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Political Values of Local Politicians Representing Non-Profit Organisations in Central Europe
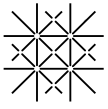
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Executive Summary

Local politicians in Central Europe are actively participating in civil society organizations (NGOs). The socialization of politicians into different roles would affect their political preferences and, therefore, policy outcomes. Thus, we study whether the political values of NGO leaders are aligned differently from those of political party peers who are not engaged in NGOs.

We draw our analysis on survey data of 355 local candidates from three large cities: Prague, Bratislava, and Budapest. We analyse the political preferences of local political leaders in the context of the official political preferences of their parties. We also compare the perceptions of elected politicians with those of non-elected politicians, and subsequently analyse the effect of engagement in civil society activity.

The results suggest that the local politicians are oriented towards local community values and are less likely to account for the official positions of their political parties. The only factor relating to a candidate's likelihood of election is the presence of a candidate's party in the national parliament.

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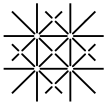
Contents

1. Introduction

Research on the contribution of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to processes of democratization in central and eastern European countries (CEECs) has argued that in the post-transition stage, NGOs are expected to contribute to the development of political party alternatives and ultimately to a politics of contestation (Beichelt & Merkel, 2014; Hahn-Fuhr & Worschech, 2014). This link between NGOs and party politics underlines the role of NGOs as socializers and begs the question of whether socialization translates into an alignment of values and rules between NGOs and parties. In the process of democratic consolidation, it is expected that political parties strengthen and develop distinctive value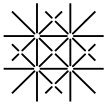s and rules that depart from those of NGOs. Therefore, studying the socialization of political leaders allows us to examine this aspect of the democratic consolidation of CEECs.

Socialization is the process of 'reproduction' and dissemination of institutionalized values and rules (Schimmelfennig, 2000, p. 112). Socialization is a useful approach for examining leadership because it sheds light on the importance of institutional (un)adaptation for leadership. Socialization is of particular importance to local politics, which is significantly embedded in different contextual levels and depends on a wide array of actors (Copus & Leach, 2014). Accordingly, socialization looks into candidates' motivations for adapting to their environment and considers the importance of tensions between the different roles played by candidates, particularly candidates who are NGO leaders.

Socialization has been applied to examine Europeanization (Beyers, 2010; Checkel, 2007), notably of CEECs (e.g., Iancu, 2013; Pop, 2009; Sedelmeier, 2008). For example, (Schimmelfennig, 2000, 2007) showed that the Europeanization of CEECs was smoother when powerful and tangible benefits were offered by European institutions and when parties shared values and rules with these institutions (liberal parties) in countries such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia. Additionally, Tudoroiu (2010) showed that in CEECs where parties and elites did not share values and rules with European institutions such as Romania and Slovakia, Europeanization relied on NGOs' support and that as a result, socialization took longer.

Whereas these approaches take a top-bottom approach (from EU to national politics), our study concentrates on the local. We examine the link between NGOs and political parties at the local level in the capital cities of three CEECs – the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia. Moreover, whereas research on political leadership tends to be highly qualitative and to concentrate on case-studies (Bell, 2014), our study seeks to cast a net wide in the exploration of leadership processes. To this end, we adopt a socialization approach that considers how strategic calculation impels candidates to adopt the values of their parties to successfully become political leaders.

A fundamental premise of socialization is that the willingness to adopt new values depends on their degree of contradiction with the prior values (Checkel, 2007). Based on this premise, we examine the degree to which the values of candidates who are NGO leaders for local elections deviate from the values of their political parties. To this end, we first study the overall values deviation of candidates to contrast in a second step with the values deviation of candidates who are NGO leaders. Finally, the values deviation of candidates who are NGO leaders is contrasted with that of candidates who have a different background, such as in civil service, politics, or the private sector. Accordingly, when NGOs are in a post-transition stage, it is expected that candidates who are NGO leaders will tend to deviate to a larger extent than other candidates. At the same time, the usefulness of non-profit leadership in becoming a political leader at local level is considered by testing the likelihood an NGO leader will be elected.

The paper is organized as follows. The second section begins with a definition of socialization, with a particular focus on strategic calculation. The section then reviews essential factors of political and non-profit leadership and formulates questions related to the expectations of strategic calculation. The third section reviews NGOs and party politics in CEECs in light of the factors of political and non-profit leadership and strategic calculation examined in the second section. The subsequent section describes the data collection methodology. The results and a discussion follow. Finally, the sixth section concludes the discussion and highlights key findings.

2. Political leadership and socialization

Political leadership depends on personal traits and, more importantly, institutions ('t Hart & Rhodes, 2014; Couto, 2014; Rucht, 2012). Institutions, which are composed of values and rules (March & Olsen, 1989, 2006), define individual behaviour and shape leadership (Helms, 2014). Nevertheless, the extent to which individual behaviour and leadership are shaped by institutions depends on the degree to which individuals are exposed to different values and rules and their willingness to adapt to them. However, individuals also have the capacity to shape institutions (Helms, 2014). Thus, values and rules are rejected, adopted or transformed as a result of individual and institutional constraints. This understanding is in line with the socialization approach adopted for our analysis, which seeks to examine the extent to which candidates internalize the values and rules adopted by their political parties.
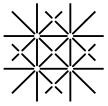
Strategic calculation

We adopt, among the different socialization approaches, strategic calculation (Checkel, 2007). Strategic calculation is an instrumental mechanism: it helps an individual achieve an objective or accomplish a role according to social expectations. In strategic calculation, external forces, such as social and material incentives and rewards, constitute socializing mechanisms. Moreover, socialization is a source of legitimacy. Candidates choose to adopt the values and rules of political parties to find the legitimacy that will lead them to political success. In the words of Schimmelfennig (2000, p. 117), candidates 'regard legitimacy as a resource that strengthens their political power, improves their access to positions of authority, enhances their capacity to govern and extends their period of rule'.

Strategic calculation is done by both socializers and the socialized (Schimmelfennig, 2000). The benefit for the party is the reproduction of its values and rules. Processes are smooth when facilitated by consensus. The benefits for the candidate are legitimacy and an increased chance of being elected. The party, as the socializer, decides who may benefit from its resources and therefore stands in a powerful position vis-à-vis the candidates. In this scenario, the key cause of socialization is the dependence of candidates on party resources. This logic underpins our general assumption that candidates are likely to adopt party values because the candidates perceive these values as a source of legitimacy.

Nevertheless, this process of computation of benefits and costs does not occur without resistance. Schimmelfennig (2000, p. 118) contends that both socializers and the socialized may be tempted to manipulate 'the standard of legitimacy'. For political parties, this manipulation consists of lowering or increasing the barriers to access, while for candidates, it involves 'formally subscribing to, but not really acting according to' party values. This manipulation is examined in light of the specificities of political leadership.

Strategic calculation and leadership

Comparative research shows that socialization may develop in different directions and at different paces depending on the institutional structures, which determine the strategic calculation of socializers and the

socialized, as explained above (Schimmelfennig, 2007). Similarly, political leadership research shows that different institutional structures may create different leadership styles. Political systems and party systems may define different patterns of leadership (for a summary, see Helms, 2014). Leadership in presidential systems can differ from that in parliamentary systems (Elgie, 1995, 2012), and party systems can adopt a presidential style or a parliamentary style, regardless of the political system (Poguntke & Webb, 2005; Webb, Poguntke, & Kolodny, 2012). Moreover, leadership at the national level differs from leadership at the local level (Steyvers, Reynaert, & Vlacke, 2012). Our analysis concentrates on local political candidates in major cities.

Transformations in party politics

Local politics in Europe has moved towards a stronger leadership that is anchored less in party politics and more in issue networks (Lobo, 2014; Steyvers et al., 2012). In addition, political parties have undergone a transformation in which party structure has fragmented and leadership selection depends on the grassroots more than on party officials (for a summary, see Lobo, 2014).
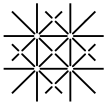
These transformations in party politics may have an effect on strategic calculation for both candidates and parties. First, the fragmentation of party leadership and the increasing reliance on grassroots support are likely to widen the variance in party values, giving candidates more adaptation options. Second, the shift towards a politics of issues signals a loosening of enforcement of party values because some issues can be negotiated and adapted according to local needs. Therefore, the likelihood of manipulating 'the standard of legitimacy' by candidates and parties increases, thereby reducing power asymmetries between them. However, this trend may be counterbalanced by the political and electoral systems in place. A candidate's dependence on the party is greater where leaders are elected by councils and the participation of citizens in the election is indirect or absent (Copus & Leach, 2014; Fenwick & Elcock, 2005).

Voting behaviour

A consequence of the transformation of party politics is that leadership is becoming an increasingly relevant factor influencing voting behaviour, although it is not clear how (Lobo, 2014). Therefore, it is necessary to examine the following questions: a) Are candidates closer to party values more likely to be elected? and b) Do deviant positions on issues affect the likelihood of candidates being elected? In the assessment of these questions, it is important to keep in mind that voting behaviour may constitute 'a random fact' (Schimmelfennig, 2007, p. 37). In other words, voters may not elect their representatives by analysing the degree of candidate alignment to party values (Copus & Leach, 2014).

Non-profit leadership

The transformation of party politics leads us to the phenomenon we seek to examine: the relevance of non-profit leadership to a candidate's likelihood of being elected. From the perspective of political leadership, NGOs play an important role as transmitters of civil society's demands and as participants in policy-making. As (Rhodes & 't Hart, 2014) note, NGOs and their leaders contribute to the policy environment. In Europe, the significance of NGOs for governance has been particularly established by EU institutions, which have fostered NGO development in CEECs (Sudbery, 2010). This emphasis on the role of NGOs in governance is based on their socialization potential and the shift from a politics of cleavages to a politics of issues and identities (Hahn-Fuhr & Worschech, 2014; Warleigh, 2001) (for a discussion of this shift, see e.g. Lobo, 2014; Steyvers et al., 2012; Webb et al., 2012).

A note of caution should be added. Leadership in NGOs does not necessarily come from an authoritative position but may instead come from action (Couto, 2014). Action non-profit leadership is based on the premise of 'taking initiative on behalf of shared values and common benefit' (Couto, 2014, p. 348). Consequently, leadership in NGOs can be embodied in the high-level authority of the president and in the mid-level organizer (Rucht, 2012, p. 110). Therefore, in our analysis, the participation of candidates in NGOs signals their intention to act upon 'shared values and common benefit.' Thus, candidates are considered leaders by their engagement in an NGO and their intention to become political leaders.

The increased relevance of NGOs in policymaking, the transformations of party politics, and the tensions between the NGO and party roles and values lead us to consider whether non-profit leadership is becoming an increasingly relevant factor in political leadership. In principle, party leadership and non-profit leadership differ due to their distinct structures and roles in governance (Couto, 2014; Rucht, 2012). Rucht (2012) illustrated how the values and rules of NGOs can contradict those of parties. Therefore, this tension in the process of socialization into party values might increase the likelihood of candidates 'formally subscribing to, but not really acting according to' party values (Schimmelfennig, 2000, p. 118). Therefore, we examine the following questions: a) Are NGO candidates more likely to consider their values to be different from those dictated by the party?; b) Are these differences more evident concerning issues?; and c) Are NGO candidates more likely to be elected?

To analyse the effect of non-profit leadership, these questions should be explored in a broad context. As the theory of strategic calculation maintains, the willingness to socialize into new values depends on the candidate's need for party legitimacy. Therefore, to consider the extent to which socialization and leadership are influenced by the need for legitimacy, we seek to answer the aforementioned questions in a comparative manner. To this end, we compare the values deviation and the likelihood of being elected between candidates who have a government and civil servant background and candidates who have an NGO and business background. It is expected that the values deviation will be more apparent among NGO and business candidates than among government and civil servant candidates, who have been socialized in politics for a long time.

3. Local politics in post-transition societies in Central Europe

The approach adopted for our analysis of leadership posits that candidates will tend to adopt party values for strategic reasons and that the degree of adaptation will depend on the authority of the parties. As the literature on party leadership has shown, transformations in the political landscape may affect the balance of power between candidates and parties and the candidate's disposition to manipulate the standard of legitimacy. This section's purpose is to summarize the main political transformations in Central Europe that may impact the balance of power between candidates and parties.

National political circumstances and political issues have influenced political parties' positions during the last three decades (Volkens et al., 2016). Typically, intra-party discussion and changes in the political leadership of these parties cause changes in the political values presented by these parties. Another reason for changing the positions belong the instability of political systems.

Currently, the established parliamentary political parties are losing ground in Central Europe. The last two elections to the national parliaments in these countries witnessed an increasing number of elected political parties and the success of new parties. The number of parties present in the parliament increased from five to seven in the Czech Republic. Moreover, five new political parties were elected, although some of them did not succeed the second time. In Hungary, the number of elected political parties in the national assembly did not change in the last two elections, but three new parties are present. Slovakia is similar, as
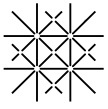
the number of elected parties there increased from six to eight; moreover, five new political parties were elected, of which three succeeded in the last elections.

The trend of established political parties losing ground relates not only to the national level but also to local elections. Independent candidates represent the majority of candidates for local assemblies. For example, in the Czech Republic, candidates from political parties constitute 43.0% of candidates and 30.4% of elected candidates in 2010 (CZSO, 2016). Furthermore, in 2014, they constituted only 35.3% of candidates and 23.5% of elected candidates (CZSO, 2016). A similar but weaker development is also evident in Slovakia (Maškarinec & Klimovský, 2016; Šebík, 2016) and Hungary. These developments indicate a crisis of political systems based on political parties and a crisis of the values they represent. Moreover, these developments are causing political disconnection among the local, regional and national levels. Thus, the political parties are losing their role as socializers. This transformation of the party landscape in local politics may be the result of the challenges in the implementation of decentralization (Iancu, 2013).

In our study, we concentrate on capital cities, which contain more voters than do small municipalities. In the capital cities, the candidates individually are unable to reach all the voters effectively, and thus political parties serve as intermediaries between them and voters and as bearers of political values. The party is thus a tool for addressing the wider public and introducing individual candidates' political values. Thus, we expect that the local politicians are in the position of the socialized rather than socializer (Schimmelfennig, 2000) in these cities. This expectation especially concerns Prague, where the mayors are elected by the assembly, in contrast to Bratislava and Budapest, where the mayors are directly elected. Thus, we would expect higher dependence on political parties and acceptance of their political values in Prague. Moreover, the election systems of local assemblies use the D'Hondt system for allocating seats according to votes gained. This system gives an advantage to groups of candidates who can fill the entire list of candidates. Thus, this system is advantageous to political parties rather than independent candidates.
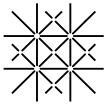
Slovaks and Hungarians view NGOs' ability to influence policies to be weakest at the local level within the EU (EC, 2012). However, Czechs believe that NGOs are capable of influencing policy at the local level but not at the national or EU level.

Almost 64% of our respondents are members of an NGO and approximately 28% of them are leaders in an NGO. The highest share of non-profit leaders among politicians is found in Budapest (38.9%). This observation is in accordance with other studies reporting that 52% of Hungarian local politicians were members of NGOs (Franek, 2005, p. 268). This high share of NGO leaders among politicians in Budapest is caused by the fact that many NGOs were set up by local governments to help provide public goods and services. In our sample, 77% of the independent candidates are also members of an NGO.

4. Data and methodology

The empirical analysis draws on data obtained from local politicians in the capital cities (Prague, Budapest, and Bratislava) of three countries in central Europe (the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia, respectively). We decided to collect data in cities, as independent candidates predominate in rural areas (Maškarinec & Klimovský, 2016). Conducting our survey in cities allowed us to have a majority of party politicians in our sample. Thus, we were able to compare the opinions and political values of local politicians with the official positions of their political parties at the national level, which would not be possible in the case of independent candidates in rural areas.

The questionnaire used the same questions regarding political affiliation, opinions on political issues, and activities and leadership in non-profit organizations in all cities. We distributed the survey to candidates, regardless of whether they were ultimately elected to local assembly.

During July and August 2014, we distributed the questionnaire to candidates who stood in local elections in 2010. We collected lists with the names of candidates for all local elections from databases provided by the Czech Statistical Office, the Hungarian National Elections Office, and the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic. To contact these candidates, we found the e-mail addresses of the secretariats of all of the political parties and civic movements with candidates standing in local elections in the three cities in 2010. Next, we contacted them with a request for participation in the research.

The distribution of questionnaires occurred in two phases. In the first phase, we asked the local secretariats of the political parties and civic movements to distribute the questionnaire to their candidates. Next, we identified secretariats that actually did so and contacted those that did not ask politicians to respond our questionnaire. As a result, we managed to collect 355 responses, of which 205 were from Prague, 78 from Budapest, and 72 from Bratislava. The sample contains information from 218 elected representatives and 130 unsuccessful candidates (122 and 83, respectively, in Prague, 56 and 16 in Budapest, 40 and 31 in Bratislava).

For our analysis, we exclude politicians with missing data on political affiliation (73), independent candidates (64), and candidates for whom the data on political party affiliation were unavailable (10) in the Manifesto Data Project (Volkens et al., 2016). Thus, we have data for 227 politicians who are each affiliated with one of the 26 established political parties in our sample.

We use ten variables from the data on political manifestos (Volkens et al., 2016) in our analysis (see Table 1 for these variables and descriptive statistics).

Table 1: Descriptive statistics on positions of political parties in the sample

Dimension	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Right-left position	-28.36	30.28	-0.44
Centralization	0.00	0.47	0.03
Governmental and Administrative Efficiency	0.73	6.90	4.37
Free market economy	0.00	9.07	1.65
Market regulation	0.54	10.09	4.22
Environmental protection: positive	0.58	14.09	4.81
Culture: positive	0.32	5.29	2.35
Equality: positive	1.19	11.23	3.67
Welfare state expansion	1.90	17.60	8.37
Education expansion	1.07	12.39	3.80

Source: Volkens et al. (2016), own elaboration, N=26, Negative values of right-left position represent left-wing parties, while positive values represent right-wing parties. Higher values for the other variables indicate stronger support for that particular issue by a political party.
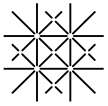
The data on the political values of the political parties are measured using different scales (see Table 1). Thus, we needed to standardize the variables to the same scale. We did so by counting them as values between 0 and 1. We did so for both the data on political manifestos (Volkens et al., 2016) and the survey. The value 0 represents the minimum level of support for a particular variable among all parties (see Table 1), and 1 represents the maximum (see Table 1). Where a coalition of candidates was present, the average value was calculated based on the political parties in the coalition, using the same weight for all participating parties in a coalition.

In the case of the survey, we first take the nominal variables (see the Table in the annex) and transform them into scale variables. We presume the same distances among all possible responses in particular questions. For example, we ascribe a value of 1 if the answer is "Yes", 0.66 if the answer is "Yes, partly", 0.33 if the answer is "Not, really", and 0 for "No". The sum of these standardized values for answers from all respondents belonging to a particular party divided by the number of such respondents gives us information about the position of the respondents who represent that particular party. We then apply the same approach as utilized on data from Volkens et al. (2016) to standardize the values to a range between 0 and 1.

The combination of these two data samples enables us to compare the position of particular candidates with the position of their political parties and other political parties.

5. Results and discussion

The overall results support the assumption that candidates are likely to adopt party values and rules. The most important factor relating to whether a candidate was elected is the representation of the candidate's political party in the national parliament (see the OLS regression results in Table 2).

We conduct our analysis in urban areas in capital cities, where higher anonymity prevails. Thus, voters select parties according to their political preferences in relation to the national level, presuming that particular candidates have the same political position they have. This situation has an effect on the political values represented by local politicians.

The positions of the political parties are formed by national political issues and local politics have little or no relevance to these positions. Thus, the local candidates form their positions mainly according to party position but also according to local factors as the politicians socialize within both their political party and local community. Even if the position of local politicians differs from the national position, the responsibility for selection of candidates rests upon the political parties. Thus, they can eliminate deviants if the differences in opinion are too high.
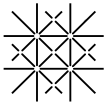
Table 2: OLS analysis of factors related to winning a seat in local assembly

	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
Constant	-.098	.430	-.228	.822
Difference in centralization	.171	.154	1.108	.283
Difference in government efficiency	.201	.227	.886	.388
Difference in free market ideas	-.409	.269	-1.521	.147
Difference in need for regulations	-.040	.259	-.156	.878
Difference in environment protection	-.350	.198	-1.770	.095
Difference in culture	.159	.212	.748	.465
Difference in social justice	.439	.215	2.038	.057
Difference in need for welfare state	.054	.256	.210	.836
Difference in support of education	-.203	.232	-.876	.393
NGO membership	-.315	.239	-1.320	.204
Non-profit leadership	.225	.287	.786	.443
Previous job - NGO	-.166	.771	-.215	.832
Previous job - public servant	.118	.318	.370	.716
Previous job - private sector	.282	.411	.686	.502
Incumbent political party	-.059	.198	-.298	.770
Party in the national parliament	.618	.161	3.852	.001
Independent	.348	.220	1.583	.132

Source: Volkens et al. (2016); own elaboration; Adj R-sqr=0.455, N=26

Further data analysis suggests that prescribed trends challenging party authority may not play a significant role in candidate socialization in the three capital cities studied. Moreover, the analysis indicates that the degree of candidate compliance with party values does not seem to affect the likelihood of being elected. However, the data analysis suggests that the socialization standard is constantly shifting for both candidates and parties. As explained, candidate and party strategic calculation does not occur without resistance. Both sides will be tempted to manipulate 'the standard of legitimacy' (Schimmelfennig, 2000, p. 118), i.e., the degree of candidate compliance with party values and rules.

The comparison between parties' and independent candidates in particular cities shows that the positions and values represented by candidates do not differ between them. The only exception is the opinion on government efficiency in Budapest as majority of respondents belonged to non-incumbent parties.

The transformations in party politics do not sufficiently explain the alignment of candidate and party values found. It was posited that the transformations in party politics such as fragmentation of party leadership and reliance on grassroots support may widen party values variance, giving candidates more options for

adapting to party values. However, the results show that party values change but do not necessarily widen in variance. First, the results show that party values change as society's values and demands change. We see that the individual politicians' positions consist of the positions of their political party and positions related to local needs. This observation may be related to increased reliance on grassroots support. Second, the results show that party values vary depending on the competitors whom they have on their side of the political spectrum (Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1: Aggregated changes in the positions of national political parties in CEECs
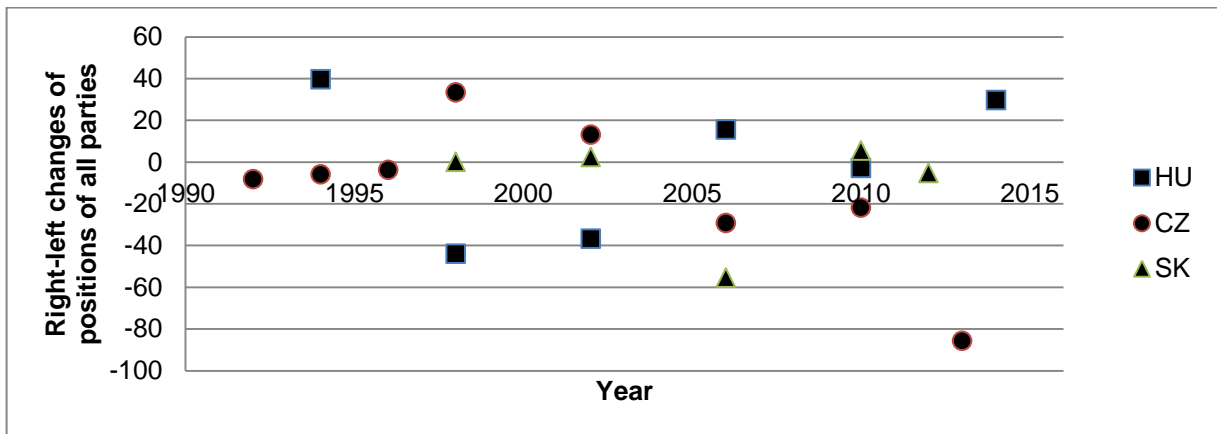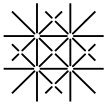

Source: Volkens et al. (2016), own elaboration, The values below (above) zero represent movement towards the left wing (right wing). The values are calculated as a sum of differences of positions of political parties in a particular year and positions held in previous national elections by the same parties.

Figure 2: Politicians' positions differences and right-left position of their political party
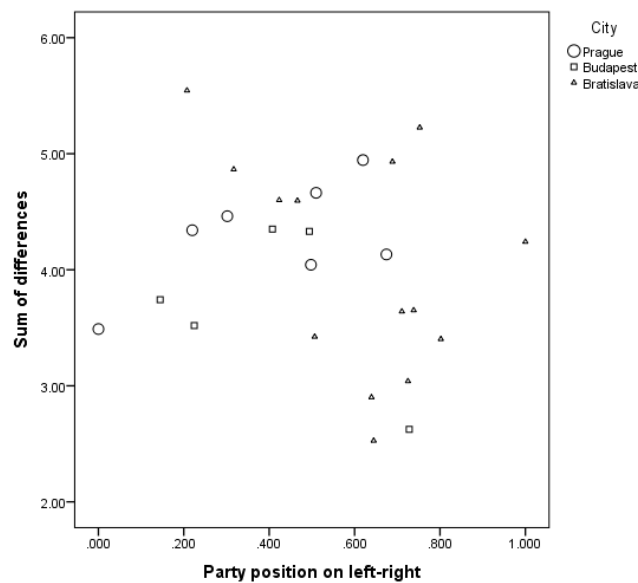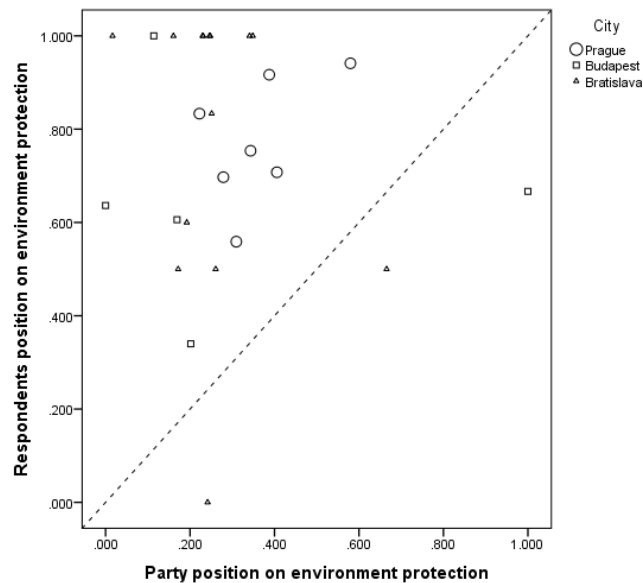

Source: Volkens et al. (2016), own elaboration based on the survey; Distances between the respondent's and party's position on the nine issues from Table 1 (rows 2-10) compose the sum of the differences, and zero (one) on party position on right-left represents the most extreme left- (right-) wing party in the sample.

When a new political party appears or a party shifts its political position slightly, other political parties react to this by adjusting their own positions. This observation is a sign of the development of political party alternatives and a politics of contestation in post-transition societies (Brunclík & Kubát, 2014; Glied, 2014). However, the parties' standard of legitimacy may not necessarily loosen. In fact, the need for adaptable candidates increases and opportunity for candidates to manipulate the standard of legitimacy diminishes.
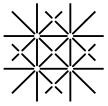
The politics of issues analysis does not explain the trends found in candidate socialization. It was expected that issues relevant at the city level would show deviation between candidate and party values, signalling greater control exerted by candidates on the standard of legitimacy. Issues considered relevant at the city level, such as environment, did show some deviation between candidate and party values, but this deviation was not statistically significant (see Figure 3 and Table 2). The environment issue is more important to almost all local politicians than to their political parties, regardless of political party. Moreover, values deviation in the politics of issues did not have an effect on the likelihood of being elected (see the regression covariates in the Table 2 and Figure 4). These results raise questions regarding the extent to which the politics of issues have an impact on party politics at the city level and affect party authority vis-à-vis candidates. For example, Čermák and Kostelecký (2004) refer to conservative political attitudes of voters in the Czech Republic, who vote for a similar type of a party even if the previous one does not exist anymore. The insignificance of the politics of issues may be connected to the results on voting behaviour and political systems in the CEECs, as we discuss below.

*Figure 3: Variation of values on environmental protection*

Source: (Volkens et al., 2016), own elaboration based on the survey

The results show that candidate socialization in party values does not affect the likelihood of being elected (Figure 4). The differences in political values vary across the political spectrum and are not correlated with the likelihood of winning a seat in local elections. These results suggest that voting behaviour in the cities studied does not necessarily constitute 'a random fact' (Schimmelfennig, 2007, p. 37) and is consistently dependent on national politics (Čermák & Kostelecký, 2004). Although some civic movements grow to gain national political importance (Glied, 2014), the political systems generally limit political participation and cause themselves to be closed off (Rose-Ackerman, 2008).

Moreover, these results should be considered in light of recent research showing that leadership affects voting behaviour, but voters assess leadership in relation to the party (Bittner, 2011). This finding implies that parties with greater visibility at the national level may also contribute to candidate identification at local level, thus increasing the likelihood that these candidates will be voted in. If this pattern is confirmed, its consequences for decentralization and local leadership should be considered. Local leadership incentivizes collective action for local development (Steyvers et al., 2012) and a strong identification of local leaders with national politics may diminish local collective action. Nevertheless, the connection with national politics may guarantee capable local leaders the necessary resources to incentivize local development (Copus & Leach, 2014).

Figure 4: Distances in values and likelihood of winning a seat in local elections
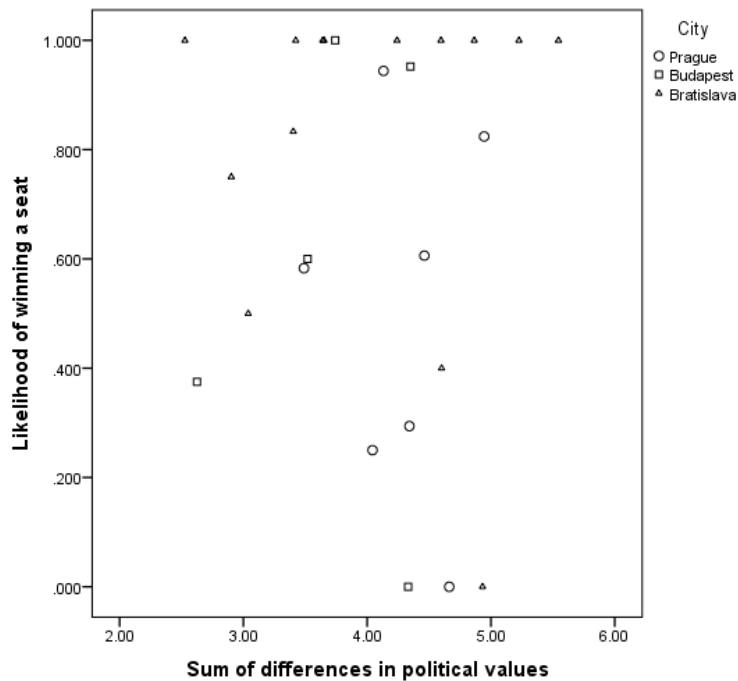
Source: Volkens et al. (2016), own elaboration based on the survey

The analysis of the values of candidates who are leaders of NGOs suggests that a link between NGO and party values may still exist. As explained in the introduction, at the post-transition stage, NGOs are expected to contribute to the development of political party alternatives and ultimately to a politics of contestation (Beichelt & Merkel, 2014; Hahn-Fuhr & Worschech, 2014). Over time, political parties will tend to strengthen and develop distinctive values departing from those of NGOs. However, our results did not show resistance to socialization among candidates who are leaders of NGOs. The presence of non-profit leadership does not affect the relation between politicians' positions and the positions of their political parties (see Figure 5). Moreover, candidates who are leaders of NGOs were not more likely to be elected than other candidates. This finding can be explained by a strong party politics culture, in which NGOs are less involved political decision-making (Fagan, 2005; Potůček, 1999; Rose-Ackerman, 2008). This implies that traits of non-profit leadership at the local level are not particularly useful for building political leadership (Rucht, 2012).
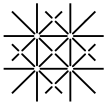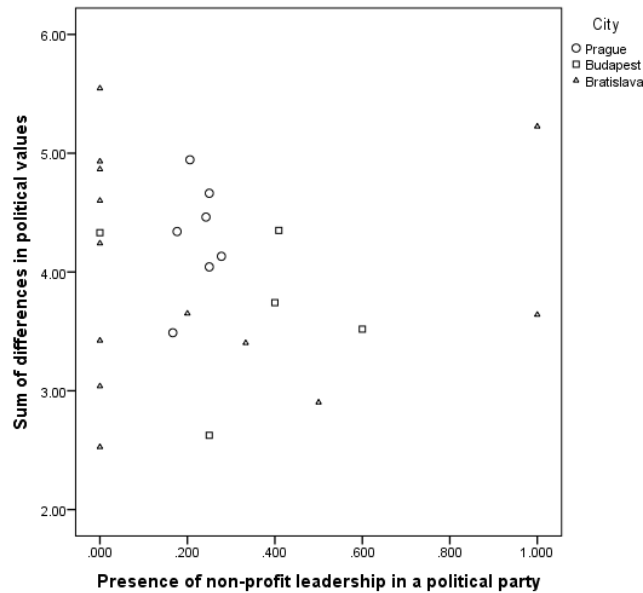
Figure 5: Distances in values and likelihood of winning a seat in local elections

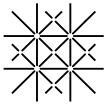*Source: Volkens et al. (2016), own elaboration based on the survey*

The study has several limitations. First, we analyse data on the positions of the main political parties competing for seats in parliaments but not for local parties and movements that act in the whole city and are thus unable to set positions to particular local issues. Second, our sample consists of 227 cases from one election year. For a more comprehensive study, application of panel data would be more appropriate. Third, the study concentrated on the analysis of party values, as expressed by candidates in a survey. Further research should broaden the spectrum of values that are analysed to identify the extent to which values in other sectors, e.g., grass roots movements, business, and civil service, also affect NGO and party values. Moreover, in-depth interview analysis of the views of candidates and NGO leaders would improve the precision in the identification of values deviation.

6. Conclusion

Following the principles of socialization, this article analysed the likelihood that candidates who are leaders of NGOs adopt the views of the parties they represent for elections in the capital cities of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia. Although it was expected that the values of candidates who are leaders of NGOs would deviate somewhat from party values, no significant variation was found at either the general or specific levels.

Moreover, it was observed that non-profit leadership was not a relevant predictor for being elected as political leader. As a result, the article adds evidence to the argument that the study of voting behaviour is a key to improving our understanding of how political leadership may be facilitated or hindered by voters. Contrary to recent research, our study suggests that the effect of leadership on voting behaviour is weak at the local level, implying that local leadership depends on national politics. Therefore, further research should compare this effect at different governance levels. Finally, in contrast to research on party leadership, our results suggest that transformations in party politics such as fragmentation of party leadership and reliance on grassroots support do not necessarily deteriorate the authority of parties as socializers

vis-à-vis candidates. In other words, to become leaders, the candidates may need to demonstrate a high degree of adaptability to fluctuations in party values. Further research should study how the stability of party leadership at the local level is affected by fluctuations in party values.
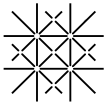
The study shows that socialization in a wide range of values at the local level is occurring, but the differentiation of rules and, ultimately, the roles that policy actors play in a consolidated democracy is still developing. The results show that in the three capital cities, candidates who are leaders of NGO rarely challenged their party's values. From the point of view of strategic calculation, this finding suggests that there are strong incentives for candidates to adapt to party views. Therefore, the separate roles NGOs and parties would play in a consolidated democracy need to be further developed in CEECs at the local level. At this point, it is difficult to determine whose leadership is key, NGOs or political parties. Despite the NGO and party convergence of values, it is observed that traditional cleavages have blurred and the spectrum of values has grown in diversity. Both NGOs and parties hold views found at different points of this diverse spectrum. This phenomenon implies that representation of different values and competition between referents of those values is consolidating in CEECs at the local level. Further research on socialization could contribute to our understanding of leadership by identifying the factors involved in the strategic calculation of NGO and party leaders at the local level, which would facilitate or hinder their internalization of new values and rules.
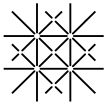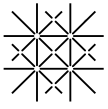
Annex 1: List of variables from a survey

| Question	Possible answers
Which political system do you prefer?	Centralized / Decentralized
Do you view governmental activities as being adequately efficient?	Yes / Yes, partly / Not really / No
Do you support the idea of free market?	Yes / Yes, partly / Not really / No
Are there necessary market regulations in the economy?	Yes / Yes, partly / Not really / No
Do you view environmental protection as an important issue at the local level?	Yes / Yes, partly / Not really / No
Do you view culture as an important issue at the local level?	Yes / Yes, partly / Not really / No
Do you view social justice an important issue at the local level?	Yes / Yes, partly / Not really / No
Do you view welfare state expansion as an important issue at the local level?	Yes / Yes, partly / Not really / No
Do you view education as an important issue at the local level?	Yes, mainly financed by the local gov. budget / Yes, mainly financed by the central gov. budget / Not really / No
Are you a member of any NGO?	Yes / No
Are you a leader or board member of any NGO?	Yes / No
Which political party you belong to?	Name of the party
When you were elected the last time, what was your previous job?	Open question
Did you win a seat in the 2010 election?	Yes / No
Gender	Woman / Man

Source: Own survey

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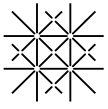
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