

# **Slovakia and the turnout conundrum**

**Olga Gyárfášová and Karen Henderson**

Institute of European Studies & International Relations, Comenius University, Bratislava

**FIRST DRAFT! PLEASE DO NOT QUOTE !**

Prepared for the 2014 European Election Study Conference

MZES, University of Mannheim

November 6-7, 2015

## **Abstract**

The Slovak Republic has produced the lowest turnout in every European Parliament election since it joined the European Union, and understanding the reason for this could have major implications for understanding public engagement with EU affairs as a whole. It has been variously suggested that turnout is reduced by hostility to the EU, satisfaction with the EU or lack of information. These propositions are examined by looking at Slovak public opinion as measured in the EES and party policies as analysed by the EUvox survey, and using as a control case the neighbouring Czech Republic, a state with a common history and which produced the second lowest turnout in 2014.

Marked differences in, for example, the percentage of Slovak and Czech citizens who think EU membership is a ‘good thing’ suggest that positive or negative views towards the EU as a whole cannot be key factors in motivating or discouraging voting. Failure to provide information – a factor frequently discussed in Slovakia, and which presents a greater possibility of finding a solution than other explanation – also appears inapplicable, since there is evidence that the EP election campaign was ‘Europeanised’ to a significant extent, and that domestic political issues did not dominate as in classic ‘second order’ elections. Two other factors do emerge, however, which may explain low turnout in post-communist member states as a whole. Firstly, very low levels of political trust in general seem to lower turnout, although EU institutions are frequently regarded as more trustworthy than domestic ones. Secondly, the EU is regarded primarily as providing solutions for domestic economic problems while other aspects of European integration appear less salient. Such an instrumental attitude to EU membership may ultimately prove more problematic than low electoral participation.

## **Introduction**

The Slovak Republic's 13.05% turnout in the 2014 European Parliament (EP) elections beat its own record for the lowest national turnout ever in an EP election, the 16.97% it achieved shortly after joining the European Union (EU) in 2004. This is, however, not the only European record the Slovaks have set at the ballot box: on 16/17 May 2003, the country produced a 93.7% vote in its EU accession referendum, the most resounding majority ever to endorse membership. The juxtaposition of its two records suggests that, as is sometimes optimistically posited when explaining low voter turnout in the USA, the phenomenon may actually be linked with voter satisfaction rather than indicating a democratic deficit. Unfortunately, while Slovaks have traditionally been relatively favourable towards their EU membership, this is not true of their Czech neighbours – who in 2014 became the first country ever to produce an EP election turnout worse than at least one of the Slovak turnouts. At 18.20%, it dropped below the 19.64% reached by the Slovaks in 2009.

It is clear, therefore, that simplistic solutions will not suffice when trying to explain the Slovak turnout conundrum. We would argue, however, that investigating the question in greater depth has a wider importance for two reasons.

Firstly, the European Parliament's own discourse considers participation of citizens in EP elections to legitimize its own existence. In the run-up to the 2014 elections, it ran a major mobilization campaign saying "This time it's different!", by which the effects of changes brought about by the Lisbon Treaty were meant, in particular Article 17.7 stating that the elections to the European Parliament should be taken into account when the European Council proposed a candidate for President of the European Commission. There was an expectation that the 2014 EP elections would be more personalized and it was hoped that the "Spitzenkandidaten" put up by the party groupings as their candidate for President, and the televised debates between them, would bring more emotion and personal identifications into what was often considered a boring and technocratic EU agenda (Schmitt et al. 2015; Baboš et al., 2015). However, as might perhaps have been predicted by the use of a German word for the candidates, the contest was most publicized in countries that put up candidates, and appeared only to raise turnout in Germany (the only country to have more than one candidate), and maybe Greece. All candidates but Alexis Tsipras, who went on to win two election victories in Greece that were of the greatest import to the future of the Eurozone, were citizens of states that were founder members of the EU, and their discussions

had little resonance in Central and Eastern Europe. The low turnouts in these countries indicate, therefore, that the European Parliament is failing in meeting its own goals.

Secondly, however, neither Slovakia, the Czech Republic nor Central and Eastern Europe as a whole appeared to be affected by the second set of factors that it was thought might increase turnout: the economic crisis and the rise of Euroscepticism. The sensational results in France and the UK, where Eurosceptic parties topped the polls, were not replicated anywhere in new member states. The major story here was the decline in turnout, and the European Parliament election results appear to indicate, quite simply, that different things are happening in different parts of Europe. While Slovakia's exceptionally low turnouts in all three EP elections in which it has so far participated may suggest it is an outlier influenced by country-specific factors, it is at the same time part of a regional trend. Factors influencing voting behaviour in Slovakia may well apply elsewhere.

What we will do in this paper is survey, first of all, the extent to which Slovak EP elections match the features of second order elections as whole, and we then look critically at Slovak explanations for their low turnouts. We then examine voters AND parties in Slovakia and raise the following questions:

Are there collective agreements about parties' positions on the pro/anti EU axis? What has changed within last 5 years? What are the consequences of unclear choices for political competition? How do the parties position on the EU axis? Is there congruence between supply and demand? What kind of political competition is EP election? Is the coherence of Slovakia's EU narrative seriously flawed by cognitive dissonance, or put simple, that voters hold contradictory beliefs at the same time.

We finally conclude that the problem in Slovakia's EP election turnout, and possibly low turnouts in Central and Eastern Europe as a whole, may stem not from the nature of these elections, nor the way that the campaigns are conducted, but rather from problematic and contradictory underlying attitudes to the EU.

### **Second-order elections in the CEEC**

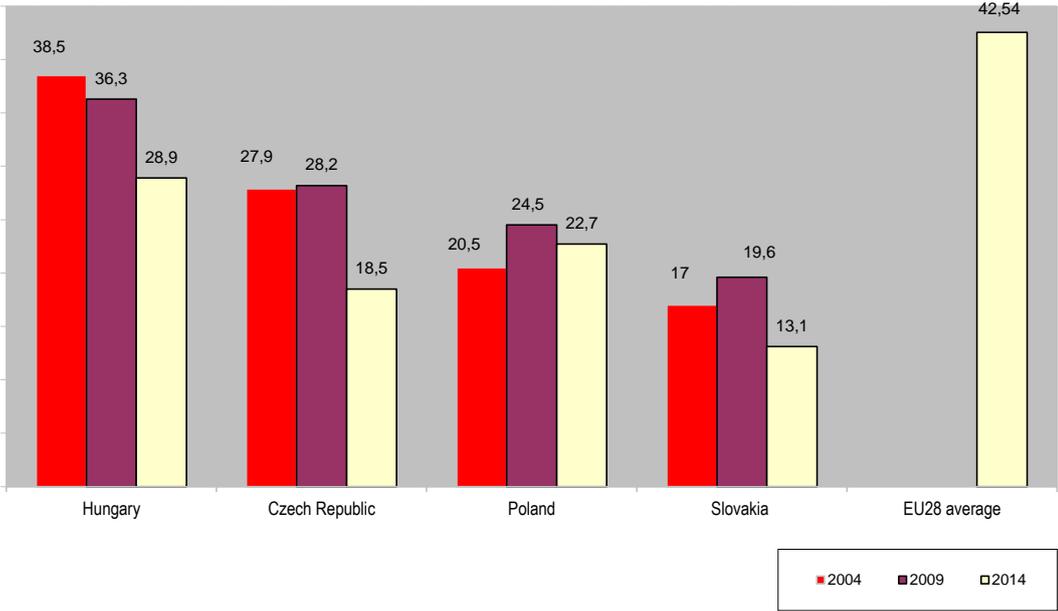
The classic view is presented by the 'second-order election theory' (Reif – Schmitt 1980) which still represents the basic narrative of EP elections, an academically vivid concept which has been developed, questioned, empirically verified and disproved (Marsh 1998; Eijk van der

– Franklin – Marsh 1996; Schmitt 2005 and many others). To sum up the core very briefly: second-order elections, unlike national (first-order) elections, are characterized by comparatively lower turnout, weak performance by the ruling parties and the electoral success of small, marginal, often radical and/or Eurosceptic parties. In the EP elections “less is at stake” and it has consequences for voting mobilization and electoral choices.

In the history of the EU-wide contest, the 2004 EP elections stood for a milestone: they represented a unique “laboratory” test in terms of comparative analysis of electoral behaviour in “old” and “new” member states. In particular one general pattern emerged: in spite of the years of yearning for EU membership, the citizens of post-communist countries were not very enthusiastic about exerting their newly-acquired rights as EU citizens. Average turnout was significantly lower than in the older EU member states. Nor did the anticipated euphoria of getting into the EU, or a ‘first election’ boost (Franklin, 2007) have a positive effect on the turnout. On the contrary, election fatigue appeared to follow the EU accession referendums of 2003, and the new EU citizens of the post-communist countries downgraded the “second-orderness” of the EP elections to hitherto unknown turnout depths.

In Slovakia the abstention rate was the highest, with less than 17% of eligible voters showing up. The second European elections in Slovakia showed little change in terms of voter mobilization and voters' decisions. Despite a much more intense election campaign and more numerous and more visible activities by political parties and other public actors, participation did not rise significantly, with less than one in five voting coming to the polling stations. Admittedly, turnout increased slightly in a year where the EP election turnout as a whole sunk, but the Slovak turnout was still lower than that produced by any other country ever. Turnout decreased again in the third EP election, but in this case the same could be said for all of Slovakia’s Visegrad Four neighbours (see Graph 1).

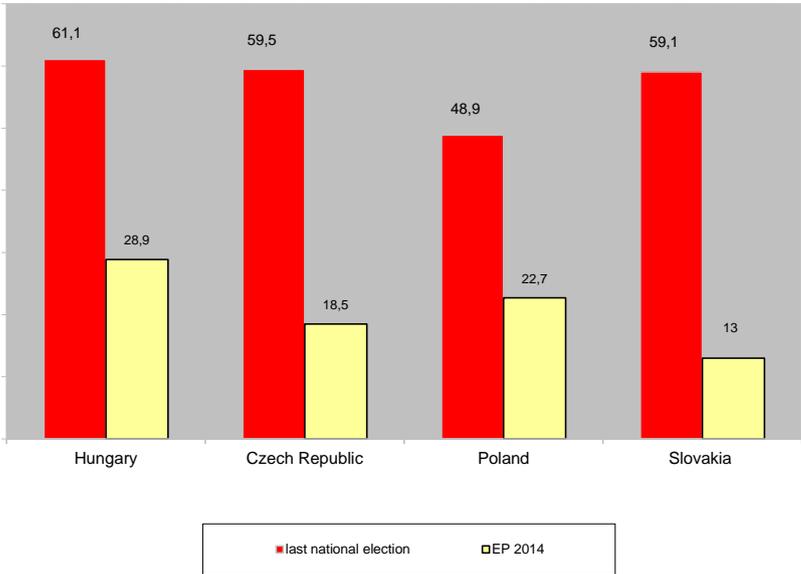
**Graph 1: EP election - turnout in V4 (2004, 2009, 2014)**



Source: [www.elections2009-results.eu](http://www.elections2009-results.eu); [www.result-election2014.en](http://www.result-election2014.en)

It appears, in fact that Central and East European Countries (CEECs) confirmed that lower turnout and weaker voter mobilization is a second-order election characteristic which without question applies. As Graph 2 shows, national election turnouts in the Visegrad Four are not particularly high, but nonetheless, EP elections only demonstrate a fraction of the turnout.

**Graph 2: Turnout: FOE vs. SOE (euro-gap) in V4 countries**



The other two characteristics of second-order elections are very difficult to prove. We would expect to see losses for governing parties, which can be explained as protest voting and punishment for the government, particularly if the EU election is held midway through the national electoral cycle. Yet this phenomenon does not appear to be significant in CEECs. Table 1, which compares national and EP election votes in Slovakia, is an example of this.

**Table 1: Slovakia - election results 2002-2014**

	<b>NR SR 9/2002</b>	<b>EP 6/2004</b>	<b>NR SR 6/2006</b>	<b>EP 6/2009</b>	<b>NR SR 6/2010</b>	<b>NR SR 3/2012</b>	<b>EP 5/2014</b>
Smer- SD	13.5	16.9	<b>29.1</b>	<b>32.0</b>	34.8	<b>44.4</b>	<b>24.1</b>
KDH	<b>8.3</b>	<b>16.2</b>	8.3	10.9	<b>8.5</b>	8.8	13.2
OLaNO	X	X	X	X	X	8.6	7.5
Most-Híd	X	X	X	X	<b>8.1</b>	6.9	5.8
SDKÚ-DS	<b>15.1</b>	<b>17.1</b>	18.4	17.0	<b>15.4</b>	6.1	7.8
SaS	X	X	X	4.6	<b>12.1</b>	5.9	6.7
NOVA	X	X	X	X	x	x	6.8
SMK	<b>11.2</b>	<b>13.2</b>	11.7	11.3	4.3	4.3	6.5
SNS	3.3	2.0	<b>11.7</b>	<b>5.6</b>	5.1	4.6	3.6
HZDS	19.5	17.0	<b>8.8</b>	<b>9.0</b>	4.3	X	X

Notes: X = the party did not exist, or did not run. Source: Statistical Office of the SR.

We reach a similarly negative finding if we look at the predictions of Hix and Marsh (2007) on the likely gains for smaller and more extremist parties:

1. the more anti-European the policy position of a party, the more its vote-share will increase between the last national election and the subsequent EP election;
2. the more extreme a party is, in terms of its distance on the left-right scale the more votes it will gain between the previous national election and the EP election;
3. green parties should receive a greater increase;
4. anti-European parties should receive a greater increase in their vote share in the EP compared to other parties (Hix – Marsh, 2007: 497).

We cannot see evidence for such electoral choices in Slovakia, and there are very limited examples in other CEECs. Eurosceptic and radical right parties lost the 2014 EP election in Slovakia. The neoliberal version of the eurosceptic position, represented by party Freedom and Solidarity (which at the time of the election was affiliated to the liberal ALDE, but then moved to the conservative eurosceptic ECR) did manage to get one mandate, but with just 6.7% of votes.

The electoral success of Eurosceptic and/or radical parties would not have been possible in Slovakia without voters moving away from the more mainstream parties. However, the post-election survey conducted did not confirm any significant voters' shifts between political parties. There is considerable consistency between elections at European and national levels. The electoral outcome of political parties in the European elections was primarily determined by their ability to mobilize their followers, and not through gaining the support of volatile voters. A high percentage of voters who participated in the EP elections stated that they would select the same party in a national election (Table 2). The range in the percentage of party loyalists is from 100% in case of Party of the Hungarian Community (SMK) to 62% in case of the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union-Democratic Party (SDKÚ-DS) (a party which is sharply in decline in terms of popularity) and the relatively new party Ordinary People and Independent Personalities (OĽaNO). Those voters who would not select the same party did not intend to switch to any party in particular but rather were undecided or would not vote. In other words we do not observe any major volatility, either deep (between government and opposition parties) nor shallow (within the same camp). Election results are determined mostly by differing levels of mobilization, and not by the ability of parties to attract switching voters.

**Table 2: Consistency of EP election vote and party support at the national level (voting intention for vote in general election)**

<b>Party (voted in the EP election)</b>	<b>Party loyalty (the same party would be voted in general election, in %)</b>
SMK	100
SaS	88
Smer- SD	86
KDH	85
NOVA-KDS-OKS	80
Most-Híd	78
SDKÚ-DS	62
OĽaNO	62

Note: Only parties which entered the EP in 2014.

Source: EES 2014.

### **Slovak explanations of low turnout in EP elections**

Since Slovakia produced the lowest EP election turnout ever in June 2004, one of the burning issues during subsequent Slovak EP election campaigns relates not to EU policy, but to the inward-looking question of whether the country can avoid the international embarrassment of again coming bottom in turns of turnout. Considerable attention is therefore paid to reasons for low turnout, and how to remedy them. Four suggestions are commonly made.

The first is one of the more promising in explanatory terms. This notes that Slovaks are suffering from ‘voting fatigue’ by the time the EP elections are held because Slovakia’s two-round presidential elections are held in a fixed five-year cycle and have always taken place a couple of months before the EP elections. Although the country has a parliamentary system of government, presidential elections may be considered first order elections in terms of turnout, with around 50% of voters attending each round. In 2014, the EP elections were also preceded the previous November by regional elections, some of which went to a second round, and followed that November by local elections. The voting fatigue explanation may therefore be considered to have some validity, though it should be noted that the turnout at the November 2014 local elections (48.34%) nearly reached that of the presidential elections, and was roughly in line with earlier local elections. The obvious answer to the voter fatigue problem – moving the presidential elections to the same day as the EP elections – would be relatively easy to achieve, despite requiring a constitutional change, and would then guarantee high EP election turnouts for the foreseeable future. It is a comment on the fractiousness of Slovak politics that this money-saving and face-saving solution was not adopted in the aftermath of the 2004 EP elections.

The second explanation raised is that the EP elections are inadequately publicised. The argument takes various forms, from criticism of MEPs for taking too little trouble in promoting their work in Brussels in their own country to accusing political parties of investing too little effort in the campaign because – unlike in domestic elections – the percentage vote they gain does not translate into revenue via state funding. It is one of the most popular arguments with Slovaks involved in EU affairs since it suggests that more resources need to be devoted into informing citizens about the work of the European Union. The difficulty with this explanation, however, is that there is no hard evidence that the EP

election campaign in Slovakia is less widespread than in many countries with higher turnout, and in addition, party programmes increasingly focus on EU-centred rather than domestic policy discussions. *Eurobarometer* surveys also suggest that Slovaks are quite well-informed about the EU, although this does rely on very basic questions such as how many member states there are in the EU and whether the European Parliament is directly elected (*Standard Eurobarometer 83*, 128-134).

The third explanation offered is that 13 seats in a 751-member parliament give Slovakia such a small voice that the elections are quite simply unimportant. This argument is weakened by the fact that nine member states have fewer seats, yet always manage higher election turnouts than the Slovaks, and 17 states have more voters per member of the European Parliament than Slovakia does, so that their citizens' voices have less weight than that of Slovaks. In addition, *Eurobarometer* data suggests that Slovaks do not feel disempowered in the European Union. When asked if they agree with the statement 'My voice counts in the EU', Slovak respondents' replies are similar to the EU average, despite considerable divergences in the EU as a whole (*Standard Eurobarometer 83*, 146).

A final explanation is that failure to vote may be linked to satisfaction with the EU. This is less often discussed in Slovakia, although shortly before the 2009 EP election, the Prime Minister Robert Fico did point out that because Slovakia was 'such an EU-oriented state and people naturally connection Slovakia with the Union', and the lack of conflict subdued voters (*Sme*, 05.06.2009). The idea that Slovaks are pleased to be EU citizens is plausible. The country had a particularly difficult political trajectory preparing for entry and all parties supported membership in the accession referendum. Slovakia has since received massive funding from the EU, receiving approximately three times more than they contribute to the EU budget, and European Commission figures suggest that between 75% (European Commission) and 85% (*Slovenská cesta...*, 2015) of public investment in Slovakia is dependent on EU funds. Politicians frequently cite 'EU funds' or 'structural funds' as the source of finance for any improvement in public expenditure they propose, particularly in election manifestoes. (In 2015, the Minister of Education even suggested that structural funds could be used to raise teachers' salaries, which are the lowest in the region (*Sme*, 21.08.2015). There is also opinion poll data (see below) to indicate that voters believe themselves to be more pro-EU than the parties they vote for. There may thus be some truth in the explanation that support for the EU is taken for granted by many Slovaks. Analysis of the EU accession

referendums in Central and Eastern Europe indicates that contestation was a crucial factor in improving turnout (Szczurbiak - Taggart 2004).

Yet as mentioned at the outset, this does not seem to account for the low Czech turnout, since data show that the Czechs are more eurosceptic than Slovaks. However, even here it could be argued that Czech euroscepticism is more prominent at party leadership level than among voters as a whole.

### **Voters and Parties: Public awareness of parties positions on the EU integration dimension**

One of the powerful theories of voting behaviour – the proximity theory – assumes that there is a certain distance between voters’ position on policies and issues and the parties’ equivalent positions, and that voters are likely to opt for a party which better represents (is closer to) their own position (Evans 2004). The precondition is that the voters are able to identify the party’s position on issues which are relevant. In 2009 we found that for had a high degree of ambiguity over Slovak parties’ positions on the EU integration dimension: the portion of ‘Don’t Know’ (DK) responses when evaluating the position of the country’s main political parties reached up to one third in Slovakia. That means the identifiability of the political supply in terms of EU integration was relatively low. However, within the following five years, awareness has increased significantly, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Public awareness of parties’ positions on the EU integration dimension (DK’s in %) in 2009 and 2014**

<b>Party</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2014</b>
NOVA	X	14
Smer-SD	28	9
OLaNO	x	12
KDH	32	11
SaS	X	12
Most-Hid	x	13
SDKÚ-DS	33	11
SMK	32	13

Note: Only parties which entered the EP in 2014. Source: PIREDEU 2009; EES 2014. <sup>1</sup>

However, the public perceives the differences among the parties to be very shallow, and the picture of the party scene is rather undifferentiated, homogeneous.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, we could point to an interesting phenomenon: when we compare two levels of evaluation – on the one hand how the voters perceive the parties of their choice (taken from their voting intention at the next national elections) and their own position we see a significant gap. It is notable that voters perceive themselves much less pro-European than the parties they intend to vote for.

The correlation of parties' and voters' positions on the EU dimension indicates similar findings: there is no significant correlation for seven out of eight political parties. That means there are issues other than the EU agenda which underlie party-voters links.

**Table 4: Parties' and voters' position on the EU dimension - Spearman's rank correlation coefficient**

Party/voters	Spearman's rho	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
KDH	-,139	,256	69
SDKÚ-DS	-,352	,109	22
SaS	,055	,752	36
Smer-SD	,034	,581	273
SMK	-,132	,521	26
OĽaNO	,323*	,022	50
NOVA	,164	,386	30
Most-Híd	,010	,963	25

---

<sup>1</sup> Calculated on basis of earlier released data file, just national data for Slovakia.

<sup>2</sup> Experts see parties in Slovakia as more differentiated: according to the Chapel Hill expert survey, the most pro-EU party is SDKU-DS with a mean 6,4 on the 7 points scale. Out of those which entered the EP in 2014 the least pro-EU is SaS, representing the neoliberal version of Euroscepticism (mean 2,9) followed by the Slovak National Party (radical nationalist party, mean 2,3). 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Survey

\* Correlation is significant at the 0,05 level. Source: EES 2014.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, based on the ISSP survey conducted in autumn 2014, we can compare the differentiation of electorates in Slovakia on three attitudinal dimensions (self-positioning): left-right, liberal-conservative and pro-EU-anti-EU. The correspondence analyses revealed that whereas the differences on the two former dimensions are statistically significant, the EU dimension does not form a dividing line. This supports the argument that there is no dividing line across different political environments, and when it comes to EU issues the attitudinal congruence between parties and their voters is weak and fuzzy. (Correspondence analyses for three attitudinal dimensions, see Annex).

### **Cognitive dissonance**

The ‘fuzziness’ of Slovak views on the EU also emerges in a number of other surveys which show both parties and voters endorsing contradictory policy stances. This cognitive dissonance – or perhaps more precisely, double standards according to whether Slovaks are recipients of EU benefits - embraces both economic areas and liberal value orientations. Both the Chapel Hill surveys and the EUvox project, which are expert surveys looking at party views, show a disconnect between most parties’ economic views at ideological/national and EU level. They contain roughly similar questions on parties’ economic policy stances, asking experts to rank each on agreement with/favouring propositions such as ‘Wealth should be redistributed from the richest people to the poorest’ (EUvox)/‘Fully in favour of redistribution’ (Chapel Hill 2014); ‘The state should intervene as little as possible in the economy’ (EUvox)/‘Fully in favour of state intervention’ (Chapel Hill 2014); but also ask about the redistributive policies of the EU: ‘The EU should redistribute resources from richer to poorer EU regions’ (EUvox)/‘position of party leadership in 2014 on EU cohesion or regional policy (e.g. the structural funds)’ (Chapel Hill 2014). While all Slovak political parties were regarded as to some extent positive about structural funds from the EU, the whole of the right-of-centre party spectrum was inclined against the redistribution of wealth from the rich to the poor and state intervention in the economy. EU intervention and the

---

<sup>3</sup> Calculated on basis of earlier released data file, just national data for Slovakia.

redistribution of wealth from rich to poor member states was therefore approved of by parties who opposed the redistribution of their own taxpayers' money.

However, the most extraordinary example of irreconcilable contradictions in views on EU policy emerges in recent *Standard Eurobarometer* surveys asking the views of the Slovak public. When Slovak respondents are asked about immigration within the EU and free movement of citizens. Whereas, in spring 2015, only 37% of Slovaks felt positive about the immigration of people from other EU Member States, an astonishing 84% supported the right for EU citizens to work in every Member State of the EU, and 80% supported their right to live in every Member State. Only Latvia showed a greater gulf between perceptions of EU immigrants and support for freedom of movement (*Standard Eurobarometer 83*, 151-160). The fact that their own right to live and work elsewhere in the EU entailed the duty to accept immigration of people from other Member States seems to have eluded nearly half of all Slovaks. In part, this reflects day-to-day experience. Freedom of movement has so far for Slovaks primarily entailed their own emigration rather than the immigration of others to Slovakia. Also, as will be seen from the table below, a measure of 'double standards' is present throughout the EU, and positive feelings about immigrants from elsewhere in the EU are generally not as prominent as the support for free movement of persons and labour.

**Table 5: Public attitudes to immigration (in %)**

	<b>SK</b>	<b>LV</b>	<b>CZ</b>	<b>EU-28</b>	<b>UK</b>	<b>AT</b>	<b>SE</b>
Positive about immigration of people from other Member States	37	36	31	<b>51</b>	48	53	79
Right for EU citizens to work in every Member State of EU a good thing	84	87	79	<b>76</b>	59	58	87
Right for EU citizens to live in every Member State of EU a good thing	80	83	74	<b>74</b>	53	58	79

Source: Standard Eurobarometer 83, Spring 2015.

Huge gulfs between respondents' views on immigration of EU nationals and freedom of movements appear to be characteristic of CEECs. The only state with a larger dissonance in its views on intra-EU migration is Latvia, whereas the three states with the most coherent

views on EU migration and freedom of movement (slightly negative in the case of Austria and the UK, positive in the case of Sweden) are all in Western Europe. Czech views, while slightly more xenophobic than Slovak ones, are also slightly more coherent. The issue of cognitive dissonance is a concern, however. While it may appear extreme in the Slovak case, as indicated by the migration example, it is present in most of Central and Eastern Europe. If it is linked to low turnout – as an inability to engage meaningfully with the dilemmas of EU membership and EU policy – then the exceptionally low EP election turnout in Slovakia may be a reflective of the extreme disconnect between expectations of what will be given and what will be taken.

## **Conclusion**

There can be little doubt that Slovak turnout in EP elections is low because it is a second-order election, but the question posed is why it is so exceptionally low. The Slovak situation is certainly exacerbated by the holding of two-round presidential elections two months prior to the EP poll, and in 2014 parties were also preoccupied with regional and local elections, although the EP campaign was more prominent than in previous years. The unfortunate sequencing of elections therefore explains low turnout to some degree, but again it fails to explain why it is so exceptionally low.

When we look at public awareness about parties' position on the EU, in Slovakia this has increased significantly, but parties' stances are perceived as weakly differentiated. European Parliament elections appear to have EU content, but not to be an EU contest. The positions of parties on many issues are fuzzy both in reality and in the perception of voters. We argue that this contributes to the Slovak failure to engage with EU issues and elections. This may be attributable to unrealistic expectations of the benefits that can be expected from membership.

Where the EU agenda was more successfully used as a tool for mass mobilization, it was by those parties which managed to instrumentalize the EU as a guarantee of improved economic conditions in Slovakia; eurosceptic messages were less effective. The utilitarian model of how the EU is perceived - 'it's the economy, stupid!' – still seems to have the greatest explanatory power. What is arguable, however, is whether the instrumental and inward-looking attitude of Slovakia and other new member states towards membership actually endangers the EU's functioning long-term. The sudden crisis of inappropriate CEE attitudes towards the refugee

crisis should not, perhaps, have come as such a surprise. The detachment of many member states from the solidaristic principles on which the EU functions may be linked to the disinterest in participating in elections.

## References:

Baboš, Pavol - Marek Rybář - Aneta Világi (2015) Sú televízne politické debaty zbytočné? Experiment pred voľbami do Európskeho parlamentu 2014, in *Politics in Central Europe* (11) (1S), pp. 91-112.

Bakker, Ryan, Erica Edwards, Liesbet Hooghe, Seth Jolly, Gary Marks, Jonathan Polk, Jan Rovny, Marco Steenbergen, and Milada Vachudova. 2015. "2014 Chapel Hill Expert Survey." Version 2015.1. Available on: [chesdata.eu](http://chesdata.eu). Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, (accessed 26 October 2015).

Eijk van der, Cees – Franklin, Mark (eds). (1996). *Choosing Europe? The European Electorate and National Politics in the Face of Union*. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press.

Evans, Jocelyn (2004): *Voters and Voting. An Introduction*. London : SAGE Publications.

EUVOX - EU-wide voting advice application (VAA) for the 2014 elections to the European Parliament. <http://www.euvox2014.eu/>.

Franklin, Mark. (2007): Turning out or turning off? How the EP elections of 2004 shed light on turnout dynamics. In Marsh, M. – Mikhaylov, S. – Schmitt, H. (eds.): *European Elections after Eastern Enlargement. Preliminary Results of the European Elections Study 2004*. CONNEX Report Series, Vol. 1, Wiesbaden: MZES, pp. 53-70.

Hix, Simon - Michael Marsh (2007) 'Punishment or Protest? Understanding European Parliament Elections', *The Journal of Politics* 69(2) 495-510.

ISSP Slovakia 2014. Data from the representative survey conducted in fall 2014.

Marsh, Michael (1998). Test in the Second-Order Election Model after Four European Election. *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 28(4), 591-607.

Reif, Karlheinz and Hermann Schmitt (1980). Nine Second-Order National Elections. A Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of European Election Results. *European Journal for Political Research*, 8 (1) : 3-44.

Schmitt, H. (2005): The European Parliament Elections of June 2004: Still Second-order? [http://www.mzes.uni-mannheim.de/publications/papers/HS\\_EP\\_ParElec\\_2004.pdf](http://www.mzes.uni-mannheim.de/publications/papers/HS_EP_ParElec_2004.pdf)

Schmitt, Hermann - Sara Hobolt - Sebastian Adrian Popa: Does personalization increase turnout? Spitzenkandidaten in the 2014 European Parliament elections, in *European Union Politics* 2015; 16(3): 347-368.

Schmitt H, Hobolt SB, Popa SA, et al. (2015) *European Parliament Election Study 2014, Voter Study*. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5160 Data file Version 1.0.0,

doi:10.4232/1.5160.

Slovenská cesta do jadra EÚ [Slovakia's path into the core of EU] [http://www.euractiv.sk/slovenske-predsednictvo/zoznam\\_liniek/slovenska-cesta-do-jadra-eu-000341](http://www.euractiv.sk/slovenske-predsednictvo/zoznam_liniek/slovenska-cesta-do-jadra-eu-000341) (accessed 2 November 2014).

*Sme*, 05.06.2009, 'Fico: Na účasť vplýva antikampaň', <http://volby.sme.sk/c/4876371/fico-naucast-vplyva-antikampan.html>, accessed 02.11.2015.

*Sme*, 21.08.2015, Mecenáši v školstve? Už sa hlásia, hovorí minister Draxler, <http://www.sme.sk/c/7975327/mecenasi-v-skolstve-uz-sa-hlasia-hovori-minister-draxler.html#ixzz3qbb3RkMX>, accessed 01.11.2015.

Standard Eurobarometer 83. Spring 2015. Public Opinion in the European Union: Report. [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb83/eb83\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb83/eb83_en.htm).

Szczerbiak, Aleks – Taggart, Paul (2004): Conclusion: Towards a Model of (European) Referendums, *West European Politics*, 27(4), 749-777.

# ANNEX

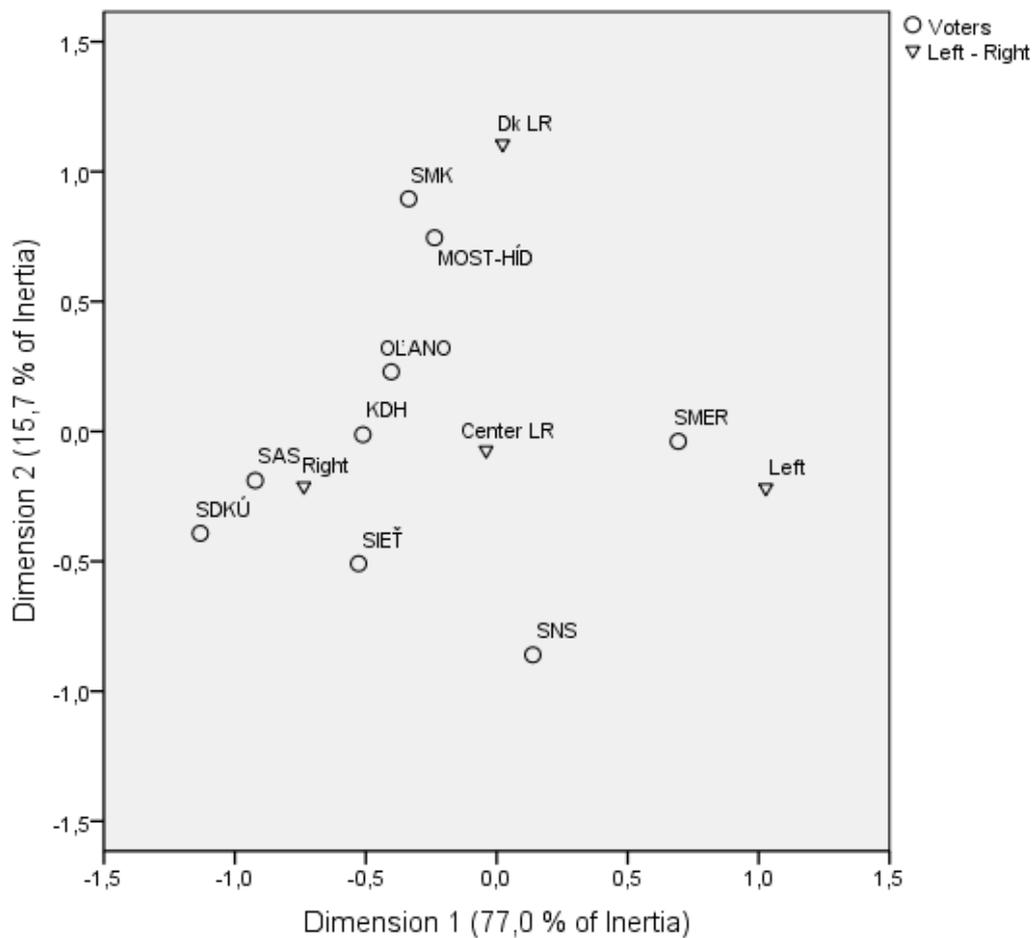
## Self-positioning of voters on left-right axis

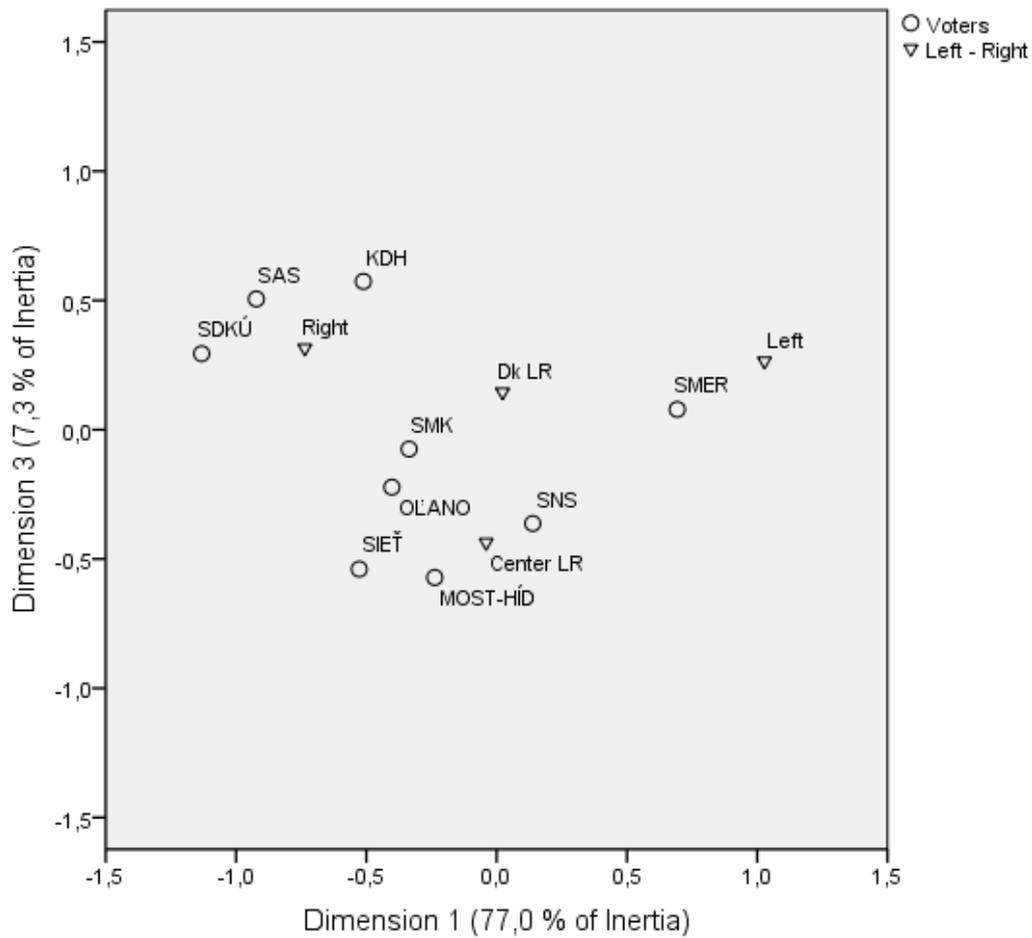
### Summary

Dimension	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi Square	Sig.	Proportion of Inertia	
					Accounted for	Cumulative
1	,383	,147			,770	,770
2	,173	,030			,157	,927
3	,118	,014			,073	1,000
Total		,191	117,584	,000 <sup>a</sup>	1,000	1,000

a. 30 degrees of freedom

Source: ISSP Slovakia 2014.





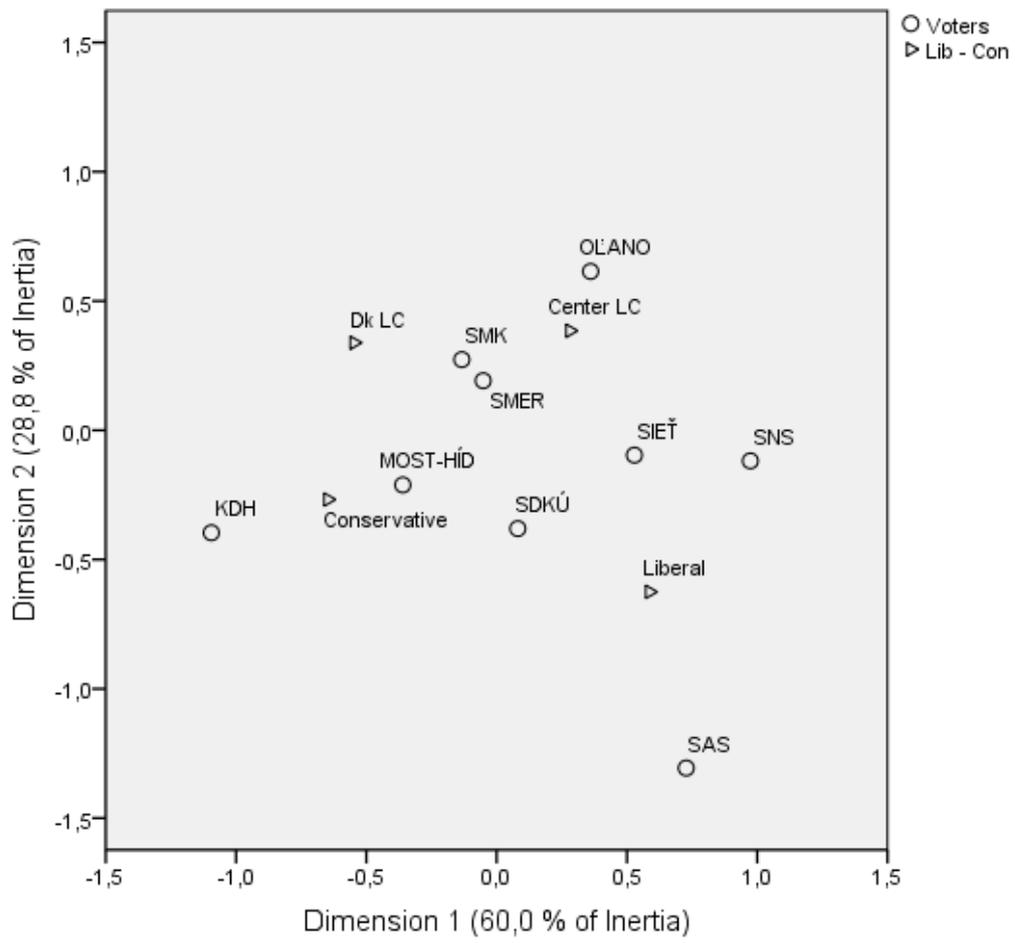
### Self-positioning of voters on liberal-conservative axis

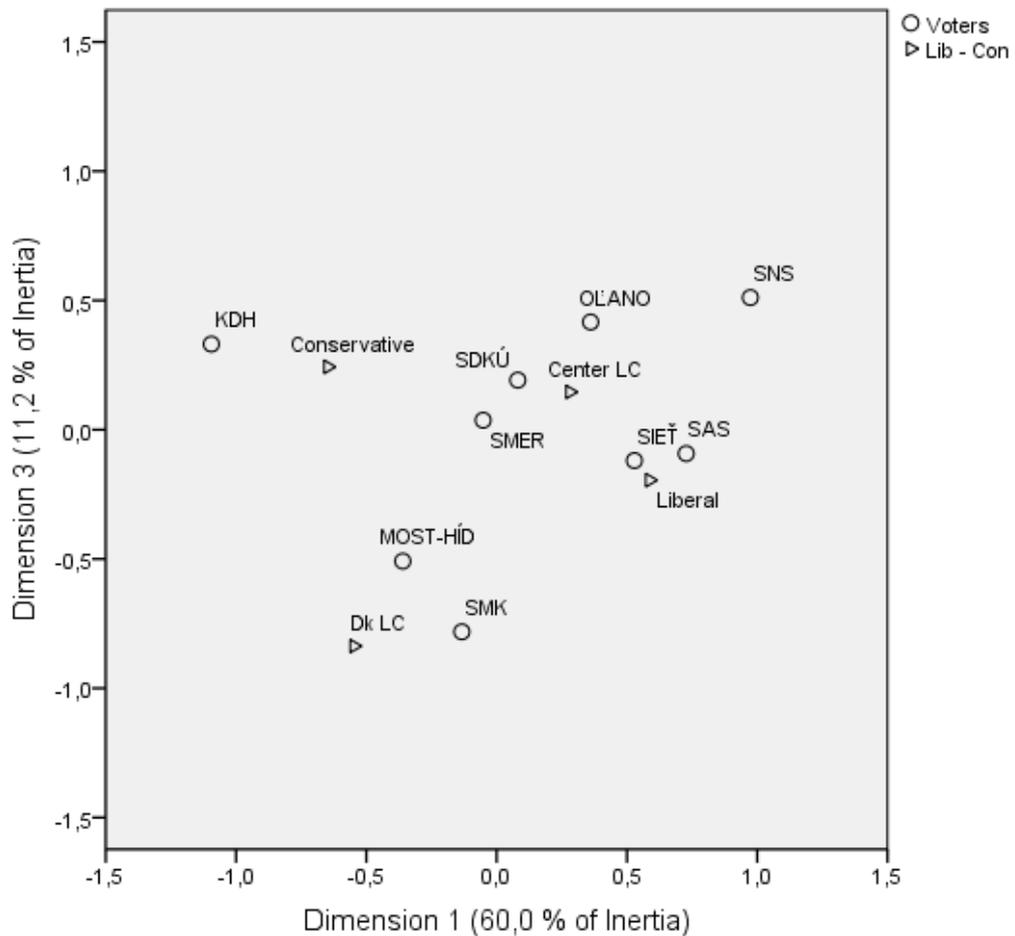
#### Summary

Dimension	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi Square	Sig.	Proportion of Inertia	
					Accounted for	Cumulative
1	,248	,062			,600	,600
2	,172	,030			,288	,888
3	,107	,012			,112	1,000
Total		,103	63,730	,000 <sup>a</sup>	1,000	1,000

a. 30 degrees of freedom

Source: ISSP Slovakia 2014.





## Self-positioning of voters on EU axis

### Summary

Dimension	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi Square	Sig.	Proportion of Inertia	
					Accounted for	Cumulative
1	,182	,033			,555	,555
2	,137	,019			,315	,871
3	,088	,008			,129	1,000
Total		,059	37,123	,174 <sup>a</sup>	1,000	1,000

a. 30 degrees of freedom

Source: ISSP Slovakia 2014.

