Democratic Efficacy and the Varieties of Populism in Europe

Working Paper

Populist Governance in Regional and Local Governments

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Abstract

Some populist parties have already reached the institutions or even the government in local and regional levels. This working paper aims to analyse the impact of populist parties in regional and local government or the impact of the government when the ruling party needs the support of a populist party. Local and regional governments offer a particularly interesting framework for analysis due to different factors: the existence of a plurality of units, provides the possibility, both to citizens and to analysts and scholars, to contrast manifestos with effective institutional action.

The methodological design is based on case studies that includes at least two cases, mostly cities, for each country included in the analysis; these are: Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Spain and Turkey. The working paper includes a brief description of the local and regional systems; an analysis of the context and conditions of the access to the local and regional institutions of populist parties; an examination of the institutional activity; and the impact of this activity in the operation of parties and in their manifestos.

This working paper offers a general vision of the operation and action of these parties in local and regional government and shows the main features of a common trend to use city councils as a mechanism to visualize populist action.

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1 The need to study populist parties in subnational government

In the last years, populist parties have achieved relevance both in terms of political discourse and governmental power. Some populist parties have already reached the institutions or even the government. This report aims to analyse the impact of populist parties in government or the impact of the government when the ruling party needs the support of a populist party.

After a preliminary analysis of populist parties in office or as supporting parties, the methodological approach to this subject has been adapted in order to offer effective comparative results. For this reason, the methodological design is based on case studies. Each contributor selected at least two cases of regional or local governments where populist parties are in office or they are supporting the ruling party. Each case is developed following the same structures. That way, although the cases and institutional sets are diverse the comparison was feasible. The countries included in this report are: Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Spain and Turkey. Each report analysed at least two regional or local governments (cases) where the presence of populist parties have been relevant. This relevance had to imply an impact in the formation of government, percentage of support, impact in terms of policymaking -both in terms of promoting or blocking policies- and the effect of the populist discourse for the party, for other parties and for the institutions.

The report begins by a description of the results of populist parties in local and regional elections, in section two. The third section includes the justification of selected cases according to the stablished criteria. The fourth analyses the context and conditions of access to the institutions; this is how and when these parties became relevant, strategies of communication, special targeting during campaigns, strategies of grassroots mobilizations, and specific issues in their agenda. In section 5 institutional activity is analysed. In this case, the position in these governments or institutions is discussed, including external agreed support to the ruling government, coalition government, punctual support to the government, preferential external partner of the -minority- ruling government. It also deals with the effective impact in the institutional activity and operation, and in the discourse of the institution. Section 6 focuses on the evolution of political parties and the party system. This is to say, the transformations that populist parties may have experience and the effects on other parties or the party system. Finally, the seventh section focuses on the transition form the manifesto to reality and the possible evolution and mismatches between the previous discourse and their action in the institutional system, the electorate or other actors and components of the political system.

2 Selection of cases: cities and regions

Due to the differences among countries, a case study strategy was considered the most suitable. In general, all the country contributors have decided to study two cities. In some cases, these two cities do also address two different populist parties. Table 10 shows the countries, cities or regional governments and the political parties included in the report. The following sub-sections analyse the arguments for the selection of cases country by country.

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Table 10. Case selection by country

Country	**Cases**	**Political parties**
Czech Republic	Prague Ostrava	ANO
Hungary	Kaposvár Ózd	Fidesz Jobbik
Italy	Turin Treviso	League M5S
Spain	Cadiz (city) Madrid (City) Andalusia (Regional)	Podemos VOX
Turkey	Ankara Istambul	AKP

2.1 Czech Republic

Although the Czech Republic has experienced an unprecedented surge of populist parties in the recent decade (Hanley 2012, Havlík 2015), the report deals solely with one political party – the Alliance of Dissatisfied Citizens (ANO) in substantially different municipalities allowing us for making comparison of populist governments on the local level across contexts. The other two populist parties are not suitable cases for the analysis. Public Affairs, successful in the 2010 general election, ended up as a "flash party", having disappeared quickly, and the far right Freedom and Direct Democracy (the successor of Tomio Okamura`s Dawn of Direct Democracy) is close to the status of a "pariah party" with only limited representation in the local executives, almost exclusively in very small municipalities.

ANO was established in November 2011 after a billionaire of Slovak origin and the owner of the biggest agro-chemical company in the Czech Republic, Andrej Babiš, released a declaration entitled "Action of Dissatisfied Citizens." He criticized the existing situation in Czech politics and the politicians, calling on citizens to take part in an initiative towards "a more just society, and a functional state with the rule of law" (ANO 2011, 2011). Andrej Babiš was not an unknown name in Czech politics and business. Before 1989, he graduated from the University of Economics in Prague and worked as an employee of the Slovak communist-controlled international trade company Petrimex in Morocco. After 1989, he became the managing director of the Agrofert company, focusing on agricultural and fertilizer production and managed to develop Agrofert into one of the largest companies in the Czech Republic despite rumors suggesting that he had illegally taken over the company. Nevertheless, Babiš can hardly be strictly seen as an outsider (as he has consistently claimed), for he allegedly had very good relationships with top Czech politicians and his business profited from privatization and state agricultural subsidies (Kaiser, 2013; Pergler, 2014).

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Eventually, the declaration became the basis for the ANO party, which was registered by the Ministry of Interior on 11th May 2012. ANO decided to take part in the 2012 Senate elections. However, none of the candidates supported by ANO was able to get to the second round of the elections (a two-round runoff electoral system is used for the upper chamber of the Czech parliament). The initial election disaster eventually turned into one of the most important drivers of the later success of the party. The party (or, more precisely, its leader Andrej Babiš and his companies) decided to invest extensively into political marketing, the party logo was changed (Jankajová, 2013) and the party was turned into a fully professional electoral party (Paleček, 2015, for the concept see Panebianco, 1988 or Lees-Marshment, 2001) employing some of the best experts on political marketing in the country.

Moreover, Agrofert bought two of the most important dailies (including their digital versions), two weeklies and a radio station just before or shortly after the 2013 election. Consequently, ANO rolled out a very intensive election campaign before the 2013 early election. It finished with 18.65 per cent of the vote and 47 out of 200 seats in the lower parliamentary chamber and became the most successful genuinely new political party in the Czech Republic since the first free election after the fall of communism.

ANO 2011 eventually became a part of the new government alongside social democrats (ČSSD) and the Christian Democrats (KDU-ČSL). Unlike other populist parties in government, ANO decided not to abandon its populist narrative (it only slightly changed its content and put more emphasis on presenting the results of its ministerial work), nor did it embrace a clearer ideological profile. After very good results in local, regional and European elections (ANO won the latter two by a small margin), ANO won the 2017 general election with 29.6% of votes and 74 seats out of 200 in the lower chamber of the Parliament. After the single-party minority government led by Babiš lost its vote of confidence, a cabinet of ANO and ČSSD supported by the communist party was formed.

Unlike most of the electorally successfully populist parties in Europe such as the National Rally in France, the Alternative for Germany, Hungarian Fidesz or the Lega in Italy, ANO did not build its populist profile on radical nativist authoritarian ideas. The people were not defined strictly regarding a nation, an ethnic group or religion. Nor was it the class approach usually employed by the populist radical left such as Podemos or the Left in Germany. Instead, ANO's people-centrism used the traditional notion of "Czech golden hands", i.e., a reference both to an alleged high level of craftsmanship and the popularity of a do-it-yourself approach in the Czech Republic (Hradecká, 2013). This glorification of the Czech people did not stand alone and was a part of the key element of any populist discourse, the proclaimed division between the people and politicians with a self-telling slogan "We are a talented nation but we are governed by the inept".

Its main feature was a general denigration of the established political parties regardless of their ideology. Corruption, incompetency, inexperience, and low morals of politicians were presented by Babiš as the main reasons behind the malaise in Czech politics. The core of the solution proposed by the leader of the party was not fundamentally political but rather a mixture of anti-politics and anti-partyism lying in the implementation of business practices strictly based on competence and expertise instead of ideology, party affiliation or the deliberative competition of political parties. Eventually, this led to the construction of the two contrasting

environments: the dirty world of party democracy and the effective, allegedly morally cleaner world of business, the world Babiš comes from.

Despite the lack of radical attitudes towards ethnic or religious minorities, the technocratic populism of ANO and managerial approach to politics undermine the principles of liberal democracies. The call for effectiveness, repeatedly expressed by the party, was translated into a strong preference for the executive branch of power over the legislative one, and a highly centralized, strongly majoritarian version of a polity with little desire for either horizontal or vertical separations of power, and a weakened system of checks and balances, including the position of the media (as Babiš explained: ”[…] I bought the media so that they write the truth [about me]“ (Cvek 2014).

The narrative of a centralized management that would increase the efficiency of the state was also reflected in ANO’s vision of the sub-state level of governance. In his book, Babiš proposed to abolish the regional level of administration, which was depicted as a set of corrupt and too expensive institutions. The current powers of the regions would be moved to the state and to bigger municipalities. The second step was that mayors would be elected directly, and they would be endowed with stronger competencies “supported by the service of the effective state” (Babiš, 2017: 128). Consequently, the state would have more powers to influence decision making on the local level, and the vertical division of power would be weakened. Moreover, it was not clear whether the local councils would remain in place. Although, unlike the Hungarian or Polish experience with populists in power, ANO`s coalition rule has not lead to illiberal transformation of the political system in the Czech Republic and has remained on the discoursive level for now, the analysis will also concentrate on the way how local governments of ANO approached the exercise of power in relation to the liberal democratic practice.

Prague

Prague is the biggest and richest city (and administrative region) in the Czech Republic with 1,309 mil. inhabitants. Prague is the 9th richest region in the whole European Union with a low level of unemployment, high salaries and the crucial importance of the tertiary sector and lower importance of the heavy industry. From a political perspective, the city of Prague represented for decades a stronghold for the right-wing parties (the Civic Democratic Party and later TOP 09), a higher share of white-collars and liberal people. Despite serious problems with the elections leader selection, ANO was able to win the local election in 2014 with more than 22 % of votes, its candidate was elected the mayor based on a coalition with ČSSD and center-right Three-Coalition. The electoral platform of ANO was based on anti-corruption appeal and stress on effective governance. Nevertheless, the governance under the leadership of ANO was not very successful. The city was facing serious problems with administration and the coalition had to be reconstructed. The following election brought a loss for the party, dominant at the national level of politics.

Ostrava

Ostrava represents a city in the center of a different region on the borders of Northern Moravia and Silesia. Traditionally, the region was a center of the heavy industry linked to coal mines and steelworks. The region was hit hard by the economic transformation after the fall of communism and is typical by a higher level of unemployment, lower salaries with a higher share of blue-collar workers. Politically, the region and the city of Ostrava itself (with 289

thousands inhabitants) can be described as a stronghold of the left (both Czech Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia were electorally successful in the region). ANO won the election in 2014 and formed the city government alongside with social democrats and Christian Democrats. Despite coalition quarrels, ANO was able to win the election in 2018 and increase its electoral support by almost 50% (from 21% to almost 33% of votes).

All in all, contrasting governing performances of ANO in local governments creates an opportunity for a detailed comparison of a populist party in office in different contexts, to compare the communication style and coalition membership dynamics.

2.2 Hungary

As Mudde (2016: 26) points out, Hungary offers a unique case for populism, since the governing party Fidesz and Jobbik, a main opposition party, could have been both considered populist for the past 10-15 years.

There is still no consensus about populism and populist parties. Key contributions have suggested ideology (Mudde 2017), political strategy (Weyland 2017), political style (Moffitt 2016), socio-cultural entity (Ostiguy 2017), and the logic of the political (Laclau 2005) to denote the core of this phenomenon. Very often, parties seem to embrace most of these aspects of populism somewhat simultaneously. Despite their populist strategies, the operations of the two Hungarian parties (Fidesz and Jobbik) are characterized by ideological populism and they best fit into the ideational approach to populism research (Mudde 2017).

As for the content of their populism, the two parties followed opposite trajectories since the mid-2000s. Fidesz was established as a liberal party during the democratic transition in 1989-1990, and gradually shifted into a right-wing conservative populist position (see Körösényi 2017). After its 2002 electoral defeat, the party took a populist turn: in opposition, it used anti-elitist and materialist rhetoric (e.g. its campaign slogan in 2006 was: “We live worse off than 4 years ago”), then continued to use this approach as a governing party from 2010 (e.g. with price regulation on utility costs and with extra taxes on multinational corporations). Jobbik was established as a radical conservative-nationalist party in 2003 and quickly showed populist features in its politics. In its first 10 years, the party was an ultra-nationalist and xenophobic actor of the Hungarian politics pursuing a strong anti-Roma agenda and law and order rhetoric. After 2014, Jobbik tried to shift its position to a more centrist one and eased its radical tone, partly because Fidesz took its agenda with the thematization of the migration crisis. From 2015, Fidesz is a more radical nationalist party, while Jobbik took a turn to a materialist anti-elitist populism targeted at Viktor Orbán’s government.

According to the DEMOS classification scheme (WP 2.2), Fidesz depicts an archetypical case of ‘post-communist, illiberal mainstream parties in Central East Europe’. Key elements of this approach are apparent in the party’s politics: anti-establishment and anti-politics attitudes, direct connection of the party and the citizens, antagonistic relations depicted between the ‘people’ and the corrupt elite (anti-elitism), and the will to represent the public good (Körösényi and Patkós 2015: 43-44). Considering anti-elitism, Fidesz’s populism does not entirely fit into the establishment versus the people dichotomy: rhetoric does not contrast the interest of the Hungarian people with those of the Hungarian elite but pits the Hungarian community against an always changing group of elites. This phenomenon can be described as flexible anti-elitism

(Körösényi 2015: 415). Nowadays the 'elite' is the international economic and cultural establishment. Specifically, in this vein, Fidesz targets the European Union, international financial organizations, multinational and foreign companies, NGOs, and persona non grata György Soros as the personified embodiment of all the aforementioned groups. It equally aims at their local representatives, the cosmopolitan, foreign-minded leftists and liberals (Körösényi 2015: 416; Enyedi 2016: 14). Since the migration crisis in 2015, the it is in the focus of Fidesz's political strategy. According to the party's communication, György Soros has a plan to settle migrants in Hungary (among other EU states), and the aim of his agents (the opposition parties and even the European Union) is to carry out this plan. Although the migration crisis is no longer a visible threat in Hungary, Fidesz succeeded to maintain its narrative since then, which helped the party to achieve its third national election victory in 2018 with a two-thirds majority in the parliament (after 2010 and 2014). Migration is still the key element of Fidesz's political strategy, even during the COVID pandemic of 2020.

Regarding the public good (or general will), Fidesz's politics can be described as majoritarianism where the task of the politics is to represent the collective interest of the national community and assert the dominance of values and norms of the majority (Enyedi 2016: 11). Enyedi argues that the systematic exclusion of the opposition from the decision-making process serves the strengthening of majoritarianism and the rejection of pluralism.

As Mudde (2017) argues, populism as an ideology is often thin-centered and that its elements often amalgamate with other ('thicker') ideologies. In Fidesz's case, these 'supplementary' ideologies are conservatism and paternalism. Populist conservatism is that the moral practices of society are actively subverted by liberal elites and the 'natural order' of things need to be defended from alien influences (Egedy 2009: 44). In this sense, 'illiberalism' can be defined as 'anti-liberalism'. Nationalism is an important part of Fidesz's conservatism. It appears in the elements of populist ideology: the antagonistic relationship characterizes the Hungarian people and the foreign elite (and their foreign-minded Hungarian agents). The general will then is identical with the national will, ultimately both determined by Fidesz. As Enyedi (2016: 17) points out, Fidesz relates to the entirety of the Hungarian people in a paternalistic way: the self-ascribed task of the government is to educate and discipline citizens and fight consumerism. In practice, the moralistic arguments accompanied by systematic bottom-up redistribution from the lower to the upper classes as the government policies (e.g. the flat personal income tax, the conversion of financial transfers into tax relief, the conditioning of social benefits) contributed to an increase in social inequalities (Enyedi 2016: 15).

Similarly to Fidesz, the populism of Jobbik can also be characterized as an ideology (in line with Mudde's approach). Jobbik is definitely anti-elitist: they promised to introduce the direct election of the head of state, to abolish the immunity of MPs and to make possible to recall them, and to make ministers legally responsible for their decisions (Enyedi 2016: 13). As an opposition party, the main target of Jobbik's anti-elitism is the governing party's (Fidesz) political and economic elite. They tried to force investigations on corruption scandals and demanded the strengthening of political accountability to gain voters who were discontent with the incumbent political elite (Loch and Norocel 2015: 263-264).

Enyedi (2016: 17) identifies two ideological layers of Jobbik: law and order populism and ultra-nationalism. Regarding nationalism, the fundamental aim of the party is to protect the Hungarian interests and values – this includes the demand for the redrawing of national borders

and re-attach the areas inhabited by Hungarians in the neighbouring countries (Loch and Norocel 2015: 264). According to Enyedi, the demand for a strong, ideologically committed state is even more present at Jobbik than at Fidesz, as Jobbik claims that the state should show direction to the national community (the ethnocultural majority) and thus it should not be neutral (Enyedi 2016: 11). Jobbik's nationalism is mirrored in the party's stance on economics (Palonen 2018: 317): the economy deserves attention because it is the locus of the biggest threat to the Hungarian nation, which is the neoliberal globalization – according to the party's rhetoric, poverty and welfare retrenchment are caused by capitalism and globalization (Varga 2014: 791, 804).

Jobbik's law and order populism can be also derived from the party's nationalism (and indirectly from its economic stance). The party claims that the Romani minority of Hungary posit a societal danger to the economy and the ethnocultural majority (Loch and Norocel 2015: 264), as Roma people take advantage of the subsidies of the state. A big part of the Jobbik's success is the result of the fueling anti-Roma sentiments: from 2006, Jobbik used the phrase "gipsy crime" ("cigánybűnözés"), claiming that there are crimes that can be associated mainly with the members of the Roma society. In 2007, a new ultranationalist organization called Magyar Gárda (Hungarian Guard) was established, which aim was to defend Hungarian values and culture. This organization can be considered as an offshoot of the Jobbik (LeBor 2008: 34). Before it was banned in 2009, Magyar Gárda held rallies in municipalities with considerable Roma population, and its members marched in military formation and in black uniforms protesting against "gypsy crime". As Jobbik was never on government, the party's law and order populism can be identified in the Jobbik-led local governments and their policies (the case of Ózd is one of the most notable example for that). With the political strategy that built upon nationalism, law and order populism and anti-elitism, the Jobbik could consolidate its position in the Hungarian political system as the third largest political force after the general elections in 2014.

Following the migration crisis in 2015, Jobbik turned away from racist discourse as the governing party Fidesz adopted and took over its xenophobic rhetoric (Palonen 2018: 317). With its party leader Gábor Vona, Jobbik tried to shift its ideological position to a more centrist direction and to transform Jobbik into a catch-all party. To be able to beat Fidesz at the next election, the right-wing Jobbik was willing to form an electoral association with the left-wing opposition parties. In the 2018 general election campaign, Jobbik still used anti-elitist rhetoric (e.g. one of its slogan was: "you are working, they [the Fidesz] are stealing"), but eased its nationalist and anti-Roma attitudes. After the 2018 electoral loss, Jobbik could not held its centrist position and lost its direction.

In sum, both Fidesz and Jobbik can be characterized as populist parties in an ideological approach. Their ideological profiles show overlaps (nationalism, paternalism, conservatism). The main difference between these two parties is that Fidesz was able to build a catch-all party upon these ideologies, while the more Jobbik was able to be successful only until it tried reach the more radical right-wing voters. Obviously, their different positions in the party system result different manifestation of populism. As a governing party, Fidesz cannot be anti-elitist in a conventional sense, but it managed to project its anti-elitism to foreign actors (EU, Soros) and its Hungarian agents (the opposition parties), while Jobbik tried to use anti-elitism against the government. The different party position results different populism on the local level: while the

leadership of a Fidesz-led local government (Kaposvár) mirrors the national politics, the Jobbik-affiliated leader of Ózd uses its mandate to implement his party's policies locally.

Regional governments are nothing more than symbolic institutions of the middle level since 2012, thus local level should be considered to examine the populist parties in action in sub-national politics. Although members of the local councils are directly elected and formally they are equal partners of the mayors, mayors are the dominant initiators, decision-makers and executives of the local government in practice (see Várnagy and Dobos 2011). Therefore, two local governments with emblematic mayors were selected for the analysis: **Kaposvár** for Fidesz and **Ózd** for Jobbik.

Kaposvár (a city with 64 thousand inhabitants) is one of the 19 municipalities of Hungary that are county capitals ("megyeszékhely"). Via this case selection, one can have a more general picture about this type of cities, since Károly Szita, the mayor of Kaposvár has been the president of the Association of Cities with County Rank ("Megyei Jogú Városok Szövetsége" - MJVSZ) since 2014. Furthermore, as most of the local governments in Hungary are governed by Fidesz-affiliated political leaders, the analysis of Kaposvár is a good example to demonstrate, how the local governments of Hungary follow the policies and rhetoric of the national governing party.

The other case fits to a different political context. In the less prosperous North-Eastern part of Hungary, Ózd a middle-sized city with about 30 thousand inhabitants was hit hard by the collapse of communist industry. At the 2014 local election, mayoral position, somewhat surprisingly, was captured by Dávid Janiczák a candidate of the Jobbik. **Ózd** might be a fitting case of populist city management because of the law and order focused policies, the attempts to hold the previous city elite to account, and style of direct communication employed by the new mayor.

2.3 Italy

Our case selection includes thus two municipalities in Italy: **Turin** and **Treviso**. We opted for these case studies since in both mayors are representatives of one of the two parties and their govern of the city is a genuine expression of the League and M5S actions in local government.

As concerns the 5SM we had two natural options: Rome and Turin, the two main cities governed by the movement. However, Rome is a quite peculiar case. Being the Italian capital, indeed, it is prone to national political dynamics which could endanger our comparative purpose. Mainly for this reason, thus, we selected Turin as a case study which is governed by Chiara Appendino from the 5 Star Movement since 2016. Turin (875,063 inhabitants in the city and 2,256,108 in the metropolitan area) is one of the most important cities in Northern Italy, with a long industrial tradition due to the presence of FIAT's industrial plants (now downsized due to the process of production delocalization). From a political perspective, instead, the city represented for decades a stronghold for the left-wing parties. Nonetheless, it could be identified a close connection between the city and the 5SM. Since the very birth of the movement, in fact, Beppe Grillo – the founding father of the 5SM – endorsed and strongly supported the No-Tav movement's claims against the construction of the high-speed train line in Piedmont. In addition, in April 2008 Beppe Grillo organized the second edition of the V-day in Turin. One year after, in 2009, the movement obtained one seat in Regional elections (the first one at a local level along with another 5SM's representative elected in Emilia Romagna).

The success at the municipal elections in 2016 – the same year when the 5SM succeeded in Rome – represented a turning point for the party demonstrating its capability to challenge mainstream parties. Chiara Appendino's policy platform were focused in particular on the inclusion of the city peripheries, aiming to reduce socioeconomic inequalities between the city center and the suburbs of the city. During her mandate, Appendino experienced several difficulties, nonetheless she is often considered as a national leader of the 5SM.

As concerns the League, instead, we decided to cover the case of Treviso. Given the long history of the party we could have relied on several and different case studies. However, at the local level the party is often in government in coalitions with other right-wing parties, while – for comparative purposes - we preferred to focus specifically on a case study where the League plays as the main party with its own candidate. In this respect, Treviso provides indeed a very privileged angle for the understanding of the League's government at the local level. With 85.714 inhabitants is one of the most important cities in North-East, its economic structure is based on little and middle industrial plants. In 2019, it resulted as the city with the highest GDP per capita in the Veneto region. From a political perspective, since 1994 the city led by the League, with only one interruption in 2013. Giancarlo Gentilini was in office from 1994 to 2003, then Gian Paolo Gobo served as mayor for ten years. Then, after about twenty years, the League government of the city was discontinued for an interlude of five years when a left-wing mayor was in office. However, in 2018 the League won back the city and elected Mario Conte. Treviso, therefore, represents a very interesting case study where the party was able to keep the government of the city for a very long period. As concerns the policy platforms, instead, there is a very specific focus on security issues targeting in particular immigrants, Roma people, drug dealers etc. It should be also noticed that Mario Conte is also pretty close to the national leader Matteo Salvini and he was one of speaker during the Pontida's event in September 2019.

2.4 Spain

Two political parties considered to be populist, Podemos and VOX, were analysed for the study. The former is a left-wing populist party and the latter a right-wing populist party. Both parties were formed in 2014, although in different contexts. Podemos arose as a social reaction to the crisis of liberal democracies and the corruption cases of the party in government. On the other hand, VOX arose as an internal division of the People's Party (PP). Some PP members opposed the party's lines of action, mainly on immigration, and decided to join forces to create a new grouping which would concentrate social conservatism and anti-immigration sensitivities. The selection of parties was less evident due to the fact that none of the parties, in strict restrictive terms, had relevant presence in the local or regional arena. In the case of Podemos, the complexity is linked to the fact that the party decided not to concur under the name "Podemos" to the municipal elections of 2015. This implied that the party formed joint candidacies but renounced to use its brand. The selection of cases took this fact into account and considered joint candidacies of Podemos, which implied a major role of the brand or the national organisation and broaden the scope to regional level and not necessarily governmental roles for VOX.

Having set out the two populist parties to be studied, two Spanish municipalities and one autonomous community were chosen for the analysis. The municipalities to be analysed are **Cádiz** and **Madrid**, and the region is **Andalusia**. The former is an Andalusian municipality, capital of the province of Cádiz, while the latter is a municipality in the Community of Madrid

and capital of the province. These two municipalities were chosen because they present unique features in relation to the rest of the Spanish municipalities.

Cádiz, as mentioned, is a municipality to be taken into account because the joint candidacy presented by the partners of Podemos (Por Cádiz Sí Se Puede - For Cadiz, Yes We Can) managed to break the two-party system between PP and PSOE (which were taking turns in power) and obtain the position of mayor in the first election in which it stood in the city.

Madrid is also important because the joint candidacy of Podemos and other groups obtained the position of mayor of the city in the first election in which it stood. The candidature of Podemos in Madrid, 'Ahora Madrid', represents an important element in the analysis, since it had no institutionalisation at the time of attaining the position of mayor. In turn, Madrid presents another unique aspect to be taken into account, since VOX holded the key to the governability of the city council in the next elections (2019).

The region of Andalusia is important because, in the 2018 autonomous community election, VOX succeeded in establishing a strong foothold in the Andalusian Parliament and represents a key element in the turning point following 40 years of socialist government. As in Madrid, VOX negotiated the establishment of a right-wing government with PP and Citizens (C's) following a left-wing government.

2.5 Turkey

The AKP is not only the most successful party in Turkey (Kirdis and Drmiheur, 2016) but it is also the most successful political party in Europe (Yabanci and Taleski, 2018). It has been in power since November 2002 and it controls almost half of the municipalities in Turkey. As of February 2020, the AKP has 10,195,904 members (Turkiye Cumhuriyeti Yargitay Cumhuriyet Bassavciligi, 2020), which makes it one of the largest parties in the world in terms of membership.

Considering the centralized political system and the political culture in Turkey, it would be naïve to assume that local governance in Turkey is conducted independent of the AKP government. The AKP government does not only have discretion over municipal budgets but also on the selection of the candidates, as the AKP candidates for mayoral offices are nominated by the central bodies in the party. Local dynamics can rarely have an effect on the selection of the AKP candidate for a certain mayoral office. Accordingly, the AKP candidate if elected, is generally subordinated to the wishes of the party leadership since she/he owes her position to them.

The AKP has a potent mix of grassroots policies backed by its extensive influence at the municipal level (Müftüler-Baç and Keyman, 2012). The AKP municipalities in Turkey are extensions of the central government in Turkey rather than being independent power brokers. The AKP controlled municipalities are generally charged with two major duties: i) complementing the central government's cultural, economic, and political agenda; ii) acting as local patronage hub for the party, which would support the central government through providing economic incentives such as aid in cash, aid in kind, or employment.

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This report, by focusing on **Ankara** and **Istanbul** two most important municipalities in Turkey, aims to demonstrate how the municipal governments in these provinces complemented the AKP in its populist agenda.

3 Introduction to regional and local government system of the considered countries

Even if the aim of this report is not strictly a comparison between states, our cases provide a preliminary framework for exploring commonalities and divergences in populist attitudes and practices in subnational governments. For doing this, the authors, besides the analysis of our research object, also offer a succinct overview of the local government systems involved, together with a brief outlook of the main electoral results of interest. This part of the report offers an overview of the institutional conditions in which local governments, and therefore populist parties in these levels of government, act. Firstly, we provide a general overview of the administrative and political situation of our cases before going in deep with concrete information country by country, secondly.

3.1 General overview of local administrative and political institutions at the local level

By some degree of chance, our cases of study fit mainly into two of the main local administrative systems in Europe: Czech Republic and Hungary are typically classified under the "Central Eastern European (CEE)" typology; whereas Italy, Spain and Turkey are usually fitted into the "Continental European Napoleonic" (CEN) type (Heinelt et.al, 2018).

The CEE type is characterized by its consolidation after the break with the legacy of socialist administrative systems. Under this typology public administration is decentralized and local governments enjoy a wide scope of functions provided by local authorities, with different degrees of fiscal discretion (Heinelt et.al, 2018). In the wake of the system change in 1989, these countries made much progress in re-establishing Continental European constitutional and administrative models.

Concerning the CEN type, it is clearly marked by the belonging of the countries included to common Roman law tradition and the importance of statutory law. In these cases, the administrative system is traditionally characterized by a strong centralized government, a comprehensive, culturally rooted acceptance of (centralized) governmental regulatory authority and a powerful centralized bureaucracy (Heinelt et.al., 2018). Traditionally, local governments are functionally weak but some of them (Italy and Spain for our interest) present administrative practices shaped by exceptionally strong politicization, clientelistic relations and political party patronage with regard to the recruitment of the civil service (Heinelt et al, 2018, quoting Sotiropoulos, 2009 and Kickert, 2011). The explanation for this may be found on the significant role of political parties in Southern European countries, where they have a strong influence not only on the allocation of administrative posts but also on the remuneration and promotion modalities in public administration.

Figure 1. Local administrative systems by countries

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Continental European Napoleonic Type (CEN)	*Continental European Federal Type (CEF)*	*Nordic Type (NO)*	*Anglo-Saxon Type (AS)*	*Central Eastern European Type (CEE)*	*South Eastern European Type (SEE)*
Belgium France Greece Italy Portugal Spain Turkey	Austria Germany Switzerland	Denmark Iceland Netherlands Norway Sweden	Cyprus England Ireland Israel	Czech Rep. Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Slovakia	Albania Croatia Romania Serbia Slovenia

Source: Heinelt et.al, 2018

Besides these previous typologies, we also count with other indicators to classify local and regional governments in Europe. For a basic understanding, the LAI project (Local Autonomy Index) provides researchers and practitioners with a comprehensive measure of changes in the extent of decentralisation in countries of the European Union (Ladner, 2015). The LAI considers variables related to the self-rule (this is political autonomy) but also interactive rule, indicating the relationships between local government and higher levels of government, this is to say vertical relations between the different levels of government.

For the regional arena, we count with the Regional Authority Index (RAI) created by Hooghe, Marks and Schakel (2010), which is a measure of the authority of regional governments in 81 democracies or quasi-democracies on an annual basis over the period 1950-2010. Their measure goes across ten dimensions of regional authority to create a valid and homogeneous measure of the legal and political capacity of most of the regions of Europe and beyond.

Our cases behave differently in these two aforementioned measures. Concerning the LAI, which probably is of more interest for our report, since most of the cases are local governments, clear differences are visible. We have two countries with a score in 2014 clearly above the average LAI (Czech Republic and Italy), two approximately in the average (Hungary and Spain) and one clearly below the average (Turkey). If we take a look at the evolution of the measure from 1990 to 2014 we observe a similar pattern: Italy and Czech Republic increase their local autonomy, whereas Spain and Hungary show a clear decline, even more marked if we compare with the general trend of increasing local autonomy marked by the average LAI of the whole sample. Turkey remain practically stable.

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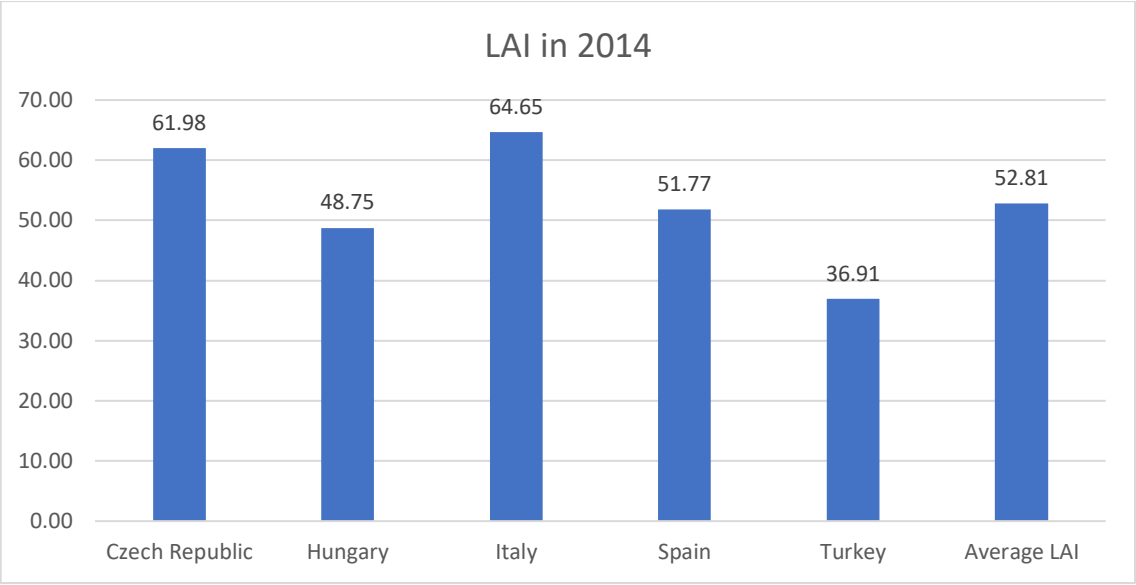

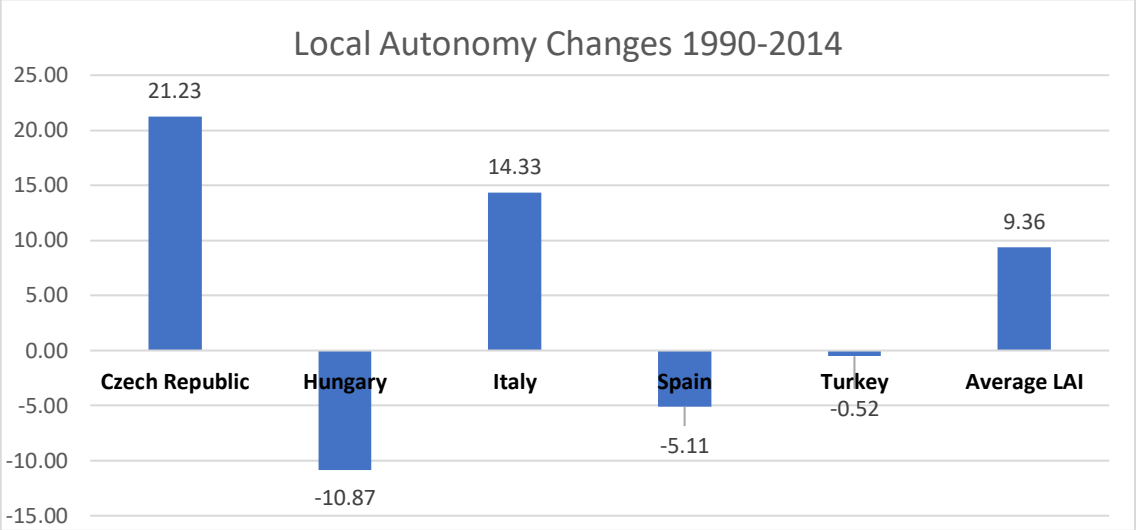

Source: own creation from the original dataset

In relation with the RAI, also interesting results appear. The trends show two countries with a high score related to the power of regional tiers: Italy and Spain. Those countries, even not being of a legal federal structure, show a significant regional power far above the average RAI from 1990 to 2010. The other three countries considered are far below the average RAI for the 1990-2010 period. If we take a look to the patterns of change of RAI from 1990 to 2010, we observe, a different pattern in a global rise of the RAI index for all the cases considered: two countries increase significantly their regional powers: Czech Republic and Italy, Spain and Turkey increase slightly above the average for the whole sample and Hungary shows the only value below the average.

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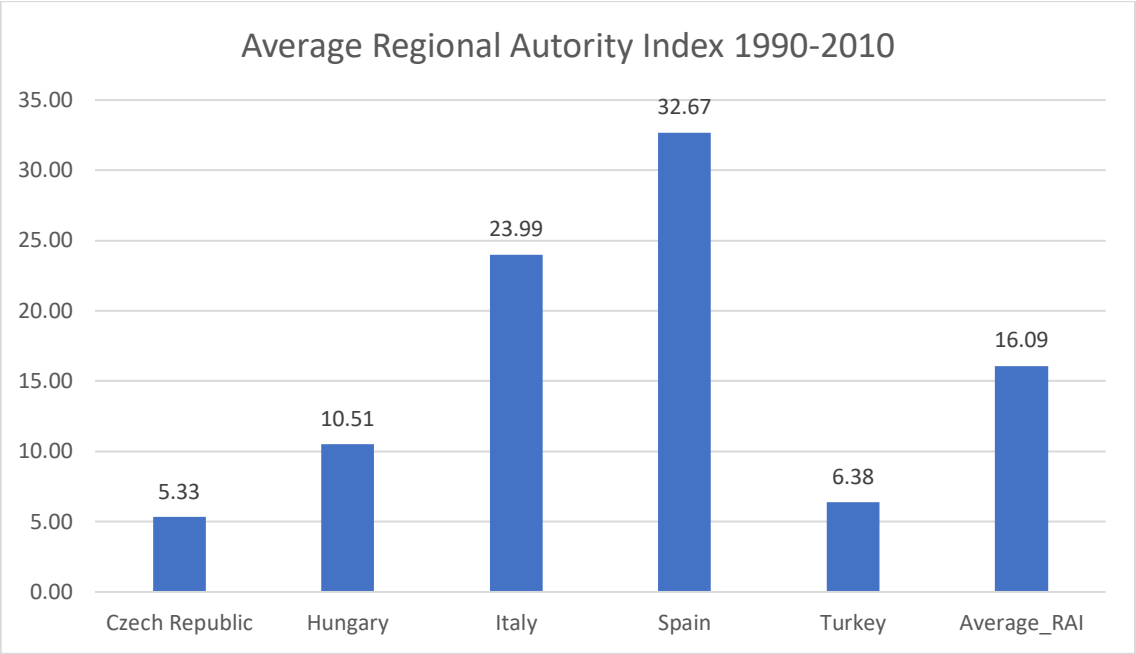

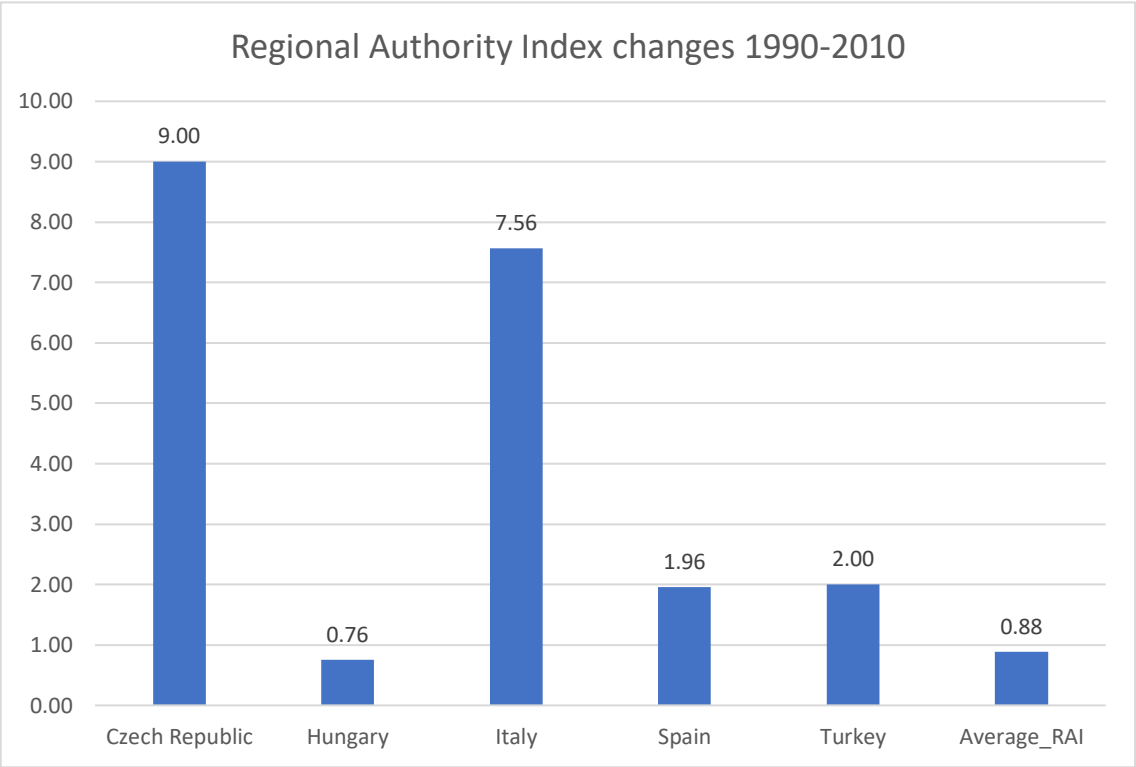

Source: own creation from the original dataset

In sum, our cases show interesting commonalities and divergences that allow us to test and to explain the activity of populist parties at the subnational level in a variate panoply of institutional and political scenarios.

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3.2 Main characteristics of the Central Eastern European countries

Czech Republic

After the dissolution of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic in 1993, the Czech Republic was founded as a successor, independent and, also, a unitary state. Despite the discussions on the (re-)introduction of regional governance based on the historical lands (Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia), municipalities became the most important level of self-administration. The Constitution expected a two-tier system of self-administration stating that " [t]he Czech Republic is subdivided into municipalities, which are the basic territorial self-governing units, and into regions, which are the higher territorial self-governing units". However, 13 regions ("Kraje") and the extension of the regional administrative powers to the city of Prague were introduced not earlier than in 2000. The long discussion on the competencies of the regions, their position in the vertical separation of powers led finally to the creation of a subnational tier of governance with only limited powers and questionable legitimacy. It was also caused by the fact that the territorial borders of regions did not stem from the historical borders or regional specifics, therefore, there was only little chance to build on the existing regional identities).

As for the local level of administration, the Czech Republic consists of 6258 municipalities with exceptionally high number of small municipalities (approximately two thirds of municipalities has population of 250 or less people in the country with more than 10 million people). Municipalities have two types of responsibilities: their "independent" powers (samostatná působnost) and execute selected "transferred" powers (přenesená působnost) of the state administration (such the issue of driving licences or IDs, issue of construction approvals, etc.). There are three categories of municipalities according to the extent of the central powers the municipalities are supposed to execute.

The local governance consists of local councils led by mayors (the executive branch) chosen by democratically elected local assemblies (legislative branch) for four years using a variant of an open list proportional electoral system with the 5% threshold. The assemblies decide on most issues and elect the councils and mayors. Mayors have only limited competencies and the system of local government reminds of a parliamentary political system with the decisive role of the legislative majority. The system of representative democracy on the local level is supplemented by a possibility to conduct referenda on almost all issues related to the local administration, however, referenda are not used very often (for instance, nine local referenda were held in 2015 and 21 referenda in 2016 – for the overview of the system of local and regional administration see e.g. Balík 2009).

Hungary

After the fall of the communist regime, a highly autonomous, decentralized local government system was introduced to Hungary in 1990. More than 3000 local communities (NUTS5) were established on the lower tier following the 'one settlement – one local government' principle while 19 counties (NUTS3) and the capital (Budapest) formed the middle tier of the sub-national system. Based on the Local Autonomy Index (LAI - see Ladner et al. 2019), the Hungarian system was fairly autonomous in 1990, with lots of discretion to provide services and with moderate room to manoeuvre regarding policy scope and fiscal autonomy. Following the Orbán cabinet's reform, a significant change occurred between 2011 and 2013. The reform affected the local government's formal and effective room to manoeuvre in numerous policy

areas (healthcare, education, social assistance), its fiscal capacity (with the activity-based financing and the new, more rigorous conditions of issuing bonds and taking out credit), and its decision-making freedom (through the effective legal control from the central government). On the one hand, the huge debt of the local level (accumulated since 1990) was consolidated by the central government, on the other hand, the Orbán cabinet took many competencies of the local governments along with their debts and left only a minor elbow room for effective functioning. After 2011, the extent of Hungarian local autonomy shrunk under the international average and only thirteen countries have smaller local autonomy (most of them are not EU countries, e.g. Albania, Georgia, Moldova or Turkey). Reviewing the path of the Hungarian local autonomy from 1990 to 2014, one can observe the biggest decline among the countries covered by the LAI project.

According to the Heinelt-Hlepas typology (2006: 34), Hungary is a Central-East European type country with a strong mayor form in its local governments. Based on the typology, the Hungarian local governments are relatively strong actors in vertical (local-central) relations with wide spectrum of local competencies and financial discretion. However, the local governments' financial autonomy gradually shrunk from 1990, and with the 2011 reform, local communities lost their competencies in public services dramatically (Pálné Kovács et al. 2017: 797-800). Considering the horizontal relations, the Hungarian, directly elected mayors are dominant actors of the local level, who can effectively direct the decision-making of the local council and control the executive functions (Várnagy and Dobos 2011: 145). After 2011, the Fidesz's reform made the mayors even 'stronger' as they gained more control over the decision-making and the implementation processes (Dobos 2016: 84-85). To sum it up, in the vertical relations the Hungarian local government system significantly diverted from the Central-East European group as the model of decentralized territorial governance was replaced by a centralized (deconcentrated) 'local state' model (Pálné Kovács 2016: 599), while in the horizontal relations the mayors became even more dominant actors in the local governments.

In Hungary, the middle level remained a 'missing tier' (Zongor 1999), because the "central government was not interested in filling out the institutional vacuum at the middle level and local governments were not interested in the establishment of a potential rival in service delivery" (Soós and Kákai 2011:546). Consequently, county governments could not become the regions' strategic planners; their role was limited to the daily operation of middle level institutions. This was also a difficult task, because the county governments had a narrow financial room to manoeuvre (e.g. they could not introduce county tax), and were strongly dependent on the support of the national level.

From 2011, county governments became even more marginal actors of the political system. The Fidesz cabinet built and strengthened a parallel structure as it established county level government offices, than took over the county governments' tasks and properties (along with their debts) in 2012. Although county governments have remained the only elected authorities on the middle level, they have been practically abolished in their old form. In the new framework, county governments should be the coordinators of strategic planning and area development, but their role is very limited in practice, as the central government calls the shots and county governments assist to its decisions administratively (Gálosi-Kovács and Haffner 2017).

In sum, the elected institutions of the Hungarian sub-national levels have been marginalized in the political system for the last 10 years: (1) without effective functions, the originally weak county governments have become nothing but symbolic institutions of the middle level; (2) local government autonomy and their effective decision-making capacities have considerably decreased, while the mayors became even more dominant actors of the local level.

3.3 Main characteristics of the Continental European Napoleonic countries:

Turkey

Turkey is probably an extreme example to centralized governance in the world. Local governors, who are elected in most democracies, are not elected but appointed by the central government in Turkey. This method of appointing governors, which started in the 19th century Ottoman Empire (Zurcher, 2004), has continued into the new Republic. The law on governance of provinces states that governors (vali) in Turkey are responsible to the President. They are charged with the regulation and supervision of the governance of provinces. According to the same law (no. 5442), governors are also head of the security forces in the provinces. In this respect, their realm of authority includes provision of security and public order. This law stipulates that governors in Turkey are state bureaucrats; hence they are not formally affiliated with any political party. A governor may or may not continue to occupy her seat when the government changes.

Mayors, on the other hand, are nominated by political parties and they are elected for 5 years in Turkey. Despite the fact that they are elected, mayors in Turkey have no authority over institutions such as police forces or the legal matters. Turkish mayors do not have any legislative powers. Furthermore, their executive authority is severely limited by the central government. Turkish municipal law (no. 5393) restricts mayors' authority mainly to running day-to-day affairs of the provincial centers (Belediye Kanunu, 2020). Another fact demonstrating the extent of centralization in Turkish local governance system is that governors (appointed by the central government) come before mayors (elected by the popular vote) in provincial protocol lists in Turkey. Municipalities in Turkey have limited revenue from local tax collection. The major source of revenue for municipal governments in Turkey is the allocation of finance by the central government (Şahin Ipek, 2018), which is yet another factor restricting the autonomy of mayors from the central government in Turkey.

Spain

Today, Spain is a highly decentralized country. However, the process of devolution started quite recently, in the early 1980s following the approval of the 1978 Spanish Constitution. The process of decentralization of the old unitary state was mainly driven by territorial pressures, especially coming from Catalans and Basques, and to a lesser extent, from Galicians, because this process was not clearly designed in the Constitution. Therefore, territorial issues, particularly the functioning and legitimation of the distribution of political powers between the regions and the state has been a controversial subject since the beginning of democracy.

The political process of decentralization from 1978 to the mid-1980s was far from straightforward. Powerful territorial elites' pressures were in place to determine the final structure of the new decentralized state. Today, Spain is formed by seventeen Autonomous

Communities (ACs) —but none of them is specifically named in the Constitution—, fifty provinces (second-tier units of local government) and 8124 municipalities. Concerning local governments, the fundamental number of units, basic functions and structure remained untouched from the dictatorship (and before, coming from the mid-18th century). The whole process of the democratic transition was made without democratically elected politicians at the local level, and the first free elections for the local government were held in 1979, almost half a year after the approval of the Constitution. From an institutional perspective, local governments were totally left outside the transition and devolution processes, and this was translated into the absence of a set of minimal competencies and also the weakness of the basic traits of local structures. Indeed, the basic law regulating local governments was not in force until 1985, seven years after democracy was in place. It is true that local political autonomy is constitutionally granted; however, in practical terms, it is narrow and conditioned.

3.4 Electoral results of the Central Eastern European countries

Czech Republic

The combination of extremely high number of municipalities and the low level of local organizational rootedness of political parties in the Czech Republic (Kopeček, Svačinová 2015) means that it is necessary to approach interpretation of the results of local elections with caution. Political parties suffer from the low level of membership, which is related to the fact that most of them have been created from above and the relationship of political parties and the public is typical by the high level of political distrust, cynicism and anti-partyism, which makes membership in political parties a highly unattractive option of political participation. Moreover, political parties tend to form electoral coalitions on the local level, whose composition varies across the country. The variety of coalitions makes electoral counting even more difficult.

The results of ANO were also influenced by the fact that the party has been very cautious in accepting members to avoid “Self-seekers (prospěcháři)” (Kopeček 2016) (in fact, it was a consequence of the business-firm character of the party and the need to control party organization from above). As a result, it had around 1 400 members in 2014 and around 3 300 members in 2018 (the local elections were held in these years). Therefore, possibly due to the inability of the party to build a solid network of local organizations and due to the centralized perception of politics as such, Babiš played down the importance of the local election in 2014: “We want to succeed in the local election but it is not a crucial thing for us. (…) Therefore, we are ok with the fact if the local elections will be won mostly by non-parliamentary movements and parties.” (Denik.cz 2014).

Another issue with interpretation of the results of the local elections stemming from the low level of institutionalization of political parties is the strategy of forming electoral coalition, very often with local political parties, or placing their representatives on electoral lists of other political parties. However, most of the candidates of major political parties were placed on the electoral lists of these parties.

Given the troubles stemming from the accessible data and the character of political parties and the party system in the Czech Republic, I decided to report the result of the analyzed populist party and compare it to other major political parties only in terms of the number of the elected representatives in local councils (excluded the MPs for city quarters). The reason lies both in

the variance in the municipality size and in the electoral system applied in the local election. The open list electoral system gives each voter as many votes as there are seats in the respective local council and allow for panachage, i.e. the possibility of vote distribution across electoral parties. As for the number of seats distributed in the election, the law favors the small municipalities: while the municipalities with population not exceeding 500 inhabitants have 5-15 MPs, cities with more than 150.000 inhabitants have 35 – 55 MPs. Therefore, although the data on the number of elected MPs suffer from the local polity setting (the municipality size bias), they seem to be the least problematic information on the electoral results of political parties. Also, due to the high number of municipalities and the lack of accessible data on the composition of local governments, I decided to exclude the electoral results in institutional terms (number of mayors and participation in executive coalitions) from the analysis.

Table 1: Results of the local elections (2014-2018)

	2014		2018	
	Seats	Share of seats	Seats	Share of seats
SNK - local parties	34440	54.45%	34634	58.37%
Independents	6326	10.62%	6227	10.5%
KDU-ČSL	3668	6.16%	3217	5.42%
ČSSD	3441	5.78%	1764	2.97%
KSČM	2371	3.98%	1368	2.31%
ODS	1869	3.14%	1929	3.25%
Association STAN + Independents	1693	2.84%	2150	3.62%
Mayors and independents	1275	2.14%	1505	2.54%
ANO	1256	2.11%	1333	2.25%
TOP 09	517	0.87%	138	0.23%
ČPS	17	0.03%	167	0.28%
SPD	N/A	N/A	128	0.22%

Note: The table include only political parties represented in the lower chamber of the parliament after 2013 or 2017 general election and electoral parties with more than 2% of votes.

Acronyms of electoral parties: SNK – Association of the Independent Candidates; KDU – ČSL – the Christian Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People`s Party; ČSSD – Czech Social Democratic Party; ODS – Civic Democratic Party; STAN – Mayors and Independents; TOP 09 – Tradition, Responsibility, Prosperity 2009; ČPS – Czech Pirate Party; SPD – Freedom and Direct Democracy.

The high number of municipalities and the inability of the major political parties to compete for votes in most of the municipalities (especially in the smallest ones) translate into the electorally dominant position of local political parties or various “independents”. During the period covered by this paper, local parties and independents were able to attract more than two-thirds of both votes and seats in local councils (with the increasing size of municipalities, the electoral gains of political parties relevant on the national level increases). On the contrary, the most successful “traditional” political party, Christian and Democractic Union – Czechoslovak People`s Party, gained due to its well-developed network of local branches especially in Moravia (the Eastern part of the Czech Republic) around 6% of seats. In both elections, ANO got slightly more then 2% of votes with a mild increase in 2018. However, the increase of its support was far from its astonishing rise in election on the national level (from 18.7% of votes in 2013 to 29.6% of votes in 2017). In fact, the number of candidates of ANO was lower in 2018 than in 2014 (7059 in 2014 compared to 6683 in 2018). While in 2014, ANO placed its electoral list in 384 municipalities, the number decreased to 342 in 2018. The numbers indicate that ANO was not successful in its institutionalization on the local level. Nevertheless, one needs to be careful, for a slightly different view on the performance of ANO in the local election

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provides us with a different picture. The number of candidates in the city quarters (only bigger cities can be divided into quarters) rose from 1624 in 2014 to 1836 in 2018 which points to the focus of the party on the bigger and possibly more visible municipalities. The fact that the local election consists of de facto more than 6000 independent electoral competitions and the limited ability of political parties to stand in most of the elections makes any meaningful description of the territorial and socio-demographic patterns of its support almost impossible. Nevertheless, what is clear is that the party has not been able to develop a massive vertical organization structure also due to its specific character of a highly centralized business-firm party.

Hungary

The nature of Hungarian local politics is clearly shaped by the local electoral system, as the electoral rules has a large, statistically significant effect on local party institutionalization (Soós 2015: 123). In Hungary, the settlements with under 10,000 inhabitants use a plurality formula with block vote to elect their council members, while there is a mixed formula with compensatory lists in use above this limit. The block vote subsystem helps the selection of individual candidates, and the compensatory lists 'let in' national political actors to the local level (Kákai, 2004:122), as the list system forces political actors to establish organizations to compete in elections (Soós, n.d.:2). The separation of the 'locality' and 'national party politics' via the electoral system clearly determines the political profiles of local governments (Swianiewicz and Mielczarek, 2005:20). In the last 30 years, about 80 percent of the representatives and mayors were independent candidates in the block vote subsystem, while only 8 percent of them were independent in the mixed subsystem (Pálné Kovács 2008, 2012). However, the increasing dominance of the national parties can be traced in every subsystems. According to Bőhm (2006:14-15), national politics suppresses local politics by controlling the local issues, it tries to solve the problems from 'above' and enforce its own interests. Local governments mirror national party-relations level as they influence local policy positions. The process of the party-system's concentration can be observed on the local level – although, it was somewhat slower than in national politics (Wiener, 2010:118). Since there are far more small municipalities than large communities[1], it could be argued that local governments in Hungary are dominated by independent representatives. Although most members of local councils are independent representatives (in 2006 their proportion was 64.6 percent – Soós and Kákai, 2011), this does not mean that the national parties are not trying to reach smaller communities: Horváth (1996:158) pointed out that 1,300 inhabitants is the limit where one can identify the appearance of political parties. The bigger towns and cities (like Kaposvár and Ózd) are clearly dominated by the national parties – although independent candidates and local parties run for positions in most of these communities, most of the votes are gained by national parties (80.4 percent of the votes in 2019) and most of the elected mayors are affiliated with these parties (70.4 percent in 2019).

To understand the recent local party politics of Hungary, national politics needs to be considered. Until 2006, the political system could be characterised as a 'two-bloc' system with the right-wing conservative Fidesz and its allies on one side and the left-wing Hungarian Socialist Party and its allies on the other. After the political (2006) and economic (2008) crises, the left-wing bloc collapsed and was disintegrated into several parties. The 2010 Hungarian general election can be considered as a critical one (see Róbert and Papp 2012), since it

[1] In 2012, only 167 local governments had more than 10,000 inhabitants, while there were 3,009 municipalities with a smaller population (based on the data of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office).

dramatically changed the party system: traditional parties (that were active during the time of democratic transition - SZDSZ and MDF) failed to gain any mandates (and shortly ceased to exist), while new parties (the left-green LMP and the radical Jobbik) emerged. The electoral success of the Jobbik resulted in the collapse of the 'two-bloc' system, since Fidesz gained an opposition party on the right spectrum of the party system. The Fidesz won the 2010 national elections and gained two-thirds majority in the parliament allowing for a restructuring the constitutional framework, then implemented comprehensive reform series in every segment of the political system (see Körösényi et al. 2020). Since then, the story of the opposition is about forging unity and set a viable alliance against the governing party. The first (relative) success of this venture (after three lost general elections and two local electoral defeats) was the local election in 2019. Before the election, the main aim for the members of the joint opposition was to agree on a joint candidate in every place. They even held preliminaries in a capital district and for the mayoral position of Budapest. Jobbik joined to the left-wing opposition and they set candidates together in almost every city. Thus, Jobbik's electoral results of 2019 unfortunately cannot be separated from the other opposition parties, since they ran in many different variants of parties[2] for positions.

Table 2. Results of Fidesz and Jobbik in local and regional elections (% of aggregated votes)

	Block vote subsystem (BV)			Mixed subsystem (MMM)			Regional elections		
	2010	2014	2019	2010	2014	2019	2010	2014	2019
Fidesz	27.9%	14.5%	14.3%	61.5%	39.2%	44.1%	72.7%	52.6%	57.2%
Jobbik	2.8%	3.3%	1.3%*	7.5%	12.6%	34.7%*	9.4%	21.3%	38.5%*

* Results of the joint opposition

Table 2 shows that there is significant difference between the results of the two subsystems. Most of the local councillors and mayors are independent or local candidates in the BV subsystem and candidates of national parties are rarely successful in the smaller communities. Based on the electoral results, the mayoral position is somewhat more subjected to the national politics even in this subsystem. Considering that this is one of the most important position in the Hungarian local politics, one could argue that the share of mayors affiliated to a party is an indicator of the party politicization in the smaller communities.

The Fidesz/joint opposition dichotomy of the Hungarian national politics is apparent in the 2019 local electoral results: other national parties could obtain less than 1 percent of the councillor seats and they have mayors in only four small villages. Based on the results, Fidesz was an unambiguous winner of the electoral race of the two blocs. The party gained 45 percent of the local council seats and its politicians are present in almost every local governments of the MMM subsystem (while the joint opposition have councillors in only half of them). However, the joint opposition had some electoral success in the largest municipalities as they won 10 mayoral elections in the 23 cities of county rank (formerly, the opposition parties had mayors in 3 of these cities), have 14 mayors in the capital district (out of 23 districts) and their candidate became the mayor of Budapest. In sum, national politics is more successful in the

[2] The following ten national parties can be identified as the members of the Joint Opposition: Democratic Coalition, Dialogue for Hungary, Everyone's Hungary Movement, Hungarian Liberal Party, Hungarian Socialist Party, Hungarian Solidarity Movement, Hungarian Two-Tailed Dog Party, Jobbik, Momentum, Politics Can Be Different. In 2019, there were at least 80 different constellations of these parties.

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MMM subsystem and Fidesz is the most dominant national party in the local politics, although the joint opposition was able to gain positions in some of the more significant urban areas in 2019 Table 3).

Table 3. Electoral results for Fidesz and Jobbik (joint opposition) in institutional terms (2019)

	% of seats in local councils		% of mayors affiliated with the party		% of seats in regional governments
	BV	MMM	BV	MMM	
Fidesz	7.5	45.2	17.0	51.5	64.3
Joint opposition	0.3	18.5	0.3	13.6	13.6

To somehow assess Jobbik's support in sub-national elections, the regional electoral results can be considered: in 14 counties (out of 19) the party ran with a standalone party list for positions. In these counties, Jobbik gained 7.6 percent of the seats, while other 6 percent of the seats were gained with joint opposition lists. To compare to the results of Jobbik in the previous years (see Table 2) I calculated the party's vote share for the counties where it ran alone in 2019. Jobbik gained 10.8 percent of votes in these 14 counties, i.e. Jobbik's vote share in regional election halved during the 2014-2019 period.

In sum, data indicates that while the Fidesz was able to consolidate its dominant position in 2014 and then in 2019 after its landslide victory in 2010, Jobbik's support dropped to the 2010 level in 2019. This suggests that Fidesz's repositioning does not influenced its support, but Jobbik's de-radicalization resulted in loss of its position as the dominant political force of the opposition.

3.5 Electoral results of the Continental European Napoleonic countries

Italy

Table 4 presents the electoral results obtained by both the two parties in last regional elections, and it accounts for the differences in terms of percentage of votes and number of seats compared with the previous regional elections[3]. Data allow to identify two different patterns: on the one hand, indeed, the LN increases its political relevance in regional context mirroring the party consolidation experienced also at the national level; on the other hand, the M5S shows electoral difficulties in regional elections and its performance fails to reflect the consensus obtained in general elections.

As concerns the LN, two things deserve to be emphasized. First of all, during the last years the party was able to further strengthen its prominence in those Northern regions - where the party was already present. Indeed, at the moment, the LN rules all the Northern regions directly with its own governors – as in Veneto, Lombardy and Friuli Venezia Giulia – or in coalition with other centre-right parties - as in Piedmont or Liguria. Secondly, under the leadership of Matteo Salvini, it succeeded to extend its influence also in Southern regions, where the LN's candidates

[3] It should be underlined that data are referred to elections held in different years.

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never ran before. The party could enter in government coalition as a major party and playing a significant role in setting the policy agenda in regions such as Sardinia, or Calabria.

Data related the M5S, instead, suggest a quite opposite trend. Regional elections have always been insidious for a party lacking of organizational structure and active branches at the local level. Nonetheless, at the beginning the meet-up's structure has been able to surrogate a proper party organization - although not consistently present in all regions. The process of party institutionalization and the experience in national government after 2018 general elections led to a concentration of resources (staff, political personal and communication effort) at the national level while disregarding the local dimension. The combined effect of being in government and the scarce local activity of the party led to a declined appeal over the electorate especially in case of local elections. Indeed, if the party increases its performance in regions such as Lombardy, Veneto or Campania, in general data show a quite evident decline in consensus at regional contests. All in all, while for the LN the success at the national level is perfectly mirrored also in regional electoral contests, the M5S pays for its government role – and the end of the honeymoon with supports- fails in mobilizing grassroots at the local level.

Table 4 - Regional Elections results of Lega Nord and Movimento 5 Stelle

	Lega Nord				Movimento 5 Stelle			
	%	Seats	Diff. %	Diff. Seats	%	Seats	Diff. %	Diff. Seats
Valle d'Aosta [c]	17.06	7	+4.81	7	10.44	4	+3.82	2
Piemonte[b]	37.1	17	+29.83	15	12.55	5	-8.9	-3
Lombardia [c]	29.68	28	+16.72	13	17.8	13	+3.47	4
Liguria [e]	20.25	5	+10.03	2	22.29	6		
Bolzano [c]	11.1	4	+8.6	3	2.34	1	-0.16	=
Trento [c]	27.09	13	+20.87	12	7.23	2	+1.39	=
Veneto [e]	17.82	10	-17.33	-8	10.4	5	+7.25	5
Friuli-Venezia Giulia[c]	34.91	17	+26.64	14	7.06	4	-12.15	-1
Emilia-Romagna[a]	31.95	14	+12.53	6	4.74	2	-8.56	-3
Toscana [e]	16.16	4	+9.66	1	15.13	5		
Umbria[b]	36.95	8	+22.96	6	7.41	1	-7.14	=
Marche [e]	13.02	3	+6.7	1	18.89	5		
Lazio [c]	9.96	4			22.06	10	+1.84	3
Abruzzo[b]	27.54	10			19.73	7	-1.65	1
Molise [c]	8.23	2			31.57	6	+14.81	4
Campania					17.01	7	+15.67	7
Puglia [e]	2.29				16.33	8		
Basilicata[b]	19.15	6			20.27	3	+7.08	1
Calabria[a]	12.25	4			6.27	0	+1.31	=
Sicilia [d]	5.65	1			26.7	20	+8.53	5
Sardegna[b]	11.36	8			9.71	6		

Note: [a]2020 Regional Elections [b]2019 Regional elections; [c] 2018 Regional Elections; [d] 2017 Regional Elections; [e] 2015 Regional Elections

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Looking at the electoral results in Turin, the M5S' declining electoral appeal is even more evident. At their first appearance in 2010 regional elections, indeed, the M5S obtained in Turin a limited result (3.7%) and the following year the votes achieved in 2011 Municipal elections were quite similar (5.3%). The turning point is of course the unexpected electoral success in 2013 General elections, where the movement obtained in Turin slightly more than one fourth of the votes. In about two years, the share of consensus for the movement increased of about 20 percentage points. In 2014 the party confirmed that its electoral exploit was not ephemeral. Despite it decreases the votes obtained in Regional and European elections (respectively, 21.4% and 21.7%) it could count on a solid electoral support in town. The peak is achieved in 2016 Municipal elections when the party obtained the one third of the votes electing 24 councillors within the City Hall (see Table 5). The M5S acceded the run-off and in the end Chiara Appendino became mayor. However, since then the consensus for the M5S starts a quite remarkable decrease: both in 2018 General elections and 2014 EP elections, indeed, the party shows a negative performance, losing - in about three years – almost 17 percentage points.

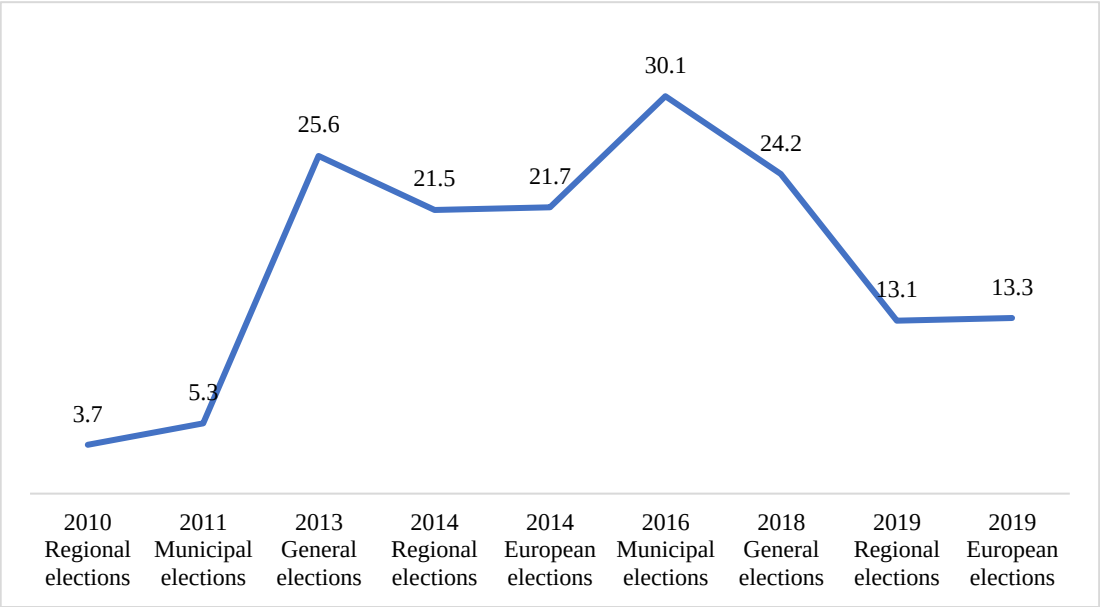

Figure 2 - Movimento 5 Stelle electoral performance in Turin (2010-2019)

Table 5 - M5S electoral performance in Turin's municipal elections

	% Votes	N Votes	N Seats
2011 Municipal Elections	5.27	21078	1
2016 Municipal Elections	30.01	107680	24

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The LN's electoral trends in Treviso are quite interesting as well. The main difference between the two cases is that while in Turin the M5S represent a political novelty and they got the lead of the city quite suddenly, Treviso could be defined as the heartland of the LN. Since the early Nineties, indeed, the party ruled the city continuously. However, during the last decade the party experienced a remarkable organizational crisis that is clearly reflected in the electoral performances, even in a stronghold as Treviso. As detailed in table 6, in 2013 Municipal elections the LN obtained only 2 seats, for the first time after almost twenty years a centre-left coalition won the lead of the city. The re-birth of the party starts in 2014, with an inversion of the declining trend registered in 2013. Since then data show a slow but steady increase in electoral consensus. Under the leadership of Matteo Salvini the LN is able in five years to get back to the levels achieved in the golden era of early Nineties, with a growing of almost 30 percentage points.

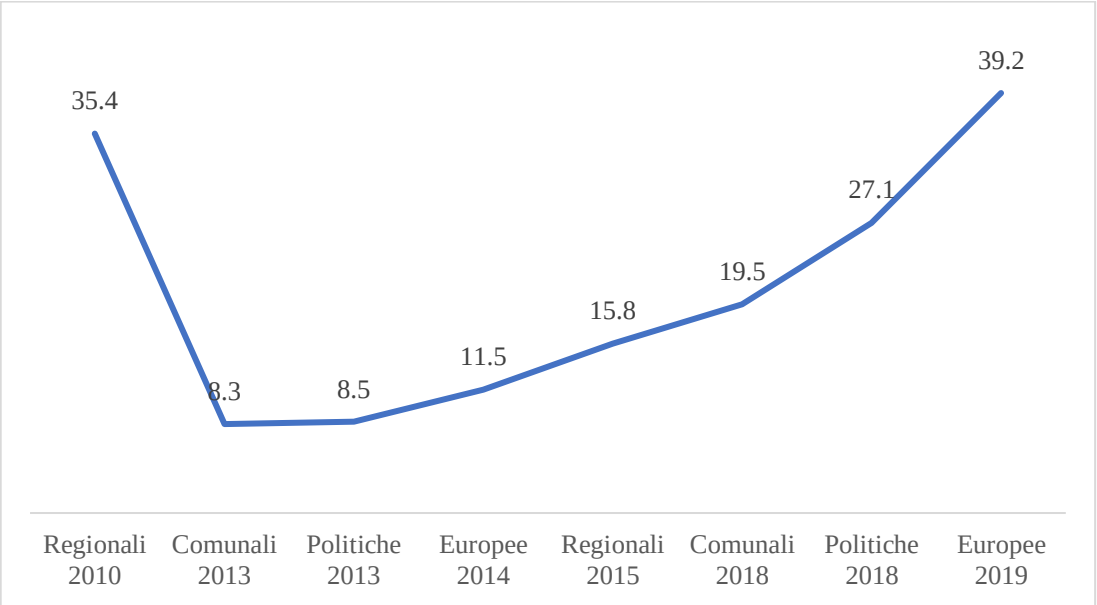

Figure 3 - Lega Nord electoral performance in Treviso (2010-2029)

Table 6 - Lega Nord electoral performance in Treviso's Municipal elections

	% Votes	N Votes	N Seats
1994 Municipal elections	17,1	8103	20
1998 Municipal elections	41,6	17558	24
2003 Municipal elections	37,8	14688	21
2008 Municipal elections	15,4	7037	7
2013 Municipal elections	8,3	3066	2
2018 Municipal elections	19,5	7303	8

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Spain

Podemos succeeded in governing the cities of Cádiz and Madrid in the legislative period from 2015 to 2019, although without having won the election in these municipalities. For its part, VOX obtained insignificant results in 2015, being the seventh force in Madrid with no councillor and the ninth force in Cádiz, also without any councillors. By contrast, the 2019 local elections are important for the study, since both formations managed to achieve a significant representation in both municipalities. Podemos, although it won the elections in both cities, did not obtain the position of mayor this time in Madrid. The People's Party and Citizens ended up governing the city with the essential support of VOX. For its part, in Cádiz the position of mayor was maintained by Adelante Cádiz, a grouping made up of Podemos, Ganar Cádiz and IU.

The Autonomous Community of Andalusia is also important in this analysis. As already mentioned, VOX participated as a key element in the change of government in the Junta of Andalusia after 40 years of socialist monopoly. VOX entered the Andalusian Parliament with 12 seats (11% of the total number of seats to be distributed), becoming the fifth political force. VOX also obtained very good results in the autonomous community election for the Valencian Parliament, in which it obtained 10 seats (10.1% of the total number of seats to be distributed) and 10.44% of the vote, even managing to surpass Podemos. Very good results are also observed in the Community of Madrid, where it obtained 12 seats (9.09% of the total number of seats to be distributed) and 8.86% of the total vote. It also outperformed Podemos in this autonomous community, and even became a key element in the formation of the autonomous government with PP and C's. For its part, Podemos obtained very good results in the Balearics, where it obtained six seats (10.16% of the total seats available) and 9.71% of the total vote. In Asturias, Podemos obtained 11.01% of the total vote and four seats (8.88% of the total number of seats to be distributed). As far as its best results are concerned, it is important to highlight Andalusia, where it obtained 17 seats (15.59% of the total seats available) and 16.18% of the total vote.

Table 7. Results by autonomous community from December 2018 to January 2020 of VOX and Podemos

	VOX		PODEMOS	
	% vote	Seats	% vote	Seats
Andalusia	10.97	12	16.18	17
Aragón	6.08	3	8.08	5
Asturias	6.42	2	11.01	4
Balearics	8.12	3	9.71	6
Canaries	2.47	0	8.75	3
Cantabria	5.05	2	3.12	0
Castile-La Mancha	7.02	0	6.9	0
Castile and León	5.49	1	4.95	1
Extremadura	4.7	0	7.18	4
Community of Madrid	8.86	12	5.56	7
Navarre	1.29	0	4.74	2
Murcia	9.46	4	5.55	2
La Rioja	3.86	0	6.63	2
Valencian Community	10.44	10	7.97	8

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Source: composed by the authors from El Pais[4].

It is important to highlight the variation of votes, percentage of votes, councillors and political strength of both populist parties. Podemos presents a positive variation in all aspects of the 2015 and 2019 municipal elections (except in Madrid, where it loses votes, percentage of vote and one councillor). For the 2015, 2016 and 2019 legislative elections, it presents a negative variation, losing votes, percentage of vote and receding as a political force in the city. The same occurred in the legislative elections in the Community of Madrid and Andalusia. Podemos above all lost in number of votes and percentage of vote (in the last election compared with the first in which it stood). Podemos also lost votes on an aggregate level in Andalusia.

By contrast, VOX presents a positive curve in all the elections analysed in both cities. From 2015 until the latest elections, VOX has managed to increase its number of votes, percentage of votes, to obtain four councillors in Madrid and improve its position among the political parties.

The following table (table 8) presents the results of the municipal elections for both formations in the cities of Madrid and Cádiz[5]:

Table 8. Electoral results of Podemos and Vox in Madrid and Cadiz local elections

			Votes	% of vote	Councillors	Force
MADRID	2015	Ahora Madrid	519.721	31.84	20	2nd
		VOX	9.867	0.6	0	7th
	2019	Más Madrid	503.990	30.94	19	1st
		VOX	124.252	7.63	4	5th
	VARIATION	PODEMOS	-15.731	-0.9	-1	1
		VOX	114.385	7.03	4	2
CADIZ	2015	Por Cádiz Sí se puede	18.342	27.89	8	2nd
		VOX	187	0.28	0	9th
	2019	Adelante Cádiz	26.498	43.59	13	1st
		VOX	2.294	3.77	0	5th
	VARIATION	PODEMOS	8.156	15.7	5	1
		VOX	2.107	3.49	0	4

Source: composed by the authors from El País and http://www.infoelectoral.mir.es/

The following table (table 9) presents the results of Podemos and VOX in the whole of Andalusia for the 2015 and 2018 Andalusian parliamentary elections.

[4] Data obtained from the newspaper 'El País'. Online [19/01/2020] Available at: https://resultados.elpais.com/elecciones/2019/autonomicas/16/

[5] Data obtained from the Ministry of Interior website for 2015. For 2019, the data are obtained from the newspaper 'El País'.

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Table 9. Electoral results in the Andalusian Parliamentary elections

ANDALUSIA					
2015		Votes	% of vote	Deputies	Force
	PODEMOS	590,011	14.84	15	3rd
	VOX	18,017	0.45	0	9th
2018		Votes	% of vote	Deputies	Force
	ADELANTE ANDALUCÍA	584,04	16.18	17	4th
	VOX	395,978	10.97	12	5th
VARIATION		Votes	% of vote	Deputies	Force
	PODEMOS	-5,971	1.34	2	-1
	VOX	377,961	10.52	12	4

Source: composed by the authors from the Andalusian Parliament website

Lastly, the territorial and socio-demographic patterns of distribution of the vote will be analysed for the two populist parties studied. For this, the cross references in the post-election study by the CIS will be analysed for the 2018 Andalusian autonomous community election. As noted, certain differences were observed between the voters of Podemos and of VOX. The voters of both populist formations present similar characteristics as regards gender, age and level of education: they are mainly men, between 18 and 24 years old with higher education. The differences arise on analysing the size of the municipality in which they live, their socio-economic condition and their socio-economic status. Podemos voters mainly live in municipalities with between 400,001 and 1,000,000 inhabitants, while VOX voters come from municipalities with a maximum of 2,000 inhabitants. It could thus be said that, in Andalusia, Podemos voters come from big cities such as Seville, Cádiz or Málaga, while VOX voters come from the smaller municipalities of the Andalusian region. As regards their socio-economic condition, it could be said that the voters of Podemos are mainly managers and professionals, while the majority of VOX voters are skilled workers and other unclassified workers. Finally, the voters of Podemos in Andalusia mainly belong to the upper/upper-middle class, while the majority of the voters of VOX come from the new middle classes. To summarise, it could be said that the main differences between the voters of these two populist formations are differences of a socio-economic nature.

Following the regional and municipal elections between the end of 2018 and mid-2019, it can be said that there was an evolution in the institutional presence of populist parties in relation to the previous legislature. In 2015, VOX did not have a presence in many municipalities and regions of Spain, and did not even exceed the minimum threshold of votes for the distribution of seats. On the other hand, in 2019 VOX experienced an increase of 508 councillors and two mayors throughout Spain, achieving a total of 530 councillors (0.78% of the total number of councillors in Spain) and 5 mayors (0.06% of the total number of mayors in Spain). In the municipal elections, VOX stood in many municipalities in Spain, although it is in Ceuta, Burgos and Guadalajara where it obtained the most seats in relation to the total number of seats available. In the province of Ceuta, VOX attained 24% of the total seats available, while in Burgos it obtained 12.5% of the seats available and in Guadalajara it received 9.93% of the total number of seats available. In turn, a certain capacity for territorial organisation is observed in some Spanish provinces, although there is also a distinct concentration of representation in

certain areas of the country (the Community of Madrid is a clear example). In Ceuta and Melilla, VOX achieved representation in the only municipality in which it stood in each province. In Guadalajara, it gained representation in 10 of the 11 municipalities in which it stood (90.9%), and in Madrid it achieved representation in 86 out of the 100 municipalities in which it presented a list. Thus, in Ceuta and Guadalajara not only did they obtain the best results in relation to the seats for which they were standing, but also these are the provinces in which they best succeeded in organising their representation throughout the territory. This strategy of territorial organisation is applied by traditional parties to ensure certain strongholds and avoid major election setbacks in a general manner. VOX possibly wanted to follow this strategic line in order to become established in the whole territory, concentrating its vote above all in the municipalities of the province of Madrid. It is also important to stress that VOX achieved representation in more than half of the municipalities in which it stood (55.1%).

In the specific case of Andalusia, VOX received 7.33% of the votes in the municipalities of Almeria in which it stood, 4.43% in the municipalities of Cadiz, 4.08% of the votes in the municipalities of Cordoba, 5.06% of the votes in the municipalities of Granada where it stood, 2.66% of the total votes in the municipalities of Huelva, in Jaen it got 2.51% of the votes in the municipalities where it stood, in Malaga it got 3.54% of the votes in the municipalities where it had a candidate and in Seville it got 4.85% of the total votes in the municipalities where it stood for election[6].

For its part, in the last municipal elections Podemos obtained a total of 668 councillors (0.99% of the total number of councillors in Spain) and retained two of the five 'City Councils of change' that it obtained in 2015. It went from governing Madrid, A Coruña, Barcelona, Zaragoza and Cádiz in 2015, to governing only Barcelona and Cádiz in 2019. Podemos also lost access to the government of Palma de Mallorca, Toledo and Santiago de Compostela.

In the specific case of Andalusia, Podemos got 2.11% of the votes in the municipalities of Almeria in which it stood, 1.68% of the votes in the municipalities of Cadiz in which it had a candidate (where it stood as part of the Adelante coalition, it got 12.39% of the vote), in Cordoba it got 2.56% of the votes in the municipalities where it stood, 1.22% of the votes in the municipalities of Granada where it stood for election (where it stood as part of the Adelante coalition, it got 3.78% of the vote), in Huelva it got 0.14% of the vote in the municipalities where it had a candidate (where it stood as part of the Adelante coalition, it got 7.41% of the vote), 0.82% of the votes in the municipalities of Jaen where it stood for election (where it stood as part of the Adelante coalition, it got 4.35% of the total vote), in Malaga it got 1.34% of the total vote in the municipalities where it stood for election and, in Seville it got 0.64% of the vote in the municipalities where it stood (where it stood as part of the Adelante coalition, it got 14.4% of the total vote).

[6] Data obtained from the Ministry of the Interior website. Available at: https://resultados.eleccioneslocaleseuropeas19.es/#/es/mun/resultados/provincias/sevilla

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Turkey

Table 10. Result of local elections in Turkey since 2009

		2009	2014	2019
Turkey	AKP	38.8	45.6	44.33
	CHP	23.1	27.8	30.12
	MHP	16.1	15.2	7.31
	Saadet	5.2	2	2.71

The AKP claimed victory in all local elections since 2009. There is a significant decline in the AKP votes from the 2007 general elections (46.58%) to the 2009 local elections (38.5%). Nevertheless, it is important to note that in general, the AKP's vote percentage has always been lower in local elections than it is in general elections. Furthermore, in 2009, Turkish economy was negatively affected by the global financial crisis causing its economy to contract by -4.7% (World Bank, 2020). This might be another reason why the AKP performed poorly in the 2009 local elections. In any case, the AKP was able to pick up its votes in the next local elections in 2014 (45.6%).

In 2019 local elections, the AKP was slightly down to 44.33%. Further decline in the AKP votes was possibly masked by its alliance with the ultranationalist MHP in major cities such as Ankara, Antalya, Aydin, Bolu, Bursa, Canakkale, Istanbul, Izmir, Konya, Rize and Trabzon. The MHP, by not nominating any candidates in these cities and by declaring its support for the AKP candidates in these cities, aimed to prevent the CHP candidates winning the elections. Accordingly, the MHP votes, which hovered around 15% in the 2014 local elections, were down to 7.31%. These figures indicate that at least some of the MHP voters voted for the AKP candidates in these cities in the 2019 local elections[7]. Nevertheless, the CHP was able to win the local elections in three most populous cities in Turkey; namely Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir as well as in other important cities such as Antalya and Bolu, which were, with the exception of Izmir, all controlled by the AKP previously.

Ankara and Istanbul are symbolically important cities for the AKP. These cities are the most populous cities in Turkey. While Ankara is the capital of the country, Istanbul is the economic and culture center of the country. In 1994 local elections, the Islamist Welfare Party (RP) won the seats in both cities. The winning candidate in Istanbul was Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the leader of the AKP and the current president of Turkey, while Ibrahim Melih Gokcek, who remained as the Ankara mayor until he was forced to resign by Erdoğan in October 2017, won elections in Ankara. After the local elections (March 2004), the mayors had always AKP members in these two cities. This situation changed in March 2019 when the AKP lost elections in both cities.

An analysis of the voter profiles in the 2014 local elections[8] demonstrates that the AKP voter profile is balanced in terms of its gender distribution. 51% of the AKP voters were female while

[7] In 2019 local elections, the MHP also lost a considerable support to the electoral alliance of the CHP-IYI Party (a.k.a. Nation Alliance). Especially secular nationalists, who were not contended with the MHP's alliance with the Islamist, populist AKP shifted their alliances to the Nation Alliance candidates.
[8] Please note that the profile analysis of the AKP voters is country wide as province-level analyses are not available.

49% were male (KONDA, 2014). According to the same report, among the AKP voters, the share of young voters (18-28 years-old) is lowest (21%) while the share of older citizens (44+ years old) is highest (42%). While only 10% of the AKP voters are university graduates, this figure is 22% for the main opposition party, the CHP (Turkish average for university educated population in 2014: 14%). In fact, 67% of the AKP voters did not have high school degree. Therefore, support for the AKP was highest among the less educated. This report also revealed that the more educated one is, the less likely she is to vote for the AKP. The KONDA report (2014) shows that of all voters without a high school degree in Turkey, 48% voted for the AKP in the 2014 local elections. The AKP performs somewhat better among lower-middle classes while its support is somewhat weaker among upper-middle and upper classes. These latter groups are more likely to vote for the CHP.

The map below (Figure 4) shows the results of the 2019 election. Each color represents a certain political party in Turkey. As the map illustrates the AKP (represented by yellow color) is stronger in central Anatolia, parts of the eastern Anatolia and in the shores of the eastern Black Sea region. The main opposition party, the CHP (represented by red color) however, is stronger in the cities coasting the Mediterranean Sea, the Aegean Sea and the Marmara Sea. The CHP vote is also strong in some central Anatolian cities such as Ankara, Bilecik, Bolu, Eskisehir, and Kirsehir. Please note that, with the exception of Bilecik and Kirsehir, the cities where the CHP won the municipalities in the 2019 local elections are economically more developed and have higher education levels than other cities in Turkey.

Figure 4

The AKP had dominated the local politics between 2004 and 2019. This fact could also be seen in its share of control of provincial municipalities in Turkey. In 2009, the AKP won 45 (55.6%) of provincial municipalities while this figure slightly increased to 48 (59.3%) in 2014. In 2019, however the AKP suffered from major losses as the number of provincial municipalities controlled by the AKP has decreased to 39 (48.1%). More importantly, the AKP has lost control

of municipal seats in Istanbul and Ankara, two most populous cities in Turkey with a combined population of more than 20 million, to the opposition. Despite this loss, the AKP still is the largest political party in Turkey as the party was able to secure %44.3 of the votes[9].

Table 11. Distribution of provincial municipalities by party in Turkey

	2009	2014	2019
AKP	45 (%55.6)	48 (59.3%)	39 (48.1%)
CHP	13 (16%)	14 (17.3%)	21 (%26)
MHP	9 (11.1%)	8 (9.9%)	11 (13.6%)
HDP/ BDP/ DTP	8 (9.9%)	10 (12.3%)	8 (9.9%)
TKP	0	0	1 (1.2%)
BBP	1 (1.2%)	0	0

4 Populism in action, country by country

This section deals with the context and conditions of the access to the institutions of these political parties. Namely, it explores how and when these parties became relevant in terms of this government, which is their position in these governments or institutions, if they are not governing, and the effective impact in the institutional activity and functioning.

4.1 Czech Republic

For ANO was established not earlier than in 2012, its first opportunity to become a relevant actor in local politics came with the municipal election in 2014, just a year after the unprecedented electoral success of the party in the general election. The successful campaign before the election to the lower chamber (the party rose from the support around several per cent to more than 18 % during the last month preceding the election) was based around several interconnected elements: 1) populist denigration of the established political parties that were portrayed as incompetent and corrupt; 2) the change of the "traditional" political style and a promise of effective governance and economic prosperity; 3) through anti-ideological (technocratic) politics; 4) guaranteed by the leader of the party, a successful billionaire Babiš. ANO used several catchy slogans that expressed the core of the message of the party. "Yes, things will get better (Ano, bude líp)", "So that also our children want to live here (Aby tu chtěly žít i naše děti)" and "We can give work to the people (Umíme dát lidem práci)" aimed at a promise of a prosperous country allegedly destroyed by the established politicians ("We are a talented nation governed by the cackhanded" – "Jsme schopný národ, jen nás řídí nemehla").

The solution offered by the party was built around the idea of a non-political, supposedly more effective managerial style of governance nicely expressed in the slogan "We are not like politicians, we work hard. (Nejsme jako politici, makáme)". The party did not say much about policies and emphasized the way how (a better) politics should be done instead. The character

[9] As noted before, the AKP's alliance with the MHP in the 2019 elections makes it difficult to measure the real level of support for the AKP in these elections.

of the party as a de facto political branch of Babiš`s economic imperium was reflected in a highly centralized electoral campaign both in terms of its organization and content. Babiš presented itself not just as a leader of the party but as a guarantor or patron of the regional leaders who were accompanied on election billboards by Babiš. The lack of clear policy stances indicates that ANO did not systematically targeted any specific social groups (see Šíma, Králiková 2014) and aimed at voters dissatisfied with politics across different social groups (although some analysis of the communication of the party.

Four years later, the campaign of the party was similar building on the anti-political anti-establishment appeal ("Working hard and not babbling" – "Makat a neblábolit" or "Facing corruption and not babbling" – "Postavit se korupci a neblábolit"), on the stress of the issue of corruption and the omnipresence of the "owner" of the party Babiš. What was different was a partial emphasis of selected issues such as the security (in the context of the migration crisis), pension raise or increase of teachers` salaries) and the stress on the necessity to complete the change (that one supposedly launched four years earlier).

The seemingly unnecessary long description of the campaign for the nation-wide parliamentary election is important for the introduction of the political communication of the party in the subnational elections including the local elections in Prague and Ostrava. Although turning subnational (or the European) elections into an arena of the continuing national electoral contest is not exceptional (see the theory of the second-order elections), the linkage of the content of the local election campaigns to the national politics, to the character of the party, and also its centralization was in the case of ANO exceptionally high.

All these elements also determined the campaign and the communication strategy of ANO before the 2014 local election including the campaigns run in Prague and Ostrava. In general, the campaign was characterized by the adaptation of issues and the style that was the core of the message of the party on the nation-wide level. Consequently, also the local electoral campaigns of the party were structured around populism built on a strong anti-establishment appeal, on the need for a greater economic effectivity, the stress on the competence and valence issues (instead of positional attitudes) and the crucial position of the "owner of the party" Andrej Babiš.

ANO deployed a massive billboard campaign before the election in which the local leaders accompanied by Babiš promised to get things done. In Prague, the party used slogans such as: "Running the city economically? We will keep an eye on it." (similarly with the promise of the safer city), "A cultural environment for our children? We will take care of it." or "Transparent public tenders? We will watch it.". The campaign in Ostrava was very similar, both in visual terms and in terms of the content: "Handicaps of Ostrava? We will solve it." or "So that our children want to live in Ostrava.". Particularly in Prague, ANO emphasized the allegedly corrupt behavior of the previous local governments and promised to make functioning of the city (politically) clean and more transparent. The stress on the fight with corruption was supported by the choice of the leader (and candidate for the mayor) Adriana Krnáčová, the former president of the Czech branch of Transparency International. In Ostrava, one of the major issue was the pollution and also the revitalization of the downtown in the city that was traditionally seen as an industrial center.

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4.2 Hungary

Kaposvár (Fidesz)

Kaposvár is traditionally led by Fidesz-affiliated politicians. Since 1998, Fidesz had majority in the local council. Moreover, the last time when a mandate was gained by a non-Fidesz-affiliated candidate in a single member district (SMD) was 2002 (four local elections were held since then), i.e. other parties' candidate could gain seats only from the compensatory tier of the MMM electoral system. In 2019, 12 SMD mandates were gained by Fidesz, while the members of the joint opposition managed to get only 4 compensatory mandates (in addition, one mandate was obtained by a candidate of a local civil organization).

Károly Szita (the mayor of the city) is even more successful. He gained the mayoral position the first time in 1994, when direct election of mayors was introduced to cities with more than 10,000 inhabitants (note: in the first electoral cycle, Szita was a deputy mayor of Kaposvár), and lead the local government since then – he is currently serving his seventh term as a mayor. From the last the elections, Szita had the worst vote share in 2019, and he got 56.4 percent of the votes even then (usually he won the election with a two-thirds or three-quarters majority). Consequently, Károly Szita can be considered as the unquestionable leader of Kaposvár.

Ózd (Jobbik)

In the early 2000s, Ózd was lead by the left-wing party MSZP, although the party had no clear majority in the local council: MSZP had the largest fraction in 2002 and 2006 but it needed the support of independent representatives to be able to govern. As in many Hungarian municipalities, the 2010 election brought a change in local politics, as Fidesz won 64.3 percent of the council mandates and also gained the mayoral position. While Fidesz could consolidate its position in almost every larger cities in 2014, Ózd was one of the municipalities were an opposition candidate was able to become mayor.

The key to victory was that Jobbik could translate its anti-Roma rhetoric to local political issues. The Fidesz-led local government wanted to establish a Roma cultural centre in Ózd. According to the post-election evaluation of the local Fidesz's chair (Iván Vitális), it was a tactical mistake to bring up this issue before the 2014 election. The Jobbik (which has only two councillors in 2010) was able to get stronger on the issue: it called the centre as a "gypsy-tent" and forced a local referendum on the project. The local citizens refused the project, which was a significant loss for the local Fidesz. Meanwhile, Dávid Janiczak was able to took over the leadership of the local Jobbik with the thematization of the issue and he became the next mayoral candidate of the party in the 2014 election.

Jainczak won the election against the incumbent Fidesz-affiliated mayor (Pál Fürjes) in 2014 with 66.4 percent of the votes. However, Jobbik gained only five seats in the council, while Fidesz had the majority (57.1 percent) with eight mandates. In Hungary, the different political background of the mayor and the council often paralyzes the decision making of the local government. After Janiczak's win, the former mayor said in an interview that "it seems impossible to Janiczak to come forward with anything that could be suitable for us". Although the Fidesz fraction disintegrated shortly after the election, three Fidesz-affiliated councillors became independent members of the council (i.e. Fidesz and Jobbik each had 5-5 councillors)

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and the local Fidesz organization was disbanded.[10] In this new situation, Janiczak was able to carry out his programme more effectively.

In 2019, David Janiczak successfully re-ran for the mayoral position. He was officially affiliated with the civil organization "For the People of Ózd and for Ózd Association" ("Ózdiakért és Ózdért Egyesület"), which was an electoral alliance of the joint opposition parties (namely: Democratic Coalition, Jobbik, Politics Can Be Different, Hungarian Socialist Party and the Everyone's Hungary Movement). The mayor gained 55.8 percent of the votes and the alliance got nine seats (64.3 percent) of the council. In a period, where Jobbik struggled nationally, Janiczak and the local party was able to maintain their positions in Ózd.

4.3 Italy

As anticipated, the two cases followed different patterns. While the League (although the old Northern League) has a long history of success and government experience in the Veneto region and in Treviso in particular, the M5S is an outsider political actor, at its very first experience in power. The paths leading those parties to win the election in these two cities are very different from each other. Next paragraphs will highlight how and when these parties became relevant.

Turin

In the history of the M5S, Piedmont is one of the first electoral success stories. The day after the movement foundation in Milan, in November 2009, a group of young activists managed to present a list at the 2010 Piedmont regional elections. Unexpectedly, at the very first electoral competition, the movement gains access to the regional parliament, obtaining 3.7% of the votes cast and getting elected two councillors. For an outsider party, in those years considered by both politicians and journalists as an ephemeral party, this result was (almost) a true victory.

The entry on the political scene of the movement in Piedmont should not be reduced however to its electoral performance. At least two other elements should be taken into account to get a more precise picture of the consequences of this unexpected result. First, the entrance of M5S changed the political balance of the region favouring the defeat of the incumbent, Mercedes Bresso, candidate of the Democratic Party (Partito Democratico - PD) and, thus, contributing to the success of the challenger, Roberto Cota, from the League (at the time still Lega Nord). The small gap between the centre-left coalition and the centre-right one (only 9,372 votes, 0,42%) was the result of large transfer of votes that took place in a particular area –Susa valley involved in long-lasting protests against high-speed train line settlement – from PD, favourable to the project, towards the movement, openly opposed to it. Secondly, the path of autonomy and organizational as well as communicative specialization that M5S Piedmont has been implementing since its inception and which is mainly due to the resources obtained thanks to the election of the two regional councillors. The hearth of this process is the official website of the regional movement which since November 2009 has been independent of Beppe Grillo's blog (although obviously consistent and linked to it) replacing the the meetup.com site for organizational activities.

[10] According to media sources, the cause that put an end to the local organization was the conflict between the local leader (Iván Vitális) and the region's parliamentary representative (Gábor Riz).

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The following year, in the 2011 Turin municipal elections, the movement confirmed to have become a stable political actor in the Piedmont landscape: a result of just over five percentage points allows the election of two municipal councillors. As in the whole of Italy, however, the results of Parma (where the M5S elected the mayor) and Sicily (obtaining 18.2% in the regional election) anticipated the success achieved by the M5S in the 2013 political elections (25,56%). In 2013, the movement establishes itself as the second political force in Piedmont with over 25% and elects 8 deputies and 3 senators. Similarly, although a slight decrease of votes in absolute terms, the 2014 European elections confirm the M5S as the region's second most important party.

In 2016 the movement therefore had all the credentials to run in the Turin municipal elections, challenging the incumbent mayor, Piero Fassino, representative of the PD. The M5S candidate Chiara Appendino, already municipal councillor, managed to get an unexpected 30.92% in the first round, forcing the outgoing mayor in the second round where the M5S wins with 54.56% of the votes, bringing together those who voted for the 'change' and who were against Fassino.

Treviso

During the First Republic Treviso was one of the most important (and loyal) strongholds of the Democrazia Cristiana which ruled the city continuously since 1946 – with only a brief exception between 1986 and 1987 when the Partito Socialista took the lead of the municipal government. The political crisis in early 90's and consequent fall of the main political parties offered a perfect stage for the League (Diamanti 1993a). The socio-economic structure of Treviso was indeed a fertile ground for its narratives. In particular, the small-middle industrial enterprises hit by the economic crisis were indeed sensitive to LN's claims criticising the central state. Similarly, given the increasing number of migrants in the area – a novelty as Italy until then never experienced incoming immigration - the position of the party in the field of security and the refusal for immigrants' integration contributed to fuel the sentiment of fear and threat among citizens. In this phase, the core of the League's ideology revolves around two main dimensions. On the one hand, the party campaigns on regionalist issues. The demands for greater regional and local autonomy for the Northern area of Italy was based on the complaining about the national central government incapacity to respond to the Northern needs, and blamed for protecting the laziness of Southern Italy (Diamanti 1993b; 1996; Giordano 2000). On the other hand, the party gets the ownership on the security issues, framing immigration as a threat for citizens' security and more in general for the cultural identity of the people. At the local level, and especially as concerns Treviso, this latter represents the underlying theme across the different municipal government led by the NL across the years.

In 1994, the LN achieved 17.5% electing 20 councillors, Giancarlo Gentilini is the new mayor of the city. The political fate of the city will be linked to this new political actor for almost twenty years then. Gentilini's provocative style obtained immediately a national visibility – a quite uncommon result for a mayor of a small city. Indeed, his xenophobic positions as well as the security policies implemented in Treviso triggered several criticisms at both the local and national level. His campaign for a liberalization of firearms and the citizens' right to defend themselves against common crimes became a fuel for LN's national campaign on the topic. In 1998, the incumbent mayor was confirmed at the head of the city with a great consensus as the LN obtained 40.5% and 24 seats in City council. Given that the electoral law set at 2 the limit of mandates, Gentilini in 2003 supports the candidacy of Gianpietro Gobbo. Again, for the LN it is an easy victory with 37.5% of votes and 21 councillors. Gobbo's governance is in direct

continuity with Gentilini (who served as vice-mayor – prosindaco – and de facto maintained his influence over the city council). The security issues are kept at the centre of the political activity. In 2008, Gobbo is elected again (15.4%, 7 councillors) within a centre-right coalition that involves the Popolo della Libertà. Nonetheless, the LN preserve its pivotal role within the local government, holding a full control of the local policy agenda. Given the great electoral consensus and the large majority within the city council the LN was able to set the local agenda focusing on security issues and launching a series of symbolic policies that got a national resonation (and criticism as well).

The control of local government ends in 2013, when a centre-left mayor was elected, while the LN experiences a setback with 8.27% of the votes. It is a short iatus, actually, in 2018 the LN is again in power with Mario Conte. His profile bridges the classical LN's claims in the field of immigration and security with the new national strategy launched by the national leader Matteo Salvini. The party has already changed its name, removing the 'North' word from the logo and turning simply into Lega per Salvini Premier, with a clear recall of the national leader as a confirm of the new path of the party (Albertazzi et al. 2018). Euroscepticism replaces the blaming of the central state and the regionalist claims, while the criticism on immigration issues is even reinforced by the refugee crisis. Conte's success coincides with the national fate of the party, with Salvini leading the Interior minister and addressing issues related to immigration and security. There is a perfect match between the two, whereas at the local level Conte continuously recall in his social media activity actions, positions, arguments and declaration from the national leader during his government action and the 2019 EP election campaign.

4.4 Spain

The presence of VOX and Podemos in Spanish institutions is very recent. In fact, VOX concurred to the municipal elections in 2015 for the first time and Podemos did not have candidacies using this "brand name" but took part in divers candidacies promoted by groups related to the party. Some of these candidacies entered in office after this municipal election. This would be the case of Cádiz and Madrid, for instance.

The period between 2014-2015 was relevant in terms of emergence of new political forces. The country had been shaken by the effects of the economic and financial crisis, and there was growing social discontent toward the institutions and politicians. Almost one out of every four Spaniards was unemployed, the unemployment rate among young people was almost 50% and more than one and a half million households had all of their members unemployed. Consequently, evictions increased on a national level, budget cutbacks reached public healthcare and education, company bankruptcies and redundancies increased notably. In 2011 appeared the 15M social movement. However, the May 2011 municipal elections were too close, so the effects of this movement were first visualised in the European elections of 2014 and, after these in the municipal elections of 2015. The emergence of Podemos can be linked with this movement (15M also called "indignados", "outraged").

The proposals of this formation responded to left-wing policies and aimed to overthrow the social and political establishment. Its criticisms have always been against the banks, the big multinationals, the politicians and traditional parties, the economic and financial elite. Since its creation, Podemos has questioned gender roles, has revived the feeling of belonging to the working class and has cast doubt on the viability of the economic and political system. In the 2015 municipal elections, Podemos succeeded in breaking the traditional two-party system in

some Spanish municipalities, becoming mayor in cities as important as Madrid, Cádiz and Barcelona. However, the fact that the candidacies grouped many different organisations introduces complexities in the analysis of the presence and impact of Podemos in the municipal elections. The party, in fact, experiences many problems related to the territorial structuration.

In 2015 VOX obtained the position of mayor in two Spanish municipalities with less than 150 inhabitants. Thus, the municipal results were completely minor. Besides, it should be highlighted that access to these positions of mayor could have occurred due to the importance of the political leader in the municipality and not of the party and its election programme, since in this type of municipality the choice of the mayor is direct. It could therefore be considered that the institutional access of VOX to the local and regional scene occurred in the 2019 municipal elections.

Access by VOX to the institutions occurred in a context of political fragmentation in the majority of autonomous community parliaments and local town councils. On the national level, the PSOE won the motion of censure against Mariano Rajoy and Pedro Sánchez was proclaimed as prime minister of the Spanish government with the support of pro-independence Basque and Catalan parties and the populists of Podemos. Concern about the economic crisis was left in the past, although new concerns arose, such as climate change, male violence against women, the Catalan pro-independence process, etc. It could be said that access by VOX to the institutions occurred as the reactionary effect of conservative voters in the face of a wave of social movements which were trying to break the established order. A vote for VOX is therefore a vote of reaction. In populist terms, its voters see VOX as the only force which will overcome the enemies of the people who are acting against the general will and against those elites which back them.

City council of Madrid

Podemos, a joint candidacy with a particular head of the list. They presented a very particular candidate, Manuela Carmena, who in that moment was 71 years old in the moment of the election and had been judge. Madrid had been governed by conservative Popular Party for 24 years (since 1991), following a bipartisan alternance between the Socialist Party and Popular Party since 1979, first municipal elections after Franco regime.

The 2015 elections showed a moment when the bipartisan traditional system entered in a crisis. The coalition arrived at the government with the support of the Socialist Party in the investiture session. Madrid was considered a symbol of the change in the Spanish party system.

Once in office, the government and the coalition had to face different problems; most of them were related to the complexities of management of a sophisticated institution such as the Madrid City Council. The difficulties had also impacted in the relation with the national organisation and, in fact, these tensions derived to a split of the candidacy for the elections of 2019.

The situation implied the confrontation between old partners of candidacy. In the municipal election of 2019, although Manuela Carmena received more electoral support, a coalition of conservative parties with the support of VOX entered in office.

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City council of Cádiz

The City Council of Cádiz had always been government by two parties since 1979. The Socialist Party governed the city until 1995, and it was replaced by the Popular Party from 1995 to 2015.

A joint candidacy of different left-wing political groups, including Podemos, concurred to the 2015 municipal election. José María González "Kichi" Santos was the candidate of “Por Cádiz Sí se Puede” (For Cádiz, yes we can). He is high school teacher of the public system and trade union representative. Cadiz became also a symbol for the most leftish tendencies inside the coalition of Podemos; in fact, he belongs to an organization called Izquierda Anticapitalista (IZAN) (Anticapitalist left).

Once in office, the government launched some relevant projects following the lines included in their manifesto -such as, for instance, the remunicipalization of municipal services.

In this case, the governmental coalition did not visualized mayor internal problems, but there were tensions with the national organizations of Podemos. In this case, the candidacy concurred to the 2019 and won, and thus, José María González "Kichi" was again appointed mayor. Some months after the municipal elections, Podemos reached the Spanish government in coalition with the Socialist Party (PSOE). This implied that Podemos acceded to institutional power at national level, including cabinet members, a vice-president and the direction of different public organisations and departments. This fact supposed an increasement of tension between the Andalusian organisation and the national headquarters that ended with the split and separation of the two organisations and Podemos lost their Andalusian partners. Consequently, the mayor of Cadiz is still José María González "Kichi”, so the government continued but it is not a group inside Podemos but a different political organisation.

Andalusian regional government

The autonomous community of Andalusia was governed from 1978 to 2019 (all the period after Franco regime) by the Socialist Party (PSOE), in some occasions with wide absolute majorities. The last government of the Socialist Party needed parliamentary support of other groups and the lack of support in the approval of the budged triggered the call of elections. The Socialist Party won again the 2019 Andalusian election, but they did not achieved the necessary majority and a coalition of conservative parties formed by the Popular Party and Ciudadanos entered in office with the parliamentary support of VOX.

The coalition needed the support of VOX to form government and in fact, the process to achieve this support was difficult and characterised by the capacity of VOX to influence the agenda. Currently VOX is not a member of the governmental coalition but it is a necessary partner and has the capacity to influence the narrative, discourse and policies of the Andalusian government.

4.5 Turkey

Political Islam in Turkey was the political underdog two decades ago. Their first major victory came in 1994 when the Islamist RP surprisingly won mayoral seats in cities such as Ankara, Istanbul, and Kayseri. Victories in Ankara and Istanbul came as a shock to the secular elite because these cities were political, economic and cultural centers of Turkey (Yavuz, 1997).

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Tayyip Erdoğan, who became the PM of Turkey in 2003[11], was elected as mayor in Istanbul while Melih Gokcek was elected in Ankara. As political underdogs, Islamists in Turkey were not only suffering from discrimination by the secular elite but also lack of access to the mainstream media. Therefore, the RP, during the campaign process, implemented a sustained and face-to-face communication strategy with the people (Onis, 1997). This campaign strategy allowed the party candidates to bypass the negative coverage of the mainstream media in their communication with the people while also making them familiar faces for the voters.

Candidates and the grassroots organization of the Islamist RP visited households, restaurants, business offices, and even pubs and brothels during the campaign process. Erdoğan himself visited several Turkish pubs (*meyhanes*) and even a brothel in Istanbul during his campaign (Terkoglu, 2019). In addition, the RP effectively used its women's branch to get access to households during the campaign process. Members of the women's branch visited households and asked for housewives' support for the local elections. This strategy, which worked well in Ankara and Istanbul, brought the RP[12] victory one year later in the 1995 general elections as well. After 1994, political Islam never relinquished the control of these two cities until the March 2019 elections. With the local elections in 2004, the AKP candidates won the elections in both cities and continued to control these cities until the March 2019 local elections.

The AKP have similar strategies to the RP in terms of their communication with the voters. Face-to-face and personalized contact with voters and a particular focus on impoverished neighborhoods of major cities were two main strategies of the RP[13]. These strategies were also adopted by the AKP. The AKP has continued to use similar tactics during its election campaigns both for general and local elections. Nevertheless, different from the RP, the AKP had privileged access to state resources, which they used to create clientelist relations with voters. Yildirim (2020) shows how prior to the 2019 local elections, the AKP mobilized public resources and its ability to make law to consolidate support over poor neighborhoods in Istanbul. For instance, the AKP's Istanbul candidate Binali Yildirim, promised to provide title deeds with a fair price to the shantytowns in Istanbul. Religious networks (cemaats) were also included in the clientelist networks of the AKP by producing 'genuine gratitude' to the AKP among the conservative voters. Gunay and Yoruk (2019) demonstrate that Islamist orders and religious networks constituted the main grassroots institutional base for garnering conservative Kurds' support for the AKP.

[11] Though the AKP won the November 2002 elections, the party leader Erdoğan could not become the PM because of a previous ban. After the ban was lifted, he was elected first as a member of the parliament and then PM in March 2003.

[12] In 1998, the RP was closed down by the constitutional court in Turkey on the grounds that it violated the constitution. The Virtue Party, the successor to the RP, was also closed down in 2001. Erdoğan and his entourage (a.k.a. Reformists) established the AKP in August 2001 while the more traditional wing founded the Felicity Party. Overtime, the Felicity Party was marginalized while the AKP became the leading party representing the Islamist tradition in Turkish politics.

[13] RP's success relied on personal face-to-face contact with the constituents at the local level, caring for the demands and problems of the people. In the absence of the left, this party successfully adopted leftist discourses and social practices, rearticulating the leftist focus on justice and rights within the conservative parlance. One should also pay tribute to the political activism of the women of the Islamist wing, who carried many activities at the local level, but were not given due representation at the level of the leadership of the party or for that matter at the parliament.

Another strategy widely used by the AKP in elections is the importance of the Erdoğan figure in the campaign process. Yilmaz and Bashirov (2018) argue that Erdoğan's personal charisma has always played an important role in the AKP's electoral success, which is not surprising given that research has already shown the significance of the leader for populist movements (Weyland, 2017). Erdoğan made 102 meetings in 50 days during the campaign process (Milliyet, 2019). Erdoğan has also made several meetings in Istanbul. In the last two days before the elections, he joined 14 meetings in 14 different locations in Istanbul while Yildirim, the AKP candidate in Istanbul, remained under the shadow of Erdoğan. Instead of participating in large meetings, Yildirim was more active in street visits in different locations in Istanbul. In Ankara, Erdoğan's involvement in the campaign was more limited due to three factors. First, public opinion polls showed that in Ankara, the opposition candidate Mansur Yavas was likely to win the elections (Euronews, 2019). Hence, Erdoğan wanted the focus his energy on important provinces (i.e. Istanbul) where the AKP candidate could actually win the elections. Second, Erdoğan, who himself was born in Istanbul and the mayor of the city between 1994 and 1998, emphasized the city's importance for him several times. The fact that the campaign poster below bears "Istanbul is a love story for us " (*İstanbul bizim icin bir ask hikayesi*) is hardly coincidence. Last but not the least, regardless of Erdoğan's great zeal for Istanbul, the city has a population of 15,519,267 (TUIK, 2020) in 2019, which generated around 1.15 trillion Turkish liras GDP (around $190 billion dollars) GDP (TUIK, 2020). This figure amounts to around 25% of the Turkish GDP. Therefore, economic factors also played an important part in Erdoğan's enthusiasm in campaigning for Istanbul.

5 Institutional activity

This section aims to analyse the position of these parties in the government or institutions and the transformations once in an institutionalised setting. It also examines the impact in the institutional activity and operation and the impact in the discourse and narrative of the institutions.

5.1 Czech Republic

The 2014 local election in Prague and Ostrava ended with the unprecedented success of a newcomer. ANO won the election with 22.08% of votes in Prague and 21.3% of votes in Ostrava, respectively. After several rounds of negotiations, ANO formed a coalition with the centre-left Czech Social Democratic Party and the Three Coalition (the pre-electoral coalition of more or less centrist parties – the Christian and Democratic Union, Mayors and Independents and the Green Party). Krnáčová was elected the mayor of the city of Prague. Nevertheless, the existence of the coalition was accompanied by internal disputes that lead to the removal of several members of the city council (initiatied by the opposition but supported by several members of the coalition parties) and to the breakdown of the coalition in October 2015. After several months of negotiations, the coalition was renewed in April 2016. Although the disputes between the members of the coalition continued, it remained in office until the next election in 2018.

Shortly after the 2014 local election in Ostrava, ANO became the leading member of the coalition with the Czech Social Democratic Party and the Christian and Democratic Union (the same party composition as on the national level) with Tomáš Macura from ANO as the new

mayor. However, after the year, the coalition cooperation ended due to the conflict between ANO and the social democratic party. Social democrats were removed from the city council and the party was replaced by the movement Ostravak (a man from Ostrava in Czech). This move helped the credibility of the coalition, for social democrats ruled the city for the last 25 years and became the symbol of the stagnation of Ostrava. The populist discourse of ANO was one of the most important drivers of the coalition changes here. The reconstructed coalition lasted till the next election in 2018.

5.2 Hungary

Kaposvár (Fidesz)

To understand Fidesz's position on local governments, Viktor Orbán's letter serves as a good starting point: right before the 2019 local election, the prime minister sent a letter to every citizen, in which he claimed: "[this Sunday] we decide whether our cities and villages will have pro- or anti-migration leaders". In Fidesz's communication, local issues are subordinated to national issues and local governments should be implementors of the central government's policies (in accordance with the 'local state' model introduced after 2010).

In this sense, Kaposvár is not a unique case for populism but a representative of Fidesz-led local governments. Moreover, as Károly Szita is not only the mayor of a particular municipality but also the leader of the association of the most populous cities of Hungary, his actions somewhat represent the attitudes and tactics of other local leaders as well.

First, the mayor's opinion on the recent *changes of the sub-national levels* is in line with the national party. As a prominent member of Fidesz, Szita claimed that the Orbán cabinet's reform (which significantly lowered effective autonomy of the local governments – see section 1.1.) in fact gave the local governments freedom via debt consolidation. He welcomes the cabinet's measures that transferred several tasks of the local governments to the national government, and basically agrees with the direction of the reform.

The main point of Fidesz's agenda has been the *migration crisis* since 2015, and Károly Szita and Fidesz-led local governments act according to this. As the president of the MJVSZ, Szita initiated that the local governments refuse the European Union's mandatory refugee quota (80 percent of the local governments joined the initiation – including Kaposvár). He criticized the EU's refugee policy and claimed that György Soros will bring migrants to Hungary if the local leaders do not take a joint stand against the Soros-plan. Before the 2018 general election, the MJVSZ held a grandiose convention for all Hungarian local governments in Budapest. At this, Szita started his speech with the following statement: "Once, again, there is a need for the joint action of the mayors, since a serious danger threatens our villages and cities."

In Fidesz's political communication, Károly Szita is "the" mayor, who represents the local governments, of which biggest issue is the migration and its effect to the local communities. In 2016, the cabinet held a national referendum on the European Union's quota policy.[14] The MJVSZ was active in the referendum campaign, and during this, Károly Szita claimed that this

[14] The only question of the referendum was: "Do you want to allow the European Union to mandate the resettlement of non-Hungarian citizens to Hungary without the approval of the National Assembly?". Although 98.3 percent of the voters said "no" to this question, the turnout was only 44.3 percent, thus the referendum was invalid.

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referendum is not a political issue (but an above-parties national one) and it is the Hungarian mayors' obligation is encourage people to vote.

Concerning the policies, the local government of Kaposvár was prominent in the implementation of the Fidesz's policies.

The city itself take part in the *defence against the migrants*: they established a garrison for border guards in the city with central government subsidies in 2019. At the opening ceremony, the mayor connected the issue of migration and safety of the local citizens with the local development project.

Kaposvár also follows the materialist populist approach of the Fidesz. According to the mayor, the local government introduced the *regulation of public utility costs* even before the central government by being the majority owners of the local public service companies, thus they were able to reduce the citizens' utility costs. Károly Szita argued that Kaposvár could become one of the cheapest cities of Hungary by regulating the profit-oriented market. This is the case with the issue of employment too: In Hungary, the main instrument to create jobs locally is the communal work organized by local governments. Kaposvár also uses *communal work* to ease the city's unemployment problems and – as the mayor argues – that way the local government takes over the free market's task to create jobs in the region. This approach clearly fits into the central governments' centralizing and paternalistic economic policy.

Another issue, that appeared in the national politics and was mirrored in the local politics is the case of homelessness. The central government tried to ban the *homelessness* in 2011, by punish the living at public places, but the cabinet's provision was dismissed by the Constitutional Court in 2014. However, the council of Kaposvár tried to find an alternate way to banish de homeless people from the city: they forbade these people to store their belongings in public places. Although the Constitutional Court found this local provision itself constitutional, they argued that it could not be used against homeless people.

Finally, Kaposvár also presents a case for local appearance of conservatism. In August 2016, the Hungarian LMBT movement organized rallies in ten cities. The only city that prevented the event was Kaposvár: although the organizers got every permit to hold the event, the city authorities banned the rally and fined the organizers.[15]

Between 2010 and 2019 local governments throughout the country served as territorial strongholds for Fidesz. Since 2010, Fidesz-mayors were tasked with transmitting national politics to the local voters, even if usual and classic local policies were too risky to neglect. Károly Szita, the long-serving mayor of Kaposvár is the example of the successful reconciliation of local political success and populist national politics. The migration crisis and populist economy prove that translating national-level populism to the local communities contributed to Fidesz's local successes. Moreover, being a high-ranking Fidesz-mayor, the case of Károly Szita reveals that the "localization" of populism was more than an accidental detour; rather it was organized from above, exemplifying the primacy of national politics.

[15] Later the court decided that the city did not have to right to stop the rally.

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Ózd (Jobbik)

First, as populism goes often hand in hand with the personalization of politics (as in many cases of the national level), the mayor's political style should be investigated.

Dávid Janiczak was only 27 years old when he was elected to the mayor of Ózd in 2014. As a young politician, he is familiar with the social media and he uses it to build a more *direct connection with the citizens* of the municipality. Every steps of the local government and the mayor are documented on Janiczak's webpage and Facebook account: if the politician donates fruit to the local day-care, visits elderly people, or plants a tree in a public park, it will be covered by the on-line platforms. However, Janiczak has not only a one-way communication (informing citizens about his activity) but he always reacts personally to the comments and criticism of the locals and his political opponents. In his interviews, he often emphasizes that he *does not care about party politics*, he looks for a consensus with the Fidesz-affiliated councillors on local issues. He tries to build an image that he is above politics and only concerns with the development of Ózd. Finally, he takes actions to strengthen the "*I am one of you*" perception of the citizens. There are videos, in which he presents his own poem, has a role in a play of the local theatre, or act as a DJ in the local disco in front of hundreds of young citizens. In sum, Janiczak acts as an approachable, consensus-seeking, above party politics type of leader of Ózd.

The party's local policies can be described by anti-elitism and law and order approach. In his campaign, Janiczak promised that he will *call to account the former leaders* of the city as the period of 2010-2014 can be characterized by corruption and misappropriation. After his victory, the mayor initiated a few monitoring processes of the local government's operation without any significant results. In relation with this, the mayor pledged in his campaign to guarantee the *full transparency and accountability* of the local government. From 2014, every proposals of the local council, videos of every council meeting are available (in addition, they have a live cover in the local TV programme) and the local government's decisions are published in its weekly print magazine. Moreover, the all local politicians' declarations of financial interests are public and available at the local government's webpage.

Jobbik's *nationalism and anti-Roma attitude* appears only indirectly in the local policies, through the law and order approach of the local government. The basic principle of the local leadership can be summarized as they want to help the citizens that obey the law and prevent the wrongdoings of the "disruptive" citizens. Formally, this politics does not differentiate between Roma and non-Roma people, but as the mayor claimed, most of the "disruptive" people in Ózd are Roma. One example for the law and order approach can be the issue of social housing. One the one hand, the local government revokes the rent for five years in its apartments for married people under 35 years, if they have high-school graduation or a profession, plus they promise to have two children in five years. On the other hand, tenants have to have a clean criminal record (with a certificate of good conduct) to apply for social housing, on which the mayor can decide personally. This approach is obviously discriminative, since former criminal acts should not be considered in social housing decisions. The mayor claims that the local government is not anti-Roma, it wants to help the people through social benefits and (more importantly) with creation of jobs in the city – he also adds, that the people that do not want to work have to leave municipality. Janiczak's argument is that these people (most likely) want to

maintain a criminal lifestyle instead of working, but as this lifestyle will not be tolerated in Ózd, they will leave the city voluntarily.

To *maintain the order*, the Janiczak-led local government took various measures, e.g. the mayor personally donated alarms to elder people and the local police got horses and quads for patrolling and chasing criminals. When the central government had a procurement for building prisons, Ózd was one of the first municipalities to apply (successfully). As the mayor argued, building a prison in Ózd has multiple benefits. The most important is that it will create more than 200 new jobs in the city, but another important consequence is that it will repel the criminals to commit crimes. To make sure that citizens agree with his plan, Janiczak initiated a local consultation. The result: 80 percent of the responders wanted to have a prison in the city.

The mayor of Ózd demonstrated his party's law and order attitude even with the issue of communal work: to ensure the effectiveness of the communal work, the local government video cameras were issued to the work inspectors. To get a job as a communal worker, the applicants needed to agree to let the inspectors to record their working.[16]

In sum, Janiczak's Ózd a spectacular example of how populist right-wing radicalism works on government on the local level. On the one hand, mayoral duties and seeking re-election demands policies that might imply distancing from narrow party-lines and former radicalism. However, on the other hand, local government policies offer opportunities for law and order populism (targeting foremost the Roma population) and for a personal appeal in the name of anti-elitism.

The electoral result of 2019 shows that Jobbik could be successful locally with this politics, while the national party lost its positions with its above described de-radicalization: Janiczak and the Jobbik-affiliated candidates had much better results than the Jobbik nationally.

5.3 Italy

Government action focused on different priorities in the two contexts. This is of course due to the specific demand from citizenry, but it also depends on the relevance accorded by M5S and League to distinctive policies and narratives.

Turin

Until 2018 the M5S had postulated the impossibility of making electoral alliances with other parties. This dogma has then fallen when the movement along with the League has created the first government Conte in June 2019. In 2016, Chiara Appendino therefore did not try to sign any alliance, instead she put forward a proposal in clear discontinuity with that of the left-wing and right-wing mainstream parties. By winning the ballot, the M5S achieved the majority of seats (24/35) and established a one-party government.

The M5S defines itself as a post-ideological movement, neither right nor left (Ceccarini and Bordignon 2013). In reality, both orientations coexist within it both in terms of supply and political demand. The first Conte government has brought out the most right-wing positions of a part of M5S representatives and of its constituency which have had no problems in allying

[16] The Hungarian National Authority for Data Protection and Freedom of Information disapproved this method, although Ózd was not fined.

with Matteo Salvini's League and supporting explicitly right-wing policies based on security, rejection of migrants, and nationalism (Marangoni & Luca Verzichelli 2019). The experience of Chiara Appendino as mayor of Turin tells another story about the movement. Here, the main issues of their campaign and initial phase of government are clearly oriented toward the left side of the political spectrum. Among those, we found the environmental issue, support for small businesses instead of mass distribution and large retailers; citizens' participation and government transparency; facing new poverties; promoting social integration of immigrants; defence of public water and of the rights of the LGBT community[17]. The government action, however, collides with the limits of governing, first of all the economic one: the main achievements have symbolic value but limited or zero economic costs (i.e. same-sex marriages), while those projects requiring substantial investments (i.e. redevelopment of the suburb) remain only partially implemented.

These proposals are communicated through a narrative based on two classic elements of populism: the exaltation of the people and denigration of the elites (Mudde 2007). This develops through a Manichean vision of the society which perfectly meets the logic of the ballot: we, the people, against them, the corrupt and colluded System. In this narrative

The last election ad was based precisely on this dichotomy: 'I live in a city divided into two: the city of the lines in front of museums and the city of the lines in front of the soup kitchen[18]. Appendino aims at representing the people intended as the poor, the people living in the suburbs, those who want to rebel against the status quo of mainstream parties. At the same time, she blames the elites intended as the political class that has ruled the city for the past 20 years, what she calls 'the system'. This narrative becomes widespread during the campaign period and contributes to increasing the perceived marginality of large sections of citizenship (Cepernich, Pellegrino and Cittadino 2018). It helps the electoral mobilization, but at the same time it creates among the citizenry growing expectations in the work of the M5S.

Treviso

As mentioned above, Treviso embodies the very soul of the LN. The party ruled the city for almost twenty years alone without the need of external allies wherewith to mediate or mitigate policy proposals. It is only during the last mandate of Gobbo – between 2008 and 2013 – that the party ran the city in coalition with Popolo della Libertà. Nonetheless, given the large electoral consensus the LN's mayors could set autonomously the local political agenda. Security issues were permanently at the centre of the policy activity. Beside the governance routine of a small city, indeed, the local government emphasized its efforts in addressing common crimes and fighting immigration. In this sense, at the local level Treviso reifies in terms of extreme policy proposals the LN's exclusionist populist discourse targeting immigrants, or Roma communities as the 'others' menacing the peoples' safety, wellbeing and

[17] The election manifesto and major achievements are available at: chiaraappendino.it/programma (last access: May 2020)

[18] See L'ultimo appello elettorale di Chiara Appendino a colpi di cartelli (The last electoral ad of Chiara Appendino using placards), https://video.lastampa.it/importati/l-ultimo-appello-elettorale-di-chiara-appendino-a-colpi-di-cartelli/56077/56075?

common identity. In Treviso, the populism blaming of the 'others' is taken to its extreme, as both Gentilini and Gobbo positions against immigration were explicitly xenophobic.

From a policy view point, it should be noticed that the Treviso local government engaged in several symbolic measures targeting immigrants. There is one very explicative case that is worth to mention to provide a better understanding. In 1997, Gentilini ordered the removal of all the bench seats in the city centre with the explicit purpose to avoid bivouac of migrants, accused to deal drugs and threatening the citizens' security. The same approach was adopted by Gobbo. For example, during his second mandate a large number of security cameras were installed across the street in order to strengthen the control of the territory by law enforcement and prevent common crimes. Incidentally, when justifying the need of a tight control over the city streets, the mayor referred to (possible) crimes committed by migrants and Roma people. In 2018, when the LN came back to lead Treviso, security was still the core of the LN's proposals. First of all, Mario Conte proposed to develop a dedicated app allowing citizens to trace and map common crimes across the city or even to signal in case they may notice suspicious people around their neighbours (it is even trivial to clarify that during rallies 'suspicious people' was a locution used as equivalent with immigrants). Also, Conte's manifesto included also the proposal to oblige foreign people residing in the city area to sign a document agreement in order to commit to not engage in criminal activities. Most of these have not been (yet) implemented, nonetheless, it is worth noticing that as a signal of continuity with the traditional League's legacy. Indeed, once in office Conte immediately reintroduced the famous Gentilini's policy and removed the bench seats from the city centre – that were placed again during the centre-left government between 2014 and 2018.

5.4 Spain

The three cases differ in the way the parties behaved once in government but the two local cases related to Podemos show the conflict between discourse and institutionalisation. The case of the regional government of Andalusia is very recent and is still transforming.

City of Madrid

Podemos entered in office in 2015 in a minority government so they needed the support of other groups in the plenary. However, due to the structure of Spanish local government, the party was able to effectively govern during the four-year period.

Changes in the government were immediately evident. The first period of the new government in office was characterized by symbolic decisions and policies and also by internal problems among the members of the group. In fact, tensions among the members were present during all the period. However, the ideological position of the government during the period of office can hardly be considered as "populist". The references to "the people" and "the political class" almost disappeared and, although there were some strategic policies launched in this period, these can be considered as "new municipalism" or progressive policies.

In this case we can identify at least three decisions clearly related to the narrative of the party:

- Changes in the names of the streets
  Madrid, as many other cities in Spain, maintained many names of streets linked to the Franco regime. The new government promote a research in order to identify

them a suggest new names. This was one of the measures that could be clearly linked to the original symbolic policies, and the generation of a narrative about the transition and the co-existence of democratic structures with some symbolic elements related to the Franco regime. The first draft of the study generated controversy because included some names that implied doubts. In a second attempt in 2017, the project was finally approved.

- Attempt to remunicipalisation of local public services
  The new government promoted the remunicipalisation of some local public services. The funeral company was transformed into a public company and actions concerning the services related to sports facilities and the street cleaning were developed. However, all of them experience problems. In the first case, the controversy ended in courts, and the other two provoked tensions with the unions and workers of the services. Although the original programme implied the remunicipalisation of a wide range of service, the processes supposed many practical difficulties.
- Introduction of restriction of the use of private cars related to reduction of pollution and recovery of the streets for "the people".
  The City Council prohibited the use of private cars in some areas of the city and the conversion of some streets in pedestrian areas, in some cases as temporary solutions. This programme was strongly confronted by the opposition who in fact took it to courts.

The discourse, the narrative and the political activity of the government tended to evolve to an institutionalised position. However, tensions among the members of the candidacy were frequent and intense. In fact, the candidacy did not concur to the following elections and a new political party appeared as a split in Podemos. The results were not sufficient to achieve the government and, in this case, the government of the candidacy linked to Podemos was substituted by the Popular Party in coalition with Ciudadanos (a liberal-conservative party) and with the support of VOX.

City of Cadiz

"Por Cádiz sí se puede" did not won the election but the candidacy achieved enough support in the plenary to elect their head of list as Mayor with the support of "Ganemos Cádiz" and the Socialist Party (PSOE). This candidacy originally linked to Podemos had been governing Cádiz since 2015 (currently under the name of "Adelante Cádiz").

In this case, the City Council promoted the remunicipalisation of some local public services. Although a tendency to institutionalisation can also be identified, the members of the government and the City Council maintained some of the references to "the people" and to the subjects that identify the candidacy with some populist discourses. They concur to the elections of 2019 with a new electoral brand "Adelante Cádiz", that included "Por Cádiz sí se puede" and "Ganemos Cádiz". In this case, the candidacy won the elections and was able to continue in office.

In this case, the changes in the discourse were less evident, although the narrative also evolved to a more institutionalised register. The formation of the government of coalition in the Spanish government of Podemos and PSOE generated discrepancies with some territorial allies and

particularly with the Andalusian section "Adelante Andalucía" that finally also abandoned the Podemos network.

Andalusia regional government

Vox is needed to achieve majorities in the Parliament of Andalusia. Thus, Vox is not the ruling party but this party can influence the policies and discourse of the government in a negotiation process.

An analysis of VOX's activity in the Parliament of Andalusia reveals a certain interest by this party in matters related to feminism and women, their activities and public subsidies. In a single week, the VOX parliamentary group in Andalusia presented four questions and requests to speak at the Plenary and Commission in relation to feminist matters: a report on subsidies granted to the Andalusian Women's Institute from 2015 until the time of the request, questions related with subsidies for associations of an exclusive nature and questions about the support by the Junta de Andalucía for the demonstration on women's day. It is important to also note that one of the first parliamentary initiatives by the VOX parliamentary group on entry into the Andalusian Parliament in early 2019 was to request information on the funding of the Andalusian Women's Institute (report, profit and losses accounts for 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018, etc.). The VOX parliamentary group also introduced matters from outside of the Community of Andalusia into public debate, such as the political situation in Catalonia. VOX presented a non-legislative motion in relation to the Committees for the Defense of the Republic (CDR) and the parties supporting separatism in Catalonia, considering this matter to be of equal importance to the party as feminism.

5.5 Turkey

Which is their position in these governments / institutions

One thing that should be clear by this report is the asymmetric relationship between the central government and the local governments. The ruling government in Turkey had received full and unconditional support from Ankara and Istanbul municipalities as long as these municipalities remained under the pro-AKP mayors. There are many instances showing how Ankara and Istanbul municipalities complemented the social, economic and political agenda promoted by the AKP government.

In AKP's populism, one of the recurring themes is the emphasis on the Ottoman past, which was the Golden Age according to the AKP party elite. For example, Kaliber and Kaliber (2019) demonstrate how Ottoman legacy, the Islamic and Middle Eastern elements of Turkey's identity is emphasized in the AKP's populist foreign policy. This emphasis on the Ottoman past under the AKP rule serves to a re-identification process in which the neo-Ottomanist nationalist ideology is adopted by the society and becomes a part of the everyday life (Erdem, 2017). This Ottoman legacy was also emphasized in domestic policy through TV shows on the state-sponsored broadcasting, leaders' speeches and a new historical discourse praising the achievements of the Ottoman Empire.

Istanbul, which was the Ottoman capital, had a special place in this discourse. In 2011, after signing a protocol aiming to increase collaboration with the Istanbul municipality, the Foreign Minister Davutoglu declared, "We want to see Istanbul as the new and great capital of the great

humanity that is beyond this geography" (IHA, 2011). In the same speech, Davutoglu emphasized the government's desire to see Istanbul as a financial and cultural capital with a global influence. The AKP's vision of re-imagining the Turkish past with the Ottoman heritage at its center could be seen in Istanbul municipality's cultural activities as well. Two examples are particularly striking. One is the celebration of the conquest of Istanbul (Fetih Gunu) on 29 May, which was co-sponsored by the Istanbul municipality and the central government under the pro-AKP mayors. Up until 2019, high-level government figures including Erdoğan joined these celebrations as well. Another example is the Panorama 1453 Museum, which was opened by the Istanbul municipality in 2009. The whole museum is dedicated to the conquest of Istanbul (Constantinople) by Ottoman armies in 1453. Erdoğan himself participated in the opening ceremony of this museum in 2009 (Panorama 1453, 2020). Therefore, Istanbul municipality provided direct support for the central government's cultural vision for the rest of the country.

Istanbul municipality had also supported the central government by providing its support to several infrastructure projects. For instance, before the 2011 general elections, the then PM Erdoğan declared that Kanal Istanbul would be one of the priorities of the AKP government if they were re-elected. Accordingly, Erdoğan referred to this project several times and argued that it would have important benefits to the city and the country. In 2018, the Istanbul mayor signed a protocol named "Kanal Istanbul Cooperation Protocol" with two ministries[19]; namely the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure and the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning.

Ankara municipality was also instrumental in providing support to the AKP government in its cultural war against the Kemalist elite. Melih Gokcek, after being elected as the new mayor of Ankara in 1994, decided to change the emblem of the municipality. The new emblem had a mosque in its center. The Kemalist elite resisted this decision and a lawsuit ensued between the Ankara municipality and the secular establishment. After the court turned down this change in the emblem, in 2004, the AKP government implemented a new law allowing municipalities to determine their emblems (Milliyet, 2014). Another example is the now infamous Ottomanspor (*Osmanlispor*) incident during Gokcek administration. Originally named Ankara Belediyespor, the football club was founded in 1978 and it was a small club receiving minor financial support from the Ankara municipality. After Gokcek won the 1994 local elections, he paid special attention to this club. The club was privatized in 2005 and its name was changed to Osmanlispor in 2013. Despite the privatization of the club, Gokcek did not cease his support to the club. His son Ahmet Gokcek became the president of the club. The Ankara municipality allocated a brand-new stadium to this club for 25 years. The architecture of this stadium was unique in the sense that it was heavily inspired by the Ottoman motives and history. The figure below (Figure 4) shows one of the entries of the stadium. Two janissaries (Ottoman-era infantry) are guarding the entry. The doors are designed as castle doors and the walls are also decorated to look like castle walls. Accordingly, one can argue that the neo-Ottomanist emphasis that is present in the central government policies was perpetuated by the Ankara metropolitan municipality at the local level.

The Ankara municipality had also provided the government support for its infrastructure projects. One controversial occasion was the construction of a highway known as 'ODTU

[19] Imamoglu, the new mayor of İstanbul, withdrew from this protocol in December 2019 arguing that this artificial canal would have drastic consequences for the city and the natural balance in the Marmara Sea.

highway'. ODTU is a major university located in Ankara, which is historically known for its strong leftist organization among the students and the faculty. In 2017, the Ankara municipality and the ODTU students was on a collision course as the Ankara municipality insisted that a highway crosscutting the ODTU campus would be constructed (HalkTV, 2017). The important point is that the highway was needed for the new gigantic hospital (Bilkent Sehir Hastanesi) that was built by a private firm after an agreement with the central government. The AKP government had decided to privatize the administration of hospitals as a part of their plans to 'reform' the health system. Under this scheme, the government merged comparatively smaller hospitals located within the city and generally constructed a gigantic city hospital in the outskirts of the cities. Bilkent Sehir Hospital was an example of this new scheme. According to the operating firm of the hospital, the cost of the hospital was around 890 million euros and it has a bed capacity of 3,704, which made it the third biggest hospital in terms of bed capacity in the world (CCN Holding, 2020). The ODTU highway was needed for an easier transportation between the city and the hospital (Ankara Belediyesi, 2017) and Gokcek, the Ankara mayor led all efforts towards the construction of this highway while the central government chose to watch the events from distance. Eventually, under the protection of the security forces, the construction of the highway started in September 2017.

Effective impact in the institutional activity and functioning

It is difficult to establish a clear and direct effect between municipal policies and the benefit of a populist party, as measurement of such an effect is not always easy. However, the municipal policies in some cases definitely benefited the central government. One particular policy realized in conjunction with the AKP government was the gentrification and construction in different neighborhoods in Istanbul. One of the campaigns of the 2011 general elections was 'Stability shall continue, Istanbul shall grow' after which the government declared major construction projects for Istanbul, which included the construction of the third bridge on Bosphorus, the construction of the biggest airport in Istanbul and the construction of the Kanal Istanbul (Cavusoglu and Strutz, 2014). The declaration of new construction projects in Istanbul was also a reaffirmation of the AKP government's economic growth strategy, which was based on construction business rather than industrial activities such as manufacturing (Karatetepe, 2016). This included allowing the construction industry to tear down and rebuilt apartment buildings and business centers in the most popular neighborhoods of the city. In many cases, the reconstructed building was higher and larger than what it used to be.

Ankara and Istanbul municipalities played major roles in this growth strategy by oiling the wheels for the construction industry and the central government. In 2010, an amendment to the Municipal Law (no. 5998) article 73 granted municipalities with the right to implement city renovation projects on planned or unplanned, empty or built-up locations (Bektas, 2015). This revision aimed at boosting the construction industry and lifting possible obstacles for the continuation of projects. Another law (no: 6306) that was enacted by the government in May 2012 enabled the municipalities and other public bodies (i.e. the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning) to expropriate estates and land that are threatened by natural disasters such as earthquakes and disasters (6306 Sayili Kanunun Uygulama Yonetmeligi, 2012). Ankara and

Istanbul municipalities, empowered by these two laws, assisted the central government to induce economic growth by boosting construction industry[20].

In Ankara, between February 2005 and April 2007 alone, the Ankara municipality either granted permission or was in the process of granting permission to reconstruction operations in 30 different locations in Ankara (Ankara Buyuksehir Belediyesi, 2020). Some of these locations were as big as 3,650,000 m2. In fact, of 80,000 ha of total size of Ankara, 45% was declared as city renovation locations.

The situation was no different in Istanbul. The Istanbul municipality established the City Renovation Directorate in order to regulate the re-construction of old buildings within the city. This body is responsible for the coordination of city renovation projects in Istanbul. Another important example is KIPTAS, which is a construction firm owned by the Istanbul municipality. According to their website, the most important duty of KIPTAS is to prevent unplanned urbanization and offer access to affordable housing (KIPTAS, 2020). However, KIPTAS has also constructed luxurious gated-communities. One particular example was Finance Town (*Finanskent*), which offered 899 houses in the city center. The name picked for the project is significant as this name is in parallel with the government policy to reframe Istanbul as a financial center in the world.

Another policy that benefited the AKP government was the establishment of a patronage relationship with the NGOs, which are close to the government. The case of one particular NGO, TURGEV is very well documented. According to TURGEV website, Erdoğan himself established TURGEV in 1996 and his daughter Esra Albayrak is a member of the Board of Directors. Other prominent names of the AKP (including Erdoğan's son Necmeddin Bilal Erdoğan) are also members of this NGO (TURGEV, 2020). TURGEV is active in the area of education and provides accommodation for students as well. Erdoğan himself pays a particular attention to this NGO because he deems the education of new generations loyal to the AKP important. Under AKP mayors, the Istanbul municipality was open in its policy of supporting TURGEV any means possible. For instance, in 2015, this municipality allocated 6 buildings free of charge for the use TURGEV (Hürriyet, 2015). Resources (in cash or in kind) that were provided to TURGEV before 2018 amounted to 41.1 million TL ($11.7 million in 2017 prices) (Toker, 2019). The AKP mayor Topbas did not shy away from attending the activities of TURGEV. For instance, he personally attended the opening ceremonies of TURGEV student accommodations (AA, 2015).

It was more difficult to find evidence for financial or in-kind support of the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality for these particular NGOs, partly because of the fact that the pro-AKP NGOs concentrated their activities in Istanbul. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the Ankara municipality did not provide support for these NGOs. For instance, Melih Gokcek

[20] It is hardly a surprise that city renovation projects started in 2012 with a ceremony in Istanbul. This ceremony was joined by the AKP leader and PM, Erdoğan, the Minister of Environment and Urban Planning, and the Istanbul mayor Kadir Topbas. In this ceremony, Erdoğan made references to the law 6306 and its importance in the context of city renovations (İstanbul Buyuksehir Belediyesi, 2012).

visited Ensar Vakfi[21] to deliver a speech for the members of this NGO (Ensar Vakfı, 2013). In this particular speech, Gokcek talked about new mosque constructions sponsored by the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality, his plans for renovation of the certain neighborhoods in Ankara, and his long relationship with the Ensar Vakfı.

11 days before the local elections in Istanbul, opposition news media reported that the İstanbul metropolitan municipality increased the amount of financial aid to the needy by fourfold from 100 TL per month to 400 TL per month. According to these reports, this increase were announced to the recipients by calling them where they were told that "Mr. Binali (the AKP candidate in İstanbul) greets you" (T24, 2019). This move is not particularly surprising given that research shows how leaders and parties use direct incentives to obtain the votes of the urban poor (Ark Yildirim, 2018). Indeed, social aid schemes ran by the AKP-run municipalities has increased significantly throughout the years. In 2011, the Istanbul metropolitan municipality provided financial aid to 41,093 people and in-kind aid to 1,240 people (İstanbul Buyuksehir Belediyesi Faaliyet Raporu, 2015). These numbers had registered important increases through the years. In 2018, 202,348 people received financial aid while the number of people receiving in-kind aid jumped to 6,498 (İstanbul Buyuksehir Belediyesi Faaliyet Raporu, 2018). The Ankara metropolitan was also active in social aid schemes particularly in in-kind aid schemes. In 2010, this municipality delivered 265,000 food and cleaning materials packages to 125,525 households while 80,000 households received coal aid. The needy also received other in-kind aid such as clothes, hot food, and boots and winter coats for school children (Ankara Buyuksehir Belediyesi Faaliyet Raporu '10, 2010). In 2018, 330,000 households received food and cleaning materials packages while 60,000 households received coal[22] (Ankara Buyuksehir Belediyesi 2018 Faaliyet Raporu, 2018).

Another instance where both municipalities benefited the government came after the 2018 economic crisis where the prices of basic consumer goods skyrocketed. When inflation started to hurt voters, Erdoğan announced that Ankara and Istanbul municipalities would establish discount centers in around the city (i.e. public squares) where the consumers could buy vegetables and legumes under the market prices (BBC, 2019). Erdoğan argued that these sales are measures to fight inflation in Turkey. Though these sales were serving the central government, they were financed not by the central government but municipal government. According to a news piece, the three-month cost of these sales to the Istanbul municipality was close to 8 million TL (around $1.5 million) (T24, 2019a).

Impact on the discourse

As emphasized in previous sections, both Ankara and Istanbul municipalities had become more accommodative of the Ottoman heritage under AKP mayors. For instance, Istanbul municipality sponsored an event to commemorate the 100th year of the death of Abdulhamid II, one of the controversial sultans of the Ottoman Empire, who has been used as a symbol by the AKP government in its cultural war against the old elite in Turkey. During this event, the Istanbul mayor gave a statement, where he argued the Ottoman Empire provided the people

[21] Ensar Vakfı is an NGO, which was established in 1979. This NGO states its mission to provide education and training in the realm of religion and ethics as well as norms (Ensar Vakfı, 2020). People, who are close to the AKP and the Erdoğan family, established Ensar Vakfı (Tele1, 2020).
[22] This decline in number of households receiving coal aid is probably due to proliferation of natural gas system in Ankara, causing a decline for the demand for coal. However, this is just an educated guess.

with peace and tranquility for 600 years. He added that no other state has provided the same kind of tranquility to the world, and probably no state could ever provide it again (Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, 2018).

Under the AKP mayor Melih Gokcek, the Ankara municipality has adopted a more direct and provocative communication style. Weyland (2017) argues that one of the characteristics of the populist leaders is to use unmediated and quasi-direct mechanisms with their followers. Research also shows that populist politicians are more uninhibited, improvisational, direct and politically incorrect while mainstream politicians are more proper, well behaved, composed, learned (Ostiguy and Roberts, 2016). Melih Gokcek presents a typical case featuring these characteristics. He is a Twitter celebrity with 4 million followers. Gokcek had used Twitter to advertise the municipal projects as well as to spark debates or to answer his critics fervently. To give an instance, two different tweets he posted on 28 and 29 September 2017 included video clips. In one of them he was talking about a new project completed in Ankara (Melih Gokcek, 2017a) while in another he was visiting an orphanage and distributing toys to the children (2017b). He also posted several tweets where he either criticized the opposition or answered his critics. To give an instance, when opposition criticized the central government's decision to increase the motorized vehicle tax by %40, Gokcek took it to the Twitter and argued that the raise in the tax amounts to the cost one cigarette per day and the opposition should stop criticizing this decision (Melih Gokcek, 2017c), In another occasion, Gokcek posted his son's photos in military uniform[23] after a Twitter user argued that if Gokcek supports Turkish military operations in Turkey he should send his son to Syria (Melih Gokcek, 2017d).

6 Evolution of political parties, party systems, and narratives and manifestos

This section aims to analyse the evolution of political parties and the party system, once in government. We wanted to explore if these populist parties changed since they are in office or they have become institutionally relevant, including possible internal tensions and changes in other organisations. We also focus on the contrast between the manifesto and reality and thus, in the capacity of these organisations to achieve successful performance and meet the expectations and the correspondent reaction of their voters and members.

6.1 Evolution of political parties and the party system

6.1.1 Czech Republic

The evolution of ANO on the sub-state level has been strongly determined by its highly horizontal as well as vertical organizational structure. Horizontally, according to the Statue of the party the crucial competencies are vested to the central decision making body and to the leader of the party in particular. Vertically, the autonomy of local and regional party branches is limited and they are dependent on the decisions taken by the central nationwide party structures. Consequently, the party has been highly efficient when dealing with "problematic" individual representatives or even whole branches of the party (either critical to the party

[23] Military service is compulsory for male citizens in Turkey. This photo was probably a reminiscent of Gokcek's son while in service.

headquarters or involved to various scandals including corruption). The problematic individuals have been expelled from the party and the branches have been cancelled. Although it has not been the case of Prague or Ostrava, the specific organizational party structure resembling a private business company has influenced the content of the electoral campaign on the level of cities.

The emergence of ANO as a nearly dominant political party both in Prague and Ostrava in the 2014 local election has changed the nature of the dynamics of the party comptetition in these two cities and also beyond. There are at least two reasons for it. First, ANO emerged as political party cutting across the existing dimensions of party competitions (based on its technocratic populism and rejecting the traditionally dominant left-right divide in the Czech Republic). Second, the populist nature of the party and the controversial history of the leader has made the party a bit toxic when it comes to the coalition collaboration.

6.1.2 Italy

Although they have been in coalition at times, M5S and League are profoundly different: they have different political histories, divergent political programs, and they adhere to different varieties of populism.

M5S was formally founded in 2009 by Beppe Grillo, an Italian comedian, and the late web entrepreneur Gianroberto Casaleggio (who died in 2016). However, the party's history began many years before that. Beppe Grillo's political life began in the early 1990s after his exit from Italian public television (Rai) because of sharp criticism he aimed at the governing party in 1988. After that, Grillo performed in theatres and public squares. During his performances he attacked the Italian elites and decried Italy's problems with sharp irony. This allowed Grillo to build a solid group of followers, who supported him in the first phases of creating M5S (Gualmini and Corbetta 2013).

The political movement guided by Grillo started to take part in local elections in 2008. At first, its adherents presented themselves under local political organisations (civic lists) and used different logos, but since 2009 they have used the M5S logo. Although M5S has repeatedly refused to be labelled as a party, holding itself aloof from 'professional politics', beginning with the 2013–2018 legislature it has played by the rules of electoral politics as a full-fledged political party. The 2013 Italian general election was a turning point for the party. In its first national electoral campaign it had striking success: Grillo's anti-political style resonated well with Italians' deep distrust for the political class. A quarter of Italian voters (25.56%) cast their ballot for M5S, making it the most-voted-for party in Italy. True to its criticism of the political class, M5S refused to join any governmental alliance and entered the Italian Parliament as an opposition party.

The transformation of Grillo's Movement into a proper institutional political actor was completed during the 2013–2018 legislature. In 2018, M5S approached the Italian elections as an experienced political party ready to take up posts in government. Therefore, although the party had always considered itself a horizontal movement with a single charismatic leader, it adopted a hierarchical structure. After having revised the party's statutes, the M5S party membership formally appointed Luigi Di Maio as 'Capo Politico' (Political Boss) of the movement with full responsibility for leading the party through the 2018 election campaign. The result of the M5S strategy was rewarding: the party was confirmed as Italy's most popular with 32.7% of the vote.

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The party has combined its clear anti-establishment rhetoric with a blurry ideological positioning. When it originated, the movement espoused a vaguely leftist ideology. The five stars in its logo represented its five left-wing objectives: sustainable development, publicly owned water, environmental protection, eco-friendly transportation, and the right to internet access (D'Alimonte 2019, 120). However, following its success in the 2013 general election, in which M5S received a considerable share of its votes from previously right-wing voters (see, e.g., Tronconi 2013), the party shifted its positioning on the political spectrum. Some important policies discussed in the Italian Parliament between 2013 and 2018 testify to this. In fact, the M5S opposed some left-wing initiatives, such as the decriminalisation of illegal immigration and a law allowing homosexual couples to adopt children. The distance between M5S and traditionally left-wing parties became even more evident in 2018 when the party decided to ally itself with the League. Nevertheless, in 2019 M5S moved back towards the left. During the European Parliament election campaign that year, the party not only softened its previous Eurosceptic position, but also embraced left-wing stances. In its manifesto it included the implementation of leftist policies such as a minimum wage system for the EU, more generous welfare provisions for European families, and investments in the health-care and education systems (Landini and Paparo 2019).

The blurring of its left-right positioning reflects M5S's refusal to be associated with the traditional political families. The party argues that it is beyond politics as it is usually conceived (Bordignon and Ceccarini 2013; D'Alimonte 2019). Moreover, M5S's political behaviour has caused a number of political scholars to describe the party as having a 'post-ideological profile' (Bordignon and Ceccarini 2015) and 'a case of pure populism' that is 'beyond left and right classification' (Tarchi 2015).

In this process of institutionalization of the movement, the Turin case shows that this blurred political orientation is the result of several different orientations within the movement and not necessarily a precise worldview. Chiara Appendino and, more generally, the experience of the M5S in Piedmont appear as still linked to the very first ideas of the movement, based on issues undoubtedly closer to the left side than to the right ones such as sustainable development, publicly owned water, environmental protection, LGBT rights and social integration.

Lega Nord

The LN has been the last party surviving the First Republic. Emerging as a group of small regional parties (the 'leghe') in Eighties, the LN emerges as one of the most important political actors within the Italian political scenario during the early Nineties (Diamanti 1993a; 1993b; 1996). The collapse of the traditional mass-based parties entailed a void of representation and the LN was able to provide a new and alternative representation to a discontent portion of electorate. The revival of the centre-periphery cleavage was combined with a populist discourse (Diamanti 1996). On the one hand the party promoted conservative values – with references to Christian traditions – by blaming immigration as a threat for both security and cultural identity of the people of the North. On the other hand, the party target the central state as the elite menacing the interests of the North for protecting the laziness of the Southern of Italy. Very rapidly, the LN was able to get the ownership of two main topics within the Italian public debate: issues related to regional autonomy, governance and relationship between local and national authorities and security and immigration issues. This latter dimension became the core activity of LN when in service in local government, where along the years the party developed a solid governance experience.

Changes in party organization were driven by the judicial and health issues involving the charismatic leadership of Umberto Bossi putting into question the entire party elite ruling the party since the beginning. In this crisis, a new generation of party officials emerged. Closed primaries in late 2013 signed the change with the appointment of Matteo Salvini at the head of the party. This shift at the head of the party entailed a deep organizational renewal – whereas a new generation of leaders took the lead of the party – and determined an ideological re-definition. During the last years of Bossi's leadership, the party took increasingly radical right-wing positions and then continued to radicalise under its new leader, Salvini (Passarelli and Tuorto 2018). While Bossi's LN was right-leaning and regionally based, Salvini's League is a staunchly far-right populist party. As the party moved onto the national level, patriotism replaced regionalism, and the European Union and immigrants replaced Rome and southern Italians as the people's enemy (D'Alimonte 2019, 122). The party has increased its focus on issues of immigration, national identity, and law and order (Albertazzi et al. 2018). For example, in the 2019 campaign for European Parliament Election, the League demanded greater respect for the sovereignty of nation-states, repatriation of illegal migrants, and stricter rules for securing the EU's external borders (Landini and Paparo 2019)

The League is a clear example of a right-wing populist party, combining anti-establishment appeal with nativism (see, e.g., Albertazzi et al. 2018). Criticism of Italy's national political elites was always a mainstay of the Northern League's leader Bossi's rhetoric. (Ivaldi et al. 2017). The LN leader attacked 'Rome', which he conceived of as the place where the political and cultural elites live, and from which they run the country for the benefit of the South and at the expense of the homogenous and hard-working community of Northern Italians (Spektorowski 2003; Albertazzi et al. 2018, 648). Salvini's League shows no significant difference in this respect. The party continues to display a pattern of explicitly delegitimising the political establishment and other elites (see, e.g., Bobba and Roncarolo 2018; Bobba 2019).

The impact of the changes within party organization is visible also at the local level. With reference to the case of Treviso, indeed, we found a precise mirroring of the League's national instances. The shift towards a net right-wing position could be identified also in the new mayor provisions and positions. Being one of the new emerging leaders of the League, Conte fully endorses Salvini's proposals at the national level and replicating on a local scale the exclusionist policies targeting migrants or ethnic minorities promoted by the national leader. Treviso maintains its role of local laboratory, as a proper example of how works the League when in charge alone, without constraints set by coalition partners to comply with.

6.1.3 Spain

City council of Madrid

The evolution of the government of Podemos in Madrid should be analysed in context and the evolution of the leader of the party, Pablo Iglesias, should be stressed. When, in 2015, Podemos gained access for the first time to certain institutions, Pablo Iglesias constantly repeated that his status as a politician would not change his status as an ordinary citizen. He continued claiming to belong to "the people", although meeting the elite. There were abundant populist arguments in his discourse until 2016, when the party adopted a less populist strategy more in line with the discourse of the classical left. From then on, the discourse of Pablo Iglesias abandoned concepts such as that of 'political caste'. As previously mentioned, the reduction in the populist element of his discourse could be directly linked to the party's access to power. On the other

hand, Podemos suffered from several splits since it gained access to the institutions in 2015. The clearest example is the split by part of the subsidiary of Podemos in Madrid, giving rise to the municipal formation Más Madrid, and later to the national formation Más País. Important personalities such as Íñigo Errejón, Manuela Carmena, Rita Maestre (all of them relevant personalities) were expelled from membership of Podemos in this split.

Meanwhile, Ahora Madrid, the Podemos brand in Madrid, changed its party line between the time it entered government in 2015 and departure in 2019. From the outset, and according to their narrative, its manifesto was about politics by and for the people, challenging large multinationals and pressuring political and economic powers. Over time, it would need to deal with unexpected events that arose during the term, difficulties with development and implementation, and judicial denials. This led Manuela Carmena to dismiss a large number of her party members who had come from Podemos and Izquierda Unida and to absorb the Area of Culture. A similar case was the 2015 proposal for a general reduction in the wages of councillors in the party and a halt to evictions. Regarding the wage cuts, the Ahora Madrid councillors declared the matter impossible after taking office, due to the fact that this decision depended on a plenary vote and they did not achieve the number of members necessary for this vote. The reaction, was to donate part of their salaries to the party or other organisations, but this cannot be considered equivalent to a general reduction of wages. During the term, thus, Ahora Madrid's populist discourse became less intense once it was part of the institution, and it even renounced some of the key points of its manifesto.

City Council of Cádiz

Once in government, the mayor and the political group faced less internal tensions and, in fact, the complexities were provoked not by the conditions of the institutional context but by the relationship with the national headquarters of the organisation in Madrid. The Andalusian section, which also was plural structure including different groups, maintained a clearer left-wing not institutionalised discourse. They concurred to the 2019 municipal elections and won again in the city of Cadiz, obtaining better results than in 2015. Some moths after this election, Podemos arrived at the Spanish government and its discourse become more institutionalised in the context of a coalition government that had required the support of almost all the nationalist and peripheric political groups in the Spanish Parliament. The relations between the national headquarters and the Andalusian section become more tense and this finally ended with the split of the two organisations.

Regional government of Andalusia

Access of VOX to the institutions implied an important change. In some parliaments and plenaries, they represent the key to the formation of centre-right governments, allowing them to adopt a much more aggressive posture in relation to institutional reforms. In Andalusia, VOX proposed a series of essential (and completely reformist) measures for the formation of a PP-C's government: the elimination of the autonomous TV channel Canal Sur, the reform of the Statute of Autonomy so that Andalusia would stop being recognised as a national reality, the transfer of healthcare and education powers to the state, the repeal of the gender violence and historical memory laws, for example. As the days passed and the investiture date approached, VOX abandoned its demands and ended up agreeing to the investiture of the Andalusian leader of the PP in exchange for a declaration of intent shared with the People's Party. The situation was very similar in Madrid City Council. VOX imposed its demand for a three-party round

table between Citizens, People's Party and VOX in order to negotiate the points of the agreement for the investiture of Martínez-Almeida. Citizens rejected this meeting and VOX ended up lowering its demands as the investiture date approached. However, these issues had already become relevant in public debate and they lingered.

This reduction of intensity does not occur in other aspects, such as for example the institutional discourse of the formation. VOX raises the intensity of its discourse once it gains access to the institutions, where it has important communication channels at its disposal with which to access the citizens.

Relocation of the party system

The party system has been modified in all the cases. The emergence of Podemos and other forces in the 2015 municipal elections represented a loss of votes for all the parties with plenary representation in the 2011-2015 legislative term. The party which lost the most votes in the 2015 elections was the People's Party. The impact in electoral terms of VOX in much more significant in 2019.

A rearrangement of the structure of the party system can be identified in all cases and affecting both areas of the ideological axis. However, this was not only due to the emergence of VOX and Podemos, although some influences can be detected. The realignment affected also Ciudadanos in the right wing, and the creation of many joint candidacies in the left. Apparently, the party system local, regional and national, can still be under some fluctuations. The general trend is to more fragmentation, and although this tendency has different particular explanations in each case, the movement tend to a certain beating movement that in 2015 implied fragmentation and certain realignments in 2019.

In Cádiz, the candidacy that was linked to Podemos succeeded becoming the main party and aggregating other left-wing groups. In contrast, in Madrid City Council, the internal tensions persisted and, in this case, the emergence of VOX is crucial to understand the evolution of the government from 2015 (with a Podemos government) to 2019 (with a conservative coalition supported by VOX in government).

In the case of the regional government of Andalusia, the instability and internal tensions of Podemos and the emergence of VOX derived in a more fragmented assembly and in a coalition conservative government that requires the support of VOX.

6.1.4 Turkey

The change in the AKP policies did have a direct effect on the local governance as the relationship between the AKP party center and the AKP mayors in Ankara and Istanbul had always been asymmetrical. The mayors in these cities were subordinated to the party center through different mechanisms such as center's supervision over municipal budget and the ability of the AKP to determine candidates for mayoral seats. In addition, the political system in Turkey is extremely centralized leaving no room for the development of an independent party organization or party system at the local level. In this context, we can only talk about the evolution of the AKP after ascending to power in 2002.

The party system in Turkey is a multiparty regime where five parties were able to pass the threshold. These parties are the AKP, the CHP (the main opposition party), the MHP, the HDP

and the IYI Party. When the AKP came to power in 2002, only two parties were represented in the parliament; namely the AKP and the CHP. However, after 2007, the number of parties in the Turkish parliament had increased gradually.

Especially during its first term between 2002 and 2007, scholars celebrated the AKP as a democratizing force (Hale, 2005; Nasr, 2005) that could finally rescue the Turkish democracy from the tutelage of the strong military (Tas, 2015; Esen and Gumuscu, 2016). Indeed, the first term of the AKP (2002-2007), along with a strong drive for the EU membership, witnessed the normalization of civil-military reforms and liberalization of political discussion, which furthered hopes for the consolidation of democracy in a predominantly Muslim country (Tas, 2015; Esen and Gumuscu, 2016; Yilmaz and Bashirov, 2018; Sezal and Sezal, 2018; Somer, 2019). Nevertheless, even during the first term of the AKP, some scholars warned against the incurring cost of this democratization. Just after three years into the AKP government, Tepe (2005) for instance, argued that Turkish democratization under the AKP was characterized by lack of public engagement and weak intra-party democracy causing her to define the process as 'democracy without democrats'. Indeed, hopes for Turkish democratization were dashed as the AKP consolidated its power in the state apparatus. Some scholars argue that the AKP turned to authoritarian practices and populist policies when felt threatened by the Kemalist elite and an uncompromising opposition in 2007 (Dincsahin, 2010; Selcuk, 2016; Somer, 2019). After 2007, the AKP has been highly critical of the checks and balances defining a liberal democracy. Institutions such as presidency, the constitutional court, anti-government NGOs, the Council of Higher Education received their share of criticism from Erdoğan on many occasions (Dincsahin, 2010). A primary goal for the AKP was to neutralize and appropriate these institutions. In later years under the AKP rule, Turkey has witnessed a fusion of the state and the AKP, which resulted with deeply politicised state institutions (Esen and Gumuscu, 2016). In addition, high courts in Turkey including Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK) lost their independence after a highly controversial referendum allowing the AKP to introduce amendments to the constitution and appoint the majority of the members of the HSYK. Erdoğan also openly criticized and even defied decisions of the Constitutional Court and administrative courts. When an administrative court ordered the suspension of all construction on the now-complete presidential palace in Ankara, Erdoğan criticised the court decision and challenged the court to destroy the palace if it has the power (Tas, 2015).

6.2 From the manifesto to reality

Czech Republic

The electoral success of ANO in both municipalities under analysis was based mostly on the promise of the changes both in the style and in the effectivity of local politics and policies. It was even most apparent in Prague, the city with a reputation of corrupt behavior of political elites and embezzlement of the public money through non-transparent tenders and overpriced contracts. The position of the coalition led by ANO was complicated from the very beginning due to the ideological differences between the coalition partners. On one hand, there was a conservative Christian Democratic Party, moderate centrist Mayors and Independents and left Green Party represented among others by one of its most radical representatives.

The ambitious program and the discourse of ANO met with the reality of both lack of experience from local politics of its leader and then the mayor Krnáčová and the ideological distances from between the coalition partners. Therefore, it was very difficult to find an

agreement on e.g. the urbanistic plans and the overall preferences on the development of the city. Moreover, internal disputes in the coalition inhibited the functioning of the city council and even led to the atmosphere of deep distrust between the coalition partners. Consequently, the city of Prague governed by the coalition of ANO and the other two parties did not fulfilled many of the most important promises such as faster building of the infrastructure. The level of investments became lower, the situation with the lack of apartments (e.g. in the context of the services such as AirBnB) did not improve as well as the bad transport in the city symbolized by the unfinished tunnel under the city or the "frozen" project of a new Undergound line. ANO criticized politicized and corruption-like paid appointments of the representatives of political parties in the boards of city companies, however, the practice of the party resembled the one of its predecessors. As for the transparency of public tenders, there was a strong pressure on its impartiality, nevertheless, the fear from the potential criminalization of public tenders led to cancellation of many of them. The performance of the coalition in general and the mayor in particular led both to the change of the leader of the list for the 2018 election and to the significant decline of the support of ANO.

The performance of ANO in Ostrava was very different from Prague. Despite the described coalition quarrels and eventual changes in the coalition composition, ANO and the mayor Macura remained popular, mostly due the enacted policies (although Macura explained his popularity by the success of the party on the national level and by the popularity of Andrej Babiš, it clearly did not work for ANO in Prague). For instance, similarly to other big cities in the Czech Republic and elsewhere, Ostrava suffer from the lack of financially accessible apartments. The city council decided to support the city`s ownership of apartments to improve the situation on the housing market. Also, it invested into the public transport or sought to increase support of the ecological heating systems (pollution is traditionally a big issue in the heavy industrialized environment). The city council was also visibly in its effort to increase the tourist attractiveness of the city by supporting various cultural events including the international ones. While it is not possible to conduct a detailed and complex analysis of the enacted policy measures, the overall picture of the coalition led by ANO in Ostrava is that the city council invested a lot of resources (not necessarily just financial) into turning Ostrava into a modern and livable city.

Italy

Once in power, Turin's mayor, Chiara Appendino, is faced with difficulties of various kinds - economic, organizational, managerial - which soon belittle the promises made during the election campaign, and put a strain on the principles of the 5 Star Movement Turin. In particular, the redevelopment of the suburbs is only marginally implemented, the environmental issue does not find substantial solutions (Turin was and remains one of the most polluted cities in Italy), the relationship between administration and citizenship, which should have been inclusive and transparent, is remained almost unchanged compared to the previous mayor. The case of the M5S in Turin, in many respects, seems to be better described in terms of continuity with the previous administration rather than as the complete change envisaged. All this has consequences on the popularity of the mayor and especially on the electoral support to the movement. After three years in power, citizens disappointment is growing[24], the city is divided

[24] See Assandri, F. (2019) I delusi da Appendino: "Nessun cambiamento, è peggio del Pd". *La Stampa*, May 17, https://www.lastampa.it/torino/2019/05/17/news/i-delusi-da-appendino-nessun-cambiamento-e-peggio-del-pd-1.33702648.

into two between positive (48%) and negative judgments (46%)[25], while the M5S in Turin undergoes a collapse of votes passing from the 30.1% of 2016 to the 13.3% of 2019 (see figure 1).

The Turin case shows that the M5S even at the municipal level is paying the costs of governing and is undergoing a normalization process that weakens one of its most effective rhetorical weapons: anti-elitism. Having become part of the elite - albeit proclaiming itself as different - the M5S manages to keep only a small part of its promises losing most of its electoral appeal.

As concerns the Treviso case it is difficult to provide a clear assessment of the governance efficacy of Mario Conte. His governance mirrored precisely the core issues of its manifesto. Security issues – in continuity with the League tradition in town – became the centre of his political activity. Relying on a large majority, and backed by both the national and regional party leaders, he could set the policy agenda of his mandate by emphasizing the fight of common crimes and criticising immigration national policies. In this respect, Conte fully supports the political line of Salvini and organizes his communication accordingly, meaning sharing constantly the national leader claims on the security dimension. From a more specific policy point of view, his first action once in office was the re-introduction of the removal of seat benches in the city centre as a signal of continuity with the anti-migrants positioning of the League' legacy. Accordingly, he kept the tradition of symbolic policies for fighting common crimes. Among these, it is worth to recall the removal of flowers pots from the city centre in order to avoid drug pushers to hide drugs there. At the end of the 2019, in occasion of the traditional press conference reporting the municipal activity he underlined the engagement of his government in the security field. Precisely, he accounted for an intense activity of municipal police in fighting common crimes (i.e. drugs dealing, robberies, muggings) as well as for an increased funding on police equipment. However, we could not rely on polls data focusing on citizens approval for the municipal government activity. Therefore, a part from a self-report activity from the local government we have no element to assess properly whether and to what extent Conte's term is fulfilling electoral promises.

Spain

The changes in the discourse are more identifiable in Podemos, which changed its discursive and political strategy three times. Podemos arose with a strong left-wing ideology, in a social movement in which Republican flags and leg-wing symbology predominated. At a political rally in 2016, Pablo Iglesias thanked United Left and the Communist Party for their support in the general election of 26 June of that same year. He highlighted the need for unity in the Spanish left wing in order to defeat the right. However, shortly afterwards his discourse changed and he abandoned the ideologisation of Podemos, and abandoned the use of leftish symbolic elements. Then, as we have already mentioned, he again changed strategy for a third time. This last change occurred after United Left and Podemos joined forces, giving rise to the coalition Unidas Podemos. Pablo Iglesias again recovered his strongly ideologised discourse and returned to the idea of a union of the left, even offering the PSOE a government agreement following the elections in April and November 2019.

[25] See Sacchi, E. (2018) Appendino promossa, la Giunta ancora meglio. *Corriere della Sera*, June 8, https://torino.corriere.it/cronaca/18_giugno_10/sondaggio-ipsos-appendino-promossa-giunta-ancora-meglio-26b119f4-6cf0-11e8-8fe1-92e098249b61.shtml

In the particular case of Ahora Madrid, whose initial discourse originally contained populist components, evolved to a less intense register once it was institutionalised as a party. From the very first moment, some Ahora Madrid candidates publicly maintained that, as soon as any politician faced legal charges, they should automatically resign. No sooner had Ahora Madrid entered government in the city of Madrid, the spokesman for the municipal government was charged with being part of a group of people who had gone into the chapel at the Complutense University of Madrid and removed all their upper clothing in the middle of a liturgical ceremony. The governmental spokesman refused to resign, claiming that not all legal charges should lead to resignations because they were not all of the same nature. In general terms, Ahora Madrid has reduced the intensity of the populist components of its discourse once it had been institutionalised. The opposite seems to have occurred with Por Cadiz Sí Se Puede, whose party line has been just as intense from the moment it stood for the first time in local elections to its institutionalisation as part of the municipal government. It did indeed encounter certain limitations when carrying out the electoral manifesto that it had presented in 2015, but its discourse did not seem to change to at the same extent as that of Ahora Madrid.

Not all of the motions that came to light in 2015 in Madrid and Cadiz were successfully applied or developed throughout the term. Others, however, were applied, such as the substitution of megaprojects with small social projects with immediate, direct benefits for the population, the reduction of financial expenses (interests) and the Ahora Madrid City Council being prevented from contracting public debt, which led to a surplus in the municipal coffers for three consecutive years (2016-2019). This surplus gave the Ahora Madrid team a certain margin to include 400 more programmes than had been budgeted for in 2016, but by the end of the year, municipal investments only amounted to 8% of the planned total. This is because a large number of these programmes were declared unviable, presented technical or bureaucratic difficulties. Meanwhile, the Por Cadiz Sí Se Puede City Council proposed that certain services should be put back into public hands, such as beach cleaning and the collection of urban waste, but they encountered certain legal and judicial obstacles. Ultimately, they were unable to municipalise all of the proposed services, but did do so with the ones that meant the greatest savings for the Council. The successful proposals made by the Cadiz City Council included those in relation to the feminism and LGTBIQ+ area, such as the summer awareness campaign against gender violence. This shows how the Cadiz executive made a priority of more populist and/or inclusive populist motions; handing control of services back to the institution (that they identified with "the people", taking them away from private elites, and protecting unprotected groups (women, or LGTBIQ+) from 'others' (male chauvinism).

For its part, the discourse of VOX was somewhat different from the actions that it carried out once it gained access to the institutions. To mention a few examples: the manifesto of VOX defined the elimination of the autonomous communication channels (television, radio, etc.) as one of the party's main objectives. On gaining access to the Andalusian Parliament and holding the key to governability in the Junta of Andalusia, it lowered its demands and eliminated this condition in the negotiation of the agreement with PP and C's. The same occurred with another of its key measures: the return of healthcare and education powers to the state. From the outset, VOX put them on the table as an essential condition for there to be an investiture agreement but, as the day of the vote approached, it lowered its demands. These backward steps in the demands from its programme did not lead to discontent among its voters or a loss of votes. VOX obtained 395,978 votes in the December 2018 election to the Andalusian Parliament. After lowering its demands and its support for the investiture of the leader of the Andalusian

PP, it obtained 611,220 votes in the April 2019 general election throughout Andalusia. Shortly afterwards, in the November 2019 election, VOX obtained 867,429 votes in the autonomous community as a whole.

In short, VOX managed to gain a certain capacity to influence public discourse in Andalusia, but was unable to influence public policies directly. An example of this is the failure to follow through on some of the proposals in the agreement between PP and VOX for the investiture of a popular candidate. One of the motions was to "guarantee educational freedom and the right for parents to choose what system they want for their children, with no interference by the public authorities in the ideological upbringing of pupils and allowing parents to exclude their children from unregulated complementary or extracurricular activities when these were contrary to their own convictions." In this case, the PP and Ciudadanos government decided not to apply the so-called 'Parental Pin' in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, breaking point thirteen of the agreement between PP and VOX. Another example was the motion agreed between PP and VOX to "promote a *Ley de Concordia* ('Concord Act') to replace the *Ley de Memoria Histórica* ('Historical Memory Act`)". VOX presented this motion to Andalusian Parliament on 11 February 2020 and it was rejected by the Government Council.

However, it cannot be claimed that there was total severance of the agreement between PP and VOX as the term is only one year old. It is also too early to say whether the budget agreements between PP, C's and VOX have been met, as these were passed in June 2019 and there has not been enough time to observe whether the agreed measures have been a success or a failure. VOX is therefore an associate to the Andalusian Government, but does not form part of it, which means it can speak against the government when it is convenient to do so, but holds little capacity to influence public policy. Therefore, unlike Podemos, VOX does not govern, which means it can speak without having to face the consequences, and also maintain its populist tone.

Turkey

The AKP tradition in local governance relies on advertising themselves as servants of the people. It was this discourse that won political Islam municipal seats in Ankara and Istanbul in 1994 and the AKP appropriated this discourse after winning these cities in the 2004 local elections. Throughout the years, the AKP discourse relied on the same theme, which materialized in the following slogan: "Service Municipalism" (*Hizmet Belediyeciligi*). This slogan also dominated the AKP campaign processes during the local elections. For instance, in 2014 local elections, the AKP election manifesto presented service municipalism as one of the main points of their election campaign (AKP, 2014). This discourse stressing the service to the people was present in the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality's publications as well. In a municipal bulletin published in June 2016, it was argued that the municipal services in Turkey had changed after 1994 (the year when the Islamists made their electoral breakthrough in local elections). It was also added that the AKP municipalities have always focused on service municipality (Istanbul Buyuksehir Belediyesi, 2016).

Throughout the years, the same discourse continued to dominate the discourse of the AKP municipalities as well as their local election campaigns. Towards to the 2019 local elections a prominent AKP MP argued that service municipalism is the trademark of the AKP. He furthermore added that while 'others just talk, the AKP delivers' (*Birileri konusur, AK Parti yapar*) (Haberturk, 2019). However, while this discourse was able to deliver results in local elections until the 2019 local elections, the AKP suffered from the ramifications of the

economic crisis that started in 2018. Accordingly, Istanbul and Ankara were both lost to the opposition despite the AKP's electoral alliance with the MHP in the latest local elections.

7 Conclusions

This report includes the analysis of different cities with institutions governed or highly influenced by populist parties. The local level is a particularly interesting scenario to analyse the performance and evolution of these parties in office. The facts that local entities are the front line of the institutional system and the political officers and the electorate are more directly related than in other levels offers opportunities to analyse the performance of the parties and also the reaction of voters. However, the comparative analysis of local government is always challenging because the structure, position and nature of local entities in each institutional setting might differ a lot. This fact takes particular relevance related to the position of the populist parties in the government.

In this report, ten municipalities and one regional government, in five different countries, are analysed. In some cases, namely for the Czech Republic and Turkey, the study includes one party. For the other three countries -this is Hungary, Italy and Spain- two different political parties are analysed. We have opted for keeping specific conclusions for each country, however, there are some points that can be considered common:

- Contrast between expectations and reality

One of the aspects that arise in different cases is the complexity to achieve expectations may have impacts both in electoral and in internal terms. The narrative and discourse of populist parties during political campaigns tend to seek support by mixing strategies and ideological orientations and defending symbolic actions. Once in power, however, the limits of governing and institutional activity may imply disappointing portions of their electorate or even provoking internal tensions.

- The nature of institutional boundaries

Large cities have normally huge administrative systems and deal with sophisticated policies. At the same time, they can also be limited by a juridical framework and the levels of autonomy may not enable them to pursue determinate actions. Therefore, once in office, political parties and their leaders, sometimes relatively unexperienced, have to face the complexities and adapt their discourse to the institution or have the power to adapt the institution to their programme. This seems to be one of the key factors both in terms of continuity and change.

- Difficulties for internal cohesion

Some of the analysed parties have experienced problems of internal tensions once in office. This tension may be a consequence of the two above mentioned aspects, but, in any case, the problems inside the organisation may cause instability in the institution and in relation to the party in other levels of government (i.e. the national level).

- Link between the national sphere and the local level

The local level appears are inextricably linked to the national level. This relationship implies that the local level should apply policies and actions following the priorities stablished by the upper levels (national) and completing or complementing the actions, narratives and discourse of the party in the national sphere. If there is a coherence and the local organisations achieves the objectives, the local action may reinforce the national narrative. On the contrary, if local and national structures are not aligned, this might also provoke tensions and may provoke splits or other internal movements.

These factors can be identified in almost all the cases in one way or another. However, there are particularities in each country that should also be addressed. There are some particular concluding features for each country analysed:

Czech Republic

ANO is an example of centrist populist party discoursively using the combination of populism (people-centrism and anti-establishment appeal) and technocracy based on the managerial experience of the chairman of the party, Andrej Babiš. The discourse was concentrated on the criticism of the established parties that were portrayed as corrupt and incompetent to govern. On the contrary, presenting an anti-political managerial technocratic thin-centered ideology, ANO promised both to get rid of corruption, to run the state effectively and to restore the economic growth. As for the organization of the party, its business firm-like highly hierarchical and centralized organization underlined the key role of the leader for the functioning of the party.

Both the ideology and the organization determined the content of the electoral campaign of ANO in the local elections. The party followed its anti-corruption and populist rhetoric building on the claim of the competence to govern effectively while Babiš was presented as the guarantor of the changes in local politics. On the other hand, the electoral success of the party was due to its newness and the low number of members and consequently electoral lists limited to bigger cities.

The paper looked at two cities, quite similar in its relative size but different in terms of the history, the structure of the economy and political background. ANO won the 2014 election there and its leaders were elected as mayors in Prague and Ostrava. Nevertheless, while ANO lost the subsequent election in Prague, it defended its position in Ostrava successfully. Although the limited scope of the paper makes any strong causal inferences preliminary, two differences seem to be crucial when compared the performance of the party during the electoral term. First, the ability of the party (or the governing coalition) to fulfil the promises. While the ruling coalition in Prague failed to keep the promises given during the campaign (possibly due to the ideological differences within the coalition and to the fact that the effective governance in such a big city as Prague is not an easy task), the coalition in Ostrava led by ANO seemed to concentrate on several crucial parts of the program and was appreciated by the electorate eventually. Second, the performance of the local leadership (mayors) differed substantially. Krnáčová in Prague was not able to guarantee the internal cohesion of the coalition and the communication within the city council became almost non-existent gradually and led to a permanent intra-coalition crisis. Macura in Ostrava also had to face internal disputes and a coalition crisis eventually, however, he was able to reconstruct a coalition and continue to govern the city quite effectively till the end of the election term. All in all, the paper confirms the importance of the study of the supply side of populism as well as of the organizational

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structure of populist political parties. Both are reflected and determine the content and the quality of populist governance on the local level.

Hungary

The Hungarian case of populist politics is somewhat special inasmuch as the country is an example of how populism functions in government while there is a populist party in the opposition too. Moreover, both Fidesz and Jobbik are positioned on the right side of the political spectrum even if changes and shifts in their position during the past decade should be taken into account. While the populism of Fidesz emerged as a materialistic thread in its politics during the mid-2000s, Jobbik was formed on a far-right xenophobic platform. It was in the mid 2010s that Fidesz adopted much of the policies and rhetoric of Jobbik by exploiting the migration crisis enabling Viktor Orbán's party both on national and local level to pursue populist policies. Jobbik, unable to compete with this shift and to accommodate to the left-wing opposition to Fidesz at the same time, turned to materialistic anti-elitist populism by 2018. In sum, the two parties followed opposite trajectories regarding the content of their populism.

The two examined municipalities show different type local manifestation of populism. In the case of the Fidesz-led Kaposvár, the task of the local leaders is to translate the national-level populism to the local community. In this paradigm, national politics clearly dominates the local politics: as the local governments are the local organs of the central government in the Fidesz's institutional setting, so act the local politicians as transmitters of the national political agenda.

The Jobbik-led Ózd serves as an example for the implementation of a radical populist party's policies to the local level: although the local government policies proved to be less radical, populist features, such as anti-elitism and law and order approach are still relevant.

Italy

The analysis of the M5S case in Turin highlights a feature that appears increasingly clear also at the national level. Although the movement claims to be post-ideological, unrelated to the concepts of left and right (Ceccarini and Bordignon 2013), the policies it proposes and implements could be easily placed in that continuum. This paradox - the support of apparently irreconcilable policies - is evident at the national level where the M5S first created a coalition government with the League, voting in favour of nationalist and anti-migrant positions (the first Conte government) and then supported instead a second government together with the leftist Democratic party, voting for several initiatives pro-EU positions, and against the former ally, Matteo Salvini (the second Conte government). In this respect, the history of the M5S in Turin shows that this blurred orientation is not the result of a precise strategy. It stems from the fact that, within the movement, there are representatives who support right-wing policies (the former political boss, Luigi Di Maio, for example) and representatives who support more left-wing policies (such as Chiara Appendino in Turin). In the election campaign, **these two** orientations coexist under the flag of populism. Once in power, however, the M5S deal with the limits of governing and pursue politically oriented policies which necessarily make disappointed a portion of its constituency.

Turning to the League, the analysis of Treviso as a case study allowed to get a more precise understanding of dynamics underpinning political parties' strategies once in government. The city is the heartland of the party, whereas the League ruled the city almost continuously since

the early Nineties. It mirrors very precisely the national party: both in terms of attitudes and leadership style when justifying and promoting local policies and in terms of the policy issues addressed. In this respect, it is worth noticing that the League's governance at the local level was able to implement a set of symbolic policy measures specifically targeting immigration and security issues consistent with the party's classical exclusionary populist rhetoric. Furthermore, it is important to underline that the organizational changes occurred within the party did not impact over the party at the local level. The League succeeded in preserving a continuity line by focusing in particular on the exclusionary populist issues relating to immigration.

What facilitated this consistency with traditional populist claims was in particular the electoral strength of the party, that could rely on large majority within the city council without the need of mediating with coalition allies and being able to set autonomously the local policy agenda. De facto, in Treviso the party could govern without coalitional constraints making the city as the very ideal type of the League's governance becoming a symbol or even a brand for promoting the party.

All in all the two case studies show that national and local levels are intertwined and that a thorough understanding of populism should study the two levels together.

Spain

This paper analyses different contexts where Podemos and VOX have become relevant parties in terms of governmental action. Podemos government action raises two different situations with radically opposite outcomes.

In the case of the Cadiz City Council, the party once in government seems to maintain, to a large extent, the discourse and the main lines of action. That leads him to reissue electoral success. Now, in the last phase analysed, with Podemos already in Spanish government, the relationship between the organisation in Andalusia (and in Cadiz) and the state nucleus deteriorates. This fact triggers the rupture between both organisations.

In the case of the Madrid City Council, the tensions between the original approach and the government action appeared very early. In this case, with Podemos still in opposition, it is the local Madrid formation that seems to opt for a more institutionalised discourse. This process will also mean a break between the local Madrid organisation and the state leadership.

In this case, the tensions between the needs for institutionalisation and the discourse can be seen very clearly. In the case of the Madrid City Council, the need for greater institutionalisation of discourse at a time when the state organisation is still in a phase of political confrontation, implies difficulties in harmonisation. In the opposite direction, in the case of the Cadiz City Council, the desire to maintain a more demanding discourse at a time when the state formation has made a transition towards a more institutional position also poses a tension. In both cases, this tension implies the rupture between the local and state organisations.

Regarding VOX, its appearance in institutions with influence capacity is recent, so it is necessary to incorporate some precautions in the analysis. In the case of Andalusia, VOX is not part of the government, but it was required for its formation. For the time being, this position has given him a remarkable capacity for influence to introduce issues into public debate and even modulate the discourse of both the government and parties in government.

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Turkey

The local governance in Turkey is extremely centralized. The central government has the ability to sway control over local governance through budget, as the municipal budget is determined by the center in Turkey. In addition, the central party bodies, rather than local dynamics, are decisive in determining the candidates for mayoral seats in Turkey. Accordingly, mayors in Turkey do not enjoy autonomy that could allow them follow policies independent of their political parties. In the case of the AKP mayors, this case is even more acute where strong leader controls every string in the party.

While the mayors are mostly concerned with day-to-day problems and services of cities, as my survey of the AKP municipalities in Ankara and Istanbul demonstrate, the AKP mayors complemented the central government's economic, cultural and social agenda. They provided the AKP government with support (material, immaterial and logistics) and allowed the central government to infiltrate local politics freely. In particular, they provided support for the neo-Ottomanist project of the central government. These municipalities also paved the way for the central government to boost economic growth through infrastructure and city renovation projects. They even opened discount markets during the economic crisis in order to mitigate the effects of the crisis on the support for the AKP. These municipalities also provided financial or logistics support to those NGOs that were protected and nourished by the central government.

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