

**Globalized Election
Weekly Report
April 29, 2010 to May 04, 2010**

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Week # 117

The **parliamentary elections in Hungary 2010** were held on 11 April and 25 April 2010. They are the sixth free elections after the end of communism. The 386 members of parliament are to be elected in a combined system of party lists and electoral constituencies. In the first round of the elections, the conservative party Fidesz won the absolute majority of seats, enough to form a government on its own. In the second round Fidesz-KDNP candidates won enough seats to achieve over two-thirds majority in parliament, enough to modify major laws and the country's constitution.

Hungary

Contents	Page#
1. Introduction	3
2. Politics	14
3. Elections in Hungary	20
4. Elections 2010	28
5. Results	35
6. Analysis	40

Republic of Hungary



Location of **Hungary** (dark green)

– on the European continent (green & dark grey)

– in the European Union (green) — [Legend]

Capital (and largest city)	Budapest 47°26'N 19°15'E
Official language(s)	Hungarian
Ethnic groups	95% Magyar, 2% Roma, 3% other minority groups
Demonym	Hungarian
Government	Parliamentary republic
- President	László Sólyom
- Prime Minister	Gordon Bajnai

- Speaker of the National Assembly Béla Katona

Foundation

- Foundation of Hungary 895

Recognized as Christian

- Kingdom - First king: December 1000
Stephen I of Hungary

- Currently 3rd Republic October 23, 1989

EU accession May 1, 2004

Area

- Total 93,030 km²
35,919 sq mi

- Water (%) 0.74%

Population

- 2009 July estimate 10,020,000

- 2001 census 10,198,315

- Density 107.7/km²
279.0/sq M-I

GDP (PPP) 2009 estimate

- Total \$185.873 billion

- Per capita \$18,566

1. INTRODUCTION

Hungary officially the **Republic of Hungary** is a landlocked country in the Carpathian Basin in Central Europe, bordered by Austria, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia. Its capital is Budapest. Hungary is a member of EU, NATO, OECD, V4 and is a Schengen state. The official language is Hungarian, which is part of the Finno-Ugric family, thus one of the four official languages of the European Union that are not of Indo-European origin.

Following a Celtic (after c. 450 BC) and a Roman (9 BC – c. 430) period, the foundation of Hungary was laid in the late 9th century by the Hungarian ruler Árpád, whose great-grandson Stephen I of Hungary was crowned with a crown sent from Rome by the pope in 1000. The Kingdom of Hungary lasted for 946 years, and at various points was regarded as one of the cultural centers of the Western world. The Battle of Mohács resulted in partial Ottoman occupation, followed by an integration into the Habsburg Monarchy, and later constituting half of the Austro-Hungarian dual monarchy. A great power until the end of World War I, Hungary lost over 70% of its territory, along with one third of its population of Hungarian ethnicity, under the Treaty of Trianon, the terms of which have been considered excessively harsh by many in Hungary. The kingdom was succeeded by a Communist era (1947–1989) during which Hungary gained widespread international attention regarding the Revolution of 1956 and the seminal move of opening its border with Austria in 1989, thus accelerating the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. The present form of government is a parliamentary republic (since 1989). Today, Hungary is a high-income economy, and a regional leader regarding certain markers.

Hungary is ranked 20th globally (out of 194 countries) on *International Living's* Quality of Life index (2010) and 6th in an environmental protection index by *GW/CAN*. Until recently, it was also listed as one of the 15 most popular tourist destinations in the world. The country is home to the largest thermal water cave system and the second largest thermal lake in the world (Lake Hévíz), the largest

lake in Central Europe (Lake Balaton), and the largest natural grasslands in Europe (Hortobágy).

History

From 9 BC to the end of the 4th century, Pannonia was part of the Roman Empire on a part of later Hungary's area. In the final stages of the expansion of the Roman empire, the Carpathian Basin fell for a while into the sphere of the Mediterranean, yet Greco-Roman civilization, its town centers, paved roads and written sources were all part of the advances which the Migration of Peoples ended.

Among the first to arrive were the Huns, who built up a powerful empire under Attila the Hun. Attila was regarded as an ancestral ruler of the Hungarians, however, this claim is rejected today by most scholars (Read chronicles like *Gesta Hungarorum* and *Tarihi Ungurus/Turkish/* and these and other chronicles write about Magyars being Huns/Scythians). After Hunnish rule faded away, the Germanic Ostrogoths and then the Lombards came to Pannonia, and the Gepids had a presence in the eastern part of the Carpathian Basin for about 100 years. In the 560s the Avars founded the Avar Khaganate, a state which maintained supremacy in the region for more than two centuries and had the military power to launch attacks against all its neighbours. The Avar Khaganate was weakened by constant wars and outside pressure and finally the Avars' 250 year rule ended when the Khaganate was conquered by the Franks under Charlemagne in the West and the Bulgarians under Krum in the East. Neither of these two nor others were able to create a lasting state in the region, and in the late 9th century the land was inhabited only by a sparse population of Slavs.

It was King Arnulf I of Bavaria who invited the Hungarians to occupy Svatopluk's lands east of the Danube.^[19] In 894, while Simeon I of Bulgaria attacked the Byzantine Empire, Svatopluk challenged Arnulf by invading Pannonia. Both Arnulf and Leo VI the Wise sought help from the Hungarians who were well

placed to attack the Bulgarians and the Moravians from the rear. Arnulf maintained the alliance with the Hungarians until his death in 899.

The freshly unified Magyars (Hungarians) led by Árpád settled in the Carpathian Basin starting in 895. According to linguists they are thought to have originated in an ancient Finno-Ugric population that originally inhabited the forested area between the Volga River and the Ural Mountains, although the genetic relation of Hungarians to Finno-Ugric peoples is excluded. The force led by Árpád contained seven Magyar, one Kabar, and other smaller tribes.

The first Republic of Hungary

In 1918, as a political result of German defeat on the Western front in World War I, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy collapsed. French troops landed in Greece to rearm the defeated Romania, Serbia and the newly formed Czech state. Despite the general armistice agreement, the Balkanian French army organized new campaigns against Hungary with the help of Czech, Romanian, and Serbian governments.

On October 31, 1918, the success of the Aster Revolution in Budapest brought the left liberal count Mihály Károlyi to power as Prime-Minister. Roving soldiers assassinated István Tisza. Károlyi was a devotee of Entente from the beginning of the World War. By a notion of Woodrow Wilson's pacifism, Károlyi ordered the full disarmament of Hungarian Army. Hungary remained without national defense in the darkest hour of its history. On 5 November 1918 Serbian Army with French involvement attacked Southern parts of the country, on 8 November Czech Army invaded Northern part of Hungary (present-day Slovakia), on 12 November Romanian Army started to attack the Eastern (Transylvanian) parts of Hungary. The First Republic was proclaimed on 16 November 1918 with Károlyi being named as president. The Károlyi government pronounced illegal all armed associations and proposals which wanted to defend the integrity of the country. The Károlyi government also dissolved the gendarme and police, the lack of

police force caused big problems in the country. By February 1919 the government had lost all popular support, having failed on domestic and military fronts. On March 21, after the Entente military representative demanded more and more territorial concessions from Hungary, Károlyi resigned. Károlyi (with a new Czechoslovakian passport and Czechoslovak diplomatic help) moved to Paris.

The Hungarian Soviet Republic

The Communist Party of Hungary, led by Béla Kun, came to power and proclaimed the Hungarian Soviet Republic. The Communists also promised equality and social justice. The Communists – "The Reds" – came to power largely thanks to being the only group with an organized fighting force, and they promised that Hungary would defend its territory without conscription. (possibly with the help of the Soviet Red Army). Hence: the Red Army of Hungary was a little voluntary army (53,000 men). Most soldiers of the Red Army were armed factory workers from Budapest. In terms of domestic policy, the Communist government nationalized industrial and commercial enterprises, socialized housing, transport, banking, medicine, cultural institutions, and all landholdings of more than 400,000 square metres. The support of the Communists proved to be short lived in Budapest. The Soviet Red Army was never able to aid the new Hungarian republic. Despite the great military successes against Czechoslovakian army, the communist leaders gave back all recaptured lands. That attitude demoralized the voluntary army. The Hungarian Red Army was dissolved before it could successfully complete its campaigns. The Communists had never been popular in country towns and countryside. In the aftermath of a coup attempt, the government took a series of actions called the Red Terror, murdering several hundred people (mostly intellectuals), which alienated much of the population. In the face of domestic backlash and an advancing Romanian force, Béla Kun and most of his comrades fled to Austria, while Budapest was occupied on August 6. Kun and his followers illegally took along numerous art treasures and the gold stocks of the National Bank. All these events, and in

particular the final military defeat, led to a deep feeling of dislike among the general population against the Soviet Union (which had not kept its promise to offer military assistance) and the Jews (since most members of Kun's government were Jewish).

The restored Kingdom of Hungary

The new fighting force in Hungary were the Conservative Royalists counter-revolutionaries – the "Whites". These, who had been organizing in Vienna and established a counter-government in Szeged, assumed power, led by István Bethlen, a Transylvanian aristocrat, and rear-admiral Miklós Horthy, the former commander in chief of the Austro-Hungarian Navy. Starting in Western Hungary and spreading throughout the country, a White Terror began by other half-regular and half-militarist detachments (as the police power crashed, there were no serious national regular forces and authorities), and many Communists and other leftists were tortured and executed without trial. The leaving Romanian army pillaged the country: livestock, machinery and agricultural products were carried to Romania in hundreds of freight cars. The estimated property damage of their activity was so much that the international peace conference in 1919 did not require Hungary to pay war redemption to Romania. On November 16, with the consent of Romanian forces, Horthy's army marched into Budapest. His government gradually restored security police and gendarmee, stopped terror, and set up authorities, but thousands of supporters of the leftist-liberal Károlyi and communist Kun regimes were imprisoned (for "High treason" and "anti-Hungarian actions"). But radical rightist political movements were suppressed too. In March, the parliament restored the Hungarian monarchy but postponed electing a king until civil disorder had subsided. Instead, Miklos Horthy was elected Regent and was empowered, among other things, to appoint Hungary's Prime Minister, veto legislation, convene or dissolve the parliament, and command the armed forces.

Hungary's signing of the Treaty of Trianon on June 4, 1920, ratified the country's dismemberment. The territorial provisions of the treaty, which ensured continued discord between Hungary and its neighbors, required Hungary to surrender more than two-thirds of its pre-war lands. However, nearly one-third of the 10 million ethnic Hungarians found themselves outside the diminished homeland. The country's ethnic composition was left almost homogeneous, Hungarians constituting about 90% of the population, Germans made up about 6%, and Slovaks, Croats, Romanians, Jews and Gypsies accounted for the remainder.

New international borders separated Hungary's industrial base from its sources of raw materials and its former markets for agricultural and industrial products. Hungary lost 84% of its timber resources, 43% of its arable land, and 83% of its iron ore. Furthermore, post-Trianon Hungary possessed 90% of the engineering and printing industry of the Kingdom, while only 11% of timber and 16% iron was retained. In addition, 61% of arable land, 74% of public road, 65% of canals, 62% of railroads, 64% of hard surface roads, 83% of pig iron output, 55% of industrial plants, 100% of gold, silver, copper, mercury and salt mines, and 67% of credit and banking institutions of the former Kingdom of Hungary lay within the territory of Hungary's neighbors.

Because most of the country's pre-war industry was concentrated near Budapest, Hungary retained about 51% of its industrial population, 56% of its industry. Horthy appointed Count Pál Teleki as Prime Minister in July 1920. His government issued a numerus clausus law, limiting admission of "political insecure elements" (these were often Jews) to universities and, in order to quiet rural discontent, took initial steps toward fulfilling a promise of major land reform by dividing about 3,850 km² from the largest estates into smallholdings. Teleki's government resigned, however, after, Charles IV, unsuccessfully attempted to retake Hungary's throne in March 1921. King Charles's return produced split parties between conservatives who favored a Habsburg restoration and nationalist right-wing radicals who supported election of a Hungarian king. Count István Bethlen, a non-affiliated right-wing member of the parliament, took

advantage of this rift forming a new Party of Unity under his leadership. Horthy then appointed Bethlen prime minister. Charles IV died soon after he failed a second time to reclaim the throne in October 1921. (For more detail on Charles's attempts to retake the throne, see *Charles IV of Hungary's conflict with Miklós Horthy.*)

As prime minister, Bethlen dominated Hungarian politics between 1921 and 1931. He fashioned a political machine by amending the electoral law, providing jobs in the expanding bureaucracy to his supporters, and manipulating elections in rural areas. Bethlen restored order to the country by giving the radical counterrevolutionaries payoffs and government jobs in exchange for ceasing their campaign of terror against Jews and leftists. In 1921, he made a deal with the Social Democrats and trade unions (called Bethlen-Peyer Pact), agreeing, among other things, to legalize their activities and free political prisoners in return for their pledge to refrain from spreading anti-Hungarian propaganda, calling political strikes, and organizing the peasantry. Bethlen brought Hungary into the League of Nations in 1922 and out of international isolation by signing a treaty of friendship with Italy in 1927. The revision of the Treaty of Trianon rose to the top of Hungary's political agenda and the strategy employed by Bethlen consisted by strengthening the economy and building relations with stronger nations. Revision of the treaty had such a broad backing in Hungary that Bethlen used it, at least in part, to deflect criticism of his economic, social, and political policies. The Great Depression induced a drop in the standard of living and the political mood of the country shifted further toward the right. In 1932 Horthy appointed a new prime-minister, Gyula Gömbös, that changed the course of Hungarian policy towards closer cooperation with Germany. Gömbös signed a trade agreement with Germany that drew Hungary's economy out of depression but made Hungary dependent on the German economy for both raw materials and markets. Adolf Hitler appealed to Hungarian desires for territorial revisionism, while extreme right wing organizations, like the Arrow Cross party, increasingly embraced Nazi policies, including those related to Jews. The government passed the First

Jewish Law in 1938. The law established a quota system to limit Jewish involvement in the Hungarian economy.

Pm. Imrédy's (a Jewish descendant) attempts to improve Hungary's diplomatic relations with the United Kingdom initially made him very unpopular with Germany and Italy. In light of Germany's Anschluss with Austria in March, he realized that he could not afford to alienate Germany and Italy for long; in the autumn of 1938 his foreign policy became very much pro-German and pro-Italian.^[66] Intent on amassing a base of power in Hungarian right wing politics, Imrédy began to suppress political rivals, so the increasingly influential Arrow Cross Party was harassed, and eventually banned by Imrédy's administration. As Imrédy drifted further to the right, he proposed that the government be reorganized along totalitarian lines and drafted a harsher Second Jewish Law. The Parliament under the new government of Pál Teleki approved the Second Jewish Law in 1939, which greatly restricted Jewish involvement in the economy, culture, and society and, significantly, defined Jews by race instead of religion. This definition altered the status of those who had formerly converted from Judaism to Christianity.

Hungary in World War II (1941–1945)

The Germans and Italians granted to Hungary part of southern Czechoslovakia and Subcarpathia in the First Vienna Treaty of 1938, and then northern Transylvania in the Second Vienna Treaty of 1940.

In 1941 Hungary participated in its first military manoeuvres as part of the Axis. Thus the Hungarian army was part of the invasion of Yugoslavia, gaining some more territory. On June 22, 1941, Germany invaded the Soviet Union under Operation Barbarossa; Hungary joined the German effort and declared war on the Soviet Union on June 26, and formally entered World War II on the side of the Axis. In late 1941, the Hungarian troops on the Eastern Front experienced success at the Battle of Uman. By 1943, after the Hungarian Second Army

suffered extremely heavy losses at the River Don, the Hungarian government sought to negotiate a surrender with the Allies. On March 19, 1944, as a result of this duplicity, German troops occupied Hungary in what was known as Operation Margarethe. By then it was clear that Hungarian politics was suppressed by Hitler's intent to hold the country in war on the side of the Nazi Third Reich because of its strategic location. On October 15, 1944, Miklós Horthy made a token effort to disengage Hungary from the war. This time the Germans launched Operation Panzerfaust and Horthy was replaced by a puppet government under the pro-German Prime Minister Ferenc Szálasi. Szálasi and his pro-Nazi Arrow Cross Party remained loyal to the Germans until the end of the war. In late 1944, Hungarian troops on the Eastern Front again experienced success at the Battle of Debrecen, but this was followed immediately by the Soviet invasion of Hungary and the Battle of Budapest. During the German occupation in May-June 1944, the Arrow Cross Party and Hungarian police deported nearly 440,000 Jews, mostly to Auschwitz. The Swedish Diplomat Raoul Wallenberg managed to save a considerable number of Hungarian Jews by giving them Swedish passports, but when the Soviets arrived he was arrested as a spy and disappeared. Nuncio Angelo Rotta and other Italian, Spanish and Swiss diplomats also organized false papers and safe houses for Jews in Budapest. Hundreds of Hungarian people were executed by the Arrow Cross Party for sheltering Jews.

The war left Hungary devastated destroying over 60% of the economy and causing huge loss of life. Many Hungarians, including women and children, were brutally raped, murdered and executed or deported for slave labour by Czechslovaks, Russian Red Army troops, Yugoslavs (mostly Serbian partisans and regular units), and the Romanian so-called "Munteanu Guard" paramilitary units — by the end of the war approximately 500,000-650,000 people.

On February 13, 1945, the Hungarian capital city surrendered unconditionally. On May 8, 1945, World War II in Europe officially ended. By the agreement between the Czechoslovakian president Edvard Beneš and Joseph Stalin the

wild expulsions of Slovaks from Hungary and Magyars from Czechoslovakia started. 250,000 ethnic Germans were also transferred to Germany pursuant to article XIII of the Potsdam Protocol of 2 August 1945.

Communist era (1947–1989)

Following the fall of Nazi Germany, Soviet troops occupied all of the country and through their influence Hungary gradually became a communist satellite state of the Soviet Union. Many of the communist leaders of 1919 returned from Moscow. After 1948, Communist leader Mátyás Rákosi established Stalinist rule in the country complete with forced collectivization and planned economy. Mátyás Rákosi now attempted to impose authoritarian rule on Hungary. An estimated 2,000 people were executed and over 100,000 were imprisoned. Approximately 350,000 officials and intellectuals were purged from 1948 to 1956. Many people, freethinkers and democrats, were secretly arrested and taken to inland or foreign concentration camps without any judicial sentence. This was the deportation of some 600,000 Hungarians to Soviet labour camps after the Second World War and the death of at least 200,000 in captivity. Hungary experienced one of the harshest dictatorships in Europe.

Rákosi had difficulty managing the economy and the people of Hungary saw living standards fall. His government became increasingly unpopular, and when Joseph Stalin died in 1953, Mátyás Rákosi was replaced as prime minister by Imre Nagy. However, he retained his position as general secretary of the Hungarian Workers Party and over the next three years the two men became involved in a bitter struggle for power.

As Hungary's new leader, Imre Nagy removed state control of the mass media and encouraged public discussion on political and economic reform. This included a promise to increase the production and distribution of consumer goods. Nagy also released anti-communists from prison and talked about holding free elections and withdrawing Hungary from the Warsaw Pact. Nagy was

removed by Soviets. Rákosi did manage to secure the appointment of his puppet and close friend, Ernő Gerő, as his successor.

The rule of the Rákosi government was nearly unbearable for Hungary's war-torn citizens. This led to the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and Hungary's temporary withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact. The multi-party system was restored by Nagy. Soviets and Hungarian political police (AVH) shot at peaceful demonstrators and many demonstrators died throughout the country, which made the events irreversible. Spontaneous revolutionary militias arose and heavy street fights started against the Soviet Army and the fearful communist secret police (AVH) in Budapest. The roughly 3,000-strong Hungarian resistance fought Soviet tanks using Molotov cocktails, in the narrow streets of Budapest, and machine-pistols. The immense Soviet preponderance suffered heavy losses, by 30 October most Soviet troops had withdrawn from Budapest to garrisons in the Hungarian countryside. The Soviet Union sent new armies to Hungary. On 4 November 1956, the Soviets retaliated massively with military force, sending in over 150,000 troops and 2,500 tanks. During the Hungarian Uprising an estimated 20,000 people were killed, nearly all during the Soviet intervention. Nearly a quarter of a million people left the country during the brief time that the borders were open in 1956.

Kádár Era (1956-1988)

János Kádár (who was the appointed leader by the Soviets) reorganized the communist party as the puppet of the Soviets. Once he was in power, Kádár led an attack against revolutionaries. 21,600 mavericks (democrats, liberals, reformist communists alike) were imprisoned, 13,000 interned, and 400 killed. Imre Nagy, the legal Prime Minister of the country was condemned to death. From the 1960s through the late 1980s, Hungary was often satirically referred to

as "the happiest barrack" within the Eastern bloc. As a result of the relatively high standard of living, and less restricted travel rights than those in force elsewhere in the Eastern Bloc, Hungary was generally considered one of the better countries in which to live in Eastern Europe during the Cold War. (See also Goulash Communism for a discussion of the Hungarian variety of socialism.) This was under the autocratic rule of its controversial communist leader, János Kádár. It was the so called Kádár era (1956–1988). The last Soviet soldier left the country in 1991 thus ending Soviet military presence in Hungary. With the Soviet Union gone the transition to a market economy began.

The Third Hungarian Republic (1989–present)

"From this spot you could see tens of thousands of students and workers and other Hungarians marching through the streets. They called for an end to dictatorship, to censorship, and to the secret police. They called for free elections, a free press, and the release of political prisoners. These Hungarian patriots tore down the statue of Josef Stalin, and defied an empire to proclaim their liberty."

—George W. Bush, Former President of the United States

In June 1987 Károly Grósz took over as premier. In January 1988 all restrictions were lifted on foreign travel. In March demonstrations for democracy and civil rights brought 15,000 onto the streets. In May, after Kádár's forced retirement, Grósz was named party secretary general. Under Grósz, Hungary began moving towards full democracy, change accelerated under the impetus of other party reformers such as Imre Pozsgay and Rezső Nyers. Also in June 1988, 30,000 demonstrated against Romania's communist Regime plans to demolish Transylvanian villages.

In February, 1989 the Communist Party's Central Committee, responding to 'public dissatisfaction', announced it would permit a multi-party system in Hungary and hold free elections. In March, for the first time in decades, the government declared the anniversary of the 1848 Revolution a national holiday.

Opposition demonstrations filled the streets of Budapest with more than 75,000 marchers. Grósz met Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow, who condoned Hungary's moves toward a multi-party system and promised that the USSR would not interfere in Hungary's internal affairs. In May, Hungary began taking down its barbed wire fence along the Austrian border – the first tear in the Iron Curtain. June brought the reburial of Prime Minister Nagy, executed after the 1956 Revolution, drawing a crowd of 250,000 at the Heroes' Square. The last speaker, 26-year-old Viktor Orbán publicly called for Soviet troops to leave Hungary. In July U.S. President George Bush visited Hungary. In September Foreign Minister Gyula Horn announced that East German refugees in Hungary would not be repatriated but would instead be allowed to go to the West. The resulting exodus shook East Germany and hastened the fall of the Berlin Wall. On October 23, Mátyás Szűrös declared Hungary a republic.

At a party congress in October 1989 the Communists agreed to give up their monopoly on power, paving the way for free elections in March 1990. The party's name was changed from the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party to simply the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) and a new programme advocating social democracy and a free-market economy was adopted. This was not enough to shake off the stigma of four decades of autocratic rule, however, and the 1990 election was won by the centre-right Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), which advocated a gradual transition towards capitalism. The liberal Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ), which had called for much faster change, came second and the Socialist Party trailed far behind. As Gorbachev looked on, Hungary changed political systems with scarcely a murmur and the last Soviet troops left Hungary in June 1991.

In coalition with two smaller parties, the MDF provided Hungary with sound government during its hard transition to a full market economy. József Antall, the first democratically elected prime minister of Hungary, died in December 1993 and was replaced by the Interior Minister Péter Boross.

The economic changes of the early 1990s resulted in declining living standards for most people in Hungary. In 1991 most state subsidies were removed, leading to a severe recession exacerbated by the fiscal austerity necessary to reduce inflation and stimulate investment. This made life difficult for many Hungarians, and in the May 1994 elections the Hungarian Socialist Party led by former Communists won an absolute majority in parliament. This in no way implied a return to the past, and party leader Gyula Horn was quick to point out that it was his party that had initiated the whole reform process in the first place (as foreign minister in 1989 Horn played a key role in opening Hungary's border with Austria). All three main political parties advocate economic liberalisation and closer ties with the West. In March 1996, Horn was re-elected as Socialist Party leader and confirmed that he would push ahead with the party's economic stabilisation programme.

In 1997 in a national referendum 85% voted in favour of Hungary joining the NATO. A year later the European Union began negotiations with Hungary on full membership. In 1999 Hungary joined NATO. Hungary voted in favour of joining the EU, and joined in 2004.

Politics

The President of the Republic, elected by the members of the National Assembly every five years, has a largely ceremonial role, but he is nominally the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces and his powers include the nomination of the Prime Minister who is to be elected by a majority of the votes of the Members of Parliament, based on the recommendation made by the President of the Republic.

By the Hungarian Constitution, based on the post-WWII Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Prime Minister has a leading role in the executive branch as he selects Cabinet ministers and has the exclusive right to dismiss them (similarly to the competences of the German federal chancellor). Each

cabinet nominee appears before one or more parliamentary committees in consultative open hearings, survive a vote by the Parliament and must be formally approved by the president.

The unicameral, 386-member **National Assembly** (Országgyűlés) is the highest organ of state authority and initiates and approves legislation sponsored by the Prime Minister. Its members are elected for a four year term. 176 members are elected in single-seat constituencies, 152 by proportional representation in multi-seat constituencies, and 58 so-called compensation seats are distributed based on the number of votes "lost" (i.e., the votes that did not produce a seat) in either the single-seat or the multi-seat constituencies. The election threshold is 5%, but it only applies to the multi-seat constituencies and the compensation seats, not the single-seat constituencies.

An 11-member Constitutional Court has power to challenge legislation on grounds of unconstitutionality.

Regions, counties, subregions and cities



Regions of Hungary with their regional centres

Administratively, Hungary is divided into 19 counties. In addition, the capital (*főváros*), Budapest, is independent on any county government. The counties and the capital are the 20 NUTS third-level units of Hungary.

The counties are further subdivided into 173 subregions (*kistérségek*), and Budapest is its own subregion. Since 1996, the counties and City of Budapest

have been grouped into 7 regions for statistical and development purposes. These seven regions constitute NUTS' second-level units of Hungary.

There are also 23 towns with county rights (singular *megyei jogú város*), sometimes known as "urban counties" in English (although there is no such term in Hungarian). The local authorities of these towns have extended powers, but these towns belong to the territory of the respective county instead of being independent territorial units.

Counties (County seats)

- Bács-Kiskun (Kecskemét)
- Baranya (Pécs)
- Békés (Békéscsaba)
- Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén (Miskolc)
- Csongrád (Szeged)
- Fejér (Székesfehérvár)
- Győr-Moson-Sopron (Győr)
- Hajdú-Bihar (Debrecen)
- Heves (Eger)
- Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok (Szolnok)
- Komárom-Esztergom (Tatabánya)
- Nógrád (Salgótarján)
- Pest (Budapest)
- Somogy (Kaposvár)
- Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg (Nyíregyháza)
- Tolna (Szekszárd)
- Vas (Szombathely)
- Veszprém (Veszprém)
- Zala (Zalaegerszeg)
- Budapest, capital

Regions

- Western Transdanubia
- Southern Transdanubia
- Central Transdanubia
- Central Hungary
- Northern Hungary
- Northern Great Plain
- Southern Great Plain

Largest cities

	Rank	City	County	Population	Metropolitan area
Budapest	1	Budapest	Pest	1,712,210	2,503,205
	2	Debrecen	Hajdú-Bihar	206,225	237,888
Debrecen	3	Miskolc	Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén	170,234	216,470
	4	Szeged	Csongrád	169,030	201,307
	5	Pécs	Baranya	156,974	179,215
	6	Győr	Győr-Moson-Sopron	130,476	182,776
	7	Nyiregyháza	Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	117,597	-
	8	Kecskemét	Bács-Kiskun	111,428	-

9	Székesfehérvár	Fejér	102,035	-
10	Szombathely	Vas	79,513	-
11	Szolnok	Jász-Nagykun- Szolnok	74,885	-
12	Tatabánya	Komárom-Esztergom	70,333	-
13	Kaposvár	Somogy	67,633	-
14	Békéscsaba	Békés	64,787	-
15	Érd	Pest	63,669	-
16	Veszprém	Veszprém	63,405	-
17	Zalaegerszeg	Zala	61,774	-
18	Sopron	Győr-Moson-Sopron	59,036	-
19	Eger	Heves	56,429	-
20	Nagykanizsa	Zala	50,540	-

Elections in Hungary

Elections in Hungary are held at two levels: general elections to elect the 386 members of the National Assembly, and local elections to elect local authorities.

General elections

The **National Assembly** (*Országgyűlés*) has 386 members, elected for a four-year term. 176 members are elected in single-seat constituencies, 152 by proportional representation in multi-seat constituencies and there are 58 so-

called compensation seats. For the latter two, an election threshold of 5% is in effect.

The general elections in Hungary take place in two rounds, the second round taking place two weeks after the first round.

First round

In the first round, each voter may cast

- one vote for one candidate running for the seat in the single-seat constituency of his/her residence;
- one vote for a party list established in the multi-seat constituency of his/her residence.

After the polls close:

- The result in single-seat constituencies where voter turnout was below 50% is declared invalid, and all candidates for the first round enter the second round.
- Any single-seat constituency where turnout was over 50% and one candidate received over 50% of the votes is won by that candidate, and no second round takes place.
- In all remaining single-seat constituencies (i.e., where turnout exceeded 50% but no candidate received over 50% of votes), the candidates who finished the first three plus any more candidates having received at least 15% of votes enter the second round (a kind of runoff voting).
- The result for multi-seat constituencies where the turnout was over 50% is produced. (If this means all multi-seat constituencies, the parties passing the election threshold can already be determined together with the distribution of the seats from the multi-seat constituencies.)

Second round

In the second round, each voter may cast

- one vote for one candidate still standing in the single-seat constituency (if the seat wasn't won in the first round);
- one vote for a party list in the multi-seat constituency (if the first round was invalid due to insufficient turnout).

After the polls close:

- Any seats in single-seat constituencies where turnout was below 25%, or where the first two candidates received an equal number of votes, will remain vacant.
- All other single-seat constituencies will be won by the candidate who received the most votes.
- The result of multi-seat constituencies where turnout was below 25% is declared invalid, and the seats from that constituency are added to the compensation seats.
- The parties passing the threshold are identified based on multi-seat constituencies with a valid result. Seats from these constituencies are distributed.
- Parties having passed the threshold are eligible for the compensation seats; these are distributed based on
 - the sum of votes remaining in the multi-seat constituencies after the distribution of the seats, plus
 - the sum of votes cast for losing candidates of each party in the first valid round of each single-seat constituency. (Since the first valid round is taken into account, votes are still counted for a candidate who is eliminated in the first round, or who steps down after a valid first round in favour of another candidate with more chances to win the second round.)

Latest local elections

The last election of local authorities took place on October 1, 2006. They took place amidst a period of protests and demonstrations against the government of Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány. In many cities, demonstrators urged people not to vote for the MSZP candidate at the elections, and Fidesz made heavy use of the fact that Gyurcsány had admitted lying in its campaign leaflets and phone calls.

In response, Gyurcsány insisted in a speech he held in Szeged on September 15^[1] that the local elections would have no bearing on his party staying in power, and *"those who don't want a war between the government and the city should know whom to vote for"*.

Before the elections, the polling firm *Szonda Ipsos* had predicted a victory for candidates of the main opposition party Fidesz – 34% of the people asked said they would vote for Fidesz, while only 22% voiced a preference for the MSZP. The opinion poll showed Fidesz with a clear lead in towns having fewer than 10,000 inhabitants (Fidesz 38%, MSZP 19%) and a narrow lead in larger towns (Fidesz 30%, MSZP 26%), while the two parties ran equal at 27% each in Budapest.

The outcome of the elections

Turnout in the local elections was 53.1%, which was two points higher than in 2002 and the highest for municipal elections since the return to democracy in 1990.

Interpretation of the results is complicated by the fact that a number of different offices are at stake in municipal elections. Hungarian voters elect their mayors; the county and Budapest assemblies; and the municipal corporations of their local settlement or Budapest district. (Moreover, the latter of those three elections, at least in mid- and large-sized settlements and the Budapest districts,

take place under a mixed electoral system, which means votes are cast both for an individual candidate and a party list.)

The results for each were as follows:

Elections	Votes governing parties	for Votes opposition parties	for Voters for others
Mayoral elections	1,150,324 27.06%	1,289,554 30.33%	1,811,185 42.61%
Elections for county and Budapest assemblies	1 286 37.73%	625 1 794 52.62%	292 329 219 9.65%
Elections for municipal corporations of local settlement or Budapest district	1 637 11.19%	549 2 592 17.72%	926 10 401 173 71.09%

Regarding the mayoral elections, these are the results of the cities with county rights:

- Fidesz: 15 mayoralties (+10 compared with 2002)
- MSZP: 7 (-6)
- SZDSZ: 0 (-3)
- Other: 1 (no ch.)

In Budapest, Gábor Demszky was re-elected as city mayor as SZDSZ/MSZP candidate. These are the results of the mayoral races for the individual Budapest districts:

- Fidesz: 8 mayoralties (+4 compared with 2002)
- MSZP: 11 (-4)
- SZDSZ: 2 (no ch.)
- Other: 2 (no ch.)

The polling firm *Median* opined that the scandal concerning Gyurcsany's admission of having lied did not affect the outcome of the elections as much as it was expected to, as support for MSZP had already hit an all-time low by early September: 33% of the voters polled had expressed their support for Gyurcsány in September, as compared to 35% in August and 38% in July.

Hungarian parliamentary election, 2010

Hungary goes to the polls on April 11 and April 25 to elect the 386 members of Hungary's unicameral National Assembly, known as the Országgyűlés. In the 2006 elections, the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) and their former liberal allies (the Alliance of Free Democrats, SZDSZ) won a majority of seats: 210 seats for the Socialists and Free Democrats. The 2006 election marked the first time since the fall of the wall in 1990 that an Hungarian government won re-election.

Electoral System

Hungary's 386 Országgyűlés is elected through a complex system. There are 176 single-member constituencies, elected through a system similar to the one used in France. To win by the first round, a candidate requires more than 50% of the vote and turnout must be over 50%. If no candidate fits this rule, a runoff is held two weeks later between all those candidates polling over 15% of the vote. A plurality is required in the runoff, and there is a 25% turnout minimum for the vote to be valid. On another ballot, voters elect 152 members through Hagenbach-Bischoff PR, in the context of 20 constituencies (Hungary's 19 counties and Budapest). There is a 5% threshold for parties, a threshold which increases to 10% for coalitions between 2 parties and up to 15% for coalitions between 3 or more parties. The remaining 58 seats are allocated on a national list to compensate parties for disparities between the popular votes and constituency seats. No votes are actually cast for this national list, and these

seats are allocated through d'Hondt among parties that qualify for the distribution of regional constituency seats.

Political History

note: Hungarian names are referred to in a last name-first name order. Names here use the Western name order.

Hungary is a polarized country, with power usually concentrated in the hands of two parties of roughly equal strength, and election results have been as such since 1998.

The first election after the fall of the wall, in 1990, saw the conservative Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) win a large victory over the SZDSZ, which represented the old liberal middle-class opposition to the communist regime. The 'incumbent' government, represented by the MSZP, which was in fact the renamed but unreconstructed communist MSZMP, took only 11% of the vote and 33 seats. Fidesz, the Hungarian abbreviation for 'Alliance of Young Democrats', was a liberal opposition movement largely dominated by university students and young thinkers, and won only 9% of the vote and 21 seats. Jozsef Antall of the MDF became Prime Minister, but his efforts at shifting Hungary's economy from a state-led socialist economy to a liberal free-market economy were unpopular because of the toll it took on jobs and consumer prices. The MDF's conservative policies on matters such as religious education made it run into the SZDSZ.

In 1994, with a struggling economy and a reconstructed MSZP acceptable to the middle-class, the MSZP won a landslide victory winning an overall majority (209 seats by itself) and around 31% of the vote. The SZDSZ was unable to capitalize on the MDF's unpopularity, and its vote fell slightly but it became the junior partner in the Socialist government led by Gyula Horn. The MDF, with only 12%, saw its caucus membership fall by 126 seats. Fidesz, after winning only 7% of the vote, under the leadership of Viktor Orbán, transformed itself from a libertarian party into a conservative party, capitalizing on the MDF's destruction.

In 1998, the tough austerity policies (including a number of privatizations and cuts) of Gyula Horn's government were sanctioned by voters, who turned to Orbán's Fidesz, by now a conservative party albeit one running on some left-wing rhetoric (improvement in welfare payments). Fidesz, although winning less votes than the MSZP, won 148 seats to the MSZP's 138. Through a coalition with the MDF and the old Independent Smallholders' Party (FKGP), Orbán became Prime Minister. Despite positive economic numbers (thanks partly to Horn's policies but also tax cuts and social insurance contributions cuts), Orbán was assailed for being arrogant in his style and a number of scandals emerged, one which totally destroyed the FKGP.

Led by former finance minister Péter Medgyessy, the MSPZ and its traditional ally, the SZDSZ, narrowly defeated the incumbent Fidesz-MDF coalition. In a polarized election which saw only the three major parties/coalitions win seats, the Socialist-liberal alliance won 198 seats to the right's 188 seats. Medgyessy, a poor leader, lasted only two years, being succeeded by Ferenc Gyurcsány, a young communist turned successful businessman.

Thanks in large part to alleged good economic times, Gyurcsány won an unprecedented second term in office, with his party winning 186 (plus 6 joint MSZP-SZDSZ candidates) and 18 seats for the SZDSZ. Fidesz won 164 seats, and the MDF won 11. However, Gyurcsány soon ran into bad waters, when a post-electoral secret tape of Gyurcsány admitting that he had lied to voters about the economic situation was released, leading to massive protests and a large Fidesz victory in the October 2006 local elections.

In addition to lingering voter suspicion of Gyurcsány's policies, the country was hit especially hard by the economic crisis, an economic crisis which saw Hungary's unemployment rate grow, and its budgetary deficit increase. Gyurcsány was assailed for his poor management of the economic crisis by both Fidesz (claiming his policies hurt the people too much) and by foreign economists (saying that he hadn't cut spending enough). Gyurcsány was

ultimately forced to step down in favour of Gordon Bajnai, a young businessman, who implemented radical shock treatment for the economy, including cutting spending to the delight of foreign investors and the IMF, who have bailed out, in a way, Hungary.

Parties and Issues

However, still hurt by Gyurcsány's lies, in addition to a shock treatment which is taking its toll on popular social programs and jobs, the Socialists are polling absolute lows. Fidesz, which, ironically, tends to be a more statist party compared to the Socialists, has benefited from this and it has been polling over 50% and sometimes over 60% since around late 2006. In the 2009 European elections, the party won 56.36% of the vote against 17.37% for the MSZP. Viktor Orbán, still the leader of Fidesz, is running on a vague platform supporting the creation of over a million jobs and prosecuting corrupt politicians. In fact, Fidesz has made little – if any – promises in this election. After Gyurcsány's promises in 2006, it seems that electoral promises left a bad taste in the voter's mouth. The party claims that it would be foolish to make promises it may not be able to fulfill.

The MSZP's kamikaze candidate for Prime Minister is the 36-year old Attila Mesterházy. Mesterházy's vague promises of punishing those corrupt is not striking a chord with voters at all.

However, Gyurcsány's lies have hurt the fundamental bases of Hungarian democracy and the economic crisis, with the IMF's shock treatment and the flow of foreign creditors, have awoken a sleeping but eternally present nationalist feeling. In fact, around 4 million Hungarians (of around 14 millions ethnic Hungarians) live outside Hungary, the result of the 1920 Treaty of Trianon which removed two-thirds of the nation's territory (Hungary received, proportionately, the worst punishment from the Allies after the First World War). In contrast to the nationalist and irredentist policies of Hungarian dictator Miklós Horthy between

the wars, the communist regime and the democratic governments have led a more pragmatic policy vis-a-vis the fate of Hungarians in Romania, Slovakia or Vojvodina. Fidesz, while in government, passed a controversial 'status law' for the Hungarian diaspora and supported a 2004 referendum (which was defeated) giving dual-citizenship to Hungarians abroad. The MSZP, on the other hand, is known for its opposition to such policies and distinguishes itself by its relative lack of Hungarian nationalist policies. However, the nationalist policies of the Slovakian government and worsening inter ethnic relations in Slovakia between Slovaks and Hungarians have hurt relations between the two countries, and the flow of foreign investors have led to the rise of resentment of foreigners and Europe as well as nationalist feelings (a bumper sticker of Greater Hungary is one of the nation's most popular bumper stickers).

The Movement for a Better Hungary, known as Jobbik, has managed to make itself the voice of these feelings. Taking votes from right-wingers who see Fidesz as too liberal and former Socialist voters disappointed by the MSZP, Jobbik blames Hungary's problems on its Roma minority (5-7%), the EU, the political elite both left and right, and Jews. Jobbik's SA-like paramilitary wing (outlawed in 2009 but recently re-created) has sparked growing tensions between Hungarians and Romas, with the result of increasing nationalist feelings. In terms of the European far-right, they're probably the closest you can get (amongst serious parties with a significant electoral audience) to the 1930s NSDAP in Germany. The party won a record 14.77% of the vote in the European elections, much higher than what polls had predicted, leading to the fear that its support might be underestimated. Recently, Jobbik has been hit by media allegations against some of its members, including Gábor Vona.

On the other hand, the liberal and internationalist SZDSZ, which left the coalition in 2008 reducing the MSZP to a minority, won only 2% of the vote in the European elections and has been entirely wiped off the political map. The MDF, although saving one seat in the European Parliament in 2009, has suffered a similar fate. On the other hand, the green movement, known as Politics can be

Different (LMP) has picked up speed, likely from Socialist voters and represents the expression of discontent with the MSZP to its left.

Here is the average of the last 6 polls on April 7 and April 8:

Fidesz	59.8%
MSZP	17.6%
Jobbik	14.6%
LMP	5.4%
MDF	2.4%

Here is an overview of the latest 3 seat predictions (excluding Nézőpont Intézet's seat prediction – an outlier – in brackets):

Fidesz	267-284	(267-275)
MSZP	50-62	(51-62)
Jobbik	37-50	(47-50)
LMP	10-15	(10)
MDF	0 (0)	

A two-thirds majority (258 or so) would allow Fidesz alone to amend the constitution, and a three-fourths majority (290) would allow Fidesz to adopt a new constitution entirely.

Fidesz will win easily, but they will have big expectations. They will need to please the Hungarian public, by creating jobs and maintaining welfare and social programs; but they'll need to please foreign investors and the IMF in order to save the economy. Pleasing both is certainly not an easy task, and most foreign observers don't have high hopes for Fidesz once in office. Will the 2014 election see the return of the MSZP...?

2010 National Assembly Election

The election is scheduled for Apr. 11 and Apr. 25. The country's electoral system calls for a first round, where a shortlist of all the candidates who receive more than 15 per cent of the vote is created. In the second round, the actual winner is chosen from these candidates. For the first round to be valid, more than 50 per cent of registered voters must take part. In the second round, the threshold is reduced to 25 per cent.

In order to qualify for proportional representation seats, parties must garner at least five per cent of the vote in the first round.

In December 2009, the governing Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) chose Attila Mesterhazy, a 35-year-old economist, to lead the party into the next election.

The Hungarian Citizens Party (Fidesz), the main opposition group, will be headed by Viktor Orban.

On Dec. 10, Orban vowed to lead a clean administration, declaring, "As long as lies are not eliminated, there will be no effective actions against corruption. (...) Policy-makers are shamelessly lying in each fiscal year, particularly in pre-election years. They are drafting fictitious budgets and deceiving the public."

On Jan. 10, 2010, current prime minister and MSZP member Gordon Bajnai said Hungary could adopt the euro by 2014 if the next government remains committed to tight fiscal policies, declaring, "If we remain on this path, if we can maintain this small deficit, then we could be the first in the region among countries that do not yet have the euro—Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary—to adopt it."

A January poll by Median showed Fidesz leading amongst decided voters with 65 per cent, followed by the MSZP with 19 per cent, the Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik) with 10 per cent, the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) with three per cent, and Politics Can Be Different (LMP) with only one per cent.

On Feb. 4, while visiting Germany, Orban said: "I have told German investors to be patient and trustful and not to abandon Hungary. The business and public

atmosphere will change greatly in Hungary and will move towards success, I hope, from April."

On Feb. 5, Orban declared during a "state of the nation" speech: "I stand ready to assume the personally the task of governing Hungary, and my party stands ready for strong, responsible and active government."

Jobbik, the nationalist party, issued a statement criticizing Orban's speech as vague, saying, "Dare we speak the truth about multinational capital, the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, Israeli expansionism, or gypsy crime?"

Mesterhazy also dismissed his rival's speech, declaring, "It was as if Viktor Orban was afraid he would be taken off the party's electoral list if he revealed too many specifics of its programme."

On Apr. 9, Mesterhazy acknowledged that his party has lost support from young voters, adding, "We have to pursue a policy which offers them an alternative. (...) If we offer modernization to Hungary as a guarantee for success, we should also undergo a process of renewal so as to adjust ourselves to the changed political field."

First round voting began took place on Apr. 11. Orban, who is heavily favoured to take over as prime minister, declared: "I don't think I can do much more for the victory today. The stake of the elections is to get the country out of despair."

Preliminary results from the first round gave Fidesz 206 overall seats, followed by the Socialists with 28 and Jobbik with 26. Fidesz will have a clear majority in the National Assembly. Turnout was tabled at 64.37 per cent. In the second round, 57 constituency seats and 64 list seats will be allocated.

In order to control two-thirds of the National Assembly, Fidesz candidates would need to win 52 of the 57 seats that will be decided in the second round on Apr. 25.

On Apr. 12, Fidesz leader Viktor Orban discussed his priorities, saying, "The focus of our economic policy is not austerity measures, but how to generate economic growth—this is the question. I cannot carry out any kind of budget rationalization if at the same time we cannot put the Hungarian economy on a growth track."

Second round voting took place on Apr. 25. Fidesz secured 54 of the 57 seats at stake, securing a two-thirds majority in the legislature.

Political Players

President: Laszlo Solyom (Fidesz)

Prime minister: Gordon Bajnai (MSZP)

Legislative Branch: The *Országgyűlés* (National Assembly) has 386 members, elected to four-year terms; 176 members in single-seat constituencies, 152 by proportional representation in multi-seat constituencies, and 58 members elected as part of the national transfer list (votes cast for candidates who were not elected and votes cast for parties in county constituencies where they failed to win a seat are apportioned to the relevant parties, provided they have obtained more than 5 per cent of the national vote).

Results of Last Election:

National Assembly - Apr. 11 and Apr. 25, 2010

			List Vote%	Constituency Seats	Regional Seats	Total Seats
Hungarian (Fidesz)	Citizens	Party	52.73%	119	87	206
Hungarian (MSZP)	Socialist	Party	19.30%	--	28	28
Movement for a Hungary (Jobbik)	for a	Better	16.67%	--	26	26

Politics Can Be Different (LMP)	7.48%	--	5	5
Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF)	2.66%	--	--	--
Civil Movement (CM)	0.89%	--	--	--
Hungarian Communist Workers' Party (MKM)	0.11%	--	--	--
Hungarian Social Democratic Party (MSZDP)	0.08%	--	--	--
Alliance Party (OPPOSITION)	0.05%	--	--	--
Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIEP)	0.03%	--	--	--
<i>To be decided on second round (Apr. 25)</i>	--	57	64	121

Hungarian parliamentary election, 2010

All 386 seats to the Országgyűlés

11 and 25 April 2010

First party



Second party Third party



Leader	Viktor Orbán	Attila Mesterházy	Gábor Vona
Party	Fidesz	MSZP	JOBBIK
Last election	164	190	0
Seats won	263	59	47
Seat change	+99	-131	+47
Popular vote	2,706,292	990,428	855,436
Percentage	52.73%	19.30%	16.67%

■ Seats won by Fidesz
 ■ seats won by MSZP
 seat won by an independent candidate

Previous	Prime	Minister
Gordon MSZP		Bajnai

Subsequent	Prime	Minister
Viktor FIDESZ		Orbán

The **parliamentary elections in Hungary 2010** were held on 11 April and 25 April 2010. They are the sixth free elections after the end of communism. The 386 members of parliament are to be elected in a combined system of party lists and electoral constituencies. In the first round of the elections, the conservative party Fidesz won the absolute majority of seats, enough to form a government on its own. In the second round Fidesz-KDNP candidates won enough seats to achieve over two-thirds majority in parliament, enough to modify major laws and the country's constitution.

After the election results KSH (Central Statistical Office of Hungary) published a study about the unemployment rate of 2010's first quarter. Unemployment rate in Hungary rose from 9.7% in September 2009 to 11.8% in April 2010. This is the

highest unemployment rate since 1994. The Hungarian parliamentary election was successful.

Polls

As polls showed both MDF and SZDSZ would be unlikely to make it into parliament on their own, they have agreed to a limited electoral cooperation. In March 2010, polls also showed that the Hungarian parliament after the election was likely to be completely dominated by Fidesz polling at 53–67% that month, followed by either the ruling Hungarian Socialist Party at 12–22% or newcomer Jobbik at 11–18%.

The election

**Election Party preferences in percentage
(What percentage of eligible voters would have voted for the party)**

Agency	Date	Fidesz	MSZP	Jobbik	MDF	LMP	SZDSZ	KDNP	Other
	25								
Medián	November 2009	66	19	10	2	1	1	n/a	1
	25								
Tárki	November 2009	68	17	11	1	1	1	2	n/a
	26								
Századvég-Forsense	November 2009	59	20	12	3	3	1	n/a	3
	16								
Tárki	December 2009	63	19	12	1	3	1	n/a	n/a
	21								
Századvég-Forsense	December 2009	64	17	9	3	2	0	n/a	4

	25								
Medián ¹	December 2009	61	23	9	2	1	1	n/a	3
Szonda Ipsos	17 January 2010	63	21	12	2	n/a	1	0	1
Forsense	21 January 2010	59	17	15	5	3	n/a	n/a	n/a
Medián	21 January 2010	65	19	10	3	1	0	n/a	2
Századvég-Kód	26 January 2010	59	23	10	4	2	1	1	n/a
Tárki	27 January 2010	62	22	11	3	1	1	n/a	n/a
Szonda Ipsos	12 February 2010	58	22	14	2	1	1	0	3
Századvég-Kód	18 February 2010	58	23	10	5	3	1	-	-
Forsense	22 February 2010	59	18	14	2	5	0	n/a	1
Medián	24 February 2010	63	18	15	2	1	n/a	n/a	1
Tárki	3 March 2010	61	22	11	2	3	n/a	n/a	1
Szonda Ipsos	11 March 2010	57	20	17	1	3	1	0	1

Nézőpont Intézet	14 2010	March	53	12	12	2	2	n/a	n/a	0
Medián	17 2010	March	57	21	18	1	2	n/a	n/a	1
Szonda Ipsos	18 2010	March	64	12	13	3	5	n/a	n/a	3
Gallup	25 2010	March	67	15	14	1	4	n/a	n/a	0
Századvég- Kód	29 2010	March	59	16	17	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a

First round

Statistical data

2010 Hungarian parliamentary election, first round: First-placed candidates by parties in the single-seat constituencies:

■ = mandate won by Fidesz-KDNP(119)

■ = first placed candidate, Fidesz-KDNP (56)

■ = first placed candidate, MSZP (1)

2010 Hungarian parliamentary election, first round: second-place candidates by parties in the single-seat constituencies

■ = MSZP (112)

■ = Jobbik (60)

■ = Somogyért Szövetség (1)

■ = Fidesz-KDNP (1)

■ = independent candidate (2)

Turnout

7:00 9:00 11:00 13:00 15:00 17:30 Overall

1.61% 10.23% 24.78% 35.88% 46.78% 59.28% 64.36%

Miscellaneous data:

Total polling stations: 10 926

Number of voters in the register at closing: 7 972 568

Number of voters included in the register using election certificate on the day of voting: 44 367

Number of voters in the register at the end of voting: 8 016 935

Number of voters in the foreign representations: 8 663

Total number of voters in the register: 8 025 598

Number of those turned out to vote in the domestic polling stations: 5 158 350

Number of statements about voting: 6 656

Total number of those turned out to vote: 5 165 006

Proportion of those turned out to vote: 64.36%

Results

Summary of the 2010 Parliamentary elections in Hungary, first round

Parties	List	List %	Constituency	Regional	Regional	Total	Total
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Party	Number of regional lists	Votes		seats	seats	seats %	seats	seats %
Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Union (<i>FIDESZ</i>)	20	2,706,292	52.73	119	87	59.59	206	53.37%
Hungarian Socialist Party (<i>MSZP</i>)	20	990,428	19.30	—	28	19.18	28	7.25%
Movement for a Better Hungary (<i>JOBBIK</i>)	20	855,436	16.67	—	26	17.81	26	6.74%
Politics Can Be Different (<i>LMP</i>)	20	383,876	7.48	—	5	3.42	5	1.3%
Hungarian Democratic Forum	17	136,895	2.66	—	—	—	—	—

(MDF)								
Civil Movement (CM)	9	45,863	0.89	—	—	—	—	—
Hungarian Communist Workers' Party (Munkáspárt)	4	5,606	0.11	—	—	—	—	—
Hungarian Social Democratic Party (MSZDP)	4	4,117	0.08	—	—	—	—	—
Összefogás Párt (ÖP)	1	2,732	0.05	—	—	—	—	—
Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIÉP)	2	1,286	0.03	—	—	—	—	—
Total (turnout)	20 max	5,169,836	100	119 ^[33]	146	100	265	68.65%

64,37%)								
Source: Valasztas.hu								

Election analysis (after the first round)

The governing Hungarian Socialist Party was blamed for Hungary's current critical economic and financial situation and for the scandal around a 2006 speech of the unpopular former Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány in which he admitted lying to the public about the country's economic state in the run-up to the last election in 2006. Therefore, the Socialist party suffered its worst result since the Hungarian parliamentary election, 1990.

The main opposition party, Fidesz, made a strong comeback to power after eight years in opposition. They profited from the unpopularity of the governments of Gyurcsány and his caretaker successor, Gordon Bajnai, and the harsh measures taken by the latter to bring Hungary out of the crisis created by the Socialists. Viktor Orbán will enter a second stint as Prime Minister after governing from 1998 to 2002.

Two parties who were formed prior to and had played a major role in the Revolution of 1989 and in the transition process after the End of Communism in Hungary, the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) and the Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ), have continued their downward trend and failed to make it into parliament, as has the Social Democrat MSZDP.

Jobbik has jumped into third place from basically nowhere in 2006 (less than 1%), profiting from disappointment with the ruling and established parties, the unanswered "Roma question" (an existing and pressing problem in Hungary, namely the lack of social integration of the Roma populace), and the revival of a nationalist sentiment among a sizable portion of the voters.

Even more recent newcomers LMP ("Politics can be different"), a Left-wing Green party just in existence since 2009, has also made it into parliament (over 7%), gaining more votes than predicted (polls gave them around 5%).

Second round

Statistical data

Turnout

7:00	9:00	11:00	13:00	15:00	17:30	Overall
1.36%	8.50%	19.37%	27.11%	33.54%	41.89%	46.52%

Results

Summary of the 25 April 2010 National Assembly (*Országgyűlés*) elections

Parties	Individual votes	Regional votes	Total votes	%	Single member seats	National list seats	Total seats
Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Union (<i>Fidesz –</i>							

<i>Magyar Polgári Szövetség)</i>							
Hungarian Socialist Party (<i>Magyar Szocialista Párt, MSZP</i>)							
Movement for a Better Hungary (<i>Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom</i>)							
Politics Can Be Different (<i>Lehet Más a Politika</i>)							
Total				100.0	57	64	121
Source:							

Hungary. Legislative Election 2010

	Turnout	Fidesz	MSZP	JOBBIK	LMP	MDF
BUDAPEST	69,77	46,32	25,33	10,84	12,81	4,70
BARANYA	60,58	54,53	21,07	12,68	8,90	2,83
BÁCS-						
KISKUN	61,88	60,45	14,62	15,70	5,58	2,23
BÉKÉS	61,72	53,20	18,45	19,21	5,21	2,05
BAZ	61,21	45,87	18,90	27,20	4,20	1,84
CSONGRÁD	62,15	50,72	20,38	15,93	7,66	2,57
FEJÉR	64,47	54,16	17,91	16,20	6,96	2,69
GYMS	65,77	59,68	16,87	12,57	6,32	2,95
HAJDÚ-						
BIHAR	62,47	57,92	14,04	18,86	5,05	2,34
HEVES	64,21	45,78	21,02	24,97	6,04	2,19
JNKSZ	60,98	49,42	17,88	24,01	5,65	2,13
KOM-ESZT.	61,85	51,31	23,39	13,76	8,37	3,17
NÓGRÁD	62,93	51,84	20,39	20,82	5,57	
PEST	66,51	52,90	17,58	16,52	8,35	2,75
SOMOGY	61,30	59,63	19,74	14,23	6,39	
SZSZB	63,22	53,84	14,84	23,64	2,86	1,81
TOLNA	61,72	58,68	17,88	15,44	5,45	2,54
VAS	66,44	62,77	16,96	12,09	6,37	
VESZPRÉM	64,88	56,79	18,81	14,66	7,15	2,59
ZALA	63,55	57,21	16,85	16,91	5,80	2,65
TOTAL	64,38	52,73	19,30	16,67	7,48	2,67