



PAVOL JOZEF ŠAFÁRIK UNIVERSITY IN KOŠICE
FACULTY OF ARTS

Ethnic Relations in Slovakia at the Beginning of the 21st Century

Mária Ďurková
Štefan Šutaj
Nikola Regináčová (eds.)



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Trends in the Development of Ethnic Relations in Slovakia

(Comparative Research of Ethnic Issue between 2004 and 2020) – (TESS2)

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Introduction

We hereby present another publication elaborated as part of the project Trends in the Development of Ethnic Relations in Slovakia (Comparative Research of Issues of National Minorities in the Years 2004 – 2020), carried out in 2016 – 2020 by the Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences in cooperation with two departments of the Faculty of Arts UPJŠ in Košice, with the support of the Agency for the Support of Science and Research. This is a collective monograph of ten authors entitled *Ethnic Relations in Slovakia at the Beginning of the 21st Century*. The scientific studies ranging from 1 to 2 author's sheets (each study formally consists of more than 36,000 characters) provide analyses following a shift in ethnic relations over the last 15 years. In addition to their focus on ethnicity, another common feature is that they draw on the sociological, socio-psychological and historical research carried out in the period under review by the Institute of Social Sciences of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (now the Institute of Social and Psychological Sciences of the Slovak Academy of Sciences) on a representative sample of the population. The dominant line is the minority ethnic identity related to the territory of Slovakia or the minority communities of Slovaks living abroad. The work is the result of the research team with a clear focus on the presentation of the results of one of the main objectives of the project, especially based on the data obtained by empirical research on ethnicity and national relations, which was carried out in 2017 as part of the project. An important method is the comparison of the obtained results with the results of research carried out in 2004 while maintaining the methodological procedures applied in empirical research from 2004. In 2003 – 2005, the Institute of Social Sciences of the Slovak Academy of Sciences carried out sociological-socio-psychological research entitled *Nation, Nationalities and Ethnic groups in the Process of Transformation of Slovak Society*, implemented by means of empirical analysis of the data obtained by the questionnaire method on a representative research sample. It is the comparison of the data from 2004 and 2017 that can be an interesting source of knowledge regarding how and where Slovak society moved over the period.

The reader can confront the complexity of the presented results with other texts that were created as part of the project. In addition to a number of scientific studies published in scientific journals and presentations at scientific conferences in Slovakia and abroad, these are: The results of the first scientific conference, held on 14 – 15 November 2016, published in the proceedings by Štefan Šutaj – Lucia Heldáková – Nikola Regináčová (eds.). *Current Issues of Research on Nationality Policy and Nationality Relations in Slovakia in the 20th and the 21st Centuries*. Prešov : Universum, 2017 and Štefan Šutaj – Nikola Regináčová – Lucia Heldáková (eds.). *Aktuálne otázky výskumu národnostnej politiky a národnostných vzťahov na Slovensku v 20. a 21. storočí*. Prešov : Universum, 2017.

The results of the second scientific conference “Central European Contexts of National Minorities’ Development at the Beginning of the 21st Century”, held on 14 – 15 November 2018, published in the proceedings Barbara Kacerová – Štefan Šutaj – Jana Šutajová (eds.).

Central European Connections in National Minorities' Development at the Beginning of 21. Century. Prešov : Universum, 2019 and Jana Šutajová – Štefan Šutaj – Barbara Kacerová (eds.). *Stredoeurópske súvislosti národnostného vývoja na začiatku 21. storočia.* Prešov : Universum, 2019. The basic data from the research carried out are presented in the final report from the project ŠUTAJ, Štefan et al. *Tendencie vývoja etnických vzťahov na Slovensku (komparatívny výskum národnostnej problematiky v rokoch 2004 – 2020). (Záverečná správa z výskumu).* Prešov : Universum, 2019, 175 p. The scientific studies in the presented collective monograph follow up on the research report, expand it in terms of scope of the issue and especially in-depth analyses of the data obtained in both the aforementioned surveys and their comparison.

Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the publication, the authors use two types of references to literature, complying with the two types of social sciences and humanities (one common for the historical sciences and the other characteristic for sociology and psychology), which use different strategies when referring to literature and resources.

Štefan Šutaj

How Do We See Each Other: Ethnic Stereotypes of Slovak Population and the Question of their Stability over Time¹

Jozef Výrost

Abstract:

Stereotypes represent an organised class in the social context of shared beliefs, the content of which constitutes the personal qualities attributed to a group and its members. In this paper, we focused mainly on the social dimension of stereotypes. Their bearers and at the same time their objects will be the selected ethnic communities in Slovakia. The theoretical-methodological basis for the study of mutual (auto and hetero) stereotypes is the SCM (Stereotype Content Model – Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, 2007). The empirical data analysed comes from two research probes conducted in 2004 and 2017 by quota sampling. In both cases, the research samples consisted of about 1,000 respondents in six groups according to nationality (Hungarians, the Roma, Ruthenians, Ukrainians, Czechs and Slovaks from nationally mixed areas). Empirical data confirm the general trend of a more positive auto-stereotype compared to hetero-stereotypes in most of the respondent groups involved, confirming the existence of close relationships between self-image, individual's personal identity, and group/ethnic identification. Hetero-stereotypes of respondents against five ethnic groups in Slovakia, representing 4 minorities (Hungarians, Ruthenians, Ukrainians and Czechs) and Slovaks are characterized by a high degree of similarity and localise the group average ratings of all six groups including the Roma into the positive quadrant of SCM expressing positive emotional relationship (WARMTH factor) and respect for skills (COMPETENCE factor). The data obtained confirm the data on positive mutual reflection of members of various ethnic groups in Slovakia obtained in the previous period. The situation with respect to Roma respondents' hetero-stereotypes is fundamentally different: it is in the negative quadrant of the SCM in all groups (low ratings in both WARMTH and COMPETENCE factors) in both rounds of data collection; i.e. in 2004 and 2017. The data obtained confirm the unfavourable status and reflect the living conditions of the Roma in society and at the same time document the stability of hetero-stereotypes towards the Roma in all groups, which has not changed within one decade at all. The predominant relative stability of the positive mutual image over time, manifested by respondents representing ethnic minorities and the majority, can be considered as a key finding of the research.

Keywords: auto-stereotypes, hetero-stereotypes, ethnic minorities in Slovakia.

1 This work was supported by the Agency for the Support of Research and Development on the basis of Agreement No. APVV 15-0745.

Introduction

Stereotypes in social psychology are relatively stable, simplified and personalized beliefs (engaged opinions), applicable to individuals – members of a community and at the same time the community as a whole. In general, they are seen as: an integrated/organized class in the social context of shared beliefs; which are expected to have a natural relationship/conformity between the characteristics attributed to a group and the personal characteristics attributed to its member; the contents of the construct of stereotypes include both personal characteristics and established behaviours; they act as shared demonstrations of personal and cultural patterns (Glăveanu, 2007).

Stereotyping in social psychology is a process that is natural, plays an important role in people's lives and is inherent in every individual. This is because stereotypes have both a cognitive and a social function: on the cognitive level, they represent a product of categorization, which results in simplification and systematisation of information, which enables an individual to more quickly and efficiently create the image of social, world, navigate and decide on various social objects; at the social level, sharing stereotypes and acquiring them reinforces both ingroup (US) cohesion and outgroup (THEM) differentiation.

Thomas (2006, 4-5) described six basic functions of outgroup stereotypes: 1. *orientation* – stereotypes act as a navigator in complex social reality and reinforce personnel capacity for rapid response, 2. *adjustment* – stereotypes accelerate individual's potential to adapt to the new social environment and its rules, 3. *resistance* – a reduced rating of other social groups (outgroups) as a tool of social comparison helps maintain positive personal and ingroup self-image, 4. *self-presentation* – communicated beliefs shared by own group (ingroup) reinforce perceived and provided social support, 5. *identity* – stereotypes have a direct influence on the formation and maintenance of the "collective spirit" of a group, 6. *control/defence* – stereotypes serve as a mechanism of controlling required behaviour towards target social objects (individuals, groups, institutions) and, at the same time, as an effective tool for the defence of acts performed.

As the stereotypes combine the reflection of the past inter-ethnic relations with the current state and at the same time personal experience with mediated experience, demonstrating only relative stability, as shown by comparative data from the well-known Princeton Ethnic Stereotypes Study, which covered 60 years in four empirical probes (Katz, Braly, 1933; Gilbert, 1951; Karlins, Coffman, Walters, 1969; Madon et al., 2001). Also, the results of application of computer analysis of word embedding² on the analysis of the evolution of gender and ethnic stereotypes in the US over 100 years (Garg et al., 2018) have shown how significant events (e.g. the 1960s women's rights movement in the US in case of gender stereotypes; terrorist attacks since the late 1980s in the case of ethnic stereotypes) have been affecting changes of stereotypes.

In the research we focus mainly on the social dimension of stereotypes, both the bearer and the object will be the ethnic communities in Slovakia. Ethnic map of Slovakia with a total population of 5,397,036 inhabitants according to the 2011 census³ consists

2 The essence of the method lies in converting words into vectors/points in space so that the expressions with similar properties are located close to each other.

3 Online: <https://census2011.statistics.sk/tabulky.html>.

of 14⁴ ethnic groups: Slovaks with 80.7 % represent the majority, Hungarians (8.5 %), the Roma (2.0 %),⁵ Czechs (0.6 %), Ruthenians (0.6 %) and Ukrainians (0.1 %) represent, according to Wolff's classification (2008), traditional minorities; the number of other eight ethnic groups (Germans, Poles, Croats, Serbs, Russians, Jews, Moravians, Bulgarians) does not exceed 0.1 %.

In this paper, we will deal with the auto- and hetero-stereotypes of the members of five traditional ethnic minorities living in the Slovak Republic (Hungarians, the Roma, Czechs, Ruthenians and Ukrainians) and the representatives of the majority – Slovaks living in nationally mixed areas of Slovakia. Although the assumption of conditionality of group stereotypes by historical events is considered generally accepted in professional circles, the influence of current events shows to be more significant (e.g. Sheridan, Gillett, 2005). Despite this fact, we consider it useful to briefly remind the basic trajectories of the development and position of the five traditional minorities in the Slovak Republic since the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 to the present.

Hungarians found themselves in the position of minority after the foundation of Czechoslovakia in 1918 and the demarcation of the borders by the Treaty of Trianon in 1920. In the census of 1921, 745,000 people declared Hungarian nationality (Tóth, Novotný, Stehlík, 2012), representing 5.5 % of the population of CSR. In the next census in 1930, their number fell to 692,000, or 4.8 % of the population. They still predominantly occupied a contiguous area along the southern border with Hungary, characterized by a predominantly agricultural character linked to seasonal work, high unemployment and low levels of infrastructure and services. Psychological effects of status change (change from a majority to a minority) found expression on the political level by seeking adequate representation in the parliament and pursuing goals perceived as the interest of the whole community: in the 1938 elections the United Christian, Socialist and Hungarian National Party won the majority votes of the Hungarian minority and their program emphasized the need for autonomy of Slovakia and at the same time proclaimed the requirement to connect territories inhabited by people of Hungarian nationality to Hungary (Šutaj et al., 2006; Šutaj, 2012). The development of the international political situation in Europe in the 1930s, reflecting the long-term intention of Hungarian governments trying to achieve the revision of borders, culminated in the Vienna Arbitration, where parts of southern Slovakia were surrendered to Hungary and subsequently (after the foundation of the Slovak State declared 14 March 1939) upon directive of Hungarian government based on the approval of Germany, Hungarian army occupied Carpathian Ruthenia and other municipalities in eastern Slovakia on 23 March 1939. After the end of World War II, the social and political atmosphere in Czechoslovakia suited opinions and measures aiming for draconian measures against German and Hungarian minorities, which were perceived as active agents of the disintegration of the common state. One of strategic objectives was the intention to displace members of German and Hungarian nationality: by the decree

4 The nationality of the respondents in the 2011 census was determined on the basis of a self-declaration principle.

5 Their actual number is in fact significantly higher, many of them declared their Slovak or Hungarian nationality in the census.

of the President of Czechoslovakia in August 1945, they lost the rights of the citizens of Czechoslovakia en bloc. In the case of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, governments of the Czechoslovak Republic and the Republic of Hungary, after long and complicated negotiations and under strong international pressure, finally agreed to exchange population (almost 90,000 resettled from Czechoslovakia to Hungary and over 70,000 persons resettled from Hungary to Czechoslovakia) in 1946. Population exchange within the Czechoslovak Republic included also other activities aimed at dispersing homogeneous enclaves inhabited by Hungarians (relocation in the territory of Slovakia, displacement to the Czech Republic, support for the change of registered nationality from Hungarian to Slovak – *reslovakization*). After the change of the political regime of Czechoslovakia in February 1948, in September the government adopted a decision to return Czechoslovak citizenship to citizens of Hungarian nationality, who were citizens of Czechoslovakia until 1 November 1939. Over the next two decades, the status and mobility of members of the Hungarian minority was significantly impacted by the ongoing economic processes – the collectivization of agriculture and industrialization. In 1968, the revival process brought a significant legislative change with regard to minorities, Constitutional Act No. 144/1968 on the Status of Nationalities in CSSR granted state-forming status also to national minorities, in addition to Czechs and Slovaks. This fundamental transformation of the society after 1989 and the establishment of an independent Slovak Republic opened a new space for expressing attitudes and addressing the requirements of the Hungarian community in Slovakia. The new territorial division of the SR, the creation of higher territorial units (regions), public administration reform, the accession of the SR to the EU were probably some of the most significant (and also the most discussed) events affecting the life and status of this minority.

As a successor state, the Czechoslovak Republic also assumed efforts to regulate the life of the Roma (known as Gypsies) from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, drawing on a detailed inventory carried out in 1893 throughout the Hungarian Kingdom. It focused mainly on the Roma living in a nomadic way and on a set of measures aimed at protecting the majority population (Horvátová, 2002), elaborated and adopted in 1927 in the form of Act No. 117 on Wandering Gypsies, and subsequently, in 1928, the Headquarters for wandering Gypsies was established. Adoption of the Nuremberg Racial Laws in Germany in 1935 after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia had a direct drastic impact on the Roma community living in Slovakia: a directive of the Ministry of the Interior in 1941 prohibited nomadism and the first labour camps for Roma men were established. In 1944, one of them was transformed into a detention camp where entire families were deported. After the end of World War II, part of the Roma migrated to Bohemia in several waves (Pavelčíková, 2004), the first of which migrated immediately after the war. The effort of the government of the Czechoslovak Republic to obtain an overview of the actual number of the Roma in 1947 was implemented in the form of Decree No. 756 on the National Mandatory Register. In the following period, the state authorities were not interested in treating the Roma as a specific ethnic group and emphasized the change of life, re-education, while considering two approaches, assimilation or ethnic principle. Controlled assimilation was chosen, embedded in Act No. 74 from 1958 on the Permanent Settlement of Nomadic Persons. The state authorities focused on the elimination of “undesirable” centres of

Roma concentration and their dispersion into predominantly urban agglomerations. In 1968, revival processes initiated a moderation of approach to the Roma community in the form of a concept of social integration, which sought to accelerate assimilation processes by providing material and social benefits. In 1969, the Government Commission for Gypsy Citizens was set up at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and a network of social guardians, field workers was gradually established, with the task of mediating between state authorities and the 'citizens of Gypsy origin', reporting on their numbers and problems of their employment, housing, education, etc. The transformation of the society after 1989 brought also some changes in the approach to this community, demonstrated in the Slovak Government Policy Principles on Roma, adopted in 1991, such as recognition of the ethnic identity of the Roma, change of ethnonym, standardization of Roma language and its equalization with other minority languages and the creation of conditions for education in Roma language. On the other hand, the processes of economic transformation also led to a deepening of social stratification and social inequalities and thus a deepening of social exclusion of part of the Roma.

Representatives of Ruthenians abroad (American National Council of Hungarian Ruthenians in 1918) and at home (Carpathian-Russian National Council in 1919) supported the idea of their incorporation into the newly emerging Czechoslovak Republic (Gajdoš, Konečný, 2005). Based on the decision of the Paris Peace Conference and the Treaty of Saint-Germain, the Upper Tisa Region with mostly Ruthenian population was incorporated in Czechoslovakia. The legal basis for the administration of the incorporated territory was the General Statute for the Organization and Administration of Subcarpathian Ruthenia, which, in addition to describing the relevant articles of peace treaties and decisions of the Territorial Commission on the demarcation of borders also contained an ambiguous statement about the official language, considering it the folk language used by people – the so-called “jazyčie” (Konečný, 2015). More than 600,000 inhabitants lived in the Subcarpathian Ruthenia region at that time, and it was estimated that Ruthenians made up around 60 % of this number. Economically, this was a poorly developed region with low economic potential (around 3,000 people worked in the industry), a small area of agricultural land (around 20 %), low creditworthiness, with a prevailing number of small farms with low productivity. Besides Carpathian Ruthenia region, 85,000 inhabitants were categorized as Ruthenians in the north-east of Slovakia according to the 1921 census, and according to the 1930 census there were 91,000 people listed as “*Russian and Little-Russian (Ukrainian) nationality*”. The situation with regard to language remained unclear, as part of the already scarce intelligentsia promoted and favoured the folk language, another part, with support of the Church, promoted Russian language and the third part, with support of the school administration promoted Ukrainian language. Similarly, the solution of the issue of autonomy of Subcarpathian Ruthenia promised by the government of the Czechoslovak Republic stagnated, and when the Constitutional Act on Subcarpathian Ruthenia was finally passed by the Parliament in Prague in November 1938, it only covered the territory reduced by 1,500 km², with 97 municipalities and 180,000 inhabitants, which, following the decision of the Vienna Arbitration, became part of Hungary. Hungarian army occupied the whole territory of Subcarpathian Ruthenia on 18 March 1939. Border changes disrupted not only the economy of north-eastern Slovakia, based on logging and

partly on wood processing and stagnant agricultural production, but above all social and political atmosphere, dominated by mutual distrust, escalated by the so-called Dudáš Doctrine (saying that Ruthenians are Slovaks by their origin; Dudáš, 1971). The liberation of the territory of the first Czechoslovak Republic by the Soviet army showed that the USSR was also deeply interested in this area of strategic importance, resulting in the treaty of surrender of Carpathian Ruthenia from 1945, which formally decided on the nationality of the Ruthenian population which was declared Ukrainian after 1948 (Final, 2009). Another event of significance was the so-called Orthodox action in 1950, directed against the Greek Catholic Church, followed by a resolution of the Board of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia in 1952 on Ukrainian as a Language of Instruction at Minority Schools. Constitutional Act No. 144 on the Status of nationalities in Czechoslovakia from 1968 did not address the position of Ruthenians, although it tolerated their designation, but only as a synonym for the designation of Ukrainians. Even increased investment in the development of the region in the 1970s did not stop the decline in the number of citizens reporting to be *“Ukrainians (Ruthenians) and Russians”* in the 1980 census by 7 % compared to the previous census. Significant social changes after 1989 accelerated the processes of the development of Ruthenian ethnic identity at all levels: in 1990, the founding assembly of the Ruthenian Revival movement was held in Medzilaborce and it was subsequently registered by the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic. In the 1991 census, Ruthenians and Ukrainians were identified separately for the first time, with more than 13,000 citizens of the Slovak Republic claiming Ukrainian nationality and more than 17,000 claiming Ruthenian nationality. In addition, 9,000 citizens reported Ukrainian and 49,000 citizen reported Ruthenian as their mother tongue. Another significant impulse for activating Ruthenian intelligentsia and the whole ethnic group was the establishment of the World Congress of Ruthenians in 1991, which set the renaissance of Ruthenian nation, including codification of Ruthenian language as their main objective. The codification in Slovakia took place in 1995. University of Prešov founded the Department of Ruthenian Language and Culture to prepare teachers with Ruthenian language major and an independent Institute of Ruthenian Language and Culture was founded in 2008 (Koporová, 2008).

When describing the development and position of the Ukrainian minority in the period of the first Czechoslovak Republic it is difficult to separate it from the position of Ruthenians and vice versa, as we briefly described above. The extraordinary census in Slovakia in 1919 monitored Ruthenian nationality (in addition to Czechoslovak, Hungarian and German – Tišliar, 2007). There was a change in the census of 1921 and a common category *“Great Russian, Ukrainian and Carpathian Nationality”* was created. In 1945, after the arrival of the Soviet Army, the Ukrainian National Council Prjaševščiny *“as the highest political body representing Ruthenian and Ukrainian minorities”* was established at the Congress of Delegates of Municipalities and Districts of North-eastern Slovakia on 1 March (Konečný, 2015, 190). After the attachment of Subcarpathian Ruthenia to the USSR and automatically ascribing Ukrainian nationality to its people even in Czechoslovakia, the approach to this community was dominated by Ukrainian direction, supported by political and state authorities. In 1952, the Central Committee of the CPS adopted a resolution on the introduction of Ukrainian language into schools, followed

by preparation for the establishment of the Cultural Union of Ukrainian Workers – KZUP (Gajdoš, Konečný, Mušinka, 1999). The 1960 Constitution did not specifically address the situation of minorities, it limited itself to guaranteeing the individual rights of their members (Hungarian, Polish and Ukrainian, art. 25) to cultural development and education in their mother tongue. The Central Committee of the Cultural Union of Ukrainian Workers took advantage of the revival process and addressed a challenge to *“the brethren Czech and Slovak people”*, in which they named the previous twenty years as the period of the cultural revival of Ukrainian population in Czechoslovakia (Konečný, 1999). Constitutional Act No. 144 on the Status of Nationalities in Czechoslovakia from 1968 declared in Art. 1 the state-forming character also to national minorities, when it declared Czechoslovakia as a common state of the Czech and Slovak nation and nationalities living on its territory. In Art. 3 it states the rights of the citizens of *“Hungarian, German, Polish and Ukrainian (Ruthenian) nationality”*. The events of November 1989 also stimulated the transformation of the cultural union – already in January, an extraordinary congress of KZUP was held, where a new organization of the Union of Ruthenians – Ukrainians of Czechoslovakia (ZRUČ) was established. There was a clash of the supporters of Ukrainian and Ruthenian orientation which resulted in the creation of parallel organization – the Ruthenian revival. *“Since the 19th century, Carpathian-Ruthenian leaders have been arguing about their national identity. Some gathered that Ruthenians are a branch of Russian nationality, others thought them to be Ukrainian, and others thought that they were a special Central European Carpathian Ruthenian nationality. Each orientation used a language, whether Russian, Ukrainian or Carpathian Ruthenian, by which it was identified. The Ukrainian orientation claims that Ruthenians are a branch of Ukrainians.”* (Magocsi, 1995, 2). Over the next period, the contradictions deepened and both sides were able to agree only to a minimal extent – e.g. on their reservations about the lack of willingness of the state authorities with regard to their requirements, or the ongoing process of assimilation with the majority – 7 430 inhabitants claimed Ukrainian nationality in the 2011 census.

The development and position of Czech minority differs fundamentally, which is due to the fact that Czechs became a minority in Slovakia only after the dissolution of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic and the establishment of the Slovak Republic in 1993. Until then (with the exception of 1939 – 1945) they represented majority as the members of one of the two state-forming nations. According to the 1991 census, approximately 60,000 citizens of Czech nationality lived across the borders of the Czech Republic. This number gradually decreased over the next period (in the 2001 census it was 44,000 and in 2011 it was 33,000). Czechs in Slovakia live in diaspora, the highest representation in the eight regions according to the 2011 census is in Bratislava (6,820), Žilina (4,195) and Trenčín region (4,106), the lowest in Prešov region (2,610) and they mostly live in urban agglomerations, most often regional cities (Bratislava, Trenčín, Banská Bystrica, Košice, Prešov).

Method

The research of stereotypes has a long tradition in social sciences and particularly in social psychology. Current approach to their study is represented by the Stereotype Content Model – SCM (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, 2007), in which global characteristics, psychometrically

derived factors **WARMTH** and **COMPETENCE** represent two independent (orthogonal) dimensions of social judgment. The content of the WARMTH factor represents the characteristics of experiencing a relationship, such as trustworthiness, sincerity, helpfulness and friendliness. The content of the COMPETENCE factor is represented by characteristics such as performance, skill, ability and wit.

In the SCM, social objects are localized into one of four quadrants, made up of a combination of the two dimensions. This combination naturally generates different emotions: **preference/admiration** when warmth and competence are high (good neighbours, close people, favourite family members can serve as an example), **compassion** when the attributed warmth is high but competence is low (for example paternalized groups, such as seniors or the disabled), **envy**, when the warmth is low, but attributed competence is high (such as the rich, excellent professionals or celebrities) and finally **contempt**, when warmth and competence are low (marginalized people groups, e.g. urban poor, homeless people, drug addicts).

Validation of the model results in 50 countries has provided evidence for its validity in a diverse cultural environment (Cuddy et al., 2009; Fiske, 2017). According to the authors of the model, although the impact of both dimensions on the organization of stereotypes is essential, it plays a primary role by giving valency (whether positive or negative) to social judgment. At the same time, it expresses activity/active facilitation, if its content is positive and an active attack, if the content is negative.

The empirical data that we analyse come from two research probes conducted in 2004 and 2017 by quota sampling. For the purpose of this paper, the 2004 survey sample consisted of 960 respondents in six groups according to nationality (Hungarians, the Roma, Ruthenians, Ukrainians, Czechs and Slovaks from nationally mixed areas), i.e. 160 adults in each group, the average age was 45 years with a standard deviation of 16. The research sample from 2017 consisted of 972 respondents again in six groups according to nationality: 165 Hungarians, 160 Roma, 160 Ruthenians, 160 Ukrainians, 165 Czechs and 162 Slovaks, the average age of respondents was 45.2 with a standard deviation of 16 years.

The respondents answered approximately 100 questions in the presence of an interviewer, these included an item related to stereotypes: according to the SCM, they were presented a group of 6 items – rating scales with a 7-point response scale (1 – 7 where 4 represented the neutral point of the scale). Three bipolar items represented the WARMTH factor from the SCM (reserve – cordiality, dishonesty – honesty, insincerity – sincerity) and the other three bipolar items represented the COMPETENCE factor specified in the SCM (irresponsibility – responsibility, unassertiveness – assertiveness, laziness – diligence).

The respondents were asked to characterize the members of the above-mentioned ethnic communities living in Slovakia (Hungarians, the Roma, Ruthenians, Ukrainians, Czechs and Slovaks) according to the presented characteristics on a continuum of 7-point scales. The average values obtained for the group were then projected into a two-dimensional graphical representation where the X axis represented the WARMTH factor and the Y axis the COMPETENCE factor, with the centre representing the intersection of the scales in value 4 representing the neutral point of the rating scales.

Results

For the sake of clarity, we will present the analysed data for each ethnic group in two graphs, where the first graph shows results from data obtained in 2004 and the second one shows results obtained in 2017.

An auto-stereotype is an evaluation of the presented attributes when the object of evaluation are members of own nationality and a hetero-stereotype is an expression of the evaluation of attributes when the object of evaluation are members of other groups. A look at the data relating to Hungarian nationals living in Slovakia, as shown in Charts 1 and 2, confirms the well-known fact about the usually more positive auto-stereotype compared to hetero-stereotypes in both empirical probes. Average rating of members of their own (in this case Hungarian) nationality in the three subscales representing the WARMTH factor (i.e. reserve – cordiality, dishonesty – honesty, insincerity – sincerity) and the three subscales representing the COMPETENCE factor (i.e. irresponsibility – responsibility, inassertiveness – assertiveness, laziness – diligence) was the most positive and localizes the auto-stereotype to the upper right quadrant (positive preference) of the SCM. The hetero-stereotype of Hungarian minority in the view of the respondents from other groups was placed in the same quadrant in both empirical probes, except for the respondents of Ukrainian nationality in 2004 and the Roma in 2017.

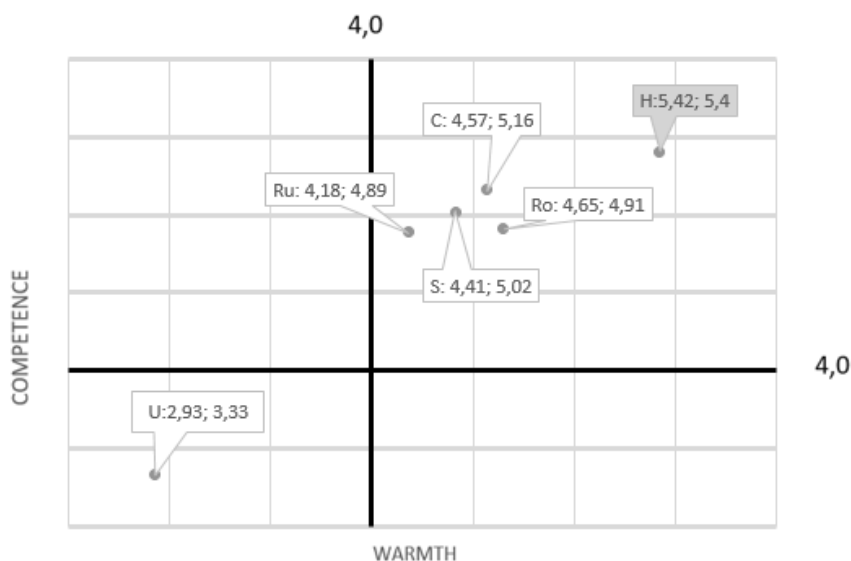


Chart 1: Auto- and hetero-stereotypes of Hungarians in Slovakia in 2004

H – Hungarians, S – Slovaks, Ro – Roma, Ru – Ruthenians, U – Ukrainians; C – Czechs. The first number in the row represents the average of respondents' ratings for the WARMTH factor, while the second number represents the average of ratings for the COMPETENCE factor.

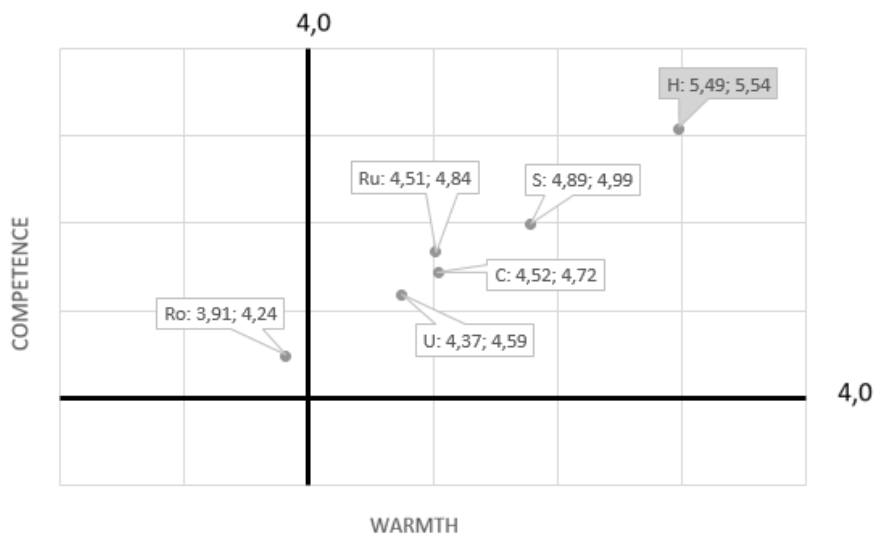


Chart 2: Auto- and hetero-stereotype of Hungarians in Slovakia in 2017

The data shown in Charts 3 and 4 offer a diametrically different picture when the object of rating object were the members of Roma nationality: only the Roma auto-stereotype was placed in the top right quadrant of the model. Hetero-stereotypes expressed as averages of respondents' ratings of all other groups are localized in the lower left quadrant of the model (both WARMTH and COMPETENCE low). Although the averages of ratings do not reach extremely low values (around 3 in the 7-point response scale), they show stability over time – there is even a slight shift in the negative direction in the WARMTH factor when comparing the data in 2004 and 2017.

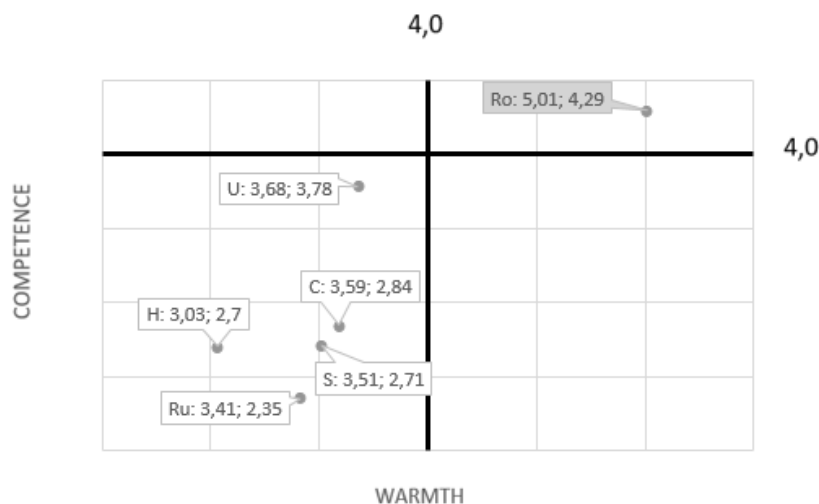


Chart 3: Auto- and hetero-stereotype of the Roma in Slovakia in 2004

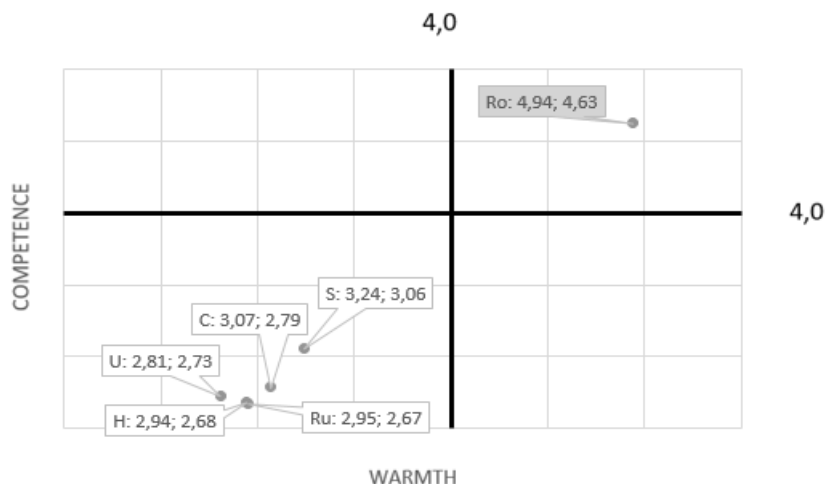


Chart 4: Auto- and hetero-stereotype of the Roma in Slovakia in 2017

In the case of respondents of Ruthenian nationality, average rating when evaluating members of their nationality was most positive, as can be seen in Charts 5 and 6, which locates their auto-stereotype in the upper right quadrant (positive preference) in the SCM. The same applies to the hetero-stereotype of the members of the Ruthenian minority in the view of respondents of other groups, which was located in the same quadrant in both empirical probes, except for respondents of Ukrainian nationality in 2004.

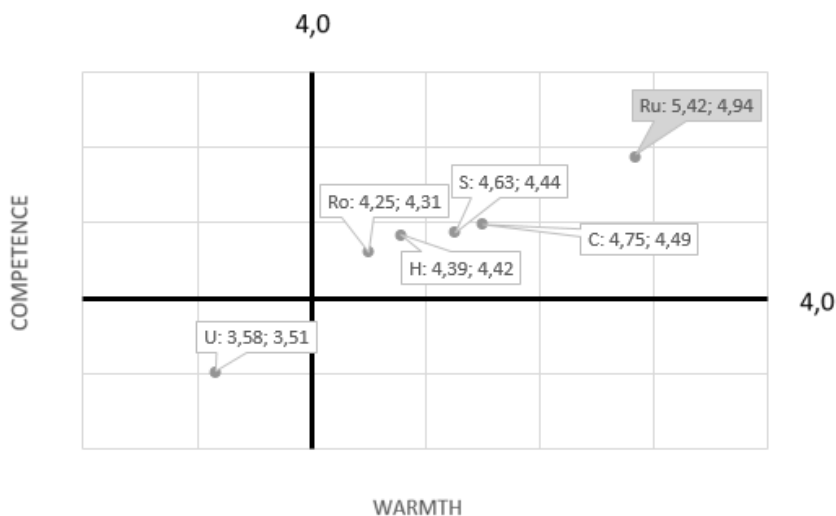


Chart 5: Auto- and hetero-stereotype of Ruthenians in Slovakia in 2004

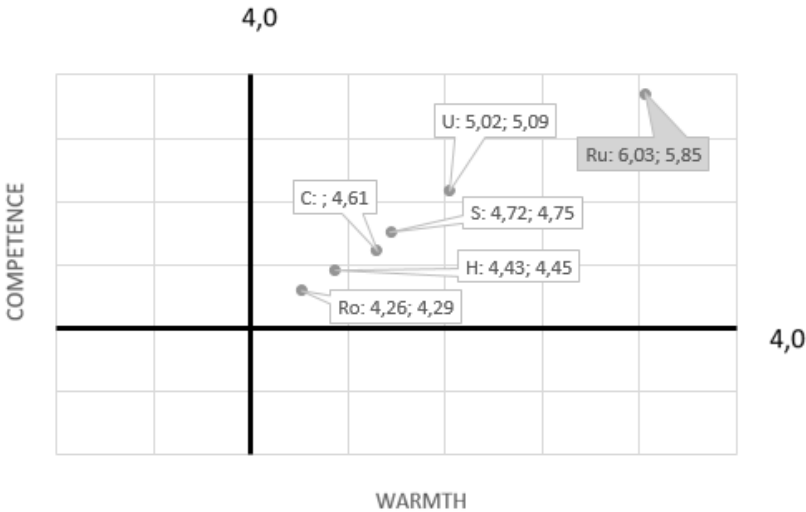


Chart 6: Auto- and hetero-stereotype of Ruthenians in Slovakia in 2017

Chart 7 offers a rather surprising picture in 2004 data when the object of rating were the members of Ukrainian nationality: while the hetero-stereotype of Ukrainians in the view of other groups is placed in the top right quadrant without exception (positive rating in both WARMTH and COMPETENCE factor), auto-stereotype was located below the neutral point (4) of the rating scales, slightly shifted to the lower left quadrant (negative rating in both WARMTH and COMPETENCE factors). It may not be appropriate to interpret this result solely as a random deviation, considering the hetero-stereotype of Ukrainian respondents, manifested towards other groups: in all cases, it was placed in the lower left quadrant of the model in 2004. It could also be a sign of some kind of generalized “frustration,” however, we cannot identify it additionally.

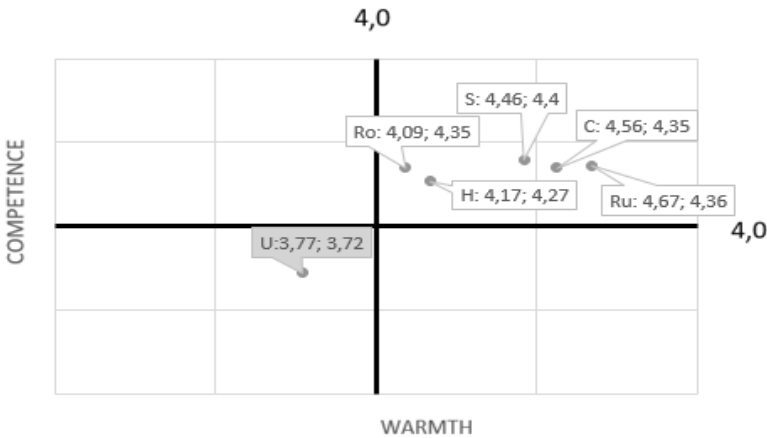


Chart 7: Auto- and hetero-stereotype of Ukrainians in Slovakia in 2004

Data from 2017, shown in Chart 8, offer a different picture: while the hetero-stereotype of Ukrainians in the view of other groups is again placed in the top right quadrant (positive in both WARMTH and COMPETENCE factor), the auto-stereotype of respondents of Ukrainian nationality moved to the top right quadrant with the most positive rating.

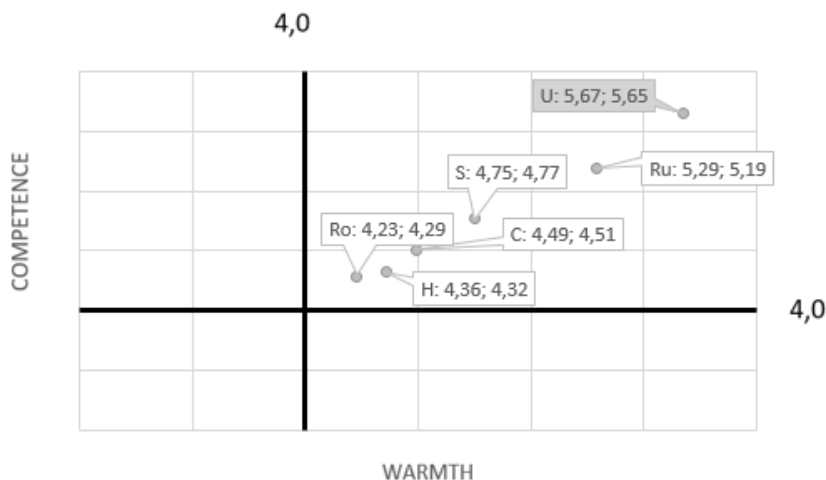


Chart 8: Auto- and hetero-stereotype of Ukrainians in Slovakia in 2017

In the case of the respondents of Czech nationality, the average of ratings was also the most positive when evaluating members of their own nationality, as can be seen in Chart 9 and 10, placing their auto-stereotype in the upper right quadrant of the model. The same applies to the hetero-stereotype of Czech minority members in the view of respondents of other groups, which was placed in the same quadrant in both empirical probes, except for the aforementioned trend among respondents of Ukrainian nationality in 2004.

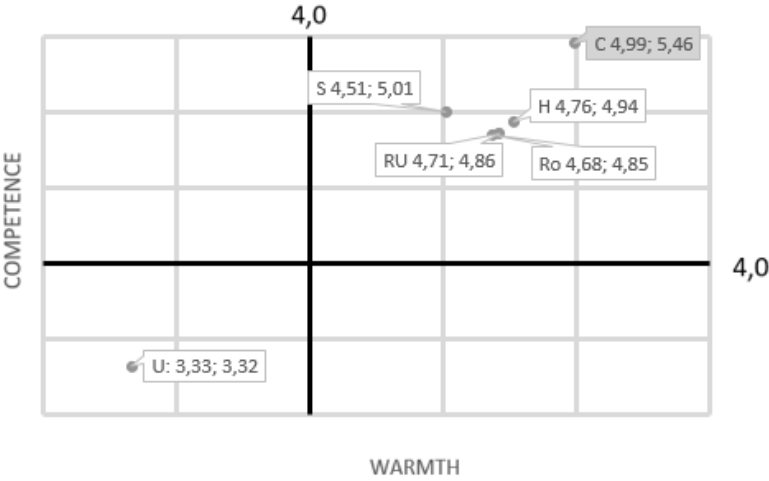


Chart 9: Auto- and hetero-stereotype of Czechs in Slovakia in 2004

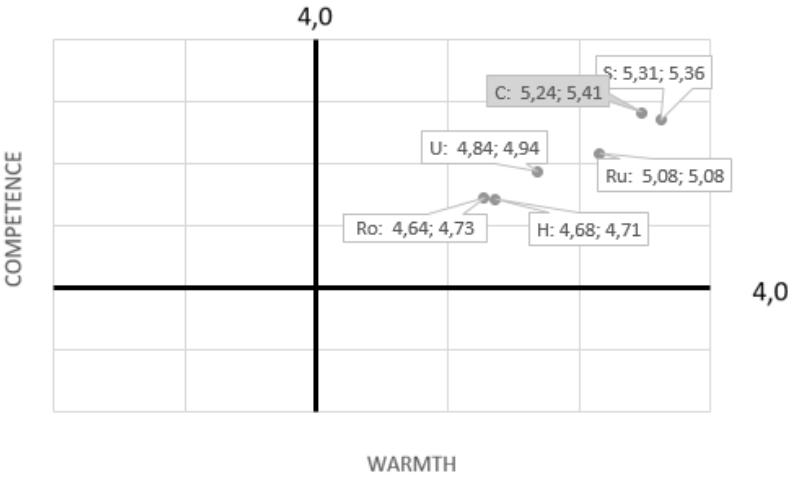


Chart 10: Auto- and hetero-stereotype of Czechs in Slovakia in 2017

Eventually, in Charts 11 and 12, we present the data on auto- and hetero-stereotypes of Slovaks from nationally mixed areas of Slovakia. In the 2004 data, their auto-stereotype was also placed in the top right quadrant, representing positive self-evaluation in both model factors, but compared to the other groups, they rated most positively only in the WARMTH factor (average rating was 5.0), their ratings in COMPETENCE factor were the fifth (average rating 4.45). Hetero-stereotype of Slovaks in the view of respondents of other groups was positive, except for the respondents of Ukrainian nationality.

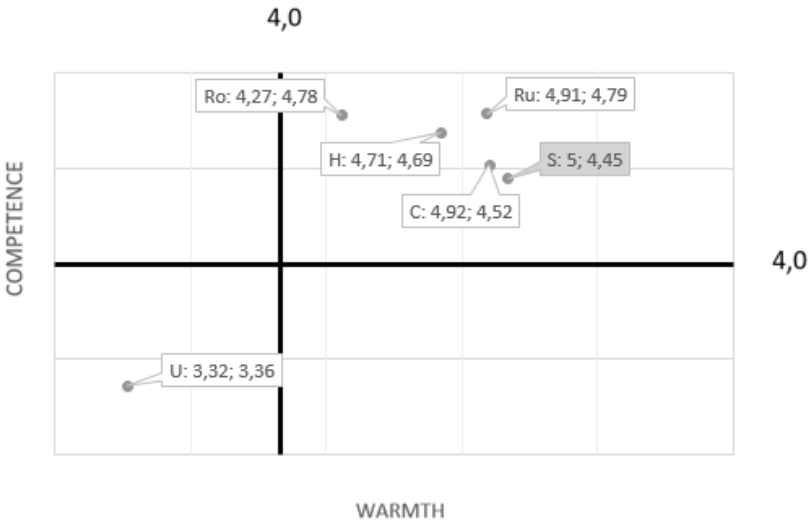


Chart 11: Auto- and hetero-stereotype of Slovaks in 2004

Data from 2017, shown in Chart 12, offer a changed picture: while Slovaks' hetero-stereotype in the view of other groups is again placed in the upper right quadrant (positive in both WARMTH and COMPETENCE factors), the auto-stereotype of Slovak respondents moved to the upper right quadrant with the most positive rating.

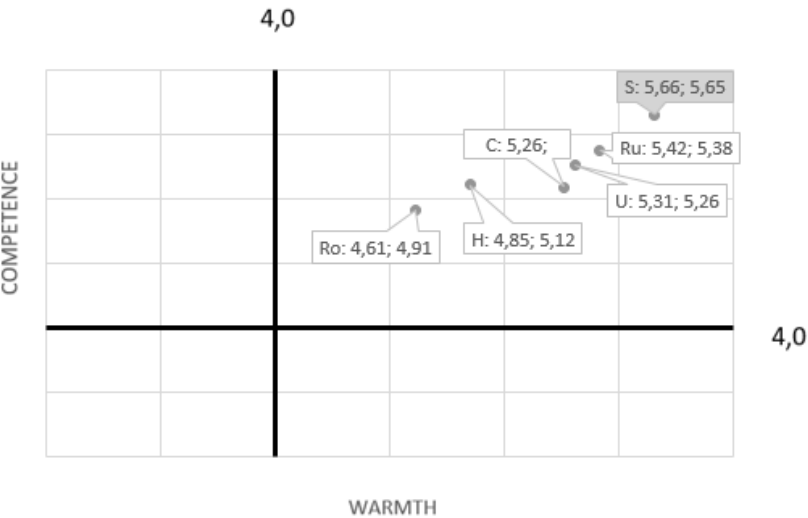


Chart 12: Auto- and hetero-stereotype of Slovaks in 2017

Conclusion

Empirical data confirm the general trend of a more positive auto-stereotype when compared to hetero-stereotypes for all groups of respondents participating in the research (except for the respondents of Ukrainian nationality in 2004). This can be seen as further empirical evidence confirming the existence of a close relationships between self-image, personal identity of an individual and group/ethnic identification (Phinney, 1989).

Hetero-stereotypes of the respondents towards five ethnic groups in Slovakia, representing four minorities (Hungarians, Ruthenians, Ukrainians and Czechs) are characterized by a high degree of similarity and localize the group average of the ratings of all six groups including the Roma (except for respondents of Ukrainian nationality in 2004) into the positive quadrant expressing a positive emotional relationship (WARMTH factor) and respect for abilities (COMPETENCE factor). The data obtained confirm the data on positive mutual reflection of members of various ethnic groups in Slovakia obtained in the previous period (e.g. Homišinová, Výrost, 2005).

The situation with respect to respondents' hetero-stereotypes towards Roma is fundamentally different: it is in the negative quadrant of the SCM (low ratings in both WARMTH and COMPETENCE factor) in all groups in both rounds of data collection; i.e. both 2004 and 2017. The data obtained confirm the unfavourable status and reflection of the living conditions of the Roma in society, not only in Slovakia, but also in the European context (European Commission, 2005; EU MIDIS II., 2018). The data also document the stability of hetero-stereotypes towards the Roma in all groups, which did not change in the course of a decade at all.

Auto-stereotype and hetero-stereotypes of respondents of Ukrainian nationality in 2004, placed, similarly to the Roma, in the negative quadrant of the SCM, differ from the described trends. In 2017, however, the results significantly changed by basically copying both auto-stereotype and hetero-stereotypes manifested by other groups. This trend could be seen as a random deviation or as an artefact of a deformed sample, however, it could also be a symptom of some temporary, more general "frustration", although we cannot identify the exact reasons additionally.

The predominant relative stability of a positive mutual image over time, manifested (besides the deviations described above) by the respondents representing ethnic minorities and the majority, can be considered a key finding of the conducted research. However, it is still necessary to remember the historical experience, how fragile the interrelationships of ethnic groups can be, how easy it is to turn the positive atmosphere into its opposite, and how long it takes to build mutual trust.

The accession of the Slovak Republic to the European Union in 2004 heralded significant changes in the life of the society in general, and especially in relation to national minorities, inter alia by applying increased international legal guarantees for their existence and further development, which are regularly monitored (see reports on the implementation of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities in

the Slovak Republic; or the European Charter for Regional and Minority languages in the SR, published on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the SR).⁶

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6 Online: https://www.mzv.sk/zahranicna_politika/ludske_prava-narodnostne_mensiny_a_ochrana_mensinovykh_jazykov.

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Cultural Life of Minorities in Slovakia in 2004 – 2017 (Historical-Sociological Comparative Analysis of Media Monitoring)¹

Lucia Heldáková

Abstract:

The existence of national minorities in the majority environment is inseparably linked to the possibilities of their cultural life. The article deals with the current issues in the cultural life of national minorities of the Slovak Republic when comparing the frequency of following minority media in 2004 – 2017 and at the same time it refers to changes in watching television, listening to radio stations and reading print media by specifying which of them were among the most followed in 2004 and 2017. Changes in the cultural life of national minorities are always a response to the majority population policy. From the point of view of the prospective development of minorities, it is effective to know and identify the problems in order to find solutions. The aim of this article is to provide an excursion through changes in viewing of minority media by members of minorities, which may in the future contribute to improving their position in the environment of the Slovak Republic.

Keywords: National minorities, Culture, Media, Press, Radio, Television.

Introduction

The existence and perspective development of national minorities is inevitably related to the ability to maintain and grow the whole cultural platform in the environment of another nation, where the minorities live. It means that without functional cultural organizations, associations, but currently also media background, the life of minorities would be endangered.

The term culture is of Latin origin and comes from the process of growing, education and cultivation of something capable of further development and improvement.² At present, we can understand culture as *"... a tradition or the way of life of a particular person or group; literature, art, music, dance, theatre, etc."*³ In connection with the electrification of society in the second half of the 20th century, we are talking about the beginning of the media era. Since then, the media have entered the individual's private life, bringing a public dimension to it. At the same time, however, they are also involved in shaping public life, thus becoming an integral part of the cultural life of society. Thus,

1 This work was supported by the Agency for the Support of Research and Development on the basis of Agreement No. APVV 15-0745.

2 *Ottův naučný slovník : ilustrovaná encyklopedie obecných vědomostí*. 8. díl, Praha : J. Otto, 1894, Keyword: culture, p. 624. Online: <http://www.digitalniknihovna.cz/mzk/view/uuid:2bb3b930-e6e7-11e4-a794> [cit. 26. 11. 2019].

3 *Cambridge Dictionary*. Keyword: culture. Online: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/culture> [cit. 26. 11. 2019].

the public and private space determine the behaviour of the media by interacting with each other, and as a result, they also modify their own character. The media play the role of a mediator of mutual discourse between the public and private space. In practice, this means that the media are involved in shaping behaviour, lifestyles and even political decisions of an individual in the society while reflecting the will of an individual and channelling public/political space.⁴

In the case of national minorities, we can speak of subcultures, within which minority media also work (minority press, radio and television). Given that they occur in the so-called super culture environment, i.e. the cultural environment of the majority population, there is an interference of super culture and subculture, i.e. the process of acculturation (by one-way or two-way transfer of other-cultural elements between two different cultures).⁵ The enculturation of a member of a minority in such an environment often results in the creation of cultural valency, by becoming bicultural and adopting a dual cultural identity (bicultural identity is one component of ethnic identity).⁶ The cultural differentiation of the minority subculture from the majority super culture is then characterized by three factors: the cultural peculiarities of the mother country; other-cultural elements adopted from the majority super culture and local subculture specificities.

Legislative-institutional background of cultural activities of national minorities in the Slovak Republic

The basic legislative framework concerning the rights of national minorities, also in the context of developing their culture, is the Constitution of the Slovak Republic adopted by the Slovak National Council on 1 September 1992. Its second title includes the fourth section *Rights of National Minorities and Ethnic Groups* (Articles 33 and 34) which ensures all human and civil rights, including the right to spread their own specific culture to the minorities.⁷

The main radio and television provider of minority broadcasting is *Rozhlas a televízia Slovenska* (Radio and Television of Slovakia, hereinafter the RTVS). It was established as

4 JIRÁK, Ján – KÖPPLOVÁ, Barbara. *Médiá a spoločnosť*. Praha : Portál, 2007, p. 12.

5 BENŽA, Mojmir. *Malý etnopolitický slovník*. Keyword: acculturation. Bratislava : Zing Print s.r.o., 2005, p. 5.

6 HOMIŠINOVÁ, Mária – VÝROST, Jozef (eds.). *Národ, národnosti a etnické skupiny v procese transformácie Slovenskej spoločnosti* : Empirická analýza dát zo sociologicko-sociálnopsychologického výskumu v rámci riešenia Štátneho programu výskumu a vývoja 2003/2005. Košice : Spoločenskovedný ústav SAV, 2005. p. 40.

7 „Art. 34 (1) Citizens constituting national minorities or ethnic groups in the Slovak Republic are guaranteed universal development, in particular the right to develop their own culture together with other members of a minority or group, to disseminate and receive information in their mother tongue, associate in national minority associations, maintain educational and cultural institutions. Details shall be laid down by law. (2) Citizens belonging to national minorities or ethnic groups are guaranteed, under the conditions laid down by law, in addition to the right to acquire the state language, a) the right to education in their language, b) the right to use their language in official communication, dealing with matters concerning national minorities and ethnic groups. (3) The exercise of the rights of citizens belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups guaranteed in this Constitution must not lead to a threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Slovak Republic and to discrimination against its other population.” Constitution of the Slovak Republic. Online: <https://www.prezident.sk/upload-files/20522.pdf> [cit. 02. 12. 2019].

a public, national, independent, informational, cultural and educational institution. Act No. 532 on Radio and Television of Slovakia and amending and supplementing certain laws, has determined as one of the key activities of RTVS *“... broadcasting at least four radio program services, one of which is intended to broadcast content and regionally balanced programs in the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups living on the territory of the Slovak Republic ... broadcasting content and regionally balanced programs in the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups living in the territory of the Slovak Republic in a time scale corresponding to the national and ethnic composition of the population of the Slovak Republic; in order to ensure the production and broadcasting of programs for national minorities and ethnic groups, Radio and Television of Slovakia establish independent organizational units of the Slovak Radio and Slovak Television ...”*⁸ RTVS provides broadcasting of content and regionally balanced programs in the language of national and ethnic minorities according to the corresponding national and ethnic composition of the population of the Slovak Republic and thus fulfils their public position in relation to national minorities – informing about their life in their native language. Broadcasting for national minorities has been operating for over 30 years under RTVS. In the beginning, there were the news and brief journalistic reports in the Hungarian language, and after 1989, news in Ukrainian, German, Ruthenian and later also other languages were added.⁹ In 1998, the Concept of Broadcasting for National Minorities was submitted to the Central Director’s Board, which resulted in the creation of an editorial office of national minority programs with nationwide coverage in Košice (the metropolis of eastern Slovakia was not chosen randomly, but due to higher concentration of national minorities in East Slovakia).¹⁰

The National Broadcasting Centre of RTVS regularly broadcasts in the languages of national minorities and cooperates closely with cultural institutions.

National minority television broadcasts are conducted in ten languages and are constantly updated and improved. The Broadcasting and Retransmission Council is the body guaranteeing media freedom and pluralism,¹¹ which aims to *“... promote the public interest in exercising the right to information, freedom of expression and access to cultural*

8 Pursuant to Section 5 par. 1, letter. b), g) Act No. 532/2010 Coll. on Radio and Television of Slovakia and on the amendment and supplementing certain laws.

9 In 1992 (20 January) Hungarian programs were already well established and the Ruthenian-Ukrainian program was broadcast for the first time, a month later it was the Roma program (the name at that time was Romale). German broadcasting was added in 1993 and Czech broadcasting in 1998. The efforts of the Ruthenian minority to become independent with regard to language was also reflected in broadcasting, and so the Ruthenian-Ukrainian program was divided into two separate magazines. The Polish program began broadcasting in 1999 and since 2001, there have been Jewish, Bulgarian, Croatian and Mix programs. National minority broadcasting of Slovak Television. Bratislava, 25. 6. 2008. Online: <http://archiv.vlada.gov.sk/ludskeprava/data/files/3971.pdf> [cit 02. 11. 2019].

10 NIŽŇANSKÝ, Štefan. *Národnostné vysielanie Slovenskej televízie*. Bratislava : STV, 2008.

11 The position and activities of the Broadcasting and Retransmission Council are regulated by Act No. 308/2000 Coll. on Broadcasting and Retransmission and on the amendment of Act No. 195/2000 Coll. on Telecommunications, as amended.

*values and education and to implement state regulation in the field of broadcasting, retransmission and the provision of on-demand audio-visual media services.*¹²

The language settings of individual national broadcasts are regulated by Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as NR SR) No. 270/1995 Coll. on the State Language of the Slovak Republic, as amended, stipulating that television and radio broadcasts in the territory of the Slovak Republic shall be carried out in the state language, except for broadcasting in the language of national minorities with subtitles in the state language or immediately preceding or following their broadcast in the state language. Radio broadcasting may be carried out in accordance with the law in the language of a national minority in the Slovak Radio during regional or local broadcast intended for national minorities (including live events) where the use of the Slovak language is not required. Private broadcasters can broadcast in the national language without the need to provide a Slovak version. Regarding occasional press for cultural purposes such as programs of cinemas, theatres, catalogues of galleries, libraries, museums, etc., these must be published in the state language or in the language of national minorities, however, in that case, the basic information must be translated into the state language.¹³

Regarding periodical and non-periodical newspapers and magazines of national minorities, their publishing is regulated by laws on the use of languages of national minorities and on amendments to certain laws,¹⁴ their records are kept by the Ministry of Culture of the SR in the List of Periodical Press available on the Ministry's website.¹⁵ Publications are supported every year by the subsidy program *Culture of National Minorities* (hereinafter CNM) under the authority of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, whose authority is the Government Plenipotentiary for National Minorities (or another person authorized by the Government Office of the Slovak Republic). The aim of the CNM is *"... to ensure the preservation, expression, protection and development of the identity and cultural values of national minorities, interethnic and intercultural dialogue and understanding between the national majority and national minorities and ethnic groups."*¹⁶

The conditions and other requirements of subsidies are regulated by Act No. 524/2010 Coll. *on the Provision of Subsidies in the Competence of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic*, as amended.

12 According to Section 4 par. 1 of Act No. 308/2000 Coll. on Broadcasting and Retransmission and on the amendment of Act No. 195/2000 Coll. on Telecommunications.

13 According to Section 5 of Act No. on the State Language of the Slovak Republic, as amended.

14 According to Section 1 par. 2 of Act No. 184/1999 Coll. on the Use of Languages of National Minorities as amended by Act No. 204/2011 Coll. amending and supplementing; Act No. 184/1999 Coll. the Use of Languages of National Minorities as amended by Act No. 318/2009 Coll. amending and supplementing certain acts, the language of the minority is: Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Roma, Ruthenian and Ukrainian.

15 The list of periodical press sorted by name, territorial scope, language, periodicity, content orientation, share in broadcasting can be found at: Ministerstvo kultúry Slovenskej republiky Zoznam periodickej tlače. Online: <http://www.culture.gov.sk/pertlac/modul/tlac> [cit. 02. 12. 2019].

16 Úrad splnomocnenca vlády SR pre národnostné menšiny, Úrad vlády SR. *Správa o postavení a právach príslušníkov národnostných menšín za rok 2015*. 2016, p. 50.

According to Section 2 par. 2 letter b) of Act No. 61/2000 Coll. on Awareness-raising Activities part of the general cultural and educational level of people is formed, among other things, by the deepening of the relationship with their own state, with the cultural identity of the nation, national minorities and ethnic groups, etc. This is also related to the activities of the state-funded organization National Awareness Centre (hereinafter the NAC), established by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, which focuses on the cultural activities of national minorities. NAC, according to Act No. 189/2015 Coll. on Cultural-Educational Activities is *"... a cultural-educational facility with nationwide scope of activity with a general focus. The National Awareness Centre is a professional and methodological workplace for cultural-educational activities, coordination and an executive workplace for theoretical, analytical, information, documentation and consulting activities in the field of cultural-educational activities, coordination and executive workplace for research and state statistical surveys in the field of culture, a specialized workplace which maintains a national register of cultural heritage as a central register of data and information on cultural heritage and a workplace for further training of employees in the field of cultural-educational activities."*¹⁷

To support the culture of national minorities, there is also a legally established *Fund for the Support of Culture of National Minorities* established in 2017¹⁸ for the purpose of cultural self-government to facilitate the management of cultural activities of minority groups, since the cultural activities of minorities are also supported by local self-governments

17 „The main activity of the National Awareness Centre is:

- the support for the development of cultural identity and intercultural dialogue at the national level;
- mapping the cultural potential of the regions of the Slovak Republic and promoting cooperation and partnerships in the Slovak Republic and abroad;
- dissemination of information on the current state and development of regional and local culture;
- protection and development of intangible cultural heritage;
- support for the development of non-professional artistic activities and non-professional artistic creation;
- non-formal education in culture and prevention of negative social phenomena;
- carrying out research with a focus on sociological research on culture, art and media;
- coordination of national statistical surveys in culture;
- ensuring the work of the National Cultural Heritage Register and making the digitized cultural heritage accessible;
- ensuring the fulfilment of the tasks of the European Contact Point;
- ensuring the functioning of the multicultural centre."

18 Under Act No. 189/2015 Coll. on Cultural and educational activities.

"The Fund is an independent public institution whose mission is to promote and stimulate the culture of national minorities in the field of cultural and scientific activities of national minorities, in particular by creating support mechanisms for the creation and dissemination of cultural and scientific values. By implementing its mission, the Fund contributes to the implementation of the cultural policy of the Slovak Republic and the European Union in the field of supporting the development of national minorities.

The Fund is established for the purpose of:

- a) *creating conditions for the preservation, expression, protection and development of the identity and cultural values of national minorities;*
- b) *promoting education and training on the rights of persons belonging to national minorities; as well as*
- c) *creating conditions for the development of intercultural dialogue and understanding between citizens of Slovak nationality and citizens belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups."* Štatút Fondu na podporu kultúry národnostných menšín, Bratislava 7. december 2017. p. 2. Online: http://www.kultminor.sk/attachments/article/405/Statut_FPKNM.pdf [cit. 02. 12. 2019].

and higher territorial units (support for projects under subsidy schemes), but this support was not specific. The creation of an appropriate and high-quality institutional basis for the implementation and development of minority culture is a catalyst for improving the universal development of the culture of a given minority.

Research methodology

In 2003 – 2005, sociological and social-psychological research called the *Nation, nationalities and ethnic groups in the process of transformation of Slovak society* was carried out at the Institute of Social Sciences of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Košice. The main researchers were Štefan Šutaj, Jozef Výrost and Mária Homišinová. The project, by means of a questionnaire method on a research sample of 1280 respondents, focused on analysing the lives of persons belonging to national minorities in various areas of life (identifying characteristics, ethnic identity, inter-ethnic relations, human rights, perspectives of development of ethnic communities, current issues of public and political life). In 2004, data were collected for research purposes. In addition to Slovakia's accession to the EU, many systematic, social and global changes have occurred since then, which may have influenced the development of national minorities. For this reason, in 2017, the data obtained from the aforementioned research was followed up by the SRDA project Trends of the Development of Ethnic Relations in Slovakia (comparative research of nationality issues in 2004 – 2020) – (TESS2) TESS, which aimed to follow the tendency of changes in the life of national minorities in the identical areas of social life. The research sample consisted of 1,160 respondents¹⁹ and, for the purposes of our research, we work with the hypothesis that one of the important factors influencing the quality of life of national minorities is the operation and viewership of minority media (press, radio and television) in Slovakia.

For the research, we elaborated two questions from the submitted questionnaire. The frequency of following media by members of national minorities between 2004 and 2017 was determined on the basis of the results obtained by the question *“In your opinion, to what extent the members of your minority follow the minority press, minority broadcasting of Slovak Radio and Slovak Television?”*. For each minority media, the respondents selected an answer on a 7-point scale, where 1 meant “not at all”, 4 meant “average” and 7 “very often”. The results are presented separately for each minority in the form of Charts. In addition to the frequency analysed, we were also interested in the specific TV and radio broadcasting stations the members of the minorities are watching and, at the same time, what magazines they are reading, where we put special emphasis on the following of minority media. In the questionnaire, the types of media followed were measured by open questions: *“Which TV channel do you watch the most?”*; *“Which radio station do you listen to the most?”*; *“Which press do you read most often (including on the Internet)?”* In order to obtain many types of answers, we chose the five most frequently watched televisions,

¹⁹ The number of respondents responsible for the representative sample (in relation to age, educational structure, gender structure and in relation to regions) of the population and the number of national minorities living in the territory of the Slovak Republic.

radio stations and periodicals for each minority nationality, which we then compared in both rounds of the questionnaire collection.

Viewership of mass media by members of national minorities in 2004 – 2017 (historical-sociological comparative analysis)

Czech nationality

The affinity of Slovak and Czech culture and both languages is a frequent cause of rapid assimilation of the members of the Czech minority in Slovakia. Exact dating of the historical settlement of the Czech minority on Slovak territory does not exist, their presence is evidenced by many historical sources. Current members of the Czech minority come from the modern migration wave of 1918 when Czech intelligentsia came to Slovak territory. In connection with the close historical ties between Slovak and Czech nationals, members of the Czech minority can now apply for dual Slovak-Czech citizenship.²⁰

According to the 2011 census, Czech national minority is the fourth largest minority (census reported 30,367 persons claiming Czech nationality). The cultural life of Czech minority is concentrated in 12 civic associations, in which 10 Czech clubs operate and two of them also publish printed periodicals in the Czech language – *INFO* magazine (Czech Association Martin) is published in four issues a year, the second periodical is bi-monthly *Stříbrný vítr* (Czech Society in Košice).²¹ There is also a museum structure of Czech minority within the Slovak National Museum – Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia in Martin. Media broadcasts intended for Czech minority in the form of Czech national magazines of RTVS are special, they are not accompanied by subtitles as in the case other TV programs, but of course, they are broadcast in the original language of the minority.²² Chart 1 shows that, as with the print media, we can also talk about the progression of Czech minority in Slovakia during the period under review (2004 – 2017) in the press as well as radio and television broadcasting.

20 Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2015*, p. 13.

21 Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2015*, p. 13, 19.

22 NIŽŇANSKÝ, Š. *Národnostné vysielanie...*; Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2013*, p. 10.

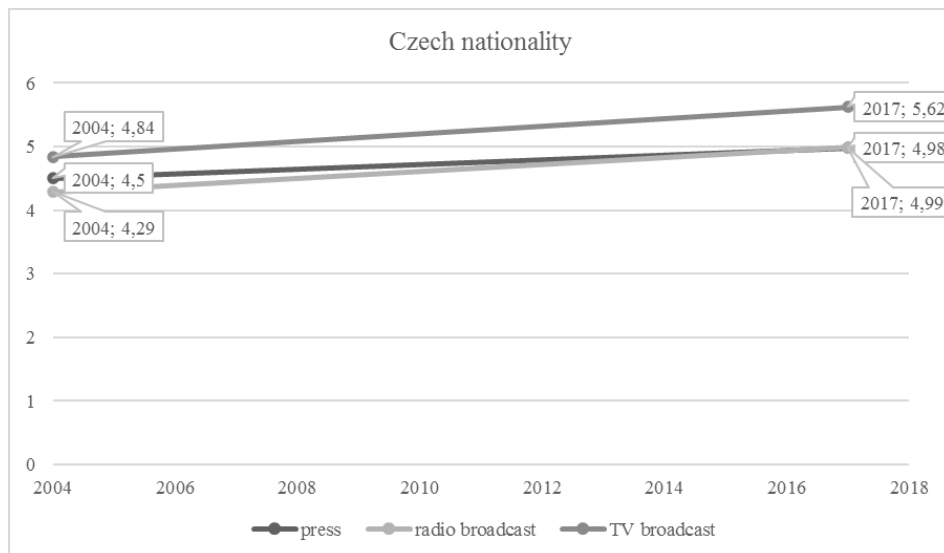


Chart 1: Viewership of mass media by the respondents of Czech nationality in 2004 – 2017

At the same time, the results of the research show that in 2004, 35.2 % respondents of Czech nationality responded that they watched channel ČT 1; except for Czech national channel, the most-watched channels were *Markíza*, *RTVS*, *Prima* and *Spektrum*. In 2017, most Czech respondents (18.2 %) said they watched *Markíza* and 17.6 % said they watched *Czech Television* and *JOJ*. In addition to the aforementioned channels, the five most-watched television channels among Czech nationals in 2017 included Czech programs *Nova* and *Prima*. With regard to the most popular radio programs of Czech nationals, in the years 2004 – 2017, based on the obtained data, we can say that among the first five radio stations most listened to by citizens of Czech nationality in both surveyed years there were *SRO* and *radio Expres*. Except for these, the popularity of radio stations differed in both years. In 2004, the most popular radio stations were the minority radio stations (22.6 %), however, in 2017, the most respondents of Czech nationality listened to commercial radio stations such as *Europa 2*, *Fun Radio*, *Antenna Rock*. The most popular print media in 2004 and 2017 among the members of Czech nationality was *SME* newspaper. Except of other newspaper and magazines, in 2004, Czech respondents also reported newspapers such as *Pravda* and *Korzar*, however, 8.8 % of respondents did not answer the question. In 2017, 13.3 % of respondents did not read the press and the most read periodicals were *Nový čas*, *Pravda* and the Internet portals *Šport.sk* and *Aktuality.sk*.

Hungarian nationality

The presence of Hungarian ethnic group in Slovakia is understandable in the view of the shifting of national borders in the past of Czechoslovakia and in connection with the Kingdom of Hungary past of today's Slovakia and Hungary. Hungarian minority currently has relatively good cultural background, which was also shown at the end of the 1990s,

when the first Hungarian editorial office was established in the Slovak Television in Bratislava. To date, the production of broadcasting for Hungarian minority comes exclusively from the Bratislava studio of the Minority Television Broadcasting STV Bratislava.²³ Hungarian minority broadcast currently produces programmes such as the News – Hírek, Hungarian program – Magyar magazine or the program Na tanieri – Terítéken.²⁴ The main broadcasting language of *Radio Patria* broadcasting for national minorities in Slovakia is Hungarian language.

Despite numerous representation of Hungarian minority media (press, radio and television) or Hungarian minority programs in the period from 2014 to 2017, we observe a significant decrease in the viewership of such media (see Chart 2).

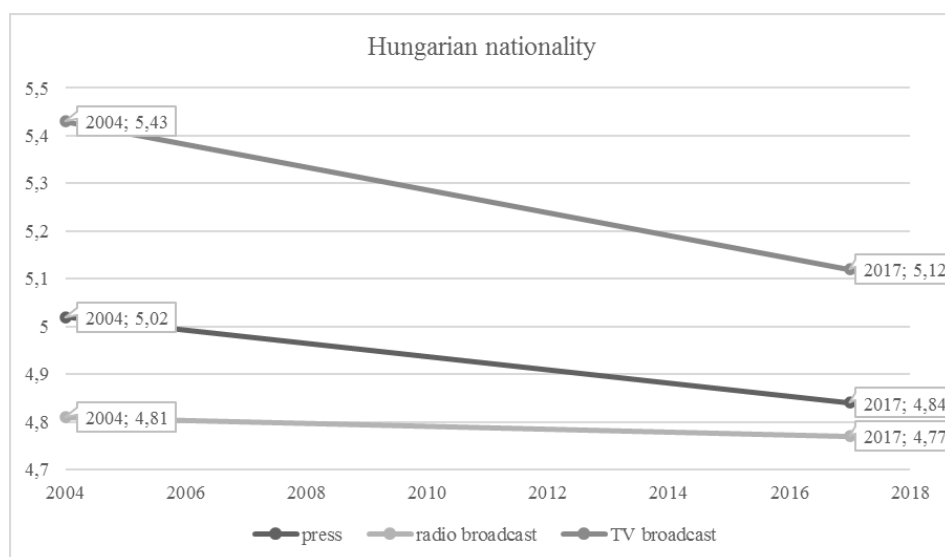


Chart 2: Viewership of mass media by the respondents of Hungarian nationality in 2004 – 2017

The viewership of TV programs by respondents of Hungarian nationality between 2004 and 2017 surveys shows a significant difference for *Markiza* television, which moved from the third place in 2004 to the most-watched first place in 2017; and *JOJ* television, which began broadcasting in 2002, and was therefore not as well established at the time of the first questionnaire survey in 2004, which changed in 2017 and its viewership rose considerably (in 2017 it was watched by 14.5 % of respondents). In the case of other television programs, we can say that their viewership remained almost constant. In 2004, 12.5 % of respondents of Hungarian nationality watched minority television broadcasts, which we find in the 2017 survey in the form of watching TV channels such as *RTL* or *M*. We can also observe a fairly significant drop in the case of radio broadcasting. In 2004, most Hungarian

23 NIŽŇANSKÝ, Š. *Národnostné vysielanie...*

24 NIŽŇANSKÝ, Š. *Národnostné vysielanie...*

respondents listened to minority broadcasting (66.9 %), but in 2017 most of them did not listen to minority radio broadcasting (20 %). However, minority radios appeared in the survey in 2017 in the form of radio station *Kossuth Rádió* (10.3 %), radios such as *Expres* (18.2 %) and *SRO* (7.9 %) also kept their listeners. While reading of newspapers by citizens of Hungarian nationality in 2004 was mainly represented by the readers of minority press (75 %), in 2017, 38.8 % of respondents answered that they do not read the press. Minority press appeared in fourth place (7.3 %) in 2017, the respondents read *Új Szó*.

German nationality

Historical development after the Second World War, in connection with the displacement of German minority from Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, resulted in the freezing of cultural activities of German minority on Slovak territory in the following decades. The torso of the German minority in Slovakia did not have any German language education or cultural institutions, could not communicate in their language or maintain contact with their mother country. Until 1989, the German minority could not carry out any organized activities in Slovakia. Today, the most important cultural institution for the German minority is the Carpathian German Association in Slovakia, founded on 30 September 1990 in Medzev. In addition, there is a specialized museum of the Slovak National Museum – Museum of Carpathian German Culture. The only periodical for the members of the German minority in Slovakia is the monthly *Karpatenblatt* and, similarly to other minorities, the Germans have their minority programs broadcast in RTVS production.²⁵ There has been broadcasting for the German minority in Slovakia since the establishment of the independent republic in 1993. The establishment of German organizations after 1989 and the strengthening of the culture of national minorities has resulted in a gradual growth of German minority in Slovakia. In 2011, 4,690 inhabitants claimed German nationality, however, it is estimated that there are around 12 – 15,000 of them in the territory of Slovakia.²⁶

However, in the case of the German minority in Slovakia, we can gradually speak of a positive development in the viewership of minority media, in 2017 more members of the minority viewed television, radio and press than in 2004 (Chart 3).

25 Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2015*, p. 35.; Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2014*, p. 34.

26 Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2013*, p. 35.; NIŽŇANSKÝ, Š. *Národnostné vysielanie...*

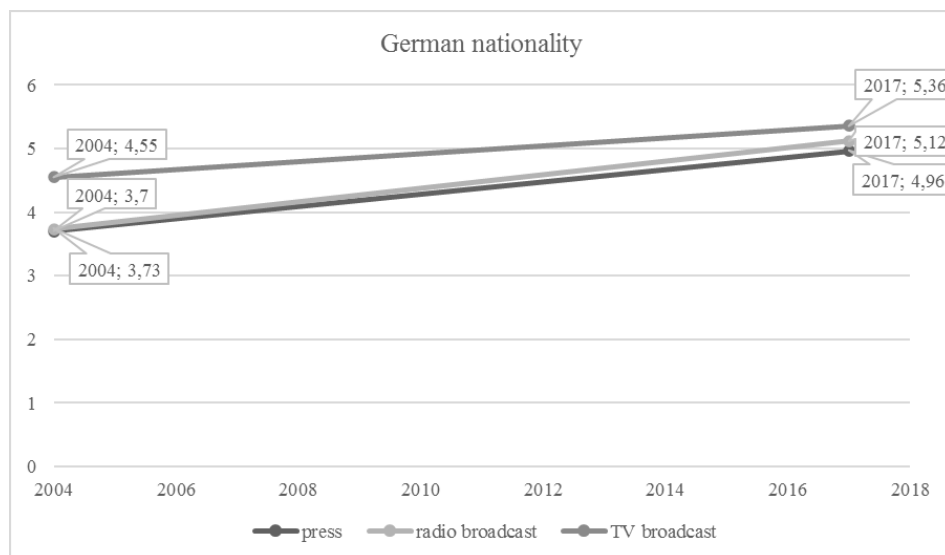


Chart 3: Viewership of mass media by the respondents of German nationality in 2004 – 2017

With regard to media viewership based on the obtained data, we can demonstrate that in all three examined media (press, radio and television) we are observing an increase in their viewership by the German minority in 2004 – 2017. TV channels such as *Markíza* (2004 – 33.8 %, 2017 – 19.6 %), *RTVS* (2004 – 18.1 %, 2017 – 16.8 %) and *JOJ* (2004 – 3.1 %, 2017 – 14 %) were represented in both the first 2004 and the second 2017 survey. In the first survey, however, 31.3 % of respondents said they were watching foreign television channels, in the second survey only *RTL* was in the top five, 13.4 % said they also watched *TAT* in 2017. With regard to listening to radio stations, the *SRO* (2004 – 40 %, 2017 – 27 %) and *Expres* (2004 – 15.6 %, 2017 – 16.8 %) remained in both analysed years. There was a change in the fact that members of the German minority listened to regional radios in 2004, replaced by commercial radio stations such as *Fun Radio* and *Europa 2* in 2017. In 2004, 28.1 % of respondents reported reading *SME* newspaper, it was read by 14 % of respondents in 2017. In 2004, the top five periodicals included mostly newspapers such as *SME* (28.1 %), *Korzar* (23.8 %), *Pravda* (16.9 %), however, in 2017, the most respondents of German nationality said that they read *Nový Cas* tabloid (16.8 %) and the internet portal *Šport.sk* (7.5 %) was also among the top five.

Roma nationality

The presence of the Roma in Slovakia is evidenced by reports from the second half of the 15th century, when we record a report on the move of a group of over 300 from Buda via Košice to Bratislava. The nomads identified themselves as pilgrims from Little Egypt who, because of their sins, had to wander the world and repent. After the excommunication of the Roma from the Church in 1427, their situation in Europe deteriorated. In the period of the Hungarian Kingdom, the reforms of Maria Theresa and Joseph II (1761, 1773) were

beneficial to the Roma, they did not expel them, but integrated them among the population, with the condition of gradual assimilation and a ban on the use of Roma language and the spread of Roma culture. During the Second World War, members of Roma ethnic group were sent to concentration camps and exterminated, and many of the survivors were moved to the Czech Republic after the end of the war. The state authorities of the Czechoslovak Republic did not recognize the Roma as a national minority and denied their right to ethnic self-identification. After the fall of the Communist regime, the Roma were recognized as a national minority in 1991 by the governmental document the Principles of the Governing Policy of the Slovak Republic towards the Roma, thus creating a space for the restoration of Roma culture in Slovakia. The outcome of favourable development of Roma culture in Slovakia is also confirmed by the number of inhabitants claiming Roma nationality. While in 1991 there were 75 802 and in 2001 there were 89 920, in 2011 there were 105 738 inhabitants who identified as Roma.²⁷

The cultural platform for the Roma in Slovakia is represented mainly by organisations such as Theater Romathan in Košice, the Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia (Slovak National Museum) and the Documentation and Information Centre of Roma Culture (established within the project of the State Scientific Library).²⁸ It is very important that national minorities have space in media broadcasting. The Roma minority has its own independent print media – *Romano nevo ľil* with the editorial office in Prešov. Jekhetane – Spolu civic association is in charge of the content of the newspaper. In addition, there is the Roma Media Centre (RPA) that has been operating in Košice since 2001, thanks to which, in 2003 – 2004, the publication of another print media for Roma, the *Rómske listy* issued as annexes to the weekly *Domino Forum*. RPA also plays a significant role in the creation of Roma national television and radio broadcasting within RTVS. In addition to RTVS, members of Roma minority have been able to watch the *Gipsy Television* on the Internet since 2010.²⁹ The viewership of media by respondents of Roma nationality in the years 2004 – 2017 is interesting, as the press and radio broadcasts recorded a decline in viewership, however, television broadcasts recorded a significant increase (see Chart 4).

27 Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2013*, p. 45-46.

28 Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2015*, p. 44-45.

29 Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2014*, p. 45-47.

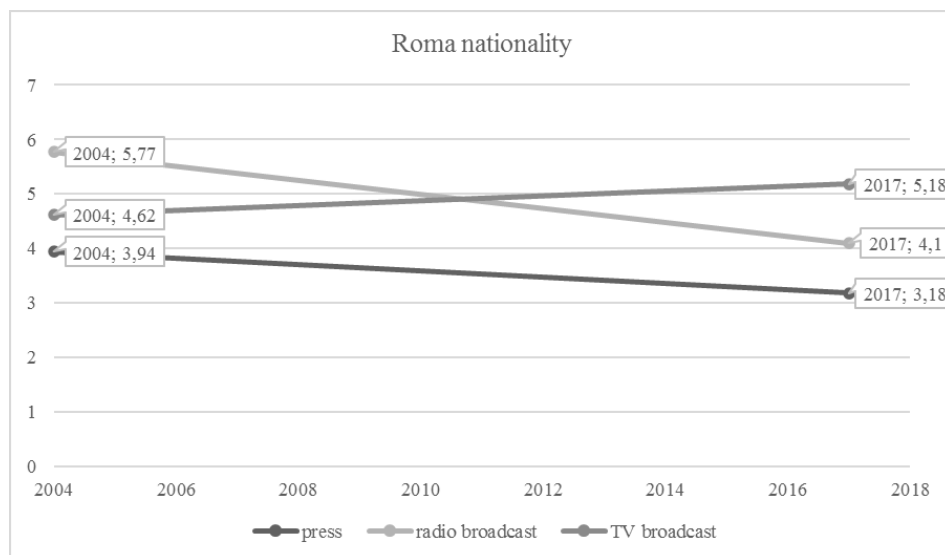


Chart 4: Viewership of mass media by the respondents of Roma nationality in 2004 – 2017

In 2004 and 2017, respondents of Roma nationality in Slovakia watched almost identical programs on television, *Markíza* (2004 – 52.5 %, 2017 – 40 %), *RTVS* (2004 – 16.2 %, 2017 – 8.1 %) and *JOJ* (2004 – 3.8 %, 2017 – 34.4 %). Only the start of broadcasting of TV Doma (9.4 %) in 2009 and TV Dajto (1.9 %) in 2012 caused the inclusion of these two television channels among the most-watched channels among Roma minority in Slovakia. Comparison of the listeners of radio broadcasting by respondents of Roma nationality shows that national radio broadcasting (2004 – 16.3 %) disappeared compared to 2004, as well as that the range of radio stations was extended considerably by new stations like *Europa 2* (start of broadcasting December, 2009; 2017 – 8.8 %), *Jemné melódie* (start of broadcasting May 2006; 2017 – 8.8 %), *Vlna* (start of broadcasting January 2012; 2017 – 3.8 %). Regarding the viewership of print media by members of Roma nationality, in 2004 the most frequent answer in the first five places did not show the possibility of not reading the press, however, in 2017, 48.1 % of respondents said they did not read the press. However, the reading of *Nový čas* (2004 – 25.6 %, 2017 – 17.3 %) was present in both questionnaire findings.

Ruthenian nationality

Ukrainization during the 1950s and the subsequent pro-Ukrainian direction caused the oppression of the Ruthenian population and for a long period (until 1989) linked Ruthenians to Ukrainian minority.³⁰ After 1989, however, the process Ruthenian cultural renaissance

30 BOGDAN, Pavol. *20 rokov – víťazstva a prehry 1989 – 2009*. Svidník : Zväz Rusínov-Ukrajincov Slovenskej republiky, 2012, p. 73; GAJDOŠ, Marian (ed.). *Rusíni/Ukrajinci na Slovensku na konci 20. storočia. K vybraným výsledkom historicko-sociologického výskumu v roku 2000*. Prešov : Universum, 2001, p. 5.

(the so-called third Ruthenian Revival) began in Slovakia, as evidenced by the number of inhabitants claiming to be of Ruthenian nationality (17,197 people claimed Ruthenian nationality, 13,281 people claimed Ukrainian nationality in 1991; in 2001, 24,201 people identified as Ruthenians, 10,814 identified as Ukrainians, and 33,482 people identified as Ruthenians, but only 7,430 people identified as Ukrainian minority in 2011).³¹ On 27 January 1995, the codification of Ruthenian language in Slovakia was declared in Bratislava, which also meant its acceptance as a language used in the public areas.³² After 1989, the largest Ruthenian organization with nation-wide activity was established. Ruthenian Revival in Slovakia (ROS), which was established on 25 March 1990 in Medzilaborce. However, there are many organizations ensuring the preservation and development of Ruthenian culture in Slovakia.³³ Ruthenian minority has the Institute of Ruthenian Language and Culture at the University of Prešov and also has a specialized museum within the Slovak National Museum. RTVS broadcasts both on the radio and on television for Ruthenian minority – Ruthenian broadcasting on *Radio Regina* and programs on *Dvojka* television channel in Košice.³⁴ In addition, since 21 August 2013 there has been an Internet radio station *Rusyn FM*³⁵ based in Bratislava and there are two minority schools with Rusyn language of instruction in Slovakia.³⁶ With regard to periodical and non-periodical Ruthenian press, the ROS publishing house has been irreplaceable in Slovakia. They publish the bi-weekly

Info Rusín and they also played a role in publishing a two-volume Slovak-Ruthenian dictionary.³⁷

Research results for Ruthenian respondents demonstrate that the frequency of listening to radio broadcast is on a downward trend, but with regard to watching TV and print media, answers from members of the Ruthenian minority were more positive (in 2017, more member of this minority viewed media than in 2004) (Chart 5).

31 Štatistický úrad Slovenskej republiky. Demografické údaje zo sčítaní obyvateľov, domov a bytov na Slovensku (1991). Online: <<http://sodb.infostat.sk/scitanie/sk/1991/format.htm>> [cit. 26. 11. 2019]; Sčítanie obyvateľov, domov a bytov 2011. Online: <https://census2011.statistics.sk/tabulky.html> [cit. 26. 11. 2019].

32 Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2013*, p. 54.

33 For more details see: Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2015*, p. 51, 67-69.

34 There are several programs for Ruthenian minority, on television for instance Rusínsky národný magazín, Národnostné správy and on the radio *Regina* there are Rádionoviny, Rádiomagazín, Literárna relácia, Hitparáda, Národný kaleidoskop. For more information see: Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2015*, p. 61-66.

35 Thanks to this media, Ruthenian minority gained all day broadcasting in Ruthenian language. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2015*, p. 71.

36 Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2015*, p. 51.

37 Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2015*, p. 86.

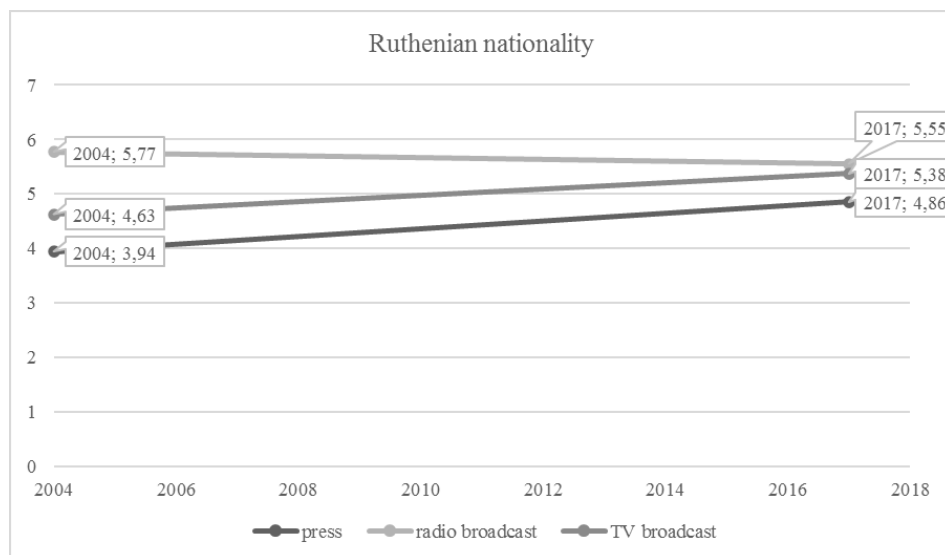


Chart 5: Viewership of mass media by the respondents of Ruthenian nationality in 2004 – 2017

The order of the most popular television stations, except the fifth station, did not change for the respondents of Ruthenian nationality in the period 2004 – 2017, the order remained identical, *Markíza* (2004 – 40 %, 2017 - 33.8 %), *RTVS* (2004 – 33.8 %, 2017 – 23.8 %), *JOJ* (2004 – 9.4 %, 2017 – 21.3 %), *TA3* (2004 – 5.6 %, 2017 – 3.8 %). ČT (3.1 %) was the fifth most watched television station in 2004, and in 2017 2.5 % of respondents responded equally to *Discovery* and *Spektrum*, which were then ranked among the top five TV stations among respondents of Ruthenian nationality. A similar situation as in the case of TV stations occurred in the case of listening to radio programs by the members of Ruthenian nationality, where we see listening to the same radio stations with only a different percentage in both surveyed years (2004, 2017) that is *SRO* (2004 – 26.9 %, 2017 – 21.3 %), *Regina* (2004 – 20.6 %, 2017 – 11.9 %) and *Express* (2004 – 12.5 %, 2017 – 21.9 %). With regard to the viewership of the press by members of Ruthenian nationality, in both years surveyed, the most widely read print media was *SME* (2004 – 28.7 %, 2017 – 11.3 %), *Nový čas* (2004 – 7.5 %, 2017 – 16.3 %) and *Pravda* (2004 – 24.4 %, 2017 – 13.8 %), however, the difference was that in 2004 the Ruthenians also read the minority press (8.1 %) and in 2017 there was also the online news portal *Aktuality.sk* (3.8 %).

Ukrainian nationality

Ruthenian-Ukrainians are now considered to be indigenous, autochthonous inhabitants of today's north-eastern Slovakia. The name Ruthenian was used before 1945, in the post-war period they were already labelled as Ukrainians or Ruthenian-Ukrainians. In 1991, the census divided them into Ruthenians and Ukrainians, and to this day their number is

gradually decreasing due to high assimilation.³⁸ In 2011, 40 912 people claimed Ukrainian nationality.³⁹

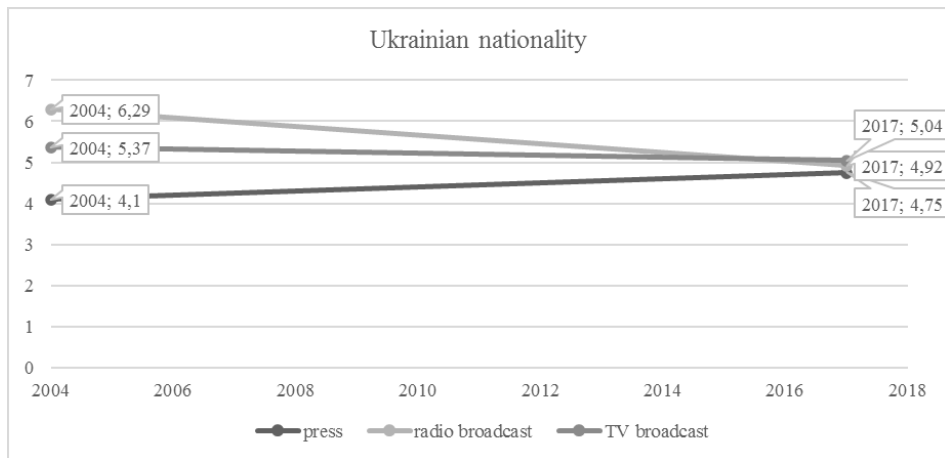


Chart 6: Viewership of mass media by the respondents of Ukrainian nationality in 2004 – 2017

The cultural platform of the Ukrainian minority in Slovakia consists of several institutions, such as the specialized museum Slovak National Museum – Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník, Alexander Duchnovich Theater in Prešov, or organizations such as the Union of Ruthenians-Ukrainians of the Slovak Republic (the largest Ukrainian cultural establishment) or the Association of Ukrainian writers. As in the case of other national minorities, minority broadcasting within RTVS forms media background of the Ukrainian minority. Slovak television has been broadcasting for Ukrainians (and Ruthenians) since 1992, the Ukrainian and Ruthenian broadcasts have been separated since 1998 and since 2003 the broadcasting for the Ukrainian minority comes from Košice studio of RTVS. Its content is diverse, ranging from journalistic genres, music programs to art shows. Mostly 8 – 10 Ukrainian programs are produced annually. Ukrainian periodicals include the literary-journalistic bimonthly *Dukľa*, the biweekly newspaper *Nove žytтя*, and the children's monthly *Veselka*.⁴⁰

In both questionnaires, Ukrainian nationals mostly watched the following three TV channels – RTVS (2004 – 44.4 %, 2017 – 15.6 %), *Markíza* (2004 – 26.3 %, 2017 – 28.7 %),

38 More information on the relationship of Ruthenians and Ukrainians in 2004 – 2017 see: ĎURKOVSKÁ, Mária – KENTOŠ, Michal. Interetnické vzťahy Rusínov a Ukrajincov v rokoch 2004 – 2017. In *Človek a spoločnosť [Individual and Society]*, 2019, Vol. 22, Supplement, p. 167-178. Online: <https://doi.org/10.31577/cas.2019.00.548>

39 Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2013*, p. 76.

40 Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2015*, p. 77-80.; Výbor pre národnostné menšiny a etnické skupiny. *Hodnotiaca správa o podpore kultúr národnostných menšín za rok 2013*, p. 78.

JOJ (2004 – 15 %, 2017 – 24.4 %). Listening to radio stations among citizens of Ukrainian nationality changed between 2004 – 2017, in 2004 more respondents listened to minority and regional radio broadcasting (6.9 %), but in 2017 the list of radio stations was topped by *Expres* (16.9 %). In 2017, 13.1 % of respondents of Ukrainian nationality listened to *Slovenský rozhlas*, as well as *Fun Radio* and 3.1 % of respondents listened to regional radio broadcasting of *Regina*. The range of periodicals read by the respondents of Ukrainian nationality remained almost the same in both monitored periods, the newspaper *Pravda* (2004 – 30.8 %, 2017 – 10.6 %), *SME* (2004 – 14.5 %, 2017 – 10.6 %) *Nový čas* (2004 – 7.5 %, 2017 – 21.9 %) and minority periodicals (2004 – 11.9 %, 2017 – 3.1 %), which in 2017 respondents specified as Ukrainian press.

Conclusion

The analysis of the questionnaire results confirmed the statistical significance of nationality factor both in relation to the minority press and in relation to minority broadcasting of RTVS on both radio and television. Depending on nationality, the viewership of the selected media has changed. The results of the research are significant for the authorities guaranteeing the rights of national minorities, as well as for the producers of radio, television broadcasting and publishers of print media with a minority focus. Thanks to the provided statistical data, it is possible to get an overview of the cultural life of individual national minorities in the period under review.

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Rights of National Minorities in Slovakia (Research Results)¹

Jana Šutajová

Abstract:

The paper analyses the answers of the respondents of Hungarian, Roma, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, German and Czech nationality, as well as Slovak nationality for comparison, to questions aimed at finding their opinions on the legal status of national minorities in Slovakia. The respondents (members of both majority and minority) were asked several questions to find out their views on the legal status of minorities in general, as well as their perception of the exercise of rights in culture, language use and various other areas of nationality life. The respondents also assessed the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the status, relations and rights of national minorities. The results of the analysis showed that respondents perceived the legal status in 2017 more positively than in 2004.

Keywords: minorities, rights, EU, Slovakia.

The current legal framework for the protection of national minorities in Slovakia complies with the international standards and modern development trends. Constitutional norms, as well as a network of international treaties at multilateral or bilateral level form the basis of the legal regulation of the position of national minorities and ethnic groups in the Slovak Republic.² The status of national minorities is affected by universal international treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms binding the Slovak Republic and which at least partly concern the protection of minority rights. These include the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, published under No. 209/1992 Coll. (No. 14)³ and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, published under No. 120/1976 Coll. (Articles 26 and 27). Furthermore, the Slovak Republic is also bound by special international treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms focused on the issues of national minorities and ethnic groups. These include the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, published under No. 160/1998 Coll., signed and ratified by Slovakia as one of the first member states of

1 This work was supported by the Agency for the Support of Research and Development on the basis of Agreement No. APVV 15-0745.

2 OROSZ, Ladislav. Ústavná úprava práv osôb patriacich k národnostným menšinám a etnickým skupinám v Slovenskej republike a jej komparatívna analýza. In ŠUTAJ, Štefan (ed.). *Národ a národnosti. Stav výskumu po roku 1989 a jeho perspektívy*. Prešov : Universum, 2004, p. 44-47.

3 After its establishment, the Slovak Republic was admitted to the Council of Europe. On that occasion, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe decided that the Slovak Republic, like the Czech Republic, would be retrospectively as of 1 January 1993 a party to the European Convention on Human Rights and its protocols ratified by the former Czechoslovak Federal Republic. HOFMANNOVÁ, Mahulena. Ochrana národnostních menšin na Slovensku. In PETRÁŠ, René – PETRŮV, Helena – SCHEU, Harald Christian (eds.). *Menšiny a právo v České republice*. Praha : Auditorium, 2009, p. 359.

the Council of Europe, which entered into force for Slovakia on 1 February 1998; or the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages, published under No. 588/2001 Coll. The Slovak Republic assumed obligations of protecting minority rights also through several bilateral international agreements with neighbouring countries on good neighbourliness and friendly cooperation, for example between the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic or the Slovak Republic and Hungary and so on.⁴

The current constitutional regulation related to persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups is contained in the Constitution of the Slovak Republic of 1992 and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, which is still part of the constitutional system of the Slovak Republic, while the Constitution uses the wording of the Charter of Fundamental Freedoms and Rights almost identically.⁵ *„The constitutional concept of the status of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups is based on the principle of equality and non-discrimination. This constitutional principle is expressed in the Slovak Constitution both on a general level and also specifically in relation to persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups.“*⁶ The constitutional principle guaranteeing equality and non-discrimination against all natural persons and the prohibition of their discrimination is contained in Article 12 par. 2 of the Constitution, where, among other reasons, the emphasis was put on equality and the prohibition of discrimination, even with regard to belonging to a nationality or ethnic group, although other articles address this in the Constitution.⁷

The fourth section of the second title of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic refers to the rights of national minorities and ethnic groups and, at the same time, the Constitution of the Slovak Republic directly determines the specific rights granted to individuals belonging to these minorities. Article 33 of the Constitution states that the membership of any national minority or ethnic group must not be prejudicial to anyone. The rights of national minorities and ethnic groups are enshrined in the Constitution of the Slovak Republic in Art. 34. Citizens constituting national minorities or ethnic groups in the Slovak Republic are guaranteed an all-round development, in particular the right to develop their own culture together with other members of a minority or group, to disseminate and receive information in their mother tongue, associate in national associations, establish and maintain educational and cultural institutions. The rights of national minorities include, under the conditions laid down by law, the right to education in their language, the right to use their language in official communication, the right to participate in the resolution of matters concerning national minorities and ethnic groups.⁸ Under the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, the conditions and details of the implementation of these minority rights are to be further regulated by law. In the case of some rights, such laws were created (Act on the Use of Minority Languages in Official Communication, the Act on Registrars, the

4 OROSZ, Ladislav. Práva národnostných menšín a etnických skupín v medzinárodných dokumentoch a ich implementácia do právneho poriadku Slovenskej republiky. In ŠUTAJ, Štefan (ed.). *Národnostná politika na Slovensku po roku 1989*. Prešov : Universum, 2005, p. 25-27.

5 OROSZ, L. *Ústavná úprava práv osôb...*, p. 44-47.

6 OROSZ, L. *Ústavná úprava práv osôb...*, p. 48.

7 OROSZ, L. *Ústavná úprava práv osôb...*, p. 47-48.

8 Ústava Slovenskej republiky.

Act on Name and Surname, the Education Act, etc.); in the case of others, legal conditions for the implementation of such right are not regulated by a specific law.⁹ Legislation on the protection of rights of persons belonging to national minorities is included in several regulations and can be described as fragmented.

Members of various national minorities live in the Slovak Republic. There are many differing opinions on the way of building the common Slovak Republic between the Slovak population and members of national minorities. These different opinions also affect the way and forms of addressing minority rights in the Slovak Republic. Getting to know these differences can help mutual understanding as well as help to overcome them. This issue has also been a part of long-term research of the Institute of Social Sciences of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, examining the opinions of respondents from nationally mixed territories. The issue was part of the research in the State Research and Development Program 2003 – 2005: *“Nation, nationalities and ethnic groups in the process of transformation of Slovak society”* Research in 2005 focused on the members of the majority (Slovaks living in predominantly nationally mixed areas) and six ethnic minority communities living in Slovakia – Czechs, Hungarians, Germans, the Roma, Ruthenians, Ukrainians. The research sample in 2004 consisted of a total of 1,120 respondents, i.e. 160 respondents, representatives of the majority and each minority. Quota selection was applied in terms of age, gender, education and nationality indicator in the selection of members of individual groups, i.e. verbal declaration of belonging to a minority, based on the results of the 2001 census of Slovakia.¹⁰

The analysed sample consisted of 1,151 respondents in 2017. Similarly, to the previous research, it was focused on Slovaks from nationally mixed areas and six ethnic communities living in Slovakia - Czechs, Hungarians, Germans, the Roma, Ruthenians and Ukrainians. Correspondingly, the respondents from individual groups were selected by quota selection based on age, gender, education and nationality indicator, i.e. verbal declaration of belonging to a minority, according to the 2011 census data.

Both surveys included more generally formulated questions, but also questions that should clarify how the members of national minorities perceive the application of specific rights of national minorities listed in the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, and whether their rating has somehow reflected the factor of personal or ethnic identity.

The rating of adopted legal standards in the Slovak Republic was determined by a generally formulated question: *“Do you think that the current legislation created by the Slovak Republic guarantees the conditions for the preservation of your minority (national minorities) in Slovakia?”*

The respondents answered on a 7-point scale (from 1 = definitely not, 7 = definitely yes). The results are shown in Chart 1.

9 SOMOROVÁ, Ľudmila. Národnostné menšiny, vážny ľudsko-právny problém. In *Človek a spoločnosť*, 2004, Vol. 7, Iss. 1. Online: <http://www.clovekaspolocnost.sk/sk/rocnik-7-rok-2004/1/studie-a-clanky/narodnostne-mensiny-vazny-ludsko-pravny-problem/>

10 The results of the research were published in the report: VÝROST, Jozef – HOMIŠINOVÁ, Mária (eds.). *Národ, národnosti a etnické skupiny v procese transformácie slovenskej spoločnosti*. Košice : Spoločenskovedný ústav SAV, CD-ROM, 2005.

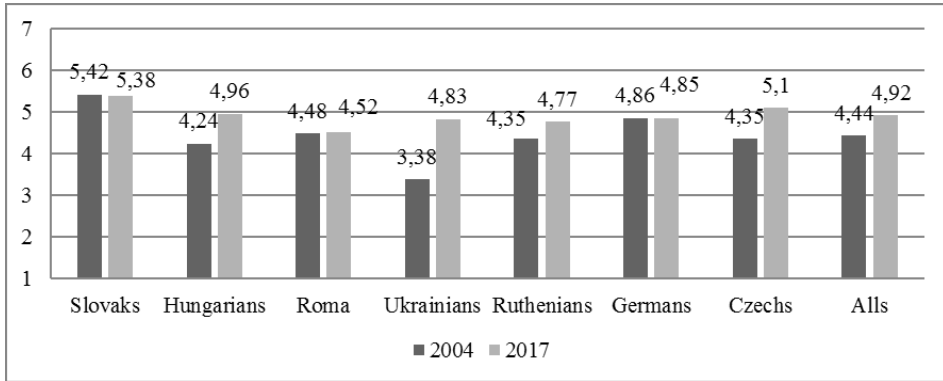


Chart 1: Rating of legislation depending on the nationality of respondents

In 2004, Slovaks (5.42) differed in their opinions from all other groups and rated the legislation clearly positively. In 2004, Germans (4.86) also came closer to this rating. Czechs (4.35), Hungarians (4.24), Roma (4.48) and Ruthenians (4.35) rated the legislation as neutral. It was rated negatively, albeit only slightly, by Ukrainians in 2004 (3.38).

In 2017, all groups of respondents rated the legislation clearly positive or neutral. Slovaks (5.38) and Czechs (5.1) considered the legislation as clearly positive, and Hungarians (4.96), Germans (4.85) and Ukrainians (4.83) also came close to this rating. The Roma (4.52) and Ruthenians (4.77) rated the legislation neutrally. All groups, with the exception of Slovaks and Germans, rated the legislation in 2017 more positively than in 2004. The perception of legislation by Ukrainians changed most significantly between 2004 and 2017.

Another generally formulated question was asked to find out the opinions of all respondents (including Slovaks) on the development of culture, traditions and language of national minorities. The question was formulated as follows: *“Do you think that in order to integrate into society, members of your minority (national minorities in the case of Slovaks) need to develop their original traditions, culture, language in the future?”*

The respondents answered on a 7-point scale (from 1 = definitely not, to 7 = definitely yes). The results are shown in Chart 2.

The results show that all respondents in 2004 and 2017, regardless of their nationality, clearly evaluated this issue positively. The differences were identified only in the degree of positivity (in the degree of agreement) of the need to develop national traditions, culture, language in the future.

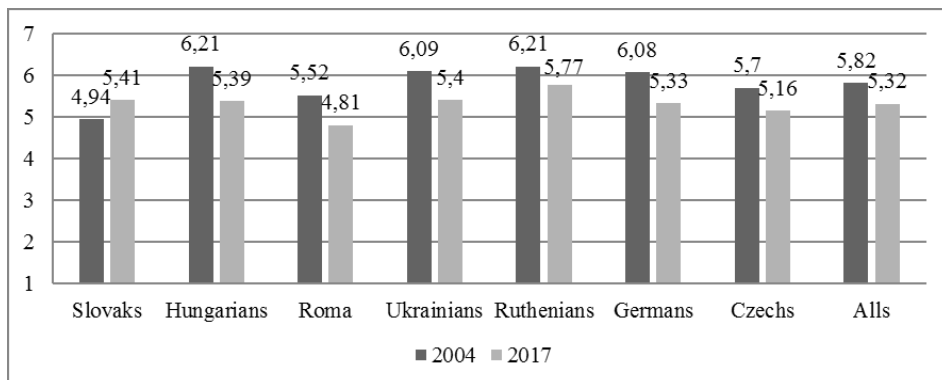


Chart 2: Development of culture, traditions and language of national minorities

In 2004, a more detailed analysis made it possible to differentiate three groups of respondents. We received the least positive rating from the first group of Slovaks (4.94). The second group consisted of the Roma (5.52) and Czechs (5.70) and the third group with the most positive rating of this question (respondents expressed the highest level of approval) were Hungarians (6.21), Ruthenians (6.21), Ukrainians (6.09) and Germans (6.08). In 2017, the degree of approval with the fact that to integrate into society, members of national minorities need to develop their original traditions, culture and language in the future decreased for respondents of all groups. The only exception were Slovaks (5.41), who were the only ones who in 2017 showed a more positive rating of the need to develop national traditions, culture, language of national minorities in the future.

In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to rate the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the status, relations and rights of national minorities. The respondents answered on a 7-point scale (from 1 = definitely not, to 7 = definitely yes). Charts 3 to 6 show the answers of the respondents.

In both 2004 and 2017, the average answers in all cases are on the positive side. This means that in 2004 the respondents had basically positive expectations in relation to Slovakia's EU membership. This was mostly true for Germans and Hungarians, slightly less for Slovaks and Czechs. Ruthenians, the Roma and especially Ukrainians were more sceptical in this respect, the 2004 research shows a reserved attitude. Ethnicity as a factor significantly influenced the results in all monitored areas.

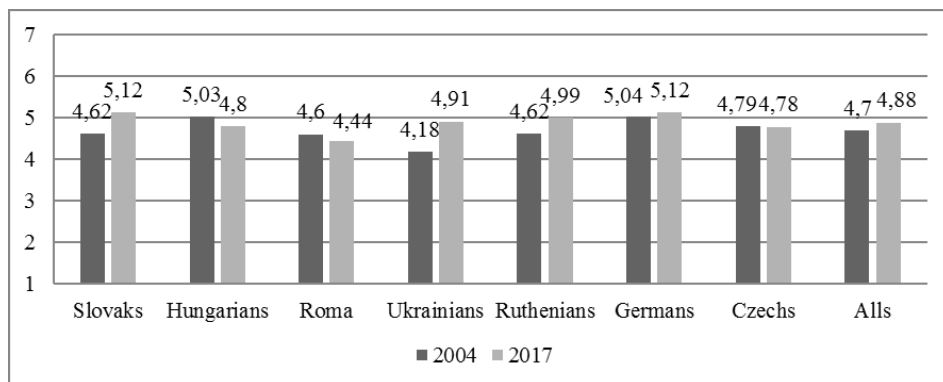


Chart 3: Rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the status and further development of national minorities

With regard to the status and further development of national minorities in 2004, positive expectations were expressed mainly by Germans (5.04) and Hungarians (5.03). The most sceptical were Ukrainians (4.18), approaching the middle of the scale. In 2017, both Germans (5.12) and Slovaks (5.12) again rated the impact of the EU on the status of ethnic minorities positively. They were also approached by Ruthenians (4.99), Ukrainians (4.91), Hungarians (4.8) and Czechs (4.78). In the case of Hungarians and the Roma, however, expectations of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the status of ethnic minorities in 2004 were higher than the rating of this impact in 2017.

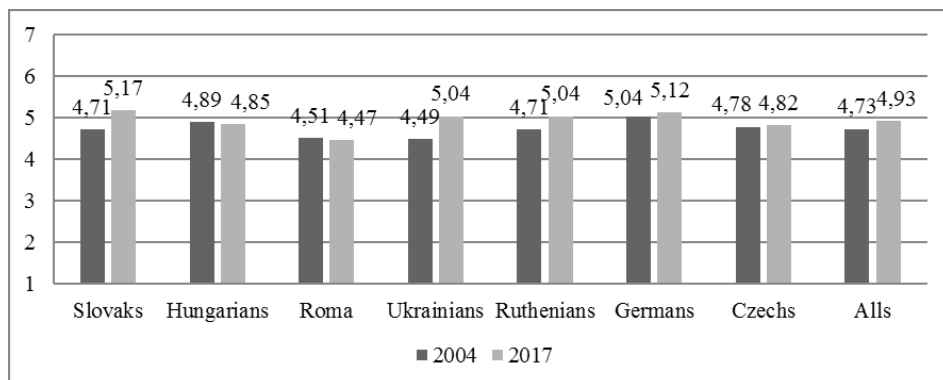


Chart 4: Rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on relations between minorities

With regard to the rating of relations between minorities, positive expectations in 2004 were again expressed mainly by Germans (5.04) and Hungarians (4.89). Ukrainians (4.49) and the Roma (4.51) were the least optimistic. In 2017, Germans (5.12) as well as Slovaks (5.17), Ukrainians (5.04) and Ruthenians (5.04) rated the positive impact of the EU on relations between minorities. Hungarians (4.85) and Czechs (4.82) also approached them.

Even in this case, however, the expectations of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on relations between minorities of Hungarians and the Roma in 2004 were higher than the rating of this impact in 2017. When comparing the results of both surveys, we can mainly notice the significant changes in the attitude of Slovaks, Ukrainians and Ruthenians.

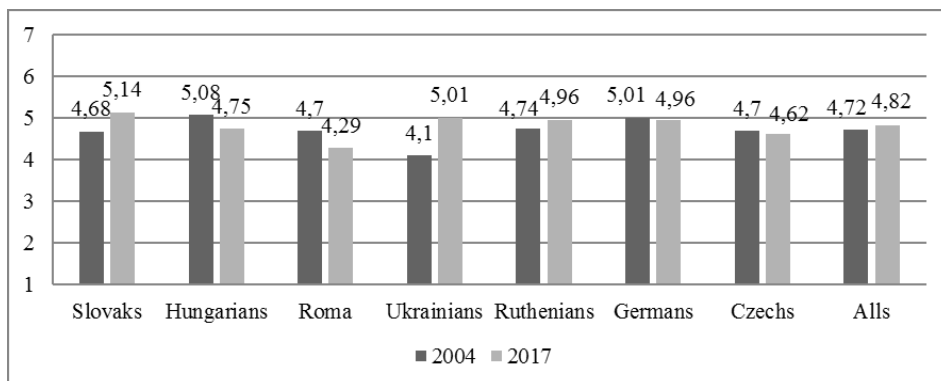


Chart 5: Rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the extension of nationality rights

Finally, in 2004, Hungarians (5.08) and Germans (5.01) expected the most positive impacts of EU membership in the rating of the extension of national minority rights. Ukrainians rated this area only at neutral point level and differed from all other sub-sets. In 2017, Slovaks (5.14) and Ukrainians (5.01) rated the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the extension of national rights most positively. They were approached by Ruthenians (4.96), Germans (4.96), but also Hungarians (4.75) and Czechs (4.62). The Roma in 2017 rated the situation the worst (4.29). In this case, the expectations of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the extension of national rights in 2004 were higher than the rating of this impact in 2017 for Hungarians, the Roma, Germans and Czechs.

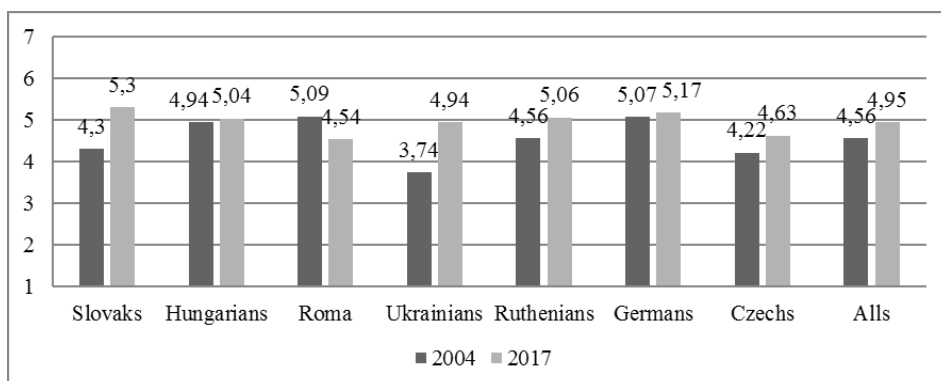


Chart 6: Rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the exercise of nationality rights.

When it comes to the rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the exercise of national minority rights, Germans (5.07), the Roma (5.09) and Hungarians (4.94) gave a positive opinion in 2004. Slovaks (4.3), Ruthenians (4.56) and Czechs (4.22) had slightly lower expectations. Ukrainians expressed the lowest expectations (3.74).

In 2017, respondents of all nationalities, with the exception of the Roma, rated the EU's positive impact on the exercise of national minority rights. Slovaks (5.3), Germans (5.17), Ruthenians (5.06) and Hungarians (5.04) rated this issue most positively. Ukrainians also approached them (4.94). Czechs (4.63) and the Roma (4.54) rated the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on this issue in 2017 the least positively.

Exercise of the rights of national minorities in Slovakia in culture

The exercise of the rights of national minorities in Slovakia in a specific life represents a wide range of areas. In our research, we also paid attention to the rating of the exercise of these rights in culture. The questions concerned the right to develop their own culture and the right to establish and maintain educational and cultural institutions. The common question in relation to these issues was: *"Do you think that members of national minorities living in Slovakia have the following rights guaranteed?"*

Respondents answered on a 7-point scale (from 1 = definitely not, to 7 = definitely yes). The results are shown in charts 7 to 8.

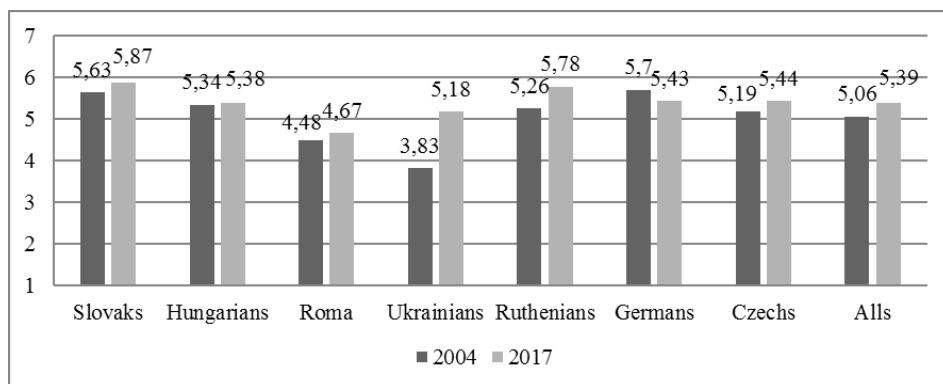


Chart 7: Rating of the right to develop one's own culture depending on the nationality of respondents

In 2004, only respondents of Ukrainian nationality (3.83) rated the right to develop own culture of individual nationalities negatively. Members of other nationalities rated the legal regulation of cultural development of individual nationalities as positive or rather neutral (the Roma). In 2017, Slovaks (5.87), Ruthenians (5.78), Czechs (5.44), Germans (5.43), Hungarians (5.38) and Ukrainians (5.18) rated the regulation of the culture development of individual nationalities positively. The Roma (4.67) rated the regulation of the development of culture of individual nationalities rather neutrally. In this case too, when looking at the results from 2004 and 2017, the most significant change was reflected in the attitude of Ukrainians.

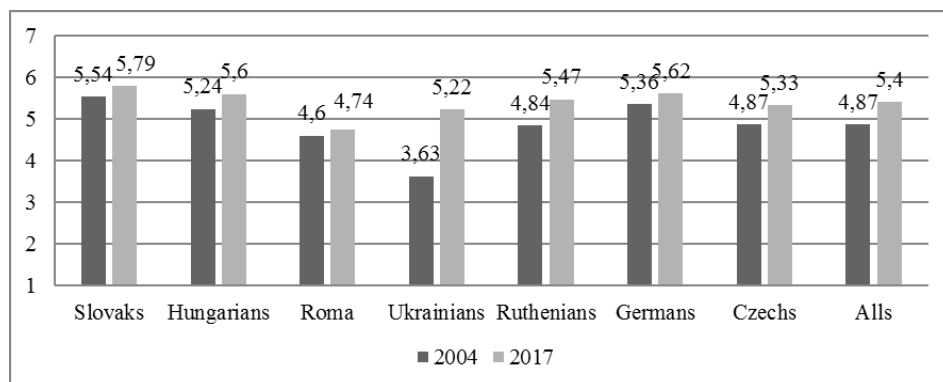


Chart 8: Rating of the right to establish and maintain educational and cultural institutions depending on the nationality of respondents

Another question examined was the right of persons belonging to national minorities to establish and maintain educational and cultural institutions. A more detailed analysis of intergroup differences confirmed that only the respondents of Ukrainian nationality (3.63) expressed a slightly negative opinion on the examined issue. Members of other nationalities favoured a positive rating of the legislation relating to the right to establish and maintain educational and cultural institutions of minorities. In 2017, all groups of respondents rated this legislation positively. It was rated most positively by Slovaks (5.79), Germans (5.62) and Hungarians (5.6). The most significant change occurred in the case of respondents of Ukrainian (5.22) and Ruthenian (5.47) nationalities, who rated the legislation significantly more positively than in 2004.

In our research, we also asked the respondents a question on who should decide on matters of minority culture in Slovakia. We offered the respondents several possible solutions. Respondents individually rated on a 7-point scale (from 1 = definitely not, to 7 = definitely yes) whether minority culture issues should be addressed by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, relevant higher territorial units, regional authorities, local self-governments, the minority concerned and its representative bodies or a new institution specifically designed for the affairs of national minorities. The results are shown in charts 9 – 16.

The analysis of the data confirmed that the differences in this case lie not only in the degree of positivity of the rating of these institutions but also in their acceptance or rejection.

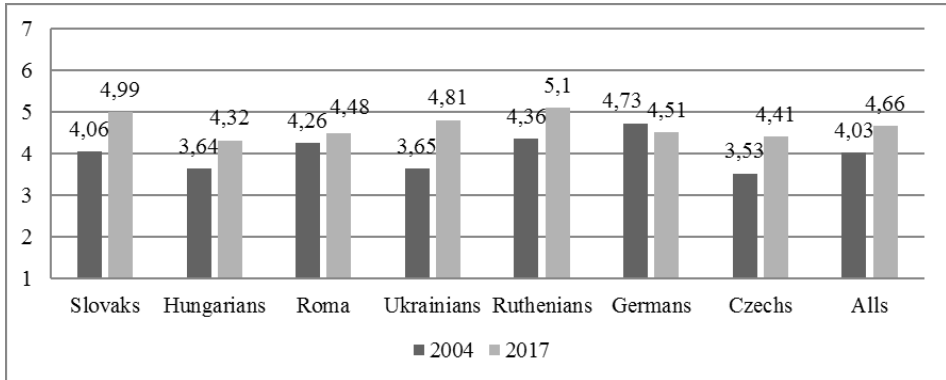


Chart 9: The Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic deciding in the matters of minority culture in Slovakia

In 2004, Germans (4.73), the Roma (4.26) and Ruthenians (4.36) expressed slight approval with the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic as the institution deciding in matters of minority culture in Slovakia. On the contrary, Czechs (3.53), Hungarians (3.64) and Ukrainians (3.65) rather disagreed with this solution. The position of Slovaks (4.06) was rather neutral. In 2017, the opinion of respondents of most nationalities was more positive than in 2004. All nationalities accepted the possibility that minority culture matters in Slovakia could be decided by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic more positively.

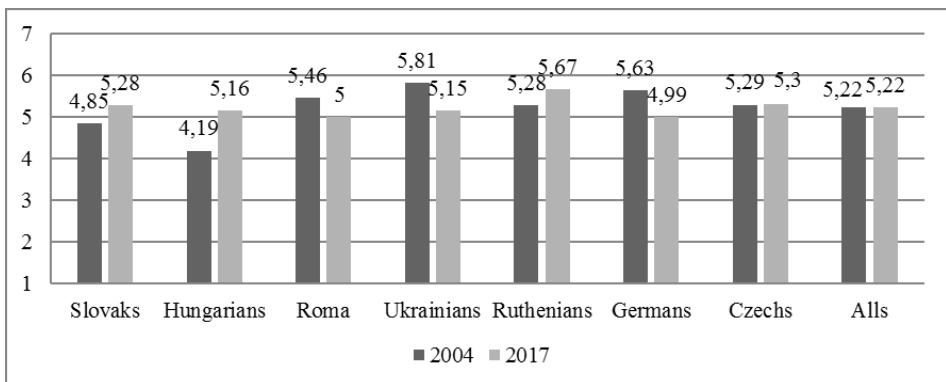


Chart 10: The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic deciding in the matters of minority culture in Slovakia

Another assessed institution was the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic. In this case, in 2004, all respondents, irrespective of their nationality, agreed with the Ministry of Culture deciding on the culture of national minorities. The differences found were only in the degree of positivity, in the degree of agreement with this institution. Ukrainians (5.81) and Germans (5.63) favoured this view the most. The lowest degree of agreement was

expressed by Hungarians (4.19). Similar results were also repeated in the 2017 research. Again, all respondents, regardless of their nationality, agreed that the Ministry of Culture should decide on the culture of national minorities. The opinion was mostly favoured by Ruthenians (5.67), Czechs (5.3) and Slovaks (5.28). The lowest degree of agreement was expressed in 2017 by Germans (4.99).

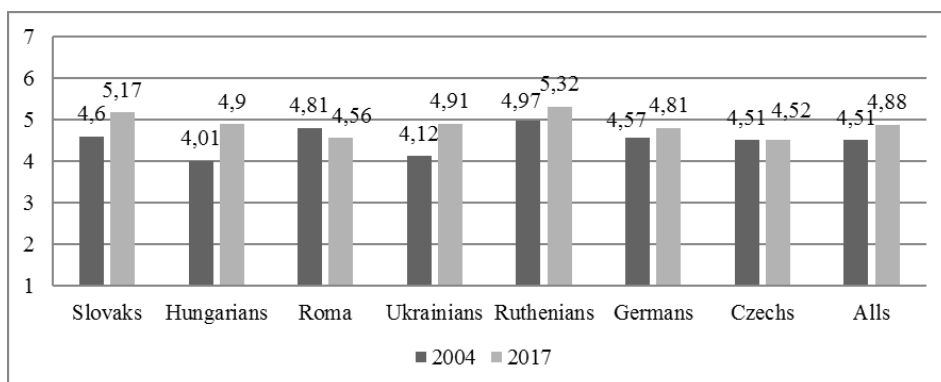


Chart 11: Relevant higher territorial units deciding in the matters of minority culture in Slovakia

In 2004, all respondents agreed, albeit only very moderately, to higher territorial units deciding on the culture of national minorities. This solution was most positively perceived by Ruthenians (4.97), the Roma (4.81) and Slovaks (4.6). Germans (4.57) and Czechs (4.51) expressed a slight agreement with this solution. The position of Ukrainians (4.12) and Hungarians (4.01) was rather neutral. In 2017, the opinion of respondents of most nationalities was more positive than in 2004. All nationalities perceived the possibility that the relevant higher territorial units would decide on matters of minority culture in Slovakia rather positively.

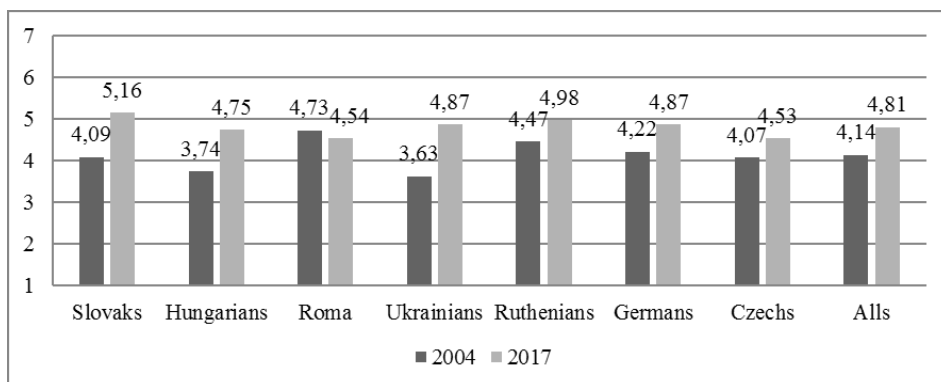


Chart 12: Regional authorities deciding in matters of minority culture in Slovakia

In 2004, opinions on regional authorities operating in the analysed area varied. The Roma (4.73) and Ruthenians (4.47) expressed a slight agreement with such a provision. On the other hand, Ukrainians (3.63) and Hungarians (3.74) were against this solution, similarly as in the case of the Ministry of Education of the SR. In 2017, the respondents perceived the activities of regional authorities in the analysed area more positively, regardless of their nationality. Slovaks (5.16), Ruthenians (4.98), Ukrainians (4.87), Germans (4.87) and Hungarians (4.75) perceived such possibility most positively.

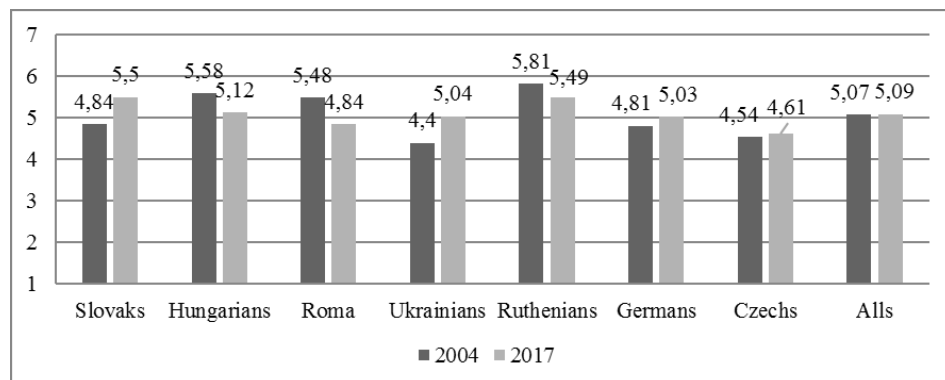


Chart 13: Relevant local self-government deciding in matters of minority culture in Slovakia

In 2004, general agreement (although to a varying degree) was found when assessing the possibility of the relevant local self-government deciding on the culture of national minorities. Ruthenians (5.81), Hungarians (5.58) and the Roma (5.48) expressed the highest degree of agreement with the possibility of local self-government. Ukrainians (4.4) and Czechs (4.54) had the lowest rates.

Also in 2017, respondents, regardless of their nationality, expressed a favourable opinion on the possibility that the relevant local self-government would decide on the matters of minority culture in Slovakia. This possibility was perceived most positively by Slovaks (5.5) and Ruthenians (5.49). The least positive was the perception of Czechs (4.61) and the Roma (4.84).

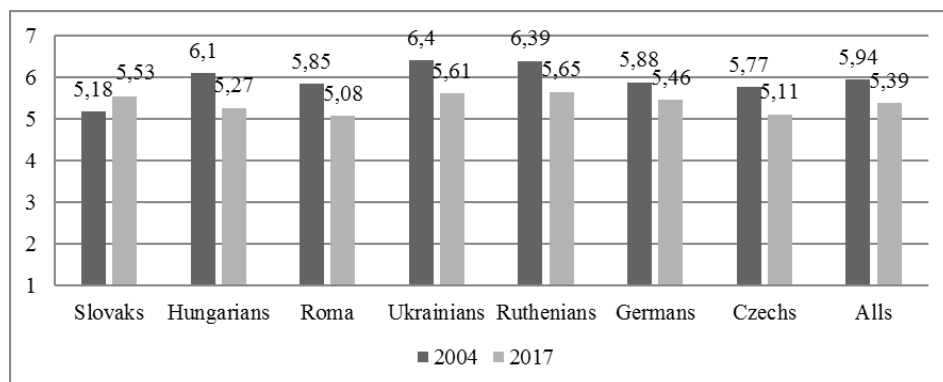


Chart 14: The minority concerned and its representative bodies deciding in matters of minority culture in Slovakia

In 2004, the possibility that the minority concerned and its representative bodies could decide on minority culture in Slovakia was preferred by respondents of all nationalities. The solution was most positively perceived by Ruthenians (6.39), Ukrainians (6.4), Hungarians (6.10), Germans (5.88), and the Roma (5.85). In 2004, however, this solution was generally supported by the respondents who participated in our research. Although this solution was positively perceived by the respondents of all nationalities in 2017, with the exception of Slovaks, the degree of agreement decreased for each group of respondents.

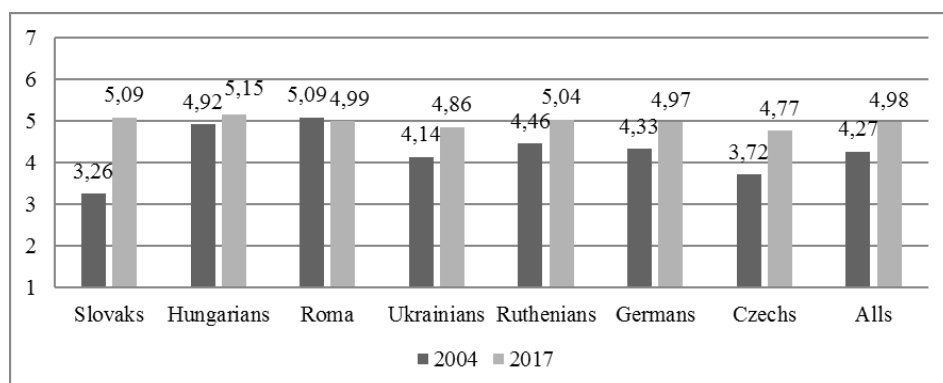


Chart 15: Special office for minority affairs, which needs to be established, deciding in matters of minority culture in Slovakia

Opinions on the possibility of a new institution, specifically designed for national minority issues deciding on cultural matters varied in 2004. The Roma (5.09), Ruthenians (4.46) and Hungarians (4.92) agreed with this solution, unlike Slovaks (3.26) and Czechs (3.72), who rather disagreed with this solution. In 2017, the degree of agreement to such an institution increased. The majority of respondents from each of the addressed ethnic

groups expressed their agreement with such a solution. The biggest change was reflected in the attitudes of Slovaks (5.09) and Czechs (4.77).

The rating of who should decide on matters of minority culture in Slovakia reaches different values, regardless of the nationality of the respondents.

The presented results from 2004 and 2017 brought a consensus in the opinions of the members of national minorities in that, according to the respondents, deciding on matters of minority culture in Slovakia should be dealt with primarily by three institutions: the Ministry of Culture – self-government – minorities concerned or the bodies representing them.

In 2004, we obtained the most positive rating in relation to the minorities concerned, or the authorities representing them – 5.94, the Ministry of Culture – 5.22, and the self-government – 5.07. Also in 2017, the most positive rating was reported for the possibility that minority culture in Slovakia should be decided by the minorities concerned or the bodies representing them – 5.39, the Ministry of Culture – 5.22 and the self-government – 5.09.

In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to rate the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on minority culture. Again, the respondents responded on a 7-point scale (from 1 = definitely not, to 7 = definitely yes). The results are shown in Chart 16.

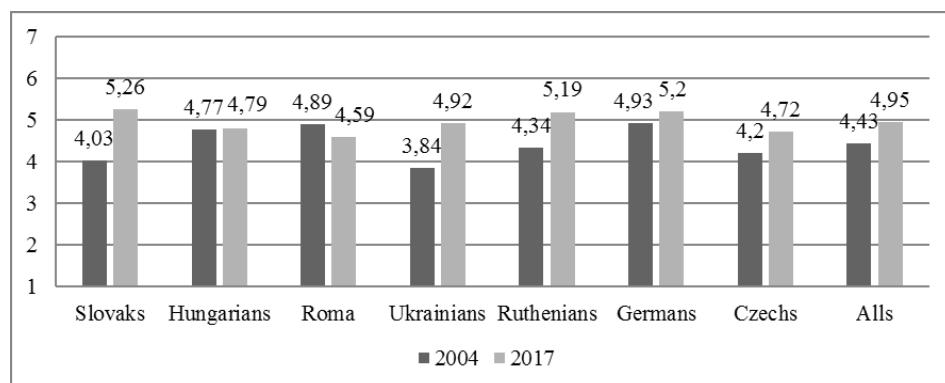


Chart 16: Rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on minority culture

With regard to the rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on minority culture in 2004, the answers of most groups of respondents were around a neutral point. Germans (4.93), the Roma (4.89) and Hungarians (4.77) gave the most positive opinions. Slovaks (4.03), Ruthenians (4.34) and Czechs (4.2) approached the centre of the scale. Ukrainians were the most sceptical (3.84).

In 2017, Slovaks (5.26) and Ruthenians (5.19), as well as Germans (5.2), rated the EU's impact on minority culture as positive. Also, Ukrainians (4.91), Hungarians (4.79) and Czechs (4.72) approached them. The Roma (4.59) rated the impact of Slovakia's accession

to the EU on minority culture in 2017 the least positive, their expectations of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU in 2004 were higher than the rating of this impact in 2017.

Exercising the rights of national minorities in Slovakia with regard to language use

In our research we also paid attention to the rating of exercising the rights of national minorities in Slovakia with regard to the language. The questions concerned the dissemination and receipt of information, as well as education in the mother tongue. The common question in relation to this was as follows: *“Do you think that national minorities living in Slovakia have the following rights guaranteed?”*

The respondents answered on a 7-point scale (from 1 = definitely not, to 7 = definitely yes). The results are shown in charts 17 – 18.

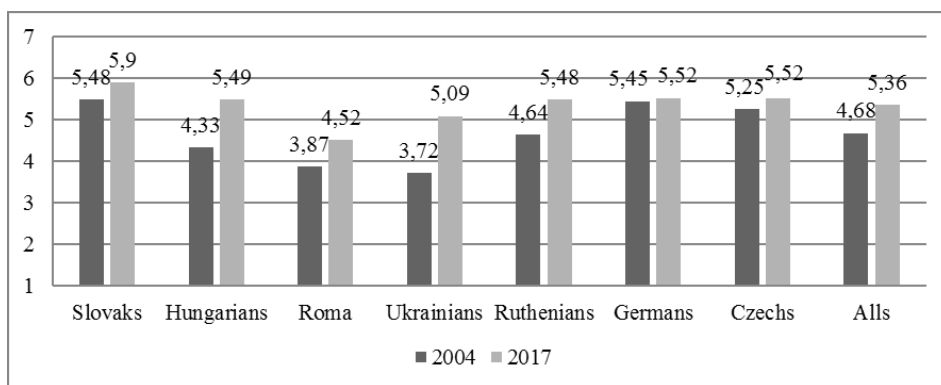


Chart 17: Rating of the right to disseminate and receive information in the mother tongue depending on the nationality of the respondents

An analysis of the differences between nationalities in 2004 showed that Slovaks (5.48), Czechs (5.25) and Germans (5.45) considered the legislation to guarantee the right to disseminate and receive information in their mother tongue clearly positively. Previously, Hungarians (4.33) and Ruthenians (4.64) rated this legislation neutrally. Ukrainians (3.72) and the Roma (3.87) rated this issue negatively, albeit only slightly. In 2017, all groups of respondents evaluated the legislation positively, with the exception of the Roma, who rated it rather neutrally. In comparison with 2004 results, mainly the ratings of Hungarians (5.49), Ukrainians (5.09), Ruthenians (5.48) and the Roma (4.52) changed significantly.

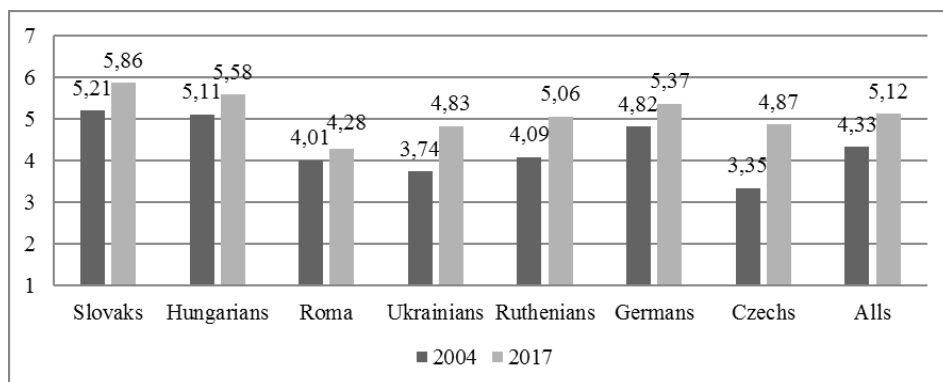


Chart 18: Rating of the right of education in the mother tongue depending on the nationality of the respondents

An important issue in the development of any national minority is also the possibility of education in their mother tongue. The analysis of the answers to this question brought partially different results in 2004. A more detailed analysis made it possible to differentiate three groups of respondents. Slovaks (5.21) and Hungarians (5.11) rated the guarantee of this right positively. The comments of Germans are also approaching this rating (4.82). Ruthenians (4.09) and the Roma (4.01) rated the legislation neutrally. Czechs (3.35) and Ukrainians (3.74) rated it negatively, albeit only slightly. In 2017, all groups of respondents rated the legislation positively or neutrally. It was rated the most positively by Slovaks (5.86), Hungarians (5.58), Germans (5.37) and Ruthenians (5.06). The lowest degree of agreement was expressed by the Roma (4.28). The most significant change occurred in the case of respondents of Czech (4.87) and Ukrainian (4.83) nationality, who rated the legislation significantly more positively than in 2004.

The question of setting a limit for the use of the language of minorities in official communication was also part of the research. According to the Act on the Use of Languages of National Minorities, citizens of the Slovak Republic who belong to a national minority have the right to use the language of a national minority in official communication in the municipality of their permanent residence, if at least 15 % of the population of this municipality belong to a national minority according to two last censuses.¹¹ With regard to the distribution of the responses to setting the limit on using the language of minorities in official communication (Table 1), in both 2004 and 2017 research, it was possible to observe that each of the options offered was more or less represented in the responses. Although Slovaks largely believe that only Slovak language should be used in official communication (69.4 % in 2004 and 80.2 % in 2017), we also encounter a selection of other offered options.

11 Act on the Use of Languages of National Minorities

Table 1: Limit on the use of minority language in official communication (% in a row by ethnicity)

Ethnicity	5 % limit 2004	5 % limit 2017	10 % limit 2004	10 % limit 2017	20 % limit 2004	20 % limit 2017	Slovak lang. only 2004	Slovak lang. only 2017
Slovaks	3.8 %	6.2 %	12.7 %	6.2 %	14 %	7.4 %	69.4 %	80.2 %
Czechs	7.1 %	6.7 %	11 %	14.5 %	22.6 %	24.8 %	59.4 %	53.9 %
Hungarians	13.9 %	12.1 %	58.2 %	28.5 %	27.2 %	30.3 %	0.6 %	29.1 %
Germans	13.9 %	5.6 %	30.4 %	10.1 %	25.9 %	18.4 %	29.7 %	65.9 %
Roma	21.5 %	14.4 %	17.4 %	20 %	22.1 %	15 %	38.9 %	50.6 %
Ruthenians	3.1 %	3.1 %	18.8 %	14.4 %	23.8 %	20 %	54.4 %	62.5 %
Ukrainians	12.1 %	10 %	21.7 %	10 %	45.2 %	20 %	21 %	60 %
Total	10.8 %	8.3 %	24.3 %	14.8 %	25.8 %	19.4 %	39.1 %	57.5 %

In 2004, there were answers similar to Slovaks' among Czechs (59.4 % only in Slovak) and Ruthenians (54.4 % only in Slovak). Even in the case of the Roma, the most common option was the exclusive use of Slovak in official communication, although only about one third of the respondents favoured this option. The answers most favouring the 20 % population limit when using the minority language in official communication were evident among Ukrainians (45.2 %). The 10 % limit was most preferred by Hungarians (58.2 %) and almost a third of Germans (30.4 %). Research results from 2017 showed that, with the exception of Hungarians, all respondents were inclined to the option of using the Slovak language in official communication in Slovakia. Slovaks (80.2 %) most favoured this option, followed by Germans (65.9 %), Ruthenians (62.5 %), Ukrainians (60 %), Czechs (53.9 %) and the Roma (50.6 %).

The rating of the limit on the use of the language of minorities in official communication reaches various values, regardless of the nationality of the respondents. In both surveys, the most frequent response was the possibility to use exclusively Slovak language in official communication. In 2017, however, more than 50 % of respondents from this group favoured this option in each group except for Hungarians.

In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to rate the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the exercise of national rights with regard to language. Also, in this case, the respondents responded on a 7-point scale (from 1 = definitely not, to 7 = definitely yes). The results are shown in charts 19 to 20.

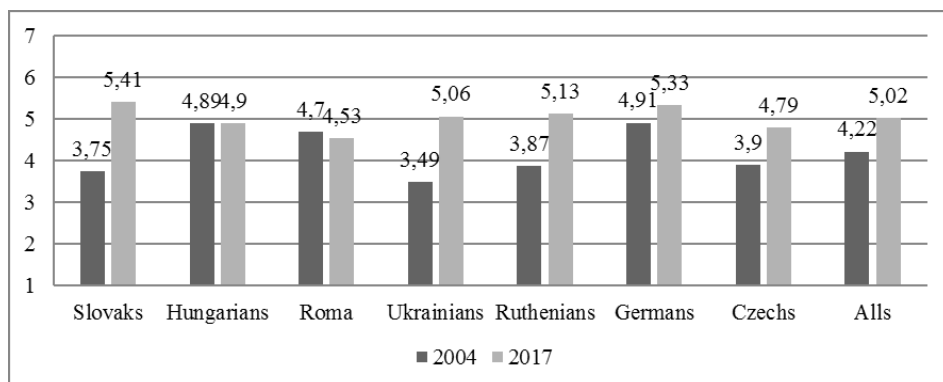


Chart 19: Rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the use of mother tongue

With regard to the rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the use of mother tongue in 2004, the most positive comments were expressed by Germans (4.91), the Roma (4.7) and Hungarians (4.89). Slovaks (3.75), Ukrainians (3.49), Ruthenians (3.87) and Czechs (3.9) were more sceptical.

In 2017, the respondents of all nationalities rated the impact of the EU on the use of their mother tongue positively. It was most positively rated by Slovaks (5.41), Germans (5.33), Ruthenians (5.13) but also Ukrainians (5.06). Hungarians (4.9) and Czechs (4.79) also came close. The Roma (4.53) rated the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the use of the mother tongue in 2017 the least positively. Again, in this case, expectations of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on this issue were higher for the Roma in 2004 than the rating of this impact in 2017.

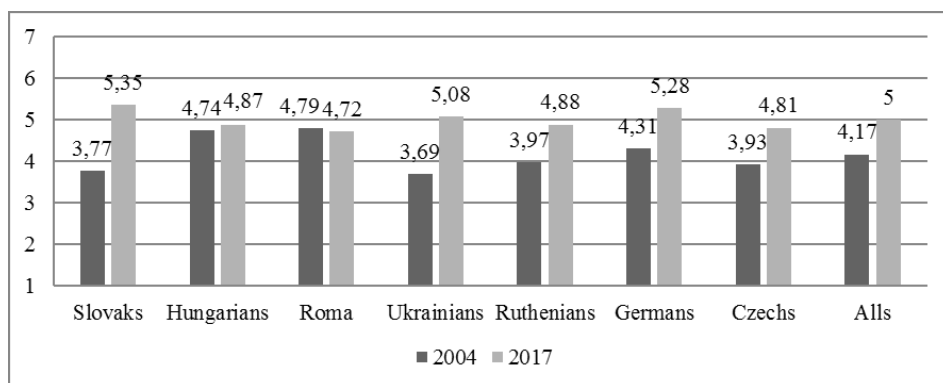


Chart 20: Rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on communication with authorities

With regard to the rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the position of ethnic minorities in relation to communication with authorities, respondents' answers

in 2004 were divided into several groups. The most positive responses were from the Roma (4.79) and Hungarians (4.74). Germans also approached the centre of the scale (4.31). Slovaks (3.77), Ruthenians (3.97), Czechs (3.93) answered more negatively. Ukrainians were the most sceptical (3.69).

In 2017, respondents of all nationalities rated the EU as having a positive impact on the status of ethnic minorities in relation to communication with authorities. Slovaks (5.35), Germans (5.28) and Ukrainians (5.08) again rated this issue the most positively. They were also approached by Ruthenians (4.88), Hungarians (4.87) and Czechs (4.81). The Roma (4.72) rated the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU in 2017 the most negatively.

Exercising the rights of national minorities in Slovakia with regard to the life of nationalities

Exercising the rights of national minorities in Slovakia in a particular life is also manifested in relation to the right to associate in national associations and minority participation in the matters concerning the minority concerned. A common question with regard to the aforementioned was as follows: *“Do you think that members of national minorities living in Slovakia have the following rights guaranteed?”*

The respondents answered on a 7-point scale (from 1 = definitely not, to 7 = definitely yes). The results are shown in charts 21 – 22.

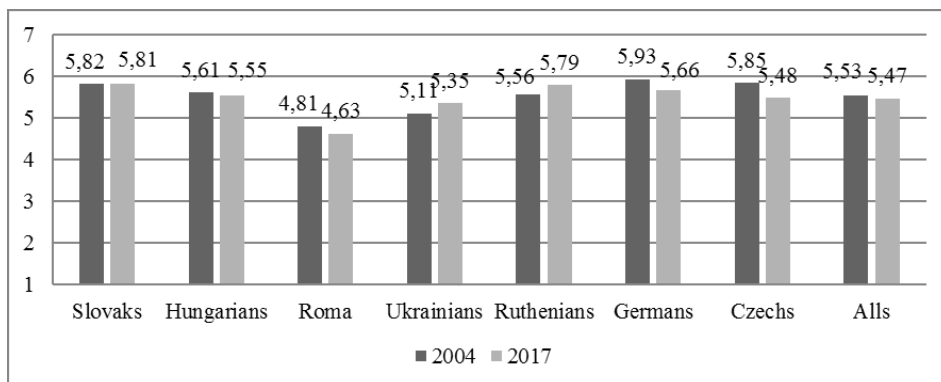


Chart 21: Rating of the right to associate in national associations depending on the nationality of respondents

The results from 2004 show that all respondents, regardless of their nationality, assessed this issue clearly positively. The differences identified consisted only in the degree of positivity (in the degree of agreement) of the rating of the guarantee of a legal standard. In this respect, the highest degree of agreement with exercising these principles was expressed by Germans (5.93), Slovaks (5.82) and Czechs (5.85). The lowest level of agreement was expressed by the Roma (4.81). In 2017, the respondents also assessed this issue clearly positively, but overall the degree of agreement slightly decreased compared

to 2004 among Slovaks (5.81), Hungarians (5.55), the Roma (4.63), Germans (5.66) and Czechs (5.48).

The last examined area with regard to exercising the rights of national minorities in Slovakia in their particular lives was the right to participate in the solution of matters concerning national minorities.

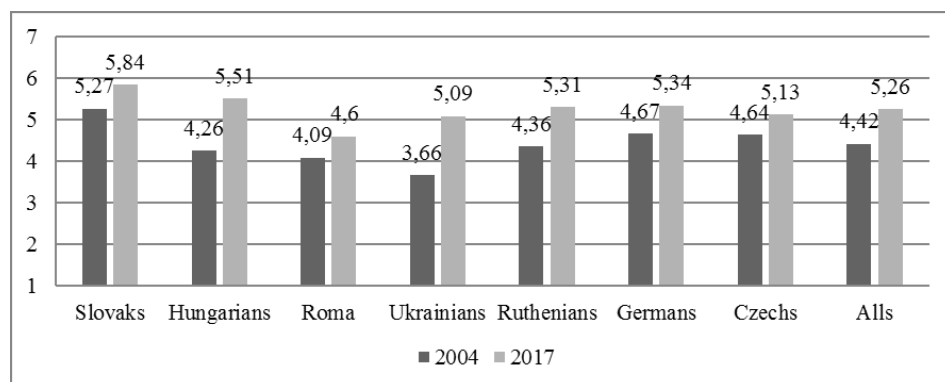


Chart 22: Rating of the right to participate in the solution of matters concerning national minorities depending on the nationality of respondents

A more detailed analysis of the differences between the responses of members of individual minorities in 2004 showed that Ukrainians (3.66), as the only national minority, expressed a slightly negative rating of the issue under consideration. Members of other nationalities were in favour of a neutral or positive rating of the legislation on the right to participate in the resolution of matters concerning national minorities. In 2017, the Ukrainians also favoured a positive rating (5.09). In 2017, Hungarians (5.51) and Ruthenians (5.31) also perceived this issue significantly more positively. The Roma (4.6) rated this legislation as positive, but to a lesser extent.

In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to assess the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the application of national rights in various areas of the life of nationalities. Again, the respondents responded on a 7-point scale (from 1 = definitely not, to 7 = definitely yes). The results are presented in charts 23 – 24.

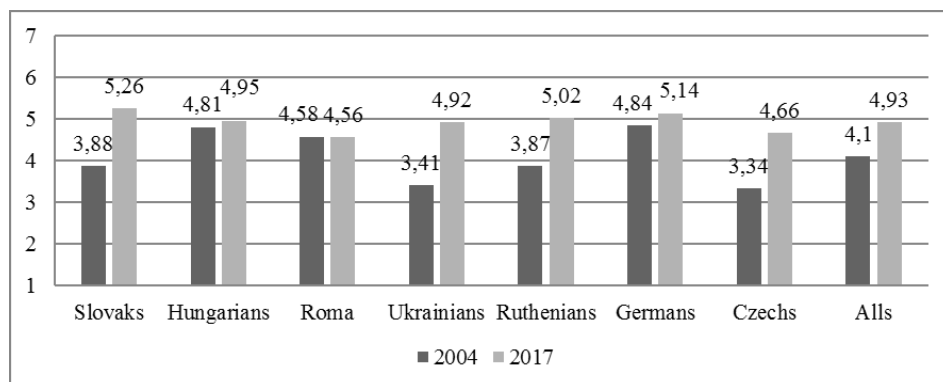


Chart 23: Rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on minority education

With regard to the rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on minority education, again in 2004, the respondents' answers were divided into two groups. The Roma (4.58), Germans (4.84) and Hungarians (4.81) were more positive. Slovaks (3.88), Ruthenians (3.87), Ukrainians (3.41) and Czechs (3.34) expressed rather negative opinions.

In 2017, respondents of all nationalities, with the exception of the Roma, rated the EU's positive impact on minority education. Slovaks (5.26), Germans (5.14) and Ruthenians (5.02) rated this issue most positively. Hungarians (4.95) and Ukrainians (4.92) also approached them. Czechs (4.66) and the Roma (4.56) rated the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on this issue the lowest in 2017.

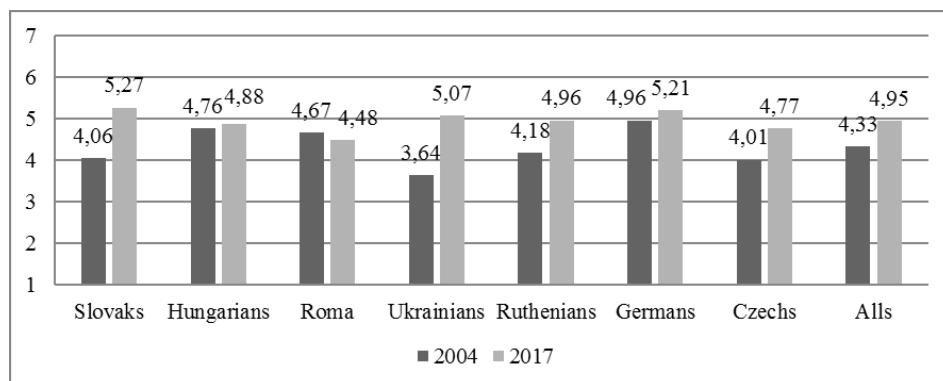


Chart 24: Rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the organization of national life

With regard to the rating of the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on the organization of the life of national minorities, the Roma (4.67), Germans (4.96) and Hungarians (4.76) were more positive in 2004. Slovaks (4.06), Ruthenians (4.18) and

Czechs (4.01) were close to the centre of the scale. Ukrainians were more negative about the issue (3.64).

In 2017, the respondents of all nationalities, with the exception of the Roma, assessed the positive impact of the EU on the organization of the life of national minorities. Slovaks (5.27), Germans (5.21) and Ukrainians (5.07) rated this issue most positively. Hungarians (4.88), Ruthenians (4.96) and Czechs (4.77) were also approaching them. The Roma (4.48) rated the impact of Slovakia's accession to the EU on this issue the lowest in 2017.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can state that if we do not take the nationality factor into account when evaluating the results, looking at the overall results, we find that in 2017 all rights except for the right to associate in national associations were rated more positively by the respondents than in 2004. Also in the case of the rating of the impact of EU accession in relation to ethnic issues, regardless of the nationality factor, the respondents' expectations in 2017 were more positive than in 2004.

Taking into account the nationality factor when evaluating the results, we find that the least positive expectations, whether in relation to the exercise of national rights or in assessing the impact of EU accession in relation to ethnic issues in 2004, were expressed by Ukrainians. In 2017, the respondents were more inclined to the positive pole and the most negative ratings appeared in the case of the respondents of Roma nationality.

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Demographic Variables as Predictors of Ethnic Identity¹

Juraj Martonyik

Abstract:

The paper focuses on the connections, influences and possible relations between ethnic identity, its components, and various demographic categories, followed by connections to differences between minorities in Slovakia. The following demographic categories were monitored: age, education, gender of respondents, and the size of the minority. Ethnic identity was determined as a 4-component composite variable, whose components represented separately tested dependent variables. These components are: an auto-stereotype about one's own ethnic group, self-identification with one's own ethnicity, a sense of ethnicity and a degree of cultural engagement in ethnic matters. Data were collected in two rounds, in 2004 and 2017. The research sample consisted of respondents of six nationalities.² These phenomena were examined depending on the nature of given variables and on individual research questions. Differential, correlation and regression statistical procedures were used for identification. None of the individual demographic categories tested proved to be a universal and sufficiently strong predictor for the entire research population, however, significant differences, as well as relationships between individual nationalities and ethnic identity components, were demonstrated. Age was not a significant predictor of ethnic identity or its individual components. Testing the differences between the groups showed a significant difference where all tested components were more prominent in the category of older respondents, with the most significant increase observed among the respondents of Ukrainian nationality and the most significant shift in the component of cultural engagement. Education was analysed by correlation coefficients. The weak relationship between the level of education and ethnic identity was confirmed. The created regression model explained a negligible amount of variation as a universal predictor, but when selecting individual nationalities, higher predictive power showed only for Ukrainian nationality, namely 15.4 %. In this category, the weak negative relationship between identity and auto-stereotype and the weak to moderately positive relationship between identity and cultural engagement are the most significant. Gender was not an important factor of ethnic identity, in none of the monitored components there were statistically significant differences in the undivided sample. The perceived differences only occurred in some components, namely for the selected nationalities, with differences present only in Ukrainian, Ruthenian and Czech nationalities, with a higher inclination to the female gender within these components, depending on the particular component.

1 This work was supported by the Agency for the Support of Research and Development on the basis of Agreement No. APVV 15-0745.

2 More detailed data on research respondents in 2004 and 2017: KENTOŠ, Michal. Vzorka / Účastníci výskumu. In ŠUTAJ, Štefan a kol. *Tendencie vývoja etnických vzťahov na Slovensku (komparatívny výskum národnostnej problematiky v rokoch 2004 – 2020). (záverečná správa z výskumu)*. Prešov : Universum, 2019, p. 13-18.

The last demographic category examined was the relationship between the size of the minority and ethnic identity. None of the components, neither the overall degree of ethnic identity, has been shown to be in any relation to the size of the minority.

Keywords: ethnicity, identity, demographic categories.

Introduction

The discovery of one's own identity is one of the basic developmental challenges of the individuation process. Understanding the meaning of the concept of identity, identifying with a certain image of oneself as well as individual's place in the world are the essential aspects of the transition to formal operational stages during adolescence (Krettenauer, 2005). In an effort to identify the importance of ethnicity in shaping one's own global identity, it is necessary to understand this identity as a set of factors affecting an individual in the context of social and group dynamics with ethnically coloured character. Affiliation with an ethnic group and the subsequent identification of oneself as its member have a great impact on both personal and social identity (Cohen, 2004). Selectivity is a specific feature of ethnic identity, in spite of its seemingly necessary or genetically programmed characteristic. This characteristic is unquestionable to some extent, but the extent to which one identifies with one's own ethnicity is variable in this context, as well as situational effects of various social influences that may affect the importance of ethnicity within the current level of overall identity. Thus, the place of ethnic identity within identity as a psychological construct is at the intersection of ethnicity, group dynamics and individual interactions of an individual in their social world. Recognition and attribution of importance by the outside world are also important for ethnicity, i.e. situations that endanger or promote an individual's ethnicity (Langer, 2010). According to Okamura (Okamura, 2010), the situational conditionality of ethnicity is defined by fluctuation or by overlapping in attributed importance between various related categories of identity, e.g. between ethnic and religious (culture would be an important aspect of both structures in this case). The relationship between various types of identity is thus defined in this case by their common components.

These models of ethnic identity can serve as a suitable tool for identifying both common and different components of ethnic identity, which can subsequently serve as both a theoretical and empirical basis for this construct.

A common line that links the structural models of ethnic identity with the evolutionary ones is a link that assumes the development of this identity as a dialectical process, an ideological transformation (Gay, 1985), its successful completion leads to a more positive outlook and acceptance of one's ethnicity and overall identity. According to Cross (in Gay, 1985), this shift is synonymous with the shift from the external determination of ethnicity attributes to internal, from negative to positive outlook. This understanding allows for the postulation of psychological wellbeing as an important factor related to ethnic identity. Since a successful solution assumes the conclusion of a certain final stage of the search, basic structural elements can be presumed. The interconnection of these models can be observed, e.g. on a two-factor model of ethnic identity search (Syed, Walker, Lee,

Zamboanga, Armenta, Umaña-Taylor, Huynh, 2013), where ethnic identity is made up of two factors: participation and search. In this conception, the participation is a component of activity, the actual level of perceived subjective ethnic identity, while the search is the aforementioned procedural, developmental aspect necessary to achieve a successful solution.

An important aspect of developmental models is that, as in other developmental theories, they assume a certain conflict, a source of tension that serves as a catalyst for psychological movement from the stage of unresolved identity to the conclusion of search of their place in the ethnic world (e.g. Cross, 1978).

Component models represent an effort to formalize the stable, current features of ethnic identity. In this respect, two basic lines of definitions can be observed; i.e. participatory and attitudinal.

In this concept, the participatory line postulates as one of the main components of participation, or an activity carried out to affirm ethnicity or ethnic identity of an individual in order to achieve a conclusive, behavioural component. This is understood as for example participation in cultural rituals, events with ethnic undertones, intended to promote ethnic phenomena externally.

On the other hand, the attitudinal or inner dimension is an emotional component that affects the inner setting and evaluative feelings resulting from the perception of one's own ethnicity. A suitable model representing this distribution, which is also suitable for formalizing measurement tools independent of a particular minority, is the Phinney model (1990). This model postulates four components of ethnic identity, on the basis of which the aforementioned internal and external aspects of this concept can be traced. These components represent: 1. self-identification: identity is understood through this component, a self-described and self-attributed characteristic, voluntarily and independently identifying oneself as a member of a certain ethnic group; 2. a sense of belonging: represents the emotional component of ethnic identity formed by a subjective, emotional or affective sense of belonging to a group; 3. attitudes towards one's own group: represent a cognitive and evaluative component towards one's own group, 4. engagement in the cultural life: it represents a certain 'behavioural component', an interest in cultural life of an ethnic group manifested by active participation in rituals of a given group.

Ethnic identity seems to be a significant indicator as well as a moderating element of several psychological indicators. From the point of view of important findings forming the current understanding, it is possible to include its hypothesised protective effect among its possible functions and benefits.

The conceptual definition of the ethnic identity construct partially overlaps with the possible effect of general self-confidence as a mediator of ethnic identity functions (Brody, Chen, Murry, Ge, Simons, Gibbons, 2006), therefore, it is necessary to define both differences and similarities between these constructs. From the point of view of self-confidence as a psychological construct, ethnic identity can be called ethnic self-confidence, i.e. a characteristic that promotes individual aspects of an internal attitude of accepting one's own ethnicity. However, the research in this area is often focused on very specific contexts as well as conceptualization of ethnic identity as such. Understanding ethnic identity as a largely subjective, multifactorial construct with a relative degree of

importance for an individual leads to narrow profiling of research tools as well as operational definitions (e.g. in the case of Mexican ethnicity Felix-Ortiz et al., 1994; for Asian minority Suinn, Ahuna, Khoo, 1992). The main attraction of such approaches lies in their high focus on the specific manifestations of ethnicity and common phenomena in specific ethnic and cultural minorities, as they contain items that reflect e.g. specific cultural knowledge, particularly promoted rituals, etc. In its essence, it is research that is not replicable for other minorities or requires a high degree of alteration of the methodologies used.

The role of ethnic identity as a protective factor proves its protective features in the use of drugs, however, it is more pronounced in ethnic minorities (e.g. Fisher, Tamika, Zapolski, Sheehan, Barnes-Najor, 2017, Schwartz, Zamboanga, Luyckx, Meca, Ritchie, 2013) than in majority communities.

Such knowledge favours the importance of situational conditionality within minority communities, i.e. in situations of actual or perceived threat to their own ethnicity.

With regard to demographic factors affecting the level of ethnicity, factors of ethnic or minority origin to be considered are the external, declared belonging to both ethnic and national minorities, as a relationship can be assumed on the basis of the above models. Factors of social-economic status, size of a given minority within the parent nation, traditional demographic categories, as well as factors of stereotypical perception by other minorities as well as the majority can influence the level of monitored variables. These hypothesised relationships will be addressed in the presented paper.

Method

The presented research dealt with the investigation of ethnic identity and its connection to some demographic categories as well as psychological variables. Ethnic identity was conceptualized according to the Phinney 4-component model (1990) based on items representing individual components. The rate created in this way shows a satisfactory level of reliability ($\alpha = .872$), the individual components and their content characteristics are shown in Table 1. These variables were compiled from both rounds of data collection (2004 and 2017), the sample consisted of 1,948 respondents, representing the main national and ethnic minorities in Slovakia. An overview and composition of the sample in terms of nationality, gender and age is given in Table 2. However, Slovak nationality was excluded from all analyses, as it is not a national minority but the majority in the Slovak context, therefore its inclusion in testing could distort the results. The distortion would probably occur mainly in the case of inclusion of Slovak nationality in the overall indicators and composite variables, where the aim of the exclusion is to prevent equal comparison of respondents from national minorities with members of the majority.

More than 100 questions were answered by the respondents. The responses were recorded on a 7-point bipolar scale, where 0 = represents the negative pole of the item and 7 = positive pole, 4 = represents the neutral centre of the scale.

The ethnic identity variable thus created represents a dependent variable in the presented analysis.

Table 1: The created scale of ethnic identity and its components

Scale	Acronym	Number of items	C α	Content of items
ethnic identity (Global Indicator)	EI	4	.872	AS, SI, SB, CA
Auto-stereotype	AS	8	.914	cognitive or evaluative component of attitude towards one's own ethnicity
Self-identification	SI	1	x	perceived subjective belonging to a minority, declared
Sense of belonging	SB	1	x	sense of belonging to a minority in an affective, emotional way (pride)
Cultural engagement	CE	1	x	subjective importance attributed to traditions and culture

Table 2: Description of the sample with regard to age, gender and nationality

Age cat.	Nationality	Gender		Total
		male	female	
Up to 34 years	Hungarian	49	41	90
	Roma	77	82	159
	Ukrainian	31	31	62
	Ruthenian	41	43	84
	German	23	29	52
	Czech	32	29	61
	Total	253	255	508
35-44 years	Hungarian	29	40	69
	Roma	39	34	73
	Ukrainian	43	34	77
	Ruthenian	32	37	69
	German	24	21	45
	Czech	15	28	43
	Total	199	195	394
45-54 years	Hungarian	37	41	78
	Roma	25	26	51
	Ukrainian	34	61	95
	Ruthenian	31	41	72
	German	43	37	80
	Czech	32	44	86
	Total	202	250	462

55 and over	Hungarian	35	53	88
	Roma	15	22	37
	Ukrainian	50	35	85
	Ruthenian	55	40	95
	German	99	63	162
	Czech	67	78	145
	Total	321	291	612
total	Hungarian	150	175	325
	Roma	156	164	320
	Ukrainian	158	161	319
	Ruthenian	159	161	320
	German	189	150	339
	Czech	146	179	325
	Total	958	990	1948

Selected demographic categories were used as predictors (independent variables). In this case, demographic variables of the following type were used: gender, age, education and the size of the minority. Minority sizes were determined on the basis of published data in the last census in 2011. In terms of education, categorization into three groups of highest completed education was used, i.e.: 1 = secondary school with leaving examination (1,084 respondents), 2 = university degree (703 respondents), 3 = postgraduate (159 respondents). The variable composed in this way was transformed into an order form where the levels of education were used from the lowest to the highest (i.e.: 1 = lowest, 2 = medium, 3 = highest). Such reduction allows for correlation testing, although it limits the result for the given test sample as the original content was shifted.

Influence or the relationship of the individual categories with the value of ethnic identity was examined depending on the given variable and its character by statistical procedures presented in the results part of the study.

Table 3: Overview of the size of individual minorities in Slovakia

Nationality	Number of Inhabitants	Percentage	Hierarchy according to size	Hierarchy according to the value of ethnic identity
Hungarian	51 505	40.95 %	1	4
Roma	42 564	33.84 %	2	6
Ukrainian	6 374	5.07 %	4	2
Ruthenian	880	0.7 %	6	5
German	22 857	18.17 %	3	3
Czech	1 586	1.26 %	5	1
Total	125 766	100 %		

Age as a demographic variable was researched in four groups, their overview is shown in Table 2 below. These categories were: 1. – up to 34 years; 2. – 35-44 years; 3. – 45-54; 4. – 55 and more. For testing purposes, this variable was further reduced to two levels by regression analysis, i.e.: 1. – up to 44 years, 2. – 45 years and more. The defined categories were included in the regression analysis as predictors.

Results

Age

The relationship of age and ethnic identity was tested by both difference and regression analyses. In the first step, two categories were created, i.e. up to 44 years and 45 years and more. There is a statistically significant difference ($t_{(1894)} = -5.754, p < .001$), between the two groups, with weak effect strength (Cohen's $D = -.262$). For the purpose of regression testing, the predictive power was evaluated by the method of multiple regression, where the age categorized in this way did not prove to be a significant predictor, wherein the created model a negligible amount of common variation was predicted, i.e. 1.7 % ($F_{(1, 1947)} = 32.986, p < .001, r^2 = .017$). Of the tested components of ethnic identity (AS, SI, SB, CE) none achieved a higher explanatory power than the created common rate.

For a deeper analysis, the middle ages were excluded from the sample in the next step to achieve a more significant divide, i.e. the relationship between the first age category (up to 34 years) and the fourth age category (55 and more) was tested. The difference between the two categories proved to be statistically significant with a higher effect strength (Cohen's $D = -0.402$) than in the previous case ($t_{(1119)} = -6.694, p < .001$). The regression analysis in this case showed an increase (3.9 %), but the explanatory power remains negligible ($F_{(1, 1119)} = 44.811, p < .001, r^2 = .039$). Of the tested components, all were significantly different in favour of the fourth age category (over 55 years), the most significant difference being the increase in the cultural engagement component ($p < .001$), where the average value increased by 0.412 on the response scale. The summaries of values of averages and standard deviations are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Overview of the components of ethnic identity by age

Variables of ethnic identity *	Age category			
	Up to 34 years		55 and over	
	average	Standard deviation	average	Standard deviation
EI	5.004	0.908	5.358	0.863
AS	4.811	1.093	5.146	1.091
SI	5.391	1.402	5.766	1.223
SB	5.791	1.080	6.163	0.996
CE	5.351	1.308	5.763	1.157

*EI – Ethnic identity, AS – Auto-stereotype, SI – Self-identification, SB – Sense of belonging, CE – Cultural Engagement

Among all the participating nationalities, the most significant shift occurred among the respondents of Ukrainian nationality, where the observed shift represented an increase of .648 in favour of the older generation ($t_{(146)} = -3.963, p < .001$), ($t_{(146)} = -3.963, p < .001$), of medium to strong Cohen's D effect 0.65.

Education

The relationship between education and ethnic identity was examined by means of differential and correlation analysis. The created categorization allowed for correlation analysis by Spearman correlation coefficient, these results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Overview of correlations between ethnic identity, its components, and educational level

Variables of ethnic identity *	Level of education	EI	AS	SI	SB	CE
Level of education						
EI	-0.129**					
AS	-0.203**	0.964**				
SI	0.081**	0.409**	0.229**			
SB	0.091**	0.393**	0.231**	0.388**		
CE	0.249**	0.241**	0.059***	0.310**	0.300**	

* EI – Ethnic identity, AS – Auto-stereotype, SI – Self-identification, SB – Sense of belonging, CE – Cultural Engagement

** relationship is significant at the level $< .001$

*** relationship is significant at the level $= .01$

As can be seen from Table 5, the most pronounced relationship is a negative weak character between the level of education and the auto-stereotype, and consequently a positive one between education and cultural engagement. However, the overall level of ethnic identity in interactions with education, is weak, slightly negative.

The next step was to ascertain the values of these relationships for individual nationalities, where the interest was directed towards the determination of interactions already limited to the two specified components in the previous step, i.e. on cultural engagement and auto-stereotype. It has shown that the correlation effect was strongest among the respondents of Ukrainian (Spearman's Rho = $-.324, p < .001$) and Ruthenian (Spearman's Rho = $-.319, p < .001$) nationality at the overall ethnic identity rate, namely in the negative direction. Negative correlations also occur for the selected components, the auto-stereotype component shows the strongest relationship in Ukrainian (Spearman's Rho = $-.406, p < .001$) and Ruthenian nationality (Spearman's Rho = $-.369, p < .001$). There were some changes in the cultural engagement component, with the most significant positive interactions achieved for Ruthenian (Spearman's Rho = $.312, p < .001$) and Hungarian nationality (Spearman's Rho = $.303, p < .001$).

The model of the influence of education on the auto-stereotype created by regression analysis explains 15.4 % of the common variant ($F_{(1, 313)} = 58.084, p < .001, r^2 = .154$), for Ukrainian nationality, this value is significantly lower for the remaining nationalities.

A one-way Anova was performed for the whole undivided sample to identify the significance of differences ($F_{(2, 1943)} = 14.254, p < .001$), and subsequent post-hoc testing (Tukey) determined the presence of significant differences in all three groups, decreasing ethnic identity along with increasing education. An overview of these values is provided in Table 6.

Table 6: Ethnic identity values by education

education	average / standard deviation	deviation significance
secondary school graduation	5.250 / .906	$p < .001$
university	5.094 / .894	$p < .001$
postgraduate	4.894 / .852	$p = .031$

Gender

Relations of gender towards ethnic identity were examined based on both differential and regression statistics. In the first step, the differential statistics with respect to the gender and the undivided sample were carried out, namely the t-test to identify possible differences between the genders. Testing did not reveal a significant difference between genders ($t_{(1946)} = -1.638, p = .102$) v g in the global indicator of ethnic identity. Subsequently, the individual components were also tested, but in none of them the effect of gender proved to be significant. The values of these variables as well as the differences are given in Table 7.

Table 7: Ethnic identity values by gender

variables of ethnic identity*	gender			
	male		female	
	average	standard deviation	average	standard deviation
EI	5.129	0.890	5.196	0.913
AS	4.900	1.117	4.993	1.108
SI	5.586	1.288	5.590	1.314
SB	5.960	1.067	5.955	1.025
CE	5.622	1.202	5.644	1.203

* EI – Ethnic identity, AS – Auto-stereotype, SI – Self-identification, SB – Sense of belonging, CE – Cultural Engagement

In terms of nationality testing, gender proved to be an important factor in case of two nationalities, namely Ruthenian ($t_{(318)} = -2.242, p = .026$) and Czech nationality ($t_{(323)} = -2.617, p = .009$), in both cases, it is a higher ethnic identity in favour of the females. Looking at the components, there are significant differences in pride (SB) in Czech ($t_{(264)} = -2.556, p = .011$) and Ukrainian nationality ($t_{(317)} = 3.097, p = .002$, Cohen D = .345), in case of Czech nationality, women indicate a higher level of pride, whereas in case of Ukrainian these are men.

In terms of self-identification (SI), there were significant differences only for Ruthenian nationality ($t_{(318)} = -2.197, p = .029$), in favour of a higher perceived self-identification among women. On the other hand, in the cultural engagement component, only Czech nationality ($t_{(277.41)} = -2.592, p = 0.01$) showed a significant difference in favour of higher cultural engagement for women. In the last component, auto-stereotype, there were significant gender differences again for Ruthenian ($t_{(318)} = -2.046, p = .042$) and Czech nationality ($t_{(313)} = -2.220, p = .027$). The values of these variables are shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Summary of statistically significant differences by the nationalities concerned and the gender of respondents

Variables of ethnic identity*	Ruthenian				Ukrainian				Czech			
	men		women		men		women		men		women	
	average	standard deviation	average	standard deviation	average	standard deviation	average	standard deviation	average	standard deviation	average	standard deviation
AS	4.858	1.172	5.118	1.106	**	**	**	**	5.083	1.081	5.346	1.016
SI	5.90	1.132	6.16	0.999	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
SB	**	**	**	**	6.13	0.908	5.80	1.001	5.92	1.221	6.24	0.917
CE	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	5.74	1.209	5.83	1.232

* EI – Ethnic identity, AS – Auto-stereotype, SI – Self-identification, SB – Sense of belonging, CE – Cultural Engagement

** statistically insignificant difference

Size of minority

The last selected demographic indicator was the size of the given minority among minorities in Slovakia. In order to test the relationship between the size of minority and ethnic identity, a variable created on the basis of the size of the minority (according to the census data in Table 3) was selected. This variable takes the form of a 6-point scale, with 1 = representing the smallest minority and 6 = the largest. This variable was then inserted into the correlation analyses shown in Table 9. As can be seen from these data, ethnic identity as a whole, as well as all its components, did not appear to be significant minority size correlations. Implications are discussed in the discussion section of this study.

Table 9: Overview of correlation coefficients between the size of minority and individual components of ethnic identity

Variables of ethnic identity *	Size of minority	EI	AS	SI	SB	CE
Size of minority						
EI	-0.073					
AS	-0.063	0.964				
SI	-0.043	0.409	0.229			
SB	-0.069	0.393	0.231	0.388		
CE	-0.014	0.241	0.059	0.310	0.300	

* EI – Ethnic identity, AS – Auto-stereotype, SI – Self-identification, SB – Sense of belonging, CE – Cultural Engagement

Discussion and conclusion

The presented research was focused on the exploration of ethnic identity and its possible predictors. On the theoretical level, these predictors were identified on the basis of classical demographic division used both in classical sociological research and in psychological sciences. Ethnic identity proves to be an important predictor of various psychological aspects, such as overall adaptability (Kvernmo, Heyerdahl, 2003), reduced risk of substance abuse (Alvarado, Ricard, 2013), and a positive correlate of self-confidence (Brody et al., 2006). Ethnic identity also appears to be an important predictor of ethnic tolerance, based on the type of settlement (Lebedeva, Tatarko, 2008). The aim of this research was to look at the factors that could influence the ethnic identity externally as a dependent variable in the geopolitical environment of Slovakia.

Within traditional demographic categories present in most research focused on ethnicity, specifically ethnic identity, this research partially confirms the previous research in this area (Holt, Hovick, Fete, Dailey, 2017) as it shows that most of the predictors examined do not play an important role in predicting ethnic identity, or the results achieved are contradictory. Race also appears to be an important predictor of ethnic identity (Smith, Silva, 2011), but this effect seems to be moderated by other factors such as age.

Specifically, the following demographic categories were tested on the sample: age, education, gender, and the size of the minority. Thus, these will be given space in this order.

Age did not prove to be a significant predictor in this research, but after excluding the middle age category and comparing the youngest age group (up to 34 years) with the oldest (over 55 years), there was a significant shift, where the individual aspects (most prominently cultural engagement), as well as the overall ethnic identity were much more represented in the older generation. This is in line with findings regarding age, where older people are found to have ethnicity more incorporated in their nature as they have lived with much of their ethnic identity (Holt et al., 2017). However, the mediating character of race (in the case of this ethnicity study) and age is also offered for re-evaluation, as older people may have more experience with adopting or rejecting ethnicity through hetero-stereotypes, and their experience gains a greater dimension. Different nationalities may also have different historical reasons for refusing or adopting ethnic identities that come into the issue. However, such hypothesis was not confirmed in this study.

Education cannot be interpreted as a direct universal predictor in the research as well, although categorization of education within the data probably did not allow for sufficient sensitivity, since the lowest differentiation category consisted of secondary education with a leaving examination, thereby losing information of probably significant character, i.e. lower education (e.g. vocational schools). Nevertheless, there has been a tendency for a slightly negative relationship between education and ethnic identity, where the importance of ethnic identity and its components decreases with increasing education. Within these components, however, there has been an interesting finding of a slightly positive relationship between the auto-stereotype and education, suggesting a tendency of decreasing negative stereotypical thinking along with increasing education, and a slightly negative relationship between cultural engagement and education. As a result of

the conceptualization of ethnic identity, individual indicators are more important than the overall global level of ethnic identity.

Previous literature indicates a positive association between education and ethnic identity, but in this respect, there are contradictory findings, depending on the nationality and ethnicity of the research samples (e.g. Kerpelman, Eryigit, Stephens, 2008).

Gender differences have been shown to be significant only in very specific combinations of both nationality and individual components of ethnic identity, confirming the research finding of little to no predictive value of gender on ethnic identity (Holt et al., 2017). However, the aforementioned specific differences, mostly towards higher values in women of some nationalities and components of ethnic identity, show moderate dominance of women, a finding that is confirmed in different contexts, whether it is women as carriers of culture or the specific situation of women in various ethnic groups (e.g. Koons-Witt, Sevigny, Burrow, Hester, 2014).

The last component examined was the size of the minority and its relationship to ethnic identity. The hierarchy created according to the size of minorities in part copied the inverted hierarchy according to the values of ethnic identity (i.e. ethnic identity negatively correlating with the size of minority), especially for German nationality, belonging to the smallest and at the same time the highest ethnic identities. However, the free conceptualization of this variable, created due to missing data in this area, does not allow for deeper interpretations and more reliable statistical indicators. However, such a relationship is indicated by a paradoxical phenomenon where the enclaves of the Slovak population abroad become more reliable keepers of Slovak traditions and customs than the domestic population (Čukan, Michalík, 2019).

To some extent, the presented study confirmed the set theoretical assumptions about the low impact of selected demographic characteristics on ethnic identity. To a certain extent, this also confirms the assumption resulting from previous research in Slovak conditions that ethnic identity as a whole is more influenced by internal, personal settings than by external demographic characteristics. However, shifts on individual components as well as between nationalities indicate high levels of situational and contextual conditionality. In this regard, the results could be helped by a deeper analysis of interactions between indicators, along with various other demographic categories, which are however not included in the current data, such as cultural specifics, income level. Nevertheless, with some caution, it can still be stated that these factors are well-founded, with a significant relationship, at the level of separate components rather than at the global level of ethnic identity.

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Linguistic Orientation and Communication with the “Closest Ones” Based on Selected Demographic Factors – Age (Historical-Sociological Comparative Analysis)¹

Nikola Regináčová

Abstract:

For centuries, today's territory of Slovakia formed an integral part of the Kingdom of Hungary, which was characterized by significant multiethnicity. These complex political, social, economic and cultural relations in the 19th century caused the division of the population based on membership of individual nations or ethnic groups. The paper deals with the current issues of national minorities and evaluates their linguistic orientation within the immediate family. Based on a comparison of the respondents' answers to the questionnaire carried out in 2004 and 2017, the paper evaluates the questions related to the communication skills of Slovak population by means of age as a demographic criterion

Keywords: linguistic orientation, nationality, age, population.

Introduction

Population is the object of the study of a large number of scientific disciplines, be it biological, medical, economic or social sciences.² Thus, when analysing population structures in detail, we have a number of features of wider economic and social significance. These are the result of previous demographic (economic and socio-cultural) development and, at the same time, they have a significant impact on future processes and the formation of population structures. Therefore, these structures need to be examined within the interpretation of historical development.³

Until the beginning of the 20th century, the territory of Slovakia was part of the multinational Kingdom of Hungary. The establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 was an important milestone when the territory of present-day Slovakia was territorially defined for the first time in its history. It was at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries that we saw the most significant changes in the formation of the ethnic structure in Slovakia, which was influenced by long-term historical development, as well as a number of other factors. The data on the use of the mother tongue has been recorded

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2 MLÁDEK, Jozef. *Základy geografie obyvateľstva*. Bratislava : SPN, 1992, p. 17.

3 MLÁDEK, Jozef – KUSEDOVÁ, Dagmar – MÁRENČÁKOVÁ, Jana – PODOLÁK, Peter – VAŇO, Boris (eds.). *Demografická analýza Slovenska*. Bratislava : UK, 2006, p. 87.

since 1880, when the Royal Statistical Office of Hungary⁴ started to record it in the official censuses. These took place in 1880, 1890, 1900 and 1910. In the 1880 population census, the mother tongue was determined not as a language that the inhabitants learned in their home environment, but as a language they adopted as their own, which they preferred to speak and which they spoke the best.⁵ Since the census in 1900, the category of mother tongue has included the language which the inhabitants speak the most and which they prefer to speak. It could therefore be one of the many languages spoken and reported by the inhabitants. In this case, the level of subjectivity was significantly higher, which was also one of the reasons for the increase in the proportion of the Hungarian population.⁶

After the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic, the new state power identified itself with one nationality (Czechoslovak nationality) and adapted its nationality policy and definition of nationality in censuses. Two censuses were conducted in the interwar period, under the guidance of the Statistical Office.

The first census in 1921, where *“the nationality was defined as a tribal affiliation, usually externally characterised by the mother tongue”*⁷ and the census of 1930,⁸ where the nationality became an examined item on census sheets – *“nationality (mother tongue)”*, determined according to the mother tongue.⁹ According to David Kertzer and Dominik Arel, collective identities are also formed by the means of a census.¹⁰ Several

4 The beginnings of the establishment of the *Hungarian Statistical Office* date back to 1848, in 1867, after the Austro-Hungarian settlement, Károly Keleti was appointed as the head of the newly created statistical department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Industry called: *Hungarian Royal Central Statistical Office (Magyar Királyi Központi Statisztikai Hivatal)* as the predecessor of the *Hungarian Statistical Office (Magyar statisztikai hivatal)*. On 18 April 1871, the office was renamed the *National Royal Hungarian Statistical Office (Országos Magyar Királyi Statisztikai Hivatal)* and the director was Károly Keleti. At that time, the independent activities of the national statistical office started. More detailed information: [cit. 2019-09-20]. Online: <https://www.ksh.hu/sajtoszoba_kozlemenyek_tajekoztatok_2017_05_24_2>.

5 A Magyar korona országában az 1881. év elején végrehajtott népszámlálás eredményei. 1. kötet. (bevezetés).

6 HOLEC, Roman. Zmeny národnostného zloženia miest na Slovensku po roku 1918 a možnosti ich interpretácie. In ŠVORC, Peter – HEPPNER, Harald (eds.). *Veľká doba v malom priestore. Zlomové zmeny v mestách stredoeurópskeho priestoru a ich dôsledky (1918 – 1929)*. Prešov : Universum, 2012, p. 14.

7 TIŠLIAR, Pavol. Odraz národnostnej politiky Slovenskej republiky (1939 – 1945) v štatistickej praxi. In TIŠLIAR, Pavol – ŠPROCHOVÁ, Terézia (eds.). *Populačné štúdie Slovenska 4*. Bratislava : Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo, 2014, p. 26.

8 In Slovakia, in addition to the aforementioned (national) censuses, two extraordinary census events took place in 1919 and 1938, the statistical office did not participate directly on these. TIŠLIAR, Pavol. K percepciám národnosti a jazyka pri sčítaniach ľudu 1919 – 1930 na Slovensku. In. TIŠLIAR, Pavol (ed.). *Populačné štúdie Slovenska 5*. Bratislava : Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo, 2015, p. 67.

9 Sčítání ľudu v republice Československé ze dne 1. prosince 1930. Praha : Státní úřad statistický, 1934. The proposal of the Ministry of the Interior was accepted: *“Nationality is usually registered according to the mother tongue. A nationality other than the one determined by the mother tongue may be registered if the person does not speak the mother tongue either in their family or at home and is fully fluent in the language of the nationality. However, Jews can always acknowledge Jewish nationality”* TIŠLIAR, P. *K percepciám národnosti...*, p. 82.

10 KERTZER, I. David. – AREL, Dominique. Censuses, identity formation, and the struggle for political power. In KERTZER, I. David. – AREL, Dominique (eds.). *Census and identity. The Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Language in National Censuses*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 1-43. [cit. 2019-09-11]. Online:

mechanisms have been developed to record identities as legal and bureaucratic categories in the state. Authorities know the population and create "readable people" through a variety of practices such as population census, school attendance, tax records, identifying the population based on classification schemes that basically measure biographical characteristics such as: gender, age, profession, ethnicity, etc.¹¹ The interest of the state apparatus focused on the introduction and promotion of a single official language.¹² This situation was reflected in education, culture, the press, the economy, as well as in the entire social life of minorities, which was also one of the causes of distorted census results with regard to nationality. The problematic censuses include especially the last census in the Kingdom of Hungary in 1910 and the first official census in Czechoslovakia in 1921, selected censuses from these years are among the most criticized by experts because of the 'artificial' increase in the number of members of state-forming ethnicity.

In 1938, the Vienna Arbitration decided on joining Southern Slovakia to Hungary, reducing the population by approximately 850,000 people, one third of whom were members of Slovak and Czech nationality.¹³ The complicated socio-political situation (the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, the formation of the Slovak state, the loss of surrendered territories, the pressure from the largest German minority in Slovakia) also had an impact on the operation of public administration, which was in a provisional state. One of the solutions was the organization of the Extraordinary census in 1938.¹⁴ In accordance with Act No. 47/1927 Coll. et seq. the next census was to be held in 1940 by the newly established Statistical Office based in Bratislava. The census can be described as atypical because of the unconventional methodology applied in obtaining information on the nationality of the population. Nationality was primarily determined by the mother tongue or the language commonly used in spoken communication. Groups of Jewish and Gypsy (Roma) population were addressed separately, they could only claim to be of Jewish and Gypsy nationality. Another specific feature of this census is the fact that not all of its results were published, most of them were published with a considerable time lag.¹⁵

World War II brought interstate population movement (German and Hungarian nationals), the elimination of Jews during the war, and the repatriation of Slovaks from Transcarpathian Ukraine, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Romania. After 1945, the state-controlled reslovakization led to the need to obtain an idea of the national composition of the Czechoslovak Republic.

On 18 October 1949, the government issued a regulation on the 1950 census to be processed by the State Statistical Office, in Slovakia the Slovak Planning Office. In the

<https://books.google.sk/books?hl=sk&lr=&id=qMxbzF4NdFUC&oi=fnd&pg=PA1&dq=Census,+Identity+Formation+and+Struggle+for+Political+Power&ots=DoWiea1j0f&sig=D3ChgywIWW_DWDvHk4XHEKHS-BE&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Census,+Identity+Formation+and+Struggle+for+Political+Power&f=false>.

11 RUPERT, Evelyn. Population Objects: Interpassive Subject. In *Sociology*, 2011, Vol. 45, issue 2, p. 219.

12 HROCH, Miroslav. *Národy nejsou dílem náhody. Příčiny a předpoklady utváření moderních evropských národů*. Praha : SLON, 2011, p. 83, 91.

13 MLÁDEK, J. *Demografická analýza...*, p. 100.

14 For more detail see: TIŠLIAR, P. *Odras národnostnej politiky...*, p. 21-51.

15 ŠPROCHA, Branislav – TIŠLIAR, Pavol. *Demografický obraz Slovenska v rokoch 1938 – 1945*. Bratislava : Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo, 2016, p. 20-21.

census sheet, nationality was defined as “*belonging to a nation whose cultural and working community the censored identifies with internally and which they claim.*”¹⁶ According to the 1950 census, the number of the members of Ukrainian and Ruthenian population decreased (in comparison to 1930), also due to the divided ethnic identification, as Ruthenians were declared part of the Ukrainian nation, with the introduction of Ukrainian into the teaching process. The dissolution of the Greek Catholic Church and the transition to the Orthodox Church also played an important role.¹⁷ The results of the 1950 census were not published and were not available even to the state authorities at that time.¹⁸ These data were processed at the district level, unprocessed manuscript information on the national composition can be found in the Slovak National Archive and in the archive of the Statistical Office.¹⁹ A new era of Czechoslovak population censuses in demographic recording started with the census of 1961 when the nationality of the respondents was included in the census sheets. Followed by the 1970 census recording the nationality and the mother tongue, the 1980 census (again recording data about nationality) and the last census – in March 1991, which already registered the nationality and mother tongue. In the independent Slovak Republic, population information was collected in May 2001 and in 2011. Until now, no more than one nationality can be reported in population censuses.

The 2001 census shows, for example, 85.8 % of the population claiming Slovak nationality; in the last census the proportion is 80.63 % of Slovaks. In the case of Hungarian nationality, it is 9.7 % (2001) and 8.48 % in 2011. Up to 7 % of the Slovak population reported unidentified nationality in the last census.²⁰ This increases the proportion of people who change their nationality in the course of their lives for various reasons, natural assimilation; this change was recorded more often in men than in women. This process is the same for the majority Slovak nationality as well as for national minorities.²¹

People were interested in language in the past too, it served as an important tool for communication, for maintaining interhuman contacts, and for social interaction. At the same time, the use of language provides information about the people involved, such as their regional origin, education, social background and others. In connection with the formation of modern (national) European states, there were attempts to conceive the population of a certain territory as a nation from the outset. The essential criteria were the language, the territory, common origin, etc.²²

In Slovakia, national identity research began to develop more intensively after 1989, and the focus was on the research into ethnic groups and nation, as well as national

16 GABZDILOVÁ, Soňa. Sčítanie obyvateľstva na Slovensku v roku 1950, maďarská menšina a historické súvislosti. In *Historický časopis*, 2011, Vol. 59, Iss. 2, p. 275.

17 MLÁDEK, J. *Demografická analýza...*, p. 100.

18 GABZDILOVÁ, p. *Sčítanie obyvateľstva na Slovensku...*, p. 280.

19 ŠPROCHA, Branislav – MAJO, Juraj. *Storočie populačného vývoja Slovenska II.: populačné štruktúry*. Bratislava : UK v Bratislave, INFOSTAT, 2016, p. 52.; It was also released *Štatistický lexikón obcí Republiky Československej*, the public got access to 1950 census information after declassification in 1962.

20 *My v číslach. Pohyb obyvateľstva 2019*. Bratislava : Štatistický úrad Slovenskej republiky, 2019, p. 42.

21 MLÁDEK, J. *Demografická analýza...*, p. 102.

22 ONDREJOVIČ, Slavomír – KRUPA, Viktor. Identita a jazyk. In KILIÁNOVÁ, Gabriela – KOWALSKÁ, Eva – KREKOVIČOVÁ, Eva (eds.). *My a tí druhí v modernej spoločnosti*. Bratislava : VEDA, 2009, p. 112-114.

identification processes in the historical context.²³ The idea of nationality as a clearly identifiable and natural category that is inherent to every individual since birth is very problematic and ambiguous.²⁴ In addition to a number of specific examples from history, there are theoretical concepts on this issue. According to A.D. Smith, national identity is based on ethnic elements, it contains an idea of common space, it is not only a variant of group identity but also its personal and social identity, which express how an individual presents himself in social interaction and how he/she is accepted by others.²⁵ The issue of national identity research is still included in the current topics of several scientific disciplines or research areas focused on society. It is also necessary to note what changes affected the development of national relations and national policy in Slovakia in the short period of 1989 to 1993, besides the change of political regime also change of nationality and so on. Although national issues (after 1989) in public opinion polls do not represent the most examined problem, its contribution is indisputable.²⁶

One of the tasks of project APVV-15-0475 *"Trends in the development of ethnic relations in Slovakia (comparative research of nationality issues in 2004-2020)"* is to present the results of the 2004 research²⁷ and compare them with the current results obtained in 2017. The basic applied method of empirical research was a questionnaire; the respondents answered questions regarding: ethnicity, inter-ethnic relations, legal regulation and also commented on the current issues of social life. The first round of data collection (as mentioned above) took place between November 2004 and January 2005 on a sample of 1,280 respondents (8x160 persons) from 8 sets – Hungarians, Ruthenians, Ukrainians, Germans, the Roma, Jews, Czechs and Slovaks living in ethnically mixed areas. The second data collection was then carried out between July and October 2017, in the same scheme. There were 1,151 participating respondents, the research focus was on Slovaks from nationally mixed areas and 6 ethnic communities: Hungarians, Germans, the Roma, Ruthenians, Ukrainians, Poles and Czechs.²⁸ The selected procedures, monitoring and interpretation of the data on the basis of a questionnaire survey are unique in gathering similar data not only in Slovakia but also in Europe. Thus, the acquired values on the population sample point to specificities in the tendencies of the development of ethnic relations in Slovakia in the monitored period.

23 A more concentrated interest in the very concept of "identity" has been recorded by authors in the humanities since about the 1960s. KILIÁNOVÁ, Gabriela. *Bádanie o identite*. In KILIÁNOVÁ, Gabriela – KOWALSKÁ, Eva – KREKOVÍČOVÁ, Eva (eds.). *My a tí druhí v modernej spoločnosti*. Bratislava : VEDA, 2009, p. 13, 15.

24 KLADIWA, Pavel. *Národnostní statistika českých zemí 1880 – 1921 – faktory, výsledky a problém jejich interpretace*. In *Moderní dějiny*, 2015, Volume 23, Issue 2, p. 79.

25 HROCH, M. *Národy nejsou dílem náhody...*, p. 41-42.

26 More detailed information „*Národnostné vzťahy a národnostná politika na Slovensku a ich význam*“ see: ŠUTAJ, Štefan et al. (ed.). *Tendencie vývoja etnických vzťahov na Slovensku (komparatívny výskum národnostnej problematiky v rokoch 2004 – 2017)*. Prešov : Universum, 2019, p. 9.

27 The first research was carried out in 2003 – 2005 entitled: *"Nation, nationalities and ethnic groups in the process of transformation of Slovak society"*, the results were published in the final report: ŠUTAJ, Štefan (ed.). *Národ, národnosti a etnické skupiny v procese transformácie slovenskej spoločnosti – vzťahy a konflikty*. Prešov : Universum, 2005.

28 ŠUTAJ, Š. et al. (ed.). *Tendencie vývoja...*, p. 15-17.

Method

The data were processed using the questionnaire method, on the basis of two rounds of data collection in 2004 and 2017. For the research, we processed data on ethnicity among the respondents of Hungarian, Roma, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, German and Czech nationality. The fundament was to process respondents' answers to the questions related to ethnic identity based on selected demographic factors (such as gender and age). Since gender as a demographic feature did not prove to be an important factor in relation to the criteria being evaluated on the sample of respondents, the demographic factor of age became the fundamental demographic attribute when processing the data obtained. Knowing the age composition is an important analytical tool. It allows the replacement of gross demographic measures by specific ones. In most cases, these demographic characteristics, such as age and gender, act as a common criterion that interacts, but can also be examined separately.

The answers of respondents of German, Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian, German and Czech nationality were evaluated according to the age scale of 1. up to 34 years, 2. from 34 to 44 years, 3. from 45 to 54 years and the last group 5. over 55 years of age. Age quota selection was used to select individual members of the research sample.

The age structure of Slovakia has undergone significant changes. In the period of the first Czechoslovak Republic, the child component of the population decreased, while the number of inhabitants in the non-productive component of the population gradually increases.²⁹ If we look at the development of the age component in the period from 1900 to 2000, the age category from 0 to 14 years has a decreasing tendency, the population over the age of 60 has increased significantly (almost 4 times). At the same time, based on the statistical data, we can evidence that the population of Slovakia almost doubled. The increase represents an increase in the number of inhabitants in the higher age categories.³⁰ Age differentiation of population can be considered as a demographic phenomenon with a high degree of complexity, as the formation of age structure affects all inhabitants. Its characterization is based on several methods and techniques.³¹

As the objective of the study is to compare the data of respondents from national minorities, Slovak nationality was excluded from the analyses so as not to distort the results. The reason for this is the fact that in the first round of data collection in 2004, the data related to the issues examined by us were not collected. During the second round of data collection in 2017, Slovaks stated that in the family environment they communicate with parents and spouses (partners) mostly in Slovak, a small percentage more in Slovak than in the minority language. The questionnaire asked questions related to linguistic competence.

In addition to communication, cultural and social functions, language is also used as a sign of belonging to ethnic communities. The concept of ethnic identity combines the

29 ŠPROCHA, B. *Storočie populačného vývoja Slovenska II...*, p. 26.

30 MLÁDEK, J. *Demografická analýza...*, p. 92-94.

31 More detail: REGINÁČOVÁ, Nikola. *Úvod do historickej demografie*. Košice : UPJŠ v Košiciach, 2015, p. 83-85.

objective elements of ethnicity (language use and command, territory, common history...) and subjective ethnic self-identification (self-identification based on self-knowledge).³²

The article focuses on the evaluation of two questions from the questionnaire research: “Which language do you mostly speak or did you speak to your parents?” and “Which language do you mostly speak or did you speak to your spouse/partner?” We specifically chose these questions to compare the responses about communication with the closest people, that is in the home environment (in private), where relationships with the closest family circle may provide a relevant view on personal perception of language skills of the respondents. The indicator is the demographic factor of age, the group that responded to this issue represented 943 respondents in 2004 and 989 respondents in 2017. The questions thus constructed were asked in six contexts, in two rounds of data collection (2004 and 2017):

1. Only in Slovak
2. More in Slovak than in the minority language
3. Both in Slovak and in the minority language
4. More in the minority language than in Slovak
5. Only in the minority language
6. Not applicable

Table 1: Answers of respondents under 34 years of age to the question: “Which language do you mostly speak or did you speak to your parents?”

Nationality of respondents up to 34	Collection round	1	2	3	4	5	6	total
Hungarian	2004	0	0	4	3	38	0	45
	2017	2	9	11	3	18	2	45
Roma	2004	13	10	9	12	24	0	68
	2017	2	18	33	17	15	3	88
Ukrainian	2004	0	1	3	2	26	0	32
	2017	2	4	11	7	6	0	30
Ruthenian	2004	0	5	2	4	14	0	25
	2017	4	5	13	8	29	0	59
German	2004	0	3	9	4	3	0	19
	2017	4	5	11	7	6	0	33
Czech	2004	6	7	1	0	6	0	20
	2017	4	7	9	7	14	0	41

1. Only in Slovak, 2. More in Slovak than in minority language, 3. Both in Slovak and in minority language, 4. More in minority language than in Slovak, 5. Only in minority language, 6. Not applicable.

32 ONDREJOVIČ, S. *Identita a jazyk...*, p. 123.

The analysis of the examined national minorities confirmed the dominance of their own language in both rounds of data collection. There was a slight change in the case of Hungarian, Ukrainian and Ruthenian minorities when evaluating the answers of respondents under 34 years of age to the question (*Which language do you mostly speak – did you speak with parents?*). While in 2004 the answers on the use of the language of national minorities prevailed, the second round of data collection (2017) showed an increase in the use of the Slovak language in communication with parents, or the use of both the Slovak language and the minority language. There was a different distribution in case of the Roma, the answers to the questions were less defined and in comparison to other nationalities they showed similar answers in both rounds of data collection. They also favoured both the use of minority language, as well as communication in the Slovak language. At the same time, the number of respondents of Roma nationality (compared to the other nationalities surveyed) is much higher for this age group (under 34). This is related to the age structure of the population sample of the community, which is characterized by strong population in the pre-productive or reproductive age structure. In the case of Czech nationality, in 2004 there is a higher number of responses on communicating with parents only in Slovak, or more in Slovak than in the minority language. In the second round of data collection, the number of communicators in the minority language increased.

Table 2: Answers of respondents from 35 to 44 years of age to the question: “Which language do you mostly speak or did you speak to your parents?”

Nationality of respondents from 35 to 44	Collection round	1	2	3	4	5	6	total
Hungarian	2004	0	0	2	2	32	0	36
	2017	1	4	6	10	10	2	33
Roma	2004	8	4	16	10	12	0	50
	2017	4	3	4	3	9	0	23
Ukrainian	2004	0	2	1	2	39	0	44
	2017	1	8	7	4	13	0	33
Ruthenian	2004	0	2	3	9	27	0	41
	2017	1	4	5	3	15	0	28
German	2004	3	4	7	9	8	0	31
	2017	1	1	5	0	7	0	14
Czech	2004	3	3	3	4	6	0	19
	2017	3	2	10	1	8	0	24

1. Only in Slovak, 2. More in Slovak than in the minority language, 3. Both in Slovak and in the minority language, 4. More in the minority language than in Slovak, 5. Only in the minority language, 6. Not applicable.

Table 2 shows the respondents' preferences with regard to the language of communication with parents, for the age range from 35 to 44 years. The dominance of the use of the minority language is again obvious for all respondents. In the case of Hungarian,

Ukrainian and Ruthenian nationalities, the language of the minority prevails, especially in the first round of data collection, while the values obtained in 2017 are dominated by the mother tongue, however, the number of respondents communicating with parents in the Slovak language increased as well. In the case of Roma, German and Czech nationality, the data are balanced, there was approximately the same number of responses were assigned to communication in the mother tongue, but also in the Slovak language.

Table 3: Answers of respondents from 45 to 54 years of age to the question: *“Which language do you mostly speak or did you speak to your parents?”*

Nationality of respondents from 45 to 54	Collection round	1	2	3	4	5	6	total
Hungarian	2004	0	0	0	5	38	0	43
	2017	2	3	3	6	17	4	35
Roma	2004	7	0	6	2	10	0	25
	2017	1	2	7	6	6	4	26
Ukrainian	2004	0	0	3	1	39	0	43
	2017	4	10	15	4	14	4	51
Ruthenian	2004	1	1	3	3	34	0	42
	2017	1	3	5	2	17	0	28
German	2004	1	1	11	10	14	0	37
	2017	0	9	9	6	14	4	42
Czech	2004	2	3	2	3	19	0	29
	2017	7	5	7	2	24	1	46

1. Only in Slovak, 2. More in Slovak than in the minority language, 3. Both in Slovak and in the minority language, 4. More in the minority language than in Slovak, 5. Only in the minority language, 6. Not applicable.

When evaluating the responses to the question about communication with parents in the age group from 45 to 54 years, there was a higher frequency of communication in the minority language in the case of Hungarian, Ukrainian and Ruthenian nationality, especially in the first round of data collection. Thirteen years later, the number of communicators in Slovak language with the dominance of the mother tongue increased for these nationalities. With regard to Czech and German nationality, the number of communicators also in the Slovak language increased especially in the second round (2017) of data collection. In 2004, Roma minority also communicated in Slovak as well as in the minority language. In 2017, the figures show more use of the minority language than Slovak language.

Table 4: Answers of respondents 55 years of age and more to the question: *“Which language do you mostly speak or did you speak to your parents?”*

Nationality of respondents over 55	Collection round	1	2	3	4	5	6	total
Hungarian	2004	0	0	3	4	29	0	36
	2017	0	1	6	5	26	14	52
Roma	2004	4	0	3	2	5	0	14
	2017	1	0	6	7	8	1	23
Ukrainian	2004	0	0	2	5	32	0	39
	2017	2	8	9	4	20	3	46
Ruthenian	2004	1	0	3	5	41	0	50
	2017	0	4	1	6	28	6	45
German	2004	3	10	19	19	19	0	70
	2017	1	6	16	13	36	18	90
Czech	2004	2	3	4	2	74	0	85
	2017	3	2	8	1	29	11	54

1. Only in Slovak, 2. More in Slovak than in the minority language, 3. Both in Slovak and in the minority language, 4. More in the minority language than in Slovak, 5. Only in the minority language, 6. Not applicable.

In the age category of respondents over 55 from Hungarian minority, there is a significant prevalence of the use of Hungarian mother tongue in communication with parents, in both the first round of data collection and in 2017. Similar values were also observed in the case of Czech, German and Roma minorities, where the minority language is dominant in the older population. The Ukrainian and Ruthenian sample of respondents is dominated by the mother tongue in 2004 and the use of the Slovak language in communication with parents is slightly increasing in 2017. German nationality shows a balanced use of language, both Slovak and minority. In this age category (55 and over), there is a much higher number of respondents of both German and Czech nationality (compared to the other nationalities surveyed). The reason is the age structure of the basic population sample of the community, which is characterized by strong population in the post-productive age.

As we focused primarily on examining communication in a close family circle, in addition to respondents' answers to the question of family communication with parents, attention was also paid to the language used in the relationship between spouses or partners.

Table 5: Answers of respondents under 34 years of age to the question: “Which language do you mostly speak or did you speak to your spouse/partner?”

Nationality of respondents up to 34	Collection round	1	2	3	4	5	6	total
Hungarian	2004	0	0	3	7	17	0	27
	2017	6	3	10	3	7	16	45
Roma	2004	8	5	9	8	16	0	46
	2017	10	13	25	9	7	24	88
Ukrainian	2004	5	2	2	1	15	0	25
	2017	6	1	4	1	1	17	30
Ruthenian	2004	7	3	1	3	4	0	18
	2017	14	10	8	2	5	20	59
German	2004	4	6	0	1	1	0	12
	2017	6	1	10	2	0	14	33
Czech	2004	4	0	0	2	3	0	9
	2017	4	7	9	1	3	17	41

1. Only in Slovak, 2. More in Slovak than in the minority language, 3. Both in Slovak and in the minority language, 4. More in the minority language than in Slovak, 5. Only in the minority language, 6. Not applicable.

When analysing the responses to the question: Which language do you speak or did you speak with your spouse/partner, there were some specificities in the age group under 34, very similar to the previous question. The dominant language of Hungarian nationality in the first round of data collection is the minority language, and subsequently, in 2017, it remains the same, with the addition of Slovak language, in particular the same use of Slovak language and the minority language. Roma, Ukrainian, German and Czech nationalities show some change. In comparison with 2004, in 2017 the majority of respondents used the Slovak language more often than minority language in communication in marriage. In the case of Ruthenian nationality, communication in the Slovak language is also increasing; this fact was more prominent in the second round of data collection (in 2017).

Table 6: Answers of respondents from 35 to 44 years of age to the question: *“Which language do you mostly speak or did you speak to your spouse/partner?”*

Nationality of respondents from 35 to 44	Collection round	1	2	3	4	5	6	total
Hungarian	2004	1	1	0	3	25	0	30
	2017	8	4	3	7	8	3	33
Roma	2004	15	4	16	2	10	0	47
	2017	5	3	1	5	7	2	23
Ukrainian	2004	8	4	7	2	22	0	43
	2017	12	7	7	1	3	3	33
Ruthenian	2004	10	2	3	3	16	0	34
	2017	8	8	4	1	4	3	28
German	2004	14	5	2	4	2	0	27
	2017	4	1	4	2	1	2	14
Czech	2004	13	1	1	1	1	0	17
	2017	7	1	10	0	5	1	24

1. Only in Slovak, 2. More in Slovak than in the minority language, 3. Both in Slovak and in the minority language, 4. More in the minority language than in Slovak, 5. Only in the minority language, 6. Not applicable.

Table 6 reflects the answers of respondents aged from 35 to 44. With regard to communicating with their spouse, in the first round of data collection, Hungarian minority predominantly claims to use the minority language, there is a shift in the second round, and the data is evenly distributed across the rated categories, indicating some deviation after 13 years and leaning to Slovak language. In 2004, Roma nationality predominantly claims to use more Slovak language than the minority language, in the second round there is a slight shift and most respondents use the minority language more. In the case of Ukrainian and Ruthenian nationality, the use of the Slovak language is increasing especially in the second round, i.e. in 2017. The selected sample of German and Czech nationality claims to use also Slovak language in both the first and second round of collecting information on communication skills.

Table 7: Answers of respondents from 45 to 54 years of age to the question: *“Which language do you mostly speak or did you speak to your spouse/partner?”*

Nationality of respondents from 45 to 54	Collection round	1	2	3	4	5	6	total
Hungarian	2004	0	2	2	4	33	0	41
	2017	4	1	6	10	8	6	35
Roma	2004	8	3	5	0	8	0	24
	2017	2	2	9	4	6	3	26
Ukrainian	2004	5	2	4	8	24	0	43
	2017	19	9	14	0	5	4	51
Ruthenian	2004	8	2	1	8	21	0	40
	2017	6	2	10	2	6	2	28
German	2004	13	6	8	3	4	0	34
	2017	22	4	13	1	2	0	42
Czech	2004	9	2	6	4	5	0	26
	2017	10	6	14	5	10	1	46

1. Only in Slovak, 2. More in Slovak than in the minority language, 3. Both in Slovak and in the minority language, 4. More in the minority language than in Slovak, 5. Only in the minority language, 6. Not applicable.

In the next section, a sample of respondents aged 45 to 54 was analysed, after answering the question: *“Which language do you speak or did you speak with your spouse/partner.”* For Hungarian nationality, the use of the minority language continues to dominate, especially in 2004. In the second round of data collection, the mother tongue is still prevalent, but the number of communicators in Slovak also increases. Most of the sample of Roma nationality uses more Slovak language than the minority language when communicating with their spouse. This fact is shown more intensively in 2004 than in 2017. Ukrainian and Ruthenian minorities claim the mother tongue as dominant in 2004, while in 2017 the number of communicators in both Slovak and minority languages increases. In the second round of data collection, German and Czech minorities leaned more towards the Slovak language than the minority language.

Table 8: Answers of respondents 55 years of age and more to the question: *“Which language do you mostly speak or did you speak to your spouse/partner?”*

Nationality of respondents over 55	Collection round	1	2	3	4	5	6	total
Hungarian	2004	0	0	2	11	21	0	34
	2017	6	4	7	5	20	10	52
Roma	2004	5	1	4	1	3	0	14
	2017	1	2	5	6	6	3	23
Ukrainian	2004	1	5	3	3	25	0	37
	2017	21	5	14	2	2	2	46
Ruthenian	2004	11	10	0	7	16	0	44
	2017	13	4	4	6	13	5	45
German	2004	19	27	9	3	10	0	68
	2017	34	18	17	7	10	4	90
Czech	2004	24	10	22	9	22	0	87
	2017	16	7	16	5	6	4	54

1. Only in Slovak, 2. More in Slovak than in the minority language, 3. Both in Slovak and in the minority language, 4. More in the minority language than in Slovak, 5. Only in the minority language, 6. Not applicable.

A similar pattern was also demonstrated in the sample of respondents over 55 years. When members of Hungarian minority communicate with their spouses, in 2004, the predominant language is Hungarian, while in the second round, in 2017 there are also increasing responses about the use of Slovak language. The situation is similar with the Ukrainian minority. In the case of Roma nationality, the answers are slightly opposite, while in 2004 Slovak language prevailed, in 2017 communication there is also communication in the minority language. German and Czech nationality, both in the first round and the second round of data collection, reports both the Slovak and the mother tongue.

Conclusion

Family plays an important role in the situation of an individual and is realized at the level in relation to society as well as to individual social groups. It thus becomes a natural environment forming not only the opinion competences of an individual. The language most commonly used in the family circle is becoming an important attribute.

At the same time, the mother tongue fulfils specific functions for ethnic groups living in a minority position, as it becomes a universal means of maintaining their individuality.³³ The formation of the nationality structure of Slovak population and the minorities in the course of historical development was influenced by a number of factors such as: political

33 ĎURKOVSKÁ, Mária. Postavenie materinského jazyka v systéme hodnôt vybraných národností v rokoch 2004 – 2017. In ŠUTAJOVÁ, Jana – ŠUTAJ, Štefan – KACEROVÁ, Barbara (eds.). *Stredoeurópske súvislosti národnostného vývoja na začiatku 21. storočia*. Prešov : Universum, 2019, p. 67.

situation in the country, natural and also forced Hungarianization, later Slovakization, physical-geographical conditions of the territory, population movement, changes of borders, legal conditions of minorities, statistic factors and so on.³⁴

The analysis of the respondents from national minorities was focused on the evaluation of communication in the private, family environment. In this paper, we focused specifically on two questions: "*Which language do you speak or did you speak to your parents?*" and "*Which language do you speak or did you speak to your spouse/partner?*" The age structure of the respondents in both rounds of data collection (2004 and 2017) was divided into four groups: under 34, 35 – 44, 45 – 54 and 55 and over.

When assessing the questions about communication with parents and spouses, the minority's own language dominates in all ethnic groups. However, there were also some specifics. The largest minority in Slovakia is the Hungarian minority. In the case of the respondents of Hungarian nationality, the use of Hungarian language in communication with their closest greatly prevailed, compared to other minorities (in 2004). In the second round of data collection, there was a slight increase in the use of Slovak language, however, it was not significant. In the case of Roma nationality, communication in both Roma and Slovak languages prevailed in 2004, with a slight change in 2017. Compared to other nationalities, there is a higher inclination towards the mother tongue in the second round of data collection. According to the age criterion, the respondents of the older age group (45 years and over) inclined towards the minority language (with the same intensity in 2017 and in 2004). The younger age groups of the Roma minority up to 45 years of age used also Slovak language for communication more.

Based on the obtained results, we can observe certain generational differences. In the case of the elderly, the use of the mother tongue is more dominant, while the younger age groups tend to use the Slovak language more. During the first round of data collection (in 2004), all nationalities communicated more frequently in the minority language at home. In 2017, 13 years later, the proportion of respondents communicating in Slovak language is increasing, with a slight exception of Roma nationality. Despite these figures, the value of the mother tongue has not been proven to be significantly age-related, since there are some differences, although not prominent.

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Attitudes towards Migrants and the Perception of Safety in the Context of Ethnicity¹

Michal Kentoš

Abstract:

The presented study analyses the perception of safety and attitudes towards migrants and migration by ethnic communities in the Slovak Republic. The aim of the study was to analyse the relationships, perception of safety, and attitudes towards migration and migrants by selected ethnic groups in Slovakia. At the same time, the attitudes of ethnic communities to economic and cultural benefits as well as the linking of immigrants with crime were examined. The research sample consisted of 1325 members of eight ethnic groups (Slovak, Hungarian, Roma, Ukrainian, Polish, Ruthenian, German, Czech). The results of the study point to a different level of rating of migrants and migration by individual ethnic groups. According to the presented data on the rating of migrants and migration by various ethnic groups living in Slovakia, overall ratings are rather negative. Slovaks, Germans and Czechs were not worried about their safety in relation to migrants. Some concerns were expressed by Hungarians, the Roma, Polish and Ruthenians. Ukrainians were the most worried about foreigners. Slovaks and Germans were also not afraid of the consequences of migration, while other ethnic groups were concerned about their own safety in relation to the economic and cultural consequences of migration.

Keywords: Perceived safety, Immigrants, Ethnicity.

Introduction

Ethnic composition of Europe has changed significantly since the mid-20th century. This is mainly related to labour migration in economically more developed countries in Europe. Problems of developed European countries with labour shortages, population ageing and reduced birth rates were saturated by the so-called *gastarbeiters* (guest workers). Foreigners mostly held unskilled and low-income professions, which the domestic population was unable or unwilling to perform. At the same time, they improved their quality of life compared to their countries of origin. Later, many foreigners stayed in the host countries and started to change their demographic composition together with their families. In its beginnings, economic migration was a simple and welcome way to tackle labour shortages. At present, migrants are a more complex group, as in addition to economic migrants, foreign students and expatriates, they include an increasingly large group of refugees from war conflicts, particularly from Asia and Africa. However, as reported

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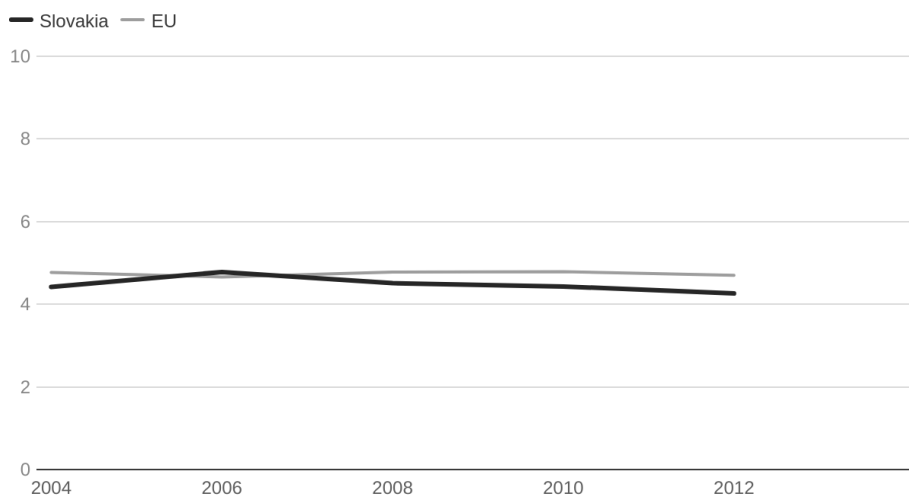
by Davidov and Semyonov (2017), many foreigners have failed to integrate even in next generations, creating segregated ethnic communities with higher unemployment rates and lower socio-economic status compared to the original population. In connection with this issue, questions have arisen regarding the social and cultural integration of foreigners into society, as well as questions about their own national identity. Issues of different religious and value systems and their impact on European countries also remain open. The topic of migration has thus also assumed political dimensions and is also reflected in the support or also rejection in the public discourse. As stated by Dennison and Geddes (2019), the support for anti-immigration parties has been increasing in Europe over the past decade. Individual countries differ in both immigration support and public attitudes towards migrants and migration. Davidov and Semyonov (2017) also report on promoting anti-immigration attitudes across all of Europe. In this context, immigrants are perceived as a threat to society, economy and culture. Many Europeans believe that immigrants have a negative impact on the values, crime, living conditions, social security and culture of the country they come to. Several studies report increasing anti-immigration tendencies at the end of the millennium, as well as their overall stability in the first decade of the 21st century (Ceobanu, & Escandell, 2010; Meuleman et al., 2009).

Attitudes towards migrants

Attitudes towards migrants can be explained by two contradictory theories - ethnic threat theory and contact theory. The ethnic threat theory is based on the work of Blalock (1967) and is based on competition between groups for limited resources (jobs, social welfare, culture). In this context, a competing group is perceived as a threat, resulting in hostile attitudes towards it. So far, the ethnic threat theory has been supported by experimental research (Stephan, Renfro, Esses, Stephan, & Martin, 2005) as well as on large comparative research samples (Semyon, Rajman, Yom-Tov, & Schmidt, 2004). Particular attention is paid to the dynamics of the relationships with competing groups based on longitudinal data (Meuleman et al., 2009).

The opposite of the ethnic threat theory is the contact theory. According to this theory, direct contact between groups eliminates typically negative stereotypes (Allport, 1954). Individuals are exposed to new information about another group through contact. This information helps to understand the concerns and interests of the other group while developing affective ties that reduce feelings of threat and refute negative stereotypes about members of the other group. In an extensive meta-analysis of 713 studies, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) confirmed in various groups and environments that contact with members of another group improves relationships and at the same time reduces prejudice against them. However, as reported by Schlueter and Sheepers (2010), it works auto-selectively. This means that individuals with the greatest prejudice are deliberately avoiding contact with members of other groups, while people without prejudice are naturally seeking them out. Studies on the positive impact of contacts in relation to immigrants bring ambiguous results. While some confirmed the aforementioned assumption (Schlueter, & Scheepers, 2010; Ellison, Shin, & Leal, 2011), others did not confirm the assumed relationship (Gravelle, 2016). Karreth, Singh and Stojek (2015) found that contact with immigrants can lead to their perception as a cultural threat, which may

ultimately support overall anti-immigrant sentiment. So far, the research into attitudes towards migrants and migration has shown that they are affected by two groups of factors. The first consists of individual factors. This includes economically vulnerable groups, i.e. people with low income, low education and the unemployed, who perceive immigrants as a threat (Semyonov et al., 2004). Conservatism, nationalism and racial prejudice are also associated with negative attitudes towards immigrants (Davidov et al., 2008, Wagner et al., 2010). The second group is represented by factors at the level of countries. These include economic conditions, the number of migrants arriving, the negative media image of migrants, as well as the current political situation in the country (Schlueter, & Davidov, 2013). The comparison of attitudes towards migrants between countries is also interesting to illustrate the situation. Giorigi and Vitale (2017) found that inhabitants of Nordic countries are generally less hostile towards immigrants, while respondents from Central Europe showed an average level of hostility towards migrants. According to Ceobanu and Escandell (2008), more negative attitudes towards migrants dominate in Eastern Europe, although these are not typical destination countries for them. These authors analysed the data from the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) 1995 – 2003 and found that, despite a large variation of anti-immigration attitudes among countries, the data reported negative attitudes to migrants (Ceobanu & Escandell, 2010). The results of the international comparative survey European Social Probe (ESP) in 2004 – 2012 show that the results of Slovak respondents copy the European average and are relatively stable over time, as illustrated by Chart 1.



Source: ESS • Created with Datawrapper

Chart 1: Average rating of the question *“Is country made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries?”*

Perception of safety

It is paradoxical for the issue of safety that it becomes topical only at the time when it is scarce and when an individual feels a lack of control over a potential threat. Consequently, the absence of safety can lead to psychological consequences – dissatisfaction, uncertainty and reduced quality of life, social consequences – reduced solidarity, cohesion, restrictions on social activities as well as behavioural changes – restrictions on movement, leisure activities or lifestyles.

Since the beginning of the research on safety perception, crime has been the only topic that has been studied. The fear of crime has become a well-established and central concept of the issue. Although the fear of crime has not been uniformly defined, one of the most accepted concepts is the definition of Ferraro and LaGrange (1987, 71), who defined the fear of crime as an *“emotional response to crime or symbols that resemble crime”*. The aforementioned implies that fear as a reaction was not only associated with crime, but also with crime-related symbols such as broken windows of buildings, garbage, graffiti etc. In addition to fear of crime, other risks started to arise over time, with similar effects. They mainly concerned political (e.g. Cold War period), economic (e.g. fear of job loss), environmental (environmental accidents) or social (immigrants) and health risks (injuries, infectious diseases), but also extreme forms of violence (terrorism). In this context, the fear of crime became a subset of threats that violated the basic human need – safety. Safety is defined by Maurice et al. (2001) as a status or a situation characterized by adequate control of physical, material or moral threat that contributes to the perception of self-protection from danger. Authors dealing with this topic distinguish its two main dimensions: the *objective dimension* represented by real risk or threat and the *subjective dimension*, involving personal attitudes or the perception of a sense of safety, while the subjective perception of the threat may differ significantly from the real objective risk (Nilsen, 2004). In addition, an individual can perceive a threat without an apparent cause, and on the other hand, be unaware of the risk of clear danger. In this context, Výrost (2012) pointed out the differentiation of the terms security and safety. He interprets security in a broad, social sense. On the other hand, safety refers to the physical and the mental integrity of an individual, distinguishing the objective conditions in which an individual finds himself, as well as the subjective perception of those conditions, which ensure that their integrity (physical, social and mental) is protected from possible negative consequences. The methodological problem of these definitions is that fear of crime is a subset of the perception of safety, and if an individual perceives that they are particularly threatened by crime, it is almost impossible to separate these constructs empirically. For the conceptualization of perception of safety, it is important to determine relevant concepts related to and contributing to safety – victimization, perception of risk, perception of the environment, social changes, psychology of fear and anxiety and the influence of the media.

The most widespread reflection on threats to one's own safety is to be a victim of criminal behaviour. Victimization is a process of causing harm or damage during which a person becomes a victim of crime. The victimization perspective is based on the assumption that citizens' fears for their safety reflect the current level of criminal activity or information on criminal activity from conversations or the media (Bennett, 1991).

However, these become a problem if they are not proportionate to the objective threats of victimization. In this context, the inconsistencies between the objective crime data and safety concerns are referred to as the '*paradox of fear*' (Warr, 2000). In this context, several studies have been conducted to analyse the links between crime levels and safety rating (Entorf, & Spengler, 2002, Gruszczynska, & Gruszczynski, 2005, Kentoš, Homišinová, & Husovská, 2012). Their findings show that despite the decreasing overall level of crime in individual European countries, the perception of safety was rather stable. Ito (1993) came to a similar conclusion when analysing the fear of crime in relation to the level of crime. His findings indicate that, despite the very low probability of becoming a victim of crime (1 %), up to 50 % of respondents showed concerns. This paradox was initially attributed to the distorted and irrational perception on an individual level (Balkin, 1979), later it became a challenge for researchers who were not satisfied with this interpretation. As reported by Visser, Scholte and Scheepers (2013) in their overview, the impact of victimization on the perception of safety is ambiguous. Part of the studies unequivocally confirmed this assumption; other studies only partially documented the relationship between victimisation and fear of threat, or did not confirm the assumed relationship (Hale, 1996). This led to the perception that there are stable interindividual differences in the perception of safety. On this basis, a vulnerability theory was created, based on the assumption that certain social groups feel less safe because they are more physically and socially vulnerable. In this context, more negative ratings of safety were shown for women (Callanan, & Teasdale, 2009, Bozogánová, 2016), seniors (Lane, & Meeker, 2003), individuals with low educations (Kennedy, & Silverman, 1985) and city dwellers. Paradoxically, women and seniors who showed a higher level of fear were far less often victims of crime than men and young people. An alternative explanation for the paradox of fear is that victimization actually reduces the fear of threat and makes the consequences of crime for the victimized more real while deepening the fear of the unknown in the non-victimized part of the population. Some authors state that this is due to the fact that the consequences of victimization of these groups give rise to greater fear in comparison to others (Stanko, 1988). More attention is also paid to victims of violent crime, which ultimately highlights the consequences of crime. In other words, while victimization is compensated by crime victims, perpetrators of violent crimes increase the impact of crime. In this context, Farrall, Jackson and Gray (2009) point out several methodological problems related to examining victimization. The first is suppressing the manifestations of fear in men. Their findings indicate that men either did not show an adequate level of fear or showed excessive fear in situations where it was acceptable. The second problem is that most research on victimization detected victimization of respondents over the last 12 months, while the experience with crime may extend beyond that period and may not be reported by respondents. The third drawback of crime victim research is the conceptualization of experience with crime as a one-off event, without detecting the dynamics of its perception as well as the intensity of potential consequences.

Perception of safety and migrants

Farrall, Jackson and Gray (2009) determine two types of fear of threat. The first is the fear based on experience. It is based on personal experience of threats to health, property or

personal integrity and is associated with poverty, risk areas and social disorganization. The second, more widespread type is the expressive fear. It is reported by individuals with sporadic crime experience, coming from a stable and relatively safe environment. However, fear causes significant consequences at the level of individuals' daily activities for both groups. All this to the extent that many individuals become "prisoners in their own homes" just because they think they are in danger outside their doors. This is related to the multiplying effect of fear – indirectly affecting other individuals in society. Skogan (1990) described this effect as indirect victimization, i.e. the influence of own or mediated information about the threat in the surrounding area. Hale (1996) also notes that indirect victimization experience has a more significant impact on fear than direct victimization. In this context, Skogan (1995) states that many migrants in the country cause an ethnic threat that can be seen as a threat to the safety of the majority population. It is explained by the theory of ethnic competition, which interprets the presence of migrants as a competition, competing for the same resources as the original population – jobs, social welfare, and social status (McLaren, 2003). Ceobanu (2011) found that negative prejudices linked to aggression, violence and criminal behaviour are also connected to migrants, these in addition to a more negative safety rating also generate social mistrust. Social trust is facilitated by the homogeneity of society. Chiricos, Eschholz, and Gertz (1997) verified the hypothesis that ethnic diversity of population affects the perception of safety and found that the current level of ethnic diversity is not related to the fear of threat. On the contrary, the perceived ethnic diversity was related to the perception of increased risk of becoming a victim of crime. However, the above findings were applicable on the majority population. Visser, Scholte and Scheepers (2013) also verified the hypothesis of the impact of the number of foreigners in the country and the perceived ethnic threat on the fear of crime and the perception of safety. Their findings showed that many foreigners had no impact on the perception of safety. Quite the opposite, the perceived ethnic threat affected not only on the fear of crime but also the perception of safety.

A different source of concerns is the economic turbulence associated with recession and job cuts, which are manifested through threats to own safety (Taylor, & Jamieson, 1998). Dowds and Ahrendt (1995) expanded this issue and interpret safety concerns as a fear of social change and the overall disorganization of society. As reported by Farrall, Jackson and Gray (2009), the idea that the fear of crime or migrants is an expression of other fears is not new and is based on abstract and diffusive fears. It is a problem to verify the assumption by quantitative methods. Therefore, several studies have been elaborated in this context, identifying the uncertainty associated with changes such as population mobility, greater social and cultural heterogeneity and the resulting unpredictability of the surrounding environment (Young, 1999; Lupton, & Tulloch, 1999).

Research on attitudes towards migrants and migration

Research on attitudes towards migrants is typically explored in two parallel concepts (Bauer, Lofstrom, & Zimmermann, 2000). The first represents reactions to specific immigrants; the second reacts to circumstances or consequences linked to immigration. The first group is characterized by racial prejudice or attitudes towards ethnicities or minorities. The second group, according to the aforementioned authors, consists

of the policies, context and consequences of the immigration process for the country. This conceptualization has been successfully used in comparative research such as the European Social Probe. People's attitudes towards migrants and migration can consistently influence their behaviour. This applies in particular to workers who come into contact with migrants. For example, as found by Hamilton and Essat (2008), prejudices and stereotypes of health care professionals about foreigners influence their decision making on diagnosis and treatment. For the time being, there is no detailed data on the attitudes of different population groups towards migrants and migration. In this context, we conducted research to determine the attitudes of individual ethnic communities in Slovakia towards migrants with regard to their origin. We were also interested in the attitudes of individual ethnic groups to migration.

Eight ethnic groups living in the Slovak Republic were participating in the research – Slovaks, Hungarians, Germans, Polish, the Roma, Ruthenians, Ukrainians and Czechs. Each ethnic group was represented by 160 respondents. The analysed sample consisted of a total of 1,120 respondents. Within each group, the respondents were selected by quota selection based on a verbal declaration of belonging to a minority. In addition, age group, gender and education quotas according to 2011 census data were taken into account. A total of 588 women and 563 men participated in the research, the average age of women being $M = 45.00$, $SD = 15.52$ and of men $M = 44.79$, $SD = 16.56$. The data were collected in July – October 2017. Data was collected by Median SK interviewers in the form of face-to-face interviews. Attitudes towards migrants were represented by three items: *“To what extent do you think Slovakia should allow people 1. of the same race or ethnicity, 2. another race or ethnic group, 3. people from poorer countries outside Europe to come to Slovakia and live here?”* The respondents answered on a 4-point scale (1 = allow many – 4 = allow none). Attitudes to migration were represented by items: 1. *“Would you say that it is generally bad or good for the Slovak economy that people come to live here from other countries?”* 2. *“Would you say that cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?”* 3. *“Is Slovakia made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries?”* The respondents answered on an 11-point scale (0 = negative – 11 = positive rating). The perception of safety was examined by the question: *“How safe do you feel walking alone in this area after dark?”* The respondents responded on a 4-point scale from very safe to not safe at all. Since research respondents do not associate this issue with a specific crime, it includes a wider social context related to their own safety. The respondents' victimization was examined by the question: *“Have you or a member of your household been the victim of a burglary or assault in the last 5 years?”* These items are a stable part of the ESS project migration questionnaire. The items have been tested in various language mutations and on various populations (Davidov et al., 2015). The research design was based on testing the differences between the origin of migrants and the consequences of migration (3 x within subject) for each ethnic group (7 x between subject). Therefore, the data were analysed by the General Linear Modelling Mixed Type model for repeated measurements. In the first part, the attitudes of individual ethnic groups towards migrants were analysed. The design of the 3x7 research enabled the comparison of three items across seven ethnic groups. The Mauchly sphericity test indicated different variance of the measured values

($\chi^2(2) = 44.81, p < 0.001$), therefore the Greenhouse-Geisser correction of degrees of freedom ($\epsilon = 0.97$) was used. The effect of the origin of migrants proved to be significant $F(1.94, 2548.7) = 249, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.16$ with the most respondents accepting migrants of the same race ($M = 2.53, SD = 0.02$), less migrants of another race ($M = 2.93, SD = 0.025$) and the least accepted migrants from outside the EU ($M = 2.97, SD = 0.025$).

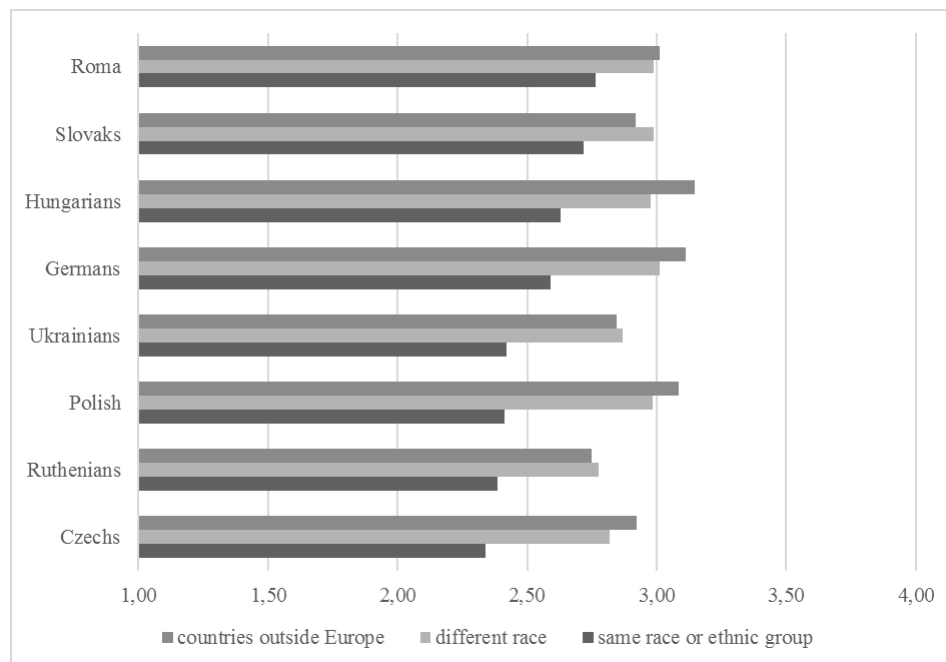


Chart 2: Mean values of attitudes to the origin of migrants according to ethnicity

The effect of ethnicity $F(7.1317) = 3.7, p = 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.02$ was also significant. Post-hoc comparisons showed significant differences between Ruthenians ($M = 2.64, SD = 0.06$) and the Roma ($M = 2.92, SD = 0.06$), Hungarians ($M = 2.92, SD = 0.06$) Germans ($M = 2.91, SD = 0.06$). Equally significant was also the interaction of migrants' origin and ethnicity of respondents $F(13.55, 2548.7) = 4.1, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.02$. Overall, the attitudes towards migrants of the same race were neutral; however, the attitudes towards migrants of a different race or from outside the EU showed more negative valency.

In the next part, attitudes towards the consequences of migration were examined. Again, three items were analysed, evaluated by seven ethnicities. The Mauchly sphericity test did not show differing variations ($\chi^2(2) = 3.33, p = 0.189$). The effect of migration consequences was significant $F(2.2634) = 7.62, p = 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.006$. The least positively evaluated was the impact on the economy ($M = 4.41, SD = 2.40$) and the overall impact on life in Slovakia ($M = 4.45, SD = 2.21$), the rating of the impact on cultural life was more neutral ($M = 4.60, SD = 2.36$).

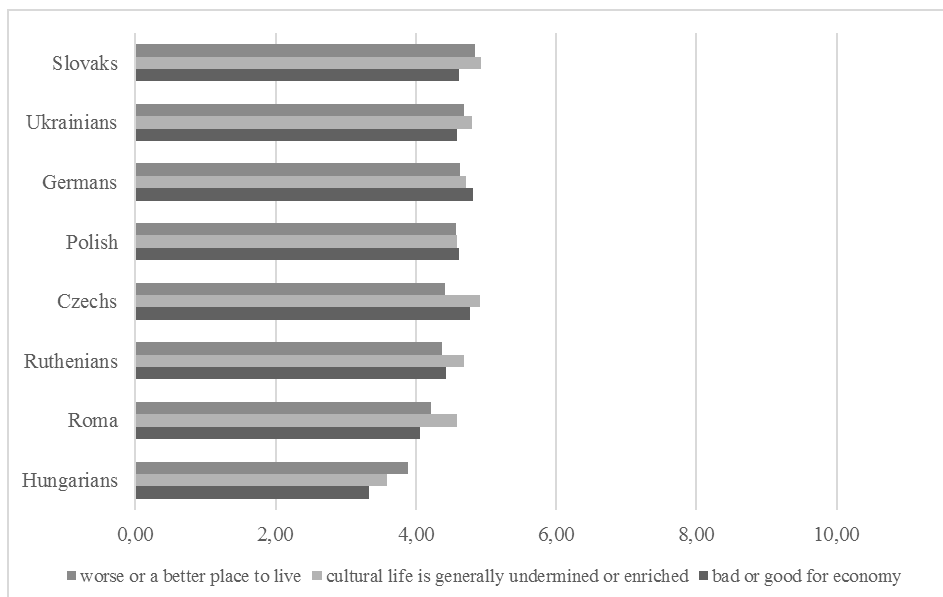


Chart 3: Mean values of attitudes to the consequences of migration according to ethnicity

The ethnicity effect was also significant $F(7.1317) = 6.209$ $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.032$. Post-hoc comparisons revealed differences between the rating of Hungarians ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.16$) and other ethnic groups – Slovaks ($M = 4.79$, $SD = 0.16$), Ukrainians ($M = 4.69$, $SD = 0.16$), Poles ($M = 4.59$, $SD = 0.15$), Ruthenians ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.16$), Germans ($M = 4.72$, $SD = 0.15$) and Czechs ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 0.16$). The interaction of the two monitored variables was equally significant $F(14.2634) = 2.6$, $p = 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.014$. Overall, the attitudes to the consequences of migration were slightly negative to neutral.

In connection with the perception of safety, we analysed the rating of the safety situation in the place of residence for individual ethnic groups, which is represented in Chart 4. The results show a relatively favourable rating of the safety situation by individual ethnic groups. At the same time, no statistically significant differences in average safety ratings by individual ethnicities were identified.

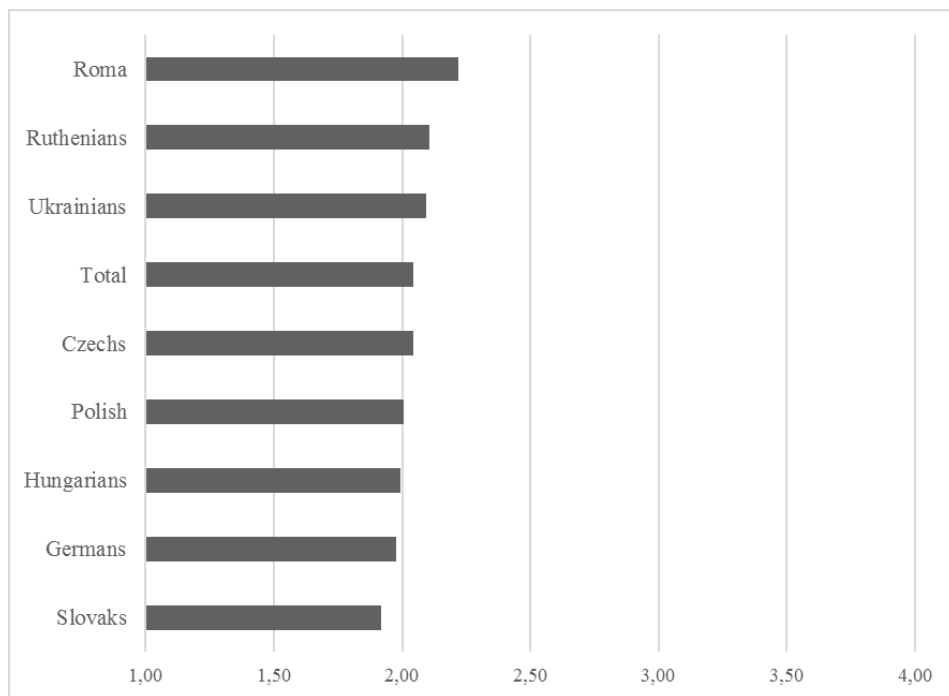


Chart 4: Mean values of the question “How safe do you feel walking alone in this area after dark?” by ethnicity (1 = very safe, 4 = not safe at all).

Table 1: Attitudes towards migrants, migration and the perception of safety by individual ethnicities

	Perception of safety							
	Slovak	Hungarian	Roma	Ukrainian	Polish	Ruthenian	German	Czech
To what extent do you think Slovakia should allow people of the same race or ethnic group as most Slovaks to come and live?	.047	.173*	.134	.265**	.183*	.187*	.045	.048
How about people of a different race or ethnic group from most Slovaks?	.097	.138	.180*	.279**	.199**	.166*	.060	.074
How about people from the poorer countries outside Europe?	.058	.081	.099	.202*	.146	-.052	-.073	-.014
Is it bad or good for the Slovak economy when people from other countries come to live here?	.020	-.211**	-.157*	-.215**	-.273**	-.169*	-.140	-.187*
Is cultural life in Slovakia endangered or enriched by people who come to live here from other countries?	.004	-.135	-.229**	-.167*	-.185*	-.256**	-.131	-.145
Is life in Slovakia worse or better because people from other countries come here?	.016	-.126	-.219**	-.116	-.178*	-.215**	-.106	-.264**

At the same time, we analysed the relationship between the attitudes towards migrants and migration and the perception of safety among ethnic groups. As the results indicate, the correlations of these items vary by ethnicity. Slovaks, Germans and Czechs were not concerned about their safety in relation to migrants. Partial concerns were expressed by Hungarians, the Roma, Poles and Ruthenians. Ukrainians were the most worried about foreigners.

Similarly, Slovaks and Germans are not afraid of the consequences of migration, while other ethnic groups have expressed concerns about their own safety in relation to the economic and cultural consequences of migration.

Conclusion

The presented results can be interpreted on several levels. The first are the mean ratings of attitudes towards migrants and migration. As demonstrated by the presented data on the rating of migrants and migration by various ethnic groups living in Slovakia, they are rather negative and at the same time stable (Ceobanu, & Escandell, 2010; Davidov & Semyonov, 2017). This is documented by the data of several cross-sectional surveys, such as ESS or ISSP. The data presented by us also follows the above trend on average.

As stated by Gorodzeisky and Semyonov, (2015) Slovak respondents show a more or less neutral rating of migrants and migration, unlike our neighbours Hungarians and Czechs. However, the research so far shows that vulnerable individuals feel particularly threatened by migrants. Still, there are no data on the attitudes of various ethnic groups towards migrants and migration. Although the results presented suggest significant differences in the rating of migration and migrants by individual ethnic groups, their importance is more or less theoretical in view of the strength of their effects. There were greater differences in the rating of individual groups of migrants. All ethnic groups living in Slovakia agreed on a more positive rating of migrants of the same race than migrants of another race or from outside the EU. This could be explained by racial prejudice or anti-immigration sentiment, as reported by Ceobanu and Escandell (2008). Although, according to Quillian (2006), the racial assumption is a simplified explanation of attitudes towards migrants. Similar conclusions apply to attitudes to migration. Again, we have identified differences between ethnic groups also in this case, however, the power of their effects is negligible. The question in this context remains the justification of examination of both constructs, i.e. attitudes towards migrants and migration separately. Although some authors report different sources of attitudes towards migrants (racial prejudice) and migration (e.g. economic threats) (Gorodzeisky, & Semyonov, 2015), others emphasize the mutual overlap of the two constructs (Bauer et al., 2000). Research limitations consist of a limited number of items that were the subject of research in both domains, as well as in a specific selection of respondents that does not correspond to the parameters of the Slovak population. A separate issue is the exploration of safety by means of the question about a night walk. Rountree and Land (1996) point out that such a question is too vague and may research the perception of the risk of becoming a victim of criminal behaviour, or vice versa, general anxiety. At the same time, the question may be stimulating for individuals with various phobias. Ferraro and LaGrange (1987) characterize this question as a way of identifying the risks associated with their own safety, with each respondent having the opportunity to put it in their own context. The question of delimiting the area to which the question relates is also open, as individual respondents may perceive the place where they live to different geographical extent. The ecological validity of the question researching safety is threatened by the fact that it is to some extent hypothetical, especially for respondents who do not practice the night walk. In spite of all the aforementioned objections, it is still a fact that the gold standard of the research into the perception of safety has not been replaced or improved so far and has been continuously used in the cognitive approach.

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Decrees of President Edvard Beneš and Autonomy – Reflection of Slovak-Hungarian Relations (on the Example of Comparison of Empirical Research Results from 2004 and 2017)¹

Štefan Šutaj

Abstract:

The paper deals with the perception of two important issues from Slovak and Czech history, which in certain periods appear as an important issue of public discussions among the population of Czech, Slovak, Hungarian and German nationality. It is the issue of post-war anti-minority legislation that resonates in the public as the issue of the “Beneš Decrees”. The second phenomenon that resonates in both Slovak and Hungarian society is the issue of autonomy. We interpret the perception of these historical events through two surveys from 2004 and 2017 among respondents of Slovak, Czech, Hungarian and German nationality.

Keywords: decrees of president E. Beneš, autonomy, national minorities.

Decrees of the President of the Republic Beneš and autonomy – their place in Slovak history

In a sense, Slovak society (and not only it) is historically stigmatized by its past and the past is reflected in the present. Historical events are instrumentalized in the historical memory of various groups of the population depending on the historical period, the political climate in the given historical period, but also on the political and social events in the present. An important role in the process of embedding historical events in historical memory is played by the views of various population groups, the official (approved) historical memory elaborated in history textbooks and the influence of political elites on the explanation of history. The historical events themselves are revived in historical memory and in ways of commemoration.

This is also the case of the idea of autonomy, which played an important role in Slovak history, particularly in relation to the possibility of organizing the position of Slovaks in Hungary (the possibility of creating a Slovak ethnic territory) and later in the Czechoslovak Republic (as part of fulfilling Slovak political ambitions in relation to the Czechs). This dimension of autonomist politics did not recede into the background even after 1945, although it had already been transformed into a federalist principle. However, the concept of autonomy was removed from the political dictionary in Czechoslovakia after World War II, or rather its negative, pejorative interpretation prevailed.

In the new (Czecho) Slovak-Hungarian relationship after 1918, the concept of autonomy was given a specific form and was related to the dissatisfaction of the Hungarians who

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remained in Czechoslovakia after its establishment.² After the signing of the peace treaty in Trianon on 4 June 1920, revisionist concepts took full control of Hungarian politics and society. Dissatisfaction with the agreed borders became a permanent part of Hungarian politics, which considered the determination of borders as unfair.³ They regarded Czechoslovakia as an artificial creation with a short-term perspective.⁴ The concepts of integral or ethnographic revision found a significant response at various levels of Hungarian society and were linked to government policy and propaganda. Gradually, the concept of integral revision aimed at restoring the full integrity of the Kingdom of Hungary was replaced by the concepts of ethnographic (ethnic) revision. In the 1920s, these were reflected among Hungarian political leaders. The result was the policy of peaceful revision for which they sought to win allies.⁵

The Hungarians in Slovakia also sought ways to organize their positions that would allow them to maintain self-governing elements to maintain their connection to their mother nation beyond the borders of the new "imposed homeland". The program was the idea of a revision, autonomy was an option for activist (state-cooperating) groups.

However, Hitler's rise to power in Germany changed the situation. The chances of achieving a revision of the Trianon borders increased.⁶ The outcome of the interwar European and concession policy towards Germany was the signing of the Munich Agreement. As a result, Hungary and Poland could demand, as they did, the revision of borders on ethnic principles. This happened regardless of the will of Slovak politicians who were not experienced in the international politics. It was only about how much of the territory would Czech-Slovakia, represented in negotiations with Hungary by Slovak politicians, have to give up.⁷

The revision of the Slovak-Hungarian border was initiated by the Vienna Arbitration and after the plans for integral revision had been thwarted by the creation of the Slovak State, it was completed by the so-called Little war. The Vienna Arbitration also influenced the efforts of Hungarian representations in Slovakia in cooperation with Hungarian politics not only to revise the borders but also to create a model delimiting ethnically defined territory. According to Slovak historians, approximately 100,000 inhabitants of Slovak and Czech nationality had to leave the territory of southern Slovakia, which was attached

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3 GLATZ, Ferenc. *Minorities in East-Central Europe. Historical Analysis and a Policy Proposal*. Budapest : Europa institut, 1993.

4 JANEK, István. Maďarské diplomatické úsilie o získanie Slovenska v rokoch 1938 – 1939. In BYSTRICKÝ, Valerián – MICHELA, Miroslav – SCHVARC, Michal a kol. *Rozbitie alebo rozpad*. Bratislava : Veda, 2010, p. 237.

5 JANEK, I. *Maďarské diplomatické úsilie ...*, p. 238. See more: ŠUTAJ, Štefan. Variace stop Trianonu v politické paměti. In DEJMEK Jindřich – LOUŽEK Marek (eds.). *Trianonská smlouva. Devadesát let poté*. Praha : Centrum pro ekonomiku a politiku, 2010, p. 69-97.

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7 More detail: JANEK, István. Maďarské a slovenské revizionistické snahy a bilaterálne vzťahy v rokoch 1939 – 1940. In MITÁČ, Ján (ed.). *Juh Slovenska po Viedenskej arbitráži 1938 – 1945*. Bratislava : ÚPN, 2011, p. 74-77; ZEIDLER, Miklós. *A revíziós gondolat*. Pozsony : Kalligram, 2009.

to Hungary in the years 1938 – 1939.⁸ Surveys of public opinion and historical memory clearly show that Slovaks perceive this period at least as negatively and as intensely as the Hungarians in Slovakia perceive the repressions from 1945 – 1948.⁹

What are the “Beneš Decrees”

After World War II, the issue of Hungarian revisionism and autonomism changed its position. It was significantly influenced by the events of World War II, the acceptance of temporary Czechoslovak establishment in London by all the victorious powers. It was crucial in the post-war situation that Germany and Hungary were defeated in the war. The idea of “fair” borders, which, from the point of view of the Hungarian representations, represented at least ethnic border, did not disappear even after the end of World War II. However, the conditions of the interested parties changed fundamentally, and hence the way in which the proposals to change the Trianon borders were submitted, in particular, to representatives of the victorious powers.

Czechoslovakia, as the country of the victorious alliance coalition, demanded confirmation of the invalidity (annulment) of the revision achieved by Germany and Hungary in 1938 – 1939 and also further adjustment (rectification) of borders in favour of Czechoslovakia. The “post-war justice” also resulted in President E. Beneš’s Decrees, the principles of collective responsibility and collective guilt, and repressions against the population of German and Hungarian nationality. According to the Czechoslovak government they were to be implemented so that the next generations did not have to fight for their borders with Germany and Hungary in the next war.¹⁰

Were the post-war repressive measures against Hungarians caused by the excessive nationalism of Slovaks? Or were they the consequences of the situation before and after World War II? Post-war legislation against Germans and Hungarians was based on the thesis that most members of German and Hungarian minorities were guilty of violations against the Czechoslovak Republic and had participated in its disintegration. The preferred solution was a transfer, displacement. In relation to Hungary, exchange of the large Slovak minority in Hungary for part of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia was also considered. Hungarian minority very sensitively perceived the events after 1945, which can be summarized, though not correctly, as the “Beneš Decrees”, as a symbol of events and acts legally implemented by President E. Beneš’s decrees, but also by the Slovak National Council (SNR) under international treaties or decisions of powers during or shortly after World War II (Armistice Agreement with Hungary of 20 January 1945, Potsdam Conference

8 More detail on this issue e.g.: DEÁK, Ladislav (ed.). *Malá vojna. (Vojenský konflikt medzi Maďarskom a Slovenskom v marci 1939.)* Bratislava : Slovak Academic Press, 1993; DEÁK, Ladislav. *Slovensko v politike Maďarska v rokoch 1938 – 1939.* Bratislava : Veda, 1990.

9 PAUKOVIČ, Vladimír a kol. *Vzťahy Slovákov a národnostných menšín v národnostne zmiešaných oblastiach Slovenska.* Košice : Spoločenskovedný ústav SAV, 1990, 66 p. ; ZEL'OVÁ, Alena – BAČOVÁ, Viera – ŠUTAJ, Štefan – VÝROST, Jozef. *Interpretácia slovensko-maďarských vzťahov v súvislosti s vybranými etnickými a sociálno-psychologickými charakteristikami.* Košice : Spoločenskovedný ústav SAV, 1992. BAČOVÁ, Viera. *Etnická identita a historické zmeny. Výskum obyvateľov vybraných obcí Slovenska.* Bratislava : Veda, 1996.

10 More detail on this issue: ŠUTAJ, Štefan. *Parížska konferencia 1946 a mierová zmluva s Maďarskom.* Prešov : Universum, 2014.

Decisions, International Agreement on Exchange Inhabitants of 27 February 1946, Peace Treaty with Hungary of 10 February 1947).¹¹

Until the establishment of the supreme legislative body of the Temporary National Assembly (DNZ) in October 1945, laws for Czechoslovakia were passed in the form of decrees of the President of the Republic, E. Beneš. Decrees related to a wide range of issues that had to be addressed in the post-war period created a legal framework for establishing Czechoslovakia. The decrees of the President of the Republic E. Beneš were not elaborated by the President, they were prepared by ministers and the government. They did not only address the position of German and Hungarian minorities, they were of various nature and affected various areas of society. They were applied differently in the Czech Republic and Slovakia because not all decrees were issued with the consent of the SNR. In the wider framework, regulations of the SNR and the decrees of President E. Beneš formed the legal basis of restored CSR.¹² Their application and consequences were different towards Germans and Hungarians, which resulted from international decisions on the issue.

The principle of collective responsibility (guilt) was applied to Germans and Hungarians in accordance with the adopted decrees, laws and regulations, based on the fact that this population should prove (defend themselves) that it was actively involved in the resistance or was persecuted in the years of war. It was therefore not considered to be innocent per se (like Slovaks or other minorities) on the grounds that it did not oppose the evil (the pro-fascist Hungarian and German fascist regimes) and defend Czechoslovakia.¹³

The exceptions that the presidential decrees and regulations of the SNR made only for anti-fascists did not apply to those who did not engage on either side.

From the point of view presented by the Czechoslovak state authorities, as well as representatives of Slovak politics, it was a struggle for democracy, against totalitarian regimes, for the security of the state and its "national" population. The representatives of Czechoslovak politics used similar arguments at the Paris Conference in 1946.

"Beneš Decrees" and autonomy – interpretations resulting from ethnic stereotypes

When evaluating Slovak-Hungarian relations in 1945 – 1948, there are certain stereotypes on both Slovak and Hungarian side. The key to them is the national principle. People are divided by the way they perceive the past. History comes to the service of the present to

11 Even in today's political practice, all the measures implemented against the minorities, including the exchange of the population or the confiscation of land ownership, the displacement of the Anyas or the transfer of Germans are in politics and journalism attributed to the "Beneš Decree". An example is the statement of the Republican Council of the Hungarian Community Party of 26 August 2017 on the 70th anniversary of the population exchange carried out on the basis of the agreement of 27 February 1946, which states that the exchange took place on the basis of Beneš's decrees. Online: <http://www.teraz.sk/slovensko/podla-smk-bude-mat-koalicia-kriza/277333-clanok.html> [cit. 25. 11. 2019]. We could give dozens of such examples from the daily press and political speeches.

12 POPÉLY, Árpád – ŠUTAJ, Štefan – SZARKA, László. *Beneš dekrétumok és a magyar kérdés 1945 – 1948*. Budapest : Attraktor, 2007; ŠUTAJ, Štefan. *Maďarská menšina na Slovensku v 20. storočí*. Bratislava : Kalligram, 2012.

13 See BEŇA, Jozef. *Slovensko a Benešove dekréty*. Bratislava : Belimex, 2004.

support ideological, national, state, group and even individual goals. This is not only the space for different interpretations of history, but also for its conscious falsification. This is the space to create legends and myths that divide society and adjust the past to current needs.

This process is not simple because it is overshadowed by injustices perceived on one's own nation, which ideologists use to excuse injustices perpetrated against other groups of the population or nations. In order to understand the results of the questionnaire research, it is necessary to state other facts as well.

While most of the approximately three million Germans had to move out of the former Czechoslovakia,¹⁴ the majority of Hungarian minority remained in Slovakia and regained their civic rights over the coming years. Unlike Germans, the population of Hungarian nationality was not evicted from Czechoslovakia as a whole. While the majority of the population of German nationality lived in the Czech Republic, most Hungarians in the Republic lived in Slovakia.

Unlike the inhabitants of German nationality who could not be compensated as they were displaced outside Czechoslovakia, Hungarian inhabitants received their Czechoslovakian citizenship back in 1948, many got also their property back, especially the immovable property that did not fall victim to the "communist" confiscation after 25 February 1948, but also agricultural property, confiscated from Hungarian nationals on the basis of SNR regulations. Population relocated to Bohemia was compensated individually in 1949 – 1950.¹⁵

Since 1948, there were fundamental changes in the position of non-Slovak population in the state compared to the situation in the post-war period.¹⁶ After the February coup in 1948 legal standards for equalization or removal of some discriminatory standards against Hungarian nationals were adopted. The Communist Party and its secretariats decided on all major issues of social development, hence the measures taken in the late 1950s and early 1960s were mostly of a political rather than legislative nature. Neither discussion on possible solutions based on the principle of autonomy, nor discussion on post-war legislation against the Germans and Hungarians were accepted. Political relaxation in reaction to XX. Congress of the KSSZ,¹⁷ at the beginning of the 1960s, it was also reflected in a review of some measures of the post-war minority policy. An important role was played by the ideological plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia in December 1963, the announcement of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia on violations of socialist legislation and the resolution of the Central Committee of Communist Party of Czechoslovakia *On the review of criticism of bourgeois*

14 More details on the issue of Germans in Slovakia: GABZDILOVÁ-OLEJNÍKOVÁ, Soňa – OLEJNÍK, Milan. *Karpatskí Nemci na Slovensku od druhej svetovej vojny do roku 1953*. Bratislava : SNM. Acta carpatho-germanica XII., 2004.

15 See e.g. ŠUTAJ, Štefan. *Akcia Juh. Odsun Maďarov zo Slovenska do Čiech v roku 1949*. Praha : Sešity Ústavu pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, Sv. 8, 1993.

16 More detail GABZDILOVÁ-OLEJNÍKOVÁ, Soňa. Vznik a činnosť Csemadoku-u v kontexte politiky KSČ (1948 – 1951). In *Historický časopis*, 2008, Vol. 56, Iss. 2, p. 477-497.

17 SIKORA, Stanislav. Under the Banner of Socialism. In ŠUTAJ, Štefan et. al. *Key Issues of Slovak and Hungarian History (A View of Slovak Historians)*. Prešov : Universum, 2011, p. 249-253.

nationalism from IX. Congress of the KPS, which brought new views on the interpretation of the issue of Hungarian nationality and the share of the so-called bourgeois nationalists on the measures against the population of Hungarian nationality in 1945 – 1948. The Resolution of the CC of CPC in December 1963 condemned the method of population exchange between Czechoslovakia and Hungary, reslovakisation and “recruitment” of Hungarians to the Czech lands. At the same time, it was stated that the bourgeois nationalists in the CPS were not responsible for these actions, but that it was a nationwide matter and the CPC was to be held responsible.¹⁸ The ideas of cultural autonomy appeared in the Csemadok proposals of 15 March 1968, which called for the administration of minority education by autonomous minority organizations.¹⁹ The steps they wanted to take (e.g. greater competencies of Csemadok, replacing the party’s leadership role with the Csemadok leadership in the Hungarian community, demands for autonomous solution of ethnic affairs, the creation of minority councils ...) were later evaluated by the normalizers as anti-communist activities and the critics were persecuted and excluded from public politics. Similar tendencies towards cultural and territorial autonomy were also presented in the Cultural Union of Ukrainian Workers.²⁰

Czechoslovak society, which dealt with the issue of federal arrangement, was not willing to accept requirements that were of even latent autonomist character. The submitted proposals created an institutional basis for minority policy and minorities and also assumed a territorial-regional separation of the region with Hungarian majority, which was not acceptable for Slovak representation, subsidized by information on strengthening the powers of Hungarian institutions and disputes in southern Slovakia. Even after the adoption of the 1968 Act on the Status of Nationalities, especially László Dobos, as a member of the government responsible for minority politics, tried to prepare legislation to support autonomous elements in the management of minority affairs in Hrušov in 1969. The emerging normalization, however, swept away not only these proposals but also L. Dobos himself.²¹

The situation after 1989 was complicated due to the emergence of independent states (the division of Czechoslovakia), complicated by international and internal political relations.²² In this situation, discussions on outstanding issues of Slovak-Hungarian relations from the past started again. The first attempts to open the “Beneš Decrees” (i.e.

18 IRMANOVÁ, Eva. *Maďarská menšina na Slovensku a její místo v zahraniční politice Slovenska po roce 1989*. Ústí nad Labem : Albis internacional, 2005, p. 236.

19 More detail: ŠUTAJ, Štefan. Národnostné práva na prelome 60. – 70. rokov 20. storočia. Príklad maďarskej menšiny. In TÍŽIK, Miroslav – KMEŤ, Norbert (eds.). *Príliš ľudská tvár socializmu? Reforma zdola a okolnosti reformného procesu v Československu roku 1968*. Bratislava : Sociologický ústav SAV, 2016, p. 109-151.

20 STÁTNÍK, Dalibor. Národnostní a náboženské poměry na severovýchodním Slovensku v letech 1968 – 1970 na příkladu okresu Svidník. TÍŽIK, M. – KMEŤ, N. (eds.). *Príliš ľudská tvár socializmu?...*, p. 290-368.

21 More detail: ŠUTAJOVÁ, Jana. *Zákon o národnostiach a Rada vlády Slovenskej socialistickej republiky pre národnosti (predstavy a realita)*. Košice : ŠafárikPress, 2019, 162 p.

22 MITROVITS Miklós. Rozdelenie Československa a maďarská politika. In LONDÁK, Miroslav – MICHÁLEK, Slavomír a kol. *20 rokov samostatnej Slovenskej republiky. Jedinečnosť a diskontinuita historického vývoja*. Bratislava : Veda, 2013, p. 290-305; ŠUTAJ, Štefan. Problematika etnických menšín v kontexte historického vývoja v rokoch 1989 – 1993. In LONDÁK, M. – MICHÁLEK, S. a kol. *20 rokov samostatnej...*, p. 239-262.

the consequences of some of the President E. Beneš decrees and SNR regulations)²³ took place shortly after November 1989, but also before Slovakia's accession to the European Union (EU) when Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán demanded their abolition. The basis of Hungarian "national" policy is the orientation towards the Hungarians abroad, unlike the neighbouring states, for whom the priority of the national policy is the policy towards minorities living on their territory.

In domestic politics, in addition to problems with the use of state language and the language of national minorities, the discussion on constitutional embedding of minority rights, the act on national minorities, the "Beneš Decrees" were a conflicting topic throughout 1989 – 2002, especially during Vladimír Mečiar's governments. This was reflected in the programs of political parties, including national minority parties, but also in the next period when the two Dzurinda governments were formed (1998 – 2006). Although Pál Csáky served as the Deputy Prime Minister for Human and Minority Rights and Regional Development (European Human Rights and Minority Affairs), his Hungarian Coalition Party (SMK) did not achieve significant concessions from their coalition partners with regard to post-war legislation.

Upon the first government of Robert Fico and due to non-participation of national minority parties in the government, confrontation took place instead of dialogue (subsidized by the naive but aggressive nationalism of Ján Slotka), however, it gradually faded, mainly due to common ambitions of government representations led by R. Fico and V. Orbán in international politics. Despite continuation of politics based on national demagoguery and national populism on both sides,²⁴ they eliminated tensions in international relations, which reflected in internal politics and less confrontational minority politics. MOST – HID party led by Béla Bugár became part of the government of R. Fico in 2016 (continued government under the leadership of Peter Pellegrini). Although this party did not have the support of official representations of Hungary, minority relations and minority policy stabilized and representatives of this political party, both Hungarian and Slovak, managed to implement a moderate minority policy with positive effects on minority relations. This ruled out the opening of unresolved historical issues.

After 1989, Slovak society started its efforts to decentralize and modernize public administration. After 2002, the strengthening of self-government, transfer of competencies to the level of municipalities and self-governing regions and changes in the financing of territorial self-government created conditions for its reinforcement. In 2004, more than 400 competences of local state administration were transferred to municipalities and self-government of higher territorial units.²⁵ These changes also included modernization of public administration, which is typical for the entire period up to now. These are the

23 More detail on this issue e.g.: ČIERNA-LANTAYOVÁ, Dagmar – ŠTEFANOVIČ, Milan – ŠUTAJ, Štefan – ŠTEFANSKÝ, Michal – ZAVACKÁ, Katarína. *Slovakia and Decrees of President of the Czechoslovak Republic Edvard Beneš in the Context of Regulation of the Slovak National Council*. Bratislava : Veda, 2006.

24 MESEŽNIKOV, Grigorij – GYÁRFÁSOVÁ, Oľga. *Národný populizmus na Slovensku*. Bratislava : IVO, 2008, 56 p.

25 NIŽŇANSKÝ, Viktor. Decentralizácia štátu a modernizácia verejnej správy. In SZOMOLÁNYI, Soňa. *Spoločnosť a politika na Slovensku. Cesta k stabilite 1998 – 2004*. Bratislava : Univerzita Komenského, 2005, p. 269-283. ŠUTAJOVÁ, Jana. *Reforma verejnej správy na Slovensku s ohľadom na postavenie maďarskej*

processes that, on one hand, strengthen the stability and competences of local self-governments at various levels, but at the same time eliminate the importance of the ethnic factor for organization of a region and the exercise of various types of competences and powers that may or may not have ethnic background. However, they are based on the civic principle. Affiliation to a region (managed territorial unit) is essential for the management and exercise of rights and competences, not belonging to ethnicity. In this way, the problem of autonomism, which terrified Slovak political parties, was in Slovakia transformed into the search for effective self-government and its strengthening. The issue of autonomy faded also in the context of EU membership. In particular, the Schengen borders created border permeability and opportunities for movement of inhabitants.

Incentives for discussing minority issues, including the “Beneš Decrees”, often came from Hungary. Representations of Hungary considered the question of Hungarians in Slovakia part of international and internal policy. It was also in connection with the accession of Slovakia to the Council of Europe, but especially to NATO and the EU. Many discussions on the status of Hungarian minority in Slovakia were inspired by internal Hungarian party problems (e.g. elections, referendum on citizenship) and opened topics (e.g. discussions on President E. Beneš’s decrees, autonomy).²⁶ In Slovakia, they were usually not discussed for fear of fragile political coalition at a time it was dominant for Hungarian political representatives, or for fear that SMK or MOST – HID could not complete favourable reforms from the positions held by its representatives in the Slovak Government.²⁷ Most of the time they came up with proposals to open post-war legislation when they were in opposition. We may include attempts by János Bócsa to register the South-Upperland Self-Determination Council (Southern Self-Determination Council) civic association, then the South-Upperland Autonomous Council in 2007. After rejecting these associations by the Ministry of the Interior, he tried to create a Regionalism Movement and suggested South-Upperland Autonomous Region, which would range from Šamorín to Kráľovský Chlmec.²⁸ However, his activities were also rejected by representatives of Hungarian political life in Slovakia.

Although the opposition SMK mentioned the possibilities of educational, cultural and regional (i.e. territorial) autonomy in the 2011 program, in the next period they replaced it

národnosti. In ŠUTAJ, Štefan a kol. *Maďarská menšina na Slovensku po roku 1989*. Prešov : Universum, 2008, p. 75-85.

26 ŠUTAJ, Štefan. Benešove dekréty ako nástroj politickej propagandy. In ŠUTAJ, Štefan (ed.). *Prezidentské dekréty Edvarda Beneša v povojnovom období*. Prešov : Universum, 2004, p. 90-111; In December 2015, the chairman of the Hungarian parliament, László Kövér, caused diplomatic tension with a statement for the Czech daily *Právo lidu*. He stated that Slovakia and the Czech Republic should not have been accepted into the European Union. Both foreign ministries summoned Hungarian ambassadors to explain the statement. Online: <http://www.teraz.sk/slovensko/vyjadrenia-l-kovera-berie-lajcak-ak/171794-clanok.html> [cit. 25. 10. 2019].

27 ŠUTAJ, Štefan – SÁPOSOVÁ, Zlatica. Národnostná politika Slovenska vo vzťahu k maďarskej menšine po roku 1989. In ŠUTAJ, Štefan a kol. *Maďarská menšina na Slovensku po roku 1989...*, p. 18-31; ŠUTAJ, Štefan. Slovensko-maďarské vzťahy, maďarská menšina na Slovensku, problematika občianstva a euroústava. In GBÚROVÁ, Marcela (ed.). *Európske občianstvo a národná identita*. Prešov : Slovacontact, 2006, p. 183-194.

28 Projekt autonómie. Online: http://www.shp.hu/hpc/hpc_member_3g.php?azonosito=commorakozi-gaz&oldalkod=1d5S524AAv [cit. 23. 12. 2018].

with a more acceptable term “self-government”.²⁹ During the period of MOST – HID in the government coalition after 2016, some elements of cultural and educational autonomy (e.g. the Fund for the Support of National Minorities Culture) were transformed into real politics.³⁰ In international politics, all steps in this area must also be seen in the context of Hungarian politics based on building the unity of Hungarian nation beyond borders, which includes ensuring citizenship for Hungarians abroad, promoting the idea of autonomy as an important component of this unity, activities (cultural, educational, sports ...) of Hungarians abroad. A policy that should, in the words of V. Orbán, “*write the future of the Carpathian Basin in Hungarian*” and which is reflected in the activities of the “Permanent Hungarian Conference” (MÁÉRT).³¹

The issue of President E. Beneš's decrees and SNR regulations and the requirements to abolish them or to compensate the inhabitants of Hungarian nationality were part of the policy of Hungarian representations in Slovakia throughout the period, but it was enforced with varying intensity. The most intense discussions occurred during an attempt to negotiate a joint declaration of reconciliation, which was compromised by the effort of the SMK to submit the Act on Compensation of Hungarians for the “Beneš Decrees” to the National Council of the Slovak Republic. It culminated in a proposal of deputies of the Slovak National Party (SNS) for a resolution “*on the inviolability of denazification documents for the organization of the arrangements after World War II*”, which was negotiated by the National Council of the SR on 20 September 2007. All Slovak parliamentary political parties, except SMK, signed the resolution.³² According to some authors, in connection with the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, which became part of the constitutional system of the Slovak Republic, provisions and laws that do not comply with this Charter became invalid. In this context, it is necessary to point out the differences between the validity and effectiveness of legislation. The difference between repealing a rule of law from the outset, from its inception (*ex tunc*) and repealing it from the issue of a rule of annulment (*ex nunc*). This implies that the decrees of President E. Beneš are part of the Slovak legal order but are not effective.³³

Moreover, many decrees of President E. Beneš were amended or abolished in the post-war period. Nevertheless, the “Beneš Decrees” agenda lived and appeared sporadically in various areas of political life in Slovakia and Hungary, and even in the European institutions.³⁴ Not all activities in this area can be evaluated here. In his evaluation of his term in office in

29 Online: <https://www.aktuality.sk/clanok/553735/komentar-daga-danisa-madari-ziadaju-uzemnu-autonomiu/> [cit. 15. 08. 2019].

30 Online: <http://www.teraz.sk/slovensko/a-ravasz-fondom-davame-mensinam-is/245224-clanok.html> [cit. 05. 06. 2019].

31 Online: <http://www.teraz.sk/zahranicie/orban-v-otazkach-obciansstva-volebneho-pr/291642-clanok.html> [cit. 12. 11. 2019].

32 ŠUTAJ, Štefan. Slovenské a maďarské politické elity a slovensko-maďarské vzťahy na Slovensku (na príklade roku 2007). In ŠUTAJOVÁ, Jana – ĎURKOVSKÁ, Mária (eds.). *Maďarská menšina na Slovensku v procesoch transformácie*. (Historické, politologické a právne súvislosti.). Prešov : Universum, 2007, p. 40-62.

33 KLIMKO, Jozef. Viedenská arbitráž a súčasnosť. In ŠMIHULA, Daniel. *Viedenská arbitráž v roku 1938 a jej európske súvislosti*. Bratislava : Úrad vlády Slovenskej republiky, 2008, p. 103-111.

34 In a speech in Bonyhad on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the population exchange, the Secretary of State of the Hungarian Government Office responsible for national policy Árpád Potápi confirmed

the European Parliament in 2018, P. Csáky stated that among his most important activities he considered the support for five petitions, among them the “petition for an apology for the application of the so-called Beneš decrees based on the principle of collective guilt”.³⁵

Results of interdisciplinary research of the Institute of Social Sciences of SAS

Although since 1989 minority issues have not been among the most important issues faced by Slovak citizens in public opinion polls, its importance to society is indisputable. Previous projects of the Institute of Social Sciences of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, which is also followed by this research, paid sufficient attention to the Beneš Decrees and basic characteristics of the post-war legislation,³⁶ as well as instrumentalization of the issues in politics and the perception of this issue by the respondents of our research.³⁷

In 2004 and 2017, data were collected for comparative research of minority relations and the status of national minorities in Slovakia, which also included questions focused on the perception of the decrees of President E. Beneš and the issue of autonomy. We assumed a link between the answers to these questions among the respondents of interested ethnic groups, i.e. Slovaks, Czechs, Hungarians and Germans. Since we were aware of this aspect of the “Beneš Decrees”, we formulated the alternatives for the respondents of the research presented here as perceived in public opinion in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. In the spirit of a well-established, albeit improper characteristic, we consider the “Beneš Decrees” to include the whole complex of measures against German and Hungarian minorities, regardless of whether they were issued by E. Beneš, Temporary or Constituent National Assembly, SNR or resulted from international agreements or decisions.

Hungary's determination to fight for the repeal of Beneš's decrees “by all means”. *Pravda*, Vol. 27, Iss. 129, 6. 6. 2017. (mti) Budapešť má opäť na programe Benešove dekréty.

35 Online: <http://www.teraz.sk/slovensko/p-csaky-europoslanec/339614-clanok.html> [cit. 16. 12. 2019].

36 Among historically focused projects, it is possible to mention the following studies and publications: ŠUTAJ, Štefan. Le mémoire de la minorité hongroise en Slovaquie et les conséquences de la seconde guerre mondiale (les décrets Benes). In *La nouvelle alternative*. 1995 (38), p. 37-38; ŠUTAJ, Štefan – MOSNÝ, Peter – OLEJNÍK, Milan. *Prezidentské dekréty E. Beneša v povojnovom Slovensku*, Bratislava : Veda, 2002; ŠUTAJ, Štefan (ed.). *Prezidentské dekréty Edvarda Beneša v povojnovom období*. Prešov : Universum, 2004.

37 VÝROST, Jozef – HOMIŠINOVÁ, Mária. (eds.). *Národ, národnosti a etnické skupiny v procese transformácie slovenskej spoločnosti. Empirická analýza dát zo sociologicko-sociálnopsychologického výskumu v rámci riešenia Štátneho programu výskumu a vývoja 2003/2005*. CD ROM, Košice : Spoločenskovedný ústav SAV, 2005; ŠUTAJ, Štefan – HOMIŠINOVÁ, Mária – SÁPOSOVÁ, Zlatica – ŠUTAJOVÁ, Jana. *Maďarská menšina na Slovensku v procesoch transformácie po roku 1989 (identita a politika)* Prešov : Universum, 2006; More detailed information about the research of the Institute of Social Sciences of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in: ŠUTAJ, Štefan. Slovak and Hungarian History – the subject of common view and confrontations of historians. In IEDA, Osamu – NAGAYO, Susumo (eds.) *Transboundary Symbiosis over the Danube II. Slavic Eurasian Studies*, No. 29, Sapporo : Slavic-Eurasian Research Center Hokkaido University, 2015, p. 15-29. Online: http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/coe21/publish/no29_ses/index.html; ŠUTAJ, Štefan. Interdisciplinary Accesses in the Researches of the Slovak-Hungarian Relationships in History. Possibilities of Cooperation of the Humanitarian and Social Sciences. In IEDA, Osamu – NAGAYO, Susumo (eds.). *Transboundary Symbiosis over the Danube: Re.thinking the mening of Symbiosis-Past, Present And Future*. Tokyo : Waseda University Press, 2018, p. 77-92. Online: https://waseda.repo.nii.ac.jp/?action=repository_opensearch&index_id=2926

Research sample/Research participants (Slovaks, Hungarians, Germans, Czechs)³⁸

In accordance with the project objective, data were collected in 2017, copying the 2004 research sample in the main indicators. Data collection was carried out in July – October 2017. Data were collected by the staff of Median SK agency in the form of personal interviews.

The analysed sample in 2017 consisted of 1151 respondents. The research was carried out on Slovaks from ethnically mixed localities and six ethnic communities living in Slovakia – Hungarians, Germans, the Roma, Ruthenians, Ukrainians, Czechs. Within each group, respondents were selected by quota sampling on the basis of three criteria: verbal declaration of nationality, age groups, gender, as determined by data from the 2011 census. Overall, in 2017, 588 women and 563 men participated, the average age of women was $M = 45.00$ and the average age of men was $M = 44.79$.

The 2004 sample was in our comparative analyses represented by members of the majority and six minorities – Hungarians, Germans, the Roma, Ruthenians, Ukrainians and Czechs. Each group consisted of 160 respondents. When selecting members of individual groups, quota selection was applied in terms of age of respondents, in four age categories (15 – 34 years; 35 – 44 years; 45 – 55 years; 55 years and more) based on the results of the 2001 Slovak Census. The research was conducted between November 2004 and January 2005.³⁹

As for the evaluation of questions concerning President E. Beneš's decrees and opinions on autonomy, we paid attention to four selected minorities (Slovaks, Hungarians, Germans and Czechs) who answered the question concerning the "Beneš Decrees". The sample composition was as follows: 671 respondents, 330 men and 341 women answered the questions. The average age of women was $M = 47.32$ and the average age of men was $M = 46.21$. The highest average age was among the respondents of German nationality (51.83) and the lowest average age was among the respondents of Slovak nationality (42.8).

With regard to the characteristics of the selected four ethnic groups in research sample in both rounds of the collection in terms of age, it can be stated that Germans and Czechs were predominantly respondents over 55 years, Slovak respondents were mostly under 34 years old, while the sample of respondents of Hungarian nationality was balanced across all four age groups. There were no significant age-related differences between respondents from individual ethnic groups between data collection rounds.

From the gender point of view, respondents of Czech, Hungarian and Slovak nationalities were predominantly women, while men were predominant among respondents of German nationality.

38 More detailed data on project participants/respondents of the research in 2004 and 2017 are given in: KENTOŠ, Michal. Vzorka / Účastníci výskumu. In ŠUTAJ, Štefan a kol. *Tendencie vývoja etnických vzťahov na Slovensku (komparatívny výskum národnostnej problematiky v rokoch 2004 – 2020)*. (záverečná správa z výskumu). Prešov : Universum, 2019, p. 13-18.

39 VÝROST, J. – HOMIŠINOVÁ, M. (eds.) *Národ, národnosti a etnické skupiny...*

Given that education was not a parameter for quota selection, the resulting set represents more a structure of education of research participants than of individual ethnic groups living in the territory of the Slovak Republic. Education of respondents of Slovak and Hungarian nationality was relatively similar, but with a different representation of secondary education. The largest share of university-educated respondents was between Czechs and Germans.

Table 1: Composition of the research sample according to the ethnicity of respondents and education in 2017 in %

	Elementary	Secondary without leaving exam	Secondary with leaving exam	University
Slovak	1.9	21.0	45.1	16.0
Hungarian	18.2	37.0	33.9	10.9
German	7.8	12.3	49.2	30.7
Czech	4.2	25.5	40.0	30.3

Analysis of the researched samples on the basis of their mother tongue confirmed the dominance of their own language among all ethnic groups. In most ethnic groups, the distribution of languages was almost identical in both rounds. It is important to note that in 2017 the respondents of Hungarian nationality showed a slightly higher incidence of Slovak than their mother tongue.

When analysing the ethnicity of respondents' parents, they were of the same nationality as the respondents. Individual ethnicities differed only in the degree of ethnic homogeneity. Slovak respondents achieved 90 %, while for Hungarians and Czechs it was 80 %. At the same time, Hungarians and Czechs living in Slovakia showed a lower degree of ethnic homogeneity in 2017. In all four groups, we recorded a higher proportion of parents of Slovak nationality in 2017 than in 2004.

The structure of ethnic affiliation of respondents' partners reports on the relative homogeneity of partnerships within individual ethnic communities. All groups had a dominant orientation towards their own ethnic community and the majority. Slovak and Hungarian respondents showed dominant orientation towards their own ethnic group and towards each other. The mother tongue of the respondents' partners also documented the previous findings on the dominant orientation towards their own ethnic community and majority in partnerships.

Samples in terms of ethnicity of the respondents' family background, whether it was the mother tongue of the father, mother or life partners, indicated a relatively high degree of homogeneity of ethnic communities living in Slovakia with a tendency to strengthen the conjunction with members of Slovak majority.

Based on this characteristic of the research sample, it can be concluded that the results of the research in both rounds may indicate acceptable results and, in particular, show a tendency in relations of ethnicities living in Slovakia and in evaluating the questions submitted.

Respondents' opinions on the "Beneš Decrees"

In both rounds, the same question was distributed to all respondents: *"What is the prevailing opinion of members of your minority on the so-called Beneš Decrees?"* As part of this block, the respondents replied YES/NO to six statements that describe the core of the issue. As is clear from the previous text, the subject of "conflict" or divergent opinions in the interpretation of the "Beneš Decrees" phenomenon is who was responsible for the creation of such legislation. Whether it was Czech and Slovak nationalism and chauvinism, hostility towards the Germans and Hungarians as a result of subordination and historical circumstances, or whether it was the result of German and Hungarian revisionist policies that rejected the Versailles peace and considered Czechoslovakia an artificial formation created by war. The second controversial point that most resonated in the instrumentalization of the story of the "Beneš Decrees" was and still is the factor of admitting guilt and apology for the persecution and often atrocities during historical development. We transformed the degree of admitting guilt and possible justification or acceptance of consequences for past offences into two symbolic historical complexes. Should Slovaks apologize for the Beneš Decrees and should Hungarians apologize for the Vienna Arbitration. These two symbols form connected vessels that can document the degree of empathy in the society towards the opinion of another ethnic community. The third view on one's own history and ethnic history, with which the addressed ethnic group lives for a long time, is to comment on the consequences of the decrees of E. Beneš for the present. A statement on compensation or possible repeal of post-war legislation may indicate how respondents perceive this issue in contemporary society.

The respondents in both surveys were asked to consider the same statements:

1. *Slovaks should apologize to Hungarians and Germans for the Beneš Decrees*
2. *Hungarians should apologize to Slovaks for the 1938 Vienna Arbitration*
3. *Hungarian and German pre-war policy contributed most to the issuance of the Beneš Decrees*
4. *The Beneš Decrees are the result of Czech and Slovak nationalism*
5. *Hungarians and Germans must be compensated for damages caused by the Beneš Decrees*
6. *The Beneš Decrees need to be abolished, as they can negatively affect life even today*

The issue of responsibility for post-war legislation was expressed by the statement: *"Should Slovaks apologize to Hungarians and Germans for the Beneš Decrees?"*.

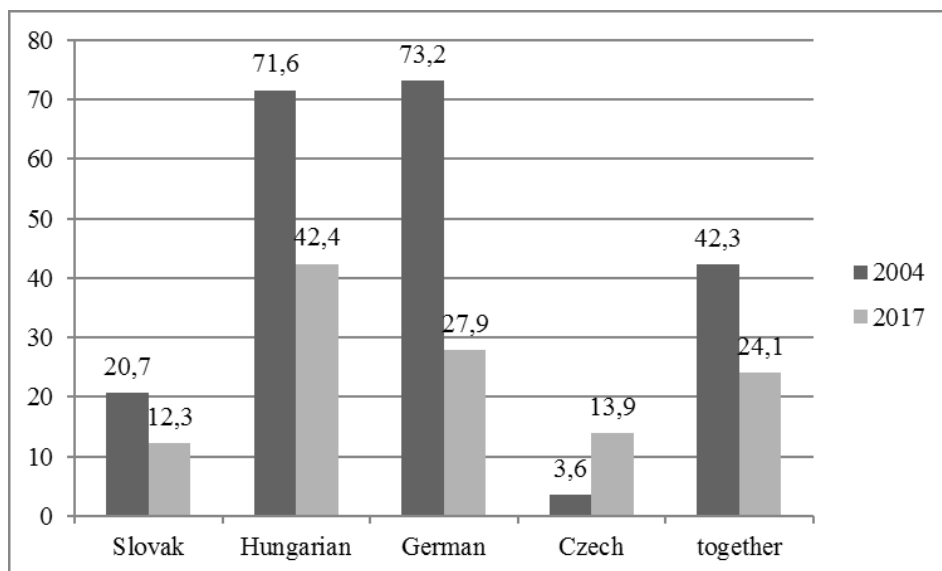


Chart 1: *Should Slovaks apologize to Hungarians and Germans for the Beneš Decrees?* (1st and 2nd round)

Compared to 2004, in the selected sample in 2017 the ratio of 'YES' responses asking for such justification fell from 42.3 % to 24.1 %. It is a result of the fact that the number of persons who would demand such justification significantly decreased among the respondents of German and Hungarian nationality, but it also decreased for Slovaks and slightly increased only for respondents of Czech nationality. Compared to 2004, the number of respondents of German and Hungarian nationality who demanded such an apology dropped significantly. Most notably among the respondents of German nationality who in 2004 most frequently answered positively to this question. In the research in 2017, the most prominent supporters of the apology were the respondents of Hungarian nationality, but their share also fell below 50 %. However, the number of Slovaks who would accept an apology to Germans and Hungarians for the "Beneš Decrees" also decreased, while the number of Czechs who supported this alternative increased. The reasons for these changes can be deduced from the ongoing changes in the social climate: a moderate ethnic environment especially after 2010 (absence of major ethnic conflicts at the international Slovak-Hungarian level, positive changes in strengthening of self-government, cultural and educational policies), changes in the demographic structure of the population – the aging of the population, the number of members of the generation who were personally affected by the issue, who themselves had experienced measures against the Germans and Hungarians after the Second World War, is decreasing. The tendency to reduce the abysmal dichotomous differences between respondents of Slovak and Czech nationality, on the one hand, and Hungarian and German nationality on the other hand is evident in the answers to all questions concerning the "Beneš Decrees".

There was a specific situation concerning the next question. „*Should Hungarians apologize to Slovaks for the 1938 Vienna Arbitration?*“

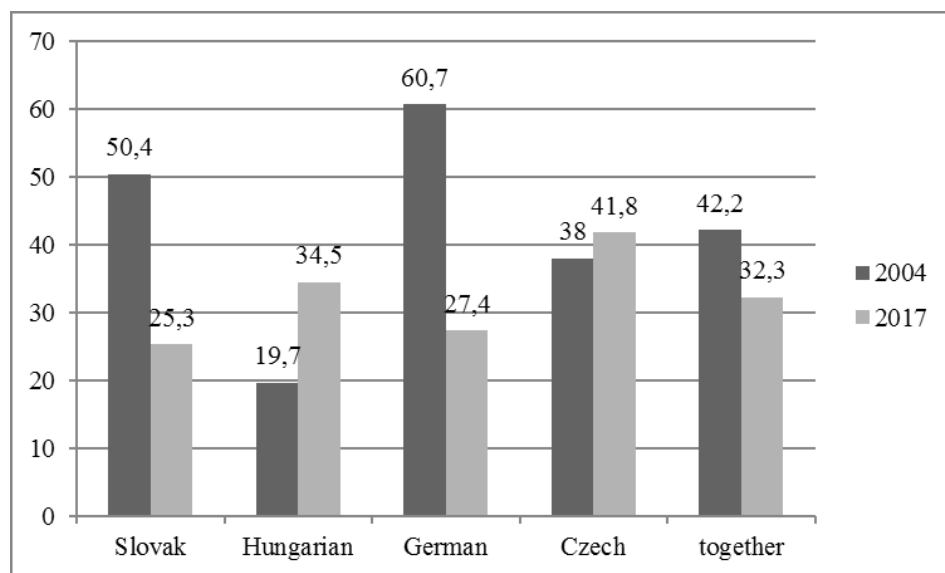


Chart 2: *Hungarians should apologize to Slovaks for the 1938 Vienna Arbitration* (1st and 2nd round)

First of all, the cohesion of the two blocs was disrupted. This resulted from the fact that while the issue of apology was thematically perceived as an issue of Czechs and Slovaks on the one hand and Germans and Hungarians on the other, the aspect of ethnic distance has to be considered in the Vienna Arbitration evaluation. Respondents of German nationality did not perceive it as “their own” and especially in 2004, less in 2017, accepted that Hungarians should apologize for the Vienna arbitration. It also reflected to a certain extent in the case of respondents of Czech nationality who perceived the apology for the Vienna arbitration as a less current problem and perceived the apology as part of general tolerance. A much more paradoxical situation occurred when evaluating the apology of Slovaks and Hungarians. When evaluating the statement “*Hungarians should apologize to Slovaks for the 1938 Vienna Arbitration*”, it turned out that, unlike in 2004, Hungarian respondents were more willing to accept this statement in 2017 (from 19.7 % to 34.5 %) and Slovak respondents did not ask for such apology to such extent as in 2004 (from 50.4 % to 25.3 %). Indeed, Hungarian respondents were more accommodating in the evaluation of the statement than respondents of Slovak nationality (Hungarians 34.5 %, Slovaks 25.3 %), which erased the significant difference in the evaluation of this statement in 2004 (Hungarians 19.7 %, Slovaks 50.4 %). In addition to the time factor, the distance from the historical event, changes in the perception of this historical event may also play a role, under the influence of the official historical memory, in which Vienna arbitration gradually

marginalizes in terms of knowledge, perception of historical injustices and trauma; it allows Hungarian respondents to be more tolerant, empathetic to the “Slovak injustice” and the apology for the Vienna Arbitration is not so important in present from the perspective of Slovak respondents. Their answers, which in 2004 differed significantly from the rest of the research sample, reached the values of other respondents. Respondents of Czech nationality remained in solidarity with the stereotypical “Slovak” solution and to the greatest extent demanded an apology for the Vienna arbitration.

Even in the third statement: *“Hungarian and German pre-war policy contributed most to the issuance of the Beneš Decrees”*, there was convergence of views among respondents from individual ethnic groups.

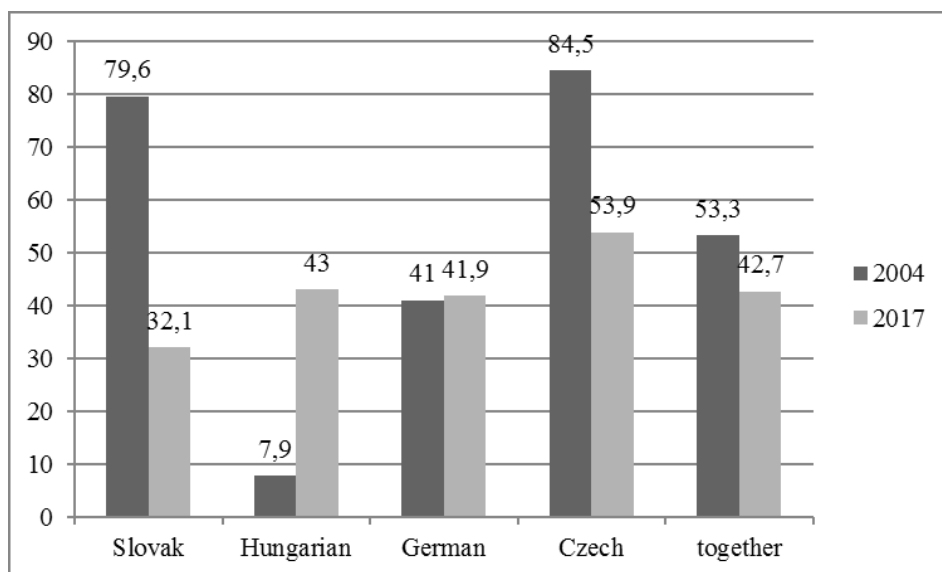


Chart 3: *Hungarian and German pre-war policy contributed most to the issuance of the Beneš Decrees* (1st and 2nd round)

While respondents of Slovak nationality agreed with the statement *“Hungarian and German pre-war policy contributed most to the issuance of the Beneš Decrees”* in 2004 to a much greater extent than in 2017 (in 2004 – 79.6 %, in 2017 only 32.1 %) respondents of Hungarian nationality rated it negatively in both surveys, but in 2017 to a much lesser extent than in 2004 (in 2004 – 92.1 % and in 2017 – 57.0 %). Respondents of German nationality evaluated this statement in approximately the same way in both surveys, while respondents of Czech nationality most often identified with this statement from the entire sample, but the agreement with this statement decreased in 2017b compared to 2004 (in 2004 – 84.5 %, in 2017 – 53.9 %).

Respondents could assume that the reason for adopting President Beneš’s decrees was either the policy of Germany and Hungary or it was Czech and Slovak nationalism.

However, both factors could have played an important role. However, a comparison of the responses to these two alternatives suggests that respondents decided mostly in eliminative way.

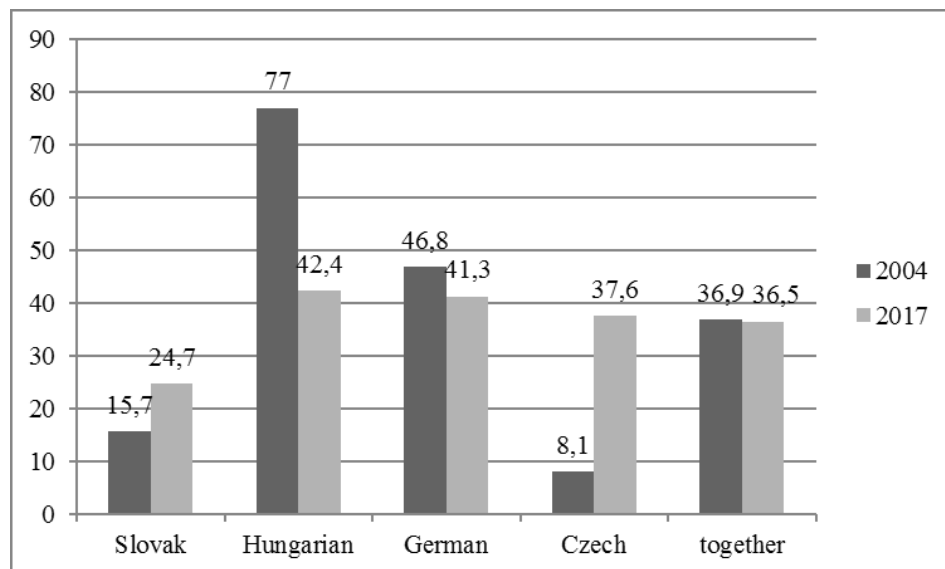


Chart 4: *The Beneš Decrees are the result of Czech and Slovak nationalism* (1st and 2nd round)

This is demonstrated by the results of respondents' answers in connection with the statement: *"The Beneš decrees are the result of Czech and Slovak nationalism"*. Respondents of German and Hungarian nationality considered Slovak and Czech nationalism the cause of post-war legislation more often, but this view was no longer prevalent to the extent that it was in 2004. On the other hand, there were more respondents of Slovak and even more respondents of Czech nationality who expressed their agreement with the statement *"Beneš decrees are the result of Czech and Slovak nationalism"*. This also reduced the distance between respondents of Slavic and non-Slavic ethnicities.

The respondents responded to the statement on the consequences of post-war legislation in the present in the traditional scheme of differing views of Slovak and Czech respondents on the one hand and Hungarian and German respondents on the other.

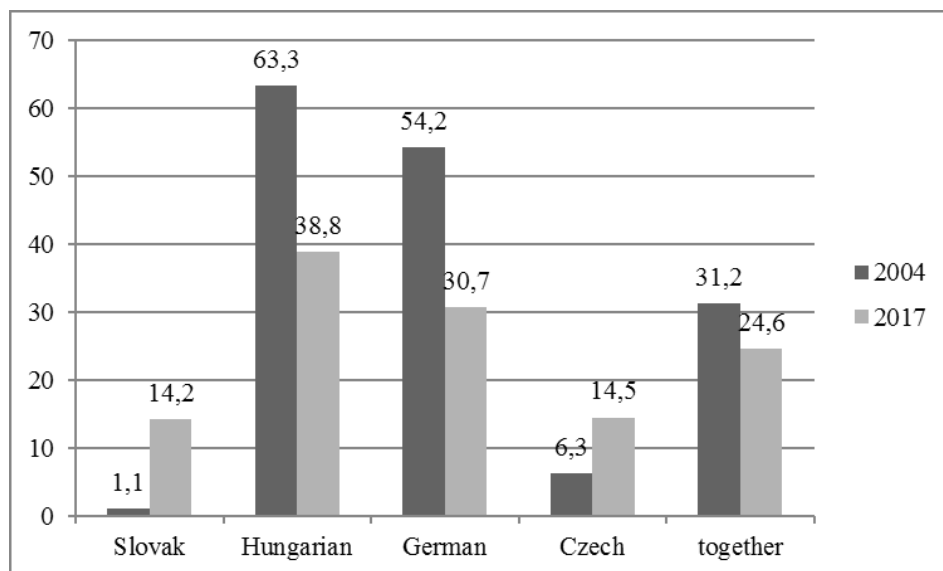


Chart 5: *Hungarians and Germans must be compensated for damages caused by the Beneš Decrees (1st and 2nd round)*

However, the tendency towards convergence of opinions was also reflected in the evaluation of the statement *"Hungarians and Germans must be compensated for damages caused by the Beneš Decrees."* While in 2004 most of respondents of German and Hungarian nationality believed, unlike Slovaks and Czechs, that it was necessary to compensate those against whom the decrees were applied, in 2017 the difference of opinion decreased as part of respondents of Slovak and Czech nationality expressed their agreement with compensation and at the same time the proportion of Germans and Hungarians who demanded such compensation significantly decreased and the respondents of all ethnic groups had already had a negative opinion on compensation. Such results could indicate that during the monitored period the importance of this issue for respondents in all the monitored groups decreased.

The last evaluated statement responded to the hypothetical possibility of abolishing post-war legislation. The problematic and nonsensical nature of such a step was discussed by experts in several forums. However, the public continued to be influenced by political speeches and decisions (resolution of the National Council of the Slovak Republic on the inviolability of post-war legislation – appeals by Hungarian and German politicians to remove this legislation from the Slovak legislation).

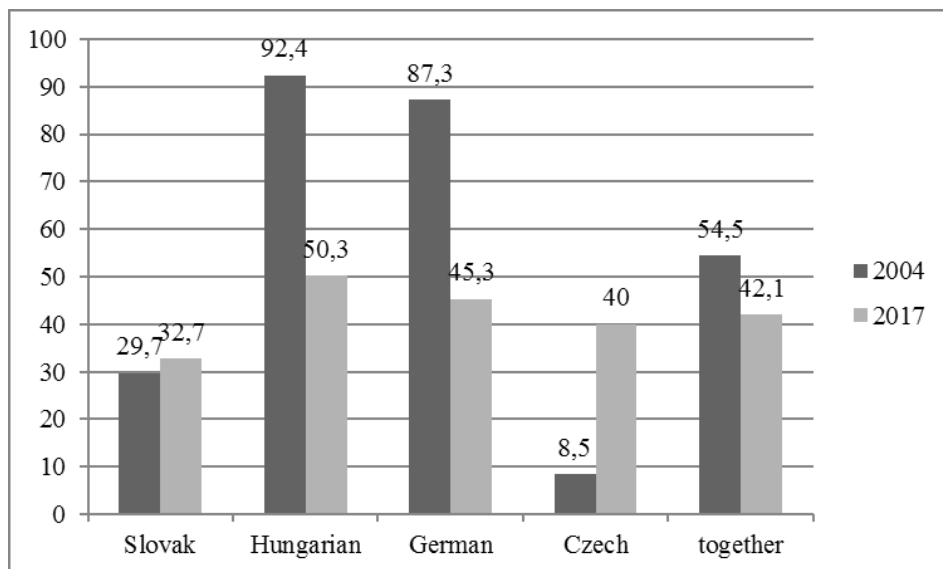


Chart 6: *The Beneš Decrees need to be abolished, as they can negatively affect life even today.* (1st and 2nd round)

The time effect or impact of discussions in professional texts and public space was reflected in the convergence of respondents' opinions. While in 2004 the vast majority of respondents of German and Hungarian nationality agreed with the statement that the "Beneš Decrees" need to be abolished, in 2007 their number oscillated around 50 %. On the other hand, the percentage of respondents that agreed with this statement increased for Slovak respondents and increased even more for Czech respondents, even though it did not achieve the percentage of respondents of German and Hungarian nationality even in 2017.

Respondents' view of autonomy

Another issue in which history and the stereotypes created by it play an important role is the issue of autonomy. As we have already indicated in the introductory part, it has a special connotation in Slovak environment and evokes various answers, often influenced by historical memory and experience. One of the ways to create autonomous areas is also the ethnic principle, which was the subject of our question. The question was as follows: *"In your opinion, should national minorities be enabled to create some form of autonomy in their residential area?"* The respondents could choose from the following options:

1. *no, no forms of autonomy should be allowed*
2. *yes, namely cultural and educational autonomy*
3. *yes, namely territorial autonomy*
4. *different opinion*

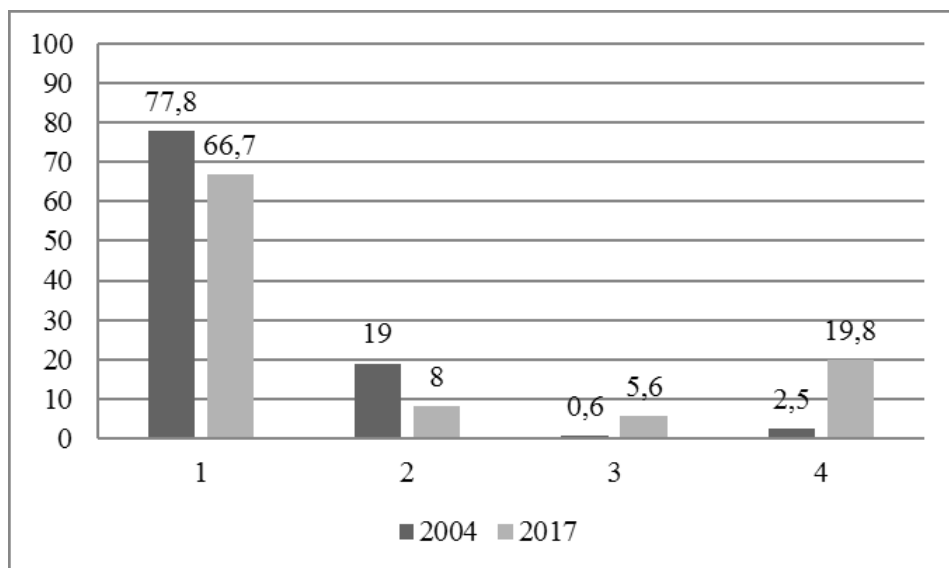


Chart 7: Percentage of answers of respondents of Slovak nationality to the question concerning autonomy

In 2004, more than three-quarters of respondents of Slovak nationality tended to believe that no forms of autonomy should be allowed and about 1/5 would grant national minorities autonomy in the cultural and educational area. In 2017, the number of respondents refusing any form of autonomy in the sample decreased by 11 percent and the number of respondents accepting cultural and educational autonomy decreased as well. The number of Slovak respondents who would be willing to accept territorial autonomy increased to 5.6 %, but still formed a significant minority in the sample. On the other hand, around 20 % of respondents would choose another alternative than those offered.

A similar scenario was chosen by respondents of Czech nationality. Most respondents in both rounds of research rejected any form of autonomy, with the difference that the number of respondents accepting cultural and school autonomy increased and, unlike Slovaks, fewer respondents chose a different alternative.

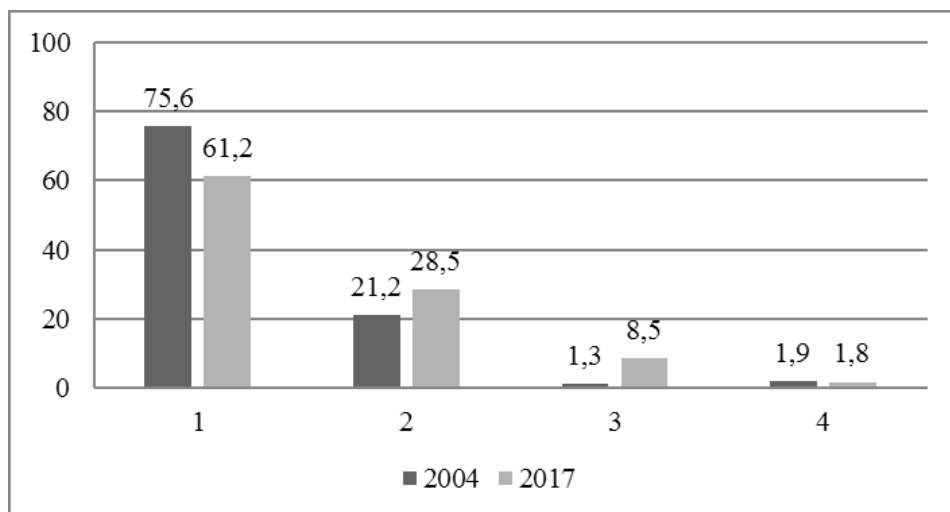


Chart 8: Percentage of answers of respondents of Czech nationality to the question concerning autonomy

The results obtained from respondents of Hungarian and German nationality also show an interesting picture. In 2017, the number of respondents who rejected any form of autonomy increased sharply (from 13.1 % to 54.5 %) and the number of respondents who had previously accepted the idea of cultural and educational autonomy significantly decreased (from 76.9 % to 30.3 %) and the number of respondents supporting territorial autonomy also decreased slightly. Obviously, Hungarian respondents appreciated the changes that were made in education and culture in the last decade, when it was possible to secure subsidies to culture by means of a separate fund managed by the minorities themselves under the Ministry's authority; as well as changes made in education by transfer of regional schools under the competence of municipalities in the case of elementary schools, or self-governing territorial units in the case of secondary education. The idea of formal creation of autonomous units thus lost the importance it had in the previous period in practical terms. The idea of territorial autonomy proved controversial and polarizing over the past period, and so, even among respondents who prefer peaceful coexistence, there is no support for the principle of maintaining ethnic stability and unity of Hungarians in Central Europe, even though it is often described as an important beyond the borders.

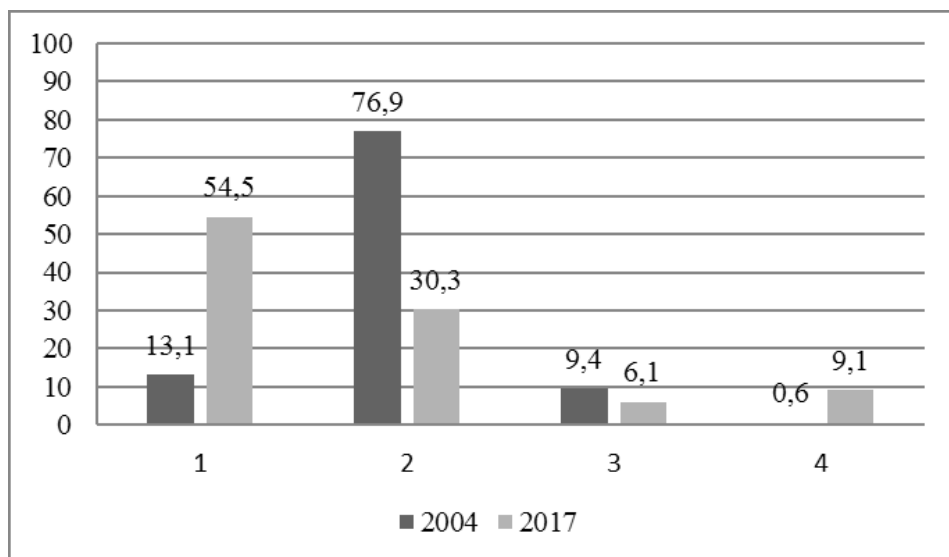


Chart 9: Percentage of answers of respondents of Hungarian nationality to the question concerning autonomy

In the case of respondents of German nationality, probably also because the German ethnic group in Slovakia does not currently live in concentrated localities, changes in minority policy in the last decade had no significant impact the stereotypes from the previous period were preserved. There was a slight increase in the number of respondents who rejected any form of autonomy, but at the same time, there was a slight increase in the number of those who would prefer territorial autonomy (from 2.5 % to 11.2 %), while the percentage of respondents preferring cultural and school autonomy decreased from 34.4 % to 19.6 %.

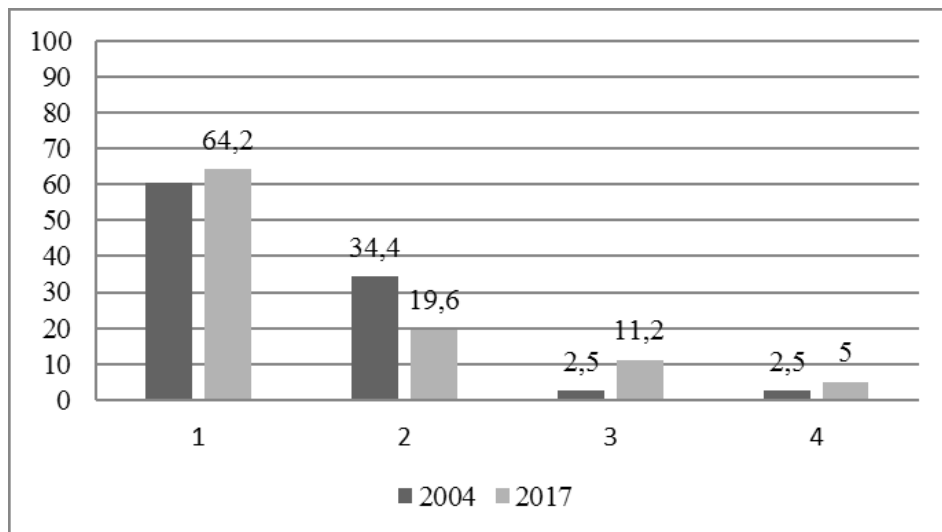


Chart 10: Percentage of answers of respondents of German nationality to the question concerning autonomy

Respondents' opinions on the "Beneš Decrees" in relation to the opinion on autonomy

Two current and historical topics, thus, the perception of President E. Beneš 's decrees and autonomy as perceived from the point of view of ethnic factor and the ethnicity of the respondents may point to the interrelationship between these components.

We compared the opinions of respondents according to ethnicity, answering the question *"What is the prevailing opinion of members of your minority on the so-called Beneš decrees?"* We compared the answers to individual statements with the respondents' answers to the possibilities of autonomy in Slovakia.

Statement: "Slovaks should apologize to Hungarians and Germans for the Beneš Decrees"

If we compare the positive answers of respondents to the possible application of autonomy, we can see that all respondents who favoured both cultural and educational autonomy or territorial autonomy in both rounds much more preferred apology of Slovaks for the Beneš decrees than those who rejected any form of autonomy. At the same time, it should be noted that in case of respondents of German and Hungarian nationality, the tendency for an apology was more favoured also by those respondents who refused autonomy, than was the case with Slovaks and Czechs. At the same time, we can state that when comparing the results of 2004 and 2017, there is a percentage decrease in the requirement to apologise to Germans and Hungarians regardless of the opinion on the possibility of autonomy. Although the number of respondents who tended towards some form of autonomy among Slovaks and Czechs was significantly lower than that of respondents of German and Hungarian nationality. The respondents of Slovak and Czech

nationality who were willing to accept some form of autonomy were more inclined to agree to an apology. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: *Slovaks should apologize to Hungarians and Germans for Beneš decrees* and YES answers to forms of autonomy in percent (1st and 2nd round)

Forms of autonomy	No forms		Cultural and educational autonomy		Territorial autonomy	
	2004	2017	2004	2017	2004	2017
round						
Slovaks	13.4	6.5	44.4	38.5	0.0	44.4
Hungarians	52.6	25.6	72.5	60.0	86.7	70.0
Germans	65.9	25.2	87.0	37.1	50.0	40.0
Czechs	1.9	7.9	6.7	23.4	50.0	21.4

The statement: *“Hungarians should apologize to Slovaks for the 1938 Vienna Arbitration”*

The evaluation of this statement showed that a smaller number of respondents answered positively to the question or statement concerning President Beneš’s decrees. In such case, the result may either be 0.0 % (in case of consent to territorial autonomy e.g. 0.6 % of respondents supporting territorial autonomy among respondents of Slovak nationality and 2.6 % of respondents of German nationality in 2004) or, on the other hand, a relatively high proportion of the resulting answer (out 1.3 % of respondents of Czech nationality favouring territorial autonomy a half supported the statement that Hungarians should apologize to Slovaks for the Vienna arbitration). Respondents of German nationality showed more significant changes. Compared to 2004, when 51.7 % of respondents of the respondents who did not support any form of autonomy supported the approval of apology for the Vienna Arbitration, it was only 16.5 % in 2017. In 2004, out of 16.1 % of respondents of Hungarian nationality favouring cultural and educational autonomy supported the statement about apology, and this ratio increased to 46.0 % in 2017. In the case of respondents of Slovak nationality, the proportion of respondents rejecting cultural and educational autonomy, but also rejecting autonomy, who agreed with the statement of an apology for Vienna arbitration, was halved compared to 2004. Other responses did not show any significant differences of opinion among respondents in relation to opinion on autonomy. The comparison is illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: *Hungarians should apologize to Slovaks for the 1938 Vienna Arbitration* and YES answers to forms of autonomy in percent (1st and 2nd round)

Forms of autonomy	No forms		Cultural and educational autonomy		Territorial autonomy	
	2004	2017	2004	2017	2004	2017
round						
Slovaks	45.4	20.4	74.1	38.5	0.0	44.4
Hungarians	36.8	23.3	16.1	46.0	28.6	60.0
Germans	51.7	16.5	76.1	51.4	0.0	45.0
Czechs	36.5	33.7	37.9	53.2	50.0	64.3

Statement: *“Hungarian and German pre-war policy contributed most to the issuance of the Beneš Decrees”*

Considering the fact that small percentage of respondents chose the alternative of territorial autonomy among all ethnic groups, we can also disregard the findings, as justified in the previous statement, and we will not deal with them because they have no informative value. The tendency to identify with the statement that the post-war legislation was mainly caused by Hungarian and German pre-war policy was also reflected in the fact that respondents of Slovak and Czech nationality supported this statement regardless of whether they rejected any form of autonomy or admitted the existence of cultural and educational autonomy. In the case of respondents of Hungarian and German nationality who did not demand any form of autonomy the percentage of respondents supporting this alternative remained stable in both rounds of research. However, in the case of the respondents of these nationalities supporting educational and cultural autonomy, there was a significant increase in the proportion of respondents approving this statement. It is among them that we can look for an increase in the respondents supporting this statement. More detailed results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: *“Hungarian and German pre-war policy contributed most to the issuance of the Beneš Decrees”* and YES answers to forms of autonomy in percent (1st and 2nd round)

Forms of autonomy	No forms		Cultural and educational autonomy		Territorial autonomy	
	2004	2017	2004	2017	2004	2017
round						
Slovaks	84.8	30.6	69.2	46.2	0.0	22.2
Hungarians	26.3	28.9	5.0	56.0	7.7	70.0
Germans	45.9	41.7	30.4	48.6	0.0	40.0
Czechs	83.0	55.4	87.1	51.1	100.0	57.1

Statement: *The Beneš Decrees are the result of Czech and Slovak nationalism*

Based on the findings in both surveys, it can be stated that respondents of all ethnic groups who would accept cultural and educational autonomy agree more often with the statement that the decrees are the consequence of Czech and Slovak nationalism in the post-war era than those who refused autonomy. However, when comparing 2004 and

2017, the data found have a decreasing tendency for Germans and Hungarians and an increasing tendency for Czechs and Slovaks. Nevertheless, the percentage of respondents that agree is significantly higher among respondents of Hungarian and German nationality than among Slovaks and Czechs.

Table 5: “The Beneš Decrees are the result of Czech and Slovak nationalism” and YES answers to forms of autonomy in percent (1st and 2nd round).

Forms of autonomy	No forms		Cultural and educational autonomy		Territorial autonomy	
	2004	2017	2004	2017	2004	2017
round						
Slovaks	13.1	24.1	29.6	30.8	0.0	33.3
Hungarians	63.2	26.7	80.7	62.0	61.5	50.0
Germans	38.4	38.3	55.6	42.9	100.0	55.0
Czechs	5.9	37.6	6.7	34.0	50.0	57.1

Statement: “Hungarians and Germans must be compensated for damages caused by the Beneš Decrees”

Considering that only a small percentage of respondents of Slovak and Czech nationality supported this statement, interesting findings can be seen in the results of respondents of German and Hungarian nationality. Respondents of Hungarian and German nationality who tended towards cultural and educational autonomy achieved a higher score of agreement. At the same time, when comparing the results from 2004 and 2017, there was a decreasing tendency in the number of respondents, regardless of their relationship to autonomy.

Table 6: “Hungarians and Germans must be compensated for damages caused by the Beneš Decrees” and YES answers to forms of autonomy in percent (1st and 2nd round)

Forms of autonomy	No forms		Cultural and educational autonomy		Territorial autonomy	
	2004	2017	2004	2017	2004	2017
round						
Slovaks	9.0	7.4	22.2	38.5	0.0	44.4
Hungarians	42.1	23.3	65.5	46.0	71.4	90.0
Germans	50.6	21.7	55.3	51.4	50.0	50.0
Czechs	5.5	12.9	6.7	17.0	50.0	14.3

Statement: “The Beneš Decrees need to be abolished, as they can negatively affect life even today”

The results of the research showed that respondents accepting cultural and educational autonomy more often leaned towards a positive assessment of the statement on the abolition of President E. Beneš’s decrees than respondents who refused autonomy. As already mentioned, Germans and Hungarians were in favour of the agreeing statement to a much greater extent than Slovaks and Czechs. It was also confirmed that, regardless of

whether they refused or supported autonomy when comparing the results from 2004 and 2017, the number of respondents of German and Hungarian nationality who agreed to the abolishment of the “Beneš Decrees” decreased in 2017 and the share of respondents of Czech and Slovak nationality who would accept the abolition of decrees slightly increased.

Table 7: *“The Beneš Decrees need to be abolished, as they can negatively affect life even today”* and YES answers to forms of autonomy in percent (1st and 2nd round)

Forms of autonomy	No forms		Cultural and educational autonomy		Territorial autonomy	
	2004	2017	2004	2017	2004	2017
round						
Slovaks	23.9	32.4	50.0	53.8	100.0	55.6
Hungarians	85.7	40.0	92.6	60.0	100.0	60.0
Germans	83.3	40.0	94.0	66.7	66.7	60.0
Czechs	6.6	34.7	16.1	46.8	0.0	57.1

Conclusion

Many works by Slovak, Czech and Hungarian authors point out to the problematic perception of the decrees of President E. Beneš and the differences in the interpretation of their consequences nowadays. This is also confirmed by the results of two surveys carried out by the aforementioned surveys. It appears that there are links not only between the ethnicity of the respondents and their answers to questions concerning President E. Beneš's decrees and acceptance of autonomy or different forms of autonomy but also between the opinion on decrees and individual forms of autonomy. Similarly, it is possible to assume such internal links between answers to other questions. It can be stated that during the years 2004 and 2017 there was a consensus between the opinions of respondents of Slovak and Czech nationality on the one hand and Hungarian and German nationality on the other. At the same time, there was a convergence of opinions on the questions asked and interpreted in this work between the two groups.

It appears that there are links between the answers to the preferred forms of autonomy and the statements concerning post-war legislation.

Today's view on the problems of the past is certainly different, determined by new knowledge, the present and evolutionary trends of today's Europe.⁴⁰ Every phenomenon and event has its roots in the past. It is necessary to know history in order to deal adequately with today's problems that are the consequences of historical events and decisions. History can no longer be changed or abolished, but we can interpret it differently and amend or mitigate old wrongs with new decisions. It appears that ethnicity, ethnic identity continues to play an important role in these processes.

40 ŠUTAJ, Štefan. Niektoré problémy interpretácie slovenských a maďarských dejín v súčasnosti. In SZIGETI, László (ed.). *V službe demokracie. Pamätnica k sedemdesiatke Martina Bútora*. Bratislava : Kalligram, 2014, p. 471-491.

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Fragments of the National Policy of Hungarian Governments with Respect to the Governments of Viktor Orbán¹

Zlatica Sáposová

Abstract:

Since 1990, national policy has become a matter of responsibility for Hungarian governments. National policy government structure, as well as its support system, were established. After the regime change, governments chose a cooperative or confrontational path with regard to national policy. Prime Minister József Antall's statement about 15 million Hungarians also provoked controversial reactions in neighbouring countries and brought the concept of national policy back to public life. National policy became a governmental activity that focused on the relationship between the Hungarian state and Hungarian communities abroad. For the first decade of the 21st century, national policy was supposed to secure and strengthen the position of foreign Hungarians through diplomatic channels, through good relations with neighbouring countries. In 2010, there were radical changes in national policy. Viktor Orbán's second right-wing government had built a systemic framework for national policy by 2014. A new constitution was adopted. Granting of dual citizenship and voting rights for foreign Hungarians created conditions for the public (legislative) reunification of the nation (during the third Orbán government, 2014 – 2018). Viktor Orbán's idea of the cross-border reunification of the Hungarian nation was being fulfilled.

Keywords: peace treaty, regime change, majority, minority, national policy, supportive policy.

The national policy, the policy of Hungarians has already been partially elaborated in the literature. Nándor Bárdy is one of the most important researchers in this field.² His works are fundamental for understanding the issue. However, there are other major experts,³

1 This work was supported by the Agency for the Support of Research and Development on the basis of Agreement No. APVV 15-0745.

2 BÁRDI, Nándor. *Tény és való. A budapesti kormányzatok és a határon túli magyarság kapcsolattörténete*. Pozsony : Kalligram, 2004, 272 p.; BÁRDI, Nándor (ed.). *Globalizáció és nemzetépítés*. Budapest : Teleki László Alapítvány, 1999, 319 p.; BÁRDI, Nándor – FEDINEC, Csilla – SZARKA László (eds.). *Kisebbségi magyar közösségek a 20. században*. Budapest : Gondolat Kiadó – MTA Kisebbségkutató Intézet, 2008, 508 p.; BÁRDI, Nándor – SIMON, Attila (eds). *Integrációs stratégiák a magyar kisebbségek történetében*. Fórum Kisebbségkutató Intézet, Somorja, 2006, 440 p.; BÁRDI, Nándor. *Národná politika Maďarska po roku 1989*. In ZAHORÁN, Csaba – KOLLAI, István – OTČENÁŠOVÁ, Slávka (eds). *Neznámy sused. Dvadsať rokov Maďarska (1990 – 2010)*. Budapest – Bratislava : Terra Cognita Alapítvány – Vydavateľstvo Talentum, 2011, p. 145-175.

3 TÖRZSÖK, Erika. *Paraszt az Orbán-politika sakktábláján a nemzetpolitika*. Online: <http://www.cecid.net/hu/taxonomy/term/31> [cit. 15. 1. 2020].

working on this topic, analysing the attitudes of Hungarian governments, prime ministers, individual political parties and their leading representatives towards foreign Hungarians. They examine the policy from various aspects, in particular: political, economic, social. Unfortunately, individual analysts often interpret the issue based on affinity towards political parties, without a critical approach and knowledge of the historical background.

The use of individual terms to describe Hungarian communities living beyond Hungarian borders 'in the detached territories' (*elcsatolt területeken*) or 'homeland' (*külhonban*) has a political character in Hungarian political life. These names assume various (legal, political, symbolic) contexts, but they relate to one thing: the unified Hungarian nation existing beyond the borders.

Different terms are used for the policies of Hungarian governments concerning Hungarians living in neighbouring states: e.g. national policy (*nemzetpolitika*), cross-border policy (*határontúli politika*), Hungarian policy (*magyarságpolitika*).

The development of assistance for foreign Hungarians living abroad can be divided into several stages.

1. Period of vision of future revision 1920 – 1938/1940/1941.
2. Period of annexation ('small Hungarian worlds') 1938/1940/1941 – 1944.
3. Period of helplessness (without means) 1944 – 1947.
4. Autonomism and the period of silence 1948 – 1956.
5. Renunciation and the period of silence 1956 – 1964/1968.
6. Rediscovery of the issue and internal topics 1964/1968 – 1983/1985.
7. Institutionalization of cultural nation 1985/1989 – 1992.
8. Institutionalization of foreign Hungarians and expectation of autonomy 1990 – 1996.
9. Support for the building of a parallel society, institutionalization of national integration 1996 – 2004.
10. Rhetoric of integration (compensation of deficits of Hungarian society) dual citizenship and voting rights.⁴

After the end of World War I, minority issue became the focus of international politics. The focus on national minorities was mainly due to the downfall of the three multinational empires after World War I (Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, Russia and the Ottoman Empire). The victorious powers in the League of Nations sought to maintain order, ensure stability, and guarantee peace through an international agreement on national minorities.

After World War I, approximately 30 million people lived as members of national minorities in East-Central Europe, a third of the whole population. This was mostly due to the new geopolitical arrangement based on a system of peace treaties. In the new organization of society, economic and strategic aspects were preferred instead of ethnic principle and the right to self-determination. The system of protection of national minorities was based on peace treaties signed by individual states.⁵ The successor states

4 BÁRDI, Nándor. *Tény és való...*

5 NAGY, L. Zsuzsa. *A Párizs környéki békék, 1919 – 1920*. In *Historia*, 1979, Vol. 1, Iss. 1. Online: www.historia.hu; [cit. 23. 2. 2020]; ROMSICS, Ignác. *Trianonská mierová zmluva*. Bratislava : Kalligram. 2006, 240

signed treaties for the protection of the rights of national minorities with the victorious powers, but their implementation was often intentionally sabotaged.

After the Treaty of Trianon,⁶ the Hungarians living permanently beyond the borders of Hungary became the second largest ethnic group on the continent. Approximately 3.5 million people (34 %) in the newly created successor states changed from the majority nation (outside the mother country) to a minority position. Only 93,000 km² and 7.5 million inhabitants out of 18 million remained from the Kingdom of Hungary in the so-called Trianon Hungary.⁷

According to the last census in the Kingdom of Hungary (1910), 1,072,000 persons with Hungarian mother tongue became citizens of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1,664,000 persons became citizens of Romania and 600,000 such people became citizens of the new state of Yugoslavia. Censuses conducted in the first half of the 1920s in Hungary's neighbouring countries had already registered much lower numbers of Hungarian nationals, approximately 790 000 people less.⁸ (Table 1).

Table 1: Population of Hungarian nationality in individual Central European countries after the Treaty of Trianon

State	Year of census	Number of inhabitants of Hungarian nationality
Austria	1923	26 474
Czechoslovakia	1921	761 823
Yugoslavia	1921	472 409
Romania	1927	1 307 543
Total		2 568 249
Hungary	1928	7 147 053
Number of inhabitants of Hungarian nationality in the Carpathian Basin		9 715 302

Source: FRITZ, László. *A magyarság a nagyvilágban* [online]. In SÜLYÖK, István. – FRITZ, László. (eds.), *Erdélyi Magyar Évkönyv 1918 – 1929*, Vol. I, 263-267. Kolozsvár: „Juventus” Kiadás, 1930, Online: http://adatbank.transindex.ro/html/alcim_pdf10777.pdf

According to the official census, more than 2.5 million people of Hungarian nationality lived in the neighbouring countries of Hungary in the first third of the 20th century. Hungarian minority in the successor states had to develop its own institutional system in order to preserve its own ethnic identity, having lost its majority position.

p.; ORMOS, Mária. Új rend a világban. Egy meg hasonlott békerendszer. In *Rubicon. Történelmi magazin*. 2.sz. 1997. Online: http://www.rubicon.hu/magyar/oldalak/uj_rend_a_vilagban_egy_meg_hasonlott_bekerendszer [cit. 23. 2. 2020].

6 It formed a part of the Versailles Peace system after the WWI.

7 What was left of the Kingdom of Hungary in the Post-Trianon Hungary: of area 32.7 %; of population 41.6 %; of urban population 62.7 %.

8 *A magyarság a nagyvilágban*. Online: http://adatbank.ro/html/alcim_pdf10777.pdf [cit. 10. 1. 2020].

Developments on the European continent in the second half of the 1930s, together with the growing expansiveness of Nazi Germany and the escalating criticism of the Versailles system, were also supported by Hungarian ruling circles, who had the hope of border revision.⁹

Hungary's policy in the interwar period was characterized by a combination of irredentism and revenge. The core of foreign policy was irredentism. Budapest's political circles maintained close contacts with the representatives of the political, social life of Hungarian nationality and cooperated with their political parties and organizations in neighbouring states. At that time there was no policy of assistance for the Hungarians living in the neighbouring states, there was only the search for the culprit for the consequences of Trianon and efforts to revise it. The irredentist propaganda "*became a routine*" referring to historical, cultural, economic, ethnic and geographical arguments.¹⁰ Irredentism brought its results in 1938, 1941.¹¹

The politics of the Hungarian ruling elite and Hungary's participation in World War II sealed the fate of the Hungarian minority for the next decades. The peace treaties adopted in Paris concluded World War II and restored the borders determined by the Treaty of Trianon with only minor changes. The ambition of individual nations to create "national" states was one of the most important factors of post-war development. Persecution measures (accepting the principle of collective guilt, displacement of Hungarian nationals, deportation, re-slovakization) after the Second World War had a tragic impact on the development of Hungarian minorities in individual countries. After the second lost world war, Hungarian foreign policy did not have the means to promote its interests. In addition, during the coalition period, individual political parties of Hungary elaborated their own views on Trianon.¹² Their hopes for ethnic revision were no longer justified.

In 1948, the totalitarian system of the Communist Party "won" also in Hungary, and recognized the Trianon borders under the influence of the "Moscow comrades".¹³ The

9 GABZDILOVÁ, Soňa – SÁPOSOVÁ, Zlatica. Maďarská menšina na Slovensku – pohľad do minulosti a súčasný stav. In ŠUTAJ, Štefan (ed). *Národ a národnosť. Stav výskumu po roku 1989 a jeho perspektívy*. Prešov : Universum, 2004, p. 117.

10 SÁPOSOVÁ, Zlatica. Národná politika maďarských vlád po roku 1989 (na základe vybraných aspektov). ŠUTAJ, Štefan – REGINÁČOVÁ, Nikola – HELDÁKOVÁ, Lucia (eds.). *Aktuálne otázky výskumu národnostnej politiky a národnostných vzťahov na Slovensku v 20. a 21. storočí*. Prešov : Universum, 2017, p. 105.

11 First revision success: Vienna Arbitration, 2 November 1938. Accession of the southern part of Slovakia to Hungary, 12,000 km², 1 million inhabitants; Second Vienna Arbitration, 30 August 1940, Hungary managed to obtain from Romania the territory of northern Transylvania (or Northwestern Transylvania), which Hungary lost after World War I under the Treaty of Trianon.

12 The Independent Agricultural Party (Független Kisgazdapárt), the winning party in the 1945 elections, identified with an ethnic-based revision, and the National Peasant Party (Nemzeti Parasztpárt) considered efforts to revise the borders to the pre-Trianon period to be chauvinistic and anti-people. The Social Democratic Party (Szociáldemokrata Párt) did not want to identify with the idea of the interwar period of Hungary or with its institutional system and tradition. The Social Democrats called for an examination of the responsibility of state power, as well as the moral responsibility of Hungarian society and intellectuals for the previous events. LITVÁN, György. *Koalíciós köztérkép, 1945 – 1948*. Rubiconline. Történelmi Magazin. Online: http://www.rubicon.hu/magyar/oldalak/koalicios_kozjatak_1945_1948 [cit. 16. 1. 2020].

13 CSARNAI, Márk. *Szocializmus és nemzetpolitika – Magyarország viszonya a határon túli magyarsághoz (1945 – 1989)*, Újkor.hu. 2017, Online: <http://ujkor.hu/content/szocializmus-es-nemzetpolitika-magyar>

nationality issue was replaced by the idea of class struggle. The intentional silence of the Communist leadership about Trianon and foreign Hungarians diverted public attention from the irredentist idea, but also diverted the interest in information about Hungarians living in neighbouring countries.¹⁴ Hungarian society received information about foreign Hungarians only through mass culture. Magazines wrote about them only superficially and in the spirit of socialist internationalism.¹⁵ Official institutional cooperation between the mother country and Hungarians abroad was almost non-existent, there were only personal, family relations. Nevertheless, Hungarian diplomacy followed Hungarians abroad. This is evidenced by archive documents located in the Hungarian National Archives in Budapest. *“... it watched what was happening in the circles of the Hungarian minority living abroad. The reason could have been be that the leaders Rákosi Mátyás, Gerő Ernő, Farkas Mihály, coming from the middle classes, had personal ties with Hungarians in the communist movement living abroad. There was an occasion when Mátyás Rákosi wanted to intervene in Moscow for the persecution of Hungarians in Czechoslovakia.”*¹⁶

After the fall of communist regimes in Eastern and Central European countries, the protection of national minorities became one of the most important issues. States clearly showed that they were interested in taking care of their ex-patriots living in other states. The adopted constitutions of individual states contained provisions under which the parent states were responsible for their minorities living abroad, moreover, they supported and strengthened their relationship with the parent state.¹⁷

Before the change of regime in Hungary, during the socialist era, it was “not customary” to be concerned about Hungarian minorities in neighbouring countries. The first freely elected government in Hungary was formed on 23 May 1990 under the leadership of Prime Minister József Antall. At the meeting of the Hungarian Democratic Forum (Magyar Demoktara Fórum) on 2 June 1991, Prime Minister József Antall commemorated the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Trianon. *“We lost two thirds of the country, no one can deny us the right to pain. And we insist that all our neighbours guarantee collective and personal rights of national minorities on the basis of a peace treaty.”* In this speech, there was a sentence that received controversial reactions from political representatives and public of neighbouring countries, due to false interpretation *“In legal terms, according to Hungarian public law, for every Hungarian citizen in a country of ten million, I want to be the prime minister, spiritually and emotionally, for fifteen million Hungarians.”*

He also stated that he was determined to protect national, ethnic and religious minorities living in Hungary. He stressed that pure national feelings are not directed

rorszag-viszonya-a-hataron-tuli-magyarsaghoz-1945-1989 [cit. 16. 1. 2020].

14 BALOGH, Gábor. *Kádár és Trianon*. Nagy Magyarország 2009/1, 2009. augusztus 4. Online: <http://tortenelemportal.hu/2009/08/kadar-es-trianon/> [cit. 9. 1. 2020].

15 KOLLAI, István. *Rozštiepená minulosť. Kapitoly z histórie Slovákov a Maďarov*. Budapešť : Terra Recognita, 2008.

16 ABLONCZY, Balázs. *A történelem túllépett Trianonon, a magyarok még nem*. Online: https://mult-kor.hu/20100604_a_tortenelem_tullepett_trianonon_a_magyarok_meg_nem [cit. 20. 12. 2019].

17 Ústava Rumunskej republiky (1991) 7. článok; Ústava Slovinskej republiky (1991) 5. článok; Ústava Macedónskej republiky (1991) 49. článok; Ústava Chorvátskej republiky (1991) 10. článok; Ústava Ukrajinskej republiky (1996) 12.článok; Ústava Poľskej republiky (1997) 6. článok.

against anyone, either within the borders or across the borders.¹⁸ Thanks to Prime Minister J. Antall, the concept of national policy (*"nemzetpolitika"*) returned to the awareness of the people of Hungary, as well as the Hungarians living as a minority in the neighbouring countries.

The government of Gyula Horn (MSZP-SZDSZ coalition, 1994 – 1998) developed the national policy on the principles of good relations with neighbouring countries so that the actions of the Hungarian government, even in the interests of foreign Hungarians, would in no way affect the neighbourly relations. Basic treaties (*alapszerződés*) with Romania and Slovakia were signed during the government of Gyula Horn. Each party signed the treaty for different reasons. Hungary, in order to observe fundamental rights for Hungarian nationality, Romania needed the Hungarian party to guarantee compliance with the principle of inviolability of borders.

The left-wing government did not have an effective system to support the economic background of Hungarians abroad and cross-border cooperation. In their new programs, they tried to promote cross-border economic development, economic cooperation, with a view to develop economic convergence of regions and halting or reducing the migration of Hungarians from border areas. Unfortunately, these economic plans were not well understood by Hungarian representatives abroad, and moreover, there was no suitable institutional system, network of contacts and funding set up to implement the programs.

Government of Viktor Orbán (1998 – 2002)

The relationship of the Fidesz – MDF – FKgP coalition¹⁹ to national policy changed radically. They incorporated it into Hungarian administration as an official expert issue. It was based not only on cultural and political strategies, but also on the concept of a united nation that is above these strategies. Existing institutions became part of the centre and exercised their interests through the centre. They considered the political elite of foreign Hungarians as part of national politics.

Instead of diplomatic means, the new political concept of Orbán's government took a new path. Rather than basic agreements, it sought to secure the rights of Hungarians abroad by adopting the *Act on Foreign Hungarians (2001. évi LXII. törvény a szomszédos államokban élő magyarokról)*.²⁰

The Act on Foreign Hungarians regulated the legal, institutional and political relationship of persons belonging to the Hungarian national minority and the Hungarian state. In addition to cultural benefits, this law also provided social and economic benefits. Under certain conditions, the holder of the license (*"Magyarigazolvány"*) received benefits and support from the Hungarian State.

18 „Törvényes értelemben, a magyar közjog alapján minden magyar állampolgárnak, ennek a tízmilliós országnak a kormányfőjeként – lélekben, érzésben tizenötmillió magyar miniszterelnöke kívánok lenni.” KÖNYA, Imre „...és az ünnep mindig elmarad?”... Online: <https://antalljozsef.igytortent.hu/az-antall-irokseg/122-a-lelekben-tizenotmillio-magyar-miniszterelnoke> [cit. 11. 1. 2020].

19 Fidesz – Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége; MDF – Magyar Demokrata Fórum, FKgP – Független Kisgazda-, Földmunkás- és Polgári Párt (známe ako Független Kisgazdapárt).

20 The Act was adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Hungary on 19 June 2001, entered into force on 1 January 2002. In Slovakia, this law is known as the Hungarian Compatriotic Act.

Hungarian Act on Foreign Hungarians complicated Hungary's relations with neighbouring countries. The negative impact on international relations might have been due to the fact that the Hungarian legislative standard was also addressed by international institutions, the Venice Commission, the European Commission for Enlargement, the OSCE. The Venice Commission identified some articles of the Act on Foreign Hungarians extraterritorially, similarly to the OSCE. The European Commission for Enlargement recommended the Hungarian side to seek a mutually acceptable compromise with Romania and Slovakia.²¹ V. Orbán's cabinet went beyond the vision of J. Antall to reunite the Hungarian nation without changing borders.

Péter Medgyesi 2002 – 2004, Ferenc Gyurcsány 2004 – 2009, Gordon Bajnai 2009 – 2010

V. Orbán's first, right-wing government was followed by left-wing governments (Péter Medgyesi 2002 – 2004, Ferenc Gyurcsány 2004 – 2009, Gordon Bajnai 2009 – 2010). After the 2002 parliamentary elections, the government of Fidesz was replaced by Peter Medgyesi's coalition of socialists and liberals. It followed on the national policy of the Horn Government, however, this political direction was already exhausted and had no future. Medgyesi's government tried to resolve conflicts with neighbouring states, which arose due to the Act on Foreign Hungarians. The law had been criticised internationally and had provoked negative reactions in the political leadership of neighbouring states. The Hungarian side tried to correct the shortcomings detected by the Venice Commission and revised it. The Act on Foreign Hungarians was passed by the Government on 23 May 2003. A month later, on 23 June 2003, the Parliament of the Republic of Hungary adopted it by a small majority. During July 2003, Hungary managed to reach an agreement first with Romania and later with Slovakia. Slovakia and Romania accepted the modified Act on Foreign Hungarians after two years.

Year 2004 was a milestone in national politics. Conflicts between political parties intensified. They were triggered by a referendum on dual citizenship. From the outset, right-wing parties, in particular Fidesz, supported the idea of granting Hungarian nationality to Hungarians abroad, partially in order to enlarge the future base of voters. The largest left-wing party of the MSZP initially approached this issue in a neutral way, later they adopted a negative attitude, arguing that dual citizenship could trigger migration from the country in which the Hungarians lived. In a speech in Parliament, F. Gyurcsány called on his supporters to reject it in a referendum. Foreign Hungarians were surprised by his arguments.²²

However, the issue of foreign Hungarians was not a priority for any political party in the referendum; it was an internal political struggle. In internal political life, everyone

21 GABZDILOVÁ, Soňa – SÁPOSOVÁ, Zlatica. Maďarský krajanský zákon. In ŠUTAJ, Štefan (ed). *Národ a národnosti Slovensku v transformujúcej spoločnosti – vzťahy a konflikty*. Prešov : Universum, 2005, p. 149, p. 144-151.

22 SÁPOSOVÁ, Zlatica. Národná politika maďarských vlád po roku 1989 (na základe vybraných aspektov). ŠUTAJ, Štefan – REGINÁČOVÁ, Nikola – HELDÁKOVÁ, Lucia. (eds.). *Aktuálne otázky výskumu národnostnej politiky a národnostných vzťahov na Slovensku v 20. a 21. storočí*. Prešov : Universum, 2017, p. 95.

blamed everyone, criticism of the ruling political elite of Hungary was growing among foreign Hungarians.

Gyurcsány's second cabinet sought a new direction in national politics. On 6 January 2005, they declared their national strategy Five Points of National Responsibility (*„A nemzeti felelősség 5 pontja“*). Prime Minister F. Gyurcsány saw the merits of national policy in the fact that the Hungarian State has a responsibility to support the Hungarian communities in acquiring, exercising and protecting national rights, in establishing and operating their institutions. With the help of Homeland Foundation (*Szülőföld Alap*) he set the goal of promoting the preservation of their national identity and competitiveness. Unlike previous governments, the coalition also emphasized the economic development of the border areas.²³

They also supported businesses and other activities in regions inhabited by the Hungarian minority.

The first objective of the support policy was the transparency of support. Expert colleges of the Homeland Foundation were active in cooperation of domestic and foreign experts (belonging to Hungarian communities abroad).²⁴

Despite the fact that the national strategy contained new principles adapted to the state of the community, differential support and programs,²⁵ it did not find support from foreign Hungarians. The prime minister became an untrustworthy person in the eyes of foreign Hungarians due to his approach to the referendum on dual citizenship. Hungarian government was continually confronted by political representatives of the Hungarian minority abroad.

The institutional system of national policy also underwent changes. F. Gyurcsány's second cabinet abolished the Office for Foreign Hungarians (*Határon Túli Magyarok Hivatala – HTMH*) by Government Decree 364/2006. (XII. 28.). The Office ceased to exist on 31 December 2006, with no legal successor. The national conception and coordination of works was carried out at the Office of the Prime Minister (*Miniszterelnöki Hivatal – MeH*) and the coordination of professional activities was carried out at individual ministries. In addition, a 'monitoring mechanism' was set up at an expert level to monitor the implementation of agreements between the government and Hungarian communities abroad, reporting monthly on the work carried out. Given the different situation in Hungarian communities, the circle of national policy makers in the home country and the extension of the expert content of maintaining contacts with foreign countries, it was necessary, according to the government, to build a differentiated "forum" system.²⁶

In addition to the Forum of Hungarian deputies of the Carpathian Basin (*Kárpát-medencei Magyar Képviselők Fóruma – KMKF*), created in December 2004, they set up Hungarian-Hungarian Government Consultant Group (*Magyar-Magyar Kormányzati*

23 Resources for economic development and support for business were managed by Corvinus Zrt.

24 Professional colleges Szülőföld Alap: educational and vocational education, cultural and church, cooperation at the level of local self-governments, informatics and media. In 2010, the Szülőföld Alap office was closed.

25 Vojvodina, Transcarpathia: Hungarian-Hungarian solidarity was applied.

26 ROSTÁS, Szabolcs. *Be nem avatkozó nemzetpolitika*. Online: https://kronikaonline.ro/kulfold/be_nem_avatkozo_nemzetpolitika [cit. 3. 1. 2020]

Konzultáció) and the Regional Reconciliation Forum (*Regionális Egyeztető Forum*) to communicate with foreign Hungarians. Permanent Hungarian Conference (*Magyar Állandó Értekezlet – MÁÉRT*) also lost its position.

The accession of individual Central-Eastern European countries to the European Union took place during the rule of left-wing cabinets (Hungary, Slovakia, Romania 2007). After their accession to the EU, the position of national minorities in the region changed significantly.²⁷

The representatives of the Hungarian minority had significant positions in the parliaments, state and public administration. Gradually, cultural autonomy was being formed.

European integration allowed for new directions for the national strategy, but also new legal and economic means. The Schengen area enabled free movement across Europe, traveling by train, car, visiting relatives, friends, neighbours, all without worrying about borders. Area without internal border checks, revitalization of rail and road transport in the border area triggered all-round cooperation between long-term separated regions. This created opportunities for cooperation between Hungarians living in their mother state and neighbouring countries.

The aim of all governments after 1989 was to strengthen the position of the Hungarian nationality on the political, social, economic level and halting the negative demographic development of Hungarians at home and abroad.

The number of Hungarian nationals decreased by more than half a million (approx. 550,000) between 1989 and 2011, as confirmed by data from the last censuses in neighbouring countries in 2011.²⁸ The data in Table 2 show changes in the number of Hungarian nationals in individual countries after 1989 from the last 2011 census. Unfortunately, the efforts of Hungarian governments to influence the negative demographic development of Hungarians abroad were not successful.

Table 2: Number of Hungarian nationals in Hungary's neighbouring countries

Countries	1989 – 1992	2001 – 2002	%	2011	%
Austria	33 355	40 583	21.3	60 000 ¹	47.8
Croatia	22 355	16 595	- 25.8	14 048	-15.3
Romania	1 642 959	1 434 377	-11.7	1 268 444	-11.6
Serbia	344 147	293 199	- 15.8	251 136	- 14.4
Slovakia	567 269	520 528	- 8.2	458 467	-11.9
Slovenia	8 503	6 243	- 26.6	5 000 ²	- 19.9
Ukraine	155 711	151 516	- 2.7	141 000	- 6.9
Total	2 756 430	2 463 141	- 10.61	2 198 095 ¹	- 10.76

1 estimate; 2 census based on registers 2011, the survey did not examine nationality
Source: *Magyar nemzetpolitika* 2013. p. 24.

27 Despite the regime change (1989 – 1990) supremacy of the majority society persisted in the political culture of the former post-communist states, the national minorities were subordinated to the majority.

28 JELEŇOVÁ, Iveta – SÁPOSOVÁ, Zlatica. *Jazyk, internetické vzťahy a používanie maďarského jazyka v Košiciach*. Košice : Centrum spoločenských a psychologických vied SAV, Fórum Maďarov v Košiciach, 2018, p. 41-42.

The biggest influence on the development of the population of Hungarian nationality was: negative natural increase, migration and assimilation. Some demographic factors differed from country to country. While in Transylvania and Vojvodina the greatest loss was caused by emigration, in the south of Slovakia it was assimilation.²⁹ Taking into account the decrease in the number of Hungarians in the mother state (approx. 942,000) and members of Hungarian nationality in the neighbouring states (558,335), the number of Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin decreased by about 1.5 million people between 1989 and 2011.³⁰

Governments of Viktor Orbán 2010 – 2014, 2014 – 2018

After gaining power in 2010, Orbán's Cabinet promised a "new era" in national policy. Hungarian government influenced the present and future of Hungarian minority communities beyond the borders much more than previous governments.

The comprehensive objective of national policy was to strengthen Hungarian communities: in terms of their numbers, intellectual, economic and legal. *"The number of the members of the community is growing, not assimilating, characterized by positive growth and good quality of life. The identity of the members of the growing community is strong, they consider social standards as their own, have competitive knowledge, preserve and develop cultural treasure. Economically prosperous community has coordinated development, opportunities, using cross-border relations, good accessibility and well-coordinated cluster work."*³¹ *The members of this growing community exercise their rights, protect and extend them as necessary."*³²

The FIDESZ and KDMP coalition won a two-thirds majority in the election, therefore it had the possibility to change the highest legal norm, the Constitution. Since 2011, the Constitution of Hungary (Article D) obliges governments to: *"Considering the fellowship of the united Hungarian nation, Hungary bears responsibility for the fate of Hungarians living beyond its borders, helps preserve and develop their communities, supports their efforts to preserve their Hungarian identity, the exercise of their individual and collective rights, the creation of their community self-administration, their place in society in their homeland and encourages their mutual cooperation and cooperation with Hungary."*³³

Orbán's Cabinet reorganized the support policy (támogatási politika). The Homeland support fund (*Szülőföld Alap*) ceased to exist and the Bethlen Gábor Fund (*Bethlen Gábor Alap* – BGA) was created.³⁴

29 GYURGYÍK, László. Magyar kisebbségek a kutatások tükrében In *Magyar Tudomány*, 2005/2, p. 132. Online: <http://www.matud.iif.hu/05feb/03.html> [cit. 16. 10. 2019].

30 A „*Magyar Nemzetpolitika – A nemzetpolitikai stratégia kerete*” című stratégiai dokumentum végrehajtása. 2013, p. 24.

31 A cluster is a special form of cooperation, a network of economic and sometimes scientific and other actors working in the same sector, or bringing together the same sectors to gain common and mutual benefits.

32 A „*Magyar Nemzetpolitika – A nemzetpolitikai stratégia kerete*”..., p. 88.

33 *Magyarország Alaptörvénye* (2011. április 25.). Zászlóterv alapján Magyarország (25. április 2011.) Online: http://nemzetikonyvtar.kormany.hu/download/0/10/50000/szlov%C3%A1k-magyar_nyomdai.pdf [cit. 16. 9. 2019].

34 Organizations representing foreign Hungarians did not get a place in the BGA management (this was a matter of course during the previous governments). A nine-member committee was set up to make support

The fundamental principle of Fidesz was that Hungarians living abroad are an integral part of the Hungarian nation. According to their view, common history, culture, language were sufficient fundamental and ethical reasons for Budapest government to look after Hungarians living abroad and, if necessary, to bear the consequences of Hungarians living abroad preserving their identity.

Parliament elected on 26 May 2010 adopted an amendment to Act No. LV from 1993 on Citizenship by a large majority (97.7 %). Pursuant to this Act, foreign Hungarians were able to regain or receive Hungarian citizenship by means of a simplified procedure. The simplified procedure meant that Hungarians living abroad would not have to settle in Hungary; they would not have to pass the citizenship test. Hungarian citizenship could be granted to a person who had ancestors with Hungarian citizenship or who came from Hungary and who speaks Hungarian language.

In 2015, Zsolt Semjén declared that they wanted to achieve one million new Hungarian citizens *“they are non-Hungarian citizens who are tied to Hungarian culture, speak our language and their ancestors come from the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary.”*³⁵ A year later, Zsolt Semjén informed the public about 920 thousand granted double citizenships.³⁶ On this grounds, Zsolt Semjén said that the target of a million new Hungarian citizens by early 2018 would be met.

*„Obtaining Hungarian citizenship is emotional for me.
I really want to be full-fledged
citizen of Hungary, just like my ancestors.”*

Miklós Lajkó, the millionth double citizen from Vojvodina³⁷

until March 2018

918 thousand people applied for Hungarian citizenship
in **135 thousand** cases previous Hungarian citizenship was recognized
875 thousand people made a civic vow
and **1 million 10 thousand** people acquired Hungarian citizenship³⁸

proposals. Zs. Semjén, Deputy Prime Minister responsible for national policy, nominated as the head of the committee Szilvesztr E Vizi, former President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. However, Zs. Semjén, András Levente Gál, State Secretary for Public Administration, and Zsuzsanna Répás, Deputy State Secretary for National Policy.

35 CSENDE, Gergely. *2018-ra egymillióval nőhet a magyar állampolgárok száma!* 2015-07-15. Online: <http://4024.hu/2015/07/15/2018-ra-egymillioval-nohet-a-magyar-allampolgarok-szama/> [cit. 4. 1. 2020].

36 30. November 2016, Wednesday, 13:33 MTI. Online: <http://www.maszol.ro/index.php/kulfold/73277-semjen-a-honositas-kezdet-e-ota-920-ezer-uj-allampolgar-lett> [cit. 5. 1. 2020].

37 *„A magyar állampolgárság megszerzése számomra érzelmi dolog. Igazán szeretnék Magyarország teljes jogú állampolgára lenni, hiszen elődeim is azok voltak.”* Cited by article: *Esküt tett az egymilliomodikként honosított külhoni magyar.* Online: <https://www.feol.hu/ország-vilag/eskut-tett-az-egymilliomodikként-honosított-kuhoni-magyar-2170215/> [cit. 4. 1. 2020].

38 *Nemzetpolitikai eredmények.* Budapest : BGA Zrt., 2018, p. 11.

From the point of view of Fidesz, simplification of getting citizenship was not only a spectacular gesture and a symbol of fellowship with foreign Hungarians but also a political calculation aimed at long-term strengthening of power.

Another objective of Orbán's Cabinet was to give voting rights to new Hungarian citizens who were not resident in Hungary. Although Martonyi and Zsolt Németh stated citizenship the citizenship does not guarantee automatic voting rights, the development of granting voting rights for dual citizens evolved in a completely different direction than prominent Fidesz politicians stated.

Following the second modification of Hungary's Constitution (9 November 2012), the most fundamental change was related to the exercise of voting right. Permanent residence in Hungary was no longer necessary to exercise the right to vote.³⁹ In practice, this meant that they secured the voting rights for Hungarians living abroad, who could vote in parliamentary elections and in national referendums. Unlike citizens residing in Hungary, they can vote by letter. In parliamentary elections, they can vote only for the parties on the list of political parties and not for individual deputies (*egyéni képviselökre nem*). Pre-registration by letter or via the Internet is required for foreign Hungarians.⁴⁰

Number of registered voters (on the list of voters)
without residence in Hungary: 378 382
(5 April 2018)⁴¹

Discussions were held at various levels before the second amendment of the Constitution. At a conference of the Corvinus University of Budapest, which focused on individual aspects of the electoral law and the voting right of foreign Hungarians, Zsolt Király, economist, member of the Hungarian Round Table in Slovakia (*Szlovákiai Magyarok Kerekasztala*) aptly pointed out the attitude to the issue of voting right of Slovak Hungarians in Hungary. Due to local circumstances, a link to Hungary or Orbán's government was not created. Hungarians in Slovakia realize that national rhetoric will not solve their daily social and economic problems.⁴²

Dual citizenship and voting rights in Hungary will not improve the status of Hungarian communities in individual states or the strength of their political representation.⁴³

After the election of 2018, there was the period of strengthening Fidesz's power beyond the borders among the communities of Hungarian nationality. The most effective way to achieve this was a generous support policy for foreign Hungarians. In 2020, Orbans'

39 Magyarország Alaptörvényének második módosítása (2012. november 9.). The second modification of the Basic Law of Hungary. 2012, November 9.

40 *Nemzetpolitikai eredmények*. Budapest : BGA Zrt., 2018, p. 11.

41 *Nemzetpolitikai eredmények*. Budapest : BGA Zrt., 2018, p. 11.

42 A kettős állampolgárság és szavazati jog megadása nem lehet öncélú. Online: <https://korkep.sk/cikkek/tudomany/2011/10/10/8262-kettos-allampolgarsag-szavazati-jog-megadasa-nem-lehet-oncelu/> [cit. 5. 1. 2020].

43 TÖRZSÖK, Erika. Magyar kormányok és kormánypolitikák 1990 után. A kisebbségpolitikától a nemzetpolitikáig. Lecture, 14. 10. 2013, Budapest ELTE ÁJK. Online: <https://www.slideshare.net/CecidNet/magyar-kormnyok-s-kormnypolitik-1> [cit. 16. 1. 2020].

Cabinet plans to use 92.8 billion forints to support foreign Hungarians. At the same time, it should be noted that the support system of Orbán Government cannot be overlooked.

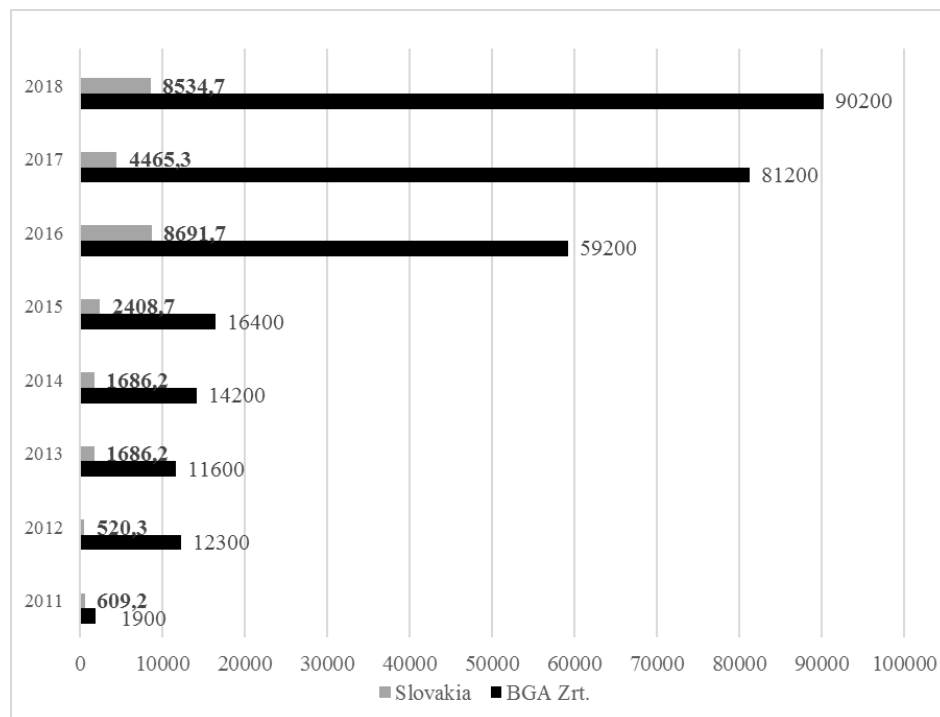


Chart 1: Total financial support of foreign Hungarians through BGA Zrt. (in billions) amount of support of members of Hungarian nationality in Slovakia (Ft.) – the amounts stated are inaccurate.⁴⁴

According to the data from Chart 1, the financial support for foreign Hungarians increased almost 50 times over 10 years from 2011 to 2020. However, it should be noted that the figures on the amount of the support are not accurate. This is only the expected amount of support. It is very difficult for foreign organizations to verify the exact data on the amount of financial support from Hungarian public sources. The support system is not transparent. In addition to the Gábor Bethlen Fund (BGA) through which organizations in individual countries should be supported, there are other Hungarian government institutions that can provide support, and state enterprises have the frameworks which enable cross-border organizations to apply for support. Átlátszó.hu pointed out that alongside BGA Zrt. the Ministry of Human Resources (*Emberi Erőforrások Minisztériuma* – EMMI) also has an

44 KOVÁCS, Gábor. A kormány suttymóban sokkal több pénzt tol ki a határon túlra. Online: https://hvg.hu/gazdasag/20190628_bethlen_gabor_alap_hataron_tuli_tamogatas. Online: <https://atlatzso.hu/2019/02/08/foci-templom-iskola-84-milliard-forint-allami-tamogatas-ment-tavaly-a-hataron-tulra/> [cit. 5. 1. 2020].

important role in the support scheme. Foreign organizations also found opportunities to receive support from the programs of the National Cultural Fund (*Nemzeti Kulturális Alap* – NKA), the National Strategy Research Institute of Jenő Szász (*Szász Jenő Nemzetstratégiai Kutatóintézet* – NSK) or Szerencsejáték Zrt. (owned by the State of Hungary).

In addition to the BGA, even the official propaganda itself, in their promotional materials identifies the following institutions as ‘sources’ of national policy in the ‘narrow sense’.

State Secretariat for National Policy (*Nemzetpolitikai Államtitkárság*), Government Commissioner Responsible for the Government Coordination of Development Tasks and the Cooperation of the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County and Transcarpathia. (*Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg megye és Kárpátalja Együttműködésének és Összehangolt Fejlesztési Feladatainak Kormányzati Koordinációjáért Felelős Kormánybiztosság*).

The National Policy Information System (*Nemzetpolitikai Informatikai Rendszer* – NIR) is in charge of summarizing and publishing information on financial support. NIR system does not report fixed BGA programs. According to NIR data, since 2011 BGA has supported projects in the amount of 190 billion forints. However, on the BGA site, based on a summary of support decisions, journalists from Átlátszó reported a much larger sum, 300 billion forints.

Still, much of the information on money intended to support Hungarians abroad is not disclosed. Spectacular real estate investments and the construction of football academies have been made (Annex 2). An accurate overview of the investments cannot be made. Their value is only estimated based on the published information, it is actually higher than the officially published amount.

Good contacts and “lobby” activity are particularly necessary to receive support. The billions of subsidies are decided by the Ministry Office (*Miniszterelnökség*).⁴⁵

The current financial support for foreign Hungarians cannot be presented correctly and transparently. The published and hard-to-find data from the competent authorities are not sufficient to produce a clear summary. The current system of support is fragmented. There is no consistent support strategy for Hungarian communities beyond the borders. Individual state authorities decide separately on financial resources, mostly unsystematically and randomly (not according to the needs of the inhabitants of Hungarian nationality in individual regions).⁴⁶

There is no control system to monitor the long-term effects of the support programs, the sustainability of the projects implemented (either by the Hungarian State or by support beneficiaries of Hungarian nationality).

In 2010, V. Orbán’s government promised a new, dynamic national policy. Their set objective was to unify the Hungarian nation beyond borders, guard national unity, develop culture and strengthen the position of the Hungarian language. They promised a new era

45 CZIMER, Gábor. *Áttekinthetetlen magyar támogatások*. Online: <https://uj szo.com/kozelet/attekinthetetlen-magyar-tamogatások> [cit. 19. 1. 2020].

46 SIPOS, Zoltán. *Határon túli támogatások 1.: a jobb kéz nem tudja, mit támogat a bal*. Online: <https://atlat-szo.ro/infografikak/hataron-tuli-tamogatások-1-a-jobb-kez-nem-tudja-mit-tamogat-a-bal/#> [cit. 20. 1. 2020].

in national policy, changes in the concept of the support system, fair and transparent inspection.

However, it was never clear what amount was used for financial support. Still, it is clear that the amount has increased rapidly in recent years. The growth of financial support was also related to the establishment of new institutions and the task of ensuring a permanent connection, communication between the mother state and foreign Hungarians. This development was also characteristic of left-wing governments, with the difference that liberal governments left the institutions for Hungarian nationality more space for decision making and allocation. Representatives of the intelligentsia of Hungarian nationality, who actually see the efforts of Orbán's government's national policy, often emphasize that the government of Hungary purposefully uses the compatriots to anchor their power and strengthen their financial position and the financial position of their close people. The support system is not built on a system strategy and is more similar to building a clientele than a national strategy.⁴⁷ By creating a system of clientelism among foreign Hungarians and distributing generous support, V. Orbán and his cabinet strengthened their position among Hungarian communities beyond the borders. Gradually, it is being suggested that without V. Orbán there is no longer a national policy and it is only him and his government who can strengthen the national identity and position of the Hungarians abroad. However, the real state reflects a different direction of development. By granting citizenship, voting rights and emphasizing the unification of the Hungarian nation, V. Orbán addressed voters mainly from the nationalist camp. Attracting voters, supporting selected political parties or organizations of Hungarian nationality raises conflicts between Hungarians beyond the borders, polarizes Hungarian communities and thus weakens the protection of their interests.

Instead of conclusion

In an interview with the Romanian daily newspaper *Krónika*, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán briefly characterized the direction of the national policy of his cabinet:

"We promote a national policy that is consistent with the fact that being a Hungarian is not only an uplifting emotion, but also a rewarding one, and not just for the most educated, but for every Hungarian, it should be worth being Hungarian. Business development programs serve this purpose. The homeland is already able to support economic development programs similar to those at home in every territory beyond the borders, allowing everyone to move forward. These will get to their destination in the Lower Land (Délvidék) and Transcarpathia (Kárpátalja) in Transylvania, we are only starting in the case of the Upper Land (Felvidék). We agreed with Slovaks on how this could be done in a way that they can support too. One of the great achievements in the coming years will be that Hungarians will survive: that only because they are Hungarian they have wider development opportunities, for employment, income and education than they had before. Therefore, it will be advantageous for a Hungarian living in the last village, in the last house, to remain a Hungarian".⁴⁸

47 PAP, Szilárd István. *Bármiféle stratégia nélkül...*,

48 Orbán Viktor interjúja a *Krónika* című romániai napilapnak. Online: <https://www.kormany.hu/hu/a->

Annex 1

Supporting Hungarian nationality in Slovakia (selected data)

Gábor Bethlen Fund (Bethlen Gábor Alap – BGA)

2018 Fund BGA together distributed 84 billion forints of which 5 817 116 800 forints (18.2 million euros) was distributed among the Slovak institutions.⁴⁹

Table 3: The largest amounts from the BGA Fund were received by the following institutions, 2018 (HUF)

Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia	2 100 000 000	financial support for the nursery school recovery program
DAC Academy Dunajská Streda	1 350 000 000	support for the operation and development of the organization
Support for teaching aids and textbooks	995 836 800	
KFC Komárno	300 000 000	support for the operation and development of the organization
Szlovákiai Magyar Társadalmi és Kulturális Szövetség (Csemadok)	145 000 000	support for the operation and of the organization and support for the program
Dunajská Streda	108 000 000	support for municipal nursery school

Source: CZIMER, G. *Áttekinthetetlen...*

Following a regional call for '*Felvidék*', the money was distributed among 504 applicants for financial support in the amount of 92 million forints. The invited organizations received 1,613,315,000 (divided among 30 applicants) from the call for development of kindergartens.

In addition to the regional calls (for individual countries), there was a central call, in which Hungarian organizations across borders and also domestic organizations could participate.

Table 4: Programs and size of total support – of which support received for Slovakia (HUF)

Call for submitted projects	Total supported	Total amount of program	Supported in Slovakia	Funds received
Central	1148	726 000 000	203	108 600 000
Support for youth communities	287	190 000 000	47	41 900 000
Family business	118	484 764 050	26	138 604 618
Year of Hungarian Families Abroad	136	213 788 914	30	49 681 239

Source: *Kiket támogat Magyarország szlovákiai magyar kultúra és oktatás címén? XI. rész* Online: <https://www.bumm.sk/belfold/2019/01/21/kiket-tamogat-magyarorszag-szlovakiai-magyar-kultura-es-oktatas-cimen-xi-resz>

miniszterelnok/beszedekek-publikaciok-interjuk/orban-viktor-interjuja-a-kronika-cimu-romanai-napilapnak [cit. 22. 1. 2020].

49 CZIMER, G. *Áttekinthetetlen...*,

It is necessary to remind that obtaining data by country from the BGA website is a difficult task. The list of successful applicants is scanned, information about the country of the applicant is not given, moreover, there are often cases where even the city or municipality is not stated, only the name of the organization is given. Searching electronically is not possible.

Gábor Baros Fund (Baros Gábor Alap – BGA)

In early 2018, the Baros Gábor Alap (foundation established to promote economic development, businesses) the Upper Land Economic Development Program (*Felvidéki Gazdaságélénkítő Program*) allocated 5.5 billion forints among 1,521 applicants.⁵⁰

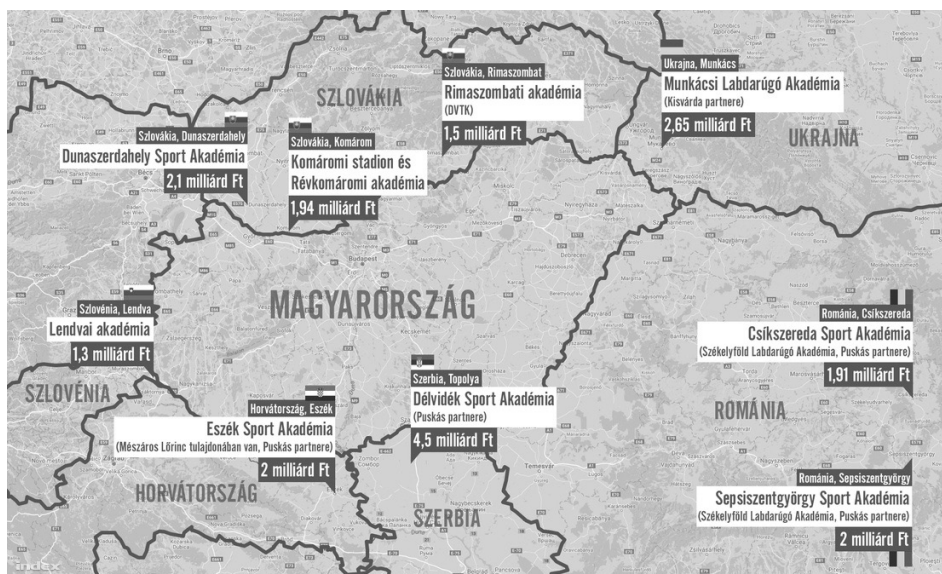
50 *Kiket támogat Magyarország...*,

Annex 2

Football empire of Viktor Orbán

Football Academies

Chart 1: Football academies in Hungary's neighbouring countries



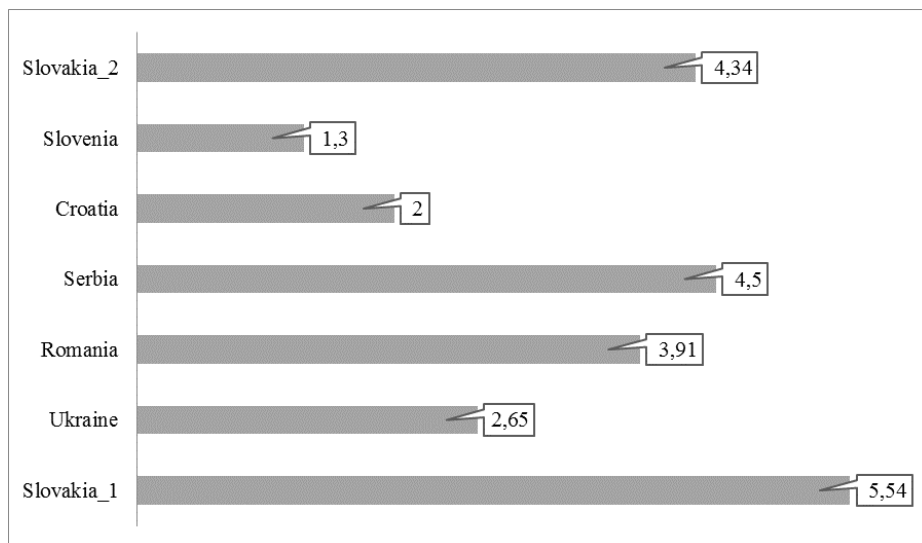
Source: Két év alatt 20 milliárd forint ment el határon túli futballra. Online: https://index.hu/sport/futball/2018/01/09/20_milliard_felett_hataron_tuli_labdarugas_magyar_allami_tamogatas/ [cit. 22. 1. 2020]

Since 2013, the Hungarian government has invested 22.5 billion forints (70 million euros) in football academies across the borders – Transylvania, Southern Slovakia, Vojvodina, Transcarpathia, Pomurje. There are both successful and unsuccessful football clubs among the supported.⁵¹ Money is sent partly through the Hungarian Football Association (*Magyar Labdarúgó Szövetség*), partly through Bethlen Gábor Alap. The Puskás Academy is always present, its owner is Lőrinc Mészáros, a close friend of Viktor Orbán, Hungary's richest person, a self-made billionaire.⁵²

51 BŐD, Tintanilla. *Orbán Viktor milliárdokkal fozizta be magát a Felvidékre*. Online: <https://atlasz.ro/tamogatasok/nemzeti-futballmania/orban-viktor-milliardokkal-focizta-be-magat-a-felvidekre/> [cit. 23. 1. 2020].

52 BŐD, T. *Orbán Viktor milliárdokkal fozizta ...*,

Chart 2: Amount from the Hungarian government for football academies abroad ⁵³



*Legend: Slovakia 2 value without adding the money for the football academy in Rimavská Sobota
Slovakia 1 value includes support for football academies and stadiums: Dunajská Streda, Komárno, Rimavská Sobota*

Two football clubs received the support of 6 billion forints from the Hungarian government. FC DAC Dunajská Streda, led by Oszkar Világi (who is one of the most influential businessmen in Slovakia ⁵⁴ and is also known from political life). In 2014 he took over the DAC football club to build a new stadium and create a football academy. Világi met Orbán in the 1990s. Both were at the beginning of their political career, young, liberal politicians. FC DAC received 2.4 billion forints from the state of Hungary.

Table 5: FC DAC Dunajská Streda, the amount and purpose of support (HUF)

Year	Amount of support	Target of support
2005	300 000 000	overhead costs, 2 new training grounds
1017	1 000 000 000	playgrounds and stands; rooms in the main building: dressing rooms, medical room, fitness hall, offices
2018	1 100 000 000	completion of the main building: construction, installation and equipment; 2 grass playgrounds with playground heating; refurbishment of dormitory; health rehabilitation centre

Source: Data online: www.atlatszo.ro.

⁵³ Source: JÁVOR, Bence. *Két év alatt 20 milliárd forint ment el határon túli futballra*. Online: https://index.hu/sport/futball/2018/01/09/20_milliard_felett_hataron_tuli_labdarugas_magyar_allami_tamogatas/ [cit. 24. 1. 2020]; OROSZI, Babett. *Futballtámogatás határok nélkül*. Online: <https://uj szo.com/kozelet-sport/futballtamogat-as-hatarok-nelkul> [cit. 24. 1. 2020]

⁵⁴ CEO of Slovnaft, member of the MOL management, is also interested in investments in the food industry

Table 6: MOL Academy budget (Dunajská Streda) (EUR)

Hungarian Football Association (Magyar Labdarugó Szövetség)	6 500 000
Own deposit	6 000 000
Bethlen Gábor Alap	1 000 000
Slovak Football Association	500 000

Source: Bőd, T. Orbán Viktor milliárdokkal ...,

The total value of the construction was EUR 14 million (4.5 billion ft.). The State of Hungary financed about a half of it. The complex of the Academy is situated on 18 hectares with 10 playgrounds, two of which have a heated lawn, the main building has a medical room and a fitness hall for footballers.

An excerpt from the opening speech of Viktor Orbán at the opening ceremony of the Football Academy in Dunajská Streda, 16 November 2018.

“This Academy, the cooperation on the realization of the academy, is a success for the whole region, and confirms that cooperation and mutual respect strengthen us, while fragmentation weakens us. ... Sport is our common language, it unites us and promotes fair competition. Therefore, the Hungarian Government will support sports academies throughout the Carpathian Basin. I personally believe that sport combines a fighting spirit, a collective emotion and a culture of respect in the most beautiful way. I am also convinced that sport is one of the most important building blocks of European civilization.”⁵⁵

“The importance of the academy in the life of Hungarian community in the south of Slovakia” was also stressed by other guests at the opening ceremony: Zsolt Hernádi, General Director of MOL; Vladimír Poór, Spartak Trnava owner; Ivan Kmotřík, Slovan Bratislava owner; Béla Bugár, chairman of Híd-Most; József Menyhárt, chairman of MKP; Árpád Érsek, Minister of Transport; Gábor Csicsai, State secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture; Zoltán Hájos, Mayor of Dunajská Streda; Gyula Bárdos, chairman of Csemadok.

Table 7: FC Komárno, size and purpose of support (HUF)

	Amount	Target of support
2017	1 800 000 000	development of sports facilities: demolition and earthworks around the playground, creation of a new playground with heating, creation of a playground with artificial grass, reconstruction of changing rooms and a grandstand, construction of a new grandstand
2018	140 000 000	sports academy support: office supplies, fuel, rent, bus

Source: Data online www.atlatszo.ro

⁵⁵ Orbán Viktor: A dunaszerdahelyi akadémia az egész régió sikere. Online: http://www.nemzetisport.hu/minden_mas_foci/orban-viktor-a-dunaszerdahelyi-akademia-az-egesz-regio-sikere-2669675 [cit. 27. 1. 2020].

Rimavská Sobota

In 2017, *Magyar Közlöny* reported that the DVTK football club in Diósgyőr will receive 10 billion forints, of which 1.5 billion forints (4.7 million euros) is to be used to build a football academy in southern Slovakia. In January 2018, representatives of DVTK and Rimavská Sobota met for the first time and discussed cooperation, which would involve the renewal of the stadium, the construction of a few new playgrounds and new training grounds. The planned project stopped due to several obstacles: the main reason was the local political struggle around the academy. Because of this, the agreement is delayed.⁵⁶ Detailed information on football academies in the south of Slovakia can be also found in the newspaper article by Viktor Orbán “*V. Orbán played a billion football in the Upper Land*”.⁵⁷

56 OROSZI, Babett. *Futballtámogatás határok nélkül*. Online: <https://uj szo.com/kozelet-sport/futballtamogatas-hatarok-nelkul> [cit. 24. 1. 2020].

57 BÓD, Titanilla. *Orbán Viktor milliárdokkal fozizta be magát a Felvidékre*. Online: <https://atlatszo.ro/tamogatasok/nemzeti-futballmania/orban-viktor-milliardokkal-focizta-be-magat-a-felvidekre/> [cit. 24. 1. 2020].

Annex 3

Institutional system of Hungarian national policy

After 1990, the establishment of an institutional system of national policy began. Institutional management of the issue belonged under the Office of the Prime Minister, where the Secretariat of Foreign Hungarians (*Határon Túli Magyarok Titkársága*) was established in 1990. Two years later in 1992, it was changed to the Office of Foreign Hungarians (*Határon Túli Magyarok Hivataláva* – HTMH) with a national scope, under the control of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During the first government of Gy. Horn, HTMH performed its activities under the supervision of the Office of the Prime Minister. There was a change after the first government of V. Orbán, when the office was put under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The left-wing government of Medgyesy moved it again under the Office of the Prime Minister. The HTMH existed until 2006, when it disappeared in the framework of the public reform under the rule of F. Gyurcsány. In 2007 – 2010, under the Office of the Prime Minister, they created a new unit to deal with the issue of Hungarian nationality abroad under the name the Department of the National Policy Issues of the State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs and National Policy (*Külkapcsolatok és Nemzetpolitikai Ügyek Szakállamtitkársága Nemzetpolitikai Ügyek Főosztálya*).

Following the election in 2010, radical changes occurred by the creation of the Ministry of Public Administration and Justice and the State Secretariat responsible for national policy (*Nemzetpolitikáért Felelős Államtitkárság*). This brought the issue of foreign Hungarians to the same level as any other sectoral policy. Since 2014, the State Secretariat belongs under the Office of the Prime Minister (*Miniszterelnökség*).

The State Secretariat responsible for national policy has three departments: the Main Department of Contact (*Kapcsolattartási Főosztály*), the Main Department of Coordination and Law (*Koordinációs és Jogi Főosztály*) and the Main Department for Strategic Planning and Information (*Stratégiai Tervező és Tájékoztatási Főosztály*). From a political perspective, the Deputy Prime Minister for National Policy is responsible for the sector.

Chart 3: Structure of (institutional system) of national policy in Hungary



Source: MILOVÁN, Orsolya. *Nemzetpolitikai struktúra és programok*.

Online: <https://docplayer.hu/1893583-Nemzetpolitikai-struktura-es-programok-milovan-orsolya-foosztalyvezeto-nemzetpolitikai-allamtitkarsag.html>

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Slovak Minority Education in Hungary in the 21st Century as Reflected in Empirical Data¹

Mária Ďurkovská

Abstract:

The results of the research on Slovak minority education in Hungary assert its crucial role in the lives of Slovaks in Hungary and at the same time the current critical situation. As the position of the family in the passing of Slovak language to the next generation is becoming increasingly weaker and more emphasis is placed on education, the importance and justification of minority schools are automatically reassessed. The aim of this paper is to outline the perception of the status of Slovak minority education, teacher status in Slovak minority education and pupils' and parents' interest in Slovak language teaching by Slovak educators in Hungary in the 21st century based on data from questionnaire research. The research was carried out among teachers working at Slovak minority schools in Hungary in 2019. Its results show that although Slovak education system in Hungary is currently struggling with a lot of problems (teachers of Slovak nationality are mostly in retirement age and a younger generation which would take their place is missing), teachers perceive the status of Slovak education, but also their own status and interest in teaching Slovak positively.

Keywords: Slovak teachers, Hungary, national education, minority schools.

Introduction

Education in the mother tongue is one of the key areas for maintaining and developing language and national identity. In the case of Slovaks in Hungary, the role of Slovak minority schools lies not only in language teaching but, above all, in preserving the national identity mentioned above. Following the results of the research carried out so far,² it has been found that Slovak youth in Hungary claim that minority schools are the most important factor in preserving their mother tongue. Slovak intelligentsia in Hungary realizes that families can no longer pass the Slovak language over to their children and pupils only learn their knowledge of Slovak national culture, their linguistic heritage, at school desks. The position of the family in handing the Slovak language over to the next generation is currently more and more weakened and more emphasis is placed on education. The significance and justification of minority schools are also reassessed automatically.

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2 The research was carried out by the Institute of Social Sciences of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Košice and the Research Institute of Slovaks in Hungary based in Békéscsaba.

From the history of Slovak education in Hungary

The aim of the official Hungarian cultural, church and school policy in the interwar period was to strengthen the Hungarian language and Hungarian culture. Since the second half of the 19th century, the instrument of this policy became the Hungarianization of territories inhabited by the Slovak majority. The interest of the state apparatus was focused on the establishment and strengthening of a single official language. This situation was reflected in all areas public sphere, for example culture, press, economy and social life of minorities.³ The focus of Hungarianization was mainly on folk schools. In the state-owned public schools, the language of instruction was, without exception, Hungarian – even in the areas inhabited by Slovaks. In the second half of the 19th century, Catholic and Protestant elementary schools also abandoned the mother tongue of instruction, although for centuries until then Slovak peasant classes were naturally taught in this language.⁴

After the division of the Hungarian monarchy, it was necessary to cope with the existence of the phenomenon of national minorities in the economic, cultural but also educational area. *“In the 20th century, minority schools became a toy for political events, manipulations and assimilation aims.”*⁵ In the interwar period, the Hungarian government aimed to Hungarianize national minorities, especially in the area of education. Although the conclusions of peace negotiations in Paris after World War I declared the protection of the rights of national minorities, these were not implemented in practice. Bethlen's government in Hungary adopted Regulation No. 4800/1923, which divided the types of minority education into three categories: A – schools with minority language of instruction; B – schools with mixed language of instruction (minority language and Hungarian); C – schools with Hungarian language of instruction; language and literature (school subject) were taught in the minority language. There were 55 Slovak schools in the territory of Hungary in the 1930s, however, most of them fell into the C category.⁶ In the period under review, there was no secondary school with Slovak language of instruction in Hungary. With regard to higher education, the Slovak language was taught only two hours a week at teacher training institutes and theological faculty. Due to the lack of Slovak secondary schools and universities, Slovaks continued their studies at Hungarian

3 PEKÁR, Martin – REGINÁČOVÁ, Nikola. Between demography and politics: changing perceptions of nationality of the Slovak population in censuses 1869 – 1930. In *Romanian Journal of Population Studies*, 2016, Vol. X, Iss. 2, p. 59.

4 LÁSIK, Michal – PEČEŇOVÁ, Edita. Sedem desaťročí békeščabianskeho Slovenského gymnázia, základnej školy, materskej školy a kolégia. In KMEŤ, Miroslav – TUŠKOVÁ, Tünde – UHRINOVÁ, Alžbeta et al. *Kapitoly z minulosti a súčasnosti Slovákov v Békešskej Čabe*. Békešská Čaba : Výskumný ústav Slovákov v Maďarsku, 2018, p. 321-339.

5 FARKAŠOVÁ, Eva. Ako ďalej? – jazykový stav v našich národnostných školách. In TÓTH, Alexander Ján – UHRINOVÁ, Alžbeta (eds.). *Slovenčina v menšinovom prostredí*. Békešská Čaba : VÚSM, 2008, p. 582.

6 According to the curriculum, they taught reading and writing in Slovak because of the successful mastery of religion, as the language of this subject was Slovak. The teaching of religion was based on church literature written in biblical Czech. This type of teaching, which was supposed to include the teaching of the mother tongue (reading and writing), and was part of the Hungarian education system, can hardly be considered a sufficiently high-quality minority teaching; although it involved a relatively large number of pupils. The vast majority of Slovaks in Hungary did not even attend schools of this type but attended Hungarian schools. LÁSIK, M. – PEČEŇOVÁ, E. *Sedem desaťročí...*, p. 321-339.

secondary schools and universities, which in many cases led to their Hungarianization, and as members of the Hungarian intelligentsia they were often initiators of Hungarianization efforts or behaved indifferently towards their nationality. Educated and conscious Slovak intelligentsia was weakened and suppressed in the background and was often subject to political pressure and even surveillance.

During this period, Slovak minority faced intensive Hungarianization of villages, which continued throughout the 1940s. Slovaks in Hungary were characterized by the process of cultural differentiation in the linguistic area – they were transformed into bilingual groups (they learned the Hungarian language in addition to the Slovak language due to Hungarianization).⁷ When the process of nationalization of schools was carried out in Hungary in 1948, it resulted in the establishment of a minority school network, but, at the same time, the loss of church schools and the associated local pillar of ethnic culture. The process of creating a network of Slovak national education was accompanied by a number of problems. The biggest difficulty was the scepticism of the Slovak minority remaining from the previous decades, characterized by the Hungarianization pressure, under which the Slovak awareness gradually disappeared. On the other hand, they had to face personnel problems when setting up new schools – the lack of qualified teachers. In 1949, the Ministry of Religion and Public Education, together with the Democratic Union of Slovaks in Hungary, contributed to the construction of Slovak minority education system, and, according to Anna Divičanová, two tendencies were typical of this process. The first was that schools could be founded only in areas where this idea met with understanding of Slovak nationals (especially Slovaks from the Lower Land). In the areas that were too linguistically closed (e.g. villages in the Pilis Mountains or Novigrad) the schools were not established.⁸ In the 1960s, Slovak primary and secondary schools were closed down and replaced by five bilingual primary schools and two secondary grammar schools (Budapest, Békéscsaba), where selected subjects were taught in the Slovak language.⁹ At other minority schools, Slovak language was taught only as a separate subject in the form of

7 KUGLER, József – GOMBOŠ, Ján. State z tristoročnej histórie Slovákov v Maďarsku – so zvláštnym zreteľom na udalosti 20. storočia. In UHRINOVÁ, Alžbeta – ŽILÁKOVÁ, Mária (eds.). *Slovenský jazyk v Maďarsku : Bibliografia a štúdie 1. Békešská Čaba : Výskumný ústav Slovákov v Maďarsku, 2008, p. 318-320; SZABÓOVÁ MARLOKOVÁ, Júlia. Podpora výchovno-vzdelávacej činnosti Materskej školy, všeobecnej školy, gymnázia a kolégia s vyučovacím jazykom slovenským v Budapešti. In *Stála konferencia Slovenská republika a Slováci žijúci v zahraničí*. Bratislava : Úrad pre Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí, 2014, p. 117.*

8 DIVIČANOVÁ, Anna. Sociologické a kultúrne zázemie národnostnej školy v Maďarsku po roku 1948. In *Človek a spoločnosť*, 2000, Vol. 3, Iss. 1, p. 102-103. Online: <http://www.clovekaspolocnost.sk/sk/rocnik-3-rok-2000/1/studie-a-clanky/sociologicke-a-kulturne-zazemie-narodnostnej-skoly-v-madarsku-po-roku-1948/>

9 In 1961, the network of minority schools with minority language of instruction disappeared in the 1940s as a result of the establishment of dual, bilingual schools. The Ministry of Education and Enlightenment adopted the phenomenon of bilingualism from the Sorbs and the Soviet Union. Bilingual schools were characterized by the fact that humanities were taught in the language of the national minority (Slovak) and science subjects were taught in Hungarian, but all professional names were taught in the Slovak language. The attempt that preceded the introduction of bilingual schools took place at Slovak school in Slovak Komlós in the school year 1959/1960. As in the course of their founding, the project of bilingual schools met with both positive opinions and criticism resulting from the difficulty of mastering such curriculum from psychological, pedagogical but also linguistic aspects. DIVIČANOVÁ, A. *Sociologické a kultúrne zázemie...*, p. 103.

a foreign language, which resulted in considerable degradation of the knowledge of Slovak language in the environment of Slovak national minority in Hungary.¹⁰

Slovak education in Hungary at present:

In 1995, the issue of Slovak language teaching at minority Slovak schools also came to the attention of Max van der Stoep, the High Commissioner for National Minorities of the OSCE. In a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary, László Kovács, on the Slovak minority education system in Hungary, dated 26 February 1996, he wrote that the situation of Slovak language in the education system in Hungary was critical. The whole complex of factors contributed to this situation: deficiencies in Slovak language teaching system during the previous regime and the dominance of Hungarian language in the current school system, the consequences of relatively weak identity within Slovak community, growing demand and interest in teaching of big foreign languages such as English, German in the education system, etc.¹¹

According to the Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 32 of 1997 *On Issuing Guidelines on Minority and Ethnic Education*, there are three types of minority schools: monolingual, bilingual and schools teaching minority language as a subject.

Monolingual schools are those in which the subjects (except for Hungarian language and literature and a foreign language) are taught in the minority language. In *bilingual schools*, teaching is bilingual, but 50 % of the subjects (except for Hungarian and foreign language) are in the minority language. The Regulation does not specify the subjects that should be taught in Slovak language; it is at schools' discretion. The individual institutions determine the subjects to be taught in Slovak language in their curricula. A sufficient number of Slovak speaking teachers is a prerequisite for fulfilling the aforementioned legal obligation. *In the schools teaching a minority language as a subject*, the teaching is in Hungarian, but the timetable also includes the minority language and literature and the so-called Slovak education. In these schools, the number of lessons of Slovak language is 5 + 1 (5 hours of Slovak language and 1 hour of Slovak education per week are compulsory) and, according to the law, 100 % participation of children at Slovak language lessons is compulsory.¹²

Minority act reforms have also had a positive impact on the management of minority schools by minority institutions, the result is that the Nationwide Slovak Self-government became the provider of monolingual as well as bilingual schools. This process took over

10 More on this issue on: HELDÁKOVÁ, Lucia – KALISTOVÁ, Anna. Slovenský národný naratív v dejepise Slovákov v Maďarsku. In ĎURKOVSKÁ, Mária – TUŠKOVÁ, Tünde (eds.). *Reflexia slovenského národnostného školstva v Maďarsku v kontexte súčasnosti a ďalších perspektív jeho fungovania : zborník príspevkov z medzinárodnej konferencie*. Košice – Békešská Čaba : Spoločenskovedný ústav CSPV SAV; Výskumný ústav Slovákov v Maďarsku, 2019, p. 37-52.

11 SZARKA, László. Jazykové problémy menšinového školstva na Slovensku a v Maďarsku. In *Človek a spoločnosť*, 2000, Vol. 3, Iss. 1. Online: <http://www.clovekaspolocnost.sk/sk/rocnik-3-rok-2000/1/studie-a-clanky/jazykove-problemy-mensinoveho-skolstva-na-slovensku-a-v-madarsku/>

12 UHRINOVÁ, Alžbeta. O slovenskom školskom systéme v Maďarsku. In PAVELCOVÁ, Zuzana (ed.). *Slováci v zahraničí*, 33. Martin : Matica slovenská, 2016. p. 46-47.

ten years. Its aim was to ensure balanced development and operation of minority Slovak schools in Hungary.¹³

There are currently around 90 educational institutions defined by law as Slovak minority schools in Hungary.¹⁴ Slovak kindergartens operate in 8 counties. The most kindergartens are in Békés and Novigrad County. Two types of kindergartens were identified by the Regulations on Minority Education. In monolingual kindergartens, education is mostly in the minority language, in bilingual kindergartens it is in Hungarian and minority language. The Regulations do not determine the proportion of the use of these languages. Pursuant to these regulations, a monolingual kindergarten operates only within Slovak school in Budapest. Other kindergartens are bilingual.¹⁵

Primary schools with the Slovak language operate in 9 counties.¹⁶ There is a monolingual school in Budapest. There are bilingual schools in Békéscsaba, Sátoraljaújhely, Sarvaš and Tótkomlós. History, geography, Slovak education, practical education, singing and music, drawing, technology and physical education are taught in Slovak language. Other schools teach Slovak language and literature or Slovak education 6 hours per week.¹⁷ In school year 2018/2019, 98 pupils were taught Slovak at the monolingual primary school in Budapest.¹⁸ There are 826 pupils learning Slovak in bilingual primary schools.¹⁹ There are two minority Slovak secondary grammar schools in Hungary – in Budapest and Békéscsaba. There are 52²⁰ students learning Slovak language at Slovak minority grammar school in Budapest and 60 students at the Békéscsaba grammar school.²¹

University education is currently the most vulnerable point of Slovak minority education in Hungary. Slovak language, literature and culture or Slovak minority teaching can be currently studied at four universities in Hungary: the Loránd Eötvös University in Budapest, the Pedagogical Faculty of the University of Szeged in Szeged, the Catholic College of Ferenc Gál in Sarvas and the Faculty of Ján Vitez of the Catholic University of Peter Pázmaň in Esztergom. These are three faculties of pedagogics and one faculty of philosophy.

13 TUŠKOVÁ, Tünde. *Slovenský jazyk v univerzitnom bilingválnom prostredí*. Békešská Čaba : Výskumný ústav Slovákov v Maďarsku v spolupráci s Katedrou slovenského jazyka a literatúry Segedínskej univerzity, 2016, p. 40-41.

14 Information on education and training of Slovaks living in individual countries with the status of a national minority. Material for the Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic for Education, Science, Youth and Sport, p. 4. Online: <https://www.uszz.sk/data/fce57df089241519623e627340d5611a.pdf>.

15 The list of bilingual kindergartens is on the website of the National Slovak-Government in Hungary. Online: <http://www.slovaci.hu/index.php/sk/kolstvo/565-dvojazy-ne-slovenske-materske-koly-v-ma-arsku>

16 Most of these schools are in Komárno-Esztergom, Békés and Pest county.

17 The list of primary schools where the Slovak language is taught as a subject is on the website of the National Slovak Self-Government in Hungary. Online: <http://www.slovaci.hu/index.php/sk/kolstvo/566-slovenske-jazykove-koly>

18 MARLOKOVÁ, Júlia. Perspektívy jednojazyčnej školy v Maďarsku. In ĎURKOVSKÁ, M. – TUŠKOVÁ, T. (eds.). *Reflexia slovenského národnostného školstva v Maďarsku...*, p. 57-58.

19 ĎURKOVSKÁ, Mária – TUŠKOVÁ, Tünde. Téma slovenského národnostného školstva v Maďarsku v projektoch Slovenskej akadémie vied a Výskumného ústavu Slovákov v Maďarsku. In ĎURKOVSKÁ, M. – TUŠKOVÁ, T. (eds.). *Reflexia slovenského národnostného školstva v Maďarsku...*, p. 18.

20 MARLOKOVÁ, J. *Perspektívy jednojazyčnej školy...*, p. 57-58.

21 ĎURKOVSKÁ, M. – TUŠKOVÁ, T. *Téma slovenského národnostného školstva...*, p. 18.

However, Slovak departments, institutions are everywhere integrated into a minority, Slavic or foreign language institute. This means that they cannot decide independently on their affairs, personnel and material issues and on their overall operation. Their biggest problem is that they have very few students overall. They do not have enough domestic students, mainly Hungarians from Slovakia study there. For example, in 2015, apart from the University of Budapest, they were not able to open their first years at these departments. There are only a few students at the two Slovak grammar schools who want to study Slovak and minority teacher education for kindergartens, lower and upper elementary schools or secondary schools per year. Students of the few secondary schools where Slovak is taught as a subject apply to study Slovak only very rarely. Moreover, applicants are characterized by very heterogeneous language and general educational readiness, which makes the work of a university teacher very difficult.²²

Objectives and methods of the paper:

The results of the research on Slovak minority education in Hungary²³ show its crucial role in the lives of Slovaks in Hungary and, at the same time, its critical and endangered condition. As the position of the family in passing Slovak language to the next generation is becoming increasingly weaker and more emphasis is placed on education, the importance and justification of minority schools is automatically reassessed. Slovak education system

22 In Hungary, Slovak language is taught only at the faculties of humanities, other disciplines, except for teaching, cannot be studied in Slovak language. Until recently, the Department of Slovak Studies of the Catholic University of Petr Pázmaň in Piliscsaba, minority teachers also studied in Békéscsaba, Slovak language and culture were also taught at the Theological College of Ferenc Gal in Szeged. However, these possibilities no longer exist, they have disappeared. If students of Slovak nationality in Hungary are interested in studying the Slovak language at the highest level, they have the possibility to apply for various specialisations at Slovak universities. It should be noted, however, that despite all the existing problems, negative tendencies and ambivalences of Slovak public and higher education in Hungary, there have been significant positive changes since the late 1980s, the impact of which has been so far mainly in the case of bilingual primary schools. UHRINOVÁ, A. *O slovenskom školskom systéme...*, p. 43-55.

23 See: DIVIČANOVÁ, Anna. *Dimenzie národnostného bytia a kultúry*. Békéška Čaba : Výskumný ústav Slovákov v Maďarsku, 2002, p. 404-408; BODONYI, Edit. *Nemzetiségi oktatásügy Magyarországon 1945-től napjainkig*. Budapest : Új Pedagógiai Közlemények, ELTE BTK Neveléstudományi Tanszék, 1999, p. 78-88; UHRINOVÁ, Alžbeta. *Dejiny prípravy slovenských národnostných učiteľov v Békešskej Čabe*. /UHRIN Erzsébet. *A békéscsabai szlovák tanítóképzés története*. Békéška Čaba – Békéscsaba : VÚSM – MSZKI, 2004; TÓTH, Alexander Ján. Používanie slovenského jazyka v školách. In UHRINOVÁ, Anna – ŽILÁKOVÁ, Mária (eds.). *Slovenský jazyk v Maďarsku* : Bibliografia a štúdie – 1. Békéška Čaba : Výskumný ústav Slovákov v Maďarsku, 2008, p. 224-244; LÁSIK, Michal. Šesťdesiat rokov békeščabianskeho Slovenského gymnázia, základnej školy, materskej školy a kolégia. In *Z pokolenia na pokolenie*. Békéška Čaba : Békeščabianske Slovenské gymnázium, základná škola, materská škola a kolégium, 2009, p. 9-20; TUŠKOVÁ, Tünde. *Slovenský jazyk v univerzitnom bilingválnom prostredí...*, p. 35-49; KMEŤ, Miroslav. *Krátke dejiny dolnozemsých Slovákov*. Nadlak : Ivan Krasko, 2018, p. 78-93; LENOVSÝ, Ladislav. *Naši vo svete. Slováci Južne od hranice Slovenska II*. Nadlak : Ivan Krasko, 2017, p. 76-88; TUŠKOVÁ, Tünde – UHRINOVÁ, Alžbeta. „Škola by sa len vtedy zachránila...“ Príbeh slovenskej národnostnej školy v Tardoši. In ZILÁK, Mária – TUSKA, Tünde (eds.). *Slovenské inšpirácie z Tardoša 35. interdisciplinárny výskumný tábor Výskumného ústavu Slovákov v Maďarsku*. Békéška Čaba : Výskumný ústav Slovákov v Maďarsku, 2018, p. 161-186.

in Hungary is currently the issue of the Slovak Research Institute in Hungary in cooperation with the Institute of Social Sciences at the CSPA SAS in Košice as part of two projects.²⁴

As part of these projects, field research was carried out among the teachers working at Slovak minority schools in Hungary. This resulted in the data collected in January – April 2019 from 139 teachers.

The aim of the paper is to outline the perception of Slovak minority education status, teacher status in the Slovak minority education and pupils' and parents' interest in Slovak language teaching by Slovak teachers in Hungary in the 21st century, based on the data from questionnaire research. The aim is also to describe the situation, problems and perspectives of the Slovak minority education system in Hungary.

Research sample:

The respondents were selected at schools of all three types in the towns and villages where Slovak language (hereinafter referred to as SL) is taught. The selection criteria were employment (position of a teacher of Slovak language or a teacher teaching in Slovak language) and the respondent's availability regardless of identification criteria (age, location, gender). The research sample consisted of 11.7 % men and 88.3 % women. Their average age was 48.7 years (SD = 10.017), the youngest was 24 and the oldest was 68. Of these, 7.3 % taught at a monolingual school, 48.2 % at a bilingual school and 43.1 % at a school where a SL is taught as a subject. Slovak nationality was declared by 54 % of them, 18.2 % claimed Hungarian nationality and both Slovak and Hungarian nationality was claimed by 27.7 % of respondents. Most teachers (22 %) studied lower-level teacher education (grades 1 – 4) and then Slovak language as major (17.4 %). In the case of Slovak language teaching in combination, teachers with Hungarian (9.1 %) and history (9.1 %) follow. Relatively high percentage is also represented by educators in dormitories or after-school clubs (10.6 %) and teachers did not study Slovak language, but e.g. mathematics and physics, but have command of Slovak language (9.1 %).

In the absence of attitudes to the current problems concerning minority education in the research of Slovak minority education in Hungary, in the next part of the paper we analysed the following topics from a set of all questions:

- 1) Perception of the status of Slovak minority education
- 2) Perception of the status of a teacher in Slovak minority education
- 3) Interest of pupils and parents in Slovak language teaching

²⁴ The first is the VEGA project entitled Reflection of the Slovak Minority Education System in Hungary in the Context of the Present and Other Perspectives of its Operation, the second is the international bilateral project between the Institute of Social Sciences CSPA SAS and the RISH entitled Current Status and Operation of Slovak Minority Education – a reflection of teachers, a reflection of students and a reflection of parents.

Results:

1. Perception of the status of Slovak minority education

In the first part, we analysed average teachers' rating in relation to the status of Slovak minority education in Hungary. In this context, we compared the ratings of the period after 1989 and the current period. The analysis was based on the following questions: *"How do you evaluate the period of the last 30 years (after 1989) in terms of the state of Slovak minority education?"* and *"How do you evaluate the current period in terms of the state of Slovak minority education?"* The respondents were supposed to select an option on the scale and the score was calculated from a 7-point scale where 1 = very negative and 7 = very positive. The ratings covered material security, human resources, quality of the pedagogical process, communication between teachers and communication with the authorities responsible.

Comparison results show relatively positive ratings of individual areas of minority education as illustrated in Chart 1. Comparison of ratings of Slovak minority education by teachers confirmed more positive ratings of material facilities at present ($M = 5.49$, $SD = 1.41$) compared to the previous period ($M = 4.93$, $SD = 1.30$). More positive ratings were also identified in the area of quality of the educational process at present ($M = 5.18$, $SD = 1.29$) compared to the past ($M = 4.95$, $SD = 1.29$). On the other hand, the situation in the area of human resources in Slovak minority education was worse ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 1.48$) compared to the past ($M = 4.74$, $SD = 1.40$). In the area of communication with colleagues and supervising authorities, we have not observed any differences in ratings. The overall assessment of the current status of Slovak minority education system reached a positive level ($M = 4.92$, $SD = 1.30$).

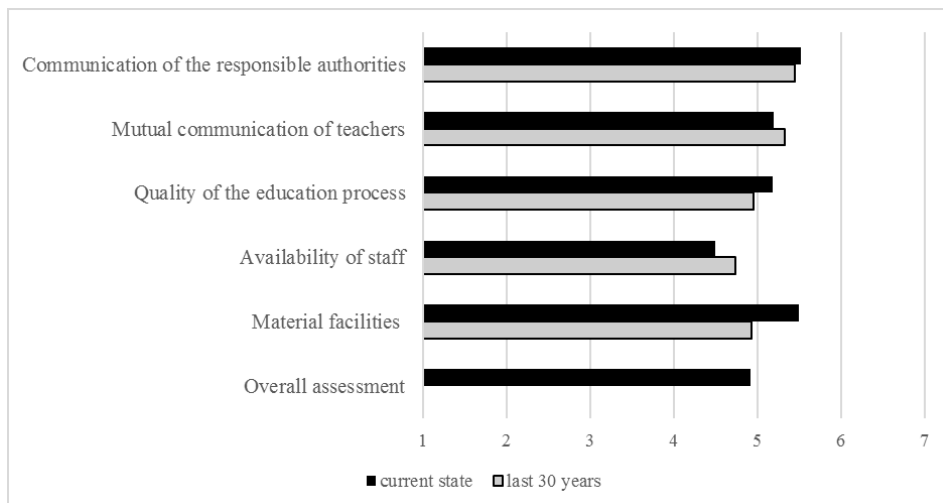


Chart 1: Average assessment of the respective areas of minority education

2. Perception of the status of a teacher in Slovak minority education

In the second part, the rating of the status of a teacher in Slovak minority education was analysed. Given our assumption that self-evaluation will differ significantly between older and younger teachers, we examined this aspect based on the age of teachers. For these purposes, we divided teachers according to age into three groups (younger, middle and older).

Table 1: Age categories of teachers in absolute and relative numbers

Age	Category	Number	Percentage
24 – 35 years	younger	18	12.9 %
36 – 50 years	middle	55	39.6 %
51 – 68 years	older	66	47.5 %

For the purpose of the analysis of the items, the following questions were asked: *“How do you evaluate your work as a teacher of Slovak language?”* The respondents were supposed to choose the appropriate option on the scale, calculated from a 7-point scale where 1 = very negatively and 7 = very positively. In the case of a positive answer, they were supposed to *“indicate the extent of the reasons for their rating of the teaching of Slovak language on the scale”*. They were offered the following options: 1. it is a personal priority for me, I am interested, 2. it is crucial in strengthening ethnic identity, 3. knowing Slovak is an asset for pupils in the future, 4. I fulfil my work duties. The respondents were supposed to select the appropriate option on a 7-point scale, where 1 = definitely not and 7 = definitely yes.

Within the individual age groups, teachers of the middle age category ($M = 6.20$; $SD = 0.70$) evaluated their work most positively. Teachers of younger and older age groups reached almost identical average (younger: $M = 5.72$; $SD = 0.95$; older: $M = 5.75$; $SD = 0.94$), see Chart 2.

Differences were also shown for the individual items in Chart 3. The lowest average score for all three age groups was ‘I fulfil my work duties’, and for the middle and older age groups it reached 4.5 and 4.8 points respectively. Educators of the oldest age group ($M = 6.43$; $SD = 0.83$), agreed with the item on the importance of strengthening ethnic identity the most, the least agreed the teachers of the youngest age group ($M = 6.05$; $SD = 0.87$) With regard to the item on commanding Slovak language as a benefit for pupils in the future, the highest agreement was reached by middle-age teachers ($M = 6.53$; $SD = 0.69$), the least by teachers aged 51-68 ($M = 6.36$; $SD = 1.03$). With regard to the item *“it is a personal priority for me”*, we did not notice any differences in rating, or there were minimal differences in the middle age category.

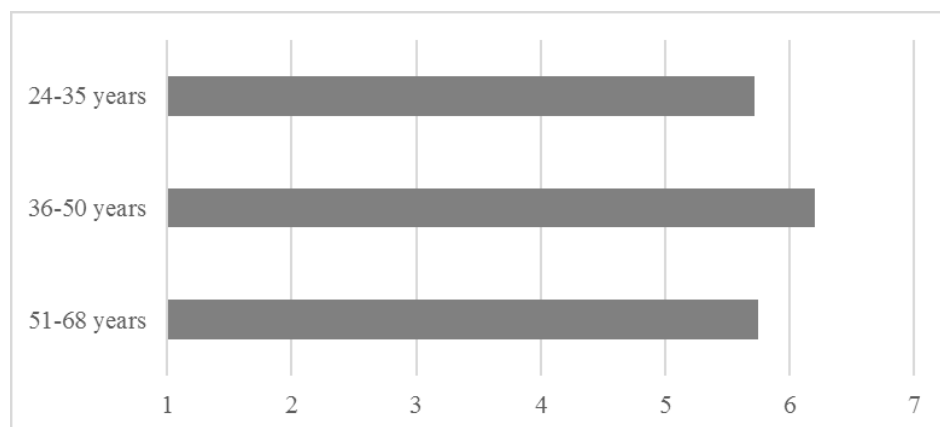


Chart 2: Self-evaluation of teachers



Chart 3: The reasons for self-evaluation of teachers

3. Interest in teaching Slovak

In the third part, we focused on the interest in teaching Slovak to pupils and parents from the perspective of teachers.

For the purpose of analyses related to the interest in teaching Slovak, two questions were asked: *“What do you think is pupils’ or students’ interest in Slovak teaching compared to the situation 10 years ago?”* and *“What do you think is parents’ (members of Slovak ethnic group) interest in Slovak teaching compared to the situation 10 years ago?”* The score was calculated from a 7-point scale in both cases, where 1 = is substantially lower and 7 = is substantially higher. We present the data from the analyses in this section as a percentage.

We modified the scale to achieve better clarity of results. Three categories of responses were created, the first group presented a more or less negative opinion (added options 1 + 2 + 3 = negative opinions), the second group selected an ambivalent, undecided answer (option 4 = ambivalence); the third group was in favour of positive rating (they selected positive options 5 + 6 + 7 = positive responses). In this way, we can distinguish negatively or positively oriented answers that were most interesting to us. The results are presented in the following Charts.

Based on the frequency of individual answers in Chart 4, we can see that the respondents’ answers to question *“interest of pupils or students in Slovak teaching to compared to the situation 10 years ago”* were mostly in the positive field of the scale. Teachers aged 51-68 (34.8 %) were the least convinced of interest in teaching Slovak. In the case of undecided answers, the highest percentage was reached in the 24-35 age group (16.7 %). Teachers aged 36-50 (69.1 %) were most positive about teaching Slovak language to pupils and students.

With regard to the question *“interest of parents’ in Slovak teaching compared to the situation 10 years ago”*, the – of teachers was somewhat different from the rating in the previous question – Chart 5. Based on the frequency analysis it is obvious that most respondents favoured positive answers. Teachers aged 51-68 (31.8 %) were most sceptical about parents’ interest in Slovak teaching. Younger generation teachers reached the highest score among ambivalent responses again. Teachers aged 36-50 years (67.3 %) were the most convinced about the interest in teaching Slovak.

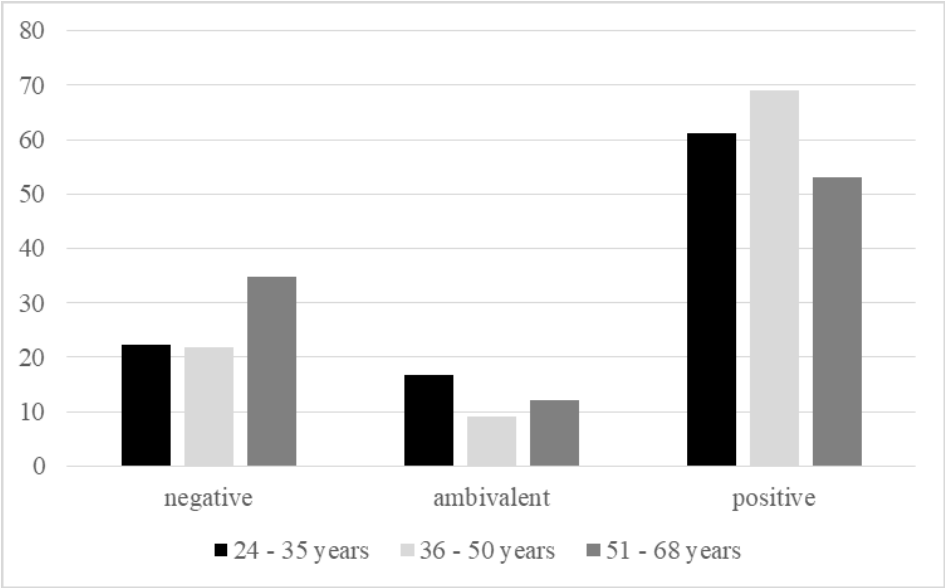


Chart 4: Rating of pupils' and students' interest in Slovak teaching in percent

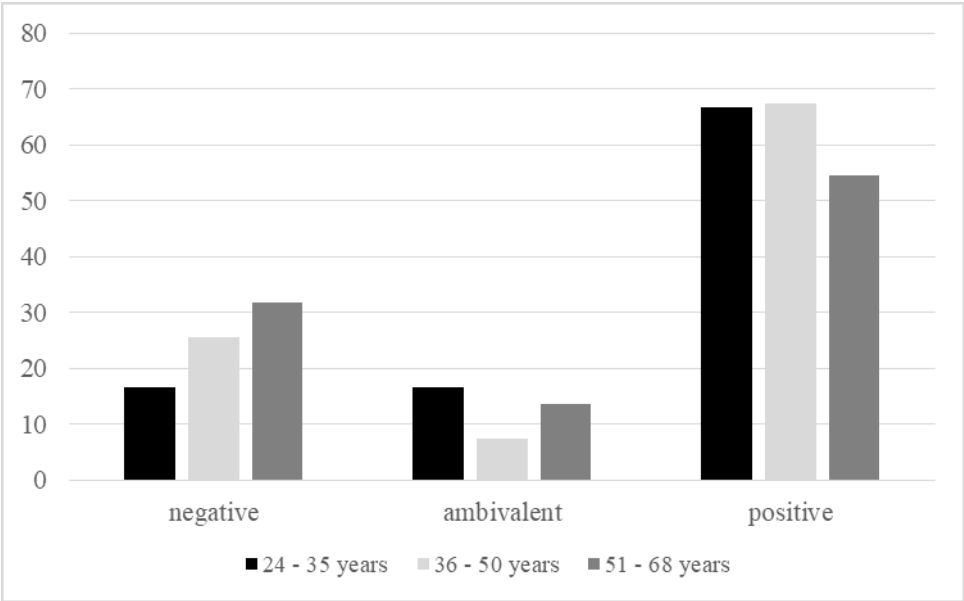


Chart 5: Rating of parents' interest in Slovak teaching in percent

Discussion:

The presented results concerning **the perception of the status of Slovak minority education** show that the rating of the level of minority education has a positive character. Feedback from the educators working in Slovak minority education system reports on the overall improvement in the quality of the pedagogical process at present as well as on significantly better material equipment. Communication with colleagues and institutions is of continuous quality. However, there is an increasing lack of human resources in the teaching process. This is very closely related to the lack of students at universities and colleges in Hungary. According to Anna Ištvánová, children enter the minority school system with various language readiness and level, to be unified by the teacher at the first level.²⁵ This situation is repeated at the secondary grammar school. Different attitudes towards Slovak language are also a problem.²⁶ These problems also characterize university students who choose to study Slovak language or the teaching thereof. Due to the lack of Slovak language teachers, many schools are increasingly asking for a visiting teacher from Slovakia.²⁷ Small number of teachers participating in further education events is also a problem – in many schools, there is only one teacher who is therefore irreplaceable.²⁸ According to Alžbeta Uhrinová, there are more suggestions for dealing with personnel issues. Concerning the unsatisfactory situation with the preparation of Slovak teachers, there is a proposal to send students to universities in Slovakia. Another alternative recommends employing only visiting teachers for the needs of Slovak studies at Hungarian universities.²⁹ Uhrinová only partially shares these views. According to her, both domestic university teachers and visiting professors and lecturers are needed, as well as domestic possibilities of studying Slovak studies combined with stays and internships in Slovakia.³⁰

25 IŠTVÁNOVÁ, Anna. Vyučovanie slovenského jazyka v Maďarsku a jeho problémy. In *Slovenčinár*, 2016, Vol. 3, Iss. 1, p. 68-72.

26 Between 2003 and 2007, the Research Institute of Slovaks in Hungary analysed the language situation in education. The aim of the research was to capture the changes, state and possible tendencies, to inform about the state of use and the viability of Slovak language in schools in Hungary. Based on the research, the researchers concluded that the language skills of Slovak children before school were almost zero. Nevertheless, it is a huge progress when in the second half of the first year children understand Slovak instructions of the teacher and respond to questions, even with mistakes. In schools where there are more Slovak teachers or they also have visiting teachers who do not speak Hungarian, the pupils' success in terms of learning Slovak is greater. ONDREJKOVÁ, Renáta. Slovenská menšina a slovenčina v Maďarsku (postavenie a funkcie slovenského jazyka v Maďarsku). In *Slovenčinár*, 2015, Vol. 2, Iss. 1, p. 33-44.

27 DEMJÉNOVÁ, Marta. Práva máme, ale možnosti nie (Postavenie Slovákov v Maďarsku na základe osobných skúseností). In KOVÁČ, Igor – MELEG Pavel (eds.). *Stála konferencia Slovenská republika a Slováci žijúci v zahraničí*. Bratislava : Úrad pre Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí, 2014, p. 117-119.

28 Information on education and training of Slovaks living in individual countries with the status of a national minority. Document for the Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic for Education, Science, Youth and Sport. Online: <https://www.uszz.sk/data/fce57df089241519623e627340d5611a.pdf>.

29 More on the issue of visiting teachers: KMEŤ, Miroslav. Slovenčina v praxi hosťujúceho učiteľa na slovenskej škole v Békešskej Čabe začiatkom 90. rokov. In UHRÍNOVÁ, Anna – ŽILÁKOVÁ, Mária (eds.). *Slovenčina v menšinovom prostredí*. Békešská Čaba : VÚSM, 2004, p. 301-307; IŠTVÁNOVÁ, Anna – KMEŤ, Miroslav. Hosťujúci učiteľ z Československa. In *Csabai Hírmondó*. 26. 01. 1990, Vol. 5, p. 4.

30 UHRINOVÁ, A. *O slovenskom školskom systéme...*, p. 43-55.

The results concerning **the perception of the status of teachers in the Slovak minority education system** show that teachers evaluate their work at school positively. Teachers aged 36-50 perceive their status most positively. In identifying the reasons for their rating, teachers in the 24-35 age group most positively rated the items *"it is a personal priority for me"* and *"I fulfil my work duties"*. The teachers of the oldest age group attributed the highest importance to the item *"it is crucial in strengthening ethnic identity"* and teachers aged 36-50 most positively rated the command of Slovak as a benefit for pupils in the future. In general, however, the differences between the four items were relatively small, ranging from 6.05 to 6.66 points. The exception is the item *"I fulfil my job duties"*, which achieved the lowest average score in all three age categories – from 4.56 to 5.05 points. Our assumption that the rating of one's own status will differ significantly between older and younger teachers has not been confirmed according to the results of our research. We can see the reasons for not confirming the assumption in the absence of examination of the length of experience of these teachers. The educational experience of respondents may not correspond with their physical age, they could have started teaching later in life, which is an important finding for the future research of teachers of Slovak minority education in Hungary.

Teachers perceive the interest positively in both questions concerning **the interest of pupils and parents in Slovak teaching**. Regarding the frequency of responses, it can be stated that positive responses on the scale were chosen in all cases by the middle generation of teachers (36-50 years). Negative responses were chosen most often by the older generation (51-68 years) and ambivalent responses were most often chosen by the younger generation (24-35 years), probably due to the lack of experience. Negative responses could have been chosen for various reasons. We will try to mention at least some of them. Although pupils have the right to minority primary schools or even to study in Slovak language, the situation is in fact much more complicated. Schools in which Slovak is taught as a subject (there is the highest number of them) are the proof that Slovak is taught at school as a foreign language. Pupils have six lessons of Slovak per week and all other subjects are taught in Hungarian. If they would like to continue their studies in Slovak, they have the possibility at two secondary grammar schools, but there is no single secondary vocational school in the whole country. Higher education can be obtained only at the pedagogical faculty or at another university in Slovakia.³¹

Conclusion:

The results of our research show the following generalizations. The largest part of our sample of 47.5 % (Slovak teachers working in Hungary) was the group aged 51 to 68 years. It is followed by the middle generation, 36-50 years old, represented by 39.6 %. Only 12.9 % are the teachers of younger generations aged 24 to 35 years. These data indicate that Slovak educators are approaching retirement and that there is a lack of a young generation of teachers to take their place.

Despite the fact that Slovak education system in Hungary is facing a number of problems at present (the departure of the current, older generation of teachers is causing

31 DEMJÉNOVÁ, M. *Práva máme...*, p. 117-119.

their urgent shortage; there is no continuity between the individual levels of schools, i.e. most pupils of primary schools do not continue at Slovak secondary grammar schools; there is a need of more pupils in bilingual schools, who could become future teachers; the lack of language training of Slovak language teachers and the lack of textbooks in the Slovak language, etc. ...) teachers perceive the status of Slovak education, as well as their own status and interest in teaching Slovak language, positively.

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Selected Aspects of the Use of Slovak Language by Adolescents in the Lower Land (in View of the Latest Research)¹

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Abstract:

The aim of the paper is to present the data reflecting the development and current state of language communication in Slovak communities living in the Lower Land. The research findings relate to 377 respondents, students of secondary schools and universities with the Slovak language of instruction aged 15 to 25, coming from Hungary, Romania, Croatia and Serbia. The chapter focuses on two indicators of the life of the Lower Land youth: an indicator of linguistic/speech behaviour and an indicator of the situational use of Slovak language (at school and outside school). The results of the research showed that the use of Slovak language by members of Slovak communities in Serbia, Croatia, Romania and Hungary is very variable and dynamic at present. The use of Slovak language in the environment of the oldest and middle generation in comparison with the younger generation has a decreasing tendency. It is even more apparent in the comparison with young people and children. In the case of mixed families, which are more and more common nowadays, the Slovak language is retreating into the background, or it remains only within the communication of the oldest and middle generations, alternatively in the communication of all generations with the oldest generation.

Keywords: Lower Land, Language communication, Use of Slovak, Slovak minority, Adolescents.

Introduction

In every society, regardless of its homogeneity or heterogeneity, there are minority groups. At present, national minorities, ethnic, linguistic or religious groups live in almost every country in Europe. The estimated number of Slovaks living abroad is 2,236,730. It results from the estimates of statistical offices, expatriate associations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic and the embassies. The World Association of Slovaks Abroad (WASA) and the Office for Slovaks Living Abroad (OSLA) represent the interests of foreign Slovaks. According to the Office for Slovaks Living Abroad, their estimated number was up to 2,660,000 in 1991. In 2005, the statistics dropped to around two million; by 2008 this number increased by more than 200,000 expatriates.² It should be stressed that estimates on the number of Slovaks vary considerably from country to country. Various numbers

1 This work was supported by the Agency for the Support of Research and Development on the basis of the Agreement No. APVV 15-0745.

2 Statistics taken from the portal of the Office for Slovaks living abroad. Online: <http://www.uszz.sk/sk/pocty-a-odhady>

arise mainly due to different approaches to the census: according to nationality based on free choice, according to data from mayors and municipalities, according to ethnological characteristics (common culture, traditions, customs, symbols), according to the mother tongue. As a result, we record various discussions about the real numbers of Slovaks living abroad. The first legislation specifically regulating the position of Slovaks living abroad was the Act on Foreign Slovaks No. 70/1997 Coll.³ The Act defined who is a foreign Slovak and what rights and obligations arising from this position. This Act was repealed and replaced by Act No. 474/2005 Coll. on Slovaks Living Abroad and on Amendments to Certain Acts, with effect from 1 January 2006. This Act regulates the position of foreign Slovaks, their rights and obligations in the territory of the Slovak Republic, as well as the procedure for granting foreign Slovaks their status and the powers of central state administration authorities in relation to foreign Slovaks. Pursuant to Act No. 474/2005 Coll. on Slovaks Living Abroad and on Amendments to Certain Acts, a Slovak living abroad is a person who does not have permanent residence in the territory of the Slovak Republic.⁴

The chapter deals with selected aspects of the use of Slovak language by adolescents in the Lower Land – in Hungary, Croatia, Serbia and Romania in the view of the research carried out at the Institute of Social Sciences CSPS SAS in Košice in cooperation with several Lower Land institutions over the past 10 years.⁵ The concepts of the Lower Land and Lower Land Slovaks have been taking the place of historical categories, beginning with the collapse of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire (1918). After this division, the Lower Land Slovaks became foreign Slovaks as well as national minorities of the successor states of the disintegrated monarchy. Their further development was determined by new political, linguistic, cultural and other characteristics of the newly formed Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Croatia and Serbia. As a result, new identifiers, as well as new and different

3 The Act in full. Online: https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/1997/70/vyhlase-ne_znenie.html

4 This term includes: persons who live abroad, do not have the citizenship of the Slovak Republic, have the citizenship of a foreign state, or are stateless persons, but they are of Slovak nationality and have interest and merit in spreading or maintaining Slovak nationality abroad. However, they are also persons who claim Slovak nationality after their relatives in a straight line. The Act in full. Online: https://www.uad.sk/33/474-2005-z-zakon-o-slovakoch-zijucich-v-zahranici-a-o-zmene-a-doplneni-niektorych-zakonov-v-zneni-ucinnom-k-1-5-2013-uniqueidOhwOuzC33qd2W4_6TwF4qJbGzHFqhOE7qsX5IXkmhySVdaLTRYHmJQ/

5 In the course of 2009 – 2016, five interdisciplinary field surveys were conducted at the Institute of Social Sciences of the Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences of the Slovak Academy of Sciences within two scientific research projects VEGA focused on the problems of the sociolinguistic situation of Lower Land Slovaks (four field studies) as well as Slovaks living in nationally mixed areas of Slovakia (one field research). The research projects were characterized by the fact that they dealt with an identical issue and used the same methodology to study the situational context of the use of the Slovak language. In order to maintain an identical approach to solution and interpretation of the results, both projects involved mostly the same researchers, combined with researchers focusing on a specific ethnic group on individual projects. The first was the VEGA project lasting between 2009 – 2011 entitled: “Language and communication behaviour of Slovak youth in Hungary and Slovakia in the situational context of intra-ethnic use of spoken Slovak”. Slovak youth in Slovakia was the so-called control sample and concerned the young generation of Slovaks living in nationally mixed areas of southern Slovakia. The second was the VEGA project lasting between 2014 – 2016 entitled: “Linguistic and communication behaviour of Slovak youth in Croatia and Serbia in the situational context of intra-ethnic use of spoken Slovak”.

forms of self-awareness and self-knowledge of the collective face of Slovaks in Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Croatia and Serbia, started to be applied in the successor states.⁶

The research findings presented in this chapter concern 377 respondents, secondary school and university students with Slovak language of instruction aged 15 – 25 years. There were 49 respondents from Croatia (15M, 34F), 121 respondents from Serbia (50M, 71F), 107 respondents from Romania (52M, 55F) and 100 respondents from Hungary (25M, 75F).⁷ The places of selection were secondary schools and colleges/universities, with Slovak language of instruction, or organizations, associations, cultural facilities, clubs associating young people with certain Slovak language communication actions. The selection criteria for each language group were: Slovak origin in terms of nationality or mother tongue; knowledge of spoken Slovak at the level of everyday communication; quota selection by gender, age and education. The main research method was the use of a structured questionnaire. The questions concerned linguistic-communication behaviour in both formal (public) and informal (family) environments.

In this paper we focus on two indicators of the life of the Lower Land youth:

a) Linguistic/communication behaviour indicator

This indicator identified linguistic behaviour in an informal environment (close family) and a formal environment (in public).

In order to identify linguistic behaviour in an **informal environment**, the respondents were asked the following question: *“Which language do you mainly speak to your grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, siblings?”* The five-degree scale identified the following five alternatives:

1 – Slovak only, 2 – more Slovak than Croatian, Serbian, Romanian, Hungarian, 3 – both the same, 4 – more Croatian, Serbian, Romanian, Hungarian than Slovak, 5 – only Croatian, Serbian, Romanian, Hungarian.

When researching linguistic behaviour **in public**, identical question (with the same scale) as for communication in family was asked, except that respondents chose answers for communication in their close environment: *friends, classmates, acquaintances on the street, shops*. To make orientation in the data easier, we created three categories of answers when communicating in both formal and informal settings from the point of view of communication in the family with Slovak orientation, bilingual or orientation focused on the majority language:

Category 1 (only Slovak + more Slovak than Croatian, Serbian, Romanian, Hungarian, merging points 1 and 2 on the scale),

Category 2 (both languages the same, point 3 on the scale),

Category 3 (more Croatian, Serbian, Romanian, Hungarian than Slovak + only Croatian, Serbian, Romanian, Hungarian, merging points 4 and 5 on the scale).

6 Botík, J. (2011). *Dolnozemskí Slováci. Tri storočia vysťahovaleckých osudov, spôsobu života a identity Slovákov v Maďarsku, Rumunsku, Srbsku a Bulharsku*. Nadlak: Vydavateľstvo Ivan Krasko, p. 9.

7 M = males, F = females.

b) Indicator of situational use of Slovak (at school and outside school)

This indicator was focused on the frequency of the use of Slovak language in two situations. The question was: “How often do you speak Slovak with classmates at school during breaks, outside school?” In both situations, the respondents answered on a seven-point scale (1 – not at all, 7 – very often).

Also, in this case, we approached the modification of the scale in terms of the frequency of use of Slovak. In both cases (at school and outside school) we categorized the responses into three response categories:

Category 1 (no to low frequency, merging points 1 – 3)

Category 2 (average frequency, point 4),

Category 3 (above-average to high frequency, merging points 5 – 7).

We used the methods of descriptive statistics (especially frequency analysis) in IBM SPSS version 21 to analyse both indicators.

Slovaks in Croatia

Slovak minority in Croatia is concentrated mainly in the area of Osijek in the Osijek-Baranja county (districts Našice, Djakovo, Novska, Osijek, Vukovar). A certain number of Slovaks also live in the Sisak area.⁸

Mostly Croats live in Croatia (90.42 %), while minority groups include Serbs (4.36 %), Bosnians, Hungarians, Italians, Albanians, Slovaks, Germans, Czechs, the Roma and others (5.22 %). Data on the number of Slovaks in Croatia in the past are not reliable. In the 19th century their number was about 30,000. In 1900, there were 17 342 Slovaks.⁹ Religious belief identical to the majority Croatian population, with the exception of the protestant communities in Ilok, Radoš and Soľany, caused the Roman Catholic population to lose language abilities quite quickly and, in many cases, to lose awareness of their Slovak ethnicity.¹⁰

The census in 2001 showed that 4 712 inhabitants of Croatia are of Slovak nationality.¹¹ At present (according to the data from the 2011 census) about 4 753 inhabitants claim Slovak nationality.¹² There are more of them – around 11 000, but many, especially the

8 More on Slovaks in Croatia: Ušák, V. (1978). *Slováci v Chorvátsku : historický náčrt*. Cleveland; Rím: Slovenský ústav; Kučerová, K. (2006). *Slováci v Chorvátsku (od začiatkov osídľovania)*. Martin: Matica slovenská.; Kuric, A., & Baksa, B. (2007). *15 rokov Zväzu Slovákov v Chorvátskej republike : Slováci v Chorvátsku včera, dnes, zajtra*. Našice: Savez Slovaka u RH.; Jančárová A. (ed.). (2000). *Slováci v Chorvátsku – minulosť a prítomnosť*. Bratislava: Dom zahraničných Slovákov.; Škiljan, F., & Kralj Vukšić, S. (2015). *Slovaci u Hrvatskoj u popisima stanovništva između 1880. i 2011. i perspektiva u istraživanju. Človek a spoločnosť 18(2)*. Online: <http://www.clovekaspolocnost.sk/sk/rocnik-18-rok-2015/2/studie-a-clanky/slovaci-uhrvatskoj-u-popisima-stanovnistva-između-1880-i-2011-i-perspektiva-u-istrazivanju/>

9 In 1948: 10 097 Slovaks; in 1953: 9 750; in 1961: 8 128; in 1971: 6 483; in 1991: 5 606. Kuric, A., & Baksa, B. (2007). *15 rokov Zväzu Slovákov v Chorvátskej republike : Slováci v Chorvátsku včera, dnes, zajtra*. Našice: Savez Slovaka u RH, 67.

10 Čukan, J. et al. (2017). *Slováci v Chorvátsku. Súčasný stav minoritnej kultúry*. Nitra: UKF.

11 Source: Državni zavod za statistiku. Online: https://www.dzs.hr/Eng/censuses/Census2001/Popis/E01_02_02/E01_02_02.html

12 Source: Državni zavod za statistiku. Online: https://www.dzs.hr/Eng/censuses/census2011/results/htm/E01_01_04/e01_01_04_RH.html

younger generation, are of Croatian nationality. The census confirms that the Slovak minority in Croatia has been increasingly assimilated. Every 10 years there is one thousand Slovaks less. At this pace, the expatriate community will disappear within 40 years.¹³

Linguistic-communication behaviour – language knowledge and intergenerational communication

When describing the language of Slovaks in Croatia, it should be emphasized that it is the Orava-Kysuce and the South-Central Slovak a dialect. The language of the middle and young generation is a mixture of Slovak and Croatian. Communication in Slovak has a decreasing tendency in families. The absence of Slovak education, especially in the villages of Central Slavonia, contributed to the linguistic assimilation of Croatian Slovaks. The same faith and proximity of languages also contribute to assimilation with the majority Croatian community.¹⁴

a) Linguistic/communication behaviour indicator

Frequency analysis of answers to the question what language the respondents speak and with family members at present found that for the communication with grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, siblings and relatives the respondents most often selected the fifth point of the scale (Croatian only) in the following percentages: 72.9 % for communicating with their father, 71.4 % with their mother, 69.4 % with the relatives, 68.9 % with the siblings, 67.3 % with their grandmother and 65.3 % with their grandfather. The option of communication exclusively in Slovak (point 1) with family members appeared to be the second most common option but to a much lesser extent – from 17.8 % in communication with siblings to 28.6 % with their grandfather. A small deviation in this case is presented by communication with relatives, which is more often in Slovak than in Croatian (point 2 on the scale) in 12.2 %. Bilingual communication was confirmed to a very low extent – from 0 % when communicating with their grandfather to 8.2 % when communicating with relatives.

The categorized answers clearly showed the most pronounced representation of Category 3 answers for all family members. Communication of respondents is therefore mostly in the Croatian language.

13 Slováci v Chorvátsku a Chorváti na Slovensku (literatúra z fondu Slovenskej pedagogickej knižnice z rokov 1991 – 2008). Bratislava: Slovenská pedagogická knižnica, 2008.

14 Homišinová, M., & Výrost, J. (2015). Reč slovenskej mládeže žijúcej na Slovensku, v Maďarsku, Chorvátsku a Srbsku v reflexii výskumu. In *Človek a spoločnosť*, 18(2). Online: <http://www.clovekaspolocnost.sk/sk/rocnik-18-rok-2015/2/studie-a-clanky/rec-slovenskej-mladeze-zijucej-na-slovensku-v-madarsku-chorvatsku-a-srbsku-v-reflexii-vyskumu/>

Table 1: Categorised answers on communication in the family

Language group	Relatives		Communication in family					
		Category 1		Category 2		Category 3		TOTAL
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
Slovaks in Croatia	Grandfather	16	32.7	0	0	33	67.3	
	Grandmother	14	28.6	2	4.1	33	67.3	
	Father	11	22.9	2	4.2	35	72.9	
	Mother	11	22.4	1	2	37	75.5	
	Siblings	10	22.2	1	2.2	34	75.6	
	Relatives	9	18.4	4	8.2	36	73.5	

Cat. 1 – Slovak language orientation (exclusive or predominant)

Cat. 2 – bilingual communication

Cat. 3 – majority language orientation (predominant or exclusive)

When analysing linguistic behaviour in public, frequency analyses showed that option 5 clearly dominated in communication with classmates and acquaintances (communication exclusively in Croatian) – 75.5 % with classmates and acquaintances on the street, 69.4 % with friends, 77.1 % in shops. None of the respondents communicated with friends, classmates and acquaintances on the street exclusively in Slovak (point 1). When communicating in shops, Slovak has minimum representation (2.1 %).

These results are confirmed after the modification of the answer scale. We recorded the highest representation in the Category 3 of answers, up to 95.9 % of communication with classmates. However, this may be due to the underdeveloped network of schools with Slovak language of instruction.

Table 2: Categorized answers on communication in public

Language group	Public sphere	Communication in public					
		Category 1		Category 2		Category 3	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Slovaks in Croatia	Friends	3	6.1	7	14.3	39	79.6
	Classmates	0	0	2	4.1	47	95.9
	Street	4	8.2	4	8.2	41	83.7
	Shop	2	4.2	4	8.3	42	87.5

Cat. 1 – Slovak language orientation (exclusive or predominant)

Cat. 2 – bilingual communication

Cat. 3 – majority language orientation (predominant or exclusive)

Based on the above results, it can be concluded that the language communication behaviour of Croatian youth in both formal and informal settings is clearly dominated

by exclusively Croatian language. It is more pronounced in the public, especially when communicating with classmates.

b) Indicator of situational use of Slovak (at school and outside school)

In this case, we were interested in how often Slovak is represented as a communication language at school (during breaks with classmates) and outside school with classmates. In other words, whether the school environment significantly determines the use of Slovak language in contact with classmates and the frequency of its use in any way. In both monitored cases, we did not record very frequent communication in Slovak at all, communication in the Croatian language with classmates dominated also during breaks and also outside school. Point 1 on the scale was chosen by 26.5 % of respondents (they do not communicate with their classmates in Slovak at all), 0 % of respondents chose points 6 and 7 on the scale (they communicate very often in Slovak). A similar situation occurred when communicating with classmates outside school – the frequency of using Slovak was very low (28.6 % chose point 1, 4.1 % chose point 7).

If we look at the categorized answers, we can state that in Category 1 (no to below-average communication in Slovak) there are almost two-thirds of the respondents in Slovak school in Croatia. Bilingual communication in Slovak language (Category 2) at school is reported by 30.6 % of the representation, outside the school in 16.3 %. Communication situation in Category 3 of responses (declared above-average to very frequent communication in Slovak language) we identified only in 4.1 % at school and 10.2 % outside school.

Table 3: Categorized answers of situational use of Slovak at school and outside school

Language group	Situation	Communication in Slovak with classmates in school and outside school					
		Category 1		Category 2		Category 3	
		No or below-average communication (points 1-3)		Average communication (point 4)		Above-average to very frequent communication (point 5-7)	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Slovaks in Croatia	SCHOOL	32	65.3	15	30.6	2	4.1
	OUTSIDE	36	73.5	8	16.3	5	10.2

Slovaks in Serbia

Slovak minority survived also in Serbia. Over 270 years, a large Slovak community with a high degree of originality outside Slovakia has formed here. Compactly populated territory, own local and municipal councils, the tradition of cultural associations, well-developed minority education, the strong position of the church and good conditions of Slovak language use ensure the generational transfer of original cultural values, customs, folklore, but also their specific development and enrichment in new conditions.¹⁵

15 More on Slovaks in Serbia: Stupavský, S. (2010). *Slováci v Šíde 1810 – 2010*. Báčsky Petrovec: Matica slovenská v Srbsku.; Čukan J. (ed.). (2015). *Vojlovica : kultúrne tradície Slovákov v Banáte*. Nitra: Filozofická

There are several tens of thousands of Slovaks living in Serbia, most of them in Vojvodina. It is therefore rightly regarded as the major centre of foreign Slovaks.

According to the 2011 census, Serbia had 7 186 862 inhabitants. Of these, there were 83.32 % residents of Serbian nationality, the rest were members of other nationalities. The highest proportion of these, 3.53 %, was of Hungarian nationality and there were 2.05 % Roma. Members of the Slovak minority occupied sixth place with 52,750 (0.73 %).¹⁶

Compared to the census ten years ago (in 2002 there were 59,021 – 0.79 % Slovaks of the total of 7,498,001 Serbian population without data for Kosovo and Metohija), the number of Slovaks in Serbia decreased by 6,271, i.e. by slightly more than 10 %.

There has been a greater decline in the population of Slovak nationality since the 1970s. An even more pronounced decline over the last 20 years has been marked mainly by the civil war. Although it did not affect the Slovaks directly, it affected their economic situation. This, together with the fact their way back to Slovakia was still open, causes a significant decrease in their number. However, low chances of finding a job also contribute to the reduction of the number of Slovaks in Serbia. This causes a serious problem, as a large part of the young generation goes abroad. Given the fact that this number fell by 11.78 % between 1991 and 2002, it can be stated that the rate of decline in the number of members of Slovak national minority remained at the same level.¹⁷

Linguistic-communication behaviour – language knowledge and intergenerational communication

In Serbia, Slovaks commonly speak Slovak among themselves. There is no problem to hear this language on the streets and in families. Everyone without exception also speaks the language of the majority population. Slovak language spoken by almost all Serbian Slovaks is at a very high level. In Slovak municipalities, there are even situations where Serbian majority becomes a minority. If, for example, a Serbian woman marries a Slovak man and they live in one of the Slovak villages, she usually learns Slovak. However, if there is a problem in a sentence or vocabulary, the locals can make a smooth transition to Serbian. From this point of view, they are fully bilingual. Thus, Slovak is spoken in families, at celebrations, among friends, and of course in schools. It is thanks to the teaching of Slovak in schools that the language is maintained even among the young generation, who thus takes the baton in preserving the national identity of Slovaks in Serbia, the inseparable part of which is the ability to speak Slovak. Serbian Slovak is in some respects different

fakulta, Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa.; Dudok, M. (2015). Jazyková komunikácia Slovákov v Chorvátsku a Srbsku. *Človek a spoločnosť*, 18(2). Online: <http://www.clovekaspolocnost.sk/sk/rocnik-18-rok2015/2/diskusia/jazykova-komunikacia-slovakov-v-chorvatsku-a-srbsku/> ; Sklabinská, M., & Mosnáková, K. (eds.). (2012). *Slováci v Srbsku z aspektu kultúry*. Nový Sad: Ústav pre kultúru vojvodinských Slovákov.

16 Information downloaded from the portal OPBC Statistical Office of the Republic Serbia. Online: <http://arhiva.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/Default.aspx>

17 Source: Obyvateľstvo podľa národnosti pri sčítaní obyvateľstva v rokoch 1948 – 2011. In: 2011 Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of Serbia. Online: http://pod2.stat.gov.rs/ObjavljenePublikacije/Popis2011/Knjiga4_Veroispovest.pdf

from standard Slovak. But it should be noted that even within Serbia, Slovak does not always have to be exactly the same everywhere.¹⁸

Two groups can be found among the older generation. The first one, who studied or worked in Slovakia for a longer time and the second one, who spent their whole life in Serbia. Slovak language in the first group is significantly purer. There are also some differences in vocabulary. Those who have lived all their lives in Serbia use more Serbian expressions and words resulting from the gradual overlapping of these two languages. In the younger generation, the second group is gradually disappearing.

a) Linguistic/communication behaviour indicator

According to the frequency analysis concerning informal linguistic behaviour of adolescent Slovaks in Serbia, communication exclusively in Slovak dominated (point 1) with all family members in order: 90.7 % with the grandmother, 90.4 % with the grandfather, 87.2 % with the father, 78.3 % with the mother, 70.3 % with the siblings and 60.8 % with the relatives. Communication in Serbian only (point 5) is observed only sporadically, most often with the mother (5 %) and the father (3.4 %). Bilingual communication is also rare in the family environment, from 11.7 % with the relatives and 7.6 % with the siblings, downward to 0 % with the grandmother mother.

After modifying the scale and creating three categories of responses, we see the most prominent representation of Category 1 responses in all items (percentages ranging from 95.8 % in communicating with the grandmother to 84.2 % in communicating with the relatives). The respondents speak mostly or exclusively Serbian to their mother at a maximum of 8.3 %. The highest rate of bilingual communication was recorded in communication with the relatives, i.e. 11.7 %.

Table 4: Categorised answers on communication in the family

Language group	Relatives	Communication in family						TOTAL
		Category 1		Category 2		Category 3		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
Slovaks in Serbia	Grandfather	108	93.2	1	0.9	6	5.2	
	Grandmother	113	95.8	0	0	5	4.2	
	Father	109	93.2	2	1.7	6	5.1	
	Mother	107	89.2	3	2.5	10	8.3	
	Siblings	102	86.4	9	7.6	7	5.9	
	Relatives	101	84.2	14	11.7	5	4.2	

Cat. 1 – Slovak language orientation (exclusive or predominant)

Cat. 2 – bilingual communication

Cat. 3 – majority language orientation (predominant or exclusive)

18 Kokaisl, P., Štolfová, A., Zychová, J., & Hanuš, P. et al. (2014). *Po stopách Slováků ve východní Evropě. Polsko, Ukrajina, Maďarsko, Rumunsko, Srbsko, Chorvatsko a Černá Hora*. Praha: Nostalgie, 255-257.

There are two variants dominating linguistic behaviour in the public, option 1 (exclusively Slovak) and option 2 (more Slovak than Serbian). Communication exclusively in Slovak students is predominant in the option with classmates (64.7 %). The youth communicates more in Slovak than in Serbian with friends (40.8 %), with friends on the street (35.8 %) and in shops (31.4 %).

In contrast to informal communication in the family, however, when investigating public behaviour in 1/3 – 1/4 of the respondents, we also encounter a variant of bilingualism, variant 3. The highest rate of this variant is with the friends on the street (30 %), then in communication with friends (29.2 %) and communication in shops (28.1 %). The lowest level of bilingualism is found in communication with classmates (5.9 %).

The results of the categorization of answers confirm the above trend, almost 80 % of Slovak youth in Serbia use exclusively or mostly Slovak language to communicate with their classmates. Category 3 answers have the most prominent representation in communication in shops, where almost one fifth of the respondents (19 %) communicate mostly or exclusively Serbian, followed by communication with classmates (15.1 %).

Table 5: Categorized answers on communication in public

Language group	Public sphere	Communication in public					
		Category 1		Category 2		Category 3	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Slovaks in Serbia	Friends	78	65	35	29.2	7	5.8
	Classmates	94	79	7	5.9	18	15.1
	Street	73	60.8	36	30.0	11	9.2
	Shop	64	52.9	34	28.1	23	19

Cat. 1 – Slovak language orientation (exclusive or predominant)

Cat. 2 – bilingual communication

Cat. 3 – majority language orientation (predominant or exclusive)

b) Indicator of situational use of Slovak (at school and outside school)

The results showed that Slovak is a very common language of communication in more than half of the Slovak youth respondents in Serbia (a little more frequent at school during breaks 60.8 %, outside school 53.7 %). We can say that more than half of the respondents use Slovak very often with their classmates. 7.5 % of respondents do not use Slovak at all when communicating at school and 6.6 % outside school.

Looking at the categorized answers, we can see that in Category 3 (prevalent or exclusive communication in Slovak), there are more than three-quarters of the respondents in Slovak school in Serbia. In the case of school communication, 77.5 % of respondents chose this option, while 76 % of respondents chose this option outside school. The second bilingual variant was chosen by 8.3 % of respondents in school and by 14.9 % out of school. There were 14.2 % of young people who do not communicate in Slovak at all or communicate in Slovak very rarely at school, 9.1 % outside school.

Table 6: Categorized answers on situational use of Slovak at school and outside school

Language group	Situation	Communication in Slovak with classmates in school and outside school					
		Category 1		Category 2		Category 3	
		No or below-average communication (points 1-3)		Average communication (point 4)		Above-average to very frequent communication (point 5-7)	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Slovaks in Serbia	SCHOOL	17	14.2	10	8.3	93	77.5
	OUTSIDE	11	9.1	18	14.9	92	76.0

Slovaks in Romania

Slovak minority in Romania is currently located in two main areas: Bihorska, which is characterized mainly by Catholicism and in the vicinity of Nadlak, with prevailing elements of Lutheranism.¹⁹

In 2002, according to the population census, there were 17 226 citizens claiming Slovak nationality in Romania. According to the administrative division in Romania, up to half (48 %) of the population lives in only five large communes (there is a system of communes – where one larger municipality is associated with several surrounding smaller ones). The largest Slovak communes are (according to the 2002 census): the city of Nadlak (3,885 Slovaks); Popești Commune (1,305 Slovaks); Nova Huta (Sinteu) Commune (1,264 Slovaks); Siplak Commune (934 Slovaks); Plopis Commune (901 Slovaks). According to the 2011 census, only 13,654 inhabitants reported Slovak nationality.²⁰

Although Romania is considered to be very varied in terms of nationality, the proportion of the main ethnic group, the Romanians, is relatively high. However, most ethnic minorities in Romania are characterized by a continuous settlement, and even though their number (and proportion) is very low on a national scale, the relevant national minority is quite significant in the area (this also applies to the Slovak minority). Immediately after Romanians, the largest share are Hungarians with 6.1 %, followed by the Roma 3.09 %, Ukrainians 0.25 % and Germans 0.18 %.²¹

The overall number of Slovaks is constantly decreasing – the reason is the departure of young people from Romania for work. A significant change in population development has occurred since the 1990s when in the period between 1992 and 2011 there was

19 More on Slovaks in Romania: Anoca, D. M. (2013). *Slovenčina v Rumunsku*. In *Slovenčina vo svete – súčasný stav a perspektívy. Zborník príspevkov z medzinárodnej konferencie*. Bratislava: Univerzita Komenského.; Štefanko, O., & Husárik, P. (2006). *Viac ako dve storočia slovenskej školy v Nadlaku*. Nadlak: Vydavateľstvo Ivan Krasko.; Bošelová, M. (2015). *Slovenská minorita v Rumunsku – etnokultúrne kontexty*. In *Človek a spoločnosť*, 18(2). Online: <http://www.clovekaspolocnost.sk/sk/rocnik-18-rok2015/2/studie-a-clanky/slovenska-minorita-v-rumunsku-etnokulture-kontexty/>; Bartalská, Ľ. (ed.). (1995). *Slováci v Rumunsku*. Bratislava : Dom zahraničných Slovákov.; Štefanko, O. (ed.). (2003). *200 rokov života Slovákov v Nadlaku*. Nadlak: Vydavateľstvo Ivan Krasko.

20 Slováci v Rumunsku. *Súčasný stav*. Online: <http://www.slovacivrumunsku.sk/01-suc.php>

21 Kokaisl, P., Štolfová, A., Zychová, J., & Hanuš, P. et al. (2014). *Po stopách Slovákov ve východní Evropě. Polsko, Ukrajina, Maďarsko, Rumunsko, Srbsko, Chorvatsko a Černá Hora*. Praha: Nostalgie, 175-176.

a decrease of almost 6,000 persons. The reasons were traditional, i.e. decreasing natality and partly also assimilation, and they were joined by the phenomenon caused by the fall of totalitarianism. After the regime change in 1989, leaving for work abroad, especially to Slovakia, became a mass phenomenon, for obvious reasons.

Linguistic-communication behaviour – language knowledge and intergenerational communication

The way of life of Slovaks in Romania was and still is a continually evolving socio-cultural system, very lively and naturally responsive to the surrounding environment and the circumstances brought about by individual historical periods.

For almost all Romanian Slovaks, the most important attribute of their Slovak identity is the Slovak language, while Slovaks living in Romania refer to Slovak as their mother tongue. It is common to mix Slovak with Romanian in discussions. However, there is a decline in Slovak, which is due to the migration of Slovak residents to other states, where they try to find work. Historical awareness plays an insignificant role in the identity of this minority.

a) Linguistic/communication behaviour indicator

Frequency analysis of the answers to the question with regard to which language the respondents currently speak to family members showed for communication with grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, siblings, the respondents most often voted the first point of the scale (in Slovak only) in percentage from 59.1 % (with siblings) to 84.5 % (with grandmother). The only exception is communication with relatives, which takes place mostly in Slovak (point 2 – 38.2 % of respondents). The same rate of bilingual communication was confirmed mostly in the case of communication with relatives (26.5 %), followed by communication with siblings (11.8 %). The choice of communication exclusively in Romanian (point 5) with family members appeared only sporadically, confirmed by less than a tenth of respondents (according to the addressee of communication).

The grouping of responses showed a significant representation of Category 1 of responses for all family members (most with grandparents and with the mother). Communication in the family of respondents is therefore mostly Slovak oriented.

Table 7: Categorised answers on communication in the family

Language group	Relatives	Communication in family						
		Category 1		Category 2		Category 3		TOTAL
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
Slovaks in Romania	Grandfather	87	94.6	3	3.3	2	2.2	
	Grandmother	90	92.8	3	3.1	4	4.1	
	Father	79	81.4	2	6.2	12	12.4	
	Mother	96	93.2	5	4.9	2	1.1	
	Siblings	79	84.9	11	11.8	3	3.2	
	Relatives	68	66.7	27	26.5	7	6.9	

Cat. 1 – Slovak language orientation (exclusive or predominant)

Cat. 2 – bilingual communication

Cat. 3 – majority language orientation (predominant or exclusive)

When examining linguistic behaviour in public, the frequency analysis revealed that the modal variant of communication with classmates was option 1 – “only in Slovak” – for almost half of the respondents (47.1 %). The same proportion of respondents (47.6 %) chose point 2 (more in Slovak than in Romanian). Communication with acquaintances and in shops is mostly bilingual – point 3 (with acquaintances on the street 40 %, in shops 41.3 %). Variants confirming the shift towards communication in the majority (Romanian) language – points 4 and 5 were chosen by less than a tenth of respondents.

The previous findings also confirm the results of the categorization of responses. In Category 1 of the responses, communication with classmates was the most common, with almost 90 % of young people choosing exclusively or mostly Slovak for their communication with classmates. It is important that respondents also choose this form of communication with other communication addressees, albeit to a lesser extent (more than half of the respondents).

Table 8: Categorized answers on communication in public

Language group	Public sphere	Communication in public					
		Category 1		Category 2		Category 3	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Slovaks in Romania	Friends	65	61.9	32	30.5	8	7.6
	Classmates	91	87.5	10	9.6	3	2.9
	Street	60	57.1	42	40	3	2.9
	Shop	54	51.9	43	41.3	7	6.7

Cat. 1 – Slovak language orientation (exclusive or predominant)

Cat. 2 – bilingual communication

Cat. 3 – majority language orientation (predominant or exclusive)

Comparing the results of linguistic-communication behaviour in an informal and formal environment we can find a majority tendency of communication in the Slovak language (with each addressee of communication), and it is more pronounced in the family environment.

b) Indicator of situational use of Slovak (at school and outside school)

The frequency analysis showed that in the case of communication with schoolmates at school, the respondents mostly chose point 7 (very frequent communication) in almost half of the representation (43.8 %). In the case of communication outside school, point 6 of the scale (frequent communication) also became modal, albeit in a lower proportion (29.5 %). Respondents' answers were predominantly spread between points 4 and 7 of the scale (average to very frequent communication) – a total of 95.2 % of respondents.

The results of categorized answers unequivocally confirm the high proportion of respondents who communicate above-average or very frequently in Slovak with classmates at school (90 %). Almost three quarters of young people communicate in Slovak also outside school. Thus, the Slovak language is sufficiently represented in young people from Romania in communication with classmates both at school and outside school.

Table 9: Categorized answers on situational use of Slovak at school and outside school

Language group	Situation	Communication in Slovak with classmates in school and outside school					
		Category 1		Category 2		Category 3	
		No or below-average communication (points 1-3)		Average communication (point 4)		Above-average to very frequent communication (point 5-7)	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Slovaks in Romania	SCHOOL	4	3.8	6	5.7	95	90.5
	OUTSIDE	5	4.8	24	22.9	76	72.4

Slovaks in Hungary

At present, Slovaks mostly inhabit the following five regions: Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county in north-eastern Hungary; Nógrád county and surroundings of Budapest; Komárno-Esztergom, Pest, Fejér and Veszprém county in Transdanubia; Békés and Congrád county in the south-eastern part of Lower Land; areas of Kiskoros and Nyíregyháza, which form smaller units.²²

Slovak minority has a long-standing tradition in the territory of Hungary, which has been manifested until present by a relatively high representation. According to the last census in 2011, 9,937,628 people live in Hungary. The most numerous minorities are the Roma and Germans. Members of Slovak nationality, together with the Romanians, rank

22 More on Slovaks in Hungary: Uhrinová-Hornoková, A., Kiss Szemán, R., Lásik, M., & Žiláková, M. (2015). *Dejiny a kultúra Slovákov v Maďarsku*. Budapest: Oktatáskutató és Fejlesztő Intézet.; Kmeť, M., Tušková, T., & Uhrinová, A. et al. (2018). *Kapitoly z minulosti a súčasnosti Slovákov v Békešskej Čabe*. Békešská Čaba: Výskumný ústav Slovákov v Maďarsku.; Petőcz, K. (ed.). (2008). *Slováci v Maďarsku*. Samorín: Fórum inštitút pre výskum menšín.

third. They are followed by Croats and then Serbs. In 2011, 35,208 inhabitants reported Slovak nationality, compared to 39,266 persons in 2001, which is more than 10 % decrease in the given period.²³

Slovaks have the most unfavourable demographic structure among all national minorities, i.e. the highest proportion of old people and the lowest proportion of children. This is mainly due to the scattering of Slovak minority, which is not concentrated in a certain region, but lives in several areas and, with the exception of one municipality, is also a local minority everywhere. Therefore, Slovaks are characterized by mixed marriages, where the language of communication is Hungarian. Children in such marriages are often of Hungarian nationality and do not speak Slovak or speak it very poorly – their mother tongue is Hungarian.

Linguistic-communication behaviour – language knowledge and intergenerational communication

In Hungary today, only about 14,000 Slovaks speak Slovak only in the family circle – a small fraction of the total number from 1918. The impact of assimilation, which is really considerable here, and also the relatively fluctuating interest of the state in maintaining Slovak culture are to be blamed for this situation. You can hardly hear Slovak in the streets. It is mostly maintained among enthusiasts for the preservation of Slovak culture in Hungary and among the elderly, thanks to which part of the younger generation will learn Slovak.

a) Linguistic/communication behaviour indicator

In their family and close surroundings, the respondents tend to use exclusively Hungarian language for communication, with the highest percentage in communication with the father and the mother (69.4 % in both cases), followed by the siblings (64.9 %), the grandparents (the grandfather 57.9 % and the grandmother 51.5 %). There are 45.9 % of respondents that speak only Hungarian with their relatives. Bilingual communication is represented to a lesser extent of 5.1 % for the father and 16.3 % for the relatives. Communication only in Slovak has the lowest representation (1 % for the siblings, 2 % for the mother and the relatives, 4 % for the grandfather and the grandmother). The only exception is communication with the father, where variant 2 – more Slovak than Hungarian – is the least frequent (1 %). In the case of categorized answers, we confirmed the majority orientation on the majority language in all points from 74.5 % to 87.8 %. Category 2 of responses was confirmed only in communication with relatives in more than one sixth of the respondents. Category 1 responses range from 5.1 % in communication with the siblings to 11.6 % with the grandfather.

23 Uhrinová, A. (2016). O slovenskom školskom systéme v Maďarsku. In Zuzana Pavelcová (ed.). *Slováci v zahraničí 33. Zborník Krajanského múzea Matice slovenskej*. Martin: Matica slovenská, p. 43.

Table 10: Categorised answers on communication in the family

Language group	Relatives	Communication in family						
		Category 1		Category 2		Category 3		TOTAL
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
Slovaks in Hungary	Grandfather	11	11.6	8	8.4	76	80	
	Grandmother	10	10.3	13	13.1	74	76.2	
	Father	7	7.1	5	5.1	86	87.8	
	Mother	6	6.1	10	10.2	82	83.7	
	Siblings	5	5.1	11	11.3	81	83.5	
	Relatives	9	9.1	16	16.3	73	74.5	

Cat. 1 – Slovak language orientation (exclusive or predominant)

Cat. 2 – bilingual communication

Cat. 3 – majority language orientation (predominant or exclusive)

They responded similarly to the question of the language of communication in public, as it was in case of the family. Communication is predominantly in Hungarian (from 64.6 % in shops, over 63.6 % with acquaintances on the street, to 44 % with friends). There is an exception in communication with classmates, where the most frequent option was option 4 – more Hungarian than Slovak (46.5 %). Communication only in Slovak is represented minimally: 0 % with friends, 1 % with acquaintances on the street. Communication in shops and with classmates reached 2 and 3 percent.

Looking at the results by categorization, we see that Category 1 responses represent less than 10 % of public communications. Slovak adolescents in Hungary reported bilingual communication in almost one fifth of the item friends. We have seen the highest proportion of answers in Category 3 (majority language orientation) – up to 87.8 % communicate mostly or exclusively in Hungarian on the street.

Table 11: Categorized answers on communication in public

Language group	Public sphere	Communication in public					
		Category 1		Category 2		Category 3	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Slovaks in Hungary	Friends	5	5.0	19	19.0	76	76.0
	Classmates	7	7.0	14	14.1	78	78.8
	Street	6	6.1	6	6.1	89	87.8
	Shop	8	8.1	11	11.1	80	80.8

Cat. 1 – Slovak language orientation (exclusive or predominant)

Cat. 2 – bilingual communication

Cat. 3 – majority language orientation (predominant or exclusive)

b) Indicator of situational use of Slovak (at school and outside school)

Slovak language is not sufficiently represented in communication of young people from Hungary with classmates at school and outside school. Very frequent communication in both items was recorded only minimally (4 % for school and 1 % outside school). More than one fifth of respondents stated that they do not communicate in Slovak at all at school and outside school. With regard to bilingual communication, 26 % of respondents use it at school and 22 % use it outside school.

In the case of categorized answers, we can see that in Category 1 (no to very poor communication in Slovak), item at school was present in more than a half of responses from young Slovaks in Hungary. Outside school, we record almost two-thirds of the answers.

Above-average communication in Slovak was reported by 18 % of respondents at school and by 13 % of respondents outside school.

Table 12: Categorized answers on situational use of Slovak at school and outside school

Language group	Situation	Communication in Slovak with classmates in school and outside school					
		Category 1		Category 2		Category 3	
		No or below-average communication (points 1-3)		Average communication (point 4)		Above-average to very frequent communication (point 5-7)	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Slovaks in Hungary	SCHOOL	56	56.0	26	26.0	18	18.0
	OUTSIDE	65	65.0	22	22.0	13	13.0

Summary of results

In general, it can be stated that the use of Slovak language by members of Slovak communities in Serbia, Croatia, Romania and Hungary is very variable and dynamic at present. According to statistical data, the declaration of Slovak mother tongue changes not only generationally, but even faster, from decade to decade. The use of Slovak language by the oldest and middle generation in comparison with the younger one has a decreasing tendency, it is even more pronounced in comparison with young people and children. In the case of mixed families, now more and more widespread, Slovak retreats into the background, or it remains only within the communication of the oldest and middle generations, or in the communication of all generations with the oldest one.

Informal environment – family:

Based on the presented data we create a bipolar image according to language groups. While in the case of Slovaks in Serbia and Romania communication exclusively in Slovak with all family members dominates significantly in all the offered items (Slovaks in Serbia from 60.8 % with the relatives to 90 % with the grandparents; Slovaks in Romania from 28.4 % with the relatives to 85 % with the grandparents) the majority language prevails for Slovaks in Croatia and Hungary. Slovak is only represented by 1 to 6.1 % in the case

of Slovaks in Hungary, depending on the addressee of communication. In the case of Slovaks in Croatia, it is interesting that respondents' answers (for all items) were placed mostly at the extreme points of the scale (1 – only in Slovak, 5 – only in Croatian). We can, therefore, conclude that even for Slovaks in Croatia there is about one fifth to a quarter of respondents who communicate exclusively in Slovak in their family environment (from 28.6 % with the grandfather 17.8 % with the siblings). The only exception is communication with the relatives, where about one tenth of respondents (12.2 %) preferred the second point of the scale (more Slovak than Croatian) to the first point (only 6.1 % in Slovak).

Overall, we can say that the most significant linguistic communication only in Slovak takes place within the family of Slovak respondents in Serbia and Romania, while the frequency of communication is slightly higher for Slovaks in Serbia. With regard to generations, we notice declining character (the most frequent communication is with the grandparents, the least frequent with the relatives) and it is also true that the percentage of this communication for all items is slightly lower among Slovaks in Romania. The extent of communication in the majority language is more pronounced for Slovaks in Croatia and Hungary, while for Slovaks in Hungary it is higher for each item. It should be stressed, however, that while in the case of Slovaks in Hungary the majority language clearly dominates (for all items), Slovaks in Croatia show a higher degree of dispersion of responses on the scale, i.e. the imbalance of responses to individual items (except for communication with relatives) and the selection of each point on the scale suggests varied communication "only in Slovak" generationally from a quarter of respondents with grandparents, over a fifth of respondents with their parents, to almost a fifth of respondents with their siblings.

Formal environment – public:

Language in public copies the trend of the results recorded in the family, both in terms of language groups and monitored items, with the difference that the medium values in each item for Slovaks in Serbia and Romania are higher. This means that communication in Slovak is less represented in public than in the family in these language groups. The situation of Slovaks in Croatia confirms a higher frequency of communication in Croatian in public than in the family. There is high dominance of communication in Hungarian among Slovaks in Hungary, approximately to the same extent in public and in the family. It is interesting that while communication with friends has the most favourable position among Slovaks in Croatia, communication with friends among Slovaks in Serbia, Romania and Hungary it is communication with classmates. Overall, it was confirmed that family environment determines communication in the mother tongue (especially among Slovaks in Serbia and Romania) more than communication in the public.

Only two linguistic groups communicate with their friends in Slovak, with one in four respondents among Slovaks in Serbia and one in six among Slovaks in Romania. None of the respondents from the group of Slovaks in Croatia and Hungary reported exclusive communication with friends in Slovak.

In the case of communication with classmates, the situation has not changed for Slovaks in Croatia (no communication exclusively in Slovak), but among Slovaks in Serbia and Romania, the communication in Slovak has increased (Slovaks in Serbia almost two

thirds, Slovaks in Romania almost half of the respondents). In the case of Slovaks in Hungary, only three respondents reported communication in Slovak language only.

Approximately one quarter of Slovak respondents in both Serbia and Romania communicate with their acquaintances on the street only in Slovak. Nearly the same proportion of respondents communicate in Slovak in shops – more than a quarter of Slovak respondents in Serbia and Romania use only Slovak in shops. In the case of Slovaks in Croatia and Hungary, their numbers were minimal. From the point of view of the use of exclusively Slovak language in public, we can say that communication with classmates dominates especially among Slovaks in Serbia and Romania, followed by communication with acquaintances on the street, then in shops and to the least extent communication with friends. It can be assumed that they are friends from the majority population.

School and outside school:

The results of the analyses showed that Slovak is very common communication language among more than half of Slovak respondents in Serbia (slightly more common with classmates). Slovaks in Romania also communicate in this way in a smaller percentage, while communication with schoolmates at school is more pronounced (43.8 %) than outside school (one quarter of answers). For the other two language groups we did not record very frequent communication in Slovak when evaluating both items (Slovaks in Croatia) or only minimally (one Slovak respondent in Hungary). By looking at the results, evaluating the complete absence of communication in Slovak, we find that more than a quarter of Slovak respondents in Croatia and more than a fifth of Slovak respondents in Hungary stated that they did not communicate in Slovak at all in and outside school. The proportion of respondents with no Slovak at all is minimal among Slovaks in Serbia and Romania. Overall, in terms of using Slovak in school and outside school with classmates, the situation is the most favourable among Slovak respondents in Serbia, with more than half of the respondents using Slovak language very often with their classmates. In the case of Slovaks in Romania, this situation is less favourable in terms of the frequency of use of Slovak language in both environments, however, the confirmation of very frequent communication in Slovak, although in a smaller percentage, confirms the “vitality” of Slovak language. In the case of Slovaks in Croatia and Hungary, the frequency of using Slovak at school and outside school is much lower, almost a third of Slovaks in Croatia and a quarter of Slovaks in Hungary report communication in Slovak at school at an average level (they chose medium point 4), the values are even lower outside school.

Conclusion

The data presented reflect the development and the current state of language communication in Slovak communities living in the Lower Land. They can also serve as a confirmation of the fact that, in order to preserve ethnic identity, the minorities require institutional attention and care from both sides – from the country in which they live, but also from the parent country.

The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which entered into force on 1 February 1998, has become an instrument for controlling the level of protection of national minorities and the realization of their members' rights and freedoms

in the member states of the Council of Europe. The fulfilment of the commitments arising from the Convention for the Protection of National Minorities is regularly reviewed in the signatory countries at intervals of five years (documents from the results of monitoring in 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 are available and monitoring reports from 2019 are about to be published at the time of writing). Documents relating to the course and results of the 4 rounds of monitoring in Croatia,²⁴ Hungary,²⁵ Romania,²⁶ and also Serbia²⁷ are also publicly available. The monitoring results clearly demonstrate the fact that the care for the status of ethnic minorities is a permanent task and that the monitoring process is justified: the overall experience of the Council of Europe from the evaluation of the four rounds of monitoring reports from various countries also pointed to examples of counter movement, when effective solutions were replaced by less effective ones or were cancelled altogether.

Help and support of the minority life by the mother country, which can take various forms, is undoubtedly of particular importance. In the case of the Slovak Republic, it focuses on four areas (education, science and research, culture, information, media), as stipulated by Act No. 474/2005 Coll. on Slovaks Living Abroad. Coordination of these activities and their funding²⁸ is the responsibility of the Office for Slovaks Living Abroad. The Government of the Slovak Republic once a year discusses the Report on State Policy in Relation to Slovaks Living Abroad and on the State Support Provided to Slovaks Living Abroad as also a draft state policy program in relation to Slovaks living abroad for the following year.²⁹

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