

## **Women's participation and the Incumbency Advantage in Slovak Cities: the Case Study of the Mayoral elections in Slovakia**

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### **Abstract**

The article focuses on the mayoral elections in all cities (138) in Slovakia. This analysis presents how the positions of mayors are distributed between men and women. Specific and detailed electoral data from the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections allows for presuming whether the current distribution is caused by the electoral preferences of voters (demand) or by the supply of candidates. According to theoretical literature, mayors who are running for second term may have an advantage over their opponents. Data shows us how big this incumbency effect is in Slovak cities.

**Keywords:** incumbents, mayors, success rate, candidacy rate, women.

### **Introduction**

One of the politically strongest as well as most attractive offices at the local level is the office of mayor. A mayor is the highest political representative of a city. This representative is also a manager of limited resources in a city. The importance of this office is a sufficient reason for the deeper study of mayoral elections.

The World Bank's (2001) definition of political decentralization says that decentralization aims to give citizens and elected representatives more power in decision-making and also more competences. However, it raises the questions: To whom is a decision-making and competences given? Or, who is empowered? Here we can argue that fair political decentralization should lead to more power for all citizens and elected representatives, regardless of sex.

According to the last census, the sex ratio of population in Slovakia is 100 males to 105 females (Statistics Office, 2011). Despite this fact, the results of local, regional, or national elections show regularly how the female majority in population may turn into an overwhelming minority in representative office holders.

There are structural factors which affect women possibilities to take part in political life. However, women face obstacles not only before they run for office but even afterwards. It is caused by the

traditional view on politics as a man's domain that makes women less confident in political career, or for instance the role of mass media and different representations of women and men in media. However, we need to know what happens if women overcome obstacles and run for office. Researchers Fox and Oxley (2003) found out that if women pass obstacles and run for stereotypically masculine positions they are as successful as men. So maybe the problem is not a lack of demand for female mayors but more likely the poor supply of women as candidates for mayor. Therefore, the first goal of this article is to analyse the input and output of the mayoral elections in Slovak cities in order to analyse the candidacy rate and the success rate of both women and men.

High quality competition and high quality contestants are important aspects that affect the quality of election results. However, elected posts are a fertile ground for incumbents who are often ruling cities for several terms and use their strong position in office in elections. Many researchers (Bernard 2012, Karnig and Walter 1981, Stone and Maestas 2004, Moreira 2012) say that these office holders who are repeatedly running for re-election may, in fact, deter good opponents. In other words, to find out how big this incumbency advantage is, we need to measure how many incumbents succeed and under what conditions. Therefore, the second goal of this article is to analyse the incumbency advantage in Slovak cities in the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections. In order to measure the level of success of candidates we need to look at the input of elections – the number of candidates running for mayor but also at the output of elections - the number of candidates elected.

Section 1 of this article briefly describes the level and some specific features of decentralization in Slovakia. In the proceeding sections 2, 3 and 4 describe the theories and concepts related to women's representation in politics. The incumbency advantage is defined in section 5. Theories and authors mentioned in these sections were followed in

the research. Section 6 describes research methods, data collection, and analysis procedures. The next two sections provide the answers on the questions raised in section 6. Last but not least, section 7 is the interpretation of the results.

### **The Level of Decentralization in Slovakia**

There are many aspects according to which we can rate the level of decentralization – the number of units, size of units, number of tiers of administration, level of fiscal decentralization, level of decentralization of competences, etc.

The current administrative division was established in 2001. Slovakia has a three-tier administrative division. The county or regional level is divided into eight counties and their main competences are health care, high school education, road administration, preparation and approval of county's budget, etc. (Law on self-government of higher territorial units). Counties collect car tax and may impose fees to ensure its original competences.

Eight counties are further subdivided into 2927 municipalities and 138 of them have the status of a city. According to Swianiewicz (2003), the average size of one municipality in Slovakia is only 17 square kilometres with 1 700 inhabitants. The most populated municipality is the capital city with almost half million inhabitants. On the other hand, there are municipalities with only 10 or 15 people. The main competences of cities and villages are primary school and pre-school education, road administration, waste management, preparation and approval of budget, etc. (Law on municipalities). These units may impose fees for using areas or services (parking, waste) and also collect property tax. The County councils, the chairman of county as well as mayors and municipal councils are elected in elections held every four years. Both counties and municipalities have a high level of fiscal and political decentralization.

According to Nižnanský (2005), one of the fathers of decentralization in Slovakia, the process of decentralization was held in 2003 - 2006. This process was mostly dedicated to fiscal decentralization which came into force in 2004 and was implemented in 2005. However, broad decentralization of competences began in 2001 (Law on the transfer of some competencies from state administration to municipalities and higher territorial units). Counties as well as municipalities have original competences and shared competences. Original competences are exclusive competences such as own budget, road administration, public order, local taxes and fees, investments and business activities. Shared competences are financed from state budget transfers. It is for instance health care, education, elderly care, or tourism.

### **Obstacles to Women's Participation in Politics**

A theoretical framework of this analysis of elections in Slovak cities refers to liberal feminism. According to Szapurova (2011), liberal feminism believes that an inequality between men and women are a result of social, cultural and political institutions, and various forms of direct and indirect discrimination. The main idea of liberal feminism is to remove the discrimination of women in the public sphere. The European Institute for Gender Equality (2013) does not see the concept of *gender* as biologically rooted, but rather they understand differences between men and women as social constructs. In other words, these differences are strongly determined by culture and over-generalization. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (1999) points out that the domination of men over women in governing society ignores fundamental principles of democracy. The domination of men in politics may be caused by the domination of men already at the input, the number of male candidates for office.

Dahlerup (2005) says that in order to diminish this domination of men at the input, formal and informal barriers must be eliminated. In the context of Slovakia, these barriers are represented by stereotypes and unbalance in perception of male and female roles in family or the perception of politics as a man's affair. And there are not only stereotypes or skewed perception that disadvantage women in taking part in politics. Shvedova (2012) talks about socio-economic obstacles such as less economic power of women compared to men or the double burden what is often described as the second unpaid work in household. The traditional view of politics as a male domain is often presented by mass media. That creates an environment where politics is seen as a bit too dirty, animal, insidious and too competitive a game for women.

However, women face obstacles not only before they run for an office but even after the decision to become candidates in elections. This is again correlated to the traditional view of politics as a male domain. Mass media still perpetuate the traditional gender stereotypes of the woman as housewife and man as head of the household and breadwinner. According to Craig's research cited in Wolska (2011), male stereotypes presented in commercials are successful, professional and athletic. On the contrary, women are presented as housewives, soft and obsessed with their weight and beauty. Sharma (2012) also points out that the media reinforce stereotyped gender roles and women's functions as housewife dependent on men's protection. These stereotypes may cause that female politicians and women in business has to put a much bigger effort to be equally perceived and evaluated as men.

Naturally, the prerequisite for running for an office is the satisfaction of social and economic needs. The Eurostat (2013) Gender pay gap statistics for 2012 says that women in EU 28 earn for the same work 16,4 percent less than their male colleagues. The gender pay gap is 21,4 percent in Slovakia. That means that Slovak women in general earn about one fifth less than Slovak men at the same position and for the same amount of work. The European Institute for Gender Equality (2013) says in its report that there are still problems with the division of professional and private life of women because it is a woman who is mostly responsible for household stuff and raising children. This second but unpaid work, or so called double burden, may adversely affects the decision to run for office.

The system of elections may affect the success rate of women. Matland (2005) studied electoral data from 1945 to 2005 and he found out that in the majority system was the ratio of elected women to elected men on average at 18 percent. In the proportional system the ratio was higher than in the majority system by more than 10 percentage points in favour of women. So, the ratio of elected women to elected men in the majority system was 18 percent, while in the proportional system was 30 percent. In other words, Matland's analysis says that women have a greater chance to succeed in the proportional system. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (2011) also stresses Gender Equality in Elected Office Action Plan in one of its goals, the reform of electoral system to be proportional with large district magnitudes which maximize the opportunities for women.

However, if we look at Slovakia and the representation of women under the majority and proportional system we do not see as clear a pattern as Matland presents. The proportional system is used in parliament elections and in European Parliament elections. On the other hand, local and regional elections are a majority system. According to European Commission's (2013) gender statistics, the representation of women in regional councils is 16 percent and 22 percent of Slovak mayors<sup>1</sup> are women. The same statistics says that in the Slovak National Council, 19 percent of MPs are women. According to the results of the 2014 European parliament election (Statistics Office, 2014), 23 percent of Slovak MEPs are women. If we look at the presented numbers of women's representation, we can hardly talk about a significant effect of the electoral system in Slovakia.

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<sup>1</sup> All 2927 municipalities

## **Inclination Towards Men**

According to Matland (2005), the domination of men in politics begins in the recruitment process. Because incumbents and leaders of political parties, who select new candidates, are usually men, in fact, they are keen to select male candidates again and again, repeatedly. Several other researchers (Carroll, 1994 and Darcy, 1994 in Marshall, 2002; Butorova and Filadelfiova, 2011) also pointed out that women are as competitive as men but women's opportunities are affected by the structure of leadership of political parties and incumbents.

Niven (1998), cited by Fox and Oxley (2003), studied gender stereotypes in the selection of candidates in political parties. He found out that the leadership of political parties prefers candidates who meet the typical masculine characteristics, such as aggressiveness or individualisms. In other words, the selection of candidates is a strong reproduction of already masculine composition of political parties. One of the possible solutions of the under representation of women in political parties and in politics in general may be an implementation of candidate quotas<sup>2</sup> for the minimum share of women on ballots.

Let's not forget that the disadvantaged position of women in high senior positions is also a strong widespread in the private sector. This effect is called the glass ceiling. The invisible barrier is the result of organizational culture, gender stereotypes, the non-transparent process of hiring and promoting, and the lack of harmonization of private-professional life. According to the data for 2012, the women's representation in senior managements of the biggest companies in Slovakia was only 13 per cent (Government Council for Human Rights, Minorities and Gender Equality, 2013).

Nonetheless, it is important to emphasize that it is not necessary to run for an office under political party. Candidates in local as well as regional elections may run for an office as independent candidates. But an independent candidate has higher costs due to the need to collect signatures under candidature and missing the support of a political party's staff.

All obstacles mentioned above are not unassailable fences. More likely they are a hurdle which may be difficult to jump over. But passing them can boost a candidate. Afterwards, a candidate may be more motivated and stronger. So what can happen if women are strong enough to overcome obstacles and run for office?

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<sup>2</sup> Quotas may have an effect on the success rate of women or minorities in proportional system. This paper analyses the local elections of mayors which is the majority system. Therefore, I will not further deal with quotas.

According to researchers Fox and Oxley (2003), women are running for stereotypically masculine positions (governor, attorney general, public service commissioner, etc.) less often than men. In other words, women behave in “selection themselves” stereotypically and the perception of position as dominantly masculine may often discourage them. But Fox and Oxley went further and tested what happens if women overcome stereotypes and run for stereotypically masculine positions. They found out that if women pass obstacles and stereotypes and run even for masculine positions they are as successful as men. This result may be interpreted as follows: there is definitely a demand for female candidates, but the problem is the low supply of women candidates caused by social and economic obstacles, the domination of men in the recruitment process, or the perception of politics as a male affair.

### **A Gender Perspective in Local Government**

Evertzen (2010) says that historically, men dominated political arena, they formulated rules and especially men’s interests were embedded in the structures and practices of political institutions. However, women face specific problems and needs and therefore their voice must be considered in policy process. Evertzen (2010) points out that all municipal functions that affect local population should be considered from the gender perspective. There are many municipal services and functions that women tend to use more than men. It is for instance public transport, the quality of paved ways, the provision of physical security, the distance and accessibility of schools, clinics, markets, etc. The presence of women in strong and important positions in local public office, such as mayor or councilwoman, may have not only a symbolic but also a practical value.

Steyvers and Reynaert (2006) found out that mayors are, compared to the European population, quite homogenous and an elite group of people. They are on average highly educated and generally middle aged males. According to this study of 17 European countries, nowhere is there more than one female mayor out of every five mayors. According to Johansson (2006) and the results of the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections in Slovak cities, in East European welfare state systems<sup>1</sup> on average 90 percent of mayors are men. This ratio is similar in most European countries with the exception of countries such as England, the Netherlands or Sweden, where on average 20 percent of mayors are women.

Vicki Johansson (2006) provides very interesting and useful models of female roads to mayoralship. She

says that the average female mayor is more often brought up in a political party and more frequently holds a position in a political party. A female mayor on average more often gets support from a political party than her male counterpart. In other words, it seems that support from political party is very important for women and less important for men. This means according to Johansson (2006) that women must put a bigger effort to become a part of political family and they have to prove their competence within the traditionally male dominated environment. But then again, as was mentioned above, it is very hard for a woman to become a leader in political party.

Local politics is closer to the public and delivers services which affect citizens every day, such as water supply, waste disposal, quality of roads and transport, health clinics and schools. Evertzen (2001) says that reasons for the participation of women in local politics is the higher efficiency through different experiences and resources that women bring into politics, justice through more equal representation, or for instance changing the perception of women and men as politicians and of politics as men’s affair. She also emphasizes that the higher women’s participation and representation at the local level is crucial for gaining the experiences and skills necessary for breaking into higher or national politics.

### **The Strength of Incumbents**

The natural goal of every single politician, regardless of political background, is to be re-elected. Incumbents may have an advantage over non-incumbents. Gordon and Landa (2009) describe the incumbency advantage as the electoral margin a candidate enjoys because of his or her status as an incumbent running for re-election.

According to some researchers (Levit and Wolfram 1997; Gordon and Landa, 2009), the incumbency advantage consists of several elements, but mostly of direct and indirect officeholder’s benefits. The direct benefits correspond to a less costly campaign due to the usage of his or her office staff during the election campaign or easier access to media. The overuse and sometimes also misuse of local media, such as newspaper, TV and radiobroadcast by local politicians and mayors is nothing uncommon. These direct benefits may deter potentially good candidates. The unique position and power of incumbents are indirect benefits. It is the opportunity to build and maintain relationships and agreements with influential groups and individuals.

Cox and Katz (1996) say that the advantage of incumbents over non-incumbents is also in quality. Cox and Katz understand the quality of a candidate as the recognisability of a candidate’s name, support

<sup>1</sup> Esping-Andersen typology

of the political party, ability to accumulate resources for the campaign, and the ability to solve problems and cooperate with leaders. They argue that because of the lasting experience in the office, incumbents are usually a higher quality than non-incumbents. However, as Stone, Maisel and Maestas (2004) pointed out, it works also vice versa. A bad quality incumbent may encourage more rival candidates. In other words, not only do costs for campaign against the incumbent deter other good candidates, but also the quality of incumbents. The attributes such as the recognisability of candidate's name, skills and experiences may be very important especially in the very personalized elections such as mayoral elections.

Levit and Wolfram (1997) says that 90 per cent of incumbents were re-elected to the US House and Senate in the 80s and 90s. According to the project OpenSecret.org (2012), the US House re-election rate in 2012 was 90 percent and the US Senate re-election rate was 91 percent. In other words, nine out of ten candidates holding office at the time of elections were re-elected. Karnig and Walter (1981) analysed the likelihood of the re-election of mayors in cities in US. They found out that the re-election rate of mayors was 70 percent. Moreira (2012) studies the re-election rate of incumbents in more than five thousand Brazilian municipalities. He found out that while in 2004 the re-election rate of incumbents was about 58 percent; in 2008 it was 69 percent. Czech researcher Bernard (2012) confirms the strong incumbency effect in Czech cities and he points out that the incumbent factor is one of the most important factors which determine election results.

In 85 percent of Slovak cities the electorate had an opportunity to vote for an incumbent in the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections. Almost nine 9 out of 10 incumbents ran for re-election. The candidacy rate, or rather re-candidacy rate, was very similar for both female and male incumbents. These numbers are sufficient reasons for the analysis of the incumbency effect in Slovak cities.

### **Research Methodology**

This article is a quantitative analysis with the usage of the methods and instruments of descriptive statistics such as arithmetic averages and ratios. The article has two main goals. The first goal is to analyse the input and output of the mayoral elections in Slovakia in order to analyse the candidacy rate and the success rate of both women and men. The input of mayoral elections is the list of candidates in each city, gender of candidates, age, work position, education and whether a candidate is independent or a candidate of a political party or coalition. The output is information about winners and losers in each city and the number

of votes they achieved in elections. The second goal is to analyse the incumbency in Slovak cities. The main research questions are the following:

Question 1: What are the candidacy rate and the success rate of women and men in the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections?

Hypothesis: Based on theoretical literature mentioned in sections 2, 3 and 4, the expectation is that male candidates greatly outnumber female candidates. However, as Fox and Oxley (2003) pointed out, if women overcome barriers and run for office, they may be as successful as men. Therefore, there is an assumption that male dominance in the success rate may not be as high as in the candidacy rate. The dependent variable is the election of a candidate. The independent variables are gender, age, work position, education, and the size of the city.

Question 2: What is the re-election rate of incumbents in the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections?

Hypothesis: There is a lack of research dealing with the incumbency advantage of mayors in Europe. However, there are studies about the incumbency advantage in US cities and Brazilian municipalities. Karnig and Walter (1981) studied the re-election rate of mayors and they found out that this re-election rate is 70 per cent. According to O'Connor (2012), US mayors are directly elected by electorate. Moreira (2012) says that the re-election rate of incumbents in Brazilian municipalities was about 58 percent in 2004 and 69 percent in 2008. Similar to Slovakia, mayors are directly elected in Brazil. Although Slovakia is different from USA and Brazil from cultural, historical, economic development perspectives, Brazil and USA have similar system of mayoral election. Therefore, we may take Brazilian and US research as a baseline for the study of the re-election rate in Slovakia. The dependent variable is the election of an incumbent. Independent variables are age, work position, education, and the size of the city.

The primary data are electoral data of the local election in Slovakia in 2006 and 2010. Because this paper analyses the mayoral elections in 138 cities in Slovakia, I abstracted from the whole database only the data for 138 cities. The source of these particular data is the Statistics Office. The data from the Statistics Office gave information about the winners and defeated candidates in each city, electoral results of each candidate in number of votes, the gender (according to last name of candidates), and whether a candidate is independent or she or he are candidates under a political party or coalition. The second source of data is information from ballots. Ballots provided information about the work position of candidates, age and education. The collection of ballots was both

through e-mail requests and searching on the city's websites. The completeness of the collected data is more than 96 per cent.

In the following sections, the terms 'candidacy rate' and 'success rate' will be used very frequently. Therefore, it is useful to define them.

The candidacy rate of women is the ratio of female candidates to all candidates who were running for mayor, regardless of gender. Similarly, the candidacy rate of men is the ratio of male candidates to all candidates who are running for mayor, regardless of gender. In other words, the candidacy rate of women says how many female candidates on average compete in the mayoral elections out of 100 candidates. This candidacy rate of women is naturally determined not only by the number of female candidates but also by the number of male candidates.

The success rate of women is the ratio of female candidates who were elected to all female candidates who were running for mayor. The success rate says how many women won mayoral elections out of 100 female candidates who were running for office. The success rate of men or incumbents is calculated likewise. In other words, the success rate is the average likelihood of the election women, men or incumbents. It is important to note that the word "success" is understood and applied in terms of the success in an election competition. It does not say anything about the success of any candidates in office.

### The Success of Women vs. Men

Male mayors significantly dominate in Slovak cities (Table 1). Only 8 percent of mayors were women in 2006. That represents 11 cities where the head of the city was a woman. In the next 2010 mayoral election, women got more offices and the share of female mayors was 11 percent. On average there was only 1 female mayor out of 10 mayors in the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections. This is the output of mayoral elections. Let's have a look at the input of the elections.

Only 83 female candidates of the total number 730 candidates were able to overcome social and economic barriers and stereotypes and ran for office. In the next election in 2010, 87 women were mayoral candidates out of all 713 candidates. It represented the candidacy rate of women only 11,4 percent in the 2006 and in 2010 election it was slightly more than 12 percent. The candidacy rate of men was almost 89 per cent in 2006 and in the next election 88 percent. In other words, almost 9 out of 10 candidates were men. It is a comparable supremacy of male over female candidates in the input and in the output of the elections.

Table 1

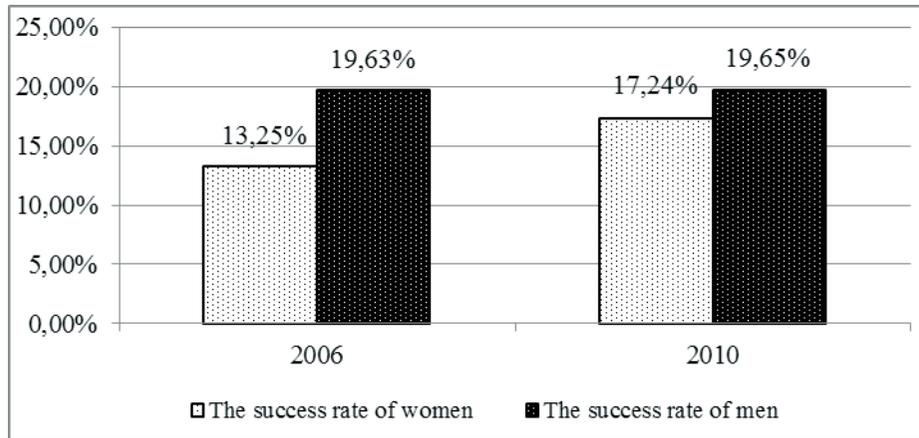
### The candidacy rate and success rate of candidates

Elections/the candidacy rate and success rate		Female	Male
Mayoral elections in 2006	The number of candidates	83	647
	The candidacy rate	11,4 %	88,6 %
	The number of elected candidates	11	127
	The share of mayors	8,0 %	92,0 %
	The success rate	13,25 %	19,6 %
Mayoral elections in 2010	The number of candidates	87	626
	The candidacy rate	12,2 %	87,8 %
	The number of elected candidates	15	123
	The share of mayors	10,9 %	89,1 %
	The success rate	17,2 %	19,7 %

A simple look either at the input or output of elections separately says about the enormous domination of male candidates. However, if we want to get the whole picture, we need to look at the input and output at the same time. And here it is the time for the success rate in the elections, which is nothing else but the ratio of successful candidates (winners) to all candidates (winners and defeated candidates altogether). In the 2006 mayoral elections the success rate of women was 13,25 percent, while the success rate of men was about 6 percentage points higher. In other words, from 100 female candidates 13 of them were elected, while from 100 male candidates almost 20 of them were elected. In the next 2010 election the success rate of women increased to 17,24 percent, while the success rate of men stayed at the 2006 level. So in the 2010 mayoral elections, 17 out of 100 female candidates were on average elected, while on average every fifth male candidate won the election.

If we look only at the number of mandates (output) of 2010 elections, we see 11 percent of females mayors compared to 89 percent of male mayors. It is almost a nine-fold difference and this difference is even bigger in the 2006 election. If we have a look at the candidacy rates (input) of the 2010 elections in the same way, only 12 percent of candidates were women. It is more than eight fold difference and again, this difference was even more evident in 2006 election. However, if we compare the success rates of women with men we see a much smaller difference. The difference in favour of men is one third in 2006 and only one ninth in 2010.

The level of the success rates for both women and men in the 2010 mayoral election suggests that male candidates are more successful than female



**Fig. 1.** The success rate of women and men in 2006 and 2010

candidates. However, it is not an abysmal difference (Fig. 1). It is important to note that in small cities of up to 10 thousand inhabitants, the success rate of women was higher than the success rate of men, at 22,6 percent for women and 20,9 percent for men. This confirms the theory of Fox and Oxley (2003), who found out that if women overcome barriers and run for an office, they may be as successful as men. It is the evidence of an existing demand for female candidates and also that this demand is comparable with the demand for male candidates. This evidence is even stronger if we look at the average electoral result of women and men. Male candidates received on average 159 votes more than female candidates in 2006 election. In the next election the difference was only 61 votes. There was the offer of at least one female candidate only in 64 cities in the 2006 election and in the 2010 election it was only in 71 cities out of 138. This suggests that the problem of a small share of female mayors is not a problem of small demand but rather a problem of a lack of supply.

So, in a hypothetical case if the offer of female candidates would have been as large as the offer of male candidates, the ratio of female mayors to male mayors would not be 1 to 9, but much closer to fifty-fifty. Of course, the condition of more female candidates is only one condition and even more important is to have candidates who meet some prerequisite characteristics. So what did the electoral data bring out about successful candidates?

Thanks to the data from ballots, it is possible to draw an approximate profile of a successful candidate in mayoral elections. The approximate profile of a successful female candidate is a women who is running for office in a small city up to 10 thousand inhabitants, a university graduate, older than 55 and who candidates under a political party or coalition. On the other hand, the approximate profile of a male candidate is a man who is running for the office in a

small or middle-size city up to 50 thousand inhabitants, a university graduate, in the age of 35 to 55 years and who candidates as a candidate of a political party or coalition.

The support of the political party seems to be important. According to collected electoral data, candidates with the support of a political party or coalition are more likely to win elections. Matland (2005) says that the selection of candidates is the strong reproduction of masculine composition of political parties and there are persistent barriers for women. Electoral data did not approve this theory, but also did not disprove it. About 60 percent of female candidates were independent candidates compared to about 50 percent of male independent candidates. These numbers suggests that it is very popular to candidate as independent, regardless of gender.

Another interesting finding is that successful women are on average older than successful men. Women are on average successful at the age more than 55 even though the most women ran for mayor at the age of 35 to 55 years. This may bear relation with social and cultural factors. Apart from a paid job, most women have the second unpaid job in their own households; for instance raising children. According to the Institute for Public Affairs' survey (2002), 80 percent of women think that family obligations are one of the main obstacles for women to enter the political arena. Although this survey is quite old, the perception of the role of women as an irreplaceable role in the family and in raising children may be one of the reasons of a delayed success in politics. Successful male candidates are at the age of 35 to 55 years. The majority of male candidates were at this age.

In summation, the mayoral electoral data showed that female candidates were, at least in the 2010 mayoral election, almost as successful as male candidates. The problem of the underrepresentation

of women is therefore not a problem of a lack of demand but rather a problem of a low supply of female candidates.

### Strong position of incumbents in Slovak cities

In 2006 and 2010, in 85 percent of 138 analysed cities, an incumbent ran for re-election. Almost 9 out of 10 incumbents ran for re-election. The candidacy rate of incumbents as well as the success rate of incumbents is very similar for male and female incumbents. Due to this similarity and also because of a small sample of female incumbents, the results below are without a gender perspective.

The combination of the electoral data of the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections and the list of elected mayors in 2002, gives sufficient data for the calculation of the success rate. Almost 7 out of 10 incumbents were re-elected in the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections (Table 2). The success rate of incumbents was 61 percent in the 2006 mayoral election. In the 2010 mayoral election the success rate of incumbents reached 72 percent. The incumbents were more successful than non-incumbents, almost six-fold in 2006 and seven-fold in 2010. This significant difference between incumbents and non-incumbents in the success rate is the evidence of the strong incumbency advantage in Slovak cities.

It is important to stress that the percentages in Table 2 for the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections are the rates themselves – the ratios of the number of re-elected incumbents and the number of incumbents running for re-election in 2006 and 2010. The success rate of incumbents was 67 percent in the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections, which is very close to the re-election rate of mayors in US cities in Karnig's and Walter's analysis and this rate is also close to Moreira's study in Brazil.

Electoral data shows that this rate is even about 3 percentage points higher in small cities. However, in big cities the success rate is only 52 percent. One of the possible reasons of this large difference may be the size of the cities. A higher density of people as well as problems in big cities may produce stronger contestants for incumbents. On contrary, small cities may not have human capital as good as big cities.

The incumbency advantage may significantly rise with more terms in office. The success rate of incumbents running for the third term (already twice re-elected) in office was 71 percent. On the other hand, incumbents running for the first re-election won in only half the attempts. This suggests that the number of terms in office may have a significant effect. One more re-election may increase the incumbency advantage in the next election. However, to adjust how big this effect is we need to have data for more than three time periods.

Table 2

The success rate of incumbents in Slovak cities

Mayoral election in 2006	The number of incumbents	119
	The number of re-elected incumbents	73
	The success rate of incumbents	61 %
	The success rate of non-incumbents	11 %
Mayoral election in 2010	The number of incumbents	116
	The number of re-elected incumbents	84
	The success rate of incumbents	72 %
	The success rate of non-incumbents	9 %
Mayoral elections in 2006 and 2010	The success rate of incumbents	67 %
	The success rate of incumbents with more than one re-election	71 %
	The success rate of incumbents running for re-election the first time	48 %
	The success rate in small cities (up to 10 thousand inhabitants)	70 %
	The success rate in medium size cities (10 – 50 thousand inhabitants)	65 %
	The success rate in big cities (more than 100 thousand inhabitants)	52 %

Although incumbents are very strong, even they lose elections. However, the incumbents lost elections in a very close run much more often than their non-incumbent opponents. A close run means that a candidate won very closely. The same as Opensecret.org, this article works with a close run as 10 percent of votes of the winner. It means that the contestant who lost elections in a close run needed 10 or less percent of votes of the real winner to win. In the 2010 mayoral election, 41 percent of unsuccessful incumbents lost elections in a close run compared to 11 percent of non-incumbents. In the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections the incumbents who lost missed the victory in elections on average by 25 percent of votes of the real winner. The non-incumbents who also lost elections needed on average 45 percent of the votes of elected mayor. In other words, it seems that incumbents lost elections tighter than non-incumbents. Anyway, the incumbents are not impassable, and they can lose. So, who are these candidates who are able to beat incumbents?

Due to the small sample, around 250 candidates, the results below represent results in cities where

incumbents lost in the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections altogether. Female candidates were more successful against incumbents as male candidates. Every fourth woman who ran against the incumbent won elections. On the contrary, only 14 percent of male candidates were successful against the incumbent in the office. There is a difference even if it comes to age. On average the most successful women ran against incumbents at the age of 35 and more. The most successful men were at the age of 34 and less. According to information from ballots, the candidates who worked as political representatives were very successful. Their success rate reached almost 50 percent. However, there is no significant difference in the success rate of independent candidates and candidates supported by a political party or coalition.

In summation, the incumbency effect reaches the level which Karnig and Walter and also Moreira described in US cities and Brazilian municipalities. According to the electoral data of the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections, almost 7 out of 10 incumbents were re-elected. Incumbents are on average seven times more successful than non-incumbents. The second most important finding is that the number of incumbent's re-elections matters. The more times the incumbent got re-elected, the stronger the incumbency advantage is.

## Conclusion

A simple look at the input and the output of mayoral elections in 138 Slovak cities says about the overwhelming domination of men over women. On average, about 88 percent of candidates in the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections were male candidates. Only 1 out of 10 mayors is women. However, if we want to get the whole picture, we need to look at the input and output of elections at the same time.

Researchers (Dahlerup, 2005, Shevedova 2005, Butorova and Filadelfiova 2011) say about the domination of men in politics as a consequence of formal and informal obstacles for women. Fox and Oxley (2003) found out that women are running for stereotypically masculine positions (governor, attorney general, public service commissioner, etc.) less often than men. However, if women pass obstacles and stereotypes and run even for masculine positions they are as successful as men. The first goal of this article was to analyse the candidacy rate and success rate of women and men in the 2006 and 2010 mayoral elections in the various categories. On the basis of theoretical literature (Dahlerup, 2005, Shevedova 2005, Butorova and Filadelfiova 2011) there was the assumption that male candidates greatly outnumber female candidates. However, according to Fox and Oxley's (2003) analysis, the dominance of

men in the success rate may not be as high as in the candidacy rate. The electoral data of mayoral elections showed that male candidates were more successful than female candidates. However, it is not an abysmal difference. In the 2010 mayoral election, 17 out of 100 female candidates were on average elected, while at the same, every fifth male candidate won the elections. In other words, the demand for female candidates is almost as high as the demand for male candidates. The problem of the underrepresentation of women is therefore not a problem of a lack of demand but rather a problem of the low supply of female candidates. Another interesting finding is that elected women were on average at the age of 55 and older, while elected men were at the age of 35 to 54. One possible explanation of this phenomenon may be that the perception of women's role as irreplaceable in the family and raising children is one of the reasons of a delayed success in politics. Naturally, this analysis tested the gender or age as one of the possible variables. However, the quality of candidates, both women and men, may be one of the most important variables for citizens to vote for the candidate. Hence, the next research in this area must contain an analysis of the quality of mayoral candidates.

The natural goal of every single politician, regardless of political background, is to be re-elected. Incumbents may have an advantage over non-incumbents. Gordon and Landa (2009) describe the incumbency advantage as the electoral margin a candidate enjoys because of his or her status as an incumbent running for re-election. Karnig and Walter (1981) analysed the likelihood of the re-election of mayors in US cities. They found that the re-election rate of mayors was 70 percent. Moriera studied municipal elections in Brazil and his findings say the re-election rate of mayors is from 58 up to 69 percent. The Czech researcher Bernard (2012) confirms the strong incumbency effect in Czech cities and he points out that the incumbent factor is one of the most important factors which determine the election results. Hence, the second goal of this article was to analyse the re-election rate of incumbents in Slovak cities. The incumbency effect in Slovak cities reaches the level Karnig and Walter described in US cities and Moreira also found in Brazilian municipalities. Almost 7 out of 10 incumbents were re-elected. The incumbents are on average 7 times more successful than non-incumbents. The strongest incumbency effect is in small cities up to 10 thousand inhabitants. On the contrary, this effect is much smaller in big cities with more than 100 thousand inhabitants. One possible explanation may be that big cities are a bigger market for the potentially good quality competitors who are able to beat an incumbent. The number of re-

elections matters. In other words, the more times the incumbent got re-elected, the stronger the incumbency advantage is. The presented results are promising for further research in this area. However, the limitation of this article is the number of periods. Therefore, the next goal is to include more mayoral elections. The mayoral election held in 2014 is a good opportunity to do so.

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### Moterų dalyvavimas ir senbuviškumo privalumas Slovakijos miestuose: merų rinkimų Slovakijoje atvejo analizė

Santrauka

Straipsnyje analizuojami mero rinkimai visuose (138) Slovakijos miestuose. Viena iš politiškai stipriausių, taip pat patraukliausių įstaigų vietos lygmeniu yra mero institucija. Meras – svarbiausias asmuo, politiškai atstovaujantis miestui ir valdantis ribotus miesto išteklius. Šios institucijos vaidmuo yra svarbi priežastis atlikti nuodugnesnes mero rinkimų studijas. Pažvelgus į mero rinkimus balsavimo (įeigos) ir rezultatų (išeigos) aspektais, pastebima dominuojanti lyčių nelygybė. Vyrų merais tampa dažniau nei moterys, t. y. tik 1 iš 10 merų yra moteris. Vidutiniškai apie 88 procentus visų kandidatų mero rinkimuose 2006 ir 2010 metais buvo vyrai. Tačiau, siekiant matyti reiškinio visumą, būtina rinkimų įeigos ir išeigos analizė nustatyti laikotarpiu.

Tyrimo pirminiais duomenų šaltiniais laikomi 2006 ir 2010 metų vietos rinkimų Slovakijoje duomenys. Statistikos departamentas pateikia informaciją apie kiekvieno miesto dydį ir juose vykusius rinkimų nugalėtojus ir kandidatus, kiekvieno kandidato rinkimų rezultatus (rinkėjų balsų skaičių), lytį, priklausomybę politinei partijai, koalicijai arba nepriklausomą kandidatavimą. Antrinis duomenų šaltinis yra rinkimų biuleteniai. Biuleteniai suteikia informaciją apie kandidato darbo poziciją, amžių ir išsilavinimą. Straipsnyje analizuojamas kandidatavimo lygis ir sėkmės rodiklis. Moterų kandidatavimo lygis yra moterų kandidačių dalis tarp visų lyčių kandidatų, dalyvaujančių mero rinkimuose. Vyrų kandidatavimo lygis yra vyrų kandidatų dalis tarp visų lyčių kandidatų. Moterų sėkmės rodiklis – tai moterų kandidačių, kurios buvo išrinktos merėmis, dalis tarp visų kandidatavusių mero rinkimuose moterų. Vyrų (senbuvių) sėkmės rodiklis skaičiuojamas panašiai kaip moterų sėkmės rodiklis. Sėkmės rodiklis parodo, kiek kandidatų iš 100, kurie varžėsi dėl posto, laimėjo mero rinkimus.

Daugelis tyrėjų (Dahlerup, 2005; Shevedova, 2005; Butorova ir Filadelfiova, 2011) patvirtina vyrų dominavimą politikoje kaip formalių ir neformalių kliūčių, sudaromų

moterims, pasekmę. Fox ir Oxley (2003) teigia, kad moterys stereotipiškai vyriškas pozicijas (vadovo, generalinio prokuroro, viešųjų paslaugų komisijos nario ir pan.) užima rečiau nei vyrai. Vis dėlto, jei moterys įveikia kliūtis, stereotipus ir siekia net „vyriškų“ pozicijų, jų veikla būna sėkminga, kaip ir vyrų. Taigi pirminis tikslas – išanalizuoti vyrų ir moterų kandidatavimo lygius ir sėkmės rodiklius mero rinkimuose 2006 ir 2010 metais įvairiomis kategorijomis. Remiantis teorinėmis priegomis (Dahlerup, 2005; Shevedova, 2005; Butorova ir Filadelfiova, 2011), egzistuoja prielaida, kad vyrų kandidatų yra daug daugiau nei moterų. Tačiau, pagal Fox ir Oxley (2003) atliktą analizę, vyrų dominavimas sėkmės rodiklio aspektu gali būti ne toks didelis kaip analizuojant kandidatavimo lygį.

Mero rinkimų duomenys rodo, kad vyrai kandidatai patyrė didesnę sėkmę nei moterys, tačiau skirtumas nėra labai didelis. 2010 metų merų rinkimuose vidutiniškai buvo išrinktos 17 iš 100 moterų kandidačių ir rinkimus laimėjo kas penktas vyras kandidatas. Kitaip tariant, moterų kandidačių paklausa yra beveik tokia pat didelė kaip ir vyrų kandidatų. Taigi nepakankamo moterų atstovavimo problema – ne paklausos stoka, bet greičiau maža moterų kandidačių pasiūla. Kitas įdomus aspektas – išrinktos moterys yra vidutiniškai 55 metų ir vyresnės, o išrinktų vyrų amžius svyruoja nuo 35 iki 54 metų. Ši analizė grindžiama lyties ir amžiaus aspektais kaip vienais iš galimų kintamųjų. Tačiau tiek vyrų, tiek moterų kandidatų kokybė gali būti vienas iš esminių kintamųjų gyventojams, balsuojantiems už kandidatus. Todėl tolesnių tyrimų laukas turėtų apimti mero rinkimų kandidatų kokybės aspektą.

Kiekvieno politiko, nepaisant jo politinės krypties, natūralus tikslas yra būti perrinktam. Senbuviai – ilgą laikotarpį politikoje veikiantys asmenys – gali turėti pranašumą prieš nepatyrusius naujus kandidatus. Gordon ir Landa (2009) senbuvio pranašumą apibūdina kaip rinkiminę maržą, kurią turi kandidatas dėl savo senbuvio statuso dalyvaudamas rinkimuose pakartotinai. Levit ir

Wolfram (1997) teigia, kad devintajame ir dešimtajame XX amžiaus dešimtmečiuose buvo perrinkta 90 procentų senbuvų. Remiantis OpenSecret.org (2012) projekto duomenimis, Jungtinių Amerikos Valstijų Baltųjų rūmų perrinkimo lygis 2012 metais buvo 90, Senato – 91 procentai. Karnig ir Walter (1981), analizavę JAV miestų merų perrinkimo tikimybes, nustatė, kad perrinkimo lygis buvo 70 procentų. Čekų tyrėjas Bernard (2012) patvirtino senbuvų efektą Čekijos miestuose ir senbuvų veiksmų pabrėžė kaip vieną iš esminių, lemiančių rinkimų rezultatus. Taigi antrasis tikslas buvo išanalizuoti senbuvų perrinkimo rodiklį Slovakijos miestuose. Nustatyta, kad senbuvų sėkmės rodiklis yra panašaus lygio kaip ir JAV miestuose.

Senbuvų efektas Slovakijos miestuose siekia lygį, kurį nustatė Karnig ir Walter (1981) Jungtinėse Amerikos Valstijose ir Moreira (2012) Brazilijos savivaldybėse 2008 m.: buvo perrinkta beveik 7 iš 10 senbuvų. Be to, senbuvai buvo vidutiniškai 7 kartus sėkmingesni (perrinkti) nei naujokai. Stipriausias senbuvų efektas užfiksuotas mažuose miestuose, kuriuose gyvena mažiau nei 10 tūkstančių gyventojų. Ir, priešingai, šis efektas gerokai silpnesnis dideliuose miestuose, kurių gyventojų skaičius viršija 100 tūkstančių. Be to, svarbus perrinkimų skaičius. Kuo daugiau kartų senbuvis perrenkamas, tuo didesnis senbuvo pranašumas įgyjamas.

**Pagrindiniai žodžiai:** senbuvai, merai, sėkmės rodiklis, kandidatavimo lygis, lytis.

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