



Country profile – SLOVAKIA

NAME:	<i>conventional long form:</i> The Slovak Republic/ Slovenska Republika <i>conventional short form:</i> Slovakia/ Slovensko
CAPITAL CITY:	Bratislava (Population: 441 453)
POPULATION:	5,407 956 (July 2000, est.)
AREA:	49 030 km ²
BOUNDARIES:	<i>Land boundaries:</i> Total: 1 672 km <i>Border countries:</i> Austria 106 km, Czech Republic 265 km, Hungary 654 km, Poland 547 km, Ukraine 98 km <i>Coastline:</i> 0 km (landlocked)
REGIONS/ ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS:	8 regions (kraje) and 79 districts
ETHNIC GROUPS:	Slovak 85.7 %, Hungarian 10.6 %, Roma 1.6% (other sources put at up to 10%), Czech 1.1 %, Ruthenian and Ukrainian 0.6 %, German 0.1 %, Polish 0.1 %, other 0.2 %

GOVERNMENT

FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Republic - parliamentary democracy. Present constitution was ratified on 1 September 1992 and entered into force 1 January 1993. Amended in 1999 to allow direct election of the president.

HEAD OF STATE

President (Rudolf SCHUSTER since 15 June 1999). The president is elected by a direct popular vote for a term of five years. Following the National Council elections in September 1998, the Constitution was changed to allow direct election of the president. The president has the power to appoint and remove the Prime Minister and other members of the government, and also to negotiate and ratify international agreements. The president is the commander-in chief of the armed forces.

PRIME MINISTER

Mikulas DZURINDA (since 30 October 1998). Members of the Cabinet are appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

LEGISLATURE

Unicameral. The 150 members of the National Council of the Slovak Republic/ Narodna Rada Slovenskej Republiky are elected on the basis of a proportional representation for a term of four years.

GOVERNMENT - ELECTIONS

Last parliamentary elections took place in September 2002. The governing coalition, headed by Mr Dzurinda, consists of the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKU), the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK), the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) and the Alliance of a New Citizen (ANO).

PARLIAMENT COMPOSITION: (2002) ELECTIONS

PARTY	% VOTES 2002	SEATS 2002
Movement for Democratic Slovakia (HZDS)	19.5	36
Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKÚ)	15.1	28
SMER	13.5	25
Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK)	11.2	20
Christian Democratic Movement (KDH)	8.3	15
Alliance of a New Citizen (ANO)	8.02	15
Communist Party (KSS)	6.32	11

ECONOMY

Main Indicators of Economic Structure in 2001		
Population (average)	Thousand	5,380
GDP per head ^a	PPS	11,100
	per cent of EU average	48
Share of agriculture ^b in:		
- gross value added	per cent	4.6
- employment	per cent	6.3
Gross fixed capital formation/GDP	per cent	31.9
Gross foreign debt of the whole economy/GDP ^c	per cent	33.4
Exports of goods & services/GDP	per cent	75.9
Stock of foreign direct investment	Million €	2,801 ^d
	€ per head ^a	521
Long term unemployment rate	per cent of labour force	11.3

^a Figures have been calculated using the population figures from National Accounts, which may differ from those used in demographic statistics.

^b Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing.

^c Data refer to 2000.

^d Data refer to 1999.

Source: European Commission, Progress Report, October 2002

EU RELATIONS

EUROPE AGREEMENT

Signed on 4 October 1993 (previously signed with the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic on 16 December 1991) and entered into force on 1 February 1995.

EU MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION DATE

27 June 1995.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION REPORTS

[COM \(2002\) 700](#)

[COM \(2001\) 700](#)

[COM \(2000\) 711](#)

[COM \(1999\) 511](#)

[COM \(1998\) 703](#)

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTIONS ON EC REPORTS

[20.11.2002 \(A5-0371/2002\)](#)

[13.06.2002 \(A5-0190/2002\)](#)

[5.09.2001 \(A5-0256/2001\)](#)

[4.10.2000 \(A5-0244/2000\)](#)

[3.12.1998 \(A4-0427/98\)](#)

EU ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS

Opened 15 February 2000. All 31 chapters closed (December 2002). The Treaty of Accession was signed on 16 April 2003.

PRE-ACCESSION FUNDING

These funding programmes concentrate their support on the Accession Partnership priorities. In the period 2000-2002 up to € 49 million (Phare), € 18.3 million (SAPARD) and € 35 to 55 million (ISPA) is available to Slovakia.

HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND

EARLY HISTORY

- 5th-6th century AD: Slavic tribes occupied the lands that are now Slovakia.
- 907: The Great Moravian Empire, which had encompassed for nearly 200 years the lands settled by the Slovaks and Czechs, collapsed. Within the next 100 years the Slovaks came under Hungarian rule, a situation prevailing until 1918.

19TH AND 20TH CENTURY

- 1867-1918: The establishment of Austria-Hungary led to a policy of increasing 'Magyarisation' in Slovakia.
- 1918-1939: Slovakia became part of the new state of Czechoslovakia, along with Bohemia, Moravia and Ruthenia. Between the wars, Czechoslovakia was one of the world's most economically developed countries and had a democratic multi-party political system. Following the Munich agreement in 1938, certain areas of Czechoslovakia were occupied by Germany and a separate Slovak Republic operating under German influence was established on 14 March 1939, under the leadership of Monsignor Jozef Tiso.
- 1944-1945: A Slovak national uprising was crushed by German forces. As the Red Army advanced westwards in 1945, a Czechoslovak government was established at Kosice shortly before the liberation of Prague. Pre-war Czechoslovak President, Eduard Benes and his government-in-exile returned. After the end of the war, the Republic of Czechoslovakia was restored, with the exception of Ruthenia, which was taken over by the Soviet Union. The Communist Party gradually took control of Czechoslovakia.
- 1948: In June, a centralised People's Republic was established instead of a federal state.
- 1960s: A reform movement grew, led by Alexander Dubcek, a communist from Slovakia, who became the head of the Communist Party in Czechoslovakia in January 1968. The process, the "Prague Spring", was stopped by armed intervention by the Warsaw Pact in August 1968. In 1969, a law establishing the Czechoslovak Federation was passed giving the Czech and Slovak Republics equal status within Czechoslovakia.

- 1989: Fall of the communist regime in the "Velvet Revolution". However, discontent with the unitary state continued. Czech and Slovak politicians held opposing views about the appropriate pace and nature of economic reform.
- 1991: The popular Slovak politician Vladimir Meciar, set up the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS). It pressed for even greater Slovak autonomy, to be based on a declaration of sovereignty, after which a loose confederal state could be negotiated.
- 1992-93: In the 1992 elections, the HZDS, led by Mr Meciar, and the Civic Democratic Party, led by Vaclav Klaus won the two largest representations in Parliament and each leader became the Prime Minister of his own republic. Disagreements between the republics intensified, and, in July, Slovakia declared itself a sovereign state. In November, the federal parliament voted to dissolve the federation, and, in January 1993, the independent state of Slovakia was formed with Michal Kováč as its first President. The HZDS-led government remained in power but internal dissent led to a number of defections.
- 1994: In March, Mr Meciar was forced to resign after a vote of no confidence in the Slovak parliament. A new interim government was formed by a broad coalition of five parties, led by Jozef Moravcik. In the parliamentary elections in September 1994, the HZDS again emerged as the most popular party, winning 35% of the total vote. It formed a government with the Slovak National Party and the Association of Slovak Workers. However, relations between Mr Meciar and President Kováč were strained and there was increasing international criticism of Slovakia over its lack of respect for human rights and commitment to democratic reform.
- 1998: In March the presidential term came to an end. The government used its additional powers to cancel another referendum on the presidential election issue and granted a controversial amnesty to various prisoners. This prompted protest rallies in Slovakia and international criticism. The electoral law was amended just before the parliamentary elections and the campaign was marked by disputes over access to the media. The HZDS remained the largest party but with a reduced share of the vote. It was unable to form a government, as its former coalition partners fared poorly. Mikulas Dzurinda became the new Prime Minister at the head of a four-party coalition of the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK), the Party of the Democratic Left (SDL), the Party of Civic Understanding (SOP) and the Hungarian Coalition Party (SMK). The new government announced its intention to pursue early membership of the EU and NATO.
- 1999: Direct presidential elections were approved by parliament in January and the governing coalition's candidate Rudolf Schuster was elected in the second round run-off against Mr Meciar in May 1999.
- 2002: In the September elections, HZDS won most votes but was unable to form a government. The outgoing Prime Minister, Mr Dzurinda, was able to form a four-party governing coalition of the centre-right SDKU, SMK, KDH and ANO parties.
- 2003: In April, the EU Accession Treaty was signed.

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Useful links

European Commission

DG Enlargement

<http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/slovakia/index.htm>

Commission Delegation in Slovakia

<http://www.europa.sk/english/index.htm>

Official Slovak sites

Slovak Government (in English)

<http://www.government.gov.sk/english/>

Slovak Parliament

<http://www.parliament.sk/>

Slovakia and the EU

http://www.vlada.gov.sk/eu_en/

Media (in English)

<http://www.slovakspectator.sk/>