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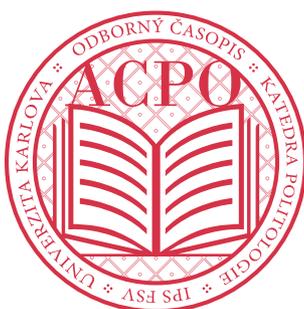
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## Politically Active Civil Society in the Liberec Region: Traditional Associations, Independents or Local and Regional Political Groupings in Municipal Elections 2010 and 2014<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract:

*Based on theories of relations between democracy and civil society and the concept of social capital especially in the version of Robert Putnam (1993) but also regarding his critics (Kwon 2004), this paper applies approaches of political geography to the study of politically active civil society outside traditional political parties in the Liberec Region of Czechia – a relatively small territory comprising many types of social, historical-cultural and natural environments. It tries to find and map differences in geographical (spatial) distribution of several types of such political civil activities and to determine some key geographical or geographically distributed factors with an impact on it. This paper focuses on a relatively untraditional role of civil society organizations (beside classical political parties) – that of direct participation and success in (municipal) elections. It presents predominantly results of the analysis of data from municipal elections in 2010 and 2014, focused on the success of several types of untraditional, local or regional political movements, which had created candidate lists. Employed methods are particularly multiple linear regression and spatial autocorrelation. There is apparent differentiation according to the historical border of the Nazi-occupied and formerly predominantly ethnic German area, while influences of settlement structure or local particularities are also visible.*

**Key words:** *political geography; civil society; democracy; social capital; Liberec Region; municipal elections; local and regional movements; traditional associations*

### Introduction

This paper<sup>3</sup> aims to examine the role of local and regional political groupings as well as “apolitical” civil society organizations (CSOs), especially traditional associations, i.e. units of the Firemen’s Association of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia (voluntary firemen), units of the Czech Sokol Organization (“Sokol units”), the Czech-Moravian Hunting Association

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<sup>3</sup> The author would like to express his many thanks to his former supervisor, Jiří Tomeš, as well as two anonymous reviewers with mostly very useful and helpful incentives, and Jan Kofroň, for his bold effort to start a debate between political geographers and other political scientists.

(“hunters”), the Czech Beekeepers Union (“beekeepers”), the Czech Tourists’ Club (KČT) etc., including possible similar individual associations even outside any nationwide organization, in municipal politics from the point of view of the past two municipal elections’ results in the Liberec Region of Czechia.

Czech municipal-level politics and their elected participants, including those outside political parties, represent a study object of many political scientists and also political geographers, especially electoral geographers and spatial (political) sociologists (Kostelecký, Vobecká eds. 2007; Ryšavý, Bernard 2013). They focus e.g. on the role of individual local elites or candidates (Ryšavý 2006; Ryšavý, Šaradín 2010; Bernard 2012b, 2013; in cultural and rural geography Chromý et al. 2011), several case studies (Balík 2010), or studies of local coalitions in smaller areas (e.g. Balík 2008) or, on the other hand, the character and stability of the entire political system (Balík, Hloušek 2016), its municipal level (Ryšavý 2006; Kopřiva 2010; Balík 2016). Even non-geographers are at least partially aware of the importance of the position of the municipality in hierarchical structure (Ryšavý 2006), population size or urban-rural polarity (Čmejrek 2007), and even some spatial factors (Balík 2016, for not only municipal level of politics Kostelecký, Čermák 2004; Bernard, Kostelecký 2014, focused on electoral behaviour; also e.g. the influence of suburbanization, see Kostelecký, Vobecká eds. 2007). Nevertheless, this paper, perhaps too general for some of the aforementioned approaches, proceeds from another direction, understanding elections and the official political system as just another “dimension” for political activities of CSOs in all municipalities, including towns, in the entire selected region of Czechia. It also stresses the importance of geographical factors and differentiation.

Namely in small rural municipalities without representatives of traditional nationwide political parties (e.g. Čmejrek 2007: 25), the situation is different; however, usually, the political activism of CSOs means rather lobbying or advocating for some public interests (see Öberg, Svensson 2012; Tarrow, Petrova 2007). It must be acknowledged that elections cover only a very specific “official” part of politically active organized civil society and its success respectively. Nevertheless, it is a way of sharing real political power, a phenomenon arguably not usual for CSOs, excluding political parties. Putnam (1993; 1995a, b) stresses the importance of associations for the building of generalized trust in the society and political culture, creating social capital; however, he rather omits their direct political role. Therefore, initially, I intended to exclude traditional associations from my research completely. However, later, I realized, those associations can play an important role in forming not only local communities, but even politics<sup>4</sup> (see Kůsová 2013; Chromý et al. 2011). For example, Vobecká and Daněk (2007: 44) find in a rather rural suburban quarter of the city of Brno a local mayor who heads a local cell of Sokol. Nevertheless, their research based on questioned respondents does not find any influence of associations on forming candidate ballots. Vogt (2015b: 453) shows some examples of even direct participation of associations in communal elections and their victories in a preliminary study in part of the Liberec Region, which had lead to further research at this field. Still, it is a rather widely known but neglected phenomena, as for example Balík (2008) shows. His research is focused on local coalitions in municipalities of four districts in Czechia. Despite his mentions of independent ballots or even traditional associations as members of coalitions, he does not pay further attention to them, preferring classic political parties – also because of their clearer political

<sup>4</sup> Many thanks for the notes of Tomáš Kostelecký at the 23rd Congress of the Czech Geographical Society and 16th Congress of the Slovak Geographic Society in Prague, 27 August 2014.

orientation, although he identifies typical political cleavages even in non-partisan municipal politics (Balík 2016), partly in contrary to the polarised view of local and nationwide politics of e.g. Ryšavý (2006).

From the point of view of geography, including the political one and this paper, of key importance is the focus on the description of important geographical aspects and, foremost, the search for influential factors with an impact on the geographic distribution of the studied phenomena. Therefore, the main research question is simple: What are the main geographical (both, spatial – horizontal and hierarchical – vertical, see below) factors influencing the distribution of relative electoral success of CSOs and namely traditional associations, beside political parties, in the Liberec Region?

The Liberec Region was selected as a suitable research territory because of spatial differentiation – and yet concentration in a relatively small territory – of many potentially influential factors (environmentally protected areas including a national park, exploited areas, towns and the regional capital city concentrating political decision-making and conflicts, areas affected by the expulsion of ethnic Germans after World War II, with more ethnic minorities as well as areas with historically relatively stable populations, see Appendix 7).

## Political Civil Society in the Geographic Space

A vibrant civil society is often seen as an important basis for vital and sustainable democracy. Therefore, there was an effort by Western organizations to support a transformation and partly almost resurrection of civil society in early post-communist countries (Balentine 2002; Císař 2008).

CSOs may be referred to as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), non-profit, voluntary, etc., including civic initiatives and other entities of different focus. According to Dohnalová (2004: 73), in the Czech Republic CSOs include civic associations; trade unions; public benefit corporations; foundations and their funds, and special purpose church institutions. Some authors add to these also churches, religious societies, political parties and movements, though they are a traditional part of cultural and political system associated with state power seen in opposition to other non-governmental or non-profit organizations (Potůček 1997: 55; Abrahamson 1995 cit. in Potůček 2005: 87). Beside the institutionalized part of civil society – the so-called civil, third or non-profit sector (Frič, Bútorá 2005; Potůček 1997; 2005, Skovajsa et al. 2010) – civil society includes also the unorganized, informal private sector (Potůček 2005: 86). It is possible to watch a process of natural institutionalization of latent initiatives (Truman 2003).

The reason for placing civil society (CS) in a kind of opposition to the state apparatus probably comes especially in post-totalitarian countries from the role of CS in fighting for human and social rights and resisting undemocratic regimes (Siisiäinen 2000; Fung 2003) and from the connection of some traditional political parties with the state, not in accordance with the aforementioned natural “bottom-up” process of institutionalization. In a democratic regime, insisting on staying in opposition in a radical way can be destructive (Fung 2003), but there is also an important role of public control, stressed in Czech territory for example already by Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century: “*This is also the foundation of democracy: the freedom of criticism and public scrutiny*” (Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk in Čapek (1969 [1935]: 265, translated by the author). After the fall of the communist regime in the former Czechoslovakia, also Václav Havel’s older vision of “*nonpolitical*

*politics*” emerged in the public debate, suppressing the power of political parties, favouring a politics run by other CSOs and open civil society in general, but this soon was criticized by Václav Klaus as a supporter of strict representative democracy with political parties and voters’ role limited to regular elections, see e.g. Havel (1984) and Havelka (1998) versus Klaus (2005). However, it seems, after 1989, political parties never gained a dominant role in smaller rural municipalities with local groupings and elites and with the growing scepticism toward political parties, even in larger and larger towns (Kostelecký 2004 cit. in Ryšavý 2006: 958), new local and regional groupings have gained political power (Ryšavý 2006), as we can see even in nationwide political scene with new movements such as the parties Věci veřejné (Public Affairs) and ANO 2011 (Balík, Hloušek 2016). Balík (2010: 17) and Balík, Hloušek (2016) are aware of theses about non-political communal politics and distinguish between nationwide parties and local movements of independent candidates, although they point out personal fluctuation and suppose all political groupings as standard members of municipal politics. Bubeníček, Kubálek (2010) and Balík (2016) show that even with absenting political parties, in small villages typical political cleavages occur, including geographical (Balík 2016: 80–81) core-periphery or between several settlements within one municipality. Balík (2016: 81) even points out political conflicts among economical and other interests of several “clubs”, e.g. sport organizations such as Sokol and Orel before World War II. It might be still part of the motivation of traditional associations’ political participation. In smaller municipalities, citizens knowing each other and aware of local issues, are in general more active even e.g. in local referenda (Gregor, Smith 2012), but their numbers willing and available for active participation in political representation are limited (Ryšavý, Bernard 2013: 833, 847). The contrast between towns and cities on one side and rural municipalities on the other represents also a phenomenon important in the geographical research – the vertical hierarchical structure (HAMPL 1998; Bernard, Kostelecký 2014: 5), beside the horizontal space.

Putnam (1993), although real contribution of associations to democracy is debatable (see Kwon 2004, Kůsová 2013), shows through the example of Italy, with its strong north-south division, the importance of historical traditions of the territory. Perlín, Kučerová, Kučera (2010) and Chromý et al. (2011) show such importance even in Czechia, with interrupted traditions in the borderland, the “Sudetenland”, from where ethnic Germans were expelled abroad after World War II. Putnam (1993: 149) shows that immigration waves to different historical-cultural environments do not affect historical division, probably due to an assimilation of newcomers. However, the case of the post-war expulsion in Czechia is more radical, despite the few remaining ethnic Germans, in having almost completely interrupted traditions. Therefore, there is a main research assumption or hypothesis that the geographical distribution of electoral support of CSOs, independent candidates and especially traditional associations is negatively influenced by belonging to the former “Sudetenland” territory. Other assumptions consider the influence of other factors in Appendix 1. Of course, the size of municipality is probably still of the foremost importance (see e.g. Ryšavý, Bernard 2013; Bernard 2012a), and this research focuses rather on other “additional” factors. For a wider and deeper discussion of the role of associations in democracy, see Skocpol (1999), Putnam (2000), Sander, Putnam (2010), Císař (2008), Stachová (2008), Pileček (2010), Pileček and Jančák (2010), Kůsová (2013) or Vogt (2015b).

## Data Sources, Focus of the Research

The main sources of data for the analysis are the results of Czech municipal elections in 2010 and 2014 (ČSÚ 2010; 2011d and 2014b); for all sources, see Appendix 1.

This paper focuses on election results of traditional (hobby) associations<sup>5</sup>, (ii) results of other local groupings – associations of independent candidates<sup>6</sup>, other local group ballots, (iii) individuals in their own ballots<sup>7</sup>, i.e. independent candidates, (iv) candidates of regionally focused groupings and mostly non-parliamentary parties<sup>8</sup>. For further statistical processing, all categories were combined and traditional associations were investigated also separately. Further, the support for extremist<sup>9</sup> political parties was also monitored, as an indicator of social problems, protest potential, dissatisfaction, “anti-putnamian” distrust, etc.

Sometimes, it was difficult to distinguish different types – e.g., local movements endorsed by the regional Mayors for the Liberec Region (SLK) connected with the nationwide active Mayors and Independents (STAN) party. In the case of independent candidates on a ballot of a party, which couldn't be found elsewhere, including the official register (MVČR 2015), the grouping was classed to other local subjects. Especially among traditional associations (Kůsová 2013), ties to traditional settlement divisions in accordance with basic settlement units (ZSJ) are apparent (e.g. one association of “hunters” or volunteer firemen per one ZSJ, a historical independent village).

The voter turnout was also investigated, as an indicator of political involvement, in the “putnamian” sense (Putnam 1993). In this respect, another indicator of the actual condition and degree of democracy of the local political scene was the number of candidates per number of seats in the municipal assembly. The indicator was used in Czechia for example by Jančák et al. (2010), studying the political involvement in Český Dub in the

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<sup>5</sup> Particular examples were mentioned in the Introduction. Mostly, watched were only the names on lists of candidates, apart from some unclear or suspicious names, where even individual candidates were watched. This process can be criticized as oversimplified, but it covers cases when traditional associations openly candidate and so declare their political engagement, not only a possible incidental personal overlap of a movement with a traditional association. Therefore, arguably it can be, without a complex theory tested, considered as “most-likely” cases (see Kofroň 2012: 315–316) of the associations' electoral engagement and success. Too general ballot names such as “Athletes”, “For Sports and Culture”, “Sports Association” or “Women” were included among other local associations, instead. The nationwide Movement for the Support of Volunteer Firemen and Other Volunteers was included among regionally focused groupings.

<sup>6</sup> A nationwide SNK-ED, however, was included among regional groupings. Local associations included also movements active in several nearby municipalities.

<sup>7</sup> It included also individual candidates, calling their ballots as local political groupings.

<sup>8</sup> This includes also nationwide groupings with local and regional base, including those with seats in parliament, especially in politically more diverse Senate, but rarely in the Chamber of Deputies (SOS, STAN and groupings with their support (except TOP 09), SNK-ED, the Union for sports and health, the movement FOR Sports and Health, further “ALTERNATIVA”, the Czech independents, the Movement of Independents for a harmonious development of (rural) municipalities and towns, “NEZÁVISLÍ” (Independents must be distinguished from local associations of independent candidates – SNK), from regional ones “Změna” (The Change) or SLK; The Democratic Regional Party also based in Liberec). The ČSNS as a currently non-parliamentary party, despite its local and regional character because of an old nationwide tradition, wasn't included here.

<sup>9</sup> It means parties (despite a certain subjectivity) generally perceived as extremist (KSČM, DSSS, ÚPD, Sovereignty, ND, NS, SPR-RSČ etc., but not radical parties advocating various forms of freedoms – the libertarian SSO, regardless some contacts with the far-right; the Pirates or Greens). In cases of local groupings, it was difficult to identify extremism. Ballots like “Dissatisfied Citizens” – Žandov in 2014 (ČSÚ 2014b) – were not included here.

Liberec Region; for usage in a wider typology of Czech countryside, see Perlín et al. (2010). The assumption was that in a village, where the ratio is around one, or even lower, no viable democratic environment can work (the wideness of electoral choice in municipalities regarding their population size was detailly studied e.g. by Ryšavý and Bernard 2013). However, despite traditionally more active residents in small municipalities (Gregor, Smith 2012), in the smallest ones, the population size itself can be the main limitation.

For all indicators, arithmetic averages of the results of the municipal elections in 2010 and 2014 were used to obtain more stable data.

## **The Method of Multiple Linear Regression and Purging of Variables**

To examine if electoral success of local and regional movements and especially traditional associations were influenced by several aforementioned geographical factors, considered in main research questions and assumptions or hypotheses, the method of multiple linear regression was employed. The relatively simple method has some shortcomings that shall be mentioned below, and in such a complex file of cases and milieu, the results should be understood as not necessarily strict relations as e.g. in natural science. However, its outputs can provide models of logical relationships of observed variables.

The variables (Appendix 1) were cleansed from the influence of population size of municipalities, similarly to Bernard (2012a) or Bernard, Kostelecký, Šimon (2014), since it is in most cases the main and obvious independent variable influencing results. A regression analysis using the “curve fit” method was employed (in SPSS 13). Nevertheless, especially in the case of linear regression, the direction of the line is to a certain extent determined by remote values (big towns), and an insufficiently large set of small municipalities that is too variable.

Residuals from differences between predicted and actual values were accepted only if the significance value was 0.05 or lower (see Appendix 3). Similarly to Bernard (2012a), another criterion was the value of the adjusted regression coefficient of 0.02, i.e. the population size of the municipality explained at least 2% of the variance of the variable.

Thereafter, the multiple linear regression of the variables or their residuals was used. The analysis is trying, in substantial points, to fulfil strict criteria, as described e.g. in Vauss (2002: 343–344, cit. in Rabušic 2006: 2), Hendl (2004: 381), Université de Fribourg Suisse (2011) or Chen et al. (2003). It is necessary to bear in mind the possibility that any nonlinear relationships between dependent and independent variables can stay hidden. Regression models were tested on multicollinearity and a likelihood of eliminating other significant explanatory variables, see the correlation cross-table (Appendix 4) and the tolerance coefficient values in Appendix 5, expressing the share of variance of the variable to be explained by other variables in the model. A very special distribution of electoral support for traditional associations is demonstrated in the VOLSPRR variable, almost uncorrelated with other variables. Results should also not be affected by sorting of cases (Hendl 2004: 381), i.e. the homoscedasticity, homogeneity of the variability (Rabušic 2006: 2). With geographically differentiated data, deliberately including dichotomous variables defining parts of the studied territory, it is an expected problem, not representing any serious obstacle for the interpretation of results.

With 215 municipalities (Appendices 6–7) and 28 independent variables (Appendix 1), the file fulfils the recommended number of cases with reserve, if the analysis is

understood as a significance test of contributions of individual independent variables, where  $104 + k$  cases are enough ( $k$  = number of independent variables), see Rabušic (2006: 5) or Hendl (2004: 399). In some variables, non-zero values occurred only in about 40 cases. However, even the absence of observed phenomena, contain substantial information.

## The Method of Spatial Autocorrelation Analysis

Due to the aforementioned geographically differentiated data (see Spurná 2008; Netrdová, Nosek 2009), also an analysis of local spatial autocorrelation was made, in the GeoDa programme (version 1.6.7), specifically the LISA = Local Indicators of Spatial Association with local Moran I criteria (Anselin 1995; 2003). This method tested the assumed influence of geographic location, the spatial position itself, although it is of course related to other variables standing behind the spatial distribution, tested in the previous multiple regression. The data for spatial units (municipalities) were correlated with spatially weighted data also for neighbouring municipalities within a certain distance, forming neighbouring clusters concentrating the same type of correlation (Anselin 1995; Spurná 2008). Local Moran I criteria are partial components of the total Moran I (index), a roughly equivalent to the Pearson correlation coefficient (see Figures 5–6, part c – so-called correlograms). Values of computed total “Moran I’s” are below 0.1, indicating a very low total spatial autocorrelation. This was expected due to the data with complex, difficult to treat, relationships, already cleansed from the main influence – the population size. Nevertheless, the local spatial autocorrelation shows places, where, despite the overall low dependence, spatial contexts play a statistically significant role at the level of individual municipalities and their clusters (see Anselin 1995).

The spatial weight was the distance from centroids of polygons of municipal territories, with a defined limit – the Euclidean distance in metres<sup>10</sup> (see ASU GeoDa Center 2015). The 10,000 metre distance was chosen, preferred also by Spurná (2008) or Bernard (2012a) for Czechia, meeting the condition that each municipality has at least one neighbour and could form “clusters” (about 6,000 metres would be the limit for the Liberec region only).

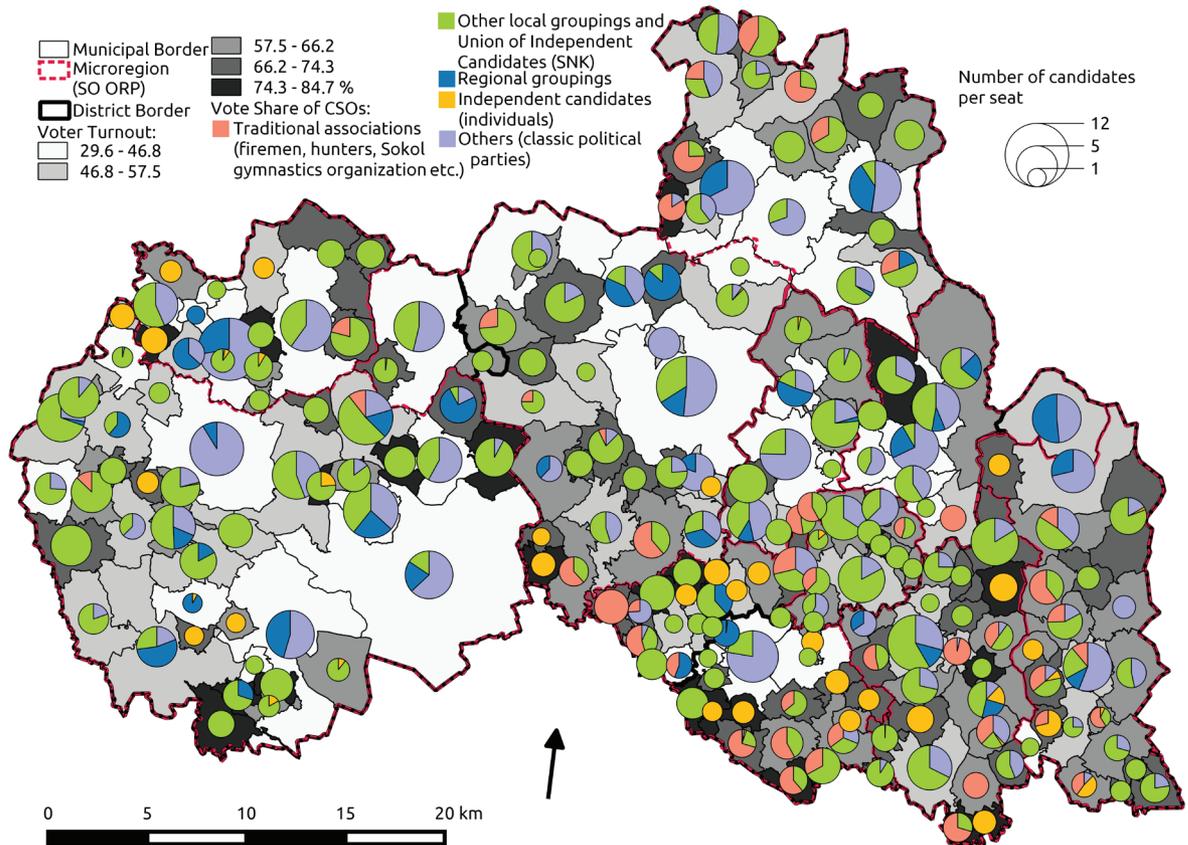
Due to a relatively small set of 215 units, the computer’s performance allowed to choose the maximum of 99,999 permutations, with stable results after repeating within the randomization process, although commonly used 999 permutations (Spurná 2008; Bernard 2012a; recommended by Anselin 2003: 9) would be sufficient with only minor changes. A common limit signifier of  $p = 0.05$  was chosen, giving a sufficient number of significant results.

## General Geographical Overview

Results of the municipal elections 2010 (ČSÚ 2010; 2011d) and 2014 (ČSÚ 2014b), see Figures 1–2, show that local groups and associations of independent candidates received the most votes in most municipalities, in general, as assumed, in accordance with e.g. Čmejrek (2007). “Classic” parties succeeded only in cities, sometimes even there in parity or minority to regional and local groupings, in accordance with recent development (already Kostelecký 2004 cit. in Ryšavý 2006: 958).

<sup>10</sup> It is based on the distance units of the given cartographic map data (projection).

Figure 1: Civil Society Organizations in the Liberec Region in Municipal Elections 2010

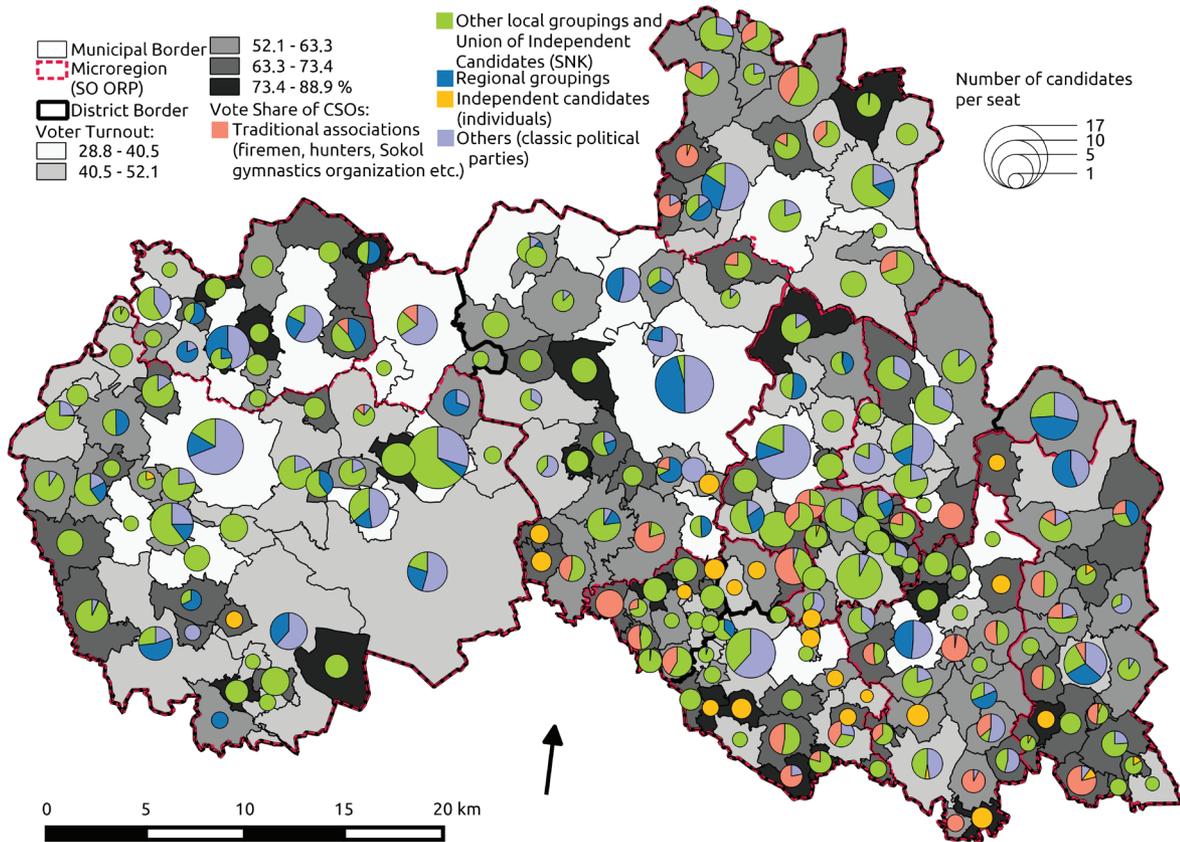


Source: ČSÚ (2010; 2011a, d); the author in QGIS.

Note: For Bohatice (Česká Lípa district), data from the election of 5 February 2011 is used. The map shows district borders as of 2002.

Especially in the smallest municipalities, success was often achieved by both independent candidates (though mostly in cases without any collective ballot competitors) and traditional associations. However, this phenomenon occurs particularly outside the former “Sudetenland” – in the Semily district (Turnov, Semily and Jilemnice microregions or districts of municipalities with extended competence [SO ORP]), partly Železný Brod in Jablonec n. N. district or in the southern Ještěd Mountain foothills (Podještědí) in the Liberec district. In the Česká Lípa and Nový Bor SO ORPs, despite a certain number of small municipalities, it occurs less often. Nevertheless, there are significant electoral gains of traditional associations in the Frýdlant SO ORP, although the microregion underwent expulsion of Germans after WWII. Political success of traditional associations can be associated also with the residential structure and rural character of the microregions, not just former “Sudetenland”, see below. The pattern has not much changed between the last two municipal elections (compare Figures 1–2).

**Figure 2: Civil Society Organizations in the Liberec Region in Municipal Elections 2014**



**Source:** ČSÚ (2011a; 2014b); the author in QGIS.

Note: The map shows district borders as of 2002.

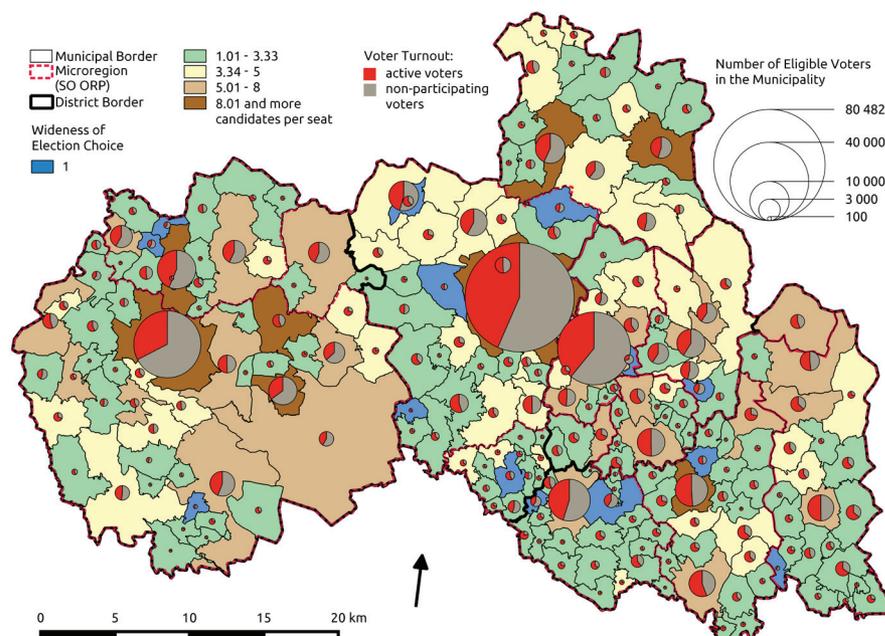
Figures 1–4 show also data on the number of candidates per one seat, and voter turnout. The situation in small municipalities cannot be romanticized. Despite the turnout sometimes up to twice compared with towns (80 vs. 40%), the population size and demographic conditions often do not allow setting more than a technically “totalitarian-like” single ballot, as mentioned above (compare with Ryšavý, Bernard 2013). In large towns, the choice can consist of more than 10 complete ballots. In some small villages with no choice, lower turnout can also be observed, see e.g. Vysoké nad Jizerou in the foothills of Krkonoše on the north of Semily SO ORP, a town with 1,306 residents in 2012, but consisting of 5 ZSJs (Appendix 6; ČSÚ 2012; 2013 b). There, between the past two elections, the number of candidates and voter turnout logically decreased strongly (from 61 candidates in 7 lists, with 9 seats in the town assembly, to one list with 15 candidates, equal to an increased number of seats in the town assembly; ČSÚ 2010, 2011d and ČSÚ 2014b). Figures 3–4 provide additionally numbers of eligible voters.

Table 1: Municipal Elections 2010 in Liberec Region: Associations, Untraditional Parties and Extremists<sup>11</sup>

| SO ORP              | Eligible voters | Turnout      | Average Turnout per municipality | Candidates per seat | Traditional associations | Other local groupings | Regional groupings | Individual candidates | Non-classic parties in total | Extremists  |
|---------------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
|                     |                 | [%]          |                                  |                     | [%]                      |                       |                    |                       |                              |             |
| Česká Lípa          | 61,230          | 40.65        | 59.11                            | 4.50                | 0.34                     | 29.50                 | 14.26              | 2.60                  | 46.70                        | 13.01       |
| Frydlant            | 19,761          | 48.66        | 59.17                            | 4.36                | 10.26                    | 33.13                 | 15.26              | 0.03                  | 58.68                        | 11.14       |
| Jabl. n.N.          | 43,169          | 41.63        | 55.15                            | 4.70                | 1.10                     | 33.62                 | 2.15               | 0.04                  | 36.91                        | 8.71        |
| Jilemnice           | 18,258          | 58.87        | 63.08                            | 2.97                | 12.10                    | 37.19                 | 5.86               | 5.69                  | 60.83                        | 3.25        |
| Liberec             | 111,015         | 45.74        | 59.14                            | 4.10                | 1.29                     | 38.23                 | 13.73              | 0.81                  | 54.06                        | 7.99        |
| Nový Bor            | 21,608          | 46.44        | 59.19                            | 4.40                | 0.66                     | 26.52                 | 17.71              | 6.26                  | 51.15                        | 8.65        |
| Semily              | 21,350          | 58.57        | 66.34                            | 3.43                | 11.44                    | 53.50                 | 5.99               | 6.93                  | 77.86                        | 3.31        |
| Tanvald             | 17,386          | 44.88        | 50.64                            | 4.59                | 2.95                     | 36.80                 | 14.45              | 0                     | 54.19                        | 9.27        |
| Turnov              | 26,219          | 53.82        | 65.92                            | 2.60                | 10.75                    | 35.62                 | 5.94               | 14.59                 | 66.90                        | 2.35        |
| Želez. Brod         | 9,913           | 56.83        | 64.95                            | 3.11                | 3.24                     | 71.73                 | 0                  | 0.66                  | 75.63                        | 2.41        |
| <b>Region total</b> | <b>349,909</b>  | <b>46.90</b> | <b>61.13</b>                     | <b>3.82</b>         | <b>4.05</b>              | <b>37.34</b>          | <b>10.66</b>       | <b>3.21</b>           | <b>55.27</b>                 | <b>7.77</b> |

Source: ČSÚ (2010; 2011d).

Figure 3: Voter Turnout and the Plurality of Choice in Municipal Elections 2010 in Liberec Region



Source: ČSÚ (2010; 2011a, d); the author in QGIS.

Note: For Bohatice (Česká Lípa district), data from the election of 5 February 2011 is used. The map shows district borders as of 2002.

<sup>11</sup> The summary of election results for the entire microregions is calculated in a simplified way from the number of returned envelopes and percent of votes per municipalities. Therefore, it does not reflect precisely the actual number of votes or incomplete ballots.

**Table 2: Municipal Elections 2014 in Liberec Region: Associations, Untraditional Parties and Extremists<sup>15</sup>**

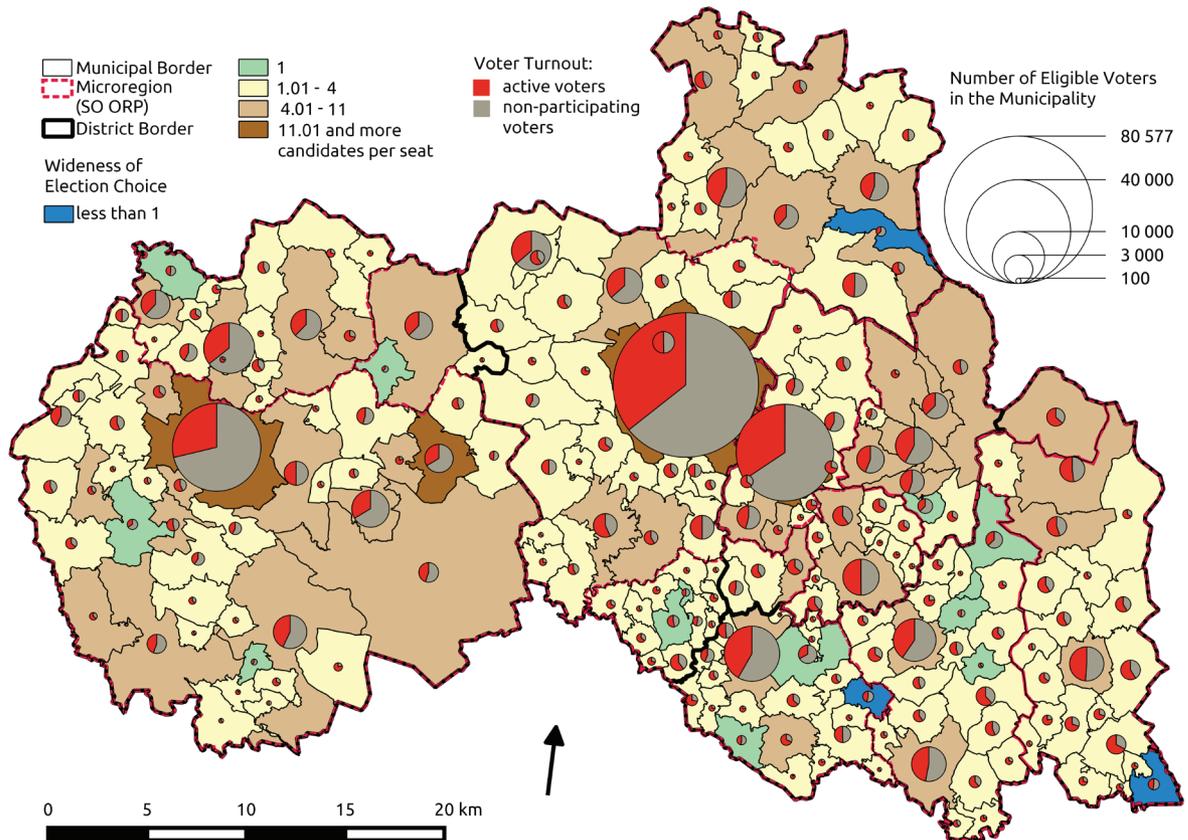
| SO ORP              | Eligible voters | Turnout      | Average Turnout per municipality | Candidates per seat | Traditional associations | Other local groupings | Regional groupings | Individual candidates | Non-classic parties in total | Extremists  |
|---------------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
|                     |                 | [%]          |                                  |                     | [%]                      |                       |                    |                       |                              |             |
| Česká Lípa          | 61,343          | 37.45        | 54.58                            | 4.51                | 0.29                     | 42.17                 | 15.19              | 0.61                  | 58.26                        | 7.84        |
| Frýdlant            | 19,685          | 48.15        | 55.47                            | 4.52                | 9.54                     | 56.07                 | 12.20              | 0.12                  | 77.93                        | 8.82        |
| Jabl. n.N.          | 43,859          | 37.83        | 60.04                            | 5.90                | 1.71                     | 32.07                 | 12.64              | 0                     | 46.42                        | 5.96        |
| Jilemnice           | 18,204          | 57.60        | 62.94                            | 3.03                | 11.60                    | 47.62                 | 13.83              | 5.28                  | 78.32                        | 1.31        |
| Liberec             | 111,790         | 38.98        | 56.22                            | 4.35                | 1.85                     | 18.77                 | 36.71              | 1.01                  | 58.34                        | 6.93        |
| Nový Bor            | 21,552          | 41.64        | 59.95                            | 3.54                | 0.46                     | 32.19                 | 33.06              | 0                     | 65.71                        | 5.94        |
| Semily              | 21,130          | 50.55        | 61.00                            | 2.81                | 13.64                    | 33.05                 | 16.86              | 6.98                  | 70.54                        | 4.59        |
| Tanvald             | 17,003          | 45.12        | 50.71                            | 5.50                | 3.60                     | 47.22                 | 9.68               | 0                     | 60.49                        | 5.67        |
| Turnov              | 26,419          | 49.98        | 61.62                            | 2.65                | 10.56                    | 49.23                 | 1.33               | 14.40                 | 75.52                        | 1.26        |
| Želez. Brod         | 9,819           | 57.34        | 68.10                            | 3.91                | 1.21                     | 80.58                 | 1.94               | 0.26                  | 84.00                        | 2.56        |
| <b>Region total</b> | <b>350,804</b>  | <b>42.55</b> | <b>58.75</b>                     | <b>3.91</b>         | <b>4.36</b>              | <b>36.56</b>          | <b>20.09</b>       | <b>2.55</b>           | <b>63.56</b>                 | <b>5.73</b> |

Source: ČSÚ (2014b).

A certain similarity of traditional associations' political activity in the Bohemian Paradise (namely south-western Semily district) and Frýdlant microregion would seem to indicate that some of the aforementioned differences in traditions and social capital (Putnam 1993; 1995a, b; Stachová 2008; Jančák et al. 2010) have already started blurring, but there is also an important role of other local factors – the overall cultural environment<sup>12</sup> or the common rural character of settlement structure. Aggregate tables 1–2 show also apparent “Sudetenland” characteristics of the Frýdlant microregion, unlike Turnov, Semily or Jilemnice – lower voter turnout and high support for extremist parties (even here in municipal elections, 2014 top). On the other hand, a relatively small Železný Brod microregion, outside the former ethnic German majority area, shows high turnouts but poor results for both extremists and associations, possibly due to a dominance of central town and its neighbourhood effect or even suburbanization.

<sup>12</sup> E.g. Frýdlant Wallenstein festivities or activities of former mayor Pávek in Jindřichovice pod Smrkem.

Figure 1: Voter Turnout and the Plurality of Choice in Municipal Elections 2014 in Liberec Region



Source: ČSÚ (2011a; 2014b); the author in QGIS.  
 Note: The map shows district borders as of 2002.

### Factors influencing CSOs' electoral support

This chapter analyses the R\_VOLVSEPR variable (average percentage votes for local and regional or regionally oriented political groupings, independent ballots and individual independent candidates for municipal elections in 2010 and 2014 – residuals cleansed from the influence of population size of municipalities, which explained only about 40.4% of variance, see Appendix 3). Residuals thus have a potential for a significant connection with independent variables.

#### Multiple Linear Regression

The most appropriate model of multiple linear regression, see Appendix 5, shows a negative relation with votes for extremist parties, the number of changes in land use plans<sup>13</sup> and the time of travel to the municipality with extended competence (ORP).

<sup>13</sup> See the description of the variable in Appendix 1; it should indicate the level of intensity of pressures on the usage of former agricultural land, e.g. new construction projects, possibly activating (not only) local civil society, in the sense of using planning data as primary data source as proposed by Foley, Hutchinson (1994), though criticized by Porteous (1995), preferring a more detailed qualitative approach.

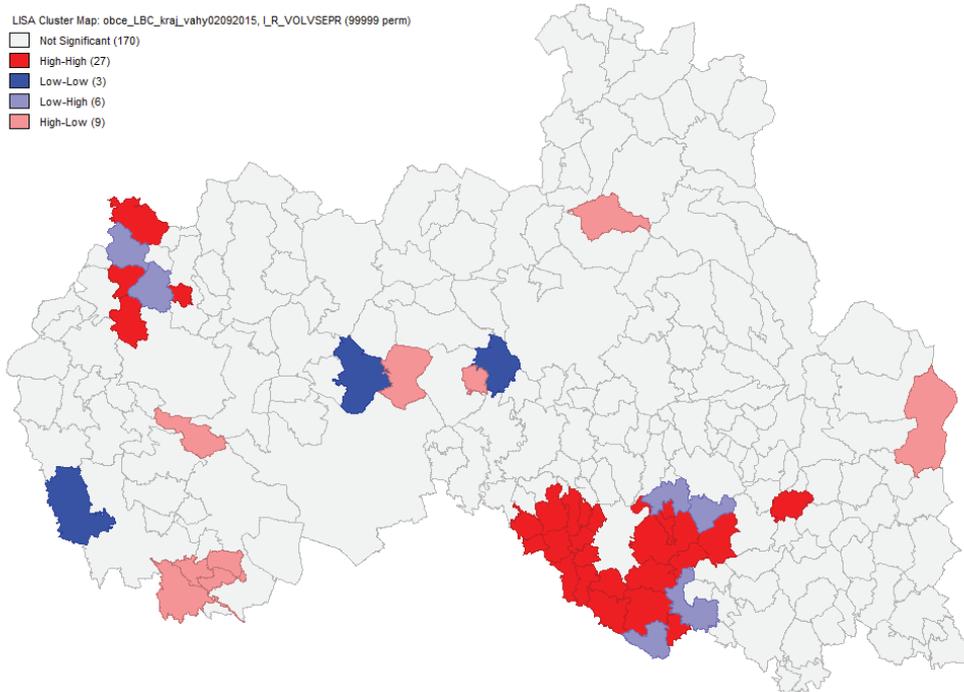
The negative influence of extremists' support (excepting Frýdlant microregion), corresponds to the assumption of stronger social capital based on Putnam (1993) and aforementioned findings. The negative connection with amendments to the land use plan can also indicate a negative correlation with larger towns (despite cleansing of population size factor) which also corresponds to the previous overview; however, the only slightly negative influence of the distance from microregional capital can indicate a strong support of different kinds of local and regional groupings over the entire region, generally slightly not preferring periphery. However, the model explains only about 14.2% of variance.

### ***Spatial autocorrelation***

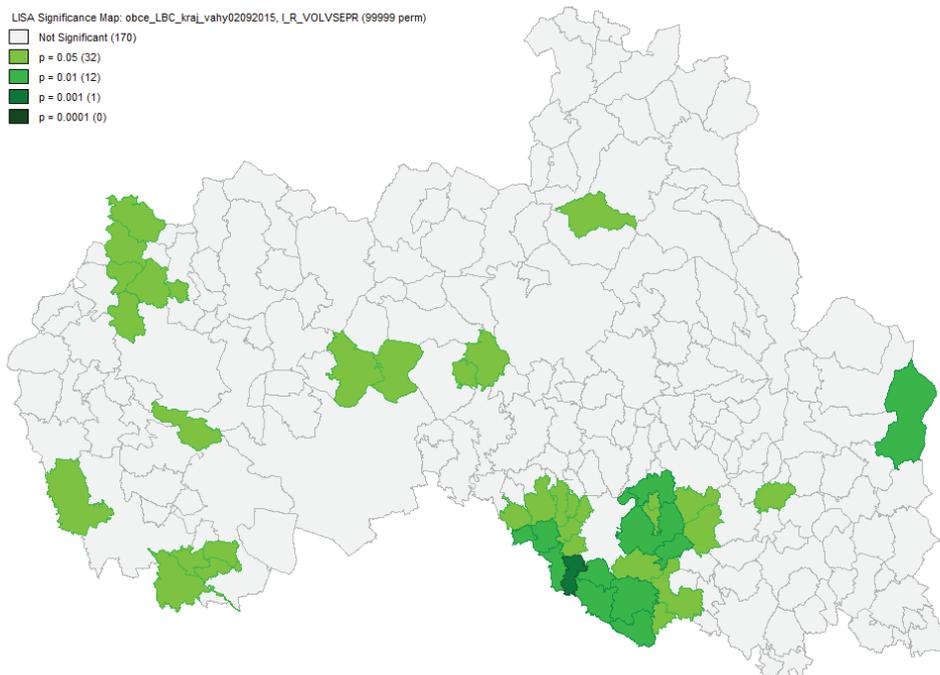
The overall spatial autocorrelation is rather indistinctive, see correlogram (Figure 5, c), but with larger local anomalies – clusters. The largest “hot-spot” is evident near Turnov, corresponding to aforementioned election results and the presumed positive influence of rural areas outside the “Sudetenland”, here with an attractive landscape (Bohemian Paradise). Similarly, Příkrý in the Semily microregion shows a positive local spatial autocorrelation of high values. Several smaller “hot spots” can be observed also in the Western Nový Bor and Česká Lípa SO ORPs, despite “Sudetenland”, arguably, beside suitable settlement structure also due to a positive influence of the attractive nature of Lusatian Mountains in contrast with other areas of these ORPs affected by industry, former uranium mining and e.g. controversial basalt mining. “Hot spots” are approximately situated in the “developing countryside” as defined by Perlín et al. (2010). In the east (Stráž pod Ralskem) and southwest (Tuháň) in the Česká Lípa microregion, there are also two “cold spots”, as well as Světlá pod Ještědem in Liberec microregion, though partially in traditional ethnic Czech area. However, generally “cold spots” around the Ještěd Foothills and farther in the Česká Lípa microregion can indicate the impact of the post-war expulsion of ethnic Germans and also current social and environmental problems.

Figure 5: Spatial Autocorrelation – LISA analysis – R\_VOLVSEPR variable<sup>14</sup>

a) Local Spatial Autocorrelation

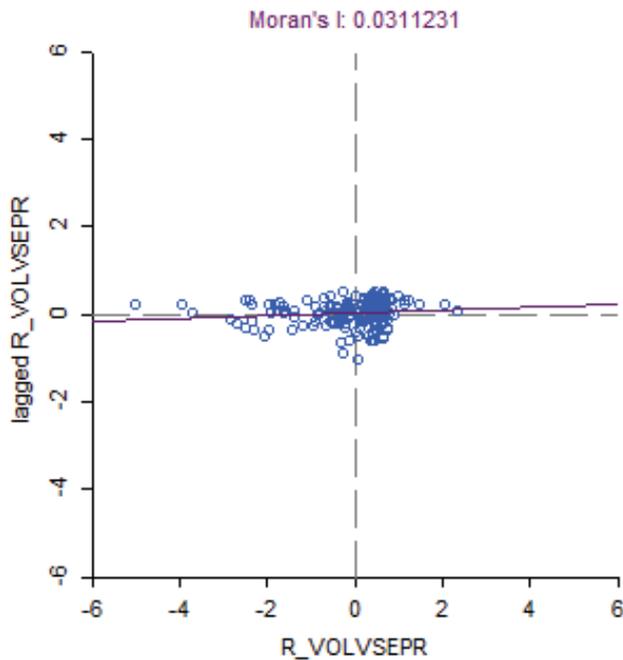


b) Significance



<sup>14</sup> The “p” value means significance. “High-high” is a kind of positive spatial autocorrelation – “hot spot” – i.e. a high value of both the variable in the spatial unit and spatially weighted variables in neighbouring units. The opposite is a (also positive) spatial autocorrelation “low-low” (“cold spot”). “High-low” and “low-high” indicate a negative spatial autocorrelation and possible spatial anomalies (Spurná 2008: 778).

c) Moran I



**Source:** ČSÚ (2010; 2011a, d; 2012; 2013a; 2014b); the author, based on his own processing in programmes SPSS and GeoDa.

### Factors influencing electoral success of traditional associations

This chapter analyses the VOLSPRR variable (average percentage votes for traditional associations [firemen, Sokol, etc.] for the municipal elections in 2010 and 2014). Due to unproven dependency on the population size of the municipality (explaining only 0.7% of the variance, see Appendix 3), despite the location rather in small villages (however, only a part of much larger and very variable file), the variable is used without cleansing.

#### Multiple Linear Regression

The most suitable regression model, see Appendix 5, explains only about 15.9% of the variance and includes five variables (still with a good tolerance coefficient values above 0.8).

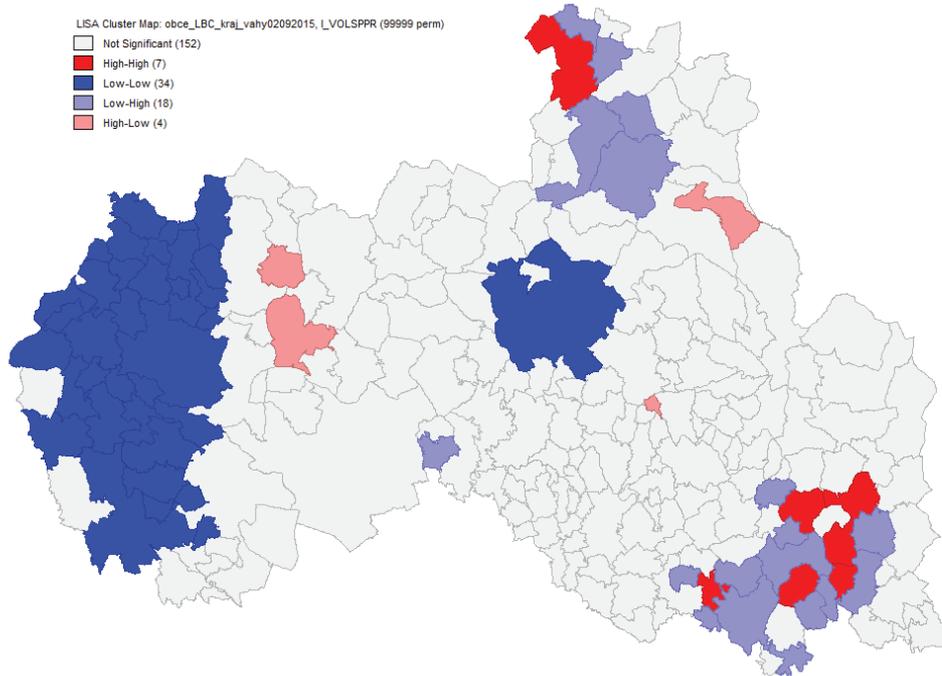
There is apparent a negative correlation of voting for associations with the “Sudetenland”, extremist and hierarchical status of the municipality, in accordance with aforementioned assumption based on Putnam (1993) of a negative impact of territories affected by the post-war expulsion of ethnic Germans, but it is also the case of towns with less a traditional life and stronger position of classical parties and other groupings. However, the connection with the “Sudetenland’s” Frýdlant microregion is positive.

A positive impact of the average number of candidates per seat, i.e. the richness of the electoral choice, in the municipal elections 2010 and 2014 was also engaged in accordance with the assumption. It also partly denies an assumption of strength of associations namely in municipalities without any other (political) organization available. Nevertheless, there were also cases of several associations standing beside or possibly against each other (Balík 2016: 81) in one municipality (ČSÚ 2010; 2011d; 2014b), and the wider choice and more intensive political activity can sometimes also indicate possible conflicts or problems.

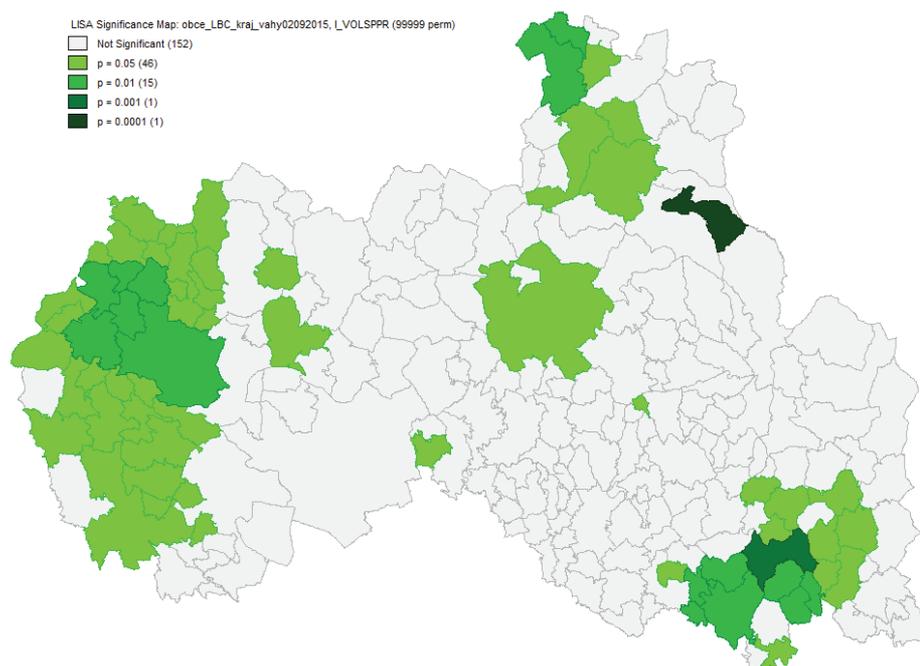
## Spatial Autocorrelation

Figure 6: Spatial Autocorrelation – LISA analysis – VOLSPRR variable<sup>17</sup>

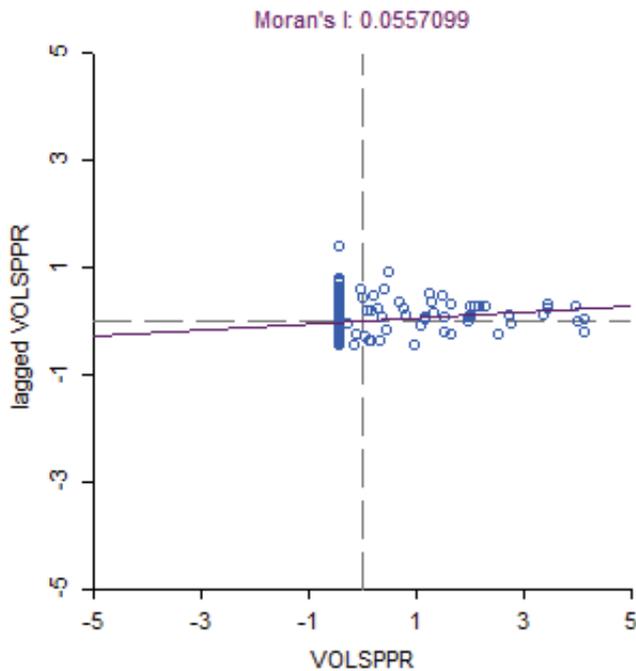
### a) Local Spatial Autocorrelation



### b) Significance



## c) Moran I



**Source:** ČSÚ (2010; 2011a, d; 2012; 2013a; 2014b); the author, based on his own processing in programmes SPSS and GeoDa.

In Figure 6, there can be seen particularly a large cluster of positive spatial autocorrelation (“low-low”) in the western Česká Lípa and Nový Bor microregions, the most significant one being in Česká Lípa and northwest of it. This corresponds well with the assumption of rather negative context of the “resettled” borderland and more problematic regions. Another “cold spot” is the regional capital city of Liberec, corresponding to the negative impact of the hierarchically higher-ranking towns. Conversely, a “high-high” cluster can be observed in northwest of the aforementioned Frýdlant microregion. It is the Višňová village, a cluster of very small settlements – 1,349 inhabitants in 9 ZSJs (ČSÚ 2012; 2013a, b), see Appendix 6. Another “hot spot” occurs along with a cluster of negative spatial autocorrelation, indicating an imbalance of this indicator in small municipalities, in the ethnically stable areas of Semily and south-west Jilemnice microregions. The negative “high-low” spatial autocorrelation in Bílý Potok (in the southeast Frýdlant microregion) is the most significant one, probably due to a fragmented settlement structure and a peripherality between the Jizera and Krkonoše mountains.

## Conclusion

The analysis of the geographic differentiation of importance of CSOs in municipal elections 2010 and 2014 has shown, in accordance with assumptions and e.g. Čmejrek (2007) or Ryšavý (2006), namely the prevalence of local and other groupings outside of classical political parties in small municipalities, but with occasionally strong representation even in larger towns, including Liberec. It shows almost widespread strength of several CSOs of different kinds at different hierarchical settlement levels.

As to geographical and other influential factors, there was found a negative link with the support of extremist parties, the number of changes to the land use plan, and the time needed for travel to microregional capitals. This also corresponds to the assumption of a greater political role of CSOs and non-parliamentary or regional parties in smaller municipalities and possibly those without larger economic interests (land use conflicts). At the same time, the negative influence of the structurally affected localities associated with the support of extremists and the weak social capital in the sense of Putnam (1993) can also have an importance, also supported by the LISA analysis (largest cluster of positive values in Turnov microregion outside the former “Sudetenland”). Despite partly similar results also for the “Sudete” Lusatian Mountains foothills, this corresponds to the “developing countryside” in the hinterland of larger towns and cities and their connecting lines (Perlín et al. 2010: 177–178).

Partly similar, but even more interesting findings have been provided by the election results of traditional associations with electoral gains concentrated almost exclusively in the Semily District outside the former “Sudetenland”, but, to a lesser extent also in the “resettled” Frýdlant microregion, while in the Česká Lípa microregion, they, even in small municipalities, almost absented. It was supported also by results of the multiple regression analysis. The support for traditional associations in municipal elections has proven to be independent of population size of the municipality (and also of other independent variables), probably due to a large variability even among small municipalities, though the phenomena is absent in larger towns.

There is apparent the general “putnamian” (see Putnam 1993) geographical factor, the resistance of original (internal) historical boundaries affecting traditions, social capital etc. (Jančák et al. 2010; Perlín et al. 2010; Bernard, Kostecký, Šimon 2014: 244), indirectly supported also by the proved positive influence of the number of candidates per seat, indicating local activities and better social capital). However, debatable is the possible influence of other factors such as settlement structure (very small municipalities with dominant voluntary firemen or Sokol gymnasts), environment quality and attractiveness, but also neighbourhood, lack of peripherality or suburbanization effect of nearby larger towns (strength of classic political parties even in smallest municipalities situated too close to Česká Lípa or Železný Brod).

Even though main assumptions or hypotheses about influence of former “Sudetenland” and hierarchical position of municipality were confirmed, there should follow further research including detailed case studies namely in areas of anomalies, especially the Frýdlant microregion. This paper offered just a basic overview, regarding traditional associations only their minimal, openly declared, successful electoral presence in municipal elections. There should be also considered the possible hidden presence of official associations or even latent civil initiatives throughout the society, including classical parties, at the individual level (Truman 2003). Despite the often seen dichotomy or antagonism between representative and participative democracy – in the Czech context, see e.g. Havel (1984) and Havelka (1998) versus Klaus (2005) – at least at the local level, the boundary is very vague or almost invisible. Besides traditionally strong associations in the smallest municipalities, other local groupings such as Změna (Change) can rise from a civil initiative or later CSO to a local or regional political movement or a party.

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## APPENDICES:

### Appendix 1: The overview of all variables used in statistical analysis (description and sources)

See: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0ByRz2Gvle1JcEdYdE9hbDdfckE>

**Source:** See the very right column called "Source"; The author, based on his own processing and computation.

### Appendix 2: Descriptive (frequency) Statistical Characteristics of Variables used in the Statistical Analysis

See: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0ByRz2Gvle1JJUWd5MnNla0RGTms>

**Source:** See individual variables in Appendix 1; The author, based on his own computation in SPSS programme.

### Appendix 3: Dependency of Variables on Population Size of the Municipality based on Regression Analysis – Value Cleansing

See: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0ByRz2Gvle1JJQW1BbmZrQkhGQzQ>

**Source:** See individual variables in Appendix 1; The author, based on his own computation in SPSS programme; the process partly based on Bernard (2012a).

### Appendix 4: Mutual Correlations of Independent Variables Entering the Multiple Regression Analysis

See: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0ByRz2Gvle1JJYnpsVhZWNhCcVE>

**Source:** See individual variables in Appendix 1; The author, based on his own computation in SPSS programme.

### Appendix 5: Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis and Local Spatial Autocorrelation (LISA)

See: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0ByRz2Gvle1JJazIDRXkyUU1oUUU>

**Source:** The author, based on his own processing in SPSS and GeoDa programmes, using variables and sources listed in Appendix 1.

### Appendix 6: Municipalities of the Liberec Region – Identification for the Appendix 7 and Basic Territorial Characteristics

See: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0ByRz2Gvle1JJOHNPV3NBNzdWLV>

**Source:** CENIA, AOPK, ČÚZK, ČSÚ (2015); ČSÚ (2011a; 2012; 2013a, b; 2014a); Zeměměřičský úřad Čechy a Morava, Opevneni.cz (2010 [1943]); Ouředníček et al. (2015).

### Appendix 7: Territorial Administrative Division of the Liberec Region in the Period 2010–2015

See: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0ByRz2Gvle1JJSDIHaGx1RWV5bIE>

**Source:** ČSÚ (2011a; 2012; 2013a; 2014a); Zeměměřičský úřad Čechy a Morava, Opevneni.cz (2010 [1943]); Ouředníček et al. (2015).