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Title **Collaborative Governance in Illiberal Democracies: A Comparative Case Study of the Drug Harm Reduction Policy in East-central Europe.**

Abstract Context. Over the last few decades, especially in Western European countries one can observe an increasing importance of collaborative governance, including both public administration practices as well as doctrines and general scholarly interest. However, in ECE region it is relatively difficult to find examples of such collaborative arrangements in practice, and the body of the literature is scarce. On the other hand, there are growing concerns about so-called “illiberal turn”, with Poland and Hungary describes as examples of such trends. Aims. The aim of this paper is to explore and understand the implications of illiberal turn on collaborative governance in the context of NGOs involvement in such arrangements. It also aims to explore whether there is a distinct, emerging illiberal governance doctrine identifiable. Methods. This research uses comparative case study design with pattern-matching. Its unit of analysis is harm reduction policy in a country, and its geographical scope is Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Hungary. 16 semi-structured interviews were conducted between 2015 and 2018 and supplemented with documentary analysis. A prediction matrix including three ideal-types of regimes (collaborative, coordinative and no-intersectoral-partnerships) was developed, and actual policy features found in empirical data were contrasted with those predicted based on theoretical assumptions. On the basis of coded data, countries were classified to one of the ideal-types across all identified relevant dimensions (variables). Results. The prediction was correct only partly. Slovakia, as predicted, exhibits features of coordinative regime. Poland, predicted as not fitting our analytical framework, fitted it well, falling between coordinative and non-intersectoral-partnerships regime. Czech Republic, predicted as being coordinative, exhibits features much closed to collaborative regime. Hungary, as predicted, did not fit any of our pre-defined ideal types, exhibiting features not included in our analytical framework in 6 out of 8 dimensions. Based on this case, we inductively identified following characteristics of “illiberal intersectoral partnerships regime”:

- Outright and conscious government attacks on harm reduction NGOs (intimidation through political rhetoric, restricting criminal law framework)
- Conscious elimination of some of the pre-existing forms and institutional fora for NGOs' involvement in ISP (selectivity)
- Selective indirect resources
- Direct resources suddenly withdrawn from harm reduction
- Semi-formal (sometimes illegal) administrative measures to eliminate "hostile" NGOs from policy design and implementation
- Conscious activities deliberately undermining trust

Discussion. Our research shows that there is a distinctive "illiberal inter-sectoral partnerships regime" identifiable. However, its materialisation is not uniform: only some NGOs working in few policy areas that embody an antithesis of the governing leading political parties' worldviews are affected by it. This materialisation can also vary in time and space. First, in case of Hungary, it seems that more recently migration and homelessness are policy areas affected. Second, in contrary to our predictions, we could not identify any features of "illiberal regime" in examined policy in Poland; However, anecdotal evidence shows that in case of Poland "illiberal regime" might have materialised itself in another policy field: women rights, reproductive rights and LGBT policies.