

ABSTRACTS

Ilona Pálné Kovács

WHY DID WE ALLOW IT TO HAPPEN? THE NATURE OF TERRITORIAL DECENTRALIZATION REFORMS IN HUNGARY

The paper is part of the project financed by the National Scientific Research Found launched one year ago which aims at preparing the theoretical basis and hypotheses.

The aim of the project is to interpret the processes and context of the territorial reforms after the systemic change; therefore empirical researches will be implemented during the following years.

In this paper the author introduces the presupposed phases of territorial reforms and the main characteristics of these phases from the angle of the aspects of values followed, of professional grounds and adjustment to the real conditions and reform capacities.

The paper tries to compare the Hungarian territorial reforms to the international trends and draws attention to the necessity of conducting researches in the field of reform processes as privileged events of public policy.

Keywords: Territorial reforms, decentralization, reform capacity, vetoplayers, regionalism

Zsófia Papp

CAMPAIGN PERSONALIZATION IN HUNGARY FROM THE LEGISLATORS' POINT OF VIEW. CANDIDATE- AND CONSTITUENCY ORIENTATION UNDER PARTY-CENTRED ELECTORAL RULES

The aim of this paper is to uncover the micro-factors structuring campaign personalization in the case of Hungarian Members of Parliament. It is presumed that under party-centred electoral rules, the effects of the various independent characteristics are filtered by the parties. Thus, due to the electoral rules, personalization cannot contradict party centeredness. Representatives do not wish to distance themselves from their parties. Personalization is more of the result of the positions they hold or wish to fill in than the desire to defy party lines out of individualistic motivations. Based on the data from the 2010 MP-survey of the Hungarian Election Study, the article unveils the circumstances under which campaign personalization prevails. The international

scholarly literature sets several hypotheses with regards to the factors influencing three dimensions of campaign personalization (norms, means and agenda), out of which several will be tested in this paper. The analysis concludes that electoral rules, local political background and party affiliation are what seem to structure campaign personalization.

Keywords: Campaign, constituency orientation, personalization, party-centred electoral rules, legislators

Benedek Jávör – Zsolt Beke

PARTICIPATION AND INDIFFERENCE: SOME DATA TO THE STATE
OF SOCIAL PARTICIPATION IN HUNGARY

A growing attention and public need is experienced concerning public participation (PP) in the last two decades all over the world. However, it has a different pattern in former communist countries than in states with a longer democratic tradition. We studied the case of Hungary focusing on institutional and social attitudes towards PP. Our results prove that in spite of the generally supportive legal environment, still there are a number of obstacles. Our survey, based on questionnaires, shows a remarkable relation between trust in democratic institutions and commitment to PP. Also important differences between age groups and settlement types were detected, which question some former hypotheses about participation. According to our study we can say that public participation is not an alternative to representative democracy, but an important measure to deepen democratic decision making. To become active in PP processes, a certain level of general trust is needed, but also a critical attitude to institutions of representative democracy increases willingness of participation. It is also important that in Hungary, in spite of the existing difficulties, there is social and institutional acceptance for a more intensive use of participatory techniques.

Keywords: Public participation, participatory democracy, active citizenship, democratic attitudes

Andrea Szabó – Balázs Kiss

CONFLICT AND GENERATION. CONCEPTUAL STARTING POINTS
OF RESEARCH INTO GENERATIONAL CONFLICTS

The paper defines two concepts, conflict and generation, that are of central importance for the rest of the thematic collection on the political science of demographic ageing. The approach to these concepts is based on Karl Mannheim's view that involvement in conflicts is a most important factor in the con-

stitution of a generation. The theoretical roots and the development of both concepts are under detailed scrutiny in the paper. The text pays special attention to the differences between generation and other concepts frequently used as its synonyms: cohort, cohort generation, family generation, welfare generation, etc. Finally, the paper delineates a couple of further concepts, which will be the pillars of the future empirical research on the social science of ageing.

Keywords: conflict, Karl Mannheim, generation, political generation, generational conflicts

Róbert, Péter – Valuch, Tibor

GENERATIONS IN HISTORY AND SOCIETY. POLITICAL ATTITUDES
AND PATTERNS OF PARTICIPATION IN A HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGICAL
APPROACH

In this paper the question is asked whether it is possible to attribute organisational and influencing role to groups emerging on a generational basis in a political and social sense in the Hungary of the recent past and present. How far and to what extent does a generational community, or getting separated from a generation influence the political behaviour, political attitude and its changes of the various social and elite groups? For this purpose the first part of the paper lays the foundations of the empirical analysis of generations of (social) history and of empirical research. In this part we mostly deal with the topic in a historical approach, also referring to aspect that cannot be studied on the basis of the available empirical data. Thus the role of the various historical events, experiences and processes is studied in the organisation and articulation of generations, in the emergence and elimination of the elite groups of generations. Finally, we reach a typology of generations as well that would separate the generations from one another on the basis of historically evolved patterns. In the second part of the paper an analysis of generations is done with the help of statistical tools on survey data, defining the historically delineated generations empirically. During the course of the analysis two issues are studied in the ESS and ISSP data base pertaining to election participation and to the perception of social conflicts. These issues are studied from the angle of changes in time, with special reference to differences among generations, and also the effect of the ageing of members of generations on political participation and on attitudes. The specific empirical analysis seeks an answer whether it is possible to find differences fit for analysis of changes taking place in the contemporary Hungarian society in historical and individual time.

Keywords: Generations, elite generations, political participation, attitudes, cohort-analysis

Márton Bene

THE POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF OLD AGE AS REFLECTED
BY ONLINE TALKS

The present paper is the first step of a research program which examines the political construction of ageing and conflicts between generations. The process of construction is driven not merely by the institutional actors and opinion leaders in the media, but also by the citizens who are talking to each other about politics. In my paper I have focused on the latter by observing online discussions appearing on the political forum called Index.hu. Disagreement between “old people” and “young people” evolved mainly about the pension system, thus the examination of ageing constructions is embedded in this context. In spite of its several limits, this method seems to be suitable to provide hypotheses to further researches. In the first part of the study I present the applied theoretical approach where I have connected the concept of stereotype with the concept of social construction. After that I focus on the activity, origin and contents of the stereotypes influencing the construction of ageing. In the third part of the study components of the constructions are demonstrated.

Keywords: Intergenerational conflict, online discourse, social construction, stereotype, pension system, ageing; youth.

Attila Bartha – András Tóth

CHANGES IN THE HUNGARIAN PENSION SYSTEM:
A POLITICAL SCIENCE APPROACH

Welfare reforms, especially pension reforms are among the most sensitive issues in the societies of Europe, including Hungary. Demographic ageing and the subsequent macro-financial constraints, however, may imply diverse reactions of the political elite; the political degrees of freedom of possible policy reactions are high. This paper analyzes the political motives and mechanisms shaping pension reforms. It gives an overview of the main theses of the political science literature about welfare reforms based on the schools of institutional resistance, prospect theory, veto player and blame avoidance approaches. After a short historical presentation of the changes in the Hungarian pension system during the last two decades, we explore certain specific causes and mechanisms of the unusually high volatility of reform and counter-reform tendencies.

Keywords: Pension reform, Hungarian pension system, prospect theory, institutional resistance, veto points, blame avoidance, polarization