



The second wave of the Spanish influenza pandemic in selected regions and towns of Slovakia (1918)

—
Veronika Szeghy-Gayer  |  szeghy@saske.sk

Institute of Social Sciences, Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences of Slovak Academy of Sciences, Košice, Slovak Republic

Abstract | Background: Very few researches have been carried out on the Spanish influenza pandemic and its consequences in the territory of Slovakia. Objectives: The paper constitutes an attempt to investigate the second wave of the pandemic between September and December 1918. It aims to reflect on the following questions: when did the outbreak of the pandemic occur in this region?; what measures were taken during the second wave of the Spanish flu in autumn 1918?; to what extent and based on what data can the number of infected and fatalities be determined? Methods: The research is based on the study of archival sources, as well as the local press, and the county periodicals, in which the official number of infections and deaths were published. Results: The first part of the paper is dedicated to the historiographical reflections, and outlines the possible reasons why historiography has not, so far, examined this question. Here it is argued that on the one hand the focus of the Hungarian and the Slovak historiographies were put on presenting the larger political, social, and economic context and consequences of the creation of Czechoslovakia and the history of the Peace Treaty in Trianon, while on the other hand, scholars have to face the lack of accurate statistical data. The second part of the study provides a short overview of the course of the pandemic in Slovakia and try to make estimates on the number of infections and fatalities based on contemporary statistics. Conclusions: Partial data suggest that around 0.5% of the population of Slovakia may have fallen victim to the epidemic. However, the study presents only the current status of the research, and data are not available for all regions of Slovakia at the moment. Therefore, further research is required to map the impact of the world pandemic on Slovakia, in regions that are missing in such analysis.

Keywords | Spanish flu, Slovakia, post-imperial transition, anti-epidemic measures, local history

Background

Only recently research has discussed the Spanish flu and its consequences in the territory of Slovakia, in spite of the fact that it was one of the most severe pandemics in history causing the death of approximately 50 million people worldwide,[1] more deaths than in WWI. Most of the publications that examined the pandemic in Slovakia can be dated after March 2020, which indicates that the study on the Spanish influenza pandemic and its course in the regions and cities of Slovakia was closely linked to the outbreak of the Covid-19 epidemic.[2] Previously, the historical analysis concerning the events of 1918 in the territory of Slovakia was not interested in the mapping of the Spanish influenza pandemic. This was despite the fact that in Slovakia, according to some estimates based on local data (and comparing the number of the fatalities from the territory of the daily Czech Republic[3] and Hungary[4]) the pandemic could have caused up to at least 15,000 deaths.[5]

This paper investigates mainly the second wave[6] of the Spanish flu pandemic which was one of the key problems the city and county leaders faced between September and December 1918 in the territory of Slovakia. It aims to provide an introduction to the problems with a special focus on local history, and to outline future research directions. In the first part of the paper, I attempt to draw up the possible reasons why historiography has not so far examined this question, while in the second part of the paper I will focus on the local epidemic data that were mapped in different parts of Slovakia. I intend to reflect on the following questions: when did the outbreak of the pandemic occur in this region?; what measures were taken during the second wave of the Spanish flu in autumn 1918?; to what extent and based on what data can the number of infected and fatalities be determined? In the paper, I would like to argue that the Spanish Influenza pandemic is a non-negligible aspect of the social and cultural history of the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the territory of Slovakia, which has not been reflected adequately in the historiographical works.

In the study, the term 'Slovakia' (formerly called also the Upper Land or Upper Hungary, until 1918 a part of the Kingdom of Hungary) is understood as the present-day territory of the Slovak Republic, which from 1918 was a geographical and administrative unit within the first Czechoslovak state. However, at the time of the second wave of the Spanish flu, between September and December 1918, the majority of its territory was still part of the Kingdom of Hungary. The Czechoslovak military occupation of the territory of Slovakia began in early November when the pandemic was already slowing down. Except for some regions in the Western and Northern part of Slovakia, including also Žilina - where from 12th December the first central political body responsible for Slovakia, the Ministry in full charge of the administration of Slovakia was seated - most of this territory came under Czechoslovak rule at the turn of 1919. Košice (in Hungarian Kassa, in German Kaschau) was occupied on 29th December, and Bratislava (or Prešporok, in German Pressburg, in Hungarian Pozsony) on the 1st January 1919, which means that in the study, the local and regional authorities that were fighting against the pandemic are understood as bodies of the still Hungarian public administration. The research is based on contemporary sources, mainly the local press and the county periodicals, in which the official number of infections and deaths were published based on the reports of the city or county chief medical officers.[7] Although this methodology makes it impossible at the moment to map the whole territory of Slovakia, as in many places the autumn editions of local daily and weekly newspapers have not been preserved in archives or public libraries[8] or are difficult to access, they indicate the extent to which a larger city or county had been affected by the epidemic.[9]

Mainly, Bratislava and Košice, the two largest cities in the territory of Slovakia, are investigated, however, I have added the examined statistical data related to the Spiš County (in Hungarian Szepes vármegye, in German Komitat Zips) and the city of Prešov (in Hungarian Eperjes), as well as the previous research results or published records from Banská Štiavnica (in Hungarian Selmecbánya), Detva (in Hungarian Detva), Turzovka (in Hungarian Turzófalva) and the findings of Attila Simon on the Spanish flu victims from the territory of Southern Slovakia (the city of Komárno/Komárom and the County of Gemer-Malohont/Gömör-Kishont vármegye).[10] These partial data published in the study below, in my opinion, are also suitable for making some estimates that concern the whole territory of

Slovakia.

The Spanish flu: a missing chapter in the history of the post-imperial transition in Slovakia in 1918 – 1919

For a long time, the Spanish flu was not part of the collective historical memory in Slovakia.[11] While a large amount of literature is devoted to the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the emergence of the new Central European states, among others the first Czechoslovak republic, the problem of the world pandemic in 1918–1919 seems to be a missing chapter in not only Slovak but in other national historiographies too.[12] In the main works concerning the establishment of Czechoslovakia, apart from the political history, only the issue of the rise in the poor standard of living, the disillusionment with the war, and the robberies taking place in the autumn of 1918 in Slovakia are reflected.[13] Most of the analyses are dominated by political history or a military history approach.[14] Even monographs that focus on a specific region of Slovakia in the period between 1918 and 1919, did not take into consideration the consequences of the pandemic.[15]

There might be several reasons for this. On the one hand, the focus of the Hungarian and the Slovak historiographies, which might have been interested in the research of the epidemic regarding the territory of present-day Slovakia, were put on presenting the larger political, social, and economic context and consequences of the post-imperial transition in 1918–1918, the creation of Czechoslovakia and the history of the Peace Treaty in Trianon. Although in recent years several innovative studies have been published to explore the given period from the perspective of everyday life during WWI,[16] the refugees, and many other aspects, in total only a few analyses were dedicated to the Spanish flu, which even though it claimed many lives, did not influence the course of political events in the region to any great extent.[17] It had no real impact on the creation of the Czechoslovak Republic or the military occupation of the Slovak regions by the Czechoslovak domestic and legionary troops. It did not change the outbreak of the Hungarian Aster Revolution at the end of October 1918 or the military conflict between the Hungarian Red Army and Czechoslovakia in mid-1919, so it has not become the subject of research on the period.

On the other hand, during the second wave of the Spanish flu, which claimed across the world the highest number of fatalities, Slovakia – at least most of its regions – still belonged to the Hungarian state administration. The Czechoslovak military occupation had just begun in this area and ended about the time the epidemic subsided between December 1918 and January 1919. In these weeks and months, there was no Czechoslovak central ministry or even any political body dealing specifically with public health problems in the Slovak territory.[18] Due to the domestic political transformation of the Kingdom of Hungary, and problems caused by the end of the war, Budapest no longer could collect centrally transparent data from the northern areas of the crumbling state, which the non-existing Czechoslovak administration was not able to do either. Consequently, (Hungarian) authorities tried to fight the epidemic at the local (county and city) level. They were responsible also for the collection of their local statistics, mainly from the end of September and from the beginning of October 1918, when Epidemiological Committees were created.[19] This might be another reason why Slovak health scholars did not address the history of the disease either, nor did researchers of the history of Spanish flu in Hungary cover Slovakia.

A third reason that may complicate the research on the “Spanish disease” in Slovakia (and in other countries too) is the unreliability of the existing statistics. And indeed, the local press only began publishing the mortality data from the end of October 1918. To avoid panic and mass hysteria, authorities were wary of exposing the population, disillusioned with war and politicians, to real data on the epidemic-related deaths, so the detailed statistical number of infections and mortalities began to be published in the regional and local press relatively late, in the second half of October 1918. In most cases, news and information regarding Spanish Influenza were mostly published on the last pages of local newspapers, amongst the smaller news stories. In addition, the notification of the disease to the authorities was not made compulsory until the second half of October 1918. Furthermore, it is also difficult to determine how many unreported cases existed. This was compounded by the fact that the Spanish flu was very often identified and reported as pneumonia in retrospective statistics. As a result, accurate and real data will probably never be available.

The second wave of the Spanish flu in Slovakia

The first cases of Spanish flu in the Hungarian part of the monarchy were detected in soldiers and prisoners transported from the Italian battlefield to the Zita Hospital in Budapest.[20] Then in July, it spread to both urban and rural areas of Slovakia. The *Pressburger Zeitung*, one of the Bratislava dailies, reported on the new disease on the 4th of July 1918. Two days later, also the chief medical officer (in Hungarian *tisztí főorvos*) of Košice, Géza Nagy announced some cases.[21] However, experts stressed that there was no cause for concern, arguing that similar diseases had also existed.[22] Subsequently, the spread of the infections slowed down in mid-August, and only sporadic cases appeared, for example, a larger number of infections were reported in the last week of August among the soldiers of the 15th Sub-Battalion in Trenčín (in Hungarian *Trencsén*).[23] Then, in mid-September 1918, the number of infections suddenly began to increase rapidly.

Given the mass illnesses, the Budapest Public Health Committee declared the pandemic on 30th September 1918. Géza Nagy, the Košice chief medical officer reported 2, 000 illnesses that same day.[24] Two days earlier, on 28th September, György Szmrecsányi, the Government Officer of Bratislava and the chief of the Bratislava County, at a meeting with the city representatives declared that although the numerical data on the infections and deaths were not yet available,[25] there was a strong need to take the first anti-epidemic measures. In the meantime, the spread of the flu epidemic was also becoming concerning in other parts of Slovakia. Until the 22nd of September, the disease appeared in 25 settlements of the Trenčín County (in Hungarian *Trencsén vármegye*), including Trenčín, Žilina (in Hungarian *Zsolna*), Ilava (in Hungarian *Illava*), and Povážská Bystrica (in Hungarian *Vágbeszterce*).[26] On 29th September *Szepesi Lapok*, the Spišská Nová Ves (in Hungarian *Igló*) local newspaper published the obituary of Vilmos Ficker, a 45-years old craftsman, who was the first known victim of the Spanish flu in the city.[27] In the last days of September, similar reports of Spanish flu deaths began appearing in other local newspapers throughout the whole territory of Slovakia.[28]

As a first measure, the local and regional authorities ordered all schools to close for two weeks, as the Spanish flu was spreading to a great extent among students.[29] These closures were extended, so most of the educational institutions reopened only when the Czechoslovak military units occupied Slovakia. Secondly, city and county authorities sought to curb the presence of the masses in public places. From the second half of October, cinemas, theatres, sports events, and dance schools were banned.[30] Regulations regarding restaurants and cafes were less rigid, as these – playing an important role in public catering – could stay open, but at certain intervals had to carry out disinfection, when customers were not allowed in. Factories had to be disinfected and aired between noon and 2 p.m, the windows of streetcars had to be kept open, and residents were advised not to go for walks, visit cemeteries, churches, and other sites of prayer in large numbers, – although these places were not closed.[31]

Many have criticized these measures, arguing that much stricter regulations were needed. The writer of the article published in *Robotnícké Noviny*, the Slovak language daily of the Social Democratic Party of the Kingdom of Hungary demanded that churches and synagogues should be kept closed too.[32] In another article written on the epidemic, the author drew attention to the fact that the poor did not have access to adequate medical examinations.[33] In addition, local authorities sought to inform the public about the symptoms of the disease and the necessary control measures through decrees and the daily press. Articles of this nature appeared mainly from mid-October when the epidemic was still on the rise in the whole territory of Slovakia.[34] Based on decrees, the Ministry of the Interior also ordered pharmacies to stay open longer and supply medicine to those that needed it.[35] The Ministry of Defense ordered army surgeons to provide care to civilians.[36] The shortage of doctors across the country became a serious problem for most regions of Slovakia. The sub-prefect of the Spiš County, Lajos Neogrady turned to the Ministry of the Interior to make it possible for military medical officers to return home during the time of the pandemic.[37]

At the same time, the district notary of Devín (in Hungarian *Dévény*) because of the pandemic did not want to enlist more soldiers in Karlová Ves (in Hungarian *Károlyfalu*), a small settlement near Bratislava.[38] In Belá (in Hungarian *Turócbéla*, today part of Belá-Dulice), a village in the Turiec County (in Hungarian *Turóc vármegye*), there were so

many dead victims of the epidemic that the settlement had to be completely isolated from the surrounding villages. [39] The Spanish flu epidemic did not spare the city of Banská Štiavnica either, by the beginning of November it had claimed five lives among students of the Mining Academy.[40] In the Eastern part of Slovakia, from the Spiš County, reports of mass illnesses and deaths began too.[41] On 19th October it was reported from Prešov that “there are hardly any municipalities in the territory of the Šariš County (in Hungarian Sáros vármegye) where such diseases have not occurred so far.[42] Thus, based on these brief reports published in contemporary newspapers and from different sources, such as memoirs, it can be concluded that the epidemic represented a serious problem in every region of Slovakia.

The number of infections and deaths

The authorities made it compulsory to announce the infections and deaths caused by the Spanish flu only in the second half of October, therefore, reliable data are only available from mid-October and November 1918.[43] On 16th October Ödön Mergl, the chief medical officer of Bratislava published his calculations. From the number of deaths observed in the schools from the end of September, he concluded that between mid-September and the 1st of October, there may have been about 8,000 illnesses in a city inhabited at that time by 78,000 people. It means that during this period approximately 10% of the population became infected. Mergl also estimated the number of deaths for this period, arguing that about 0.5% of the infected patients died. He claimed that Bratislava was already at the peak of the epidemic at that time. In his analysis, he also showed that, based on data gained from hospitals, half of the patients were minors, while the other half were aged between 18 and 45.[44] Furthermore, in Bratislava the number of Spanish Flu patients did start to decline from the beginning of November but rose again in the middle of the month due to the mass return of soldiers from the war fronts. Yet, there were fewer reported illnesses: in October 1,638, while in November 417.[45]

At the same time, experts calculated about 2000 – 3000 cases in Košice in the last week of September 1918,[46] while later in October it was announced that another 1,465 people had been infected.[47] In the spring of 1919, the official Košice statistics published the estimated number of people who died from pneumonia in 1918: 283 persons. However, they added that the vast majority of these people were victims of the Spanish flu.[48] Consequently, in Košice too, about 10% of the population became infected.[49]

Table 1: Spanish flu deaths in the territory of Slovakia (1918)[50]

Place	Number of deaths
Banská Štiavnica	5
Bratislava	243
Detva	212
Gemer-Malohont (the whole county)	450
Komárno	60
Košice	283
Prešov	58
Turzovka and its surroundings	250
Spiš (the whole county)	250
Vlčkovce	18
Together:	1,829

In the Spiš County by the end of October 7,304 cases were reported, of which 250 were fatal.[51] Although the pandemic was slowly receding by early November, by the 5th of November still more than 1,000 infections had been detected,[52] meaning that at least 5% of the Spiš county's population[53] were suffering from the disease. In the table

above local records on mortality has been collected from different parts of Slovakia between mid-September and December 1918, while the Košice statistical data refer to the whole year 1918. Of course, the table is currently incomplete and will need to be supplemented by future research, on the larger cities such as Trenčín, Nitra (in Hungarian Nyitra), Banská Bystrica (in Hungarian Besztercebánya), or even from the regions of Orava (in Hungarian Árva), Liptov (in Hungarian Liptó) and Zemplín (in Hungarian Zemplén).

Conclusion and possible further research

The paper attempted to map the consequences of the Spanish flu, mainly the second wave of the pandemic in the territory of Slovakia. The analysis was put in the larger political context of the post-imperial transition in 1918, so in the first part of the paper it is argued that the pandemic can be considered a missing field in the research on the creation of Czechoslovakia. One of the main reasons for this might be the fact that most of the works are dominated by a political history approach. The second part of the study provided an overview of the course of the pandemic in Slovakia and estimated the number of fatalities based on contemporary statistics. It can be concluded that the Spanish influenza pandemic in 1918 had a devastating impact on the cities and countryside of Slovakia, as much as in other regions of the collapsing Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Thousands of people from Slovakia lost their lives because of the pandemic. However, it should be added that despite the chaotic and precarious situation, local authorities were aware of the problems associated with the pandemic and, although they reacted relatively late, had tried to prevent it from spreading. Anti-epidemic measures were issued in strong cooperation with experts and chief medical officers. Based on the examined sources it can be concluded that the epidemic could have caused up to 450 deaths at the county level, while in major cities (such as Bratislava or Košice) hundreds lost their lives, and in smaller towns (for example, Prešov with 16,000 or in Komárno with 19,000 inhabitants) about 50-60 deaths were reported too. According to Harald Salfellner, at least 0.5% of the contemporary population of the Czech Lands between 1918 and 1920 (approximately 9.62 million people) may have fallen victim to the epidemic.[54] There are similar estimations for the territory of contemporary Hungary (7.6 million people), where the number of deaths from the Spanish Flu in 1918 are estimated at about 53,000 people (0.6% of the population). If these data can be applied to some extent to Slovakia (approximately 2.9 million inhabitants in 1918), it can be concluded that that here around 14,500 people may have died from the epidemic.[55] However, currently research data are not available for all regions of Slovakia. Further research is thus required to map the Spanish flu's impact in regions that are missing in this analysis. These future studies might include not only archival sources, or the local periodicals, but also death registries, which might help us to estimate the number of deaths more accurately. Finally, a better understanding of the course and consequences of the Spanish flu in Slovakia will allow us to learn more also about the period under investigation. Local authorities were forced to fight the epidemic under extremely difficult circumstances. In the autumn of 1918 local administrations in the territory of present-day Slovakia had to react to both the Hungarian domestic political transformation and the creation of Czechoslovakia, while they confronted the problems with supplies, looting and robberies, as well as the end of the war and the mass return of WWI soldiers.

Acknowledgments:

This publication was supported by the project VEGA 1/0397/21, *Epidémie a protiepidemiologické opatrenia na území Slovenska v dlhom 19. storočí* [Epidemics and anti-epidemiological measures on the territory of Slovakia in the long 19th century].

Data sharing and preregistration is not applicable to this article.

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

[1] As for the number of victims see recently SALFELLNER, Harald. *Španělská chřipka. Příběh pandemie z roku 1918*. Vitalis, 2021, p. 153.

[2] SZE GHY-GAYER, Veronika. Španielska chrípka neušetrila ani Bratislavu a Košice. In KOVÁR, Branislav – ZAJAC, Oliver – BENEDIKOVÁ, Lucia (ed.) *Epidémie v dejinách : Ludstvo v boji s neviditeľnými nepriateľmi*. Bratislava : Premedia, 2020, pp. 232-237.; SIMON, Attila. *Az átmenet bizonytalansága. Az 1918/1919-es impériumváltás Pozsonytól Kassáig*. Somorja – Budapest : Fórum Kisebbségkutató Intézet – Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 2021, pp. 21-25.

[3] Harald Salfellner estimates the number of victims in the Czech lands between 44,000 and 82,648 people. See SALFELLNER, H. *Španělská chřipka...*, p. 155-156.

[4] The estimated number of Spanish flu victims in the territory of post-WWI Hungary in 1918 was 53,000. See GÉRA, Eleonóra. A spanyolnátha emlékezete: A spanyolnátha, az első világháború lábjegyzete. In *Századok*, 2022, Vol. 156, No. 1, p. 100.

[5] SZE GHY-GAYER, V. *Španielska chrípka...*, p. 237.; Tomáš Vasilko in his article based on the European mortality data estimated the number of those who died from the virus in the territory of present-day Slovakia at 15 to 30,000 arguing that the disease took 0.5 percent of population of Slovakia (2.9 million). In: <https://dennikn.sk/1043382/zabijala-viac-ako-hitler-spanielska-chripka-aj-u-nas-usmrtila-tolko-ludi-az-hrobari-v-kosiciach-zacali-strajkovat/> [15.3.2022]

[6] The first wave of the Spanish influenza pandemic began in the first half of 1918 and resulted in fewer cases and deaths compared to the devastating second wave in October and November 1918. The third wave of the epidemic in the spring of 1919 claimed more lives than the first, but was milder than the second one.

[7] Here also the monumental six-volume collections of historical documents edited by Miklós Molnár, the Košice government commissioner in 1918-1919 should be mentioned, as it contains detailed information about the course of the Spanish Influenza pandemic and on the anti-epidemic measures issued by the city administration. BUKOVSKÝ, László – SIMON, Attila – SZE GHY-GAYER, Veronika. *Kassától Košicéig. Molnár Miklós-emlékkönyv*. Somorja – Budapest : Fórum Kisebbségkutató Intézet – Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 2020.

[8] For example Felső-Sárosi Hírlap, the local weekly in the city of Bardejov.

[9] The research was conducted in the National Széchényi Library in Budapest and by using the digital database of the University Library of Bratislava (digitalna.kniznica.info). Furthermore, I examined the local daily paper of Prešov (Eperjesi Lapok) and that of Košice (Kassai Újság, Felsőmagyarország) in the Košice libraries.

[10] See SIMON, A. *Az átmenet bizonytalansága...*, p. 24

[11] After March 2020, there has been an increased interest in the history of the Spanish flu in Slovakia that, however, has not been researched so far. Since then, only a few studies examining the epidemic at the local level have appeared. See for example ČERVENKA, Juraj. *Pandémia španielskej chrípky v Bratislave: najprv zľahčovanie, potom strach*. Available at: <https://plus.sme.sk/c/22362854/pandemia-spanielskej-chripky-v-bratislave-najprv-zlahcovanie-potom-strach.html> [15.3.2022]; SIMON, Attila. *Az 1918-as spanyolnáthajárvány és a mai Dél-Szlovákia*. Available at: <https://ujso.com/panorama/az-1918-as-spanyolnathajarvany-es-a-mai-del-szlovakia> [15.3.2022]; SZE GHY-GAYER, Veronika. Pred sto rokmi zabíjal zákerný vírus aj v Košiciach. In *Košice: Dnes*, April, 21. 2020, Vol. 7, No. 76, p. 2-4.; See also the article of Michael J. Kopanic published on internet: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341703230_The_Spanish_Influenza_Pandemic_in_Slovakia/link/5ecfa5e892851c9c5e63b6d4/download [15.3.2022]

[12] A similar conclusion was reached by different authors who researched the Spanish influenza pandemic. See for example: SPINNEY, Laura. *Pale Rider. The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it Changed the World*. New York: Public Affairs,

2017; GÉRA, E. *A spanyolnátha emlékezete...*, pp. 97-115.

[13] FERENČUHOVÁ, Bohumila – ZEMKO, Milan (eds.). *Slovensko v 20. storočí. Tretí zväzok, V medzivojnovom Československu 1918 – 1939*. Bratislava : VEDA, pp. 24-38; Anna Falisová only mentioned the problem of epidemics, but she did not provide any data concerning the Spanish flu. See FALISOVÁ, Anna. *Medzivojnové Slovensko z pohľadu zdravotného a sociálneho*. In FERENČUHOVÁ, Bohumila – ZEMKO, Milan (eds.). *Slovensko v 20. storočí. Tretí zväzok, V medzivojnovom Československu 1918 – 1939*. Bratislava : VEDA, pp. 365-416.

[14] See for example: HRONSKÝ, Marián. *Trianon. Vznik hraníc Slovenska a problémy jeho bezpečnosti 1918 – 1920*. Bratislava : VEDA, 2011.

[15] FURMANIK, Martin. *Spiš a vznik Československej republiky*. Spišská Nová Ves : Múzeum Spiša v Spišskej Novej Vsi, 2018.

[16] See for example the monograph DUDEKOVÁ KOVÁČOVÁ, Gabriela. *Človek vo vojne. Stratégie prežitia a sociálne dôsledky prvej svetovej vojny na Slovensku*. Bratislava : VEDA, 2019.

[17] For example, according to the German historian Manfred Vasold, the Spanish flu played a key role in the formation of the Republic of Weimar. GÉRA, E. *A spanyolnátha emlékezete...*, p. 99.

[18] The first central political body responsible for Slovakia, the Ministry in full charge of the administration of Slovakia, headed by Vavro Šrobár, who was a doctor himself, was formed only 10th December 1918.

[19] Therefore, the claim of Michael J. Kopanic, – who said in an online presentation that „Hungarian officials did not gather statistics or try to stem the pandemic” – cannot be supported by evidence. Based on the local researches, it can be concluded that the exact opposite happened. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=28svY6l8Vhg> [23.4.2022]

[20] GÉRA, Eleonóra. *A spanyolnátha Budapesten*. In *Budapesti Negyed*, 2009, Vol. 64, p. 215.

[21] *A spanyol betegség Kassán*. In *Felsőmagyarország*, July 6, 1918, p. 3.

[22] *Nincs spanyol nátha Kassán*. In *Felsőmagyarország*, July 14, 1918, p. 3.

[23] *Közegészségügyi értesítő f. évi augusztus 25-től szeptember 1-ig bejelentett fertőző betegségekről. Spanyol-influenza: Trencsén (15. honvédpótzászlóalj)*. In *Trencsén Vármegye Hivatalos Lapja*, Vol. 37, September 5, 1918, p. 165.

[24] *Archív mesta Košice* (State Archives of Košice, hereinafter referred only as AMK), fund (f.) *Úradný hlavný lekár mesta Košice 1827 – 1940, roky 1918 – 1920* (Official Chief Medical Officer of the City of Košice 1827-1940, years 1918 – 1920 hereinafter referred only as ÚHLMK). *Kassa szab. kir. város polgármesterétől, 9587/1918-tf. A tisztí főorvos jelentése az úgynevezett spanyol betegség állapotáról, 1918. szeptember 30.*

[25] *In Angelegenheit von Gregreifung von Maßregeln gegen die Ausbreitung der Spanischen Grippe*. In *Pressburger Zeitung*, October 1, 1918, p. 2; *Vorsichtsmatzregeln gegen die Spanische Grippe. Kundmachung*. In *Pressburger Zeitung*, October 9, 1918, p. 6.

[26] *Közegészségügyi értesítő f. évi szeptember 15-től 22-ig bejelentett fertőző betegségekről*. In *Trencsén Vármegye Hivatalos Lapja*, No. 40, September 26, 1918, p. 181.

[27] *A spanyol nátha első halottja Iglón*. In *Szepesi Lapok*, September 29, 1918, p. 3.

[28] See for example the local dailies such as *Figyelő* from Banská Bystrica, *Felsőmagyarország* from Košice or the *Prešov Local Press*, *Eperjesi Lapok*.

- [29] See for example in Košice: Bezárták az összes kassai iskolákat. Pusztít a spanyol nátha. In *Kassai Hírlap*, October 1, 1918, p. 2.
- [30] In Košice they decided to close cinemas and theatres on 22th October. In A járvány-bizottság ülése. In *Kassai Hírlap*, October 22, 1918, p. 2.
- [31] See in Bratislava the measures issued by György Szmrecsányi on 30th September 1918: Vorsichtsmatzregeln gegen die Spanische Grippe. Kundmachung. In *Pressburger Zeitung*, October 9, 1918, p. 6; See also the supplementary decree of György Szmrecsányi on 22th October: A kávéházak, vendéglők és a spanyol nátha. In *Nyugatmagyarországi Híradó*, October 25, 1918, p. 3; In Košice see A járvány-bizottság ülése. In *Kassai Hírlap*, October 22, 1918, p. 2.
- [32] Rôzne správy. Španielska epidemia. In *Robotnícke Noviny*, October 24, 1918, p. 3.
- [33] Dedinky (Spišska stol.). In *Robotnícke Noviny*, December 12, 1918, p. 4; See also Van-e hát Kassán járvány? In *Kassai Hírlap*, October 6, 1918, p. 2.
- [34] See for example Most már „veszedelmes” betegség a lenézett spanyol-nátha? In *Kassai Hírlap*, October 17, 1918, p. 2; Orvosi tapasztalatok a spanyol-járvány gyógyításai körül. In *Eperjesi Lapok*, November 3, 1918, p. 4.
- [35] AMK, f. ÚHLMK, Kassa szab. kir. város polgármesterétől, 9587/1918-tf. A tisztii főorvos jelentése az úgynevezett spanyol betegség állapotáról, 1918. szeptember 30.
- [36] Štátny archív v Košiciach (State Archives of Košice, hereinafter referred only as ŠAK), fund Abovsko-Turňanská župa, Podžupan 1882 – 1919 (Abov-Turňa County, Sub prefect of the County 1882 – 1919, hereinafter referred only as ATŽ Podžupan), carton (c) 718, number of document 8252/1918. Abaúj-Torna vármegye alispánja a katonai parancsnokságnak, 1918. október 30. Tárgy: Járvány alkalmával katonai orvosok kirendelése.
- [37] Intézkedések a spanyolláz elleni védekezés ügyében. In *Szepesi Hírnök*, October 16, 1918, p. 3.
- [38] BANDOLOVA, Margita et al. (ed.). *Od Uhorského kráľovstva k Československej republike. Dokumenty z fondov slovenských regionálnych archívov k udalostiam v rokoch 1918 – 1919*. Bratislava : Košice : Ministerstvo vnútra Slovenskej republiky, Štátny archív v Bratislave, Ministerstvo vnútra Slovenskej republiky, Štátny archív v Košiciach, 2018, p. 50.
- [39] Španielska choroba. In *Národné Noviny*, October 24, 1918, p. 3.
- [40] Available at: <http://sopronselmec100.uni-sopron.hu/spanyolnatha-selmecbanyan> [23.4.2022]
- [41] Terjed a spanyol nátha. In *Szepesi Hírnök*, October 5, 1918, p. 3; Terjed a spanyolkór. In *Szepesi Hírnök*, October 16, 1918, p. 3.; Intézkedések a spanyolláz elleni védekezés ügyében. In *Szepesi Hírnök*, October 16, 1918, p. 3.
- [42] Vármegyei közgyűlés. In *Eperjesi Lapok*, October 20, 1918, p. 3.
- [43] In Košice for example the Epidemiological Committee – that was created in the frame of the city government – decided on 15 October to make the notification of the disease compulsory. In A járvány-bizottság ülése. In *Kassai Hírlap*, October 15, 1918, p. 2.
- [44] A pozsonyi spanyol influenza-járvány. In: *Nyugatmagyarországi Híradó*, 16th October 1918, s. 3.
- [45] Pozsony egészségügyi viszonyai novemberben. In *Nyugatmagyarországi Híradó*, December 12, 1918, p. 3.
- [46] A város parlamentjéből. In *Felsőmagyarország*, September 27, 1918, p. 3; See also A kassai T. házból. In *Kassai Hírlap*, September 28, 1918, p. 2; In *Kassai Hírlap* they wrote about 10,000 people infected. See Kassán is dühöng a spanyol nátha. In *Kassai Hírlap*, September 21, 1918, p. 2-3.

[47] A járvány-bizottság ülése. In *Kassai Hírlap*, October 29, 1918, p. 2-3.

[48] *Úradné Noviny župy Abauj-Turňanskej a mesta Košíc*, Vol. 19, No. 6-7, May 8, 1919, p. 76.

[49] A detailed local statistic from Košice see Megnyitják a középiskolák felsőbb osztályait. In *Felsőmagyarország*, November 28, 1918, p. 3-4.

[50] Sources:

Banská Štiavnica: Available at: <http://sopronselmec100.uni-sopron.hu/spanyolnatha-selmecebanyan> [02.03.2022];

Bratislava: A pozsonyi spanyol influenza-járvány. In *Nyugatmagyarországi Híradó*, October 16, 1918, p. 3, Pozsony egészségügyi viszonyai novemberben. In *Nyugatmagyarországi Híradó*, December 12, 1918, p. 3-4; Detva: GOLIAN, Ján. Vývoj úmrtnosti vo farnosti Detva v rokoch 1781 – 1920. In *Historická demografie*, Vol. 41, No. 1, p. 64;

Gemer-Malohont: SIMON, A. Az átmenet bizonytalansága..., p. 24;

Komárno: SIMON, A. Az átmenet bizonytalansága..., p. 24;

Košice: *Úradné Noviny župy Abauj-Turňanskej a mesta Košíc*, Vol. 19, No. 6-7, May 8, 1919, p. 76;

Prešov: A spanyolnátháról. In *Eperjesi Lapok*, November 10, 1918, p. 2;

Turzovka and its surrounding: Sylvia z Limericku – MINTALOVÁ, ZORA. Z činnosti pomocnej misie Britského Červeného Kríža Lady Muriel Paget na Slovensku. In *Historický časopis*, 2008, Vol. 56, No. 3, p. 500; Spiš: Der Munizipalausschutz der Zipser Komitates. In *Karpathen-Post*, December 5, 1918, p. 2-3;

Vlčkovce: Available at: <https://www.vlckovce.sk/obec-2/o-obci/historia/> [02.03.2022]

[51] Der Munizipalausschutz der Zipser Komitates. In *Karpathen-Post*, December 5, 1918, p. 2-3.

[52] Der Munizipalausschutz der Zipser Komitates. In *Karpathen-Post*, December 5, 1918, p. 2-3.

[53] In 1910 the Spiš County was inhabited by 164 120 people.

[54] SALFELLNER, H. Španělská chřipka..., p. 155-156.

[55] Consequently, I agree with Tomáš Vasilko, who estimated the number of those who died from the virus in the territory of present-day Slovakia at 15 to 30,000. Available at: <https://dennikn.sk/1043382/zabijala-viac-ako-hitler-spanielska-chripka-aj-u-nas-usmrtila-tolko-ludi-az-hrobari-v-kosiciach-zacali-strajkovat/> [15.3.2022]

References

Archives

Archív mesta Košice [Košice City Archives], Košice, Slovakia

- Fund Úradný hlavný lekár mesta Košice 1827–1940 [Fund of the Official Chief Medical Officer of the City of Košice 1827–1940]

Štátny archív v Košiciach [State Archives of Košice], Košice, Slovakia

- Fund Abovsko-Turňanská župa, Podžupan 1882 – 1919 [Fund of the Abov-Turňa County, Sub prefect of the County 1882 – 1919]

Periodicals

Eperjesi Lapok

Felsőmagyarország

Karpathen-Post

Kassai Hírlap

Národné Noviny

Nyugatmagyarországi Híradó

Pressburger Zeitung

Robotnícke Noviny

Szepesi Hirnök

Szepesi Lapok

Trencsén Vármegye Hivatalos Lapja

Úradné Noviny župy Abauj-Turňanskej a mesta Košíc

Bibliography

BANDOLOVÁ, Margita et al. (ed.). *Od Uhorského kráľovstva k Československej republike. Dokumenty z fondov slovenských regionálnych archívov k udalostiam v rokoch 1918 – 1919*. Bratislava : Košice : Ministerstvo vnútra Slovenskej republiky, Štátny archív v Bratislave; Ministerstvo vnútra Slovenskej republiky, Štátny archív v Košiciach, 2018.

BUKOVSKÝ, László – SIMON, Attila – SZE GHY-GAYER, Veronika. *Kassától Košicéig. Molnár Miklós-émlékkönyv*. Somorja – Budapest : Fórum Kisebbségkutató Intézet – Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 2020.

DUDEKOVÁ KOVÁČOVÁ, Gabriela. *Človek vo vojne. Stratégie prežitia a sociálne dôsledky prvej svetovej vojny na Slovensku*. Bratislava : VEDA, 2019.

FALISOVÁ, Anna. Medzivojnové Slovensko z pohľadu zdravotného a sociálneho. In Ferenčuhová, Bohumila – ZEMKO, Milan. (eds.). *Slovensko v 20. storočí. Tretí zväzok, V medzivojnovom Československu 1918 – 1939*. Bratislava : VEDA, 2012, pp. 365-416.

FERENČUHOVÁ, Bohumila – ZEMKO, Milan. (eds.). *Slovensko v 20. storočí. Tretí zväzok, V medzivojnovom Československu 1918 – 1939*. Bratislava : VEDA, 2012.

FURMANIK, Martin. *Spiš a vznik Československej republiky*. Spišská Nová Ves : Múzeum Spiša v Spišskej Novej Vsi, 2018.

GÉRA, Eleonóra. A spanyolnátha Budapesten. In *Budapesti Negyed*, 2009, Vol. 64, pp. 208-232.

GÉRA, Eleonóra. A spanyolnátha emlékezete: A spanyolnátha, az első világháború lábjegyzete. In *Századok*, 2022, Vol. 156, No. 1, pp. 97-116.

GOLIAN, Ján. Vývoj úmrtnosti vo farnosti Detva v rokoch 1781 – 1920. In *Historická Demografie*, Vol. 41, No. 1, pp. 39-72.

HRONSKÝ, Marián. *Trianon. Vznik hraníc Slovenska a problémy jeho bezpečnosti 1918 – 1920*. Bratislava : VEDA, 2011.

SALFELLNER, Harald. *Španělská chřipka. Příběh pandemie z roku 1918*. Vitalis, 2021.

SIMON, Attila. *Az átmenet bizonytalansága. Az 1918/1919-es impériumváltás Pozsonytól Kassáig*. Somorja – Budapest : Fórum Kisebbségkutató Intézet – Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 2021.

SPINNEY, Laura. *Pale Rider. The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it Changed the World*. New York : Public Affairs, 2017.

Sylvia z Limericku – MINTALOVÁ, ZORA. Z činnosti pomocnej misie Britského Červeného Kríža Lady Muriel Paget na Slovensku. In *Historický časopis*, 2008, Vol. 56, No. 3, pp. 497-506.

SZEGHY-GAYER, Veronika. Pred sto rokmi zabíjal zákerný vírus aj v Košiciach. In *Košice: Dnes*, April 21, 2020, Vol. 7, No. 76, pp. 2-4.

SZEGHY-GAYER, Veronika. Španielska chrípka neušetrila ani Bratislavu a Košice. In KOVÁR, Branislav – ZAJAC, Oliver – BENEDIKOVÁ, Lucia (ed.) *Epidémie v dejinách : Ľudstvo v boji s neviditeľnými nepriateľmi*. Bratislava : Premedia, 2020, pp. 232-237.

Sources from internet

<https://www.vlckovce.sk/obec-2/o-obci/historia/> [02.03.2022]

<http://sopronselmec100.uni-sopron.hu/spanyolnatha-selmecebanyan> [02.03.2022];

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=28svY6l8Vhg> [23.4.2022]

<https://dennikn.sk/1043382/zabijala-viac-ako-hitler-spanielska-chripka-aj-u-nas-usmrtila-tolko-ludi-az-hrobari-v-kosiciach-zacali-strajkovat/> [15.3.2022]

ČERVENKA, Juraj. Pandémia španielskej chrípky v Bratislave: najprv zľahčovanie, potom starch. Available at: <https://plus.sme.sk/c/22362854/pandemia-spanielskej-chripky-v-bratislave-najprv-zlahcovanie-potom-strach.html> [15.3.2022]

KOPANIC, J. Michael.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341703230_The_Spanish_Influenza_Pandemic_in_Slovakia/link/5ecfa5e892851c9c5e63b6d4/download [15.3.2022]

SIMON, Attila. Az 1918-as spanyolnáthajárvány és a mai Dél-Szlovákia. Available at: <https://uj szo.com/panorama/az-1918-as-spanyolnathajarvany-es-a-mai-del-szlovakia> [15.3.2022]