

Pre-Term Parliamentary Elections in Ukraine on September 30, 2007
Some views and reflections

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The author of this paper has visited Ukraine several times since 2004 in capacity of an international election observer and participant of various conferences assessing election processes. So, the occasion of the September Election represented a good opportunity to compare events and political developments of the above-mentioned period including elections.

Generally my main and determined impressions of these elections are positive in all aspects: the political atmosphere was quiet without any tensions, the election was properly organised, the distribution of duties at all dimensions seemed to be clear and understandable as well as the counting and tabulation activity.

It is well-known that the strongest party's position has been won by Regional Party, but by the end of the E-day the election victory belonged to the Julia Tymoshenko Bloc and to the Our Ukraine- People's Self-Defence Bloc. However the balance of two political blocs remained tight. It is getting clearer and clearer that one can organise elections as much as he wishes the new government may be „orange” or „blue” colour but the political relations would be nearly the same. More politicians are recognising that political problems must be solved with consensus. The improvement of political climate is widening such possibilities. Moreover there were even some attempts to involve blue members into orange coalition government. The massive but peaceful demonstration of Regional Party in Kiev (where this party is not strong) after elections which passed without irregularities is also a sign of progress.

On the basis of the above-mentioned we can conclude that democracy in Ukraine is on the right way. The opinion of the author is that such process can be more effective if there were some changes in the politics of Russia towards Ukraine and also the EU persuaded a more flexible course of policy as well as took into account the Ukrainian reality to a greater extent. The aim of international observation and monitoring is to demonstrate moral and political commitment of the international community to democratic elections. How to reach this goal? The principle of impartiality should be on the first place because without this condition there is no confidence.

It is also necessary to point out an other particular question. In Ukraine the political situation „produced” to many elections. Of course pluralistic elections may be really a school

of democracy but it does not mean that „the more elections – the more democracy”. On the contrary. The permanent politisation of the every day life can create political apathy specially if the participation of citizens in state affairs is low. In such aspect the role of political parties seems to be important. We know that the traditional political field in Western Europe differs from the new democracies and so the parties. However one of the main lessons of political history is that parties are unavoidable factor of democracy. Only the political parties as the instruments of social and national interest are able to express and gather the voice of people in politics.

In addition to the written above it worths making any practical remarks to September Elections that could be useful also for other new democracies. Based on the experience and lessons of the 2004 elections several amendments were made to the Electoral Law in June 2007. The amendments, which were a result of a political compromise, led to several problems and it was difficult for the Central Election Commission as executor to comply with the unflexible rules. For instance, the voter registration framework became much stricter, the voters who crossed state border and went abroad have been removed from the voters’ lists. However due to the shortages in time, the electoral administration was not able to pass over perfectly the normal changes and some voters were excluded from lists by administrative mistakes.

On the whole the 2007 September elections in Ukraine were a lesson-full step towards democracy in this country.