Post-transformation Politics, Socio-Economic Cleavages and Populism in Central and Eastern Europe

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Abstract

Using rich data provided by the European Social Survey from 2002 onwards, this study documents the evolution of the relationship between party support and electoral socio-economic cleavages from the beginning of the 21^{st} century until the present in seven Central and Eastern European countries: Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Estonia, and Lithuania. It documents the overall decline of the left-wing parties and the rise in populist and national conservative ones, as well as the beginnings of the transition toward multi-elite party systems. Despite their common historical background as part of the Eastern Block before the 90s, the countries' political scenes differ in the decline in the left vote, political fragmentation, and different political and socio-economic cleavages. The legacy of transformation from the late 20^{th} century makes them an interesting case study of the transition from undemocratic to democratic regimes, offering valuable insights for other young democracies.

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Keywords: Central and Eastern Europe, political economy, income inequality, electoral behaviour, social cleavage, transformation, populism, nationalism.

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Introduction

On the 1^{st} of May 2004, the European Union (EU) experienced its widest enlargement, admitting ten new members, including eight former Eastern Block countries. It can be seen as a finale of the sequence of events that started with the first since the Second World War partially free democratic elections in Poland on the 4^{th} of June 1989 and that were followed by the fall of the Berlin Wall, regaining independence by the Baltic States and eventual fall of all socialist regimes in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) region. The transition to democratic and rule-of-law-based order and the emergence of the market economy during the 90s was a turbulent period culminating in the EU accession for a few countries in the region. For many citizens of these countries, the 1^{st} of May is seen as a return to their rightful place in Europe.

Figure 1: Map of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE).
Source: Dobek-Ostrowska, 2015.

What followed was a period of unprecedented growth during which these countries became more prosperous, developed, and closer to the political dynamics characteris-

ing the Western countries. Yet, the historical background of experiencing the socialist regimes and the hardships of the following transformation makes for a unique political landscape on the world scale. The following work aims to delve more into post-transformation politics, socio-economic cleavages and populism in seven of eight former Eastern block countries that joined the EU in 2004: Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, with the aim of answering the question of what the main political and socio-economic cleavages are in these countries a decade after the regime change. Have they transitioned towards a multi-elite party system as most Western democracies? How did the communist past influence different parties' performance? Thus, its goal is to complement a wide-ranging body of research by adding the perspective of this unique region in the heart of Europe.

The political and socio-economic cleavages, with particular focus on income- and education-based cleavages, are investigated following the methodology developed by Piketty, 2018 and Gethin, 2018, which was successfully used on a large scale during the creation and development of the World Political Cleavages and Inequality Database. The author utilises a large-scale cross-country study - the European Social Survey (ESS) as a socio-economic and individual data source, which can be treated as a postelectoral survey. Meanwhile, the official electoral results are collected from the national institutions responsible for their reporting.[1] Based on gathered samples, the number of linear probability models describing voting along specific dimensions that have the potential to yield a cleavage are estimated, and their evolution over time is analysed.

The period after the beginning of the 21^{st} century was chosen for pragmatic reasons. Firstly, the transition time - the 90s, was characterised by the general consensus in aiming for more alignment with Western institutions. All analysed countries became part of the EU and NATO. This common foreign policy goal defined each country's reforms and governing direction for almost a decade.[2] Hence, to a certain extent, cleavages between the parties were not as pronounced as they were later.

Secondly, all countries in the study experienced a relatively high degree of political fragmentation and dynamic change in the late 20^{th} century.[3] New political parties were regularly established, many hailing from the opposition movements of the earlier time, to answer previously dormant views of the society confined to the undemocratic regime structures. Equally regularly, such parties were dismantled. At the same time, former regime parties were transitioning to participate in the new system, often

[1] In most cases, it was some national electoral commission.

[2] It is not without exceptions, like in the case of Slovakia in 1992-1998 (Henderson, 1998).

[3] Some of the analysed countries, like Estonia, Lithuania or Slovenia, continue to be pretty heavily fragmented.

softening their agenda toward social-democratic ideology. More stable trends only came to be in the analysed period.

Lastly, entry into the EU structures meant that all countries had to comply with a large set of rules and democratic values, which created a comfortable framework for the researcher to ensure their comparability. As the primary goal of the first decade of transformation was achieved and the early enthusiasm for change settled, the disillusionment came, thus allowing for the emergence of new electoral divides.

Probably unsurprisingly, the CEE countries are much more diverse than one could suspect from their shared history, at least in terms of their political and socio-economic cleavages. Countries like Czechia, Estonia or Lithuania boast traditional "class" divisions, at least to a noticeable extent. In contrast, others seem to slowly transition more toward Western-style political dynamics. These discrepancies result from different contexts and complexities in each country's society. Nevertheless, the overreaching conclusion for most countries in CEE is the marginalization of the left-wing parties and, in most cases, their move towards a more central position on the political spectrum in terms of redistribution-related policies.

The thesis is organised as follows. The first chapter reviews the current literature to give more context to the work performed and to set the stage for later discussions. The second chapter aims to familiarise the reader with the data used, while the third chapter discusses the main ideas behind the methodology used, referencing other works when necessary. Chapters from 5 to 10 analyse each country under study. Firstly, countries' political systems are presented, and the evolutions of party support over time are elaborated on, followed by a presentation of the specific cleavages. Lastly, conclusions are drawn. Finally, all additional results, summary statistics, and party classifications are in the appendix of this work.

1 Literature Review

As stated in the title, this work handles politics, socio-economic cleavages, and populism in CEE. The following chapter provides more precise definitions of cleavages and populism. Moreover, this work will be placed in the broader strand of the economic literature on political cleavages and inequalities.

Firstly, one of the central concepts of this study is social and political cleavage. It takes its source in the seminal work written by Lipset and Rokkan, 1967. In its simplest sense, it is understood as a divide. It is helpful to capture and describe the political conflict that plays out along easily perceived lines that can be defined using, for instance, income or one's educational attainment. Such a cleavage should be characterised by some time consistency and result from historical and structural changes of the investigated group or society. According to Lipset and Rokkan, 1967, political cleavages followed the notions of building nation-states and later industrial revolutions. They were the earliest divides that shaped European party systems per their work.

They identified the four main cleavages. Firstly, the centre-periphery cleavage originated in the state centralisation policies. This centralisation, both in terms of the territory and the cultural identity, leads to divisions and differentiations between the central bureaucrats and the regional groups and minorities. Secondly, through the often complicated state-Church relations, the religious-secular cleavage emerged. Next, land-industry cleavage occurred due to the conflicting economic interests identified between the industrial and agricultural sectors. Lastly, the capital owner-worker social cleavage follows from the left-right divide regarding economic policy and redistribution preferences. Current studies do not limit themselves to only the original four, identifying cleavages along ethnicity, language or race. These divides tend to interplay, disappear, and possibly return, together with the changing environments in which societies live. Hence, it is often necessary to apply a cross-cleavage perspective in order to notice their interactions and, thus, their influence on the political conflict. It serves as a complement to the qualitative work performed in social sciences.

The inequalities constitute an additional layer of interest. These, using Bourdieu, 1979, could relate to more than one dimension of the capital an individual is endowed with. These include economic capital, cultural or human capital, and social capital. Each of these is differently expressed depending on a given context, and they are proxied using various measures, including net income and educational attainment. Most inequalities, especially in income and wealth, have been on the rise since the end of the 20^{th} century (Chancel et al., 2022), which brought about the question of how this changing circumstance might influence traditional political competition.

As per Albright, 2010 and Rovny, 2012, while the preferences on redistribution are one of the key issues considered while making voting decisions, political competition between the parties is far more multi-dimensional. Piketty, 2018, using post-World War Two electoral surveys, observed a changing structure of the political conflict in the US, France and the UK, where the multiple-elite party systems echoing the multidimensional character of inequalities emerged.

Already Inglehart, 2016 speculated that a shift from the previously dominant class-driven debate to more post-materialist topics is on the way. As per his theory, the new generations, which experienced life under relatively secure economic conditions and general prosperity, developed priorities reaching beyond the basic financial needs, and with the ascend of these new generations, the non-economic political agendas started taking a more prominent role in political campaigning and in the political platforms, which exactly happened in many countries over the past few decades. Norris and Inglehart, 2019 follow up on this early thesis and conclude that current political competition centres mostly around sociocultural questions and concerns, which find support more easily among highly educated middle-class voters. Roemer, 1998 developed a model of multi-dimensional political competition from which he concluded that the supply of pro-redistribution policies is inversely correlated with the salience of other than economic issues.

For instance, the left-wing parties, whose electorate consisted of lower-education and lower-income voters in the 1950s-1960s, shifted towards the most educated in recent decades. All the while, the high-income voters continued voting right-wing, yet by a smaller margin than before. The rise in migration due to globalisation resulted in the reshuffling of political parties along a new divide between nativists - described as low-income and low-educated, and internationalists - high-income and highly educated. This methodology was applied to other contexts by Gethin, 2018, Banerjee et al., 2019 and others. Eventually, the collection of studies of 50 different democracies has been published by Gethin et al., 2021, the most significant volume to date. It includes the first results of political cleavages in Poland, Czechia, and Hungary. This work draws on the methodology and approach developed by this literature to provide comparability while bringing in more information about the not-as-deeply studied CEE region.

Another significant milestone in the study of political and socio-economic cleavages was the creation of the World Political Cleavages and Inequality Database (WPID),[4] which consolidates harmonized electoral surveys conducted in a number of countries from the mid-20^{th} century until now. In the WPID, the election results are broken

[4]The WPID can be accessed at https://wpid.world.

down by more than a dozen socioeconomic variables, including age, gender, income, and education. They can be compared nationally and over time. This rich compilation of data sources stands as a standard that this work strives to follow.

Over the recent decades, an essential issue in the political sciences literature has been the problem of populism and the populist parties. It seems ever more relevant today, considering the rise in power and popularity of populist forces in Europe and around the world in the 21^{st} century. Inglehart and Norris, 2016 see increased support for populism driven mainly by economic insecurities and sociocultural factors. The populist leaders and their parties seem to address common issues like erosion of organised labour, unemployment, globalisation or shifts towards more progressive values with answers that are easy to understand for the electorate and promise quick solutions. Voting for the populist parties was also linked with general feelings of unhappiness, life dissatisfaction and overall discontent (Lindholm and Rapeli, 2023; Nowakowski, 2021).

The presence of populist parties among many studied political and party systems necessitates defining the phenomena in more detail. For the purpose of this study, the definition by Mudde, 2004 will apply. According to this definition, populism is an ideology arguing chasm between two conflicted homogenous groups: the people and the corrupt elite. Thus, it often prominently features an anti-establishment focus, negligence of long-term policy consequences and propensity towards authoritarianism. Building on that, Van Kessel, 2015 considers a party populist when it consistently portrays the people as homogenous, advocates for popular sovereignty and defines itself as against the political establishment. The later analysis will include various examples of such parties, including the Polish PIS, the Czech ANO2011, the Estonian EK, and more.

A crucial twist, however, comes with the growing nativist tendencies in many analysed countries (Mudde, 2007). As previously described, nativist supporter is often low-income and low-educated older man (Norris and Inglehart, 2019; Oesch, 2012) with anti-immigrant and frequently right-wing outlooks. This term will be used to specify certain tendencies into a broader group of populist and anti-system parties. Importantly, it should be seen as separate from far-right or radical-right descriptions since many nativist movements, although following similar rhetoric on the issues of migration and traditional values, do not represent right-wing economic policies. A good example would be the difference between PIS and KWN in Poland, where the first one is a populist nativist movement, and the second one could be described as a far-right party.

The rise of the nativist movements is sometimes connected with the electoral fall

of the left-wing parties since they are seen to be described as the new working-class parties (Arzheimer, 2012; Oesch, 2012) considering the electorate they appeal to. There are two main types of theories aiming to explain this. Firstly, the economic thesis, which sees the nativist voters as people who feel failed by the new-style left parties which moved away from their traditional redistribution policies and focused towards more socio-cultural questions (Berman and Snegovaya, 2019; Piketty, 2018; Piketty and Goldhammer, 2020). Embracing market forces by the left led people to perceive fewer differences between the two ends of the political spectrum. The nativist voters are perceived as the ones who lose out on globalization (Colantone and Stanig, 2018; Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2017; Rodrik, 2018), and the nativist platforms promise to correct that.

On the other hand, the sociocultural thesis argues that the value shift and rise in post-materialist issues in the political discourse is to blame. It relates to previously mentioned work by Norris and Inglehart, 2019. With questions about gender equality, rights of ethnic minorities or that of the LGBTQ+ community occupying an increasing amount of political conflict, the conservative voters – which often coincide with the nativist voter described previously, embrace political parties which cater to their taste and reject the progressive values, promising protection of what traditionally defined their societies.

2 Data

This study combines three primary data sources intending to deliver a comprehensive overview of political and socio-economic cleavages in Central and Eastern Europe. First, the European Social Survey is used for socio-economic and individual data. Second, for the results of national elections, the work refers to respective national electoral commissions or their equivalents in each country. Lastly, to classify political parties in terms of their ideology, it uses the data of the Manifesto Project.

2.1 Socio-economic and Individual Data

As already discussed, the analysis draws on data covering both individual voting behaviour and a variety of socio-demographic characteristics, which allow for the identification of cleavages in each studied country. In the literature, familiar sources of such data include post-electoral surveys run immediately after the election by specialised researchers or pre-electoral surveys from the period before the given elections. Thus, opposite to the previous type, they ask about whom an individual wants to vote for. The third option is the use of extensive cross-country projects which aim to follow changes in political views and socio-demographic variables over time. This final type of data includes the ESS, which served as a data source for the entire analysis carried out in this work.

The ESS was first run in 2001, and since then, it has been carried out in regular, two-year-long intervals, reaching a total of 39 countries at least once (European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure Consortium, 2024). It aims to measure "the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of diverse populations," thus providing high-quality data that allows for a study and comparison of living standards, opinions, and attitudes within and between European countries. This data is publicly available for non-commercial use. However, not each study wave includes answers from samples from all European countries, which also influences this work.

Table 1 presents the participation of each of the seven chosen countries in each of the ten available waves of the ESS. It is easy to notice that complete data is available only for Hungary and Poland, with the largest gaps in studies for Lithuania and Slovakia. However, only in the Lithuanian case, the lack of data from the first three waves prevents analysis of the first elections in the 21^{st} century in the country. In all other cases, the data allows for the full coverage of the analysed period. More information about the sample size of each eave for every country can be found in the Appendix.

The ESS provides researchers with a wide range of variables that could prove

Table 1: Analysed Countries Participation in ESS

Country	R1 2002 /2003	R2 2004 /2005	R3 2006 /2007	R4 2008 /2009	R5 2010 /2011	R6 2012 /2013	R7 2014 /2015	R8 2016 /2017	R9 2018 /2019	R10 2020 -2022
Czechia	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Estonia		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Hungary	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Lithuania					•	•	•	•	•	•
Poland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Slovakia		•	•	•	•	•			•	•
Slovenia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Source: European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure Consortium, 2024

helpful in analysing the political and socio-economic cleavages. Not only does it report on the gender, age, marital status or country of birth of an individual but also on their highest educational attainment and household income decile. Additionally, it includes data on religious affiliation and religiosity, whether they live in an urban or rural community, and what the first language spoken at home is. The ESS includes answers to questions on life satisfaction, satisfaction with the state of democracy in the respondent's country, level of trust for the government, party affiliation, interest in politics, union membership and who the individual voted for in the last national elections, etc. It includes more than 2500 variables per wave, therefore being an ideal source of evidence for the given study. Notably, the ESS uses strictly probability-based samples for data collection, reports exact weights for each observation, and provides extensive information on the matter (Kaminska, 2020).

Even though the overall quality of ESS data can be described as very high, it is not without certain shortcomings, which are natural when conducting any survey. While preparing the study, the researchers strive to provide a sample that is as representative as possible, yet it is subject to project financial constraints. Sample sizes for each analysed country are reported in the table 2. Moreover, results come from face-to-face interviews and missing entries or refusal of an answer occur regularly.

2.2 Political and Electoral Data

The information about the exact results of political parties in consecutive national elections was sourced from the official websites of electoral committees in each of the seven researched countries. In general, no problems with retrieving data occurred.

All analysed countries implemented high levels of transparency while pursuing their admission to the EU and later as a part of the block's values. This means that all information referring to elections is publicly available and well-presented.

Understanding potential political cleavages over time necessitates identifying the ideological affiliations of the parties and the linkages between them. In order to observe their evolution, there must be some continuity within one or several political movements, which can be easily recognisable in a given time frame. In the case of the Western, and specifically European, countries, the left-right divide is usually considered like in Piketty, 2018 and in Gethin et al., 2021. The challenge is then to accurately classify a given political party in one or the other group representing distinct sides of the political spectrum. Some cases might pose a more significant challenge as the political programmes encompass more than one side of the spectrum.

To correctly specify the political affiliations of the parties, as noted before, the author opted to utilise the data prepared by the Manifesto Project. The Manifesto Project is an ongoing research effort to classify a wide range of political parties worldwide based on their political manifestos using many different indices. In other words, the political preferences of each party are broken down into the most straightforward possible statements, which allow for the comparative analysis between them (Lehmann et al., 2024). Manifestos are analysed in their original languages, giving the data additional credibility as the more emotionally loaded language or specific emphasis is less likely to be lost in translation.

Thanks to this critical data source, it is possible to observe which political issues are emphasised more by each party - in the case of the given study, the left-right position will be the primary consideration. However, in order to better understand the specificities of policy platforms, since more and more parties present more mixed manifestos than traditionally defined left and right, especially when it comes to the populist parties or so-called "big tent" parties and coalitions, other indices are accounted for. These include the state-market economic index, which measures the degree to which each party in any given election supports more pro-market rather than pro-redistribution economic policies. Moreover, the socio-cultural stand of each party and coalition is observed, as well as their views on multiculturalism and migration. The essential advantage of this data set is that it allows for observation of how parties relate to each other regarding their positions within each country.

3 Methodology

The research design of this study draws extensively upon the methodological framework developed previously in works of Piketty, 2018 and Gethin, 2018, also used in constructing the World Political Cleavages and Inequality Database. The following section presents and develops the main points of the reasoning and refers to the aforementioned works as necessary.

3.1 Defining Cleavages

The study's main goal is to follow the electoral choices of various groups of people distinguished by certain characteristics corresponding to different dimensions of inequalities over the given period - from the beginning of the 21^{st} century. It aims to answer questions like, for example, which candidates were the young voting for throughout time? Or, for whom did the women vote during the given period? Necessarily, the types and magnitudes of social cleavages this approach could yield are entirely dependent on the choice of explanatory variables made by the author. As such, it is imperative to underline that at no point does this work claim to cover all possible or all the most important cleavages that existed in the CEE societies in the post-transformation period.

The author chose to focus on the subset of harmonised discrete variables that were, firstly available, secondly, drawing on the vast literature, could correspond to the widely known determinants of inequality - socioeconomic factors, including, among others, income, education, gender or age. Moreover, using the political sciences literature, certain aspects that lead to identity voting were considered, such as one's religion. All of these can be seen as promising for the comparative approach. Other aspects that could yield potential cleavages, like occupation, were disregarded due to challenges connected with the harmonisation process.

Using the variables mentioned above, groups of people can be compared along several dimensions in terms of their party choice. Thus, the study concentrated on the voting gap between distinct categories - mostly extremes, of considered variables, e.g. men vs women, low- vs highly educated, and youth vs the elderly. In other words, how large or small is the difference between the share of male (low-educated / young) voters voting for a given party compared to the share of female (highly-educated / elderly) voters endorsing the same party.

Let us consider now a binary variable x equal to 1 if an individual belongs to a given category and 0 otherwise. Now, let us define a dependent variable y that equals 1 if an individual voted for the specific party or the party coalition A and 0 otherwise.

Then, the simple mean difference β can be seen as a direct measure of the potential cleavage associated with x, which is possible to estimate using the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) approach with heteroscedasticity-robust standard errors (Wooldridge, 2010)[5] as presented below:

$$\beta = E\left(y|x=1\right) - E\left(y|x=0\right) = P\left(y|x=1\right) - P\left(y|x=0\right)$$
$$\text{where } P\left(y=A\right) = \beta_0 + \beta X + \varepsilon$$

This linear probability model allows β to capture the percentage point difference between the proportion of individuals defined by $x = 1$, e.g. low-educated and $x = 0$, e.g. highly-educated, in terms of vote share y for the given party or party coalition A (e.g. conservatives). So, in this example, β is the difference between the share of low-educated voters endorsing conservative parties and the share of highly-educated voters voting for the same parties. If positive, it means that the low-educated voters support the conservative parties proportionally more than the highly-educated ones, and the reverse is also true.

While including controls maintains the original, intuitive interpretation of the β coefficient, it can be misleading. The main point of interest, remaining in the setting of the previous example, is to know how much the low-educated voters are more likely to vote for the conservatives while all other factors, including gender, age, etc., are held constant.

Yet, the control variables might have a non-linear influence on individuals' voting behaviour, and as such, the interaction terms would have to be considered. It is worth underlining that the controls included in different regressions in this study can never be seen as exhaustive in explaining the residual variation. Therefore, it does not allow for concluding any causal interpretations. Every single control variable can potentially have an effect on the voting preferences going in the opposite direction to the rest. Thus, the limited sets of controls will be favoured throughout the analysis.

The point of interest is instead the direction and the magnitude of the effect observed after adding a control variable or when analysing the evolution of the difference of the β coefficient of the given period. For example, does controlling for gender increase or decrease the gap in conservative voting between low- and highly educated? Did we observe a reversal in the trend over time? Additionally, thanks to this regression framework, it is possible to test whether the effects considered are statistically significant or not at a given level and if the result holds once controls are accounted for.

[5]For further details, see chapter 15, pp. 562-565.

3.2 Harmonisation - the Decile Approach

Analysis of the evolution of the β coefficient over time may be confusing for the interpretation. As already noted by Gethin, 2018, the difference in vote shares reflects the actual change in the election outcome of a party at the national level and the structural changes in the broader composition of the electorate equally. Such a point is especially important to consider when the socioeconomic characteristics of the opposition party voters are being analysed since their vote share is sometimes quite volatile. This will be addressed by accounting more for party coalitions with a stable vote share rather than each party separately. When it comes to the structural changes of the broader electorate, this may pose less of a challenge while focusing on the shorter time frame, which is closer to the case in this study, during which the changes should not be as significant. Nonetheless, when the analysed variable is divided into several different categories, the decile approach used in literature is employed to overcome the harmonisation issues partially.

Let us consider a variable x, which decomposes into distinct categories, e.g. income. Suppose it is assumed that the population is uniformly distributed within each category. In that case, it is possible to apply a reweighing scheme for approximating quantiles while accounting for the initial distribution of the sample along this variable. Income is a perfect example of this procedure since it is commonly coded within specific brackets in most surveys, including the ESS. The aim is to identify, for instance, the top 10% of earners according to the income distribution within the sampled population in a given year. This methodology can be extended to education or religiosity, which allows for the accounting of the differences in distribution observed between surveys. These can be a result of structural changes in the voters' composition but also can occur due to the wording of the questions.

Assuming that the average value taken by the dependent variable remains constant within each bracket, the resulting estimator is consistent. However, it should be logical to assume that the vote shares within brackets vary in the same direction as those between them. Thus, it is better to consider this estimate as the lower bound of the actual effect.

Such reweighing schemes, specific to individuals, could lead to attributing an observation to distinct quantile groups, which in turn could prevent solving the subsequent regression models that use the quantile variables as regressors. As per Gethin, 2018, the solution is to duplicate the sample the same number of times as the number of quantiles considered, e.g. ten times for deciles. Then, the reweighing scheme at the individual level has to be applied differently in each dataset version. Later, a decile version of the variable of interest is generated, and standard errors are clustered by

individuals for regressions performed over the expanded dataset.

3.3 Weighing Scheme

The analysis is performed when all sample weights are rescaled to match the party preferences expressed in each survey with the actual electoral outcomes of the elections closest to the survey date. The reweighing exercise is performed to consider each survey as representative of the electorate's composition in a given period - the post-transformation era in CEE, thus allowing for a broader interpretative scope of the findings. The same approach has been adopted to conform to the comparative frame developed in Gethin et al., 2021, which serves as an exemplary work in this strand of the literature.

$$\hat{w} = w \times \frac{\widehat{share_{official}}}{share_{survey}}$$

From a more formal mathematical perspective, the procedure of rescaling solely consists of taking the share of people who voted for a particular party (as per the official results and in terms of percentage of votes received) $\widehat{share_{official}}$ and calculating the weight $\hat{w}$, such as the share of the survey respondents that reported voting or preference for the same party would be equal, at the same time not forgetting about the original weighting scheme w that guaranteed the representativity of the sample at the national level. Thus, the given formula is true.

4 Poland

Poland is by far the largest of the analysed countries in terms of area and population, which stands close to 37 million people (Eurostat, 2024a). It is the sixth-largest economy in the EU, with the real GDP per capita at 14 750 euros in 2023 (Eurostat, 2024b), which is a stark contrast to the situation at the beginning of the economic transition in the early 90s (Piatkowski, 2019; Bukowski and Novokmet, 2021). Poland is characterised by a persistent liberal-nativist divide, discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

4.1 Political and Party System in Poland

Polish people voted in the first partially free democratic elections in 1989, thus beginning the transformation period, which saw the country change into a democratic state with a market-based economy. In 1997, the new constitution came into force, redefining and solidifying the country's political system (The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, 1997), which could be described as a mix between a parliamentary and semi-presidential republic. The president is the head of state, and the prime minister is the head of the government.

Poland boasts a bicameral parliament with a lower chamber of 460 deputies (posłowie) called Sejm and a higher - Senate (Senat), with 100 deputies (senatorowie). The Polish parliament is elected every four years in the universal ballot, where the lower chamber uses proportional representation. The higher chamber before 2011 used plurality block voting and later one-round first-past-the-post voting. Political parties must cross the 5% nationwide threshold to qualify for the division of mandates in Sejm. For the coalition of parties, the 8% threshold is applied. The main point of interest for the discussions in this chapter will be the case of the Sejm, as it represents the country's central stage of policy debate.

Since the beginning of the 21^{st} century, the steady decline of the left-wing parties can be observed in the country, with the last left-led government of the post-communist Democratic Left Alliance (Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej, SLD) coming to power in the 2001 elections. The austerity policy[6] carried out by the cabinet ended up in plummeting support for the left in the 2005 elections, which set the stage for the competition between two major right-wing parties since then, more liberal and central Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska, PO) - later called Civic Coalition

[6]It is a common theme for many left parties in CEE to move towards more liberal economic policies, which was partially done to offset old connotations with the previous regime (Tavits and Letki, 2009).

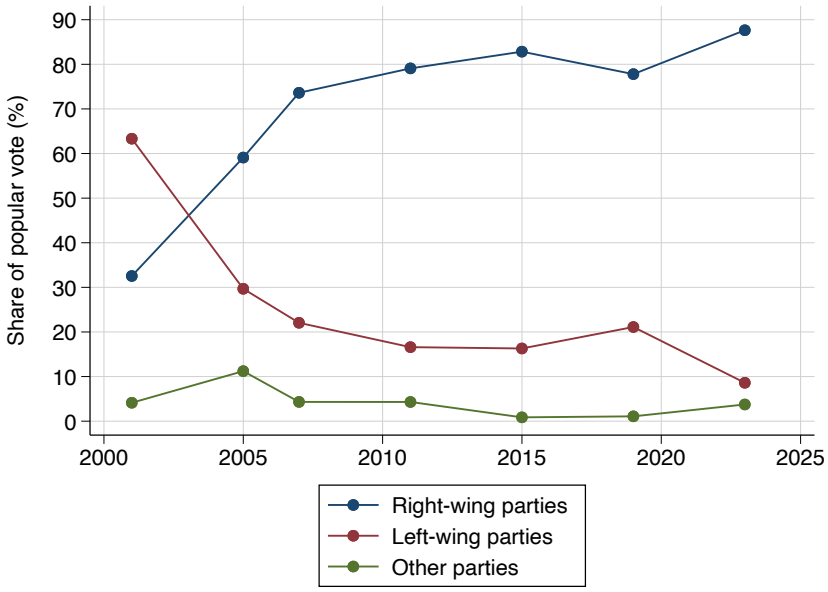

Figure 2: Election results in Poland, 2001-2023
Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza (National Electoral Commission)", n.d.).

(Koalicja Obywatelska, KO) and national conservative Law and Justice party (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, PIS).

From 2005 to 2007, the PIS-led government governed the country. Eventually, it collapsed due to a major corruption scandal - the Land Scandal (Dudek, 2013), involving one of the PIS coalition's partners - Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland (Samoobrona Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej, SRP). This brought about two consecutive electoral wins for the PO, which governed together with the Polish People's Party (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe, PSL)[7] until 2015.

2015 saw a considerable reshuffling on the Polish political scene. The PIS-led coalition with two minor partners won an absolute majority on the platform of more redistribution towards poorer regions and people left behind by the economic transition.[8] This election saw no mandates allocated to the left parties since the fall of the Iron Curtain,[9] as the United Left (Zjednoczona Lewica, ZL) did not cross the 8% threshold required for party coalitions in elections. The PIS government maintained

[7]PSL is considered in this work as a left-leaning party. However, it traditionally represents the interests of the farmers and the Polish village. It has a generally conservative social outlook and maintains a deep connection with Christian values.

[8]One of the more popular reforms introduced was the implementation of monthly child benefit of PLN 500 for second and subsequent children and for some first children (depending on the income threshold), widely known as 500+ (Sawulski, 2017).

[9]PSL candidates received seats in the parliament. Nonetheless, it is not an entirely left party as previously explained.

its hold on power in the following 2019 elections and continued governing until 2023. This period has been characterised by the emergence of constitutional and rule of law crises in Poland, democratic backsliding and growing social tensions (Ulrike and Michael, 2019). During this time, many investigations of breaches of the rule of law were opened by the European Commission and other EU institutions, including the European Court of Justice, and this led to the freezing of EU post-pandemic recovery funding (European Commission Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, 2023).

The 2023 parliamentary elections were won again by PIS, yet with high losses in its support. Following its electoral victory, the party did not manage to secure a parliamentary majority, and the government was formed by the coalition of KO, Third Way (Trzecia Droga, TD)[10] and New Left (Nowa Lewica, NL).[11] Praised as the major return from the populist path, the win of the democratic and pro-European forces resulted from the record high turnout elections, seeing 74,38% of voters participating.

Throughout the analysed period, the right-wing parties' dominance is undeniable, with the primary political cleavage going along the liberal-nativist divide since 2005. The duopoly of PIS and PO (later KO), both regularly pooling above 30%, is striking compared to other parties, which barely come close to the 15% mark.

4.2 Inequality and Political Cleavages in Poland

The evolution of the income-based electoral cleavage in Poland since the early 2000s seems highly stable in the analysed period. A simple steepness indicator summarizes this evolution of income gradients—the difference between the share of people who vote for the left (right or other parties) among the top 10% of income earners and the fraction voting for the same groups among the bottom 90% of the population. Figure 3 shows it for all elections considered in this study for Poland, namely the 2001-2019 period.

It is worth noticing how little of a difference one's income played in the voting for different groups of parties at the beginning of the 21^{st} century in Poland, which suggests little evidence of "class" based voting behaviour. However, it changed from 2005 onwards, with the voters in the top 10% more likely than voters in the bottom 90% to vote for right-wing parties by between almost 10 in 2007 and close to 3 percentage points after 2015. All the while, voters in the top 10% were less likely to vote for the left-wing parties by between almost 9 in 2007 to 3 percentage points after 2015. Nevertheless, the class voting still does not seem to be striking.

[10] Coalition between PSL and Poland 2050.

[11] The governing coalition is also supported by the left-wing party Together (Razem).

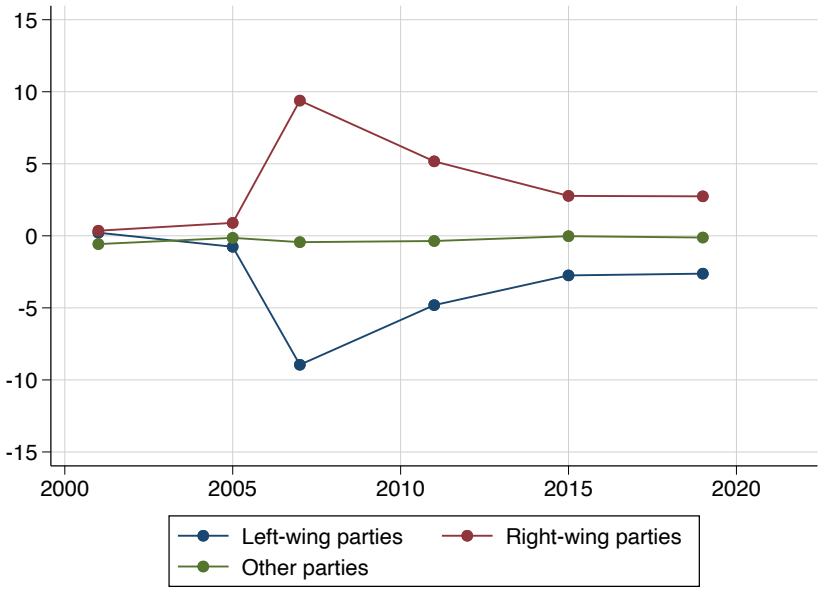

Figure 3: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Poland

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

Since 2005, when the PIS and PO (later KO) duopoly emerged on the political stage, the right regularly polled above 60% of all votes in Poland. Looking at the gradients for PIS and PO, one can notice a clear differentiation between the two main parties along income lines in figure 4. In 2001, there was almost no difference; however, since 2005, the negative gradient for PIS has become a constant feature of Polish politics. PIS regularly captured more votes from the bottom 90% of the income distribution. The difference between the two peaked in 2011 when the top 10% voters were around 18 percentage points more likely to vote for PO, while the bottom 90% were nearly 11 percentage points more likely to vote for PIS. This situation started to change in 2015, with PO moving closer to the centre and trying to reposition itself from being the party of the wealthy. Partially, it was due to the electoral success of Modern, which represented a strongly pro-market and liberal platform.[12]

The evolution of the education-based electoral cleavage in Poland in the past two decades can be seen as more dynamic than the income cleavage. Here, the education gradient is defined as the difference between the share of university graduates voting left-wing (right or other) and the fraction of non-university choosing the same types of parties. Figure 5 shows it for all considered Polish elections from 2001 to 2019.

[12]Modern eventually united with PO under the KO coalition.

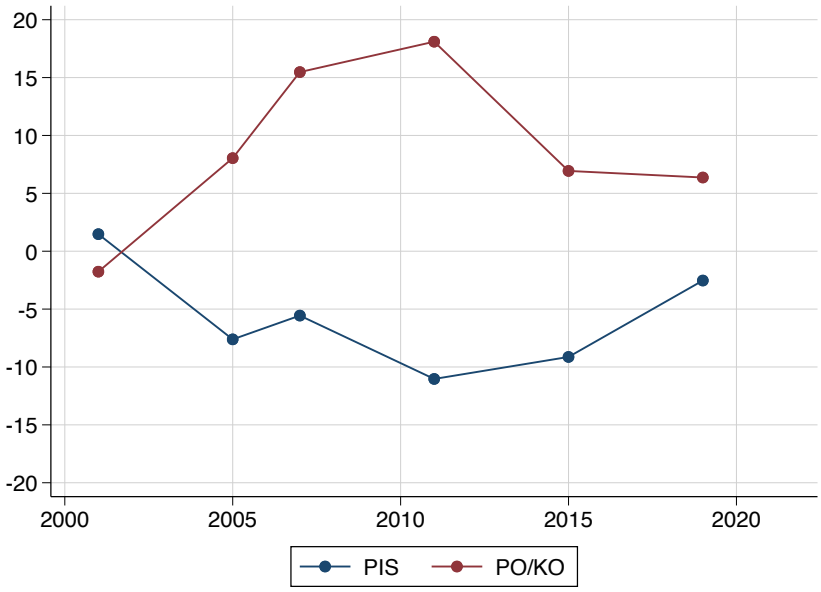

Figure 4: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) PIS and PO/KO

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either PIS or PO/KO, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

Until 2011, the highly educated were likelier to choose right-wing parties. Meanwhile, the left had little to no education gradient. Interestingly, people without tertiary education were most likely to vote for the other parties. This changed after 2011, with the left increasingly representing progressive values popular among university graduates and the right becoming closer to people with maximum secondary education. Nonetheless, similarly to income, these cleavages were less pronounced in this period.

Looking again at the two main forces on the Polish political stage, one can notice strict division along educational lines in figure 6. The gap between university graduates and the rest is vast and growing, especially with the less educated being increasingly likely to vote for PIS. It is worth noting that university graduates are more likely to vote for PO than for the left, which could be explained by gathering around the strongest opposition party, aiming to strengthen it in competition with PIS.

One of the more salient cleavages in Poland can be observed in income, where people with low incomes are decisively more likely to vote for PIS. Another one is education, where the liberal and pro-market PO continues to be supported by the highly educated and PIS by the least educated. The left-wing parties do not differentiate themselves strongly from the previously mentioned two main right-wing parties, which could explain their relatively mediocre performance in elections, dominated by the PIS vs PO competition.

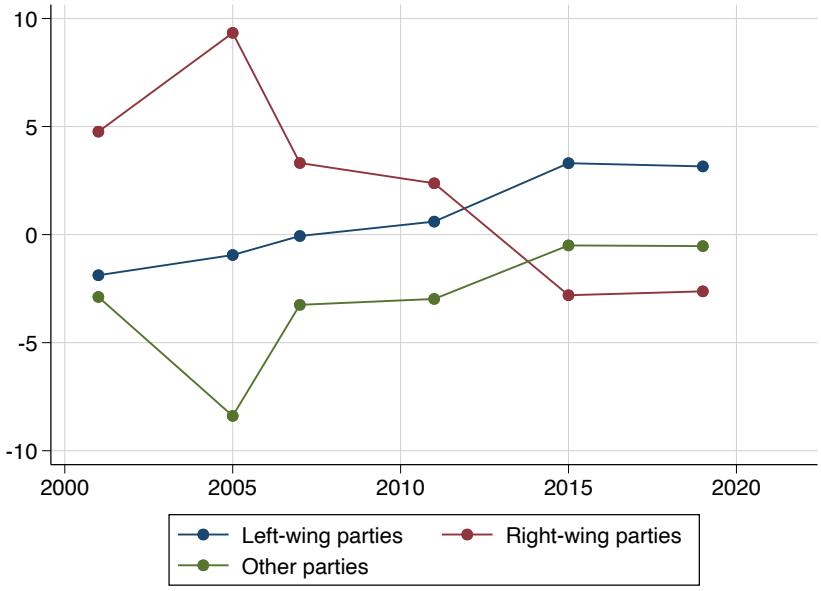

Figure 5: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Poland

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

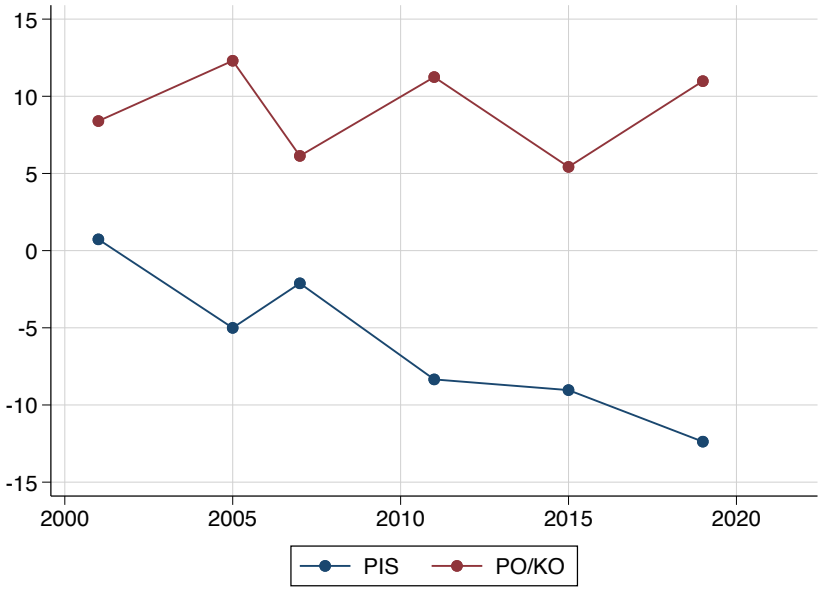

Figure 6: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) PIS and PO/KO

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for PIS and PO/KO, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

5 Czechia

Czechia, with almost 11 million people (Eurostat, 2024a), is the second largest analysed country in terms of population. It is a highly successful economy where GDP per capita reached 18 370 euros in 2023 (Eurostat, 2024b), making Czechs richer than their Polish and Slovak neighbours. Unlike Poland, Czechia witnessed fairly regular changes of governments between the left and the right until a later rise in support for the populists in 2013 (Haughton and Deegan-Krause, 2021), which is elaborated more on in this chapter.

5.1 Political and Party System in Czechia

Following the November 1989 Velvet Revolution events, Czechoslovakia transitioned to democracy. However, issues relating to the renaming of the country after the fall of the regime and the subsequent Hyphen War (Pomlčková válka) led to the peaceful split of the state into separate Czech and Slovak republics on the 31^{st} of December 1992 - the so-called Velvet divorce. In 1992, the new Czech constitution constituted the country's political system post-split with Slovakia (The Constitution of the Czech Republic, 1992), making it a unitary parliamentary republic, where the president is the head of state and the prime minister is the head of the government.

The Czech parliament is bicameral and consists of a lower Chamber of Deputies (Poslanecká sněmovna) with 200 members (poslanců) and a higher - Senate (Senát) with 81 senators (senátorů). The lower house is elected every four years using proportional representation. Meanwhile, the upper house changes one-third of its members every two years in two-round first-past-the-post voting. The Chamber of Deputies requires parties to cross the 5% threshold to enter parliament, and this house will be the point of consideration in the following discussion.

Compared to Poland, Czechia boasted a stable competition between the left and right-wing forces until the 2013 parliamentary elections. During that period, the government was either led by the left Czech Social Democratic Party (Česká strana sociálně demokratická, ČSSD) or right Civic Democratic Party (Občanská demokratická strana, ODS).[13] It is worth noting that the political competition was more substantial than in the Polish case, with the successor of the former regime-leading party, the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy, KSČM) and the Christian Democratic Union (Křesťanská a demokratická unie-Československá strana lidová, KDU-ČSL) maintaining stable support.

[13]The main party hailing from the dissolution of the Civic Forum (Občanské fórum, OF) and the opposition movement of the Velvet Revolution.

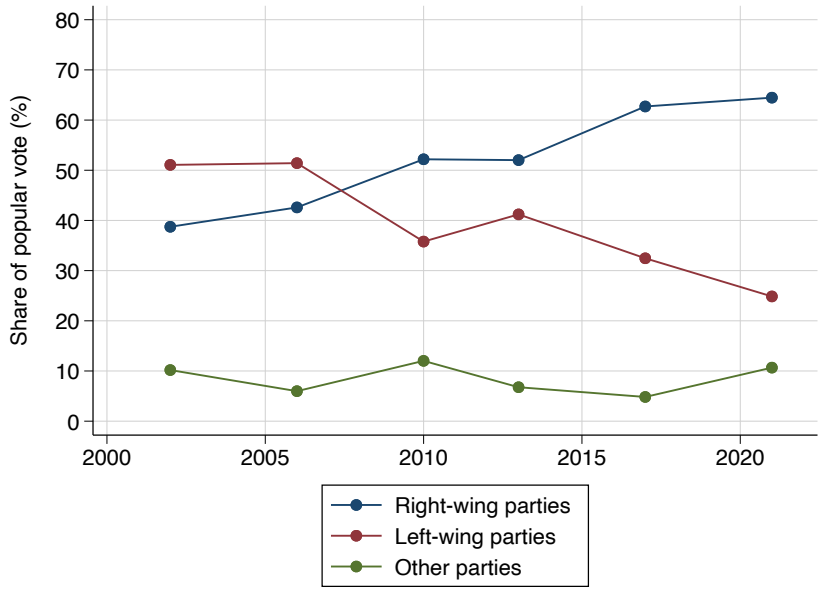

Figure 7: Election results in Czechia, 2002-2021

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Český statistický úřad (Czech Statistical Office)", n.d.).

The traditionally leading ODS and ČSSD lost their standing in the 2013 and 2017 elections, respectively. The first was due to the 2013 political corruption scandal (Válková and Kopecký, 2014), and the second resulted from the Czech government crisis.[14] The 2017 elections became the first in which neither of the previously dominant parties won, giving ground to the populist government led by Action of Dissatisfied Citizens 2011 (Akce nespokojených občanů 2011, ANO2011).

With the fall of the two main political forces, the Czech political scene changed drastically, with the new parties emerging on both sides of the political divide. To the right of the spectrum, the conservative Tradition Responsibility Prosperity 09 (Tradice Odpovědnost Prosperita, TOP09), Mayors and Independents (Starostové a nezávislí, SAN). Moreover, the populist radical right party Freedom and Direct Democracy (Svoboda a přímá demokracie, SPD) increased its support significantly. On the left side is the cosmopolitan and liberal Czech Pirate Party (Česká pirátská strana, ČPS), which ended the 2017 elections third. Most of them focused their platform on the fight against corruption. However, most importantly, the "technocratic populist" ANO2011 of the billionaire Andrej Babiš won the 2017 elections and formed a minority govern-

[14]The Minister of Finance in Bohuslav Sobotka's (ČSSD) cabinet, Andrej Babiš, the leader of ANO2011 and a partner in the ruling coalition, was suspected of tax evasion in his business activities leading to a break in the coalition and eventually resulting in snap elections ("Czech government to resign amid finance minister row", 2017).

ment with ČSSD and the support of KSČM.[15]

In the 2021 elections, the closest ones in modern Czech history, the centre-right coalition Together (SPOLU), composed of ODS, KDU-ČSL and TOP09, narrowly won with ANO2011 and eventually formed the government with a coalition of Pirates and Mayors (Piráti a Starostové, PAS). SPD maintained its electoral support while both ČSSD and KSČM failed to cross the 5% threshold to enter the parliament, thus marking a strong right-ward shift in Czech politics.

The general balance between the right and left in Czech politics that characterised the beginning of the 21^{st} century started slowly shifting towards the dominance of the right-leaning parties. This follows the same tendency observed in Poland, where the gap between the two ends of the spectrum has been noticed earlier.

5.2 Inequality and Political Cleavages in Czechia

In Czechia, the evolution of the income-based electoral cleavage since the early 2000s can be described as relatively stable. A simple steepness indicator—the difference between the share of people who vote for the left (right or other parties) among the top 10% of income earners and the fraction voting for the same groups among the bottom 90% of the population, summarises well the evolution of income gradients. Figure 8 shows this for all elections considered in this study for Czechia - 2002-2017 period.

Unlike the Polish case, the Czech left and right differed strongly along income lines. For most of the studied period, the top 10% of income earners were about 10 percentage points more likely to vote for the right than the bottom 90% of earners. At the same time, the reverse was true, where the bottom 90% of income earners were about 10 percentage points more likely to vote for the left. The results suggest a strong tendency to "class" voting. As such, the economic and redistributive issues divides can be viewed as a major political cleavage.

Taking a closer look at the differences between the two traditionally dominating parties—ODS and ČSSD —as well as ANO2011, in figure 46 one could see that both ODS and ČSSD conform to the class choice, with the rich being more likely to choose ODS, while the poor ČSSD. Both parties maintained traditional ideological lines on economic issues for the right and the left, respectively (Grzymala-Busse, 2002).[16] At the same time, ANO2011 has no significant income gradient. It is important to

[15]It marked the first time since the regime's fall that the communists participated in the government.

[16]It was not the case in Poland, where PIS adopted many redistributive economic policies in its programme.

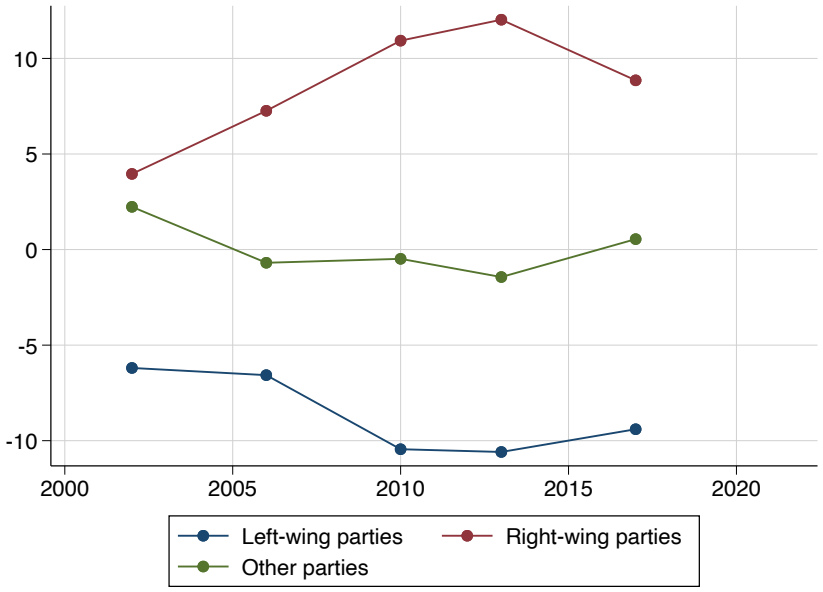

Figure 8: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Czechia

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

mention the fact that with the plummeting support for both ODS and ČSSD and a general rise in the anti-corruption parties, the prominence of the "cultural" discourse increased.

Contrary to the income case, the evolution of the Czech education-based electoral cleavage from 2002 to 2019 seems to indicate its slow disappearance. The education gradient is defined as the difference between the fraction of university graduates voting left-wing (right or other) and the share of non-university graduates choosing the same parties. It is shown in figure 9.

Just like in the case of income, a higher level of education translates to a higher likelihood of voting for the right-wing parties. Meanwhile, the lower-educated people are more likely to vote for the left. Nevertheless, the gap between the two is closing, nearing around 5 percentage points in both cases. Albeit, it continued to be significant and positive throughout the entire studied period. As such, it is too early to say if the country's educational cleavage has been reversed.

Turning attention towards the main political parties in Czechia in figure 49, ODS, ČSSD and ANO2011, again, as in the income case, parties maintain similar gradients as their broader ideological groups regarding direction. ODS attracts more university graduates, while ČSSD is a more likely choice for the less educated. Interestingly, ANO2011 has nearly the same gradient as ČSSD in 2017, which could be explained

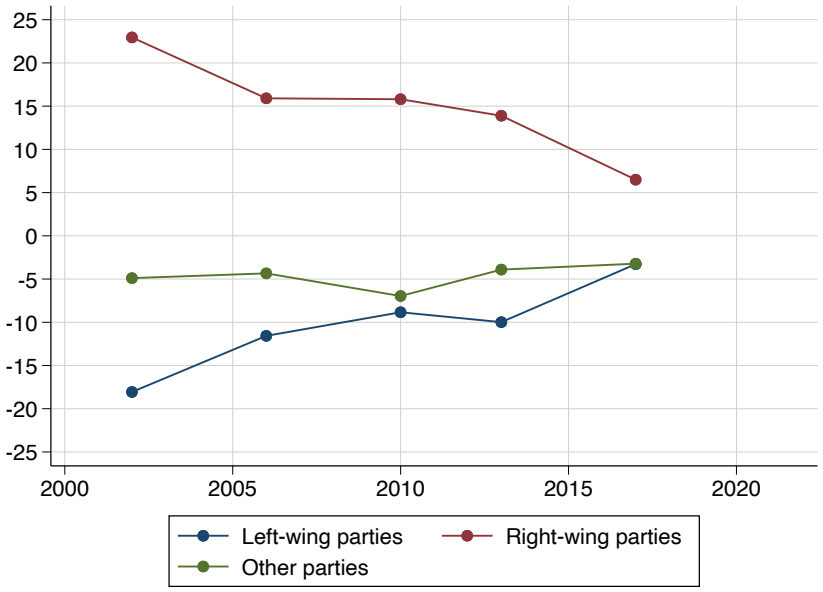

Figure 9: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Czechia

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

by the appeal that the populist parties have been more pronounced for non-university graduates. For all parties other than ANO2011 here, the educational gradient is on the rise.

All in all, Czechia sees too fairly strong cleavages along the lines of income and educational attainment, with more affluent and more educated people being more likely to vote for the right and the poorer and less educated more likely to vote left. Although some signs of the education gap seem to appear, the income divisions remain strong.

6 Slovakia

Slovakia has a population of less than 5.5 million people (Eurostat, 2024a). Less populous than Czechia, it is also slightly poorer, with a GDP per capita of 16 490 euros in 2023 (Eurostat, 2024b). The dominance of right-leaning parties is relevant in Slovakia. However, due to the highly fragmented political scene with one dominant party, the left and the populists hold power after most elections.

6.1 Political and Party System in Slovakia

As mentioned in the chapter on Czechia, following the November 1989 Velvet Revolution events, Czechoslovakia democratised. Yet, the Slovak push for renaming the country after the fall of communism and the subsequent Hyphen War (Pomlčková vojna) ended up in a peaceful split of the state into separate republics on the 31^{st} of December 1992 - the so-called Velvet divorce. In the same year, the new Slovak constitution was enacted (The Constitution of the Slovak Republic, 1992), creating Slovakia as a unitary parliamentary representative democratic republic, with the president as the head of state and the prime minister acting as the head of the government.

Slovakia boasts a unicameral parliament — the National Council of the Slovak Republic (Národná rada Slovenskej republiky), with 150 members (poslancov) elected every four years by universal suffrage under proportional representation. A 5% threshold applies for parties in order to receive a place in the parliament. The elections to the National Council of Slovak Republic will be at the forefront of the elaboration in this chapter.

Similar to Czechia, Slovakia's political landscape is pretty fragmented and often requires the formation of coalition governments. The beginning of the 21^{st} century in Slovak politics was marked by the electoral dominance of the right. The Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko, HZDS) was the most significant force in the parliament. However, the party could not form a government,[17] ultimately led by a coalition of other right-wing parties: Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia, SDKÚ), Christian Democratic Movement (Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie, KDH), Alliance of the New Citizen (Aliancia nového občana, ANO) and a Hungarian minority represented by the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (Strana maďarskej koalície, SMK). The right government completed accession talks with the EU and NATO and delivered high economic performance. Nevertheless, it failed to distribute the economic benefits equally,

[17]Previously in power from 1992 until 1998, it halted democratic reforms and the process of reform aimed at joining the EU. Often described as violating fundamental civil liberties and the rule of law, led to partial international isolation of Slovakia (Henderson, 1998).

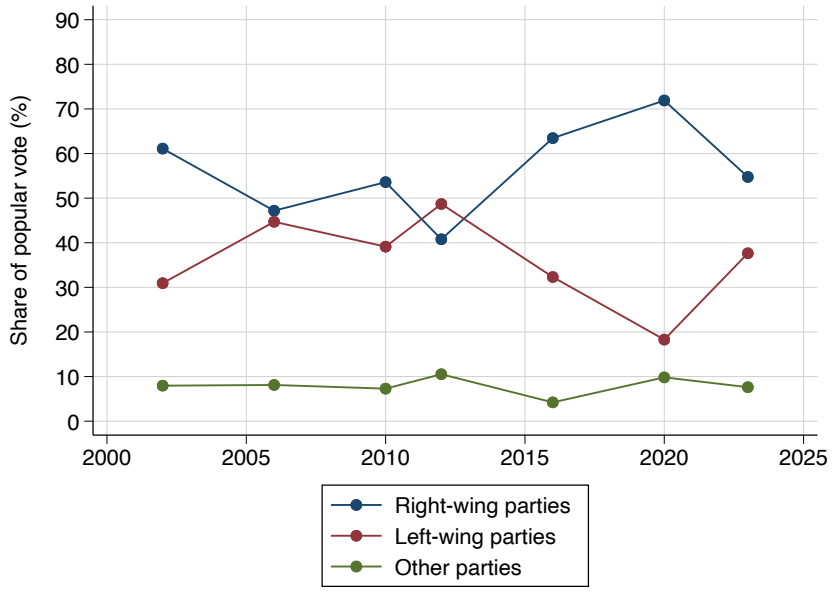

Figure 10: Election results in Slovakia, 2002-2023

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Štatistický úrad Slovenskej republiky (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic)", n.d.).

with high unemployment rates in the rural areas, leading to the rise of the left and nationalist governments in the following years.

In 2006, Direction – Social Democracy (Smer – sociálna demokracia, SMER-SD), which is an indirect successor of the former regime party, won the elections by a wide margin and formed a coalition government with the nationalist Slovak National Party (Slovenská národná strana, SNS) and populist HZDS. In the 2010 elections, SMER-SD continued to be a major force. However, with plummeting support for SNS and the failure of HZDS to enter the parliament,[18] other parties formed a right-wing coalition government between Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia – Demokratická strana, SDKÚ-DS) - previously SDKÚ, KDH, Freedom and Solidarity (Sloboda a Solidarita, SaS) and Bridge (Most–Híd, MH) - partially formed by dissidents from SMK. The coalition collapsed due to differences in perception of the expansion of the European Financial Stability Fund ("Slovak rivals reach deal to back EU bailout fund", 2011) and was replaced by the first one-party government in Slovakia since 1993, which resulted from the landslide SMER-SD victory. SMER-SD continued to govern for another term until 2020, yet it was forced to enter a coalition after heavy losses in support. In 2016, the government was joined by SNS, MH and Network (Sieť).

[18]Party was later dissolved in 2014.

The governing coalition led by SMER-SD continued to lose support due to mounting allegations of corruption and growing social and political tensions. In 2018, Prime Minister Robert Fico resigned as a result of mass anti-government protests following the murder of investigative journalist Ján Kuciak (Davies, 2018). Nevertheless, the parliament continued, and elections were called only in 2020. The elections were won by the anti-corruption movement Ordinary People and Independent Personalities (Obyčajní ľudia a nezávislé osobnosti, OĽaNO), which formed a coalition with We Are Family (Sme rodina, SR), SaS, and For the People (Za ľudí, ZL).

SMER-SD emerged victorious from the 2023 parliamentary elections and formed a coalition government with SNS and left-wing populist Voice – Social Democracy (Hlas – sociálna demokracia, H-SD).[19] SMER-SD was elected on the eurosceptic platform and promised to end countries' support for its neighbour - Ukraine, in fighting a full-scale Russian invasion.

Slovakian society and politics are highly fractured and polarised, with a high degree of populism and extremism present. Overall, the country's political landscape is very volatile, and tensions are higher than ever. One of the recent events that shocked public opinion both in Slovakia and abroad was an attempted assassination of the prime minister Robert Fico on 15^{th} of May 2024.

6.2 Inequality and Political Cleavages in Slovakia

The changes in the income-based electoral cleavage over the past two decades in Slovakia are characterised by high volatility and no clear pattern since 2010. The evolution of income gradients is summarized by a simple steepness indicator—the difference between the share of people who vote for the left (right or other parties) among the top 10% of income earners and the share voting for the same groups among the bottom 90% of earners. Figure 11 presents it for all studied Slovak elections, meaning the 2002-2020 period.

A near lack of any coherent trend in income-related cleavage characterises the period until 2010. Afterwards, no clear trend emerges, with the left and the right parties consequently alternating which group - the richer or the poorer, is more likely to vote for them. Due to this, let us look at the situation for the three major parties over the analysed period, namely SMER-SD, SDKÚ (later SDKÚ-DS) and OLaNO in figure 59. Nevertheless, in this case, no trend could be concluded as well.

The evolution of the education-based electoral cleavage in Slovakia follows a more regular pattern than in the income case in this country. The education gradient is

[19]Party was formed by the dissidents from SMER-SD party in 2020 around the former prime minister Peter Pellegrini. Peter Pellegrini was elected the new president of Slovakia in 2024.

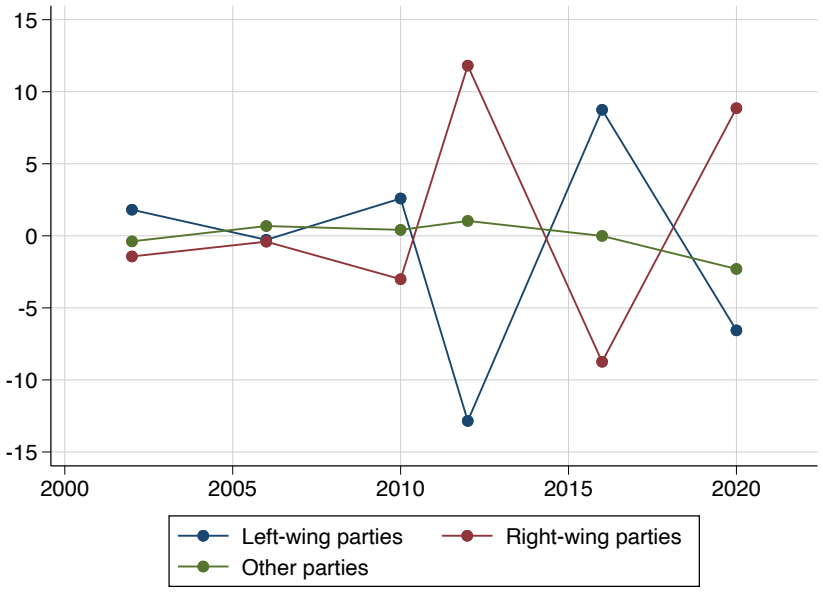

Figure 11: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Slovakia

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

defined as the difference between the share of university graduates voting left-wing (right or other) and the share of secondary or lower school graduates choosing left (right or other). In figure 12, it is shown for all investigated elections in Slovakia, 2003-2020.

The left and right are strongly divided along educational lines, with university graduates generally being more likely (10 to even 20 percentage points) to vote for the right and the less educated being more likely (5 to 18 percentage points) to vote for the left. This gap remained relatively large over time and has partially reduced since 2010 when it peaked. Overall, the right-wing parties seem to differentiate themselves more in terms of the education level of their voters than the left.

After more thoroughly examining figure 61, which presents the educational gradients for the three main political parties in Slovakia in the past two decades - SMER-SD, SDKÚ and OLaNO, it is clear that they align with their ideological groupings discussed above. However, it is worth noting that OLaNO has barely any positive educational gradient.

Slovakia boasts a salient and visible educational cleavage. The lower educated support the left-wing parties, while university graduates are more likely to vote for the right-leaning parties. This starkly contrasts income, which does not follow any specific trend. Overall, it can suggest a stronger presence of identity-based politics

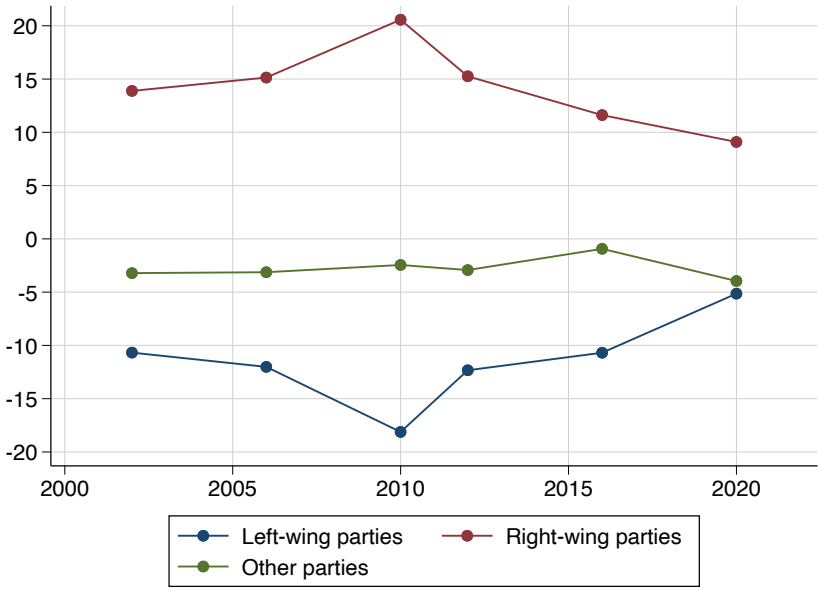

Figure 12: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Slovakia

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

and the "cultural" discourse, increasing its importance over economic issues.

7 Hungary

Short of 10 million people (Eurostat, 2024a), Hungary is the third largest analysed country. At the same time, it is the poorest in GDP per capita, amounting to 14 370 euros in 2023 (Eurostat, 2024b). Contrary to other Visegrad countries,[20] it maintains a strictly right-wing course, with one dominant party holding power for the past four consecutive terms. All of that makes Hungary an exciting case study, the details of which follow in this chapter.

7.1 Political and Party System in Hungary

Like other analysed countries, Hungary's *rendszerváltás* (regime change) followed a peaceful course and accelerated with the first free elections in 1990. The previous constitution was heavily amended in 1989 (Constitution of the Hungarian People's Republic, 1949) and then entirely changed only in 2011 (The Fundamental Law of Hungary, 2011), the latest of all former Eastern Block countries. Hungary is a unitary parliamentary representative democratic republic where the president holds the ceremonial role of the head of state. Meanwhile, the prime minister acts as the head of the government.

Hungarian National Assembly (Országgyűlés) is a unicameral body consisting of 199 members (képviselők)[21] elected every four years by universal suffrage. The elections follow semi-proportional representation, namely, a mixed-member majoritarian representation with partial compensation via transfer votes and mixed single vote. Voters vote for single-member districts (first-past-the-post)[22] and party lists. A 5% threshold applies for the party lists to receive mandates in the parliament.

Hungarian politics can be described by an almost equal split between the left and right-leaning parties until 2010. Although in the 2002 elections, the Fidesz - Hungarian Civic Alliance (Fidesz – Magyar Polgári Szövetség, FIDESZ) was victorious, it was descending from the former regime party Hungarian Socialist Party (Magyar Szocialista Párt, MSZP) and Alliance of Free Democrats (Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége, SZDSZ) forming the government. The same coalition government emerged from the 2006 elections. Eventually, support for both parties dropped following the economic downturn of the Great Recession and the earlier political scandal from 2006.[23]

[20] Visegrad group includes Poland, Czechia, Slovakia and Hungary

[21] Until 2014 386 members.

[22] Before the 2014 parliamentary elections, the single-member districts had run-off elections if none of the candidates gained an absolute majority.

[23] The Őszöd speech (Őszödi beszéd) of the Hungarian Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány was leaked to the press in 2006, leading to the mass protests due to the admission of lies in the campaign and extensive use of vulgar language (Körösényi et al., 2017).

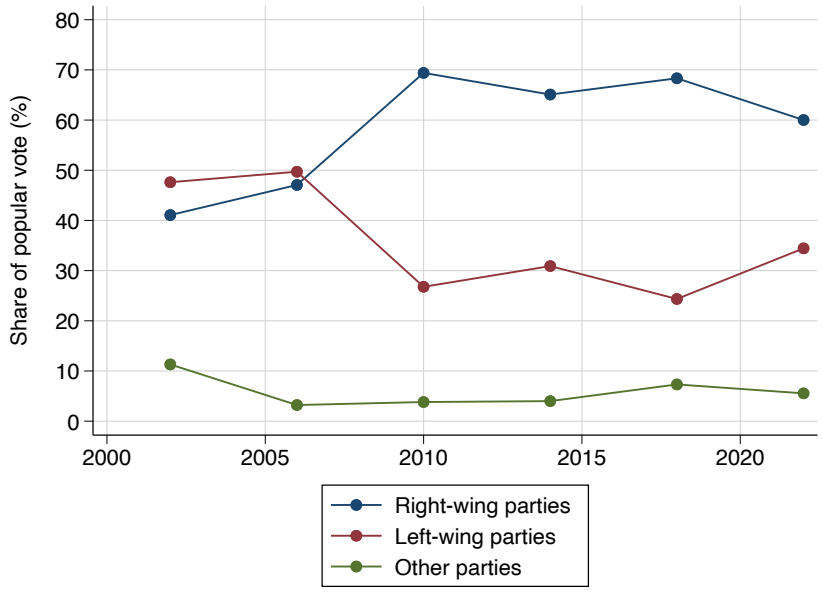

Figure 13: Election results in Hungary, 2002-2022
Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Nemzeti Választási Iroda (National Election Commission)", n.d.).

The 2010 elections saw the rise of the FIDESZ-KDNP alliance - Christian Democratic People's Party (Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt, KDNP), which gained a two-thirds supermajority in the Hungarian National Assembly, allowing them to change the country's constitution the following year. At the same time, the electoral base of the left-wing parties dropped below 30% margin and never recovered. Moreover, new political parties arose in this election. Far-right Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom, Jobbik) and left-leaning green Politics Can Be Different (Lehet más a politika, LMP). Both remained in opposition to FIDESZ. The 2010 elections can be seen as the end of more than a decade of a duopoly between the two main parties, MSZP and FIDESZ, and the beginning of the almost total rule of the latter, which is partially thanks to the winner-takes-all element of the Hungarian system, which was made even stronger in the new constitution (Tóka, 2014).

The unprecedented power that FIDESZ gained allowed Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his party to mould the country's institutional fabric to its liking completely. This included many cases of democratic backsliding and institution capture, like changing the public broadcaster to a government party outlet. It led to investigations of breaches of the rule of law being opened by the European Commission and withholding EU funding from Hungary (European Commission Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, 2023). Many accusations of corruption emerged, with

most public contracts and tenders being won by an exclusive group of entrepreneurs from the prime minister's close circle. FIDESZ is considered populist and nativist, adopting both anti-immigration and antirefugee rhetoric as well as a eurosceptic outlook. Due to the consecutive wins of FIDESZ, political cleavages within the opposition diminished almost completely and made way for the emergence of the main line of opposition being anti-Orbán.

It is worth noting that the recent pardoning scandal from February 2024 involving President Katalin Novák and former Minister of Justice Judit Varga led to some turbulence in the government ("Hungary President Novak quits under pressure over sex-abuse pardon case", 2024). Both previously mentioned figures resigned, and Péter Magyar—the ex-husband of Judit Varga and former FIDESZ member—became a leader of the Respect and Freedom Party (Tisztelet és Szabadság Párt, TISZA) and decided to contest FIDESZ dominance, eventually securing 29.6% of votes in the 2024 European Parliament elections.

Overall, Hungary's political scene is dominated by the FIDESZ-KDNP forces, which lean strongly towards populist, nativist, and even authoritarian tendencies. The answer to the question if the new contenders manage to break their hold on power remains to be seen.

7.2 Inequality and Political Cleavages in Hungary

The evolution of the income-based electoral cleavage in Hungary since the early 2000s shows signs of reversal during the analysed period. The change of income gradients is summarized by a simple steepness indicator—the difference between the fraction of people who vote for the left (right or other parties) among the top 10% of income distribution and the fraction voting for the left (right or other parties) among the bottom 90% of income earners. Figure 14 presents it for all studied Hungarian elections in the 2002-2018 period.

The beginning of the 21^{st} century was not characterised by any significant difference in the likelihood of voting for the left or the right depending on the income group, with both having positive, yet small, income gradient. The situation changed in the 2006 elections, with the traditional "class" voting becoming more apparent. Nevertheless, after 2010, a complete reversal of this short-lived cleavage occurred, with the top 10% of income earners being around 7 percentage points more likely to vote for the left-wing parties than the bottom 90%. At the same time, the bottom 90% was 6 to 8 percentage points more likely to vote right-wing than the top 10%. As visible in figure 75, since 2010, the left parties record more considerable successes vote-share-wise in the top 10% income bracket than in the middle 40% and the bottom 50%.

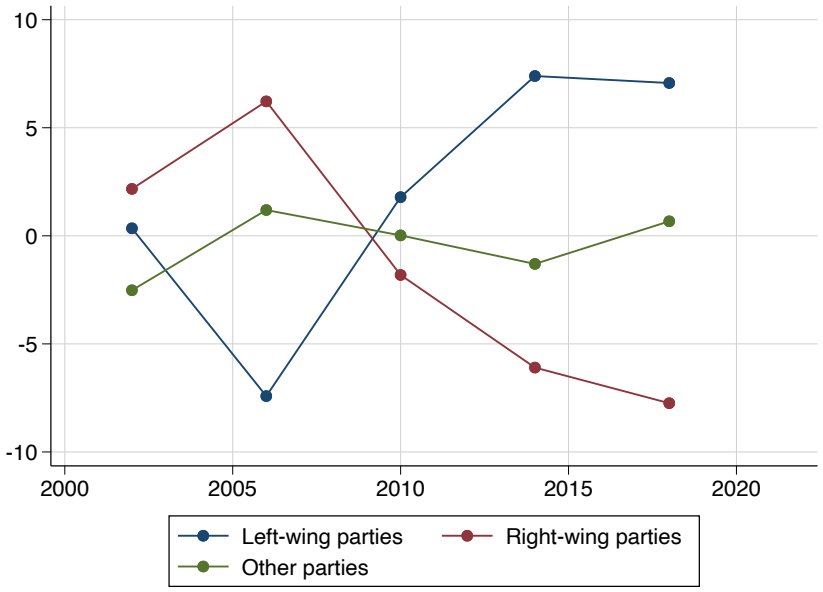

Figure 14: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Hungary

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

From the early 2000s until 2010, MSZP[24] was the largest party in the National Assembly in Hungary. However, from 2010 onwards, the dominance of the FIDESZ and its smaller partners (previously MDF and later KDNP) has been uncontested. Thus, let us concentrate on the evolution of their income gradients over time - figure 15. Additionally, results for the far-right Jobbik party are presented.

MSZP, which had a strong negative income gradient in the 2006 elections—the bottom 90% of income earners were almost 12 percentage points more likely to vote for them than the top 10%—reversed this and started attracting wealthier voters. Its loss of appeal among the bottom 90% could be partially explained by their failure to manage the Great Recession and the use of austerity measures, widely unpopular among the lower-income voters. Yet, some of the liberal reforms struck accord with the higher earners. Moreover, it was evident in the 2014 elections when MSZP, as part of the broader BO alliance, moved closer to the centre to attract a wider electorate. Interestingly, FIDESZ generally does not have a transparent income gradient. Nevertheless, it can be seen as slightly more appealing to lower-income voters, specifically in the 2014 elections, which might be due to *rezsicsökkentés* - a policy aimed at compelling utility providers, predominantly multinational companies, to cut their

[24]In this analysis, we will consider votes cast for BO, which was the left-wing alliance led by MSZP in the 2014 elections, as votes cast for the party.

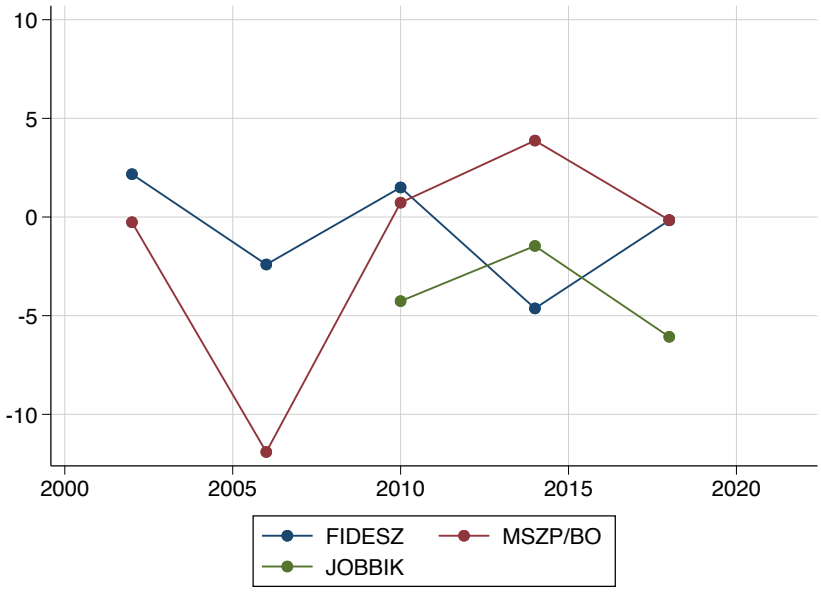

Figure 15: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) FIDESZ, MSZP and Jobbik

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either FIDESZ, MSZP or Jobbik, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

rates, which served the lower-income population. Meanwhile, Jobbik, which runs on a far-right antiimmigration platform, has continued attracting the poorer electorate since it entered the Hungarian parliament in 2010. Its income gradient looks more similar to the traditional left-wing parties than that of the right-wing, which can be explained through the playout of fear of losing one's job due to migration - card often used by Jobbik, which is more relevant in the bottom 90% of the income distribution.

The evolution of education-based cleavage in Hungary over the past two decades had a more apparent trend and seems to have come full circle. Here, the education gradient is defined as the share difference between the left (right or other) voters who graduated from university and the fraction of the voters who voted for the same groups of parties but did not graduate from university. Figure 16 represents this evolution over the analysed elections between 2002 and 2018.

The gap in voting depending on education has been consistently large and significant until the 2018 elections - definitely more essential in understanding the voting behaviour of the country's population. Starting from the 2002 elections, the left became increasingly popular among the highly educated, while the right gathered more support among the less educated population. The peak occurred in 2010, when university graduates were 10 percentage points more likely than non-graduates to vote

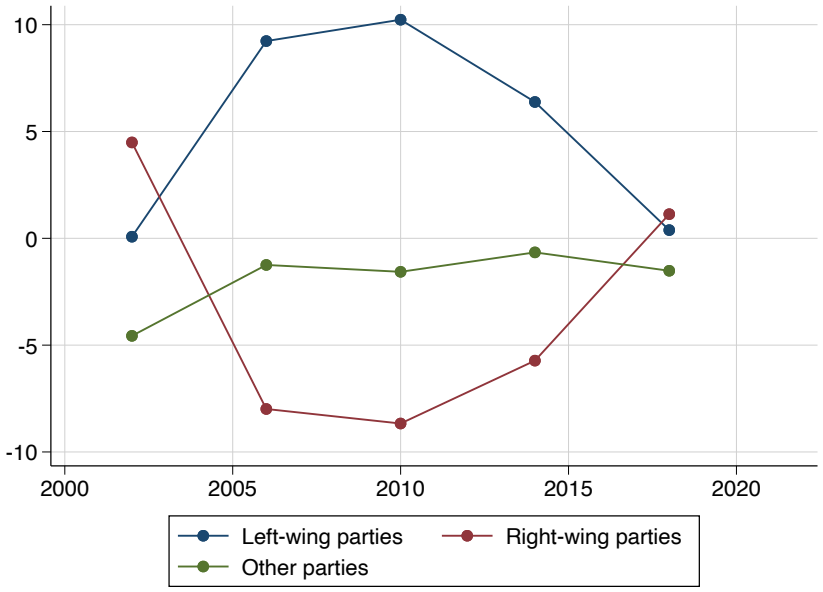

Figure 16: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Hungary

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

for the left, while non-graduates were 8 percentage points more likely than university graduates to vote right-wing. The situation seems to have changed in the 2018 elections. However, let us look more closely at how the main Hungarian parties are characterised in terms of the education gradient.

Looking at the education gradients of the main parties - figure 17, one can easily see that MSZP was more attractive to the highly educated for most of the analysed period. Regardless, their gradient was lower than the general one for all left-wing parties, which shows that the left indeed became more representative of intellectuals. However, most of them chose other left-wing options. At the same time, FIDESZ follows more or less the same trajectory as the general aggregate of all right-wing parties, which is reasonable considering its almost absolute dominance of the right side of the political spectrum in Hungary. Interestingly, FIDESZ continuously was more attractive to the lowest educated than its far-right counterpart, Jobbik.

Overall, educational cleavage and its salience are valuable in understanding the voting behaviour of the Hungarian population, in which the more educated part votes more left-wing and the less educated is more right-wing. Equally, the growing prominence of the income cleavage post-2010 cannot be understated, which indicates a reversal of traditional "class" based voting.

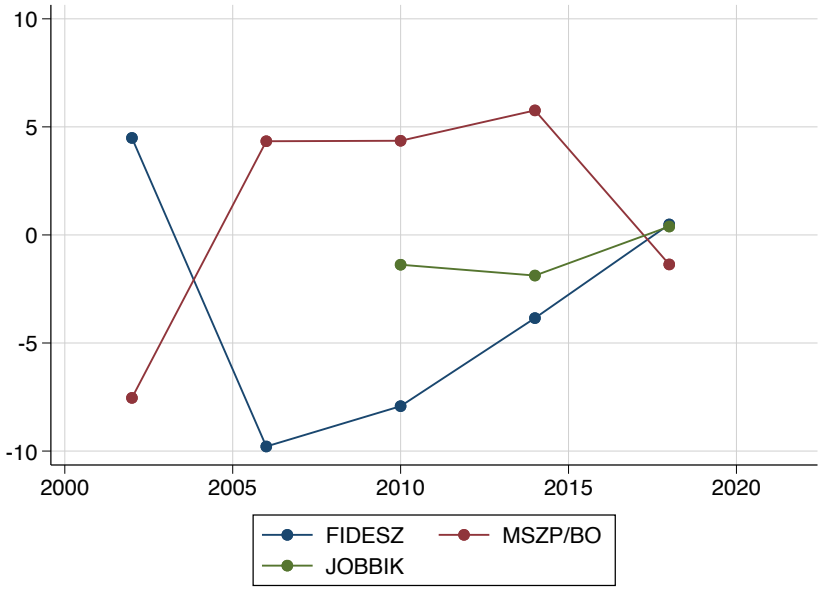

Figure 17: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) FIDESZ, MSZP and Jobbik

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for either FIDESZ, MSZP or Jobbik, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

8 Estonia

Estonia, with less than 1.5 million inhabitants (Eurostat, 2024a), is the smallest of all considered countries. Its GDP per capita, standing at around 15 370 euros, makes it only slightly richer than neighbouring Lithuania and poorer than Slovakia. Estonian politics can be described by a general dominance of right-wing forces, with both right and left shares relatively stable over time and a fragmented party scene.

8.1 Political and Party System in Estonia

Estonian was forcibly made part of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) after the Second World War and never seized to aim for independence. Following the introduction of perestroika, the independence restoration process triggered by 1987-1991 the Singing Revolution (Laulev revolutsioon) - a wider movement in all Baltic states which included the Baltic Way (Balti kett) on the 23^{rd} of August 1989. On the 20^{th} of August 1991, Estonia declared the restoration of independence. In 1992, the country introduced its new constitution (The Constitution of the Republic of Estonia, 1992), which defines Estonia as a unitary parliamentary representative republic with the head of state being the president and the head of the government being the prime minister.

Riigikogu is a unicameral parliament of Estonia with 101 members (liiget) elected every four years in proportional representation via universal ballot. Parties must cross a 5% threshold in the nationwide electoral results to gain seats in the parliament. Elections to Riigikogu will be the main point of consideration in the following chapter.

Shortly before the 2003 elections, Estonia was governed by a centre-right liberal coalition government of the Estonian Centre Party (Eesti Keskerakond, EK) and the Estonian Reform Party (Eesti Reformierakond, ERK). The 2003 elections resulted in both EK and Res Publica Party (Erakond Res Publica, RP) being awarded the same highest number of seats in the Riigikogu. RP managed to secure a governing coalition with ERK and the People's Union of Estonia (Eestimaa Rahvaliit, ER). The 2003 elections were the last one when EK managed to secure more seats than ERK until 2023, being always the second largest party in Riigikogu. 2005, the coalition formula changed, and ERK, ER, and EK joined forces after the previous cabinet resigned.

Before the 2007 elections, RP merged with the Pro Patria Union (Isamaaliit, I), creating Pro Patria and Res Publica Union (Erakond Isamaa ja Res Publica Liit, EIRS).[25] With ERK winning the 2007 elections, the so-called Triple Alliance was formed between ERK, EIRS, and the Social Democratic Party (Sotsiaaldemokraatlik

[25]In 2018, the party was renamed to Fatherland (Isamaa, IE).

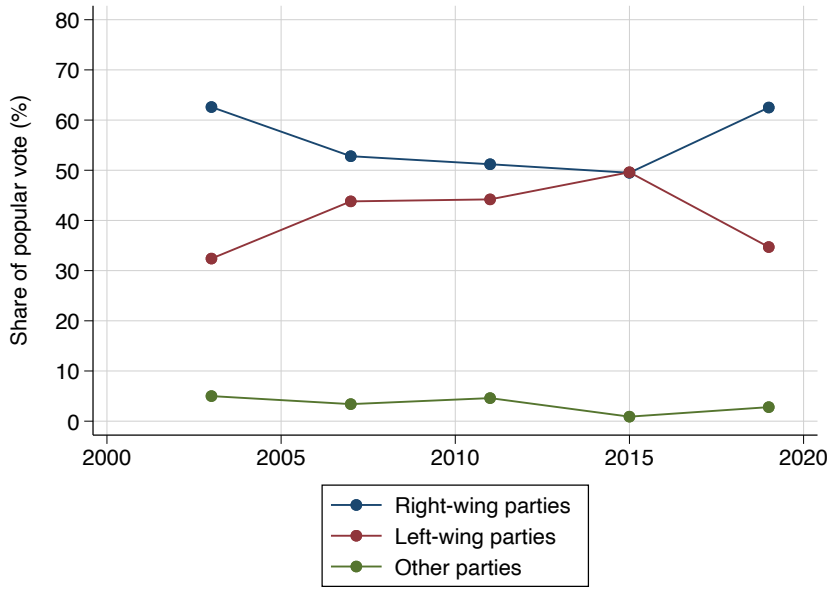

Figure 18: Election results in Estonia, 2003-2019

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Vabariigi Valimiskomisjoni ja riigi valimisteenistuse (Estonian National Electoral Committee and the State Electoral Office)", n.d.).

Erakond, SDE).[26] Since 2007, ERK has won every Estonian parliamentary election, becoming a constant feature of Estonian politics. Governments led by ERK in coalition with other Triple Alliance parties continued to govern Estonia until 2016. 2007 also marked the first and the last time Estonian Greens (Erakond Eestimaa Rohelised, ERR) entered the parliament.

Since 2007, due to many controversies surrounding EK's leader Edgar Savisaar (Tagel, 2015), also related to an agreement with Vladimir Putin's United Russia party, other parties have subjected EK to *cordon sanitaire* treatment. EK was unable to enter any coalition talks until the change in leadership in 2015. After the collapse of the Triple Alliance government in 2016, EK formed a coalition with EIRS and SDE. It marked the first time since 1999 that ERK did not participate in the running of the government.

The 2019 elections continued the rule of EK-led coalitions despite ERK electoral wins after it rejected cooperation with the nationalistic Conservative People's Party of Estonia (Eesti Konservatiivne Rahvaerakond, EKR). EKR entered Riigikogu for the first time in the 2015 elections on the anti-immigrant, eurosceptic and anti-Russian minority platform. The established coalition comprised EK, IE and EKR. Following the 2021 corruption scandal involving businessman Hillar Teder, the coalition col-

[26]Following the Great Recession and subsequent budget cuts, SDE left the coalition in 2009, resulting in other parties leading a minority government for the rest of the term.

lapsed. It was succeeded by the ERK and EK cabinet led by Kaja Kallas and later by her Triple Alliance cabinet.[27]

In 2023, both SDE and IE saw further erosion of their support. At the same time, a new liberal party - Estonia 200 (Eesti 200, E200), entered the parliament as the fourth strongest force after ERK, EKR, and EK. Kaja Kallas of ERK formed another coalition government with E200 and SDE.

An interesting feature of Estonian politics is the high frequency of government coalition changes within parliamentary terms without triggering snap elections. At the same time, ERK remains the most significant political force, which can be described as having remarkable stability. Moreover, Estonia became the first country to hold legally binding online elections during its municipal vote in 2005 (Vassil et al., 2016). Since the 2007 parliamentary elections, e-voting has been a valid way of casting one's ballot. The 2023 parliamentary elections were the first during which more than half of the votes were cast online.

8.2 Inequality and Political Cleavages in Estonia

In Estonia, the evolution of the income-based cleavage since the beginning of the 21^{st} century can be described as somewhat stable. A simple steepness indicator - the difference between the fraction of voters from the top 10% of income earners voting for the left (right or other parties) and the share of voters voting for the same groups of parties from the bottom 90% of the income distribution, summarises the evolution of income gradient well. Figure 19 shows this for all considered Estonian elections from 2007 to 2019.

Similarly to Czechia and differently to Poland, the left and the right differed noticeably along income lines. During most of the studied period, the top 10% of income earners were about 15 percentage points more likely to vote for the right than the bottom 90% of income earners. All the while, the bottom 90% of income earners were 15 percentage points more likely to vote for the left-leaning parties than the top 10%. These results can serve as convincing evidence of voting along the lines of "class." Thus, economic and redistributive issues could be seen as major political cleavages that explain the voting behaviour of Estonian voters.

Now, moving closer to the income gradients for the parties dominant in the studied period, let us focus on ERK, EK and SDE. Fascinating is the case of ERK, which has become almost a constant feature of every single Estonian government in the past two decades. The results are shown in figure 20.

[27]Kaja Kallas thus became Estonia's first female prime minister.

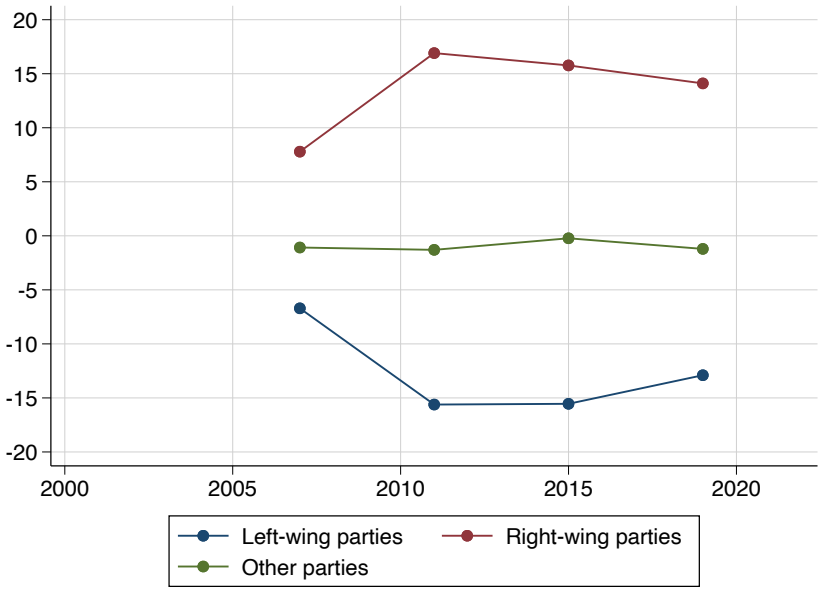

Figure 19: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Estonia

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

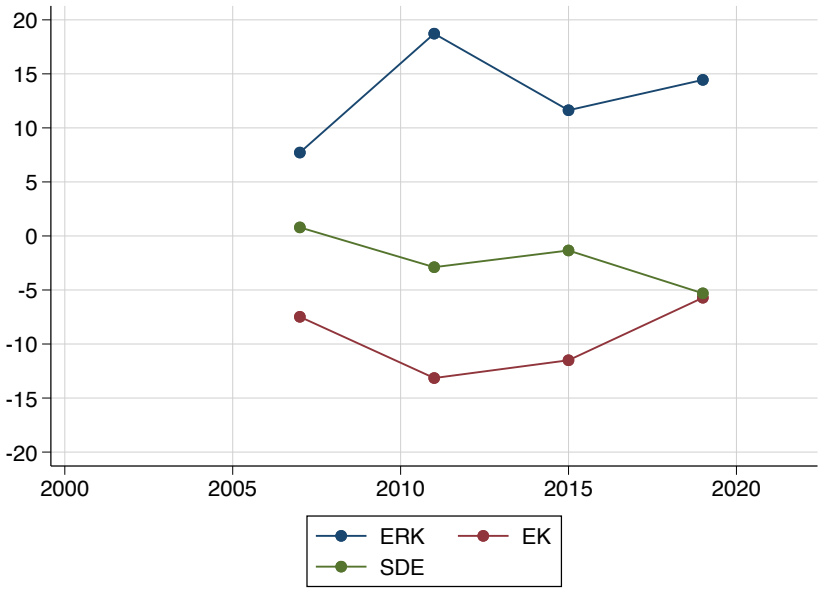

Figure 20: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) ERK, EK and SDE

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either ERK, EK or SDE, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

All the chosen parties follow approximately the same direction of income-based cleavages as the larger left-right groupings to which they belong. It means that the top 10% of income earners are more likely to vote for the ERK than the bottom 90%, while the bottom 90% of earners are more likely to vote for either SDE or EK than the top 10%. Nevertheless, some more nuanced insights could be drawn. Specifically, the income gradient of SDE is only faintly negative. At the same time, the income gradient for the populist EK was around 10 percentage points lower in the 2010 and 2015 elections. They converge only in 2019.

EK is often described as the party attracting the most votes from the Russian minority in Estonia, who are often marginalised and fall into the lower range of the income distribution, which could explain EK's strongly negative income gradient. Here, it was checked using the data on the first language spoken at home and religion as proxies, confirming that indeed among the Russian speakers and Eastern Orthodox majority of voters chose EK.[28]

Unlike the income-based cleavage, the education-based one seems to be fairly non-existent in Estonia since the 2007 elections. The education gradient is defined as the difference between the share of university graduates voting left-wing (right or other) and the fraction of non-university graduates casting votes for the same parties. The evolution of the education gradient is presented in figure 21. In the 2007 elections, a clear difference between the left and the right could be observed, with the highly educated being more likely to vote for the right and the left attracting the lower educated, which was in line with classical "class" voting behaviour. Ever since, the difference has almost entirely disappeared, with the gradients reversing, albeit continuing to be close to 0.

Let us once more consider the largest parties on the Estonian political scene in figure 22. Here, it is possible to observe more apparent differences along the lines of educational attainment. ERK follows a similar trend to all other right-wing parties when considered together, with the less educated being more likely to vote for them than the most educated during the majority of the analysed period. However, there is a clear cleavage between SDE and EK, both politically aligned to the left of the spectrum. The most educated are likelier to vote for the SDE than the least educated, and the reverse is true for EK. Again, this could be potentially explained by the situation of the Russian minority in Estonia, which is also characterised by a lower educational attainment than the native population. At the same time, SDE might be

[28]It is interesting to note that both Estonia and Latvia have a problem of the so-called non-citizens, which predominantly influences the situation of the Russian speakers, as they were seen as alien after the fall of the USSR and not automatically granted citizenship – contrary to the Lithuanian case (Saarts and Saar, 2022; "In the Baltics, the stateless who can't vote in the EU election", 2024).

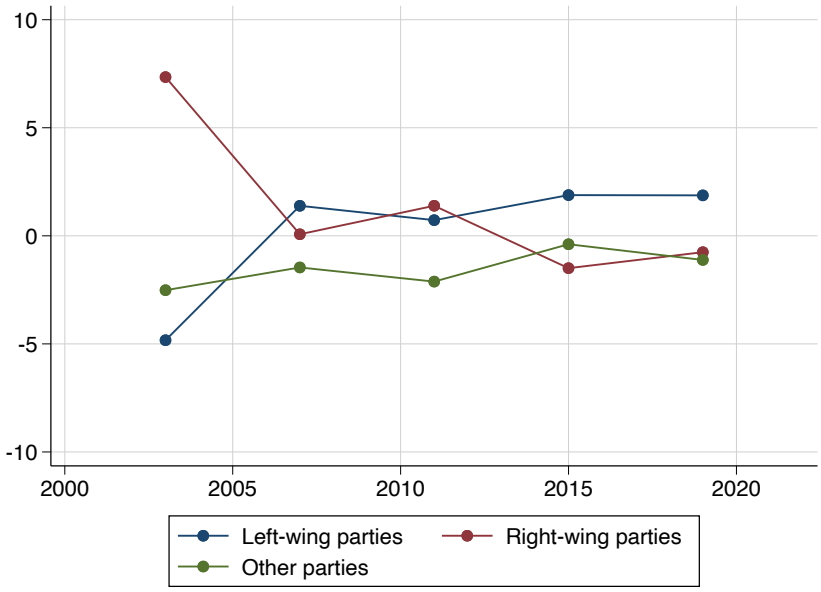

Figure 21: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Estonia

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

emerging as a representative of the "Brahmin Left."

In general, the income-based political cleavage seems to provide good information on the voting behaviour of the Estonian population, with the voters being divided along the classical "class" based voting lines. Nevertheless, education seems to provide much less explanation. Yet, after examining the country's main political parties, some educational attainment cleavages could be noticed within the left-wing party group between the populist EK and social-democratic SDE.

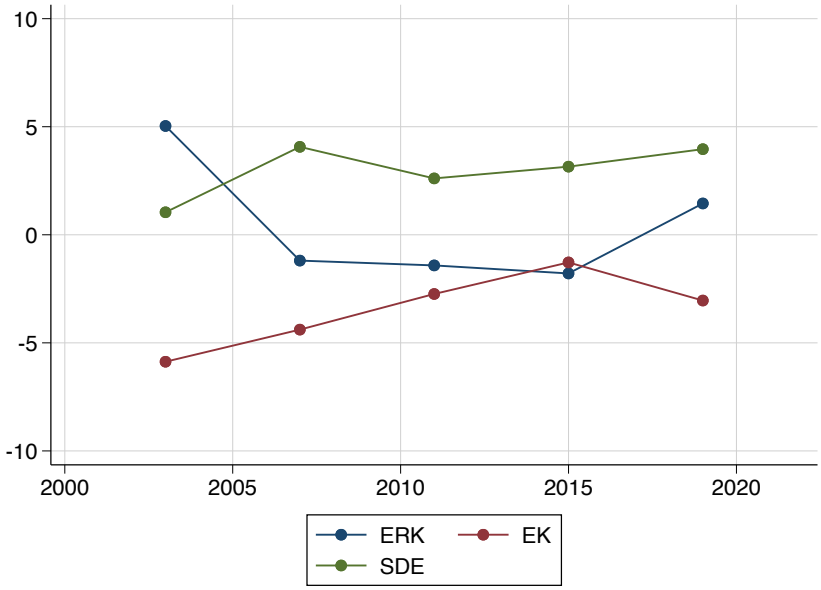

Figure 22: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) ERK, EK and SDE

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for either ERK, EK or SDE, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

9 Lithuania

Lithuania is the third smallest of all countries considered in this study, with a population of nearly 3 million people (Eurostat, 2024a). It is more prosperous than Poland and slightly poorer than another analysed Baltic country - Estonia, with a GDP per capita of 14 840 euros in 2023 (Eurostat, 2024b). Lithuania has a remarkably diverse and fragmented political scene, yet stable and alternating shares of the votes for the left and right-wing parties can characterise it.

9.1 Political and Party System in Lithuania

Lithuania shared the same fate as Estonia and, after the Second World War, was annexed by the USSR. During perestroika, its strong independence movements were further revived, leading to the 1988-1991 Singing Revolution (Dainuojanti revoliucija) and the Baltic Way (Baltijos kelias) on the 23rd of August 1989. Lithuania became the first Soviet-occupied country to declare the restitution of its independence on the 11^{th} March 1990. It adopted its new constitution in 1992 (The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, 1992), which made Lithuania a unitary semi-presidential representative democratic republic. Its president is the head of state, while its prime minister is the head of the government.

The country boasts a unicameral parliament called Seimas, with 141 members (Seimo nariai) elected every four years by universal suffrage. Half the members are elected in individual constituencies in a two-round system, and others via proportional representation. Every party willing to enter the Seimas must receive at least 5% in the nationwide list or at least 7% in case of party coalitions. For the purpose of this work, the proportional representation votes will be analysed as it is more reliable in terms of assigning the party ideology than the case of the individual candidates.

Starting from 1998, Lithuanians began to feel the consequences of the Russian financial crisis, which, together with the internal fights within governing right-wing coalition of the Homeland Union - (Lithuanian Conservatives) (Tėvynės sąjunga (Lietuvos konservatoriai), TS)[29] and the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party (Lietuvos krikščionių demokratų partija, LKDP) resulted in two different replacement governments and drop in support for the main parties like TS and the Democratic Labour Party of Lithuania (Lietuvos demokratinė darbo partija, LDDP).

The 2000 elections were won by a large Social-Democratic Coalition of Algirdas Brazauskas (Algirdas Brazausko socialdemokratinė koalicija, BSDK), which was com-

[29]Since 2008 known as the Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrats (Tėvynės sąjunga – Lietuvos krikščionys demokratai, TS–LKD)

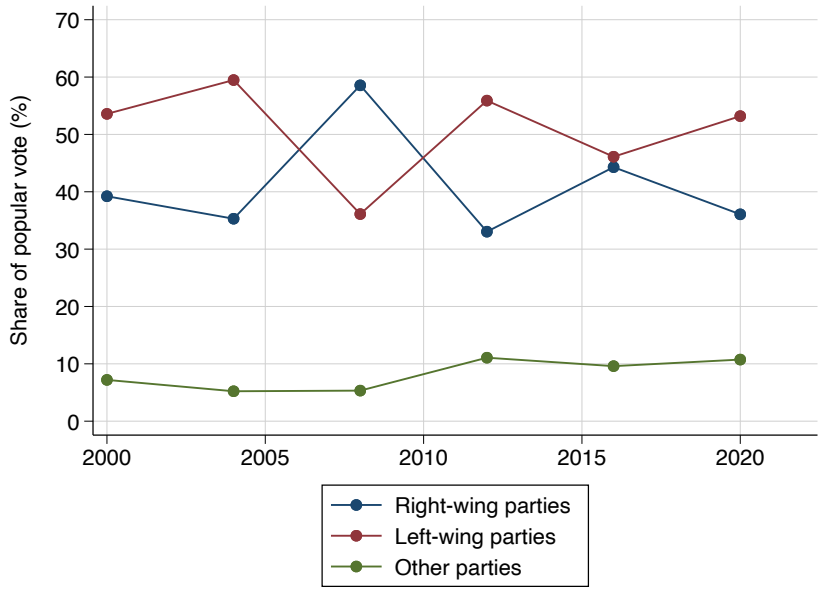

Figure 23: Election results in Lithuania, 2000-2020

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Lietuvos Respublikos vyriausioji rinkimų komisija (Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Lithuania)", n.d.).

posed of LDDP, Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (Lietuvos socialdemokratų partija, LSDP), Lithuanian Russian Union (Lietuvos rusų sąjunga, LRS) and New Democracy Party (Naujosios demokratijos partija, NDP). Nevertheless, it was the Liberal Union of Lithuania (Lietuvos liberalų sąjunga, LLS) that formed a right-wing coalition government with the New Union (Social Liberals) (Naujoji sąjunga (socialliberalai), NSSL) and other minor rightparties.[30] The government collapsed shortly after and was changed by an LSDP-led left-wing coalition, including the left-populist Labour Party (Darbo partija, DP).

The 2004 elections were won by a wide margin by DP, followed by Coalition Working for Lithuania (Už darbą Lietuvai, UDL) of LSDP and NSSL. LSDP secured another governing coalition with DP and the Lithuanian Peasant and Greens Union (Lietuvos valstiečių ir žaliųjų sąjunga, LVŽS). Later, LSDP moved closer to the centre, forming a new coalition with parties like LVŽS and the Liberal and Centre Union (Liberalų ir centro sąjunga, LiCS). The 2004 elections constituted the peak of support for the left-wing parties, closing at almost 60% of all votes cast.

With increasing economic pressure, the left parties suffered significant losses in support following the 2008 elections, which were won by the right and TS–LKD received

[30]This included the Polish minority led Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania (Lietuvos lenkų rinkimų akcija, LLRA), which is the only party in Lithuania monopolizing support of one of the minority groups, with the Polish speakers almost exclusively voting LLRA (Janušauskienė, 2016).

the majority of the votes. The polls were also successful for a new right-wing populist National Resurrection Party (Tautos prisikėlimo partija, TPP). TS-LKD, TPP, LiCS, and the Liberals' Movement of the Republic of Lithuania (Lietuvos Respublikos liberalų sąjūdis, LRLS) formed a right-wing coalition government. Due to the ongoing Great Recession, the government enacted a broad range of austerity measures, which heavily impacted its approval of renting. Nevertheless, it became the first Lithuanian cabinet to serve the full parliamentary term.

In 2012, left-wing forces again dominated the elections, with DK and LSDP on the top. Both parties, the right-wing LLRA and Order and Justice (Tvarka ir teisingumas, TT) presented the cabinet. The 2016 elections continued the trend of left dominance, but only by a small margin. TS–LKD won the elections, with LVŽS slightly behind it. As a result of coalition talks, LVŽS formed a government with LSDP. The 2020 elections happened amid the COVID-19 pandemic and resulted in a win of TS-LKD. All former government parties suffered electoral losses. Since 2020, Lithuania has been governed by a right-wing coalition of TS-LKD, LRLS, and the Freedom Party (Laisvės partija, LP).

All in all, Lithuania's political scene is heavily fragmented, which regularly necessitates the creation of government coalitions - often changing during the parliamentary term. This situation is reasonably similar to Estonia; however, it lacks as clear of a leading party as the Reform Party in Estonia. In Lithuania's case, the closest is TS-LKD.

9.2 Inequality and Political Cleavages in Lithuania

The changes in the income-based electoral cleavage over the past two decades in Lithuania are characterised by an increasing difference between the left and the right. The evolution of income gradients is summarised by a simple steepness indicator - the difference between the fraction of the population who vote for the left-leaning parties (right or other) among the top 10% of income earners and the share voting for the same groups among the bottom 90% of the income earners. Figure 24 shows this evolution for all considered elections in Lithuania - 2008-2020.

The period from 2008 until 2020 could be described as stable in terms of the evolution of income-based cleavage on both sides of the Lithuanian political spectrum. Except for the 2012 elections, the right income gradient was positive and increasing, and the left was negative and decreasing. Both values peaked in the 2020 elections, with the top 10% of income earners being almost 15 percentage points more likely to vote for the right-wing parties than the bottom 90% of earners and the bottom 90% of income earners being close to 14 percentage points more likely to vote left-wing

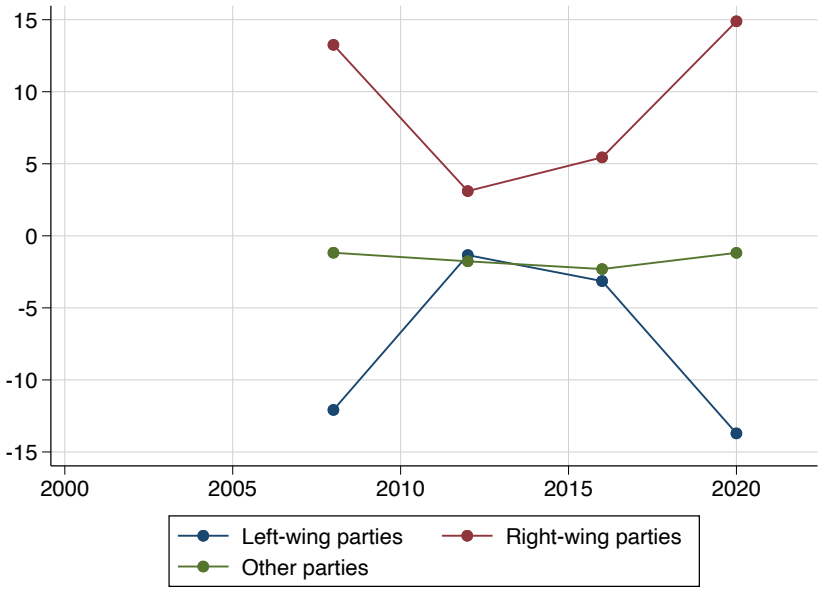

Figure 24: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Lithuania

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

than the top 10%. It constitutes a strong and growing divide, which suggests strong "class" based voting behaviour.

Let us look at the leading players on the Lithuanian political stage: LSDP, TS-LKD and LVŽS, in figure 25. All parties seem to follow the same general trend observed in the case of their respective ideology spectrums - left for LSDP and LVŽS and right for TS-LKD. However, TS-LKD has a definitively more extensive appeal to the highest income earners than both other mentioned parties to the lower income earners. Additionally, even with the negative income gradients, especially in the case of LVŽS, both mentioned left-wing parties remained close to 0 in the analysed period.

The evolution of the education-based electoral cleavage in Lithuania also follows a regular pattern, even more than in the case of income. The education gradient is defined as the difference between the share of university graduates voting left-wing (right or other) and the share of secondary or lower school graduates choosing left (right or other). Figure 26 shows it for all investigated elections in Lithuania, 2008-2020.

The right-wing parties attract more highly educated voters, whereas only a slightly negative education gradient describes the left. Interestingly, other parties are the most attractive among the lower-educated voters, with non-university graduates being close to 5 percentage points more likely to vote for other parties than their counterparts

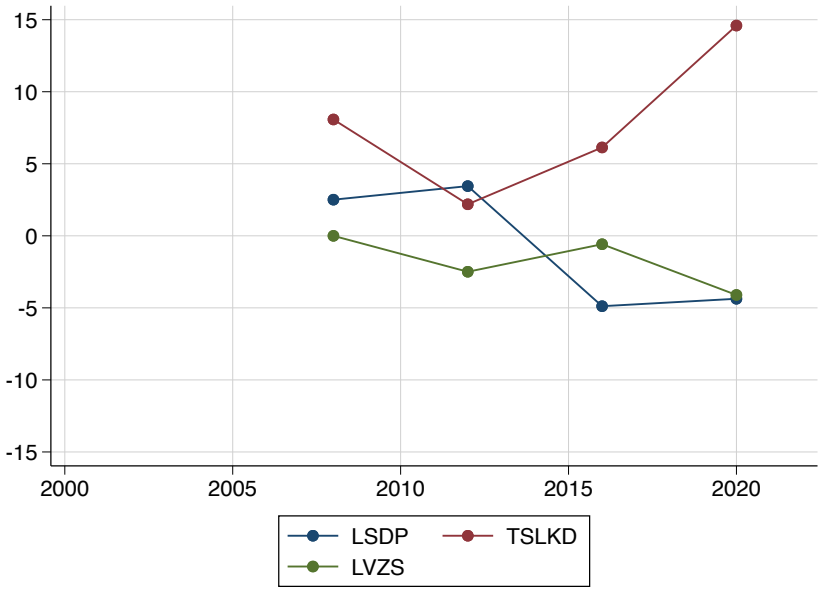

Figure 25: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) LSDP, TS-LKD and LVŽS
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.
Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either LSDP, TS-LKD or LVŽS, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

with tertiary education. Turning our attention again to the main political parties in Lithuania in figure 96, it is clear that both LSDP and TS-LKD attract more educated voters than LVŽS, with the university graduates being around 4 percentage points more likely to vote for TS-LKD and 3 percentage points more likely to vote LSDP than the secondary or lower school graduates. LVŽS education gradient is trailing close to 0 during the analysed period. Nevertheless, all three parties do not boast very high education gradients.

In the Lithuanian case, "class" based voting seems to be a dominant behaviour, and the salience of economic and redistributive issues remains essential. At the same time, education cleavage is the most pronounced when comparing the right-wing and other parties, while the left runs education gradients close to 0. It is a situation unseen in other countries studied in this work.

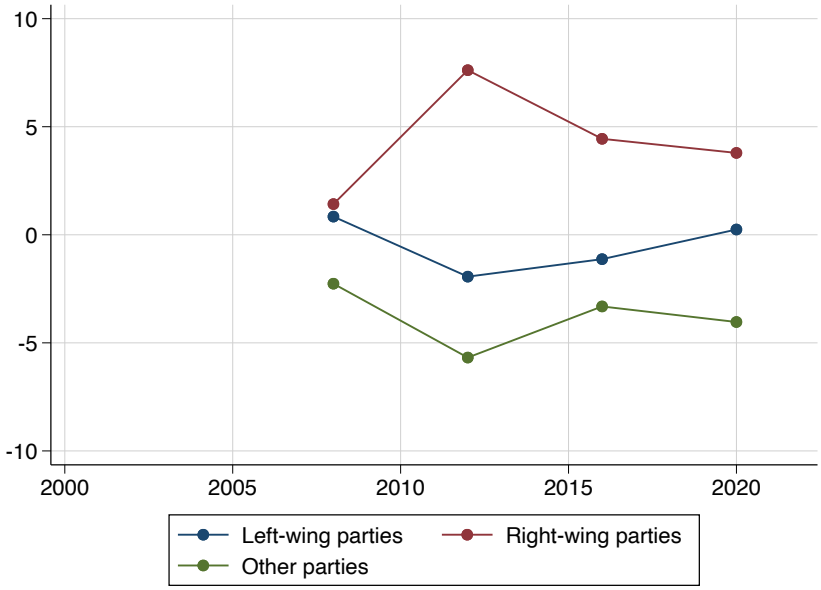

Figure 26: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Lithuania

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

10 Slovenia

Slovenia is the second smallest country in this study, with its population standing just above 2 million people (Eurostat, 2024a). Yet, it is also the richest of all former Eastern Block. Its GDP per capita equaled 22 090 euros in 2023 (Eurostat, 2024b). The right wing dominated Slovenian politics until the second decade of the 21^{st} century when the competition between the left and the right became closer.

10.1 Political and Party System in Slovenia

On the 25^{th} of June 1991, Slovenia declared its secession from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), which triggered the Ten-Day War (Desetdnevna vojna) with the federal forces. It ended with The Brioni Agreement (Brionska deklaracija), eventually leading to Slovenia becoming the first break-away country in Yugoslavia and the one with the most minor bloodshed. In 1991, the government adopted a new constitution (The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, 1991), becoming a parliamentary representative democratic republic with the president acting as the head of state and the prime minister as the head of the government.

The upper house of the parliament in Slovenia is the National Council (Državni svet), representing various social, economic, professional and local interest groups of the country. It is not directly elected. The National Assembly (Državni zbor) is the lower house of the country's bicameral parliament. It has 90 members (poslancev), elected every four years in a universal ballot using a proportional system.[31] There is a 4% threshold for parties to receive mandates in the parliament. In this study, the case of the National Assembly will be considered since it is the actual electable body of the Slovenian parliament.

The 2000 elections brought the end of the right-wing coalition government of the Slovenian People's Party (Slovenska ljudska stranka, SLS). The land-slide winner - the Liberal Democracy of Slovenia (Liberalna demokracija Slovenije, LDS), joined by SLS, the Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia (Demokratična stranka upokojencev Slovenije, DESUS) and the Social Democrats (Socialni demokrati, SD) constituted the new cabinet. The 2004 elections were won by the Slovenian Democratic Party (Slovenska demokratska stranka, SDS), followed by LDS. It led to creating a right-wing government of SDS, SLS, DESUS and the New Slovenia–Christian Democrats (Nova Slovenija, NSI).

The right-orientated parties lost in the 2008 elections following the economic hardships of the Great Recession. The winner, SD, slightly exceeded SDS's share and

[31] Two members are elected separately by Italian and Hungarian minorities, respectively.

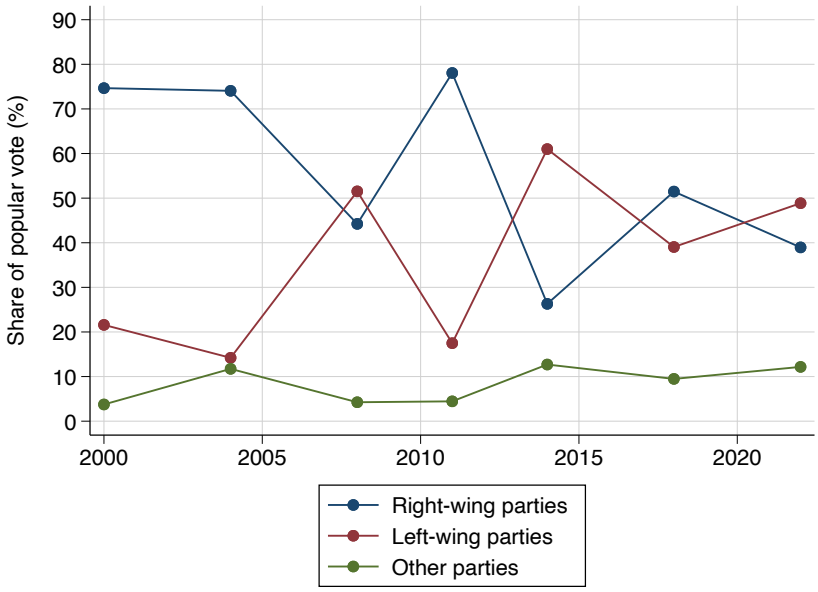

Figure 27: Election results in Slovenia, 2000-2022

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Republika Slovenija Državna volilna komisija (Republic of Slovenia State election commission)", n.d.).

formed a governing coalition with DESUS, LDS and a new liberal party, Zares. The cabinet did not receive the confidence of the parliament in 2011, which ended up in snap elections generally won by the right-leaning parties.[32] Nevertheless, the largest single party in the parliament was the new centre-left party, Positive Slovenia (Pozitivna Slovenija, PS). Following the 2011 snap elections, a coalition of SDS, NSI, SLS, DESUS and the Civic List (Državljanska lista, DL).

2014 was the second snap election in a row, resulting in a major reshuffle of the Slovenian political scene. This resulted from a major corruption scandal involving the SDS prime minister. Many new parties entered it, most notably, the left-leaning Party of Miro Cerar (Stranka Mira Cerarja, SMC),[33] which won elections by the landslide, leaving behind the runner up SDS more than 10 percentage points behind. The 2014 elections were a major victory for the left parties, which overall received around 61% of all votes. SMC formed a cabinet together with DESUS and the Social Democrats (Socialni demokrati, SD).

The 2018 elections resulted in the further fragmentation of the National Assembly. All parties previously in government noted a loss in support, and the elections were won by the SDS and, more widely speaking, right-wing parties. None of the left parties agreed to enter into a coalition with SDS, resulting in the formation of a

[32]It started a period of calling snap elections at the end of parliamentary terms.

[33]Later in 2015, renamed to the Modern Centre Party (Stranka modernega centra, SMC).

complex minority left-wing government led by the new List of Marjan Šarec (Lista Marjana Šarca, LMŠ), in cooperation with SD, SMC, DESUS and the Party of Alenka Bratušek (Stranka Alenke Bratušek, SAB). After two years, the cabinet collapsed, followed by the SDS, SMC, DESUS and NSI minority government, which finished the parliamentary term in power. In 2022, the Freedom Movement (Gibanje Svoboda, GS) entered the political stage and won more than 30% of votes, thus becoming the largest party in the lower house of the Slovenian parliament and credited with the defeat of right-populist SDS. Most traditional parties, like SD and SDS, noted a drop in their results. Some, including DESUS and SAB, ended below the 4% threshold and did not enter the parliament. GS, SD and The Left (Levica, L) formed a left-leaning cabinet.

Like Lithuania and Estonia, Slovenia's fragmented and dynamic political scene requires the winning parties to enter into complex coalition agreements extending beyond ideological lines and political cleavages. This nuanced political landscape is easier to analyse by looking only at the playoff between the general right and left vote, which, from right-dominant, became increasingly balanced over time.

10.2 Inequality and Political Cleavages in Slovenia

The evolution of the income-based electoral cleavage in Slovenia since the early 2000s seems to lack any specific strong trend. This evolution of income gradients is summarised by a simple steepness indicator—the difference between the share of people who vote for the left (right or other parties) among the top 10% of income earners and the fraction voting for the same groups among the bottom 90% of the population. Figure 28 shows it for all elections considered in this study for Slovenia, namely the 2000-2018 period.

Over the studied period, the top 10% of income earners were slightly more likely to vote for the left-wing parties than the bottom 90% of income earners. On the other hand, the bottom 90% of income earners were minimally more likely to vote for the right-wing parties than the top 10% of earners. The exception was the 2011 elections when the small income-based cleavage in the country almost disappeared.

The extremely high level of fragmentation of the country's political stage and its dynamic character makes it hard to choose which parties would be the most interesting to analyse more in-depth. Ultimately, the author decided to opt for SDS and SD as the two parties that managed to enter the parliament throughout the whole period of the analysis, with a fairly significant number of mandates each term. As per figure 29, both parties followed the evolution of income-based cleavage of their more comprehensive political affiliations, albeit SD did so more weakly. However, after the 2014 elections,

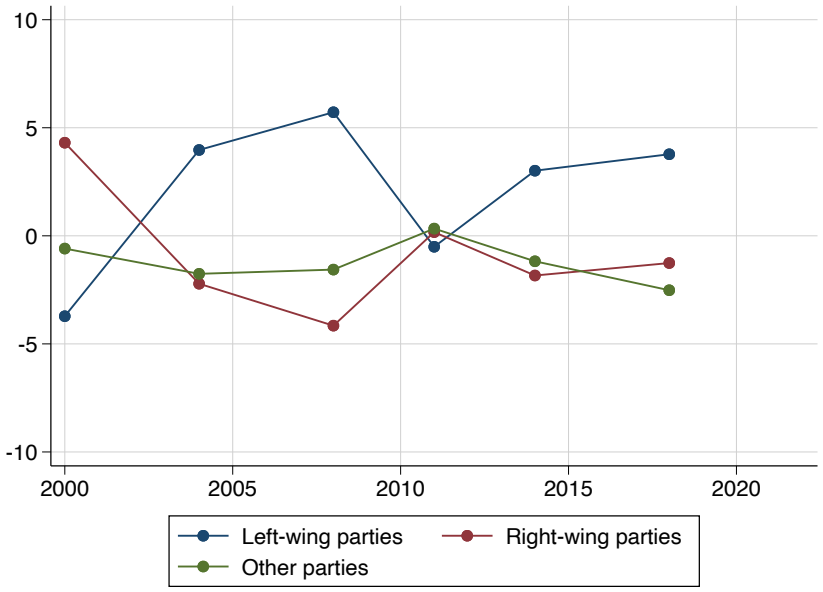

Figure 28: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Slovenia

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

SDS became increasingly popular among the top 10% of income earners. In the 2018 elections, it surpassed the income gradient of SD. It can be seen as a representative of "Merchant" right.

The evolution of the education-based electoral cleavage in Slovenia in the past two decades can be seen as more precise than the one in income cleavage. Here, the education gradient is defined as the difference between the share of university graduates voting left-wing (right or other) and the fraction of non-university choosing the same types of parties. Figure 30 shows it for all considered Slovenian elections from 2000 to 2018.

The education gradients follow similar trajectories to the income ones. However, the gap between the left and the right is larger and more stable. For most of the analysed period, university graduates were almost 10 percentage points more likely to vote for the left-leaning parties than non-university graduates. On the other hand, both the right-leaning parties and the other parties were more attractive to the less educated voters. Now, looking again at the two previously chosen parties: SDS and SD.

The education-based cleavage between SDS and SD is clearly visible - 31. Yet, it might show some signs of disappearance, with the SD education gradient crossing into negative territory in the 2018 elections. Generally, non-university graduates were

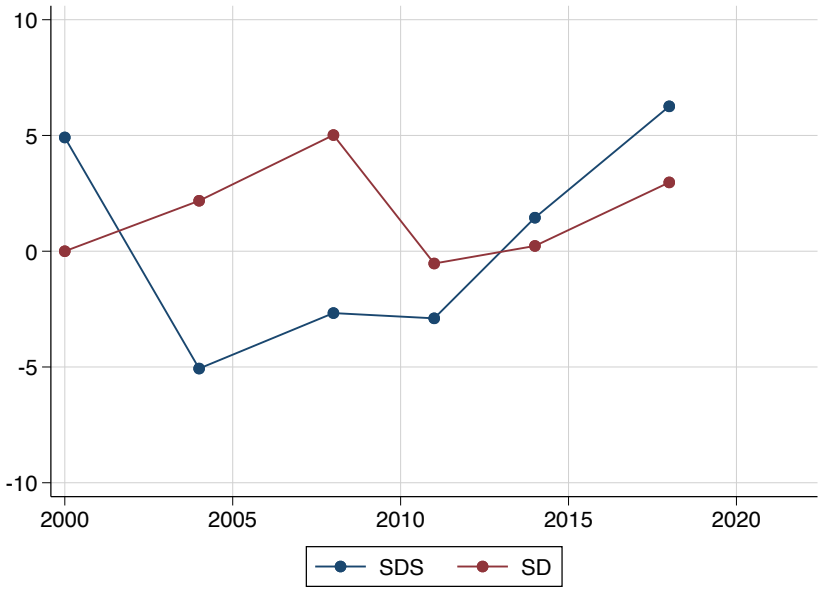

Figure 29: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) SDS and SD

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either SDS or SD, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

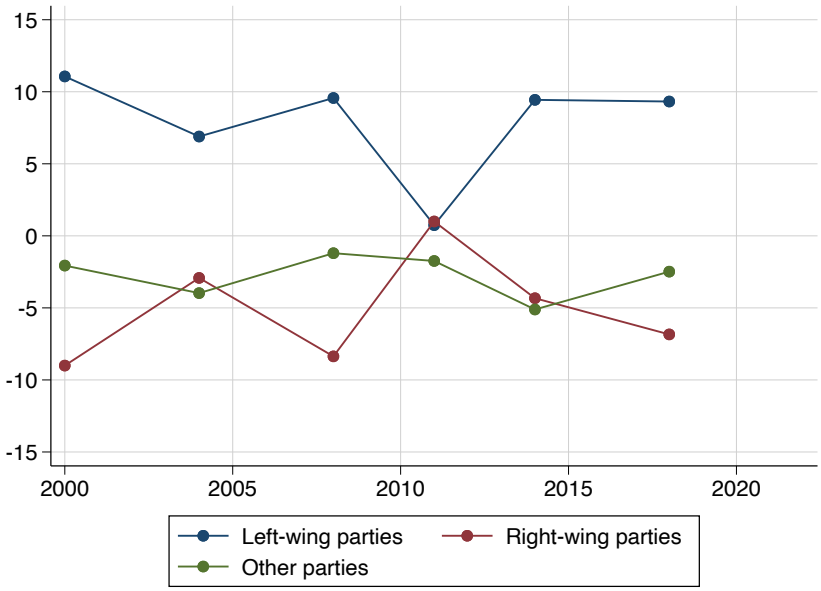

Figure 30: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Slovenia

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

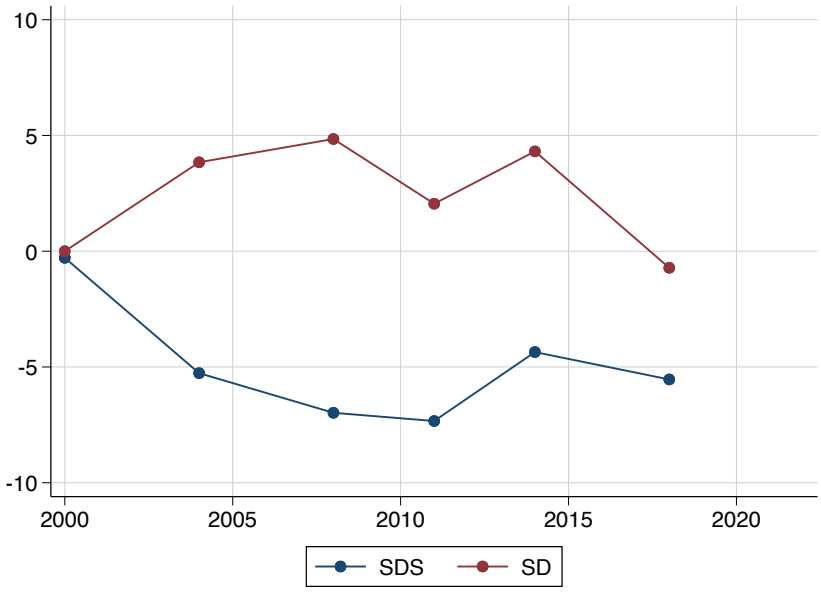

Figure 31: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) SDS and SD

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for either SDS or SD, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

consistently more than 5 percentage points more likely to vote for SDS than university graduates. Meanwhile, university graduates were close to 5 percentage points more likely to vote for SD than their lower-educated counterparts.

All in all, Slovenia is probably the closest of the studied countries to possessing the "Brahmin" left and "Merchant" right parties. While income-based cleavage is not strongly pronounced, it does give some evidence of the Slovenian population's voting behaviour. It indicates the continued importance of redistributive issues in society. At the same time, the educational cleavage shows a clear trend, with the left dominating the highly educated voter group.

Conclusion

This study aimed to identify and explore the evolution of the relationship between the structure of political cleavages and socioeconomic inequalities in Central and Eastern Europe. The analysis was conducted using a large-scale cross-country survey – ESS, for Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, Estonia, Lithuania and Slovenia over the period from the beginning of the 21^{st} century. The methodology initially developed by Piketty, 2018 and applied for the first time to three CEE countries in Lindner et al., 2021 was extended to further countries in the region. Combining the ESS data for these various countries, a homogenous time series on political cleavages in the region was created, all the while accounting for the distribution of the party choice among each sample to be representative of the electorate's composition in each given election year. Through simple measures of inequality along different dimensions, mainly in net income and educational attainment, the investigation was conducted to determine whether one could relate the divides observed in voting patterns to distinct social or income inequality types. These were later discussed using the general input from various social sciences, mainly political science.

Even though all studied countries shared, to a certain extent, similar recent history, the results derived for each of them can sometimes be contradictory, which is a testament to the rich history of every one of these countries' pre-communist rule and complex societal structures. In most CEE countries, the left-wing parties moved closer to the centre on the economic and redistribution-related issues,[34] which generally resulted in them bleeding support from traditional workers voters. The general collapse of the support for the left parties was the case in every country except Estonia, where the share remained pretty stable over time, Slovenia, where these parties regained some of their lost support in the last decade and Lithuania, which was alternating between the right and left dominance over the analysed period. Overall, it is plausible to say that the left-wing parties were generally marginalized in the CEE in the 21^{st} century (Tavits and Letki, 2009; Kitschelt, 1999).

As for the income-based cleavages, clear trends, however not always along left-right divide lines, could be found in almost all cases, with Slovenia having fairly faint differences and lacking any clear trend in Slovakia. In Poland, stark income-related differences between PIS and PO/KO suggest strong "identity" based voting behaviour. Czechia and Estonia, interestingly, are the most apparent cases of traditional "class" based voting, which might relate to the left continuing a rather traditional agenda on redistribution issues, especially in the first one. Similar divisions are found in

[34] With a notable exception of Czechia.

Lithuania. However, their evolution was not as stable. In Hungary, "class" based voting was reversed, with left-wing becoming more popular among the top earners in comparison to the bottom 90% of the population, which might be explained by the broad appeal of the populist FIDESZ, which embraced, similarly to PIS, many pro-redistribution policies, and can be considered a nativist movement (Piketty and Goldhammer, 2020). Like in Hungary, Slovenia experienced a reversal in "class" based vote. Nevertheless, in this case, the gap between the left's positive income gradient and the right's negative income gradient is still smaller.

Looking at all studied countries, education-based cleavage can be considered better for explaining the voting behaviours of their populations due to its generally more stable trends across all countries. In Poland, with the time passing, the left became increasingly attractive to university graduates, however, an important cleavage between the two main parties is necessary to mention. Hungary seems to have come full circle, with the left attracting more educated voters most of the time and the right being associated with lower education. At the same time, in Estonia, the difference is hugely faint. However, it could suggest a slow move towards a multi-elite party system. Nevertheless, this is much more nuanced since ethnic divisions are a big consideration.[35] The Slovenian case provides probably the most visible example of "Brahmin" left out of all analysed CEE countries, with the left parties being much more attractive to university graduates.

In Czechia, the left still attracts a less educated electorate. Nonetheless, the gap seems to be slowly closing, which might indicate a move towards a multi-elite party system. Slovakia continues with stable education-based cleavage, where the most educated vote right-wing and the least educated vote left-wing. Since the income-based cleavage is not pronounced, a more substantial presence of identity-based politics and the "cultural" discourse seems to occur. Unlike all other countries, the negative education gradient in Lithuania can be primarily associated with the other parties.

Maybe unsurprisingly, the CEE countries are much more diverse than it could be initially suspected in terms of their political and socio-economic cleavages. Some continue to boast traditional "class" divisions, at least to a noticeable extent, while others seem to transition toward Western-style political dynamics slowly. The performed work could be further improved with updates relating to the most recent elections, especially in Poland and Czechia, where the populist wave seems to be reversed, but also in Slovakia, where the opposite is true. Additionally, in the case of the Baltic states, the update on the last elections could be interesting in light of the Russian in-

[35]Problem of the marginalization of the Russian-speaking minority is discussed more in detail in the eighth chapter.

vasion of Ukraine, which sent shockwaves in the region and specifically in the Baltics, which host significant Russian-speaking minorities. Moreover, this work cannot claim to be exhaustive in terms of its analysis and could benefit from looking more deeply into aspects of other types of inequalities.

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Appendix

European Social Survey

The following data sets of ESS were used in the given study:

- European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC), 2023a,
- European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC), 2012,
- European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC), 2018,
- European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC), 2023c,
- European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC), 2023c,
- European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC), 2023d,
- European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC), 2023e,
- European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC), 2023f,
- European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC), 2023g,
- European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC), 2023h,
- European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC), 2023b.

Table 2: Sample Sizes in ESS

Country	R1 2002 /2003	R2 2004 /2005	R3 2006 /2007	R4 2008 /2009	R5 2010 /2011	R6 2012 /2013	R7 2014 /2015	R8 2016 /2017	R9 2018 /2019	R10 2020 -2022
Czechia	1360	3,026	-	2,018	2,386	2,009	2,148	2,269	2,398	2,476
Estonia		1,989	1,517	1,661	1,793	2,380	2,051	2,019	1,904	1,542
Hungary	1,685	1,498	1,518	1,544	1,561	2,014	1,698	1,614	1,661	1,849
Lithuania	-	-	-	-	1,677	2,109	2,250	2,122	1,835	1,659
Poland	2,110	1,716	1,721	1,619	1,751	1,898	1,615	1,694	1,500	2,065
Slovakia	-	1,512	1,766	1,810	1,856	1,847	-	-	1,083	1,418
Slovenia	1,519	1,442	1,476	1,286	1,403	1,257	1,224	1,307	1,318	1,252

Source: ESS

Poland

Table 3: Summary Statistics Poland

Variable	2001	2005	2007	2011	2015	2019
Age: 15-40	0.32	0.35	0.30	0.32	0.28	0.27
Age: 40-60	0.46	0.43	0.41	0.36	0.36	0.34
Age: 60+	0.22	0.22	0.29	0.31	0.36	0.39
Education: Primary or lower	0.21	0.24	0.31	0.44	0.40	0.26
Education: Secondary	0.65	0.63	0.48	0.37	0.36	0.39
Education: Tertiary	0.14	0.13	0.21	0.19	0.24	0.34
Employment status: Employed	0.48	0.47	0.48	0.50	0.53	0.54
Employment status: Unemployed	0.07	0.05	0.04	0.06	0.03	0.03
Employment status: Inactive	0.45	0.47	0.48	0.44	0.44	0.43
Marital status: Married or with partner	0.69	0.68	0.67	0.68	0.68	0.67
Religion: No religion	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.07	0.00
Religion: Catholic	0.93	0.94	0.94	0.93	0.92	0.98
Religion: Other Christian	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01
Religion: Muslim	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Religion: Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
Church attendance: Never	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.05	0.14
Church attendance: Less than monthly	0.34	0.35	0.31	0.31	0.36	0.49
Church attendance: Monthly or more	0.62	0.62	0.65	0.65	0.60	0.36
Rural-urban: Rural areas	0.39	0.42	0.42	0.47	0.46	0.33
Gender: Man	0.51	0.48	0.47	0.51	0.50	0.49

Data: ESS

Table 4: Parties Classification in Poland

Party	Party name	Party orientation
AWSP	Right Solidarity Electoral Action	Right
KO	Civic Coalition	Right
KORWIN	New Hope	Right
KUKIZ15	Kukiz'15	Right
KWN	Confederation of Freedom and Independence	Right
LID	Left and Democrats	Left
LPR	League of Polish Families	Right
NL	New Left	Left
NOWOCZESNA	Modern	Right
PALIKOT	Palikot Movement	Right
PIS	Law and Justice	Right
PO	Civic Platform	Right
PSL	Polish People's Party	Left
RAZEM	Left Together	Left
SLD	Democratic Left Alliance	Left
SRP	Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland	Left
TD	Third Way	Right
UW	Freedom Union	Left
ZL	United Left	Left

Data: Manifesto Project

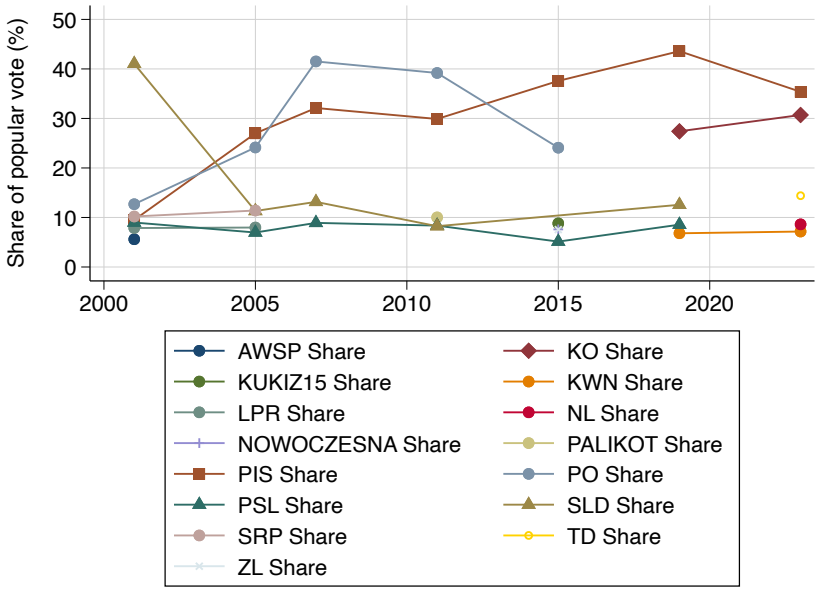

Figure 32: Election results by parties in Poland, 2001-2023

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza (National Electoral Commission)", n.d.).

Note: Only parties which crossed the 5% threshold at least once are presented.

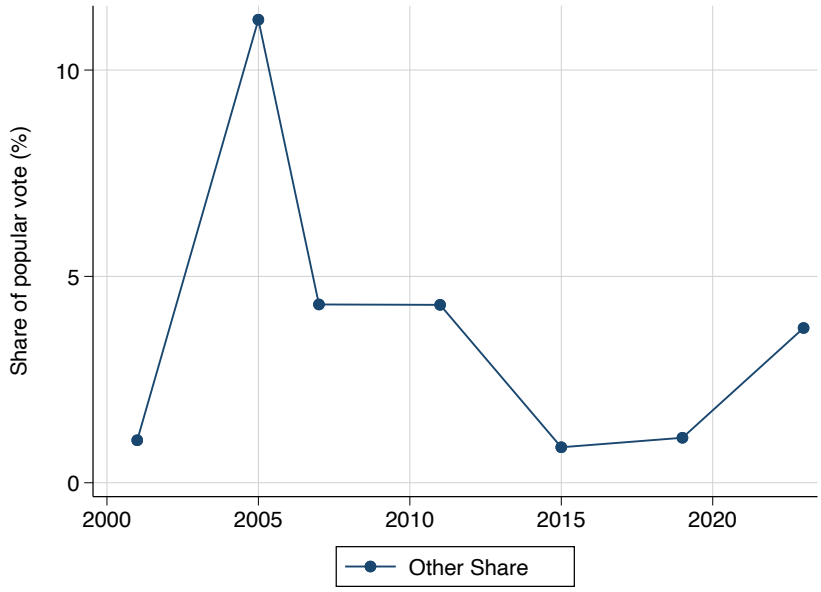

Figure 33: Election results of other than left- and right-wing parties in Poland, 2001-2023

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza (National Electoral Commission)", n.d.).

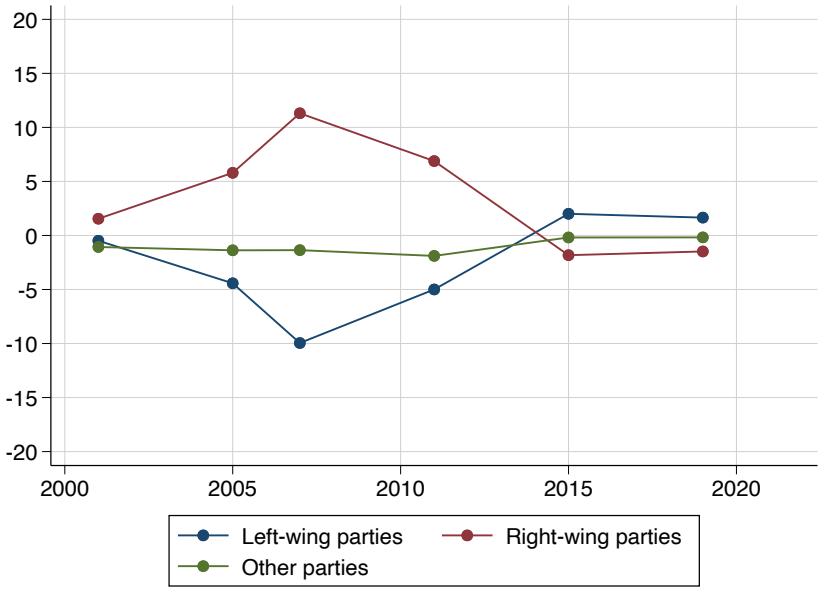

Figure 34: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Poland - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

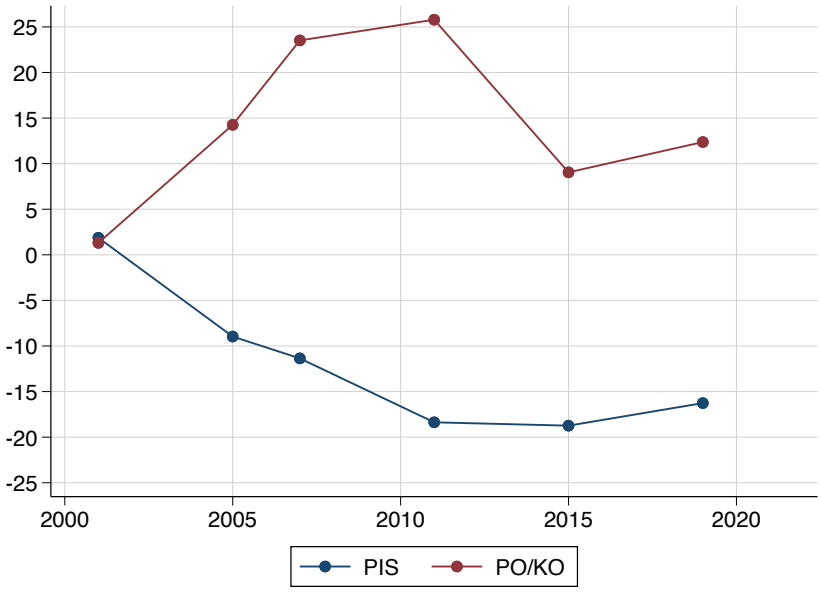

Figure 35: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) PIS vs PO/KO - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either PIS or PO/KO - no controls.

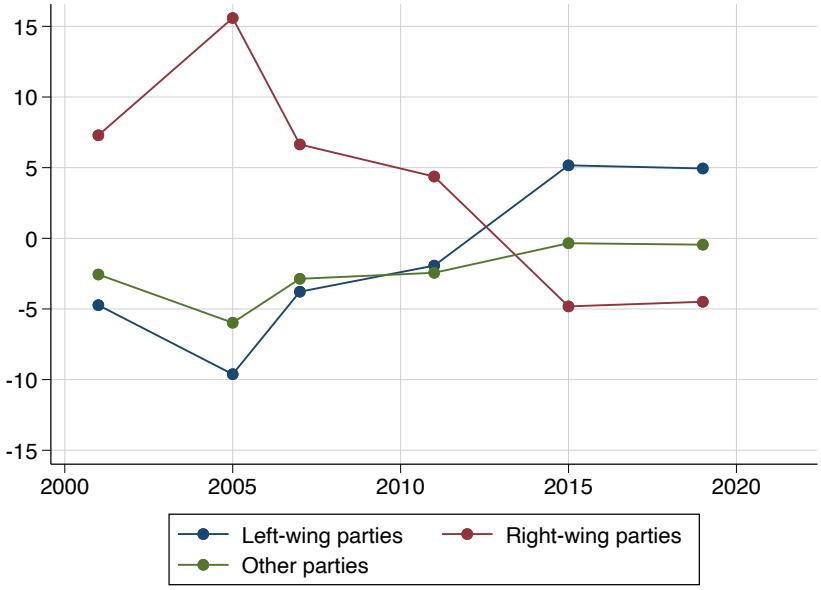

Figure 36: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Poland - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

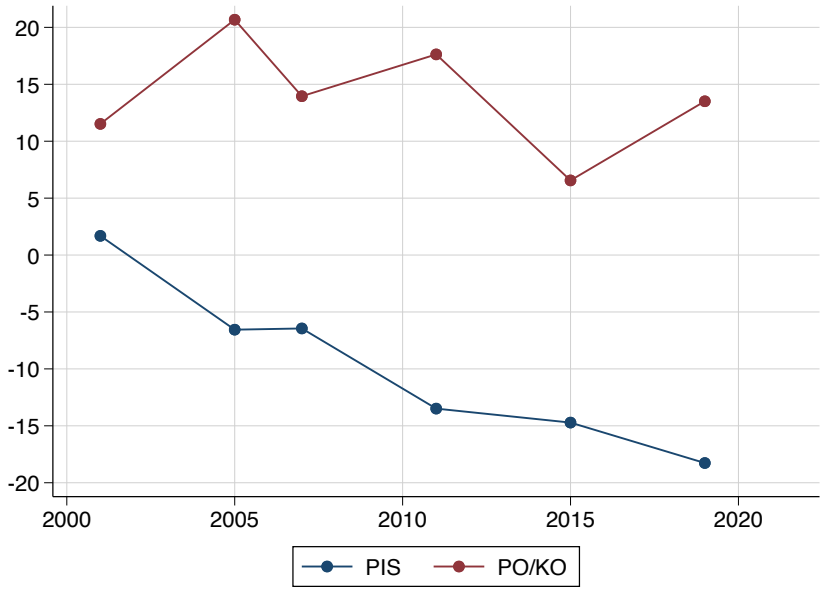

Figure 37: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) PIS vs PO/KO - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for either PIS or PO/KO - no controls.

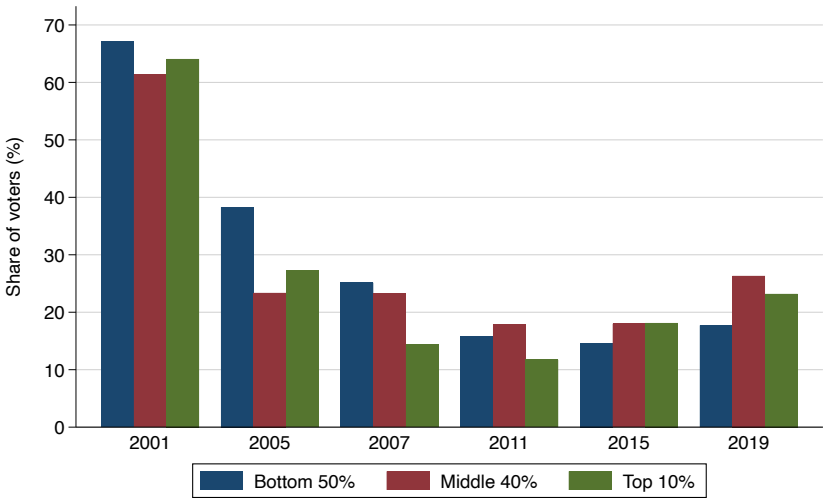

Figure 38: Left vote by income group in Poland

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

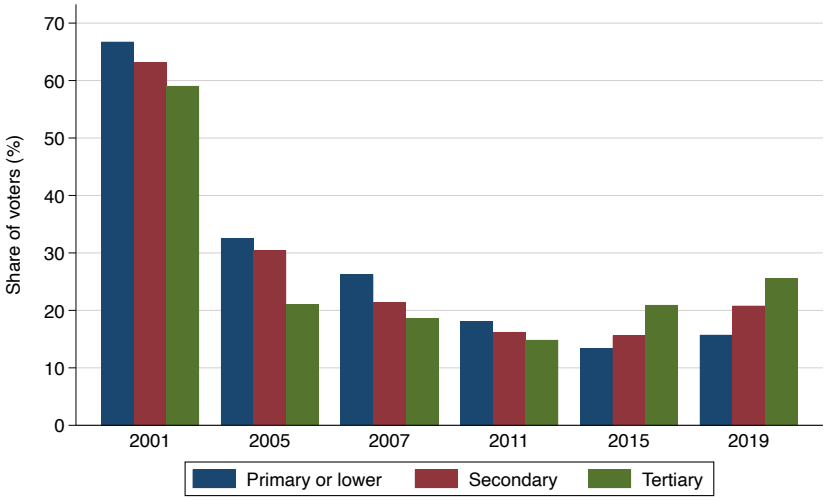

Figure 39: Left vote by education level in Poland
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

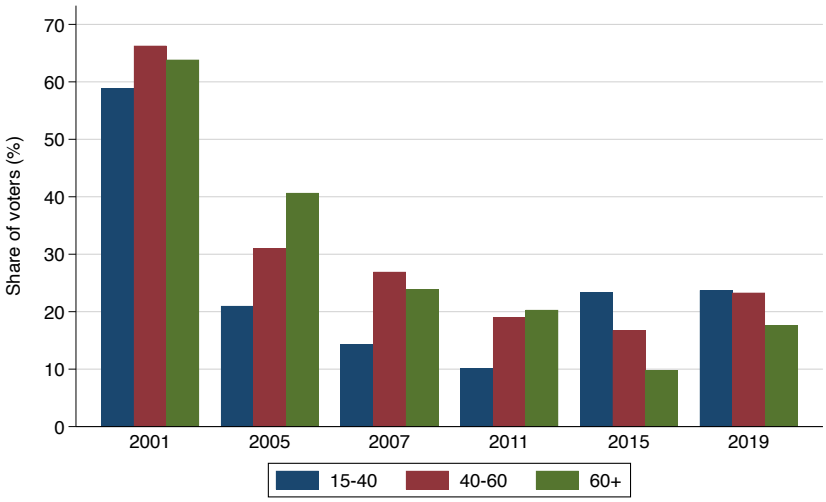

Figure 40: Left vote by age group in Poland
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

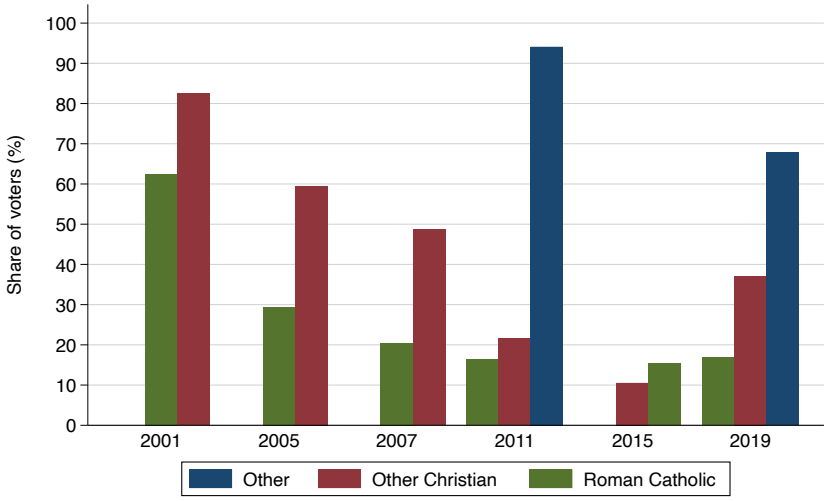

Figure 41: Left vote by religious affiliation in Poland
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Figure 42: Left vote by gender in Poland
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Czechia

Table 5: Summary Statistics Czechia

Variable	2002	2006	2010	2013	2017
Age: 15-40	0.32	0.32	0.33	0.26	0.24
Age: 40-60	0.40	0.42	0.41	0.42	0.44
Age: 60+	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.32	0.33
Education: Primary or lower	0.15	0.12	0.10	0.09	0.09
Education: Secondary	0.73	0.71	0.71	0.70	0.68
Education: Tertiary	0.13	0.17	0.19	0.22	0.24
Employment status: Employed	0.51	0.59	0.58	0.60	0.60
Employment status: Unemployed	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.02
Employment status: Inactive	0.46	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.38
Marital status: Married or with partner	0.69	0.70	0.67	0.71	0.67
Religion: No religion	0.68	0.72	0.77	0.78	0.77
Religion: Catholic	0.28	0.24	0.20	0.19	0.20
Religion: Other Christian	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.02
Religion: Muslim	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Religion: Other	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01
Church attendance: Never	0.54	0.58	0.59	0.58	0.60
Church attendance: Less than monthly	0.37	0.33	0.35	0.35	0.34
Church attendance: Monthly or more	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.07	0.06
Rural-urban: Rural areas	0.31	0.31	0.30	0.30	0.32
Gender: Man	0.50	0.50	0.51	0.50	0.50

Data: ESS

Table 6: Parties Classification in Czechia

Party	Party name	Party orientation
ANO2011	Action of Dissatisfied Citizens 2011	Right
ČPS	Czech Pirate Party	Left
ČSSD	Czech Social Democratic Party	Left
KDU-ČSL	Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party	Right
KSČM	Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia	Left
ODS	Civic Democratic Party	Right
PAS	Pirates and Mayors	Left
SPD	Freedom and Direct Democracy	Right
SPOLU	ODS, KDU-CSL, TOP09	Right
SAN	Mayors and Independents	Left
SZ	Green Party	Left
TOP09	Tradition Responsibility Prosperity 09	Right
UPDTO	Tomio Okamura's Dawn of Direct Democracy	Right
VV	Public Affairs	Right

Data: Manifesto Project

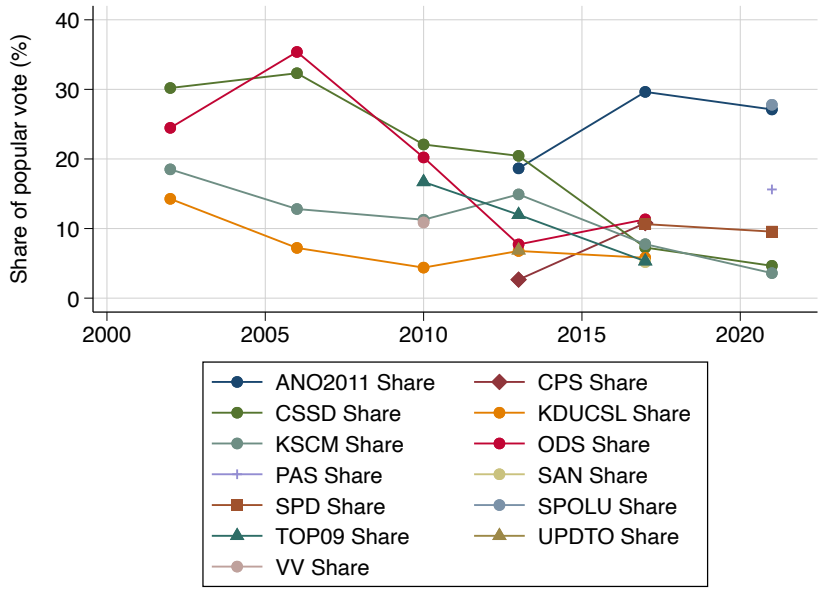

Figure 43: Election results by parties in Czechia, 2002-2021

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Český statistický úřad (Czech Statistical Office)", n.d.).

Note: Only parties which crossed the 5% threshold at least once are presented.

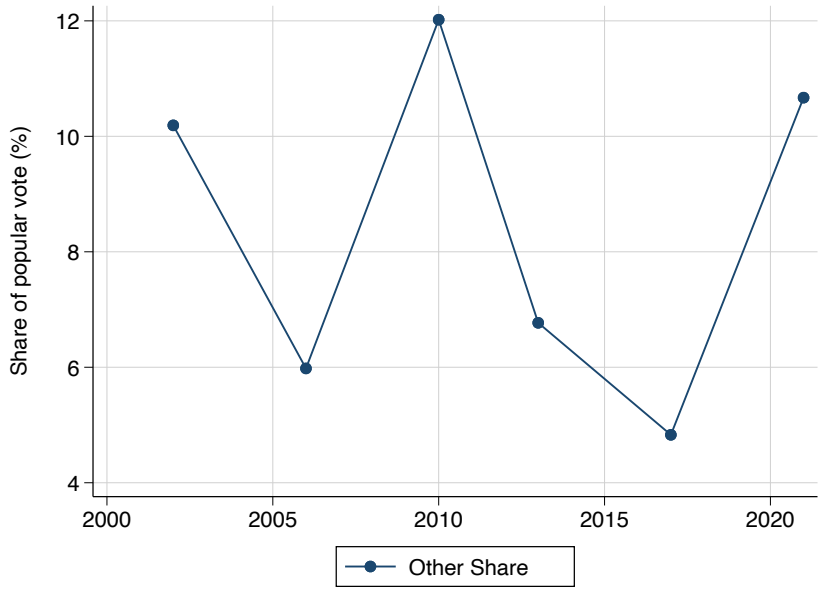

Figure 44: Election results of other than left- and right-wing parties in Czechia, 2002-2021

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Český statistický úřad (Czech Statistical Office)", n.d.).

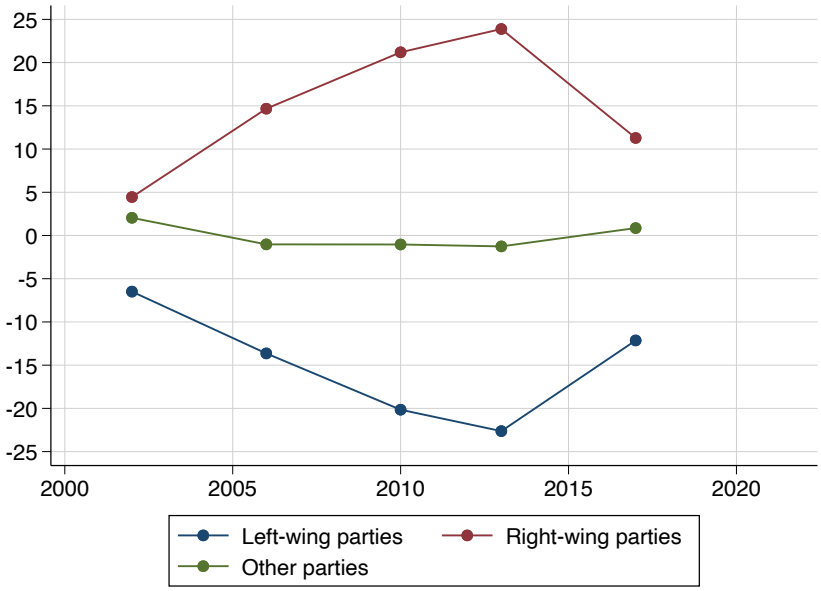

Figure 45: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Czechia - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

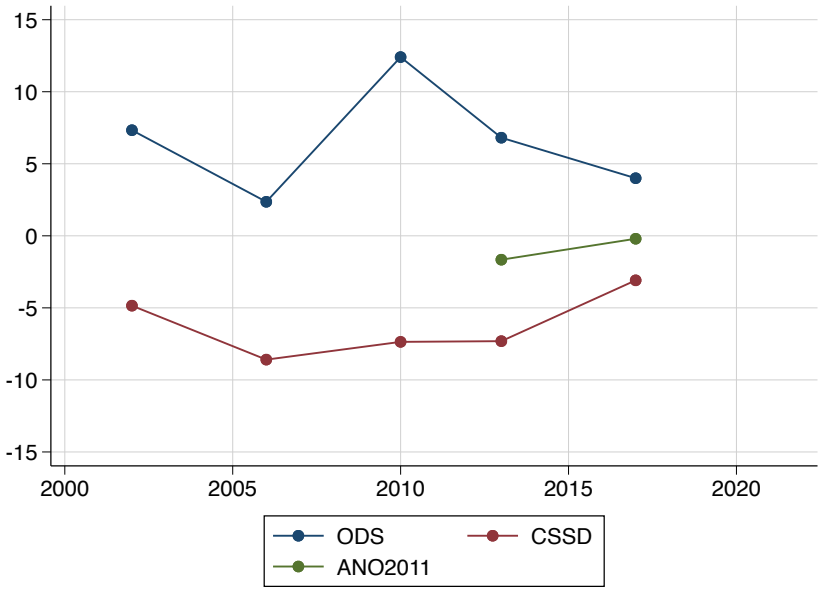

Figure 46: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) ODS, ČSSD and ANO2011

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either ODS, ČSSD or ANO2011, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

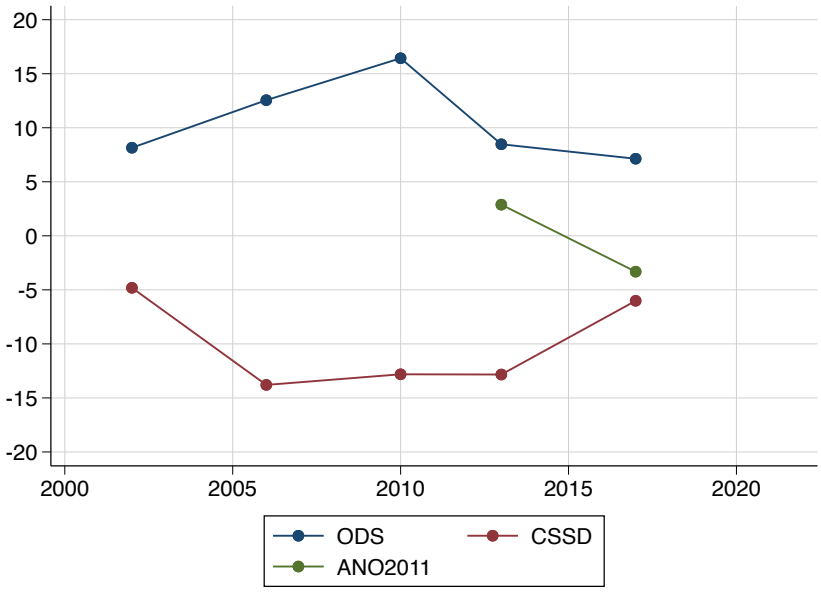

Figure 47: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) ODS, ČSSD and ANO2011 - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either ODS, ČSSD or ANO2011 - no controls.

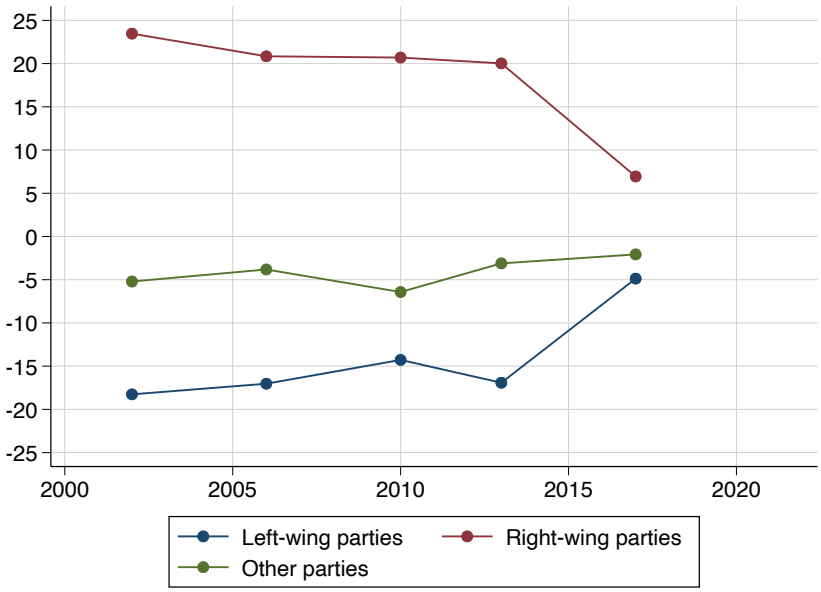

Figure 48: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Czechia - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

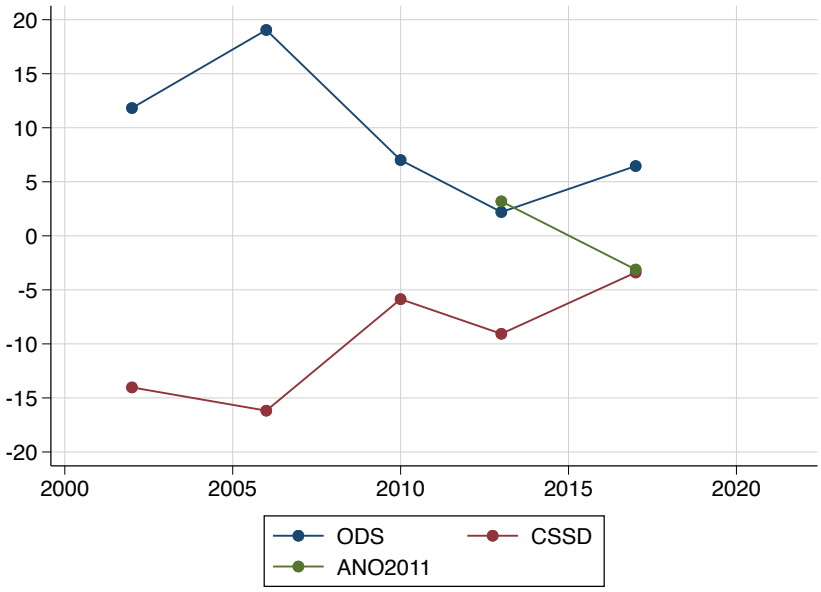

Figure 49: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) ODS, ČSSD and ANO2011

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for either ODS, ČSSD or ANO2011, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

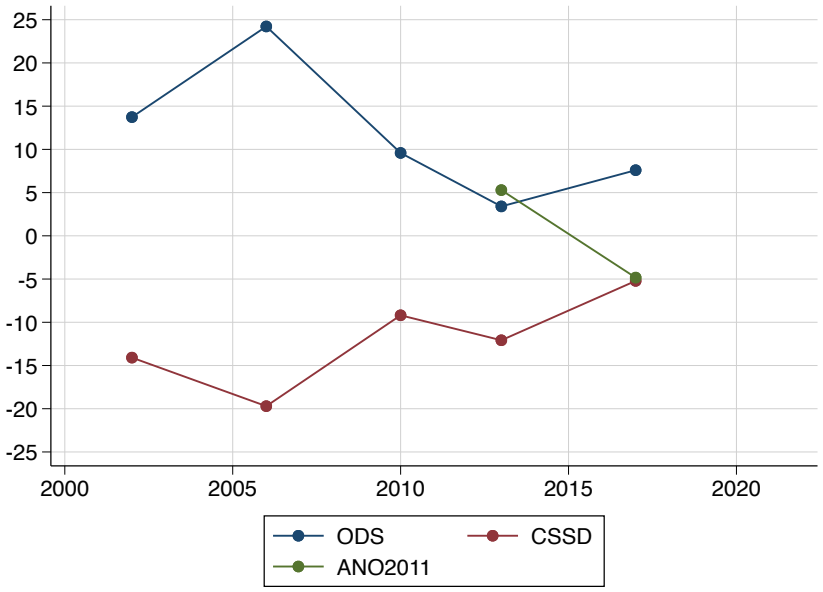

Figure 50: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) ODS, ČSSD and ANO2011 - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for either ODS, ČSSD or ANO2011 - no controls.

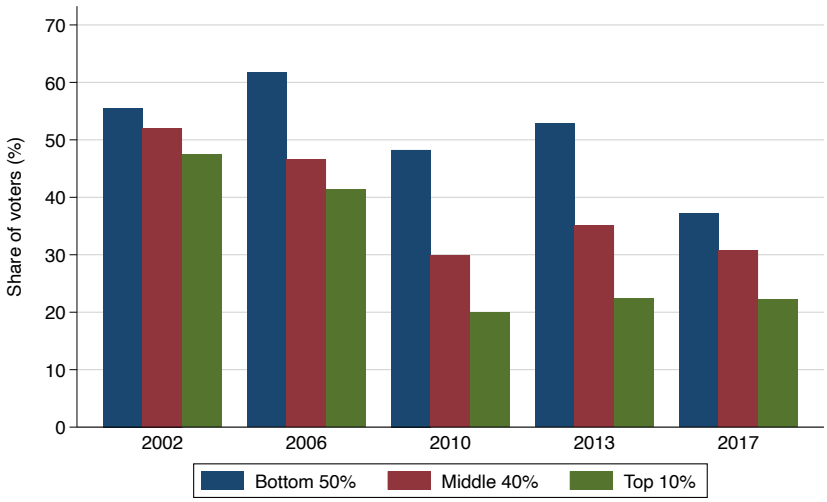

Figure 51: Left vote by income group in Czechia

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

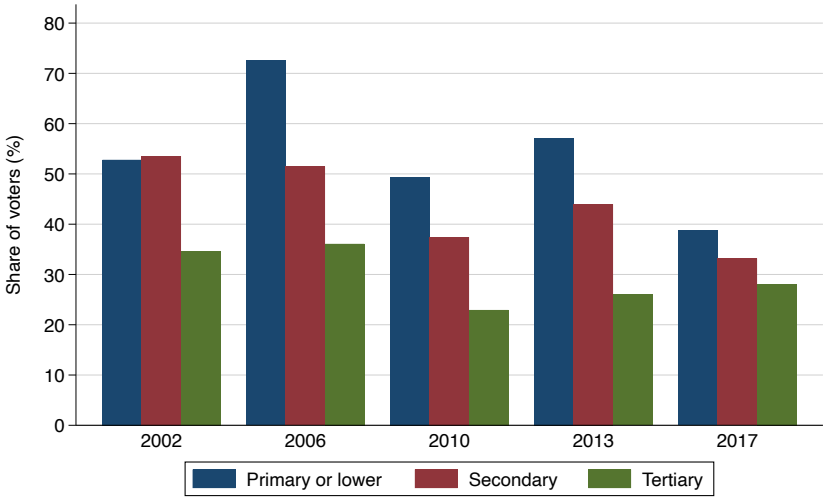

Figure 52: Left vote by education level in Czechia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

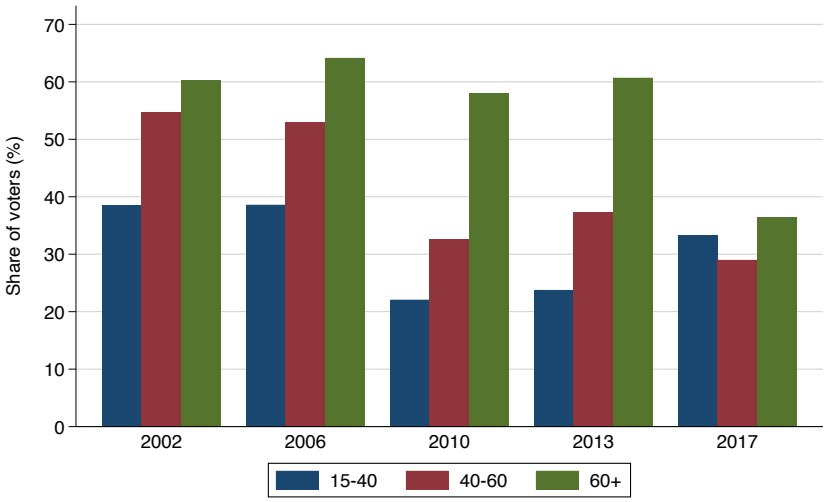

Figure 53: Left vote by age group in Czechia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

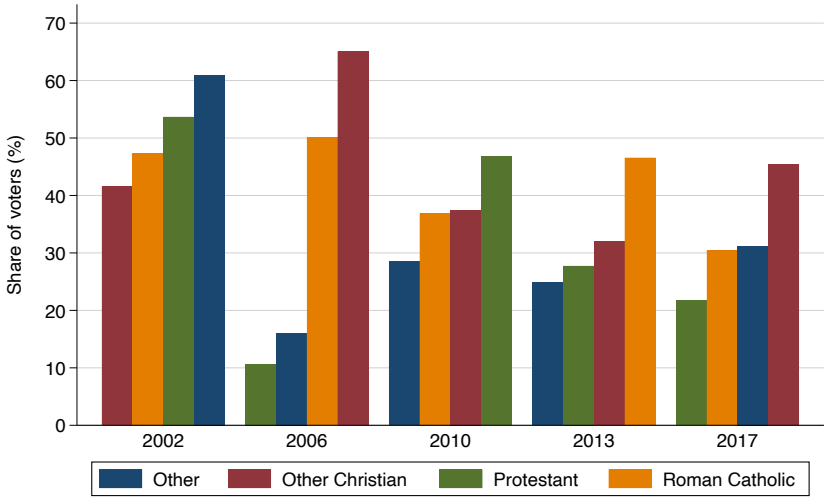

Figure 54: Left vote by religious affiliation in Czechia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

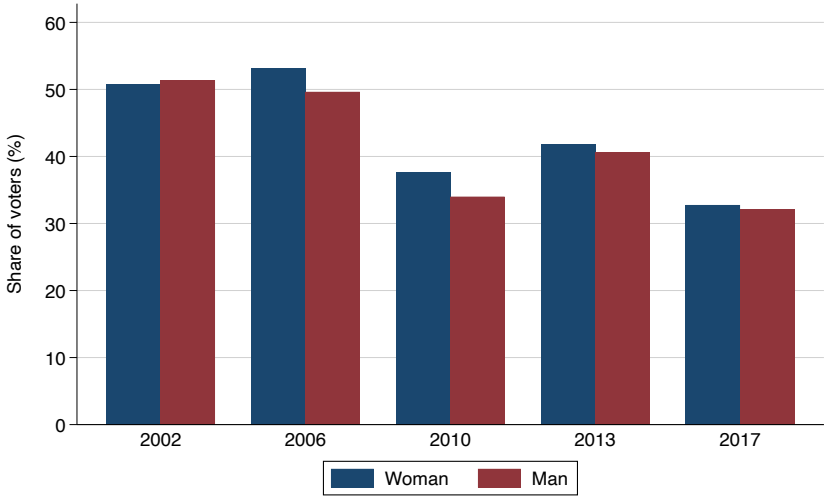

Figure 55: Left vote by gender in Czechia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Slovakia

Table 7: Summary Statistics Slovakia

Variable	2002	2006	2010	2012	2016	2020
Age: 15-40	0.38	0.39	0.40	0.34	0.33	0.41
Age: 40-60	0.40	0.39	0.40	0.41	0.38	0.40
Age: 60+	0.22	0.23	0.21	0.25	0.29	0.19
Education: Primary or lower	0.26	0.20	0.17	0.16	0.11	0.09
Education: Secondary	0.62	0.67	0.67	0.68	0.66	0.63
Education: Tertiary	0.12	0.13	0.17	0.17	0.23	0.29
Employment status: Employed	0.51	0.54	0.49	0.52	0.61	0.62
Employment status: Unemployed	0.09	0.05	0.07	0.08	0.03	0.06
Employment status: Inactive	0.40	0.41	0.44	0.40	0.37	0.32
Marital status: Married or with partner	0.61	0.64	0.62	0.65	0.67	0.66
Religion: No religion	0.21	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.29	0.30
Religion: Catholic	0.62	0.67	0.66	0.67	0.57	0.55
Religion: Other Christian	0.15	0.12	0.11	0.12	0.14	0.14
Religion: Muslim	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Religion: Other	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
Church attendance: Never	0.22	0.19	0.21	0.20	0.18	0.24
Church attendance: Less than monthly	0.43	0.46	0.40	0.41	0.47	0.49
Church attendance: Monthly or more	0.34	0.35	0.38	0.39	0.35	0.26
Rural-urban: Rural areas	0.49	0.47	0.50	0.49	0.42	0.49
Gender: Man	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.49	0.51	0.47

Data: ESS

Table 8: Parties Classification in Slovakia

Party	Party name	Party orientation
ANO	Alliance of the New Citizen	Right
H-SD	Voice – Social Democracy	Left
HZD	Movement for Democracy	Right
HZDS	Movement for a Democratic Slovakia	Right
KDH	Christian Democratic Movement	Right
KSS	Communist Party of Slovakia	Left
ĽSNS	People's Party Our Slovakia	Right
MA	Hungarian Alliance	Right
MKS	Hungarian Community Togetherness	Right
MH	Bridge	Right
OĽaNO	Ordinary People and Independent Personalities	Right
OĽaNOaP	OĽaNO and Friends	Right
PS	Progressive Slovakia	Right
PS-Spolu	PS - Together	Right
PSNS	True Slovak National Party	Right
Republika	Republic	Right
SaS	Freedom and Solidarity	Right
SDKÚ	Slovak Democratic and Christian Union	Right
SDKÚ-DS	SDKÚ – Democratic Party	Right
Sieť	Network	Right
SR	We Are Family	Right
SMER-SD	Direction – Social Democracy	Left
SMK	Party of the Hungarian Coalition	Left
SNS	Slovak National Party	Right
ZL	For the People	Right

Data: Manifesto Project

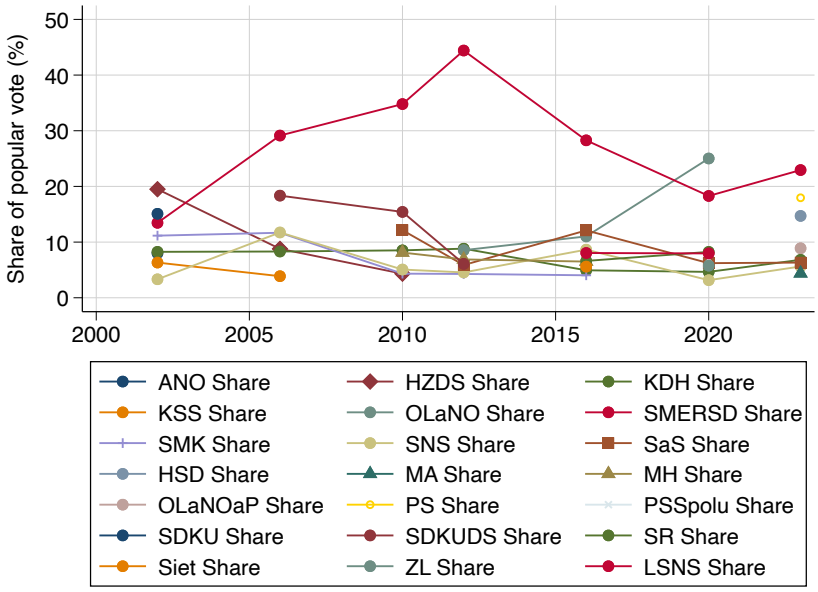

Figure 56: Election results by parties in Slovakia, 2002-2023

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Štatistický úrad Slovenskej republiky (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic)", n.d.).

Note: Only parties which crossed the 5% threshold at least once are presented.

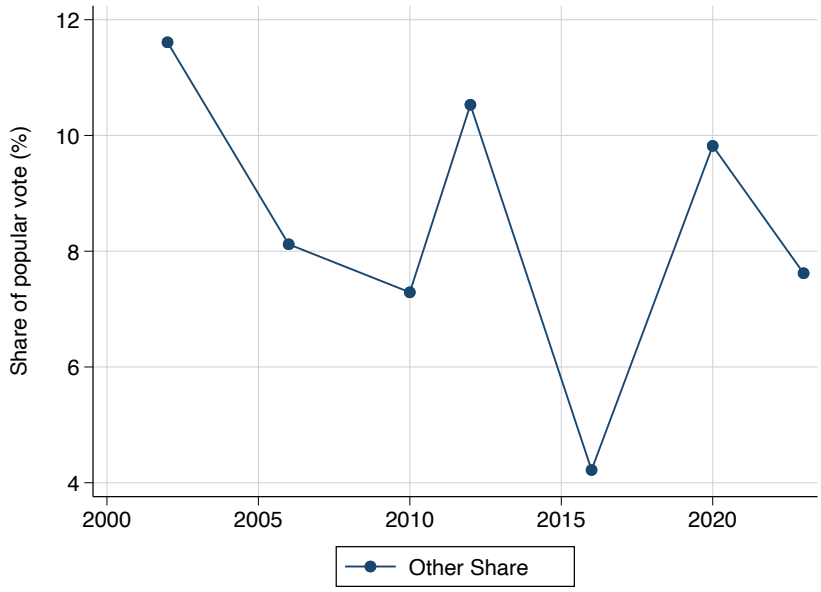

Figure 57: Election results of other than left- and right-wing parties in Slovakia, 2002-2023

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Štatistický úrad Slovenskej republiky (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic)", n.d.).

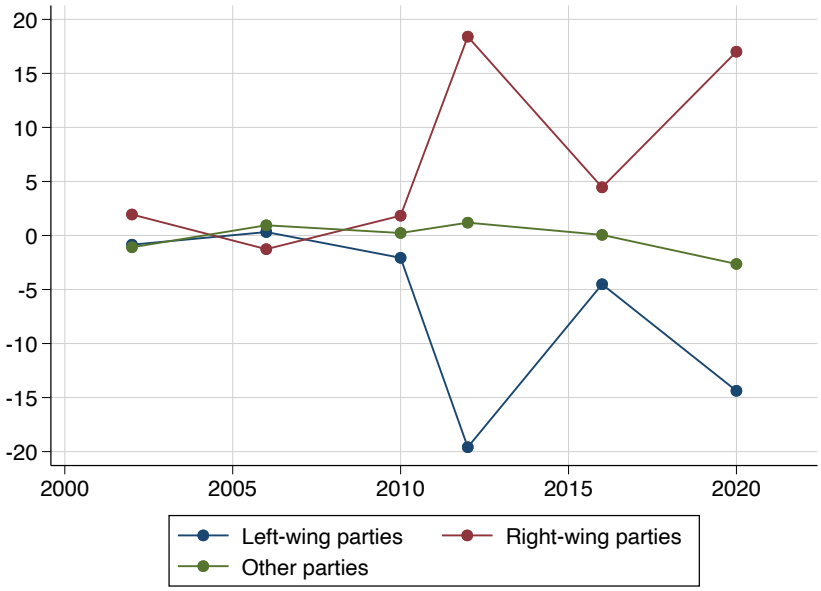

Figure 58: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Slovakia - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

Figure 59: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) SMER-SD, SDKÚ and OLaNO

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either SMER-SD, SDKÚ or OLaNO, after controlling for age, gender, and education.

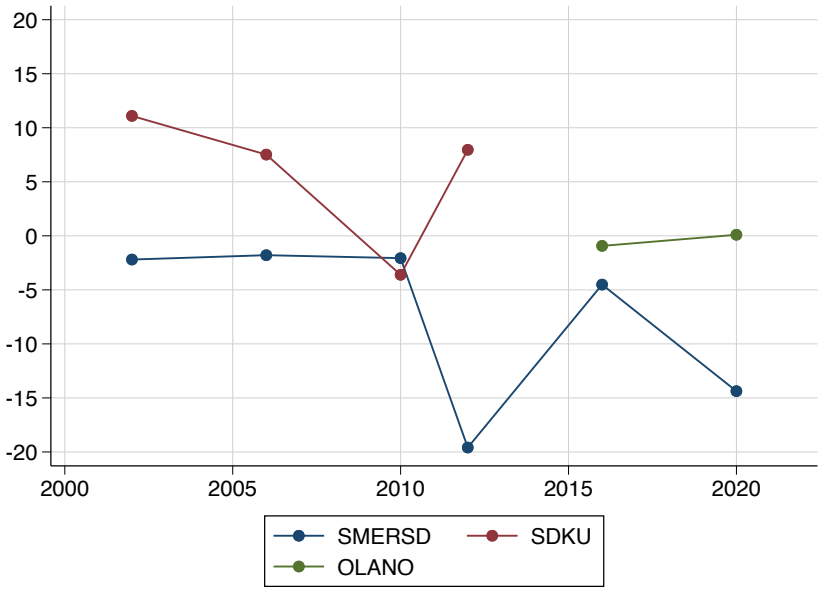

Figure 60: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) SMER-SD, SDKÚ and OLaNO - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either SMER-SD, SDKÚ or OLaNO - no controls.

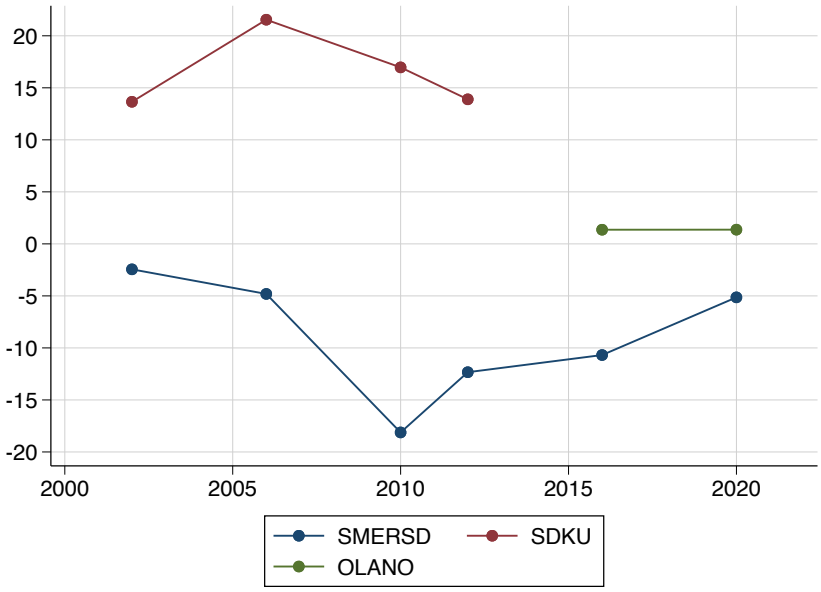

Figure 61: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) SMER-SD, SDKÚ and OLaNO

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for either SMER-SD, SDKÚ or OLaNO, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

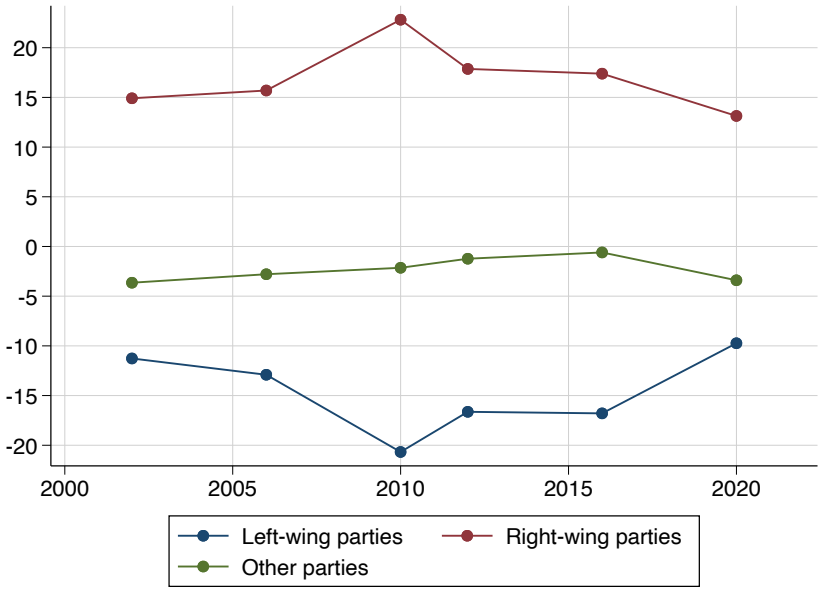

Figure 62: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Slovakia - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

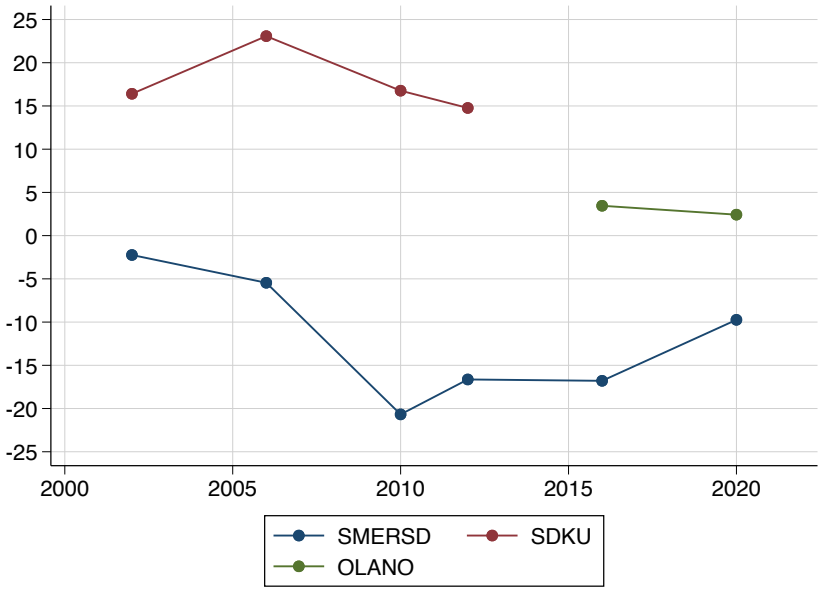

Figure 63: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) SMER-SD, SDKÚ and OLaNO - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for either SMER-SD, SDKÚ or OLaNO - no controls.

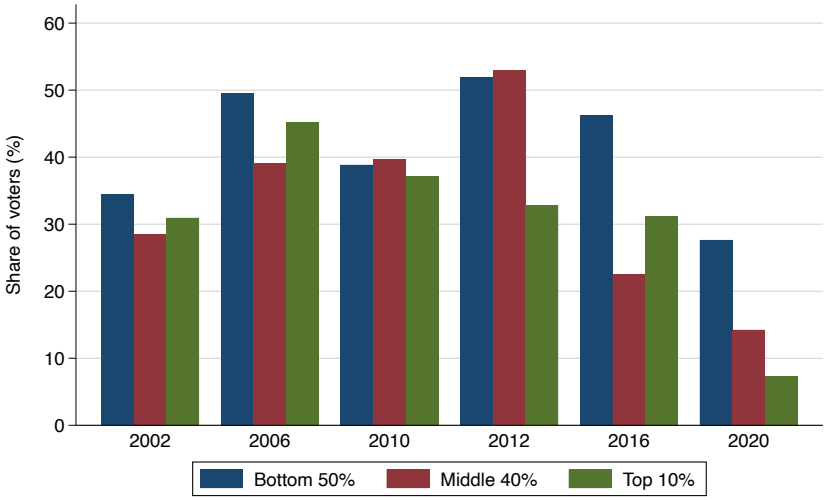

Figure 64: Left vote by income group in Slovakia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

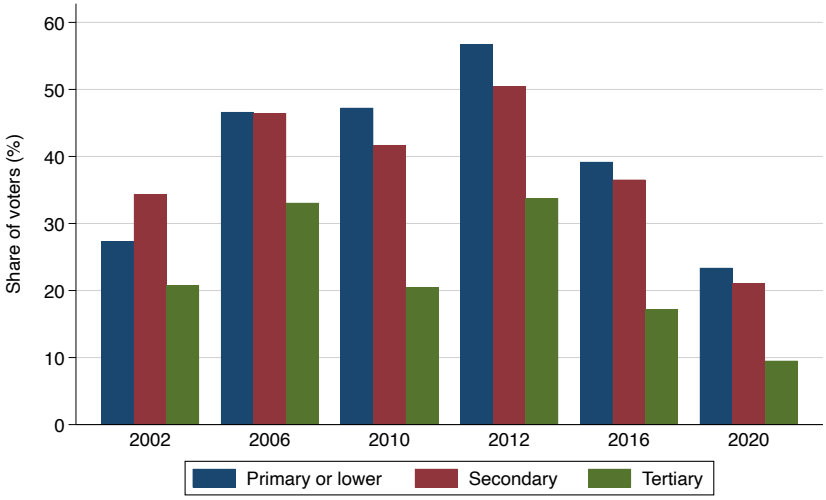

Figure 65: Left vote by education level in Slovakia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

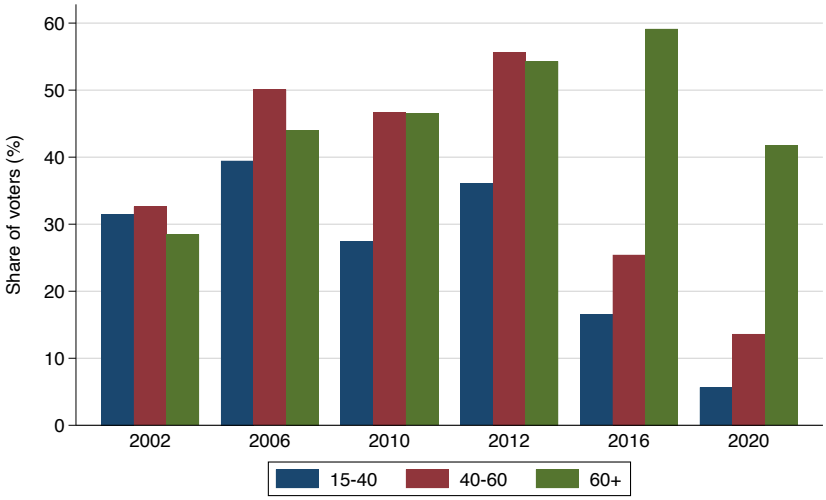

Figure 66: Left vote by age group in Slovakia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

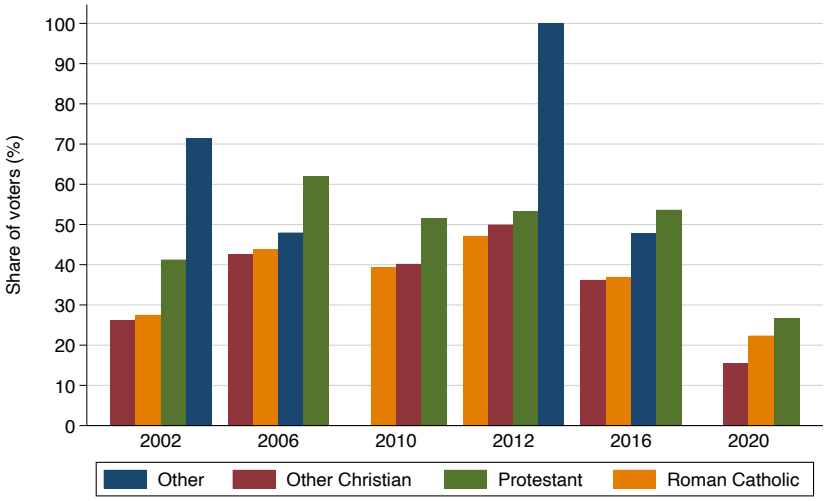

Figure 67: Left vote by religious affiliation in Slovakia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

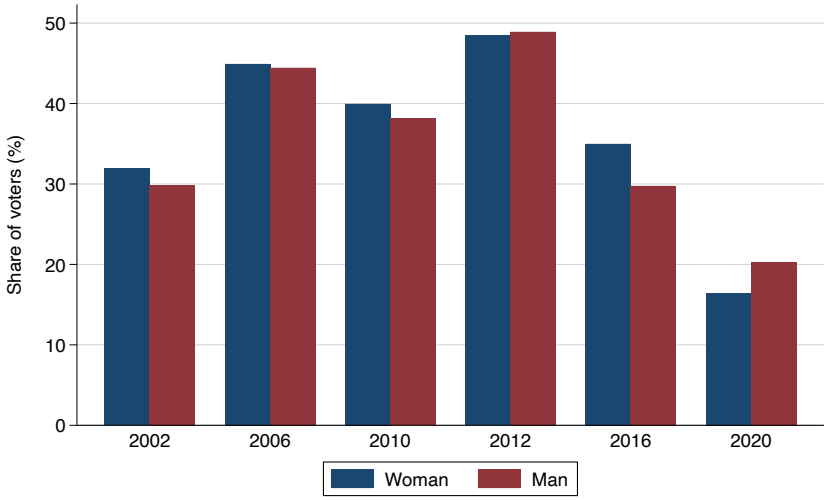

Figure 68: Left vote by gender in Slovakia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Hungary

Table 9: Summary Statistics Hungary

Variable	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
Age: 15-40	0.38	0.37	0.33	0.26	0.24
Age: 40-60	0.38	0.36	0.38	0.36	0.39
Age: 60+	0.25	0.27	0.29	0.38	0.36
Education: Primary or lower	0.33	0.28	0.26	0.24	0.21
Education: Secondary	0.52	0.55	0.54	0.55	0.56
Education: Tertiary	0.14	0.17	0.21	0.21	0.24
Employment status: Employed	0.47	0.46	0.47	0.55	0.58
Employment status: Unemployed	0.03	0.06	0.07	0.02	0.03
Employment status: Inactive	0.50	0.48	0.46	0.43	0.40
Marital status: Married or with partner	0.63	0.63	0.60	0.63	0.63
Religion: No religion	0.54	0.38	0.41	0.45	0.41
Religion: Catholic	0.32	0.44	0.43	0.41	0.47
Religion: Other Christian	0.13	0.18	0.15	0.14	0.12
Religion: Muslim	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Religion: Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Church attendance: Never	0.39	0.39	0.36	0.37	0.34
Church attendance: Less than monthly	0.50	0.51	0.53	0.55	0.56
Church attendance: Monthly or more	0.12	0.11	0.11	0.09	0.10
Rural-urban: Rural areas	0.25	0.41	0.36	0.31	0.30
Gender: Man	0.45	0.46	0.44	0.44	0.46

Data: ESS

Table 10: Parties Classification in Hungary

Party	Party name	Party orientation
DK	Democratic Coalition	Left
EM	DK - Jobbik - Momentum Movement - MSZP - LMP - Dialogue	Left
FIDESZ-KDNP	Hungarian Civic Alliance - KDNP	Right
FIDESZ-MDF	Hungarian Civic Alliance - MDF	Right
Jobbik	The Movement for a Better Hungary	Right
KDNP	Christian Democratic People's Party	Right
LMP	Hungary's Green Party	Left
MDF	Hungarian Democratic Forum	Right
MI HAZÁNK	Our Homeland Movement	Right
MSZP	Hungarian Socialist Party	Left
BO	MSZP - Together - DK - Dialogue for Hungary - Hungarian Liberal Party	Left
MSZPP	Hungarian Socialist Party - Dialogue	Left
SZDSZ	Alliance of Free Democrats	Left

Data: Manifesto Project

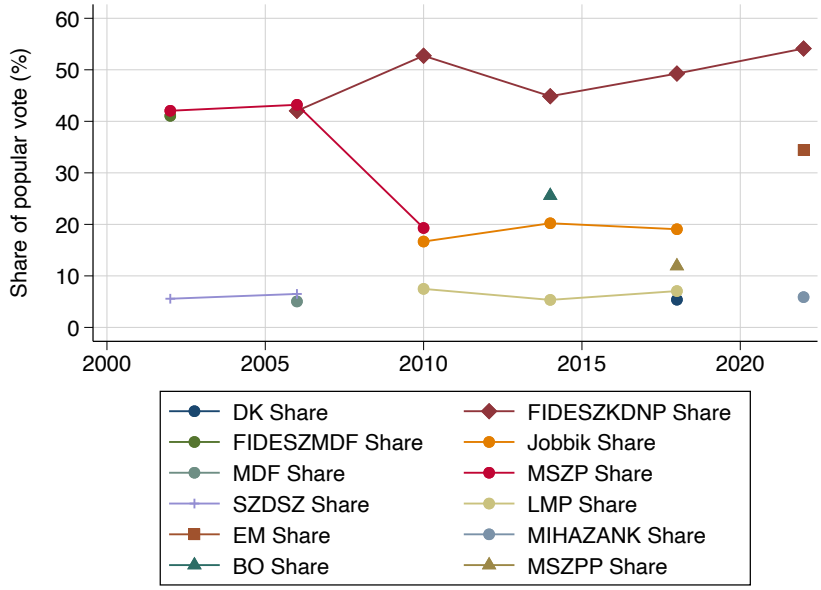

Figure 69: Election results by parties in Hungary, 2002-2022

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Nemzeti Választási Iroda (National Election Commission)", n.d.).

Note: Only parties which crossed the 5% threshold at least once are presented.

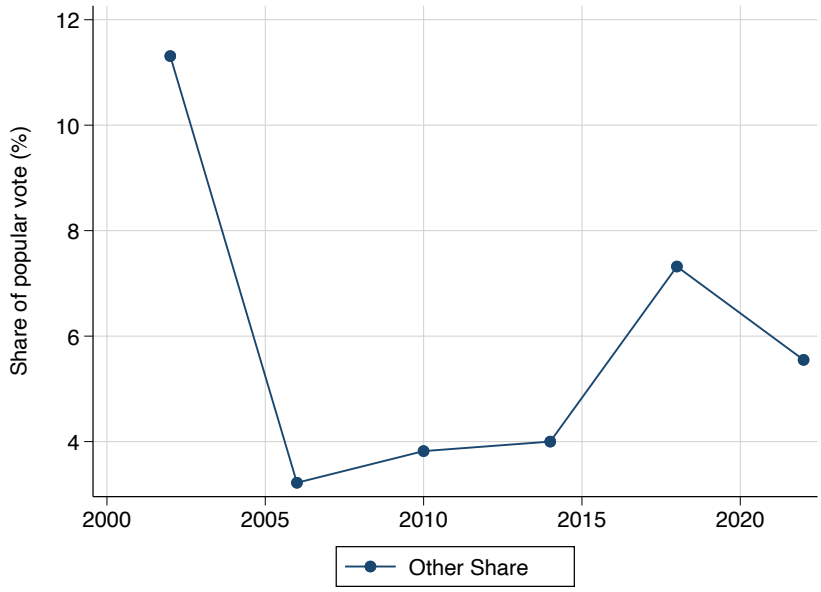

Figure 70: Election results of other than left- and right-wing parties in Hungary, 2002-2022

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Nemzeti Választási Iroda (National Election Commission)", n.d.).

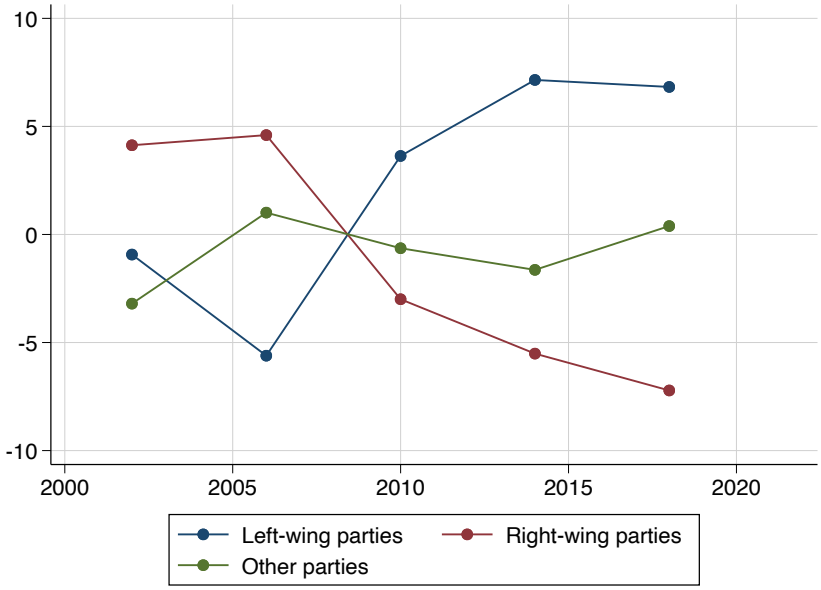

Figure 71: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Hungary - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

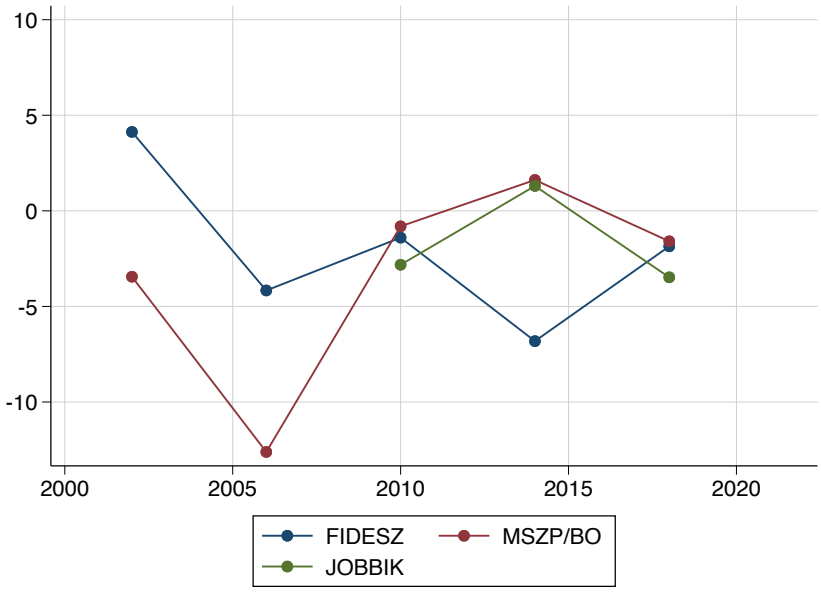

Figure 72: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) FIDESZ, MSZP and Jobbik - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either FIDESZ, MSZP or Jobbik - no controls.

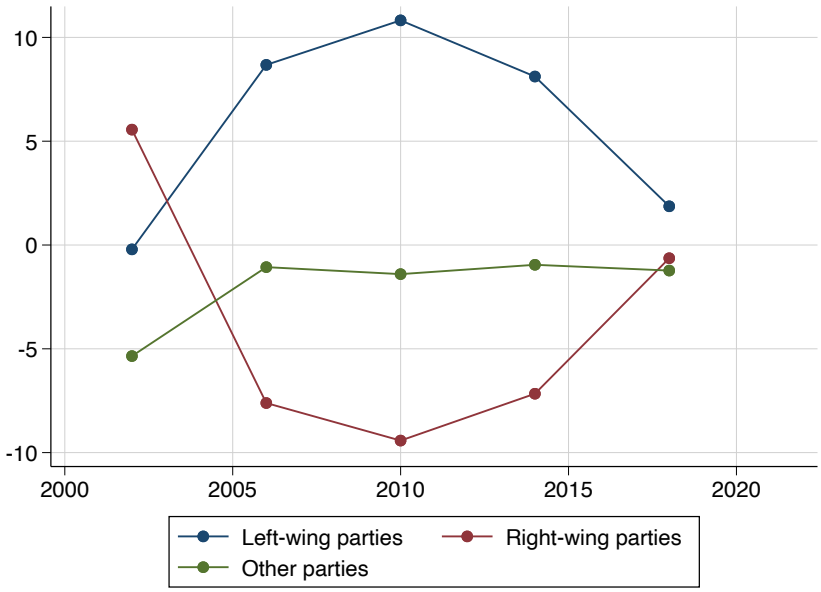

Figure 73: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Hungary - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

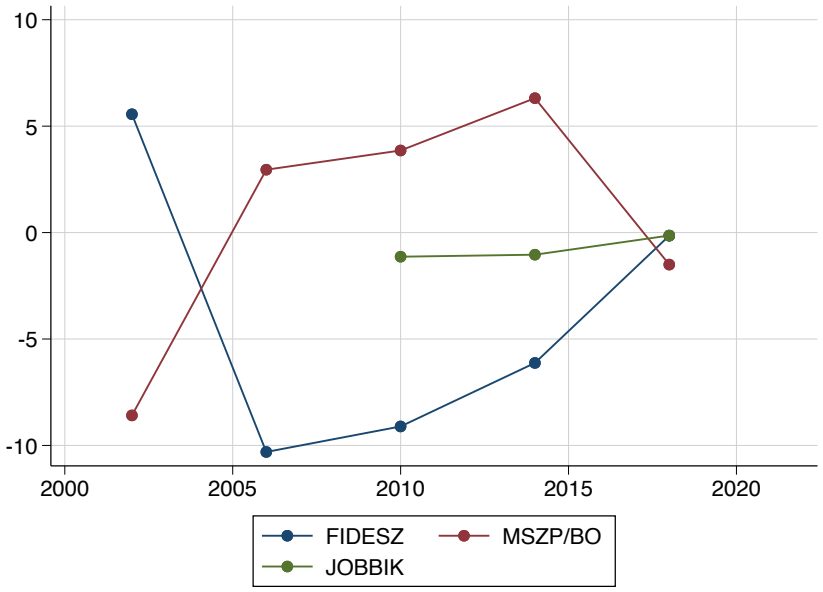

Figure 74: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) FIDESZ, MSZP and Jobbik - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for either FIDESZ, MSZP or Jobbik - no controls.

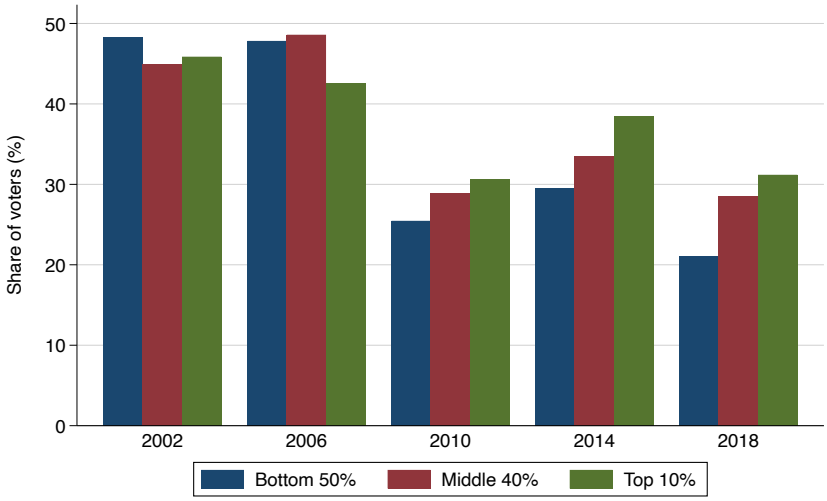

Figure 75: Left vote by income group in Hungary

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

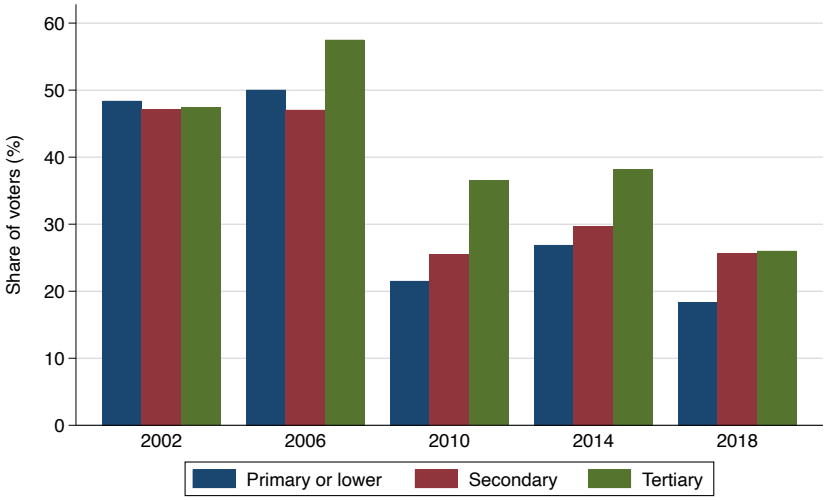

Figure 76: Left vote by education level in Hungary
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

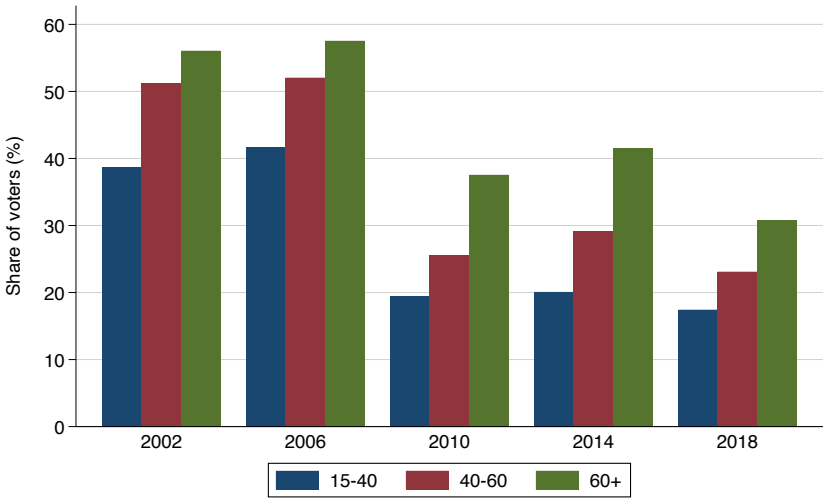

Figure 77: Left vote by age group in Hungary
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

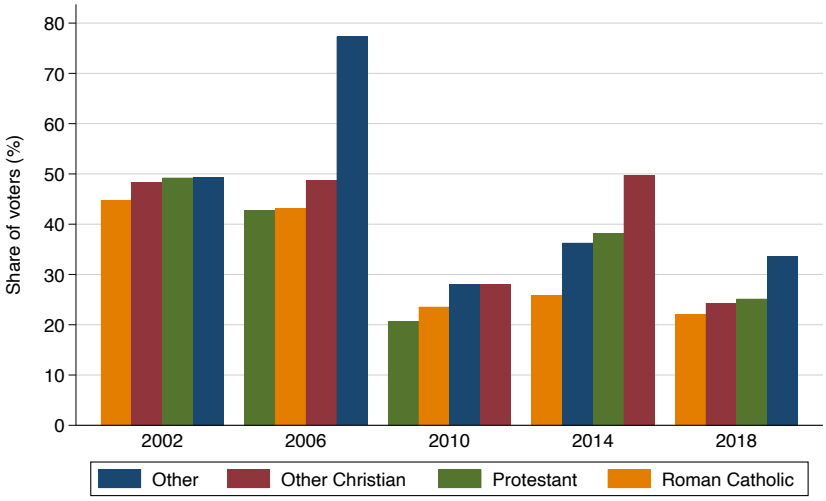

Figure 78: Left vote by religious affiliation in Hungary
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

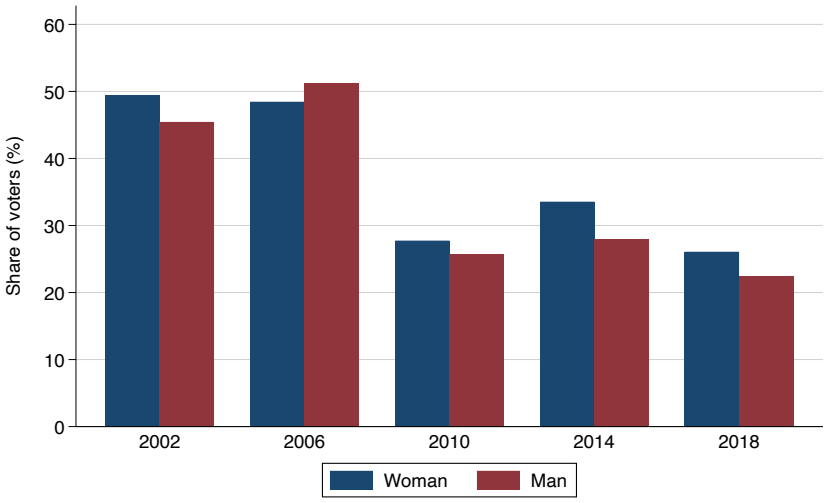

Figure 79: Left vote by gender in Hungary
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Estonia

Table 11: Summary Statistics Estonia

Variable	2003	2007	2011	2015	2019
Age: 15-40	0.34	0.33	0.33	0.31	0.29
Age: 40-60	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.36	0.39
Age: 60+	0.29	0.29	0.30	0.33	0.33
Education: Primary or lower	0.14	0.12	0.10	0.09	0.07
Education: Secondary	0.50	0.50	0.48	0.45	0.46
Education: Tertiary	0.36	0.38	0.43	0.46	0.46
Employment status: Employed	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.64	0.66
Employment status: Unemployed	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.03
Employment status: Inactive	0.37	0.36	0.36	0.34	0.31
Marital status: Married or with partner	0.64	0.63	0.61	0.64	0.60
Religion: No religion	0.78	0.82	0.74	0.76	0.79
Religion: Catholic	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01
Religion: Other Christian	0.21	0.18	0.24	0.22	0.19
Religion: Muslim	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Religion: Other	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01
Church attendance: Never	0.29	0.31	0.31	0.34	0.44
Church attendance: Less than monthly	0.68	0.67	0.65	0.64	0.54
Church attendance: Monthly or more	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03
Rural-urban: Rural areas	0.30	0.32	0.24	0.27	0.27
Gender: Man	0.41	0.41	0.40	0.43	0.44

Data: ESS

Table 12: Parties Classification in Estonia

Party	Party name	Party orientation
E200	Estonia 200	Right
EK	Estonian Centre Party	Left
EKR	Conservative People's Party of Estonia	Right
ERK	Estonian Reform Party	Right
EV	Estonian Free Party	Left
ER	People's Union of Estonia	Right
ERR	Estonian Greens	Left
EIRS	Pro Patria and Res Publica Union	Right
IE	Isamaa	Right
I	Pro Patria Union	Right
RM	Moderate People's Party / Social Democratic Party	Left
RP	Res Publica Party	Right
SDE	Social Democratic Party	Left

Data: Manifesto Project

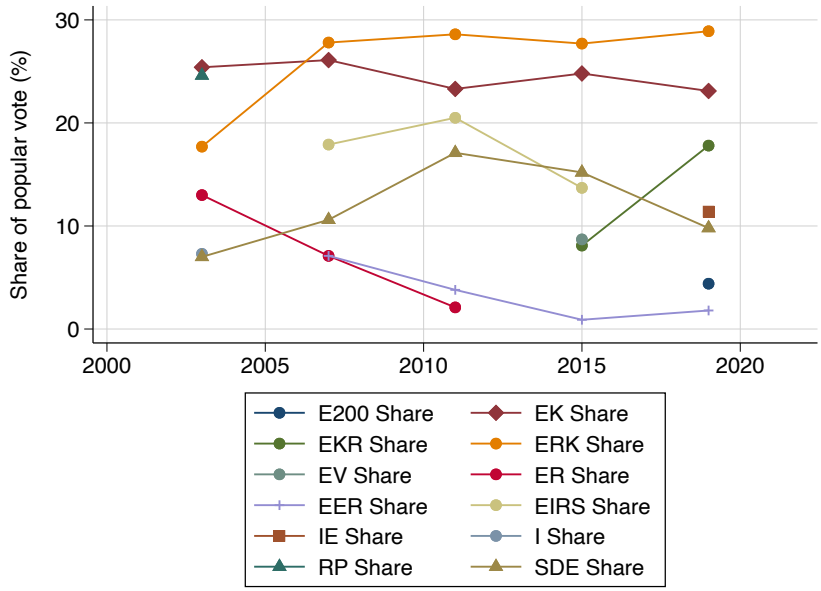

Figure 80: Election results by parties in Estonia, 2003-2019

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Vabariigi Valimiskomisjoni ja riigi valimisteenistuse (Estonian National Electoral Committee and the State Electoral Office)", n.d.).

Note: Only parties which crossed the 5% threshold at least once are presented.

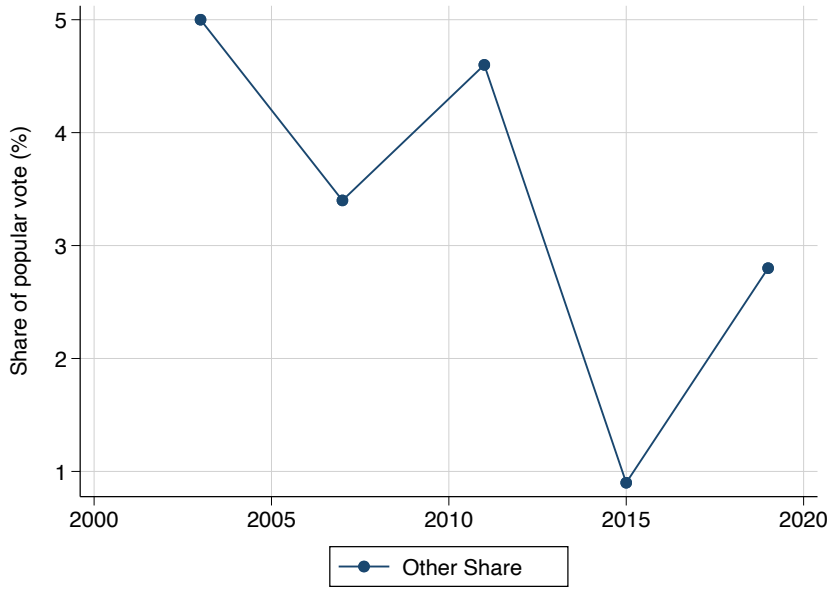

Figure 81: Election results of other than left- and right-wing parties in Estonia, 2003-2019

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Vabariigi Valimiskomisjoni ja riigi valimisteenistuse (Estonian National Electoral Committee and the State Electoral Office)", n.d.).

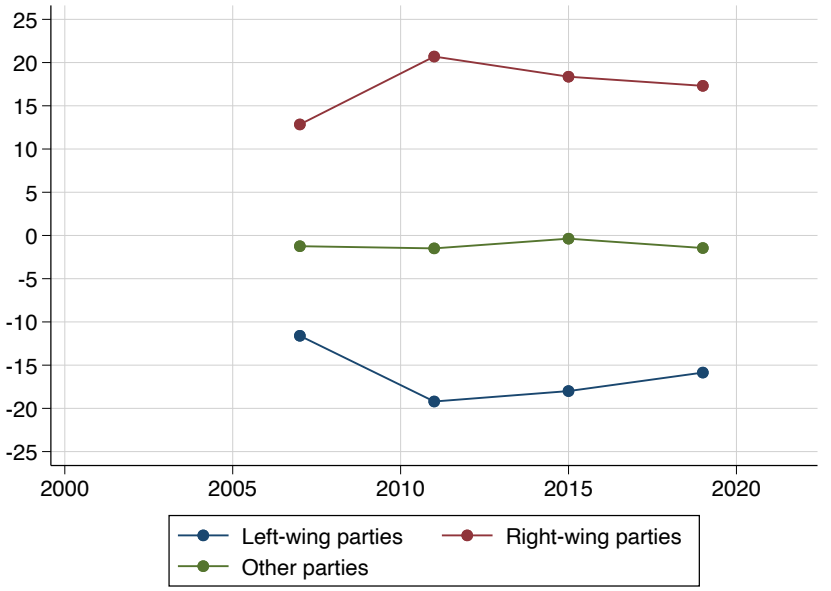

Figure 82: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Estonia - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

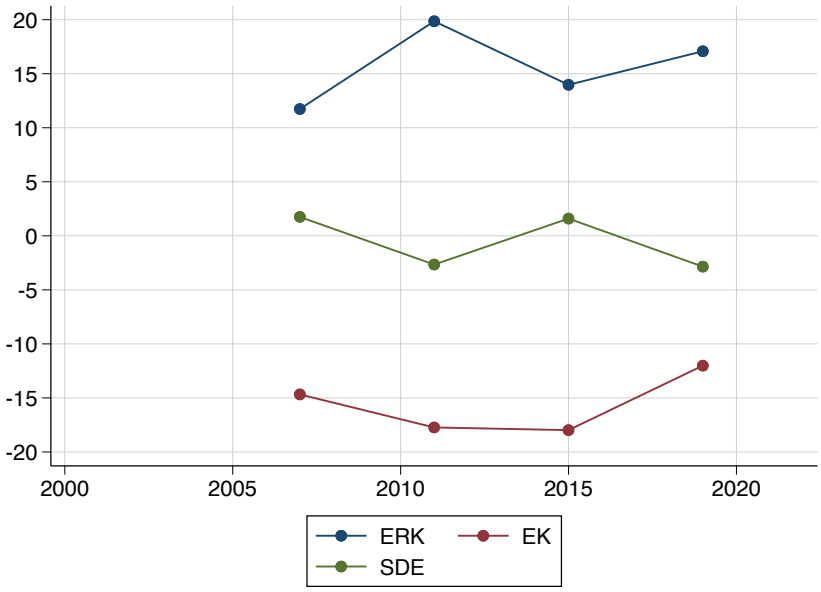

Figure 83: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) ERK, EK and SDE - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either ERK, EK or SDE - no controls.

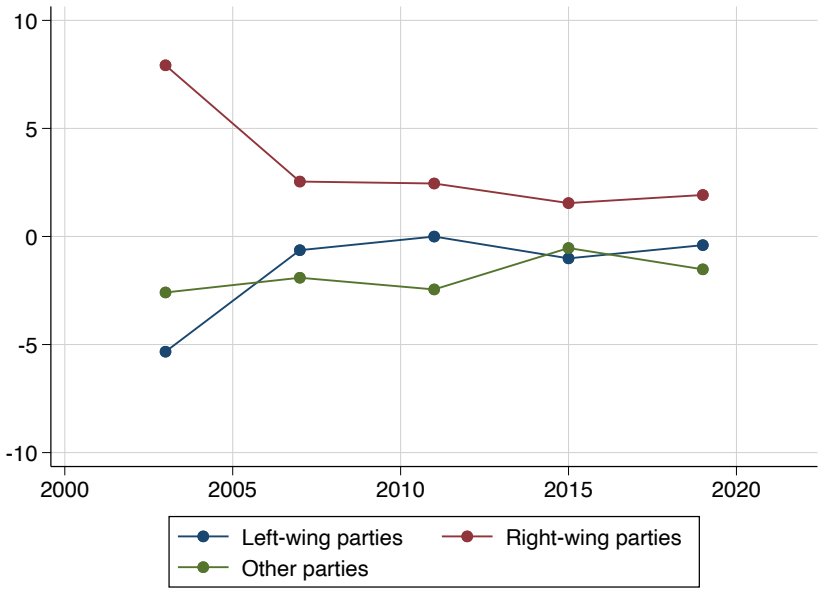

Figure 84: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Estonia - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

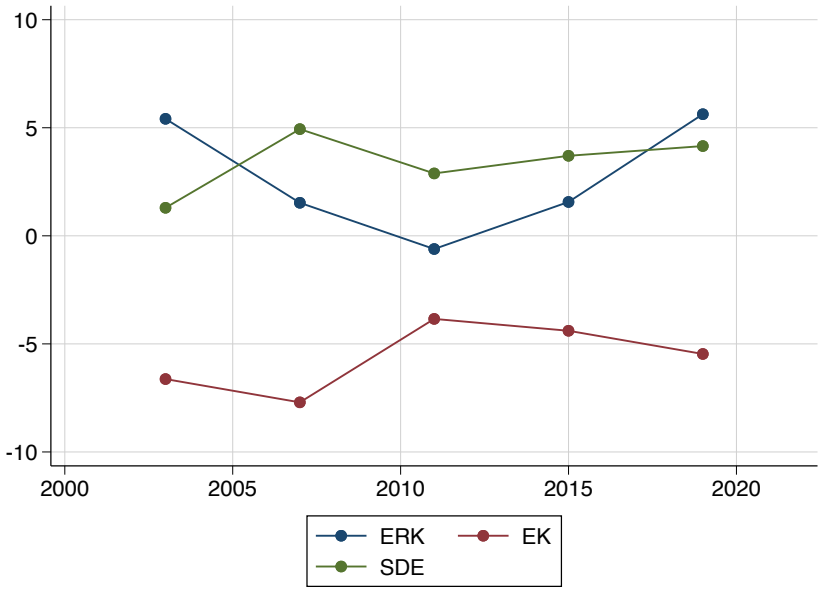

Figure 85: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) ERK, EK and SDE - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for either ERK, EK or SDE - no controls.

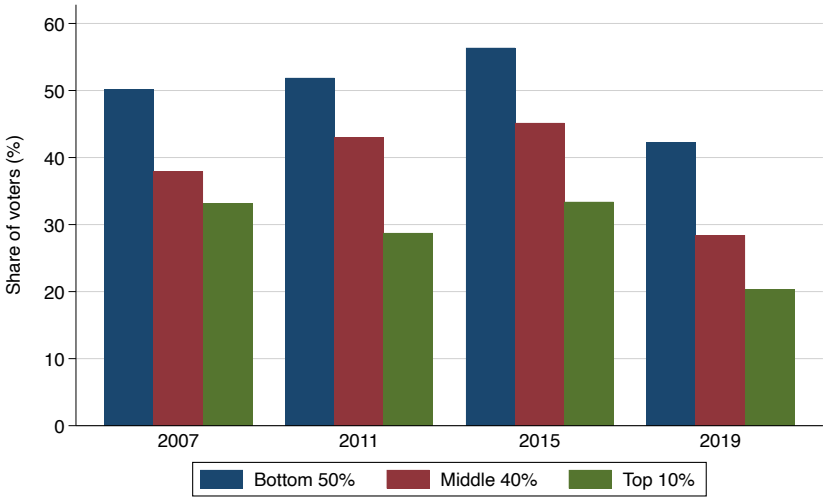

Figure 86: Left vote by income group in Estonia

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

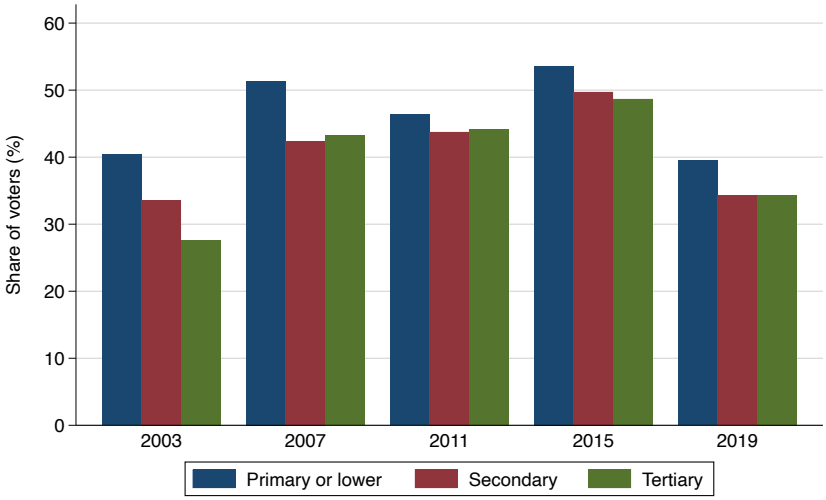

Figure 87: Left vote by education level in Estonia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

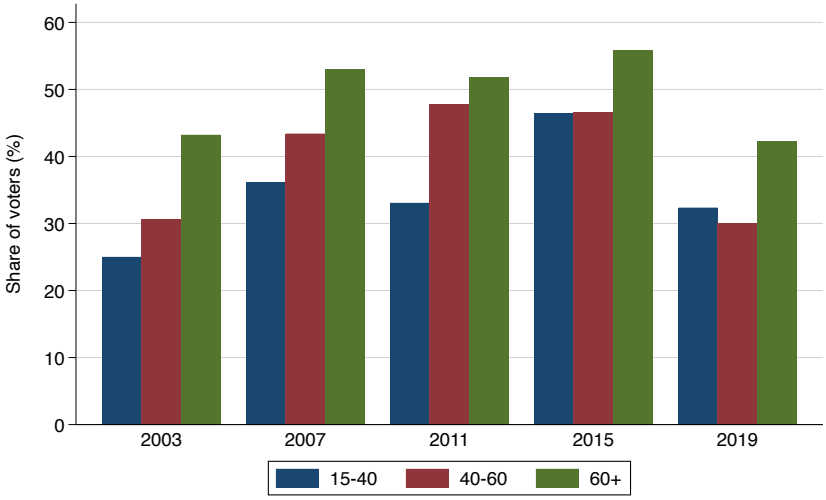

Figure 88: Left vote by age group in Estonia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

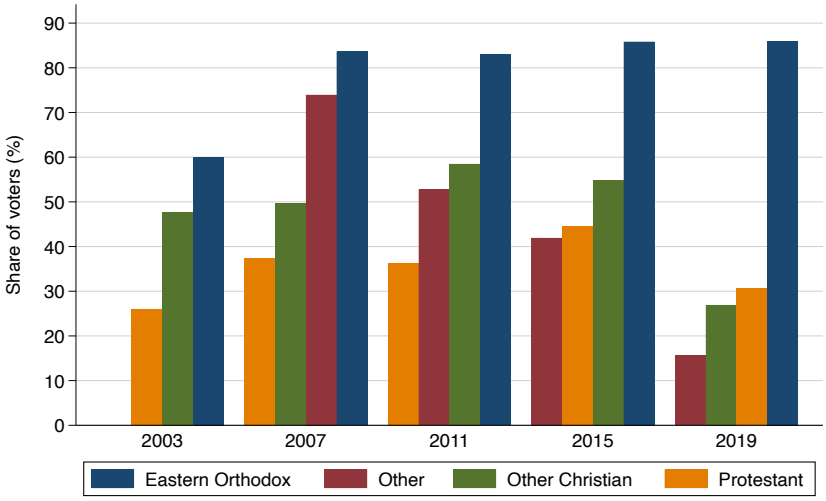

Figure 89: Left vote by religious affiliation in Estonia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

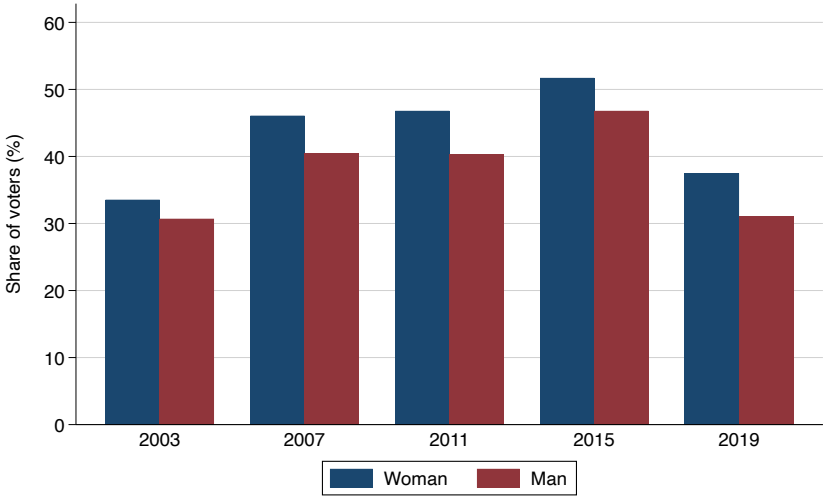

Figure 90: Left vote by gender in Estonia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Lithuania

Table 13: Summary Statistics Lithuania

Variable	2008	2012	2016	2020
Age: 15-40	0.49	0.44	0.40	0.37
Age: 40-60	0.31	0.34	0.37	0.35
Age: 60+	0.20	0.23	0.23	0.28
Education: Primary or lower	0.28	0.26	0.20	0.19
Education: Secondary	0.42	0.50	0.51	0.51
Education: Tertiary	0.30	0.24	0.28	0.30
Employment status: Employed	0.40	0.50	0.56	0.48
Employment status: Unemployed	0.11	0.06	0.06	0.08
Employment status: Inactive	0.49	0.44	0.38	0.44
Marital status: Married or with partner	0.43	0.54	0.59	0.56
Religion: No religion	0.20	0.17	0.16	0.27
Religion: Catholic	0.74	0.77	0.80	0.67
Religion: Other Christian	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.05
Religion: Muslim	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Religion: Other	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01
Church attendance: Never	0.16	0.13	0.14	0.16
Church attendance: Less than monthly	0.75	0.76	0.77	0.76
Church attendance: Monthly or more	0.09	0.11	0.09	0.08
Rural-urban: Rural areas	0.13	0.27	0.28	0.26
Gender: Man	0.43	0.45	0.45	0.46

Data: ESS

Table 14: Parties Classification in Lithuania

Party	Party name	Party orientation
APKK	Anti-corruption coalition	Right
BSDK	Social-Democratic Coalition	Left
CPT	Centre Party - Nationalists	Right
DK	Political Party 'The Way of Courage'	Left
DP	Labour Party	Left
DP-J	Labour Party + Youth	Left
Frontas	Party 'Front'	Left
KDS	Christian Democratic Union	Right
LCS	Lithuanian Centre Union	Left
LiCS	Liberal and Centre Union	Right
LKDP	Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party	Right
LLRA	Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania	Left
LLRA-KSS	LLRA-Christian Families Alliance	Left
LLS	Liberal Union of Lithuania	Right
LLSL	Lithuanian Freedom Union (Liberals)	Right
LP	Freedom Party	Left
LRLS	Liberals' Movement of the Republic of Lithuania	Right
LSDDP	Social Democratic Labour Party of Lithuania	Left
LSDP	Lithuanian Social Democratic Party	Left
LVLS	Lithuanian Peasant Popular Union	Left
LVP	Lithuanian Peasants' Party	Right
LVŽS	Lithuanian Peasant and Greens Union	Left
NKS	Union of Moderate Conservatives	Right
NS	National Alliance	Right
NSSL	New Union (Social Liberals)	Left
TPP	National Resurrection Party	Right
TS	Homeland Union - Lithuanian Conservatives	Right
TS-LKD	Homeland Union - Lithuanian Christian Democrats	Right
TT	Party Order and Justice	Right
UDL	Coalition 'Working for Lithuania'	Left
VNDS	Peasants and New Democratic Party Union	Left

Data: Manifesto Project

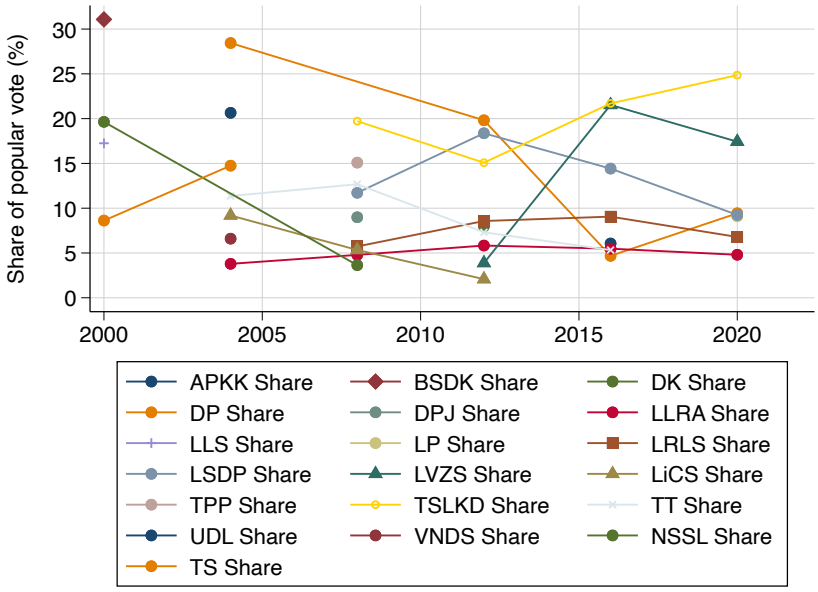

Figure 91: Election results by parties in Lithuania, 2000-2020

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Lietuvos Respublikos vyriausioji rinkimų komisija (Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Lithuania)", n.d.).

Note: Only parties which crossed the 5% threshold at least once are presented.

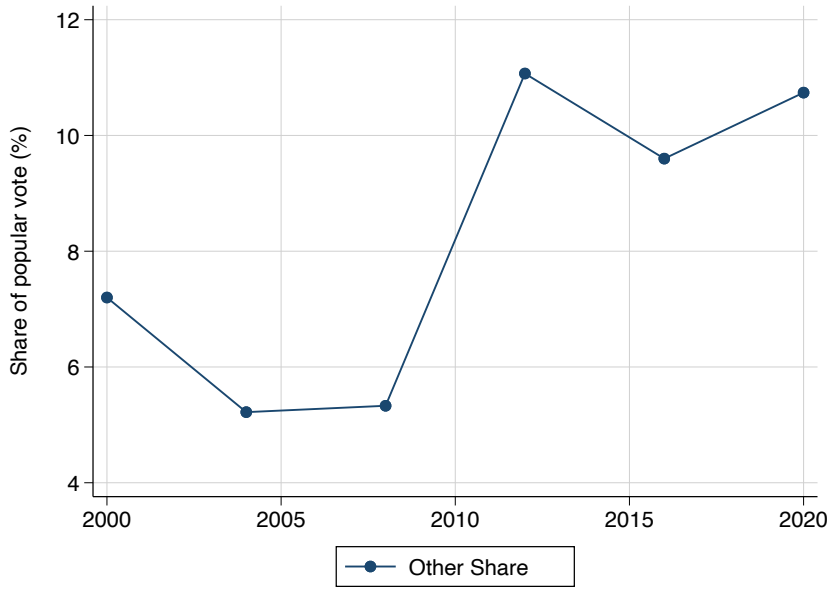

Figure 92: Election results of other than left- and right-wing parties in Lithuania, 2000-2020

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Lietuvos Respublikos vyriausioji rinkimų komisija (Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Lithuania)", n.d.).

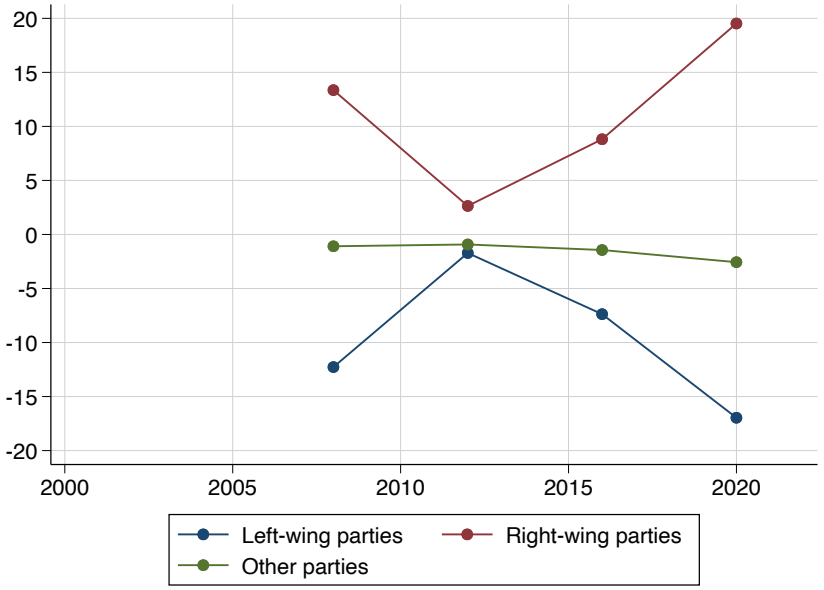

Figure 93: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Lithuania - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

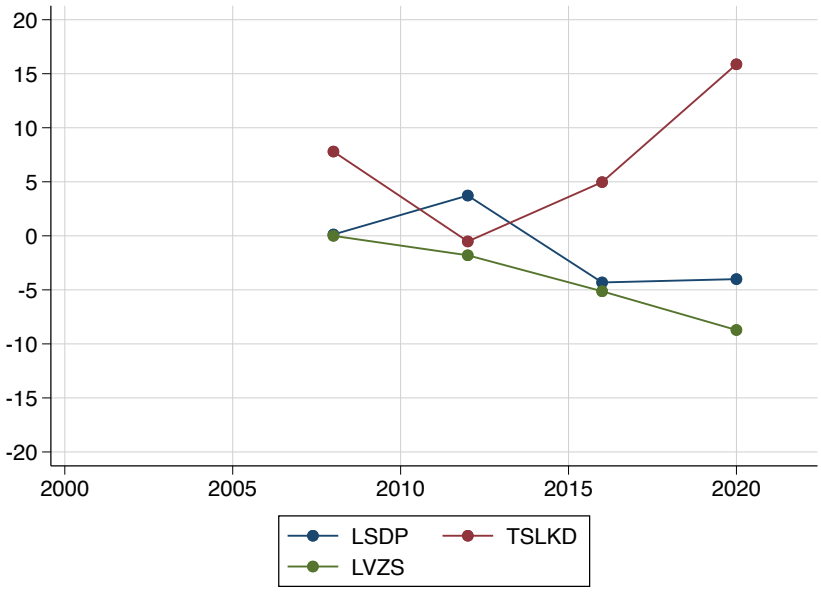

Figure 94: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) LSDP, TS-LKD and LVŽS - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either LSDP, TS-LKD or LVŽS - no controls.

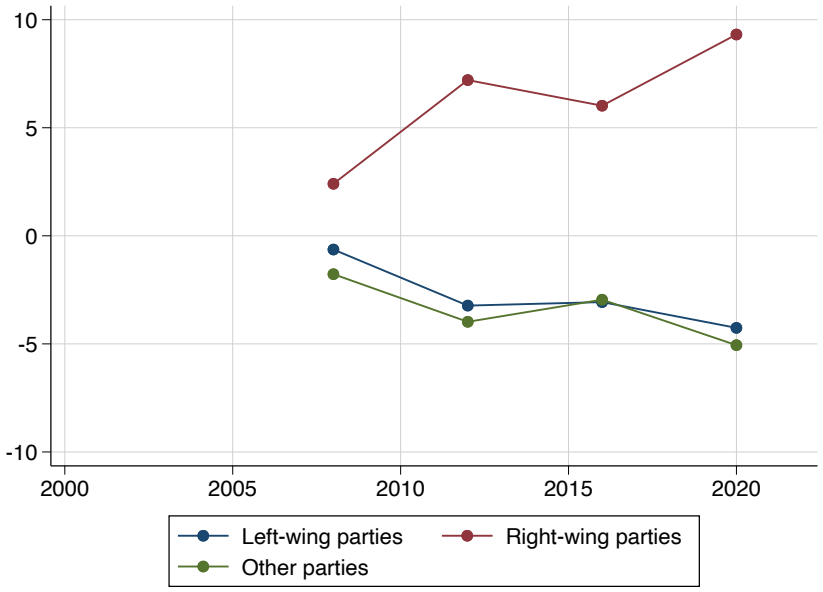

Figure 95: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Lithuania - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

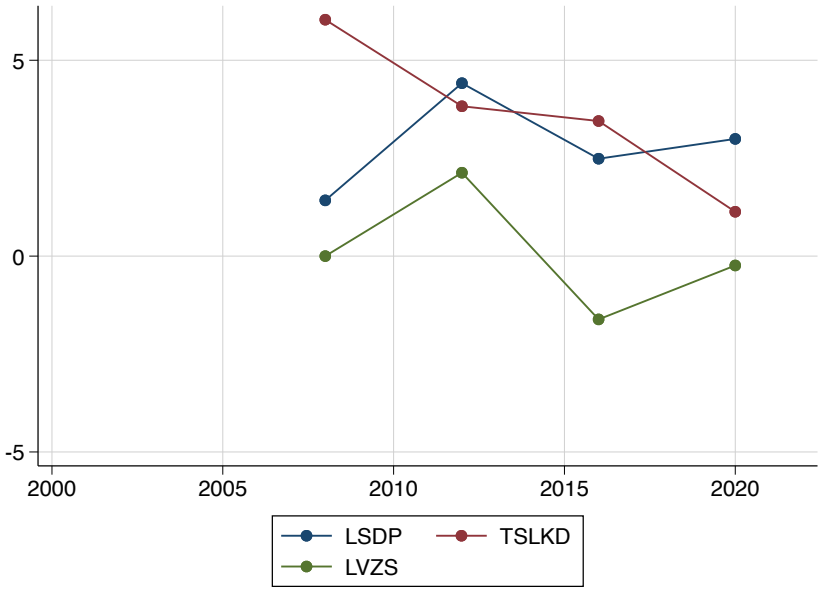

Figure 96: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) LSDP, TS-LKD and LVŽS

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for either LSDP, TS-LKD or LVŽS, after controlling for age, gender, and income.

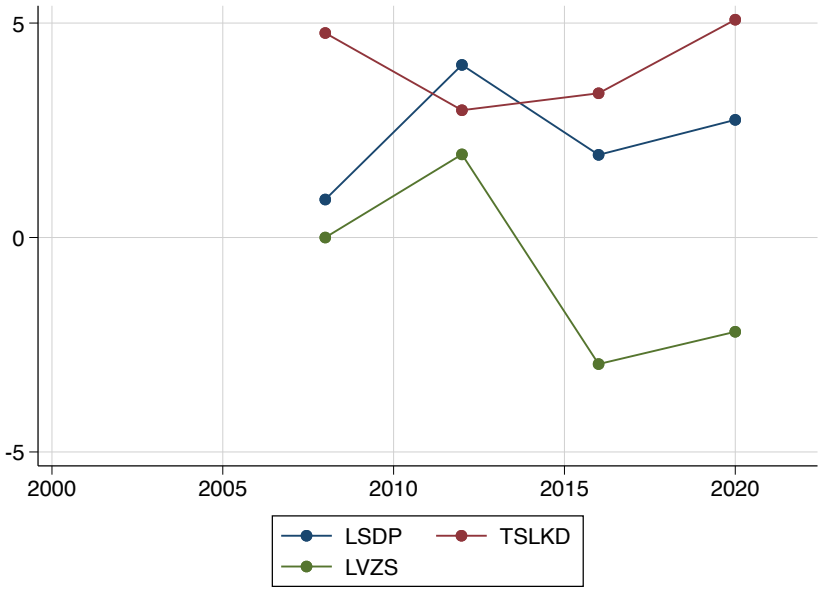

Figure 97: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) LSDP, TS-LKD and LVŽS - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for either LSDP, TS-LKD or LVŽS - no controls.

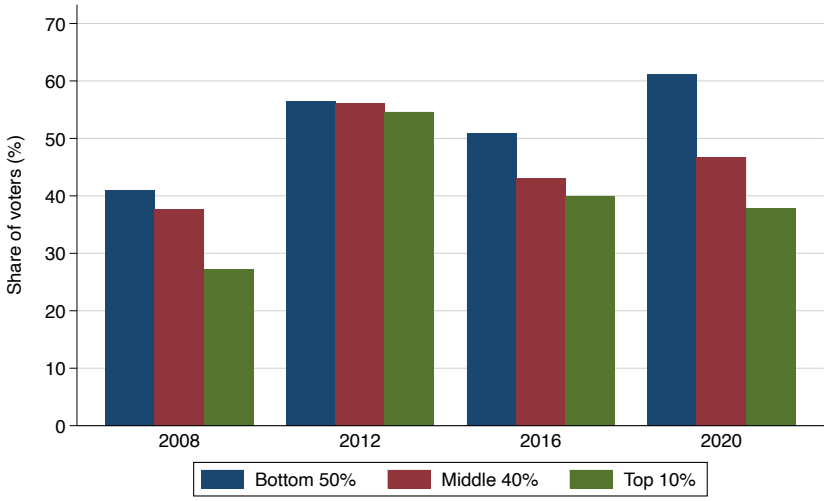

Figure 98: Left vote by income group in Lithuania

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

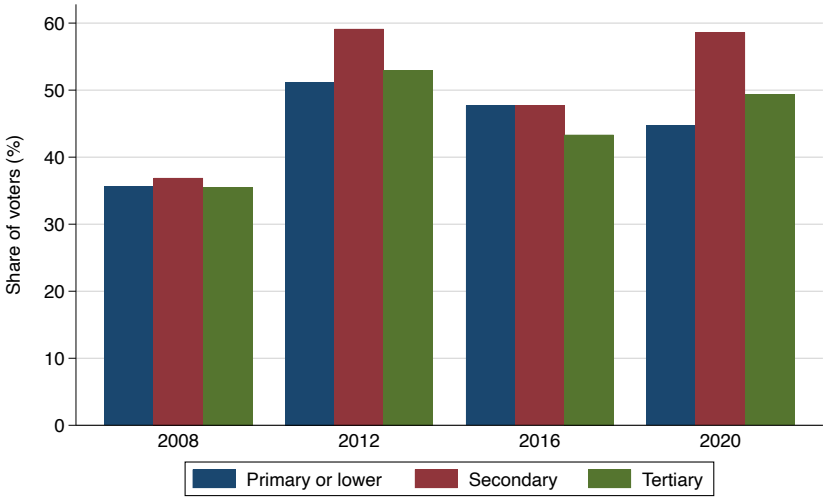

Figure 99: Left vote by education level in Lithuania
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

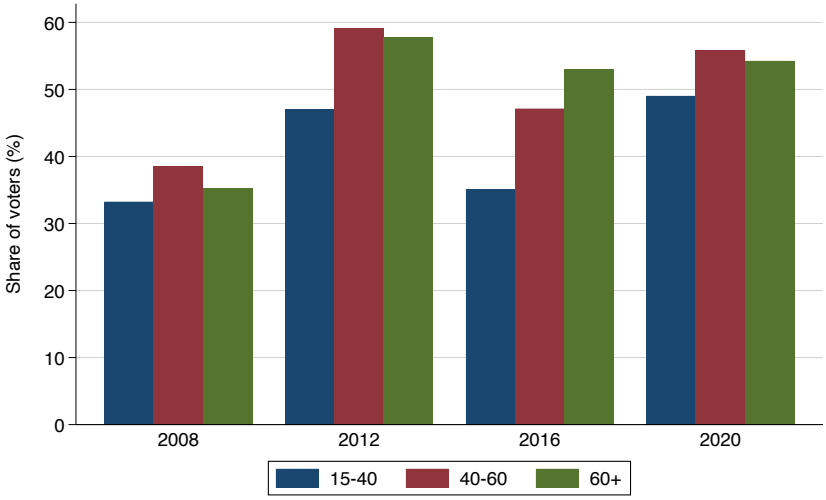

Figure 100: Left vote by age group in Lithuania
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

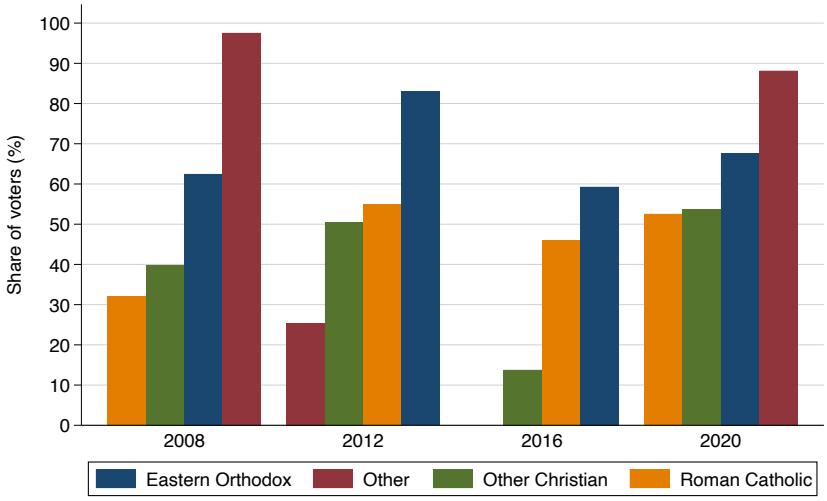

Figure 101: Left vote by religious affiliation in Lithuania
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

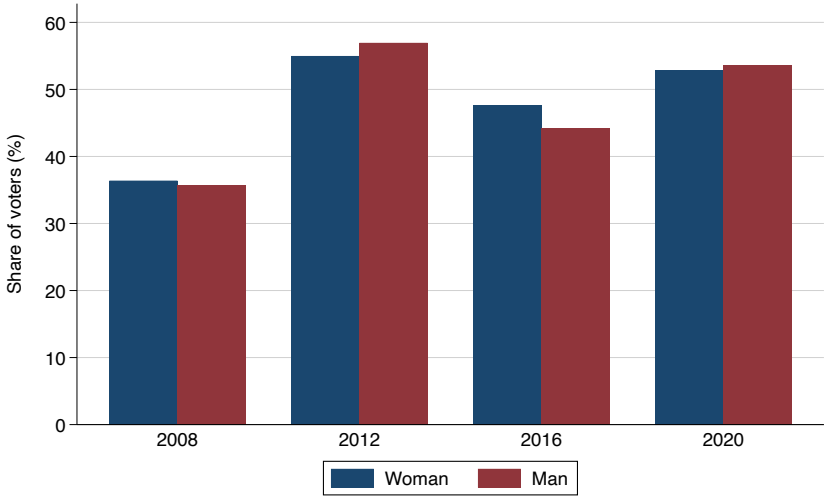

Figure 102: Left vote by gender in Lithuania
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Slovenia

Table 15: Summary Statistics Slovenia

Variable	2000	2008	2011	2014	2018
Age: 15-40	0.31	0.31	0.33	0.26	0.24
Age: 40-60	0.40	0.38	0.39	0.39	0.36
Age: 60+	0.28	0.31	0.28	0.34	0.40
Education: Primary or lower	0.23	0.20	0.17	0.17	0.13
Education: Secondary	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.53	0.54
Education: Tertiary	0.19	0.22	0.26	0.29	0.32
Employment status: Employed	0.46	0.47	0.44	0.46	0.50
Employment status: Unemployed	0.04	0.04	0.08	0.06	0.03
Employment status: Inactive	0.50	0.49	0.47	0.48	0.47
Marital status: Married or with partner	0.67	0.64	0.63	0.69	0.68
Religion: No religion	0.44	0.45	0.43	0.43	0.43
Religion: Catholic	0.53	0.51	0.53	0.54	0.53
Religion: Other Christian	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.03
Religion: Muslim	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Religion: Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Church attendance: Never	0.28	0.28	0.31	0.30	0.32
Church attendance: Less than monthly	0.52	0.55	0.52	0.55	0.56
Church attendance: Monthly or more	0.20	0.17	0.17	0.14	0.12
Rural-urban: Rural areas	0.50	0.52	0.53	0.54	0.51
Gender: Man	0.49	0.49	0.54	0.49	0.49

Data: ESS

Table 16: Parties Classification in Slovenia

Party	Party name	Party orientation
DESUS	Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia	Left
DL	Gregor Virant's Civic List	Right
GS	Freedom Movement	Left
LDS	Liberal Democracy of Slovenia	Right
Levica	The Left	Left
LMŠ	List of Marjan Šarec	Right
NSI	New Slovenia	Right
Povezimo Slovenijo	Let's Connect Slovenia	Right
PS	Zoran Janković's List – Positive Slovenia	Right
SAB	Party of Alenka Bratušek	Left
SD	Social Democrats	Left
SDS	Social Democratic Party of Slovenia / Slovenian Democratic Party	Right
SLS	Slovenian People's Party	Right
SLS-SMS	Slovenian People's Party–Youth Party	Right
SMC	Mira Cerarja's Party / Modern Centre Party	Left
SMS	Youth Party of Slovenia	Left
SNS	Slovenian National Party	Right
ZAAB	Alliance of Alenka Bratušek	Left
Zares	Zares	Left
ZL	United Left	Left
ZLSD	United List of Social Democrats	Left

Data: Manifesto Project

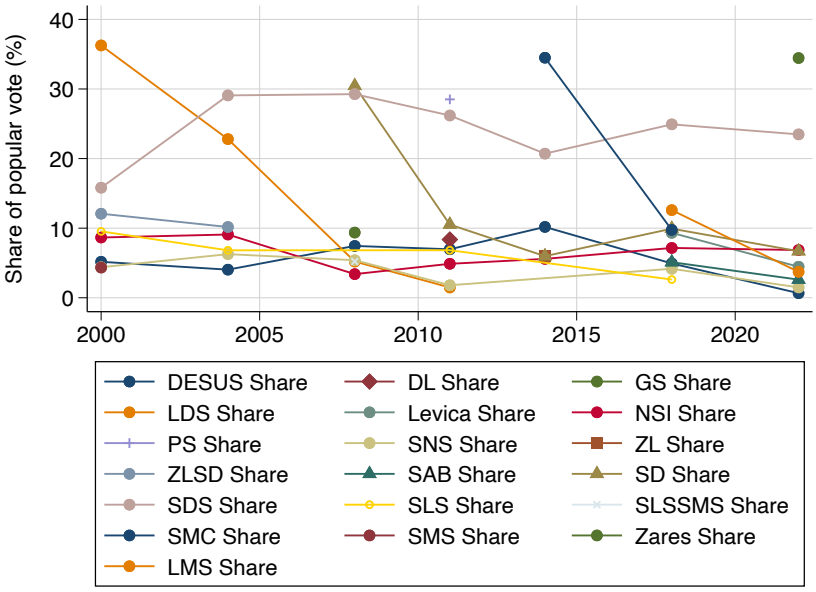

Figure 103: Election results by parties in Slovenia, 2000-2022

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Republika Slovenija Državna volilna komisija (Republic of Slovenia State election commission)", n.d.).

Note: Only parties which crossed the 5% threshold at least once are presented.

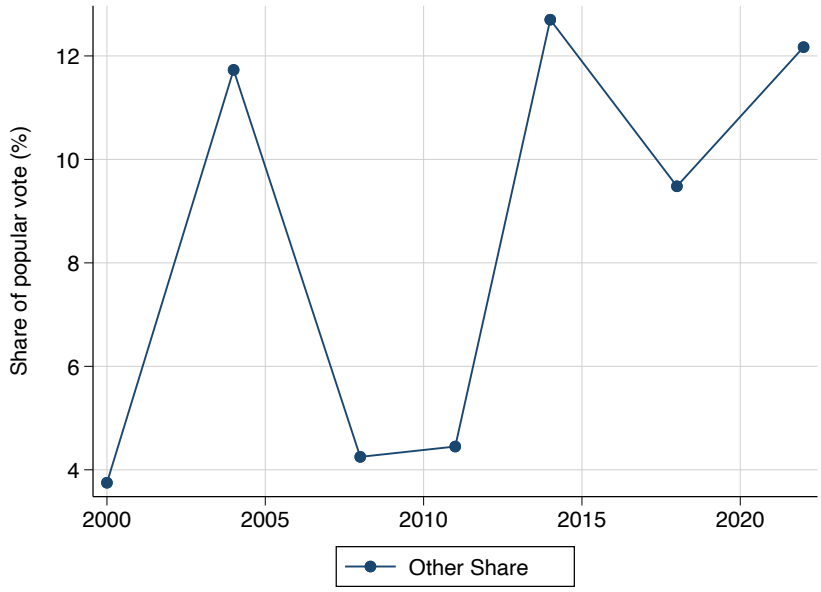

Figure 104: Election results of other than left- and right-wing parties in Slovenia, 2000-2022

Source: Authors' computations using official election results ("Republika Slovenija Državna volilna komisija (Republic of Slovenia State election commission)", n.d.).

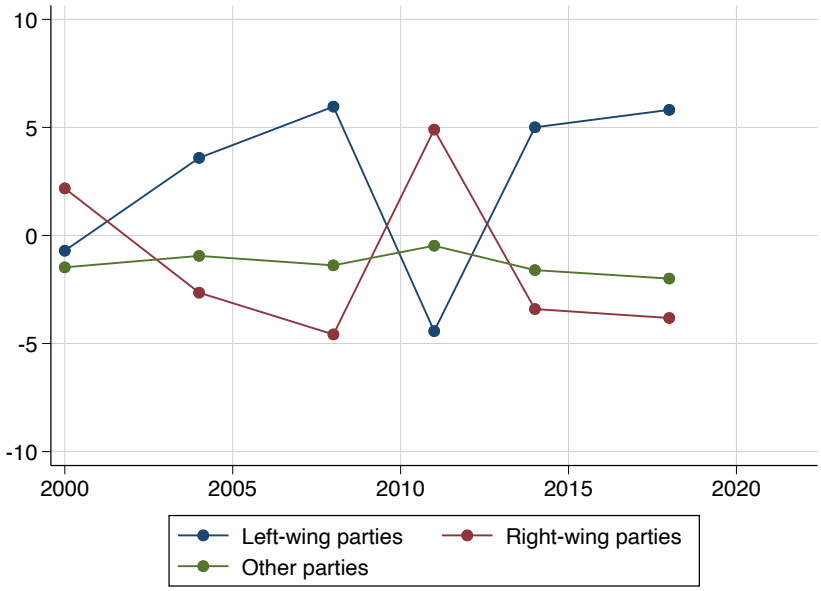

Figure 105: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Slovenia - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

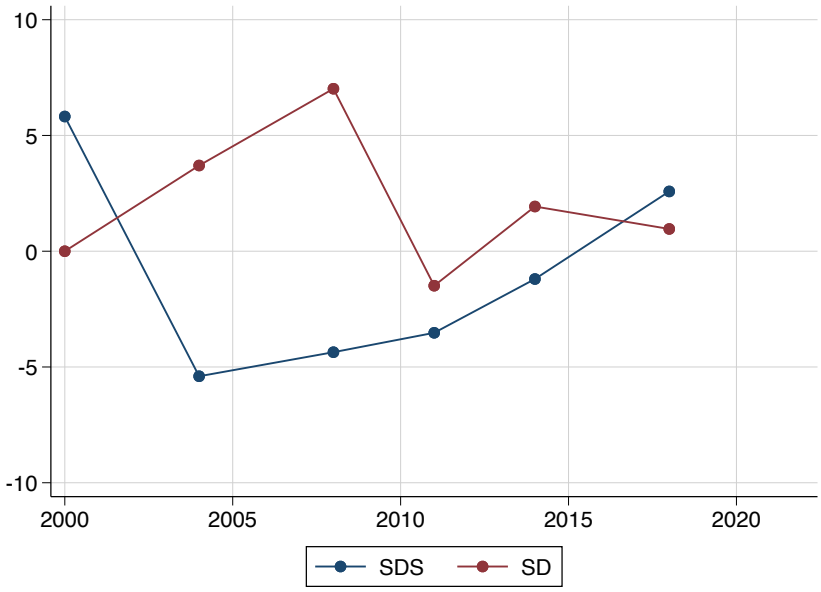

Figure 106: Income Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) SDS and SD - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% earners and the share of bottom 90% earners voting for either SDS or SD - no controls.

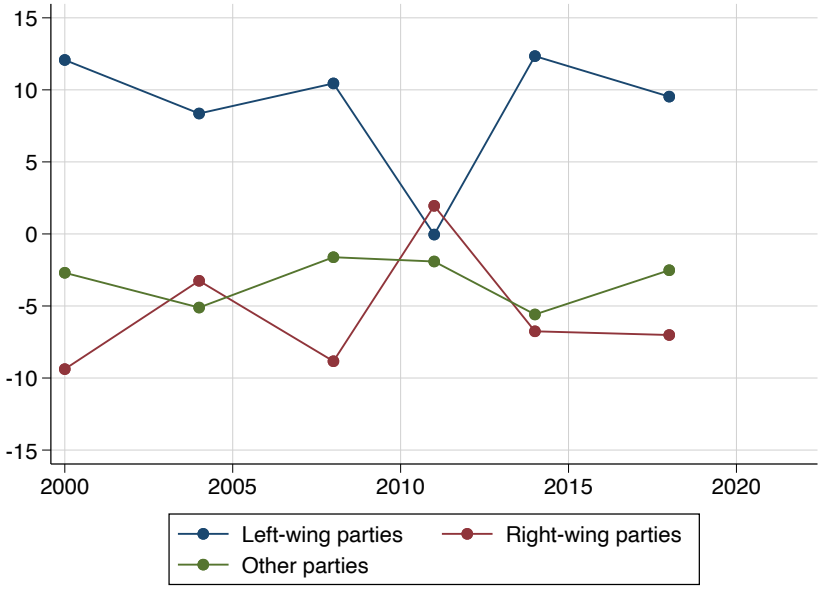

Figure 107: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) in Slovenia - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for the main groups of parties - no controls.

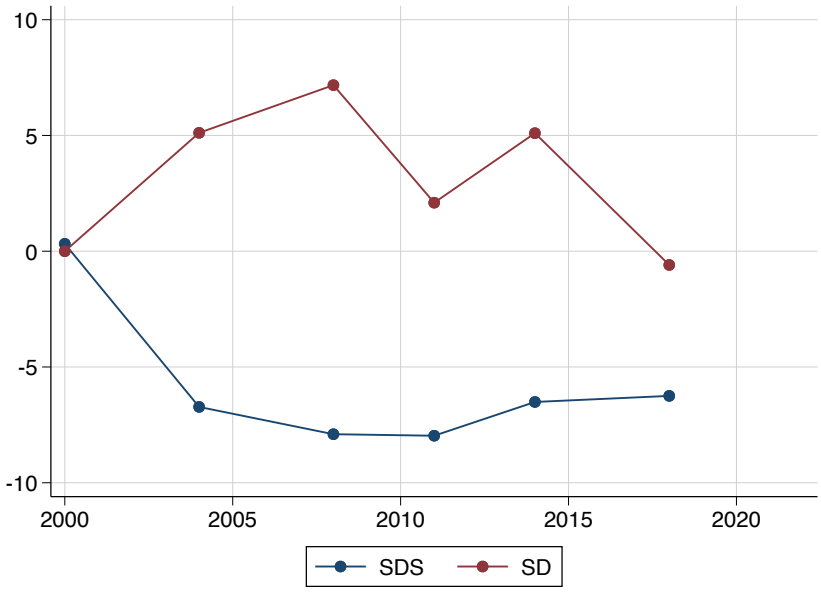

Figure 108: Educational Cleavages (Top 10% vs. Bottom 90%) SDS and SD - no controls

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

Note: The figure shows the difference between the share of university graduates and the share of non-university graduates voting for either SDS or SD - no controls.

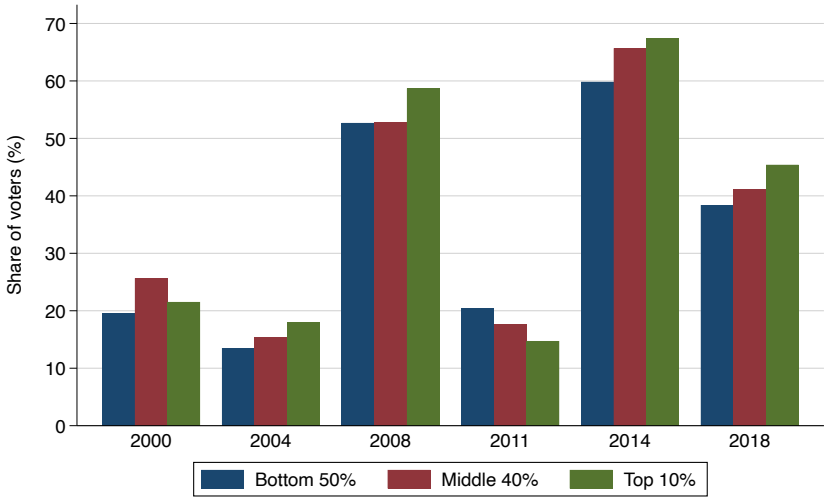

Figure 109: Left vote by income group in Slovenia

Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

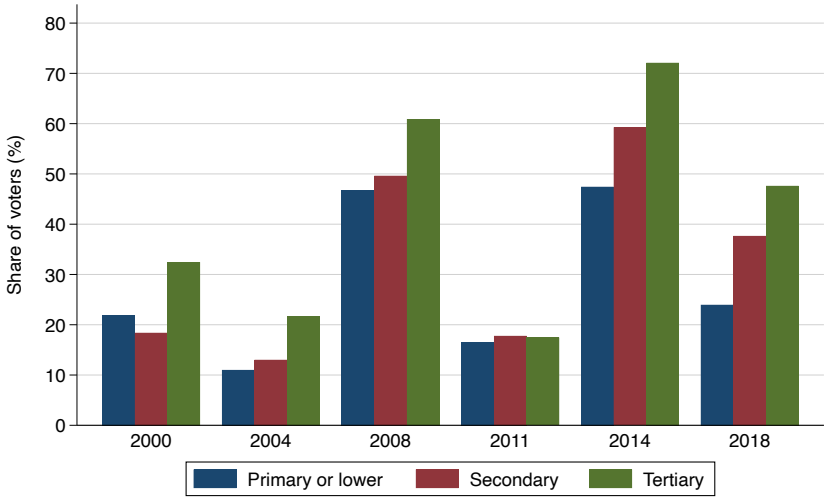

Figure 110: Left vote by education level in Slovenia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

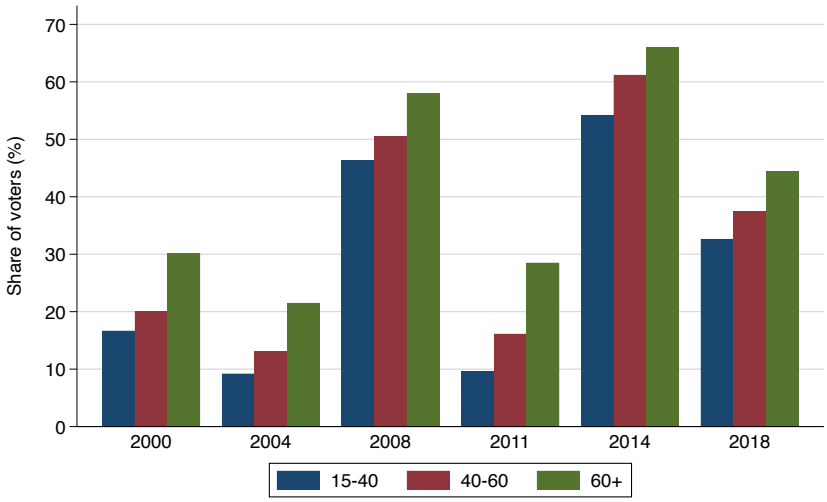

Figure 111: Left vote by age group in Slovenia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

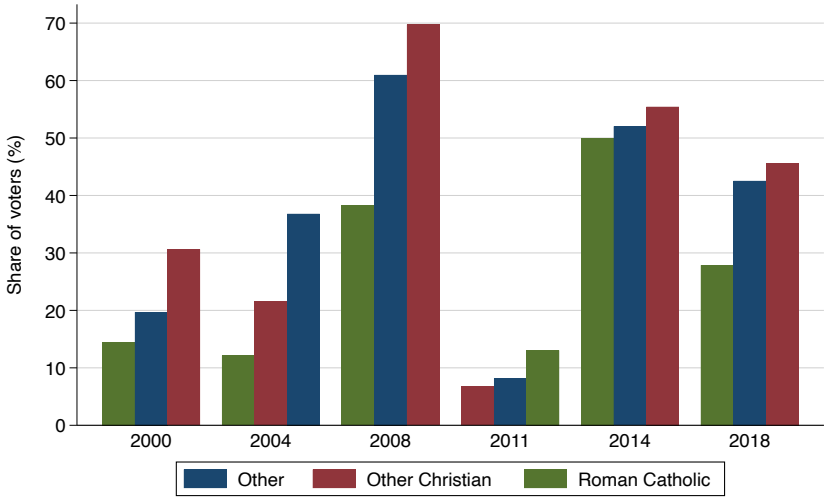

Figure 112: Left vote by religious affiliation in Slovenia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.

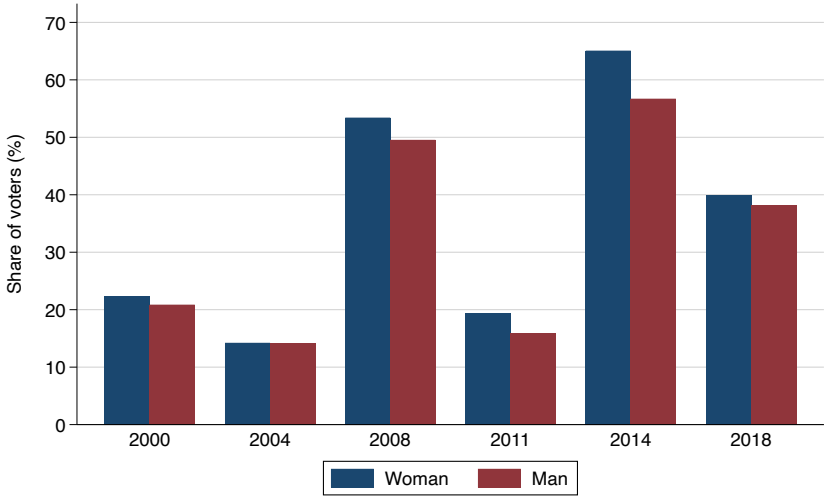

Figure 113: Left vote by gender in Slovenia
Source: Authors' computations using ESS.