

HUNGARY

Date of Elections: 8 June 1985

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament on the normal expiry of their term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Hungary, the National Assembly, is composed of 387 members* elected for 5 years. Of these, 352 are popularly chosen and 35 are prominent personalities selected from a "national list" of candidates.

Electoral System

All Hungarian citizens who have reached the age of 18 have the right to vote. Disqualified, however, are persons who have been disfranchised by court order, those under police surveillance or detention, and the insane.

Electoral registers are drawn up on the constituency level and revised before each election. A constituency absentee may be included on the electoral register of his temporary residence and vote in that constituency. Voting is not compulsory.

Candidates for the National Assembly must be qualified electors who have received the endorsement of the country's Patriotic People's Front. The parliamentary mandate is not incompatible with remunerative work, which the Deputies may continue to carry on throughout the duration of their mandate.

Prior to the elections and within each constituency, local committees of the Front organize voters' meetings in the communes, factories, offices and all working places, as well as for members of the army and police. Parliamentary candidates - who may be proposed by organs of the Front, social organizations, workers' collectives or individual voters - are chosen during these pre-election meetings. All those persons who receive at least one third of the votes of electors present at two of these meetings and who fulfill the conditions set by the statutes of the Front are endorsed. Several candidates may therefore contest the same seat.

Deputies are elected in 352 single-member constituencies. In each, at least two candidates must be fielded. If, within a constituency, no candidate obtains an absolute majority of the votes in the course of the first ballot, or if less than an absolute majority of the total number of registered electors have voted, a second or subsequent ballots are held until these require-

* See section *Parliamentary Developments*, p. 11.

A total of 10% of the Assembly's members (35) are chosen from a national list drawn up by the Patriotic People's Front.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

In accordance with the 1983 Electoral Law*, multiple candidatures were the general rule in the 352 constituencies. Although all those in the running were under allegiance to the Patriotic People's Front - the country's umbrella political organization - 71 candidates were nominated at voters' meetings on 18 and 22 April 1985 rather than having been recommended by the Front.

Of 867 candidates for formal nomination, 762 were successful. Thirty-five prominent candidates, including high-ranking government officials, figured on a national list with no opponents.

Polling day was preceded by the 13th Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' (Communist) Party, held on 25-28 March 1985. One of the main topics of debate among the delegates was economic reform. Party leader Janos Kadar indicated that the programme of reforms would continue. In a speech on 6 June, Mr. Kadar called for a further opening in politics to non-Party members.

Voting results were decisive for 310 Assembly seats; runoff elections were required on 22 June in 42 constituencies where no candidate obtained an absolute majority.

*See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections and Developments XVIII* (1983-1984), pp. 12-13.

Statistics

*1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats
in the National Assembly*

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| Number of registered electors* | 7,568,480 | |
| Voters** | 7,103,146 | (93.85%) |
| Blank or void ballot papers | 386,759 | |
| Valid votes | 6,716,387 | |

*7,728,208 for the national list of 35 candidates.

** 7,265,915 (94%) for the national list of 35 candidates.

| Political Group | Number of Seats |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Patriotic People's Front | 386* |

"Plus one vacancy.

*2. Distribution of Deputies according to
Professional Category*

| | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Intellectuals. | .179 |
| Workers. | .133 |
| Farmers. | .16 |
| Employees and others. | .58 |
| | 386* |

3. Distribution of Deputies according to Sex

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Men. | 305 |
| Women. | <u>81</u> |
| | 386* |

4. Distribution of Deputies according to Age Group

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| 30 years and under. | .20 |
| Over 30 years. | <u>366</u> |
| | 386* |

•Plus one vacancy.