

## **Slovakia**

Rice

Slovakia is one of two states that were formed after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia on December 31, 1992. Upon independence, Vladimír Mečiar, one of the Slovakian leaders who had negotiated the terms of the separation, became Prime Minister. A member of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) party, which he founded in 1991, Mečiar also entered into a coalition with the Slovak National Party (SNS) to obtain an absolute majority in the legislature. ). The coalition fell apart in March 1993 and the HZDS ruled as a minority government. This is a minor SOLS change. Shortly thereafter, the SNS rejoined the government, which we code as another minor SOLS change (Woldendorp et al 2000). In 1994, Mečiar lost a vote of no confidence in March, after splits in the HZDS led to instability within the coalition. He was replaced by an interim government of Jozef Moravčík, a member of the Democratic Union, a coalition of parties which included the Alternative of Political Realism party (APR, and Moravčík's official party affiliation), the Alliance of Democrats in the Slovak Republic (ADSR), the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH), and the Party of the Democratic Left (SDL). We do not code this interim government as a SOLS change (Henderson 2002, Skalnik 1996). Although there is disagreement on whether this can be called an interim government, there are more than two sources (Henderson 2002, Skalnik 1996, Europa World Yearbook 200, and Jeffries 1996) say this is an interim government, so we code it as such. Moravčík was only in office until new parliamentary elections were held in December 1994. In those elections, Mečiar and the HZDS again were victorious, forming a coalition with the SNS and the newly formed Association of Slovak Workers (ZRS). This is a SOLS change.

With this coalition, Mečiar remained Prime Minister until 1998, when his party and coalition partners were unable to garner enough seats to form a government. Instead, the Prime Minister became Mikuláš Dzurinda, a member of the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK) (who had won the second-most seats). This is a SOLS change. The SDK was made up of five parties, and Dzurinda also governed with the support of the SDL, the SMK, and the Party of Democratic Understanding (SOP). Dzurinda remained in office until 2006, however, his party affiliation and the parties in his coalition changed a few times.

First, in 2000, after some parties left the SDK, it renamed itself the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKU). Because this represents some changes in the makeup of the governing coalition, we have coded this as a minor SOLS change. Then, in 2002, after elections failed to result in an absolute majority for any party, the SDKU formed a coalition with the SMK, the KDH, and the Alliance of the New Citizen Party (ANO). This is a minor SOLS change. In the 2006 parliamentary elections, Dzurinda's coalition lost to one led by Robert Fico, a member of the Direction-Social Democracy party (SMER), along with the SNS and the LS-HZDS (the product of a merger between the People's Party and the HZDS). This is a SOLS change. Fico remains in office in the present day.

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