Electoral Research in Kosovo: Since 2000-2012

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CSES Conference – 21-22 April 2012
Overview

Background

• Different than other presentations, little is known about the inside’s of elections in Kosovo
• Political & Institutional Environment
• Electoral History

Type of Electoral Research

• Electoral System
• Surveys
• PVT & Observation
• Fraud Prevention
Environment

**Institutional**

- International Administration of Kosovo
- Election administration by the OSCE
- Little external scrutiny (ODIHR out)
- International responsibility of the process
- Stability Over Democracy

**National Priorities**

- Security trumps all
- Inter-ethnic divisions and centrifugal tendencies in the north
- Open dispute and dialogue with Serbia
- Institution building
- Clear international preferences over the winners needed
Electoral History

Municipal...

- ... Assembly
- ... Mayoral
  2007, 2009, next in 2013, next several likely

National....

- ... Assembly
  Closed lists/no threshold:
    2001, 2004
  Open lists/5% threshold
    2007, 2010
  Next expected in 2013 (early)
- ... President
  Constitutional amendments in process
  Expected in 2013 (also early)
Main Features

Post-war treatment

• Still treated like a post-war society in some aspects. The political culture finds it challenging to mature
• Impatience grew over the lack of development on state-building
• Constitution
  – Proportional
  – Reserved seats for minorities

Focus on the system

• Electoral system lagged behind with development of political culture & public needs
• Political parties
  – All but one are still run by their founders
  – Little ideological profile, but started to become members of international networks
• Need to transform political parties
Changes

**People Driven**

**Successful:**
- Open Lists
  - 2000 OPEN
  - 2001-2004 CLOSED
  - 2007 OPEN (10 preferences)
  - 2009-2010 OPEN (5 preferences)
- Directly Elected Mayors
  - Introduced in 2007

**Yet to Take Place:**
- Regional PR

**System Driven**

- Threshold
  - From 0 to 5%
- Direct Presidential Elections
  - To avoid inter-party bargaining for the President
Trend Analysis

Official Data

• Different format every year
• Presented in pdf format
• 2009 missing:
  – Unused Ballots
  – By-mail
  – Early
  – Conditional ballots
  – Spoiled
  – Blank
  – Total turnout missing for mayoral elections (same day with others)

• 2003-2007: KIPRED (Leon co-founder and Research Director, and ran the election studies)
  – Highlighting the faults of a single districts and closed lists
  – The need for evolution of the party system, and not to cement the then current political culture
  – Used by Donald Horowitz in his class at Duke

• 2011+: D4D in 2011, and a forthcoming detailed publication in 2012.
  – Developing a massive database for each candidate for every polling station
Observation

Funding only for Observation

- **KACI**
  - Observation in 2000 and 2001
- **KMDLNJ**
  - Observation in 2002 and 2004
- **KIPRED** (I ran this one)
  - Observation & PVT in 2007
  - Elaborate forms also used for research (e.g. men/women voting, time it takes to process each voter)
- **KDI**
  - Observation in 2009 and 2010
- **D4D**
  - Observation in 2012 by-elections

PVT

- The only country in the Balkans without a stable observation mission
- Very professional one in 2007, sms system with live feeding, 2 mln clicks: 0.3% margin of error (90% coverage)
- Early results to lower tension and avoid fraud
- Early results to avoid fraud
Public Opinion Surveys

International Organizations

• International Administration and Various IOs
• Diplomatic Representations and Donors
• Private companies keep information confidential
• Political parties increasingly do their own surveys, the main party is well funded and now has professional internal consultancy

Useful

• UNDP Early Warning, now Public Pulse
• Two surveys by IFES on experience with elections
• One that we did, and one forthcoming in 2012 by D4D
• Phone surveys have not yet begun, but one company is preparing
• Only one serious company which cooperates with Gallup
Election Process

• Dissatisfaction with the electoral system but high trust placed on the process until 2004 – Kosovo used to boast that it organizes the best elections in the region

• Gradual loss of trust since 2007
  – Violations initially treated as isolated cases
  – Massive fraud in 2010
  – Now realization that there is a very advanced organization behind fraud, with outvoting at the Central Election Commission,

• Our mistake to start so late but only started seriously to deal with fraud in 2011 by D4D.
Other Papers

• Internal papers conducted by the OSCE
• USAID on districting in 2004 (Lisa Handley)
• IFES study on voter list accuracies in a pilot municipality (2009)
• IFES paper on use of technology in voter identification and counting (2012)
• FES funds some very rudimentary studies on ideological party profiling
Comparison of Various Sources

**Triangulation**
- Elaborate forms by observers used for research
- Demographic data
- Population Census
- Survey
- Official election data

**Large Gaps Identified**
- **Turnout**
  - Official data: 45%
  - Surveys: 79-80%
- **Voter List Inadequacies**
  - Census: 1,750,000 inhabitants,
  - Voters List: 1,650,000 in the voters list
  - While Kosovo has around 27% who are younger than 18 years old
Stakeholders

International

• OSCE
  – actor until 2007 with strong vested interests and preferences
  – Left a very intransparent process
• European Union
• USAID

Domestic

• Central Election Commission
  – Incompetence, not transparent
• BIRN
  – Journalistic outfit focusing on debates & observation
• D4D
  – since 2011 with trends, process, observation & PVT