Do We Need the Second Round of Elections for Mayors?

This article summarizes the experience of repeated voting in the election of vogts, mayors and city presidents in Poland. The author analyses the prevalence of second rounds in local elections in 2002–2014 and presents empirical tests of several key arguments for the suitability of this institution. Repeated elections are typically characterized by a lower turnout, which can be associated with lower motivation on the part of voters. The margin of victory in the first ballot also affects the turnout in the second round. In approximately 25–30% of cases, the winner of the first vote loses in the second round, which usually serves to increase the legitimacy of the election by increasing the decisive majority.