

TANULMÁNYOK / STUDIES

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Hungarian-Hungarian international migration within the Carpathian-basin, 2011-2017

Hungary has a unique role in international migration. The research introduces the facts and figures about foreign-born population in Hungary, focusing on migrants arriving to Hungary from the Carpathian Basin and their geographical networks, revealing the source areas of migration. The analysis interprets those involved in international migration in broad terms; as such, it is not focused solely on the movements of foreign citizens, but rather examines the effects of migration together with the naturalized Hungarians born abroad.

Key words: International migration, Carpathian Basin, Hungary

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1. Introduction and theoretical background

It is a fact that the processes involved in migratory movements have the potential to play a significant role in population development. This is especially true in the case of Hungary. The transformation of the Hungarian ethnic spatial structure since the conquest in the Carpathian Basin can be divided into four main periods. The first (the period between the 10th and 15th centuries) mainly consisted of the settlement of non-inhabited areas and the Hungarian expansion that took place at the expense of other nationalities; the second (from the 16th to 18th centuries) was characterised by the significant decline of ethnic Hungarians as a result of the Ottoman (Turkish) occupation, the wars of liberation and the subsequent resettlement. In the third period, (from the 19th to the early 20th century), due to social factors which resulted predominantly from Hungarisation, the regeneration of the medieval Hungarian ethnic territories, the Hungarian ethnic expansion and the loss of territory of the other ethnic groups unfolded and accelerated, which could only be halted by the Trianon Peace Treaty and the division of the territories of the historical Hungarian state. In the fourth period, which is still in progress, within the territory of the post-Trianon country, an increased Hungarian ethnic advancement can be seen, while past the Trianon borders, a general decline was observed in ethnic-territory Hungarians as Slovaks, Rusyns, Romanians, Serbs, Croats and Slovenians advanced. This was only interrupted by a short, temporary Hungarian ethnic expansion as the result of the revisions between 1938 and 1944 (Kocsis K., 2002, 2003, 2015; Kocsis K. et al., 2015).

The third demographic disaster³ was a turning point in the population development of Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. After the Great War, due to the artificial intervention in the domestic population principles, what had been until then the organic processes of population development (which helped through the first two disasters) were halted (Tóth P., 2018). In fact, the population development of Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin is interrelated; it was a mutually supportive

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³ The first demographic disaster was the Tatar invasion; the second was the Ottoman occupation; and the third was the Trianon Peace Treaty, after the “Great War”; while the fourth was caused by the loss of World War II. Following the 1956 Revolution there was also a significant loss of population, but it is not measurable as in the four demographic catastrophes above.

dual process. One element of this process was the continuous population development determined by the fertility of the ethnically unified Hungarians, modified by mortality. The other element of the process consisted of members of the other populations assimilating into the Hungarians. Within the framework of the “Hungarian Empire”, the results of both processes ensured the thriving growth of the Hungarian population beyond the natural rate, which enabled Hungarians to overcome their demographic disasters by 1918. This also means that following the third demographic disaster, in the case of Hungarians caught between the new borders, the practices of the pre-1918 period no longer, or just barely, determined the development of the Hungarian population. With the partition of the country, the (domestic) movement that had worked until then came to a halt, by which non-Hungarians, or people of mixed nationalities who migrated to the central areas inhabited by a Hungarian majority, assimilated to those living there, increasing the numbers of Hungarians. After 1918, internal migration served only the territorial redistribution of the population; movements were made from the new border areas towards the centre (Tóth P., 2010, 2018).

The role of international migration in population replacement changed after 1918. As a result, the majority of “foreigners” migrating to the country (namely, the migration of Hungarians living in neighbouring countries to Hungary) did not increase the total number of Hungarians, only the number of Hungarians living in Hungary. With the changes to the borders, the people who until then had been counted as national migrants; transformed into international migrants. In the long term this international migration no increases the number of Hungarians within the Carpathian-Basin, but paradoxically, it plays (to strengthen assimilations) a part in reducing those numbers (Kocsis K. et al, 2015, Tóth P., 2018).

Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that at the core of the structure of their respective groups, the structural development of the Hungarians living in Hungary or Hungarian-speaking communities in neighbouring countries, is independent of each other only at first glance. All that is taking place in the area of demographic processes in Hungary, is only a part of the wider demographic processes of the Hungarian linguistic community (Tóth P., 2018, Dövényi Z., et al, 2008).

2. Data and methodology

There are several types of data sources available on foreign nationals, mostly in the form of administrative records. These are registers created by a given administrative organisation (for the purposes of taxes, social insurance, etc.) to support the implementation of its own statutory administrative tasks (Gárdos É. et al., 2008). In these cases, statistical and research needs do not primarily determine the concept and the content, the units of the target population, the reference time of the data and definitions. Another difficulty is that the content and structure of the register may suffer changes as a result of changes in legislation. All this means that, in some cases, it is difficult to obtain information directly from these data systems to meet scientific needs.

The advantage of census data over administrative data is that everyone can be linked to their habitual place of residence, along with all the variables of the survey. This provides the opportunity of gaining insight into the living conditions and economic, educational and social backgrounds of Hungary’s inhabitants in territorial breakdowns for statistical purposes. The census is conducted throughout the country at a single point in time, with the same content, and based on uniform methodology. Surveys were also carried out for Hungarian citizens who habitually live in the national territory, or for citizens staying abroad temporarily (12 months or less); moreover, foreign nationals and stateless persons who stay in the country’s territory for a given period of time are also listed. Among the foreign nationals not included are members of diplomatic bodies and their family members; members of foreign armed forces on the basis of resolutions by the Parliament or government, as well as people in the country for the purposes of

tourism (resting, hiking, hunting, etc.), personal visits, medical treatments, business meetings, etc. However, this information is not available as often as in administrative records.

We used these two types of statistical data sources. We worked with the 2011 and 2017 stock data of the Hungarian migration databases as they are relevant to the topic (Personal Data and Address Registers, the Ministry of Interior's Records of Foreign Residents, Population Census, microcensus). The data underlying the analyses were not directly available, we had to make use of separate classifications for the assessment of territorial impacts. The mapping of the source settlements and regions of international migration in the Carpathian Basin enables a deeper understanding of the migration processes affecting the Carpathian Basin. Currently, country classifications are automated in administrative sources, with the list of foreign settlements posing a number of challenges: typing errors, instructions, and the city names in different languages made progress difficult. Many large cities have been recorded under many different ways, and in many cases, settlements that were formerly independent were included⁴.

Both data sources contain information that is missing from the other file (for example, the microcensus contains data related to education and economic activity which are not part of the Ministry of Interior's database; however, the administrative database contains the settlements of birth). For this reason, it was necessary to link both files⁵.

For 2011, we added administrative data to the census (this is the source of official statistics data in the census reference year), while in the case of 2017, We added the microcensus information to the Ministry of Interior's database (in the years when there is no census, official statistics are provided by the administrative records). Therefore, the 2017 distributions may slightly differ from the microcensus results.

The analysis of international migrants is often limited to foreign nationals living in a given country. However, the demography involved in migration is much wider and its structure is more nuanced. When assessing the effects and extent of immigration, naturalisations and foreign-born citizens whose number significantly exceeds that of foreign nationals cannot be neglected. Therefore, this study focuses on the foreign-born population (including those who were granted citizenship of the given country as well as those who were not).

3. International migrants in Hungary Quantities and nationalities

Often times, international migrants living in Hungary are examined in simplified terms as foreign citizens residing in Hungary. Nevertheless, the population involved in migration is much larger and its structure much more nuanced.

⁴ Just a few examples:

(1) The village of yore of Székelyhidegkút (*Vidacutu Român* in Romanian, *Kaltenbrunnen* in German) is today a village in Romania, in Harghita County. It emerged from the unification of Magyarhidegkút and Oláhhidegkút in 1926. The northern part of the village is Hungarian -, the western part of Oláhhidegkút, currently a part of the Hidegkút settlement. - Hidegkút (*Vidăcut* in Romanian) is a village in the Romanian Harghita County. It belongs administratively to Székelyandrásfalva.

(2) Horthyvára: Máriamajor (*Степановићево/Stepanovićevo* in Serbian, between 1941 and 1944 Horthyvára; in 1941-it was called BácsHADIKfalva for a short period), today belongs to the Újvidék township in Serbia, in Vojvodina, in the Southern-Bácska district.

(3) Kadicsfalva – (*Cadiseni*) is today a part of the city of Székelyudvarhely (According to the chronicles, in 1566 it was known as *Kadichfalva*).

(4) Csekelaka (*Cecălaca* in Romanian) village in Romania, in the Maros County. Today, it belongs to the Cintos Township.

⁵ Marcell Kovács, Director of the Population Census and Demographic Statistics Department, and his experts, Zita Ináncsi and János Novák, provided essential assistance to this work. I sincerely thank them for their support here.

If we examine solely the population of the previous years, we find that the number of foreign nationals in 2011, 143,197, increased by only 5.5% by 2017, when 151,132 foreign nationals lived in Hungary. For example, thanks to global migration trends, in 2017 more Chinese citizens resided in Budapest more than Romanians. However, this data needs further explanation.

When examining the effects and extent of immigration, we must not forget the effects of naturalization: Hungarian citizens who were born abroad but already reside in Hungary (the overwhelming majority were born abroad, as foreign citizens, and only became Hungarian citizens after migrating to Hungary; the smallest part of them were born abroad but as Hungarian already). Their number significantly exceeds that of foreign nationals. Together, the two groups mentioned cover the target population we mean to examine: the population of foreign origin living in Hungary (the group is composed of foreign citizens and Hungarian citizens born abroad). Within this group, the number of foreign citizens is showing a steady decrease: from 37% in 2011 to 29% in 2017.

In 2017, the ‘population of foreign origin’ living in Hungary was already 521,258 (a 33% increase since 2011). Those emigrating Hungarians who returned to live to Hungary (127,000 people) are not included in this figure of the target population. These figures counter the statement that Hungary’s international migration balance is negative (Juhász et al. 2017).

At the same time, it is important to note that the majority of the naturalized migrants arrive from neighbouring countries (Blaskó Zs. – Gödri I., 2016; Siskáné et al, 2017; Egedy T., 2017). In 2011, 288,024 people living in Hungary arrived from countries of the Carpathian Basin. In 2017, their numbers increased by 22% (to 352,506 people, of which 313,000 were Hungarian). Today, the number of people born in Romania living in Hungary is higher than the total population of Debrecen, the second largest settlement in the country. During the period under review, the neighbouring countries saw a dynamic rise in numbers, the largest share of which was in the case of Ukrainian migrants, at 81%.

Table 1: Hungarian citizens born abroad and foreign nationals by major countries

Country of citizenship/place of birth	2011			2017		
	Foreign citizens	Hungarians born abroad	Total of population of foreign origin	Foreign citizens	Hungarians born abroad	Total population of foreign origin
Romania	38 574	139 093	177 667	24 040	182387	206 427
Germany	16 987	7 294	24 281	18 627	16039	34 666
Slovakia	8 246	25 195	33 441	9 519	17376	26 895
Austria	3 936	2 897	6 833	4 021	7102	11 123
Great Britain	2 602	1 184	3 786	3 081	8578	11 659
France	2 201	1 123	3 324	2 523	2156	4 679
Netherlands	2 058	461	2 519	2 814	1208	4 022
EU28	85 414	183 761	269 175	76 270	248524	324 794
Ukraine	11 820	23 953	35 773	5 774	59272	65 046
Serbia	7 752	21 306	29 058	2 312	37497	39 809
Europe other	7 536	8 764	16 300	14 838	5 463	20 301
Europe total	112 522	237 785	350 307	99 194	350756	449 950
China	8852	939	9791	19 111	415	19 526
Vietnam	2358	728	3086	3 256	825	4 081
Iran	1 523	163	1 686	2 444	248	2 692
Asia other	9 571	2 930	12 501	15 126	5 051	20 177
Asia total	22 304	4 760	27 064	39 937	6539	46 476
United States	3 022	1 924	4 946	3198	5294	8 492
Canada	484	807	1 291	513	2218	2 731

America other	1 237	1 054	2 291	1 686	1 637	3 323
America total	4 743	3 785	8 528	5 397	9149	14 546
Nigeria	1 015	105	1 120	1475	192	1 667
Egypt	472	176	648	1182	567	1 749
Africa other	1 366	909	2 275	3 328	1 639	4 967
Africa total	2 853	1 190	4 043	5 985	2398	8 383
Australia and Oceania	775	350	1 125	619	1284	1 903
Total	143 197	247 870	391 067	151 132	370 126	521 258

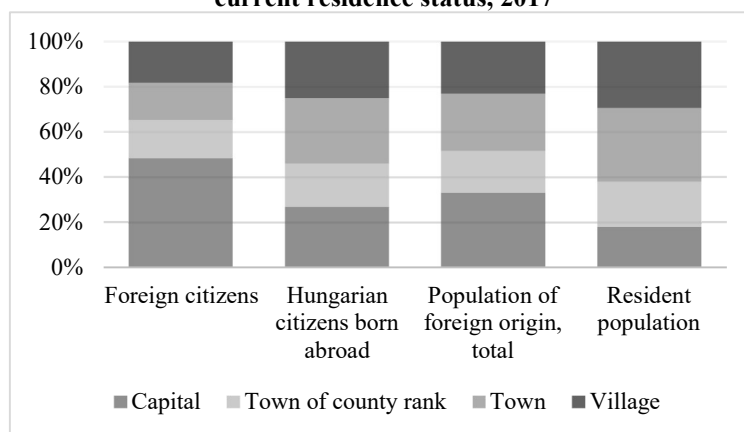
Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO)

Territorial characteristics

In the case of internal migration, it is true that social groups with better labour market positions migrate to regions that feature higher economic indicators, better image, and higher positions in the settlement hierarchy (Bálint L., et al., 2017). This also strengthens the differences in the spatial social structure and the territorial separation of different prestigious social groups.

These findings are only partially characteristic of international migration. In addition to income opportunities, a more important role is played by the territorial location of the destinations and the natural environment (Dövényi Z., 2011). Therefore, the spatial distribution of the population of foreign origin is different than the distribution of the Hungarian-born population; thus, their influence is higher in the areas they prefer than in the national context.

Figure 1: Distribution of the population of foreign origin and resident population by current residence status, 2017



Source: own calculation, based on the database of HCSO

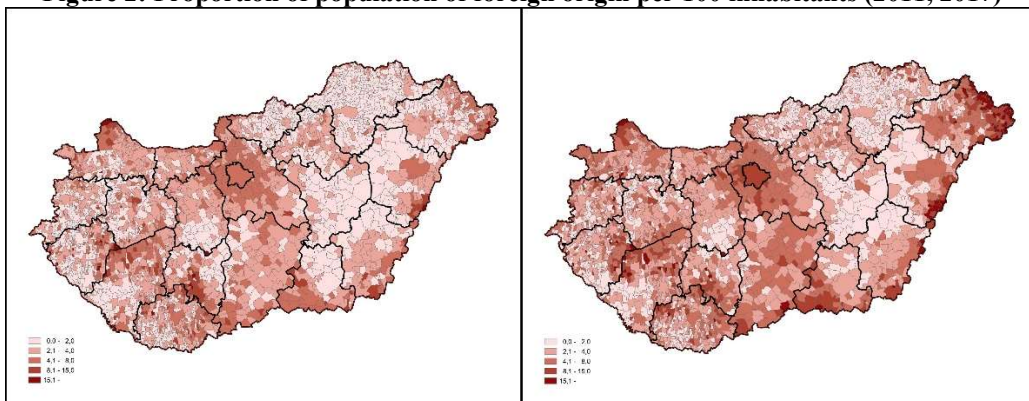
Through the lens of migration, there are three regions in which the examined migration groups are permanently and generally present in larger numbers and proportions in Hungary: Central Hungary, the areas near the borders and the Lake Balaton region.

Budapest and Pest County attract people from a greater distance, and the majority of non-European foreigners live here. Many of them are employed, younger on average, and have higher education. It is primarily economically active, highly qualified foreign citizens who settle down here. Over the past ten years, Budapest has become a global destination for migration. Nationwide, the proportion of foreign citizens making national income statements (no data are available for Hungarian citizens born abroad) is close to 2% of the resident population. They account for more than 3% of the income tax. In Central Hungary, these ratios are higher than 5%.

In Hungary, where the majority of foreign citizens still continue to arrive from neighbouring countries, the location of the target areas also plays a decisive role in the distribution of the foreign population. Therefore, in making a choice of a new place of residence the *border regions* also play an important role, in addition to the economic centres. In these settlements, the composition of citizenships is not as diverse; rather, most of the foreigners simply arrive from the other side of the border.

The region of *Lake Balaton* is chosen mainly by German, Austrian, Dutch, and Swiss pensioners; older people usually choose this area because their pensions provide them with higher purchasing power, as well as for the recreational opportunities and the value of a natural environment. In many cases, foreigners come as tourists before migrating (Kincses Á., 2014) and then arrive having already detailed information about the target areas. The volume of elderly migration increased significantly in the period under review.

Figure 2: Proportion of population of foreign origin per 100 inhabitants (2011, 2017)



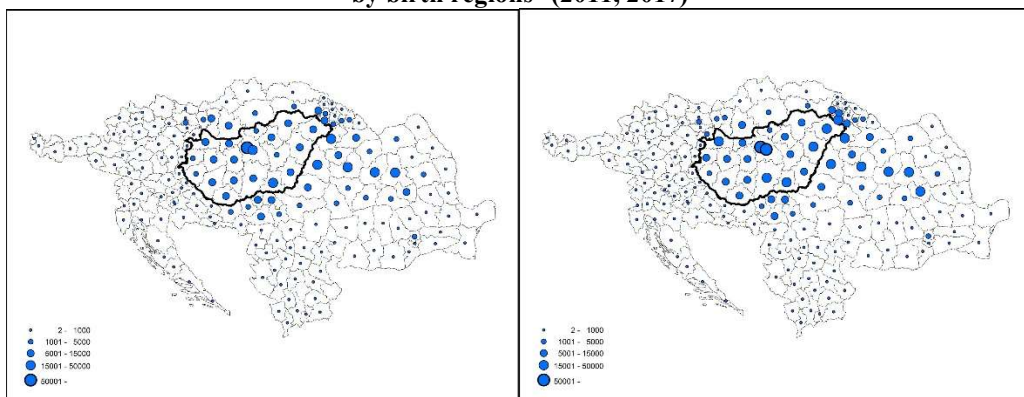
Source: own calculation, based on the database of HCSO

4. The Carpathian Basin's territory sources of international migration to Hungary

From a demographic, economic, social and geographic perspective, the focus of research on migration in Hungary is primarily on the impact in the receiving areas. The reason for this is twofold. On one hand, analysing the consequences for Hungary requires this approach, on the other hand, emigration areas are difficult to identify for the most part, which makes research on the Carpathian Basin remain unobserved. Using official statistics, data links and classifications mitigates the omission to study the wider migration processes, since demographic processes are not worth examining only within the current borders of the country. Therefore, the primary goal is to explore the migration source areas in the neighbouring countries, to learn more about the effects in the areas that send migrants, and to explore the overall picture of the situation in the Carpathian Basin between 2011 and 2017. In the case of foreigners or those who are already Hungarian citizens, the observation of the effects of emigration is not relevant, the population of foreign origin was considered collectively.

In 2017, the population of foreign origin from Hungary's neighbouring countries living in Hungary was 352,506. Of these, 7,131 were born in Hungary, and 560 of them had never stepped foot in their country of nationality (for example, Romanian citizens born in Germany, or Serbian citizens born in Sweden). Thus, a total of 344,815 people who were born in one of the neighbouring countries (regardless of nationality) lived in Hungary in 2017. This represents a 24% increase compared to 2011.

Figure 3: Population of foreign origin from the neighbouring countries living in Hungary by birth regions⁶ (2011, 2017)



On January 1, 2011, the majority of the population born abroad but now living in Hungary had been born in the counties of Mures (27,879 persons), Bihar (27,374 persons), Hargita (26 439 persons), Cluj (21,667 persons), Satu Mare (17,102 persons), in the Nitriansky kraj (13,742 persons), Covasna county (10,821 persons), Berehove rajon (9,301 persons), Severnobački okrug (8 877 persons), Uzhhorod rajon (7,958 persons) and the Severnobanatski okrug (7,668 persons). These are the Romanian, Transcarpathian, Vojvodina and Slovak areas where the proportion of Hungarian nationals is high (Kapitány B., 2015).

By 2017, only the order of the five major Transylvanian counties had changed (Hargita 35,613, Mures 32,433, Bihar 31,587, Satu Mare 20,075, and Cluj 19,540). The rest of the major source areas were Berehove rajon (19,429 persons), Covasna County (17,021), Severnobački okrug (12,769), Uzhhorod rajon (12,410), Severnobanatski okrug (11,687), Vynohradiv rajon (11,628) and the Nitriansky kraj (10,286).

From the major source regions, the areas where the ‘emitting’ role was strengthened for the years under review were Transcarpathia (at rajons level: Vynohradiv: 259%, Berehove: 209%, Mukachevo: 177%, Khust: 159%, Uzhhorod: 156%, Tiachiv: 131%), as well as the Bacau (243%) and Covasna (157%) counties.

The main feature of international migration to Hungary is that the majority of the immigrating population is either of Hungarian nationality or is a native Hungarian speaker. The strength of the linguistic and cultural relations extending beyond the borders is primarily the result of the peace treaties that ended World War I and World War II. This determining factor is steadily, but slowly weakening. The main reason for this is the gradual shift of the countries of origin from the neighbouring countries to a wider range.

It is possible to identify the demographic processes behind the phenomenon in the period before 1918. The proportion of non-Hungarian native speakers is higher in those arriving from Ukraine (not including the Transcarpathian regions), Northern Slovakia, Serbia (not including Vojvodina), as well as in Austria, Croatia and Slovenia.

In the case of Ukraine, the prominent value can be linked to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict that has been protracted since 2014, the economic and social crisis, and general uncertainty (Karácsonyi D. et al., 2014).

⁶ The map displays the places of birth in the neighbouring countries of citizens living in Hungary, while the Hungarian parts show those who were born in nearby countries but elected to live in Hungary.

5. International migration networks in the Carpathian Basin, 2011, 2017

International migration to Hungary is characterised by the fact that the majority of the immigrant population has Hungarian nationality or is a native Hungarian speaker. The strength of cross-border linguistic and cultural relations is primarily the consequence of the peace treaties that concluded World War I and World War II. In 2017, 3.6% of Hungary's resident population was born in other countries of the Carpathian Basin.

This chapter aims to go beyond the classical study of international migration by not only examining the phenomenon according to Hungarian destination areas, but also linking sending and receiving areas by identifying the areas of origin.

The relations of the place of birth and current place of residence of the foreign-born population arriving to Hungary are reviewed at NUTS3 level, based on data of 2011 and of 2017. In the case of Ukraine, due to the large size of the country, only Transcarpathia was considered in the study, since nearly 90% of Ukrainian migrants arrive from this region. (As the NUTS classification does not exist in Ukraine (Mezencev K., 2010), for Transcarpathia (Zakarpatska Oblast) the analyses were carried out at "raion" level, a less aggregated level than "oblast". From the 161 regions curated, significant concentrations can be detected in the migration matrix to the 19 Hungarian counties and Budapest. Omitting the pairs of regions, which account for more than 0.5% of total migration, a much narrower group is available than before (see table 2 and 3.). Thus, 41.6% of migrations were concentrated in 1% of all matrix cells in 2011, which increased by 4.7 percentage points by 2017.

In 2011, Central Hungary was the most attractive destination to those arriving from Transylvanian counties. 3.24% of migration from neighbouring countries to Hungary took place between Mures and Budapest, 3.19% from Harghita County and 3% between Cluj-Napoca and the Hungarian capital. Active contact spaces and intense flows (Anderson et al., 1999; Baranyi B. et al., 2004; Hansen N., 1977; Van Geenhuizen, M. et al., 2001) developed between the interconnected counties, which can be explained partly by the phenomenon of circular migration (Fercsik R., 2008; Illés S. et al., 2009) and partly by the easier interaction with family members who remained home (Rédei M., 2007). The most significant of these were the movements between Bihar and Hajdú-Bihar (1,58%), Satu Mare and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county (1,05%), North Bačka, North Banat and Csongrád county (1%, 1,2%), as well as from Beregovo and Uzsgorod raion to Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County (0,99%, 0,68%).

By 2017, the number of pairs of regions affected by more than 0.5% of migration from neighbouring countries to Hungary increased. Hungary's migration relations widened, the more distant areas of neighbouring countries also became source areas by smaller volumes, while the regional role of the districts of Trnava, Bratislava, Košice and Nitra somewhat weakened. The importance of Budapest and Pest County further strengthened, as well as the migration weight of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County, mainly because of those arriving from Ukraine. By 2017, the proportions of migration from Harghita, Mures to Central Hungary increased slightly, however the rates of border connections strengthened to a greater extent.

Table 2: The proportion of major migration flows from neighbouring countries to Hungary (%)⁷, 2011

Foreign /Hungarian counties	Budapest	Pest	Komárom-Esztergom	Győr-Moson-Sopron	Tolna	Hajdú-Bihar	Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	Bács-Kiskun	Békés	Csongrád
Suceava	0.09	0.07	0.00	0.01	0.57	0.00	0.01	0.21	0.03	0.02
Arad	0.59	0.28	0.03	0.06	0.02	0.06	0.02	0.08	0.33	0.33
Bihor	2.55	1.75	0.21	0.37	0.10	1.58	0.18	0.30	0.59	0.30
Cluj	3.01	1.90	0.20	0.25	0.07	0.28	0.11	0.24	0.15	0.15
Satu Mare	1.43	1.10	0.14	0.21	0.05	0.67	1.05	0.17	0.13	0.10
Sălaj	0.64	0.60	0.06	0.08	0.02	0.13	0.08	0.09	0.08	0.07
Covasna	1.27	0.92	0.18	0.14	0.08	0.08	0.04	0.14	0.09	0.10
Harghita	3.19	2.34	0.21	0.33	0.18	0.22	0.15	0.39	0.27	0.34
Mures	3.24	2.35	0.30	0.44	0.16	0.26	0.14	0.42	0.27	0.32
Trnava district	0.37	0.17	0.08	0.55	0.10	0.02	0.03	0.12	0.07	0.05
Nitra Region	1.04	0.64	0.85	0.40	0.24	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.22	0.12
North Bačka District	0.73	0.24	0.03	0.07	0.12	0.02	0.01	0.50	0.05	1.00
North Banat District	0.48	0.21	0.04	0.06	0.06	0.03	0.01	0.22	0.06	1.20
South Banat District	0.56	0.17	0.03	0.05	0.13	0.02	0.02	0.26	0.05	0.37
Uzhhorod Raion	0.72	0.40	0.05	0.05	0.02	0.23	0.68	0.06	0.04	0.03
Berehove Raion	0.79	0.45	0.06	0.06	0.03	0.18	0.99	0.08	0.04	0.05

Table 3: The proportion of major migration flows from neighbouring countries to Hungary (%), 2017

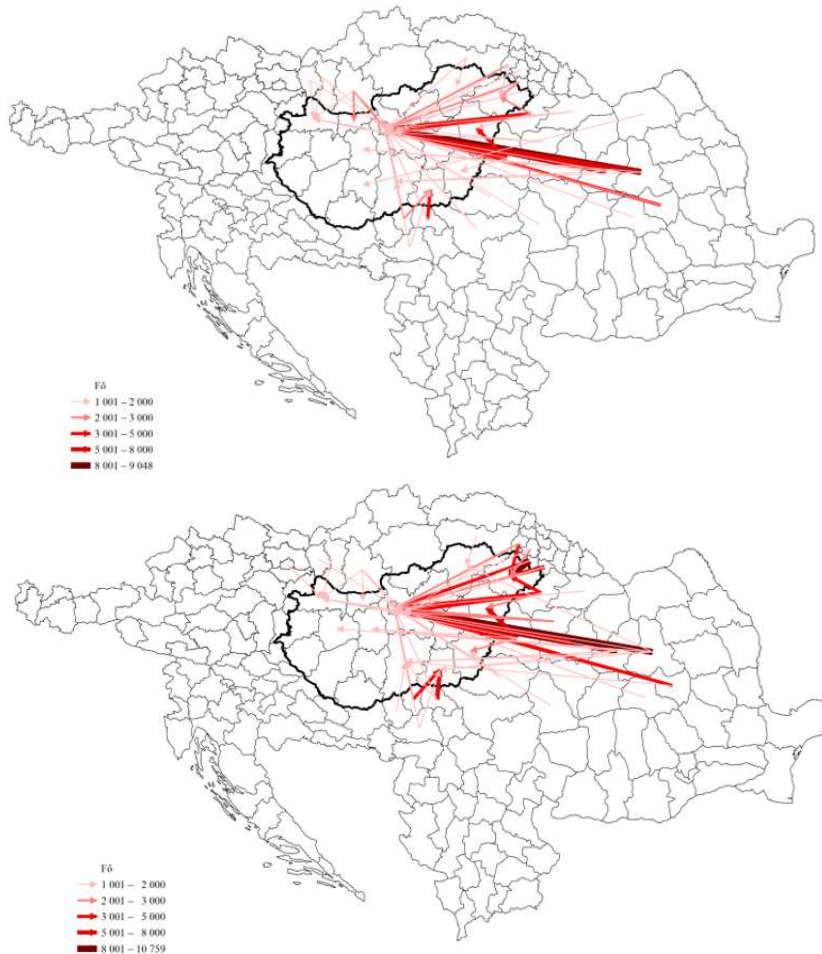
Foreign/Hungarian counties	Budapest	Pest	Komárom-Esztergom	Veszprém	Hajdú-Bihar	Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	Bács-Kiskun	Békés	Csongrád
Arad	0.31	0.32	0.02	0.03	0.05	0.01	0.04	0.52	0.22
Bihor	1.94	1.52	0.19	0.28	2.05	0.17	0.22	0.70	0.25
Cluj	2.08	1.40	0.15	0.26	0.21	0.09	0.16	0.10	0.09
Satu Mare	1.20	1.14	0.12	0.16	0.66	1.32	0.12	0.09	0.08
Sălaj	0.71	0.63	0.05	0.05	0.21	0.09	0.07	0.07	0.06
Covasna	1.39	1.23	0.19	0.27	0.09	0.04	0.51	0.10	0.09
Harghita	3.15	2.59	0.23	0.55	0.26	0.16	0.57	0.19	0.35
Mures	2.86	2.66	0.27	0.21	0.22	0.10	0.47	0.18	0.42
Nitra Region	0.51	0.29	0.58	0.24	0.02	0.04	0.07	0.09	0.05
North District Bačka	0.69	0.25	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.01	0.75	0.06	1.30
North District Banat	0.44	0.24	0.04	0.05	0.03	0.02	0.41	0.08	1.58
Uzhhorod Raion	0.80	0.39	0.06	0.04	0.24	1.32	0.13	0.03	0.03
Berehove Raion	1.00	0.52	0.07	0.05	0.24	2.88	0.10	0.04	0.04

⁷ The total foreign-linked population born in the neighbouring countries and residing in Hungary =100%

Mukachevo Raion	0.44	0.23	0.03	0.03	0.16	0.77	0.05	0.03	0.02
Vynohradiv Raion	0.61	0.31	0.06	0.04	0.16	1.64	0.07	0.02	0.02

The growing appreciation of the capital city area is evident not only in the larger sending regions, but also in most of the Carpathian Basin (Rédei M., 2009). This Hungarian region, is the clear destination for international migrants, even from greater geographical distances (Soltész B. et al., 2014). This is particularly true for those of working-age, with higher educational attainment, working in managerial position, as well as for those living in households without children. Border areas are mostly considered as local destinations. In case of shorter geographical distances and movements close to the border area, the proportion of those moving with their children is much higher, the educational attainments and occupations of migrants are more diversified, but there are no significant differences in their economic activity compared to that of migrants of a longer distance.

Figure 4: The relations of the region of birth and region of the current place of residence in Hungary among the foreign-linked population (persons)⁸ (2011, 2017)



⁸ The illustrative maps were prepared by the QGIS software. I am grateful for the contribution of my colleagues, Prof. Géza Tóth (Hungarian Central Statistical Office) and Dr. Lajos Bálint (Hungarian Demographic Research Institute).

6. Conclusions

International migration into Hungary is markedly differentiated into two levels: the global migration effect, and the processes flowing between Hungary and its neighbouring countries, which have been going on for a long time. The main characteristic of international migration in Hungary is that the largest part of the immigrant population is of Hungarian nationality or speaks Hungarian as a native language. The strength of the linguistic and cultural relations extending beyond the border are the outcome of the peace treaties that ended World War I and World War II.

The reproduction of minorities living in the neighboring countries is not just a matter of natural demographic processes. Migration also plays a significant role. Those arriving to Hungary reduce the numbers of the Hungarian population in the place of emigration, where in most cases, regardless of this, population loss takes place due to natural demographic causes. In turn, in areas where the number of Hungarians could grow, this natural growth is partly diminished by migration. On the other hand, migration, as an age-specific process, influences the socio-economic progresses of the source territories through indirect effects (through dependency rates, mean age, economically active rates, etc.). Migration to Hungary from abroad does not change the total number of Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin in the short term. However, in the long term this number decreases, since they have a significant influence on the ethnic spatial structure, and in the local regions of emigration, schooling, labor market, cultural and social opportunities decrease with the number of Hungarians; ethnic relations may narrow, and together with the scattering, assimilation may appear or accelerate.

Population movements in the late 1980s and early 1990s made it clear that the demographic processes taking place in the Hungarian linguistic community – despite the fragmentation occurring in 1918, and the nearly 100 year old ‘distributed development’ – can be fully understood only if we examine them together, as a single process. It is important to recognize that demographic processes inside and outside of the current border are similar in nature. Therefore, what we see happening in demographic processes in Hungary is only a part of the wider demographic processes of the Hungarian language community. The goal might not only be stopping the downsizing of the Hungarian population in Hungary, but also in the Carpathian Basin as well. Accomplishing this is not an easy task, as it may not be in line with the national interest of the neighboring countries.

The migration processes described in this study would have a significant impact on the ethnic spatial structure and numbers of Hungarians of the Carpathian Basin, if the numbers of other ethnic groups did not decrease similarly to the Hungarians. Strengthening the number of people staying in their home country, increasing the number of return migrations, and increasing the fertility rate of local Hungarians could all form the basis of a solution to this problem. Thus, an attainable goal would be to increase the proportion of Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin to over 50% again. Currently, the biggest barrier to this process is the loss of population, which affects the Hungarian population of the Carpathian Basin due to low fertility and high mortality rates.

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