

Abstract

Voter decision-making about which political party to support in the elections is a very complex process. One of the key factors influencing our voting behaviour is the effect of particular candidates in terms of their local activities. Many Czech and also foreign studies show that candidates gain significantly higher preferences in the municipality of their residence and its surroundings. Within the analyzed parliamentary elections, this is reflected not only by the territorial concentration of preferential votes, but also by higher local electoral support of the political parties or movements represented by these candidates. This diploma thesis examines, among other things, differences in the strength of the described effect (technically called the friends and neighbours effect) between candidates from different political parties and in different regions of Czechia. Quantitative research has shown greater local strength and spatial extent of friends and neighbours effect for leading candidates from non-metropolitan areas who have experiences from local or regional politics, such as mayors or regional councilors. In the 2017 parliamentary elections, the friends and neighbours effect mostly influenced the spatial patterns of electoral support of the KDU-ČSL and the STAN movement and on the other hand, it was hardly noticeable in conjunction with the SPD candidates.

Keywords

friends and neighbours effect – voting behaviour – parliamentary elections – Czechia
– multiple regression – hot spot analysis