

The density and quality of the system of roads are determined by two factors in Central Europe, as well as in other places. These factors are on one hand the population density and the cultural standards, on the other hand the geographical conditions, primarily relief.

The population density is the highest in the northwestern corner of Central Europe, in Saxony, Silesia and in the Bohemian-Moravian Basins. The densest system of roads is to be found in these areas. Relief conditions hamper communication but on the peripheries of the Bohemian Basin; those highland areas are in fact poorer in roads and railways than the gentle sloping downs or plains. A strikingly scanty system of roads is to be found especially in the region of the Bohemian and Bavarian Forests, in the southern portion of the Bohemian Basin. The Bohemian Erz Gebirge and the region of the Sudeten are densely populated and stretch along mining and industrial regions with a lively economic life. Here man had tried his best to surmount all the natural obstacles and constructed numerous roads across the mountains being not too high. Nevertheless, the effect of the natural barriers may be evidenced in the system of roads as well.

A dense system of roads, similar to that of the northwestern areas, is to be found in the interior of the Hungarian Basin, around Budapest, in the Great Hungarian Plain and in Transdanubia. The great variety of routes is due to the population density and the higher living standards. Within the Carpathians natural conditions do not furnish effective barriers to communication; the centrifugal river system of this round area even facilitates the grouping of roads around Budapest, the capital of Hungary. The construction of roads has seemingly the least obstacles in the Great Hungarian

Plain. However, it should be taken into consideration that the two most important building materials: stone and wood are lacking in the Great Hungarian Plain. The construction of roads thus is very expensive, as the heavy and bulky building materials should be brought here from long distances. After 1918, when the highland areas of the Carpathian Basin had been cut off from the Great Hungarian Plain by the political boundaries, the building of roads had to meet with great difficulties. The timber and stone of the Slovakian and Ruthenian highlands, as well as those of Transylvania - which were transported to the Great Hungarian Plain by natural and relatively easy ways - because of the economic exclusiveness of the little entente states could not reach the Plain, or only burdened with high rates of duty and unfavourably high tariffs.

In the eastern portion of Central Europe and on the Balkan Peninsula only long transversal roads had been built, and especially the system of railways and of the first-rate highroads is sparse. The scanty system of roads in Russia is primarily due to the low population density, while in the Balkan states, beside the still lower density of population, it is also due to the insurmountable physical barriers. The areas of Central Europe especially poor in roads are to be found in the western half of the Balkan Peninsula, in the region of the Dinaric Alps. The chief problem of Yugoslavia had just been the fact that sparsely or scarcely populated and inaccessible areas of vast expanse were lying in the very middle of the country, and the major part of settlements, as well as traffic had been confined to the peripheries. These borderlands had no good contacts with each other; it resulted in an economic disunion and political separation as well. Taking into account but the system of railways, it is much more striking how the Dinaric highlands serve as effective barriers to transportation.

Beside the regions of the Dinaric Alps poor in roads, a zone of strikingly spare system of roads stretches along the regions of the Alps and the Carpathians. This ring surrounds the Hungarian Basin and forms within its boundaries a special system of routes. This special island is connected but by a few transversal routes with the surrounding European areas. This distinct network of communication also contributed toward the fact that the Carpathian Basin has been for long centuries an area politically and economically closely connected. The network of communication of the regions lying within the ranges of the Carpathians differs from that of the areas lying outside the Carpathians in that respect too, that in the Hungarian Basin the chief routes are running from the peripheries towards the center in a radiant direction; outside the Carpathians, however, they are running round about in front of the outer feet of the highlands. This system of roads and railways running round about made it possible that the region of Kraków and Galicia had been connected with the Czech and Austrian provinces in the XII. century, and this had furthered possibilities for uniting the Wallachian and Moldavian principalities as well. The regions of Wallachia and Moldavia are much closer connected with each other than any of them with the province of Transylvania within the Carpathians.

The Carpathians and the highland areas around the Adriatic serve as double mighty barriers diverting the routes which tend from the Balticum and Eastern Europe toward Southern Europe, and towards the Mediterranean from the Hungarian Basin. They tend therefore to get access to the Adriatic along the feet of the Alps through Upper Silesia, the Moravian Gate and the Vienna Basin, or they are running in front of the Eastern Carpathians towards the Black Sea. In diverting these routes the Hungaro-Turkish zone of war played an important part in the XVI. and XVII. centuries, and had been serious handicaps to communication and trade in the Carpathian Basin. In the present century the political boundaries drawn in 1919-20 play the same role.

The Eastern European table land is almost as poor in railways as the western half of the Balkan Peninsula, although the population of the former is much denser than that of the region of the Dinaric Alps. The network of roads, however, replaces somehow the lack of railways. The Roumanian Plain is also poorly equipped with railways, yet it has a dense system of roads. It is true that the major part of these roads are of an inferior quality and in a constantly bad state.

During the period between the First and Second World War, in consequence of motorisation, the construction of roads rapidly developed in Western Europe. Long lines of first-rate improved roads, autostradas had been built. At the same time the construction of roads in Central Europe shows hardly any advancement. Even those transversal autostradas had not yet been constructed which would have been able to carry out international traffic, in spite of the fact that most of the time they have been maintained or even built by foreign capital of companies from abroad. Wherever these roads or some of their sections had been built, the byroads remained in a very bad state. There were certain states, however, which have made vigorous efforts in the field of road - construction, such as Hungary and Czecho-Slovakia. The success of these endeavours in the former state had been hindered by the lack of the necessary raw-materials; in the case of the latter by the fact that such areas had to be connected with each other which were separated by relief through numerous barriers.

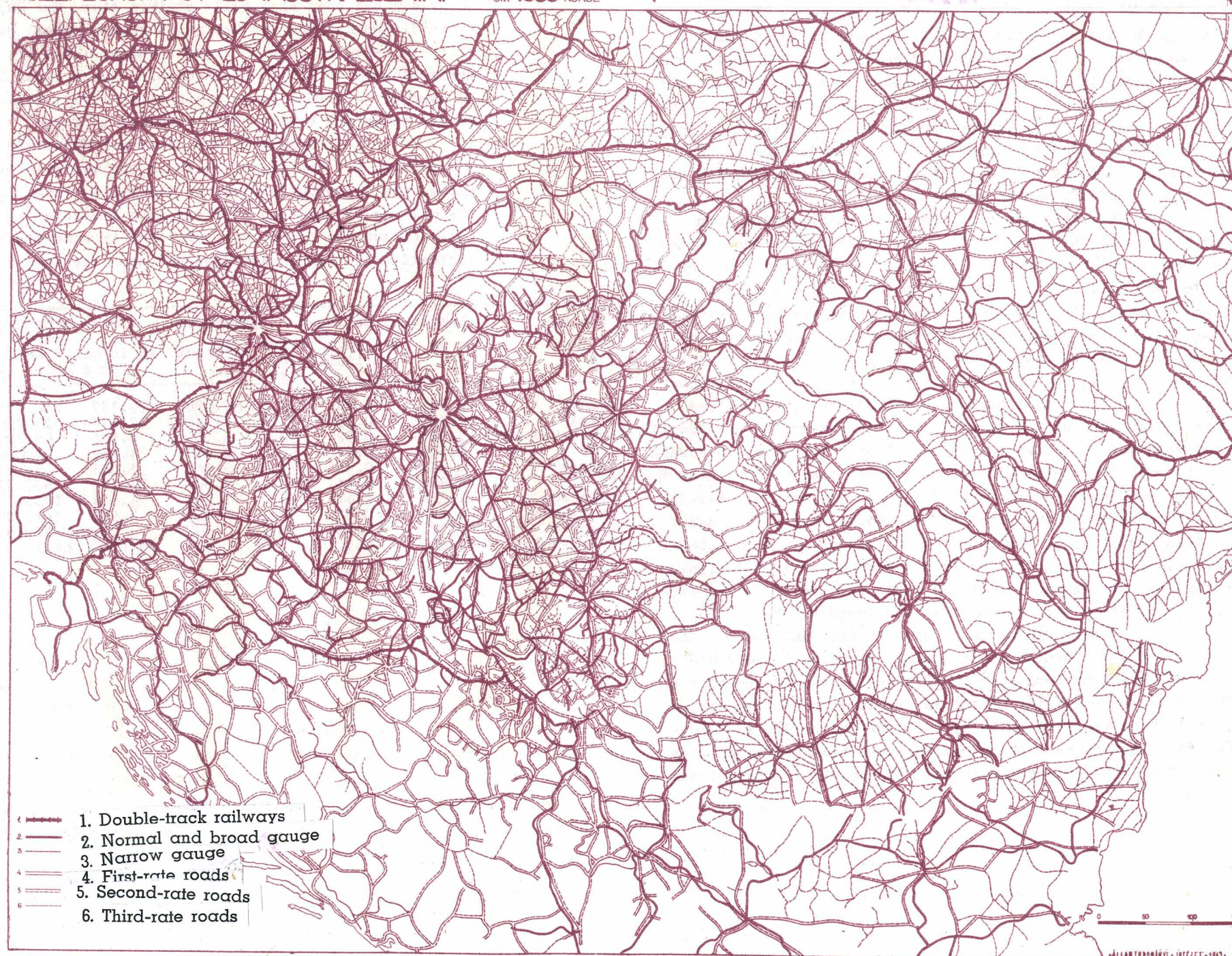
In some other states, however, new roads had not been constructed at all, and the old ones got ruined because of neglecting them to be improved and kept in good repairs. The building of roads and their being kept in good repair has been especially neglected in Roumania. In the Transylvanian area annexed from Hungary to Roumania, and in Bucovina Roumania received quite a well-constructed system of roads in 1920. In 1940 when one part of the Transylvanian area returned to Hungary, these roads were in general in a much worse state than before. The roads of Poland and Jugoslavia were in a bad state as well.

KÖZÉPEUROPA ÚT ÉS VASÚTHÁLÓZATA.

UM 1935 KORÚL

SYSTEM OF ROADS AND RAILWAYS

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The building of railways had started the soonest in the northwest and gradually extended towards the east and southeast. In the middle of the XIX. century in the Carpathian Basin there was but a single line of railway running from Vienna through Pozsony to Budapest and from here as far as Szolnok and Szeged respectively. At the same time in the Bohemian Basin one line of railway led from Saxony through the Elbe Pass to Prague and from there across the Moravian Basin towards Vienna. The line running in front of the eastern slopes of the Alps had been built from Upper Silesia as far as Laibach.

There was another line of railway leading from Upper Silesia to Warszawa. To the east and south of these lines there were no other lines of railways. From the middle of the XIX. century till 1877, up to the new political arrangement of the Balkan areas, the building of railways primarily developed in the area of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. A great number of railway lines had been built in the Bohemian Basin and in the Austrian provinces as well, and the rail-net of the Carpathian Basin had also been built as far as the northern, eastern and southern frontiers of the natural state-territory. The construction of railways was very slow in the Polish area belonging to Russia, where in 1877 there were altogether but two lines. In front of the northern and eastern outer feet of the Carpathians, however, the first line following the principal direction of traffic, had been built quite up to the end in the direction of Kraków, Lwów, Gernauti, Galati, Bucuresti, Pitesti and Turnu-Severin. This line, however, had nowhere access to the Black Sea, as it had no connections either in Bessarabia or at the Lower Danube.

To the south of the Roumanian area and towards the south of the Sava-boundary, not a single line of railway did exist on the Balkan Peninsula in this period. At the end of the XIX. and in the beginning of the XX. century the railway-lines of the Balkans had been built. By building the bridge of Cernavoda the Roumanian network of railways had been connected with the traffic of the Black Sea in this period. The railway lines

of Russia had been also built at this time. The Russian lines differing from the Central European normal gauge /1.435 m/ were built with broader gauge /1.524 m/. In the areas annexed to Poland and Roumania, these lines had to be changed to normal gauge lines after 1920, while in the Soviet Union the border gauge remained in force.

According to the political boundaries of 1930 the density and traffic of rails in the various states showed the following picture in the Table below, in 1937. The mileage of roads in 1937 are also indicated in the Table. It must be noted, however, that in some states the indication of "highroads" does not mean the same categories.

State	Length of Railways km	per 1000 in- habitants	per 1000 km	passenger in millions	tons km in mil- lions	Length of roads km	per 1000 in- habitants km
Germany	54.556	0.80	115.6	50.096	79.757	212.733	3.2
Poland	20.118	0.59	51.9	6.948	22.077	335.726	9.9
Czecho-Slovakia	13.925	0.92	99.4	6.861	8.586	69.700	4.7
Austria	5.585	0.87	69.7	2.407	4.151	31.000	4.4
Hungary	8.671	0.96	93.2	2.646	3.088	62.225	6.9
Italy	22.901	0.54	73.9	9.806	11.155	62.432	1.5
Roumania	11.216	0.57	38.0	3.141	4.934	103.670	5.5
Yugoslavia	9.471	0.62	38.2	2.410	3.216	41.809	2.8
Bulgaria	3.270	0.52	31.7	597	748	25.650	4.3
Soviet-Union	85.200	0.50	4.0	--	354.800	2,691.400	15.5