

## Supervisor's references

Author of the thesis: Luciana Carolina Serrano Parra

Thesis title: Electoral performance of the radical right in Central Europe. The cases of Hungary and Czech Republic

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Luciana Carolina Serrano Parra focuses on the electoral performance of the radical right parties in Hungary and in the Czech Republic. She asks two main research questions: "Which factors take part in the electoral performance of the radical right in the Czech Republic and Hungary?" and "What role do the mainstream parties play in the electoral performance of the radical right?" (pp. 27). In the theoretical part of the thesis the author introduces the reader into the discussion on radical parties in relation to the broad meaning of this rather controversial term. Then the author continues with discussing electoral performance of the so-called new parties with special focus on the supply and demand side aspect. This is then completed with the discussion of framing and issue ownership concepts within the influence of the social media. Methodology section is followed by the analytical part of the thesis. In this part of the thesis, the author introduces her two cases, the case of Freedom and Direct Democracy (Svoboda a přímá demokracie - SPD) in the Czech Republic and The Movement for a Better Hungary, commonly known as Jobbik, in Hungary in the last two parliamentary elections (2013 and 2017, reps. 2010 and 2014).

The author has chosen very "hot issue" in current politics not only in the two countries of interest but all over the Europe as well. It means that this theme is central to lots of research papers nowadays, but still leaving plenty of room for original contribution. I am sorry to say that this thesis is not such a contribution. At least the potential to originally contribute to current debate on this theme would have been fulfilled if the author had had time to discuss her work with her supervisor. Quite a lot of problems of this thesis might have been solved. First, there is a problem with the classification – radical right parties. Although the author discusses this term and the terms related (extreme parties and populist parties) the reader is not sure what the outcome of this discussion is. Does it mean that the parties of interest are radical right parties (but why - what criteria do they meet so they can be classified as radical and not e.g. populist)? Or does it mean that these terms are problematic, and it is not quite clear how to use them? The most serious problem of this thesis is the methodology. Based on the research questions and the case-oriented research, one would expect case study design, which means qualitative testing of the factors (variables) the causes the (positive) electoral performance. None of this is fully present in this thesis. There is no testing of any theory, which is quite visible in the final part, because the author does not provide the reader with clear answer to any of the questions asked. What the author delivers is rather a quite complex description of the electoral results and the context of both cases. This would be completely fine, if it was completed with testing the theory. In addition, case-based research depends a lot on the selection process of cases, because the way you choose the cases influences the outcomes. The most common way of choosing cases is based on Mill's methods (e.g. most similar and most different systems), but the author, when dealing with the strategy of choosing, states that the cases have some characteristics in common, some not. But which are common, which are not and what it means for the case selection and further analysis is not mentioned. These problems then lead to uncertainty about the conclusions (which are not clear at the same time), because the reader does not know for sure based on what the author concludes her findings.

Although there are serious problems, the thesis fulfils the requirements for master thesis. Thereby I recommend the thesis to defence.

Date and place:

Signature: