Mechanism of Voter Mobilisation of ĽSNS and Marián Kotleba

Patterns of voting behavior, vote shifts and geographical distribution of electoral votes
(Preliminary Research Papers)
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Introduction

In November 2013 regional election—forth of its kind— has been held in Slovakia. The competition promised several interesting rivalries, however all of them were clearly overshadowed by the results in Banská Bystrica region. In the run for the governor in this region, the leader of extreme right LSNS Marian Kotleba placed second and got into a runoff with Vladimír Maňka nominated by SMER-SD who nearly crossed the electoral threshold in the first round which would ensure him victory. Despite the high margin between the two candidates, Kotleba was able to beat his rival and was elected governor. The leader of LSNS thus scored significantly better than in the regional elections in 2009 and his victory has so far been the greatest success of his party.

This scenario quite resembled the one from French presidential elections in 2002 where the leader of FN Jean Marie Le-Pen got into a runoff, though here he was beaten by the incumbent, Jacques Chirac. The story of Marian Kotleba followed the same path, with one distinct difference – the electoral success for the far right. This victory opened several questions, including whether Kotleba’s win could serve as a stimulus for his party on the national level. To answer this question it is of utmost importance to study the electorate of the far right LSNS and its leaders. The four presented papers use quantitative approaches to shed light on the results of the election as they seek to find explanation.

The study by Michal Škop concentrates on the election’s geographic aspects. The author addresses the differences in the electoral support in the runoff. He provides an analysis on the ward level and introduces the main differences between the results achieved by Marian Kotleba and Vladimír Maňka. His findings indicate divisions of the electorate both on the inter-municipality and intra-municipality level. In addition, the results show a higher support of LSNS leader in the northern part of the region, unlike the areas inhabited by Hungarian minorities where he received rather low gains. The study also found variability within the municipalities. While the residential areas comprised of the housing estates have shown stronger inclination towards Marian Kotleba, his rival was preferred more in the older town centers and in residential areas with family houses.

Juraj Medzihorský in his contribution discusses geographical aspects of the electoral support in the regional elections, however in a different way than the previously mentioned paper. His approach is based on the concept of party nationalization which among others claims that subjects with lower support draw their support from a more territorially concentrated electorate. The author analyzes the national elections in 2010 and 2012 and regional election 2013 on both the municipal and ward level. His findings are in accordance with the party nationalization theory. As Juraj Medzhorský shows, the territorial concentration of Kotleba supporters fully fits the patterns predicted by the theory, and it also holds true for the other candidates who competed for the office of the regional governor. The same outcomes are also true for the LSNS extreme right party in the national elections as its support was found to be concentrated to several specific territories to the same extent as other parties with comparable support.
In his paper Kamil Gregor presents a study of voters’ transitions between various electoral pools in Slovakia. To map this shift of votes, the typical research tools used include election surveys or exit polls. However, as no such instruments were available in case of the most recent elections in Slovakia, the author uses alternative methods. By applying a hierarchical Bayesian model of ecological inference he is able to create a model of voter transitions. The scope of the paper includes the results from national, presidential, European and regional elections. Among the most important findings, the author identifies the ability of Marian Kotleba to retain his voters from the first round and to mobilize a fair share of consistent nonvoters. With respect to the party affiliation of Vladimír Maňka, he points to a somewhat surprising outcome – that a fair share of party Smer’s voters have opted for the far right candidate.

The final contribution aims to discover patterns of Kotleba’s support on the local level in the first round of the regional elections. In this study Petr Voda and Peter Spáč analyze the impact of several socio-economic factors, including the presence of the Roma minority, as the primary target of the LSNS. The paper uses data from the Atlas project which allows to identify both the share of Roma in the local population as well as the type of location, ranging from dispersion in the majority to segregated settlements. The results clearly show that Kotleba’s support has a connection to presence of the Roma in municipalities. The leader of LSNS scored better in areas with higher share of Roma as well as in municipalities with Roma living in the outskirts or in separated settlements. The paper tested also for influence of more economically-based factors, finding they had the expected, though only limited effects on the elections outcome.

Together, the four above presented texts create a solid bloc of research with a focus on Marian Kotleba’s electorate. They bring substantial and interesting findings which apply not only to 2013 regional election but may be used to project the perspectives of LSNS in national politics. Their outcomes may also serve as a basis for a further research, also of qualitative nature.
Geographic distribution of votes in Banská Bystrica 2013 regional elections, 2nd round of gubernatorial elections

Summary
In the exploratory analysis of the geographic differences in the electoral support in the second round of 2013 Banská Bystrica gubernatorial elections we have found clear patterns of geographic distribution both among the municipalities of the regions and within the municipalities themselves. On the level of municipalities, Mr. Kotleba won mainly in the northern part of the region, including the regional capital Banská Bystrica, and in big towns in the southern part. Mr. Maňka won in Zvolen and in the Hungarian-speaking southernmost boundary region. Within the municipalities, Mr. Kotleba was gaining more in the housing estates, while Mr. Maňka in the older centers of towns and in the areas with family houses. Based on the results we have constructed interactive maps showing the results of both rounds of the elections.

Introduction
This exploratory study concentrates on the results the 2013 Banská Bystrica gubernatorial elections from the geographic point of view. It tries to depict the geographic differences and capture their size. It intentionally omits the broader background information on the 2013 gubernatorial elections itself as this information may be found elsewhere (including news articles, etc.) and it concentrates only on the core particular topic of geographic distribution of the electoral support in the 2nd round. The study uses data-driven exploratory approach (as opposed to a theory-driven approach). Therefore the analyses look for patterns (which may lead to theories) rather than trying to confirm different theories. The official election results (Štatistický úrad SR 2013) were used for the analysis and the location data were obtained by geocoding. It was necessary to identify the electoral districts using their description on the websites of municipalities. The geocoding itself was done using Nominatim (OpenStreetMap Foundation 2014).

Geographic distribution of votes on the municipality level
There was a clear pattern in the distribution of electoral support for the two candidates in the 2nd round of gubernatorial elections.
Mr. Kotleba gained votes in the northern part of the region (Horehronie [upper Hron region] including the capital Banská Bystrica, Revúca region, Žiar nad Hronom region) and in some regional centres in the south (Lučenec, Rimavská Sobota, Veľký Krtíš, Krupina).
Mr. Maňka won in his hometown of Zvolen and was very significantly winning in the predominantly Hungarian-speaking southern rural regions.

Analysis
I have divided the whole region into 4 parts to establish the values of differences in regional distribution of support for the candidates.
The first group is the predominantly Hungarian speaking southern rural region. It is a widely known fact that the Hungarian speaking regions differ substantively in the voting behavior from the rest of Slovak regions in many elections in Slovakia (e.g. Štatistický úrad SR 2010; 2012).

I have included municipalities with more than 50% of population declaring itself as belonging to Hungarian nationality (based on data from Infostat Bratislava and Prírodovedecká fakulta Univerzity Komenského v Bratislave, 2009). The evidence shown in Map 1 also supported this choice for the gubernatorial election, clearly distinguishing the south from the rest of the region.

Map 1 also helped to identify other regions that differed from the average results. When analysing the election results on the county level, it was possible to identify another region that differed the most from the average results - the northern part of the region consisting of the counties Brezno and Banská Bystrica (selected therefore as 2nd and 3rd group).

The rest of the region is considered as the forth group.

**Map 1:** Banská Bystrica region. Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one municipality. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on a green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both).

**Results**

The empirical results support the exploratory division of support for the candidates, which was found to be strongly regionally divergent and provide us with the size (measurement) of these differences. These are summarized in the Table 1 and in Chart 1.
Mr. Kotleba received over 70% in the northern Brezno county, significantly more than in the rest of the region. He also registered gains in the other northern region - Banská Bystrica county - even if the victory was not as high as in Brezno.

On the other hand, he secured only ⅓ of the votes in the predominantly Hungarian speaking south.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of voters</th>
<th>Kotleba</th>
<th>Maňka</th>
<th>Kotleba %</th>
<th>Maňka %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Election</td>
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<td>71441</td>
<td>57188</td>
<td>55.5%</td>
<td>44.5%</td>
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<td>3264</td>
<td>6022</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>64.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>16454</td>
<td>10561</td>
<td>60.9%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brezno region</td>
<td>13864</td>
<td>9784</td>
<td>4080</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest</td>
<td>78464</td>
<td>41939</td>
<td>36525</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Comparison of support for Mr. Kotleba in different regions in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections in Banská Bystrica.

Distribution of the candidates’ support was more diverse in the Hungarian speaking region than in the northern counties and even more than in the “others” group, which is clearly visible from the Chart 1.

Chart 1: Comparison of support for Mr. Kotleba in the southern predominantly Hungarian speaking area, the northern counties and the rest of the region in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Every bubble represents one municipality. The size of bubbles represents the number of voters. Horizontal lines represent average support in a group (solid lines) and overall average (dashed line). The position of municipalities on the x axis within the four regions is randomized for better readability of the chart.
Distribution of votes within municipalities

Even if the overall support for the candidates varied on the municipality level, there is a clear uniform pattern of the geographic differences in the support of the candidates within municipalities. Mr. Kotleba was gaining (over average of the municipality) mainly in the housing estates (e.g. Sásová in Banská Bystrica, Západ in Zvolen). On the other hand, Mr. Maňka obtained more votes at the polling stations in the older centers of towns or in family residential areas with houses. This pattern may be recognized in all the regional centers of the Banská Bystrica region.

Analysis

The electoral results for each electoral district (polling station) is the most detailed data available. Even though the description or location of the electoral districts is not centrally published, we were able to geolocate all the districts in the region based on their descriptions that were published on the website of the municipalities. These descriptions usually consisted of list of streets; we had to use the address of the polling station as a proxy for the electoral district in a few cases only. It is necessary to be able to rely on sufficient cases - electoral districts - to be able to study the differences within the municipalities. Therefore I used only the biggest regional centers in the region with more than 10 electoral districts (Banská Bystrica, Zvolen, Lučenec, Rimavská Sobota, Brezno, Žiar nad Hronom).

The detailed election results maps on the level of the electoral districts show important differences in the support for the two candidates within the selected towns. For illustration see Map 2 for Banská Bystrica city, the rest of maps of the regional centers are in the Appendix. Generally, there are not many options how to reasonably differentiate between the electoral districts because there is virtually no data available on such a detailed level. Apart of the geographic position (centre, outskirts), it was possible to differentiate among the electoral districts using the housing type. I coded for three different groups of electoral districts in the towns based on geography and the housing types as follows: a) old town centers and areas of family houses, b) housing estates (generally outskirts) and the rest was included in group c) (including mixed areas comprising the two previous groups).

Because the overall electoral results differ substantially in the towns, I have compared the results in each electoral district with the average results in the town. The groups a) old town centers and b) housing estates covered about 38% of the voters in the six towns and about 13% of all voters in the 2nd round of the elections. The rest of the electoral districts could not be clearly included in any of the two groups, so they were left for the group c) and excluded from the analysis. A list of the selected electoral districts can be found in the Appendix.
Map 2: Banská Bystrica city. Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both).

Results
The results are summarized in the Table 2 and showed in a greater detail in Chart 2. First group (electoral districts in town centers and in areas of family houses) showed significantly lesser support for Mr. Kotleba, about 5% less, than was the Six-town average or similarly represented on average 87% of the town’s average gain (weighted average of his gains in the selected electoral district vs. all districts in the town, summarized for all six towns).

On the other hand, Mr. Kotleba was gaining significantly more in the second group of electoral districts (housing estates). He gained on average 8% more votes than on average in the six towns, or similarly 114% of his town average.

In other words, inhabitants of the housing estates were, on average, about 30% more likely to vote for Mr. Kotleba than those living in the centers of towns or in family houses.
There were only few electoral districts among the selected ones from both a) and b) groups that did not follow the same pattern within the six towns (see Chart 2). While there were only two districts in the town center where Mr. Kotleba gained little more than was his town average (Brezno 4 and Žiar n.H. 2nd district), there were a couple of electoral districts in the housing estates where he performed worse. The biggest “anomaly” from the pattern happened in Sekier housing estate in Zvolen (Mr. Maňka’s hometown).

![Chart 2: Comparison of support for Mr.Kotleba in town centers & areas of family houses vs. housing estates in the 2nd round of gubernatorial elections in 2013.](chart2.png)

The size of bubbles represents the number of voters. The selected polling stations included the 6 biggest towns in the region.
Changes between 1st and 2nd rounds from geographic point of view
While in the 2nd round we have seen clear patterns of the electoral support throughout the region and its distribution within the municipalities, there is no such pattern when it comes to comparing the gains from the 1st round.
Mr. Kotleba was gaining new voters throughout the whole region (and inside the municipalities), and similarly the number of Mr.Maňka’s voters was roughly the same in the whole region.

Banská Bystrica region, 2013

Banská Bystrica region. Geographical distribution of difference of support for Mr. Kotleba in the 1st and the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one municipality. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes in the 1st and 2nd round on green-red scale (the more green the more gain in support for Mr. Kotleba in the 2nd round, the more red the more support for Mr. Kotleba in the 1st round, yellow color represents roughly equal support in both rounds).
Conclusion
This study consists of exploratory analyses of the geographical distribution of support for the candidates in the second round of Banská Bystrica gubernatorial elections in 2013. In the first analysis, we have seen that support for the candidates varied geographically between the municipalities, with Mr. Kotleba gaining support in the northern counties, including Banská Bystrica, with up to 70% support in Brezno county. On the other hand, he received only 35% votes among the voters in southern-most municipalities with Hungarian-speaking majority.

Any future research could include more variables - socioeconomic, demographic, and others, and it could try to explain some of the variance found in the data.

The second analysis showed significant differences between the voting preferences of citizens living in the centers of the towns or in the family house, and the housing estates. If we took into account the differences between the municipalities themselves, the inner-town differences showed about 30% higher support for Mr. Kotleba in housing estates compared to the centers.
The data on population differences within municipalities is rare (compared to data available on the municipality level), which is a limiting factor for future research of the differences in electoral behavior within municipalities. However, it is possible to include more geographic measurement, such as for instance concentration of the population.

On the other hand, we have not found any significant geographical differences in changes in support for the two candidates between the election rounds. Mr. Kotleba was gaining and similarly Mr. Maňka’s support was stagnating “everywhere.”

While analyses of geographical distribution of the support for candidates bring generally more descriptive results, they provide a strong basis for other research – In this case, for example, research on the reasons leading to the surprising victory of Mr. Kotleba.

Michal Škop, is a postgraduate student at the Department of Political Science, University of Hradec Králové. He is a founding member and programmer of KohoVolit.eu.

Reference


Appendix

The interactive maps

We have produced two interactive maps showing a) all the polling stations in Banská Bystrica region, and b) all the municipalities in the Banská Bystrica region, together with the corresponding results of the elections in the 1st and 2nd round of gubernatorial elections.

The polling stations are geocoded either to the center of the electoral district (usually, if the description of the district was available on the municipal website) or to the address of the polling station (a few smaller municipalities). The usual geocoding of the municipality was used in case of municipalities with just one polling station.

The interactive maps allow us to compare two electoral gains (e.g., Mr. Kotleba vs. Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round). Each bubble represents one polling station (or one municipality), the size may represent the voter turnout, while the color shows the difference in votes between the two candidates (on green to red scale). This representation is used instead of the choropleth maps, which are used usually to show the election results. This is due to the fact that choropleth maps are very misleading for such use, because they show the size of the territory and not the size of population (e.g., a municipality with a few inhabitants but with a large territory may look bigger than a city with concentrated population).

These maps are accessible from Škop (2014a) (polling station level) and Škop (2014b) (municipality level, including results from European elections 2014).

These interactive maps serve for producing the maps for individual municipalities. The copyright on the background maps from OpenStreetMap contributors applies.

List of electoral districts used for analysis of differences within municipalities

Town centers and areas with family houses:
- Banská Bystrica 1-11; Zvolen 2, 4, 7, 8, 13, Lučenec 3, 10, 11, 14, 26; Rimavská Sobota 1, 2, 3; Brezno 1-5; Žiar nad Hronom 2, 5.

Housing estates:
- Banská Bystrica 63-79 (Sásová); Zvolen 25-27 (Sekier), 34-40 (Západ), Lučenec 16-22 (Rúbanisko); Rimavská Sobota 18,19,21 (Rovinka); Brezno 14-18 (Mazornikovo); Žiar nad Hronom 1, 13, 11 (Hviezdoslavova, J.Kráľa).
Maps of results by electoral districts in regional centers

Zvolen. Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both).
Lučenec. Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both).
Rimavská Sobota. Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both).
Banská Bystrica region, 2013

Results by electoral districts.

Brezno. Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represent roughly equal support for both).
Žiar nad Hronom. Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both).
**Detva.** Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents **one polling station.** The **size** of the bubble corresponds to the **number of voters** in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both).
Banská Bystrica region, 2013

Results by electoral districts.

Veľký Krtíš. Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both).
Revúca. Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represent roughly equal support for both).
Banská Štiavnica. Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both).
Krupina. Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both).
Žarovnica. Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both).
Poltár. Geographical distribution of support for Mr. Kotleba and Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes for both candidates on green-red scale (the more green the more support for Mr. Kotleba, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both).
Maps of changes in support between 1st and 2nd round in Banská Bystrica city

Banská Bystrica region, 2013

Results by electoral districts.

Banská Bystrica city. Geographical distribution of difference of support for Mr. Kotleba in the 1st and the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes in the 1st and 2nd round on green-red scale (the more green the more gain in support for Mr. Kotleba in the 2nd round, the more red the more support for Mr. Kotleba in the 1st round, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both rounds).
Banská Bystrica city. Geographical distribution of difference of support for Mr. Maňka in the 1st and the 2nd round of 2013 gubernatorial elections. Each bubble represents one polling station. The size of the bubble corresponds to the number of voters in the 2nd round, the color shows the difference in votes in the 1st and 2nd round on green-red scale (the more green the more gain in support for Mr. Maňka in the 2nd round, the more red the more support for Mr. Maňka in the 1st round, yellow color represents roughly equal support for both rounds).
Territorial Distribution of Electoral Support for LSNS and M. Kotleba

Introduction

The victory of M. Kotleba in the gubernatorial elections of Banská Bystrica Region in November 2013 drew unprecedented attention. Not only did M. Kotleba defeat in the runoff an incumbent and vice-chairman of the ruling party Smer-SD, he did so as a representative of an extra-parliamentary party, and a highly controversial one. His party, L’udová Strana Naše Slovensko (‘People’s Party Our Slovakia’) can be classified as extreme right, and its program and campaigns are rife with xenophobia and racism, directed primarily against Roma. Since the Banská Bystrica Region is home to a considerable part of Slovakia’s Roma minority, one of the questions of wide interest is to what extent did M. Kotleba succeed because of anti-Roma racism. The present report contributes to this debate by examining the extent to which the support for M. Kotleba and his party is associated with particular territorial units. The following two sections introduce the methods and data, and the subsequent three sections summarize the findings from the parliamentary elections of 2010 and 2012 and gubernatorial elections of 2013.

Methods

The extent to which the support for political parties is even across territorial units is in the literature on political parties assessed under the concept of ‘party nationalization.’ In that framework, a party or a system thereof is considered perfectly nationalized if its levels of support are identical across territories. Despite this consensus, there is no equally consensually adopted measure of party nationalization (see e.g. Caramani 2004; Bochsler 2010; Golosov 2014). This is because while ‘perfect nationalization’ is identical to the lack of association between territorial units and vote choice, there are many different concepts of association applicable.

Avoiding these controversies, this report does not use the concept of party nationalization. Instead, it takes the clearer and narrower goal of examining the association between territory and electoral support. As a measure thereof, it adopts the ∆ index of dissimilarity (Gini 1914) for independence in a table that cross-classifies votes by party (or candidate) and territory. Hereafter, the measure is often referred to simply as ‘Delta.’ The main appeal of this measure is in its interpretability. The value of the measure is the smallest possible fraction of voters that would need to change their choice in order to observe the same level of support for a candidate, party, or a group thereof, while preserving the national party/candidate totals and numbers of votes cast in each territory. The higher the value, the less even the support is across the inspected territories, and the stronger the association between the support and the territories. For an illustration, consider the following example. Table 1 shows returns for two parties in three districts. The parties have obtained 25% and 75% of the total vote, but this pattern is present only in one district. In order for this pattern to be present in all districts, it would suffice for 25

1 The present author discusses this issue in detail elsewhere, see Medzihorsky (2014).
voters of A to vote for B in district J and the other way in district L. Thus, in this case the value of the measure is 0.17, or 17%, for the whole system, and 33% and 11% for the two parties. Substantively, we can conclude that electoral support is less territorially even for party A than for party B, and party A shows stronger association between territories and support.

Data

The data on the 2010 and 2012 parliamentary elections is sourced from Electronic database of parliamentary elections results in all Slovak municipalities from 1929 until 2012 (Krivý 2012) and the data on the 2013 gubernatorial elections from VUC 2013 Elections Dataset (Medzihorsky 2013). The resulting dataset covers all 2926 Slovakian municipalities, of which 516 are in the Banská Bystrica Region, and were further divided for the 2013 gubernatorial elections into 912 wards. 18 parties ran in the 2010 and 26 in the 2012 parliamentary elections. In the gubernatorial elections, 11 candidates took part in the first and 2 in the second, runoff, round. In the analysis, eligible voters that did not cast a valid vote in a given election are ignored.

Findings

Parliamentary Elections of 2010 and 2012

Extant research on party nationalization repeatedly finds that support for electorally less successful parties tends to be more associated with particular territories (see e.g. Bochsler 2010). As shown in figure 1, this is also found to hold for parties that competed in the 2010 and 2012 Slovakian parliamentary elections, and especially well for those that gained at least 10 thousand votes total. With the exception of two parties—SMK-MKP and Most-Híd—support is associated with municipalities to a roughly similar extent as for other parties with similar national or regional vote totals. For Most-Híd and SMK-MKP, the values of Delta are approximately 0.5 and 0.8 respectively, while for other parties with similar vote totals they are around 0.2-0.3. This is hardly surprising, since both of the parties draw most of their support from the members of an ethnic minority that is not distributed evenly across the inspected municipalities. In contrast, LSNS shows, both regionally and nationally, practically the same strength of municipality-support association as other parties with similar vote totals. In other words, its voters are distributed just as evenly across municipalities as are those of other parties of similar electoral strength.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1: Strength of the support-municipality association (Delta) for each party (y-axis) plotted against the natural logarithm of its total vote count (x-axis) nationally [left] and in the Banská Bystrica Region [right]. Grey lines show the OLS fit of cubic polynomial of lnVotes. excluding Most-Híd and SMK-MKP.

Figure 2: Support-municipality association [left] and national vote share [right] of L’SNS in each of the eight regions in the 2010 (x-axis) and 2012 (y-axis) parliamentary elections.
Shifting the focus on the level of regions, among the eight self-governing regions of Slovakia, the Banská Bystrica one has recorded the highest regional share for L’SNS, followed by the Prešov and Košice regions (figure 2, right panel). Yet, within the Banská Bystrica region its voters appear to be distributed more evenly across municipalities than in the other two regions (figure 2, left panel).

![Figure 3: Support-municipality association (y-axis) and the natural logarithm of its total regional vote (y-axis) for all parties [left] and L’SNS only [right] in the 2010 and 2012 parliamentary elections. Grey line shows OLS fit of third degree polynomial of lnVotes excluding Most-Híd and SMK-MKP.](image)

A slightly different perspective is shown in figure 3. Overall, we observe the same pattern of slight decrease in Delta with increasing vote totals as in figure 1. However, for L’SNS only we do not observe this pattern. Within each region, with the exception of the Košice region, the total L’SNS vote has been substantively larger in 2012 than in 2010. However, Delta did decrease only in half of them.

**Gubernatorial Elections of 2013**

As shown in figure 4, the relationship between support-territory association and overall electoral success appears in the 2013 Banská Bystrica Region gubernatorial elections similar to that in the 2010 and 2012 parliamentary elections. This holds regardless of whether municipalities or wards are inspected. The only candidate that stands out is E. Samko, a distinctly marginal one, who seems to draw most of his support from a small set of areas. For M. Kotleba, the value of Delta is similar to that of the nearest candidate in terms of electoral support in both rounds – L’. Kaník in the first, and V. Manka in the second round. Again, as in the case of L’SNS in the parliamentary elections, his voters appear to be distributed just as evenly across municipalities and wards as are those of other candidates with similar vote totals.
Figure 4: Association between the electoral support and municipality [left] or ward [right] (y-axis) and the natural logarithm of total votes (x-axis) for candidates in the 2013 Banská Bystrica Region gubernatorial elections. Grey lines show the OLS fit of cubic polynomial of lnVotes.

Conclusion

The literature on party nationalization repeatedly finds that the less electorally successful a party is, the stronger the association between its electoral support and specific territories. This report finds the same pattern for candidates in the 2013 gubernatorial elections of Banská Bystrica Region and for parties in the 2010 and 2012 parliamentary elections, with the exception of those parties (and possibly also candidates), who are clearly identified with an ethnic minority. L’SNS and its gubernatorial candidate M. Kotleba fit this pattern closely. In short, their electoral support is not associated with specific territories any more than that of other parties and candidates with similar levels of success in the same elections.

Juraj Medzihorsky is a PhD candidate at the Department of Political Science specializing Methodology and Comparative Politics. His dissertation project is on handling unobserved heterogeneity in several political science problems using the π* mixture index of fit.

Reference


Who are Kotleba’s voters? Voters’ transitions in the Banskobystrický Region 2009-2014

The aim of the paper is to explore voting behaviour of supporters of Marian Kotleba, a controversial right-wing candidate that won the presidency of the Banskobystrický Region, Slovakia, in the 2013 regional elections. Specifically, the paper models transitions of voters between political parties and candidates in the 2009 and 2013 regional elections, the 2012 National Council elections, the 2014 presidential elections and the 2014 European Union elections in order to determine who Kotleba’s supporters voted for. Since no electoral surveys of shifts in voter behavior in those elections are available, a hierarchical Bayesian model of ecological inference is used to estimate the transition rates.

The paper presents three key findings: 1) There is a group of people in the Region that consistently do not participate in the low-profile elections and Kotleba managed to mobilize a large share of these voters in the second round of the 2013 regional elections. 2) Kotleba’s voters were very disciplined – almost everyone who supported him in the first round participated in the second round and voted for him again. 3) Kotleba was as successful as his opponent Vladimír Maňka in mobilizing voters of the Smer party and those who have voted for Robert Fico, the party’s chairman and at the time of this writing, the Prime Minister.

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to explore voting behaviour of supporters of Marian Kotleba; specifically, to model transitions of voters between Marian Kotleba and other candidates in the regional elections and political parties and candidates in 2009-2014 elections. Marian Kotleba is a far right-wing candidate of ĽSNS¹, known for his controversial positions towards the Roma community in Slovakia, NATO and EU, the Jewish holocaust and the 20th Century Slovak history (e.g. TASR 2014a; 2014b; 2014c; 2014d).

He competed in the 2009 and the 2013 regional elections in the Banskobystrický Region to become the regional governor. This post is elected using a majoritarian run-off voting system where the candidate needs to obtain over 50 % of all valid votes. If no candidate receives the proscribed share of votes, second round of elections is organized where voters can choose among the two candidates. Members of the regional parliament are elected simultaneously with the first round of the gubernatorial elections.
In the first round of the 2009 regional elections, Kotleba failed to enter the second round because he obtained only 10.03% of the vote. Vladimír Maňka, a candidate of Smer and ĽS-HZDS and the regional governor at that time, received 35.40% of the vote. Jozef Mikuš, a candidate of SDKÚ-DS and KDH,

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The 2013 regional elections (1st round)
SaS\(^6\), OKS\(^7\) and KDS\(^8\), received 28.80 % of the vote. These two candidates ran in the second round where Maňka was elected, obtaining 53.70 % of the vote. Other candidates that managed to gain over 5 % of the vote include a former regional governor Milan Murgaš (independent, previously a member of Smer with 13.50 % of the vote) and Jozef Šimko (candidate of SNS\(^9\) and HZD\(^10\); 5.29 % of the vote). The turnout reached 27.06 % of all registered voters in the first round and 18.01 % in the second round.

In the first round of the 2013 regional elections, Kotleba managed secure the second highest number of votes - 21.30 %. Maňka who ran as a candidate of a broad coalition of Smer-SD, SZ\(^{11}\), HZD, LS-HZDS, SMS, SMK\(^{12}\) and KDH gained 49.47 % of the vote. The only other candidate securing over 5 % of the vote nationwide was Ľudovít Kaník (a candidate of SDKÚ-DS, MOST – HÍD\(^{13}\) and SaS who received 15.07 % of the vote).

It was expected that Maňka would win the second round of the elections since it has been frequently observed that in a majoritarian voting system and two-candidates setting (such as the second round of a majority rule run-off voting system), if there is an extreme and a moderate candidate voters from the unrepresented extreme of the political spectrum are more likely to side with the moderate candidate. This hypothesis in line with the median voter theorem by Harold Hotelling (1929) and Anthony Downs (1957) and has been empirically tested in multiple situations – it has been, for example, shown that candidates of the far-right FN\(^{14}\) in France are comparatively less successful in the second rounds of the National Assembly elections because voters of other parties tend to support their moderate opponents (e.g. Lubbers and Scheepers 2002). A specific example is the 2002 French presidential elections where Jean-Marie Le Pen lost to Jacques Chirac in the second round.

In Slovakia, Kotleba’s defeat was also expected due to the fact that explicitly far right parties gained only relatively marginal support in the Banskobystrický Region in other elections. For instance, in the 2012 National Council elections, Kotleba’s own party, LSNS, obtained 2.61 % of the vote; the nationalist SNS gained 4.6 %; and LS-HZDS only 1.31 %. Interestingly enough, even in the 2014 European elections that took place after Kotleba’s success in the regional elections, LSNS only gained 3.89 % of the vote and SNS gained 3.84 % of the vote. It is therefore obvious that Kotleba’s victory over Maňka cannot be sufficiently explained by a support from far-right parties’ voters.

Contrary to expectations, Kotleba managed to win the second round of the regional elections and became the regional governor since he secured 55.53 % of the vote. The turnout reached 24.59 % of all registered voters in the first round and 24.61 % in the second round. It is notable that in this particular case, the turnout actually increased between the rounds, although only slightly. A chart below shows differences between turnout in the first and second rounds in all 24 contests with the second round since the first regional elections were held in 2001\(^{15}\). In most cases, turnout dropped in the second round, sometimes quite dramatically. This happened also in the 2009 regional elections in the Banskobystrický Region where the turnout dropped by over 9 %. The 2013 regional elections in this Region were, however, among the few contests where the turnout did not decline.
So what led to Kotleba surprisingly becoming the regional governor? Why did the median voter theorem fail to predict the results of the second round of the 2013 regional elections? These questions are crucial for the future prospects of democracy in Slovakia and elsewhere, given the controversial profile of Kotleba and other far-right Slovak politicians. One way to shed light on the subject is to explore the electorate of Kotleba in the 2013 elections – essentially to answer a simple question of what kinds of voters chose Kotleba over other candidates. When it comes to voters’ characteristics, two types of questions can be asked. First, one may inquire about the social, economic or demographic characteristics of Kotleba’s voters. Second, one may explore which political parties and candidates Kotleba’s voters supported in other elections. This paper answers the latter question. It explores the structure of voters’ transitions between the 2013 regional elections and other elections occurring before and since.
I select one instance of each type of elections taking place in Slovakia with the exception of the municipal elections\(^{16}\) that were organized the closest to the 2013 regional elections – namely the 2009 regional elections, the 2012 elections to the National Council (i.e. parliament), the 2014 presidential elections, and the 2014 European elections. In each case, voters’ behaviour in those elections is projected against voters’ behaviour in the 2013 regional elections to see how voters changed their political preferences.

The principle of secret ballot causes an irreversible loss of information about the actual structure of voters’ shift. Any method of its reconstruction is inescapably based on an indirect estimation with a degree of uncertainty. Methods based on surveying a random sample of voters are almost always the most suitable ones for this purpose. However, no such surveys were conducted in case of the Slovak regional elections.

Therefore, we have to use a hierarchical Bayesian model of ecological inference in order to estimate the voters’ transition rates based on electoral data aggregated to the level of a large number of very small territorial units, in this case electoral precincts (volebný okrsk). This method is used to estimate the most probable structure of transitions given a set of statistical assumptions. In the Central European region, it has been used to study the Czech and Slovak presidential elections (Gregor 2014a), as well as Czech parliamentary (Gregor 2014b), senatorial (Pink and Gregor 2011), presidential (Gregor 2014c), European (Linek and Lyons 2007) and regional elections (Gregor and Gongala 2014d).

This paper is divided into several sections. In the first section, I briefly introduce the statistical model used to estimate the transition rates. The second section comments on data used in statistical modelling, while the third section presents the structure of voters’ transitions obtained by the models. The fourth and final section then compares transition rates across the 2009 and 2014 elections and summarizes the main findings.

The hierarchical Bayesian model of ecological inference

Information on the real structure of voters’ transitions between political parties or candidates in two consecutive elections is always irreversibly lost and cannot be retrieved. It can, however, be approximately reconstructed using two groups of methods. The first group contains methods based on direct surveying of a random sample of voters. There are four types of these surveys available: panel surveys, pre-election surveys, exit polls and post-elections surveys. They differ in who is being surveyed and how. If the respondents are selected randomly, results of the survey closely approximate the actual unobserved social reality. This makes survey methods optimal strategies for voters’ transitions research in most situations.

There may, however, be serious problems with surveying voters: In pre-election surveys, there is always a share of respondents who are not certain about their future electoral behaviour or may change political preferences after surveying. Exit polls do not provide any information about previous electoral behaviour of people who do not participate in the given elections since it is conducted through secret ballot. And all surveys obviously run into the risk of respondents providing answers that don’t reflect the

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15 In additional 8 contests, a candidate managed to secure over 50 % of the vote and therefore to become the regional governor in the first round and no second round was thus organized.

16 Voting system used in the municipal elections prevents a meaningful aggregation of results to the regional level and therefore exploration of shifts in voter behavior.
reality. Many voters do not remember which political party or candidate they supported in previous elections, especially in situations when a number of years have elapsed. This often causes distortions in the distribution of voters among political parties in the sample despite the respondents being selected randomly.

There were no surveys conducted before or during the 2013 regional elections which would be suitable for reconstructing information about voters’ transitions. This forces me to utilize the second group of methods for estimating the structure of these transitions – statistical modelling. The specific model used in this paper is a hierarchical Bayesian model of ecological inference (Rosen et al. 2001). The model uses aggregate data to draw inferences about individual behaviour. It consists of three steps. In the first step, a suitable probabilistic distribution of values of unobserved variables is selected using distributions of values of observed variables. In this case, the observed variables are shares of votes cast for political parties and presidential candidates and the unobserved variables are values in a contingency table of voters’ transitions between the two elections.

It is assumed that values of the unobserved variables follow the multidimensional Dirichlet distribution. It is a very general distribution that likely covers all actual distributions in social reality. In the second step, each territorial unit representing one data point is given an interval where a value of an unobserved variable must necessarily decrease given the values of the observed variables. For example, if Marian Kotleba gained 35 votes in the first round and 53 votes in the second round in a hypothetical electoral precinct, it is possible to determine that the share of voters who supported him in both rounds cannot be lower than 0 % and higher than 66 % of all voters that supported him in the second round (35 divided by 53 is 66 %).

In the third step, all values within this interval are assigned a probability of being the true value according to the Dirichlet distribution. Its statistical parameters are determined using distributions of the observed variables via the Bayes Theorem (see the formal description of the model in Rosen et al. 2001 and Lau et al. 2007 and further literature on ecological inference - King 1997; King et al. 1999; King et al. 2004). The model used in this paper is commonly applied to reconstruct individual behaviour from aggregate data in a variety of political science research designs (for example Johnston et al. 2004; Herron and Sekhon 2005; King et al. 2008; Kopstein and Wittenberg 2003; 2004; 2009; 2010a; 2010b; 2011a; 2011b).

An output of this method is a table. Variable v0 denotes the share of non-voters in elections t. Variables v1 to vi-1 denote shares of i-1 relevant parties in these elections and variable vi the share of votes for other parties. Variable s0 denotes the share of non-voters in elections t+1, s1 and sj-1 denote shares of j-1 relevant parties in these elections and sj denotes the share of votes for other parties. Variables denoted βij are unobserved quantities of all possible combinations of electoral behaviour. The table does not include first-time voters, as well as voters who died between the two elections, voters who lost the right to vote etc. Since their numbers are usually unknown it is necessary to omit them.
Validity of the model is determined by measuring a match between the contingency table estimated by the model and an electoral survey. The most extensive research on this subject to date was conducted by Lucas Leemann and Philipp Leimgruber (2009) who compared estimates of religious affiliation of voters in 113 Swiss referenda produced by six statistical models. The match between the model and a survey can be calculated using so-called index of similarity. It is a sum of absolute values of differences between a survey ($\beta_p$) and the model ($\beta_m$) divided by two and subtracted from zero:

$$S = 1 - \frac{\sum_{i=0}^{n} \sum_{j=0}^{n} |\beta_{pij} - \beta_{mij}|}{2}.$$ 

Table 2 presents values of this index for several models of voters’ transitions between two parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic between 1996 and 2010. The transitions were estimated using municipal-level data (some 6,300 territorial units). The estimates are compared with results of the SC&C exit polls in 1998, 2002, 2006 and 2010 (see Gregor 2014b for further details).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voters’ transitions</th>
<th>Raw index</th>
<th>Standardized index</th>
<th>Contingency table size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary elections 2006 and 2010</td>
<td>89.4%</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary elections 2002 and 2006</td>
<td>89.0%</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary elections 1996 and 1998</td>
<td>88.6%</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary elections 1998 and 2002</td>
<td>83.7%</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Raw values of the index are not comparable across models because the size and shape of the contingency table are not the same. The smaller the table, the more likely it is to correctly place a voter into a correct cell of the table at random. To compare the values, they must be standardized by the size of the contingency table. The standardized index informs whether the statistical model is more accurate than a “model” of uniform distribution of voters across the contingency table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elections t</th>
<th>Non-voters</th>
<th>Party 1</th>
<th>Party 2</th>
<th>...</th>
<th>Party i-1</th>
<th>Other parties</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elections t+1</td>
<td>Non-voters</td>
<td>$\beta_{00}$</td>
<td>$\beta_{10}$</td>
<td>$\beta_{20}$</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>$\beta_{i-10}$</td>
<td>$\beta_{0i}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party 1</td>
<td>$\beta_{01}$</td>
<td>$\beta_{11}$</td>
<td>$\beta_{21}$</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>$\beta_{i-11}$</td>
<td>$\beta_{1i}$</td>
<td>$s_1$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party 2</td>
<td>$\beta_{02}$</td>
<td>$\beta_{12}$</td>
<td>$\beta_{22}$</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>$\beta_{i-12}$</td>
<td>$\beta_{2i}$</td>
<td>$s_2$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ...
| Party j-1 | $\beta_{0j-1}$ | $\beta_{1j-1}$ | $\beta_{2j-1}$ | ... | $\beta_{i-1j-1}$ | $\beta_{ij-1}$ | $s_{j-1}$ |
| Other parties | $\beta_{0j}$ | $\beta_{1j}$ | $\beta_{2j}$ | ... | $\beta_{i-1j}$ | $\beta_{ij}$ | $s_j$ |
| Total | $v_0$ | $v_1$ | $v_2$ | ... | $v_{i-1}$ | $v_i$ | 1 |
Data sources
In this paper, I present results of statistical modelling based on Slovak electoral data, specifically on results of the following elections: the 2009 and the 2013 regional elections (the first and the second rounds; elections of the regional governor), the 2012 National Council elections, the 2014 presidential elections (the first and the second rounds) and the 2014 European elections. Data were extracted from the Slovak Statistical Office electoral website (Štatistický úrad SR 2014) that provides downloadable electoral results on municipal level in machine readable formats within hours after elections.

In all cases, data on the smallest level aggregation available is used – results in electoral precincts that represent individual polling stations. There were some 900 precincts in the Banskobystrický Region in the aforementioned elections. Most municipalities in the country only correspond to one precinct while larger towns and cities are divided into multiple precincts. This increases granularity of the data and effectively mitigates the so-called “Manhattan effect.”

Geographical division of the region into precincts slightly changed in 2009-2014 – new precincts were occasionally created or existing ones merged. In such cases, I design artificial territorial units that remain constant during the whole period. This produces a total of 910 precinct-based territorial units, a number sufficiently high for valid statistical modelling.

The statistical model assumes that population remains constant in both elections. This obviously does not correspond to reality. In 2009-2014, some voters died, some gained or lost the right to vote and some cast their votes in different electoral precincts. These problems are either unsolvable or marginal so it is necessary to omit them. If the number of all registered voters differs in one territorial unit in two elections, the difference is added to non-voters.

Under normal circumstances, the number of non-voters is calculated as

\[ n_t = v_t - \sum_{i=1}^{n_i} s_{ti} \]

where \( n_t \) denotes the number of non-voters in elections \( t \), \( v_t \) denotes the number of all registered voters, \( s_{ti} \) denotes number of votes for a party \( i \). When constructing a dataset for statistical modelling the number of non-voters is calculated as

\[ n_t = \max(v_t, v_{t+1}) - \sum_{i=1}^{n_i} s_{ti} \]

where \( v_t \) is the number of all registered voters in elections \( t \) and \( v_{t+1} \) is the number of all registered voters in elections \( t+1 \). The number of non-voters in elections \( t+1 \) can be calculated as

\[ n_{t+1} = \max(v_t, v_{t+1}) - \sum_{i=1}^{n_i} s_{t+1i} \]

In all elections, electoral support for political parties and candidates that failed to obtain above 5% of the vote nationally is added up to a residual category (“Others”).

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17 The “Manhattan effect” is a special case of information loss due to data aggregation. It is a situation when there is a data point representing very large area or population in a dataset of many small territorial units. This data asymmetry can cause distortions when statistical methods are applied. The effect is named after one of its prime examples, the New York borough of Manhattan (King 1997).
Structure of voters’ transitions

This section of the paper presents results of the ecological inference models. As I have explained, an output of such a model is a contingency table with political parties or candidates in first rounds of elections in rows and parties or candidates in second round of elections in columns. The cells contain quantities of voters with all possible combinations of voting behaviour in both elections. The quantities can either be the estimated absolute numbers of voters or fractions of either all voters, voters in the first round of elections (i.e. row totals) or voters in the second round of elections (i.e. column totals).

It is, however much more instructive to present these results via charts than via tables since quantities of voters transitioning between various voting options are much easier to compare that way. Therefore, each model of voters’ transitions will be presented via four charts in this section. First and second charts represent row totals – shares of voters that chose various voting options in the second round of elections out of voters that chose various voting options in the first round. Third and fourth charts represent column totals – shares of voters that chose various voting options in the first rounds of elections out of voters that chose various voting options in the second round.

In other words, first and second charts answer a simple question of “where the voters went” since they visualize the behaviour of voters from the first elections round to the second round. Third and fourth charts answer a question of “where the voters came from” since they visualize the behaviour of voters from the second round of elections versus the first round.

In the first and third chart, shares of voters in each column add up to 100 %. Therefore, they enable the reader to clearly see voters’ transitions even in case of political parties or candidates that obtained only relatively few votes. At the same time, however, these charts do not display the actual share of votes obtained by various political parties and candidates and therefore conflate differences in popular support. In second and fourth chart, shares of votes in each column add up to the actual share of votes of a given political party or candidate. Therefore, differences in popular support between these parties or candidates are clearly visible. In cases of parties or candidates with relatively few votes, however, the structure of voters’ transitions becomes difficult to read because their columns are small.

It should be noted that second and fourth chart does not contain a column representing non-voters. This is because in most elections, the number of non-voters is far greater than the number of supporters of even the strongest political party or candidate. If columns representing non-voters were added to the charts, the necessary rescaling of the vertical axis would render voters’ transitions between parties and candidates with relatively few votes much more difficult to see.

It should be, moreover, noted that for the reader’s convenience, political parties and candidates are assigned colours that remain constant throughout the paper. In order to minimize the number of colours used, political parties are assigned the same set of colours as individual candidates. This, however, does not correspond to their political affiliation. For example, Maňka is a member of Smer but is assigned blue rather than red colour code in order to better distinguish between him and Kotleba who is assigned the brown colour code.
The 2009 regional elections (the first versus the second round)

Charts below show the structure of voters’ transitions between the first and the second round of the 2009 regional elections. As we can see, most people that did not vote in the first round also did not participate in the second round of the elections. It is not surprising that most voters that supported the two most successful candidates (Maňka and Mikuš) also supported them in the second round.

Voters of Kotleba and Murgaš from the first round mostly did not participate in the second round, while voters of Šimko participated in the second round to a greater extent and largely supported Mikuš. This was, however, not sufficient for him to secure victory. Among the few Kotleba voters that did participate in the second round, the majority voted for Maňka.

![Graph showing transitions between first and second round votes](image-url)
The 2013 regional elections (the first versus the second round)

Charts below show the structure of voters’ transitions between the first and the second round of the 2013 regional elections. Most non-voters from the first round also did not vote in the second round. However, there is a relatively small group of people who did not participate in the first round but did participate in the second round and supported Kotleba. Even though this influx of new voters was not very large in comparison to his overall support in the second round, Kotleba secured much more such “newcomers” than Maňka.

It is also notable that almost all Kotleba voters from the first round participated in the second round and voted for him again. Transitions to Maňka or to the group of non-voters are negligible. Maňka, however, managed to lose some of his supporters from the first round to Kotleba. Some of his voters also did not turn out to vote in the second round. It could be speculated that they expected Maňka to win and therefore did not feel the need to vote again.

Voters of Kaník, the only other candidate that obtained above 5 % of the vote in the first round, mostly did not turn up for the second round, and those voters who did show split their support almost evenly between Kotleba and Maňka. This also applies to supporters of the other eight candidates that failed to secure more than 5 % of the vote nation-wide, with the exception that they opted for Maňka more than Kotleba if they participated in the second round.

What secured Kotleba’s victory in the second round was an influx of voters who did not participate in the first round. This allowed him to overcome the almost 30 % difference of popular support between him and Maňka from the first round. Maňka gained comparatively much less voters who did not participate in the first round so his electorate in the second round was mostly comprised of his previous voters from the first round. This was, however, not sufficient to secure victory.
Among my primary objectives when evaluating the structure of voters’ transitions in other elections is to inspect whether the same pattern appears – whether supporters of Kotleba in the second round of the 2013 regional elections did not participate in other elections. If this is the case, it can then be concluded that the opportunity to elect Kotleba to become the regional governor managed to mobilize a group of people that almost never turn out to vote (see the third section of this paper for evidence of this).

The 2009 versus the 2013 regional elections

Charts below show the structure of voters’ transitions between the 2009 and the 2013 regional elections. First, I analyse transitions between the first rounds of both elections. It is not surprising that most supporters of Kotleba and Maňka from 2009 cast their votes for the same candidate in 2013.

This shows a stability of voting behaviour in the region when it comes to regional elections. Voters of other candidates from the 2009 elections mostly cast their vote for Maňka in 2013, provided they participated in the 2013 regional elections at all. The only 2009 candidate whose electorate supported Kotleba to a greater extent in 2013 is Mikuš.
The 2009 regional elections (1st round) versus the 2013 regional elections (1st round)

The 2013 regional elections (1st round) versus the 2009 regional elections (1st round)
The 2009 regional elections (1st round) versus the 2013 regional elections (1st round)

The 2013 regional elections (1st round) versus the 2009 regional elections (1st round)
This pattern is repeated in the structure of voters’ transitions between the second round of the 2009 regional elections and the first round of the 2013 regional elections. Most voters of Maňka supported the same candidate in the subsequent regional elections while the supporters of Mikuš who participated in 2013 split their support almost evenly between Kotelba, Maňka and Kaník.

The three strongest candidates in the first round of the 2013 regional elections had very different electorates as compared to voters’ choices in the 2009 elections — most of Maňka’s voters already supported him in 2009. On the contrary, most voters of Kaník came from the electorate of Mikuš. Kotleba’s voter base is somewhere in between these two extremes — he attracted relatively most of the people who did not vote in the second round of the 2009 regional elections. Those people who did and later cast their vote for Kotleba voted almost equally for Maňka and Mikuš in 2009.
The 2013 regional elections (1st round) versus the 2009 regional elections (2nd round)

The 2013 regional elections (1st round)
Now I move to cover the structure of voters’ transitions between the first round of the 2009 regional elections and the second round of the 2013 regional elections. As we can see from the charts, most supporters of Kotleba and Maňka remained loyal to their candidates in both of these cases. What is interesting to notice, though, is a large group of voters who have shifted their support from Maňka in 2009 to Kotleba in 2013. The quantity of voters who had transitioned in this direction is unusually high and was not reciprocated by a similarly sized shift from Kotleba to Maňka.

Supporters of Mikuš who took part in the second round of the 2013 elections again split almost evenly between Kotelba and Maňka as we saw above. Supporters of Murgaš, Šimko and other candidates who voted in 2013 supported Maňka to a much greater extent than they did Kotleba. We again see that Kotleba managed to attract a large group of voters that did not participate in the 2009 elections. What’s more, Maňka’s electorate has increased compared to 2009 – he relied on his own voters and supporters of Murgaš. This is not surprising given that Murgaš was a former Smer member as well. Kotleba’s voter base was – apart from his own voters from 2009 – made of former supporters of Maňka and Mikuš.
Let me conclude this section of the paper by analysing the structure of voters’ transitions between the second rounds of the two most recent regional elections. We yet again observe similar patterns than before: 1) there was a two-way split of Mikuš supporters between Maňka and Kotleba; 2) a relatively large group of people that voted for Maňka in 2009 transitioned to Kotleba in 2013; 3) Kotleba secured support of a very large group of people that did not vote in 2009 but did vote 2013. Maňka seems to be much less successful in this respect.
The 2013 regional elections versus the 2012 National Council elections

This segment of the paper discusses transitions of voters between the 2012 National elections and the 2013 regional elections. First, I discuss transitions between the 2012 national elections and the first round of the 2013 elections. Then, transitions between the 2012 elections and the second round of the 2013 elections are debated.

In the 2012 National Council elections, the Smer party won by a landslide when it secured 46% of the vote in the Banskobystrický Region. The rest of the vote has been fragmented among a large number of smaller parties, most notably OĽaL (8.35%), Most-Híd (6.69%), KDH (6.21%), SDKÚ (5.65%), SMK (5.31%), SaS (5%) and SNS (4.6%). The National Council elections registered a comparatively higher turnout than the 2013 regional elections (59.11% of the vote). It is therefore not surprising to find that much more people that did not vote in the 2013 elections have voted in the 2012 elections, with the majority of these voters supporting Smer.

It is also not surprising to find that the electorate of Maňka in the first round of the 2013 regional elections consisted largely of voters who supported Smer in 2012, given that Maňka was a candidate of that party. He also received a sizable support from voters of SDKÚ and SMK. In comparison, Kotleba’s voter base included comparatively less supporters of Smer and a much higher relative share of SDKÚ and KDH voters. He was also heavily supported by people who have in the 2012 elections cast their votes for smaller parties. The voter base of other candidates from the first round of the 2013 regional elections was highly fragmented.

When we look at where supporters of political parties from the 2012 National Council elections went in the 2013 regional elections we find that in almost all cases, a majority of voters abstained from the regional elections. The largest share of voters that did vote in both elections was made up of supporters of SDKÚ. On the contrary, voters of SaS and OĽ who attended the 2012 national election showed up for the 2013 elections the least. What’s more, Kotleba gathered support of mainly former OĽ voters and voters of smaller parties. The electorate of KDH was almost equally split between Kotleba and Maňka.

It is interesting to analyse voters’ transitions from SNS, a far-right nationalist political party. This is the party where we should observe the largest support from Kotleba since it is ideologically the closest to his political positions. More voters of SNS from the 2012 elections cast their vote for Maňka in the first round of the 2013 regional elections, contrary to expectations given the ideological closeness between Kotleba and SNS.
The 2013 regional elections (1st round) versus the 2012 National Council elections

The 2013 regional elections (1st round)
The following charts capture the structure of voters’ transitions between the 2012 National Council elections and the second round of the 2013 regional elections. As we can see, the electorate of Kotleba was much more fragmented than the electorate of Maňka. The latter candidate was mainly supported by former voters of the Smer party. A sizeable portion of his voter base also constituted people that cast their votes for SDKÚ. Supporters of the Hungarian parties SMK and Most-Híd have cast their votes more in favour of Maňka than for Kotleba.

Kotleba’s electorate also included many former Smer, OĽ, KDH or SaS supporters. The second largest group of voters in the 2012 National Council elections though came from smaller parties that failed to obtain 5% of the vote on the national level. There were 18 other political parties that together received 12.18% of the vote.

These parties include most notably LSNS (2.61% of the vote), the “99%” party (2.02%), ĽS-HZDS (1.31%), KSS19 (1.1%) and a coalition of “Zmena zdola” (Change from Below) and DU20 (1.1%). Since these parties gained only marginal support, it is not possible to break down their voters’ transitions in detail. It should be noted, however, that there are several parties with political positions similar to those of Kotleba – most notably LSNS.

It is very interesting that voters of almost all major political parties from the 2012 National Council elections that turned out to vote in 2013 actually have given their support to Kotleba more often than to Maňka. This includes primarily OĽ, KDH and SaS where the support for Kotleba was overwhelming. Voters of SNS again split almost evenly between Kotleba and Maňka, as they did in the first round.

![Image of charts showing voter transitions](image-url)
The 2013 regional elections (2nd round) versus the 2012 National Council elections

The 2012 National Council elections versus the 2013 regional elections (2nd round)
The 2013 regional elections versus the 2014 presidential elections

This section discusses the structure of voters’ transitions between the 2013 regional elections and the 2014 presidential elections. Since both elections have two rounds, I will present the structure of transitions between all combinations of the rounds (the first round of 2013 versus the first round of 2014, the first round of 2013 versus the second round of 2014, the second round of 2013 versus the first round of 2014 and finally the second round of 2013 election versus the second round of 2014).

The 2014 presidential elections saw a victory of Robert Fico in the first round (a candidate of Smer) who obtained 30.27 % of the vote in the Banskobystrický Region. Andrej Kiska (independent) was second with 21.28 % of the vote. Other candidates included Radoslav Procházka (independent; 19.61 %), Milan Kňažko (independent, a former member of SDKÚ; 13.04 %), Gyula Bárdos (SMK; 6.1 %) and nine other candidates who obtained less than 5 % of the vote nation-wide. The turnout reached 37.06 % in the first round and increased to 43.71 % in the second round in the Banskobystrický Region.

Let us start the analysis by inspecting the structure of the voters’ transition between the first rounds of the 2013 regional and 2014 presidential elections. It is apparent that the electorate of the three most successful candidates in 2013 was comprised almost exclusively of those who also voted in the 2014 elections. Maňka attracted a large portion of future Fico voters which is not surprising given that both politicians are members of Smer. Apart from that, he also gained support of a majority of Procházka’s voters. Kotleba’s voter base largely consisted of Smer, SDKÚ and KDH voters.
It is noteworthy that there was a relatively sizeable portion of Fico voters that previously cast their votes for Kotleba. Also, supporters of Kiska and Kňažko surprisingly cast a greater number of votes for Kotleba than for Maňka. On the other hand, those who participated in the 2014 elections and voted for Procházka and candidates with less than 5% of the vote nationally, were to a greater extent voters of Maňka than Kotleba.
The structure of voters’ transitions between the first round of the presidential elections and the second round of the regional elections reveals similar trends. The electorate of Kotleba is again comprised of future supporters of Fico, Kiska and Kňažko, while Maňka secured the votes of relatively more Fico, Procházka, Bárdos voters and candidates who received below 5 % of the vote.

It should be noted that this time, we do not observe an influx of those who did not vote in the 2014 presidential elections into the Kotleba’s voter base in 2013. This is due to a relatively high turnout in the presidential elections – the voters that could not be bothered to vote even in the presidential elections fail to show up in the regional elections as well.

As we can see from the charts, future voters of Fico split almost evenly between Kotleba and Maňka in 2013. Most voters of Kiska and Kňažko from 2014 who participated in the regional elections the previous year cast their vote for Kotleba in the second round of these elections. Maňka only managed to gain votes from future voters of Bárdos and candidates with smaller popular support.
The 2013 regional elections (2nd round) versus the 2014 presidential elections (1st round)

The 2014 presidential elections (1st round) versus the 2013 regional elections (2nd round)
I now proceed to inspect the structure of voters’ transitions between the first round of the 2013 regional elections and the second round of the 2014 presidential elections. In the latter case, voters could only choose between Fico and Kiska. It is apparent that the electorate of both Maňka and Kotleba was almost evenly split between those who later took part in the presidential elections and voted for Fico and Kiska in the second round. Future voters of Kaník and other candidates favoured Maňka much more often than they did Kotleba in the first round of the 2013 regional elections.

It is not surprising to find that both Kiska and Fico attracted a relatively large group of those who did not vote in the 2013 elections. This is due to a relatively lower turnout in 2013 – there were simply not enough voters in the regional elections to account for the support of the two presidential candidates. What’s more, the structure of voters’ transitions reveals that Kiska was more successful in mobilizing these non-voters than Fico.

From those who did participate in the first round of the 2013 regional elections, Fico gained support of much more voters of Maňka, as well as former Kotleba voters. Kiska, however, secured votes of a majority of supporters of Kaník and the less successful candidates. Most people that did not vote in the 2014 presidential elections also did not participate in the 2013 regional elections.
The 2013 regional elections (1st round) versus the 2014 presidential elections (2nd round)

The 2013 regional elections (1st round)
Finally, we can conclude this subsection of the paper by overviewing the structure of voters' transitions between the second rounds of the 2013 regional and the 2014 presidential elections, comparing shifts in voter bases of Kotleba and Maňka in the former elections and of Kiska and Fico in the latter elections. We observe a similar pattern on a two-way split between Kiska and Fico in the group of voters who participated in both elections also in the electorates of both Kotleba and Maňka. It is interesting to note that among those who did not vote in 2013 but did vote in 2014, supporters of Kiska were more frequent.

The second round of the 2014 presidential elections is among the few cases where we do not see an influx of non-voters in the electorate of Kotleba from 2013. Both Kotleba and Maňka attracted a similarly sized group of voters who in the second round of the 2014 presidential elections abstained from voting. What's noteworthy is that despite the fact that Maňka was a member of Smer, he received only about the same number of votes from supporters of Fico as Kotleba did. On top of that, Kotleba gained support of much more future Kiska voters than Maňka did.
The 2013 regional elections (2nd round) versus the 2014 presidential elections (2nd round)

The 2014 presidential elections (2nd round) versus the 2013 regional elections (2nd round)
The 2013 regional elections versus the 2014 European elections

Similar to the 2012 National Council elections, the European elections were won by Smer (securing 30.71 % of the vote in the Banskobystrický Region). Other votes were again fragmented among many smaller parties, notably OL (8.59 %), SMK (7.56 %), KDH (7.55 %), SDKÚ (6.59 %), Most-Híd (5.38 %), SaS (5.18 %) and NOVA (4.8 %). There were 12 other parties that failed to obtain over 5 % of the vote nationwide. Among these, the most successful ones in the Banskobystrický Region were "Strana TIP" (TIP Party) (4.32 %), LSNS (3.89 %), SNS (3.84 %), KSS (1.71 %), PaS\textsuperscript{21} (1.48 %), SDS\textsuperscript{22} (1.48 %) and NaS-NS\textsuperscript{23} (1.08 %). The turnout was relatively low, reaching only 13.45 %.

As we can see, most people that did not vote in the first round of the 2013 regional elections also abstained from participating in the 2014 European elections. The largest relative share of voters from the 2014 elections went to Maňka whose voter base primarily consisted of Smer voters. Kotleba, on the other hand, gained support of much more of those individuals who did not participate in the European elections. Among those who did, majority voted for small parties that failed to obtain over 5 % of the vote nationally. These small parties included the far-right LSNS (Kotleba’s party) and SNS. It is therefore very likely that a bulk of those parties’ voters supported Kotleba although a more granular analysis to corroborate this is not possible. Apart from smaller parties, Kotleba’s voter base also included a relatively large group of SaS and KDH supporters, although KDH voters were divided among multiple candidates.

\textsuperscript{21} Law and Justice (Právo a Spravodlivosť)
\textsuperscript{22} Social Democratic Party of Slovakia (Sociálnodemokratická strana Slovenska)
\textsuperscript{23} Nation and Justice – Our Party (Národ a Spravodlivosť – naša strana)
Political parties that ran in the 2014 European elections whose supporters voted for Maňka to a greater extent than for Kotleba in 2013 included Smer, SMK, KDH, Most-Híd and NOVA. Voters of OĽ, SDKÚ and SaS supported Kotleba more often than Maňka, although a sizeable portion cast their vote for Kaník and other candidates. The electorate of small parties was split almost evenly between supporting Kotleba and Maňka.

The 2013 regional elections (1st round) versus the 2014 European elections

The 2013 regional elections (1st round)
The 2013 regional elections (1st round) versus the 2014 European elections

The 2014 European elections versus the 2013 regional elections (1st round)
It is safe to say that in the second round of the 2013 regional elections, Kotleba won due to a very large group of people who did not participate in the 2014 European elections. Maňka also obtained the support of many voters who abstained from the European elections; the size of this group is almost two times smaller, though. Maňka’s electorate in the second round of the 2013 elections consisted mainly of supporters of Smer.

Among those voters from the 2014 elections who supported Kotleba in the second round of the 2013 elections, only a very small minority were supporters of Smer. In this group, supporters of KDH, SDKÚ and SaS are represented in equal or even greater numbers. of Smer. Similar to the first round, Kotleba also attracted much more of those who have cast their vote in favour of small parties in the 2014 elections.

Shifts in voter behaviour between the first round of the 2013 and the 2014 elections and between the second round of the 2013 and the 2014 elections are very much correlated. Supporters of OĽ were in both cases split almost equally between Maňka and Kotleba. Voters of Smer, SMK, Most-Híd and NOVA supported Maňka in both rounds of the 2013 elections. On the contrary, KDH, SDKÚ and SaS had opted more for Kotleba than Maňka.
The 2014 European elections versus the 2013 regional elections (2nd round)

The 2014 European elections
Discussion

In this section of the paper, I summarize the findings from the individual models of voters’ transitions presented in the previous section. Specifically, I will comment on patterns that appear repeatedly in multiple models. In order to condense a large quantity of visual information contained in the charts from the previous chapter, I aggregate them into a smaller number of charts. The charts below show the structure of voters’ transitions between various elections and the second round of the 2013 regional elections. The transitions around the second round of the elections are crucial for our understanding of Kotleba’s success since they answer the question of how Kotleba managed to gain sufficient popular support to overcome the almost 30% gap in his and Maňka’s share of vote from the first round and eventually come out at the top.

In these aggregated charts, columns represent voters’ transitions between the four types of elections that we analyse (European, presidential, National Council and regional) and one of the three voting options in the second round of the 2013 regional elections (not voting, voting for Kotleba and voting for Maňka). Colour coding of political parties and candidates from previous sections of the paper is retained. One colour, therefore, represents multiple parties or candidates, depending on which elections a column represents. The reader should keep in mind that colours were not assigned to candidates based on their affiliation to parties (e.g. Smer, Fico and Murgaš are all assigned red despite the fact that Murgaš ran as an independent in the 2009 regional elections).

The first chart represents voting behaviour of individuals who did not vote in the second round of the 2013 regional elections. As we can see, this group mostly did not vote in other types of elections either. This is a key finding that lends evidence to a proposition that there is a relatively sizeable portion of the Region’s adult population that almost never votes in any elections. The only elections that this group of people do participate in are so-called first order elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980) – in this case the parliamentary elections and the presidential elections.
It should be noted that the modelling of voters’ transitions presented in this paper is not in and of itself sufficient to establish that non-voters that we observe during various elections are actually the same people. The only thing that we have established is that the group of people that did not vote in the second round of the 2013 regional elections also did not vote in other types of elections. It may, however, still be the case that, for example, a much larger relative share of voters that participated in the National Council elections, also did not vote in the European elections.

In order to establish a higher degree of certainty that there really is a stable group of non-voters, one would have to model voters’ transitions between all combinations of the elections in questions – a total of 56 models. Then, high values in the matrix of non-voters in these 56 pairs of elections would establish the existence of a group of people that consistently do not vote. This dauntless task is, however, beyond the scope of this paper. Still, the shares of people that did not vote in the second round of the 2013 regional elections and in other types of elections are so large that the mutual overlaps of non-voters in pairs of other elections (e.g. presidential versus parliamentary) is very likely also high.
The chart above shows voters’ transitions between Kotleba in the second round of the 2013 regional elections and parties and candidates in other elections. The following chart shows the same information for the electorate of Maňka. A notable difference is the fact that Kotleba was much more successful than Maňka in attracting those individuals who did not participate in other types of elections.
Much more of those individuals who did not vote in second order elections (European and regional) did cast their vote for Kotleba in the second round of the 2013 regional elections. In the first order elections (presidential, parliamentary), the voter base of Kotleba consisted of many supporters of Smer and Fico – in fact, Kotleba was almost as successful in attracting these voters as Maňka. This is very surprising given the fact that Maňka was the official candidate of Smer.

Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to explore the structure of voters’ transitions between Kotleba in the 2013 regional elections and political parties and candidates in the 2009 regional, the 2012 National Council, the 2014 presidential, as well as the 2014 European elections. Given the far-right position of Kotleba and a much more moderate position of his opponent Maňka in the second round of the 2013 regional elections, Kotleba’s defeat was expected. This is in line with the median voter theorem by Harold Hotelling (1929) and Anthony Downs (1957) predicting that in a majoritarian voting system and two-candidates setting (such as the second round of a majoritarian run-off voting system), a moderate candidate will win because the voters from the unrepresented extreme of the political spectrum are more likely to side with the moderate candidate.
Contrary to expectations, Kotleba managed to win the second round of the regional elections and become the regional governor. It is therefore crucial to get to the bottom of why the median voter theorem failed to predict the outcome. The principle of secret ballot causes an irreversible loss of information about the actual structure of voters’ transitions. Since there were no surveys of voters’ transitions conducted around the Slovak regional elections, I was forced to use a hierarchical Bayesian model of ecological inference in order to estimate the voters’ transition rates based on electoral data aggregated to the level of a large number of very small territorial units.

The paper shows that there is a group of people in the Banskobystrický Region that consistently do not participate in elections, particularly in the first order elections. Kotleba managed to gain enough votes in the second round of the 2013 regional elections and defeat Maňka because he was able to mobilize a considerable share of this group than Maňka did. Kotleba’s voters were also relatively disciplined – almost everyone who supported him in the first round participated in the second round and voted for him again. Moreover, he was as successful as Maňka in mobilizing the supporters of Smer and Fico from other elections despite the fact that Maňka participated in the 2013 elections as the official candidate of Smer.

Kamil Gregor is a postgraduate student of the Department of Political Science, Masaryk University in Brno. He works as data analyst, project manager and spokesperson with KohoVolit.eu.

Reference


Just a Roma Issue? The Support for Marian Kotleba in 2013 Regional Elections

Introduction

The last decades of the 20th Century witnessed an emergence of a new wave of far right parties in Western Europe. These subjects differed from their predecessors as they no longer followed the historical idea of fascism. Instead, they reacted to existing challenges of the postindustrial society, largely to changes on the labor market and to the phenomenon of immigration from other countries. In the following years, the role of the far right increased and in several countries these parties gained considerable influence.

This progress sparked the interest of researchers to focus more on the topic as whole. One of the main dilemmas was to conceptualize the far right as a party family and its features (Ignazi 2006). Mudde (2000; 2007) provided a thorough clarification of this phenomenon. According to him the far right is characterized by the presence of nationalism, xenophobia, belief in a strong state and welfare chauvinism, which represents an understanding of the country’s social policy that should help its own nation and not the ‘other’ people.

After 1989 the far right parties started to emerge also in the region of Central and Eastern Europe. The conditions in these countries, significantly different compared to Western Europe, had a specific manifestation. The local far right could thus not react to postmaterialism, multiculturalism or immigration as these topics were irrelevant or not present in the region and it had to found its own specific themes. Due to this it focused primarily on the interstate and intrastate national and ethnic tensions, a region’s legacy from historical development.

Slovak far right was no exception. Starting from the early 90s it gained quite a stable, even if rather weak, position in the country’s party system. Over the past years however, it showed a possible change. The traditional main protagonist of the Slovak far right -- the Slovak National Party (SNS), successful for nearly two decades, has registered a decline. Though this might have been seen as a decline of the far right in Slovakia in general, it proved otherwise. A new formation - The People’s Party – Our Slovakia (LSNS), espousing an extreme right position with a strongly negative stance against the Roma minority began to gain support. Although it was not able to enter the parliament yet, in the 2013 regional election its leader Marián Kotleba got elected as one of the eight regional governors while beating the candidate of the ruling party Smer – Social Democracy.

Our aim is to explore the support of Kotleba as we found his victory marked an important step which may help his party to gain relevance also in the nation-wide politics and even pave the way to the parliamentary arena.

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1 Out of many, several are worth mentioning. In 1999 the Austrian Freedom Party ended second in general election which allowed it to enter the government. Three years later, Jean-Marie Le-Pen made it to the run off of French presidential election, thus creating a strong voter mobilization which helped his rival Jacques Chirac to win the presidency. In the same year the Pim Fortuyn List ranked second in Dutch general election, with its leader assassinated during the campaign.
We expect that his support has a connection to the topic which LSNS targets the most – the Roma minority and its presence on the local level. The structure of the paper is as follows: first, we introduce theoretical assumptions about the support of the far right parties. After that follows a brief characteristic of LSNS and its ideology. The third part deals with methods and the used data. Finally, we present our findings and discuss their possible consequences.

Theoretical insight

The primary aim of this chapter is to provide the initial theoretical insight. Our study presumes that the voter decision in Slovak regional election may be different based on presence and character of the local Roma community. What is more, some other factors as the level of unemployment or education may play a role here, though their effects may vary.

Due to lack of theory regarding the relations between the Roma minority and Slovak far right, our theoretical assumptions focus on the literature devoted to Western European countries. Although it might seem that their conditions are fairly distinct from the Slovak case, the basic principles remain the same. It is irrelevant whether the ostracized minority are the immigrants in Belgium or Roma Slovakia as all these groups are similarly negatively labelled based on their race, social behavior or lifestyle in general.

The existing literature shows a noticeable interest in relation between the electoral support of the far right in Western Europe and the phenomenon of immigration. This link is not surprising as immigrants and multiculturalism were the primary topics of the far right parties, immediately from their emergence in the region in the close of the 20th Century. The framing of immigrants by far right parties has been consistently negative and used in various ways. This social group was marked as the threat of the national identity, the main source of criminality and also as a subject which abuses the welfare system (Rydgren 2008). These points helped the far right to mobilize its voter support.

The literature provides some important findings here. One of such outcomes is that the immigration is a key topic for supporters of the far right (Brug and Fennema 2003; Brug, Fennema and Tillie 2005). A comparative research conducted by Lubbers, Gijsberts and Scheepers (2002) on sixteen Western European countries further confirmed this statement. Based on its results, the negative stance towards the immigration is one of the key indicators leading to the support of the far right parties.

One may expect a positive correlation between the share of immigrants in the country’s society and the support of the far right. Papers working with such a presumption may be found but they provide rather mixed results (Lubbers, Gijsberts and Scheepers 2002; Golder 2003; Norris 2005). As Rydgren (2008) critically points out, these analyses use data from the national level and thus they cannot represent outcomes applicable for lower territorial units. The point is that it may be exactly the sub-national level, which is of key importance, as this is where the daily contact between people takes place. Rydgren correctly states that it is a fallacy to conclude that all people living in a multiethnic country also live in an ethnically heterogeneous locality.
This logic is backed up by a vast amount of research. In their work, Halla, Wagner and Zweimüller (2012) analyzed the territorial support of the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) and found a strong effect of immigration. Their results show that each percentage point of immigrants’ share in the local community increased the electoral support of FPÖ by 0.4 percentage points. The authors also discovered that the skill composition of immigrants was important as well as only low-skilled and medium-medium skilled immigrants helped the results of FPÖ while this was not true for high-skilled ones. Similarly interesting study was conducted by Rink, Phalet and Swyndedouw (2008) who concentrated on the Belgian Flemish Bloc (VB). As they found, the raising share of immigrants on the municipal level increased the probability of voters supporting VB. Also, their work showed the importance of focusing on regional or local units, as the results of their calculations would not indicate such effects if done on the national level.

Literature thus points to more underpinning factors than just immigration alone. Several works (cf. Rydgren and Ruth 2013; Bowyer 2008; Bjørklund 2007; Golder 2003) showed that the support of far right parties is affected by the presence of immigrants, but also by the level of unemployment and education. In their study of Sweden Democrats (SD) Strömblad, Malmberg (2014) found unemployment to be the key factor. According to their analysis the rising contact with the visible minorities led to higher support of SD in times of high unemployment. On the contrary, in locations with low unemployment, the stronger contact with the minority had the opposite effect.

The theoretical discussion found more ways how immigration, unemployment, education and support of the far right may be related. While these parties receive support from all parts of the society, their core voters usually come from lower social groups who find immigrants a threat. Higher willingness to support the far right was found among men, younger age groups, people with middle education and those being self-employed or having manual and routine non-manual jobs (Arzheimer and Carter 2006). The importance of socioeconomic factors for developing a demand for the far right is recorded in the so-called loser hypothesis (Rydgren and Ruth 2011; Brug, Fennema and Tillie 2005). Its idea is that several groups in the society, challenged by their unstable position on the labor market, seek someone they could blame. In Western European countries this aversion may point to immigrants and asylum seekers and thus it may result in the support of a political party which promises a more restrictive immigration policy.

The character of the contact with the minority and emergence of a negative stance against it which may lead to support of the far right is described by two contradictory theories (Strömblad and Malmberg 2014). The first of them is interpreted as a possible result of competition for limited resources. It presumes that members of the majority or a domestic group (in-group) will view the minority with suspicion or even hate. Because of this, the arriving immigrants need help from the state, which is perceived as a burden, mostly by the people with weaker position on the labor market who thus feel endangered. If such people notice immigrants in their surroundings, their feelings may result in willingness to support the far right.

Another theory holds that ethnic conflict may arise from rational action (Sherif and Sherif 1953). It sees xenophobia as a result of conflict between immigrants and lower social classes of the majority society for unstable resources, such as low paying jobs or social benefits. The discrimination against immigrants, advancing of racial stereotypes and the support of the far right may be interpreted not as an emotional reaction as was mentioned above, but as an instrumental strategy.
Despite their high unemployment rate and the fact that the Roma in Slovakia are not immigrants, but a resident ethnic minority, this theory may be easily applied to them. In case of Slovakia a theory may apply that for voters with lower education, unstable job or the jobless, the Roma may be perceived as a rival on the ‘social welfare market.’ Their negative stance may be even enhanced by unfounded information about various social benefits and reputed advantages of Roma minority.

The role of scapegoat (e.g., Dollard et. al. 1939) may be attributed to Roma in Slovakia for several reasons. In public surveys they typically represent the group towards which the majority keeps the most distance. This stance is fully independent of age, sex, education, nationality (Slovak or Hungarian) or political preferences. Different culture and lifestyle of the Roma minority are perceived negatively by the majority. In accordance with that, the prevailing opinion of the majority is that a significant share of the Roma does not want or is not willing to get used to the mainstream norms (Vašečka 2003). This social distance however does not end only in opinions. Based on Puliš (2003) Roma in Slovakia are the main target of Slovak far right extremists, which gives relevance to our study and its aims.

Far Right in Slovakia

As in other Post-communist countries after 1989, far right emerged also in Slovakia. For nearly two decades, the most prominent subject in this area was the SNS (cf. Mudde 2007; Kupka, Laryš and Smolík 2009; Kopeček 2007; Spáč and Voda 2013). With an exemption in the period 2002-2006, which was caused by a temporary internal split, the party was represented in the parliament permanently from its emergence. It also got into the government led by Vladimír Mečiar in the 90s and later by Robert Fico. However, in recent years the position of SNS faded and after 2012 the party found itself outside the parliament.

Nevertheless, the decline of SNS was far from an end of the far right in Slovakia. On the contrary, the recent period witnessed a rise of another party, the LSNS. Based on its ideology, LSNS may be labeled as an extreme right party. Unlike its predecessor, the Slovak Brotherhood (SP), the party reduced the glorification of the Slovak Wartime to minimum. Its core issues include strong populist appeals against the existing establishment and most of all the concentration on Roma minority in Slovakia (Kluknavská 2012). LSNS labels Roma as a burden of the social welfare system and as a source of criminality which the state is unable to handle leaving the majority unprotected (Kluknavská 2014; Our Slovakia 2013). This framing is similar to the one used by the Western European far right when dealing with immigrants.

In respect to electoral support, LSNS has not yet entered the parliament, however, its potential seems to be rising. In 2010 it received 1.3 per cent of votes and two years later a slightly better result of 1.6 per cent. However, the biggest success was only to come. In 2009 regional elections Marián Kotleba the leader of LSNS competed for the post of regional governor, receiving nearly ten per cent of votes. Four years later Kotleba made another attempt, now with strikingly different results (table 1). In the first round he came in second with more than 20 per cent of votes. In the runoff he stood against the candidate of SMER-SD party which at that time held the majority in the national parliament. And Kotleba was able to win and assume the post of regional governor. His victory could indicate some potential for his party to enter the national politics and thus highlights even more the importance of studying this issue.
Table 1. Results of the 2013 regional gubernatorial elections in Banska Bystrica region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Political Party</th>
<th>1st Round</th>
<th>2nd Round</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Votes</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Maňka</td>
<td>SMER-SD, SZ, HZD, LS-HZDS, SMS, SMK, KDH</td>
<td>60 960</td>
<td>49.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Kotleba</td>
<td>LSNS</td>
<td>26 251</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ľ. Kaník</td>
<td>SDKU-DS, Most, SaS</td>
<td>18 571</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Konárík</td>
<td>SNS</td>
<td>5 056</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O. Binder</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>4 022</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 363</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.

Data and methods

The theoretical part brings several assumptions about factors influencing the support of a candidate of extreme right party and looks in greater detail into how these factors work. Support of Kotleba, as the outcome of xenophobic thoughts of voters, should be influenced by the presence of Roma communities in the municipalities, by unemployment and the level of education attained. More precisely, the electoral result of Kotleba should not be influenced only by the proportion of Roma but the type of their settlement on the local level should also make a difference because it creates different conditions for the nature of everyday contact between majority and minority. In municipalities with Roma concentrated in the center or living dispersed among the majority, the support for Kotleba should be lower than in municipalities with Roma concentrated in the outskirts or in a segregated settlement. The explanation is that the latter mentioned settlements lead to less intensive everyday contact thus preventing the break-up of the existing stereotypes.

The hypothesis about the influence of the presence of Roma minority (as percent share of the total population) is even more complicated as it is doubtful to expect a linear relation with the support of Kotleba. On the contrary, we assume that the support of Kotleba should be low in cases with both low and high share of Roma. The latter has a straightforward logic as in the municipalities where the Roma form a majority, there are only few voters, who can be attracted by Kotleba. It is thus the municipalities where Roma are present, but do not compose a majority where the leader of LSNS can capitalize the most from the hate and fear of the Slovak population. Unemployment and education are other important concepts mentioned in the theoretical part. Both play a different role here. Unemployment (together with fear of it) has a function of a “trigger” of the whole process as it helps to create the dissatisfaction and distrust among working class and low-wage workers. Therefore, we can expect that the higher unemployment should lead to higher support of Kotleba. The assumption about the role of education is the following. Inter-ethnic relations can lead into mutual understanding in areas with higher level of education, because things like tolerance or debunking of stereotypes are part of the educational process. Education also can be considered as an indicator of knowledge about society and social situation, e.g. about differences in standards of living between different social groups.

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4 Slovak Brotherhood (Slovenská pospolitost) was a civic association formed in the 90s which was transformed into a political party in 2005. It strongly praised the Slovak Wartime state and supported the idea of a corporativist country. Apart from this it used strong negative appeals against various subjects as Hungarians or Roma (Mikušovič 2007; Kupka, Laryš and Smolík 2009).
Therefore we expect the negative relation between education and support of Kotleba, because with higher education there should be less extent of xenophobic attitudes in a given locality and therefore smaller amount of voters willing to vote for a candidate of extreme right. To confirm this thesis we operationalize the factor of education as per cent of people with university degree. Finally, it is possible to expect an interaction effect of the above mentioned variables. As it is shown by previous studies (Halla, Wagner and Zweimüller 2012; Strömblad, Malmberg 2014), the quality of both the community as well as the “out-group” can modify the marginal effect of individual variables. Beside the share of Roma minority, unemployment and education, the share of Hungarian minority has to be taken into account, because for a party promoting Slovak nationalism, this group is completely irrelevant. Citizens belonging to Hungarian minority can be hardly willing to vote for candidate such as Kotleba, despite they can be in other respects very same as his actual voters. Therefore the analysis is restricted only to municipalities with less than 30 % share of Hungarians. However, even for the municipalities which fulfill this condition, we still control this variable. To improve the analysis it also controlled for the variables used for explanation of regional differences of established parties (Pink et al. 2012). Therefore the set of variables includes also the proportion of entrepreneurs, workers in agriculture, share of Catholics and size of municipality.

As the base for analysis, we use census data and official results of regional election provided by Slovak Statistical Office. Due to specific conditions the data about Roma minority are gathered from the Atlas project (see below). The elections of regional governors in Slovakia are held under a two-round run off. We analyze only results of the first round as the outcomes of the second round may be more affected and biased by strategic voting and by voting against the rival candidate. Some data about the Roma minority in Slovakia is available from regular census, however its relevance is questionable. Due to the bad image of this minority, many Roma tend to state a different nationality than their own. This results in a vast underestimation of the number of Roma in the country’s population. Studies working with this official data are thus at risk of spoiled results due to incorrect inputs. As a solution which provides better and more precise data, the project Atlas of Roma Communities (2013) will be used. This unique project was realized in cooperation between national and international bodies and its results are based on thorough terrain mapping work of all municipalities in Slovakia. It does not capture only the numbers of persons belonging to Roma minority, but it also describes the way how Roma are concentrated in a municipality. Its outcomes distinguish four types of Roma presence on the local level: the dispersion of Roma minority in whole municipality; concentration of this minority in the center; concentration at the outskirts; and concentration in a segregated settlement. These categories are not exclusive and therefore several types of presence of Roma minority can be valid for any one municipality. For the purpose of analysis, two sets of dichotomous variables are constructed. The first one addresses the four types of Roma presence on the local level: the dispersion of Roma minority in whole municipality; concentration of this minority in the center; concentration at the outskirts; and concentration in a segregated settlement. These categories are not exclusive and therefore several types of presence of Roma minority can be valid for any one municipality. For the purpose of analysis, two sets of dichotomous variables are constructed. The first one addresses the four types of Roma presence on the local level. There is no common referential category for the entire set of variables capturing the nature of presence of the Roma minority, the referential value for each category is its opposition. The second variable monitors the share of Roma minority in municipalities and as we do not expect a linear relation here, we sub-divide it into several categories. The first category is “without Roma minority” which is also the referential one. Other categories are assigned the following intervals: 0.1 - 5 %; 5.1 - 10 %; 101 - 15 %; 15 - 25 %; 25 - 50% and more than 50 %.
The remaining variables are based on census data. Unemployment rate is computed as a share of the unemployed out of all economically active people. The share of entrepreneurs and workers in agriculture is also related to economically active population. The amount of people with university degree is calculated as a share of those with higher than secondary education out of all inhabitants older than fifteen years of age. The variables of Catholics and foreigners are calculated as a share of the total population. Most of the variables are aggregate in nature. It means that the value of variable for each municipality is made up by the sum of individuals belonging to that municipality. Although these individuals form the basis of the data, the results of analysis cannot be attributed to individual behavior of voters but only to the characteristics of municipalities and their influence on the support of Kotleba. Values of each variable are valid for a set of 512 municipalities in the region of Banská Bystrica. However, only 392 of the total number of municipalities are used in the analysis as all units with more than 30% share of Hungarians are excluded. Due to very different size of municipalities in terms of their population, the number of inhabitants is used as the weight.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hungarians</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Unemployment</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Entrepreneurs</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Foreigners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholics</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are some connections between the independent variables, which can violate the assumption of no correlation between the expected causes in the statistical models. Values of Pearson coefficient indicate an especially deep relation between unemployment, share of Roma population and the level of education. In principle, with higher share of Roma minority there is higher unemployment, and lower share of highly educated people. Although the correlation between unemployment and share of Roma is very high, it is unreasonable to simplify it to the equation “Roma = unemployment,” because there are several municipalities without the Roma minority, which also have high unemployment. Because the share of Roma population is recoded to set of dummy variables, the possible co-linearity between these two variables (share of Roma population and unemployment) is not a problem in respect to technical requirements of the analysis. However, the problem with making the link between education and unemployment remains and coefficients of these two variables can be affected by this relation in the analysis.
Relation between presence of Roma minority and support of Kotleba

Before the actual analysis, the relation between the presence of Roma minority and support of Kotleba is examined. Table 3 shows that the growing share of Roma in the population leads to growing support of Kotleba only in a limited extent and in a different array of ways. In municipalities without any Roma minority the average electoral result of Kotleba was 22 per cent of valid votes. A very similar result was recorded in case of low share of Roma minority ranging between one and ten per cent. However, a substantial difference may be spotted in municipalities with 10 to 50 per cent of Roma where the average support of Kotleba was higher than 25 per cent. As expected, with Roma composing a numerical majority in municipalities, the support for Kotleba was low on average and reached about fourteen per cent of votes.

Table 3. Support for Kotleba according to share of Roma minority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Votes (%)</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0.1-5</th>
<th>5-10</th>
<th>10-15</th>
<th>15-25</th>
<th>25-50</th>
<th>50-100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are also differences between support of Kotleba in municipalities according to the type of presence of Roma minority. If the members of Roma community are dispersed across the municipality or concentrated in the centre, then Kotleba’s results are almost the same as in other municipalities. The opposite relation is valid for other types of presence, especially in municipalities with concentration of the Roma minority on the outskirts of municipalities, the support for Kotleba is higher than in other units.

Table 4. Support for Kotleba according to type of presence of Roma minority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Votes (%)</th>
<th>Dispersed</th>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>Outskirt</th>
<th>Settlement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Previous tables offer only the initial insight into support for Kotleba in the 2013 regional elections. The second part of the chapter explains differences in electoral support for Kotleba across municipalities more precisely. The explanatory part is based on results of regression analysis. The electoral result of Kotleba in municipalities is the dependent variable in the analyses, while variables describing the presence of Roma minority, unemployment, education, sectoral employment, religious affiliation and share of foreigners are used as explanatory variables. We examine several models to examine the role of independent variables including their interactions.
Table 5. The OLS regression model explaining support for Kotleba in 1st round of regional elections in 2013 in the district of Banska Bystrica

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>23.18</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>21.89</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>21.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispersed</td>
<td>-2.28</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-13.08</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>-13.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrum</td>
<td>-1.21</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outskirt</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>5.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlement</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of Roma</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.1 - 5</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>7.08</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>7.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 - 10</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>9.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1 - 15</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>14.69</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>14.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.1 - 25</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>15.97</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>17.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.1 - 50</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>15.03</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>15.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.1 - 100</td>
<td>-7.48</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>4.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control variables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreigners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.41</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R square</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of the first two models show that only the presence of Roma minority is insufficient to explain differences between municipalities as for the electoral support of Kotleba. Although some categories of both variables (type and intensity) have some influence, the explanatory power of both models is very low. The first model can explain only 6 percent of the variance of the dependent variable, while the second model is just slightly over this value. The results of unstandardized regression coefficients (see Table 5) in these models only copy patterns illustrated in the previous part (see tables 3 and 4). Values of unstandardized regression coefficients express the difference in support for Kotleba between municipalities with or without the certain type of presence of Roma minority (model 1) or between municipalities with certain portion of Roma population and municipalities without any Roma population. The effect of different types of settlement observed in this model is not in conflict with our assumptions. Without any further control, in municipalities with any concentration of Roma minority and in municipalities with concentration on outskirts or in segregated settlements, the support of Kotleba is lower than in those with concentration on outskirts or in segregated settlements.
This result supports the hypothesis about the influence of the role of different means of everyday contact. Coefficients in the second model copy the results of descriptive statistics, when they identify as the best environment for high support for Kotleba municipalities with 10 % to 50 % share of Roma minority.

However, if both sets of variables are used together in the same model (model 3) the explanatory power increases and due to better control exceeds the sum of the both previous models. This means that in order to arrive at satisfactory explanation, information about the proportion of Roma minority as well as the type of their presence are necessary. Values of unstandardized regression coefficients indicate that there is more important role of most of the variables when both the type of presence as well as the share of Roma minority are taken into account. In model 1, the difference in Kotleba’s support between municipalities with and without dispersed Roma minority is estimated at about 2 percent, whereas when it is controlled for the share of population, the results indicate a difference of about 13 percent between municipalities with the same portion of Roma minority, but different when it comes to presence of dispersed Roma minority.

The same applies for the share of Roma minority controlling for the type of community. When we compare the same types of municipalities, any increase in the percentage of Roma minority present leads to higher support for Kotleba, although according to model 2, the majority of Roma population in a municipality is a disadvantage. The best conditions for the high support of extreme right candidate are in municipalities with a concentration between 10 to 50 per cent of Roma minority located on the outskirts and in settlements. This outcome indicated in model 3 is affected by electoral turnout and very probably by a “selective ethnic” turnout. The level of turnout in regional elections is generally very low in Slovakia and in municipalities with high share of Roma population it is even lower. This allows us to assume that the people who come to the polls are mostly of majority Slovak population and thus in smaller towns just a few voters of Kotleba can affect a high value of support in relative means.

The model 4 shows the results of explaining the differences in support for Kotleba by socio-economic characteristics usually used in analysis of support of “traditional” parties. This attempt to explain the differences in Koleba’s support is obviously unsatisfactory. The explanatory power of the model, which includes only indicators of social and economic characteristics of municipalities and their population is very close to zero. Only proportion of highly educated people, Catholics and foreigners seems to have at least some relation to support of Kotleba – which is negative in all cases. If these indicators are added to the model with the type of presence of Roma minority and its share, the effects of most variables change. The possible reason for this may lie in the fact that the effects in model 4 are partially just a mediation of the effect of presence of Roma minority. The effects on the variable in question which are not diminished when compared to model 4 are the education level and the share of Hungarians. It may be concluded that with better education and higher share of Hungarian inhabitants, the support for Kotleba decreases (provided the the municipalities are the same in terms of presence of minority and its share).
Conclusion

This paper analyzed the support of Marian Kotleba in the 2013 regional election. Our findings indicate that the presence of Roma minority has a substantial importance for understanding Kotleba’s results. The outcomes presented in this paper showed two key points. First, the rising share of Roma in municipalities enhanced the support of Kotleba, however this is true up to a point when the Roma stay a numerical minority. In areas where they compose a majority, Kotleba’s support went steadily down. Second, the type of Roma community had its influence on the level of support as well. With Roma living dispersed among the majority and in the town centres, Kotleba scored worse. On the other hand his results were better in areas with Roma living concentrated on the outskirts and in segregated settlements. These findings are in accordance with the contact theory and prove that lesser daily contact of the majority with Roma leads to higher support of extremists.

The paper tested also the potential effect of socio-economic factors on support of Kotleba. According to our findings, these factors alone have only very limited influence. The support of Marian Kotleba was thus not truly based on socio-economic grounds as only some effect of the share of Hungarians and highly educated people was found on the election results, whereas, the unemployment factor seemed to have no effect at all.

These findings bring us to final remarks. Our results proved some of the theoretical expectations, though not all of them. The high results of the LSNS leader had a connection with the Roma issue, however the explanatory power of our models indicate that also other factors played a role here. We may conclude that support of Kotleba was partly also an expression of a protest vote aimed potentially against political parties as such. To sum up, the far right candidate in the regional election in 2013 thus did not only receive a ‘classical’ far right electoral support.

Petr Voda is research assistant and Peter Spáč is assistant professor at the Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic.

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