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THE CZECH REPUBLIC 2014 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTION: VOTERS GONE OUT, NEW PARTIES IN

Abstract:
This article describes and evaluates 2014 Czech European Parliament (EP) election. Starting with the context of the election, it goes through all relevant party actors participating in the election and introduces them both in general ideological terms as well as in relation towards the European integration. After results of election are discussed, the article concludes that 2014 EP election confirmed recent changes in the Czech party system – inter alia destabilization of the system as a whole, reconfiguration on its right wing and emergence of populism. Concerning the European message of the election, their results confirmed their second-order character.

Key words:
EP election 2014, Czech Republic, ANO 2011, party system, second order elections, ODS

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EUROPEAN ELECTIONS IN CROATIA

Abstract:
This text discusses the results of European elections in Croatia. It reaches the conclusion that voters, unhappy with the economic situation, punished the ruling social democratic coalition which suffered a heavy defeat. On the other hand, election results prove the recovery of HDZ, the opposition, centre-right party. It is also obvious that most Croatian citizens do not believe that European elections are important enough to warrant voting. Euroscepticism in Croatia is on the rise because citizens see no obvious benefits from joining the European Union. On the contrary, it is becoming increasingly clear that, in its first year as a member, Croatia will pay more funds into EU budget than it will receive from it. It is evident that direct elections of European Parliament members did not succeed in strengthening EU’s legitimacy in the eyes of Croatian voters, and that European elections are actually of secondary importance.

Key words:
European elections, Croatia, European Union, Euroscepticism

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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS IN LITHUANIA: POPULIST COMPETITION IN THE SHADOW OF THE PRESIDENTIAL VOTE

Abstract:
The 2014 European Parliament elections in Lithuania were successful for mainstream political parties: no new-born political movement came up in the political scene; no open Euro-sceptic party was able to gain any seats. But such a victory came at a price: the major European topics
(joining the euro-zone, land-ownership by the foreigners) were left aside; the EP electoral campaign was overshadowed by Presidential elections with populist discussions about Russian threats and national security. The coincidence of two political campaigns boosted the voter turnout and made a significant impact on the distribution of MEP seats; because of the higher turnout, smaller parties were able to enter the EP, while two established parties with devoted core voters suffered some losses compared to the 2009 EP elections.

Key words:
European Parliament, Lithuania, elections, campaign, electoral slogan, populism

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THE 2014 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS IN ROMANIA

Abstract:
The 2014 European elections in Romania represented a test for the political parties preparing for the presidential elections at the end of the same year. Firstly, we analyze the political context in which the European elections took place. Since 2012 the changing governing coalitions have created an unstable party system with many politicians shifting party allegiances. Several high ranking party officials were considered suspicious for corruption acts and this affected the nomination of candidates. Secondly, we show that although the ideological allegiance of citizens and political parties increased since 2012, the match between policy preferences of political party and their supporters continues to be remarkably low. Finally we discuss several effects of the European elections, including difficulties in appointing candidates and creating electoral coalitions for the presidential elections encountered by the center right wing parties.

Key words:
EP election 2014, party system, Romania, political competition, European Parliament

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THE 2014 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS IN SLOVENIA: HARDLY ANY NOVELTY

Abstract:
In the article the main characteristics of the European Parliament elections in 2014 in relation to the characteristics of the both previous elections to the Parliament were analysed. First, the legal framework is presented, followed by the presentation of candidate lists. As it is frequently the case, the authors for the analysis employed the analytical framework presented by Reif and Schmitt (1980). Following the framework, it is obvious the elections in Slovenia again demonstrated many elements of the second-order elections framework, for example in terms of the turnout, success of the governmental parties, success of small parties, as well as almost complete absence of party programmes, Euroscepticism and European topics in the campaign. Since several important domestic events happened just before the EP elections (e.g. resignation of the government at the beginning of May and the fact the leader of the biggest opposition party
was by the court found guilty of corruption activity and sent to the prison at the end of April) such developments did not come as a big surprise.

**Key words:**
Slovenia, European Parliament, elections, Euroscepticism

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**EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS IN POLAND IN 2014**

**Abstract:**
The aim of the article was discuss the elections to the European Parliament in Poland in 2014, taking into consideration the political situation before the elections in particular. The influence of the parliamentary elections in 2011 on the Polish political scene, and the activity of governmental coalition of the Civic Platform and the Polish Peasant Party, as well as the emergence of new political entities actively participating in electoral competition, has been analysed. A detailed analysis was done regarding the course of election campaign, paying attention to the elements of negative campaigning as well as the course of the elections themselves. The final reflections were dedicated to the election results and their influence (consequences) on the Polish party system.

**Key words:**
elections, European Parliament, Polish political scene, political competition, party system

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**VOTER TURNOUT IN THE 2014 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTION IN POLAND**

**Abstract:**
European Parliamentary election 2014 were the third elections for countries that joined European Union in 2004, including Poland. As we may observe from the very beginning of the EP’s history, elections suffer constant drop in voter turnout, and since 1999 the turnout total for less than 50%. There are many theories explaining this state of affairs, with most notable “second-order elections” and democracy deficit theories. Polish profile of voter turnout in EP elections seems to fit into frameworks of these theories, and is positioned among EU’s members with the lowest turnout. What is specific for electoral behaviour in Poland is stability: the turnout and support for political parties seems to stable and even petrified. This assessment seems to be supported by the results of election within past four years, both on aggregate and individual levels of data.

**Key words:**
EP elections, voter turnout, electoral behaviour in Poland, petrification of political scene
CANDIDATE SELECTION IN THE 2014 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTION IN POLAND

Abstract:
The article presents the determinants of creating candidate lists in European Parliament elections in Poland. Its subject context is the evaluation of importance of selected factors with reference to the effect obtained in the election. The main study hypothesis assumes different patterns of creating candidate lists in EP elections in comparison to parliamentary elections, involving the combined occurrence of several determinants. The first of them is the tendency to fill the highest positions in candidate lists with popular people well-known in the media, who have an advantage over anonymous ones. The second factor is territorial bonds connecting candidates with the electoral district where they stand for election. Another determinant taken into consideration is the territorial form of the candidate list. The last important element of analysis is the concentration of support, determined by the position on the candidate list.

Keywords:
party candidate selection, European parliamentary election, candidate list position, Polish party system

ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS: THE ILLUSION OF SUPRANATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Abstract:
The paper refers to the essential problem of the European political space, namely the insufficient implementation scale of accountability standards, which has a direct effect on the democratization of the European political system, specifically on the democracy deficit. The paper was presented the accountability standard on the background on the EP election in 2014, with the strong focus on the relations between the voters and the EP candidates. In the analyses the factors characterizing the quality of political discourse were considered taking into account both, the electorate political activity (principal – in the meaning Principal- Agent-Theory), as well as the offer of the running politicians (as the agents).

Key words:
accountability, principal, agent, political system, European Parliament
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POSITIONING STRATEGIES OF POLISH POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE 2014 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTION

Abstract:  
The article concerns an analysis of the types of positioning an electoral agenda adopted by the Polish political parties during the political campaign before the elections to the European Parliament in 2014. Positioning the electoral offer has been treated as one of the main elements of the electoral strategies of political parties, as the way of defining their electoral goals and identifying their strengths and weaknesses as well as opportunities and threats. The scope of analysis assumes main Polish political parties represented in the Polish parliament in the years 2011 - 2014 and additionally the party that managed to cross the entry barrier into the parliamentary market in the EP election in 2014.

Key words:  
positioning, political parties, elections, European Parliament

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THE SPECIFICITY OF ELECTORAL VOLATILITY IN EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS

Abstract:  
European Parliament elections are a special area for the analysis of electoral volatility understood as changes of electoral support for individual parties occurring in time. Firstly, it is so because they are referred to as second-order elections. Secondly, despite their supranational character, voting behaviours occurring in them are to a considerable extent moderated by the national context. The article discusses the qualities of European elections which generate electoral volatility at various analysis levels.

Key words:  
electoral volatility, European Parliament elections, voting behaviours

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EQUAL OR NOT? ON THE MATERIAL ASPECT OF EQUALITY OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS IN POLAND
Abstract:
This article focuses on the issue of equality of elections, in the context of the 2014 European Parliament election in Poland. Most often the definition of principles of elections’ equality comes down to emphasizing its two aspects: the formal one and the material one. The first of them refers to guaranteeing each person with the active voting right the same number of votes. The material aspect of the equality principle is connected with striving to guarantee the same “voting power” to the election participants. Most briefly, it means that a given number of people elect as many representatives as another group with the same numerical strength.

The main aim of this article is focus on the material aspect of implementing the principle of equality in EP elections. In the article will be emphasized three issues decisive for the specific features of the electoral system (electoral districts, election threshold and electoral formula), at the same time influencing the range of implementation of the material equality of elections. General findings will be confronted with empirical data, which will allow to formulate conclusions about the degree to which the European Parliament election conducted in Poland on 25th May 2014 met the principle of material equality.

Key words:
equality of elections, the European Parliament, electoral system