

Country Report

Hungary

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This Country Report offers a detailed assessment of religious diversity and violent religious radicalisation in the above-named state. It is part of a series covering 23 countries (listed below) on four continents. More basic information about religious affiliation and state-religion relations in these states is available in our Country Profiles series. This report was produced by GREASE, an EU-funded research project investigating religious diversity, secularism and religiously inspired radicalisation.

Countries covered in this series:

Albania, Australia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Malaysia, Morocco, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

<http://grease.eui.eu>



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The EU-Funded GREASE project looks to Asia for insights on governing religious diversity and preventing radicalisation.

Involving researchers from Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Oceania, GREASE is investigating how religious diversity is governed in over 20 countries. Our work focuses on comparing norms, laws and practices that may (or may not) prove useful in preventing religious radicalisation. Our research also sheds light on how different societies cope with the challenge of integrating religious minorities and migrants. The aim is to deepen our understanding of how religious diversity can be governed successfully, with an emphasis on countering radicalisation trends.

While exploring religious governance models in other parts of the world, GREASE also attempts to unravel the European paradox of religious radicalisation despite growing secularisation. We consider the claim that migrant integration in Europe has failed because second generation youth have become marginalised and radicalised, with some turning to jihadist terrorism networks. The researchers aim to deliver innovative academic thinking on secularisation and radicalisation while offering insights for governance of religious diversity.

The project is being coordinated by Professor Anna Triandafyllidou from The European University Institute (EUI) in Italy. Other consortium members include Professor Tariq Modood from The University of Bristol (UK); Dr. H. A. Hellyer from the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) (UK); Dr. Mila Mancheva from The Centre for the Study of Democracy (Bulgaria); Dr. Egdunas Raciunas from Vytautas Magnus University (Lithuania); Mr. Terry Martin from the research communications agency SPIA (Germany); Professor Mehdi Lahlou from Mohammed V University of Rabat (Morocco); Professor Haldun Gulalp of The Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (Turkey); Professor Pradana Boy of Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang (Indonesia); Professor Zawawi Ibrahim of The Strategic Information and Research Development Centre (Malaysia); Professor Gurpreet Mahajan of Jawaharlal Nehru University (India); and Professor Michele Grossman of Deakin University (Melbourne, Australia). GREASE is scheduled for completion in 2022.

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GREASE - Radicalisation, Secularism and the Governance of Religion: Bringing Together European and Asian Perspectives

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Introduction

Hungary has received some ambiguous spotlight in the past years in Europe. The way the Hungarian government handled the migration wave of 2015 and the political discourse it has been following ever since has become a hot topic. The Hungarian government has positioned itself as the Guardian of Christian Europe. A move that resonates well with domestic constituents as well as many in the increasingly polarized European Union member states. This country report tries to fulfil two goals. It tries to shed light on the current state of religious legislation and the government attitude towards Muslims in Hungary. By doing this, we will try to explain the recent legislative activity that took place since 2010, when the governing coalition led by the FIDESZ party won a landslide victory in general elections. We also need to explain the unique situation of Hungary, where Muslims are the 'far-away menace'. As the Muslim community in Hungary hardly reaches 40 000, Islam and Muslims are rarely present in the everyday lives of Hungarians. Still the rejection of Muslims and other ethnic and religious groups are wide-spread in society. This wide-spread rejection of any manifestation of the other is a potential breeding ground for radical ideas.

As migration takes centre ground in international and domestic politics, the Hungarian government decided to link the topic of migration with the presence of Islam and Muslims in Europe. They managed to link Muslims and Islam to migration and introduce a security narrative to the topic. In the process, the Hungarian government decided to present itself as the protector of Christian Europe from the migrating Muslims. This rhetoric could be considered as radical in many European countries. But in Hungary this nationalistic narrative has become the mainstream and has historical roots. Muslims have become the new threat for Hungarian and European society. This could be a welcome development for the traditional scapegoats, the Jewish and the Roma community, as attention from them is now diverted to another minority group. The Jewish community may enjoy from losing the spotlight temporarily, but the Roma community still suffers from widespread discrimination and rejection, which often manifests in radical actions against its members.

This report covers the following topics: First, we are going to take a closer look at the social background of Hungary. Special attention will be given to religious and major ethnic groups that can be the target of radical dynamics in the country. Then, we are going to focus our attention to legislation concerning religious communities. Throughout these two parts, we would like to elaborate this topic from a historical perspective, so we can better understand the current dynamics in Hungarian society. Then, we are going to deal with the topic of violent religious radicalisation. Since the Muslim community is rather small in Hungary, radical Islamic movements do not play a major part in the country. This is why this chapter will also focus on the narrative of the government about Islam and migration, two topics that have become intertwined in recent times. Lastly, we are going to give a brief overview on policies addressing radical actions before concluding the paper.

Current composition of the population and challenges arising from it

According to the latest census taken by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (n.d.), the population of Hungary was 9 937 628 in 2011. The biggest religious group is the Roman Catholic community with 39% of the population. This group is followed by Calvinists (11%) and other denominations such as Lutherans Methodists and other neo-protestant communities. 0.1 % of the respondents declared themselves following Judaism and Islam respectively. However, we need to treat these figures with caution. Firstly, it was not compulsory to answer the question about religious affiliation during the census. Thus, we can assume that a high number of individuals did not declare their religious belonging. This assumption is supported by the fact that more than 45% of the population either declared that they do not belong to a religious community or they chose to pick the possibility of belonging to a religious group that was not presented on the census list. Thus, we could have two further assumptions: On the one hand, it is very likely that for a high proportion of the Hungarian population religion is a non-issue. On the other hand, we could assume that a number of respondents decided to hide their religious affiliation for various reasons. This would resonate with the strong indications that the size of the Jewish community is much bigger than the figures show in the census of 2011. The number of the Jewish community is estimated between 58 936 and 110 679 (Kovács & Barna, 2018). The case is similar with the Muslim community, as the number of Muslims in Hungary is estimated to be 32 618 in 2010 (Sulok, 2010).

Another way to estimate the number of followers of certain religious communities have is to take a look at the number of people who decide to offer 1% of their income tax to religious communities in the country, which is allowed by law in Hungary. According to this list, the 5 biggest religious groups are the following: Catholic church, Calvinist church, Lutheran Church, Hungarian Society for Krishna Consciousness, Hit Gyülekezet¹ (Community of the Faith) (Hungarian Tax and Customs Administration, 2019). This latter community is the most important neo-protestant, born-again Christian community in Hungary.

From these figures, we can confirm that Catholic church has the biggest following in the country followed by other traditional protestant churches. Yet, it is also worth mentioning again that for many in Hungary, religion does not play a major role. In this sense, the situation in Hungary is very similar to that of other Central European post-communist countries, where the role of religion was weakened during the Soviet occupation. As elsewhere in other European societies, church attendance is bigger among the older generations. A lot of people only formally belong to religious communities, but this only manifests in certain milestones in life such as weddings and baptizing ceremonies but not in active community life or church attendance. We can safely state that Hungarian society is getting more and more Post-Christian, yet neo-protestant and other non-traditional religious communities can attract new followers.

¹ As most neo-protestant movements, they are very pro-Israel and often openly anti-Muslim in their rhetoric

If we take a look at another dimension of minority characterization in Hungary, the most important group that needs to be addressed is the Roma (or Gypsy) community. With this societal group, the previously mentioned problems with measuring the population reoccurs. As belonging to this community can be a stigma in many cases, the 2011 Census only recorded up to 316 000 individuals. However, estimations by experts put the population of this community between 620 000 and 876 000 (Pénzes, Tátrai, & Pásztor, 2018).

While the overall population in Hungary steadily decreases due to low birth-rates and emigration, the size of the Roma community has been steadily increasing due to above the average fertility rates. This is a major challenge for Hungarian society, as the Roma population tend to be marginalized (poorer, less educated than the average population and there is also an over-representation of Roma individuals in Hungarian prisons). This also has an effect on negative image of the Roma community among the general Hungarian population. There is a widely accepted view in the country that Roma people are more likely to commit crimes than non-Roma individuals (Póczik, 2003).

The rejection of certain ethnic minorities is rather wide-spread within Hungarian Society. There was an infamous quantitative study conducted by Hungarian researchers at the TÁRKI Institute about the attitudes of the Hungarian population vis-à-vis certain ethnic groups and xenophobia. As a control variable they invented an imagined community called the Piréz people. When asked about admitting certain ethnic groups into Hungary, an overwhelming majority of the respondents did not want to admit members of this non-existent ethnic community to Hungary. The only ethnic group that received a welcoming attitude were ethnic Hungarians living in neighbouring countries (TÁRKI, 2007).

This suspicion about non-Hungarian ethnic and religious groups run deep in Hungarian history. During the 19th century when Hungary was part of the Habsburg empire. As nationalism gained more popularity in the region, the Hungarian elite perceived both the governing Habsburgs and both the numerous ethnic minority groups within the Hungarian borders as a threat the Hungarian nation (Paksa, 2012). Besides down to the 150 year of Ottoman occupation, Hungarian collective memory has a historical image of Hungary being the protector of Christian Europe, which was abandoned in it fight against the Muslim threat. Thus in Hungarian collective memory the image of Hungary as a protecting bastion of Europe from outside invasion is still present today as it is part of the general school curriculum.

The trauma caused by the Post WWI peace treaties further aggravated this phenomenon and still has far-reaching consequences in the mind-set of ordinary Hungarian people. Before WWI the Hungarian part of the Austro-Hungarian empire was an ethnically diverse country. In fact, ethnic Hungarians only made up 54.4% of the overall population of the pre-war Hungarian territories of the Empire in 1910 (Romsics, 2010, p.49). Losing two thirds of its territory and a reasonable size of the ethnic Hungarian population to neighbouring countries left a mark on Hungarian collective memory and attitudes toward other social groups. There is a wide-spread fear in society that if Hungary admits new ethnic groups into its territory, this national tragedy could be repeated in the future.

This is also one of the reasons why there is a certain distrust towards the growing Roma population, too.

The question of migration has become a hot topic in recent years in Hungarian society, too. There are a number of reasons for this. The spectacular events of the 2015 migration wave and the ensuing communication campaign of the government is only one reason. There are also other socio-economic dynamics in the background. As it was mentioned before, the population of Hungary is in steady decline, and the society is showing signs of aging. The number of children are steadily declining (Hungarian Central Statistical Office, n.d.). This dynamic is further aggravated by a steady outflow of (mostly young) people to other (mostly EU) countries for mainly economic reasons (Siskáné Szilasi, Halász, & Gál-Szabó, 2017). The labour market is increasingly characterized by demand, and this may also have negative effects on economic growth. This means the country faces serious socio-economic challenges, such as the sustaining the services of the welfare-state among others.

As the topic of immigration has become a highly politicized one, it was a challenge for the government and for economic actors to look for labour force to fill in empty positions on the job market. In spite of the Anti-Migration/Anti-Islam/Anti-Muslim rhetoric of the government², there is a steady increase in legal economic migration from Non-European countries into Hungary (Pancevski & Bihari, 2019). Most foreign workers come from neighbouring countries such as Ukraine or Asian countries such as China, Mongolia and Vietnam (index.hu, 2019).

To sum up, the Hungarian population is shrinking due to low birth-rates and migration. A further challenge is posed by the Roma minority, which many Hungarians regard as a challenge and a threat as the birth-rate is higher among their members. As there is a general shortage of workforce, people has been brought in from countries where Islam is not a dominant religion.

Historical background of state-organised religion relations and current institutional structure for governing religion and religious diversity

Hungary's geographical location means that it has been on the periphery of a number of religions in Europe. Historical Hungary lied at the border of Eastern and Western Christianity. Besides, the country was also the Northern border of the Ottoman Empire and Protestantism also reached its southernmost expansion here (Horváth, 2011). Besides, there has been a tangible Jewish community present in the country for centuries. As a result, the Hungarian society and state has a historic tradition of dealing with different religious communities.

However, the level of tolerance towards certain religions and their followers changed throughout the centuries. During the early days of the Hungarian kingdom the Roman Catholic church enjoyed a privileged position. Members of other religious minorities were treated as secondary citizens and were expected to assimilate. However, during the first, Árpád dynasty, there was reasonable tolerance towards religious minorities,

² We will cover this topic later in more detail.

the small Muslim communities included. By the 14th century Muslims have been assimilated or expelled from the territory (Pap, Reményi, M. Császár, & Vég, 2014). The second wave of Islamic presence also coincided with the spreading of the protestant movements and the expansion of the Ottoman Empire into Hungarian territories as well. Under Ottoman domination religious movements flourished, and there was gradual easing of oppression on the Habsburg-dominated territories as well, even though the dominant role of the Catholic church was not questioned at this time. As mentioned earlier, in the Hungarian collective memory, the 150 years of Ottoman occupation is considered as a tragedy. That Hungary was the bastion protecting Christian Europe and that other Christian states could not unite and come to the rescue of Hungary in the face of the Ottoman/Muslim threat may resonate well in the face of contemporary challenges.

On the territory of historic Hungary, there was no religious wars in the Western European sense, even though that does not mean religion did not play a role in revolts against Habsburg domination. Movements for independence often had support from protestant denominations, and as such, consecutive Habsburg kings granted concessions to religious communities to quell such movements (Horváth, 2011).

The breakthrough came from Joseph II, whose famous Edict of Tolerance was incorporated into the Hungarian legal system in 1791. Under this system, main Christian communities were recognized and enjoyed wide-ranging rights. The Jewish community received legal recognition in 1895, followed by the recognition of Islam in 1916 (ibid.).

The recognition of Islam was a sensitive topic, since the Ottoman occupation left painful memories. A full legal recognition of Islam came after Bosnia Hercegovina had been occupied in 1878 and annexed into the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1908. Thus, Muslims en masse have become imperial subjects. It is telling that even though Muslims were subjects the Austro-Hungarian Empire from 1908, recognition of Islam only happened in 1916 in the Hungarian part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Sulok, 2010). Another reason for the recognition is that the Ottoman empire joined World War I on the side of Central Powers. Thus, recognizing Islam has also become a foreign policy necessity.

During the Cold War era, religious movements were closely controlled by the government. The central narrative about religions tried to frame religious beliefs as something anachronistic that will disappear with economic and social progress. Thus, we can characterize this era as a time of state-enforced secularism. Religious communities were only tolerated and closely controlled and watched by the government and secret services.

Islam was no exception, and here we can see foreign policy playing a role. Islam was practically non-existent during much of the Cold War period. From the 1970s Muslims students from so-called "friendly" countries came to Hungary to study in Hungarian higher education. These Muslim students started to organize themselves according to religious lines in the 1980s. As the government wanted to control this dynamic, the Association of Muslim Students were formed with active government intervention. From this movement the Hungarian Islamic Community was founded in 1988 with state consent (Sulok, 2010) (Csicsmann & Vékony, 2011). The government decided to grant recognition to Islam and a Muslim community on its own term. This also enabled to

government to keep the goodwill of Islamic countries of the Middle East, which were important export markets for the country (Békés & Vékony, 2018).

After the advent of multi-party democracy in Hungary following the fall of the Berlin Wall, a new and very liberal regulation was introduced as far as religious communities were concerned. Founding a religious community i.e. a church has become an administrative task overseen by independent civil courts. This led to a proliferation of the number of churches in Hungary. There were more than 300 registered churches in the country by 2010, a huge number compared to the small population of the country (Antalóczy, 2013). As churches enjoyed a tax-free status and were entitled to other government support according to their number of followers, some civil society organizations without any religious background chose to become churches as well, hence the high number. These so-called business churches were one of the main reasons why the government in 2010 decided to change the legislation in this domain (Antalóczy, 2013).

Under the new government dominated by the FIDESZ party that won with a landslide in 2010, not only new legislation was introduced on religion, but also a new constitution was adopted. The new government introduced new rules and regulations in many domains in the country, redesigning a lot of institutions in the process.

The new constitution is called the Basic Law of Hungary. The Basic Law has some fundamental differences from the old constitution that was in place between 1989 and 2011. Besides mentioning the appreciation of various religious traditions of the country, the preamble of the new Basic Law emphasizes the role of Christianity as a force to preserve the Hungarian nation (Hungarian Parliament, 2011, p. 1). This a major change from the old constitution that did not mention the role of Christianity and God in the text at all (Alkotmany.hu, 2011). In this sense, the new constitution could be considered as a step away from the secular neutrality of the state as far as religions are concerned, since there is a special, symbolic place for Christianity in the text. This does not mean that there is a state-religion in Hungary. As article VI. of the Basic Law states, Churches are separated and independent from the state in Hungary. However, the text also mentions that the state cooperates with Churches for certain public goals (Hungarian Parliament, 2011, p. 7). As such, the new Basic Law assigns a much bigger role for state-recognized churches in the country. It aims to involve the churches in areas, where the state had extensive presence, such as social services and education.

After the passing of the Basic Law, a new Law on Churches was also introduced. This law that regulates religious communities was not without controversies. Firstly, instead of the independent judiciary deciding on which community should be recognized as a church, the law delegated this power to the legislative branch of power. Moreover, the new legislation created 3 different levels for the recognition of religious communities. In order to be recognized as a church a religious community should have had at least 100 years of international existence or at least 20 years of national presence as a religious community. Also, recognition could be denied on certain conditions, such as "threat to national security" (Antalóczy, 2013, p. 31). In the beginning, there was 14 recognized churches, which later increased to 27. Those religious communities who did not receive recognition, had to carry on their activities as religious associations or as foundations.

(ibid.). As an example, it was not clear, which Islamic community will receive the recognition as Churches from the three main communities active in Hungary. In the end, only 2 main communities applied and got recognized within the framework of the Hungarian Islamic Council, which had two member organizations the Organization of Muslims in Hungary and the Hungarian Islamic Community. The smallest community (the Iszlám Egyház - the Islamic Church) with a Salafist leaning decided not to apply for a church status.

Due to domestic and international criticism, the Law on Churches has been amended a number of times (U.S. Department of State, 2017). The latest amendment of the new law was accepted by Parliament in 2018. This latest version sustains the multi-level recognition of religious communities. The law makes it easier for religious communities to have themselves registered. This process is now delegated back to the judiciary. However, in order to achieve the highest status, the minister responsible for religious affairs will have to turn to the Parliament for approval (Government of Hungary, 2018). Thus, to achieve this highest status of 'established church' (bevett egyház) a religious community still needs the approval of the elected government and consequently that of the parliamentary majority, too. As being an established church may lead to closer cooperation and increased funding from the state, those communities that fail to reach this status may see challenges, among others, in providing religious services in certain institutions and running religious educational institutions. As of today, there are 32 religious communities recognized as established churches in Hungary (Ministry for Human Resources, n.d).

In the end, even after numerous amendments, with the current version of the law the government has the freedom to pick which religious community it wants to cooperate with, which one of them can receive funding for running schools, camps, etc.

As a result of the close cooperation between established churches and the government, the line between the church and state is becoming blurred. The administrative authority of a high number of state schools were transferred to religious communities in the last couple of years. These latter institutions receive extra funding from the state due to religious reasons, so there is a paradox situation, where the state gives more financial support for schools not run by the government but by the established churches than to state-run institutions. This pushes many families to choose church-run schools instead of state-run, secular institutions (Domschitz, 2019). However, not every community is able to run their own schools. During informal consultations with members of the Organization of Muslims in Hungary, a representative of the community told me that they are ready to take on the task of running a school, but the government's passive attitude in this topic tells them that it is not a reality these days. Indeed, the current legislation does not oblige the state to enter into closer relationships with established churches. This is merely a possibility, and the state can decide which communities it favours in this regard. However, the representative also told me that with the current financial situation of the Muslim community in Hungary, it is not a reality to run their own schools. Other challenges are also more urgent, such as finding a solution for the problem of lack of burial places for Muslims in Hungarian cemeteries.

Challenges of violent religious radicalisation: a brief overview

As indicated above, Hungary has a very small Muslim population. As of today, only two individuals are known to have wanted to join the so-called Islamic State. Neither of them belongs to any of the Muslim communities in Hungary. Their knowledge of Islam is almost non-existent. They were radicalised online in 2014. One of them travelled to Turkey, tried to cross into Syria, but was arrested by Turkish authorities and spent a short time in a Turkish prison before being deported to Hungary. The other person did not travel to Syria or Turkey. After the Nice attacks, he made threatening remarks on a social media page of a former leading far-right politician and former leader of the far-right leaning Jobbik party, Gábor Vona. Among others, in a comment he threatened to drive a lorry into a group of people. As a result, Gábor Vona reported the person to the police. Both of them were arrested and tried in Hungarian courts in 2017 (Albert, 2017).

This case shows a number of similarities with other Western European individuals who were not born into Muslim families, but later became radicalised. They told the court they had little prospects growing up in rural Hungary, and they saw little chance from breaking out from poverty. They had no previous knowledge of Islam, and since they did not formally convert to Islam, they could not be considered as Muslims. For them, the Islamic State was a way to get away from their reality and give a meaning to a life, they regarded as lacking opportunities and any future prospects. (ibid.)

Both representatives of the Organization of Muslims in Hungary (OMH) and the representatives of the Hungarian Intelligence denied that they are aware of any other individuals, during informal consultations with them. It seems the Hungarian Muslim communities as so small in numbers and so tightly knit that no individuals attempted to leave to Syria to fight on the side of extremist groups. This may be down to the fact that Hungarian Muslims with an immigrant background tend to be highly educated, as most of them came to study to Hungary and later decided to settle down in the country. As a result, there is no Muslim underclass in Hungary as there are in many Western European countries, where many Muslims settled down to work in the lower levels of the industrial production or social services. This relatively high social standing, better educational background and small population can explain the reason for a lack of Muslims leaving Hungary to fight abroad.

When Muslims leave Hungary, they tend to go to Western Europe. During informal consultations with the representative of the OMH, I learned that many Muslims with an immigrant background leave the country to join their family members living in other Western European countries. Others leave for better economic opportunities abroad. They also mentioned a growing feeling of rejection from Hungarian society and a growing wave of Islamophobia or Muslimophobia. In fact, in Hungary it would be better to speak of Islamophobia, as the lack of Muslims mean that in many cases people are afraid of a community that seldom visible or present in their everyday lives.

As Sayfo points out that this growing sense of Islamophobia could be further aggravated by political leaders, too, since stroking fears about a non-present community means a relatively riskless activity, as one does not have to be afraid of wide-spread atrocities and other short-term negative consequences (Sayfo, 2016). The governing elite started

to focus even more on Islam with the topic of migration after the events of 2015, when several thousands of migrants crossed Hungary to Western European states.

The government seems to be following a triple discourse in this domain. Firstly, mainly foreign policy purposes political leaders emphasise the greatness of Islam and Islamic civilization. In 2015 after negotiations with Egyptian president Sisi, Prime minister Viktor Orbán stated that the "differences in cultures is a gift from God"... and .. "when we speak about countries belonging to the Islamic cultures we need to speak the language of respect" (Orbán, 2015, n.p.). Secondly, this discourse is complemented by the idea of the ability and the right to choose, whom certain country's population wants to live with. The Orbán government has been voicing its scepticism about integration of Muslims in Europe. In 2016 Orbán stated that as far as Muslims are concerned ..." the most we can hope for is a peaceful coexistence, but that is called parallel societies." (Mno.hu, 2016, n.p.), which is obviously not desirable. This second discourse focuses on heterogeneous Western European societies and deals with heterogeneity through a securitized approach. Thus, heterogeneity becomes the source of insecurity, while homogeneity based on Christianity represents security and stability. This is put in a historical perspective, where Hungary reoccupies the role of the bastion of Christian Europe. But today, as Western Europe is moving away from Christian values the challenge is twofold: protecting Christian Europe from the migrants coming from the East, but also safeguarding the continent from Western European leaders that celebrate heterogeneity and support immigration. This second discourse puts Christianity in the center, but it does not target Muslims directly. The furthest point is, when it links migration from mainly Muslim countries and the rise in anti-Semitism in Western European societies (Bild.de, 2019). However, the third narrative openly links Muslims and security. It is important to emphasise that the first and second narrative is officially supported by the government, whereas the third, sometimes openly Islamophobic narrative does not get official government endorsement. Still, as a number of media outlets close to the governing party push this narrative, it needs to be highlighted. This third narrative links migration and Muslims and further emphasises the question of security (Kovács, 2019). This narrative presents Muslims as not capable of adopting European values and customs. As a result they erode the social order and regarded as a challenge to security. This narrative further blames Western European governments for encouraging migration and bringing Muslims into societies that are governed by elites that accept the decline of these states' Christian identities. This third narrative is spread in Hungarian press products mainly for domestic consumption.

We can see that this multi-layered narrative links Islam and migration and managed to securitize the topic for Hungarian society. Part of this process is the building of a security fence on the Serbian-Hungarian border. As a result, migrants mostly avoid Hungary, which is a proof in the hands of the government that its policies are effective. Putting security at the center of political discourse is now part not only the domestic, but also foreign policy. In line with this, during negotiations with German chancellor Merkel, Orbán stated that Hungary acts as a protector of Europe, by not allowing migrants to enter the country (Lokál.hu, 2018). This year, in a speech he stated that ..."the migration crisis has become a civilizational crisis, the East came to the West" (Botos, 2019, n.p.). It

is clear that the Orbán government would like to frame the current migration crisis as a civilizational clash (Huntington, 2006), where Hungary is taking on again the historic role of the defender of the Christian West. This echoes well for Hungarian society the historical event mentioned earlier. One further similarity is the image of the "ungrateful" West. As Hungary was left alone with the Ottoman threat in the 16th century, according to the narrative of the government, Western Europe is again unfaithful. The reason for this is that these countries are controlled by parties who support immigration. According to this manichean logic, European politics could be broken down into two conflicting camps, one that supports migration and the other one that is against it.

This rethoric is paired up with an utterly harsh treatment of migrants in the so-called Transit Zones set up in the southern borders of the country with Serbia. These Transit Zones are the only places where migrants can claim asylum. The Hungarian government have been condemned by the UN High Commission for Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights for mistreating and starting migrants in the Transit Zones (Euronews, 2019) (168 Óra, 2019).

In line with the anti-migration narrative the government initiated the "Hungary Helps" program. This aid program targets mainly Christian communities based in mainly Muslim majority countries. But we need to point out that also Non-Christian communities receive some support from these programs. Nevertheless, the main target group are Christian communities who are persecuted in their own countries (Hungarian Government, n.d.).

This increased attention to Muslims and migration diverted attention to the "usual" targets of radical groups and individuals: the Roma and the Jewish population. These are the two historically targeted communities in Hungary. The Roma are the bigger in number and due to their visibility (most of them have brown skin and black hair), and lower socio-economic status, they get targeted more often. Far-right groups regularly use these two ethnic groups as their targets. In 2008-2009 there was a series of killings committed by radical individuals belonging to Hungarian far right underground cell. They attacked 9 family homes, killing 6 people including 1 child. They were convicted in 2016 for life imprisonment (Népszava, 2016).

These attacks are a proof that the anti-Roma discourse pushed by far-right groups can manifest in lethal consequences in Hungary. However, the anti-Roma rethoric has become marginalized in the last couple of years due to the centrality of the migration/Muslim narrative. A newly emerging far-right party called Mi Hazánk (Our Home) that broke away from Jobbik (a party trying to move to the centre-right from the far-right) is trying to refocus the discourse on the "Roma crime" phenomenon. The fact that the Mi Hazánk party reached back to the Roma topic is hardly surprising as the government was so successful in monopolising the migration/Muslim narrative, they needed a topic with which they can differentiate themselves. The Mi Hazánk party also tries to create its own paramilitary corps, copying the tactic of Jobbik a couple of years earlier (24.hu, 2019).

Radicalisation is a challenge in prisons in Hungary, too. Here we can see divisions between Roma and non-Roma inmates. Héra warns that due to bad prison circumstances not only inmates, but also prison guards are exposed to radicalisation.

Prisoners' everyday life is getting harsher by new prison regulations that does not allow meaningful contact with family members. It seems, policy in prisons focus on punishment and less on rehabilitation and integration today (Dr. Héra, 2018).

Physical violence against Jews are rare in Hungary in present days. However, the Roma community is still very much concerned in this sense. In Hungary, there is a law designed to target hate-crime on religious or ethnic grounds. In one case, Roma people attacked members of a far-right paramilitary group, who threatened them. In the end, it was the Roma people who received jail sentences based on the hate-crime legislation. This case is clear evidence that laws designed to protect certain ethnic communities are sometimes turned against the very group it should protect (TASZ, 2013). Thus, it is safe to claim that institutional racism is still a wide-spread problem in Hungary.

Policies and practices addressing or preventing such radicalisation

As we can see from the sections above. The government itself is a source of a nationalistic discourse that links migration and Muslim presence in Europe with security. This narrative would be regarded as radical in many Western European societies. However, this could be considered as the mainstream in contemporary Hungary. Nevertheless, this does not mean the government or any institution would systematically target Muslims or people with a migration background. Indeed, attacks on minorities have been dealt with by police in a proper manner.

Even though, there are a number of isolated cases when police personal turn on the Roma community. In a case in 2017 a policeman gave advices to perpetrators of hate-crime against Roma people on how to avoid being caught. The ensuing police investigation was also rather weak. Only when an NGO (Társaság a Szabadságjogokért (TASZ) - Hungarian Civil Liberties Union) intervened on the behalf of the Roma victims did the police conduct a serious investigation (index.hu, 2017).

As we can see, legislation concerning the addressing of radical acts of violence often backfire. It seems the government is still looking for meaningful solutions as far as prevention is concerned. What we can see, is that the government expects that lengthy prison sentences may deter would be perpetrators, but this is not the case all the time. Besides, rehabilitation and reintegration of perpetrators is still a tangible challenge.

In these cases, the work of civil society actors and NGOs are vital, as down to negative attitude towards minorities from society means that often times institutions fail to protect those that may be the most vulnerable.

As for the Muslim community, the Hungarian Islamic Legal Aid Association is a an organization recently founded in 2016 to protect the interests of the Muslim community and to deal with Islamophobic acts of all sorts. At the moment this organization lacks funding. A good indication of this is that they do not even have a website, they are only present and active on social media sites (Hungarian Islamic Legal Aid Association , n.d.). According to their social media profile, their address is the same as the head office of the Organization of Muslims in Hungary.

As far as far-right radicalisation is concerned, there are no comprehensive programs for prevention. Nevertheless, the government is eager to demonstrate its ability to protect members of the society regardless of their ethnic background. When the newly formed far-right Mi Hazánk party organized a rally against 'Roma crime' in the city of Tatárszentgyörgy, police prevented far-right activists and members of the Roma community from clashing with each other. Also, they did not allow the far-right group to march through the neighborhood inhabited by members of the Roma community (Mérce, 2019). This could be considered part of the security narrative by the government. The government wants to position itself as the ultimate source of security within (and outside) the country. Thus, the prevention of clashes between ethnic groups are of vital importance for them. The government makes sure it communicates a similar narrative vis-à-vis the Hungarian Jewish, too. In this case, the narrative emphasizes that in Western Europe antisemitism is on the rise, but thanks to the efforts of the government, Jews can live in safety in Hungary (origo.hu, 2018).

During our consultation with Borbála Fellegi, head of the Foresee research group that focuses on radicalisation in Hungarian prisons, she drew attention to the problematic nature of Hungarian national identity and the debate that surrounds it. There is still a fragile atmosphere around patriotism and being proud of national identity. In many cases, the boundaries between nationalists and far-right groups and individuals is blurred in Hungary. According to Fellegi, political groups on the right and the left are both to blame. We already covered the challenges coming from the right and from the government. But we should also mention that during the 1990s and early 2000s parties on the left often stigmatized nationalist groups as 'Nazis'. This kind of effort to reject and control the narrative on nationalism also had a push-factor for the right-leaning groups to far-right extremes. Indeed, there is still a rather toxic atmosphere in Hungary around national identity, where both groups on the left and right feel free to stigmatize and try to push the other outside of the idea of the nation what does it mean to be a good Hungarian patriot. This attitude, sadly, only fuels polarization instead of addressing it. Thus, we should admit that for the current polarization of Hungarian society we should blame parties of the left and right alike for demonizing each other and their followers and creating a confrontational atmosphere.

Concluding Remarks

Recent legislation saw a radical overhaul of the relationship between the state and religious communities in Hungary. The previous distance between the state and certain religious groups is on the decline. The privileged communities receiving the status of Established Churches enjoy potentially far-reaching advantages. But this also created a class system within religious communities, where it is the government and elected politicians, who have the final say about which community will get an elevated status. Nevertheless, this does not mean that Hungarian society is more religious than before, but religion is being instrumentalized by the government.

As we can see, even though two Muslim communities were granted the established church status. However, this does not mean that Muslims enjoy wide-spread appreciation and recognition in Hungarian society. Partly down to the rhetoric linking Muslims with migration and security, life for members of the Muslim community in Hungary is very challenging these days. Especially vulnerable are the female members of the community who are the more visible than their male counterparts.

One unexpected winner of these developments in the Roma community in Hungary. As attention from Roma individuals turn to the non-present perceived threat of Muslims, members of the Roma community can have some much needed breathing space. Still there is wide-spread discrimination against the members of this community.

To sum up, we can conclude that the new FIDESZ led government puts much more emphasis on Christianity and Christian heritage in their political rhetoric. We would also like to mention the complex 3-layered narrative on Muslims and migration from the side of the governing elite.

For a certain degree the government involves religious communities in the managing of certain social institutions. By putting more emphasis on these religious values than any other government did in modern times, and by getting a security dimension to the Muslim and migration question, the Hungarian government chose a political path that many would consider as radical in a number of other EU member states and which puts the country in conflict with some of its foreign partners.

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