

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE

Doctoral School of Public Administration

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**Quantitative Analysis of Transnational Europrotest in the
European Union**

author's description of a doctorate thesis (PhD)

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Main goals of the research

The main ambition of the research is to investigate how the Europeanization has influenced the European social capital. I define social capital as a resource existing due to repeated interactions between individuals belonging to a specific community; these resources not only help individuals but foster effective collective actions, which, on their turn, help in building a healthy, sustainable community. The relationship between individuals determines which norms are accepted, what methods do they apply to enforce these rules, and, what methods do they apply in order to achieve their common goals – in other words, their self-governing competence. I regard all activities that stem from self-governance as a manifestation of social capital; hence, social movements can be regarded as well as manifestation of social capital. Social movements comprise of individuals and organizations and are highly dependent on the political culture of the community. The European Union with its very distinctive political culture does have a special effect on the European social movements.

My exploratory research aims to analyze the changes characteristic for the European social movements, more specifically, the movements that take place in Europe, and are related to either the politics, the polity or the polity of the EU, hence the expression “europrotest”. The units of analysis are the twenty-eight Member States of the European Union and the data covers the period after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon.

The past decades’ research centered on social movements has elaborated on the internal structure, and history of individual or regional movements; the opportunities offered by the political systems of the European Union; or have attempted to estimate the success or failure of them.

In spite of numerous analyzes, only one comprehensive empirical study has been published, which examines the impact of Europeanization on European social movements and analyses the overall trends in Europe. The quantitative research of Doug Imig and Sidney Tarrow appeared in 2001 and analyzed active European protest movements recorded between 1984 and 1997. The focus of this research will also be to assess the impact of Europeanization on protest movements.

My specific research goal is to repeat the research carried out by Doug and Imig by using similar but not identical methods. The entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon has brought many political and economic changes within Europe, which would make it justifiable to repeat the research and try to evaluate the effects of the Europeanization. In my dissertation, I examine a ten-

year period, the data from 2009 to 2019, while Imig and Tarrow analyze events from 1984 to 1997.

Research questions

Firstly, I seek primarily to answer the same questions that Doug Imig and Sidney Tarrow also investigated:

1. Are social movements, traditionally formed in nation-state structures, more likely to chose to turn with their EU-related grievances toward their national governments, or do they appeal to the supranational organizations? Which factors seem to determine the level of governance that protesters turn to?

2. Does the intensity of the protests depend on what level of governance protesters turn to? What other factors determine the intensity of protests?

3. Do movements formed within the new political structures and new political opportunities contribute to the emergence of transnational networks and the development of a common European dialogue and identity?

The Member States joining the EU with the occasion of the Fifth Enlargement Round have been members of the Union for only maximum 15 years, therefore we can expect that the Europeanization has not yet had such an impact movements organized in these countries. Therefore, I pose a research question not included in the original research:

4. Are there any significant differences between the characteristics of social movements in the older and newer Member States, and if so, what are they?

Hypotheses

1. The characteristics of the Europrotests in the older and newer Member States of the European Union suggest that the bottom-up Europeanisation of the two regions is different.
2. Europrotests' target varies according to how top-down Europeanisation has affected certain social groups.
3. The intensity of europrotests depends on the level of government at the center of the protest and on the perceived success of bottom-up Europeanization.
4. There is no clear upward trend in the number of transnational europrotests.

Research methods

In my research I try to apply the same methodology as Doug and Imig, that is, I have processed materials published in international news sources, I have defined the variables in the same way, as much as possible, and they have similar attributes. Although methodologically is objectionable, I have tried to compare the results of the two research and analyze the results which are not representative, but are capable of showing tendencies.

In order to gather data I have used big data of GDELT. On theoretical basis I have created new variables and have coded them further using the typology of the Europrotest. The strength and direction of the relationships between the variable variables were investigated with statistical tools (Pearson's correlation coefficient, Fisher exact test, Kruskal-Wallis test, Mann-Whitney test and regression line).

Short overview of the main findings

The characteristics of the protests in the new and old Member States suggest that the bottom-up Europeanisation of the two regions is different.

Europrotests' target varies according to how top-down Europeanisation has affected certain social groups.

The intensity of europrotests depends on the level of government at the center of the protest and on the perceived success of bottom-up Europeanization.

- There is no clear upward trend in the number of transnational euro protests.
- The top-down Europeanization does not show the expected effects in regards of the intensity of the Europrotests and the choice of targeted governmental level. In these cases, a stronger determinant is the political culture of the Member States and its domestic politics.
- Protesters do adapt to the opportunities offered by different political structures and do not always protest as they are socialized based on the political culture of their Member States.
- Regarding the intensity of transnational europrotests, a determining factor is the relationship with (*for* or *against*) the residents of another Member State.

List of publications related to the topic

Máthé Réka Zsuzsánna (2019) „Társadalmi mozgalmak a visegrádi országokban: konfliktus vagy együttműködés?: Empirikus elemzés”. Európai Tükör, 2019:1, old. 45-66.

Máthé Réka Zsuzsánna, Hajnal György (2017) „Civil-Society Organizations’ Capacity Building in the Local Governmental Sector: Is It Working? A Case Study” The NISPAcee Journal of Public Administration and Policy, vol. X, no.1, old: 61-80.

Máthé Réka Zsuzsánna (2014) „Honnan ered a bizalom?”, Bodó Barna: Erdélyi Magyar Civil Évkönyv 2014, Gordián, Timisoara, old: 42-58.

Máthé Réka Zsuzsánna (2014) „Linking Trust and Civil Society”. Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, European and Regional Studies, Vol. 6 (2014) old. 43–66.

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