

Impact of Electoral System of Russian Federation on Other Political Institutes (Case of 2007, 2011, 2016 parliamentary elections)

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Ռուսաստանի Դաշնության ընտրական համակարգի դրսևերումները քաղաքական այլ ինստիտուտների վրա (2007, 2011, 2016 թթ. խորհրդարանական ընտրությունների օրինակով)

Մուղնեցյան Տիգրան Ա.

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Հայաստանի Հանրապետության Պետական կառավարման ակադեմիա (Երևան, ՀՀ)
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Ամփոփագիր. Սույն հոդվածում ներկայացվում է ընտրական համակարգի դրսևերումները այլ քաղաքական ինստիտուտների, մասնավորապես քաղաքական կուսակցությունների և խորհրդարանի վրա Ռուսաստանի Դաշնությունում դիտարկելով 2007, 2011, 2016թթ.-երի խորհրդարանական ընտրությունները: Հոդվածում նախևառաջ տրվում է ընդհանուր նկարագրություն ընտրական ինստիտուտին, դրա առաջնային և երկրորդական բաղկացուցիչներին, հետսովետական երկրներում ընտրական ինստիտուտի զարգացման առանձնահատկություններին: Բացի դրանից դիտարկվում է հետսովետական երկրներում քաղաքական ռեժիմի առանձնահատկություններից կախված ընտրական ինստիտուտի ձև նախապատվությունը: Քննարկվում է նաև գրականությունում առկա ընտրական ինստիտուտի ազդեցության մոդելները այլ քաղաքական ինստիտուտների վրա: Այնուհետև ընդհանուր տեսական ընկալումները կիրառվում են Ռուսաստանի Դաշնության երեք խորհրդարանական ընտրությունների համատեքստում: Վերոնշյալն իրագործելու նպատակով օգտագործվում են համեմատական, պատմական մեթոդները, ինչպես նաև քանակական նկարագրական վիճակագրության մեթոդներ: Մասնավորապես հաշվարկվում է Ռուսաստանի կառավարման ձևի ինդեքսը, ինչպես նաև հիմք ընդունելով ընտրական տվյալները կուսակցությունների էֆեկտիվ թիվը, անցողիկ էֆեկտիվ շեմը և խորհրդարանի կշիռը: Հոդվածը քննարկում է ընտրական համակարգի չորս առաջնային բաղկացուցիչները՝ ընտրական բանաձև, ընտրատարածքի ծավալ, ընտրական անցողիկ շեմ և խորհրդարանի չափ: Ըստ այդմ դիտարկվում է փոփոխությունները երեք խորհրդարանական ընտրությունների ընթացում և ներկայացնում դրանց ազդեցությունը: Ամփոփելով աշխատանքը կարող ենք նշել, որ Ռուսաստանի ընտրական համակարգը ձևակերպված է այնպես, որ պահպանի քաղաքական համակարգի գործող կարգավիճակը և ապահովի քաղաքական համակարգի կայունությունը: Երեք տարիների ընտրությունների արդյունքում խորհրդարան անցած կուսակցությունների թվի և կազմի անփոփոխ մնալը կարող է վկայել այդ կայունության մասին, սակայն հաշվի առնելով մասնակիցների թվի նոսրացումը և կուսակցական համակարգերում կատարվող փոփոխությունները փաստում են քաղաքական համակարգի որոշակի լծացման մասին:

Հանգուցարաններ՝ ընտրական համակարգ, քաղաքական ինստիտուտներ, կառավարման ձև, կուսակցական համակարգ, Ռուսաստանի Դաշնություն, քաղաքական ռեժիմ:

Влияние избирательной системы Российской Федерации на другие политические институты (Пример парламентских выборов 2007, 2011, 2016 годов)

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Аннотация. В данной статье представляется воздействие избирательной системы Российской Федерации на другие политические институты, в частности на политические партии и парламент, рассматривая парламентские выборы 2007, 2011, 2016 годов. В статье изначально дается общая характеристика избирательного института, его первичные и вторичные элементы, обсуждается специфика развития избирательного института в

постсоветских странах. Кроме того, рассматривается предпочтение формы избирательного института в зависимости от особенностей политического режима. Обсуждаются также существующие в литературе модели воздействия избирательного института на другие политические институты. После этого общие теоретические положения применяются в контексте трех парламентских выборов. Для достижения вышеизложенной цели используются сравнительные, исторические методы, а также количественные методы описательной статистики. В частности, вычисляется индекс формы правления России, а также учитывая избирательные данные эффективное число партий, эффективный избирательный порог и вес парламента. Статья также обсуждает четыре основные элементы избирательной системы: избирательная формула, размер избирательного округа, избирательный порог и размер парламента. В результате исследуются изменения во время трех парламентских выборов в России и рассчитывается их влияние. В заключении можно отметить, что избирательная система России образовано таким образом, чтобы сохранить действующее состояние политической системы и гарантировать стабильность политической системы. Это свидетельствует одинаковое число и состав парламентских партий за три избирательных цикла. Однако уменьшение количества участников и изменения в партийных системах обозначают некоторую политическую стагнацию.

Ключевые слова: избирательная система, политические институты, форма правления, партийная система, Российская Федерация, политический режим.

While discussing Post-Soviet dimension, and especially Russian Federation, foremost one should outline institutional heritage, which is reflected on various political processes and institutes. In particular, in USSR before its collapse non-inclusive majoritarian electoral system was exercised, which became a foundation and common institutional heritage for post-Soviet states at the initial stage [2, p. 43].

In many post-Soviet countries electoral process become essential, as it was deemed central and essential feature of democracy, in many cases ignoring other democratic procedures. During the third democratic wave throughout the world and post-communist political systems, so called "electoral democracies" emerged, as significant factor for legitimacy. However, rules of competition developed differently, designed in a way either to tackle or reward political competition [1, p. 411].

Bielasiak [1, p. 413] has studied all the electoral data of post-communist countries, mainly from 1989 to 2005, and compared that data with political regime assessment of Freedom House and Politi IV.

Comparing preferences of post-communist countries regarding electoral system during first election and political regime, we can imply following. Those regimes with motives to maintain non-competitive political environment kept the inherited institutional complex, such as majoritarian electoral system. While, democracies preferred proportional representation rule for open and competitive political environment.

Scrutinizing further the data, we can note that the trends mention in the passage above are preserved, even rooted. Political environment becomes more open and competitive in post-communist societies. Even though that trend exists, it gradually changes and some transformations can be outlined.

Generally there is four primal categories for electoral system regarding political regime: electoral

formula, district magnitude, electoral threshold and change of parliament size during the fifteen-year period.

Summing up, we can imply following for each primal electoral system component. The most democratic regimes gradually increase electoral threshold, in some extreme case starting from no threshold at all. These kinds of measures are applied to guarantee political stability. The most frequent change observed is district magnitude. Literature review shows that this element has the most significant impact on political parties. Regarding size of parliament, we can outline that during the afore-mentioned timespan the most rigorous autocratic regimes reduced number of parliament members. Particularly in post-Soviet countries, Belarus reduced the number from 260 to 110, Tajikistan from 181 to 63, Uzbekistan from 250 to 120 and Kazakhstan from 177 to 77 [1, p. 423].

Concerning electoral formula John Carey [3, p. 85] notes its important system-forming role especially in countries performing rapid democratic turnaround. Data processed from 1945 includes 57 democratic turnaround performed countries out of 67 and their 211 election cycles.

Study of abovementioned election cycles implies that in majority of times preference of electoral formula is given to proportional representation. Simultaneously, D'Hondt formula is the most popular among those who prefer proportional representation.

Discussing new democracies, post-Soviet countries also included, distinguishing feature of first five election cycle is high fragmentation level of votes and mandates, that is abundance of political life participants due to electoral rule and electoral formula. From this we can imply, that Hare's largest remainder formula guarantees the higher level of participation in new democracies during first five election cycles. After first five cycles absolute

majoritarian electoral system also guarantees high participation and inclusion.

Besides that Carey proposes formula that estimates political, particularly partisan, competitiveness. Formula represents percentage deference between first and second most voted political parties: $v_I - v_{II}$ [3, p. 95]. It is important to note that this formula will also be applied for studying certain cases.

In spite of the fact that Carey in his paper discusses cases of Peru, Honk Kong, Spain and Tunisia, as examples of rapid democratic turnaround, it is still significant to adhere to its empiric conclusions. The latter is important because Carey's definition of new democracies is also appropriate and covers post-Soviet political regimes. Furthermore, Carey finds that to prevent intentionally and manually formed political majorities, which can lead to unipersonal rule, Hare's largest remainder formula is introduced. In the case of D'Hondt's formula, political parties that are unable to receive majority of votes, are given an opportunity to seize majority with the help of the formula. Particularly, when competition is unbalanced, that is when larger political party dominates in fragmented political environment. That are the cases of Tunisia's first election and Peru's election of 2006. The abovementioned issue is very relevant in new democratic regimes. In that circumstances Hare's largest remainder formula application is the most optimal option.

To sum up afore-mentioned passages, we should bare in mind that study of mixed or predinetal forms of governance are somewhat imaginative and conditional tools that facilitate our understanding of electoral system's impact on other political institutes. That notion is significant as electoral system in literature mainly refers to parliamentary electoral rules and regulations. It is also worth mentioning that examination of electoral system in presidential or mixed system is still based on parliamentary elections data output due to its abundance and relevance.

Theoretical concepts and notions discussed above hereafter will be applied in Russian Federation's political dimension. Russia's political environment, institutes and procedures alongside with several similarities has its peculiarities. Among those peculiarities we can underline firmness of presidential institute, bicameral structure of parliament, due to latter specifics of electoral system elements and others.

First and foremost we should note that as literature is full of analysis and data processing concerning description of Russia electoral system and its changes, impact on other institution and consequences up to 2005, this piece will concentrate

on three election cycles after 2005, that is 2007, 2011, 2016.

Hence we will apply Krouwel's model modified by Zaznaev [4, pp. 342-345] to estimate parliamentary and presidential indexes of Russia according to given criterias. As well as form of governance index is estimated through deduction of parliamentary index from presidential index.

After 2005 in Russian Federation four significant constitutional changes occurred that had impact on the form of governance. In 2008, changes concerned prolongation of presidential office and lower house of parliament: six and five years respectively [6]. With the other significant change in 2008 government was held accountable to parliament too [8]. Two ammendment of 2014 [7] handed president the right to appoint up to 10% of his/her representatives in upper house of parliament and as well as right to appoint attorneys was expanded [9].

So taking into account constitutional amendments it turns that, before 2008 presidential index accounted for 7.5, while parliamentary index 2.5, henc the governance index was +5. This means that presidential power had significant weight in Russia's checks and balances system. After 2008 constitutional amendments balance had little shift. Presidential index is calculated 7, while parliamentary 3, hence index of form of governance is 4. From this we can empirically state Russian Federation in presidential republic, despite little shift towards parliamentarism.

After 2005 four parliamentary elections were held: in 2007, 2011, 2016 and 2021. However, due to lack of data output, processing and time for reflection, the last one will be omitted from observations. Before 2005 elections were held with mixed system: combining both majoritarian and proportional representation systems. In 2005 with the "On election of Federation Council's State Duma members" law [11] elector system fully switched to proportional representation system and electoral threshold was canceled. However, with 2014 law "On election of Federation Council's State Duma members" electoral system returned to its mixed state.

In 2011 parliamentary tresold was 7 percent, which was raised before 2007 election. However, due to amendments made in 2009 [10], political parties that gained 5-6% percent of votes could receive one mandate, while the one with 6-7% of vote could get two.

Now we will try to implement following formulas by using election data starting with 2007 parliamentary elections. Taagepara and Shugart propose $100\%/Mp$ formula, where p is number of political parties. However, we will follow formula

that Lijphart suggests, which is $100\% / 2M$: From this one Lijphart derives effective electoral threshold, which is the mean of upper and lower thresholds: $T_{eff} = 50\% / (M+1) + 50\% / 2M$.

With putting together afore-mentioned four primal and secondary features in literature several significant formulas are derived. First is, so called Seat Product Model, which turns effective number of parties with this formula $N_s = (MS)^{1/6}$. It is noteworthy that N_s is calculated with $N_s = 1 / \sum (S_i)^2$ formula as well, where \sum is the sum, I - parties with seats, s share of seats of political parties.

As a result of their theoretical and empirical studies Taagepara and Shugart propose [3, p. 57] four formula-laws. It is worth to note, that although there are many other formulas to the level of law are categorized only this four:

a) law of the largest political party: $s_1 = (MS)^{-1/8}$

b) law of the number of political parties: $N_s = (MS)^{1/6}$

c) law of largest political parties' votes: $v_1 = [(MS)^{1/4} + 1]^{-1/2}$

d) law of effective number of vote-received political parties: $N_v = [(MS)^{1/4} + 1]^{2/3}$

So in 2007 parliamentary elections in Russia threshold was at 7%, while district magnitude was equal to parliament size that is: $M=S=450$:

Initially, let's calculate effective threshold. $T_{eff} = 0.16\%$, which shows the need to set official electoral threshold at higher level.

Effective number of seat winning parties equals to 7.66, according to the Seat product model, while in fact parliamentary parties were 4. Structure of the parliament based on weight of political parties is 1.92. Due to latter, we can state that at least superficially Russian Federation political system resembles to two party system. Deviation floats around 2.5% which is relatively high number. While calculated extent of competitiveness is 53%, which on the contrary is relatively low indicator for competitiveness. With the predicted model the share of the largest political party in parliament had to be $s_1 = 0.2$, in other words 20% of parliament. Whereas in reality the largest party has 2.5 times more share.

It is significant to underline, that in State Duma elections Hare's largest remainder formula was applied. In case of D'Hondt's formula application one seat from second place political party would be transferred to the first-placed one.

Furthermore 2011 parliamentary elections will be discussed. Here as well, threshold was fixed at 7%, while district magnitude equaled to parliament size, which is $M=S=450$. However, effective number of political parties is higher with almost one compared to previous elections, equaling 2.8. The latter number is somewhat comparable to the real

number of political parties that passed to State Duma. Deviation of representation floats around 2.8. While the predicted share of seats of the largest party is still the same, considering parliament size and district magnitude remaining unchanged.

In 2016 parliamentary elections Russia switched back to 5% electoral threshold. It is noteworthy, that during this elections law blocked the opportunity to form alliances [12]. Of all 14 competing political parties this time again only four could pass to State Duma. Majoritarian system only allowed two non-partisan deputies to be elected. The ruling party received significantly more votes than in previous election. Along that lack of new competitors in political environment may imply that regime used electoral reforms to cement its place. Even lowering electoral threshold didn't impact political inclusiveness.

Parliament's weight of 1.6 parties epitome the abovementioned statement, which is the lowest among three elections. Moreover, 1.2 of 1.6 is share of the ruling party. Interestingly, with the given election results and application of D'Hondt's formula advantaged difference for ruling party is only one seat.

By summing up process and collected data for three electoral cycle, we can state about "party of power" distinguishing feature for many post-Soviet political entities. Besides that, according to afore-mentioned conclusions are to follow.

Regarding electoral formula, which many political scientists consider as the most significant element of electoral system and democratic development, we can state that in Russian political system guarantees only one seat difference. Hare's largest remainder formula only enables slight edge for chasing political parties. Considering electoral formula in general political system's context we may imply that it aims to guarantee stability of political status quo. As we will see further, whole electoral system is designed to fulfill that function.

Size of parliament, State Duma, remained the same for three consecutive election cycles. That regarding Russia's complex territorial administration, existence of local parliaments, and also demographic trends in Russia is fully inherent to political system's evolution.

District magnitude and electoral threshold will be discussed in one complex. One of the reasons of that, as Lijphart mentions [5, p. 34] that small district magnitude equals to high electoral threshold. The other reason is that those two elements were reformed simultaneously in Russia to affirm the same result. Shifting to proportional representation made district magnitude bigger, resulting one district equaling 450, while maintaining 7% electoral threshold. Shift from 7% threshold to 5%

threshold intended relatively more inclusive political and partisan environment, although the result was canceled due to parallel shift to mixed electoral system. The latter resulted steep decline in district magnitude, thus neutralizing former threshold reform. From the first glance aforementioned changes had zero impact on political and partisan inclusiveness, however more detailed study can constitute about slight decline.

To sum up, we can state that electoral system of Russian Federation is designed in a way to maintain political stability and guarantee little changes in political, particularly partisan dimension. Unchanged number and structure of parliamentary political parties during three parliamentary election cycles epitomes about the latter mentioned stability. However, considering reduction of number of participants in political life and changes in party system imply about slight decline of political system. Moreover, observing rising authority of the “party of power” in the context of declining political and partisan inclusiveness, we may find that this state of affairs supports dominant presidential institute. In a way guaranteeing execution of presidential power without facing any resistance.

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11. Федеральный закон от 18 мая 2005 г. № 5-ФЗ "О выборах депутатов Государственной Думы Федерального Собрания Российской Федерации"
12. Федеральный закон от 22 февраля 2014 г. N 20-ФЗ "О выборах депутатов Государственной Думы Федерального Собрания Российской Федерации" URL: <https://inlnk.ru/ZZg1eD> (ссылка укорочена. Дата обращения: 09.06.2022).

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