

RENÁTA BZDÍLOVÁ, GABRIEL EŠTOK, JAKUB BARDOVIČ : ELECTIONS AND ELECTORAL ISSUES IN EU STATES

Pavol Šafarik University in Košice, Košice, 2018, 238 p.

The topic of elections and electoral systems is one of the classic domains of political science. Its biggest problem is keeping the data up-to-date, because new elections always bring new results, and individual electoral rules also change quite often. It is therefore very important to always monitor the validity of individual results. On the other hand, this also brings the advantage that authors can update their data on a regular basis and bring new and updated data over a period of time. This introduction is also applicable for the new university textbook *Elections and Electoral Issues in EU States* from the Department of Political Science in Košice, written by its two political scientists (Renáta Bzdílová and Gabriel Eštok) and their colleague from the Faculty of Social Sciences of UCM in Trnava (Jakub Bardovič). Overall, the textbook is divided into individual chapters, describing each country from the family of EU Member States. Given that the European Parliament, as the only EU institution, is created directly by citizens of individual EU countries, the last chapter is devoted to these elections. In addition to the results of individual parliamentary elections, the authors also provide basic geographic data including area, population, capital city, currency, establishment, current GDP, form of government, or constitutional structure. There is also an overview of the official languages in countries given, nationality structure and information about the year of inclusion to the EU or the Schengen area.

In addition to these basic data, the authors also offer brief analyses of the organization of legislative and executive power, as well as view on dominant political parties. It should be mentioned here, that in the future it would be appropriate if the given information were to the same extent for all countries. For example, the lists of the constitutional competences of the head of state, government or parliament are not present in the same scope. If these information are present in some countries description, it would be appropriate to add them to others as well, and this textbook would then have even more positive impact on the overall dimension of comparative politics.

Particular mention should be made about the sections devoted to the elections themselves, in the form of describing the electoral mechanisms and arran-

gement of the country by electoral districts. In this part it is possible to sense that some authors are closer to institutional views and others emphasize the elections themselves, as well as the electoral rules. Therefore another recommendation to the team of authors, in case of publishing updated edition, is to try to define each part in a more balanced way for each country. In any case, the enrichment of this author's representation is the fact, that they declare and visually express the development of voter turnout in each elections using progress chart. Although there are different electoral rules in various countries, such a view allows to further present their analytical views to readers.

Although the issue of elections and electoral systems brings different perspectives, different interpretations of results, different perspectives on the electoral rules themselves, I believe that the authors have succeeded in putting together a textbook suitable for students of political sciences. It represents a product that helps to understand the overall issue, provides a sufficient overview of terms and statistical data. Thus, it is a suitable learning tool, thanks to which they can sufficiently understand the purpose and goal of this field. And that is also the main positive of this whole university textbook.

Finally, the authors may be advised that this publication should not be left alone, but it should be updated at certain intervals. If they have already focused on all current countries in the EU, they might expand their scope to include at least the EU's associated countries (such as Norway or Switzerland) and those in the symbolic waiting room for inclusion into EU (Albania, Montenegro and Iceland). Then, there would be only a small step towards all countries in the European area, which would be convenient for all readers. It would also be useful if this university textbook could be accessed through the public distribution network or would be available on the Internet, providing learning material of good quality to all students.

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