

Abstract

István Hegedűs

**Hard Populism, Radicalised
Political Communication, Politics
of Fear: Towards a New Phase of
the Orbán-regime?**

The scientific debate about the exact definition of the current Hungarian political system has not been completed. Still, there is a sort of consent in the literature and the international media regarding the essential populist, illiberal and even authoritarian characteristics of the Fidesz rule. The on-going, hectic radicalisation of the political party after grasping uncontrolled political power in 2010, as well as the sharpening of the government's political communication has not shown any signs towards a political consolidation. Continuous mobilisation and smear campaigns, rude methods used for creating new enemies and scape-goats in the dominant narrative of the ruling party and its loyal media, the shrinking space for political debates and fair partisan competition, the constrain of civil society activities in "defence" of national security seem to be a transition to the introduction of a qualitatively harder authoritarian phase in the history of the Orbán-regime after the elections in April 2018. Even today, Hungarian state propaganda and disinformation techniques follow the pattern of simplistic identity politics of fear. The contraposition of us and them, the ordinary Hungarians and the faceless migrants, linking the refugee crisis directly to terrorism, playing the

Eurosceptic game hiding behind a traditional national sovereignty concept against “Brussels” has polarised the country. Analysing recent speeches and interviews of the Hungarian prime minister, are there also less shocking alternative hypotheses and scenarios for the future of the regime?