

EUROPEAN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SECURITY ISSUES

Tasha Wood
Editor

Slovakia

Culture, History and People

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SLOVAKIA

CULTURE, HISTORY AND PEOPLE

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TASHA WOOD
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PREFACE

In this compilation, the authors evaluate the political situation in Slovakia, a young democracy with a population of over five million and with history of a quarter of a century of independence lying in the heart of Europe, by analyzing the results of the recent general (parliamentary) election held in 2016 and a series of referenda that have taken place in Slovakia over the past two decades. They present the basic rules for the application of parliamentary elections in this post-socialist European country, commenting on the pre-election situation and the chances of individual parties based on the results of pre-election opinion polls.

Information concerning an important library located in Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic, is presented in one chapter. The library was founded in 1919, and the first period of its development includes the time of the interwar Czechoslovak Republic from 1919 to 1938, when it was known as the Comenius University Library. The position and mission of the University Library at individual stages, the different ranges of its activities and tasks and the overall potential to fulfil its scientific, cultural and educational mission are also presented.

Following this, the authors analyze the historical roots of political radicalism and extremism in Slovakia. The methodology of this chapter is based on historical analysis and statistical analysis of election results, secondary analysis of surveys and analysis of relevant documents and media output.

Lastly, asylum seekers' access to health care in the Slovak Republic is described. Asylum seekers represent a specific group, since they are not included in the Slovak health insurance system. Therefore, they do not have the same rights regarding health care as citizens of the Slovak Republic.

Chapter 1 - This chapter deals with the evaluation of the political situation in Slovakia, a young democracy with a population of over five million and with history of a quarter of a century of independence, lying in the heart of Europe, by analyzing the results of the recent general (parliamentary) election held in 2016 and a series of referenda that have taken place in Slovakia over the past two decades. The authors chose the elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic because of the fact that among all of the types of public elections they have the highest electoral participation (usually almost 60%), and in Slovakia, on the basis of their results, they represent the most significant way of applying a representative form of democracy. The authors will present the basic rules for the application of parliamentary elections in this post-socialist European country, commenting on the pre-election situation, the chances of individual parties based on the results of pre-election opinion polls, electoral results on a national scale, but also regionally, while identifying the most important factors influencing their regional pattern, and from the point of view of out-of-state voters. The most significant findings of these elections were the rapid decline in support of left-wing politics on one hand, and mandates for the far right-wing party which was criticized by all of the other political actors on the other. The outcome of the post-electoral negotiations of the new parliamentary parties about the composition of the national government was surprising and criticized by a considerable segment of the public. At the end of this chapter, the reader will learn about nationwide referenda that have taken place, as the most important type of application of direct democracy. Of the eight referenda already held, only one was valid, the referendum on the accession of the country to the European Union in 2003.

Chapter 2 - This chapter presents information concerning an important library located in Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic. The library

was founded in 1919, with its name and mission and the range of tasks having changed as it developed. The first period of its development includes the time of the interwar Czechoslovak Republic from 1919 to 1938, when it was known as the Comenius University Library. The next period ran from 1939 to 1953, when it was called the Slovak Republic Library and covers the period of the first wartime Slovak Republic and the post-war years of restored Czechoslovakia. During the third period running from 1954 to 1989, the Library became a state scientific institution for the general public, while retaining the historical name of the University Library in Bratislava. Its operations were influenced by Czechoslovakia's new ideological and political orientation. In legislative acts, it was codified as the Central Scientific Library for Slovakia and, together with Matica Slovenská, it was the National Library performing the functions of a central library in Slovakia's library system in Slovakia. Finally, the fourth and current period includes the years of political and social changes that began in November 1989 and the subsequent development of the University Library in the independent Slovak Republic. This chapter also outlines the position and mission of the University Library at individual stages, the different ranges of its activities and tasks and the overall potential to fulfil its scientific, cultural and educational mission.

Chapter 3 - This chapter analyzes historical roots of political radicalism and extremism in Slovakia. Specificities of the historical development of the Slovak nation and statehood, mainly the experiences with oppression of national culture under the Austro-Hungarian Empire and late fulfilment of political demands, caused the nationalism, in its conformal, but as well in its violent form, has become the integral part of the Slovak politics. Moreover, new sources of the rise of right-wing radicalism and extremism, connected with current forms of globalization, are relevant also for Slovakia. As an example of political subjects representing ideas of right-wing radicalism and extremism, two political parties are analyzed in more detail – the radically nationalist Slovak National Party and the extremist Kotleba party. The methodology of the chapter is based on historical analysis and statistical analysis of election

results, secondary analysis of surveys and analysis of the relevant documents and media outputs.

Chapter 4 - The aim of the chapter is to describe asylum seekers' access to health care and its outcomes in the Slovak Republic. Asylum seekers represent a specific group, since they are not included in the Slovak health insurance system. Therefore, they do not have the same rights regarding health care as citizens of the Slovak Republic. The exception, however, is urgent care, to which asylum seekers have the same right. Surveillance study results are based on the mapping of studies and statistical data identifying asylum seekers' access to health care and its outcomes. The surveillance study selectively maps those facts during the asylum procedure. After applying for asylum, asylum seekers are placed in a detention camps where basic medical examinations are performed. They detect the possible presence of tuberculosis, syphilis, salmonellosis and HIV. After completing all medical examinations, asylum seekers are placed in residential camps where in addition to health care, psychological assistance is provided.

Chapter 1

ELECTORAL GEOGRAPHY OF A SMALL COUNTRY: DETERMINING FACTORS, THREAT OF RADICAL RIGHT, AND COMMENTS ON REFERENDA HELD IN SLOVAKIA

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ABSTRACT

This chapter deals with the evaluation of the political situation in Slovakia, a young democracy with a population of over five million and with history of a quarter of a century of independence, lying in the heart of Europe, by analyzing the results of the recent general (parliamentary) election held in 2016 and a series of referenda that have taken place in Slovakia over the past two decades. We chose the elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic because of the fact that among all of the types of public elections they have the highest electoral participation (usually almost 60%), and in Slovakia, on the basis of their

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results, they represent the most significant way of applying a representative form of democracy. We will present the basic rules for the application of parliamentary elections in this post-socialist European country, commenting on the pre-election situation, the chances of individual parties based on the results of pre-election opinion polls, electoral results on a national scale, but also regionally, while identifying the most important factors influencing their regional pattern, and from the point of view of out-of-state voters. The most significant findings of these elections were the rapid decline in support of left-wing politics on one hand, and mandates for the far right-wing party which was criticized by all of the other political actors on the other. The outcome of the post-electoral negotiations of the new parliamentary parties about the composition of the national government was surprising and criticized by a considerable segment of the public. At the end of this chapter, the reader will learn about nationwide referenda that have taken place, as the most important type of application of direct democracy. Of the eight referenda already held, only one was valid, the referendum on the accession of the country to the European Union in 2003.

Keywords: parliamentary election, referendum, Slovakia, region, district

INTRODUCTION

Slovakia, a small Central European country with almost five and a half million inhabitants, gained independence on January 1, 1993, when the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic was split into two independent states - the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic. This fundamental break in the history of both nations was based on the decision of the political leaders and not directly by citizens through a referendum. It should be noted, however, that the mood for breaking the federation was particularly true for Slovakia, where after the thousand-year chapter of Hungarian history and 75 years in the Czechoslovak state (with the exception of a short phase of “independence” during the Second World War), a majority of the public longed for independence and taking responsibility for their future in their own hands, in accordance with democratic principles of governance.

Apart from the elementary information concerning the parliamentary elections and referenda held in Slovakia as the most visible agents of representative and direct forms of democracy, this chapter also emphasizes the importance of the differences in political views at election time as political decision-making of citizens about their representatives in public office, across different parts of the country. Territorial patterns as well as the reasons for the differences are evaluated according to called electoral geography. It was not possible to develop this discipline from 1948 to 1989 in domestic conditions due to the totalitarian regime in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, which generated unilateral election results. After the Velvet Revolution in 1989, however, the discipline has been developing and trying to catch up with the “*Western school of electoral-geographic research*”. In the period after 1989, electoral geography within Czech and Slovak geography can be characterized as a relatively intensively developing sub-discipline. Its main themes include research on spatial aspects and regional differences in the distribution of the electorate of individual political parties and movements. The advantage of these studies is the fact that results of this type of research are usually of a highly applied nature, thus providing valuable information to politicians about the regions of their electoral support and the “home” regions of their competitors, which can, in the end, either positively or negatively affect electoral strategy, especially during pre-election campaigning. As Madleňák (2010) notes, we can generally say that the electoral geography of the transforming states from the former Eastern Bloc is in a situation where, after decades of the absence of democratic elections, along with other social disciplines, it seeks to capture and analyze the transformation of society and the stabilization of democracy which is not always of a uniform nature and is undergoing various challenges. There is often an attempt to apply electoral-geographic formulas verified under conditions of liberal democracies to this environment and to modify them due to specific conditions of the post-socialist states of Europe.

In the period after the change of the political regime in the late 1980s and early 1990s, many Slovak and Czech authors have focused on the geographical analysis of election results; they include Kostecký and

Blažek (1991), Jehlička and Sýkora (1991), Jehlička, Kostelecký and Sýkora (1993), Kostelecký (1993, 2000), Vlčková and Brunn (1994), Vlčková (1995), Krivý, Feglová and Balko (1996), Mariot (1999), Madleňák (2006, 2012), Kyloušek and Pink (2007), Plešivčák (2011, 2013a, 2013b, 2014a, 2014b, 2015, 2017), Mikuš (2014), Kostelecký and Krivý (2016), Mikuš and Gurňák (2016) or Mikuš, Gurňák and Máriássyová (2016).

The interest of geographers in elections held in Slovakia is generally centered on the following three core areas: regional differences in election results and defining regions with a specific “political climate”; causes that influence regional differences in election results; and the assessment of the significance of the spatial differentiation concerning electoral results and the particularities of the individual electoral systems for the formation of representative bodies. This last issue has been frequently covered by Slovak geographers (Vlčková 1995), and has an irreplaceable role in terms of the relevance of a representative and direct democracy.

ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS OF (GENERAL) ELECTIONS IN SLOVAKIA

One of the fundamental rights of citizens is the right to participate in public affairs. They have the right to associate in political parties and movements. In addition to passive electoral law in the form of candidacy for public office (the right to be elected), it acts as the instrument of the people for active electoral law - the right to elect their representatives to such a post. In a representative democracy, exercising the right to vote for candidates is one of the most important powers of the citizens in their participation in the political life of the society; in the Slovak context, this especially applies to forming the National Council of the Slovak Republic, the supreme legislative body of the state.

In addition to the referendum as an elementary form of direct democracy, five types of elections are held in Slovakia, through which citizens have the opportunity to elect their representatives to legislative and

representative assemblies at different hierarchical levels (European, national, regional and local). The Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic (the NR SR in Slovak) announces elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic, elections to the European Parliament, and elections to the regional and local self-governmental bodies at least 110 days in advance of Election Day and the presidential election at least 55 days in advance of Election Day. Electoral law declares the universality, equality and straightforward electoral right by secret ballot.

Act No. 180/2014 Coll. on the Conditions for the Exercise of Electoral Law, is divided into the following nine parts: General Provisions, Elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic, Elections to the European Parliament, Election of the President of the Slovak Republic, People's Vote on the President's Appeal, Elections to the Bodies of Self-governing Regions, Referenda, Common, Transitional and Final Provisions. The structure of the six original electoral and referendum laws which was merged into the currently valid two legislative standards (Act No. 180/2014 Coll. on the Conditions for the Exercise of Electoral Law and Act No. 181/2014 Coll. on the Electoral Campaign) was very similar.

Anyone who is 18 years of age and has Slovak citizenship or permanent residence in the Slovak Republic has the right to vote. The election for the National Council of the Slovak Republic is the most popular election with the highest turnout (generally at 60%), and is comprised of a 150-mandate electoral district covering the territory of the Slovak Republic. Members of parliament are elected for a four-year term of office.

During the elections for the National Council of the Slovak Republic, municipalities ensure that the list of candidates is delivered to every household at least 25 days before Election Day. Nowadays, in addition to standard communication tools, political parties and their candidates also communicate through the internet and social networks where, aside from billboards, "posters" and "leaflets" or standard electronic media as radio and television, a substantial part of the electoral campaign is run. A political party or a coalition may nominate as many candidates as there are

seats or in the National Council (i.e., a maximum of 150 candidates) or for the Slovak Republic in the European Parliament. The election campaign starts on the day of the publication of the decision on the election in the Collection of Laws of the Slovak Republic and ends 48 hours before Election Day. A political party or movement may spend up to 3,000,000 euros (including VAT) on its campaign for election to the National Council of the Slovak Republic, as well as for election to the European Parliament.

Political broadcasting may begin on the 21st day before the Election Day and must end 48 hours before Election Day. Publishing information on candidates of political parties, candidates of political parties' coalitions, presidential candidates, and candidates for offices in local government for their benefit or disadvantage in radio broadcasting, television broadcasting, on-demand audio-visual media services, periodicals, non-periodical publications and agency news must end 48 hours before Election Day and until the polls are closed. It is forbidden to publish the results of election polls within 14 days before Election Day and while the polls are open.

Political parties that win at least five per cent of the valid votes cast in the polls are entitled to appoint representatives to the national parliament. The number of seats for each political party depends on its election result. If a proportional (or mixed) electoral system is defined as a systematic solution for the electoral process, it is not enough to simply count the votes, but mathematical methods of calculating votes on mandates need to be used. We call this conversion as a generic term for the electoral formula. In the case of elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic, the so-called "Hagenbach-Bischoff quota" is applied. If we use this method, there will be a number of empty seats, so we have a second round (scrutinium) to fill them. A typical method that solves the problem of undistributed mandates and which is also used in the general election in Slovakia, is the largest remainder method. According to this principle, the remaining mandates fall to those parties that have the largest absolute number of unused votes. There is a possibility of preferential voting within the election, when candidates from the lower position of the candidate list may also be preferred. As Mikuš (2014) concludes, the influence of

preferential voting has grown in Slovakia, with the first clear evidence of this in the 2010 and 2012 parliamentary elections. State funding is awarded to those parties which have achieved at least three per cent of the valid votes cast in the elections. The president of the Slovak Republic traditionally entrusts the leader of the party with the most votes to form the government. Including the parliamentary election in 1992 which formed the first independent legislative assembly of Slovakia, eight parliamentary elections have been held (1992, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2012 and 2016).

In the following passage we will present the circumstances and results of the 2016 parliamentary elections. Before that, however, from a political and ideological point of view, we will briefly define those parties who succeeded in this election and obtained seats in the National Council of the Slovak Republic for the 2016-2020 period.

- Direction - Social Democracy (abbreviation Smer-SD in Slovak) - leftist (social democratic) party
- Freedom and Solidarity (SaS) - liberal party
- Ordinary People and Independent Personalities - NOVA (OLaNO - NOVA) - centre-right movement/coalition
- Slovak National Party (SNS) - nationalist party
- Kotleba - The People's Party Our Slovakia (ĽSNS) – ultra-nationalist party
- We Are Family - Boris Kollár (Sme rodina) - centre-right party
- Most-Híd (Most-Híd) - ethnic party of the Hungarian minority
- #Network (#Siet') - centre-right party

In addition to these parties, two other parties were granted a financial contribution from the state, but are not represented in the parliament – the conservative Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) and the Party of the Hungarian Community (SMK).

RESULTS OF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS AND NATIONAL REFERENDA IN SLOVAKIA

Pre-Election Situation

On March 5, 2016, the seventh parliamentary election in the history of the independent Slovak Republic was held. The election was declared by the Chairman of the National Council of the SR on November 12, 2015, by decision No. 307/2015 Coll. On that day, the pre-election campaign began and lasted until March 3. Voters could choose from 23 political parties and movements which nominated a total of 2,914 candidates. It was assumed that the situation would be different from the 2012 election, when *Smer-SD* dominated (44.4%), and for the first time in the existence of the independent state of Slovakia, a one-color government emerged. The cards of the political future of the country were mixed in this context by the direct election of the president in March 2014, which featured independent candidate, Andrej Kiska, and the chairman of the *Smer-SD* party and Prime Minister, Robert Fico. It was assumed that if Fico won the presidential election, it would probably also weaken *Smer-SD* itself in the 2016 parliamentary election because the party would lose its long-term leader. However, Fico lost the presidential election (he gained 40.6% of the votes compared to 59.4% for his opponent); he remained in the position of prime minister and was the party's leader for the upcoming parliamentary election. The context of regional support for the candidates in the second round of the 2014 presidential election is captured by Figures 1 and 2 (the order numbers of the districts are stated in Figure 5).

The pre-election opinion polls first predicted large electoral gains for *Smer-SD* (37.0% by the Focus Agency on January 13, 2016, and 36.0% by the Median Agency on January 22, 2016), but as Election Day approached, the estimates decreased (32.1% by Median on February 7, 2016, and 29.3% by the Phoenix Research Agency on February 8, 2016). It was anticipated that positive election results would be achieved by the centre-right and liberal parties which would thus be able to form a government coalition. In the opinion of some media, the candidate for the right-wing

#Siet' party and predicted nominee for the post of future prime minister was its leader Radoslav Procházka, an unsuccessful candidate for president in 2014. However, the very high overestimation of the election results for *#Siet'* and the underestimation of other parties invalidated the relevance of the public opinion surveys. Most agencies attributed a preference of approximately 15% to this party (for example, on August 8, 2016, Phoenix Research released an estimate of 16.8%), but the actual result was less favorable. It gained only 5.6%. It was assumed that the decline in votes could have been caused by Procházka's unconvincing performances in television debates and his refusal to reject post-election cooperation with *Smer-SD*. The success of the traditional political party of KDH was also inaccurate; pre-election opinion polls predicted values between 6 and 7%, but the party only received 4.94% just below the threshold for entry into parliament. The agencies also predicted an election turnout that was 5 to 10 percentage points higher than the final result (59.82%). On the contrary, the strength of the Kotleba - *ĽSNS* party was underestimated in many surveys. The agency estimates of about 2% were far below the results, as this far-right party gained up to 8.0% of all valid votes. The following factors were attributed to the party's remarkable electoral increase:

Spiral of Silence

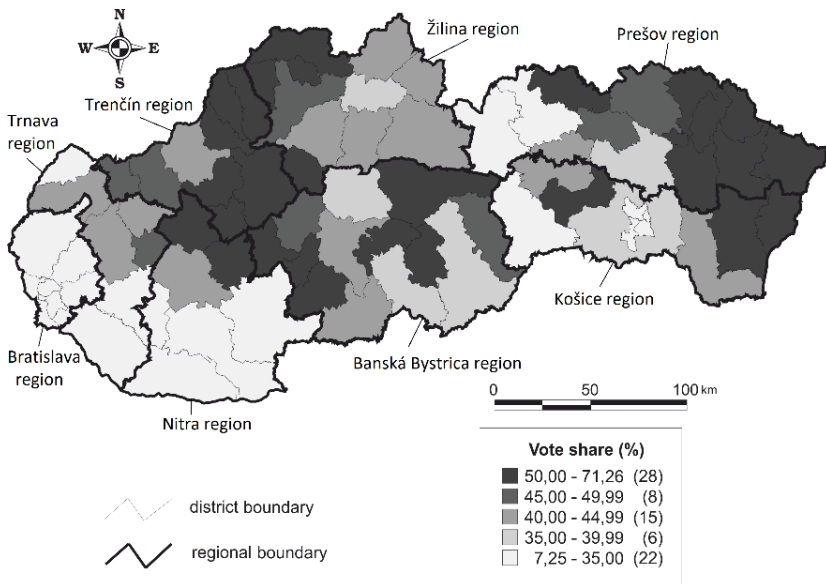
This explains the formation of public opinion and the media's influence on this process, but also describes how public opinion acts on an individual in society and influences his/her willingness (or lack thereof) to express an opinion. If someone is viewed as a minority by society, neighbors or the media, his/her fear of isolation grows and reduces the willingness to express and defend his/her true opinion (Noelle-Neumann 1974). This creates a phenomenon called the "hidden voter".

Issue Voting

If there is a serious problem resonating throughout society, voters elect a political party to resolve it. Such significant issue of the pre-election campaign could overlap with other program points and the ideological orientation of voters. In Slovakia, the problem of underdeveloped regions

or areas with a high number of socially deprived citizens is a case in point. However, the general dissatisfaction of the public with the performance of traditional political parties and their representatives, which subsequently leads to a protest vote, which was argued in detail by Taylor and Johnston (1979), is also important. The attitude of political actors toward the consequences of the refugee crisis, which brings points mainly to the far-right and Euro-skeptical parties, is extremely relevant.

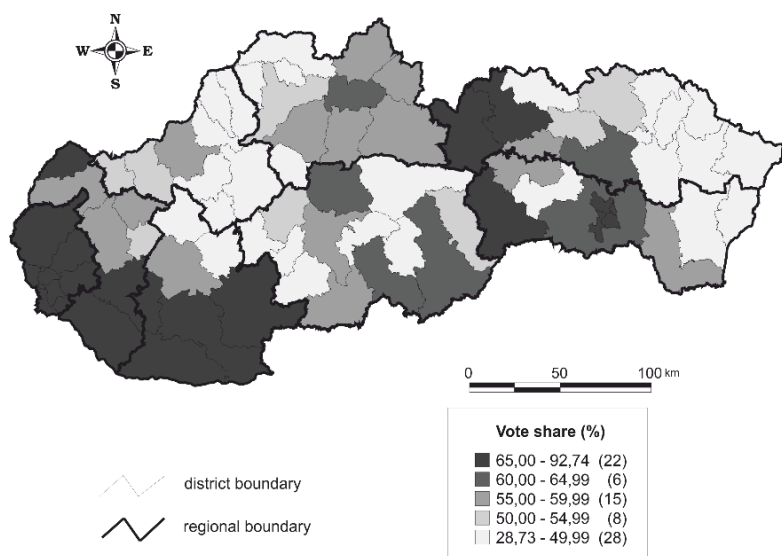
The fundamental influence on the deviation of the surveys from the actual election results (Figure 3) also depends on when and how a survey is conducted (e.g., systematic errors in data collection). As a result, different collection methods should be combined to emphasize the question of the representativeness of opinion polls, to use polls based on more sophisticated methodology and also to control the actions of the agencies conducting the polls.



Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

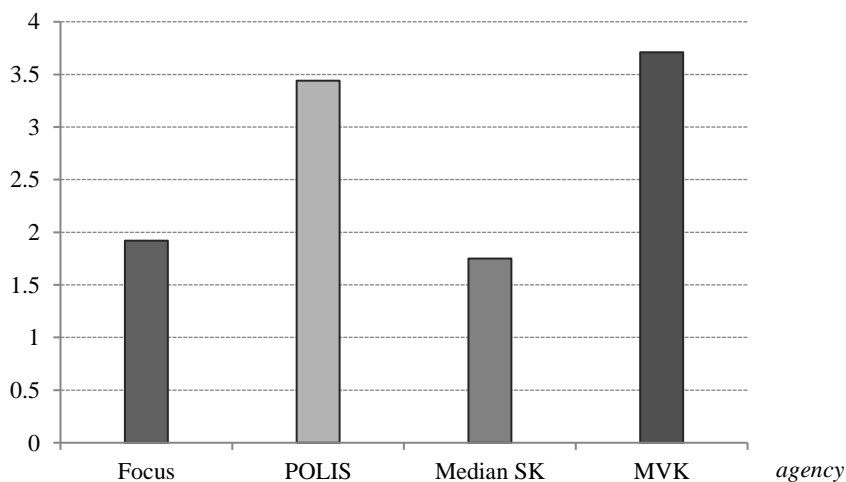
Note: For information on locations and names of the districts, please see Figure 4 and Figure 5.

Figure 1. Robert Fico's election results at the district level in the second round of the 2014 presidential election in Slovakia.



Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 2. Andrej Kiska's election results at the district level in the second round of the 2014 presidential election.

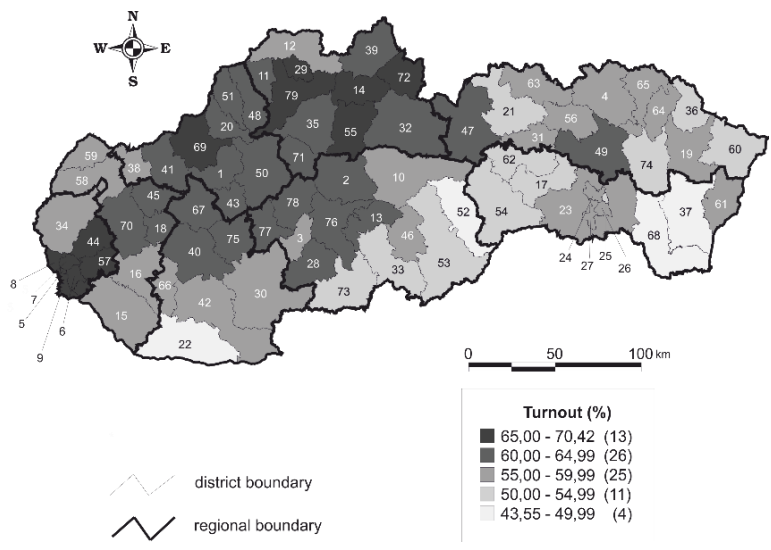


Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 3. Average margin of error of the pre-election surveys of individual agencies compared to the real election results of the 2016 general election in Slovakia (in percentage points).

Election Results

Turnout in the elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic was 59.82%, which was comparable to the two previous elections (2010 and 2012). The highest turnout since the establishment of the Slovak Republic was in the 1998 parliamentary election - 84.24%; the lowest was in 2006 - only 54.67%. A total of 2 648 184 voters, out of a total of 4 426 760 eligible voters participated in the 2016 parliamentary election. The lowest participation was recorded in the Košice region, and the highest participation was recorded in the Bratislava region. In terms of spatial distribution of voter turnout, it has been repeatedly demonstrated in parliamentary elections that turnout is higher in economically more advanced parts of the country, while underdeveloped regions and districts with many social and economic problems experience lower turnouts. The possibility of voting from abroad in the 2016 election was exercised by 17 278 citizens.



* order numbers of districts are stated in Figure 5

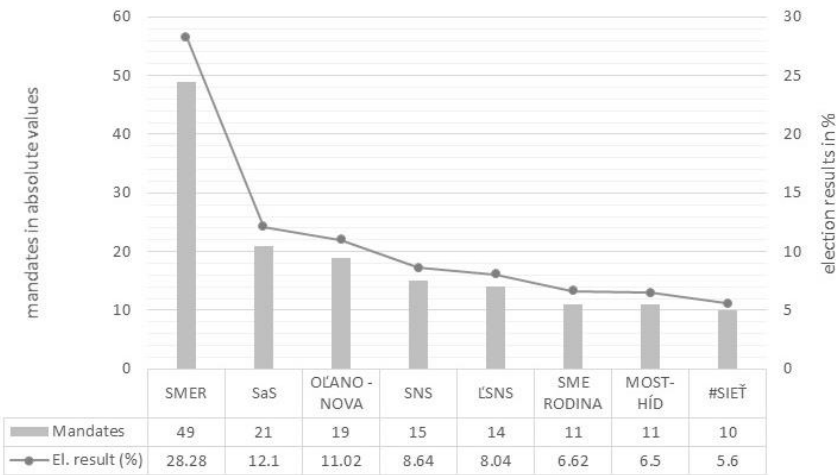
Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>

Figure 4. Turnout at the district level in the 2016 general election in Slovakia.

Order Number	District	Order Number	District	Order Number	District
1	Bánovce nad Bebravou	28	Krupina	55	Ružomberok
2	Banská Bystrica	29	Kysucké Nové Mesto	56	Sabinov
3	Banská Štiavnica	30	Levice	57	Senec
4	Bardejov	31	Levoča	58	Senica
5	Bratislava I	32	Liptovský Mikuláš	59	Skalica
6	Bratislava II	33	Lučenec	60	Snina
7	Bratislava III	34	Malacky	61	Sobrance
8	Bratislava IV	35	Martin	62	Spišská Nová Ves
9	Bratislava V	36	Medzilaborce	63	Stará Ľubovňa
10	Brezno	37	Michalovce	64	Stropkov
11	Bytča	38	Myjava	65	Svidník
12	Čadca	39	Námestovo	66	Šaľa
13	Detva	40	Nitra	67	Topoľčany
14	Dolný Kubín	41	Nové Mesto nad Váhom	68	Trebišov
15	Dunajská Streda	42	Nové Zámky	69	Trenčín
16	Galanta	43	Partizánske	70	Trnava
17	Gelnica	44	Pezinok	71	Turčianske Teplice
18	Hlohovec	45	Piešťany	72	Tvrdošín
19	Humenné	46	Poltár	73	Veľký Krtíš
20	Ilava	47	Poprad	74	Vranov nad Topľou
21	Kežmarok	48	Považská Bystrica	75	Zlaté Moravce
22	Komárno	49	Prešov	76	Zvolen
23	Košice - okolie	50	Prievidza	77	Žarnovica
24	Košice I	51	Púchov	78	Žiar nad Hronom
25	Košice II	52	Revúca	79	Žilina
26	Košice III	53	Rimavská Sobota		
27	Košice IV	54	Rožňava		

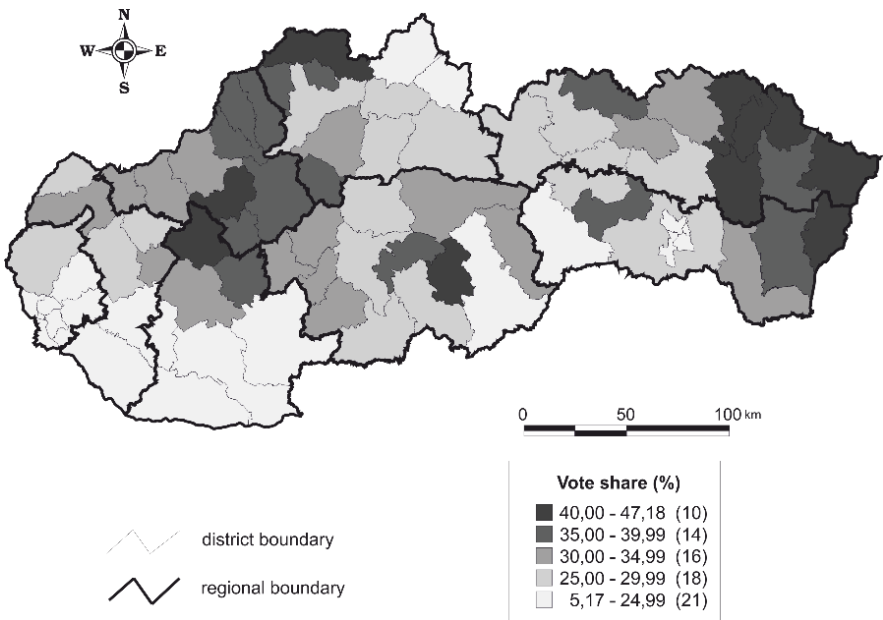
Figure 5. Number of districts used in cartographic figures.

The final 2016 election results entitled eight political parties to parliamentary seats, namely *Smer-SD*, *SaS*, *OLaNO - NOVA*, *SNS*, *ĽSNS*, *Sme rodina*, *#Siet'* and *Most-Híd*. The percentage and the number of mandates won by the parties are shown in Figure 6. The spatial context of participation rates as well as the support of decisive political subjects at the district level are captured by the series of figures numbered 4-14.



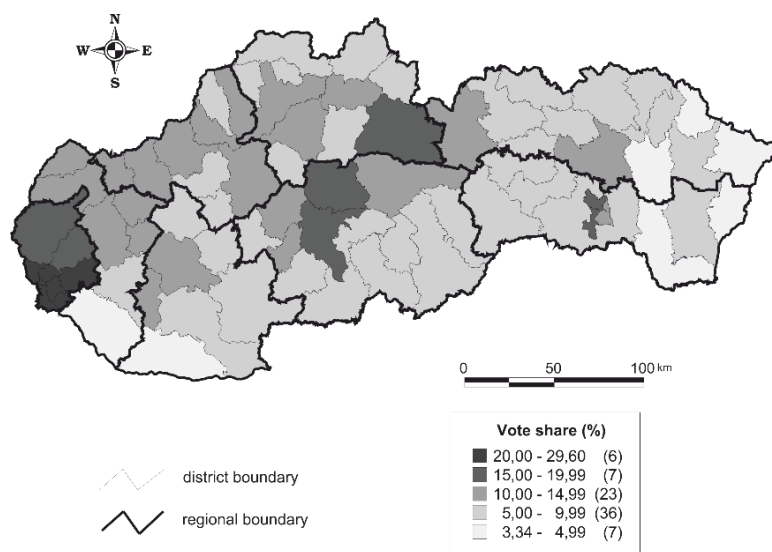
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Figure 6. Total number of assigned mandates and final election results of the 2016 general election in Slovakia.



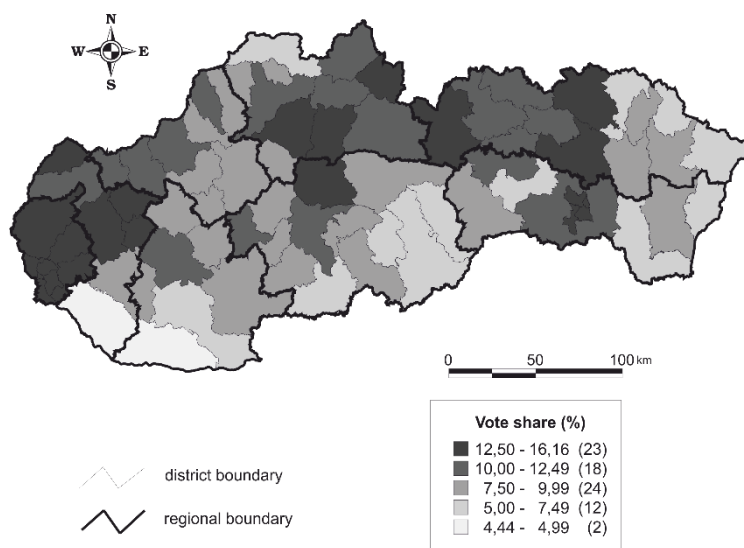
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Figure 7. Election results of *Smer-SD* at the district level in the 2016 general election in Slovakia.



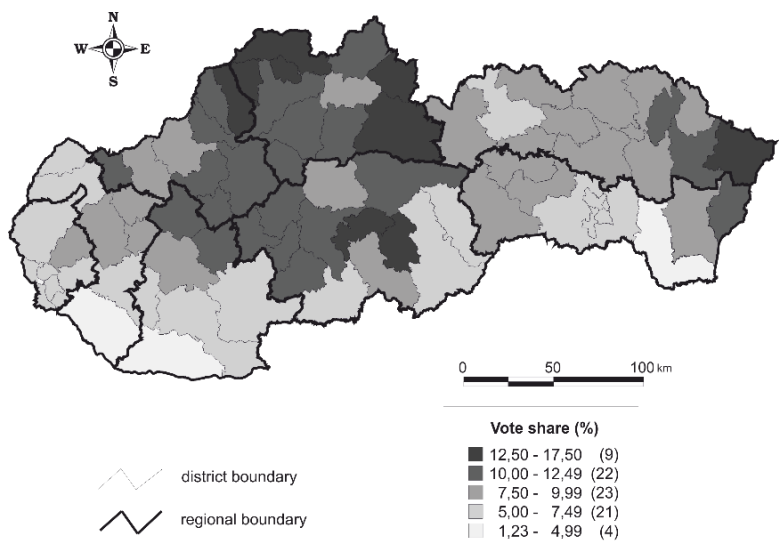
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Figure 8. Election results of *SaS* at the district level in the 2016 general election in Slovakia.



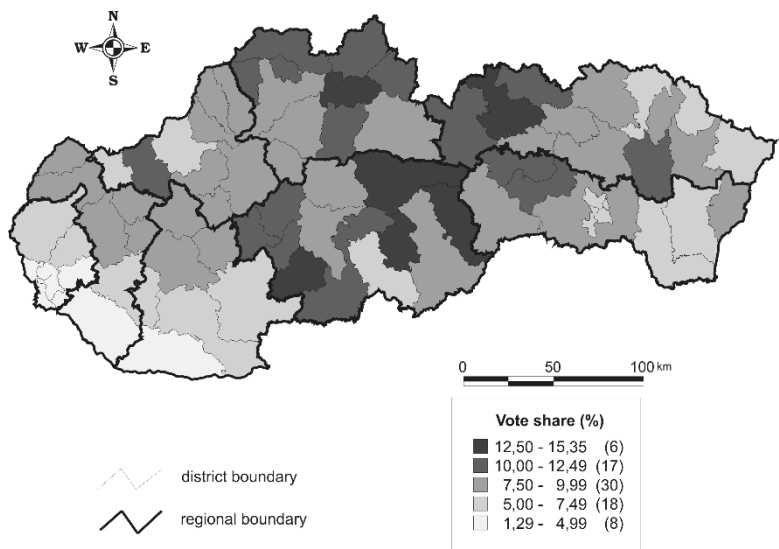
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Figure 9. Election results of *OLaNO - NOVA* at the district level in the 2016 general election in Slovakia.



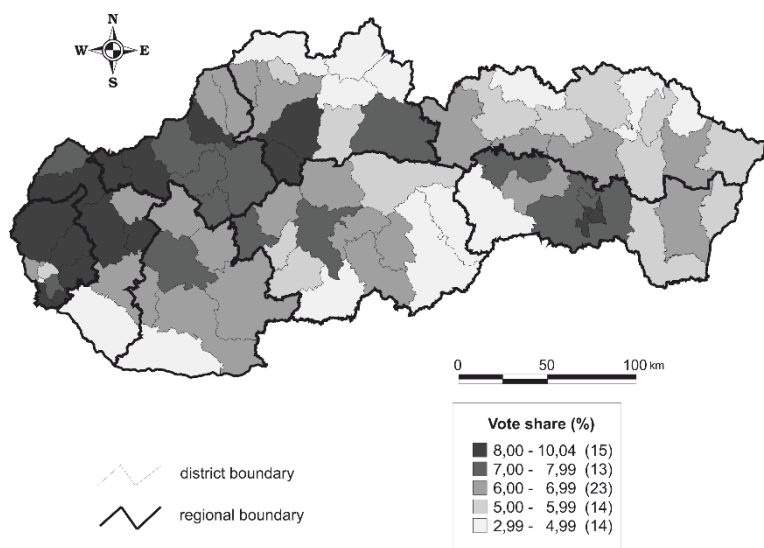
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Figure 10. Election results of *SNS* at the district level in the 2016 general election in Slovakia.



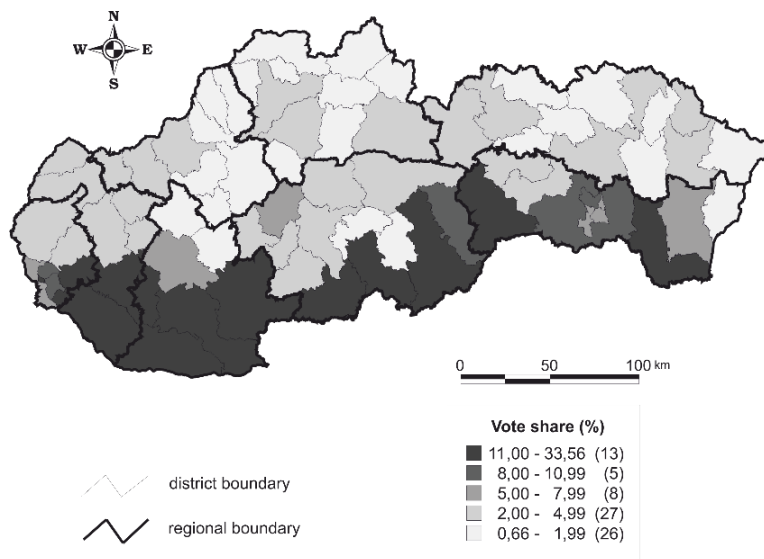
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Figure 11. Election results of *LSNS* at the district level in the 2016 general election in Slovakia.



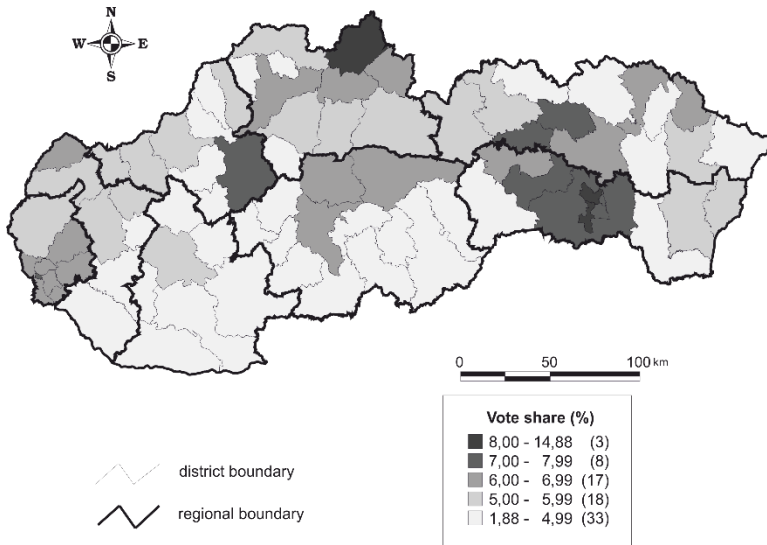
Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 12. Election results of *Sme rodina* at the district level in the 2016 general election in Slovakia.



Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 13. Election results of *Most-Híd* at the district level in the 2016 general election in Slovakia.



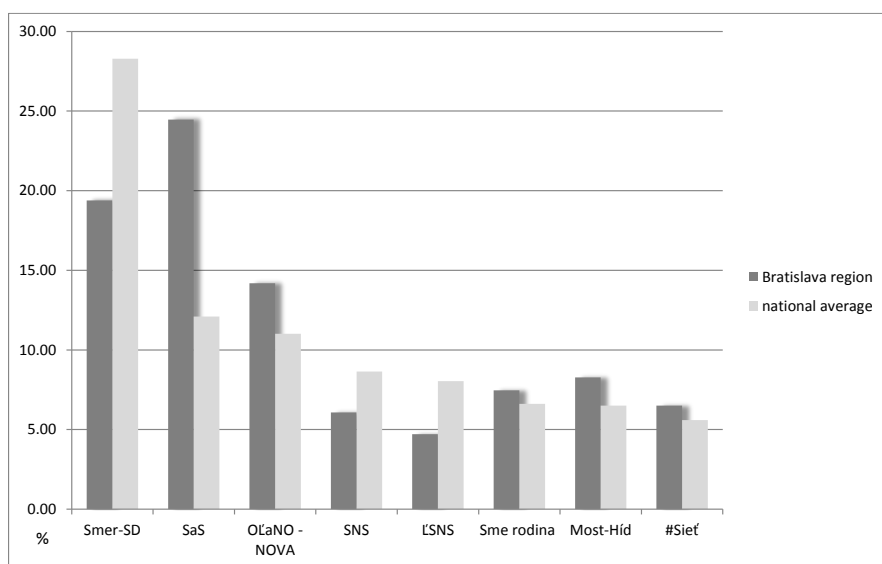
Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 14. Election results of #Sier' at the district level in the 2016 general election in Slovakia.

Bratislava Region

The region of Bratislava is the nation's economic leader; it has a gross domestic product comparable to that of Western European capital regions, and an advantageous position at the interface of four countries (Slovakia, Austria, Czech Republic and Hungary). Therefore, it was not surprise that it supported parties of the right-wing political spectrum even in this election (Figure 15). The capital city and the largest city in the country is the official home to 420,000 inhabitants, but its catchment area serves an additional 200,000-250,000 inhabitants. The liberal SaS defeated the left-wing Smer-SD by more than five percentage points (p.p.) here. While SaS scored mainly in the city districts of Bratislava - the traditional bastion of the right (in all of them over 25%), Smer-SD recorded relatively good results in the suburban districts of Malacky and Pezinok (26.9% and 24.1% respectively). The Bratislava region is the only region in which *Smer-SD* did not win. The support of the third political subject, the centre-right

OLaNO - NOVA, was fairly balanced in all districts of the region and almost identical to the country-wide outcome (i.e., around 14.2%). Ethnic *Most-Híd* succeeded in the region thanks to good results in the Senec and Bratislava I districts (both by 12%). The failure of the two nationalist parties - *SNS* and the extreme right-wing *LSNS*, demonstrates the attitudes of the voters in this region. Moreover, based on its regional election results, *LSNS* would not have exceeded the required 5% threshold for entry into parliament.



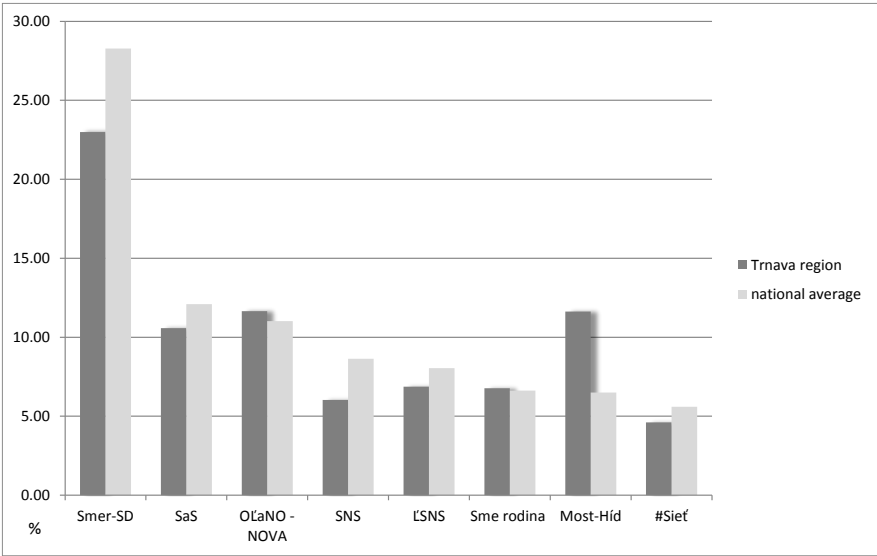
Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 15. Election results of parliamentary parties in the 2016 general election in the Bratislava region.

Trnava Region

Compared to the capital region, the results here were quite different, due to both the ethnic composition and the spatial distribution of the individual districts in terms of infrastructure and economic characteristics. We clearly see the dominance of the leftist *Smer-SD* (Figure 16). It gained

support mainly in the Hlohovec district (34.5%) and the Senica district (31.4%). On the contrary, marginal support for this party was registered in the predominantly Hungarian district of Dunajská Streda (5.2%). OĽaNO – NOVA, which finished second, succeeded in the Trnava district, which is the hometown of its leader, Igor Matovič. Thanks to the strong representation of the Hungarian minority in the districts of Dunajská Streda (33.6%) and Galanta (19.2%), *Most-Híd* finished third. On the other hand, in the remaining five districts of the region (Hlohovec, Piešťany, Senica, Skalica and Trnava) it gained only 2% of the votes. This demonstrates the party’s direct dependence on the population share of the Hungarian minority in the district. At the same time, the party’s electoral potential in areas without a Hungarian minority is relatively low. *SaS* finished in fourth place with its highest support in the Skalica district (14.2%). *#Siet’* finished with less than 5% of the votes.

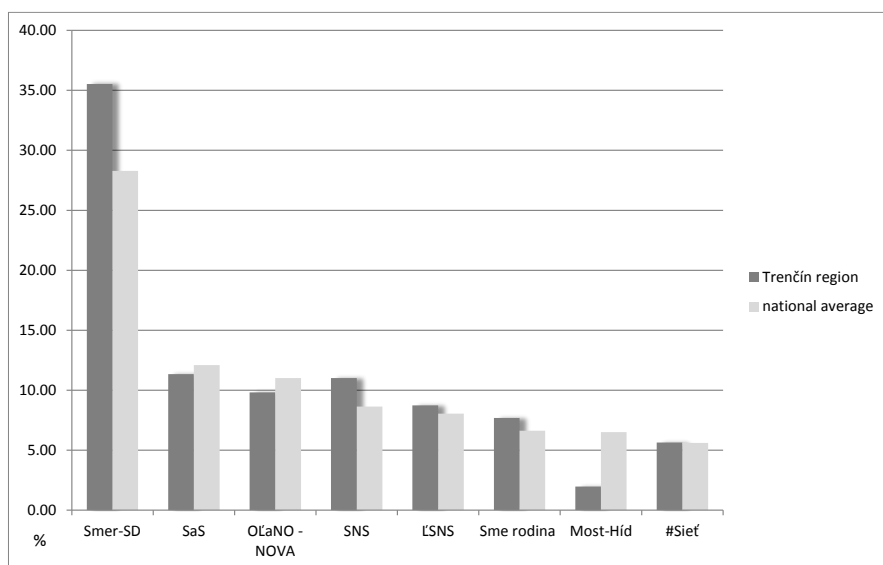


Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 16. Election results of parliamentary parties in the 2016 general election in the Trnava region.

Trenčín Region

The Trenčín region is the traditional stronghold of *Smer-SD*. It even gained by 24 p. p. more votes than the second place party - *SaS* (Figure 17). This result demonstrates that the more underdeveloped part of the region and the rural population overwhelmingly support the leftist party. However, this was the only region in which the abovementioned claim regarding underdeveloped regions held true. *Smer-SD* obtained the best result in the Bánovce nad Bebravou district (41.1%). On the contrary, *SaS* benefited mainly from support in the districts of Trenčín, Nové Mesto nad Váhom and Myjava. *SNS*, succeeded mainly in the northern part of the region, in the district of Považská Bystrica (14.1%). *#Siet'* just cleared the 5% line while *Most-Híd* fared poorly overall and in each district due to the ethnic composition of the region.

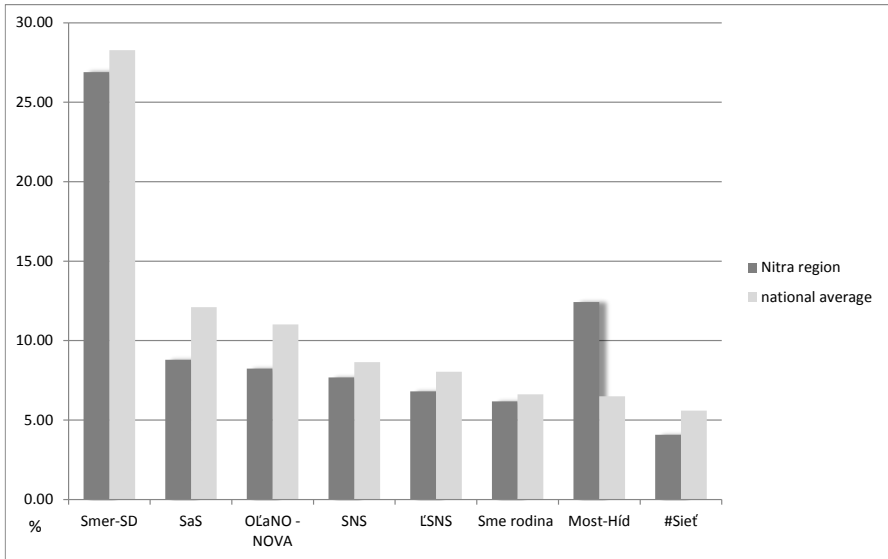


Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 17. Election results of parliamentary parties in the 2016 general election in the Trenčín region.

Nitra Region

The overall election results in Nitra were influenced by the ethnic composition of the territory. We can also see the connection between the home region of a strong leader and the success of his political party (the ‘friends and neighbors’ effect) - in this case, *Smer-SD* and the Topoľčany district (42.6%), Robert Fico’s hometown. Most-Hid, achieved a positive result due to its strong position in the Hungarian populated southern districts such as Komárno (27.9%), Šaľa (18.5%) and Nové Zámky (18%). The centre of support for the nationalist *SNS* and ultranationalist *ĽSNS* was concentrated in the districts of Zlaté Moravce, and Topoľčany. Once again, *#Siet’* received less than 5% of the votes (Figure 18).

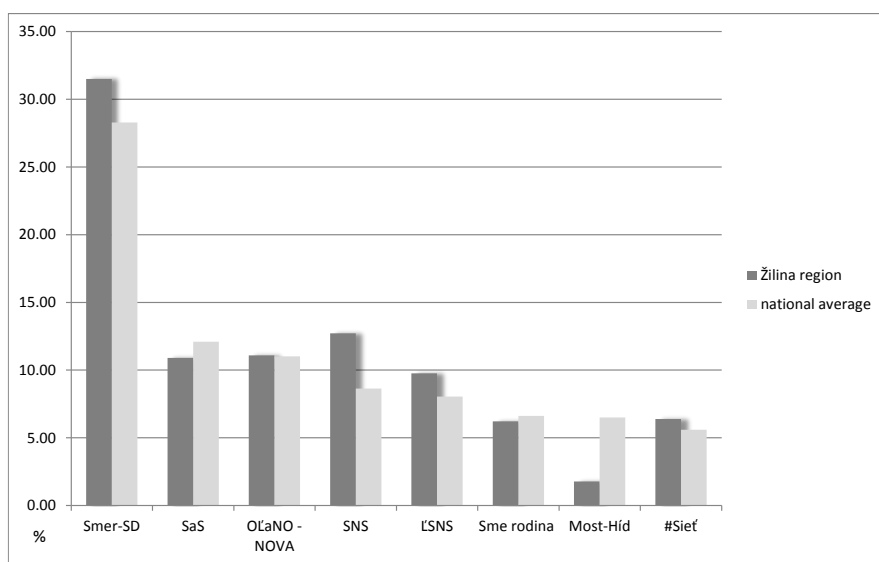


Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 18. Election results of parliamentary parties in the 2016 general election in the Nitra region.

Žilina Region

On the basis of regional election results, *Smer-SD* would be the winner of the election (Figure 19), due to its enormous support, especially in the districts of Čadca (45.5%) and Kysucké Nové Mesto (39.3%). It is assumed that the outcome was influenced by the traditional inclination of the region of Kysuce toward the values of etatism and egalitarianism, the most prominent representative of which is the party of three times Prime Minister, Robert Fico. However, the Žilina region is also known for its attachment to the values of conservatism and nationalism.



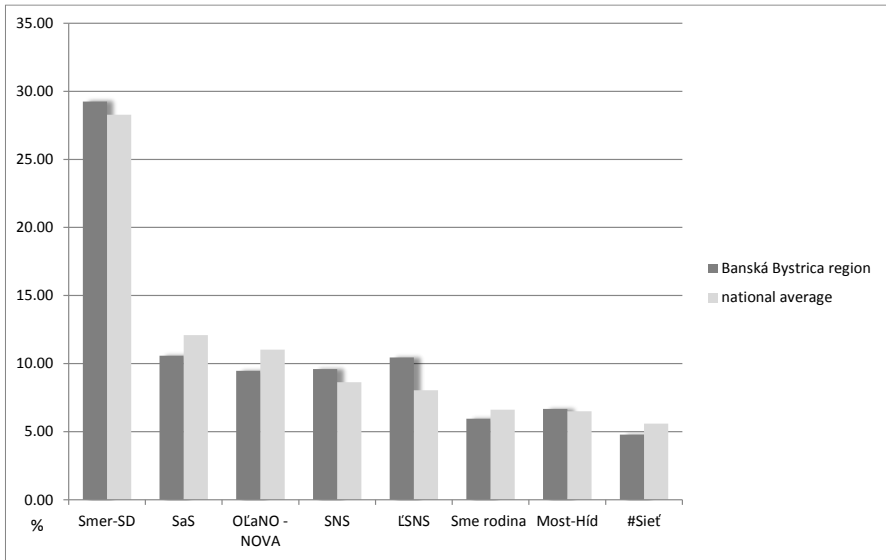
Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 19. Election results of parliamentary parties in the 2016 general election in the Žilina region.

This ensured a second place result for *SNS*, which had above average results in Kysucké Nové Mesto (17.5%), Bytča (16.9%) and Tvrdošín (14.9%). While *OĽaNO - NOVA* achieved its best results in the Tvrdošín district (14.5%) and the worst results in the Bytča district (8.0%); *SaS*,

finished 4th with the best results in the district of Liptovský Mikuláš (15.9%) and in the worst results on the Námestovo district (5.2%). The strong support for *#Siet'* and extra-parliamentary KDĽ in the Námestovo district (14.9% for both parties), was also noteworthy. However, given the political history of the *#Siet'* party leader (a former member of KDĽ) and its platform, this result is not surprising, as both parties compete for a similar, conservative electorate that defends Christian values. The region of Orava has always had the highest proportion of Catholics. Not surprisingly, given the ethnic composition of the territory (approximately 95% of the territory is inhabited by Slovaks), Most-Híd did not do well.

Banská Bystrica Region



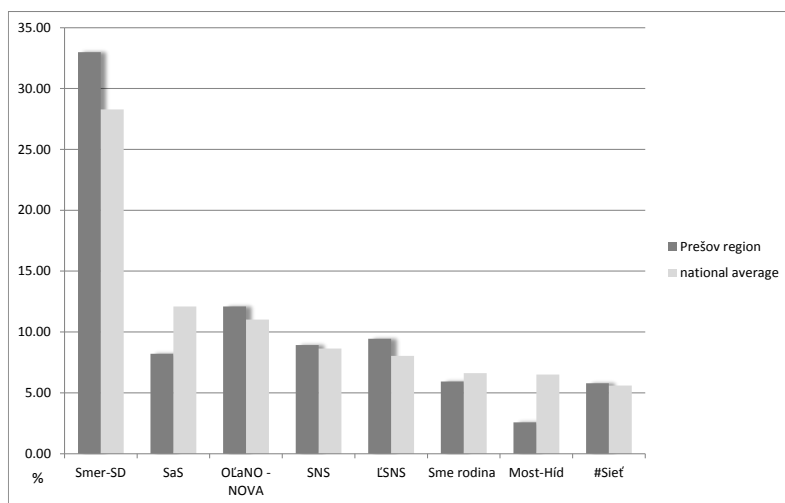
Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 20. Election results of parliamentary parties in the 2016 general election in the Banská Bystrica region.

The Banská Bystrica region, which along with the Prešov region suffers from the most serious socio-economic problems (unemployment, socially deprived communities, low wages, depopulation - emigration of

young people, aging of the population, etc.) voted in favor of *Smer-SD*, but thanks to massive support in the districts of Poltár (40.4%), Detva (37.8%) and Žarnovica (34.8%), the far-right *LSNS* finished second with just 0.13 p. p less than the leader. (Figure 20). This is definitely due to the fact that at the time of the elections, the leader of the *LSNS*, Marián Kotleba, was also the head of the regional council, and by the fact that this is where he established his party. Its highest level of support came in districts with significant economic and social problems - Krupina (15.4%) and Brezno (14.1%), on which the political entities of these orientation usually base their agenda. Most-Hid, recorded a relatively favorable result in the districts of Rimavská Sobota and Lučenec, while again the centre-right *#Siet'* failed to cross the 5% threshold.

Prešov Region

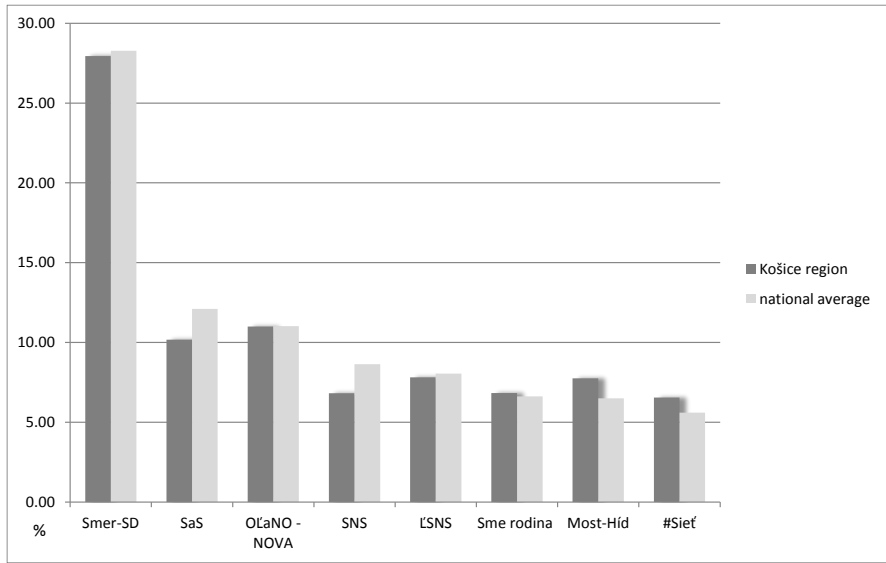


Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 21. Election results of parliamentary parties in the 2016 general election in the Prešov region.

It is no surprise that *Smer-SD* recorded its second best election result in the country (32.9%), in the Prešov region, a traditional bastion of its support since 2006, and always supportive of leftist movements. Almost half of the votes were cast for the party in the districts of Medzilaborce (47.2%) and Snina (46.9%). Its worst result was in the Poprad district, but it still gained 25.6%. *SaS* had its best results in the district of Poprad, while *OLaNO - NOVA* did best in the Prešov district. Even on the basis of these findings, the right-wing parties also do well mainly in the districts of larger towns, with typologically different voters compared to those living in rural areas of Slovakia. Considering the ethnic composition of the territory, it is not surprising that *Most-Híd* had the lowest gains among all parliamentary parties (Figure 21).

Košice Region



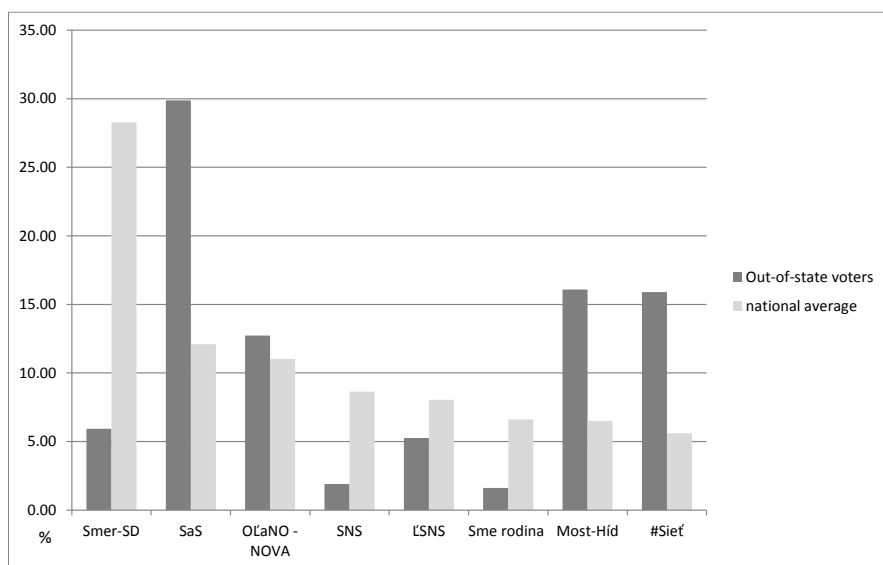
Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 22. Election results of parliamentary parties in the 2016 general election in the Košice region.

In the Košice region, the influence of the city of Košice, the metropolis of the eastern part of Slovakia, with 240 000 inhabitants and the second largest city in Slovakia (no other city has a population of more than 100 000), can be recognized in the overall regional election results (Figure 22). In all districts of Košice city, centre-right *OLaNO - NOVA* and liberal *SaS* recorded above average results compared to their regional score, while ultranationalist *ĽSNS* again succeeded in socially and economically less developed districts, such as Gelnica and Spišská Nová Ves.

Abroad

As demonstrated in Figure 23, there was a diametrically different pattern of electoral behavior of voters from abroad compared to the domestic electorate.



Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 23. Election results of parliamentary parties in the 2016 general election by voters from abroad.

The political space was divided into two halves with the liberal and centre-right parties at the forefront, and the nationalist, egalitarian and etatist profiled parties lagging behind. Smer-SD and ĽSNS just barely exceeded the 5% line, while SNS and Sme rodina finished far behind the others. On the contrary, a third of all voters from abroad cast their votes for the liberal SaS. An interesting election result (more than 15% of the vote) was also recorded by the centre-right #Siet'. We believe that voters abroad did not closely follow current events during the electoral campaign, or the information was delayed, and thus did not reflect the ambiguous attitudes of the party's representatives and their unconvincing behavior in TV debates.

Just two days after the election, President Andrej Kiska announced that he would instruct Robert Fico, as chairman of the winning party, Smer-SD, to form the government. And after surprisingly quick negotiations, a seemingly incoherent coalition with nationalist SNS, ethnic Most-Híd, and centre-right #Siet' was formed. On March 23, 2016, President Kiska appointed the prime minister and other members of the new government to manage the ministries. However, this variant did not last long because after the dissolution of #Siet' in August 2016 and the departure of a large part of its deputies to the Most-Híd parliamentary club, on September 1, 2016, a new coalition agreement was signed between Smer-SD, Most-Híd and SNS. As a result, the distribution of mandates in the 15-member government was as follows: Smer-SD with 9 seats (including two non-party nominees), while SNS (3) and Most-Híd (3) occupied the remaining 6 seats (all SNS candidates were non-party nominees).

National Referenda

The referendum represents one form of a direct democracy. Citizens can decide on legislative and executive issues as long as the legislation of that state permits. A referendum differs from typical elections due to the fact that the electorate votes for social, economic and cultural issues and not people (with the exception of undemocratic regimes where a vote may

be taken to prolong the term of office for a local ruler). In our conditions, the still valid federal Constitutional Act No. 23/1991 Coll. (Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic) in Article 21 states: "Citizens have the right to participate in the administration of public affairs directly or by the free choice of their representatives". The idea that all citizens share in the government resonates in the work of Jean Jacques Rousseau (1949). He understood democracy literally with its original meaning as the rule of the people.

Referenda can be categorized (Hendrych 2009):

- (a) According to the binding nature of the result (binding and advisory /consultative),
- (b) According to their legal necessity (obligatory/compulsory and optional/voluntary),
- (c) According to the territory on which they take place (e.g., national, regional and local).

When it comes to the issue of changing a territorial organization, such as state borders, the referendum is marked as a plebiscite.

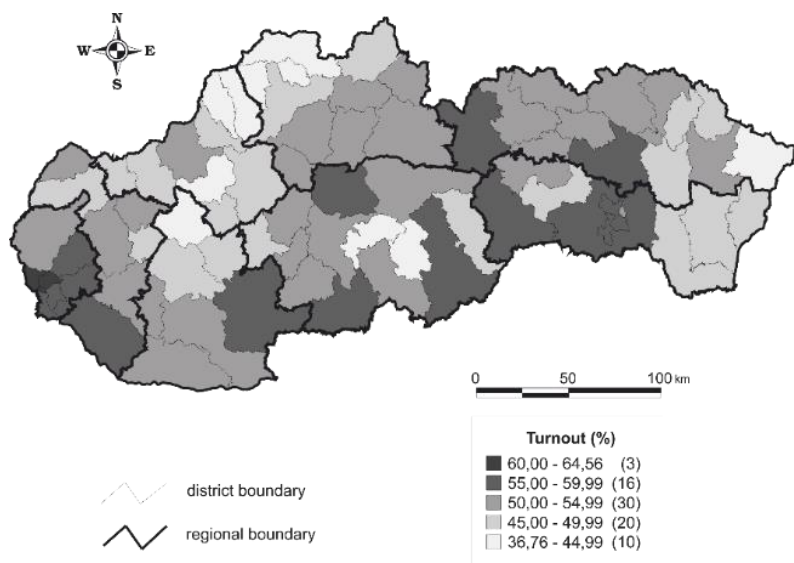
The previous rules governing the organization and holding of a referendum (plebiscite) in the Slovak Republic were regulated by the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 564/1992 Coll. on Referendum. However, following the changes made to the electoral law in 2014, the conditions for pronouncing, organizing and implementing a referendum are now defined in Act No. 180/2014 Coll. on the Conditions for the Exercise of Electoral Law and on Amendments of Certain Laws. Eight nationwide referenda have been held in our country since 1993. In addition to these referenda, two more were to be held, but both were vetoed by the president and the National Council of the Slovak Republic. As defined by the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 564/1992 Coll. on Referendum, 350,000 signatures are needed to hold a referendum. This number of signatures should guarantee that it will address issues that are important for a substantial part of the society. More than 50% of the citizens entitled to vote must participate in a referendum in

order for it to be valid; this happened only once - in 2003, after a massive campaign before the referendum on Slovakia's accession to the European Union.

In the following passage we will briefly discuss the referenda held in Slovakia over the last twenty years. Since 1998, a total of six referenda have taken place, of which only one has achieved the necessary 50% participation of the voters to make its results politically and socially binding. In the period preceding the year in question, there were two referenda (1994 and 1997), but they did not reach the mentioned quorum required for them to be recognized as successful and their outcome was invalid. In 1997, the Referendum on the direct election of the president was thwarted by the political elites. Of the set of referenda that have been published since the establishment of the independent Slovak Republic, only a few proved to the Slovak public to be more significant in their content or inter-political relations. This is the case of the 1998 Referendum on the privatization of strategic enterprises linked to parliamentary elections and the only successful 2003 Referendum on Slovakia's accession to the European Union. In addition, the Referendum on shortening the government's term of office (in 2000 initiated by the Movement for Democratic Slovakia of former three time prime minister Vladimír Mečiar, and in 2004 by the Confederation of Trade Unions and Smer-SD) was unsuccessful, as well as the Referendum on the rights and obligations of members of the National Council and public officials and obligations of physical and legal persons in connection with the payment of concession fees organized in 2010 under the auspices of the newly-formed SaS liberal party, and the recent one also known as the "Family Protection Referendum" (2015).

The 1998 referendum was initiated by the coalition government (Movement for Democratic Slovakia, Association of Slovak Workers, and Slovak National Party) and intentionally linked to the elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic with the hope of exceeding the 50% threshold for its validity and maximizing the profit of the coalition parties. Despite the high participation in the parliamentary election (84.25%), the Referendum on the privatization of strategic enterprises was

not successful, as only 44.26% of eligible citizens attended, although four fifths of them (81.08%) expressed their disapproval of the sale of state-owned, energy-related enterprises.

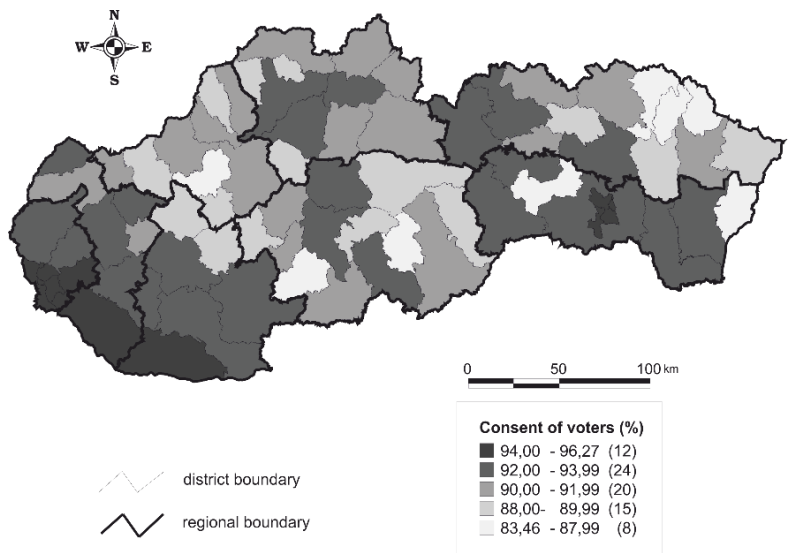


Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 24. Turnout at the district level in the 2003 referendum on the accession of the Slovak Republic to the European Union.

The integration efforts towards transnational organizations of the two successive coalition governments (1998-2006) culminated in the Referendum on the accession of the Slovak Republic to the European Union held in 2003. The spatial context of referendum participation and consent to Slovakia's accession to the EU at district level are shown in Figures 24 and 25. This was the only valid referendum in the history of independent Slovakia, as the previous four and subsequent three referenda were invalid due to low participation. Even this popular vote of international significance struggled with the burden of the low participation of the public and the threat of its invalidity. The participation rate of the voters was only 52.15%. The so-called "yes to EU" vote (92.46%) in the referendum was in sharp contrast to the abysmal

participation in the very first European Parliament election held in Slovakia a year later (16.96%, in 2014 only 13.05%). Even in this case, it can be assumed that the Euroskeptics had decided not to participate in the referendum and thus prevent the number expressing the rate of referendum participation from reaching the necessary quota.



Data source: <http://volby.statistics.sk/>.

Figure 25. Agreement of voters with the accession of the Slovak Republic to the European Union at the district level in the 2003 referendum.

CONCLUSION

If we summarize the previous findings, we can highlight some nuances that characterize the electoral behavior of the Slovak public. In the cities and larger towns, liberal and middle-right parties do well, while the parties of left-wing and nationalist orientation gain support mainly from the smaller towns and villages. The Slovak historical peculiarity is that if there is a district where the leftist *Smer-SD* strongly dominates, it is very likely that nationalist *SNS* and ultranationalist *LSNS* will also experience above

average popularity. If a Hungarian minority is strongly represented in a particular region, the results of *Most-Híd* will be positive.

The situation in Slovakia after the 2016 general election revealed (amongst others) the crisis of traditional, catch-all parties and the endeavor to support niche parties, which may be seen as a new, emerging type of political cleavage, in the context of the radicalization of the wider public. Despite the victory of the party with a long-standing political history, the election results of 2016 are a warning for the future, since the very high volatility of the electorate and the low level of voter identification with a certain value and ideological orientation ultimately led to the destabilization of the entire party system and increased inclination toward populism. The fact that up to 209,000 eligible voters (8% of all valid voters) decided to support the far-right *ĽSNS*, whose program is based on “simple slogans and solutions” is proof of these trends. This is in line with Lucardie’s theory (2000) which claims that people dissatisfied with the current establishment look for “purifiers, prophets, and spokesmen”.

We would like to consider the great danger represented by the fact that ultranationalist *ĽSNS* received strong support from first-time voters. However, we cannot automatically claim that most young people support the idea of neo-Nazism. On the contrary, many choose liberal political ideology, such as that represented by *SaS*. Rather, this can be explained by the easy suggestibility of this age group (and its diversity in terms of education and socio-economic status) and the inability to critically evaluate information received through the media, and in particular by social networks. Above all, we have witnessed the efforts of many media to distort and “bend” reality (and consequently the views of citizens) to their image or that of their “sponsors” (entrepreneurs, interest groups, political streams, NGOs, etc.). The traditional model of “balanced and impartial reporting” is gradually shrinking. This is certainly a serious problem, since the media lack what is most important - the legitimacy of the elected power authorities, which often leads to a variety of controversies and the overall loss of citizens’ trust in the information value of these information sources. This, on the contrary, plays into the hands of conspiracy propaganda to increase this mistrust and disseminate “serious” (dis)information. Another

reason for the election of radical and populist parties is the protest against increasing social inequalities, deteriorating living conditions (even for young people under the age of 30), the changing geopolitical situation and the neglect of long-term socio-economic problems by traditional political actors.

Based on the aforementioned facts about the parliamentary elections and referenda held in Slovakia, the most practical democratic form of government is covered by the representative model also in the conditions of such a small Central European country as Slovakia, as evidenced, for example, by the significant difference in election and referendum participation (perhaps with the only exception of the European Parliament election, partly regional ones), although, as in the case of the Western democracies, a large part of the electorate is repeatedly disappointed by its political representatives and refuses to take part in any type of election. Such an approach, however, usually serves the interests the hands of non-standard, far-right or far-left political actors which question the democratic form of governance. However, standard political parties also have to “look at themselves in the mirror”, because through policies they implemented, the way of government and the results they have achieved, people are losing interest in political issues influencing the society they live in, and adopting a passive attitude towards public affairs.

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Zákon Národnej rady Slovenskej republiky č. 181/2014 Z. z. o volebnej kampani. [Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 181/2014 Coll. on the Electoral Campaign].

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Chapter 2

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IN BRATISLAVA: 99 YEARS IN THE SERVICE OF SCIENCE, CULTURE AND EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents information concerning an important library located in Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic. The library was founded in 1919, with its name and mission and the range of tasks having changed as it developed. The first period of its development includes the time of the interwar Czechoslovak Republic from 1919 to 1938, when it was known as the Comenius University Library. The next period ran from 1939 to 1953, when it was called the Slovak Republic Library and covers the period of the first wartime Slovak Republic and the post-war years of restored Czechoslovakia.

During the third period running from 1954 to 1989, the Library became a state scientific institution for the general public, while retaining the historical name of the University Library in Bratislava. Its operations were influenced by Czechoslovakia's new ideological and political orientation. In legislative acts, it was codified as the Central Scientific

Library for Slovakia and, together with Matica Slovenská, it was the National Library performing the functions of a central library in Slovakia's library system in Slovakia. Finally, the fourth and current period includes the years of political and social changes that began in November 1989 and the subsequent development of the University Library in the independent Slovak Republic.

This chapter also outlines the position and mission of the University Library at individual stages, the different ranges of its activities and tasks and the overall potential to fulfil its scientific, cultural and educational mission.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces a significant library located in the capital of the Slovak Republic.

The Slovak Republic is a small country in area located in Central Europe. It was established in 1993 upon the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, and so is relatively young. Nevertheless, the territory covered by Slovakia has a very rich history.¹ The first inhabitants appeared in the area about 250,000 years ago. Over the centuries different tribes settled here, culminating with the Slavs in the 5th century AD. During the 9th century, most of Slovakia was part of the Great Moravian Empire. When it was dissolved in the 11th century, Slovakia was incorporated into the Kingdom of Hungary and eventually became a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until 1918. In October 1918, a significant milestone in the history of the Slovak nation took place with the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic, the common state of the Czechs and Slovaks, as it had been previously subjected to strong national oppression like the other non-Hungarian peoples within Hungary. In the Czechoslovak Republic, the Slovaks became part of the process of building a state, with favourable conditions created for the development of other nationalities living in Slovakia, too.

Similar to Slovakia, Bratislava as its capital has had a rich history too. Archaeological finds show the area of the current town having been settled

¹ Spiesz, A. and Caplovic, D. (2006). *Illustrated Slovak History*.

since the Neolithic period. Remnants of the Celtic presence in the region are also abundant. There was a mighty Great Moravian castle and later a royal castle in the area. In 1291, Pressburg - as Bratislava was called until the early 20th century - obtained town privileges. After most of the Kingdom of Hungary was annexed by the Ottoman Empire, Pressburg became the capital of Hungary in the mid-16th century and remained so until the end of the 18th century. After the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic, the renamed city Bratislava became the capital of Slovakia and the seat of Slovak institutions.

Bratislava's rich cultural tradition includes its libraries. The oldest collection of books was established in the middle of the 13th century at the Pressburg chapter of the Canonical College, which was located at the main Church of St. Salvator, later St. Martin's Cathedral). In subsequent centuries, libraries with collections of books were established in monasteries and, schools, set up by different corporations and intellectuals. In 1465, the Universitas Istropolitana was founded in Pressburg, but it would be short-lived and there is no solid evidence that it ever had a library, although it is assumed that professors and university students were using the chapter library).

The tradition of university libraries in Bratislava begins with the arrival of the Royal Law Academy in 1784. The Law Academy was formed after the university that had been established in Nagyszombat (now Trnava) moved to Buda and its successor received a third of the university's library. The oldest part of the Trnava University Library originated from the library of the Jesuit College in Trnava and was put together from 1561.

In 1914, the Elizabeth Hungarian Royal University opened in Pressburg and, in the same year, the university library began its activities. The libraries for Elizabeth University were created from libraries at the Law Academy, the library of the former Jesuit grammar school (1627-1773) and the public town library (1900-1914). Elizabeth University and its library remained open and were active until 1919.

In July 1919, Comenius University was established by Czechoslovakia in Bratislava. A government commissioner was appointed for the new

university library and the former University of Elizabeth Library was taken over by the newly-formed university on 10th October 1919. It was on this day when the history of today's University Library in Bratislava formally began. Over history, its name has changed. From 1919 to 1938, its official name was Comenius University Library (Knihovňa Univerzity Komenského - KUK), while between 1939 and 1953 it was called Slovak University Library (Knížnica Slovenskej Univerzity - KSU). Its current name of University Library in Bratislava (Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave - UKB) has been used ever since 1954.

COMENIUS UNIVERSITY LIBRARY (1919 – 1938)

Despite its name, it was not part of Comenius University (with was administered by the Ministry of Education and National Culture). Nevertheless, it primarily served the university's needs. The mission of the university also defining the library's mission, which consisted of three main segments: 1) general scientific needs (collecting local and international literature from the disciplines taught at the university), 2) national needs (collecting Slovak writings and other literature related to Slovakia and the Slovak people such as Slovakistic documents ("slovaciká"), and 3) the mission of the Slavic Studies Center (collecting Slavonic literature and Slavic works).

Such a defined orientation in the Comenius University Library's activity was also reflected in how the collections were organised, and also in the structure of the offices where work curating individual collections was concentrated. There were four departments created to cover Slovak, Czech, Slavic and all other languages. These were complemented by a lending office and a workshop. The library began with a stock of 84,826 library units and 15 employees. Due to the lack of a Slovak intelligentsia, the majority of employees were Czech. The first director of the library was Jan Emler, a government commissioner.²

² Fircáková, K. (Ed.). (1994). *Príspevky zo seminára k 115. výročiu narodenia Dr. H. C. Jana Emlera*. [Contributions from the seminar to the 115th birthday of Dr. H. C. Jan Emler].

The library was located in the historic Clarisse Convent, which had formerly housed the Order of St. Clare (a.k.a. the Clarisses). The original building dated from the 12th century with the nunnery having been rebuilt between 1635 and 1640. After the St. Clare Order was abolished, the building became the seat of the Royal Law Academy, was later occupied by a grammar school and, after the establishment of Elizabeth University, the home of the University Library.³

But the book stock at the Elizabeth University Library could not meet the needs of Comenius University as it was completely lacking in Slovak literature (it was said that there were only 20 Slovak books in the entire library), as well as in the literature of Slavic nations. As for the books in the library, the literature available in other languages (both local and international) was also inadequate. The primary task faced by the Comenius University Library was, therefore, to build a representative collection of older Slovak literature and to secure the acquisition of contemporary literature for the future. This task was partially accomplished in November 1919, when the Library was granted the right to a compulsory copy of the print production from inside Slovakia while, at the same time, it also became a preservation library for these editions (and so obliged to preserve them permanently).

Collecting older Slovak literature was more demanding as book markets were not selling it. Activity here focused primarily on acquiring entire libraries. Among the first acquisitions in 1921 was the library of Ľudovít Vladimír Rizner, the author of the consolidated *Bibliography of Slovak Literature from the Earliest Times until the End of 1900*.⁴ It contained 1,465 volumes, more than 1000 vintage periodicals and a few dozen tiny prints. Although only a part of the original Rizner Library, it was nevertheless very valuable in what it contained, and at the Comenius

³ Z dejín budov Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave. (2005). [History of buildings of the University Library in Bratislava].

⁴ Rizner, L. V. (1929 – 1934). *Bibliografia písomníctva slovenského na spôsob slovníka od najstarších čias do konca r. 1900*. [Bibliography of Slovak literature from the earliest times until the end of 1900].

University Library it created the foundation of a collection of older Slovak literature.⁵



Figure 1. Clariseum; Photo Ľudovít Zupko.

⁵ Ecker, J. (1993). Knižnica Ľudovíta Vladimíra Riznera v Univerzitnej knižnici v Bratislave. [Ľudovít Vladimír Rizner's Library in the University Library in Bratislava]. Fircáková, K. (2005). Knižnica Ľudovíta Vladimíra Riznera v Univerzitnej knižnici v Bratislave (II). [Ľudovít Vladimír Rizner's Library in the University Library in Bratislava (II)].

Another important element was the Slavic Institute in Bratislava's library (also known as the "Štúr Library" or Štúrova). It was a library kept by the student society at the Evangelical Lyceum in Bratislava, put together between 1827 and 1873. In addition to Slovak literature, it also contained Slavonic literary works. Altogether, the library comprised 1,386 books, 92 titles of periodicals and 11 manuscripts. The Comenius University Library acquired the collection in 1923 on permanent loan from the Lutheran Church.⁶ The Old Slovak Literature Collection gradually expanded as other book collections were acquired from the libraries of cultural historians, schools and corporations) and with parts of other libraries and individual works.

In parallel with the local literature it was receiving, the Comenius University Library was acquiring literature from Slovaks living abroad, especially those residing in Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia, as well as far away in the United States. People from Slovakia have been moving to the US since the 1870s, mostly labourers and craftsmen who went to find jobs there, as well as the intelligentsia who left Slovakia to escape from national and political oppression. Starting in the 1880s, Slovak schools were established, Slovak newspapers started publishing and clubs and associations were formed, all this gradually shaping and developing the social and cultural life of the Slovak community.⁷

The first Slovak prints from the United States were acquired by Comenius University Library in 1920. Today, the collection contains 210 volumes (118 titles of non-periodic prints and 14 titles of periodicals with numerous editions). In spite of its limited scope, this collection is very valuable from a cultural point of view, providing rich knowledge about publishers of Slovak literature and print media in the USA and about what was produced. The publishers were corporations with a diverse focus along with companies and individuals that were producing literature. The national-cultural corporations included the Pittsburgh-based National Slovak Society, Matica Slovenská of America in Chicago and the Slovak

⁶ Ferienčíková, A. (1972). *Knižnica Slovanského ústavu v Bratislave*. [Library of the Slavic Institute in Bratislava].

⁷ Bartalská, Ľ. (2001). *Spojené štáty americké*. [United States of America].

League in America, also in Pittsburgh. In addition, there were confessional organisations such as First Slovak Catholic Unity (Cleveland), Slovak Protestant Unity (Allegheny, Pennsylvania) and the Sokol Sports Club (Passaic, New Jersey). Publishing companies that produced newspapers were the American-Slovak Newspapers (Amerikánsko – Slovenské Noviny - Pittsburgh), Equality of People (Rovnosť Ľudu - Chicago), New York Daily (New Yorský Denník - New York) and Slovak in America (Slovák v Amerike - New York). Founders and owners of publishing houses included Pavol K. Kadak (Scranton), Peter V. Rovnianek (Pittsburgh) and Ján Pankúch (Cleveland).

There was also literature and print media with a different focus and content. Slovaks coming to the United States would be provided with helpful and practical advice from different manuals and also assistance with learning and reading English via different dictionaries. There was literature published that concentrated on spiritual needs, consolidation of national consciousness, helping with the upbringing of children and youth and educating adults. These publications sought also to shape their worldview and political attitudes, too. A special group to be mentioned were publications about Slovak corporations in the USA and about their activities. A lot of fiction literature was also published: apart from the works of Slovak writers, which included translations from other languages, especially Slavonic. Calendars were very popular.

The acquisition of Slovak literature, its processing by the Comenius University Library and the creation of its catalogues were the basic mission of the Slovak Department. The department catalogued Slovak-language literature (although Slovakist documents – “slovakistá” - were processed in other departments), and created its own Slovak literature catalogue. These catalogued documents were preferentially included in the Slovak Conservation Collection and from duplicates the Slovak Loan Collection was built. Some historical libraries (such as the Library of the Slavic Institute in Bratislava) remained as separate units (with their own collections). In the first five years, more than 5,000 volumes were gathered into the Slovak Department’s collections. (It is assumed that this included

up to 90% of the total production of Slovakacist documents.)⁸ By the end of 1938 these collections had increased to 24,600 volumes.

There was a similar growth in collections by other departments. By the end of 1938 the Czech department included more than 46,000 volumes, the Slavic department nearly 20,000 volumes and the other language departments had almost 80,000 volumes. Acquisitions by the Library's different departments included valuable collections of Arabic, Turkish and Persian manuscripts and prints (284 volumes), bought in 1924 from Bosnia by scholar Safvet Beg Bašagić.⁹ (Manuscripts from the Bašagić Library were recorded in the UNESCO Memory of World registry in 1998). In 1933, the Jewish Collection was started (at the end of 1938 it contained 1,200 volumes). In 1936, a separate department of foreign language journals was established.

There are more detailed statistics available at the Comenius University Library about the services they in 1934.¹⁰ That year saw 4,000 visits and 8,400 loans, and does not include visits and people reading in the study rooms. The Library had three study rooms, a "large" study room (80 study places) a professorial room and a reading room for periodicals.

The interlibrary loan service provided 364 volumes from library collections and 626 volumes were lent from other libraries, of which 90 volumes came from abroad. Library users were mainly university educators and students, the institutes where they studied and seminars they attended, public authorities and institutes and academics.

The Slovak Department has a significant place in the Comenius University Library's activities.¹¹ The department was headed from its

⁸ Pražák, V. (1926). *Ze vzpomínek na začátky slovenského oddělení bratislavské Universitní knihovny*. [From memory at the beginning of the Slovak department of the University Library in Bratislava].

⁹ Blaškovič, J., Petráček, K. and Veselý, R. (1961). *Arabische, türkische und persische Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek in Bratislava*. [Arabic, Turkish and Persian manuscripts of the University Library in Bratislava]. Molnár, J. (1980). *Orientálne tlače z knižnice Safveta bega Bašagića v Univerzitnej knižnici v Bratislave*. [Oriental prints from the Library of Safvet beg Bašagić in University Library in Bratislava].

¹⁰ Mestitz, F. (1959). *Univerzitná knižnica v rokoch 1919 – 1939*. [University Library in the years 1919 – 1939].

¹¹ Fircáková, K. (2014). *Budovanie Slovenského oddelenia v Knižnici Univerzity Komenského a Vilém Pražák*. [The Slovak department building in the Library of Comenius University and Vilém Pražák].

inception until 1939 by Vilém Pražák, well-known as an ethnographer and educator. Together with Director Emler, he created the concept of the Slovak Department and participated, to a significant degree, in carrying out its mission. In addition to processing Slovak literature and creating catalogues, a number of other tasks were concentrated in this department. In 1923, the Central Catalogue of Slovak libraries was started. In 13 years, collections of 12 scientifically and historically valuable libraries were processed, the most important of these being the Matica Slovenská Bibliotheca and the Transcius Society's library of the.

An important set of tasks undertaken by the Slovak Department was the bibliographic processing of Slovak and Slovakist literature. Between 1923 and 1935, this department processed the documentation for the state registry bibliography (Bibliographic Catalogue of the Czechoslovak Republic). Starting in 1923, the Comenius University Library collaborated on a retrospective Books of Czech and Slovak Prints that ran from the earliest periods to the end of the 18th century (*Knihopis českých a slovenských tisků od doby nejstarší do konce 18. století*).¹² The Slovak Department provided information about the Slovakian prints.

In the retrospective bibliography, the main objective was to process a continuation of Rizner's Bibliography of Slovak Literature from the earliest periods to the end of end of 1900. (The Library of Comenius University had also sought to make the Rizner bibliography available itself, but the publication was delayed.) This task was undertaken by Pražák, and his work entitled *Slovak Bibliography 1901-1925* was completed around 1927. However, he did not manage to have it published in Slovakia. In the end, it was merged with a similar work produced as a book in the Czech lands under the joint title of *Czechoslovak Literature Catalogue 1901-1925*.¹³

¹² *Knihopis českých a slovenských tisků od doby nejstarší až do konce XVIII. století*. (1925 – 2000). [*Book of Czech and Slovak prints from the earliest periods to the end of the 18th century*].

¹³ Nosovský, K. and Pražák, V. (1931 – 1938). *Soupis československé literatury za léta 1901 – 1925*. [*Czechoslovak literature catalogue 1901 – 1925*].

In 1932, the Slovak Department was tasked with supplying lists of Slovak books recommended for public libraries. These lists were published in a magazine called *Our People* (Náš ľud) and used by Pražák to compile a sample catalogue.¹⁴ At the request of users, inventories of literature on various topics were produced for retrieval.

The department was also asked to present and promote Slovak literature through exhibitions. Different exhibitions were prepared either independently or in cooperation with other departments. One of these exhibitions displayed Bratislava's prints from 1770 to 1840, prepared for the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Comenius University Library (1929).

The scope and nature of its mission enabled the Slovak Department to function virtually as a national library. Its small staff encompassed many noted figures in Slovak librarianship and culture, who participated in undertaking the jobs assigned to the department. One of them was Peter Tvrdý, a prominent Slovak lexicographer, who later became an employee at the Comenius University Library when he was 70 years old. In 1920-27, he worked at the Slovak Department cataloguing older Slovak literature, mostly the entire collection of books kept at the Rizner Library and the Library of the Slavic Institute, while also working at the Transciscus Society Library with the Central Slovak Library Catalogue. As an expert in Russian literature (he spent most of his life in Russia), he collaborated on completing and cataloguing it at the Slavic Department.¹⁵

The mosaic of activities at the Comenius University Library in this period also included educating and training of librarians. Between 1923 and 1931, Library Director Emler lectured on librarianship at Comenius University. After a break of several years, Marie L. Černá once again taught the subject in 1937-39.

¹⁴ Pražák, V. (Ed.). (1937). *Soznam slovenských kníh vhodných pre obecné verejné knižnice*. [List of Slovak books recommended for public libraries].

¹⁵ Ondrejovič, S., Fircáková, K. and Lechner, D. (Eds.). (2001). *Peter Tvrdý: zborník zo seminára k 150. výročiu narodenia*. [Peter Tvrdý: proceedings from the seminar to 150th anniversary of birth].

SLOVAK UNIVERSITY LIBRARY (1939 – 1953)

The division of Czechoslovakia and the establishment of the first Slovak Republic in March 1939 brought changes to the Comenius University Library too. When the university was renamed, so was the name changed to the Slovak University Library. Czech employees working there, including several renowned experts, were forced to leave as members of the Slovakian intelligentsia gradually joined the Library to replace them. Among them was Ján Mišianik, who would later become an important literary historian. He was a member of the Slovak Department in 1939-43 and briefly headed it. In addition to his regular job, he produced supplements to the Rizner Bibliography of Slovak Literature.¹⁶

The basic focus of the Library's activities remained essentially unchanged, but was influenced by the worsening situation caused by the conditions of the Second World War (e.g., in the acquisition of foreign literature). Overall, however, the library collections did not suffer from the war and the Slovak University Library's activities were never interrupted by it.

The Slovak University Library resumed its work completely after the end of the Second World War and the Czechoslovak Republic had been restored, but the new era brought new challenges. An important event was the establishment of the KSU Bibliographic Institute in November 1945. The Institute's role was to register bibliographically all books published in Slovakia; namely preparing and producing the Slovak national bibliography. In this way, bibliographies covering the years 1946-1954 were processed. They were either published separately or as part of the national bibliographic catalogue for the Czechoslovak Republic.¹⁷

¹⁶ Fircáková, K. (2000). Ján Mišianik: pracovník Knihnice Slovenskej univerzity v Bratislave. [Ján Mišianik: worker of the Library of the Slovak University in Bratislava]. Mišianik, J. (1946). *Bibliografia slovenského písomníctva do konca 19. st.: (doplňky k Riznerovej bibliografii)*. [Bibliography of Slovak writing until the end of the 19 century: (supplements to Rizner's Bibliography)].

¹⁷ Dubay, A. (1947). *Bibliografický katalóg Československej republiky: Literárna tvorba z roku 1946 bez novín a časopisov*. [Bibliographic catalogue of the Czechoslovak Republic: Literary work for 1946 without newspapers and magazines]. Dubay, A. (Ed.). (1949 – 1951). *Bibliografický katalóg: B. Knihy slovenské*. Vol. 17 – 19. [Bibliographic catalogue. B. Slovak books. Vol. 17 – 19]. Dubay, A. (1951). *Bibliografia slovenskej knižnej tvorby za*

Retrospective book production bibliographies covering the period from 1930 to 1945 were also prepared.¹⁸ The editing was done by the then directors of the Bibliographic Institute, Anton Dezider Dubay and Oľga Wagnerová.¹⁹ The Bibliographic Institute was an active part of the Slovak University Library until 1954, when it was put under the administration of Matica Slovenská in Martin to be codified as the Slovak National Library.



Figure 2. Palace of the Hungarian Chamber; Photo Ľudovít Zupko.

rok 1947. [Bibliography of Slovak book production for 1947]. Wagnerová, O. (Ed.). (1952 – 1954). *Bibliografický katalog ČSR: Slovenská kniha*. Vol. 3 – 5. [Bibliographic catalogue of the ČSR: Slovak book. Vol. 3 – 5].

¹⁸ Dubay, A. (Ed.). (1947). *Sélection de la production littéraire Slovaque des années 1930 – 1946*. [Selection from Slovak literary production from 1930 to 1946]. Dubay, A. (1948). *Bibliografický katalóg slovenskej knižnej tvorby za roky 1939 – 41*. [Bibliographic catalogue of Slovak book production for the years 1939 – 41]. Dubay, A. (1952). *Bibliografia slovenskej knižnej tvorby za roky 1942 – 1945*. [Bibliography of Slovak book production for the years 1942 – 1945].

¹⁹ Rydlo, J. M. (Ed.). (2000). *Pocta bibliografom Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave: zborník*. [Tribute to a bibliographer of the University Library in Bratislava: proceedings].

In 1946, the Slovak University Library was entrusted with the administration of libraries that had been left behind by the owners of castles and aristocratic estates at the end of the war and of the confiscated libraries that had belonged to associations, political parties and other organisations. After the night of “savagery” in 1950, the libraries of the abolished monasteries were added. The confiscated collections were concentrated in several places, partly in the Slovak University Library (there were more than 300,000 volumes), and it was tasked to process the records and sort the literature into their own collections and for other libraries. Working with confiscated collections was a difficult and unpleasant task. Only later were some of the other libraries. Administration of the monastic libraries was taken over by Matica Slovenská, while KSU acquired the entire Erdődi Library (about 6,500 books), numerous old and rare prints and some newer literature (so-called “reserve” collections). When confiscated property was restituted in 1993, the original owners or their heirs were allowed to request the return of what had been confiscated by the previous regime if they could meet requirements stipulated in the law governing restitutions.

The foundation for building the Library’s collection was extended when a new law on compulsory copies was introduced in 1947, providing the Slovak University Library with compulsory prints from everywhere in the Czechoslovak Republic and these copies continued to be received until Czechoslovakia split in 1992. In 1950, the KSU became the UN Depository for Slovakia and began to receive UN editions, too. In 1965, the Slovak University Library became a first class UN Depository Library and in 1957 also a UNESCO Depository Library.

The rapid growth of the Library’s collection (between 1945 and 1950 it grew from 248,000 to 344,000 books), the need to process large amounts of additional library units, expand the recording equipment and catalogues, and to rationalise activities that had taken place since the end of the 1940s required a change in how work would be organised. Instead of the original departments, working under the linguistic principle, departments were created for every field undertaken by the Library, such as departments for replenishing and acquiring collections, cataloguing, bibliographical work

and services. At the same time, rooms were set aside for working with special documents (such as departments for music and for manuscripts and old and rare prints).

As the Slovak University Library's collections grew, so did the volume of its services. The number of visits rose from 11,000 in 1945 to 18,600 in 1950, while the number of loans increased from 6,500 to 24,300 in the same period. With the overall expansion of library activities, the Library's limited space became increasingly evident. This problem was solved when it acquired additional space at the former Hungarian Chamber building.²⁰ The large palace, built in 1753-56, has a rich history. It was originally the home of the Hungarian Ministry of Finance and from 1802 to 1848 it was the seat of the Hungarian Parliament. Later it became the seat of the Hungarian governing council, courts and other institutions. The Slovak University Library received the building in 1951 and, after it was reconstructed, it became the official home of the Library in 1955.

Both the administration of the confiscated libraries and efforts to obtain the Hungarian Chamber Palace were the result of one man, Ján Čaplovič, who was director of the Slovak University Library between 1948 and 1951. Čaplovič was a renowned historian of literature and book culture and wrote a consolidated work - *Bibliography of Prints Published in Slovakia Until 1700*.²¹

(1ST) UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IN BRATISLAVA (1954 – 1989)

When the KSU was established the mid-1940s, it was the only academic and scientific library in Slovakia and also served as a national library. But starting in 1946, other colleges and universities were established and they established their own libraries. In addition to

²⁰ *Z dejín budov Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave*. (2005). [History of buildings of the University Library in Bratislava].

²¹ *Príspevky zo seminára Ján Čaplovič (1904 – 1976): život, dielo, človek* (2007). [Contributions from the seminar Ján Čaplovič (1904 – 1976): life, work, man]. Čaplovič, J. (1972 – 1984). *Bibliografia tlačí vydaných na Slovensku do roku 1700*. [Bibliography of prints published in Slovakia until 1700].

academic libraries, separate scientific libraries for the public were created. Thus, the KSU gradually changed into a scientific library serving the general public. Its role in relation to the university, which had returned to its original name of Comenius University, was partially played now by the libraries different faculties at the university had organised themselves. At the same time, Matica Slovenská became responsible for the national library.

Since 1948, but more intensely since the early 1950s, the KSU's activities were influenced by Czechoslovakia's new ideological and political orientation of and its integration into the bloc of socialist countries. Libraries had been generally required to hew actively to this direction, reflected in how the collections were structured and composed, how services were oriented and in the cultural and educational activities of libraries.

1954 may be considered a symbolic milestone in the Library's history. In that year, the library's name was changed back to the University Library in Bratislava (Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave - UKB) to express continuity with its earlier stages of development. Six months into the year, the library was separated from the Bibliographic Institute and, in August, the Ministry of Education and Culture issued the Organisational Statute for State Scientific Libraries, specifying the University Library as the Central Science Library for Slovakia. The status and scope of the library was shifted to an even higher level by the Library Act adopted in 1959. This act declared the University Library to be a central scientific library, and together with the library at Matica Slovenská also a national library, which meant that it had to fulfil the function that central libraries in Slovakia's library system had. The scope of the University Library was now mainly concerned with working with foreign literature.

Over the next three decades, the University Library's activity expanded in terms of its scope and volume. Fortunately, the library had sufficiently large space to meet the prerequisites. Shortly after the Hungarian Chamber had been reconstructed and opened, the library also acquired the spacious Leopold de Pauli Palace. It was likewise a landmark building, built in 1775-76 for the administrator of imperial estates and it

happened to be adjacent to the Hungarian Chamber. It was reconstructed, connected to the Hungarian Chamber and opened on the University Library's 50th anniversary in 1969. The pavilion that stood in the palace gardens was also restored and named after composer Franz Liszt, who had supposedly performed concerts there in 1820.²²

The new premises provided the necessary space to store the Library's collections, enabling new study rooms and offices to be established, along with improved working conditions and an overall enhancement of the environment. In the 1960s, the historic Clarisse Convent was also reconstructed. Renowned Slovak artists participated in the interior decoration of the University Library in Bratislava's restored buildings.

The University Library's status and the mission, as framed in the Library act, became specific responsibilities and were gradually embedded in the Library's statutes, promulgated in 1964 and later amended in 1985. Its fundamental mission, as a public scientific library, was to develop collections, provide library and information services, conduct bibliographic and methodological activities, and to do scientific research. The scope and focus of these duties was to a certain extent influenced by the Library's broader sectoral, national and governmental scope, which also brought the library new roles.

Its collections were growing quickly and had by 1966 reached one million library units, and further doubled in volume by 1987. In 1989 the collection contained 2,779,969 library units, composed of books, periodicals, special prints and also audio-visual and electronic documents in European and world languages. In terms of relative completeness, compulsory prints were provided of all publications released in Czechoslovakia, supplemented by scientific and professional literature in the social and natural sciences from outside the country

This literature accounted for approximately 20% of the University Library (in 1989 it was 8,641 library units). Literature from Soviet bloc countries were added to the collection on a large scale.

²² *Z dejín budov Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave*. (2005). [History of buildings of the University Library in Bratislava].



Figure 3. Leopold de Pauli Palace; Photo Ľudovít Zupko.

Acquiring foreign literature from Western countries was more complicated as it was linked to the allocation of foreign exchange funds; therefore the international book exchange was more commonly used. The University Library created an extensive exchange pool abroad. In 1969 it concluded an agreement with the Library of Congress in Washington to send the first edition of new, unabridged book titles published in Slovakia to the Library of Congress. Funds received for the delivered publications were deposited in the University Library's account at a bank in The Hague, Netherlands and used to purchase foreign literature. In 1977 a

Memorandum of Cooperation was signed with libraries in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The UN and UNESCO depository collection was built autonomously, with 200-300 volumes added annually. These included minutes of UN meetings, registers of international treaties, reports from UN conferences, statistical reports and economic, social and legal publications. UNESCO's publications included publication from the fields of social science, culture, pedagogy, librarianship and bibliography. Starting in 1963 the collection was regularly promoted through exhibitions. Between 1977 and 1990 the *Bulletin of the United Nations and UNESCO Depository Library* was published.²³

In 1972, the University Library became a special collections centre. These special collections had prohibited foreign literature ordered by Slovak libraries and confiscated by censors. It was funded from a special budget and was only accessible for study within the library building with special permission. In 1990, the so-called "special collections" were released from sequestration and the literature was included in generally available collections.

Documents acquired for its library collection were catalogued and library records were created from these catalogue entries. Cataloguing was done by nomenclature, system and subject. In order to improve the cataloguing, two major changes were introduced in 1963. The Soviet Library and Bibliographic Classification (BBK) was adopted as the new classification system and, at the same time, system and subject catalogues were transferred from the Catalogue Department to the newly established Reporting Department to be organised on the principle of science disciplines.

Introducing the BBK into practice was challenging, as it required translation of the Russian grading tables, modifying the grading system for library conditions in Slovakia and partial re-cataloguing of the University Library catalogues. Considering the wider application of the BBK system in Czech or Slovak libraries, the challenge was met at the research level

²³ *Bulletin Depozitnej knižnice OSN a UNESCO pri Univerzitnej knižnici v Bratislave*. (1977 – 1990). [*Bulletin of the United Nations and UNESCO Depository library*].

(1967-75),²⁴ but ultimately the system remained limited to the University Library. Although the adoption of BBK was largely motivated by ideological concerns, this method of sorting units at the Library contributed to a higher quality in its systematic catalogues. BBK was used until 1986 and since 1973 foreign literature was classified in parallel with the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC), the system that eventually replaced the BBK.

The University Library catalogue system was considerably structured.²⁵ It consisted of partial catalogues of historical collections (closed to the public) and then collections sorted by nomenclature, system and subject. Based on the purpose of the collection, these were divided into readers and service catalogues, which were complemented by shelf lists. The most important of these catalogues was the general nomenclature catalogue, which reflected the entire library. Later, periodicals were removed and included in a separate catalogue for them.

Library collections were made available either through lending outside the University Library or by full-time study in its study rooms. The system of study rooms included a general study room (120 study places located in the lower chamber room of the Hungarian parliament), a room for studying periodicals, a so-called small “professor” study room and specialised study rooms for sociological literature, natural science literature, textbook literature, library literature and bibliographical references. There were also study rooms for the UN and UNESCO depository and a study centre for special press media. Study rooms were equipped with well-stocked reference collections. Study places were also located in the Department of Manuscripts, Old and Precious Prints, in the Music Department and in the special collection section. In the summer, a reading room would be open in the Liszt Garden.

Like the Library’s collections, borrowing from it also grew quickly. In 1966, when the library collection reached one million units, a total of

²⁴ Fratričová, M. (Ed.). (1981). *Význam a využitie Knihovnícko – bibliografického triedenia v knižničnej praxi*. [The importance and usage of Library – Bibliographic Classification in library practice].

²⁵ Fratričová, M. and Dostálová, D. (1981). *Katalógy, kartotéky a evidencie Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave*. [Catalogs, files and records of the University Library in Bratislava].

573,220 library units were borrowed from the University Library. By 1987, that number had swelled to 967,242 and in 1989 it was 953,345. Of these numbers, an average of 3,000 units were borrowed by other libraries both locally and internationally through the inter-library loan system and approximately the same number of units were borrowed from other libraries.

Together with the lending services, library users were provided with difference advisory services. There were information services (providing documentary, factual information and literary research with retrievals), translation and rendering services, and reprographic services. Most of the University Library's services were provided free of charge. The system of basic services were complemented by exhibitions and events organised for the public, such as library excursions, lectures, discussions and information days. The Library provided its premises also for cultural events organised by other institutions. An example is the annual concerts that have been held since 1975 in the Baroque courtyard of the DePauli Palace during the Bratislava Cultural Summer.

The University Library's services have been mainly used by registered users. Users were first registered in 1957 and were allowed to register if they were at least 17 years of age (later changed to 16). Institutions and corporations also could register as users. In 1959, it had 6,164 registered users, with the number having increased by 1989 to 24,450. More than half of the registered users were university students, but there were also university teachers and people involved in science, research and culture; educators; academics and both secondary school teachers and students. In addition to registered users, other visitors would come to the Library. In 1959, the University Library had a total of 224,471 visits by unregistered number and that number had risen by 1989 to 391,986 visits.

There were been a number of exhibits at the University Library starting in the late 1960s, focusing on promotion of the University Library collections as well as wider promotion of literature. New additions to the library collection and smaller thematic exhibitions were continuously on display continuously in the reading rooms, while a special exhibition room was available for larger exhibitions. Annually, up to 10 exhibitions in

various fields were organised by the University Library. These include 50 years of the University Library (1969), 15th to 18th century Slovakist documentation and Bohemian documentation (1972), Manuscripts and Printing of the 16th Century (1976), Music and Medicine (1978), The Slovak National Uprising and Slovak Art (1979), Mathematics and Computer Engineering (1982), Matthias Bel in the Collections of the University Library (1984), Calendars in Slovakia (1984), History of Belles-lettres (1985). Clothes through the Century (1986) and Artistic Crafts (1988). Approximately the same number of exhibitions were prepared in cooperation with other institutions such as the Slovak Centre for Book Culture, the Slovak Academy of Sciences Publishing House, Slovak Book - Trade Centre, the Soviet Book Store and with Foreign Representations. The exhibitions featured book production from foreign countries. Exhibits during this period included English Literature in Paperbacks (1969), Belgian Artistic Books (1969), Japanese Children's Books (1973), Iraqi Books (1980), Vietnamese Books (1983), Books from the Federal Republic of Germany (1984), Jacques Damas's 40 Years of Publishing (1988) and 200th Anniversary of the French Revolution (1989). There were regular exhibitions of scientific literature from the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania. The Slovak Ex-Libris Group also had a regular exhibition in the University Library.

The bibliography remained a significant area in the University Library's work even after the departure of the Bibliographic Institute. The Bibliographic Department, which has since become the successor of the Institute, and the entire University Library were struck by a heavy loss in 1956, when five members perished in an airplane crash while they were flying to the First Slovak Bibliographic Conference in Kosice. Among the dead was bibliographer, literary historian and Slavist Jozef Bánsky.²⁶ This tragic event is memorialised in a plaque in the entrance hall. Bibliographic activities focused on processing both a national bibliography and the special bibliography.

²⁶ Petrovský, K. (Ed.). (1997). *Osobnosť a dielo Jozefa Bánskeho: zborník. [Personality and work of Jozef Bánsky: proceedings]*.

After the then national bibliography was transferred to Matica Slovenská, the University Library became involved in the processing of a national retrospective bibliography. The National Retrospective Bibliography Systems (SNRB), formed in the mid-1950s and involving several libraries assigned the University Library to produce a comprehensive bibliography of books published in Slovakia from 1945 to 1955 and a bibliography of periodicals for 1919-38. Work only finished on the production of these bibliographies in the late 1960s.²⁷ In 1965, the directive and planned Slovak retrospective bibliography entered into force, a fundamental document which defined the subject matter of the SNRB and regulated the procedure for processing the bibliography. In terms of chronology, the SNRB was supposed to follow-up on the work that had been done by J. Čaplovič, The Bibliography of Prints Published in Slovakia until 1700, with a similar bibliography covering the period to 1965. Virtually all types of printed documents would be included in the SNRB. The University Library was tasked with processing the bibliography of “serial” publications including calendars, annals, year-books, periodical collections, annual reports, schematisms and directories. Work on these tasks was demanding and included extensive research at libraries and archives both in Slovakia and abroad. The first to be processed was the Bibliography of Slovak and Other Languages Calendars for the Years 1701 - 1965.²⁸ Subsequently, work began on the bibliographies of annual school reports and year-books, annuals and proceedings.

Starting in the late 1970s, the University Library was again involved in creating a concurrent national bibliography, this time involving dissertations.²⁹

²⁷ Ferienčíková, A. and Spišková, E. (1968 – 1970). *Bibliografia slovenskej knižnej tvorby za roky 1945 – 1955*. [Bibliography of Slovak book production from the years 1945 – 1955]. Kipsová, M. et al. (1968). *Bibliografia slovenských a inorečových novín a časopisov z rokov 1919 – 1938*. [Bibliography of Slovak and other languages newspapers and magazines from 1918 to 1938].

²⁸ Kipsová, M., Vančová, T. and Gešková, Ž. (1984). *Bibliografia slovenských a inorečových kalendárov za roky 1701 – 1965*. [Bibliography of Slovak and other languages calendars for the years 1701 – 1965].

²⁹ Kucianová, A. (Ed.). (1979 – 1992). *Slovenská národná bibliografia. Registračný rad. Ročenka série D. Dizertačné práce*. [Slovak National Bibliography. Registration board. Yearbook of series D. Dissertations].

The special bibliography was initially composed of “recommended” bibliographies. These were rather small lists of literature about various topics, intended for the needs of public libraries, educational facilities and for the self-education of individuals. Bibliographies on topical socio-political themes were prevalent in this area. Since the mid-1960s, bibliographic activity had focused on creating more demanding bibliographical works, with professional and scientific bibliographies from the social and natural sciences. They had the character of scientific and professional (and interdisciplinary), thematic and personal bibliographies. These included documents originating both in Czechoslovakia and foreign countries, scientific and professional literature, fiction and special documents. A number of special bibliographies were prepared and published annually and these lists can be found in the bibliographies of the University Library, including *Bibliography of Paleontological and Biostratigraphic Literature of Slovakia* (1969), *World History in Belles-lettres* (1971, 1988), *Women and Society: The Status of Women in Society* (1977, 1987), *Basketball* (1975, 1979), *SNP and Slovak Fine Arts* (1975, 1979, 1984), *Igor Hrušovský* (1988), *List of Foreign Abstracts* (1975), *Encyclopaedia and Dictionaries of Natural Sciences* (1975, 1982), *Encyclopaedia and Dictionaries of Social Sciences* (1988), *Czech and Slovak Choral Works for the Liberation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic: Bibliography of Music Materials* (1979).³⁰

Between 1973 and 1989, in collaboration with the Slovak Centre for Book Culture (SÚKK), the University Library undertook an important

³⁰ Mikulecká, M. (1969). *Bibliografia paleontologickej a biostratigrafickej literatúry Slovenska*. [Bibliography of paleontological and biostratigraphic literature of Slovakia]. Kipsová, M. (1971, 1988). *Svetová história v krásnej literatúre*. [World history in belles – lettres]. Gešková, Ž. and Ondráčková, E. (1977 – 1987). *Žena a spoločnosť: postavenie ženy v spoločnosti*. [Women and society: the status of women in society]. Smida, I. (1975 – 1979). *Basketbal*. Fircáková, K. (1975 – 1984). *SNP a slovenské výtvarné umenie*. [Slovak National Uprising and Slovak fine arts]. Linzboothová, J. (1988). *Igor Hrušovský 1908 – 1987*. Brteková, L. and Hanincová, N. (1975). *Súpis zahraničných referátových periodík*. [List of foreign abstracts]. Brteková, L. and Sušová, T. (1975 – 1982). *Encyklopédie a slovníky z prírodných vied*. [Encyclopaedia and dictionaries of natural sciences]. Ďurove, S. (1988). *Encyklopédie a slovníky zo spoločenských vied*. [Encyclopaedia and dictionaries of social sciences]. Duka – Zólyomiová, E. (1979). *Česká a slovenská zborená tvorba k oslobodeniu ČSSR: bibliografia hudobní*. [Czech and Slovak choral works for the liberation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic: bibliography of music materials].

project of processing and publishing bibliographies of translated foreign literature. It provided bibliography processing and received part of the edition for its own needs. There were 27 volumes published in the edition titled *Bibliography of Foreign Language Translation*, which included translations of literature from all over the world that had been published in Slovakia from 1945 to 1976. A bibliography of literature translations from the United States was prepared in a separate volume.³¹

Historical collections and documents became a significant area of its work. The Department of Manuscripts, Old and Rare Prints had already been established in 1953 and begun processing valuable Slovak prints from the National Revival Period that ran from the end of the 18th century to the first half of the 19th century).³² Manuscripts, 15th century prints (incunables) and 16th century prints from entire library collections were gathered and kept at the University Library for processing. The first to be processed was a collection of incunables and its catalogue, containing more than 400 prints with the oldest dating from 1460 and produced by Johannes Gutenberg's workshop. An extensive collection of European manuscripts was produced in the 1960s that contained 1,500 handwritten books and fragments dating between the 12th and 20th centuries. The Slavic prints were the first to be processed from these 16th century prints.³³

The Department of Manuscripts, Old and Rare Prints collected other rare prints and made them accessible to the public, among them the Komeniána and Elzevír. Considerable attention was paid to safeguarding the old and rare documents, with the Restoration Department and organisations outside the University Library preserving and restoring them.

³¹ *Bibliografie prekladov zahraničnej literatúry*. (1973 – 1989). [*Bibliography of foreign language translation*]. Molnár, J. (1984). *Literatúra Spojených štátov amerických na Slovensku 1945 – 1976: bibliografia prekladov*. [*Literature of United States of America in Slovakia 1945 – 1976: bibliography of translations*].

³² Kotvan, I. (1956). *Štúrovské tlačie Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave*. [*Prints of Štúr movement in University Library in Bratislava*]. Kotvan, I. (1957). *Bernolákovské tlačie Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave*. [*Prints of Bernolák movement in University Library in Bratislava*].

³³ Kotvan, I. (1960). *Incunábuli Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave*. [*Incunabula of the University Library in Bratislava*]. Kotvan, I. (1970). *Rukopisy Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave*. [*Manuscripts of the University Library in Bratislava*]. Kotvan, I. (1981). *Slaviká XVI. storočia Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave*. [*Slavica of the 16th century in the University Library in Bratislava*].

The Department of Manuscripts, Old and Rare Prints was established by Imrich Kotvan, a literary and book historian and incunable expert employed by the Library who headed the department for almost thirty years.³⁴ He studied the incunables on a wider, national scale. The results of his long-time work were included in 12 partial catalogues of Slovak library collections and the comprehensive work *Incunables in Slovakia*. A special work presented by him was on Slovak-related incunables. Subsequently, he continued to research incunables from Slovak libraries abroad, working for six months in 1963 at the German State Library in Berlin editing the World Incunables Catalogue (*Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke*).

Historical collections and libraries were also processed at other departments in the University Library. Catalogues of some of the libraries were also published in book form (such as the Library of the Slavic Institute in Bratislava, Bašagić Library and the Ján A. Wagner Library),³⁵ while others remained in card form (Old Jesuit Grammar School Library, Jewish Documentation Collection, Jozef Bellai Library, Lorenz von Schlauch Library, Erdődi Library). In addition, units from the “reserve” collections were also processed.

Besides the Department of Manuscripts, Old and Rare Prints, there were other offices in the Library dedicated to working with special documents. This included primarily the Music Department, established in 1951 and working with musical literature and reproducing scores, printed music, sheet music and audio documents. The cabinet prepared proposals to provide those documents that did not come to the Library as compulsory, cataloguing all the musical documents and compiling

³⁴ Frimmová, E. (Ed.). (2010). *Prínos Imricha Kotvana do oblasti kultúrnej histórie*. [Contribution of Imrich Kotvan to the field of cultural history]. Kotvan, I. (1979). *Incunábuly na Slovensku*. [Incunabula in Slovakia]. Kotvan, I. (1974). *Incunábuly so slovenskými vzťahmi*. [Incunabula with Slovak relations]. Kotvan, I. and Frimmová, E. (1996). *Incunábuly zo slovenských knižníc v zahraničných inštitúciách*. [Incunabula from Slovak libraries in foreign institutions].

³⁵ Ferienčíková, A. (1972). *Knižnica Slovanského ústavu v Bratislave*. [Library of Slavic Institute in Bratislava]. Blaškovič, J., Petráček, K. and Veselý, R. (1961). *Arabische, türkische und persische Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek in Bratislava*. [Arabic, Turkish and Persian manuscripts of the University Library in Bratislava]. Molnár, J. (1980). *Orientálne tlače z knižnice Safveta bega Bašagića v Univerzitnej knižnici v Bratislave*. [Oriental prints from the Library of Safvet beg Bašagić in University Library in Bratislava]. Wagnerová, O. (1973). *Katalóg knižnice Jána A. Wagnera*. [Catalogue of Ján A. Wagner's Library].

catalogues of them. It was in this way both musical literature and music reference libraries were created, maintained and how the entire collection of audio documents in the sound archive was made available. In 1985, it contained 11,500 gramophone record, of which 3,800 were available for lending. The department was equipped with a reproduction studio and, in addition to lending services and providing advisory and bibliographic information, it prepared exhibitions together with various events for librarians and the general public. In the 1980s, an average of 3,800 visits was recorded in the Music Department. Visitors to the Department and the people using its services were mostly students and educators at the Bratislava Conservatory and the Academy of Performing Arts, music scientists and artists, other professional and the general public, and, of course other libraries. The Music Department was the first and for a long time the only place of its kind. By processing music bibliographies, providing expert advice and organising professional events for librarians, it was able to assist methodologically in setting up music departments in libraries and was critical in building music librarianship as a special area of library work. In cooperation with the Union of Slovak Librarians and Informatics, it started in 1981 to organise annual seminars for music librarians, from which annual publications were produced.

Yet another department working with special documents was created in 1985, the Special Prints Centre. This department focused on the so-called “special” and small prints the University Library had been acquiring since the mid-1960s. These were single-sheet prints like maps and city plans, artwork reproduction, posters, postcards and photographs, bookplates and even sets of single-sheet prints, brochures and folders like theatre bulletins, exhibition catalogues, tourist brochures and more. Shortly after the Special Prints Centre was established, the University Library organised a special seminar in 1988 on special prints as a source of information and knowledge.³⁶ In 1989, the Centre registered 186 visits and 425 units borrowed.

³⁶ Perďochová, A. (Ed.). (1989). *Špeciálne tlače ako prameň informácií a poznatkov*. [Special prints as a source of information and knowledge].

The status of the University Library as a central science library and its role as the central library in the national library system brought new roles for it to play, particularly working with foreign literature, which was being carried out across the library system. Another area targeted academic (university) libraries.



Figure 4. The Liszt's Pavilion; Photo Ľudovít Zupko.

The University Library had been entrusted with handling foreign literature since the late 1950s and it was subsequently codified in a 1964 statute to be the central authority for coordinating the import of foreign literature from so-called “foreign exchanges” and as a centre of international interlibrary loans in Slovakia. In 1965, it became one of two centres keeping national records of foreign literature (the other was the State Library of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in Prague), which obliged the University Library to build its own national catalogues. Both centres developed these national catalogues of foreign books and

periodicals in parallel, with the Library of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic responsible for the availability of the book catalogues and the University Library responsible for cataloguing periodicals. Between 1965 and 1985, approximately 26,000 periodicals were registered in the foreign periodicals catalogue. These titles were acquired by 2,000 institutions throughout Czechoslovakia, with the reporting and processing done annually. Catalogue entries were processed by computer offline and subsequently made available in printed form. Starting in 1984 these were made available on the Internet. The issue of computerised catalogue processing was researched in 1971-80. The comprehensive catalogue of foreign periodicals was later extended to local periodicals and retrospectively added. Currently, it contains data about local and international periodicals kept in collections at Slovak libraries ever since they began to be published. The Comprehensive Catalogue of Periodicals (SKP) is today available through the University Library website in Bratislava. The development of a national catalogue of foreign books at the University Library continued even after the division of Czechoslovakia and the catalogue is available as a leaflet.

In 1977, the University Library was entrusted as a national specialised information institution to work with foreign periodical literature. The new function expanded its background methodologically. Focusing on foreign periodicals, the Library would survey in subsequent years the use of them in libraries, preparing methodological manuals and starting to publish its own periodical, *Foreign Periodicals in Information Practice*³⁷

Focusing on the entire library system, the University Library has been coordinating social and natural sciences bibliographies since 1957, including an analysis of planned bibliographic production from social and natural sciences departments for all years and evaluating the works they published. The aim of the preliminary analysis was, in particular, to avoid duplicate processing of different themes, with subsequent evaluation of the total output from individual scientific departments and bibliographic works. As part of a bibliography- coordinating organisation, the Library

³⁷ *Zahraničné periodiká v informačnej praxi*. (1982 – 1990). [*Foreign periodicals in information practice*].

participated in the processing of key documents and reviewing current bibliography issues.

The University Library has focused its methodological and other activities with the aim of helping university libraries virtually ever since the libraries were created. Between 1964 and 1978, it served as the central library for the university library network libraries before it was transferred that year to the Slovak Pedagogical Library. The job description included creation critical and conceptual materials to manage the academic libraries processing academic library statistics, both methodology and advisory work that included publication of information- methodology periodicals) and providing assistance in the education and training of their staffs. As a result of the 15 years the University Library was involved in this field, the academic library network was completed and the individual libraries were transformed into modern study and information centres with improved staffing structure. The academic libraries continue to use the results of the University Library's work in both their core and specific fields, and the same applies to other libraries.

The methodology was more or less present in all the wider work conducted by the University Library. However, this outside work with the other libraries was only one element in its overall methodological activity. Another included intra-library methodology, which was more oriented towards internal library processes and was developed starting in 1955, when the library methodology was established. (The Methodology Department itself would only be established in 1966). The University Library's own methodology contains essential and conceptual materials the University Library has created in relation to the activities of the entire library and its individual domains along with work processes, performance standards and the coordination and rationalisation of these work processes and its planning and analysis activities, statistical reporting and the education and training of its staff.

Its methodology is also linked to activities aimed at helping with the education and training of librarians in school and extracurricular systems. They have been an essential element ever since the first years of the University Library and always considered part of its wider educational

mission. Students at the Secondary Librarian School and at the Department of Library Science (and Scientific Information) at the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University were provided a specialised study room for library literature and with its information collection. In addition, they had the opportunity for complete professional practice of their skills at the Library and to receive ideas and literature for their seminar and diploma theses. The librarians acted as consultants and discussants for these theses the students wrote, while also teaching and lecturing outside the Library, preparing practical exercises, and more. For librarians who were not qualified to work in the field, the University Library organised basic library courses (seven altogether in 1965-73). After the establishment of the Matica Slovenská Educational Centre, the University Library cooperated with it by sending lecturers for specialised courses and, in some cases, taking over the courses themselves. For instance, the library coordinated a course on Labour in the Music Departments of Libraries in 1984 - 1985).

Similarly to its methodological work, the University Library's scientific and research activities were focused on two basic areas. One area consisted of historical research (oriented toward historical collections, documents and summarising the history of book culture), while the other area was focused on researching current problems and librarianship needs such as its activities and processes). Research had been systematic since the late 1960s, but it was already present therein even before then in the form of autonomous projects or as part of wider projects. These projects of national reach and importance were included in the state research plan, which was how a comprehensive catalogue of foreign periodicals was built. There were two related jobs where the University Library had responsibility. One was the development of an automated Slovakists authors in the collections of the University Library in Bratislava system for the Comprehensive Catalogue of Periodicals in 1971-75 and the other was the building of a database for foreign periodical literature in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic during 1976-80). At the government research level, they also addressed in 1967-70 the implementation of the Soviet Librarian-Bibliographic Classification based on conditions for the

classification in the Soviet Union. In the late 1980s, the University Library was involved in the government-run project to integrate an electronic librarian information system.

Projects with nationwide reach included a research plan for the Ministry of Culture. This involved historical research at this level in 16th century Slavic documents at the University Library in Bratislava³⁸ and Slovakist authors kept in the University Library in Bratislava's collections and was part of a wider project called the Slovak Biographical Dictionary, which was supposed to provide input for the processing of the dictionary. The product that resulted from this project was a four-volume thesaurus covering Slovakist authors in the collections of the University Library in Bratislava.³⁹ There were also long-term tasks in the national retrospective bibliography during the late 1980s that were included in the sectoral research plan, namely the Bibliography of Annals, Yearbooks and Collections in Slovakia⁴⁰ and Bibliography of Annual School Reports in Slovakia.⁴¹ Work began on the 16th century prints in the collections of University Library in Bratislava that additionally covered the Labour Movement prints produced until 1921 and kept at the University Library in Bratislava⁴² and the History of the University Library in Bratislava for the period from 1919 to 1985.⁴³

Focusing on librarianship and libraries at the field research level, the University undertook and completed the following projects: Optimisation

³⁸ Kotvan, I. (1981). *Slaviká XVI. storočia Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave*. [Slavica of the 16th century in the University Library in Bratislava].

³⁹ Hudáková – Šturdíková, M. (Ed.). (1977 – 1984). *Slovakikálni autori vo fondoch Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave*. [Slovakist authors in the collections of the University Library in Bratislava].

⁴⁰ Kovačičová, E. and Štvrtecký, Š. (1991). *Bibliografia almanachov, ročeniek a zborníkov na Slovensku 1919 – 1944*. [Bibliography of annals, yearbooks and collections in Slovakia 1919 – 1944]. Kovačičová, E. and Schlenkerová, K. (1995). *Bibliografia almanachov, ročeniek a zborníkov na Slovensku 1945 – 1965*. [Bibliography of annals, yearbooks and collections in Slovakia 1945 – 1965].

⁴¹ Gešková, Ž and Krišková, E. (1998). *Bibliografia výročných správ škôl z územia Slovenska za školské roky 1918/19 – 1952/53*. [Bibliography of annual school reports in Slovakia 1918/19 – 1952/53].

⁴² Starkbauer, J. (1987). *Tlače robotníckeho hnutia do r. 1921 v Univerzitnej knižnici v Bratislave*. [Labor movement prints produced until 1921 in the University Library in Bratislava].

⁴³ Ecker, J. (1994). *Dejiny Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave 1919 – 1985*. [History of the University Library in Bratislava for the period from 1919 to 1985].

of the Applied Classification Scheme of the Soviet Library-Bibliographic Classification (1971-1975), Specialisation of Scientific and Academic Libraries for the Creation and Utilisation of Collections (1972-1974), System Model for Library Statistics in the Uniform Library System (1977 - 1980), Bibliographic Performance Standards for Scientific Libraries (1977 - 1980) and Updating of Library Collections for Audit and Disposal in Libraries of the Slovak Republic (1986-1990). The resulting products from these tasks were classification tables, proposals for models of library specialisation and statistics system, a set of performance standards and criteria for disposing of collections.

At the institutional level, research was undertaken closely related to the needs of the University Library. They were related, for example, to principles of supplementing and organising library collections, a system of catalogues and file books, streamlining of scientific information services and the introduction of library mechanisation and automation. The Discussants Board served here as the advisory board for scientific research activities.

Since the mid-1960s, new technologies have played an increasingly active role in the University Library. The first stage involved mechanising some library work, followed by the use of computers in library processes and automating them. For the first time, there was data processing of foreign catalogue periodicals and a comprehensive newsletter of foreign books added to the Library, called the *Prírastky zahraničných kníh* (PZK) was selected for computerised processing. Here the University Library only prepared the inputs, while the computer processing itself was initially done outside it. It was only in 1980 when the University Library acquired its own computing centre. Subsequently, an automated libraries information system (AKIS) was built that incorporated subsystems like acquisitions, cataloguing, bibliographic services, lending, loans, management and administration. The comprehensive catalogue of foreign periodicals continued to be computerised and made available by the Institute for Scientific, Technical and Economic Information (ÚVTEI) in Prague.

The University Library collaborated with libraries both inside and outside Slovakia in its jobs. In particular, there was intense cooperation with Matica Slovenská in Martin and with the State Library of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in Prague, but there were also scientific, academic and professional associations with other libraries. Besides bilateral cooperation, the Library was also involved in wider projects, particularly worth mentioning was its contribution toward the creation in 1965 of the Slovak Information Centre (SIC), a cooperative association of libraries, and its subsequent activities. Four scientific libraries were originally created by the centre to enhance communication of information about foreign literature, particularly literature from “foreign exchange” areas acquired for libraries located in Slovakia. Gradually, all the scientific libraries and some university libraries and information centres would become involved. The University Library was involved in SIC work when it published two series of the *Newsletter of Foreign Book Additions* and *List of Social and Natural Science Retrievals*.⁴⁴

It was always represented at senior library bodies such as at the National Central Library Council and in the Slovak Library Council, as well as in professional and working bodies that had been active for a long time or formed for a specific purpose. The University Library also cooperated quite strongly with the Union of Slovak Librarians and Informatics.

There was foreign and international cooperation both pursuant to bilateral agreements concluded between the University Library and all national libraries in the entire Eastern Bloc and to international conventions. By 1989, it had 456 partners in the international exchange of publications and 670 partners in the international interlibrary loan service.) The culmination of international activities by the University Library was its active participation in the preparation of the 44th International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), which was held in at Štrbské Pleso in the High Tatras of Slovakia in 1978. During this

⁴⁴ PZK – Prírastky zahraničných kníh. Séria A. Séria C. (1973 – 1993). [Newsletter of foreign book additions. Serie A. Serie C.]. Súpis literárnych rešerší zo spoločenských a prírodných vied. (1967 – 1990). [List of social and natural science retrievals].

conference, it was responsible for editorial work and exhibitions, with library staff also working in other committees. In 1981, the University Library was accepted as a member of IFLA, becoming its one thousandth member. At IFLA's 60th anniversary, there was a seminar initiated by IFLA on its activities.⁴⁵ During the 1980's, the University Library also became a member of the International Association of Music Libraries (AIBM).

The University Library has presented the results of its multifaceted work in a variety of ways, such as at librarian forums, in events organised for professionals and the general public and through publications in the professional press and through its own editorial work. The Editorial Board was the advisory body for editorial activities and it annually published ten and sometimes even more non-periodic titles, with the number of periodicals gradually increasing to seven titles. Editions of these titles covered catalogues, bibliographies, studies and omnibuses, methodical materials, periodicals and other topics. Editorial activity listings were published in the library omnibuses, which will be presented at the end of this study.

With the expansion of its scope and total volume at the University Library over this period, the number of people employed by it also rose. In 1954, it had 68 employees and by 1989 the number had increased by 245 employees. The composition of the staff also changed to favour employees with secondary school and university library qualifications, with the addition of new professions involving the restoration and preservation of library documents and information technologies, among other things. The overall profile of the University Library and its character was also changing, transforming it from a classic type library into a modern information institution. For the most part during this period, between 1959 and 1986, the library was headed by director Vincent Kútik, a recognised manager.⁴⁶ The assistant directors were also recognised experts.⁴⁷ They

⁴⁵ Fircáková, K. (Ed.). (1988). *60 rokov činnosti IFLA. [60 years of IFLA's activities]*.

⁴⁶ Ferková, K. (1986). *Ing. Vincent Kútik: osobná bibliografia. [Ing. Vincent Kútik: personal bibliography]*. Fircáková, K. (2007). *O jednom výročí a jeho protagonistovi: Ing. Vincent Kútik (1917 – 1995). [One anniversary and his protagonist: Ing. Vincent Kútik (1917 –*

were librarian historian Juraj Ecker (1965-1982) and Marta Fratričová (1983-1991), a long-time library methodologist with a wide range of professional interests and activities.

(2ND) UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IN BRATISLAVA (1990 -)

The political and societal changes which began in November 1989 were also projected into the life and work of the University Library, pushing away the ideological and political aspects of its activities and expanding access to documents and information. The Library's main added value in the period following the Velvet Revolution became the provision of free access to information. It allowed access to literature that had been earlier prohibited and, in parallel, much of the Marxism-Leninism and political literature which had been acquired in the past in large numbers were retired from its collections. Attention was paid to the personalities, corporations and more the past regime had incriminated.⁴⁸ – As the book market overall re-emerged, it became necessary to look for new suppliers of literature who would provide stock at advantageous prices.

After Czechoslovakia split into two independent Czech and Slovak republics in 1992 and although the University Library was no longer receiving compulsory copies from the Czech Republic, contacts and cooperation with Czech libraries were not interrupted. In 1991, the directors of the four main libraries in former Czechoslovakia signed an agreement to create a unified online network called CASLIN - the Czech and Slovak Library and Information Network. CASLIN was designed to allow both local and international users to have fast and unlimited access to the information stored in its libraries and information centres. ALEPH, a

1995)]. Kútik, V. (1979). *Za socialistický život knižnic: zborník materiálov*. [For the socialist life of libraries: a collection of materials].

⁴⁷ Fircáková, K. (2007). *Juraj Ecker * Marta Fratričová: personálna bibliografia*. [Juraj Ecker * Marta Fratričová: personal bibliography].

⁴⁸ Stano, P. (1990). *Rudolf Dilong: personálna bibliografia*. [Rudolf Dilong: personal bibliography]. Pašteka, J., Rydlo, J. M. and Petrovský, K. (2000). *Andrej Žarnov: personálna bibliografia*. [Andrej Žarnov: personal bibliography]. *Slovenská katolícka moderna*. (1991). [Slovak Catholic Modern].

software system produced by Israeli company Ex Libris, was chosen and other libraries joined the project too. Since 1993, the project has continued in both republics and every year there have been CASLIN joint seminars held, with the University Library organising them in 1995 and 2007.⁴⁹ Likewise, a colloquium of Czech, Moravian and Slovak bibliographers and some other joint projects have remained.

The activities of the University Library in the Slovak Republic have been continuously linked to the previous period. A new, yet rather short chapter its history was in 1997-99 (at that time it was called the University Library in Bratislava - National Library Centre), when it was designated to provide a central methodology. Subsequently, central methodology was transferred back to the Slovak National Library at Matica Slovenská, from where it had been until two years previously. Since September 1999, the University Library has once again returned to its original status and name. The scope of its duties and mission was confirmed by the new Library Act passed by the National Council of the Slovak Republic in 2000 and later amended in 2015. The 2000 Library Act included the new mission and functions the University Library had received in the 1990s, in particular as a UNESCO Centre and an ISSN National Agency (International Standard Serial Number System) in 1997), and since 2000 the University Library has also functioned as a NATO depository library.

The UNESCO Information and Documentation Centre opened in 1994 with the creation of the UN and UNESCO depository libraries, providing library and information services for these collections. It supports the establishment of UNESCO Clubs and gives methodological assistance to people active in them, orienting itself towards assisting the Associated Schools of UNESCO. As part of this, it organises numerous events (seminars, workshops, exhibitions, etc.) and also serves as the secretariat for the Slovak committee in the UNESCO Memory of the World.

The ISSN National Agency is the executive body of the International Standard Serial Number System and has been a part of the University Library since 1997. The Agency's main role is to assign printed documents (ISSN) and electronic serial documents (EAN) with an International

⁴⁹ CASLIN PEW '95. (1995). Androvič, A. (Ed.). (2007). CASLIN 2007.

Standard Serial Number, to create the National ISSN database and to make it accessible to the public. In fulfilling its mission, it also cooperates with foreign agencies.

The NATO Depository Library was opened in 2004, with a collection that includes publications from the NATO Information and Press Office in Brussels. In addition, it has also acquired printed and electronic documents covering international relations, security and defence, with emphasis on the North Atlantic Alliance. It cooperates with the NATO Library in Brussels and both local and international agencies and related affiliated corporations. It also plays a cooperative role in organising the Slovak Security Forum.

Between 2002 and 2005, general reconstruction and renovation of the library buildings took place under the Multifunctional Cultural and Library Centre Project - Restoration and Revitalisation of Historic Buildings of the University Library in Bratislava.⁵⁰ Together with the restoration of the historical buildings, it also included transformation inside them to meet the needs of a modern library and to create the conditions for development of future activities. The platform for this development was the digitalisation and application of modern information technologies.

With the need to highlight the Library as a Multifunctional Cultural Centre, the newly established eponymous department started operating in 2005. Its mission is to provide dramaturgical, organisational and administrative services for cultural events, such as exhibitions, concerts and seminars, carried out at specific locations and outside the framework of library activities and services. A few hundred of these events are organised by the centre, among other places at the Liszt Pavilion and at the home of the Music Department before it moved to the Clarisse Convent building). Public events are also organised by other departments at the library.

The overall development of the University Library from 1990 to 2017 is evidence, using basic indicators, of it having reached the limits of extensive development. The library collection has been growing at a

⁵⁰ Bahna, J. and Šimkovič, V. (2005). *Obnova historických objektov Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave*. [Restoration of historical premises of the University Library in Bratislava].

slower pace, with an increase in the past 28 years of “only” 667,000 library units (to 2,784,062 library units in 2017). A declining trend has also been seen in the number of registered users (from 24,486 in 1990 to 19,063 in 2017). The number of visits to the Library has also fallen (from 390,594 in 1990 to 180,894 in 2017) and the number of classical borrowings (924,759 in 1990 to 647,732 in 2017). However, these figures do not take into account overall use of the Library’s collections, which was much higher. It is also necessary to add the large number of online library visits, averaging over a million a year (1,183,895 visits in 2013 and 905,303 in 2017) and the use of electronic documents and databases. The share of electronic documents its collection is also rising considerably, complemented by electronic databases (both produced by the Library and from licensed databases).

By the end of the socialist era, space for the storage of library collections had been virtually exhausted, and new homes for them outside of the Library’s buildings had to be identified. This problem was particularly urgent when the Library buildings were reconstructed in 2002-05, when existing Library warehouses had to be emptied. To a lesser extent, these issues still persist and require a solution.

The University Library’s collection was enriched with the addition of several specialised foreign literature collections and other documents donated mainly by foreign representations. They generally contain documents which focus on the donors’ countries. The first donated collection was developed from documents provided by the US Embassy in the Slovak Republic, starting in the mid-1990s. INFO USA became available to the public in 2005 within reconstructed rooms containing more than 5,000 library units. In 2004, both the Austrian Library (with more than 5,000 library units) and the Russian Centre Library (with more than 1,300 library units) opened, while in 2007 the doors opened to what has proved to be the most popular library, the British Centre (with more than 7,000 library units). A special place among these collections is held by the Mamatey Library (1,400 library units), containing historical literature mostly from Central Europe. The collections therein were donated in 1997 by historian Viktor Mamatey, whose father, Albert Paul Mamatey, was a

Slovak that lived in the United States and a signatory of the 1918 Pittsburgh Agreement concluded between Slovak and Czech organisations in support of the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic.) Specialised foreign literature collections are accessible for reading in the general study.

The current study room system at the University Library consists of a general room, periodical reading room and study rooms for micrographic documents, electronic documents and audio-visual documents. In addition, there are study rooms for the Department of Manuscripts, Old and Rare Prints, the Music Department, the UNESCO Information and Documentation Centre and the NATO Depository Library. Each study room also provides information services according to the subject on which they focus. There are 511 study places and 51 personal computers available, including 45 with internet access.

The ALEPH library-information system was replaced by VIRTUA in 2007. This system processes additions to a library's collection, creates catalogues and records, and provides services. While the new electronic catalogues, were being created, older catalogues were digitised. In 1996, construction of the general nomenclature catalogue was completed. It was subsequently digitised and made available for use. Likewise, the periodical catalogue was digitised, with work starting on the electronic UKB Catalogue, a common catalogue for books, periodicals, and other documents.

The National Retrospective Bibliography (SNRB) conducted almost all bibliographic activity, while special bibliographies were processed only sporadically.⁵¹ Following completion of the *Bibliography of Slovak and Other Language Calendars 1701 - 1965*, the database of calendar articles was edited, subsequently digitised and is now available on the internet. Other SNRB tasks, such as the Bibliography of Annual Schools Reports and Bibliography of Annals, Yearbooks and Collections, have been included in the research plan. Due to the long time span involved, 264 years in total, the project was divided into several sub-tasks, and it was

⁵¹ Smida, I. (1993). *Václav Medek: personálna bibliografia*. [Václav Medek: personal bibliography]. Perďochová, A. (1998). *Daniel Rapant: personálna bibliografia*. [Daniel Rapant: personal bibliography]. Kamenická, T. (2003 – 2013). *Súpis článkov o masmédiách.za roky ...* [List of articles about the mass media for years ...]

decided at the national level for the bibliographies covering the period from 1918 to be processed first. Thus, the *Bibliography of Annual School Reports in the Territory of Slovakia for the School Years 1918/19 - 1952/53* was prepared.⁵² After it was published, redaction of articles from the annual school reports began and the database is now available on the internet. *Biographies in the Annual School Reports* was published in book form. The next bibliography to be processed was for annual school reports covering what is now Slovakia in the period between 1701 and 1850, as well as the list of articles from the annual reports.⁵³ Similarly, the *Bibliography of Annals, Yearbooks and Collections 1918-1965* was also processed.⁵⁴ Subsequently, work was done on the bibliography for the period between 1701 and 1918. It is now almost completed with its bibliographic database already available on the Internet.⁵⁵

The research of Slovakist literary authors in the collections of the University Library from previous years was based on research of Slovak prints, whose outcome was an eight-volume provisional list entitled *Catalogue of Slovakist Prints of the University Library in Bratislava until 1918*.⁵⁶

In historical research, work continued on cataloguing 16th century prints in the collections of the University Library in Bratislava. This extensive task, performed in the Department of Manuscripts, Old and Rare

⁵² Gešková, Ž. and Krišková, Ľ. (1998). *Bibliografia výročných správ škôl z územia Slovenska za školské roky 1918/19 – 1952/53*. [Bibliography of annual school reports in the territory of Slovakia for the school years 1918/19 – 1952/53]. Gešková, Ž. (2009). *Biografie vo výročných správach škôl z územia Slovenska za školské roky 1918/19 – 1952/53*. [Biographies in the annual school reports in the territory of Slovakia for the school years 1918/19 – 1952/53].

⁵³ Krišková, Ľ. (2006). *Bibliografia výročných správ škôl z územia Slovenska 1701 – 1850*. [Bibliography of annual school reports in the territory of Slovakia 1701 – 1850].

⁵⁴ Kovačičová, E. and Štvrtecký, Š. (1991). *Bibliografia almanachov, ročeniek a zborníkov na Slovensku 1919 – 1944*. [Bibliography of annals, yearbooks and collections in Slovakia 1919 – 1944]. Kovačičová, E. and Schlenkerová, K. (1995). *Bibliografia almanachov, ročeniek a zborníkov na Slovensku 1945 – 1965*. [Bibliography of annals, yearbooks and collections in Slovakia 1945 – 1965].

⁵⁵ *Bibliografia almanachov, ročeniek a zborníkov na Slovensku za roky 1701 – 1918*. [Bibliography of annals, yearbooks and collections in Slovakia 1701 – 1918]. [online]. <http://www.retrobib.ulib.sk/azr.htm>.

⁵⁶ Telgársky, J. and Banská, Z. (1999 – 2003). *Katalóg slovacikálnych tlačí Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave do roku 1918*. [Catalogue of Slovakist prints of the University Library in Bratislava until 1918].

Prints, includes the research and processing of 2,900 prints and is almost completed. It is part of a national programme to develop a general catalogue of 16th century prints preserved in Slovakia. Another research project the department undertook was the *Emblem Books in the University Library in Bratislava*.⁵⁷

In addition to historical research at the University Library, two other related activities involving editorial work and digitalisation should be mentioned. The editorial projects includes publication of *Studia Bibliographica Posoniensia*,⁵⁸ a periodical collection in print since 2006 that is focused on the history of book culture. Each year the collection selects a theme and brings research results and materials from scientific conferences. Its activities included in 2015 the digitisation of editions of the *Pressburger Zeitung* from 1764 to 1929.

Numerous library research and implementation projects have been the focus of digitisation, computerisation and application of new information technologies in the University Library's work.⁵⁹ To mention just a few, there has been the Collective Catalogue of Slovak Republic Periodicals (2002), the implementation of the VIRTUA system (2004-07), the UKB Web Portal (2006-07), the Culture Register providing a cultural profile of Slovakia (2011) and, the Central Data Archive or CDA (2011-14). The goal of the Culture Register is to establish a database of cultural institutions to cover Slovakia's national cultural heritage and cultural activities. The CDA project aims to build a comprehensive integrated system for acquiring, processing, safeguarding and storing digital sources, including passive storage of media, over the long term. The newly-established CDA Department was tasked with preparing the project, research work and putting the results into practice.

Of all the specialised departments at the University Library, the Department of Manuscripts, Old and Rare Prints and the Music Department deserve brief mention. In addition to routine tasks, the Department of Manuscripts systematically prepares diverse public events

⁵⁷ Mészárosová, K. (2011). *Emblémové knihy Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave*. [Emblem book's in the University Library in Bratislava].

⁵⁸ Poriežová, M. and Križanová, P. (Eds.). (2006 – 2017). *Studia Bibliographica Posoniensia*.

⁵⁹ Androvič, A. (2009). *Na čele inovačného frontu*. [Innovation front leader].

such as lectures, exhibitions and presentations. Visitors to the department include many researchers, librarians, cultural workers, foreign diplomats, members of foreign representations in the Slovak Republic and others. Activities of a broader scope and significance include exhibitions of oriental manuscripts and prints from the Bašagić Library in countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina (2010), Turkey (2010), France (2010), Austria (2010), Kuwait (2011), Spain (2016) and Iran (2018). The Department of Manuscripts, Old and Rare Prints has been headed by Klára Mészárossová since 1995.

The Music Department also continues to prepare a wide range of events for both professional musicians and the wider public that include lectures, exhibitions, concerts and music plays. Since 1983, it has published a calendar of important anniversaries for music librarians⁶⁰ and every year since 1980 it has organised annual seminars. The 32nd edition of the music librarian seminar featured the sixtieth anniversary of the Music Department. From 1969 until her retirement in 2005, the department was run by Emese Duka–Zólyomi.⁶¹

Having reviewed professional activities at the University Library since 1990, brief mention should be made of its methodological activity, which was carried out similarly as previously with a two-way focus by individual departments within their scope of specialisation towards the library system. The internal library methodology and the coordination of all methodological activities were concentrated in the Methodological Department.

As before, the University Library continues to have extensive contacts with libraries and other institutions and corporations both locally and internationally. New contacts include cooperating with the University Library in Bielefeld, Germany during 2005-07 to implement JASON, a system for express ordering and delivery of full text articles. Some of the

⁶⁰ *Významné výročia na rok hudba..* (1983 – 1997). [Significant anniversaries for year: music]. *Kalendár výročí ... hudba.* (1998 – 2017). [Music anniversary calendar...].

⁶¹ Drlíčková, D. (Ed.). (2013). *Hudobný kabinet Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave 1952 – 2012*. [Music cabinet of the University Library in Bratislava 1952 - 2012]. Fircáková, K. (2005). *Hudobná knižnička Emese Duka – Zólyomiová*. [Music librarian Emese Duka – Zólyomi].

new partners were mentioned in connection with the Library's new central functions or as donating to library collections. Among library associations, cooperation with the American Library Association (ALA) is worth mentioning, with ALA President Roberta Stevens having visited the University Library in 2011. In 2014, IFLA President Sinikka Sipila also came to visit the library.

Traditional forms of presenting the University Library's work were expanded when the *Newsletter of the University Library in Bratislava* began to be published.⁶² The *Newsletter* reported on the Library in a broad, universal manner, showcasing individual areas, announcing individual events and featuring articles and studies about Library staff. It was first published between 1900 and 1996 and was revived in 2005, while in 1999-2004 such articles appeared in the newsletter *News (Aktuality)*.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the 99 years the University Library in Bratislava has existed and been active, its collections, study rooms and services have aided tens of thousands of students and helped them acquire higher education qualifications. The library has provided assistance to hundreds, perhaps thousands of university educators and scientists in their research work and in addressing scientific and professional issues, enabling their work to be compared with other research and solutions abroad, aiding in further development of science in Slovak. Finally, through the collecting and protection of manuscripts, old and rare prints, and other historical documents, the library has contributed toward documenting, safeguarding and identifying Slovakia's past cultural heritage, adding to the country's treasury of science, culture and education.

⁶² *Bulletin Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave*. (1990 – 1996, 2005 – 2015). [*Bulletin of University Library in Bratislava*]. *Aktuality: informácie z knižničnej a informačnej vedy a praxe* (1999 – 2004). [*News: information from library and information science and practice*].

Learning more about the role of the University Library in Bratislava has been made possible through numerous sources about its history: bibliographies,⁶³ annuals⁶⁴, monographs⁶⁵ and annual reports.⁶⁶

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⁶³ Ecker, J. (1981). *Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave 1561 – 1980*. [University Library in Bratislava 1561 – 1980]. Ecker, J. (1986). *Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave 1981 – 1985*. [University Library in Bratislava 1981 – 1985]. Fircáková, K. (2005). *Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave 1986 – 1999*. [University Library in Bratislava 1986 – 1999].

⁶⁴ Čaplovič, J. (Ed.). (1950). *Z bratislavských knižníc*. [From Bratislava libraries]. Lehký, J. (Ed.). (1959). *Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave 1914 – 1919 – 1959*. [University Library in Bratislava 1914 – 1919 – 1959]. Lehký, J. (Ed.). (1962). *Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave 1959 – 1960*. [University Library in Bratislava 1959 – 1960]. Ecker, J. (Ed.). (1965). *Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave 1961 – 1964*. [University Library in Bratislava 1961 – 1964]. Ecker, J. (Ed.). (1970). *Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave 1965 – 1968*. [University Library in Bratislava 1965 – 1968]. Fircáková, K. (Ed.). (1980). *Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave 1969 – 1979*. [University Library in Bratislava 1969 – 1979]. Kútik, V. and Fircáková, K. (Eds.). (1986). *Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave 1980 – 1985*. [University Library in Bratislava 1981 – 1985].

⁶⁵ Ecker, J. (1994). *Dejiny Univerzitetnej knižnice v Bratislave 1919 – 1985*. [History of the University Library in Bratislava 1919 – 1985]. Gerbóc, J. (Ed.). (1999). *Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave 1919 – 1999: osemdesiat rokov službách vedy a poznania*. [University Library in Bratislava 1919 – 1999: eighty years in the service of science and knowledge]. Trgiňa, T. (Ed.). (2005). *Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave: multifunkčné kultúrne centrum*. [The University Library in Bratislava: the multifunctional cultural centre]. Trgiňa, T. (Ed.). (2009). *Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave 1919 – 2009*. [The University Library in Bratislava 1919 – 2009].

⁶⁶ *Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave: správa o činnosti a hospodárení za rok* (1988 – 2017). [University Library in Bratislava: activity and management report for year].

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Chapter 3

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CURRENT FORMS OF POLITICAL RADICALISM AND EXTREMISM IN SLOVAKIA^{*}

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ABSTRACT

This chapter analyzes historical roots of political radicalism and extremism in Slovakia. Specificities of the historical development of the Slovak nation and statehood, mainly the experiences with oppression of national culture under the Austro-Hungarian Empire and late fulfilment of political demands, caused the nationalism, in its conformal, but as well in its violent form, has become the integral part of the Slovak politics. Moreover, new sources of the rise of right-wing radicalism and extremism, connected with current forms of globalization, are relevant also for Slovakia. As an example of political subjects representing ideas

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of right-wing radicalism and extremism, two political parties are analyzed in more detail – the radically nationalist Slovak National Party and the extremist Kotleba party. The methodology of the chapter is based on historical analysis and statistical analysis of election results, secondary analysis of surveys and analysis of the relevant documents and media outputs.

Keywords: extremism, radicalism, Slovak history, nationalism, Slovak political parties

INTRODUCTION

In the last years or decades, we have been learning about the terrorist actions, violent crimes and attacks on national and ethnical minorities, foreigners, people of different color or religion almost on daily basis across the world, Slovakia being no exception. With regard to this, we often talk about extremism. The term of extremism is becoming more and more central to the social and political awareness. In addition to the fact it is mainly related to violent and militant activities, it is also successful in establishing its institutional form, mostly through political parties and political associations. This applies not only to socially and politically unstable systems but also to countries that have a long democratic tradition and development. For example activities of ultra nationalist and right-wing extremist political parties and groups in Germany (NPD), Belgium (Flamish interest), France (National front), and so on.

This chapter analyzes the specific forms of political radicalism and extremism in Slovakia. Slovakia has been an independent democratic state only since 1993. However, the existence of several state units and political regimes in the past preceded the emergence of this democratic regime. This historical experience is something that strongly influences current forms of political radicalism and extremism in Slovakia mainly when it comes to the controversial perceptions of the first Slovak state of 1939. However there are other important causes and features of the recent increase of the popularity of political subjects representing ideas of political radicalism

and extremism in Slovakia. Some of them are more general and typical for the growth of the popularity of political subjects of the far right, also in other European countries (such as the anti-elite, anti-EU and anti-immigration rhetoric) – some are quite specific, i.e., the problem of Hungarian and Roma minority. All these challenges have influenced the forms and manifestations of political radicalism and extremism, as well as its perception by political elites, the public, and also by the scientific community. This is the reason why the understanding of political radicalism and extremism in the Central European context is different from its understanding in the Western Anglo-Saxon area. Methodology of the paper is based on historical analysis, theoretical analysis of the core concepts and terms, and empirical analysis of election results, campaigning and rhetoric of relevant politicians and political parties and on secondary analysis of the surveys and exit polls.

As the main representatives of the politics of right-wing radicalism and extremism, two political subjects are analyzed in more detail – the Slovak National Party and Kotleba – People's Party Our Slovakia. During the 1990s and early 2000s, the extremist subjects were marginal in the political scene and the problem of extremism was rather connected to extreme right wing movements and subcultures, such as skin-heads. As for political parties, the Slovak national party seemed to be the closest to the ideas of right wing radicalism and extremism. Foreign analysts and politicians often referred to the Slovak National Party as extremist, but in the Slovak context the party was accepted as a part of the standard political spectrum although being radically nationalist. Since 2013, the extremist Marian Kotleba was elected to the head of the regional government and later in 2016, his party was elected to the national parliament, changing the situation dramatically. Slovak politicians, journalists and the public were confronted with a situation when someone considered to be against the system and not acceptable was legally elected. The discussions appeared about how to cope with the situation, whether to ignore the “fascists” or to cooperate with them since they were legally elected and received support of a significant part of the voters. Can we ignore these people, are they extremist? These were the questions that have preoccupied public debates

recently and different strategies were developed in connection to this. Mostly we can say that politicians and journalists have chosen not to cooperate with Kotleba and his political party and to ignore them (e.g., not to support principally their legislation proposals, not to invite them on particular official celebrations, etc.).

TERMINOLOGY OF RADICALISM AND EXTREMISM

The extremist actions and political activities of extremists are discussed vigorously by politicians, journalists, scientists and the public all over the world. The discussions show that individual actors rarely understand the term extremism in the same way. On the one hand it is due to the fact that extremism is a multidimensional phenomenon that affects all areas of social life¹, and this multidimensional character and various analytical approaches to it significantly complicate the definition of extremism and its interpretation. On the other hand, various actors use basic terms as extremism, radicalism, terrorism interchangeably as synonyms² in discussions, which leads to deepening of the incorrect understanding of the concepts and their misleading interpretation. This may give rise to some unfavorable reactions, such as a) dismissing legitimate opinions and requirements of certain groups of people that are purposefully named as extremists and the subsequent end of the dialogue with them, or b) underestimating extremist behavior, which may result in larger space for extremists' activities. It follows that the absence of generally valid definition of extremism as well as insufficient knowledge, or unprofessional conduct at presenting the facts about extremism, strengthen this phenomenon.

Extremism is not a new phenomenon in the history of mankind. It has manifested itself throughout the human history. In all historical periods we

¹ Extremism has become the subject of research by various disciplines - political science, history, law, psychology, sociology, etc.

² E. Jesse: "With regard to terminology, we can talk about the Babylonian blending of languages: extremism, radicalism, populism, fundamentalism - all these concepts are used in (political) science, journalism and politics more or less as synonymous" (Jesse, 1993, p.27).

can find groups of people that stood on a periphery, disregarded generally accepted rules, purposefully excluded themselves from the majority and made claims to it to achieve their goals. In political theory, the concept of extremism marks a position on a political scale that is furthest away from the political center, either to the right or to the left margin of the ideological (political) spectrum. This position reflects the etymology of the word itself as it is based on the Latin words of *extremus*, *extremitas* or furthest, most distanced but also most harmful (e.g., Mikulčíková, 2010; Charvát, 2007). The view of extremism has been changing throughout the history. Something labelled as extremist in the past may now be perceived as modest or representing a central, not marginal position. Extremists thus represent extreme positions and stances. They distance themselves from modest, generally accepted center³, they do not accept it and fight against it.

The Slovak (scientific) understanding of the extremism is inspired by German defining criteria. The fact that Germany was an aggressor in the WWII and had experience of the Nazi regime caused that the research of extremism has received a lot of attention there. In Germany (also in political science), the extremism is understood in a normative way. It is defined as an antithesis towards democracy, its basic principles⁴, or the tendency to cross the line of normative procedures characteristic of the democratic process. German authors U. Backes and E. Jesse (1989, p. 33) see political extremism as an umbrella term for various political opinions and efforts whose common characteristic is rejecting the democratic constitutional state, its basic rights and rules of the game. It is either negating the basic principle of equality of people (right-wing extremism) or applying the principle of equality in all aspects of life, which suppresses the idea of individual freedom (left-wing extremism). American sociologist M. S. Lipset reached the similar conclusions. He regards all political

³ General public understands extremism as an activity that steps out of the generally accepted norms and rules, it is impolite, dangerous and unusual and cannot be tolerated (Kalamár, 2011). As the tolerance is a subjective dimension, the disagreements in the understanding of extremism are rather deep in the society.

⁴ Extremism therefore seeks to eliminate democracy and its fundamental pillars, such as sovereignty and the rule of the people, the division of power, the protection of fundamental human rights, pluralism, free elections and so on.

actions that are opposed to liberal democracy, either in the form of political ideology or the constitutional setting of concrete political systems or states, as political extremism (Cabada, 2002, p. 2).

In general, extremism arouses negative emotions. The negative or even pejorative connotations it provokes originate in historical experience and are connected to its rejecting or defying positions and attitudes. The term is used to label political opinions, political actions and political actors that one is to distance from. People labelled as extremists usually disagree with these opinions, they try to undermine their eligibility, view themselves in a positive light and turn the negative emotions towards those that call them extremists.

In many countries the term extremism is not used due to the absence of its precise definition valid internationally (Milo, 2005). In many countries extremism is defined in relation to radicalism. In Germany, though, these two terms are strictly separated and this is how it is accepted also in Slovakia. For this reason it is necessary to specify the basic differences between extremism and radicalism. Although both are characterized by methods and objectives that strongly divert from methods and objectives used within the existing social or economic order, they cannot be identified with each other.

The original meaning of the term radicalism can be derived from the Latin word *radix* (root) meaning “go towards the core, root,” with aim to change the society from the basics. It is necessary to understand the term radicalism in (historical and political) context of intensity of the ties to certain political principles, especially to the tradition of enlightenment of 18th and 19th centuries. It denoted the groups that pursued requirements regarding civil rights, social equality and democratic self-determination. Radical political parties of 19th century defended explicitly democratic programs and therefore stood on the left wing of the gradually forming party spectrum (Hermann, 1995, p. 3).

In comparison with the term extremism, radicalism is understood, also with regard to assessment of the work of radical political movements in the 19th century, in a more positive sense of the word. Although radicalism represents stances that are clearly different from generally accepted and

valid opinion, contrary to extremism it aims to change the system. It is based on rational arguments and it usually does not cross the borders of the basic democratic order. This cannot be claimed as far as the extremism is concerned. It arouses negative reactions, as it attacks the foundation of the free democratic order and its aim is – using the violent, illegitimate and illegal methods, emotional part of the politics, irrationality, prejudices and manipulation with the consciousness – to destroy the existing system and replace it with the authoritarian or totalitarian regime (Mel'vil' et al., p. 537-538).

Political extremism is primarily divided into the right-wing and left-wing extremism. The right-wing extremism is connected to the categories like stretched nationalism, xenophobia, racism, belief in a strong state, and inclination to leadership principle (Pfahl-Traugher, 1993, p. 18). Left-wing extremism is typical by ideological background based on communism, socialism, partially also on anarchism and its forms.

HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL ROOTS OF EXTREMISM IN SLOVAKIA

If we are to understand the activities of extremist subjects in Slovakia at present, we must reflect upon the specific nature of historical and political developments of the Slovak state. The territory of what is now Slovakia was until 1918 a part of the multinational Habsburg Monarchy, or dualist constitutional monarchy of Austria – Hungary. After WWI it became part of the Czechoslovak Republic; between 1939-45, the “war” Slovak Republic; after WWII (from 1945) to 1993 it became again part of Czechoslovakia.

The 19th century is in the European context seen as the century when the new modern states began to form, first under the influence of enlightenment and then the French revolution.⁵ Within the Habsburg Monarchy, Slovakia was part of its territorial unit – Hungary. There were

⁵ Italy or Germany becomes unified. Gradually the existing political systems become more liberal and democratic.

several nationalities living in Hungary then. The Slavic majority of its population comprised Slovaks, Croats, Vojvodina Serbs and Rusins. In addition to them, there lived Hungarians, Germans and Romanians. From the beginning of the 18th century, the Hungarian aristocracy tried to secure the decisive political power among these nationalities and it considered itself as the only bearer of the political power in the country (Hungary). A certain level of independence of Hungary created favorable conditions for the rise of political and national self-assurance of the Hungarian aristocracy. This attitude manifested itself in the oppression of non-Hungarian nationalities. In the later period, the Hungarian political and intellectual elite started to stand up more radically also to the Austrian (Habsburg) rule in Vienna (Cambel, 1987).

The period at the end of 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries the Habsburg monarchy was also connected with the rise and development of national and emancipation movements of individual nationalities living in the monarchy. Small nations (Slovaks among them) that by then had considered themselves as part of the Hungarian nation, begun to realize gradually their distinctiveness. They began to be more critical of the central policies of the Habsburgs administered from Vienna as well as to the aforementioned dominant attitude of the Hungarian political elites.

The process of transformation of the Slovak ethnic group into the modern Slovak nation is called the Slovak national revival (i.e., Marsina, Čičaj, 1992; Cambel, 1987; Matula, Škvarna, 1993). In the first phase of the process (the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century), Slovaks, more specifically the Slovak enlightened intelligentsia (priests, teachers, doctors, lawyers etc.), became active mainly in the areas of language and culture that were to accentuate the national identity and strengthen the national unity of Slovaks by arousing interest in the history of the nation. This activity supported also the steps towards creating the national community (unit) not practiced before. One of the basic features of a nation is language. However, the Slovak society did not use the same language. As late as the 19th century, the literary language was biblical Czech and Latin, although Slovak was also used as a spoken language. It was the support of the language as a unifying tool developing culture,

education and national consciousness that brought the change in language development of Slovaks. However, literary Slovak was codified only in the third stage of the national revival, in 1843.

In the second stage of the revival (the beginning of the 1820s), the representatives of the national revival focused on the magyarization issue. They criticized the fragmentation of Slavic nations and the growing national oppression of Slovaks in the Kingdom of Hungary. They saw protection against the magyarization in pursuing the idea of the Slavic reciprocity. J. Kollár as a prominent representative of this revival phase was inspired by the ideas of Herder about the historical mission of the Slavs that were to contribute to the culmination of humanity in the development of human society. Kollár emphasized the so called cultural and ethnical concept of the nation in which he highlighted language, culture, customs and traditions as its main identifying features. This understanding of the nation provided Slovaks with the prerequisites to establish themselves as a nation regardless of the existence of their own state within the great Slavic nation. Kollár's concept of the Slavic issue was not generally accepted. In it, Kollár integrated Slovaks and Czechs into one language stream, which was in an objective conflict with the efforts of the Slovaks to reach their national identity. Despite its shortcomings, his vision bore some significance as it encouraged cooperation and further cultural activities.

The younger generation of the Slovak intelligentsia called "Štúrovci" (Štúr followers, by L. Štúr as their prominent representative and leader) took into consideration the dissatisfaction with the political situation in Europe and the revolutions or uprisings in the 1830s. In addition to the language issue they also dealt with the relationship of Slovaks towards the Kingdom of Hungary, where Slovaks were to function as an independent nation with equal rights as Hungarians. At the same time they dealt with political issues, e.g., they requested cancellation of the serfdom and aristocratic privileges, or promoted establishing loan cooperatives etc. The young Štúr generation was also interested in Kollár's program of Slavic cooperation but the idea of reciprocity was given a different content under the pressure of their own Slovak needs. Under reciprocity, or solidarity,

they understood connecting the two veins of the Slovak movement (Catholic and Protestant) and connecting the educated elite with the common people, which succeeded in the codification of the literary language. Štúr's followers were not interested only in the cultural development but cared for the political and social needs of the Slovak population (i.e., Marsina, Čičaj, 1992; Cambel, 1987; Matula, Škvarna, 1993).

In the revolutionary years of 1848-49⁶ they initiated almost all political activities of Slovaks. In May 1848, Štúr's followers produced a political program, the so called Demands of the Slovak Nation. In it, they pronounced Slovaks should have an independent nation and demanded equality and fraternal coexistence of all peoples within federalized Hungary. In addition to the central Hungarian Diet they demanded establishment of the independent Slovak parliament, adoption of the Slovak language as an official language in the Slovak lands and founding Slovak lower and higher schools. The Slovak national independence was to be represented by the unique Slovak flag and National Guard. Other demands concerned further democratization of public and political life. Slovaks demanded general voting rights, freedom of the press and of assembly and association, as well as the abolition of serfdom. The submitted program can be regarded as one of the most progressive political programs for Slovaks in the 19th century (Butvin, Kostický, Vartíková, 1981).

By defeating the revolution⁷, mainly the substantial Magyar anti-Habsburg fight, the Viennese government did not consider the demands of

⁶ There were significant differences in the state and political systems of individual nations within the Habsburg monarchy. Some of them had an independent state in the past (e.g., Kingdom of Hungary, Czech Kingdom etc.). This fact constituted a complicated situation mainly in multinational Hungary. The Magyar liberal nobility became very active in the revolutionary years of 1848-49. It called for the independence of Hungary from the Habsburg monarchy, demanded an independent Hungarian government, civic equality, freedom of press, abolition of aristocratic privileges and serfdom. On the other hand, it sought to retain a dominant position of power in Hungary at the expense of other non-Hungarian nationalities. This considerably weakened the joint campaign against the Habsburg supremacy, which eventually led to the defeat of the revolution.

⁷ The Viennese government promised to meet the demands of the oppressed Slavic nations in the Hungary if they join its side at defeating the Magyar revolution.

the Slovaks. Nevertheless, the participation of Slovaks in the revolution bears a great significance in the history of Slovakia. It contributed to strengthening their national identity and upgraded the process of constituting the modern Slovak nation. Slovaks began to demand a revision of their legal position within the state in favor of an autonomous administrative and political unit.

By defeating the revolution, the Habsburgs temporarily strengthened their power within the monarchy. From the political point of view, absolutism was introduced and accompanied by strong Germanization of non-German area in the monarchy. Absolutism renewed the ill ways of ruling that failed to address the ideological, economic and national demands of the time. It led to a weaker position of the monarchy abroad as well as growing opposition of other non-German nationalities. In 1860, the Viennese government had to abandon absolutism.

For some time the situation became more relaxed also regarding the nationalists' issue. The Slovak national movement became more active and it used the conflicts between the central government in Vienna and the Magyar political elites to its advantage. The representatives of the national movement prepared a program that considered new political situation and the needs of the time. In 1861 the Memorandum of the Slovak nation was adopted (Marsina, Čičaj, 1992). Its main aim was to achieve legal recognition of the Slovak nation and creation of the self-governed Slovak territory, so called Upper Hungarian Slovak District (Hornouhorské slovenské okolie). This demand meant a great step ahead in the Slovak endeavors to reach autonomous legal position of Slovakia within Hungary. On this territory, the offices, courts and schools were to use only Slovak language. The Memorandum did not demand the independence of Slovakia, but it demanded the representation of Slovaks in the new Hungarian Diet.

These demands were not fulfilled. The Habsburg monarchy slipped into internal political crisis also due to foreign political events⁸ that resulted in formation of the dualist Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1867, or the so called Austro-Hungarian compromise (Kováč, 2002). The Magyar

⁸ The Habsburgs were defeated in the fight for the power dominance in Europe by Prussia.

political elites succeeded in reaching political independence for Hungary within the Monarchy.⁹ For non-Hungarian nationalities, the Compromise meant legalizing the state doctrine by which all peoples of Hungary constituted a united, indivisible political Hungarian nation (which meant Magyar nation in Magyar language). Neither Slovaks, nor Serbs, Romanians, Ukrainians were seen as nations but were considered ethnical groups. Hungarian (Magyar) language became the official state language. Languages of other nationalities could only be used in a limited way, e.g., Slovak could be taught only at elementary schools. Such educational policy was meant to eliminate the number of educated people of non-Hungarian origin. Severe nationalist oppression in Hungary lasted until the beginning of WWI.

Austria-Hungary lagged behind Western powers economically and ran into debts. In order to strengthen their position of power, the ruling elites chose the way of expansion. The aim of the foreign policy was to secure a decisive influence in the Balkans (Fabian, 1990). The course of the WWI (in which Austria-Hungary became an aggressor) and the continuing internal disintegration indicated that the multinational monarchy and its ruling elites were not able to deal with the crises. Non-Hungarian and non-German nations living in the Austria-Hungary realized the situation could enable the rise of new independent national states (Urban, 2000). Slovaks sought allies against the nationalist oppression among the other non-Hungarian nationalities in Hungary but mainly with the Czech nation. Czech and Slovak cooperation and mutual contacts of Czechs and Slovaks, resulting from the closeness of languages and culture, had historical roots but intensified during the period of the Slovak national revival and became stronger in the period to follow.

As early as at the beginning of the WWI there was an idea that the Czechs¹⁰ and Slovaks should proceed together in their quest for national

⁹ Hungary and Austria (i.e., the Kingdoms and Lands Represented in the Imperial Council) had only the common emperor, foreign affairs and finances.

¹⁰ After the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, Bohemia (so called Czech lands) remained a part of the Austrian part of the monarchy. There was, contrary to Hungary, relatively liberal constitutional system. Czechs had their deputies in the Viennese parliament and their own autonomous parliament - the Bohemian land diet. Contrary to Slovaks, the Czechs had a historical experience with their own state - The Kingdom of Bohemia, had had their own

and state sovereignty. More favorable economic and political conditions enabled Slovaks and Czechs living in the USA and France to form the so-called exile resistance and several proposals of the future state arrangements of the joint state were formulated. In October 1915, representatives of the Slovak League of America and the Czech National Association approved the Cleveland Agreement. The Agreement declared cooperation between Czechs and Slovaks to pursue common federalist state with the full national autonomy of Slovakia (Butvin, Kostický, Vartíková, 1981).

The new common Czechoslovak Republic (ČSR) was established mainly thanks to the Czech politician, philosopher and professor working in exile Tomas Garrigue Masaryk, Edvard Beneš and also the Slovak general Milan Rastislav Štefánik (Švorc, 1992). In 1916, the Czechoslovak National Council was founded with the ambition to secure agreement of the Western powers to create an independent Czechoslovak state after the war. Apart from the exile resistance, centers of the Czech and Slovak home resistance emerged during the war and they emphasized their right to self-determination.

The process of establishing Czechoslovakia was not straightforward and was preceded by several proposals of the state arrangement: from the federal state of Czechs and Slovaks with the full autonomy of Slovaks (as mentioned in the Cleveland Agreement), through a unitary state with the autonomy of Slovakia (Pittsburgh Agreement) to the unitary state based on the concept of Czechoslovakism (Declaration of Independence of the Czechoslovak Nation). This concept was supported by T. G. Masaryk (Brabec, 2002). In this concept, the Czechoslovakia consists of one nation – the Czechoslovak nation (Marsina, Čičaj, 1992, p. 195-205). The proponents of the Czechoslovakism concept argued that for the sake of the establishment of the Czechoslovak state it was necessary to have it represented by one nation that would outnumber the other populous national minorities and create a strong enough anti-German barrier and it

language since the 14th century and they had their schools. All these factors had positive effect on the educational level of the citizenry and formation of national movement and the number of its representatives.

would benefit from neighboring Russia. The population of the newly established Czechoslovakia was comprised of 51.5% Czechs, 14% Slovaks, 23% Germans, 5.6% Hungarians and 3.5% Ukrainians (Tóth, Novotný, Stehlík, 2012, p. 3-5). Eventually, the Czechoslovakist concept was applied at the establishment of the new state.

The first independent Czechoslovak Republic was declared on 28 October 1918. Independently of this declaration, Slovaks proclaimed the Declaration of the Slovak Nation on 30 October 1918. The Declaration was adopted as an independent legal statehood act of the Slovak nation by which the Slovaks officially withdrew from the state of Hungary and acknowledged the right to self-determination of the Czechoslovak nation. In this way they expressed the demand for establishing the common state with the Czechs. The term Czechoslovak nation was to express the political (not national) unity of Czechs and Slovaks in relation to other countries.

However, the concept of Czechoslovakism that regarded Czechs and Slovaks as a united nation caused many conflicts in the later development of Czechoslovakia. The Republic was established as a unitary state with Prague as a capital. The Czech political elite in fact monopolized control of social and political life in the state. It ruled the state centrally without respecting the specific features of the Slovak political culture. It failed to recognize the independence of the Slovak nation and regarded Slovak language as a Czech dialect. Although the concept of Czechoslovakism was used as a reason for establishing Czechoslovakia, instead of bringing the two nations closer, it incited nationalism in Slovakia and provoked nationalistic encounters. The main opponent of Czechoslovakism in Slovakia was the Hlinka's Slovak People's Party.

It is an indisputable fact that uniting Slovaks and Czechs into one state created space for emancipation of the Slovak nation that faced the harsh magyarization before the War. Within Czechoslovakia, the territory of Slovakia was more agrarian and due to historical reasons Slovaks lacked the necessary number of educated people to cover the needs of education, culture or administration in the newly established state. The offices and other positions were thus filled by the educated Czechs and even the top state positions were occupied by the minimum number of the Slovaks, as

the leading Czechoslovak political circles considered Slovakia as a weak part of the state. This approach on the side of the Czech political representatives and the failure to respect the cultural and political needs of Slovaks eventually resulted in declaring the autonomy of Slovakia within Czechoslovakia (Kováč, 2002).

Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (HSL'S)¹¹ had a membership base consisting of catholic and nationalistic inclination. It was also supported by Slovak farmers or small businessmen. Its ideology was influenced by nationalism, patriotism, Christian beliefs and anticommunism. It promoted the sovereignty of the Slovak nation that was formed and preserved thanks to the Christian tradition of Slovaks. The structure of the party supporters reflected the nature and character of the Slovak population at the time. The party presented itself as a defender of their interests against the Prague (Czech) centralism and against the misunderstanding of Slovak specificities. From the beginning of 1920s it stood at the head of the Slovak autonomist movement. During the existence of the Czechoslovak Republic it filed three proposals with the central political authorities to provide Slovakia autonomy within the state (Marsina, Čičaj, 1992; Hradská, Kamenec, 2015). Only under the pressure of foreign political events at the end of 1930s in Europe and stronger Nazi Germany influence¹², the HSL'S succeeded in declaring the autonomy in November 1938.

Declaration of the Slovak autonomy was another step in the process of the Czechoslovakia destruction following the Munich Agreement. It was in Germany's interest to present the elimination of Czechoslovakia as an internal collapse of the state. Hitler invited the Prime Minister of the Slovak autonomous government and the Chair of the HSL'S, Catholic priest

¹¹ The name was derived from the name of its Chairman, the catholic priest Andrej Hlinka who served as its chair until 1938.

¹² Realization of the Hitler's expansion plans directly concerned the Czechoslovak state as it counted with its destruction. The destruction of Czechoslovak Republic (ČSR) was accomplished not only thanks to the massive Nazi propaganda but also due to the appeasement policy of France and Great Britain. With their active participation, Adolf Hitler succeeded with his demands towards Czechoslovakia on 30th September 1938 in Munich. ČSR was forced to cede part of its territory to Germany, which weakened the Czechoslovak state within Central Europe.

Jozef Tiso, to Berlin. He informed him that unless the Slovak government declared the independent state, he would leave it to its fate and the expansion efforts of Hungary and Poland. In case Slovakia declared independence, Germany would guarantee its existence. Eventually, Tiso agreed to this proposal in order to safeguard the territorial integrity of Slovakia. Slovakia declared independence on 14. 3. 1939, although in fact it became a Germany's satellite state. Subsequently the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was established under the direct administration of the Nazi Germany (Hradská, Kamenec, 2015).

The Slovak Republic (sometimes called the Slovak State, the war Slovak State, the first Slovak State) existed in years of war 1939-45. The ruling political party was the Hlinka's Slovak People's Party – The Party of Slovak National Unity (HSL'S – SSNJ)¹³ that had its own concept of running the state (Slovenský Zákonník, 1939). In line with the slogan one God, one party, one leader; the HSL'S began to transform the democratic system to the authoritarian one. HSL'S controlled also other institutions: Hlinka Guard that had military, police and political functions; Hlinka Youth and Christian trade unions. In 1942 the Parliament adopted the HSL'S Act through which the fascist leadership principle was introduced. The clerical character of the state ideology became clear as the origin of the political authority was not based on the social or human basis but was derived from God (Hradská, Kamenec, 2015). The Constitution of the first Slovak Republic established the decisive power of the Catholic Church. Some articles of the Constitution restricted the freedom and beliefs of an individual. "The unique nature of an individual given to them by the Creator was subdued to the concept of the nation and its political idol, the state" (Hanzel, 1997, p. 100). The new political system in Slovakia destroyed the democratic freedoms introduced in the first ČSR: the freedom of press, assembly and association, among others. "All these measures were justified by HSL'S as necessary for the unity of the nation" (Kováč, 2002. p. 212).

¹³ It was the party that formally united all significant Slovak and Czechoslovak parties in Slovakia except the Communist and Social Democratic party that were forbidden or had their activities suspended.

There were two wings within the HSĽS party: the group led by Vojtech Tuka that sympathized with the Nazi Germany and tried to curb the influence of the Catholic Church on the state control and the moderate wing around the president J. Tiso. The ideology of the Slovak clerical fascism (clero-fascism), as the regime of the first Slovak Republic is sometimes called, was based on the two basic ideological pillars: on nationalism and clericalism. The most controversial issue about the Slovak clero-fascism was its relation to the Jewish population. The Jews were deprived of their property and many Jewish businesses thus found themselves in the hands of Christian companies for the minimum price (so called Aryanization or arization). Their right to education was restricted and they had to wear the yellow David star. In 1941 the government of the first Slovak Republic issued a decree on the legal position of the Jews, so called Jewish Codex that “established the separate legal regime for citizens of the Jewish faith who thereby lost their civic rights” (Slovenský Zákonník, 1941). The Jewish question eventually resulted in the so called final solution that involved also the government of the first SR. From March 1942 to October 1942, 57 628 Jews were forcefully deported from Slovakia (Čaplovič, Čičaj, 2000, p. 250).

In the course of the war the anti-fascist resistance formed gradually in Slovakia and culminated in the Slovak National Uprising of 1944. Thanks to the Uprising that was supported both by the Slovak Army and the partisan units, Slovakia upheld the democratic values and joined the fight of the Czecho-Slovak exile resistance and the antifascist coalition of states.

The idea of restoring the common state of Czechs and Slovaks re-emerged after the phase of inactivity (caused by the establishment of the independent Slovak state). The Czechoslovak Republic was re-established in 1945. In 1948 it got into the sphere of the Soviet influence and had to endure 40 years of totalitarian communist regime that disregarded democratic rights, such as freedom of election, freedom of faith, press and other and did not hesitate to use violent measures to promote the state communist doctrine. The totalitarian regime in Czechoslovakia lasted until 1989 when the country returned on the path to democracy. The Communist regime refused to acknowledge the existence of social, nationalistic or

ethnic problems. It was revealed only after 1989 that the problems of coexistence of both nations and their mutual relations were pushed aside during communism. This led to the division of Czechoslovakia in 1993 (Renner, 1993).

Slovakia regained its own statehood. The democratic regime that is characterized by plurality in all areas has also enabled the rise and existence of undemocratic, i.e., extremist subjects. As Slovakia had a recent experience of the totalitarian communist regime (the left-wing extremism), it was natural that the attitudes of some citizens would incline to the ultra-nationalism, racism, xenophobia or chauvinism constituting the ideology base of the right-wing extremism.

CURRENT POLITICAL PARTIES REPRESENTING POLITICAL RADICALISM AND EXTREMISM IN SLOVAKIA

In November 2013, the world's media reported on the results of the regional elections in Slovakia, which are usually not subject to foreign media interest. Regional self-governing units have limited competencies - secondary education, regional transport, some social services, etc. Elections in 2013, however, were somewhat exceptional. For the first time in the history, the candidate whose name is associated with the extremist movement succeeded. Marian Kotleba became the chairman of the Banská Bystrica self-governing region. His progress to the second round of the election was unexpected and his victory in the second round over the candidate of the strongest political and government party Smer-SD was a great surprise for many. Although Marian Kotleba, personally or through the political subjects he represented had already manifested his political ambitions in the past, he never had a chance to be elected.

Since then, many analysts and political scientists have been trying to explain what has actually happened. More than two years later, the Kotleba's party – People's Party Our Slovakia (Slovak abbreviation: Kotleba- ĽSNS) experienced another significant and unprecedented success - receiving 8.04% of the votes in the national parliamentary

elections, which enabled them to occupy 14 seats in a 150-member single-chamber parliament. In the past, the results of Kotleba's political party had never reached the 5% voting quorum, although they had a slightly increasing tendency. In this part, we will briefly introduce the circumstances of Kotleba and his party's entry into the elected functions, their program orientation and voter profile, and we will also analyze some hypotheses that are often used to explain the success of this extreme right-wing political party with obvious, though often hidden, sympathies for neo-Nazism.

Marian Kotleba started his political career in the group named 'Slovak Togetherness' (Slovak abbreviation: SP), which first functioned in a form of a civic association. The activity of this group appeared from its beginning to show clear signs of anti-Semitism and orientation towards the independent Slovak state during the war (1939-45). According to Mikušovič (2007), the program of Slovak Togetherness was based on radical nationalism and bigoted Catholicism in combination with anti-Semitism and xenophobia. The first period of activity of SP prior to the entry of Marian Kotleba in 2003 is evaluated by Mikušovič (2007) as a "silent period" and the period after 2003 as "resonant" (p. 3). The first major media attention of the domestic scene came on the occasion of celebration of the 1140th anniversary of the arrival of St. Cyril and Method to Great Moravia, in Komárno in July 2003. Uniformed members of Slovak Togetherness raised the attention of both the public and journalists, taking part in the event. The media started to discuss the similarity of their uniform with the uniform of the paramilitary group Hlinka Guard from the time of the war Slovak state, and the organization was described as extremist. The management of the organization has opposed these claims, using the argumentation that is typical for them in following years – play for details. They claimed, for example, that while the uniform of the Hlinka Guard was black, their uniform is dark blue. The effort of the association not to conflict with the law was reflected in the cautiousness towards details, allowing any accusations against them to be dismissed. They have adapted their greetings and other symbols so that it was not possible to prove direct connection with Nazism, Fascism, or accuse them

of defamation of the race and nation. Since the procedures of evidence and forensic judgments have long tolerated this circumventing of the law, in fact Kotleba has never been found guilty in connection to extremist crimes. Organized meetings and marches in uniforms, often with torches in hand, have been repeated since 2003 quite often for example on various anniversaries associated with the creation of the First Slovak Republic or its President, Jozef Tiso.

The intensification of the organization's activities continued in the next years and culminated in the establishment of the political party, Slovak Togetherness – national party (Slovak abbreviation: SP-NS) on January 31, 2005. The concept of this new political party was suggested by Marian Kotleba in his speech in Modra in 2004, in which he refused parliamentary democracy and subscribed to the corporate orientation of the war Slovak state (Slovak togetherness 2004c, In Mikušovič 2007). The newly established party had its branches in nine cities, the publication of the “Prúty” magazine provided information mainly about the activities of Slovak Togetherness and its program, but with thematic continuity with older editions justifying the ideology of German National Socialism, producing texts that were openly anti-Semitic and racist. They published different texts on Zionism, cartoons with subtitles such as “Join the United States Army and kill for Israel” or articles justifying the deportation of Slovak Jews during the Second World War because of Jewish loyalty to the Hungarian authorities during the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In the first renewed edition in September 2004, an article describing the control of Slovak media by Jews and Freemasons appeared. The activities of the Slovak Togetherness included different political declarations, against NATO, against the separation of Kosovo, etc., as well as various appeals, such as the appeal towards the Catholic Church, which was seen by Kotleba and his people as their natural partner. The truth is that part of the Catholic Church responded positively.

Against various organized activities of the Slovak community, the police had intervened several times, and members of SP used these incidents to point out how persecuted and victimized they were because of police brutality. The general prosecutor finally gave an incentive to the

Supreme Court to dissolve Slovak Togetherness - National Party. The SP-NS was dissolved by the Supreme Court on March 1, 2006, which prevented it from participation in the June parliamentary elections. Although the representatives of Slovak Togetherness very quickly agreed to co-opt their members to the top places of the electoral candidate list of the Slovak People's Party, the dissolution of the political party was however a serious problem for this movement. There have been disputes with some other Slovak nationalist organizations, the withdrawal of part of the members, and the decline in the activities of members and sympathizers. In addition, Marian Kotleba stepped down from the leadership of SP-NS, the members of the organization limited the use of the uniforms, which were the most significant identification mark of SP.

After the dissolution of Slovak Togetherness and temporary attenuation, Kotleba changed strategy. Slovak journalist Daniel Vražda - the author of a book about Marian Kotleba, connects this change of strategy with Kotleba's visit to extremists from the Workers' Party in the Czech Republic. In November 2008, in the Czech city of Litvínov, some of the hardest clashes with police took place, when the extremists came to protect "whites from gypsies." Kotleba here "experienced for the first time what it looks like when hundreds of ordinary people support extremists and found the subject that people would listening to, no matter who was saying it" (Vražda, 2017, p. 49). Anti-Roma rhetoric, together with a reference to the failure of the state to solve the Roma problem, gradually replaced the unpopular historical issues of the war Slovak state or questioning of the Slovak national uprising. It has to be said that this change of theme had really been successful. In Slovakia, the Roma problem is even more protracted than in neighboring Czech Republic, and at the same time, there exist relatively strong normalized anti-Romani rhetoric. That is to say that "to scoff" at the Roma/Gypsies would be a publicly acceptable way of framing this topic. It is not exceptional to hear some politicians to speak like this, so in this respect, Kotleba does not look like an extremist, but as someone "who is flatly telling the truth." At the same time, the coexistence of Roma and the majority in the surveys is a significant problem that

worries the population and voters of all political parties (see Bútorová & Gyarfášová, 2017, p. 14).

On this basis, following its roots in Slovak Togetherness, the political party People's Party Our Slovakia (Slovak abbreviation: ĽSNS) emerges in February 2010. A party whose slogan is "For decent people! Against parasites!" is formed on radical nationalism, anti-Semitism and resistance to minorities, especially Roma and homosexuals. The chairman of the party was initially Martin Beluský, but the real leader of the party was from the beginning Marian Kotleba, as evidenced by the fact that the magazine named "Our Slovakia" published by ĽSNS had a subtitle "newspaper of Marian Kotleba's political party." Kotleba, in an editorial of the first edition wrote that ĽSNS is a party "that will not allow anyone to sleep peacefully, not only an aggressive parasites, but also thieves in the government or deputies in the parliament" (Naše Slovensko 09/2011, In Kluknavská, 2012). ĽSNS has identified itself as a political party based on national and Christian values that advocates the introduction of the principles of direct democracy and absolute freedom of opinion (People's Party Our Slovakia, 2010b In Nociar, 2012). Thus, the basic themes of the newly formed political subject appear to be both an anti-Roma rhetoric and anti-system orientation.

After a few unsuccessful candidacies, whether with the political subjects in which he was involved or in which he personally ran (he ran unsuccessfully for the chairman of the regional government in Banská Bystrica region in 2009), Kotleba suddenly succeeded when he was elected chairman of the regional government in 2013. Later, his political party, the People's Party Our Slovakia (Slovak abbreviation: Kotleba- ĽSNS) entered the Slovak national parliament. In this part we will analyze the voter profile for Marian Kotleba and his political party.

In the regional elections, Marian Kotleba received almost 55.53% of the votes which meant he was supported by 71,397 voters. The level of electoral participation in the regional level is traditionally very low in Slovakia, and this time only 24.59% of eligible voters participated in the Banská Bystrica region (Statistical Office SR, 2013). Low participation together with an expected clear victory of Kotleba's opponent Vladimír

Maňka could have influenced Kotleba's success as the mobilization against him was neglected. Kotleba gained more support in the northern districts of the region, including Banská Bystrica where he came from. He gained the highest support in Brezno (up to 70%) – a region where he had already received significant above-average numbers in the past. Many pointed to his campaign strategy – Kotleba and his co-members visited personally on a regular base small villages in the region, speaking directly to the people and offering small services (such as help to the older citizens etc.). The distribution of preferences was significant also by lower support in districts with a stronger proportion of the Hungarian minority.

It is precisely for Kotleba's success in rural areas and small towns of the region that the socio-economic hypothesis has emerged to explain his victory – the assumption that he addressed mainly the lower social strata in society. It was not possible to confirm completely this hypothesis by the regional election results data mainly due to the low electoral participation and correlation between socio-economic level and proportion of Roma and Hungarian minority in the districts. A big surprise was that Kotleba also scored well in villages with history related to Slovak National Uprising and in villages that were burned by the Nazi army during the Second World War (SME, 2013). In this context analysts began to talk intensely about the fact that Kotleba's voters are not, for the most part, extremists that they voted for "protest" (BystricaDnes24, 2013; Webnoviny 2013). Since the major part of Kotleba's rhetoric concentrated on the Roma question, one of the possible sources of frustration and protest could have been considered the long-term neglect for finding a solution to the Roma problem. Kotleba presented some radical solutions for how to induce Roma to work and prepared a program named "Pickaxes and buckets" (Bystricoviny, 2014). The voters, however, seemed to underestimate the fact that the position Kotleba was elected for did have the mandate, nor competences to solve this problem, and that his solutions would be difficult to apply taking into account the legislation, institutional framework and so on.

But again, the hypothesis of the correlation between Kotleba's support in the 2013 regional elections and areas with a higher proportion of the Roma population (especially the population living in the segregated Roma

settlements or otherwise problematic communities) does not fully apply. This is obvious when looking at his election results in the county town of Banská Bystrica, where the Roma problem is not significant and some of the mayors of smaller villages where Kotleba succeeded confirmed this fact. It seems to be clear that “protest” was also connected to the second important part of Kotleba’s agenda – protest against standard politicians – that could have been expressed even more intensely as Kotleba’s main rival was a member of the governing Smer-SD party and at the same time being a member of European parliament and thus personalizing the prototype of typical standard politician being far from the problems of ordinary people.

From the very beginning analysts claimed that Kotleba had addressed the concerns of many young people. This argument was supported by watching the internet discussions, personal experiences and later also confirmed by several surveys. In 2014, before elections to the European Parliament, the simulated elections were organized in 62 secondary schools from all over Slovakia. Kotleba and his party came in second and gained 10.83% of the votes (IVO, 2014). Similar simulated elections were organized later in 2016, before national parliamentary elections, and the results were very similar — Kotleba’s party again came in second but with 15.53% of the votes (Dennikn, 2016). The success among young people can be explained by the activity of Kotleba’s party and groups of his sympathizers on the internet and social networks (mainly Facebook). Another reason may be the opposition to standard politics that is far more intense among that the younger generation is usually more radical in expressing its opinions (this is however true not only for pro-Kotleba opinions but as well for contra-Kotleba opinions). Finally, we can say that among youngsters, “imitation” as a pattern of voting behavior is more relevant and thus we can say that in the moment when Kotleba’s support exceeded a certain “critical limit” it began to be spread even more rapidly.

The electorate of Kotleba’s party has some other specific demographic characteristics. Not surprisingly, male voters dominated - according to the survey, they make up 63.6% of voters, while women make up only 36.4% (Gyrfášová, Slosiarik, 2016, p. 3). As for education, Kotleba’s party has a

lower share of the university-educated populace; however this is similar in numbers to the biggest government party Smer-SD (about 20%). Generally, it can be said that although we can find the prevalence of certain groups of voters in the Kotleba - ĽSNS electorate, the electorate of the party is still quite heterogeneous. We also find the diversity of Kotleba's voters in terms of the degree of consensus with the ideas of the movement's identification. After the victory in the parliamentary elections, several blogs or interviews appeared, in which voters declared they voted for Kotleba, although they disagree with a large part of his opinions and proposals. The reason was mostly in "protest," that is to say "to warn" standard politicians.

After success in the 2016 parliamentary elections, the interest in explaining the unexpected increase in popularity of Kotleba and his political party has become even more urgent. The previous local success of Kotleba himself could be trivialized by the low voter turnout and taken as an episodic matter, while more than 8% of votes in the national election were something more serious. Martin Hanus (2016) summarizes the three most common explanations of Kotleba's success. Firstly, he has been presented himself as a good Catholic in recent years proclaiming Christian values, and several Catholic priests openly supported him and his party. Secondly, as a result of the long-term neglect for finding solutions to the problem of the segregated Roma communities, the tensions in the regions with the Roma population are rising, which is a natural advantage to extremists like Kotleba. Thirdly, this is primarily a social phenomenon. Where people are unemployed and without hope for change; the chances of an electoral success of extremists rise sharply.

Let's have a look at what the data can tell us about these three hypotheses. Firstly- there is the assumption that what has helped Kotleba's popularity was his gradual profiling as a good Catholic with frequent appeals to God in his speeches, and support by several priests. This could indicate that Kotleba had successfully mobilized believers in particular. However, the available data shows that this is not the case. First of all, it should be said that in Slovakia, according to the results of the last population census in 2011, 62% of the population is reported to be

Catholic. Therefore, it is natural that we find this group of believers in the electorate of many political parties. More obvious differences would be found if we divide the believers in terms of the degree of practicing the faith. However, data show that only 2% of Kotleba's voters consider themselves to be deep believers. This makes Kotleba – ĽSNS the party with the lowest number of voters profiled as deep believers. If we divide the group of those not practicing religion into sub-groups, the highest level of support Kotleba are those who go to the church only on special occasions such as weddings or funerals, e.g., less than once a year. This is also the most numerous group in the population. Among them, Kotleba would receive up to 15% support, three times more than in a group of practicing believers. Kotleba has a lower, although still above average support, among those who never go to church (Múčka, 2017). A party that has for a long time (since 1989) been profiled as a party of Catholic believers is the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH). Exit poll conducted on the day of the parliamentary elections March 3rd 2016 shows that the party Kotleba - ĽSNS only got 1.9% of former KDH voters (although the movement recorded a significant outflow of voters in this election and for the first time in history did not reach the voting quorum to get into the parliament). It seems that Kotleba's profiling as a good Catholic is not a key reason of his success.

Another often used explanation for Kotleba's success is the connection of his support with the Roma problem. This connection is undoubtedly very important. On the other hand, statistical data do not confirm significant correlation between Kotleba's party election results and the proportion of the Roma population in the districts. M. Hanus (2016) found out that in the 15 districts with the highest proportion of Roma, Kotleba gained 9.3% of voters (slightly more than the average of 8 per cent), while in the 15 districts with the lowest share it was 8.1%. The difference is thus not that significant. Some factors, however, distorted this comparison: in the 15 districts with the highest proportion of Roma, a lot of Hungarians live as well. And this is a factor that does not help Kotleba, because in general, the more the percentages of votes for the Hungarian national political parties, the less for Kotleba. But even if we exclude from analysis

seven mixed Slovak-Hungarian districts, we see that in the Slovak districts with the highest proportion of Roma, only 10% of the voters voted for the Kotleba - ĽSNS, which is an insignificant above-average share. It is possible that this number is influenced by the Roma themselves who logically choose not to vote for Kotleba in these districts. But as we do not know whether local Roma are being approached by polls in negligible or, conversely, significant numbers, we cannot support this assumption. At the same time, the fact is that official statistics of the Roma population record only a part of the Roma, as many of them report to Slovak or Hungarian nationality.

It seems that the perception of a Roma problem as a serious threat is not related only to the number of Roma living in a given territory, nor does it necessarily relate to the immediate neighborhood with the so-called Roma segregated settlements. The perception of Roma problem is partly a projected bias rather than immediate experience¹⁴ or only through episodic meetings with the Roma perceived as being problematic. In the context of the generally perceived behavior of the Roma as problematic, it may be enough to make voters feel acute about this issue. Moreover, many experiences are mediated - i.e., communicated through the media, social networks, and so on. There are certain data available (TV noviny, 2016) concerning topics that were crucial for voter's decisions to vote for Kotleba, however no special item was dedicated to the Roma problem. However it is clear that whether the Roma problem was considered as a key reason to vote for Kotleba or only a marginal one, the voters at least had to tolerate Kotleba's radicalism in this question to the extent they did not change their choice. On the other hand, it should be emphasized that anti-Roma rhetoric is broadly accepted and naturalized in Slovakia and many other politicians, albeit in a milder form, are likely to use anti-Roma rhetoric as well or at least do not actively oppose it. It means anti-Roma sentiment is not exclusive for Kotleba's voters. These voters yet might have had other reasons not to vote for him (rejection of Kotleba as a

¹⁴ similar phenomenon was connected the anti-Hungarian agenda of Slovak national party and its sensitive perception, especially in the Kysuce region with a very small proportion of the Hungarian minority.

fascist, rejection of some other parts of his agenda, or preference for other topics and reasons as important in their decision making).

The third hypothesis relates to the connection of Kotleba's results with the social situation of the population, e.g., the assumption that Kotleba scored well mainly in regions with high unemployment and poor social infrastructure. Again, we looked at the districts results and their correlation with particular socio-economic indicators to confirm the hypothesis. In Slovakia, in January 2016, there were 19 districts where unemployment was higher than 15%, and in some cases over 20%. But there is no clear correlation with the support of the Kotleba-LSNS. In the seven affected districts, Kotleba's party received above average support, four were near average, and eight were under average. Even if we exclude from analysis the mixed Slovak-Hungarian districts, nothing change fundamentally; the districts with average or under average support for Kotleba remain in a moderate prevalence. At the same time, however, the highest profits were recorded by the LSNS party in the districts, which we could designate as "peripheral" - distant from the center (bigger city) with worse transport and social infrastructure. However, not all such districts have high preferences of Kotleba - LSNS. This might be the case when voters had a good reason to vote for another political party (voters in the south of Slovakia who voted mainly Hungarian national political parties and voters in the east of Slovakia with a strong support for Smer-SD, but also for other radical and currently marginal political parties – on the right and left part of political spectrum). At the same time however, above average results of Kotleba-LSNS can be found nationwide, including many districts which belong to better developed areas.

It should be noted that the increase in the support of extremist Kotleba - LSNS cannot be explained simply, each of the previous hypotheses definitely offers an explanation for a certain part of Kotleba's electorate. Among his voters, we can find people with a tendency to extremist and radical opinions, some of whom have voted for Kotleba already in the past, but many did not want to vote for a marginal party with no chance to enter the Parliament. However, when it turned out that Kotleba-LSNS had the real chance to succeed, they expressed themselves by their voting choice.

Part of the voters probably identify with part of Kotleba's extremist views (e.g., with radical solutions of Roma problem) but they might disagree with another part of the agenda (e.g., with celebration of the Slovak State, or his anti-EU orientation). In this cases it is very important which question is seen as a priority for the voter and of course an alternative offer. At the same time, we identified "protest" voters who could be divided into two, although probably interconnected, groups. Firstly, are a group of people whose protest was a result of frustration, people that have been forgotten by the system, and the second group - those whose protest was mainly connected with resistance to standard politicians, regardless of their own socio-economic status.

At the same time, the 2016 parliamentary elections campaign was going on at the time of the escalating refugee crisis. Slovak politicians from different political parties, with most active engagement of Prime Minister Fico, used anti-immigration rhetoric quite frequently. One of the hypotheses concerning Fico's motivation to engage in anti-immigration rhetoric so actively is that he wanted to prevent Kotleba from gaining voters who felt very concerned about possible influx of immigrants into Slovakia. Kotleba however claimed he is the only one who meant it seriously and will not admit a single refugee to come. The refugee crisis and its misuse by standard politicians thus might have helped Kotleba's preferences.

A few words should also be said about the relationship of Kotleba's party and various groups that disseminate conspiracy theories and disinformation campaigns. There is no doubt that these groups are interconnected and support each other. It is to say that the various conspirators often support Kotleba's political party, at least because they do not feel attacked by them as an illegitimate part of the discourse, and of course because of some thematic intersections. At the same time, however, the official pages and media tools of the Kotleba - ĽSNS are far less concerned with the active production and spreading of misinformation and conspiracy that one could expect. Their anti-Roma and anti-establishment normative rhetoric (even without the support of pseudo-sophisticated

argumentation of the conspiracy theories) seems to be, for now, sufficient for their success.

To conclude, we can say that many have voted for Kotleba simply because they could. The fact that Kotleba took off his uniform and became a holder of the legitimate office had removed various psychosocial barriers to his choice. At the time of writing this paper, some two years have passed since the parliamentary elections and preferences of Kotleba's political party are quite stable. In April 2018 he still had a 10.3% preference (Preferencie Teraz, 2018) despite the fact that Kotleba has alluded several times to his extremist background. Kotleba himself, for example, faces criminal prosecution for a donation in the sum of 1,488€, a number associated with neo-Nazi symbolism¹⁵. This year, a deputy for Kotleba-LSNS Milan Mazurek was found guilty (but this decision is still pending) for the "defamation of a nation, race and conviction in connection with the crime of incitement, defamation and threats to persons for their belonging to some race, nation, nationality, ethnic group, the color of the skin or their origin" for his statements in the private radio station Frontinus. Other members of this political party were also investigated or prosecuted. One of them had to give up the mandate immediately after being elected. So far, however, it seems that such "excesses" do not hinder Kotleba's voters - not even those who claim to be not extremists.

Before Kotleba and his political parties entered the Slovak political scene, the Slovak National Party (Slovak abbreviation: SNS) was seen as being the most relevant party of the far right. This political party was formed in March 1990, immediately after the Velvet Revolution. It was the only political party in Slovakia, which had formation of an independent Slovak state in its program (and hence the division of Czechoslovakia). This part of the agenda was important to SNS until this requirement was not met (but this was not primarily due to the political impact of SNS and its representatives). As Vladimír Mečiar, prime minister and chairman of the Movement for Democratic Slovakia, was considered to be the main

¹⁵ Two eights mean twice the eight letter (H) in the alphabet - the Nazi greeting "Heil Hitler." Number 14 means in the slang of the extreme right fourteen words of an American neo-Nazi terrorist David Lane: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children."

founder of the new Slovak state, SNS needed to find other topics to address the voters. The SNS's slogans in the 1998 elections were "family - the basis of the nation," "for God and for the nation" (which is also one of the slogans of Kotleba - People's Party Our Slovakia), "for the satisfaction of life for all Slovaks" and "Let's vote for Slovakia without parasites" (Školkaý, 1999). The party thus focused on voters who were addressed by nationalism and anti-minority orientation – mainly defined as opposed to the interests of neighboring Hungary and Hungarians living in Slovakia (Evans & Whitefield, 1998), Roma and other marginalized groups, whereby the party began to implement the program of "nationalizing the state" (Rybář, 2011).

In the next years, the party experienced several internal turbulences, in one period even splitting of the party into two entities, and consequently the party did not reach parliament in the 2002 - 2006 parliamentary period. At the same time, however, during this period, the party was reunited and in parliamentary elections in 2006 gained 11.73% of votes and became part of the ruling coalition in which the Social Democratic Smer-SD as the strongest party and the other coalition partner - the Movement for Democratic Slovakia (HZDS). This governmental coalition has recalled a great deal of criticism, partly for HZDS's participation in the government (although without controversial Vladimír Mečiar), but especially for cooperation of the social-democratic party with the nationalist party, viewed abroad as a far-right or even extremist. Due to the coalition with SNS, SMER-SD was suspended from membership in the Party of European Socialists, where cooperation with nationalists is considered something unacceptable.

It is necessary now, to mention a different perception of what is already considered to be extremely nationalist or far-right and even extremist in the Western European and Central European context, especially in Slovakia. As we have mentioned in the first part of the paper, the specific historical circumstances of Slovak statehood and the formation of the Slovak nation have a significant influence on what forms and the degree of nationalism and anti-minority is considered a normal part of politics and what is beyond perception of what is unacceptable. The fact

that a certain degree of conformational and everyday nationalism is part of political expressions of politicians from different political parties and is institutionalized and lived in with everyday social interactions, the Slovak National Party has always appeared to be in some sense radical with an aggressive adherence to certain requirements and priorities of national interests as a cross-cutting aspect of all levels of politics, but not extremist. On the contrary, Mudde (2005) considers SNS belonging to racist extremist parties, Melzer and Serafin (2013) speak about SNS as an extreme right party with additional epithet: “fascist-autocratic right, often including racism or xenophobia” (p. 14).

There has been attempts to explain the reasons for this different approach, e.g., Kymlicka (2007, p. 192). According to him, the post-communist societies (unlike the Western countries) did not cope with ethnic diversity inside the nation and even the modest demands by their national minorities (opening of private universities, the use of bilingual signs) can be subjected to securitization. Western countries rarely use the securitization discursive strategies to the requirements of autochthonous minorities, and these are not reasons for suspending normal democratic procedures or debates. They are part of “normal politics.” Political opponents do not use the strategy of moral panic even in those cases where minorities question the very legitimacy of the state (as in the case of the Catalans in Spain and Scots in the UK). According to Kymlicka (2007), one important fact explaining this is that the minorities in Western societies do not have the kin-state that would be a potential threat to a majority as a nation. The opposite is the truth for post-communist countries, where the national minorities can be understood as “minoritized majorities” (p. 186-187) – as “potentially irredentist groups loyal to their kin-state, as historically powerful and privileged groups that in the past collaborated with hegemonic imperial power to oppress the former minority (this is for example the case of Hungarian minority in Slovakia)” (ibid.).

This means that certain cautiousness towards minority demands is typical also for some other political parties and, to a greater extent to the largest political party SMER-SD. Its moderate nationalism tends to become

more pervasive under certain conditions. For example, in 2010, the government led by SMER-SD responded very quickly and resolutely to the Citizenship Act of Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orbán which allowed Hungarians living abroad to adopt Hungarian citizenship. It means the nationalism in Slovakia is largely enhanced by the fact that similar conformal and normalized nationalism is part of Hungarian politics as well, and moreover is often extraterritorial. And since the Hungarian minority is the largest in Slovakia, according to the latest population census, 8.5% of the population, the escalation of nationalism is often the result of the mutual interaction of the political representatives of Slovakia and Hungary. We can therefore find more explosive periods and, on the contrary, more peaceful periods - like now, as the coalition is, apart from Smer-SD, formed by nationalist SNS together with and the Hungarian minority party Most-Híd. This unconventional coalition was formed after the 2016 elections to create, by the words of former Prime Minister Róbert Fico, a “dyke against extremism” (SME, 2016) just after the entry of Kotleba - ĽSNS into parliament.

Whether we designate SNS as extremely right-wing or radically nationalist, the fact remains that a key part of its agenda is anti-minority. Politically, it is against the Hungarian minority, but occasionally also against Hungary. In the 2012 political program, the party writes about “permanent threats to sovereignty and integrity of Slovakia by our southern neighbor” and in its magazine Hungary is referred to as a Trojan horse of Europe (Kluknavská, 2012). The Roma minority is not primarily seen as a political threat, but in relation to the Roma issues, SNS often manifests open racism, for example, the billboard campaign disparaging Roma (SME, 2010). In 2012 the electoral program of SNS referred to the “Gypsy problem”¹⁶ and the abuse of the social policy of the state where “the decent majority population is working and supporting a non-conforming part.” In the program, the section of the “Gypsy Issue Solution” is the most elaborate part compared to other topics. SNS here proposed several

¹⁶ Gypsy is a historical term that is nowadays perceived as being either a folk or disparaging term depending of the context, but in official language, is considered to be unacceptable.

solutions, including the setting up of boarding schools for “children of maladjusted citizens” (SNS, 2012).

However, SNS gradually adopted the topics typical for the far right in the West. SNS is against multiculturalism, and is “determined to defend Christian values” while liberal migration policy according to SNS indirectly favors “ethnically hardly adaptable” groups. For this reason, it calls for the creation of a “European cultural fortress against those forms of multiculturalism that detracts us from our principles” (SNS, 2012). In January 2015, SNS chairman Andrej Danko spoke about “Islamization” when he said: “We have to do everything to keep Europe Christian. Today, Slovakia is the only state in Europe that does not have a mosque, and we must do everything to prevent a mosque from being built here in the future (...) I appeal to the government to combat Islamism, to fight against extremists not just in the form of declaration, because remember well, as they said in France, Islamization starts with kebab and in Bratislava, it is already here, and we realize what can be here about ten years ago” (Teraz.sk, 2015).

However, it has to be said that although Andrej Danko from 2010 was vice-chairman of SNS and since October 2012 its chairman, in his younger years he seemed to be as radical as his predecessors; he has distanced himself from the style of politics and rhetoric of former chairman Ján Slota who was perceived very negatively by the public because of his vulgarity. Currently, Andrej Danko, as chairman of the parliament and chairman of the government party, concentrates his attention rather on issues of Slovakia’s national interests, does not reproduce the hostile nationalism and tries become known as a responsible politician. However, it is important to say that the elements of authoritarianism and estatism (not in the classic sense of economic redistribution, as SNS is a right-wing political party, but in the sense of having state control over strategic economic interests and also other areas - culture, education, etc.) are still found in the statements and politics of SNS. An example can be found in the 2016 election program that was called the “Election Program for a Strong State” (SNS, 2016).

CONCLUSION

As we have just shown, the problem of extremism and radicalism in Slovakia is connected to the historical development of Slovak nation that started to be formed quite late, and can be marked as “delayed” nation (Podoba, 2003). In the 19th century, the Slovak national revival began with linguistic and cultural emancipation and directed towards self-determination, which however could not be accomplished under the conditions of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The Czechoslovak Republic founded in 1918, is generally regarded as a form of fulfilment of the right of the Slovaks to self-determination. However, the concept of Czechoslovakism stimulated the creation of an autonomist movement during the 1930s, which demanded a greater acceptance of the Slovak nation within Czechoslovakia. The activity of this movement in the context of the international political situation resulted in the emergence of the historically first independent Slovak state – a clerical-fascist Slovak Republic. The Communist regime of the re-established Czechoslovakia applied the principle of equality in all spheres of life, but it suppressed some national or ethnical specificities. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, Slovakia regained its independence in 1993 - this time as a democratic state, whose basic principle of pluralism allowed the existence of various groups, including radical and extremist political parties that started to use national sentiments officially expelled from political life during the previous period.

The internal contradiction between identity based on cultural and ethnical and civic principles clearly reflected on the relationship of Slovaks to themselves as well as to ethnic and national minorities living on Slovak territory. The internal contradiction between identity based on cultural and ethnic principles on one side and civic principles on the other is clearly reflected in the self-perception of Slovaks as well as to ethnic and national minorities living on Slovak territory. During the historical development of the Slovak nation, it is possible to identify nationalism in all forms (national emancipation, patriotism, - from the 1930s, escalation of hateful nationalism - during the period of the first Slovak Republic). Nationalism

as a ubiquitous element can be related to the fact that the Slovaks needed to constantly confirm their national identity. The roots of nationalism rest in the fact that most Slovaks still perceive the Slovak nation as a nation that has been oppressed for centuries by the Hungarians (within Hungary or the Habsburg monarchy), or by Czechs within the common Czechoslovak state, which often activates some defense mechanisms against national minorities or foreigners.

The rise of the nationalist tendencies in Slovakia after 1993 can generally be seen from two points of view, which complement each other. The first is global, linked to intensified globalization; the latter is internal, linked to the lately acquired national sovereignty.

1. Globalization has inevitably raised the question of the extent to which particular nation states are able to retain their own national identity and sovereignty as globalization equalize the economic, political, and cultural specificities, which in turn creates the opposite tendencies aimed at protecting the specific, unique and unrepeatable, the bearer of which is a nation. More and more problems, e.g., migration, or unemployment, are becoming global, and the responses of state authorities are, in many cases, perceived to be inadequate. It is often nationalism with its more radical forms that offer seemingly easy solutions to many problems.
2. The second point of view is that Slovakia has gained its national sovereignty only recently and most of the nation considers it (many times very sensitive and emotional) to be one of its greatest values, which it is willing to defend. In this situation, most political actors identify a citizen as a nationally sensitive person and take this into account in their programs and activities. And conversely, the citizens are subsequently influenced by these political programs. The use of the so-called "national card" in political programs across the entire party spectrum is typical for the Slovak party system. Unfortunately, in the political environment of the Slovak Republic, such expressions of politicians have been tolerated that the boundaries of what is

considered to be normal behavior in politics has been shifted significantly. This is why, in the Slovakia's circumstances, it is quite difficult to establish the exact boundaries between constitutionally conformist nationalism and its escalated forms – ultra-nationalism or right-wing extremism.

It is a fact, however, that Kotleba-ĽSNS is an extremist political party, easily distinguishable from other parties, and practically all other political parties in Slovakia distance themselves from any possible cooperation with it. Some of them even talk about the danger of extremism and the necessity to fight against it. At the same time, however, some of the politicians from these political parties themselves reproduce the same kind of discourse, for example former prime minister Fico during the refugee crisis (see Androvičová, 2017), or at least do not actively oppose some of the topics that seems to be crucial for voters of extremists, namely the blaming of the Roma, Hungarians, immigrants, sexual minorities and thus create an environment in which extremism is far more easily acceptable for a significant part of the voters.

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Chapter 4

ASYLUM SEEKERS' ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the chapter is to describe asylum seekers' access to health care and its outcomes in the Slovak Republic. Asylum seekers represent a specific group, since they are not included in the Slovak health insurance system. Therefore, they do not have the same rights regarding health care as citizens of the Slovak Republic. The exception, however, is urgent care, to which asylum seekers have the same right. Surveillance study results are based on the mapping of studies and statistical data identifying asylum seekers' access to health care and its outcomes. The surveillance study selectively maps those facts during the asylum procedure. After applying for asylum, asylum seekers are placed in a detention camps where basic medical examinations are performed. They detect the possible presence of tuberculosis, syphilis, salmonellosis and HIV. After completing all medical examinations, asylum seekers are placed in

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residential camps where in addition to health care, psychological assistance is provided.

Keywords: asylum seekers, health care, Slovak Republic

INTRODUCTION

The topic of health care and its associated topic of health insurance for immigrants coming from non-EU countries has become quite frequently discussed in recent years. This is due to the increased number of immigrants coming to the Slovak Republic, who are forced to deal with this situation. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to describe the access of immigrants, who are asylum seekers, to health care while pointing out the outcomes of this health care in the Slovak Republic. Immigrant groups coming from third countries pose a health risk because they can bring various diseases with them.

Access to health care is one of the major factors within the structural dimension of integration. In this context, immigrants who have applied for asylum in the Slovak Republic may be considered as a specific group because they are not included in the Slovak health insurance system. For this reason, they do not have the same rights to health care as citizens of Slovakia, with an exception to urgent care. The increasing number of immigrants coming to Slovakia and the fact that we are part of the European Community that shows efforts to regulate immigration at the national level is an impulse to reflect on the future developments in this area.

The introduction to the issue is presented in the first part of the chapter, which is dealing with the legal regulation of the provision of health care in the Slovak Republic during the asylum procedure. The second part is focuses on the description of results of the case study, which is aimed at mapping of outcomes of health care during asylum procedure of immigrants in the Slovak Republic. The authors want to point out the

need to explore this issue and the creation of new strategies in relation to the effective integration of immigrants in this area.

HEALTH CARE IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Access to health care is governed by Act no. 580/2004 Coll. on health insurance and amending and supplementing Act no. 95/2002 Coll. on Insurance and on amendments to certain laws, as amended by the act on Public Health Insurance in the Slovak Republic. This law defines public health insurance and related legal relations arising on the basis of health insurance.

Health care recipients are natural persons who are provided with:

- §2 Sec. 1 which defines health care as a set of occupational activities performed by health care professionals, including the provision of medicines, medical aids and dietetic foods, in order to extend the life of a natural person, enhancing the quality of life and the healthy development of future generations; health care includes prevention, dispensary, diagnosis, treatment, biomedical research, nursing care and midwifery,
- §2 Sec. 3: “Urgent care is a health care provided to a person in a sudden change of his/her state of health which immediately endangers his/her life or some of his/her vital life functions, without the immediate provision of health care, the person may seriously endanger his/her health, it causes him/her sudden and unbearable pain or sudden changes in his/her behavior and actions, under which the immediate threat to self or his/her surroundings is imminent. Urgent care is also:
 - health care provided during childbirth,
 - Examination of a person identified as a possible source of rapidly spreading and life-threatening infection, diagnosis and treatment of a person with a rapidly spreading and life-threatening infection,

- urgent transport of the person to the health care facility, urgent transport between health care facilities, urgent transport of the human organ donor and the recipient of the human organ for transplantation, urgent transport of health care workers carrying out activities related to the procurement of human organs and urgent transport of the human organ for transplantation; urgent transport is carried out by emergency health service providers.”
- §7: Forms of health care (Act No. 576/2004 Coll., on health care).

According to the Act no. 576/2004 Coll. On health care, following forms of care are distinguished:

1. Ambulatory care:
 - general (for adults, children and adolescents),
 - specialized (gynecological and dentistry),
 - specialized other,
 - Emergency medical services.
2. Institutional care.
3. Pharmacy care.
4. Nursing care in a social welfare facility.

Ambulatory care is provided to people whose health condition does not require continuous provision of health care that would take longer than 24 hours. It is also provided in home, resp. in a natural environment of these people. Institutional health care is provided in hospitals or other inpatient facilities if the patient's condition requires continuous provision of such care for more than 24 hours (Hlavatý, Liptáková et al. 2011). According to Act no. 576/2004 Coll. On health care, institutional health care is provided according to:

- the recommendation of the attending physician,
- decision of a court,

- the request of a person, even without the recommendation of the attending physician.

The aforementioned forms of health care are supplemented by the pharmacy care, in which responsibility is to provide the procurement, preparation, storage, delivery and sale of medicines or other medical devices. Nursing care in social welfare facilities is provided to people, who are their clients. In social-legal protection and social guardianship facilities for children, nursing care is provided to those for whom social protection measures for children and social care are implemented (Act No. 576/2004 Coll. On health care).

Certain services are also present in relation to health care, such as provision of food and bed while providing institutional health care. It also involves the processing of patient data in electronic form, which will be used for purposes of health insurance, transport, medical assessment and the provision of medical records (Hlavatý, Liptáková et al. 2011).

The provision of health care benefits is governed by several legal regulations:

- Act no. 576/2004 Coll. On health care,
- Act no. 577/2004 Coll. On the extent of health care reimbursed on the basis of public health insurance and on reimbursements for health care services,
- Act no. 363/2011 Coll. On the scope and conditions for the payment of medicines, medical aids and dietetic foods on the basis of public health insurance and
- Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 722/2004 Coll. the amount of the insured's reimbursement for health care services.

Another important term is medical services. These are the services performed in the context of the provision of health care for diseases listed in the International Classification of Diseases. There are listed medical actions leading to lifesaving, curing the disease, avoiding serious health

complications, avoiding a worsening of the severity of the disease, resp. the transition to the chronic stage, effective prevention, diagnosis of diseases and the alleviation of symptoms. In addition to these criteria, the following are also taken into consideration:

- the effectiveness of medical services in the context of prevention, diagnosis and treatment,
- the benefits of medical services as a part of prevention, diagnosis or treatment in relation to the reduction of morbidity and mortality,
- improving prevention, diagnosis and treatment in comparison with existing prevention, diagnosis, or treatment options.

Medical service is a comprehensive activity of a health care worker, which is a basic unit of health care provision. Prevention represents education and training, aimed at protecting the preservation or recovery of a person's health, active search for possible causes of diseases, their eradication and disease prevention, the search for pathological processes for treatment, active disease monitoring to prevent deterioration of the state of health. Dispensarisation is an active and systematic monitoring of the state of health of a person who is expected to have degrading health condition, his/her examination and treatment. Diagnosis is the detection and assessment of a person's health condition, and in the case of detection of health disorder or disease, determination the severity of the disease and diagnosis. The treatment is the conscious influence on person's health in order to restore his/her health, to prevent the deterioration of the state of health, the mitigation of the signs and the consequences of the disease. A treatment regimen is a person's diet designed to support a treatment that is determined by the attending physician (Act No. 576/2004 Coll. On Health Care). It should be noted that the term of the treatment regime violation cannot be found in the law, since there is no such legal definition. According to Act no. 576/2004 Coll. On health care, biomedical research is part of health care and it represents the acquisition and verification of new scientific knowledge and knowledge from midwifery assistance. Nursing

practice is the practical implementation of the nurse's activity, the activity of the midwife. Maternity care is the health care of an assistant with specialist competence under a specific regulation on a woman and child during pregnancy, childbirth and puerperium.

The legal regulation of the public health insurance, under which the health care is provided to the public health insurers, is regulated by Act no. 580/2004 Coll. On health insurance. The scope of health care covered by public health insurance and reimbursement for services related to its provision is set by Act No. 577/2004 Coll. On the extent of health care covered by public health insurance and on health care of related services.

The system of public health insurance is provided by health insurance companies which, under contracts with health care providers, cover the cost of health care within the statutory scope. The Health Care Surveillance Authority oversees the activities of health insurers and the entire system of public health insurance. Funding for health care is provided by insurance premiums paid by employees, employers, self-employed persons, self-payers and the state. The state is the payer of premiums for health insurance under the Health Insurance Act for a wide range of people, for example, those who are kept in job seekers' records, old-age or invalidity pension recipients, parental benefit recipients, dependent children, recipients of financial contributions for care also. The public health insurance in the Slovak Republic provides benefits in kind. This means medical care including dental care, hospitalization, medicines, medical aids, dietetic foods, spa stays, health care services such as transportation, hospital meals, medical assessment, etc. Health care benefits are provided to all insured of public health insurance, irrespective of nationality, free of charge or for partial reimbursement, the amount of which is defined by legislation (Drozd 2013).

In the context of modern perception of health, informed consent is an important part, as this consent significantly activates patient in treatment processes and increases their legal and medical awareness. The need for patients' involvement in treatment is the essence of specific health care services, while the health care represents an intervention in physical

integrity (Cehlárová 2009). According to Act no. 576/2004 Coll. On health care, health care professionals are obliged to inform about the purpose, nature, consequences and risks of providing health care, but also about the choices of proposed procedures and the risks of refusal of provided health care. Further, they are obliged to inform the persons to be provided with health care or other persons designated by them and a legal guardian, guardian, tutor, other natural person as the parent who has a child in custody. Last but not least, attending health care professionals are required to provide instruction clearly, thoughtfully, without pressure, with the possibility and sufficient time to freely decide for informed consent and adequate intellectual and mental maturity and health of the person to be instructed. It is important to note that according to law, everyone who has the right to instruction has the right to refuse it. Informed consent is a demonstrable consent to the provision of health care services which was preceded by instruction under this Act.

IMMIGRANTS ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE IN SLOVAKIA

According to the Act on Health Insurance, all natural persons who have a permanent residence in the Slovak Republic are obliged to have health insurance. For natural persons who do not have permanent residence under the Act on Residence of Foreigners in the territory of the Slovak Republic, public health insurance arises on the day when the conditions for health insurance are met. According to this regulation, a natural person who is not permanently resident in the territory of the Slovak Republic and who is not insured in another Member State of the European Union is obliged for mandatory health insurance and he/she is:

- employed by an employer having its registered office in the territory of the Slovak Republic,
- a self-employed person,
- Asylum seeker under the Asylum Act,

- a student from another Member State or a foreign student studying at a school in the Slovak Republic under an international treaty binding the Slovak Republic,
- a foreigner secured in the territory of the Slovak Republic,
- a minor who resides in the territory of the Slovak Republic without a legal representative or a natural person responsible for his/her upbringing,
- a foreigner who is in custody or serving a sentence, a dependent family member of an insured person who was born to an insured person in another Member State (Koldinská, Scheu, Štefko 2016).

Third-country nationals have the same rights and obligations in public health insurance as citizens of the Slovak Republic. According to §2 Sec. 7 (p) and (q) of the Act on Health Insurance is state the payer of the insurance for asylum seekers and foreigners in the territory of Slovakia. The Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic reimburses the health care of persons granted subsidiary protection that are not publicly insured, in the extent that it is covered by public health insurance, through the General Health Insurance Company, Inc. (VšZP) In practice, doctors refuse to provide medical care because they do not know the document (the so-called “Pink card”) and therefore do not know that this is evidence of eligibility for health care. Without the intervention of a social worker, the provision of health care would be problematic. The presence of a third person in case of disease or injury is a necessity (Act no. 576/2004 Coll., on health care).

Immigrant is obliged under the Asylum Act to conclude health insurance within three working days of receipt of the residence document and to prove at the check of the stay that he / she is health insured in the territory of the Slovak Republic. Health insurance Act assumes that not all immigrants will qualify for statutory insurance, so it is stipulated that these immigrants conclude an individual health insurance on the basis of which individual insured persons are provided with individual health care to the extent stipulated in the insurance contract under the Civil Code. Immigrant, who is authorized to:

- temporary stay for business purposes,
- temporary stay for the purpose of special activity (sporting, artistic activity, etc.),
- temporary stay for research and development purposes,
- temporary stay for the purposes of family reunification,
- the temporary stay of a third-country national who has been granted long-term resident status in another Member State,

is obliged to pass a document proving his/her health insurance to the police department within 30 days of receipt of the residence document. Health insurance is also evidenced by an application for an extension of a temporary residence permit or an application for permanent or long-term residence (Koldinská, Scheu, Štefko 2016).

Based on the above, it can be concluded that current legislation relating to the provision of health care to immigrants, grants this group equal rights only in the context of urgent medical care. Almost all immigrants who are legally resident in the Slovak Republic must have health insurance and its existence must be documented by the police at the time of granting the stay. For each category of immigrant, the fundamental difference is that not all of them can be insured and benefit from the system of public health insurance. Part of them is *de facto* obliged to be insured but does not have the access to the public insurance system, even at a voluntary level. For this reason, they have to conclude commercial health insurance, which is financially more demanding.

Private, commercial health insurance is not defined by any law. Certain categories of immigrants often have to establish commercial health insurance if this is a condition of granting a residence permit. Conventional commercial health insurance is determined on the basis of individual assessments of an application made by immigrants. There is insufficient competition in this area, as only one health insurance company offers private insurance for immigrants. In case that this insurance company refuses to insure immigrants in the event of a bad health condition, they will have to insure abroad (Bargerová et al. 2012).

In the case of asylum seekers, the provision of health care is ensured in accordance with Chap. 2, Art. 15, Sec. 1 and 2 of Council Directive 2003/9 / EC of 27 January 2003. This Directive lays down minimum standards for the provision of health care to immigrants coming from third countries. The Slovak Republic provides immigrants with the urgent health care for asylum seekers, which includes emergency health care and necessary treatment of diseases in accordance with Act no. 480/2002 Coll. about asylum. Asylum seekers who are not insured by public health insurance are provided with urgent health care. This is also ensured for minor asylum seekers who have been victims of abuse, neglect, exploitation, torture, cruel inhuman treatment, degrading treatment and suffering from the consequences of armed conflict. In connection with systemic provision of health care, the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic shall issue a document certifying the entitlement to health care to the asylum seekers.

The Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic provides primary and secondary health care to the asylum seekers through contracted health care facilities. Health care is provided to asylum seekers through medical and preventive care, the extent of which is related to the necessity and urgency of the medical treatment in accordance with Act no. 577/2004 Coll. On the extent of medical treatment reimbursed on the basis of public health insurance and reimbursements for health care services. In asylum centers, primary and secondary general medical care is provided through nurses and contract physicians (Koldinská, Scheu, Štefko, 2016).

During the stay in the detention camp, asylum seekers are subjected to a health check, blood screening, X-ray, quarantine measures, and the quarantine duration is 30 days. After the quarantine, asylum seekers will be transferred to residential camps. In residential camps, immigrants are provided with accommodation, meals, meal money, basic health care and pocket money. In case that input screening show the presence of disease, resp. if the examining physician suspects the particular disease, the asylum seekers are required to undergo a special examination and subsequent treatment in specialized health care facilities (Brnula 2008).

The Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic cooperates with the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic and the General Health Insurance Company, as well as with health care facilities, in the framework of provision of health care for immigrants. Control of medical care provided to asylum seekers is carried out by the Migration Office, which also provides for the establishment, recording and keeping of the basic medical records of each asylum seeker, by contract practitioners who practice in asylum facilities. Each asylum seeker has therefore his/her health card registered in the asylum facility where he/she is (Gubáš 2016).

Immigrants with tolerated residence do not belong to public health insurers as there is an administrative barrier of expulsion. However, the state grants them the right to have such insurance if they fulfill the conditions. The state is also a payer of health insurance for immigrants who are in material need and receive a benefit under the Act on Assistance in Material Need. In practice, however, it is often the case that immigrants with a tolerated residence have a problem with the fulfillment of this right, for technical reasons (registration in the public health insurance system) and for practical reasons (the Office of Labor, Social Affairs and Family does not grant an immigrant the benefit in material need, because they cannot provide their permanent address) (Bargerová, Divinský 2008).

On the basis of the above, it is possible to define the problems in the area of providing health care to immigrants:

- asylum seekers are disadvantaged regarding the health care because they have no right to choose a health care provider or are in some situations reliant on the assessment of their health status by those with insufficient qualifications,
- in some asylum facilities there is a low level of provided health services,
- medical services related to addiction treatment and special care for immigrants with mental disorders are not provided in asylum facilities,

- inadequate health insurance legislation applicable to immigrants with tolerated residence.

HEALTH CARE IN DETENTION AND RESIDENTIAL CAMPS

Every asylum seeker in the detention camp undergoes a personal medical check-up, which is an entrance examination, including blood collection and X-ray examination. In this closed-type facility, asylum seekers remain for 30 days and immigrants may not leave. This is because of prevention in relation to the majority society, as medical examinations take place in the detention camp (Brnula 2008). “The basic tests that are performed are: rectal swab to confirm or disprove the suspicion of salmonellosis, blood sampling for hepatic tests, HIV tests, BWR syphilis, chest X-ray to refute or confirm TB. Each camp has its ambulance with the nurse and the contractual clinician goes to the camp usually twice a week. If certain diseases are confirmed, treatment will be initiated at the appropriate department of the nearest hospital or national or central institutions.” (Levická, Mrázová 2005, s. 96) Evaluation of tuberculin test is problematic, according to Laukka (2011), because most immigrants come from countries where they have been vaccinated multiple times. In the case of children who do not have a vaccination card, vaccination is mandatory. Brucháčová (2015) additionally adds control of the development of children and pregnant women, checking vaccination and screening of victims of violence and human trafficking. Last but not least, the quarantine measure is also targeted at parasitic infections (Lauková 2011). As part of the medical examination of immigrants, proceeds according to Decree No. 38 of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic (2011), which regulates details of the issuing of medical assessments, in which an immigrant coming from a third country does not suffer from any disease threatening public health (Brucháčová 2016).

Subsequent to the completion of all medical examinations, asylum seekers are transferred to residential camps. The main difference between the residence and the detention camp is that the residence camps are open-

type facilities that asylum-seekers can leave on the basis of the permit. In this facility, the immigrant is provided with comprehensive health, psychological and social care (Brnula 2008).

Immigrants arriving in the receiving country have similar health problems as the domestic population. The problem, however, are conditions in which they temporarily live and move because they cause frequent acute aggravation of chronic diseases, which subsequently become serious and sometimes life-threatening (Adamkovičová, Balogová, Virág 2016). The health problems that immigrants face are especially accidental injuries, hypothermia, burns, cardiovascular events, complications related to pregnancy and childbirth, diabetes and hypertension. In addition, there are risks associated with population movement, i.e., psychosocial disorders, higher levels of infant mortality, drug use, nutrition disorders, alcoholism, but also interruption of continuous treatment, respiratory infections, skin diseases and so on (Pochybová 2016).

Immigrants coming from countries that are not members of the European Union come mostly from the poorest countries. In these countries the level of health care is very low. From the epidemiological point of view, the immigration of the population of these countries shows a high rate of tuberculosis indications that have serious consequences (Lauková 2011). In this context, the immigrants living in the territory of the Slovak Republic, who are so called “black workforce,” are the risk group. It is not possible to check the health status of this group of immigrants because they often live in poor living conditions, have low income and are without social assistance (Gubas 2016). According to Brucháčová (2016), the Slovak Republic belongs to countries with a very well-established system of capture of communicable diseases and currently represents a country with less immigration pressure.

In the context of this, it is necessary to emphasize that good quality care for immigrants cannot be ensured only by the health care system, because social determinants of health, such as socially safe housing, education or employment, have also the impact on health. In relation to the whole society, therefore, there is a need to ensure access to vulnerable

groups, particularly small children of immigrants, to acute care, even under normal conditions. Last but not least, health care professionals should have knowledge of the recognition and treatment of communicable diseases and strengthen their readiness to communicate with immigrants coming from different cultural environments (Lauková 2011).

METHODS

In the selective mapping of information related to the presented issue, the survey study was oriented to:

- Searching for information on immigrants' access to health care, using the Proquest, Science Direct, Springer Link and Web of Science databases, as well as specialized monographs dealing with this issue. Concerning the selection of specific information sources, the following criteria were chosen: implementation of research in the conditions of the Slovak Republic, target group of immigrants, research carried out in the time horizon after joining the European Union, and the results had to include findings within the area of health care.
- Mapping of current health care outcomes, using information from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic and the Institute of Health Information and Statistics, which is within the competence of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic.

The study of the available information sources ran from January to May 2018. Under the term health care outcome, we mean the result of examinations of immigrants, which:

- determines whether an immigrant is able to stay in the camp,
- identifies whether an immigrant is dangerous to one's health or others,
- identifies potential victims of violence,

- determines whether there is a medical condition causing an immigrant's residence limitation,
- defines the protection of public health.

CONCLUSION

Prior to the presentation of the results we find it necessary to provide basic descriptions of immigrants living on the territory of the Slovak Republic. The number of immigrants living in Slovakia with a residence permit is 97 934 in June 2017, with a share of the total Slovak population of 1.8%. We can conclude that since the accession of the Slovak Republic to the European Union, the number of legally living immigrants has increased more than fourfold, as 22 108 immigrants lived in Slovakia in 2004 (ÚHCP, 2017). At the same time, we have reported the number of asylum seekers in the last five years. Within the current period, it can be seen that in the year 2017, 166 immigrants applied for asylum in the Slovak Republic, while the asylum was granted to 29 immigrants. Subsidiary protection was granted in 25 cases, 73 procedures were suspended and citizenship was granted to 6 immigrants. For the year 2018, 49 asylum seekers applied for asylum, it was granted in one case. Subsidiary protection was granted to 4 immigrants, 16 procedures were suspended and citizenship was not granted to any immigrant.

Table 1. Statistics of asylum seekers

Year	Number of applications for asylum	Asylum granted	Asylum procedure suspended	Subsidiary protection granted/rejected	Procedures stopped	Citizenship granted
2014	331	14	197	99/41	163	12
2015	330	8	124	41/24	148	5
2016	146	167	82	12/13	35	3
2017	166	29	77	25/16	73	6
2018	49	1	34	5/4	16	0

Source: Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic.

Immigrants' Access to Health Care

Immigrants who are legally resident in the Slovak Republic are obliged to have health insurance (Bargerová et al. 2012), on the basis of which they are provided ambulatory and institutional health care (Maslen, Brnula 2004). In the framework of the provision of health care services Popper et al. (2006) draw attention to the findings suggesting that access to these services by immigrants is made easier by more informal acquaintances and contacts. Bargerová et al. (Bargerová et al. 2012) point to inaccessibility of Slovak public health care for certain categories of immigrants. They are then forced to conclude insurances that are financially more demanding for them. Last but not least, the provision of health care is complicated due to the ignorance of the Slovak language by immigrants (Bargerová et al. 2012), but also by bureaucracy in Slovakia (Štefančík, Lenč 2012). According to research study by Bargerová et al. (Bargerová, Fajnorová, Chudžíková 2011), in practice many doctors are often unaware of the existence of the so-called "Pink card," i.e., a document proving an immigrant's entitlement to health care. They also do not have information about the status of holders of this document or the extent of health care they can provide on the basis of the document. Authors point to the fact that in the event of disease or injury, the presence of a third person is necessary and without the intervention by social workers it would make the provision of health care to immigrants in Slovakia very problematic.

Health Care Outcomes

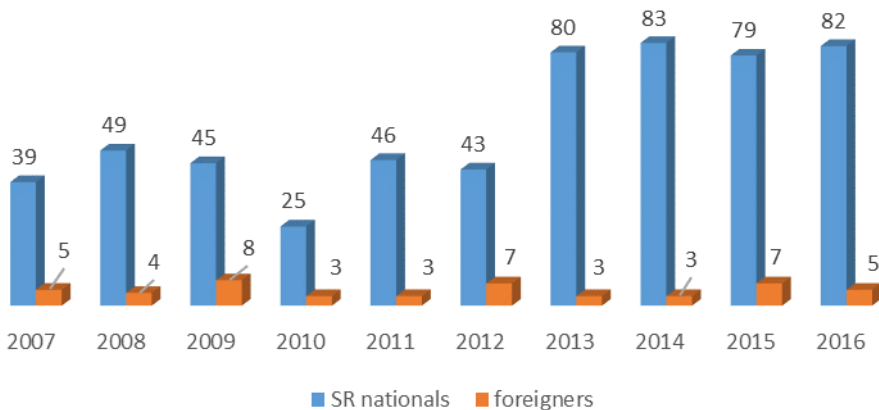
We have focused on diseases that pose a threat to public health as part of our findings on health care outcomes. V oblasti infekčných chorôb existujú štatistické údaje o počte diagnostikovaných prípadov HIV infekcie. Slovakia is one of the Member States of the European Union with the lowest incidence of HIV infection. It can be stated that the last decade shows an upward trend in the incidence of new cases of HIV infection, along with the increasing number of individuals living with this infection.

The latest statistics released on December 31, 2017 report 756 citizens of the Slovak Republic living with HIV infection. In the Slovak Republic, from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017, 6 new cases of HIV infection were diagnosed among immigrants, of which 1 is in the stage of AIDS (Regional Public Health Authority 2017).

In connection with the occurrence of HIV infection, no detailed information about specific numbers of immigrants who have been diagnosed with the infection in 2017 were published. However, statistical data from 2016 are available. These data are shown in Figure 1, which also compares the number of cases of HIV infection since 2007 (Regional Public Health Authority 2017).

In the Slovak Republic, 246 transmissible infections were imported in 2016, with diarrheal diseases dominated (138 cases):

- typhoid (1),
- salmonellosis (52),
- shigellosis (1),
- diarrhea caused by *E. coli* (5),
- campylobacteriosis (38),



Source: Regional Public Health Authority 2017.

Figure 1. Trends in the Number of HIV Cases Diagnosed in the Slovak Republic.

- rotavirus, adenovirus and norovirus enteritis (12),
- giardiasis (22),
- intestinal infections caused by other bacteria (2),
- diarrhea and gastroenteritis caused by unrecognized agents (3),
- trichuriasis (1) a helminthosis (1),
- campylobacteriosis (38) (Health Yearbook of the Slovak Republic 2016).

In addition to these diseases in 2016, 10 cases of hepatitis type B surface antigen (HBsAg) were reported and 19 cases of viral hepatitis:

- VHA (10),
- VHB (2) – chronic in 1 case,
- VHE (1) – chronic v 4 cases.

Hepatitis type B surface antigen has been imported in 10 mentioned cases by 2 immigrants from Ukraine, 2 immigrants from Vietnam, 2 immigrants from Iraq, from the Republic of Korea, China, Germany and Israel (Health Yearbook of the Slovak Republic 2016).

Additional diseases imported to Slovakia in 2016 included:

- TB (1),
- pertussis (4),
- varicella (3),
- parotitis (14),
- spirochete infections (1),
- meningococcal meningitis (1),
- malaria (5),
- rabies suspected animal bites (20),
- brucellosis (1),
- Dengue fever (3),
- hemorrhagic viral fever transmitted by mosquitoes (3),
- tick-borne encephalitis (2),

- syphilis (22),
- Anogenital herpesvirus infections (1),
- HIV (7).

These diseases were imported from the following countries: France (3), Thailand (3), Congo (1), Hungary (28), Bulgaria (10), Cambodia (4), Turkey (11), Croatia (16), United Kingdom (6), Germany (9), Poland (6), Italy (2), Serbia (2), China (2), Somalia (10), Austria (5), Indonesia (8), Spain (5), Romania (6), Cyprus (1), Czech Republic (27), Egypt (5), Greece (4), Tunisia (1), Bosnia and Herzegovina (1), Barbados (1), Nigeria (2), Uzbekistan (2), Israel (1), USA (1), Morocco (1), Russia (6), Ukraine (19), Colombia (2), Azerbaijan (1), Malaysia (2), Slovenia (1), Iraq (12), Korea (1), Sudan (1), Algeria (1), Syria (2), Madagascar (1), Mali (2), Georgia (1), Dominican Republic (3), Singapore (1), Switzerland (1), Netherlands (2), Kazakhstan (1), Vietnam (5), United Arab Emirates (1), Venezuela (12) (Health Yearbook of the Slovak Republic 2016).

The Health Yearbook of the Slovak Republic in 2016 also records the number of immigrants hospitalized. Their total number was 3431, of which 1812 were men and 1619 were women. The total number of deaths of immigrants in the Slovak Republic was 27 (Health Yearbook of the Slovak Republic 2016).

We also examined the health status of immigrants in the detention camp of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, but the latest available information is from the period from 2009 to 2011. Data from this period are evaluated based on the type of disease and the country of origin of immigrants. In particular, it was infectious, sexually transmitted, and skin diseases, and the proportion of infected immigrants in 2006 was 6.54% of all immigrants registered in the detention camp. Until 2011, the number of registered immigrants who have applied for asylum in the Slovak Republic has been decreasing, reducing the share of individual diseases. In 2010, this share was 4.79% and in 2011 4.15% of all registered immigrants in the detention camp (Bilic, Krogmann 2013).

Table 2. Selected diseases of immigrants detected in the detention camp of Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic in the years 2009-2011

type of disease \ year	2009		2010		2011	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
scabies	15	62,5	10	66,7	2	22,2
giardiasis	3	12,5	0	0	0	0
HIV	1	4,2	0	0	3	33,3
syphilis	2	8,3	2	13,3	4	44,4
hepatitis type A	3	12,5	0	0	0	0
dysentery	0	0	1	6,7	0	0
H1N1	0	0	2	13,3	0	0
total	24	100	15	100	9	100

n = frequency.

Source: Bilic, Krogmann 2013.

51 cases of hepatitis type B surface antigen (HBsAg), from the total number of registered immigrants, were reported in the period from 2009 and 2011 in the detention camp. In 2009 it was 16.9%, in 2010 25% and in 2011 57.8% (26) of the total number of registered immigrants. The reason for this increase in 2011 was the temporary placement of 100 immigrants from Afghanistan and Georgia in the detention camp. Significantly, hepatitis type B surface antigen (HBsAg) has also been diagnosed among Vietnamese and Russian immigrants (13.7% for both groups of immigrants). Based on these facts, the Regional Public Health Authority states that the most frequent carriers of the mentioned disease in the Slovak Republic were the immigrants from the Central East, South East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. These are territories that are termed as areas with high presence of endemic hepatitis type B surface antigen (HBsAg) state carrier (Bilic, Krogmann 2013).

The most common disease in the detention camp from 2009 to 2011 was hepatitis type C. In 2009, it was 49.3%, with up to 43% of these immigrants coming from the Russian Federation and 17% from Afghanistan. In 2010, the share of these persons was 46.2%, of which half (50%) were immigrants from Georgia and 17% from the Russian

Federation. This share decreased in 2011 and accounted for 22.2%, with 70% of immigrants from Georgia and 20% of Russian Federation. Higher level of hepatitis type C state carrier has also been demonstrated in immigrants from Armenia (5.8%), Iraq (7.3%) and Afghanistan (10.2%) (Bilic, Krogmann 2013).

For clarity, we present an overview of selected diseases of all registered immigrants infected in the detention camp of the Ministry of Interior, from 2009 to 2011.

DISCUSSION

This chapter describes asylum seekers' access to health care in the Slovak Republic and its outcomes. Apart from the urgent health care to which asylum seekers have the right, this group of immigrants does not have the same right to health care in the territory of the Slovak Republic as its citizens. Based on the mapping of studies and statistics that track immigrants' access to health care and health outcomes, we have come up with results of case study selectively mapping these facts.

Regarding identifying immigrants' access to health care, it is possible to state that Slovak public health care system is unavailable for certain categories of immigrants, thereby forcing them to conclude insurance which is significantly more costly for them. The provision of health care is complicated, due to the lack of knowledge of the Slovak language by immigrants, but also due to bureaucracy. In practice, physicians are often unaware of the existence of a document proving immigrants' entitlement to health care. They also do not have information about the status of the holders of this document or the extent of health care they can provide under basis of this document. In cases of disease or injury, the presence of a third person is necessary and without intervention by social workers the provision of health care to immigrants in Slovakia would be very problematic.

Concerning the health care outcomes of immigrants, the most recent data from 2017 relates only to the incidence of new cases of HIV infection.

In Slovakia, from the beginning to the end of 2017, 6 new cases of HIV infection have been diagnosed among immigrants, one case being in the stage of AIDS. In 2016, there are 5 cases of HIV infection among immigrants.

The most up-to-date information on other diseases threatening public health is from the year 2016. That year, 246 transmissible diseases were imported into Slovakia, with diarrheal diseases dominated among them in 138 cases. In addition to these diseases, 10 cases of surface antigen hepatitis type B (HBsAg) state carrier and 19 cases of viral hepatitis were diagnosed. Hepatitis B surface antigen state carrier has been imported in 10 cases by 2 immigrants from Ukraine, 2 Vietnamese immigrants, two immigrants from Iraq, the Republic of Korea, China, Germany and Israel. Tuberculosis, parotitis, malaria and others were among the most frequently imported diseases.

The case study also selectively mapped the health status of immigrants in the detention camp of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic. The most up-to-date data is from 2009 to 2011. During this period, infectious, sex and skin diseases were the most prevalent in the detention camp and the infected immigrants represented 6.54% of all immigrants enrolled in the detention camp in 2009. Until 2011, the number of registered immigrants who have applied for asylum in the Slovak Republic has been decreasing, which reduces the share of individual diseases. In 2010, this share was 4.79% and in 2011 4.15% of all registered immigrants in the detention camp. There were also 51 cases of hepatitis type B surface antigen (HBsAg) state carrier in the total number of reported immigrants. In 2009 it was 16.9%, in 2010 25% and in 2011 57.8% (26) of the total number of registered immigrants. The reason for this increase in 2011 was the temporary placement of 100 immigrants from Afghanistan and Georgia in the detention camp. Significantly, hepatitis type B surface antigen (HBsAg) state carrier has also been evidenced among Vietnamese and Russian immigrants (13.7% for both groups of immigrants). Based on these facts, the Regional Public Health Authority states that the most frequent carriers of the mentioned disease in the Slovak Republic were migrants from the Middle East, South East Asia and sub-

Saharan Africa. These are territories that are termed as areas with high endemic occurrence of hepatitis type B surface antigen (HBsAg) state carrier.

The most common disease in the detention camp from 2009 to 2011 was hepatitis type C. In 2009 it was 49.3%, in 2010 the share of these persons was 46.2%, and this share fell in 2011, accounting for 22.2%. The highest number of immigrants infected with hepatitis type C during that period originated from Southwest and South Asia, specifically from Georgia (37.7%) and the Russian Federation (30.4%), mainly from Chechnya, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. These data indicate that the proportion of infected immigrants decreases annually as one of these diseases was diagnosed in every 7th immigrant in 2009, one in four in 2011. It can also be stated that the most common disease of immigrants is hepatitis type C, scabies, diseases resulting from low hygienic conditions during transfer to the receiving country, and the HIV virus, whose share is steadily rising among immigrants.

It can be concluded that in the Slovak Republic, the risk of importing diseases by immigrants is largely eliminated through health and quarantine measures in the detention camp of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic. However, despite this fact, illegal immigrants represent a significant and uncontrollable risk because their real health condition is not known and is de facto uncontrollable, which increases this risk.

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