

10.

INTERNAL MIGRATION

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MAJOR FINDINGS

- In the period following the change of regimes internal migration continued to decrease in Hungary until it reached its nadir in 1994 with 360,000 movements. This was followed by a slight fluctuation, then between 2005 and 2007 by a rising tendency. In 2007 the number of internal migrations (514,000) was already above the 1990 level but in 2008 it fell back to the level around the turn of the millennium.
- The number of internal migration and residential mobility was approximately the same in the discussed period, just as the number of permanent and temporary movements within migration. Among local residential movings, however, permanent ones were nearly three times as many as temporary ones.
- As regards permanent migration the rate of the sexes was equal. In temporary migration the considerable surplus of men characteristic of earlier decades disappeared in the early 1990s, then beginning with 1994 a moderate female surplus could be observed.
- The age distribution of migrants has changed since 1990. In the case of both permanent and temporary migration the rate of the older generations (50+) increased slightly, that of the age group 30-39 grew considerably, and that of those below 30 decreased.
- The intensity of migration according to family status has also changed since 1990. Permanent migration among unmarried women has grown to a higher level than the one among unmarried men, and there is a slight growth also in the permanent mobility among the divorced, the intensity of which is greater among men. Widows – the majority of all widowed persons – are less mobile than widowers.
- The direction of internal migration has changed considerably since 1990. The positive migration balance of Budapest in the early 1990 disappeared and up to 2006 out-migration from the capital was greater. From the mid-1990s the villages became the targets of internal migration. Around the turn of the millennium these trends tended to slacken and in 2007 a new turn took place. The migration loss of Budapest disappeared and the migration balance of the villages became negative once again.
- Internal migration is directed from east to west. Central Hungary, the Central Transdanubian and Western Transdanubian regions are the winners in internal migration, whereas all other regions of the country, especially Northern Hungary and the Northern Great Plains suffer a loss of population, their migration balance having been negative ever since 1990.
- As regards the counties, Pest County has been the only one with a positive migration balance since 1990, mostly due to the growth of the agglomeration around Budapest. The gain of Pest County has been outstandingly high (between 12 and 17 per thousand) every year since 1994.

The statistics of internal migration in Hungary, tracing the spatial or geographical movement of the population, relies on the system of the registration of residence (earlier called the registration of permanent and temporary address). Data about the number of permanent and temporary movements have been available since 1955 and reveal first a rise in the fifties then a steady decrease in the period from 1960 to the change of regimes. A cause of this might be the slow levelling of living standards in the various parts of the country, the fusion of settlements, and the increasing residential mobility and daily commuting. The change of regimes did not bring about a change in this respect and the earlier trends continued.

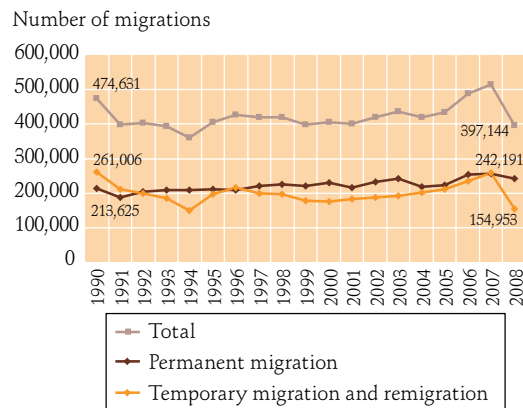
INTERNAL MIGRATION AFTER THE CHANGE OF REGIMES

Internal migration continued to slacken in the first part of the 1990s (from 475,000 in 1990 to 360,000 in 1994), then between 1995 and 2005 it was relatively stable (around 400–420,000) (Fig. 1).¹

Following this period a considerable growth could be observed in internal migration in Hungary, the number of movements rising to over 500,000 in 2007. This change was, however, not lasting. Already in 2008 86,000 migrations fewer were registered than a year earlier. Interestingly, unemployment appearing in Hungary in the 1990s did not have an impact on the number of migrations.

¹ The registration of residents shows the number of movements instead of the number of persons moving. A person changing residence more than once in a given year consequently appears more than once in the system.

Fig. 1. Internal migration, 1990–2008



Source: volumes of Demográfiai évkönyv, KSH STADAT 2009

Examining the changes in permanent and temporary migration separately it can be seen that both the nadir in 1994 and the decline in 2008 followed mainly from the decrease in the number of temporary movements that had partly administrative reasons.² At the same time it is important to note that the number of temporary migrations and re-migrations is less accurate than that of permanent migrations as people moving temporarily tend to neglect registration for want of any legal consequences.

Apart from some minor recessions, permanent internal migration was rising slightly during the whole period in question and from 1993 on it almost continuously slightly exceeded the level of temporary migration.

Although residential mobility within the same settlement does not belong strictly to

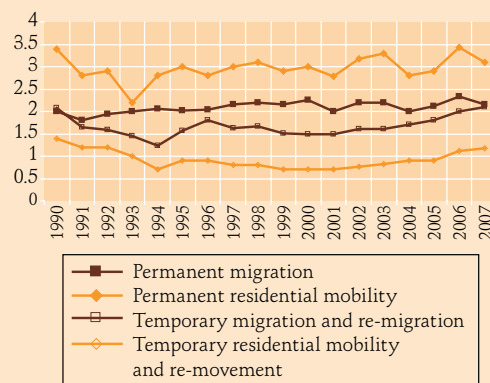
² From 2006 the period after which a residence not prolonged regularly was automatically struck off the register was extended from two to five years. The effect of this regulation appeared first in 2008 when new residences registered in 2006 and not prolonged were not struck off for the first time.

HOW MANY TIMES DO PEOPLE MOVE IN A LIFETIME?

The total migration rate and the total residential mobility rate show the number of migrations and local changes of residence of a person in his/her lifetime should the rate of migration and the rate of mobility for a given year remain unchanged. The indicator is computed by dividing the number of the persons concerned (grouped by individual years of age) by the mid-year population of the same age. The sum total of these ratios by years of age shows the average number of migrations and movements per person. In these calculations complete age is taken into account. Below 89 the individuals are registered by each year of age but above 90 the age group consists of ten years, the oldest person supposed to be 100. These indicators eliminate the bias resulting from the changing number of the population and the changes in its age distribution, offering by this a more realistic picture about the temporal changes in the intensity of migrations and local movements. The most frequent type of mobility since 1990 has been the permanent residential mobility (change of permanent residence within a settle-

ment). This is followed by permanent migration, then by temporary migration and re-migration. The least frequent types are temporal movements and re-movements within the same locality, at least these forms of movement are registered the least frequently. As regards the year 2007 it can be established that should the current conditions of movements and migration remain unchanged, a person would migrate twice temporarily and twice permanently between localities, and move three times permanently and once temporarily within the same locality.

Total migration and residential mobility rates, 1990–2007



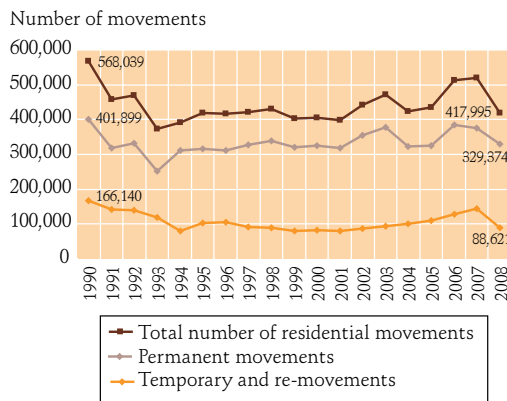
Source: Demográfiai évkönyv

migration, it similarly reflects the territorial mobility of the population. The sharp and sudden decrease in the number of residence changes began already prior to the change of regimes, starting with 1987, and did not stop after the transition, either. While in the late 1980s the annual number of residence change reached 700,000, by 1993 it had dropped to below 400,000. Then after a slight rise it settled at that level. A moderate revival took place after the turn of the millennium but it

did not prove to be lasting. In 2008 another wave of decrease arrived, similarly to the case of internal migration (Fig. 2).

The constancy of this trend cannot be judged yet, but it can be assumed that the economic crisis must have played a role in the drop of the number both of internal migrations and residential movements. Consequently, it is only the improvement of the economic conditions that can bring about a new start in this respect.

Fig 2. Residential mobility, 1990-2008



Source: volumes of Demográfiai évkönyv, KSH STADAT 2009

The size of internal migration and residential mobility was approximately on the same level in the discussed period but whereas the size of the two types of migration (permanent and temporary) was similar, permanent mobility within the settlements was three times as high as the temporary.

Specific indicators like migration and mobility rates that show the tendencies in migrations and local movements per thousand inhabitants (eliminating by this the possible bias due to the changing number of the population) reflect similar trends. It is the total migration and mobility rates that describe the intensity of the territorial mobility in a country the most vividly (see the first text in frame).

COMPOSITION OF INTERNAL MIGRANTS

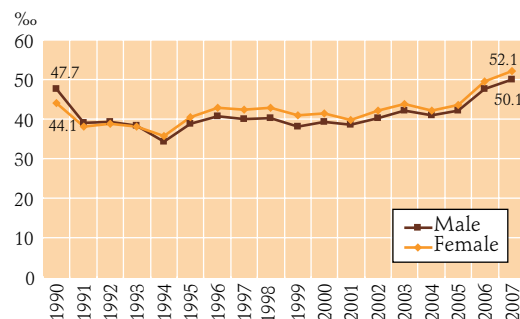
The individual demographic groups of the society do not participate in migration equally, let it be external or internal. Examining the distribution of migrants by sex, there was a slight male surplus in the early

1990s but beginning with 1994 a moderate female surplus appeared, which is still the case today. Female mobility was more marked than male mobility especially in the second half of the 1990s (Fig. 3).

However, taking also the type of migration (permanent or temporary) into account we find that the proportion of the sexes is more similar in the case of permanent migration, the differences coming from their different share in temporary migration. This phenomenon follows from the fact that permanent migration usually involves families, whereas temporary migration is more characteristic of individuals for educational purposes or for the sake of employment. Men took a decisive part in temporary migration earlier, namely in the 1960s and 1970s. Although the differences gradually slackened, male participation in temporary internal migration was still the most frequent in the first few years following the change of regimes. Later women took the upper hand and the difference grew further in the late 1990s. The growing mobility of women went back partly to the fact that their participation in secondary and higher education increased.

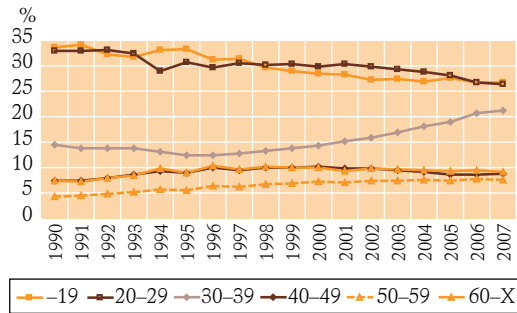
The age structure of migrants within Hungary is fairly young, though it has

Fig. 3. Total internal migration per thousand inhabitants by sex, 1990-2007



Source: volumes of Demográfiai évkönyv

Fig. 4. Distribution of total internal migration by age groups, 1990-2007



Source: volumes of *Demográfiai évkönyv*

slightly been ageing since 1990. This follows from the fact that studying further, leaving the parental house, and making an independent home were the decisive factors behind migration. Whereas in the early 1990s about two thirds of all migrants were below 30, today this rate is just over 50 per cent (Fig. 4).³

At the same time, in the first half of the 1990s the rate of older migrants increased slightly, then it got settled. Following the turn of the millennium the participation of the age group 30-39 grew considerably, from 12-14 to 21 per cent, which obviously stands in connection with the fact that starting a family and establishing an independent home shifted to a later period in the life course.

The rate of older migrants (50+) among women was invariably higher in the given period than that of men of the same age group, in which the higher life expectancy of women certainly plays a part, making migration following the death of the husband probable.

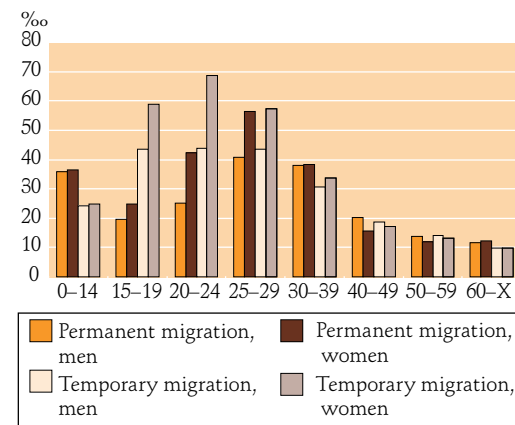
The above described change in the age distribution of migrants can be observed in the case of both permanent and temporary

migration. Those migrating temporarily are, however, younger. The rate of the age group -30 was higher among them across the whole period in question (70 per cent in the early 1990s and 56 per cent today) than among those partaking in permanent migration, whereas the rate of the elderly was lower. The cause of this is partly that a considerable portion of temporary migrations is in connection with learning further.

Examining the intensity of internal migration on the basis of the number of the migrants per thousand inhabitants it can be established that in 2007 permanent migration took place mostly in the age groups -15, 25-39 for men and 20-39 for women (Fig. 5).

As a contrast, the intensity of temporary migration was the highest in the age group 15-29, and involved much more women (60-70 per thousand) than men (40 per thousand). This fact implies that part of the permanent migrations concerns families with children, so the rates of men and women are more similar. The usual aim of temporary migration is, however, participation in higher education (besides a new

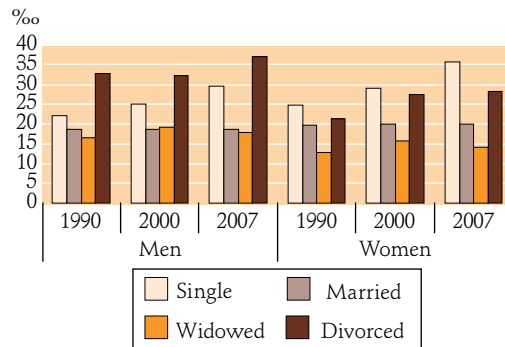
Fig. 5. Number of internal migrants per thousand inhabitants by sex and age groups, 2007



Source: volumes of *Demográfiai évkönyv*

³ Migrants are handled here by year of birth.

Fig. 6. Rate of permanent migration (per thousand inhabitants) by sex and family status



Source: volumes of *Demográfiai évkönyv*

job), and learning further is more frequent among women.

The intensity of migration has changed since 1990 also as regards its distribution by family status. Permanent mobility among single women has risen exceptionally fast and has reached a level higher than that of single men (Fig. 6).

Permanent migration is the most intensive among divorced men, and a slow increase can be observed both among divorced women and men. In the intensity of migration among married and widowed individuals no change could be detected. As regards differences by gender, married men and women are equally mobile, while widows are less mobile than widowers.

TERRITORIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERNAL MIGRATION

The direction and magnitude of internal migration can greatly change the size of the population within a given geographical unit beyond natural increase and decrease. The social and economic changes in the

1990s, although left the dimensions of internal migration unaltered, modified its direction to a great extent.

In the early 1990s internal migration was directed mainly towards Budapest and to a smaller extent towards other settlements in Pest County. The largest senders were the counties of Northern Hungary and the Northern Great Plains. Between 1990 and 2000 the direction of migration underwent a considerable change and many people moved from Budapest to the agglomeration or commuter belt around the capital (see the second text in frame).⁴

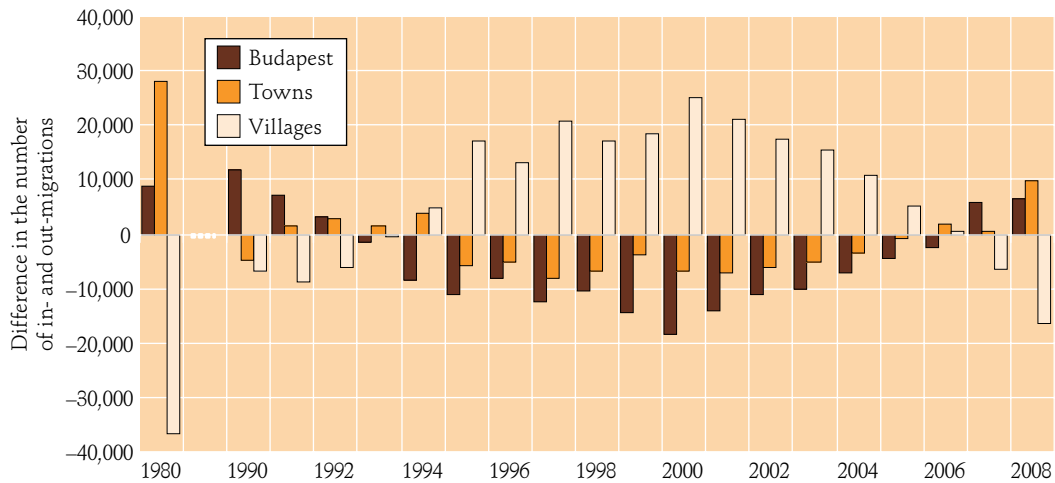
The permanent migration difference of Budapest has been negative since 1991, its total (permanent and temporary) migrations difference has been negative since 1993 (Fig. 7).

At the same time, the negative migration balance of the villages ceased to exist and the villages were on the winning side as regards internal migration for a decade from the mid-1990s, primarily due to the high migration surplus of the villages in Pest County. At the same time, Budapest (from 1993 to 2006) and other towns (from 1993 to 2005) were characterized by out-migration, the pace of which gradually slackened after the change of regimes. In 2007 the migration loss of Budapest disappeared, the surplus being nearly 6,000. The balance of the villages became, in turn, negative once again. This trend strengthened further in 2008, when the towns could boast of a positive balance of about 10,000 persons.

Internal migration continues to be directed towards west. Certain regions of

⁴ In the meantime, migration towards Budapest did not stop, either. The tendency of the changes of residence within the capital were at the same time decreasing.

Fig. 7. Balance of internal migration by type of settlement, 1990-2008

Source: volumes of *Demográfiai évkönyv*

SUBURBANIZATION

In the early 1990s migration from villages to towns was replaced by a movement in the opposite direction, i.e., from the towns to the neighbouring villages. This phenomenon is called in technical literature suburbanization. In Hungary it assumed considerable proportions in the region of Budapest. The loss of the capital due to migration in the 1990s was 110,000 persons, whereas the gain of Pest County in the same period was 125,000, resulting mainly from the movement of Budapest residents to the villages of the commuter belt around the city. This means that it was a typical suburbanization process changing the number of the inhabitants and shaping the structure of space to a great extent with various intensity at the individual settlements.

Examining the migration between the capital and the neighbouring settlements it can be established that Budapest was the target mostly of young career-starters,

whereas those moving to the commuter belt were mainly families with children. Moving from Budapest was still not suburbanization in the original sense of the word in that it affected not only middle-class persons but also those belonging to lower social strata for whom it was a kind of survival strategy. The 'suburbanization of the poor' was directed towards settlements underdeveloped from infrastructural point of view (Dövényi 2009, Csanádi and Csizmady 2002).

Suburbanization became a typical form of internal migration after 1990. In addition to Budapest, a commuter belt appeared around all larger towns of the country, too, but also around some smaller ones. Recent tendencies indicate, however, that the extreme phase of suburbanization is over. The region of Budapest is increasingly characterized also by desuburbanization (Dövényi 2009), which means that the wave of people moving out of the capital sweeps past the settlements of the commuter belt and reaches further rural regions in the country.

Table 1. The average rate of internal migration difference per thousand inhabitants in the various regions of Hungary, 1990-2007

Regions	1990–1994	1995–1999	2000–2004	2005–2007	1990–2007
Central Hungary	3.3	1.1	1.7	5.5	2.6
<i>within this</i>					
Budapest	1.2	-6.0	-7.0	-0.2	-3.3
Pest country	7.4	14.4	15.6	13.7	12.7
Central Transdanubia	0.0	1.1	1.4	0.6	0.8
Western Transdanubia	0.3	0.9	1.6	1.1	1.0
Southern Transdanubia	-0.4	-0.5	-0.8	-2.6	-0.9
Northern Transdanubia	-3.5	-1.9	-2.3	-5.2	-3.0
Norther Great Plains	-3.1	-1.5	-2.0	-4.1	-2.5
Central Great Plains	-0.2	0.0	-0.7	-1.6	-0.5

Source: KSH (2008), author's calculations

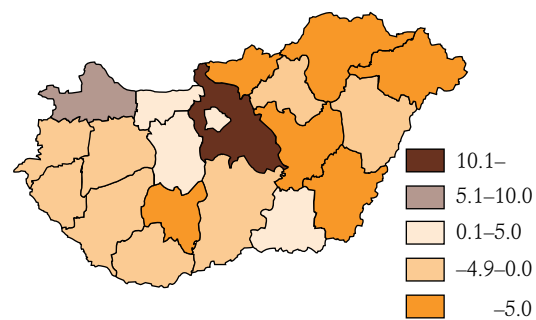
Central and Western Transdanubia became more favoured by migrants after the turn of the millennium, so Central Hungary, Central Transdanubia and Western Transdanubia continue to be winners in the process of internal migration, while the population of other Hungarian territories decreased due to out-migration (Table 1).

The differences have become even greater since 2005. The region of Central Hungary gained even more inhabitants, while the loss of the sending regions increased.

The positive migration balance of Central Hungary is due to the exceedingly high gain of Pest County, whereas the balance of Budapest was negative for the period in question. Pest County has had a positive migration balance every year since 1990, which has made it the primary winner with a migration surplus of 12-17 per thousand since 1994. While Pest County was characterized by the greatest internal mobility of all counties, the smallest mobility per thousand inhabitants could be observed in Budapest and in the southern counties of the Great Plains.

In 2008 Central Hungary and Western Transdanubia were the two receiving

Fig. 8. Rate of internal migration difference per thousand inhabitants, 2008



Source: KSH (2009)

regions, though the surplus of the latter (2,400 persons) was only one tenth of that in the former. Within the region of Western Transdanubia itself it was only in Győr-Moson-Sopron County where the number of in-migrants exceeded that of out-migrants. Zala and Vas Counties showed a slightly negative balance (Fig. 8).

In Central Hungary Pest County remained the primary target of in-migrants with nearly 17,000 surplus population.

Out-migration is today invariably the most marked in Northern Hungary and in the Northern Great Plains. The greatest loss was suffered by the counties Sz-

abolcs–Szatmár–Bereg and Borsod–Abaúj–Zemplén compared to the number of their population. In these two counties the loss was almost one per cent in a single year.

As regards towns of county rank, Sopron, Szeged, and Érd showed a positive migration balance in 2007 (with an internal migration difference of 9-10 per thousand inhabitants), while out-migration was the most marked in Dunaújváros, Salgótarján, and Eger.

HOME PAGES

<http://www.demografia.hu> – Central Statistical Office, Demographic Research Institute
<http://portal.ksh.hu> – Central Statistical Office (stADAT tables)

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