

Social Movements of Central-Eastern Europe: Examining Trends of Cooperation and Antagonism by Using Big Data

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Abstract : The globalization and the Europeanization have significantly contributed to a change in the role of the nation-states. The global economic crisis, the climate changes, and the recent refugee crisis, are just a few among many challenges that cannot be effectively addressed by the traditional role of the nation-states. One of the main roles of the states is to solve collective action problems, however due to their changing roles; apparently this is getting more and more difficult. Depending on political culture, collective action problems are solved either through cooperation or conflict. The political culture of Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries is marked by low civic participation and by a weak civil society. In this type of culture collective action problems are likely to be induced through conflict, rather than the democratic process of dialogue and any type of social change is probably to be introduced by social movements. Several studies have been conducted on the social movements of the CEE countries, yet, it is still not clear if the most significant social movements of the region tend to choose rather the cooperative or the conflictual way as action strategy. This study differentiates between a national and a European action field, having different social orders. The actors of the two fields are the broadly understood civil society members, conceptualized as social movements. This research tries to answer the following questions: a) What are the norms that best characterize the CEE countries' social order? b) What type of actors would prefer a change and in which areas? c) Is there a significant difference between the main actors active in the national versus the European field? The main hypotheses are that there are conflicting norms defining the national and the European action field, and there is a significant difference between the action strategies adopted by social movements acting in the two different fields. In mapping the social order, the study uses data provided by the European Social Survey. Big data of the Global Data on Events, Location and Tone (GDELT) database offers information regarding the main social movements and their preferred type of action. The unit of the analysis is the so called 'Visegrad 4' countries: Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary and the research uses data starting from 2005 (after the European accession of these four countries) until May, 2017. According to the data, the main hypotheses were confirmed.

Keywords : big data, Central and Eastern Europe, civil society, GDELT, social movements

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