

國立政治大學國家發展研究所
Graduate Institute of Development Studies
College of Social Sciences
National Chengchi University

碩士論文
Master's Thesis

從經貿外交角度探討臺灣與斯洛伐克的
雙邊關係（1993-2003 年）

A Study of Taiwan-Slovakia Relations (1993-2003)
from the Perspective of Economic Diplomacy

Student: Eunika Rejtova

Advisor: Mei-Chuan Wei, Ph. D.

中華民國 109 年 5 月

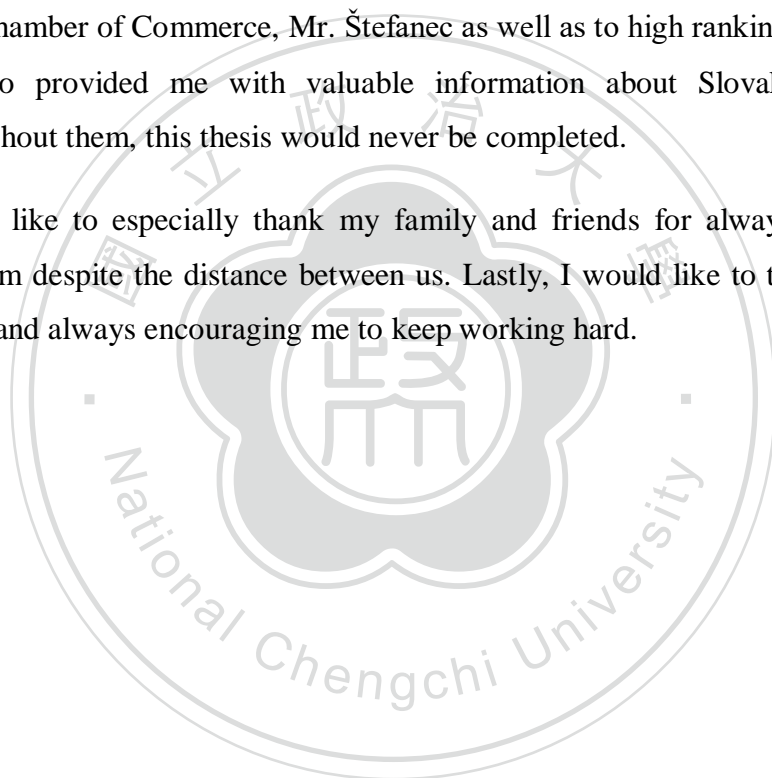
May 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Mei-Chuan Wei for all her help and guidance throughout the entire process of writing of this thesis. She has been extremely supportive and has devoted herself to providing me with constructive feedback. My thesis would never be at the level I wanted it to be at without Dr. Wei.

I also would like to extend my warmest gratitude toward my committee members, Dr. Wei and Prof. Yang for their insightful suggestions. Deep thanks go as well to the current head of the SECO, Mr. Podstavek and to the president of the Slovak-Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Štefanec as well as to high ranking Taiwanese officials, who provided me with valuable information about Slovak-Taiwanese relations. Without them, this thesis would never be completed.

I would also like to especially thank my family and friends for always being my support system despite the distance between us. Lastly, I would like to thank Akuan for inspiring and always encouraging me to keep working hard.



ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to provide an account of the relations between Taiwan and Slovakia before the opening of the representative offices with a special emphasis on the reasons that made Slovakia being one of the last countries in Central Europe to institutionalize its substantial relations with Taiwan. Given Slovakia's official relations with China and the 'one China' policy to which Slovakia adheres, any relations with Taiwan are possible exclusively on the informal level. Taiwan establishes this kind of relationship with China's diplomatic allies through the so-called 'informal' diplomacy. One tool of the informal diplomacy that had been adopted by Taiwan on Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s is the economic diplomacy. In order to identify the reasons behind the delay of the opening of the mutual offices, the analytical framework of the thesis aimed first to evaluate the degree of influence of Taiwan's economic diplomacy on Slovakia in the 1990s and then find out whether this resulted in an asymmetrical dependent relationship with Slovakia. The research revealed that although Taiwan had made efforts since the 1990s to establish relationship with all Central European countries, its economic diplomacy with Slovakia did not appear to be effective primarily due to the country's domestic politics until the time of early 2000s. The domestic politics were thus identified as the most influential factor for explaining the delay of the opening of the representative offices. The different approaches of the two administrations that led Slovakia in the 1990s – 'economy serving politics' under Mečiar's government and 'politics serving economy' under Dzurinda's administration - determined the country's foreign policy, economic reforms and its attitude towards Taiwan's economic diplomacy. This thesis suggests a model of the bilateral relations that could help to understand the possible patterns of Taiwan's substantial relations with other countries built through the economic diplomacy.

Keywords: Slovakia, Taiwan, Central Europe, substantial relations, economic diplomacy, representative offices

摘要

本文旨在從經貿外交的角度探討臺灣在斯洛伐克設立代表處之前的兩國關係，特別著重於討論斯洛伐克作為中歐最後一個與臺灣建立實質關係國家的原因為何。由於斯洛伐克與中國的官方關係，以及斯洛伐克對「一個中國」政策的堅持，與臺灣建立任何關係都僅止於非正式層面。臺灣採取所謂「非正式外交」方式與中國的盟友建立實質關係，而經貿外交則是臺灣於 1990 年代與中歐和東歐採取的非正式外交手段之一。為確認臺灣辦事處延遲設立之因，本文的分析框架為先評估 1990 年代臺灣經貿外交對斯洛伐克的影響程度，然後探討是否因此導致雙方之間出現「不對稱互賴性關係」。本研究結果顯示，儘管臺灣自 1990 年代以來持續努力與所有中歐國家建立關係，但其與斯洛伐克的經貿外交似乎直到 2000 年代初才因為該國的國內政治變化而出現成效。據此，本研究認為斯洛伐克國內政治為臺灣代表處延遲設立的主要因素；1990 年代斯洛伐克政府的兩個領導者對經濟發展採取不同的方針：Meciar 的「經濟服務政治」和 Dzurinda 的「政治服務經濟」，不同了方針因此決定了該國的外交政策、經濟改革及其對臺灣經貿外交的立場。本論文從經貿外交角度出發，以臺灣代表處延遲設立為例探討 1993-2003 臺灣與斯洛伐克外交關係所進行之研究的結果顯示，國內政治為影響臺灣經貿外交成效的重要因素，但在國際現實條件下，透過加強經貿關係仍為臺灣與他國建立實質性關係的重要雙邊關係模式。

關鍵字：斯洛伐克、台灣、中歐、實質關係、經貿外交、代表處。

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	II
ABSTRACT	III
Contents	V
1. Introduction	7
1.1 Research Background	7
1.2 Research Motivation and Purpose	11
1.3 Research Question	12
1.4 Research Method	12
1.4.1 Qualitative method	12
1.4.2 Interview Arrangement	14
1.5 Chapters Structure	15
1.6 Research limitations and contributions	16
2. Literature Review	18
2.1 Taiwan's foreign policy: from 'anti-communist' to 'flexible' diplomacy	18
2.2 Taiwan's relations with Central Europe and Slovakia	20
2.3 Economic diplomacy	23
2.4 Analytical Framework	31
3. The almost non-existent Slovak-Taiwanese Relations (1993-2003)	36
3.1 Economic cooperation between Taiwan and Slovakia (1993-2003)	36
3.2 Taiwan's economic assistance to Slovakia (1993-2003)	38
3.3 The absence of favorable conditions	39
3.3.1 Slovakia's domestic politics (1993-2003)	40
3.3.2 Slovakia's EU membership (1993-2003)	44
3.3.4 The China factor (1993-2003)	47
3.4 Summary	49
4. Convergence of Slovakia's and Taiwan's Interests	52
4.1 Slovakia's economic awakening	53
4.2 EU membership: In favor of rapprochement	58
4.3 The Slovakian (delayed) model of relations with Taiwan	59
4.4 Development of Slovak-Taiwanese relations after the opening of the representative offices	61
4.5 Summary	68

5. Conclusion	69
Interviewees' responses	73
References	83



1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Prior to beginning a discussion about Republic of China's (hereafter ROC or Taiwan) relations with Slovakia, it is important to give an initial background account of Taiwan and its foreign policy making. To understand how this one works we have to put Taiwan in the cross-strait relations context.

The position of Taiwan in the international sphere has largely been influenced by its complicated relationship with the People's Republic of China (hereafter "PRC" or China). In the so-called 'cross-strait relations', the 'one China' policy (一個中國政策) and 'one China' principle (一個中國原則) are two core concepts that need to be mentioned. The 'one China' principle is directly linked to the retreat of the defeated Chinese nationalists to the island of Taiwan and the emergence of the communist PRC in 1949. The principle began immediately to work as a condition of the newly-formed communist government in gaining legitimacy and establishing diplomatic relations. Based on this principle, Taiwan was defined as part of the territory of China, of which the only legitimate government is the government of the PRC. Thenceforth, countries wishing to establish diplomatic relations with Beijing are expected to adhere to this principle and cut relations with or refrain from recognizing the Republic of China on Taiwan as a sovereign state (The Taiwan Affairs Office and the Information Office of the State Council). What safeguarded Taiwan's international position from 1949 to 1970, when Taiwan especially suffered some diplomatic setbacks, was the military alliance of the US (Mengin, 1998).

However, ever since the UN resolution in 1971 replaced the ROC with the PRC as a permanent member of the Security Council in the United Nations and recognized the PRC as the only legitimate government of China, Taiwan's international space has been reduced drastically. Despite being democratic and despite being one of the world's largest economy, Taiwan is currently officially recognized

only by 15 small countries.¹ With the exception of the Holy See (Vatican City), which is Taiwan's only European ally, current Taiwan's diplomatic allies have been mostly small or impoverished countries in Africa, the Caribbean, and South Pacific. Despite their small size and less developed economies, diplomatic relationships with these allies provide valuable formal recognition of Taiwan's sovereignty. Taiwan's allies speak for it in international organizations and give Taiwanese officials the opportunity to make transit visits from the Caribbean to the United States and Washington, where they would not ordinarily be able to go because of Washington's 'one China' policy (Larus, 2008).

Moreover, Taiwan benefits to a high degree also from trade and cultural relationships with internationally significant players such as the USA, Japan, Singapore, Australia, India, Canada, the EU and many others that sustain Taiwan's ability to function as a state. The impact and support of these countries is also significant for Taiwan in terms of participation in international organizations such as the WHO and ICAO (The Diplomat, 2016), from which Taiwan was excluded on the basis of Beijing's uncompromising attitude to 'one China' policy (Focus Taiwan, 2018).

In other words, with China's growing leverage in a world, where the majority of countries recognizes the PRC as the only representation of the whole China, Taiwan's foreign policy making is rather limited. However, this does not mean Taiwan's foreign policy is without resources. "If formal relationships are not possible, 'informal', 'substantive' or 'virtual' ties serve as an excellent substitute" (Hickey, 2007). To advance its political and diplomatic interests, Taiwan can rely on several alternative foreign policy methods. One of these is the so-called 'economic diplomacy' that can be defined as influence attempts of a state that rely essentially on "resources which have a reasonable semblance of a market price in terms of money" (Baldwin, 1985). Economic diplomacy was adopted by Taiwan in Central Europe for the first time in the 1990s. Slovakia belongs to this region as well.

¹ The current diplomatic allies of Taiwan are Belize, Guatemala, Haiti, Holy See, Honduras, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Nicaragua, Palau, Paraguay, St Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Swaziland and Tuvalu.

In case of Taiwan and Slovakia we thus obviously talk about relations of informal character, which is the result of the official diplomatic relations that exist between Slovakia and China. Slovakia's relations with Taiwan therefore consist mostly of economic interactions, but active cooperation exists also in areas such as culture, education and science. Most of these activities are carried out thanks to the Slovak Economic and Cultural Office Taipei (SECO Taipei) and Taipei Representative Office, Bratislava (TROB) established in 2003.

The origin of relations between the ROC and Slovakia can be traced back to the end of the WWI, when the ROC on mainland recognized the Czechoslovak Legion as a proper Czechoslovak army by the so-called Vladivostok declaration (1918) and thus granted Czechoslovakia (one of the successor states of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy) its de facto official recognition (Bakešová, 1997). Following this event, the two countries established official diplomatic relations. However, due to the communist environment in Central Europe in the fifties, then communist Czechoslovakia was among the first countries in 1949 that recognized the new PRC government and thus renounced its relations with the Kuomintang government.

The relations between Czechoslovakia and Taiwan were reanimated in late 1980s, when the then President of Taiwan Lee Teng-hui 李登輝 adopted his foreign policy strategy - the so-called 'flexible diplomacy' (彈性外交). As Hickey (2007) points out, flexible diplomacy's main agenda focused on "1) the advancement and reinforcement of formal diplomatic ties; 2) the development of substantive relations with countries that do not maintain formal relations with Taiwan; 3) admission or readmission to international organizations and activities vital to the country's national interests." This agenda was built on a major change in Taiwan's foreign policy approach towards the 'one China' principle, i.e. Taiwan accepted the idea of dual recognition that would allow Taipei and Beijing simultaneously engage in diplomatic relations with the same states. Moreover, the implementation of the new foreign policy strategy was favored by several external factors. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the importance of China has scaled down and was further undermined in the 1989 with the Tian'an Men event. By contrast, Taiwan's democratic development and the economic miracle that the island experienced all contributed to its positive reputation (Tubilewicz, 2007).

Taiwan's democratization and its gradual abandonment of the ideological preconditions in seeking international support created a favorable environment for a reciprocal relationship between Taiwan and the post-communist governments of Central European countries. Given the desperate need of economic assistance, the region in Central Europe seemed an especially ideal target for Taiwan to use its economic diplomacy in exchange of ties be it diplomatic or 'substantive' (Tubilewicz, 2007). Taiwan targeted Central European post-communist countries with promises of investments, humanitarian relief, grants and loans, which were warmly welcomed in the region. The countries, stimulated by the prospects of economic help, agreed to 'consolidate their friendship' with Taiwan by opening representative offices (Tubilewicz, 2007). As a result, Hungary opened its ROC's representative office in 1990, followed by Czechoslovakia in 1991 and Poland in 1992 (Szczudlik –Tatar, 2013):

Former Czechoslovakia was one of the countries in the region that initiated with the ROC relatively intense interactions. Taipei representative office opened in Prague in 1991 as a result of warm relations based on the same ideological sentiments and public support for Taiwan promoted by President Václav Havel². Considering the friendly dialogue initiated in the previous years and the atmosphere of a freshly installed democracy, Slovakia as one of the successor state³ of Czechoslovakia could have built on a well-laid foundation of bilateral relations. However, after the split of Czechoslovakia in 1993, the evolution of Slovak-Taiwanese relations followed a rather different pattern. Slovakia was the last country among the post-communist Central European countries to open its representative office (2003) and was the 19th European country to do so. The reason for this delay in respect to other countries in the region is the limelight of this thesis.

The reasons for limiting the study focus on the territory of Slovakia are threefold. First, there are several publications on Slovakia's relations with China, yet

² The relations between the Czech Republic and Taiwan are still characterized by a warm atmosphere. The recent signing of a sister city agreement between Taipei and Prague only proves this.

³ After the peaceful split of Czechoslovakia in 1993, independent Slovakia succeeded in the basic bilateral and multilateral contractual agreements of Czechoslovakia and foreign relations.

the Slovak literature dedicated to Taiwan and its relations with Slovakia are scarce. This thesis thus could partially fill in the gap on this topic. Second, the research on economic diplomacy in Slovakia might unveil specifics that could be applicable for economic diplomacy in other countries with similar geographical and cultural distance. Third, the country was also selected in order to utilize resources and knowledge acquired during my bachelor study in Slovakia, where my research on Slovak-Taiwanese relations has commenced.

1.2 Research Motivation and Purpose

The backdrop of this thesis comes from a personal curiosity in Slovak-Taiwanese relations. Having a sinology background, during my bachelor studies in Slovakia I realized how limited the literature dealing with bilateral dialogue between Slovakia and Taiwan is, especially in contrast with the Czech literature on this topic. Therefore, I oriented my research question to this area and elaborated my bachelor thesis on the Slovak-Taiwanese relations. However, given time constraint and data availability limitations, the paper covered only the period of bilateral relations starting from the year of the establishment of the representative offices in 2003 until 2016 when the research was carried out. Therefore the primary purpose of this thesis is to provide an account of the relations between Taiwan and Slovakia before the opening of the institutions with a special emphasis on the reasons that made Slovakia being one of the last countries in Central Europe to institutionalize its substantial relations with Taiwan.

Moreover, given the non-recognition of Taiwan as a sovereign state by the majority of states, this research aims to contribute to the understanding of Taiwan's successes and failures in establishing either diplomatic or substantial relations. The Slovakia's case is particularly relevant for the study of Taiwan's diplomatic efforts to translate economic means into political ends, i.e. Taiwan's economic diplomacy as a foreign diplomatic tool.

1.3 Research Question

The primary purpose of this thesis is to provide an account of the relations between Taiwan and Slovakia before the opening of the institutions with a special emphasis on the reasons that made Slovakia being one of the last countries in Central Europe to institutionalize its substantial relations with Taiwan.

After the division of Czechoslovakia in 1993, the Taiwan's representative office remained administered together with the office in Taipei (opened in 1993) by the Czech Republic. Slovakia opened its Taiwan representation only in 2003, which finally launched an institutionalized form of relations between the two countries. In order to understand this delay, this study attempts to answer the following main questions:

- *How did Slovakia respond to the Taiwanese economic inducements in Central Europe in the 1990s?*
- *What were the specific reasons that led Slovakia to be the last Central-European country to establish the representative office with Taiwan (e.g., ideological, diplomatic, political, economic, etc.)?*

1.4 Research Method

1.4.1 Qualitative method

In order to answer this thesis' research questions, qualitative research was adopted. Qualitative research is believed to fit this thesis the best as it is a type of research used in social science that gathers and works with non-numerical information that are further interpreted in order to understand social phenomena that are the subject of the research. Qualitative research relies on methods such as observation and immersion, interviews, open-ended surveys, focus groups, document analysis, content analysis of visual and textual materials, and oral history (Crossman, 2019). Apart from the above mentioned methods, the qualitative research has been chosen for this thesis as it seeks to answer open-ended questions that give room for further probing

and help to provide an in-depth picture of the given topic. The qualitative research was also helpful to collect, organize, and interpret the textual and verbal data used for this thesis.

The specific methods adopted for this thesis are interviews and document analysis. Interview is one of the most common qualitative research methods. According to Miller and Glassner (2011), qualitative interviews provide valuable accounts that enable researchers to find evidence of the phenomenon under investigation. Moreover, qualitative interviews bring insights into cultural frames, contexts and situations in which the given phenomena emerge. Qualitative interviews are conducted by researchers speaking with one or more participants. Interviews are personal and are conducted in a purely conversational method that allows open-ended questions formulated in one's own words instead of choosing from provided responses, as quantitative methods do.

Qualitative interviews generally follow semi-structured or unstructured forms. In a typical semi-structured interview, the researcher follows a predetermined list of questions or topics, but how and when the questions are put in discussion depends on the way the interviewee chooses to respond (Edwards, Hollands, 2013). In an unstructured interview, the interviewer sets the conversation on a particular topic without a formal guide, but the interview candidate is allowed to guide the conversation. (Edwards, Hollands, 2013). This thesis adopted the method of semi-structured interview and the list of interviewees with the interview arrangement is listed at the end of this section.

As for document analysis, Corbin and Strauss (2008) explain that, it is a procedure adopted for reviewing or evaluating both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) data. In order to understand, draw out meaning and acquire knowledge from documents these need to be first systematically examined and interpreted. Documents include agendas, minutes of meetings, books and brochures, diaries and journals; event programs (i.e., printed outlines); letters and memoranda, newspapers (clippings/articles), press releases, radio and television program scripts; organizational or institutional reports; survey data; and various public records. (Bowen, 2009) Document analysis generally relies on methods such as

finding, selecting, appraising, and synthesizing data from the documents (Labuschagne, 2003).

The secondary data analysis of this thesis was applied to the existing scholarly literature and articles on the topic. The research also made use of government documents and reports, that were acquired either from official websites of the respective governments and other relevant institutions or through direct communication with the authorities. Apart from these resources, the thesis also closely monitored local media websites in Slovakia and Taiwan for information on relevant activities and the diplomatic relations as a whole.

1.4.2 Interview Arrangement

The main purpose of the interview is to identify the attitudes and reasons behind the lack of interactions between Taiwan and Slovakia in the 1990s. In order to get a complex insight of the matter, interviews were conducted on both Taiwanese and Slovak side. The selection criteria for sampling interviewees were their position in the governmental structure and relevance of their work to the research topic. The purpose was to approach former and current heads and staff of Taipei Representative Office in Bratislava (TROB) and Slovak Economic and Cultural Office, Taipei (SEKO) as well as Slovak and Taiwanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MOFA) officials that had been engaged in diplomatic dialogues with Central Europe and Slovakia. Given their experience and personal engagement in the Slovak-Taiwanese relations, their insight and remarks were a valuable source of information for this thesis. With the explicit request of the Taiwanese respondents, this thesis keeps anonymous their identity.

The interviewees in this study include:

Mr. Martin Podstavek – Current head of the Slovak Economic and Cultural Office, Taipei (SEKO), in office since 2017

Mr. Vladislav Štefanec – President of the Slovak-Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce
Taiwanese high ranking MOFA official, former head of the Taipei Representative Office in Bratislava (TROB)

Taiwanese high ranking MOFA official, former deputy Director at the TROB

Questions addressed to the Slovak respondents:

1. In the 1990s, Taiwan targeted Central Europe with grants and investments and promoted bilateral trade relations. Did Slovakia consider the potential of entering into economic partnership with Taiwan and why?
2. Did the economic partnership with the PRC somehow affect Slovakia's position towards Taiwan?
3. Do you think that Slovakia's domestic politics might have somehow influenced the course of the Slovak-Taiwanese relations?
4. What led Slovakia to agree on the opening of the representative offices with Taiwan?

Questions addressed to the Taiwanese respondents:

1. In 1993, Slovakia emerged as an independent country out of Czechoslovakia with which Taiwan had a rather friendly and promising relationship. Did Taiwan consider initiating a dialogue with the Slovak government? What were the responses from the Slovak side?
2. In the 1990s, Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic were targeted by Taiwanese businessmen who sought to expand Taiwan's export market. On the other hand, Slovakia's economic relations with Taiwan were negligible. What do you think were the aspects that made Slovakia an unattractive business partner?
3. Do you think that Slovakia's domestic politics might have somehow influenced the course of the Slovak-Taiwanese relations?
4. What were the conditions that set for the opening of the Taipei Representative Office in Bratislava (TROB) in 2003?

1.5 Chapters Structure

The first chapter of the thesis is the Introduction. In this part, a short background to the topic is given followed by the research motivation and purpose. The research question as well as the research method is explained in this part as well.

Chapter 2 consists of literature review that introduces the most authoritative and the most relevant works to this thesis. This chapter also explains the analytical framework chosen for this research.

Chapter 3 follows the analytical framework provided in Chapter 2 and is thus divided into sections based on the framework's main dimensions: Economic cooperation between Taiwan and Slovakia (1993-2003), Taiwan's economic assistance to Slovakia (1993-2003), Slovakia's domestic politics (1993-2003), the China's factor (1993-2003) and the EU membership (1993-2003).

Chapter 4 contains an analysis and discussion based on the dimension of the framework found to be the most relevant when looking for the reasons behind the late opening of the diplomatic missions. The dimension is namely Slovakia's domestic politics (1993-2003). This chapter also provides a brief overview of the Slovak-Taiwanese relations up to date and a discussion about future development.

Finally, the Conclusion answers the research question of this thesis.

1.6 Research limitations and contributions

Although this study provides interesting insights into the development of the Slovak-Taiwanese relations in the 1990s, it is not without its limitations. Firstly, the data collection for this research met with the problem of lack of availability to literature needed. The information and data relevant for the particular topic of the interactions between Taiwan and Slovakia before the opening of the offices are very limited. The existing literature on Taiwan's relations with Slovakia touches about this subject very briefly. The reason to this is mostly due to the lack of interest in the topic among the Slovak academia. Very few information were accessible online, yet this seems to be understandable given the fact that the online database of governmental institutions and online news started to be available mostly around the beginning of the 21st century.

Especially difficult was to collect economy relevant data. There is a substantial lack of information on bilateral trade and investment between Taiwan and Slovakia before the latter's accession to the EU. Moreover, the methodologies applied in producing statistical information of this type have not been consistent. Given the

lack of resources and researcher's abilities, future research should account for elaborating on the relevant statistical figures.

With the hope to fill in the gap of the missing information and data, this thesis aimed to collect information from semi-structured interviews with MOFA officials and diplomatic missions' representatives on both Slovak and Taiwanese side. However, only several interviews were realized due to the sensitivity of the topic and various private reasons of several interviewees. Moreover, most of the interviewees were engaged in Slovak-Taiwanese relations after the opening of the representative offices, therefore the information provided about the period relevant for this research were rather limited. In addition, given a low number of the interview participants and their limiting engagement in the relations in the 1990s, the results of the interview cannot be generalized. Lastly, I acknowledge my personal attachment to the topic of the research and I am aware of the potential impact of my preconceptions and biases it might have had on the study.

Despite all the limitations, this study provides an insight about a topic highly neglected in the Slovak academia. To be more precise, attempting to provide explanations to the delay of the opening of the representative offices between Taiwan and Slovakia, this thesis represents the only one on this particular subject. The researcher hopes the thesis could contribute to a better understanding of the Slovak-Taiwanese relations and at the same time provide an account on the results of Taiwan's economic diplomacy on the example of a small European country. The research shows that economic diplomacy is an important tool for Taiwan to expand its international relations and that in the 1990s it was successful in forging relations with Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland, where a favorable economic development and a friendly political culture provided a positive response to Taiwan's diplomatic attempts. On the other hand, Slovakia became receptive to Taiwan's economic diplomacy only with the domestic stabilization and government transition that brought a new approach to the foreign policy of the country. This thesis therefore wishes to emphasize the relevance of domestic politics of small European countries and its possible effect on their approach towards Taiwan.

2. Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the literature relevant for this thesis. As the topic on Taiwan's relations with other countries requires touching upon foreign policy making, the first part provides a review about this subject. The next part focuses on Taiwan's relations with Central Europe and Slovakia. The third section introduces literature about economic diplomacy as a concept and Taiwan's economic diplomacy in particular. Finally, this chapter is concluded with the analytical framework adopted for this thesis.

2.1 Taiwan's foreign policy: from 'anti-communist' to 'flexible' diplomacy

Dennis van Vrancken Hickey points out that "Taiwan's international status in the global community is complicated, unusual and perhaps even unique" (Hickey, 2007). This makes of Taiwan's foreign policy a popular research topic, and as a consequence there are many studies on Taiwan's foreign policy. For this thesis, particularly relevant were publications focused on Taiwan's foreign policy making in the period between late 1980s and 1990s.

In the history of Taiwan's foreign policy, relations with Central Europe were not always a matter of course. To understand Taiwan's focus on Central Europe as an outcome of a new foreign policy strategy, factors influencing the policy making have been researched. Dennis Van Vranken Hickey in his book *Foreign Policy Making in Taiwan* (2007) analyzes the ROC's foreign policy making from the retreat of KMT to the island of Taiwan until the government of President Chen Shui-bian 陳水扁, when the book was written. Hickey demonstrates that given Taiwan's difficult international position, its strategies as well as foreign policy goals, values and diplomatic instruments have been subject to numerous modifications and changes reflecting the evolution in the international sphere. That is to say, various external and internal factors have been influential on Taiwan's foreign policy making. Hickey shows many levels of analysis that influence Taiwan's foreign policy behavior, such as the

international system, government structure, societal forces as well as individual factors. Similarly, Timothy Ka-ying Wong in his publication *The Political Economy of Taiwan's Foreign Policy* (1999), points out that a regime's foreign policy making lies upon constant evaluation of internal and external political and economic changes. However, unlike Hickey, Wong examines the changes in Taiwan's foreign policy since the breaking of US-Taiwan diplomatic relations as according to him, this event triggered a sudden change in the relations across the Taiwan's Strait and Taiwan's foreign relations line-up and at the same time coincided chronologically with tumultuous changes taken place within Taiwan itself, i.e. economic restructuring and transformation from capital importation to capital exportation and its political indigenization and democratization (Wong, 1999).

Indeed, many factors have been influencing Taiwan's foreign policy. However, the major impact on Taiwan's foreign policy making and its outcomes is generally attributed to the complex relations of Taiwan with mainland China (Wang, 1990; Mengin, 1998; Wong, 1999; Hickey, 2007; Tubilewicz, 2007). In her article about *Foreign Policy of the Republic of China on Taiwan* (1990), Wang points out that after the KMT government retreated to Taiwan, its major political objective had been to oppose/defeat the communists and recover the country on the mainland, of which the ROC claimed to be the sole legitimate representation. This kind of foreign policy making is characterized by Wang as 'traditional', 'anti-communist' or even 'orthodox'. It was subsequently followed by a strategy termed as 'practical' diplomacy that emerged in the 1960s and focused on a new kind of unofficial foreign relations relying primarily on economic, trade, civil and cultural exchanges. Up to the end of this period in 1988⁴, Taiwan did not accept any relations with communist countries or countries having diplomatic relations with China. In Wang's chronology, this approach changed with the so-called period of 'pragmatic' diplomacy adopted by Lee Teng-hui.

Hickey's (2007) classification slightly differs from Wang's in its perspective. Hickey chooses to highlight the ROC's international recognition and support in the earliest stage after the retreat from the mainland, and thus he begins his chronology with the 'Golden era (1950-1971)'. This stage is subsequently contrasted by the

⁴ 1988 is the year of Chiang Ching-kuo's death.

period of ‘diplomatic isolation (1971-1988)’, when Taiwan engaged in the diplomatic zero-sum game with China started drastically losing its diplomatic allies. But the last period of Hickey’s classification agrees in time and term with Wang’s period of ‘pragmatic’ diplomacy. Timothy Ka-ying Wong (1999) further identifies a fourth stage, the so-called ‘deepening of the pragmatic diplomacy’ that led in the early 1990’s from a passive non-avoidance of dual recognition with Beijing in the international community to one of actively seeking dual recognition”.

2.2 Taiwan’s relations with Central Europe and Slovakia

The evolution of Taiwan’s foreign policy strategy from an anti-communist towards a flexible approach towards the communist block is particularly relevant for the Slovak-Taiwanese relations. In particular it is the abandonment of the ideological principle of no coexistence with Beijing and other communist countries as it oriented Taiwan’s diplomacy to the region, where Slovakia belongs – the Central Europe that at the time was under communist influence.

In the article *Promising Eldorado: Taiwan’s Diplomatic Offensive in East Central Europe, 1989-1999*, Tubilewicz (2000) argues that it was Washington’s shift of recognition from Taipei to Beijing in 1979 that forced Taiwan’s government to re-assess its diplomatic strategy towards communist Europe and the same year agreed on direct trade with Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, East Germany and Yugoslavia. However, Tubilewicz argues that despite the legalization of direct trade, commercial relations between Taiwan and the countries from East Central Europe remained rather insignificant. Their bilateral interaction continued being limited by the region’s commitment to China and Taiwan’s ideological prejudice against communist states. As pointed out by other scholars of Taiwan’s foreign policy mentioned above, Tubilewicz too shows that only the death of President Chiang Ching-kuo provided the space of revising Taiwan’s diplomatic strategy towards the post-communist countries. The analysis further pays particular attention to the post-1989 developments and argues that Taiwan relied on promises of financial assistance and foreign investments in return for diplomatic recognition.

In his next article called *Breaking the Ice: The Origins of Taiwan’s Economic Diplomacy towards the Soviet Union and its European Allies*, Tubilewicz (2004) puts

special emphasis on Chiang Ching-kuo's successor President Lee Teng-hui and his 'flexible' diplomacy. As the title of the article suggests, Tubilewicz explains how this new foreign policy strategy led Taiwan from abandoning its ideological prejudice towards a more flexible approach when seeking international support from communist countries be it in official or substantive form. This study provides the readers with a good background on the unofficial diplomatic interactions (especially economic) between the Soviet Union and its allies and shows how Taiwan gradually abandoned its cautious anti-communist policy and decided to exploit the rapid democratization and need of economic assistance of the countries to forge a relationship going beyond economic co-operation.

Tubilewicz's (2005) article *The Scrooge effect: Taiwan's economic diplomacy towards Central Europe 1988-2005* and the book called *Taiwan and Post-Communist Europe, Shopping for Allies* (2007) further elaborate on the 'flexible' diplomacy and the emphasis of a close linkage between the 'flexible' diplomacy goals and the economic practices of Taiwan, i.e. economic diplomacy. In these two works, Tubilewicz provides detailed information about Taiwan's foreign policy strategies in specific Central and Eastern European countries and they thus represent some of the most relevant works for this thesis. The article provides a good account of the relations between Taiwan and Czechoslovakia, however, when it comes to Slovak-Taiwanese relations, the author observes that *"Unlike its Czech neighbor, Slovakia did not actively seek membership of either the European Union (EU) or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and reoriented its foreign policy toward the East. In this context, Premier Mečiar became a staunch ally of China and avoided communication with Taiwan."* (Tubilewicz, 2005, p. 231)

While the book provides an extended analysis of the previous works, when it comes to Slovak-Taiwanese relations, the one-page sub-chapter called Slovak awakening does not provide any new information compared to the previous Tubilewicz's study. Slovakia is omitted in the five models of Taiwanese relations with post-Communist European countries that Tubilewicz (2007) in this book identifies: Hungarian ("substantive"), Latvian ("consular"), Czech ("ideological"), Russian ("geostrategic"), and Macedonian ("diplomatic").

The limited scholarly research dedicated to the bilateral relations between Taiwan and Slovakia could be generally attributed to the fact that the relations between Taiwan and Slovakia do not have a long history. On the other hand, the

interactions between Taiwan and the Czech Republic are considered rather fruitful therefore the literature on the topic is more abundant as well. Bakešová from the Czech academia covered the historical interactions between the ROC and Czechoslovakia in her two books, *Taiwan, Different China* (1992) and *Czechoslovakia – China 1918-1949* (1997). The latter dates the origin of the relations to the end of the WWI and follows its dynamic cooperation in the economic sphere until the foundation of the PRC in 1949, when Czechoslovakia as an already communist country revoked relations with the ROC in favor of the new regime (Bakešová, 1997).

Given the communist influence in the region and its close relations with the PRC, any relations between Taiwan and the Central Europe were suspended until the late 1970s after the ROC lifted up the trade and investment ban on the communist countries and gradually relaxed its anti-communist policy. Considering the absence of any relations between Taiwan and the region until that moment this topic attracted relatively little scholarly attention. The few exceptions worth to mention are Pi Ying-hsien's and Chao Chun-shan's *Analysis of East European National Characteristics and the ROC's Foreign Policy* (東歐國情分析與我國對外關係), Tang Shao-cheng's *The Relations between Poland and China/Taiwan: As Seen from Taiwan* and Jan Rowinski's *China and Central and Eastern Europe: A New Relationship* (Tubilewicz, 2005).

Among the most recent works on Taiwan and Slovakia is Straková's (2017) master thesis on *Taiwan's Cultural Diplomacy Practice: The Case in Slovakia* that recognizes cultural diplomacy as an essential tool that Taiwan employs to pursue national interests. The research examines aspects of cultural diplomacy practices exercised in Slovakia with focus on the recent discourse of practices identified as successful and outlines suggestions for fine-tuning of the cultural diplomacy practice. The thesis moreover incorporates outcomes of a public survey about awareness of Taiwan and its cultural products among Slovak public. Finally, the article on *Slovak-Taiwanese Relations under the 'One-China' Policy* (Rejtová, 2019) analyzes the bilateral relations between Slovakia and Taiwan under different Slovak governments. The emphasis is put on the unofficial inter-parliamentary linkages and the influence of the 'One China' policy that shows to be hindering the deeper development of dialogue between Taiwan and Slovakia, and at the same time unnecessarily reducing the

potential offered by this cooperation. The article summarizes the most important agreements and events between Taiwan and Slovakia after the opening of the representative offices up to the date of its publication.

2.3 Economic diplomacy

When it comes to economic diplomacy that works as a substitute for official diplomacy as for instance in Taiwan's case, certain approaches point out the inextricable linkage between economic diplomacy's tools, especially foreign aid and the concept of country's self-promotion that is sometimes also called propaganda or public diplomacy.

According to Nye's definition, public diplomacy conveys public information, sells a positive image of a country and builds long-term relationships that create an enabling environment for government's policies (Nye, 2005). Public diplomacy is in academia generally connected to the term of soft power. According to Nye (2005), who first coined the term, soft power includes all the elements except what belongs to the "hard power" (military power, economic sanctions, etc.). However, Alexander (2014) in his work called *China and Taiwan in Central America, Engaging Foreign Public in Diplomacy*, argues that in international relations, hard power factors can be part of an attraction, and public diplomacy despite being a tool for gaining more soft power, should not be thought of as exclusively an instrument for soft power generation. He points out that since engaging in development assistance helps governments to improve their domestic and international public image, it is highly attractive to marginalized governments concerned with international and domestic sovereign legitimacy. Moreover, despite these governments often are not members of certain international organizations, development assistance allows them to take part on shaping global policies such as for instance the UN Millennium Development Goals. As Alexander (2014) points out, "This in turn provides the government with international and domestic authority and prestige because of their conformity to the prevailing values of the international system."

Batora (2006) agrees with this proposition in his writing on *Public Diplomacy between Home and Abroad: Norway and Canada*, by stating that "for small and medium-sized states, public diplomacy represents an opportunity to gain influence

and shape the international agenda in ways that go beyond their limited hard power resources”. Similarly, Rawnsley (2010) in his book about *Taiwan's Informal Diplomacy and Propaganda*, argues that foreign aid reinforces the benevolent image of the donor and ties it politically to the recipient through a relationship of loyalty and dependence. Rawnsley considers foreign aid an act of propaganda of the deed, i.e. an instrument of publicity in contrast to diplomatic communications, which may be private or public and more formal. He suggests that economic diplomacy and propaganda are closely linked as economic diplomacy has the power to reinforce the informality of relations.

Likewise, Larus (2008) in her study about *Soft Power versus Hard Cash* makes use of constructivism to explain why some countries have chosen diplomatic relations with Taiwan over China. According to social constructivism, a state's behavior depends on both its self-constructed identity and the relations it has with other countries. Larus shows that Taiwan's key identifier in the international community has been democracy and Taiwan has positioned itself as a political and economic model for developing countries. With China's growing influence and its growing economic assistance in the world, these values helped Taiwan to project a positive image abroad and combined with the economic diplomacy – a key factor in diplomatic relations of Taiwan – helped Taiwan to retain its diplomatic allies.

Tubilewicz (2000, 2004, 2005, 2007) as well acknowledges that in the 1990s, Taiwan's booming economy and democracy helped to promote the country's name internationally, especially in contrast to the anti-democratic and economically backward China. Tubilewicz argues that Taiwan relying on this asset adopted economic diplomacy in Central Europe with the purpose either to identify new diplomatic allies or, if this proved impossible to achieve, to establish semiofficial ‘substantive’ relations. In order to achieve its goals, Taiwan aimed at constructing the so-called asymmetrical interdependence between itself and the potential ally. This kind of relationship was supposed to place Taiwan in such a dominant position that the dependent country would have no other choice than comply with Taiwan's policy preferences (in exchange of economic rewards) (Tubilewicz, 2007).

This very concept of allocating economic rewards in exchange of political concessions or recognition has been the reason why sometimes in media and academia economic diplomacy has been referred to as 'dollar diplomacy'. Although this term originally refers to the US practice in Central America and the Caribbean as

pointed out for instance in *Financial Missionaries to the World, The Politics and Culture of Dollar Diplomacy* (Rosenberg, 1999), it has been often associated with the ROC practice, especially in the context of the zero-sum diplomatic game with the PRC (Rawnsley, 2010), for instance in Africa as seen in *Taiwan's Foreign Policy and Africa: The limitations of dollar diplomacy* (Taylor, 2010) or even in Europe as pointed out in *Taiwan's Balkan option: A new chapter in Republic of China 'dollar diplomacy'* (Tubilewicz, 2001). Although these books were not fundamental for this thesis, they can provide the readers with an interesting insight of Taiwan's economic diplomacy practice in specific regions of the world.

In order to understand better the meaning of economic diplomacy, it is important to provide its conceptual definition. The emergence of the concept of economic diplomacy in the study of diplomacy can be dated to the 1980s. However, as Woolcock (2011) argues, to provide a suitable theory of economic diplomacy might be challenging due to the number of variables that can shape international economic negotiations at any one. Literature review on this topic shows that since 1980s, very few works attempted to provide a sounder understanding of the meaning and scope of the concept. Among the most influential there is for instance Baldwin's (1985) *Economic statecraft*, Bayne's and Woolcock's (2003) *The New Economic Diplomacy*, Blanchard's and Ripsman's (2008) *A political Theory of Economic Statecraft* and more recent Maaiké Okano-Heijmans' (2011) paper on Conceptualizing Economic Diplomacy.

In his authoritative writing about *Economic Statecraft*, Baldwin (1985) refers to an ancient foreign policy tool that has been defined as governmental influence attempts directed at other states and non-state actors in the international system relying essentially on tools which have a reasonable pretense of a market price in terms of money. As Baldwin argues, these resources can be either categorized as positive or negative economic sanctions, such as trade embargoes as well as aid programs by states and other actors such as the United Nations to coerce other states to cooperate. A similar definition has been provided by Berridge and James (2003) in their *A Dictionary of Diplomacy*, where economic diplomacy can be “a diplomacy which employs economic resources, either as rewards or sanctions, in pursuit of a particular foreign policy objective.” However, the dictionary entry is further expanded by a definition that sees economic diplomacy concerned with economic policy

questions and work related to monitoring and reporting on economic policies and development in the target state and advising on how best influence them.

These authors conceptualized economic diplomacy using realist and neorealist frameworks which resulted in a traditional state-centric analysis where it is conducted by officials with the objective of advancing the economic interests of the state in foreign countries and the world economy (Lee and Hudson, 2004). However, with a growing influence of the process of globalization and regionalization on diplomacy, scholars have gradually started highlighting the importance of understanding international relations outside the narrow state-centric security framework. The new framework, as it has been defined by Lee and Hocking (2011) is the one that “involves the social, economic, cultural and political relations among networks of political actors in formal and informal domestic and systemic environments.” The authors argue, that in this context, the study of diplomacy has moved from emphasizing the economic tools of statecraft to the study of economic diplomacy in which two themes emerge: 1) That of diplomat as agent in International Relations (IR) and International Political Economy (IPE) and 2) How to fit non-state and non-foreign ministry officials into diplomatic agency.

Indeed, these developments fragmenting the concept of a traditional state-to-state economic diplomacy are reflected in research of many scholars of the 21st century. Bayne and Woolcock (2003) promptly show how economic diplomacy evolved in reaction to the end of the Cold War and globalization. They give an account of these changes in *The New Economic Diplomacy* that shows the growing impact of non-state actors, such as private businesses and civil society on the practice of the state. The authors acknowledge that economic diplomacy is usually carried out by the state, but they also emphasize the importance of the domestic context in which the state operates. Therefore, they conceptualize economic diplomacy as a set of activities related to investment, export, import, lending aid and migration pursued by state and non-state actors in the real world.

The involvement in international economic relations by an increasing number of non-state actors is discussed as well in Saner's and Yiu's (2003) paper on *International Economic Diplomacy: Mutations in Postmodern Times*. Their research emphasizes the importance of economic diplomats, whose contribution comes from

overseeing and reporting on economic policies in foreign countries and giving the home government directions on how to best influence them. In this context, Saner and Yiu define economic diplomacy as diplomacy dealing with economic policy issues, e.g. work of delegation at organizations such as WTO and Bank of International Settlements (BIS). The authors stress the importance of acquiring the additional competences to engage constructively in political dialogue for the different actors involved in today's complex political and economic realities and at the same time for MOFA's and state's diplomats to learn to reshape their traditional roles and functions in the enlarged sphere of postmodern diplomacy (Saner and Yiu, 2003).

In a similar fashion, the above mentioned authors Lee and Hocking (2010) in their paper on *Economic Diplomacy* conceptualize economic diplomacy as a series of formal and informal activities and ties between public-private networks encompassing state and non-state actors. They as well put a special emphasis on the role of diplomats, who with their direct involvement in trade and finance negotiations, as well as commercial activities create and regulate markets and capital.

Moreover, reflecting the above mentioned changes in economic diplomacy, Lee and Hocking (2010) see the necessity of redefining the concept of the discipline. They focus on key strands of economic diplomacy that reflect and are relevant to the contemporary globalization. These are: trade diplomacy, commercial diplomacy, finance diplomacy, and consular visa services associated to increased migration flows. Adopting a different method, Maaïke Okano-Heijmans (2011) in the article called *Conceptualizing Economic Diplomacy: The Crossroads of International Relations, Economics, IPE and Diplomatic Studies*, discerns five strands of economic diplomacy that are often overlapping and distinctions between them are often unclear. The concepts are: economic diplomacy, economic statecraft, economic security, trade diplomacy, commercial diplomacy and financial diplomacy. These strands can be either perceived as more commercial/economic or political in essence and are thereby closer to the 'business end' or 'power-play end' of economic diplomacy.

Indeed, the purpose of economic diplomacy is generally perceived as of economic nature, i.e. to enhance economic growth (be it domestic or foreign) (Tubilewicz, 2007), to promote and/or influence international trade and investment and to increase economic security (Van Bergeijk, Moons, 2009). However, economic diplomacy does not only aim at economic ends, but it sometimes uses economic tools for non-economic purposes, such as to consolidate the right political climate or to

advance personal foreign policy objectives, be they diplomatic, military or expressive (Holsti, 1995).

Now that a brief introduction of the literature on economic diplomacy has been given, for the purpose of this thesis, economic diplomacy will be defined as follows:

- Economic diplomacy is a series of formal and informal activities and links carried by state actors and non-state actors directed at other states and non-state actors in the international system.
- Economic diplomacy employs economic activities, such as export, import, investment, lending, aid programs etc.
- These activities can be either categorized as positive or negative and are therefore used either as rewards or sanctions.
- The goals of economic diplomacy can be either closer to power-play end or closer to business end. Thus economic diplomacy can be used when pursuing a particular foreign policy objective, to promote and/or influence international trade and investment, to enhance performance of markets and/or to deal with market shortages and to reduce costs and risks of cross border transactions; to increase economic security.

From the above mentioned literature results that most of the theoretical works on economic diplomacy focus on the actors of the economic diplomacy and its effectiveness, however, not that much on the target states and the conditions for success of economic diplomacy. If they do so, they usually elaborate on sanctions and incentives and tend to focus on the regime-type of the target state (Brooks, 2002; Lektzian and Souva, 2007) and neglects the other domestic factors relevant for the evaluation of conditions for success of economic diplomacy (Blanchard and Ripsman, 2008). For instance, the paper on *An Institutional Theory of Sanctions Onset and Success* argues that the relationship between the cost of sanctions and regime type is dependent, and sanctions are more successful when they are addressed to the target's winning coalition (Lektzian and Souva, 2007). Similarly, Woo and Verdier (2013) in their paper on *Sanctions, Rewards and Regime Types*, work with the regime type proposition and conclude that both sanctions and incentives are most effective when

used simultaneously. However the authors identify the intermediate regimes (neither quite democratic, neither absolutely autocratic) to be the least responsive to either type of incentive.

On the other hand, Blanchard's and Ripsman's (2008) *A political Theory of Economic Statecraft* analyzes the conditions of economic sanctions and incentives that lead to successful achievement of important political objectives as well as the reasons why do they fail. The authors argue that the success of economic statecraft depends on whether it succeeds to translate the economic pain or gain into political costs or opportunities, rather than its economic magnitude. The degree of the sanctions' or incentives' success depends on what the authors define as the target state's level of stateness. Stateness is conceptualized as composed of three components: 1) autonomy, or a state's ability to take decisions under the pressure of domestic political opposition; 2) capacity, or the state's capability either to compensate or coerce the ones that will lose from going against the sender; and 3) legitimacy, or the ability of the state to reunite dissatisfied domestic groups.

Perhaps a more suitable perspective for the analysis on when and under what conditions economic diplomacy can achieve foreign-policy objectives is offered by the theory on the so-called asymmetrical interdependence. The term itself is perhaps known thanks to the *Power and Interdependence* by Koehane and Nye (2011), who defined it as a relationship where one party is more dependent on another for a certain commodity. However, it was Caporaso (1978) who defined the concept in a strictly economic term as a relation where actor A depends on actor B for large amount (expressed as proportions of total consumption) of important goods which are not easy to be replaced at bearable costs. On the other hand, B obtains small quantities of unimportant goods from A that are replaceable. Caporaso suggested three conditions facilitating the formation of a dependent relationship: 1) size of the reliance relationship, 2) importance of goods on which one relies, and ease, 3) availability and cost of the replacement alternatives (Caporaso, 1978). This argument has been refined and expanded by Tubilewicz (2007), who analyzes the asymmetrical interdependence on the case of Taiwan as a donor and the post-communist European countries as target states. The conditions that the author identify as necessary for establishing a dependent relationship between actor and target state are as follows: 1) the dependent relationship, 2) generosity, 3) disbursements, 4) economic effectiveness of assistance,

5) economic cooperation, 6) domestic politics, 7) feasibility of diplomatic objectives; and particularly relevant for the Taiwan's case 8) the China's factor.

From the above reviewed literature, we learned that one of the frequent diplomatic tools adopted by Taiwan to enhance its international presence is economic diplomacy. There have been several approaches to economic diplomacy. The earlier ones emphasize its close linkage to the state. Recently, with the changes of international sphere resulting from growing influence of globalization and regionalization on diplomacy, new approaches stressing the role of new non-governmental actors have emerged. Understanding the engagement of various actors in economic diplomacy is particularly relevant for the case of Taiwan. Government actors such as the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA, 中華民國經濟部), the Ministry of Finance (中華民國財政部), the Council of Agriculture (行政院農業委員會), Central Bank of China (中央銀行) or several governmental aid funds, such as the International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF, 國際合作發展基金) as well as the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange (蔣經國國際學術交流基金會) are important channels of Taiwan's investments (Tubilewicz, 2007). On the other hand, Taiwan relies on around 3000 NGOs to promote its image of aid donor and at the same time to enhance its status in the like-minded international community (Taiwan Today, 2017).⁵ Taiwanese transnational companies and business communities also play an important role in Taiwan's economic diplomacy. For instance, export of capital is a way how to strengthen Taiwan's ties with countries receiving its capital investments. The export of capital has been one of the successful ways Taiwan elevates bilateral relations to a higher footing. As Timothy Ka-Ying Wong (1999) points out, with the growing bilateral economic and trade relations both the Taiwan's government and the government engaged in economic activities with Taiwan gradually agree on mutual conveniences that often result in the establishment of representative offices or granting of certain rights and privileges that only formal diplomats are given.

⁵ Among the most prominent Taiwan's NGOs there is for instance the Red Cross Society of the Republic of China (Taiwan) (中華民國紅十字會) or the religious NGOs, such as Fo Guang Shan (佛光山慈悲基金會) and Tzu Chi Foundation (慈濟基金會).

From the available literature on economic diplomacy it is thus possible to understand how actor states engage in economic diplomacy. Rather few of the works, however, elaborate on the perspective of the target states. For the purpose of this thesis' research it was of particular relevance to incorporate the approach towards economic diplomacy of a target state as well. Despite the contribution of Tubilewicz's books on Taiwan's diplomatic activities in Central Europe, the information on the case of Taiwan's economic diplomacy adopted on Slovakia still remains rather limited. This major gap in the literature could be perhaps explained as a result of an insufficient awareness about Taiwan in the Slovak society. The following chapters of this thesis therefore aim to address this flaw and contribute to the academic debate on the topic.

2.4 Analytical Framework

In order to answer this thesis research questions (*How did Slovakia respond to the Taiwanese economic inducements in Central Europe in the 1990s? and What were the specific reasons that led Slovakia to be the last Central-European country to establish the representative office with Taiwan?*), this thesis adopts the perspective of economic diplomacy and the framework suggested by Czeslaw Tubilewicz on the case of Taiwan's relation with Central and Eastern European countries (Tubilewicz, 2007). Tubilewicz's research explains Taiwan's diplomatic accomplishments or failures from the perspective of asymmetrical interdependent relationship between Taiwan as a potentially dominant state and the recipients of Taiwan's economic favors. The asymmetrical interdependence can be established by means of trade volume, foreign direct investments or foreign aid that puts the dominant state in a position that it has the power of influencing the dependent state's policies so that these become consistent with the policy preferences of the dominant state. The framework thus evaluates whether Taipei attempted to form, or successfully formed an asymmetrical interdependence with the target states and is therefore helpful to evaluate the Slovak-Taiwanese relations in the 1990s.

Following Tubilewicz's definition, we could assume that the asymmetrical interdependence between Taiwan and Slovakia would result from Taiwan's capacity to form a relationship with Slovakia that is characterized by some degree of Slovakia's economic vulnerability with regards to Taiwan, whether in terms of trade,

aid or investment. In this relationship, Taiwan is in a position to influence Slovakia's policies to the extent that these become consistent with Taiwan's policy preferences. The study assumes that, without Taiwan's influence efforts, Slovakia would think preferable political relations with China rather than with Taiwan (Tubilewicz, 2007).

In Tubilewicz's study on Taiwan's economic diplomacy in Central Europe, the analytical framework incorporates concepts such as dependent relationship, generosity, disbursements, economic effectiveness of assistance, economic cooperation, domestic politics, feasibility of diplomatic objectives, and the China factor (Tubilewicz, 2007). Some key changes in the proposed analytical framework include the decision of limiting the factors resulting in asymmetrical interdependent relationship on the economic sphere, i.e. as mentioned above the trade volume, foreign direct investments and foreign aid. For this purpose, trade volume and foreign direct investments will be categorized as "economic cooperation". In a similar fashion, this thesis chooses to categorize "generosity", "disbursement" and "economic effectiveness of assistance" as sub-categories of the concept "economic assistance" for practical reasons.

Other changes include removing the concept "feasibility of diplomatic objectives". This is because the researcher believes the opening of the representative offices between Taiwan and Slovakia can be considered a feasible diplomatic objective of Taiwan's foreign policy. Especially given the diplomatic missions already present in the neighboring central European countries and their obvious character of unofficial representation.

Finally, this study proposes to include to the analytical framework the concept of "the EU membership". This is because the researcher assumes that the EU membership played the role of a leading force for Slovakia's economic reforms and promotion of favorable conditions for the opening of the mutual offices with Taiwan.

The asymmetrical interdependence in the framework adopted for this thesis will be measured on the degree of mutual economic cooperation between Taiwan and Slovakia and the level of economic assistance provided from Taiwan to Slovakia.

It is assumed that the success of Taiwan's economic diplomacy being translated into political ends further depends on conditions such as 1) the target's state domestic politics, 2) if located in Europe its EU membership, and 3) the China factor.

- **Economic cooperation**

Taiwanese transnational companies and business communities play an important role in Taiwan's economic diplomacy. For instance, export of capital is a way how to strengthen Taiwan's ties with countries receiving its capital investments. The export of capital has been one of the successful ways Taiwan elevates bilateral relations to a higher footing. As Timothy Ka-Ying Wong points out, with the growing bilateral economic and trade relations both the Taiwan's government and the government engaged in economic activities with Taiwan gradually agree on mutual conveniences that often result in the establishment of representative offices or granting of certain rights and privileges that only formal diplomats are given (Wong, 1999). However, in order to establish a certain level of interdependence, it is important to keep in mind that dependence on Taiwan as an export market, rather than an import market, brings higher chances of conformity with Taiwanese foreign policy objectives. Even if the target state's export is not dependent on the Taiwanese market, its trade surplus with Taiwan should make it susceptible to meet at least some of Taiwan's political demands (Tubilewicz, 2007).

- **Economic assistance**

Tubilewicz (2007) assumes that "greater generosity is more likely to achieve policy goals." Therefore, in order to establish and maintain relations by means of asymmetrical interdependence, it would be in Taiwan's interest to offer the target state generous economic incentives and/or rewards. However, it is assumed that negotiable grants or soft loans are more likely to stimulate target state's interest rather than aid conditional on Taiwanese exports or granted for specific reasons (Tubilewicz, 2007).

- **Domestic politics**

From the perspective of the political environment, it is assumed in Tubilewicz's study (2007), that "states with governing parties leaning to the left would be more likely to treasure friendship with communist China than states where the ruling elites are oriented towards the right of center in the ideological spectrum." Thus while the leftist leaders would prioritize a smooth dialogue assuring China's diplomatic support and accessing to its growing market, by analogy, state leaders with human rights and democratic values on their main agendas would be expected to show support to Taiwan (Tubilewicz, 2007).

- **EU membership**

The prospect of the EU membership for the Central-European post-communist countries is believed to have played a major role in propelling the governments to adopt market reforms and open up their economies in order to catch up with and adjust to international standards. As a consequence, the willingness to accept Taiwan's economic incentives would be more likely higher from governments wishing to attract foreign investors and business partners. The already existent economic cooperation between the EU and Taiwan could have had especially facilitated otherwise cautious approach of the target states in official relations with China.

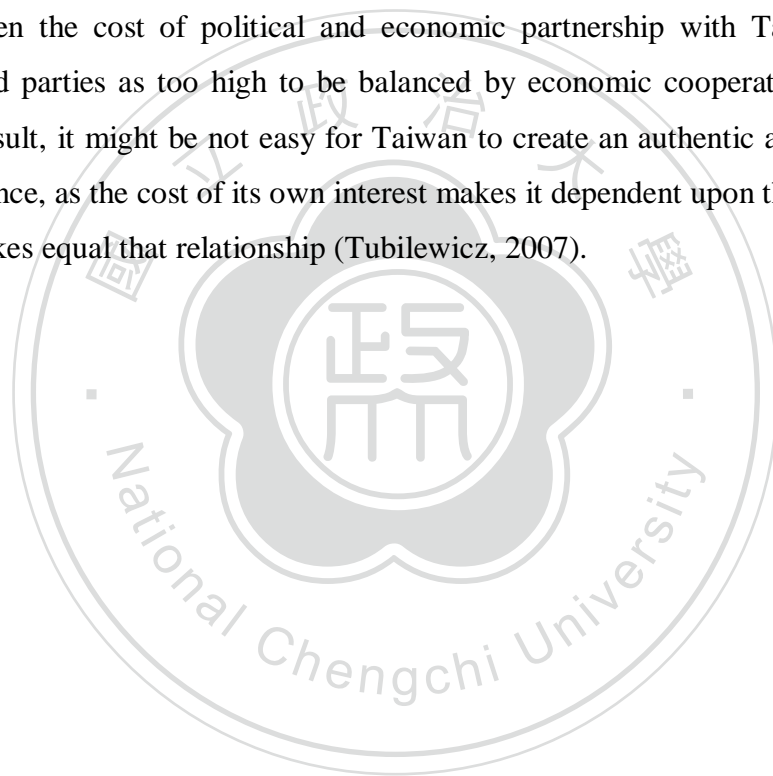
While the aspiration for the EU membership could have had positive impact on the perception of Taiwan as an attractive economic partner, it indeed added to the target state's value as well. Expanding its market in the EU represented substantial advantage for Taiwan. Especially attractive was the ideal location, a solid industrial base, low wage costs and a skilled labor force (我國設立駐斯洛伐克代表處記者會紀要, 2003). Therefore, Taiwan would presumably offer generous incentives to countries whose membership in the EU was secured.

From the political aspect, the EU membership is believed to be providing constant direct pressure for an acceding state to introduce and adopt democratic rules and procedures, civil and other rights and lead thus to its transformation into a highly developed country when it comes to economic development, institutions and the quality of governance (Javorcik, Kaminski, 2004). In this sense, adhering to the EU

fundamental values, such as the promotion of democracy and human rights, could have provided foundations for cooperation with a likeminded country such as Taiwan.

- **The China factor**

There is no doubt that cross-Strait relations are of significant importance to Taiwan's economic relations with foreign partners. Whether countries are willing to engage in negotiations on economic agreements with Taiwan depends to a high extent on the existence of similar agreements between Beijing and Taipei. The activities of Taiwan's economic diplomacy are thus largely restricted by China (Okano-Heijmans, Wit, van der Putten, 2015). Moreover, as a result of China's diplomatic and economic pressure, often the cost of political and economic partnership with Taiwan might result to third parties as too high to be balanced by economic cooperation with the island. As result, it might be not easy for Taiwan to create an authentic asymmetrical interdependence, as the cost of its own interest makes it dependent upon the target and therefore makes equal that relationship (Tubilewicz, 2007).



3. The almost non-existent Slovak-Taiwanese Relations (1993-2003)

This chapter follows the analytical framework adopted for this thesis and analyzes the degree of the asymmetrical interdependence relationship between Taiwan and Slovakia. It helps to understand the character of the relations between the two countries and analogically leads us to find the reasons behind the late opening of the diplomatic missions. The factors that need to be taken in to account when determining whether there was any asymmetrical interdependent relationship between Taiwan and Slovakia in the years before the opening of the representative offices, i.e. from 1993 to 2003 are: 1) The economic cooperation and 2) Taiwan's economic assistance.

The factors that are further taken into consideration in order to explain the success or failure of the asymmetrical interdependent relationship are: 1) the target state's domestic politics, 2) its EU membership, and 3) the China factor.

3.1 Economic cooperation between Taiwan and Slovakia (1993-2003)

In order to determine whether there was an asymmetrical interdependent relation based on the economic cooperation between Taiwan and Slovakia prior the opening of the diplomatic missions, we have to take in consideration several factors as suggested by the analytical framework. These factors are: investments coming from Taiwan to Slovakia and bilateral trade volume, where Slovakia's dependence on Taiwan as its main export market brings higher chances for a successful interdependent relationship.

As for the investments, it is obvious that Taiwan invested in Slovakia only after the opening of the representative offices. A significant influx of Taiwanese investments to Slovakia began with the arrival of Delta Electronics in 2006. Other important Taiwanese investors in Slovakia, such as Foxconn, AU Optronics, and ESON followed briefly after (SECO Taipei, 2017).

Similar situation could be observed in trade relations, where the statistical data show that the turnover of trade between Slovakia and Taiwan remained consistently very low compared to other central European countries that were showing growing numbers in bilateral trade figures with Taiwan. The total trade turnover between Taiwan and Slovakia prior the opening of the representative office in 2003 compared to the turnover from the year 1993 actually raised only by more than 10% whereas for instance in case of the Czech Republic this value in the same year increased up to 112%. Hungary's total trade turnover growth reached more than 242% (See Figure 1). These data once again show that regarding Central Europe's economic cooperation with Taiwan, Slovakia was a regional exception. The absence of a Taiwan's representative office only accentuated this phenomenon.

TIME PERIOD: 2003/01 - 2003/12

COUNTRY_NAME	TOTAL TRADE(re-imports & re-exports included)			EXPORT+re-exports			IMPORT+re-imports			SURPLUS/DEFICIT(re-imports & re-exports included)		
	1993	2003	GROWTH RATE(%)	1993	2003	GROWTH RATE(%)	1993	2003	GROWTH RATE(%)	1993	2003	GROWTH RATE(%)
	01-12			01-12			01-12			01-12		
Visegrad 4	616.92	952.09	54.330	178.92	770.61	330.706	438.00	181.48	-58.567	-259.08	589.13	-327.392
CZECH REPUBLIC	156.86	332.49	111.968	48.11	48.11	483.141	108.75	51.97	-52.216	-60.65	228.56	-476.863
HUNGARY	87.63	299.80	242.125	69.99	69.99	253.175	17.64	52.61	198.278	52.35	194.58	271.670
POLAND	372.04	279.45	-24.888	60.47	60.47	260.876	311.58	61.24	-80.344	-251.11	156.97	-162.508
SLOVAKIA	0.39	40.34	10,335.824	0.35	0.35	6,858.239	0.03	15.66	49,122.777	0.32	9.03	2,695.646

SOURCE:DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CUSTOMS, MINISTRY OF FINANCE, ROC

REMARKS: --- MEANS NO DATA IS AVAILABLE OR DATA CANNOT BE REPRESENTED NUMERICALLY

Figure1. Yearly Comparison of ROC imports & exports by continent (area)

It seems that the existence of the diplomatic missions in the other countries of the region (Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic) facilitated negotiation on economic matters and provided both sides with a communication platform. After the separation of Czechoslovakia in 1993, the representative offices opened between Taiwan and Czechoslovakia officially limited their activities to the relations between the Czech Republic and Taiwan. The Taiwanese Office in Prague monitored to an extent the Slovak economic development and the economic opportunities (Interview,

2019) however, this was not enough to provide a sufficient support for the communication between Taiwan and Slovakia. Therefore, the absence of such an institution rendered the chances for mutual trade with Slovakia and other forms of economic cooperation even less favorable. That is to say, the major gap in Slovakia's trade cooperation with Taiwan in comparison with the other three countries in the region could have been to an extent determined by the absence of a diplomatic mission. The existence of such an institution would have probably positively affected the economic exchange rate between Taiwan and Slovakia in the 1990s.

However, as Tubilewicz (2007) points out, the opening of a representative office was often the result of a successful strategy of Taiwan's economic diplomacy. In other words, this kind of diplomatic achievements was often the outcome of asymmetrical interdependent relationship that Taiwan managed to establish with its target state. Judging from the absence of a substantial economic cooperation between Taiwan and Slovakia, it seems that this kind of relationship was difficult to establish. Further research is necessary in order to understand the reasons behind this situation.

3.2 Taiwan's economic assistance to Slovakia (1993-2003)

The framework assumes that generous economic assistance most likely has the power to stimulate target's state allegiance. There is no available data that would suggest that Taiwan economically assisted Slovakia prior the opening of the representative offices. However, there is information that shows that Taiwan economically assisted Central Europe as a whole, which if generous enough could have equally motivated Slovakia to consider economic partnership with Taiwan.

Taiwanese aid provided to Central European countries was not defined as official development assistance (ODA; targeting developing states) or official assistance (OA; targeting post-communist states), but rather broadly as concessional transfers of economic resources. These included cash grants, soft loans, infrastructure contracts and investments, technical assistance, supplies of goods (from medicines to computers to helicopters), technical assistance, humanitarian relief, technical training, politically motivated imports and promises of investments (Tubilewicz, 2007).

Taiwan for instance assisted the region in collaboration with the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in 1991, when a fund was established to contribute to several projects in Central Europe (MOFA ROC, 2003). Similarly, in 1994, Taiwan through IECDF contributed USD 20 million to co-finance EBRD investment projects across post-communist Europe (Tubilewicz, 2007). However, as Tubilewicz points out, the Taiwanese contribution constituted only a small part among the EBRD investment, and almost 60 per cent of the fund was spend on regional rather than country-specific projects. Therefore, the multilateral aid did not stimulate the target states to comply with Taiwan's foreign policy requests and it became very soon evident that Taiwan's cash grants or humanitarian relief were small, while aid was provided in form of soft loans with an unknown grant element. The contrast between the actual economic assistance and the aid projects that Taiwan widely advertised became obvious in the cases of aid packages allocated to Macedonia and Kosovo. This drew attention to the limited economic benefits resulting from political partnership with Taiwan (Tubilewicz, 2007).

Moreover, Taiwan opted to make the actual disbursement conditional upon the target's state fulfillment of the political conditions, which rendered the process of establishing new relations not easy (Tubilewicz, 2007). Slovakia's allegiance in the 1990s was yet to be proven. Thus it seems, at least according to the available data, that Taiwan started providing Slovakia with substantial economic and humanitarian aid only after the opening of the diplomatic mission.⁶ The absence of economic assistance from Taiwan to Slovakia prior the opening of the diplomatic missions suggest that economic assistance was not a tool that would help Taiwan to create an asymmetrical interdependent relationship with Slovakia.

3.3 The absence of favorable conditions

As it has been previously mentioned, Slovakia was the last Central European country to institutionalize its relations with Taiwan by means of a diplomatic mission.

⁶ After the opening of the representative office in Slovakia, Taiwan has been actively involved in providing assistance in fields such as education, health care, charity, science and culture. The account on the activities can be found on the official website of the office <https://www.roc-taiwan.org/sk_en/>

This statement would not necessarily mean anything unusual given the fact that Slovakia has come into being after the separation of Czechoslovakia and the offices opened with the former Czechoslovakia remained after 1993 under the administration of the Czech Republic. The author's curiosity however, results from the delay of more than ten years that took Slovakia and Taiwan to agree on the mutual opening of the representative offices. Slovakia is in this aspect a singular case among the other three Central-European countries. These opened their offices few years after Taiwan established the first contacts with the region through its economic diplomacy.⁷

This delay is especially striking given Taiwan's interest to expand its relations with all the Central European countries Slovakia included (Interview, 2019). Taiwan's strategy of people to people relations and economic diplomacy apparently did not find a fertile ground in Slovakia. In which aspect did the country differ from its neighbors that might have resulted in the tardy development of the bilateral relationship? Did actually Slovakia's domestic politics or its relations with China play any relevant role? Closer look on these factors is necessary in order to provide an explanation.

3.3.1 Slovakia's domestic politics (1993-2003)

According to the framework adopted for this thesis, when analyzing the factors relevant for Taiwan's economic diplomacy's successful establishment of a dependent relationship, it is necessary to take into consideration the ideological agenda of the ruling elites in the target state. The framework's theory assumes that the pro-democratic and pro-human rights oriented leaders would express support to Taiwan, rather than leaders who disregard such values and thus give priority to a stable diplomatic relationship with China (Tubilewicz, 2007).

This was the case for instance in the Czech Republic, where a moral support represented by the liberal values of the President Václav Havel was the leading force of Taiwan-Czech relations. As Tubilewicz points out, it was mostly the shared anti-communist convictions rather than economic considerations that bound Taiwan and the Czech Republic's friendship (Tubilewicz, 2007). Havel offered international

⁷ Hungary opened its ROC's representation in 1990, Czechoslovakia followed in 1991 and Poland established the office in 1992.

support to Taipei several times by having repeatedly expressed support for the ROC joining the UN (1994, 1996) or having publicly recognized the existence of two Chinas (1995). Havel also acted unconventionally by having officially welcomed the Taiwanese delegation headed by Premier of Taiwan Lien Chan 連戰 (1996), and by having openly announced during the visit of the Chinese delegation headed by Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen 錢其琛 that Taiwan is a political reality which cannot be ignored (Tubilewicz, 2007).

Similarly, Poland's foreign policy was building on its own experience with totalitarian regime and often openly criticized China for violating human rights. Moreover, Poland was the only nation in Central-Eastern Europe that in 1989 demonstrated against the Chinese intervention in the Tian'an men protests (Gregušová, 2005). Poland's president Lech Walesa, who was an anti-communist activist, stood with Taiwan and even had the intention to promote relations with Taiwan to official level by visiting the island in his official capacity (Tubilewicz, 2007). Although the Polish-Taiwanese relations were left to unofficial level, Walesa visited Taiwan few times and participated in the presidential and vice presidential inauguration ceremonies of 1996 and 2000 and remained one of the most vocal European supporters of Taiwan (MOFA Taiwan, 2007). As a result, Prague and Warsaw saw the particular benefits of good relations with Taiwan, as both registered a trade surplus with Taiwan in the early 1990s (Tubilewicz, 2007).

Slovakia's case was rather different. After the separation of Czechoslovakia, the constitution adopted together with the declaration of independence and national sovereignty, paved the way for parliamentary democracy in Slovakia. However, the quest of independence, the task of creating a new nation and the legacy of communism that weakened the Slovak civil society as well as the uncertainties resulting from the economic, social, and political changes gave rise to a nationalistic government (Fisher, 2006). The first post-independent government of Slovakia was led by Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar. Mečiar's followers were former supporters of communism and of the wartime state's Slovak People's Party that advocated 'national emancipation'. Similar alliance did not exist in neighboring Central European countries (Szomolányi, 2003).

Except a few months break in 1994⁸, Mečiar dominated Slovakia's politics until 1998. His government was known as a quasi-authoritarian and repressive leadership, attracting attention abroad for its anti-democratic restrictions on freedom of the press, connection with organized crime, undemocratic concentration of power in the cabinet and nepotism (Bertelsmann Transformation Index 2003). Alarming was also the resurgence of anti-Semitism, continuing nostalgia for Slovakia's fascist past and discrimination of national minorities (Goldman, 1999). Some experts even claim, that Slovakia was getting closer to a model, where an early post-totalitarian regime transforms to "a successor regime that is likely to be authoritarian or controlled by leaders who have emerged from the previous regime" (Linz and Stepan, 1996 in Szomolányi, 2003)

Despite Slovakia's official claims to adhere to the principles of the Western community, any signs of a value-oriented diplomacy as a leading force of foreign relations was absent during the leadership of Prime Minister Mečiar, whose interest in partnership with Russia often made the international community doubt his commitments (Goldman, 1999).

It seems understandable that under the undemocratic conditions, backwardness and discontinuity it was unlikely for Slovakia to develop an interest for Taiwan's situation and foster a sentiment of solidarity and activism. By 1998, Slovakia was too absorbed into its domestic violations of moral principles to find energy to introduce a moral stance in its foreign policy and support a small and barely familiar East-Asian country in the Pacific Ocean. Štefanec (Interview, 2019), the president of the Slovak-Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce, similarly argued that "the political situation in the home country set limits on establishing new partnerships." In the specific case of Slovakia, Štefanec also believes that,

"The political situation in the 1990s characterized by criminalization of the state, struggle against authoritarianism, economic crisis and the search for its own European identity prevented small Slovakia from dealing with relations with selected countries in East Asia. In the 1990s, the Czech Republic with a stronger tradition, a much more experienced diplomatic apparatus and, in particular, a more

⁸ In 1994, Mečiar was unseated as prime minister by the parliament and a new government under the leadership of Jozef Moravčík was created by the opposition parties. However, the elections held at the turn of September and October 1994 saw Mečiar's HZDS victory and he was thus reappointed prime minister again.

straightforward democratic development successfully established relations with Taiwan.”

Similarly, Taiwanese diplomats (Interview, 2019) pointed out, that during the government of Mečiar, it was difficult to establish connection with Slovak diplomacy. However, negotiations became much smoother after the 1998 transfer of power.

In the election campaign of 1998 a broad left-right coalition of five opposition parties (KDH, DU, DS, SDSS, and SZS) formed a single movement, the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK) led by Mikuláš Dzurinda. Eventually, by taking part in the elections, the movement achieved the transfer of power in which Mečiar’s authoritarianism lost control. The result of the 1998 parliamentary elections was thus a radical turning point in the political orientation of the country. The newly elected government committed to defend Slovakia’s foundations for democratization and consolidation as well as lead the country to its integration and membership in NATO and the EU (Bertelsmann Transformation Index 2003).

Eventually, Slovakia’s way towards democratic consolidation was strengthened by the 2002 parliamentary elections. With the center-right coalition of the Slovak Democratic and Christian union (SDKU), the Hungarian Coalition Party (SMK), the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) and the New Citizen’s Alliance (ANO) Slovakia got rid of the extreme nationalists and moved towards a ‘consensus of fundamental values’ reflected mostly in the sphere of foreign policy (Szomolányi, 2003).

The shift from Mečiar’s repressive administration towards a Western-valued oriented Dzurinda’s leadership marked a different approach in the Slovak-Taiwanese relations as well. According to Taiwanese diplomats, negotiations with Slovakia became much easier after Mečiar’s departure from the government. The post 1998 administration seemed to be more open-minded, which showed on the proactive approach of some Slovak diplomats (Interview, 2019). Instrumental in promoting the establishment of bilateral representative offices in 2003 and a long-term supporter of the development of relations between Slovakia and Taiwan was the then Vice Foreign Minister of the Slovak Republic Milan Tancár. Marián Tomášik, who served as the director of the Asia and the Pacific Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs also actively advocated substantive cooperation between the ROC and Slovakia (Office of the President, Republic of China (Taiwan), 2015). The framework’s assumptions

regarding the leadership's ideological orientation thus seem to be proving relevant in case of the Slovak-Taiwanese relations. It is obvious that the fundamental basis for rapprochement between Taiwan and Slovakia were laid during the administration of Dzurinda, i.e. the leadership the helped Slovakia to comply with the Western international standards and achieve its membership in important international institutions, such as the EU and NATO.

3.3.2 Slovakia's EU membership (1993-2003)

Slovakia's EU membership could have played an important role in accelerating the rapprochement between Taiwan and Slovakia before the opening of the representative offices. In particular, it is believed that Slovakia's complying with the EU standards for economic performance and democratic governance could have eventually led to mutual interests between Taiwan and Slovakia. However, as it was suggested above, although the EU membership was commonly pursued by all the post-communist central European countries, Slovakia's post-independent development did not always suggest so.

From the signature of the Europe Agreement in March 1992, it is obvious that the Czechoslovak Government, which was formed in 1990, committed itself to the European integration. As a new country, Slovakia sought legitimacy, security and trade relations to ensure its survival. In order to avoid international isolation, similarly with Taiwan Slovakia needed support of the international community. An ideal solution for Slovakia was to join the EU and NATO. Slovakia formulated its policy towards the European Union in its program of January 1995. The document stated that the membership of Slovakia in the EU was among its foreign policy priorities; and emphasized its commitment to implement fully the Europe Agreement, to conform its legislation and standards to those of the EU, to prepare for entry into Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and to proceed with full trade liberalization (Agenda 2000, 1997).

The Memorandum accompanying Slovakia's application to the EU stated: "The strategic objective of the Slovak Republic is to become a full-fledged member in the EU within the time horizon around the year 2000. The Slovak Republic wishes to

join the EU as an equal member actively contributing to the advantageous multifaceted cooperation.” (Agenda 2000 - Commission Opinion on Slovakia’s Application for Membership of the European Union, 1997). According to the resolution on accession of Central and Eastern European countries to the EU issued by the European Council in Copenhagen in June 1993, a country’s accession was going to be approved once the country was able to assume the obligations of membership by satisfying the economic and political conditions. The conditions were as follows:

- “that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities;
- the existence of a functioning market economy, as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union;
- the ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union” (Agenda 2000, p. 125, 1997).

However, the 1994 elections that brought Mečiar back to power predetermined a difficult path for Slovakia towards the membership. The impact of Mečiar’s style of politics gradually led to political regression and to Slovakia’s departure from the promising Central European style of transition that was characteristic for its three neighboring countries: the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland (Szomolányi, 2003).

Mečiar’s increasingly populist, nationalist and authoritarian style jeopardized Slovakia’s democracy and rule of law. His actions suggested an obvious priority given to reinforcing his position by non-democratic means instead of his stated aim for Western integration (Agenda 2000, 1997). Mečiar’s government often infringed constitutional principles, disregarded decisions by the constitutional court, and severely undermined the functioning of the constitutional court, as well as the office of the president (Bertelsmann Transformation Index, 2003). Substantial were also the issues between the government and civic institutions, as well as the government’s approach and policies towards national minorities. Public institutions were abused by politicians for their own personal purposes, and freedoms of opinion and the press were restricted by repressive measures (Bertelsmann Transformation Index, 2003).

When it comes to market economy, the institutional basis for free-market competition was weak due to the manipulation of the privatization program to benefit government sympathizers. Similarly, the banking system lacked independence from political influences as loans were often granted based on personal relationships or political influence.

It is therefore evident, that Slovakia under Mečiar's rule failed to meet the preconditions for the first wave of EU and NATO integration as a result of personal interests of the leaders over the national interests (Szomolányi, 2003). As a result, Slovakia's application to the EU was rejected in 1997, when the EU parliament issued a statement affirming that,

“Slovakia does not fulfill in a satisfying manner the political conditions set out by the European Council in Copenhagen, because of the instability of Slovakia's institutions, their lack of rootedness in political life and the shortcomings in the functioning of its democracy” (Agenda 2000, 1997).

However, following the 1998 Slovak elections, the European Parliament adopted a resolution that congratulated Slovakia on the results of the national elections calling it ‘a significant political change’. The resolution called on the incoming Slovak government “to give absolute priority to the establishment of a political system that fully respects human rights and the rights of minorities, democracy and the rule of law” (European Parliament, 2000). It further appealed on the Council and the Commission to monitor the new political situation in Slovakia and to reassess its fulfillment of the political criteria for membership of the European Union (European Parliament, 2000).

Subsequently, in the Regular Reports to the Council submitted on further progress achieved towards accession by each candidate country the Commission concluded that, thanks to the changes introduced since September 1998, Slovakia fulfilled the Copenhagen political criteria (European Parliament, 2000). In 2001, the Slovak government issued its Report on the preparedness of the Slovak Republic for the EU membership that stated that government's objective is to catch up with the other neighboring Visegrad group countries in order be able to join the EU at about the same time (Government Office of the Slovak Republic, 2001).

Dzurinda's government proved its willingness to abide by the requirements of the EU, which showed on the progress in social and economic restructuring. This in turn further advanced Slovakia's attempts to enter alliances it had been trying to join

since independence. As Mesežnikov (2001) points out, “the entry of the Slovak Republic to the OECD in December 2000, and its invitation (extended in December 1999) to begin negotiations on full EU membership, were tangible fruit of these endeavors.” Eventually, Slovakia was invited to participate in the first wave of accession in 2004 and gained acceptance of the international community.

In relevance to the Slovak-Taiwanese relations, it appears obvious that Mečiar’s dubious attitude towards the EU membership failed to create economic and political conditions that would have facilitated negotiations between Taiwan and Slovakia. These were set only after the change of government in 1998, which brought as well the first substantial interactions between Taiwan and Slovakia. It is thus possible to assume, that the endeavors to obtain the EU membership activated the necessary conditions favoring as well the Slovak-Taiwanese relations.

3.3.4 The China factor (1993-2003)

China’s presence on the international sphere is of significant importance to Taiwan’s diplomatic relations. Whether a target country is willing to engage in any kind of negotiations with Taiwan usually depends to a major extent on the target state’s relations with China. The diplomatic pressure that China often exerts on its allies leads them to reconsider their position and the value of a potential relationship with Taiwan. The analytical framework therefore assumes that it is often difficult for Taiwan to create an asymmetrical dependent relationship, as the cost of its own interest depends to a major extent on the target state (Tubilewicz, 2007). In order to evaluate the degree of China’s influence on the Slovak-Taiwanese relations prior the opening of the representative offices, it is important to have a look first at the relations between Slovakia and China.

Slovakia as part of former Czechoslovakia first established relations with the Kuomintang regime on the mainland after the WW1. However, following the foundation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, an already communist Czechoslovakia was one of the first countries to acknowledge and establish official contact with this new Asian regime. Therefore, 1950s were marked by a relatively active cooperation between Czechoslovakia and China in fields as trade, technical

sectors and culture. The friendly relations were, however influenced by the split between China and the USSR, and the atmosphere started improving only in the late 1980s with the changes within the USSR itself. Yet the 1989 developments that on one hand saw the Chinese Communist Party suppressing social protests in the country, and on the other hand a systemic transformation in Czechoslovakia cooled the bilateral relations once again. Similarly, the subsequent division of the country in 1993 was not welcomed by the Chinese government, which itself was trying to suppress the domestic separatist tendencies (Fürst, 1989). Nevertheless, the independent Slovakia succeeded in the basic bilateral and multilateral contractual agreements of Czechoslovakia (Duleba, Lukáč, Wlachovský, 1998) and thus maintained diplomatic relations with the PRC.

In the 1990s, China was not the primary focus of the Slovak foreign policy and vice versa. This was mostly given as a result of Slovakia's low economic performance and its low international impact (Gregušová, 2005). Therefore, there was no significant cooperation between Slovakia and China during this period. However, the Slovak government opted for a non-confrontational dialogue with China disregarding the sensitive issues such as human rights or the 'one China' policy in order to maintain good relations with the growing economy. The importance of this partnership is proved by relatively high number of political visits occurring in this period (Gregušová, 2003).

Nonetheless, the economic partnership was not the only factor a young country such as Slovakia took into consideration in its foreign policy. China's rising political status and its UN membership to which Slovakia aspired were equally important elements that showed as too high to be balanced by economic gains from the ROC. Taiwan allegedly offered Slovakia 500 million USD in exchange of political or economic communication and it seems that the President Michal Kováč, the political opponent of Mečiar, appealed to the government to initiate economic or political dialogue with Taiwan (Tubilewicz, 2007). However, given Mečiar's predominance in the politics of Slovakia in the 1990s, it is not surprising that Taiwan eventually did not find support from the Slovak government.

On the contrary, Slovakia's efforts to please China intensified and the Parliamentary Friendship Group with the PRC was established in 1995. An official Slovak delegation to China that same year assured the Chinese government of its clear

stand towards the 'one China' policy and emphasized the importance of the partnership for Slovakia (Gregušová, 2005). Finally, President Kováč in 1996 assured the Chinese delegation that even though Bratislava did not exclude economic cooperation, the government did not plan to establish official relations with Taiwan (Tubilewicz, 2007).

According to the information available, it thus seems that despite the lack of substantial cooperation between China and Slovakia, it was the latter to willingly prioritize these relations. This reality would again only prove the assumptions that pragmatic leaders, such as Mečiar, would turn a blind eye on Taiwan and instead prefer to assure smooth relations with China and thus an easy access to its growing market (Tubilewicz, 2007). On the other hand, liberally oriented leaders are more likely to show support to Taiwan as it was seen on the case of the Czech Republic and Poland. Once Slovakia's political scene saw the departure of Mečiar, the economic cooperation with Taiwan gradually intensified. The new political atmosphere eventually brought several Slovak diplomats to show support to Taiwan.

3.4 Summary

The framework of this thesis was meant to determine whether there was an asymmetrical dependent relationship between Slovakia and Taiwan prior the opening of the diplomatic missions. The next step was to identify the factors that in the 1990s obstructed Taiwan's economic diplomacy's goal to establish substantial relations with Slovakia. The country, unlike the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary that opened their diplomatic missions with Taiwan in the early 1990s, followed their example only in 2003 becoming thus the nineteenth European country to do so (Tubilewicz, 2007).

From the above analysis it is obvious that the economic cooperation between Taiwan and Slovakia in the 1990s was almost non-existent. The lack of economic negotiations thus could not lead to an agreement on mutual conveniences that often result in the establishment of representative offices. According to the available data, it also seems that Taiwan did not provide Slovakia with generous economic incentives in form of humanitarian and economic aid needed at the time of the economic distress caused by the legacy of centrally planned economy and subsequently by the government's manipulation of the privatization program. These two factors only

prove the expected absence of an asymmetrical interdependent relationship between Taiwan and Slovakia prior 2003.

The analysis thus lead us back to the research questions of this thesis: *How did Slovakia respond to the Taiwanese economic inducements in Central Europe in the 1990s? What were the specific reasons that led Slovakia to be the last Central-European country to establish the representative office with Taiwan?*

That is to say, it was necessary to understand where could have Taiwan's economic diplomacy's efforts failed to build asymmetrical interdependence with Slovakia. The China factor proposed in the analytical framework should give light to the influence of the PRC on the matter of the Slovak-Taiwanese question. Were the relations with China too precious to be sacrificed for a friendly dialogue with Taiwan and thus predetermined the attitude of Slovakia towards Taiwan? Indeed, given the negligible economic relations with Taiwan, the cost of Slovakia's political and economic partnership with Taiwan might have appeared as too high compared to the value offered by smooth relations with China. However, as we could see, despite the official diplomatic relations between the independent Slovakia and China, the relations were not as fruitful to be regarded one of the Slovak foreign policy priorities. Moreover, the other countries in the region that similarly engaged in official relations with the PRC could at the same time enjoy the few advantages of the economic relations with Taiwan. China did exert diplomatic pressure on them (Tubilewicz, 2007), yet this did not prevent the Hungarian, Polish and the former Czechoslovak government to agree on the conditions for the opening of the unofficial representations. Why it did not work in case of Slovakia?

As we could see, the framework assumes that "states with governing parties leaning to the left would be more likely to treasure friendship with communist China than states where the ruling elites are oriented towards the right of center in the ideological spectrum" (Tubilewicz, 2007). Slovakia's government during most of the 1990s definitely did give importance to relations with China and from the ideological perspective obviously did not prioritize human rights and democratic values as important principles of its administration. Therefore, the government's attitude seems to be supporting the idea and explaining the lack of bilateral communication until 1998, when a new government took the lead of the country and signaled a new era not

only for Slovakia's relations with the West, but also for the Slovak-Taiwanese relations.

The sudden warming in the Slovak-Taiwanese relations obvious from 1998, when the first bilateral trade agreement was signed and resulted in the first wave of mutual trade negotiations suggest an important change in the development of the bilateral relationship. This change is somehow concurrent to the major political transition in Slovakia – the 1998 elections that saw the Mečiar's government defeat by a democratically and pro-EU oriented coalition led by Dzurinda. The administration of these two leaders had very different impact on Slovakia's development within the Central European region and on its route towards the EU and NATO membership. The acceptance to these international institutions, especially the EU, propelled Slovakia to conform to the Western international standards and catch up with its Central European neighbors. The opening of the representative offices with Taiwan was one of the aspects Slovakia needed to catch up with. So how did these important changes affect Slovakia's decision making towards Taiwan and what exactly were the conditions that previously lacked to provide a favorable environment for the opening of the mutual offices? From the above analysis results that the domestic politics and its impact on Slovakia's foreign policy seem to have played the major role in delaying the opening of a diplomatic mission between Taiwan and Slovakia. A further analysis is required in order to answer the thesis' research questions.

4. Convergence of Slovakia's and Taiwan's Interests

As Taiwanese officials engaged in relations with Slovakia argue, Taiwan was definitely interested into expanding its relations with all the Central European countries (Interview, 2019). It was however, difficult to engage into negotiations with Slovakia. The reasons mostly pointed out by concerned parties are Slovakia's inexperienced diplomatic apparatus as well as a delayed democratic and economic development. Moreover, all of these are stressed out in comparison with the other Central European countries. Indeed, it seems that Slovakia differed from its neighbors in many aspects that might have resulted in the tardy development of the bilateral relationship. Despite its cultural and historical affinities with the other countries in the region, its development in the aftermath of the 1989 democratic revolution took a rather deviant route. While Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were able to get in the first round of the Euro-Atlantic integration due to their successful reforms and democratic consolidation, Slovakia was known as the 'black hole of Europe'. This unflattering label resulted from an unstable and disturbing political development of the country.

As Szomolányi (2003) points out in her study on Slovakia's transition to a consolidated Central-European democracy, Slovakia had been identified as a puzzling example when it comes to its political development in the 1990s within the region it belongs to. While the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary followed a path generally heading toward political democracy, the rule of law, a functioning market economy, and an emerging civil society, Slovakia belonged to the category of development somewhere in between of "the one considered to be more troubled, which may be characterized by disrespect for the principles of constitutionalism, a tendency to centralize executive power, and movement towards the establishment of a powerful, oligarchic, property-owning class" (Duleba, 1997). The former one is referred to as the 'East Central-European', while the latter as the 'South Eastern' type of transition (Duleba, 1997). Slovakia after independence basically experienced all of the circumstances that transition research regards as 'the specific consolidation risks of post-communist countries'. These include ethnic heterogeneity, conflicts with minorities' problems with strong societal polarization and the existence of a strong anti-system party (Bertelsmann Transformation Index 2003). However, the reason

why Slovakia's political development and transition had been more difficult is generally agreed to be the complicated task of creating simultaneously a new nation, a new economic structure, and new legal and political institutions (Elster et al., 1998). This complicated transition environment seemed to make of Slovakia in the 1990s an exception among the Central European countries. As it was pointed out before, Slovakia's exceptionality in the region lies as well in the delayed opening of the representative offices with Taiwan. To which extent is the 'troubled' development of post-independence Slovakia relevant to the late establishment of the Slovak-Taiwanese diplomatic missions? The next section will attempt to provide the answer.

4.1 Slovakia's economic awakening

The Slovak-Taiwanese relations, as all of the substantive foreign relations of Taiwan, began with economic cooperation. This is because Taiwan's complex international position allows it only to rely on unofficial diplomacy and its successful economic development is an essential asset of it. Nonetheless, the analysis of the previous chapter shows that the Slovak-Taiwanese economic relations were delayed almost by ten years compared to the other Central European countries. This might have resulted from the delay in Slovakia's economic development itself, which as a consequence discouraged the foreign investors and it's therefore plausible to assume that it discouraged Taiwan as well. It is thus relevant for this research to understand how the Slovak-Taiwanese relations evolved on the background of Slovakia's economic development in the period of 1993 to 2003, i.e. before the opening of the trade offices with Taiwan.

With the decline of centrally planned economies in Central and Eastern Europe and the beginnings of a free-market system, Taiwan enterprises showed interest to enter the region's market and set up their operations. Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia seemed to be the countries with the greatest potential when it came to economic and political conditions, infrastructural development, and the level of risk (Taiwan Today, 1992). What especially attracted Taiwan was the ideal location, a solid industrial base, low wage costs and a skilled labor force (我國設立駐斯洛伐克代表處記者會紀要, 2003). To promote bilateral economic relations, Taiwan's public

and private sectors both organized several delegations to visit Eastern Europe. Moreover, to help Taiwan enterprises interested in entering the Central European market, a private organization called Taipei-based Central European Business Association of the ROC was founded in 1992 (Taiwan Today, 1992).

Before entering into economic partnership, economic reforms, a good legal framework and business infrastructure were qualities upon which Taiwanese businessmen and investors were looking. In this aspect, Hungary attracted more foreign businesses than any other nation in the region. The country's legal structure was more complete than in other former COMECON countries, and the telecommunications system and transportation were also more convenient than in other countries in the area. Besides, Hungary had tax laws that offered significant incentives for companies to invest in key industries such as electronics, vehicles and vehicle parts, machine tools, public telecommunication services, and tourism development. To boost bilateral trade, in 1990 Taiwan eventually set up the representative office in Budapest (Taiwan Today, 1992). As it has been already mentioned many times, Czechoslovakia and Poland followed a rather similar course of events and set up their offices in 1991 and 1992 respectively.

Unlike the other Central European countries, Slovakia after independence did not enjoy any of the conditions that would attract and motivate foreign and in particular Taiwan enterprises to enter its market. After the fall of the Soviet Union and communism itself, Slovakia with other post-communist countries was strongly undercapitalized. Companies borrowed money to repay back the old debts instead of buying new technologies or modernize. Adding to the difficult situation was the fact that, after the separation of Czechoslovakia, Slovakia not only had to build its own market economy but, at the same time, establish the institutions of an independent state. In order to gain access to loans, joining international monetary institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund was of a vital importance. However, Slovakia's prospects were not favorable, especially in contrast with its neighbor, the Czech Republic, where the industry better adapted to new conditions because after the split of Czechoslovakia it was more developed and competitive than Slovakia's. While the Czech Republic could rely on middle-sized production that could trade with neighbors from the European Union, Slovakia's production mostly depended on heavy and

defense industries with ineffective structure and thus failed to compete with rivals on the EU markets (Spectator, 2018). A much higher unemployment than in the Czech Republic, political instability and the absence of consensus on the path of economic reform hindered the transformation process and highly affected the development of Slovakia's economy (Agenda 2000 - Commission Opinion on Slovakia's Application for Membership of the European Union).

One of the ways to do away with the obstacles to economic growth and to introduce a free enterprise economy was adopting the so called privatization method. The Slovak government was under international pressure, especially from the European Community, the OECD and the World Bank to move forward in this area as it would provide Slovakia with chances of gaining membership in the international institutions and facilitate the integration with the Western market. However, privatization of the state enterprise proceeded rather slowly. The reason for that was that Mečiar favored an economic system somewhere between capitalism and socialism that included a substantial amount of state control and a very gradual rate of change (Goldman, 1999).

The government's self-serving management of Slovak privatization represented an important source of political patronage, yet it had several negative implications on Slovak economy. One of them was the very low foreign direct investment. Although Slovakia had low wage costs and a skilled labor force, its direct foreign investment in the early 1990s amounted to only about USD 620 million, which was about nine times less than the Czech's foreign investment and desperately far away from Hungary's USD 11 billion (Goldman, 1999). The main reasons for this seemed to be uncertainty of foreign community towards the commitment of the Slovak authorities towards market reform, political instability (Agenda 2000, 1997) and a larger actual openness of the economy (infrastructure of border crossings, customs duties and certificates) (Marcincin, Beblavy, 2000). Moreover, the Slovak government discriminated foreigners in most of the privatization process in favor of government officials, which called attention of the media (Spectator, 2019) and consequently produced a negative image of Slovakia. Slovakia's prime minister himself believed foreign money would discourage domestic entrepreneurs (Goldman,

1999).⁹ The unwillingness of giving up state control of ‘strategic’ companies, the cost of restructuring old and inefficient enterprises to make them saleable and a scarcity of foreign investment eventually made Slovakia lag behind its Central European neighbors in the percentage of GNP coming from the free sector (Goldman, 1999).

It is highly possible that the improper approach of the government towards Slovakia’s economic reforms not only curtailed the chances of cooperation with many foreign partners, but with Taiwan as well. After all, Taiwanese diplomats themselves affirmed that the impression that Slovakia after independence gave to Taiwan was that of a small and agricultural country. The contrast was especially big when comparing Slovakia with its neighbors, who were bigger and more skilled in banking, and international affairs (Interview, 2019). In other words, Slovakia simply did not provide attractive incentives as well as safe and favorable conditions that would stimulate the interest of foreign businesses and investors. Moreover, as Podstavek, the current SECO’s representative argues:

“In the 1990s, Slovakia was a great unknown to non-European partners, or perceived as just one of the regions of Czechoslovakia, which was logically identified with the Czech Republic and Prague. This of course was mainly due to poor self-promotion by the Slovak government and central authorities. Very few East Asian investors were so analytically savvy that they could estimate Slovakia's economic investment potential. It seems that even the Slovaks could not estimate it in the first half of the 1990s. Furthermore, East Asia had never before been an important economic partner for Slovakia and therefore there were no experts involved in the East Asian markets that could have facilitated the bilateral economic interactions.” (Podstavek, Interview, 2019).

When Mikuláš Dzurinda’s government took power in 1998 and introduced economic reforms, Slovakia finally made a leap forward. The reforms had immediate effects and as a result, Slovakia gained acceptance of the international community and was no more perceived as an “international pariah” (Pridham, 2001). Dzurinda’s government re-elected in 2002 adopted consistent economic policy, the implementation of liberal economic reforms, investor-friendly legislation and

⁹ As Goldman (1999) claims, this statement proved to be misleading given the poverty of most Slovaks, who anyway did not have chance to be small investors in the proposed new companies.

proactive measures towards the adoption of euro. This gradually made of Slovakia a model of successful economic transformation and one of the fastest developing countries in the European Union (Daborowski, 2009). In the 'Doing Business 2009' World Bank report, which assessed the conditions for, and legislation on business activity and foreign investments, Slovakia's conditions for economic activity ranked as the most favorable among all of its neighbors¹⁰ (World Bank, 2009 in Daborowski, 2009). Analysts see this being the result of the very favorable conditions that the Slovak government conferred to major foreign investors and the tax cuts and reliefs that were much deeper than in the neighboring countries (including Poland and the Czech Republic). As a result, large global companies, especially the automotive sector and electronic industry, chose Slovakia as an ideal location for investment and new factories (Daborowski, 2009). Asian investors such as Japan and Korea became increasingly interested in Slovakia and Taiwan followed their example as well (Podstavek, Interview 2019).

Taiwan got attracted by Slovakia's successful economic development as it can be seen from intensified economic interactions. In 1998, in attempt to deepen mutual trade contacts and learn from the example of the neighboring countries, Slovakia signed a trade agreement between the Slovak Commerce and Industrial Chamber (Slovenská obchodná a priemyselná komora, SOPK) and the China National Association of Industry and Commerce (中華民國工商協進會, CNAIC) (MOFA SK, Economic Information about Territory, Taiwan, 2016).¹¹ Subsequently, the activities accompanying the agreement and the Slovakia's upcoming membership in the EU eventually led to negotiations about the opening of the diplomatic missions with Taiwan in 2003. The offices eventually enabled the major flux of investments from Taiwan that began when Delta Electronics came to Slovakia in 2006. The other important Taiwanese investors that followed are Foxconn, AU Optronix and Eson (SECO Taipei, 2017).

¹⁰ Slovakia ranked 36th of the 181 states studied, compared to Hungary at 41st, the Czech Republic at 75th, Poland at 76th and Ukraine at 145

¹¹ The Slovak Commerce and Industrial Chamber served in the early years mainly as an official communication platform for economic diplomacy. In recent years, however, fruitful economic interactions and communication on ministerial level have been going on between Taiwan and Slovakia thanks to the Slovak-Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce.

4.2 EU membership: In favor of rapprochement

For Taiwan, relations with the EU are rather important. As a consequence of its lost seat in the UN (1971), Taiwan lost most of its formal diplomatic relations with the EU countries and the relations with the EU itself were completely interrupted. To regain support among the European countries and thus to counter its growing international isolation Taiwan relied on its successful economic development. During the 1990s, several Western European countries increased their economic cooperation with Taiwan as a result of its well established reputation of a key exporter of technology-intensive products. By 1991, 10 of the 12 EU member states had set up representative offices in Taipei (Chang, 2001). When it comes to trade with the EU, Taiwan was systematically in surplus until 1990. In that year, the total volume of trade between the ROC and Europe was US\$ 21,819 million, of which Taiwan's imports were US\$ 9,586 million, and exports US\$ 12,233 million, resulting in a surplus of US\$ 2,647 million. The growth rate was 17.9% over 1989. As Chang (2001) points out, "these statistics clearly indicated the significance of the EU market to Taiwan's trade."

When Taiwan targeted the Central European countries with its economic diplomacy, their commitment to access the EU only added on their value. Taiwan was motivated by the prospects of deepening its connections with the world third largest economic power by engaging in relations with its future Central European members. Their proximity to Western Europe, relatively cheap labor and developed infrastructure as well as the balanced economic growth and price stability with highly competitive market economy provided by their future EU membership were all attractive incentives to Taiwan (Tubilewicz, 2007).

With the government transition in 1998 not only the Slovak economy gradually improved but also Slovakia's international position changed. Its status on the EU waiting list moved from the "disqualified" to an "acceptable" candidate and Slovakia was subsequently invited to participate in the first wave of accession in 2004 (Javorcik, Kaminski, 2004). As Javorcik and Kaminski (2004) point out in their analysis on the EU factor's impact on Slovakia's globalization, there seems to be a consensus that accession to the EU had been the driving force of the process that enabled a fast and smooth integration of Slovakia in the international community. The

EU is therefore regarded as providing constant direct pressure for an acceding state to introduce and adopt democratic rules and procedures, civil and other rights and lead thus to its transformation into a highly developed country when it comes to economic development, institutions and the quality of governance (Javorcik, Kaminski, 2004). Similarly, Szomolányi argues that the EU conditionality was a very influential external factor on Slovakia's democratic consolidation as it led Slovak political elites to overcome the lack of consensus. "The common aspiration to EU membership has contributed to the gradual convergence of the formerly disunited national elite and in this way overcome a crucial historical obstacle on the path to consolidated democracy" (Szomolányi, 2003). This all, however, became possible only in the aftermath of the elections in 1998, because the broad ruling coalition led by Prime Minister Dzurinda refusing the "Eastern" image of an autarkic and self-sufficient national third-road for Slovakia" guided the country toward the Euro-Atlantic structures (Szomolányi, 2003).

4.3 The Slovakian (delayed) model of relations with Taiwan

With China's growing influence and its growing economic assistance in the world, Taiwan has to be constantly adapting its diplomatic strategy in order secure its position in the international sphere. During the President Chen Shui-bian's 陳水扁 administration (2000-2008), Taiwan's key identifier in the international community became democracy. Democratic values combined with economic diplomacy helped Taiwan to project a positive image abroad and maintain relations with likeminded countries (Larus, 2008). Slovakia's democratic consolidation in the early 2000s and its stabilization in the EU that shares similar values with Taiwan thus finally provided a framework for potential cooperation, and convinced Taiwan it is time to further expand its influence among the Central European countries (Interview, 2019). After all, in the aftermath of the government transition in 1998, Taiwan's relations with Slovakia obviously intensified.

From Slovakia's perspective, Taiwan's WTO membership (from 2002) set a new possibility to negotiate economic deals, i.e. by treating Taiwan as a customs union rather than as a sovereign entity (Winkler, 2007; Štefanec, Interview 2019). That is probably how Taiwan's accession to the WTO led the grounds for the opening

of the European Economic and Trade Office (EETO) in Taipei in March 2003 (Heijmans, Wit, van der Putten, 2015). This set example to Slovakia that heading towards integration with the West and aiming to economically catch up with its neighbors, started regarding Taiwan as a potential source of foreign direct investments (Štefanec, Interview 2019).

The competition between the Central European countries to convince Taiwanese to locate their firms within their territories eventually led Slovakia to acknowledge the necessity of opening a trade office with Taiwan. The Taipei Representative Office in Bratislava was set up in 2003, i.e. one year before Slovakia joined the EU. During the press conference announcing the opening of the diplomatic mission, the Taiwanese side declared the biggest advantage of the relations being the upcoming EU membership of Slovakia that will guarantee fast development of the country and provide Taiwan with a secure environment for trade and investment (我國設立駐斯洛伐克代表處記者會紀要, 2003). We might therefore conclude that the EU had been not only an external democratizing force providing consistent direct pressure for the transformation of an acceding backward Slovakia into a highly developed country but in a way also the driving force of the process that enabled the institutionalization of Slovak-Taiwanese relations.

With Slovakia's accession to the EU, its national interest became consistent with the common interest of the EU as a whole. That is to say, as the EU does not recognize Taiwan as a country but promotes trade and economic relationship with Taiwan, the bilateral relations between any EU member state and Taiwan can be limited only to this area. Slovakia's sudden turnabout in its relations with Taiwan can be thus explained as a result of a purely economic interest. For as Podstavek (Interview, 2019) pointed out, "For Slovakia, the Taiwanese investments were one of many that came from the world at that time. It is possible to assume, that Slovakia did not even pay attention to the origin of the investor, but the quality of the investment and the possibilities of cooperation."

The official rhetoric of the Slovak government's document on the foreign policy focus from 2004 only upholds to this assumption as it states: "*In relation to the Taiwan issue, Slovakia will continue to abide by the One China policy, yet at the same time advocate support of the Slovak-Taiwan cooperation in the field of economy and*

culture, which is acceptable to the PRC” (MZV a EZ SR, 2004). These statements were further reiterated in the official documents following the opening of the representative offices and more or less persist in all the of the government’s rhetoric.¹² That is to say, Slovakia remains cautious in its relations with China and limits its interactions with Taiwan purely to activities that cannot upset Beijing, such as economy, culture, education and research.

4.4 Development of Slovak-Taiwanese relations after the opening of the representative offices

After the opening of the offices in 2003, the Slovak-Taiwanese relations followed the standard pattern of development typical for relations between Taiwan and other European countries. Slovakia, in line with the EU's common foreign and security policy, maintains relations with Taiwan only through non-governmental bodies, recognizes Taiwan only as an economic and business entity (as it is a full WTO member), and as long as there are benefits for both sides, Slovakia also supports Taiwanese participation in international organizations (SECO Taipei, 2017). Given the unofficial character of the relations, contacts between Slovakia and Taiwan are limited mostly to investments or business missions meetings between government officials and Taiwanese investors operating in Slovakia. The most intensive cooperation between Slovakia and Taiwan is thus in the economic sphere. Taiwan is the second largest non-European investor in Slovakia after South Korea. Total Taiwanese investments in Slovakia reach nearly 445 million Euro¹³.

A significant influx of investment from Taiwan to Slovakia began in 2006 when Delta Electronics came to Slovakia. Other important investors to follow were Foxconn, AU Optronics, and ESON. However, this relationship had been unilateral for several years, as Slovak companies started to invest and operate in Taiwan only

¹² Slovakia’s consistence to the ‘one China’ policy was further shown at the time of the opening of the trade office in Bratislava, that was as expected accompanied by discontent of the PRC to which the Slovak government complied. The Chinese made sure that the offices only represent the capital cities and that the office in Bratislava does not display the official attributes of Taiwan - the flag and the coat of arms.

¹³ This is almost 10 times more compared to the 49 million of Euro of Chinese investments in last 16 years.

recently. The main areas of cooperation so far seem to be intelligent transport, cyber security, blockchain technologies and others (Podstavek, Interview 2019).

Taiwan is indeed Slovakia's valuable economic partner. As for Slovakia's role in this relationship, there is still room for improvement compared to the other countries in the region. In 2019, Slovakia is Taiwan's 59th biggest economic partner (while Poland is 39th, the Czech Republic 47th, Hungary 48th) and 19th largest economic partner in the European Union. The data show that the total bilateral trade has been experiencing a negative growth rate of almost 16%. This year the value of bilateral trade with Taiwan was USD 279.71 million (in 2018, USD 348.59 million), which means a drop of about 20% compared to the previous year. In 2018, Slovakia's exports to Taiwan were about USD 137.98 million while imports from Taiwan were about USD 210.61 million (Bureau of Trade, 2019). In bilateral trade with Taiwan, Slovakia exhibits a surplus of imports over exports, yet this phenomenon is typical for the trade relations of the whole EU with the countries of Southeast Asia. Chronic deficit results from the parameters of global division of labor and consumer preferences (SECO Taipei, 2017).

Slovak exports to the island consist of machinery, mechanical tools and electronic equipment, cars and vehicles, optical, photographic or cinematographic tools and plastic products. Taiwan's exports to Slovakia include machinery, mechanical and electronic equipment, optical and photographic apparatus and metal products. The most common Taiwanese brands importing to Slovakia are HTC, Acer, Acer, D-link, Giant, Merida (SECO Taipei, 2017).

A solid basis for cooperation and interaction between Taiwan and Slovakia in trade and economics, science and technology, as well as culture exists thanks to several significant bilateral agreements and memoranda of understanding. Especially productive were years 2011 and 2012, when the two countries signed various agreements and memoranda of cooperation. Among the most significant are the agreement for avoidance of double taxation; a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for cooperation on standards, metrology, and inspection; an agreement on cooperation in the field of e-government; an MOU between the Bureau of Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the ROC and the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic; and an MOU on mutual recognition of

driver's licenses. Slovakia and Taiwan also signed an MOU on youth working holidays.

Despite being only a small international actor, Slovakia's EU membership gives value to the support expressed for Taiwan in the international arena. Slovakia took action several times to support Taiwan's participation in international organizations. For instance, in 2014 Slovakia was the first country in the Eurozone to raise a resolution supporting visa-free travel for Taiwan nationals to the Schengen Area. In 2015, Slovakia also supported a proposal for a Taiwan-EU bilateral investment agreement (BIA) in a new EU trade strategy report proposed by European Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmstrom. Similarly, Slovakia actively engaged into promoting the negotiation and signing of an economic cooperation agreement (ECA) between Taiwan and the EU. In addition, the Slovak National Council's Committee on European Affairs in 2010 passed a resolution supporting Taiwan's participation in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In 2013, Slovak-Taiwanese Parliamentary Friendship Group called on the International Civil Aviation Organization to accept Taiwan's observer status (Office of the President ROC (Taiwan), 2015).

With regard to the significance of the bilateral relations, there are several advantages for Taiwan. By establishing substantial relations with Slovakia, Taiwan gained limited support for its attempts to re-enter intergovernmental organizations, means for arranging visits by high-ranking officials and conducting regular dialogue through government-to-government channels. It also successfully expanded its European market attracted by its processed goods and gained a source of raw materials from Taiwanese industry (Tubilewicz, 2007).

As for Slovakia, the most important gains resulting from its relations with Taiwan concern the economic partnership. As mentioned previously, Taiwan is the second largest non-European investor in Slovakia and its investments reach almost ten time higher figure than the investments coming from the PRC. However, Slovakia believes that it cannot ignore the strategic partnership with China, especially in the context of the current Chinese project One Belt One Road (OBOR). Therefore the country remains excessively cautious in its approach and communication with Taiwan. This caution, however, may unnecessarily reduce the potential that the Slovak-Taiwanese cooperation offers (Rejtová 2019). This is possible especially given the

evidence that “non-confrontational foreign policy towards the PRC does not guarantee greater economic benefits than a supportive policy for Taiwan and Tibet issues” (Furst, Pleschová, 2010). After all, this could be seen on the development of Taiwan’s relations with Slovakia’s neighbors in the 1990s, when as mentioned previously, active criticism of the PRC and friendly attitude towards Taiwan and Tibet did not reduce the countries’ chances to enjoy close economic cooperation with China. Slovakia has therefore space for improvement in order to make its relations with Taiwan equally convenient and fruitful for both sides.

List of bilateral agreements and memoranda (SECO, Taipei)

- Agreement on Scientific and Technical Cooperation and Research between the Slovak Academy of Sciences (Slovenská akadémia vied, SAV) and the National Science Council¹⁴ (國家科學委員會), signed in 1996.
- Memorandum of Understanding on Customs Cooperation between Taiwan Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance (財政部關務署) and Customs Administration of the SR (Colné riaditeľstvo SR), signed in 1998.
- Cooperation Agreement between Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Slovenská obchodná priemyselná komora, SOPK) and the Chinese National Association of Industry and Commerce (中華民國工商協進會), signed in 1998.
- Agreement on cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan (Republic of China), signed in 2004.
- Air Services Cooperation Agreement, signed in 2007.¹⁵

¹⁴ The National Science Council (NSC) became the Ministry of Science and Technology (科技部) on 3 February 2014.

¹⁵ Despite the agreement, there have not been any direct air services between Taiwan and Slovakia. The reason to this, as stated by a Taiwanese diplomat during an interview, seems to be the lack of connecting flights from Bratislava to other countries. It is therefore the international airport in Vienna that is in very close proximity to Bratislava that serves as a hub for China Airlines in the region.

- Memorandum of Cooperation in the Electrotechnical Industry between the Union of Electrical Engineering of the Slovak Republic (Zväz elektrotechnického priemyslu SR, ZEP) and the Taiwan Electrical and Electronic Manufacturers's Association (台灣區電機電子工業同業公會, TEEMA), signed in 2008.
- Memorandum of Cooperation between the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (Slovenská technická univerzita, STU) and National Science and Technology University of Taipei (國立臺灣科技大學), National Taipei University of Technology (國立臺北科技大學), and the Taiwan National SunYat-sen University (國立中山大學), signed in 2009.
- Memorandum of Cooperation between the Prešov University (Prešovská univerzita v Prešove) and Soochow University (東吳大學), signed in 2012.
- Memorandum of Cooperation between the Comenius University in Bratislava (Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave) and the National Sun Yat-sen University (國立中山大學), signed in 2010.
- Agreement between the Jessenius Medical Faculty in Martin (Jesseniova lekárska fakulta UK) and the Research Center for Biomedical Equipment (生醫器材研發暨產品試製中心) at Taipei Medical University (臺北醫學大學) signed in 2010 for five years.
- Agreement on Scientific Cooperation between the Slovak Academy of Sciences (Slovenská akadémia vied, SAV) and National Science Council (國家科學委員會, NSC) on the program of exchange of scientific workers working on a joint project, signed in 2010.
- Memorandum of Cooperation between the Taipei Medical University (臺北醫學大學) and the Jessenius Medical Faculty, signed in 2014 for five years.
- Memorandum of Cooperation of National Associations of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, signed in 2011.

- Memorandum of Cooperation between the Slovak-Taiwan Friendship Group in Slovakia and the Hsinchu Science Park (新竹科學工業園區), signed in 2011.
- Agreement on Cooperation between the Metrology and Standardization Offices, signed in 2012.
- Agreement to prevent double taxation and tax evasion in the field of incomes between The Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of China (Taiwan) (中華民國財政部), signed in 2011.
- Agreement on Cooperation in the Area of eGovernment between the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for the Information Society and the Research, Development, and Evaluation Commission, Taipei City Government (臺北市政府研究發展考核委員會), signed in 2012.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic and the Bureau of Consular Affairs (BOCA, 外交部領事事務局) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China (Taiwan), signed in 2012.
- Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Driving Licenses, signed in 2012.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Slovak Economic and Cultural Office in Taipei and the Taipei Representation Office, Bratislava on a Working Holiday Program, signed in 2014.
- Agreement on Science and Research Cooperation between The Slovak Economic and Cultural Office Taipei and the Taipei Representative Office, Bratislava, signed in 2015.
- Memorandum of Cooperation between the Technical University of Košice and Chung Hua University (中華大學) signed in November 2018.
- Agreement on Cooperation between the Čiernohronská Historical Railways and the Forestry Bureau of Taiwan (林務局) focusing on

cooperation in the field of historic railways and the promotion of tourism in Pohronie and Alishan, signed in December 2018.

- Memorandum of Cooperation between the University of Žilina (UNIZA) and the Institute for Information Industry in Taiwan (財團法人資訊工業策進會) in the area of cyber security, signed in March 2019.
- Memorandum between the Slovak Economic and Cultural Office in Taipei and the Taipei Representative Office, Bratislava (駐斯洛伐克台北代表處) on economic cooperation signed in April 2019.
- Memorandum of Cooperation between Comenius University and Soochow University (東吳大學) signed in July 2019.
- Letter of intent between the Slovak Economic and Cultural Office in Taipei and the Forestry Bureau of Taiwan (林務局), signed in May 2020.



4.5 Summary

Taiwan had made efforts since 1990s to establish relationship with all Central European countries and yet its economic diplomacy with Slovakia did not appear to be effective until the early 2000s. The important shift in the Slovak-Taiwanese relations development was concurrent with the major changes within Slovakia's domestic politics. With the change of government in 1998, Slovakia started gradually conforming to the Western European standards as well as gaining on market confidence as a result of the prospects of the EU membership. In other words, the differences previously existing between Slovakia and its Central European neighbors gradually ceased to exist. It was under these circumstances that the accords on the opening of the representative offices with Taiwan were negotiated. The major changes in Slovakia's post 1998 development thus suggest a possible correlation with the shift in Slovakia's decision making towards Taiwan as well as with Taiwan's own interest towards a partnership with this Central European country.

The development after the opening of the representative offices shows that Slovakia's relations with Taiwan follow the standard pattern of relations typical between Taiwan and other European countries. That means that Slovakia adhering to the EU's common foreign and security policy maintains *de facto* relations with Taiwan and engages in bilateral cooperation mainly in economic and cultural areas. Despite the relations being only of substantial character, they bring meaningful advantages to both sides, which can be seen on several important agreements. Moreover, Taiwan being Slovakia's second largest non-European investor by far overcomes scarce Chinese investments. On the other hand, Slovakia proves to be a valuable partner within the EU, where it speaks up for Taiwan in its fight for international support.

5. Conclusion

The analytical framework adopted for this thesis provided us with several factors that were supposed to evaluate whether in 1990s Taiwan was able to build an asymmetrical interdependent relationship with Slovakia and provide it thus with an incentive to follow its Central European neighbors and open the representative offices. The analysis was further meant to answer the thesis' research questions: *How did Slovakia respond to the Taiwanese economic inducements in Central Europe in the 1990s? What were the specific reasons that led Slovakia to be the last Central-European country to establish the representative office with Taiwan?*

Firstly, when we look at the economic cooperation between Taiwan and Slovakia, it becomes evident that an asymmetrical interdependent relationship built on economic partnership between these two countries did not exist in the 1990s. Taiwan, seeking to expand its international support, relied primarily to economic incentives in form of aid, investment and trade when targeting Central European countries. These were responsive to Taiwan's offers due to their uneasy economic situation resulting from decades of centrally planned economy. Slovakia shared the same experience, yet neither the loans nor the grants employed by Taipei's economic diplomacy in the region seem to have succeeded in stimulating Slovakia's foreign policy conformity. Given scant evidence, the reason behind this cannot be conclusively determined. However, it is possible to base some assumptions on the region's experience with Taiwan's humanitarian aid. By the time Slovakia emerged as an independent country (1993), all the other Central European countries have already entered into economic partnership with Taiwan. By then, as Tubilewicz claims, it was clear that Taiwan's cash grants or humanitarian relief were small, while aid relied primarily on soft loans with an unknown grant element. The contrast between the actually provided economic assistance and the promised aid projects was particularly obvious in the cases of aid packages of Macedonia and Kosovo. This served to remind the post-communist countries about the limited economic benefits resulting from political support for Taiwan (Tubilewicz, 2007). Moreover, as the author further points out, Taiwan found it difficult to construct an asymmetrical interdependent relationship relying primarily on its aid as its interests in persuading the recipients to become its partners was

greater than the recipient's interest in Taiwanese aid, which could have been substituted by China (Tubilewicz, 2007).

Given the absence of a dependent relationship between Taiwan and Slovakia based on the economic aid, it was necessary for this research to take into consideration other instruments employed by Taiwan's economic diplomacy in Central Europe, i.e. trade and investments. While these have convinced the other countries to interact with Taiwan and to open mutual representative offices, it is evident that Slovakia was not among them. While Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic could rely on rather favorable economic conditions, good legal framework and business infrastructure, Slovakia's case was rather different. The analysis of the economic situation of Slovakia in the 1990s showed that, unlike its neighbors that after 1989 managed to adopt successful economic reforms to heal the state economy and integrate it to the world market, the Slovak government of Prime Minister Mečiar led by personal interests implemented several measures that led the country to a continuing economy distress. This discouraged the international investors who were looking for a stable and safe business environment (Goldman, 1999). This thesis therefore assumes that the economic policies of Mečiar's government could have to a certain extent affected the economic interactions with Taiwan that in the 1990s were minimal if compared to the neighboring countries. As expected, in 1990s Taiwan's economic diplomacy was not successful to build an asymmetrical interdependent relationship with Slovakia and as a consequence the mutual representative offices were not open until 2003. The specific reasons leading to this were the focus of this thesis.

What usually to a major extent complicates Taiwan's international status and its diplomatic relations is the influence and interference of China. Beijing is particularly sensitive when the Taiwan's issue affects its official diplomatic relations. That is why, as Tubilewicz (2007) argues, China did exert some diplomatic pressure on Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia, yet this did not prevent their governments to agree on the conditions for the opening of the unofficial representations. These countries thus despite being engaged in official relations with China could at the same time enjoy the few advantages of the economic relations with Taiwan. As for Slovakia, given its economic backwardness and its minimal international influence, China did not give particular relevance to it and consequently, the bilateral relations were not

particularly fruitful in the 1990s. However, it seems that for the newly independent and economically distressed Slovakia, the cost of partnership with an economically powerful UN member was way too high to be balanced by the friendship of a small and internationally isolated country in the Pacific Ocean. Therefore, Slovakia in the 1990s deliberately chose to secure China's diplomatic support and access to its vast market and avoided any confrontation regarding the Taiwan's issue.

According to the framework adopted for this thesis, this kind of attitude is assumed by those states with governing parties leaning to the left. These are more likely to treasure friendship with communist China than states where the ruling elites are oriented towards the right of center in the ideological spectrum (Tubilewicz, 2007). The relevance of this assumption on the case of the Slovak-Taiwanese relations is further proven by the obvious change of communication between Taiwan and Slovakia after the 1998 government elections that brought a democratic and pro-EU orientation in Slovakia's foreign policy. It is evident that after the government transition, not only Taiwan has finally found its way to Slovakia, but Slovakia's overall development underwent a complex change.

The reforms implemented by the new government gradually led Slovakia's economy towards the standards of the Western market economy and secured the country's position in the international organizations, such as the EU and NATO, to which Slovakia aspired but was previously denied membership due to the disturbing political development under Prime Minister Mečiar. The government under the leadership of the Prime Minister Dzurinda aimed at the accession to the EU and successfully led Slovakia to democratic consolidation and revitalized the country's economy. As a consequence, mutual political values as well as Slovakia's eagerness to attract foreign investors and further catch up with its neighbors and other Western countries, made Slovakia enter into economic partnership with Taiwan. The EU factor has been thus identified as an intervening variable that not only provided consistent direct pressure for the transformation of Slovakia from a pariah state into a highly developed country, but also as an external force in the process of rapprochement between Taiwan and Slovakia.

To borrow an apt term from Tubilewicz (2007) – we can conclude that the institutionalization of the Slovak-Taiwanese relations eventually resulted from a

“convergence of economic interests”. The positive development after the 1998 power transition have been conducive and encouraging for the Slovak-Taiwanese relations and the opening of the diplomatic mission in 2003 only supports this argument. Conversely, it seems plausible to argue that if these conditions had been feasible in the early stage of the 1990s, the Slovak-Taiwanese relations might have followed the pattern of other Central European countries and opened the mutual representative offices after the independence of Slovakia.

It seems thus unlikely for post-independence Slovakia, a young and inexperienced country dealing with its own internal issues, such as creating its own nation, a new economic structure, new legal and political institutions (Elster et al., 1998), to develop an interest for a small and remote island in Asia Pacific. These kinds of circumstances and as Mr. Podstavek argues (Interview, 2019), the fact of not having high-quality strategies in the area of its own economy, let alone experts involved in Asian markets, made so that Slovakia was not able to evaluate the potential of its economic partnership with Taiwan. Not until Slovakia carried out its economic reforms and joined the EU, did the country recognize Taiwan as a potential source of economic benefits. We could thus argue, that Slovakia’s response to Taiwan’s economic inducements in Central Europe in the 1990s was a delayed one.

This being said, it is necessary to stress out that the most influential factor for explaining the delay of the opening of the representative offices identified in the process of this research is Slovakia’s domestic politics. The different approaches of the two administrations that led Slovakia in the 1990s – ‘economy serving politics’ under Mečiar’s government and ‘politics serving economy’ under Dzurinda’s administration - determined the country’s foreign policy, economic reforms and eventually its attitude towards Taiwan’s economic diplomacy.

Interviewees' responses

- **Mr. Martin Podstavek – From 2017 the current head of the Slovak Economic and Cultural Office, Taipei (SECO). The interview was conducted online in written form on December 5th, 2019.**

1. In the 1990s, Taiwan targeted Central Europe with grants and investments and promoted bilateral trade relations. Did Slovakia consider the potential of entering into economic partnership with Taiwan and why?

The period of economic relations between Slovakia and Taiwan must be divided into two phases - one is the 1990s you are asking about and the other one is the period of 2000-2010. Both are very different, unrelated to Taiwan's geopolitical position in the world.

In the 1990s, Slovakia was a great unknown to non-European partners, or just one of the regions of Czechoslovakia, which was logically identified with the Czech Republic and Prague. Prague was a place to get information about the economic environment, investment opportunities and, of course, especially what incentives the Czechoslovak central government would provide to potential investors, because they were one of the main motives for an Asian investor in the Czechoslovakian federation. Central decision-making until 1993 was still in Prague. Very few East Asian investors were so analytically savvy that they could estimate Slovakia's economic investment potential. It seems that even the Slovaks could not estimate it in the first half of the 1990s.

In the years 1993-1999, Slovakia alone had no high-quality strategies in the area of the economy, and no one at all who would have been intensively involved in the East Asian markets. It is not surprising - Asia has not been an important partner for Slovakia, there have never been natural vectors of cooperation or interaction in history (unlike the Netherlands, which colonized almost all of Indonesia today and knew the area very well).

The main task of Slovakia at that time was to become a part of the most important and for us geopolitically strategic groupings - EU, NATO, OECD, WTO, etc. Slovakia gradually fulfilled all these tasks and today is a good contributor and participant to these organizations.

Internally, the main task for Slovakia was to consolidate its own economy. That is why we needed high-quality investors who came mainly from Western Europe. In the early 1990s, Slovakia's international invisibility and political liability and unpredictability were a problem. Many investors have not been able to find Slovakia on the world map, and did not have information on its investment potential and environment. Of course, the mistake in this case was mainly due to poor self-promotion by the Slovak government and central authorities.

Thus, East Asian investors naturally perceived the Czech Republic under the name Czechoslovakia, where they later significantly strengthened their presence.

It should also be noted that Taiwanese investments, perhaps by coincidence, appeared in Europe, where Japanese investments also established themselves. This was also the case in Slovakia. Only when Japan became intensely interested in investment opportunities in Slovakia, Taiwanese investors appeared. It is interesting that in the end, for a certain period of time (from 2005 to 2017) Taiwanese investments in the Slovak Republic were stronger than the Japanese ones.

Only the period of 2000-2010 brought very favorable conditions for the development of bilateral cooperation with East Asia. Our economy began to stabilize, after a hectic period of transition to a market economy and especially the transfer of ownership relations within Slovakia from state to private and corporate hands (both in positive and negative terms), Slovakia began to offer advantages that some neighboring countries failed to achieve. For serious investors with a long-term vision, we were certainly an interesting destination for assessing their investments and business philosophies - a skilled workforce (more high school educated technicians such as those in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe), a stable market vision (Slovakia was supposed to join the EU, NATO, OECD), but also the link to the infrastructure of developed economies in Europe (especially Germany), made Slovakia one of the major investment destinations on the world map. This was also noticed by strategists

from the then prosperous economies in East Asia - the most important investment that came to Slovakia after 2000 was the South Korean car manufacturer KIA.

Taiwan's investments were of medium size, but still very important for both sides - in the period of 2000-2010 Taiwanese companies Foxconn (Honhai Group), Delta Group (Delta Electronics in Nová Dubnica) and AU Optronics invested in Slovakia.

For Slovakia, Taiwanese investments were one of many that came to us from the world at that time. To be honest, Slovakia did not pay attention to the origin of the investor, but the quality of the investment and the possibilities of cooperation. We absolutely needed to increase employment and bring high-quality technologies and working practices to us precisely because all these processes and habits were disrupted and destroyed in the times of the collective socialist economy. Our tradition as a relatively advanced country in terms of the economics of 1918-1945 was discontinued in 1948-1989..

The real interest in upgrading economic relations to long-term strategic bilateral cooperation between Taiwan and Slovakia became apparent only after 2000. A serious interest in partnership resulted in the opening of mutual representations (on the Taiwanese side of the Taipei Representative Office and on the Slovak side of the Slovak Economic and Cultural Office). 2004). It is only in this period that we can talk about a real bilateral program between Slovakia and Taiwan, which focused on the economic area and which was actually caused by the interest of Taiwanese investors in Slovakia, not the other way around.

It should be noted that several personalities, also from the Slovak diplomacy environment, have significantly contributed to the development of mutual relations, especially in the logistical preparation of mutual cooperation and interaction. One of these personalities was Ambassador Milan Tancár.

2. Did the economic partnership with the PRC somehow affect Slovakia's position towards Taiwan?

I do not think so. It is true that Slovakia has always strictly adhered to and adheres to the policies of one China, as the US and all the EU countries do. On the other hand, economic relations are often governed by other axioms, such as the internal political wishes and desires of the ruling political parties in any country. Where the country is

authoritarian, this interaction of the political party and the economy is much stronger, but fortunately this did not affect Slovakia after 1989.

In my opinion, Slovakia has a balanced and good policy and communication towards both sides, both Beijing and Taipei. Slovakia does not mix in the internal affairs of other countries.

In the economic field, Slovakia has a completely different quality of its interaction with Taiwan than with the PRC. Namely, Taiwan is one of the most important East Asian investors in the country, employing more than 5,000 workers. Unfortunately, the PRC does not show any investment interest in Slovakia, or it has so far not shown it in addition to verbal statements. The PRC's investments in the Slovak Republic are less than 1% of all investments, which speaks for itself if we consider the importance and size of the Chinese economy. Even our participation in some Beijing-initiated transnational projects (16+1, BRI) has no financial and economic benefits for Slovakia yet.

However, some phenomena that are common in democracies are not acceptable to the PRC. For this reason, Beijing, as a consequence of their "unacceptable" phenomena, sometimes punishes some countries by reducing the level of political and economic interaction, for various reasons. I think that once the time comes when the government in Beijing realizes that such practices are ultimately devoid of effect, they are not worthy of a large economy and one of the most advanced states in the world, and only the initiator himself. Taipei, on the other hand, never brings politics into a mutually beneficial economic outcome in economic interaction with us.

The PRC is a very important partner in all respects. It is therefore not surprising that the EU and its individual Member States must always take Beijing's voice into account. If the aim is to seek mutual partnership and benefit and not disagreements, there will always be a common starting point even when the thinking of the partners is not politically complementary. In fact, this is the basis not only of economic cooperation but also of overall peace and prosperity in the world.

For these reasons too, Slovakia and other EU countries sometimes seem to be affected by the conflict in the Taiwan Strait between Beijing and Taipei. But it's not true. We are not in a one-sided world, we must communicate and listen to the fundamental

comments of all partners, and on this basis we must balance our approach to everyone - of course we balance it in such a way as not to disturb our basic vision.

To sum up, Slovakia has no diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Nevertheless, thanks to the generosity of all actors across the Strait of Taiwan, it has developed and develops high-quality economic and cultural relations with Taiwan. Nowadays we have entered a new phase of bilateral relations - Slovak companies are starting to invest and operate in Taiwan, even in modern areas of cooperation (intelligent transport and cyber security, blockchain technologies and others).

2. Do you think that Slovakia's domestic politics might have somehow influenced the course of the Slovak-Taiwanese relations?

Slovak-Taiwanese relations have one backbone - that is significant Taiwanese investments in our country. I believe that if they did not exist, we would not have many economic exchanges with Taiwan. Therefore, it is very difficult to find logical intersections between the policy of Slovakia and the course of Slovak-Taiwanese relations, which are determined by this "backbone". Although there are times when the internal political scene was more or less cautious in relation to Taiwan, this was never, in my opinion, substantial and actually did not affect the growth or decline of Taiwanese investments or the overall economic cooperation in our country.

Taiwan, however, is something peculiar in the history and cultural influence of China, from Singapore to Vladivostok - Taiwan's society in this space was the only one able to introduce a working democracy, a bottom-up government, not the other way around. This is a unique thing that cannot be bought, cannot be imposed. We should not only envy Taiwanese democracy and how local and regional governments work, but also support them and learn from them precisely because our values and vision of the world are similar or at least should be based on our fundamental constitutional law.

3. What were the conditions that led Slovakia to agree on the opening of the representative offices with Taiwan?

The opening of economic and cultural offices in Bratislava and Taipei was a logical consequence of the interest of large Taiwanese companies in the Czech Republic. I also believe that, to a certain extent, the role of the same values that Slovakia and

Taiwan profess and their proximity to opinions on how the future of our world should look, not only in the economic field, played a role in this. But let's be honest - without that backbone, without the presence of major Taiwanese investors, we would probably not find a pragmatic reason for opening offices in both cities (Singapore is an example - despite very good relationships with Singapore, we don't have strong economic ties with Singapore and don't have our representative office there). Even today, Taiwan is the 22nd largest economy in the world, almost belongs to the G20. It would be unwise to circumvent such a partner. However, the interest must be mutual. That is why we are very pleased that today Taiwan is once again turning to the countries of Central Europe and looking for new possibilities for economic cooperation. If we find them, the bilateral interaction will again be as good as it was after 2004. If we do not find them, we run the risk of attenuating our mutual relations.

- **Mr. Vladislav Štefanec – President of the Slovak-Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce. The interview was conducted online in written form on December 4th, 2019:**

1. In the 1990s, Taiwan targeted Central Europe with grants and investments and promoted bilateral trade relations. Did Slovakia consider the potential of entering into economic partnership with Taiwan and why?

No, in the 1990s it was not a real possibility. It came up only with the WTO and the EU.

Taiwan's international policy in the 1990s can be characterized as economic diplomacy, where relatively wealthy Taiwan has bought international legitimacy in exchange of economic benefits. While this policy has been partially successful in Africa (ex. G-Bissau) in Oceania (ex. Palau) or in Latin America (ex. Grenada), it has been doomed in a relatively wealthy Europe with strong institutions. In my opinion, the success of this policy was related to the size of the country, its relative wealth, the strength of the institutions and the size of the political elite.

The political elite in the 1990s was bipolar in Slovakia. While Mečiarism pushed for traditional partnerships from the time of communism (primarily Moscow) the anti-

Mečiarism opposition pushed towards the Europeanization of the country. Neither Moscow nor Brussels recognized Taiwan, and neither of the Slovak elites saw relations with Taiwan as a primary or secondary topic to be dealt with.

Only when Slovakia was anchored in the European structures (1998-2002, Taiwan's accession to the WTO (2002)) allowed the elites to find their way to each other.

2. Did the economic partnership with the PRC somehow affect Slovakia's position towards Taiwan?

Not economic but political relations with the PRC influenced relations with Taiwan. The economic link between the Slovak Republic and the PRC was marginal in the 1990s. As 20-30 years ago, even now is our relationship to the PRC defined as an importer of consumer goods. (Import level approx. 7%, export approx. 2.5% / 2019 /). FDI from China has practically never existed in Slovakia.

The political elites, with their attitude to the PRC (in particular their relationship with the Communist Party of China), have shaped and to this day are shaping their position towards Taiwan.

3. Do you think that Slovakia's domestic politics might have somehow influenced the course of the Slovak-Taiwanese relations?

The political situation in the 1990s (criminalization of the state, struggle against authoritarianism, economic crisis) and the search for its own European identity prevented small Slovakia from dealing with relations with selected countries in East Asia. In the 1990s, the Czech Republic with a stronger tradition, a much more experienced diplomatic apparatus and, in particular, a more straightforward democratic development successfully established relations with Taiwan. I would argue that the political situation in the home country set limits on establishing new partnerships.

4. What were the conditions that led Slovakia to agree on the opening of the representative offices with Taiwan?

- Stabilization of Slovakia in European structures (and thus increased economic motivation for Taiwan to cooperate).

- Taiwan's accession to the WTO, which created a platform for cooperation.
- Capital accumulated in Taiwan, which Slovakia has identified as a potential source for FDI.

- **Former head of the Taipei Representative Office in Bratislava (TROB).
The interview was conducted on July 7th, 2019 in the ROC Presidential Office building.**

1. In 1993, Slovakia emerged as an independent country out of Czechoslovakia with which Taiwan had a rather friendly and promising relationship. Did Taiwan consider initiating a dialogue with the Slovak government? What were the responses from the Slovak side?

Taiwan was definitely interested into expanding its relations with all the Central European countries and wanted to treat all the V4 countries equally. However, it was not easy to enter into diplomatic partnership with them. The alternative was to establish the people to people relations. In case of Slovakia, this proved to be rather difficult given the fact that after the division of Czechoslovakia, most of the skilled and experienced diplomats chose to stay in the Czech Republic and the Slovak government appeared to be still rather influenced by the former communist practices.

2. In the 1990s, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic were targeted by Taiwanese businessmen who sought to expand Taiwan's export market. On the other hand, Slovakia's economic relations with Taiwan were negligible. What do you think were the aspects that made Slovakia an unattractive business partner?

Compared to the Czech Republic, Slovakia was a very agricultural country. The Czech Republic and other neighbors were bigger and more skilled in banking, international affairs and their democratic values and principles were similar to Taiwan's. Therefore, it was easier to communicate with them and the economic climate was more favorable, because what Taiwan looked for was a safe environment for its investments. Gradually, when other Western and Asian countries started investing in Slovakia, Taiwan as well started engaging in dialogue with Slovakia.

3. Do you think that Slovakia's domestic politics might have somehow influenced the course of the Slovak-Taiwanese relations?

Taiwan observed the V4 countries and observed how they sustain the pressure from China. Most of the Western countries have already had their offices with Taiwan, but the negotiations about the office in Slovakia took a long time. It seems to me that the Slovak officials were perhaps afraid to do mistakes, which might have been because of a strong pressure from China or simply because of the lack of experience with international affairs. Definitely under the administration of the Prime Minister Meciar, the talks were not possible.

4. What were the conditions that set for the opening of the Taipei Representative Office in Bratislava (TROB) in 2003?

The Slovak government was more open-minded. Very helpful were also some diplomats such as ambassador Tancár.

- **Former Deputy Director at the TROB. The interview was conducted on August 30th, 2019 in the Building of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of China (Taiwan).**

1. In 1993, Slovakia emerged as an independent country out of Czechoslovakia with which Taiwan had a rather friendly and promising relationship. Did Taiwan consider initiating a dialogue with the Slovak government? What were the responses from the Slovak side?

As for this question, I am not able to answer because I started my diplomatic carrier only later and this information is not available to me.

2. In the 1990s, Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic were targeted by Taiwanese businessmen who sought to expand Taiwan's export market. On the other hand, Slovakia's economic relations with Taiwan were negligible. What do you think were the aspects that made Slovakia an unattractive business partner?

As I said, I don't really have information about the period before opening of the representative offices. I can only say that I assume Taiwan was definitely interested to expand its export market in Central Europe and the reason behind the poor economic relations with Slovakia at that time might have been because of the overall uncertain

situation in Slovakia after the independence. Taiwan for sure was observing the situation in Slovakia through the Czech office in Prague and the nearby office in Vienna as well.

3. Do you think that Slovakia's domestic politics might have somehow influenced the course of the Slovak-Taiwanese relations?

I think Slovakia after 1993 had a really hard time to build up its own government and establish itself as an independent country. These were times of uncertainty and even though there might have been mutual interest to establish the relations, the response from Slovakia was important.

4. What were the conditions that set for the opening of the Taipei Representative Office in Bratislava (TROB) in 2003?

For sure it was Slovakia's economic interest to attract investments. Slovakia wanted to catch up with the countries in the region that already had some investments from Taiwan. As for the Taiwan's side, Slovakia's presence in the EU played an important role. For Taiwan it is relevant on the international arena to get the support of countries that have voice in the EU decision making.

References

Books

- Alexander, C. R. (2014). *China and Taiwan in Central America: Engaging Foreign Public in Diplomacy*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Baine, N. and Wookock, S. (2003). *The New Economic Diplomacy: Decision-Making and Negotiation in International Economic Relations (Global Finance)*. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Baldwin, D. A. (1985). *Economic Statecraft*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Berridge, G., James A., Lloyd L. (2012). *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Diplomacy*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (3rd ed.). Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Elster, J., Offe, C. and Preuss, U. K. (1998). *Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fürst, R. Bakesova, I. and Hermanova, Z. (2004). *Hisory of Taiwan (Dějiny Taiwanu)*. Prague: Nakladatelstvi Lidove noviny.
- Fürst, R. (2010), *The Czech-China Relations after 1989*. Prague: Karolinum.
- Gao Lang (1994). *Zhonghua Mingguo waijiao guanxi zhi yanban, 1972-1992* [An Evolution of Foreign Relations of the Republic of China, 1972-1992]. Taipei: Wunan Tushu Chuban.
- Goldman, M. F. (1999). *Slovakia since Independence: A Struggle for Democracy*. London: Praeger Publishers.
- Holsti, K.J. (1995). *International Politics: a Framework for Analysis*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
- Keohane, R. O., & Nye, J. S. (1977). *Power and interdependence: World politics in transition*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Linz, J. and Stepan, A. (1996). *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Nye, J. S. Jr. (2005). *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Rawnsley, G. D. (2010). *Taiwan's Informal Diplomacy and Propaganda*. London: Macmillan Press LTD.
- Rosenberg, S. Emily (1999). *Financial Missionaries to the World, The Politics and Culture of Dollar Diplomacy*. London: Harvard University Press.

Tubilewicz, C. (2007). *Taiwan and Post-Communist Europe: Shopping for Allies*. New York: Routledge.

van Vranken Hickey, D. (2007). *Foreign Policy Making in Taiwan: From Principle to Pragmatism*. London and New York: Routledge.

Wang, Y. S. (1990). *Foreign Policy of the Republic of China on Taiwan: An Unorthodox Approach*. New York: Praeger.

Wong, T. (1999). *The Political Economy of Taiwan's Foreign Policy*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies.

Journal articles

Arel-Bundock, V. and Atkinson, J. and Potter, R. A. (2015). *The Limits of Foreign Aid Diplomacy: How Bureaucratic Design Shapes Aid Distribution*. Retrieved January, 2019 from <<https://doi.org/10.1111/isqu.12191>>.

Batora, J. (2005). *Public diplomacy in small and medium-sized states: Norway and Canada*. Netherlands Institute of International Relations' Clingendael'. Retrieved January, 2019 from <https://www.peacepalacelibrary.nl/ebooks/files/Clingendael_20050300_cli_paper_dip_issue97.pdf>

Blanchard, F. and Ripsman, N. M. (2008). A Political Theory of Economic Statecraft, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, vol. 4, no. 4, 2008, pp. 374-398. Retrieved January 2019, from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229889891_A_Political_Theory_of_Economic_Statecraft>.

Bowen, G. (2009). (PDF) *Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method*. Retrieved April, 2019 from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240807798_Document_Analysis_as_a_Qualitative_Research_Method>.

Brooks, R. (2002). Sanctions and Regime Type: What Works, and When? *Security Studies* 11(4), 1-50.

Caporaso, James A. (1978). Dependence, Dependency, and Power in the Global System: a Structural and Behavioral Analysis, *International Organization*, 32, 1-2, Winter-Spring, 13-43.

Daborowski, T. (2009). Slovakia's Economic Success and the Global Crisis in *Centre for Eastern Studies, Issue 19*. Retrieved November, 2019 from <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/96500/commentary_19.pdf>.

Dickey, L. (2018). Taiwan's Small-power Diplomacy. *The interpreter*. Retrieved January, 2019 from <<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/taiwans-small-power-diplomacy>>.

Duleba, A. (1997). Democratic Consolidation and the Conflict over Slovak International Alignment in *Slovakia: Problems of Democratic Consolidation and the Struggle over the Rules of the Game*, Bratislava: Slovak Political Science Association and Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 209-230.

Duleba, A. and Lukac, P. and Wlachovsky, M. (1998). 'Zahraničná politika Slovenskej republiky východiská, stav a perspektívy' [Foreign politics of the Slovak Republic: Background, Status and Perspectives]. Retrieved Sept, 2019 from <http://www.sfpa.sk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/1998_Duleba_Lukac_Wlachovsky.pdf>.

Fürst, R. and Pleschova, G. (2010). Czech and Slovak Relations with China: Contenders for China's Favour. *Europe-Asia Studies*. Glasgow: University of Glasgow, 1363-1381. Retrieved October, 2018 from <<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09668136.2010.504387>>.

Goldstein, S. M. (2008). Soft Power as a Foreign Policy Tool for Taiwan. In Tsang, S. (Eds.), *Taiwan and the International Community*. Bern: International Academic Publishers.

Gregušová, G. (2003). Slovak-Chinese Relations. *Report on the State of Society*, Bratislava: Institute for Public Issues, 303-306.

Gregušová, G. (2005). Relations of Visegrad Four Countries with China. *Czech Journal of International Relations 1-2005*. Prague: Institute of International Relations. Retrieved November, 2019 from <<https://mv.iir.cz/article/view/152>>.

Javorcik B. S., B. Kaminski, (2004). *The "EU Factor" and Slovakia's Globalization: The Role of Foreign Direct Investment*. Retrieved September, 2019 from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242514642_The_EU_Factor_and_Slovakia's_Globalization_The_Role_of_Foreign_Direct_Investment>.

Labuschagne, A. (2003). *Qualitative research: Airy fairy or fundamental?* The Qualitative Report, 8 (1), Article 7. Retrieved April, 2019 from <<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol8/iss1/7/>>.

Larus, E. F. (2006). Taiwan's quest for international recognition. *Issues & Studies*, 42(2), 23-52.

Lee, D. and Hocking, B. (2010). Economic Diplomacy. In Robert A. Denemark (Eds.), *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, Vol. II, 1216-1227. Wiley Blackwell.

Lektzian, D. and Souva, M. (2007). An Institutional Theory of Sanction Onset and Success. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51(6), 848-71.

Marcincin A., Beblavy, M. (2000). Economic Policy in Slovakia 1990-1999. Retrieved August, 2019 from <https://www.academia.edu/6258072/Economic_policy_in_Slovakia_1990-1999>.

Mengin, F. (1998). The Foreign Policy of the ROC on Taiwan since 1971: An Overview. *The Republic of China on Taiwan in International Politics*. Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang D. Retrieved May 4, 2019 from <<https://www.peterlang.com/view/title/23365>>.

Okano-Heijmans, M. (2011). Conceptualizing Economic Diplomacy: The Crossroads of International Relations, Economics, IPE and Diplomatic Studies. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, January 2011. Retrieved on January, 2019 from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233659639_Conceptualizing_Economic_DiplomacyThe_Crossroads_of_International_Relations_Economics_IPE_and_Diplomatic_Studies>.

Okano-Heijmans M., Wit S., van der Putten F. P., (2015). *Cross-Strait Relations and Diplomacy in East Asia: Towards Greater EU-Taiwan cooperation?* Retrieved October 2019 from <[https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/2015%20Towards%20Greater%20EU-Taiwan%20Economic%20Cooperation%20-%20Clingendael%20Report%20\(FINAL\).pdf](https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/2015%20Towards%20Greater%20EU-Taiwan%20Economic%20Cooperation%20-%20Clingendael%20Report%20(FINAL).pdf)>.

Pleschová, G. (2013). The Slovak and Hungarian Partnerships with China: High Hopes that Did Not Come True. *China's Comeback in Former Eastern Europe: No Longer Comrades, Not yet Strategic Partners*. Prague: Institute of International Relations, 45-49.

Pridam, G. (2001). Uneasy Democratisations – Pariah Regimes, Political Conditionality and Reborn Transitions in Central and Eastern Europe. *Democratisation*, vol. 8, 2001, no. 4, 65–94.

Rejtoová, E. (2019). Slovak-Taiwanese Relations under the One China Policy, *Studia Orientalia Slovaca*, vol. 1, 2019, ISSN 1336-3786,

Saner, R. and Yiu, L. (2003). International Economic Diplomacy: Mutations in Postmodern Times. *Discussion Papers in Diplomacy*, 84 (1). The Hague: Clingendael (Netherlands Institute of International Relations). Retrieved January, 2019 from <http://www.businessdiplomats.com/images/articles/files/Postmodern_diplomacy.pdf>.

Straková, A. (2017) *Taiwan's Cultural Diplomacy Practice: The Case in Slovakia* (Master thesis, School of Culture Resources, Taipei National University of the Arts).

Su, Hungdah (2010). The EU's Taiwan Policy in a New Context. *Issues & Studies* 46 (1), 1-53.

Szczudlik –Tatar J. (2013). *The Unexploited Potential of Poland's Cooperation with Taiwan*. Retrieved January, 2019 from <https://www.pism.pl/files/?id_plik=14455>.

Szomolányi, S. (2003). *Slovakia: From a Difficult Case of Transition to a Consolidated Central European Democracy*. Retrieved, September 2019 from <http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/sympo/03september/pdf/S_Szomolanyi.pdf>.

Taylor, I. (2002). Taiwan's Foreign Policy and Africa: The limitations of dollar diplomacy. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 11:30, 125-140, DOI: [10.1080/10670560120091174](https://doi.org/10.1080/10670560120091174)

Tubilewicz, C. (1999). Comrades No More: Sino-Central European Relations after the Cold War, *Problems of Post-Communism*, 46, 2, March/April 1999, pp. 3–14.

Tubilewicz, C. (2000). Promising Eldorado: Taiwan's diplomatic offensive in East Central Europe, 1989-1999. *East Asia*, 18(1), 34-60.

Tubilewicz, C. (2001) Taiwan's Balkan option: A new chapter in Republic of China 'dollar diplomacy', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 12:1, 161-184, DOI: [10.1080/09592290108406194](https://doi.org/10.1080/09592290108406194)

Tubilewicz, C. (2005). The Scrooge Effect: Taiwan's Economic Diplomacy Toward Central Europe, 1988-2005. *Issues & Studies*, 41(4), 209-249.

Tubilewicz, C. (2004). Breaking the ice: The origins of Taiwan's economic diplomacy towards the Soviet Union and its European allies. *Europe Asia Studies*, 56(6), 891-906.

van Bergeijk, P. A.G. and Moons, S. (2009). Economic Diplomacy and Economic Security. *New Frontiers for Economic Diplomacy*, 37-54. Retrieved January, 2019 from <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1436584>.

Winkler, S. (2007). *EU-Taiwan Relations in the WTO: The Question of International Status*. Retrieved September 2019 from <<https://www.ies.be/files/070417%20Sigrid%20Winkler%20EU-Taiwan.pdf>>.

Woo, B. and Verdier, D. (2013). *Sanctions, Rewards and Regime Types*. Unpub. Retrieved May, 2019 from: <<https://polisci.osu.edu/sites/polisci.osu.edu/files/Sanctions%2C%20rewards%20and%20regime%20type.pdf>>.

Government and Organizations' documents

Bertelsmann Transformation Index (2003). *Slovakia*. Retrieved October 2019 from <https://www.btiproject.org/fileadmin/files/BTI/Downloads/Reports/2003/pdf/BTI_2003_Slovakia.pdf>.

The Basis for One China, de Facto and de Jure. Retrieved September, 2018 from <<http://en.people.cn/features/taiwanpaper/taiwanb.html>>.

Directorate General of Customs, Ministry of Finance, ROC. Statistics Database Query: Yearly Comparison of ROC Imports and Exports by Continent (Area), Visegrad 4. Retrieved August, 2019 from <<https://portal.sw.nat.gov.tw/APGA/GA30E;APGAJSESSIONID=nT9Dp4NST0b41NbfSvy0zJ0RV4q51gmPwnJt9bvmm9dQPpQGf0Xk!-626283149>>.

European Commission (1997), *Agenda 2000 - Commission Opinion on Slovakia's Application for Membership of the European Union*. Retrieved September, 2019 from <https://www.esiweb.org/pdf/slovakia_EC%20Opinion%20on%20SK%201997_en.pdf>.

European Parliament (2000). *Briefing No 13 Slovakia and the enlargement of the European Union*. Retrieved November, 2019 from <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/briefings/13a3_en.htm>.

Freedomhouse (2003). *Reports, Czech Republic*. Retrieved August, 2019 from <<https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2003/czech-republic>>.

Government Office of the Slovak Republic (2001) *Report on the Preparedness of the Slovak Republic for the EU Membership*. Retrieved November, 2019 from <<https://rokovania.gov.sk/download>>.

Institute for Policy Studies (2016). *What Europe Can Teach Us about Trump*. Retrieved October, 2019 from <<https://ips-dc.org/europe-can-teach-us-trump/>>.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China (Taiwan) (2003). 我國設立駐斯洛伐克代表處記者會紀要 . Obtained during Interview in August, 2019.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China (Taiwan) (2003). *The ROC signed the "Replenishment Agreement for the EBRD-Taipei China Technical Cooperation Fund" and...* Retrieved September, 2018 from <https://www.mofa.gov.tw/en/News_Content.aspx?n=539A9A50A5F8AF9E&sms=37B41539382B84BA&s=AF58130F6D2F7430>.

MOFA Slovakia, Economic Information about Territory, Taiwan (2016). Retrieved September, 2018 from <<https://www.mzv.sk/documents/1479306/1481362/Ekonomick%C3%A9+inform%C3%A1cie+o+terit%C3%B3riu/882cb16c-422c-4f92-ac86-6fd3513ddb64>>.

National Bank of Slovakia, NBS (1995). *Annual Report 1995*. Retrieved August, 2019 from <<https://www.nbs.sk/sk/publikacie/vyrocnna-sprava-vs-1995-kapitoly>>.

Office of the President, Republic of China (Taiwan) (20015). *President Ma meets delegation led by Slovakian Member of European Parliament Eduard Kukan*. Retrieved November, 2019 from <<https://english.president.gov.tw/NEWS/4744>>.

Taiwan Affairs Office and the Information Office of the State Council. *The One-China Principle and the Taiwan Issue*. Retrieved July, 2019 from <<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/world/asia/022200china-taiwan-text.html>>

Taiwan's Foreign Aid Policy White Paper (2010). Retrieved September, 2018 from <<https://www.mofa.gov.tw/Upload/RelFile/2173/80233/%E5%A4%96%E4%BA%A4%E9%83%A8%E6%8F%B4%E5%A4%96%E6%94%BF%E7%AD%96%E7%99%BD%E7%9A%AE%E6%9B%B8%E8%8B%B1%E6%96%87%E7%89%88%EF%BC%88PDF%EF%BC%89.PDF>>

Taipei Representative Office in Hungary, <<http://tro.hu/en/tajvanrol/>>.

The Official Website of Republic of China: Economy. Retrieved September, 2018 from <https://www.taiwan.gov.tw/content_7.php>.

The Treaty of Lisbon (2009). Retrieved November 2019 from <<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=legisum%3Aai0033>>.

Media reports

The Diplomat (2016). *International Civil Aviation Organization Shuts out Taiwan*. Retrieved September, 2019 from <<https://thediplomat.com/2016/09/international-civil-aviation-organization-shuts-out-taiwan/>>.

Focus Taiwan, (2018). *EU supports Taiwan's participation in WHO*. Retrieved September, 2019 from <<http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201805010010.aspx>>.

Taiwan Today (1992). *Testing Free-Market Waters*. Retrieved September, 2018 from <<https://taiwantoday.tw/news.php?unit=8,29,32,45&post=13094>>.

Taiwan Today (2011). *Paying tribute to Vaclav Havel*. Retrieved October, 2018 from <<https://taiwantoday.tw/news.php?unit=2,23,45&post=2126>>.

The Slovak Spectator (2019). *Is Slovakia a Mafia State?* Retrieved October, 2019 from <<https://spectator.sme.sk/c/22138003/is-slovakia-a-mafia-state.html#privatisation>>

Trend (1998). *V obchode s Taiwanom je Slovensko nadalej pasivne*, [Slovakia continues to be passive in Trade with Taiwan]. Retrieved March, 2019 from <<https://www.etrend.sk/trend-archiv/rok-/cislo-Okt%C3%Bber/v-obchode-s-taiwanom-je-slovensko-nadalej-vysoko-pasivne.html>>.

