

## **Феномен, ідеологічне позиціонування та оцінювання електоральних успіхів пенсіонерських партій у Країнах Центральної, Південно-Східної та Східної Європи**

Проаналізовано суть феномену пенсіонерських партій. Розкрито сутність позиціонування пенсіонерських партій в ідеологічному спектрі на прикладі країн Центральної, Південно-Східної і Східної Європи. Здійснено порівняльний аналіз успіхів партій пенсіонерів у країнах Центральної, Південно-Східної і Східної Європи на основі їхнього електорального й урядового представництва.

*Ключові слова:* партія, пенсіонерська партія, ідеологічне позиціонування партії, «посіріння партійної демократії», Центральна, Південно-Східна та Східна Європа.

## **Phenomenon, ideological positioning and evaluation of electoral success of pensioners' parties in Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern European countries**

The article is dedicated to analyzing the essence of pensioners parties' phenomenon. The author outlined the essence of pensioners parties' positioning in ideological left-right spectrum in case of Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern European countries; carried out the comparative analysis of pensioners parties' successes in Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern European countries on the basis of their electoral and cabinet representation.

*Keywords:* party, pensioners party, ideological positioning, "greying of party democracy", Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern Europe.

Transformation processes in post-communist (including post-Soviet) countries of the Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern Europe have a lot of political consequences. For example, these countries to a different degree follow or defeat political traditions and practices pertinent to the Western European countries. Peculiarities of interparty competition and

participation in political life of the region are not exceptions in this context. No wonder that different materialistic and post-materialistic tendencies, which find interpretation on political level in the parties activities have gained or are gaining significant popularity in the Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern Europe. To a large extent it is also reproduced in the attempts to construct so called pensioners parties, which predominantly express interests of voters of older generation or elderly people. At first glance it isn't weird, since a human being of any age aspires to make an influence, through which his/her tasks can be implemented. However, at second glance it isn't so simple, since the phenomenon of pensioners parties for the Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern European countries is relatively new, that's why it hasn't been fully examined. With regard to this, the parties of pensioners or pensioners parties, whose usual voters are people of pension age, need theoretical and methodological and empirical outline. To a large extent the grounds are related with the conclusions, which are incorporated from studies of pensioners parties in the countries of Western Europe. Out of them the following scientists are singled out by authorship: S. Hanley<sup>1</sup>, A. Campbell<sup>2</sup>, L. Derfner<sup>3</sup>, N. Eberstadt and H. Groth<sup>4</sup>, A. Evers and J. Wolf<sup>5</sup>, D. Feltenius<sup>6</sup>, A. Goerres<sup>7</sup>, J. Gynn i S. Arber<sup>8</sup>, M. Henn, M. Weinstein and D. Wring<sup>9</sup>, E. Iecovich<sup>10</sup>, J. Lynch<sup>11</sup>, C. Mukesh, G. Betcherman and A. Banerji<sup>12</sup>, E. Phelps<sup>13</sup>, B. Susser<sup>14</sup>, M. Tepe and P. Vanhuysse<sup>15</sup>, J. Vincent, G. Patterson

- <sup>1</sup> S. Hanley, *The emergence of pensioners' parties in contemporary Europe*, [w:] J. Tremmel, *Young Generation Under Pressure? The Financial Situation and the "Rush Hour" of the Cohorts 1970-1985 in a Generational Comparison*, Wyd. Springer Verlag 2010, s. 225-244.
- <sup>2</sup> A. Campbell, *How Policies Make Citizens: Senior Political Activism in the American Welfare State*, Wyd. Harvard University Press 2003.
- <sup>3</sup> L. Derfner, *The grand old party*, "Jerusalem Post" 2006, vol 6.
- <sup>4</sup> N. Eberstadt, H. Groth, *Healthy Old Europe*, "Foreign Affairs" May/June 2007.
- <sup>5</sup> A. Evers, J. Wolf, *Political organization and participation of older people: traditions and changes in five European countries*, [w:] A. Walker, G. Naegele, *The Politics of Old Age in Europe*, Wyd. Open University Press 1999, s. 42-61.
- <sup>6</sup> D. Feltenius, *Client organizations in a corporatist country: pensioners' organizations and pensions policy in Sweden*, "Journal of European Social Policy" 2007, vol 17, nr 2, s. 139-151.
- <sup>7</sup> A. Goerres, *Why are Older People more Likely to Vote? The Impact of Ageing on Electoral Turnout across Europe*, "British Journal of Politics and International Relations" 2007, vol 9, nr 1, s. 90-121.; A. Goerres, *The Political Participation of Older People in Europe: The Greying of Our Democracies*, Wyd. Palgrave-Macmillan 2009.
- <sup>8</sup> J. Gynn, S. Arber, *The Politics of Old age in the UK*, [w:] A. Walker, G. Naegele, *The Politics of Old Age in Europe*, Wyd. Open University Press 1999, s. 152-167.
- <sup>9</sup> M. Henn, M. Weinstein, D. Wring, *A Generation Apart? Youth and Political Participation in Britain*, "British Journal of Politics and International Relations" 2002, vol 4, nr 2, s. 167-192.
- <sup>10</sup> E. Iecovich, *Pensioners' political parties: the Israeli case*, [w:] J. Durandal, *Cahiers du FLAPA. Volume 1: Grey Power? Political Power and influence*, Wyd. FIAPA 2002, s. 118-132.
- <sup>11</sup> Lynch Julia (2006), *Age in the Welfare State: The Origins of Social Spending on Pensioners, Workers and Children*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- <sup>12</sup> C. Mukesh, G. Betcherman, A. Banerji, *From Red to Gray: The "Third Transition" of Ageing Populations in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union*, Wyd. World Bank 2007.
- <sup>13</sup> E. Phelps, *Young Adults and Electoral Turnout in Britain: Towards a Generational Model of Political Participation*, "Sussex European Institute working paper" 2006, nr 92.
- <sup>14</sup> B. Susser, *The Retirees' (Gimla'im): An "Escapist" Phenomenon?*, "Israel Affairs" 2007, vol 13, nr 1, s. 187-192.
- <sup>15</sup> M. Tepe, P. Vanhuysse, *Are Aging Welfare States on the Path to Gerontocracy? Evidence from 18 OECD Democracies, 1980-2002*, "Journal of Public Policy" 2009, vol 29, nr 1, s. 1-28.

and K. Wale<sup>16</sup>, A. Walker<sup>17</sup>, J. Večerník<sup>18</sup>, P. Vanhuyse<sup>19</sup>, etc. Nevertheless they don't fully outline the principles of pensioners parties functioning in Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern Europe, which creates the grounds for further scientific surveys.

In most cases pensioners parties are interpreted as a kind of *special parties* or *parties of special/specialized political interests*, which derive from convictions and interests of people of retirement/elderly age. The phenomenon *special parties* in the political science traditionally means the parties, which have the function of aggregation and/or expression of influence of certain social groups of population on how adoption of special and industry political decisions takes place. Besides, special parties are often interpreted in the format of a tool and mechanisms of performing modern legislative lobbying<sup>20</sup> (however the mentioned definition mostly concerns the parties, which are represented at the parliament). Special political parties are such parties, whose program activity is based on special/non-traditional values, which can have or not have materialistic/post-materialistic nature. The functioning of special parties has in common non-traditional and little popular program position, as well as very limited circle of voters and supporters. As the result of this, special parties are nonhomogenous.

Pensioners parties make untypical group of special parties in the countries of Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern Europe. The thing is that scientists do not always agree to refer pensioners parties to the parties of materialistic or post-materialistic values. It is so because pensioners parties, representing special political interests, make a separate group first of all on the basis of age structure of their members and electorate, but they don't deny those principles, which are pertinent to sociopolitical divisions of "old policy". Taking this into consideration, it is clear that pensioners parties are positioned in ideological section as such that shift from their materialistic outline to the post-materialistic one: they are traditionally outlined as extra-ideological/post-materialistic, but they are constructed on the issues of resources distribution in the society, i.e. they tend toward classical left and right materialistic ideological range.

Appearance of pensioners parties in the countries of Europe was caused by the fact that the party policy of modern Europe (including Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern Europe) often shows express *generalized prejudices* ("generalized prejudices" mean taking into account prejudices on the basis of generations change). "Older" (in the context of their age) voters are

<sup>16</sup> J. Vincent, G. Patterson, K. Wale, *Politics and Old Age: Older Citizens and Political Processes in Britain*, Wyd. Basingstoke 2001.; J. Vincent, *Demography, Politics and Old Age*, Paper presented at the British Society for Gerontology Annual Conference, Newcastle upon Tyne, 4-6 September 2003.

<sup>17</sup> A. Walker, *Speaking for themselves: the new politics of old age in Europe*, "Education and Ageing" 1998, vol 13, nr 1, s. 13-36.

<sup>18</sup> J. Večerník, *Changing Social Status of Pensioners and Prospects of Pension Reform in the Czech Republic*, Wyd. Institute of Economic Studies: "Occasional Paper" 2006, nr 2.

<sup>19</sup> P. Vanhuyse, *Divide and Pacify: Strategic Social Policies and Political Protests in Post-Communist Democracies*, Wyd. Central European University Press 2006.

<sup>20</sup> D. Baron, *Review of Grossman and Helpman's Special Interest Politics*, "Journal of Economic Literature" 2002 vol 40, nr 4, s. 1221-1229.; G. Grossman, E. Helpman, *Special Interest Politics*, Wyd. MIT Press 2001.; N. Martineau, *The Influence of Special Interests and Party Activists of Electoral Competition*, "Job Market Paper" 2010.

more determined by participation in the party life and process at least based on two key aspects: firstly, the “older” voters more actively participate in voting for political parties at the elections<sup>21</sup>; secondly, the “older” voters display more initiative in their intentions to receive membership in political parties. And vice versa, “younger” (in terms of their age) voters are more inclined not to participate in official party and election policy. As the result of this they don't raise worries in terms of determining such phenomenon as “graying/darkening of party democracy” and socio-political organizations<sup>22</sup> (in most cases “graying/darkening of party democracy” means the process, which denotes relative decadence of the voters' political activity in terms of the voters' solving traditional problems of development on the basis of procedures of participation nature). It is demonstrated by the fact that certain political parties are disproportionately supported by older age groups. For example, in certain cases, at least in terms of evaluating electorate of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSCM) in Czech Republic, which is pointed by S. Hanley<sup>23</sup>, specifically voters of elderly age can make majority. Similar situation is peculiar for voters for the Communist Party of Ukraine (KPU) or Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF). As the result of this it is quite obvious that the elderly voters can significantly influence on the process of how the parties understand and/or decide priorities of their own programs further development and/or respond to political calls signaled to them by the voters. However, the possibility of the fact that ageing of population and growing importance of the issues related with ageing of the society can cause appearance and growing up of electoral popularity of “new” pensioners parties, is to a large extent ignored. In many regards it is small wonder, since despite appearance during the last two decades of pensioners parties (or parties of pensioners) on the periphery of European party system, the mentioned “parties of grey interest” (such definition of pensioners parties has been proposed by A. Goerres<sup>24</sup>), are at first sight evaluated as a phenomenon, which doesn't have big and self-sufficient role<sup>25</sup>.

However the parties of grey interest represent new socio-political phenomenon and potentially new ideological family of parties in the formed/institutionalized party systems of European countries. As H. Herzog<sup>26</sup> points with this regard, despite the potential for receiving voters' votes, new “minority” parties can become marker for appearance of new political issues,

<sup>21</sup> A. Goerres, *Why are Older People more Likely to Vote? The Impact of Ageing on Electoral Turnout across Europe*, “British Journal of Politics and International Relations” 2007, vol 9, nr 1, s. 90-121.

<sup>22</sup> M. Henn, M. Weinstein, D. Wring, *A Generation Apart? Youth and Political Participation in Britain*, “British Journal of Politics and International Relations” 2002, vol 4, nr 2, s. 167-192.; E. Phelps, *Young Adults and Electoral Turnout in Britain: Towards a Generational Model of Political Participation*, “Sussex European Institute working paper” 2006, nr 92.; F. Robertson, *A Study of Youth Political Participation in Poland and Romania*, Wyd. University College London 2009.

<sup>23</sup> S. Hanley, *Towards Breakthrough or Breakdown? The Consolidation of the KSCM as a Neo-Communist Successor Party in the Czech Republic*, “Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics” 2001, vol 17, nr 3, s. 96-116.

<sup>24</sup> A. Goerres, *Why are Older People more Likely to Vote? The Impact of Ageing on Electoral Turnout across Europe*, “British Journal of Politics and International Relations” 2007, vol 9, nr 1, s. 90-121.

<sup>25</sup> A. Goerres, *The Political Participation of Older People in Europe: The Greying of Our Democracies*, Wyd. Palgrave-Macmillan 2009.; A. Walker, *Speaking for themselves: the new politics of old age in Europe*, “Education and Ageing” 1998, vol 13, nr 1, s. 13-36.

<sup>26</sup> H. Herzog, *Minor Parties: The Relevancy Perspective*, “Comparative Politics” 1987, vol 19, nr 3, s. 317-329.

and also are early indicator, which wide groups of voters can use at redefinition and reevaluation of socio-political identities or in search of mechanisms of implementing protest policy. Moreover, in certain Central, Southern-Eastern European countries the parties of “grey interest” currently enjoy sufficient successes at the elections. That’s why it is even worth to say that those parties receive political/governmental levers of influence.

Without going into the history of pensioners parties formation as such, it is worth to note that the phenomenon of pensioners parties itself has been applied for the first time in the countries of the Western Europe. The first pensioners parties started to form in Europe during post-war period in 1940-1950-ies. Some of their examples were also known during the period between two world wars. The exact form of such organizations is historically manifold and first of all depends on the national context, which demonstrates specific models of “*pillarization*” (mechanism of stable vertical division of the society) and/or “*participation*” (forced inclusion into some party) of social life and specific activities strategies of mass organizations activity. The successive wave of socio-political organizations of “older voters” started in 1970-ies in the context of “new policy of elderly people”, induced by parallel processes of ageing of population, reduction and reconfiguration of the idea of “state of general well being”<sup>27</sup>. Nevertheless, pensioners parties as established phenomenon were accepted only in the end of 1980-ies – in the beginning of 1990-ies.

Starting from 1990-ies pensioners parties started to form in *Central Europe*. The experience shows that they were applied in the majority of countries of the region (Lithuania is the only exception). Hence, in Bulgaria of different time periods such pensioners parties functioned/have been functioning as the Movement of Social Solidarity (DSS), in Estonia there are the Estonian Union of Pensioners (EPL) and the Estonian Union of Pensioners and Families (EPPL) (renamed into the Estonian Party of Pensioners and Families (EPPE)), in Latvia there are the Party of Pensioners and Elderly People (PSP) and party “Latvian Renaissance” (LA), in Poland there are the Association of Pensioners and the Disabled Persons (O/W Legnica), the Party of Disabled Persons and Pensioners (NER), the National Party of Pensioners (KPEiR), the National Alliance of Pensioners (KPPiR-RP), in Romania there are the Party of Pensioners of Romania (PPR) and the Party of People’s and Social Protection (PPPS), in Slovakia there are the Party of Pensioners and Socially Dependent (SDSO) and the Party of Pensioners of Slovakia (SDoS), in Slovenia there is the Democratic Party of Pensioners (DeSUS), in Hungary there is the Party of Pensioners (NYUP) and in Czech Republic there is Party “Pensioners for Safe Life” (DŽJ) (later renamed into “Party for Safe Life” (SZJ)). As of 2014 among the countries of Central Europe pensioners parties didn’t function only in Latvia, Lithuania and Czech Republic (please see details in table 1).

<sup>27</sup> A. Walker, *Speaking for themselves: the new politics of old age in Europe*, “Education and Ageing” 1998, vol 13, nr 1, s. 13-36.; A. Evers, J. Wolf, *Political organization and participation of older people: traditions and changes in five European countries*, [w:] A. Walker, G. Naegele, *The Politics of Old Age in Europe*, Wyd. Open University Press 1999, s. 42-61.

As to *Southern-Eastern European countries* it should be noted that they predominantly repeat the experience of the countries of Central Europe. It means that in the majority of countries of the region pensioners parties are applied. For example in Albania there function/functioned Party "People's Union of Pensioners" (PBPPSH), in Bosnia and Herzegovina there are the Pensioners Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina (SPU), the Pensioners Party of Serbian Republic (PSRS) and the Democratic Party of Pensioners (DSP), in Croatia there is the Croatian Party of Pensioners (HSU), in Montenegro there is the Party of Pensioners and Disabled Persons (PPI), in Macedonia there is the Party of Pensioners of the Republic of Macedonia (PPRM), in Serbia there is the Party of United Pensioners of Serbia (PUPS). As of 2014 among the countries of Southern-Eastern Europe pensioners parties didn't function only in Kosovo (please see details in table 1).

However, the situation is entire different in the countries of *Eastern Europe*. This is so because pensioners parties haven't received experience of formation to a full extent there. Hence, the parties of the mentioned profile are found only in Russia – the Party of Pensioners (PP), the Russian Party of Pensioners (RPP) and the Russian Party of Pensioners for Justice (RPPzS); and in Ukraine – the Party of Pensioners of Ukraine (PPU) and the Party for Ukraine's Pensioners Protection (PZPU). At the same time there are/have been no pensioners parties in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belorussia, Georgia and Moldova. The noticed correlation, in accordance with which pensioners parties are predominantly met in democratic countries, but have no application in authoritarian or hybrid political regimes (please see details in table 1).

In general, in the selected countries of Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern Europe several conclusions are made with regard to the experience of formation and consequences of functioning of pensioners parties: 1) the majority of the selected countries have experience of pensioners parties functioning; 2) in the selected countries pensioners parties were formed at different time periods: in some countries (Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Macedonia, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine and Hungary) – in 1990-ies; in other countries (Albania, to a large extent Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Latvia, to a large extent Russia, Romania, Serbia and Croatia) – in 2000s; 3) in the majority of countries the selected pensioners parties are not successful in terms of their representation in parliaments and/or government cabinets: for example pensioners parties were represented in the parliament only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Russia, Serbia and Slovenia, and in government cabinets – only in Slovenia. Also it is obvious that during the period 1990-2014 the dynamics of electoral support of pensioners parties have been increasing/is increasing or remains stable only in Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia, where pensioners parties are considered as typical participants of interparty competition.

For example, *Croatian Party of Pensioners*, which emerged in 1996 is rather popular. It is a «single-issue party». At the dawn of its functioning the party was often criticized that it was allegedly created exclusively to cut away voices of "pensioners-voters" from Social-Democratic Party of Croatia (SDP) and to help the governing/governmental Croatian

Democratic Union (HDZ) of F. Tudžman to remain at power. Nevertheless Croatian Party of Pensioners (HSU) gradually built its organizational structure in the entire country and expanded its electoral popularity. The reason for this became lack of desire of the government cabinet of I. Račan (2000-2003) to fulfill decision of the Constitutional Court of Croatia on payment of pension arrears from the beginning of 1990-ies. As the result of it Croatian Party of Pensioners was able to receive four percent of votes at the parliamentary elections in 2003 and also to bring its three of its deputies to the legislature. By the election results HSU secured support of governmental cabinet of I. Sanader from Croatian Democratic Union in exchange of execution of the Constitutional Court Decision on payment of pension arrears. In 2007 Croatian Party of Pensioners was able to receive 4.1 percent of votes at the successive parliamentary elections. However, application of proportional system of lists in line with D-Hondt formula allowed the party to receive only one deputy mandate. Nevertheless the party continued to clearly perform its obligations to fulfill obligations of pension arrears payment. The electoral popularity of the party rose after the pension reform, whose essence was in implementation of so called “Swiss formula” of pensions calculation. HSU insisted that new pensions should be recounted to equal the old pensions<sup>28</sup>. Aggravation of this matter as well as the consequences of financial crisis in 2009 made Croatian Party of Pensioners stop supporting government cabinet of Ya. Kosor. Instead the party became a member of so called electoral block “Coalition kukuriku” (the previous name – “Union for changes”). It is socio-democratic and socio-liberal alliance consisting of four parties: Socio-Democratic Party (SDPH), People’s Party of Liberal Democrats (HNS), Istriysk Democratic Assembly (IDS), as well as Party of Pensioners (HSU). At the elections in December of 2011 the elective coalition received 40.4 percent of the votes and 80 mandates. Out of them 3 mandates were given to the Party of Pensioners. However the party was never included into negotiations on government cabinet formation, although its election partners formed coalition government of majority.

*Party of United Pensioners of Serbia* (PUPS) is rather popular; it appeared in 2005 and positions itself as «single-issue party» or special party. The program of this party says that it is extra-ideological and ready to cooperate with any political party, which defends interests of pensioners and other socially vulnerable layers of population. The main vectors of activity of Party of United Pensioners are determined as: achievement of economic equality, social justice, reformation of all aspects of pension system and sphere of the pensioners and disabled persons rights protection, ensuring of free education, preservation of healthy environment

<sup>28</sup> At the same time the stood (and stands) for: implementation of social justice principles, which are based on the principles of morale; ensuring plebiscitary pattern of social community and democracy; organization of self-regulatory groups to help people; decentralization of budget resources; differentiation of pension provision; protection of disabled persons and pensioners rights, etc. See: *Program Stranke Umirovljenika Za Razdoblje 2011-2015 Godine*, źródło: <http://www.strankaumirovljenika.hr/PDF/SU%20-%20PROGRAM%20STRANKE%20UMIROVLJENIKA%202011%20-%202015..pdf> (styczeń 2014).

and rational use of natural resources, etc.<sup>29</sup>. Such program of the party allowed it to become popular from electoral point of view. Hence, by the results of parliamentary elections in 2007, in which the Party of United Pensioners of Serbia participated in electoral block with the Socio-Democratic Party (SDP), it didn't receive any mandate. In the parliamentary elections in 2008, in which Party of the United Pensioners of Serbia participated in electoral block with the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) and the party "United Serbia" (JS), it received five mandates in the parliament. By the results of parliamentary elections in 2012, in which the Party of United Pensioners participated in identical electoral coalition, it received 12 mandates. It shows gradual growth of electoral popularity of this political force.

Even despite this, the most politically successful in the analyzed countries is *the Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia* (DeSUS), which appeared at the dawn of Slovenian independence in 1991. In the classical left-right ideological range DeSUS is evaluated as center party, which is based on protecting and guaranteeing social justice<sup>30</sup>. During the period of 1992-2014, this party always participates in parliamentary elections and receives deputies mandates. At that the electoral support of the party ranges from 4 to 7.5% of the voters (or from four to seven mandates in lower part of Slovenian parliament). The most important is the fact that during 1996-2014, when the party was represented in the parliament, it participated in formation of seven government cabinets, i.e. it received ministerial portfolios: for example in 1997-2000 the party was member of minimally victorious coalition of Ya. Drnovshek; in 2002-2004 – of excessively victorious coalition of A. Ropa; in 2004 – it worked in the composition of minimally victorious coalition of A. Ropa; in 2004-2008 – it worked in the composition of minimally victorious coalition of Ya. Yanshi; in 2008-2011 – in minimally victorious coalition of B. Pakhor; in 2012 – in excessively victorious coalition of Ya. Yanshi; in 2013-2014 – in composition of excessively victorious coalition of A. Brasushek. At that it is interesting that the party clearly positioned itself as left-of-center «single-issue party». It is evidenced by the fact that the party more often cooperated with the left/left-of-center political forces.

In general the analysis of program documents of pensioners parties in the selected countries demonstrates that *ideologically the pensioners parties* are usually left and left-of-center political parties. The predominantly articulate forthright short-term material demands, related with resources distribution. However, the parties position themselves as the ones with "non-political niche" of protecting the "older" voters. As the result of this the parties of pensioners have

<sup>29</sup> Програм Партије Уједињених Пензионера Србије, извор: <http://www.pups.org.rs/images/vesti/program.pdf> (styczeń 2014).

<sup>30</sup> K. Benoit, M. Laver, *Party policy in modern democracies*, Wyd. Routledge 2006.; L. Hooghe, *Reliability and validity of measuring party positions: The Chapel Hill expert surveys of 2002 and 2006*, "European Journal of Political Research" 2010, vol 49, nr 5, s. 687-703.; H-D. Klingemann, A. Volkens, J. Bara, I. Budge, *Mapping policy preferences II: Estimates for parties, electors and governments in Central and Eastern Europe, European Union and OECD, 1990-2003*, Wyd. Oxford University Press, 2007.; M. Steenbergen, G. Marks, *Evaluating Expert Surveys*, "European Journal of Political Research" 2007, vol 46, nr 3, s. 347-366.; A. Trechsel, P. Mair, *When parties (also) position themselves: An introduction to the EU Profiler*, "EUI Working Papers RSCAS" 2009, vol 65.



legitimacy mandate and are outlined as “detached from political pressure” on the part of other parties. Key requirements of the pensioners parties are concentrated on a number of program slogans: regular increase of pensions and benefits to elderly and/or disabled persons, improvement of social services level (health care, social security and reduction of taxes) for elderly persons; elimination or decrease of discrimination on the basis of age and providing higher social status to the pensioners. At the same time the pensioners parties present themselves a little more than “single political issues” parties and one special group interest. It is because they often design their political programs as such, which are directed at achieving social agreement, unity and solidarity of generations. It is demonstrated by the fact that pensioners parties often identify themselves as broad political movements, whose purpose is to achieve social justice and equality, and improvement of social security level. A noticeable peculiarity of such parties activity is the fact that when they enter into discussions with institutionalized systemic parties, they predominantly appellate to the issues of social security for pensioners and disabled persons. Instead, when there are discussions between the parties of pensioners and other non-institutionalized parties, the former appellate to the categories of equality, justice and social protection, positioning themselves as the left or left-of-center parties. This (in case of the pensioners parties representation in parliaments) provides them with both “potential for coalition” and “potential for blackmail”.

The main *reasons for pensioners parties formation* are as follows: 1) ageing of population (this trend is especially peculiar to post-industrial societies), which raises the necessity for “older” voters to be heard and/or politically represented<sup>31</sup>; 2) peculiarities of pension systems (in some countries, especially the post-communist ones, different simplifying mechanisms of retiring have been initiated – it is caused by the necessity of industry restructuring processes and prevention of social discontent after collapse of “real socialism” regimes)<sup>32</sup>; 3) reconstruction of “state of general welfare” concept (to a larger extent it concerns the countries of Central Europe, in which a shift took place from the idea of state concentrated on resources and representation to the idea of state, which is concentrated on reduction of expenses and reformation), as the result of which large layers of the population felt themselves in social danger<sup>33</sup>; 4) construction of sectoral/industry divisions in the generations (“older” voters are not identical in the context of social welfare – some of them receive professional and private

<sup>31</sup> A. Walker, *Speaking for themselves: the new politics of old age in Europe*, “Education and Ageing” 1998, vol 13, nr 1, s. 13-36.

<sup>32</sup> P. Vanhuysse, *Divide and Pacify: Strategic Social Policies and Political Protests in Post-Communist Democracies*, Wyd. Central European University Press 2006.

<sup>33</sup> P. Pierson, *The New Politics of the Welfare State*, “World Politics” 1996, vol 48, nr 2, s. 143-79.; P. Vanhuysse, *Review Article: The Political Economy of Pensions: Western Theories, Eastern Facts*, “Journal of European Public Policy” 2001, vol 8, nr 5, s. 853-861.; C. Green-Pedersen, M. Haverland, *Review essay: The new politics and scholarship of the welfare state*, “Journal of European Social Policy” 2002, vol 12, nr 1, s. 43-51.; L. Pop, P. Vanhuysse, *Review Article: Varieties of Capitalism, Varieties of Theory? Conceptualizing Paths of Change and Patterns of Economic Interaction across Models of Market Democracy*, “Journal of European Public Policy” 2004, vol 11, nr 1, s. 167-177.; C. Mukesh, G. Betcherman, A. Banerji, *From Red to Gray: The “Third Transition” of Ageing Populations in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union*, Wyd. World Bank 2007.

pensions, and others depend on state guarantees)<sup>34</sup>, which usually play the role of opposing the pensioners potential to express their collective position, that's why they are the resource of socio-political mobilization<sup>35</sup>. The synthesis of the mentioned reasons influences in a different way on construction of pensioners parties phenomenon. *Firstly*, age contradictions, which are related with the social policy, are often a catalyst of pensioners parties formation, at least based on the fact that they are direct channel of mobilization of moods and feelings of social/public estrangement of "older voters" (such social/political tendencies are perceived as forms of discrimination on the basis of age). *Secondly*, the reason for the pensioners parties formation is deep difference in accepting the concept of "general welfare state" before its upheaval and after it. It is so, because the fact of change of perceiving the established social orders gives birth to different socio-political interests and identities, in particular in the environment of pensioners and non-pensioners<sup>36</sup>.

As far as the perspectives of probable electoral successes of pensioners parties in the countries of Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern Europe are concerned, it should be noted, that they depend to a large extent on the reason of their formation and also on institutional and political factors: peculiarities of political regimes (pensioners parties are predominantly formed in democratic political regimes); parameters of election systems (pensioners parties are usually more successful in the countries, in which proportional systems of lists with low electoral barriers and election formulas, created for the benefit of small parties); level of party systems institutionalization (when the key role in the system is played by large institutionalized parties, appearance of small parties is complicated and problematic).

In general, in the course of considering pensioners parties in the countries of Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern Europe we can conclude that: 1) in general the pensioners parties represent peripheral and minority phenomenon of interparty competition (the majority of pensioners parties have no stable electoral support on national level and don't participate in government offices formation, although the pensioners parties in some countries, in particular in Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia are not minority anymore, since they permanently have representation in the national parliaments and even are governmental ones); 2) in some countries pensioners parties make a short-term group of parties, at least based on the fact that they cease their existence in ten-fifteen years after their appearance (in Czech Republic, Latvia and Poland); 3) ideologically pensioners parties tend toward left center, although in most cases they position themselves as apolitical organizations.

<sup>34</sup> J. Večerník, *Changing Social Status of Pensioners and Prospects of Pension Reform in the Czech Republic*, Wyd. Institute of Economic Studies: "Occasional Paper" 2006, nr 2.

<sup>35</sup> A. Goerres, *The Political Participation of Older People in Europe: The Greying of Our Democracies*, Wyd. Palgrave-Macmillan 2009.

<sup>36</sup> S. Hanley, *The emergence of pensioners' parties in contemporary Europe*, [w:] J. Tremmel, *Young Generation Under Pressure? The Financial Situation and the "Rush Hour" of the Cohorts 1970-1985 in a Generational Comparison*, Wyd. Springer Verlag 2010, s. 225-244.

**Table 1.** Pensioners parties in the countries of Central, Southern-Eastern and Eastern Europe: electoral participation and representation (1990–2014)<sup>37</sup>

Stan	Party	Date of creation (termination of activity) of the party, year	Participation in parliamentary elections, number of times (years)	The best result of parliamentary elections, % (year)	Result of the last elections, % (year)	The best result of parliamentary elections, number of mandates (year)	Participation in parliament, number of times (years)	Dynamics of electoral support	Participation in European Parliament, number of times (years)	Participation in formation of governments, number of times (years)
Albania	PBPPSH <sup>37</sup>	2009	1 (2013-k)	– (k)	– (k)	–	–	decreasing (from 2013)	–	–
Armenia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Azerbejdżan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Białoruś	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Bośnia i Hercegowina	SPU	2002	3 (2002-2010)	1,48 (2006)	0,10 (2010)	1 (2002)	1 (2002)	decreasing (from 2006)	–	–
	PSRS	2002	3 (2002-2006, 2010-k)	2,49 (2006)	2,49 (2006)	1 (2002, 2010-k)	2 (2002, 2010-k)	decreasing (from 2006)	–	–
	DSP	1998	2 (1998-2000)	1,1 (2000)	1,1 (2000)	1 (2000)	1 (2000)	decreasing (2000)	–	–
Bułgaria	DSS	2007	–	–	–	–	decreasing (from 2007)	–	–	
Chorwacja	HSU	1996	3 (2003-2007, 2011-k)	4,1 (2007)	4,1 (2007)	3 (2007, 2011-k)	3 (2003-2011)	increasing (from 2003)	–	–
	SU	2013	–	–	–	–	–	increasing (from 2013)	–	–
Czarnogóra	PPI	2009	2 (2009, 2012-k)	2,37 (2009)	2,37 (2009)	–	–	decreasing (from 2009)	–	–
Czechy	DŽJ	1990 (2006)	4 (1992-2002)	3,77 (1992)	0,86 (2002)	–	–	decreasing (from 1992)	–	–
Estonia	EPL	1992	1 (1992)	3,71 (1992)	3,71 (1992)	–	–	decreasing (from 1992)	–	–
	EPPL	1995	2 (1995-1999-k)	–	–	–	–	decreasing (from 1995)	–	–
Gruzja	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Kosowo	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Litwa	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Łotwa	PSP	2006 (2009)	–	–	–	–	–	decreasing (from 2006)	–	–
	LA	1987 (2009)	–	–	–	–	–	decreasing (from 1992)	–	–
Macedonia	PPRM	1996	2 (1998, 2008-k)	0,5 (1998)	k (2008)	–	–	decreasing (from 1998)	–	–
Mołdawia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Polska	O/W Legnica	1991 (1994)	1 (1991)	0,04 (1991)	0,04 (1991)	–	–	decreasing (from 1991)	–	–
	NER	1991 (1992)	1 (1991)	0,04 (1991)	0,04 (1991)	–	–	decreasing (from 1991)	–	–
	KPEiR	1994	5 (1997, 2001-2011-k)	2,18 (1997)	– (k)	–	–	decreasing (from 1997)	–	–
	KPPIR-RP	1997 (2005)	1 (1997)	1,63 (1997)	1,63 (1997)	–	–	decreasing (from 1997)	–	–

Rosja	PP	1997 (2001)	1 (1999)	1,95 (1999)	1,95 (1999)	1 (1999)	1 (1999)	decreasing (from 1999)	–	–
	RPP	2001 (2006)	1 (2003-k)	– (k)	– (k)	1 (2003)	1 (2003)	decreasing (from 2003)	–	–
	RPPzS	2012	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Rumunia	PPR	2000	1 (2000)	0,66 (2000)	0,66 (2000)	–	–	decreasing (from 2000)	–	–
	PPPS	2008	1 (2008)	0,12 (2008)	0,12 (2008)	–	–	decreasing (from 2008)	–	–
Serbia	PUPS	2005	3 (2007-2012)	k (2007-2012)	k (2007-2012)	12 (2012)	2 (2008-2012)	increasing (from 2007)	–	–
Słowacja	SDSO	1995	–	–	–	–	–	decreasing (from 1995)	–	–
	SDoS	1995	1 (2002-k)	3,70 (2002-k)	3,70 (2002-k)	–	–	decreasing (from 2002)	–	–
Słowenia	DeSUS	1991	6 (1992-k, 1996-2011)	7,47 (2008)	7,00 (2011)	7 (2008)	5 (1996-2011)	decreasing (from 2008)	–	7 (1997-2014)
Ukraina	PPU	1999	3 (2006-2012)	0,56 (2012)	0,56 (2012)	–	–	increasing (from 2006)	–	–
	PZPU	1998	1 (2007-k)	–	–	–	–	decreasing (from 2007)	–	–
Węgry	NYUP	1994	3 (1994, 2002, 2006)	0,02 (1994)	0,02 (1994)	–	–	decreasing (from 1994)	–	–

Źródło: H-D. Klingemann, A. Volkens, J. Bara, I. Budge, *Mapping policy preferences II: Estimates for parties, electors and governments in Central and Eastern Europe, European Union and OECD, 1990–2003*, Wyd. Oxford University Press, 2007.; K. Benoit, M. Laver, *Party policy in modern democracies*, Wyd. Routledge 2006.; *Portal: Politics*, "Wikipedia", źródło: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Politics> (styczeń 2014).; H. Döring, P. Manow, *Parliament and government composition database (ParlGov): An infrastructure for empirical information on parties, elections and governments in modern democracies*, źródło: <http://parl.gov.org/> (styczeń 2014).

<sup>37</sup> Abbreviations: PBPPSH means Party „People’s Union of Pensioners” (Partia Bashkimi Popullor i Pensionistëve Shqiptar); SPU means the Party of Pensioners of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Stranka Penzionera Umirovljenika BiH); PSRS means the Party of Pensioners of the Serbian Republic (Penzionerska Stranka Republike Srpske); DSP means the Democratic Party of Pensioners (Demokratska stranka penzionera); SSM means the Movement of Social Solidarity of Bulgaria (Movement „Social Solidarity”); HSU means the Croatian Party of Pensioners (Hrvatska stranka umirovljenika); SU means the Party of Pensioners (Stranka Umirovljenika); PPI means the Party of Pensioners and Disabled Persons (Partija penzionera i invalida); DŽJ means the Party „Pensioners for safe life” (Duchodci za životni jistoty) (later renamed into „The Party for Safe Life” (Strana za životni jistoty, SŽJ), and later – in 2006 – it merged with the party „Independent Democrats” (ND)); EPL means the Estonian Union of Pensioners (Eesti Pensionaride Liit); EPPL means the Estonian Union of Pensioners and Families (later renamed into the Estonian Party of Pensioners and Families (Eesti Pensionaride ja Perede Erakond, EPPE)); PSP means the Party of Pensioners and Elderly Persons (Pensionāru un Senioru partija); LA means the party „Latvian Renaissance” (Latvijas Atmoda); PPRM means the Party of Pensioners of the Republic of Macedonia (Партија на пензионерите на Република Македонија); O/W Legnica means Association of Pensioners and Disabled Persons; KPEiR means the National Party of Pensioners; KPPiR-RP means the National Alliance of Pensioners of the Polish Republic; NER means the Party of Disabled Persons and Pensioners; PP means the Party of Pensioners (Партия пенсионеров); RPP means the Russian Party of Pensioners (Российская партия пенсионеров); RPPzS means the Russian Party of Pensioners for Justice (Российская партия пенсионеров за справедливость); PPR means the Party of Pensioners of Romania (Partidul Pensionarilor din Romania); PPPS means the Party of People’s and Social Protection (Partidul Popular și al Protecției Sociale); PUPS means the Party of United Pensioners of Serbia (Partija ujedinjenih penzionera Srbije); SDSO means the Party of Pensioners and Socially Dependent (Strana dôchodcov a sociálne odkázaných); SDoS means the Party of Pensioners of Slovakia (Strana dôchodcov Slovenska); DeSUS means the Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia (Demokratična stranka upokojenecv Slovenije); PPU means the Party of Pensioners of Ukraine (the Party of Pensioners of Ukraine); PZPU means the Party of Protection of Pensioners of Ukraine (Партия захисту пенсіонерів України) (in 2009 it changed the name to „People’s Block”); NYUP means the Party of Pensioners (Nyugdijasok Partja); k means participation in elections or parliamentary ones on the basis of participation in election coalition (electoral block).