

Abstract

The topic of this diploma thesis is direct elections of the President of Slovak Republic in context of other Central European countries – particularly Czech Republic and Poland. The subject of my analysis were selected aspects of presidential election, which I analyzed in the third chapter (in case of Slovakia), dedicated to direct elections of Slovak president in 1999, 2004 and 2009; and in the fourth chapter, which is dedicated to last direct election. Among analyzed aspects (in case of Slovak presidential election) a trend of declining interest in the first round of elections was confirmed; also sooner claiming of candidacy, compared with previous elections. The latter fact is connected with longer and longer pre-election campaign, which is also more and more personal and offensive. The ratio of partisan and non-partisan candidates was in all elections about the same (approx. 3:2 in favor of partisan candidates). In the fifth chapter of the thesis I analyzed these aspects in case of direct presidential elections in Poland and Czech Republic. Then, I compared them. According to analysis, women in Poland almost were not standing for president at all (there were even fewer women candidates than in Slovakia), but in Poland we can see much higher number of very prominent candidates (especially former prime ministers and speakers of parliament), high number of partisan candidates and also candidates who were standing for president three or more times (in Slovakia there was no such candidate). Among analyzed aspects a key problem in Polish presidential elections was much too high number of signatures, which caused expulsion of a lot of candidacies (even tight majority). Although in case of direct election of the Czech president it is not possible to speak about long-lasting trends (only one direct election has taken place there until now), it was possible to compare them with trends in Polish and Slovak presidential elections. There was similarity between Slovak and Czech elections in campaign management and its image in media. On the contrary, like in Polish elections, in Czech election there was only small number of independent or non-partisan candidates, standing for president. Similarity with direct election of Polish president was also in minimal level of signatures, necessary for registration of candidacy, which made troubles for high number of “wannabe-candidates.” Czech presidential election differed from Polish and Slovak ones in ratio women and men, standing for president (3:1 in favor of men).

The second (and more important) analysis was connected with finding out the extent, to which media influenced the result of last Slovak presidential election, which took place in March 2014. I tried to find out this extent by using simple statistical analysis of newspaper articles, which I selected according to criteria, described in the first chapter of this thesis. Results of

the analysis did not show credible correlation between result of election and image, which analyzed media gave about candidates (especially about the two most successful ones). However, analysis confirmed, that ideological affiliation of analyzed newspapers has influence on nature of articles and commentaries, published in analyzed newspapers about successful candidates. I believe that, based on extensiveness of my research, not only analysis of selected aspects of elections, but also finding out of extent, to which media influenced the result of elections, can be the subject of research in other scientific papers or theses.