



**MALMÖ UNIVERSITY**  
FACULTY OF CULTURE  
AND SOCIETY

# **Populism and the refugee crisis**

The communication of the Hungarian government  
on the European refugee crisis in 2015-2016

*Zsolt Marton*



Media and Communication Studies  
One-year Master's Programme  
Master Thesis, 15 Credits  
Spring, 2017  
Supervisor: Michael Krona

## Abstract

The European refugee crisis sparked many debates within the European Union member states, as European countries had different ideas about handling the situation. As a result to the long negotiations without decisions, the crisis escalated, resulting in anti-immigrant, populist parties to emerge with big support among European citizens.

The Hungarian government was among the first countries in the European Union to capitalise upon the refugee crisis by politicising the question of immigration, therefore, several anti-immigration campaigns were initiated in Hungary during 2015 and 2016.

By analysing and comparing two campaign materials (one from 2015 and one from 2016) via the three-dimensional critical discourse analysis model of Fairclough, the thesis sought to identify the milestones and the rhetoric shifts of the communication of the Hungarian government that changed the public discourse in Hungary, as well as to point out similarities with populist practices in the anti-immigrant campaigns. The empirical analysis was carried out in the theoretical framework of discourse and power, populism, post-factuality, and agenda setting and framing.

The text argued for a rhetorical shift between 2015 and 2016, in which the target of the governmental communication changed from refugees towards the European Union and its immigration policy. The thesis found evidence for the usage of populist practices that vastly affected the way Hungarians approach the question of immigration.

It is hoped that this thesis could highlight the imbalance in the power relations of the public discourse in Hungary, and the findings could contribute to further analyses of populist campaigns in the period of the European refugee crisis.

## Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Context .....</b>	<b>6</b>
The governing coalition in Hungary .....	6
The refugee crisis in Hungary - key events.....	8
The refugee crisis in the European Union - key statistics .....	13
<b>Theoretical framework.....</b>	<b>15</b>
Discourse and power.....	16
Populism.....	17
Post-factuality .....	19
Agenda-setting and framing.....	20
Theoretical framework summary.....	21
<b>Literature review .....</b>	<b>21</b>
Media representation of refugees .....	22
Refugees and immigration in political discourse .....	23
Populist leaders about refugees and immigration.....	25
Literature review summary.....	26
<b>Data and methodology .....</b>	<b>27</b>
Ethical considerations .....	31
Role as a researcher .....	32
<b>Analysis of data .....</b>	<b>33</b>
First phase: sensitisation against immigration and refugees.....	33
Second phase: sensitisation against ‘Brussels’.....	44
Comparison and summary of analysis .....	55
<b>Discussion.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>60</b>

## Introduction

The European refugee crisis has been a topic in public debates all over Europe during the year of 2015 and 2016. During these two years, there has been around 2.46 million first time asylum applicants (Eurostat, 2017a) in the European Union, and probably many more unregistered people mostly from Middle-Eastern countries. The impact of the refugee crisis has been huge in the European Union from many aspects, among them humanitarian, economic, or social considerations. The EU faced many questions, doubts and decisions regarding the status of asylum-seekers that as a structure, based on the experiences during the year of 2015 and 2016, it was probably not prepared to answer. The situation affected the everyday life of EU citizens indirectly, and in many cases, on the routes of refugees, also directly. Citizens' personal experiences and the moral implications related to the topic were a key factor for the crisis to be politicised not only at the problem-solving operational level but in political communications and campaigns as well. There were significant differences regarding how governments and other political actors in the European Union member states approached the crisis which not only contributed to a dissimilar treatment of asylum-seekers in the countries but also to an inconsistent and divided EU.

The inconsistency between politicians, journalists and researchers who approached the topic has been vast. Even the name of the crisis evokes confusion among people. There are many who refer to the events as the 'European refugee crisis' considering the huge number of refugees arriving to Europe while others discuss the situation as the 'European migration crisis' taking into consideration the people who are not refugees but 'economic immigrants'. To clarify, this thesis will use the expression 'European refugee crisis' as this phrasing was also used by European Union institutions.

This thesis will focus on the events of Hungary, and more precisely on the communication of the Hungarian government on the refugee crisis in 2015 and 2016 (and not on the political decisions made). The Hungarian government was among the first countries in the European Union to openly refuse 'economic immigrants' and

criticise the European Union for not being able to handle the crisis. As part of their communication strategy, they initiated information campaigns, a national consultation, and a referendum to affect people's opinion on the topic, gain political support from citizens, and to prove a point to the European Union.

The purpose of this thesis is revolving around two questions. Firstly, I would like to understand and analyse the strategically important communication milestones of the anti-immigration campaigns that changed the public discourse in Hungary. Therefore, the first research question is the following:

*RQ1: What were the communication phases and milestones during the Hungarian government's anti-immigration campaigns in 2015 and 2016 that changed the public discourse regarding the European refugee crisis?*

Secondly, I hypothesise that the practices within the communication of the campaigns can be considered populist and they drastically affected the way Hungarian citizens approach the question of the refugee crisis. Therefore, the second research question is:

*RQ2: What are the similarities between populist practices and the Hungarian government's anti-immigration campaigns in 2015 and 2016?*

The research questions will be discussed from the theoretical perspective of discourse and power, populism, post-factuality and agenda setting and framing. Previous researches in the topic of representation of refugees and immigration in political discourses will help me to compare the topic to other examples. The main theory, according which the analysis will be carried out is populism and how is it connected to the communication of the Hungarian government's anti-immigration campaigns, if at all. My data for analysis will be two campaign materials: one from 2015 and the other from 2016. The analysis will focus first on each separately and then discuss the differences between the materials from linguistic, discursive, and social aspects via critical discourse analysis (CDA) methods and in the light of the theoretical framework.

## Context

To understand the context behind the messages put forward by the government during the refugee crisis between January 2015 and October 2016, a basic knowledge of the introduction to the governing coalition, Fidesz-KDNP, the summary of the political events related to the refugee crisis in Hungary in the timeframe above, and quantifiable data about the European refugee crisis is necessary. This section aims for laying down the foundation for the analysis of the empirical data by providing context.

### The governing coalition in Hungary

The governing party to date, Fidesz (Hungarian Civic Union) started out as a liberal party at the end of the Soviet era in Hungary and slowly shifted towards a national conservatism during the years (Fidesz.hu, 2002). The party first won the elections in 1998 and was in power until 2002 (Választás.hu, 2017a). After other political forces taking over in the subsequent years, and losing support with their unfavourable actions, voters placed confidence in Fidesz with the alliance of KDNP (Christian-Democratic People's Party) in 2010 for a second term. The coalition won 67,88% of the seats in the Hungarian Parliament which meant more than two-third (263 from 386) were taken by Fidesz-KDNP (Választás.hu, 2017b). By earning supermajority of the seats, Fidesz-KDNP had the power to amend legislation without the need of convincing or finding support from the opposition parties' delegates. With such power, even the so called 'two-third' laws that needed two-third of the votes from the delegates in the Hungarian Parliament could be modified after the approval of the supreme court. During the second term, Fidesz in coalition with KDNP introduced a new constitution called 'The Fundamental Law of Hungary' in 2011 (Kormány.hu, 2017a). The changes introduced in the law system by the government laid down a new foundation to the public law, changing a constitution that was operative since 1949. The Fundamental Law restructured the electoral system (lowering the number of seats in the Parliament from 386 to 199); modified the press law and introduced a new press controlling institution;

and adjusted the role of the courts, the supreme court, and the constitutional court (Dupré, 2012).

Parliamentary elections are held every 4 years in Hungary, therefore after 2010 the next parliamentary elections were held in 2014. The results showed that the changes in the law system favoured Fidesz-KDNP, as the coalition won again for the third term by grabbing two-third of the seats (66,83% - 133 seats from 199) in the Parliament (Választás.hu, 2014). According to the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights report about the 2014 Hungarian parliamentary elections (OSCE/ODIHR, 2014), some changes introduced in the law system about the elections ‘were positive’, however ‘a number of key amendments negatively affected the electoral process, including the removal of important checks and balances’ (pg. 1). The report directly points at which way the new system was in favour of the Fidesz-KDNP coalition:

(...) provisions for the surplus votes of winning candidates in each constituency to be transferred to parties participating in the national, proportional contest. This change itself resulted in an additional six seats being allocated to the alliance of Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Union (Fidesz-Magyar Polgári Szövetség, Fidesz) and the Christian-Democratic People’s Party (Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt, KDNP). (pg. 1)

OSCE/ODIHR also mentioned the political imbalance of the media outlets as one of the problematic issues around the elections:

Furthermore, a lack of political balance within the Media Council combined with unclear legal provisions on balanced coverage created uncertainty for media outlets. (...) The OSCE/ODIHR media monitoring results showed that three out of five monitored television stations displayed a significant bias towards Fidesz by covering nearly all of its campaign in a positive tone while more than half the coverage of the opposition alliance was in a negative tone. (pg. 3)

The question of political imbalance and ownership of the media outlets in Hungary is recurring as there is an increasing tendency of televisions, radio stations and online news portals to get into the hands of people associated with Fidesz. A few of the most notable cases were the acquisition of the second biggest commercial television group with one of the most-watched news programme in the country, TV2 by the

government commissioner responsible for reforming the Hungarian film funding system (Magyar Nemzet, 2015); the acquisition of the regional printed and online newspaper network providing news to rural areas in Hungary by a billionaire affiliated with Fidesz (Szalay, 2016); or the restructure of one of the biggest online news sites, Origo to obey the needs of governmental communication (HVG.hu, 2016).

To date, Fidesz-KDNP has 131 seats in the Hungarian Parliament as they lost two seats in the by-elections in the past years (Parlament.hu, 2017), therefore, they are currently not in a two-third majority. However, after the changes in the law system, they are still able to vote on crucial governmental questions without involving opposition delegates in the process. Such questions include the handling of the refugee crisis in the country. Therefore, it is safe to say that almost any governmental communication that were aimed at or were about refugees during 2015 or 2016 were issued by Fidesz-KDNP, many times without any prior discussions with the opposition parties. Moreover, as later introduced, the way the refugee crisis was treated at governmental level earned the most support among voters for the governing coalition party, Fidesz and KDNP.

### **The refugee crisis in Hungary - key events**

By the beginning of 2015, Fidesz-KDNP lost significant support from certain voters and if the parliamentary elections would have held in that period, the coalition would have gained around 20-30% of the votes (Közvéleménykutatók.hu, 2017). Fidesz-KDNP needed a topic to communicate that was exploitable for long-term, shed positive light on the coalition and therefore could bring voters to the two parties. Arguably, this topic became the refugee crisis and more precisely the way Fidesz-KDNP handled the situation. In the following, a timeline of key events related to the refugee crisis will introduce how the crisis developed in Hungary and how the government reacted to the events. The timeline focuses on the period between January 2015 (the Charlie Hebdo attack) and October 2016 (the failed Hungarian refugee quota referendum) but only takes into consideration the key events in Hungary or those that are international but relevant for understanding of the Hungarian context.

### ***January 2015***

On 7 January two terrorists attacked the office of a satirical newspaper, Charlie Hebdo in Paris, killing 12 people. A few days later Viktor Orbán, the Prime Minister of Hungary (from Fidesz-KDNP) visited France to attend a memorial of the victims. During an interview, he stated that Hungary will not provide refuge to economic immigrants and until he is the Prime Minister, he will not let Hungary to become the target of immigrants (Index.hu, 2015a).

### ***February 2015***

In the beginning of February refugees were taken down in big numbers from trains towards Austria in Hungary. The government announced that it will ask people's opinion about economic immigrants in a form of a national consultation.

A debate day was organised by Fidesz-KDNP in the Hungarian Parliament with the title 'Hungary does not need economic immigrants'. Human rights organizations protested against the stigmatisation of refugees in a reaction to the title of the debate day. During the debates, the coalition's delegates related refugees to terrorists, arsonists, and called them aggressive and carriers of diseases (Dull, 2015a).

### ***March-April 2015***

Throughout March and April, the number of refugees arriving via the Mediterranean Sea increased greatly. Hundreds of refugees drowned and thousands were saved from the sea. In response to the catastrophes on the sea, the Foreign Minister to Hungary (from Fidesz-KDNP) suggested that the European Union should act immediately and try to solve the refugee crisis not within the borders of Europe but outside (Joób, 2015a).

### ***May 2015***

In the beginning of May, the national consultation letters with a personal message of Viktor Orbán arrived to Hungarians. The letters issued by the government asked the opinion about 'immigration and terrorism'. On 19 May 2015, the European

Parliament put the question of the consultation letters (together with the idea of the government introducing death penalty) on its agenda where Orbán defended the stance of the Hungarian government.

A few days before the European Parliament session, the European Union called for the resettlement of refugees based on a quota system to balance out the pressure on the European Union member states.

### ***June 2015***

In June 2015, it has been announced that the government will start an information campaign about immigration. Few days later the so called 'If you come to Hungary' billboards with messages aimed at refugees were put on the streets of Hungary.

On 17 June 2015, the government confirmed that a 4 meters high fence between Hungary and Serbia is in the plans to defend the Schengen border. The Council of Europe condemned the idea (Stubnya, 2015a). In response, the Foreign Minister criticised the EU for being 'impotent', and 'reluctant to understand Hungarians' problems' (Stubnya, 2015b).

### ***July-August 2015***

Many of the refugees used Hungary as a transit country to go further to Western-Europe via Austria but in the Summer of 2015 Austria stopped letting refugees through the Hungarian-Austrian border via trains. Therefore, at the end of July and throughout August, refugees started to fill up the main railway stations in the capital of Hungary, Budapest and settled down with tents, waiting for the border to open. The situation led refugees to seek for alternative ways to cross the borders. Smugglers started to transport them in cars, buses, and vans to Austria. At the end of August, 71 refugees were found dead because of suffocation in a van in Austria, coming from Hungary.

### ***September 2015***

In September, Angela Merkel chancellor of Germany stated that most of the Syrian refugees will be accepted in Germany (Index.hu, 2015b). In response, the Hungarian government blamed the Germans for the unsustainable situation at the railway stations in Budapest and the increased number of refugees at the Hungary to Serbia border (Index.hu, 2015c).

After a stalemate situation and the failure of the registration system at Röszke (one of the main entry points for refugees to enter Hungary), refugees broke through the border and into Hungary. Orbán evaluated the situation as refugees rebelling against the Hungarian law (Dezső, 2015).

In the middle of September, the Hungarian border fence closed the Serbian border. Refugees started to enter the Schengen area from the neighbouring Croatia. In the second part of September, this caused a lot of political tension between Croatia, Serbia, and Hungary as each of them wanted to send refugees back to the countries.

Fidesz-KDNP delegates and the government continued to criticise the European Union highlighting that refugees die because of the Brussels' careless actions (Dull, 2015b), and the European leaders live in a dream world, failing to handle the situation (Index.hu, 2015d). Orbán came up with six suggestions to tackle the refugee crisis for the upcoming European Union summit (Joób, 2015b). On the summit, on 23 September 2015, European Union leaders decided for stricter border policies.

At the end of the month, an opinion poll showed that the support of Fidesz increased by the way they handled the refugee crisis (Közvéleménykutatók.hu, 2017; Dull, 2015c).

### ***October-November-December 2015***

In October, Hungary closed the borders to Croatia to prevent refugees flowing in from the country.

On 14 November, terror attacks were carried out in Paris, France killing 130 and injuring around 360. The Islamic State claimed the attacks. In a response, Orbán declared that the era of political correctness is over, there is a correlation between

refugees and terrorism and the Schengen borders must be defended at any cost (Index.hu, 2015e). The EU's response to the attacks was to start discussions with Turkey to stop refugees from coming to Europe in exchange of financial support.

The Hungarian government announced another information campaign about 'immigration and terrorism'.

### ***January-February 2016***

On New Year's Eve, reports surfaced about sexual harassment cases by refugees in several cities Europe-wide.

The government announced that it will suggest starting a national referendum about the European Union's plan of the refugee quotas.

### ***March-April 2016***

In the beginning of March, a national state of emergency was declared because of the refugee crisis. On a national holiday speech, Orbán said that there are millions of refugees arriving towards Europe and they are threatening the Hungarian traditions and customs, for which Brussels is to blame (Miklósi, 2016).

On 23 March 2016, several bomb attacks were carried out in Brussels, Belgium. The terror acts killed 32. The Islamic State yet again claimed responsibility.

### ***May-June 2016***

The Hungarian Parliament voted in favour of organising the refugee quota referendum on 2 October with only Fidesz-KDNP and far-right Jobbik votes in support.

### ***July-August 2016***

On the 14 July 2016, a terror attack was carried out in Nice, France, killing 86.

In middle of July, the government launched the second big information campaign about refugees, migration, and terrorism as a run-up to the quota referendum with the so called 'Did you know?'. Meanwhile, statistics showed that there are less and less refugees staying in the country (Index.hu, 2016a).

***September 2016***

A government agency against persecution of Christians have been set up by the government. The aim with the new secretary to raise awareness on the persecuted Christians in the world and to coordinate humanitarian aids (Index.hu, 2016b). Later in September, Orbán said that he is shocked about the ratio of ‘natives and non-natives’ in the big European cities and stated that Europeans, Hungarians, Christians must make up their minds about the refugee crisis (Thüringer, 2016).

The Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International reported about inhuman treatment of refugees at the Hungarian-Serbian border (Dezső, 2016).

***October 2016***

On 2 October, the day of the referendum voting, the national public television alerted its viewers about a new wave of refugees should the referendum fail (Comment, 2016). After the referendum vote, it was announced that 98% of the voters voted against the refugee quotas with only 2% in favour of them. However, the voting attendance did not reach the validity threshold of 50% + 1 vote from all the eligible voters in Hungary, as only 41% casted valid votes (Választás.hu, 2016). Nevertheless, the government communicated the results as a huge success. In a speech after the results, Orbán called for a change in the fundamental law to include that Hungarians refuse forced resettlements (Index.hu, 2016c).

Democracy Reporting International (DRI) and the Mérték Media Analyst Workshop released a report, pointing at huge imparity in television channels’ news programmes during the referendum campaign in several channels, especially in the channels of the national public television’s group with 95% of the programmes transferring anti-immigration sentiments (DRI, 2016).

**The refugee crisis in the European Union - key statistics**

Figure 1 provides quantifiable impact about the refugee crisis, provided by Eurostat to complement the key events introduced above.

*Key statistics about the asylum-seekers in the EU in 2015 and 2016*

geo/year	Number of first time asylum applicants - annual aggregated data (rounded)		Number of first instance positive decisions on applications		Percentage of first instance positive decisions from all applications	Population of the country (estimates)	Percentage of first time asylum applicants against the population of the country	Number of resettled persons	
	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015 and 2016	2016		2015	2016
<b>EU (28 countries)</b>	<b>1257030</b>	<b>1205095</b>	<b>307510</b>	<b>672650</b>	<b>39.8%</b>	<b>510284430</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>8155</b>	<b>14205</b>
Belgium	38990	14250	10475	15050	47.9%	11311117	0.5%	275	450
Bulgaria	20165	18990	5595	1350	17.7%	7153784	0.5%	0	0
Czech Republic	1235	1200	460	440	37.0%	10553843	0.0%	0	0
Denmark	20825	6055	9915	7120	63.4%	5707251	0.5%	450	310
Germany	441800	722265	140910	433905	49.4%	82175684	1.4%	510	1240
Estonia	225	150	80	125	54.7%	1315944	0.0%	0	10
Ireland	3270	2235	330	480	14.7%	4724720	0.1%	175	355
Greece	11370	49875	4025	2710	11.0%	10783748	0.6%	0	0
Spain	14600	15570	1020	6860	26.1%	46445828	0.1%	0	375
France	70570	76790	20635	28750	33.5%	66759950	0.2%	620	1420
Croatia	140	2150	40	95	5.9%	4190669	0.1%	0	0
Italy	83245	121185	29610	35400	31.8%	60665551	0.3%	95	1045
Cyprus	2105	2840	1585	1300	58.3%	848319	0.6%	0	0
Latvia	330	345	15	135	22.2%	1968957	0.0%	0	5
Lithuania	275	415	85	195	40.6%	2888558	0.0%	5	25
Luxembourg	2360	2065	185	765	21.5%	576249	0.8%	45	50
<b>Hungary</b>	<b>174435</b>	<b>28215</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>9830485</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
Malta	1695	1735	1255	1195	71.4%	434403	0.8%	0	0
Netherlands	43035	19285	16450	20810	59.8%	16979120	0.4%	450	695
Austria	85505	39875	15040	30370	36.2%	8690076	1.4%	760	200
Poland	10255	9780	640	305	4.7%	37967209	0.1%	0	0
Portugal	870	710	195	325	32.9%	10341330	0.0%	40	0
Romania	1225	1855	480	800	41.6%	19760314	0.0%	0	0
Slovenia	260	1265	45	170	14.1%	2064188	0.1%	0	0
Slovakia	270	100	80	210	78.4%	5426252	0.0%	0	0
Finland	32150	5275	1675	7065	23.4%	5487308	0.7%	1005	945
Sweden	156110	22330	32215	66345	55.2%	9851017	1.8%	1850	1890
United Kingdom	39720	38290	13950	9940	30.6%	65382556	0.1%	1865	5180

**Figure 1** Created by the author. Data taken from Eurostat (2017a; 2017b; 2017c; 2017d).

According to the statistics there has been around 2.46 million first time asylum applicants in the European Union during 2015 and 2016 which is 0.5% of the population of the European Union countries. From all the applicants, 39.8% received a positive answer to their application in the first instance. Eurostat reported around 22300 resettled refugees during the two years.

The Hungarian data suggests that there were around 202 000 first time asylum applicants in 2015 and 2016 from which only 0.5% got a positive decision for the first instance. This is by far the lowest in the European Union: as a comparison, the next lowest in line is Poland with 4.7% and the highest of all 28 countries is the Netherlands with 59.8%. However, it is important to point out that Hungary was under a huge pressure during the two years, receiving the highest percentage (2.1%) of asylum-seekers when compared to the population of the country from all European Union countries. This is a significant percentage, considering that 13 countries had 0.1% or below for this stat. The Eurostat data also points out that there have been only 10 resettled refugees arriving to Hungary during 2015 and 2016 which is way below the thousands that the Hungarian government communicated about in the campaigns. Of course, it has to be acknowledged that the reluctance to accept the proposed quotas that has been demonstrated by the Hungarian government at the European Union greatly contributed to keep this number low.

## **Theoretical framework**

Focusing on the events of the refugee crisis in Hungary and the reaction of the Hungarian government, one can identify practices in the communication that are rooted in the following theoretical points introduced in this section: discourse and its connection to power; populism as a political doctrine; post-factuality, a trend of the recent years in the world of political communication that neglects facts and builds on emotions; and finally, agenda-setting and framing, as a process that introduces topics to public agendas and suggests a way of interpretation about them.

## Discourse and power

As the analysis of the empirical data will be carried out with the critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach, the first theoretical standpoint of this thesis is discourse and power. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary's (2017) definitions for discourse are the following: 'verbal interchange of ideas; especially: conversation' and 'a linguistic unit (such as a conversation or a story) larger than a sentence'. This definition suggests that there is interaction between at least two sides. The definition can be taken as the starting point to for the approach of Fairclough as well. According to him, discourse is 'an important form of social practice which both reproduces and changes knowledge, identities and social relations (...), and at the same time is also shaped by other social practices and structures.' (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pg.65). By structures Fairclough means social relations within the society but also between institutions.

Fairclough also discusses the role of power in discourses. Discursive practices necessarily contribute to 'the creation and reproduction of unequal power relations between social groups' (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pg.63) as 'discourse functions ideologically' (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pg.63). According to him, ideology is 'manning in the service of power' (Fairclough, 1995, pg.14; ref in Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pg.75) and ideologies are created based on social structures like gender or class (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pg.75). Hegemony is a state when a discourse emerges as dominant among the others (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pg.76).

Discourses also have a historical aspect as they gain meaning within a specific social, and cultural context related to a specific time and location (Sheyholislami, 2001, pg.13). Summarising the thoughts of Fairclough, one can see that discourse is a chain of interactive processes between social groups with ideologies that by engaging into a discourse contribute to the construction of a 'social world' where power relations are necessarily unequal.

Considering that discourses change in politics, and identifying what is the general frame or guiding trend in political discourse could help to understand contemporary political campaigns and communication. Richards (2004) wrote about

how emotions are currently a conscious, sophisticated part of politics. Emotional discourse understands emotions as not optional (contemporary politics acknowledge and build upon the fact that politics do evoke emotions), complex and multi-layered (therefore not easily understood), not only expressive but also reflexive (politicians address emotions, whether positive or negative) and as a ground of self-identity (one can find oneself in political narratives that addresses feelings and relationships; this is how politicians as persons come to the fore) (Richards, 2004, p.346). Power relations of contemporary politics are allowed to be emotional, moreover supporters crave for strong and binding emotions towards the leadership (Richards, 2004, p.348).

## **Populism**

Viktor Orbán, the Prime Minister of Hungary and his government has been accused many times with populism. Therefore, there is a necessity to introduce populism from a theoretical point of view and assess whether the 'populist' tag is appropriate to use for the Hungarian government based on the empirical data introduced in a later section. Canovan (1999) states that populism cannot be described by a clear definition but rather through analysis of its structures. In her text, she analyses populism from four aspects:

- their connection to power structures,
- their relation to citizens,
- their style of politics,
- and the characteristics of the political mood they use.

Related to power structures, populist movements carry the notion of revolt against the established power-holders but also against elite values by attacking opinion leaders from economic and academic life, as well as representatives of the media (Canovan, 1999, pg.3). There is a flexibility in the world-view of populism in the different countries (in some cases the movement revolts against economic issues, in

other against liberal values etc.), as the established system can have various attributes in the different countries (Canovan, 1999, pg.4).

Populist movements gain legitimacy by claiming that they are speaking for the 'people', the 'silent majority' and they act on behalf of this huge group (Canovan, 1999, pg.4). In their communication, they address 'people' firstly as the 'united people' (a nation or a country against the systems or structures that want to divide it), secondly as 'our people' (a specific ethnicity against problematic alien immigrants or minorities), finally as the 'ordinary people' (or 'common people' against the privileged) (Canovan, 1999, pg.5).

In political style and language populists are proudly simple to be different from the complex bureaucratic jargon used by the elite. Populists thrive on (fake) transparency and claim to fight against complex processes, shady deals and technical details only understood by experts (Canovan, 1999, pg.5-6).

Populist movements usually have a charismatic leader who create campaigns out of politics to save the country from an imminent threat, adding an additional layer of emotion to the communication and involving otherwise politically uninterested people (Canovan, 1999, pg.6). There is an emotional binding towards politicians and especially political leaders who are increasingly expected to carry out 'emotional labor', and thus not only be competent but also be sensitive who carry all emotional attributes a regular person would have (Richards, 2004, pg.348). Moreover, people expect extraordinary features and competence from leaders but also to be part of the ordinary (Richards, 2004, pg.348). This emotional ambivalence is what populist leaders exploit.

Populists do not aim to abolish elections, nor they wish to introduce dictatorship but instead they believe in 'direct democracy' where initiating referendums to justify their power and maintain the illusion of giving the executive power to 'ordinary people' is the main aim (Canovan, 1999, pg.6-7).

Parallely, contemporary politics are increasingly part of popular culture (Richards, 2004) which is not directly connected to populism but I believe definitely plays a role in making any political movements appealing and 'trendy' by lifting it into the public norm and thus making it part of political culture.

## Post-factuality

Emotions became structural part of the political world in the recent years, especially in political communication as a tool to make politics more consumable (Richards, 2004). Post-factuality is one step further to emotion-based politics, as while building on voters' emotions, it parallelly disregards facts.

A democracy is in a post-factual state when truth and evidence are replaced by robust narratives, opportune political agendas, and impracticable political promises to maximize voter support. (...) Stories feeding on awe, anger, or fear often enjoy more social transmission than stories with sad or depressing content. Meanwhile, stories correcting, explaining or adjusting facts, fictions and forecasts have a hard time getting traction' (Hendricks, 2016, sec. 2, par. 2-3)

Post-factuality also has strong connections to social media (Facebook and Twitter is especially affected) where emotional stories are easily shareable, likeable and interactable (Hendricks, 2016). The filter bubble phenomenon by Pariser (2011) is also relatable to post-factual democracy. In the era of personalised information over the internet users are served a tailor-made content based on their online footprints (their browsing history, stored cookies, previous search data etc.), trapping them in a filter bubble, interact only with what they already liked, followed, shared before and therefore not having the chance to understand and read about the 'other side of the truth'. This leads to 'hyper-fragmented' societies (not only in the online world but in general) where through political communication, people are left in an uncertain state, are told that ultimately it is impossible to verify the truth, and let to embark into never-ending arguments and information-debunking with each other (Harsin, 2015).

In a previous assignment, I argued that political communication in the post-truth era is a new phenomenon and is still developing. The development of post-truth practices is affected by globalisation (where ideas and ideologies are imported and exported as goods) and the salience of media coverage of politics and the need for immediacy (any political topic can be followed instantly), which then results in unaccountable media outlets reporting contradictory information about the same

events. In such a situation, verifying truth gets increasingly hard, therefore media audiences turn to channels that feed them news they would like to hear, in the belief that what they hear is the truth. In such fragmented society, citizens live in filter bubbles, becoming consumers of political narratives, they are fed with (Marton, 2017).

### **Agenda-setting and framing**

In the context of the refugee crisis in Hungary, it is also relevant to understand how topics get into the mainstream and stay there for a two-years providing talking points in public debates. Scheufele (2000) analysed the cognitive effects of political communication. In his article, he discusses the role of agenda-setting, priming, and framing in mass media related to politics. According to Scheufele, mass media has the role and responsibility in highlighting certain events by increasing the salience of reports about them. This process can be called as setting the media agenda. When the audience follow a media channel they have access to information related to a certain event and the information they gain mixed together with personal experiences result in setting a general audience agenda. This way the media shapes the public debate by pointing at a topic for the audiences to talk about, therefore the audience agenda is greatly dependant on the media agenda, whereas the media agenda should be independent from any influential force.

The process of priming is ‘an inherently individual psychological outcome of agenda-setting’ (Scheufele, 2000, pg. 302) that affects the standards in the audience’s mind according which a political topic is reviewed.

Scheufele states that framing on the other hand is not related the salience of reports, but the way how an event in the reports is depicted and thus influence how the audience interpret an event during the internalisation of the information. From the Hungarian point of view, Scheufele’s study poses huge issues as it presumes an independent mass media, not affected by the government’s political intentions, whereas in Hungary as introduced in the context section, there are concerns about the impartiality of media outlets.

## **Theoretical framework summary**

In general, I would group the theoretical framework part into two. Understanding discourse and power relations, and agenda setting and framing helps me to assess in the analysis how the discussion about the refugee crisis got onto the public agenda, what are the power relations in the discourse between the sides, and how does the dominant side use or abuse its power to lead the discourse and moreover to frame topics. As discussed in the context section, the topic of the refugee crisis has been kept on the public agenda for the two-year period, becoming the topic of several governmental campaigns. The knowledge gained through describing populism and post-factuality in this section will guide me to reflect upon the qualitative aspects of the communication of the Hungarian government: what were the elements of the campaigns and the communication materials; and how the messages of the campaigns, the communication style of the government influenced the discourse. As a binding force that connects the theories together, I will use the question of emotional aspects in contemporary political campaigns to assess what mark they leave on the discourse, what role they play in the power relations, and how they are used in the political campaigns to manipulate people.

## **Literature review**

Refugees and migration as phenomena have been the centre of the attention of the scientific world from many aspects in many countries. However, the refugee crisis and especially the Hungarian events are yet to be thoroughly analysed as there are few researches dealing with this specific topic, probably since it is still happening as this thesis is written albeit in a slower pace. Therefore, my literature review will focus mainly on European studies that are complemented with a few Hungarian findings as well.

## **Media representation of refugees**

A recurring topic that is related to studies about refugees is how the media and political movements represent them. This will be a main question when analysing the empirical data of this thesis, therefore I found it important to review literature touching this topic. In the text of Horsti (2016) the subject of the analysis were online news articles and the way they depict irregular migration. The study showed that in general there are two kinds of associations towards refugees in the articles. They are mainly depicted as invaders and threats to the culture of the country they arrived to and in much fewer cases they come across as victims of circumstances they are not responsible for (Horsti, 2016, p.2). Horsti also highlighted the power of imagery in depicting irregular migration in a questionable manner, sometimes unintentionally (the choice of picture by the journalist not meant to intentionally shed light on refugees in a bad connotation but the semiotic meanings behind the picture do transfer negative emotions) and many times intentionally. The general finding of the study of Horsti is that refugees or people with immigrant backgrounds are framed in news based on the journalists' views and they do not have their voices heard in the mainstream media. This finding corresponds to what Sjöberg and Rydin (2014) wrote about from the point of view of the 'other side'. According to a series of interviews carried out amongst 75 refugee families in Sweden, the feeling of otherness and exclusion of society is an issue that the interviewees highlighted many times (Sjöberg and Rydin, 2014, pp.202-203). The refugees participating in the study pointed out that the Swedish media doesn't portray them correctly, moreover they are depicted as inferior to Europeans (Sjöberg and Rydin, 2014, p.203-206). In general, the study found out that the Swedish media maintains a discursive power structure which contributes to promote exclusion and segregation rather than inclusion and the understanding of different cultures (Sjöberg and Rydin, 2014, p.207).

Esses et al. (2013) analysed media representation of refugees from a Canadian point of view. They argued that media outlets take advantage of the situation of the refugees whose status are uncertain in many countries due to unclear immigration

policies and as referred to in the text of Horsti and Sjöberg and Rydin the lack of voice in the mainstream media. The uncertain policies make refugees easily abusable by the media and political parties, and by the sensationalist tone that intentionally addresses the situation as a 'crisis' to make citizens consider refugees as threats (Esses et al., 2013, pg.519). After carrying out focus group tests in which Esses et al. included editorial articles and cartoons about refugees as bearers of infectious diseases, bogus queue-jumpers and potential terrorists, they found out that 'uncertainty surrounding immigration, paired with the media's proclivity to focus on negative rather than positive news stories, can lead to extreme negative reactions to immigrants and refugees—their removal from the human race through dehumanization' (Esses et al., 2013, pg.529-531). The keyword in the text of Esses et al. is dehumanisation as a method that helps citizens to channel negative emotions towards refugees and thus defend their wellbeing from an imminent threat. Even though it is not the topic of this thesis, therefore it will be not mentioned extensively, it is also worth mentioning that there are same tendencies can be observed on social media: Rettberg and Gajjala (2015) wrote about the way social media audiences (and especially Twitter) portray male Syrian refugees as rapists, cowards, and terrorists under the hashtag #refugeesNOTwelcome.

### **Refugees and immigration in political discourse**

Media representation of refugees contributes to agenda-setting and framing. However, it is the political stance and communication that activates citizens to vote or act in some way. There have been many examples of the topic of refugees being the centre of political campaigns and communication in Europe in answer to the refugee crisis, therefore there are many studies available that analyses the politics of these (mostly negative) campaigns. In a 13 years analysis period that aimed at measuring the popularity of anti-immigrant parties via monthly surveys, Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart (2007) found that 'news media coverage highlighting immigration issues as politically or socially important significantly contribute to the success of anti-immigrant populism' (Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart, 2007, pg.407). Among the

findings, it was also mentioned that the decision on supporting anti-immigration parties was not based on economic considerations but rather on cultural and thus emotional standpoints (Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart, 2007, pg.413).

One of most the recent political campaigns built on post-factual information and anti-refugee rhetoric - two phenomena that oftentimes go together in recent years (Marton, 2017) - is the Brexit campaign in the United Kingdom. Hobolt (2016) analysed the socio-demographic aspects of the Brexit referendum based on the results of the voting. She found that similarly to other examples of populist parties around Europe, the anti-establishment, anti-EU and anti-immigration sentiments, together with economic considerations helped the Leave campaign to be a success. The messages about 'taking back control' in the UK and thus defending the nation's integrity was especially popular among less-educated and elderly citizens, also among people who were worried about the negative effects of immigration, according to Hobolt (2016).

When selecting the literature to include in this thesis, I have not found a research about the analysis that were specifically about the Hungarian government's campaigns on the refugee crisis. This was definitely a limitation to my thesis topic. However, there are several newspaper articles (so not scientific studies) available that addressed the campaign materials that I will also analyse in a later section. As Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart, and Hobolt introduced, Veczán (2016) also mentioned that economic and refugee related questions are mixed together in the campaign materials, complemented with cultural aspects. Tibor Závach, the former director of the Ipsos polling institute discussed the questions of the Hungarian national consultation letter (Diószegi-Horváth, 2015). He stated that the national consultation letter is a political propaganda, covered in a public poll as the questions of the letter guide the reader to a way of thinking, intentionally mixing together terrorism, immigration and social issues and presenting them in a one-sided, manipulative way. Havasi (2015) came to the same conclusion about the questions, highlighting that the consultation survey relies on emotions rather than facts; that it is cynical, non-representative by design, and raises serious ethical and professional questions regarding the representation of the refugee crisis.

## **Populist leaders about refugees and immigration**

The Leave campaign of Brexit had a key figure in Nigel Farage whose charismatic appearance greatly contributed to effectively channel the messages of the campaign. There are similar examples of populist parties having a similar, charismatic leader. Vossen (2011) studied the ideological development of Dutch far-right winged politician, Geert Wilders. According to the study, Wilders started out as a conservative liberal and through the years he shifted towards being a national populist. This case can be relatable to the Fidesz party and its leader, Viktor Orbán who himself also started out as a liberal after the fall of the Soviet Union. During his campaign activities, Wilders expressed strong Islamophobic sentiments and worked for the marginalisation of Muslims by referring to them as ‘street terrorists’, ‘Muslim colonists’ (Vossen, 2011, pg.185-186). An important point in Wilder’s populist politics is strong nationalism and the promotion of national values against the values of the European Union (Vossen, 2011, pg.185). Since Vossen’s text, the Dutch seemed to reject Wilder’s politics by trusting the majority of their votes to another party in the 2017 Dutch elections.

Stockemer and Barisione (2017) focused on another charismatic political figure, Marine Le Pen. In their study, they carried out a content analysis of more than 350 Front National (Le Pen’s party) communication materials (e.g. press releases and Facebook posts) to understand the reasoning behind the huge success of the party in recent years. Based on old and new presidential programmes, Stockemer and Barisione argue that the change in the leadership position within Front National (Marine Le Pen replaced her father Jean Marie Le Pen) increased the populist rhetoric and the party became more focused on its leader, Marine Le Pen as a charismatic ‘problem-solver’ with nationalist sentiments who fights for the oppressed hard-working French people (Stockemer and Barisione, 2017, pg.104). There was a major change in the approach to immigration with the start of the Marine Le Pen leadership. Before her time, Front National pointed at immigration as a cause of the problems of France but did not offer solutions to fight it, whereas Marine Le Pen identified anti-immigration as a holistic solution, a way to overcome social and economic issues (Stockemer and Barisione, 2017, pg.107).

The study of Stein (2017) is probably one of the most relevant literature to the topic of this study. In his text, the subject of the analysis was the public speeches of Viktor Orbán, the Hungarian Prime Minister to date about refugees and the Hungarian identity. Stein used a critical discourse analysis with a historic-discourse approach to analyse the texts. The study's hypothesis is that via his speeches, Orbán securitizes the refugee crisis as an existential threat to Hungary and by constructing a social identity model, he maximizes the impact the politicization of the situation which then results in more support of his party (Stein, 2017, pg.14). From many aspects, Stein identifies major similarities to what Vossen (2011) and Stockemer and Barisione (2017) wrote in their studies about other charismatic leaders. Similarly, to Wilder's one of the main topic of Orbán's speeches is the incompetent European Union that cannot handle the refugee situation (Stein, 2017, pg.29-48) and similarly to Le Pen, Orbán as well raises his voice for a homogenous Hungary where anti-immigration and a strong social identity is a key to secure the welfare, the culture, and the values of a nation (Stein, 2017, pg.56). Stein also argues for a shift in Orbán and his party's ideology towards far-right, but mentions that Orbán himself has never been openly xenophobic, racist, or channelling Islamophobic sentiments, he does not halt the spread of these views either (Stein, 2017, pg.57). Viktor Orbán has been a prominent character in the Hungarian political landscape from the end of the Soviet era in Hungary and Stein's text I believe proves how charismatic leader he is among Hungarians. While Stein's text focuses on Orbán's speeches only and constructs a reality based on them, I believe my thesis can complement Stein in providing an analysis from another point of view, focusing on the anti-immigration publications of the government that Orbán and his party uses.

### **Literature review summary**

When summarising the literature review, several patterns can be identified regarding the representation of refugees in the media and in political campaigns in connection to the refugee crisis of 2015-2016. It seems that dehumanising anti-immigration sentiments are efficiently transferred in a populist way as described by

Canovan (1999) and introduced in the theoretical framework. In European countries, anti-immigration also comes with anti-EU views and with the notion of nationalism where the promises of the campaigns and the populist parties are to defend the integrity of the country and the cultural values of the nation. This notion is no different in the case of the Hungarian government. The points in the summary will be key for the analysis of the empirical data of this thesis.

## **Data and methodology**

The data analysis is focusing on the Hungarian government's communication campaigns about refugees and 'economic immigrants' during 2015 and 2016. The reason for choosing the two-year period for the topic of the thesis is based on the communicative acts of the government. The first openly hostile governmental publication against refugees and 'economic immigrants' during the European refugee crisis were issued in May 2015 and I consider the failed refugee quota referendum in October 2016 as a closure of an all-out communicative attack against 'economic immigration', as the rhetoric shifted towards other directions.

In first step, I reconstructed the timeline of the context section that provided a list of Hungarian events, based on news articles. As a Hungarian who follows the politics of Hungary I also relied on my personal experiences and memory to reconstruct the political environment of the nearly two-years period. In the next step, I collected publicly available and relevant campaign materials issued by the Hungarian government. The materials were vastly differed from each other: there has been extensive information campaigns on the streets of Hungary, a national consultation letter was issued in the name of Viktor Orbán, press releases and press events organised by the Hungarian government, interviews, PR articles and paid advertisements of all sorts (pictures with texts, TV spots, banners etc.) in media outlets. After the data collection, I grouped the materials into two: the publications (either online or printed) that the Hungarian government released and public appearances (videos, articles or

radio interviews) in which government officials communicated about the stance of the government. The comparison of the content and the messages of the materials resulted in revealing that the foundation to all communication from government officials during public appearances were the campaign materials released by the Hungarian government. Due to the limitations of this thesis, I decided to therefore to base my analysis on the publications that has been issued by the government to Hungarian citizens, as they contained the quintessential of all messages.

While collecting the data and deciding about the campaign materials to analyse, a rhetorical shift has stood out between the communication during the two years concerning the subject of the ‘antagonist’ role and therefore, I grouped the communication and campaign materials under two phases:

1. *The sensitisation of Hungarians against immigration and refugees*

This phase lasted from January 2015, the start of the arrival of refugees in big numbers to Hungary, to January 2016, until the quota referendum is announced. This period consists of media appearances, a national consultation letter and the first information campaign with the ‘If you come to Hungary’ billboards.

2. *The sensitisation of Hungarians against ‘Brussels’*

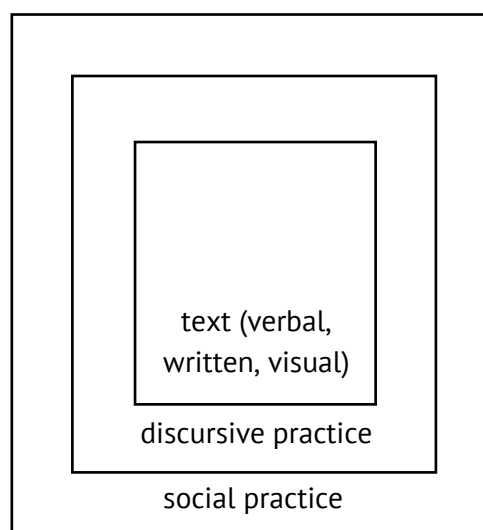
This phase lasted from January 2016, the announcement of the quota referendum until the end of October 2016, the follow-up of the quota referendum. This period consists of the ‘Did you know?’ billboard campaign, information publications, media appearances and the referendum itself with the communication in the follow-up.

The focus of my analysis therefore is on discussing and providing argumentation for this rhetorical shift. To compare the communication practices between the two phases, I will analyse the national consultation letter about ‘immigration and terrorism’ from the first phase, and an information booklet about the quota referendum from the second phase and compare the rhetoric and messages of the two publications. I believe,

both materials provide a comprehensive view on the messages channelled by the government in the different phases. Additional campaign materials are mentioned during the analysis and in the context section, should they complement the social and discursive practices of that period. Since the subjects of the analysis are in Hungarian, I translated them into English and recreated the publications via publication editing tools. The original versions of the materials are available in the references.

My analysis will deal with qualitative aspects of the research topic. Qualitative analyses have an ‘emphasis on the points of view concerning expressions, language and the object’s surroundings, backgrounds, aims and meanings’ (University of Jyväskylä, 2017a). I will use Fairclough’s three-dimensional critical discourse analysis approach to analyse the publications by the Hungarian government, as CDA ‘brings social science and linguistics (...) together within a single theoretical and analytical framework, setting up a dialogue between them’ (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999, pg.6; ref. in Sheyholislami, 2001) and my aim with the analysis is to provide an imprint of a period from social and discursive point of view. A philosophical base for discourse analysis is social constructionism and linguistics (University of Jyväskylä, 2017b) which by its principles views knowledge and reality formed in a natural way by social and linguistic interaction (University of Jyväskylä, 2017c).

There are two key elements in the centre of attention of CDA: the communicative event through which language is used to express something, and the order of discourse which defines the way of the production and consumption of text or talk (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pg.67). Therefore, the three-dimensional model of Fairclough focuses on the analysis of these elements from the following aspects:



**Figure 2** The three dimensions in the three-dimensional model of Fairclough. Recreated by the author based on Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002

(1) the linguistic features of the text (text), (2) processes relating to the production and consumption of the text (discursive practice); and (3) the wider social practice to which the communicative event belongs (social practice) (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pg.68)

In relation to the Hungarian government’s communication, the analytical questions around which my analysis will revolve is how the government depicts refugees and ‘economic immigrants’ both by textual and discursive aspects; what emotions do the materials evoke in the text in the light of post-factuality and contemporary politics; how the government frames and keeps the question of the refugee crisis in the public debate; and ultimately I will use the analysis of the three dimension to answer the second research question of this thesis, which aims to reveal any connection between the anti-immigration rhetoric of the government and four points of populist practices introduced in the theoretical framework section.

The name of the method, ‘critical discourse analysis’ gives away its aim which is to be critical towards a discourse practice and point out imbalance between power relation (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pg.63). Therefore, it should be highlighted that CDA is not politically neutral but takes side with oppressed social groups (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pg.64). In my case, when analysing the discourse of the Hungarian government, the subject or the oppressed groups are both refugees and Hungarian people who do not agree with the politics of Fidesz-KDNP. This thesis will hopefully shed light on the imbalance in the public debate and the power structures in the period.

The data analysis section will also include semiotic analysis to complement the critical discourse analysis, in which the focus will be on the additional photos and illustrations that complement the text of the analysed materials. Visual materials are commonly used as part of a discourse, therefore researchers who use critical discourse analysis consider photos, illustrations etc. as text and study the relationship of them to language (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pg.61). ‘Semiotics explores the content of signs, their use and the formation of meanings of signs at both the level of a single sign and the broader systems and structures formed by signs’ (University of Jyväskylä, 2017d). Thus, the semiotic analysis will focus on identifying signs and how they “mediate” between the external world and our internal “world”, or how a sign “stands for” or “takes

the place of” something from the real world in the mind of a person’ (Kenney, 2005, p.99). The semiotic analysis will be used to identify ‘signs’ on photos depicting refugees, and to find out what visual connotations the Hungarian government wanted to channel in the topic of the refugee crisis.

I believe using a method that builds on so much subjective interpretation is both a strength and a weakness. For some, interpretations of social practices and the construction of a social reality could be too vague, but for others, strict frameworks related to other approaches could be too limiting. Using critical discourse analysis to analyse the data I collected, I believe serves the need of this thesis, as a thorough analysis of the campaign materials from three dimensions could provide a comprehensive approach to answer the research questions raised, and evidence or rebuttal to the hypothesis. I believe this is a strength of the method. I also consider being Hungarian and familiar with the context of the messages and publications a strength, providing me a better insight on the events for the critical discourse analysis. The weaknesses probably lie between the focused approach I took in analysing and comparing two materials: one from 2015 and the other from 2016. By this I will not have the chance to introduce and analyse the reactions to the government’s communication practices, nor to shed light on the opposition’s view on the topic. However, I believe my approach could provide a comprehensive and focused view on the government’s campaigns and the differences between the two phases mentioned above.

### **Ethical considerations**

Protection of human rights (and animals) is in the core of ethical codices, as they guide researchers to minimise any risk that can harm the participants of a research. Today, these considerations are fundamental bases of researches not only in biomedical contexts but in all fields of science.

At their core, the basic tenets shared by these policies include the fundamental rights of human dignity, autonomy, protection, safety, maximization of benefits and minimization of harms, or, in the most recent accepted phrasing, respect for persons, justice, and beneficence. (Markham and Buchanan, 2012, pg.4)

Given the fact that my thesis focuses on analyses of texts and my research work does not involve working with humans or animals, related ethical considerations do not apply. However, there are several considerations related to moral norms and law. The Swedish Research Council (2011) summarised the scope of their research guidelines in eight points. According to their rules reflecting on the content of their good practice book, as a researcher, you should:

- tell the truth about your research.
- consciously review and account for the purpose(s) of your studies.
- openly account for your methods and results.
- openly account for commercial interests and other associations.
- not steal research results from others.
- keep your research organized, for instance through documentation and archiving.
- strive to conduct your research without harming people, animals or the environment.
- be fair in your judgement of others' research. (Swedish Research Council, 2011, pg.12)

Additionally, Fairclough also pointed out ethical considerations for discourse analysts using his method regarding the public use of the outcomes. The risk that was identified is that the results of any critical discourse analysis can be used to alter social discourses and encourage social engineering (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pg.88).

During writing my thesis, the considerations above were respected and the data analysis was conducted according to the ethical norms above.

### **Role as a researcher**

I feel that it is important to point out my individual involvement related to the topic. As a Hungarian, speaking Hungarian, I was affected by communication of the Hungarian government, therefore my analysis will be based on both knowledge I gained

via materials from external sources but also from personal experiences. I also need to add that I am not affiliated with any governmental institution, nor to any refugee activist network in Hungary.

## **Analysis of data**

The data analysis section is dedicated to study the communication materials of the Hungarian government with CDA methods. Therefore, the text will refer to the context and theoretical framework sections to underpin discursive and social practices. During the analysis of the data, my mission also revolves around answering RQ2 by comparing the communication acts of the Hungarian government to the text of Canovan (1999) and to the examples from other countries discussed in the literature review section. The data analysis is carried out according to the two phases indicated in the data and methodology section.

### **First phase: sensitisation against immigration and refugees**

According to my categorisation, the first phase of the communication strategy of the Hungarian government aimed at sensitising Hungarian citizens against refugees and immigrants. In chronological order the first main milestone was to send out a national consultation letter asking Hungarians to send back a consultation survey, that aims to collect their opinions in questions related to immigration and terrorism. Shortly after, to boost the interest in the consultation, the government initiated a billboard campaign with three messages in Hungarian:

- If you come to Hungary, you need to respect our culture! (Figure 3)
- If you come to Hungary, you need to respect our laws!
- If you come to Hungary, you cannot take the jobs of Hungarians!



**Figure 3** An example of a poster from the 'If you come to Hungary' billboard campaign. Reconstructed with the English translation by the author (Hungarian Government, 2015a)

Seemingly, these messages were aimed at refugees and immigrants, however, the messages were written in Hungarian, in a language that is most probably not understandable by them, but more so by Hungarians who could develop an attitude towards immigrants by reading these messages. There have also been many media appearances by government officials commenting (negatively) on the crisis to reinforce the messages and to keep the topic on the public agenda.

### ***Analysis of the national consultation letter about immigration and terrorism***

As introduced in the context section, in May 2015 the national consultation letters have arrived to Hungarian citizens as part of the government's strategy. The letter included two pages: the first consisted of a personal message from the Prime Minister of Hungary, Viktor Orbán. The second page was the consultation survey itself. The English translation with the reconstructed letter can be seen on Figure 4 and 5.



**Dear Hungarian Citizen,**

In 2010, we, Hungarians have decided that we will discuss all important issues before making any decisions. This is the reason, why we started a national consultation about the new constitution of the country, the social security of all of us, and bettering the living conditions of pensioners among many. And this is why we are starting now a national consultation about the question of economic immigration.

As you surely remember, Europe has been struck by an exceptional terror attack. Innocent people have been killed cold-bloodedly and with frightening brutality in Paris. What has happened, left all of us stunned. This monstrosity cannot be comprehended by human sense and showed that Brussels and the European Union cannot properly handle the question of immigration.

Economic immigrants cross the borders illegally, and while they act as refugees, they come for social benefits and work opportunities. Just in the past few months the number of economic immigrants have been multiplied by twenty in Hungary. This is a new type of threat that must be stopped.

Brussels has failed to handle immigration; therefore, Hungary needs to go down its own road. We will not let economic immigrants to put Hungarians' workplaces and wellbeing in danger.

We need to make a choice on how Hungary should defend itself against illegal border-crossing. We need to make a choice on how to limit the explosive growth of economic immigration.

I would like to ask you with all due respect to get in contact with us, tell us what you think about the questions raised, and send us back the filled-out consultation survey. I count on your opinion.

Best regards,  
**Viktor Orbán**

**Figure 4** The first page of the national consultation letter. Issued by the Hungarian government in the name of Viktor Orbán. Reconstructed with English translation by the author (Hungarian Government, 2015b)



# NATIONAL CONSULTATION

## about immigration and terrorism

PUBLISHER: PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

### Fill in the survey!

- 1) There are many opinions about the intensifying terror attacks. How important do you think spreading terrorism (the French massacre, the frightening acts of ISIS) is in terms of your own life?  
 Really important  Important  Not important
- 2) Do you think that Hungary can be the target of terror attacks in the next years?  
 There is a serious chance  Could happen  Perfectly impossible
- 3) There are people who think that there is a correlation between the mishandling of immigration by Brussels and the spread of terrorism. Do you agree with these opinions?  
 Totally agree  I rather agree  I don't agree
- 4) Did you know that economic immigrants cross the border illegally and in recent times the number of them have been multiplied by twenty in Hungary?  
 Yes  I heard about it  I didn't know
- 5) There are many opinions about immigration. There are people, who think that economic immigrants put Hungarians' workplaces and wellbeing in danger! Do you agree with these opinions?  
 Totally agree  I rather agree  I don't agree
- 6) There are people, who think that the politics of Brussels regarding immigration and terrorism has failed and therefore, there is a need for a new approach regarding these topics. Do you agree with these opinions?  
 Totally agree  I rather agree  I don't agree
- 7) Would you support the Hungarian government to introduce a stricter immigration policy in opposition to Brussels' permissive policies?  
 I would fully support it  I would partially support it  I would not support it
- 8) Would you support the Hungarian government to introduce stricter policies based on which illegal immigrants can be arrested?  
 I would fully support it  I would partially support it  I would not support it
- 9) Do you agree with the opinion that immigrants that cross the borders illegally should be sent back to their own country in the shortest possible time frame?  
 I would fully support it  I would partially support it  I would not support it
- 10) Do you agree that economic immigrants should self-support their living expenses while staying in Hungary?  
 Totally agree  I rather agree  I don't agree
- 11) Do you agree that the best way to fight immigration is that the European Union member states help the development of the countries where immigrants come from?  
 Totally agree  I rather agree  I don't agree
- 12) Do you agree with the Hungarian government that instead of supporting immigration, there is rather a need to support Hungarian families and soon-to-be-born children?  
 Totally agree  I rather agree  I don't agree

**Figure 5** The second page of the national consultation letter. Issued by the Hungarian government. Reconstructed with English translation by the author (Hungarian Government, 2015b)

*Discursive practice*

The national consultation letter carries a high degree of interdiscursivity, by containing various discourses in one text. The mix contains descriptions of the place where the text gains relevance (Europe and Hungary and the connection of the two in relation to the refugee crisis) and the atmosphere that sets the tone for the letter (the seriousness of the question of immigration). The narrative is there to reveal the events that made the letter to be written (similar consultations have been already initiated, the terror attacks, the high number of immigrations arriving to the country, and the mishandling of the situation by the European Union), and to connect the chain of events, thus creating a narrative thus manipulating the reader, as mentioned by Závach (Diószegi-Horváth, 2015). This manipulative intention through narratives also point in the direction of Hendricks (2016) who also discussed similar practices in post-factual politics. The conversational and personal approach of the letter addresses the reader directly with the pronoun ‘you’, involving him or her into a community, the community of Hungarians in which Viktor Orbán also belongs, by referring to the group as ‘we’, and calling the reader for action (‘I would like to ask you...’ and ‘I count on your opinion.’).

In terms of genres, several of them are identifiable. Firstly, the format in which the text is presented is a letter, including all the features of a letter by addressing the reader, and including the writer’s name and signature (in the original Hungarian version). This makes the text personal, as if it would be a message that has been sent directly to the receiver of the letter. By looking at a text, one can also identify notions of a public speech as the writer of the text (the Prime Minister of Hungary) addresses the receiver (a Hungarian citizen) within a hierarchical setting (the leader addresses its followers). In such a setting, the power relations are unequal, and the sides of the letter (Orbán, the charismatic leader and the ordinary, hard-working Hungarians) show similarities to the power relations of Wilders (Vossen, 2011) and Le Pen (Stockemer and Barisione, 2017) to their supporters. The letter also contains a survey, in which twelve questions are asked with an option to answer them by choosing from ‘ready-made’ answers.

There have been similar letters sent out before to Hungarian citizens, therefore interdiscursivity can be found in the format (the Prime Minister addresses the citizens, the letter is signed by Viktor Orbán himself, the usage of the Hungarian crest etc.). At the time of issuing the letter, the topic of the immigration crisis has been new on the public agenda in Hungary (therefore the purpose of agenda setting and framing can also be found when analysing the background of the text), however there has been already a Parliamentary debate about the refugee crisis and many public statements by government officials which the letter intertextually builds on. The discourse environment in which the letter was issued was introduced in the context section of this thesis between January 2015 to May 2015.

#### *Textual attributes*

When thinking about a national consultation or in fact any kind of consultation, one can argue that the aim should be to receive meaningful feedbacks about a topic to assess the opinion of the consultants and after, to conclude about what to do in the next steps. This is not the case with this letter. The text is filled with elements that give away the point of view of the writer, Viktor Orbán and the government and thus guiding the reader into a way of thinking. As a first point, Závach highlighted ‘national’ in the title of the publication, that suggests that the consultation will represent the whole nation’s point of view, however this is not true, as the people who sent back such a survey will never form a representative group (Diószegi-Horváth, 2015). I believe, one of the most striking example of manipulation is the usage of the word ‘economic immigrant’. This letter has been written after a terror attack in Paris and before refugees and immigrants started to show up in high numbers at the borders of Hungary. It was important on how to set the agenda and frame the topic of immigration from governmental side towards Hungarian citizens to explain them the situation. Using the expression ‘economic immigrant’ instantly gives away the intentions of the government on how they want Hungarians to see refugees: people who come for economic purposes, putting in danger the workplace and wellbeing of Hungarians. Even ‘immigrant’ (migráns in Hungarian) as a choice of word evokes mistrust, as ‘immigrant’ is a foreign word in Hungarian,

unfamiliar and not widely used, therefore it serves the purpose of alienation and negative connotation towards the subject of the word. In opposition, ‘refugee’ (menekült in Hungarian) is a more familiar word for Hungarian citizens and channels a positive connotation (a person who is running away from something and needs some sort of an aid). The case is similar to what Horsti (2016) found in photos (the semiotic signs on the photos she analysed evoked bad connotation) but in this case the manipulation lies in the text. The adjective ‘illegal’ in front of ‘economic immigrants’ also reinforces bad implications in the reader.

There is a call for interaction from the side of Orbán towards the reader and even if it cannot be considered as a conversation, it is important to analyse how the interaction is controlled in the text. The communicative style that Orbán uses is subjective: he is completely devoted to the statements he makes, making them appear as undeniable and straightforward facts (which again is questionable, because the message has been sent out as a part of a consultation letter). This also results in other opinions completely ignored in the message. The modality of the text is alethic, as the writer, Orbán discusses possibilities (the wellbeing of Hungarians might be in danger if the situation continues) and necessities (the necessity for Hungary to go down its own road; the necessity to decide in a very serious dilemma etc.). The use of language many times shifts between emotionally charged (cold-bloodedly, frightening, monstrosity etc.) and sensationalist (exceptional, explosive, stunned, threat etc.) which considering the factual and the official format in which the text would like to appear could be considered as post-factualist rhetoric as described by Hendricks (2016). Post-factuality can also be observed by the inaccurate use of statistical data (the text mentions that the number of immigrants have been multiplied by twenty in Hungary, however it doesn’t give away the exact numbers, nor it relates to the population of Hungary or other comparable data so the reader cannot know what exactly this means in numbers).

The personal message of Orbán starts by reminding the reader that consultations are initiated when there is a serious question to answer, and the question of immigration is serious enough to discuss via the form of a consultation. By the statements in the introduction, he sets the tone for the reader. He then continues with the mention of the

Charlie Hebdo terror attack that seemingly does not fit into the text. The previous and the forthcoming sentences discuss the question of economic immigration and without any connecting elements, like conjunctions or via the flow of ideas he sticks in a part about a terror attack. This makes it unclear how economic immigration is connected to terrorism but nevertheless creates a mental connotation within the reader between the topic of refugees (economic immigrants) and terrorism. Even at the end of the paragraph, when the EU's mishandling of the question of immigration is the topic, the lack of explanation on how this is directly connected to terrorism is missing, hindering the clear understanding of the context. It is important to highlight that the use of the word 'refugee' (menekült) appears only once in the whole consultation letter and the reason for it to appear in this paragraph, making a revelation about economic immigrants disguising themselves as refugees. Taking into consideration the Hungarian context, could be understood as an attempt to devalue the word, sensitising Hungarian citizens against refugees by depreciating the label of 'refugees' and dehumanising the subject (Esses et al., 2013). The rest of the content is mostly a repetition of the first part or the same ideas rephrased, that carries the features more like a campaign booklet than a personal message from the head of state. At the end of the letter, Orbán calls the reader to share their views in the survey that is attached to this personal message.

The consultation survey consists of 12 mostly yes-no questions. However, there are three answers to each question that the participants of the survey can choose from. In a case of a yes-no question where the options are 'Totally agree', 'I rather agree' and 'I don't agree' or 'I would fully support it', 'I would partially support it' and 'I would not support it', two of the answers are positive and one of the answers is negative. From the two positive answers, one is more positive than the other, however there is no space for participant to explain the answers. From the three options, there are always two that supports the stance of the government or supports the views in Orbán's personal message. This has been pointed out by Závach as well (Diószegi-Horvát, 2015). This might be confusing and misleading to the participants of the survey. It also raises the question about the usefulness of the consultation.

Some of the questions can also be pointed out as not necessarily useful in a consultation process. Question number 1, 3, 5, 6, and 9 collect answers about opinions of some ‘people’, and by ignoring other opinions in the texts, and avoiding the clashing of at least two opposite views, the questions remain one-sided and manipulative (Diószegi-Horváth, 2015). Similarly, to the problem above, question number 7, 8, 10, and 11 ask participants about a ready-made option, rather than listing a few different actions to choose from. The way the question is phrased, the lack of options in the text and the non-existence of places to explain opinions in detail, I believe hinders getting to know various opinions about the topic of immigration. Question number 4 is a repetition of an information mentioned already in the personal message of Orbán but this time in a question form. This can also be told about question number 3, 5, and 6. Question number 12 put the participants of the survey into a moral dilemma by forcing them to choose between supporting immigration or supporting Hungarian families and ‘soon-to-be-born children’ whereas it has never been stated in the letter that supporting refugees would deduct the funds of the government from supporting Hungarian families. According to Havasi (2015), this is not only a mistake in the argument but conscious use of ‘irrelevant argument’, when connecting two facts when there is no evidence that the two can be connected, therefore the reader can agree with one of the facts without necessarily agreeing with the other. The definition of the Cambridge dictionary for the word ‘demagogue’ is ‘a person, especially a political leader, who wins support by exciting the emotions of ordinary people rather than by having good or morally right ideas’ (Cambridge Dictionary, 2017). Based on this description, I believe that question number 12 could be considered demagogic.

### *Social practice*

I believe the analysis on discursive practices and textual attributes reveal that the power relations within the discourse are imbalanced. On one-side there is the government of Hungary that leads the interaction and takes side with the supporters with the same views. On the other side there are refugees, immigrants, and citizens who do not agree how the discourse developed but whose voice cannot be heard within the

text. The ideology of the government overpowers the discussion, which means that the discourse can be considered hegemonic.

Arguably, the discursive practices within the letter mould into a populist approach to the communication as described by Canovan (1999). Firstly, in the idea of initiating a consultation (or rather a survey) about a political question between citizens and the government, I believe can be considered as a tool of direct democracy, which is widely used by populist parties to justify their power by the public's will. Secondly, in the power relations, more precisely the way how the 'charismatic leader', the Prime Minister of Hungary reaches out to the Hungarian citizens to defend the country against the minorities (refugees) who are putting the wellbeing of Hungarians into danger. The identification of economic immigration as a social threat (economic immigrants put in danger Hungarians workplaces) resonate well with what Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart (2007) wrote about which states the anti-immigrant sentiments mixed together with unemployment related questions results in more support for the anti-immigrant parties (pg.414). Thirdly, in the approach of addressing citizens as part of a homogenous mass with identical ideas and opinions, and thus representing the whole nation in the letter. Finally, in the way of the language and text use, which is simple, straightforward, easily understandable for the people and at the same time uses words that are sensationalist and built on emotions rather than facts. Ultimately all discursive practices within the letter are used to create a world view in the mind of the Hungarians, where the country is in danger, and the only hope to save it is to give ultimate power to the Hungarian government by participating in a survey and supporting the thoughts of the leader of the country, Viktor Orbán who can then defend the interest of the citizens.

The consultation letter was only the start of the communication campaign against refugees and immigrants. The letter was followed by the 'If you come to Hungary' billboard campaign that continued channelling the messages of the consultation letter. The reception of the campaign divided Hungarians. There have been many cases of Hungarian citizens damaging the governmental posters. In response, a joke party, called Two-Tailed Dog Party (Kétfarkú Kutya Párt) and an online newspaper, Vastagbőr started their own billboard campaign against the anti-immigrant rhetoric.



**Figure 6** An example of a poster from the joke party's billboard campaign against the anti-immigration rhetoric of the government (Kétfarkú Kutya Párt and Vastagbőr, 2015)

However, this hasn't prevented Hungarians to change their attitude towards refugees and immigrants. TÁRKI Social Research (2016) Institute carried out a study about the social aspects of the immigration crisis in Hungary. TÁRKI reported that 'the rejection of the idea of an open society, in which scapegoating takes a central role, as well as fear ridden welfare chauvinism are strongly related, and are inseparable in people's minds' (pg.12). The organisation also highlighted that from 2014, the last data before the government's anti-immigration campaign to April 2015, the first data after the campaign, 'the level of xenophobia (...) immediately jumped to a very high level' (pg.12). 'In January 2016 the level of xenophobia reached an all time high' (pg.12).

As introduced in the context section of this thesis, the crisis escalated, a huge number of people arrived to Hungary by the Summer of 2015, seeking asylum. The European Union and the Hungarian government was not prepared to handle the reception of this many people which resulted first in refugees to fill up and settle down in the railway stations in Hungary. To prevent more refugees entering the country, the government built up a border fence in Southern Hungary. The EU also tried to solve the crisis by suggesting the resettlements among member states. This was met with a huge resistance from the Hungarians, but the indignation was mutual as the actions of the Hungarian government also evoked criticism among European leaders and the EU. As the dispute escalated, the Hungarian government's communication shifted from against immigrants towards against 'Brussels'.

## Second phase: sensitisation against ‘Brussels’

The Hungarian government categorically refused to accept any quota system suggested by the European Union. Instead, in January 2016, it was announced that the government will organise a national referendum ‘against forced resettlements’ in October 2016, even though the resettlement scheme was still in development, therefore leaders of the EU member states were still discussing the details of the plan. In the run-up to the quota referendum, another billboard campaign was initiated by the government. The ‘Did you know?’ billboards (Figure 7) channelled information about immigration and ‘forced resettlements’ and reminded people about what is at stake.



**Figure 7** Examples of the messages from the 'Did you know?' billboard campaign (Hungarian Government, 2016a). Reconstructed with English translation by the author

The billboards were followed by ads with similar messages as on the billboards, covering the most popular media outlets in Hungary. Government officials also echoed the messages put across via the campaign in their public speeches. Additionally, the government published an information booklet about the quota referendum including a comprehensive collection of their messages.

**Analysis of the referendum information booklet**

The reason for analysing the referendum information booklet is because I believe it contained most of the messages communicated by the government in the run-up to the referendum during 2016 and similarly to the national consultation letter it has been sent out via post to all Hungarian citizens to take part in an initiative organised by the government. Figure 8 to 15, shows the pages of the booklet with English translation. Veczán (2016) analysis mostly consisted of fact-checking related to the statements in the information booklet, however this will not be the case with my analysis as I will stick to the approach of the three-dimensional model.



**Figure 8** The cover of the referendum information booklet. (Hungarian Government, 2016b). Reconstructed with English translation by the author



**Figure 9** Page 2-3 of the referendum info booklet (Hungarian Government, 2016b). Reconstructed with English translation by the author

## IMMIGRATION PUTS EUROPE'S FUTURE IN DANGER

The number of illegal immigrants keeps on growing year by year. The European elite refuses to accept this problem.

**EUROPE DOES NOT DEFEND ITS BORDERS.**

Brussels thinks that the immigration is a good opportunity to handle population decline and workforce shortage. Hungary refuses this argument.

The Brusselian elite argues that Europe needs new workforce. The truth is that there are currently 21.4 million job-seekers from which 12.4 million is permanently unemployed.

**THE NUMBER OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS ARRIVED TO EUROPE**

Year	Number of Immigrants
2012	336 thousand
2013	432 thousand
2014	627 thousand
2015	1,5 million

Figure 10 Page 4-5 of the referendum info booklet (Hungarian Government, 2016b).  
Reconstructed with English translation by the author

## HUNGARY DEFENDS ITS BORDERS

The Hungarian government built a border fence in order to defend Hungary and Europe. In response, the European politics and press started a campaign against the Hungarian government. Nevertheless, there are more and more people supporting the Hungarian solution.

**INSTEAD OF FORCED RESETTLEMENTS, THERE IS A NEED TO DEFEND THE OUTER BORDERS SO THAT UNHINDERED TRAVEL CAN CONTINUE WITHIN THE EUROPEAN UNION.**

The Southern border fence lessen illegal immigration. However, the danger persists, therefore, the border has to be defended by any means. In response to this, the Hungarian government sent a 10-points action plan to EU leaders with the name Schengen 2.0. In this plan, the government suggested the reinforcement of the border control system.

**'Lot of people will thank later the Hungarian Prime Minister's actions at Hungary's borders.'**

Horst Seehofer, Prime Minister of Bavaria  
N24 German news channel

**IMMIGRANTS ARRIVED TO HUNGARY IN 2015**

Category	Number of Immigrants
BEFORE THE BORDER FENCE	390.638
AFTER THE BORDER FENCE	746

Figure 11 Page 6-7 of the referendum info booklet (Hungarian Government, 2016b).  
Reconstructed with English translation by the author

## ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION RAISES TERROR THREAT

**WE REFUSE FORCED RESETTLEMENTS BECAUSE IT WOULD RAISE TERROR THREAT.**

The immigrants mostly come from territories where European states carry out military actions. This raises security risks remarkably.

Terrorists use the lack of border control consciously and well-organised to dissolve in the masses of immigrants. Nobody can tell, how many terrorists have arrived among immigrants so far.

Viktor Orbán 'said it out loudly what a lot of leaders think but because of political correctness, they don't speak about it.'

Beata Szydlo, Polish Head of State  
TVN24 Polish news channel

The attacks in Paris and Brussels proved that **THERE IS A STRONG CORRELATION BETWEEN IMMIGRATION AND TERRORISM.**

January 2015 <b>PARIS</b> ↑ 17 DEAD	November 2015 <b>PARIS</b> ↑ 130 DEAD	March 2016 <b>BRUSSELS</b> ↑ 32 DEAD	July 2016 <b>NICE</b> ↑ 86 DEAD
+ 22 wounded	+ 368 wounded	+ 340 wounded	+ 303 wounded

Figure 12 Page 8-9 of the referendum info booklet (Hungarian Government, 2016b).  
Reconstructed with English translation by the author

## FORCED RESETTLEMENTS PUT OUR CULTURE AND TRADITIONS IN DANGER

With forced resettlements Europe would change, so would Hungary's ethical, cultural and religious consistency. Illegal immigrants don't respect our laws, and don't want to share our cultural values.

**IF WE DON'T ACT, WE WILL NOT RECOGNISE EUROPE IN A FEW DECADES.**

'I agree with Viktor Orbán that Europe needs a strong outer border'

David Cameron, former British Head of State during a press conference held together with Viktor Orbán

The illegal immigrants do not respect European norms, among others the rights of women. Since the beginning of the immigration crisis there is a spike of harassment cases against women

**NO-GO** THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF 'NO-GO' ZONES IN EUROPEAN BIG CITIES

Territories called 'no-go' zones are districts that the authorities cannot keep under their control. In these districts, the written or unwritten norms of the country do not apply. In the European countries where immigrants live in high number, there are hundreds of 'no-go' zones.

Figure 13 Page 10-11 of the referendum info booklet (Hungarian Government, 2016b).  
Reconstructed with English translation by the author

## THE DANGEROUS PLANS OF BRUSSELS

According to the suggestion of the European Commission, those member states that would not want to settle immigrants would get financial penalty.

**THE AMOUNT OF THE FINANCIAL PENALTY WOULD BE 78 MILLION FORINTS PER IMMIGRANT.**

As a comparison, a Hungarian person receives 1 million Forints EU support in seven years.

Brussels would hit all member states that says no to forced resettlements with

**78 MILLION**

Forint penalty per immigrant.

There is

**1 MILLION**

Forint support for each Hungarian in 7 years.

**BRUSSELS' ENVISAGED PENALTY PER IMMIGRANT IS THE SAME AMOUNT WHAT A HUNGARIAN PERSON WORKS FOR ON AVERAGE IN 39 YEARS**



Figure 14 Page 12-13 of the referendum info booklet (Hungarian Government, 2016b).  
Reconstructed with English translation by the author

## LET'S SEND A MESSAGE TO BRUSSELS!

**THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATED A REFERENDUM AGAINST FORCED RESETTLEMENTS.**

There is a need for the referendum because Brussels suggested to resettle immigrants arriving to the European Union based on a fixed quota among member states, on a mandatory basis.

Considering the current pace of immigration and family reunions, this would mean the settlement of a cityful of people in 5 years' time.

**BRUSSELS NEEDS TO BE STOPPED!**  
Via the referendum we can send a clear and straightforward message to Brussels.

We need to achieve that it revokes the dangerous proposal.  
**FOR THIS TO HAPPEN, WE NEED TO VOTE NO.**



Figure 15 Page 14-15 of the referendum info booklet (Hungarian Government, 2016b).  
Reconstructed with English translation by the author

*Discursive practice*

The referendum information booklet is a continuation of the framing of the refugee crisis in the liking of the Hungarian government, thus manipulating Hungarians into a way of thinking rather than informing citizens about an important referendum question in a balanced way by displaying argumentations for and against the refugee quotas. The discourse is set in a tone of a campaign, using catchy slogans to communicate to the reader and using a communicative approach as if it would be from a programme of a party (vote no and we ‘promise’ to do this). These practices show similarities to how Canovan (1999) discussed populist political movements’ approach to politics (making campaigns out of political questions). Therefore, interdiscursivity can be found between the booklet and election publications. Still fitting in the campaign discourse, the uses of statistical data is subordinate to the messages, communicating only the data that verifies the views of the Hungarian government, building on the practices that Harsin (2015) explained (there is no way to ultimately verify the truth). Similarly, to the national consultation letter, the text is narrative in a way that it does not only explain the events around the crisis and the refugee quotas but also connects them together in a manipulative way, explained in the textual attributes of this section. Via the personal discourse, the reader is not only asked to decide about whether the quota system is the good choice for Hungary or the European Union but explicitly asked to take part in the referendum voting and vote ‘no’ to save the country (another sign of populist practice). There is a strong intertextuality between the messages and the text of the information booklet to what has been communicated by government officials in public appearances (as described in the context section), thus this information booklet provides an accurate depiction of the governmental communication, both topics-wise and messages-wise within the period before the referendum and in the-run up to the voting.

*Textual attributes*

The cover of the booklet displays the message ‘Let’s send a message to Brussels so that they can understand it, too!’. The title gives away already in the cover that there

has been a shift in communication and the government wants Hungarians to have a new 'enemy' to fight, other than refugees. This idea continues within the publication, and refugees appear to underpin the importance of the fight against 'Brussels'.

Before moving on to analysing other parts of the booklet, it is important to discuss why the government communicates about stopping 'Brussels' and not the 'European Union' in this publication. Brussels, the city itself is definitely not responsible for any kind of suggested refugee quota, nevertheless the government kept on using 'Brussels' in all the communication. My argument is that the reason for using the word 'Brussels' is a conscious choice. There was and still a several disputes between the Hungarian government and the European Union in many topics but it is not in the interest of the government to defame and turn people against the EU, as on a longer term, it is more beneficial for Hungary to stay in the union. This is the reason I believe, why the Hungarian government always stayed vague, blurry, and undefined and rarely referred to a specific European body or the European Union in the communication but to 'Brussels', which is not an accurate phrasing when referring to the EU but works as an 'imaginary' enemy. Veczán (2016) also mentioned the vague phrasing in his article and the recurring 'Brussels' and 'Brusselian elite', but he concluded that it is because of the reason that the Hungarian government could not find any scapegoat among major politicians from the EU who stated what the Hungarian government included in the booklet.

The text uses alethic modality when confronting its readers to possibilities and necessities. Among the possibilities it envisions a Europe that might be not recognisable anymore, more terror threats, and a huge penalty after each immigrant should Hungary disagree to accept the quota. Among the necessities, it reinforces the idea of the border fence (and thus justifies the actions of the Hungarian government), it echoes the communication earlier about the necessity to stop immigration, and highlights the need for stopping Brussels' refugee quota. As the text carries similarities to a campaign material, it is subjective and imbalanced. The statements are one-sided and lack factual basis (e.g. 'Illegal immigrants don't respect our laws, and don't want to share our cultural values' or 'Illegal immigrants do not respect European norms'), thus the

publication does not serve its purpose as an information booklet which supposedly was the intention of the government.

The messages revolve around two main topics in the publication: data about refugees and immigrants, and the EU and the refugee quota. While the first part of the booklet focuses more on the former, the second part is on the latter. By this, the reader of this publication is reminded about the public discussion around the refugee crisis before shifting the attention towards the main aim of the text which is to convince the reader to take part and vote 'no' on the referendum. The two main topics are divided into seven subtopics. All of them have a short and concise title that summarizes the description and the argumentation of the Hungarian government below them. The titles contain many words with negative meaning or connotation (danger, illegal, terror, threat, forced, dangerous) raising concern and discomfort in the reader. The channelling of negative messages continues within the argumentation of the texts connected to the titles as well, having positive messages only when they are related to the actions of the Hungarian government (e.g. the Hungarian government defended the border of Hungary and the European Union). Evoking strong emotions can be considered as a post-factual technique to gain support. As another way to give credibility and justification, the publication contains quotes from other European politicians agreeing with the actions of the Hungarian government. There is a recurring element in the communication which discusses how and why Brussels is wrong (e.g. refugees are not stopped but invited; according to the EU, refugees will be able to fill currently vacant jobs whereas there are unemployment Europeans; the question of the financial penalty etc.) but these statements remain uncontrasted with messages on how the EU is right which I believe would be the role of such an information booklet.

The role of photos as textual elements in the publication is important as they carry strong associative and semiotic meanings. Among the seven pictures two of them depicting refugees and both have dehumanising features as discussed by Esses et al. (2013). On figure 9, refugees can be seen as a mass of people queuing up in a line that has no end, suggesting an invasion that is approaching Hungary. This depiction is like what Horsti (2016) wrote about. Around refugees there are two guards that oversee the

queue, resembling Hungary and the power relation between Hungarians and refugees. The setting of the scene is also suggestive: the garbage and rusty pipes around the people evoke an uncomfortable place to be at. Figure 10 contains another photo of refugees, set probably in a refugee camp. In the centre of the attention, there is a man with a huge stone raised above his head, suggesting that the swing of the stone will break something at his feet. The photo is cropped at the knees of the person, not letting the reader of the booklet to see what the man is trying to break. The cropping of the photo in such a way evokes discomfort in the reader by not showing what will be broken by the swing of the stone and suggests aggressive behaviour from the side of the man with the stone who could use the stone to attack something or someone.

The photos on Figure 11 and 12 depict elements that are related to armed forces – the police and the army. The combat car on Figure 11 suggests the authority of the Hungarian forces over the refugee situation, but also have a connotation that is related to wars, and thus hint at an emergency in which Hungary and the European Union are in. The presence of the armed forces on Figure 12 has a different connotation. The photo is related to the terror attack in Nice and role of the police forces is only to analyse the crime scene and thus the photo does not channel authority over the situation but more the contrary, chaos. These notions are also reinforced in the text around the photo.

The photo on Figure 14 depict European Union flags in front of a building, and the photo on Figure 15 shows Hungarian flags carried by a mass of people. While the former photo is rigid, cold, does not carry any emotional value, and does not feature a person, the latter photo suggests unity, a supportive attitude, and positive emotions by the people depicted. The texts around the photos also channel the same messages (EU flag – a faceless system that decides about financial penalties; Hungarian flag – people in unity to fight the oppressor Brussels).

Some of the illustrations of the publication also carry questionable messages. On Figure 12, there is a chart about the number of dead and wounded people of major terror attacks in 2015 and 2016 in the European Union. Above the number of dead people the Christian cross is used to illustrate the weight of the casualties. This suggests that dead people were only Christians which is not true as there were many dead with other

religious backgrounds. The map on Figure 13 also channels inaccurate and unclear information about the 'no-go' zones by not identifying and pointing out the places directly (the existence of the 'no-go' zones have been denied by many representatives of cities marked on the map).

### *Social practice*

The power relations between refugees and the Hungarian government described at the analysis of the national consultation letter still present in the information booklet. However, there is another power relation in the communication materials of 2016, including the information booklet. While the materials from 2015 showed superiority by the government towards refugees (lower culture, rapists, aggressive people etc.), the materials from 2016 (including the analysed booklet) show inferiority towards the European Union, who ultimately has the power to stop the refugee crisis and needs to be convinced to change its current politics, otherwise the Hungarian interests are put at risk.

The power relations are the bases of the populist discourse within the text as well. The message on the cover page of the booklet 'Let's send a message to Brussels so that they can understand it, too!', and the mention of the EU as the 'Brusselian elite' is a populist take that aims to frame the EU as the oppressors of the Hungarian ordinary, hard-working people. The booklet also suggests that it is only the Hungarian government that can help to ensure that the interests of the citizens are respected against the oppressing political elite. Similarly to the national consultation, the referendum is also a technique of direct democracy, by involving citizens in a process which aims at justifying the power of the government and maintaining the illusion of executive power granted to citizens.

The communication of the government was again met with resistance from the same joke party as during the national consultation campaign. An example of the messages can be seen in English on Figure 16.

The timing and the relevance of the referendum and the communication around it were arguably questionable, as the negotiations about the quotas were still ongoing

throughout 2016 including the Hungarian government as one of the discussing sides. Figure 1 also shows that the resettlements have not been realised during 2015, nor during 2016 (Hungary resettled only 5 refugees). It can also be noted that there was nothing at stake by the referendum, as the Hungarian government already made it clear even before the referendum that Hungary will not accept resettled immigrants. As discussed in the context section, the way of communication about the refugee crisis won over a lot of people and the governing coalition, Fidesz-KDNP gained a lot of supporters. As introduced in the context section, after the EU's agreement with Turkey and the closure of the Southern border of Hungary, there was a decrease in the number of refugees and immigrants approaching the country. The government needed to find a topic that they could control the public agenda with and could stay in a positive light among the supporters. Therefore, the communication about the refugee crisis combined with the oppressive Brussels could gain ground in 2016. The communication practices were beneficial for the Hungarian government, regardless the fact that the referendum failed (Markotay, 2016).

The rhetoric shift from attacking refugees to attacking Brussels can be also justified by the words of Viktor Orbán towards the end of the referendum campaign, when he said that the real problem is not with the refugees but with the bureaucrats in Brussels (Nyilas, 2016). The campaigning against Brussels continued in 2017 as well, as the Hungarian government organised another national consultation with the title 'Let's stop Brussels!', this time to defend Hungary's sovereignty in deciding on questions related to taxation, unemployment, and energy prices against the oppressing Brussels (Kormány.hu, 2017b).



**Figure 16** An example of a poster from the joke party's billboard campaign against the referendum campaign of the government. Reconstructed with English translation by the author. (Kétfarkú Kutya Párt, 2016)

## Comparison and summary of analysis

When comparing the two materials, one can find several similarities but also many differences. The national consultation letter was written in a much more personal style to get to citizens, while the information booklet was more like a campaign publication that did not even want to cover the fact of taking a side in the debate. The approach to the public agenda is also different: while the national consultation letter is setting the agenda, trying to introduce the topic of the refugee crisis to the public debate and obliquely trying to frame the question of the refugee crisis, the information booklet included a strong interdiscursivity and intertextuality to build up messages that dehumanised refugees in a way that was discussed in the work of Esses et al. (2013) thus framed the topic accordingly. Taking the communication practices analysed in this thesis, media researchers' study (Index, 2016) about the imbalanced media reports in the topic of immigration and Scheufele's (2000) theory of agenda setting and framing in the independent media, one can identify a severely distorted public debate about the refugee crisis in Hungary, where the state of play is much like Pariser's (2011) filter bubbles in real-life. The major difference between the filter bubbles online, how Pariser describes them is that they are based on the likings of the users, while in the case of the Hungarian government, the messages are forced down on the throats of the citizens whether they liked them or not.

Arguably, the materials were built on post-factual rhetoric. Evoking emotions were integral part of the communication strategy of the government to make the topic more consumable as Richards (2014) discussed contemporary political ads, while facts were neglected or used only if they proved the government right. From the analysis, it could also be learned that the campaign materials were built on 'robust narratives, opportune political agendas' much like Hendricks (2016) introduced post-factual democracies. Generating emotions and through that public debates that started never-ending arguments and information-debunking (Harsin, 2015) proved to be a successful way to keep the topic of the refugee crisis on the public agenda. And forcing the topic on citizens successfully gained supporters for the coalition party, also confirming the

study of Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart (2007) who stated that salience of media coverage of immigrants, contribute to anti-immigrant populism. The findings I believe could also confirm and complement Stein's (2016) analysis of Orbán's speeches. Stein argued that Orbán communicates about the refugee crisis as an existential threat to Hungary and politicizes the refugee crisis to gain support. The same can be identified in the campaign materials of the government.

While both materials were targeted at Hungarian citizens, the subjects of the campaign shifted from refugees and immigration to 'Brussels' that represents the 'Brusselian elite'. The change in the subject also resulted in change of the power relations from the point of view of the discourse: while in the consultation letter Hungarians and the government appear as superior to refugees and immigrants, the information booklet keeps the relation setting towards refugees but adds the European Union to the communication, towards which Hungarians and the government has an inferior power relation. The other major difference between the communication materials is the usage of photos and visuals: while the consultation campaign and letter did not build the communication around visuals, the referendum campaign and booklet used and abused photos to convince citizens.

I believe the analysis also proved that populist practices as described by Canovan (1999) and complemented by Richards' (2004) thoughts on emotions in contemporary politics are present in the communication by the Hungarian government. Based on the four points of Canovan (1999), the following practices can be observed in the text:

- using direct democracy by the way of initiating a national consultation and a referendum;
- putting in front in the communication a charismatic leader who defends the values and customs of the country;
- sensitising Hungarians against minorities (refugees and immigrants) and the political elite ('Brussels') who does not understand the needs of the ordinary, hard-working Hungarian people;
- relying on emotions to a more effective, consumable communication;

- referring to Hungarians as a homogenous nation, all united under one ideology and opinion; and
- using a clear, straightforward, uncomplicated language to reach out to as many people as possible with the communication.

As a result to this communication practices, xenophobia has risen to new heights in Hungary (TÁRKI, 2016), confirming my hypothesis that the campaigns was indeed populist and affected the way Hungarians look at refugees and the refugee crisis.

## Discussion

This thesis sought answers to two research questions regarding the communication of the Hungarian government about the European refugee crisis.

*RQ1: What were the communication phases and milestones during the Hungarian government's anti-immigration campaigns in 2015 and 2016 that changed the public discourse regarding the European refugee crisis?*

I believe the two-phased categorisation were useful to separate the rhetorical shift in the communication and let the reader of the thesis to understand in which way were they different from each other and to get to know the zeitgeist of that period. I acknowledge the fact that my thesis was condensed and focused on introducing and comparing two relevant campaign materials, however being a Hungarian, and having lived through the Hungarian government's communication about the refugee crisis in 2015 and 2016, I am confident that the materials analysed and mentioned in this thesis covered the discursive and social practices of that period.

*RQ2: What are the similarities between populist practices and the Hungarian government's anti-immigration campaigns in 2015 and 2016?*

At the stage of writing this thesis, I was living abroad and therefore I could follow the events of the communication campaigns, both as an insider via frequently visiting Hungary and following the happenings in the media and as an outsider relating the events to the reality in another European country. I know by my Hungarian experience how hard it is to take a step back and be critical about a powerful, comprehensive communication campaign if living under the spell of it. Therefore, I believe the findings and the practices described in the previous sections that connect the communication of the government to populism could help Hungarians understand how the campaign works and reflect on their role as citizens in Hungary. From the researcher's point of view, even though the thesis is focused on a very specific topic, I believe the findings could be useful when comparing populist practices among different countries or discussing how different European countries' politicians tackled the refugee crisis.

By choosing to focus on the communication of the Hungarian government only, there are several topics related that has been not mentioned or analysed in this thesis. I believe additional research directions related to the Hungarian events could further enhance this text. An interesting approach could be to analyse the reaction of the Hungarian citizens on the internet, in the era of memes, active presence online and more specifically on social media. This study could complement the social background of the topic. There was less mention of the political resistance and the opposition in this thesis, so a research direction towards colliding the views could bring results that complemented the findings in my text (even though that the opposition parties and resisting citizens were clearly outnumbered by the Hungarian government's media arsenal and campaign machine). I believe an interesting sociological research could be to analyse the events from the perspective of refugees who arrived to Hungary and were faced by the government's campaigns.

Finally, my intentions were not to be critical just to oppose the Hungarian government but to point out the huge imbalance in the public discourse that persists in Hungary, at least while this thesis was being written. As a person working and studying in the field of communication and media, I believe that researching the Hungarian

events within my field of expertise, from communicative point of view is probably the best way to contribute to a healthier society and a more balanced public debate.

## Conclusion

The European refugee crisis has initiated many public debates in several topics within the countries of the European Union. The challenges that the countries faced also changed the political discourse. In many countries within Europe anti-immigration and far-right parties emerged to claim their place and provide their own solutions to the crisis. My thesis focused on the communication of the Hungarian government's anti-immigration campaigns. I hypothesised that the practices within the communication of the campaigns can be considered populist and they drastically affected the way Hungarian citizens approach the question of the refugee crisis. Firstly, the analysis was focusing on discovering the similarities between populist practices in general, in other countries' examples and the communication of the Hungarian government. The theoretical framework of discourse, power, agenda setting and framing, and post-factuality helped to identify the social and discursive practices of the Hungarian government's communication, while examples of the representation of refugees and the question of immigration in political discourses in other countries put the Hungarian events into context. The data for analysis included two examples of campaign materials: a national consultation letter and an information booklet about the referendum. The communication not only involved refugees but put the European values into question by questioning the European Union's actions. The analysis and the comparison of the materials confirmed that there were indeed populist practices used during the campaigns of 2015 and 2016 which resulted in both gaining supporters for Fidesz-KDNP, the governing parties and raising xenophobia in Hungary. The thesis discussed what happens if populist practices are extended to a political, social, and humanitarian dilemma what the European refugee crisis brought to the EU. From a Hungarian perspective and on the long term, a major question to answer is what the Hungarian

government will do to change the discourse in Hungary towards immigration as no doubt there are and will be refugee and immigrant families settling and staying in Europe, being part of a diverse and multicultural European Union.

## References

- Boomgaarden, H.G. and Vliegenthart, R., 2007. Explaining the rise of anti-immigrant parties: The role of news media content. *Electoral studies*, 26(2), pp.404-417.
- Cambridge Dictionary, 2017. Demagogue Meaning in the Cambridge Dictionary. Online. Available at: <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/demagogue> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Canovan, M., 1999. Trust the people! Populism and the two faces of democracy. *Political studies*, 47(1), pp.2-16.
- Chouliaraki, L. and Fairclough, N., 1999. Discourse in late modernity: Rethinking critical discourse analysis. Edinburgh University Press. In: Sheyholislami, J., 2001, p.6.
- Diószegi-Horváth, N., 2015. Nemzeti manipuláció a bevándorlásról és a terrorizmusról [National manipulation about immigration and terrorism]. *Vasárnapi Hírek*. Online. Available at: [https://www.vasarnapihitek.hu/fokusz/nemzeti\\_manipulacio\\_a\\_bevandorlasrol\\_es\\_a\\_terrorizmusrol](https://www.vasarnapihitek.hu/fokusz/nemzeti_manipulacio_a_bevandorlasrol_es_a_terrorizmusrol) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Esses, V.M., Medianu, S. and Lawson, A.S., 2013. Uncertainty, threat, and the role of the media in promoting the dehumanization of immigrants and refugees. *Journal of Social Issues*, 69(3), pp.518-536.
- Harsin, J., 2015. Regimes of Posttruth, Postpolitics, and Attention Economies. *Communication, Culture & Critique*, 8(2), pp.327-333.
- Havasi, É., 2015. Milliárdforintos kérdéssor [The billion Forint questionnaire]. *Népszabadság*. Online. Available at: <http://nol.hu/velemenymilliardforintos-kerdessor-1532727> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Hendricks, V. F., 2016. In the post-factual democracy, politicians win by getting feelings right and facts wrong, *Quartz*. Online. Available at: <http://qz.com/723537/in-the-post-factual-democracypoliticians-win-by-getting-feelings-right-and-facts-wrong/> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Hobolt, S.B., 2016. The Brexit vote: a divided nation, a divided continent. *Journal of European Public Policy*, pp.1-19.
- Horsti, K., 2016. Visibility without voice: Media witnessing irregular migrants in BBC online news journalism. *African Journalism Studies*, 37(1), pp.1-20.
- Jørgensen M.W. and Phillips L.J., 2002. *Discourse analysis as theory and method*. Sage.
- Kenney, K., 2005 [2005]. Representation theory. In: Smith et al., pp.99-117.

- Kormány.hu, 2017b. Állítsuk meg Brüsszelt! [Let's stop Brussels!]. Online. Available at: <https://nemzetikonzultacio.kormany.hu/> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Markham, A. and Buchanan, E., 2012. Ethical decision-making and internet research: Recommendations from the AoIR Ethics Working Committee (Version 2.0).
- Markotai, C., Népszavazás: csak nyerhet a Fidesz [Referendum: Fidesz can only win]. Magyar Nemzet. Online. Available at: <https://mno.hu/belfold/nepszavazas-csak-nyerhet-a-fidesz-1355457> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Marton, Z., 2017. Political communication in the post-truth era. Unpublished document. Malmö University.
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2017. Definition of Discourse by Merriam-Webster. Online. Available at: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/discourse> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Nyilas, G., 2016. Orbán: Nem a migránsokkal van bajunk, hanem a brüsszeliakkal [Orbán: We do not have problems with immigrants, we do have problems with Brusselians] Index. Online. Available at: [http://index.hu/belfold/2016/09/11/orban\\_nem\\_a\\_migransokkal\\_van\\_bajunk\\_hanem\\_a\\_brusszeliakkal/](http://index.hu/belfold/2016/09/11/orban_nem_a_migransokkal_van_bajunk_hanem_a_brusszeliakkal/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Pariser, E., 2011. The filter bubble: What the Internet is hiding from you. Penguin UK.
- Rettberg, J.W. and Gajjala, R., 2016. Terrorists or cowards: negative portrayals of male Syrian refugees in social media. *Feminist Media Studies*, 16(1), pp.178-181.
- Richards, B., 2004. The emotional deficit in political communication. *Political Communication*, 21(3), pp.339-352.
- Scheufele, D.A., 2000. Agenda-setting, priming, and framing revisited: Another look at cognitive effects of political communication. *Mass Communication & Society*, 3(2-3), pp.297-316.
- Sheyholislami, J., 2001. Critical discourse analysis.
- Sjöberg, U. and Rydin, I., 2014. Talk on the Media's Role in Creating Otherness and Exclusion: Discursive Identifications and Public (Dis) Connections.
- Smith, K.L., Moriarty, S., Kenney, K. and Barbatsis, G. eds., 2005. *Handbook of visual communication: Theory, methods, and media*. Routledge.
- Stein, K.C., 2017. Viktor Orbán's National Hungarian Identity Construct-Securitization of 2015-2016 European Migrant Crisis as Existential Threat.
- Stockemer, D. and Barisione, M., 2016. The 'new' discourse of the Front National under Marine Le Pen: A slight change with a big impact. *European Journal of Communication*, p.1-16.
- Swedish Research Council, 2011. Good Research Practice. Online. Available at: <https://publikationer.vr.se/en/product/good-research-practice/> (Accessed on 22 May 2017).
- TÁRKI, 2016. The Social Aspects of the 2015 Migration Crisis in Hungary. Online. Available at: [http://www.tarki.hu/hu/news/2016/kitekint/20160330\\_refugees.pdf](http://www.tarki.hu/hu/news/2016/kitekint/20160330_refugees.pdf) (Accessed on 22 May 2017).

University of Jyväskylä, 2017a. Qualitative Analysis. Online. Available at:

<https://koppa.jyu.fi/avoimet/hum/menetelmapolkuja/en/methodmap/data-analysis/qualitative-analysis> (Accessed on 22 May 2017).

University of Jyväskylä, 2017b. Discourse Analysis. Online. Available at:

<https://koppa.jyu.fi/avoimet/hum/menetelmapolkuja/en/methodmap/data-analysis/discourse-analysis> (Accessed on 22 May 2017).

University of Jyväskylä, 2017c. Social Constructionism. Online. Available at:

<https://koppa.jyu.fi/avoimet/hum/menetelmapolkuja/en/methodmap/philosophy-of-science/social-constructionism> (Accessed on 22 May 2017).

University of Jyväskylä, 2017d. Semiotic Analysis. Online. Available at:

<https://koppa.jyu.fi/avoimet/hum/menetelmapolkuja/en/methodmap/data-analysis/semiotic-analysis> (Accessed on 22 May 2017).

Veczán, Z., 2016. Mi igaz és mi nem a kormány propagandájából? [What is true and what is not true from the government's propaganda?] Magyar Nemzet. Online. Available at: <https://mno.hu/belfold/mi-igaz-es-mi-nem-a-kormany-propagandajabol-1361616> (Accessed on 22 May 2017).

Vossen, K., 2011. Classifying wilders: The ideological development of Geert Wilders and his party for freedom. *Politics*, 31(3), pp.179-189.

### References used for the context section

Comment, 2016. Népszavazás: a köztév égy új menekülthullámot is bedobott [Referendum: the public television envisions a new wave of refugees]. Online. Available at:

[http://comment.blog.hu/2016/10/02/a\\_kozteve\\_meg\\_a\\_szerbibi\\_menekultek\\_is\\_beveti\\_a\\_nepszavazas\\_megmentesere](http://comment.blog.hu/2016/10/02/a_kozteve_meg_a_szerbibi_menekultek_is_beveti_a_nepszavazas_megmentesere) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

Dezső, A., 2015. Orbán: A menekültek fellázdak a magyar jogrend ellen [Orbán: The refugees rebelled against the Hungarian law system]. Index. Online. Available at:

[http://index.hu/kulfold/2015/09/11/orban\\_a\\_menekultek\\_fellazadtak\\_a\\_magyar\\_jogrend\\_ellen/](http://index.hu/kulfold/2015/09/11/orban_a_menekultek_fellazadtak_a_magyar_jogrend_ellen/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

Dezső, A., 2016. Durva képet fest az Amnesty arról, ahogy a menekültekkel bánnak a magyar hatóságok [Amnesty reports a grim picture about how the Hungarian authorities treat refugees]. Index. Online. Available at:

[http://index.hu/belfold/2016/09/27/durva\\_kepet\\_fest\\_az\\_amnesty\\_arrol\\_ahogy\\_a\\_menekultekkel\\_bannak\\_a\\_magyar\\_hatosagok/](http://index.hu/belfold/2016/09/27/durva_kepet_fest_az_amnesty_arrol_ahogy_a_menekultekkel_bannak_a_magyar_hatosagok/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

DRI, 2016. Erősen elfogult volt a közszolgálati híradó a kvótanépszavazási kampányban [National television was strongly biased during the quota referendum campaign]. Online. Available at:

<http://democracy-reporting.org/?p=2437> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

- Dull, S., 2015a. Gyűlöletheadjárátot indított a Fidesz a menekültek ellen [Fidesz launched a hate campaign against refugees]. Index. Online. Available at:  
[http://index.hu/belfold/2015/02/20/gyuloletheadjaratot\\_inditott\\_a\\_fidesz\\_a\\_menekultek\\_ellen/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/02/20/gyuloletheadjaratot_inditott_a_fidesz_a_menekultek_ellen/)  
 (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Dull, S., 2015b. A Fidesz üzent az EU-nak: Brüsszel miatt halnak meg menekültek [Fidesz sent a message to the EU: Refugees die because of Brussels]. Index. Online. Available at:  
[http://index.hu/belfold/2015/09/22/a\\_fidesz\\_uzent\\_az\\_eu-nak\\_brusszel\\_miatt\\_halnak\\_meg\\_menekultek/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/09/22/a_fidesz_uzent_az_eu-nak_brusszel_miatt_halnak_meg_menekultek/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Dull, S., 2015c. Medián: A Fideszt felhozta, a Jobbikot lehúzta a menekültválság [Medán: Fidesz won, Jobbik lost on the refugee crisis]. Index. Online. Available at:  
[http://index.hu/belfold/2015/09/30/median\\_a\\_fideszt\\_felhozta\\_a\\_jobbikot\\_lehuzta\\_a\\_menekultvalsag/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/09/30/median_a_fideszt_felhozta_a_jobbikot_lehuzta_a_menekultvalsag/)  
 / (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Dupré, C., 2012. Hungary's fundamental law challenges the EU's democratic ideals. Guardian. Online. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/libertycentral/2012/mar/13/hungary-fundamental-law-eu> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Fidesz.hu, 2002. A Fidesz története [The history of Fidesz]. Online. Available at:  
<http://archiv.fidesz.hu/index.php?Cikk=60> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- HVG.hu, 2016. Volt TV2-s lesz az Origo új főszerkesztője [Ex-TV2 person will be Origo's new editor in chief]. Online. Available at: [http://hvg.hu/gazdasag/20160317\\_gyorgy\\_bence\\_origo\\_foszerkeszto](http://hvg.hu/gazdasag/20160317_gyorgy_bence_origo_foszerkeszto)  
 (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Index.hu, 2015a. Orbán: Gazdasági bevándorlóknak nem adunk menedéket [Orbán: We will not give shelter to economic immigrants]. Online. Available at:  
[http://index.hu/belfold/2015/01/11/orban\\_gazdasagi\\_bevandorloknak\\_nem\\_adunk\\_menedeket/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/01/11/orban_gazdasagi_bevandorloknak_nem_adunk_menedeket/)  
 (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Index.hu, 2015b. Merkel az asztalra csapott menekültügyben [Merkel's strong statements about the refugee crisis]. Online. Available at:  
[http://index.hu/kulfold/2015/09/01/merkel\\_menekultek\\_felelosseg/](http://index.hu/kulfold/2015/09/01/merkel_menekultek_felelosseg/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Index.hu, 2015c. Lázár János: A németek hibája, ami a Keletinél zajlik [János Lázár: It is the Germans' fault what happens at Keleti]. Online. Available at:  
[http://index.hu/belfold/2015/09/03/lazar\\_janos\\_kormanyinfo\\_21\\_tajekoztatoja\\_a\\_menekultekrol/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/09/03/lazar_janos_kormanyinfo_21_tajekoztatoja_a_menekultekrol/)  
 (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Index.hu, 2015d. Orbán: Az európai vezetők álomvilágban élnek [Orbán: European leaders live in a dream world]. Online. Available at:  
[http://index.hu/belfold/2015/09/12/orban\\_az\\_europai\\_vezetok\\_alomvilagban\\_elnek/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/09/12/orban_az_europai_vezetok_alomvilagban_elnek/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Index.hu, 2015e. Orbán: Dublin halott, Schengent meg kell védeni [Orbán: Dublin is dead, Schengen needs to be defended]. Online. Available at:

- [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/11/16/orban\\_dublin\\_halott\\_schengent\\_meg\\_kell\\_vedeni/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/11/16/orban_dublin_halott_schengent_meg_kell_vedeni/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Index.hu, 2016a. Magyarországon egyre kevesebb a menekült [There are less and less refugees on Hungary]. Online. Available at: [http://index.hu/belfold/2016/07/22/menedekkerok\\_szama\\_csokken/](http://index.hu/belfold/2016/07/22/menedekkerok_szama_csokken/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Index.hu, 2016b. Az üldözött keresztények segítésére hozott létre hivatalt a kormány [The government created an institution for persecuted Christians]. Online. Available at: [http://index.hu/belfold/2016/09/07/az\\_uldozott\\_keresztenyek\\_segitesere\\_hozott\\_letre\\_hivatalt\\_a\\_kormany/](http://index.hu/belfold/2016/09/07/az_uldozott_keresztenyek_segitesere_hozott_letre_hivatalt_a_kormany/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Index.hu, 2016c. Érvénytelen a kvótanépszavazás, Orbán módosítaná az alkotmányt [The quota referendum is invalid, Orbán would like to modify the constitution]. Online. Available at: [http://index.hu/belfold/2016/10/02/kvota\\_nepszavazas\\_eredmenyek\\_oktober\\_2./](http://index.hu/belfold/2016/10/02/kvota_nepszavazas_eredmenyek_oktober_2./) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Joób, S., 2015a. Sziijártó Péter egy csapásra megoldja Európa, a Közel-Kelet és Észak-Afrika problémáit [Péter Sziijártó solves the problems of Europe, the Middle-East and North-Africa at instant]. Index. Online. Available at: [http://index.hu/mindekozben/poszt/2015/04/20/szijjarto\\_peter\\_egy\\_csapasra\\_megoldja\\_del-europa\\_a\\_kozel-kelet\\_es\\_eszak-afrika\\_problemaid/](http://index.hu/mindekozben/poszt/2015/04/20/szijjarto_peter_egy_csapasra_megoldja_del-europa_a_kozel-kelet_es_eszak-afrika_problemaid/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Joób, S., 2015b. Orbán szerint az egész világban kellene szétosztani a menekülteket [According to Orbán, refugees should be resettled in the whole world]. Index. Online. Available at: [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/09/23/orban\\_szerint\\_az\\_egesz\\_vilagban\\_kellene\\_szetosztani\\_a\\_menekulteket/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/09/23/orban_szerint_az_egesz_vilagban_kellene_szetosztani_a_menekulteket/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Kormány.hu, 2017a. The Fundamental Law of Hungary. Online. Available at: <http://www.kormany.hu/download/e/02/00000/The%20New%20Fundamental%20Law%20of%20Hungary.pdf> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Közvéleménykutatók.hu, 2017. Pártpreferencia [Party-preferences]. Online. Available at: <http://kozvelemenykutato.hu/partpreferencia/> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Magyar Nemzet, 2015. Tulajdonosváltás a TV2-nél: aláírták a szerződést [Change of owners at TV2: the contracts have been signed]. Online. Available at: <https://mno.hu/media/tulajdonosvaltas-a-tv2-nel-alairtak-a-szerzodest-1309274> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Miklósi, G., 2016. Orbán szerint ő '48, Brüsszel a bolsevik internacionalisták örököse [According to Orbán, he is '48, Brussels is the inheritor of Bolshevik internationalists]. Index. Online. Available at: [http://index.hu/belfold/2016/03/15/marcius\\_15\\_orban\\_beszed/](http://index.hu/belfold/2016/03/15/marcius_15_orban_beszed/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- OSCE/ODIHR, 2014. OSCE/ODIHR Limited Election Observation Mission Final Report. Online. Available at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/hungary/121098?download=true> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)
- Parlament.hu, 2017. A pártok képviselőcsoportjai és a független képviselők (aktuális) [The parties' groups of representatives and independent representatives (up-to-date)]. Online. Available at:

<http://www.parlament.hu/a-partok-kepviselesocsoportjai-es-a-fuggetlen-kepviselek-aktualis->

(Accessed on 22 May 2017)

Stubnya B., 2015a. Európa Tanács: Elhibázott ötlet a kerítés [Council of Europe: The idea of the fence is a mistake]. Index. Online. Available at:

[http://index.hu/kulfold/2015/06/18/unios\\_biztos\\_elhibazott\\_otlet\\_a\\_kerites/](http://index.hu/kulfold/2015/06/18/unios_biztos_elhibazott_otlet_a_kerites/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

Stubnya B., 2015b. Szijjártó: Az EU nem vesz rólunk tudomást [Szijjártó: The EU ignores us] Index. Online.

Available at: [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/06/18/szijjarto\\_az\\_eu\\_nem\\_vesz\\_rolunk\\_tudomast/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/06/18/szijjarto_az_eu_nem_vesz_rolunk_tudomast/)

(Accessed on 22 May 2017)

Szalay, D., 2016. Csak egyvalaki lesz nagyobb a médiapiacra a Mészáros Lőrinc közelébe kerülő

Mediaworks-nél [Only one person will be bigger in the media industry than Mediaworks, affiliated

with Lőrinc Mészáros]. 24.hu. Online. Available at: [http://24.hu/media/2016/10/26/csak-egy-valaki-](http://24.hu/media/2016/10/26/csak-egy-valaki-lesz-nagyobb-a-mediapiacon-a-meszaros-lorinc-kozelebe-kerulo-mediaworksnel/)

[lesz-nagyobb-a-mediapiacon-a-meszaros-lorinc-kozelebe-kerulo-mediaworksnel/](http://24.hu/media/2016/10/26/csak-egy-valaki-lesz-nagyobb-a-mediapiacon-a-meszaros-lorinc-kozelebe-kerulo-mediaworksnel/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

Thüringer, B., 2016. Orbán nem akar olyan Magyarországot elképzelni, ami fejet hajt Brüsszelnek [Orbán doesn't want a Hungary that bows before Brussels]. Index. Online. Available at:

[http://index.hu/belfold/2016/09/27/orban\\_menekultvalsag\\_interju\\_reformatus/](http://index.hu/belfold/2016/09/27/orban_menekultvalsag_interju_reformatus/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

Választás.hu, 2014. Nemzeti Választási Iroda – 2014. Évi országgyűlési választások [National Election Office – Parliamentary elections 2014]. Online. Available at:

[http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/ogyv2014/861/861\\_0\\_index.html](http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/ogyv2014/861/861_0_index.html) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

Választás.hu, 2016. Országos népszavazás - 2016. október 2. [National referendum – 2 October 2016].

Online. Available at: [http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/ref2016/1154/1154\\_0\\_index.html](http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/ref2016/1154/1154_0_index.html) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

Választás.hu, 2017a. Országgyűlési választások Magyarországon 1998 [Parliamentary elections in Hungary 1998]. Online. Available at: [http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/ovi/51/51\\_0.html](http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/ovi/51/51_0.html) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

Választás.hu, 2017b. Országgyűlési választások 2010 [Parliamentary elections 2010]. Online. Available at:

[http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/ovi/455/455\\_0.html](http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/ovi/455/455_0.html) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

## References used for the figures

### Figure 1

Eurostat, 2017a. Asylum and first time asylum applicants - annual aggregated data (rounded). Online.

Available at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tps00191> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

Eurostat, 2017b. First instance decisions on applications by citizenship, age and sex Quarterly data (rounded). Online. Available at:

[http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?query=BOOKMARK\\_DS-055298\\_OID\\_-50CBEE47\\_UID\\_-3F171EB0&layout=TIME,C,X,0;GEO,L,Y,0;CITIZEN,L,Z,0;SEX,L,Z,1;AGE,L,Z,2;DECISION,L,Z,3;UNIT,L,Z,4;INDICATORS,C,Z,5;&zSelection=DS-055298DECISION,TOTAL\\_POS;DS-055298CITIZEN,EXT\\_EU28;DS-055298INDICATORS,OBS\\_FLAG;DS-055298SEX,T;DS-055298UNIT,PER;DS-055298AGE,TOTAL;&rankName1=UNIT\\_1\\_2\\_-1\\_2&rankName2=AGE\\_1\\_2\\_-1\\_2&rankName3=DECISION\\_1\\_2\\_-1\\_2&rankName4=CITIZEN\\_1\\_2\\_-1\\_2&rankName5=INDICATORS\\_1\\_2\\_-1\\_2&rankName6=SEX\\_1\\_2\\_-1\\_2&rankName7=TIME\\_1\\_0\\_0\\_0&rankName8=GEO\\_1\\_2\\_0\\_1&sortC=ASC\\_-1\\_FIRST&rStp=&cStp=&rDCh=&cDCh=&rDM=true&cDM=true&footnes=false&empty=false&wai=false&time\\_mode=NONE&time\\_most\\_recent=false&lang=EN&cfo=%23%23%23%2C%23%23%23.%23%23%23](http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?query=BOOKMARK_DS-055298_OID_-50CBEE47_UID_-3F171EB0&layout=TIME,C,X,0;GEO,L,Y,0;CITIZEN,L,Z,0;SEX,L,Z,1;AGE,L,Z,2;DECISION,L,Z,3;UNIT,L,Z,4;INDICATORS,C,Z,5;&zSelection=DS-055298DECISION,TOTAL_POS;DS-055298CITIZEN,EXT_EU28;DS-055298INDICATORS,OBS_FLAG;DS-055298SEX,T;DS-055298UNIT,PER;DS-055298AGE,TOTAL;&rankName1=UNIT_1_2_-1_2&rankName2=AGE_1_2_-1_2&rankName3=DECISION_1_2_-1_2&rankName4=CITIZEN_1_2_-1_2&rankName5=INDICATORS_1_2_-1_2&rankName6=SEX_1_2_-1_2&rankName7=TIME_1_0_0_0&rankName8=GEO_1_2_0_1&sortC=ASC_-1_FIRST&rStp=&cStp=&rDCh=&cDCh=&rDM=true&cDM=true&footnes=false&empty=false&wai=false&time_mode=NONE&time_most_recent=false&lang=EN&cfo=%23%23%23%2C%23%23%23.%23%23%23) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

Eurostat, 2017c. Population on 1 January. Online. Available at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tps00001> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

Eurostat, 2017d. Resettled persons – annual data. Online. Available at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tps00195> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

### **Figure 2**

Jørgensen M.W. and Phillips L.J., 2002. Discourse analysis as theory and method. Sage, p.68.

### **Figure 3**

Hungarian Government, 2015a. Kormány információ [Government Information]. Billboard poster.

Available online in: Német, T., 2014.

Német, T., 2014. Megvan a kormány menekültellenes kampányának két újabb szlogenje [Two more slogans from the government's anti-immigration campaign revealed]. Online. Available at:

[http://index.hu/belfold/2015/06/04/megvan\\_a\\_kormany\\_menekultellenes\\_kampanyanak\\_ket\\_ujabb\\_szlogenje/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/06/04/megvan_a_kormany_menekultellenes_kampanyanak_ket_ujabb_szlogenje/) (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

### **Figure 4-5**

Hungarian Government, 2015b. Nemzeti konzultációs levél [National consultation letter]. Letter.

Available online at:

[http://www.kormany.hu/download/7/e2/50000/nemzeti\\_konzultacio\\_bevandorlas\\_2015.pdf](http://www.kormany.hu/download/7/e2/50000/nemzeti_konzultacio_bevandorlas_2015.pdf)

(Accessed on 22 May 2017)

**Figure 6**

Kétfarkú Kutya Párt and Vastagbőr, 2015. MKKP & Vastagbőr információ [MKKP and Vastagbőr information]. Billboard poster. Available online in: Szeretlekmagyarország.hu, 2015. Szeretlekmagyarország.hu, 2015. Nézzétek meg az összes Kétfarkú-ellenplakátot! [Have a look at all the Two-Tailed Dog posters!]. Online. Available at: <http://www.szeretlekmagyarorszag.hu/nezzetek-meg-az-osszes-ketfarku-ellenplakatot/> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

**Figure 7**

Hungarian Government, 2016a. Tudta? [Did you know?] Billboard poster. Available online at: <http://www.kormany.hu/hu/miniszterelnoki-kabinetiroda/kormanyzati-kommunikacioert-felelos-allamtitkar/hirek/fel-kell-hivni-a-figyelmet-brusszel-elhibazott-bevandozaspolitikajanak-veszelyeire> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

**Figure 8-15**

Hungarian Government, 2016b. Népszavazás 2016 információs kiadvány [Referendum 2016 information booklet]. Printed publication. Available online in Vastagbőr, 2016. Vastagbőr, 2016. Itta kormány legújabb propagandafüzete [Here is the government's newest propaganda booklet]. Online Available at: <https://vastagbor.atlatszo.hu/2016/09/07/itt-a-kormany-legujabb-propagandafuzete/> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

**Figure 16**

Kétfarkú Kutya Párt, 2016. Tudta? [Did you know?] Billboard poster. Available online at: <http://ketfarkukutya.com/?p=1697> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)

**Cover illustration**

Freegrunge.com, 2017. Vector Barbed Wire. Online. Available at: <http://freegrunge.com/barbed-wire/> (Accessed on 22 May 2017)