Generational Effects on Voter Turnout in Post-Communist Countries, 1990–2013

Lukáš Linek (lukas.linek@soc.cas.cz)
Ivan Petrúšek (ivan.petrusek@soc.cas.cz)
Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences
Hypotheses

Socialization hypothesis based on impressionable years model

- Regime type
- Communist regime phase

Habitual voting hypothesis

- Pure habit of going to polls
- Habit with cognitive dimension
Data

Post-election surveys
- Czech Republic (1992–2013 – 7 surveys; N=10630)
- Hungary (1990–2010 – 6 surveys; N=7861)
- Poland (1991–2011 – 7 surveys; N=12618)
- Slovakia (1992–2012 – 6 surveys; N=6421)

Variables
- Age (linear and quadratic)
- Sex
- Year of birth
- Year of data collection
Modelling strategy

Identification problem in APC analysis “solved“ using:

- Linear and quadratic specification of age effects
- Different period grouping of the variables age, period and cohort
- Multi-level model – cross-classified random effects model

\[
\text{logit (VOTE}_{ijk} = 1) = \gamma_0 + \beta_1 \text{AGE}_{ijk} + \beta_2 \text{AGE}^2_{ijk} + \beta_3 \text{FEMALE}_{ijk} + u_{0j} + v_{0k}
\]

for \( i = 1, 2, 3, \ldots, n_{jk} \) individual within cohort \( j \) and time period \( k \);
\( j = 1, \ldots, 15 \) birth cohorts;
\( k = 1, \ldots, z \) time periods/election years
# Overall results

## Fixed effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CZ</th>
<th>SLO</th>
<th>HUN</th>
<th>POL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>intercept</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age squared</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Variance components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CZ</th>
<th>SLO</th>
<th>HUN</th>
<th>POL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohort</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period</td>
<td>0.617</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>0.457</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: *** less than 0.001; ** less than 0.01; * less than 0.05.
Generational effects - CZ

[Image of a line graph showing trends across different generational periods such as democratic and 2WW gen., stalinist gen., post-stalinist gen., post-totalitarian gen., and democratic gen. for various years from 1921-1995.]
Generational effects - SLO

[Graph showing generational effects from 1921-1925 to 1991-1995, with different generational categories including democratic and 2WW gen., stalinist gen., post-stalinist gen., post-totalitarian gen., and democratic gen.]
Generational effects - HUN
Generational effects - POL
Conclusion

- Strength of generational effects varies across countries
- No uniform pattern of generational effects on voter turnout
  → No support for hypotheses

- Generational effects are much weaker than in Western Europe and have a different direction
- The case of Poland highlights the importance of special and historical events