

**KRIVÝ, Vladimír (ed.): Slovenské voľby '12. Čo im predchádzalo, postoj a výsledky (Slovak Elections '12: What Preceded Them, Attitudes and Results)**

Bratislava: Sociologický ústav SAV, 2012, 238 s. ISBN 978-80-85544-76-3

The collective volume edited by the Slovak sociologist Vladimír Krivý, the scholar from the Institute of Sociology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, is the second publication of the scientific community analysing the Slovak parliamentary elections 2012. While the first publication edited by the political scientist Dušan Štrauss (2012) brings a multidimensional view of the elections in more than 360 pages (analysis of the political parties, electoral behaviour, party system institutionalization, election campaign, election programs, legislation, funding), the contents of this publication is much more modest. It is divided into four chapters. The first chapter analyses the development of the Slovak political system and political parties; in the second chapter, the author analyses the voters' behaviour; in the third chapter, the authors analyse the public opinion and the voters' behaviour; the last chapter finally analyses the voters' behaviour only in the Slovak capital – Bratislava.

Firstly the chapter titled “*Development of the party system, party politics and elections '12*” by the author Grigorij Mesežnikov is analysed. The author provides a detailed description of the political situation in the Slovak Republic during the period since the 2010 election. He describes the first disagreements among the parties of the Coalition led by the Prime Minister Iveta Radičová, as well as the conflicting opposition political strategy, in particular, by the left-wing party Smer-SD. The author describes the entire two-year period of the government of Iveta Radičová in detail. The author contributes to the collective volume outlining the program profiles of the Slovak relevant political parties as well as the system of the funding them and the effectiveness of the campaign costs. The positive aspect of this chapter is the detailed description reviewing the historical moments in the period 2010 – 2012; some of them have been forgotten about. This approach can be perceived by readers in a negative way. If the reader gets the detailed information about the political situation in Slovakia from the daily press, this chapter does not offer the readers some new information. A negative point in this chapter is the fact that the author repeats some statements for several times in his endeavour after a detailed description of the situation.

The second chapter written by the volume's editor, Vladimír Krivý, titled “*Election results '12: What has changed and what remains*“, is much more valuable. Krivý analyses the losses and gains of ballots for the relevant political parties, the Slovak voters' behaviour; he diachronically compares it and proves the generally prevailing hypothesis of moving original LS-HZDS voters towards Smer-

SD, respectively, from the charismatic politicians as Vladimír Mečiar towards the charismatic leader as Robert Fico.

In the Slovak social science research, Vladimír Krivý is known for his approach towards historical links between the electorate of current parties and those existing before the World War II. This perspective seems to be interesting when he is also looking for some historical parallels between the past and present. But the Krivý's argument about linking voter support towards the Smer-SD depending on the degree of literacy measured in 1930 is extremely provocative. On one hand, this correlation seems to be interesting; on the other hand, however, the author is not explaining, how approach it, respectively, why he has chosen just the factor of the literacy for this comparison. Perhaps, does it say anything about the current levels of literacy of voters Smer-SD? It seems that in any case not, because after more than 80 years of the development of the society, nowadays, the level of the literacy is at a higher level in the searched regions. Moreover, if we combined the results of the parliamentary elections with the results of the municipal elections, we would come to the question, what the relationship factor between the literacy levels from 1930 towards victory of leftist candidate in the Slovak capital in municipal elections in 2010 is.

In the third chapter "*Public opinion and voters' behaviour*" the authors Zora Bútorová, Oľga Gyarfášová and Martin Slosiarik analyse the public mood before preliminary elections 2012 in a detailed way. The authors characterize the Slovak society as extremely negative tuned one towards the political parties, dissatisfied with the direction of the society, with low confidence in the rightist government of Iveta Radičová. A brief reflection on the election campaign may also be found in this chapter. Because the authors do not exclude the thesis that it was one of the dirtiest campaigns of the modern history of the Slovak Republic, it would be appropriate to analyse the election campaign in a separate chapter. However, the authors were only marginally mentioning the election campaign, and they were focusing more on the policy level than the specific techniques of voter mobilization and the persuasion of citizens for which we could confirm the assumption of the dirtiest campaign.

The final chapter is the most interesting and from the point of science, this is the most beneficial part of this volume. The authors, Miloslav Bahna and Juraj Majo title this chapter "*Bratislava seen from close distance. Elections '12 and '10*". Analysing small electoral districts, they contribute to a better understanding of the voters' behaviour of the residents of the Slovak capital. In fact, Bratislava is often simply referred to as the bastion of the Right Wing. It is also referred to as "*the blue city of Bratislava*" (in the political meaning). So, it was interesting to learn which districts of the capital are actually blue, which of them are closer to the Left. Although the authors had a lack of accurate population socio-demographic variables (such as education or job classification) of different areas, they characterize the electorate of the political parties reviewed the available data such as the type of buildings (houses or apartment buildings, several years' or new area).

Based on these variables they are able to estimate at least some characteristics of the Bratislava' electorates of the Slovak relevant political parties. That is the reason why this analysis of both authors we can see considered as an interesting assted towards research of the voting behaviour.

The collective volume edited by Vladimir Krivý is an interesting contribution to the debate on preliminary elections of the National Council of the Slovak Republic 2012. In the future, the volume certainly will certainly serve as a reservoir of information that will meanwhile be forgotten, but it also offers some new methodological approaches in research towards the voters' behaviour. A little deficiency of this volume is that some parts (such as the election campaign) are processed only in a superficial way and it would certainly require a detailed analysis.

Radoslav Štefančík  
Fakulta aplikovaných jazykov  
Ekonomická univerzita, Bratislava