

# Counter-Islamophobia Kit

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**Workstream 1: Dominant Islamophobic Narratives – Hungary**

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**Working Paper 7**

Countering Islamophobia through the Development of Best Practice in the use of Counter-Narratives in EU Member States.

**CIK Project (Counter Islamophobia Kit)**

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### **About the CIK Project**

The *Countering Islamophobia through the Development of Best Practice in the use of Counter-Narratives in EU Member States* (Counter Islamophobia Kit, CIK) project addresses the need for a deeper understanding and awareness of the range and operation of counter-narratives to anti-Muslim hatred across the EU, and the extent to which these counter-narratives impact and engage with those hostile narratives. It is led by Professor Ian Law and a research team based at the Centre for Ethnicity and Racism Studies, School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Leeds, UK. This international project also includes research teams from the Islamic Human Rights Commission, based in London, and universities in Leeds, Athens, Liège, Budapest, Prague and Lisbon/Coimbra. This project runs from January 2017 - December 2018.

### **About the Paper**

This paper is an output from the first workstream of the project which was concerned to describe and explain the discursive contents and forms that Muslim hatred takes in the eight states considered in the framework of this project: Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Portugal and United Kingdom. This output comprises eight papers on conditions in individual member states and a comparative overview paper containing Key Messages. In addition this phase also includes assessment of various legal and policy interventions through which the European human rights law apparatus has attempted to conceptually analyse and legally address the multi-faceted phenomenon of Islamophobia. The second workstream examines the operation of identified counter-narratives in a selected range of discursive environments and their impact and influence on public opinion and specific audiences including media and local decision-makers. The third workstream will be producing a transferable EU toolkit of best practice in the use of counter-narratives to anti-Muslim hatred. Finally, the key messages, findings and toolkits will be disseminated to policy makers, professionals and practitioners both across the EU and to member/regional audiences using a range of mediums and activities.

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## **1. Introduction**

The paper aims to give an overview of the major Islamophobic narratives identified in political and media discourses in Hungary. As it will be discussed, Islamophobia had not been a relevant issue till the 2015 migration crisis primarily due to the very small scale immigration and small size immigrant population (under 2% of total population) and an even smaller size Muslim population (estimated between 0,1-0,3%). It was in 2015 with the migration crisis that the national-conservative government politically identifying itself as illiberal launched a fierce anti-immigration campaign that also gave rise to anti-Muslim narratives. Political analysts describe the Hungarian illiberal regime as populist that is in constant need to create new enemies. The Islamophobia generated around the migration crisis will thus be interpreted in the political context of the populist illiberal regime.

The paper will briefly look at how Islamophobia has been researched in Hungary and what the main characteristics of the local Muslim population are. Then it will give an overview of the political context of anti-Muslimism in the country and relying on this, will analyse some political communications and media representations on the 'migration-Islam' theme as well as reflect upon the impacts of the hate narratives on local Muslims. This will be done by taking into account the 'clusters of Islamophobia' developed by Sayyid (2014): attacks on persons perceived to be Muslims; attacks on property considered to be linked to Muslims; act of intimidation; less favorable treatment; comments in the public domain that disparage Muslims and/or Islam; state activities such as intensification of surveillance of Muslim populations.

## **2. State of the art in research on Islamophobia**

Due to the small size of the Muslim population and a rather low political and public interest in issues related to Islam until the 2015 migration crisis, there have been very few research studies and reports on the question of Islamophobia in Hungary.

One field where research on or related to Islamophobia emerged is public opinion surveys on xenophobic attitudes of the Hungarian population (Zick et al., 2011; Wike et al, 2016; Simonovits, 2013; Boda and Simonovits, 2016; Csepeli and Örkény, 2017). TÁRKI Social Research Institute has been undertaking regular surveys on xenophobic attitudes against migrants and asylum seekers since 1992.<sup>1</sup> Between 1992 and 1995 there was a rapid increase in xenophobia from 15% to 40%, followed by a rather stable period between 2002 and 2010 (24-33%). This started to rise again in 2012 and reached its peak in 2015: 45% of the population was xenophobic. The surveys also look at the

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<sup>1</sup> The questions have been unchanged since 1992. There are three categories: xenophobic, that is of the opinion that no one foreigner should step into the country; xenophiles, who would allow all immigrants to come and settle in the country; situational viewpoint: in-between, who are called selective people (Hárs et al, 2009: 66).

different ethnic groups refused. Among those in the ‘situational, in-between category’, in 2006, ethnic Hungarians were refused by 4%, Arabs by 82%, Chinese by 79%, Russians by 75%, Romanians by 71% and a non-existent group (Pirez) by 59%. In 2015, when xenophobia peaked, 94% refused refugees of Arab ethnicity. While the refusal of refugees of Arab ethnicity is the highest, other ethnicities or origins such as Chinese, African, Romanian is also very high, between 70-80% and the non-existent group is 60% (Simonovits, 2013; Sík, 2015, Rostoványi, 2016).

There are also some studies which look at specifically Islamophobe attitudes. Although Hungary has only a small Muslim community, it has higher rates of Islamophobia than countries with significant Muslim population that is explained by the lack of contacts and the effects of the media misrepresentations (Csepeli and Örkény, 2017). In a 2011 survey, researchers using the Bogardus-scale found that after the Roma, Arabs are the most rejected group, 43% of the population would not accept them on any level (Simonovits, 2013). Recent surveys which could already measure the impacts of the migration crisis and the accompanying anti-Muslim government rhetoric also assert that Hungary’s Islamophobia is among the highest compared to other European countries included in the survey (Wike et al, 2016). In another survey looking at the effects of the migration crisis in Hungary, it is demonstrated that the population would be much less likely to accept Muslim than Christian refugees (Boda and Simonovits, 2016).

Additionally, there are brief annual reports on Islamophobia issued by the Hungarian Islamic Community (HIC). Before the 2015 crisis the general tone of these reports were rather positive regarding the government’s approach to the local Muslim community and the political sphere, because no Islamophobic party was present. Criticisms were raised concerning how Muslim organizations were refused to do charity or other activities in refugee camps. However, contacts with the police were seen as peaceful as well as with prison headquarters where they could enter and help Muslim inmates. With regards to the media, the HIC had serious concerns about the biased representation of Islam and Muslims practically in all media, both left and right.

### **3. Background: Muslim population in Hungary**

Hungary has long historic contacts with Islam and Muslims. The country was under Turkish occupation between 1541 and 1699. It has impacts on the national identity and culture (e.g. in child rhymes there are anti-Turkish verses), as well as on the built environment (minarets, mosques, Turkish baths). However, the ‘150 year occupation’ is not remembered as a Christian-Muslim conflict but as a foreign occupation (similar to the Habsburg, or the Soviet occupation). Specifically, there was no forced conversion of the population. There is also an important tradition of Middle Eastern and Islamic studies from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century (Ármin Vámbéry, Ignác, Goldziher, Gyula Germanus) which is different from its Western counterparts in as far as it lacked the viewpoint of the colonizer and often represented an emphatic approach to Islam and contributed to diplomatic and trade relations with the Muslim world. Islam was recognized as an official denomination in Hungary in 1916, the second country in Europe to do so, after the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1912. During the communist era, strong political and economic relations were built with some Middle East

countries. Many students arrived from Algeria, Syria, Iraq and some of them stayed. After the transition, these ties were loosened (Pall and Sayfo, 2016; Sereghy, 2017).

Despite the historic ties, there is no sizeable immigrant and Muslim population in Hungary. Immigration and immigrant integration has very different trends in Hungary than in Western European countries. Hungary is still a transit country for most migrants rather than a destination. Immigration started around the regime change in 1989-90, before, it had not been a significant trend, only few migrants arrived from other communist countries as students or workers (Kováts, 2013b). The proportion of immigrants is one of the lowest in Europe, less than 2%, with the majority being ethnic Hungarians from the neighbouring countries (Kováts, 2010). The first wave of migration took place in the late 1980s still during the communist era: ethnic Hungarians' illegal migration from Romania followed by a second wave of the same population in the early 1990s (Sik, 1996). The third wave of migration was the result of the Yugoslav war, with ethnic Hungarians accompanied by other nationalities from the former republics of the dissolving Yugoslavia (Horváth et al, 2011). In the early 1990s, the only significant migrant group, other than the above ones, was the Chinese, filling in economic niches in trading (around 40,000 in the 1990 later dropping to 10,000). Given these characteristics of immigration in Hungary, there are no big immigrant communities, while there is a high degree of assimilation. At the same time, the ethnically, culturally and religiously different migrants having small numbers only, are not visible and do not make much impact on the everyday interactions of people. On top of that, they generally have higher level of education, and higher rate of activity, and are less dependent on social welfare than the total population (Kováts, 2013a,b).

According to the 2011 census, there were 5,579 Muslims, that is 0.056% of the total population, and almost all of them belong to the Sunni Islam. Out of this number, 4,097 declared themselves as Hungarian (73.4%) and 2,368 (42.5%) as Arab by ethnicity.<sup>2</sup> Besides the census data, there are estimations concerning the size of the Muslim population. According to the Pew Research Centre there are 25,000 and according to the Church of Muslims of Hungary 50,000 Muslims in the country (that is between 0.1-0.3% of the population) (Sereghy, 2017).

The census data give us information on Muslims with Hungarian citizenship, both of Hungarian and Arab ethnicity. However, it does not contain information on migrants with different legal status, which partly explains why there is such huge discrepancy between the census data and the other estimates. There are numerous research studies on the labour market status (Hárs, 2009; Örkény and Székelyi, 2010; Várhalmi, 2013), the education level (Hárs, 2013a,b; Schumann, 2013), the social integration (Örkény and Székelyi, 2010; Várhalmi, 2013; Göncz et al., 2013), political participation (Örkény and Székelyi, 2009, 2010, 2013a,b) and the experiences of discrimination (Örkény and Székelyi, 2009; Sik and Várhalmi, 2010; Simonovits, 2013) of migrant populations. Researchers use various data sources for analysing the migrant populations. They either rely on the data collection of different authorities or use their own targeted surveys. There is no data collection on 'Muslims' but

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<sup>2</sup> The Hungarian census allows for the self-declaration of more than one ethnicity.

other categories are used which, to smaller or larger extent, cover the Muslim migrant population: Arab and Turkish.<sup>3</sup>

According to the census and other administrative data, the labour market status of migrants is better than the Hungarian average, the rate of activity and employment is higher among migrants than among the total population. However, based on other surveys there are huge differences concerning the labour market position (self-employed or employee) of different migrant groups (Kováts, 2013b). The activity rate among all migrant groups is very high, over two thirds. The majority of Turkish migrants are entrepreneurs while among the Arab migrants the proportion of self-employed and employees are similar. Among these groups, the average per capita income is twice as high as among the educated Hungarians. The education level of migrants is very high. In one of the surveys it is found that over 50% has higher education degree and almost 40% secondary education. The highest level of education among migrant groups is that of the Arabs and the lowest is that of the Turks, nonetheless, one third of the Turkish migrants has higher education (Örkény and Székelyi, 2009). The gender breakdown of migrant Turks and Arabs show an overrepresentation of males, among these two groups the proportion of males is over 75%.

While xenophobia and anti-migrant sentiments are among the highest in European comparison, migrants living in Budapest encounter much less discrimination than in other European cities. It is important to note that anti-migrant attitudes do not necessarily translate into direct discrimination. In Budapest, migrants have much fewer problems finding a job compared to their counterparts in other European cities. When they had to identify obstacles of getting into the labour market, migrants did not mention discrimination as one of the three most important causes. It was rather the lack of language skills that they found as the major problem of labour market integration (Card et al., 2009; Huddleston and Tjaden, 2012; Kováts, 2013b; Simonovits, 2013). These findings are in accordance with the 2012 Eurobarometer survey that found that Hungary is among the countries where discrimination on ethnic basis is the highest in fields other than the labour market (Simonovits, 2013). In a 2009 research it was revealed that about 10% of the Turks and 20% of the Arab said they already experienced discrimination. Turks felt that there was very little discrimination and they had to face it only when they went shopping. Arabs were rather confident that Hungarian authorities, health care institutions and workplaces were inclusive and they experienced no discrimination whereas in their everyday life (e.g. shopping, finding a flat) they did (Örkény and Székelyi, 2009). Another survey looking at the factors (lack of Hungarian language skills, foreign origins, legal status, ethnic features such as skin colour, dressing, cultural habits and religion) influencing the discrimination experience of migrant groups pointed out that the Chinese have the highest experiences of discrimination and Turks have the lowest. Arabs, along with two other groups, experienced discrimination due to their 'visible foreignness'. It was also confirmed in this research that in their neighbourhood, school, workplace and health care institutions they feel much less discrimination than in other situations. Though this is true when they already entered these spheres. School and workplace provide certain security against discrimination due to the fact that these groups (Arabs included) work either in their ethnic business or are self-employed while in the school

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<sup>3</sup> E.g. in Örkény and Székelyi (2009): every migrant group consisted of about 200 respondents, and 96% of the Turkish sample, and 66% of the Arab sample were followers of Islam.



anti-discrimination legislation plays an important role. Importantly, Arabs felt no discrimination because of their religion (Sik and Várhalmi, 2012).

There are two officially recognized Islamic religious organizations, both Sunni: the Hungarian Islamic Community whose members are mainly converted Hungarians, and the Church of Muslims of Hungary having predominantly foreign born Muslims. There had been a third organization, the Islamic Church, which had been the biggest one, however its official status was revoked in 2012<sup>4</sup>. The Muslim community is represented on the government level by the Islamic Council of Hungary. In Budapest, there is only one mosque and a handful of prayer rooms, and the last minaret was built 500 years ago (Pall and Sayfo, 2016; Sereghy, 2017).

#### **4. Background: the formation of anti-Muslim hatred**

Before contextualizing the recent phenomenon of Islamophobia, it is worth pointing to some of the major issues in how immigration in general had been dealt with in Hungary since the regime change, what political debates and considerations played important roles in policy making and how immigration had been framed. As mentioned earlier, immigration has some specificities in Hungary: it is not numerous and lacks significant ethnic diversity (consisting mainly of trans-border ethnic Hungarians). For that reason, immigration or migrant integration has evolved as an important political or public issue only in connection with ethnic Hungarians: important citizenship acts and other legal measures were always shaped with a view on trans-border ethnic Hungarians (the 1993 Act on Hungarian Citizenship providing some benefits for ethnic Hungarians; the 2002 Status Law giving entitlements for the same group to work in Hungary and opening the door for labour migration; and the 2010 Dual Citizenship Law a symbolic gesture to ethnic Hungarians to feel more connected to the mother country). The messages of the Hungarian governments through these acts and measures were ambiguous: a strong preference for ethnic Hungarian immigrants (Satus Law) and at the same time a nationalist stance of encouraging them to stay in their country of origin and make stronger ethnic presence there (Dual Citizenship) (Horváth et al, 2011; Messing et al, 2015). As a consequence of this nature of immigration, the major debates linked to welfare chauvinism and threat of economic migration (taking our jobs) emerged in connection with transborder ethnic Hungarians rather than any other immigrant group.

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<sup>4</sup> The government introduced the “Law on the Right to Freedom of Conscience and Religion, and on Churches, Religions and Religious Communities” in 2011. According to the new law “a religious group must meet certain criteria in order to qualify for legal church status. Primarily, they must have existed in Hungary for at least 20 years, and must count at least 1,000 members in their ranks. Controversially, the group must also reach a 2/3 majority in a parliamentary vote on their recognition. This meant that smaller minority denominations of Islam were particularly vulnerable as members of parliament could effectively decide which religions they liked – and which they didn’t. The law did not specifically outlaw or discriminate against any one religion, but by restricting those groups which could qualify for the benefits of legal status it became harder for many churches to survive – in particular, smaller religious groups which could not meet the strict requirements, including a number of Islamic communities around the country.”

<https://theculturetrip.com/europe/hungary/articles/a-brief-history-of-hungarys-controversial-islamic-churches/>

Meanwhile, no substantial and comprehensive immigration policies have been developed, no professional and political debates have happened on what immigration policies Hungary should have. Concerning demographic, labour market and social integration issues related to immigration, there are no overall policies but policies run by different administrative branches without a common goal (Kováts, 2004; Szalayné, 2008; Hárs et al., 2009; Messing et al., 2015).

A research carried out in 2014 by the Helsinki Committee found that the topic of immigration and integration of foreigners and the refugees question is hardly mentioned in the media, migrants are basically invisible or when they appear they are repulsive and threatening. News on migration reflects the views of authorities, there are no reports, commentaries related to the topic. It's only the authorities that talk about migrants and neither NGOs or migrants themselves have a voice in the media. Very often, migrants appear in connection to crimes, such as illegal migrants who will invade the country. Editorial offices lack the knowledge of basic concepts on immigration and asylum seeking and they often publish false or misleading information and data (Zádori, 2015).

Islamophobia or the presence of Islamophobic narratives in the Hungarian context is a very recent phenomenon.<sup>5</sup> Not until the 2015 migration/refugee crisis, whereby hundreds of thousands of people tried to cross through Hungary to go to Western Europe, had Islam and Muslims been put in the focus of political and media discourses. In the 1990s Islam and Muslims received practically no media attention.<sup>6</sup> The low number of Muslims and the small size of the Muslim community rendered the theme of Islam as a non-issue in the Hungarian public discourse (Sereghy, 2016; Győri, 2016; Brubaker, 2017).

9/11 and 7/7 resulted in some increase in Islamophobic attitudes as Western narratives slowly appeared (Sereghy, 2016). This situation radically changed in early 2015 when suddenly the number of asylum seekers started to increase at an unprecedented speed.<sup>7</sup> While it is true that it caused a crisis situation as institutions were not prepared to react properly, it soon became apparent that the government did not even have the intention to see the arriving people as refugees or asylum seekers and treat them as such. The Hungarian government took the opportunity to make political profit by creating a situation of moral panic leading to the securitization of migration (Haraszti, 2015; Bernáth and Messing, 2015; Szalai and Göbl, 2015; Brubaker, 2017). According to the theory of moral panic, "the actions, characteristics and behaviour of a small group of people can be sensed as a danger by the society, and the state applies all its available tools (administrative, legislative, communicative) to help people identify this threat." Consequently, "the society will then start to demand radical and often very simplistic solutions and thus legitimize forceful intervention by the government. The intervention itself will also feed into the panic" (Mong and Messing, 2015).

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<sup>5</sup> Till the 2015 migration crisis when Islamophobic narratives emerged, the only significant anti-Islam narrative was promoted by the American-style 'Born Again Christians' (60,000 members) claiming that Islam was the Antichrist (Sereghy, 2017).

<sup>6</sup> As the Helsinki Committee report (Zádori, 2015) says, there has been a misrepresentation of migrants and refugees, however, without reference to the background or origin of these groups.

<sup>7</sup> Over 100,000 migrants registered in the third quarter of 2015, mainly Muslims. Hungary faced an increase of 13 times compared to previous year (Sereghy, 2016)

After the Charlie Hebdo attacks in January 2015, the Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán, declared that migration is a threat to Europe and migrants bring no economic benefit to our countries and therefore Hungary opposes migration. The emergence of anti-immigrant political rhetoric paving the path for the securitization of migration preceded the huge wave of migrants and refugees that peaked in the summer of 2015 (Szalai and Göbl, 2015). In May 2015, the government launched the National Consultation on Immigration and Terrorism campaign sending every Hungarian citizen a questionnaire including “heavily biased questions”.<sup>8</sup> The same month, the government also initiated a large-scale billboard campaign against immigration as part of its communication strategy to get support for the national consultation. The aim and result of the campaigns were an increased situation of moral panic, as it was shown by various evidence: “The government very quickly commissioned an opinion poll, which was conducted by a “friendly” pollster. This poll immediately showed that 70 percent of the population would demand harsh measures against migrants, which was a logical consequence of the sudden change in tone by the Prime Minister and the leading government politicians” (Mong and Messing, 2015).

Both campaigns had propaganda objectives, as some analysts stated, to divert attention away from state corruption, gain more popular support and ensure that the radical right wing party, Jobbik, (second in popularity after the governing coalition thus an important rival of the governing coalition) won't be able to make use of the crises by creating its own xenophobic narrative (Szalai and Göbl, 2015; Györi, 2016; Sereghy, 2016). The anti-immigration narratives, while xenophobic in nature, did not use any direct reference to or named openly Islam or Muslims, neither on the billboards nor in the questionnaire. In July 2015, the government started to erect a razor wire fence along the Serbian border to stop migrants and asylum seekers to enter the country and send a message to European policymakers what Hungary thinks about the crisis. The fence has also become the symbol of the Hungarian position against the resettlement quotas proposed by the EU. The government to gain legitimation from the people, organized a referendum against the resettlement quotas in October 2016. The referendum was preceded by an ‘information campaign’ featuring anti-immigration billboards with posing questions like: “Did you know? More than 300 people were killed in terrorist attacks in Europe since the start of the migrant crisis”; “Did you know? The Paris terrorist attacks were carried out by immigrants”; “Did you know? 1.5 million illegal immigrants arrived to Europe in 2015”; “Did you know? Almost one million immigrants want to come to Europe from Libya alone?”; or “Did you know? Since the start of the immigration crisis, sexual harassment of women has increased in Europe?”. While the turnout was lower than 50% making the referendum invalid, the majority of those who voted refused the quotas (98%). Thus, the results were interpreted by the government as ‘politically valid’ (Sereghy, 2017).

Hungarian Islamophobia linked to the migration crisis starting in 2015 has to be interpreted in the political context of the country. The national-conservative government (Fidesz-KDNP) – coming into power in 2010 and gaining the popular majority vote again in 2014 – established a political system that declared itself illiberal.<sup>9</sup> In fact, from early on, the intentions of the governing coalition has been

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<sup>8</sup> It was also criticized by the European Parliament for being misleading, biased and unbalanced establishing a link between immigration and security threats (Györi, 2016).

<sup>9</sup> The PM delivered a speech in 2014 in which he explicitly said that the government is building an illiberal democracy (Szalai and Göbl, 2015).

to build a new political system that intended to shift away from liberal democracy. Gradually, democratic institutions have been weakened: dismantling of checks and balances, reducing the rights of minorities, appointing loyal party members into institutions, drafting a new constitution reflecting the political visions and interests of the governing coalition, rewriting the election system to favour those currently in power as well as by using various techniques, taking control over the majority of media and thus limiting freedom of speech, etc. (Szalai and Göbl, 2015; Urbán, 2016). In the meanwhile, part of their political strategy has been also to strengthen the relationship with Middle East and Asian countries ('Eastern Opening') (Pall and Sayfo, 2016), thus, turning more away from Europe and the EU (and its norms, rules and political system).

Hungarian politics of the 2010s is a case of mainstream national populism (Csigó and Merkovity, 2017). One of the main characteristics of national populist politics is that it is in constant need of creating opposition between 'us' and 'them'. There are always new enemies named and created to mobilize support for the populists. The enemies or the other can be either vertical (the people vs. the elite) or horizontal (insiders, people like us vs. outsiders, those who threaten our way of life) (Brubaker, 2017).

As we said, the government took the opportunity of the 2015 migration/refugee crisis to create a new enemy. That was all the more important as the popularity of the government was record low after a successful anti-government demonstration against a bill to impose tax on the internet. In the beginning of 2015, with still low number of refugees, the official narrative emphasized that what we were facing was economic migration where migrants entered the country illegally and therefore they were not regarded as refugees. It was also emphasized that this mass migration was a security threat to both Hungary and Europe. The rhetoric started to change as the wave of migration was rising and the economic migration narrative was topped with a strong security and identity axis (Szalai and Göbl, 2015). Throughout the successive campaigns no distinction was made between economic migrants and asylum seekers, and legal and illegal migrants, which also provided the grounds for the criminalization of migrants and also their helpers.<sup>10</sup> The Prime Minister and his government as well as the media close to them, made the 'Migrant-Islam-terrorist nexus' the dominant discourse. Thus, security linked to (Muslim) terrorism has become the official political narrative thus prescribing how the migration/refugee crisis should be interpreted. Nonetheless, as pointed out, in the political communication of the government the 'anti-migrant' narratives do not always make direct reference to Muslims: neither in the national consultation on immigration and terrorism, the billboard campaigns nor in the referendum questions there is an explicit mention of Muslims or Islam (Haraszti, 2015; Szalai and Göbl, 2015; Sereghy, 2016; Brubaker, 2017).

While, as Brubaker (2017) points out, the "East Central European anti-Muslimism has been primarily securitarian, with its rhetoric of an "invasion" and its focus on crime, disease, and terrorism", it has a strong "identitarian and civilisational dimension" as well (Brubaker, 2017: 19). In Western democracies the populist narratives on Islam have integrated liberal ideas and liberal values (such as secularism, philosemitism, gender equality, gay rights, free speech) and thus they position

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<sup>10</sup> Besides the political rhetoric, the criminalization of migrants was turned into legislation as of September 2015 prohibiting border crossing for migrants/asylum seekers (Szalai and Göbl, 2015).

themselves as protectors of these values in opposition to the illiberal Islam. In East Central European countries and in Hungary, identities are not of the civilizational but that of the national-level, “the prevailing political semantics of the self and other remain fundamentally nationalist” (Brubaker, 2017: 18). This national self is defined as Christian and related to this (in so much as being anti-secular) as non-liberal (illiberal). Thus, the endorsement of liberal values which constitute a foundation of the populist narratives in Western European countries, is missing from the Hungarian narratives. More than that, Hungarian anti-Muslimism explicitly refutes liberal values as they are considered as not being part of the Hungarian “nationalist semantics of self”. Thus, besides the ‘Muslim other’ created in the horizontal dimension, it makes a further opposition in the vertical dimension as well between us (Hungarians) and them (EU, Western Europeans). Being in opposition or subjugated to some great power is a historical experience as well as seeing ourselves in this situation as having a positive role, as “bulwarks of Christianity” (Brubaker, 2017: 19). The Hungarian national identity has this strong element of protecting Christian Europe against the invasion of Muslims.

## 5. Dominant narratives of Muslim hatred

### *Methodology and process of data analysis*

Based on the assumptions on the background of Muslim hatred explored above, we conducted a frame analysis of political and media narratives. Frames are constructed by political actors and the media to express their political interest. By framing reality they “delimit” it, and provide a guidebook to understand and interpret the given situation, and establish new relationships with previous facts (La Porte and Azpiroz, 2009). It is a process of selection and composition: including and excluding facts, opinions and judgements, and arranging these components with the aim of producing a particular meaning (Etnam, 1993; Carvalho, 2008)

The power of framing is essential in times of new social phenomenon, outbreak of crisis, or “unsettled times” (La Porte and Azpiroz, 2009; Bail, 2012) The migration/refugee crisis of 2015 in Hungary clearly represented a case whereby framing of a new phenomenon offered an opportunity for the populist national-conservative government to produce novel frames (Bail 2012) that was Islamophobic in content. The political interest of the governing coalition was, as we pointed out, to gain more popular support and counter-balance the popularity of the radical right wing party, Jobbik (Győri 2016).

The process of analysing frames should start with identifying a catalogue of frames (frame discovery) that continues with coding themes to reveal patterns in the different frames (frame analysis) (Boydston et al., 2013). Frame discovery can be bottom-up whereby researchers proceed from texts to frames (Nickles, 2007). It is also emphasized that frame discovery is very complex and labour-intensive. Therefore, researchers often rely on existing frames codebooks which provide frames specific to the issue (top-down) (Baumgartner et al., 2008; Boydston et al., 2013).

In our analysis, we apply both a bottom-up and a top-down approach. Since anti-Muslimism is a new phenomenon starting with the migration/refugee crisis, no pre-existing frames codebooks are available. The various analyses that have been published on the media perception of the migration crisis (Bernáth and Messing, 2015; Barta and Tóth, 2016; Kiss, 2016) focus exclusively on the migrant-refugee aspect of the problem rather than looking at how ‘Islam’ and ‘Muslims’ are constructed in the migration narrative. Nevertheless, some of the analyses on the events and the main political standpoints, such as Brubaker’s (2017) could serve as basis for constructing our frames codebook. Based on his analysis, as well as the assumptions of some other researchers (Szalai and Göbl, 2015; Győri, 2016; Sereghy, 2016; Sereghy, 2017) the major narrative of the crisis was one of securitisation. On the one hand, this securitarian narrative was concerned with the physical security of the country and its citizens, and on the other hand, it also had a symbolic security dimension whereby the national identity had to be protected against the influx of migrants coming from alien cultures and (Muslim) religion. We mentioned that the political communications of the government on the migration crisis does not always openly use Islamophobia, sometimes it is confined to the anti-immigrant narrative. Thus, we distinguished two major frames, both concerned with security from different aspects: (1.) security/securitization (physical security) linked to illegal migration, economic migration, terrorism, and (2.) symbolic security linked to securing/defending/protecting national, European, and Christian identity.

We started the process with the frame discovery using a top-down approach. Our purpose with this analysis besides shedding light on what frames were constructed in the political discourse, was also to see what components these frames had, what meanings were constructed and to what extent and how these frames were reflected in the media discourse (La Porte and Azpiroz, 2009; Ibrahim, 2010). Therefore, we continued with coding themes in political and media texts and revealed how the two frames were constituted using what thematic elements.

For the coding of themes we relied on Entam’s (1993) definition of the four features of political and media frames: problem definition, problem diagnosis or causal interpretation, moral evaluation or describing consequences, and treatment recommendation. By problem definition it is meant how the political actors and the media perceive the nature and the scope of the problem. By problem diagnosis and causal interpretation it is usually meant to understand the origins of the given issue while moral evaluation and consequences refer to the perceived social and moral implications. Treatment recommendation is the measures, policies, etc. proposed by actors to address the issue (Nickles, 2017).

For our analysis we formulated specific questions – based on Entam’s definition – to identify themes. For both frames we specified questions and thus we designed the following coding system:

Table 1. Coding system

<b>Political narratives</b>	<b>Media narratives</b>
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<b>Frame 1. Illegal/economic migration, securitization</b>
<u>a.Problem definition</u> How is illegal/economic migration defined?
<u>b.Causal interpretation (reasons that lie behind)</u> What are the causes of illegal/economic migration identified in this political/media rhetoric?
<u>c.Moral evaluation, consequences</u> What are the consequences of illegal/economic migration on the society?
<u>d.and/or treatment recommendation</u> What policies are identified to address these consequences?
<b>Frame 2. Identity</b>
<u>a.Problem definition</u> How is the issue of identity in the time of the crisis or under the pressure of the migration influx defined? (Threat to national and other identity) Who is the ‘migrant other’?
<u>b.Causal interpretation (reasons that lie behind)</u> Why our identity has to be defended? Why is the (Muslim) migration crisis a threat? How is the ‘migrant other’ imagined?
<u>c.Moral evaluation, consequences</u> What consequences of the migration crisis have on our society that legitimizes the increased need of the defense of our (national, European, Christian) identity?
<u>d.and/or treatment recommendation</u> What policies, political actions are seen as effective to avoid the negative consequences?

**Sampling**

The study had the aim of revealing the main narratives on Islamophobia in Hungary. As we know from the literature, the phenomenon is new, connected to the migration and refugee crisis starting in 2015 and it is generated by the government rhetoric. Taking this into account, we limited our

timeframe to the migration crisis (2015-2016), looking at government narratives in political speeches and selected the newspaper directly linked to the government (Magyar Idők<sup>11</sup>). We applied a keyword search for the on-line database of the newspaper using the following terms: 'Iszlám', 'Muszlim' and 'Muzulmán'. We focused on two sections, 'internal affairs' and 'opinion' to be able to identify articles related to the migration crisis and exclude the ones that dealt with international politics related to the Middle East and/or Muslim countries. The search resulted in around 1000 articles. We used systematic random sampling to reduce the number of articles as our aim was to conduct primarily a qualitative research. We selected the first week of every month from the two sections. Thus we got a corpus of 114 articles.

The newspaper publishes the speeches of government politicians, therefore we used this corpus for analysing political narratives as well as media ones. We separated 'politicians' from 'non-politicians' in the articles and analysed them as belonging to either the political or the media narrative. The majority of political actors were representing the government, while the non-politicians were from very different backgrounds: security experts, church representatives, certain types of civil organizations, researchers, publicists.

The research had certain limitations. Given the time constraint of the research, and that there are no media analysis on Islamophobia in Hungary, we could only look at one newspaper instead of a wider range of the media landscape. Therefore, we cannot make general conclusions about the media representation of Islam and Islamophobia in Hungary.

## **6. Results: framing Islam and Muslims in the context of the migration crisis**

### **Political narratives**

#### ***Frame 1. Illegal/economic migration, securitization***

An important argument in defining the essence of the 'migration crisis' in the dominant political narrative is that most of the people arriving cannot be considered refugees or asylum seekers because those who flee real conflict zones are already safe in the nearest safe place or country. So heading to Europe, and in the meanwhile passing through Hungary, cannot be interpreted in any other way than migrating for economic and not for personal safety reasons. The causes behind economic migration are explained on the individual level as search for a better life. There are also structural elements of the explanation, such as the impacts of globalization: *They want the German way of life, therefore, Hungary regards them as migrants. MI1 (Prime Minister); They are tempted by global advertisements suggesting consumer welfare. MI2 (Prime Minister)* In this frame, with regards to explaining the causes of the migration crisis, we find an important reference to Muslim countries

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<sup>11</sup> The newspaper was launched in September 2015.



claiming that the intention of great powers to bring democracy and build democratic systems in these countries has failed. Another explanation is that migration is not a spontaneous process caused by any of the above causes but it is the result of the calculated and purposeful activities of some actors, such as the 'liberals' and the 'left', and George Soros (representative of speculative capital). In many respects this explanation is implying some conspiracy behind the migration crisis: *Some civil organizations are generating the migrant question and they have an important role in pulling migrants to Hungary so they are engaged not only in charitable activities. (...) Civil organisations close to Soros should be investigated, those which conduct activities contradicting the national security interests of Hungary. MI98 (vice-president of Fidesz)*

The consequences of the 2015-2016 migration influx are primarily formulated in this frame as a security issue threatening both the country and Europe: *It's hard to say who are coming and why and it's enough if only a few dozen of inspired by some crazy ideology want to commit terrorist attacks. MI5. Migrants are dehumanized, they are compared to some natural forces which could eventually destroy 'us': We have to monitor migration, they will keep coming. Europe underestimates the risks of the current migration flow, as it is not about hundreds of thousands but more than ten million people. And their reserves are inexhaustible. MI2 (Prime Minister)* The logical and legitimate policy is to build a physical obstacle – a fence – that will stop this flow. In the meantime, it is suggested that it would also be desirable from international actors to initiate policies to keep migrants where they originally live: *Protecting our borders is a legitimate demand. MI13 (Prime Minister)* Conflicts should be handled where they happen. *MI1 (Prime Minister).*

## **Frame 2. Identity**

The arrival of migrants (outsiders) is formulated as a threat, because they are coming from a religion/culture alien to ours: *Hungarians are not used to "foreign religions" and a "strong Muslim community". MI14* What is really threatening is if they come here, in our country (closeness), and if their numbers increase (visibility). Having only a few Muslims and having them far away, is the acceptable model for Hungary: *Hungary appreciates its law abiding Muslim community (we like kebab shops and buying lamb for Easter) (...) While appreciating the Muslim community, Hungary does not want the number of Muslims to grow MI1 (Prime Minister)*

In the current mainstream political narrative, represented by the governing National-Conservative and Christian Democratic coalition, national identity is closely linked to Christianity. (It is so despite the fact the religiosity of the Hungarian population is very low.) Thus, formulating the issue of the threat to the national identity caused by the migration crisis, is most evidently construed as a threat to our Christian identity. The migration crisis is seen as an Islamisation process taking place in Europe, Muslims coming here to occupy us, our countries, societies and culture: *Europe's Islamisation started with the migration process. MI3 (vice-president of the Parliament)* The reason why Hungary thinks of itself as playing the role of the protector of European civilization is that European countries and especially its leaders are incapable of solving the migration crisis. While the people of European countries know what should be done, their leaders don't. The cultural destruction of Europe, similarly to how the causes of the migration crisis are explained, is also linked to the idea of certain agents'

manipulating the whole migration crisis, of whom George Soros is the main embodiment: *Europe will not be anymore the Europe of the European people but that of some well-organized – if I think of the Soros Foundation it is not a groundless idea – organisations, shifting around tremendous amounts of money, the activists disregarding the borders of nation states and fulfilling the delirious dreams of the leader elected by nobody. MI30 (Prime Minister)*

Hungary being a Central European Country has a very different history than Western European countries which have long migration histories and large Muslim communities. Hungary sees the Western examples – parallel societies, situation of women, etc. – as warning signs of what happens if the size of the Muslim population increases. Given the assumed cultural and religious character of Islam, too many Muslims and too much Muslim influence on our culture and identity will but lead to destruction. Importantly, saying this is reflected upon as “not being Islamophobic” since it makes constant reference to the richness of Islam as a culture. What is emphasized is that although it is rich, it is radically different from ours: *There are no European answers: different rules, situation of women, insular communities; they will vote for their own European Muslim parties. If we don't wake up, we have to say farewell to our Europe. I am not Islamophobic in what I am saying. Muslim culture has very rich traditions but it is a radically different culture that is incomprehensible for Europe. MI23 (Fidesz MP)* The main concern in how to reserve our culture and identity is to avoid the mixing of cultures, religions and people and strengthen ours and Europe’s Christian identity. Hungary, again having a different history from Western European countries, should take a different path by opting for better family policies to increase birth rates (of Hungarians) instead of taking in migrant populations: *According to Soros, Europe will be saved and revived by Muslims, and that's why they have to be let in. We do not believe in that but that Hungarian families have to be reinforced. MI94 (Fidesz MP, Minister)*

### **Media narratives**

#### **Frame 1. Illegal/economic migration, securitization**

We find similar reasoning in media narratives about how the issue of the migration crisis is interpreted: migrants seek a better life and they come illegally. In addition, we also find an argument that emphasizes that migrants are not that vulnerable after all as they possess all kinds of valuable objects which prove that they cannot be “real refugees”. Besides coming illegally, they are also blamed for not staying at home and fighting their enemies. Thus they are made morally highly problematic in this narrative.

In the media narrative linking migration and terrorism is very important. It is the narrative of security experts that is dominant here. Among other issues, they claim that terrorists arrive mixing with the migrants. The Hungarian Muslim community, as previously in the political narrative, is not seen as a threat, they are not migrants (at least not arriving with the current flow), therefore, they are

differentiated from the dangerous newcomers. We also find a cultural explanation by security experts for the aggression of the terrorists: *They have a different sociological background, tribal and clan cultures; culture of aggression; MI18 (security expert)*

Among the causal interpretations, we find some similar ones used by politicians: migrants coming for a better life, failed attempts of Western powers to install democracy in Muslim countries, as well as the conspiracy theory according to which migration is organized by some agents: *They are not running from a specific situation but it is part of a well-organized action which we can call invasion MI107*. Besides these similar arguments, in the media security frame linking the causes of migration to the ISIS and Muslim terrorists is more explicit: *ISIS uses the migration invasion which has caused a war like situation in Europe. MI66* The security threat concerns migration from a broader perspective as it focuses not only on the current influx of migrants; migration is dangerous in general as we see from the examples of Western European countries where there are home-born terrorists among the different generations of migrants.

Defending borders is the policy that is emphasized by the media, similar to what politicians say. It is noteworthy that border defence is formulated in opposition to humanism: *Instead of playing the humanist, the EU should defend its borders. (...) unregistered migrants entering Germany by the thousands. MI33 (security expert)*. In the media frame there is reference to migrants as refugees, and reflections on how solidarity towards them should be envisioned. While normally solidarity is understood as not making distinctions among people in need on any basis, here it is suggested that there should be a pre-selection of refugees and while realizing any act of solidarity, we should take into account our own means: *Not contradicting, just supplementing what he (Pope Francis) is saying: we have to help the needy according to our resources. MI37 (Catholic Bishop)*

## **Frame 2. Identity**

The themes in the media narratives are similar to the political ones when defining identity issues within the migration crisis context. As Hungarians, we are exposed to newcomers only now with the migration crisis. But based on the experiences of Western European countries, where the death of multiculturalism is perceived in this narrative as a fact, it should be clear to us that migration associated with Muslims represent an alien religion and culture. The very fact that they are coming (migrating here) means that the physical distance is decreasing that constitutes a threat to our national and Christian identity. It is so mainly because the cultural distance cannot be bridged given that Islam makes it impossible for its followers to adapt to other cultures, thus to integrate into European societies: *Integration of Muslims only possible in the labour market, but it does not work in everyday life because of the religious rules that all Muslims have to follow in every aspect of their lives; there is no passage between Christianity and Islam. MI114 (Orientalist academic)*

The media narrative also emphasizes that Islamisation of Europe is a major threat to our identity. In the analyzed media, Islamisation has various components which all interpret Islam and Muslims from a certain cultural perspective. We get a whole range of essentialized explanations of what Islam is

(aggressive, sexually exploitative of women) and how Muslim people behave (don't want to integrate). It is very common to see Islam as an aggressive religion that is also linked to seeing it as aggressive against women (especially in the light of the incidents of abuses taking place in certain European cities by "migrants" at that time). Islamisation is also about the incompatibility of other values such as our democratic system and norms: *Islam can integrate only if it can shape reality according to its norms. Not because it is aggressive but because it is its essence. MI24; Islam is incompatible with democracy as democracy is man created, Islam does not know human rights, human dignity is linked to Islamic faith but a Muslim has more dignity than anyone else. (Orientalist academic)*

On the one hand, in this narrative Hungary's European identity, linked to certain values, is emphasized, on the other hand, Europe is strongly criticized and seen as incapable of the right action. It is criticized for its migration policy, but in more general terms for most of the things that constitute present day modern (Western) European liberal democratic countries: secularization (leading to loss of identity), human rights, facing post-colonialism, tolerance. Most of these values are categorized under the label of 'liberalism' (sometimes conflating it with neo-liberalism) blaming all problems on this ideology. Thus, liberal values and practices are behind everything that has opened the path to the Islamisation of Europe: the dominance of individualism leading to the devastation of communities and collective identities and the tolerance of other cultures who intend to destroy us: *The suicide of a civilisation. Gender movement and willkommneskultur are intermingled. Liberal democracy as an ideology has proven wrong. (...) The same progressive, humanist attitude propagates that all migrants have to be accepted, and furthermore in the name of human rights fundamentalism their rights and culture should be treated as equal. MI104.* In the political frame, it is explicitly said that Hungary is in opposition to Europe concerning how the migrant/refugee crisis is seen, as well as Hungary sees itself as a protector of Europe against the migration flow. The media frame is more concerned with elaborating the details of the cultural difference between us (Europeans) and them (Muslims).

The Catholic Church and the Pope are also criticized for their liberalism as they stand for solidarity with the refugees. This Catholic liberalism is described as having the same self-devastating characteristics as the liberal ideology: *it is incomprehensible why the Pope supports the aggressive, on-going, unlimited European acceptance of migrants (...) and does not differentiate between Coptic Christian and Muslim migrants. MI84 (publicist)*

Conspiracy theory is also present in the media frame, attributing the causes of migration leading to the Islamisation of the continent to the calculated actions of certain agents (US multinational companies, liberal left wing intellectuals, Soros, German industry, American interest group, global capital, global financial elite, etc.). Conspiracy theories are important in the political frame as well, however, the media frame is more detailed concerning who and what actors are assumed to be behind the migration crisis: *Looking at the expansion of the cosmopolitan fifth column financed from abroad hiding behind various civil organizations basically preparing the ground for US multinational companies and their servants the liberal left wing intellectuals. This aim is achieved by promoting various human rights organisations, sexual deviances, destroying traditional communities including the family, spreading of crazy ideas such as gender ideology, and dismantling of the nation state. The*

*infamous speculator, Soros, has spent billions of dollars to achieve his goals. (...) If Europe gives up its values and denies its symbols for the sake of foreign civilizations, peoples and religions, then its final demise is just a matter of time. If crosses will be taken off the walls and carpets will cover the symbols of Christianity, then we give up ourselves. This is not tolerance, but the brain washing action of the intellectual group serving a well definable political-economic interest group. MI38 (political scientist, publicist)*

The consequences of the migration crisis and the inability of Europe to react in an adequate way is envisioned to lead to the total and irreversible Islamisation of Europe: *Liberals can take their backpacks and find a new home if Islam becomes an influential political force in Europe. MI24; Muslims will be in majority, end of European civilisation MI28 (publicist)* As a solution, it is recommended that *Hungary should stay out of it (not letting in Muslims and create big communities) MI46*. The political measures to stop migration and avoid the (assumed) consequences are supported wholeheartedly: *Hungary's symbolic radicalism saved Europe from real radicalism; what is happening in Europe is an invasion generated by ISIS and the continent is lucky that Hungary is handling the issue radically. MI27 (security expert)*

## 7. Discussion: dominant narratives of Islamophobia

### ***Islamophobic political and media narratives of the government***

In Central and Eastern European countries, the ‘new other’ is the migrant of the recent migration crisis (of whom the majority is actually not even staying in the country but arrives with the intention to go to Western countries) who has two embodiments – the two frames identified – in political and media narratives. As demonstrated by the analysis of the two frames, security issues have two dimensions which have different connections to how ‘Islam’ and ‘Muslims’ are understood: the *illegal migrant* (only implying or having weak or only scattered references to Islam) and the *culturally different other* threatening our identity.

Table 2. Summary of the narratives of the refugee crisis

	<b>Political</b>	<b>Media</b>
<b>Frame 1.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Already safe in the nearest safe place or country (therefore they are not asylum seekers but illegal migrants)*</li> <li>➤ Migrating for economic reasons (therefore they are not asylum seekers but illegal migrants)*</li> <li>➤ Migration can be a threat because of potential terrorism*</li> <li>➤ Temptations of global capitalism*</li> <li>➤ Migration caused by leftist-liberal ideology*</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Illegal/economic migration, securitization</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Migration caused by pre-calculated activities of leftist-liberals + some capitalist actors (conspiracy theory)*</li> <li>➤ Failure of democratization of Muslim countries**</li> <li>➤ Protecting borders against illegal migrants is legitimate*</li> <li>➤ Threat of migration: masses of people flooding out country/continent*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Muslim migrants blamed for not fighting ISIS (Muslims morally problematic)**</li> <li>➤ Muslim terrorists/terrorism:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Arriving with migration flow**</li> <li>-Coming from aggressive culture**</li> <li>-Migration is generated by ISIS**</li> <li>-Home born Muslim terrorists in Western countries**</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Migrants are not poor*</li> </ul>
	<p>( Based on an essentialized understanding of Islam)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Islam is an alien religion, culture (for Hungarians)**</li> <li>➤ Muslims should not come to and become visible in Hungary**</li> <li>➤ Islam is a threat to our identity (national, Christian)**</li> <li>➤ Islam is a threat to our European Christian civilization**</li> <li>➤ Islamisation: migration=occupation of Europe, destruction of our culture**</li> <li>➤ Migration leading to Islamisation of Europe generated by Europe/EU/liberals/the left**</li> <li>➤ Conspiracy theory: Migration leading to Islamisation of Europe generated by Europe/EU/liberals/the left + some capitalist figures**</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Frame 2. Identity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Islam is respected as long as it stays far away**</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ (Essentialized explanations of) Islam as a religion/culture**:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-aggressive</li> <li>-sexual exploitation</li> <li>-impossibility of integration</li> <li>-incompatibly of norms, values</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

\*Narratives of the refugee crisis not related to Islam/Muslims

\*\*Narratives of the refugee crises related to Islam/Muslims

As we have seen, in the first frame security issues are linked to migration and illegal migrants. It is assumed that illegal migrants may have connections to terrorism, could have been sent by terrorists, and linked to ISIS. It is also underlined that some of the migrants may have been involved in wars and

armed conflicts as well as coming from an ‘aggressive culture’. Nevertheless, in this frame, the reference to ‘Islam’ and ‘Muslims’ is very limited – mainly linked to ISIS.

The identity frame is about how Islam and Muslims represent a threat to our (national, European and Christian) identity. It is in this frame where we see full-fledged, essentialized interpretations of Muslim culture, religion and the Muslim world in general. Anti-Muslimism is constructed by emphasizing how alien this culture is, especially that Hungarians are not used to living with cultures so distant from theirs. In fact, physical distance is seen as an important theme: we have a very small Muslim community, they are invisible, and it is acceptable, but we should keep it like this. No more Muslims should arrive. We respect their culture as long as they remain where they are. Hungarian identity thus consists of non-acceptance of alien cultures and religions. There is a radical difference between us (Christians) and them (Muslims). A very important element of this frame is that we see ourselves as different also from Western Europe. They already have experiences with Islam and this should be a warning sign for us – to stop immigration especially of Muslims, refuse multiculturalism, etc.

In both frames the representatives of leftist-liberal ideology and the ideology itself is constituted as one of the main enemies: (neo-)liberalism responsible for global migration, liberals helping migrants and refugees who arrive here, liberalism tolerating a religion that wants to destroy it, etc. Very often, all these processes besides being linked to the leftist-liberals, are interpreted as a conspiracy theory.

As we said before, the Hungarian national-conservative government identifies itself and the political system as illiberal. This illiberalism has yet another enemy, which is Europe. We, Hungarians, with our traditions and values, stand against the mainstream European developments. Western populists using Islamophobia incorporate liberal values and oppose them to the illiberal Islam (Brubaker, 2017). Hungarian Islamophobia, being an important narrative of the government, cannot incorporate liberal values as it would contradict its very essence. So Islam and Muslims are seen as enemies not because they are in opposition with our liberal democratic values, but because they have a religion/culture that is incompatible with ours. So cultural essentialization is the main instrument how Muslims are made different.

While our analysis is limited to one medium, a state-controlled daily functioning as a close ally and voice of the government ideologies and policies, it is still worth pointing out some of the differences in the two narratives. While the general trends are the same, using the same or similar themes within the two frames, we can argue that the media narrative is more directly anti-Muslim. The newspaper amplifies the narratives of the government, particularly how Islam as a culture/religion is described, how the process of Islamisation is presented and what details of the enemy liberalism and of conspiracy theory are mentioned. While describing the radical cultural and religious differences and Islamisation, the media makes reference to a whole range of social and cultural phenomena in more detail than in the political narrative. Similarly, the newspaper serves as a platform for ideologues, public figures, and opinion leaders supporting the government’s anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim stance to elaborate on why and how liberalism and liberal values are leading to the destruction of Europe. The conspiracy theories, favoured also by the political narrative, are more detailed and long

articles explain how the entire migration crisis and the invasion of Europe by Muslims is manipulated by certain actors.

### ***Islamophobia of non-political actors***

The analysed newspaper, as we said, serves as a platform for providing space for researchers who give the academic justification of the anti-Muslim narratives with their comments and articles. There are two important institutions the representatives of which are published on a regular basis in the paper. One is the Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Arabic faculty. Led by Miklós Maróth, who holds one of the highest academic positions and at the same time is an advisor to the PM. He has a Christian conservative philosophical approach that is practically an essentialized interpretation of Islam and Muslims. The other is the Migration Research Institute, founded in 2015. It also aims to justify the anti-Muslim official government narrative by publishing reports and researches on Muslims using an equally essentialized approach (Pall and Sayfo, 2016; Sereghy 2017).

Similarly, as mentioned before, security experts have a very important role in generating and maintaining the official narratives. “Self-declared security experts” using essentialized anti-Islamic stereotypes are “omnipresent guests” in various media (Sereghy, 2017). One of their most important narrative is that there is no such distinction as peaceful or violent Islam, only Islam (Pall and Sayfo, 2016).

The Catholic clergy is yet another actor in maintaining the narrative. The mainstream clergy is in opposition to Pope Francis and they strongly refute his (too liberal) statements and stance on the migration question (Pall and Sayfo, 2016).

### ***Islamophobia of non-government political actors***

#### *The far-right*

In the 1990s, the far-right MIÉP party had a strong anti-Semitic discourse supported by a strong pro-Palestine discourse. In the early 2000s, MIÉP was replaced on the political spectrum by another, younger radical right wing party, the Jobbik. They established strong ties with certain Muslim countries. The party’s president in 2011 wrote about Islam: if Islam were to decline, “a light would go out almost entirely (in the world), and there would be no one who could face the darkness of Globalization” (Pall and Sayfo, 2016: 4). Given the political contacts, the party refrains from openly anti-Muslim statements which makes it different from its European far-right counterparts (Pall and Sayfo, 2016; Sereghy, 2017).

#### *Some marginal groups*



There are some small circles of Jewish liberal intellectuals (Pall and Sayfo, 2016) who can be linked to the Israeli right and who have anti-Muslim stances. Similarly, a Pentecostal Church (Hit Gyülekezete), of American-style Born Again Christians (about 60,000 members), is Islamophobic in so much as for them Islam is the Antichrist (Pall and Sayfo, 2016; Sereghy, 2017). This Church is linked to far-right Zionism which accepts the views of the Israeli right-wing propaganda (Langer, 2013).

### ***Islamophobia in other media***

As said earlier, the media landscape in Hungary is characterized by the overwhelming dominance of government controlled media. This results in anti-migrant and anti-Muslim narratives “largely incontestable in today’s political and media environment” (Sereghy, 2017: 269). There are only some very brief reports and newspaper articles addressing the issue of the media representation of Islam and Islamophobia in Hungary. The Hungarian Muslim Community named various media outlets whom they considered as expressing anti-Muslim discourses. Among them, we find media close to the government (Kossuth Rádió, M1 TV, Magyar Idők), but various other media from the right wing (Magyar Nemzet, Hír TV) and left wing opposition (Index). ATV (TV channel) and Hetek (weekly) are also mentioned which are owned by the Pentecostal American style ‘Born Again Christians’ Church (Hit Gyülekezete). ATV and Hetek are not religious but left-wing liberal media outlets generally in opposition to the government but sometimes agreeing with its anti-immigrant political stance and expressing anti-Islam narratives. Among the Internet sites there are some radical right and Church affiliated sites with Islamophobic content that are “bordering on hate speech” (Sereghy, 2017: 269). As stated by the Hungarian Islamic Community, almost all media express some degree of Islamophobia by focusing mainly on terrorism, wars and anti-immigrant messages and never giving attention to any positive aspects of the lives of Muslims.

### **Experiences of discrimination**

The anti-Muslim narrative of the recent years, dominated by the government’s rhetoric and linked to its political interest, created an enemy that is primarily based on the “historical trope of ‘antemurale Christianitatis’ – the idea, central to nationalist historiography and myth throughout the region, of Central and Eastern European nations as ‘bulwarks of Christianity’ against Islam” (Brubaker, 2017: 19). Thus, the enemy is not (yet) within our borders but outside of it. This is also reflected in the often repeated claim that *Hungary appreciates its law abiding Muslim community*. While anti-Muslimism created and targets enemies physically outside, the hate-campaigns nevertheless impact the Muslim community living in the country.

The Muslim communities declared that their relationship with state authorities had deteriorated due to the hate campaigns prevailing recently in the public discourse. The Hungarian Islamic Community revealed cases of transgressions against Muslims (verbal abuse, pulling off headscarves), but claimed that these mainly remain unreported. The president of the Hungarian Islamic Community wrote a letter to the PM, in which he pointed to the increasing hate speech and physical threats, asking for protection of mosques and their families. In the response letter the PM gave his promise to give

protection to all Hungarian citizens. Some NGOs have information on certain abuses committed by the police and border guards and immigration authorities against Muslim asylum seekers concerning their religion: mocking and mishandling of Quran, and dealing with Muslim women and inmates during Ramadan inappropriately (Sereghy, 2017).

There is a very peculiar case of banning Islamic symbols; that is a village, Ásotthalom, of 4,000 inhabitants near the Southern border of the country with no immigrants but a recent history of immigrants passing through or near the village. The radical right wing mayor banned the construction of mosques or minarets, and the wearing of the chador, the niqab, the burqa and the burkini. He also banned LGBT propaganda and gay pride marches. Ridiculous it may seem, the mayor claimed to set positive examples to other municipalities. There was neither government reaction nor support from the far right party (Sereghy, 2017).

## **8. Concluding remarks**

Islamophobia is a recent phenomenon in Hungary linked to the migration/refugee crisis starting in 2015. Given the very small size of the Muslim population in Hungary, Islamophobia targets recent migrants and refugees and not the local Muslim community. Nonetheless, Islamophobia has impacts on local Muslims who feel much less safe and encounter insults on a daily basis not experienced earlier.

Islamophobia became the dominant government narrative during the crisis. The government, being a national-conservative populist political force declaring itself as illiberal, uses anti-Muslimism as one of the instruments to mobilize popular support by creating a new enemy. Islamophobia in Hungary thus has to be understood and interpreted in the migration crisis context.

In the government's political narratives as well as in government controlled media we find different formulations of anti-Muslimism. By relying on the literature and conducting our own analysis of government political speeches and media texts directly linked to the government we revealed that the migration crisis is framed primarily as a security issue. Based on previous studies we identified two frames within this dominant security narrative concerning how the migration crisis was discussed in politics and media. The two frames are 'physical security' (securitization) and 'symbolic security' (identity issues).

The main components of the physical security frame make fewer and less direct references to Islam. In certain political communications (such as the government anti-immigrant campaigns) there is no direct mention of Islam or Muslims neither is there in most political speeches. In the media, however, the link between Islamic terrorism and physical security is made explicit. It could be argued that the

(partially) coded political language is supported by a non-coded media narrative making sure that the decoding of the message will not be too complicated for the target audience, the population at large.

The symbolic security frame has explicit anti-Muslim components both in the media and the political narratives. The main arguments concern the essentialization of Islam: radically different, refusing our cultural norms, aggressive, and incapable of integration. Given these cultural interpretations of Islam, migration is seen as Islamisation of Europe which constitutes a threat to European civilization and Christianity and eventually to our identity.

As stated earlier, Hungarian Islamophobia has to be understood differently from its Western counterparts as primarily being government generated (not from marginal (or less marginal) radical right wing parties). The government is not positioning itself as a protector of liberal values against the illiberal Islam, as it declares itself to be illiberal. In the meanwhile, as part of the illiberal turn, Hungary is seeking allies with countries where liberal democratic values are not strong. So there is apparently a contradiction between the state policy of ‘Eastern Opening’ (including establishing or strengthening ties with certain Muslim countries) and the dominant, official anti-Muslim narrative. This is counterbalanced by always making reference in foreign political communication to the cultural richness of Islam and by claiming that it deserves to be respected as long as it stays outside of Europe and Hungary.

Our analysis was a qualitative one, therefore, it was not possible to make a quantified ranking of the narratives as to their dominance and significance. Therefore, we created a qualitative ranking scheme that attempts to address the issue of how dominant or significant different narratives are.

In the refugee crisis narratives within the two frames, we found narratives with and without reference to Islam/Muslims. Those without reference are ranked as less significant than those with reference. Political narratives, as we have seen from the qualitative analysis, are less directly linked to providing Islamophobic framework for the refugee crisis. While the media, using the same narratives, amplify and make it overt what the political narratives only imply, therefore, we considered political narratives as less significant than media narratives, and political and media narratives together (narratives appearing in both) as the most significant. Based on these considerations, we have the following ranking scheme:

Dominance/significance of narratives going from 1 (least significant) to 6 (most significant)

1. Narratives used by politicians - Narratives with no reference to Islam/Muslims
2. Narratives used by media - Narratives with no reference to Islam/Muslims
3. Narratives used by both politicians and media - Narratives with no reference to Islam/Muslims
4. Narratives used by politicians - Narratives with reference to Islam/Muslims
5. Narratives used by media - Narratives with reference to Islam/Muslims

6. Narratives used by both politicians and media - Narratives with reference to Islam/Muslims

1. Narratives used by politicians - Narratives with no reference to Islam/Muslims

∅

2. Narratives used by media - Narratives with no reference to Islam/Muslims

- Migrants are not poor

3. Narratives used by both politicians and media - Narratives with no reference to Islam/Muslims

- Already safe in the nearest safe place or country (therefore they are not asylum seekers but illegal migrants)

- Migrating for economic reasons (therefore they are not asylum seekers but illegal migrants)

- Migration can be a threat because of potential terrorism

- Temptations of global capitalism

- Migration caused by leftist-liberal ideology

- Migration caused by pre-calculated activities of leftist-liberals + some capitalist actors (conspiracy theory)\*

- Protecting borders against illegal migrants is legitimate

- Threat of migration: masses of people flooding out country/continent

4. Narratives used by politicians - Narratives with reference to Islam/Muslims

- Islam is respected as long as it stays far away

5. Narratives used by media - Narratives with reference to Islam/Muslims

- Muslim migrants blamed for not fighting ISIS (Muslims morally problematic)

- Muslim terrorists/terrorism:

-Arriving with migration flow

-Coming from aggressive culture

-Migration is generated by ISIS

-Home born Muslim terrorists in Western countries

6. Narratives used by both politicians and media - Narratives with no reference to Islam/Muslims

- Failure of democratization of Muslim countries

- Islam is an alien religion, culture (for Hungarians)

- Muslims should not come to and become visible in Hungary

- Islam is a threat to our identity (national, Christian)

- Islam is a threat to our European Christian civilization

- Islamisation: migration=occupation of Europe, destruction of our culture

- Migration leading to Islamisation of Europe generated by Europe/EU/liberals/the left

- Migration leading to Islamisation of Europe generated by Europe/EU/liberals/the left + some capitalist figures (conspiracy theory)

Finally, we would like to reflect on the clusters of Islamophobia as approached by Sayyid. Throughout the paper we have shown that Hungary – similarly to other Central and Eastern European countries – is a case of Islamophobia (practically) without Muslims (Sereghy, 2017). Islamophobia is used by the illiberal, populist Hungarian government to make political profit of the refugee crisis. The government generated Islamophobia differentiates between local Muslims and the migrants/refugees (who are not even let into the country). This Islamophobia targets an enemy that is not an existing community in the country (the local Muslims are always used as an example for being the “good guys”, different from the new migrants/refugees). Based on this conclusion, the case of Hungary’s Islamophobia fits into the category of “incidents in which there is a sustained and systematic elaboration of comments in the public domain that disparage Muslims and/or Islam”, targeting the ‘enemy outside’ or the ‘imagined enemy’. Obviously, the anti-Muslim narratives have negative impacts on local Muslims, but the other clusters of Islamophobia can only be indirectly linked to the dominant narratives. In other words, the incidents targeting Muslims, mainly unreported, can be interpreted as the consequences of the general Islamophobic campaigns.

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