

Politics of childcare policy in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland¹

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Introduction

Since the fall of the socialist regime family policies have undergone considerable transformation in Central and Eastern European countries. Due to the pre-1989 policies advancing women's education and labour market participation, the female employment rate used to be above the EU average (Fodor and Balogh 2007). However this trend has diminished in the last two decades (Csillag et al 2013) as most of the states preferred re-familisation policies shifting responsibilities for childcare to the families, especially mothers (Saxonberg, Sirovátka, 2006; Szikra, 2011, Szelewa, 2012, Saxonberg 2014). As a result, all Visegrad countries witnessed a rapid decline in the availability of childcare services for children under three years, reducing the possibilities for reconciling work and family life. Mothers withdrew from the labour market for longer periods and negative trends soon appeared in the declining level of child bearing, too (Fodor and Balogh, 2007, Scharle 2007).² Since then, family policies, more specifically care policies targeted at families with children under three years have tended to preserve their conservative character with an accent on long-term leave schemes and maintaining existing gender stereotypes (Győry and Szikra 2014).

The rising demand for flexible work and care arrangements are reflected in public as well as political discourses. This paper aims to focus primarily on the latter by examining the attitudes of political parties towards families in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland.³ We analyze the parties' electoral programmes as these highlight the priority policy fields and inform voters about measures to tackle the most pressing issues identified in the programmes (Naurin, 2011). Our main research questions are: *To what extent do political parties view care policies salient? What attitudes are embedded in the electoral promises and what is the policy direction they anticipate to increase maternal employment and foster gender equality?* The scope of the analysis is restricted to electoral programmes prepared for the 2010 parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic and Hungary and for the 2011 elections in Poland. In each case we focus primarily on parties gaining at least 2% of votes.

The study begins with a review of the state of the art of care policies in the pre-election period – i.e. in 2010 and 2011 respectively – which describes the starting position in comparison to which the proposals are made. The description is accompanied by a brief review of the literature on family policies in Central and Eastern Europe. Secondly, the literature of political discourses and party

¹ The study is work in progress, please do not cite! The preliminary findings of the study has been released in a working paper prepared within FP7 Research project "GRINCOH – Growth-Innovation-Competitiveness – Fostering Cohesion in Central and Eastern Europe".

² In contrast to female employment rates reaching 52.1 and 58.2% in Hungary and Czech Republic respectively in 2012, the maternal employment rate was 27-28% in Czech Republic and Hungary. In Poland the trends are a bit different due to the distinct leave policies – female employment rate was 53.1% and maternal employment rate was 50% (Csillag et. al based on Eurostat data). Fertility rates were the lowest in Hungary in 2011 slightly exceeding 1.20, in Poland 1.3 and in the Czech Republic 1.45.

³ The analysis is a replication of the study „What is the direction of the Czech childcare policy?” written by Jana Válková, published in the edited volume „Manka goes to work”(2010).

politics is introduced with a particular focus on the characteristics of party politics in the three Visegrad countries. Public attitudes towards families are also summarised briefly, and contrasted with the political programmes, as a rough measure of the responsiveness of electoral promises to public opinion. Our theoretical approach comprises of a two-dimensional model examining the political parties' approach to childcare measures, parental leaves and (dis)incentives in relation to division of care according to the underlying policy motives of political parties (Scheiwe and Willekens, 2009) and the type of care the proposal tends to support (Crompton, 1999). The last section presents findings for each country and compares the three cases.

Existing research on the evolution of family policies in the region is relatively scarce. Most of the work is descriptive and comparative studies tend to focus on path dependence or economic factors to explain policy divergence within the region (e.g., Glass and Fodor 2007, Ingloot et al 2011, Szikra 2011, Szelewa 2012). So far, few studies have made a link with the related literature on gender role attitudes (a notable exception is Saxonberg 2014). This paper aims to contribute to the existing literature by mapping the discourses political parties as main decision-making entities use in relation to families and gender roles and reveal whether these are responsive to public attitudes.

The literature on party politics and political discourses in Central Europe also tends to be limited to studies of party formation (Kitschelt 1992; Lindstrom 2001; Grzymala-Busse 2003; Toodle 2003, O'Dwyer 2004) and accountability of new political elites (Bruszt and Stark 2001, Bruszt 2002). The existing analyses of political discourses tend to focus on the governing parties, while little attention is devoted to specific policies where ideological considerations may be overridden, as highlighted by Saxonberg (2014) in relation to family policies.

Caring policies in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland

This section describes the status quo in family policies that needs to be considered when evaluating the promises of party programmes. The care policies of the three countries are in many aspects similar, however each of them has some specific features. The general approach to parental leave schemes is almost identical in Hungary and in the Czech Republic with preference for long-term maternity and parental leaves (up to three years), while in Poland maternity leave is shorter and parental leave benefits are income-tested. In all of these countries access to childcare services is limited (Szikra, Győry, 2014).

In the past five or six years each country tried to reform its family and care policies. Interestingly, each country had tried a somewhat different approach. In the Czech Republic, maternity leave was available for 28 weeks with 70% of the individual daily wage base for a mother up to a ceiling of CZK 23,490 (€920) per month. From the seventh week following the childbirth both parents are eligible for the leave without any restriction on the alterations between the parents, but there is no special paternity leave provision. In 2008 the parental leave system was transformed to a multiple option model, which is exceptional among the analysed countries. However, despite the high flexibility granted in the legislation, the actual practise remained the same (Szikra, Győry, 2014). As childcare services have not been developed, in reality the parents do not have the freedom to choose a shorter period of parental leave and more than 60% of mothers opt for the 3 year model (Haskova, 2011).

Table 1 – Overview of leave policies in the Czech Republic (2010), Hungary (2010) and Poland (2011)

<i>Type of benefit/ Country</i>	<i>Maternal Leave (in weeks)</i>	<i>Replacement rate (in %)</i>	<i>Paternal Leave (in weeks)</i>	<i>Replacement rate (in %)</i>	<i>Parental Leave (in months)</i>	<i>Replacement (in EUR, in % of previous income)</i>
Czech Republic	28	60, raised to 70 during 2010	from 2012 entitled to swap maternal leave	70	24 36 48	420 EUR 276 EUR 138 EUR
Hungary	24	70	1	100	18 (GYED, GYES)	70% 96 EUR
Poland	22 (14+8)	100 60	1	100	up to 48 months	Means tested 107 EUR

Source: Statutory Maternity Leave, Statutory Paternity Leave, Statutory Parental and Childcare Leave, 2014

In Hungary commitment to long-term parenting has not decreased. The maternity leave is granted for mothers for the period of 24 weeks with a rate of 70% of previous wage with ceiling. Three types of paid parental leave are provided – both insurance-based and flat rate parental leave benefits used to be available for the period of 2 years in 2010⁴, the third type of leave is available for parents raising 3 or more children and is provided till the 8th birthday of the youngest child.

In Poland the length of maternity leave was gradually extended. In 2011 it was offered for 22 weeks of which 14 weeks were obligatory for mothers and the remaining eight weeks could be taken by fathers as well. The means-tested parental leave is provided until the child's fourth birthday. Poland is advanced from the aspect of its approach to fathers – besides offering the possibility to share the maternity leave, one-week long paternity leave and the option of spending up to 3 months on parental leave by both parents was available in 2011.⁵

Both Poland and Hungary offer leave dedicated only to fathers which fully covers the income loss (see Table 1) compared to mothers who only receive 70% in Hungary and 60% in Poland the second half year of their previous income when on maternity leave. The Czech Republic allowed men to use the financially less advantageous parental leave (flat rate) therefore the take-up by Czech fathers is very low (1.62% in 2010, 1.79 in 2013, calculation based on CZSO, 2014).⁶

The leave policy in all the three countries supports childcare, mainly for children under three, provided by a family member, be it the mother or the father. Other options to ensure care for children below the school age are however underdeveloped. Table 2 displays the share of children in formal care which are very low compared to other European countries, especially in the group of

⁴ Although the flat-rate parental leave was also decreased to 2 years in 2009, it has been quickly reversed and 3 years long benefit has been reintroduced by the Orbán Government in 2011.

⁵ Since 2011 the length of paternity leave was extended to two weeks.

⁶ However, they have now access to maternity leave based on written consent of the mother of the child and are covered at the same replacement rate as women.

children under three. In the latter group, the Czech Republic and Poland have the second and third poorest rates among 36 countries. Hungary ranks somewhat better, holding the thirtieth position in the list.

Table 2 – Rates of children in formal childcare/education aged 0 to 5 in 2010

<i>Children aged 0 to 5 in formal childcare/ Country</i>	<i>Enrolment rate for children aged below 3 (percentages)</i>	<i>Enrolment rate for children aged 3+ (percentages)</i>
Czech Republic	4.0	78.9
Hungary	10.9	86.7
Poland	6.9	59.7
EU 27 average	29	82.6

Source: OECD Family Database, 2015

Such combination of long leaves and poor formal childcare provision is unfavourable for women and their employment, raising their exposure to new social risks (Taylor-Gooby, 2004, Esping-Andersen, 2009). The shift of childcare from institutions to families is referred to as the re-familisation process (Sirovátka, 2004) in family policy development. Different studies show that the family policy in the Czech Republic and Poland is clearly familialistic – the former in its explicit form with generous and long leave provision whereas the latter is rather considered implicitly familialistic for lacking capacities in nurseries and limited access to generous benefits (Szelewa, Polakowski, 2008, Javornik, 2014). Hungary can also be viewed as explicitly familialistic (Javornik, 2014) but the recent attempts to raise capacity in childcare facilities signal development towards comprehensive family support (Szelewa, Polakowski, 2008). The question remains what other measures these countries need in order to improve female economic activity and gender equality, which will be analysed in electoral programmes of parliamentary parties.

Political discourses and party politics

Public discourses – among which media and political discourses may be considered the most powerful – are important as a means for reproduction of the existing arrangement but also for shaping them. As Pfau-Effinger argues (2004) the existing gender culture comprising of cultural values and ideals in terms of division of labour between women and men can be observed and thus reproduced at various levels in the society – structural, institutional, discursive or individual. Discourses play their role also in policy making by focusing on some problems and leaving out others and may help institutionalise certain arrangement better than others (policy-as-discourse approach, Bacchi, 2000, 2004). Political programmes are therefore important material signposting future policy development.

As the literature on party systems or on democratic institutions and political action in general suggests, ‘public policy choices and outputs in constitutional democracies can be attributed to a sizeable extent to the party composition of a government’ (Schmidt 2002:167). Research on welfare state usually suggests that party systems and the influence of dominating political forces have contributed to the particular shape of welfare institutions (Esping-Andersen 1990; Boix 1998; Hicks 1999; Hall and Soskice 2001; Kersbergen and Becker 2001; Kitschelt 2001). Most scholars agree on the very general division between parties, programs, and that constituencies are the consequence of

basic social cleavages. In sum, the political parties' concept assumes congruence between the interests of the social group represented by the party, the parties' ideological affiliation, and its policies. For the development of welfare state institutions, the division between Christian-Democrats on the one hand and social-democrats on the other has been recognised as crucial. In short, policies pursued by Christian-Democrats should reflect their ideological affiliation and make the policies consistent with the ideology of familism, while social-democratic politicians are expected to orient themselves more towards equality in the sphere of gender relations (Panayotova and Brayfield 1997; Sainsbury 2001; Heinen 2002; Nordenmark 2004, Morgan 2011). As pointed out by Kimberly Morgan (2008), the traditional supporters of "women-friendly" welfare states, i.e. social-democratic parties indeed contributed to the development of gender egalitarian policies regarding care in the Nordic countries in general, while the long-time domination of the social democrats in Sweden meant a firmer (than in Norway or Denmark) commitment to gender equality in this country.

The cases of Central European cases have not yet been analysed sufficiently from this point of view. The existing literature focuses mainly on party system formation (Kitschelt 1992; Lindstrom 2001; Grzymala-Busse 2003; Toodle 2003; O'Dwyer 2004) and the general problems of 'accountability' of the new political system (Bruszt and Stark 2001; Bruszt 2002). Thus, the particular reforms of family policies should be related to the party composition of the governments both in the short term (one government – one reform) and the long term (one-party domination over time and the model of the policies prevailing). As some scholars have already shown, neither of these two levels of analysis remains unproblematic. Firstly, in Poland, there has never been an explicitly Christian-Democratic party. Though the Election Coalition 'Solidarity' (AWS), which was in power in the second half of the 1990s, tried to extend parental leave, these policies were in place only for a couple of months before being abolished by the social democratic government in the name of a 'fiscal discipline'. Second, classified by Bob Deacon in 1993 as 'liberal-capitalist', the Hungarian welfare state, and family policy more specifically, remains quite generous. The unusual, socialist-liberal, coalition in power in the years 1994-1998 tried to reform social policies on the basis of the principle of targeting, and was followed by a period of more generous, 'conservative' measures (re-introducing universal entitlements).

Saxonberg (2014) claims that in Central Europe the ideological orientation of the political parties does not necessarily coincide with the policy measures promoted. In the analysed countries political parties are rather organized based on networks than on ideology (Saxonberg, 2014). Toka and Henjak (2009) found the Czech party system tends to be more ideologically polarized among these countries. From the perspective of voting behaviour they highlighted similar differences – Czech Republic outstanding with stronger ideological voting and Hungary frequently presenting performance-based voting (Toka, Henjak, 2009).

The identification of the voters with left or right-wing politics is more affected by their personal identification with certain political parties rather than by their ideological convictions (Hloušek, Kopeček, 2008; Bíró Nagy, 2011; Sokolowski, 2012). According to Bíró Nagy (2011) in Hungary the left-right differentiation would fully fall apart if the traditional left-right-wing socioeconomic preferences would be taken into account. In terms of voters' attitudes toward the state and expectations of the state all citizens tend to take rather leftist stances preferring increased protection by the state regardless their party preferences. In Hungary and Poland majority of

respondents expect the state to take responsibility rather than individual⁷. According to the survey conducted by the Public opinion research centre in the Czech Republic in 2010 60% of respondents claimed that the state should be responsible for the social protection of citizens (Červenka, 2010).

Concerning family policies there are two main discourses– the pro-natalist, family-centred discourse and the gender-equality discourse. The former discourse is more internalized in a national setting, gender equality debate is still less recognized and popular in Central Europe (Saxonberg, 2014). The study aims to test the congruence between the declared political ideology and profile of political parties with the family policy initiatives incorporated.

Attitudes towards childcare provision

As highlighted by Hanna Pitkin political parties competing for the representation of voters are eager “[to act] in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them” (1967:209). Therefore they aim to address issues the citizens and voters are most concerned about. In order to assess the responsiveness of electoral programmes to the voters’ expectations, it is important to review public opinions and attitudes toward family and care policies. Based on our calculations using 2012 International Social Survey data⁸ shows (See Table 3) that in regard to the division of care work between the parents mothers still dominate in taking up parental leave and provide full-day care. In the Czech Republic 63% of respondents claim parental leave shall be fully undertaken by mothers, almost 19% thinks that it involves mostly mothers with some involvement of fathers and only 8% thinks care should be shared equally by both parents in respect to taking parental leave (ISSP, 2012). In Hungary the situation is similar 58%, 19% and 8% respectively (ISSP, 2012). Poland shows a different picture as equally 30% of respondents supported the three statements (ISSP, 2012).

Concerning the division of care between the families and services providers 74% prefers family care and 23% expect the state to provide childcare and 2% prefer private services (ISSP, 2012). In the Czech Republic 54% trusts the family, 38% prefers the state, 2%, 3% and 1% is choosing non-profit organizations, resp. private facilities and employers as providers of childcare services (ISSP, 2012). In Poland 75% of respondents think family should take care of children, 13% is expecting the state to ensure these services, 7% prefers private facilities. Preference for non-profit organizations and employers run services is minor under 1% (ISSP, 2012).

⁷ Hungary, 2005: 62 % of respondents preferred higher responsibility to be taken by the government rather than individuals (62% choosing 6 or higher values on a 10 point scale, where 10 means agreement with the statement that the government should take responsibility), Poland 2012: 64% of people agreed with higher responsibility on the side of the state (World Values Survey 1981-2014 time series, E037.- Government responsibility).

⁸ in 2012 the topic of Family and Changing Gender Roles IV was surveyed. Although the parliamentary elections analysed in this paper preceded the collection of data, we consider these data relevant to our analysis. Sample sizes: Czech Republic 1804 (cond. in 2012); Hungary n.a (cond. in 2013); Poland 1115 (cond. in 2013).

Table 3 - **Public opinion on family policies in the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland**

	PL	Hu	CZ
<i>What is the ideal division of paid leave between parents?</i>			
Mother entire, father none	30	58	63
Mother most, father some	30	19	19
Mother and father half	30	8	8
Other views	10	15	10
<i>Who should be the primary provider of care for pre-school age children?</i>			
Family members	75	74	54
Government agencies	13	23	38
Private / non-profit care	8	2	6
Other views	4	2	3

Authors' calculations using the ISSP survey of 2012, unweighted percentages

Analytical framework

This study wants to reveal what childcare policy measures are proposed by parliamentary parties in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. Proposed policy measures are analysed from two specific viewpoints. One important dimension refers the philosophy and conceptualisation of childcare policy looking into key principles of the system whereas the other targets the impact of childcare systems on the gender order.

Therefore a two-dimensional model has been created in order to analyse the childcare policy proposals:

1. policy motives to implement certain types of care
2. division of care that certain type of care contributes to.

In line with Scheiwe and Willekens (2009) we distinguish two models - the educational model and the work-care reconciliation model – which follow different policy motives for the implementation of childcare measures. The educational model promotes universally accessible pre-school education pursuing pedagogical purposes. Work-care reconciliation model represents a care-centred, targeted approach, which rather implies mini-nurseries, mini-kindergartens or private nannies (see Table 4).

Table 4 – Simplified overview of the institutional dimensions affected by the different goal-setting of public childcare system

Institutional Dimension	Educational Model	Work-Care Model Reconciliation Model
Approach	Universal	Targeted
Entitled person(s)	Children	Parent/child with special needs
Pedagogic concept	Pedagogic objectives (education)	Mainly care
Size and organization of groups	Relatively large groups (similar to school classes)	Smaller groups
Fees	No school fees	Both (state and parental contribution)

Source: Scheiwe a Willekens (2009)

The other dimension tracks the potential impact of childcare measures on gender order in the society – on division of care work between possible providers, namely mothers and fathers but also state or private institutions. Different perceptions on the division of care responsibilities may be found in literature (Rubery, Smith, Fagan, 1999, Korpi, 2000, Sainsbury, 2001, Gornick, Meyers, 2003) with the central point of the discussion in intensity of male breadwinner model and/or models considering people as individuals disregarding of their family configuration. Model developed by Crompton however includes other actors than parents and has therefore been selected for this study offering 5 possible divisions of care work (see Table 5).

Table 5 – Division of care between parents, state and market

Male breadwinner Female carer	Dual earner Female part-time carer	Dual earner State carer	Dual earner Dual carer
		Dual earner Marketised carer	

Source: Crompton (1999)

During the analysis we applied this two-dimensional framework in order to examine the political parties' approach to childcare measures (childcare facilities, family centres, etc.), parental leaves (eligibility criteria, length, flexibility of parental leave schemes, etc.) and (dis)incentives in relation to division of care (tax deductions, support for part-time jobs for caring parents, etc.).

Data collection

We look at party programmes for the parliamentary elections held in 2010 in the Czech Republic and Hungary and in 2011 in Poland. In each case we focus primarily on parties gaining at least 2% of votes in the parliamentary elections, but we are taking into account and analysing only those parties with care policy agenda presented in their programmes. In the Czech Republic these parties are the Czech Social Democratic Party, Civic Democratic Party, Tradition Responsibility Prosperity 09, Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia, Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party and the Green Party. In Hungary the electoral programme of the governing coalition of the Fidesz –

Hungarian Civic Union and Christian Democratic Peoples' Party as well as the programmes of the Hungarian Socialist Party, Jobbik - Movement for a Better Hungary and Politics Can Be Different. In Poland out of six political parties exceeding the here applied 2% threshold only the Civic Platform, Law and Justice, Democratic Left Alliance and Poland Comes First incorporated care policies in their electoral programmes⁹.

Electoral programmes key documents, which are widely used by parties to identify the main policy fields of their interests and promote interventions they seek to implement (Naurin, 2011). Rating is primarily based on observation of the occurrence of proposals and policy initiatives without the strict insistence on in-depth elaboration of the implementation plan. Therefore the rating indicated by „+“ and „-“ do not represent the quality of the proposals, but rather the volume of initiatives favouring or opposing certain policy measures.

Results and discussion

Based on the reviewed electoral programmes, family policy and more specifically care policies cannot be considered as the top-priority policy field, but most of the parties consider it important to deal with it. Concerning the diversity of proposals the discourse on care policies was more intense during the Czech and Polish parliamentary elections¹⁰. Although three of the seven main Polish political parties did not include family policies in their manifestos. In Hungary the analysed 2010 elections were outstanding as an asymmetric political situation evolved predicting the overwhelming victory of Fidesz-KDNP (Török, 2011). This set-up resulted that Fidesz-KDNP did not have to invest much effort to convince the voters and ran with a minimum-risk programme with vague promises. The leftist opposition also responded with quite uncertain programme based on the primary principles and values they adhere to. The most detailed programmes were the ones published by the two newly-established parties. In Poland the elections and the campaign was marked by the competition between the two strongest parties and dominated by the cleavage of modernity and traditions represented by the Civic Platform and the Law and Justice party respectively (Sokolowski, 2012). For the first time in the history of democratic Poland the government got re-elected. The Czech elections were inevitably affected by the corruption scandals and voters' dissatisfaction with the political elites, which encouraged the participation of new parties. The results are often described as a political earthquake fragmenting the till then stable party system of four major political parties (Hanley, 2012).

Division of care model

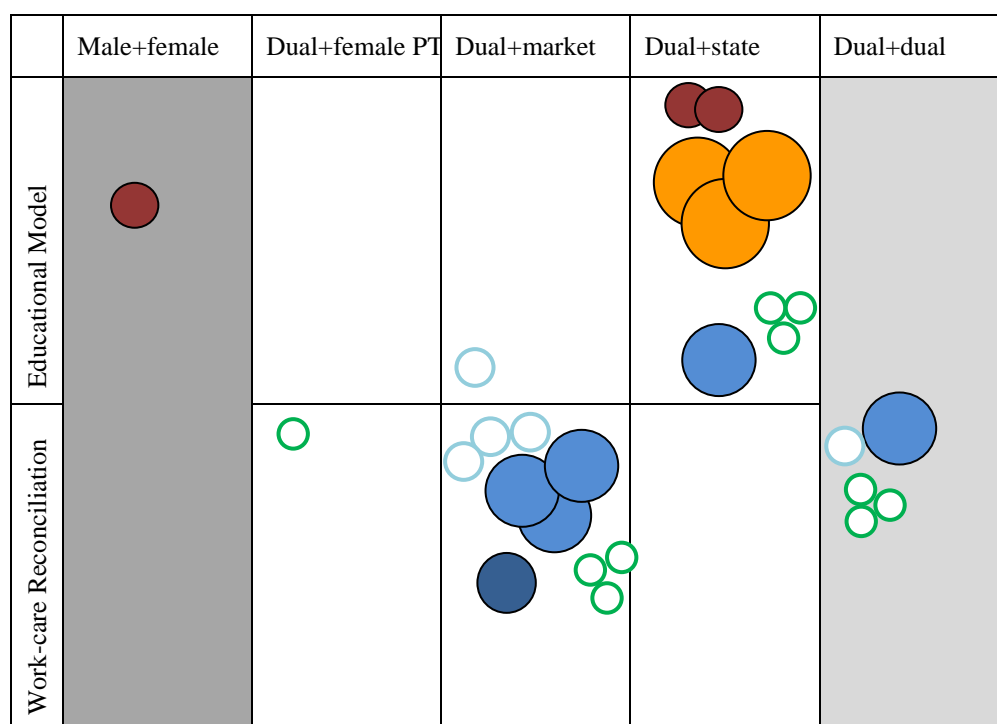
Almost all of the political parties tend to accept dual-earner model. In this respect we can not observe extreme standpoints in any of the countries. There are parties which clearly promote the status-quo of long-term parental leave scheme, however even in these cases there is reference to work-care reconciliation (e.g. extreme right-wing party in Hungary). In regard to its realization there are different initiatives. As alternative forms of employment are not wide-spread in any of these

⁹ Please see Annex 2 enlisting the political parties participating at the analysed parliamentary elections and the brief description of their political orientation.

¹⁰ For the list of proposals included in the analysed electoral programmes please see Annex 1.

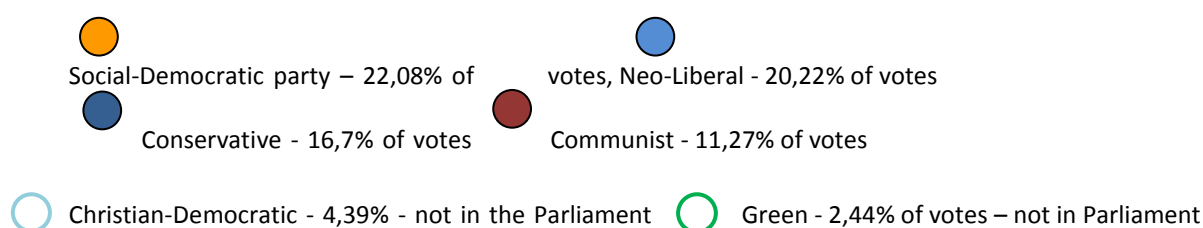
countries, the political parties tend to search for solutions in the part-time carer models. This is manifested mainly in case of Hungarian and Czech political parties. In the division of care dimension the representation of support for dual earner and dual carer model is the least frequent, which tends to be in line with the rather conservative and slowly changing public attitudes as shown by our calculation based on ISSP data.

Table 6 - Location of political parties within the „policy motives – division of childcare” framework in the Czech Republic



Source: Válková (2010)

Notes:



Each bubble represents one identified proposal.

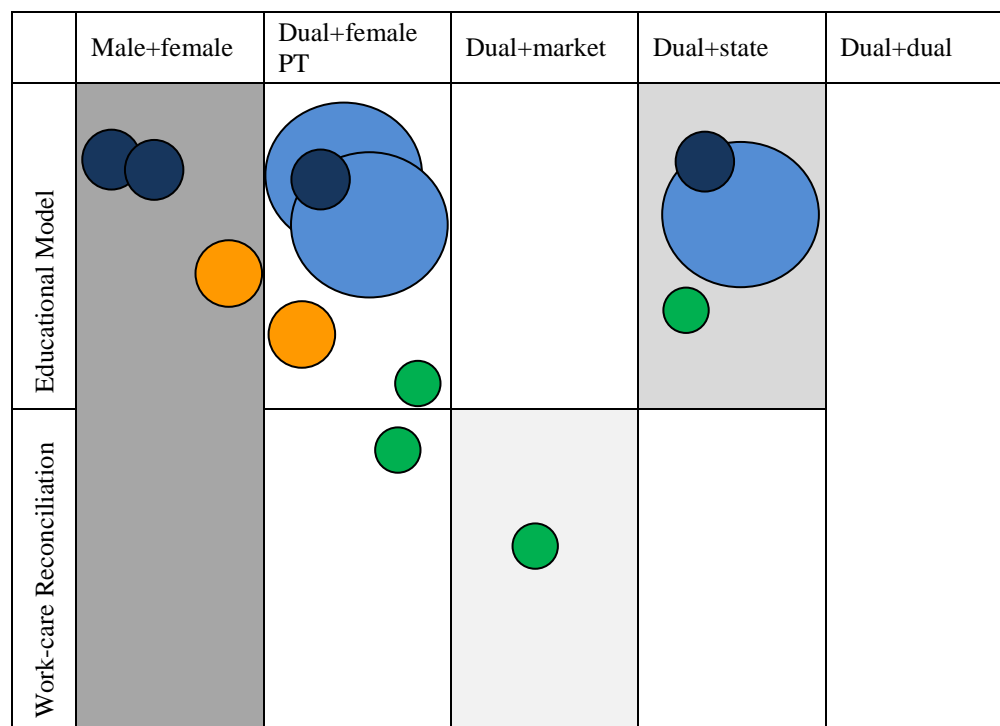
Dark grey background represents the current practise. Light grey background indicates existence of legal provision with limited implementation.

See Annex 1 Table 1-2 on rating of proposals

On the one hand a clear tendency is observable that working mothers are getting to be respected. On the other hand, change in regard fathers' carer role is still unusual and implicitly discouraged. The most conservative in this respect are the Hungarian parties and the most courageous was the Czech

Green party¹¹, which as the only party clearly refused male breadwinner model and supported dual earner and dual carer model. In Poland we can see a quite balanced picture – all parties seem to be open to different alternatives regardless the ideological drives (see Table 9). The Social Democratic party is the only party proposing extension of fathers’ rights. Other Polish parties’ passivity contradicts the above described public attitudes, however it may reflect the perception of the current status of fathers’ care entitlements sufficient and limited willingness to open up the issue.

Table 7 - Location of political parties within the „policy motives – division of childcare” framework in Hungary



Source: Györy (2014)

Notes:

- Conservative – 52.77% of votes
 Social Democratic – 19.29% of votes
 Far-Right – 16.71% of votes
 Green party – 7.42% of votes

Each bubble represents one identified proposal.

Dark grey background represents the current practise. Light grey background indicates existence of legal provision with limited implementation.

See Annex 1 Table 3-4 on rating of proposals

Openness toward marketization also varies. There are two dominant groups of parties - parties declaring non-difference or equal support for private and state institutions and parties inclined to support public facilities. Table 7 clearly indicates that in the Czech Republic this issue is the main dividing line between the left and right-wing parties. The leftist parties with clear inclination to the

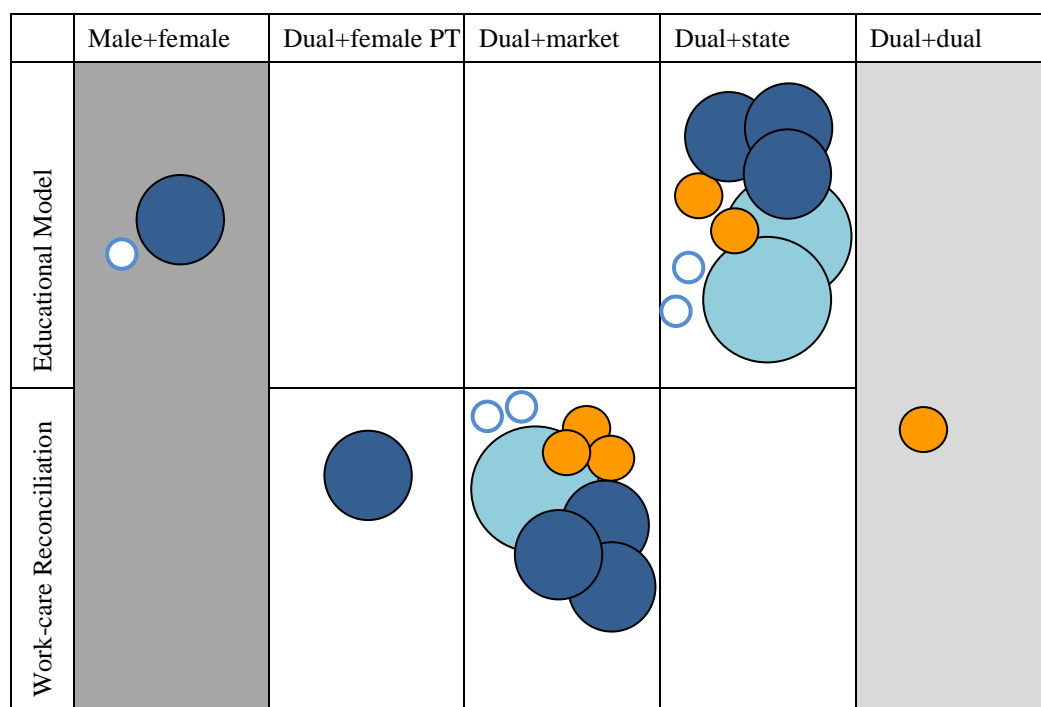
¹¹ The Green Party did not gained enough votes to get into the Parliament. In 2012 they entered the Senate and since then they participate in the parliamentary work.

state-run facilities represent the rather traditional spectrum, while the right-wing parties searching for solutions at marketization of these services manifest a rather liberal approach.

Policy motives for childcare

In all three countries kindergarten enjoys high political support, while childcare services for children under three years are quite scarce. The policy motive dimension reflects on the above mentioned state versus market division as well as on the driving principle of the proposed form of services. Along this dimension the three states represent quite different outcome. Relatively high variation is observable in the Czech Republic. As already mentioned, pro-state or pro-market, pro-education and pro-care models varies significantly. In Hungary the perception of this issue remains minor shifting attention to the rather pro-educational status quo. In Poland we can observe openness for alternative forms of childcare, while focus on the public educational approaches is supported as well without clear preference for one or another.

Table 8 - Location of political parties within the „policy motives – divison of childcare” framework in Poland



Source: Polakowski, Szelewa (2014)

Notes:

- Christian-Democratic, Liberal Conservative – 38.18% of votes
- Conservative – 29.89% of votes
- Social Democratic – 8.24% of votes
- Centre-Right, Conservative Liberal – 2.19% of votes – not in Parliament

Each bubble represents one identified proposal.

Dark grey background represents the current practise. Light grey background indicates existence of legal provisions with limited implementation.

See Annex 1 Table 5-6 on rating of proposals

Conclusion

The current status of family policies in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland reflects rather conservative attitudes to childcare and gender roles. The efforts to make care policies more flexible remained ineffective due to the lack of progress in extending capacities of childcare service (Szikra, Győry 2014). This paper intended to approach this issue by mapping the attitudes of political parties toward families, gender roles and division of care-work between parents in electoral programmes. The analysis of election promises not only revealed the discourse the political parties use, but also informed us about the alternatives and policy aims the parties consider relevant. We can observe many similarities between the approaches and initiatives made regardless of the ideological orientation of political parties, which underlines Saxonberg's (2014) claim that the official political orientation of the parties does not strictly determine the direction of family policy initiatives. In line with Gábor Toka's findings, our analysis confirmed that the left-right wing ideological divide was the most manifested in the case of the Czech Republic, while it was less clear in Hungary or Poland.

In terms of gender role attitudes the electoral programmes tends to coincide with the public attitudes to varying degree as there are some marked differences between the three countries. The Hungarian electoral programmes fully reflect the conservative attitudes as found out in the public opinion survey. Family policies did not feature high on the agenda in the Hungarian election campaign of 2010. The incumbents all promoted the educational model, combined with the male breadwinner or dual earner – female part-time carer model, though they did mention the dual earner-state carer model as well. In the Czech Republic, the issue received more attention. While according to the public opinion survey Czech respondents are the most conservative among the three countries, parties seem to be less conservative. Their views seemed to converge on the issue of care division, as most parties advocated a less conservative form: dual earner with state, market or dual carer. Proponents of increased state responsibility tended to favour the educational model (kindergarten for children aged over 3), while proponents of the market or dual carer model supported the work-family reconciliation model. As in the Hungarian case, the green party presented the most comprehensive and progressive plans, including incentives to increase the involvement of fathers in child care. While the public opinion survey showed outstandingly supportive attitudes toward fathers' role, the electoral programmes are less liberal and innovative in this regard. The proposals reflect a mildly liberal consensus over supporting the dual earner – state or market carer models, in both the educational and work-family reconciliation models. None of the political parties refused work-care reconciliation as such, and the direction of the desired change is rather a moderate dual earner model. Despite the strong public support for the egalitarian share of care work between the parents (30%), the electoral proposals and promises are silent in this regard and keep father's role fixed. Based on the electoral promises childcare is divided primarily between mothers, the state and the market without clear demarcation between these actors.

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Annex 1 – List of proposals and its rating

Czech Republic

PP	Proposal	EM	WCRM	MB-FC	DE-FC	DE-MC	DE-SC	DE-DC
Conservative Neo-liberal	Tax deductions on provable expenses on private childcare and housework		+			+		
	Sustain kindergarten as main pillar of pre-schooling	+					+	
	Support for mutual parental assistance		+			+		
	Support for mini-kindergartens		+			+		
	Propose allowances for working parents for childcare outside home		+			+		
	One week of paid paternity leave							+
Christian Democrats	Sustain kindergarten as main pillar of pre-schooling	+						
	Support for mutual parental assistance		+			+		
	Support for private mini-kindergartens		+			+		
	Part-time jobs for caring parents				+			+
Green Party	Sustain kindergarten as main pillar of pre-schooling	+				+		
	Support for private kindergarten	+					+	
	Extension of public care services	+				+		
	Flexible and part-time attendance of public childcare facilities	+						
	Support for mutual parental assistance – simplify conditions of private caregivers (“nannies”)		+				+	
	Support for private mini-nurseries and mini-kindergarten		+				+	
	Support for mother and family centres		+			+		
	Refusal of male-breadwinner model			-				
	Paid paternity leave							+
	Part-time jobs for caring parents				+			+
	Quota for sharing care							+

Social Democrats	Support for public nurseries	+					+	
	Support for public kindergarten	+					+	
	Strengthening the system of leisure activities for children in public organisations	+					+	
Communists	Support for public nurseries	+					+	
	Support for public kindergarten	+					+	
	3 year-long parental leave with increased monthly rate			+				

Table 1 – Rating of electoral programmes regarding the policy motives in the childcare in the Czech Republic

Political Party	Educational Model	Work-care Model	Reconciliation
Conservative	0	+	
Neo-liberal	+	+++	
Christian Democrats	+	++	
Green Party	++++	+++	
Social Democrats	+++	0	
Communists	++	0	

Source: Válková (2010)

Table 2 – Rating of electoral programmes regarding the division of childcare in the Czech Republic

Political party	Male breadwinner – female carer	Dual earner – female part-time carer	Dual earner – marketized carer	Dual earner – state carer	Dual earner – dual carer
Conservative	0	0	+	0	0
Neo-liberals	0	0	+++	+	+
Christian Democrats	0	+	+++	0	+
Green Party	-	+	+++	+++	+++
Social Democrats	0	0	0	+++	0
Communists	+	0	0	++	0

Source: Válková (2010)

Hungary

PP	Proposal	EM	WCRM	MB-FC	DE-FC	DE-MC	DE-SC	DE-DC
Far-right party	Extension of capacities of nurseries	+						
	Provide stable state financing and making childcare service provision mandatory task for municipalities	+					+	
	Extension of work-related parental leave			+				
	Introduction of a new – 8 year long – parental leave for caring mothers			+				
	Tax-reliefs for employers of mothers returning from parental leave				+			
Conservative	Support for nurseries	+					+	
	Support for integrated kindergarten-nurseries	+						
	Promote part-time jobs and atypical employment opportunities for parents				+			
	Promote family-friendly employment				+			
Green Party	Support for pre-schooling of socially disadvantaged children	+						
	Support for nurseries	+					+	
	Support for mini-nurseries		+			+		
	Promote atypical employment for parents – part-time jobs, homeworking, etc.				++			+
Social-Democratic	Support for early childhood education as a means to counter child poverty	+						
	Recognize care work as paid work			+				
	Need for new tools to promote re-employment of mothers				+			

Table 3 – Rating of electoral programmes regarding the policy motives in the childcare in Hungary

Political Party	Educational Model	Work-care Model	Reconciliation
Far-right party	+	0	
Conservative	++	0	
Green Party	++	+	
Social Democrats	+	0	

Source: Győry (2014)

Table 4 – Rating of electoral programmes regarding the division of childcare in Hungary

Political party	Male breadwinner – female carer	Dual earner – female part-time carer	Dual earner – marketized carer	Dual earner – state carer	Dual earner – dual carer
Far-right party	++	+	0	+	0
Conservative	0	++	0	+	0
Green Party	0	++	+	+	0
Social Democrats	+	+	0	0	0

Source: Győry (2014)

Poland

PP	Proposal	EM	WCRM	MB-FC	DE-FC	DE-MC	DE-SC	DE-DC
Conservative	Extension of public nurseries – encourage local governments – lowering standards, reduce administrative burdens, allocation of funds to counties and municipalities	+					++	
	Support for private nurseries		+			+		
	Support for kindergarten – both public and private	+				+	+	
	Support for alternative forms of childcare services – e.g. mini-nurseries, services provided by employers		+			+		
	Extension of maternity leave			+				
	Flexible employment for mothers (part-time jobs, flexitime)				+			
Centre-right Conservative	Place for every child in crèche or kindergarten	+					+	
	Equal support for public and private childcare services		+			+	+	
	Support for alternative forms of childcare services		+			+		
	extension of the maternity leave			+				
Christian Democratic – Liberal Conservative	Extension of capacities of creches	+						
	Extension of capacities of kindergarten	+						
	Equalisation of state subsidies for public and private kindergarten					+	+	
Social-Democrat	Support for kindergarten	+						
	Place for every child in crèche or kindergarten	+					+	
	Support family-care facilities (mini-nurseries)		+			+		
	Support childcare services provided by employers		+			+		
	Father quota or extension of paternity leave							+

Abbreviations:

PP – Political party

EM – Educational model

WCRM – Work-care reconciliation model

MB-FC – Male breadwinner – female carer

DE-FC – Dual earner – female part-time carer

DE-MC – Dual earner – marketized carer

DE-SC – Dual earner – state carer

DE-DC – Dual earner – dual carer

Table 5 – Rating of electoral programmes regarding the policy motives in the childcare in Poland

Political Party	Educational Model	Work-care Reconciliation Model
Conservative	++	++
Center-right – conservative	+	++
Christian Democratic – Liberal Conservative	++	0
Social-Democrat	++	++

Source: Polakowski, Szelewa (2014)

Table 6 – Rating of electoral programmes regarding the division of childcare in Poland

Political Party	Male breadwinner female carer	Dual earner – female part-time carer	Dual earner – marketized carer	Dual earner – state carer	Dual earner – dual carer
Conservative	+	+	+++	+++	0
Center-right – conservative	+	0	++	++	0
Christian Democratic – Liberal Conservative	0	0	+	+	0
Social-Democrat	0	0	+++	+	+

Source: Polakowski, Szelewa (2014)

Annex 2 – Description of political parties participating in the analysed Parliamentary elections

Czech Republic

Name of the political party, year of establishment	Political orientation, type	Election results 2010			Brief description
		%	seats	In Government	
Czech Social Democratic Party (<i>Ceska strana socialne demokraticka, CSSD</i>), 1989	Social democratic party	22.09	56	No	The party adheres to social democratic values, supports social market economy and advances European integration. (European Election Database, EPERN)
Civic Democratic Party (<i>Obcanska demokraticka strana , ODS</i>), 1991	Conservative, Neo-liberal	20.22	53	Yes	The party is the strongest right-wing party in the Czech Republic with clear preference for liberal market policies, promoting limited state interventions, reduction in state bureaucracy and low tax rates. The party's aim to present itself as defender of national interests faded in the past years, however its attitude toward the EU is rather moderate supporting limited integration (European Election Database, EPERN; National Identity in CEE - Database).
Tradition Responsibility Prosperity 09 (<i>Tradice Odpovědnost Prosperita 09, TOP 09</i>), 2009	Conservative centre-right	16.71	41	Yes – as coalition partner	TOP 09 was formed as a “break-away” party by former representatives of Christian-Democratic party. The party distinguished itself from the other centre-right parties offering different form of liberal conservatism emphasising quality governance, support for civil society and adherence to ethics of public life. Main values of the party are “liberty of individuals, family as fundamental part of the society, common responsibility of individuals to the society, shared values of state, rule of law and social solidarity in terms of free market and public good.” (National Identity in CEE – Database, European Election Database, EPERN; Hanley, 2012).
Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (<i>Kommunisticka strana</i>)	Communist	11.27	26	No	The party clearly favours traditional left-wing policies and supports socialism in a democratic way respecting human rights and freedom. It profiles as a Euro-sceptic party rejecting both

<i>Cech a Moravy, KSČM), 1989</i>					political and economic integration efforts (National Identity in CEE – Database, European Election Database, EPERN).
Public Affairs (<i>Věci veřejné, VV</i>), 2001	Conservative, centre-right	10.88	24	Yes – as coalition partner	Till 2009 the members and activities of the party were restricted to municipal politics. The party identifies itself as a liberal party promoting direct democracy and advocating referendums at all levels of governance. The party tends to lack strong ideological base. Its restrictive social policy stances contradict the declared liberal political orientation (National Identity in CEE – Database, European Election Database, EPERN; Hanley, 2012).
Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party (<i>Křesťanská a demokratická unie – Československá strana lidová, KDU-CSL</i>),	Christian democratic	4.39	Not in Parliament	-	The party with strong connections to the Roma-Catholic Church advocates traditional conservative values such as support for families and family life, individuality and responsibility (National Identity in CEE – Database).
SPOZ - Party of Civic Rights – Zemanovci (<i>Strana Prav Občanů – Zemanovci</i>), 2009	Social democratic	4.33	Not in Parliament	-	
Suveren - Sovereignty - Jana Bobosikova Bloc (<i>Suverenita - blok J.Bobosikove</i>), 2002		3.67	Not in Parliament	-	
Green Party (<i>Strana zelených, SZ</i>),	Green	2.44	Not in Parliament	-	The party supports environmental protection, promotes stronger civil society and pushes for greater social welfare. The party advances European integration policies (Hanley, 2012; National Identity in CEE – Database).

Other parties:

DSSS - Workers' Party of Social Justice (Delnic.str.socialni spravdl.)

CPS - Czech Pirate Party (Ceska piratska strana)

Svobodni - Party of Free Citizens/Free Citizens Party (Strana svobodnych obcanu)

PB - Righ Bloc (Volte Pr.Blok)

Obcane - Citizens (Obcane.cz)

M - "Moravians" (Moravane)

KONS - Conservative Party (Konzervativni strana)

KC - "Czech crown" - Monarchist party of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia (Koruna ceska (Monarchisticka strana cech, Moravy a Slezska)

STOP SPRRSC - Sdruzeni pro republiku - Republikanska strana Ceskoslovenska

CSNS2005 - Ceska strana narodne socialisticka

KH - Klicove hnuti

HS - Humanisticka strana

ES - EVROPSKY STRED

CSNS - Ceska strana narodne socialni

LIB - Liberalove.CZ

NP - Narodni prosperita

Hungary

Name of the political party, year of establishment	Political orientation, type	Election results 2010			Brief description
		%	seats	In Government	
Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Union (<i>Fidesz – Magyar Polgári Szövetség</i>), 1988	Conservative	52.73	262	Yes	Since its establishment the party underwent considerable changes with clear shift from liberal to conservative policies with increasing focus on nationalism and became the strongest right-wing party. The party adheres to conservative values of Christianity, traditional families and protection of the nation and cultural values. The party focuses its economic and social policies rather on middle-class. It inclines to centralization of governance (National Identity in CEE - Database).
Christian Democratic Peoples' Party (<i>Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt - KDNP</i>), 1989	Christian-democratic			Yes – as coalition partner	The party with strong connections to the churches is committed to traditional Christian-democratic values.
Hungarian Socialist Party (<i>Magyar Szocialista Párt, MSZP</i>), 1989	Social democratic	19.3	59	No	The Hungarian Socialist Party is the successor party of the workers' party in the communist period. The party adheres to values of social democracy promoting more extensive welfare state. In regard to the economic policies it is more market-oriented. It support European integration.
Jobbik - Movement for a Better Hungary (<i>Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom</i>), 2003	Far-right, conservative	16.67	47	No	The party led by Gábor Vona is an extreme right-wing national-populist party building mainly on anti-Jewish and anti-Roma sentiments. The party promotes traditional, conservative values. The main issues raised by the party are the corruption, ensure order in the society and protect Hungarian interests. The party is highly Euro-sceptic.
Politics Can Be Different (<i>Lehet Más a Politika! LMP</i>), 2009	Green	7.48	16	No	The party was established as a “third-way” party by environmental and civil society activists. One of the most important policies promoted by the party are the environmental policies and promotion of sustainability and social policies and advancing of social integration.

Hungarian Democratic Forum (<i>Magyar Demokrata Fórum, MDF, 1987</i>)	Conservative, centre-right	2.67	Not in Parliament	-	
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Other parties:

CM - Civil Movement (Civil Mozgalom)

MUNKASPART - Hungarian Communist Workers' Party (Magyar Kommunista Munkáspárt)

MSZDP - Hungarian Social Democratic Party (Magyarországi Szociáldemokrata Párt)

ÖP - (Összefogás Párt BAZ M-i Lista)

MIÉP - Hungarian Justice and Life Party (Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja)

Poland

Name of the political party, year of establishment	Political orientation, type	Election results 2011			Brief description
		%	seats	In Government	
Civic Platform (<i>Platforma Obywatelska</i> , PO), 2001	Centre-right, Liberal Conservative party	39.18	207	Yes – second period	The party led by Donald Tusk supports free market economy, pluralist democracy, and respect for individual human rights. It advocates for flat-tax policies, privatization and de-monopolization, weakening of the trade unions' privileges and favour allocation of a larger budget for local government. However since 2007 articulation of principles of economic liberalism and social conservatism tended to wane as the party was aiming to extend the group of voters and profiled as a "catch-all" party (European Election Database, EPERN - Aleks Szczerbiak 2011, Jasiewicz,2012).
Law and Justice (<i>Prawo i Sprawiedliwość</i> , PiS), 2001	Conservative	29.89	157	No	The party led by Jaroslaw Kaczyński is a tradition, euro sceptic party inclining to populism. It firmly stresses the need to preserve the Polish nation and its traditional values with particular focus on the Roman Catholic religion (European Election Database, EPERN - Aleks Szczerbiak 2011, Jasiewicz,2012).
Palikot's Movement (<i>Ruch Palikota</i> , RP), 2010	Liberal, populist	10.02	40	No	The liberal party led by Janusz Palikot distinguishes with the refusal of the Roman Catholic church and its influence, promotion legalization of abortion on demand, legalization of in vitro fertilization as well as decriminalization of soft drugs. In the economic dimension they represent right-wing policies with preference for universal flat-tax policies (European Election Database, EPERN - Aleks Szczerbiak 2011, Jasiewicz,2012).
Polish People's Party (<i>Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe</i> , PSL), 1990	Christian Democratic, Agrarian	8.36	28	Yes – as coalition partner	The party is the successor of the communist-time agrarian party denoting rather left-wing views (used to be coalition partner of the Democratic Left Alliance). The party led by Waldemar Pawlak has strong electoral support in rural communities. It has clear agricultural agenda while its focus on other policies has been limited (European Election Database, EPERN - Aleks Szczerbiak

					2011).
Democratic Left Alliance (<i>Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej</i> , SLD), 1999 (as a coalition party is was established in 1991 already)	Centre-left, Social Democratic	8.24	27	No	The party led by Leszek Miller adheres to social democratic traditions. It supports pro-Europeanism . Its roots go back to the communist era.
Poland Comes First (<i>Polska jest Najważniejsza</i> , PJN), 2010	Centre-right	2,19	Not in Parliament	-	The party presented itself as the one filling the gap between the two major parties – the Civic Platform and the Law and Justice. In the social and cultural dimension it adheres to more conservative values than the Civic Platform, but less traditional than Law and Justice, while in relation to the economic policies it is more open to liberalization.
Congress of the New Right - New Right (<i>Kongres Nowej Prawicy, Nowa Prawica</i> , KNP), 2011	Conservative, right-wing populist	1.06	Not in Parliament	-	
Polish Labour Party (<i>Polska Partia Pracy</i> , PPP)	Socialist	0.55	Not in Parliament	-	

NP - New Right (Nowa Prawica - Janusza Korwin-Mikke)

PR - Right of the Republic (Prawica Rzeczypospolitej)

MN - German Minority (Mniejszosc Niemiecka)

NDP - Nasz Dom Polska-Samoobrona Andrzeja Leppera