ETHNIC HUNGARIANS IN THE NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

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MAIN FINDINGS

» The situation of ethnic Hungarians can be considered special in Europe. Since the territory of Hungary was much larger in the past, the number and share of ethnic Hungarians in the neighbouring countries is significant.

» Ethnic Hungarian communities living in the neighbouring countries are traditional ethnic groups: they did not arrive in the territory of the state concerned voluntarily or as a result of migration, and still maintain close relations with Hungary.

» Population censuses are still the most important sources of data on ethnicities and minorities in Central and Eastern Europe. Since the results of population censuses concerning ethnicity have – in most countries – important policy implications (e.g. minority rights), they must be interpreted with caution. In addition, methodological difficulties make their interpretation even more challenging.

» Traditional ethnic Hungarian communities of significant size – more than one hundred thousand people – live in Romania (Transylvania), Slovakia, Serbia (Vojvodina) and Ukraine (Transcarpathia). On the basis of population census data, it is estimated that approximately 2.4 million ethnic Hungarians live in these four countries, more than half of them in Romania.

» In Slovakia and Ukraine, Hungarian communities live alongside the Hungarian border, within a 30 kilometres range, constituting the majority of the population of the area concerned. However, the existing administrative-territorial division in these two countries conceals the existence of these ethnic blocs.

» In Romania and Serbia Hungarian communities live in a very large area. There are multi-ethnic regions as well as Hungarian-majority territories located away from the Hungarian border.

» During the past decades, the number and percentage of Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries have decreased significantly. While in Romania emigration, in Serbia natural population decline, whereas in Slovakia assimilation is the major cause of the decline.

» Most recently, in terms of population replacement, Hungarian ethnic minority had more favourable trends than those of the Romanian majority in two multi-ethnic regions of Romania, inhabited by 2.2. million Romanians, Hungarians and Roma people.

Monostori, J. - Őri, P. - Spéder, Zs. (eds.)(2015): *Demographic Portrait of Hungary 2015.* HDRI, Budapest: 225–239.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents demographic data concerning the autochthonous Hungarian ethnic minorities living in the neighbouring countries around Hungary based on the results of the 2011 population censuses. The region under consideration is the "Carpathian Basin", namely the area that constituted most of the territory of the Hungarian Kingdom until 1920 *(See Figure 1)* except most of Croatia, where the number of Hungarians has always been low.

These Hungarian communities can be considered autochthonous ethnic communities because they did not arrive in the territory of these states as a result of migration. These territories inhabited by Hungarian communities were part of the former Hungarian Kingdom, and became part of these neighbouring countries as a result of border changes. The status of the ethnic Hungarian groups living in the neighbouring countries are somewhat different from other European ethnic minorities that emerged as a result of migration (for example Turkish communities in Germany or Hungarians in England) or have never established a state of their own before (for example Bretons in France or the Sorbian in Germany).

The specific situation of these communities – which is also extremely sensitive from a political point of view – makes the collection of unbiased demographic data difficult, and results must be interpreted with caution.

Figure 1: Territories in the neighbouring countries that were the part of the Hungarian Kingdom until 1920

REMARKS ON POPULATION CENSUS AS A SOURCE OF DATA ON ETHNICITY

Population censuses are still the most important source of information in Central and Eastern Europe on the size and structure of ethnic and minority populations. In these countries, unlike in Western Europe, it is a century-long and still living tradition that the ethnicity of the respondents is also indicated on the census questionnaires (Simon 2012). Nevertheless, population censuses can no longer be used as a uniform source of ethnic data in the whole region because two countries (Slovenia and Austria) introduced a register-based census in 2011 and no data on ethnicity were collected.

It is also a common practice in the region that data on ethnicity is published in detail in the standard statistics by the statistical offices. The reason for this is that certain rights regarding language use or other rights affecting ethnic minorities living in the given region are established on the basis of census data.

The interpretation of data on ethnicity collected by population censuses should be treated with special caution, since the data system used has several methodological shortcomings.

Firstly, in the absence of Eurostat standards, questions and results on ethnicity were not collected and published in the same way in the different countries. Secondly, citizens have to declare their ethnicity under very different political or linguistic circumstances at censuses and these circumstances affect their ethnic self-identification. Experience has shown that in the case of individuals of less stable ethnic identity (e. g. people living in mixed marriages) ethnic self-identification is

DATA ON ETHNICITY AND MINORITY RIGHTS

Questions concerning ethnicity are considered an extremely sensitive issue in almost every country of the region. The main cause of this is that answers given to this question do not only, moreover, do not primarily serve statistical purposes. In the countries of the region, different rights related to language use as well as other rights and state supports are usually determined on the basis of the ethnic data of censuses. As a result, it is typical in the region that serious campaigns similar to electoral ones take place with respect to the questions on ethnic affiliation, typically led by some minority organizations. The primary aim of these campaigns is to persuade people who belong to an ethnic minority group to declare their ethnicity at enumeration. Furthermore, in some countries there is some covert and overt pressure on ethnic minority respondents to declare themselves as members of the majority group or not to respond.

Since it is not possible to provide a comprehensive overview of minority rights linked to census results, only some examples are highlighted here:

In Romania the use of a national minority language is compulsory in public administration in those settlements where the share of the given minority exceeds 20% of the total population. (Ethnic composition is determined by the official results of the last census.)

In Slovakia Hungarian language can be used in public administration in those settlements where at least 15% of the population is of Hungarian ethnicity according to the results of two successive censuses.

Currently, Hungary has a double limit in this respect: on the one hand, minorities are entitled to elect their own ethnic self-government body in settlements where according to the last census at least 30 people declared themselves as a member of a certain ethnic group. After this, if the given town has an ethnic self-government body, and at least ten percent of the settlement's population belongs to the ethnicity concerned, documents used in public administration, as well as the names of public institutions, place names and street names must be used in the minority language as well (if this is initiated by the ethnic self-government body).

In Croatia, people belonging to a minority group can use their mother tongue in public administration on an equal basis with the Croatian language in settlements where their share exceeds one-third of the population.

greatly influenced – even under democratic circumstances – by the current political atmosphere. The ethnicity of the enumerator and/or the language used during the interview may also influence respondents.

Thirdly, "non-responses" can reflect different realities. It is compulsory to take part in the population census; however, the question on ethnic affiliation is not compulsory in most of the countries in the region. The use of non-compulsory questions started to spread in the recent decade. As a result, the number of people who refuse to answer such questions has been increasing.

Lastly, the interpretation of the "non-response" has become a key question. Some argue that it is related to the loss of ethnic identity, which alongside non-response also includes those replying "unknown" or giving "invalid" answers. Others point out that certain minority groups – as some signs suggest – are reluctant to declare their ethnic identity during the enumerations. Not providing data on ethnicity, in this case, is

presumably caused by hidden or concealed minority identity. Furthermore, it is also possible that certain minority groups were forced into non-response in some cases, for example the enumerators did deliberately not ask them about their ethnicity. Another factor behind non-response might be the aversion towards the institution of census or simply the lack of time.

In some countries, the possibility of completing census questionnaires alone on the internet or sending it back by mail also caused that the number of "non-respondents" or individuals giving unclear answers are growing. It is much easier to leave some questions unanswered in the case of non-personal data collection than in the presence of an enumerator.

In summary, to find out which of the above factors and to what extent they contribute to the non-response item on ethnicity questions in certain countries, it is necessary to examine them separately (for a more detailed description see Kapitány 2013). The above should make us very cautious in interpreting census data, but it should not prevent us from presenting the numbers, rates and distributions by ethnicity, since census data is a unique source of information on ethnicities and minorities.

ROMANIA (TRANSYLVANIA)

The last census in Romania was held in October 2011, during which data were collected only in the traditional way, with the help of enumerators. It was not compulsory to answer the questions on mother tongue, religion and ethnicity, although this option was not emphasized or not sufficiently emphasized, therefore most people answered these questions.

The question on ethnicity was as follows: "What ethnic group does the person consider he/she belongs to?" Possible answers were not listed on the questionnaire; therefore the enumerator had to write down the answer given without any modification, and categorize it afterwards. In the case of ethnic affiliation, a two-step coding system was prescribed by the instruction for the census takers, but this was questionable or non-existent for several important questions. For example, answers referring to geographical identity (for instance "Transylvanian") had to be classified as Romanian. People identifying themselves as Ceangăi/Csángó[1] whose situation is considered politically extremely sensitive had to be classified neither as "Hungarian" nor "Romanian" but were added to the category of "Other", together with the Chinese and other ethnicities. Partly as a result of this, and as the low percentage of individuals added to the category of "Other" makes it predictable, the number of respondents declaring themselves Ceangăi was extremely low.

In Romania data on ethnicity appeared even in the preliminary publication of results, which were published by local administrative units in February 2012.

The publication of the final results of the population census started in June 2013. However, preliminary and final results showed a greater difference than expected. For example, the population of Romania – according to preliminary results – was 19,042,936, while on the basis of final results it is 20,121,641 people, a difference of more than a million people.

The cause of this difference is that the method of preliminary and final data cleaning in Romania was different from other countries. The process of data cleaning consisted of not only the filtering of dual respondents and

[1] The Ceangăi or Csángó people (Romanian: Ceangăi, Hungarian: Csángók) are a Hungarian ethnographic group of Roman Catholic faith living mostly in the Romanian region of Moldavia. Their traditional language, Csango, an old Hungarian dialect is still in use.

the correction of obviously incorrect data, but before the finalization of the results, the Romanian Statistical Office complemented the results of the census by using registertype databases. Although this method is accepted in the international practice of censuses, in this case the process underwent an unscheduled, posterior correction, which – according to critics – was more political than professional, and as a result, it raises a lot of professional questions and doubts.

In the case of data on ethnicity – due to the additional data taken from the register – a category "information is not available" was introduced. Those individuals were added to this category who were taken from the register, therefore, were not asked about their ethnicity, and also those individuals who participated in the census but did not answer the question on ethnicity. When calculating the percentage of ethnicities of a particular settlement or administrative unit, the category "information is not available" is disregarded. This is the reason why in official publications the national share of Hungarians is not 6.1% – what follows from the raw data – but 6.5 %.

According to the final results the population of Romania exceeds 20 million people, out of which 6.8 million people live in Transylvania (the areas of Banat, Crișana and Maramureș are considered part of Transylvania). In this area less than three quarters of the population identified themselves as Romanian and 19% of them as Hungarian. The number of ethnic Hungarians living in Transylvania was 1.217 million people while in the other parts of Romania only 11,000 people declared themselves Hungarian. The number of people identifying themselves as belonging to Roma/gypsy ethnicity was 271,000 in Transylvania, which constitutes 4.2% of the total population. The ethnic composition of the counties has basically not changed over the past decade:

Apart from the two counties where Hungarians are in majority and which are situated several hundred kilometres away from Hungary (Harghita/Hargita[2] and Covasna/Kovászna), there are four more counties where the share of ethnic Hungarians is between 20% and 50%. Concerning Hungarian ethnicity, the remaining eight counties of Transylvania are considered as diaspora. Although a fundamental shift in the ethnic composition cannot be observed yet in these counties, the rapidly decreasing share of ethnic Hungarians deserves attention.

On the one hand, the results of the census show that the size of the Hungarian community in Transylvania and Romania is continuously decreasing. Since the last census in Romania (less than a decade ago) the number of individuals identifying themselves as Hungarians has decreased by 200,000 (13.6%). The decrease is observed in every county of Transylvania without exception, and even in counties like Harghita/Hargita, the rate of decrease is more than 6%. In five of Transylvania's 16 counties – Arad, Caraș-Severin, Hunedoara, Sibiu and Timiș – the level of this decline reached or exceeded 25%. As a result, in these diaspora areas even the survival of the Hungarian communities are at risk.

On the other hand, the total population of Romania has also decreased significantly over the past decade. In 2002, the total population of the country was 21,681,000 people, while according to the results of the 2011 census it is only 20,122,000 people, the latter also including people who were "imputed" from the register (in a methodologically controversial way) when completing the census database results. Due

[2] The names of adminsitrative units are indicated in Hungarian only if Hungarian can be used as an official language in the given adminsitrative unit.

Table 1: The final results of census 2011 in Romania: the number and percentage of ethnic Romani-ans and Hungarians by county

Counties	Total population	Number of people of Hungarian ethnicity	Number of people of Romanian ethnicity	Number of people of Roma/gypsy ethnicity	Number of people of other ethicity	Information is not available	Rate of ethnic Hungarians (%)	Rate of ethnic Hungarians, 2003, 2002 (%)	Rate of ethnic Romanians, 2011 (%)	Rate of ethnic Romanians, 2002 (%)
Alba county	342,376	14,849	291,850	14,292	969	20,416	4.6	5.4	90.6	90.4
Arad county	430,629	36,568	340,670	16,475	11,095	25,821	9.0	10.7	84.2	82.2
Bihor/Bihar county	575,398	138,213	366,245	34,640	7,905	28,395	25.3	26.0	67.0	67.4
Bistrița-Năsăud county	286,225	14,350	247,627	11,937	639	11,672	5.2	5.9	90.2	90.3
Brașov county	549,217	39,661	453,325	18,519	3,962	33,750	7.7	8.7	87.9	87.3
Caraș-Severin county	295,579	2,938	243,933	7,272	17,720	23,716	1.1	1.7	89.7	88.2
Cluj county	691,106	103,591	520,885	22,531	3,390	40,709	15.9	17.4	80.1	79.4
Covasna/Kovászna county	210,177	150,468	45,021	8,267	304	6,117	73.7	73.8	22.1	23.3
Harghita/Hargita county	310,867	257,707	39,196	5,326	206	8,432	85.2	84.6	13.0	14.1
Hunedoara county	418,565	15,900	368,073	7,475	1,889	25,228	4.0	5.2	93.6	92.7
Maramureș county	478,659	32,618	374,488	12,211	32,219	27,123	7.2	9.1	82.9	82.0
Mureș/Maros county	550,846	200,858	277,372	46,947	2,122	23,547	38.1	39.3	52.6	53.3
Sălaj/Szilágy county	224,384	50,177	148,396	15,004	1,340	9,467	23.3	23.0	69.0	71.2
Satu Mare/Szatmár county	344,360	112,580	188,155	17,388	6,742	19,495	34.7	35.2	57.9	58.8
Sibiu county	397,322	10,893	338,505	17,946	4,958	25,020	2.9	3.6	90.9	90.6
Timiș county	683,540	35,295	550,836	14,525	33, 494	49,390	5.6	7.5	86.9	83.4
Transylvania (incl. Banat, Crișana and Maramureș)	*6,789,250*	*1,216,666*	*4,794,577*	*270,755*	*128,954*	*378,298*	*19.0*	*19.6*	*74.8*	*74.7*
Total Romania	*20,121,641*	*1,227,623*	*16,792,868*	*621,573*	*242,767*	*1,236,810*	*6.5*	*6.6*	*88.9*	*89.5*

Source: http://www.recensamantromania.ro

to this overall decrease and the inclusion of the category "information is not available", the percentage of ethnic Hungarians in Romania has hardly changed (it changed from 6.6% to 6.5%) despite the continuous decrease of the size of Hungarian community. Furthermore, since the share of Romanians has also decreased as compared to that of Roma people, the Romanian-Hungarian ethnic ratio has changed only marginally.

In two counties with Hungarian majority (Harghita/Hargita and Covasna/Kovászna) and in two counties where Romanians are in majority (Sălaj/Szilágy and Satu Mare/Szatmár), the percentage of Romanians has decreased over the past decade as compared to that of Hungarians. In Bihor/Bihar and Mureș/Maros counties the share of Romanians and Hungarians decreased in such a way, that although the decrease of ethnic Hungarians was greater, on the whole, the ratio of the two ethnicities has remained quite stable. Currently, the proportion of ethnic Hungarians in the above-mentioned six counties is 43%, and this rate has practically not changed since 2002 (43.1% and 42.9%).

By contrast, the rate of ethnic Romanians decreased during this period: from 51.4% in 2002 to 50.2%, by 2011, while the share of Roma ethnicity increased from 4.5% to 6%. In these six counties – representing an area of 33,000 square kilometres and a total population of 2.2 million people – where more than three fourths of the Transylvanian Hungarian community live, the demographic trends of the Hungarian minority have recently been more favourable than those of the Romanians.

These "two-faced" results are caused by the special demographic situation that characterised Romania over the past decade. Disregarding the problems concerning data collection and publication occurring in the course of censuses, it can be assumed that the size of ethnic Hungarian community decreased by 194,000 persons between 2002 and 2011. About one third of this decrease can be attributed to a natural population loss, in other words, it was due to the surplus of deaths over births. This substantial decline was not caused by ethnic Hungarians' lower fertility rates as compared to Romania as a whole but by the age structure of the Hungarian community, which was older than the national average. This is due to high levels of emigration among Hungarians in the 1990s.

The emigration of ethnic Hungarians did not decrease considerably even after the millennium, its rate cannot be regarded today as if it exceeded the national average. Although the Hungarian community was characterized by a serious migratory loss between 2002 and 2011 (it was above 100,000 people), in this period – due to the accession process to the European Union and the end of travel restrictions – the Romanian and Roma populations of the country were also characterised by high levels of emigration. In these two communities the rate of emigration surpassed that of ethnic Hungarians.

The third reason for the declining size of the ethnic Hungarian community is assimilation, although its significance is lower than that of emigration and natural population decrease. Assimilation is typically strong in those areas where the number and share of ethnic Hungarians is low. By contrast, in counties where Hungarians are in majority, these communities might presumably even have some gain caused by assimilation.

SLOVAKIA

The last census in Slovakia was held in May 2011. The census was carried out according to the following system: respondents could choose between the option of an internetbased data delivery and a paperbased selfreporting, thus, the role of enumerators was minimal. There were four questions related to ethnicity in the census questionnaire. One of them asked directly about the ethnicity of respondents, who were allowed to select only one response option.

When interpreting the results, we must consider an important detail which have might influence the process of the census. The census had already started when the data protection commissioner – who was otherwise ethnic Hungarian – drew attention to the fact that respondents could be identified by the barcode on the form. As a result, the office of the commissioner called on the statistical office to withdraw this obligation. After this, a considerable number of people – especially in larger towns – refused to complete the questionnaire or did not stick the barcode on it. It is unclear to what extent this scandal was responsible for the large number of non-response on the ethnicity question even though in principle it was compulsory. Nevertheless, it is certain that it caused delay in data processing, and the statistical office also had to find a method – not described in detail – to complement the missing or unidentifiable data.

Final results by ethnicity were published in March 2012 at national level and at local

Table 2: The results of the census 2011 in Slovakia: the number and percentage of ethnic Slovaks and Hungarians by district, 2011

Districts	Total population	Number of people of Hungarian ethnicity	Number of people of Slovakian ethnicity	Number of people of Roma/Gypsy ethnicity	People of other ethnicity	Non-respondents	Rate of ethnic Hungarians (%)	Rate of ethnic Hungarians, 2001 (%)	Rate of Slovakians, 2011 (%)	Rate of Slovakians ,2011 (%)
Banská Bystrica Region	660,563	67,596	505,528	15,525	5,800	66,114	10.2	11.7	76.5	83.7
Bratislava Region	602,436	23,888	543,573	767	16,194	18,014	4.0	4.6	90.2	91.3
Košice Region	791,723	74,743	580,066	36,476	11,458	88,980	9.4	11.2	73.3	81.8
Nitra/Nyitrai Region	689,867	169,460	473,269	3,987	6,155	36,996	24.6	27.6	68.6	70.1
Prešov Region	814,527	646	668,300	43,097	37,853	64,631	0.1	0.1	82.0	90.7
Trenčín Region	594,328	797	545,535	574	6,916	40,506	0.1	0.2	91.8	97.3
Trnava/Nagyszombati Region	554,741	120,784	394,902	3,048	5,929	30,078	21.8	23.7	71.2	73.9
Žilina Region	688,851	553	641,602	2,264	7,258	37,174	0.1	0.1	93.1	97.5
Total Slovakia	*5,397,036*	*458,467*	*4,352,775*	*105,738*	*97,563*	*382,493*	*8.5*	*9.7*	*80.7*	*85.8*

Source: http://www.scitanie2011.sk

administrative unit-level three months later, in June. According to the results the number of population in Slovakia was 5,397,000 people and out of this 459,000 people (8.5% of the total population) identified themselves as Hungarian, while 4,353,000 people (80.7%) declared themselves Slovak.

The second largest minority group in Slovakia was the Roma community of whom 106,000 people declared their ethnic affiliation. According to data published and probably partly adjusted, the share of non-respondents was 7.1% (380,000 people).

The territorial division of Slovakia did not follow a geographical logic, but it probably aimed at creating an ethnic Slovak majority in every district. As a consequence, in two of the eight districts (Trnava/Nagyszombat and Nitra/Nyitra regions) the proportion of ethnic Hungarians is 20–25%, while the number and share of Hungarians in the region of Košice is also considerable, although it is a diaspora.

Nevertheless, the official publication of data by administrative unit conceals that most of the ethnic Hungarians living in Slovakia form an ethnic bloc alongside the Slovakian-Hungarian border where they constitute the absolute majority of the population.

Comparing the 2011 census data with those from 2001 one can find only a slight population increase (by 18,000 people, which means an increase of 0.3%), whereas the number and share of both Hungarians and Slovaks decreased: the number of Hungarians by 62,000 people which means almost 12%. At the same time, the number of Slovaks decreased by 262,000 (6%).

Although the number and percentage of Roma people increased, the above was not caused by this fact, but the increase in non-response on ethnicity. While in 2001 only 55,000 people did not give information about their ethnicity, in 2011 this number reached 382,000, representing 7.1% of the country's population.

Consequently, it is important to examine the composition of the group of non-respondents in this respect. At present, we have no sufficient answers to this question yet. The first scientific analyses examining these results found that in settlements where Hungarians form a dominant majority the percentage of non-respondents is not above the average. In addition, it was also shown that there was no significant relationship between the share of unidentifiable persons and the ethnic composition of a given locality.

Although various factors could contribute to the increase in the number of people not giving information on their ethnicity, it is clear that from the point of view of the Hungarian community the Slovakian census results – in contrast to those in Romania – can be considered definitely negative. The results show not only the decreasing number of ethnic Hungarians but their diminishing proportion as compared to the total population of the country as well as to that of ethnic Slovaks. Moreover, this phenomenon characterises not only Hungarians living in diaspora communities (their number is low in Slovakia) but also those areas and communities where Hungarians live in majority.

For instance in Komarno/Komárom and Dunajská Streda /Dunaszerdahely in the very centre of the Hungarian speaking area, both the number and percentage of ethnic Hungarians are declining. In the Dunajská Streda/Dunaszerdahely district the percentage of ethnic Hungarians decreased by 6,000 people (from 83% to 75%) while the number of Slovaks grew from 16,000 to 23,000 people.

Therefore, census results suggest that the main issue in Slovakia is not that the borders of the Hungarian ethnic bloc are changing. (Perhaps some settlements in Bratislava's agglomeration can be regarded as an exception, where the Hungarian character is disappearing because of out-migration). Instead, the number of people declaring themselves ethnic Hungarian is falling even without a substantial out-migration. In Slovakia the main cause of population decrease in ethnic Hungarian communities is assimilation, and natural population decrease comes only second. By contrast, in Transylvania the main causes are emigration as well as natural population decrease and assimilation is stronger only in diaspora towns.

SERBIA (VOJVODINA/VAJDASÁG)

The last census in Serbia and in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina/Vajdaság belonging to Serbia was held in October 2011. The census used the "traditional" method, enumerators visited respondents in their home and completed the census questionnaire in a face-to-face interview. Therefore, respondents did not have the option to complete the questionnaire online.

The question on ethnicity was asked as an open question, with no predefined answer categories, and enumerators had to write in the column of "ethnicity" the answer provided by the respondent on the basis of their self-identification. Double or multiple ethnic identities were allowed to be declared. However, it was not possible to amend or edit the response given to this answer later. It was not compulsory to answer this question, which was indicated on the questionnaire. The answers were coded by the statistical office later, a practice that cannot be regarded as fully neutral with respect to ethnic affiliation.

Due to the lack of questionnaires in languages other than Serbian and the large number of enumerators who did not speak Albanian, most of the Albanians living in South Serbia (not in Kosovo) successfully boycotted the census on the call of their minority political leaders. Some Bosniaks also joined the boycott, therefore the reliability of data in the Bukanovac, Preševo and Medveđa areas is highly doubtful.

The Serbian Statistical Office published the data related to ethnicity in November 2012.

Table 4: The results of the census 2011 in the region of Vojvodina/Vajdaság: the number and per-centage of ethnic Serbs and Hungarians by district, 2011

Districts	Total population	Number of people of Hungarian ethnicity	Number of people of Serbian ethnicity	Number of people of Roma/gypsy ethnicity	Number of people of other ethnicity	The number of non-respondents	Rate of ethnic Hungarians (%)	Rate of ethnic Hungarians, 2001 (%)	Rate of Serbs, 2011 (%)	Rate of Serbs, 2001 (%)
Central Banat/ Közép-Bánát	187,66	23,550	134,264	7,267	14,351	8,235	12.5	13.4	71.5	72.3
North Bačka/ Észak-Bácska	186,906	76,262	50,472	3,342	42,043	14,787	40.8	43.6	27.0	24.8
North Banat/ Észak-Bánát	147,770	68,915	63,047	4,769	4,956	6,083	46.6	47.4	42.7	43.6
South Bačka / Dél-Bácska	615,371	47,850	445,270	10,482	82,872	28,897	7.8	9.3	72.4	69.1
South Banat / Dél-Bánát	293,730	13,194	208,462	8,025	49,662	14,387	4.5	4.9	71.0	70.3
Syrmia/ Szerémség	312,278	3,789	265,272	5,488	25,766	11,963	1.2	1.3	84.9	84.5
West Bačka/ Nyugat-Bácska	188,087	17,576	122,848	3,018	33,218	11,427	9.3	10.2	65.3	62.9
Vojvodina/ Vajdaság	*1,931,809*	*251,136*	*1,289,635*	*42,391*	*252,838*	*95,809*	*13.0*	*14.3*	*66.8*	*65.0*
Total Serbia	*7,186,862*	*253,899*	*5,988,150*	*147,604*	*545,123*	*252,086*	*3.5*	*3.9*	*83.3*	*82.9*

Source: http://www.popis2011.stat.rs

According to the results, the population size of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina dropped to under two million (1,932,000 people) while the total population of Serbia was 7,187,000 people. The number of ethnic Hungarians living in Vojvodina was 251,000, while in other parts of Serbia only a few thousand people declared themselves Hungarian. Therefore, the total number of ethnic Hungarians in the country was 254,000. The proportion of Hungarians in Vojvodina was 13% while in Serbia as a whole it was 3.5%. Compared to the result of the last census held in 2002, the number of ethnic Hungarians decreased by 13–14% (from 290,207).

Vojvodina is divided into seven administrative districts *(see table 4)*. According to the results, there was no district in which Hungarians formed an absolute majority but in two districts in the northern part of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, near the Hungarian border (North Bačka/Észak-Bácska and North Banat/Észak-Bánát), Hungarians still formed a relative majority with a rate of 41% and 47% respectively. While the share of Serbs in North Banat/ Észak-Bánát was 43% (compared to 47% of Hungarians), in North Bačka/Észak-Bácska – one of the most multiethnic regions of Europe – several other ethnic groups lived in a great number alongside the Hungarians (41%) and Serbs (27%).

The population decrease in Serbia since the last census in 2002 was more or less in line with preliminary estimations both in the case of Vojvodina (where the population

MOTHER TONGUE AND OTHER DATA RELATED TO ETHNICITY

Census questionnaires of some states often include other questions related to ethnicity as well. Among these, the most frequent one is the question on mother tongue. However, similarly to ethnicity, the definition of mother tongue is not harmonised in different countries. In Slovakia, for example, the concept of mother tongue is related to the language used between parents and their children: "The mother tongue shall mean the language which was spoken by a person´s parents in his/her childhood." In Hungary, this definition allows more freedom: "Mother tongue is the language which was learned by the individual in their childhood, and which is usually used when speaking with family members, and is identified by them as their mother tongue." Romania did not give any definition of mother tongue, neither in the census questionnaire, nor for the enumerators; moreover, the guide prepared for the enumerators also underline that it was a subjective decision of the respondent, which language they considered their mother tongue.

In addition to questions concerning mother tongue, several other questions appear in census questionnaires. In Slovakia, for example, the questionnaire included a separate question referring to which language the respondent used most frequently at home, and which was the one he usually used in public. In Hungary, census 2011 included a question that asked what languages the respondent usually spoke with his or her family members or friends. While in 2001, individuals were asked about which ethnicity's cultural values and traditions were familiar to them. In several countries, respondents are also asked about the languages they speak.

decreased by 100,000 people) and Serbia as a whole, where the decline was 300,000 people.

The decrease in the size of the ethnic Hungarian population living in Vojvodina (40,000 persons) can be attributed primarily to the considerable emigration of young Hungarians who were in child-bearing age during the civil wars of the 1990s. As a result, the age structure of the Hungarian community has changed and it is characterised by a significant ageing process. This explains most of the natural population decrease of 30,000 people between the two censuses. According to experts, the migratory loss of ethnic Hungarians between the two censuses was approximately 8,000–9,000 people. Similarly to Romania, assimilation most frequently occurs generation by generation, therefore, it does not contribute to popula-tion decline significantly, but is rather reflected in the low number of ethnic Hungarians in the births statistics. (Among children who are born in ethnically mixed marriages the proportion of ethnic Hungarians is less than 50%).

An unexpected result of the census was that the number of Serbs decreased less significantly than expected. While the number of Vojvodina's population fell by 100,000 people, the population decrease among Serbs was only about 32,000 people. As a result, the percentage of Serbs increased significantly in every district of Vojvodina, except for Central Banat/Közép-Bánát. It seems that Serbs who fled to the territory of Vojvodina during the years of the Yugoslavian civil war in the 1990s left Vojvodina in a lower number than expected, while assimilation tendencies among minorities became stronger.

As a result, the proportion of ethnic Serbs living in Vojvodina has exceeded more than two thirds of its population over the past

decade (it increased from 65% to 66.8%). By contrast, the percentage of minorities living in the territory is continuously decreasing, even the percentage of the second largest minority – ethnic Hungarians – is only 13%. The decline in the number of ethnic Hungarians is also reflected in changes in the spatial ethnic distribution: mainly the ethnic transformation of Subotica/Szabadka, which is the centre of the Hungarian community, can be considered critical from the point of view of the Hungarian community.

UKRAINE (TRANSCARPATHIA)

Transcarpathia is the only examined area where no censuses were held over recent years. According to the original plans, a census would have been held in Ukraine in 2011, but it was postponed due to financial and political reasons. As a result, the last data available are from 2001. Under the circumstances of those times, 152,000 people of the total population of Transcarpathia (1,255,000 people) identified themselves as Hungarian.

According to the estimations of Transcarpathian demographers József Molnár and István D. Molnár, before the beginning of the civil war the number of ethnic Hungarians in Transcarpathia was around 141,000 people. In the absence of exact data, we also use this number in this summary. The total population of Transcarpathia is estimated to be around 1,249,000 people.

However, it is important to draw attention to the fact that there is a lot of uncertainty around the data on ethnic composition in the region since the share of multilingual individuals with multiple ethnic identity is traditionally high. As a result, the quality of census data depends greatly on the administrative-political situation of the region at the time of the census.

CROATIA

In Croatia the last census was held in April 2011, in the course of which traditional paperbased questionnaires were used. The method of the registration of ethnicity obviously implied the priority of the constituent nation in majority (Croatian).

On the basis of the 2011 census results – the comparability of which is limited with the results of the 2001 census due to methodological reasons – 14,048 people declared themselves Hungarian (in 2001 this number was 16,595). Out of those who identified themselves as Hungarian, only 8,249 lived in the Osijek-Baranja County. According to the results of the 2011 census, the population number of the Osijek-Baranja County was 305,000. The share of Hungarians in the county – which originally had a mixed population consisting of Croats, Serbs and Hungarians, but has been inhabited predominantly by Croats since the end of the Yugoslav civil war in 1998 – is less than is 3%.

AUSTRIA (BURGENLAND)

Instead of the traditional type of census, a register-based enumeration was held in Austria in 2011. Data on ethnic affiliation were not collected in the course of the census. Therefore, no data on ethnic affiliation is available in the state of Burgenland, which also formed part of Hungary prior to 1920.

A further problem is that in Austria citizens were not asked about their ethnicity or mother tongue even during the "traditional" census held in 2001. The question of the census referred only to the language respondents usually use in their everyday life (Umgangssprache). According to the results of the 2001 census 6,641 of the 278,000 people living in Burgenland used Hungarian as an everyday language.

Thus, in the case of Burgenland, we must rely on estimations only. With respect to the

number of people of Hungarian ethnicity, we can use the number of people speaking Hungarian as an everyday language (based on the results of the 2001 census) as a baseline. Taking into account that Austria has become one of the main destination countries for mass emigration from Hungary in recent years and that Burgenland also receives a high number of immigrants, it can be estimated that the number of Hungarians in Burgenland has increased to 10,000 people over the last decade.

SLOVENIA (PREKMURJE)

Similarly to Austria, instead of the former traditional form of census based on face-to-face interview, in 2011 a register-based census was held in Slovenia that did not include questions on ethnicity. According to the results of the previous, traditional census held in 2002, out of the 121,000 people living in Prekmurje, 5,544 individuals declared themselves Hungarian.

By 1 January 2012, the population of the administrative unit of Prekmurje dropped to 119,000 people. Considering the assimilation tendencies observed in the Hungarian community in Prekmurje (its number decreased from 7,657 to 5,544 people between the two censuses) and the fact that significant migratory movements did not take place in the area, the estimated number of ethnic Hungarians in the region is approximately 4,000 persons.

OVERALL RESULTS, TRENDS

As it has been presented, there are important methodological differences in the population censuses of the examined countries concerning both the practice of enumeration and the method of data collection on ethnicity. Obviously, these differences affected the final results, and also limited the comparability of this type of data.

The total population of the area also including Hungary (in other words the territory of the former Hungarian Kingdom without the former Croatian Kingdom) was 26,015,000 people at the time of the censuses held in 2011. Of these 10,400,000 people identified themselves as Hungarian (about 40% of the area's total population). Apart from Hungarians living in Hungary, there were approximately 12,540,000 people who formed part of ethnic majority populations in the neighbouring countries living in this area (e.g. Romanians in Transylvania, Slovaks in Slovakia etc.). Their overall proportion was 46.3%. The overall number of individuals belonging to other national minorities, people not giving information about their ethnic affiliation, and – in the case of Romania – individuals who were not even asked was more than 3,550,000 people, representing 14% of the total population of the examined area.

Compared to the results of the censuses held ten years ago, the population of the area has decreased by more than 800,000 people.

Table 4 shows the results of a – simplistic – estimation that corrects the number of individuals declaring their ethnicity by distributing non-respondents (in the case of Romania including people taken from the register) proportionally in the given territory on the basis of the shares of declared ethnic affiliation. (In the case of Hungary the answers given to the first question related to ethnicity were used. For details see Kapitány 2013).

On the basis of this estimation, we can conclude that the adjusted proportion of Hungarians in the examined area was 46.2% in 2001 and about 45.9% in 2011. The number of people of Hungarian ethnicity was 12.8 million in 1991, their adjusted number was 12.4 million in 2001 and 11.95 million in 2011.

Figure 2: The presence of ethnic Hungarians on NUTS3 level in the "Carpathian Basin"

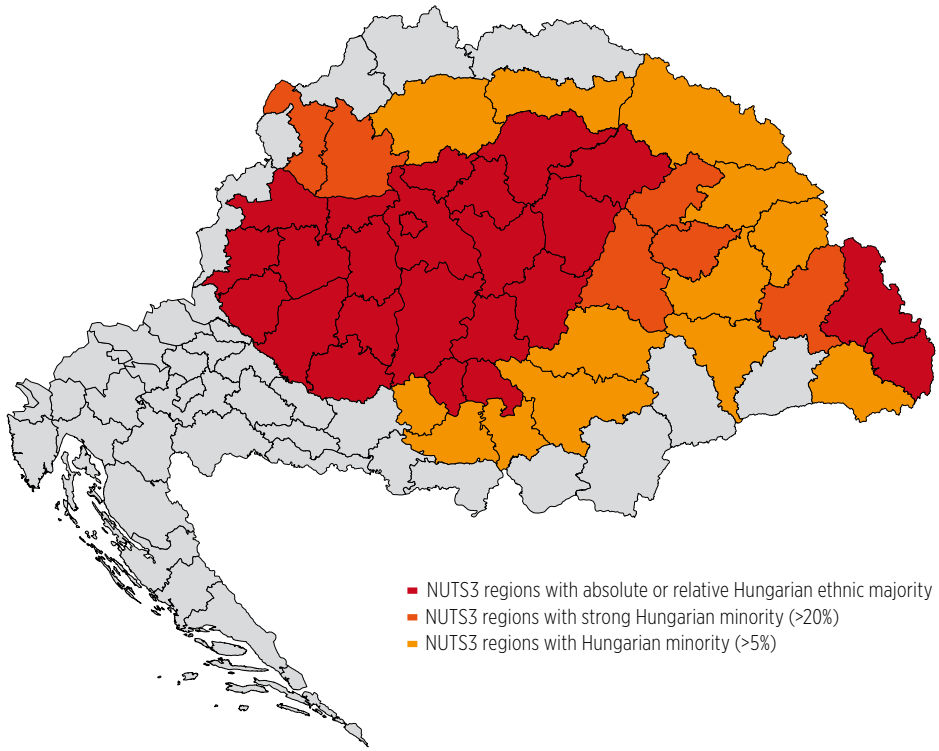

Table 4: Ethnic proportions in the "Carpathian Basin": results based on self-identification and those corrected by including the non-respondents, around 2001 and 2011

	Population 2001	Number of people of Hungarian ethnicity	Number of people of Hungarian ethnicity, corrected	Corrected rate %	Population 2011	Number of people declaring themselves to be Hungarians	Hungarian ethnicity, corrected	Corrected rate %
Hungary	10,198,315	9,416,045	9,974,035	97.8	9,937,628	8,314,029	9,741,112	98.0
Transylvania	7,221,733	1,415,718	1,415,901	19.6	6,789,250	1,216,666	1,290,568	19.0
Slovakia	5,379,455	520,528	525,856	9.8	5,397,036	458,467	493,437	9.1
Vojvodina/Vajdaság	2,031,992	290,207	301,914	14.9	1,931,809	251,136	264,241	13.7
Transcarpathia	1,254,614	151,516	151,516	12.1	1,249,000	141,000	141,000	11.3
Prekmurje	120,875	5,445	5,797	4.8	118,988	4,000	4,000	3.4
Burgenland	277,569	6,641	6,641	2.4	286,215	10,000	10,000	3.5
Osijek-Baranja County	330,506	9,784	9,960	3.0	305,032	8,249	8,532	2.8
Total Carpathian Basin	*26,815,059*	*11,815,884*	*12,391,619*	*46.2*	*26,014,958*	*10,403,547*	*11,952,891*	*45.9*

Source: Kapitány 2013.

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