

## THE SYSTEM OF POLITICAL PARTIES OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Peter Ondria – Branislav Kováčik – Igor Kosír\*

### RESUME

Cooperation and coordination of politicians, party leaders into their parties, also into vote-seeking and governing teams of candidates and parliamentarians, has been a universal, almost law like phenomenon in contemporary democracies and political systems around the world as well as an interest of modern political science. The ways in which politicians have organized and voters have responded to partisan appeals have varied widely over the time and across the countries. Authors in this article try to explain and describe situation in political parties and the party system of the Slovak republic with the respect to the last electoral process. Most important part of this view is analysis of the contemporary party ideology and their programmes.

**Key words:** *cooperation, principle of pluralism, system of political parties, analyse of programs of political parties*

### RESUME

Stranícka kooperácia a spolupráca stranických lídrov na parlamentnej úrovni, ale aj vo volebnom procese je považovaná za tradičný fenomén súčasných demokracií po celom svete a býva často krát predmetom záujmu modernej politickej vedy. Spôsob straníckej organizácie ako aj participácia voličov sa značne rozlišujú od krajiny ku krajine. Snahou autorov je vysvetliť a opísať situácia a stav v Slovenskej republike s dôrazom na volebný proces. Veľmi dôležitú úlohu zohrávajú analýzy politických strán a ich programov tradičných politických strán.

---

\* PhDr. Peter Ondria, PhD. is an Assistant Lecturer at the Department of Political Sciences, Faculty of Political Sciences and International Relations, Matej Bel University in Banska Bystrica, e-mail: peter.ondria@umb.sk.

Doc. PhDr. Branislav Kováčik, PhD. is associate Professor at the Department of Political Sciences and the Department of Security Studies, Faculty of Political Sciences and International Relations, Matej Bel University in Banska Bystrica, e-mail: branislav.kovacik@umb.sk.

Doc. Ing. Igor Kosir, CSc. is associate Professor at the Department of International Relations, Faculty of Political Sciences and International Relations, Matej Bel University in Banska Bystrica, e-mail: igor.kosir@umb.sk.

**Kľúčové slová:** *spolupráca, princíp pluralizmu, systém politických strán a analýza programov politických strán*

In the Slovak Republic, there is a standard system of political parties; it can be characterised from a theoretical point of view as a *plural multipartism*. This means that the parties' system is typical for the existence of several political parties that continually compete to acquire power or a share of power.

In general, the character of the parties' system is determined by the type of electoral system, as it is just the mechanism of electoral choice that directly influences the number of political parties in the Council of the Upper Tier Unit. The political system of the Slovak Republic applies, if we speak about a parliamentary election, a proportional electoral system. This type – contrary to the application of some type of majority electoral system – directly prefers and asserts the existence of several political parties.

A plural multipartism in the political system of the Slovak Republic means that it is the *competitive system of political parties* where several political parties may equally operate. With respect to this fact, we can conclude that this system of arrangement of political parties represents the standard variant that is typical for modern democratic societies. In comparison with the past, a significant qualitative shift has been evident, as the foundation of the previous regime of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic can be characterized as an uncompetitive system and, therefore, it has not been applicable any more; strictly speaking, it did not allow any real competition of political parties. In an effort to understand the current form of this system much better, it is necessary to accept this fact as one of the most important terminus a quo. In our opinion, it is important to accentuate that the former regime, despite the possibility of choice from several political parties, did not know any competition, plurality and alternation of power by several political parties. Naturally, this fact was expressed in the deformed form of the system of political parties that in fact, was a system of one party that neither allowed the other political parties to organise themselves, nor to acquire the support of voters with the aim to acquire power or a share in political power. Though, after the change of political regime, a new form of institutional structure succeeded in the rapidly created new political system of the country, the building up of party structures requires a longer period of time.

Despite the fact that the bases of a new political system started to immediately be built after the change of political regime under the conditions of a common state, the full development of a party system can be observed after

the declaration of an independent Slovak Republic; and the political development in this period is characterised by an unique feature in the sphere of a party system that is typical for transforming countries. This relates to the fact that *if we speak about the development of a party system in the independent Slovak Republic, in fact, we also speak about its origin.*

The above mentioned assertion indicates that after the change of social and political situation and after the modification of legislative regulations, the functions of political parties and the system of political parties had started to be newly created. In general, all political subjects represented in their essence newly established political parties that had to accommodate to new surroundings in the sphere of the legal delimitation of their functioning, in the sphere of programmatic, as well as in building up of their own party structures. At the same time it was a new situation for voters who were offered absolutely new possibilities in the form of wide spectrum of new political parties competing for their support and favour of voters.

The above mentioned facts themselves were expressed in some *typical features* of both the party system and the political system of the Slovak Republic. Furthermore, we will just mention those that show to a clear affiliation with the party system of our country.

Based on the possibility of executing freedom of association, the free competition of political parties resulted in the *establishment of many political parties*. Today, approximately 45 political parties are registered in the Slovak Republic, but less than 10 participate in the execution of practical policy. There was a period, when more than 100 political parties were registered at the Slovak Ministry of Interior, but at present time, most of them do not carry out any activities and they are gradually disappearing from the political scene. On the one hand, the origin of such a large number of political parties expresses a certain pluralism of opinions, but on the other hand, it also expresses a significant fragmentation of the political spectrum. However, the creation of governmental coalitions requires the uniting of several political parties. Before we focus our attention to the characteristics of coalitions in the political system of the Slovak Republic, we would like to further point out specific features of the Slovak party system.

If we trace the history of an individual political subject - a specific political party - we can see that the political party has undergone several specific stages. The *absence of a historical tradition* in the Slovak political parties was

expressed in “elementariness” with respect to their origin and development; but in many cases, in a very fast decline of their support. If we say that there is an absence of tradition in political parties, we try to point out to the fact that none of the current political parties is capable enough to pick up the threads with the continuation, maintenance and perseverance of previous traditions and messages. Despite the proclamations of some political parties that perceive themselves as successors of the political parties from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in fact, this tradition is not realistic. Except for having the same name, the new political parties have nothing in common with their predecessors. With respect to their internal structure, party programs as well as their support by voters, they are absolutely different subjects. It is proved that 40 years of the absence of democratic rules concerning the organisation of democratic life is a too long period of time to overcome all deformations of a system by the simple proclamation or declaration that the party follows the mission of its predecessors.

The situation was not easy for voters as well, similarly to political parties the citizens had no experience with the opinion and program of plurality, and they needed some time to be properly oriented in new conditions. This resulted in an *unstable* or permanently changing *support of political parties* from election to election. Voters need some time to identify themselves with a political party likewise the political party needs some time to build up organisational and membership bases that will assist it during the electoral competition.

It is a specific feature of originating party systems that *political parties are built from top to down – catalytically*. These subjects are typical for fast increasing support compared to traditional political parties, but it also decreases speedily in case when there is a change in the sentiments and orientation of voters. The most typical examples in the party system of the Slovak Republic are represented by the political party “ANO” that is not represented in Parliament today, and the current non-existing political party “SOP.”

With respect to ensuring the practical functioning of the individual elements of power, it is symptomatic for the political system in the Slovak Republic that there is a need to create coalitions comprising several members, which reach a required majority in Parliament and thus ensure the stability of the executive. The existence of coalitions themselves is first of all influenced by the type of electoral system that consequently determines the number of political parties acting in Parliament. The application of proportional electoral systems results in

the existence of a larger number of political parties, and none of them has a real chance of forming a government independently; therefore, there is a need to form a governmental coalition consisting of several members.

From the theoretical point of view, we can distinguish the following alliances:<sup>1</sup>

- electoral
- parliamentary
- governmental

If speaking about electoral alliances, they can be of tacit or explicit shapes. However, the tacit alliances are of no sense in the case of proportional electoral systems. With respect to the level, where the coalition is concluded, in the case of electoral alliances, we can generally distinguish the so-called national and local alliances. It is a specific feature of the Slovak party system that a relatively wide scope of alliances originates at local levels, which is unusual and unthinkable at the national level. Similarly, it is typical that electoral coalitions are concluded quite often, but they are rarely created at the national level.

If speaking about parliamentary alliances, we distinguish pro-governmental and opposing alliances. It is just this type that is typical for multipartism, and parliamentary alliances may be functional without governmental alliances. However, governmental alliances cannot exist without parliamentary alliances. In the political system of the Slovak Republic as a standard republican parliamentarism, the government retains its mandate if it can rely on the parliamentary majority. Otherwise, the government loses its mandate, which either results in a clerical government, or an earlier election. The Slovak Republic has experienced both; in 1994, when the so-called “clerical government” chaired by J. Moravčík existed and worked until the earlier election in the same year.

An electoral alliance need not transform into governmental alliance automatically, as cooperation from the period of elections need not necessarily continue in future; it depends on the number of the acquired votes for individual political parties. Similarly, we must take into consideration the fact that while electoral cooperation suffices with a negative accord towards a political rival, the existence of a minimum positive program accord is inevitable for the creation of

---

<sup>1</sup> According to researchers, terms coalition and alliance may be used interchangeably.

governmental coalition. With respect to this, **M. Duverger** states that though the most extreme party dominates the electoral alliance, it is just the most moderate political party that takes its place in the governmental alliance. (Duverger, 1964) In practice, however, the party that acquires the majority of votes usually dominates the governmental coalition.

In the political system of the Slovak Republic, it is applicable that governmental coalitions are usually created after parliamentary elections and the number of votes acquired by the political party is decisive in this case.

At the level of theoretical delimitation, we distinguish the following governmental alliances:

- left-wing and right-wing
- centrist alliances
- the coalition of extremes
- national unification

The first case represents the creation of alliance based on the cooperation of political parties from one or the other political spectrums. Based on this principle, two competing alliances are usually formed; the left-wing versus the right-wing, and in case of disciplined and serious parties, such multipartism may resemble the bipartism, and individual alliances behave like individual blocs. In this case, it is the so-called bipolar multipartism. However, the dualism of coalitions is less cohesive compared to classical bipolarism, as it is weakened by the rivalry of political parties within the framework of each of the blocs. (Fiala, Strmiska, 1998)

This is the most frequent structure of alliance creation, despite the fact that this form of creation of coalitions is only applicable with difficulties to our political system when we take into accounts the specific features of the system of arrangement and functioning of political parties in the Slovak Republic. The others, above mentioned examples, of political alliances do not occur under the conditions of the Slovak Republic.

It is a specific feature of the origin of governmental coalition in this system that the acquiring of a minimum governmental majority is preferred to a program accord and ideological affinity. As a consequence, heterogeneous coalitions occur very often and they are weakened by the mutual rivalry of the participated political parties.

When we evaluate the party system in relation to its individual alliances, it is also important to clarify relations among coalition partners. They can acquire various forms starting from egalitarian pseudo coalition – the following characteristics takes into account a degree of inequality of individual partners.

Factors influencing relations among partners are as follows:

- a proportionate size of political parties
- their status within the political spectrum
- their organisational structure

The governmental experience usually has a moderating impact which is more intensified if the most extreme party is the strongest party of the coalition at the same time, whereby this moderating effect relates to confrontation with reality and responsibility for governing the country.

With the exception of this, the participation in government causes an erosion of political parties; i.e. the political parties are “worn and torn” as they are never able to fulfil the expectations of voters, which *ex post* manifests in decreased support by voters. This process is intensified in case of coalitions different in terms of program and spectrum, as the weaker – smaller parties are too far to fulfil their program priorities and they loose the support of their voters – they erode. Subsequently, this effect influences most of all political parties within the horizon of the time passed.

With respect to the evaluation of concrete political parties in the political system of the Slovak Republic, we will just deal with political subjects that were so successful in the last parliamentary election that their results allowed them to enter the Slovak National Council, and thus they were given a real chance to share political power in the country. The influence and significance of other political parties is marginal, and therefore, we will not deal with them.

The following parties were successful in parliamentary election of 2006:

The SMER – Social Democracy	29, 14 %	50 mandates
The Slovak Democratic and Christian Union – Democratic Party	18, 35 %	31 mandates
The Slovak National Party	11, 73 %	20 mandates

The Party of Hungarian Coalition	11, 68 %	20 mandates
The People's Party – Movement for Democratic Slovakia	8, 79 %	15 mandates
The Christian Democratic Movement	8, 31 %	14 mandates

The election in 2006 was very specific in many aspects. The results of the parliamentary election were affected by the lowest number of participating citizens in the Slovak history with respect to this type of election (only 54.67 % of entitled voters). Similarly, the HZDS (the Movement for Democratic Slovakia), the winner of previous elections, took the fifth place with the worst electoral results in its history and thus confirmed a trend of decreasing its electoral preferences. Contrary to this, the SNS (the Slovak National Party) returned to Parliament after four years as it overcame its internal disintegration, and after it consolidated itself, it acquired the third best electoral results. SMER, as an unambiguous winner of the election, acquired 1/3 of the deputies' mandates and became the most powerful parliamentary party and an absolute dominant political subject of the governmental coalition that was created together with the SNS and the HZDS. The results of the SDKÚ (the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union) were also surprising; despite the fact that this party was governing in previous 8 years, it exceeded the expectations of analysts.

In relation to the above mentioned, it seems to be appropriate to ask the question: How do political parties originate? In accordance with *the Act on political parties and political movements*, the parties register themselves at the Slovak Ministry of Interior. Before any Party is established, a meeting of the preparation committee is held. The preparation committee must be comprised of a minimum of three members. The preparation committee submits the proposal to register the party to the Slovak Ministry of Interior. The proposal must be made in writing, signed by each of the members of the preparation committee and their signatures must be verified by a notary. The proposal must include first names, surnames, personal numbers and permanent places of residences of all the members of the preparation committee, and there also must be stated who, from the members of the preparation committee, is a plenipotentiary. The following documents must be enclosed to the proposal:

- a) a list of members who agree with the establishment of the party; this list must be signed by a minimum of 10 000 citizens and each of the citizens must state his/her first name, surname, permanent place of residence and the number of identity card,
- b) the bylaws of party in two copies,
- c) the receipt of paid administration fees,
- d) a declaration stating the address of registered offices with the name of the municipality, the name of the street and the number of the building, signed by the authorised person; the registered office must be in the territory of the Slovak Republic, the Bylaws must comprise the name of the party and its abbreviation if it should be used, the name of party and its abbreviation must be different from any name and abbreviation that were registered before,
- e) the program of party with the aims of activities,
- f) the rights and obligations of the members of party,
- g) the bodies of the party, the procedure of their election and the stipulations of their competences,
- h) the manner by which the statutory body will act on behalf of the party; whether the statutory body may do legal acts and in what extent,
- i) the principles of economy of the party,
- j) the provisions on the organisational units of the party, if any are established, specifically to the extent to which they may acquire property on behalf of the party, to administer and dispose of it or to acquire any other proprietary rights and to what extent they may act and bind on behalf of the party; the organisational units of the party are not legal entities,
- k) the manner of the disposal of the rest of the property resulting from the liquidation of property and from liabilities in case the party is dissolved.

The Ministry will register the party within 15 days from the beginning of the procedure in case the proposal does not include any shortcomings or there is no reason to reject the registration of the party. In case the proposal includes serious shortcomings, the Ministry will request the preparation committee to correct the shortcomings.

The Register of Parties is a public register; it registers the data in accordance with the legislation related to the party foundation, any modifications of registered data and the data related to the dissolution and cessation of the party.

The following data are registered in the Register:

- a) the name of party and its abbreviation,
- b) the address of registered office,
- c) the date of party's registration and its registration number,
- d) the first names, surnames, personal numbers and permanent places of residences of all the members of preparation committee with the name of the person who is authorised to act on behalf of the party,
- e) the party identification number
- f) first name, surname, personal number and the permanent place of residence of the person who is the statutory body or the member of statutory body, and to state the manner how the statutory body acts on behalf of the party,
- g) the date and the number of the entry with respect to the modification of the address of the party's registered office, the modification of the statutory body or the modification of Bylaws,
- h) the date of the entry of new Bylaws,
- i) the dissolution of the party and the reason of it,
- j) the party in liquidation includes the first name, surname and the permanent place of residence of liquidator and the end of liquidation; during the period of liquidation, the name of party and the words "in liquidation" added must be used,
- k) the declaration of bankruptcy including the first name, surname and permanent place of residence of trustee, and the end of bankruptcy proceedings or the refusal of the motion to decree bankruptcy due to shortage of assets; during the bankruptcy proceedings, the name of party with the words "in bankruptcy" added must be used,
- l) the date and reason for the deletion of party from the Register of Parties

The party will be dissolved based on:

- a) voluntary dissolution,
- b) the fusion with any other party,
- c) the declaration of bankruptcy or the refusal of bankruptcy due to the shortage of assets,
- d) the lawful decision of the Supreme Court on the dissolution of party, or
- e) due to any other reasons in accordance with legislation (the law of political parties and movements in the Slovak republic 85/2005)

## **The current dominant political parties in the political system of the Slovak republic**

### **The SMER – Social Democracy**

The political party SMER was established in December 1999 and it is the youngest political party acting in the Slovak National Council. If we look for the motives and reasons why this political party came into existence, we can conclude that according to its leaders, the main impulse was dissatisfaction with the existing situation, the distribution of powers, as well as with the policy of existing coalition and opposition.

The founders of the party were sure when they established the party that only a new political subject would bring a fundamental qualitative change that would represent a real alternative for the existing governmental coalition as well as the existing opposition. They wanted to achieve this change not only with a program alternative, but also with a change of political representation that the new political subject would stand for.

It was a specific feature of SMER that its preferences increased relatively fast, and contrary to other newly established parties, this party succeeded not only in keeping its position, but also in improving it to such an extent that during the last parliamentary election in 2006 it acquired the largest number of votes, and consequently, it acquired the possibility of forming the government. The accentuation of this fact is not pointless, as from the point of view of political sciences, it is an exceptional situation; quite a new political subject acquired a significant support during a relatively short period of time resulting in the possibility of forming the government. It is very exceptional in traditional political systems that a new party acquires such a support that it allows it to participate in power in a relatively short time.

When defining the position of the political party within the framework of the political spectrum, it is possible to take into account several factors, whereby the program configuration and the practical way of execution are usually decisive. In case of the political party, SMER – Social Democracy, its position is quite unambiguous. It is clearly a left-wing political party that in its program documents univocally professes *“the principles of freedom, democracy, equality, social justice, solidarity and environmental responsibility through parliamentary and direct democracy. It operates within the framework of the political system of the Slovak Republic and the European Union and it advocates the ideas and*

*program goals of the Socialist International and the Party of the European Socialists.*<sup>2</sup>

When analysing the reasons of rapid increase in preferences, we conclude that the party succeeded in taking a free space in the left-wing part of the political spectrum and in general, the left-wing oriented voter had no other real alternative to SMER in the elections after 1998. The above mentioned is also supported by the fact that the party merged with its largest existing left-wing competitor, the SDL, and at present it really represents the main left-wing political party - alternative- in the Slovak Republic.

### **The SDKÚ – the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union**

Under the conditions of the current Slovak political reality, the SDKÚ represents the main opposition political party. When considering the circumstances of its establishment, we can conclude that this subject originated as an alternative to the coalition of five political parties resulting from the elections of 1998. The individual development of the individual subjects of SDK (the Slovak Democratic Coalition) resulted in the fact that the SDKÚ represented an unacceptable alternative for many, and thus leaders of this union presented a project of a new political party, the SDKÚ, in 2000.

The SDK was an initiative of democratically oriented political forces focused on the creation of strong and competitive political subject with the purpose of prevailing in the elections of 1998 and acquiring power in the country. This effort was also successful in cooperation with other political subjects at a practical level, and resulted in the formation of governmental assuming power and political responsibility in the election of 1998. The SDK was a purposive political unit in its essence; some of its members refused to abandon it and to return to their parent parties. As a consequence, efforts to establish a new political party, the SDKU established in 2000, appeared in the same year as the merging of the SDKÚ with the Democratic Union. In 2002, the Democratic Party (the DS) was included and at the same time, the name of SDKÚ was modified to SDKÚ-DS.

When considering the significance and impact of this party, we can conclude that it is a relatively successful party. Immediately after its establishment, its predecessor became a part of government- the same

---

<sup>2</sup> See more on-line: [www.strana-smer.sk](http://www.strana-smer.sk)

situation repeated in 2002. From the point of view of political sciences, it is very interesting that its election results increased from 15 % in 2002 to 18.35 % in 2006, though the party was a decisive subject that was responsible for the rule of country during the last two election periods. This fact is even more interesting since the party assumed responsibility for the execution of demanding and rather unpopular reforms.

With respect to program configuration, it is surely a centre-rightwing political subject with a significant focus on the values of liberalism and Christian democracy. At present, it represents the main opposition force as well as the dominant alternative for rightwing voters.

### **The SMK – the Party of Hungarian Coalition**

The Party of the Hungarian Coalition was established in 1998 based on an extremely close cooperation of nationalistically oriented parties. The SMK – the Party of the Hungarian Coalition originated from the transformation of the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement and as a result of a merge with the “Spolužitie” (Living Together) and the Hungarian Civic Party. When considering this political party, we again should accentuate its exceptional and specific position in the political spectrum of the Slovak Republic. Its place in the classical political spectrum can be defined as a rightwing subject with a rather conservative orientation. However, its most characteristic feature is represented by the significant focus on Hungarian minority citizens and voters. In fact, the sharp and almost exclusive focus on Hungarian minority voters is expressed in all spheres of the party activities and management. Its territorial structure practically traces the districts with substantial Hungarian minority and analogically, the party does not operate in other parts of country. The territorial aspect is unequivocally present in electoral results of this party. The party dominates in the districts with a significant Hungarian voter presence and its results achieve the level of statistical average of the Hungarian minority. Compared to other political subjects, the party has a great advantage which consists of and is represented by a clearly identifiable and fully disciplined and well-organized voter.

In comparison with the voters of other political parties, the voters of SMK belong among the most disciplined and the most loyal towards their party. The specific feature of program configuration is represented by its nationalistically

oriented political agenda with a strong accent on enforcing the priority interests of the Hungarian minority. The party is the most active with respect to the issues of cultural and language rights as well as in the sphere of regionalism and self-administration. We should state, to be objective, that according to the party program documents, the party declares the protection of all minorities' rights, though its practical activities are focused mainly in favour of the Hungarian majority for whom it currently represents the only possible alternative.

### **The ĽS – HZDS – the People's Party – the Movement for Democratic Slovakia**

This political party represents a traditional subject of the political spectrum in the political system of the Slovak Republic. When evaluating the development of this political party, we can conclude that during a relatively short time of its existence, this subject has undergone many developmental changes – starting from splitting the original subject, a transformation from movement to the political party, the internal split to the modification of its name. The roots of party can be traced in the VPN - the Public against Violence - the political movement active during 1989-1992 which integrated the most decisive political elites during the transformation of the country's political and social system. Based on the establishment of the platform, the VPN HZD, the Public against Violence, the Movement for Democracy by **V. Mečiar**, the basis of new political party, the HZDS, was laid. The party was officially established in May 1991. In 2003, the name was modified as the ĽS – HZDS, and thus the process of HZDS transformation as a broadband movement to the political leftwing people's party of a mass type, was officially ended. The ĽS – HZDS is a political party with the widest experience with governance. In some sense, it is the most successful political party during the short history of the Slovak Republic political system. First of all, in 1992, 1994 and 1998, the HZDS had been the most successful political party that won parliamentary elections. On the other hand, it is necessary to point out that there are consistently decreasing electoral preferences, and the retreat of party from the dominant positions. *Ad illustrandum*, this party had acquired 34.94 % votes of the entitled voters in the election to the National Council of the Slovak Republic in 1994, it was only 8.79 % in 2006. This fall of the electoral support is the most significant compared to other parliamentary political parties.

For many years this party is typical for the dominant position of its chairman **V.Mečiar** who is the most significant personality, and in fact he determines the basic line of party trends. With respect of the party placement within the framework of the political spectrum, the party can be placed in the right centre, but most of its voters are taken by the SMER at present.

### **The KDH – Christian Democratic Movement**

The KDH represents one of the oldest political parties operating in the independent Slovak Republic. In fact, the party was established before the existence of the independent state, and it has soon become a traditional and stable subject within the system of political parties of the Slovak Republic. Despite the fact that the Party has included the word “movement” into its name, it is a classical political party. With respect to its internal development we can conclude that the party has undergone several developmental stages, and several subjects have been gradually separated from it, and later on they have been transformed into the profile of independent political parties. For example, in 1992, a group with the opinion opposing the arrangement of the ČSFR (the Czechoslovak Federative Republic) had separated from the KDH, and established the Slovak Christian Democratic Movement - SKDH. During 1994 – 1998, the party was the strongest opposition party, with the exception of a short period in 1994, when it had become a part of the temporary government of professionals chaired by **J. Moravčík**. In 1996, the KDH entered the so-called “blue coalition” together with the Democratic Party and the Democratic Union. Later, this coalition increased in subjects; i.e. the SDSS - the Social Democratic Party of Slovakia and the SZS – the Party of the Greens in Slovakia. The activities of existing opposition parties had resulted in an effort to form a real alternative for the existing ruling power that found its real expression in establishing a new subject, the SDK – the Slovak Democratic Coalition. The SDK comprised five opposition parties that together with the SOP – the Party of Civic Understanding and the SDL – the Party of the Democratic Lefts had succeeded in the parliamentary election in 1998, and formed the government. After internal discrepancies in the SDK, some deputies had separated and established a new political party, the SDKÚ. After the parliamentary election in 2002, the KDH had again become a part of the government coalition, and remained in it until 2006. It has been an opposition party since that time. The last split of the party had occurred in 2008, when after being for many years

active in the party, some particularly important personalities and members of the KDH had parted with the KDH and established a new political party, the Conservative Democrats of Slovakia.

After defining the place of the KDH within the political spectrum, we can conclude that it is the rightwing subject with significantly rightwing focus on the conservative values. The party accentuates the values of freedom, the rule of law and it enforces the concord of religious, civic and political rights and freedoms.

### **The SNS – the Slovak National Party**

The SNS represents one of the oldest political subjects operating in the Slovak Republic. Despite the fact that the party identifies itself with the SNS from the period of 1871 – 1938, it is necessary to declare that in this case it is simply an affiliation with historical mission of the party as the current SNS has nothing in common with that party, except of its name, reference to tradition, and in some sense of word, a value orientation as well. When defining the position of this party in the political spectrum, we can conclude that it is clearly rightwing, traditionally nationalistically and conservatively focused party. The party sharply emphasizes enforcing of a state creating national interest as well as the sovereignty of the Slovak Republic. The party clearly identifies and professes activities that are related to the establishment of the independent Slovak Republic. Its exceptional position is also expressed in its clear opinion and program alternative towards the SMK. We can generalize and come to the following conclusion; to a certain extent it is interestingly noticeable that both political parties have approximately the same electoral preferences. When evaluating the developmental trends of the Slovak political parties, we can observe a very similar development with all political parties. In fact, all parliamentary parties have undergone an internal split; some individuals or utterly all groups had parted with the parent party, and then established their own parties. With respect to the SNS, it had been that period when some members of the party, after opinion discrepancies with the party leaders, had decided to establish their own political party – the Right SNS. That disagreement weakened the party to such an extent that none of them, neither the SNS nor the Right SNS, achieved enough votes for the entry to Parliament in the 2002 elections. In practice the model of two nationally oriented parties had proved to be inevitable, but both parties had merged in 2003. The SNS had

achieved its best election results (11, 73 %) in the parliamentary election in 2006, and it had become the third strongest political party that consequently became a part of the governmental coalition.

## References:

- ČIČ, M. a kol. 1997. *Komentár k Ústave Slovenskej republiky*. Martin: Matica slovenská, 1997.
- DRGONEC, J. 2007. *Ústava Slovenskej republiky. Komentár*. Šamorín: Heuréka, 2007
- DUVERGER, M. 1964. *Political parties, their organization and activity in the modern state*. Routledge Kegan & Paul; 1964 2nd edition ISBN: 0416683207
- HORVÁTH, P..2000. *Funkcia prezidenta v ústavných systémoch*. Bratislava: IVO, 2000
- KLOKOČKA, V. 1996. *Ústavní systému evropských štátů*. Praha: LINDE, 1996
- KREJČÍ, O. 2006. *Nová kniha o volbách*. Praha: Professional Publishing,
- KULAŠIK, P., BRIŠKA, F. 1995. *Lokálna moc v transformačnom procese*. Bratislava: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Slovenské združenie pre politické vedy, 1995
- KULAŠIK, P..2007. *Politológia*. Hlohovec: Efekt copy, 2007
- KURA, A. 2004. *Prezident v systéme štátnych orgánov Slovenskej republiky*. Komárno: KT s.r.o.
- McMILLAN, I. a kol. 2009. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, s. 117
- ONDROVÁ, J. 2009. *Konanie o kontrole právnych predpisov pred Ústavnými súdmi Slovenskej a Českej republiky*. Právnicka fakulta UMB, Bratia Sabovci spol. SRO Zvolen, Banská Bystrica 2009, s.136.ISBN 978-80-8083-730-3
- PALÚŠ, I., SOMOROVÁ, L. 2002. *Štátne právo Slovenskej republiky*. Košice: UPJŠ, 2002
- POSLUCH, M., CIBULKA, L. 2006. *Štátne právo Slovenskej republiky*. Šamorín: Heuréka, 2006
- PRŮCHA, P. 1991. *Místní správa*. Brno: MV, 1991
- ŘEHŮŘEK, M. 1997. *Právo účasti občanov na správe vecí verejných*. Bratislava: VEDA, 1997
- Rokovací poriadok NRSR

SARTORI, G. 2005. Strany a stranické systémy. CDK Brno 2005.

ŠTEFÁNIKOVÁ, L. 2008. *Kríza straníckej demokracie – prejavy a dôsledky*. In:

JURÍK R., ŠČEPÁN, M. (eds.): *Ekonomické, politické a právne otázky medzinárodných vzťahov 2008*. Zborník z medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie doktorandov a mladých vedeckých pracovníkov. Bratislava: Ekonóm, 2008, s. 7-8

STRMISKA, M., FIALA, P. 1998. *Teorie politických strán*. Barrister a Principal. Brno 1998.

SVÁK, J. 2001. *Ústavné právo Slovenskej republiky*. Bratislava: Akadémia Policajného zboru v Bratislave, 2001

SVÁK, J., CIBULKA, Ľ. 2007. *Ústavné právo Slovenskej republiky*. Bratislava: Bratislavská vysoká škola práva, 2007

TÓTH, R. 1998. *Koncepcia politického systému*. Bratislava: ÚSRVT SR, 1998

UŠIAK, J. 2008. *Európska spoločnosť a jej politická kultúra*. In: GOŇCOVÁ, M. a kol.: *Evropa 21. storočí: rozmanitosť a soudržnosť?* Brno: Masarikova Univerzita, 2008. ISBN 978-80-210-4766-2, s. 204-215

Zákon č. 85/2005 Z. z. o *politických stranách a politických hnutiach*.

Zákon č. 460/1992 Zb. a nasl. - Ústava SR

[www.strana-smer.sk](http://www.strana-smer.sk)

[www.hzds.sk](http://www.hzds.sk)

[www.kdh.sk](http://www.kdh.sk)

[www.smk.sk](http://www.smk.sk)

[www.sns.sk](http://www.sns.sk)

[www.sdku-ds.sk](http://www.sdku-ds.sk)