Veronika Tamas:

Politics in Local Governments

*Latitude, Relationship and Role of Actors in the Local Political System*

PhD dissertation

Doctoral (PhD) Thesis

Supervisor:

Andras Korosenyi
professor

Budapest, 2016.
I. The object and main ambitions of the thesis

The autonomous local governments had been formed during the formation of democratic system in Hungary in the early 90s. Twenty-five years have passed, and, since then, several disciplines had examined them. The different disciplines all have their own particular point of view, and examine the segment which is interesting and relevant to them: the local legislation, the effective administration of the regional differences, the local community, the local government budget and management. This work examines the local authorities by the point of view of political science: examines the political institutions, organisations and other actors which are in connection with the sphere of politics and focuses on their relationship.

The research on local politics is a new and relatively new topic of political science. Political scientists – especially in Hungary – mainly concentrate on the national level, most of them pay attention only to local elections, and interested in the results of national parties and the success of their campaign. Only the position of the mayor of the largest cities is interesting enough to mention in national newspapers, and publications.

Local politics, as it is referred in the international political science, deals with the political relations in the local governments. It contains the local governments of the cities, towns and villages. On the other hand, the concept of “local politics” also refers to the regional and county level of politics. In this thesis, I use a constricted concept of local politics: I will not examine the regional and county governments; I only examine the following settlements: cities, towns, villages and the districts of the capital. I will not examine the governments of the counties, because it would increase the compass of this work too much. As regards the regional politics, it is also an important exclusive fact that they do not have autonomous elected bodies in Hungary.

On the other hand, concept of “local politics” consists not only of the government, but, beyond the institutional actors, contains also the other actors who are in connection with local politics. The concept of “local government” refers only to the institutionalized governing actors at local level (mayor, council, committees); the concept of “local governance” adds other actors (local NGOs, parties, firms, etc.).

The research areas of international literature can also be found in Hungary, but many questions have other meaning in Hungarian context. The problem of applying the international theories of local politics in Hungary is described well by Pálné: “Based on
research results, political scientists found that the adaptation of American point of view and methodology is unsuccessful, because among the frame of European centralized states, the role and sweep of the local power is different. (...) While in the USA, the question was: who governs, then was what are the consequences of who governs, in Europe they concentrated on the basic requirement of local power and policy-making: on the autonomy or lack of autonomy.” (Pálné 2008: 91)

For example, the elitist and pluralist debate did not emerge in Hungary, because in Hungary, due to the interrupted social development there is no real strong civic society. There are existing interest groups and NGOs but they have limited influence on decisions. (Kákai, 2006). On the other hand, the argumentation of the elitists would not be acceptable, because in Hungary there is no united power elite to hold all power in their hands, excluding other elite groups, because there is a great (political-ideological) distinction between the elite groups, and they rarely cooperate. Still, in some respect, it is possible to use the results of both theories. Similarly to the pluralists, I see local power as a fragmented power, I think local politics has many actors, and not only the institutionalized, but the external actors play an important role in it. Some statements of the elitist theory can also be operationalized regarding Hungarian local governments: for example, the local political elite rarely transfer the important decision-making to other actors, including the community of citizens (local referendum).

Consequently, I regard local governments as a fragmented space of power, where the local political relations are formed by the interactions between the different actors. During my research on local politics, I remain inside the paradigm of “local governance, using its point of view and methodology.

The paradigm governance leans on three theoretical pillars: network management (Tardos, 1996), delegation theory, and the theory of social interpretation. My point of view is close to the network management theory (Rhodes, 1997), as I think that the understanding of connections between local political actors can lead us to better understanding of local political relations, especially if we analyse the quality of these connections. Governments use two different strategies managing these networks: game-management and the strategy of network-structuring. The former means the management of existing connections, transforming the rule of the game, the latter refers to building new connections. (Stoker, 1995). As it is mainly describing, the former is more emphasized, and the strategies of local governments are only mentioned in this thesis.
The description of connection networks helps us to map the relationship of the actors. It is important to emphasize that the Hungarian governments are far from “network governance” in the meaning of a method of governing; therefore I will not describe them as one.

The dissertation also has its antecedents in political science. After the fall of the communist system, representatives of different scientific areas have started the examination of the newly created local governments. These streams had been described in the thesis. The theoretical background of my work was partly sociology. Projects regarding the values and attitudes, sociological character of local leaders (Táll, 2000, Böhm, 1994) found significant differences between local and national politics, and stated that the attitude of local politicians has been changed in accordance with requirements of democracy. My thesis contributes to these researches with the analysis of the governing style of city mayors, as I think the unique political character of local political leaders is one of the cornerstones of autonomous local politics.

The multi-player character of local politics had also been sensed by Hungarian researchers: several publications had been prepared on the role of NGOs in local governments (Böhm, 1999; 2006, Kákai, 2004). My researches on NGOs and the direct citizen participation can add some new aspects to these, and may help to answer the question whether the multi-player governance can work in Hungary.

The analysis of local political relations was performed by Tamás M. Horváth (Horváth, 1996) and Laszló Kákai (Kákai, 2004): they examined local party coalitions, the operation of parties at local level. The most important results had been summarized by Ilona Pálné Kovács in her book: “Local governance in Hungary”. She also analysed the city of Pécs, using regime theory. In general, the publications analysing local government by the point of view of political science, emphasizing the important role of parties and party-principle operation.

My thesis is mainly based on international literature, but it also fits in the domestic literature of political science and sociology, trying to contribute with the analysis of some phenomenon. The main objective is to unfold characteristics of local power relations.

II. The structure of the thesis

The thesis has three main parts:
In the first chapter I give a short overview of the literature on local politics: I describe the main research streams and their prominent representatives, focusing on authors who had influenced the point of view of my thesis. I present the methodologies of my researches, and the main assumptions and topics of this dissertation indicating the dilemmas and research questions.

The second chapter contains the particular description of the topics and the results of my empirical researches. At first, I present the institutional and legal basis of local politics, which determines the possibilities of local governments. (Chapter II. 1.)

In the further chapters, after a short draft of the methodology, I present the results of my empirical researches. Because of its important role, the first research topic is the local council, and the power relations of significant political actors. (Chapter II. 2.).

In Chapter II. 3. I make an attempt to describe the effect of alter personal characteristics on local governance, examining the governing styles of city mayors. Chapter II. 4. I discuss the problem of local cleavages. In Chapter II. 5. the local non-governmental organisations, as important actors of local politics are discussed. Last, but not least, an important form of citizen participation, local referendum will be discussed. Chapter II. 6.).

In the Conclusions part of my thesis, I summarize the main findings of my empirical researches, and make an attempt to present some conclusions, which are valid not only for single cases, but in general for the whole local politics.

III. Research Questions, Hypothesis

Local power is fragmented: on the one hand, on institutional basis: the directly elected mayor, the council and its committees, the notary, as the leader of local bureaucracy and the Office are the main actors. On the other hand, local power is fragmented on political base: government/opposition division can be found in two senses. First, the confrontation at national level can also be found at local level. Second, sometimes crossing these lines, the local governing elite and its opposition can be distinguished. Local power is not only in the hand of institutional actors, the NGOs, citizens, economic actors, interest groups and local parties take part in it. Even external actors can participate in this multi-player “game”: leaders of neighbouring municipalities, central government, representatives of regional or county government, and other prominent politicians of the national level who has some links to the settlement in question.
The question is what influences the relationship between these actors? What factor determines the size of power and their ability to influence decisions? In the following, I highlight the factors I presume to be the most important, then I describe how they influence local power relations. I also include dilemmas that had emerged during former researches.

The analysed factors are:
1. Size of the municipality (by the number of citizens)
2. Institutional arrangements, power relations created by the results of local elections;
3. Personal character of political actors
4. Local cleavages
5. Strength of local civic organisations
6. Forms and quality of citizen participation

These factors, the relating dilemmas and the used methodology are summarized in a table at the end of this document (Attachment No. 1.)

IV. Methodology

As in the thesis I examine different territories of local politics, it seemed to be necessary to apply different research methodologies.

In order to find answers for the questions of the thesis, I used qualitative and quantitative methodologies simultaneously. Regarding some topics I use literature and research results published by other researchers. As this dissertation analyses local politics as a whole, researches made by the author cannot cover all areas. But, as it is a doctoral dissertation, I dedicate more space to present my empirical researches than the others; their results are only summarized and linked to this work. In spite of the use of different methodologies we are able to make general statements. I always try to choose methodology that suits the most to the examined area.

1. Literature and legal background

The first step to investigate the relationship of local political actors is to describe the institutional-legal background. The primary source of this for the first era (1990-2011) is the Hungarian Constitution, the old 1990. Act LXV. on Local Governments of Hungary. After 2011, the new Fundamental Law of Hungary, and the Act CLXXXIX of 2011 on Local Governments. For local elections, the Act XXXVI of 2013 on Electoral Procedure, and regarding local referendums Act CCXXXVIII. on Initiating Referendums. It is also important
not to forget about the numerous decisions regarding debates in connection with local governments of the Hungarian Constitutional Court.

Other important legal sources of local politics are the Statutes of Local Councils, which are accented by local councils, and contains the most important rules of everyday work.

2. Empirical research

2.1. Surveys

The Chapter dealing with local power relations use data coming from a survey that had been held among local councillors. The governing style of city mayors examined by the use of data of a survey that had been made among Hungarian city mayors, providing information of their subjective opinion and attitudes. These data were supplemented with some interviews with local political actors.

2.2 Research based on database analysis

The analysis of local elections based on former studies (Kákai, 2006, Bőhm, 2006) and on the database of National Elections Office at www.valasztas.hu. The latter was used to gain some information on re-election of mayors and on the composition of local councils. Similarly, this data was used to analyse the participation of NGO-s on local elections.

Regarding local referenda, I used data collected by a newspaper called HVG, and the database of National Elections Office. Information on particular local referendums was collected from local newspapers.

2.3 Case studies

The advantage of case studies is that they give us the possibility to collect large amount of data, wide-range information on a particular case. Analysing several cases using the same dimensions can provide data for comparison. The disadvantage is, because of the low number of cases we cannot make general conclusions.

Regarding local cleavages, I present some typical cases in order to demonstrate the characteristics of different types. I also use case studies in addition to general data analysis to present some local NGOs that participated on local elections in order to make a closer view on their role in local politics.

During the preparation of case studies I aimed to choose different cases: on the one hand, I tried to examine settlements from different regions, and on the other hand, I chose municipalities with different size and political composition. So among the case studies we can find large and small municipalities, with councils and mayors of political left and right, and independents.
V. Findings and conclusions of the thesis

V.1. Research results

In the dissertation I presented the world of local politics from such a point of view when the actors are in continuous interaction generating a unique connection network. I found there are characteristics that are valid for this network in general, and there are also some dimensions, which influence the quality of these networks.

1.

The first characteristic of local politics is the unique institutional arrangement it has. This arrangement simultaneously provides the emergence of consent principle and majority principle. The former is more frequent than the latter, and not as surprising as it would be in the national politics. Between the mayor and the council there is also an exigence to make this consent, although the mayor has the opportunity to make own decisions, but with limitations.

It is also an important characteristic of local politics that the electoral system does not provide majority for the mayor in the council. The administrative apparatus has two leaders: the mayor and the notary, and the committees and its members are also participating in the executive tasks.

The institutional arrangements of local governments can simultaneously provide opportunity either for the consent, or for the majority principle. This is one of the characteristics of local politics. The consensus between the governing and opposition parties is not as surprising as it would be in national politics.

Additionally, the directly elected actors of local politics (such as the mayor and the council) are forced to make consent in most cases. The electoral system does not provide automatic majority for the mayor in the council, but the latter is to make the final decision on regulations and the budget. The executive power is divided among several actors: the notary, the mayor and the committees of the local council. After 2011, the role of the mayor has strengthened: the mayor has the right to make decisions without the council in certain situations. The notary is appointed and removed by the mayor, so the executive power does not have “two heads” anymore. The system shifted from consent to majority logic.

2.

The operation of local power is determined by the results of local election. The most important questions are: is there a fix majority in the council? Is the majority acquired by one
party, or is it created by a coalition of two or more parties (or NGOs). Is the mayor a member of this party, or is he/she a member of the opposition, or independent? The important role of these results indicates that local politics is determined by political logic. In spite of the fact that in some areas consent is made by the actors, these are mainly not very important, “general” questions, or connected with goods that can be divided among the actors.

The majority rule determines decision-making in local governments: the party, which has majority, is able to make political decisions on policies, personnel, strategical matters. Sometimes instead of majority rule, local political actors make consent: if there is no stable majority, in economic or other crisis. In that case, party politics is there but it is suppressed by other, more important factors. There are also some questions in which there is consent among local political actors: for example applying for funds to the European Union, or to any national source. One of the most important differences between local and national politics is that consent is more often and not as surprising as it would be at national level.

3.

My hypothesis on the influence of single local political actors was – in case of balanced power relations (when none of the parties have stable majority in the council) – the mayor will emerge as the most significant political actor. After the survey in cities I found that the mayor has much more strength in cities where he/she has stable majority in the council.

“Balanced” councils are less determined by party politics, but they operate similarly: the councillors consult in advance their opinions before council meetings, and they also complained in the survey because they have less influence on decisions than the actual/temporary majority.

4.

In local politics, mayors have different abilities to manoeuvre in the political and legal environment, and this ability is determined by their personal qualities and charisma.

Simultaneously, without supporting majority, the directly elected leader of the settlement can easily become a grey eminence. The role of personal qualities is secondary compared to the necessities dictated by the power relations: party membership is more important than the personal charisma. Therefore, however charming a mayor is cannot turn politicians of the opposition on his/her side. On the other hand, the role of personal qualities is more important than in the national politics: it can strengthen or weaken the effects of other factors.
In our country, the mayors of cities have different governing styles, according to our survey, four types can be defined. The attitude and governing style of our mayors strengthens the opened, consent-oriented governing style in our country. The intention of our city leaders to collaborate with other actors during the realisation of their visions is an important stair on the way from ‘government’ to ‘governance’.

5.

The analysis of local cleavages was performed via case studies. Four types of local cleavages were analysed: conflicts between parts of the settlement (territorial cleavage); conflicts linked to personalities (personality cleavage), ethnical conflicts and project-related conflicts. Those conflicts were the base of local cleavages. I found these cleavages are similar to great, macro-societal cleavages; they may cross or coincide each other, as well as those at the macro-societal level. They divide local political actors permanently; they influence local party structure and party politics, the relationship of local political actors.

However, there are also some differences between types of cleavages: the territorial cleavages and the personality cleavages proved to be more permanent, than project-related cleavages. The personality-cleavage will not extinct after the person loses power (or p.e. dies), the former contact or attitude to this person still determines local political relations. Ethnical cleavage in a settlement not usually creates permanent groups, and hard to identify, because it often camouflaged to be other, for example territorial cleavage (which is other coincides with it).

6.

The aim of research on local civic organisations was to examine NGOs that try to influence local politics by sending their representatives to the council. Based on their activity and their proximity to politics I created five types, and analysed their results on local elections. The main outcome of the analysis is that besides the traditional NGOs, there are also some civil organisations which operate as a “local party (Ignits, 2008).

Despite of decreasing participation of local NGOs on elections, these local parties are still present, and they try to substitute to national parties, which do not have the potential or the intention to participate at local elections in all settlements. Not only they get representation, but sometimes they acquire the majority in the council or even the position of the mayor (Soroksári Civil Szervezet, Gödöllői Lokálpatrióta Klub). There are also some organisations that are directly related to national parties (Polgári Körök), but local parties are different: their members are usually citizens who want to work for their settlement.
The participation of NGOs on local elections has two main edifications regarding characteristics of local politics. The first one is the mere fact that NGOs are participate on elections and became the actors of political processes. The presence of NGOs in election campaigns, in councils, can amend the quality of local politics, and help to switch to governance instead of government in those municipalities. But, as the second consequence, the participation has its effects on NGOs, either. During the political work their representatives become politicians, the political activities become more frequent and important than the civil ones.

7.

Local referendum operates as a correctional mechanism of representative democracy in local politics. It provides the possibility to the citizens to overrule and change the decisions of their directly elected representatives: it works as a forum to appeal. The application of this decision-making method was caused in almost all cases because of some kind of conflict. These conflicts not were permanent, but the intensity and importance of the case was strong enough to create more or less permanent groups. The supporting and the opposition side were formatted, and usually the citizens and the local government cannot be found on the same side. Parties, NGOs, SMEs have only minor role during referendum campaigns, and if they appeal, they usually not very successful.

Although referendum can be a serious weapon in the citizens’ and local politicians’ hand, they rarely use it as a form of citizen participation and local democracy.

V.2. Findings

In the thesis I presume I managed to verify the hypothesis, that local politics has its own characteristics as a fragmented, multiplayer political sphere, where relations between actors are formed by certain rules. In the following, I summarize these rules and characteristics of local politics, based on results of empirical research, and I make an attempt to prove the existence of an autonomous “local political system”.

---

1 An analogy of András Körösényi’s famous book „Hungarian Political System” (Körösényi, 2015; illetve Körösényi, A; Török G.; Tóth Cs. 2007)
At first it is important to declare that local politics is: local. This means political agenda, the debates, the behaviour of the actors are determined by local problems, the relations with other local politicians and the demands of citizens. It is true even if national politics is present at local governments, and influences the attitude of actors, either. This can be proved with an inverse method: none can prove more effectively the existence of local politics than the fact that despite of very intense antagonism between national parties, they often vote together, work together to reach (or, to prevent) something at local level. The appearance of national politics at local level can be sensed in even smaller settlements (Kákai, 2005), but local politics is not simply the same in a smaller scale.

Although the presence of consent-principle is perceived only in certain cases, and the frequency of it decreases in larger municipalities, it can still registered as a characteristic of local politics. The other factor strengthening this is the fact there are certain problems that only valid in certain settlements, and connected to those special local problems. The objects of local cleavages are independent from the cleavages of national politics represented by national parties, they sometimes coincide with them, strengthening their effects, sometimes cross them, which weakens their importance.

In the following I will highlight the factors which I consider to be the characteristics of local politics in Hungary. The factors that were analysed more closely in this thesis can be divided into three groups.

At first, the characteristics of local politics can be found in the specifics of institutions, actors of local governments and their relationship. This relationship is strongly influenced by the room for manoeuvre which they operate in. This is not the same in the different size of municipalities, but means the same rules for settlements with same size. This special institutional arrangement: the mayor – council – notary (especially before 2011) triangle, with the other political actors is the first characteristic of local politics. Despite of “parlamentarisation” (Pálné, 2008), that can be observed in larger cities; the rules concerning local institutions create alter conditions (executive role of the committees, the outsider members of committees, directly elected mayor, etc.).

The observation, that two, very similar (economic, geographic facilities, arrangement of power) settlement can evolve very differently, can be explained very often with the different personal character of local leaders. Political style or character determines the actor’s

---

2 An analogy of „local government is local” (Stoker, 1988: 234.).
ability to make consent, his/her openness to collect interests, his/her willingness to participate in any collaboration. Personal characteristics have strong effect on local political relations, so we can consider political character as a characteristic of local politics.

On the other hand, all those factors that influence the possibilities and connections of the actors are the distinguishing characteristics of local politics.

One of these is the size of the municipality. The size determines the work in the council (number of councillors, absence of political parties, the complexity of local problems, number of committees, etc.). It fundamentally determines the role of the mayor, because in smaller settlements they have more important role (Pálné, 2008).

The size of settlement has significant effect on the presence and interest representation abilities of local NGOs, and we also caught its effect on local referendum (regarding capacities for mobilization). Moreover, size of municipality has great importance in the case of cleavages: in smaller villages only one cleavage can play important role, while in the greater ones there are other cleavages, which can strengthen or weaken its effect.

Another important factor that influences relationships is the existence /absence of the supporting majority party. The existing stable majority determines the daily work in the council (factions, decision-making) and in the committees. One of the key elements in the role and position of the mayor is possession of stable majority in the council. For NGOs, majority can be extremely important especially in case they obtain it.

Local cleavages are also factors that influence local political actors: the existence /absence of these, their correlation with the macro-societal cleavages, also form the status of local political actors and their relations. They determine the behaviour of political actors, generate groups, and influence territorial division.

The result of the local election is also one of these factors, but it is not the object of deeper analysis because it is not the significant characteristic of local politics.

Third, I consider as a characteristic of local politics all those actors who participate in its formation, influencing the happenings, changing the relations between the actors. Broader range of actors are involved in the decision-making processes: Local NGOs and other actors of local civic organisations\(^3\) (that were not analysed in this thesis), though with changing intensity and effectiveness, can participate in formation of local cases. The most important local NGOs are “local parties” that operate on a single settlement, its goal is to get power, and have their visions about the whole settlement. Their presence is the proof of the fact that local

---

\(^3\) Economic interest groups, foundations, minority self-governments and organisations
politics formed by local topics and conflicts, and they produce their party-like organisations, either.

More actors are involved in decision-making process: besides politicians, other actors: local NGOs, other organisations of local civil sphere can participate, though with different intensity, in the formation of local cases. The most important civil actors are “local parties”, which operate in the municipalities, their goal is to obtain power and they have their vision regarding the whole settlement. Their presence is a proof that verifies the hypothesis that local politics is formed by different actors than at the national level. There are special local conflicts which create their own, party-like organisations. We can also consider citizens as such actors, who can influence decision-making, especially through a local referendum, but even if they start a referendum it can influence politicians.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Summary: Particularities of local politics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actors’ characteristics and their connection networks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal environment: institutional arrangements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political environment: power relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality, political character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factors affecting relations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support of majority party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local cleavages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Results of election)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special actors in local politics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOS, especially “local parties”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The world of local politics, just like an autonomous political system, has its own logic and operating mechanisms. Sometimes these show us the signs of party politics, and related closely to the size of settlements, but many of its dimensions refers to an autonomous rationality, which valid in only that context: local politics is exists, and its “local”, because it is organized with different logic from national politics, but, on the other hand, it is “politics” so it is determined by the rules of politics.

**VI. For further research**
Local politics naturally has other characteristics, which are not discussed in this thesis, but could be the objective of further research.

At first, we have to mention the specific role and status of local media. Most of local newspapers and TV channels are owned by the local government, so that local politicians are not under the pressure of publicity, in spite of their colleagues at national level. Local media reacts slower, published rarely, and does not make investigative journalism: the pressure is less on the representatives, and the potential loss of popularity comes slower, too.\(^4\) But, due to the media-ownership, they do not have to fear a hostile or critical media.

The other important political actor is the parliamentarian of the municipality, who represents the micro region in Parliament.\(^5\) Since 2012, he/she cannot be the mayor at the same time, but he/she has strong influence on local politics, even if he/she comes from the same party as the mayor. When the two positions could be occupied by the same person, the role of the vice-mayor had strengthened because of the regular absence of the mayor. It is an important question for further investigation whether the separation of the two positions will create new conflicts at local level, and simultaneously, will it decrease the ability to represent local and territorial interests?

The relation with the national, regional level and the central government also influences local politics, especially in Hungary. As the position of the mayor and the member of Parliament has been separated\(^6\), it would be interesting to examine the role of the latter in local politics.

Beyond the other actors of local politics, the dimensions examined in this thesis could be the objects of further analysis. The spectrum of research could be widened in both time and space; almost all of larger empirical research concentrates on larger settlements, though the analysis of smaller settlements could provide us useful information on local political relations.

The research on local power relations, and the governing style of the mayor should be repeated, in order to make a comparison. The research on cleavages could be continued with wider empirical data collection, and maybe it would be possible to find other types of cleavages. The governing style of local mayors should be examined in villages.

---

\(^4\) On the other hand, local politicians – especially the mayor - has more direct connection to the decisions – even to the bad ones.

\(^5\) Természetesen a településhez kötődő, listáról bejutott országgyűlési képviselők is megjelenhetnek, ám az űr legitimációjuk nem akkora, mint egyéni kerületi társaké, mely a polgármesteréhez hasonlatos.

\(^6\) 2011. évi CLXXXIX. törvény. Magyarország helyi önkormányzatairól
The interesting NGO type, “local party” could be examined more closely, especially those who have spent some years as a governing majority, in order to find out whether they became parties, or were able to conserve their civil characteristics.

The research on local referendums should be completed with data regarding the whole era.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1.</th>
<th>Dilemmas</th>
<th>Research areas</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Size of municipality</strong></td>
<td>Community-based or party principle?</td>
<td>Size of municipality and parties; independent candidates on local elections, community principle</td>
<td>Continuous reflexion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Centralisation or fragmentation?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional arrangements</strong></td>
<td>What is room for maneuver of the actors?</td>
<td>public law status of local governments</td>
<td>National and local statutes, literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Power relations created by local elections</strong></td>
<td>How it influences power relations? What power constellations are created?</td>
<td>Majority in the council, party affiliation of the mayor, coalitions, division of committee memberships and positions</td>
<td>Local elections data analysis, empirical survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal character of local political actors</strong></td>
<td>Role of personality, personalisation – are their any differences? What influences the political character?</td>
<td>governing style, credo</td>
<td>Empirical survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local cleavages</strong></td>
<td>Are their autonomus local cleavages? What factors are create them? How do they influence local power relations? How durable are they?</td>
<td>territorial cleavage, personality cleavage, ethnical conflicts and project-related conflicts,</td>
<td>Case studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengthness of civil organisations</strong></td>
<td>What factors are determine its abilities to influence politics? Will they become politicized?</td>
<td>NGOs in local politics and on local elections</td>
<td>Local elections data analysis, case studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Form and quality of citizen participation</strong></td>
<td>Elite or participatory democracy? Quality or quantity of participation is more important? Are citizens consumers or members of a community? Is local government closed or opened?</td>
<td>Will it fulfill the functions of participation? protest, local referendums, citizen forums</td>
<td>Data analysis, literature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VII. Publications of the author on the theme of the thesis

Local referendum in Hungary (A helyi népszavazások Magyarországon) Politikatudományi Szemle 2004/3. 194-223 (Co-author: Csilla Nagy)

Role of economic interest groups in local governments and elections (A vállalkozói érdekcsoportok szerepe az önkormányzatokban és a választásokon) Társadalom és Politika, 2005/1. 114-144.


Politics in Local Governments (Politikai élet a helyi önkormányzatokban) Budapest: MTA TK Politikatudományi Intézet, 2014
VIII. Cited literature

Bocz János 2004.: Újraválasztott polgármesterek, avagy kiket és miért választanak meg ismét a szavazópolgárok? Századvég, 2004. 3. szám


Horváth M. T. 1996. Pártok a helyi hatalomban Magyar Közigazgatási Intézet, Budapest


Nagy Csilla – Tamás Veronika: Helyi népszavazások Magyarországon. Politikatudományi Szemle XIII. évf. 3. szám, pp. 197-222

Pálné Kovács Ilona: A helyi kormányzás Magyarországon Dialóg-Campus, Pécs, 2008


Stoker, Gerry (2006): Local Governance Research: Paradigms, Theories and Implications; Lecture prepared for presentation at Zhejiang University, October 2006


