

Electoral system and its reforms

Peter Spáč

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Electoral systems

- Mechanisms which transform votes of citizens into seats of the elected body (e.g. Parliament, local assembly)
- Areas included:
 - Geography
 - Mathematics
- No such thing as a perfectly **neutral** electoral system
- No such thing as the **best** electoral system

Electoral systems - division

- Many possibilities how to classify electoral systems
- Most common criterion – electoral formula (the main „logic“ of the system):
 - Single-member district systems
 - Proportional representation systems
 - Mixed systems

(only a very rough list)

Single member district systems

- „*The winner takes all*“
- Country is divided into constituencies
- In each constituency **only 1 person** is elected and gets the seat
- How many votes does the winner need?
 - Plurality – the most votes from all candidates
 - Majority – at least 50 % + 1 vote

UK election 2010

- Constituency: Chichester (southeastern England)

Candidate	Party	Votes	Votes in %
Sarah Newton	Conservative	20 349	41,7
Terrye Teverson	Liberal Democrat	19 914	40,8
Charlotte MacKenzie	Labour	4 697	9,6
Harry Blakeley	UK Indep. Party	1 911	3,9
Loic Rich	Mebyon Kernow	1 039	2,1
Ian Wright	Green	858	1,8

- Sarah Newton elected as MP for Chichester constituency

Czech Senate election 2012

- Constituency: Zlín

Candidate	Party	Votes	Votes in %
Ludvík Hovorka	KDU-ČSL	6 398	16,5
Tomio Okamura	Independent	11 772	30,3
Stanislav Mišák	ČSSD	9 740	25,1
Jana Jurenčáková	STAN	4 736	12,2
Others		6 232	15,9

- No candidate got more than 50 % of votes – what now?
- **A second round (runoff)**

Czech Senate election 2012

- Constituency: Zlín, second round

Candidate	Party	Votes	Votes in %
Tomio Okamura	Independent	17 401	66,23
Stanislav Mišák	ČSSD	9 740	33,76

- Tomio Okamura elected as senator for Zlín constituency

Proportional representation

- Aim – the composition of the elected body (Parliament) should be a copy of the public opinion
- Ideally – a party which gets 30 % of votes should receive 30 % of seats etc.
- The reality may be quite different
- Less wasted votes, more parties can get seats
- Main category – **List PR systems**



List PR systems

- **Constituencies:**
 - Only multi-member
 - The bigger the constituencies, the better for smaller parties and vice versa
- **Threshold:**
 - Amount of votes which a party needs to get to be included to the allocation of seats
- **How to transform votes into seats?**
 - Divisor
 - Quota

Quota

- A number of votes which are needed to obtain a seat
- Political party gets as many seats as many times it acquired the quota
- Example:
 - Quota = 10 000 votes
 - Votes of party = 263 000
 - Party gets **26 seats** as it acquired quota for 26 times
- Many types: Hare, Hagenbach-Bischoff, Imperiali..

Hagenbach-Bischoff quota

- $Q = V / (S + 1)$
- Q – quota
- V – valid votes
- S – seats
- Example:
 - We want to divide **100 seats** and all political parties got **250 000 votes** together
 - $Q = 250\ 000 / (100 + 1) = 250\ 000 / 101 = \mathbf{2475}$

Hagenbach-Bischoff quota

- $Q = 2475$

Party	Votes	Quota	Division	Seats	Remaining votes	Seats
A	95 438	2475	38,56	38	1 388	38
B	76 522		30,92	30	2 272	31
C	47 183		19,06	19	158	19
D	30 857		12,47	12	1 157	12
Sum	250 000			99		100

Divisor

- A row of numbers by which the parties' votes are divided
- The results are ranked according to their size
- The highest results are awarded with seats
- Advantage – all seats are allocated altogether and there are no remaining votes
- Many types: D'Hondt, Danish, Imperiali...

Divisor D'Hondt

- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 ...
- We want to allocate 10 seats

		Divided by number				
Party	Votes	1	2	3	4	5
A	120	120	60	40	30	24
B	100	100	50	33,3	25	20
C	60	60	30	20	15	12
D	40	40	20	13,3	10	8

Divisor D'Hondt

- Allocation of seats if we are dividing:

 4 seats

 10 seats

		Divided by number				
Party	Votes	1	2	3	4	5
A	120	120	60	40	30	24
B	100	100	50	33,3	25	20
C	60	60	30	20	15	12
D	40	40	20	13,3	10	8

Slovak electoral system

Electoral systems in 20th century

- No linear tradition
- **Single member districts:**
 - Era before 1918
 - Later communist rule
- **Proportional representation:**
 - 1st Czechoslovak Republic (1918-1938)
 - Slovak autonomy
 - 3rd Czechoslovak Republic (1945-1948)
 - Early communist rule

After 1989

- Need to change the political system and its features
- Change of electoral system:
 - Symbolic
 - Pragmatic
- Adoption of historical tradition
- Electoral reforms in accordance with federal level

Slovak parliament



- **Name:**

- Until 1993 - Slovak National Council (SNR)
- Since 1993 – National Council of Slovak Republic (NR SR)

- **Features:**

- Unicameral
- 150 MPs



Electoral system in 1990

- **List PR** system (unchanged until now)
- Slovakia divided into **4 constituencies**:
 - Bratislava (the capital city), Western, Central and Eastern Slovakia
 - Great differences in their size – large constituencies (**41, 46, 50 seats**) except of Bratislava (**13**)
- **Threshold** of 3 % of votes
- **Hare quota** ($Q = V / S$)
- Altogether – a highly proportional system

Elections 1990

Party	Votes (in %)	Seats	Seats (in %)	S / V (%)
VPN	29,4	48	32	1,09
KDH	19,2	31	20,67	1,08
SNS	13,9	22	14,67	1,06
KSC / KSS	13,4	22	14,67	1,1
Hungarian parties	8,7	14	9,33	1,07
DS	4,4	7	4,67	1,07
Green party	3,5	6	4	1,14
Others	7,6	0	0	0

Electoral reform 1992

- Increase of **threshold**:
 - 5 %
 - Special threshold for coalitions:
 - 7 % – 2 and 3 members
 - 10 % - 4 and more
- Change of **votes to seats calculation**:
 - Hagenbach-Bischoff quota
 - No real impact of this change

Elections 1992

Party	Votes (in %)	Seats	Seats (in %)	S / V (%)
HZDS	37,26	74	49,33	1,32
SDL	14,7	29	19,33	1,31
KDH	8,89	18	12	1,35
SNS	7,93	15	10	1,26
Hungarians	7,42	14	9,33	1,26
ODU	4	0	0	0
SDSS	4	0	0	0
DS – ODS	3,3	0	0	0
SKDH	3,1	0	0	0
Others	9,4	0	0	0

Elections 1992

Party	Votes (in %)	Seats	Seats (in %)	S / V (%)
HZDS	37,26	74	49,33	1,32
SDL	14,7	29	19,33	1,31
KDH	8,89	18	12	1,35
SNS	7,93	15	10	1,26
Hungarians	7,42	14	9,33	1,26
Others	23,8	0	0	0

Elections 1994

Party	Votes (in %)	Seats	Seats (in %)	S / V (%)
HZDS	34,96	61	40,67	1,16
SV	10,41	18	12	1,15
Hungarians	10,18	17	11,33	1,11
KDH	10,08	17	11,33	1,12
DÚ	8,57	15	10	1,17
ZRS	7,34	13	8,67	1,18
SNS	5,4	9	6	1,11
Others	13,06	0	0	0

Era of Vladimír Mečiar

- **Government 1994-1998:**
 - HZDS and two small partners
 - Problematic style of politics
 - Decreasing support of population

- Solution – change of electoral rules

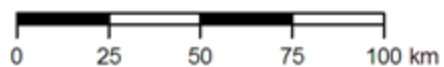
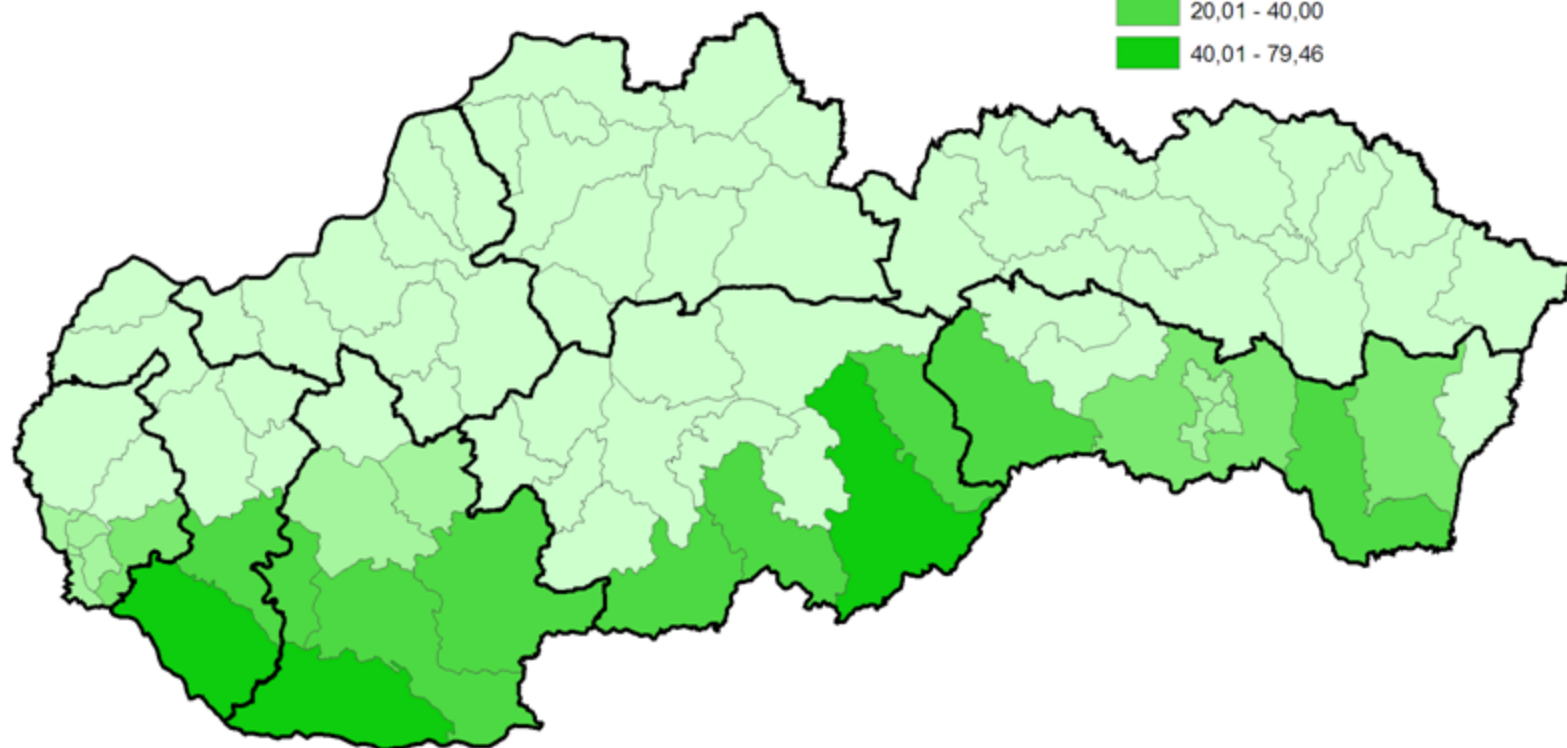
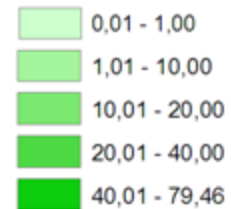


Non-realized reform

- Aim to make a single member district system
- Logic:
 - HZDS still ranked as the most popular political party
 - Although the opposition had a high cumulative support, it consisted of heterogeneous parties
- First step – new administrative division of Slovakia:
 - 79 districts (possible electoral constituencies)
 - Great differences in their population

HUNGARIAN MINORITY IN SLOVAKIA

SHARE OF HUNGARIAN MINORITY (%)



ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS UNTIL 1996



ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS SINCE 1997



Non-realized reform

Average number of citizens entitled to vote	
All districts (79)	42 521
„Slovak“ districts (64)	39 478
„Hungarian“ districts (15)	55 505

Non-realized reform

- **New administrative division:**
 - Higher support of HZDS in smaller districts and vice versa
 - Areas of highest concentration of Hungarians joined into few very populated districts
- **If such division would be used** for elections:
 - Possible breach of the equality of voters
 - Advantage to voters of smaller districts = advantage to HZDS
- The reform was **not realized** possibly due to refusal of HZDS's small coalition partners

The „Mečiar’s reform“

- Adopted only a few months before 1998 election
- 1 nationwide constituency (all 150 MPs)
- Ban of campaign in private media
- Coalitions:
 - **Each party** in coalition had to gain 5 %

The „Mečiar’s reform“

- **Impact of reform:**
 - No change of proportionality
 - The name of the party leaders visible to all voters
 - No sense to create coalitions → measure against opposition (SDK, Hungarians)
- Reaction of opposition – transformation from coalitions to single parties

Elections 1998

Party	Votes (in %)	Seats	Seats (in %)	S / V (%)
HZDS	27	43	28,67	1,06
SDK	26,33	42	28	1,06
SDL	14,66	23	15,33	1,05
SMK	9,12	15	10	1,1
SNS	9,07	14	9,33	1,03
SOP	8,01	13	8,67	1,08
Others	13,06	0	0	0

Development 'after Mečiar'

- Partial corrections made by Dzurinda's government
- Threshold for coalitions back to 7 and 10 %
- No special requirements for parties in coalitions
- 1 nationwide constituency preserved
- Some features of Mečiar's reform banned by the Constitutional court (campaign in private media)

Elections 2002

Party	Votes (in %)	Seats	Seats (in %)	S / V (%)
HZDS	19,5	36	24	1,23
SDKU	15,09	28	18,67	1,24
SMER	13,46	25	16,67	1,24
SMK	11,16	20	13,33	1,19
KDH	8,25	15	10	1,21
ANO	8,01	15	10	1,25
KSS	6,32	11	7,33	1,16
Others	13,06	0	0	0

Elections 2006

Party	Votes (in %)	Seats	Seats (in %)	S / V (%)
SMER	29,14	50	33,33	1,14
SDKU	18,35	31	20,67	1,13
SNS	11,73	20	13,33	1,14
SMK	11,68	20	13,33	1,14
HZDS	8,79	15	10	1,14
KDH	8,31	14	9,33	1,12
Others	13,06	0	0	0

Elections 2010

Party	Votes (in %)	Seats	Seats (in %)	S / V (%)
SMER	34,79	62	41,33	1,19
SDKU	15,42	28	18,67	1,22
SaS	12,14	22	14,67	1,21
KDH	8,52	15	10	1,18
Bridge	8,12	14	9,33	1,15
SNS	5,07	9	6	1,19
Others	13,06	0	0	0

Elections 2012

Party	Votes (in %)	Seats	Seats (in %)	S / V (%)
SMER	44,41	83	55,33	1,25
KDH	8,82	16	10,67	1,21
OLaNO	8,55	16	10,67	1,25
Bridge	6,89	13	8,67	1,26
SDKU	6,09	11	7,33	1,2
SaS	5,88	11	7,33	1,25
Others	13,06	0	0	0

Elections 2016

Party	Votes (in %)	Seats	Seats (in %)	S / V (%)
SMER	28,28	49	32,67	1,16
SaS	12,1	21	14	1,16
OĽaNO	11,02	19	12,67	1,15
SNS	8,64	15	10	1,16
LSNS	8,04	14	9,33	1,16
SR - BK	6,62	11	7,33	1,11
Bridge	6,5	11	7,33	1,13
Network	5,6	10	6,67	1,19
Ostatní	13,20	0	0	0

Impact of electoral reforms

- High proportionality
- Number of relevant parties
- Personal composition of the parliament

High proportionality

Czech election 2006			
Party	Votes (in %)	Seats (in %)	S / V (%)
ODS	35,38	40,5	1,14
SZ	6,29	3	0,48
Slovak election 2006			
Party	Votes (in %)	Seats (in %)	S / V (%)
Smer	29,14	33,33	1,14
KDH	8,31	9,33	1,12

Number of relevant parties

Elections	Threshold	Change	Parties in parliament	Wasted votes (in %)
1990	3	-	7	7,6
1992	5	+ 2	5	23,8
1994	5	-	7	13,06
1998	5	-	6	5,81
2002	5	-	7	18,21
2006	5	-	6	11,89
2010	5	-	6	15,94
2012	5	-	6	19,36
2016	5	-	8	13,20

Personal composition of NR SR

- Preferential voting
- 1. half of 90s
 - Each voter has 4 preferential votes
 - To move to the top of the list a candidate needs to gain such amount of preferential votes which is at least 10 % of the votes of his/her party **in the constituency**
- 1998:
 - 1 nationwide constitution → paralysis of the system

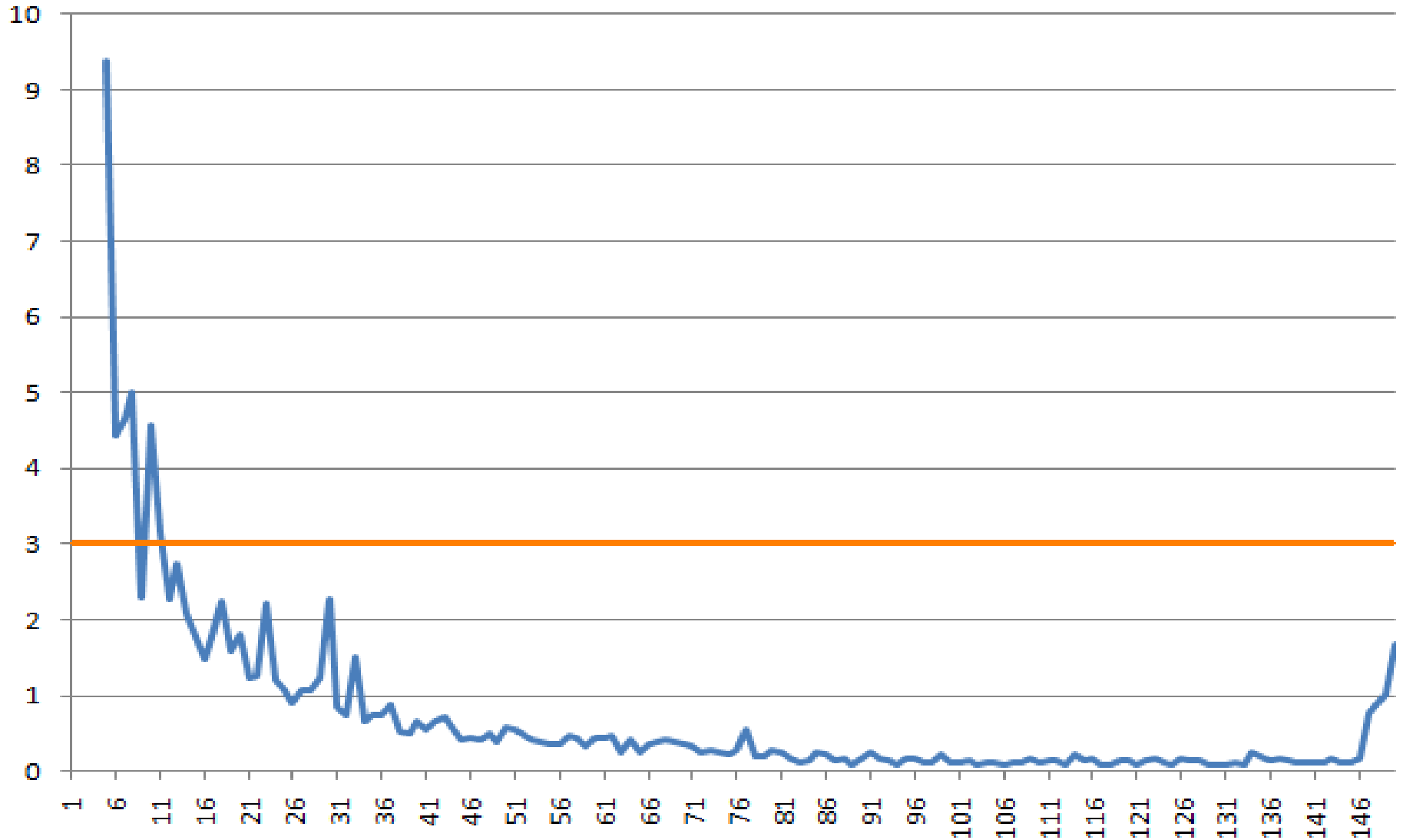
Personal composition of NR SR

- MPs thanks to preferential votes:
 - 1998 – 0
 - 2002 – 1 (**out of 150!**)
- Solution – lowering the amount from 10 to **3 % of party votes**
 - Impact – more MPs thanks to preferential votes:
 - 2006 – 7
 - 2010 – 11
 - 2012 – 15
 - 2016 – 13

Share of preferential votes for candidates in elections 2006 (in %)

	Smer	SDKÚ	SNS	SMK	HZDS	KDH
1-10	73,28	75,81	68,07	64,4	67,6	69,75
11-20	7,48	11,69	8,61	12	10,38	8,8
21-30	4,72	3,27	5,5	7,02	9,74	4,47
31-40	2,99	1,88	3,68	5,79	2,55	3,51
41-50	1,57	1,01	2,01	1,82	2,05	1,82
51-60	2,24	1,34	2,73	2,16	1,99	1,05
61-70	1,81	1,42	2,88	1,34	1,22	1,51
71-80	1,41	0,43	1,41	1,38	0,9	2,69
81-90	0,57	0,33	0,61	1,16	0,85	0,92
91-100	0,59	0,4	0,71	0,79	0,78	1,32
101-110	0,79	0,41	0,51	0,4	0,5	0,54
111-120	0,59	0,36	0,67	0,44	0,8	1,05
121-130	0,67	0,28	0,4	0,38	0,46	0,75
131-140	0,49	0,36	0,59	0,52	0,48	1,08
141-150	0,81	1	1,56	0,4	0,46	0,74

Preferential votes of candidates



Summary

- Since 1993 only a list PR system has been used
- **Most important reforms:**
 - Higher threshold in 1992
 - Mečiar's reform
- **Impact of nationwide constituency:**
 - Strong position of parties' leaderships
 - Low influence of voters on personal composition of NR SR
 - No political party which passes the 5 % threshold can be harmed by the system