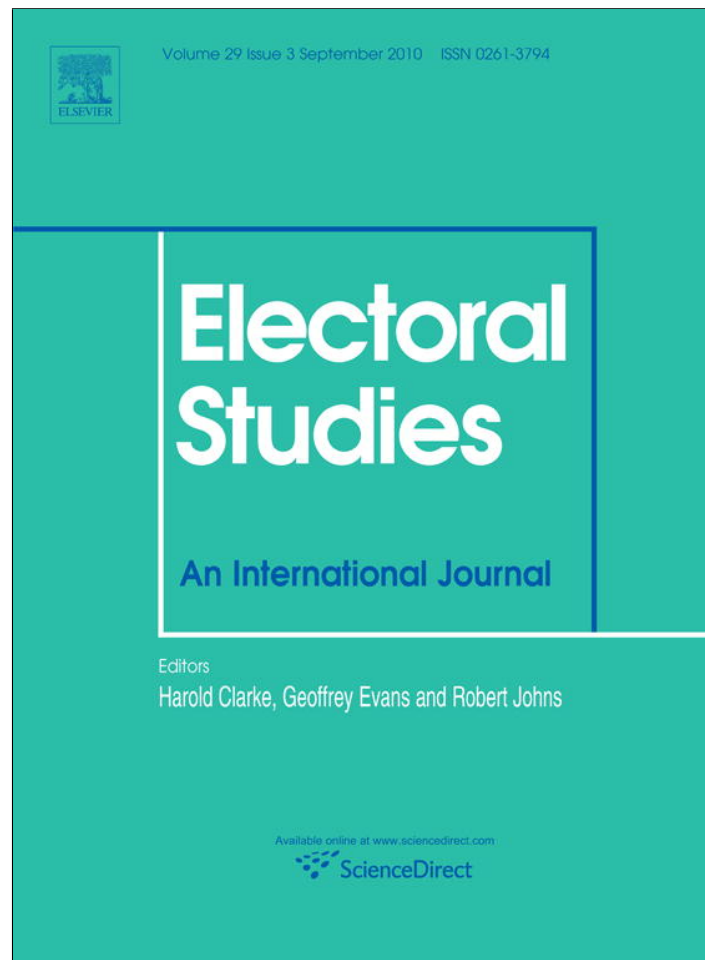


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seize the opportunity to implement a programme for a new beginning in Icelandic politics.

On 10 May the majority coalition of the SDA and the LG took over from the minority coalition of the same parties which had been formed three months earlier. The government had a majority consisting of 34 seats out of 63 in parliament. In most cases such a majority (three seats) might have been considered sound but in this case there were doubts. Party discipline was one of the features of conventional politics which had come under attack during the pots and pans revolution and some of the new LG MPs entered parliament determined to make up their minds individually rather than collectively on several issues. Sources of disagreement between the two parties included their attitudes to the IMF programme which had been agreed to in November the previous year. Some of the Left-Green MPs were also sceptical concerning the Icelandic government's obligation to pay claims made in Britain and the Netherlands on the so-called "Icesave" accounts of the bankrupt Landsbanki. The two parties' policies on environmental issues were also different, the Left-Greens being strongly environmentalist but the SDA more divided. Above all, perhaps, the two parties disagreed on membership of

the European Union, with the SDA strongly in favour and the LG divided but on the whole more negative than positive.

Negotiations between the two parties were concluded with the publication of a coalition agreement of 7000 words (compared to an average of 2500 words since 1983) (Kristinsson and Indridason, 2007). This longest coalition agreement in Icelandic history promised the recovery of economic stability along with measures to increase equality and to introduce radical changes in the political system (including a constituent assembly). The two parties also agreed on an application for membership of the European Union, with the final decision on future membership to be made through a referendum. The parties promised to respect each other's different emphases concerning European integration.

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The presidential election in Croatia, December 2009 and January 2010

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1. Background

Until this election, Croatia had had only two presidents during the 19 years of independence. The first, Franjo Tuđman, died in office. The second, Stjepan Mesić, governed for two five-year terms. According to Article 94 of the Constitution, "no one shall be elected the President of the Republic more than twice." With no incumbent in the running, twelve candidates took the opportunity to compete in the election.

Croatia is a parliamentary democracy. However, compared with other parliamentary systems, the president of Croatia has relatively broad responsibilities. As Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, the president has broad responsibilities in foreign policy and national

security, and in representing the country. That the president is directly elected gives the office additional authority. These elections are determined by an absolute majority: if no candidate wins more than 50% in the first round of voting, there is a run-off between the top two candidates. In order to appear on the ballot, candidates must collect at least 10,000 signatures of support for their candidacy.

2. Candidates

While twelve candidates collected enough signatures in order to stand, there were four major contenders, two of them representing the two major parties. Andrija Hebrang was the candidate of the ruling Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ). A physician and university professor, he had served as a minister of defence and of health in previous governments, and is regarded as belonging to the right wing of the party. Standing for the main opposition, the Social

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Democratic Party (SDP), was Ivo Josipović. He is a professor of law at the University of Zagreb and a recognized musician. The two major parties employed very different procedures for selecting their candidates. Hebrang was selected by acclamation at a party meeting – there was no other candidate. In contrast, Josipović was elected in party primaries in which all members of the SDP had the opportunity to choose between him and another strong candidate, Ljubo Jurčić. Two other leftist parties also fielded candidates: Vesna Pusić stood for the Croatian Peoples Party (HNS) and Damir Kajin was candidate for a regional party, the Istrian Democratic Assembly (IDS).

What was unusual in this election was a strong showing of independent candidates. Milan Bandić, SDP mayor of the capital, Zagreb, was unhappy with the nomination of Josipović as the party's candidate, and therefore decided to run as an independent candidate. He was subsequently expelled from the SDP. Nadan Vidošević, the head of the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, followed a similar trajectory, being expelled from the HDZ when he decided to run for presidency independently. All of the other candidates were considered as outsiders from the very beginning of the campaign. Most worthy of mention among them was Dragan Primorac, physician and former minister of education.

3. Campaign

Unofficially, the main candidates started campaigning in the late spring of 2009. Officially, the first-round campaign began on 19 November and ran for 37 days (until 25 December). The most hotly disputed campaign issue was an arbitration agreement with Slovenia intended to solve a year-long border dispute between the two states. Croatia cannot join the European Union (EU) without the approval of Slovenia, and Slovenia has withheld such approval pending agreement between the two about borders (even though Slovenia itself joined the EU without such an agreement). Croatia proposed putting this problem before the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in Hamburg (since the border at issue is in the Adriatic Sea) or at the International Court of Justice in The Hague. However, Slovenia strongly opposed such a move, motivated presumably by the likelihood that these courts would apply the equidistance rule and take Croatia's side. Faced with this impasse, the Croatian government accepted an ad hoc arbitration by judges appointed by the EU. The resulting agreement was widely considered to be clearly in favour of Slovenia and was therefore opposed by most of the Croatian presidential candidates in 2009. They argued that Croatia should instead insist that this problem be solved at the international courts. Only three candidates – Hebrang, Pusić and Vidošević – supported the agreement with Slovenia (HRT, 2009). It is important to note that opposition to the EU's border proposal did not signal a broader Euroscepticism. None of the candidates were opposed to EU membership (a consensus that does not extend to the broader Croatian public). Debate concerned the terms under which Croatia should join the EU, not the question of whether it should join at all.

Polls throughout the campaign showed that Josipović was the frontrunner but was well short of the 50% of votes

needed to be elected in the first round.¹ The main battle was therefore for second place. This set the tone for a campaign in which most of the main contenders for the second place – notably Hebrang, Vidošević and Primorac, with Bandić an honourable exception – fiercely criticized each other. Hebrang was especially critical towards his former party colleagues, Vidošević and Primorac, accusing them of betraying the HDZ. Broadening his attack, he also questioned the origins of Vidošević's wealth, implying illegality, and criticized Primorac for deserting not just his party but also his country, since Primorac had left Croatia during the war although doctors were not permitted to do so.

An additional issue during the campaign was the treatment of candidates in the media. For example, Nova TV invited the six leading candidates (according to the polls) for a television debate on 10 December. The other candidates were invited for a separate debate. However, candidate Mrkšić left the second show protesting against what he called discrimination among candidates. As with such debates elsewhere, practical issues (such as having a manageable number of candidates in a debate) became inextricably entangled with political concerns.

4. First-round results

No one candidate came close to 50% of first-round votes and so the two leading candidates, Josipović and Bandić, qualified for the second round of the election (Table 1). Although, as noted above, polls had predicted this outcome from the beginning of the campaign, some features of the results are nevertheless a little surprising. The candidate from the governing party received only 12%, just one-third of the vote share won by his party in the parliamentary elections only two years previously (Antić and Dodić-Grujičić, 2008). The main reason for such an appalling incumbent showing was the grim economic situation in Croatia, which experienced severe negative economic growth (–5.8%) in 2009 (HNB, 2010). Yet also crucial was the split of the rightist vote among eight candidates (Hebrang, Vidošević, Primorac, Tuđman, Jurčević, Mikšić, Škare Ožbolt and Vukušić). Had Hebrang had only the votes of Miroslav Tuđman (son of the founder of HDZ) on his side he would have qualified for the run-off. In the event, the two contenders that went forward to the second round, Josipović and Bandić, were both left-leaning. As prominent current and former figures within the opposition SDP, both candidates benefited from dissatisfaction among voters with the incumbent's economic performance. Bandić's success was also based on his centrist position. While asserting his social democratic credentials, he also stressed that faith and patriotism were prominent features in his political outlook. Furthermore, he carefully cultivated close relations with veterans of the Croatian Patriotic War (1991–5). Thus, Bandić also won votes from some right-leaning electors. He also received considerable support from the diaspora, most of whom live in Bosnia and Herzegovina

¹ For example, according to a 17 November poll by survey agency *Puls*, Josipović was supported by 25% of voters followed by Bandić with 16%, Vidošević with 15% and Hebrang with 12%.

Table 1

Results of the 2009/10 presidential election in Croatia.

Candidate (plus party affiliation, where applicable)	First round (27 December)		Second round (10 January)	
	Votes	Votes%	Votes	Votes%
Josipović, Ivo (SDP)	640,594	32.4	1,339,385	60.3
Bandić, Milan	293,068	14.8	883,222	39.7
Hebrang, Andrija (HDZ)	237,998	12.0		
Vidošević, Nadan	223,892	11.3		
Pusić, Vesna (HNS)	143,190	7.3		
Primorac, Dragan	117,154	5.9		
Tudman, Miroslav	80,784	4.1		
Kajin, Damir (IDS)	76,411	3.9		
Jurčević, Josip	54,177	2.8		
Mikšić, Boris	41,491	2.1		
Škare Ožbolt, Vesna	37,373	1.9		
Vukušić, Slavko (SR)	8309	0.4		
Total votes/turnout	1,954,441	44.0	2,222,607	50.1

Source: DIP (2010a).

where Bandić was born and where he has argued that Croats should receive a third federal unit in this country (which is currently constituted of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska).

Voting turnout in the first round was very low at only 44%, seven percentage points lower than in the presidential election of 2005. The most logical explanation for this is dissatisfaction with politics and politicians in general. This feeling stems partly from the economic crisis but also from widespread perceptions that politicians are corrupt and that it will make little difference which of them is running the country.

5. Run-off

Campaigning for the run-off started early in the morning of 28 December, minutes after the Croatian electoral commission announced the first-round results. In his first public appearance of the run-off campaign, Bandić described Josipović as being on a remote control operated by Zoran Milanović, the SDP president. Bandić wanted thereby to stress his status as an independent candidate who would not be in thrall to any party leadership. In a rather less spirited speech, Josipović claimed in response that light won over dark in the first round. With this he sought to imply not only that corrupted politicians lost in the first round but also that Bandić is a part of this Croatian 'dark politics'.

More broadly, Josipović continued to stress the main themes from his first-round campaign. He promised a reversal of the privatization process in Croatia, using the slogan "pay or return property" to signal that those who illegally gained during the privatization should pay the appropriate price for their assets or face these assets being renationalized. This message resonated with voters who, as in other transitional countries, have been very dissatisfied with many aspects of the privatization process. It also chimed with Josipović's often-stated commitment to equality of opportunity.

Bandić's strategy was simple: win support from right-wing voters to whom he was ideologically closer than was his rival. He therefore used some of the slogans that were

more traditionally associated with HDZ electoral campaigns: faith, patriotism, and concern for Croats who live outside the country. Bandić also paid particular attention to mobilizing the large number of voters who abstained in the first round. Crucial for Bandić was to win support from the Catholic Church with which an overwhelming majority (almost 88%) of Croats are affiliated (Crostat, 2010). Though the Croatian Catholic Church did not formally endorse either candidate, its preference for Bandić over the agnostic Josipović was fairly obvious (see, for example, Miklenić, 2010).² Bandić frequently sported a crucifix at his public appearances during the run-off. He also warned voters, particularly during his television campaign ads, that the election of Josipović would mean "red Croatia". The election commission prohibited one of these spots, arguing that it violated ethical standards in campaigning (DIP, 2010b).

On the other hand, many important politicians gave support to Josipović: defeated first-round candidates Vidošević, Pusić and Kajin; president of the Croatian Social Liberal Party, Darinko Kosor; and president of Independent Democratic Serb Party, Milorad Pupovac. The most controversial endorsement came from incumbent (and acting) President Mesić, with Bandić claiming that such support from the President himself is not in accordance with democratic principles. Meanwhile, the HDZ refused to support either candidate.

Josipović achieved a landslide victory in the run-off, winning more than three in five votes (Table 1). At 50% turnout was somewhat higher than in the first round. Compared to the first round, Josipović's vote increased by 28 percentage points and Bandić's by 25 points. Arguably, then, Josipović's campaign was more successful in both rounds of the election. It is also important to note that Josipović won in all but one county (županija) in Croatia.³ However, Bandić received a landslide victory among the

² After the election, Cardinal Bozanić, head of the Croatian Catholic Church, was among the latest to send a letter of congratulation to Josipović, illustrating the Church's dissatisfaction with the result. Even President Obama sent his letter prior to Bozanić.

³ Croatia consists of 20 counties (županije) and the City of Zagreb. Bandić won only in Ličko-Senjska County, receiving 52% of the vote.

diaspora, taking 92% of their votes. These results illustrate the gulf in preferences between voters in Croatia and the diaspora. Such a disparity reignited discussions about whether Croats resident in Bosnia and Herzegovina should have right to vote in both countries.

6. Discussion

Why did Josipović achieve such an impressive victory? The key reason is that he was simply the more credible candidate. During the run-off campaign, it became obvious that he was much more knowledgeable than his rival Bandić who, for example, was exposed in TV duels for being unable to identify the current US Secretary of State, President of the European Union or President of the European Commission. The fact that Bandić speaks no foreign language reinforced the impression that he would be less well able to represent Croatia abroad than Josipović. In contrast, Josipović will have a strong claim to be the most educated head of the state in the world.⁴

Looking to the future, it can be confidently predicted that this election will change the style rather than the substance of Croatian policy. Josipović himself declared that he would continue the policy direction taken by his predecessor, Mesić, although, being on the left side of the

Croatian political spectrum, Josipović will probably lay more stress than did Mesić on equality and social justice. However, in foreign policy, his priority will be exactly the same as Mesić's – achieving full membership of Croatia in the European Union.

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⁴ In addition to having Ph.D. in law, he also graduated at the Musical Academy, University of Zagreb.

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The Namibian elections of 2009

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In accordance with the provisions of its constitution, Namibia held Presidential and National Assembly elections on 27 and 28 November 2009. The former liberation movement, the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), sought to defend its two-thirds majority in parliament and to secure a second presidential term for Hifikepunye Pohamba, but attention principally focused upon the challenge posed by the Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP), a SWAPO splinter party formed in 2007. Led by Hidipo Hamutenya,

a former liberation stalwart and Cabinet minister, RDP hoped to become the first opposition party to secure support in the densely-populated north-central region – from which many of its cadres originated – and to exploit discontent over poverty, unemployment, under-development, public service provision, corruption and crime.

1. Electoral system

Namibia's presidential elections are conducted under a majoritarian system, whilst its National Assembly is elected under a party list variant of proportional representation using a single, 72-member national constituency.

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