

RESUME

Krisztián RÁKÓCZI

Elections in Slovakia – The growth of electoral power of the protest parties and the decline of Hungarian participation in the elections

The parliamentary elections – the seventh since Slovakia became independent – held in March 2016 led to a victory for Robert Fico's SMER party and the defeat of the traditional right-wing parties. Eight parties passed the 5% electoral threshold, including the ultranationalist, anti-regime and protest parties. This earthquake-like electoral change altered the stable but otherwise diverse party scene in Slovakia. The election also witnessed the third competition for the Hungarian votes in Slovakia between the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) and the interethnic Slovak-Hungarian Most–Híd party. The key question for the Hungarian community was whether the Hungarian ethnic party would make it to the parliament after two election failures.

Gábor HARRACH

Ethnicity and party preferences in Slovakia – Who provides the support for the MKP and the Most–Híd electorates?

The study tries to explore the party preferences of ethnic Hungarian voters during the last three parliamentary elections in Slovakia. It examines the share of the votes for the SMK (MKP in Hungarian), which is an ethnic Hungarian party and the Most–Híd (Bridge in English), which is a liberal interethnic formation. The study is based on original estimations and observations. It can be concluded that the MKP received more support from the Hungarian electorate, while Most–Híd received more support from the population in general. The voters of the Bridge are ethnically heterogeneous and this character of the party is getting stronger because of the decreasing number of the Hungarian supporters within its camp. Finally, it can be observed that the higher is the proportion of Hungarians in a Slovakian settlement, the higher is the preference of the clearly ethnic political option instead of the interethnic alternative.

László HORVÁTH

Parliamentary, provincial and local elections in Serbia – The Hungarians of Vojvodina have maintained their influence

This analysis sets the political scene for the Serbian elections of April 24, 2016. It relates the efforts of the Hungarian national community of the 1990's to the fate of this northern province of the country. Besides presenting the circumstances and results of the elections, it also describes the challenges and tasks facing the new government in relation to the Hungarian community. The author identifies the long-lasting problems and controversies which have been resolved or partially resolved in Serbian-Hungarian relation. It also points to the issues that require further efforts to be settled. Reflecting on the past quarter of a century, the study draws attention to the fact that governments in Serbia rarely serve out their full term. This may be inevitable in a young democracy overcoming the problems of the past to offer new prospects and opportunities. At the same time establishing a new functioning Serbian regime to meet the requirements of the European Union's accession process adds to the challenges.

Gergely ILLYÉS

Local elections in Romania – For what is the victory of the left enough?

The biggest winner of the Romanian municipal elections, held on June 5, 2016, was the Social Democratic Party (PSD), which gained 35% of the votes in the county council elections. Their major opponent, the National Liberal Party (PNL) received only 30.6% of the total votes. The balance of power between the two major parties is tilted even more toward the left since the PSD is in alliance with the National Union for the Progress of Romania (UNPR), its satellite-party, which gained a further 4.6% of the total votes. Furthermore, its potential coalition partner, the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats (ALDE), led by Senate President Calin Popescu Tariceanu, which received 6.32% of the votes. This, plus 2.67% additional for UNPR adds up to 48.59% in total for the left-wing coalition. As appeared to this the PNL and their allies can muster only 32.37%. The votes for the Hungarian organizations show that the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) could increase its support at the expense of the two smaller Hungarian parties. The Hungarian prospects in the Romanian elections are definitely better than four years ago: Satu Mare again has a Hungarian mayor, more over RMDSZ – with two exceptions – has acquired the presidency of the major Hungarian councils in Satu Mare, Bihor and Mures.

Karolina DARCSI

Local elections in Ukraine – Cooperation among Hungarian parties has increased their influence

The study deals with the local elections held in the Ukraine in 2015. It also reflects on the situation of the Hungarian minority in Transcarpathia and the performance of the Hungarian political parties in that region. The study also briefly introduces the amendments of the electoral system and the setting up of polling districts. In the local elections the Transcarpathian Hungarian parties decided to run their candidates on a combined list. As a consequence of this decision, the Hungarian representation in the county and township councils increased and has added weight to the defense of Hungarian interests.