

-----Original Message-----

From: gschopflin@clara.co.uk [mailto:gschopflin@clara.co.uk]

Sent: Monday, January 02, 2012 5:10 AM

To: kimlane@Princeton.EDU

Subject: Hungary

Dear Prof. Lane Scheppele,

I read with interest your notes on Hungary as reproduced in Paul Krugman's blog.

Seeing that you have spent time in Hungary, I am assuming that you read Hungarian.

What I find surprising is that you characterise Haza és Haladás as a "respected Hungarian think tank", which it may well be in some quarters, but hardly respected universally. With your political science background, not to mention your interest in Hungary, you will be aware of the very deep division between left and right, hence there is no such thing as universally accepted political neutrality in Hungary (I regret this myself).

All institutions are regarded as politically committed. This certainly applies to Haza és Haladás, a leading light of which is Viktor Szigetvári, who was the MSZP campaign chief in the 2010 elections, not mention the fact that the think tank is closely linked to Gordon Bajnai, again a leftwing political figure. You made no mention of these data.

The obvious inference to be drawn from Haza és Haladás's assessment of the electoral law, therefore, is that it can be regarded as a part of the Hungarian left's anti-Fidesz campaign and is thus hardly a neutral source.

Then, had neutrality been your primary criterion, you might well have cited analyses that come to a very different conclusion from what Szigetvári and his collaborators have published. You may well find these two links relevant:

<http://mno.hu/belfold/tovabb-csusztatnak-bajnaiek-1035899>

<http://mno.hu/belfold/amerikaba-is-eljutottak-bajnaiek-csusztatasai-1037460>

If, of course, you were not aiming at political neutrality, but regard yourself as an ancillary in the anti-Fidesz oppositional activities of the Hungarian left, then it might have been fairer to have drawn your readers' attention to this.

Should this last be the case, then please ignore what I have written.

In any case, you are welcome to treat this letter as being in the public domain.

Yours sincerely,

György Schöpflin

MEP for Hungary (Fidesz)

and formerly

Jean Monnet Professor of Politics,

University of London

office telephone +322 28 45884

[www.schopflinyorgy.hu](http://www.schopflinyorgy.hu)

és angolul/and in English

[www.schopflinyorgy.hu/en/](http://www.schopflinyorgy.hu/en/)

BLOG

<http://schopflin-iroda.blogspot.com/>