

Original scientific papers**VOTER MOBILIZATION IN A FROZEN ENVIRONMENT:
A COMPARISON OF OLD AND NEW CANVASSING APPROACHES
IN MONTENEGRO**Nemanja STANKOV¹

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ABSTRACT:

Field experimentation of canvassing effect on turnout has grown significantly since Gerber and Green's seminal work in New Haven. This study is an attempt to adapt the large literature on the USA, to estimate the canvassing success/failure in a small and socially highly intercorrelated Montenegrin society. A popular wisdom suggests that the most effective mobilization strategy in small communities is door-to-door canvassing as it ensures personalized appeal and personalized content of the message. I test this assumption in a political context where political contestation (and party preferences) are frozen along ethnic cleavage lines. Using propensity score matching I demonstrate that contact during the campaign did not effect overall turnout rates, but that there were differences between canvassing approaches. Namely, phone and SMS contact did decrease turnout and imply a hierarchy of techniques where phone and SMS contact signals some sort of disrespect and levity in a small society. Moving on to specific mobilization efforts, I demonstrate that SMS message on the Election Day in 2016 parliamentary elections did not have any effect on overall turnout rates. The results are discussed in the context of previous literature findings.

KEY WORDS:

Montenegro; Voter mobilization; SMS contact; Matching.

¹ Nemanja Stankov is a PhD candidate at the Doctoral school of Political Science, Central European University in Budapest. In his research Nemanja Stankov mostly deals with psychological basis of ideological preferences on individual level and his research and scientific interest also include issues related to political communication, voter mobilization, experimental, quantitative methodology and statistics.

SAŽETAK:

Terenski eksperimenti na temu učinka kontakta na izlaznost značajno su češći od Gerberovog i Grenovog istraživanja u Nju Hejvenu. Ovo istraživanje je pokušaj prilagodjavanja opširne literature o SAD-u, kako bi se procijenio uspjeh/neuspjeh mobilizacije glasača u malom i veoma međusobno povezanom crnogorskom društvu. Popularna mudrost sugeriše da je najefektivnija strategija mobilizacije u malim zajednicama kampanja od vrata do vrata jer osigurava personalizovan sadržaj poruke. Ova pretpostavka testirana je u političkom kontekstu u kojem se politička utakmica (i stranačke preferencije) zamrzavaju duž etničkog društvenog rascjepa. Koristeći tehniku mečinga pokazujem da kontakt tokom kampanje nije uticao na ukupnu izlaznost na parlamentarnim izborima 2016., ali da postoje razlike između korišćenih tehnika kontakta. Naime, kontakt telefonom i SMS-om smanjio je izlaznost i signalizira postojanje hijerarhije tehnika u kojima telefonski i SMS kontakt signaliziraju neku vrstu nepoštovanja prema glasačima u malim zajednicama. U nastavku rada, fokusiram se na specifične mobilizacione događaje, gdje rezultati pokazuju da SMS poruka na dan parlamentarnih izbora u oktobru 2016. godine, nije imala uticaj na ukupnu izlaznost. Zaključak stavlja rezultate studije u kontekst prethodnih nalaza iz literature.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI:

Crna Gora; Mobilizacija glasača; SMS kontakt; mečing.