

Abstract

Along with the right-left economical dimension of positioning of political parties and voters, there is also dimension of division along cultural and value items which is described as authoritarianism – libertarianism axis or sometimes conservatism – liberalism. In new democracies the division along clear support for liberal democracy on the one hand and support or toleration of non liberal use of power on the other hand is often very important.

We distinguish between authoritarianism as orientation with tendency towards support for restrictive and hierarchical politics, which in some cases lead to non liberal variant of formally democratic order, and cultural conservatism, which has its roots mainly in higher level of religiosity. Authoritarian and conservative tendencies are to certain level associated with each other, nevertheless they do not create an integral complex. There is evidence of a group with authoritarian value orientation and culturally liberal position at the same time; in Slovak conditions it is the case of the electorate of left wing party Smer (Direction).

Examining the opinion cleavage among Slovak public along cultural and value questions, we identify the biggest conflict potential of the authoritarian items as the mode of political rule and nationalism. Next significant opinion difference among public, which copy political blocs division as well, is the attitude to Hungarian minority. The themes of cultural conservatism divide Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) supporters from the rest of the society. Because of the dominant position of right-left economical division and the axis authoritarianism versus political liberalism in Slovak society, conflict between cultural conservatism and liberalism is not crucial for the division of political blocs.