

JON FOX

Hungary's New Racism and the Rise of the Radical Right

In Hungary, the recent rise of the radical right has been accompanied by the spread and legitimation of racist and exclusionary rhetoric. Jobbik, which gained 16% of the vote in the 2010 parliamentary elections, did not tone down its racist message when seeking political office. Not only did Jobbik stay on message, its message has increasingly been borrowed by Hungary's more mainstream political players. Our analysis of press coverage surrounding two recent murder scandals involving Roma (as victim in one case and perpetrator in the other) reveals how racist and exclusionary rhetoric that has long been a staple of the radical right is increasingly finding its way, albeit in modified

forms, into mainstream political and media discourse. Whilst the liberal turn amongst radical parties in West Europe may be informed by core values of tolerance and respect for cultural diversity, the radical turn in mainstream (and even liberal) parties in Hungary has been undergirded by a striking lack of those values, and the ascendancy in their stead of racism and xenophobia. The result has been an increased legitimacy and indeed popularity of racist and exclusionary discourse. Our paper examines how this spread of radical right exclusionary rhetoric is accomplished in and by the media.

