

Executive Master
in EU Studies

***Viktor Orbán: An extreme case of
the Eurosceptic, Populist,
Anti-Liberal politician?***

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Abstract

For some time the paths of the European Union and Hungary seem to have been diverging, as the political leadership of Hungary has taken stances that seem contrary to those of the wider EU and in some cases purposefully so. This paper will attempt to examine the extent to which these choices have been purposeful and calculated moves that have attempted to cast Hungary and more specifically Viktor Orbán in a role opposite that of the EU. This paper will also seek to provide a brief examination of what motivations there may be behind such actions and consideration of the future prospects for EU-Hungarian relations in light of the findings. From the evidence that I gathered from two key sets of speeches given by Viktor Orbán over a period of fourteen years, it appears that while Orbán was not originally a populist, anti-liberal, Eurosceptic, his speeches have shown an increasing tendency towards strategies typical of these groups. However, it is also appears to be the case that he has become increasingly extreme in his views over his four consecutive terms in office and this trend looks set to continue.

1. Introduction

The term ‘Eurosceptic’ is defined by the Oxford Dictionary of Politics and International Relations as “a person, a political party, or group of people who are sceptical of the European Union and European integration” (Brown, McLean and McMillan, 2018). The term is non-partisan and may be used in relation to any and all groups across the political spectrum. Within this definition there is a large amount of variation in the reasons for euroscepticism – some may be critical of ceding further authority to the European Union due to worries around national sovereignty (De Wilde and Trenz, 2012, Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2017), some may see it as an elitist organisation that supersedes domestic politics to create a cross-Europe class that promotes neoliberal ideologies (Brack and Startin, 2015), while others may argue that the EU is a positive force that nonetheless needs reform to better deliver success (Wessels, 2007). The term Eurosceptic is one that has often been applied both by his enemies and his allies to the current Prime Minister of Hungary, Viktor Orbán, alongside monikers such as anti-liberal and populist.

For better or worse, Viktor Orbán both in domestic politics and further afield is one of the key political figures of the current era and his unarguable success is the result of long years of tireless effort, savvy political machination and no small amount of luck. Far from being a political parvenu who would explode onto the Hungarian political scene and disappear just as quickly, Orbán has proved to have enduring (and perhaps increasing) appeal within his home country and within wider global circles that share the same political outlook. Indeed, the 2022 Hungarian parliamentary elections saw Orbán's Fidesz party (in coalition with the Christian Democratic People's party KDNP) win an increased number of seats, taking a supermajority of 139 out of 199 seats in Parliament and 54.13% of all votes cast. To understand the current political situation in Hungary and its relation to the wider EU issues, it is necessary to understand the meteoric rise of Viktor Orbán.

From his early years growing up in the Communist Hungarian People's Republic, Orbán has had a penchant for challenging the prevailing or fashionable political view of the time. At one time reported to the police for anti-Communist activity and suspected of engaging in seditious and dangerous activities exploring liberal, Western thought, Orbán as a student had already started to develop an anti-establishment streak (Lendvai, 2017). In 1988, Orbán and other now influential members founded Fidesz – the Hungarian Civic Alliance as a youth movement, anticipating the end of Communist rule and with a clear aim of developing into a fully-fledged political party that would contest the first non-Communist elections following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991.

While not the head of this movement, Orbán's influence was undeniable and his now-famous speech on Hősök Tére in Budapest in 1989, which paid homage to the heroes of the 1956 Hungarian Uprising (against Soviet occupation), issued a clear challenge to the Communist powers that be and put him squarely in the centre of the growing political momentum for regime change (Murer in Krüger et al., 2018). This momentum would see him first elected as a member of Parliament in the 1990 Hungarian elections and soon after replace the collective leadership of Fidesz's nascent parliamentary group as the sole head of the party.

It was following this period that Orbán's influence over Fidesz becomes noticeable and the shift in focus of the political group he led becomes marked. What had started out as an idealistic, left-leaning, student-led movement wanting free and fair elections and the

promotion of liberal values, over time redefined itself as a conservative centre-right political force (Koenen, 2023). This was not without significant challenges though, such as their poor results in the 1994 elections in which the party barely managed to survive and the competition from Antall József's MDF party which was also centre-right. Luckily for Orbán, Antall's government, which had won convincingly in the 1990 elections, was riven by internal conflict which also led them to sustain major losses in the 1994 elections. The untimely death of Antall in 1993 and the malaise that gripped his MDF party through the next parliament allowed Orbán an opportunity (Rupnik, 2018).

Seeing a fragmented right-wing, he fought the 1998 elections as the leader of Fidesz but the inconclusive elections, split between the left-wing MSZP winning a plurality of votes but Fidesz having won the most seats, allowed political manoeuvring in which Orbán could take the helm of a wider centre-right coalition. Orbán Viktor was duly appointed the head of the coalition government, assuming the office of Prime Minister of Hungary on the 6th July 1998. He served out the full four-year term in office and this first taste of political power, albeit diluted, would prove influential in the future as he became the Leader of the Opposition following the MSZP victory in the 2002 election cycle (Serdült, 2024).

It would be 2010 before Orbán Viktor would once again take over the reins of Hungary, winning a landslide victory due to political scandals surrounding the MSZP and their leader Ferenc Gyurcsány. However, this time would prove to be very different, as Fidesz were not only able to win but to secure a two-thirds majority of the unicameral National Assembly, meaning they were handed sweeping new powers to create and adopt legislation. Fidesz were now in control of the legislative levers that would allow them to see through their policies and ultimately they had the power to forge Hungary into the country they wanted it to be (Scheppele, 2022).

2010 is also important as it marks a turning point in Orbán's political agenda. Where previously Prime Minister Orbán's concerns lay mostly in the cut-and-thrust of domestic politics of a nation rebuilding itself and rediscovering its own national identity, Orbán was now the leader of a much more assured country than when he last held the premiership. While there was still work to be done to bolster newly-independent Hungarian nationhood, the country Orbán inherited was a confident and promising member of the European Union whose rise and rise seemed assured. Thus, it is only natural that Hungary's ambitions

should also continue to expand outwards and Hungary has sought to carve out its own niche on the world stage.

In the fourteen years (and three successive elections) since then, Orbán has had almost unfettered power to decide the direction and aims of not only Hungary's domestic agenda, but so too its geopolitical agenda as it continues to integrate further into the European Union and the Common Market. His efforts have lionised him within his home nation and they have also brought significant positive attention from outside, as global actors see in Hungary the opportunity of a close ally within the EU that does not always toe the party line (Politico, 2023). By contrast, Orbán has only increased his unpopularity within the European Union's leadership through his continual testing of the boundaries of European patience and more recently legality. This mounting frustration is perhaps best exemplified in the 2015 summit in Riga, as the former EU Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker, famously greeted Orbán by hailing "dictator!" followed by a slap to the face (Guardian, 2015).

A large amount of the friction that has occurred between the Hungarian political leadership and the European Union in recent years has been as a direct consequence of the stated political ambitions of these two players conflicting with one another, at times being outright antagonistic. While other Member States have expressed their unease or dissatisfaction with the direction or implementation of EU policy, arguably no other EU country has done it quite so volubly and vociferously as the 'bête noire' of Hungary (Washington Post, 2024). To understand the reasons behind Orbán's pugilistic approach to the EU is not only to understand how the EU and its Member States may identify their own priorities differently but also to understand why there is criticism of the bloc. By investigating the extent to which there may be truth in the assertions that Orbán is a populist, Eurosceptic, anti-Liberal leader it is also help to further understand the growing gulf between the aspirations of European nationalistic/populistic movements and the EU itself.

2. Literature Review

In addition to understanding the historical political development surrounding Orbán and

the Fidesz leadership in the last few decades, it is also important to define some of the major concepts that have been suggested to intersect with and inform the Prime Minister's political agenda. These are namely Geopolitics, Nationalism/Populism and Identity Politics. An overview of these areas will allow us to deepen our understanding of current Hungarian discourses and their evolution.

2.1 – What is geopolitics and why is it important?

Geopolitics is now an inescapable concept when looking through international media sources. From the geopolitics of Israel and Palestine to the geopolitical motivations guiding the Russian invasion of Ukraine, it is a sub-discipline that is once again finding itself in the spotlight, as analysts attempt to understand the reasons behind current events and attempt to predict the future course of events based on past patterns.

Classical Geopolitics is an area of study that seeks to understand how the geography of a place may influence its politics or international political economy and vice versa. This could be in terms of a country's mineral wealth, its climate, its biological resources, but equally this could refer to the human aspects of a country, its culture, society, history, and diplomatic relations (Flint, 2021).

Geopolitics as a lens through which to understand political actions fell out of favour for a time, particularly since the 1990s, as the idea that "the world is flat" gained traction. This view saw the incipient globalisation the world has experienced since the 1970s as a way to overcome the friction of distance, with the idea that time-space convergence would make the physical location of a country increasingly obsolete as the digital world took precedence (Ó Tuathail and Dalby, 1998).

Yet, the importance of geography has not yet been overcome as we realise that many of the technological fixes we have become so dependent on are themselves inextricably tied to geography, for example in the supply of raw materials. The period from 2020-23 illustrates this, as global industries ground to a halt due to a shortage of microchips integral to their functionality which in part was due to a physical shortage of minerals (Centre for European Policy Analysis, 2023). Similarly, many of the burgeoning conflicts that we are witnessing such as Russia in Ukraine and unrest along the Guyanese border between the UK and

Venezuela are in no small part due to the presence of valuable raw materials. Indeed, some commentators are suggesting the current period in the history of mankind will be the geopolitical era (World Economic Forum, 2024).

Another variation of Geopolitical theory also started to emerge in the late 1980s and 90s after being influenced by Poststructuralist theory and is far more relevant in the current study. John Agnew outlines the differences of Critical Geopolitics from traditional Geopolitics as the idea that “world politics is underpinned by a myriad of assumptions and schemes about the ways in which geographical divisions of the world, strategic plans, global images and the disposition of the continents and oceans enter into the making of foreign policy and into the popular legitimation of those policies” (Agnew, 2013:19). Critical Geopolitics thereby moves away from the idea that there is a static truth underpinning global power relations and instead attempts to understand how different narratives are created and promulgated over time (Kuus, 2010). In this current research paper the use of Critical Geopolitics is valuable, as it helps to give an insight into how Orbán’s conceptions of his own country’s political power, especially in relation to the EU and other external actors, informs his policies.

Specifically in relation to the actions and pronouncements of the Hungarian Prime Ministers, this can help us understand Hungarian geopolitical aims on a number of a different levels. Firstly, we can analyse the Hungarian approach to international institutions and the way that Hungary has sought to contribute to or distance itself from types of global governance. The way in which Orbán and his government have approached the COVID-19 pandemic, NATO and US-Hungarian relations, for example, will allow us to see whether the underlying ambitions of the country have changed throughout Orbán’s time in power. At the same time, understanding the Hungarian position within wider global society, and moreover how this may have changed, will also help to elucidate on any shifts through time.

On a more regional scale, we can analyse the Hungarian approach to EU-wide issues such as stability within the bloc and security challenges originating from outside its immediate neighbourhood. War has arrived at the EU’s door already and exploring Hungarian participation in both security and peace-making efforts will further shine light on what areas Orbán sees as the most necessary to the continued stability of the nation

within the wider EU area. By looking at regional allies and the approach Hungary has taken for example to territorial disputes we can glean information of the broader Hungarian regional geopolitical strategy.

Finally, it can help us to analyse the national goals and priorities that are driving Hungary and giving direction to its policies. In particular, by looking at the stability of the Hungarian economy, we may begin to understand the needs and wants of the population and how this is translated into action by the Fidesz government to secure this. After a succession of global shocks, from the financial crisis to the pandemic to inflation, countries are increasingly looking inwards to ensure that they can maintain the peace and prosperity they currently enjoy, despite difficult global headwinds. Hungary is no exception to this, needing to ensure that its economy is robust and resilient and that it is able to secure the necessary fundamental resources such as food, water, and energy that this requires.

Critical Geopolitics is therefore useful as it helps us to understand the narratives and actions of countries on a number of scales, particularly at the current time when we are seeing mounting global conflict (Koopman et al., 2021). As some speculate on the slow drift of the world towards another momentous war, understanding the geopolitical goals of Hungary and critically evaluating whether these have shifted over time will inform us as to the possible path of relations between the EU and Hungary in the future.

2.2 – What is Nationalism/Populism and why is it important?

A second important theoretical strand regards the political climate within Hungary. At a time when the political arena within the European Union is becoming increasingly polarised and fragmented on both the left and right, for example with the recent plurality of Geert Wilders in the Netherlands or the notable successes of the far-right Chega party in Portugal, many are worried that voters are increasingly opting for more extreme parties (Mattila and Raunio, 2012). The accusation levelled particularly at the Fidesz party, not only in recent years but also as we have seen since the ideological split in its early years, is that it continues to drift to the political right. In particular, these accusations have asserted that the ideological drive of the party has become more and more nationalistic and populist (Feledy, 2017).

Nationalism as a political belief is the idea that one's country is of tantamount importance and therefore all actions and policies should serve the aims of the country (Haas, 1986). Loyalty to the country therefore takes on a very prominent role in this type of government to the detriment of all else. It may be accompanied by the kind of political leadership that aims to instil pride in the populace by emphasising what they see as the very best parts of their national culture and heritage. It can also create an environment where allegiance to the country must be continually shown and the actions of those in government should continually contribute to the wellbeing of the nation (Hobsbawm, 2021).

Key to nationalistic politics are some underlying intractable tenets. The first of these is a shared sense of identity, something that distinguishes the group from 'the Other'. This may find its origin in a shared ethnicity, nationality, language, history, or politics. In the case of Hungary, the Magyar language, Uralic origins, its fight for independence from the Austrian Empire and the previous territorial extent of Hungary before the 1920 Treaty of Trianon are some of the important binding principles that have at varying times formed the basis of nationalistic discourses (Maxwell, 2019). Accentuating the notion of togetherness and a shared common identity allows nationalistic discourses to elevate their own nation above all others. Often this leads to actions in pursuit of unified national interests which may be at the detriment of others or minority groups (Smith, 1979).

A second and equally important strand is the idea of sovereignty of the nation and the ability to decide its own affairs. Hungary sits within the supranational governmental apparatus of the European Union and as such has willingly ceded some of its authority to the EU. However, the right of the nation-state to determine its own course is something that is sacrosanct to nationalist politics and conflict can often be created when it appears that the sovereignty of the state is impinged. Slogans such as 'take back control' and 'standing against outside influence' summarise this approach of nationalists, stirring public opinion against what are portrayed as malign outside influences. This is also linked to inculcating patriotism into all aspects of political life, including through traditions or public displays that promote a love of the country (Bonikowski, 2016).

Another distinct though closely related concept is Populism, a political principle that aims to appeal to the country's 'ordinary' citizens, sometimes referred to as 'the silent majority'. This is generally achieved through direct and deliberately unembellished

messaging, aiming for simplistic polemical messages (often purposely using dialect or working-class language) which they contrast with the rhetorical abilities of the ‘political elite’ (Urbaniti, 2019). Populist leadership often purposefully reduces complex situations to establish false dichotomies and proclaim to offer a solution to intractable problems that is commonsense and straight-forward. Many leaders who could be identified as populist (despite not identifying themselves as such) often establish themselves as outside of traditional politics and able to offer a new perspective – that of the morally upright, hard-working, common man (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2017).

Populism on both extremes of the political spectrum can often be traced to charismatic leaders who may aim for sole rule or to concentrate power around themselves and a small group of like-minded allies. Perhaps the most important weapon in the arsenal of populism is the willingness to tap into public sentiment which may appeal to people’s fears or prejudices. Anti-immigration, anti-religious or anti-capitalist sentiments are all areas prime for exploitation as voters begin to feel empowered voicing once-fringe views after they see that there are others in the mainstream already doing so (Laclau, 2005).

Populism and Nationalism are increasingly intertwined nowadays, with many of the tactics used by one also being used by the other, for example making joint enemies from other countries or institutions that appear to challenge national interests. Aspects of both populism and nationalism have appeared in Hungarian politics at various times throughout Orbán’s premiership, with some worrying that this has become more extreme over time (Kenes, 2020). Indeed, Örkény (2014) even goes as far as to suggest that this process has promoted xenophobia and ethnocentrism as far back as the end of Orbán’s first full term. While it is can be difficult to disentangle the two, it is nonetheless necessary to see whether this is the case and what ramifications such a shift is likely to have for domestic politics within Hungary.

2.3 – What is Identity Politics and why is it important?

A third and final ideological strand to enable deeper consideration of political situation within Hungary is the notion of Identity Politics. This refers to political movements which link closely with the identities that people express, for example gender, sexuality, ethnicity or able-bodiedness, which many feel are integral to their experience and engagement with

the political system (Bernstein, 2005). Identity Politics has been increasingly included in political discourses in recent decades as some have felt increasingly disenchanting with or ignored by broad, top-down political decision-making.

Many groups on both sides of the political divide have sought to harness Identity Politics as a way of increasing representation and visibility of their identities. Primarily the aim of this approach is to increase equality between different groups within society and to address discrimination that may have become accepted and entrenched for a wide variety of reasons. Aiming for more representative politics allows subaltern groups to share their experiences of inequality and to work with those in power to affect positive change (Hill and Wilson, 2010).

Identity Politics has also been a tool by which marginalised people or voices have been able to find expression and more importantly allies who share similar experiences or support them. Oftentimes this can lead to a broader understanding of how direct or indirect oppression happens and allows various interest groups to suggest ways in which progress towards social justice may be better achieved (Alcoff, 2000). Additionally, it is a way to address historic imbalances in power relationships within a society or country to ensure fairness for all citizens (Nic Craith, 2003).

Identity Politics has been instrumental in helping to secure self-determination for communities and nations that may previously have had their representation lessened or taken away. In relation to Hungary this may be the increased visibility of the *Csángók* of present-day Romania or the ethnic minority in Slovakia and the closer ties they have forged with the Hungarian government (Harris, 2007). Many *Csángók* for example are now exerting their rights to a Hungarian passport or the ability to vote in Hungarian parliamentary elections. Through Identity Politics, many communities have historically felt like they are given more agency or possibly even allowed self-determination which will permit them to lead more authentic and better lives (Ward, 2018).

However, Identity Politics does have a number of critics who have suggested that emphasis on more and more niche identities leads to the fragmentation of civil society and increased divisions within the national borders. Its use can also be cynical, as groups who are not marginalised or in the minority have used Identity Politics for their own ends,

implying they are under attack. Koller (2022) suggests Identity Politics has become much more widely practiced in Hungary in the last decade to create national narratives that are counter to those of the European Union. Scott (2018) outlines how Identity Politics may be used in the service of nationalist-conservative nation-building and thereby a vehicle for what he calls a 'Hungarian antipolitics of Europe'. Khorishko and Horlo (2021) draw parallels between the exploitation of Identity Politics by the political elites in both Poland and Hungary as a way through which their governments can criticise further European integration.

It is clear that Identity Politics will continue to play a part on the political scene in Hungary for the time being and therefore its relation to Hungarian national politics is worthwhile studying. It is therefore helpful to get a deeper understanding of how over time this political topic has had more or less of an influence on the actions of the Hungarian government and the ways in which it has been discussed by Orbán. With these in mind, we can consequently identify whether there are patterns regarding the aforementioned themes, specifically with regard to national political speeches, during the last fourteen years.

3. Methodology

3.1 - Hypotheses

To enable the overall question of this research to be answered more effectively, I have identified three hypotheses that will contribute to an overall answer in response to the question. These hypotheses will be revisited in light of the speech analysis to allow them to be proven or disproven. They are as follows:

I – Orbán's geopolitical narrative has become increasingly Eurosceptic from 2010-2024.

II – Orbán's political narrative has become increasingly nationalistic and populist from 2010-2024.

III – Orbán's political narrative has increasingly sought to identify himself as an opponent of Liberal Politics from 2010-2024.

3.2 – Process

In order to answer the hypotheses in a systematic way I have chosen to use the method of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is an area of linguistics that seeks to understand the way in which language is used and the meaning it creates, but also goes further to explore the social conditions surrounding the creation and dissemination of the text (McCarthy, 2002). From this it may be possible to infer something about the motives and choices of the author/speaker (Taylor, 2013). By using discourse analysis I believe that I will be able to identify broad themes within the speeches of Viktor Orbán and to quantify how the content of these speeches may or may not have changed over time. From this I can then more closely analyse the wording and rhetorical devices within each speech to see whether there are identifiable patterns over time in Orbán's ideas rather than this being a close analysis of each speech.

More specifically I will be using techniques of Political Discourse Analysis. Similar in many ways to Critical Discourse Analysis which looks for implicit or socially-created meaning (Van Dijk, 2015), Political Discourse Analysis more particularly attempts to understand the use of political language and how this links to the socio-political issues it addresses (van Dijk, 1997). Political Discourse Analysis starts from the point at which a political actor, usually a politician, gives an address but must also consider the impact on the broader political sphere – for example, what might be the intended effect on the audience (usually the voting population) and how does it address political issues such as decision-making, conflicts of interest and power relations? (Dunmire, 2012). One way (and the most apposite here due to the lengthy nature of each speech) in which this can be done is through the identification of themes within political speeches and the subsequent deeper analysis of the rhetorical ways in which these themes are addressed (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012).

In attempting to identify narratives within Orbán's discourse, I have primarily chosen to use his annual State of the Nation address. Traditionally given every year in February, the Prime Minister of Hungary delivers a speech updating the population on significant developments within the country. In the Hungarian State of the Nation address contemporary problems facing the country are often briefly considered, as well as outlining

national achievements of the last twelve months, before finally giving some indication of the future direction and goals of the country in the following year. The Hungarian State of the Nation address can be seen as an encapsulation of the political situation within the country and elaborates on the most pressing issues on the political agenda as identified by the Hungarian government. Orbán expressed this himself quite succinctly in his 2022 speech when he commented that the address serves as a way to express clearly “who one is and what one wants to talk about” (State of the Nation Address, 2022) and therefore serves as an appropriate subject for political discourse analysis in order to be identify Orbán’s political priorities year on year.

A second important annual speech given by Orbán is in August every year at the Bálványos Free University and Summer Camp. Now held in Băile Tuşnad in Transylvania, Romania, this area was formerly a territory of Greater Hungary before the 1920 Treaty of Trianon and the event is more commonly known by the former Hungarian name of the Romanian town that now plays host – Tusványos. As originally conceived, the Summer Camp was a way to promote Hungarian – Romanian Hungarian (*Csángók*) relations and the very location of the Summer Camp is seen as something of a political statement of hope for the reunification of the ethnic Magyar diaspora (Visegrád Post, 2019). Now in its 32nd year, the event has turned from what was originally a light-hearted cross-community event into a channel for young politicians or political hopefuls to come together and share ideas. In particular, since 2010 it has increasingly been used as a way for Orbán and Fidesz to showcase their political agenda (Korányi, 2024). What marks the Tusványos speech as distinct from the State of the Nation address is that the speech specifically focusses on political ideology and therefore acts as a useful way to assess his political objectives.

One advantage of using these speeches is that they are clear public statements of the Hungarian governments intentions. The Cabinet Office of the Prime Minister produces an official English translation each year that they publish on the website of the Hungarian Government (<https://2015-2019.kormany.hu/en>) as well as the Official homepage of the Prime Minister Orbán Viktor (<https://miniszterelnok.hu/en/>). With the help of the former I was able to obtain every State of the Nation Address from 2011 onwards (aside from 2012 and 2015 which for some reason does not appear on the website and 2021 when the address was not delivered due to the COVID-19 pandemic). With the help of the latter I was also able to obtain the officially translated transcripts of the Tusványos speeches from 2014

onwards (aside from 2015 and in the years 2020 and 2021 when the summer camp was also not held due to the pandemic). By looking at a series of comparable speeches that cover a significant part of Orbán's time as Prime Minister since 2010, I hope to develop a longitudinal sense of possible change.

While analysis of these speeches is likely to reveal commonalities and themes, to do so manually would be time-consuming. I therefore decided to speed up the process of data analysis with the aid of ChatGPT version 4o. Using the OpenAI resource, I first input the transcript from each of the translated speeches into ChatGPT asking the software to read it fully. I then asked it to analyse the five key themes within the speech, using the command "read the entirety of this speech and analyse the five main themes within the speech", the results of which are shown in Appendix A. Secondly, I asked ChatGPT to summarise the speech in five key words, using the command "summarise the messages of this speech in five key words" and these are shown in Appendix B. I then repeated this method with the Tusk speech and the results are shown in Appendix C respectively.

The advantages of this method are that it is initially a free resource (ChatGPT 4o has a free trial to check whether analysis is possible before requiring a monthly subscription), may be used by other researchers to ask the same set of questions and as many of the speeches are over ten pages this vastly reduces the analysis time needed for discourse analysis. There is one downside in that ChatGPT continues to be developed and others who may ask the same question may get a slightly modified answer in future as the computer-learning software becomes more sophisticated, however I feel this is not a major issue as the themes it will identify will continue to be similar if not identical to those given in this paper despite slightly altered wording.

Once I had done this thematic analysis I also decided to go further and use generative AI using another programme to code and quantify the speeches based on the analysis provided by ChatGPT. To do this I input all of the five key themes identified for each speech in each year and asked the programme to suggest broad categories into which these themes may be divided. ChatGPT originally returned nine categories created from the themes and an extra category named Miscellaneous containing several themes that it found difficult to place. This proved too difficult when input into the coding programme and I will discuss these issues in more detail in the Limitations section. Having re-input data I

was able to cut the categorisations down to eight much more appropriate and clearly delineated groups for coding. The final categories are shown in Figure 1.

1	National Unity and Sovereignty
2	Economic Growth and Stability
3	Cultural and Ideological Identity
4	Political Strategy and Critique
5	Social and Community Development
6	Technological and Environmental Progress
7	Responses to Global Issues
8	Historical and National Pride

Figure 1

Once I had this basic data categorisation, I then used another widely-available generative AI coding programme called NVivo. Commonly used in the Humanities and Social Sciences to facilitate coding of numerous interviews or large amounts of data, NVivo is a powerful tool to integrate into and supplement qualitative research (Kraiwanit, Limna and Siripipatthanakul, 2023). To begin with I input all of the officially translated texts into the NVivo platform where it was read by the system. Secondly, to help the system to recognise what should and should not be allocated to each category, I manually coded the entire speeches from 2019 and 2024 according to the categories above. From this, NVivo used generative AI to extrapolate using the data I had input to automatically code all the other years of speeches.

While this method is not perfect - it could be argued for example that the categories are open to interpretation and some statements may fall into more one category - I believe that even if flawed the results are just as reliable as they would be if they had been performed by a single researcher. Additionally, the aim of the method is to point to general themes

over time within the State of the Nation and Tuskányos addresses rather than to minutely analyse the meanings of each statement. I coded two different speeches to ensure that the programme had varied and multiple data points from which the system could learn. While it was obviously not possible to ensure that the system had an equal amount of each category that I had coded, I did ensure that there were at least fifty examples from each category across both speeches from which the system could draw. I then used the information output by NVivo to gather a variety of data such as frequency that each code is mentioned within speeches and the total amount of times each code appears in the speeches used as percentages.

Finally, I have also chosen to supplement this analysis by considering some of the major policies that have been implemented by the Hungarian government during Orbán's time in power. I have tried to look at a number of different areas of civic life and in a chronological order, using these to support the information gained from the speeches. While it is not possible within the scope of this research to address each and every policy change that has been implemented since 2010, I have instead chosen to reference key policy decisions in tandem with political discourse analysis to see if there is any correlation between the themes of the speeches and the policy direction of the Hungarian Government over time.

4. Analysis

To begin analysing Orbán's speeches I will start chronologically in 2011 and give a brief overview of each successive year before attempting to look for commonalities or changes across time. I will do this first in the State of the Nation address and then similarly for the Tuskányos address, before considering how the results might relate to my hypotheses.

4.1 Analysis of State of the Nation speech themes using ChatGPT (5,000 words)

In 2011, ChatGPT was able to identify five key themes within Orbán's first State of the Nation address after coming to power, of which the first was national rebirth and renewal. It is unsurprising that in Orbán's maiden speech as the newly-returned leader of the Fidesz-KDNP coalition he sought to portray himself as an iconoclast that would lead the country

in a new direction. He spends much of the speech emphasising the undeniable political mandate that he had gained in addition to promising to offer a clean slate to the Hungarian voters (who had until recently been ruled by the left-wing *Demokratikus Kóalíció*). He characterises this as a renaissance for Hungary and its people, saying “renewal means that we will put Hungarian life back on its feet [...] a nation being born again” (State of the Nation Address, 2011).

Indeed, Orbán backed up his words with deeds as 2011 would later be the year in which Members of Parliament voted for the National Constitution (written for the newly-Soviet Hungarian Socialist Republic in 1949) to be replaced by the Fundamental Law of Hungary.

Vincze (2012) points out that not only did Orbán’s government use this to bring in sweeping changes to the political landscape of the country, but they also did this on Easter Monday, a day traditionally associated with resurrection, in keeping with Orbán’s theme of this year. Tóth (2011) notes the huge protests in response to the changes, which many criticised as anti-democratic and in whose amendments many of the opposition did not get a say. Others point out how the movement to a Fundamental Law also brought with it curtailment of the powers of the Constitutional Court, brought in much more fiscal restraint on the Hungarian National Bank (granting many more economic levers to the Prime Minister while weakening checks on governmental authority) and bringing in socially conservative overtones (such as references to God and the sanctity of life) where previously there were none (Human Rights Watch Report, 2013).

The main thrusts of this address is further supported by the other themes of struggle, unity, reform and historical continuity. Orbán uses Hungarian history to draw parallels, noting how “after every historic tribulation, it was the strength of the Hungarian spirit that was able to put the country back on its feet” (State of the Nation Address, 2011). While the majority of this speech is upbeat and features very little in the way of remarks aimed at the opposition, he does gravely warn that “if renewal does not happen, the past will return” in oblique reference to the Left formerly in power. It is also worth mentioning that early on in the speech Orbán makes specific reference to how “the Hungarian and the European economy” are in the position to take on the challenge of recovery after the financial crash. He then sets out a clear flight path for his first term by explaining 2010 was for unity, 2011 for renewal, 2012 will be for take-off, 2013 for ascent and 2014 will be the year of growth

showing that the effort of the past few years have paid off (State of the Nation Address, 2011). The optimistic tone of the speech which mostly focusses on his vision for a new and more united Hungary ends with the acknowledgement that “Renewal is being born again, Renewal is struggle. Renewal is a mission.” (State of the Nation, 2011).

In 2013 and 2014, we can see as Orbán progressed within his mandate and at the head of the first Fidesz government that his focus shifts more to economic issues, the idea of national pride and throughout an emphasis on the successes of his government despite the challenges they inherited. The solidarity of the Hungarian community is something he refers to briefly. In both of these speeches there is also a hint of future aspirations, although his 2013 his focus is on demonstrating his efficacy in economic reform whereas in his 2014 he necessarily positions himself in readiness to be able to fight the upcoming election as he asks of the future “what more can we achieve?” (State of the Nation Address, 2014).

In the 2013 edition, Orbán’s focus is very clearly on the theme of economic independence. Orbán is at pains to make it clear that he has been instrumental in the economic successes that Hungary has seen since 2008, in particular highlighting how the governmental debt has been reduced since he re-took power in 2010. Once again he visits the idea of reducing reliance on foreign loans which he sees as a way to restrict the Hungarian nation from fully exerting its own sovereignty, such as when he says “our plan is to put an end to the country’s dependence upon external financial resources [...] we will rescue everyone out of foreign currency-based debt” (State of the Nation Address, 2013). Many commentators understood this to specifically be aimed at the IMF who had provided a number of loans to the country during de-Sovietisation, but through which many in government had come to abhor due to their imposition of austerity, even going as far as requesting the IMF to vacate their Budapest office (Sadecki, 2014). Djankov (2015) points out that this also coincided with a period of aggressive nationalisation of the banking and energy sector, while also concentrating power centrally in the insurance and retail sectors through reform.

A second and equally important theme of this speech is his focus on national pride. Orbán makes direct reference to the 1848 and 1956 Revolutions, against Habsburg absolutism and Communist oppression respectively, which are both major turning points in

Hungarian history. He makes overt links here between Hungary's historical ability to rebuild itself following large-scale conflicts with his own improvements in the quality of life of Hungarian citizens, such as when he states "the situation is that yet again we see the birth of a new Hungarian accomplishment [...] a strong Hungary fit for the twenty-first century" (State of the Nation Address, 2013). This cohesive device he creates throughout large parts of history of a Hungarian spirit that has always struggled in the face of adversity allows Orbán to assert that "greatness is born [when] the entire Hungarian nation combines its strengths, its talent, its courage and we create something lasting together" (State of the Nation Address, 2013).

The economic theme carried over into his 2014 speech, prior to the election later that year that would return him to power. In keeping with the targets he set out in his 2011 speech, Orbán once again recounts the economic progress that his government has made. This includes low inflation rates, lowered utility prices, increasing employment rates and a positive economic forecast. A second point made by Orbán in this speech is how he has managed to break tradition and his administration has been a change of regime within the country, offering political renewal. He mostly focus on the positive changes that he has been able to enforce within the country, battling against speculators, criminals and fraudsters to achieve success while he contrasts this with the previous post-communist regimes. His comments remain critical but subtle, such as when he states "the communists came back to power, or rather the socialists, along with their sidecar liberals [...] and brought the country to ruin. Financial collapse, an economic nosedive" (State of the Nation Address, 2014).

Interestingly, Orbán also makes a point in this speech regarding needing to take back control from foreign influences, which now includes Brussels. He entreaties the audience to "remember a time when the Brussels bureaucrats attacked Hungary roughly and threateningly" before going on to say that a hallmark of the EU leadership is poorly thought out planning (State of the Nation Address, 2014). He uses particularly violent imagery for the first time in relation to the EU, saying that "the solution of Brussels [is] to cut off your toes if your shoes are too tight" (State of the Nation Address, 2014). This show a break from the previous years in which he emphasised his success in working closely with the EU and especially his 2013 speech as he talks of the success in gaining EU support to further the development of the country. All of this is set against an ideological

backdrop within the speech that there are external forces seeking to dominate Hungary and therefore it is important for the country to assert its independence and self-respect.

By 2016 and 2017 we can see a change in the main area of focus in both of the speeches, as ChatGPT identified the first theme of both being national identity and sovereignty. This is a marked change from earlier years where national unity and the Hungarian community have been referred to, but not particularly framed as under threat. It is also no surprise that in 2016 one of the themes identified is the threat of mass migration this followed on the back of the 2015 migration crisis within the EU and appeals directly to the fears of his audience that Europe and more particularly Hungary will be overrun. Alongside this consideration in 2016 is also the critique of European Union policies twinned with the defence of European cultural identity. Naturally these themes combine rhetorically, amounting to a criticism of the migration crisis and the EU's handling of this crisis while also starting to more openly show sentiments towards immigrants as a threat to European cultural identities. In 2017's speech we also see a return of a focus on the outgoing governments achievements, in the form of its economic and social policies, as it once again gears up for an election, although the ever-present threat of a 'flood of migrants' remains.

Emphatically in 2016 we see a change in the language used by Orbán regarding national sovereignty. Where previously his appeals had been heavily linked to the historic achievements of the Hungarian nation and its people, Now instead, Orbán's narrative becomes more combative, specifically those who seek protection under the influence of greater world powers. Orbán demonises domestic politicians, willing to work with the EU, the Russians or the Americans, as acting contrary to the national interest in the most strongly worded attack on his political opponents up to this point. He rails against what he sees as "the weakening of our civilisation's natural and fundamental instinct for the defence of ourselves, our families, our homes and our land" (State of the Nation Address, 2016). He closely links this with the idea that Hungary should effectively mind its own business and absolutely must not be caught up in global struggles as "Hungary will not take a single step down such a path" for the sake of peaceful relations (State of the Nation Address, 2016).

Following the EU Migrant Crisis of 2015, Orbán specifically chooses to criticise this

event and the response of the EU. Orbán frames the issues of immigration as an existential threat to Hungary and her people, elaborating on how migrants into the country challenge its social and cultural traditions to their detriment. He exhorts how we must not take “the protection and safety of our continent for granted” (State of the Nation Address, 2015). Alongside this is also a heavy emphasis on the idea of common European heritage that is shared between its citizens, bestowing them with a shared history, culture and values. Much of this rhetoric was the culmination of the bruising conflict between Hungary and the EU in 2015, in which the Hungarian Parliament adopted an Act exempting it from accepting asylum seekers as part of the EU Migration Pact (Groenendijk and Nagy, 2015). This also created a border wall with Serbia and Croatia, allowing the deportation of migrants back to Serbia and permitted push-backs. The EU instigated five separate infringement procedures against Hungary to censure it for its asylum legislation further escalating the situation and giving rise to Orbán’s more belligerent tone in this year (IOM Hungary, 2024).

Similarly, his 2017 speech takes a much stronger stance regarding political ideology, with heavy criticism of what he sees as weak liberal democracy, such as when he suggests that “the globalists and liberals [...] skimmed the profits from that world order” (State of the Nation Address, 2017). Orbán’s opposition to liberal governance is notable in the way that he attacks them as short-sighted, ill-prepared and attempting to hang on to the power that they have traditionally accrued. This is entirely in keeping with his Tusk speech of 2014 when he advocating illiberal democracy as the best form of governance to push Hungary forward or risk stagnation and decline with the way liberal politics in the EU is going.

Finally, another strong theme of Orbán’s speech in this year is his worries about the future. In particular, Orbán calls for proactive measures, announcing that “Hungarian politics must respond to [...] five main attacks” including immigration, energy independence and “the transnational empire of George Soros” (State of the Nation Address, 2017). He likens Hungary to a fish in a pond, swimming between predators such as Soros who represent the very real and current threats he sees to the Hungarian way of life and its national identity. A concurrent threat is the demographic decline across Europe and Orbán sees these two challenges as inextricably linked. By this point it is clear that Orbán has emphasised the Hungarian way of life as significantly under threat from a number of

sources that his rhetoric suggests stem from the same intractable problem of the failures of liberal democracy.

By 2018 we see that the main theme has been supplanted by immigration twinned with national identity as these themes has monopolised the discourse, becoming themes in their own right whereas previously they were grouped together. What started in 2011 as a message that Hungary was on the right path but needed a renewed leadership has now turned into a defence of Hungary from significant external threats in the form of migrants and those who don't share the same core values.

Once again another pointed theme is the idea of national sovereignty and independence, which Orbán here sets up as the alternative to the forces that caused Hungary to become stagnant. Beside this is also the much more explicit inclusion of the theme of Christian values and Hungarian cultural identity. While Orbán's previous speeches have mentioned the Christian nature of Hungary and the 2011 Constitutional changes made direct mention of God, this becomes the first time that it has really been brought to the forefront of his speeches (Fekete, 2016). Máté-Tóth and Rakovics (2023) point out how this increased use follows the populist strategies outlined by Laclau and Mouffe and that Orbán uses Christianity increasingly as a unifying symbol, often with anti-Semitic tropes. In June 2018 the so-called Stop Soros Law was agreed, an attempt to curtail funding for non-governmental organisations. With Soros being a prominent Jewish financier, some commentators went as far as to suggest that Orbán has been deeply tainted by anti-Semitic conspiracy theories in his pursuit of a Christian-national narrative (Richardson and Wodak, 2022).

In many ways we can also see, in his electioneering for a third term, how Orbán's change in these years sees a sustained focus on the 'other', represented here by non-European immigrants who do not share the same cultural traditional and values as Hungarians. Immigration is now an issue that threatens the future of Central Europe, and more emphatically it is the threat represented by the Islamic world that Orbán chooses to focus on here, as he states "they want us to accept migrants and to also become countries with mixed populations [...] the policies that made them immigrant countries and that opened the way for the decline of Christian culture and the expansion of Islam" (State of the Nation Address, 2018). Orbán sets up immigrants as a direct challenge to the Hungarian

way of life and a threat to its unique heritage and identity. In response, the Prime Minister underscores his own efforts to protect his nation, for example by building a border wall and bringing in strict immigration laws, that at time have put him at odds with the wider EU, especially as he asserts “the situation is that the danger is threatening us from the West [...] from politicians in Brussels, Berlin and Paris” (State of the Nation Address, 2018). With the upcoming election in mind, it is possible to see how Orbán is very clearly constructing a narrative for himself as the defender of Hungary, the Christian faith and traditional Europe.

As in recent years, we see a strong focus on the economic prosperity that has been won during the last few years in power. This time however, Orbán very clearly makes an return to the argument of increasing self-reliance of the nation, for majority stakes being held by Hungarians in key areas such as banking, energy, the media and other industries that are crucial to the independence of the country. For example he mentions that “our ministers of the economy aim for full employment, and rescue families with excessive debt from the trap of foreign currency” (State of the Nation Address, 2018). This also chimes with the narrative that Orbán clearly propagates here, namely that Fidesz has proven to be the vehicle of Hungary’s renewal and the reason for its saviour, despite the fact that this is now the eighth year of power and the message is the same. There is a sidenote here in which the Prime Minister’s gaze turns eastwards, lauding “China, India, Indonesia and Vietnam [countries that have] dragged themselves out of poverty, set their economies on a path of growth, and will soon take over the leading role in the economy” (State of the Nation Address, 2018).

Once again in 2019 and 2020 we see a switch in the priority of the State of the Nation address. As we often see in Orbán’s speeches following a successful election, he uses his first State of the Nation to form a clear roadmap of what he would like to achieve in the next four years. In this sense, Orbán very firmly now entrenches himself in some of the ideological themes that have guided him in the last years, building a clearer sense of political identity for his party and for himself. At the start of his third term bolsters his image by beseeching “everyone to defend and to build our country [as] our greatest victories have yet to come” (State of the Nation Address, 2019). This portrays himself as leader of the defenders of traditional Christian values and a Hungarian fighting for his nation against larger and more powerful international forces.

While burnishing his own credentials, he also provides criticism of his political opposition within the country that is much sharper and more pointed than previously, Whereas before he had mainly focussed his ire on the Political Left, he now groups them together with the Far Right *Jobbik* party, demonising all of these groups as mere puppets of the liberal EU administration and George Soros who would see to destabilise Hungary and disrupt its progress. It is clear now that the political landscape within Hungary has become polarised as Orbán ridicules “one hundred years of solitude has come to an end. All we need is a sunny disposition and some humour, but the Hungarian opposition will take care of that” (State of the Nation Address, 2019).

His 2020 speech offers very little new in the way of ideas with the mainstay themes of economic growth, Christian values, resistance to global influence and the preparedness for the coming challenges to Hungary (at this point COVID was not yet an urgent intercontinental issue). Rather, the Prime Minister follows his 2019 speech in brandishing his qualifications as a family-friendly leader whose pro-natalist policies are a riposte to the moral and demographic decline of liberal western European nations. He announces his “Family Protection Action Plan” and its success since its implementation, despite as he points out, the continued decline of the population. There is a much heavier emphasis on the twin themes of family and demographic policies which were introduced in 2019 and which tie in very closely to Orban's new found emphasis on Christian and conservative values.

Following a gap in 2021 the state of the nation address returned in 2022 with the main theme addressing the issues of economic stability following the COVID pandemic. Many of the primary concerns shown in 2014 and 2018 have had to be redirected due to the impacts of the global pandemic. However, we do also see a significant strand of EU critique within the 2022 speech. In addition to a pressing new focus on national security and defence due to the recent full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia. Despite the focus here on the two most urgent matters facing Hungary during 2020 - invasion of Ukraine and the impacts of the pandemic - the final theme as identified by ChatGPT was cultural and ideological identity, a now old weapon in Orbán’s armoury.

Further analysis of these speeches show that Orbán casts the pandemic as the source of economic woes despite having focussed on the need for economic growth in many speeches. He asserts that “even during the pandemic we did not renounce our goals, and

that is why Hungary will emerge from the current crisis in a stronger condition than when it entered it” despite the Hungarian economy being one of the hardest hit by the pandemic (State of the Nation Address, 2022). To some extent this also provided Orbán with a get-out-of-jail-free card and in dealing with the war in Ukraine he uses this to reinforce the idea that he seeks to stay out of wider geopolitical conflicts and wants only peace for Hungary. He uses this opportunity to criticise the EU for not acting quickly or effectively in response to these twin shocks – in his eyes another failure of the established European elite to plan for the future, which very much contrasts with his own approach. Again this helps to further the persona he has created as someone who, despite significant pressures, is willing to do the right thing and the fight against the tide for what he sees is morally right.

2022 proved to be an interesting year in terms of Orbán’s State of the Nation address. While we see the usual return to the economic achievements of the outgoing administration as way to shore up support for their efficacy during office, Orbán is able to give new impetus to this. He does so by positioning himself as the continuity candidate sorely needed at a time of global crisis. He underscores his commitment to economic self-reliance and his adept handling of the economy throughout his tenure. In reality, it is possible to see that Hungary had one of the highest inflation rates in Europe following the global pandemic and his economic policies. His policies regarding energy and his dissent in the EU led to Hungary being exempt from the withdrawal of Russian energy supplies, in many ways contrary to the principles he had been preaching of the need to increase self-sufficiency (About Hungary, 2022).

2023 and 2024 both follow the same vein in speaking of resilience in the face of significant external threats, the importance of defending Hungary's national sovereignty, the importance of economic stability and the pushing once again of social and cultural conservatism. It is only in 2024 that we see green energy and technological advance becoming one of the most important themes within the state of the nation address, although this is also used as a stick with which to beat the EU and their policies. A final theme is child protection and legal reforms, where Orbán continues to emphasise his self-professed credentials as a protector of the family and traditional values. However this followed on the back of the resignation of the Hungarian president, Novák Katalin, due to a paedophile-pardoning scandal.

In 2023, one new strand of thought does appear in the national address which is about

the Russian war in Ukraine. Orbán seeks to set himself apart from other countries within the bloc that have provided military support to Ukraine. Instead, Orbán states that Hungary will only provide humanitarian aid and not contribute in any way to the ongoing bloodshed. He advocates dialogue in order to achieve peace in opposition to what he sees as the combative approach of the rest of the EU. He comments how “the Left in Hungary is also on the side of war: it would supply arms, take on the financial burden of war and sever relations with Russia. We are not doing this.” (State of the Nation Address, 2023). It is clear to see that Orbán’s polemic here is very finely calibrated to appear to take a much more ambiguous position towards Russia, yet also to acknowledge the threats inherent in the conflict as Hungary shares a border with Ukraine and there are many Hungarian speakers in the Ukrainian Zakarpattia Oblast (Transcarpathian region or *Kárpátalja* in Hungarian). Indeed, Orbán is very clear as he declares “the Hungarian government does not consider it realistic to assume that Russia is a threat to the security of Hungary or of Europe” (State of the Nation Address, 2023).

Yet his 2024 State of the Nation address does begin to show new themes – possibly introduced as Orbán begins to realise he is not able to constantly recycle the same material. The first is a linked development of his family-friendly image, that of Child Protection. Orbán in this case has been on the back foot due to the resignation of Katalin Novak, the President of Hungary. This was due to a paedophile-pardoning scandal in which the President granted a pardon to a man who had pressured children into retracting claims of abuse that they had levelled at a former director of a state-run children’s home outside Budapest (BBC News, 2024). Orbán makes very clear that he believes this to be a simple mistake and that politics today is too quick and too critical in dealing with such instances. Instead, he chooses to focus his attention on his crusade to protect children within Hungary. In reality, this is the euphemistic way in which he talks about the increasingly targeted legislation he has brought that many criticise as directed at the LGBT population. In 2021, the Hungarian government adopted Act LXXXIX on taking more severe action against paedophile offenders and amending certain Acts for the protection of children, which many commentators argue was a thinly-veiled attack of LGBT rights for the sake of garnering votes (Roots, 2022).

The second new theme is the necessity of the transition to sustainable energy. Orbán sees this as a way for his country to develop economically while also meeting the needs of

its citizens. He particularly focusses on the opportunities presented by expanding the nuclear energy sector and the generation of solar power within Hungary, as he states “we see that the era of green energy is no longer knocking on our door: it has kicked the door in” (State of the Nation Address, 2024).

4.2 Analysis of State of the Nation coding using NVivo

Analysis from the AI-assisted coding done by NVivo revealed any underlying patterns within the themes of the State of the Nation speeches as well as seeing whether there is statistical significant to the themes already identified. For each of the speeches the programme produces an analysis of the frequency with which each of the eight categories appears. Using the analysis from NVivo related to the themes identified by ChatGPT we can see whether there are trends across the themes from 2011 to 2024 as shown in Figure 2.

From the analysis we can see that references to the theme of National Unity and Sovereignty stayed relatively low throughout the years and there was not much change which was also the same for Cultural and Ideological Identity, although for the latter there was a spike in 2018. Economic Growth and Stability as well as Political Strategy and Critique saw a small rise throughout the speeches but again did not overly influence the addresses. By contrast, Social and Community Development saw a slight decrease over time from a low starting point. By contrast, Historical and National Pride has proved a consistently popular theme throughout the speeches, even since the starting point in 2011. The largest increase over time instead was in Responses to Global Issues which in 2023 was mentioned over one hundred times.

When the data is taken year by year the same pattern is also borne out. In terms of percentages of each theme that is the most prominent, Historical and National Pride is the most or close second most common theme in six years, from 2011 to 2022. Responses to Global Issues is also the first most common theme in six of the speeches, showing how Orbán’s addresses are often underpinned by these two abiding themes.

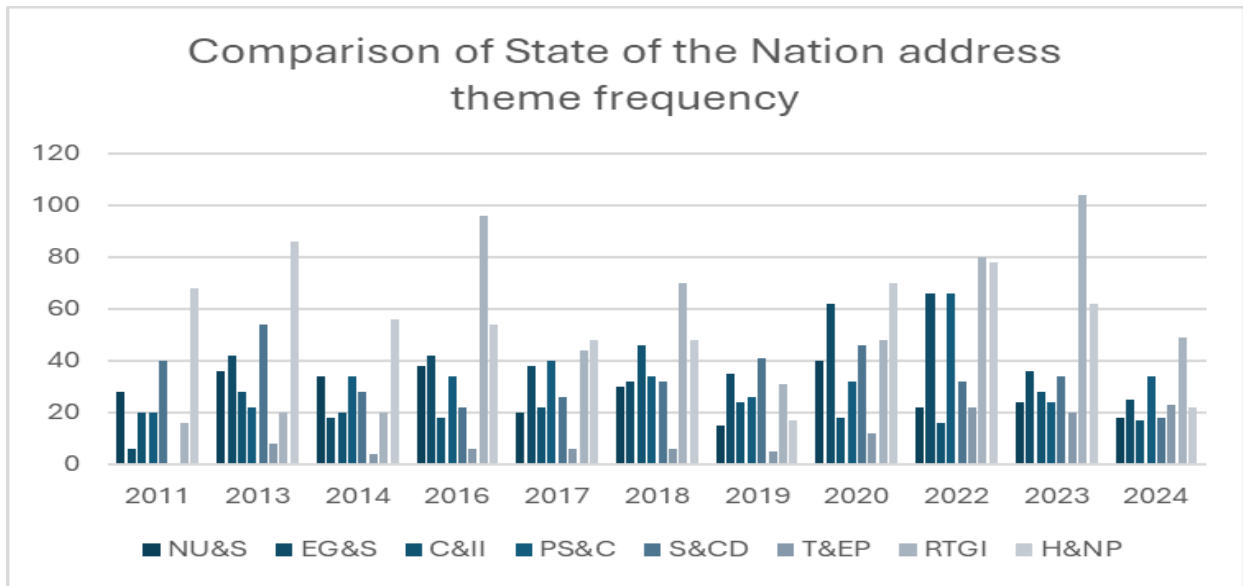


Figure 2

4.3 Analysis of Tusk speech themes

In the same way that I analysed the themes identified with the State of the Nation speeches I will do the same for the Tusk speeches, albeit starting from the first available English translation which is 2014. This now infamous speech is the first time that Orbán introduced the idea of the transition within Hungary from liberal democracy to illiberal democracy, as he directly announces “the new state we are constructing in Hungary is an illiberal state, a non-liberal state” (Tusk Address, 2014). He foresees the decline of the Liberal Western world, lamenting “the strength of American soft power is in decline and liberal values today embody corruption, sex and violence” (Tusk Address, 2014) Thus, Orbán promotes his new idea of an illiberal form of governance as the impetus needed to find new ways of life and ultimately to push the country forward.

Interestingly, ChatGPT identified the main theme of this speech as Electoral Victory and Political Legitimacy, despite this speech now becoming infamous for his reference to illiberal governance. It is rather telling that this is the starting point from which Orbán goes on to justify this transition (the speech given in August and the elections having happened in April) after winning an increased mandate in the 2014 election. Orbán combines these ideas to justify a vision for a work-based state in which liberal principles are forgotten and the main preoccupation is furthering the interests of the country. This also translates into greater Hungarian control of industries, a central plank of his drive for economic

nationalism. He sees this as the only way that Hungary can maintain its distinct identity and also be competitive in increasingly difficult economic circumstances. This supports his new political approach as he proclaims “in the great global race that is underway to create the most competitive state, Hungary’s citizens are expecting Hungary’s leaders to find, formulate and forge a new method of the Hungarian state organisation” (Tusványos Address, 2014).

2016 goes further than this, with the main theme being the Crisis of European Identity and Governance. As we can see Orbán here makes a clear contrast between himself and his government with that of the wider EU, which he portrays as weakened and increasingly relegated to a regional player rather than one that commands respect on the world stage. He summarises “there was no doubt that the European Union was a global player [...] but with Britain’s departure an era has come to an end, and we must openly admit that this capability of the European Union has come to an end with it” (Tusványos Address, 2016). In keeping with Orbán’s increasing focus on wider geopolitical issues, he outlines a vision for Europe in which Hungary is an iconoclastic leader and if they heed his advice they would be able to forge a new and stronger path forward on the world stage. He is quick to denounce this “unacknowledged crisis of the European elite [which has turned into] a crisis of democracy, because large numbers of people obviously and spectacularly want something different” (Tusványos Address, 2016).

Orbán believes that the key to effective governance is the understanding of what exactly the EU’s place is in the world compared to large global powers such as China and India as well as the willingness to accept that there are issues such as migration that need to be dealt with in a holistic way, rather than focussing on individuals. It is clear that the Prime Minister is directly appealing to the fears of the audience in this speech, outlining major threats to Hungarians as “migration, terrorism and uncertainty” (Tusványos Address, 2016), many of whom are undoubtedly aware of the recent Migration Crisis within the EU and have seen the actions that the political grouping have taken with little effect. He also importantly refers to the causes of these issues as the European Elite, characterising decision-makers as out of touch with ordinary citizens within the EU and increasingly interested in serving their own purposes.

2017 follows many of these same ideas, revisiting familiar topics such as National

Sovereignty and Immigration, however in this year Orbán particularly sought to project himself as a rare type of political leader who is actually responding to these issues rather than sleepwalking into a catastrophe, obliquely referring to himself as a “patriotic national leader” against ‘the transnational elite’ (Tusványos Address, 2017). In particular, he talks at length about the Family Policies that Hungary have introduced as a direct attempt to tackle worries about declining birth rates. Interestingly, as many demographers acknowledge, there are two main strategies to arrest demographic decline – pro-natalist policies that try to encourage an increase in the birth rate or immigration, with the former being a far less effective method (Loužek, 2003).

Orbán portraying himself as strong and willing to fight against much more powerful enemies while simultaneously raising sympathy for Hungary as a country that is attempting to stand alone against the powerful tide of global politics and external pressures from international institutions. Orbán continues to develop the narrative that immigration and immigrants will prove a deadly threat to the core Christian values of Hungarians, as multiculturalism will dilute ethnic compositions terminally, such as when he states “Europe is currently being prepared to hand its territory over to a new mixed, Islamised Europe” (Tusványos Address, 2017). Again we can see that this language is more radical than that of his national speech. In particular this is one of the ways in which he criticises the over-reach of EU institutions into domestic politics and he frames this as the EU attempting to restrict the ability of smaller nations to protect themselves and their identities. He goes as far to warn how “it is clear that the reform of Europe can only start with stopping migrants, putting an end to immigrations, and everyone using their national competence to protect their borders” (Tusványos Address, 2017).

The Tusványos speech in 2018, following Orbán’s return to power is a much more positive exploration of Hungary and the new-found unity that the nation has both within its borders and outside. There is a clear celebration of the extension of Hungarian citizenship to ethnic Hungarians outside of national borders, with the Prime Minister particularly celebrating the one millionth person to gain Hungarian citizenship from the Carpathian basin. Orbán thanks those Hungarians outside of the country’s borders who have supported him and returned him with an enlarged mandate, and who similarly seek national unity, declaring “let us want a strengthening Székely Land and let us want a strengthening Hungarian community” (Tusványos Address, 2018). This also chimes with his celebration

of the Carpathian basin countries and advocates for increased co-operation between them, particularly in terms of energy and transport infrastructure. He advocates “Central Europe’s path is a path of an alliance of free nations [...] the mission extending beyond the Carpathian basin which lies ahead of us” (Tusványos Address, 2018).

Orbán himself chooses this as a time to reflect on his political journey through his last few terms as well as providing information on what he sees as some of the most important contributions his country has made to the stability and continuity of the nation such as economic growth and employment levels. Many of these themes are now commonplace in his speeches but there are some notable exceptions. First, Orbán suggests that the type of governance he is advocating is now Christian democracy “based on national and Christian foundations “ (as opposed to the Illiberal democracy of 2014) (Tusványos Address, 2018). There is also time dedicated here to the upcoming 2019 European elections in which Orbán says there is a moment for real change if the liberal European elite are able to be replaced with those who believe in protecting the moral integrity and traditions of Europe. Once again he uses this point to link liberalism, George Soros and the failures of EU leadership, stating “a result in the upcoming European elections which is to our liking could derail the plan for the comprehensive transformation of Europe: the Soros Plan” (Tusványos Address, 2018).

Finally, Orbán issues a call-to-arms for a generational change within Hungary to take place. However this is incredibly confusing as Orbán suggests that the Christian generation of the ‘90s should take the reins from the post-’68 generation who hold much more liberal attitudes. He suggests this is the way for Hungary to find a good way forward and to achieve further progress, as he says “In European politics it is the turn of the anti-communist generation, which has Christian convictions and commitment to the nation” (Tusványos Address, 2018).

In 2019, special emphasis is paid to the direction the country has taken in the 30 years since independence. Orbán is at pains to point out how the development from a socialist collectivised economy to a capitalist open market has brought with it success, wealth and safety for current generations. He particularly focusses on the importance of generational struggles and how this success has been hard-won only after years of fighting off socialist influence within the country. He also takes to opportunity to attach his domestic opponents,

commenting “by 2002 we built a civic, Christian democratic national cooperation, while their political generation [the Left] had run out of road [but] we spent the four years between 2006 and 2010 preparing the blueprint for a national transformation” (Tusványos Address, 2019).

He aims to project a narrative of a conservative, Christian Hungary which respects the traditions and culture of the past to create stability in the present and preserve what he romanticises as the Hungarian way of life. He once again revisits illiberal democracy as a way of achieving this return to past glories as necessary and what the majority of the Hungarian people want. Once again he returns to the language of the illiberal democracy as the vehicle through which this change may be achieved, saying “in an illiberal or national system, distinguished performance is not a private matter [but leads to] self-sufficiency and work, creating and securing a livelihood” (Tusványos Address, 2019). As we have seen, the speech adds nothing new to his previous comments but still ends with a usual rallying cry for unity among Hungarians.

Following a two year break due to COVID, the Tusványos speech returned in 2022 with a much sharper focus on Hungarian geopolitical aims. He revisits many of his now commonplace threats such as the decline of the west due to their lack of values and the inability to fight for them twinned with demographic decline. However he does take this in a different direction by making a much more explicit link in this speech to the opportunities that this presents for new connections and relationships around the world. He emphasises the importance of Hungary acting as a neutral country in relation to the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine and makes a clear link between geopolitical conflict and the increase in energy insecurity within the country. He also criticises how “the Americans are able to impose their will because they are not dependent on energy from others; they are able to exert hostile pressure because they control the financial networks” (Tusványos Speech, 2022). Further, alongside advocating the need for more Hungarian self-reliance, he also talks of the possibility of Hungary being exempt from the global recession if it is able to capitalise effectively on finding and securing foreign investment and new trading partnerships with major global players such as China and the United States.

Orbán very clearly signifies the turn away from the European Union as the only partner who might be able to provide the resources and security that Hungary needs but instead

signals a willingness to work on a much broader platform by leveraging his influence on the world stage. This matches his continued criticism of the declining ability of the West as he sees it to face modern day challenges and what he frames as existential threats, yet seems to go against the doctrine he has been espousing of national self-reliance and resisting the influence of external powers. He complains how “the West’s negative feelings about the world are due to the fact that crucial energy and raw materials needed for economic development are no longer in the West’s hands” (Tusványos Address, 2022).

In particular, this speech also focusses on gender and what Orban refers to here as the ‘gender lunacy’ of the liberal European elite. He reiterates his ‘family-friendly’ policies as legislation that will support traditional families, that is to say “the father is a man and the mother is a woman” (Tusványos Address, 2022). His views of these issues are also linked to the wider ideological battle that he feels the Right within European are waging against forces that would seek to set Europe back by more widely disseminating liberal ideologies across the continent.

Finally, in last year’s Summer Camp speech, Orbán seems to particularly now focus on the possibilities of further political and economic ties with China. He likens the growing presence of China on the world stage to that of a return rather than a new emergence, which also ties in closely to his own created narratives of Hungarian history. He sees many parallels between the Chinese focus on community rather than the individualistic policies of Western European states. He also specifically mentions the Thucydides Trap – when a rising world superpower challenges an established superpower for dominance it will necessarily lead to conflict rather than this happening occasionally. It is clear from this statement that Orbán is thinking ahead to Xi Jinping’s May 2024 visit to Budapest in which significant Chinese investment in the country was announced (Associated Press, 2024).

China seems to be coming to the rescue of Hungary, which is timely especially when he is promoting an increase in Hungarian exports and the importance of stabilising the economy after the shock of the pandemic. However, he does also expend effort in considering Hungary’s place within Europe and referring to other countries within the bloc that have forces attempting to protect sovereignty such as France, Italy and the Netherlands. He expresses support for this approach, quite likely thinking ahead to the possible outcome of the European elections in June 2024. This is also interesting

considering the experience Fidesz had of being forced out of the European People's Party grouping within the European Parliament due to what was perceived as too extreme a political view (European Stability Initiative, 2024)

4.4 Analysis of Tusk's NVivo coding

In order to keep consistency throughout the study, I used the same eight categories in applying the NVivo analysis to the Tusk's speeches. The programme was able to identify some trends across time. Despite the Tusk's speech specifically being a political speech aimed at a more ideologically distinct audience, we see similar themes recur as in the State of the Nation address as shown in Figure 3.

National Unity and Sovereignty as well as Cultural and Ideological Identity were surprisingly low and did not change much over time, much like the theme of Social and Community Development. Economic Growth and Stability shows a very small rise to 2024 and Technological and Environmental Progress also increases slightly from 2022. Political Strategy and Critique showed a sharp rise in 2019 but decreases again afterwards. Historical and National Pride once again proves to be a common and frequent theme.

When the data is taken year by year the same pattern is returned, with Responses to Global Issues present nearly 29% of the time in the speeches overall while Historical and National Pride comes in second with 17%. The least common themes were both Political Strategy and Critique as well as Social and Community Development, which both counted 5.77% each.

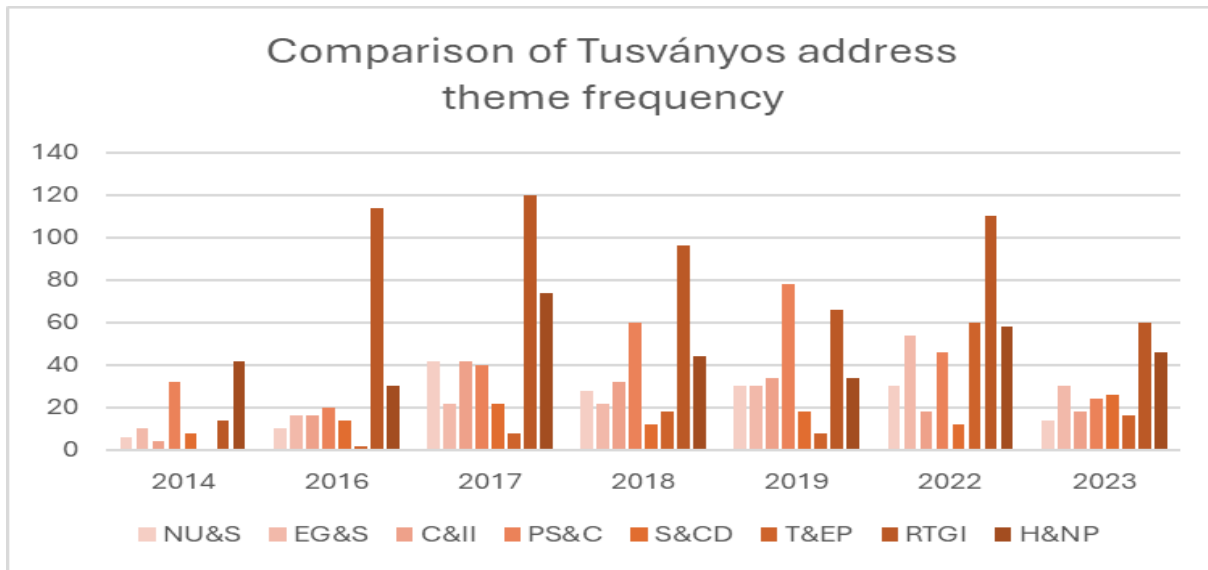


Figure 3

5. Conclusions

As we can see both the State of the Nation and the Tusványos speeches address many of the same ideological themes the course of Orbán's last four consecutive terms as the Head of State. Yet we also see the important reason for looking across a variety of speeches that Orbán has given, as we see that there are also significant differences between the way that Orbán deals with his preoccupations in each set of speeches. For example, Orbán seemingly attempts to be much more diplomatic and statesman-like in his State of the Nation address which will be received by the Hungarian voting public. By contrast, the rhetoric used in the Tusványos speeches, to a captive audience of many who share the same political ideologies is much more combative and direct. When considering the analysis generated by both ChatGPT and by the NVivo software, it becomes clear that there are common patterns within the ideological backing of the address in spite of this. I will now consider how the patterns identified links to the originally started hypotheses.

5.1 – Hypothesis I – Orbán's geopolitical narrative has become increasingly Eurosceptic from 2010-2024.

During Orbán's 2010 – 2014 administration, we can see that the a focus is on internal dynamics and domestic policies. He attempts to show the voters that the Fidesz-KDNP are able to govern in their first majority government position despite being relative political

novices. In his 2014 – 2018 administration, there is a muted change with the promise of bigger and better, but the sense starts to creep in that Orbán has grander visions of the best path forward for Hungary. His 2018 – 2022 administration shows is a clear shift towards us vs them perspective and increased attacks on those who are not Hungarian. The EU becomes an easy target on which to pin blame by this point and he sets himself up as the David willing to take on Goliath. Finally his 2022-present administration abandons the pretences seen in the early years of governance and now wages a pugilistic campaign against what he sees as the slovenly, immoral West which is trying to drag Hungary down with it.

As we have seen, the initial term in which Orbán came to power as the head of the Fidesz-KDNP coalition in 2010 was a period in which he took time to emphasise Hungary's links with the EU and often spoke of the economic advances that Hungary was making with European help. In his second administration, Orbán surreptitiously turns on the EU and more frequently uses them as a scapegoat for any issues with the economy in Hungary. ChatGPT and NVivo identified 2022 as the years in which Economic Growth and Stability were mentioned the most and it is in these years that Orbán tries to project confidence in the Hungarian economy following COVID. A significant part of this relies on criticism of the EU and their economic policies as inhibiting and limiting Hungarian growth. While the extent to which this is factual or not has not been part of this research, it is doubtful that Hungarian economic growth would be significantly better off without the EU. What is more likely is that Orbán's increasing use of Eurosceptic statements will signal to other non-EU countries that Hungary is willing to form closer ties globally and would welcome international investment.

5.2 – Hypothesis II – Orbán's political narrative has become increasingly nationalistic and populist from 2010-2024.

It is clear that from the outset of Orbán's administration in 2010 he has always maintained a strong emphasis on national pride, history and unity. As show by both ChatGPT and NVivo these are themes (National Unity and Sovereignty and Historic and National Pride) that appear consistently in each speech from the very start. Historical and National Pride is actually the most common theme to be found in the State of the Nation Addresses (at around 20%) and the second most common in the Tuszványos addresses (17%

of all speeches). While it is not possible to definitely assert that nationalist themes within Orbán's speeches have increased, what is possible from those speeches analysed is to say that the language used regarding nationalism has changed dramatically. What in the early years were upbeat calls for national unity and clarion calls for national renewal have turned into more antagonistic and defensive rhetoric that has gradually built up the idea of Hungarian exceptionalism.

In relation to populism however, this is more readily answerable. As we have seen, Orbán's rhetoric has undoubtedly become increasingly populist. It is clear particularly at the beginning of his third term that his language begins to set up 'the European elite' against hard-working, traditional Hungarians. His ability also in his fourth term to reduce complex global situations to the ways in which Hungary is being threatened by external global forces also fit into the tactics used by populist demagogues. The patterns identified suggest that while Orbán is a typical populist there are signs he is becoming increasingly extreme, with little indications that this is likely to stop in the future.

5.3 – Hypothesis III – Orbán's political narrative has increasingly sought to identify himself as an opponent of Liberal Politics from 2010-2024.

Perhaps the most straight-forward of the three hypotheses to answer is the increasing anti-Liberal tone of Orbán's speeches. Orbán himself is very clear even as early as 2014 that he is an opponent of liberal democracy as we saw in his now infamous Tusk address of the same year. In his second term he particularly focusses on the idea of illiberal democracy and how he is implementing this type of governance in Hungary as the will of the people. Yet there is still a marked change, as especially from Orbán's third term onwards he begins to change the rhetoric surrounding governance to one of 'national democracy' or traditional Christian democracy. It is possible to suggest that following Orbán's bombshell pronouncements regarding illiberal democracy, this has frequently been used against him when politicians or the EU itself have been critical of his policies. To shift his language to the use of Christian democratic values becomes a much more difficult ideology to criticise and is more likely to garner support from other Christian Democratic groups within Europe.

This research has sought to take a long view of two annual political addresses that

Viktor Orbán gives every year. While the politics of Viktor Orbán have already proved a fruitful field for study, particularly in relation to the EU and their increasingly frequent clashes, many studies such as Bozoki (2015) and Rydliński (2018) see Orbán's politics as monolithic and having changed very little in time since returning as Head of State. Instead what this research has attempted to prove is the extent to which Orbán and his political proclamations have always fit into our understanding of a Populist, Anti-Liberal, Eurosceptic politician..

In response to my research hypotheses I can conclude that all three appear to be true, having shown increasing references to euroscepticism, populist and anti-liberal ideologies between 2010 and 2024. The value of this research lies in understanding the motivations behind the changing narratives that Viktor Orbán has created over successive stints as Prime Minister of Hungary but also in relation to a wide gamut of changing global issues that have a direct impact on Hungary. As we have seen, Orbán continues to win an increased majority year on year when his rhetoric has increasingly fit into the Populist, Anti-Liberal, Eurosceptic ideology. This research has suggested some of the reasons for this shift over time and in understanding the changes it is hoped that the Hungarian community in addition to the European Union as a whole can further understand the appeal of dog whistle politics and thereby create more effective strategies to combat its spread. Many within the EU see the bloc as facing an existential threat in the next European election and in order to ensure the continued functioning of such an idiosyncratic organisation as the EU is to successfully combat extremist ideologies which the continent has had such horrifying experiences with in past centuries.

6. Evaluation and Limitations of the Research

While attempts have been made to make this research replicable and the ways in which the data has been collected have been justified, there remains room for improvement. One immediate area is the availability of speeches covering the entire time in since Orbán returned to power in 2010. Particularly with the Tusk speeches there were less data points available to scrutinise and this therefore weakened the research, yet a wide enough sample size was still used to enable conclusions to be drawn. While conclusions were able to be drawn, the following limitations could be considered for similar future work.

6.1 – Limitations of ChatGPT 4o

ChatGPT 4o is the latest stage in the public development of OpenAI's generative AI platform. It is a useful tool to enable more rapid analysis as in this case it was able to quickly and effectively identify themes within speeches (Sharma and Yadav, 2022). This method proved reliable and despite the continual evolution of machine-learning tools such as ChatGPT it is fair to assume that future analysis would still produce similar if not the same themes based on current knowledge. One issue I encountered early on was the inability of ChatGPT to deal with multiple examples where there was little linkage. In the first instance I input the key themes from the State of the Nation address as identified by the programme back into ChatGPT and asked it to broadly group the themes of the speeches. In this case, ChatGPT returned with nine categories, many of which made sense but including others that were also relatively similar such as Governance and Political Strategy, International Relations and Global Critique, and Security and Defence. Another issue was that ChatGPT had created a category labelled 'Miscellaneous' where it grouped singular themes that it was unable to fit neatly elsewhere, for example those that appeared once such as the COVID-19 pandemic in a cover-all theme. After some reorganisation of the categories to make them workable, I initially tried to code these themes within the speeches using NVivo but the system was unable to effectively do this due to significant overlap. This led me to subsequently use the key themes from both speeches and to re-input this data once again for evaluation. It was only at this point, with themes from both speeches, that ChatGPT was able to create eight effective and clearly defined categories that I was able to implement when coding.

However, another method initially envisaged as contributing to this research project was the use of ChatGPT as a way to identify key words within each speech. In this case, each of the speeches were input into ChatGPT and it was asked to identify five keywords that the programme would associate with each given year. The results yielded for the 2011 State of the Nation speech for example, were Nation, Progress, Challenges, Resilience, and Identity and for 2024 these were Unity, Protection, Sustainability, Economy, and Sovereignty (ChatGPT 4o, 2024). Despite this method producing results, in reality the keywords that were identified were in many cases exactly the same as those of the themes but reduced down to a single word, replicating much of the thematic analysis already done. A better

method would have been to use the key words and branched words within each speech according to their frequency of use rather than themes. As Cheng and Yu (2023) have already pointed out however, ChatGPT which has had issues with quantification, meaning that a more reliable tool such as NVivo software would be a better way in which to analyse this data. A further aspect of this is that with NVivo the speeches are able to be input and stored for each project in addition to NVivo highlighting examples of where it has coded terms and branched words (such as unity and unification) to enable the researcher to double check for accuracy at a later date if needed.

6.2 – Limitations of NVivo 14

NVivo is an established AI tool created by Lumivero and frequently used within Social Sciences research to aid with coding and analysis tasks, though importantly not to be seen as a replacement for the researcher (Zamawe, 2015). The latest version has seen significant development since its release in 1981 and is marketed as an impartial way interrogate and cross-analyse qualitative data sets to uncover underlying connections. The use of NVivo 14 within this research project allowed the rapid auto-coding of a large amount of data which was undeniably useful, especially as the resource was free during the initial trial period.

However, one issue seen with the initial attempts at coding the speeches was the inability of the system to distinguish when to code points to Category 5 – International Relations and Global Critique. In the initial coding of the two speeches from 2019 and 2024, I often highlighted sentences and how they matched up to categories to help guide the system. Yet, when attempting to auto-code the other speeches within the NVivo system, an issue arose in which Category 5 was not identified in any of the auto-coded speeches. This can possibly be attributed to two issues, the first being the difficulty of distinctions between the categories. In particular categories 4 (Governance and Political Strategy) and 5 (International Politics and Global Critique) were difficult to disentangle as in some cases there were sentences that could be assigned to both. In the second attempt at coding a distinction was made between issues that specifically affected Hungary (category 4) or the interactions with outside forces such as the EU (category 5). This enabled the second attempt at auto-coding through NVivo to properly identify all themes within the speeches.

The second was the issue of large amounts of text being highlighted from which the

programme could draw. When reattempting the coding for a second time, shorter phrases in the 2019 and 2024 speech were coded to allow NVivo to better discern between which categorisation to use and this resulted in the programme being able to fully auto-code all other speeches. As previously mentioned a frequency analysis of words and branches words could be used as in support of such analysis. Much more effective however may be to ensure that key areas within each theme are correctly outlined before the texts are highlighted. In this case, it was the choice of the researcher yet for the sake of replicability sub-divisions would head off some of the issues with multiple interpretations. Ultimately, this is likely to remain a constant issue within political discourse analysis that can only be minimised rather than eradicated.

7. Discussion of further research areas

This research does however raise valid areas for further study within the same field. One suggestion may be to analyse in a deeper and more comprehensive way the official speeches of Orbán Viktor since his return to office in 2010. Use of other formal speeches such as the *Március tizenötödik* (March 15th) speech or those given at the opening of Parliament would broaden and deepen the scope of analysis. Additionally, much of the focus of this research has been on speeches that primarily have a domestic audience. Speeches given by Orbán within more international settings such as the recently created Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) Hungary or his addresses given to the European Parliament may prove interesting areas for political discourse analysis in comparison with domestic speeches to uncover common narratives or differing themes tailored to particular audiences.

A second possibility also exists for further research which would be a comparison of the speeches of various leader throughout the EU throughout their time in power. It has already been pointed out within this paper that there are other nationalistic and populist movements that have become popular within Europe, the Law and Justice party of Poland for example. Once again the use of annual speeches become important in pursuing investigations of how leaders' messages change over time by allowing a standardised data set to be compared over time and between countries. The extent to which leader represent particular political ideologies and how this has shifted with time could be plotted against a political compass

in order to detect patterns. Not only would this allow further analysis of trends within parties in the European Parliament as a whole but also enable cross-country analysis as a springboard to deeper research as to why some strategies work in some countries or regions but not others.

A final suggestion for an area of further research is the extent to which the changes brought about in Hungary since 2010 have departed from the accepted core values of the European Union. Although not straight-forward, it would be possible to find examples of the EU Treatises and examples of Case Law that have sought to define the idea of core EU values in concrete terms. This could then be twinned with a linear evaluation of Hungarian legislation in subsequent years to see to what extent the government and the judiciary has responded proactively or reactively to wider EU legal direction.

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Appendix B

2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Unity	Resilience	Sovereignty	COVID	Unity	Growth	Immigration	Confidence	Independence	X	Achievements	Growth	X	Nation
Protection	Sovereignty	Economy		Independence	Unity	Sovereignty	Sovereignty	Peace		Change	Resilience		Progress
Economy	Peace	Security		Resilience	Critique	Culture	Economic Progress	Sovereignty		Nationalism	Self-Reliance		Challenges
Sustainability	Economy	Identity		Tradition	Sovereignty	Economy	National Identity	Migration		Unity	Accomplishment		Resilience
Sovereignty	Conservatism	Critique		Preparedness	Family	Unity	Vigilance	Identity		Future	Future		Identity

Appendix C

2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
European and Western Values	Decline of Western Civilisation and Power Shift	COVID	COVID	Historical Reflection and Transformation	National Unity and Identity	National Sovereignty and Patriotism	Crisis of European Leadership and Democracy	X	Electoral Victory and Political Legitimacy
Geopolitical Shifts and China	Demography and Migration			National Identity and Sovereignty	Political Stability and Development	Demographic and Family Policies	Migration and Security Concerns		Shift from Liberal Democracy to Illiberal Democracy
Hungary's Position in Europe	Cultural and Gender Issues			Illiberal Democracy and Christian Values	Regional Co-operation and International Dynamics	Cultural Identity and Immigration	Economic Challenges and Global Competition		Global Challenges and the Decline of Western Influence
Economic Strategies and Challenges	Economic Challenges and Energy Dependence			Economic and Political Challenges	Cultural and Civilisational Discourse	Critique of the European Union and Global Elites	Call for Sovereignty and National Solutions		National Sovereignty and Resistance to Foreign Influence
Cultural and National Identity	Geopolitical Strategy and National Sovereignty			Future Vision and Call to Action	Future of European Politics	Security and Defence	Vision for the Future of Europe		Economic Nationalism and State Control

