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What else comes with a geographical concept beyond geography? The renaissance of the term 'Carpathian Basin' in the Hungarian Parliament

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Abstract

A key tenet from research on geographical concepts is that these are never neutral but filled with different ideas and agendas. The 'Carpathian Basin' is one of the most significant concepts in Hungarian geographical thought, but its recently reemerging use in political discourse has not yet been studied through quantitative text analysis.

In this paper, we describe how a structural topic model was used to analyze the 1,525 speeches containing the term delivered in the Hungarian Parliament between 1998 and 2020.

Our results indicate a renaissance in the use of the term, both in terms of its more frequent use and its discursive meaning as a sign of a turn in national policy. At the same time, 'Carpathian Basin' discourse serves as a symbolic battleground for different political ideologies to indicate both neutral geographical references and nationalist sentiments. Left-liberals tend to use it politically neutrally, referring to an ethno-culturally heterogeneous area, and using a less personal voice, referring to institutions and interests. In contrast, right-wing narratives often demarcate the Carpathian Basin as a single geographical entity. Some of these speeches exhibit virtual nationalism, while others subtly question territorial legitimacy. The latter MPs speak in terms of representing their own community, referring to values, emotions, and culture, offering a collective identity to which people attach values and emotions.

Keywords: natural language processing, structural topic model, Carpathian Basin, Hungarian Parliament, ideological divides

1 Introduction

Language and concepts influence our thoughts and actions, and this is also true of geographical names. However, while, for instance, country names are well-established, spaces that lack formal institutions (including borders) need to be denominated in order to be imagined as real. The respective names then need to be continuously invoked and re-invoked if the intention is to build a consensus around the existence of that space.

Throughout various periods, the Carpathian Basin has been one of the most significant concepts in Hungarian geographical thought, including serving irredentist goals in the interwar era (Balogh, 2021). While the irredentist element has never been part of official policy since WWII, the concept has been gradually revived in recent decades (Hajdú, 2018) and now forms part of everyday political discourse and national identity construction (Scott & Hajdú, 2022). This article investigates how the concept has recently been used by Hungarian political elites. By examining speeches delivered in the Hungarian Parliament between 1998 and 2020 that contain the label ‘Carpathian Basin,’ we seek to answer the question of what latent themes can be distinguished in the discourses tied to the term. Further, can politically motivated identity-making patterns be detected? How does the framing of each political-ideological bloc differ? What changes can be observed during the studied period? Since the issue of national identity played a very important role in political debates during the period under examination, with a widening gap between political blocs regarding the concept of the nation, it can be assumed that these processes are also reflected in discourses related to the Carpathian Basin.

To examine the texts, we used a natural language processing tool called structural topic modeling (STM) (Roberts et al., 2019). This model is suitable for exploring the latent topics of a corpus and has the advantage of being able to incorporate meta-variables, the role of which can be twofold: influencing either the frequency of the occurrence of topics (prevalence variable) or their framing (content variable). Thus, by representing political position and time as meta-variables, the method can help answer the following question: What are the nature and dynamics of the relationship between a political position and the framing of latent topics? The paper aims to contribute to the current academic discourse in two ways.

First, from a substantive perspective, with a comprehensive quantitative analysis of the Hungarian parliamentary discourse. The ‘Carpathian Basin’ is one of the most significant concepts in Hungarian geographical thought, but its recent reappearance in political discourse has not yet been studied in relation to Parliament. Second, from a methodological perspective, we demonstrate the wide applicability of quantitative methods in textual analysis. Prior studies on national identity or critical geography usually use a qualitative approach, but the approach we use provides quantitative evidence, and because we use a complete corpus, our approach cannot be criticized using the arguments often raised against qualitative methods (incomplete empirical base or selective source selection). The method we use (the structural topic model) is also not yet widely used in the field and, to our knowledge, has not been applied to Hungarian social data research, so we also hope that our analysis will inspire others.

The article is structured as follows. This introduction is followed by a theoretical chapter that lays out our conceptual approach. The subsequent chapter briefly introduces the historical background and current context of the use of the term ‘Carpathian Basin.’

The next chapter presents our data and the methodological framework underlying the study. In this framework, structural topic modeling is combined with a qualitative approach. The subsequent chapter is devoted to the results. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches are used to select the most appropriate model and interpret the results. The final chapter concludes the paper by summarizing the key findings and putting the results in a broader context. We will argue that while the ‘Carpathian Basin’ has been used across political blocs, it has been particularly embraced by the right. Moreover, differences can be detected between the political camps concerning how the concept is invoked.

2 Text as the empirical base

2.1 ‘Text as data’ in social research

Our empirical research draws inspiration from the recent ‘text as data’ approach in social research and the related methodology for the automated mining of large text databases, namely natural language processing (NLP). One antecedent of this empirical social research trend is the narrative turn in the social sciences (Goodson & Gill, 2011), which has primarily sought to provide a methodological alternative to positivist research, seeing in the text the possibility of a self-reflexive approach to social phenomena. Another, not unrelated, discipline-specific antecedent is the science of language and politics, where language is seen as an indispensable tool for political action (Wodak & Forchtner, 2017; Müller, 2008). We should also mention research on the discursive construction of national history (Wodak, 2010) and national identity (Wodak et al., 2009).

2.2 Political agendas associated with geographical labels

While Foucauldian and other scholars have long established that language – including word choice – influences thought as well as agency, geographical names and discourses have only more recently become subjects of investigation from this perspective (Medby & Thornton, 2023; Müller, 2008). The field of critical geopolitics has greatly contributed to this, showing that geographical labels are never neutral but filled with various ideas and intentions (Dodds, 2019). In addition, spatial concepts can play a significant role in identity politics and foreign policy visions (Balogh, 2022), as well as collective identity-making (Paasi, 2016; Egry, 2020), which is particularly true when competing ideas exist concerning what and where the nation is and where it should be heading. Hence, the intentions and effects of meaning-making in relation to geographical concepts are of primary interest.

According to Lacoste, the nation is ‘the fundamental geopolitical concept’ (1997: 38) in the sense that it ‘refers [...] fundamentally to language and territory’ (ibid. 36). Consequently, this is the spatial entity into which most people are primarily socialized through various processes, one of which is the discursive dimension (Paasi, 2016). However, macro-regional constructs can also be the subjects of political or collective desire, not least when they have existed in a real or imagined glorious past. As Bassin (2012: 553) has described, such meaning-making often ‘involves the construction of idealized pictures of national glory lost at some point in the remote past, and then the projection of this picture

as an aspirational vision for the future.’ It goes without saying that macroregion-building projects are often contested and even dangerous, although this depends on whether any given nationalism is of the ‘hot’ or the ‘banal’ sort (cf. Paasi, 2016).

3 The concept of the Carpathian Basin

The Carpathian Basin (Kárpát-medence) is the designation of a physical geographical entity in Central Europe. Although the term exists in English and other languages, it is a genuinely Hungarian one in the sense that – except in the natural sciences – it is rarely used (or even known) by non-Hungarians (Fejes, 2011). This is because the label defines a space in which Hungarians constitute the single largest ethnic group. Accordingly, the concept has also been and remains contested, especially among Hungary’s neighbors, but also by some domestic commentators (Balogh, 2021; Scott & Hajdú, 2022). Even in Hungary, the term ‘Carpathian Basin’ only appeared in the late 19th century, and even then, very sporadically (Balogh, 2021). The main reason for this is that the Basin largely corresponded to the historical territory of Hungary, consequently making it unnecessary to use an alternative name for the same entity. However, as during the 1910s, fears of potential territorial losses increased in Hungary, the need was increasingly felt to stress not just the environmental but also the political and economic coherence of the Basin. Accordingly, following the territorial losses in 1920, the term ‘Carpathian Basin’ experienced its heyday as a surrogate for pre-WWI Hungary, which Hungarian geographers and others made all effort to justify on all fronts (*ibid.*). In fact, territorial revisionism was an official policy in interwar Hungary and was partly implemented during WWII. However, following the war, the reinstatement of interwar Hungary’s territory, and the installment of a communist regime, the ‘Carpathian Basin’ became a taboo term until the early 1980s (*ibid.*). Since then, however, the concept has gradually sneaked back into Hungarian academia, public awareness, and eventually politics (Scott & Hajdú, 2022).

Although all governments have – to varying degrees – embraced the issue of trans-border Hungarians¹ in the Carpathian Basin since 1990 (Waterbury, 2010), 2010 certainly constitutes a milestone in this respect. In fact, Hungary’s since-then-incumbent national-conservative government coalition has made this issue one of its key ideological cornerstones (Lesińska & Héjj, 2021). At the same time, it is important to note that – unlike in the interwar period – the recent revival of Carpathian Basin-related discourses and policies are envisaged in line with respecting current borders and cooperation within EU frameworks (Bán, 2015). Still, it is on some level understandable that the concomitant narrative of ‘reunifying the nation’ (*ibid.*, Pogonyi, 2017) raises eyebrows, especially among Hungary’s neighbors. To what extent the expression may be divisive in Hungary itself is the subject of investigation in the remainder of this paper.

¹ The literature uses various terms for Hungarians living beyond Hungary’s borders. Here, we refer to them as ‘trans-border Hungarians’ because this is one of the simplest and most used phrasings. Later in the paper, we also apply different terms like ‘Hungarians beyond the borders,’ ‘ethnic Hungarians,’ and ‘(ethnic) minority Hungarians.’

4 The parliamentary public sphere

Parliaments are among the most important institutions of representative democracy, being political assemblies that engage in free and open political debate on legislation. The key question in examining political representation is the extent to which the parliamentary agendas reflect the concerns of the public. Moreover, since communication is the core of parliamentary decision-making, it is also the core of representative democracy itself. At the same time, the parliamentary discourse is not a sterile reasoning process since representatives are aware that they cannot realistically convince their political opponents. Instead, politicians tend to emphasize symbolic issues and reinforce values that constitute political ideology. This is why the Parliament is also an excellent research field for us.

Discourses in parliaments not only reflect social configurations but also contribute to the discursive formation of them – in our case, through the use of geographical concepts with certain historical/cultural connotations.

Since the focus of our analysis is the language usage in parliamentary speeches, it is worthwhile discussing the discursive context briefly. Regarding the focus of the parliament, we distinguish between two operational categories, debate parliaments and working parliaments (Gallagher et al., 2011). The Hungarian Parliament – like most European parliaments – can be considered a working parliament, with less confrontational interactions, where the focus is on legislative procedures and committees. However, beyond legislation, the Hungarian parliament is the arena of governmental responsibility and accountability, where MPs confront cabinet members with current political issues and social problems, too (as happens in parliamentary government systems).

In parliaments, the power of speaking is the power of acting (Ilie, 2017): what can be done depends to a large extent on what can be said. This is also an important thought in relation to the changing legitimacy/role of the term ‘Carpathian Basin,’ which is detailed above. Speeches contain both theatrical and agonistic elements, i.e., they address both formal and competitive goals (Ilie, 2003). Since the Parliament in the Hungarian public law structure undertakes both legislative and control functions, the discourses can be distinguished on this basis, which is roughly in line with what Ilie states from a linguistic viewpoint: the genre of parliamentary discourse displays several subgenres that are subordinated to these two specific parliamentary goals. Keynote speeches, speeches, and pre-agenda speeches generally have a legislative function and, thus, a representative function that reflects the main messages of the parties. Speeches with a control function typically include prompt questions, prompt replies, two-minute speeches, etc., which by definition are non-representative, non-ceremonial speeches.

From a text analysis perspective, a further important genre distinction is whether the text is pre-written or spontaneous. This distinction is broadly consistent with the functional distinction above. Additionally, the debates are audience-centered as they occur in front of a real audience of other MPs and a virtual audience of voters and the media.

Our goal is also to examine the differences in the language of the parties in relation to the concept of the Carpathian Basin. General differences in the language of Hungarian parties have been investigated qualitatively by Szücs (2012). According to the latter, the Hungarian party Fidesz has created a ‘new conservative language’ as a successful alternative to the ‘sociologizing language’ of the 1990s. Szücs identifies distinctive features in

comparing the latter two languages, such as moralistic versus professional, referring to the natural order versus socioeconomic factors, rhetorical versus denying rhetoric, etc. These are the features we can expect to see in our analysis when comparing political blocs, even if, in contrast to our approach, Szücs observed the representative public sphere, not the Parliament.

5 Political landscape

Characterizing the time interval under review according to the parties in government, three periods can be distinguished: 1998-2002: Competition between center-right parties led to FIDESZ's leadership by center-right government; 2002-2010: The socialists (MSZP) and liberals (SZDSZ) twice became the governing force. During this period, FIDESZ became a mobilizing populist party, leading the FIDESZ-KDNP alliance to a landslide victory in the 2010 elections, resulting in a two-thirds majority in parliament. After 2010, Fidesz re-structured the whole Hungarian political scene: with a supermajority in the parliament, it adopted a new Fundamental Law and radically reorganized the whole electoral process, which resulted in not only successive electoral victories for the governing party but also a two-thirds supermajority in each parliamentary cycle.

For our analysis, we divided the period under consideration into two parts, with the 2010 elections as the cut-off point. As mentioned above, 2010 is a turning point for our topic. The right-wing Fidesz's return to power in 2010 gave them (and their election partner, KDNP) a constitutional majority in Parliament. Viktor Orbán, as new Prime Minister and former opposition leader, called for a 'revolution in the polling booths.' The party started implementing fundamental changes. The Constitution was replaced with a Fundamental Law, which states the emergence of a new order, the 'System of National Cooperation' (Nemzeti Együttműködés Rendszere). The regime's most important messages were based on the idea of ethnicity-based 'national (re)unification' (Pogonyi, 2017).

In the meantime, the role of the Parliament was also reduced. For instance, from 1999 onwards (during the first Fidesz government), the weekly plenary session was reduced to meetings every three weeks. After a change of government, between 2002-2010, bi-weekly sessions were the norm. Since 2010, when Fidesz returned to power, the former three-week system has been reinstalled. Moreover, the functioning of the parliament has changed radically: the lawmaking process has become less transparent with the reorganization of committees, and the opposition's rights have been severely reduced (Szente, 2020).

From the point of view of our topic, it is worth briefly reviewing the symbolic political points that have defined the relationship with Hungarians beyond the borders during the period under discussion. The first important event was the referendum on dual citizenship in 2004, the stake of which was whether Hungarians living beyond the border could be granted Hungarian citizenship. The real public debate around transborder Hungarians was invigorated around 2001 when the then-governing Fidesz-led coalition introduced and passed a law about the preferential treatment of Hungarian individuals beyond the borders (including financial aid, access to schools, cultural facilities, and work permits, among other elements). Fidesz openly refused to provide citizenship for trans-border Hungarians and offered this special status instead. However, this policy was not really

welcomed on the right: In 2003, a right-wing organization called Magyarok Világszövetsége (World Federation of Hungarians) initiated a referendum about granting a preferential process for obtaining citizenship to Hungarians beyond the borders. Though many found the idea risky, Fidesz (already in opposition) quickly joined the referendum campaign, claiming that this could not be a political issue and that refusing citizenship could not be an answer. The governing left-liberal coalition was strongly divided by the issue, but many of their leading politicians campaigned against the proposal, stating that dual citizenship was not a solution for these people (Bárdi, 2013). The harsh campaign and the failed referendum (neither option reached the required 25% threshold) stabilized the issue of Hungarians beyond the border as a kind of political cleavage and a political polarization factor. The next turning point was in 2010: among their first legislative acts after their supermajority win, Fidesz elevated the day of the Trianon Peace Treaty (1920, when Hungary suffered severe territorial losses) to a national Memorial Day, and a completely new national policy was launched. Since 2011, laws have been enacted to provide kin-state citizenship, voting rights, and financial and political support to ethnic Hungarians abroad, especially in neighboring countries. The issue of Hungarian minorities beyond the borders has divided the political parties in Hungary: while the left-wing and liberal parties promoted constitutional patriotism, the right-wing parties supported the idea of the 'virtual unification of the nation.' Achieving a constitutional majority in the Hungarian parliament opened the door for Fidesz to reshape the citizenship issue and provide extensive financial aid and other state-funded policies (schooling, social services, infrastructure development, etc.) to the communities of Hungarians beyond the border. As Kiss summarizes, the landslide changes in Hungarian politics fundamentally transformed so-called national policy, both politically and financially (Kiss, 2018, pp. 57-63).

Finally, in the context of the Carpathian Basin as a historical self-definition, it is also worth mentioning that after 2010, Fidesz became very active in instrumentalizing collective identity-making. By excluding opposition figures and their historical narratives from the public sphere, Fidesz presented itself as the sole defender of Hungarian national sovereignty. In this effort, the 'us/them' contrast has often been used: specific collective memories, including the Trianon Treaty, have been reinterpreted and used to assert a sense of national belonging and resentment against other nations (Benazzo, 2017).

Since our goal was primarily to detect political differences in the parliamentary discourse, we had to categorize parties according to their political stance. Members of the following parties were elected in the period under review: Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ), Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP), Democratic Coalition (DK), Dialogue for Hungary (PM), Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Union (Fidesz), Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), Independent Smallholders, Agrarian Workers and Civic Party (FKgP), Jobbik Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik), Politics Can Be Different (LMP), Together – Party for a New Era (Együtt). The ideological classification of several of these parties is problematic. Fidesz has not been ideologically coherent in the period under study at all: until 2002, it pursued a basically conservative-liberal economic policy, then after 2002, in opposition, it took a left turn regarding economic policy, while in foreign policy it followed an Atlanticist and Westernist line, and finally, since 2010 it can be defined as a right-wing populist and national-conservative party. Furthermore, LMP claims to be green, but it is very difficult to locate them on the left-right scale.

In the end, we decided on three categories: Fidesz, other right-wing nationalist parties (Jobbik, MDF, FKGP, KDNP, MIÉP), and left-wing liberal parties (SZDSZ, MSZP, DK, LMP, PM, Együtt). Fidesz is listed separately as a benchmark. The latter two political blocs, especially the left-liberal one, are ideologically very heterogeneous: we do not define a political position associated with a clear-cut ideological stance but as a point of reference to Fidesz as the hegemonic party. This classification is based partly on the Parties and Elections Database (Nordsieck, 2022) and partly on the literature on the Hungarian party system and political cleavages (Horváth & Soós, 2015). According to the latter, instead of the sometimes confusing or overlapping ideological categorizations of the parties, the relationship between the parties (their cooperative or hostile attitude towards each other; in other words, the possibility of their coalition-making) may be a good means of categorization, as it indicates an important political cleavage since the mid-2000s when supporting the major parties and their leaders (like Viktor Orbán and Fidesz, or Ferenc Gyurcsány and the Socialists) also became a kind of political cleavage, beyond the classic ideological orientations (Horváth & Soós, 2015, p. 277). Furthermore, electoral cooperation during the period covered by the research also strengthened our bloc categories: far-right parties never formed an electoral coalition with the left, liberal, and green parties until 2022, and no party from the latter groups offered/accepted genuine cooperation from Fidesz, but always engaged in stronger or weaker coordination among themselves.

In the parliamentary discourses related to the Carpathian Basin, we expect to see an increase in the legitimacy awarded to and different meanings of the concept. Since the examined period parallels the birth of Fidesz's new, distinctive national policy and memory policy, it was assumed that this would also affect the discourses. Finally, in relation to the 'sociologizing language' of the left-liberal side, instead of emotional identification and the use of national symbols, a kind of bureaucratic narrative can be expected in the speeches of this bloc as well.

6 Data and methods

6.1 Data

Our corpus contains speeches made in the Hungarian Parliament from parliamentary terms 3-7 between June 25, 1998, and November 23, 2020. The start date marks the formation of the new Parliament, and the end date marks the end of our data collection. The openly accessible corpus was collected within the PARLDATA project of the non-profit organization K-Monitor by its volunteer developers and the consulting firm Precognox. We restricted the analysis to the relevant speech types by eliminating non-substantive, technical ones, e.g., those related to the agenda. Only speeches of party-affiliated MPs were analyzed, so independent MPs and representatives of national and ethnic minorities were excluded from the dataset, resulting in a corpus of 168,506 speeches.

The relevant sub-corpus was identified by keyword filtering, keeping only speeches containing the term 'Kárpát-medenc*' (the Hungarian equivalent of Carpathian Basin; * replaces any string here; this is necessary due to the agglutinative nature of Hungarian). Our final corpus consists of 1525 speeches, and our unit of analysis is full speeches.

6.2 Methods

The purpose of topic modeling is to uncover hidden topics in a corpus. The model assumes the existence of a finite set of topics, where a topic is statistically defined as a multinomial distribution over the specified parliamentary terms. The model allows texts to relate to more than one topic. Structural topic models (STM, Roberts et al., 2019), a subtype of topic models, allow the researcher to estimate the relationship of topics to document metadata. This metadata can influence both the content and prevalence of topics, where content refers to the words used within a topic. The metadata option of STM fits well with our research question because it allows us to examine how political blocs speak differently about a given topic. Further, the vocabulary differences between political blocs may indicate a divergence in the framing of the topics concerning how political blocs interpret and communicate political reality. In fact, STM was developed by political scientists and adapted for purposes similar to ours, such as examining vocabulary differences by party (Roberts et al., 2019).

Another important feature of the model is that, in contrast to classical topic models (Blei et al., 2003), it allows for correlation between topics. It does not make the rather unrealistic assumption that topics that appear in individual speeches are independent. To implement the models, we used the STM R package (Roberts et al., 2019).

Like many other text-mining approaches, STM relies on the word-based representations of texts (e.g., Aggarwal & Zhai, 2012), assuming that texts are ‘bags of words’ while ignoring word order, syntactic relations, etc. During the preprocessing, we unified the character encoding of the database and removed unnecessary tokens that had been added to the text during the web harvesting process. We employed lemmatization to standardize different forms of the same word. For this purpose, we used the e-magyar (emtsv package (Váradi et al., 2018; Indig et al., 2019)) and deleted very common words (‘stop words’ like articles and conjunctions). We treated the most relevant two- and three-word collocations (‘significant bigrams/trigrams’) as single terms, such as ‘*határon túli magyarok*’ (‘Hungarians beyond the border’) or ‘*előző ciklus*’ (‘previous term’). We recognized proper nouns (or ‘named entities’ in technical terms), such as names of politicians, parties, etc., and treated them as single terms.

The number of topics is an input parameter of the STM model and the metadata variables together with their type (‘content variable’ or ‘prevalence variable,’ depending on whether they affect the content or prevalence of the topics, with the restriction that only one content variable can exist). When trying to optimize the choice of these input parameters, our decision was based on the interpretation of the topics of the models obtained from different inputs.

As mentioned above, we used two meta-variables, date, and political position. The date (as previously explained) was binary: before/after the 2010 elections, while the political position was a three-category variable: Fidesz/right-wing nationalist bloc/left-liberal bloc.

When deciding on the type of meta-variables, we fitted two different seven-topic models. A topic size of seven was considered realistic based on our previous modeling experience with the corpus. Both models had political position as a content variable, but in one, only the date; in the other, the political position was also a prevalence variable. From the point of view of interpretability (displaying words associated with topics and meta-variables, using the `sageLabels` and `labelTopics` function of the STM package), the latter model seemed to be better, so this meta-variable representation was chosen.

To determine the optimal number of topics, we combined quantitative and qualitative approaches to get topics that were not too broad but still not over-clustered. First, we fitted the model according to varying numbers of topics (between 5 and 20), and assessed the models using the searchK function, which performs several tests. This data-driven approach helped us to identify a narrower range of topics, 7-11. Inspecting further now only within this narrower class of models, according to their most relevant terms, topic sizes eight and nine seemed to be the most coherent and, simultaneously, the most parsimonious.

We ranked these two models qualitatively by reading the ten speeches most strongly associated with each topic in six groups (two periods and three political blocs) using the findThoughts and plotQuote functions. Finally, a topic size of eight proved to be the best for meaningful interpretation.

6.3 Limitations

Our analysis, like any other, has its limitations. It examines political communication only in Parliament, a medium characterized by a specific genre of discourse. Additionally, our unit of analysis was whole speeches, although we could have chosen a smaller context for the occurrence of the term ‘Carpathian Basin.’ However, we felt that the whole speech was representative of the discourse in which the term occurs. Furthermore, although the parliamentary speeches could be considered elements of broader debates with dynamic and interactive patterns, this research analyzed the speeches as individual manifestations.

Though the issue of the Carpathian Basin, both as a territory and a metaphor for Hungarians living there, was an important issue in the early years of the 1990s in Hungarian politics, as the scope of the research covers the 1998-2020 timeframe, the paper does not deal with earlier political developments. We divided the examined period into two intervals. A finer division could have been employed, but the 2010 split point reflected the theoretical aspects. Finally, since there are no canonical procedures for determining the optimal topic model, quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to select the model parameters.

7 Results

7.1 Descriptive results

The number of speeches using the term ‘Carpathian Basin’ increased significantly in the period under review (Table 1; note, however, that the second interval is shorter). If we look at the occurrences of the term rather than the speeches containing the term, the change is negligible (it decreases from 86,743 to 81,763). This may indicate that the number of contexts/areas in which the term is used is what is actually increasing.

The increase in the number of speeches was not uniform across political blocs. The number of speeches using the term tripled for Fidesz and the right/conservative bloc, while the number of speeches on the left-liberal side was unchanged (Table 1). In general,

it is also true that most of the speeches were made by Fidesz representatives, and the left-liberal side made fewest. The same pattern holds for the proportion of speeches containing the phrase as a percentage of all speeches: left-liberal speeches contain a much smaller proportion of the keyword.

Table 1 Number and proportion (%) of speeches containing the term ‘Carpathian Basin’

Speeches containing the term				
Date	Speaker’s political bloc			
	right-wing nationalist	Fidesz	Left-liberal	Total
1998–2010	153	161	161	475
	32.21%	33.89%	33.89%	100%
	27.82%	24.73%	46.69%	31%
2010–2020	397	490	163	1050
	37.81%	46.67%	15.52%	100%
	72.18%	75.27%	50.31%	69%
Total	550	651	324	1525
	36.07%	42.69%	21.25%	100%
	100%	100%	100%	
All speeches				
1998–2020	41,538	57,390	69,578	168,506
	24.7%	34.1%	41.3%	100%
Proportion of Carpathian Basin-related speeches within all speeches				
1998–2020	1.3%	1.1%	0.5%	168,506

‘All speeches’ refers to the corpus before keyword filtering, i.e., all other cleaning/filtering has been executed

Compared to the whole corpus, the Carpathian Basin sub-corpus is associated with a much higher frequency of pre-written keynote speeches, speeches, and pre-agenda speeches that have a legislative function in representing the main messages of the parties and are written in advance (see the Appendix, Table A1). At the same time, the sub-corpus has a much smaller proportion of non-representative, non-ceremonial, spontaneous speeches with a control function (prompt questions, prompt replies, two-minute speeches, etc.).

7.2 Modeling results

The final eight-topic model is presented in Table 2. The table presents the topic labels obtained after qualitative and quantitative interpretation, the prevalence of the topics, and their most relevant terms. The robustness of the eight-topic model (and the validity of the method in general) is demonstrated by the fact that the interpretation of the seven-topic and nine-topic models (which were fitted independently to the eight-topic one) shows that the topics can be matched (e.g. the topic of collective identity-making is present in each model), and a topic from the smaller model was split to obtain the larger model (e.g. the topic of climate and energy policy of the nine-topic model was derived from the topic of economy in the eight-topic model).

Prevalence (here and hereafter) is defined as the average of the topic contributions. To make sense of ‘contributions,’ recall that topics are not clusters of speeches since a speech can belong to more than one topic. The value of a topic’s contribution to a speech tells us the extent to which the given topic contributed to the ‘generation’ of the speech.

The most relevant terms are defined by FREX (Roberts et al., 2019). That is, they are not the most frequent terms within the topic but the most distinctive ones: FREX weights words by their overall frequency and how exclusive they are to the topic. Most of the eight topics are semantically well defined; Topics 6 and 8 are rather exceptions, with less homogeneous themes and typically lower topic contributions (if the highest values of these contributions are less than 80-90 percent, this indicates that no speech clearly belongs to the topic; the topic is typically mixed with other topics).

Correlation between the topics was not found to be considerable (absolute value below 0.25), so there is no relation between their occurrence in speeches.

We can describe the topics in more detail using a qualitative approach by reading the most representative speeches. We have focused on the ten most typical posts (with a topic contribution of at least 80%) per topic, per time period, and per ideological bloc. The most relevant examples of the use of the term ‘Carpathian Basin’ from these speeches, with short quotations, are included in Table A2 in the Appendix, from which the following quotations are taken. Table A2 also includes the original Hungarian text.

Topic 1 mainly includes speeches on agriculture and related sectors (water management, environment- and climate policy, sustainable energy), and the Carpathian Basin is presented as a transboundary ecosystem, e.g., in terms of GMO exemptions or pesticide use (‘in fact, water from all over the Carpathian Basin flows here.’). Elsewhere, the use of the space category seems less justifiable – for example, the climate/agro-economic potential of the Carpathian Basin is identified with Hungary’s climate/agro-economic potential, etc. For example, ‘Forest management in Hungary has been based on ten-year plans for 130 years. The result of this 130 years of planned work is, in my opinion, the survival of the forests of the Carpathian Basin.’ On the right-wing nationalist side, the debate about policy issues is not free from assessment of the geopolitical situation (‘[...] we can also say that the quality of life in this endangered place is primarily up to us; to us and to some extent, of course, to the neighboring countries, because in the current political situation, the whole Carpathian Basin is not under our jurisdiction.’)

Table 2 Topics in the final model, with their label, prevalence, and most important terms

ID	Label	Prevalence (1998–2010, 2010–2020)	Most relevant terms
T1	Agriculture	14% (15%, 14%)	víz (water), termőföld (farmland), növény (plant), GMO, árvíz (floods), hektár (hectare), mezőgazdaság (agriculture)
T2	Culture	8% (5%, 10%)	hungarikum (unique Hungarian product), palinka (traditional fruit spirit), emlékév (commemorative year), termék (product), értéktár (heritage), világörökségi (world heritage), érték (value)
T3	Public administration, political rights	16% (16%, 16%)	ön (you), szavaz (vote), Jobbik (Jobbik, right-wing political party), státustörvény (status law), választás (election), Fidesz (Fidesz, currently governing party), párt (party)
T4	Collective identity-making	17% (18%, 16%)	nép (people), király (king), korona (crown), szabadság (freedom), történelem (history), Szent Korona (Holy Crown), hős (hero)
T5	Economy	10% (11%, 9%)	költségvetés (budget), százalékos (in percentage), demográfiai (demographic), stratégia (strategy), infláció (inflation), éghajlatváltozás (climate change), Duna (Danube)
T6	Human resources I: symbolic elements and institutions	7% (6%, 8%)	nemzetiségi (person belonging to a nationality), nemzetiség (nationality), műemlék (monument), egyház (church), roma (roma), kulturális örökség (cultural heritage), nemzetiségi önkormányzat (national minority government)
T7	Elements of national policy	19% (26%, 16%)	autonómia (autonomy), nemzetpolitika (national policy), határ túli Magyar (Hungarians beyond the borders of the country), Románia (Romania), szülőföld (homeland), Székely (Székely, family name or an ethnicity in Romania), csatlakozás (accession)
T8	Human resources II: social benefits, state aid, and funds	8% (3%, 11%)	Erzsébet (Elisabeth; The 'Erzsébet Camps' program offers holidays for children, including those from beyond the border), tábor (camp), alapítvány (foundation), millió forint (million Hungarian Forints), Bethlen Gábor Alap (Gábor Bethlen Fund, which supports cross-border Hungarians), BGA (abbreviation of Gábor Bethlen Fund), milliárd forint (billion Hungarian Forints)

Topic 2 includes cultural topics focusing on the whole Carpathian Basin, such as the ‘hungarikum’ label (which refers to high-quality local products), language law, or public television broadcasting beyond the borders. Here, the geographical label is usually used in the sense of ‘the Hungarians of the Carpathian Basin,’ but even here it is sometimes less justifiable – e.g., family-centricity is referred to as a traditional value in the Carpathian Basin (‘In the Carpathian Basin, people have been brought up within the family for centuries in a way that [...]’), or in speech intended to mobilize the Carpathian Basin (‘to listen, to mobilize the country, the Carpathian Basin in this matter’). Regarding this topic, the right-wing nationalist bloc also uses wording that suggests criticism of the geopolitical situation: ‘[it] is never a foreign country for us, the occupied Hungarian territory of the Carpathian Basin, any Hungarian territory, but formally, legally a foreign country.’ There are cases when the term is used in a neutral way, referring to an actual geographical region; these only occur in left-liberal speeches.

Topic 3 includes public administration and regulatory issues affecting Hungarians beyond the borders, such as voting rights, transport development, health care, and housing subsidies. This topic is rather interactive and contains controversial issues, as also indicated by the use of ‘you’ among the relevant terms and ‘not angry’ (a lemmatized form of the phrase ‘don’t be angry, but...’) among the most frequent terms. In often heated debates, the concept is also used in extreme contexts, e.g., ‘[...] we are dealing with the number one lobbyist of open society, who is completely indifferent to whether or not there will be Hungarians living here in the Carpathian Basin in a hundred years’ time.’

Topic 4 contains speeches related to collective identity-making, e.g., concerning the 1100th anniversary of the founding of the state. On the one hand, the Carpathian Basin as a whole is presented as the territory of the former Hungarian Kingdom, and on the other hand as the historical home of the Hungarians for thousands of years, where (according to the right-wing nationalist narrative) other peoples were either dispersed or merged into other nations. Here, too, the two geographical entities, Hungary and the Carpathian Basin, seem to overlap in some places (for example, ‘[...] to address the National Assembly, the people of the country, the people of the Carpathian Basin, the Hungarian nation all over the globe’). On the left-liberal side, the idea of the Carpathian Basin’s superiority is criticized, with the suggestion that we do not live alone in the Carpathian Basin (‘We have not lived our difficult history, this millennium alone, and we do not live alone in the Carpathian Basin today.’). In this historical context, the expression ‘the peoples of the Carpathian Basin’ is common from this political side, while on the other two sides, the Carpathian Basin is often referred to as a ‘historic homeland.’

The relevant terms in Topic 5 are all associated with the economic field, and the Carpathian Basin context is only one aspect of more general economic topics (budget, organizations’ annual reports, etc.) – e.g., mentioned as part of plans for an agricultural development or higher education development program for the whole Carpathian Basin.

Topics 6 and 8 deal with policy areas other than the economy, agriculture, and culture. Topic 6 deals with symbolic elements and institutions (church policy, monument protection, sports policy, etc.), and Topic 8 deals with social benefits, state aid, and funds. Both topics are rather heterogeneous, and typically, as in Topic 5, the Carpathian Basin arises in relation to these more general topics, alongside several other aspects (Topic 6: ‘the wooden churches of the north-eastern Carpathian Basin’ or the ‘winemaking

community in the Carpathian Basin,' Topic 8: '[...] which would make it possible to increase the knowledge about Hungarians living beyond the borders in the Carpathian Basin through class excursions [...]').

Finally, Topic 7 is the most interesting from a social research point of view because it also presents principled positions on national and neighborhood policy, typically along the lines of issues related to the political, cultural, and religious organizations of Hungarians living beyond the borders. It emphasizes symbolic community with Hungarians beyond the borders, which, according to left-liberal MPs, can be achieved by joining the EU ('It is fundamental for the Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin that the process of reuniting the divided Hungarians through European integration without changing borders will continue and, we hope, be completed.'). While right-wing nationalist parties often associate this unification with national autonomy ('Hungarian autonomy aspirations in the Carpathian Basin,' and 'autonomy policy in the Carpathian Basin.'). The desire to create institutions for the symbolic reunification of the nation is often explicit in Topic 7 – for example, from a Fidesz MP: 'in the objectives of the government of the civic coalition, more systematic, closer, so to speak institutionalized, relations between the Carpathian Basin and the Hungarians of the West and the motherland were also a priority.'

In a speech pertaining to this topic, a right-wing nationalist MEP² explicitly referred to the national-political connotations of the term 'Carpathian Basin' and its advantages over other alternatives: 'So when we talk about Hungarians beyond the borders, we should always put this adjective in brackets; let's talk about Hungarians, let's talk about Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin and in the world, let's talk about our annexed or separated brothers and sisters, but I think that we cannot go in the direction of what, among others, the policy of abandoning national interests has embodied [...].'

As regards the dynamics of the topics, the biggest change is the decrease in the prevalence of symbolic topics (see Table 2, third column: national policy from 26 to 16 percent, but also memory policy from 18 to 16 percent), and the parallel increase in the prevalence of public policy topics that replace symbolic gestures with concrete action in relation to their subject, e.g. financial support for Hungarian organizations beyond the borders (social benefits, state aids and funds from 3 to 11 percent, symbolic elements and institutions from 6 to 8 percent, cultural policy from 5 to 10 percent). If we examine these dynamics by political bloc (see Table A3 in the Appendix), we see that the decrease in the prevalence of symbolic topics mainly occurs with the left-liberal bloc, while the increase in concrete actions is mainly induced by Fidesz (in government).

Looking at the topics' relation to speech genres (see Table A4 in the Appendix), we see a big difference mainly in the pre-agenda speeches (which are, as mentioned, over-represented in the corpus under study). This is a genre that has a strong political and social significance; it thematizes the parliamentary session and the political public sphere. In this genre, the two symbolic topics are over-represented: memory policy and national policy (31 and 28 percent, respectively, compared to only 17 and 19 percent in the whole Carpathian Basin-corpus). In contrast, Topic 3 contains more speeches with a control

² Dr. Tamás Gaudi-Nagy, from the far-right party Jobbik, 2013

function, which are rather non-representative, spontaneous speeches. This is consistent with the interpretation of the topic above, which presents it as a more interactive, conflictual topic.

Finally, let us see how different political blocs talk differently about the same topic. The plots below show which words within a topic are more associated with one political bloc versus another. Due to the language of the corpus, the terms in the figures are in Hungarian. The horizontal axis quantifies the degree of belonging to the blocks; the colors orange, dark brown, and blue represent the Fidesz, the right-wing nationalist bloc, and the left-liberal bloc, respectively. In Figure 1, on the left side of the plot, the words on the left are those that Fidesz uses more frequently within Topic 1, while on the right side of the plot are words that the left-liberal block uses more frequently. The size of words is proportional to their frequency in the corpus. The figures were originally plotted using the plot.STM,type = 'perspectives') function, then recreated in Tableau. Below is a selection of just a few plots that highlight important results, but the online supplement includes an interactive visualization that allows users to explore all the plots by selecting various parameters.

In several topics (e.g., T1 and T4, see Figures 1 and 2), the general difference is that while Fidesz and right-wing nationalist MPs speak in terms of representing their own community (the pronoun 'we' is over-represented) – i.e., forming an 'us'/'them' opposition – the left-liberal side is more formal, less personal and refers to institutions ('EU,' 'government,' 'Hungary'). A similar contrast is reflected in the collective identity-making topic (T4, Figure 2), with Fidesz and the right-wing nationalists naming their own community on an ethnocultural basis ('nation,' 'Hungarian') and the left naming its own community on a civic basis ('Hungary'). In T1 on agriculture, the two large blocs are also markedly differentiated by the fact that the two right-wing blocs also include a territorial aspect (the word 'territory' is over-represented).

The difference between discourse referring to one's own community and to organizations can also be seen as the difference between the homogeneity and heterogeneity of the perspectives that are represented, most clearly in the case of Topic 7 (national policy, see Figure 3). Here, the narrative of Fidesz and the right-wing nationalists is dominated by their own community defined on ethnocultural grounds ('Hungarian,' 'Hungarians,'³ 'community,' 'national,' 'connection'), while on the left-liberal side, the actors and perspectives in the narrative are more heterogeneous ('European,' 'European Union,' 'Hungarians beyond the borders,' 'Hungary'). It is revealing that the Fidesz/right-wing nationalist half of both plots are dominated by a single term, 'Hungarian.'

A further dimension of the right-left divide appears in Topic 5 on the economy (see Figure 4): the two right-wing blocs argue on a value and emotion basis, while the left argues on a rational basis, the former on a rhetorical, the latter on a bureaucratic/expert basis (Fidesz vs. left-liberal: 'strategy,' 'important,' 'national,' 'goal' versus 'budget,' 'resource,' 'government,' right-wing nationalist versus left-liberal: 'Hungarian,' 'family' versus 'government,' 'budget'). The same distinction can also be observed in Topic 6 (Figure 5: Fidesz

³ The Hungarian original ('magyarság') is a difficult-to-translate term that refers to the ethno-culturally homogeneous Hungarian nation as a whole living anywhere in the world.

versus left-liberal: ‘culture,’ ‘national,’ ‘support,’ ‘important,’ ‘Hungarian’ versus ‘economic,’ ‘interest,’ ‘law,’ right-wing nationalist versus left-liberal: ‘community,’ ‘culture,’ ‘nationality’ versus ‘interest,’ ‘strategy,’ ‘law,’ ‘government’).

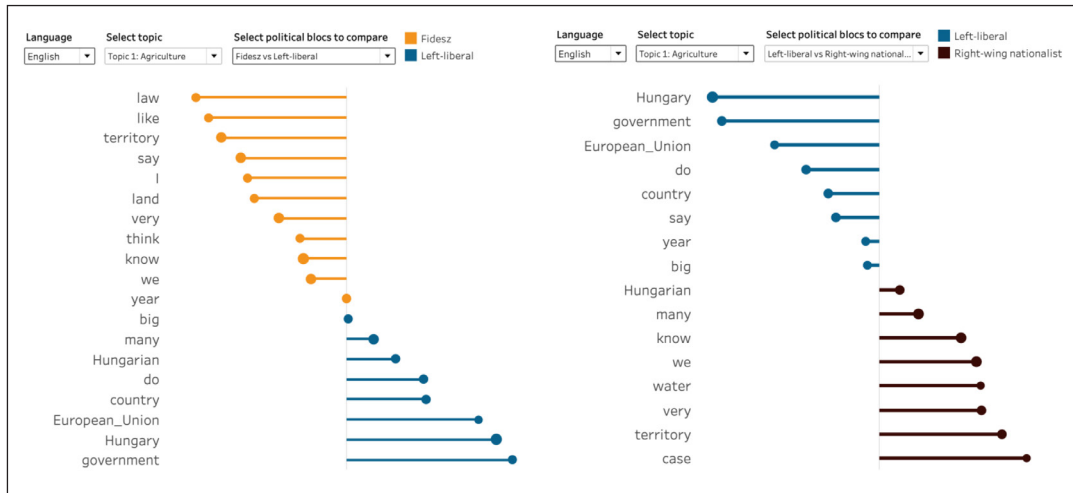


Figure 1 Vocabulary differences according to political blocs for Topic 1 (Agriculture).

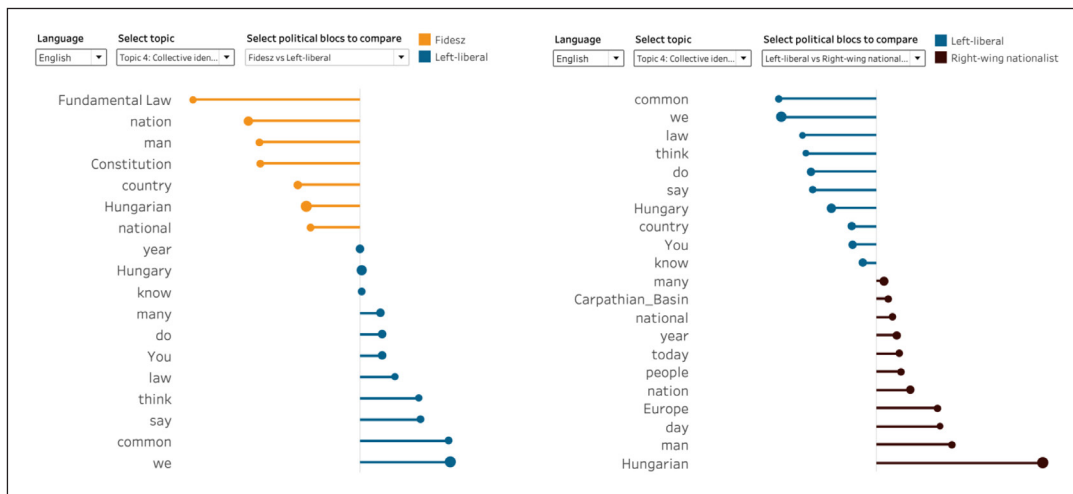


Figure 2 Vocabulary differences according to political blocs for Topic 4 (Collective identity making).

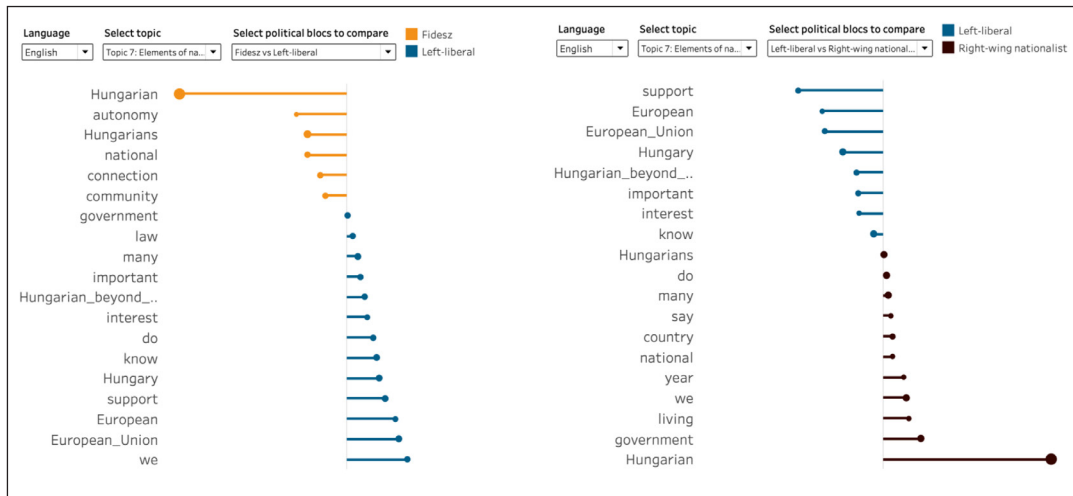


Figure 3 Vocabulary differences according to political blocs for Topic 7 (Elements of national policy)

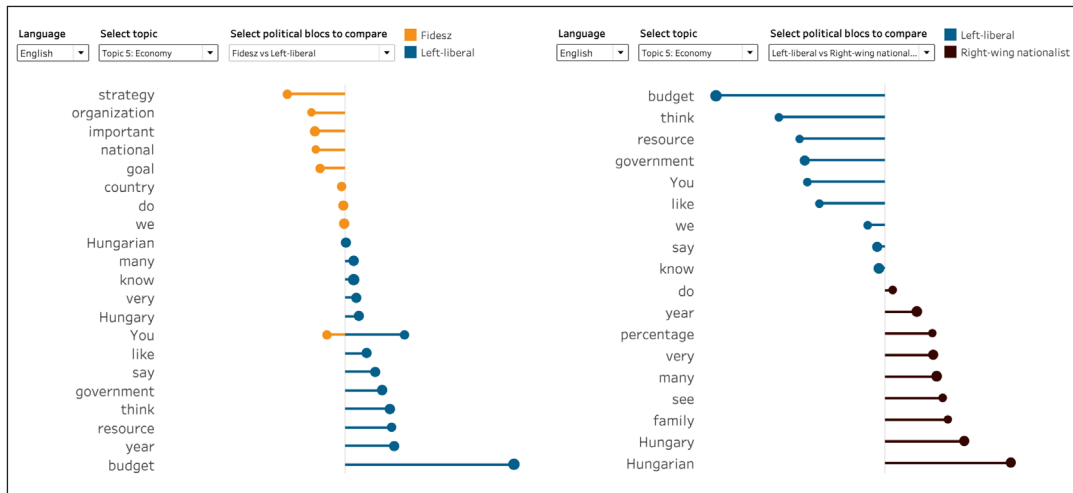


Figure 4 Vocabulary differences according to political blocs for Topic 5 (Economy)

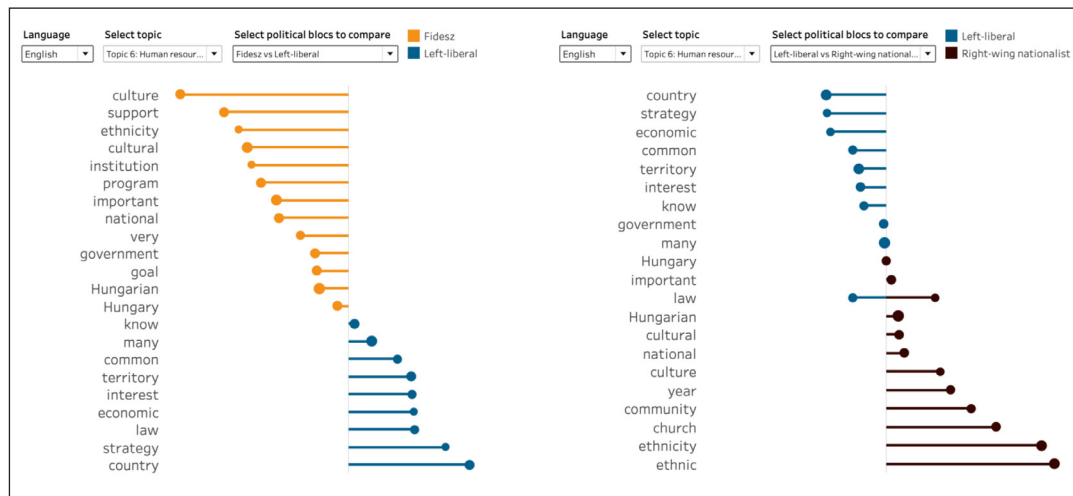


Figure 5 Vocabulary differences according to political blocs for Topic 6 (Human resources I: symbolic elements and institutions)

8 Summary and discussion

In our paper, we have examined how the Carpathian Basin, one of the most important geographical concepts related to national identity, was referred to in the past two decades in the Hungarian Parliament. We sought to answer the question of what latent themes can be distinguished in the discourses and what linguistic representation of political processes were captured.

Our analysis, like any other, has its own limitations, which are listed in the chapter on limitations. Here, we would like to focus on just one of them: our study examines political communication only in a specific political institution, the Hungarian Parliament. There is no available research on how Hungarian parliamentary discourse relates to, influences, or shapes the broader political communication space; existing analyses focus mainly on campaign communication, media relations, and changes in the political agenda (Kiss, 2019), and more recently, especially on online political communication (Bene, 2020). In the relevant research, parliament is usually considered an actor (legislator), not a layer of political communication. Research focusing on the political discourse finds that there is a sovereignty/integration dichotomy in the Hungarian political discourse that may be related to the context of territoriality, which is the topic of this paper. The European integration-oriented political discourse dominant in the 1990s has been complemented by a national sovereignty-oriented discourse since the 2010s (Szűcs, 2015). In our study, which examines the rise and political characteristics of the Carpathian Basin as a geographical and political category used in parliament, we did not use this sovereigntist-integrationist dichotomy as an analytical framework, but it is important to highlight the temporal coincidence between the rise of the sovereigntist discourse and the dominance of the term 'Carpathian Basin.' In this sense, our analysis can also be interpreted as quantitative confirmation of previous qualitative research.

Turning to our results, the political relevance of our topic is shown by the fact that while the number of related speeches in the left-liberal bloc remained unchanged during the period, the number of speeches in the Fidesz and the right-wing nationalist blocs more than doubled. These results can be added to the observation that the left-liberal side lost the opportunity to shape identity and memory politics in Hungary (Barna & Knap, 2022). The marked rise of the Carpathian Basin as a discourse unit in the Right's speeches after 2010 testifies to the sharp change in national policy and can be seen as a kind of political symbol of the renewed relationship between the Hungarian state and the Hungarians living beyond the border (Kiss, 2018).

The sub-corpus of parliamentary discourse related to the Carpathian Basin represents different genres than the full corpus: the former includes mainly representative ceremonial speeches conveying the main messages of the parties and performing a legislative function. All this may indicate that the term 'Carpathian Basin' is perceived by MPs as having a strong political meaning and is consciously used to convey a political message. However, the term may not yet be part of everyday vocabulary because it is less frequently used in spontaneous speeches. The fact that this topic is hardly present in the control-function speeches may also indicate that although national policy and politics related to trans-border Hungarians (especially concerning financial support and the government's political activities beyond the border) have been hot topics in Hungarian politics since 2010, opposition parties did not problematize this in the parliament, thus the politicians of the governing party did not mention it either in their replies. These are the linguistic imprints of the way in which the issue of Hungarian minorities beyond the border has divided political parties.

According to the results of structural topic modeling, we identified eight topics in the corpus which are well-separated thematically (economy, agriculture, culture, collective identity-making, elements of national policy, public administration and political rights, social benefits/state aid/funds and symbolic elements/institutions). The symbolic function of the topics on national policy and collective identity-making is clearly shown by the fact that these speeches were over-represented among pre-agenda speeches (which genre, in general, has a representative and opinion-forming function).

As for the dynamics of the topics, the left-liberal bloc is identified with a decrease in the prevalence of symbolic issues (collective identity-making, national policy), while the right-wing nationalist bloc saw an increase in the prevalence of public policy issues, which, in fact, replace symbolic gestures with concrete actions, such as financial support for Hungarian organizations beyond the borders. The results reflect the fact that Fidesz's rise to power has fundamentally transformed national politics, not only politically but also financially.

In the eight topics, the term is used in different contexts, often with different meanings. These contexts can be divided into two larger categories. In the first category, the term is sometimes used to refer to a politically neutral geographical unit (e.g., a trans-boundary ecosystem related to the topic of agriculture). Another type of use in this category is where the geographical unit's relation to Hungarians is more precisely specified ('Hungarian-inhabited areas of the Carpathian Basin'), or it is explicitly designated as an ethnically heterogeneous area and other actors are also explicitly mentioned ('nations of the Carpathian Basin,' 'peoples of the Carpathian Basin'). Left-liberal speeches typically

fall into this category. In the second category, the two geographical entities, Hungary and the Carpathian Basin seem to overlap: the agro-economic potential of the Carpathian Basin is identified with Hungary's agro-economic potential, family-centricity is presented as a traditional value in the Carpathian Basin, etc. The Carpathian Basin is often identified with historical Hungary; e.g., in speeches on the topic of collective identity-making, the Carpathian Basin has been presented as the historical home of the Hungarians for over a thousand years. This second category of use is typical of Fidesz and the right-conservative bloc.

The politically non-neutral use of the term can also be approached in relation to the 'virtual nationalism' concept of Csergő and Goldgeier (2004). Virtual nationalism entails a national agenda that aims at the integration of political unity with the national community, yet it rejects territorial claims and aims to establish institutions that enable the sustenance of a national community separated by borders. Some of the topics (Topics 3, 5, 6, and 8) relate to various public policy strategies that aim to establish these institutions. The purpose of these institutionalization efforts is often explicitly mentioned in Topic 7, which deals with the principles of national policy. The explicit distinction between the demand for territorial unification and the non-territorial means of nation-building is most pronounced on the left-liberal side; see the speeches that emphasize a symbolic community that can be achieved by joining the EU. On the other political sides, this distinction is sometimes not explicit; the unification is often associated with ethnic autonomy, and sometimes, the wording of right-wing nationalist MPs even suggests a denial of the legitimacy of territorial division, which means they go beyond virtual nationalism.

Different political blocs frame the same topics in different ways. The different vocabularies suggest that Fidesz and right-wing nationalist MPs speak in terms of representing their own community, forming an 'us'/'them' opposition, and defining their own community on an ethno-cultural basis. In contrast, the left-liberal side speaks in a less personal voice and refers to institutions, defining the community on a civic basis. The differences between left and right in the discourse on the territoriality of Hungary have already been presented in previous analyses: the Hungarian parliamentary discourse on the Treaty of Trianon between 1990 and 2002 shows that while the right-wing parties treated the peace treaty and its territorial consequences as a national-historical issue (tragedy), the left-wing parties focused on the social effects and consequences of the peace treaty and the loss of territory (Romsics, 2006). In other words, the political meaning of Trianon was very different for different actors, as our research on the Carpathian Basin also confirms.

The difference can also be found in terms of the homogeneity and heterogeneity of the perspectives that are represented. A further dimension of the right-left divide appears in the values vs. interests, emotions vs. bureaucratic expertise, culture and community vs. strategy, and government distinctions. This division is a long-standing feature of Hungarian political discourse, where the parallel existence of ideas about the cultural nation and the political nation characterizes the political discourse and policymaking of national policy (Vida, 2002).

The latter results are in line with Szücs' (2012) qualitative study on other genres of political texts (representative public speeches), in which he identifies the Fidesz/left-liberal distinction along the moralistic-vs-professional-, and in terms of justification according to the natural-order-vs-socio-economic-factors dimension. We can also put our results in a more general, international context, such as corresponds with Mouffe's influential writing

(e.g., Mouffe, 2011) on the current state of democracy. Mouffe argues that socio-democratic/liberal thinking ignores fundamental, contradictory aspects of human nature, and instead of creating a public sphere that allows conflicting values and interests to clash, its proponents believe in a universal rational consensus. They ignore the fact that there is an important affective dimension in political acting and that people need to be able to identify with a collective identity that gives them an image of themselves to which they attach values. In contrast, populist politics is characterized by an emphasis on emotion rather than rationality, the expression of collective identity rather than the principle of competing individuals. These dichotomies recur in the results of our analysis.

In sum, the term ‘Carpathian Basin’ used to legitimize official claims to territories lost by Hungary in the interwar period and hence not used on official forums for decades after the Second World War and even after the regime change, is now widely used by the Hungarian political elite on all political sides. However, the linguistic features of the parliamentary discourse related to the concept reflect the fault lines of Hungarian national policy and Hungarian political thought in general. In the left-liberal bloc, the term tends to be used to refer to a politically neutral geographical entity or to an ethnically heterogeneous area. It is mainly signs of virtual nationalism that can be detected in the politically non-neutral use of the term, but there are speeches on the right-wing nationalist side that go beyond this and implicitly suggest questioning the legitimacy of territorial division. The right-wing narratives, although in different ways and to different degrees, share the feature of demarcating the Carpathian Basin as a single geographical entity. It is presented as a Hungarian space that manifests itself in symbolic memory and national policy but is also strengthened through institutional and economic ties.

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Appendix

Table A1 Distribution by speech type on the full corpus and the corpus filtered by 'Carpathian Basin' keyword

Type of speech	All speeches	Speeches of the Carpathian Basin subcorpus		
	Frequency	Proportion	Frequency	Proportion
Accepted answer by MP	1206	0.71%	2	0.14%
Answer by rapporteur	4626	2.71%	42	2.88%
Comment on a post-agenda speech	608	0.36%	8	0.55%
Comment on a pre-agenda speech	5417	3.18%	94	6.44%
Exposition	2820	1.65%	45	3.08%
Interpellation/question/prompt question	15260	8.95%	65	4.45%
Justification for exceptional procedure	2	0.00%	0	0.00%
Justification of an individual motion	496	0.29%	6	0.41%
Justification of urgency	87	0.05%	0	0.00%
Keynote speech	9311	5.46%	210	14.38%
Opening remarks by rapporteur	913	0.54%	22	1.51%
Oral answer to interpellation	3204	1.88%	15	1.03%
Other type of speech (uncategorized)	59	0.03%	0	0.00%
Post-agenda speech	3256	1.91%	122	8.36%
Pre-agenda speech	6211	3.64%	153	10.48%
Presentation of committee's minority opinion	2559	1.50%	6	0.41%
Presentation of opinion of a committee	6085	3.57%	37	2.53%
Proposal for agenda	2	0.00%	0	0.00%
Question answered	7475	4.38%	36	2.47%
Question for agenda	2018	1.18%	0	0.00%
Recommend for general discussion	1	0.00%	0	0.00%
Rejected answer by MP	2596	2.11%	6	0.41%
Reply to a prompt question by MP	5847	3.43%	9	0.62%
Reply to prompt question by minister	4077	2.39%	7	0.48%
Speech (general category)	38327	22.49%	533	36.51%
Speech on grounds of personal involvement	219	0.13%	0	0.00%
Two-minute speeches	46770	27.44%	107	7.33%
Total	170452	100%	1460	100%

Table A2 Some representative uses of the term ‘Carpathian Basin’ by topic, period and political orientation

Topic 1, 1998–2010, left-liberal	
‘A Kárpát-medencét természeti viszonyai kiválóan alkalmassá teszik több mezőgazdasági és kertészeti faj vetőmagjának és szaporítóanyagának termesztésére. Ennek megfelelően hazánk világviszonylatban is jelentős szerepet játszik ebben az ágazatban.’	‘The natural conditions of the Carpathian Basin make it an excellent place for the production of seeds and propagating material for many agricultural and horticultural species. Accordingly, our country plays a significant role in this sector worldwide.’
‘[...] ide folyik tulajdonképpen mindenhonnét a Kárpát-medencéből összegyűlő vízmennyiség.’	‘[...] in fact, water from all over the Carpathian Basin flows here.’
Topic 1, 1998–2010, Fidesz	
‘[...] és a korábban kiváló adottságaink nagyon könnyen kedvezőtlenre fordulhatnak itt, a Kárpát-medencében, ahol egyébiránt kiválóak az élelmiszer-előállítás feltételei [...]’	‘[...] and our previously excellent conditions can very easily turn unfavourable here in the Carpathian Basin, where the conditions for food production are excellent [...]’
‘[...] termőföldi adottságaink világviszonylatban is a legjobbak közé sorolhatók, amely után az érdeklődés a Kárpát-medencei tartózkodásunk óta jelentősnek mondható, sok esetben nehézséget okozott az érdeklődők távol tartása is [...]’	‘[...] our farmland is among the best in the world, and since we have been in the Carpathian Basin, interest in it has been considerable, and in many cases it has been difficult to keep people away [...]’
Topic 1, 1998–2010, right-wing nationalist	
‘Az erdőgazdálkodás Magyarországon azóta, tehát 130 év óta tízéves tervek alapján történik. Ennek a 130 év óta folytatott tervszerű munkának az eredménye véleményem szerint a Kárpát-medence erdeinek fennmaradása.’	‘Forest management in Hungary has been based on ten-year plans for 130 years. The result of this 130 years of planned work is, in my opinion, the survival of the forests of the Carpathian Basin.’
‘[...] azt is elmondhatjuk, hogy elsősorban rajtunk múlik az, hogy ezen a veszélyeztetett helyen milyen minőségű életet tudunk magunknak biztosítani; rajtunk és némileg természetesen a szomszédos országokon, mert a jelen politikai helyzetben az egész Kárpát-medence nem tartozik a fennhatóságunk alá.’	‘[...] we can also say that the quality of life in this endangered place is primarily up to us; to us and to some extent, of course, to the neighbouring countries, because in the current political situation the whole Carpathian Basin is not under our jurisdiction.’
Topic 1, 2010–2020, left-liberal	
‘ha a globális átlaghőmérséklet emelkedése eléri a 2 fokot, az a Kárpát-medencében 4 fokos felmelegedést fog eredményezni majd’	‘if the global average temperature increase reaches 2 degrees Celsius, the Carpathian Basin will experience 4 degrees Celsius of warming’
‘Sajnos, a Kárpát-medence és Magyarország is különösen veszélyeztetett.’	‘Unfortunately, the Carpathian Basin and Hungary are particularly at risk.’

Table A2 (continued)

Topic 1, 2010–2020, Fidesz	
‘[...] ha az erőforrásokat nem tudjuk garantáltan ezekhez a helyi közösségekhez, családokhoz, települési közösségekhez juttatni, akkor valószínűleg nagyon súlyos nemzetbiztonsági helyzetbe kerülhet a magyarság itt a Kárpát-medencében.’	‘[...] if we cannot guarantee that the resources will reach these local communities, families and municipal communities, then the Hungarian people here in the Carpathian Basin will probably find themselves in a very serious national security situation.’
‘Az anyaföldben benne van minden kötődésünk a Kárpát-medencei tájhoz, a lakóhelyhez, családtagjainkhoz, mindannyiunkhoz, akik itt élünk, [...]’	‘The motherland contains all our ties to the landscape of the Carpathian Basin, to the place where we live, to our family members, to all of us who live here [...]’
Topic 1, 2010–2020, right-wing nationalist	
‘Az elfogadott Alaptörvényünk már eleve tartalmazza azt a gondolatot, hogy meg kell óvnunk a Kárpát-medence természet adta értékeit [...]’	‘Our adopted Fundamental Law already contains the idea that we must protect the natural values of the Carpathian Basin [...]’
‘[...] arra szeretném kérni a köztársasági elnök urat [...], hogy legyen szíves, támogassa [...] a Kárpát-medence természeti értékeinek a jövő generációk magyarjai számára történő megőrzését.’	‘[...] I would like to ask the President of the Republic [...] to kindly support [...] the preservation of the natural values of the Carpathian Basin for the benefit of future generations of Hungarians.’
Topic 2, 1998–2010, left-liberal	
‘[...] Kárpát-medence népeit – hangsúlyozom, nemcsak a magyarságot, hanem a Kárpát-medence népeit [...]’	‘[...] the peoples of the Carpathian Basin – I stress, not only the Hungarians, but the peoples of the Carpathian Basin [...]’
‘Ez az ország érdeke, ez az itt lakó állampolgárok mindegyikének az érdeke, ez a Kárpát-medencében lakók érdeke, és ez Európa érdeke is.’	‘It is in the interest of the country, it is in the interest of all its citizens, it is in the interest of the people of the Carpathian Basin, and it is in the interest of Europe.’
Topic 2, 1998–2010, Fidesz	
‘A pálinka közismerten a Kárpát-medence egy speciális itala, a magyarsághoz kapcsolódik, [...]’	‘Pálinka is known to be a special drink of the Carpathian Basin, associated with the Hungarian [...]’
‘De én nemcsak a hazai, tehát a határon belüli területről beszélek, hanem a Kárpát-medencében élő magyarság által termékként megjelenő hungarikumokról is, hisz az, hogy a határok elválasztottak bennünket valamilyen oknál fogva, attól még a magyar nemzetség által lakott területeken a hazai terméknek egyfajta hungarikumi védelmet tudni kell biztosítani.’	‘But I am talking not only about the domestic territory, i.e. the territory within the borders, but also about the Hungaricums that are produced by the Hungarian community living in the Carpathian Basin, because the fact that the borders have separated us for some reason does not mean that the Hungarian products in the areas inhabited by the Hungarian ethnic group should not be able to enjoy a kind of Hungaricum protection.’

Table A2 (continued)

Topic 2, 1998–2010, right-wing nationalist	
‘Hisz a Kárpát-medencében olyan nevelést kaptak a családon belül az emberek évszázadokon keresztül, [...]’	‘In the Carpathian Basin, people have been brought up within the family for centuries in a way that [...]’
‘[...] a Kárpát-medencei képernyőkön láthatóvá váljon a magyarság világtelevíziójának első műsora’	‘[...] the first programme of Hungarian world television to be shown on the screens of the Carpathian Basin’
Topic2, 2010–2020, left-liberal	
‘a Kárpát-medencében élő országok’	‘countries in the Carpathian Basin’
‘Láthatjuk, hogy nagyon komoly politikai megosztottság, politikai problémák is szabdalják az itt élő országokat [...] erősíteni kéne az együttműködését akár a Kárpát-medencét nézzük, akár egy nagyobb képet, egy közép-európai térséget az itt élő államoknak, hiszen mondhatjuk, hogy egy sorsközösségben vagyunk [...]’	‘We can see that there are very serious political divisions and political problems among the countries living here [...] we should strengthen cooperation, whether we look at the Carpathian Basin or at the bigger picture, at the Central European region of the states living here, because we can say that we are in a community of destiny [...]’
Topic2, 2010–2020, Fidesz	
‘meghallgassuk, egyáltalán mozgósítsuk az országot, a Kárpát-medencét ebben az ügyben’	‘to listen, to mobilise the country, the Carpathian Basin in this matter’
‘amikor a parlament nyilvánvalóvá tette, hogy nemcsak országhatáron belüli magyar értékekre, hungarikumokra ügyel, [...], hanem a Kárpát-medence, egyáltalán a magyarság értékeit’	‘when the Parliament made it clear that it does not only care about Hungarian values and Hungaricums within the national borders [...], but also about the values of the Carpathian Basin, of the Hungarian people in general.’
Topic2, 2010–2020, right-wing nationalist	
‘A törvényjavaslat szerint az Országgyűlés többek között megállapítja, hogy [...] a Kárpát-medence ember alkotta és természet adta értékeit átfogó értéktárban kell összesíteni.’	‘According to the bill, the Parliament states, among other things, that [...] the man-made and natural values of the Carpathian Basin shall be collected within a comprehensive inventory of values.’
‘számunkra soha nem külföld Kárpát-medence megszállt magyar területe, bármelyik magyar területe, de formáljogilag külföld’	‘is never a foreign country for us, the occupied Hungarian territory of the Carpathian Basin, any Hungarian territory, but formally, legally a foreign country’
Topic3, 1998–2010, left-liberal	
‘ez a Kárpát-medencei magyarságra terjedne ki’	‘it would cover the Hungarian population of the Carpathian Basin’
‘fokozott a felelősségünk, hogy az Európai Unió bővítése mellett hogyan gondoskodunk azokról a magyarokról, akik Kárpátalján és a Vajdaságban élnek’	‘we have an increased responsibility to take care of the Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin and Vojvodina beside the enlargement of the European Union.’

Table A2 (continued)

Topic3, 1998–2010, Fidesz	
‘nekünk, akik a Kárpát-medencében akarunk és tudunk gondolkodni, létérdekünk lenne, hogy minden jogot, amely ma állampolgársághoz kötődik, áttörjünk.’	‘it would be in the vital interest of us who want to and can think in the Carpathian Basin to break through all the rights that are now linked to citizenship.’
Topic3, 1998–2010, right-wing nationalist	
‘Nem az ország tévedt rossz útra – ahogy a miniszterelnök úr fogalmaz -, ez az ország egyrészt nem kel útra, ez itt van, ezer éve itt van a Kárpát-medencében, Európában, a kormány tévedt rossz útra, az önök kormánya tévedt rossz útra, az ország pedig csak elszenvedője az önök szélhámosságának’	‘The country has not gone astray – as the Prime Minister puts it – on the one hand, this country is not going astray, it is here, it has been here for a thousand years in the Carpathian Basin, in Europe, the government has gone astray, your government has gone astray, and the country is just a victim of your deceit.’
Topic3, 2010–2020, left-liberal	
‘a környező országok, a Kárpát-medencében lévő országok’	‘neighbouring countries, countries in the Carpathian Basin’
Topic3, 2010–2020, Fidesz	
‘nekünk, képviselőknek, mindnyájunknak dolgozni kell, hogy a Kárpát-medence ezer esztendő múlva is magyar szótól legyen hangos, a magyar legyen akkor is a legnagyobb nemzet a Kárpát-medencében, és mi irányítsuk ezt a medencét’	‘we MPs, all of us, must work to ensure that the Carpathian Basin will still be full of the Hungarian word a thousand years from now, that Hungarians will still be the largest nation in the Carpathian Basin, and that we will still be in charge of this basin’
‘a nyílt társadalom elsőszámú lobbistájával van dolgunk, akit teljesen hidegen hagy, hogy itt a Kárpát-medencében száz év múlva magyarok élnek-e vagy sem.’	‘we are dealing with the number one lobbyist of open society, who is completely indifferent to whether or not there will be Hungarians living here in the Carpathian Basin in a hundred years’ time.’
Topic3, 2010–2020, right-wing nationalist	
‘a kormánynak törekednie kell a Kárpát-medencei magyarság természetes egységének helyreállítására’	‘the government should strive to restore the natural unity of the Carpathian Basin Hungarians’
Topic 4, 1998–2010, left-liberal	
‘Nem egyedül éltük meg nehéz történelmünket, az évezredet, s ma sem egyedül élünk a Kárpát-medencében.’	‘We have not lived our difficult history, this millenium alone, and we do not live alone in the Carpathian Basin today.’
Topic 4, 1998–2010, Fidesz	
‘Mindez alapja lehet Magyarországnak, a Kárpát-medence, a bíboros szóhasználatával élve: a történelmi haza erkölcsi, szellemi megújulásának is.’	‘All this can be the basis for the moral and spiritual renewal of Hungary, of the Carpathian Basin, to use the Cardinal’s words, of the historic homeland.’

Table A2 (continued)

'[...] hogy megszólítsam az Országgyűlést, az ország népét, a Kárpát-medence népét, a magyar nemzetet szerte a glóbuszon'	'[...] to address the National Assembly, the people of the country, the people of the Carpathian Basin, the Hungarian nation all over the globe'
Topic 4, 1998–2010, right-wing nationalist	
'mi a titka annak, hogy ezer olyan nehéz esztendő után ez a maroknyi nép itt élhet a Kárpát-medencében'	'what is the secret that after a thousand years of hardship this handful of people can live here in the Carpathian Basin'
Topic 4, 2010–2020, left-liberal	
'dicséretes, hogy a nemzeti összetartozás fogalomköréből továbblépve egy tágabb integráció fontosságáig tágítja a kört, jelesül a Kárpát-medencei népek együtt élésének, egymásra utaltságának fontosságát hangsúlyozza'	'it is commendable that, moving on from the concept of national belonging, it broadens the scope to the importance of a broader integration, namely it stresses the importance of the Carpathian Basin peoples living together and their interdependence'
Topic 4, 2010–2020, Fidesz	
'A magyar állam a Kárpát-medence államaiban és a diaszpórában élő magyar közösségeket az egységes magyar nemzet részének tekinti'	'The Hungarian state considers the Hungarian communities living in the Carpathian Basin states and in the diaspora as part of the united Hungarian nation'
Topic 4, 2010–2020, right-wing nationalist	
'abba, ami 1920-ban történt, a Kárpát-medence földrajzi, gazdasági, politikai és kulturális egységének szétszaggatásába, Szent István országának csonkolásába ne törődjenek bele'	'not to put up with what happened in 1920, in the dismemberment of the geographical, economic, political and cultural unity of the Carpathian Basin, in the mutilation of the country of St Stephen'
Topic 5, 1998–2010, left-liberal	
'készül egy agrárfejlesztési program, 'Híd a harmadik évezredbe,' amely az egész Kárpát-medencére ki fog terjedni'	'an agricultural development programme, 'Bridge to the third millennium,' is being prepared, which will cover the whole Carpathian Basin'
Topic 5, 1998–2010, Fidesz	
'[...] a Kárpát-medence területén is megszorodtak a szélsőséges természeti jelenségek. Az általuk okozott kár három esztendő leforgása alatt több mint 150 milliárd forint veszteséget okozott a nemzetgazdaság számára.'	'[...] extreme natural phenomena have also increased in the Carpathian Basin. The damage caused by these events has resulted in losses of more than 150 billion forints for the national economy in three years'
Topic 5, 1998–2010, right-wing nationalist	
'A Magyar Demokrata Fórum célja, hogy ebben az évezredben is egy erős, életképes, nemzeti hagyományait, kultúráját ápoló és fejlesztő magyar nemzet éljen a Kárpát-medencében. [...] Ennek a politikának az egyik legfontosabb eleme a népesedéspolitika, családpolitika folytatása.'	'The goal of the Hungarian Democratic Forum is to ensure that a strong, viable Hungarian nation that cherishes and develops its national traditions and culture will continue to live in the Carpathian Basin in this millennium. [...] One of the most important elements of this policy is the continuation of population and family policy.'

Table A2 (continued)

Topic 5, 2010-2020, left-liberal	
‘A kormány újra feléleszti az MFB-n belül a határon túli, Kárpát-medencei térségbe irányuló tőkebefektetéseket, ami öt-hat éve sajnos elhalt.’	‘The government is reviving capital investment in the cross-border Carpathian Basin region within the MFB, which unfortunately died out five or six years ago.’
Topic 5, 2010–2020, Fidesz	
‘Különösen, ha Romániára gondolunk, nemcsak Bukarestből, hanem Nagyváradról is lehet már New Yorkba repülni. Igen-igen nagy fejlesztések indultak meg a Kárpát-medencében és a közép-kelet-európai régióban.’	‘Especially if you think of Romania, you can now fly to New York not only from Bucharest, but also from Oradea. Yes, there are very, very big developments in the Carpathian Basin and in the Central and Eastern European region.’
Topic 5, 2010-2020, right-wing nationalist	
‘Nem nehéz belátni, ha bármilyen Kárpát-medencét illető olyan tervünk van, amely egy Kárpát-medencei egységes gazdasági övezetet magyar dominancia mellett kíván kialakítani, [...]’	‘It’s not difficult to see that if we have any plans for the Carpathian Basin that would create a single economic zone in the Carpathian Basin with Hungarian dominance, [...]’
Topic 6, 1998–2010, left-liberal	
‘Szeretném hozzátenni az anyagnak azt az elemét is, amely a régióban is gondolkodik, és azt szorgalmazza, hogy itt a Kárpát-medence vagy Közép-Kelet-Európa térségében is érdemes lenne egy közös stratégia mentén [...]’	‘I would also like to add the element of the document that also thinks in terms of the region, and urges that it would be worthwhile to have a common strategy for the Carpathian Basin or Central-Eastern Europe [...]’
Topic 6, 1998–2010, Fidesz	
‘Számunkra kizárólag egységes magyar nemzeti kultúra létezik, szülessen az a kultúra bárhol a Kárpát-medencében vagy az emigráció körében.’	‘For us, there is only a single Hungarian national culture, whether it is born anywhere in the Carpathian Basin or among the emigrants.’
Topic 6, 1998–2010, right-wing nationalist	
‘Fontos lenne ugyanakkor a régiók műemlékeit együttesen kezelni, egy átfogó rendezési tervet kidolgozni rájuk az EU keretében is, hiszen sok kárpát-medencei épületegyüttes rendbehozása is beletartozna ebbe a körbe.’	‘At the same time, it would be important to treat the monuments of the regions together, to develop a comprehensive management plan for them within the framework of the EU, as the restoration of many Carpathian Basin monuments would also be included in this scope.’
Topic 6, 2010–2020, left-liberal	
‘az északkeleti Kárpát-medence fatemplomai’	‘the wooden churches of the north-eastern Carpathian Basin’
Topic 6, 2010–2020, Fidesz	
‘Kárpát-medencei borásztársadalom’	‘winemaking community in the Carpathian Basin’

Table A2 (continued)

Topic 6, 2010–2020, right-wing nationalist	
‘olyan ország vagyunk, akiknek nemzeti kulturális örökségének jelentős része határon túlra került, így nekünk, az anyaországnak az is feladatunk, hogy a Kárpát-medence egységes és oszthatatlan magyar nemzeti örökségére vigyázzunk’	‘we are a country where a significant part of our national cultural heritage has been transferred across borders, so it is also our duty as the motherland to take care of the united and indivisible Hungarian national heritage of the Carpathian Basin’
Topic 7 1998–2010, left-liberal	
‘Alapvető a Kárpát-medencében élő magyarok számára, hogy folytatódik és reméljük, befejeződik az a folyamat, amely újraegyesíti a szétszakított magyarságot az európai integráció révén a határok megváltoztatása nélkül’	‘It is fundamental for the Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin that the process of reuniting the divided Hungarians through European integration without changing borders will continue and, we hope, be completed.’
Topic 7 1998–2010, Fidesz	
‘a polgári koalíció kormányának célkitűzéseiben is kiemelt feladatként jelent meg a Kárpát-medencei és a nyugati magyarság rendszeresebb, szorosabb, úgymond intézményesített kapcsolattartása az anyaországgal.’	‘in the objectives of the government of the civic coalition, a more systematic, closer, so to speak institutionalised, relations between the Carpathian Basin and the Hungarians of the West and the motherland were also a priority.’
Topic 7 1998–2010, right-wing nationalist	
‘a Kárpát-medencében élő magyarságnak egyetlen történelmi realitása az újraegyesítés kapcsán az európai uniós csatlakozás.’	‘for the Hungarian people living in the Carpathian Basin the only historical reality of the reunification is European Union accession.’
Topic 7 2010–2020, left-liberal	
‘megadunk minden támogatást a kárpátaljai és az egész Kárpát-medencei magyar oktatás megmaradásáért a magyar kormánynak ‘	‘we give all support to the Hungarian government for the survival of Hungarian education in Transcarpathia and the entire Carpathian Basin’
Topic 7 2010–2020, Fidesz	
‘A Kárpát-medencei autonómiapolitika történetében [...]’	‘In the history of autonomy policy in the Carpathian Basin [...]’
Topic 7 2010–2020, right-wing nationalist	
‘Amikor tehát határon túli magyarokról beszélünk, akkor azért mindig tegyük zárójelbe ezt a jelzőt; beszéljünk magyarságról, beszéljünk Kárpát-medencei és a világban élő magyarságról, beszéljünk legfeljebb elcsatolt vagy elszakított testvéreinkről, de azt gondolom, hogy nem lehet beállni abba az irányba, amit többek között például az a nemzeti érdekeket feladó politika testesített meg [...]’	‘So when we talk about Hungarians beyond the borders, we should always put this adjective in brackets; let’s talk about Hungarians, let’s talk about Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin and in the world, let’s talk about our annexed or separated brothers and sisters, but I think that we cannot go in the direction of what, among others, the policy of abandoning national interests has embodied [...]’

Table A2 (continued)

Topic 8 1998–2010, left-liberal	
‘[...] a Kárpát-medencében élő magyar fiatalok számára a két legfontosabbnak tartott érték a család, illetve a saját jövő’	‘[...] for young Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin, the two most important values are family and their own future.’
Topic 8 1998–2010, Fidesz	
‘[...] amely lehetőséget biztosít a folyamatos párbeszédre a Kárpát-medence minden tájáról származó magyar fiataloknak’	‘[...] which provides an opportunity for continuous dialogue for young Hungarians from all over the Carpathian Basin’
Topic 8 1998–2010, right-wing nationalist	
‘a legnagyobb probléma a nemzetstratégia kérdésében, a közös Kárpát-medencei nemzetstratégiánk összefüggésében a bizalmatlanság’	‘the biggest problem in the issue of national strategy, in the context of our common national strategy for the Carpathian Basin, is mistrust’
Topic 8 2010–2020, left-liberal	
‘a Kárpát-medencében a határon túli magyarsággal kapcsolatos ismeretek bővülése osztálykirándulások kapcsán meg tudjon valósulni [...]’	‘[...] which would make it possible to increase the knowledge about Hungarians living beyond the borders in the Carpathian Basin through class excursions [...]’
Topic 8 2010–2020, Fidesz	
‘[...] megkezdődött az egyes Kárpát-medencei magyar régiók fejlesztését célzó gazdaságfejlesztési tervek támogatása’	‘[...] support for economic development plans aimed at the development of certain Hungarian regions in the Carpathian Basin has started’
Topic 8 2010–2020, right-wing nationalist	
‘A Kárpát-medencében a történelmi egyházaink egy élő közösséget és működő hálózatot jelentenek’	‘Our historic churches in the Carpathian Basin are a living community and a functioning network’

Table A3 Change in topic prevalence by ideological bloc

Term		Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 5	Topic 6	Topic 7	Topic 8
FIDESZ									
1	Mean	0.18	0.05	0.25	0.14	0.11	0.03	0.20	0.04
	Standard error of mean	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01
2	Mean	0.14	0.07	0.13	0.19	0.07	0.11	0.17	0.12
	Standard error of mean	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Total	Mean	0.15	0.07	0.16	0.17	0.08	0.09	0.18	0.10
	Standard error of mean	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
RIGHT-WING NATIONALIST									
1	Mean	0.20	0.07	0.08	0.19	0.13	0.05	0.26	0.03
	Standard error of mean	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.01
2	Mean	0.11	0.10	0.18	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.16	0.10
	Standard error of mean	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Total	Mean	0.14	0.09	0.16	0.17	0.12	0.06	0.19	0.08
	Standard error of mean	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
LEFT-LIBERAL									
1	Mean	0.06	0.04	0.16	0.20	0.10	0.09	0.32	0.04
	Standard error of mean	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.01
2	Mean	0.25	0.17	0.15	0.12	0.05	0.06	0.11	0.09
	Standard error of mean	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.02
Total	Mean	0.16	0.10	0.15	0.16	0.07	0.08	0.21	0.06
	Standard error of mean	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01

Table A4 Distribution of topics by type of speech (prevalence with standard error).

Type of speech	Number of speeches	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 5	Topic 6	Topic 7	Topic 8
Presentation of committee's minority opinion	N=6	0.30	0.01	0.16	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.12	0.07
		0.19	0.01	0.14	0.00	0.18	0.00	0.10	0.06
Answer by rapporteur	N=42	0.12	0.20	0.30	0.08	0.03	0.08	0.16	0.03
		0.04	0.05	0.05	0.03	0.01	0.03	0.05	0.02
Exposition	N=45	0.14	0.08	0.07	0.15	0.10	0.10	0.24	0.12
		0.05	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.04
Presentation of opinion of a committee	N=37	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.14	0.07	0.25	0.30
		0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.06	0.07
Reply to prompt question by MP	N=9	0.14	0.17	0.16	0.14	0.08	0.01	0.27	0.03
		0.11	0.09	0.08	0.09	0.07	0.00	0.10	0.03
Reply to prompt question by minister	N=7	0.15	0.01	0.31	0.11	0.04	0.18	0.09	0.11
		0.13	0.01	0.12	0.07	0.02	0.13	0.05	0.10
Interpellation / question / prompt question	N=65	0.30	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.08	0.11	0.21	0.18
		0.05	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.04
Opening remarks by rapporteur	N=22	0.14	0.14	0.05	0.18	0.01	0.22	0.14	0.13
		0.07	0.07	0.04	0.07	0.00	0.09	0.06	0.07
Speech (general category)	N=533	0.15	0.10	0.18	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.15	0.08
		0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Oral answer to interpellation	N=15	0.08	0.05	0.18	0.03	0.13	0.10	0.29	0.15
		0.06	0.05	0.08	0.03	0.07	0.06	0.09	0.07
Accepted answer by MP	N=2	0.00	0.01	0.05	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.36	0.54
		0.00	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.32
Rejected answer by MP	N=6	0.14	0.06	0.51	0.06	0.05	0.01	0.13	0.03
		0.09	0.04	0.10	0.04	0.03	0.00	0.07	0.03
Question answered (1)	N=1	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.06	0.84
	

Table A4 (continued)

Type of speech	Number of speeches	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 5	Topic 6	Topic 7	Topic 8
Question answered (2)	N=35	0.17	0.08	0.16	0.06	0.09	0.10	0.19	0.15
		0.05	0.03	0.05	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.04
Two-minute speeches	N=107	0.13	0.13	0.34	0.11	0.10	0.03	0.13	0.04
		0.03	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01
Pre-agenda speech	N=153	0.14	0.04	0.10	0.31	0.04	0.05	0.28	0.04
		0.03	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.01
Comment on pre-agenda speech	N=94	0.14	0.04	0.19	0.15	0.08	0.03	0.33	0.03
		0.03	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.04	0.01
Post-agenda speech	N=122	0.13	0.05	0.04	0.41	0.12	0.08	0.15	0.01
		0.03	0.02	0.01	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.00
Comment on post-agenda speech	N=8	0.01	0.01	0.09	0.21	0.02	0.16	0.48	0.04
		0.00	0.00	0.04	0.11	0.01	0.11	0.15	0.02
Keynote speech	N=210	0.15	0.09	0.14	0.09	0.10	0.12	0.18	0.13
		0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Justification of individual motion	N=6	0.06	0.09	0.17	0.10	0.14	0.01	0.40	0.03
		0.06	0.07	0.07	0.04	0.12	0.00	0.13	0.02
Total	N=1525	0.14	0.08	0.16	0.17	0.10	0.07	0.19	0.08
		0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01

Online Supplement

The interactive visualization below allows users to explore the results of our model by selecting various parameters. The figure includes language as one of its parameters: terms can be displayed in English as well in the online version. The chart was created based on the results of the 'STM' R-Package. The figure indicates differences in the vocabulary of each topic and illustrates variances in vocabulary across selected political blocs. Line lengths reflect the extent to which words favor one bloc over the other (based on probability of use). Dots are sized proportional to their use within the plotted topic. The bigger the dot, the more emphasized the word. This analytical tool pertains to the substantive content of each topic. While the semantic differences in the three subcorpora may not be consistent for every topic, both minor and major shifts in emphasis equally offer opportunities for interpretation.

https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/eszterkatona/viz/discourse_carpathian_basin/Dashboard1?publish=yes