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Fortress Europe: The Dangers of Democratic Insecurities

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Abstract

European radical parties are increasingly popular across the whole continent and the pan-European dimension of this trend requires a thorough analysis of this phenomenon. Also, rising politicisation of hitherto social movements like PEGIDA, proliferation of various forms of direct democracy (referenda, demonstrations, manifestations), and vigilante groups (like Soldiers of Odin) present both in the eastern and western part of the European Community begs for a deepened reflection regarding the drivers and determinants of these phenomena and decide whether radicalisation of European politics is a temporary occurrence or will it become a permanent feature of European political landscape due to structural reasons. This paper argues that the crisis of societal security (Buzan et al. 1998) manifests itself through a crisis of representative democracy (Rosanvallon 2008) institutions and mechanisms visible in "radicalisation of politics" taking forms of anti-establishment initiatives (radical parties, social movements, and vigilante groups) and various forms of direct democracy (referenda, manifestations, demonstrations).

Keywords: societal security, political representation, populism, democracy, political radicalisation

Introduction

In November 2013, in Vienna, a meeting was organised and hosted by the Freedom Party of Austria that invited the representatives of its Dutch equivalent (Partij voor de Vrijheid; PVV), French Front National, Belgian Vlaams Belang, Italian Northern League and the Swedish Democrats; the aim was to form a coalition before the incoming elections to the European Parliament. The event was noticed by few and even less people got excited about it. Mainly right-wing blogosphere, indifferent to objective reality, enthusiastically reported about the turning point in the history of the European Community and quoted Reuters that interviewed a politician largely unknown to the international audience, named Norbert Hofer, who asserted that the aim of cooperation is "a cooperation of constructive, positive, patriotic forces in Europe" (Bare Naked Islam 2013). A joint conference convened shortly in The Hague by Marine Le Pen and Geert Wilders was similarly ignored by the political mainstream. While the icon of the National Front, and the most controversial Dutch politician together urged the Euro-skeptic political parties to unite, none of these exhortations were taken seriously. Certainly not by the "monsters from Brussels" (as phrased by Le Pen and Wilders), i.e. Eurocrats, who, according to two the most colorful politicians in Europe, should be overthrown. After all, the anti-establishment, vociferous and radical parties have always existed. One could safely assume that in case of their increased popularity we face merely a temporary anomaly, because the radical parties simply are a safety valve; role indispensable in any political system.

And yet, to everyone's surprise, the events did not follow the beaten track; in May 2014 approximately 100 hard-core nationalists entered the European Parliament[1] followed by another subtly Euro-skeptic hundred deputies (The Economist, 2014), the crisis of Eurozone and the huge human tsunami that flooded the continent only deepened the belief that the European Union is not able to offer any coherent and long-term response to the towering challenges. Or, perhaps this statement should be rephrased: It became apparent that the policies proposed by the ruling elites are rejected by their constituencies – either by direct contestation, or via passive, silent resistance. Furthermore, this societal opposition manifests itself in anti-establishment initiatives and various forms of direct democracy.

Increasing numbers of Europeans are dissatisfied with the way their interests are represented and the gap between the political elites and ordinary Europeans is so vast that democracy in the form of placing a cross on the ballot every few years begins to fail. When the people begin to believe that their political representatives do not take their voters' views into account but instead stand up for different constituencies, or simply make decisions guided by incomprehensible imponderables, impossible to explain by even the most elaborate rhetoric, when they suspect that politicians do not listen to what their people say, do not care about their fears and needs - there is no other choice, one needs to take matters into their own hands. Thus, it should not be surprising, that in the last presidential battle in Austria, it was Norbert Hofer who almost turned upside down the heretofore predictable race for power to which election in every self-respecting solidified democracy have evolved (Lowe 2016).

European radical parties are increasingly popular across the whole continent and the pan-European dimension of this trend requires a thorough analysis of this phenomenon. Also, rising politicisation of hitherto social movements like PEGIDA, proliferation of various forms of direct democracy (referenda, demonstrations, manifestations), and vigilante groups (like Soldiers of Odin) present both in the eastern and western part of the European Community begs for a deepened reflection regarding the drivers and determinants of these phenomena and decide whether radicalisation of European politics is a temporary occurrence or will it become a permanent feature of European political landscape due to structural reasons. This paper argues that the crisis of societal security (Buzan et al. 1998) manifests itself through a crisis of representative democracy (Rosanvallon 2008) institutions and mechanisms visible in "radicalisation of politics" taking forms of anti-establishment initiatives (radical parties, social movements, and vigilante groups) and various forms of direct democracy (referenda, manifestations, demonstrations).

Societal In/Security

The concept of societal security was designed to tackle changing reality of post-Cold War Europe, adjusted to new settings and conceived to deal with emerging political reality of the European Union (EU). It places heavy emphasis on society as the focal point of European security concerns. States need independence to survive; for societies survival is determined by their identity. Insecure society does not resort to military actions, it turns to processes that strengthen and juxtapose "us" versus "them". This leads to situations where one identity is challenged by another one and hence reinforce each other reciprocally, what leads to a societal security dilemma. Consequently, the top-down processes that undermine, disrupt or weaken society's identity lead to societal insecurity when societies define given change, development or potentiality as a threat to their survival as a community (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998, 119).

One of the fundamental assumptions governing the societal security concept is that the state and the society "of the same people" are two different things (Buzan et al. 1990, 119). Consequently, security of the state and security of a society are two different "securities" derived from two different sources; the former from sovereignty, while the latter from "patterns of language, culture, religious and national identities, and customs of states," (Buzan 2008, 122-123) in short from identity. Waever (1993, 24-25) argues that states can be undermined or destabilized by "their" societies becoming threatened or weakened in terms of social cohesion and identity. Society thus is more than just a sector of state security through which the state's security can be threatened; it becomes an independent agent and a referent object of its own security concerns. Since societal identity is able to reproduce itself independently of the state and even in opposition to it, it should be considered as something integral yet at the same time independent of state security (Waever 1993, 23). Secondly, and more importantly with respect to the argument presented here, lack of societal security also enhances the discrepancy between the state and the society or more precisely, between the society and the political elites. This is understandable when one considers that the elites and the general public pursue a different logic, with the elites more closely linked to the state and the public to the society (Waever 1993, 82).

Societies are conceptualised as large-scale collective units of individuals (yet more than the sum of individual people) with profound constituent of mutual orientation (sense of belonging) grounded in structures, institutions, and practices (Waever 1993, 21-22). Society's kernel is identity (i.e. all that enables a group of people to refer to themselves as "we"), the self-conception of communities and of individuals identifying themselves as members of a community (Buzan et al. 1990, 119). Naturally, the sense of this shared heritage varies with respect to size of the group, intensity of bond, and the causes for its construction, yet, remains necessary for the existence of every society. Furthermore, although societal identity does not exist in peace but experiences inner tensions and conflicts. At the same time, it demonstrates a willingness to defend itself against internal or external threats. Thus, analysed from such perspective, society has both, an objective and subjective dimension as well as a social and moral structure.

Society, as opposed to nation, is not linked to the state and is clearly distinguishable from other social groups. Buzan et al. characterize nation as a special case of society defined by affiliations to territory; a community with continuity across time, linking past to current and future members "with specific customs, dances and stories, its songs and traditions" (Waever 1993, 21-22). Notwithstanding the political deeds and views of individuals (pluralism), nation makes people to belong all together (universalism) as one of the units of which the global order consists (Waever 1993, 29). While being constructed, nationhood is not a question of an ambiguous category applied to various cases in which it fits more or less nicely. It combines two sets of factors, the objective, such as language or location, and the constructed (inter-subjective) enhanced by a political or personal choice to identify with some community (Buzan et al. 1990, 120). This explains why multinational states are more likely to generate problems of societal insecurity than are nation states (Buzan et al. 1990, 41). This observation is crucial especially when we take into consideration the European dimension.

Societal security concept can be applied on a macro-level (EU) where due to processes of migration, integration, homogenization, sincretisation, and European cosmopolitanism societies are forced to defend themselves against identitive threats perceived as existential and posit themselves against international elites. It can also be applied on a micro-level to analyse identitive configurations of either national groups, subgroups (e.g. Scots) or cross state ones (European Muslims). For this reason, as Waever claim (1993, 3), on macro-level "societal security issues may play a key role in determining not just the pace and scope, but also the success or failure of the European integration process," while on the micro-level it can be applied to deal with an EU reality suffused with intermestic matters, where international mingles with local to this extent that it is almost impossible to differentiate between the two. Consequently, societal security dominates the two interlocking security discourses about Europeanisation threatening national identities and re-nationalisation being a threat to Europe (Buzan and Waever 2003, 375).

Societal Security Dilemma: Crisis of Representation

As its name suggests, the idea of security dilemma consists of two concepts: the security dilemma and societal security. Paul Roe (1997) explains that "societies can experience processes in which perceptions of 'the others' develop into mutually reinforcing 'enemy' pictures leading to negative dialectics whereby groups tend to define their national identity and national consciousness in negative terms, through distinction from or comparison with neighbours." Competing identities can either be mutually exclusive or one with overbearing influence can disrupt the reproduction of the other, thereby triggering protection against seductive cultural imports (Waever 1993, 43-44). Societal security dilemma denotes then processes whereby a group perceiving its identity as threatened starts to act in a security mode on this basis (Waever 1993, 23).

Since identity is constructed, threats to identity always depend on something perceived as threatening to "us". With societal, as with other forms of security, what is perceived as a threat, and what can be objectively assessed as threatening, may be quite different. Real threats may not be accurately seen. Perceived threats may not be real, and yet still have real effects. Waever argues, that internal threats to society are symptomatic for weak states (Waever 1993, 43, 49); a claim that needs to be scrutinized in the context of European Union. Furthermore, societal security dilemma is not a static configuration, but a process with its own dynamics whereby the nature of the threats is liquid and "some changes will be seen as part of natural process by which identities adjust and evolve to meet alternations in historical circumstances" (Waever 1993, 42). What is rarely accentuated, is the fact that he threatening "them", the Other, might be conceptualised either horizontally or vertically. Majority of the analyses (Bansak, Hainmueller and Hangartner 2016) concentrate on the former reflected in the rising hostile attitudes towards migrants, refugees or asylum seekers (but also European Muslims) (Fetzer and Soper 2003; Savelkoul et al. 2010; Fekete 2004). Rarely is it noticed that the vertical dynamics of societal insecurity renders the political elites, both on European and national level, a separate group against which European societies posit themselves.

As a key concept for understanding the working of modern democratic states, political representation, in the broadest possible terms, whether substantive or formal, indicates a situation when the people are represented by their governments so that it is possible to say that, where the government rules, it is the people who also rule (cf. Runciman and Vieira 2008, VIII, 5). Representative democracy is state-based but, in the words of Michael Saward (2011, 75), it can also be conceived "from within a wider canvas of practices denoted by the idea of societal democratic representation." Notwithstanding the level of analysis, representation evolves around the issue of trust. To put it simply, constituencies need to trust those who act for them politically. The trust is revocable and can be withdrawn in case of breach, e.g. when the representative abuses their power or act in their own self-interest or fail to bear the interests of those who they promised to represent (Runciman and Vieira 2008, 74-79). Tensions derive from the gap that must always exist between the representative and the represented (Runciman and Vieira 2008, XI). The growing discrepancy between the representative and the represented might be partially rooted in what Schmitter (2011, 165) termed the "the professionalisation of the role of politicians" with political elites politicians living from politics, not for politics, but also arises from the more basic question of who is represented (demos, ethnos, set of ideas and values).

These issues, visible on national levels, are further exacerbated in the context of the European Union (EU). EU is very often seen and portrayed as a confusing, detached and not representative political design prepared for and by the elites (Katz 2001). As Kurlantzick (2013, 9) noted, already in 2006 Central Europe "showed the most skepticism about the merits of democracy of any region of the world." In fact, according to him since 2006, support for democracy in all of the new European Union nations except Bulgaria (Kurlantzick 2013, 20). The democratic deficit (Hix 2013) as well as problems with accountability (Zielonka 2006) have undoubtedly contributed to this crisis. However, the issue of representation lies at the heart of the problem. European leaders, Members of the European Parliament,

Commissioners and other high profile bureaucrats in Brussels – who do they represent? European states or European nations? And perhaps a vague idea of Europe or broadly defined Europeans? European Community developed on the conceptual foundations of "People's Europe" (Blanco Sío-López 2015). But who the people of Europe exactly are? Does this phrase include migrants? Does it account for lobbyists of big businesses? It is not a trivial question if one considers that there are 1700 financial sector lobbyists working at an EU level, i.e. four for every one financial civil servant, and each year they spend more than €120 millions lobbying EU institutions, whereas 75% of advisors who sit on European Commission Expert Groups and advise on legislation have direct links to the financial sector (Hanula-Bobbitt 2016). Statements of EU officials juxtaposing national and European interests, instead of showing their convergence further complicate the issue. Jean-Claude Juncker, the president of the European Commission, who famously stated that Prime Ministers must stop listening so much to their voters and instead act as "full time Europeans" (The Telegraph 2016) can be an example of this trend.

Those questioning the current state of affairs often earn a title of "populist" and frequently the term is used indiscriminately as a silencing label in political debates or conceived as "pathology of representative politics" (Taggart in Meny and Surel 2002, 5) in academic disputes. Indeed, what traditionally has been referred to as "a principle that animates modern democracies" (Pitkin 1967) evolved into utopian or unrealistic concept regardless of how political representation is understood and which real, ideal or imagined community (Anderson 1991, 4) it purports to represent. And yet, in the public discourse, in the midst of the representative democracy crisis "populist" becomes coterminous with the opposite of the elite; somebody who represents the people.

Radicalisation of European Politics

Societal insecurities of European societies have been a catalyst of the processes rooted in the widening rift between the societies and the political elites inducing and accelerating political and societal changes. Politically, the processes rooted in the lack of societal security progressed from politicisation of the issue (one of many issues that can be coped with in within the standard political settings) to securitisation (the most important issue; a threat that requires extraordinary measures and engagement). On the other hand, when it comes to societal results of democratic insecurities, polarisation (vertical, fringe parties) gave room to radicalisation (horizontal, political elites versus their societies). These two manifest themselves in visible in radicalisation of politics taking forms of anti-establishment initiatives (radical parties, social movements, and vigilante groups) and push for direct democracy (referenda, manifestations, demonstrations,). The final part of this paper will carefully analyse two of these phenomena.

Polarisation of the political scene cut through from the lowest echelons of the society to the highest ranking politicians but only the electoral margins were compelled by their argumentation. Majority of the society would remain indifferent towards the issue and political consensus would deny these "radical" parties and movements any rights of representation and arguably this *cordon sanitaire* would guarantee a secure marginalisation of those political parties who did not fit into the political status quo.Furthermore, polarised groups did not have any capabilities to influence mainstream policies. Fringe parties like Front National constituted a form of political folklore. They existed, and this existence was possible to a large extent because they differed from political mainstream in all the main points, including migration, but few took them seriously. If such party increased its sphere of influence, like it happened with Jörg Haider's Freedom Party in Austria in 2000, isolation and freezing of diplomatic cooperation would be immediately applied.

Interestingly however, within the last couple of years Europe saw a real surge of the anti-establishment parties. They are commonly referred to as the 'far right', 'hard-right' or 'populist' parties but this essentialist approach befuddles the picture as some of them (especially in economic terms, but not only) are firmly rooted in the leftist tradition. One cannot exclude that a certain interpretation of 'radical politics' is dominant (Newman 2007, 179) or that these parties are indeed far right yet only in socio-cultural sense of the term (Rydgren 2013, 3).These parties have one in common – they are parties of protest, they do not want to work within the current political status quo. To the contrary, instead of willing to be seated at the table, their main political objectives are aimed at overturning both the table and the establishment that deals over or under it. They want to change present political structured but they do so not through a revolution, but using perfectly acceptable political means and deriving their strength from societal support. Another peculiar feature of the anti-establishment parties is the fact that in spite of their nationalist narratives, Europe remains the frame of their political reference and a focal point of their agendas. What differentiates the radical from the mainstream is conceptualisation of Europe. According to them Europe is the exact opposite of the European Union. Accordingly, while the latter signifies common roots, heritage and culture, certain brotherhood of peoples, the former is seen as an elite-driven, politically engineered project catering to the needs of cosmopolitan elites and mighty

corporations. This approach is perhaps best visible in the "Love Europe, Hate the EU" campaign organised by the Generation Europa associated to the European Liberty Coallition.

Lack of representation stopped being the issue of politics and started being the question of security – feeling safe and taken care of. In fact, we observe a bottom-up securitization whereby the society pushes for extraordinary measures in order to safeguard their representation. In order to be secure Europe must be turned into fortress. According to this logic, the continent is besieged by the migrants from without, but it is also endangered by its very own elites from within. Securitisation enables and drives radical politics of democratic insecurities. In France *Front National* at present has 27 percent of steadily growing support, while its leader, Marine Le Pen, is one of the leading candidates for the upcoming presidential elections(Front National 2016). United Kingdom Independence Party with 17 percent share of votes (ITV 2016) had Nigel Farage (MEP) famously announcing that he came to the European Parliament to take UK out of EU (The Guardian 2016). In Denmark the Danish People's Party (*Dansk Folkeparti*) with 20 percent of support became the second political power in the country (Breitbart 2015). In The Netherlands Party for Freedom (*Partij voor de Vrijheid*) is the current number one, as Geert Wildres announced proudly on his weblog. Its 'sister party' in Austria (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*) is currently at 30 percent and aspires to be the leading political power in Austria (Olterman 2016) with a possible future in waiting (Norbert Hofer). Swedish Democrats (*Sverigedemokraterna*) are often called a single-issue party (Erlingsson, Vemby and Öhrvall 2014) because opposing to migration policies implemented by the current government is the central point on their political agenda. Clearly, the Swedish society concurs, as the party currently holds the first place in the country in spite of the *cordon sanitaire* imposed by other parties present in the *Riksdag* (Lane 2016). In Finland the Finns Party (*Perussuomalaiset*, formerly True Finns) has been a member of the ruling coalition in Finland since 2015 (Financial Times 2015), while in Norway the Progress Party (*Framstegspartiet*) has recorded the best result in the recent survey since 2011 (Norway Today 2016). Finally, in Italy the Northern League (*Lega Nord*) secured nearly 20 percent of the vote in last elections and its leader, Matteo Salvini, has 33 percent of approval securing position of a rising political star (Politico 2016).

Most of the scholarship still treats the radical parties as if they were fringe and marginal and assumes their support as rather unstable (Givens 2005). As to the reasons of increased popularity of radical parties, political sciences lack a unanimous and convincing theory. Regarding the particular electoral preferences, several earlier studies on far right parties take on the more popular explanations that post-industrialisation and globalisation have restructured social stratification in Western societies thus creating new "pools of frustration" to be exploited (Rydgren 2013, 1). These explanations base the growing political support for radical parties on fear (Kitschelt 1995) or economic crises (Flecker 2016). Others argue that the voters' choice should be explained not in economic terms but rather through socio-cultural policy-preferences (Ignazi 2003) which become more salient in Europe. Kemper (2009) bases on a grievance theory while Goodwin and Jasper (2009) point to in-group out-group dynamics. Finally, factors like migration (Ivarsflaten 2008) and ethnic competition (Lubbers, Gijsberts and Scheepers 2002), discontent (Belanger and Aarts 2006) are proposed as the ultimate leverages. More importantly, recent studies looking into the causal models explaining the success of radical parties are one-dimensional when juxtaposed with other political actors (Arzheimer 2009, Norris 2005, Van Der Brug and Meindert 1999). Other studies aimed at measuring radical parties' impact, mistake correlation for causality putting forward quite a tautological argumentation, e.g. that the increased anti-immigrant sentiments prove that right wing parties have played a part in fuelling these negative feelings. For instance, in her study Williams (2006, 66) entirely ignores the possibility of a bottom up reaction or a demand-supply dynamics.

While many of these propositions are partially true, they take mistake effect for cause. In other words, the causal factors listed above are merely symptoms of societal insecurity of which political radicalisation is the last but not least emanation. By neglecting the societal factor of horizontal fracture between the society and the elite, one may hastily ascribe the reaction of the voters to single phenomena listed above that are not able to provide satisfactory explanation for the complex canopy of society. Only by employing the societal security framework, one may delve deep into the real source of the problem and account for the primary causal factors instead of stopping half-way and focusing on the by-products of societal insecurities and explain the progressing problems with political representation.

Direct Democracy

The quest for a new political representation is not the only form of alleviating democratic insecurities. Buzan (1990, 122) explains that societies can react to threats by having the threat placed on the state agenda or through activities carried out by the community itself. However, when the gap between the political elite and ordinary Europeans becomes too deep, democracy in the form of placing a cross on the ballot every few years begins to fail. For this reason, the societal security framework also allows to understand the sources of rising popularity of various social movements like PEGIDA, the urge for street democracy (demonstrations, manifestations, happenings), and

attractiveness of vigilante groups (like Soldiers of Odin who originated in Finland but already have branches in many different European countries) present both in the Eastern and Western part of the European Community. Particularly, as de Jonge (2016) noticed, direct democratic instruments are used with increasing frequency as a way of bringing controversial issues to the fore. At the European level, this phenomenon further intensifies the problems connected with the crisis of representation and tensions between the societies and the political elites.

A treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (TCE) was signed in Rome on 29 October 2004 by representatives of the 27 member states of the EU but was subject to further ratification. It was expected that most of the member states would pursue a parliamentary ratification, and since the project had a vast governmental support, its approval was deemed certain. Sixteen countries (including two candidates Romania and Bulgaria) completed the ratification by parliament only. Ten member states had announced referenda on the subject. Spain was the first one to pass the test; in spite of low participation (about 43%), the TCE was approved in a consultative referendum by almost 77% of the voters. On April 20, 2004, Prime Minister Tony Blair unexpectedly promised a referendum in the United Kingdom. This promise compelled French President Jacques Chirac to issue a similar promise in France. French people rejected TCE in a referendum held on 29 May, 2005 and two days later, another "no" followed from the Netherlands. The Dutch referendum was a consultative one, yet the government had assured that it would not ratify the treaty if the society rejected it. The last referendum was held in Luxembourg on 10 July 2005 in spite of the two defeats; even though there was a majority in favour of TCE, it was unexpectedly narrow. No other country has pursued plans for a referendum.

When analyzed from purely political perspective, the spectacular defeat of the French and Dutch referenda is indeed astounding. Virtually in all countries major political parties gave their full support to the TCE. The opponents were denounced as threatening populists and their arguments were not considered seriously. The EU "flag-and-balloon" machinery (Weaver et al. 1993, 81) also worked towards TCE adoption with all institutions and main politicians giving their full backing to the project. Only when examined from a societal security perspective, does the outcome of the referenda take on greater significance. Through this lens, the evaporation of faith in the European model and a renunciation by European people, not politicians, of a system and institutions that they no longer see as representative, but rather, as threatening becomes clear. Both constitute a strong societal reaction against an elitist project that is both too complicated to be understood, and having too vast of consequences on the daily life of average citizen; no citizen was involved in constructing it. Furthermore, the citizens sense that they are being patronized for the simple reason that they are not ask to say what they think. They are asked to say "yes" and cheer loudly. If only the approval for something one does not really comprehend is expected by the state, can it really be called a democratic procedure?

Historically, politically and economically the Netherlands has been the mainstay of the EU, therefore was it up to the country's political leaders, the endorsement of the TCE would be a certainty. The referendum in the Netherlands was deemed "a PR disaster" by Andre Krouwel (McGuinness 2005). Such stance suggests that the enlighten elite could and should have explain to the hoi polloi why their political designs are right. Yet, Michiel van Hulten, a leader of the Better Europe Foundation remarked, people are unhappy precisely with the fact that Europe is an elitist project and not the project of the ordinary people(Mulvey 2005). Such a grand endeavour should not be implemented through explanation, no matter how patient; rather it is a question of negotiation and consultation. The TCE, sadly, lacked both.

Due to failure of the TCE, after a "period of reflection," a new, Reform Treaty, also known as the Treaty of Lisbon was designed to reorder the organizational structure of the EU and kept most of the institutional innovations that had been agreed upon in the TCE. The political will to endorse it was in fact so high that the first country, Hungary, ratified the document on 17 December 2007, i.e. before the text was even printed. The question was raised whether the treaty would politically survive another public rejection, and therefore the governments were not keen on holding referenda. The one exception to this rule was Ireland, where following a Supreme Court decision from 1987, constitutional amendments and ratification of international treaties inconsistent with the state's constitution oblige the government to obtain the agreement of the people (Setälä and Schiller 2009). It is worth noting that all Irish parties forming the governmental coalition and all opposition parties supported the "yes" campaign. The only exceptions were radical Sinn Féin (campaigning for "no") and the Green Party, which did not have an official position on the matter and left its members free to decide. What is more, the majority of Irish trade unions and business organisations were involved into the "yes to Lisbon" campaign (BBC News 2008, RTE News 2008, Kubosova 2008).

Nonetheless, as the result of the referendum held on 12 June 2008, 860,000 Irish citizens by a margin of 53.4% to 46.6% voted in opposition to the treaty in a 53.1% turnout, reiterating the previous message given by the French and Dutch societies. Those who were not interested in voting, abstained because in their opinion, it would not change anything just like it was in case of the 2001 referendum on Niece Treaty (53,9% against). Perhaps they were right, since even though the decision of Irish electorate means that the treaty cannot be ratified, first plans for a revote

appeared in July 2008. A July 2008 survey carried by UK think-tank, Open Europe, showed that 62% would reject the document if the referendum was held again, and that 71% don't want to vote on the subject again. The Irish Times poll from 6 June 2008 suggested that the main reasons for rejection were primarily to "keep Ireland's power and identity," and that the people voted "no" because they "don't like being told what to do/forced into voting yes" (OpenEurope 2008).

German newspaper, *die Zeit*, called using a referendum to decide on matters concerning the EU "an extreme absurdity" arguing that referendums might make sense only in situations where the fate of one's land is in question, but not when the future of other countries is involved. This was seconded by German Chancellor, Gerhard Schroeder stipulated "Such historic decisions cannot be made dependent on the whims of changing opinion polls or referendums"(Der Spiegel 2008). The above two examples are only the most prominent examples. Other referenda either ignored or made to vote again include 1992 referendum in Denmark against (51,7%) Maastricht Treaty and 2015 vote held in Greece with respect to Eurobailout (61,3%). With the rising securitisation of the issue of representation, referenda are now perceived as an ultimate test of democracy. That was the case of Brexit referendum, and the referendum in Hungary on European migrant quotas.

Conclusions

Societal security concept with its insistence on the difference between the elite and the ordinary people, provides the most comprehensive framework for cutting through the Gordian knot of identities and cultures and their causal role in the context of democratic insecurities leading to political radicalisation. Donald Horowitz (20011, 21) argued that while elites often shape national identity, they rarely create it and Jürgen Habermas (in Der Spiegel 2008) predicted that the governments cannot continue to suppress crippling dissent of their societies and must admit that "they are at their wits' end."

For many the European Bunker, *Festung Europa*, is a worst case scenario. The decisive point for Europe is whether Europeans will entrust the governance to those who appeal to the fact that they are misrepresented by the ruling elites to either due to the fact that the nation states have given their powers to the EU or because of the rift between the politicians and their constituencies. When societal security concerns escalate to the point of securitization, the issue of representation becomes a fulcrum of the political agenda. This can be observed in those European countries, where recent elections brought to power anti-establishment forces (Poland, Spain, Portugal). In the situation where the vertical rupture between the society and their political representatives is ignored by the elite thereby triggering the societal insecurity mode, societies start looking for other forms political representation (including direct democracy) or act independently of the state (social movements, demonstrations, vigilante groups). In the former case we observe radicalisation of politics and the rise to power of new political forces with the issue of representation not merely politicized, but framed in their agendas as an issue of security. In the latter, escalating societal tensions along political lines have damaging impact both on society and the state; also on the European level. Arguably, both trends could be a stimulus for further political fragmentation and regionalization of Europe, and both are conducive towards violence.

While radical parties posit themselves in opposition to the ruling elite, they still use Europe as a main frame of reference and for this reason we should think about them as alter- rather than anti-European. At the same time, they present Europe as a besieged fortress (Festung Europa), threatened by waves of migrants from without and faceless EU bureaucrats from within. In this understanding only dismantling the oppressive pan-European polity can truly liberate Europe and unleash its true potential. Recognition of this way of thinking is crucial in terms of preparing an appropriate response to political and social radicalisation. It needs to be reckoned with that the increasing popularity of radical parties may trigger further radicalisation of European politics whereby the mainstream parties would take over some of the arguments or language used by their radical competitors. What is more, if we focus on the societal side of the whole situation, it is undeniable that the current trends impact the society and enhances polarisation and fragmentation of communities.

Societal security concept provides the explanation for how brushing the societal factor aside coincides with the line of de-democratization and exacerbates democratic insecurities. Societal voice is the only factor not being seriously considered by the European leaders. Such attitudes do not build up societal trust in European politics as they reflects a premise that people can be talked out of their position by putting on them an unbearable pressure or coercion. While the reasons for voting in favour or against certain issue may not be understood, no one should question their right to vote or the fact that the will of people is binding; and no one does so, at least on the national level. Only when the decision making processes ascends up to the European level, relatively weak societal cohesion makes it possible to ignore the Europeans (Cf. Setälä and Schiller 2012). Thus, the surprise of societal initiatives are not so surprising when examined through the lenses of societal insecurity factor.

Not only did the citizenry dislike the idea of a bureaucratically negotiated compromise pushed through behind their backs, but also the referenda callously confirmed that the politicians are not the only ones determining Europe's future, and that the societies have their means to stop the processes they perceive as threatening. Societal security framework urges the need to acknowledge the mounting sense of distrust among EU citizens. The increasing level of societal insecurity, based on many different fears and on a lack of knowledge followed by de-democratization when the elites force political projects on ordinary people either by not allowing them to have their say or by putting the issue to the vote repeatedly until the result suits the leaders, is responsible for triggering processes with far-reaching consequences. Also dismissing the identitive issues and discrediting these reactions as cheap populism does not bring us closer to understanding what lies behind societal decisions or actions, or what are the root causes of the change in the perception of the EU from benign creature of guaranteed peace, freedoms and welfare into a growing threat.

Bio:

Monika Gabriela Bartoszewicz (m.bartoszewicz@vistula.edu.pl) completed her PhD in the School of International Relations at the University of St. Andrews (Scotland, UK). Her doctoral research focused on the potential terrorist threat of European converts to Islam. In 2005 she was awarded a scholarship in the Centre for Transatlantic Studies in Maastricht, the Netherlands. In 2007 she was a research intern at the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence and in 2009 her work was recognized with the Russell Trust Award. Dr. Bartoszewicz also took part in British Council's Our Shared Europe project. In 2011 Dr. Bartoszewicz carried out an independent research for Scottish Prison Services on radicalisation of European converts to Islam. From 2011 to 2013 she was appointed as the E.MA Fellow specialising in International Relations in the European Inter-University Centre in Venice (Italy). She carried out research in the UK, The Netherlands, Denmark, Kosovo and Poland. At present she is an Assistant Professor at Vistula University in Warsaw, Poland.

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[1] The results of elections to the European Parliament by radical party:
- UK: UKIP, 30% – 24 seats
- France: Front National, 25% – 24 seats
- Hungary: Fidesz-KDNP, 51% – 13 seats; Jobbik, 17,8% – 4 seats
- Finland: True Finns, 21,7% – 3 seats
- Denmark: Danish People's Party, 23% - 3 seats
- Austria: Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, 20% - 4 seats
- The Netherlands: Party for Freedom, 13.2% - 4 seats
- Sweden: Swedish Democrats, 6.9% - 1 seat.