

---

# ABSTRACTS

---

WOLFGANG J. MERKEL

## DEEPENING AND WIDENING? THE LIMITS OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

My hypothesis is that up to the beginning of the 1990s the lack of democracy was highly functional for the course of economic integration. The Treaty of Maastricht, the transition from negative economic to positive economic and political integration, the third enlargement of the EC/EU in 1995, and the prospective inclusion of East Europe has made the democratic deficit a hindrance to further integration. My main hypothesis is: Due to the deepening of the Union the democratic deficit has to be diminished. But the now functionally necessary democratization will decrease the efficiency of the decision making process in the European Union. An efficiency - democracy dilemma will emerge and even aggravate with every single new member state.

I will unfold my argument in four steps. First I will explain which kind of legitimacy the European Union, as a "partly formed political system", needs to survive. Secondly I will explore what sort of democratic deficit exists within the Union, and what this means for the further deepening of European Integration. Thirdly I will discuss whether there is a dilemma between the utilitarian and the democratic components of legitimacy. Fourthly I will show how far the East European enlargement will cause additional problems to the efficiency and legitimacy of the European Union. Fourthly I will ask whether one can imagine an institutional configuration of the European polity which could lead out of the utilitarian-democratic legitimacy dilemma an "ever closer union" will unavoidably face.

GÁBOR TÓKA

## SOCIAL EQUALITY IN THE VOTER BEHAVIOR

One of the evergreens of modern social science is that the legal safeguarding of formal equality is not only unable to yield equality in a broader sense of the term, but it is also unable to approach its own ideal. In a stronger wording it is occasionally added that formal,

legal equality is nothing else but the bogus veneer of a world based on inequalities, which ultimately guarantees only the peaceful subjugation of citizens short of resources.

The subject of the present survey is to see how far the empirical premises of the statement are founded. Of them the one according to which the principle of 'one person - one vote' does not only miss to create the generally understood equality of political influence, but it even does not make the political influence of individuals, endowed with an equal number of votes, but of unequal social status equal in the voting arena in the narrowest sense of the term.

Citizens who are better endowed with organisational, human and material resources which can be mobilised, can implement a much wider repertory of exercising political influence, than citizens who are poor in resources and information, are distantly located from political authority in space as well as in the network of connections, who have less political articulation and are less able to disturb the process of social reproduction by retaining production, withdrawing loyalty, building road blockades, etc.

The theoretically truly exciting questions are related to the issue under what conditions are the results of the conversion of social inequalities into political ones smaller or bigger. The following analysis dwells upon the assumption that the voting arena gives different weightage to the preferences of the various status groups in relation to different political issues.

The lower classes have a relatively better chance to express effectively their racist, or antiracist preferences than those of economic policy, than the members of classes richer in resources may do. This assumption suggests that while the assessment of certain questions (like macro-economic policy) would go beyond the possibilities of the voter in collecting and processing information, the issues involving ethnic identity do not raise such a problem: it can be stated on the basis of a minimum quantity of information which stand can be associated with which ethnic group, and preliminary socialisation develops strong emotions and a sense of evidence in relation to one's ethnic affiliation. Consequently while the interrelationship between views related to 'difficult' questions and political behaviour (including voting) grows in proportion to social status, the strength of the connection between the stand related to ethnic, etc. and political behaviour is not related to social status. Therefore the practising politician acts correctly if he lays greater emphasis on ethnic, etc. questions than their 'actual' importance (assumed by the educated classes). Of course, the issues related to the corruptness of the government or to its macro-economic policy may dominate the agenda of election campaigns - the hypothesis only suggests that questions comprehensible by anyone will be present more strongly in public party politics, than it would be justified by their significance attributed to them by a hypothetical independent observer.

Therefore the empirical analysis, presented in the paper, studies whether people of unequal social status are able to establish a

relationship, to be sensed in a way, between their choice of a party and their preferences (political opinions).

According to the second hypothesis though the attitudes related to the so-called difficult questions have a weaker connection with the choice of a party among voters of less information and education than among others, no such difference can be observed in the case of the so-called easy questions.

ILONA PÁL-KOVÁCS

#### LOCAL AND REGIONAL POLICY

The local and regional policy became an empirically practised discipline in the Hungarian political sciences in the recent years, since the systemic change has established the political and legal conditions for the local power execution. The so called local society researches before the transformation were important because they provided the possibility for a covert criticism of the system.

The introduction of the Hungarian local governmental system in 1990 generated fundamental changes in the territorial structure of power execution. The focus of territorial administration became the settlement irrespective of its size or administrative potential. The role of the county governments replacing the former territorial councils was significantly reduced.

In the light of the past six years it is clear, that the spatial distribution of power, the organisational forms of political-power decentralisation were not able to eliminate the former centralised power system and political culture.

The local governments can make their local decisions indeed free from external influences, while the whole of the system is yet unchanged centralised due to the role of central redistribution, the regional influence of the centralised state power and the weakened system of regional governments.

The introduction of the self-governmental model generated so far no significant changes in the quality or the intensity of the democracy nor in the width of social relations. Experiences show that neither local governmental politicians and organisation nor the local society is prepared for co-operation, the joint shaping of local policy.

The Hungarian political science plays an important role in the establishment of the theoretic and methodological system of local and regional policy, also encouraging of further development of its organisational and operational system and the preparation of the political culture and the local society to utilise the possibilities provided by the local democracy and decentralisation.

The forthcoming process of the establishment of the new constitution must answer the question, with what kind of administrative system Hungary wishes to enter the "Europe of Regions".

EDIT SOÓS

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MICROREGIONAL CO-OPERATION IN CSONGRÁD COUNTY

Institutions are crucial actors at the intermediate level under the new regional structure in Hungary. This survey assesses the experiences of one such body, the Development Council - recently established in Csongrád County.

The study focuses on how political actors cooperated with each other in order to secure joint ventures and programmes. It reveals how micro-regions, organised "bottom-up" by local authorities, have yet to find a democratic means of expressing their views through the Development Council of Csongrád County, although it covers most of the county.

Although the Development Act (1996. LXV) theoretically recognises the priorities of micro-regions, in practice the work of the Development Council reflects the 6 statistical units created by the Government. Moreover, since the county councils are generally organised on party political lines, the 59 towns and settlements, via the "mayors lobby" have reduced the opportunity of exerting their interests. The increased number of micro-regions will inevitably cause further legitimisation problems since the new Act fails to give newly-organised cooperations the right to be involved in the decision-making process.

Clearly, the role of micro-regions is hardly recognised by the creation of the Development Council, and alternative approaches need to be found to give a means of articulating the interest of the settlements at this intermediate level.

Elsewhere in Europe, especially among EU member states, regions are important, but this opportunity appears to have been missed under the Development Act. In the South-Plain region, a major innovation is the creation of the Euro-regional Development Programme as part of the Phare CBC Programme with Romanian and Yugoslavia.

Territorial policy, institutional structure, the development of the planning system, interregional and crossborder cooperation, the development of the planning system, interregional and crossborder cooperation, are all features that need to meet EU requirements if - (the price you pay seems to finish at this point) - they are to be consistent with what is happening elsewhere in Europe.

ISTVÁN MURÁNYI

### PUBLIC OPINIONS ON A LOCAL GOVERNMENT

After changing of regime more and more directions of Hungarian settlements realized that it is impossible to talk successful local politics without any objective knowledge of community behaviours and opinions.

In a county town of East Hungary - Nyiregyháza - the Local Government Leading had public opinion polls made five times between

1990 and 1996. Surveys can be realised as panel researches because the sample methods and most of the questions were same and unchanged.

The conclusions from the surveys are:

1. After changing of regime - similarly to other big Hungarian towns - people living in Nyiregyháza are consistently more satisfied with their town than with their country.

2. Compared to the former council system in 1990 the people felt the change of Local Government less than a change of the city in 1994. The judgement of democratic character in the local administration changed similarly because it is said to be bigger and more unchangeable than the first cycle.

3. In the research most people in Nyiregyháza can't make a difference between the Mayor Office and the representatives.

4. Similarly to the other big cities in Hungary the elected Member of Local Government is unknown by most people living in Nyiregyháza. Differently from the other cities people living in Nyiregyháza don't know their representatives, either. Between 1990 and 1996 the present and former mayor rises above the local power politicians.

5. The municipal judgement overestimated by the local power tole of the mayor is independent of the major or political powers rearranging by local election.

6. The municipal opinion which gets over the criticism on local government system says that the local social groups or the population (themselves) have got a small part in the forming of the city position.

#### JÁNOS HAÁSZ-RICHÁRD HORVÁTH-TÜNDE TÓTH BORSOD YOUTH AND LOCAL POLITICS

Local and regional politics represent the opposite pole of central power in the representative democracies of the complex societies of our days, and presumably their role may further grow in the future. It is just because of this 'projection into the future' that it is considered important to obtain an image on what is the opinion of the secondary school youth, the future generation of politics, on local politics and on the possibilities of such a level of political activity.

The possible later political, or public role, to be undertaken by the youth, is influenced by a secondary factor of socialisation, that is the educational institution, primarily the secondary school where there are more and more meaningful opportunities for undertaking community tasks partly because the school is more organised than the primary one, and partly because the youth are more developed.

The community life and interests in politics of grammar school pupils is studied by our research.

Due to the limitations of our financial and other capacities we have concentrated on a single region, on one of the biggest (and most populous) counties, which is Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county.

In our questionnaire we inquired about the interests of young people in politics and in local political activity.

Among others answers were sought how far the respondents were satisfied with local politics, and how dissatisfied were those who gave a negative assessment.

Finally, it was also studied how far has the social and family background of the respondents influenced their opinion related to politics and local political activity.

The conclusion was drawn that though a greater interest in the local issues and a bigger activity of the youth were welcome, it was also a fact that the events of national politics were not, or not adequately followed with attention, and that their political knowledge was rather deficient.

## CONTENTS

### PAPERS

---

- Merkel, Wolfgang J.*: Deepening and Widening? The Limits of European Integration ..... 5  
*Tóka, Gábor*: Social Equality in the Voter Behavior ..... 33

### CONFERENCE

---

- Pál-Kovács, Ilona*: Local and Regional Policy ..... 47  
*Soós, Edit*: The Development of the Microregional Co-operation in Csongrád County .. 70  
*Murányi, István*: Public Opinions on a Local Government ..... 85  
*Haász, János-Horváth, Richárd-Tóth, Tünde*: Borsod Youth and Local Politics ..... 97

### DISCUSSION

---

#### POLITICS AS DISCOURSE

- Frivaldszky, János*: Political Discourse and Its Limitations ..... 105  
*Fricz, Tamás*: The Policy of Discourse ..... 112

#### COMMENTS

---

- Pokol, Béla*: Reply to Criticism ..... 121  
*Körösényi, András*: The Limits of the Functionalist System Theory ..... 127  
*Győrfi, Tamás*: The Problem of the Basic Law Stratum ..... 132

### ORIENTATION

---

- Gredšić, Ivan*: Development of Political Science in Croatia ..... 137

### BOOKS

---

- Löffler, Tibor*: Historiography and Political Science ..... 155  
The Selected Bibliography of Hungarian Political Science ..... 171

- NEWS ..... 175
- 

- INFORMATION ..... 191

- From the issues of the *Review of Political Science* so far published ..... 199

- ABSTRACTS ..... 211
-

