

FATIGUE

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The mainstreaming of Islamophobia in Czechia
Contextualising 2015





Brno mosque
by [Harold](#) (no changes made)

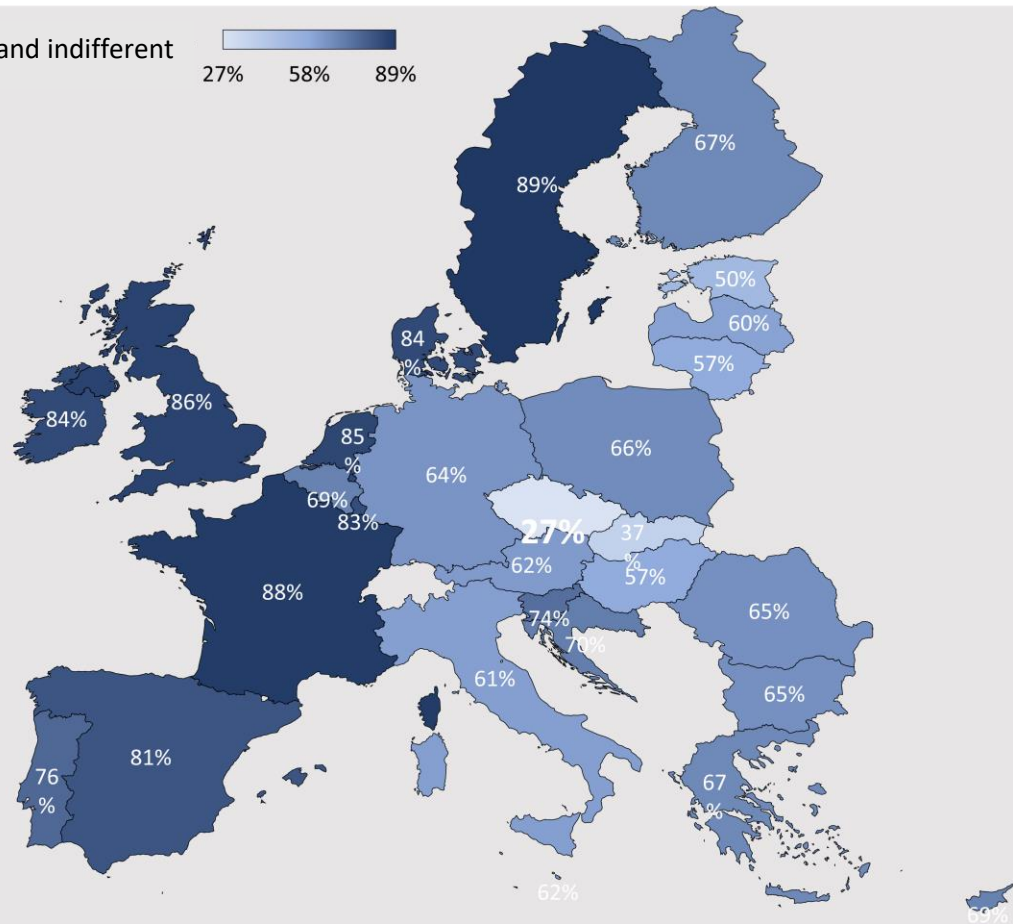
“In the near future, the issue of Islam is unlikely to become crucial for extreme right politics in East-Central Europe, unless something extraordinary were to happen (e.g. an Islamist terrorist attack in the area with major consequences)”

(Mareš, 2014, p. 220)

How comfortable would you feel if one of your colleagues at work belonged to each of the following groups?

A Muslim person

Total comfortable (7-10) and indifferent



Special Eurobarometer 437 (2015)
Fieldwork May-June 2015

See cover [here](#)

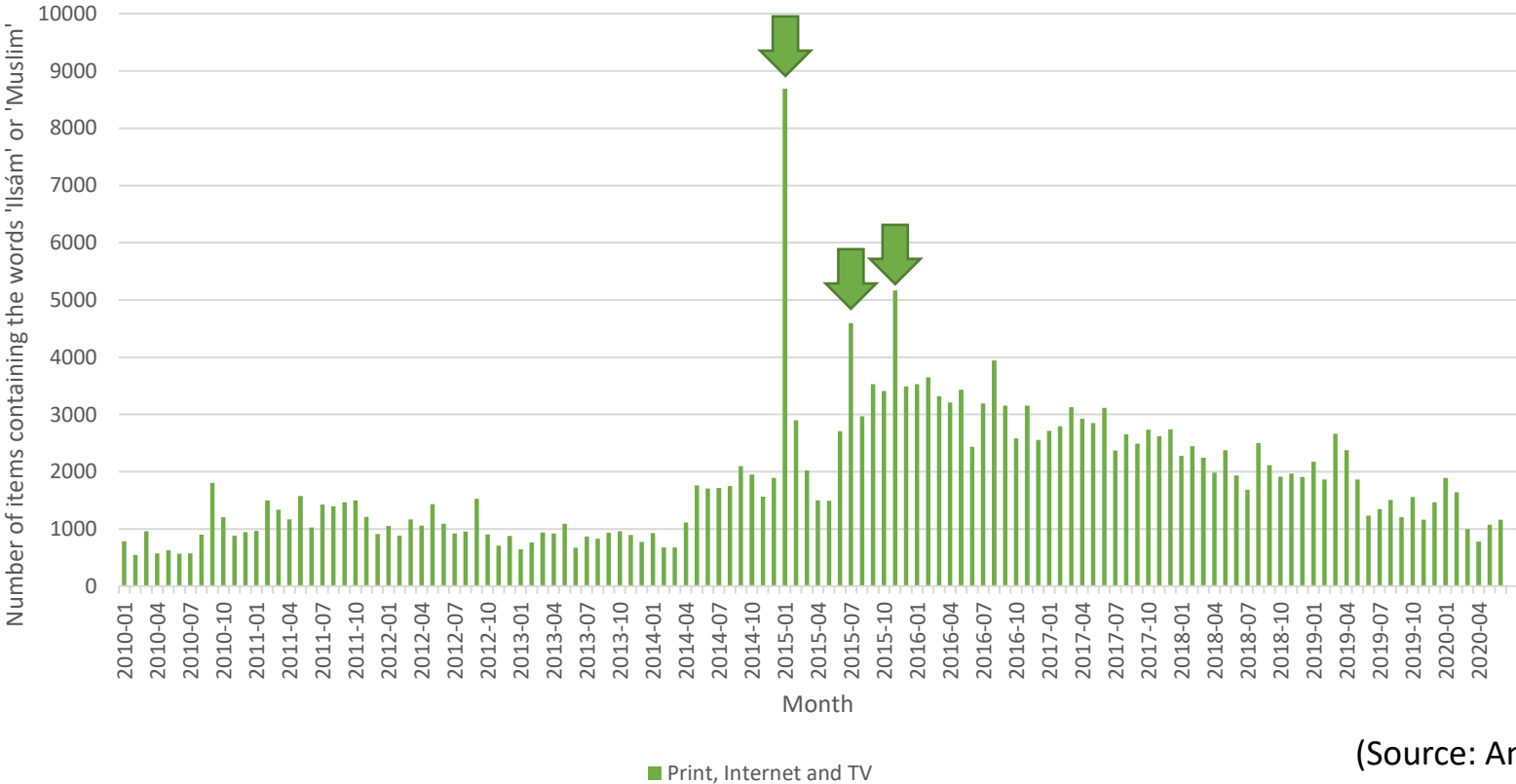
Media

- **Securitisation** frames in the news coverage of the ‘**migration crisis**’ (Sedláková, 2017; Tamchynová, 2017; Tkaczyk, 2015; Tkaczyk et al 2015)
- Before 2015 →
 - most coverage about Islam in traditional media tends to focus on **foreign issues** and **conflicts** (Křížková, 2006; Korečková & Lužný in Topinka, 2016);
 - emphasizes ‘**pathological**’ aspects (Vesecký, 2006; Sedláčková, 2011; Čermáková, Janků, Kliment & Linhartová in Topinka, 2016, p. 105)

“The Murder of Europe. Numbers do not lie, but the Continent’s political elite does”

(Reflex magazine cover, 5 January 2017)

Occurrence of the words 'Islám' OR 'Muslim' in Czech print, online media and TV (1/2010 - 6/2020)



(Source: Anopress)



Martin Konvička, leader of the movement 'We Do Not Want Islam in the Czech Republic' appeared often on television in early 2015

Photo: [Kirk](#) (no changes)

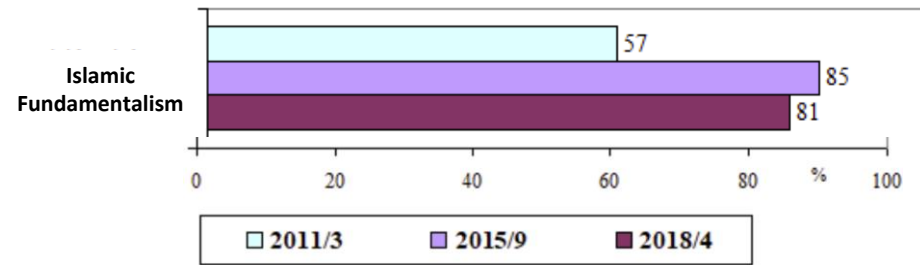
Public debate

- **'Anyone'** became **allowed into** the (post-factual) public debate about 'Islam', (Ostřanský, 2020, 2017, pp. 17–23) and its 'imaginary Muslims' (Ibid, 48; Černý, 2016), including **popular figures** (Rosůlek, 2018)

Public opinion → changes in 2015

How big of a threat do the following pose for our country...

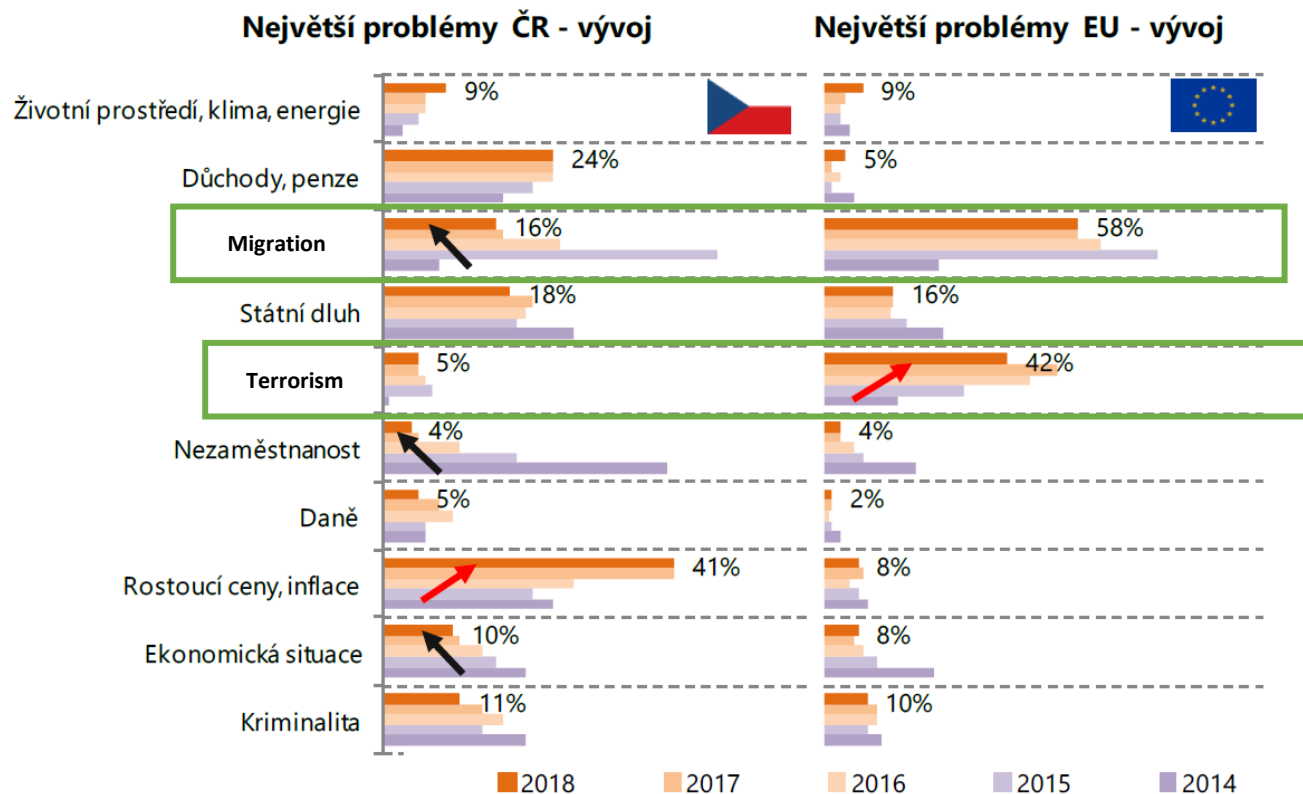
Showing percentage of answers 7-9, on a scale 1-9 where 1 = no threat, 9 = a very big threat.



STEM, Trendy 2011/3, 2015/9, 2018/4

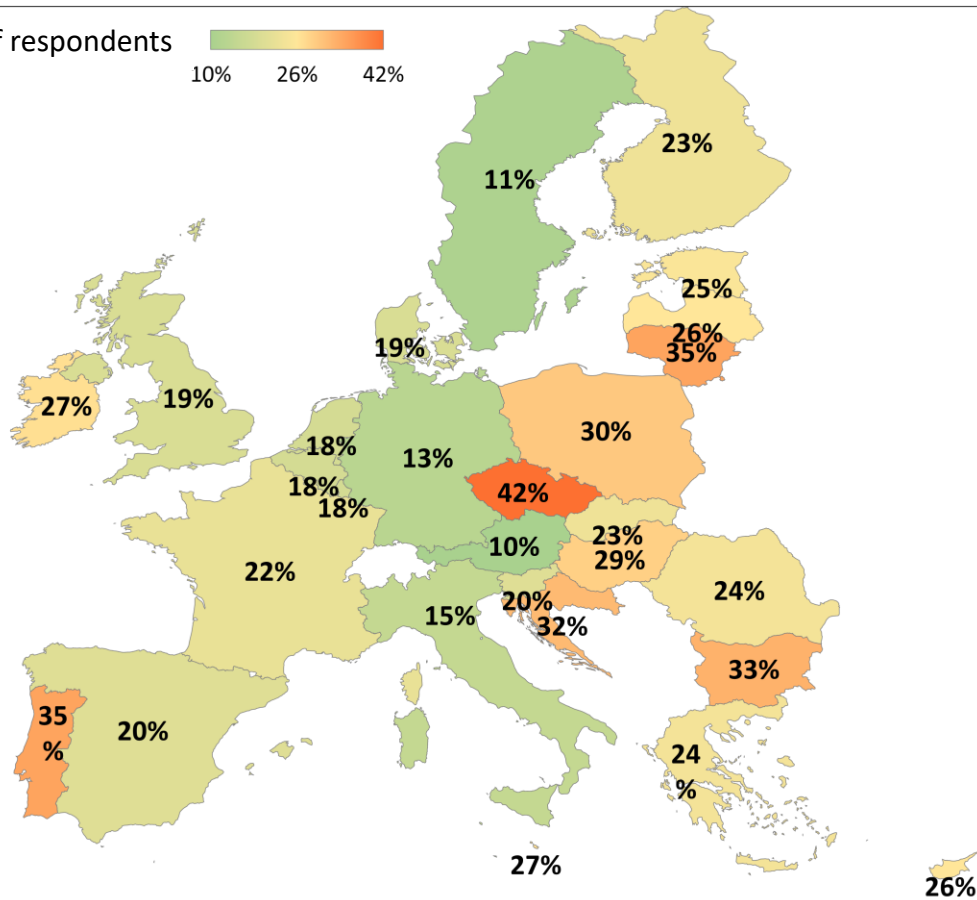
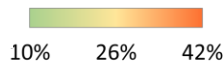
- Marked spikes on perceived 'threat to Czechia's security' of **terrorist groups/individuals, wars, refugees, radical religious movements (CVVM) and Islamic fundamentalism (STEM)**

Graf 1 – Problémy ČR a Evropské unie, názory Čechů, možnost více odpovědí, vývoj 2014–2018



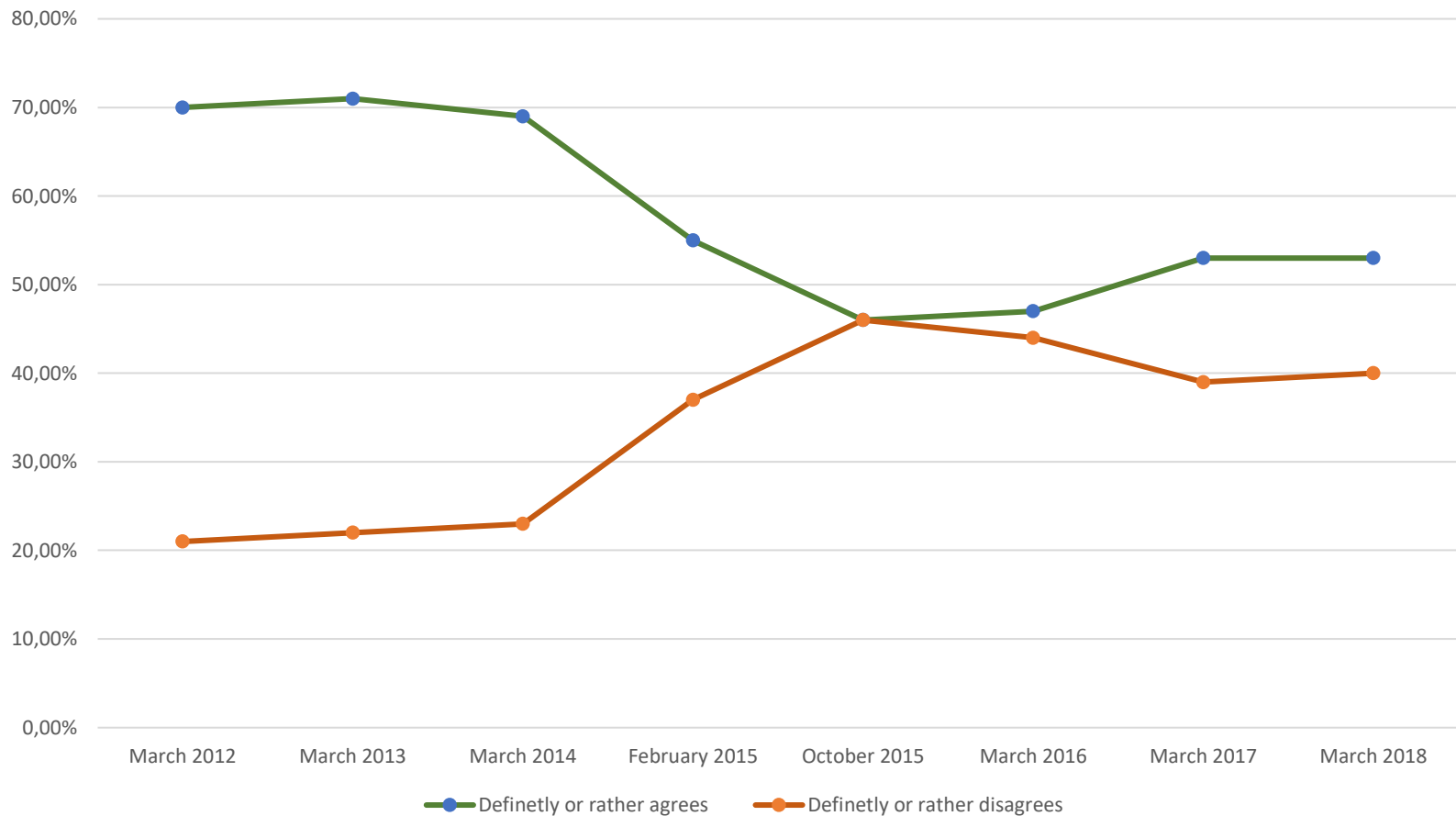
Respondents who select 'terrorism' as one of the two biggest issues facing the EU

Percentage of respondents

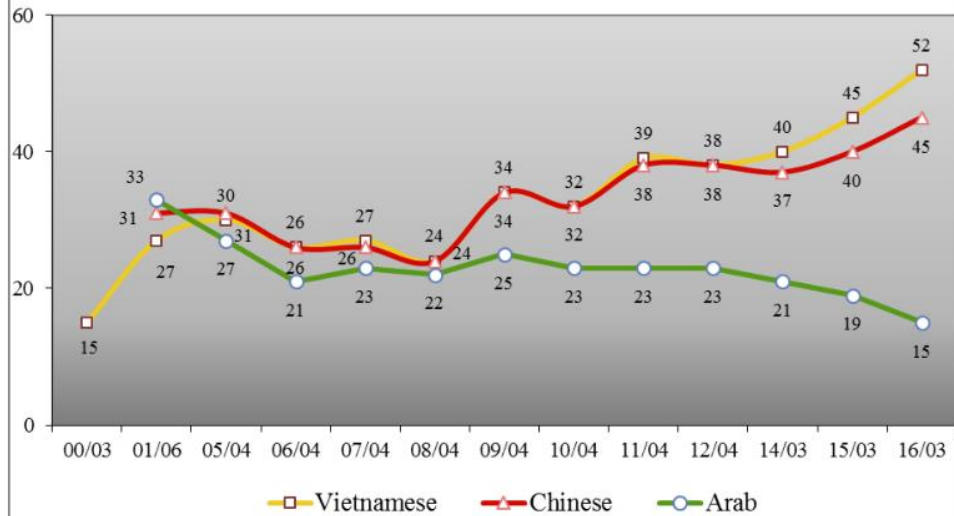


Standard Eurobarometer 90 (2018)
Fieldwork November 2018

Czechia should allow the residence of foreigners due to their religious/racial/political persecution





"How would you feel about having a neighbour who is:"
(proportion of "very good, no problem" answers in %)




Source: STEM, Trends 2000-2016

Public Opinion → attitudes that predate 2015

- Negative attitudes towards **Arabs** and other **ethnic/national** groups from **Muslim-majority** countries in surveys since, at least, early 2000s
- Fear of Islam and opposition to mosques (Břešťan, 2006)
- Reticence to accept Muslim migrants as long-term residents (Topinka 2016, Chapter 15) – but acceptance grows if proof of clean criminal record (Median, 2018)

Anti-Islam Online Groups  
Sporadic far-right actions
Embrace of anti-multiculturalism

Politics (before 2015)

Far-right tries Islamophobia 

Populists enter parliament  

2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015

Nationalists try Islamophobia 
Conservative party programmes  
Populists enter parliament 

4 January 2015
[Interview](#) with Miroslav Mareš
Two days before Charlie Hebdo...



Politics (2015-)

- 2014/2015 → **charismatic** leaders revive Czech **far-right** (Slačálek, 2019) with an issue they own
- Political **mainstreaming** (Hesová, 2016; Stulík & Krčál, 2019), interpreting **statistics** (Prokop, 2019)
- **2017 general elections** → playing the 'Muslim card' (Krčál & Naxera, 2018)



"Is it really our main concern the right of someone to wear a headscarf, which is a symbol of a culture which threatens us?"

(Party chairman Petr Fiala at ODS Congress on September 2014)



October 2017 Parliamentary Election by [Manfred Rackelhuhn](#) (detail)



January 2018 Presidential Election by [Martin2035](#) (detail)

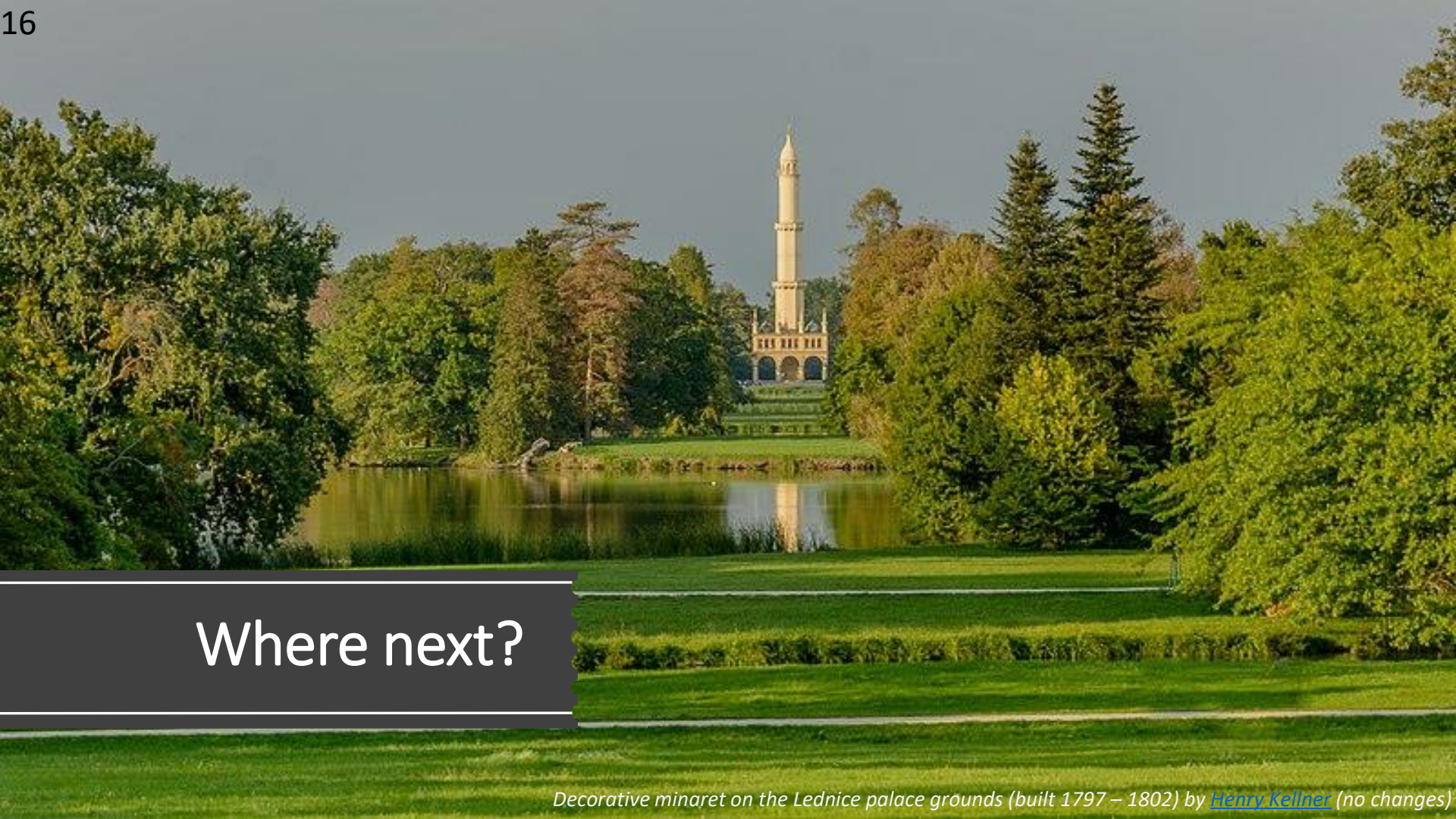
“Havířov without migrants!”
See poster [here](#)

October 2018 Municipal elections



“When we look at the problems that other European countries face, we do not want any more Muslims in Czechia. We help people who are coming from Eastern Europe”

PM Bohuslav Sobotka in interview for Die Presse (25.8.2017).
Photo by [Olaf Kosinsky](#) (no changes)



Where next?



Thank you for your attention!

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<https://populism-europe.com/>

“Říp* is for a Czech, what Mecca is for Muhammad”

Pre-9/11 sign at Boumova Chata (Říp)

**Mount Říp is the legendary ‘cradle’ of the Czech nation and a popular place of pilgrimage.*

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