

The master's thesis „*Direct election of mayors in the European experience*” is dealing with the direct election of mayors, which is being used in more than a half of the European countries. The focus of the thesis is the trend and the impacts of the direct election of mayors. The purpose is to find out, if the direct election of mayors causes an increase in the voter's turnout, if there are cases of divided majorities under the direct election of mayors and if those are causing issues with the system functioning. Lastly, if the direct election of mayors is a trend which is going to spread into further countries. The first theoretical part deals with the phenomenon of the direct election of mayors, the leadership theories at the local level, typologies of local systems and brings a theoretical basis for the analysis of the voter turnout and divided majorities. The second part contains an overview of the European countries according to the direct or indirect method of voting for their mayors and also case studies of chosen countries. In the cases of England, Norway, Croatia, Poland, Italy, Austria and Germany the voter turnout, the frequency of divided majorities and the functioning of a system under divided majorities is analyzed. The analysis is based on the primary primary data, existing research and the academic literature. While taking into consideration the differences among the cases, there is a comparison of the data at the end of the thesis. The aim is the verification of the hypotheses postulated in the introduction. Attachments containing data and summarizing tables are included.