

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to identify the characteristics of environmental populism in Slovakia, which has been promoted by right-wing parties, labelled as populist, and which has been promoted in relation to the issues of nature conservation and the climate crisis in speeches in the National Council of the Slovak Republic on a specific bill amending Act No. 543/2002 Coll. on the Protection of Nature and the Countryside, the so-called reform of national parks. The theoretical part identifies the status and challenges of nature conservation in Slovakia, the attitudes of experts and the general public, as well as the proposed reform of national parks. The theoretical framework of the thesis includes the definition of populism and environmental populism and other phenomena associated with populism. The empirical part consists of an analysis using two methods - qualitative critical discourse analysis and quantitative method of holistic grading of 161 speeches of actors who were elected to the Parliament in 2020 on the electoral lists of Kotlebovci – Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko (Kotlebovi – the People's Party Our Slovakia) and We are Family (Sme rodina). One of the most significant findings of the research is that environmental populist discourse is present in the debate on the reform of national parks. The analysed actors in the discourse use the concepts of anti-elitism, people-centrism and economic marginalisation of people. The connection between populist right-wing parties and environmental populism is also confirmed by the consistency with the analysed aspects of the populist radical right, such as dissatisfaction with the scientific discourse and green patriotism. Nationalism and threats to national sovereignty also appear in the rhetoric of the analysed actors.