

11.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

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MAJOR FINDINGS

- The large-scale immigration in the years around the change of regimes later settled at a lower level, then it grew again but did not reach its former intensity. Immigration to Hungary can be considered moderate as regards both the number of immigrants and their rate per thousand inhabitants.
- Between 1990 and 2007 two thirds of the immigrants arrived from four neighbouring countries. In the past few years the primacy of the largest sending country, Romania, slackened.
- Immigrants typically belong to the younger age groups, though the rate of older age groups has increased as compared to the early 1990s. The primary destination is invariably Budapest and its area. Over half of the immigrants has come here since 1990 in yearly average.
- The number of emigrants can be estimated mostly on the basis of the immigration statistics of the receiving countries, according to which 20,000-27,000 Hungarian citizens appear as immigrants in various European countries annually. The primary target is Germany, a destination of over 70 per cent of Hungarian emigrants in Europe in the last two decades.
- The number of foreign citizens living in Hungary on January 1, 2009 was 184,358. Thirty-six per cent came from Romania, one tenth from the Ukraine and Serbia, each, and 3 per cent from Slovakia. The rate of natives of countries outside Europe coming to Hungary was merely 16 per cent, including the 6 per cent of the Chinese immigrants.
- Forty-five per cent of foreign citizens in Hungary belong to the age group 20-39. As compared to the age distribution of the receiving population foreigners both below 20 and belonging to the old generation represent a much lower rate.
- The rate of the population born abroad was 2.9 per cent at the time of the 2001 census. Most of them (80 per cent) were born in neighbouring countries and were ethnic Hungarians. Their age structure is older than that of foreign nationals (one third of them is above 60).
- The rate of persons with higher education is higher both among those born abroad and among foreign citizens than among the receiving population. Their level of employment is also above the Hungarian average.
- Between 1993 and 2007 115,283 persons were granted Hungarian citizenship. Eighty-seven per cent of the new citizens came from four neighbouring countries, mostly from Romania (66.4 per cent). Relatively few of the immigrants coming from Asia applied for and were granted citizenship.
- The rate of women is slightly higher among the persons gaining Hungarian citizenship, and the rate of the age group 60+ has been considerably increasing since the beginning of the period (from 3 to 23 per cent).
- In 2007 5 per cent of all foreigners living in Hungary were granted citizenship. In Europe this rate was higher only in Sweden and Norway.

Hungary became involved in international migration in the late 1980s. In the decades prior to that date migration across the border was a greatly restricted, suppressed, and concealed phenomenon.¹ In the period since the change of regimes a incessant immigration (though fluctuating in intensity) and an emigration smaller by orders of magnitude could be observed. However, emigration statistics is highly uncertain due to the insufficiency of the present system of registration. The number of those leaving the country can be, therefore, underestimated. For this reason we are going to deal here primarily with immigration and the characteristics of the foreign population in Hungary and of those having received Hungarian citizenship. Emigration from Hungary will be discussed briefly, mainly on the basis of the immigration statistics of other European countries.

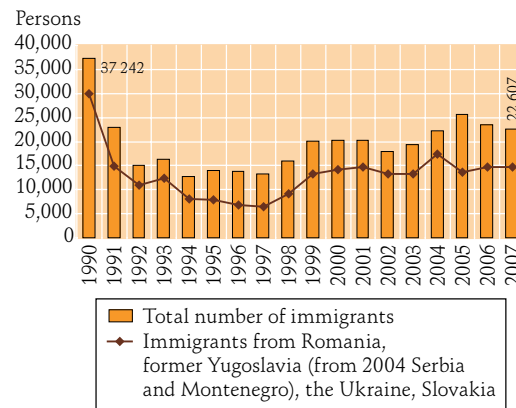
IMMIGRANTS

In the period since the change of regimes the greatest number of immigrants arrived in 1990. Then their number suddenly decreased and got settled on a level of 13,000–16,000 between 1992 and 1998, then rising a little, it alternated between 18,000 and 20,000 yearly after 1999 (*Fig. 1*).

An increase could be observed again in the years following Hungary's accession to the European Union. In 2005 the number of registered immigrants exceeded 25,000. Up to 2004 the changes were determined primarily

¹ The last significant wave of emigration took place in Hungary during the 1956 revolution and in the following year when nearly 200,000 persons left the country. Afterwards emigration was scanty till the end of the 1980s (a yearly average of 4,300). The level of immigration was still lower with a yearly average of 2,500 (Tóth 1997, Hárs 2001).

Fig. 1. Number of immigrating foreign citizens with special regard to persons coming from four neighbouring countries, 1990–2007



Source: Demográfiai évkönyv

by the fluctuating number of persons coming from the neighbouring countries but in 2005 a sudden increase occurred in the number of those coming from other countries of the European Union (nearly 8,000 persons)

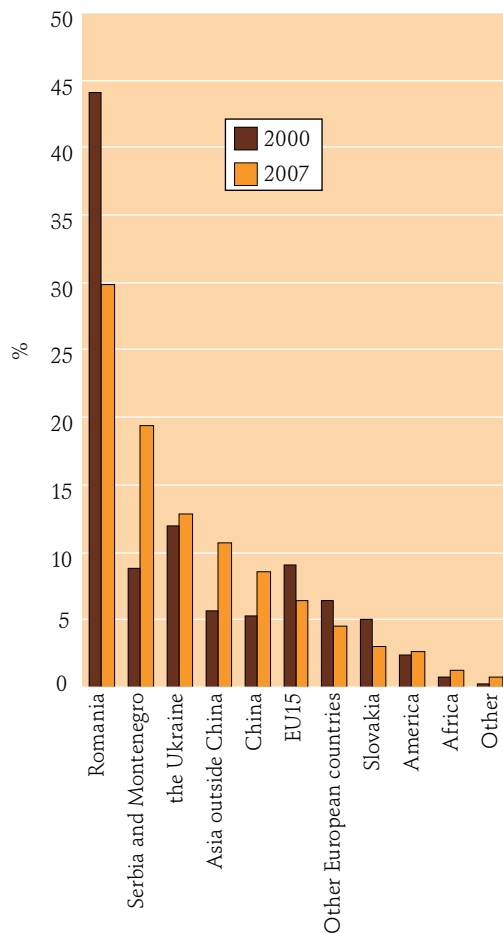
Between 1990 and 2007 two thirds of all immigrants came from four neighbouring countries: Romania (45 per cent), the former Yugoslavia and the Ukraine, and to a smaller degree Slovakia. Surveys testify that over 90 per cent of them were ethnic Hungarians. In the case of the Ukraine this rate was slightly lower. The share of Romania was significant mostly in the years around the change of regimes. In 1990 80 per cent of the immigrants arrived from that country. This trend has decreased since then (especially recently). In 2007 the share of immigrants from Romania within the total number of immigrants was less than 30 per cent.² However, the dominance of immigrants from the neighbour-

² This phenomenon was registered also by the Transylvanian surveys of migration potentials. It turned out that for those planning emigration lately Hungary is no longer the primary target country.

ing countries still did not come to an end as the number and rate of those coming from Serbia increased.

The other large group is that of those arriving from Asia, primarily from China. One fifth of all immigrants came from that continent in 2006-2007. The rate of immigrants from America and Africa is small. *Fig. 2* illustrates the changes in the distribution of immigrants by the sending countries in the past decade.

Fig. 2. Distribution of immigrants to Hungary by country of citizenship, 2000 and 2007



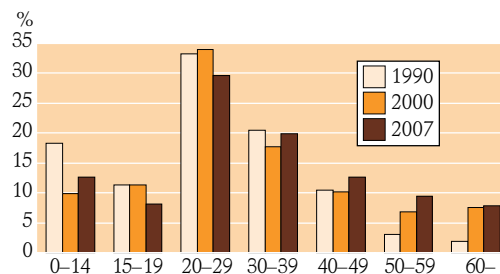
Source: Demográfiai évkönyv

A change took place also in the demographic distribution of immigrants. The male surplus observed at the beginning of large-scale migration (over 60 per cent) slackened in the course of the 1990s and disappeared by the end of the millennium. Subsequently it began to rise again and settled around a yearly 56-58 per cent after 2002. The distribution by gender differs also according to the sending countries. In 2007 the majority of those coming from Slovakia (54 per cent) were women, while 52 per cent of those from Serbia and 59 per cent of those from Romania and the Ukraine were men. The rest of the European sending countries and those outside Europe were similarly characterized by a male surplus.

The distribution of immigrants by age groups reflects a selection generally characterizing migrants: young people, especially those in the age group 20-29 dominate among them. In recent years their rate diminished to some extent, and the rate of immigrants below 15 dropped, too, as compared with 1990 (*Fig. 3*).

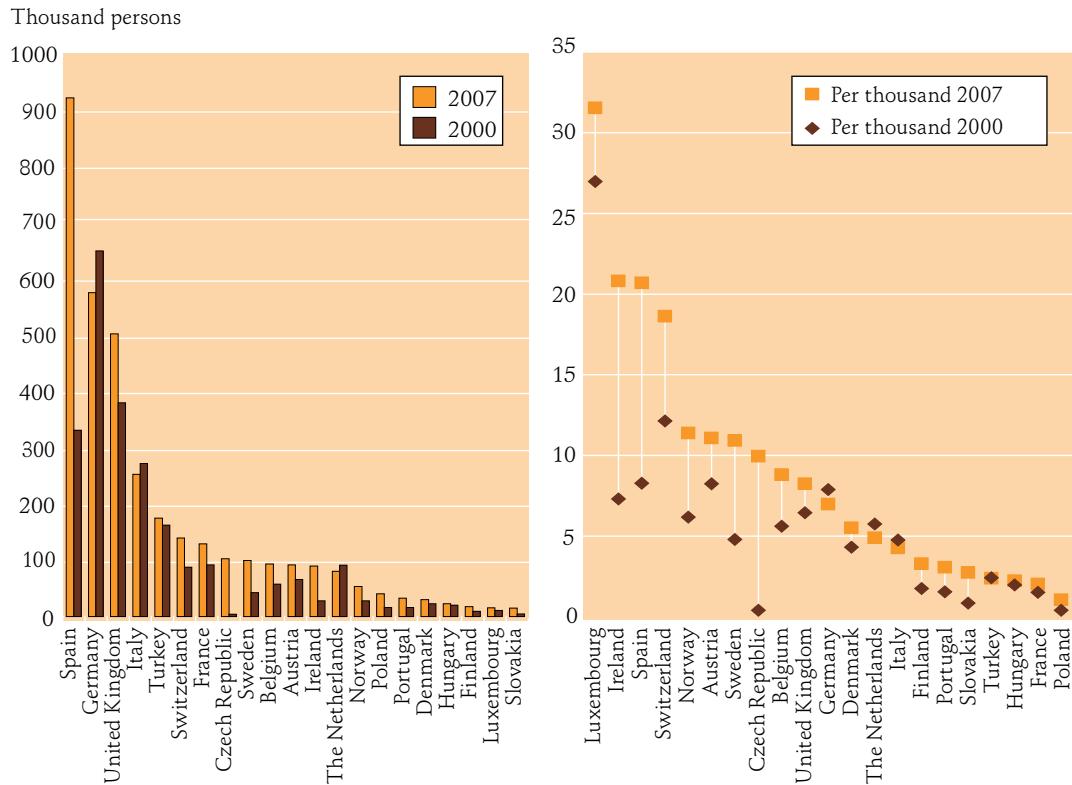
At the same time the rate of the elderly, mainly those above 50 or 60 increased. Whereas in 1990 only 5 per cent of all immigrants were older than 50, in 2007 this

Fig. 3. Distribution of immigrants to Hungary by age groups according to year of arrival



Source: Demográfiai évkönyv

Fig. 4. Number of immigrants and crude immigration rate in some OECD countries in 2000 and in 2007



Source: OECD 2008; Eurostat Yearbook 2008. Author's calculations.

rate was already 15.6 for men and 19 per cent for women. In 2007 the rate of immigrants in the age group 60+ (i.e., of retired persons) was especially high among those coming from Serbia and other (not neighbouring) countries of Europe (18 per cent).

The demographic distribution of immigrants coming in large numbers may modify the demographic structure of the receiving country (see Chapter 12 in the present volume). The rate of the young, economically active groups among them exceeding the Hungarian average of the respective age groups is a positive increment for Hungary from both demographic and economic point of view.

For most immigrants Central Hungary is the final destination. Forty-four per cent of those coming between 1990 and 2007 settled down in Budapest and another 11 per cent in the Budapest area (in Pest County). The rate of immigrants coming to the Southern Great Plains was also significant (13 per cent in average), particularly in the first years of the South Slav war (22–28 per cent).

Hungary does not belong to the major target countries of migration (Fig. 4).

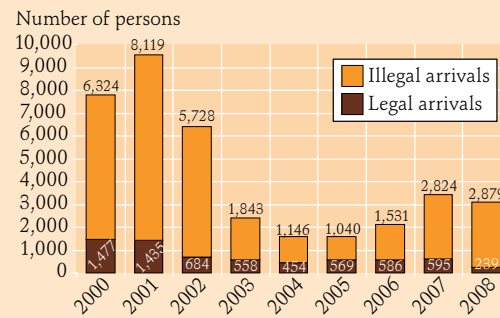
While in the traditional destination countries (Germany, France, United Kingdom, Switzerland) and in some new ones (Spain, Italy) the annual number of immi-

REFUGEES

Besides immigrants, another group of people arriving in a country are the refugees. Between 2000 and 2008 all in all 38,031 refugees came to Hungary, mostly at the beginning of the period. Eighty-three per cent of them arrived illegally. Whereas in the early 2000s most refugees were nationals of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Bangladesh, in 2008 the most numerous group was that of the Serbs and Montenegrins (51 per cent), followed by those coming from Pakistan (8 per cent), Somalia (6 per cent), and Georgia (5 per cent).

The number of refugees indicates the number of applications for refugee status in a given year. However, less than one tenth of the applicants were granted refugee status.

Refugees coming to Hungary by ways of entering the country, 2000–2008



Source: KSH STADAT 2009.

grants amounts to hundreds of thousands, in East Central Europe it is only the Czech Republic that reached this level in 2007 due to the steady rise of immigration beginning with 2002.

Hungary is among the last in Europe not only as regards the number of immigrants but also in their rate per thousand inhabitants (2.3), i.e., the crude immigration rate. In 2007 this indicator was very high in Luxembourg (31.5), Ireland (20.8), Spain (20.7), and Switzerland (18.6). In East Central Europe the values were much lower than that but it was only Poland (1.1) that lagged behind Hungary. At the same time, the crude immigration rate tended to increase in most countries between 2000 and 2007.

EMIGRANTS

From the late 1980s Hungary was no longer merely a receiving but also a transit country as some of the foreigners coming here

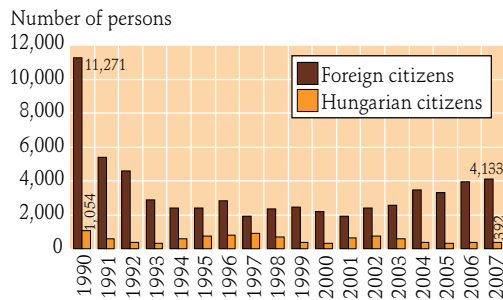
sooner or later migrated further. At the very beginning of the 1990s the number of emigrating foreigners reached about 25–30 per cent of the number of immigrants. From 1993 on this figure constantly remained below 20 per cent, and around the turn of the millennium it even remained below 10.

Besides foreigners leaving the country, also Hungarian nationals emigrate for a certain period, or even finally. According to official Hungarian statistics the number of these persons (a few hundred per year) lags much behind the number of emigrating foreigners (*Fig. 5*).

This figure derives, however, from the deficiency of the registration system and does not reflect even the order of magnitude of emigration.

The young generations, those in their twenties and thirties, constitute the majority also of emigrating foreigners. At the same time, the proportion of the sexes has shifted in the direction of men. Men made up 60–70 per cent almost every year.

Fig. 5. Number of foreigners and Hungarian nationals emigrating from Hungary, 1990–2007

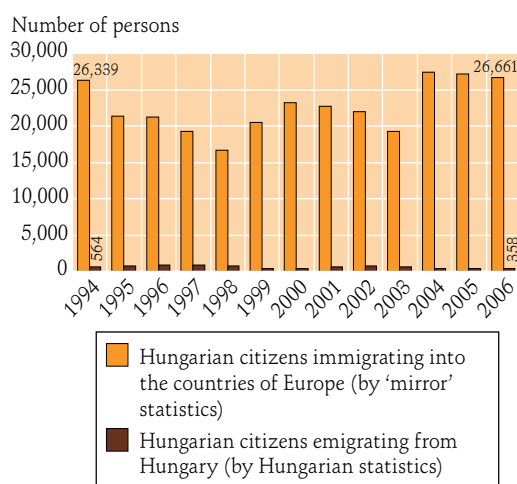


Source: Demográfiai évkönyv

The shortcomings of the Hungarian emigration statistics can be seen also when comparing the yearly number of emigrating Hungarian citizens with the total number of Hungarian immigrants appearing in the various European countries in a given year (Fig. 6).

In the larger part of the period in question over 20,000 Hungarian nationals were registered as immigrants in the countries of Europe, which obviously is not the full

Fig. 6. Number of Hungarian citizens emigrating from Hungary and immigrating into the countries of Europe, 1994–2006



Source: Demográfiai évkönyv; OECD 2008.

number of emigrants (only its lower limit) since Hungarian citizens may have emigrated to other continents as well. The growth from 2004 indicates that the accession of Hungary to the European Union contributed to the increase of emigration.

The primary target country within Europe is Germany with over 70 per cent of all emigrants from Hungary on average. A much smaller though still significant group of emigrants went to Austria and in the past decade also to the United Kingdom.

Summing up the annual number of Hungarian emigrants on the basis of the

PHYSICIANS EMIGRATING FROM HUNGARY

In mapping emigration from Hungary important documents are the certificates issued by the *Egészségügyi Engedélyezési és Közigazgatási Hivatal* about diplomas earned by doctors wanting to work abroad in order to acknowledge that their qualification and practice meet the European requirements. According to the data available since May 1, 2004, i.e., Hungary's accession to the European Union it can be established that the emigration of physicians is considerable. Nearly 3,000 certificates were issued before December 31, 2008. The majority was given to doctors aged 30–49 having sufficient experience and presumably one or more specialist examinations (Eke, Griasek, and Szócska 2009). We have no information about the intentions of doctors working abroad, whether they plan to stay there finally or not. The willingness of doctors to emigrate is, by all means, much above the average. Whereas in 2003 the migration potential of the total population of Hungary was 12 per cent, surveys repeated regularly since then have shown a 60–67 per cent potential among interns (i.e., doctors in the first years of their specialist studies).

statistics of the receiving countries it can be established that between 1994 and 2006 at least 300,000 Hungarian citizens left for various European countries. The number of those who have returned since then is not known but it can be assumed that the individuals who had themselves registered as immigrants abroad planned to stay there for a long time, if not for good.

On January 1, 2008 Hungarian citizens in the countries of Europe numbered about 121,000, 60,200 of whom lived in Germany and 19,300 in Austria. These figures do not contain those who gained citizenship in one of these countries in the meantime.

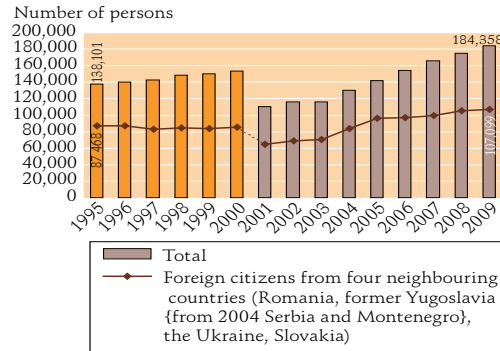
FOREIGN CITIZENS RESIDING IN HUNGARY

While some immigrants later leave the country (the smaller part of them), some are granted citizenship and cease to be foreigners (with the exception of those with dual citizenship). The number of foreign nationals living in Hungary between 1995 and 2000 grew by 11 per cent across the period. The drop of 28 per cent in 2000-2001 was primarily due to administrative reasons (Fig. 7).

Beginning with 2001 a steady growth can be observed again, the number of foreigners residing in the country rising from 110,000 to 184,000 by 2009. The rate of those coming from the neighbouring countries within the stock of foreigners was slightly lower than among the newcomers, but it still reached 56-58 per cent in the given period.

With regard to the foreign citizens' country of origin the picture is similar to that of the immigrants, i.e., the share of the neigh-

Fig. 7. Number of foreign citizens residing in Hungary with special regard to those from four neighbouring countries, 1995-2009 (January 1)



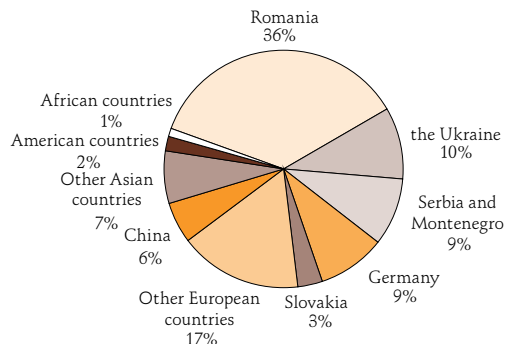
Note: The system of registration used by the Office of Immigration and Nationality (Bevándorlási és Állampolgársági Hivatal) changed as from January 1, 2000. Before 1995 the data were processed according to a different method, so there are no comparable data available for earlier periods. Beginning with January 1, 2001 a revision of the database was executed as well (expired residence permits were struck off the registry), resulting in a decrease of 40,000 persons.

Source: Demográfiai Évkönyv, KSH STADAT 2009

bouring countries, Germany, and China was the greatest among them (Fig. 8).

The category "Other European countries" contains every old member of the European Union as well as Poland, Russia, Bulgaria, and Turkey citizens of which live in a number

Fig. 8. Distribution of foreign citizens residing in Hungary on January 1, 2009 by country of citizenship (sending country or continent)



Source: KSH STADAT 2009

over one thousand in Hungary. Since 1995 the majority (82–89 per cent) of foreigners living here has been European citizen.

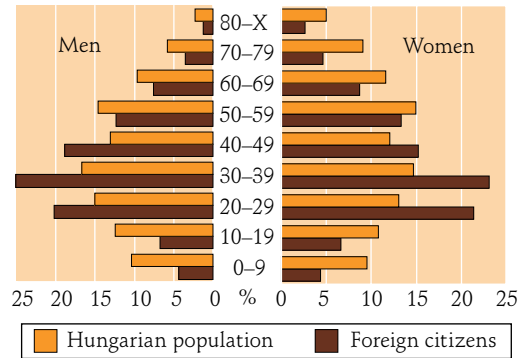
Forty-three per cent of all foreigners residing in Hungary on January 1, 2008 lived in the capital, 36 per cent of them lived in towns and 21 per cent lived in villages. Among those living in Budapest persons of Asian origin represented a much higher rate (23 per cent) than the national average (13 per cent).

The proportion of the sexes among foreign citizens is fairly balanced. Between 2001 and 2005 there was a slight female surplus (51–52 per cent) and from 2006 a moderate male surplus could be observed (55 per cent). However, among immigrants from certain sending countries women are in considerable majority, e.g., in the case of Poland (61 per cent), Russia (60 per cent), and Slovakia (58 per cent).

As regards the distribution of age groups, foreigners residing in Hungary show the typical distribution of migrant populations with the predominance of young people. One third of all foreign nationals living in Hungary on January 1, 2008 were below 30 and another 25 per cent belonged to the age group 30–39. The rate of young people was still greater in Budapest with almost two thirds of the immigrants having been below 40. Whereas 42.5 per cent of all foreign immigrants lived in the capital, in the age group 20–39 this rate was 48 per cent, which was obviously connected with the fact that this generation arrived primarily for the purpose of employment, the chances of which were more abundant in Budapest.

Comparing the age distribution of foreigners to that of the Hungarian population one can see that the rate of the age group 20–49 is greater among the former in both sexes (Fig. 9).

Fig. 9. Age pyramid of the Hungarian population and of the foreign nationals residing in Hungary, January 1, 2008

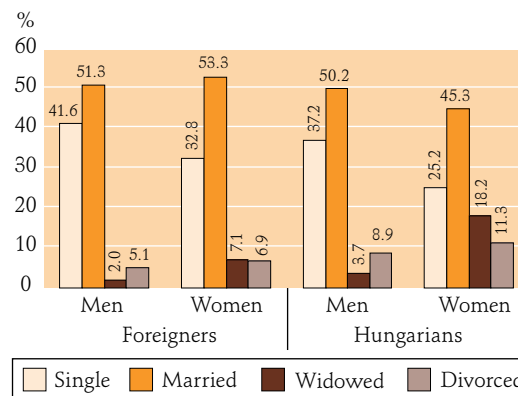


Source: Demográfiai évkönyv, 2007

At the same time, the rate of those above 50 and especially those below 20 is much more moderate than in the receiving population.

As regards the distribution of foreign citizens in Hungary by family status, the rate of married persons is slightly higher than among the Hungarian population, especially among women. At the same time, as a result of the young age struc-

Fig. 10. Distribution of foreign citizens living in Hungary and of the Hungarian population aged 15+ by family status, January 1, 2008



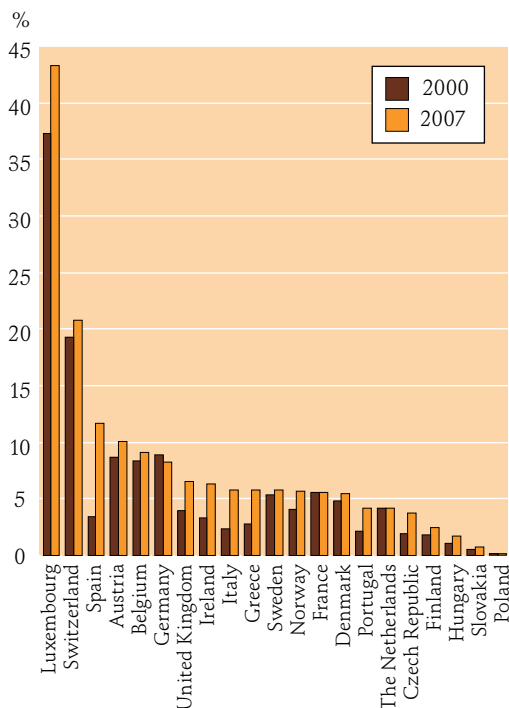
Source: Demográfiai évkönyv, 2007

ture the rate of single persons is similarly higher (Fig. 10).

Despite the growing number of foreign nationals in Hungary, their rate within the total population of the country continues to be small, rising from 1.1 per cent in 2001 to 1.7 per cent in 2008. It was higher than the national average in Budapest (4.4 per cent), and in the counties Csongrád (2.6 per cent) and Pest (2 per cent). The highest growth can similarly be observed in Budapest as compared to 2001.

Hungary lags behind most European countries also as regards the stock of the foreign population (Fig. 11), preceding only Slovakia and Poland.

Fig. 11. The rate of foreigners within the receiving populations in some OECD countries, 2000 and 2007



Note: France: data for 1999 and 2006
Hungary: data for 2001 and 2007
Ireland: data for 2000 and 2006

Source: OECD 2008.

With the exception of Germany, France, and the Netherlands the rate of foreigners increased in most countries as compared to the year 2000. The growth was especially high in Spain, Italy, Greece, Portugal, the Czech Republic, and Ireland.

Another way of registering foreign population is by their *place of birth*. This method is common mostly in large receiving countries outside Europe, like Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States. In Hungary, the 2001 census offers possibility for examining the size and composition of the foreign-born population (i.e., those born outside the present borders of Hungary). Accordingly, in 2001 2.7 per cent of the permanent population and 2.9 per cent of the resident population had been born abroad but only one third of them were foreign nationals.

Among those born abroad the rate of persons coming from the neighbouring countries is still higher (80 per cent) than among residing foreign citizens. At the same time, most of them (92 per cent of those born in Romania, 93 per cent of those born in Slovakia, 86 per cent of those born in Serbia, and 82 per cent of those born in the Ukraine) are ethnic Hungarians. The rate of persons born in Germany (3.5 per cent) and in Russia (2.2 per cent) can be regarded considerable but the total number of those born outside Europe is merely 6 per cent.

Women represent 55.4 per cent among those born abroad, and the age structure of the foreign-born population is younger than that of foreign citizens living in Hungary in 2001. Their territorial distribution is different, too. They live in the capital to a smaller rate (31 per cent) than foreign citizens (37 per cent) in general.

As opposed to immigrations statistics, the census of 2001 contains data also as regards the educational level, the econom-

TITLES OF STAYING IN HUNGARY AMONG FOREIGN CITIZENS

The *Bevándorlási és Állampolgársági Hivatal* (Office of Immigration and Nationality) publishes the number of foreigners residing in Hungary according to the title of their stay (status) in the country. Accordingly, the foreign population could be divided as on December 31, 2008 to four larger groups: those with immigration permits (25.6 per cent), those with permanent residence (settlement) permits (15.5 per cent), those with residence permits (24.9 per cent), and those with registration certificates (26.3 per cent). All those living in Hungary on other grounds made up a mere 7.8 per cent. Immigration permits could be applied for until the end of 2001. As from January 1, 2002 it was replaced by the settlement permit. At the same time the long-term and provisional forms of residence permit ceased to exist. The EEA residence permit can be given to nationals of the countries belonging to the European Economic Community for a stay longer than 90 days. (The EEA, members are at present the countries of the European Union, Iceland, Norway, and Liechtenstein.) On July 1, 2007 two new immigration laws came into effect. One of them regulated the stay in Hungary of nationals of the EEA member states, and the other dealt with nationals of third countries. From that day on EEA citizens are entitled to have registration certificates and permanent residence cards. Citizens of third countries can

be granted various settlement permits. Temporary ones (for up to 5 years) are for those having a residence permit in another EU country. The national settlement permit is, in fact, the legal successor of the former settlement permit. Its precondition is a three-year stay in Hungary for those not having Hungarian ancestors.

Number of foreign citizens residing in Hungary by type of permit, December 31, 2008

Types of permit	Number of persons
Immigration permit	47,205
Permanent residence permit	28,522
Residence permit	15,304
EEA residence permit	30,579
Registration certificate	48,527
Permanent residence card	6,560
Third-country national family members of a Hungarian citizen	4,733
Third-country national family member of an EEA citizen	322
EC (European Community) permanent residence permit	242
National permanent residence permit	2,568
Permanent residence permit with limited validity	6
Total	184,568

Source: Office of Immigration and Nationality (*Bevándorlási és Állampolgársági Hivatal*)

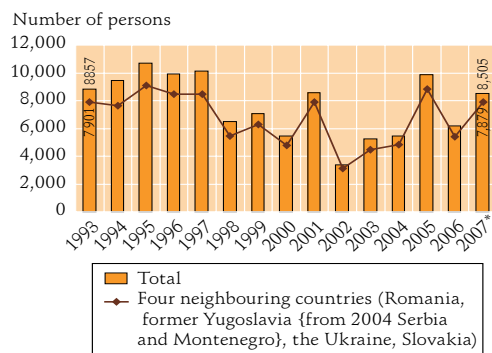
ic activity and occupation both of foreign citizens and of the foreign-born population. Among the members of both groups the rate of those with higher education is far beyond the similar rate among the receiving population. In 2001 27 per cent of men and 18 per cent of women aged 25+ among those born abroad, and 28 per cent of men and 23 per cent of women among

foreign citizens had college or university degrees. (Within the total population of Hungary this rate was at that time 12 per cent among women and 14 per cent among men.) The economic activity rate of this group similarly exceeds the Hungarian level. The rate of employment among those coming from Romania, Germany, and Asia is prominently high.

NATURALIZED FOREIGN CITIZENS

Gaining citizenship in the receiving country is an important landmark in the process of integration for immigrants as they acquire by it several rights not enjoyed before (i.e., the right to vote in local and national elections and the right to occupy certain posts). Between 1993 and 2007 115,283 persons were granted Hungarian citizenship altogether, mostly at the beginning of the period (Fig. 12).

Fig. 12. Number of foreign citizens naturalized in Hungary with special regard to those coming from four neighbouring countries, 1993–2007



* Preliminary data

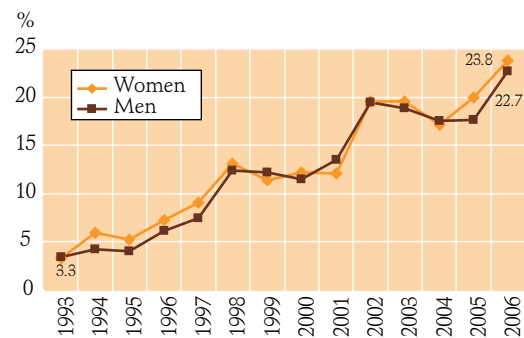
Source: Demográfiai évkönyvek

Eighty-four per cent of the new citizens arrived from four neighbouring countries, the majority (66.4 per cent) coming from Romania. The proportion of citizens of the neighbouring states among the new nationals has always been higher than among the immigrants in general. The reason for this is that Hungarian ethnicity and the common mother tongue makes it easier to fulfil the requirements of acquiring citizenship. People immigrating from Asia constitute a mere 1 to 2 per cent of the new citizens each year. Despite their

relatively high number (over 23,000 in 2009), only few of them acquire Hungarian citizenship.

Among those receiving citizenship the rate of women is generally higher (53–56 per cent). Whereas the rate of the young (especially that of those below 25) decreased during the period examined, that of both men and women aged 60+ increased considerably (Fig. 13).

Fig. 13. Rate of the age group 60+ among naturalized foreigners, 1993–2006

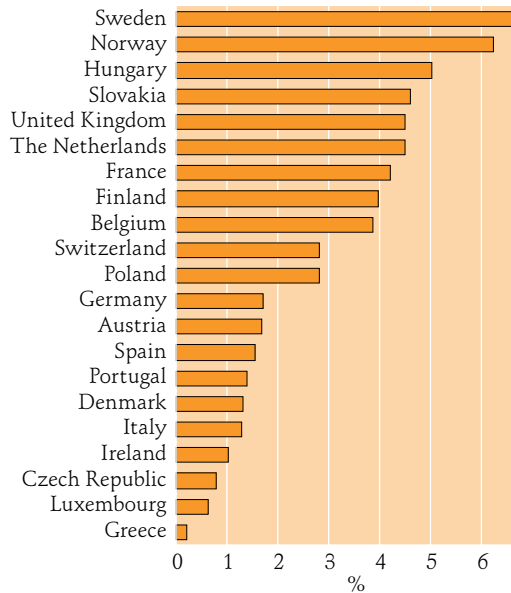


Source: Demográfiai évkönyv

This phenomenon is a result of increasing migration serving the unification of families, mostly the immigration of retired parents joining their previously migrated children, especially in the case of persons coming from neighbouring countries.

The size of the naturalized population can be related to that of the receiving one or to the number of all foreigners residing in the given country. The latter comparison offers a picture of the degree of political integration among immigrants. In this respect Hungary occupied the distinguished third place among the European countries in 2007 (preceded only by two Scandinavian ones), though a mere 5 per cent of the foreign population received citizenship (Fig. 14).

Fig. 14. The rate of naturalized foreigners within the total number of foreign citizens in some OECD countries, 2007



Source: OECD 2008

In several large receiving countries (Germany, Austria, Spain, and Italy) this rate remained below 2 per cent. In contrast with Hungary, these countries have a numerous immigrant population differing greatly from their own citizens as regards language and culture.

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