

Perception of Political Leadership in Local Governments in Latvia

Malvīne Stučka

PhD Student, University of Latvia, Raina bulvaris 19, LV-1586, Riga, Latvia;

E-mail: malvine.stucka@gmail.com

The article has been reviewed.

Received on 12 November 2018, accepted on 31 December 2018

Abstract

Theme of the paper is political leadership in local governments in Latvia. The work uses secondary data analysis and case studies. The aim of the study is to find out what kind of role does the chairperson of the municipality have as a political leader and what kinds of factors are influencing him/her. The results revealed that formally the chairperson of the municipality has no decisive influence on the municipality and that both types of factors (internal and external) interact with each other limiting the political leader's (chairperson's of a municipality) freedom of action.

Keywords: political leadership, local government, Latvia.

Introduction

Leadership plays an important role in any organization as one of the main instruments to achieve the organization's goals. The leader is the person who influences behavior, actions, and creates positive and/or negative attitudes among others in the organization. Today we can no longer predict how political leader will choose a way to realize his or her ideas in developed democracies. As it is seen from Brexit in Europe, the presidential elections in the United States, and from the elections in Brazil, Austria, Italy, and elsewhere voters want to see changes in the political system, government, and the country. Voters, therefore, make it difficult for a political party to choose a suitable leader.

An important aspect mentioned by Ilga Kreituse in one of her interviews is that "the Latvian voter mostly votes not so much for the idea put forward by the party, but the person, personality at its forefront" (Laganovskis, 2016). It should also be mentioned that there is no long-standing traditions of democracy in Latvia, and the level of

participation in political parties is low (Karvonen, 2010). The political leader and his image is therefore one of the most important determinants for the electorate in Latvia. One of the reasons explaining such electorates' choice is that the television is the most widely used media in Latvia (Tendencies of usage of media in Latvia, 2015), and television is the medium which depicts political leaders and their characteristics the most (Aarts, Blais and Schmitt, 2013). The society votes differently in each election, meaning that you cannot define precisely the type of politician the society wants to see in the Parliament. Older people who are the most reliable voters consume television the most.

The difficulties faced by political parties with a choice of leaders are not only at the national level, but also at the regional level; therefore, it is also important to look at political leaders at the local level from where often future leaders at national stage emerge. It is useful to study situation in the municipalities, because these institutions are the closest to residents and voters. Municipalities are the types of institutions which need to provide services and support to people who are facing a wide range of problems. Municipalities must be able to provide support to people with different social and ethnic backgrounds, instead of serving more or less monolithic interests of a specific electorate. Political leaders also play an important role in shaping the relationship between national politics and the municipalities, as by skillful reasoning they can ensure that additional funds are allocated for their planned projects and municipality, thus also changing fostering development of their region. It should also be taken into consideration that municipalities are the places where citizens receive various services

provided by the state and local governments, some of which may be nationally established and are still delivered locally via local governments. Also, for most elected members of the municipality their office is not the primary source of income (unlike for the elected members of the Parliament), therefore, they have a contact with the citizens, with potential voters, also via their other activities.

The aim of this paper is to find out what kind of political leaders are chairpersons of the municipalities (hereinafter “chairperson”), as well as what kind of internal and external factors are influencing the political leaders, i.e. chairpersons of Latvian municipalities.

The research is based on the analysis of selected medium sized municipalities in Latvia, considering them being more representative of an average Latvian municipality when compared to Councils of mayor of Latvian cities.

Framework of the research on political leadership and factors affecting it

Different definitions of political leader exist in scientific literature. It should be taken into account that almost every author defines the term “political leader” differently. However, there are common criteria: authority, power and individual ability (Blondel, Thiebault and Czernicka, 2012; Tales, 2012). A political leader is a democratically elected representative, who can also be reelected, revoked and who works to improve and also influence the legislative process. The power of the political leaders is their mandate, which allows realizing his or hers plans and policies in accordance with his/her declared policies. It is considered that the mandate has been officially given from the electorate due to election results (Morell, Hartley, 2006, p.2-3).

The most important terms used in the work are “political leader” and “political leadership”, so it is important at the beginning of the work to set out what will be understood by using both terms. The chairperson, who has received a deputy mandate, and has received the support of the municipality and therefore has been elected as the chairperson will be considered as a political leader. A process by which the political leader manages an organization and a team in a direction that is necessary, predetermined and specific to the particular organization will be considered as a political leadership.

Tales (2012) outlines that it is not necessary to focus on the role of a political leader, but it is necessary to focus on how the political leader works in democracy, which strategies he/she uses and how much he/she has the opportunity to influence society, what motivation he/she has to act as a political

leader. Tale’s views on a political leader and his/her role coincides with Verba (2015). The author views political leadership not from a normative approach that looks at how it would be necessary to behave, but rather from a descriptive-analytical one, which examines how the leader works and behaves. Thus, the authors so far consider that it necessary to look at the real possibilities of action that political leaders do and how many political leaders are able to influence society through their actions.

Political leadership in the municipality is multifaceted, as it is determined by relationships and various changes in the existing structure, and other various factors affecting the way in which the political leader works.

Political leaders operate in the context of opportunities, traditions, history and political culture, which are included in their work in the municipality. These existing contexts are influencing the political leadership, but they do not fully determine its dynamics, as there are also national factors that can influence leadership in the municipality (relations between government and local government) (Rhodes, Hart, 2016, p. 552).

Looking at the political leadership, one has to consider the relationship between political leader and his followers/voters, who can assess and affect his/her future. In addition, voters can limit the political leader’s possibilities to act and solve problems (Torfing and Ansell, 2017). Political leaders should not only listen to the political community, but also they should lead it in the direction, which would be better for long-term and may not be accepted at the beginning.

Researchers state that local political leadership models and institutional frameworks are important structures and norms that shape the behavior of chairpersons and their leadership style. These models need to be considered to be able to further define the framework of the chairperson’s activity/ leadership style and factors influencing him/her. According to these models, the chairperson or any other politician, who can be regarded as a political leader, forms a further scenario for his/her intended activities (Silva, 2009).

Wollmann (2008) examined the municipality systems in Europe from an institutionalist approach. Local government systems in European countries can be divided into three forms and their institutional features can be divided into two opposed groups. The first one is a monistic model versus dualistic task/function model. The difference between these models is the division of tasks/functions between elected deputies and administration employees who are not elected and do not change after each municipal elections.

In the monistic model, all municipal authorities have elected members. Members are not only the main decision-makers, but they are also given executive powers in which they can assign tasks to administrative staff and control their implementation. This model is characterized by the system of committees, which means that each commission is responsible both for decision-making in its specific field and for the administrative staff of the specific field (Wollmann, 2008).

The elected members of the dualistic model have the highest decision-making power and decision-making rights, but there is a separate position in local municipality, for example, the executive director. Elected deputies can vote for the candidate to the separate position, who will be in power until the next municipal elections. The member elected to this separate position is responsible for indicating the direction, the executive functions, as well as he/she has to control the administration of the municipality (Wollmann, 2008).

Wollmann (2008) considers that municipalities can be divided into two other different groups, where one is a uniform task model and the other is a dual task model. In the uniform task model, all the functions which are necessary to ensure municipality's operation and are entrusted to the municipality, are also specific tasks of the municipality that need to be decided by its elected members. Municipalities have to fulfill their functions as defined by law, as well as to carry out the functions assigned to them. State exercises supervision over municipality and checks if activities are legal. In the dual task model, the municipality fulfills its functions, which are defined by laws and performs tasks that should be performed by the state and tasks that are delegated to the municipality. State exercises more control over activities and checks if they are not only legal but also if they are appropriate to implement.

Wollmann (2008) also defines local government models, which make distinction based on relationship between municipality and state. A separationist model is characterized by a distant relationship between the state and local government. An integrationist model is characterized by relations that are legally established and may also be specified in the regulatory enactments.

It is important to look at this partition, because a political leader and used/not used political leadership by him/her takes different role in each of these models.

For the assessment of municipalities, there is also a need to look at the typology developed by Mouritzen and Svava (2002). They developed the theory that evaluates horizontal relations in

an organization. Within the framework of the horizontal relations, it is examined how the roles and functions are divided among the chairperson, deputies, commissions and the administration of the municipality. Therefore, looking at this typology one can determine, what type of organization is pertinent in Latvia, and then, by assessing current legislative framework and secondary data, the role of the chairperson and the relation of the existing horizontal power in the municipality will be determined.

This typology addresses the main differences of the power of the chairperson in different countries. Taking into account the influence of power of the chairperson, the abovementioned researchers have devised four municipal models (Mouritzen and Svava, 2002): 1) The Council-manager form; 2) The Collective form; 3) The Committee-leader form; 4) The Strong-mayor form.

Researchers argue that the Local Autonomy Index (LAI) is one of the most suitable indexes that can be used to determine vertical relations that incorporate relationships, competences and control within an organization at the local level in the national political system. Vertical power relations include the division of competences between the municipality and the national level government. This index looks at what type of relationship exists in the municipality, what functions are assigned to the municipality, and is a part of the functions provided by the state, or is carried out by the municipality (Heinelt and Magnier, ..., 2018).

Ladner, Keuffer and Baldersheim (2016) argue that local autonomy is an essential factor in the existence of good governance in the municipality. This index was carried out in 39 European countries and covers the period from 1990 to 2014. The index includes 11 variables.

Research methodology

It is important to define and develop a methodology to determine the role of the chairperson as a political leader and to include criteria for determining the power relations between him/her and other involved actors.

Also it is important to determine factors influencing the possibilities of the chairperson to achieve the tasks specified in the normative acts, in theory, and his/her predefined priorities. When it comes to determine whether the chairperson depends on other actors, one can presume that the chairperson is not the strongest position of power in the municipality, and power is shared between different institutions in Latvia.

The methodology used in the work is based on the evaluation of the municipality models of

Wollmann, Mouritzen and Svava (2002) and of the Local Autonomy Index. The study by Wollmann (2008) does not include a case of Latvia, but the various models offered by him and their distribution makes it possible to more precisely assess the case of Latvian municipalities. Researchers have expressed

opinion that that the system of municipalities in Latvia is a specific case requiring a more in-depth research. Various models of Wollmann (2008) help to define precisely the appropriate framework, in which one can determine the factors necessary for further analysis of municipalities.

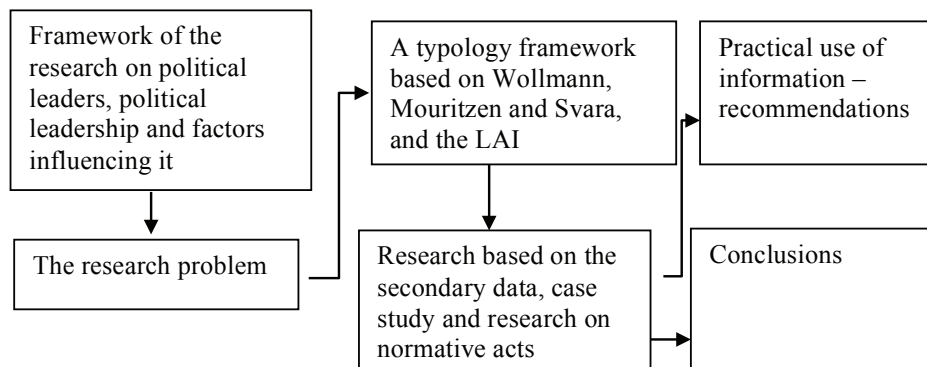


Fig. 1. The framework of the research methodology

The model proposed by Mouritzen and Svava (2002) and the criteria set for it correspond to the horizontal power relations, make it possible to specify which factors are internal, while the Local Autonomy Index specifies the framework for the analysis of external factors. In determining the framework and key points that are important for the model of Latvian municipalities, internal and external factors from the theories about political leaders and leadership in local governments that are in line with the case of local governments in Latvia are determined.

The developed typology depicts the process in which the chairperson plays the role of a political leader and how it takes place, as well as factors influencing the outcome/result of the process. The framework indicates why the chairperson is important in this study and why it is important to look at the process. Taking into account that local governments need greater autonomy and ability to make decisions independently, as well as the fact that other state institutions cannot participate in their budgeting, the most important evaluators of the strategies implemented by the municipality are voters in the subsequent municipal elections. Consequently, the decisions of the chairperson, the specific consequences of the development results come back to those who have elected him/her to the council and they have the opportunity to re-evaluate the chairperson by voting or not voting for him/her again.

It is necessary to get an insight and to determine the model of the Latvian municipalities according to the explained models and theories, because they give an insight into the role of the chairperson and in what

relationship framework he/she works. In Latvia, municipalities are characterized by the dualistic model, the dual model and the integrationist model, thus creating a separate category of municipalities that is not included in the view proposed by Wollmann (2008). These models are consistent with the views of local government researchers Vanags and Vilka, who believe that there should be a separate group of local government systems, which would include Eastern European and Baltic States. These countries are characterized by “moderate constitutional status (with the exception of Latvia where it is low), very strict local government control from above, moderate level of local autonomy” (Vanags and Vilka, 2005, p. 17).

To determine the subordinate factors of the models and to divide them into groups (internal and external factors), they will be determined based on the literature discussed and then described in detail in this chapter.

From the dualistic model perspective, the duties of the chairperson and the executive director must be assessed in order to more accurately assess who is responsible for the direction, the performance of administration, and determine who of them has the control of the local government’s administration.

From the dual task model perspective, the performance of the functions of a chairperson and a municipality, which is required to be performed by the municipality but delegated by the state, should be evaluated. As well as in this model it would be necessary to evaluate whether and, if yes, in what way the budget expenditure sections are coordinated with the sustainable development strategy. The Sustainable Development Strategy is important, as

it includes the perspective of future development until 2030; therefore, it is possible to determine whether the council or the chairperson considers the importance of the same priorities as is set out in the sustainable development strategy.

From the integrationist model perspective, the supervision of municipality is carried out by the state; therefore, it is important to look at the relationship between the state and the chairperson, the state and the municipality itself. In this way, it will be possible to determine the extent to which the existence of relations between the state and the municipality promotes their mutual cooperation, or, on the contrary that the local governments do not seek to cooperate with the state and want to obtain a higher degree of autonomy.

All of the models examined will be supplemented by the criteria of the Mouritzen and Svava as well as the Local Autonomy Index; therefore, the significance of external and internal factors and the role of the chairperson as a political leader could be more accurately assessed. Factors, as evidenced by the theoretical framework defined above, are divided into two groups – internal and external. Internal factors will be considered those factors which indicate activity and have influence within the organization, and thus are characteristic of horizontal relations. External factors will be considered those factors whose operation and influence are observed outside the organization – vertical relations.

Table 1

External and internal factors influencing political leader

External factors	Internal factors
Inhabitants' attitude	Participation in the budget process
National party representative (yes / no)	Independence in policy making
First place between all parties in the elections	Political majority
Party as a platform in the elections	Taking into account his/her priorities in budget allocation

Source: Wollman (2008), Mouritzen and Svava (2002), the Local Autonomy Index.

The factor determining whether a political leader is a representative of a political party is included in the research as, in the light of the literature examined, it was concluded that irrespective of the electoral system, the relationship between the chairperson and his/her party is important. The factor will be determined using the EU-based study data, where chairpersons give information about the importance of the party in the election, in their activity, in order to determine their influence /role/ relationship with the association of the represented political parties.

The factor of political majority is significant, as it enables the chairperson, together with other elected members of his party, to have more freedom, thus it can contribute to the development of the municipality and there is no need to form a coalition with other parties, therefore, it is also less likely that, for example, the municipality council members submit a proposal to dismiss the chairperson, as was observed in the study in the case of Bauska County Council. Similarly, the political majority may also make it easier for the chairperson to unite the members of different parties, which in turn can contribute to the speed of the necessary work, but it cannot be forgotten that the municipality is closer to the people and each member represents the interests of certain electorates/inhabitants; therefore,

it is important to listen to the different opinions of all members, if any, on variety of issues. With the help of this criterion and in addition by the study of normative acts, the role of the chairperson is determined. Given that political institutions gain influence in the country through the contexts where there is a specific role for political leaders and the people around them, it is necessary to look at how the various laws and regulations determine the ability of a political leader to influence the processes, the role he/she has assigned to them. Compliance with the priorities set out in the implementation of the budget is an important factor in determining the role of the chairpersonship, as finances are the basis for determining the development in the municipality, which may not be sufficient for all of the promised priorities. Within this framework, it will be ascertained whether the priorities given by the chairpersons within the framework of the EU study are indeed also achieved/implemented in Latvian municipality. Clarifying this factor and linking it to the budget adoption process discussed further in the study will also clarify the possibility of influencing his/her priorities, or whether the chairperson has no such opportunities. The budget is an important tool for achieving goals of the chairperson as a political leader, which may also affect the views of the local government. The study will look at municipal basic

budget expenditures from 2013 to 2017, which will be broken down into the functional groups included in the budget, which are set by the Cabinet of Ministers “Regulations on classification of budget expenditure according to functional categories”.

The rules define ten functional categories, of which nine are used by municipalities to classify the main budget expenditure section. It is necessary to determine whether there is a link between the budget, the sustainable development strategy and the priorities of the chairperson, and also to see whether the chairperson has the ability to influence the budget and whether the factors have a positive or negative effect on this process. The attitude of the municipality’s residents towards the chairperson also allows him/her to determine what role he/she has and whether he/she has public support. This attitude can be determined by looking at the number of votes in the elections, and whether the chairperson has been re-elected in the 2017 elections, thereby find whether there is a link between the support of the population and the priorities observed/not taken into consideration. Taking into account the researchers’ statement that nowadays people vote for party leaders and ideas of the party leave in background, it is necessary to look up the number of pluses given in the elections for the chairperson. When considering the theory of the political leader in the municipality, one can conclude that the significance is in the outcomes. Residents evaluate the elected chairperson – the political leader, and as a result, the leader receives feedback in the subsequent municipal elections – in a form of pluses and minuses. The emphasis on the role of followers is important, since voters can limit the chairperson’s possibilities to act and solve problems.

The chairperson has a meaningful role in maintaining cooperation between his/her political party and the national level. If there is cooperation between the chairperson of the municipality and the national level then it is easier to have access to decision made at the national level. It is an important reason because, as it was mentioned before, it gives easier access which can potentially lead to greater influence outside their municipalities, which in turn can have a positive effect on their municipality. Within this factor, reference should also be made to the expressed criticism of this factor that such kind of approach and opportunity is useful if the leader has the ability to use this type of access appropriately and it would improve the situation in the municipality – access does not determine success (Rhodes and Hart, 2016); therefore, significant attention is paid

to participation in local government associations as well.

Involvement in associations is an important external factor that can promote leadership and influence, because through these associations it is possible to defend the interests of the municipality and together with other municipalities it is possible to influence the decision-making processes at the national level. The rules of political leadership in the municipality can be influenced by non-political actors mentioned in the reflection on the theory, which may also arise from non-governmental organizations. Therefore, it can also be assumed that the political leadership in the municipality is also influenced by associations and involvement therein.

Getting the first place among people from his/her list will show that people have potentially expressed a preference for the particular person to become the municipality leader, so it could be determined as an external factor that influences leadership in the municipality. Political leaders, despite the fact that they have been elected for a longer period of time, have to face the various challenges of staying in power within their party, how to cooperate with the coalition and opposition to stay in power, how to communicate with the media, society and how to work with different non-governmental organizations, lobby groups, and also society.

The relationship between the chairperson and his/her party is also an important factor. This factor will indicate how capable the leader is, whether he/she is able to work with his/her party, and how important the party is for him/her as a platform in the elections. This factor can be determined by analyzing the electoral rolls submitted to the municipal elections in 2013 and 2017, looking at the place where the candidate, who has been elected as the chairperson, was placed. One can see whether he/she was placed at the top of the list, thus announcing that he/she is the leader and thereby granting him significance already prior to election. Lists submitted for both the 2013 and 2017 municipal elections will be considered in order to determine whether position has been retained, gained or lost by the chairperson who held the post from 2013 until 2017.

Independence in policy making is an important factor in determining the role of the chairperson in influencing the policies implemented by the municipality, to asses to what extent this is possible in Latvia. This factor will be available at the secondary data of research conducted in EU – Political Leaders and Changing Local Democracy (Reynaert and Magnier, 2017).

Analysis of political leadership in local government

Currently, there are 119 municipalities in Latvia, of which 110 are counties and 9 republic cities. In the data used in the study, 7 counties (Bauska, Ķekava, Lielvārde, Ludza, Saldus, Talsu and Tukums) were examined. In these counties, the population is no less than 5000 people.

In the study by Iveta Kažoka and Līga Stafecka “The balance of power and control in Latvian municipalities”, researchers concluded that in Latvian municipalities a significant role is played by the ruling party and the executive, which in turn reduces and complicates the possible activities of

the opposition parties (minority parties) that cannot influence decision-making and get effectively involved in the work of the Council. Kažoka and Stafecka note that the experts who were included in the elaborated study have recommended the introduction of a direct election of the chairperson of the municipality in Latvia (2017, p. 13). If direct council elections were introduced, then there would be no contrast/inconsistency between the formal representation model and the actual influence of the chairperson of the municipality on the activities in the municipality. Consequently, it is important to find out whether the chairperson of the municipality has more informal power than formal one.

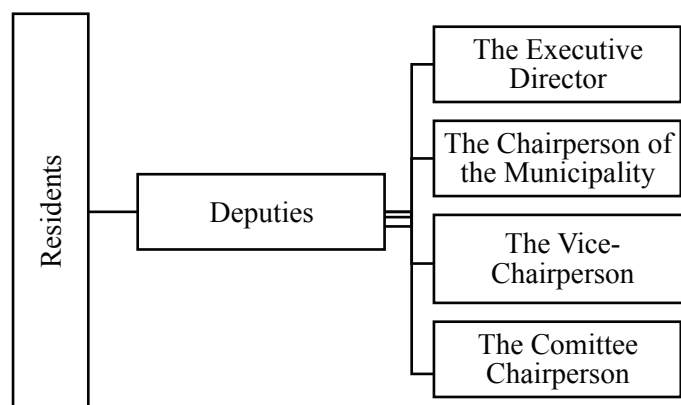


Fig. 2. The procedure for the election of local government political position

Within the framework of the study, 2013 municipal elections and 2017 municipal elections are considered; therefore, it is important to determine participation to get an idea of the population’s participation in the local elections and their changes. At the elections of the Councils of Republic Cities and Councils of Municipalities of June 1, 2013, the participation was 45.99% (1,491,526 voters were entered in the electoral roll, but 685,890 voted) (Central Election Commission of Latvia, 2013). On 3 June 2017, the participation in the election was 50.39% (1,491,526 voters were entered in the electoral roll, but 685,890 voted) (Central Election Commission of Latvia, 2017). The growth in participation could indicate what the chairperson of the Central Electoral Commission, Arnis Cimdars, in 2016 said: “The activity of voters could differ within margins of local governments, and in certain municipalities, where the work of the City Council, maintaining a link with the inhabitants of the municipality, was more successful or the competition of political forces is fiercer, voters may be more motivated to vote.” (Poll: 47% of voters are ready to participate in municipal elections, 2016).

Residents elect deputies who, in turn, based on Article 19 of the Law “On Local Governments”,

vote for nominated candidates. The deputies vote for the vice-chairperson of the city municipality; also the local government members, i.e. the council, have the right to appoint and dismiss an executive director, as stipulated in Article 21 of the Law. The duties of an executive director cannot be performed by any of the council members, i.e. the chairperson, except if the municipality’s population is less than 5,000, as defined in Article 67 of the Law “On Local Governments”. According to the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (Statistical database), by the beginning of 2017 there were 38 municipalities in Latvia with a population of less than 5,000.

Considering that in the dualistic model proposed by Wollmann (2008) there is a distinction between the election of a separate representative who is responsible for determining the direction of the municipality, performing executive functions and controlling the administration of the municipality. It is important to look at what functions are undertaken by the chairperson of the municipality and what by the executive director in the normative acts. As it follows from scheme and from laws, then the council elects both representatives.

The functions and tasks of the chairperson of the municipality are set out in Article 62 of the Law “On Local Governments”. It includes managing the work of the council and committees, managing the work of the finance committee, representing local government in different kind of meetings and in court, signing legal documents on behalf of the municipality, recommending the examination of issues, preparing submissions for other institutions, recommending the dismissal from the position held by local head of administrative institutions, performing other duties provided in other laws.

Taking into account the tasks, it can be concluded that he/she is also responsible for the employees of the local government’s administration and directs them on a daily basis by giving them binding orders. Moreover, he/she directs the work of the council, which is an important task for him/her as a political leader, since he/she must be able to coordinate the work of different party members in a specific/before-set out direction (Law “On Local Government”, Article 62).

The tasks of the executive director of the municipality are set out in Article 69 of the Law “On Local Governments”. It includes organizing implementation of laws and regulations, issuing orders to the heads of local institutions, preparing recommendations, recommending to the council the appointees to an office, and hire and dismiss administrative employees. It also includes submitting proposals regarding the local government institutions, in accordance with law, acting with local government’s resources, organizing the formulation of significant documents, and performing other duties that are stated in other normative acts (Law “On Local Government”, Article 69).

Taking into account Mouritzen and Svava’s (2002) opinion, that there is committee-leader type in municipalities in Latvia, then one can conclude from the Figure 1, that the chairperson of the municipality does not have the strongest position because he/she is not directly elected. He/she is elected by members, just like the executive director and vice-chairperson. The executive director performs executive functions. Consequently, it is confirmed that he/she does not have a significant influence and his/her executive functions are largely shared with other actors in the municipality, for example, the executive director, the deputies, chairpersons of committees. In the case of Latvia, there is also a difference between the municipalities of other states that also have the form of committee-leader type. In other states, larger attention is paid to the committees, however, the chairperson works full-time and is the head of the financial commission and he/she takes the option

to regulate not only the work of administration and local government, but also the process of budget adoption.

Looking at the differences between the position of the executive director and the chairperson in determining the role of the city council in municipalities in the framework offered by Wollmann (2008), it can be concluded that the chairperson is responsible for directing municipality’s activities in accordance with predetermined plan, since his/her duties include the management of the council’s work and coordination and consideration of various issues in commissions. Thus, the chairperson may direct municipality towards implementation of his/her ideas about the development of the region. The control of the municipality administration according to the functions defined in the Law “On Local Governments” corresponds to the duties of both the chairperson and the executive director, as well as the executive functions correspond to both positions. Consequently, it can be concluded that both positions are of equivalent importance in the framework of this model.

Taking into account the data, one can conclude that each municipality has a different context in which it operates, but they all have a link with national parties. Some of the chairpersons are from the coalition parties; however, there are chairpersons of the municipalities that represent a party, which is an opposition party at the national level. Some municipalities, where the chairperson comes from an opposition party, at national level have signed agreements on cooperation with parties that are in the coalition at the national level. There are potential channels for giving advice or proposals on various law drafts at national level, taking into account the number of hours the chairperson has indicated that they are in contact with regional or higher parties. Approximately, it is 2 hours in a week (Reynaert and Magnier, 2017).

In 6 municipalities out of the 7 municipalities chairperson’s party also won the largest number of votes in the municipal elections in 2013, except for the Lielvarde case, where the “Alliance of Regions” party received the most votes, while the chairperson was from other party – the Unity Party. However, the data confirms that the chairperson, who is also from the party which won, also counts the party as an important platform that supports him. The chairperson of the Lielvarde County Council does not fully agree with statement, that the party chooses to focus on the chairperson in the election campaign, thus reaffirming that the party has won plays a role in the opinion of the chairperson regarding the compliance with the position.

The political majority of one party exists only in Ludza and Tukums districts, therefore, in other municipalities, the chairperson must be able to unite the representatives of different parties. There is a need for uniting, because there are often several representatives from several parties, so in order to foster county's development there is a need not to discuss issues of organization of work all the time, and not threaten work of opposition members, that would also complicate the political leadership's ability to hold office.

All 7 municipalities have followed the direction indicated in the strategy of sustainable development; therefore, it can be considered that the work of the chairperson as a political leader not only in the municipality but also in the financial commission is to be evaluated positively. Nevertheless, only in two cases the residents and the newly elected council have reelected the same chairperson, which suggests that residents wanted a different style of chairperson of the city council.

Generally municipalities located near Riga are characterized by the fact that large portion of expenditures is spent on the management of the territory and housing of the municipality, and their revenues are higher. Consequently, it can be considered that municipalities specifically focus on attracting new residents to the municipality with the existence of a dwelling and an orderly environment, but do not seek to create new jobs for the people allowing them to work in the capital city with higher wages and, consequently, higher personal income tax that is diverted to municipality where people reside.

In addition to internal and external factors, participation in the municipal elections was also analyzed, and it was concluded that participation in the municipality elections in 2017 increased compared to the municipality elections in 2013. Also participation increased in those municipalities (Bauska district, Tukums district) in which the chairpersons were re-elected, therefore it cannot be assumed that more people went to express their opinion because they were dissatisfied with the existing policies.

Conclusions

The tasks of the municipal political leaders – the chairperson of the municipality, are not only set out in the Law “On Local Governments”, but they arise also from various normative acts; therefore, the chairperson of the municipality has a relatively wide range of possibilities to act as a political leader, but as a result the views on tasks and opportunities of chairpersons vary between different municipalities and their political leaders. Chairpersons are regarded

as political leaders who have both executive functions and decision-making functions.

Chairpersons as political leaders have a dominant role in governing the interests of the majority. At the same time, they must also be able to find the opportunity at local and regional level to cooperate with all parties, because they represent the interests of local people, and implement policies that are necessary for the development of the municipality and even region.

External and internal factors interact with each other by limiting the possibilities to act. Factors influence the possibility to cooperate with other parties, to involve in the budget process, to realize his/her vision. Furthermore, those factors make the work of political leader multifaceted. Therefore, the leader's ability to achieve his/her priorities quickly is reduced. At the same time, the multiplicity contributes to the development of political leaders' abilities and skills. He/she has to make thoughtful decisions on the use of the resources and opportunities available to them to achieve the desired goals, and at the same time take into account and predict the impact of the factors.

In Latvia, the chairperson of the municipality does not formally have the decisive influence to the municipality. As mentioned before, the chairperson of the municipality has a relatively wide range of possibilities to act as a political leader, but also most often they are shared with other representatives of municipalities, therefore, in the absence of the majority of his/her party, the influence of the chairperson on the work of the municipality is not decisive.

Citizens appreciate the work of a chairperson of the municipality positively, if both the sustainable development strategy is applied and the budget expenditures match priorities, as well as if the strategy is in line with the views of the chairperson on the importance of policies in the area he/she represents. Citizens choose and vote using the opportunities which are offered by the proportional electoral system (by using the pros and cons opportunity) by which they can assess the ability of a political leader to achieve the desired result for the development of the municipality, building on and implementing the necessary policies within the framework of a defined budget.

Taking into account that the organizational culture is different in each municipality, political leaders can be regarded as significant key persons within the organization. Their significant tasks are to create a vision for employees and to direct the municipality towards development, and not to only promote local people's confidence in themselves and

the opportunity to be re-elected, but also to promote trust from national level in him/her, thereby ensuring that the municipality would be able to better represent its interests at the national level.

Recommendations

A chairperson would need to develop skills that would help to create a functioning and effective coalition if there is no majority in the municipality's council. Taking into account that the tasks and conditions for the holders of higher positions tend to be defined in broad terms, a chairperson may perform different tasks, especially informal ones, which are not defined in the normative acts. Therefore, there is a need to carry out more research about the chairperson and his/her tasks in municipality.

The information gathered in the study indicates that the leadership skills of the chairperson as political leader are important. The results show that successful leader is considered to have good skills to cooperate at the national level, regardless of whether the (regional) party represented by the chairperson has an agreement with a national party, or the chairperson represents a national party. Likewise, the essential characteristic of a leadership is the ability to move forward with the appropriate budget and implement future visions, regardless of whether the party representing the chairperson has the majority in the council or in a coalition.

References

1. Aarts, K., Blais, A., Schmitt, H. (Eds.). (2013). *Political leaders and democratic elections*. OUP Oxford.
2. *Aptauja: pašvaldību vēlēšanās gatavi piedalīties 47% vēlētāju*. (01.12.2016) Available online at <https://www.lsm.lv/raksts/zinas/latvija/aptauja-pasvaldibu-velesanas-gatavi-piedalities-47-veletaju.a212672/>.
3. Blondel, J., Thiebault, J., L., Czernicka, K., F. (2009). *Political Leadership, Parties and Citizens: The Personalization of Leadership*. Routledge.
4. Heinelt, H., Magnier, A., Cabria, M., Reynaert, H. (Eds.). (2017). *Political Leaders and Changing Local Democracy: The European Mayor*. Springer Science & Business Media.
5. Karvonen, L., (2010). *The Personalization of Politics: A Study of Parliamentary Democracies*. ECPR Press.
6. Kažoka, I. Stafecka, L. (2018). *Varas līdzsvars un kontrole Latvijas pašvaldībās*. Available online at <http://deputatiuzdelnas.lv/assets/upload/userfiles/files/PROVIDUS%20petijums%20par%20pasvaldibam%202017.pdf>.
7. Ladner, A., Keuffer, N., Baldersheim, H. (2016). Measuring Local Autonomy in 39 Countries (1990–2014). *Regional & Federal Studies*, 26 (3), 321-357. Available online at <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13597566.2016.1214911?needAccess=true>.
8. *Law "On Local Governments"*. (2018). Available online at <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=57255>.
9. *Mediju patēriņa tendences Latvijā*. (2015). Available online at <http://www.7guru.lv/blog/mediju-paterins-latvija/>.
10. *Republikas pilsētas domes un novada domes vēlēšanas 2013. gada 1. jūnijā*. (2013). Available online at https://www.cvk.lv/pub/upload_file/2013/Pasvaldibu%20velesanu%20rezultati%202013_gramata.pdf.
11. *Republikas pilsētas domes un novada domes vēlēšanas 2017. gada 3. jūnijā*. (2017). Available online at <https://www.cvk.lv/pub/public/31244.html>.
12. Silva, C. (2009). Local Political Leadership in Portugal: Exceptionalism or Convergence Towards a 'Mayoral Model'? *Lex Localis*, 7 (3), 243-256. Available online at <http://pub.lex-localis.info/index.php/LexLocalis/article/viewFile/85/50>.
13. Svava, J., Mouritzen, P. E. (2002). *Leadership at the apex*. Available online at <http://digital.library.pitt.edu/islandora/object/pitt%3A31735046143545/viewer#page/74/mode/2up>.
14. Tales, P. (2012). *Political leaders: the paradox of freedom and democracy*. Available online at <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/descarga/articulo/3991963.pdf>.
15. Torfing, J., Ansell, C. (2017). Strengthening political leadership and policy innovation through the expansion of collaborative forms of governance. *Public Management Review*, 19 (1), 37-54. Available online at DOI:10.1080/14719037.2016.1200662.
16. Verba, S. (2015). *Small Groups and Political Behavior: A Study of Leadership*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
17. Vilka, I., Vanags, E. (2005). *Pašvaldību darbība un attīstība*. Latvijas Universitātes Akadēmiskais apgāds.
18. Wollmann, H. (2008). Reforming Local Leadership and Local Democracy: The Cases of England, Sweden, Germany and France in Comparative Perspective. *Local Government Studies*, 34 (2), 279-298. Available online at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03003930701852344?journalCode=flgs20>.
19. Wollmann, H., Marcou, G. (2010). *The provision of public services in Europe: Between state, local government and market*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
20. Rhodes, R. A., Hart, P. (2016). *The Oxford Handbook of Political Leadership*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Восприятие политического лидерства в латвийских муниципалитетах

Резюме

Тема исследования связана с политическим руководством в самоуправлениях Латвии. Цель исследования – выяснить, каких типов политических лидеров являются председатели Латвийских самоуправлений, а также какие внутренние и внешние факторы влияют на политического лидера (председателя самоуправления Латвии). Лидером в организации является тот человек, который влияет на поведение, действия, а также создает позитивные и/или негативные отношения среди других. Политический лидер и его созданный образ является одним из наиболее важных факторов для избирателей Латвии, о том, какой выбор сделать на выборах. Поскольку влияние телевизионного контента в Латвии является наиболее широко используемым. Телевидение больше всего из медиа отображает политического лидера и ему свойственные качества.

Самоуправления являются одной из институций в стране, которым необходимо оказывать поддержку жителям, которые сталкиваются с разными проблемами, поэтому самоуправления должны иметь возможность оказывать поддержку людям с различным социальным и этническим происхождением, вместо того чтобы служить более или менее монолитным интересам электората.

Политическим лидером в рамках этой работы будет считаться председатель думы, который получил депутатский мандат на выборах самоуправления, получил поддержку думы и был избран председателем думы. Лидерство в рамках работы будет рассматриваться как процесс, в рамках которого политический лидер руководит организацией и командой в таком направлении, которое необходимо, предопределено и специфично для конкретной организации.

П. Талес (P.Tales) взгляды совпадают со взглядами С. Верба (S. Verba), который считает, что необходимо посмотреть, как работает и ведет себя лидер. Авторы считают, что необходимо посмотреть на реальные возможности действий, которые они выполняют, и на то, на сколько политические лидеры своими действиями могут влиять на общество.

Модели местного политического лидерства - это те, на основе которых председатель думы или любой другой с политикой связанный индивид, которого могут считать политическим лидером, создает дальнейший сценарий для его запланированных действий, но эти предполагаемые действия не определяют то каким лидером он является. (Сильва)

Х. Воллманн распределяет существующие системы самоуправлений тремя способами, чьи институциональные функции можно разделить на две противоположные группы - монистическая модель против дуалистической модели задач/функций. Разница между этими моделями заключается в разделении между избранными депутатами и должностными

лицами администрации думы. Он делит монистическую и дуалистическую модель, модель единой задачи и модель с двойной задачей, модель разделения и интеграции.

Для оценки самоуправления необходимо взглянуть на типологию Паула Е. Мауритцена (Paul E. Mouritzen) и Джеймса Х. Свара (James H. Svava) - типология Мауритцена и Свара, в рамках которой рассматриваются горизонтальные отношения власти. В рамках горизонтальных отношений власти рассматривается вопрос о том, как распределяются роли, функции на уровне самоуправления между председателем думы, депутатами, комиссиями и администрацией самоуправления.

Был использован индекс локальной автономии (Local autonomy index) (далее именуемый «VAI»), который является одним из наиболее подходящих индексов, который может быть использован для определения отношения вертикальной власти, компетенции и контроль на уровне местной власти в политической системе государства.

Типология, использованная в работе, была разработана на основе оценки моделей самоуправлений Х. Вулмана, Маурицен и Свара, и индекса локальной автономии. Исследование Х. Вулмана не включает случай Латвии, но предложенные им модели и их распределение позволяют более точно оценить случай с самоуправлением Латвии.

В исследовании выявлены различия между исполнителем директором и председателем думы, и был сделан вывод о том, что ответственность за указание направления в развитии самоуправления несёт председатель думы, так как в его должность входит управление работы думы, координация и рассмотрение различных вопросов в комиссиях. Контроль над администрацией самоуправления в соответствии с законом «О самоуправлениях» соответствует обязанностям председателя думы и исполнительного директора, также функции исполнительной власти соответствуют обоим постам.

Политический лидер нуждается в поддержке от тех, кто его избрал, а также есть потребность в том, чтобы избирателям была предоставлена возможность оценить его через определенный период, чтобы оценить достигнутые результаты.

Оба типа факторов взаимодействуют друг с другом, ограничивая свободу действий лидера, которого лимитирует сотрудничество с другими партиями, возможное участие в бюджетном процессе, независимость в разработке политики и указанное в нормативных актах, что делает процесс работы политического лидера многогранным.

Задачи политических лидеров местного самоуправления исчерпывающе не определены в одном

законе, они указаны в различных нормативных актах, поэтому возможности председателя думы действовать в качестве политического лидера относительно широки, но в результате интерпретаций, мнения о рабочих задачах и возможностях различаются между разными самоуправлениями и их политическими ли-

дерами. Председателей думы чаще всего считают такими политическими лидерами, которые выполняют как исполнительные функции, так и функции принятия решений.

Ключевые слова: политическое руководство, местное самоуправление, Латвия.