Party identification in new democracies. The case of Central and East Europe

Party identification is a concept which made its way to Europe from the USA. Drawing on two modules of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems project, the article attempts to answer the key questions regarding the genesis of party identification on the part of the citizens of the new democracies in Central and East Europe (CEE) and its manifestations. In particular, an hypothesis regarding the extents to which the emergence and strength of party identification in CEE are determined by social factors and by political ones is tested. The results obtained are congruous with the hypothetical expectations, namely that party identification in new democracies depends on short-term and affective factors to a larger degree than in old and stable ones, where long-term factors related more to rational determinants exert the main influence.

**Key words:** party identification, new and stable democracies, political representation, ideological representation, affective party differential