



The Making of an Illiberal Democracy: The Case of Hungary

Noah Higgins | Olson Scholar



Hypothesis

- Economic decline created the conditions for dramatic political change in Hungary.
- Declining support for liberal values, rising nationalism, and the example of successful authoritarian regimes determined the illiberal nature of that change.

2010 Hungarian Election Results



- Orange=Fidezs/KDNP
- Red=Hungarian Socialist Party

Findings

- Economic decline did in fact open the door to radical political change.
- There was no significant decline in the support for liberal values.
- Nationalist sentiment was rising in Hungary throughout the 2000s.
- There is no evidence of popular level admiration for authoritarian states though there is evidence of this phenomena on an elite level.

Sources & Methods

- Method→ A process-tracing study of the case of Hungary, with a focus on the leadup to the 2010 elections.
- Sources→ Economic indicators, survey data, speeches by Hungarian politicians, news articles, materials from the House of Terror Museum in Budapest, election results and reports from democracy monitoring watchdogs.

Research Question

What caused democratic decline in Hungary?

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