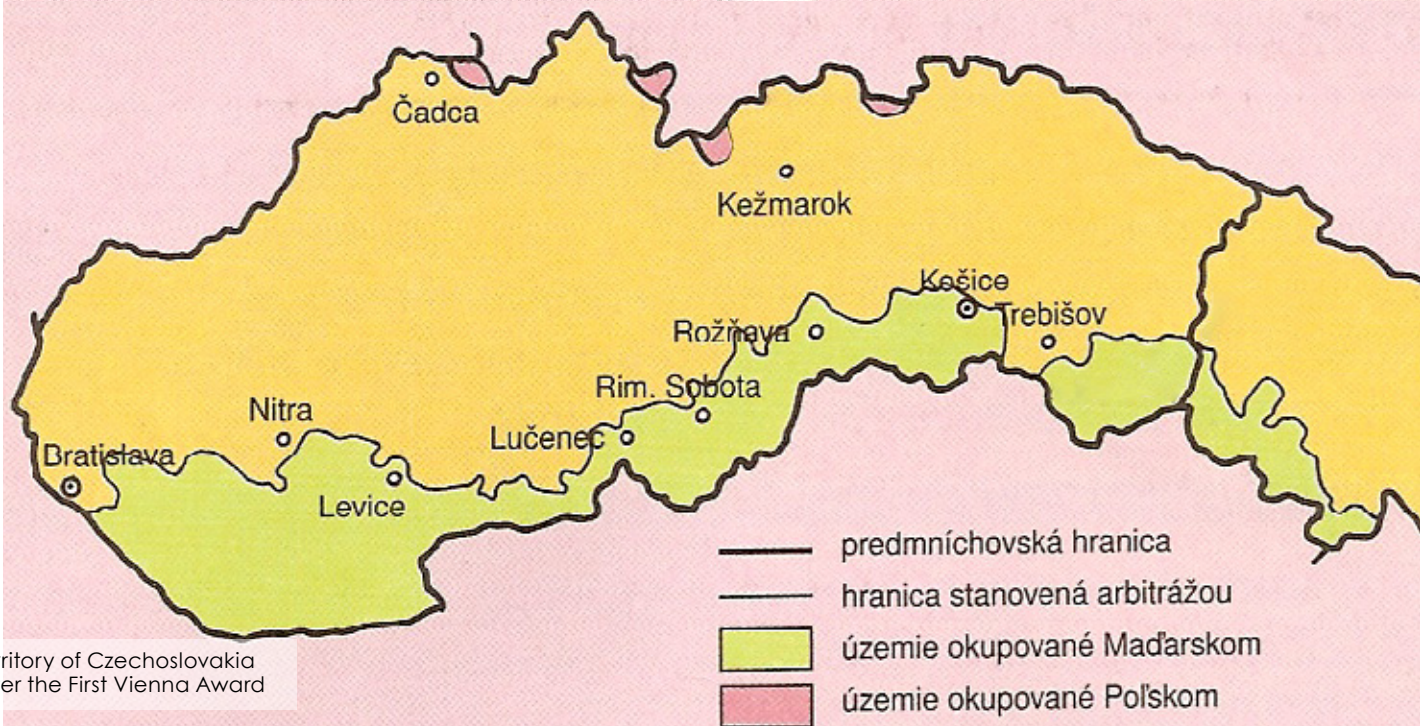


1930s



Miklós Horthy

1938



Territory of Czechoslovakia after the First Vienna Award

Republic or who lived in the territory well before 1918 were expelled as well. The same destiny afflicted also so-called inconvenient persons, such as representatives of the educated class, teachers and all those who had participated in the political activities of Czechoslovakia. By mid-December 1938, around 50,000 inhabitants had left the occupied territory. The Slovak government reacted by introducing the reciprocity principle, i.e. the Hungarians in Slovakia would enjoy the same rights as those allowed to the Slovaks in Hungary, which led to discontent by the Hungarian minority in Slovakia. Their representatives requested that the misconduct of Hungarian authorities against the non-Hungarian population be at least moderated. The Hungarian government reacted to these concerns with sensitivity and in fact it at least partially attenuated its interference against non-Hungarian citizens.

There were problems at schools as Slovak schools were shut down and teachers were dismissed but those who promised loyalty to the Hungarian State could remain at school. However, as soon as they became inconvenient for the Hungarian establishment, they were transferred to schools in purely Hungarian counties.

The Vienna Award resulted in a great many problems in the lives of people in South Slovakia. Between 1938 and 1945, occupied South Slovakia was governed by a regime that was anti-democratic, authoritative and rather intolerant towards minorities. Persecution and Hungarian assimilation

ended with liberation of the southern territory of Slovakia and its annexation back to Czechoslovakia in 1945.

**"The aim of Horthy's Hungarian regime was to incite as much discontent and protest as possible among the Slovak population so that the regime could then intervene with brutal force. It was their malevolence and an effort towards total assimilation of the Slovak inhabitants that negated any democratic manners and rules."**

Karol Kufka, personal witness

### WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW MORE?

Recommended websites:  
[www.upn.gov.sk](http://www.upn.gov.sk); [www.enrs.eu](http://www.enrs.eu)



EURÓPSKA SIET'  
PAMÄŤ A SOLIDARITA

## THE FIRST VIENNA AWARD

The First Vienna Award took place on 2 November 1938. Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy compelled Czechoslovakia to cede its territory in the south of Slovakia and Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia to Hungary.



November 10, 1938

Entry of the Hungarian Red Army to Rimavská Sobota



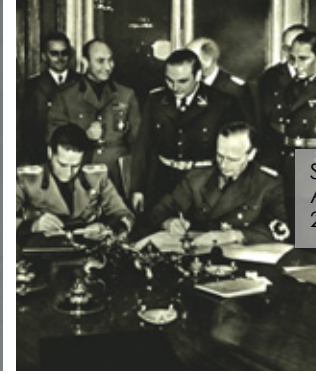
November 1938

Kassa  
1938 november 11.



Miklós Horthy enters Košice

November 2, 1938



Signing of the First Vienna Award in Vienna, November 2, 1938

Railway station in Rimavská Sobota 1938–1945



November 1938



Occupation of South-Eastern Slovakia by the Hungarian Red Army

## FOREIGN POLICY OF HUNGARY TOWARDS CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in 1918 was one of the consequences of the First World War and it was replaced by new successor countries, including Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Hungary continued to defend the territorial integrity of the former Hungarian Kingdom and considered the separation of Slovakia to be only a temporary loss of its territory. **The main goal of the foreign policy of all Hungarian governments between the two world wars was a change to the Treaty of Trianon, which they considered an unjust verdict by the victors in the First World War.** Their efforts bore fruit when non-democratic and totalitarian regimes took power in Italy and Germany.

## MUNICH AND NEGOTIATIONS IN KOMARNO

An opportunity for change emerged after signing of the Munich Agreement in late September 1938 when the Great Powers (Germany, Italy, Great Britain and France) agreed upon the cession of border areas of Czechoslovakia (Sudeten) to Nazi Germany. One of the annexes to the Munich Agreement mentioned also the need of negotiations between the Hungarian and Czechoslovak governments to solve the issue of the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia. Both governments agreed to send delegations for negotiations that took place in Komárno between 9 and 13 October 1938. If no agreement could be found, they were

to ask the signatories of the Munich Agreement to arbitrate the dispute. **The Hungarian delegation took an uncompromising position during the negotiations, pursued firm territorial claims and followed the instructions of its government which said: "Do not negotiate, claim."** On these grounds, it was soon clear that mutual agreement was impossible. As the negotiations failed, the governments of both countries decided to ask the Great Powers to decide.

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FIRST VIENNA AWARD

The arbitration took place in Vienna on 2 November 1938. The Foreign Affairs Ministers of Germany and Italy, Joachim von Ribbentrop and Galeazzo Ciano, decided upon the border line and the size of territory to be surrendered by Czechoslovakia. Great Britain and France had lost interest in the events in Central Europe and did not participate in the arbitration proceedings. **Slovakia lost territory of 10,390 km<sup>2</sup> with 854,218 inhabitants. According to the last population census of 1930, more than half a million people were of Hungarian nationality and almost 300,000 inhabitants were Slovaks and Czechs.**

## OCCUPATION OF SOUTHERN SLOVAKIA BY THE HUNGARIAN ARMY

The southern areas were occupied by the Hungarian Army between 5 and 10 November 1938, culminating in an entry

of the Hungarian Regent, Miklós Horthy, seated on a white horse, into Košice on 11 November. **In his speech among other things he promised to improve the living standard of Slovaks as well as the full freedom of language and culture.** Already before Christmas 1938, the Hungarian Army imposed military administration on the annexed territory. The occupied territory was hermetically closed, while railway and road transport stopped for local civilians. Neither private phone lines nor telegraph lines were functioning. People could cross the border only with special written permission from the Chief of the General Staff. Czechoslovak political parties were banned – except for Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (almost inactive) and the United Hungarian Party as well as civic organisations and associations of Czechs and Slovaks.

## PERSECUTION AGAINST NON-HUNGARIAN POPULATION

That period saw the severest persecution by military bodies, the police and semi-military terrorist organisations supported by the Hungarian Army with armies and training, that even claimed the lives of several persons. Not only colonists – who had been assigned land in the territory already before 1938 and usually came from poor regions of Northern Slovakia as well as Czech regions and Moravia – were displaced from their homes. Inhabitants who had purchased land from private owners during the existence of the First Czechoslovak