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Newsletter of the ECPR Standing Group on Extremism & Democracy

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The *e-Extreme* is the newsletter of the ECPR Standing Group on *Extremism & Democracy*. For any enquiries about the newsletter and book reviews, please contact the managing editors (extremismanddemocracy@gmail.com).

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STANDING GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear *e-Extreme* readers,

We hope you are well, wherever you may be. Read on for the usual mix of announcements, reports, reviews and alerts to keep on top of all the recent developments related to ‘extremism and democracy’.

In this issue of *e-Extreme* we’re delighted to share with you a selection of articles on the upcoming French and Hungarian elections. We hope you enjoy these perspectives and you feel inspired to continue the conversation.

Please do get in touch with your contributions and ideas. In the meantime, take care.

WELCOME TO NEW E&D STEERING COMMITTEE

A message from **Annika Werner, Daphne Halikiopoulou and Léonie de Jonge:**

As the incoming Steering Committee for the Standing Group on Extremism & Democracy, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for entrusting us with your group!

Over the past weeks, we have been busy setting up meetings across three (!) different time zones and familiarizing ourselves with our new role. We would like to thank the outgoing Committee members-Caterina Froio, Andrea L. P. Pirro, and Stijn van Kessel-for making the transition as smooth as possible. We also would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work and dedication over the last several years. We have big shoes to fill!

Besides talking to our predecessors, we have had really insightful conversations with our ECPR communication officers, Helen Cooper, as well as our fantastic *e-Extreme* newsletter editors, Patricia Rodi and Fred Paxton. While we are settling in, we already wanted to share some of our key objectives for the coming years. Our main role is to support the E&D community’s active participation in ECPR activities. We aim to do so by continuing to build an inclusive and thriving academic community of scholars who study different aspects of ‘extremism and

democracy' around the world. To this end, we strive to cultivate a welcoming environment for early career researchers; we commit to promoting gender equality and supporting scholars from under-represented groups; and we aim to take particular care of E&D members located outside of Western Europe.

But we ultimately serve the needs of the E&D community, so we would really like to get a better sense of what those needs are. What activities would you like to see in the coming years? We would be very grateful if you could take a moment to fill in our survey [here](#). You can also always email us at: extremismanddemocracy@gmail.com. We hope to see many of you in person during the ECPR General Conference or elsewhere. In the meantime, feel free to reach out to us with any comments or questions.

REGISTER AS AN E&D STANDING GROUP MEMBER

You can join the ECPR Standing Group on *Extremism & Democracy* always free of charge and at the click of a button, via the ECPR website (<https://ecpr.eu/Groups>). If you have not already done so, please register as a member so that our list is up to date and complete.

In order to join, you will need a MyECPR account, which we assume many of you will already have. If you do not have one, you can create an account in only a few minutes (and you need not be from an ECPR member institution to do so). If you are from a non-member institution, we will need to accept your application to join, so your membership status (which you can see via your MyECPR account, and on the Standing Group pages when you are logged in to MyECPR) will be 'pending' until you are accepted.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch!

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW

Your Standing Group membership is due for renewal this year. The current membership year will end on 30 September, and the renewal option is now available on the ECPR website.

How to renew? When you are logged in to your My ECPR account, visit ‘My Groups’ (<https://ecpr.eu/MyEcpr/MyGroups.aspx>) and click ‘Renew Membership’ next to ‘Extremism and Democracy’. If you do not renew by 30 September, your membership will be discontinued.

CALL FOR REVIEWERS

e-Extreme is now offering scholars the opportunity to review articles! If you want to share your review of the latest published articles in the field of populism, extremism and radicalism and have it published in *e-Extreme*, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us via: extremismanddemocracy@gmail.com.

E&D ROUTLEDGE BOOK SERIES

The Routledge Book Series in *Extremism and Democracy*, which publishes work that lies within the Standing Group’s academic scope, covers academic studies within the broad fields of ‘extremism’ and ‘democracy’, with volumes focusing on adjacent concepts such as populism, radicalism, and ideological/religious fundamentalism. These topics have been considered largely in isolation by scholars interested in the study of political parties, elections, social movements, activism, and radicalisation in democratic settings. Since its establishment in 1999, the series has encompassed both influential contributions to the discipline and informative accounts for public debate. Works will seek to problematise the role of extremism, broadly defined, within an ever-globalising world, and/or the way social and political actors can respond to these challenges without undermining democratic credentials.

The series was originally founded by Roger Eatwell (University of Bath) and Cas Mudde (University of Georgia) in 1999. The editorial team now comprises Caterina Froio (Sciences Po), Andrea L. P. Pirro (Scuola Normale Superiore), and Stijn van Kessel (Queen Mary University of London). The editors strongly encourage ideas or suggestions for new volumes in the book series, both from established academics and early career researchers.

To discuss any ideas or suggestions for new volumes in this book series, please contact the editors at: extremismanddemocracy@gmail.com.

KEEP US INFORMED

Please keep us informed of any upcoming conferences or workshops you are organising, and of any publication or funding opportunities that would be of interest to Standing Group members. We will post all details on our website. Similarly, if you would like to write a report on a conference or workshop that you have organised and have this included in our newsletter, please do let us know.

Please, also tell us of any recent publications of interest to Standing Group members so that we may include them in the 'publications alert' section of our newsletter, and please get in touch if you would like to see a particular book (including your own) reviewed in *e-Extreme*, or if you would like to review a specific book yourself. We are always keen on receiving reviews from junior and senior scholars alike!

Finally, if you would like to get involved in the production of the newsletter, the development of our website, or any of the other activities of the Standing Group, please do get in touch. We are always very keen to involve more and more members in the running of the Standing Group!

UPCOMING EVENTS

The year ahead is looking promising with three major events endorsed by the SG and set to shape the activity of our members and beyond.

The Workshop entitled *Movement Parties: Their Rise, Variety, and Consequences*, chaired by **Endre Borbáth** (*Free University Berlin*) and **Fred Paxton** (*University of Milan*) was accepted for the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops. The event will be held at the University of Edinburgh and online, 19–22 April 2022. The full list of papers and participants can be found [here](#).

The 3rd Summer School on Concepts and Methods for Research on Far-Right Politics is convened by **Pietro Castelli Gattinara** (*Sciences Po & Université Libre de Bruxelles*) and **Andrea Pirro** (*Scuola Normale Superiore*), and sponsored by the ECPR and the Centre for Research on Extremism (C-REX). This year's event will take place at Sciences Po, Paris, 4–8 July 2022, as usual addressing early career researchers interested to apply established theories and research techniques to the study of far-right politics. Keynote speakers and instructors include: Cas Mudde, Nonna Mayer, Tore Bjørgo, Kathleen Blee, Linda Bos, Pietro Castelli Gattinara, Maura Conway, Caterina Froio, Andrea Pirro, and Andrej Zaslove.

The Section entitled *Conspiring Elites and Disgruntled Masses? Revisiting the Populist and Extremist Challenges to Democracy*, chaired by **Fabian Habersack** (*University of Innsbruck*) and **Sophia Hunger** (*WZB Berlin Social Science Center*), was accepted for the ECPR General Conference taking place at the University of Innsbruck, 22–26 August 2022. The deadline for funding applications is 7 April, and registrations will open on 20 April.*

* N.B. If you have submitted a paper to this section, you might be wondering [why there is a delay](#) in hearing back from the conference organisers. In short, this is because our section received about 160 paper proposals and a standard allotment of 8 panels from the ECPR central office. 8 panels means 40 papers, which would result in a 75% rejection rate. The ECPR has offered to move some panels online, into a special "online" conference day. The E&D Steering Group Committee and the section organisers are resisting this move. We have communicated our concerns and our resistance to the ECPR office but have yet to hear back. Please bear with us until we receive some answers.

SYMPOSIUM

THE UPCOMING FRENCH & HUNGARIAN ELECTIONS

THE MAINSTREAMING OF THE FAR & EXTREME RIGHT IN THE FRENCH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Aurelien Mondon
University of Bath

As the French presidential election looms, the far right is in the spotlight, again. Yet it would be wrong to assume the context has not dramatically evolved. It appears that we have reached a new stage in the mainstreaming of far-right politics in France and that the borders between the mainstream, far and even extreme right are increasingly porous and fuzzy. While it is too early to tell how the far and extreme right will fare in the election – it is indeed possible that the crowded field may lead to a split in the vote and to the whole family missing out on the second round – it is clear that their pet issues have already become further normalised during the campaign.

Most strikingly perhaps, Valérie Pécresse, the Républicains candidate, recently gave credence to the [great replacement theory](#), trying to appear tough on immigration, as if this was a legitimate grievance of ‘the people’, and that pandering to fascist conspiracy theories was a popular demand. She backtracked when faced with a backlash, albeit a rather tame one considering how extreme such theories are, but another step had been taken.

Of course, Pécresse is not solely responsible for this situation, nor is the centre right, despite [Nicolas Sarkozy having been a precursor and key actor](#) in shaping the current reactionary context. The Macron government has an incredibly poor record when it comes to countering far right politics and discourse. Attacks on racialised Muslim communities in France have gone hand in hand with the whipping up of moral panics about [Islamism](#), wokeism and Critical Race Theory.

Crucially, this is not just limited to discourse. The rightward move has had some very serious practical circumstances as more stringent anti-terrorism laws have been passed to counter ‘[Islamist separatism](#)’. On the right, [Laurent Wauquiez](#), the president of the Regional Council of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, went as far as removing some funding from the University of Grenoble accused of ‘wokeism’ for denouncing the Islamophobia of one of their lecturers.

This process of normalisation cannot be discussed without mentioning Eric Zemmour, the new kid on the block who is at the same an old dog of the media

establishment in France. Zemmour loves to paint himself, and see himself painted by a [broadly compliant mainstream media](#), as an outsider, as someone who is regularly [cancelled for breaking taboos](#) and opposing the elite, even though this could not be further from the truth. Indeed, for [decades now](#), Zemmour has received countless platforms to push some incredibly extreme ideas and politics, which should not have been a surprise given that extreme sexist, racist and homophobic positions were already clearly articulated in his first book *Le Premier Sexe* (2006). His presence in the mainstream media has not been limited to the right and far right, but he has often been allowed to gain legitimacy on [more liberal programmes](#).

Interestingly, the [many defections](#) from the Rassemblement National to Zemmour's Reconquête party suggest that the Le Pens' strategy of de-demonisation was always only superficial within the party. Once a more extreme alternative appeared in a context where far right ideas have become increasingly mainstream, [many of those who had been biding](#) their time jumped ship. While Marine Le Pen has somewhat proved the victim of her own success, it would be a mistake to give her sole responsibility in the mainstreaming process. In fact, as [Katy Brown, Aaron Winter and I](#) explored in an attempt to conceptualise the process of mainstreaming, it is not only mistaken but dangerous to ignore the central role played by the mainstream itself in the process. No matter how skilful the far right may be, its move to the mainstream of politics can only take place if it is allowed to and if its presence or ideas are normalised in our public discourse. This means that actors who have a higher ability to set the agenda, such as the mainstream media, politicians and even academics to an extent, have a particular responsibility in either resisting, accepting or enabling these ideas. As such, it is crucial to understand the mainstreaming process as a top-down one rather than bottom up, as [the use of the concept of populism may have suggested at times](#).

This leads us to what is perhaps the more contentious lesson which we have failed to learn as a society when it comes to understanding the mainstreaming of the far right. Far from being antithetical to our current system, it is becoming increasingly clear that far right politics can in fact be adopted and assimilated into the workings of liberal democracies. As Aaron Winter and I discussed at length in [Reactionary Democracy](#), this should not have come as a surprise and has only been possible because of the mythology which has not only simplistically linked existing liberalism with progress, but also placed liberal democracies, in and of themselves, as a bulwark against the far right. This short-sightedness has meant that we have failed to learn key lessons in history and prevented us from thinking beyond a model that offers as sole alternatives the far right and the status quo, both of which exclude many unhappy with the current circumstances, concerned with the multitude of impending crises and yet unconvinced by the solutions offered by the far right. If anything is to be learnt from the French election at this stage, it is the simple fact that we have still not reconciled ourselves with our responsibility as actors with the power to shape public discourse in the mainstreaming of the far right.

Aurelien Mondon is a Senior Lecturer in politics at the University of Bath. His research focuses predominantly on the impact of racism and populism on liberal democracies and the mainstreaming of far right politics through elite discourse. His first book, **The Mainstreaming of the Extreme Right in France and Australia: A Populist Hegemony?**, was published in 2013 and he recently co-edited **After Charlie Hebdo: Terror, racism and free speech** published with Zed. His latest book **Reactionary democracy: How racism and the populist far right became mainstream**, co-written with Aaron Winter, is out with Verso.

HOW THE WAR IN UKRAINE AFFECTS THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN FRANCE

Timothy Peace
University of Glasgow

The French presidential campaign is now officially underway with 12 candidates having managed to reach the landmark of 500 signatures needed from elected officials. Yet the attention of the French public will be, rightly, focused on the war in Europe following the actions of the Russian military in Ukraine. An election campaign in wartime will provide a unique set of circumstances whereby domestic politics take a back seat to international events and their repercussions for French and European citizens. A widely held view is that this situation will only further enhance Emmanuel Macron's chances of being re-elected as he strides the world stage attempting to (until now unsuccessfully) mediate in the conflict and to lead the response of the EU. Indeed, there are few who believe in anything other than a smooth Macron victory come 24th April. Who is to join him in the second round of the election, however, is still very much up for grabs.

The latest polling data indicates Marine Le Pen as the best placed to join Macron in the run-off, in a repeat of the 2017 presidential election. However, a lot can happen before the first round of voting on 10th April, especially given the magnitude of current geopolitical events. Even before Russian tanks began rolling into Ukraine, the *Rassemblement National* candidate had been seriously weakened by the candidacy of Eric Zemmour. The existence of a far-right competitor for the RN splits its potential electorate and gives Marine Le Pen less distinctiveness. What is more, since the beginning of the year, a number of high-profile defections have taken place with prominent RN politicians throwing their lot in with Zemmour and his newly created *Reconquête* (Reconquest) party.

Some of these defections were expected, such as MEPs Gilbert Collard and Jérôme Rivière as well as the Senator Stéphane Ravier, who were known to be critical of MLP's leadership and her mainstreaming approach, dubbed *dédiabolisation*. However, the loss of a senior figure such as Nicolas Bay, who had served

as General Secretary of the RN and was a spokesman for Marine Le Pen's campaign, was a bigger blow. Le Pen referred to Bay as a slug, but [she had 'kinder' words for her niece Marion Maréchal](#) who also confirmed her support for Zemmour on 6th March: "Poor Marion has been transformed into a sort of life-buoy for a campaign [Zemmour] that is collapsing in on itself...It's a shame because she deserves better than that."

Marion Maréchal, a former member of parliament for Le Pen's party, has distinguished herself in recent years through her unwavering support for the regime of Vladimir Putin including multiple trips to Russia and to annexed Crimea. The decision by Zemmour's team to accept her support has been questioned at a time when both far-right candidates have become seriously compromised by their pro-Kremlin positions. Since Russia's (most recent) invasion of Ukraine, social media has been awash with videos of both [Eric Zemmour](#) and [Marine Le Pen](#) praising Putin. Le Pen's meeting with the Russian leader in Moscow in March 2017 had already been used against her during the presidential campaign of that year and the existence of a photo from that moment being used in her 2022 campaign material (prepared before the war) has been a source of embarrassment. Despite early assertions from her campaign team that the war would not lead to a volte-face regarding Marine Le Pen's opinion on Vladimir Putin, the signs are clear that she is now distancing herself from her former positions. She has now condemned the actions of the Russian military in Ukraine and her MEPs, with the exception of Thierry Mariani, voted in favour of a resolution to provide more aid to Ukraine and increase sanctions on Russia. The RN candidate for the presidency and party president Jordan Bardella have both made statements accepting that Russia is an authoritarian state.

Eric Zemmour, on the other hand, has been reluctant to row back on his previous statements supporting Putin and, at the time of publication (1 April 2022), still opposes sanctions placed on Russia and the sending of arms to Ukraine. His foreign policy program also includes the proposal to pull France out of NATO's integrated military command which would repeat the famous decision taken by Charles de Gaulle in 1966. He also continues to take a hard line on Ukrainian refugees despite public opinion largely being in favour of France taking in its fair share of displaced people fleeing the war. Zemmour's recent fall in the polls indicates that he may have misjudged the public mood and the ongoing war may derail his campaign if he insists on taking a more ambiguous position vis-à-vis Russia's actions in Ukraine.

If either Zemmour or Le Pen can make it to the second round against Macron, we can be sure that their positions on the conflict will be severely tested. Failure to repeat her achievement of 2017 will see Marine Le Pen come under immense pressure to step down as leader of the RN. This would also leave the party in disarray before the start of the legislative elections in June. Similarly, a poor performance from Zemmour in the presidential race will hamper his party's chances of

gaining seats in a two round electoral system that has always made it more difficult for smaller challenger parties. The next few months will certainly be interesting for observers of extremism and democracy in France.

Timothy Peace is a Lecturer in Politics at the University of Glasgow. His research interests include social movements, religion and politics and populist parties in Europe. He is the author of *European Social Movements and Muslim Activism: Another World but with Whom?* (Palgrave 2015)

STILL 'NEITHER LEFT NOR RIGHT, FRENCH?' MARINE LE PEN & THE RESTRUCTURING OF POLITICAL CLEAVAGES

Marta Lorimer
London School of Economics

Marine Le Pen's 2017 presidential election was punctuated by claims that French politics was no longer structured around the Left/Right cleavage. Instead, she claimed, the division was between 'patriots' on one side, and 'globalists' on the other (Lorimer, 2018).

Le Pen has spent the last few years trying to impose this new cleavage, helped in no small part by Emmanuel Macron himself. First, in the years since she became leader of the party, Marine Le Pen has expanded her issue agenda and refashioned it in such a way that it is able to appeal to voters beyond the traditional right. In addition to her long-standing focus on immigration and security, she has sought to expand her socio-economic programme with the aim of strengthening her appeal among working-class voters.

Second, Le Pen has devoted a good part of her energy to rejecting the Left/Right cleavage discursively and replacing it with something more conducive to her political agenda – the distinction between 'globalists' and 'patriots'. She has established herself as the representative of the 'patriotic' camp and identified Emmanuel Macron as the representative of the 'globalists' and has been adamant that they are the only two options that the French can credibly pick between. For a while, the polls seem to support her contention – just a year ago, few expected that the second round of the 2022 presidential election would be different from that of the 2017 election. Although much has changed since, Marine Le Pen still holds that she is Macron's greatest opponent, and that he is still her principal adversary.

Marine Le Pen's rejection of the politics of Left and Right is one of the key differences between herself and her far-right contender, Éric Zemmour. Whereas Zemmour sees himself as the person who can finally unite the mainstream right and the far right, Marine Le Pen considers this 'curious appeal to a supposed people of the Right' a 'useless and anachronistic call for a revenge on the left, at a time

when the left no longer exists and the right has been “macronised” (Le Point, 2022).

This fundamental distinction between Zemmour and Le Pen reveals a much broader division within the French far right concerning what it should do to gain more power. For Zemmour, the priority is to tear down the wall that separates the mainstream right from the far right and unite all conservative forces under a single entity. The precondition of this union of the rights is by and large the implosion of the mainstream right-wing party Les Republicains, as well as, at the very least, a change of course in the Rassemblement National. However, Zemmour’s project does nothing to question the fundamental distinction between Left and Right. It merely seeks to widen the camp of the Right.

For Marine Le Pen, on the other hand, the solution is to appeal to voters beyond the right and impose a new ‘vertical’ division between the people and the elite. Her attempts at introducing a new distinction between ‘globalists’ and ‘patriots’ need to be understood as part of this strategy, as they enable her to appeal to voters of the left as well as to voters of the right.

The outcome of the presidential election will be key in determining which strategy will prevail in the next electoral cycle. If Le Pen successfully reaches the second round, she might still be able to claim that her strategy of seeking to overcome Left and Right is valid. However, if she is unsuccessful again (which is likely to be the case), proponents of a union of the right even within her party might become more vocal and push for a change in strategy. This might indeed be what Zemmour hopes for: rather than aiming to win the current presidential, he may simply be preparing for the aftermath.

Marta Lorimer is a LSE Fellow in European Politics. Prior to joining the European Institute, she was a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Exeter. Marta’s research focuses on far right politics and differentiated integration in the European Union. Her research has been published in the *Journal of European Public Policy*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, and the *Swiss Political Science Review*.

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- Lorimer, M. (2018) “‘Ni droite, Ni gauche, Français!’ Far right populism and the future of Left/Right politics’, in Herman, L. and Muldoon, J., *Trumping the Mainstream: The conquest of mainstream democratic politics by far-right populism*, London: Routledge.

ALL EYES ON HUNGARY: WILL PUTIN'S WAR GIVE THE EDGE TO ORBÁN'S CHALLENGERS?

Dana Trif

Babeş-Bolyai University

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Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iaşi

Toma Burean

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In the midst of Putin's war in Ukraine, the Hungarian elections on April 3rd are the first political battleground for what seems to be an emerging European anti-war movement. Will it give the necessary edge to topple Victor Orbán?

2022 is Orbán's 16th year in power as Prime Minister, a period marked by increasingly authoritarian leadership and democratic backsliding. Evidence points to a serious challenge from a newly united Hungarian opposition. At the October 2019 local elections, the opposition took 14 of the 23 districts of Budapest and 11 out of 12 provincial cities. But Orbán's party FIDESZ still retained a majority of the votes across Hungary. According to [Politico's latest polling](#), by March 30th FIDESZ and the united opposition were closely in contention, at 50% and 45%. Orbán's foreign affairs performance might even just tip the scales.

Since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, Orbán has been driven into a corner: to cater to his voters' opposition to Russian aggression, despite his own long-term closeness to Putin and similarly authoritarian approach. Orbán's behaviour regarding anti-Russian sanctions shows that Orbán has struggled to put distance between himself and Putin's actions in Ukraine. Initially, the Hungarian PM, along with his German, Italian, and Cypriot counterparts, had rejected the idea to exclude Russia from their international payments systems SWIFT. Only two days later, after the international media was flooded with images of helpless Ukrainian refugees and fighting across the country, Orbán retracted his veto. On February 26, the EU finally decided to cut out Russia from SWIFT.

This action strongly signals Orbán's desire to shed his long-term allegiance to Putin ahead of the April elections. Yet there are cracks in his stance. Having agreed to the sanctions imposed by the EU, Orbán still opposed the idea of sending military help to Ukraine. Orbán's decision to forbid the transition of military help to Ukraine on Hungarian territory sets him apart from other European countries.

Amidst the changed circumstances, Orbán has also adapted his well-known anti-migration agenda. An article published by the Hungarian news website on February 26, [index.hu](#), shows a picture of Orbán casually dressed visiting the Beregsurány border and declaring that Hungary should be prepared to deal with the consequences of war. On March 3rd a BBC reporter once again questioned Orbán during a similar visit on his messages towards Zelensky and Putin. The Prime Minister deflected the question emphasizing that his main priority were the immigrants. Yet even that claim rings hollow. Only two days later, the Romanian

media reported that Hungarian authorities had blocked buses transporting Ukrainian refugees fleeing to the West because the latter lacked biometric passports.

Orbán is aware that the backlash against Putin's war does not automatically translate into pro-democratic, progressive politics. He may still try to brandish his conservative connections with an invitation to Donald Trump to visit Hungary, a plan on the table at the beginning of February.

In the opposition camp, the [United for Hungary alliance released its national list of candidates](#) for the parliamentary elections on 25 February. Márki-Zay Péter, the mayor of Hódmezővásárhely, was selected as its candidate for the position of Prime Minister. Despite the ideological diversity of the alliance – including amongst others both the radical right Jobbik and green liberals – its electoral strategy seems to have been so far effective. As never before in Hungary's democratic post-1989 history, the opposition has managed to show a united front. It has also used the current events in Ukraine to its advantage, by consistently emphasizing Orbán's ties to Russia. The war offers a golden opportunity to condemn Orbán as the leader who would remove Hungary from its democratic path once and for all, and endanger the long-term security of Europe.

With this opposition alliance, the Hungarian election also showcases the rise of a new type of politics, one in which so-called 'movement parties' are spearheading the political fight. Unlikely ideological bedfellows as they may be, Jobbik and Momentum have both drawn their strength from grass roots organizations and social movements. They share the same *modus operandi*, if not similar political views.

The stakes of the April 3rd election are high, and the outcomes are uncertain. High profile voices already hint at potential irregularities. Writing for the economic weekly [Hvg.hu](#), István Elek warned that this year's elections would be neither free nor fair. Elek is one of Orbán's former advisers and co-founder together with Márki-Zay Péter of Everybody's Hungary Movement (Mindenki Magyarországa Mozgalom, or MMM). His criticism of the authoritarian drift in Hungarian politics is nothing new. Yet coming from a former member of Orbán's circle, it carries extra weight.

Will Putin drag his former ally down? In a twist of fate, Viktor Orbán's long rule and defense of illiberalism might become another victim of Putin's war. But the opposition may also be too diverse for its own good. Even if it were to win a majority in the Hungarian Parliament, its internal coherence may prove an even bigger challenge than that of electoral victory. Writing at this hour and under such quickly evolving circumstances, one can only conclude that, as banal as it may sound, the future remains more than ever uncertain.

Dana Trif is an international relations scholar working at the interface between politics, law, and ideology. Her PhD in Political Science was awarded by the Freie Universität Berlin and was distinguished with the 2015 Stiftung Überlebensrecht Prize.

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PUBLICATIONS ALERT

Our publication alert is based on a semi-automated search and can never be complete. Therefore, please tell us about any **recent** publications of interest to Standing Group members so that we may include them in our newsletter.

- Abrassart, A. & Wolter, S. C. Rejecting education as the basis of the social prestige of occupations: the role of polarized political ideologies and parties in Switzerland. *Acta Politica*.
- Anderl, F. False friends: Leftist nationalism and the project of transnational solidarity. *Journal of International Political Theory*.
- Angelucci, D. & Vittori, D. Are All Populist Voters the Same? Institutional Distrust and the Five Star Movement in Italy. *South European Society and Politics*.
- Aydemir, N. Framing Syrian refugees in Turkish politics: a qualitative analysis on party group speeches. *Territory Politics Governance*.
- Bajar, J. T. F. (2022) Gravitating political capital on the geo-social divide: Duterte's populisms, electoral craft, and the "Imagined Spatiality". *Asian Politics & Policy*, 14, 43-66.
- Barcelo, J. & Labzina, E. Islamic State's Terrorist Attacks Disengage Their Supporters: Robust Evidence from Twitter. *British Journal of Political Science*.
- Barker, D. C., Detamble, R. & Marietta, M. (2022) Intellectualism, Anti-Intellectualism, and Epistemic Hubris in Red and Blue America. *American Political Science Review*, 116, 38-53.
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