CHAPTER 4

Civil Society and Political Parties

GROWTH AND CHANGE IN THE ORGANIZATIONS LINKING PEOPLE AND POWER

Kevin Deegan-Krause

Communism fell and democracy rose because of complex geopolitical interactions and powerful structural forces, but amid the turmoil small groups of thoughtful, committed citizens were the ones who actually brought about big changes. Fledgling civil society organizations and political parties promoted democratic values and built new institutions that helped prevent a return to dictatorship. If we want to understand how Central and Eastern Europe has changed and what we might expect for its future, we need to look not only at the big questions of constitutions, markets, and national identity but also to the concrete and local experience of civil society and political parties. This chapter will set down basic definitions for civil society and political parties, consider the difference between the two, and then discuss how they developed in the region with particular attention to laws, values, organizations, and their impact on society.

What We Mean by Civil Society and Political Parties

Civil society and political parties are different, but they are similar enough to share a chapter because they inhabit an "in-between" space. "Civil society" in particular is often defined by what it is *not*. It is not "the family," "the state," or "the market" but rather a sphere of activity located between these in which "institutions, organizations and individuals . . . associate voluntarily to advance common interests."[1] More recent and specific definitions try to recast this negative space into a positive set of values. Roberto Foa and Gregorz Ekiert define civil society as

> the realm of organized social life that is open, voluntary, self-generating, at least partially self-supporting, autonomous from the state, and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules [and which] involves citizens acting collectively in a public sphere to express their interests, passions, preferences, and ideas, to exchange information, to achieve collective goals, to make demands on the state, to improve the structure and functioning of the state, and to hold state officials accountable.[2]

"Civil society organization" is the generic term for any institutional unit of civil society, and this term includes all those interest groups, service groups, clubs, think-tanks, foundations, churches, and any other institutions that fit the definition's requirements by being voluntary, independent, and oriented to public, collective goals.

Parties are *not quite* the same as civil society organizations. They are sometimes easier to spot because they often use "party" in their name, but not all parties use that label and not everything with that label is a party. One of the most widely used definitions sets up two criteria: a party is an "institution that (a) seeks influence in a state, often by attempting to occupy positions in government, and (b) usually consists of more than a single interest in the society and so to some degree attempts to "aggregate interests."[3] The lines between civil society organizations and parties are sometimes blurry, but the general rule is that parties seek "influence from within the government" while civil society organizations work from outside and that parties take a more "comprehensive view of the public interest and political agenda" while civil society organizations focus more narrowly on a few specific agenda items.[4] Political parties together form broader collectives called "political party systems" that describe how parties relate to one another: their alliances and feuds, the issues they fight about, and their relative positions on the political spectrum.

Understanding Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe

HOW CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPED IN A CHAOTIC REGION

Civil society in Central and Eastern Europe faced widespread destructive pressure under communism, but when that pressure lifted, civil society organizations rapidly emerged to play an important role in the postcommunist period. The development of civil society has not been smooth, however. The mid-1990s were a time of particularly difficult adaptation, and civil society organizations in the south of the region faced the most severe challenges.

The seizure of power by communist parties in the late 1940s did profound damage to civil society in Central and Eastern Europe, but its problems began much earlier. Professional associations, discussion circles, charitable societies, and other groups began to flourish in the late 1800s industrialized cities such as Prague and Budapest, but they were much slower to develop in the countryside and in countries to the south and east. Further growth was made more difficult both by the economic crises of the 1920s and 1930s, which starved civil society of resources, and by the emergence of authoritarian leaders who saw civil society as a threat to their rule and tried to suppress its activity. When communist parties took over after World War II, they also attacked independent civil society but from a different direction. Communists were willing to allow clubs and associations—and even to help build them—but only on the condition that they became completely dependent on the state. Communist parties in the region actively used what remained of civil society as "transmission belts" for mobilizing support (or at least the

appearance of support) for government efforts, and they made major efforts to create a "dense network of large associations" while at the same time ensuring that these were "tightly controlled by the party-state."[5]

At the same time, another kind of civil society began to emerge beneath the surface. Dissidents who rejected the overwhelming power of the communist regimes began to work together to organize their opposition even though they faced the constant risk of political persecution and legal prosecution. Most of these organizations remained fragmented and hidden from view except in rare instances when (as in Poland) they could find protection from other institutions such as trade unions or the Catholic Church or when (as in Czechoslovakia) leaders of dissident organizations openly accepted imprisonment as the price of speaking out. Yet, whenever pressure from above eased—as it did in Hungary in 1956, in Czechoslovakia in 1968, in Poland in the late 1970s, and across the region in the late 1980s—organizations such as these showed a strong capacity to organize, and they quickly mobilized marches and other acts of public opposition along with newspapers, informal schools, and help for the families of those who were fired or jailed.

As communism weakened and the Soviet Union withdrew support, an independent civil society again began to emerge from several directions: the increased strength of independent dissident groups, the increased independence of formerly state-run groups, and the creation of many wholly new civil society organizations. In the northern and western countries of the region, these organizational networks played critical roles in pushing some governments into negotiations and pushing others out of office. In the south of the region, significant activity by civil society organizations also helped to end the communist monopoly in Yugoslavia, but much of that effort became bound up in ethnic conflicts about the groups would control the state.

As a vibrant and voluntary alternative to the tired and oppressive state apparatus of communism, civil society played a key role in the democratic transitions but popular enthusiasm eventually waned. As many of the most skillful activists turned their attention to parliament and the government, and as many of the smaller, less-connected organizations saw their resources dry up, many skeptics believed that civil society simply could not overcome the destructive historical legacies of suppression by interwar dictators followed by subservience under communist rule. History was not destiny, however, and instead of shriveling up, civil society organizations adapted to the new circumstances with new goals and new forms of organization. Civil society survived and in some places it even thrived.

MEASURING CIVIL SOCIETY ACROSS TIME AND SPACE

How can we assess the state of civil society? The region of Central and Eastern Europe is diverse and rapidly changing, and there are simply not many tools for making good comparisons. Of the available measures, one of the best is the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) project that asks scholars to estimate the strength of civil society for every year, past and present. Figure 4.1 summarizes the views of experts about whether civil society enjoyed "autonomy from the state" and whether citizens could "freely and actively pursue

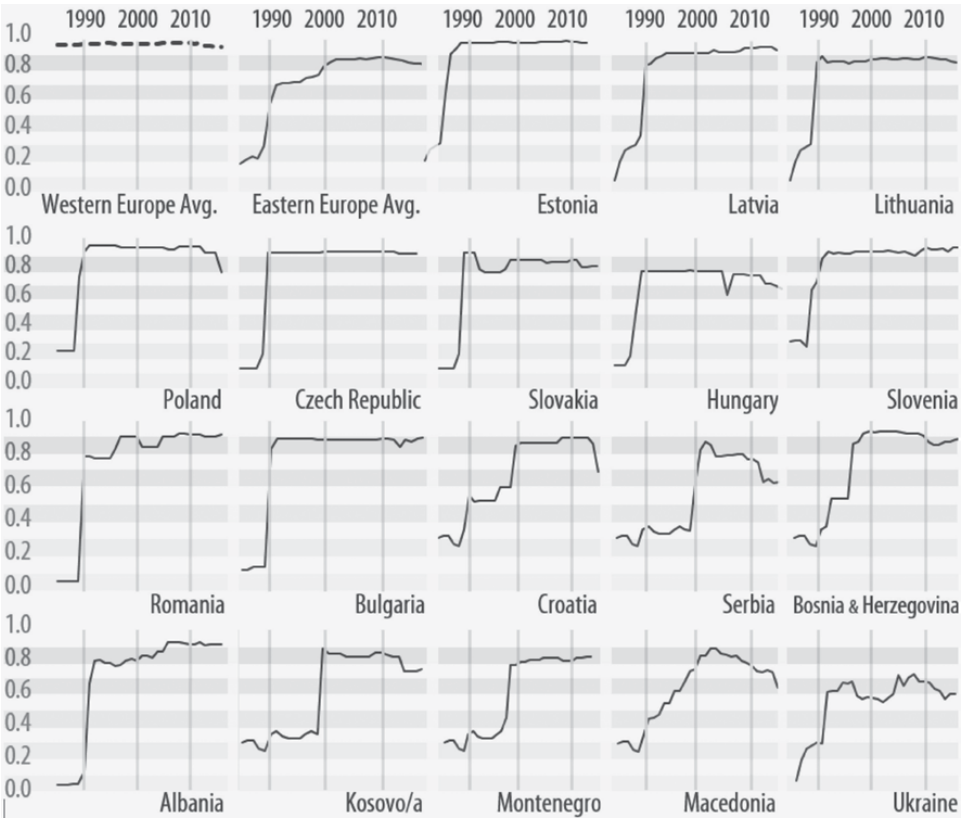

Figure 4.1. Overall Strength of Civil Society over Time (Core Civil Society Score)
Source: V-Dem 2017.

their political and civic goals, however conceived." In every country in the region, the autonomy of civil society rose sharply from extremely low levels in the late 1980s to higher levels in the early 1990s and then remained fairly strong.[6]

A closer look at individual countries, however, shows some significant variation. The data show two fairly distinct regional patterns and a few variations. In the northern and western countries of the region (especially in the eight countries that entered the European Union [EU] in 2004), the graphs show that civil society followed an almost identical pattern, strengthening rapidly from exceptionally low civil society under communism and then remaining relatively strong in subsequent decades. In the south and east, the graphs show much more variation, with some repeating the pattern above—especially in Romania and Bulgaria—and others experiencing more gradual climbs and lower peaks. While most countries in the region remained close to the levels they reached in the late 1990s, Hungary, Serbia, and Macedonia have shown noticeable declines. Even with the drop, however, they have stayed well above their mid-1980s levels (unlike countries to the east such as Russia whose civil society experienced the same initial rise but by 2016 had fallen back to the levels of the late communist era).

DIMENSIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY GROWTH AND CHANGE

These broad, all-purpose measurements are useful for making big comparisons, but they do not tell the whole story because civil society can succeed or fail in many different ways. Helmut Anheier and Lisa Carlson argue that civil society has multiple dimensions. Their "Civil Society Diamond" breaks down the analysis of civil society into four different categories:

- *Space:* "What is the legal and political space within the larger regulatory environment in which civil society operates; and what laws and policies enable or inhibit its development?"
- *Values:* "What values underlie civil society; what values, norms and attitudes does it represent and propagate; how inclusive and exclusive are they; and what areas of consensus and dissent emerge?"
- *Structure:* "How large is civil society in terms of institutions, organizations, networks, and individuals; what are its component parts; and what resources does it command?"
- *Impact:* "What is the contribution of civil society to specific social, economic and political problems?"[7]

Space: What Institutions Shape Civil Society?

All organizations work within broader frameworks of rules and resources that they cannot completely control. The "in-between" nature of civil society makes it especially dependent on decisions that are made somewhere else, whether by families, by firms or, especially, by governments. But the relationship with government is complicated. Civil society needs government to act but not too much. On the one hand, civil society organizations cannot function without some degree of public order or formal legal status that allows them to protect their organizational identity, oversee membership, and manage accountability and finances. Many civil society organizations, furthermore, depend on government for financial support, either directly through subsidy or indirectly through tax codes that promote voluntary donations. On the other hand, civil society needs governments to refrain from getting involved because governments that become too intrusive in their regulation (either accidentally or intentionally) can undermine the positive efforts of civil society organizations, scare off membership, and threaten their essential independence.[8] The communist era is perhaps the best example of a government that intrudes too much—to the point of undermining and even criminalizing anything it did not like—while the chaos of some countries in the early postcommunist era demonstrates the way that civil society needs government to enforce the rule of law.

Some countries in Central and Eastern Europe in the postcommunist era have found it more difficult than others to maintain this complicated equilibrium. Since the mid-1990s, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has issued annual reports on civil society's "legal environment" with special attention to questions about how well governments register, tax, regulate, and respect the independence of civil society organizations. The results follow familiar regional patterns: the legal environments in most countries in the north and west of this region have consistently received high marks

as "supportive" while most countries in the south and east of the region received the lower assessment of "evolving" because of problems such as administrative harassment, fines, and deliberate refusal to register new organizations. Positive change did occur in most countries as they began to enact more streamlined rules on tax exemptions, donations, and accounting procedures, but improvement remained slow.[9] A few declines, by contrast, were severe, most notably in Hungary, whose once widely praised nonprofit legal environment descended into "an atmosphere of intimidation" with the rise of Viktor Orbán's "illiberal democracy" model. Now the atmosphere is characterized by "accusatory statements by the government" and "ongoing administrative harassment" including police raids on organizations distributing civil-society-related grants from the Norwegian government.[10]

Values: What Are Civil Society's Motivations?

Even a supportive legal structure will not produce a strong civil society if a society's underlying values do not contribute to individuals volunteering the time, money, and effort that civic efforts require. Under these circumstances, even a high degree of public support may not produce positive results if the values nurtured by civil society organizations are too sharply at odds with one another or with the fundamental values of democracy.

The first question for a successful civil society is whether anyone cares. Other spheres of action—governments, firms, and families—have carrots and sticks that allow them to exert leverage and get what they want, but civil society organizations have no sticks to force cooperation and even carrots are in short supply because of the famous "free-rider" problem that allows some people stand by and take advantage of the social benefits produced by civic engagement of others.

In the early years of postcommunism, the incentives won out and large parts of the populations of many countries demonstrated the core values that sustain civil society. At first, only a courageous few risked severe punishment to organize into groups and take small-scale actions. They typed multiple copies of forbidden texts, organized small discussions and events, and even mounted legal defenses of others facing prison as the Committee to Protect the Workers (KOR) did after the 1970 strikes in Poland and the civil-rights advocacy group Charter 77 did in Czechoslovakia. As organized groups got stronger and sensed lack of resolution from the communist governments in the 1980s, ever-larger numbers turned out for collective protests and introduced an independent spirit into once-subservient communist-era associations. Many of the leaders of these efforts came from the earlier opposition groups: Lech Wałęsa, the shipyard worker who became head of the Solidarity organization and movement in Poland, had been in the workers' group created by the intellectual group formed in 1976, Committee to Protect the Workers, KOR, and Václav Havel, the playwright who helped lead mass demonstrations in Prague in November 1989, had spent years in prison for his activity as spokesperson for the Czech dissident group, Charter 77.

Many of the leaders of dissident groups and civil society organizations went on to prominent government positions—Wałęsa and Havel became the presidents of their respective countries—but, at the grassroots level, the victory was less obvious. As early public enthusiasm for demonstrations waned, the corrosive effects of communism on the values of civil society members became increasingly apparent. According to Marc Morjé

Howard, communism's tendency to force people into supportive organizations and then label those activities as "voluntary" produced a low level of generalized trust in society as a whole and encouraged the narrow relationships of trust based on the close-knit "private and informal networks" that people built for self-protection. The end of communism did not immediately break these habits, and the economic slumps and political crises of postcommunism led to a deep dissatisfaction that encouraged many people to "withdraw even further from public activities."[11]

More recent evidence, however, indicates that instead of withdrawing completely, people in the region shifted their civil society participation to other, less-obvious activities. Fao and Ekiert have found that, although the level of many civil society behaviors in Central and Eastern Europe falls considerably below those of Western Europe, the gap is narrowing.[12] Small-scale studies and local opinion polls show that the idea of "volunteering" is losing some of the stigma of the communist era and that some segments of the population have begun to adopt West European patterns of charitable giving and philanthropy.[13]

The values of civic engagement, however, can do more harm than good if citizens are engaged in the pursuit of destructive goals. Simone Chambers and Jeffrey Kopstein mince no words when they confront the problem of "bad civil society," by which they mean groups that embody the civil society ideals of voluntary mutual engagement among individuals but in the service of "hate and bigotry."[14] Ugliness, of course, is in the eye of the beholder, and fears about the violence of football fan clubs such as the Czech Ultra Sparta, the intolerance of conservative religious organizations such as the Polish nonprofit Radio Mariya, or the nationalism of patriotic organizations such as Croatian Disabled Homeland War Veterans Association, exist alongside fears about the danger to the social order posed by what many see as morally permissive Gay Pride Parades or the "anti-patriotic cosmopolitanism" of organizations funded by Hungarian billionaire George Soros. In reality, though, the potential sources of "bad civil society" in Central and Eastern Europe represent only a tiny share of the sector as a whole. Far from the extremes, most civil society organizations in East and West alike act to help the needy, solve practical problems, and engage together on hobbies and areas of mutual interest.

Structure: What Are Civil Society's Capacities?

Even when legal civil society merely provides open space for people with similar goals or interest to interact, it requires organizations with formal names, bylaws, members, and resources. How these are structured can have a huge impact on whether people can use civil society to reach their goals. Along with its review of legal frameworks, USAID has also evaluated civil society based on the measures membership, management, fundraising, training, and partnerships with other sectors along with the transparency and accountability of civil society organizations.[15] These show rapid growth in the capacity of civil society in the early 1990s followed by a long period of overall stability. During this stable period, however, big changes were happening under the surface. A three-decade analysis of Poland, conducted by Ekiert, Kubik, and Wenzel, found that the submissive associations of the communist era faced major challenges caused both by the loss of state resources and the acquisition of a new and unfamiliar independence. Many formerly

communist-led unions, associations, and organizations either simply collapsed or limped along with inherited memberships and little sense of direction. At the same time, new professional associations, unions, and clubs emerged as fresh-thinking alternatives to communist-era groups and other groups emerged to meet needs that had not existed under communism such as campaign watchdog organizations, chambers of commerce, and homeless shelters. In the process, civil society's "center of gravity shifted from the large, membership-based, formal organizations, such as trade unions and professional associations (mostly inherited from the old regime), to a highly diverse sector of small, professionalized NGOs that rely on voluntary involvement and public as well as private funding."[16] In Poland's case, there are "tens of thousands" of "small organizations run by professional staffs that rely on public funding, fundraising, and volunteers" and "focus on a wide range of local and national issues and initiatives."[17] Poland is not unique. Countries across the region exhibit similar patterns with the most effective associations of the old regime being "complemented by the dynamic growth of new organizations," together creating "a diverse, competitive, and balanced associational sphere."[18]

Along with this organizational transition came new patterns of economic impact and funding. Although civil society plays a significant role in serving people's needs and stabilizing the political system, it remains a relatively small part of the economy. A 2013 study by Johns Hopkins University found that the nonprofit sector in the Czech Republic, for example, accounted for just under 2 percent of all jobs and economic activity, though the direct impact was slightly larger when adjusted to include volunteers, and the indirect, nonmonetary effects were even more significant.[19] Because civil society organizations did their work with relatively few financial resources, wealthy outside institutions could, by devoting only a tiny fraction of their own resources, have an outsized impact on the organization and direction of civil society. During the 1990s and early 2000s, the EU and the United States, together with private philanthropists such as George Soros, funded hundreds of consultants and contributed hundreds of millions of dollars to strengthen civil society organizations in the hopes of helping to consolidate democracy. Although these efforts appear to have played a big role in creating the basic infrastructure for civil society, there were limits. Critics argue this funding failed to achieve many of its goals because recipients were concentrated in a relatively thin layer of elite nonprofits with international connections rather than among local-level organizations with fewer connections.[20] This dependence on outside resources also led to problems for civil society in the north and west of the region that had been the first to get aid either in donations or advisors. By the time the other countries in the region were felt to be ready to get aid, special-funding programs for soon-to-be EU member states had begun to dry up. Other outside donors then focused their efforts on the more vulnerable democracies of the south and east.

Impact: How Does Civil Society Shape Its Surroundings?

The impact of civil society, then, depends on the combination of the rules that govern it, the values that shape it, and the organizational capacity of its organizations. A recent report by the World Economic Forum offered a long list of tasks that civil society organizations perform in any society: "watchdog" over public institutions; "advocate" for

awareness of social issues; "service provider" to meet societal needs; "expert" to provide well-crafted solutions; "capacity builder" and "incubator" to make future efforts possible; as well as "representative," "champion," and "definer of standards" to identify voices that otherwise go unheard and bring them into existing systems of governance.[21] To what extent does civil society in Central and Eastern Europe actually fulfill this role?

During the late stages of communism, dissidents excelled in the role of champion of the people against the regime. In the absence of rival parties or opposition newspapers, the small and vulnerable civil society organizations were representatives of the society and its concerns by talking and writing as openly as they could about societal problems including everything from corruption to industrial pollution as well the quality and availability of vegetables. As democratically elected governments emerged in the early stages of postcommunism, civil society added watchdog functions. Over time, much of the watchdog role shifted to political parties that sought to keep one another in check, but civil society organizations continued to advocate on issues that did not have any strong political representation of their own. During this same period, civil society organizations also began to respond directly to public needs and became increasingly involved in providing services, even if they often lacked the funding to really solve the problems they were addressing.

The surveys by USAID measure the impact of civil society using two main factors: advocacy, the ability of organizations to "communicate their messages through the media to the broader public, articulate their demands to government officials, and monitor government actions to ensure accountability," and service provision, "the range of goods and services that [civil society organizations] provide and how responsive these are to community needs and priorities."[22] Civil society organizations across the region rank higher for their advocacy than for their service provision. This is understandable because civil society groups generally have fewer resources than governments, and it is usually more expensive to provide services than to advocate. Furthermore, even with foreign support, civil society organizations usually cannot afford to provide wide-reaching services without assistance from the domestic government. The barriers to advocacy, by contrast, are more uneven and depend heavily on how governments treat civil society. In the most extreme cases, governments emphasize the threat posed by civil society. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, for example, claimed that policy advocates from civil society organizations "are being paid by foreigners" who use this access to government "to apply influence on Hungarian political life."[23] Orbán subsequently escalated tensions with a law whose administrative procedures threatened to force the closure of Central European University, a social science-oriented institution based in Budapest and funded by Hungarian refugee and human rights advocate George Soros.

In response, many of these civil society organizations have tried to get around these barriers by turning to more public forms of protest. Hungarian civil society has responded not only with significant demonstrations but also with numerous smaller efforts that that range from serious investigation of corruption by government officials to successful gofundme.com campaigns for creating parodies of government anti-immigrant billboards ("Come to Hungary, *we've* got jobs in London").

In a similar vein, Poland's 2016 Black Monday Women's March to oppose a government antiabortion law progressed quickly from online protest ideas—calls for women to

boycott work and to gather in public wearing black—to mass demonstrations of women and men in more than sixty Polish cities, which closed down many businesses and government offices and ultimately helped push the government into withdrawing the legislation. Less than a year later, the government's attempt to subordinate the independence of the courts (chapter 9) led to yet another series of mass demonstrations in front of the government and the Supreme Court and in cities around the country (including a group claiming to represent the earlier women's organization, along with opposition political parties and angry citizens). In this latter case, demonstrations did not deter Polish parliament but did strengthen the case for Poland's president's to veto the initial bills even though they had been initiated by his own party.

Although the concerted efforts of a strong civil society have been unable to check the efforts of a government that has both the desire and the parliamentary votes necessary for undermining democratic accountability. But, the absence of victory does not mean total defeat and, even if civil society is not the "make-or-break" factor in preventing the return to dictatorship, it is still important because it reinforces support for the everyday work of democratic institutions, builds connections among citizens that may later help with mobilization, and helps secure the well-being of those who are hit hardest by political and economic decline.

Indeed the true impact of civil society—the full expression of its values and its capacity—is often only apparent when these organizations find themselves under pressure. Attempts by the governments of Slovakia, Croatia, and Serbia to impose authoritarian rule in the mid-1990s led to strong and effective response by civil society organizations, revealing strengths that had been honed under four decades of resistance to communism combined with new tactics learned from around the world. Working independently of political parties (though accepting European and American financial and technical assistance), these organizations produced "rock the vote" tours, sought to boost turnout with a campaign built around the slogan "It's not all the same to me," and prepared civil disobedience that could detect and respond to evidence that the government had manipulated election results. While these efforts probably could not have defeated the government without an equally effective campaign of cooperation by parties in the political opposition, they certainly helped increase the new government's majority and gave it political breathing room in its first years of operation. These efforts also provide one of the earliest examples of Central Eastern civil society as an international influence in its own right since leaders from Slovakia helped advise their counterparts in Croatia in the following year, and representatives of both groups went on to advise civil society organizations in Serbia in 2000 and in Georgia and Ukraine in the early 2000s.

Understanding Political Parties in Central and Eastern Europe

Civil society raised the curtain on democracy in Central and Eastern Europe, but political parties stole the show.[24] Civil society organizations moved to the margins and transformed into a solid, stable sector of service providers and advocates. Political parties jumped to

Photo 4.1. Black Monday Women's Strikes in 2016 against the legislation which would criminalize all abortions. (Adam Lach, NAPO)

the center of the political stage, transformed to keep up with changing circumstances and then transformed again and again to keep up with opponents who were changing too. In the process, Central and Eastern Europe produced complicated party systems with many parties and rapid shifts in names and membership as well as programs. Many of those parties built themselves in traditional ways, around economic and cultural issues and ties to specific voting groups, but others burst in with new ideas and new ways of organizing.

HOW POLITICAL PARTIES DEVELOPED IN A CHAOTIC REGION

Central and Eastern Europe lacked party competition between 1948 and 1989, but it certainly never lacked political parties. In every country of the region, a single, dominant Communist Party controlled every political institution and, though there were periodic elections, voters usually faced the choice of voting for the sole Communist Party–approved candidate on the ballot or risking party disapproval (or worse) by failing to vote or making the ballot invalid with an "X" across the ballot or writing in "No." When they had a "choice," the other parties on the ballots were subordinate to the Communist Party that were sham opposition, loyal to the Communist Party but presenting themselves as representing specific groups, like the peasants in the case of the Polish Peasant Party, for whom the Communist Party had no appeal.

The communist monopoly on power ended by the early 1990s. Communist parties did not. In most countries of the region, the successors of the various communist parties proved resilient and, while most were pushed out of office in the first years after 1989, some actually managed to stay in governing coalitions and others returned to power in coalitions at the next election through a combination of internal reform, strong organization, and voters' desire for economic protection. Some broke apart and others changed their names to "Socialist" or "Reform" or "Labour"; but, since they began with a huge membership base and still retained some member loyalty, most were successful in translating the membership and inherited resources—funds, offices, and bureaucratic connections—into strong results in the early competitive elections.

Competing against the communists in these elections were parties representing all of the various forces that had previously opposed communist rule—those who favored freer markets or sought more civil liberties—as well as those with strong religious belief or national identity, and those with strong ecological concerns or other specific interests such as larger pensions or higher farm supports (or even more specific interests such as the Czech Republic's "Independent Erotic Initiative" and "Friends of Beer"). In some countries, these extremely disparate forces managed to band together into one or more large anti-communist movements. In others, they found that cooperation more difficult. Although all of the anti-communist movements ultimately splintered into many parts, some of the fragments went on to become strong parties in their own right. Many of these new parties took as their models the kinds of parties found in Western Europe: liberal parties supporting free markets, Christian democratic parties supporting moral values, ethnic parties supporting their own particular cultural groups, and social democratic parties (other than the communist successors) supporting moderate redistribution of wealth and income. Many other parties remained difficult to pin down in those familiar terms but possessed well-known leaders who could attract votes. During the 1990s, some of these leader-driven parties (often allied with nationalist groups) sought to stifle competition and return to one-party rule. Croatia's Franjo Tuđman, Serbia's Slobodan Milošević, Slovakia's Vladimír Mečiar, and Ukraine's Leonid Kuchma all used their executive powers to defeat or eliminate (and in some cases, apparently, kill) political opponents who threatened to hold them accountable. They all, to varying degrees, manipulated electoral rules and procedures to try to stay in power. Through a combination of illness, political miscalculation, and popular counterpressure, however, none of the four succeeded in bending the political system fully to his will (unlike parallel cases in Russia and Belarus).

By the mid-2000s, every country in the region had developed a reasonably robust political party system in which entities recognizable as political parties actively competed fairly over jobs and taxes and minority rights and other predictable, if mundane, issues. The emergence of regularized party competition did not necessarily produce stable party systems, however, and the 2000s and 2010s brought significant disruptions by new political parties that capitalized on public dissatisfaction with politics and the apparent corruption of the newly entrenched postcommunist leaders. Often led by celebrities from nonpolitical backgrounds (ranging from an ex-king to the manager of a supermarket chain, and including colorful figures such as television investigative journalists and game-show hosts), these parties promised cleaner government based on new ways of thinking

("neither left nor right but forward") but they usually found it difficult to deliver on these promises and faced their own outsider challenges in the elections that followed. Parties such as Positive Slovenia (the manager), Lithuania's Party of National Resurrection (the game-show host), the Czech Republic's Public Affairs (the journalist), and the National Movement of Simeon the II (the king) rose quickly and then disappeared without a trace one or two election cycles later, leaving space for another new party in its wake.

MEASURING POLITICAL PARTIES ACROSS TIME AND SPACE

The challenges of assessing parties are different than those of civil society. Gathering statistics on individual parties is fairly easy because governments keep specific lists of what count as a party and when parties compete they compete almost exclusively using the common currencies of votes and seats. But there's no easy way to judge the overall health of a party system. The number of parties and the speed of change provide two good starting points because there are dangers on *both* sides: too many parties can be as dangerous as too few, and too little change can be as destructive as too much.

Fragmentation: How Many Parties?

There is no way, in the abstract, to decide on the right number of parties in a political party system. Without at least two parties, it is hard to imagine meaningful competition, but every addition to the party system makes it more unlikely that a majority will agree on who will run the government and what policies it will pursue. Figure 4.2 shows the sizes of political party systems in Central and Eastern Europe using a mathematical formula designed to deal with the problem of how to count parties with vastly different sizes, especially tiny parties.[25] A measure of less than 2.0 on this scale suggests that one party is significantly larger than all the rest combined, while a measure of more than 6.0 indicates a number of parties so large that cooperation becomes difficult. Figure 4.2 shows that the average in Central and Eastern Europe has declined from the high-end of the normal range in the early 1990s to a middle position that is now in line with political party systems in Western Europe.

Unlike the graphs for civil society strength, the graphs of fragmentation do not show any clear geographic patterns. Slightly larger party systems were more common in the north, particularly the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, which tended to hover between five and six systems with below-average levels of fragmentation were more common in the south and east of the region (with the sole exception of Bosnia and Herzegovina where the constitution separates voting along ethnic lines and multiple parties can compete successfully for support within each of the three major ethnic groups). Only a few countries fell below the threshold indicating one-party dominance and it was rare for any single party to command a majority of the seats in parliament. Some of these single-party-dominant periods were short-lived, such as Bulgaria and Lithuania during the mid-1990s, and Slovakia in the early 2010s, but a few other countries have seen more consistent one-party dominance, especially Montenegro, where the Party of Democratic Socialism has dominated over other parties since 1992 and nearly

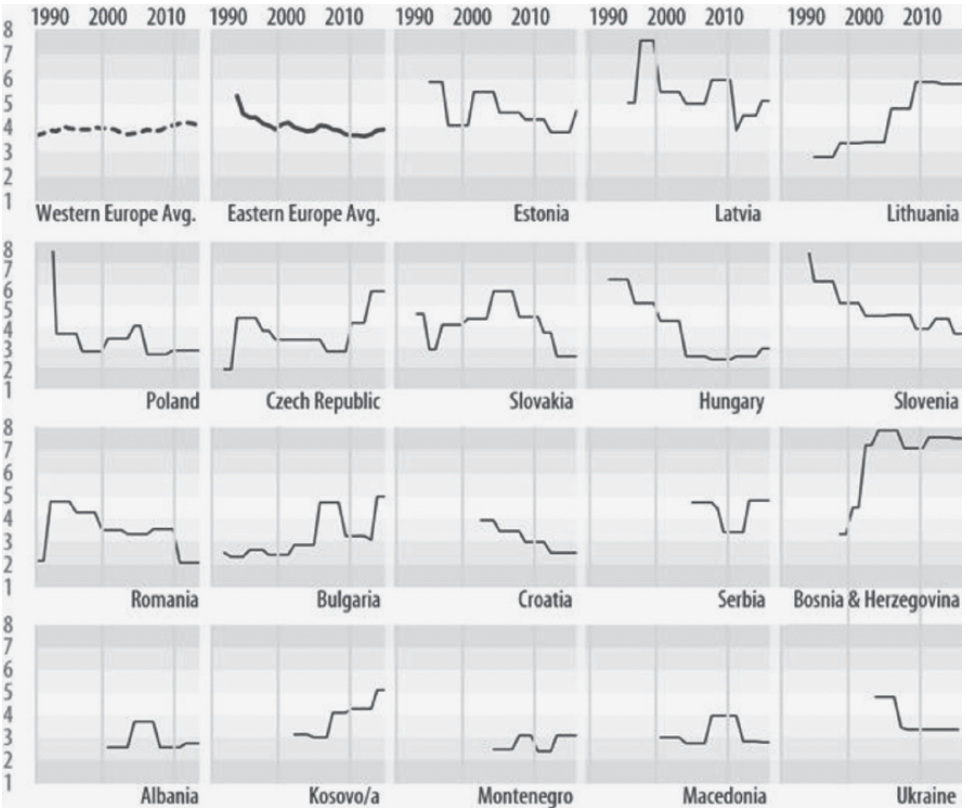

Figure 4.2. Effective Number of Parliamentary Parties in Central and Eastern Europe over Time

Source: Casal Bértoa, Ferdinand, "Database on WHO GOVERNS in Europe and Beyond," 2017, (http://whogoverns.eu).

always controlled a parliamentary majority, and Hungary, where the party Fidesz gained a two-thirds majority in parliament in 2010 against a fragmented opposition and then repeated that performance in 2014.

Volatility: How Much Change?

The first decade of democracy in any country is often a time of extreme party system change in political party systems as voters and politicians try various options before deciding to settle down. Central and Eastern Europe experienced similar changes but never actually came to rest. Calculating party volatility is measured here by the changes in every party's vote share from one election to the next. Like fragmentation, volatility has "danger zones" at both the high and low ends: constant change means that voters and politicians cannot make intelligent guesses about what will happen next and, therefore, cannot make long-term plans. Infrequent change gives parties little incentive to listen to voters.

Volatility in Central and Eastern Europe started high and has remained high. Even the relatively conservative measurements used in figure 4.3 show that about one-third of all voters changed their minds from one election to the next, resulting in a volatility of about 30 percent during the first postcommunist decade. This was three times as high as in Western Europe during the same period. Volatility dropped to around 20 percent in the second postcommunist decade with one-fifth of all voters changing their minds. Then, instead of declining further toward what had been West European levels, it began to rise again in the mid-2000s and remained high in the 2010s and West European levels also rose in this later period.

As with fragmentation, the location and timing of volatility reflect broad regional differences. To the extent that there is any geographical pattern, it is the opposite of what occurred in civil society. The most extreme volatility levels emerged in the northern and western states rather than those in the south and east (though, even in those countries,

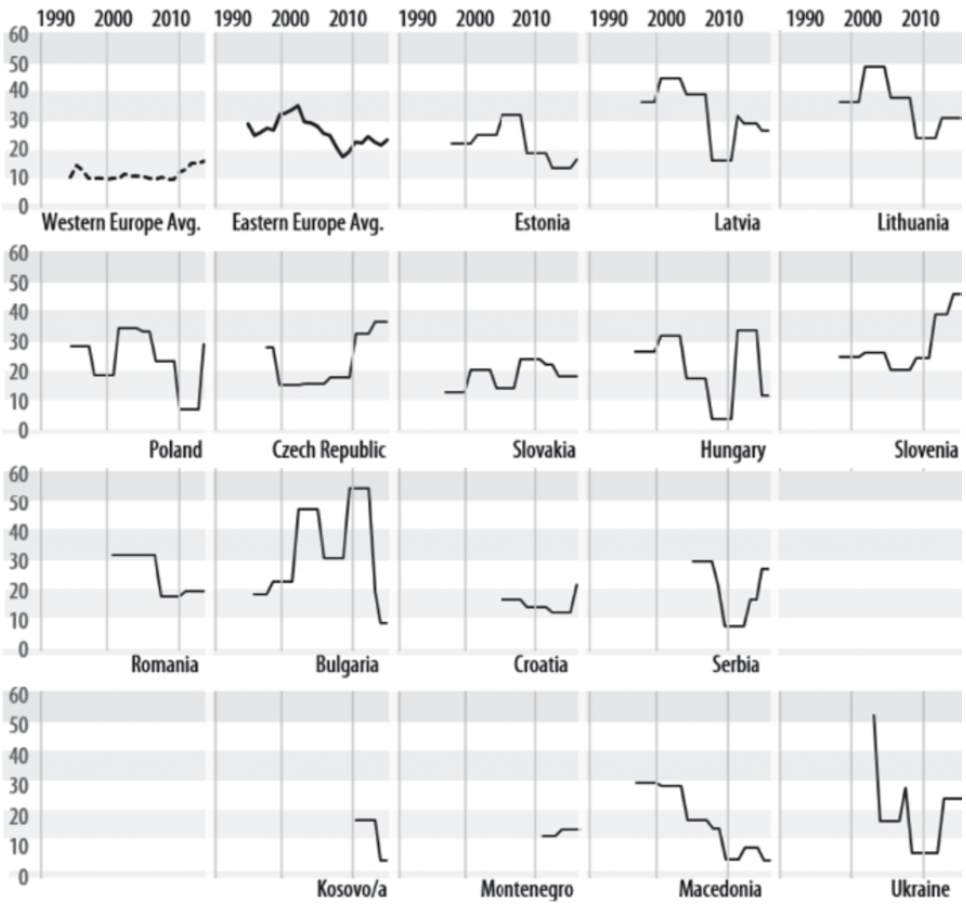

Figure 4.3. Volatility of Party Systems in Central and Eastern Europe over Time
Source: Casal Bértoa, Ferdinand, "Database on WHO GOVERNS in Europe and Beyond" (http://whogoverns.eu).

the level of change has been well above West European levels). Part of the explanation lies in the fragility of political parties themselves. Furthermore, economic problems and corruption scandals do not just weaken parties' support among voters, they kill parties outright or cause them to splinter into many pieces, and new parties pop up out of nowhere to fill the open spaces. Because this kind of volatility depends on the choices of parties and their leaders, and most did not come into politics with the same party loyalties as their counterparts in Western Europe, the region's volatility is quite unpredictable. In some countries, such as Slovakia, the changes have occurred frequently but at a relatively moderate level. In other countries, such as Hungary, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, and Slovenia, periods of stability ended with massive changes to the party system. Sometimes, the self-inflicted wounds were sudden: a leaked recording of a Hungarian prime minister's profanity-filled admission that "we lied morning, noon and night," revelations in Poland of top politicians conversations in expensive restaurants about their planned luxury vacations and contemptuous comments on voters, and a police anti-corruption raid on the office of the Czech prime minister. In other countries, the changes reflected the hope for a better alternative as was the case with the return of Bulgaria's former king as a possible savior, and the emergence in Slovenia of a wave of new parties run by nonpolitical outsiders.

DIMENSIONS OF POLITICAL PARTY GROWTH AND CHANGE

As with civil society, these broad measurements only scratch the surface. A deeper understanding of parties can use the same categories as the analysis of civil society, but the questions are different—how are parties regulated? How do they compete? How are they organized? And how do they govern?

Space: What Institutions Shape Political Parties?

Democracies depend on elections and, since political parties are the main actors in the electoral process, they are subject to a significant amount of regulation. As in other regions of the world, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have distinct regulations about how parties apply for formal registration (often requiring a petition with a minimum number of signatures) and preventing parties from using the same or similar names or acronyms as established parties and how they interact with their members with a requirement that party leaders submit, periodically, to election by party members. Government involvement is especially strong in the area of campaigns and finance. Almost every country in the region requires full disclosure of donations and places limits on what individuals and organizations can donate and prevents or limits what foreign organizations can give as well as how much parties can spend. In return, nearly all countries provide free media time for campaign advertisements and most provide a public subsidy (in some countries as much as $10 for each vote a party receives over a certain threshold).[26] Lawmakers justify these rules and subsidies as part of an effort to reduce the dependence of parties on hidden private interests; but, the enforcement of disclosure requirements in many countries often depends on what party is in power and

the generous subsidies to victorious parties are seen by many as an attempt to create a cartel to exclude potential rivals.[27]

Of all laws related to parties, by far the most important is the choice of an electoral system, particularly in terms of the rules that determine how votes are translated into seats in parliament. Except for presidential elections, where there can only be one winner, the winner-take-all system of voting for individual candidates is extremely rare in Central and Eastern Europe (and even in the region's presidential voting systems the winner is not simply the one with more votes than anybody else; if no presidential candidate wins an outright majority of 50 percent plus one vote, then the top two candidates must face each other in a second round of voting held several weeks later). Instead of winner-take-all, countries in Central and Eastern Europe preferred the proportional representation model of continental Western Europe where voters cast ballots for political parties and the share of seats in parliament roughly matches each party's share of the vote. (Only the parliaments of Lithuania and Hungary have consistently used winner-take-all systems to elect individual candidates from single-member districts, and even in these systems they use the proportional representation system to elect a significant share of the parliament). If proportional representation often fails to produce *exactly* proportional results, it is because most systems also try to reduce fragmentation by imposing a "vote threshold" that prevents a party from getting *any* seats at all unless its overall vote share exceeds a certain threshold of about 5 percent. When many of these smaller parties are excluded, it can help to magnify the performance of larger parties. In Poland in 2015, for example, the threshold excluded five significant parties with a total of nearly 16 percent of the overall vote. A result in an above-the-threshold party such as Law and Justice could benefit from having its 37.8 percent share of the vote translated into 51.1 percent of all seats in parliament.

Because electoral laws and electoral systems define the gateway into political power, they can be tempting targets for political manipulation. During the first decade of postcommunism, leaders in Slovakia, Croatia, and Serbia made significant changes in electoral laws—switching seats from proportional to winner-take-all, raising the size of the threshold, changing the ability of parties to band together in coalitions—often at the last moment, in order to knock opposition parties off balance, and these were often successful, though, in the long run, they tended to strengthen political oppositions and unify their efforts. In subsequent decades, such attempts have been less blatant, but parties in power continue to adjust the legal space of party competition for their own benefit, especially in countries to the east and south such as Ukraine, Albania, Montenegro, and Macedonia, which scored lower on measurements of integrity of the electoral process especially because of problems with government use of state media, voters excluded from election rolls, and opaque party finance. Hungary faced particular scrutiny for manipulated district boundaries in its winner-take-all section (a phenomenon known in the United States as "gerrymandering") and for its restrictive electoral regulations.[28]

Values: What Do Political Parties Fight About?

The only value that political parties in a democracy can be expected to agree on is the value of democracy itself (and even that is not a certainty). Fighting about values is

Photo 4.2. Law and Justice Party majority voting for their legal reforms. (Adam Lach, NAPO)

what parties do and the party system is the main realm in which rival visions of a better world can come into clearer focus. Those visions take different forms depending on the preferences of the party. For clarity, political scientists group them into three main categories of appeals: charisma, clientelism, and program.

While "charisma" is notoriously resistant to a precise definition, it is found when individual leaders demonstrate they (and they alone) have solutions to their voters'

deepest fears. Since charismatic parties depend on a personal connection with the leader, they often disregard ideology and the specifics of how to solve the problem and emphasize the leader's ability to get things done. Many of these parties (though not all) even bear the leader's name: "Palikot's Movement" and "Kukiz '15" in Poland, "We Are Family-Boris Kollar" in Slovakia, the "People's Party of Dan Diaconescu" in Romania, and many others.

Clientelism involves direct transfers of resources between parties and supporters, ranging from cash for votes to jobs for supporters to subsidies for particularly supportive clans, industries, or neighborhoods. Research by Herbert Kitschelt finds that parties in the south and east of the region use the most clientelism but that even the less clientelist Baltic and Višegrad countries used such tactics more than the Western Europe average (though not much more than Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain).[29] Parties in the north and west tend to rely most on hidden "wholesale" clientelism at the national level in which firms receive lucrative government contracts in exchange for hidden cash payments that parties use to pay for expensive election campaigns. Parties in the south and east also engage more frequently in "retail" clientelism at the local level, such as the use of local community services to encourage turnout among favorable voting groups reported in Bulgaria and Romania and even the individual cash-for-votes transactions identified in analyses of Ukrainian elections.

While charisma and clientelism are important for specific parties, the most important differences between Central and Eastern European parties—and the strongest sources of competition—occur on the programmatic level. Some early observers expected that precommunist and communist legacies would sentence the region to unproductive struggle over personalities and payments, but parties across the region quickly adopted specific policy positions and began to compete along internationally recognizable issue dimensions. Several common patterns began to emerge quite soon in almost every country in the region:

- *Economics.* Emerging parties immediately clashed over whether markets or the government would exert the dominant influence over economic activity. The battles took many forms: whether to lower taxes to attract investment or raise taxes to provide more public services in education and health care; whether to focus on the well-being of pensioners or the opportunities for students; whether to keep industries safely in state hands or raise revenue by privatizing them to the highest bidder; and whether those bids must come from domestic buyers or from wealthier foreign investors with less commitment to the country's well-being. Social democratic and socialist parties across the region (including some Communist-party successors) were the most frequent promoters of government intervention in the economy, facing off against pro-market parties that used labels such as "civic," "free," or "liberal" (in the classical, "small-government" sense of the word).
- *Culture*. Clashes over cultural values varied from country to country to a greater degree than economic questions, but the cultural issues tended to revolve around respect for norms of religion and moral authority such as abortion, homosexuality, and restoration of church property previously confiscated by communists. These values, championed by parties with labels such as "Christian" or "people's" were initially stronger in countries with Roman Catholic traditions such as Poland and Slovenia, but similar emphasis has subsequently emerged also in parties in the northern Baltics and Romania and other countries across the region. In some countries, parties emerged on

the opposite end of this dimension with calls for a free choice of lifestyle and morals, and in the absence of strong interest in ecological questions, it is on these questions of cultural freedom that the region's "green" parties often focused their efforts.

- *Ethnicity.* Most countries in Central and Eastern Europe have a sizeable ethnic minority with a distinct language and culture, and minority groups in those countries almost invariably led to competition between political parties of a minority group that sought more rights and resources and parties of the majority group.[30] The ethnic dimension sometimes also encouraged conflicts among parties of the ethnic majority about whether to demand majority dominance or to adopt a more conciliatory stance. Nearly every country in the region produced at least one sizeable party that went beyond praise of the majority ethnic group to call for stronger steps against potential internal threats such as the dangers posed by minority groups—often secession or criminality—and potential external threats such as a flood of migrants, a loss of national identity due to globalization or EU rules, or mistreatment of people from the same ethnic group living in neighboring countries. Although such extreme right ("nationalist" constitutes yet another meaning of "right" in the region) parties have appeared across the region—from "Attack" in Bulgaria to "All for Latvia!"—their direct role in politics has been relatively minor, though larger parties with only slightly more moderate positions have led governments in Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, and Serbia.

In some ways, party competition along these three dimensions has come to resemble the West European model, and recent research finds that over time voters in Central and Eastern Europe have come to agree with party positions almost as much in the east as in the west.[31] In other ways, however, the dimensions are different. Whereas in Western democracies, the preference for higher taxes and spending usually aligns with a more open approach to moral judgments, this connection was almost wholly absent in Central and Eastern Europe countries such as Slovakia. It has actually been reversed in others such as Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria where those who wanted more government involvement in the economy often sought a much stronger government hand on questions of morals and national identity. This, in turn, blurred common political labels so that a party that supports welfare spending but rejects gay marriage might call itself either "left" (as in Slovakia) or "right" (as in Poland and Hungary).[32]

Although economic, cultural, and ethnic issues played the most important role, parties also fought about issues that did not have obvious parallels in Western Europe:

- *Democracy.* Nearly all parties in the region claimed to support "democracy" but many still sometimes disagree about what the term *means* and some see democracy as entirely consistent with significant power in the firm hand of a charismatic leader who can put for restrictions on rival branches of government or opposition parties or public protest in order to preserve a higher goal such as public order, national unity, or moral cultural values. Such conflicts have led to near collapses of democracy in Slovakia, Croatia, and Serbia in the 1990s and Ukraine in the 2000s and continue in some form to the present especially in Montenegro, Macedonia, Hungary, and Poland where governments have taken steps to weaken or subordinate potential sources of accountability such as courts, oversight agencies, and the mass media. The conflicts in Hungary and Poland are particularly worrisome because these countries, once exemplars of democracy in the

region, have begun to see a political sorting of the population between those who are willing to tolerate a firmer political hand and those who are not. As long as advocates of the strong hand hold a parliamentary majority capable of constitutional change, the democratic system remains at risk.

- *Corruption.* The use of state resources for private gain has become a major issue in Central and Eastern European politics, but corruption does not follow the ordinary rules of issue competition. Parties in power cannot easily defend the corruption that may have happened on their watch (and it is often quite significant), so they try instead to talk about their experience or redirect public attention to other issues where they can make stronger claims. On the other side stand antiestablishment parties—often newly created with assertive, clever marketing and celebrity leaders from outside the political realm—which identify corruption as the single most important issue and argue that there is no difference between any of the existing parties, all of which should be replaced.

Closely related to the debates over democracy and corruption is the growing importance of populism. The subject is difficult to discuss because "populism" has developed many overlapping and contradictory meanings over recent decades and often becomes a slur used to describe the unexpected success of an opponent (we are "popul*ar*" but they are "popul*ist*"). If populism still has any meaning, it involves the sweeping rejection of elites on behalf of virtuous ordinary people.[33] Many (though not all) of the radical right parties discussed above have strong populist elements, but populists do not always have strong anti-immigrant or anti-minority tendencies. The most recent crop of populists in Central and Eastern Europe call for a thorough housecleaning but do not offer many details on policy positions, something that is readily apparent even in the new parties' names: "For Latvia from the Heart," "The Party of National Resurrection" (Lithuania), "Dawn" (Czech Republic), "Ordinary People" (Slovakia), "Positive Slovenia," "Bridge" (Croatia), "Save Romania Union," and "Will" (Bulgaria).[34] Without a solid programmatic structure, these parties have rarely survived for long, and the closer they have gotten to power the more fragile they proved to be, since once in office they have often proven to be just as corrupt as the parties they railed against.

Structure: How Do Parties Organize and Build Relationships with Voters?

Relationships between parties and voters depend not only on issues but also on how parties organize themselves to draw in potential supporters. As with civil society, the organizational structures in Central and Eastern European parties are somewhat weaker than those of Western Europe, but the lower average levels of membership and member activity conceal a wide variation. Parties in Central and Eastern Europe follow every possible organizational style from the deep, extensive organization of former communist parties (carried over from when they were in power) to the intangible webs of social media and celebrity marketing that characterize some newer party efforts. These organizational methods are not all created equal. The lightweight celebrity and social media method offers a recipe for short-term electoral success but this usually only works once and, according to a long-term study by Margit Tavits, a party's long-term survival and sustained influence still is greatest if they have more traditional organizations with paid employees, office spaces, and frequent membership activities.[35] Some new parties have

begun to understand the advantages of organization "on-the-ground," but then have found that they cannot build such structures without diverting their already strained human and financial resources away from the difficult work of becoming an effective party in parliament or government. Many of these pay the price in the next election and find themselves replaced by even newer parties that then face the same dilemma.[36]

Even the parties that have succeeded in establishing deeper societal roots have not necessarily followed expected patterns. Traditional ideas of "class" voting—laborers voting for left-wing parties, for example—have remained weak since the fall of communism despite increasing social inequalities, but parties have found other ties that can connect them to social groups. Ethnic voting patterns in particular are so strong that nearly all members of minority populations vote for ethnically defined parties such as the "Democratic Union for Integration" supported by ethnic Albanians in Macedonia, the "Movement for Rights and Freedoms" supported by ethnic Turks in Bulgaria, and various parties supported by ethnic Hungarians in Romania and Slovakia and by ethnic Russians in the Baltics. Religious patterns also shape party support (especially in Roman Catholic countries) because frequent churchgoers give strong support to parties with clear positions on cultural morality. They sometimes refer to themselves as Christian Democrats. Major differences in party choice have also emerged between younger city dwellers with high education and potential for advancement who support parties such as Slovakia's "Freedom and Solidarity" or Slovenia's "Party of the Modern Center" and older voters living in the countryside with few opportunities to get ahead who support parties such as Poland's "Law and Justice" and the Croatian Democratic Union.

Impact: How Do Political Parties Turn Values and Votes into Policy?

The main way that parties shape their surroundings is by winning elections and using their power to determine government policy. The question of where to focus their electoral efforts is made easier by the fact that almost all the constitutions of the region create centralized, parliamentary systems of government. This means that political power in the region rests mainly in national-level legislatures and in prime ministers and cabinets that are chosen by the parliament and serve only as long as they can maintain parliamentary support.[37] Furthermore, since proportional representation means that few parties win majorities in parliament, prime ministers are usually forced to depend on coalitions of several parties that have agreed to work together. The impact of parties thus depends on their ability to work with other parties and at the same time maintain their own internal unity.

Coalitions are difficult work, and finding one or more appropriate partners for the long run is difficult. Most of the region's coalitions parties share values on at least one of the major dimensions, whether economic, cultural, or national. No combination is easy but some governments found common cause or pliant partners that received support for specific issues: in Hungary, for example, the nominally left-leaning Hungarian Socialist Party could agree on morality issues (and some economic ones) with the culturally liberal Free Democrats, while in Poland the pro-market Civic Platform was willing to take care of some of the rural interests of the Polish Peasants' Party. But the lure of power has even brought bitter enemies into the same government, such as the decision of the Slovak

National Party to join with the "Bridge" party of ethnic Hungarians in the 2016 coalition of Slovakia's Prime Minister Robert Fico. These combinations face constant challenges, however, and the increasing importance of other dimensions where the partners do not agree can break a government, as can scandals, and other factors such as the illness or death of a leader. On average, governments in the region have served out only about half of their possible terms before a crisis in cooperation among parties has led to a new prime minister, a new coalition, or new elections that shuffle the parliament and cause the whole process of coalition building to start over again.[38]

Civil Society and Political Parties Looking Forward

Communism in Central and Eastern Europe lasted for four decades. Postcommunism is now approaching the same age. Whether it lives longer than its predecessor will depend in no small part on the functioning of civil society and political parties. At the moment, those two intertwined sectors look reasonably healthy in most of the region. Civil society organizations and parties have not fully replicated their counterparts in Western Europe, either in form, density, or strength, but in most cases, they bear a fair resemblance to the institutions of successful democracies elsewhere in the world.

But that does not mean that there is no reason for concern. Some of the dangers are immediately familiar, most notably the Hungarian example of what happens when one organization—in this case a political party—becomes both strong and ambitious enough to drive its rivals—both parties and civil society organizations—into submission. Strong civil society and robust party systems cannot alone prevent the return of chaos or autocracy (especially when promoted by powerful foreign interests such as Russia), but they are the best hope.

Other challenges stem not from the region's history and geography but from elsewhere in the rapidly changing world. Civil societies and parties re-emerged in Central and Eastern Europe just as the world was rushing to an entirely new model of communication and organization that was both more flexible and more fragile. In older democracies, these innovations faced inertia from well-entrenched organizations, but in Central and Eastern Europe the fall of communism meant that alternatives were much weaker. The resulting loose organization of civil society and rapid turnover of political parties may not pose an immediate threat, but the region must figure out how to ensure stability and plan for the future despite with organizations that do not expect to survive the next election or the next funding cycle. Though this next revolution lacks the drama of 1989, the decisions of parties and organizations of Central and Eastern Europe still deserve our close attention.

Study Questions

1. What functions do civil society and political parties have in common? How are they different?
2. How have civil society organizations changed from their role under communist rule to their role in the political change of the 1990s to their role in today's democracy?

3. How do civil society organizations differ geographically across Central and Eastern Europe? Which countries stand out as different from their neighbors and what is different about them?
4. How do electoral laws and electoral systems shape what political parties are like in Central and Eastern Europe?
5. What kinds of value conflicts shape the competition among political parties in Central and Eastern Europe? How do these differ from (or resemble) the competition in your own country?

Suggested Readings

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3. Alan Ware, *Political Parties and Party Systems* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 5.

4. Nancy L. Rosenblum, "Primus Inter Pares: Political Parties and Civil Society," *Chicago Kent Law Review* 75, no. 2 (2000): 493–529, available at http://scholarship.kentlaw.iit.edu/cklawreview/vol75/iss2/9.

5. Grzegorz Ekiert, Jan Kubik, and Michal Wenzel, "Civil Society and Three Dimensions of Inequality in Post-1989 Poland," *Comparative Politics* 49 (April 2017): 335.

6. See Michael Coppedge, et al., "V-Dem [Country-Year/Country-Date] Dataset v7.1," Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project, 2017. Measurements conducted by the international nongovernmental organization Civicus and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) tell similar stories.

7. Anheir and Carlson, *The Civil Society Diamond*, 6.

8. See Robert C. Post and Nancy L. Rosemblum, eds., *Civil Society and Government* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 8–12.

9. United States Agency for International Development (USAID), *The 2015 CSO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia*, 2015. Available online: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1861/Europe_Eurasia_CSOSIReport_2015_Update8-29-16.pdf.

10. János Kornai, "Hungary's U-Turn," *Capitalism and Society* 10, no. 1 (2015): 6. Available online: http://www.kornai-janos.hu/Kornai_Hungary's%20U-Turn.pdf.

11. Marc Morjé Howard, *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 10.

12. Ekiert, Kubik, and Wenzel, "Inequality in Post-1989 Poland," 339.

13. Ekiert, Kubik, and Wenzel, "Inequality in Post-1989 Poland," 339.

14. Simone Chambers and Jeffrey Kopstein, "Bad Civil Society," *Political Theory* 29, no. 6 (2001): 844.

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16. Ekiert, Kubik, and Wenzel, "Inequality in Post-1989 Poland," 334.

17. Ekiert, Kubik, and Wenzel, "Inequality in Post-1989 Poland," 333.

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19. Lester M. Salamon, S. Wojciech Sokolowski, Megan A. Haddock, and Helen S. Tice, *The State of Global Civil Society and Volunteering* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Center for Civil Society Studies, 2013), 2–3.

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21. World Economic Forum, *The Future Role of Civil Society*, 2013, 9. Available online: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_FutureRoleCivilSociety_Report_2013.pdf.

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24. Much of the work in this section derive from a chapter written with Zsolt Enyedi on "Voters and Parties in Eastern Europe" that is forthcoming in Adam Fagan and Petr Kopecký, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of East European Politics* (UK: Routledge, 2017).

25. Fragmentation is tied to the number of parties but it is not just of a matter of counting the number of parties on the ballot. The formula for fragmentation weighs both the number and size of parties so that a few big parties will register low fragmentation while many small parties will register high fragmentation and a mix will register a level in between.

26. Marijn Van Klingeren, Margarita Orozco, Joost van Spanje, and Claes de Vreese, "Party Financing and Referendum Campaigns in EU States, European Parliament Directorate-General for

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30. Some countries such as Poland, Croatia, Romania, Slovenia, and Serbia formally reserve a small number of seats for representatives of small ethnic minorities that otherwise might not be able to pass the parliamentary threshold, though these often sided with the parliamentary majority in the hope of gaining tangible benefits for the group.

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32. Jan Rovny and Erica Edwards, "Struggle over Dimensionality: Party Competition in Western and Eastern Europe," *East European Politics & Societies* 26, no. 1 (2012): 56–74.

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34. A similar phenomenon has subsequently had a profound effect on political competition in Italy (Five Star Movement), Spain (We Can and Citizens), Greece (The River), and France as well as in Asia, Latin America, and the United States.

35. Margit Tavits, *Post-Communist Democracies and Party Organization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

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37. Although many countries in the region have popularly elected presidents, most of those presidents have relatively weak positions in the overall political system.

38. Courtney Ryals Conrad and Sona N. Golder, "Measuring Government Duration and Stability in Central Eastern European Democracies," *European Journal of Political Research* 49 (2010): 119–50.