rajčáková, 2005). Amendments to the NUTS classification shall be taken no more frequently than every three years in the second half of the calendar year based on the classification set out in Regulation criteria in accordance with the regulatory procedure referred to. In case of a substantial reorganization the relevant administrative structure of a Member State may be amendments NUTS classification taken in intervals of less than three (European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No. 1059/2003).

In accordance with the provisions of the NUTS classification updated every three years. This important process took place in late 2006. The new NUTS classification will apply the data provided from 1 January 2008. From this date must be timely statistics data in accordance with the new NUTS classification 2006. The NUTS classification is the reference framework for all regional statistics of the EU. Member States are required to submit regional statistics Commission, specifically Eurostat, which then publishes. (Commission Communities, 2007).

3. Slovakia and countries of the Visegrad Group

Slovak Republic belongs to the countries called. Otherwise the Visegrad Group also called Visegrad Four (V4). Visegrad Group name is derived from Northern Hungarian town Vysehrad (Hungarian Visegrád), which was in the 14th century venue Meeting of Central European rulers. In Visegrad in 1335 has already been met Czech, Hungarian and the Polish king to discuss regional co-operation between their kingdoms and agreed to working closely together in the field of politics and business. As an indication of the country He 656 years later elected president of Czechoslovakia Vaclav Havel, President of the Hungarian Government József Antall and Polish President Lech Walesa at the meeting, which was held in Visegrad 15 February 1991. The three original leaders that signed the declaration of its close cooperation three (now four) countries towards European integration. After the fall of communist regimes mutual cooperation played an important role of these countries in the transition from totalitarian regime to a free, pluralistic and democratic society

3.1 Slovakia

Slovak Republic is a landlocked country in Central Europe. formed relatively Recently 1.1.1993 after the split of Czechoslovakia. Since 1 May 2004 a member of the European Union. As of 31.12.2008 there were in the country to 49 035 km² with 5,412,254 inhabitants population density amounted to 110 inhabitants per km². The level of urbanization is at about 56.5%. The capital of Slovakia is Bratislava (426,927 inhab.). Administratively, the country is divided into 8 autonomous regions, 79 districts and 2,891 villages (Municipalities 31.12.2007). Regional policy is essential to the NUTS division. The whole territory of Slovakia falls under NUTS I. There are also earmarked 4 NUTS 2 regions (Bratislava region, Western Slovakia, Central Slovakia and Eastern Slovakia), 8 NUTS 3 regions (all regions), 79 regions LAU I (districts) and LAU II regions in 2891 (the village; Eurostat, 2009).

3.1.1 Development of regional policy in Slovakia

Each historical period of development in Slovakia, both within Czechoslovakia or even before Austria-Hungary, on his left his mark regions. current form Regional structure of Slovakia has been shaping the development of the most within the socialist Czechoslovakia (Kling, J., 2003). In the period of "real socialism" existed prescriptive The governance of central planning, under which were determined by the objectives of economic, social and territorial development of individual regions (Freedom D., 2003). The main priority for the development of the state in the 50s and 60s was the industrialization of Slovakia (Considered the main tool of balancing economic development and living standards Slovakia and the Czech regions) and its successor urbanization. Regional development was to 1960, part of a single state plan of economic development, from the early 60s national plan for economic and social development projects included the development of regional and to the state plan, they were integrated and option plans conurbations and adjacent areas. In the regional plan, the emphasis in terms of placement of investment funds put the cities of medium size (20 to 100,000 inhabitants), which represented the core regions (Korec, P., 2005). Naoko plans address the differences between the regions but were not permanently sustainable.

An important milestone in the development of regional policy in Slovakia was society-wide changes that occur after November 1989 (D. Freedom, 2003). The new regional policy in Slovakia began to take shape after the year. 1990. The Government Resolution no. 390/1991 approved the principle of regional economic policy representing motion system steps on regional issues and the regulation of development the problem of territorial units. This document also applied to Slovakia principles and objectives of regional planning corresponding with the European Standard European Charter for Regional / Spatial Planning (National Plan Regional Development, 2001) According to D. Freedom (2003), the regional policy after 1990 focused more on the Monitoring of growing regional disparities and receiving non-systemic steps to the stop growing regional disparities. Prevailing problems with excessive the distribution of funds through the state budget, as well as a lack of project managers in the field of pre-accession funds. Later it was the same turnover. In 1997 the Government approved the Concept of State Regional Policy and was developed as a range of documents relating to cross-border and international cooperation, integration in the European

Union and the possibilities for assistance of the funds. In particular it should be noted Integrated Plan of Regional and Social Development (approved by RG SR č.923 / 1999), which identify 29 problem districts that concentrate in the current Košice, Prešov and Banská Bystrica Region (National Plan for Regional Development, 2001). Who carried out the reform of public administration in the Slovak Republic with an ambition to contribute to the enhancement Slovakia's economic performance and its regions through decentralization of decision-making processes, including those related to regional development (D. Freedom, 2003). Regional development and regional policy of the Slovak Republic in the period 1999 - 2004 developed in accordance with the integration initiatives and with Slovakia joining the EU (Rajčáková E., 2005). Slovak Republic adopted on the development of its regions and the pre-accession financial assistance Union programs PHARE, ISPA and SAPARD. From 1 May 2004, Slovakia is a full member of the European Union and can benefit from support from the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund. Institutional provision of regional policy of the Slovak Republic currently has three levels - Central (Government, the Ministry of Construction and Regional Development, Central State Report) and the municipal level, regional (autonomous regions) and local (municipal) with relevant competence (Rajčáková, 2005).

3.1.2 Regional disparities - the reason for the implementation of regional policy

Slovakia is characterized by huge regional disparities - disparities between individual regions. Large regional differentiation is determined by geography, history, culture, economic development, ethnic composition, religion, age-old cultural and administrative centers. Is affected by external cultural influences, abuse, State intervention in the regions, urbanization and industrialization level. After years of a centrally controlled leveling regional disparities in Slovakia differences between different parts of the country began to rapidly increase. With the advent of market economy led to inappropriate consequences of regional policy of the communist regime. Once supporting industrial and agricultural enterprises of each region have been unable to adapt to market forces and unable to cope with the lack paternalism government (Kling, J., 2003). Analysis of the current state of the Slovak economy showed that the key disparities lie (Ivaničková, 2007):

- the low competitiveness of production and services,
- insufficient quality of human resources
- insufficient quality and availability of public infrastructure.

For the application of the principles of consistency and application of structural policy instruments are important NUTS level 2. The most developed area of Slovakia Bratislava region, which has well above the average GDP in PPP compared to the EU27 average (see. Tab. 1). Thus it falls under Objective 2 "Regional Competitiveness and Employment". Other SR regions are lagging behind significantly and convergence. The worst thing is that the Eastern region Slovakia, which in 2006 amounted to GDP in PPP only 44 percent of the level of the EU 27. In the Middle and Eastern Slovakia is relatively higher unemployment rate than

in the west Slovakia. In year There in 2007 reached about 15 percent, while in California for just over 4 percent.

3.1.3 Strategies and Regional Policy in the period 2007-2013

The basic strategic document of the Slovak Republic for the programming use of European Union funds in the period 2007 - 2013 is the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF). It sets national priorities, which will be co-financed by the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund in the programming period following the strategic guidelines Community, which defines the framework for the Funds at European level. Content National Strategic Reference Framework is to analyze the current situation Slovakia Republic, the vision and strategy for the economic and social development priorities, including Slovakia NSRF, the strategy to operational programs and the NSRF financing.

The strategic objective for 2007 - 2013 is formulated as "significantly increase by 2013 competitiveness of the regions and the Slovak economy and employment by respecting sustainable development "is not only a continuation of the trend approaching the EU-15 in terms of economic performance, but its fulfillment Subject to a qualitative and structural changes needed to increase competitiveness of Slovakia and its regions, as well as enhancing the quality of life of citizens Slovak Republic. On the basis of the underlying strategies and following the set goal of the Slovak Republic NSRF strategy is based on three strategic priorities and their three objectives that It will be attained through projects financed in the programming period 2007 – 2013.

Strategic priorities are at lower levels to specific priorities and target objectives (Ivaničková, 2007). Institutional provision of regional policy of the Slovak Republic currently has three levels - Central (Government, the Ministry of Construction and Regional Development, Central State Report) and the municipal level, regional (autonomous regions) and local (municipal) with relevant competence (Rajčáková, 2005).

3.1.4 Software products for regional policy in the period 2007-2013

Strategy, priorities and objectives of the NSRF are implemented through 11 operational programs under individual EU cohesion policy objectives (NSRR 2007 - 2013):

Six operational programs for the Convergence objective, including: four operational programs co-financed by the ERDF cover the entire Slovakia except Bratislava region (Regional Operational Programme, OP Information Society, OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth and OP Health); on two operational programs financed by the ERDF and CF cover the entire Slovakia including Bratislava region (OP Transport and OP Environment); priority axis co-financed by the ERDF will cover the entire Slovakia except for the Bratislava region and priority axes financed from the Cohesion Fund will apply to the entire Slovakia including Bratislava region.

Three operational programs common for both objectives - Convergence and Regional competitiveness and employment, ie covering the entire Slovakia including the Bratislava region - One co-financed by the ERDF (OP Research and Development) and two from the ESF (OP Employment and Social Inclusion and OP Education);

Operational Programme Technical Assistance for the Convergence objective covering horizontal activities, under the responsibility of the Central Coordinating Authority for NSRF and which are common to all OPs;

Operational Programme Bratislava Region for the Regional Competitiveness and employment co-financed by the ERDF. Regional development was within the framework of the EU funds in the period 2007 – 2013 Slovakia allocated a total of € 11.6 billion, of which 10.9 billion under Objective Convergence, € 0.5 billion under the Regional Competitiveness and jobs and € 0.2 billion under the European Territorial Cooperation

3.2 Czech Republic

The Czech Republic is a landlocked country in Central Europe. It was established on 1 January 1993 after the peaceful division of Czechoslovakia, which was economically more advanced part. From 1 May 2004 a member of the European Union. As of 31.12.2008 there were in the country of 10,467,542 inhabitants on an area of 78 866 km². The population density of the country amounted to 132.7 inhabitants per km² and the level of urbanization was 73.5%. The Czech capital is Prague (1,212,097 inhab.). Administratively, the country is divided the 14 regions, 77 districts and 6,249 communes (municipalities 31.12.2007). As for the way the whole NUTS Czech Republic falls into NUTS I. It is also allocated 8 NUTS 2 regions (Prague, Central Bohemia, Southwest, Northwest, Northeast, Southeast, Central Moravia and Moravia-Silesia), 14 NUTS 3 regions (all regions), 77 regions LAU I (districts) and 6249 LAU II regions (municipalities, Eurostat, 2009).

3.2.1 Cohesion Regions NUTS 2 in the Czech Republic

The most developed area of the country is a region consisting of the capital Prague. In year 2005 contributed to almost a quarter of the total national GDP (see. Tab. 5) and is the only an above-average level of GDP in PPP terms compared with other regions in the EU 27. Other convergence among regions and achieves this indicator or average country. The closest to him was the region of Central Bohemia, the smallest level reached Central Moravia.

3.2.2 Development of regional policy in the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic in 1989, similar to the development of regional policy as Slovakia. After 1989, the government at the regional level in the Czech Republic mainly by the action of four utvárala factors. Have a role to play historical, political, integration and social factors. Since the beginning of the 90s the development of regional policy has undergone several stages. The main attention was paid to solving transformation processes at the national level. Regional differences are not given greater attention, since they were at that time also evident as in other post-communist countries. By 1996, regional policy mainly focused on regional support for small and medium businesses, aimed at assistance in obtaining loans (Rajčáková

E., 2005). In 1996 was created Ministry of Regional Development, but in 1998 the government It attributed greater importance to regional policy and has decided to adopt the principles of regional policy in accordance with the practice of EU policy. These principles of the Framework set out the main principles, objectives, Programming documents and instruments of regional policy. Implementation of regional policy has been defined on two levels: in the state and to the regional level. system programming Document form: Strategy of Regional Development of the Czech Republic (covers the entire territory of the Czech Republic), Regional development programs (for regions with so-called. focussing the support of the state) and sectoral programs. These documents serve only to implement the national policy. In addition to state aid regional development and cohesion funds to stimulate pre-accession assistance intended for: national programs, CBC programs and multinational programs implemented by the European Commission. They also used the IPA as the ISPA and SAPARD (Rajčáková E., 2005).

The first conceptual document in the field of regional policy was adopted in 2000 Strategy of Regional Development. Its aim was to define a framework for training programming documents for the use of EU structural funds for the training of civil support programs for selected regions and for the programming of development regions Emerging in 2001.

3.2.3 Regional Policy in the period 2007-2013

The basic tool of regional policy, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Regional Development, the updated Strategy of Regional Development of the Czech Republic applicable to the period 2007 – 2013.

The strategy meets 5 guiding principles: solidarity, cohesion, growth, competitiveness and sustainability. It builds on the Strategy of Sustainable Development, Strategy for Economic Growth The Czech Republic, the renewed Lisbon Strategy is aligned with EU priorities set out in policy economic and social cohesion. Regional development strategy, by contrast, significant source documents in the preparation of the National Development Plan, the National Strategic reference framework and operational programs based on disbursement European funds. The strategic objectives of the national strategic reference framework in the Czech Republic include: Competitive Czech economy; Open, flexible and cohesive society; attractive the environment and Balanced Territorial Development.

In the programming period 2007-2013, the Czech Republic has prepared a total of 24 operational programs. Of this number constitutes a relatively large part of the 7 regional operational programs and five cross-border cooperation programs. For these programs has been the period 2007 - 2013 for the Czech Republic granted a total of 26.7 billion euros, of which 25.9 billion under the Convergence objective, € 0.4 billion under the Regional Competitiveness and jobs and € 0.4 billion under the European Territorial Cooperation

3.3 Poland

The Republic of Poland is a seascape area north of Central Europe. It was established in 1945 after the end of WW2. Since 1 May 2004 a member of the European Union. As of

31.12.2007, it lived in a country 38,116 miles. Population (Demographic Yearbook of Poland 2008), an area of 312,680 km². The population density of the country amounted to 121.9 inhabitants km² and degree of urbanization was 61.5%. The capital of Poland is Warsaw (1,706,624 inhab.). Administratively, the country is divided into 16 provinces, 308 districts, 65 towns the competence of the district and 2489 municipalities. NUTS division is different. Poland's territory divided at the level of NUTS I to 6 regions (Region Central, Region Poludniowy, Wschodni Region, North-Western Region, Region Dolnoslaskie and region Polnocny). Furthermore, for the implementation of EU structural policy allocated 16 regions NUTS 2 (provinces) and, since 2008, 66 sub-regions NUTS 3 (previously there were 45; Eurostat, 2009). 4.3.1 Regions NUTS 2 cohesion in Poland. All regions of the country are among the convergence. Amongst these, the most National GDP accounts for the largest rozlohovo Mazowieckie region, which includes its main 30 Warsaw. The GDP PPP per capita is one that comes closer to the average of the Regions EU 27, where in 2006 reached 83.6 per cent of their level. Other regions in this indicator lagged considerably when second in the order was the only region of Lower Silesia 56-percent level. At least, just over 35 percent, were lying regions in the east Poland: Lubelskie and Podkarpackie.

3.3.2 Development of regional policy in Poland

Poland belonged since the end of WW2 the country where he was raised communist regime. At the turn of the eighties and nineties was transformed all spheres of the economy and the economy. Policies of central planning, the in conditions of market economy has proved impossible. transformation influenced also on regional development of Poland. They began to exhibit significant regional differences each Province. Many of them had unsatisfactory structure of the economy. (Szlachta J., 1997). The result of the new situation was to identify strategic challenges in the sphere of regional development. These included: definition of a functional regional system; building policy Regional Development of Poland according to the principles of the European Union; the creation of joint bases of regional development; building policy of the state in accordance with regional needs; opportunities for greater competitiveness of regions; exploit opportunities geopolitical position of Poland in the aspect of development of the border area; creating modern tools and institutions of regional development (R Broszkiewicz et al., 1996). The most important achievement in the early 90s was the realization of the so-called. Balcerowiczovho plan. Its author was the then Minister of Finance. Result of the implementation of the reform program was the liberalization of internal prices, efforts to increase imports, tightening controls wage increases, tightening of financial policies to corporates, the introduction of interest rate higher than the rate of inflation, the stabilization of the dollar and the introduction of his redemption.

Polish economy stabilized and opened up the world. Poles have reformed the banking system and financial and credit policies. Within system reforms have important implications beginning of changes in ownership structure, spin-offs and promoting internal competitive mechanisms. In Poland, a capital market and the labor market. consistently implemented economic policy of Poland led them in a short time the most rapidly growing economy in Europe Since 1990, the process of continuous decentralization - transfer of state powers to lower levels of government. It was created 16 provinces and in In 1998 there were three levels

of management of regional policy: central, regional (provinces) and local (municipalities). Created the precondition for more effective regional policies. regional offices launched sub-regional regional policy, which includes: economic awakening activities, and enhance the competitiveness of inováčnosti, creating conditions regional development, with creation of the labor market. Municipalities are responsible for the provinces as well preparation and implementation of development strategy provinces, the determination of the most important documents Autonomous regional planning policies (Rapport on rozwoju and polityce regional, 2007).

3.4 Hungary

Hungary is a landlocked country lying south east of Central Europe. It was established in 1918 after the collapse of Austria-Hungary. After the 2nd World War belonged to so countries. Eastern Bloc. Since 1 May 2004 a member of the European Union. As of January 1 2008 lived in Hungary 10,045,401 inhabitants in an area of 93,030 km². Population density amounted to 108 inhabitants per km². The level of urbanization is at 66.3%. The capital of Hungary is Budapest (1.7 mil. Pop.). administrative the country is divided into 20 regions (19 counties + capital) and 173 subregions. In Hungary to 01.07.2007 with 3152 municipalities, of which 298 seats. According to the NUTS division was divided country different. In Hungary it is already at NUTS I divided into three regions (KözépMagyarország, Plain and Northern Great Plain es). Furthermore, for the implementation of regional policy The EU allocated 7 NUTS 2 regions (Central Hungary, Central Transdanubia, NyugatDunántúl, Southern Transdanubia, Northern Hungary, Northern Great Plain, Southern Great Plain, that is secondary Hungary, Central Transdanubia, Western Transdanubia, Northern Great Plain, Northern Hungary, Northern lowlands and southern lowlands) and 20 NUTS 3 regions (Eurostat, 2009).

3.4.1 Regions NUTS 2 cohesion in Hungary

Hungary is a country for which are typically significant regional differences. The most developed part of the State Central Hungary (Central Hungary), which includes the capital city of Budapest with its agglomeration. This region was produced in 2005 almost half of the national GDP, Hungary and is the only achieves above-average level of GDP PPP per capita 1 in comparison with the EU regions 27. Conversely, least developed regions is Northern Hungary (Northern Hungary), which is struggling Low growth, structural problems and high unemployment. Dynamic economic growth is typical for Northern and Western Transdanubia and university centers of Pécs, Szeged, Debrecen and Miskolc. More and more obvious, however, is lagging behind east (Kurucz 2006).

3.4.2 Status and development of regional policy in Hungary

Development of Hungary in 1990 was developed in accordance with the principles of central economic governance and towards the overall development of the national economy sectors and areas. The subsequent transformation of political, economic and social spheres of the also reflected in regional development (Rajčáková, 2005). One of the first modern instruments of regional policy after 1990 was called. Széchenyi Plan. Was a comprehensive medium-term

program for economic development. Its six main priorities were: encouraging entrepreneurship and job creation; housing development; tourism development; improving the conditions for education and research; 34 building the information society and development of information capacity; infrastructure building, especially highway network (Rajčáková, 2005). After 1990 occurred in Hungary and significant changes in the policy area, which affects the development of territories, overcoming or at least mitigating the inequalities between regions largely affecting the economic and social policies the whole society. Regional policy has been subsumed in every government since 1990 to another department or even was split between different ministries, often with different axes and the resources that have been devoted to this area. Maybe it occurred to frequent changes principles and priorities of regional policy, which is a serious problem. This reflects negatively on its consistency and transparency. Its strong point is that since 1996 has law the framework that shapes and strengthens the presence of a regional perspective in decision-making processes at both the state administration and self-government. After the parliamentary elections in of 2006 the Ministry of Government and Regional Development, in which the regional issues included in addition to the government, together with the civil defense, control Fire Brigade and Sports (Kurucz 2006).

4 Conclusion

Regional policy has become a term today. While regions have developed since ancient times, but not so purposefully and systematically than it is today. Since the mid-20th century, the development momentum has become the European Union and its policies. In addition, it has built a system of financial coverage of problem areas and has enough experts who are primarily concerned with regional policy. Exchanges of experience in implementing this policy in the regions themselves in the EU increases the prospects for their development more efficient. Evidence of continuous development and shift perceptions of EU regional policy are the changes that have occurred there in the creation of the EEC in the fifties of the 20th century. You can say that with every enlargement of the Union has changed view of regions and regional policy. With the accession of new member countries of the Union space becoming increasingly heterogeneous. Economically richer countries have begun to support the poorer countries and their regions lagging behind. Gradually, a system of aid instruments called. EU funds, including the Cohesion and Structural Funds (ERDF, ESF). The most prominent of them became the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Additional tools have become more communitarian initiatives (Interreg, EQUAL). Increasing regional differences were at the end of the 20th and even the early 21st century the main reason for reform of regional policy and the adoption of new action programs (the Delors plan, Agenda 2000). The current situation is adapting policy objectives and covering also instruments to achieve them. In the current programming period 2007 - 2013 are among the main objectives of cohesion and regional policy: Convergence; Regional competitiveness and employment; European territorial cooperation. Tools for development are still the Structural Funds, Cohesion Fund and Community Initiatives. Specific policy of regional development, the countries of the Visegrad Group. By the end of 1989 it was among the countries where socialism was prim. The objectives of economic, social and territorial development of

individual regions were determined prescriptive policy management centralized planning. The main priorities are the development of industrialization and urbanization subsequently. Centrally managed policy was not sustainable. After the end of socialism in 1989, so she had to transform the economy and all spheres of the economy. The V4 countries began to take shape a new regional policy. Each of the countries have a differentiated approach to it. Probably the lack of professionals in this area in a manner that initially took some time to be developed and adopted relevant legislation. Partial problem was also that it was nobody to effectively apply to lack of experience. Gradually, the country began to prepare for EU accession. That adapt the legal framework for regional policy 48. Slovakia was in 1997 adopted Concept of state regional policy and subsequently produced documents relating to the integration into the EU and with the possibility of using the EU pre-accession funds (SAPARD, ISPA, Phare). Similar concepts have been adopted in other V4 countries. In the Czech Republic was the first policy document of regional policy adopted until 2000 - Strategy for Regional Development. On validated concepts gradually forge other documents, plans and strategies. In 2004, after the country's accession to the EU started States to apply regional policy in full accordance with the Union. Eligibility draw EU structural assistance to all 16 regions in Poland and almost all regions of Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary. This is not only territory, where they are the main city of the state. The reason is that these regions have achieved a higher level of GDP per capita as established limit of 75% of the developed EU countries. Also it had the same level of most regions of Austria. These regions can draw on the resources of the other two objectives, "Regional competitiveness and employment" and "European territorial cooperation. Relatively low it ended and Eastern Slovakia (44.0). When comparing with 1995 is an evident increase in the level of all regions somewhere higher, lower elsewhere. Everywhere rose PPP GDP per capita in absolute terms. However, it is questionable how they affect regional development in the future economic and financial crisis that began to manifest itself in the second half of 2008.

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Dominik Pristach is a student in political science at Trnava University in Trnava, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts.

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Influence of political parties and the media on the formation of public opinion

Richard Horniak*

University of Trnava, Hornopotočná 23, 918 43 Trnava, Slovakia

richardhorniak@gmail.com

Abstract:

Purpose and Originality: This article deals with political parties, mass media and public opinion. It is exploring, how the political parties and mass media influence the decisions made by the public.

Method The research was done by the method of observation. We observed the influence of political parties and the media to shape public opinion. The observation was made in the Slovak Republic.

Results: The aim of this paper work is to analyze and examine how reaction of the public opinion changes by receiving the information from the political parties and media.

Society: The study enables easier orientation in manipulation of public opinion that can improve the social order as well as social responsibility and the environment indirectly.

Limitations / further research: The study is restricted performance enhancers political parties intervene in public opinion. The study is based on data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic and the agency FOCUS. Further research could explore influence of interest groups on political parties.

1 Introduction

In the article, we are trying to present influence of political parties and mass media on public opinion formation. The first chapter deals with political parties, when they were found and by their origin. In the second chapter is about the primary division of the parties. Subsequently, in the third chapter I will mainly focus on the public opinion, which is manipulated by the upper echelons, such as mass media, politicians and of course by the parties, which as a whole are connected onto the highest propagandists and information intermediaries. Also I want to mention, or try to describe how the public opinion can be eased, because it is not possible to stop it. So then the main object of this paper work is to analyze the current relation between public opinion and the political parties and analyze information, that are shared via mass media and other structures, which are trying to give these information to the citizens “relevantly”.

2 Theoretical framework

2.1 The formation of political parties

Their origin was already established by the group of politicians in antiquity, in antique Greece. It is possible to search beginnings of more substantive parties in England and France revolution; also they might be connected with the creation of the USA. Afterwards the modern political parties were established since the middle of 19th century and brought quarrels between privileged ranks, who wanted to stand for their position; they had not wanted any changes in discriminated ranks, who were trying to radically change their inferior position.

* Korespondenčni avtor / Correspondence author

Due that the conservative and social – democratic parties were being created. If there would not be such thing as to spread opinions freely to the public, the creation of political parties alone, will not be effective. In the beginnings, the right to vote was not enhanced to everyone, because of this fact; the liberal parties were created in the middle of 19th century, so they could struggle for the codification of human rights, freedom and surety of the right to vote for everybody. Another kind of the political parties is being founded at the beginning of 20th century; this kind is called the extreme political parties. They separated from the traditional social – democratic and conservative parties. And so the communistic party was founded, in other word the extreme left wing and fascistic parties called the extreme right wing. These parties fought to erase the political pluralism.

The term party is originated in the Latin word *pars*, which stands for party or it might be better if we say *part*. In the present, each country has their own term, for example in English it is *party*, in German it is *partei*, in France it is *parti*, however nations which are close for Slovaks, like Czechs or Croatians it is called the exactly same; "*strana/stranka*". The definition of the word *party* is harder than it looks. For example in 18th century, E. Burke defined the party as an organization of people, who have united on the concrete principle, which everyone accepts and want to realize for the national interest by their own specific way (Scarrow, 2002, p. 35) . Then we can also mention the example of J. Schumpeter, who tried to define the word *party* as a party of members, who are trying to achieve and organize the power in the competitive fight. We think that it is possible to agree on the statement, that the political party has a lot of definitions, however for today's definition, it is about the group of people or unit, whose are trying to represent the majority of citizens on the executively – legislatively level in the state and obtaining of power, which will be used for the benefit of the biggest majority possible.

Each political party as a representative subject of people has more of the functions, by which they influence the public opinion. These functions are contributing to stabilization and organization of the society; also some of the functions are changing the society. Under the stabilization of the society we may possibly imagine situation in the state, when parties are cooperating together and they are offering the most primary values and ways of identification in the best possible way for the elector. Simply said they are creating the surrounding suitable for living which contributes to lower the tension at the all levels in the state. In contrast to those stabilizing parties there are parties, which are changing the society, creating much more of the tension, they main motive is to compete with each other . We can definitely say that the political parties are examining the society from the view of values, which creates measure value of the public while facing the reality and evolutionary tendencies, meanwhile the values are being influenced by hierarchy, and by doing that they are informing the public, which values are considered as the deciding ones, unalterable, marginal or in some cases inappropriate ones. Political parties also contribute to socializing of citizens by spreading of the ideas or fantasies about the society. The parties are trying to get the citizens used to democracy or in other words democratic structures of power and political behavior. On the other hand they are bringing the intolerance against other's political ideas to the conscious of people. Without the activity of the political parties, however political socialization of citizens

could be less efficient and most likely more manipulated; therefore the main subject would become the state. The main duty of the political parties is to persuade citizen to cope with the existing political system, in the case of some problem with his defense as well. Also the political parties includes citizens into the policy, it helps to widen their participation in the adjudging process. By doing this they let them go against each other and limiting their natural perceptiveness of the world, therefore they oblige them to organizational and ideology support of their own party. Besides that, the political parties are creating the space for the legal battle for the political power, they are also the mechanism of organization of elections to the parliament and very important factor, which has the influence on the public opinion, is the elite, which operate the political party as well. A lot of distinguished writers dealt with the elitism, I dare to mention J. Schumpeter. The point, I will be dealing with is his outlook on the relationship between the elector and the elected elite. Elections plebescity are in the sense that they accept or reject a particular team leader (Svennson, 1995, p. 142). Schumpeter insists, that elites, which are elected by the people must have certain freedom at the deciding and maneuvering. It would be very difficult and destabilizing, if elites, which holds the power had to be under constant pressure of the public, in a sense citizens, so they could not be able to carry out any political decisions, therefore there are always people or just the part of the population, which would not agree with the elite. Moreover, it would be much harder to deduce the political consequence against the elites, because they could be forced to some of their decisions by the certain group of people. Therefore it is important to have elected elites with the autonomous deciding, so they would not decide for the certain mass of people for the short period of time, just so they could have relative relax. It is the elite which has to take the responsibility and decide even if it does not appeal to be popular at the first glance, but for the future the best possible choice to be made. Schumpeter in this case says about democratic self-control. At the conclusion of the elites, it is obvious that mostly they and their rhetoric creates the baseline of the page. Although, it is not the rule, because there are parties or just period in some of the traditional parties, when leader's position is just *de jure*, however *de facto* party is pulled from the background by someone else. Exactly parties in the Slovakia in the past as well as now is not the exception, charismatic leaders, who are rhetorically capable. From the past, I am talking about Vladimír Mečiar and currently, it would be impossible not to mention Róbert Fico. They can provide people with exactly what they want through their performance. In the end it reflected in the elections, in the 2010 when party SMER – SD achieved the most of the members in the parliament (62), what was caused by the unstable right wing and middle-to-the-right wing which shattered at the most precious moment and because of that, they let themselves be overtaken by the good rhetorically provided SMER – SD, which appealed to the electors and won the elections. SMER was not able to construct the government; coalitionist government was constructed by the second strongest party SDKU – DS. This government lasted for two years. Downfall was brought by the united voting about uttering faithfulness with EUROVAL from the workshop of SAS, which afterwards did not support their coalition partners and therefore the government fell. In 2012 a premature election occurred, SMER – SD obtained 44, 41% of votes, that ensured 83 mandates in the parliament. SMER – SD constructed the government on its own. (ŠTATISTICKÝ ÚRAD SR, 2012) At the latest elections the dominance of SMER – SD dropped. They were able to gain “ just “ 28,28 % of votes what makes 49 mandates and therefore they had to find coalitionist

partners with whom they are going to establish the government. (ŠTATISTICKÝ ÚRAD SR, 2016). A lot of analytics assume that the dropped votes were because of the insufficient marketing communication of the leader with the electors. We can observe what kind of public opinion is in Slovakia and how easily can be manipulated, in the case of Slovak political parties. But it is important to mention the division of political parties, before taking on the description of public opinion versus political parties.

2.2 Division of parties

In these days, it is possible to divide parties according of their establishment and way of organizing into the four main types. Those are elites, masses, catch all parties and cartels. According to M. Duverger and his typology, the main types are elites and masses. Main difference between these two parties consists in their different organizational structure and not in their members, what anyone might think at the first glance. The participation in the elite parties has been different from the participation in mass parties. „Members” of the elite parties are going through strict and informal interviews and their numbers are just limited. The quality of their influence decides. Elite parties corresponds with their surrounding, in which they had been created, where the main role were played by the limited right to vote and limited amount of the electors, property census, and natural interest of well – connected people about political deciding. Mass parties were being established with the widening of the general right to vote. The support for both of the parties reflects different political interests of the voting groups. Elite parties were bourgeoisie parties, representing the interests of the middle class, mass parties were socialistic parties representing lower class. (Rybář, 2011, p.7)

The authors of the phrase “catch all party” is German politic Otto Kirchheimer. It is about the parties which do not have good fundamentals at the beginning, but they are trying to talk at the biggest and the widest area around the electors. Parties are trying to reach the maximum width of their potentials electors without looking at their social status. Parties are changing into a big parties, mildly and flexible, dependant on the need from the elector’s side. The bigger straightforwardness of the parties toward the masses, which was supported by the new phenomenal – media, brought new style of policy, that aims at one person only. (Kirchheimer, 1966, p.179) SMER – SD is in these days a example of how does this kind of policy works. The last term of the cartel party is not so important to this work. That is why I think that it is appropriate to mention them just marginally. Richard Katz and Peter Mair came with it. According to them it is about deepening of the relationship between political party and the state and not between political party and the society, as it is mentioned in the upper mentioned parties.

Hypothesis: Political parties influence public opinion thorough the mass media in order to achieve popularity growth.

3 Method

3.1 Public opinion

If there is the public, then there is always a public opinion. We might define it, that it is a folder of public expressions of the members of various social groups, about the public assemblies. The research of the public opinion is carried out by the particular component of sociological examination while its aim is finding out the opinion, approaches, or attitudes of the public toward various questions of life in society. Not only one factor is deciding at the opinion – making, but it is the set of crossing – over factors, which then makes the whole public opinion. Very important thing is that under which conditions and in what kind of conditions is the public opinion being formed. Opinion is dependant of the education of person, of the characteristic of his work and his activities, insufficiency of information and knowledge about the subject, which significantly restricts rational core of the opinion, which then can be just shallowly and incorrectly evaluated certain type of phenomenon or event. Opinion itself cannot exist without attitude, because it is originated on the attitude and because the attitudes are complexly creating the opinion. Journalism and mass communication are one of the most important opinion – makers, for certainty. Media must be free, so they could represent public opinion. The freedom of media is fundamental in the creating of public opinion. Expect for freedom, the important factor is that any of the mass – media will not be dependant of any kind of ideology, or will not be formed only one way. This factor is obviously looked at in the common life very simply and naturally. The daily news is simple example of this. It is set so the headline and name of the print can decide the group of readers and form the opinion about the type of group of people or individuals. The influence of the media on the recipients must be constant and persuasive, the number of news, number of viewers or listeners is dependant of the content and as the result of this, creating of the opinion or attitude of reader is dependant as well. In each of the states, the mass – media have their supporters and they are dividing the society according their coverage and orientation, of course it is unwritten. Consequently we can say, media works tactically and in the first place they are trying to catch the attention of the biggest mass of the society. In lot of cases media does not care, or does not put the emphasis whether the information are true and because of this they intentionally manipulate the society. Society is often unintentionally manipulated and not just by the media. Society, which has strong, populism and in lot of cases the charismatic leader, can be often fed by the disinformation, which is called frauds. Leaders, who are giving power and conviction to frauds, are supported by the media as well are creating the fact, intensity of the opinion raise and manipulate the crowd. This public opinion, which was constructed by the leaders' ability, is visible in the example of Hitler and his propaganda against non- Aryan race. Just because he was supported even by the media, it came down to reality, that the tendency of the public opinion became more intensive in a lot of ways and gained the mass character. Frauds are connected with the insufficiency of the information, which are creating misrepresenting explanation, which is gradually changing. They are also creating a isolation of the certain groups of people from the sociological life and they have their share at the creating of the fears in the given society. Medias' role in the relation toward the frauds is an important task and their reaction toward the frauds can be

different. They might stand for the reaction, which can be reflected as a silence; on the other hand the frauds can be supported and widened.

3.2. The influence of media on the public opinion

As I mention it earlier, the main subject of this work is the relation, public opinion versus political parties. At the basis of the definitions and phrases we are getting to question. How does the party influence the public opinion and how does the public opinion perceives and reacts on a different kind of impulses from the side of the political parties. We will be trying to appoint concrete situations, which we could or still can see in our policy system. We can possibly say, that the parties in Slovakia, mainly the governmental parties are available a couple of ways to influence the public opinion. The main factor without a doubt is media. Media are divided into private media and state media. In the first place the neutrality is supposed to be kept in the media; however in our country it is unfortunately not true. Exactly the private channels are connected to a lot of politicians and parties, which has the power available right now or are currently in the opposition. Countless of common people have own opinion, I mean majority of people; however it is not possible for ordinary people to work out and evaluate the wide spectrum of the messages and proclamations and even analyzing their relevance. Therefore the term “influence of the public opinion”. People accept being “fed” by the media, what people at the upper ranks prefer for their “dominance”. Independence of the private media is absent and that is why at least the media in the hand of state should be independent. Media are giving the information and by doing that they are giving the stimuli to the public to take a stand toward the public questions. Reader often makes a wrong opinion based on the information provided by the media, whit which he agree, presents and even support. Journalistic information are the subject of daily discussions and way of their output or suppressing orientated in various social groups attention on concrete social phenomenon. The public opinion is created at various events and does not need to be the aimed at the whole state. We must not forget that the media in the first place are subjects, which are trying to approach the biggest possible spectrum of the receivers of the information. One of the reasons why they are trying to get the attention might be their desire to be wealthy, acknowledged and visible, but with that in mind, that each of the mass media have their own leader, who is representative. When taking into consideration the social and cultural changes of the modern society that mass media became important intermediaries of the public and private life. Phrases like a mass media or media are very specific. Mass media represents the wide scale of resources, from where they obtain knowledge, whether they are based on the false, truth, or half – truth. They influence the public in various forms and have big and visible effect. The effects of media influence the behavioral changes or mind change of the individual recipient, or the audience. According the aim of the media impact, we can divide it on the planned or unplanned, but we can also look at the impact from the long - term point of view, how it influences the society. Because of that we can divide the impact into long – term and short – term. Media in the society has the indissolubly place for the existence of the person with the world around him. In a lot of cases the society does not even recognize, how much is being influenced by the mass media. That the person, society is formed through the whole spectrum of mass media is reality, but does the society, individual, even realize it? What kind of power do the media have in this kind of word sense?

3.2 The influence of political parties on the public opinion

Political parties were interfering to creating of the public opinion since a long time ago. Once again we stumble at the problem, which is declared by the one, who currently has the power. The one who occupy the resort of the culture commands the media. This fact creates a significant problem to which no one will ever own up to. However ordinary people once again can do nothing to prevent this manipulation. Some of them do not even realize that in some cases they do not want to realize that. A good example of this is the recent case of gorilla. A lot of political tops states that this case was not even brought on the surface, the reason are so that there will not be conducted responsibility against the competent ones, but because, so the discredit of the interested people right before the election will occur. It is very relevant to evaluate it this way, because after the elections in which a lot of traditional parties noticed a drop and gradually this case is becoming non – actual and unsolved. So we might state, this case served to political goals and principle stayed unnoticed. The best possible way to influence the public opinion is via the media. The news, broadcast, and mainly the internet must be mentioned in this area too. Mainly the internet is currently the biggest place; internet brings the highest risk possible, because a lot of young people are getting in touch with the internet. The internet replaces mass media as daily news, internet is phenomenon of mass media, and it changes public opinion and its medial spot. It is the fundamental player in the breakdown of the time and place barriers in the forwarding of information and messages and in the big ratio assists to global, maybe global public opinion. It is also interfering with the traditional mechanism which serves for controlling and widening of information by the elite. Internet creates nearly unlimited space for the debate of daily and relevant problems of the society, by which it influence and changes even public opinion of the citizens. In the latest elections to the national council of Slovak republic, parties like SAS, LSNS, SME RODINA, OĽANO – NOVA became visible via the internet. These parties gained a lot of sympathy from the people because of their internet campaign. A lot of problems came that way to political party LSNS, which is xenophobic and nationalistic oriented was popular mainly with the youngsters, debutant voters. (FOCUS, 2016) Traditional parties like KDH underestimated this fact and the result was more that disaster. Political party #SIEŤ as well as party KDH underestimated this fact and had an unpleasant surprise after March elections. People have been influenced so much, because of media; meetings and primarily internet were the factors which caused that the pre-elections which were done one month before the real elections were absolutely different from the real ones. Until then the sovereign SMER – SD, suffered in the elections by the significant debilitation, party #SIEŤ which was called as a second strongest party in the examinations, suffered a devastative slump. Party has been struggling to keep at the limit of 5%. On the other hand, extremist party LSNS gained strength; also party SME RODINA, but even party like SAS and OĽANO – NOVA gained strength against pre – election research. (ŠSTATISTICKÝ ÚRAD SR, 2016) In these days election researches proves, that the individual political parties are gaining and loses which is caused by a massive communication of the political presenters with people mainly via, already mentioned internet.

As we can see in the table 2, in Novembers' election research the removal of the voters from some of the parties is visible, what might cause the change in the number of mandates in the parliament. We should also mention party KDH, which is esteemed as a traditional party in

Slovakia has strengthen the communication skills with residents what reflected on the election preferences. On the other hand party #SIEŤ, which because of their leader even after the elections continued losing the faithfulness of electors, moreover even the trust of his own members. But we must not forget the fact, this is just a research and we must take these results with a certain outlook, since we know that this examination did not even resemble the real ones.

That is why it is definitely appropriate to say that people should not be manipulated and their approach to information should be in the biggest possible ratio critical. Main problem is the fact, that a part of the population is satisfied with the explanation and by that the need to evaluate something critically is not needed. These people practically put the trust into the media and political parties. Because, when people think about what they see and read they will keep asking the questions. That is the only way to get at least to some kind of the relevance. Journalism today as well as some other professions (e. g. Doctors) suffer because of „absolute solidarity estates“. We speak about the public control from the side of media; it is media, which ensure information and public control practically of every area of public life, but the control of such important part of society, as the media does not exist. Practically there was not a case that the Slovak media would pillory the mistake of another Slovak media, more likely journalist. There are not discussions about ethic questions of journalism and methods of media and there is no consensus in the range of regional journalism (Mistríková, Žitný, 2001,p.15.) The question still remains how can be the independence of the media guaranteed? The answer is simply very easy, from the change of below. If we, people changed, the guarantee of the independence of media might be reached. The ones who should express their dissatisfaction whit the given statement and force elite to change are the people. However the elites are the ones, who gains from people who are passive toward policy and who do not care about what is happening in the media. That is why we reached the conclusion, we may wonder, that unless people care about the faithfulness of media and politics, this currently dominant phenomenon will not change.

In these days, as well as in the past we may have been observing that public opinion can be also influenced by changing the important current topic, into a topic which invokes the aggression, therefore people forget about the real subject of discussion. Concretely we are talking about the nationalism, nationalistic thoughts and currently the most actual topic of migration policy which was used by some of the parties as a structure of the campaign. In a case of Slovakia it is clearly visible, that as soon as some kind of case came on the surface, the other thing from the past appeared and started to be solved, by following the standard the old cases were orientated on the national character. Those are, for example, the relations between Slovakia and Hungary are as important as presented? We may suggest that anyone of smart people would say no. The importance of this problem is high, and origins reaching the distant past. A lot of grievances, which happened in the past between these two parties, whether we want or do not want, cannot be forgotten, but we think that there is not deep reason to constantly opening them. It is the past which is one of the never ending feuds between these two states and unfortunately the past is brought out whenever the public opinion is averted from what it should obediently observe, to what it should not observe.

Former political represents, who are not situated in the parliament anymore, the former chairman of the Slovak national party and chairmen of the Hungary coalition party are one of the initiators, who were constantly bringing out the thing which happened and cannot be undone. We might mention the one of the most squeamish questions are presidential decrees of Eduard Beneš from the 40s in 20th century. We dare to mention the confiscation of the property, from the Hungarians living in Slovakia. At the decree bases, the tangible and intangible property of people was confiscated; the people were indicated as enemies. The enemies were people who were creating activity against the state sovereignty, integrity, autonomy, protection; they were underestimating or deceiving other people to this activity, supported Hungarian occupants, supported hungarization. As we already mentioned it is the topic which is not suited for public to deal with and listened to it from each party and right before elections.

4 Discussion

Majority of people thinks, that when they are living in a state with democratic elements, is free. Majority do not even recognize that they are doing exactly what they were infected by certain someone. It is the manipulated herd (Urbanová, 2011). The truth of this quote is cruel, however according to our opinion is very appositive. We can possibly assume that it appositively reflects the reality. It is really beautiful that we live in a democratic society, but it is the corruption and manipulation, which are present in any area is the reflection of that the principles of democracy are not always kept in the democratic constitution. The biggest possible manipulation is right before the elections. It is the period when each of the parties, which is situated in the political spectrum makes the most of the effort, whether material or any other to manipulate the citizens. The meetings of parties are organized, summits, where the refreshments and souvenirs are given to electors, where rhetorically capable politicians can be presented by their statements, which sometimes do not have meaning. We also must mention that media are significantly active during this period, because they often picks the sentenced out of the context, and by doing that people already do not know what is real and what is fraud. The very good example is pre – election research of the agencies, which are examining the opinions of people toward the political scene. Very refined question can get answers from asked respondents, which were planned at the creating of inquiry. We can create inquiry with a single question and it will be enough; which political party is hurting Slovakia the most and should leave political scene? Regarding to constant influence of the public opinion in disadvantage to certain political party, it is evident that the subconscious will switch on and majority of asked people answer as expected. The result of research is then discussed in media and gets into the heads of those who never gave a thought about such thing or did not even dispose with own opinion. Reality, which is reflected by media is their tactical way, it is understandable for media. It is up to consumer, if he takes the reality offered by media as a real one, will spread it or absolutely cope with it. Identification with the medial reality is very various and is influenced by number of factors. The fundamental thing is also that if the consumer is offered also the medium, which offers opponents version of the reality. The first criterion is also reality, whether the consumer is socialized in big or small society.

The public opinion is easily lost, but hard to obtain. Each of the public opinion is formed in society and is changed, presented and reflected by society.

Despite all of the upper mentioned statements, there is still a question of solving of this unpleasant state. The key question to future is the improvement of morality in policy and media, because if we will not start to care about the fairness now in the current period, it might be too late in the future. Put more pressure on politics and media, tightening the connection and simultaneous enrichment by the every means possible, so we could get the most relevant information than from media, as well as from political parties, that way our public opinion will lead the state, so that the state cannot lead our public opinion.

5 Conclusion

We found clear conclusion in my work. The topic of public opinion and political parties can be understood by different point of views. We emphasize political parties in the first half of the paper work. We describing their foundation, reason of their establishment, and relevance. In the second part we put my brain to their division, characteristic and their opinion to public opinion. In the third part we trying to point out, who is the real intermediary of disinformation and half-truth, which are shared with people and who is the biggest opinion maker in the state. We assume, that we reached that, the politics are manipulating the public opinion by the biggest possible means for their personal success. It is also visible, that not all of the constituents, who are working with the public opinion, are neutral, what applies for the mass media, as well. Of course, when all parts of this folder connects, it does not bring nothing else than just giving of the false information to a common public, which, as we mentioned already, thinks that when we are living in the democratic society, that society must be free. Unfortunately it does not look so, because we are “fed” only by what the upper echelons wants us to be fed.

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Appendix

Table 1. Results of the elections in March 2016 and the number of seats for the winning party. (ŠSTATISTICKÝ ÚRAD SR, 2016)

Party name	Share of votes in %	Number of seats
Smer- SD	28,28	49
SaS	12,1	21
OLaNO- NOVA	11,02	19
SNS	8,64	15
Kotleba- ĽS NS	8,04	14
Sme rodina- Boris Kollár	6,62	11
Most-Híd	6,5	11
#Siet'	5,6	10

Figure 1. Map the results of the dominant parties in individual districts. (aktuality.sk, 2016)

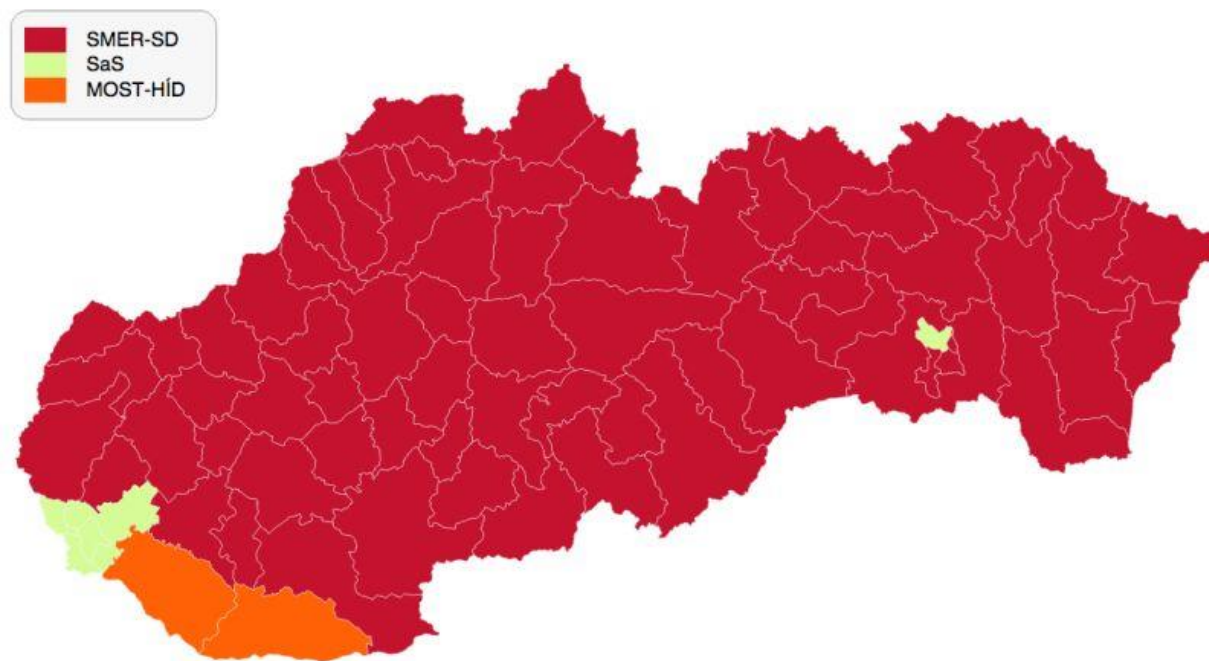


Table 2. Voting preferences November 2016 (FOCUS, 2016)

Party name	Share of votes in %	Number of seats
Smer- SD	26,9	46
SNS	12,8	22
SaS	12,1	20
Kotleba- ĽS NS	8,4	14
OLaNO- NOVA	8,0	13
Sme rodina- Boris Kollár	7,5	13
Most-Híd	6,7	11
KDH	6,3	11

Richard Horniak is a student of 3rd year bachelor study in political science at the University of Trnava, department of Political Science. From 2016 he is a member of Student council Trnava University.

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