

# POLITICAL PARTIES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: DOES THE INTERNAL ORGANIZATION STILL MATTER? **Special Issue of *Transitions* Review**

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**General Information:** *Transitions* Review is published by the Institute of Sociology of the Université Libre de Bruxelles and by the European Institute of the University of Geneva. *Transitions* accepts original texts which take into account the cultural, historical, political and social dimension of the Central and Eastern European countries and analyze the evolutions that they have witnessed since the end of the 1980s.

**Deadline for submission:**  
February 15, 2007.

Please submit short paper abstracts (500-1000 words) to Jean-Michel De Waele:  
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Contributions in French or English are welcome.

The process of democratization in Central and Eastern European countries implied the emergence and the consolidation of political parties. The post-communist party systems are strongly fragmentized and volatile. The political parties of the region were characterized by weak structures of membership and a strong tendency of colonization of the state. In this context, little attention has been paid to the analysis of party organizations, especially to their middle level elites.

However, this situation does not apply to all the political parties of the area, several parties (especially the successor parties) succeeded to impose and to maintain both high levels of the party membership as well as strong party organizations. In addition to this, although the parties' statute proclaim the supremacy of the party Congress as the main body of decision at the party level, very few scholars focused on the study of the party delegates, as designated representatives of the local branches of the party and on their role in establishing the guidelines of the party strategy and program.

Research on parties middle level elites is a part of a broader effort to understand party functioning and the role they play in determining the institutionalization and the success of different parties. Therefore, we are interested in the papers that aim at filling the gap at the theoretical level regarding the role of the middle level elites, and empirical driven studies about the opinions and attitudes of the party's active stratum. The proposals can embrace a comparative or a monographic stance.

We especially privilege articles concerning the analysis of the social background characteristics of the middle level elites and their activity at the party level; the structure of the values that they exhibit, the degree of their cohesiveness and to what extent these values coincide with the general principles expressed by the party program. Finally, we are looking for papers that emphasize the relationship between opinions of middle level elites and the actions taken by the party on the political field.