

## ABSTRACTS

KÁLMÁN PÓCZA

**Eternal crisis of parliamentarism? Decline of the legislature and the question of excessive demands**

In the mid-1920s the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) recognized the widespread discontent of the electorate with the parliamentary system of government in general and, more specifically, with the institution of parliaments in many European countries. The IPU asked some internationally renowned experts to share their views on the causes and consequences of this crisis and formulated at the same time a resolution that included some proposals about how the crisis could be overcome. The Hungarian National Group of the IPU forwarded the proposals to politicians and scholars, and published an edited volume with reactions from the Hungarian respondents in 1929. This paper presents an overview of these reactions, but first it delineates a narrative framework that might be applied to the Hungarian reactions to the IPU proposals. Secondly, it sketches out the general political context in Hungary with special reference to the development of Hungarian parliamentarism in the inter-war period. Thirdly it gives some insights into the public discourse on the crisis of parliamentarism and fourthly it analyses the Hungarian reactions to the IPU proposals.

**Keywords:** parliamentarism – Inter-Parliamentary Union – crisis – Interwar Hungary – functions of parliaments

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**Empty words? Detailed debates in the Justice Committee (2014–2018)**

The aim of this paper is to evaluate the new detailed debate of the legislative process in the Hungarian National Assembly which was introduced in 2014. The practice of the Justice Committee considering the scope of duties, the number of detailed debates conducted, and the professional background of its members provides an appropriate area for this examination. The paper is based on a comprehensive analysis of the detailed debates that took place in relation to bills submitted between 2014 and 2018. My analysis concentrates on how the Justice Committee has used its new power of scrutiny.

The paper argues that despite of the extended authorization provided by the new regulation, the Justice Committee has not become an important forum for decision-making, and it does not have a significant impact on the content of the bills. Detailed debates are largely determined by the Government. The Committee almost always decides on the amendments in accordance with the opinion of the Government.

Thus, the main function of the detailed debate is to present the different political standpoints. However, plenary sittings would be more suitable for sending political messages to the public. Therefore, it is likely that the elimination of the detailed debate in plenary sittings contributed to a significant drop in the number of amendments submitted by MPs between 2014 and 2018. In the absence of amendments, the detailed debate simply loses its importance.

**Keywords:** legislative procedure, Hungarian National Assembly, parliamentary committees, parliamentary debate, amendment proposals

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**Barriers of the political community**

The aim of this paper to investigate the borders of political community in sense of people having the right to take part in the election of some state organs (parliament, local government). The impact of citizenship, domicile, time, age, mental capacity and commitment of certain crimes on the membership in the political community are analysed as well. If we take a look at the question as constitutional lawyers, we can see, that connecting suffrage to citizenship, domicile or certain age complies with both the Basic Law of Hungary and the international duties of Hungary as well. Other barriers to the membership in the political community are the so-called „natural exclusionary reasons” which means the exclusion of certain mentally or psychosocially disabled people furthermore criminals from the suffrage. These issues are disputed even by constitutional lawyers. However, it is worth to take a look at theoretical considerations behind the legal norms and examine the philosophical basis of the exclusion of certain groups from suffrage. In the end of the analysis we can see that the closeness of relationship with the state, the impact of the elected body on the person, furthermore responsibility of kin-states towards kin-minorities are considered. Integrity of electoral system is the main reason regarding exclusion of some people being lack of mental capacity or under certain age is another reason. At the same time, the necessity of the extension of voting rights to these people appear in the literature as well. So the issue of children’s suffrage emerged as well. The reasons behind it were sustainable development, future-oriented decision-making, extension of democracy and increasing of population growth. Meanwhile a more radical standpoint regarding the necessity of connecting suffrage to certain level of knowledge appeared as well. Some of the criminals are withdrawn suffrage as well. This can be considered as an ostracism from the political community. It is also outlined, that certain members of the political community (homeless, disabled or illiterates) are more vulnerable, therefore they need support to exercise their rights. As a consequence we can say that the barriers of political community are far from stable and are challenged day-by-day from each side. That is why there is a need on examining and tracking this question in the future.

**Keywords:** political community, suffrage, disability, disenfranchisement, vote

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ATTILA HORVÁTH

**In Poland nothing new? The results of the 2019 parliamentary election**

In October 2019 parliamentary elections were held for the ninth time in the history of the independent Poland. Just like in 2015, the Law and Justice party (PiS) won the elections by a large margin, securing absolute majority in the lower chamber of the parliament (Sejm). Firstly, I outline the political background and the prelude of the elections, highlighting the most important political developments of the 2015–2019 period and focusing on the governmental actions resulting the eroding of democracy and rule of law. The next section is devoted to the electoral system, paying special attention to its impact on the results of the parties. The outcome of the election is investigated in the third section. While assessing the results, I analyze the aftermath of the election in the context of the almost 30 years history of the Polish party system, pointing out that the results of the last election fit in the structure of the competition emerged in 2005. I also evaluate the results of the parties, underlining the reasons of the permanent popularity of the PiS. Finally, I deal with the government formation which held no excitement since PiS controls more than half of the seats in the Sejm. However, the single party PiS government may face with severe challenges in the future.

**Keywords:** Poland, elections, 2019, parties, party system

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CSILLA FEDINEC

**Ukraine's 2019 snap parliamentary elections: rise of political newcomers**

Modern parliamentarism is based on parties. In Ukraine multi-party system evolved in the period before the change of the Ukrainian state. In the last three decades this system has been continuously changing but there has not been much fluctuation among the actors. Up to 1994 ideological aspects were of decisive importance regarding the establishment of parties, but later other considerations came to view, the main function of a party was no more the representation of social interests but the political legalization and support of the ambitions of some groups or people – connected to campaigns. Parties were established by administrative means, the point was to force persons somehow subordinated to the founders, to join the given party. Opposition parties were undermined by founding “clone parties” or buying parties. Economic lobbies became dominant actors. Up to the middle of the first decade of the 2000s the concept of parliamentary majority was relative, the legal obligation was prescribed only by the law preparing the elections in 2006. 2019 – the year of parliamentary and presidential elections – disturbed this rather particular political construction: newcomers appeared authorized much more than ever, who promised a basic transformation of the country and the parliament. Election victories cannot be explained only by protest votes against the ruling power, they may be the result of an elaborated political project. Performer, actor and producer Volodymyr Zelensky won the spring elections with the strongest authorization of all times, he is the first top politician, who did not take any part in the political life of the country before. The parliament – loyal to the resigning president – tried to stop the turn by limiting the power of the president by constitutional means. To prevent this, the new president initiated snap parliamentary elections, which his newly founded party, Servant of the People won with overwhelming victory. It was the first time in the history of the country and European democracies that one single political power gained the parliamentary majority and formed a government. Political practice will prove if it is actually an innovation in politics.

**Keywords:** Ukraine, Constitution, electoral law, elections, Constitutional Court, parliament

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**The 2019 Indian General Elections**

The last Indian general elections were held in seven phases from 11 April to 19 May 2019. As a result, the governing Hindu nationalist cabinet of Prime Minister Narendra Damodardas Modi remain in office. Modi's party, the central-right Bharatiya Janata Party won 303 seats in the lower house of the parliament, further increasing its majority. The main opposition party, the Indian National Congress won only 52 mandates, but it could stabilize its leading position in the left side of the political arena. However, the new five years term of the government means that the BJP could consolidate its economic and social programs in the base of Hindu nationalist ideology. This paper offers an overview on the basic structure of the Indian parliament and government, the two main parties and their alliances, the campaign and the results of the elections. Nevertheless, this is not all.

The rise of nationalism is not a typical Indian phenomenon. We can observe it worldwide, in countries with various historical, social and cultural backgrounds. Nowadays, the Hindu nationalist political ideology and practice causes many tensions in the fragmented and multicultural Indian society, especially between the dominant Hindus and the Muslim minority. The ongoing reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir state is the newest example of this. In the summer of 2019, Modi's government revoked the special status granted to Jammu and Kashmir and created two new union territories out of its area. Despite of the political communication, the reason of this action is clearly ideological, and it is seriously harms the interests of the local Muslim community. India face with deep changes in its originally secular and democratic political culture. The first governments' territorial nationalism replaced by a religious-civilizational based nation-building plan, which aims to achieve the total Hindu supremacy in India. Many consequences of this process are questionable today, but we can foresee that the South Asian country's society will pay a big prize for this new style of national identity.

**Keywords:** India, elections, Narendra Modi, hindu nationalism, parliament.

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ZSÓKA MAGYAR

**Report on the Conference on Legislators and Legislation in Europe**

An English conference titled „Legislators and Legislation in Europe” was held on 2th May 2019 on the occasion of the day of parliamentarism, which attracted lecturers and audience not only from the countries of the Visegrad Group countries, but also from Vienna, London and Milan, in order to discuss their experiences with the functioning and powers of the Parliament.

The event was carried out in cooperation with the National University of Public Service, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church of Hungary, and the Széchenyi István University of Győr, the Faculty of Law of Ferenc Deák. The participating lecturers and the audience were greeted by Dr. Szalayné Dr. Erzsebet Sándor, deputy commissioner for the protection of the rights of ethnic minorities in Hungary, and representative of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Frank Spengler. The conference was hosted by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Centre for Social Sciences, in Budapest.

**Keywords:** Legislation, legislator, parliamentary procedure, democracy, opposition

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