

Transformation of the Political Parties of the EU Member States

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Abstract: The study aims to provide an analysis and systematize the complex of factors influencing the transformation of party systems. We attempt to identify the relationship between their general and specific influences in particular countries to explore the transformation process's general patterns and national characteristics in European Union's political space. This study's method is based on an overview of the unique bibliography collected by the researchers, which includes sources devoted to the study of foreign parties and party systems in the European Union by modern political scientists. The analysis shows the specification of internal and external factors that influence the adaptation of the political parties and systems to the EU's changing situation, country, and society. The modern transformation of political parties and party systems in the EU is caused by the phenomenon of globalization, the financial and economic crisis of 2008-2009, the overlapping migration crisis of 2015-2026, Brexit and changes in the institutional environment, and the democratic deficit in the EU itself. The obtained results have verified the research hypothesis. This study discussed modern tendencies in the transformation of political parties and political space in the European Union under the influence of different, controversial but discrete factors of development and complete explanation about the essence of new types of political parties

Keywords: The European Union, political party, political system, internal factor, an external factor.

1. INTRODUCTION

The European Union is a fundamentally new and unique phenomenon. There have not been state organizations or unions with such a level of synchronization and subordination to states' uniform norms and goals before the establishment of the EU. For a long time, the development of the European integration process was the initiators' pride. But today, the EU is faced with several large-scale challenges, which allowed experts to talk about "a large-scale systemic crisis of this structure" (Arbatova, 2017).

The transformation process is occurring both under the influence of external actors and factors, the nature of which follows from the logic of the development of the European Union, national states, and party-political systems (Khairullina *et al.*, 2019). This determines the too complicated, contradictory, and multidimensional nature of the modernization processes for party-political systems at this stage of their development. Regarding this process's incompleteness, a new configuration of the EU political space is being formed, with new quantitative and qualitative parameters. At the same time, this process is not unambiguous for the party systems of all EU members. The difference in the dynamics of this process and the nature of partogenesis is rooted in the peculiarities of the

historical development of the EU states, the formation of their political system, as well as the model of political culture, the degree of development of democracy and civil society (Almond & Verba, 1965; Grishin, 2019).

The major trends of the EU transformation process can be observed, which are sustainable and can be traced throughout the European Union's political space. First of all, these include the process of fragmentation of party systems taking place at the national and supranational levels.

According to G. Weinstein's (2018) estimates, since the beginning of the 21st century, 69 new parties have been created in Western Europe, more than 40 of them have taken part in 43 election campaigns at all levels. By the beginning of the new electoral cycle 2015-2019, within which elections of all levels were held in almost all EU countries, as well as elections to the European Parliament in May 2019, the quantitative growth of parties became one of the significant parameters of the characteristics of the modern party systems. So, in the Czech Republic by this time, there were 89 parties and 143 political movements (Ministerstvo vnitra České republiky, 2020), in Hungary - 250, 116 of which were established in 2014-2018 (Több mint 250 párt van Magyarországon, 2019); there are 86 parties in Poland (Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 2016); in Slovakia – 61 (Uzunova, 2019); and Italy – 50 (Podchasova, 2019). Two new parties were created in Britain; in Greece during 2010-2015 dozens of new parties appeared (Kvashnin, 2018).

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This trend is typical for all party systems of the EU member states. This is confirmed by the results of the 2019 elections to the European Parliament, which included representatives of 160 parties. This allowed the experts to assert that national states' party systems have a steady tendency towards further progressive development towards their fragmentation and a radical change in their configuration (Semushin, 2019).

Assessing the results of the May 2019 elections to the European Parliament, all experts state that the European Parliament has never been as fragmented as it is now. For the first time, the two dominant parties, the European People's Party (EPP) and the Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), do not have a majority together, with only 331 of 376 seats.

The large fragmentation of the European Parliament's political space is convincing evidence that Europe's pan-European political process is characterized by the weakening of the traditional left and right-center, which from the national level has reached the pan-European one. Within the framework of Sartori's discourse of the typology of party systems, the party-political systems of modern Europe change from bipolar (or dominant) to "moderately pluralistic" or multiparty. This thesis is confirmed by the analysis of party systems in the context of the Laakso-Taagepera index. So, in Slovenia, it is 5.58, in Bulgaria - 4.88, in Austria - 5.25 (Georgiev, 2017).

As a result of recent electoral cycles, bipolar party systems have been destroyed in several states: Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, and France. In France, following the 2017 elections, a five-pole system was formed (Narochitskaya, 2019); the bipartisan system in Britain (Ananyeva, 2016) and Sweden (Grishin, 2019) was also destroyed. The process of the formation of a five-party system is underway in the FRG. The party system in Spain is turning from a bipolar to a four-pole system with a tendency to transform it into a multi-party one (Prokhorenko, 2016). At the same time, in the Czech Republic and Hungary, a one-and-a-half-pole system is being formed (Basov, 2019). Experts consider the party systems of the Baltic countries to be stable, first of all - the party system of Estonia (Lanko, 2015).

Thus, noting that the fragmentation of the EU's political space is one of the dominant vectors of the ongoing process of the transformation of the EU party-political systems.

The analysis of those factors that are catalysts of the transformations for party-political systems of united Europe and new parameters of partogenesis is of particular importance. Therefore, the present paper is aimed to reveal and systematize the complex of factors influencing the processes of transformation of party systems, to identify the relationship between their general and specific influences in particular countries, and also to explore general patterns and national characteristics of the transformation process in the political space of the European Union.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This main method utilized in this study is an overview of the unique bibliography collected by the researchers, which includes sources devoted to the study of foreign parties and party systems in the European Union by modern political scientists. This study's fundamental basis is an overview of the unique bibliography collected by the researchers, which includes sources devoted to the study of foreign parties and party systems in the European Union by modern political scientists. Based on the review of the classic literature and new research carried out during 2010-2020 and materials of the political parties and national electoral committee, the factors and the logic of the transformation of the EU's political parties are analyzed. These features of the study of political parties and factors that cause their transformation are associated with scientists' deep attachment to the formal-descriptive traditions of the social sciences. Such a traditional formal institutional approach justifies itself while describing institutional changes.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Transformation of Party and Political Space of the European Union

The establishment of new parties and the disbanding of old ones have always been the most important condition for the adaptation of party systems to the changing situation in the country and society.

A feature of the process of the modern partogenesis at the beginning of the XXI century is the formation of the grassroot parties through the transformation of protest movements into political parties. The German political scientist Holtmann noted this tendency, emphasizing that a protest party is formed on the periphery of the party system as a new competitor, and this type of political organization is actively spreading

throughout Europe. Confirmation of this thesis is the Spanish party "Podemos" (Spanish for "We Can"), which was founded out based on the "Movement of the Indignant", which swept the whole of Spain in 2011 (Larionova, 2017), the "Movement of Five Stars" in Italy (Lyubin, 2015) - both parties took leading positions in the political systems of the countries. The Romanian Most party has a similar nature of creation (Kandel, 2017). The Ecologists Greens in Greek were established based on the grassroots movement (Kvashnin, 2018). According to G. Mikheeva (2016), such parties can be specified as "civil" or "civic".

The fourth industrial and information revolution, which began at the end of the twentieth century, formed fundamentally new communication technologies and thereby created conditions for a new type of social communication between various social and political actors. Political parties have formed a new model to carry out their activities in the virtual space.

For the first time, an attempt to typology a new type of party was carried out by H. Margetts (2006). Using the term "cyber party", the researcher has defined this new form of the party not as a marginal one, and its emergence not as a kind of accident, but as a natural result of the development of partogenesis within the framework of the development of its trajectory from a dominant cadre party to a mass party, and later to a cartel type of political parties, and, finally, to a new type of party, defined as the "cyber party". The researcher sees the origins of this type of political party in the changing pattern of political participation, the spread of mixed electoral systems, and the development of the Internet and network systems. The abandonment of the usual formal membership and the transition to direct contacts with voters are regarded as a key feature of this new type of the parties (Margetts, 2006).

Several terms are used concerning this type of party. These are "cyber parties", "online parties" (Morozova, 2015), "virtual", "Internet parties", as well as "network" parties. According to L. Smorgunov (2014), the signs of such parties are considered to be lack of membership, party channels of communication are network channels, internal and external ones are direct connections with voters, strong party competition for various preferences of voters, and their role in the political space is the position between the civil society and the state (Smorgunov, 2014).

A significant number of new parties is related to 'one-issue parties', as well as regional or local parties.

As a rule, these parties are small in number, and concerning them in Western political science today the term "small party" is used.

A "small party" is a party that is not included in the government, does not lead it and in the future, it will not be able to do it, since it has a limited number of voters. As a rule, small parties concentrate on a relatively narrow target electoral group, which is not in the interests of large parties (Kuznetsov, 2015). At the same time, they have significant total potential and form scattered networks (Meden, 2015). They put forward their slogans, which are meant for a small electoral group, the interests of which the big parties do not reflect (Simoleit, 2009).

According to many researchers, small parties perform the functions of indicators and timely social and political signals. They make it possible to draw a wide range of people into political discourse, including radical points of view. At the same time, they create a new competitive environment. In most cases, the emerging new parties are "anti-system ones" that are extremely difficult to typology within the framework of the classical matrix "right-left centre" (Weinstein, 2018). Almost all researchers agree that the phenomenon of antisystemism is extremely complex and there is a clear tendency to its further complication because within the framework of ideological criteria new types of political parties can be placed along the entire political spectrum: from libertarianism to ultra-right conservatism and nationalism (Parfenova, 2015).

A pronounced feature of these parties is their personalization. These include the thesis that programs are being replaced by the image of party leaders as the most effective instrument of communication and information. A striking example is the "Freedom Party" in the Netherlands, which consists of one person - its leader G. Wilders – but at the same time, this political entity is one of the most influential political forces in the country. The same case is the Spanish party Podemos, where 51% of its voters are not familiar with its program, but they know the leader well (Henkin, 2016).

Noting the diversity of these parties, the researchers conclude that all of them, as a rule, position themselves as opponents of existing parties, clearly defining their positions as anti-political and anti-system parties. They have a high protest potential and are supporters of direct democracy.

An analysis of scientific literature also makes it possible to specify such a pattern of partogenesis as

an increase in the number of local-regional and nationalist parties. This trend is objective and, in our opinion, is a natural result of the logic of the development of integration processes in the 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century within the EU. According to T. Zonova (1999), this development was based on the concept of a "Europe of Regions" and I. Khokhlov (2004) regards the widespread establishment of the principle of subsidiarity as the basis of the management system, in which power functions were distributed between Brussels and regional and local authorities, which led to an increase in the political influence and economic power of territorial administrative units.

Parallel to the process of fragmentation of political parties and the creation of new ones, usually of an anti-systemic nature, the key vector of the transformation of party-political systems is the process of evolution of systemic (dominant or major) parties. This process is objective and is caused by the need to overcome the deep crisis in which they find themselves. Thus, according to P. Ignatsi (2010), political parties have long begun to lose their attractiveness (Ignatsi, 2010). At the beginning of the 21st century, in 15 EU countries, only 20% of the population assessed them positively (Ignatsi, 2010). Other Western researchers give a sharper assessment to parties, for example, R. Dalton (2010) emphasized the "purely negative" image of political parties in the public consciousness.

After 2008, experts note the growing crisis within the major parties. This is evidenced by the 2015-2019 electoral cycle, as a result of which the major parties almost everywhere, except for a few countries, worsened their results. The situation in the FRG can serve as an illustrative example. Thus, the dominant parties CDU / CSU and SPD in 1980 received 80% of the vote in elections, their share in the 1990s accounted for 70% (Chandler, 2001), in 2003 - 57% (Schmidt, 2008), in 2017 – less than 50% (Bundestag Election, 2017).

In these conditions, the parties faced the problem of comprehending the current stage of development. They are forced to evolve, striving to respond to the demands of the electorate and adapt to new challenges. This process is taking place both in the discourse of the search for new ideological attitudes and in the methods and forms of working with voters, as well as in terms of abandoning traditional views about their allies.

Dominant political parties are searching for new ideological concepts, which researchers have designated as "molecular ideologies", not focused on universal ideas or explanations of social processes, but concentrated on a fairly one-sided tunnel vision of problems – as Yu. Gaivoronsky (2016) claims, from assertive feminism to "militant environmentalism". And for new parties, it is characteristic to form not on an ideological basis, but on an opportunistic basis, that is, around those topics and problems that are most urgent for voters at that moment, and whose solution they are most worried about (Baranov, 2016). An example is some parties created in 2014-2017, which were based on the problem of migrants (the so-called anti-immigrant parties).

New ideologies that do not justify the need to protect the interests of the class and social groups, but are focused on solving specific problems and small deeds, are called "molecular ideologies" that replace large, historically formed, ideological narratives.

In the development of modern party-political systems, researchers distinguish several stages. In our opinion, the most preferable for scientific argumentation is the periodization worked out by K. Kholodkovsky (2016), who distinguishes three stages of the development of the modern party systems. The first covers the post-war period and is associated with the initial stage of development of integration processes. This is 1945 - the end of the 1950s - the beginning of the 1960s. The second stage is during the 1970s - the beginning of the 21st century. The modern third stage begins at the turn of the XX-XXI centuries and continues up to the present.

Immediately after the war, the party system of European countries was characterized by "a plurality and diversity of parties", the entire array of which was located along the linear axis "left" - "right". It was during this period, according to researchers, that a bipartisan system with two dominant parties was formed in most states, "which ensured the rotation of power and did not allow the state's political course to deviate too much in one of the possible directions" (Kholodkovsky, 2016).

In the course of the second stage, the nature of the systems as a whole did not fundamentally change, but some new trends emerged that allowed to consider the crisis of existing systems. The researchers saw the confirmation of this in the loss of clear ideological guidelines by the parties, defining the confrontation

between conservatives and socialists, that is, right and left, both of which were moving closer and closer to each other - to the "centre". There was a process that K. Kholodkovsky (2018) called as "crossing of ideologies". At the same time, during this period, in response to challenges related to environmental protection, a new type of party (party of one issue) emerged from the "green movement" - the green party (Rovinskaya, 2019). Besides, some Western political scientists during this period also pointed out that the dominant parties in power were no longer able to adequately respond to the challenges that faced the society, especially in the 1980s and 1990s (Henkin, 2016).

By the beginning of the third stage, the dominant system in most countries had become bipolar, usually with two dominant parties or a coalition of parties. During this period, the mainstream parties, dominant and anti-systemic, alternative ones, were distinguished; this division determined the specifics of this stage (Sergeev, Kazantsev & Petrov, 2017).

The depth and scale of the changes that today characterize the political space of European states, including their party-political system, in our opinion, cannot be comprehended only within the framework of the factors mentioned above. Today's transformation process is the result of the impact of a whole range of interrelated factors of different nature and degree of impact on the development process of both individual EU member states and the structure of the European Union itself.

In our opinion, they can be systematized according to their character and the nature of their occurrence. These are external factors that carry the signs of geopolitics, conditioned by the formation of new world order (Borovkin *et al.*, 2019). The second group of factors consists of internal factors that are the result of the development of the European Union itself. The third group of factors is associated with the peculiarities within the party-political systems, both at the national and supranational levels.

3.2. The Influence of External Factors on Partogenesis in Europe

The influence of these factors on transformation processes is different, but their combination sets the parameters and trajectory of the transformation process. The nature of the general factors covering the entire political space of the EU and specific ones

operating at the national level determines the national specifics of the process of transformation of party systems.

Among the external factors that determine the parameters of the current EU party systems, the dominant influence is exerted by the phenomenon of globalization as the main trend of world development and the development of the EU. The development of the EU economy, as an element of the global economy, was considered by the mainstream parties to be one of the most important priorities in their activities. The globalization processes developing against the background of the information revolution have led to the formation of a post-industrial society with its new qualitative parameters and created an objective necessity for the transformation process. The dominant motive in this discourse was the change in the social structure of society. By the early 1990s, it was based on the middle class. In the EU member states, the middle class constituted 50-55% of the population, being the electoral basis of the mainstream parties. By the beginning of the XXI century, it became obvious that neoliberal globalization has not only advantages but also disadvantages, demonstrating the presence of a split between those who won and who lost as a result of its development.

The process of forming a new world order, in which the EU plays a key role, should also be referred to the external factors that set the parameters for the transformation of party-political systems. The political agenda, especially of systemic parties, cannot but reflect the problems associated with the development of this process. Geopolitical and geostrategic shifts associated with the struggle for spheres of influence, control over natural resources, the need to confront global threats, could not and cannot be ignored by political parties. The geopolitical shifts that took place associated with the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the socialist camp and the collapse of the USSR had profound, not yet fully appreciated, impacts on the configuration of party-political systems. Thus, R. Katz and P. Mair (2009) said about a fundamental change of party democracy in Western Europe since the 1970s: a self-referential political class unremovable from power dominating politics and determining their own infrastructure.

Today, the nature of the main conflict in Western society lies in the plane of confrontation between the pro-globalization elites and the rest of the society. Thus, the transformation of the world order, which is

proceeding extremely intensively, introducing new challenges to the political agenda of Europeans, and requires a quick response to them from political forces, an adequate reaction of parties to the demands of voters (Vorobieva & Savushkin, 2018).

The transformation process was catalysed by the financial and economic crisis of 2008-2009 and the overlapping migration crisis of 2015-2016. The 2008 global financial crisis had not only economic consequences, collapsing the economies of almost all EU countries, and leading to an unprecedented increase in unemployment, on average in the EU it was 20%, and in some southern European countries - Spain, Portugal and Greece, it was even higher, especially among young people, where the percentage of unemployed was over 50%. The 2008 crisis led to an exacerbation of imbalances and asymmetries within the European Union, the extent of which was quite large even before that.

The destabilization of the situation in the Middle East, the Syrian crisis, led to the emergence of hundreds of thousands of refugees who wanted to find shelter in Europe. In 2015, 790,000 Muslim refugees entered the EU countries, the percentage of whom has increased in Europe in previous years. So, during 2010-2016, the number of the Muslim population increased from 19.5 to 25.7 million people, and by 2017, immigrants accounted for more than 5% of the EU population (in 2015, this indicator was 3.8) (Europe's Growing Muslim Population, 2017). The problem of migrants became a political problem and was actively used in the pre-election period to attract the electorate (Yashlavsky, 2018). The migration crisis was named the main problem, the solution of which most worries the citizens of the European Union, in the course of sociological surveys conducted in 2015-2016, and remains so today (Shaparov, 2017). Only the inhabitants of Portugal put it in second place in terms of importance. Residents of all other countries gave her first place. The greatest concern about the problem of migrants is in Estonia - 79%, the Czech Republic, Denmark and Germany - 70%, and in the EU as a whole - 55% (Public opinion in the European Union, 2015). The specificity of the migration crisis in Europe is that it generates a complex of obvious and latent threats to the future of the EU. Among them, a particular danger is posed by a decrease in the level of security and protection against terrorist threats, a threat to European values, and a lack of unity within the European Union on this issue. All this objectively requires the political elites to respond to these

challenges adequately. Internal factors of partogenesis in the EU.

3.3. Internal Factors of Partogenesis in the EU

Among the group of internal factors of partogenesis in the EU first of all necessary to highlight the integration process itself. Some researchers, assessing the impact of this structure on the party systems of the EU member states, use the concept of "Europeanization", which is understood as the process of unification of the legal framework within which political parties operate firstly (Prokhorenko, 2014). Secondly, it is a change in the party-political space's configuration, the creation of supranational party associations. Moreover, EU membership requires the so-called "European question" to appear in the domestic political discourse. The essence of which is that the parties have to take a position according to the European integration process and the activities of supranational structures (Prokhorenko, 2014).

At the same time, the researchers come to the following conclusion: the processes of European integration are changing the institutional environment in which the political parties of the old European democracies operate. At the same time, there is a change of their usual decision-making procedures, as well as the creation of a European supranational centre for decision-making and a system of common European norms and rules (Georgiev, 2017). Also, European integration creates new arenas for political interaction for national political parties at the intergovernmental and supranational levels, while at the same time, they are under pressure for their organizational adaptation. The influence of European integration on the parties, in our opinion, is most clearly manifested in the creation of new political actors - European MPs, a new category of political elites, which experts assess ambiguously (Pogorelskaya, 2014).

Among the internal factors that determine the parameters of the transformation of party systems, Brexit should be specified. The trigger of this process, according to experts, was the migration crisis (Arbatova, 2012). Britain's exit from the European Union, with 12% of its contributions to the organization's budget, leads not only to extremely negative consequences in the socio-economic sphere but also, according to experts, has profound political consequences, including influencing the development of party-political systems (Lambert, 2017). Western experts view Britain's exit from the EU not as a

manifestation of Euroscepticism or racism, but as a response to "victims of globalization and austerity, economic inequality, and the political elite" (Kaveshnikov, 2016).

The second group of factors can be viewed as a direct consequence of the "complex political crisis" of the EU (Biryukov & Kovalenko, 2012). The political crisis is most clearly manifested in such phenomena as the crisis of legitimacy, a democratic deficit, and the crisis of participation. Western researchers are intended to regard the essence of the political crisis in the EU as a crisis of the common European idea and identity, as well as a crisis of common European institutions and mechanisms (Kaina, 2007). The crisis of legitimacy must be viewed in two dimensions (Arbatova, 2017). First, there is tension between elites and ordinary citizens, who today do not trust non-traditional parties and institutions. Secondly, it is the citizens' distrust of supranational structures and mechanisms. This is manifested in the growth of a negative assessment of the activities carried out by Brussels and a critical attitude towards the EU - the growth of Eurosceptics not only among ordinary citizens but also among the political elite. Also, mistrust to national structures and political parties is growing. For example, in France, more than 55% of citizens do not believe either the government or by political parties can effectively manage the challenges facing the country.

The phenomenon of "a democratic deficit", as one of the manifestations of the EU's political crisis, today also has several components. First, today 80% of EU citizens are convinced that they cannot influence EU decisions. Secondly, today's European Parliament does not fully implement its main functions - representing the interests of citizens of EU member states at the supranational level. Most of its decisions are only advisory in nature. Despite the created multi-level management system based on the principle of subsidiarity, the influence of national structures at all levels on decision-making by Brussels is rather limited (Arbatova, 2017).

The narrowing of the sphere of powers of the national authorities in the absence of a sufficient level of openness and foresight of decision-making at the EU level created the preconditions for strengthening Brussels' negative attitude. This situation is increasingly viewed by most citizens and part of the political establishment as a threat to national sovereignty.

The logic of the development of the European integration process, as well as external factors operating outside of it, created favourable preconditions for the development of the process associated with a change in the public consciousness of EU citizens, a change in their electoral sympathies and motivation during voting. The intensity of the development of this process accelerated after the events of 2008-2015, which convincingly showed that the European Union failed to solve several fundamental problems related to both the socio-economic development of countries, ensuring the security of their inhabitants and the formation of Pan-European identity. Under these conditions, in most countries, the degree of pessimism grew both concerning themselves, their families, and the future of the European Union. Thus, more than 40% of EU citizens believed that this structure would cease to exist in 2040; in France, the number of pessimists looking anxiously to the future increased from 2009 to 2016 from 55 to 67%, and the share of optimists decreased, respectively, from 42% to 32% (Baromètre de la confiance politique, 2016).

T. Wieder (2014), a political scientist, described this state of society as "collective depression". Among the many factors caused this phenomenon, the priority is the "crisis of the system of political representation", expressed in the decline of traditional forms of participation in political life and, most importantly, an extremely low percentage of trust both in national authorities and party structures and in supranational institutions. as well as politicians. For example, in France the number of the voters who demonstrated their distrust to the traditional political parties was in 2010 was 76% (L'Huillier, 2010). In Sweden, 70% of citizens do not trust their traditional parties (Förtroendet för politiker rasar efter regeringskaoset, 2019).

Ultimately, this process leads to the emergence of a new antisystem socio-psychological context of mass consciousness. In practice, this is reflected in the unprecedented growth of Euroscepticism as an ideology and political practice, the phenomenon of which researchers regard as a factor influencing the development of political systems in European countries and, first of all, the party component (Yakunin, 2017). National characteristics of the transformation of political parties of the EU countries

3.4. National Characteristics of the Transformation of Political Parties in the EU

The third group of factors that determined the nature and directions of the transformation of the party

system in the countries of the European Union is associated with internal processes taking place within the systems themselves. This is the tendency to go to the periphery of the political process and the transformation of the communist parties into marginalized ones. More significant for understanding the discourse of transformation processes has become a deep crisis of center-left ideology, the origin of which researchers attribute to the 1970s and 1980s and which reaches its peak in the XXI century (Orlov, 2012). According to experts, it is the social democratic movements that have been the mainstay of European democracy for decades, and its collapse deprives political life of stability and predictability (Kholodkovsky, 2018). As dominant parties in most countries, Social Democrats were in power in 2000 in 10 EU member states. But their transformation from mass organizations for the working class into a "class administrator" made them unable to adequately respond not only to global challenges but also to challenges existing at the national level (Manukov, 2018). Social Democracy was "lost" - concludes Diaz-Cano, which led to a sharp reduction in the electorate of these organizations (Díaz-Cano, 2011). This is convincingly evidenced by the results of both the elections to the European Parliament and the results of national election campaigns since 2009. In the May 2019 elections to the European Parliament, the Alliance of Socialists and Social Democrats lost 40 seats compared to the 2014 elections, gaining only 147 seats, and over 60 compared to the 2009 elections (Eremina, 2019).

A similar trend dominates at the national level. The Social Democratic Party of Germany in 2009 received only 23% of the vote. This was the worst result in the history of this political party. But even fewer people voted for it in 2017 - 20.5% of the vote, the party received 40 fewer seats (Bundestagswahl, 2017). The Social Democrats of the Czech Republic during the last elections received the lowest result - 7.2%, gaining only 15 seats and losing 2/3 of their voters and 33 mandates (Volby do Poslanecké sněmovny Parlamentu České republiky, 2017). The Austrian Social Democrats (SPÖ) lost their status as the leading party, so in 2013 the party's support was 26.8%, and in 2019 it fell to 21.18% (Nationalratswahl in Österreich, 2019), and the party's size also decreased - in 1990 it included 620,000 members and in 2017 this number was 180,000 (Steinmüller-Schwarz, 2017). The Socialist Party of France, which was in power during the presidency of François Mitterrand from 1981 to 1996

and François Hollande from 2012 to 2017, is leaving the political space. During the 2018 presidential campaign and in the parliamentary elections, the party won only 7.49% of the vote, while its candidate 6.36%. The number of party members has decreased from 60,000 in 2014 to 42,000 in 2016 and 12,000 in 2017 (Schofield, 2017).

The reasons for the deep crisis of the social democratic parties and their ideology are multifaceted. For seven decades, they have been a pillar of European democracy, creating a model of a welfare state, which turned out to be ineffective in the post-industrial society. According to experts, social democracy today faces a dilemma associated with the choice of a further course. Either the Social Democrats will deeply and critically rethink and revise the experience of their activities in the discourse of searching for new social democratic ideas, or this ideology will be doomed to "continue to float with the flow of routine political life without pretending to seriously reform it" (Orlov, 2006).

In modern conditions, the model of the policy pursued by the Social Democrats is based on a historical class compromise and it is this model that is now unable to respond to challenges and is on the periphery of the political process (Wahl, 2018). The crisis phenomena affected not only the Social Democrats but also all other parties traditionally dominating the political space, as evidenced by such indicators as the process of reducing the number of parties. So, in 1980 - 9.8% of various electorates were party members, then by the beginning of the XXI century - only 5.7%. Their image in the public consciousness is becoming more and more negative. This, in many respects, was facilitated by the current policy of the mainstream.

The mainstream is considered to be the centrist approach to managing the nation-state in the era of globalization. Parties that implement this approach, as a rule, are characterized by 'a fusion of right and left views on the problems of state development'. Such an approach was positioned by them as no alternative (Sergeev, Kazantsev & Petrov, 2017). All attempts to change this status quo by alternative political forces are regarded as attempts to implement "impossible policy" (Sergeev, Kazantsev & Petrov, 2017). Today, there is an intensive process of erosion of their monopoly on political power, a decline in parties' authority from decade to decade. This is seen in the CDU / CSU and SPD in 1980 80% of voters cast gave their voices for

them, in 2005 - only 70% of voters, in 2009 their electorate was 57%, and in 2017 only 44,7% (Bundestag Election, 2017).

At the same time, the process of changing the functions of traditional (systemic) parties is underway. Thus, researchers tend to believe that these parties have lost their main function by the twenty-first century - the function of political communication and building relationships between the government and the electorate, the state and civil society. Moreover, Europeanization, which made it possible for party elites to act freely, does not always allow making decisions following their party's position and voters. This, in turn, further aggravates the possibilities of implementing parties' functions, aggravates the situation between the party elite and a simple ordinary voter, and allows the latter to personify national parties with the Brussels bureaucracy (Semenenko & Prokhorenko, 2015). The consequence of this is the loss of confidence of ordinary voters and the fall in the authority of the parties, which represent the majority in the government. Favorable conditions are created for the formation of a new type of party, which in turn leads to the collapse of two-party systems with dominant parties.

4. CONCLUSION

By the beginning of the third stage in the development of party-political systems in the EU countries, the process of the growing crisis began, caused by new challenges that faced both the European Union as a whole, as a unique international structure with a high degree of integration of participants, and specifically before that neoliberal model of social development, which was based on the idea of a welfare state, and that in the conditions of globalization was unable to adapt to new conditions. During this period, in connection with the above factors, in a number of the countries of the EU, the peculiarities of their national historical development, associated with the problems relevant to their political agenda - national sovereignty, national values, preservation of national identity - acquired special significance. In a number of these countries, the formation of the political system ran counter to the general European principles and values. A good example in this context is Hungary, where, according to the Hungarian political scientist B. Magyar (2016), an authoritarian regime is being formed. A return to authoritarianism is also typical, according to experts, for Poland (Basov, 2019).

The complex of factors in their interaction determines the current direction of the transformation process of party-political systems (Cherdymova *et al.*, 2018), which have both common qualitative characteristics that are visible throughout the political space of the European Union, and specific features, due primarily to the specifics of national states, the level of development of the civil society, type of political culture, the specificity of cultural and socio-economic development.

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Received on 06-11-2020

Accepted on 15-12-2020

Published on 27-12-2020

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.6000/1929-4409.2020.09.265>© 2020 Tryma *et al.*; Licensee Lifescience Global.

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