

Béla IV  
the 'Second Home Founder'

**Béla IV:**

- Andrew II dies in 1235 → Béla IV's rule: 1235-1270
- He followed his grandfather's policy (Béla III), he was against his father's policy (András II), he tried to restore the ideal feudal kingdom
- He tried to get back and integrate crown lands (royal estates) and counties thus provoking the resistance of barons.
- As the repossession of the estates also affected the servientes and the royal serfs, they also turned against the king.
- It turned out to be a fatally bad timing for reforms.
- Later on, he changed this policy because he needed the support of the barons in order to be able to rebuild the county
- As Europe was threatened by the Mongol invasion, Béla IV tried to fortify the Transylvanian borders.
- He sent Friar Julianus (a Dominican friar) to Bashkiria to the Magyars to ask them to move to Hungary.
- To secure the borders, he invited the Cumans (nomadic tribes attacked by the Mongols).
- The problem was that the Cumans could not adapt to the conditions of their new country, so both the lords and the peasants revolted against them and turned against the king.



BÉLA IV REX HUNGARIE

**BÉLA IV**

Béla IV was King of Hungary and Croatia between 1235 and 1270. Already in the 1220s, he was appointed by his father Andrew to rule over Croatia and Transylvania, where he tried restore royal authority by taking lands back.

In the 1241, he led the Hungarian forces against the Mongol invaders; however, after the devastating defeat at Muhi, Béla fled to the castle of Tráu in Dalmatia.

In 1242, he returned to Hungary and started its reconstruction, for which he is known as the "second founder of the state".



**Royal policy before the Tartar invasion:**

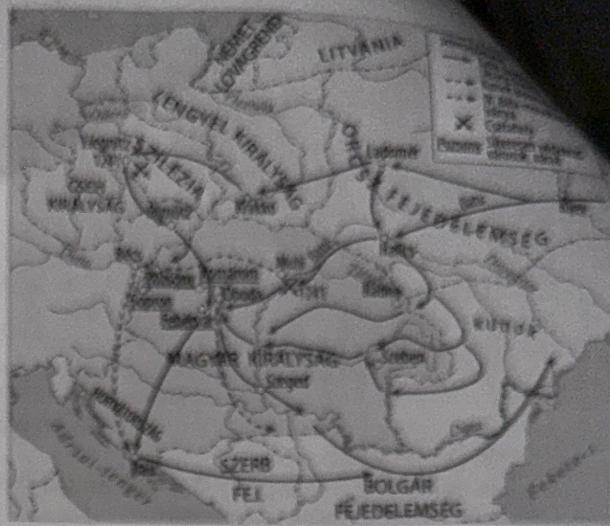
- Expansion and Diplomacy
  - Negotiated marriages with influential European families to strengthen political ties.
  - Looked for alliances through diplomacy to enhance Hungary's security.
- Administrative Reforms
  - Implemented reforms to improve governance and administrative efficiency.
- Economic Development
  - Encouraged agricultural expansion and trade to stimulate economic growth.
  - Granted privileges to towns and cities to promote commerce and industry.
- Military Reorganization
  - Recruited and trained professional soldiers to bolster the royal army.
  - Strengthened fortifications along the kingdom's borders to defend against external threats.
- Religious Policy
  - Supported religious institutions and patronized the construction of churches and monasteries.
  - Promoted Christianity among non-Christian groups within the realm.

### Brief summary of the Tartar invasion:

- the Tartars reached the Hungarian border in 1241
  - they came across the Verecke pass led by Batu Khan and from Transylvania
- Béla settled Cumans down to defend:
  - were nomadic tribes escaping from the Tartars
  - Béla tried to settle them between the Tisza and the Danube, but they couldn't adapt to Hungarian traditions, so their khan, Kötöny/Köteny was killed by the nobles
  - the Cumans left the country destroying the Southern territories
- The Hungarian nobility didn't help Béla because of his land policy, and they didn't give him soldiers
- Béla asked for help from the Pope (Gregory IX) and the Holy Roman emperor (Frederick II), but they refused, because they were in an investiture struggle (fight for the right of the electing and appointing of the Church leaders)
- One of the most famous battles of this period was fought in 11 April 1241, at Muhi (at the River Sajó)
  - Hungarians were defeated
  - Béla IV escaped → went to Austria: The Austrian prince asked for money and the surrender of some counties, but in the end, he did not give any help. → went to Dalmatia, to the castle of Trau (Trogir)
  - Margaret was born here (her daughter)
- Tartars reached the line of the Danube, and killed or enslaved 1/3 of the population, plundered the country, only the stone fortresses survived (mostly in the Alföld and Southern Transylvania)
- They left in 1242, because Batu Khan went back to the khan election, because Ögödei Khan died or they just did not want to settle down, just wanted to get treasures by robbing the land of Hungary.
- Geographical reasons: Hungary's flat plains and fertile valleys (termékeny völgyek) made it an attractive target for the Mongols. The open landscape suited their fast-moving cavalry (gyorsan mozgó lovasság) and their tactics of surrounding and defeating enemies.

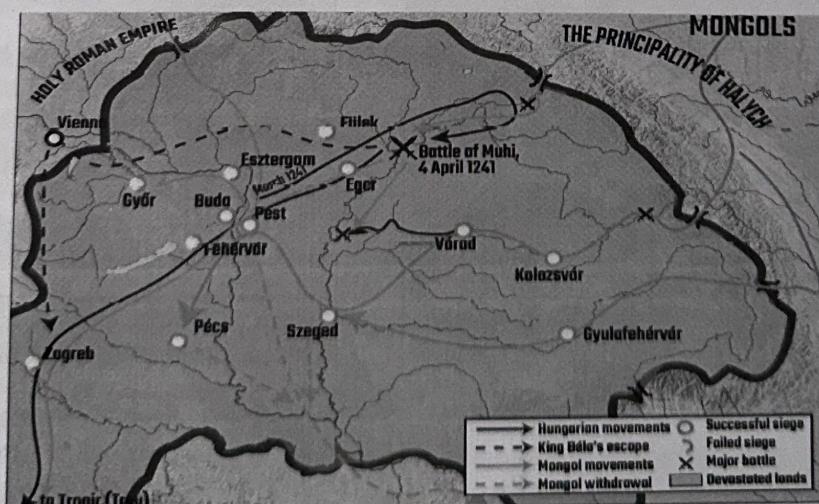
### Reorganisation and resettlement of the country:

- Béla returned to Hungary, and established a strong feudal kingdom (that is why we call him The Second Homefounder)
- To secure settlements he gave up his previous policy of repossession and donated the devastated (feldült) lands to the lords on the condition that stone fortresses were built.
- The lords were also required to set up a heavily armoured force recruited (nehézpáncélosok toborzása) among lesser nobility (former servientes) under their leadership thus creating the so-called banderum.
  - Banderium: The nobles had to give soldiers to the royal army, and they went to the battles under the banner (banderia) of the nobles.
- Later, it became a royal issue because these barons became so strong due to the stone fortresses → petty monarchs (kiskirályok)
- Settled the Cumans to protect the borders of the country - established a dynastical connection with Cumans
  - Béla's son (Stephen) got married with the Cuman prince's daughter Elizabeth
- Saxons (szászok): settled around Pest and Transylvania and they were traders
- Moravians (morvák): traders and peasants
- Romanians (románok): mainly peasants, settled them down in Transylvania
- In 1244, King Béla IV established and renewed the privileges of the Körment, Korpona, and Pest hospes. Originally, in the 11th-12th centuries, a hospes was an aristocratic individual who,



## Social and political changes

- The last years of Béla IV's reign saw the first steps of what was to grow into Parliament.
- In 1267 new laws were introduced that confirmed the privileges of royal servientes and called them nobles for the first time.
- The laws institutionalized (intézményesített) the autonomy of the lesser nobility in counties led by the bailiff (ispán) who was appointed by the king.
- Towns were granted special rights and many trading centres were granted town charters.
- 1267 also marks the beginning of parliamentary institutions - elected representatives from all counties were invited to meet.
- In 1289 the first meeting of the so-called **Parlamentum Publicum** was summoned.
- Social layers:
  - the nobility divided into two subcategories: Barons and Nobles (közemes)
  - serfs (jobbágy)
- There was a special connection** between the barons and the nobles, it was the familiarity
- Familiarity (familiaritás)** is a special type of vassal system in Hungary, there was a strict relationship between the lord and its 'vassal'.
- The familiar got his lands directly from the king, not from his lord.**
- The vassal was almost family member** and they got protection from the lord. (A hűbéri függés magyarországi változata, amely a XIII. század folyamán alakult ki. Sajátos kapcsolat, függőségi viszony a nagybirtokosok és a kisebb birtokosok között. A kisebb birtokos a nagyúr szolgálatába állva annak tágabb értelemben vett családjához (familiájához) tartozott (familiáris). Részt vett ura birtokának igazgatásában, szolgált hadseregében, ezért védelmet és természet- vagy pénzbeli juttatásokat kapott. A familiáris nem állt ura joghatósága alatt, birtokait sem urától, hanem a királytól kapta, s az szabadon szállít utódaira. Ezért a familiaritás nem keverendő a hűbérisséggel.)
- lesser nobles had to step into service under the rule of their lord
- barons' power increased and was expanded → later ruled as petty monarchs (kiskirályok)
- Béla died in 1270, his son, Stephen got the throne until 1272
- After Béla's death (1270) Stephen V. (1270-72) then Ladislas IV. 'the Cuman' (1272-90). The last king of the Árpád Dynasty was Andrew III. (1290-1301). The male line of the Árpád Dynasty died out. (**The demise of the House of Árpád**)



leaving their homeland, came to Hungary to gain land through service to the king. By the 13th century, the term also applied to peasants who left their previous lords to settle on the lands of other landlords under favorable conditions

- Hungary became multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-lingual country
- The formation of a homogenous peasantry and by the 1300s the unified class of the serfs (**jobbágy**) appeared
- Because of the settling the urbanization (urbanizáció) started in Hungary
- Most important towns were mining towns (**Selmecbánya, Besztercebánya, Kőmöcbánya**)
- After the Mongol invasion, Béla IV granted several settlements (e.g. Buda) the privilege of free royal towns, on condition that they had stone walls built around them, since during the invasion only stone walls could stand in the way of the Mongols.
- This period marked the beginning of urbanization: **Zólyom, Kőmend, Korpona, and Besztercebánya** were granted city status. Following the Mongol invasion, the rebuilding of the country included the founding of **Buda Castle**.

King Béla IV of Hungary granted **city privileges** (városi kiválltságjogok) to several towns as part of his efforts to rebuild the country after the Mongol invasion. These privileges typically included:

1. **Autonomy:** Towns received greater self-governance, often with their own councils or magistrates, allowing them to manage local affairs independently.
2. **Economic Benefits:** The grants often included exemptions from certain taxes or duties, which encouraged trade and economic development.
3. **Legal Rights:** The towns were granted legal rights, such as the right to hold markets and fairs, and sometimes to establish their own courts.
4. **Defensive Measures:** Towns could build defensive walls and fortifications, which helped protect them from future invasions and raids.

