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Party Leadership in Post-Communist Countries: Selected Issues

1. Introduction

Party leadership is not a common research topic and sadly it cannot be counted among the most important trends in political sciences. Among other reasons, such a situation is due the fact that this topic is located somewhere between the main research fields of this scientific discipline. The range of analysis of party leadership includes issues related to political systems, party systems, electoral systems, foreign policy or political marketing.

Politicians who lead their parties are often a subject of press debates, they are discussed in news bulletins, internet portals or conversations among citizens. However, much less frequently they become a topic to pursue in academic research. Common knowledge and the media reality obfuscate the systemised body of knowledge in this field.

This chapter constitutes a summary report of the research described in a multi-author monograph. Its authors focus on post-communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe. The undertaken comparative analysis concerns party leadership in 57 parties in 10 countries. The study included formations which entered the lower chamber of parliament as a result of the last elections. Hence, taking into consideration the time to prepare the publications, the study reflects the data as current as the second half of 2014.

Every chapter of the monograph has a similar structure and attempts at analysing the following issues: presentation of the evolution and structure of the party system; general characteristics of the analysed parties chosen in the most recent parliamentary elections; formal determinants of party leadership; profiles of the previous leaders of the presented parties.

As of yet, the issue referred to in the title has not been described in detail in the scope presented below. This is the first such research initiative of Polish political scientists whose purpose was to collect in one volume analyses regarding various countries. It is the more valuable since their research encompasses the post-communist area, where democratic processes are still being institutionalised and political transformations are dynamic. Moreover, the publication constitutes yet another scientific contribution of Political Leadership Section in the Polish Political Science Association.

Attempts at describing party leadership among researchers around the world which would employ the comparative method have so far been rather infrequent. We can refer mainly to two major monographs in English, whose purpose was to collect in one place data concerning many countries in line with the editors' unified assumptions. However, what seems to be worth emphasising is the fact that the monographs focused primarily on politically stable democracies.

The first monograph is in fact a special issue of the *European Journal of Political Research* from 1993. It presents the analysis of six countries: Belgium¹; France²; Great Britain³; Ireland⁴; Norway⁵; Spain⁶. In line with the assumptions of the contributors, the volume centred on answering a few questions: who is the leader; how is s/he elected; what are the characteristics of the selection process; what are the consequences thereof?

¹ L. DeWinter, The Selection of Party Presidents in Belgium: Rubber-stamping the Nominee of the Party Elites, *European Journal of Political Research* 24:3(1993): 233–56.

² J.L. Thiebault, Party Leadership Selection in France: Creating a 'President's Party', *European Journal of Political Research* 24:3(1993): 277–93.

³ M. Punnett, Selecting the Party Leader in Britain. A Limited Participatory Revolution, *European Journal of Political Research* 24:3(1993): 257–76.

⁴ M. Marsh, Selecting Party Leaders in the Republic of Ireland: Taking the Lid off Party Politics, *European Journal of Political Research* 24:3(1993): 295–316.

⁵ K. Strøm, Competition Ruins the Good Life: Party Leadership in Norway, *European Journal of Political Research* 24:3(1993): 317–47.

⁶ G. Colomé, and L.L. Nieto, The Selection of Party Leaders in Spain: Socialist Cohesion and Opposition Turmoil, *European Journal of Political Research* 24:3(1993): 349–60.

The other monograph also focused mainly on the selection process party leaders undergo, yet it contained a greater number of cases. The analysis encompassed 13 countries: Australia⁷; Austria⁸; Belgium⁹; Canada¹⁰; Germany¹¹; Great Britain¹²; Hungary¹³; Italy¹⁴; Israel¹⁵; Norway¹⁶; Portugal¹⁷; Romania¹⁸; Spain¹⁹.

Apart from the two monographs there are of course numerous other valuable publications which can be included in the trend of analysing party leadership. However, neither of them is a collective study.

⁷ A. Gauja, Leadership Selection in Australia, In: J.B. Pilet and W.P. Cross, eds. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies. A Comparative Study*, pp. 189–205.

⁸ L. Ennser-Jedenastick, W.C. Müller, The Selection of Party Leaders in Austria. Channeling ambition effectively, In: J.B. Pilet and W.P. Cross, eds. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies. A Comparative Study*, pp. 62–76.

⁹ J.B. Pilet, B. Wauters, The Selection of Party Leaders in Belgium, In: J.B. Pilet and W.P. Cross, eds. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies. A Comparative Study*, pp. 30–46.

¹⁰ W.P. Cross, Party Leadership in Canada, In: J.B. Pilet and W.P. Cross, eds. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies. A Comparative Study*, pp. 171–188.

¹¹ K. Detterbeck, I. Rohlfing, Party Leader Selection in Germany, In: J.B. Pilet and W.P. Cross, eds. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies. A Comparative Study*, pp. 77–92.

¹² T. Bale, P. Webb, The Selection of Party Leaders in the UK, In: J.B. Pilet and W.P. Cross, eds. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies. A Comparative Study*, pp. 12–29.

¹³ G. Ilnoski, R. Várnagy, Stable Leadership in the Context of Party Change. The Hungarian Case, In: J.B. Pilet and W.P. Cross, eds. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies. A Comparative Study*, pp. 156–170.

¹⁴ G. Sandri, A. Seddone, F. Venturino, The Selection of Party Leaders in Italy, 1989–2012, In: J.B. Pilet and W.P. Cross, eds. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies. A Comparative Study*, pp. 93–107.

¹⁵ O. Kenig, G. Rahat, Selecting Party Leadership in Israel, In: J.B. Pilet and W.P. Cross, eds. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies. A Comparative Study*, pp. 206–221.

¹⁶ E.H. Allern, R. Karlsen, Unanimous, by Acclamation? Party Leadership Selection in Norway, In: J.B. Pilet and W.P. Cross, eds. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies. A Comparative Study*, pp. 47–61.

¹⁷ M. Lisi, A. Freire, The Selection of Party Leaders in Portugal, In: J.B. Pilet and W.P. Cross, eds. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies. A Comparative Study*, pp. 124–140.

¹⁸ M. Chiru, S. Gherghina, Let's not risk too much. The Selection of Party Leaders in Romania, In: J.B. Pilet and W.P. Cross, eds. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies. A Comparative Study*, pp. 141–155.

¹⁹ O. Barberà, J. Rodríguez-Teruel, A. Barrio, M. Baras, The Selections of Party Leaders in Spain, In: J.B. Pilet and W.P. Cross, eds. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies. A Comparative Study*, pp. 108–123.

2. Selected conclusions

The analyses of particular countries contain a number of detailed data referring to aspects of party leadership. Having considered all of them, we decided to select two main aspects which can be best compared in order to draw conclusions pertinent to all the discussed parties. In the first group there are formal determinants within each party, among which we can distinguish: the name of the position, the term of office, the electing body. The second group comprises issues related to social and demographic features of party leaders, such as gender, education, and age when they took the position.

2.1. The name of the position

First of all, the current comparative study focuses on determining precisely who is considered to be a party leader. In the analysed parties it is their president/chairman, i.e. a person who is the head of the party. Hence no attention was paid to parliamentary clubs' chairmen, general secretaries or other positions provided for in the organisational structure of each party.

In 10 analysed countries 57 parties were included in the study. The vast majority of these parties use either of two names to refer to a party leader in their statutes. These are *president* or *chairman*, the only exception being the Communist Party of Ukraine, which traditionally calls the position in question *First Secretary*.

Additionally, it needs emphasising that the applied terminology is homogenous in the presented countries. Poland is the only exception here, as both *chairman* (PO, TR, SLD) and *president* (PiS, PSL) are in use. In the remaining countries *chairman* is applied in 7 countries (Albania, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Lithuania, Slovakia, and Ukraine), while *president* in two remaining ones (Croatia, Serbia).

It can thus be seen that in the majority of the presented cases the term *chairman* is applied. Considering the above mentioned diversity in Poland, it needs emphasising that the choice of name is caused by the place of a given party on the left-right wing scale. Left-wing and centre parties use the word *chairman*, while those removed more to the right prefer to have *president*.

Table 1

The name of the position

Country	Party name	Party name in English	Name	Name in English	Term of office
Albania	Partia Demokratike e Shqipërisë	Democratic Party of Albania	Kryetar	Chairman	4
	Partia Socialiste e Shqipërisë	Socialist Party of Albania	Kryetar	Chairman	n/a
Croatia	Socijaldemokratska Partija Hrvatske	Social Democratic Party of Croatia	Predsjednik	President	4
	Hrvatska Narodna Stranka – Liberalni Demokrati	Croatian People's Party – Liberal Democrats	Predsjednik	President	4
	Istarski Demokratski Sabor	– Istrian Democratic Assembly	Predsjednik	President	4
	Hrvatska Stranka Umirovljenika	Croatian Pensioners Party	Predsjednik	President	4
	Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica	Croatian Democratic Union	Predsjednik	President	4
	Hrvatski Laburisti – Stranka Rada	Croatian Labourists – Labour Party	Predsjednik	President	4
	Hrvatski Demokratski Savez Slavonije i Baranije	Croatian Democratic Alliance of Slavonia and Baranja	Predsjednik	President	4
	Hrvatska Seljačka Stranka	Croatian Peasant Party	Predsjednik	President	4
	Hrvatska Stranka Prava dr. Ante Starčević	Croatian Party of Rights dr. Ante Starčević	Predsjednik	President	4
	Samostalna Demokratska Srpska Stranka	Independent Democratic Serb Party	Predsjednik	President	4
The Czech Republic	Česká Strana Sociálně Demokratická	Czech Social Democratic Party	Předseda	Chairman	2
	ANO 2011	ANO 2011	Předseda	Chairman	2
	TOP 09	TOP 09	Předseda	Chairman	2
	Komunistická Strana Čech a Moravy	Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia	Předseda	Chairman	4
	Občanská Demokratická Strana	Civic Democratic Party	Předseda	Chairman	2
	Křesťanská a Demokratická Unie – Československá Strana Lidová	Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party	Předseda	Chairman	2
	Úsvit Přímé Demokracie	Dawn of Direct Democracy	Předseda	Chairman	5
Hungary	Magyar Polgári Szövetség	Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Alliance	Elnök	Chairman	4
	Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt	Christian Democratic People's Party	Elnök	Chairman	4
	Magyar Szocialista Párt	Hungarian Socialist Party	Elnök	Chairman	4
	Jobbik	Jobbik-the Movement for a Better Hungary	Elnök	Chairman	4
Lithuania	Lietuvos Socialdemokratų Partija	Social Democratic Party of Lithuania	Pirmininkas	Chairman	2
	Tvarka ir Teisingumas	Order and Justice	Pirmininkas	Chairman	2
	Darbo Partija	Labour Party	Pirmininkas	Chairman	2
	Lietuvos Lenkų Rinkimų Akcija	Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania	Pirmininkas	Chairman	4
	Tėvynės Sąjunga – Lietuvos Krikščionys Demokratai (konservatoriai, politiniai kaliniai ir tremtiniai, tautininkai)	Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrats (Conservatives, Political Prisoners and the Exiled, Nationalists)	Pirmininkas	Chairman	2
	Lietuvos Respublikos Liberalų Sąjūdis	Liberals' Movement of the Republic of Lithuania	Pirmininkas	Chairman	2
	Lietuvos Valstiečių ir Žaliųjų Sąjunga	Lithuanian Peasant and Greens Union	Pirmininkas	Chairman	2
	Drąsos Kelias	The Way of Courage	Pirmininkas	Chairman	2

Moldova	Partidul Democrat din Moldova	Democratic Party of Moldova	Președintele	Chairman	4
	Partidul Comuniștilor din Republica Moldova	Party of Communists of Moldova	Președintele	Chairman	4
	Partidul Liberal	Liberal Party	Președintele	Chairman	4
	Partidul Liberal Democrat din Moldova	Liberal Democratic Party	Președintele	Chairman	4
	Partidul Socialiștilor din Republica Moldova	Party of Socialist of the Republic of Moldova	Președintele	Chairman	4
Poland	Platforma Obywatelska Rzeczypospolitej Polski	Civic Platform of the Republic of Poland	Przewodniczący	Chairman	2-4
	Prawo i Sprawiedliwość	Law and Justice	Prezes	President	3
	Twój Ruch	Your Movement	Przewodniczący	Chairman	4
	Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe	Polish Peasant Party	Prezes	President	4
	Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej	Left Democratic Alliance	Przewodniczący	Chairman	4
Serbia	Srpska Napredna Stranka	Serbian Progressive Party	Predsednik	President	4
	Socijalistička Partija Srbije	Serbian Socialist Party	Predsednik	President	4
	Savez Vojvodanskih Mađara	Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	Predsednik	President	4
	Demokratska Stranka	Democratic Party	Predsednik	President	4
	Stranka Demokratske Akcije Sandžaka	Party of Democratic Action of Sandžak	Predsednik	President	4
Slovakia	Sociálna Demokracia	Direction – Social Democracy	Predseda	Chairman	n/a
	Kresťanskodemokratické Hnutie	Christian Democratic Movement	Predseda	Chairman	4
	Obyčajní Ľudia a Nezávislé Osobnosti	Ordinary People and Independent Personalities	Predseda	Chairman	n/a
	Most-Híd	Bridge	Predseda	Chairman	n/a
	Slovenská Demokratická a Kresťanská Únia – Demokratická Strana	Slovak Democratic and Christian Union	Predseda	Chairman	n/a
	Sloboda a Solidarita	Freedom and Solidarity	Predseda	Chairman	n/a
Ukraine	Партія регіонів	Party of Regions	Голова	Chariman	4
	Всеукраїнське об'єднання „Батьківщина”	All-Ukrainian Union "Fatherland"	Голова	Chariman	5
	Комуністична Партія України	Communist Party of Ukraine	Перший секретар	First Secretary	2-3
	Всеукраїнське об'єднання «Свобода»	All-Ukrainian Union "Svoboda"	Голова	Chariman	n/a
	Український демократичний альянс за реформи Віталія Кличка	Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reforms of Vitaliy Klychko – UDAR of Vitaliy Klychko	Голова	Chariman	n/a

2.2. The term of office

The formal length of term varies in the discussed countries. Most often this is four years, which is confirmed in statutes of all parties in the following countries: Albania, Croatia, Serbia, Hungary, Moldova. However, there are also parties which determine a 2-year term: in the Czech Republic 5 out of 7 parties and in Lithuania 7 out of 8 parties. The period of three years is binding in only one party (PiS – Law and Justice in Poland). 5 years is the term in All-Ukrainian Union „Fatherland” (in Ukraine) and in Dawn of Direct Democracy (in the Czech

Republic). In two cases there is a determined period within which the term is to finish – this is Civic Platform (Poland) with two-four years; and Communist Party of Ukraine (Ukraine) with two-three years. Thus, summarising, 5 different solutions can be determined: two years (12 parties); three years (1 party); four years (32 parties); five years (2 parties); and a changing length of the term (2 parties).

2.3. The electing body

The method according to which the party leader is chosen is one of the most important and interesting aspects of party leadership. The spectrum of the analysed countries and parties reveals little variation. In most cases the leaders are chosen during national congresses/conventions/meetings, when delegates elected from among the members of local party structures choose the party leader in a ballot.

One can distinguish three main solutions implemented in the analysed political parties. First of all, there is a ballot in which all members of a given party vote (when ballots are sent by post or email). Secondly, the leader can be chosen through a ballot during a national congress/convention/meeting (although the names might be different the idea behind all of them is the same), i.e. an assembly of the representatives of local party structures. Thirdly, the choice can be made by another body, i.e. one of the constant authorities (such as Political Council), which are, however, quite a limited party representation.

What is more, there are two mixed approaches to the party leader elections, in which party statutes admit the possibility that the leader will be chosen on the basis of selected methods, although the applicable decision is to be taken before each elections. In the last case, the choice is made either by all the party members or by their congress/convention, or by national congress/convention/meeting or another party authority.

We can thus say that there are five possible solutions embraced by the analysed parties, and we can attribute a given solution to a given party. The decision who is to be the party leader in 28 parties is taken by their congress/convention/meeting, which constitutes a dominant solution. Very rarely, since only in three cases, this privilege is given exclusively to all the party members. In none of the analysed countries the right to choose the leader is awarded solely to a body other than those mentioned above. In two cases the choice is made by all the party members or the congress/convention/meeting.²⁰ In three parties, the

²⁰ It is worth adding that in the case of UPD (the Czech Republic), the leader is chosen by all the party members (9) during a national meeting.

leader can be chosen by the congress/convention/meeting or by another authorised body.

1. All members: PO (Poland); PD (Albania); ÚPD (Czech Republic); SDP (Croatia).

2. National congress/convention: PiS (Poland); TR (Poland); HNS (Croatia); IDS (Croatia); HSU (Croatia); HDZ (Croatia); HL (Croatia); HDSSB (Croatia); HSS (Croatia); HSP AS (Croatia); SDSS (Croatia); ANO 2011 (Czech Republic); TOP 09 (Czech Republic); KSČM (Czech Republic); ODS (Czech Republic); KDU-ČSL (Czech Republic); SNS (Serbia); SPS (Serbia); DS (Serbia); SVM (Serbia); SDA (Serbia); Smer-sd (Slovakia); KDH (Slovakia); Most-Híd (Slovakia); SDKÚ-DS (Slovakia); SaS (Slovakia); PR (Ukraine); B (Ukraine); KPU (Ukraine); UDAR (Ukraine); MSZP (Hungary); Jobbik (Hungary); PDM (Moldova); PCRM (Moldova); PL (Moldova); PLDM (Moldova); PSRM (Moldova); TS-LKD (Lithuania); DP (Lithuania); Tīt (Lithuania); AWPL (Lithuania); DK (Lithuania); LVŽS (Lithuania).

3. Other bodies: none.

4. All members or national congress/convention: SLD (Poland); ČSSD (Czech Republic); LSDP (Lithuania); LRLS (Lithuania).

5. National congress/convention or other body: PSL (Poland); Fidesz (Hungary); KDNP (Hungary).

Table 2

Electing body				
		All members	National Congres/Convention	Other body
Albania	PD	X	–	–
	PS	X	–	–
Croatia	SDP	X	–	–
	HNS	–	X	–
	IDS	–	X	–
	HSU	–	X	–
	HDZ	–	X	–
	HL	–	X	–
	HDSSB	–	X	–
	HSS	–	X	–
	HSP AS	–	X	–
	SDSS	–	X	–
The Czech Republic	ČSSD	X	X	–
	ANO 2011	–	X	–
	TOP 09	–	X	–
	KSČM	–	X	–
	ODS	–	X	–
	KDU-ČSL	–	X	–
	ÚPD	X	X	–

Hungary	MSZP	–	X	–
	Fidesz	–	X	X
	KDNP	–	X	X
	Jobbik	–	X	–
Lithuania	LSDP	X	X	–
	TS-LKD	–	X	–
	DP	–	X	–
	TtT	–	X	–
	LRLS			–
	AWPL	–	X	–
	DK	–	X	–
Moldova	LVŢS	–	X	–
	PDM	–	X	–
	PCRM	–	X	–
	PL	–	X	–
	PLDM	–	X	–
Poland	PSRM	–	X	–
	PO	X	–	–
	PiS	–	X	–
	SLD	X	X	–
	PSL	–	X	X
Serbia	TR	–	X	–
	SNS	–	X	–
	SPS	–	X	–
	DS	–	X	–
	SVM	–	X	–
Slovakia	SDA	–	X	–
	Smer-sd	–	X	–
	KDH	–	X	–
	OLaNO	n/a		
	Most-Híd	–	X	–
	SDKÚ-DS	–	X	–
Ukraine	SaS	–	X	–
	PR	–	X	–
	B	–	X	–
	KPU	–	X	–
	ZOS	n/a		
	UDAR	–	X	–

2.4. Social and demographic features of the leaders

Another interesting aspect of party leadership are features of people taking the position of a leader. Our attention is focused here on three basic factors: gender, education and age of assuming the position. On needs to mention that depending on the country and party, there was a different number of leaders to be analysed. Their number in relation to the number of parties amounted to: 7 in 2 parties in Albania, 24 in 10

parties in Croatia, 28/7 in the Czech Republic, 18/4 in Hungary, 7/5 in Moldova, 20/8 in Lithuania, 17/5 in Poland, 13/5 in Serbia, 9/6 in Slovakia, and 6/5 in Ukraine.

Table 3**Social and demographic features**

Country	Party	Woman	Education	Age
Albania	PD	–	All higher	Berisha (46); Selami (n/a); Shehu (47); Berisha (second time – 53); Basha (39)
	PS	–	All higher	Fatos Nano (39); Edi Rama (41)
Croatia	SDP	–	All higher	Račan (46); Milanović (41)
	HNS	Vesna Pusić; Savka Dabčević-Kučar	All higher	Dabčević-Kučar (67); Čačić (45); Pusić (47); Čačić (second time – 59); Pusić (second time – 60)
	IDS	–	All higher	Jakovčić (33); Miletić (39)
	HSU	–	All higher	Hrelja (50)
	HDZ	Jadranka Kosor	All higher	Tuđman (67); Sanader (47); Kosor (56); Karamarko (53)
	HL	–	Lesar (secondary education)	Lesar (54)
	HDSSB	–	All higher	Bubalo (33); Šišljagić (50); Vulin (28)
	HSS	–	All higher	Stipac (71); Tomčić (49); Friščić (56); Hrg (51)
	HSP AS	Ruža Tomašić	All higher	Tomašić (51)
	SDSS	–	All higher	Stanimirović (44)
The Czech Republic	ČSSD	–	All higher	Horák (66); Zeman (49); Špidla (50); Gross (35); Paroubek (54); Sobotka (40)
	ANO 2011	–	All higher	Babiš (58)
	TOP 09	–	Schwarzenberg (secondary education)	Schwarzenberg (72)
	KSČM	–	All higher	Machalík (45); Svoboda (45); Grebeníček (46); Filip (50)
	ODS	–	All higher	Klaus (49); Topolánek (46); Nečas (46); Kuba (40); Fiala (50)
	KDU-ČSL	Michaela Šojdrotová	All higher	Bartončík (46); Lux (34); Kasal (47); Svoboda (45); Kalousek (43); Kasal (second time – 47); Čunek (47); Svoboda (45); Šojdrotová (47); Bělobrádek (34)

	ÚPD	–	Okamura (secondary education)	Okamura (41)
Hungary	MSZP	Ildikó Lendvai	All higher	Nyers (66); Horn (58); Kovacs (59); Hiller (40); Gyurcsány (46); Lendvai (63); Mesterhazy (36); Tobiás (44)
	Fidesz	–	All higher	Orban (30); Kover (41); Pokorni (39); Orban (second time – 39)
	KDNP	–	All higher	Keresztes (70); Surjan (40); Gicz (41); Semjén (40)
	Jobbik	–	All higher	Kovács (27); Vona (28)
Lithuania	LSDP	–	All higher	Butkevičius (52); Kirkilas (56); Brazauskas (69); Andriukaitis (47); Sakalas (67); Antanavičius (52)
	TS-LKD	–	All higher	Kubilius (47); Landsbergis (61)
	DP	Loreta Graudžinienė	Graudžinienė (secondary education)	Graudžinienė (50); Gapšys (31); Daukšys (46); Uspaskich (44)
	TiT	–	All higher	Paksas (46)
	LRLS	–	All higher	Masiulis (34); Auštrevičius (43)
	AWPL	–	All higher	Tomaszewski (34); Sienkiewicz (38)
	DK	–	All higher	Varkala (61)
	LVŲS	Kazimiera Prunskienė	All higher	Karbauskis (40); Prunskienė (62)
Moldova	PDM	–	All higher	Diakov (45); Lupu (43)
	PCRM	–	All higher	Voronin (53)
	PL	–	All higher	Salaru (31); Ghimpu (35)
	PLDM	–	All higher	Filat (38)
	PSRM	–	All higher	Dodon (36)
Poland	PO	–	All higher	Piątyński (43); Tusk (46)
	PiS	–	All higher	L. Kaczyński (51); J. Kaczyński (53)
	TR	–	All higher	Palikot (47)
	PSL	–	Bartoszcze (vocational education)	Bartoszcze (43); Pawlak (31); Kalinowski (35); Wojciechowski (49); Pawlak (second time – 44); Piechociński (52)
	SLD	–	All higher	Miller (52); Janik (53); Oleksy (58); Olejniczak (31); Napieralski (34); Miller (second time – 64)

Serbia	SNS	–	All higher	Nikolić (56); Vučić (42)
	SPS	–	All higher	Dačić (40); Milošević (49); Jović (63)
	DS	–	All higher	Mićunović (60); Đinđić (42); Tadić (46); Đilas (45); Pajić (44)
	SVM	–	All higher	Kasa (50); Pastor (51)
	SDA	–	All higher	Ugljanin (43)
Slovakia	Smer-sd	–	All higher	Fico (35)
	KDH	–	All higher	Čarnogurský (46); Hrušovský (48); Figeľ (49)
	OLaNO	–	All higher	Matovič (38)
	Most-Híd	–	All higher	Bugár (51)
	SDKÚ- -DS	–	All higher	Frešo (45); Dzurinda (43)
	SaS		All higher	Sulík (41)
Ukraine	PR	–	All higher	Azarov (52); Yanukovych (53); Azarov (second time – 62)
	B	Yulia Tymoshenko	All higher	Tymoshenko (39)
	KPU	–	All higher	Symonenko (50)
	ZOS	–	All higher	
	UDAR	–	All higher	Klitschko (38)

2.4.1. Gender

First of all, party leaders in the analysed parties are mainly men. Women account for only 6% of all the leaders in the analysed post-communist countries. Among all 149 party leaders we can enumerate 9 women: Vesna Pusić (HNS – Croatia); Savka Dabčević-Kučar (HNS – Croatia); Jadranka Kosor (HDZ – Croatia); Ruža Tomašić (HSP AS – Croatia); Michaela Šojdrová (KDU-ČSL – Czech Republic); Loreta Graužinienė (DP – Lithuania); Kazimiera Prunskienė (LVŽS – Lithuania); Yulia Tymoshenko (B – Ukraine); Ildikó Lendvai (MSZP – Hungary). However, there was no female leader in the analysed parties in Poland, Albania, Serbia and Slovakia. The greatest number of female leaders was found in Croatia, where there were four women, including two in HNS.

2.4.2. Education

When education is considered, it needs emphasising clearly that in the analysed political parties most leaders have higher education. So far there have been only four leaders without such education. These are: Bartoszcze (PSL, Poland); Lesar (HL, Croatia); Schwarzenberg (TOP 09, the Czech Republic); Okamura (ÚPD, the Czech Republic). Thus a conclusion can be drawn that party leaders are generally well-educated.

2.4.3. Age of assuming the position

It is also interesting to analyse the age at which people are chosen to take up the position of the party leader. According to the collected data, this happens most often at the age of 45-49. Only three people became leaders before their 30th birthday, while two were chosen after 70 years of age. Analysing the age of assuming the party leadership, it can be noticed that the number of leaders who did that after 55 is considerably decreasing. There is also a clear disproportion between young (younger than 40 years old) leaders and those after 55 years of age, with the former constituting a larger group.

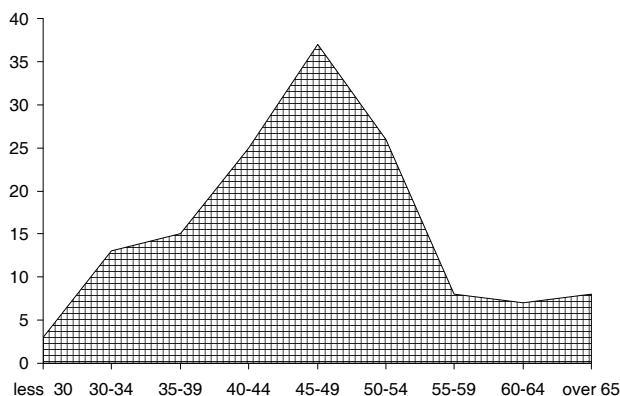


Figure 1. Age of assuming the position

2.5. Return to leadership

Analysing people who assumed leadership, it can be noticed that there are those who managed to return to the position of the leader in their party. With reference to the analysed parties, 9 such cases can be described: Poland – Pawlak (PSL, 1991–1997 and 2005–2012), Miller

(SLD, 1999–2004 and since 2011); Croatia – Pusić (HNS, 2000–2008; 2013), Čačić (HNS, 1994–2000; 2008–2013); Czech Republic – Svoboda (KDU-ČSL 2001–2003; 2009–2010), Kasal (KDU-ČSL, 1999–2001; 2006); Albania – Berisha (PD, 1990–1991; 1997–2013); Serbia – Milošević (SPS 1990; 1992–2006); Ukraine – Azarow (PR, 2001, 2010–2014). The issue of return to the position of leadership in the same party (although in the discussed countries there were also cases of assuming leadership in different parties) is an interesting aspect of internal party democracy and deserves further studies as a separate research topic.

3. Summary

The analyses of party leadership constitute a significant step towards understanding politics. Data about internal formal determinants of particular parties as well as knowledge about leaders themselves allow researchers to understand more thoroughly the mechanisms and activities of most important parties and politicians.

Taking into consideration the above comparative data, as well as details included in all the chapters concerning particular parties, one can state that party leadership in each of them has its own specificity. Analysed in detail, this phenomenon is really varied. However, trying to draw comparative conclusions, one can notice a few common features.

Political parties most often refer to their leaders as the chairman. The term of office in most cases lasts four years, and the leaders are chosen during a national meeting of delegates, chosen in turn by local structures of each party.

Referring to the knowledge about party leaders, we can say that they are mainly male. The vast majority have achieved higher education. The age most conducive to assuming the position of the party leader seems to be 45–49 years of age.

The outlook on party leadership presented in this as well as other chapters constitutes the first step towards further comparative analyses. Subsequent studies will aim at pursuing the issue in three dimensions: providing more in-depth research, widening the scope of analysed factors, and embracing a longer period of time.