



# EU Elections 2019: What do the Central European Political Parties stand for?

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# 1. Introduction

The coming European Parliament elections take place in turbulent times for the European Union and the whole European integration project. The many challenges of the last years have left the current EU divided and, despite attempts to present unity and a clear vision, questioning its future paths. In the past few years, attempts at reforming the eurozone have not been successful while the momentum brought about by the debt crisis has passed. The changing international order with the ascendance of China, the United States turning further away from their transatlantic partners and Russia escalating its territorial ambitions in the immediate neighborhood of the European Union demonstrate to Europe that it is time to stand up for global priorities and for its security, and to do so on its own feet. The so-called migration crisis of 2015 pointed at divisions existing between the “newer” and “older” member states regarding their attitude not only towards immigration but also towards the character of Europe and the values that it is constituted by. At the same time, the Union has spent a lot of time and capabilities negotiating about one of the largest member states leaving.

This paper looks at how political parties in the countries of the Visegrad Group and Austria position themselves on five issues that are currently salient regarding the future of European integration. These issues are: the eurozone and its possible future developments; European foreign policy, security and defense; migration; the EU future budget.

The Visegrad Group has acquired the image of a cohesive block in the EU, especially in recent years, mostly based on their common critical approach towards migration, but also their shared preferences regarding other issues – e.g. budget. We decided to include Austria as a country which differs from the Visegrad Group in a lot of aspects, including economic factors, Austria being one of the net contributors into the EU budget while all the V4 countries still belong among net beneficiaries, and the absence of the post-communist legacy and the history of being locked behind the Iron curtain with the resulting longer tradition of foreign political ties with the rest of the “West”. At the same time, Austria neighbors on three of the Visegrad Countries and its relations with them reach well into the past. Moreover, with the entry of the ÖVP-led government into office in 2017, some of the Visegrad countries’ leaders expressed hopes that the new Austrian policies will be close to their own, especially regarding the hot topic of migration. Taking a look at the Austrian parties’ positions and preferences will show possible commonalities and differences, not only among the currently governing political parties in all five countries but also the opposition ones and thus illustrate possible areas for cooperation on the EU level.

Rather than by individual countries, the publication is structured according to the political groups in the European Parliament that the parties are currently members of. This brings the opportunity to compare among parties which (at least supposedly) belong to the same party families, the assumption being that the priorities of the parties in these groups should be similar.

When assessing the party positions, we used the official manifestos published for the occasion of this year’s EP elections. In cases where the information contained in the manifesto was not sufficient, we looked at media proclamations of party representatives since April 2018, i.e. roughly a year before the election campaign. We also used parties’ websites or older manifestos where necessary. To limit the scope of this publication, we decided to focus on parties who had a chance of getting into the European Parliament according to the April 2019 polls.



In the table below, the parties are divided according to their current affiliation with groups in the European Parliament.

	Austria	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia
<b>EPP</b>	ÖVP	KDU-ČSL, TOP09-STAN <sup>1</sup>	Fidesz-KDNP <sup>2</sup>	Civic Platform, Polish People's Party <sup>3</sup>	Most-Híd, KDH, SMK
<b>S&amp;D</b>	SPÖ	ČSSD	MSzP, DK	Democratic Left Alliance	Smer-SD
<b>ALDE</b>	NEOS	ANO	Momentum	Modern	PS
<b>ECR</b>		ODS		Law and Justice	SaS
<b>Greens-EFA</b>	Greens		LMP, Dialogue for Hungary <sup>4</sup>	Greens	
<b>GUE/NGL</b>		KSČM			
<b>EFDD</b>				KORWiN <sup>5</sup>	
<b>ENF</b>	FPÖ	SPD			We are family - Boris Kollár
<b>N/A</b>		Pirate party <sup>6</sup>	Jobbik <sup>7</sup>	Spring, Kukiz15, National Movement	ĽSNS, SNS, OĽANO, Together <sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The only STAN MEP, Stanislav Polčák, elected in 2014 when STAN ran on a common list with TOP09, is affiliated with the EPP group in the EP.

<sup>2</sup> The parties of the current government coalition, Fidesz and its junior coalition partner, the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP), will run together in the upcoming EP elections. As of now, both parties belong to the European People's Party, albeit Fidesz has been suspended in March 2019 due to concerns about violating democratic values and principles in Hungary. Its future membership in the EPP is as yet unclear. KDNP has not been suspended but it is highly likely that its membership will be decided in accordance with that of Fidesz.

<sup>3</sup> Civic Platform, Polish People's Party, Democratic Left Alliance, Modern and Greens run on a joint list under the title "European Coalition". In the following text, they will be analyzed in the chapter devoted to the EPP parties, as the Civic Platform and the Polish People's Party belonging to the EPP form the important share of the coalition's ballot and their candidates have a high probability of being elected

<sup>4</sup> Party runs on a joint list with MSzP. MSzP put forward its program in February, while Dialogue does not have an independent program.

<sup>5</sup> KORWiN runs on a joint list together with National Movement and two other minor subjects under the name Confederation (Konfederacja). In the current European Parliament, KORWiN has two representatives, one of them non-affiliated and the other one a member of EFDD.

<sup>6</sup> The Pirate Party has not yet expressed any clear preference about a group it would like to become a member of

<sup>7</sup> Following the upcoming elections, a moderated Jobbik is intent on joining a political group, however, whether its attempts will be successful is still unclear.

<sup>8</sup> Progresívne Slovensko (PS; Progressive Slovakia), member of ALDE and Spolu- občianska demokracia (Spolu) (Together- civic society), non-affiliated though declared interest to join EPP, has established coalition before EP elections. In the following text, they will be analyzed in the part concerning ALDE.



## 2. Group of the European People's Party

### Eurozone

According to the Hungarian PM Viktor Orbán, the future of the euro is not guaranteed and thus a target date for its introduction in Hungary is not set. It is being examined whether it is worth it for Hungary to join the eurozone. Fidesz<sup>9</sup> thus occupies a wait and see position on the introduction of the common currency, as well as on the future development of the eurozone.<sup>10</sup> While the KDU-ČSL<sup>11</sup> expresses a cautiously positive attitude towards Czech Republic joining the eurozone, claiming that it is not only an issue of economic stability, but also security and strategic affiliation, the party also emphasizes that a rational and open debate is needed before the Czech Republic accepts the common currency and that the eurozone needs to be stabilized. TOPo9-STAN consider the common currency to be a successful project and claim that the Czech public attitude towards joining the eurozone can be improved by an adequate and comprehensible information campaign. According to TOPo9-STAN, joining the eurozone would be beneficial for the Czech economy, assuming that fiscal responsibility is kept. In Poland, all members of the European Coalition<sup>12</sup> are in favor of the introduction of the euro in Poland. However, they do not provide any specifics. As there is a need to amend the constitution before replacing the zloty with the euro, it is hardly possible in the near future. Grzegorz Schetyna, leader of the Civic Platform, has so far refused to discuss Kaczyński's declaration on the euro in Poland (see below), as he insists on duel debate on EU issues.

As for the eurozone members, the European People's Party is represented by three political parties in Slovakia: Most-Híd (Bridge), Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) and Party of Hungarian Community (SMK). All three political parties have supported membership of the eurozone. However, there are variations in opinions about its further development. Most-Híd supports stronger fiscal integration as well as more competencies for the EU to control the finances and budget deficits of member states. However, it also requires a clear division of competencies between EU institutions and national states.<sup>13</sup> KDH and SMK have not recently made any statement about the future of the eurozone. However, in the principal program manifesto, KDH has supported membership of the eurozone and more competencies for EU institutions regarding control and possible punishment of countries that violate EU budget deficit rules.<sup>14</sup> In its election manifesto before the parliamentary elections 2012, SMK supported the idea of a stronger mechanism that would control duties of member states regarding financial discipline.<sup>15</sup> According to the ÖVP, responsible budget policy in the eurozone is needed. The Pact of Growth and Stability needs to be adhered to and non-compliance must result in sanctions by the European Commission. Sticking to the rules is regarded

<sup>9</sup> "Orbán Viktor programot hirdetett a bevándorlás megállításáért - Fidesz.hu | Fidesz frakció," <https://fidesz.hu/hirek/orban-viktor-programot-hirdetett-a-bevandorlas-megallitasaert>

<sup>10</sup> Vég Márton, "Orbán beszélt az euró magyarországi bevezetéséről is," Napi.hu, 19 January, [https://www.napi.hu/magyar\\_gazdasag/orban-euro-politika.676534.html](https://www.napi.hu/magyar_gazdasag/orban-euro-politika.676534.html)

<sup>11</sup> „PRO LEPŠÍ EVROPU: Program KDU-ČSL pro volby do Evropského parlamentu 2019 - KDU-ČSL - Celostátní web,” <https://www.kdu.cz/volby-do-ep-2019/program>

<sup>12</sup> Natalia Sawka, "Koalicja Europejska. Co ich łączy poza niechęcią do PiS?," wyborcza.pl, 29 February 2019, <http://sonar.wyborcza.pl/sonar/7,156422,24480581,koalicja-europejska-co-ich-laczy-pozaniechecia-do-pis.html>, "Deklaracja - Deklaracja programowa Koalicji Europejskiej - Wybory do Parlamentu Europejskiego 2019," <https://koalicjaeuropejska.pl/deklaracja>

<sup>13</sup> „Slovensko, Európa a svet budúcnosti - MOST-HÍD,” <https://www.most-hid.sk/sites/most-hid.sk/files/downloadable-files/programovydokumentsk.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> „Cesta pre Slovensko: Základný program KDH - KDH,” [http://kdh.sk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/programCesta\\_web.pdf](http://kdh.sk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/programCesta_web.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> „24 Strana maďarskej koalície (SMK) - volebný program,” Nový Čas, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cas.sk/clanok/217029/24-strana-madarskej-koalicie-smk-volebny-program>



by the party as a prerequisite for any deepening of the Economic and Monetary Union. ÖVP is opposed to risk sharing among the eurozone states. European deposit insurance is possible only if there is a sustainable risk reduction mechanism. The European Stability Mechanism should be transformed into a proper European Monetary Fund.

## Foreign, Security and Defense Policy

While Fidesz is against the introduction of qualified majority voting in CFSP<sup>16</sup>, ÖVP is in favor of it. Neither KDU-ČSL, nor TOP09-STAN expressed any stance regarding the issue. Both Most-Híd and KDH generally supported the development of common foreign and security policy.

KDU-ČSL and TOP09-STAN<sup>17</sup> agree that European Defense cooperation should be deepened but both emphasize that it should not happen at the expense of our cooperation in NATO. According to the latter, recent US policies make it obvious that the European pillar of NATO must be strengthened, and the EU needs to take responsibility for its own defense. TOP09-STAN frame the issue of climate change in security terms, emphasizing the EU's role in tackling it. European Coalition member parties are in general in favor of enhanced member state cooperation in the area of Foreign, Security and Defense Policy<sup>18</sup>. European Coalition member parties' MPs were very critical of a lack of governmental initiative in PESCO, suggesting that Poland should play a more important role in this area. The European Coalition manifesto speaks about enhanced defense cooperation in the EU, but also about the intensification of EU-NATO cooperation. Hungary signed up to PESCO under the Fidesz government and PM Orbán expressed support for a joint European army as early as 2016 and reiterated it in July 2018 when meeting Chancellor Merkel. He added that he wants to see a European defense industry and wishes to see the modernization of the Hungarian army on these grounds.<sup>19</sup> In the current EP election manifesto, Most advocates involvement in PESCO as the basis for further strengthening of European security. The party also supports a joint approach in foreign policy to face external threats and joint troops of the EU that can be used in conflict areas.<sup>20</sup> KDH, in its principal program manifesto, welcomes cooperation in the security and foreign policy area and the creation of a "defense union."<sup>21</sup> According to the ÖVP, the CSDP should be deepened as Europe must be able to protect itself.

Fidesz politicians including PM Orbán have repeatedly spoken out against the sanctions against Russia over the years but have not vetoed their prolongation. Fidesz regards Russia as a highly important business partner for Hungary and does not speak of Russia as a threat. None of the Slovak EPP members mentioned in official documents their opinion towards sanctions against Russia. However,

<sup>16</sup> "Magyarország nem támogatja az uniós külpolitikai döntésekben a minősített többség alkalmazását - Fidesz.hu | Fidesz frakció," <https://fidesz.hu/hirek/magyarorszag-nem-tamogatja-az-unios-kulpolitikai-dontesekben-a-minositett-tobbseg-alkalmazasat>

<sup>17</sup> „STAROSTOVÉ a TOP 09 - Spojenci pro Evropu,” <https://www.most-hid.sk/sites/most-hid.sk/files/downloadable-files/programovydokumentsk.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> „Peľny zapis przebiegu posiedzenia,”

<http://orka.sejm.gov.pl/zapisy8.nsf/o/27080C7D5F10C728C1258232004FE0Ao/%24File/0281408.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> "Új szintre léphet az együttműködés Németországgal - Fidesz.hu | Fidesz frakció,"

[https://fidesz.hu/hirek/uj-szintre-lephet-az-egyuttmukodes-nemetorszaggal\\_230103](https://fidesz.hu/hirek/uj-szintre-lephet-az-egyuttmukodes-nemetorszaggal_230103); Orbán Viktor,

"Találkozási a kancellárral // Treffen mit der Kanzlerin," Facebook, 3 August 2018,

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=10156318821521093>

<sup>20</sup> „Slovensko, Európa a svet budúcnosti - MOST-HÍD,” <https://www.most-hid.sk/sites/most-hid.sk/files/downloadable-files/programovydokumentsk.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> „Cesta pre Slovensko: Základný program KDH - KDH,” [http://kdh.sk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/programCesta\\_web.pdf](http://kdh.sk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/programCesta_web.pdf)



representatives of Most-Híd and KDH declared support for sanctions in their recent interviews. Chairman of the Foreign Affairs committee of the Slovak parliament and MP for Most-Híd, Katarína Cséfalvayová considers sanctions as a logical consequence of the Russian federation's aggressive behavior and explaining why it is not possible to cancel them.<sup>22</sup> Member of the European Parliament for KDH Ivan Štefanec welcomed the prolongation of sanctions in December 2018. He further stressed that it is not possible to close one's eyes in the face of acts of aggression and violations of international law.<sup>23</sup> None of the Polish parties expressed a will to remove sanctions against Russia.

According to the ÖVP, Communication channels with Russia must stay open for the sake of peace and stability in Europe. Sanctions against Russia should be revoked step by step, given that there is progress in fulfilling the Minsk agreements. TOPo9-STAN is in favor of keeping the sanctions in place and even expanding them following the US example. Both KDU-ČSL and TOPo9-STAN mention Russia regarding its disinformation activities and the need for Europe to be able to protect itself.

## Migration

Fidesz's main, and essentially only, program point is that immigration must be stopped. This is the only topic the party's 7-point program published for the EP elections touches upon. PM Orbán states that the current leaders of the EU do not want to even attempt to stop but rather encourage migration. The 7 points argue that the management of migration should not be in the hands of bureaucrats in Brussels but should be returned to national governments. It speaks out against obligations of member states to take migrants against their will and calls for not letting anyone into Europe without valid IDs and documents. The points call for ending the use of what it terms "migrant cards" and "migrant visas" and call on Brussels to stop giving money to Soros' organizations supporting immigration but rather to reimburse the costs of border protection. PM Orbán wants anti-immigration leaders to lead EU institutions.

All three Slovak EPP member parties also highlighted that the competencies of the asylum process belonged to member states. However, their attitudes differ regarding the Common European Asylum System, though all parties rejected the idea of the quota system. SMK rejected the idea of accepting hundreds of thousands of people from conflict areas and consider it to be a dangerous precedent. Instead, the party suggests resolving problems directly in conflict areas, mainly through development aid.<sup>24</sup> KDH sees mass immigration as a security risk and in its EP manifesto promotes the increasing of development aid, protection against illegal migration, better protection of the Schengen area and the return of illegal migrants to their home countries.<sup>25</sup> Most-Híd in their EP manifesto declared support for the Common European Asylum System of legal migration, however based on needs of member states, solidarity and willingness.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> "Most-Híd upozornil SNS na dodržiavanie zahraničnej politiky," SME.sk, 9 October 2018, <https://domov.sme.sk/c/20933089/most-hid-upozornil-sns-na-dodrziavanie-zahranicnej-politiky.html#ixzz5mfJXFkeS>

<sup>23</sup> „V. Maňka: Sankcie voči Rusku sú účinné," Teraz.sk, 16 December 2018, <https://www.teraz.sk/slovensko/v-manka-sankcie-voci-rusku-su-uci/367557-clanok.html>

<sup>24</sup> „Spoločná vôľa: Volebný program Strany maďarskej komunity," <https://drive.google.com/file/d/oB-uFWuo8PUjobUIzNDFjSHI4cUk/view>

<sup>25</sup> „Náš program pre Silné Slovensko v Európe - KDH," <http://kdh.sk/eurovolby-program>

<sup>26</sup> „Slovensko, Európa a svet budúcnosti: Programový dokument k aktuálnym otázkam EÚ - MOST-HÍD," <https://www.most-hid.sk/sites/most-hid.sk/files/downloadable-files/programovydokumentsk.pdf>



TOPo9-STAN emphasize the need for the further development of the European Border and Coast Guard to fight trafficking and call for information sharing among member states. According to the party, people legally coming to the EU need to be granted protection, but also must respect our legal norms and rules. Only people in need of asylum and people with legal residence permits should be admitted, the others should be returned to their countries of origin. Financial and humanitarian assistance should be provided to European countries which face the biggest influx of immigrants. The party also points to the importance of development assistance to solve problems in the countries from where the migrants come to Europe. KDU-ČSL also argues for tackling the issue in the countries of origin and for voluntary solidarity as opposed to a mandatory relocation scheme.

The Civic Platform and Polish People's Party government voted in favor of the temporary relocation mechanism for asylum seekers in 2015 and were of the opinion that this obligation should have been fulfilled. Nevertheless, while voting on the Sejm declaration condemning this legislative act in April 2016, PPP MPs mostly abstained from the vote. Civic Platform and Modern MPs voted against the declaration which called for not accepting asylum-seekers from the temporary mechanism.<sup>27</sup> As for the CEAS reform, all parties in the Sejm including Civic Platform and Modern were against a permanent relocation mechanism when voting in the Sejm.<sup>28</sup> However, some Civic Platform members supported it in the European Parliament, as they voted for the resolution "Making relocation happen" in May 2017.<sup>29</sup> Most Civic Platform members abstained from the vote. Democratic Left Alliance MEPs voted in favor of the resolution.

According to the ÖVP, the functioning protection of the external border is a prerequisite for open internal borders, declaring that Austria will protect its borders until the EU external border is secure. Frontex should be strengthened in terms of personnel and regarding its mandate. In order to better combat the reasons for migration on the spot, better coordination of development assistance both in Austria and Europe is needed. The party argues in favor of EU readmission agreements with third countries in exchange for development assistance or visa liberalization. ÖVP also stressed that Europe needs a plan for cooperation with Africa, created on an equal level.

## Budget

Following the publication of the Commission's budget proposal, Fidesz opposes the decrease of cohesion and agricultural funds in the 2021-2027 budgetary period, and lobbies for maintaining them in the framework of the "friends of cohesion" group. The party also favors allocating more funds for innovation and R&D. It claims that the Commission wants to increase the amount of available resources for the integration of migrants, which it opposes. Fidesz also opposes Hungary's accession to the European Public Prosecutor's Office and the introduction of any rule of law conditionality in the budget.

According to TOPo9-STAN, the main budget priorities are protection of the external border and internal security. Cohesion funds should be allocated for pro-growth infrastructure projects, environmental projects, education, research and innovation. The parties are in favor of linking EU funds to fiscal responsibility and

<sup>27</sup> „Głosowanie nr 126 na 15. posiedzeniu Sejmu - Sejm Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej,” <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm8.nsf/agent.xsp?symbol=glosowania&nrkadencji=8&nrposiedzenia=15&nrglosowania=126>

<sup>28</sup> „Głosowanie nr 213 na 31. posiedzeniu Sejmu - Sejm Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej,” <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm8.nsf/agent.xsp?symbol=glosowania&nrkadencji=8&nrposiedzenia=31&nrglosowania=213>

<sup>29</sup> „Making relocation happen - VoteWatch Europe,” <https://www.votewatch.eu/en/term8-making-relocation-happen-motion-for-resolution-vote-resolution.html>



the rule of law. TOP09-STAN argue against negative adjustments in cohesion policy beyond changes resulting from Brexit. CAP funds should preferably be allocated to small farmers and innovative technologies. The parties are for gradual capping of direct agricultural payments. KDU-ČSL similarly proposes to allocate the funds mainly for public projects as opposed to private businesses.

European Coalition<sup>30</sup> declares that it will fight for as high as possible contribution for Poland from the EU budget. It singles out a need to improve rail, road and telecommunication infrastructure in Poland. It wants to improve the position of Polish farmers when it comes to direct payments.

As for the Slovak EPP members, only Most-Híd and KDH came up with notions regarding the future financial framework of the EU. Most-Híd would like to balance both European and Slovak interests. The crucial areas of the new budget are considered to be security and protection of the EU's borders, education, mainly Erasmus+, the digital economy and innovation, cohesion policies and common agricultural policy<sup>31</sup> KDH mentioned as a priority the increasing of finance in the area of education and the Erasmus program.<sup>32</sup> However, its MEPs added several other areas such as support for the digital market, energy union, infrastructural projects, protection of borders. KDH opposes a proposal that decreases finance for the cohesion policy. The MEPs also supported increasing the overall budget to 1.14% of GDP.<sup>33</sup>

According to the ÖVP, among the EU budgetary priorities should be issues connected to migration, competitiveness, climate protection, research and innovation. CAP funds should support mainly smaller farmers. ÖVP is opposed to reducing funds allocated to Austria. Projects supported by regional funds must have a clear added value and should be strongly related to structural reforms for a more efficient usage of the funds.

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<sup>30</sup> The joint list of Civic Platform, Polish People's Party, Democratic Left Alliance, Modern and Greens in Poland.

<sup>31</sup> „Slovensko, Európa a svet budúcnosti – Programový dokument k aktuálnym otázkám EÚ – program Most – Híd,“ <https://www.most-hid.sk/sites/most-hid.sk/files/downloadable-files/programovydokumentsk.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> „Náš program pre Silné Slovensko v Európe – program KDH,“ <http://kdh.sk/eurovolby-program>

<sup>33</sup> „Rozpočet Únie dnes a zajtra: Aké zmeny v európskych financiách prináša návrh Komisie? – Euractiv.sk,“ <https://euractiv.sk/section/eu-crossroads/linksdossier/rozpocet-unie-dnes-a-zajtra-ake-zmeny-v-europskych-financiach-prinasa-navrh-komisie>



### 3. Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats

#### Eurozone

MSzP<sup>34</sup> supports Hungary's integration into the eurozone as it considers it - as well as the fulfillment of the convergence criteria - the country's obligation to deliver. It calls for joining the ERM II in 2020 and setting a euro-entry date as soon as possible, which however should come at a time that is beneficial for Hungarian people and businesses. MSzP also acknowledges the intention of deepening cooperation in the eurozone and wants to see it remain open towards those countries which are committed to Euro-integration but do not meet the criteria yet. The party wants to prevent the exclusion from an integrated system of anyone interested in common developments and for this reason it wants to see a flexible framework. DK<sup>35</sup> supports the introduction of the euro as soon as possible. It perceives the common currency as a stabilizing factor in the countries that have recently joined the eurozone and would expect similar positive effects in Hungary, as well. The party also backs strong European economic governance, supports the German-French proposal for "the establishment of a real banking and fiscal union", and would like Hungary to belong to core-Europe centered around those.

According to ČSSD's brief mention<sup>36</sup> of the issue in the manifesto, Czech Republic joining the eurozone is currently not a topic. The Czech Republic should wait until it is unequivocally beneficial for the Czech economy and there is a wide consensus about it in the society.

Neither Austrian nor Slovak social democrats offer specific views on the issue of the future of the eurozone. According to the SPÖ, the eurozone should be reformed in line with democratic and social values and towards full employment and fair wealth redistribution. For Smer-SD, only slightly outdated information is available. During the euro crisis, Smer-SD declared the necessity of the euro for Slovakia, and it rejected the idea of a return to the Slovak crown. The party leader claimed support for stricter rules regarding budgetary discipline for member states and automatic sanctions for their violation.<sup>37</sup> The Chairman of the party supported closer integration within the eurozone in 2017 and further claimed the interests of Slovakia to be in the core of these processes.<sup>38</sup>

#### Foreign, Security and Defense Policy

Feeling the protective umbrella of NATO to be shaken by President Trump, MSzP supports deeper European cooperation in the field of foreign, security and defense policy in order to make sure Europe can pursue its interests globally. The program also adds that the EU needs to cooperate in order to defend itself against cyber-attacks.

<sup>34</sup> Haza, Szeretet, Európa! – MSZP.hu," [https://mszp.hu/hir/haza.\\_szeretet.\\_europa\\_20190329](https://mszp.hu/hir/haza._szeretet._europa_20190329)

<sup>35</sup> "A DEMOKRATIKUS KOALÍCIÓ – program," [https://dkp.hu/uploads/docs/10/176/dk-ep-program-fuzet-web\\_1.pdf](https://dkp.hu/uploads/docs/10/176/dk-ep-program-fuzet-web_1.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> "ČSSD PRO FÉROVOU EVROPU – SEBEVĚDOMÉ PROSAZOVÁNÍ ČESKÝCH ZÁJMŮ – volební program ČSSD," <https://www.cssd.cz/data/files/volby-do-ep-argumentar-final.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> "Programove zameranie strany SMER-Socialna Demokracia na roky 2012-2016,"

<http://stwebsmer.strana-smer.sk/programove-zameranie-strany-smer-socialna-demokracia-na-roky-2012-2016>

<sup>38</sup> Fico: Eurozóna by sa mala ešte viac zomknúť, chceme patriť k jej jadru – SME Ekonomika,"

<https://ekonomika.sme.sk/c/20548943/fico-eurozona-by-sa-mala-este-viac-zomknut-chceme-patrit-k-jej-jadru.html>



DK supports a united European foreign policy that is value based and is more independent from member states' interests than it has so far been. It suggests the strengthening of police and intelligence cooperation and the establishment of an independent EU army. On top of traditional forces, it emphasizes the importance of developing common defenses against cyber-attacks. It also promotes joint steps to fight radicalization and social exclusion as the roots of terrorism. In this regard, it also seeks the development of a joint European plan for internet security, identification and punishment of terrorist content.

According to the ČSSD, Europe needs to take its security into its own hands. European defense cooperation must become more efficient, the European Defense Fund being a start to this. EU member states' military forces should cooperate more. The Czech Republic needs to increase its defense spending, especially by procuring arms from other EU states in order to achieve mutual interconnection.

Representatives of Smer-SD declared support for deepening cooperation in this area. The prime minister claimed Slovak interests to lie in belonging among the "most integrated countries" even if it means more burdens. He inclines to cooperation within PESCO.<sup>39</sup>

According to the SPÖ, the Common Foreign and Security Policy should be based on values and protect peace and stability. In the changing international environment, SPÖ advocates for multilateralism, mainly through the UN which needs to be reformed, and the OSCE. According to the party, the EU should promote disarmament, arms control and small arms containment, instead of supporting armament companies. The EU should be neutral in its foreign policy, as opposed to the "American model of interventionist policies".

Regarding relations between the EU and Russia, ČSSD representatives repeatedly claimed that Russia poses a threat to the EU<sup>40</sup> and expressed support for EU sanctions. DK considers Russia as an aggressor in relation to Ukraine and supports common European policies to push back against Russia's attempts to gain influence in Europe. It identifies Russia as a real foe of Europe and thus of Hungary. According to the SPÖ's manifesto, Russia pursues an imperial foreign policy and carries a great deal of responsibility for the conflict in Eastern Ukraine. MSzP, as part of a broader strategy to deal with the primary causes of migration to Europe, in its program calls for, amongst other things, the normalization of EU-Russia relations. The chairman of Smer-SD numerous times expressed his negative attitude regarding sanctions against Russia. He considered them non-sensical, ineffective and damaging to the Slovak economy.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, prime minister Pellegrini presented his skeptical opinion, and he explained the Slovak vote for prolongation of the sanctions as trying not to break the unity of the EU.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Pellegrini v europarlamente: Reakcia na vraždy bola znakom vyspelosti demokracie a občanov – Euractiv.sk," <https://euractiv.sk/section/buducnost-eu/news/pellegrini-v-europarlamente-reakcia-na-vrazdy-bola-znakom-vyspelosti-demokracie-a-obcanov>

<sup>40</sup> „Ministr Petříček: Rusko je i pro nás vážné bezpečnostní riziko, varování BIS je třeba brát vážně – Rádio Plus," <https://plus.rozhlas.cz/ministr-petricek-rusko-je-i-pro-nas-vazne-bezpecnostni-riziko-varovani-bis-je-7685841>, „Petříček v Kyjevě mluvil o ruské agresi. Ukrajinsko-české vztahy má řešit nové fórum – ČT 24 – Česká televize," <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/svet/2718203-petricek-v-kyjeve-mluvil-o-ruske-agresi-ukrajinsko-ceske-vztahy-ma-resit-nove-forum>, „Anexe Krymu je porušení mezinárodního práva, připomněl Hamáček v OSN – Lidovky.cz," [https://www.lidovky.cz/svet/anexe-krymu-je-poruseni-mezinarodniho-prava-pripomnel-hamacek-v-osn.A180929\\_221019\\_ln\\_zahranici\\_krku](https://www.lidovky.cz/svet/anexe-krymu-je-poruseni-mezinarodniho-prava-pripomnel-hamacek-v-osn.A180929_221019_ln_zahranici_krku)

<sup>41</sup> „Sankcie voči Rusku sú nezmyselné a nefungujú, povedal Fico na summite Únie – TA3," <https://www.ta3.com/clanok/1093001/sankcie-voci-rusku-su-nezmyselne-a-nefunguju-povedal-fico-na-summite-unie.html>

<sup>42</sup> „Pellegrini: Máme svoj rezervovaný postoj, no sankcie proti Rusku podporíme – Trend.sk," <https://www.etrend.sk/ekonomika/pellegrini-mame-svoj-rezervovany-postoj-no-sankcie-proti-rusku-podporime.html>



## Migration

Like its coalition partner ANO (see below), ČSSD takes pride in standing up against the relocation scheme. According to the party, every country has the right to decide who lives and works in its territory and the Czech Republic should show solidarity by helping people in their own countries. The Social Democrats refuse illegal and uncontrolled migration on economic grounds claiming it can negatively affect the economic, security and social situation in the Czech Republic and Europe. For ČSSD, protection of the EU external border is crucial, and the Czech Republic needs to actively participate in it. There should also be cooperation between security forces across the Union.

Smer-SD has rejected the migration quotas suggested by the European Commission, and it belongs among the fiercest opponents of the idea. The party also dismissed ideas to connect solidarity regarding immigrants with finance from European funds.<sup>43</sup>

According to MSZP, the Dublin system in its current form is not sustainable and there is a need for a new asylum system in the EU based on solidarity as well as regard for differences among member states. The party wants to make the protection of the EU's external borders a European issue and wants Frontex to be strengthened to support the national units, however, it would also require national approval for Frontex to be allowed to operate along a given country's border. The program also speaks up against illegal migration. It calls for the development of a strategy based on a common European toolkit that addresses the primary causes of the refugee crisis as well as the fight against terrorism, the effects of climate change, energy security and the security situation in the neighborhoods.

In order to guarantee the prerequisites of free movement within the Schengen zone, DK supports a common European border protection system where the European Border and Coast Guard Agency can effectively support all member states if they face too much pressure on their borders. To address the needs of those countries which have to deal with a high number of asylum seekers, DK suggests the establishment of common asylum and refugee regulations and an EU Asylum Agency.

SPÖ is strongly in favor of a common European solution regarding migration and asylum. According to the party, costs should be shared among all EU member states and the procedures for asylum applicants should be standardized with minimum standards guaranteed. SPÖ is also in support of increased efforts in negotiations with other countries regarding readmission agreements, together with work visa arrangements for cooperating countries. SPÖ proposes that the Dublin III regulation be applied in the future, taking into consideration the economic level and job market of particular EU member states. They would also like a European Solidarity Fund to be established for support of cities and municipalities that accept asylum seekers. SPÖ proposes a common European humanitarian visa for people seeking protection. The manifesto mentions the importance of safe routes for people seeking protection, e.g. establishing European sea emergency rescue, and centers on the external border of the EU where the asylum applications would be administered with asylum seekers distributed to EU member states according to a set quota system. Last but not least, SPÖ mentions the need to contribute to peace in the problematic territories by prohibiting arms exports to the conflict regions, efficient measures regarding climate change and setting up an investment plan for Africa.

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<sup>43</sup> „Nás nič nezlomí. Fico poslal před rokováním o migrácii tvrdý odkaz – HN Slovensko,“ <https://slovensko.hnonline.sk/1770693-nas-nic-nezlomi-fico-poslal-pred-rokovanim-o-migracii-tvrdy-odkaz>



## Budget

MSzP believes that the current size of the budget is not enough to finance the EU's common goals and suggests increasing member states' contributions to 1.3 % of the GNI. As for new resources, the party would use income from the emission trading system and a new type of corporate tax targeting the digital sector. In light of a thus increased budget, MSzP refuses the decrease of cohesion, agricultural and rural funds to Hungary and is against supporting the net contributors, which it believes would decrease the chances of cohesion in the EU. It advocates for a social Europe and a real increase in funds available for social investments, like the European Social Fund +, beyond the prospective merger of other tools into it. It wants to maintain and broaden the Juncker Package with tools available for the lower, regional levels. It argues for more funds for the youth through expanding Erasmus+, maintaining and broadening the Youth Guarantee Program and supporting social housing. It also supports the creation of a European unemployment fund. Citing serious misuse of EU funds in Hungary, MSzP suggests that EU funds should be accessible more directly without the state as an intermediary. The party also argues for Hungary joining EPPO and supports stricter monitoring for the use of EU funds.

DK also campaigns for a social Europe and calls for the introduction of a European family support scheme, a minimum wage and pensions financed or supported from the European Social Fund. To generate more funds and finance the above new initiatives, the party calls for a European multi-tax as a direct source for the EU budget. It also calls for allocating more funds for health care, social housing and the creation of a fund to support the cohesion of wages across the EU as well as the introduction of a European unemployment benefit. It would maintain the youth guarantee program and wants EU funds to be allocated for the development of a knowledge-based society. DK still considers enhancing cohesion a central goal of the EU and wants the EU to consider its least developed regions as special economic zones and implement direct, targeted investment programs there. Referring to the abuse of EU funds and political corruption, the party calls for Hungary to join EPPO.

The leader of the ČSSD lead candidate Pavel Poc<sup>44</sup> refused the linking of EU funds with the rule of law in a given member state and argued for increasing the co-financing by the EU of projects in less developed regions. Among other things, European funds should, according to the ČSSD, be used for investments to medical facilities.

As for Smer-DS, the Slovak prime minister claims as one of the priorities of his party effective and flexible cohesion and agriculture policies and he declared readiness of Slovakia to increase its contribution to the EU budget. He also rejected ideas to link contributions from the EU budget with the concept of the rule of law.<sup>45</sup>

SPÖ argues that instead of focusing mostly on deficits and debts, the EU's budgeting (so called European semester) should pay more attention to issues like public investments, asset distribution, household income, balance, the gender pay gap, unemployment etc. and should be in line with the UN development goals. The European Parliament should have the same say in adopting the budget as the Council.

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<sup>44</sup> P. Poc: peníze pro regiony – Česká strana sociálně demokratická,"

<https://www.cssd.cz/aktualne/aktuality/p-poc-penize-pro-regiony>

<sup>45</sup> "Slovensko je podľa Pellegriniho pripravené zvýšiť príspevok do EÚ – Trend.sk,"

<https://www.etrend.sk/ekonomika/slovensko-je-podla-pellegriniho-pripravene-zvysit-prispevok-do-eu.html> and <https://www.finreport.sk/agenturne-spravy/premier-pellegrini-ocakava-menej-penazi-z-rozpoctu-eu-slovensko-je-ochotne-navysit-prispevok>



## 4. European Conservatives and Reformists Group

### Eurozone

Law and Justice is against introduction of the euro in Poland before Poland reaches the level of economic development of Western Europe, most importantly of Germany. Jarosław Kaczyński even asked opposition leaders Schetyna and Kukiz to sign a declaration to this effect. According to the ODS,<sup>46</sup> the Czech Republic should not join the eurozone until its structural problems are resolved. The party repeatedly stressed that the Czech Republic needs to be able to freely decide if and when it wants to accept the single currency.

SaS rejects the idea of the European Stabilization Mechanism and a system of transferring the debts of irresponsible countries to the responsible ones who follow fiscal rules and considers it a violation of the Lisbon Treaty. The party advocates for automatic sanctions following violations of fiscal/debt rules e.g. by temporary loss of voting rights in the European Parliament and the EU Council as well as freezing of finance transfers from the EU's budget. The highest sanction would be expulsion from the eurozone. SaS supports membership of Slovakia in the eurozone as the costs for its leaving would be huge.

### Foreign, Security and Defense Policy

Law and Justice is not in favor of deepening of foreign policy coordination. It would not support qualified majority voting on foreign policy issues. Similarly, it does not call for further deepening of defense cooperation as it is concerned that such a step would undermine the role of NATO in European security. ODS is also against qualified majority voting on foreign policy issues. According to the party, attempts at building a common European defense unnecessarily complicate our security and we should focus more on cooperating within NATO.

The Law and Justice government signed Poland up to PESCO, after some hesitation. It did so after declaring three expectations: 1) PESCO would complement NATO and enhance its capabilities. 2) PESCO would apply a 360 degrees approach to security issues in the EU's neighborhood; i.e. it would not limit itself to the southern neighborhood. 3) A balanced approach to defense industry development would apply, so that the Polish defense industry may play a significant role in PESCO projects development.<sup>47</sup>

SaS supports PESCO and closer cooperation of European armies that should play useful roles in the protection of migrant camps outside the EU territory. However, similarly to PiS and ODS, the party considers NATO as the central pillar of European security. Richard Sulík, leader of the party, criticized sanctions against Russia in the previous year. As he claimed, the party initially supported the sanctions, but it does not see their sense now. He also accuses some European countries of hypocrisy as they still cooperate with Russia in strategic projects (such as Nord Stream II) despite sanctions.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> "Na evropské unii nám záleží. Co chceme a co budeme prosazovat – ODS,"

<https://www.ods.cz/volby2019>

<sup>47</sup> "Polska włącza się w politykę obronną UE, przedstawia warunki. Portal tvp.info dotarł do dokumentu – TVP Info," <https://www.tvp.info/34795784/polska-wlacza-sie-w-polityke-obronna-ue-przedstawia-warunki-portal-tvpinfo-dotarl-do-dokumentu>

<sup>48</sup> „Sulík: Smer a SNS si kupujú hlasy za peniaze nás všetkých,” Pravda.sk, 10 June 2018,

<https://m.pravda.sk/flog.pravda.sk#!a=472748>, Richard Sulik, „VELKÍ EURÓPANIA: SANKCIE PRE NÁS NEPLATIA,” Facebook, 27 April 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/RichardSulik/posts/1350737545005970>



## Migration

Law and Justice is against the reform of the CEAS. It is fundamentally against the permanent relocation scheme for refugees. In Law and Justice ideology, Poland is constituted by the Polish nation which must be ethnically and religiously homogeneous. Multiculturalism is a false idea which has only brought decline and decadence to Western Europe. In its European Declaration, Law and Justice singles out better control of EU borders and the fight against illegal immigration as its priorities.<sup>49</sup>

Similarly, among its priorities regarding migration, ODS lists strengthening the external border, cooperation of intelligence services to prevent illegal migration and terrorism, financial help to states on the EU external border and coordination of cross border activities of security services. ODS also does not support CEAS, e.g. the refugee relocation scheme.

SaS rejects any reforms of the Dublin migration system that would include a system of mandatory quotas. Decisions about asylum must stay as an exclusive competence of member states. If an asylum application is rejected in one of the member states, it needs to be automatically rejected in all EU countries. On the other hand, the party would support EU hotspots/camps for migrants outside EU territory, where it would be possible to ask for asylum in any EU country. Asylum seekers would stay in these camps until the final decision. Such camps should be situated in North Africa.

## Budget

PiS underlines the need to support poorer (Eastern) parts of Poland from EU funds. It pays attention also to the Via Carpatia road, which - according to the Law and Justice - should be paid for from EU sources.<sup>50</sup> The party is in favor of the leveling of direct payments for farmers in the EU. According to ODS, EU funds should be allocated for big projects focused on transportation, energy, telecommunications and the development of new technologies. SaS welcomes the gradual cancellation of the system of correction in the new financial framework. But it disagrees with increasing of own sources of the EU budget. SaS suggests setting up an EU budget only from the contributions of the member states. The resources from the budget should be exclusively used for the infrastructural projects with European significance in the areas of transport, energy and digitalization, for the protection of external borders as well as areas that develop the four basic freedoms of the EU citizens.

<sup>49</sup> "Dla nas europejskość to lepsze życie Polaków – PiS Prawo i Sprawiedliwość," <http://pis.org.pl/aktualnosci/dla-nas-europejskosc-to-lepsze-zycie-polakow>

<sup>50</sup> Via Carpatia is an infrastructural project of highway connection between Klaipeda in Lithuania and Thessaloniki in Greece.



## 5. Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe

### Eurozone

According to ANO,<sup>51</sup> the Czech Republic will not join the eurozone anytime soon. The eurozone needs to be reformed. Further attention should be paid to overseeing if countries fulfill the Maastricht Criteria. Furthermore, the level of alignment of the Czech and eurozone economies needs to be considered, as well as its long-term sustainability and ability to react flexibly. The party claims that the Czech Republic needs to take an active part in the negotiations about eurozone reform and promote the fiscal responsibility of its members and solutions for the situation of one or more members not being capable of fulfilling their commitments, thus destabilizing the eurozone as a whole.

Momentum's program<sup>52</sup> is clearly in favor of Hungary introducing the common currency, which it regards as an asset guaranteeing the unity of the EU's economy, increasing its attractiveness for investment and facilitating the everyday functioning of European enterprises and the lives of its people. The party calls for the clear declaration of Hungary's intent to join the eurozone, and thus the core-EU, at the earliest date possible following the necessary preparations. The party also favors deepening economic and fiscal cooperation. It calls for integrating the European Stability Mechanism into the Treaty, supports the introduction of eurobonds, and the establishment of the third pillar of the Banking Union, the European Deposit Insurance Scheme. The party supports strong supervisory mechanisms over member states' budgetary paths. The program discussed these points under the headline "welfare Europe" suggesting that the deepening of fiscal cooperation is the means Momentum sees to this end.

PS/Together support the realization of banking and capital market union that would protect the eurozone against future crises and effective following of financial and budgetary rules for member states. The A parties support further mechanisms of integration including the creation of a position of European minister of finance and economy, a European customs and tax office, a European budget council that would oversee the finances of member states and European unemployment insurance.

According to NEOS, the ESM should be transformed into a fully-fledged European Monetary Fund to ensure stability of the eurozone and help countries in crises. That should among other things lead to a depoliticization of this process. The party proposes an insolvency mechanism for countries in crisis. The ECB should retain its role as a watchdog for stability of the currency and stop financing states. NEOS are critical of a common European deposit insurance but in favor of harmonization, adjusted according to each state's buying power.

### Foreign, Security and Defense Policy

ANO believes that the EU needs to take its security into its own hands, especially given the rhetoric of the US president. The party is in favor of a "more efficient" Common Foreign and Security Policy. Security forces of the member states must cooperate in order to counter terrorism, including information exchange. ANO does

<sup>51</sup> "Česko ochráníme. Tvrdě a nekompromisně: Program hnutí ANO pro volby do Evropského parlamentu," <https://www.anobudelip.cz/file/edee/ke-stazeni/ano-cesko-ochranime.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> "Ne adjuk a jövönket Momentum EP Program 2019 - Momentum + Európa = Jövö," <https://momentum.hu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Ne-adjuk-a-j%C3%B6v%C5%91nket-Momentum-EP-Program.pdf>



not mention Russia in its election manifesto, they have however supported related sanctions.<sup>53</sup>

Momentum supports the establishment of a permanent European army that could be used both for defensive purposes and also outside of the EU, primarily in peacekeeping, complementing NATO. A part of national armies could be united under multinational units to act outside of the EU or in NATO missions for self-defense purposes. The party also supports the development of the European defense industry to serve European needs and ensure competitiveness with American companies. Beyond defense, Momentum also supports the deepening of intelligence and counter-intelligence cooperation on a bilateral and multilateral basis, whilst not seeing EU-wide cooperation as realistic at this point.

Program points concerning security and defense mention Russia as a threat to the EU's security multiple times, and in one point, Momentum explicitly calls for stepping up the response to the Russian attack. Moscow is considered to pose a hybrid threat to the EU for which reason the Union needs to ensure the protection of its borders, its cyberspace and itself against spying and disinformation. In these fields, especially to counter Russian activities, the program calls for stronger European cooperation. The sanctions imposed in reaction to Russia's aggression in Ukraine are not discussed, but the program clearly portrays Russia as the aggressor and being at war with Ukraine.

PS/Together declared their support for further deepening of cooperation in the foreign policy and security area. As they claim, it is in the interests of Slovakia. In the security area parties support joint military headquarters, increasing of defense expenditures, joint investments into military technologies and they would welcome defense expenditures as a part of the EU budget. They also want other instruments such as the Vice-president of the European Commission to fight against hybrid threats, the European center of cybersecurity as well as the EU's information service. In foreign policy, PS/ Together want a stronger voice for the EU in global structures and a seat for the EU at the UN security council. The parties did not make a statement regarding sanctions against Russia in their manifesto. However, from the declarations of candidates to the EP it is clear that they support them. For instance, one of the candidates claimed that the questioning of sanctions by some Slovak politicians means the undermining of (pro-Western) Slovak foreign policy orientation.<sup>54</sup>

NEOS are in favor of QMV in both CFSP and CSDP. The party supports sanctions against Russia unless there are substantive steps by Russia towards securing peace in Ukraine. EU member states should invest in media literacy of European citizens to be able to face Russian propaganda. NEOS advocate for further integration in the areas of security and defense, including a European army which should be created in the long-term. PESCO should be expanded and focus on projects with a European added value. The party is in favor of common procurements and division of tasks among member states. Military mobility, national regulations for movement of military equipment and personnel must be simplified and harmonized. Research and development should be coordinated at the European level. Intelligence services must cooperate and there should be a new intelligence service at the EU level, responsible to the EP.

<sup>53</sup> "Babiš může v Bruselu jednat o přísnějších sankcích proti Rusku, schválila vláda – Denník N," <https://denikn.cz/36718/babis-muze-v-bruselu-jednat-o-prisnejsich-sankcich-proti-rusku-schvalila-vlada/?ref=tit1>

<sup>54</sup> "Minúta po minúte – Denník N," <https://dennikn.sk/minuta/1255587>



## Migration

According to ANO, ensuring controls at the external border of the EU is one of the key tasks for the EU, using the European Border and Coast Guard, which should prevent future migration crises and tackle the momentous migration pressure. Each member state should have the right to decide who lives and works on its territory. ANO believes that Schengen needs to be protected at all costs and supports including all the continental EU member states to Schengen. The party is clearly against the refugee relocation scheme and takes pride in achieving its rejection at the EU level. ANO is in support of changing the Common European Asylum System, preventing it from being misused for illegal migration and focusing on the people in need of international protection. ANO suggests establishing admission centers at the external border of the EU where the asylum procedures would be administered. ANO emphasizes the need to improve the situation of refugees in the countries of origin and proposes directing the focus of development programs towards countries affected by conflicts. Development programs should be interconnected with the readmission policy.

PS/Together support keeping the decision about granting of asylum to member states. However, they are supporting closer cooperation in several areas, among them increasing finance for the protection of the EU's external borders as well as for Frontex. They also want effective and fair reform of the Dublin system and closer cooperation of the EU regarding the Common European Asylum System.

Momentum's approach to migration seeks a common European understanding and is centered on protecting Hungary and the other member states, guaranteeing the fundamental human rights of asylum-seekers and cooperating on a European level in as many aspects as possible. These would include developing Frontex into the sole provider of common external border control, sharing the burden of people granted asylum through a quota-trading system (modeled on the Kyoto climate quota system) and the stabilization of neighboring regions. Momentum supports effective assistance to areas where most migrants come from.

NEOS advocate for creating a common European asylum system in line with already existing Commission proposals as soon as possible, with a coalition of the "decisive" states, including Austria, to implement it. The party also supports strengthening the member states' participation in the voluntary resettlement programs in cooperation with the UNHCR. An EU asylum authority, responsible for administering the asylum applications, should be established. There should be admission centers at the external borders, dealing with applicants on the spot (asylum procedures, readmissions). Asylum seekers would be distributed among member states on a voluntary basis with a mandatory scheme being employed in the case of high numbers of people coming. In the case of a state's refusal to take part in it, monetary sanctions or expulsion from the Schengen area would follow. Frontex should be strengthened. According to NEOS, an efficient system for labor migration to the EU is needed.

## Budget

ANO advocates for principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. They believe that funds should be allocated for security, protection of the EU border, the fight against illegal immigration, terrorism, radical Islamism and effective defense against cyber-attacks. Sufficient funds should also be allocated for regional and agricultural policies. ANO refuses CAP and cohesion funds being reduced. Instead of the resources from the European Social Fund, ANO prefers investments into traffic infrastructure, schools, hospitals and culture. According to the party, member states should determine the areas where the money goes.



Momentum supports a common budgetary policy and the establishment of the position of a European finance minister supervising an increasing number of areas. In terms of the focus of the budget, it would invest more into youth by increasing the Erasmus budget. It would also increase funding for innovation and new technologies through Horizon Europe (to 100 billion EUR) and for R&D (to 30 billion EUR). The party wants to maintain the total amount of EU funds allocated for Hungary during the next MFF. Momentum advocates for Hungary's accession to EPPO and calls for the organization to monitor the use of EU funds in member states.

PS/Together support a share of the EU budget based on the Union GDP as well as the principle of solidarity. Among the PS/Together's priorities belong common defense, protection of borders, climate change and areas significant for countries' development such as science and education, infrastructure and adaptability to new economic challenges. To increase income, the coalition is willing to support an environmental tax as well as a digital tax.

Neos argue that together with the budgetary process of the MFF, EU competencies must also be adjusted to ensure maximum efficiency. The EU should be financed by its own taxes instead of by member states' contributions. Europe-wide harmonized tax levies should go directly into the EU budget. These should be administered by an EU finance minister. According to NEOS, money for the CAP should be reduced and focus more on water protection, protection of biodiversity etc. Cohesion funds should focus on less developed regions and cross border regions.



## 6. Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left<sup>55</sup>

According to the KSČM,<sup>56</sup> the Czech Republic should join the eurozone only on the basis of a referendum, although the party is opposed to the idea.

KSČM believes that the transatlantic policies have been aggressive and need to be replaced by economic cooperation including the entire Europe, Eurasia and the whole world. The misconception of Russia as an enemy needs to be refuted and replaced with the notion of Russia as a partner and a fellow guarantor of peace and security. The party claims that instead of “threats and sanctions”, we need to build a dialogue with Russia. It also proposes reconceptualizing the Eastern Partnership in a spirit of cooperation between Russia and the six EaP countries.

KSČM refuses increased defense spending and European defense cooperation. European defense architecture needs to include non-EU and non-NATO states and should be based on OSCE cooperation.

Regarding migration, KSČM is against the quota system. What KSČM believes the EU needs is a working protection of EU external borders and efficient asylum policies on the national level. The EU needs to help developing countries to prevent immigration to Europe. Cooperation in security sectors across the EU needs to be further developed and established also with non-member states. The party emphasizes that asylum and migration policy cannot lead to economic and social damage in the accepting country.

According to the KSČM, Czech institutions need a simpler method of administering EU funds. Funds should be invested in building apartments instead of soft projects. Social and cohesion funds need to be increased. The new budget should focus on security, border protection, sustainable development and infrastructure.

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<sup>55</sup> From the list of political parties analyzed in this paper, only the Czech Communist party (KSČM) is a member of GUE-NGL. The following chapter is thus not divided into subchapters as it would lead to an unnecessary fragmentation of the text.

<sup>56</sup> “Volební program KSČM k volbám do EP v roce 2019 – KSČM,” <https://www.kscm.cz/cs/nase-strana/program/volebni-program-kscm-k-volbam-do-ep-v-roce-2019>



## 7. Group of the Greens/ European Free Alliance

### Eurozone

LMP<sup>57</sup> considers that the eurozone currently does not meet the basic criteria of an ideal currency union. Due to the significant economic and social inequalities within and the different economic cycles of its members, the euro does not support the integration of the periphery and does not mean automatic stability either, according to the party. In this light, LMP believes that Hungary should not join the eurozone as long as it has not reached the average of the eurozone's member states in terms of economic development.

Austrian Greens are in favor of establishing a financial transaction tax to avoid speculations. They suggest multiple measures to ensure stronger bank supervision and regulation of the finance sector. The bank union must be amended by deposit insurance. The Stability and Growth Pact should be newly formulated and amended in line with social, economic and environmental goals. According to the Greens, long-term social and environmental investments should not fall under the restrictive regulations of the European Stability and Growth Pact, so that debt reduction “does not happen at the expense of the future”. The party proposes a newly defined Growth and Stability Pact and a new Sustainability and Welfare Pact

#### 6.2 Foreign, Security and Defense Policy

To preserve Europe's influence in world politics, LMP believes that a united foreign and security policy is necessary. It also supports attempts at striving for a common defense policy. Beyond these, the program contains no further details. LMP, however, has been against lifting the sanctions on Russia and talks about Russia's aggression towards Ukraine.<sup>58</sup> According to the Austrian Greens, the EU should invest more in conflict prevention, mediation, peace building and peace keeping. Emphasis is put on the EU as a peace project.

### Migration

LMP calls for the development of a long-term European strategy to deal with the challenges of migration. It supports joint border controls and common initiatives against illegal migration and human trafficking, as well as cooperation with transit countries in fighting illegal migration, especially in the Balkans. The party calls for leaving immigration policy in member states' competence. The program argues that the biggest help for those escaping war and other dangerous situations is creating the conditions for their safe return, but in the transitory time the party calls for their humane treatment. LMP also calls for effective steps against climate change as it fears a potential new migration crisis due to the increasing number of climate refugees.

Austrian Greens call for responsible and humane migration policies and believe that Europe needs immigration. According to the party, an update to the Dublin system is needed. The party emphasizes external border control. Asylum seekers should be fairly divided among member states. The party advocates for common European norms for migration and work mobility.

<sup>57</sup> “A Lehet Más a Politika európai parlamenti választási programja – 2019 - Lehet Más a Politika (LMP),” <https://lehetmas.hu/a-zold-europa-programja>

<sup>58</sup> LMP: az Oroszország elleni szankcióknak maradnia kell - Lehet Más a Politika (LMP),” <https://lehetmas.hu/sajto/lmp-az-oroszorszag-elleni-szankcioknak-maradnia-kell>.



## Budget

LMP would expand the EU's competencies in taxation and would introduce a new Financial Transaction Tax that would contribute to the base of common EU funds. LMP would reform the administration of EU funds and would strengthen the role of the local administrative level as opposed to the central state level. It calls for the supervision of the use of EU funds by EPPO, which it wants Hungary to join. LMP's program also calls for a just and social Europe, the creation of a European social minimum standards and support for housing via EU funds. It calls for supporting SMEs with EU resources. According to the Greens, the EU budget should be increased by its own resources, i.e. e.g. environmental taxation. 50 % of the EU budget should be allocated for climate action and environmental protection. They emphasize gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting.



## 8. Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy<sup>59</sup>

Confederation<sup>60</sup> is against introduction of the euro in Poland but in favor of a referendum on that issue. The coalition also believes that there is no need for further integration in foreign and security policies. Confederation is against any agreement on Asylum and Migration Policy on the European level. Party members want to stop even any labor immigration to Poland from Ukraine.

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<sup>59</sup> From the list of political parties analyzed in this paper, only the Polish KORWiN party is a member of EFDD. The following chapter, devoted to the common list running under the title “Confederation”, is thus not divided into subchapters as it would lead to an unnecessary fragmentation of the text.

<sup>60</sup> Confederation (Konfederacja) is a joint list of KORWiN, National Movement and two other minor subjects in Poland.



## 9. Europe of Nations and Freedom Group

### Eurozone

Given the SPD's<sup>61</sup> overall position demanding a renegotiation of Czech membership, followed by a referendum about leaving the EU, it is not surprising that the party is strongly against the Czech Republic joining the Eurozone.

FPÖ<sup>62</sup> is against any further integration measures and opposes creating a position of "eurozone minister of finance". It is also against any role for the EU in taxation issues.

We are family accepts the euro as currency and the advantages that it provides to citizens. At the same time, the party noted that the policy of the ECB is not always in line with "common sense." The party would prefer more freedoms to national central banks in member countries.<sup>63</sup>

### Foreign, Security and Defense Policy

SPD is opposed to any further EU cooperation in foreign, defense and security policy. The party is against sanctions against Russia.<sup>64</sup>

FPÖ is against qualified majority voting in CFSP. The party is in favor of EU cooperation in Security and Defense policy e.g. for protecting the external border but opposes the idea of a European Army, especially if it should serve in offensive conflicts. The party emphasizes Austria's neutrality. Although the party has criticized sanctions against Russia, they did not attempt to veto them at the EU level.<sup>65</sup>

We are family did not present ideas regarding future cooperation in the foreign policy or security area. Nevertheless, their election manifesto from 2016 mentioned an interest in joint protection of the EU's borders and the Schengen area as well as closer cooperation between Slovak embassies and EU delegations abroad.<sup>66</sup> Party leaders declared a negative opinion towards anti-Russian sanctions. The leader of the party list in the EP elections reasoned this negative attitude by several factors. He claimed that sanctions mean economic costs for Slovakia, he criticized Germany for avoiding sanctions and stressed that the EU did not achieve anything by them.<sup>67</sup>

### Migration

<sup>61</sup> "Volíme SPD do EP – volební program – SPD," [https://volimespddoep.cz/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/EU\\_program.pdf](https://volimespddoep.cz/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/EU_program.pdf)

<sup>62</sup> "Mehr Österreich, weniger EU – FPÖ," <https://www.fpoe.eu/mehr-oesterreich-weniger-eu>

<sup>63</sup> "Pčolinský: Anexia Krymu? Vnútorná záležitosť dvoch krajín mimo Únie – Euractiv.sk," <https://euractiv.sk/section/buducnost-eu/interview/pcolinsky-anexia-krymu-vnutorna-zalezitost-dvoch-krajin-mimo-unie>

<sup>64</sup> Tomio Okamura – SPD, Facebook, 12 May 2015,

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/prosazuji-zru%C5%A1en%C3%AD-sankc%C3%AD-proti-rusku-v-sou%C4%8Dasnosti-neexistuje-pro-%C4%8Dr-jedin%C3%BD-raci/1006225479388267>

<sup>65</sup> "Strache: "Kein Veto gegen Russland-Sanktionen – OÖNachrichten,"

<https://www.nachrichten.at/politik/innenpolitik/Strache-Kein-Veto-gegen-Russland-Sanktionen;art385,2918130>

<sup>66</sup> "P R O G R A M SME RODINA – Boris Kollár 2016 - SME RODINA," <https://hnutie-smerodina.sk/Program-Hnutia-Sme-Rodina.pdf>

<sup>67</sup> "Pčolinský: Anexia Krymu? Vnútorná záležitosť dvoch krajín mimo Únie – Euractiv.sk," <https://euractiv.sk/section/buducnost-eu/interview/pcolinsky-anexia-krymu-vnutorna-zalezitost-dvoch-krajin-mimo-unie>



SPD, FPÖ and We are family believe that migration issues should be exclusively in the hands of national states and are against the refugee relocation scheme. All of them argue for a secure external border and claim that immigration poses a security risk. They also point to the danger of political Islam and see migration from Muslim countries as a cultural threat.

## **Budget**

SPD would like to abolish the system of EU funds in general. In any case, member states should be able to use the funds according to their preferences.

While We are family did not publish its view on the future financial framework, the party disagrees with the proposal to cut the budget for the Common agricultural policy.<sup>68</sup>

On the contrary, FPÖ believes that given Brexit, the EU budget should be reduced. Austria's contribution to the budget should not increase. The party argues for reductions in CAP and cohesion funds.

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<sup>68</sup> "Hnutie SME RODINA – Boris Kollár rokuje so zahraničnými partnermi o Spoločnej poľnohospodárskej politike – SME RODINA Borris Kollár," <https://hnutie-smerodina.sk/aktuality/hnutie-sme-rodina-boris-kollar-rokuje-zahranicnymi-partnermi-o-spolocnej-polnohospodarskej-politike>



## 10. Non-affiliated

### Eurozone

According to the Pirate Party, the euro is crucial for European economic stability. Joining the eurozone would be beneficial for Czech businesses, foreign investments etc. However, adjustments on the side of both the Eurozone and the Czech Republic must be made before the Czech Republic can replace the Czech crown with the euro. Structural problems of the eurozone need to be solved.

According to Spring,<sup>69</sup> introduction of the euro in Poland is inevitable. Poland must be part of the integration core.<sup>70</sup> However, as Robert Biedron, the leader of Spring pointed out, nobody can push the issue through now, as an amendment of the Polish constitution is necessary.<sup>71</sup>

Speaking in general terms, not specifically about Hungary, Jobbik's program<sup>72</sup> argues that the euro can only be introduced if the huge differences among member states disappear. It cites Greece as an example that shows the consequences of fast and unprepared integration into the eurozone. The program does not talk about the future development of the eurozone.

Kukiz'15 is against introduction of the euro in Poland. Kukiz15 proposed a declaration in the Polish Sejm confirming the Polish zloty as the Polish currency already in 2018. Kukiz promised to sign Jarosław Kaczyński's appeal on the euro.

OLaNO<sup>73</sup> supports Slovakia's membership in the eurozone, but it considers it necessary to make significant reform, otherwise the euro would not survive the next crisis. Among these reforms are higher financial discipline of member states, stricter budget rules that will be overseen by independent budget councils on national and European levels, common saving instruments serving only in case of temporary financial issues, not for saving irresponsible countries, mechanisms of state's bankruptcy proceedings, and closer cooperation within bank and capital unions.

LSNS does not support Slovakia's membership in the eurozone. It mentioned an ambition to restore the Slovak crown in its election manifesto in 2016.<sup>74</sup> SNS did not make a statement about further integration within the eurozone. However, in the Poprad memorandum, it requires sanctions against all countries that violate financial rules and the cancellation of financial help to countries that manipulate their statistics before joining the eurozone.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>69</sup> "EUROPA DLA CIEBIE – Europejski Program Wiosny,"

[https://wiosnabiedronia.pl/public/upload/media\\_files/Europa-dla-Ciebie.pdf](https://wiosnabiedronia.pl/public/upload/media_files/Europa-dla-Ciebie.pdf)

<sup>70</sup> „Krzysztof Śmiszek: Wiosna w wyborach do PE liczy na 15-20 procent – Onet WIADOMOŚCI,”

<https://wiadomosci.onet.pl/kraj/krzysztof-smiszek-wiosna-w-wyborach-do-pe-liczy-na-15-20-procent/onxpq4r>

<sup>71</sup> Biedroń: Nikt nie jest dziś w stanie przeforsować wprowadzenia euro w Polsce – GAZETA PRAWNA. PL,” <https://www.gazetaprawna.pl/artykuly/1408148,biedron-nikt-nie-jest-dzis-w-stanie-przeforsowac-wprowadzenia-euro-w-polsce.html>

<sup>72</sup> „BIZTONSÁGOS EURÓPÁT, SZABAD MAGYROROSZÁGOT! – EP VÁLASZTÁSI PROGRAM, 2019 - Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom,” <https://www.jobbik.hu/biztonsagos-europat-szabad-magyarorszagot-ep-valasztasi-program-2019>

<sup>73</sup> „Program hnutia Obyčajní ľudia a nezávislé osobnosti do volieb do Európskeho parlamentu - Obyčajní ľudia a nezávislé osobnosti,” <http://www.obycajniludia.sk/volby-do-ep-2019/program>

<sup>74</sup> 10 BODOV ZA NAŠE SLOVENSKO! Volebný program politickej strany KOTLEBA - LUDOVÁ STRANA NAŠE SLOVENSKO,” <http://www.naseslovensko.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Volebn%C3%BD-program-2016.pdf>

<sup>75</sup> „Žiadosti slovenských vlastnecov Bruselu – Popradské memorandum – Slovenská národná strana,” <https://www.sns.sk/dokumenty/popradske-memorendum>



## Foreign, Security and Defense Policy

The Pirate Party's program has been rather vague regarding questions of foreign, security and defense policy. The party argues for strengthening external EU borders and common defense policy. It also mentions cybersecurity as one of the key contemporary security challenges.

Spring is strongly in favor of European defense cooperation, supporting PESCO, EII, European Defense Fund, common European procurement of military equipment and common European standards of military equipment. The party specifically speaks about the necessity of creating a European Army. They also advocate for an enhancement of the European Agency for Network and Information Security to increase cybersecurity. The party supports significantly increasing the EU budget allocated for fighting disinformation in the EU. Spring does not speak specifically about Russia, yet it stresses support for Ukraine's European choice.

OlaNO prefers closer cooperation in the areas of defense and foreign policy particularly regarding energy union. The party supports building the military capabilities of EU member states that can potentially be provided for the needs of the EU. However, the party does not support building a European army. The EU should intensify cooperation between information services as well as the fight against hybrid threats. The party did not make a statement on anti-Russian sanctions.

Jobbik's EP election program does not touch upon EU external relations, CFSP or CSDP, and nor do these topics appear in public speeches by the party. Although a few years ago Jobbik was still against setting up a European army, recently it told journalists that such an army should be compatible with Hungary's current alliances,<sup>76</sup> which suggests a major shift in the party's position. Jobbik has also been known for its Russia-friendly positions, and in its national election program in 2018 it highlighted that Hungary must be interested in good relations with Russia and also that it hoped for economic benefits from the cooperation.<sup>77</sup>

As for Kukiz'15, not much information is available. The party is suspicious towards enhancing CSDP, however did not criticize the decision of the government to join PESCO.

LSNS does not have a clear position towards the common foreign and security policy. On the other hand, its leader rejected sanctions against Russia. LSNS considers them an undemocratic tool for advancing the political and economic interests of groups that want to use Russian mineral wealth and as space for expansion. The party believes that the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation was legitimized by a valid and democratic referendum.<sup>78</sup>

The leader of SNS claims to be a supporter of the creation of the European army.<sup>79</sup> Previously he has also claimed that the European Union should be a global player, which is possible only once it is more unified in strategic areas.<sup>80</sup> On the

<sup>76</sup> KI MIT ÍGÉR AZ EP-VÁLASZTÁSON? – Azonnali," [https://azonnali.hu/cikk/20190507\\_ki-mit-iger-az-ep-valasztason-osszefoglaltuk](https://azonnali.hu/cikk/20190507_ki-mit-iger-az-ep-valasztason-osszefoglaltuk)

<sup>77</sup> MAGYAR SZÍVVVEL, JÓZAN ÉSSZEL, TISZTA KÉZZEL – Jobbik Magyarorszáért Mozgalom," <https://www.jobbik.hu/magyar-szivvel-jozan-essel-tiszta-kezzel>

<sup>78</sup> „Profilový ROZHovor s prezidentským kandidátom Marianom Kotlebom: EÚ sa mení na diktát – topky.sk," <https://www.topky.sk/cl/1003045/1775051/Profilovy-ROZHovor-s-prezidentskym-kandidatom-Marianom-Kotlebom--EU-sa-meni-na-diktat>

<sup>79</sup> „Danko: Slovensko sa nemuselo tak hnať do transatlantických štruktúr – Sme Domov," <https://domov.sme.sk/c/22018425/danko-slovensko-sa-nemuselo-tak-hnat-do-transatlantickych-struktur.html>

<sup>80</sup> „Danko je presvedčený, že iba jednotná Únia môže hrať rolu globálneho hráča – Sme Domov," <https://domov.sme.sk/c/20549923/danko-je-presvedceny-ze-iba-jednotna-unia-moze-hrat-rolu-globalneho-hraca.html>



other hand, he also declared sanctions against Russia to be ineffective, and according to him, they should be lifted.<sup>81</sup>

## Migration

Spring politicians are in general in favor of accepting refugees in Poland.<sup>82</sup> Spring underlines its solidarity with countries facing the immigration challenge. It is not specific on the current debate on the reform of EU Asylum and Migration Policy. It stresses that there are more urgent and important problems in Poland than the influx of refugees (which in fact is not taking place). Spring does not speak in its program for the EP election about migration at all.

Regarding migration, the Pirate Party's program is again rather vague. The party declares that it is against the mandatory refugee relocation scheme, but it argues for a common European approach and solidarity.<sup>83</sup>

OLANO rejects required quotas for asylum seekers and considers it as nonsense. Instead, the party suggests increasing protection of Schengen borders and if necessary, also utilizing security and military forces within a special EU mission. They also want to establish a list of safe countries from where applicants would have no chance of receiving asylum and the faster return of illegal migrants to their home countries

Jobbik's program speaks about illegal migration being a global problem that requires common efforts to solve. The party argues that all EU member states have to contribute to the efforts of border states to protect the EU's external borders. If a country does not want to or cannot protect its external borders, Frontex needs to step in. All candidate states pursuing membership negotiations have to be considered safe third countries. Jobbik supports all agreements with third countries that guarantee people staying in their countries and thinks that Europe's responsibility is to support this.

Kukiz was in favor of a national referendum on relocation quotas for asylum-seekers<sup>84</sup> and against the Commission proposal on CEAS reform, which included the permanent relocation mechanism<sup>85</sup> as well as against the temporary relocation mechanism adopted in September 2015.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> "Členstvo v EÚ nespochybňujem, ale sankcie voči Rusku treba zrušiť, tvrdí Danko – Správy Pravda," <https://spravy.pravda.sk/svet/clanok/487605-clenstvo-v-eu-nespochybnujem-ale-sankcie-voci-rusku-treba-zrusit-tvrdi-danko>

<sup>82</sup> „Robert Biedroń: Marzę o zasiadaniu w PE – Fakty Interia,” <https://fakty.interia.pl/polska/news-robot-biedron-marze-o-zasiadaniu-w-pe,nId,2568783>

<sup>83</sup> "Postoj České pirátské strany k vlně uprchlíků – Pirátská strana," <https://www.pirati.cz/tiskove-zpravy/stanovisko-k-uprchlikum.html>

<sup>84</sup> Kukiz: to psi obowiązek władzy. Co tak zbulwersowało szefa Kukiz'15? – Polskie Radio," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqk7NMQ6iHo>

<sup>85</sup> Bartosz Józwiak (Kukiz'15) PRZECIWKO stałemu mechanizmowi alokacji uchodźców – PrawicowyInternet," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-VW8KUMJEW>, "MONITOR POLSKI DZIENNIK URZĘDOWY RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ POLSKIEJ - UCHWAŁA SEJMU RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ POLSKIEJ z dnia 2 grudnia 2016 r.," <http://prawo.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WMP20160001183/O/M20161183.pdf> and "Głosowanie nr 213 na 31. posiedzeniu Sejmu - Sejm Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej," <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm8.nsf/agent.xsp?symbol=glosowania&nrkadencji=8&nrglosowania=31&nrglosowania=213>

<sup>86</sup> "MONITOR POLSKI DZIENNIK URZĘDOWY RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ POLSKIEJ - UCHWAŁA SEJMU RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ POLSKIEJ - UCHWAŁA SEJMU RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ POLSKIEJ z dnia 1 kwietnia 2016 r.," <http://prawo.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WMP20160000370/O/M20160370.pdf> and "Głosowanie nr 126 na 15. posiedzeniu Sejmu - Sejm Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej," <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm8.nsf/agent.xsp?symbol=glosowania&nrkadencji=8&nrglosowania=126>



L'SNS' election manifesto in 2016 claimed as the main priority “not to allow migrants to occupy Slovakia.” To achieve this, L'SNS wants to restore protection of borders, not accept even a single migrant, and to expel all migrants taken based on agreement with the EU's institutions.<sup>87</sup>

SNS rejected any attempts to force members states to agree with migration quotas under threats of possible sanctions. Instead, it prefers participation in the protection of borders.<sup>88</sup>

## Budget

OLaNO wants to protect national interests within the next financial framework, particularly to prevent a decrease of finance available from European funds for Slovakia. Among priorities belong transport infrastructure, innovation and reform of the common agriculture policy that should be fair toward newer member states. The party also supports cooperation in the area of science and research, and it will support the Erasmus+ program as well.

Jobbik wants EU funds to be spent on SMEs, R&D, education, info-communication, health care and the social sphere in Hungary. It wants to reform the administration of these funds and empower the local level as opposed to the state level. Jobbik wants Hungary to join EPPO in order to supervise the use of EU funds and prevent Hungary losing those resources under a rule of law mechanism.

The Pirate Party believes that the rules for allocation of funds need to be stricter. The party is in favor of capping CAP funds.

Kukiz'15 is in favor of leveling of direct agricultural payments in the EU, i.e. higher subsidies for Polish farmers. Spring does not speak specifically about the EU budget, but it suggests various new initiatives that have to be funded from EU sources.

Neither L'SNS nor SNS made any specific statements regarding the EU budget.

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<sup>87</sup> “10 BODOV ZA NAŠE SLOVENSKO! Volebný program politickej strany KOTLEBA - LUDOVÁ STRANA NAŠE SLOVENSKO,” <http://www.naseslovensko.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Volebn%C3%BD-program-2016.pdf>

<sup>88</sup> “Andrej Danko: Európska únia by mala rešpektovať aj názor malých členov – Slovenská národná strana,” <https://www.sns.sk/andrej-danko-europska-unia-by-mala-respektovat-aj-nazor-malych-clenov>



## 11. Conclusion

Based on the above described political party positions it is possible to observe that the parties have different approaches to the EU not only in terms of content but also scope. While some of the parties offer detailed positions on individual issues concerning the current state of the EU and its policies, others stick to more general program points. Rather than of the general importance with which the party associates the European Union, it might be symptomatic of changing ways of communicating party positions to voters.

None of the government parties in the three non-eurozone Visegrad countries is in favor of their country's joining the eurozone soon. In Hungary, such a position of Fidesz is challenged by MSzP, DK and Momentum. In Poland, parties in the European Coalition also expressed a vague support for Poland introducing the single currency. The situation is different in the Czech Republic where none of the political parties who have a chance of getting into the European Parliament is in favor of joining the eurozone in the near future. Most of the parties in the EPP, S&D and ALDE groups, both in eurozone member and non-member countries, agree that measures need to be taken for the eurozone to be able to face crises in the future. However, only some of them present any concrete ideas of what those steps should be.

There seems to be an overall agreement among the member parties of the EPP, S&D, ALDE and to a certain extent the Greens-EFA group, about the need to strengthen European defense cooperation, in the face of the global security challenges and also developments in the policies of the current US administration. While most of the parties provide clear positions towards the specific area of defense, the positions are more diverse in the area of EU foreign policy with some of the parties speaking directly in favor of measures to make the decision-making in this area more efficient, i.e. qualified majority voting instead of unanimity in some aspects of the CFSP, others are explicitly against and many of them do not cover the issue at all or only vaguely. Concerning the issue of the EU's relations towards Russia, apart from the far-right parties, there are also examples of "mainstream parties" advocating against the sanctions (Fidesz-KDNP, SMER-SD) or at least for better communication with Russia (ÖVP, MSzP).

Regarding the hot topic of migration and the way it should be dealt with in the EU, there is a broad consensus on the importance of the ability of the EU to protect its external border. Opinions differ about the extent to which migration should be handled at the EU level rather than at the level of the member states, unsurprisingly not only among political groups but also among parties inside some of them. While the EPP group member parties all argue for a rather strong role of state on the issue of migration, Fidesz-KDNP bearing the strictest stance, the positions of ALDE member parties vary from ANO, arguing for migration being handled exclusively at the member states' level, to NEOS, proposing a voluntary mechanism which under certain circumstances could become mandatory or Momentum, proposing a "quota trading system". The positions also differ among the S&D group parties, with the ČSSD and SMER-SD being against any kind of a compulsory redistribution system and SPÖ and MSzP emphasizing solidarity and the need to find a common European solution, although quite vaguely.

In regard of the EU budget and its priorities, there is a broad consensus among the EPP, S&D and ALDE groups' parties that the cohesion and agricultural funds should not be reduced. Security and border protections are widely shared as a priority area where EU money should be allocated, along with infrastructural projects, research and development and climate change. Some of the parties (MSzP, NEOS, Greens or LMP) propose new resources of the EU budget.

Internal cohesion of the political groups in the European parliament has never been unequivocal, as a result of the specific institutional setting of the European Union and its political system and political topics that the European



parliament usually deals with. We should not expect that the parties affiliated with certain groups in the EP will share their positions on every issue, as those are primarily formed in their respective national contexts and influenced by multiple factors, e.g. the party being part of a government coalition or the opposition, the most salient issues resonating in their domestic political discussion etc. In the recent past, we have seen cooperation among the governments of the Visegrad countries on EU issues, especially migration and the future of cohesion funds, even though the current government parties in the Visegrad group are affiliated with various political groups in the European parliament. This will likely remain the case in the upcoming period as long as the governments stay in place. A potential for cooperation with the Austrian government led by ÖVP is present but should not be overestimated. Based not only on reading the manifestos for the EP elections, but also on certain politicians' rhetoric and policies in the past few years we can expect that the current party affiliations in the political groups in the European Parliament will not remain unchanged in the following period.



## 12. List of abbreviations

CAP – Common Agricultural Policy  
CFSP – Common Foreign and Security Policy  
ČSSD – Czech Social Democratic Party  
DK – Democratic Coalition  
DLA – Democratic Left Alliance  
EPPO – European Public Prosecutor's Office  
Fidesz- KDNP - Hungarian Civil Alliance & Christian Democratic People's Party  
FPÖ – Freedom Party of Austria  
KDH – Christian Democratic Movement  
KDU- ČSL – Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party  
KSČM – Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia  
ĽSNS – People's Party Our Slovakia  
LMP – Politics can be different  
MSzP – Hungarian Socialist Party  
NEOS – The New Austria and Liberal Forum  
ODS – Civic Democratic Party  
OLANO - Ordinary People and Independent Personalities  
ÖVP – Austrian People's Party  
PPP – Polish People's Party  
PS – Progressive Slovakia  
QMV – Qualified Majority Voting  
SaS – Freedom and solidarity  
Smer-SD – Direction – Social Democracy  
SMK – Party of Hungarian Coalition  
SNS – Slovak National Party  
SPD – Freedom and Direct Democracy – Tomio Okamura  
SPÖ – Social democratic Party of Austria  
TOPo9- STAN – TOPo9 and Mayors and Independents



## Association for International Affairs (AMO)

AMO is a non-governmental not-for-profit organization founded in 1997 in Prague to promote research and education in the field of international relations. This leading Czech foreign policy think-tank owes no allegiance to any political party or to any ideology. It aims to encourage pro-active approach to foreign policy issues; provide impartial analysis of international affairs; and facilitate an open space for informed discussion.

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