



Slovakia — Va-PoReg Country Report

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08/29/1526 Start Part of Other Country [of Hungary]: Since the 10th century, the territory of what is later known as Slovakia, belonged to the Hungarians. In the battle of Mohacs in 1526, Hungary lost parts of its territory against the Ottoman Empire. As a result, present day Slovakia became a part of the Habsburg Empire.^{0F¹} Only when the Austro-Hungarian Empire disintegrated in 1918, Slovakia got a new ruler.^{1F²}

10/28/1918 End Part of Other Country [of Hungary, Constitutional Monarchy]/Start Part of Other Country [of Czechoslovakia, Democratizing Regime]: On this date, the Territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire were declared independent and some of them formed the Czechoslovak Republic, including todays Slovakia.^{2F³} The Czechoslovak Constitution adopted on 02/29/1920 guaranteed universal suffrage.^{3F⁴}

03/14/1939 End Part of Other Country [of Czechoslovakia, Electoral Democracy]/Start Right-Wing (Fascist) Autocracy [semi-sovereign, external affairs under Germany, Right-Wing (Fascist) Autocracy]: On this date, Slovakia became the Slovak Republic and declared independence from Czechoslovakia. Instead, it became a client state of Nazi Germany.^{4F⁵} The country was ruled by Hlinka's Slovak People's Party, a clerical-fascist party, as a one-party state. Elections were scheduled for 1943, but they did not take place, consolidating the parties power grip.^{5F⁶} The government played a central role in regulating and controlling the economy. For example, it established a number of cartels and monopolies, and it also imposed strict controls on wages and prices. The regime was characterized by a strong emphasis on nationalism and antisemitism, Tiso cooperated with Germany in the deportation of Jews, overseeing the transfer of numerous Slovak Jews to extermination and concentration camps in Germany and German-occupied Poland. Additionally, some Jews within Slovakia were directly subjected to acts of violence resulting in their deaths.^{6F⁷} However, the party was marked by internal conflicts. Two separate wings had emerged, the radicals wanted to establish a more radical fascist regime, modeled after Nazi Germany, whereas the conservatives pursued a mildly more moderate, but still fascist, way. When it looked like the conservative wing would win, Nazi Germany intervened and appointed a new Prime Minister, Vojtech Tuka. In 1941 the conservatives won the power struggle. Germany accepted the situation, because they needed a successful example of a satellite state.^{7F⁸} LIED does not provide any data during the specified period. In this period, V-Dem's PCLI is likewise classified by us as showing that political liberties were absent. For the relevant period, V-Dem's JCE indicates that judicial constraints on the executive are limited. At the same time, V-Dem's LCE shows no value, which, with appropriate caution, can be interpreted as an absence of legislative constraints on the executive.

04/03/1945 End Right-Wing (Fascist) Autocracy [semi-sovereign, external affairs under Germany, Right-Wing (Fascist) Autocracy]/Start Part of Other Country [of Czechoslovakia, Communist Ideocracy]: For the regime in this period see Czechoslovakia. The Prague Spring of 1968, initiated by Slovak leader Alexander Dubček, was partly motivated by a desire for greater Slovak autonomy within Czechoslovakia. Following the suppression of the Prague Spring, the federalization of Czechoslovakia in 1968 was a key development for Slovakia, leading to the formation of the Slovak Socialist Republic. This gave Slovakia more self-governance, although the real power still remained with the central communist party in Prague. Slovakia, with its strong Catholic tradition, had a tense relationship with the officially atheist communist regime. The government suppressed religious institutions and tried to limit the influence of the Church, which was a

significant cultural and social force in Slovakia. The communist regime in Slovakia, as in the rest of Czechoslovakia, controlled and censored the media, literature, and the arts, promoting Soviet-style socialist realism. Slovak culture and language, however, were promoted in an attempt to build a unified socialist national identity. This was a departure from the pre-war era, where Slovak culture often played a secondary role to Czech culture in the combined state. One of the major shifts was the transformation of Slovakia from a predominantly agrarian society to a more industrial one. Before the communist era, the majority of Slovakia's population was engaged in agriculture. However, by the end of the communist period, only a small percentage of all employees continued to work in agriculture. This shift was accompanied by rapid urbanization and the creation of new employment opportunities (Londák/Londáková 2011). LIED and V-Dem do not provide data for Slovakia before 1993.

01/01/1993 End Part of Other Country [of Czechoslovakia, Communist Ideocracy]/Start Electoral Democracy: On this date, independence was declared (Marshall 2018b). The country has a unicameral parliament (National Council), with delegates elected for four-year terms based on proportional representation. The president, who is the head of state, is elected by direct popular vote for a five-year term.^{8F9} Slovakia's parliamentary structure involves routine multiparty elections and peaceful transitions of power among competing parties. In 1994, Vladimir Meciar, who was prime minister of a nationalist minority government, lost a vote of no confidence and resigned. However, in the next elections the oppositional parties were not able to form a coalition against the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), thus Meciar of the HZDS again became prime minister, this time in a left-right coalition with the Association of Workers of Slovakia (ZRS) and the Slovak National Party (SNS). In 1997, the opposition parties (the Christian Democratic Party, the Democratic Union, the Democratic Party, the Green Party and the Social Democratic Party) formed the "blue coalition", which would later be formalized as the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK).¹⁰ According to FH, a score of 6 to 7 for the year 1993 designates the country as partly free, which aligns with our interpretation of rather free. As per FH's classification for the years 1994 to 1995, the country receives a score of 5 as free, which we categorize as rather free. As classified by FH in the period 1996-1997, the country is partly free with a score ranging from 6 to 7, which we place in the rather free category. Per FH, for 1998, the country is classified as free, scoring between 2 and 4, which we also place in the free category. Based on our observations, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period, which aligns with the observations of LIED. According to LIED the elections are classified constantly as competitive since the country's independence. Since 1994 Slovakia's election fully represent overall freedom and fairness by V-Dem's EF&FI. In addition, V-Dem's CEI reports constantly cleanliness for the elections since 1993. Regarding the political liberties LIED views them as absent, whereas V-Dem's PCLI is classified by us as indicating that political liberties were present. From 1993 to 1997, as per Polity5's categorization, the executive's authority was significantly constrained, nearing parity with other branches, placing it in the third intermediate category. In 1993 and 1998, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were comprehensive, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were robust. Between 1994 and 1997, V-Dem's JCE and LCE are both interpreted by us as indicating robust constraints on the executive. While PRC classifies the regime as a semidemocracy between 1993 and 1998, all other regime datasets (like BMR, CGV, GWF, HTW) classify the regime in this period as a democracy.

09/25[&26]/1998 End Electoral Democracy/Start Liberal Democracy: On this date parliamentary elections took place. The HZDS claimed victory and became the largest party in the parliament but were unable to form a coalition. Thus, the newly formed SDK announced their ambition to form a government, leading to the resignation of Meciar as prime minister. The SDK, consisting of five parties, came to power with the support of three other parties, the Party of the Democratic Left (SDL), the Hungarian Alliance (SMK) and the Party of Democratic Understanding (SOP), and Mikuláš Dzurinda became prime minister. In preparation for the national elections in 2002, Dzurinda formed a new coalition called the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKU), which was composed different to the SDK, and won again. He stayed in office through 2006,

when national elections led to the victory of the Direction – Social Democracy (Smer-SD) under Robert Fico, which was founded in 2002.¹¹ Although civil liberties are typically upheld, democratic institutions face challenges due to persistent discrimination against Roma communities and escalating political animosity towards migrants and refugees. Moreover, political corruption continues to pose a significant issue.^{9F}¹² On 09/30/2023 early parliamentary elections were held, from which the left-wing nationalist party Direction, Social Democracy (Smer-SD) emerged as the party with the most votes, while Progressive Slovakia (PS) came second and Voice, Social Democracy (Hlas-SD) third.^{10F}¹³ A three-party coalition consisting of Smer-SD, Hlas-SD and the Slovak National Party was formed under prime minister Robert Fico.^{11F}¹⁴ As per FH's classification for this regime period, the country is considered free with a score ranging from 2 to 4, which we also interpret as free in our framework. Based on our observations, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this whole period, which aligns with the observations of LIED. For 1998 LIED identifies political liberties as absent. For the rest of the relevant period, LIED identifies political liberties as present, and V-Dem's PCLI is also classified by us as indicating that political liberties were present. Since 1998, based on Polity5's assessment, the executive was either equal to or subordinate to other institutions, demonstrating strong constraints on decision-making authority. For the relevant regime period, V-Dem's JCE and LCE are both interpreted by us as indicating comprehensive constraints on the executive. FH viewed Slovakia as free in this period.

Liberal Democracy as of 07/01/2025 continued.

Additional sources (Mikus 1963, Rybář 2010, Saxonberg 2001)

Notes

¹ https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Moh%C3%A1cs

² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slovakia>

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Czechoslovak_Republic

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_suffrage;
<https://spectator.sme.sk/c/22336586/the-1920-constitution-rooted-democracy-and-womens-suffrage-in-czechoslovakia.html>

⁵ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slovak_Republic_\(1939%E2%80%931945\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slovak_Republic_(1939%E2%80%931945))

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slovak_People%27s_Party

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jozef_Tiso

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slovak_People%27s_Party

⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics_of_Slovakia

¹⁰ <http://www.chisols.org/narratives.html> , see narratives for version 5.0, Slovakia_R: 1, Slovakia_V: 1.

¹¹ <http://www.chisols.org/narratives.html> , see narratives for version 5.0, Slovakia_R: 1, Slovakia_V: 1-2

¹² <https://freedomhouse.org/country/slovakia/freedom-world/2022>;
https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Slovakia_2017?lang=en

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2023_Slovak_parliamentary_election

¹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fico%27s_Fourth_Cabinet

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