

RESUME

Gergely ILLYÉS

Parliamentary Elections in Romania

The Surprise Winner Left-Wing Party Did not Get to Form Government

Romania held parliamentary elections on December 6, 2020. The unusual circumstances due to the coronavirus restrictions resulted in an expectedly record low turnout: 33.3%. Surprisingly, the Social Democratic Party (PSD) won the election with nearly 30%, while the National Liberal Party (PNL) won only 25%, and the USR-PLUS Alliance finished third with 15% of the votes. Another unexpected result was achieved by the far-right, ultraconservative Alliance for the Association of Romanians (AUR). The AUR, which enjoys the support of the Romanian Orthodox Church, ranked fourth with 9%, even though polls had anticipated the party at 2–3%. The Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (DAHR) finished at 5.8%, and thus, as expected, passed the 5% parliamentary threshold. In contrast, the People's Movement Party (PMP) and Pro Romania did not enter the parliament with only 4.9% and 4.1%, respectively. There were not many questions left in the five-party parliament about the political direction of the next government: it was clear that only the PNL could form a government in coalition with the USRPLUS and the DAHR, and the government would be supported by the group of national minorities in the parliament. Former PNL finance minister Florin Citu was elected prime minister, and the presidents of the two coalition parties, Dan Barna and Hunor Kelemen, were appointed as deputy prime ministers.

Tamás Zoltán WÁGNER

In the Parliament Again

The Emergence of AUR and the Revival of the Far-Right in Romania

Respective Romanian governments for several years have been emphasizing that there is no far-right party in the parliament, which provided them with a good reputation in European mainstream political circles. In addition, this favorable judgement was also reinforced by the election of a president of ethnic German origin in 2014, as well as by the electoral behavior (anti-PSD) of the Romanian diaspora in the previous parliamentary elections. Nonetheless, the election held in December 2020 radically changed the political landscape. First of all, the turnout was extremely low, which effectively contributed to the success of the Alliance for the Association of Romanians (AUR) as the first far-right party to enter the parliament since the fall of the Greater Romania Party (PRM) in 2008. Secondly, the election refuted the general belief that the Romanian diaspora overwhelmingly supports the right-wing-liberal parties. Above all, overt anti-Hungarian sentiment is now again in the forefront of Romanian politics. However, the election results cannot be attributed exclusively to the exploitation of the anti-Hungarian sentiment; other factors, such as the utilization of virus skepticism, also contributed. In the paper, I thoroughly analyze these factors. I take a glance at the characteristics of far-right parties and then the history of the Romanian far-right since the regime change. Finally, I examine the ideology and the key politicians of AUR together with the possible future of the party. During the analysis, I address the allegations that Romanian intelligence or Russia were behind the emergence of the party. I argue that AUR's entrance to the parliament was not unexpected because those structures and electoral groups are present in the Romanian political life that can be effectively used by far-right parties. It is especially true for this election where AUR managed to utilize multiple factors.

**Zsombor CSATA – Gyöngyi SCHWARCZ – Márton PÉTI –
Mátyás BORBÉLY**

**A Comparative Analysis of the Well-Being of the Hungarians
in the Carpathian Basin**

The study is a descriptive analysis of the economic and social determinants of well-being among the Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. Empirically, it is based on a survey conducted in 2018–2019 in Hungary and in the four regions with the largest Hungarian population outside of Hungary (Transylvania in Romania, southern Slovakia, Vojvodina in Serbia, and Transcarpathia in Ukraine). The conceptual framework of the study draws mainly from substantive economics, according to which the premise of social development is not economic growth per se, but the improvement of people's quality of life.

The results show that there is a positive relationship between EU membership and the quality of life of Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin: general welfare indicators score higher in southern Slovakia, Hungary, and Transylvania, and significantly lower in Vojvodina and especially in Transcarpathia. The differences are more spectacular in employment conditions and in terms of income. The study also reveals that economic activity and a better financial situation are essential but not exclusive determinants of quality of life and that their role is more important in providing comfort and helping people make ends meet. In addition to the financial aspects, people's health conditions, whether they live in a long-term relationship, and whether they can count on the help of their friends and relatives in critical situations also have an important influence. In general, welfare benefits are also related to higher education as well as to proficiency in English and in the language of the ethnic majority.

Katalin KOVÁLY

**The Role of Ethnic Social Capital in the Operation of Hungarian
Enterprises in Transcarpathia on the Example of Beregszász District**

The research examines the role of formal and informal ethnic social capital in the economic life of Hungarian businesses operating in Transcarpathia. The results of the current investigation are based on a qualitative research carried out with Hungarian entrepreneurs of Beregszász district—where a significant number of Hungarian companies operate—with

the representatives of local socio-economic organizations, and with relevant experts. Based on the results of the research, I conclude that informal relationships are essential in the operation of the examined enterprises, but these relationships are not necessarily organized on a linguistic-ethnic basis. However, the role of formal ethnic relations has increased in recent years due to the extensive financial support provided by Hungary. The results of the research also reveal that the main issue of the examined enterprises—besides the lack of financial capital and the business disadvantages stemming from the “forced” nature of the enterprises—is the lack of social capital.