ORIGINAL ARTICLE

EU integration, regional development problems and the rise of the new radical right in Slovakia

Štefan Rehák ⬤ | Oliver Rafaj ⬤ | Tomáš Černěnko ⬤

Department of Public Administration and
Regional Development, University of
Economics in Bratislava, Slovakia

Correspondence
Oliver Rafaj, Department of Public
Administration and Regional Development,
University of Economics in Bratislava,
852 35 Bratislava, Slovakia.
Email: oliver.rafaj@euba.sk

Abstract

The rise of the radical right in Slovakia is associated with stronger attitudes against the European integration and globalization. In this paper, the authors examine the role of the regional factors associated with EU membership in the voter support of the traditional and the new radical right political parties in Slovakia. The main finding is that while the support for the traditional radical right is mostly based on cultural and nationalistic factors, the support for the new radical right is associated with the regional economic factors such as the unemployment rate and wages. The electoral results of the radical right are more influenced by the unemployment rate just after joining the EU than by the situation during elections. Results also show that in the analysis of the impact of investments from the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) on voter support of the radical right, it is useful to distinguish between investments from the ERDF and CF and from the ESF.

KEYWORDS
EU integration, radical right parties, regional development, Slovakia

JEL CLASSIFICATION
D72; R11

1 | INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, there have been several extensive economic and social processes in the world, changing the trajectory of the development of regions. Globalization of world trade, the fall of the Berlin Wall, integration processes in Europe and economic crises not only bring new opportunities but also risks of instability and changes in income distribution. These changes are also reflected in voting patterns. Current research focuses mainly on the analysis of support for Eurosceptic, populist, anti-system and far-right parties. Most of the research is carried out in countries with high rates of immigration and a decline in industrial production. Brexit research is the most elaborated in this field (Fidrmuc, Hulényi, & Tunali, 2019; Gordon, 2018; Lee, Morris, & Kemeny, 2018). On the opposite side, Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries benefited from the inflows of foreign direct investment (FDI) and faced outmigration. In addition, this region was a major beneficiary of financial support from the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). This creates a substantially different context for the research on the radical right.

Support for radical right-wing parties has increased in recent years in CEE and some of these countries have experienced problems with democratic backsliding (Cianetti, Dawson, & Hanley, 2018). Slovakia is an exception, yet the country as a whole is struggling for its political future, which may be either autocratic-populist or liberal-democratic (Harris, 2019). Economic transformation from a planned economy and accession to the EU was associated with an increase in development problems in certain regions. Regional development problems are in the focus of the current research as it has been showed that the support for anti-system and populist parties is stronger in regions with long-term economic and industrial decline (Rodríguez-Pose, 2018). Authors also have sought to include the support for anti-system parties in the general debate on regional development (Dijkstra, Poelman, & Rodríguez-Pose, 2019; Rodríguez-Pose, 2018).

The aim of this paper is to analyse the relationship between the voter support of the radical right and the regional dimension of socio-economic processes related to the integration of Slovakia into the EU. Our research question is: Is the voter support of the new radical right based on the factors related to the process of European integration and regional development problems? We provide our analysis on data from the parliamentary elections in Slovakia from 2016, when the new radical right for the first time in modern history entered the national parliament. The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. In Section 2, we present the conceptual background of the support for radical right-wing parties, focusing mainly on the modernization losers' concept. We also provide a literature review that examines individual, regional and EU policy-related factors. Section 3 explains the specifics of the radical right in CEE. In Section 4, we analyse the development of the two largest right-wing political parties in Slovakia and the differences between them. Those are the traditional Slovak National Party (*Slovenská národná strana*—SNS) and the more recently established People's Party Our Slovakia (*Ľudová strana naše Slovensko*—ĽSNS) which is considered as the main representative of an anti-system and Eurosceptic movement in Slovakia (Engler, Pytlas, & Deegan-Krause, 2019; Kluknavská, 2013). Section 5 is devoted to EU integration and the emergence of regional problems in Slovakia. Section 6 provides model specifics and used data. Our results are presented in Section 7 and in Section 8 we discuss and conclude.

2 | INDIVIDUAL, REGIONAL AND POLICY RELATED FACTORS IN VOTING PATTERNS

One of the main theories explaining the support of the radical right is the modernization losers theory (Rydgren, 2007), and its latest adaptation—globalization theory (Mudde, 2016; Swank & Betz, 2003). Globalization has interconnected the world economically. This has led to the growth of insecurity of the part of the population, which turns to radical right populists. Empirical research suggests that the support for these parties is mainly associated with individual characteristics of voters such as attitudes towards immigrants and minorities, worker occupation, unemployment, self-employment, age under 35, lower education and male gender (Stockemer, Lentz, &

Mayer, 2018). Stockemer, Lentz, and Mayer (2018) performed a meta-analysis of 46 articles that quantitatively analysed the role of individual factors. Their analysis only partially confirmed the importance of attitudes to immigrants, minorities and gender. The importance of other variables has been confirmed only in one third of the studies. In addition, the authors also analysed 14 articles based on qualitative research. They have shown that the support for the radical right is linked to the feeling of relative economic deprivation and dissatisfaction with the political system. With its simple populist rhetoric, the radical right often appeals to citizens who have been dissatisfied and have lost interest in politics, so they can succeed in low-turnout regions in which it mobilizes new voters (Immerzeel & Pickup, 2015).

The recent research has drawn attention to regional factors. These are considered to be more important than individual factors (Dijkstra, Poelman, & Rodríguez-Pose, 2019; Rodríguez-Pose, 2018). Dijkstra et al. (2019) cite the three main groups of regional factors—migration, rurality and economic decline. Migration was most often associated with a change in the population structure in the target regions. This brings worries regarding a loss of employment and a loss of identity of the native population. Lee, Morris, and Kemeny (2018) came to the conclusion that higher level of residential immobility in areas with relative economic decline was associated with higher support for "Leave" in the Brexit referendum. Low population density and rural settlement are also associated with the support for populist parties, because the central government usually overlooks the needs of citizens in these areas. The (relative) economic downturn increases the support of these parties, as it is associated with concerns about their future. Rodríguez-Pose (2018) summarizes these arguments in a thesis of "places that do not matter." According to the economic voting theory, the incumbent parties are responsible for the economic results and people vote according to the development of the main economic indicators (Lewis-Beck & Nadeau, 2011; Lewis-Beck & Paldam, 2000; Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier, 2007). From this perspective, the relationship between the ESIF and election results is particularly interesting. Fidrmuc, Hulényi, and Tunali (2019), McCann (2019) and Crescenzi, Di Cataldo, and Giua (2019) found that the regional support from the ESIF played virtually no role in the Brexit referendum. On the other hand, empirical results from the latest presidential election in France (Bachtrögler & Oberhofer, 2018) were opposite. Similar results were also obtained in Italy by Albanese, Barone, and de Blasio (2019).

3 | SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE RADICAL RIGHT IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Radical right-wing parties in CEE share some common characteristics with those in Western Europe. According to Pirro (2013), these are nativism, authoritarianism and populism. Nativism is based on the premise that the state should be inhabited exclusively by its native inhabitants, and politics should mainly pursue their interests. The non-native population (immigrants and minorities) is threatening the nation-state. Authoritarianism is tied to the idea of a strictly ordered society with a strong central government role and limited political freedoms. Populism divides society into corrupt elites and ordinary people whose interests the radical right seeks to defend.

The specific features of the radical right in CEE are related to a different historical context shaping the radical right in CEE (Minkenberg, 2017; Pirro, 2013). Minkenberg (2017) considers the transformation process in these countries to be a more complicated version of the modernization process in the Western countries. Apart from the transition from an industrial to a post-industrial economy, these countries have undergone also the transition to a market economy, deeper participation in the global economy and the building of liberal democracy and nation states. However, the pace and extent of the institutional change, together with the euphoria of acquired freedom, have greatly weakened the power of the state (Fukuyama, 2004) and thus its ability to guarantee impartial law enforcement for all citizens. According to Pirro (2013), the Eurosceptic attitudes of the radical right in CEE are understandable as the European Union (EU) poses a threat to newly gained national independence. In addition, these parties could also gain votes of those whose exaggerated expectations of EU membership have not been met.

4 | TRADITIONAL VS. NEW RADICAL RIGHT IN SLOVAKIA

According to Harris (2019), the support of the ethno-nationalist parties in Slovakia has ideological links to the war-time fascist Slovak State. Today, these political views are represented mainly by the Slovak National Party (SNS), the People's Party Our Slovakia (ĽSNS) and several smaller non-parliamentary political parties. In line with the international Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2017 classification of political parties (Polk et al., 2017), we consider SNS and ĽSNS as radical right parties. SNS was re-established in 1990 and represents the nationalist and conservative voters in the political spectrum. This party is a representative of the radical right of the 1990s, which, according to Kluknavská and Smolík (2016), was based mainly on the ideas of defending national sovereignty and defined itself towards the groups that could threaten the sovereignty of Slovakia, namely, minorities. The party achieved the highest voter support in the 1990 parliamentary elections (13.94%) when it was in opposition, and later in 2006 (11.73%) when it became part of the coalition government.

The period of the 1990s was characterized by a high turnout ranging between 70 and 80%. However, the interest in the elections has gradually reduced and the turnout decreased to 60% in the years 2010–2016. During this period, we have witnessed an increase of popularity of the new radical right parties in Slovakia. ĽSNS was established in 2010, but before its inception, leaders of the party had long been profiled as supporters of neo-Nazi militant political movements in Slovakia. ĽSNS mobilized political support mainly by an active campaign against the Roma minority and criticism of the current political establishment (Kluknavská, 2013). The party's programme has evolved over the years and now includes the fight against liberal democracy, Slovakia's withdrawal from the EU, NATO and the euro area, the expulsion of immigrants and aggressive activities directed against the Roma minority.

For a long time, SNS had higher support in Slovakia compared with ĽSNS. However, ĽSNS has gained stronger support in recent years. In 2013, its chairman Marian Kotleba won the regional election in the Banská Bystrica self-governing region. In 2016, both parties SNS and ĽSNS entered the national parliament. Currently (December 2019), opinion polls show significantly higher support of ĽSNS (11.8%) than SNS (5.4%). Figure 1 provides a development of voters' support of ĽSNS and SNS during the last 10 years.

The parties differ in the spatial arrangement of their main electorates. SNS is dominant in the Žilina region, which is the third most developed region of Slovakia. The Banská Bystricka region, which is the second least developed region in Slovakia, is the region with the strongest support of ĽSNS. This suggests that the growth of a new support of the radical right may be related to the development problems in the region. Figure 2 provides the spatial distribution of support for ĽSNS and SNS.

5 | EU INTERGRATION AND EMERGENCE OF THE REGIONAL PROBLEM IN SLOVAKIA

Economic development of Slovakia was largely influenced by the transformation from a centrally planned to a market economy. By 1998, economic growth was unstable due to problems regarding privatization and the complicated political development. After the reforms during 1998–2004, Slovakia recorded significant economic growth, which culminated in 2007 with an annual GDP growth rate at 10.5%. However, the economic transformation resulted in the growth of regional disparities. It was, to a certain extent, a consequence of the structural heritage of socialism as well as different responses of the regional economies to globalization (Sokol, 2001). Disparities mainly increased in periods of overall economic growth, which correlate with key institutional changes in the economy as mentioned by Banerjee and Jarmuzek (2009).

We document the regional problem in Slovakia with a focus on indicators related to the accession to the EU and economic situation in Slovak regions in Table 1. The accession of Slovakia to the EU was associated with simplified mobility of capital and labour. The dominant sectors with large FDI inflows were automotive and electrotechnical
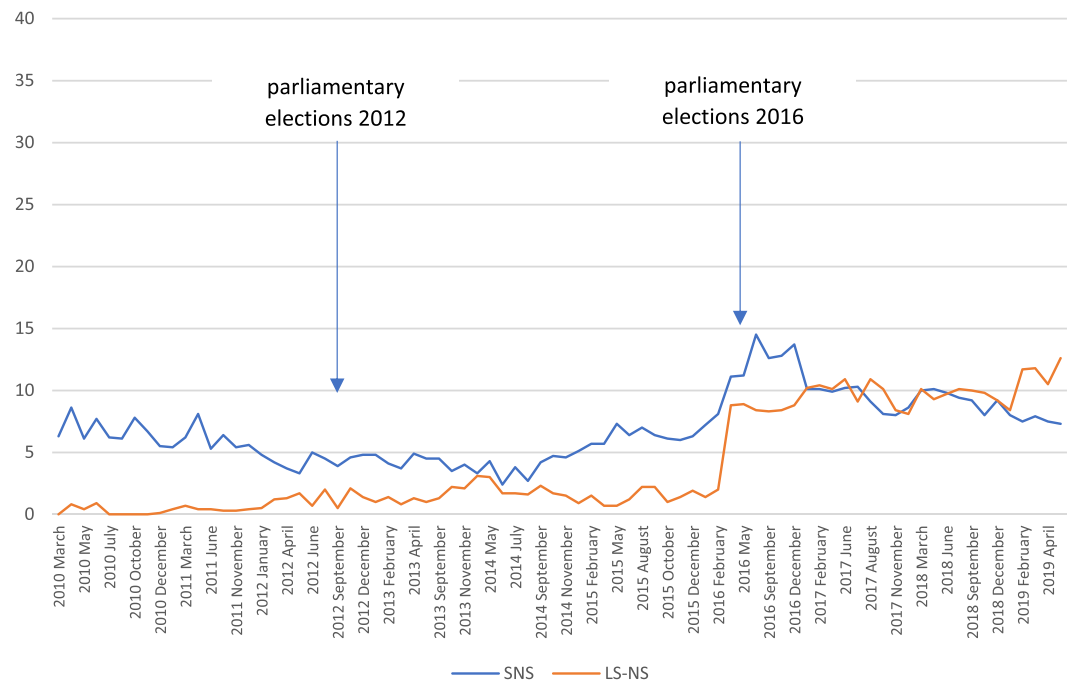
FIGURE 1 Development of support of the radical right-wing parties in the Slovak Republic (2010–2019).
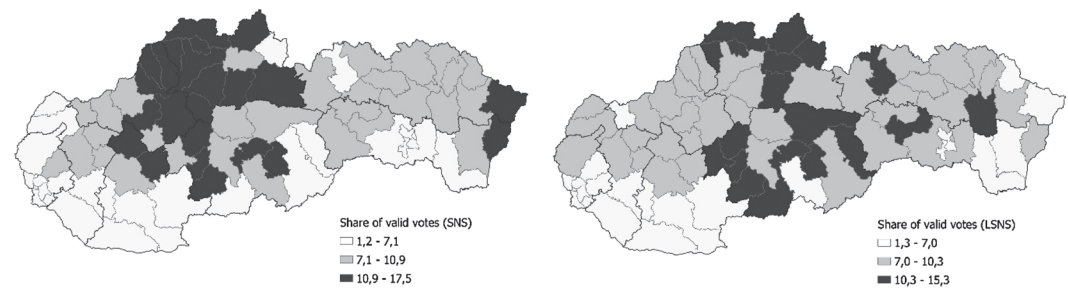*Source*: authors elaboration based on opinion polls of FOCUS agency www.focus-research.sk

FIGURE 2 Spatial distribution of support for radical right-wing parties in Slovak districts (parliamentary elections 2016).
Source: authors, data: Statistical office of the Slovak Republic (ŠUSR)

industry (Pavlínek, 2004, 2016). During 2004–2016, the volume of FDI *per capita* in Slovakia almost tripled. Investment was strongly concentrated in developed regions with industrial tradition and better transport accessibility. Accession to the EU has significantly increased labour migration to other EU member countries (Kahanec & Zimmermann, 2009). The largest labour migration was from the Prešov region (45 people per 1,000 inhabitants) and the least from the Bratislava region (9 people per 1,000 inhabitants). On the other hand, Slovakia has not become a destination country for immigrants and refugees. Regarding the data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, the share of foreigners living in Slovakia in 2016 was only 3.4%. Two thirds of them were coming from the neighbouring countries (Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Ukraine).

TABLE 1 Key regional disparities in Slovak NUTS 3 regions, during 2004 to 2016

Region	FDI Average FDI per capita during 2004–2016 in €	Labour migration Average number of employed with workplace outside SK per 1,000 inhabitants, during 2009–2016	ESF ESF contributions per capita, during 2007–2013 (2015) in €	ERDF_CF ERDF and CF contributions per capita, during 2007–2013 (2015) in €	Wages Average gross monthly wage per capita during 2004–2016 in €	Unemployment Average unemployment rate during 2004–2016 in %	Long-term unemployment Average long-term unemployment rate during 2004–2016 in %
Bratislava	31,508	9	78	2,134	1,123	4,2	1,3
Trnava	3,749	10	34	825	771	7,2	2,9
Trenčín	2,519	18	40	2,171	732	8	3,4
Nitra	1,580	32	44	804	707	10,9	5,7
Žilina	3,004	32	50	2055	745	9,6	4,4
Banská Bystrica	994	21	67	1,488	708	17,3	11
Prešov	470	45	81	1,328	655	16,4	10,2
Košice	2,771	22	70	1,558	786	16,2	10,5

Note: displayed data on ESF and ERDF and CF contributions do not include national projects.
Source: authors, based on statistical data from the ŠUSR, the National Bank of Slovakia and the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic.

To support development of Slovak regions after accession to the EU, the country received €1.7 billion in the shortened programming period 2004–2006 and €11.7 billion in the following 2007–2013 period (Ministry of Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic, 2008). This amount together with the state contributions, accounted for more than 90% of all public investment, which is the highest proportion in any of the EU countries (European Commission, 2014). In terms of spatial distribution, there were significant differences in the drawing of resources from the individual funds between the regions. As the Bratislava region is one of the most developed regions of the EU, the bulk of the aid went to the remaining three NUTS 2 regions (approximately 90%).

6 | MODEL AND DATA

We used the data from the parliamentary elections in 2016 to examine the factors that influence the support of the radical right in Slovakia. The parliamentary elections are the most important elections in Slovakia, as the powers of the president, regional and local governments are rather limited. Moreover, the turnout in the parliamentary elections is significantly higher (59.82% in 2016) than in the regional (29.96% in the first round of 2017) and the local government elections (48.67% in 2018), or the presidential elections (48.74% in the first round in 2019).

Regression models analysing factors directly related to EU membership are as follows:

$$ExtRgh_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Rel_i + \beta_2 YPop_i + \beta_3 UEdu_i + \beta_4 Min_i + \beta_5 lnDen_i + \beta_6 DistRC + \beta_7 VTurn_i + \beta_8 VTurnDif_i + \beta_9 EUref_i \quad (1)$$
$$+ \beta_{10} lnEmig_j + \beta_{11} lnFDI_j + \beta_{12} lnERDF\bar{C}F_j + \beta_{13} lnESF_j + \epsilon_i$$

$$ExtRgh_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Rel_i + \beta_2 YPop_i + \beta_3 UEdu_i + \beta_4 Min_i + \beta_5 lnDen_i + \beta_6 DistRC + \beta_7 VTurn2012_i + \beta_8 VTurnDif_i + \beta_9 EUref_i \quad (2)$$
$$+ \beta_{10} lnEmig_j + \beta_{11} lnFDI_j + \beta_{12} lnERDF\bar{C}F_j + \beta_{13} lnESF_j + \beta_{14} BSK + \epsilon_i$$

Where $ExtRgh_i$ is the proportion of votes in the 2016 parliamentary elections won by the radical right-wing party (sSNS or sĽSNS) in the municipality i. The data were collected at the level of LAU2, that is, for 2,926 municipalities of the Slovak Republic,[1] for 2016 (data from Census are from 2011). The variable Rel_i represents the share of religious population, $YPop_i$ is the share of the population aged 20–29, $UEdu_i$ is the share of the population with university education, Min_i is the share of the population belonging to the national minority,[2] Den_i is the population density (in log form) as a measurement of rurality, $DistRC$ is the distance of the municipality from the capital city of the region (as a measurement of peripherality; a proxy for the access to higher level public services), $VTurn2012_i$ is the turnout in the municipality in the parliamentary elections in 2012 and $VTurnDif_i$ is the change in turnout during 2012 and 2016 (in percentage points).

The following are the indicators related to Slovakia's accession to the EU. The indicator $EUref_i$ is the share of votes in the municipality against Slovakia's accession to the EU in the 2004 referendum. At district level (LAU1) (j), we analyse four indicators. The variable $Emig_j$ represents the number of people who moved abroad after joining the EU (per 100,000 inhabitants) during 2004–2016, FDI_j is the volume of foreign investment in € per capita (as an average level of 2004–2016), $ERDF^-CF_j$ is the volume of investment from the ERDF and the CF in thousands € per capita and ESF_j is the volume of investment from the ESF in thousands € per capita in the programming period 2007–2013. All regional indicators are in logarithmic form. Our goal is to compare the influence of the individual factors on the voter suppport of the traditional radical right-wing party (SNS) and the new radical right-wing party (ĽSNS), so we developed separate models for each party. Since the Bratislava region was largely excluded from the EU Funds support in the 2007–2013 programming period, we also developed the models in which we checked for this fact using the dummy variable BSK listed in Equation 2 (models (1B) and (1D) in the Table 3).

---

[1]Valaškovce municipality was excluded due to absence of data.
[2]In addition to the share of minorities, we also analyzed the role of the share of immigrants in previous versions of the model, but this factor was not statistically significant.

In the second part of the analysis, we examine the impact of the variables that reflect the situation on the labour market in districts during the period immediately after the accession to the EU and in the years before elections.

$$ExtRgh_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Rel_i + \beta_2 YPop_i + \beta_3 UEdu_i + \beta_4 Min_i + \beta_5 lnDen_i + \beta_6 DistRC + \beta_7 VTurn2012_i + \beta_8 VTurnDif_i + \beta_9 EUref_i \quad (3)$$
$$+ \beta_{10...18} RegInd_j + \epsilon_i$$

The first eight variables are the same as in Equations 1 and 2. The variables under $RegInd_j$ represent the average unemployment rate UR in district j, the average long-term unemployment rate $LtUR$ in district j, and the average wage $Wage$ in district j. Impact of these indicators is estimated separately for 3 periods 2004–2007; 2008–2022 and 2012–2016. Since regional labour market indicators are mutually correlated (listed in Table A1, in the Appendix), they are estimated separately. We compare the election results in separate models for SNS (model (2A)–(2)I in the Table 4) and for ĽSNS (model (3A)–(3)I in the Table 5).

The Breusch-Pagan residue heteroscedasticity test was significant, so we use regression models with robust standard errors clustered at district level (j).

TABLE 2 Descriptive statistics

Variable	Level	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
sSNS	LAU 2	2,926	9.2	5.6	0	48.5
sĽSNS	LAU 2	2,926	8.6	4.8	0	45.8
Rel	LAU 2	2,926	86	10.7	26.8	100
YPop	LAU 2	2,926	13.9	2.8	0	44.4
UEdu	LAU 2	2,926	8.5	4.4	0	35.9
Min	LAU 2	2,926	16.5	27.2	0	99.1
Den	LAU 2	2,926	113.1	393.9	0.5	13,549
DistRC	LAU 2	2,926	38.7	20.9	0	94
VTurn2012	LAU 2	2,926	60.8	8.8	5.3	100
VTurnDif	LAU 2	2,926	0.2	6.1	−60.8	34.9
EUref	LAU 2	2,926	9.9	6.1	0	67.2
Emig	LAU 2	2,926	36.1	17.7	7.9	100.3
FDI	LAU 1	2,926	1666.8	3,824	−376.3	44704.3
ERDF_CF	LAU 1	2,926	1.322	0.914	0.32	5.352
ESF	LAU 1	2,926	0.053	0.03	0.004	0.134
UR 2004–2007	LAU 1	2,926	13.6	6.5	2,8	28.3
UR 2008–2011	LAU 1	2,926	15.2	6.8	3.9	32.1
UR 2012–2016	LAU 1	2,926	14.8	6.1	5.5	29.7
LtUR 2004–2007	LAU 1	2,926	8.3	5.2	0.5	20.7
LtUR 2008–2011	LAU 1	2,926	8.4	5.6	0.8	23.7
LtUR 2012–2016	LAU 1	2,926	9.4	5.6	1.6	24.2
Wage 2004–2007	LAU 1	2,926	534.3	73.3	424.3	964.5
Wage 2018–2011	LAU 1	2,926	680.8	92.9	510	1209.5
Wage 2012–2016	LAU 1	2,926	798.5	101.3	621.8	1,309

Note: regarding minimum values (0) for sĽSNS and sSNS – ĽSNS did not get any vote in 63 municipalities (out of 2926) and no one voted for SNS in 91 municipalities (out of 2926).
Source: authors, based on statistical data from the ŠUSR, the National Bank of Slovakia and the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic.

TABLE 3 Regression models (1A)–(1)D of the election results analysis with EU related indicators

	(1A)	(1B)	(1C)	(1D)
	sSNS	sSNS	sĽSNS	sĽSNS
Rel	0.022 (0.015)	0.021 (0.015)	−0.027* (0.015)	−0.027* (0.015)
YPop	−0.031 (0.047)	−0.030 (0.047)	0.245*** (0.042)	0.246*** (0.042)
UEdu	0.003 (0.037)	0.029 (0.036)	−0.160*** (0.033)	−0.144*** (0.033)
Min	−0.112*** (0.008)	−0.110*** (0.008)	−0.101*** (0.007)	−0.100*** (0.007)
lnDen	−0.340 (0.310)	−0.358 (0.314)	−0.215 (0.310)	−0.227 (0.317)
DistRC	0.028** (0.012)	0.026** (0.013)	0.025** (0.011)	0.024** (0.011)
VTurn2012	0.090*** (0.016)	0.088*** (0.016)	−0.014 (0.018)	−0.015 (0.018)
VTurnDif	−0.040* (0.023)	−0.039* (0.023)	0.046* (0.026)	0.047* (0.026)
EUref	0.098*** (0.028)	0.101*** (0.028)	0.009 (0.030)	0.011 (0.029)
lnEmig	−0.288 (0.487)	−0.202 (0.507)	−0.020 (0.312)	0.034 (0.306)
lnFDI	−0.001 (0.126)	0.004 (0.126)	0.120 (0.106)	0.123 (0.105)
lnERDF_CF	1.294*** (0.419)	1.265*** (0.423)	0.256 (0.288)	0.237 (0.287)
lnESF	0.098 (0.298)	−0.072 (0.321)	0.405* (0.241)	0.300 (0.277)
BSK		−1.855** (0.733)		−1.148* (0.633)
_cons	3.097 (2.902)	3.503 (3.030)	8.355*** (1.900)	8.606*** (1.936)
N	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804
adj. R-sq	0.397	0.399	0.324	0.325

Notes: standard errors in parentheses. *, ** and *** denote significance at 0.10, 0.05 and 0.01 respectively.
The number of observations is smaller compared to the total number of municipalities as the average FDI inflow was negative in Dunajská Streda district in the observed period. Logarithm of a negative number is undefined.
Source: authors, based on statistical data from the ŠUSR, the National Bank of Slovakia and the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic.

Data for our dependent variables *ExtRgh* (*sSNS*; *sĽ'SNS*) were collected from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (ŠUSR). Data for socio-demographic and geographic variables were collected from two sources. Data for variables *Rel*, *UEdu* and *Min* are from the Population and Housing Census in 2011, and we collected data for variables *YPop*, *Den*, *DistRC*, *VTurn*2012, *VTurnDif*, *EUref* and *Emig* from the ŠUSR. Data for the *FDI* were from the National Bank of Slovakia. We collected data for the *ERDF‾ CF* and *ESF* variables from the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic. In this case, we excluded national projects and projects with missing location information. Regarding the data for *ERDF_CF*, we also included all transport projects in them. However, some transport projects had information about the place of implementation at the NUTS 3 level. In these cases, we have evenly divided such projects at the level of the relevant LAU 1 districts. Data for *RegInd* variables, such as *UR*, *LtUR* and *Wage* were collected from the ŠUSR. Table 2 provides descriptive statistics of all used variables.

7 | RESULTS

The results of the models (1A) to (1D) are in Table 3. First, we assess the impact of the demographic factors for SNS (model (1A)). Support of SNS, the traditional radical right-wing party, is higher in municipalities with a lower representation of minorities. By contrast, support is lower in municipalities with higher religiosity. The share of the population aged 20–29 and the share of the university-educated population is not significant. The higher population density is neither a significant factor and peripheral location of the municipality in the region is significant and

TABLE 4 Regression models (2A)–(2I) of the election results analysis of SNS with regional economic indicators

	(2A)	(2B)	(2C)	(2D)	(2E)	(2F)	(2G)	(2H)	(2I)
	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS
Rel	0.021 (0.014)	0.021 (0.014)	0.022 (0.014)	0.019 (0.013)	0.020 (0.014)	0.021 (0.014)	0.016 (0.014)	0.016 (0.014)	0.020 (0.014)
YPop	−0.004 (0.045)	−0.006 (0.046)	−0.007 (0.046)	−0.005 (0.044)	−0.006 (0.045)	−0.007 (0.046)	−0.028 (0.048)	−0.029 (0.047)	−0.022 (0.047)
UEdu	−0.001 (0.037)	0.001 (0.037)	0.004 (0.037)	−0.002 (0.036)	0.000 (0.036)	0.003 (0.037)	0.006 (0.037)	0.007 (0.037)	0.005 (0.038)
Min	−0.118*** (0.007)	−0.117*** (0.007)	−0.117*** (0.007)	−0.117*** (0.007)	−0.017*** (0.007)	−0.117*** (0.007)	−0.118*** (0.007)	−0.118*** (0.007)	−0.118*** (0.007)
lnDen	−0.508 (0.335)	−0.457 (0.338)	−0.432 (0.340)	−0.508 (0.334)	−0.466 (0.342)	−0.433 (0.343)	−0.273 (0.338)	−0.284 (0.349)	−0.333 (0.347)
DistRC	0.036*** (0.013)	0.033** (0.013)	0.032** (0.014)	0.038*** (0.012)	0.036*** (0.013)	0.033** (0.013)	0.022* (0.012)	0.021* (0.012)	0.024** (0.012)
VTurn2012	0.088*** (0.018)	0.092*** (0.018)	0.094*** (0.018)	0.086*** (0.018)	0.090*** (0.018)	0.093*** (0.018)	0.102*** (0.017)	0.101*** (0.017)	0.100*** (0.017)
VTurnDif	−0.035 (0.022)	−0.033 (0.022)	−0.031 (0.022)	−0.037* (0.022)	−0.035 (0.022)	−0.032 (0.022)	−0.023 (0.022)	−0.022 (0.023)	−0.025 (0.023)
EUref	0.120*** (0.025)	0.121*** (0.026)	0.122*** (0.026)	0.119*** (0.025)	0.122*** (0.025)	0.122*** (0.026)	0.114*** (0.027)	0.113*** (0.027)	0.117*** (0.027)
UR 2004–2007	−0.076* (0.040)								
UR 2008–2011		−0.050 (0.040)							
UR 2012–2016			−0.044 (0.042)						
LtUR 2004–2007				−0.111** (0.050)					
LtUR 2008–2011					−0.081* (0.047)				

TABLE 4 (Continued)

	(2A)	(2B)	(2C)	(2D)	(2E)	(2F)	(2G)	(2H)	(2I)
	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS	sSNS
LtUR 2012–2016						−0.058 (0.046)			
Wage 2004–2007							−0.003 (0.003)		
Wage 2008–2011								−0.003 (0.002)	
Wage 2012–2016									−0.001 (0.002)
_cons	3.413* (1.780)	2.821 (1.763)	2.508 (1.784)	3.511* (1.783)	2.870 (1.761)	2.513 (1.787)	4.216 (3.059)	4.568 (2.781)	2.859 (3.196)
N	2,926	2,926	2,926	2,926	2,926	2,926	2,926	2,926	2,926
adj. R-sq	0.411	0.409	0.408	0.413	0.410	0.408	0.408	0.408	0.407

Note: standard errors in parentheses. *, **, and *** denote significance at 0.10, 0.05 and 0.01 respectively.
Source: authors, based on statistical data from the ŠUSR, the National Bank of Slovakia and the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic.

TABLE 5 Regression models (3A)–(3I) of the election results analysis of ĽSNS with regional economic indicators

	(3A)	(3B)	(3C)	(3D)	(3E)	(3F)	(3G)	(3H)	(3I)
	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS
Rel	−0.030** (0.014)	−0.031** (0.014)	−0.032** (0.014)	−0.030** (0.014)	−0.030** (0.014)	−0.031** (0.014)	−0.034** (0.015)	−0.037** (0.014)	−0.037** (0.014)
YPop	0.232*** (0.039)	0.230*** (0.039)	0.230*** (0.038)	0.235*** (0.039)	0.234*** (0.039)	0.235*** (0.039)	0.241*** (0.040)	0.235*** (0.040)	0.234*** (0.040)
UEdu	−0.154*** (0.028)	−0.155*** (0.028)	−0.158*** (0.028)	−0.153*** (0.028)	−0.155*** (0.028)	−0.157*** (0.028)	−0.156*** (0.028)	−0.154*** (0.027)	−0.155*** (0.027)
Min	−0.103*** (0.006)	−0.104*** (0.006)	−0.104*** (0.006)	−0.104*** (0.006)	−0.104*** (0.006)	−0.104*** (0.006)	−0.103*** (0.006)	−0.103*** (0.006)	−0.104*** (0.006)
lnDen	−0.059 (0.289)	0.041 (0.286)	0.017 (0.289)	0.026 (0.288)	0.013 (0.284)	−0.010 (0.284)	−0.046 (0.277)	−0.010 (0.278)	−0.011 (0.279)
DistRC	0.013 (0.010)	0.013 (0.010)	0.015 (0.010)	0.014 (0.010)	0.014 (0.011)	0.016 (0.011)	0.021** (0.010)	0.018* (0.010)	0.017* (0.010)
VTurn2012	0.001 (0.018)	−0.001 (0.018)	−0.003 (0.018)	−0.001 (0.018)	−0.002 (0.018)	−0.005 (0.018)	−0.009 (0.017)	−0.008 (0.017)	−0.008 (0.017)
VTurnDif	0.053** (0.025)	0.052** (0.025)	0.051** (0.025)	0.052** (0.025)	0.051** (0.025)	0.050** (0.025)	0.046* (0.024)	0.048** (0.024)	0.048** (0.024)
EUref	0.017 (0.029)	0.015 (0.029)	0.015 (0.029)	0.018 (0.029)	0.016 (0.029)	0.015 (0.029)	0.016 (0.029)	0.013 (0.029)	0.0013 (0.030)
UR 2004–2007	0.070** (0.028)								
UR 2008–2011		0.061** (0.025)							
UR 2012–2016			0.057** (0.025)						
LtUR 2004–2007				0.077** (0.036)					
LtUR 2008–2011					0.069** (0.032)				

TABLE 5 (Continued)

	(3A)	(3B)	(3C)	(3D)	(3E)	(3F)	(3G)	(3H)	(3I)
	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS	sLSNS
LtUR 2012–2016						0.053* (0.031)			
Wage 2004–2007							−0.001 (0.002)		
Wage 2008–2011								−0.003** (0.001)	
Wage 2012–2016									−0.003** (0.001)
_cons	9.217*** (1.769)	9.488*** (1.778)	9.819*** (1.791)	9.496*** (1.754)	9.788*** (1.719)	10.050*** (1.729)	11.578*** (1.860)	13.235*** (1.933)	13.440*** (2.067)
N	2,926	2,926	2,926	2,926	2,926	2,926	2,926	2,926	2,926
adj. R-sq	0.357	0.356	0.355	0.356	0.355	0.354	0.352	0.354	0.354

Note: standard errors in parentheses. *, **, and *** denote significance at 0.10, 0.05 and 0.01 respectively.

Source: authors, based on statistical data from the ŠUSR, the National Bank of Slovakia and the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic.

negative. Support for SNS is higher in municipalities with a higher turnout in 2012 and lower in municipalities with an increase in turnout during 2012 and 2016. A higher share of votes against the accession to the EU in 2004 is a significant negative predictor of the support for SNS. The volume of foreign outmigration and the volume of FDI did not prove to be significant factors in the voter support of the SNS. On the other hand, the volume of investment from the ERDF and the CF in the period 2007–2013 is highly significant and it is positively associated with the support of SNS. These results remain the same even if we included a dummy for the Bratislava region (model (1B)), only religiosity lost its significance.

Model (1C) shows that the higher support of ĽSNS is significantly negatively associated with a higher share of the population between 20 and 29 years-old, longer distance from the capital city of the region and in municipalities with an increase in turnout during 2012–2016. On the other hand, a higher share of minorities, a higher share of religious population and a higher share of population with university degree is associated with lower support of ĽSNS. Population density and turnout in 2012 are not statistically significant factors. A closer analysis of the factors related to the accession to the EU shows significant differences compared to SNS. The results of the referendum on the accession to the EU is neither a significant factor, nor foreign outmigration, FDI and the investment from the ERDF and the CF. The volume of investment from the ESF *per capita* is positively associated with the support of ĽSNS. However, the addition of the dummy variable *BSK* (Model 1D) shows that this indicator is not statistically significant.

In the second step, we analysed the role of an economic situation in regions with the same controls for demographic and geographic factors as in Table 3. Again, we use separate models for SNS (Table 4) and ĽSNS (Table 5).

The only significant factors are the average unemployment rate in 2004–2007 and the average long-term unemployment rate in the first two periods (models (2A), (2D), (2E)). Both models show that higher unemployment rate is associated with lower support of SNS. Other regional variables are not statistically significant.

In contrast, the analysis of ĽSNS results gives different results (Table 5). Distance to the regional capital city does not turn out to be significant in the models with unemployment rate (3A – 3F). Thus, it is not peripherality but unemployment rate which matters for ĽSNS support. The higher unemployment rate as well as the long-term unemployment rate are associated with a higher rate of the ĽSNS support (models (3A)–(3F)). Another important finding is that the magnitude of the coefficients as well as its explanatory power has decreased. On the contrary, the average wage is a significant factor in the later periods (models (3G)–(3I)).

8 | DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

A substantial part of the discussion on the causes of the rise of populist, anti-system, and right-wing parties' ties to the Western European countries and the US. However, the growth of right-wing radicalism and populism is also taking place in the eastern part of Europe. We focused on the analysis of determinants of the election results of the radical right-wing parties in Slovakia in 2016. We were mainly interested in factors related to the EU membership and economic development in the Slovak regions. This study is important for two reasons. First, while the regions in Western Europe have faced immigration and a decline in industrial production, the regions of Eastern Europe have faced labour outflow and an increase in employment, largely due to foreign investment. In addition, countries of CEE have been significant beneficiaries of the EU cohesion assistance. Therefore, we focused on whether the support of the radical right has been related to these factors. Second, this analysis of the electoral results of the radical right was carried out in a single country and thus we avoided the typical problem of political analyses, which compare countries with different institutional systems.

To point out the change in voter behaviour on the right side of the political spectrum, the paper compared the two radical right-wing parties—the more traditional SNS and the new ĽSNS whose voter support has grown significantly in the recent years. The results show that the dominant common cleavage of both parties is nationalism. Both

parties define themselves as those defending national interests of Slovaks against minorities in the country. However, this is where the similarities between the two parties end.

ĽSNS won votes mainly in the municipalities with a high proportion of young voters and, conversely, had fewer votes in municipalities with a high proportion of citizens with a university degree. This is a different result compared to, for example, the Brexit analysis, where the support for Brexit was lower in the regions with a higher proportion of young people aged 20–34 (Crescenzi, Di Cataldo, & Faggian, 2018). First-time voters make up a significant share of the young population and this was also confirmed by the analysis of exit polls (Gyárfašová & Slosiarik, 2016; Kazharski, 2019). Young and less educated people may be more sensitive to the lack of opportunities in their regions and therefore turn to radical parties. Although the new radical right did not gain more votes in the municipalities with low turnout in 2012, it was able to mobilize a new group of voters and gained more votes in those municipalities where turnout increased. The rural character of a municipality is not a significant factor in supporting either the traditional or the new radical right. The results for the peripherality of the municipality are volatile. Peripheral location of municipality is significant only if the unemployment rate is not included in the model. This suggests that it is not the availability of services but lack of job opportunities what matters for voting behaviour.

Our research aims mainly at the role of the factors related with the EU integration and regional development problems in the voter support for the traditional and new radical right. Traditional radical right nationalism ties more to the idea of national sovereignty of Slovakia (Mesežnikov, 2009). This nationalist argument of SNS voters is also reflected in the long-term anti-EU sentiment. The vote against the EU accession in the 2003 referendum is still a significant predictor of SNS voter support even in 2016. Entering the EU brought new institutional order, which limited the feeling of national sovereignty of these voters (Kazharski, 2019). Although ĽSNS also profiles itself as a nationalistic and Eurosceptic party, the share of votes in the referendum on joining the EU was not a significant factor.

EU enlargement has brought significant structural changes in regional economies, mainly related to the movement of capital and labour. Previous research has shown that the higher inflow of FDI was associated with lower support for UK's exit from the EU (Crescenzi, Di Cataldo, & Faggian, 2018) and that the increase in migrants in the region was associated with higher support for Brexit (Gordon, 2018). Although FDI generally had had a positive impact on Slovakia's economic growth, its impact on the radical right support was not significant, which is a surprising result. Also, a higher foreign outmigration had not affected the election result of the radical right in Slovakia. This suggests that it is not the mobility of production factors what matters for election results but the employment and incomes as our later results suggest.

By analysing regional differences in the volume of investments from the ESIF funds, we examined the relationship between EU cohesion policy and support for the radical right. The relationship between ESIF investment and the growth of Euroscepticism has become an important European issue (Capello & Perucca, 2019). The results of Brexit's analyses did not reveal any link between the volume of ESIF in a region and the choice to leave the EU (Crescenzi, Di Cataldo, & Giua, 2019; Fidrmuc, Hulényi, & Tunali, 2019; McCann, 2019). Our results show that the volume of support from ERDF and CF has a significant positive impact on the election results of the traditional radical right. The positive result for SNS supports the economic voting theory hypothesis as SNS was the ruling party during the period 2006–2010. It could be argued that the insignificant influence of the ERDF and the CF on the electoral result of the new radical right is due to the mixed positive results of investment in the regions and the negatives associated with their misalignment (unnecessary investment) and corruption (Harris, 2019; Kazharski, 2019). The topic of corruption and criticism of EU funds is one of the main topics of ĽSNS. Based on the party's rhetoric, the use of ESIF brings dependence and control from Brussels, and only selected groups of people (government, minorities, LGBT, etc.) benefit from it (Gyárfašová & Mesežnikov, 2015). Empirical research on the effectiveness of the cohesion policy in the lagging regions of Slovakia has also shown that its impact has been marginal and only short term (Némethová, Širaňová, & Šipikal, 2018). The lack of awareness of the EU assistance provided to the region is also a frequently mentioned factor in the literature in this field (López-Bazo & Royuela, 2019). Last important finding in this section is that it may sense to distinguish between the various types of cohesion aid, as they can have

different effects on the electoral behaviour of the population. In contrast to investment from ERDF and CF, soft measures financed from ESF (targeted on e.g. education, employment or social inclusion), showed not be significant factor.

Finally, our results also show that support for the new radical right in Slovakia is higher in regions with higher unemployment rates, higher long-term unemployment rates and lower wages. This indicates that an increase in the voter support of the radical right is driven by the economic situation in the regions. In addition, this effect of the unfavourable economic situation influences the voter support with some time lag. Models with an unemployment rate just after the EU accession were more informative than models with unemployment rate in the years before the elections. This confirms the findings of Dijkstra, Poelman, and Rodríguez-Pose (2019) and Gordon (2018), who also argue that it is the long-term economic trend in the regions that explain anti-EU voting. In recent years, the importance of wage levels has increased. This suggests that not only differences in job availability but also wage differences between regions play an important role in political preferences.

We propose several important policy recommendations. EU accession has not brought about the expected decline in social and economic disparities, despite the ESIF investment in lagging regions. Thus, reduction of regional disparities still seems to be an important area for policy interventions. There is an urgent call for policies tailored more to the specific regional needs namely, a call for place sensitive policies (Iammarino, Rodríguez-Pose, & Storper, 2019). Thus, a major challenge for the EU is the efficient use of the ESIF to address not only objective but also perceived needs in the underdeveloped regions (Capello & Perucca, 2019). As pointed out by Crescenzi, Di Cataldo, and Giua (2019), ESIF contribute to mitigate Euroscepticism only if they are associated with improvements in the local labour market. Similarly, Dąbrowski, Stead, and Mashhoodi (2019) found that higher volume of ESIF funds *per capita* reduces the negative image of the EU, but this is not the case during the period of negative economic prospects in problematic regions. Job availability and decent wages are important factors, especially for young people who are more sensitive to labour market supply. Therefore, one of the options is to target on employment opportunities, education and entrepreneurship of young people in lagging regions. Providing economic opportunities and utilizing existing unused economic potential in these regions are to be important especially during the emerging economic decline. Otherwise, these regions will remain a source of increasing support of the radical right and Euroscepticism.

ORCID

Štefan Rehák https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2503-3979
Oliver Rafaj https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7663-622X
Tomáš Černěnko https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2902-911X

REFERENCES

Albanese, G., Barone, G., & de Blasio, G. (2019). Populist voting and losers' discontent: Does redistribution matter? Marco Fanno Working Paper 239.

Bachtrögler, J., & Oberhofer, H. (2018). Euroscepticism and EU Cohesion Policy: The impact of micro-level policy effectiveness on voting behavior. WU Economics Working Paper 273.

Banerjee, B., & Jarmuzek, M. (2009). Anatomy of regional disparities in the Slovak Republic. IMF Working Paper 145.

Capello, R., & Perucca, G. (2019). Citizens' perception of Cohesion Policy: From theory to empirical evidence. *Regional Studies*, *53*(11), 1520–1530. https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2019.1587398

Cianetti, L., Dawson, J., & Hanley, S. (2018). Rethinking "democratic backsliding" in Central and Eastern Europe: Looking beyond Hungary and Poland. *East European Politics*, *34*, 243–256. https://doi.org/10.1080/21599165.2018.1491401

Crescenzi, R., Di Cataldo, M., & Faggian, A. (2018). Internationalized at work and localistic at home: The 'split' Europeanization behind Brexit. *Papers in Regional Science*, 97(1), 117–132. https://doi.org/10.1111/pirs.12350

Crescenzi, R., Di Cataldo, M., & Giua, M. (2019). It's not about the money! EU funds, local opportunities, and the Brexit vote. LSE 'Europe in Question' Discussion Paper 149.

Dąbrowski, M., Stead, D., & Mashhoodi, B. (2019). EU Cohesion Policy can't buy me love? Exploring the regional determinants of EU image. *Regional Science Policy & Practice*, 11(4), 695–711. https://doi.org/10.1111/rsp3.12237

Dijkstra, L., Poelman, H., & Rodríguez-Pose, A. (2019). The geography of EU discontent. *Regional Studies*, 54, 737–753. https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2019.1654603

Engler, S., Pytlas, B., & Deegan-Krause, K. (2019). Assessing the diversity of anti-establishment and populist politics in Central and Eastern Europe. *West European Politics*, 42, 1310–1336. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2019.1596696

European Commission. (2014). Investment for jobs and growth: Promoting development and good governance in EU regions and cities. 6th report on economic, social and territorial cohesion. Brussels: Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy. https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/cohesion6/6cr_en.pdf

Fidrmuc, J., Hulényi, M., & Tunali, Ç. B. (2019). Can money buy EU love? *European Journal of Political Economy*, 60, 101804. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpoleco.2019.07.002

Fukuyama, F. (2004). *State-building: Governance and world order in the 21st century*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Gordon, I. R. (2018). In what sense left behind by globalisation? Looking for a less reductionist geography of the populist surge in Europe. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 11, 95–113. https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rsx028

Gyárfašová, O., & Mesežnikov, G. (2015). Actors, agenda, and appeal in Slovakia. In M. Minkenberg (Ed.), *Transforming the transformation? The East European radical right in the political process* (pp. 224–248). New York: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315730578-11

Gyárfašová, O., & Slosiarik, M. (2016). Voľby do NR SR 2016: Čo charakterizovalo voličov. Working papers in Sociology 1.

Harris, E. (2019). Nation before democracy? Placing the rise of the Slovak extreme right into context. *East European Politics*, 35, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/21599165.2019.1667770

Iammarino, S., Rodríguez-Pose, A., & Storper, M. (2019). Regional inequality in Europe: Evidence, theory and policy implications. *Journal of Economic Geography*, 19(2), 273–298. https://doi.org/10.1093/jeg/lby021

Immerzeel, T., & Pickup, M. (2015). Populist radical right parties mobilizing 'the people'? The role of populist radical right success in voter turnout. *Electoral Studies*, 40, 347–360. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2015.10.007

Kahanec, M., & Zimmermann, K. F. (2009). Migration in enlarged EU: A challenging situation? European Economy, Economic Papers 363: 1–58.

Kazharski, A. (2019). Frontiers of hatred? A study of right-wing populist strategies in Slovakia. *European Politics and Society*, 20, 393–405. https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2019.1569337

Kluknavská, A. (2013). Od Štúra k parazitom: Tematická adaptácia krajnej pravice v parlamentných voľbách na Slovensku. *Politologický časopis—Czech Journal of Political Science*, 20(3), 258–281. https://doi.org/10.5817/PC2013-3-258

Kluknavská, A., & Smolík, J. (2016). We hate them all? Issue adaptation of extreme right parties in Slovakia 1993–2016. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 49, 335–344. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.postcomstud.2016.09.002

Lee, N., Morris, K., & Kemeny, T. (2018). Immobility and the Brexit vote. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 11, 143–163. https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rsx027

Lewis-Beck, M. S., & Nadeau, R. (2011). Economic voting theory: Testing new dimensions. *Electoral Studies*, 30, 288–294. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2010.09.001

Lewis-Beck, M. S., & Paldam, M. (2000). Economic voting: An introduction. *Electoral Studies*, 19, 113–121. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-3794(99)00042-6

Lewis-Beck, M. S., & Stegmaier, M. (2007). Economic models of voting. In J. D. Russell & H. D. Klingermann (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of political behavior* (pp. 518–538). New York: Oxford University Press.

López-Bazo, E., & Royuela, V. (2019). Citizens' perception of the Cohesion Policy and support for the European Union. *Regional Science Policy & Practice*, 11(4), 733–749. https://doi.org/10.1111/rsp3.12223

McCann, P. (2019). P erceptions of regional inequality and the geography of discontent: Insights from the UK. *Regional Studies*, 54, 256–267. https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2019.1619928

Mesežnikov, G. (2009). National and right-wing radicalism in the new democracies: Slovakia. Paper for the workshop of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation on "Right-wing extremism and its impact on young democracies in the CEE-countries", Budapest.

Ministry of Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic. (2008). National Strategic Reference Framework of the Slovak Republic for 2007–2013. DOC type of document. URL: www.nsrr.sk/narodny-strategicky-referencny-ramec-2007-2013/

Minkenberg, M. (2017). *The radical right in Eastern Europe: Democracy under siege? (Europe in crisis)*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-56332-3

Mudde, C. (2016). Populist radical right parties in Europe today. In J. Abromeit, B. M. Chesterton, G. Marotta & Y. Norman (Eds.), *Transformations of populism in Europe and the Americas* (pp. 295–307). London: Bloomsbury Academic. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781474225243.ch-016

Némethová, V., Širaňová, M., & Šipikal, M. (2018). Public support for firms in lagging regions—evaluation of innovation subsidy in Slovakia. *Science and Public Policy*, *46*, 173–183. https://doi.org/10.1093/scipol/scy046

Pavlínek, P. (2004). Regional Development Implications of foreign direct investment in Central Europe. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, *11*, 47–70. https://doi.org/10.1177/0969776404039142

Pavlínek, P. (2016). Whose success? The state–foreign capital nexus and the development of the automotive industry in Slovakia. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, *23*, 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1177/0969776414557965

Pirro, A. L. P. (2013). Populist radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe: The different context and issues of the prophets of the patria. *Government and Opposition*, *49*, 600–629. https://doi.org/10.1017/gov.2013.32

Polk, J., Rovny, J., Bakker, R., Edwards, E., Hooghe, L., Jolly, S., … Zilovic, M. (2017). Explaining the salience of anti-elitism and reducing political corruption for political parties in Europe with the 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Survey data. *Research & Politics*, *4*, 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1177/2053168016686915

Rodríguez-Pose, A. (2018). The revenge of places that don't matter (and what to do about it). *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, *11*, 189–209. https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rsx024

Rydgren, J. (2007). The sociology of the radical right. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *33*, 241–262. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.33.040406.131752

Sokol, M. (2001). Central and Eastern Europe a decade after the fall of state-socialism: Regional dimensions of transition processes. *Regional Studies*, *35*, 645–655. https://doi.org/10.1080/00343400120075911

Stockemer, D., Lentz, T., & Mayer, D. (2018). Individual predictors of the radical right-wing vote in Europe: A meta-analysis of articles in peer-reviewed journals (1995–2016). *Government and Opposition*, *53*, 569–593. https://doi.org/10.1017/gov.2018.2

Swank, D., & Betz, H. G. (2003). Globalization, the welfare state and right-wing populism in Western Europe. *Socio-Economic Review*, *1*, 215–245. https://doi.org/10.1093/soceco/1.2.215

APPENDIX

TABLE A1 Correlation matrix

	lnEmig	lnFDI	lnERDF_CF	lnESF	UR 2004–2007	UR 2008–2011	UR 2012–2016
lnEmig	1						
lnFDI	0.173***	1					
lnERDF_CF	0.075***	0.218	1				
lnESF	0.245***	−0.188***	0.395***	1			
UR 2004–2007	−0.336***	−0.542***	−0.338***	0.186***	1		
UR 2008–2011	−0.304***	−0.588***	−0.302***	0.190***	0.975***	1	
UR 2012–2016	−0.301***	−0.640***	−0.262***	0.221***	0.949***	0.985***	1
LtUR 2004–2007	−0.330***	−0.490***	−0.373***	0.177***	0.992***	0.960***	0.931***
LtUR 2008–2011	−0.306***	−0.552***	−0.314***	0.201***	0.974***	0.984***	0.970***
LtUR 2012–2016	−0.292***	−0.592***	−0.279***	0.223***	0.949***	0.979***	0.988***
Wage 2004–2007	0.338***	0.799***	0.101***	−0.010	−0.594***	−0.594***	−0.627***
Wage 2008–2011	0.286***	0.754***	0.115***	−0.026	−0.579***	−0.579***	−0.611***
Wage 2012–2016	0.293***	0.754***	0.165***	−0.034*	−0.628***	−0.628***	−0.659***

Note: standard errors in parentheses. *, ** and *** denote significance at 0.10, 0.05 and 0.01 respectively.

TABLE A1 Continued

	LtUR 2004–2007	LtUR 2008–2011	LtUR 2012–2016	Wage 2004–2007	Wage 2008–2011	Wage 2012–2016
lnEmig						
lnFDI						
lnERDF_CF						
lnESF						
UR 2004–2007						
UR 2008–2011						
UR 2012–2016						
LtUR 2004–2007	1					
LtUR 2008–2011	0.974***	1				
LtUR 2012–2016	0.943***	0.987***	1			
Wage 2004–2007	−0.499***	−0.537***	−0.570***	1		
Wage 2008–2011	−0.457***	−0.519***	−0.553***	0.948***	1	
Wage 2012–2016	−0.518***	−0.573***	−0.605***	0.928***	0.974***	1

Note: standard errors in parentheses. *, ** and *** denote significance at 0.10, 0.05 and 0.01 respectively.
Source: authors, based on statistical data from the ŠUSR, the National Bank of Slovakia and the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic.