

Abstract

The thesis analyses the elements of representative democracy in the structures of churches associated in the Ecumenical Council of Churches of the Czech Republic. Although churches have not a generally democratic structure, the author examines whether they contain elements of representative democracy, according to the criteria for the functioning of democracy given by Robert Dahl. The thesis is also based on the work of Luca Badini Confalonieri, who describes the issue of democracy within the Roman Catholic Church in his publication. The thesis outlines the roots of democracy in churches in the books of Old and New Testaments of the Bible and the church history, especially in the context of religious diversity in the Czech lands. The historical core of the problem is how to properly appoint leaders of ecclesial communities, whereas this problem is already being described in the Bible. Furthermore, the work deals with the organizational structures of twelve selected churches in the Czech Republic, examines the methods of election or appointment of their representatives and bodies. For this purpose, the church was divided into three categories - the Roman Catholic Church, churches with an episcopal element, protestant synodal-congregational, and congregational churches. The work also points to democratic deficits in individual church institutions. Nevertheless, churches show varying degrees of application of democratic and representative principles, while churches from the group of synod-congregational and congregational can be considered as the most democratic. The work has shown that churches can also honor elements of representative democracy.