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**Slovakia** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en);[[1]](#cite_note-1)[[2]](#cite_note-2) [Template:Lang-sk](/wiki/Template:Lang-sk) [Template:IPA-sk](/wiki/Template:IPA-sk)), officially the **Slovak Republic** ([Template:Lang-sk](/wiki/Template:Lang-sk), [Template:Audio](/wiki/Template:Audio)),[[3]](#cite_note-3) is a [landlocked country](/wiki/Landlocked_country) in [Central Europe](/wiki/Central_Europe).[[4]](#cite_note-4)[[5]](#cite_note-5) It is bordered by the [Czech Republic](/wiki/Czech_Republic) and [Austria](/wiki/Austria) to the west, [Poland](/wiki/Poland) to the north, [Ukraine](/wiki/Ukraine) to the east and [Hungary](/wiki/Hungary) to the south. Slovakia's territory spans about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) and is mostly mountainous. The population is over 5 million and comprises mostly [ethnic Slovaks](/wiki/Slovaks). The capital and largest city is [Bratislava](/wiki/Bratislava). The [official language](/wiki/Official_language) is [Slovak](/wiki/Slovak_language), a member of the [Slavic language family](/wiki/Slavic_languages).

The [Slavs](/wiki/Slavs) arrived in the territory of present-day Slovakia in the 5th and 6th centuries. In the 7th century, they played a significant role in the creation of [Samo's](/wiki/Samo) Empire and in the 9th century established the [Principality of Nitra](/wiki/Principality_of_Nitra). In the 10th century, the territory was integrated into the [Kingdom of Hungary](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Hungary),[[6]](#cite_note-6) which itself became part of the [Habsburg Empire](/wiki/Habsburg_Empire) and the [Austro-Hungarian Empire](/wiki/Austro-Hungarian_Empire). After [World War I](/wiki/World_War_I) and the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Slovaks and Czechs established [Czechoslovakia](/wiki/Czechoslovakia). A separate [Slovak Republic (1939–1945)](/wiki/Slovak_Republic_(1939–1945)) existed in [World War II](/wiki/World_War II) as a [client state](/wiki/Client_state) of [Nazi Germany](/wiki/Nazi_Germany). In 1945, Czechoslovakia was reestablished [under communist rule](/wiki/Czechoslovakia:_1969-1987) as a Soviet satellite. Slovakia became an independent state on 1 January 1993 after the peaceful [dissolution of Czechoslovakia](/wiki/Dissolution_of_Czechoslovakia).

Slovakia is a [high-income](/wiki/High_income_economy) [advanced economy](/wiki/Developed_country).[[7]](#cite_note-7)[[8]](#cite_note-8) The country joined the [European Union](/wiki/European_Union) in 2004 and the [Eurozone](/wiki/Eurozone) on 1 January 2009.[[9]](#cite_note-9) Slovakia is also a member of the [Schengen Area](/wiki/Schengen_Area), [NATO](/wiki/NATO), the [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations), the [OECD](/wiki/Organisation_for_Economic_Co-operation_and_Development) and the [WTO](/wiki/World_Trade_Organization).

## Contents

* 1 History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]
  + 1.1 Bronze Age[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]
  + 1.2 Iron Age[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]
    - 1.2.1 Hallstatt Period[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]
    - 1.2.2 La Tène Period[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]
    - 1.2.3 Roman Period[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]
  + 1.3 Great invasions from the 4th to 7th centuries[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]
  + 1.4 Slavic states[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]
  + 1.5 Great Moravia (830–before 907)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]
  + 1.6 Kingdom of Hungary (1000–1918)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]
  + 1.7 Czechoslovakia (1918–1939)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]
  + 1.8 World War II[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]
  + 1.9 Soviet influence and Communist party rule (1948–1989)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]
  + 1.10 Establishment of the Slovak Republic (after 1993)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]
* 2 Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]
  + 2.1 Tatra mountains[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]
  + 2.2 National parks[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]
  + 2.3 Caves[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]
  + 2.4 Rivers[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]
  + 2.5 Lakes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]
  + 2.6 Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]
* 3 Biodiversity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]
  + 3.1 Fungi[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]
* 4 Politics and government[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]
  + 4.1 Foreign relations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]
  + 4.2 Military[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]
  + 4.3 Human rights[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]
  + 4.4 Administrative divisions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]
* 5 Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]
  + 5.1 Industry[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]
  + 5.2 Energy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]
  + 5.3 Transportation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]
  + 5.4 Tourism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=33)]
  + 5.5 Science[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=34)]
* 6 Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=35)]
  + 6.1 Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=36)]
  + 6.2 Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=37)]
* 7 Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=38)]
* 8 Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=39)]
  + 8.1 Folk tradition[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=40)]
  + 8.2 Art[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=41)]
  + 8.3 Literature[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=42)]
  + 8.4 Music[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=43)]
  + 8.5 Cuisine[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=44)]
  + 8.6 Sport[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=45)]
* 9 See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=46)]
* 10 Notes and references[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=47)]
* 11 Bibliography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=48)]
* 12 External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=49)]

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

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[thumb|left|upright|A](/wiki/File:Moravianska_venusa.jpg) [Venus](/wiki/Moravany_Venus) from [Moravany nad Váhom](/wiki/Moravany_nad_Váhom), which dates back to 22,800 BC. [Radiocarbon dating](/wiki/Radiocarbon_dating) puts the oldest surviving archaeological artifacts from Slovakia – found near [Nové Mesto nad Váhom](/wiki/Nové_Mesto_nad_Váhom) – at 270,000 BC, in the [Early Paleolithic](/wiki/Lower_Paleolithic) era. These ancient tools, made by the [Clactonian technique](/wiki/Clactonian), bear witness to the ancient habitation of Slovakia.

Other [stone tools](/wiki/Stone_tool) from the [Middle Paleolithic era](/wiki/Middle_Paleolithic) (200,000 – 80,000 BC) come from the Prévôt (Prepoštská) cave near [Bojnice](/wiki/Bojnice) and from other nearby sites.[[10]](#cite_note-10) The most important discovery from that era is a [Neanderthal](/wiki/Neanderthal) [cranium](/wiki/Human_skull) (c. 200,000 BC), discovered near [Gánovce](/wiki/Gánovce), a village in northern Slovakia.

Archaeologists have found prehistoric human skeletons in the region, as well as numerous objects and vestiges of the [Gravettian](/wiki/Gravettian) culture, principally in the river valleys of [Nitra](/wiki/Nitra_(river)), [Hron](/wiki/Hron), [Ipeľ](/wiki/Ipeľ), [Váh](/wiki/Váh) and as far as the city of [Žilina](/wiki/Žilina), and near the foot of the [Vihorlat](/wiki/Vihorlat_Mountains), Inovec, and [Tribeč](/wiki/Tribeč) mountains, as well as in the [Myjava](/wiki/Myjava) Mountains. The most well-known finds include the oldest female statue made of [mammoth](/wiki/Mammoth)-bone (22,800 BC), the famous [Venus of Moravany](/wiki/Venus_of_Moravany). The statue was found in the 1940s in [Moravany nad Váhom](/wiki/Moravany_nad_Váhom) near [Piešťany](/wiki/Piešťany). Numerous necklaces made of shells from Cypraca thermophile [gastropods](/wiki/Gastropoda) of the [Tertiary period](/wiki/Tertiary) have come from the sites of Zákovská, Podkovice, Hubina, and Radošinare. These findings provide the most ancient evidence of commercial exchanges carried out between the [Mediterranean](/wiki/Mediterranean_Sea) and Central Europe.

### Bronze Age[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[thumb|Left: A](/wiki/File:Web_Biatec.jpg) [Celtic](/wiki/Celts) [Biatec](/wiki/Biatec) coin  
Right: Five [Slovak crowns](/wiki/Slovak_koruna) The [Bronze Age](/wiki/Bronze_Age) in Slovakia went through three stages of development, stretching from 2000 to 800 BC. Major cultural, economic, and political development can be attributed to the significant growth in production of copper, especially in central Slovakia (for example in [Špania Dolina](/wiki/Špania_Dolina)) and northwest Slovakia. Copper became a stable source of prosperity for the local population.

After the disappearance of the Čakany and [Velatice](/wiki/Velatice) cultures, the [Lusatian](/wiki/Lusatian_culture) people expanded building of strong and complex fortifications, with the large permanent buildings and administrative centers. Excavations of Lusatian [hill forts](/wiki/Hillfort) document the substantial development of trade and agriculture at that period. The richness and the diversity of tombs increased considerably. The inhabitants of the area manufactured arms, shields, jewelry, dishes, and statues.

### Iron Age[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

#### Hallstatt Period[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

The arrival of tribes from [Thrace](/wiki/Thrace) disrupted the people of the [Kalenderberg culture](/wiki/Kalenderberg_culture), who lived in the hamlets located on the plain ([Sereď](/wiki/Sereď)) and in the hill forts like Molpír, near [Smolenice](/wiki/Smolenice), in the [Little Carpathians](/wiki/Little_Carpathians). During Hallstatt times, monumental burial mounds were erected in western Slovakia, with princely equipment consisting of richly decorated vessels, ornaments and decorations. The burial rites consisted entirely of cremation. The common people were buried in flat urnfield cemeteries. A special role was given to weaving and the production of textiles. The local power of the "Princes" of the [Hallstatt period](/wiki/Hallstatt_culture) disappeared in Slovakia during the last century before the middle of first millennium BCE, after strife between the [Scytho](/wiki/Scythians)-Thracian people and locals, resulting in abandonment of the old hill-forts. Relatively depopulated areas soon caught interest of emerging [Celtic](/wiki/Celts) tribes, who advanced from the south towards the north, following the Slovak rivers, peacefully integrating into the remnants of the local population.

#### La Tène Period[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

From around 500 BC, the territory of modern-day Slovakia was settled by [Celts](/wiki/Celt), who built powerful [oppida](/wiki/Enclosed_oppidum) on the sites of modern-day [Bratislava](/wiki/Bratislava) and [Devin](/wiki/Devín). [Biatecs](/wiki/Biatec), [silver coins](/wiki/Silver_coin) with inscriptions in the Latin alphabet, represent the first known use of writing in Slovakia. At the northern regions, remnants of the local population of Lusatian origin, together with Celtic and later Dacian influence, gave rise to the unique [Puchov culture](/wiki/Puchov_culture), with advanced crafts and iron-working, many hill-forts and fortified settlements of central type with coinage of the "Velkobysterecky" type (no inscriptions, with a horse on one side and a head on the other). This culture is often connected with the Celtic tribe mentioned in Roman sources as [Cotini](/wiki/Cotini).

#### Roman Period[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

From 2 [AD](/wiki/Anno_Domini), the expanding [Roman Empire](/wiki/Roman_Empire) established and maintained a series of outposts around and just north of the [Danube](/wiki/Danube), the largest of which were known as [Carnuntum](/wiki/Carnuntum) (whose remains are on the main road halfway between Vienna and Bratislava) and Brigetio (present-day [Szöny](/wiki/Szöny) at the Slovak-Hungarian border). Such Roman border settlements were built on the present area of Rusovce, currently a suburb of Bratislava. The military fort was surrounded by a civilian vicus and several farms of the villa rustica type. The name of this settlement was [Gerulata](/wiki/Gerulata). The military fort had an auxiliary cavalry unit, approximately 300 horses strong, modeled after the [Cananefates](/wiki/Cananefates). The remains of Roman buildings have also survived in Devin castle (present-day downtown Bratislava), the suburbs of Dubravka and Stupava, and Bratislava Castle Hill.

[thumb|A Roman inscription at the castle hill of](/wiki/File:Trencin-Roman2.JPG) [Trenčín](/wiki/Trenčín) (178–179 AD). Near the northernmost line of the Roman hinterlands, the [Limes Romanus](/wiki/Limes), there existed the winter camp of [Laugaricio](/wiki/Trenčín) (modern-day [Trenčín](/wiki/Trenčín)) where the Auxiliary of Legion II fought and prevailed in a decisive battle over the Germanic [Quadi](/wiki/Quadi) tribe in 179 AD during the [Marcomannic Wars](/wiki/Marcomannic_Wars). The Kingdom of [Vannius](/wiki/Vannius), a kingdom founded by the [Germanic](/wiki/Germanic_peoples) [Suebian](/wiki/Suebi) tribes of [Quadi](/wiki/Quadi) and [Marcomanni](/wiki/Marcomanni), as well as several small Germanic and [Celtic tribes](/wiki/List_of_Celtic_tribes), including the Osi and [Cotini](/wiki/Cotini), existed in Western and Central Slovakia from 8–6 BC to 179 AD.

### Great invasions from the 4th to 7th centuries[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

In the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, the [Huns](/wiki/Huns) began to leave the Central Asian steppes. They crossed the Danube in 377 AD and occupied [Pannonia](/wiki/Pannonia), which they used for 75 years as their base for launching looting-raids into Western Europe. However, Attila's death in 453 brought about the disappearance of the Hun tribe. In 568, a Turko-Mongol tribal confederacy, the [Avars](/wiki/Pannonian_Avars), conducted its own invasion into the Middle Danube region. The Avars occupied the lowlands of the [Pannonian Plain](/wiki/Pannonian_Plain), and established an empire dominating the [Carpathian Basin](/wiki/Pannonian_Basin).

In 623, the Slavic population living in the western parts of Pannonia seceded from their empire after a revolution led by Samo, a Frankish merchant.[[11]](#cite_note-11) After 626, the Avar power started a gradual decline[[12]](#cite_note-12) but its reign lasted to 804.

### Slavic states[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

The [Slavic](/wiki/Slavic_peoples) tribes settled in the territory of present-day Slovakia in the 5th century. Western Slovakia was the centre of [Samo's empire](/wiki/Samo) in the 7th century. A Slavic state known as the [Principality of Nitra](/wiki/Principality_of_Nitra) arose in the 8th century and its ruler [Pribina](/wiki/Pribina) had the first known Christian church of Slovakia consecrated by 828. Together with neighboring [Moravia](/wiki/Moravia), the principality formed the core of the [Great Moravian Empire](/wiki/Great_Moravia) from 833. The high point of this Slavonic empire came with the arrival of [Saints Cyril and Methodius](/wiki/Saints_Cyril_and_Methodius) in 863, during the reign of Prince [Rastislav](/wiki/Rastislav_of_Moravia), and the territorial expansion under King [Svatopluk I](/wiki/Svatopluk_I).

### Great Moravia (830–before 907)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|alt=The papal letter "Industriae Tuae"|*Industriae Tuae*, a letter written in 880 by](/wiki/File:Letter_svatopluk.jpg) [Pope John VIII](/wiki/Pope_John_VIII) to [Svatopluk I](/wiki/Svatopluk_I) [thumb|Certain and disputed borders of Great Moravia under](/wiki/File:Great_Moravia_Svatopluk.jpg) [Svatopluk I](/wiki/Svatopluk_I) (according to modern historians)

[thumb|upright|left|A statue of](/wiki/File:Cyril_a_metod_zilina.jpg) [Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius](/wiki/Saints_Cyril_and_Methodius) in [Žilina](/wiki/Žilina). In 863, they introduced Christianity to what is now Slovakia.

Great Moravia arose around 830 when [Mojmír I](/wiki/Mojmir_I_of_Moravia) unified the Slavic tribes settled north of the [Danube](/wiki/Danube) and extended the Moravian supremacy over them.[[13]](#cite_note-13) When Mojmír I endeavoured to secede from the supremacy of the king of [East Francia](/wiki/East_Francia) in 846, King [Louis the German](/wiki/Louis_the_German) deposed him and assisted Moimír's nephew [Rastislav](/wiki/Rastislav_of_Moravia) (846–870) in acquiring the throne.[[14]](#cite_note-14) The new monarch pursued an independent policy: after stopping a Frankish attack in 855, he also sought to weaken influence of Frankish priests preaching in his realm. Rastislav asked the [Byzantine Emperor](/wiki/Byzantine_Empire) [Michael III](/wiki/Michael_III) to send teachers who would interpret Christianity in the Slavic vernacular.

Upon Rastislav's request, two brothers, Byzantine officials and missionaries [Saints Cyril and Methodius](/wiki/Saints_Cyril_and_Methodius) came in 863. Cyril developed the [first Slavic alphabet](/wiki/Glagolitic_alphabet) and translated the Gospel into the [Old Church Slavonic](/wiki/Old_Church_Slavonic) language. Rastislav was also preoccupied with the security and administration of his state. Numerous fortified castles built throughout the country are dated to his reign and some of them (e.g., *Dowina*, sometimes identified with [Devín Castle](/wiki/Devín_Castle))[[15]](#cite_note-15)[[16]](#cite_note-16) are also mentioned in connection with Rastislav by Frankish chronicles.[[17]](#cite_note-17)[[18]](#cite_note-18) During Rastislav's reign, the [Principality of Nitra](/wiki/Principality_of_Nitra) was given to his nephew [Svatopluk](/wiki/Svatopluk_I_of_Moravia) as an [appanage](/wiki/Appanage).[[16]](#cite_note-16) The rebellious prince allied himself with the Franks and overthrew his uncle in 870. Similarly to his predecessor, Svatopluk I (871–894) assumed the title of the king (*rex*). During his reign, the Great Moravian Empire reached its greatest territorial extent, when not only present-day Moravia and Slovakia but also present-day northern and [central Hungary](/wiki/Central_Hungary), [Lower Austria](/wiki/Lower_Austria), [Bohemia](/wiki/Bohemia), [Silesia](/wiki/Silesia), [Lusatia](/wiki/Lusatia), southern Poland and [northern Serbia](/wiki/Northern_Serbia) belonged to the empire, but the exact borders of his domains are still disputed by modern authors.[[19]](#cite_note-19) Svatopluk also withstood attacks of the semi-nomadic [Magyar](/wiki/Hungarians) tribes and the [Bulgarian Empire](/wiki/First_Bulgarian_Empire), although sometimes it was he who hired the Magyars when waging war against East Francia.[[20]](#cite_note-20) In 880, [Pope John VIII](/wiki/Pope_John VIII) set up an independent [ecclesiastical province](/wiki/Ecclesiastical_province) in Great Moravia with Archbishop [Methodius](/wiki/Saints_Cyril_and_Methodius) as its head. He also named the German cleric [Wiching](/wiki/Wiching) the Bishop of [Nitra](/wiki/Nitra).

After the death of Prince Svatopluk in 894, his sons [Mojmír II](/wiki/Mojmir_II_of_Moravia) (894–906?) and [Svatopluk II](/wiki/Svatopluk II) succeeded him as the Prince of Great Moravia and the Prince of Nitra respectively.[[16]](#cite_note-16) However, they started to quarrel for domination of the whole empire. Weakened by an internal conflict as well as by constant warfare with [Eastern Francia](/wiki/Eastern_Francia), Great Moravia lost most of its peripheral territories.

In the meantime, the semi-nomadic Magyar tribes, possibly having suffered defeat from the similarly nomadic [Pechenegs](/wiki/Pechenegs), left their territories east of the [Carpathian Mountains](/wiki/Carpathian_Mountains),[[21]](#cite_note-21) invaded the [Carpathian Basin](/wiki/Carpathian_Basin) and started to occupy the territory gradually around 896.[[22]](#cite_note-22) Their armies' advance may have been promoted by continuous wars among the countries of the region whose rulers still hired them occasionally to intervene in their struggles.[[23]](#cite_note-23) It is not known what happened with both Mojmír II and Svatopluk II because they are not mentioned in written sources after 906. In [three battles](/wiki/Battle_of_Pressburg) (4–5 July and 9 August 907) near [Bratislava](/wiki/Bratislava), the Magyars routed [Bavarian](/wiki/Bavaria) armies. Some historians put this year as the date of the breakup of the Great Moravian Empire, due to the Hungarian conquest; other historians take the date a little bit earlier (to 902).

Great Moravia left behind a lasting legacy in Central and Eastern Europe. The [Glagolitic script](/wiki/Glagolitic_alphabet) and its successor [Cyrillic](/wiki/Cyrillic_script) were disseminated to other Slavic countries, charting a new path in their [sociocultural development](/wiki/Sociocultural_evolution). The administrative system of Great Moravia may have influenced the development of the administration of the [Kingdom of Hungary](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Hungary).

### Kingdom of Hungary (1000–1918)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Istvan-ChroniconPictum.jpg)[Stephen I](/wiki/Stephen_I_of_Hungary), [King of Hungary](/wiki/King_of_Hungary) [thumb|A Slovak volunteers' corp during the fight for independence from the Kingdom of Hungary](/wiki/File:1franci2.jpg) [thumb|Royal Hungary, Principality of](/wiki/File:Central_europe_1683.png) [Upper Hungary](/wiki/Upper_Hungary), Principality of Transylvania and Ottoman eyalets around 1683.

Following the disintegration of the [Great Moravian Empire](/wiki/Great_Moravian_Empire) at the turn of the 10th century, the Hungarians annexed the territory comprising modern Slovakia. After their defeat on the [Lech River](/wiki/Lech_River) they abandoned their nomadic ways; they settled in the centre of the Carpathian valley, adopted Christianity and began to build a new state – the Hungarian kingdom.[[24]](#cite_note-24) From the 11th century, when the territory inhabited by the Slavic-speaking population of Danubian Basin was incorporated into the Kingdom of Hungary, until 1918, when the [Austro-Hungarian empire](/wiki/Austro-Hungarian_empire) collapsed, the territory of modern Slovakia was an integral part of the Hungarian state.[[25]](#cite_note-25)[[26]](#cite_note-26)[[27]](#cite_note-27) The ethnic composition became more diverse with the arrival of the [Carpathian Germans](/wiki/Carpathian_Germans) in the 13th century, and the [Jews](/wiki/Jews) in the 14th century.

A significant decline in the population resulted from the [invasion of the Mongols](/wiki/Mongol_invasion_of_Europe) in 1241 and the subsequent famine. However, in medieval times the area of the present-day Slovakia was characterized rather by burgeoning towns, construction of numerous stone castles, and the cultivation of the arts.[[28]](#cite_note-28) In 1465, King [Matthias Corvinus](/wiki/Matthias_Corvinus_of_Hungary) founded the Hungarian Kingdom's third university, in Pressburg (Bratislava), but it was closed in 1490 after his death.[[29]](#cite_note-29) Before the [Ottoman Empire's](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) expansion into Hungary and the occupation of [Buda](/wiki/Buda) in 1541, the capital of the Kingdom of Hungary (under the name of [Royal Hungary](/wiki/Royal_Hungary)) moved to Pressburg (in [Template:Lang-sk](/wiki/Template:Lang-sk) at that time, currently Bratislava). Pressburg became the capital city of Royal Hungary in 1536. But the [Ottoman wars](/wiki/Ottoman_wars_in_Europe) and frequent insurrections against the [Habsburg Monarchy](/wiki/Habsburg_Monarchy) also inflicted a great deal of devastation, especially in the rural areas.[[30]](#cite_note-30) As the [Turks withdrew](/wiki/Great_Turkish_War) from Hungary in the late 17th century, the importance of the territory comprising modern Slovakia decreased, although Pressburg retained its status as the capital of Hungary until 1848, when it was transferred to Buda.[[31]](#cite_note-31) During the [revolution of 1848–49](/wiki/Revolutions_of_1848_in_the_Habsburg_areas), the Slovaks supported the [Austrian Emperor](/wiki/Emperor_of_Austria), hoping for independence from the Hungarian part of the [Dual Monarchy](/wiki/Austria–Hungary), but they failed to achieve their aim. Thereafter relations between the nationalities deteriorated (see [Magyarization](/wiki/Magyarization)), culminating in the secession of Slovakia from Hungary after World War I.[[32]](#cite_note-32)

### Czechoslovakia (1918–1939)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|A monument to](/wiki/File:Masaryk_a_Štefánik.jpg) [Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk](/wiki/Tomáš_Garrigue_Masaryk) and [Milan Štefánik](/wiki/Milan_Rastislav_Štefánik) – both key figures in early Czechoslovakia In 1918, Slovakia and the regions of [Bohemia](/wiki/Bohemia), [Moravia](/wiki/Moravia), [Czech Silesia](/wiki/Czech_Silesia) and [Carpathian Ruthenia](/wiki/Carpathian_Ruthenia) formed a common state, [Czechoslovakia](/wiki/Czechoslovakia), with the borders confirmed by the [Treaty of Saint Germain](/wiki/Treaty_of_Saint-Germain-en-Laye_(1919)) and [Treaty of Trianon](/wiki/Treaty_of_Trianon). In 1919, during the chaos following the breakup of Austria-Hungary, Czechoslovakia was formed with numerous Germans and Hungarians within the newly set borders. A Slovak patriot [Milan Rastislav Štefánik](/wiki/Milan_Rastislav_Štefánik) (1880–1919), who helped organize Czechoslovak regiments against Austria-Hungary during the First World War, died in a plane crash. In the peace following the World War, Czechoslovakia emerged as a sovereign European state. It provided what were at the time rather extensive rights to its minorities and remained the only democracy in this part of Europe in the interwar period.

During the [Interwar period](/wiki/Interwar_period), democratic Czechoslovakia was allied with France, and also with [Romania](/wiki/Romania) and [Yugoslavia](/wiki/Yugoslavia) ([Little Entente](/wiki/Little_Entente)); however, the [Locarno Treaties](/wiki/Locarno_Treaties) of 1925 left East European security open. Both Czechs and Slovaks enjoyed a period of relative prosperity. There was progress in not only the development of the country's economy, but also culture and educational opportunities. The minority Germans came to accept their role in the new country and relations with Austria were good. Yet the [Great Depression](/wiki/Great_Depression) caused a sharp economic downturn, followed by political disruption and insecurity in Europe.[[33]](#cite_note-33) Thereafter Czechoslovakia came under continuous pressure from the [revisionist](/wiki/Revanchism) governments of Germany and Hungary. Eventually this led to the [Munich Agreement](/wiki/Munich_Agreement) of September 1938, which allowed Nazi Germany to partially dismember the country by occupying what was called the [Sudetenland](/wiki/Sudetenland), a region with a German-speaking majority and bordering Germany and Austria. The remainder of "rump" Czechoslovakia was renamed [Czecho-Slovakia](/wiki/Czecho-Slovakia) and included a greater degree of Slovak political autonomy. Southern and eastern Slovakia, however, was reclaimed by Hungary at the [First Vienna Award](/wiki/First_Vienna_Award) of November 1938.

### World War II[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb||German map of the](/wiki/File:Slowakei.1943.jpg) [First Slovak Republic](/wiki/Slovak_Republic_(1939–1945)) in 1943 After the Munich Agreement and its [Vienna Award](/wiki/Vienna_Awards), [Nazi Germany](/wiki/Nazi_Germany) threatened to annex part of Slovakia and allow the remaining regions to be partitioned by Hungary or Poland unless independence was declared. Thus, Slovakia seceded from Czecho-Slovakia in March 1939 and allied itself, as demanded by Germany, with [Hitler's](/wiki/Adolf_Hitler) coalition.[[34]](#cite_note-34) The government of the [First Slovak Republic](/wiki/Slovak_Republic_(1939–1945)), led by [Jozef Tiso](/wiki/Jozef_Tiso) and [Vojtech Tuka](/wiki/Vojtech_Tuka), was strongly influenced by Germany and gradually became a [puppet regime](/wiki/Puppet_state) in many respects.

[thumb|left|150px|](/wiki/File:Edvard_Beneš.jpg)[Edvard Beneš](/wiki/Edvard_Beneš), leader of the [Czechoslovak government-in-exile](/wiki/Czechoslovak_government-in-exile) Meanwhile, the [Czechoslovak government-in-exile](/wiki/Czechoslovak_government-in-exile), sought to reverse the [Munich Agreement](/wiki/Munich_Agreement) and the subsequent German occupation of Czechoslovakia, and to return the Republic to its 1937 boundaries. The government operated from [London](/wiki/London) and it was ultimately considered, by those countries that recognized it, the legitimate government for Czechoslovakia throughout the Second World War.

[thumb|right|President of the puppet government,](/wiki/File:Jozef_Tiso_(Berlin).jpg) [Jozef Tiso](/wiki/Jozef_Tiso) with [Adolf Hitler](/wiki/Adolf_Hitler), 1941. Most Jews were deported from the country and taken to German [death camps](/wiki/Death_camps). Thousands of Jews, however, remained to labor in Slovak work camps in Sereď, Vyhne, and Nováky.[[35]](#cite_note-35) Tiso, through the granting of presidential exceptions, has been credited with saving as many as 40,000 Jews during the war, although other estimates place the figure closer to 4,000 or even 1,000.[[36]](#cite_note-36)Nevertheless, under Tiso's government, the vast majority of Slovakia's Jewish population (between 75,000–105,000 individuals) were murdered.[[37]](#cite_note-37)[[38]](#cite_note-38) Tiso was the only European leader to pay Nazi authorities to deport his country's Jews.[[39]](#cite_note-39)[[40]](#cite_note-40) After it became clear that the Soviet [Red Army](/wiki/Red_Army) was going to push the Nazis out of eastern and central Europe, an anti-Nazi [resistance movement](/wiki/Resistance_movement) launched a fierce armed insurrection, known as the [Slovak National Uprising](/wiki/Slovak_National_Uprising), near the end of summer 1944. A bloody German occupation and a guerilla war followed. Germans and their [local collaborators](/wiki/Hlinka_Guard) completely destroyed 93 villages and massacred thousands of civilians, often hundreds at a time.[[41]](#cite_note-41) The territory of Slovakia was liberated by Soviet and Romanian forces by the end of April 1945.

### Soviet influence and Communist party rule (1948–1989)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

After World War II, Czechoslovakia was reconstituted and [Jozef Tiso](/wiki/Jozef_Tiso) was executed in 1947 for collaboration with the Nazis. More than [80,000 Hungarians](/wiki/Hungarians_in_Slovakia#Population_exchanges)[[42]](#cite_note-42) and 32,000 Germans[[43]](#cite_note-43) were forced to leave Slovakia, in a series of [population transfers](/wiki/Expulsion_of_Germans_after_World_War_II) initiated by the Allies at the [Potsdam Conference](/wiki/Potsdam_Conference).[[44]](#cite_note-44) Out of about 130,000 [Carpathian Germans](/wiki/Carpathian_Germans) in Slovakia in 1938, by 1947 only some 20,000 remained.[[45]](#cite_note-45) As a result of [Yalta Conference](/wiki/Yalta_Conference), Czechoslovakia came under the influence and later under direct occupation of the Soviet Union and its [Warsaw Pact](/wiki/Warsaw_Pact), after a coup in 1948. The country was [invaded](/wiki/Warsaw_Pact_invasion_of_Czechoslovakia) by the Warsaw Pact forces (with the exception of [Romania](/wiki/Romania)) in 1968, ending a [period of liberalization](/wiki/Prague_Spring) under the leadership of [Alexander Dubček](/wiki/Alexander_Dubček). In 1969 Czechoslovakia became a federation of the [Czech Socialist Republic](/wiki/Czech_Socialist_Republic) and the [Slovak Socialist Republic](/wiki/Slovak_Socialist_Republic).

### Establishment of the Slovak Republic (after 1993)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[thumb|right|Slovakia became a member of the European Union in 2004 and signed the](/wiki/File:Tratado_de_Lisboa_13_12_2007_(081).jpg) [Lisbon Treaty](/wiki/Lisbon_Treaty) in 2007. The end of Communist rule in Czechoslovakia in 1989, during the peaceful [Velvet Revolution](/wiki/Velvet_Revolution), was followed once again by the country's dissolution, this time into two [successor states](/wiki/Succession_of_states). The word "socialist" was dropped in the names of the two republics, i.e. the Slovak Socialist Republic was renamed Slovak Republic. In July 1992 Slovakia, led by Prime Minister [Vladimír Mečiar](/wiki/Vladimír_Mečiar), declared itself a sovereign state, meaning that its laws took precedence over those of the federal government. Throughout the autumn of 1992, Mečiar and [Czech Prime Minister](/wiki/List_of_Prime_Ministers_of_the_Czech_Republic) [Václav Klaus](/wiki/Václav_Klaus) negotiated the details for disbanding the federation. In November the federal parliament voted to dissolve the country officially on 31 December 1992.

The Slovak Republic and the [Czech Republic](/wiki/Czech_Republic) went their separate ways after 1 January 1993, an event sometimes called the [Velvet Divorce](/wiki/Dissolution_of_Czechoslovakia).[[46]](#cite_note-46)[[47]](#cite_note-47) Slovakia has remained a close partner with the Czech Republic. Both countries cooperate with Hungary and Poland in the [Visegrád Group](/wiki/Visegrád_Group). Slovakia became a member of NATO on 29 March 2004 and of the European Union on 1 May 2004. On 1 January 2009, Slovakia adopted the Euro as its national currency.

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) Slovakia lies between latitudes [47°](/wiki/47th_parallel_north) and [50° N](/wiki/50th_parallel_north), and longitudes [16°](/wiki/16th_meridian_east) and [23° E](/wiki/23rd_meridian_east).

The Slovak landscape is noted primarily for its mountainous nature, with the [Carpathian Mountains](/wiki/Carpathian_Mountains) extending across most of the northern half of the country. Amongst these [mountain ranges](/wiki/Mountain_range) are the high peaks of the [Fatra-Tatra Area](/wiki/Fatra-Tatra_Area) (including [Tatra Mountains](/wiki/Tatra_Mountains), [Greater Fatra](/wiki/Veľká_Fatra) and [Lesser Fatra](/wiki/Lesser_Fatra)), [Slovak Ore Mountains](/wiki/Slovak_Ore_Mountains), [Slovak Central Mountains](/wiki/Slovak_Central_Mountains) or [Beskids](/wiki/Beskids). The largest lowland is the fertile [Danubian Lowland](/wiki/Danubian_Lowland) in the southwest, followed by the [Eastern Slovak Lowland](/wiki/Eastern_Slovak_Lowland) in the southeast.<ref name=cia>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

### Tatra mountains[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Wide image](/wiki/Template:Wide_image) <gallery mode=packed> Posredni Gerlach.jpg|[Gerlachovský štít](/wiki/Gerlachovský_štít) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)), the highest peak in Slovakia Kriváň.JPG|[Kriváň](/wiki/Kriváň_(peak)) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)), the country's symbol on 1,2 and 5 euro cents STANICA LANOVKY S OBSERVATÓRIOM - výhlad.JPG|View from [Lomnický štít](/wiki/Lomnický_štít) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)) File:2005Lodowy z mnicha.jpg|[Ľadový štít](/wiki/Ľadový_štít) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)) File:Bystra a4.jpg|[Bystrá](/wiki/Bystrá_(mountain)) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)) </gallery>

Tatras, with 29 peaks higher than [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) [AMSL](/wiki/Sea_level#AMSL), are the highest mountain range in the Carpathian Mountains. Tatras occupy an area of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), of which the greater part [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) lies in Slovakia. They are divided into several parts.

To the north, close to the Polish border, are the [High Tatras](/wiki/High_Tatras) which are a popular [hiking](/wiki/Hiking) and [skiing](/wiki/Skiing) destination and home to many scenic lakes and valleys as well as the highest point in Slovakia, the [Gerlachovský štít](/wiki/Gerlachovský_štít) at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) and the country's highly symbolic mountain [Kriváň](/wiki/Kriváň_(peak)). To the west are the [Western Tatras](/wiki/Western_Tatras) with their highest peak of [Bystrá](/wiki/Bystrá_(mountain)) at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) and to the east are the [Belianske Tatras](/wiki/Belianske_Tatras), smallest by area.

Separated from the Tatras proper by the valley of the [Váh](/wiki/Váh) river are the [Low Tatras](/wiki/Low_Tatras), with their highest peak of [Ďumbier](/wiki/Ďumbier) at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).

The Tatra mountain range is represented as one of the three hills on the [coat of arms of Slovakia](/wiki/Coat_of_arms_of_Slovakia).

### National parks[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|right|350px|A](/wiki/File:Slovakia_topo.jpg) [topographic](/wiki/Topography) map of Slovakia There are 9 national parks in Slovakia: {| class="wikitable sortable" |- !Name !Established !Area

|- | [Tatra National Park](/wiki/Tatra_National_Park,_Slovakia) | 1949 | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)

|- | [Low Tatras National Park](/wiki/Low_Tatras_National_Park) | 1978 | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)

|- | [Veľká Fatra National Park](/wiki/Veľká_Fatra_National_Park) | 2002 | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)

|- | [Slovak Karst National Park](/wiki/Slovak_Karst_National_Park) | 2002 | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)

|- | [Poloniny National Park](/wiki/Poloniny_National_Park) | 1997 | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)

|- | [Malá Fatra National Park](/wiki/Malá_Fatra_National_Park) | 1988 | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)

|- | [Muránska planina National Park](/wiki/Muránska_planina_National_Park) | 1998 | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)

|- | [Slovak Paradise National Park](/wiki/Slovak_Paradise_National_Park) | 1988 | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)

|- | [Pieniny National Park](/wiki/Pieniny_National_Park_(Slovakia)) | 1967 | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)

|}

<gallery mode=packed> Nízke Tatry - view from Krúpova hoľa.jpg|[Low Tatras National Park](/wiki/Low_Tatras_National_Park) Velka fatra narodny park.jpg|[Veľká Fatra National Park](/wiki/Veľká_Fatra_National_Park) Pieniny panorama.jpg|[Pieniny National Park](/wiki/Pieniny_National_Park_(Slovakia)) Národní park Malá Fatra, výhled z Chlebu.JPG|[Malá Fatra National Park](/wiki/Malá_Fatra_National_Park) </gallery>

### Caves[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Domica_Cave_20.jpg)[Domica Cave](/wiki/Domica) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Slovakia has hundreds of caves and caverns under its mountains, out of which 15 are open to the public. Most of the caves have stalagmites rising from the ground and stalactites hanging from above. There are currently five Slovak caves under [UNESCO's](/wiki/UNESCO) World Heritage Site status. They are [Dobšinská Ice Cave](/wiki/Dobšinská_Ice_Cave), [Domica](/wiki/Domica), [Gombasek Cave](/wiki/Gombasek_Cave), [Jasovská Cave](/wiki/Jasovská_Cave) and [Ochtinská Aragonite Cave](/wiki/Ochtinská_Aragonite_Cave). Other caves open to the public include [Belianska Cave](/wiki/Belianska_Cave), [Demänovská Cave of Liberty](/wiki/Demänovská_Cave_of_Liberty), [Demänovská Ice Cave](/wiki/Demänovská_Ice_Cave) or [Bystrianska Cave](/wiki/Bystrianska_Cave)

### Rivers[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Belá_river_(Slovakia).jpg) [Belá River](/wiki/Belá_(river)) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Most of the rivers stem in the Slovak mountains. Some only pass through and the others make a natural border with surrounding countries (more than [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)). For example, the [Dunajec](/wiki/Dunajec) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)) to the north, the [Danube](/wiki/Danube_River) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)) to the south or the [Morava](/wiki/Morava_(river)) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)) to the West. The total length of the rivers on Slovak territory is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).

The longest river in Slovakia is the [Váh](/wiki/Vah_River) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)), the shortest is the Čierna voda. Other important and large rivers are the [Myjava](/wiki/Myjava_(river)), the [Nitra](/wiki/Nitra_(river)) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)), the [Orava](/wiki/Orava_(river)), the [Hron](/wiki/Hron) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)), the [Hornád](/wiki/Hornád) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)), the [Slaná](/wiki/Sajó) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)), the [Ipeľ](/wiki/Ipeľ) ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), forming the border with Hungary), the [Bodrog](/wiki/Bodrog), the [Laborec](/wiki/Laborec), the [Latorica](/wiki/Latorica) and the [Ondava](/wiki/Ondava).

The biggest volume of discharge in Slovak rivers is during [spring](/wiki/Spring_(season)), when the snow melts from the mountains. The only exception is the Danube, whose discharge is the greatest during summer when the snow melts in the [Alps](/wiki/Alps). The Danube is the largest river that flows through Slovakia.[[48]](#cite_note-48)

### Lakes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

<gallery mode=packed> Strbske pleso slovakia.jpg|[Štrbské pleso](/wiki/Štrbské_pleso) natural lake is a popular tourist destination in the High Tatras Mengusovská dolina, Vysoké Tatry (37).JPG|[Popradské pleso](/wiki/Popradské_pleso) File:Wielki Hińczowy Staw a1.jpg|[Veľké Hincovo pleso](/wiki/Veľké_Hincovo_pleso) Zabie Stawy z Kopy Popradzkiej.jpg|Žabie pleso in the High Tatras File:Zmarzly Staw Starolesny.jpg|Zbojnícke Ľadové pleso in Veľká Studená dolina </gallery>

There are around 175 naturally formed [tarns](/wiki/Tarn_(lake)) in [High Tatras](/wiki/High_Tatras). With an area of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) and its depth of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), [Veľké Hincovo pleso](/wiki/Veľké_Hincovo_pleso) is the largest and the deepest tarn in Slovakia. Other tarns in the High Tatras include [Štrbské pleso](/wiki/Štrbské_pleso), [Popradské pleso](/wiki/Popradské_pleso), [Skalnaté pleso](/wiki/Skalnaté_pleso), [Zbojnícke pleso](/wiki/Zbojnícke_pleso), [Velické pleso](/wiki/Velické_pleso), [Žabie pleso](/wiki/Žabie_pleso), [Krivánske zelené pleso](/wiki/Krivánske_zelené_pleso) or [Roháčske plesá](/wiki/Roháčske_plesá). Other than in the High Tatras there are [Vrbické pleso](/wiki/Vrbické_pleso) in [Low Tatras](/wiki/Low_Tatras), [Morské oko](/wiki/Morské_oko_(Slovakia)) and [Vinné jazero](/wiki/Vinné_jazero) in [Vihorlat Mountains](/wiki/Vihorlat_Mountains) or [Jezerské jazero](/wiki/Jezerské_jazero) in [Spišská Magura](/wiki/Spišská_Magura).

The largest dams on the river Váh are [Liptovská Mara](/wiki/Liptovská_Mara) and [Sĺňava](/wiki/Sĺňava). Other well-known dams are [Oravská priehrada](/wiki/Oravská_priehrada) in the north, [Zemplínska Šírava](/wiki/Zemplínska_Šírava) and [Domaša](/wiki/Domaša) in the east, [Senecké jazerá](/wiki/Senecké_jazerá), [Zlaté piesky](/wiki/Zlaté_piesky) or [Zelená voda](/wiki/Zelená_voda) in the west.

### Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[thumb|left|200px|Slovakia map of Köppen climate classification.](/wiki/File:Slovakia_map_of_Köppen_climate_classification.svg) The Slovak climate lies between the temperate and [continental climate](/wiki/Köppen_climate_classification#Group_D:_Continental/microthermal_climates) zones with relatively warm summers and cold, cloudy and humid winters. Temperature extremes are between [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) although temperatures below [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) are rare. The weather differs from the mountainous North to the plain South.

The warmest region is [Bratislava](/wiki/Bratislava) and Southern Slovakia where the temperatures may reach [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) in summer, occasionally to [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) in [Hurbanovo](/wiki/Hurbanovo). During night, the temperatures drop to [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). The daily temperatures in winter average in the range of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) to [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). During night it may be freezing, but usually not below [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).

Summer in Northern Slovakia is usually mild with temperatures around [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) (less in the mountains). Winters are colder in the mountains, where the snow usually lasts until March or April and the night temperatures fall to [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) and colder.[[49]](#cite_note-49)

## Biodiversity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[thumb|left|*Rupicapra rupicapra tatrica* in the](/wiki/File:Vysoké_Tatry,_Dolina_Bielej_vody,_cestou_od_Zeleného_plesa_na_Jahňací_štít_(32).JPG) [Tatra Mountains](/wiki/Tatra_Mountains) Slovakia signed the Rio [Convention on Biological Diversity](/wiki/Convention_on_Biological_Diversity) on 19 May 1993, and became a party to the convention on 25 August 1994.[[50]](#cite_note-50) It has subsequently produced a [National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan](/wiki/Biodiversity_action_plan), which was received by the convention on 2 November 1998.[[51]](#cite_note-51) The biodiversity of Slovakia comprises animals (such as annellids, arthropods, molluscs, nematodes and vertebrates), fungi ([Ascomycota](/wiki/Ascomycota), [Basidiomycota](/wiki/Basidiomycota), [Chytridiomycota](/wiki/Chytridiomycota), [Glomeromycota](/wiki/Glomeromycota) and [Zygomycota](/wiki/Zygomycota)), micro-organisms (including [Mycetozoa](/wiki/Mycetozoa)), and plants.

### Fungi[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

Over 4000 species of fungi have been recorded from Slovakia.[[52]](#cite_note-52)[[53]](#cite_note-53) Of these, nearly 1500 are lichen-forming species[[54]](#cite_note-54) Some of these fungi are undoubtedly endemic, but not enough is known to say how many. Of the lichen-forming species, about 40% have been classified as threatened in some way. About 7% are apparently extinct, 9% endangered, 17% vulnerable, and 7% rare. The conservation status of non-lichen-forming fungi in Slovakia is not well documented, but there is a red list for its larger fungi.[[55]](#cite_note-55)

## Politics and government[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [400px|right|thumb|](/wiki/File:Grassalkovich_Palace_(2).jpg)[Grassalkovich Palace](/wiki/Grassalkovich_Palace) in [Bratislava](/wiki/Bratislava) is the seat of the [President of Slovakia](/wiki/President_of_Slovakia)

Slovakia is a [parliamentary democratic](/wiki/Parliamentary_system) republic with a [multi-party system](/wiki/Multi-party_system). The last [parliamentary elections](/wiki/Slovak_parliamentary_election,_2016) were held on 5 March 2016 and two rounds of [presidential elections](/wiki/Slovak_presidential_election,_2014) took place on 15 and 29 March 2014.

The Slovak [head of state](/wiki/Head_of_state) is the president (currently [Andrej Kiska](/wiki/Andrej_Kiska)), elected by direct popular vote for a five-year term. Most [executive](/wiki/Executive_(government)) power lies with the [head of government](/wiki/Head_of_government), the prime minister (currently [Robert Fico](/wiki/Robert_Fico)), who is usually the leader of the winning party, but he/she needs to form a majority coalition in the parliament. The prime minister is appointed by the president. The remainder of the cabinet is appointed by the president on the recommendation of the prime minister.

Slovakia's highest [legislative](/wiki/Legislature) body is the 150-seat [unicameral](/wiki/Unicameralism) [National Council of the Slovak Republic](/wiki/National_Council_of_the_Slovak_Republic) (*Národná rada Slovenskej republiky*). Delegates are elected for a four-year term on the basis of [proportional representation](/wiki/Proportional_representation). Slovakia's highest [judicial body](/wiki/Judiciary) is the [Constitutional Court of Slovakia](/wiki/Constitutional_Court_of_Slovakia) (*Ústavný súd*), which rules on constitutional issues. The 13 members of this court are appointed by the president from a slate of candidates nominated by parliament.

Slovakia has been a member state of the European Union and [NATO](/wiki/NATO) since 2004. As a member of the United Nations (since 1993), Slovakia was, on 10 October 2005, elected to a two-year term on the [UN Security Council](/wiki/United_Nations_Security_Council) from 2006 to 2007. Slovakia is also a member of WTO, OECD, [OSCE](/wiki/Organization_for_Security_and_Co-operation_in_Europe), and other international organizations.

The [Constitution of the Slovak Republic](/wiki/Constitution_of_Slovakia) was ratified 1 September 1992, and became effective 1 January 1993). It was amended in September 1998 to allow [direct election](/wiki/Direct_election) of the president and again in February 2001 due to EU admission requirements. The [civil law system](/wiki/Civil_law_(legal_system)) is based on Austro-Hungarian codes. The [legal code](/wiki/Code_(law)) was modified to comply with the obligations of [Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe](/wiki/Organization_for_Security_and_Co-operation_in_Europe) (OSCE) and to expunge the [Marxist–Leninist](/wiki/Marxism–Leninism) [legal theory](/wiki/Law). Slovakia accepts the compulsory [International Court of Justice](/wiki/International_Court_of_Justice) jurisdiction with reservations.

The president is the head of state and the formal head of the executive, though with very limited powers. The president is elected by direct, popular vote under the [two-round system](/wiki/Two-round_system) for a five-year term.

Following National Council elections, the leader of the [majority party](/wiki/Two-party_system) or the leader of the majority coalition is usually appointed prime minister by the president. Cabinet appointed by the president on the recommendation of the prime minister has to receive the majority in the parliament.

[thumb|The](/wiki/File:Bratislava_Narodna_Rada_R01.jpg) [National Council](/wiki/National_Council_(Slovakia)) building in [Bratislava](/wiki/Bratislava)

[Template:Office-table](/wiki/Template:Office-table) |[President](/wiki/List_of_Presidents_of_Slovakia) |[Andrej Kiska](/wiki/Andrej_Kiska) |[Independent](/wiki/Independent_(politician)) |15 June 2014 |- |[Prime Minister](/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Slovakia) |[Robert Fico](/wiki/Robert_Fico) |[SMER-SD](/wiki/Direction_–_Social_Democracy) |4 April 2012 |- |Speaker of the National Council of the Slovak Republic |[Andrej Danko](/wiki/Andrej_Danko) |[SNS](/wiki/Slovak_National_Party) |23 March 2016 |- |Deputy Speakers of the National Council of the Slovak Republic |[Béla Bugár](/wiki/Béla_Bugár)   
[Martin Glváč](/wiki/Martin_Glváč)  
[Andrej Hrnčiar](/wiki/Andrej_Hrnčiar)  
[Lucia Nicholsonová](/wiki/Lucia_Nicholsonová) |[Most–Híd](/wiki/Most–Híd)   
[SMER-SD](/wiki/Direction_–_Social_Democracy)  
[#SIEŤ](/wiki/#SIEŤ)  
[Freedom and Solidarity](/wiki/Freedom_and_Solidarity) |23 March 2016  
23 March 2016  
23 March 2016  
23 March 2016 |}

### Foreign relations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Slovak Embassy in](/wiki/File:SlovakianEmbassyWashingtonDC01.jpg) [Washington D.C.](/wiki/Washington_D.C.) Slovakia has been a member of [European Union](/wiki/European_Union) since 2004. Slovakia has been an active participant in U.S.- and NATO-led military actions. There is a joint Czech-Slovak peacekeeping force in Kosovo.

Slovakia is a member of the [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations) and participates in its specialized agencies. It is a member of the [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe](/wiki/Organization_for_Security_and_Cooperation_in_Europe) (OSCE), the [World Trade Organization](/wiki/World_Trade_Organization) (WTO), and the [OECD](/wiki/OECD). It also is part of the [Visegrad Four](/wiki/Visegrad_Four) (Slovakia, [Hungary](/wiki/Hungary), [Czech Republic](/wiki/Czech_Republic), and [Poland](/wiki/Poland)), a forum for discussing areas of common concern.

The Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic entered into a [Customs Union](/wiki/Customs_Union) upon the division of Czechoslovakia in 1993, which facilitates a relatively free flow of goods and services. Slovakia maintains [diplomatic relations](/wiki/Diplomacy) with 134 countries, primarily through its [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](/wiki/Ministry_of_Foreign_Affairs_(Slovakia)). There are 44 embassies and 35 honorary consulates in [Bratislava](/wiki/Bratislava).

### Military[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Multiple image](/wiki/Template:Multiple_image) The Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic number 14,000 uniformed personnel.[[56]](#cite_note-56) Slovakia joined [NATO](/wiki/NATO) in March 2004.[[57]](#cite_note-57) From 2006 the army transformed into a fully professional organization and compulsory military service was abolished.

Slovak [Ground Forces](/wiki/Ground_Forces_of_the_Slovak_Republic) are made up of two active [mechanized infantry](/wiki/Mechanized_infantry) [brigades](/wiki/Brigades). The [Air and Air Defence Forces](/wiki/Slovak_Air_Force) comprise one [wing](/wiki/Wing_(military_aviation_unit)) of [fighters](/wiki/Fighter_aircraft), one wing of utility [helicopters](/wiki/Helicopter), and one SAM brigade. Training and support forces comprise a National Support Element (Multifunctional Battalion, Transport Battalion, Repair Battalion), a garrison force of the capital city Bratislava, as well as a training battalion, and various logistics and communication and information bases. Miscellaneous forces under the direct command of the [General Staff](/wiki/General_Staff) include the [5th Special Forces Regiment](/wiki/5th_Special_Forces_Regiment_(Slovakia)).

### Human rights[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

The U.S. State Department in 2010 reported:

"The government generally respected the human rights of its citizens; however, there were problems in some areas. Notable human rights problems included some continuing reports of police mistreatment of Romani suspects and lengthy pretrial detention; restrictions on freedom of religion; concerns about the integrity of the judiciary, corruption in national government, local government, and government health services; violence against women and children; trafficking in women and children; and societal discrimination and violence against Roma and other minorities."[[58]](#cite_note-58)

Human rights in Slovakia are guaranteed by the [Constitution of Slovakia](/wiki/Constitution_of_Slovakia) from the year 1992 and by multiple international laws signed in Slovakia between 1948 and 2006.[[59]](#cite_note-59) Slovakia [excludes multiple citizenships](/wiki/Slovak_nationality_law).

### Administrative divisions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) As for [administrative division](/wiki/Administrative_division), Slovakia is subdivided into 8 [*krajov*](/wiki/Kraj) (singular – *kraj*, usually translated as "region"), each of which is named after its principal city. Regions have enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy since 2002. Their [self-governing](/wiki/Self-governance) bodies are referred to as Self-governing (or autonomous) Regions (sg. *samosprávny kraj*, pl. *samosprávne kraje*) or Upper-Tier Territorial Units (sg. *vyšší územný celok*, pl. *vyššie územné celky*, abbr. VÚC).

The "kraje" are subdivided into many [*okresy*](/wiki/Okres) (sg. *okres*, usually translated as districts). Slovakia currently has 79 districts.

In terms of economics and [unemployment rate](/wiki/Unemployment), the western regions are richer than eastern regions; however the relative difference is no bigger than in most EU countries having regional differences.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [Template:Heraldic map of Slovakia](/wiki/Template:Heraldic_map_of_Slovakia) | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Name in English** | **Name in Slovak** | **Administrative seat** | **Population (2011)** | | [Bratislava Region](/wiki/Bratislava_Region) | *Bratislavský kraj* | [Bratislava](/wiki/Bratislava) | align=right| 602,436 | | [Trnava Region](/wiki/Trnava_Region) | *Trnavský kraj* | [Trnava](/wiki/Trnava) | align=right| 554,741 | | [Nitra Region](/wiki/Nitra_Region) | *Nitriansky kraj* | [Nitra](/wiki/Nitra) | align=right| 689,867 | | [Trenčín Region](/wiki/Trenčín_Region) | *Trenčiansky kraj* | [Trenčín](/wiki/Trenčín) | align=right| 594,328 | | [Banská Bystrica Region](/wiki/Banská_Bystrica_Region) | *Banskobystrický kraj* | [Banská Bystrica](/wiki/Banská_Bystrica) | align=right| 660,563 | | [Žilina Region](/wiki/Žilina_Region) | *Žilinský kraj* | [Žilina](/wiki/Žilina) | align=right| 688,851 | | [Košice Region](/wiki/Košice_Region) | *Košický kraj* | [Košice](/wiki/Košice) | align=right| 791,723 | | [Prešov Region](/wiki/Prešov_Region) | *Prešovský kraj* | [Prešov](/wiki/Prešov) | align=right| 814,527 | |

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) [thumb|350px|A graphical depiction of Slovakia's product exports in 28 color-coded categories.](/wiki/File:Slovakia_Export_Treemap.png) [thumb|upright|Slovakia is part of the](/wiki/File:Eurozone.svg) [Schengen Area](/wiki/Schengen_Area), the EU single market, and since 2009, the [Eurozone](/wiki/Eurozone) (dark blue)

The Slovak economy is a developed, [high-income](/wiki/World_Bank_high-income_economy)[[60]](#cite_note-60) economy, with the GDP per capita equaling to 76% of the average of the European Union in 2014.[[61]](#cite_note-61) The country used to be dubbed the "[Tatra Tiger](/wiki/Tatra_Tiger)" before the [recent global economic crisis](/wiki/Late-2000s_financial_crisis). Slovakia successfully transformed from a centrally [planned economy](/wiki/Planned_economy) to a market-driven economy. Major [privatizations](/wiki/Privatization) are nearly complete, the banking sector is almost completely in private hands, and foreign investment has risen.

Before the [financial crisis of 2007–08](/wiki/Financial_crisis_of_2007–08), Slovakia had experienced high and sustained economic growth. In 2007, 2008 and 2010 (with [GDP](/wiki/Gross_domestic_product) growth of 10.5%, 6% and 4% retrospectively), Slovakia was the fastest growing economy in the [European Union](/wiki/European_Union).[[62]](#cite_note-62) In 2011 and 2012, Slovakia was the 2nd fastest growing [Eurozone](/wiki/Eurozone) member after [Estonia](/wiki/Estonia). In 2012, more than 75% of Slovak exports went to, and more than 50% of Slovak imports came from, other European Union member states.[[63]](#cite_note-63) The ratio of government debt to GDP in Slovakia reached 58% by the end of 2013.[[64]](#cite_note-64) Unemployment, peaking at 19% at the end of 1999, decreased to 7.5% in October 2008 according to the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.[[65]](#cite_note-65) In addition to economic growth, migration of workers to other EU countries also contributed to this reduction. According to [Eurostat](/wiki/Eurostat), which uses a calculation method different from that of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, the unemployment rate in April 2015 is at 12.1% [[66]](#cite_note-66) the sixth highest in the Eurozone.

[thumb|left|160px|National Bank of Slovakia in](/wiki/File:Bratislava_Central_Bank3.jpg) [Bratislava](/wiki/Bratislava)

Inflation dropped from an average annual rate of 12% in 2000 to just 3.3% in 2002, an election year, but it rose again in 2003–2004 because of rising labour costs and taxes. It reached only 1% in 2010 which is the lowest recorded rate since 1993.[[67]](#cite_note-67) The rate was at 4% in 2011.

Slovakia adopted the Euro currency on 1 January 2009 as the 16th member of the Eurozone. The euro in Slovakia was approved by [the European commission](/wiki/European_Commission) on 7 May 2008. The [Slovak koruna](/wiki/Slovak_koruna) was revalued on 28 May 2008 to 30.126 for 1 euro,[[68]](#cite_note-68) which was also the exchange rate for the euro.[[69]](#cite_note-69) Slovakia is an attractive country for [foreign investors](/wiki/Investment) mainly because of its low wages, low tax rates and well educated [labour force](/wiki/Labor_force). In recent years, Slovakia has been pursuing a policy of encouraging foreign investment. [FDI](/wiki/Foreign_direct_investment) inflow grew more than 600% from 2000 and cumulatively reached an all-time high of $17.3 billion in 2006, or around $22,000 per capita by the end of 2008.

Slovakia, along with other [post-communist](/wiki/Post-Communism) countries, still faces major challenges in the field of the [knowledge economy](/wiki/Knowledge_economy). The business and public [research and development](/wiki/Research_and_development) expenditures are well below the EU average. The [Programme for International Student Assessment](/wiki/Programme_for_International_Student_Assessment), coordinated by the [OECD](/wiki/Organisation_for_Economic_Co-operation_and_Development), currently ranks [Slovak secondary education](/wiki/Education_in_Slovakia) the 30th in the world (placing it just below the United States and just above Spain).[[70]](#cite_note-70) In March 2008, the Ministry of Finance announced that Slovakia's economy is developed enough to stop being an aid receiver from the [World Bank](/wiki/World_Bank). Slovakia became an aid provider at the end of 2008.[[71]](#cite_note-71)

### Industry[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[thumb|right|Refinery of Slovnaft in Bratislava](/wiki/File:Refinery_of_Slovnaft_in_Bratislava,_view_from_Nový_most_viewpoint.jpg) Although Slovakia's GDP comes mainly from the tertiary (services) sector, the industrial sector also plays an important role within its economy. The main industry sectors are [car](/wiki/Automobile) manufacturing and [electrical engineering](/wiki/Electrical_engineering). Since 2007, Slovakia has been the world's largest producer of cars per capita,<ref name=Kia>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> with a total of 571,071 cars manufactured in the country in 2007 alone.[[72]](#cite_note-72) There are currently three automobile assembly plants: [Volkswagen's](/wiki/Volkswagen) in [Bratislava](/wiki/Bratislava), [PSA Peugeot Citroën's](/wiki/PSA_Peugeot_Citroën) in [Trnava](/wiki/Trnava) and [Kia Motors'](/wiki/Kia_Motors) [Žilina Plant](/wiki/Kia_Design_and_Manufacturing_Facilities#Žilina_Plant). In 2018, [Jaguar Land Rover](/wiki/Jaguar_Land_Rover) is set to open the country's fourth automobile assembly plant in [Nitra](/wiki/Nitra).[[73]](#cite_note-73) From electrical engineering companies, [Foxconn](/wiki/Foxconn) has a factory at [Nitra](/wiki/Nitra) for [LCD TV](/wiki/LCD_television) manufacturing, [Samsung](/wiki/Samsung_Group) at [Galanta](/wiki/Galanta) for [computer monitors](/wiki/Computer_monitor) and television sets manufacturing.

[ESET](/wiki/ESET) is an IT security company from Bratislava with more than 500 employees worldwide at present. Their branch offices are in the United States, [Ireland](/wiki/Ireland), United Kingdom, [Argentina](/wiki/Argentina), [Czech Republic](/wiki/Czech_Republic), [Singapore](/wiki/Singapore) and [Poland](/wiki/Poland).[[74]](#cite_note-74) Bratislava's geographical position in Central Europe has long made Bratislava a crossroads for [international trade](/wiki/International_trade) traffic.[[75]](#cite_note-75)[[76]](#cite_note-76) Various ancient [trade routes](/wiki/Trade_route), such as the [Amber Road](/wiki/Amber_Road) and the [Danube](/wiki/Danube) waterway, have crossed territory of present-day Bratislava. Today, Bratislava is the road, railway, waterway and airway hub.[[77]](#cite_note-77)

### Energy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]

[thumb|left|Wind power stations in](/wiki/File:VTE_cerova.jpg) [Cerová](/wiki/Cerová) [thumb|right|Nuclear Power Plant](/wiki/File:Jaslovske_Bohunice_Power_Plant_1.JPG) [Jaslovské Bohunice](/wiki/Jaslovské_Bohunice_Nuclear_Power_Plant) In 2012, Slovakia produced a total of 28 393 [GWh](/wiki/Kilowatt_hour#Multiples) of [electricity](/wiki/Electricity) while at the same time consumed 28 786 GWh. The slightly higher level of consumption than the capacity of production (- 393 GWh) meant the country was not self-sufficient in energy sourcing. Slovakia imported electricity mainly from the [Czech Republic](/wiki/Czech_Republic) (9 961 GWh – 73.6% of total import) and exported mainly to [Hungary](/wiki/Hungary) (10 231 GWh – 78.2% of total export).

[Nuclear energy](/wiki/Nuclear_power) accounts for 53.8% of total electricity production in Slovakia, followed by 18.1% of [thermal power](/wiki/Thermal_power_station) energy, 15.1% by [hydro power](/wiki/Hydro_power) energy, 2% by [solar energy](/wiki/Solar_energy), 9.6% by other sources and the rest 1.4% is imported.[[78]](#cite_note-78) The two nuclear power-plants in Slovakia are in [Jaslovské Bohunice](/wiki/Jaslovské_Bohunice_Nuclear_Power_Plant) and [Mochovce](/wiki/Mochovce_Nuclear_Power_Plant), each of them containing two operating reactors. Prior to the accession of Slovakia to the EU in 2004, the government agreed to turn-off the V1 block of [Jaslovské Bohunice power-plant](/wiki/Jaslovské_Bohunice_Nuclear_Power_Plant), built by [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union) in 1978. After deactivating the last of the two reactors of the V1 block in 2008, Slovakia instantly stopped being self-dependent in energy production. Currently there is another block (V2) with two active reactors in [Jaslovské Bohunice](/wiki/Jaslovské_Bohunice_Nuclear_Power_Plant). It is scheduled for decommissioning in 2025. The nuclear power production in Slovakia sometimes draws attention to [Austrian](/wiki/Austria) green-energy activists who occasionally organize protests and block the borders between the two countries.

### Transportation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [left|thumb|A RegioJet train passes by Strečno in central Slovakia](/wiki/File:RegioJet_class_193_Strečno.jpg) [300px|thumb|Highway network in Slovakia prior to May 2016](/wiki/File:Highways_in_Slovakia.svg) [[79]](#cite_note-79) [thumb|A tram in the northern town of Vysoké Tatry](/wiki/File:Vysoké_Tatry,_Starý_Smokovec,_nádraží,_jednotka_425.965.jpg) There are four main highways D1 to D4 and eight express ways R1 to R8. Most of them are still in the planning phase.

The [D1 motorway](/wiki/Motorway_D1_(Slovakia)) connects Bratislava to [Trnava](/wiki/Trnava), [Nitra](/wiki/Nitra), [Trenčín](/wiki/Trenčín), [Žilina](/wiki/Žilina) and beyond, while the [D2 motorway](/wiki/Motorway_D2_(Slovakia)) connects it to [Prague](/wiki/Prague), [Brno](/wiki/Brno) and [Budapest](/wiki/Budapest) in the north-south direction. The [D4 motorway](/wiki/Motorway_D4_(Slovakia)) (an outer bypass), which would ease the pressure on Bratislava's highway system, is mostly at the planning stage.

The [A6 motorway](/wiki/Nordostautobahn) to [Vienna](/wiki/Vienna) connects Slovakia directly to the Austrian motorway system and was opened on 19 November 2007.[[80]](#cite_note-80) In Bratislava there are currently five bridges standing over the [Danube](/wiki/Danube) (ordered by the flow of the river): [Lafranconi Bridge](/wiki/Lafranconi_Bridge), [Nový Most](/wiki/Nový_Most) (The New Bridge), [Starý most](/wiki/Starý_most_(Bratislava)) (The Old Bridge), [Most Apollo](/wiki/Apollo_Bridge) and [Prístavný most](/wiki/Prístavný_most) (The Harbor Bridge).

The city's inner network of roadways is made on the radial-circular shape. Nowadays, the city experiences a sharp increase in the road traffic, increasing pressure on the road network. There are about 200,000 registered cars in Bratislava, (approximately 2 inhabitants per car).[[77]](#cite_note-77) Bratislava's [M. R. Štefánik Airport](/wiki/M. R. Štefánik_Airport) is the main [international airport](/wiki/International_airport) in Slovakia. It is located [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) northeast of the city centre. It serves civil and governmental, scheduled and unscheduled domestic and international flights. The current runways support the landing of all common types of aircraft currently used. The airport has enjoyed rapidly growing passenger traffic in recent years; it served 279,028 passengers in 2000, 1,937,642 in 2006 and 2,024,142 in 2007.[[81]](#cite_note-81) Smaller airports served by passenger airlines include those in [Košice](/wiki/Košice) and [Poprad](/wiki/Poprad).

The [Port of Bratislava](/wiki/Port_of_Bratislava) is one of the two international [river ports](/wiki/Port) in Slovakia. The port connects Bratislava to international boat traffic, especially the interconnection from the [North Sea](/wiki/North_Sea) to the [Black Sea](/wiki/Black_Sea) via the [Rhine-Main-Danube Canal](/wiki/Rhine–Main–Danube_Canal). Additionally, tourist lines operate from Bratislava's passenger port, including routes to [Devín](/wiki/Devín), [Vienna](/wiki/Vienna) and elsewhere.

### Tourism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=33)]

<gallery mode=packed> [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Bratislava, Hrad, Slovensko.jpg|[Bratislava Castle](/wiki/Bratislava_Castle) Trenciansky hrad (2007).jpg|[Trenčín Castle](/wiki/Trenčín_Castle) Spissky Hrad-LV-2.jpg|[Spiš Castle](/wiki/Spiš_Castle) Castle Bojnice SK.jpg|[Bojnice Castle](/wiki/Bojnice_Castle) Slovakia Oravsky Podzamok.jpg|[Orava Castle](/wiki/Orava_Castle) </gallery> [thumb|right|Cable cars at](/wiki/File:Jasná_Ski_Resort_-_gondola_lift_Kosodrevina_-_Chopok_(4).jpg) [Jasná](/wiki/Jasná) in the Tatra Mountains [thumb|The center of](/wiki/File:Bardejov10Slovakia6.JPG) [Bardejov](/wiki/Bardejov) – a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](/wiki/UNESCO_World_Heritage_Site)

Slovakia features natural landscapes, mountains, [caves](/wiki/List_of_caves_in_Slovakia), medieval [castles](/wiki/List_of_castles_in_Slovakia) and towns, folk architecture, spas and [ski resorts](/wiki/Ski_and_winter_sports_in_Slovakia). More than 1.6 million people visited Slovakia in 2006, and the most attractive destinations are the capital of [Bratislava](/wiki/Bratislava) and the [High Tatras](/wiki/High_Tatras).[[82]](#cite_note-82) Most visitors come from the Czech Republic (about 26%), Poland (15%) and Germany (11%).[[83]](#cite_note-83) Typical souvenirs from Slovakia are dolls dressed in folk costumes, ceramic objects, crystal glass, carved wooden figures, [črpáks](/wiki/Črpák) (wooden pitchers), [fujaras](/wiki/Fujara) (a [folk instrument](/wiki/Folk_instrument) on the UNESCO list) and [valaškas](/wiki/Valaška) (a decorated folk hatchet) and above all products made from [corn husks](/wiki/Husk) and wire, notably human figures.

Souvenirs can be bought in the shops run by the state organization ÚĽUV (*Ústredie ľudovej umeleckej výroby* – Center of [Folk Art](/wiki/Folk_art) Production). *Dielo* shop chain sells works of Slovak artists and craftsmen. These shops are mostly found in towns and cities.

Prices of imported products are generally the same as in the neighboring countries, whereas prices of local products and services, especially food, are usually lower.

### Science[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=34)]

The [Slovak Academy of Sciences](/wiki/Slovak_Academy_of_Sciences) has been the most important scientific and research institution in the country since 1953. Slovaks have made notable scientific and technical contributions during the history. The list of important scientists and their inventions include:

* [Jozef Murgaš](/wiki/Jozef_Murgaš) (1864–1929), contributed to development of [wireless telegraphy](/wiki/Wireless_telegraphy)[[84]](#cite_note-84)\* [Ján Bahýľ](/wiki/Ján_Bahýľ) (1856–1916), constructed the first motor-driven [helicopter](/wiki/Helicopter) (four years before [Bréguet](/wiki/Breguet_Aviation) and [Cornu](/wiki/Paul_Cornu))[[85]](#cite_note-85)\* [Štefan Banič](/wiki/Štefan_Banič) (1870–1941), constructed the first actively used parachute[[86]](#cite_note-86)\* [Aurel Stodola](/wiki/Aurel_Stodola) (1859–1942), created a bionic arm in 1916 and pioneered steam and gas [turbines](/wiki/Turbine)[[87]](#cite_note-87)\* [John Dopyera](/wiki/John_Dopyera) (1893–1988), constructed a [resonator guitar](/wiki/Resonator_guitar), an important contribution to the development of acoustic [string instrument](/wiki/String_instrument)[[88]](#cite_note-88)\* [Eugen Čerňan](/wiki/Eugene_Cernan) (1934), American astronaut of Slovak origin was the last man to visit the Moon
* [Ivan Bella](/wiki/Ivan_Bella) (1964), first Slovak in space,[[89]](#cite_note-89) having participated in a 9-day joint Russian-French-Slovak mission on the [space station](/wiki/Space_station) [Mir](/wiki/Mir) in 1999.
* [Daniel Gajdusek](/wiki/Daniel_Carleton_Gajdusek) (1923–2008), (of Slovak ancestry) won the [Nobel Prize](/wiki/Nobel_Prize) in Physiology or Medicine in 1976 for work on [Kuru](/wiki/Kuru_(disease))[[90]](#cite_note-90)

## Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=35)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) [Template:Largest cities of Slovakia](/wiki/Template:Largest_cities_of_Slovakia) [thumb|left|Ethnic makeup of Slovakia according to Census 2011](/wiki/File:Slovakia_2011_Ethnic.png) According to the 2011 census,[[91]](#cite_note-91) the majority of the inhabitants of Slovakia are [Slovaks](/wiki/Slovaks) (80.7%). [Hungarians](/wiki/Hungarians_in_Slovakia) are the largest [ethnic minority](/wiki/Minority_group) (8.5%). Other [ethnic groups](/wiki/Ethnic_group) include [Roma](/wiki/Romani_people) (2%),[[92]](#cite_note-92) [Czechs](/wiki/Czechs) (0.6%), [Rusyns](/wiki/Rusyns) (0.6%) and others or unspecified (7.6%).<ref name= gov-stats>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Unofficial estimates on the [Roma](/wiki/Roma_in_Slovakia) population are much higher, around 5.6%.[[93]](#cite_note-93) In 2007 Slovakia was estimated to have a [total fertility rate](/wiki/Total_fertility_rate) of 1.33[[94]](#cite_note-94) (i.e., the average woman will have 1.33 children in her lifetime), which is significantly below the [replacement level](/wiki/Sub-replacement_fertility) and is one of the lowest rates among [EU countries](/wiki/Member_State_of_the_European_Union).

The largest waves of Slovak emigration occurred in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In the 1990 U.S. census, 1.8 million people self-identified as having Slovak ancestry.[[95]](#cite_note-95) [thumb|250px|The](/wiki/File:Slovak_alphabet.png) [Slovak alphabet](/wiki/Slovak_alphabet) has 46 characters, of which 3 are [digraphs](/wiki/Digraph_(orthography)) and 18 contain [diacritics](/wiki/Diacritic).

### Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=36)]

[thumb|left|Linguistic makeup of Slovakia, according to Census 2011.](/wiki/File:Slovakia_2011_Language.png) The [official language](/wiki/Official_language) is [Slovak](/wiki/Slovak_language), a member of the [Slavic language family](/wiki/Slavic_languages). [Hungarian](/wiki/Hungarian_language) is widely spoken in the southern regions, and [Rusyn](/wiki/Rusyn_language) is used in some parts of the Northeast. [Minority languages](/wiki/Minority_language) hold co-official status in the municipalities in which the size of the minority population meets the legal threshold of 20%.[[96]](#cite_note-96) Slovakia is ranked among the top EU countries regarding the knowledge of foreign languages. In 2007, 68% of the population aged from 25 to 64 years claimed to speak two or more foreign languages, finishing 2nd highest in the European Union. The best known foreign language in Slovakia is [Czech](/wiki/Czech_language). [Eurostat](/wiki/Eurostat) report also shows that 98.3% of Slovak students in the upper secondary education take on two foreign languages, ranking highly over the average 60.1% in the European Union.[[97]](#cite_note-97) The deaf community uses the [Slovak Sign Language](/wiki/Slovak_Sign_Language). Even though spoken Czech and Slovak are similar, the Slovak Sign language is not particularly close to [Czech Sign Language](/wiki/Czech_Sign_Language).

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=37)]

[thumb|right|150px|](/wiki/File:Dóm_sv._Alžbety,_Košice.jpg)[St. Elisabeth Cathedral](/wiki/St._Elisabeth_Cathedral) in [Košice](/wiki/Košice) is Slovakia's largest church[[98]](#cite_note-98) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) The [Slovak constitution](/wiki/Constitution_of_Slovakia) guarantees [freedom of religion](/wiki/Freedom_of_religion). In 2011, 62.0% of Slovaks identified themselves as [Roman Catholics](/wiki/Roman_Catholic), 8.9% as [Protestants](/wiki/Protestant), 3.8% as [Greek Catholics](/wiki/Slovak_Greek_Catholic_Church), 0.9% as [Orthodox](/wiki/Orthodox_Christianity), 13.4% identified themselves as [atheists](/wiki/Atheism) and 10.6% did not answer the question about their belief.[[99]](#cite_note-99) In 2004, about one third of the then church members regularly attended church services.[[100]](#cite_note-100) The [Slovak Greek Catholic Church](/wiki/Slovak_Greek_Catholic_Church) is an Eastern rite [sui iuris](/wiki/Sui_iuris) Catholic Church. The pre–World War II population of the country included an estimated 90,000 Jews (1.6% of the population). After the genocidal policies of the Nazi era, only about 2,300 Jews remain today (0.04% of the population).[[101]](#cite_note-101)

## Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=38)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Expand section](/wiki/Template:Expand_section) Education in Slovakia is compulsory from age 6 to 16. The education system consists of elementary school which is divided into two parts, first grade(age 6–10) second grade(age 10–15) which is finished by taking nationwide testing called Monitor from slovak language and math. Students are then obliged to take one year in high school. They are able to pick from Gymnasium which is seen as the highest level of high-school education, specialised high school with bacalaureat and specialised highschool without bacalaureat. Schools with bacalaureat take 5 years to complete while the ones without usually take less. After finishing high school students can go to university.

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=39)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

### Folk tradition[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=40)]

[thumb|left|Slovak folk dancing at *Hontianska paráda* a folklore festival in the village of](/wiki/File:Hontianska_parada_2003-DSC01328.JPG) [Hrušov](/wiki/Hrušov,_Veľký_Krtíš_District) [thumb|upright|Slovak women in traditional dress, demonstrating a traditional method of grinding grain into flour.](/wiki/File:Hontianska_parada_2003-DSC01152.JPG) [|thumb|This wooden church in](/wiki/File:Bodruzal_cerkov06017008.JPG) [Bodružal](/wiki/Bodružal) is an example of Rusyn folk architecture and is a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](/wiki/UNESCO_World_Heritage_Site).

[Folk tradition](/wiki/Folk_tradition) has rooted strongly in Slovakia and is reflected in literature, music, dance and architecture. The prime example is a Slovak national anthem, *"*[*Nad Tatrou sa blýska*](/wiki/Nad_Tatrou_sa_blýska)*"*, which is based on a melody from *"*[*Kopala studienku*](/wiki/Kopala_studienku)*"* folk song.

Manifestation of Slovak folklore culture is the "*Východná*" Folklore Festival. It is the oldest and largest nationwide festival with international participation,[[102]](#cite_note-102) which takes place in [Východná](/wiki/Východná) annually. Slovakia is usually represented by many groups but mainly by SĽUK (*Slovenský ľudový umelecký kolektív – Slovak folk art collective*). SĽUK is the largest Slovak folk art group, trying to preserve the folklore tradition.

An example of wooden folk architecture in Slovakia can be seen in the well preserved village of [Vlkolínec](/wiki/Vlkolínec) which has been the [UNESCO World Heritage Site](/wiki/UNESCO_World_Heritage_Site) since 1993.[[103]](#cite_note-103) The eastern part of Slovakia, particularly the region of [Spiš](/wiki/Spiš), preserves the world's most remarkable folk wooden churches. Most of them are protected by Slovak law as [cultural heritage](/wiki/Cultural_heritage), but some of them are on the [UNESCO](/wiki/UNESCO) list too, in Bodružal, Hervartov, Ladomirová and Ruská Bystrá.

The best known Slovak hero, found in many folk [mythologies](/wiki/Mythologies), is [Juraj Jánošík](/wiki/Juraj_Jánošík) (1688–1713) (the Slovak equivalent of [Robin Hood](/wiki/Robin_Hood)). The legend says he was taking from the rich and giving to the poor. Jánošík's life was depicted in a list of literature works and many movies throughout the 20th century. One of the most popular is a [film](/wiki/Film) *Jánošík* directed by [Martin Frič](/wiki/Martin_Frič) in 1935.[[104]](#cite_note-104)

### Art[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=41)]

[Visual art](/wiki/Visual_art) in Slovakia is represented through [painting](/wiki/Painting), [drawing](/wiki/Drawing), [printmaking](/wiki/Printmaking), [illustration](/wiki/Illustration), [arts and crafts](/wiki/Handicraft), [sculpture](/wiki/Sculpture), [photography](/wiki/Photography) or [conceptual art](/wiki/Conceptual_art). The supreme and central gallery institution displaying Slovak art nowadays is the [Slovak National Gallery](/wiki/Slovak_National_Gallery),[[105]](#cite_note-105) established in 1949.

Medieval time

[thumb|right|German painting of a cathedral in Košice, 1900](/wiki/File:Kaschau_Dom_um_1900.jpg)

Well-known sculptor of the 15th century Late [Gothic](/wiki/Gothic_art) era in Slovakia is the [*Master Paul of Levoča*](/wiki/Master_Paul_of_Levoča). Although his work can be found in many places ([Banská Bystrica](/wiki/Banská_Bystrica), [Spišská Sobota](/wiki/Spišská_Sobota) or Lomnička), his most famous is a wooden [altar](/wiki/Altar) in the Church of St. Jacob in [Levoča](/wiki/Levoča). With its height of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), it is the tallest Gothic altar in the world.[[106]](#cite_note-106) Well-known painters of that time are the *Master from Okoličné*, author of the altar in [St. Elisabeth Cathedral](/wiki/St._Elisabeth_Cathedral) in [Košice](/wiki/Košice), and [*Master M.S.*](/wiki/Master_MS) of the 16th century, whose statue of Madonna can be seen in the Saint Catherine Church in [Banská Štiavnica](/wiki/Banská_Štiavnica). The statues of Saint Catherine and Saint Barbara are in the art gallery of the Slovak Mining Museum in Banská Štiavnica.

19th century

The 19th century in Slovakia was a turbulent period of time when Slovaks began experiencing their national revival in the kingdom of [Austria-Hungary](/wiki/Austria-Hungary). [Romanticism](/wiki/Romanticism) of [Jozef B. Klemens](/wiki/Jozef_B._Klemens) (1817–1883) and [Peter Michal Bohúň](/wiki/Peter_Michal_Bohúň) (1822–1879) was represented in the portrait paintings of Slovak national protagonists of that time (Štefan Moyses, [Andrej Sládkovič](/wiki/Andrej_Sládkovič), Karol Kuzmány or [Ľudovít Štúr](/wiki/Ľudovít_Štúr)), depicting the revolutionary atmosphere of the 1840s in the background. Other important painters of the 19th century were mainly [portraitists](/wiki/Portraitist) Vojtech Angyal, Dominik Skutecký (1849–1921), J. Štetka, E. Ballo, Jozef Hanula (1863–1944), [landscapist](/wiki/Landscapist) Karol Miloslav Lehotský (1846–1915) and [impressionists](/wiki/Impressionist) [Maximilián Schurmann](/wiki/Maximilián_Schurmann) (1863–1944) and P. Kern.

[Sculpture](/wiki/Sculpture) in the 19th century was dominated by a sacral sculptor Vavrinec Dunajský (1784–1833) and his son Ladislav Dunajský, author of [Ján Hollý](/wiki/Ján_Hollý) memorial in [Dobrá Voda](/wiki/Dobrá_Voda,_Trnava_District). Another important sculptors were [Ján Koniarek](/wiki/Ján_Koniarek) (1878–1952), [Alajos Stróbl](/wiki/Alajos_Stróbl) (1856–1926), [János Fadrusz](/wiki/János_Fadrusz) (1858–1903) and [Alojz Rigele](/wiki/Alojz_Rigele) (1879–1940).

20th century

[thumb|left|Martin Martinček –](/wiki/File:Liptovska_dedina_martin_martincek.jpg) [Liptov](/wiki/Liptov) village in the awakening of March (1970–72) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:150px-Mother_Galanda.jpg)[Mikuláš Galanda](/wiki/Mikuláš_Galanda) – *Mother* (1933)

Painters [Mikuláš Galanda](/wiki/Mikuláš_Galanda) (1895–1938), [Martin Benka](/wiki/Martin_Benka) (1888–1971), [Janko Alexy](/wiki/Janko_Alexy) (1894–1970), [Miloš Alexander Bazovský](/wiki/Miloš_Alexander_Bazovský) (1899–1968), [Gustáv Mallý](/wiki/Gustáv_Mallý) (1879–1952) and [Jan Hála](/wiki/Jan_Hála) (1890–1959) are considered to be the ones who laid foundations of the Slovak [modern art](/wiki/Modern_art) in the first half of the 20th century. The inspiration of their work stems mainly from the lives of everyday people in Slovak [rurals](/wiki/Rural_area) which they admired and idealized. The painters influenced by [Art Nouveau](/wiki/Art_Nouveau), [symbolism](/wiki/Symbolism_(arts)) and [expressionism](/wiki/Expressionism) are Zolo Palugyay (1898–1935), Anton Jasusch (1882–1965), [Edmund Gwerk](/wiki/Edmund_Gwerk) (1895–1956) or [Július Jakoby](/wiki/Július_Jakoby) (1903–1985). Important also is [Blažej Baláž](/wiki/Blažej_Baláž) (1958).

Some of the most distinguished Slovak artists, whose work was closely linked to modern European art streams are [Koloman Sokol](/wiki/Koloman_Sokol) (1902–2003), who became a professor of graphic techniques at the *Escuela de las Artes del Libro* and at the University of [Mexico City](/wiki/Mexico_City) from 1937 to 1941, [Ľudovít Fulla](/wiki/Ľudovít_Fulla) (1902–1980) who received many international prices for his work[[107]](#cite_note-107) and [Imro Weiner-Kráľ](/wiki/Imro_Weiner-Kráľ) (1901–1978). The generation 1909 represent [Cyprián Majerník](/wiki/Cyprián_Majerník) (1909–1945), Ján Želibský, [Ján Mudroch](/wiki/Ján_Mudroch) (1909–1968), Ladislav Čemický (1909–1968) and [Ester M. Šimerová](/wiki/Ester_M._Šimerová) (1909).

Slovak [graphic art](/wiki/Graphic_art) experienced its peak during the 20th century. The most notable print-makers are [Koloman Sokol](/wiki/Koloman_Sokol) (1902–2003), [Vincent Hložník](/wiki/Vincent_Hložník) (1919–1997), [Albín Brunovský](/wiki/Albín_Brunovský) (1935–1997), [Jozef Jankovič](/wiki/Jozef_Jankovič)(1937), [Dušan Kállay](/wiki/Dušan_Kállay) (1948), [Vladimír Gažovič](/wiki/Vladimír_Gažovič) (1939), [Karol Ondreička](/wiki/Karol_Ondreička) (1944–2003) [Blažej Baláž](/wiki/Blažej_Baláž) (1958) or the young generation of artists Katarína Vavrová, and Matej Krén.

[Andy Warhol](/wiki/Andy_Warhol) (1928–1987), a leading figure in the 20th century [visual art movement](/wiki/Art_movement) known as [pop art](/wiki/Pop_art), was born in [Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania](/wiki/Pittsburgh,_Pennsylvania) as *Andrej Varchola* to Slovak parents Ondrej Varchola (1889–1942) and [Júlia](/wiki/Julia_Warhola) (née Zavacká, 1892–1972).[[108]](#cite_note-108) A museum dedicated to him is in [Medzilaborce](/wiki/Medzilaborce), where his parents lived.

Notable Slovak [photographers](/wiki/Photography) in the 20th century are [Martin Martinček](/wiki/Martin_Martinček) (1913–2004) and [Karol Kállay](/wiki/Karol_Kállay) (1926–2012). Both Martinček and Kállay received the EFIAP (Excellence de la Fédération Internationale de l' Art Photographique) price in 1970.

Sculpture in the 20th century represent [Ján Koniarek](/wiki/Ján_Koniarek) (1878–1952), [Július Bártfay](/wiki/Július_Bártfay) (1888–1979), [Tibor Bártfay](/wiki/Tibor_Bártfay) (1922) Ján Mathé (1922), [Jozef Kostka](/wiki/Jozef_Kostka) (1912–1996), [Ladislav Snopek](/wiki/Ladislav_Snopek) (1919–2010), Rudolf Uher or Rudolf Hornák.

21st century

Notable Slovak artists of the 21st century include [Cyril Blažo](/wiki/Cyril_Blažo) (1970), [Martin Vargic](/wiki/Martin_Vargic) and [Viliam Loviska](/wiki/Viliam_Loviska) (1964)

### Literature[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=42)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) For a list of notable Slovak writers and poets, see [List of Slovak authors](/wiki/Lists_of_Slovak_authors).

Christian topics include: poem [Proglas](/wiki/Proglas) as a foreword to the four [Gospels](/wiki/Gospel), partial translations of the Bible into [Old Church Slavonic](/wiki/Old_Church_Slavonic), *Zakon sudnyj ljudem*.

[Medieval literature](/wiki/Medieval_literature), in the period from the 11th to the 15th centuries, was written in [Latin](/wiki/Latin), Czech and Slovakized Czech. Lyric (prayers, songs and formulas) was still controlled by the Church, while epic was concentrated on legends. Authors from this period include [Johannes de Thurocz](/wiki/Johannes_de_Thurocz), author of the [Chronica Hungarorum](/wiki/Chronica_Hungarorum) and Maurus, both of them Hungarians.<ref name=Phillips>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> The worldly literature also emerged and chronicles were written in this period.

There were two leading persons who codified the Slovak language. The first was [Anton Bernolák](/wiki/Anton_Bernolák) whose concept was based on the western Slovak [dialect](/wiki/Dialect) in 1787. It was the codification of the first ever literary language of Slovaks. The second was [Ľudovít Štúr](/wiki/Ľudovít_Štúr), whose formation of the Slovak language took principles from the central Slovak dialect in 1843.

Slovakia is also known for its polyhistors, of whom include [Pavol Jozef Šafárik](/wiki/Pavel_Jozef_Šafárik), [Matej Bel](/wiki/Matthias_Bel), [Ján Kollár](/wiki/Ján_Kollár), and its political revolutionaries and reformists, such [Milan Rastislav Štefánik](/wiki/Milan_Rastislav_Štefánik) and [Alexander Dubček](/wiki/Alexander_Dubček).

Famous globetrotter and explorer, count [Móric Benyovszky](/wiki/Maurice_Benyovszky) had Slovak ancestors.

### Music[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=43)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

[thumb|right|The new national theatre building](/wiki/File:BratislavaSND2.jpg)

Classical music

The most important Slovak composers have been [Eugen Suchoň](/wiki/Eugen_Suchoň), [Mikuláš Schneider-Trnavský](/wiki/Mikuláš_Schneider-Trnavský), [Ján Cikker](/wiki/Ján_Cikker), [Ján Levoslav Bella](/wiki/Ján_Levoslav_Bella), [Alexander Moyzes](/wiki/Alexander_Moyzes) and [Dezider Kardoš](/wiki/Dezider_Kardoš), in the 21st century [Vladimír Godár](/wiki/Vladimír_Godár) and [Peter Machajdík](/wiki/Peter_Machajdík).

Pop music

[Popular music](/wiki/Popular_music) began to replace [folk music](/wiki/Folk_music) beginning in the 1950s, when Slovakia was still part of [Czechoslovakia](/wiki/Czechoslovakia); American [jazz](/wiki/Jazz), [R&B](/wiki/Rhythm_and_blues), and [rock and roll](/wiki/Rock_and_roll) were popular, alongside [waltzes](/wiki/Waltz), [polkas](/wiki/Polka), and [czardas](/wiki/Csárdás), among other folk forms. By the end of the 1950s, radios were common household items, though only state stations were legal. Slovak popular music began as a mix of [bossa nova](/wiki/Bossa_nova), [cool jazz](/wiki/Cool_jazz), and rock, with [propagandistic](/wiki/Propaganda) lyrics. Dissenters listened to [ORF](/wiki/Österreichischer_Rundfunk) (Austrian Radio), [Radio Luxembourg](/wiki/Radio_Luxemburg), or [Slobodná Európa](/wiki/Radio_Free_Europe/Radio_Liberty) (Radio Free Europe), which played more rock.

Due to Czechoslovak isolation, the [domestic market](/wiki/Domestic_market) was active and many original bands evolved. Slovakia had a very strong [pop culture](/wiki/Popular_culture) during the 1970s and 1980s. This movement brought many original bands with their own unique interpretations of modern music. The quality of socialist music was very high. Stars such as [Karel Gott](/wiki/Karel_Gott), Olympic, Pražský výběr (from the Czech Republic) or [Elán](/wiki/Elán_(band)), [Modus](/wiki/Modus_(band)), [Tublatanka](/wiki/Tublatanka), [Team](/wiki/TEAM_(Slovak_band)) (from Slovakia) and many others were highly acclaimed and many recorded their LPs in [foreign languages](/wiki/Foreign_language).

After the [Velvet Revolution](/wiki/Velvet_Revolution) and the declaration of the Slovak state, domestic music dramatically diversified as [free enterprise](/wiki/Capitalism) encouraged the formation of new bands and the development of new [genres of music](/wiki/Music_genre). Soon, however, major [labels](/wiki/Label) brought pop music to Slovakia and drove many of the small companies out of business. During the 1990s, American [grunge](/wiki/Grunge) and [alternative rock](/wiki/Alternative_rock), and [Britpop](/wiki/Britpop) have a wide following, as well as a newfound enthusiasm for musicals.

Jazz

[Peter Lipa](/wiki/Peter_Lipa) (born 1943) is a well-known Slovak singer, composer and promoter of modern [jazz](/wiki/Jazz). He is one of the main organizers of the "[Bratislava Jazz Days](/wiki/Bratislava_Jazz_Days)" festival, which takes place in the capital city at the end of October each year since 1975. It is the biggest jazz venue in Slovakia.

[Martin Valihora](/wiki/Martin_Valihora) (1976), having been awarded a scholarship on the [Berklee College of Music](/wiki/Berklee_College_of_Music) in Boston,[[109]](#cite_note-109) he established himself as a part of the New York's jazz scene. He has been playing with the world's famous Japanese jazz [pianist](/wiki/Pianist) [Hiromi Uehara](/wiki/Hiromi_Uehara).[[110]](#cite_note-110) Other notable Slovak jazz players are [Laco Déczi](/wiki/Laco_Déczi) (1938) – composer, jazz trumpeter, [Marián Varga](/wiki/Marián_Varga) (1947) – composer, organ player

### Cuisine[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=44)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Halusky_kapustnica.jpg)[Halušky](/wiki/Halušky) with [bryndza](/wiki/Bryndza) cheese, [kapustnica](/wiki/Sourkrawt) soup and Zlatý Bažant dark beer – examples of Slovak cuisine

Traditional Slovak cuisine is based mainly on [pork](/wiki/Pork) meat, [poultry](/wiki/Poultry) ([chicken](/wiki/Chicken) is the most widely eaten, followed by [duck](/wiki/Duck), [goose](/wiki/Goose), and [turkey](/wiki/Turkey_(bird))), [flour](/wiki/Flour), [potatoes](/wiki/Potatoes), [cabbage](/wiki/Cabbage), and [milk products](/wiki/Milk_products). It is relatively closely related to [Hungarian](/wiki/Hungarian_cuisine), [Czech](/wiki/Czech_cuisine) and [Austrian cuisine](/wiki/Austrian_cuisine). On the east it is also influenced by [Ukrainian](/wiki/Ukrainian_cuisine) and [Polish cuisine](/wiki/Polish_cuisine). In comparison with other European countries, ["game meat"](/wiki/Game_(hunting)) is more accessible in Slovakia due to vast resources of forest and because hunting is relatively popular.[[111]](#cite_note-111) [Boar](/wiki/Boar), [rabbit](/wiki/Rabbit), and [venison](/wiki/Venison), are generally available throughout the year. [Lamb](/wiki/Sheep) and [goat](/wiki/Goat) are eaten but are not widely popular.

The traditional Slovak meals are [bryndzové halušky](/wiki/Bryndzové_halušky), [bryndzové pirohy](/wiki/Bryndzové_pirohy) and other meals with potato dough and [bryndza](/wiki/Bryndza). Bryndza is a salty cheese made of a sheep milk, characterized by a strong taste and aroma. Bryndzové halušky must be on the menu of every traditional Slovak restaurant.

A typical soup is a [sauerkraut](/wiki/Sauerkraut) soup ("kapustnica"). A [blood sausage](/wiki/Black_pudding) called "krvavnica", made from any and all parts of a butchered pig is also a specific slovak meal.

Wine is enjoyed throughout Slovakia. [Slovak wine](/wiki/Slovak_wine) comes predominantly from the southern areas along the Danube and its tributaries; the northern half of the country is too cold and mountainous to grow grapevines. Traditionally, white wine was more popular than red or rosé (except in some regions), and [sweet wine](/wiki/Sweetness_of_wine) more popular than dry, but in recent years tastes seem to be changing.[[112]](#cite_note-112) Beer (mainly of the [pilsener](/wiki/Pilsener) style, though [dark lagers](/wiki/Dunkel) are also consumed) is also popular.

### Sport[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=45)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|right|The Slovak national ice hockey team celebrating a victory against](/wiki/File:Slovakia2010WinterOlympicscelebration2.jpg) [Sweden](/wiki/Swedish_national_men's_ice_hockey_team) at the [2010 Winter Olympics](/wiki/2010_Winter_Olympics)

Sport activities are practiced widely in Slovakia, many of them on a professional level. Among the most popular are [ice hockey](/wiki/Ice_hockey), [football](/wiki/Association_football), [tennis](/wiki/Tennis), [handball](/wiki/Team_handball), [basketball](/wiki/Basketball), [volleyball](/wiki/Volleyball), [whitewater slalom](/wiki/Whitewater_slalom) or [athletics](/wiki/Athletics_(sport)).

Ice Hockey

One of the most popular collective sports in Slovakia is [ice hockey](/wiki/Ice_hockey). Slovakia became the member of [IIHF](/wiki/IIHF) on 2 February 1993 [[113]](#cite_note-113) and ever since has won 4 medals in [Ice Hockey World Championships](/wiki/Ice_Hockey_World_Championships), consisting of 1 gold, 2 silver and 1 bronze medal. The most recent success is a silver medal from [2012 IIHF World Championship](/wiki/2012_IIHF_World_Championship) in [Helsinki](/wiki/Helsinki). Slovak national hockey team made five appearances in the Olympic games too, ended up 4th in the [2010 Winter Olympics](/wiki/2010_Winter_Olympics) in [Vancouver](/wiki/Vancouver). The country has 8280 registered players and is ranked 8th in the [IIHF World Ranking](/wiki/IIHF_World_Ranking) at present. Prior to 2012, Slovak team [HC Slovan Bratislava](/wiki/HC_Slovan_Bratislava) joined the [Kontinental Hockey League](/wiki/Kontinental_Hockey_League), considered the strongest hockey league in Europe, and the second-best in the world.[[114]](#cite_note-114) Slovakia organized the [2011 IIHF World Championship](/wiki/2011_IIHF_World_Championship) in ice hockey in which the team of [Finland](/wiki/Finnish_national_hockey_team) won the gold medal. The venue took place in [Bratislava](/wiki/Bratislava) and [Košice](/wiki/Košice).

The most notable Slovak hockey players who played or are still playing in the [National Hockey League](/wiki/National_Hockey_League) are [Stan Mikita](/wiki/Stan_Mikita), [Peter Šťastný](/wiki/Peter_Šťastný), [Marián Šťastný](/wiki/Marián_Šťastný), [Anton Šťastný](/wiki/Anton_Šťastný), [Peter Bondra](/wiki/Peter_Bondra), [Žigmund Pálffy](/wiki/Žigmund_Pálffy), [Marián Gáborík](/wiki/Marián_Gáborík), [Marián Hossa](/wiki/Marián_Hossa), [Pavol Demitra](/wiki/Pavol_Demitra), [Zdeno Chára](/wiki/Zdeno_Chára), [Miroslav Šatan](/wiki/Miroslav_Šatan), [Ľubomír Višňovský](/wiki/Ľubomír_Višňovský), [Tomáš Kopecký](/wiki/Tomáš_Kopecký), [Andrej Sekera](/wiki/Andrej_Sekera) or [Jaroslav Halák](/wiki/Jaroslav_Halák).

Whitewater slalom

[Whitewater slalom](/wiki/Whitewater_slalom) is the most successful [Olympic](/wiki/Olympic_Games) sport in modern-day Slovakia. Apart from winning many World and European Championships, Slovak [canoeists](/wiki/Canoeists) collected medals in each [Summer Olympic Games](/wiki/Summer_Olympic_Games) since their first appearance in [Atlanta 1996](/wiki/1996_Summer_Olympics).[[115]](#cite_note-115)[[116]](#cite_note-116) {| class="wikitable sortable" |- ! Athlete ! Gender ! Category ! [Atlanta 1996](/wiki/Atlanta_1996) ! [Sydney 2000](/wiki/Sydney_2000) ! [Athens 2004](/wiki/Athens_2004) ! [Beijing 2008](/wiki/Beijing_2008) ! [London 2012](/wiki/London_2012) |-

| [Michal Martikán](/wiki/Michal_Martikán) | male | C-1 (canoe single) | [16px](/wiki/File:Gold_medal_olympic.svg) | [16px](/wiki/File:Silver_medal_olympic.svg) | [16px](/wiki/File:Silver_medal_olympic.svg) | [16px](/wiki/File:Gold_medal_olympic.svg) | [16px](/wiki/File:Bronze_medal_olympic.svg) |-

| [Pavol Hochschorner](/wiki/Pavol_Hochschorner) | male | C-2 (canoe double) | – | [16px](/wiki/File:Gold_medal_olympic.svg) | [16px](/wiki/File:Gold_medal_olympic.svg) | [16px](/wiki/File:Gold_medal_olympic.svg) | [16px](/wiki/File:Bronze_medal_olympic.svg) |-

| [Peter Hochschorner](/wiki/Peter_Hochschorner) | male | C-2 (canoe double) | – | [16px](/wiki/File:Gold_medal_olympic.svg) | [16px](/wiki/File:Gold_medal_olympic.svg) | [16px](/wiki/File:Gold_medal_olympic.svg) | [16px](/wiki/File:Bronze_medal_olympic.svg) |-

| [Elena Kaliská](/wiki/Elena_Kaliská) | female | K-1 (kayak single) | – | – | [16px](/wiki/File:Gold_medal_olympic.svg) | [16px](/wiki/File:Gold_medal_olympic.svg) | – |-

| [Juraj Minčík](/wiki/Juraj_Minčík) | male | C-1 (canoe single) | – | [16px](/wiki/File:Bronze_medal_olympic.svg) | – | – | –

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## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=46)]

[Template:Wikipedia books](/wiki/Template:Wikipedia_books) [Template:Div col](/wiki/Template:Div_col)

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* [Outline of Slovakia](/wiki/Outline_of_Slovakia)
* [Protected areas of Slovakia](/wiki/Protected_areas_of_Slovakia)
* [Public holidays in Slovakia](/wiki/Public_holidays_in_Slovakia)
* [Remembrance days in Slovakia](/wiki/Remembrance_days_in_Slovakia)
* [Telecommunications in Slovakia](/wiki/Telecommunications_in_Slovakia)

Lists

* [List of towns in Slovakia](/wiki/List_of_cities_and_towns_in_Slovakia)
* [List of football clubs in Slovakia](/wiki/List_of_football_clubs_in_Slovakia)
* [List of villages and municipalities in Slovakia](/wiki/List_of_municipalities_and_towns_in_Slovakia)
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* [List of tourism regions of Slovakia](/wiki/List_of_tourism_regions_of_Slovakia)
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[Template:Div col end](/wiki/Template:Div_col_end) [Template:Portal bar](/wiki/Template:Portal_bar)

## Notes and references[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=47)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

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## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=49)]

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Government

* [Government Office of the Slovak Republic](http://www.vlada.gov.sk/government-office-of-the-slovak-republic/)
* [President of the Slovak Republic](https://www.prezident.sk/en/)
* [Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic](http://www.foreign.gov.sk/web/en)
* [Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic](http://slovak.statistics.sk/)

Tourism and living information

* [Official Slovak National Tourism Portal](http://slovakia.travel/en)
* [Railways of Slovak Republic](http://www.zsr.sk/anglicky.html?page_id=124)

Maps

* [Template:Wikiatlas](/wiki/Template:Wikiatlas)
* [Template:OSM relation](/wiki/Template:OSM_relation)

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* [Slovakia](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/slovakia.htm) from *UCB Libraries GovPubs*
* [Template:Dmoz](/wiki/Template:Dmoz)
* [Key Development Forecasts for the Slovak Republic](http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=SK) from [International Futures](/wiki/International_Futures)

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