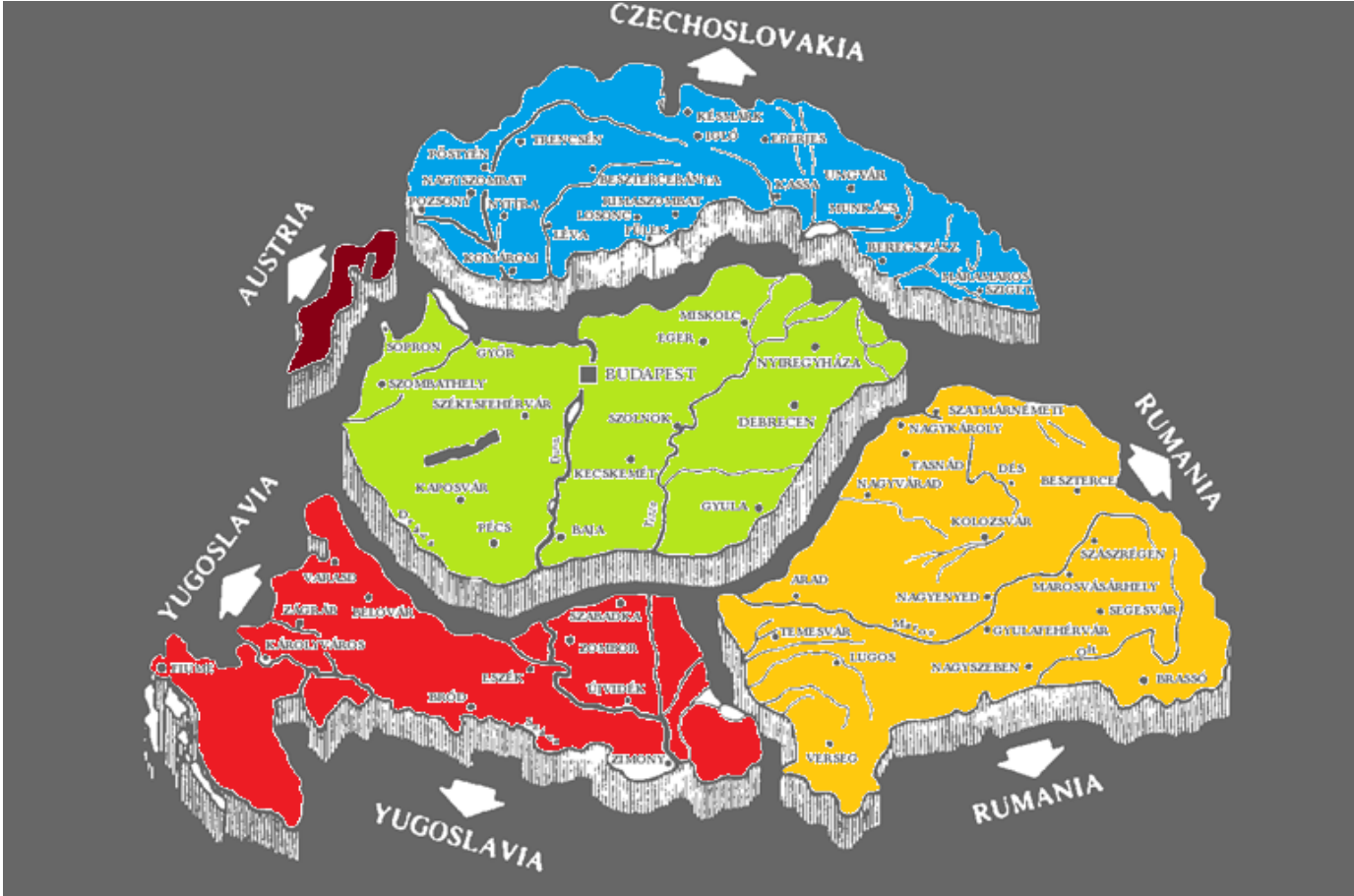


# Slovakia Before 1989

POLb1135 Slovak Politics

# Before 1989



# Hungarian Rule (Since 10th Century)

- 1867 – dualization of Austria-Hungary → negative stance against minorities
- National oppression:
  - Press legislation
  - Abolishment of Slovak high schools
  - 1875 - dissolution of **Slovak Motherland** („Matica Slovenská“)
- Aim – creation of one nation without ethnic fragmentation

# Slovak Party „System“

- Political conditions:
  - No universal suffrage – only 7 per cent of people in 1918
  - Manipulations of elections
  - High barriers for achieving mandates
  - Low citizen participation and activity
- The result – nearly for the whole period until 1914 there was only one party representing the Slovaks

# Slovak Party „System“

- Slovak National Party (SNS, 1871):
  - Elite protestant party
  - Limited resources
  - Internal plurality – Agrarians, the catholic **Slovak People's Party** (SLS, gained independence in 1913)
- Less than **10 MPs** in Parliament (out of 435) → minimal impact on the country's politics

# The First Czechoslovak Republic (1918-1938)

- Two nations in different situation
- Higher development of the Czech part:
  - Economy and standard of living
  - Level of education
  - Character of political parties
- Czechoslovakism - the idea of **one Czechoslovak nation**

# Population of Czechoslovakia (1921)

Nationality	Amount	Share (in %)
Czech	6,780,000	50.2
Slovak	1,990,000	14.7
German	3,123,000	23.1
Hungarian	745,000	5.5
Other	880,000	6.5
Sum	13,510,000	100

# Population of Czechoslovakia (1921)

Nationality	Amount	Share (in %)
Czechoslovak	8,770,000	64.9
German	3,123,000	23.1
Hungarian	745,000	5.5
Other	880,000	6.5
Sum	13,510,000	100



# The First Czechoslovak Republic

- The political system:
  - Parliamentary democracy (PR electoral system)
  - Universal suffrage
  - Citizen freedoms
- Oligarchic bodies
- Changes in the international situation in the 30s → degeneration of Czechoslovak democracy

# Political Parties in Slovakia

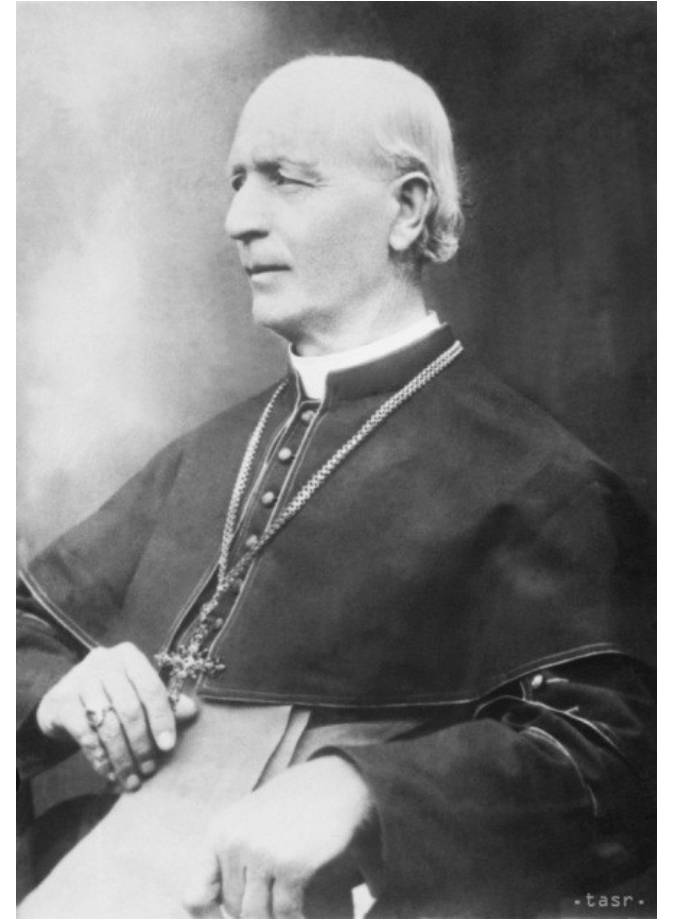
- System of one party changed to plurality
- **Czech parties:**
  - Changed names from „Czech“ to „Czechoslovak“
  - Only limited success in Slovakia
- **Parties of ethnic minorities:**
  - Hungarian and German
  - Oriented towards „their“ minorities
  - Mostly opposed to the idea of Czechoslovakia

# 'Authentic' Slovak Parties in CSR

- Parties from the past as well as new parties
- Gained votes mostly in Slovakia
- Parties divided into two groups:
  - Autonomists – seeking Slovak autonomy
  - Centralists – accepting CSR
- The strongest actor – SLS - renamed to **HSLS** (Hlinka Slovak People's Party)

# Hlinka Slovak People's Party

- Leader – Andrej Hlinka (Catholic priest)
- Ideology:
  - Catholic and conservative values
  - Never fully accepted liberal democratic ideas
- Highest electoral support in Slovakia
- Radicalization in the 30s



# Results of Elections

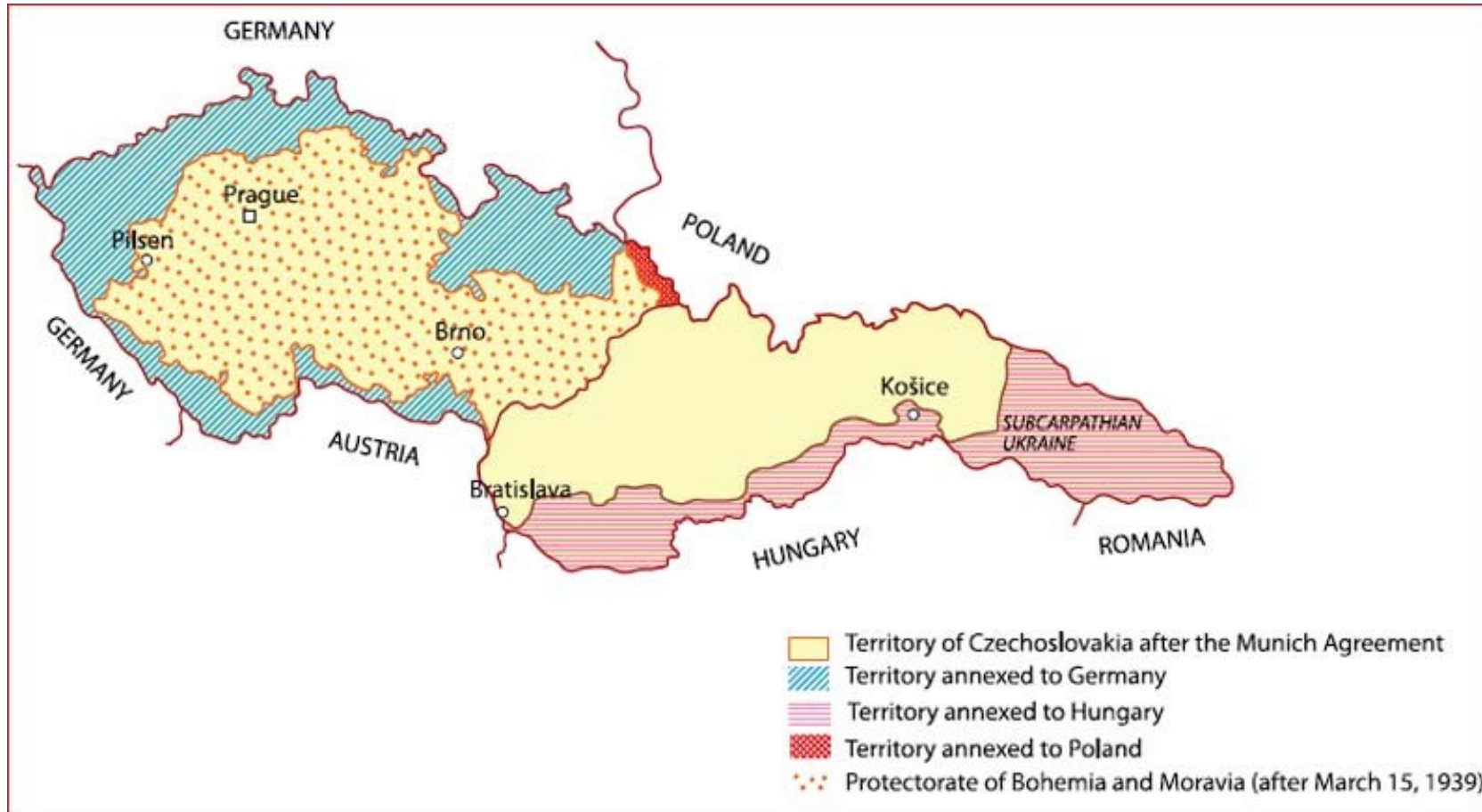
Political Party	1920	1925	1929	1935
<b>HSLs</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>34.3</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>30.1</b>
Agrarians	18.7	17.4	19.5	17.6
Communists	-	13.9	10.7	13.0
Social Democrats	39.4	4.3	9.5	11.4
Hungarian parties (Sum)	10.7	14.6	15.9	14.2
Czech parties (Sum)	2.3	6.4	11.6	9.7

# Munich Agreement (1938)

- Beginning of The Second CS Republic
- Degeneration of democracy in CSR
- Czech lands:
  - Two party system
  - No real competition
- Slovakia:
  - More straightforward decline of democracy
  - Hegemony of HSLS



# Munich Agreement (1938)



# Autonomy of Slovakia

- **October 1938** – an official request by HSLS:
  - Signed by most Slovak parties
  - Refused by Social democrats and Communists
- **November 1938** – Constitutional law granting autonomy to Slovakia:
  - Slovak Assembly
  - Slovak Government



# Autonomy of Slovakia

- Hegemony of HSLS
- Other parties:
  - Forced to merge with HSLS
  - Social democrats and Communists were abolished
- Authoritarian tendencies of HSLS
- Democracy refused as „*complicated*“

# Elections to Slovak Assembly (1938)

- „*The one and only*“
- A clear sign of **non-democratic** tendencies:
  - Single candidate list
  - Separate electoral rooms for different ethnic groups
  - Manipulative techniques
  - Violation of secret vote
  - Planned sanctions on people casting blank lists
- Results – HSLS receives **97.3** per cent of votes

# The Wartime Slovak State (1939-1945)

- Satellite of the Third Reich
- Non-democratic regime
- President – „doctor“ Jozef Tiso



# The Wartime Slovak State

- Clear dominance of executive power
- Overlap of state and the party – Tiso as president and leader of HSLS
- Parliament (Assembly) without any real power
- Para-military forces – the Hlinka guard

# The Wartime Slovak State

- Two wings of HSLS:
  - **1. Conservative and more moderate (Tiso):**
    - Catholic and corporatist ideas
  - **2. Radical (Tuka, Mach):**
    - Inspiration in Nazi Germany
    - Connection with Hlinka Guard



# 1939 - 1940

- Authoritarian regime
- Catholic, conservative, corporatist values
- Weaker position of HSLS's radicals
- Depicted (even now by some parties) as „*The smiling Slovakia*“ despite the nature of the regime
- **Reaction** → Hitler's request for a change

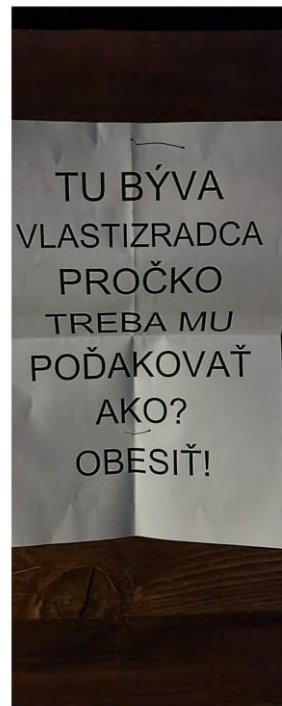


# 1940 - 1942

- Radical wing of HSLS gained power
- Conservative wing led by Tiso overpowered them but only by applying their techniques
- Tiso gained the title „**Leader**“ („Vodca“; equivalent to German „Führer“ used by Hitler)
- Antisemitic laws, deportation of Jews (58 thousand in 1942) – 2/3 of Jews living in Slovakia







# The erosion after 1942

- Main reasons:
  - Turnover in the Second World War
  - Lower trust of the society
- 1944 – Slovak National Uprising – suppressed by German forces
- 1944-1945:
  - Slovakia under total control of Germany
  - Terror, revenge on partisans, restoration of deportation of Jews



# After the World War II

- Third Czechoslovak Republic (1945-1948)
- Only a fiction of a democratic system
- Problematic features:
  - Dominance of the executive power (decrees)
  - Retribution justice
  - Limited plurality of the party system - only a few parties were **allowed** to exist (no German or Hungarian party)
  - Limited political competition among parties

# Party System in 1945-1948

- **National front:**

- Umbrella organization with parties as members
- Decided which parties may exist
- All parties had to follow the same political program (nationalization of property, pro-USSR foreign policy)

- **Slovak parties:**

- Communist party of Slovakia (**KSS**)
- Democratic Party (**DS**)
- Two other marginal parties

# Democratic party (DS)

- Created by members of several former parties (SNS, Agrarians etc.)
- Civic and non-socialist party
- Protestant party vs. Catholic nation → Catholics added on candidate lists (two thirds)
- Ideas about the position of Slovakia → Czech parties including Slovak communists diminished the influence of Slovak political institutions

# Elections 1946 – free and fair?

Czech lands			Slovakia		
Party	Votes (%)	Seats	Party	Votes (%)	Seats
KSC	40.2	93	DS	62.0	43
CSNS	23.7	55	KSS	30.4	21
CSL	20.2	46	SS	3.7	3
CSSD	15.6	37	SP	3.1	2

# After 1946 elections

- Rising power of communists
- Infiltration of the state's power components – army, police, secret service, trade unions
- These trends were more straightforward in the Czech part of the state
- February 1948 – end of this time period

# Communist rule (1948-1989)

- Totalitarian regime
  - Terror
  - Planned economy
  - Sharp restrictions on human rights and freedoms
- Country and society fully under control of KSC
- Formal existence of „opposition“ parties and elections
- Formal liquidation of Slovak political institutions (1948, 1960)

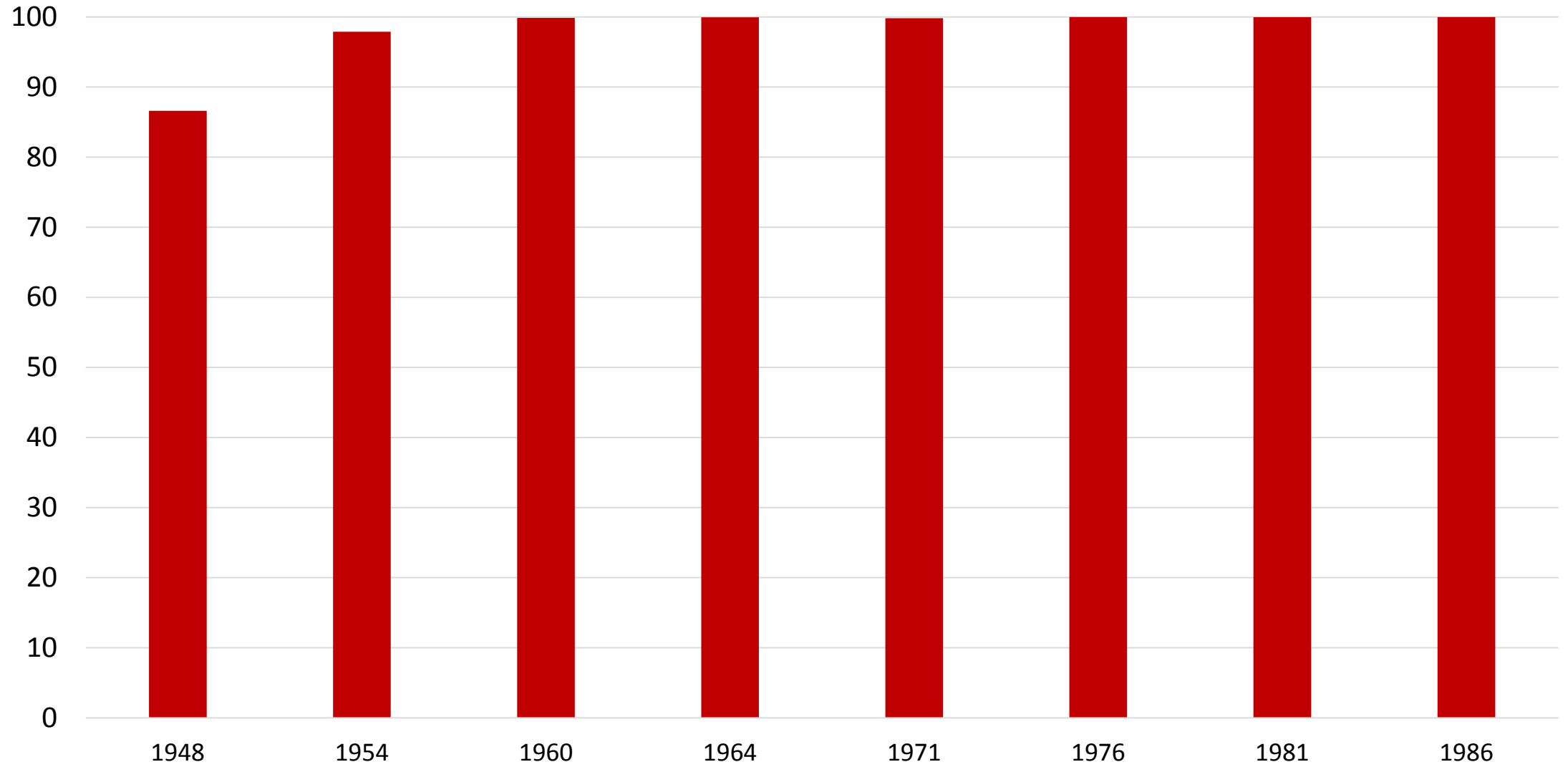




# Results of 'Elections'

Year	Votes (in %)	Blank lists
1948	86.60	994,419
1954	97.89	182,928
1960	99.86	12,775
1964	99.94	6,040
1971	99.81	-
1976	99.97	-
1981	99.96	-
1986	99.97	-

## Share of KSC votes



# 1960s and the Prague Spring

- Alexander Dubček as the first Slovak selected for the chairman of KSC
- „*Socialism with a human face*“
- Two nations with different aims:
  - Czechs – political reforms
  - Slovaks – federalization of the country



# 1968 – End of Prague Spring

- Czechoslovakia invaded by armies of the Warsaw Pact
- Stop to any liberalization for the next 20 years



# After 1968

- **Federalization (1970):**

- Creation of national governments and parliaments (Slovak National Council continued in its existence)
- Ban of majoritarianism

→ Only formal changes – real politics remained unchanged

- **Normalization (1969-1989):**

- Restoration of the regime „before 1968“
- Sanctions against large groups of society
- Higher intensity in Czech part of the federation



# Legacy for the Period after 1989

- **Specifics of the communist regime in Slovakia:**

- „Moderate“ version of the regime when compared to Czech lands
- Achievement of federalization (despite its formal character)
- Economic modernization – industrialization, urbanization

- **Effects:**

- Weaker dissent movement
- Higher acceptance of several principles of the communist period
- More sympathy towards the „*middle way*“ → support of less radical economic reforms after 1989