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## Preface to the special issue 'Text as data' – Eastern and Central European political discourses from the perspective of computational social science (Part 2)

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This issue is the second part of the 'Text as data' – *Eastern and Central European political discourses from the perspective of computational social science* special issue, the first part having been published as the issue 2024/4. The articles all approach social research problems through text analysis, using computational techniques, typically natural language processing (NLP).

In the second part of the special issue, the Central European political discourses are mapped from different angles. Renáta Németh, Eszter Katona, Péter Balogh, Zsófia Rakovics and Anna Unger explore the discourses surrounding the Carpathian Basin, a central metaphor of a collective identity anchored in the narratives of historical Hungary from parliamentary debates. Emese Túry-Angyal and László Lőrincz analyse discursive mechanisms, partly related to the technological infrastructure of algorithmic public spheres: they explore how echo chambers, homophily and network type affect the spread of information on Facebook.

According to Radu M. Meza and Andreea Mogoş generating fear and loathing is not a rare tendency in Central European political discourses. By analysing the headlines of Sputnik News (broadcast in Poland, Romania and the Czech Republic), they mapped the discursive strategies, and the affective framing that appear in the communication of a Russian government-funded news agency. In a similar vein, Ilya Sulzhytski and Varvara Kulhayeva analyse Belorussian Telegram channels from the perspective of their interpretation of the Ukrainian invasion. Besides mapping the main discursive panels, they also demonstrate that local pro-government activists are central channels of the creation and dissemination of hatred towards Ukrainians in Belarus. Although the impact of war is the most tangible in the present, the collective traumas also linger in collective memories.

Diagnoses of the vulnerability of Central European democracies can be refined by reflecting on the ongoing discursive mechanisms. One of the most dangerous potentials of political polarization and the consequent intensification of social conflicts are indicated by the various forms of scapegoating. Rok Smrdelj, Roman Kuhar and Monika Kalin Golob analyse another hotspot in contemporary identity politics, namely the debates surrounding gender. Based on Twitter posts, they attempt to map filter bubbles of anti-gender

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discourses. Kata Knauz, Attila Varga, Zsolt Szabó and Sára Bigazzi analyse the Hungarian political discourses of the Roma minority. Besides the explicit stereotypes and hostile prejudices, an attempt is also made to detect the more subtly biased, paternalistic discourses, which appear in the communication of parties. Áron Szalay and Zsófia Rakovics analyse the enemy images appearing in the speeches of Viktor Orbán, the prime minister of Hungary. Besides mapping the range of generic (e.g. migrants) and specific (e.g. Soros, Brussels) enemies, the discourses of fearmongering are also examined in detail.

The special issue concludes with two shorter studies. In his book review, Mohammad Ashraful Alam writes about the book *Natural Language Processing in the Real World: Text Processing, Analytics, and Classification*, written by Jyotika Singh, which is a practical guide for building natural language processing solutions. The special issue also contains a short data note on a comparative analysis of information society in Central and Eastern Europe by Árpád Rab, Tamás Szikora and Bernát Török. Findings reveal both regional commonalities and distinct national attitudes towards online manipulation, social media use and the impact of internet communication on personal relationships.