

Peter Mariot, Ph.D.

THREE LEVELS OF TERRITORIAL DIFFERENTIATION OF POLITICAL PREFERENCES IN THE TERRITORY OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Results of the 1994 elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic

The elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic (NR SR) held on September 30 and October 1, 1994 were the third elections of deputies to the Slovak Parliament after the political change which took place in Slovakia in 1989–1990.

Table 1: Results of elections to NR SR held on September 30 and October 1, 1994.

Political party	Abbreviation	Votes	
		abs.	%
Hnutie za prosperujúce Česko-Slovensko	HZPČS	30,292	1.05
Sociálna demokracia	SD	7,121	0.24
Združenie robotníkov Slovenska	ZRS	211,321	7.34
Maďarská koalícia MKDH, ESWS, MOS	MK	292,936	10.18
Spoločná voľba – koalícia SDL, SDSS, SZS, HP, SR	SV	299,496	10.41
Demokratická únia Slovenska	DÚ	246,444	8.57
Strana proti korupcii	SPK	3,929	1.31
Združenie pre republikov – Republikáni	ZPR–REP	1,410	0.04
Demokratická strana	DS	98,555	3.42
Nové Slovensko	NS	38,369	1.33
Komunistická strana Slovenska	KSS	78,419	2.72
Rómska občianska iniciatíva v SR	ROISR	19,542	0.77
Slovenská národná strana	SNS	155,359	5.40
Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie	KDH	289,987	10.08
Hnutie za demokratické slovensko a Roľnícka strana Slovenska	HZDS–RSS	1,005,488	34.96
Kresťanská sociálna únia Slovenska	KSÚ	59,217	2.05
Reálna sociálnodemokratická strana Slovákov	RSDSS	3,573	0.13

Compared to two preceding elections (1990, 1992) the 1994 elections were rather special for more intense pre-electoral fight among the political subjects and a lowered interest of population in elections (a drop to 75.6 % in 1994 as compared to 93.2 % or 81.8 % in 1990 and 1992 respectively). In spite of it also these elections confirmed the dominant position of HZDS, stability of support to MK, and the willingness of the Slovak constituency to accept new political subjects with short history (when DU which originated only some months before the elections obtained 8.6 % of votes). Table 1 contains the results of elections to NR SR.

Differences in political preferences at the level of provinces in the SR

In this article we intend highlight the territorial differentiation of political preferences at three levels — the levels of province, district and community using the results of the 1994 elections to NR SR. The province of Košice was used as a model territory. We shall consider the following:

- specific features of electoral preferences in this province as compared to other provinces of the SR;
- internal differentiation of Košice province as characterised by various electoral results in its districts;
- a detailed structure of electoral preferences of the province or its districts at the level of communities.

The data in Table 2 confirm that while HZDS obtained a one third majority at the whole of the territory of the SR, at the level of provinces there were comparably great differences in support of this political subject.

Table 2: Results of the 1994 elections to NR SR at the level of provinces of the SR (%).

Party	Province	Total %	ZRS	MK	SV	DU	SNS	KDH	HZDS
HZDS+DU+SV	Bratislavský	86.73	4.44	4.37	12.95	16.00	8.61	11.70	28.66
HZDS+MK	Trnavský	86.71	5.20	24.81	9.44	6.78	4.95	9.48	29.05
HZDS+KDH	Trenčiansky	88.50	6.46	0.11	9.29	6.95	7.31	8.39	49.99
HZDS+MK	Nitriansky	90.06	5.15	29.13	8.70	5.43	5.25	6.04	30.36
HZDS+KDH	Žilinský	88.22	7.65	0.09	8.04	7.79	7.21	11.73	45.71
HZDS+MK+SV	Banskobystrický	86.70	9.15	10.86	9.79	8.43	5.11	5.28	38.08
HZDS+KDH+SV	Prešovský	82.63	10.73	0.14	11.47	7.61	2.922	17.59	32.17
HZDS+SV+MK	Košický	83.79	8.99	11.84	13.79	10.79	2.73	10.82	24.83
HZDS+SV+MK	Slovensko	86.94	7.34	10.18	10.41	8.57	5.40	10.08	34.96

The table shows that HZDS obtained a relative majority of votes in all provinces

of the SR though the values oscillate between 24.8 and 49.9 % Comparably variegated is also the combination of political subjects (type) which together obtained more than 50 % of votes. HZDS dominates in all provinces, but what is changing is the other political subject. Only the provinces of Trnava and Nitra (HZDS + MK) are of the same type where MK comes comparably closely to HZDS or the Trenčín and Žilina provinces (HZDS + KDH) though HZDS obtained far more support there than KDH.

The province of Košice as a region shows the most variegated structure of electoral preferences. Out to the political subject which obtained seats in the Slovak Parliament in autumn 1994 in this province the following subjects obtained the over average values: SV (+3.38 %), DU (+2.22 %), MK (1.66 %), ZRS (+1.66 %), and KDH (+0.74 %). Less than all-Slovakia average of their success was obtained there by HZDS (-10.13 %) and SNS (-2.67 %). Though HZDS obtained the relatively lowest support (24.83 %) in the Košice province, its dominance was more distinct than in Trnava or Nitra provinces where the difference between the first (HZDS) and the following subject (MK) is only 4.24 and 1.23 % respectively.

The quoted data prove that the analyses of the electoral preferences carried out at the province level makes possible to identify the most general features of the picture of their territorial differentiation related mainly to the nationalities (representation of MK among the subject which obtained more than 50 %) and religion of the population of the SR (representation of KDH among the subjects which obtained together more than 50 % of votes).

Differences in political preferences at the district level (example of Košice province)

Eight provinces of the SR are further broken to 79 districts (5 municipal districts in Bratislava and 4 municipal districts in Košice). HZDS dominated in 66 districts (while it obtained the majority of more than 50 % of votes in 15 district) in the elections of autumn 1994. MK dominated in other 11 districts (obtaining the majority in 2), DU lead in one (Košice 1) and KDH obtained one in Kežmarok. The main area supporting HZDS were the districts in the central and north-western half of the Slovak territory including Kysuce, Orava, upper and central part of the Váh basin, upper Nitra and central part of the Hron basin. The second area with an over-average support of HZDS is in eastern Slovakia comprising the eastern districts of the Prešov province. The boundary districts (Galanta and Šaľa) in south of Slovakia are the ones which supported the second dominating party (MK).

The province of Košice as a region shows the most variegated structure of electoral preferences as show the data contained in table 3.

Table 3: Results of elections to NR SR (1994) in the district of Košice province (%).

Type	District	ZRS	MK	SV	DU	SNS	KDH	HZDS
HZDS+ZRS+KDH	Gelnica	14.24	0.13	12.50	5.39	3.01	12.93	32.20
DU+HZDS+SV	Košice I.	5.80	6.05	15.61	21.01	2.99	13.31	17.31
HZDS+DU+SV	Košice II.	9.27	3.61	15.87	18.81	3.34	11.15	19.87
HZDS+SV+DU	Košice III.	10.84	3.09	17.88	17.29	3.46	9.80	18.94
HZDS+DU+SV	Košice IV.	8.83	5.27	15.27	17.41	3.16	12.81	18.52
HZDS+MK+KDH+SV	Košice – okolie	10.06	16.84	11.67	10.63	2.98	12.10	20.53
HZDS+SV+MK	Michalovce	7.52	10.16	12.63	7.09	2.75	9.53	34.96
MK+HZDS+SV	Rožňava	9.04	31.89	15.64	5.71	2.85	2.71	15.92
HZDS+KDH	Sobrance	7.50	0.08	13.08	4.96	2.21	11.13	47.43
HZDS+KDH+SV	Spišská N.Ves	11.45	0.12	12.27	7.48	3.51	15.78	33.39
MK+HZDS	Trebišov	7.03	28.10	13.09	6.13	1.66	8.84	23.06
HZDS+SV+MK	Košický kraj	8.99	11.84	13.79	10.79	2.73	10.82	24.83

HZDS dominating all over Slovakia obtained in the districts of Košice province an above average result only in the community Sobrance (47.43 %). In district Michalovce the support of HZDS reached the all Slovakian level but in other districts HZDS reached the support which was 1.5–19.0 % lower than the average. The districts of the Košice region constitute a homogeneous region with an above average support of SV as there is a high share of constituency with worker's profession. The results obtained by MK in the 1994 elections to the NR SR make possible to divide the Košice province to two distinctly different sub-regions. One of them is are the southern boundary districts (Rožňava, Košice rural area, Trebišov) where there live a large proportion of Hungarian citizens. MK reached above average results (by 6.7 to 17.9 %) in in this area. The urban districts of Košice and the northern districts of the province constitute the second sub-region where the preferences of MK are distinctly below the average.

KDZ obtained at the territory of the Košice province an electoral result of 0.8 % above the Slovakian average of preference. But the differences in support of KDH are bigger at the level of districts making possible to break its territory to four subregions. The first of them is the district of Rožňava with a very low representation of the KDZ voters (2.7 %) mainly because this district is the one with the lowest share of population of the Roman-Catholic confession. The second subregion comprises the districts of the central part of the province in which KDH obtained a slightly above average support (by 1 to 5 %). The districts Trebišov and Michalovce form the third subregion remarkable for the fact that KDH partially substitutes MKDH (a part of MK) for the citizens of Hungarian nationality. KDH reaches here the results 1–2 % below the national average. The fourth subregion consists of Sobrance where precisely the absence of the Hungarian citizens allowed KDH to realise its elevated popularity among the rural population and to obtain 11.1 % of votes.

From the all Slovakian point of view the province of Košice is the one with above average support of DU (10.79 %). A closer view of the preference distribution of this political subject at the level of districts though, reveals that the above average results were reached by DU only in urban districts of Košice (17.29–21.01 %) and in the district Košice-rural area (10.63 %). It confirms the thesis that DU is a party preferred mainly by the urban population.

ZRS obtained preferences exceeding the all Slovakian average in industrial districts of the western and central part of the Košice province which is a part of more extensive core regions supported by ZRS stretching over almost the whole of the eastern Slovakia. Exception is represented only by the eastern district of the province (Trebišov, Michalovce, Sobrance) where the support of ZRS oscillated at the level of all Slovakian average (7.03–7.25 %).

From the point of view of support given to SNS the territory of the Košice province appears a homogeneous region, all districts typical for a below average preferences of SNS (1.66–3.51 %).

Passing to the level of the districts we can say that the territory of Košice province is innerly differentiated as far as the support of the various political subjects is concerned. Meanwhile there are distinct deviations from the all-province average which allow for the division of the province to subregions characterised by various intensity of support of certain subject. Number and location of these subregions is different for each political subject.

Differences in political preferences at the level of communities of the SR (example of Košice province)

The territory of subregions of the single political subjects delimited at the level of districts is homogeneous only as seen from the point of view of all-district values of this criterion. But also these subregions are innerly structured as showed the analysis of the electoral results made for the level of communities.

We analysed the combinations of subjects which obtained more than 50 % of votes on a model territory of Košice province comprising more than 437 communities and 22 urban parts of Košice. We created an order of political subjects by percentage of votes obtained for each community. Then we summed up the shares until their sum reached 50. The results are summarized in table 4 which includes also the typification of the provinces of the SR and the districts of the Košice province.

All urban districts of Košice have a variegated structure of electoral preferences as only in three local parts (Kavečany, Poľov, Šebastovce) more than 50 % of votes were obtained by two political subjects. The most diverse structure of political preferences was in district Košice 2, eight local parts of which correspond to seven types of political associations. Dominance of DU in four of the five local parts of the Košice district 1 and the dominance of KDZ in four of six local parts of the Košice district 4 are remarkable.

Table 4: Political associations which obtained more than 50 % of votes in 1994 elections.

Type of political association				Province of the SR	Košice province districts number	
HZDS				–	–	55
HZDS	SV			–	–	51
HZDS	SV	MK		Košický	Michalovce	1
HZDS	SV	KDH		–	–	11
HZDS	SV	DÚ		–	Košice 3	–
HZDS	MK			Trnavský, Nitriansky	–	1
HZDS	MK	SV		Bansko-bystrický	–	2
HZDS	MK	KDH	SV	–	Košice-okolie	–
HZDS	KDH			Trenčiansky, Žilinský	Sobrance	65
HZDS	KDH	SV		Prešovský	Spišská N. Ves	8
HZDS	KDH	ZRS		–	Košice 2, Košice 4	13
HZDS	DÚ	SV		Bratislavský	–	6
HZDS	ZRS			–	–	20
HZDS	ZRS	KDH		–	Gelnica	6
MK				–	–	90
MK	HZDS			–	Trebišov	2
MK	HZDS	SV		–	Rožňava	1
KDH	HZDS			–	–	17
KDH	ZRS			–	–	11
DÚ	HZDS	SV		–	Košice 1	–

The same as on the territory of the whole Slovak Republic, Košice province also on the territory of its districts the common reason of heterogeneity of the electoral preferences is the national structure of population and occurrence of the citizens of Hungarian nationality. This was why the districts with highest number of Hungarian population (Rožňava, Košice-rural area, Trebišov, Michalovce) are broken to two microregions. The southern microregion is characterised by uniformity of political preferences of MK. Preferences in northern microregion are considerably more variegated, but the dominant position is that of HZDS. Its accompanying political subjects and formation of the type of political association surpassing 50 % of votes is determined by two aspects. Religion is the one which made of KDH a partner to HDZS in northern part of the districts Michalovce and Trebišov. Social aspect created the partnership of HZDS with SV or ZRS. Its influence is evident in northern microregion of the district Rožňava and partial also the district Košice-rural area.

In the majority of the districts where the Slovaks constitute more than 90 % of population (Spišská Nová Ves, Gelnica, Sobrance) preferences HZDS dominate. Its partner in the east of the province is mostly KDZ and in the west also SV.

Conclusion

Analysis of political preferences of the population of the SR carried out at the level of provinces, districts or communities gives a particular level of their statement value and allows for assessment of the possibilities of their application. The province data are generalised to such an extent that they only can be used for identification of overall features of the regional structure, while the district data comparably exactly reflect the territorial structure of political preferences providing a good data base for evaluation of electoral behaviour of population of the SR. The data of communities allow for monitoring of the most elementary features of the political preferences in Slovakia. They are especially suitable for the detailed analysis of the motifs determining the data at the district level.

Bibliography

- Brunn, S.D., Vlčková V., 1994: Parties, Candidates and Competitive Regions in the 1992 Slovak National Council Elections. *Geografický časopis*, 46, 231–246, Bratislava.
- Krivý, V., Feglová V., Balko D., 1996: Slovensko a jeho regióny: sociokultúrne súvislosti volebného správania. *Nadácia Médiá*, 417 s., Bratislava.
- Mariot, P., 1991: Priestorové hodnotenie výsledkov volieb do Slovenskej národnej rady (jún 1990). *Geografický časopis*, 43, 231–249, Bratislava.
- Mariot, P., 1993: Die Wahlen in den Slowakischen Nationalrat in dem Jahren 1990 und 1992. *Geographische Zeitschrift*, 81, 1–2, 82–97, Stuttgart.
- Mariot, P., 1998: Špecifická volebných preferencií obyvateľov okresných miest SR v roku 1994. In: *Podobnosti a rozdiely vývoje mest ČR a SR po roce 1990*. Regiograph, 17–27, Brno.
- Mariot, P., 1997 a: Spatial aspects of the 1994 elections for the National Council of the Slovak Republic. *Moravian Geographical Reports*, 4, 1, 52–60, Brno.
- Mariot, P., 1997 b: Slovak Republik. Nationalities — Religiousness — Electoral Preferences. *Földrajzi értesítő*, 3–4, 183–189, Budapešť.
- Mariot, P., 1997 c: Regióny volebnej preferencie na západnom Slovensku. *Geographia Slovaca*, 12, 99–105, Bratislava.
- Mariot, P., 1997 d: Základné črty volebných preferencií obyvateľstva v slovensko-českom pohraničí. In: *Podobnosti a rozdiely vo vývoji SR a ČR po rozdelení ČSFR*. Geografický ústav SAV, 65–82, Bratislava.