

Development of Media Consumption of Hungarians in Slovakia in the Light of Empirical Data

Zuzana Mészárosová Lampl

Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra: Univerzita Konstantina Filozofa v Nitre

Mária Kočnerová

Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra: Univerzita Konstantina Filozofa v Nitre

Abstract

Research on the media consumption of national minorities contributes to identifying whether the media have an impact on the formation of national identity. The language and symbols used by the media are a strong factor influencing this identity. In the presented study, we focused on the analysis and comparison of empirical data resulting from several sociological researches carried out by the authors of this study on the Hungarian minority in Slovakia. The research was mainly focused on media consumption, the type of media that the Hungarian minority prefers to follow, because we assume that the chosen medium and its language contribute to the formation of identity. The aim of this study is to evaluate the development of media consumption among the above-mentioned minority and to evaluate changes in consumption upon the discovery of new modern media.

Keywords

media consumption, Hungarian minority in Slovakia, rate and frequency of followership

Introduction

Media consumption has been one of the most frequent ways of spending people's leisure time since the 1960s in both the Western and the Eastern Bloc, and it has retained this position in the structure of leisure activities even in today's globalized world. In the past, of course, it was not the media that were discussed, but the mass media, and research focused on watching

* Zuzana Mészárosová Lampl, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra: Univerzita Konstantina Filozofa v Nitre, Slovakia

* Mária Kočnerová, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra: Univerzita Konstantina Filozofa v Nitre Nitra, Slovakia. kocnerova@gmail.com

television, radio, and print media: that is, the so-called classical or traditional media. Nowadays, research on Internet-based new media tracking has also been added (the boundaries between leisure and other time are blurred when watching these).

A fundamental question in media consumption research is the rate and frequency of media tracking, that is, how many people read, watch, and listen to them, and how often they do so. Another question is the pattern of media consumers, that is, whether, and at what tracking rate, specific media is typical for certain groups and segments of the population, whether the consumption of certain media is particularly typical or, on the contrary, very atypical for some, and whether a typology of media consumers can be established based on these preferences. Another interesting question is what media content (for instance, news, sports articles/broadcasts, entertainment content, and so on) people prefer and why, and based on these preferences what media-content orientations are typical for a given population.

Another broader framework, or the base for this research into the media consumption of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, is the well-known influence of the media on the formation of national identity (see, e.g., B. Anderson 1991, 2006; D. McQuail 1992; M. Price 1998; M. Kočnerová – T. Tökölyová 2017). Especially through the language of the media and the national symbols presented by them, the media can strengthen or, on the contrary, weaken the national identity (see S. Hall 2001) of media consumers. The media also has a significant influence on the formation of their political identity, which ultimately manifests itself primarily in the preferences of political parties in parliamentary elections.

However, for reasons of scope, we cannot address all these aspects of media consumption in our study. We will focus on the most basic aspect of media consumption: the rate and frequency of viewing of diverse types of media (print, television, radio, Internet), and the rate and frequency of viewing of specific print media, television and radio stations, and Internet news portals. We draw our data from empirical sociological research, in most cases our own.

1. About Research on Media Consumption of Hungarians in Slovakia

The first, very brief data on the media consumption of Hungarians in Slovakia—that 74.5% of the respondents watched television—comes from the sociologist István Kardos in 1965. More extensive and more detailed results were obtained only by sociological research conducted in 1971–1975 at the Department of Theory of Culture and Sociology of the Research Institute of Culture in Bratislava under the direction of Milan Kašjak and

László Vegh. From this “retro” research we learn, among other things, that during the period of normalization, the most preferred media of Hungarians in Slovakia was television, which was watched by 97% of the respondents. The second place was taken by radio, which was listened to by 94.6% of the respondents, and the third place was taken by the press, which was read by 82%. While it is true that the press came third overall, it was the medium that most fulfilled the primary—that is, the informational—function of mass communication, as it was the most widely watched source of information/news, while television and radio were primarily a means of entertainment and relaxation. Most respondents (82%) read—at that time and still today—the only daily newspaper in the Hungarian language, *Új Szó* (at that time it was the press organ of the Communist Party of Slovakia), but in the 6 districts of southern Slovakia where the survey was conducted, 18.9% of Slovaks also read it. So, it was the most read newspaper in that region. It was regularly read by 52.9% of respondents, while only 33.7% read the Slovak party daily *Pravda*.

Further sociological research on the media consumption of Hungarians in Slovakia was conducted after the regime change, mostly under the leadership of sociologist Zuzana Lampl, from the mid-1990s onwards. The first research she conducted within the Ferenc Balázs Institute in Budapest, the others within the Forum Institute for Minority Research in Šamorín. These and other survey-type researches of the Sociological and Demographic Research Department of the Forum Institute are specific compared to the researches of other research institutes in Slovakia in that their basic population is not the population of all citizens of Slovakia, or just young people (as by Štefaňák, 2022), but only citizens of Hungarian nationality over 18 years of age, who, according to the latest census (SLBD) of 2021, total 456,154¹, and who predominantly live in the region of southern Slovakia. The first survey (Lampl 1995) was conducted on a sample of eight hundred respondents, the largest one (Lampl 2014) on a sample of 3,000 respondents, the last one (Mrva-Lampl 2021) on a sample of 1,000 respondents. Other research carried out in the meantime were also conducted on samples of about 1,000 respondents. The samples of all surveys were representative by gender, age, school education, number of Hungarians in each district, type of municipality (town-village) and size of the municipality by population. Interviewing was face-to-face, conducted by a network of trained interviewers. All surveys were conducted

1 The 2021 Census differed from the previous ones by, among other, the fact that a second nationality could be recorded in addition to the primary nationality in the ethnicity survey. 422,055 people reported Hungarian as their first nationality and 34,089 as their second nationality. In previous censuses, only one nationality could be indicated.

in ethnically mixed districts of southern Slovakia and some also in the cities of Bratislava and Košice. In addition to these “normal” media surveys, in 2007 we undertook a comparative survey, which included not only Hungarians but also Slovaks living in the mixed territory of southern Slovakia. The sample at that time consisted of 800 respondents and, in addition to the above-mentioned parameters, it was also representative according to the ethnic structure of the districts inhabited by Hungarians and Slovaks (Lampl 2016a).

In the next part of this paper, we will first present the basic trends in the development of media consumption of Hungarians in Slovakia from the mid-1990s to the second decade of the third millennium. Then we will discuss the latest results, which come from research in 2021.

2. The Main Trends of Media Consumption of Hungarians in Slovakia from the Mid-1990s to the Second Decade of the Third Millennium

After the system transformation in 1989, the period of the so-called pluralistic media emerged, which brought a radical change not only in the structure of the media, in their values and functions (Pružinec 2005), but also in media consumption. Another radical change in the media space was the introduction of the Internet, which became widespread at the end of the 20th century.

In the period under review, the material and technical conditions for media monitoring were already fulfilled: by the mid-1990s, all respondents already had a black-and-white television set, and 90.2% of Hungarians in Slovakia already owned a color television set. Even 37% owned a video device, which was considered a “gadget” at the time (Lampl 1999). In 2011, everyone already had a color TV set, most respondents also had more than one (45.2% one TV set, 40% two TV sets, 14.8% several TV sets), and 79.7% also had a satellite device (Dobos 2012:35, 41). In 2016, 97% of respondents owned a color TV set, 61% a DVD player, 29% a video camera and 23% a so-called home cinema (the highest quality TV set at that time) (Lampl 2016). Regarding internet access, in 2001, 8.4% of Hungarians had an internet connection at home (Dobos 2012:152), but by 2007, 53% already had broadband (Lampl 2007). In 2016, 79% had a computer and 77% had internet access (Lampl 2016). According to the latest data from 2021, 80% of Hungarians in Slovakia have internet access (Mrva 2021).

In terms of media consumption, in the 1990s, viewing figures show that television retained its primacy, but print media overtook radio. So, the order of audience was: television, print media, radio. In terms of the language of the monitored media, a major change compared to the past was the strong rise of Hungarian-language media, which also meant a strong preference for

media from Hungary in the case of television and radio, and in the case of the press, mainly the reading of the domestic Hungarian press. At that time, the most popular television was the public television in Hungary (then MTV1 and MTV2), and among the radio stations Kossuth and Petőfi, also from Hungary. The most widely read domestic Hungarian periodicals were *Új Szó*, *Vasárnap*, *Szabad Újság* and *Új Nő*².

Since the beginning of the third millennium, there have been further major changes in media consumption due to two factors: the rise of commercial media and the gradual massive expansion of the Internet. The commercial media quickly overtook the public media in terms of viewership, and this applied to both Hungarian and domestic media. In 2001, two commercial TV stations from Hungary, RTL Klub and TV2, pushed the previously most watched Hungarian public broadcaster MTV1 to third place, and in 2003, Hungarian commercial radio also joined the ranks of commercial TV by becoming more watched than MTV1, while its listenership also exceeded that of Hungarian public radio. The viewership of Slovak public television has also decreased. The Hungarian broadcaster Slovak Television lost half of its viewers. At the same time, the first Slovak commercial television channel, Markíza³, which in 2003 was already watched by half of the Hungarian respondents, gained a large audience. The process of changing the viewership of the commercial media at the expense of the public media also affected Slovak public radio. Its preference has also declined, and the Hungarian broadcaster, the current Rádio Patria, in Hungarian Pátria Rádió, has not been able to maintain its listenership of the 1990s. At the same time, Slovak commercial radio stations have gained ground, although they have not been able to overtake Rádio Patria⁴.

Another change in the media consumption of Hungarians was brought about by the rise in the viewership of Slovak media. However, this did not mean an overall change in the linguistic orientation of media consumption of Hungarians in Slovakia, because despite the increased interest in Slovak media, they continued to prefer Hungarian-language media. Internet viewership has also steadily increased, as evidenced by the fact that it has risen

2 *Vasárnap* and *Szabad Újság* were published as weekly newspapers. In the meantime, *Szabad Újság* has disappeared (although one new website appeared under this name this year), but *Vasárnap* still exists to this day. *Új Nő* was initially published as a women's weekly, later switched to monthly periodical, and is still published as such.

3 The first Slovak commercial television began broadcasting on 31st August 1996.

4 Radio Patria is a Slovak public radio station. It broadcasts for national minorities and ethnic groups in Slovakia in their native languages. Before its establishment, there was a broadcast for fellow Hungarians.

to second place behind television as a source of current news. At the same time, the readership of the press declined.

In the second decade of the third millennium, the tendency to prefer Hungarian television continued, especially watching RTL Klub and TV2, which maintained their position even after the emergence of other commercial television channels, although their viewership decreased in 2014. Viewership of the Slovak commercial television Markiza remained high, although it decreased slightly after the entry of the competing Slovak commercial television JOJ TV. The Slovak news television TA3 has also doubled its viewership in almost a decade. Regarding regional and local TV stations, respondents preferred domestic ones to those broadcasting from Hungary. We have data on the viewership of regional and local TV since 2010, and according to them, the viewership of regional TV has decreased, while that of local TV has increased.

In terms of radio listenership, the preference for commercial radio from Hungary declined until 2014 and remained stable at around 25% in the following period, i.e. one in four respondents listened to it. At the same time, we can state that the listenership of Slovak radios was increasing until 2011, while the listenership of Hungarian-language radios was decreasing.

The development of press preferences up to 2010 was characterised by a significant decrease in the readership of Hungarian national periodicals as well as the Hungarian press (the readership of local newspapers remained unchanged) compared to 2003. The readership of the Slovak press also decreased. Compared to the figures from the 1990s, the readership of the Hungarian national press declined by 30 percentage points, that of the Hungarian local press by 11 percentage points and that of the Hungarian press by 12 percentage points, while the readership of the Slovak press was stable. In numerical terms, this meant that in 2010 almost every second Hungarian read the Hungarian national press (48%), every fourth the Hungarian local press (24%), every fifth the Slovak national press (21%), roughly every seventh the Hungarian press (14%) and every tenth the Slovak local press (9%).

3. Recent Media Consumption Trends

In outlining the latest state of media consumption of Hungarians in Slovakia, we draw on a research database from 2021 (Mrva 2021). 1,000 respondents were contacted, 970 questionnaires were filled in. However, relevant data from previous surveys will not be missed, which, although not fully comparable with the most recent ones due to minor differences in the questions asked, show the same media preferences. In other words, however one asks, media

consumption tendencies are in many ways very similar, and this proves that they are deeply rooted.

3.1. Preferences for Media Types in 2021

According to the latest data (Table 1), 94% of respondents watch television, 81.4% of them daily, most of them (29.1%) for more than three hours, one in four for 1-2 hours and 21.6% for 2-3 hours. 6.8% watch television less than an hour a day. The rest (13%) watch it less than daily.

Radio is listened to by 84% of the respondents. 61.9% of them listen daily, most of them 1-2 hours (21.7%), 15.7% listen more than 3 hours, 10% listen 2-3 hours and 14.5% listen less than an hour. Almost one in five respondents listen to the radio on a weekly or monthly basis.

Print media is read by 76% of respondents, 14.6% of whom read it daily. The highest percentage, 20%, reads them several times a week, 8.6% once a week, 13.6% several times a month, 3.6% once a month, and 15.5% less frequently, than monthly.

Internet news portals are read by 71% of the respondents, most of them, about one in three (32.3%), daily.

In terms of preference for different types of media (print, television, radio, internet news portals), it is true that, as in previous periods - in fact for the

Table 1: *How often do you watch... (%)*

	<i>Print (newspapers, weeklies, monthlies)</i>	<i>Internet news portals</i>	<i>Television</i>	<i>Radio</i>
More than 3 hours daily	-	-	29.1	15.7
2-3 hours daily			21.6	10
1-2 hours daily			23.9	21.7
Less than an hour daily			6.8	14.5
Daily	14.6	32.3	Total daily 81.4	Total daily 61.9
Several times a week	20	18.4	8	11.8
Once a week	8.6	3.2	0.7	2
Several times a month	13.6	8.9	1.8	4.3
Once a month	3.6	1.2	0	1.3
Less frequently than monthly	15.5	6.8	2.1	2.9
Almost never or never	24.1	29	5.9	15.9

last fifty years - television is the most followed medium (94% of respondents watch it). This is followed by radio with 84% of respondents listening to it, then the press (read by 76% of respondents) and finally internet news portals (71% of respondents). However, if we take only the daily frequency of the different types of media as the basis for viewership, television and radio retain their first and second place (81.4% and 61.9% daily viewership respectively), but in third place are the internet news portals with 32.3% daily viewership, overtaking the press, which has only 14.6% daily viewership⁵.

Let us now turn to the details of media consumption: first, the viewership rates of specific print products, TV stations, radio stations and online news portals, and then its frequency. The background is always how many of a given population read, watch, and listen to a specific media, that is, how large its audience is. However, how often they do so is also an important piece of information. After all, there may be media that are watched by many people but rarely, and there may be media that are watched by fewer people but often. Each media tries to have a wide audience and one that watches it as often as possible.

3.1.1. Press Tracking

We have a myriad of data on print readership from previous research. If we look only at the results from recent years, in 2014 the most widely read newspapers were *Új Szó* (55%), *Nový čas* (7%) and *Sme* (3%). The most read weeklies were *Vasárnap* (27%), *Delta* (5%), *Remény*, *Szabad Újság*, *Nők Lapja* and *Story* (2% each), and the most read monthly was *Új Nő* (2%). In 2015, the most popular newspapers were *Új Szó* (31%), *Vasárnap* (8%), *Nový čas* and *Szabad Újság* (3-3%), and *Új Nő*, *Sme* and *Plus 7 dní* (2-2-2%). In 2016, we focused only on the preferences of daily newspapers, and found that in the two weeks prior to the survey, *Új Szó* (54.8%) was the most widely read, followed by *Nový čas* (23%), *Šport* (10%), *Plus jeden deň* (6.6%), *Sme* (6.5%), *Hospodárske noviny* (5%), *Pravda* (3.7%), *Korzář* (3.3%), *Denník N* (1.3%). On the previous day of the survey, 48% of the respondents read *Új Szó*, 39% *Nový čas*, 36% *Šport*, 32%, *Sme*, 31% *Denník N*, 25% *Korzář*, 20% *Hospodárske noviny*, 19% *Plus jeden deň* and 13% *Pravda*.

5 As a point of interest, we note that in previous decades subscriptions to the press were widespread, as this provided convenient access to periodicals, especially in smaller villages where there were no newsagents or newsstands. Even today, subscriptions are more typical of print media, occurring ten times more frequently in our sample than subscriptions to online news portals. Although media organizations continue to try to gain subscribers, subscribers make up just under one-fifth of respondents. Of these, 18.3% subscribe to print and 1.9% have internet subscriptions. In the case of print, a major problem is that the Slovak Post has stopped Saturday delivery of subscriptions, and this is counterproductive to publishers' efforts.

Table 2: *Percentage readership rate of individual periodicals (N=975)*

	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Not reading</i>
Új Szó	57.9	42.1
Nový čas	39.6	60.4
Plus jeden deň	28	72
Pravda	22.5	77.5
Sme	20.5	79.5
Šport	18.2	81.8
Denník N	9.9	90.1
Hospodárske Noviny	16.7	83.3
Korzář	12.7	87.3
Magyar 7	21.7	78.3
Vasárnap	48.9	51.1
Csallóköz	18.8	81.2
Új Nő	29.4	70.6

The print readership rate⁶ in 2021 is shown in Table 2. The results are not surprising. The most widely read is *Új Szó* (read by 57.9% of respondents), followed by *Vasárnap* (48.9%), *Nový čas* (39.6%), *Új Nő* (29.4%), *Plus jeden deň* (28%), *Pravda* (22.5%), *Magyar 7* (21.7%), *Sme* (20.5%), *Csallóköz* (18.8%), *Šport* (18.2%), *Hospodárske noviny* (16.7%), *Korzář* (12.7%), *Denník N* (9.9%).

Thus, the most read daily newspapers in the long term are *Új Szó* and *Nový čas*, the most read weekly is *Vasárnap* and the most read monthly is *Új Nő*. At the same time, it can be stated that Hungarians in Slovakia continue to prefer among the print media those published in the Hungarian language. Many of them also follow the Slovak press, but its readership lags behind that of the Hungarian press in terms of readership numbers and regularity, as shown in Table 3.

In Table 3 we see not only the individual periodicals in descending order of their readership (column 2), but also two other indicators of frequency and regularity of reading. Starting from the obvious assumption that the more frequently someone reads, the more regular a reader he or she is, we consider daily reading to be regular reading in the case of daily newspapers, at least

⁶ There were 13 press products in the questionnaire, of which 8 were Slovak and 5 Hungarian. Of the 13 periodicals, 9 were daily newspapers, 3 weekly and 1 monthly. *Vasárnap*, *Magyar 7* and *Csallóköz* are weeklies, *Új Nő* is a monthly, the others are dailies. Slovak weeklies and monthlies, and periodicals published in Hungary were not included in the questionnaire this time. However, we know from the results of previous research (Lampl 2001, 2014, 2015) that Hungarians in Slovakia also read those, especially women's magazines (e.g., *Eva*, *Emma*, *Báječná žena*, *Kiskegyed*, *Magyar Nők Lapja*), housing magazines and hobby magazines, but their readership is low.

Table 3: *Rate and regularity of press reading*

<i>Daily newspapers</i>	<i>Reading rate (%)</i>	<i>Share of regular readers (%)</i>	<i>Average reading frequency (1. daily, 2. more than once a week, 3. once a week, 4. more than once a month, 5. once a month, 6. less often than monthly)</i>
<i>Új Szó</i>	57.9	12.9	3.42
<i>Nový čas</i>	39.6	3.8	4.23
<i>Plus jeden deň</i>	28	1.6	4.51
<i>Pravda</i>	22.5	1.3	4.57
<i>Sme</i>	20.5	2.2	4.43
<i>Šport</i>	18.2	1.5	4.17
<i>Hospodárske Noviny</i>	16.7	0.7	4.64
<i>Korzár</i>	12.7	0.6	4.69
<i>Denník N</i>	9.9	0.5	4.99
<i>Weeklies, Monthly</i>	<i>Reading rate (%)</i>	<i>Share of regular readers (%)</i>	<i>Average reading frequency</i>
<i>Vasárnap</i>	48.9	22.3	3.97
<i>Magyar 7</i>	21.7	5.3	4.56
<i>Csallóköz</i>	18.8	2.3	4.93
<i>Új Nő</i>	29.4	16.8	4.69

once a week in the case of weeklies, and at least once a month in the case of monthly newspapers. We report the share of regular readers so defined in column 3 of Table 3. In the 4th column of Table 3, we show the average reading frequency, which also tells us about the regularity of reading. The value of this indicator can range from 1 (reads daily) to 6 (reads less frequently than monthly). So, the higher the average, the more infrequent and irregular the reading.

What does this data show?

The daily *Új Szó* not only has the highest readership (57.9%), but also the most regular readership, with 12.9% of respondents reading it regularly. Further evidence is the average frequency of reading, as this is the lowest average, which otherwise corresponds to the range between reading once a week and several times a month (3.42). Again, we see that not only the readership of Slovak daily newspapers is lower, but also the proportion of regular readers, and the average reading frequency is higher, ranging from a

few times a month to once a month. In terms of the share of regular readers, among Slovak daily newspapers the most widely read are *Nový čas* (3.8%), followed by *Sme* (2.2%), *Plus jeden deň* (1.6%) and *Šport* (1.5%) and others. In terms of average reading frequency, *Šport* (4.17) and *Nový čas* (4.23) are the most read Slovak daily newspapers.

In the case of weekly newspapers, *Vasárnap* also stands out in terms of regular readership (22.3%), but also in terms of average reading frequency (3.97).

3.1.2. Television viewership

In 2007, the most watched TV stations were RTL Klub, TV2 and M1. In 2015, three quarters of respondents indicated their favorite TV station, and these were RTL Klub (16%), Duna and Duna World (13-13%), TV2 (10%), Markíza (6%), M1 and M2 (6-6%) and JOJ (3%). In 2016, the most watched TV channel was RTL Klub (19.5%), followed by Duna Televízió and TV2 (11.4 and 11.3%), Markíza (8%), Joj (4.4%), Cool TV (4.3%), M1 and M4 (4.2-4.2%), HBO (2.6%) and Spectrum (2.1%). This research also featured an additional question: that is, the week prior to the interview, which specifically named TV stations respondents had watched for at least 5 minutes. The order of the television stations thus obtained was similar to the previous order: RTL Klub (53%), TV2 (46%), Markíza (45%), Duna TV (32%), Joj (27%), M1 (26%), Cool TV (19%), Duna World and Film+ (17-17%), TA3 and Jednotka (16-16%), RTL II (15%), M4 sport (13%), M2 (12%), Spectrum (11%), TV Doma (10%), HBO (9%), Dvojka (8%), ATV (7%), Hír TV (5%).

The questionnaire in 2021 included 31 TV channels, of which 12 were Slovak and 19 from Hungary. Let's see what their viewership was.

Table 4 shows the share of viewers of Hungarian TV channels in descending order. The first three most watched Hungarian TV stations are RTL Klub (77.1%), TV2 (76.1%) and Cool TV (69%), followed by other TV stations and the row is closed by the least watched M5 (25.8%).

Now let's look at the viewership of Slovak television (Table 5). Markíza (81.5%), Joj (73.1%), and WAU (65.6%) have the highest share of viewers, but the Hungarian broadcast of Slovak Television (57.8%) also enjoys a high viewership and is ranked fourth in viewership. The least watched among Hungarians is STV Dvojka (30.1%).

If we summarize the data on the viewership of Slovak domestic and Hungarian television, we get the following ranking (Hungarian television in italics): Markíza (81.5%), *RTL Klub* (77.1%), *TV2* (76.1%), Joj (73.1%), *Cool*

Table 4: *Television viewership rates from Hungary (%)*

	<i>Watching</i>	<i>Not watching</i>
RTL Klub	77.1	22.9
TV2	76.1	23.9
Cool TV	69	31
Duna World	65.3	34.7
Hír TV	61	39
Duna TV	57	43
RTL +	55.1	44.9
RTL II	52	48
M1	49.5	50.5
ATV	49.1	50.9
Super TV2	48.9	51.1
Viasat3	42.7	57.3
M4 Sport	41.5	58.5
RTL Gold	41.4	58.6
Film +	37.3	62.7
Viasat 6	33.9	66.1
M2	32.4	67.6
PRIME	32.3	67.7
M5	25.8	74.2

Table 5: *Share of viewership of Slovak television (%) (N=975)*

	<i>Watching</i>	<i>Not watching</i>
Markíza	81.5	18.5
Joj	73.1	26.9
WAU	65.6	34.4
Hungarian Broadcasting of Slovak Television	57.8	42.2
STV Jednotka	51.7	48.3
Doma	50.9	49.1
Dajto	49.6	50.4
Jojko	47.4	52.6
STV Trojka	45.1	54.9
Plus	36.8	63.2
TA3	32.9	67.1
STV Dvojka	30.1	69.9

TV (69%), *WAU* (65.6%), *Duna World* (65.3%), *Hír TV* (61%), Hungarian Broadcasting of Slovak Television (57.8%), *Duna TV* (57%), followed by other Hungarian and Slovak televisions, and the last place is occupied by *M5* (25.8%).

Thus, overall, most Hungarians (81.5%) watch Slovak Markíza. The second and third most watched TV stations are Hungarian, namely *RTL Klub* (77.1%) and *TV2* (76.1%), which have been the most watched TV stations by Hungarians in Slovakia since their existence (especially *RTL Klub*). The Hungarian broadcasting of Slovak Television (57.8%) came a respectable ninth in the ranking (57.8%), which is surprising as it had a steadily lower viewership in previous years.

If we compare the viewership of Slovak and Hungarian television, we can see that the share of viewers of domestic television is between 81.5% and 30.1% and the share of viewers of Hungarian television is between 77.1% and 25.8%. However, this interval is valid for 19 Hungarian television stations. If we compare only the first 12 most-watched Hungarian TV channels with all 12 Slovak TV channels, the interval of viewership of these Hungarian channels ranges from 77.1% to 42.7%. This indicates that the 12 most watched TV channels in Hungary are watched by more people than all 12 Slovak channels combined. Thus, although the most watched TV channel by Hungarians in Slovakia is Markíza, overall, the viewership of Hungarian TV channels is higher than that of domestic channels.

At the same time, we can also state that the preference of specific Hungarian and Slovak channels at the top of the ranking seems to be stable.

Now let's see how the TV ratings rank according to the share of regular, that is, daily viewers. In the following list we summarise both domestic and Hungarian TV channels in their descending order (Hungarian channels are again in italics): *RTL Klub* (32.1 %), Markíza (28.6 %), *TV2* (27.5 %), *Joj* (20.5 %), *Hír TV* (18.6 %), *WAU* (17.9 %), *Cool TV* (15.7 %), Hungarian broadcasting of Slovak Television (14.2 %), *Super TV* (11.7 %), *RTL+* (11.7 %), *Duna World* (11.4 %), *Duna TV* (10.7 %), *M1* (10.7 %), *RTL II* (9.6 %), *M4 Sport* (8.7 %), *STV Jednotka* (6.7 %), *ATV* (6.4 %), *STV Trojka* (6.4 %), *RTL Gold* (6.3 %), *Film+* (6.2 %), *Doma* (5.3 %), *Viasat3* (5.2 %), *Dajto* (4.4 %), *TA3* (2.9 %), *Viasat6* (2.6 %), *PRIME* (2.7 %), *M2* (2.1 %), *M5* (1.9 %), *Plus* (1.8 %), *STV Dvojka* (1.5 %).

3.1.3. Radio Audience

In 2015, the most listened to were *Pátria Rádió* (16%), *Class FM* (10%), *Kossuth Rádió* (7%), *Rádió Expres* and *Petőfi* (both 5%) and *Europa 2* (3%).

Table 6: *Share of Slovak and Hungarian radio listenership (%) (N=975)*

	<i>Listening to</i>	<i>Not listening to</i>
Rádio Expres	58.6	41.4
<i>Retro Rádió</i>	47.8	52.2
Fun Rádio	47.1	52.9
<i>Petőfi Rádió</i>	42.9	57.1
<i>Kossuth Rádió</i>	39.4	60.6
Rádio Jemné	39	61
Rádio Vlna	37.3	62.7
Rádio Slovensko	35.6	64.4
Pátria Rádió	33.4	66.6
Rádio FM	32.4	67.6
Rádio Európa 2	29.7	70.3
<i>Rádió 1</i>	28.9	71.1
<i>Dankó Rádió</i>	26.2	73.8
Rádio Regina	23.3	76.7
<i>Bartók Rádió</i>	21.5	78.5
Rádio Anténa Rock	21.1	78.9
<i>Magyar katolikus rádió</i>	17.2	82.8
Rádio Devín	14.9	85.1
Rádio Best FM	11.7	88.3
Rádio Lumen	11.7	88.3

In 2016, in the week before the survey, the most listened to were Rádio Expres (26.3%), Pátria Rádió (22.9%), Class FM (16%), Kossuth Rádió (16.2%), Petőfi (11.5%).

In 2021, 13 Slovak and 7 Hungarian radio stations were included in the questionnaire. In Table 6 we list the domestic and Hungarian radio stations together in descending order of their listenership (Hungarian stations are listed in italics). Of the domestic ones, Rádio Expres was the most popular (58.6%), and the least listened to Rádio Best FM and Rádio Lumen (both listened to by 11.7% of the respondents). Among the Hungarian radio stations, Retro Rádió came first (47.8%), and Magyar Katolikus Rádió came last (17.2%).

Most Hungarians listen to the domestic Rádio Expres (58.6%), followed by the Hungarian Retro Rádió (47.8%) and the Slovak Fun Rádio (47.1%).

After the Hungarian radio stations Petőfi and Kossuth, and the three Slovak radio stations, the national broadcasts of the Slovak Radio Pátria Rádió follow (33.4%), which is the ninth most listened to radio station and the sixth most

listened to domestic radio station. Overall, the least listened to are Rádio Best FM and Rádio Lumen (both 11.7%).

The listenership of domestic radio stations ranges between 58.6% and 11.7%, while the listenership of Hungarian radio stations ranges between 47.8% and 17.2%. Thus, the top of the listenership rankings is topped by domestic radio stations, then Hungarian and domestic stations alternate, and the last three places are occupied by domestic stations.

In order of regular, that is, daily listenership, Rádio Expres and Retro Rádio are in first place (both 13.6%), followed by Kossuth Rádio (10.6%), Petőfi Rádio (9.1%), Rádio Vlna (7.3%), Fun rádio (7%), Rádio Jemné (5.7%) and Rádio 1 (5.1%). The share of daily listeners of the other radio stations is below 5%, with negligible differences for some of them. Rádio Lumen, Rádio Best FM, and Rádio Devín have the lowest share of daily listeners (half a percent each), and of the Hungarian radio stations Magyar Katolikus Rádio (3%) and Dankó Rádio (3.3%).

Comparing the number of respondents who listen to each radio station with the number of daily listeners, it can be said that the two most listened to radio stations, Rádio Expres and Retro Rádio, are also the most frequently listened to radio stations.

4. Internet Portals' Followership

In 2021, four-fifths of respondents (80.3%) had access to the Internet, while one in five (19.7%) did not. The proportion of those respondents who use the Internet (79%) shows that those who have the Internet, with few exceptions, do use it. And they use it frequently, for 82.6% of all respondents go online every day, and most of them are online for more than 3 hours a day (13.4% for more than 3 hours, 26.2% for 2–3 hours, 20.4% for 1–2 hours, 22.7% for less than 1 hour). 17.4% of the respondents surf the Internet less often than daily, 10% of them more than once a week, and 7.4% go online less frequently.

Internet use is, of course, a broad concept. Staying on the topic of media consumption, we are primarily interested in following online news portals, but for the sake of comparison, it does not hurt to note to what extent the respondents are engaged in other potential Internet activities. Table 7 shows that among the ten activities listed, the third most common activity, after watching videos (69.3%) and listening to music (64%), is reading online news portals and newspapers (61%).

In addition, in answer to a separate question focusing on the readership of online news portals, even more respondents (71%) reported that they follow

Table 7: *Percentage of respondents performing various internet activities (%)*

	<i>Using</i>	<i>Not using</i>
Watching videos, e.g. YouTube	69.3	30.7
Listening to music	64	36
Reading online news portals, newspapers and journals	61	39
Watching movies	58.6	41.4
Reading blogs	52.7	47.3
Downloading movies	45.4	54.5
Listening to internet radios	38.8	61.2
Downloading books, reading and buying books from the internet	32	68
Listening to podcasts	31	69
Sharing content, e.g., your own videos, blogs, music, etc.	26.2	73.8

them, namely 32.3% daily, 18.4% several times a week, 3.2% once a week, 8.9% percent several times a month, 1.2% once a month, and 6.8% less than once a month.

Now, continuing the logic of the analysis used when looking at print, television, and radio, let us first see how many respondents read the news portals listed in the questionnaire. In total, 40 news portals were listed in the questionnaire, of which 21 were Slovak, 12 were from Hungary, and 7 were Hungarian portals in Slovakia. We show their readership rates in descending order in separate Tables 8–10.

Among the Slovak news portals, the most read news portals are *aktuality.sk* (48.9%), among the Hungarian news portals in Slovakia *uj szo.sk* (43.9%) and among the Hungarian news portals *blikk.hu* (30.3%). The readership of the Slovak news portals ranges from 48.9% to 4%, that of the Hungarian domestic news portals from 43.9% to 22.3% and that of the Hungarian news portals from 30.3% to 5.5%.

If we look only at the top seven most read Slovak news portals and compare their readership with the top seven domestic Hungarian news portals, we see that the seventh most read Slovak news portal (*ta3.sk*, 27%) is read by more respondents than the last most read Hungarian news portal in Slovakia (*körkép.sk*, 22.3%) and the second most read in Hungary (*origo.hu*, 24%). In other words, the Slovak news portals are the most read overall.

Let us now summarize all 40 news portals in descending order of their readership (Table 11). The top two most read news portals are *aktuality.sk* and *uj szo.sk*; the former is followed by almost half (48.9%) and the latter is read

Table 8: *Followership of Slovak news portals (%)*

		<i>Following</i>	<i>Not following</i>
1	aktuality.sk	48.9	51.1
2	noviny.sk	34.1	65.9
3	sme.sk	33.1	66.9
4	cas.sk	31.8	68.2
5	tvnoviny.sk	31.5	68.5
6	topky.sk	31.1	68.9
7	ta3.sk	27	73
8	pravda.sk	26.7	73.3
9	aktualne.sk	26.6	73.4
10	pluska.sk	24.5	75.5
11	sport.sk	22.8	77.2
12	dennikn.sk	22.1	77.9
13	hlavnespravy.sk	18.2	81.8
14	hnonline.sk	13	87
15	etrend.sk	11.3	88.7
16	dobrenoviny.sk	11.2	88.8
17	startitup.sk	10.4	89.6
18	refresher.sk	9.5	90.5
19	infovojna.sk	6.3	93.7
20	zemavek.sk	5	95
21	postoj.sk	4	96

by more than 40% of respondents (43.9%). News portals in the order 3–10 are read by every third or almost every third respondent (the viewership rate varies between 34.3% and 30.3%). These include the two Slovak-Hungarian portals, parameter.sk (31.2%) and felvidek.ma (31.1%), which are followed to the same extent, as well as the most read Hungarian news portal blikk.hu (30.3%). The 11th–23rd places in the followership rankings are those news portals whose readership is below 30% but above 20%. Among them, the Hungarian portal in Slovakia, hirek.sk, has the highest readership (28.8%), which is close to 30%. Domestic Hungarian portals bumm.sk (25.5%) and ma7.sk (24.7%) are read by one in four respondents, closely followed by origo.hu (24%), hirado.hu (23.4%), and körkép.sk (22.3%). There are no more Hungarian domestic portals among the portals with less than 20% followership, but two-thirds of the 12 news portals from Hungary fall in this audience interval. Of these, 24. hu (20%) and index.hu (19.5%) are read by one in five respondents. The portals hvg.hu (16.6%), telex.hu (14.2%), 444. hu (12.4%), ripost.hu (10.7%) also have an audience above 10%. The news

Table 9: *Followership of Hungarian news portals in Slovakia (%)*

		<i>Following</i>	<i>Not following</i>
1	uj szo.sk	43.9	56.1
2	parameter.sk	31.2	68.8
3	felvidek.ma	31.1	68.9
4	hirek.sk	28.8	71.2
5	bumm.sk	25.5	74.5
6	ma7.sk	24.7	75.3
7	körkép.sk	22.3	77.7

Table 10: *Followership of Hungarian news portals (%)*

		<i>Following</i>	<i>Not following</i>
1	blikk.hu	30.3	69.7
2	origo.hu	24	76
3	hirado.hu	23.4	76.6
4	24.hu	20	80
5	index.hu	19.5	80.5
6	hvg.hu	16.6	83.4
7	telex.hu	14.2	85.8
8	444.hu	12.4	87.6
9	ripost.hu	10.7	89.3
10	pestisracok.hu	8.4	91.6
11	mandiner.hu	7.2	92.8
12	888.hu	5.5	94.5

portals pestisracok.hu (8.4%), mandiner.hu (7.2%), and 888.hu (5.5%) have a readership of less than 10%. 888.hu is also the least read Hungarian news portal and the Slovak portals zemavek.sk (5%) and postoj.sk (4%) round off the ranking by readership.

In Table 12 we see not only the individual news portals in descending order of their readership (column 3). but also the proportion of regular followers (column 4) and, in the last column, the average frequency with which they are followed (as was the case for the press). These data show that aktuality.sk is also the most regularly followed portal (12.7% of regular followers).

The second most read portal ujszo.sk is also the third most regularly read portal (8.8%). But in terms of regularity (9.3%), for example, it is in second place. The seventh most viewed portal is parameter.sk. The ranking of individual portals by daily viewership can be seen in the column.

Table 11: Followership of all news portals (Hungarian news portals in Slovakia in bold, news portals from Hungary in italics)

		<i>Following</i>	<i>Not following</i>
1	aktuality.sk	48.9	51.1
2	ujso.sk	43.9	56.1
3	noviny.sk	34.1	65.9
4	sme.sk	33.1	66.9
5	cas.sk	31.8	68.2
6	tvnoviny.sk	31.5	68.5
7	parameter.sk	31.2	68.8
8	felvidek.ma	31.1	68.9
9	topky.sk	31.1	68.9
10	<i>blikk.hu</i>	<i>30.3</i>	<i>69.7</i>
11	hirek.sk	28.8	71.2
12	ta3.sk	27	73
13	pravda.sk	26.7	73.3
14	aktualne.sk	26.6	73.4
15	bumm.sk	25.5	74.5
16	ma7.sk	24.7	75.3
17	pluska.sk	24.5	75.5
18	<i>origo.hu</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>76</i>
19	<i>hirado.hu</i>	<i>23.4</i>	<i>76.6</i>
20	sport.sk	22.8	77.2
21	körkép.sk	22.3	77.7
22	dennikn.sk	22.1	77.9
23	<i>24.hu</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>80</i>
24	<i>index.hu</i>	<i>19.5</i>	<i>80.5</i>
25	hlavnespravy.sk	18.2	81.8
26	<i>hvg.hu</i>	<i>16.6</i>	<i>83.4</i>
27	<i>telex.hu</i>	<i>14.2</i>	<i>85.8</i>
28	hnonline.sk	13	87
29	<i>444.hu</i>	<i>12.4</i>	<i>87.6</i>
30	etrend.sk	11.3	88.7
31	dobrenoviny.sk	11.2	88.8
32	<i>ripost.hu</i>	<i>10.7</i>	<i>89.3</i>
33	startitup.sk	10.4	89.6
34	refresher.sk	9.5	90.5
35	<i>pestisracok.hu</i>	<i>8.4</i>	<i>91.6</i>
36	<i>mandiner.hu</i>	<i>7.2</i>	<i>92.8</i>
37	infovojna.sk	6.3	93.7
38	<i>888.hu</i>	<i>5.5</i>	<i>94.5</i>
39	zemavek.sk	5	95
40	postoj.sk	4	96

Table 12: *Rate and regularity of news portal followership*

<i>Followership rank</i>	<i>Followership rate (%)</i>	<i>Proportion of daily followers (%)</i>	<i>Ranking of portals by daily followership</i>	<i>Average frequency of followership</i>
1. aktuality.sk	48.9	12.7	1	2.97
2. ujszo.sk	43.9	8.8	3	3.27
3. noviny.sk	34.1	4.3	8	3.78
4. sme.sk	33.1	5.3	6	3.72
5. cas.sk	31.8	6.6	4	3.47
6. tvnoviny.sk	31.5	4.7	7	3.56
7. parameter.sk	31.2	9.3	2	3.12
8. felvidek.ma	31.1	3.2	15	3.82
9. topky.sk	31.1	6.3	5	3.35
10. blikk.hu	30.3	2.5	19	3.87
11. hirek.sk	28.8	4.3	9	3.67
12. ta3.sk	27	3.4	13	3.73
13. pravda.sk	26.7	3	16	4.2
14. aktualne.sk	26.6	3.9	10	4.01
15. bumm.sk	25.5	1.6	24	3.94
16. ma7.sk	24.7	1.9	22	3.75
17. pluska.sk	24.5	1.8	23	4.13
18. origo.hu	24	2.7	17	3.9
19. hirado.hu	23.4	3.7	12	3.62
20. sport.sk	22.8	3.9	11	3.58
21. körkép.sk	22.3	2.5	20	3.82
22. dennikn.sk	22.1	2.6	18	4.06
23. 24.hu	20	1.6	25	3.96
24. index.hu	19.5	3.3	14	3.9
25. hlavnespravy.sk	18.2	2.5	21	3.62
26. hvg.hu	16.6	1	28	4.22
27. telex.hu	14.2	1.3	26	4.06
28. hnonline.sk	13	0.7	31	4.68
29. 444.hu	12.4	0.8	30	4.51
30. etrend.sk	11.3	0.1	37	4.99
31. dobrenoviny.sk	11.2	0.5	32	4.73
32. ripost.hu	10.7	0.1	38	4.84
33. startitup.sk	10.4	0.9	29	4.32
34. refresher.sk	9.5	1.2	27	4.16
35. pestisracok.hu	8.4	0.2	35	4.89
36. mandiner.hu	7.2	0.1	39	5.3
37. infovojna.sk	6.3	0.4	33	4.69
38. 888.hu	5.5	0.2	36	5.22
39. zemavek.sk	5	0.1	40	5.37
40. postoj.sk	4	0.4	34	5.18

The last indicator of viewership is its average frequency. According to it, out of 40 news portals, the most watched are aktuality.sk (2.97), parameter.sk (3.13) and ujszo.sk (3.27).

Conclusion

At the end of this study, based on empirical data on the media consumption of Hungarians in Slovakia over the last fifty years, we can summarize three main trends. In the competition between different types of media, television has maintained its primacy. It is true that the share of viewers who do not watch television has doubled from 3% to 6%. But in parallel, regular viewership has increased: the proportion of viewers who watch TV every day has risen from 49.2% to 81.4%. Radio is the second most preferred medium, listened to by 84.1% of Hungarians, most of them daily (61.9%). The press is in third place in terms of consumption, 76% read it, 15.6% follow it daily.

Among daily newspapers, *Új Szó* is still the most widely read, although its readership has decreased over time (currently 57.9%, fifty years ago it was 82%). It is also the most regularly and frequently read daily. Internet news portals are followed by 71% of Hungarians, so in terms of this indicator it ranks fourth in media preference, but it is ahead of the press in terms of daily frequency of following.

In the competition between public and commercial media, the commercial media have had a leading role since their inception, and this applies to Slovak and Hungarian television as well as to Slovak radio and Hungarian radio stations, although the public radio stations Kossuth Rádió and Petőfi Rádió are also popular among Hungarians.

What about the linguistic context of the media? Although Slovak media are gradually gaining ground in the media consumption of Slovak Hungarians, the Hungarian language media are still preferred, at least in the case of classical media.

Although our study did not focus on the influence of the media on the formation of national and political identity through research on the media consumption of Hungarians in Slovakia, reflecting on the broader starting framework of our research, we can note that the above-described trends in media consumption of the Hungarian minority fully correspond with the assimilation changes that have occurred in recent decades in their national identity, as well as with the changes in their political identity, which in the last parliamentary elections in September 2023 manifested themselves mainly in the fact that Hungarians deviated to an unprecedented extent from the election of the Hungarian party (this time it was the Szövetség party) and voted for the Slovak political parties.

Acknowledgement

The study was conducted within the framework of the project titled Changes in the Hungarian Society in Slovakia over the Last 100 Years, with Particular Focus on Everyday Culture, with project number APVV-20-0336.)

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