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**Multi-party system in Russia, the results of 2016:**

**regional aspect**

*In September, 2016 in Russia the State Duma elections of the seventh convocation took place. In this article analysis by the results of last election campaign on all 14 political parties participating in the elections in our country, and, in particular, across the Khabarovsk territory is carried out; the reasons of electoral preferences of voters are considered; election results in the State Duma of the Russian Federation of 2011 and 2016 are compared. In the article the suggestions, concerning the changes in dynamics of the electoral support of political parties, and also some possible aspects in the activities of political parties connected with the prospects of further development of the Far-Easten region are considered.*

**Многопартийность в России, итоги 2016 года:**

**региональный аспект**

*В сентябре 2016 г. в России состоялись выборы в Государственную думу седьмого созыва. В статье проводится анализ по результатам прошедшей избирательной кампании по всем 14 политическим партиям, участвовавшим в выборах в нашей стране и, в частности, по Хабаровскому краю; рассматриваются причины электоральных предпочтений избирателей; сравниваются результаты выборов в Государственную думу РФ 2011 и 2016 гг. В статье высказываются предположения, касающиеся изменений в динамике электоральной поддержки политических партий, а также рассматриваются некоторые возможные аспекты в деятельности политических партий, связанные с перспективами дальнейшего развития дальневосточного региона.*

***Keywords:*** *political parties, multi-party system, the State Duma of the Russian Federation, electoral support, the Khabarovsk territory, youth.*

***Ключевые слова:*** *политические партии, многопартийность, Государственная дума РФ, электоральная поддержка, Хабаровский край, молодежь.*

The Constitution of the Russian Federation adopted in 1993 proclaimed the important provision determining the prospects of changes in the political sphere of development of our society which concerned essentially important aspect connected with the functioning of political parties in our country. In the constitution it is fixed that Russia "… political variety, multi-party system are recognized " [1, p. 5]. Adoption in 2001 became the following important step concerning the activity of political parties. The federal law "About Political Parties" to which the changes reflecting search of the most optimal variant of forming and functioning of political parties in Russia were constantly made. At the same time we will note that in all editions of this law the basic provision connected with the determination of political party remained invariable. According to the considered law: "The political party is the public consolidation created for the purpose of participation of the citizens of the Russian Federation in political life of the society by means of forming and expression of their political will, participation in public and political shares in the elections and referenda, and also for the purpose of representation of interests of the citizens in the public authorities and local government bodies" [2, p. 4].

It is natural that one of starting positions determining specifics of the existing party system is the number of political parties which is in turn connected with the implementation of provisions of the law determining the order of their creation. In this regard the fact that in the first versions of the law was emphasized that the batch shall have regional departments more than in a half of subjects of the Russian Federation draws attention. At the same time "… in a political party at least fifty thousand members of political party, at the same time more shall consist than in a half of subjects of the Russian Federation the political party shall have regional departments numbering at least five hundred members … In the other regional departments the number of each of them can't constitute less than two hundred fifty members of political party …" [3, p. 4]. According to the Federal law of 02.04.2012 No. 28-FL, "… in a political party at least 500 members of political party shall consist … By the charter of political party requirements to the minimum number of members of political party in its regional departments can be established " [2, p. 4].

A peculiar simplification of conditions of the formation of political parties, according to the new edition of law, causes different directions for reasonings. Before elections to the State Duma of Russia in 2016 75 parties were registered, and in the Khabarovsk territory there were 45 regional departments of these parties. On the one hand, this expansion of possibility of creation of the political organizations which can make a worthy contribution to development of the country and the region through attraction in the ranks of new representatives from different social groups of the society which, perhaps, didn't find earlier reference points for expression of their political preferences. But whether, on the other hand, how are they created in the region? And, the most important, how effectively functions in real life the proclaimed multi-party system in case of such quantity of parties?

It is possible to assume that more simplified procedure of formation of new parties is legislatively snugged in order that possible manifestations of the arising dissatisfaction from the implementation of social and economic policy in the regions went directly to the course of activities of the created new political associations with all their opportunities and organizational parameters of party functioning regulated by the law, and, thus, in a certain measure prerequisites of the organization of possible spontaneous forms of protest would be neutralized.

The important indicator of real manifestation of multi-party system are preparation, holding the election campaigns and the results of vote on party lists which considerably reflect the extent of social support by the population of this or that party. Considering indicators following the results of vote in the country and in the Khabarovsk territory, we can see, on the one hand, the relation of voters to the parties in the region against the background of results about the country and draw certain conclusions on some features electoral preferences of voters in the region. On the other hand, comparing such indicators, we can see distinction in the dynamics of their changes and ask a question: why some parties in the region strengthened or weakened the line items in comparison with the indicators about the country? Let's address specific figures, first of all on four political parties in Russia (tab. 1).

*Table 1*

**Share of the vote of the voters given for federal candidate lists, pushed by political parties in elections of deputies of the State Duma of the Russian Federation in 2011 and 2016**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Political party** | **2011** | **2016** |
| **RF** | **KhT\*** | **RF** | **KhT** |
| United Russia | 49,32 | 38,14 | 54,20 | 37,31 |
| CPRF | 19,19 | 20,49 | 13,34 | 16,46 |
| LDPR | 11,67 | 19,82 | 13,14 | 25,10 |
| Just Russia | 13,24 | 14,09 | 6,22 | 4,55 |

\* KhT – the Khabarovsk territory

*Source: it is made by the author on the materials of collections of electoral statistics of the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation [4, 5].*

If to consider only a percentage ratio of indicators, then a conclusion is unambiguous – victory of the United Russia is absolute about the country. The CPRF considerably weakened its position, LDPR, on the contrary, strengthened its position in comparison with 2011 a little, but in too time continues to lag behind the indicators of CPRF. Thus, CPRF in a percentage ratio has dynamics to reducing support by the voters, and LDPR has the dynamics to increase in this support. At the same time, considering the fact, as CPRF and LDPR has rather strong positions of party leaders (especially at LDPR), it is possible to assume that when there is a change of leaders, these parties can reduce the potential of electoral support gained by them. Let's pay attention that for the last five years “Just Russia” steadily loses support of the voters countrywide including in the Khabarovsk territory.

Considering the results of elections only in percentage terms on the territory, we see that indicators at “The United Russia” became slightly less in comparison with 2011, but in general the support was at one level (2011 – 38,14%; 2016 – 37,31%). CPRF weakened its positions from 20,5% to 16,46%. LDPR made sharp breakthrough from 19,82% to 25,01%, and “Just Russia” sharply reduced its positions in the region from 14,09% to 4,52% [4, 5, 6].

However, if we deepen consideration of comparative results of the election campaigns on the State Duma elections of 2011 and 2016 a little, then we will see that there are considerable motions in behavior of the Russian electorate which aren't visible in case of only percentage measurement of these results. And in this case, if we consider the results taking into account indicators of a voter turnout not only as a percentage, but also in the absolute measures which voted for this or that party, then we will see some deep motions of electoral preferences.

In 2011 in case of coming about the country 60,21% for “The United Russia” 32 379 135 voted voters. In 2016 in case of coming of 47,84% 28 527 828 voters voted for this party [4, 5, 6]. If across the Khabarovsk territory in 2011 in case of coming of 52,53% 419 100 voters voted for “The United Russia”, then in 2016 in case of coming of 36,93% 139 494 voters voted for this party. Thus, we see that there is a certain reducing of social base of support of this party. Considering the vote results on September 18, 2016, considering the reduction of coming and the fact that a part of electorate voted for the other political parties, as a matter of fact at “The United Russia”, electoral support about the country makes about 25% of voters.

At the same time, LDPR in this region in 2016 in percentage terms made breakthrough, but in absolute figures, considering the reduction of coming in 2016, 25,10% meant 93 514 voters, and in 2011 – 19,82% meant 217 800, it means that this party had a loss of voters in the region. The similar situation on absolute measures developed also on CPRF and “Just Russia”. [4, 5, 6]

Probably, discrepancies between the indicators across Russia and the territory are connected, first of all, with dissatisfaction of inhabitants of the region with the results of social and economic policy, responsibility for which during the period between the elections the voter confers first of all on “The United Russia”. Discrepancy of indicators on the other parties, elected to the Duma, are connected, probably, with the bigger or smaller activity of regional departments of these political parties during the election campaigns, and also their organizing work during the period preceding the elections.

The results of support by the voters of the parties which are created long ago are of interest, have the leaders famous to all country who are well know the technologies of organization of the election campaigns, but these parties can't secure with the necessary number of votes to be provided in the State Duma of the country. Support of “Yabloko” about the country in 2011 made 3,43% (2 252 403 people), and in 2016 – 1,99% (1 051 335 people). Respectively across the Khabarovsk territory in 2011 – 3,7% (40 700 people), and in 2016 – 1,85% (6 903 people). Support of the party "Patriots of Russia" about the country in 2011 made 0,97% (639 119 people), and in 2016 – 0,59% (310 015 people). Respectively on the territory in 2011 – 1,4% (15 500 people), and in 2016 – 0, 42% (1 556 people) [4, 5, 6].

Considering a percentage ratio of indicators on these parties, we will note that their certain synchronization about the country and the territory, the indicators low comes to light and there are no big differences in the results on the Khabarovsk territory and the country in general. In this regard it is possible to assume that the voters don't consider them as the political organizations which, realizing the offers can change the country situation to the best.

Considering the results of the election campaign of 2016 on those parties which didn't participate in the elections in 2011, we will note that their indicators in the Khabarovsk territory are considerably synchronized with the election results about the country. So "The Russian Party of Pensioners for Justice" (across the Russian Federation – 1,73%, on the territory – 2,99%); "Homeland" (across the Russian Federation –1,51%, on the territory – 1,60%); "Growth party" (across the Russian Federation – 1,29%, on the territory – 1,11%); "Green" (across the Russian Federation – 0,76, on the territory – 1,22%), “Parnassus” (across the Russian Federation – 0,73%, on the territory – 1,12%); “Civic Platform“ (across the Russian Federation – 0,22%, on the territory – 0,23%); “Civilian Power“ (across the Russian Federation – 0,14%, on the territory – 0,17%) [5, 6]. Probably, countrywide and on the territory there was an initial process of forming of the relation to them of voters, and it was hardly possible to expect at these new parties of sharp breakthrough of the voters support. Also we will note that sometimes even the name of parties doesn't help accurate orientation of voters, and on the contrary, can raise the questions connected with the similarity of names, for example “Civilian Power” and “Civic Platform”. Probably, creators of these parties had a hidden, perhaps deep, but not understood by the voters sense.

Observing participation of a number of new parties in political life of the region there is a thought of their insufficient readiness for work with the population though on the questions of how the party shall work to gain authority among the differents segments of population on Russia, in general, and in each region, in particular, there is a sufficient practical experience gained during the Post-Soviet period, experience which is reflected both in the scientific research, and in the popular methodical literature connected with the preparation and organization of the election campaigns.

Not every new parties could participate in the elections correctly and in time give the necessary documents, not all could organize a collecting signatures in support successfully. Many omissions were also in how the representatives of new parties participated in a debate not only on the regional, but also on the federal levels which in general passed more orderly, than in last years. It was shown in putting the problems connected with the social and economic development with a system of argumentation of their positions, with the critical analysis of positions of the opponent, in ability to listen and answer the questions of the opponent. And it reflects a certain level of readiness of a party for the race for power, in ability of a new party or its regional department to organize the work.

It is necessary to consider in more detail the organizational level of participation of parties in the elections on September 18. In many respects this is peculiar complex phenomenon of a party to the people. This day all amount and quality of prior organizational and agitation and propaganda activities, and also the direct ability of a party to prove to be in the election day, naturally, within established by the law is shown. At the polling stations during the vote and at the time of counting of votes the observers, authorized representatives, candidates can be present. On the polling stations in Khabarovsk constantly it was possible to see representatives of “The United Russia”, CPRF, LDPR, “Just Russia”. And representatives of the other parties? I didn't manage to see them though on the downtown bypassed many polling stations. Not their presence, but their absence was evident though, probably, somewhere there were observers and from these parties. And if the party can't organize the work even of the own observers, few party members mean at it, it isn't enough supporters. Perhaps, it is early to participate in the State Duma elections for it?

The analysis of the results of elections is important for leaders of the regional departments of political parties as it shows both the dynamics of mood of the electorate, and the peculiar reference point important both for the daily activity of the party, and for its preparation for the election campaigns which are coming at all levels in the short term more accurately.

It is natural that concerning the indicator of a voting turnout there can't be unambiguous evaluation. The fact that in Russia it isn't high it is a reflection of the deep processes happening in the population consciousness. It is not high and in the other countries. Let's note that "… on the elections to parliament of France this figure – 43%, in Great Britain – 36%, in Poland – at all 22%" [7]. But the conclusions about a degree of organization of the elections in many respects are based on the indicators of this or that coming from the electoral commissions, about the extent of agitation and propaganda and organizing work of political parties and their leaders both on the federal, and on the regional levels, about the scales of social activity of citizens on the basis of which the authorities are created.

Or the coming is rather steady and rather high, or its reducing which is reflected in the reducing absolute support by the voters even the party which won the elections is shown. The more the coming is reduced as a result of different reasons, the peculiar kernel of voters who steadily vote for this or that party is allocated more and come to the elections in any situation. In this sense it is possible to tell that not really high turnout of voters is important for some parties for a victory.

Analyzing the results of the election campaign of 2016, some researchers drew a disturbing conclusion: "Decrease in the level of support of all four system parties, not passing to the parliament of new parties and devastating the result of democratic opposition of non-parliamentary parties – manifestation of crisis of the party system" [8, p. 19]. Let's pay attention that following the results of social researches in 2011 and 2016 in the answers of respondents critical judgments of a rather existing multi-party system were traced, respondents noted "… contradictions between the declared multi-party system and widespread monopolistic political practicians [9, p. 47].

Each party participating in the elections aims to calculate, guess a segment of voters which in this case will be determining for a victory on the polling stations and work with which can bring success, we vote in the place of residence. In our country people of a retirement age is the developed category of voters from which it is possible to expect coming to the polling station to a large extent, than from the young people to whom 18 years were only performed. The share of young people aged from 18 up to 35 years about the country makes about 27%, and in this regard young voters aren't the determining sphere for work of political parties to win the elections which are taking place at present. The contribution to work with the voters of advanced age is more perspective. Naturally, there are territories in the city in which the young voters have more crucial importance.

However perspective value of participation of young people in each election campaign is big. If a set of conditions in the organization of elections promotes broad participation in them of youth, then the requirement to political participation in this sphere of manifestation of democracy begins to be created and if for various reasons we constrain participation of the young man in elections, then in the long term we can receive politically passive personality who can be manipulated by means of the Internet, or the person which will become a part of the silent majority which it is unknown when and as can show the activity will be created.

Whether many of those who is 18 years old in August, 2016 were performed, thought that they need to come to the polling station at the place of residence where they are already entered in the electoral registers and to take, the relevant documents to vote on September 18, being already a student in the city of Khabarovsk? How actively the electoral commissions worked in this direction? How actively the regional departments of political parties worked that on particles to bring together for themselves representatives of the youth electorate moving from the one Far-Eastern subject of Russia to another, or from one settlement to another within the same territory or area? If the young man of 18 years who moved from one settlement to another came to the polling station and on quite legal cause refused the opportunity to vote, then, perhaps, in the future he won't come to the elections at all.

Analyzing the results of election campaign on the State Duma elections in 2016 we will note that “The United Russia” because of reducing an appearance at the elections had a reducing the social base of support expressed in absolute figures. But, nevertheless, it has the constitutional majority in the parliament and, respectively, now the absolute opportunity to adopt those laws which this party considers necessary. But together with an increase of its opportunities, its responsibility which also becomes absolute increases. For the next years this party bears all completeness of responsibility as for the decision making, and their implementation.

Let's note that prior to the next State Duma elections, the situation developed in such way that the citizens of our country will participate in the implementation of policy which the elected to parliament parties in 2016 will develop. However both development of this policy, and its implementation will take place in case of domination of “The United Russia” which will develop and pursue the policy, on the one hand, considering the offers and argumentation of the other parties, and on the other hand, in the disputes with these parties it will defend the offers and to enhance persuasiveness of the argumentation.

Let's note that all voters, being citizens of Russia, participated and will participate in the implementation of domestic and foreign policy of the state, performing the production functions on each workplace. In this sense nobody ever will be able to avoid participation in the policy. Irrespective of, we go to the elections or not whether we voted for this or other political party, we won't be able to avoid participation in the implementation of policy which is developed and reflect in the adopted laws of a party, elected to the State Duma and the regional parliaments.

And implementation of this policy in many respects happens, and will happen through the accomplishment of specific programs in all spheres of public life. If someone thinks that it is possible to avoid participation in the policy, without coming to the polling station, then the policy as implementation process of purposeful actions in all spheres of public life at the federal, regional and municipal levels will involve everyone in the course by the means of participation of each of us in the course of work on the workplace.

In the Far East one of the population relation indicators to activities of the authorities, a peculiar indicator of the social well-being of inhabitants of the region can be considered the scale and speed of migratory outflow of the population. Migratory processes are objective, people will leave, but will and come to the Far East. For the region the problem consists in that, has or not the outflow of population the mass character. It is an indicator of the attitude of inhabitants towards the efficiency of activities of the authorities, that is understanding of the effectiveness of activities of the power structures for development of the Far East, implementation of the adopted programs, to creation of the more favorable conditions for life of the Far-Easterners. Let's note that now there is a reducing migratory outflow of population from the region.

In this regard the fact that in the mass media there were not the materials, large-scale and available to a general population, according to the analysis of accomplishment of the previous versions of the development program of the Far East and Transbaikalye. And similar programs were created in the modern Russia since 1996, and we constantly could read about the apearance of new editions of this document, but not about the analysis of its step-by-step implementation with consideration of the reasons of failure to carry out of these or those sections. It is natural that in the authorities such analysis were brought, it is about availability of information on this question to a general population.

The matter is that the rather complete and objective information about the process of accomplishment of such large-scale program can become one of the instruments of forming of social optimism, labor enthusiasm, desire to make a specific contribution to creation of the best living conditions in the region. And the absence or insufficiency of such fixed information promotes the forming of misunderstanding of positive prospects and can promote creation of the moods stimulating the population to move to the regions where the situation is stabler, and the real positive prospect is more clear.

For stimulation of social optimism, labor enthusiasm, probably it is only not enough to designate perspective figures which are remote in time of today. The understanding and feeling by each inhabitant of the step-by-step achievement of effective objectives in the specific territory in specific foreseeable time and the personal participation in these step-by-step is especially important even if to the insignificant progress.

Now the new edition of the State program "Social and economic development of the Far East and the Baikal region for the period till 2025" is approved. Let's note that following the results of the second Eastern economic forum which took place on September 2 – 3, 2016 in Vladivostok, the Russian President V.V. Putin gave to the Government a number of instructions aimed at the development of the Far-Eastern region. To the Far East the new prospects to which implementation the authorities of all levels, each resident of the Far East make a contribution are opened.

The political party irrespective of, is it provided or not in this or that authority, can find specific aspect of the active participation in implementation of these plans, but not become isolated only in the inner-party work and activization of the activities during the preparation for another election campaigns. It is reasonable to prepare the base of possible success on the elections not in the offices, and by the means of solution of specific problems which concern the population. Active participation of all political parties in the development of the Far East can become the important aspect of manifestation of the real multi-party system in the region.

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