

MIGRATION

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An important human characteristic is the ability to move to a more ‘favourable’ location in line with objectives, needs and expectations. When international or internal administrative boundaries are crossed, this spatial movement is usually called migration or migratory movement. The importance of migration is shown by its decisive role in the human settlement of the Earth. Alongside natural reproduction, migration is a major factor determining the population of a given area.

Since migration can take many forms, it is difficult to give a comprehensive and authentic picture of it. What is certain, however, is that in the course of migration an individual crosses an administrative boundary. If this is a national border, we may speak of *international (or external) migration*. If the spatial movement occurs within the national borders but crosses a regional or municipal boundary, it is termed *domestic (or internal) migration*.

One specific form of movement of an individual is when the starting point is the same as the finishing point, with the person returning on a daily or weekly basis. Unlike in the case of the two previous forms of migration, there is no change of residence. Such movement is called *commuting*. These three forms of movement will be discussed in the following.

Statistically tangible parameters are a prerequisite for the interpretation of migration. Among them, quantity/volume and direction are the most important. Based on the latter indicator, a distinction can be made between in-migration, when a group of individuals

arrives in an area, and out-migration, with people leaving an area. In the case of international migration, the terms ‘*immigration*’ and ‘*emigration*’ are also used. For commuting, the terms ‘*in-commuting*’ and ‘*out-commuting*’ are employed. The balance of migration is the difference between the number of people moving into an area and the number moving out; it can be a positive or negative value.

International migration in the Carpathian Basin

International migration entails a long-term absence (of at least 12 months) from the country of original (habitual) residence. The migrant establishes residence in another country for the purpose of settlement, earning an income or even studying.

Current migration trends in the world differ in general terms from those of previous centuries in that the number of migrants is much higher. Moreover, international migrants come from areas that are distant in social, cultural and economic terms from the areas to which they are heading. In 2019, 272 million people – 3.5% of the world population – were residing in a country other than their native one.

The Carpathian Basin is not a classical receiving region, as far as global migration is concerned. Indeed, the volume of migration – and its ratio in relation to the total population – is significantly lower than in the major receiving countries. Since the second half of

the 1990s, however, a larger number of foreigners have arrived in the Carpathian Basin, having been attracted here by economic convergence and European integration. At the same time, the Yugoslav Wars and the break-up of Czechoslovakia also triggered significant population movements. As a destination, the Carpathian Basin primarily attracts, albeit to a declining extent, people from other areas of Europe. In other words, short-distance international migration is typical. The number of foreign nationals per thousand inhabitants shows a large dispersion. In addition to the marked differences, a strong west–east gradient can be observed 1. To the west of Hungary, the major centres of migration are mainly metropolitan areas such as Vienna (286 foreigners per thousand inhabitants), Graz (211), Prague (151), and Ljubljana (90). Much of the foreign population lives in these urban centres. Meanwhile, the proportion of foreigners in the major cities of the Carpathian Basin is lower (e.g. Budapest 42, Bratislava 29, and Zagreb 6 foreigners per thousand inhabitants).

The Carpathian Basin is characterised by high numbers of people arriving from neighbouring countries. This is particularly the case in Hungary where almost 181,000 foreign citizens were living on 1 January 2019, two-thirds of whom were Europeans and a third were citizens of neighbouring countries. In 2019, no more than 76,000 foreign citizens resided in Slovakia, 78% of whom were Europeans, (mostly Czech, Hungarian, Austrian and Ukrainian citizens), who tended to live in the border regions.

Transylvania has the lowest ratio of foreigners. The number of foreigners in Romania (114,000) is smaller than in Hungary. Bucharest and the counties of Cluj/Kolozs and Timiş are exceptions, where the ratio of foreign citizens ranges from 0.2% to 1% of the population. Vojvodina, Croatia and Slovenia differ from Transylvania in that significant population movements are still taking place as a result of the Yugoslav Wars. Vojvodina is characterised by an accelerating ageing of the population, a decreasing number of births, a decreasing number of people born there, but also by significant immigration processes. Indeed, the resettlement of refugees resulted in an increase in the number of inhabitants of the region.

In a space as ethnically fragmented as the Carpathian Basin, which has also been affected by border changes in the recent past, it comes as no surprise that the proportion of people born abroad far exceeds that of foreign citizens. The Yugoslav Wars, the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, and the Treaty of Trianon have a significant influence on migration processes in the region to this day. The ratios of people born abroad (who do not live in their country of birth, no matter whether they are foreign citizens or have been naturalised) vary very strongly within the region with much higher values than those observed for foreign citizens 2.

In Hungary, most people born abroad (565,000 people in 2019) moved to the country from neighbouring countries. In 2011, there were 281,000 people living in Hungary who came from other countries in the Carpathian Basin, and the number had risen by nearly a fifth by 2019. However, most recently the greatest increase has been observed among those arriving from areas outside Europe. The ratio of Western Europeans has increased particularly rapidly: for example, the number of people born in the United Kingdom has tripled. The number of people born in neigh-

bouring countries has also increased, with the highest rate being detected for immigrants from Ukraine (doubling between 2011 and 2019). The number of arrivals from non-Hungarian-inhabited areas of the countries of the Carpathian Basin is also increasing.

In the case of Hungary, therefore, we see that not only are domestic conditions decisive for international migration. An additional factor is the general conditions of the population that considers itself ethnic Hungarian even though having citizenship of one of the neighbouring countries.

This also means that, in the case of Hungarians residing within the post-Trianon borders, the conditions defining Hungarian population development until 1918 no longer or barely apply. Following the annexation of two-thirds of Hungary and of one-third of ethnic Hungarians (Treaty of Trianon, 1920), the nature of internal migration was fundamentally altered. It was no longer the case that the migration of non-Hungarians to areas inhabited mostly by Hungarians led to their assimilation, resulting in an increase in the number of Hungarians.

Slovakia has 184 thousand people born abroad, including natives of the Czech Republic (93 thousand people), Hungary (18.2 thousand people), Ukraine (10.4 thousand people), Romania (8.5 thousand people) and Poland (7 thousand people). In these cases, in addition to Bratislava, regions adjacent to the given country are the main destinations of resettlement.

Migration in Slovenia, Croatia and Vojvodina is largely determined by population movements fuelled by the Yugoslav Wars. Out of the 7 million inhabitants of Serbia, 802 thousand were born abroad. Immigrants came in large numbers mostly to Vojvodina, changing in this way the ethnic map of the region. As a result, an increase in the numbers of people of Serbian (and Roma) ethnicity and a decrease in the Hungarian ratio can be observed.

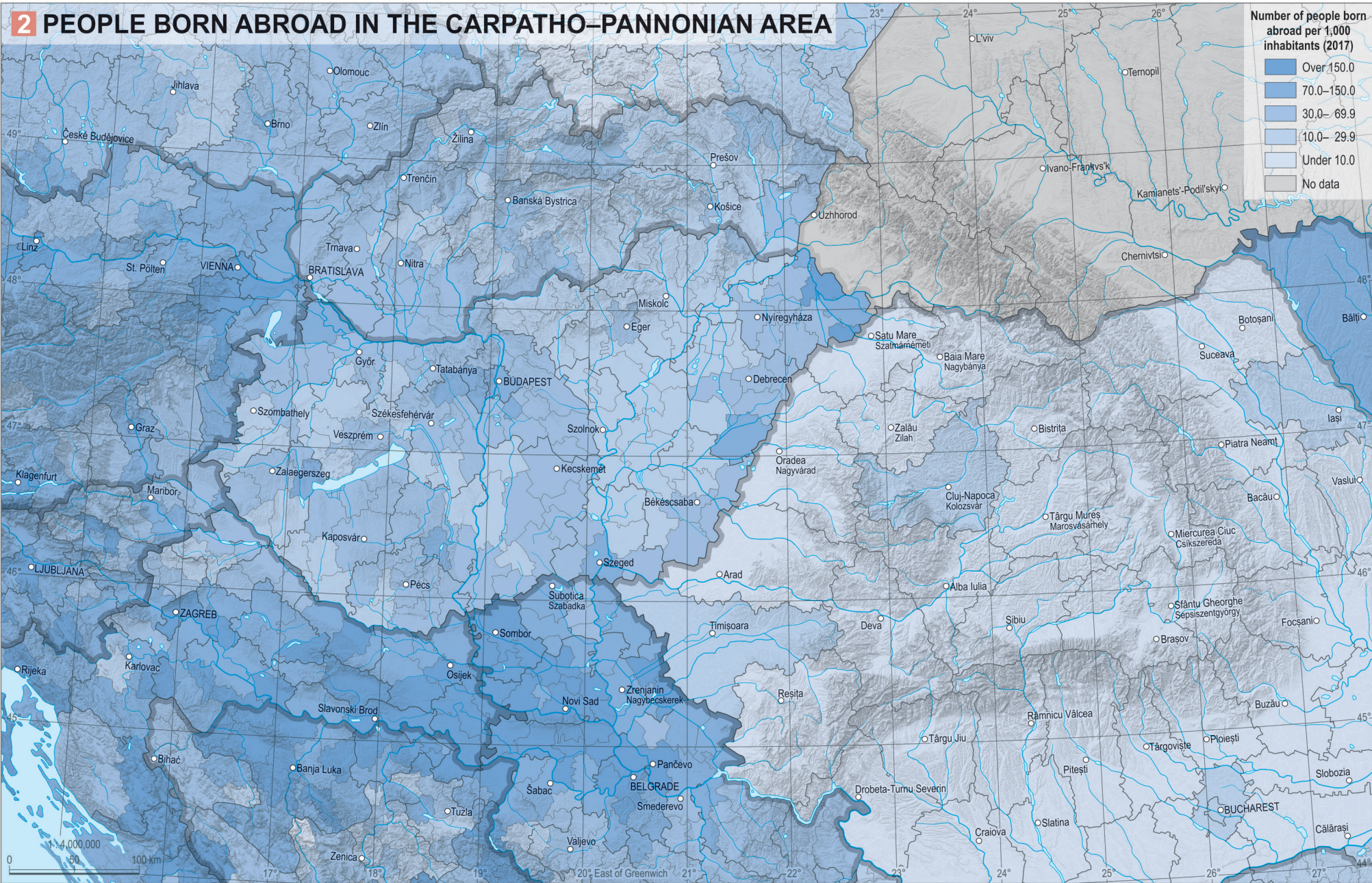
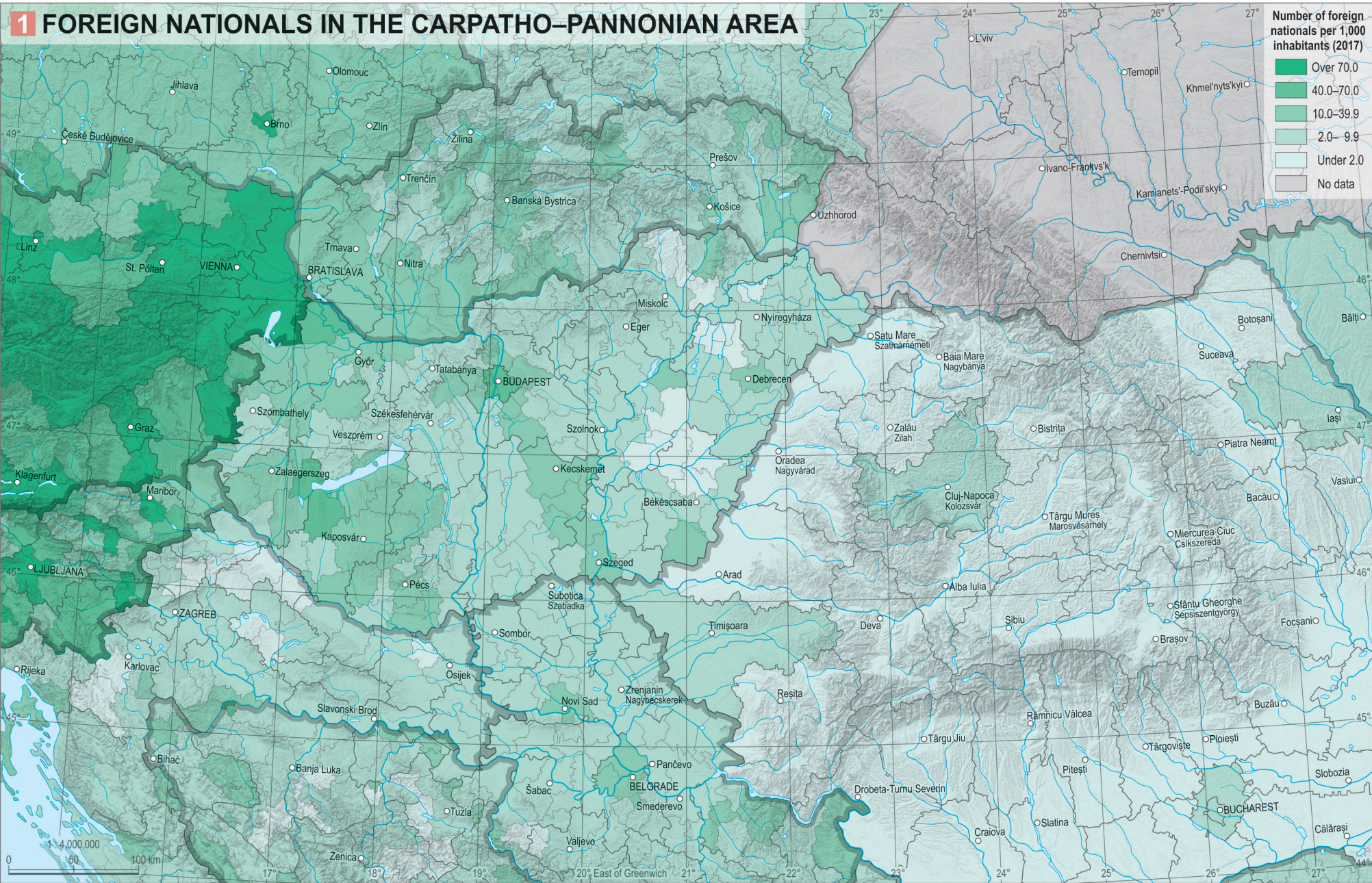
Austria has the highest number of non-native immigrants (1.66 million people) in the Carpatho–Pannonian Area. Nearly one in five residents was born outside Austria. The ethnically fragmented Carpathian Basin is characterised by differences between the data on the country of birth and the data on citizenship. For instance, whereas 70 thousand Hungarian citizens live in Austria, only 49 thousand of them were born in Hungary. As many as 21 thousand were born in neighbouring countries; they obtained Hungarian citizenship and then settled in Austria.

The marked difference between the two maps showing the regional distribution of foreign citizens and those born abroad is striking at first glance: while in the first case, the focus area is Austria, in the case of the latter indicator, it is the successor states of the former Yugoslavia. Another significant difference between the two indicators is that the highest values for those born abroad are often observed in rural areas, with cities being less salient 2.

Hungary in the currents of international migration

A glance at the past

World War I closed the emigration route to America, and a new chapter began in the international migration of Hungarians as well. After the ‘Great War’, Hungary became a receiving country again, and the cause of the immigration was the Treaty of Trianon that dismembered historical Hungary. One consequence was that many Hungarians who found themselves in the successor states fled to what was nicknamed ‘Rump Hungary’. Refugees arrived from the autumn of 1918 onwards. According to the official data at the time, 350 thousand Hungarians moved to the present-day territory of Hungary. In reality, the number is more



likely to have been between 420 and 430 thousand (i.e. at least one in 10 Hungarians residing in the successor states moved to Hungary).

Between 1925 and 1941, international migration was less significant in Hungary. In the 1940s, however, further dynamism was observed. Once again, the process was an unwelcome one, as migration was essentially defined by World War II. Just like after the 'Great War', forced migrations were decisive, mostly in the form of refugee waves, deportation and population exchange. The Holocaust was a part of these tragic events, with more than 200 thousand Jewish people from the present-day territory of Hungary being killed between 1941 and 1945. There were also many victims of the barbarism of the other totalitarian dictatorship, communism, with Hungarian people being en masse captured and taken to the Soviet Union for forced labour. In the successor states, history repeated itself, as many ethnic Hungarians (a number similar to the refugee tally after World War I) fled to Hungary. As a result of the anti-German and anti-Hungarian Beneš decrees, which were adopted immediately after the war, more than 30 thousand Hungarians from Slovakia were forced to leave their native areas (i.e. to flee to Hungary).

The deportation/resettlement of Germans from Hungary took place following 1945, resulting in about a quarter of a million Hungarian Germans leaving for Germany. At the same time, the forced Hungarian-Czechoslovak population exchange resulted in about 70 thousand Hungarians from Slovakia and slightly fewer Slovaks from Hungary moving to the other country.

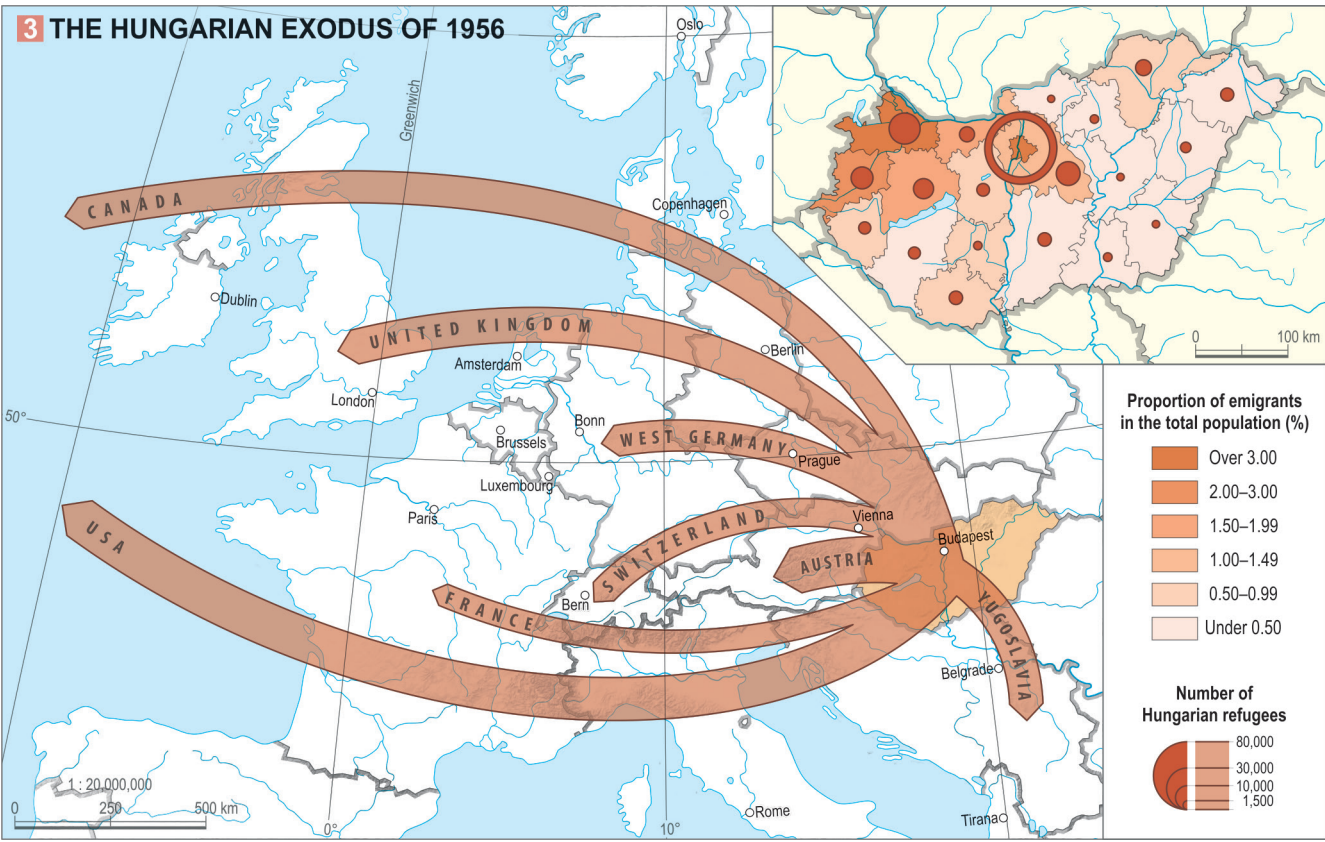
Such forced resettlement did not, however, mark the end of the negative migration processes, for in the deteriorating political atmosphere of the post-war years, some 150 thousand people preferred to emigrate rather than to remain in Hungary. Thus, the aftermath of World War II – unlike the post-World War I period – saw Hungary lose hundreds of thousands of its population.

International migration in the shadow of the Iron Curtain

After the communist party came to power (1949), the 'Iron Curtain' on the border almost hermetically sealed off Hungary, preventing external migratory movement. However, when the border was temporarily opened in the autumn of 1956, many people left the country in a short period of time [1]. Indeed, the number of emigrants exceeded 200 thousand, or 2% of the population of Hungary. There were, however, significant regional differences behind the average: Budapest and counties close to the Austrian border were strongly



1 Hungarian refugees in Vienna, 1956



overrepresented, while the eastern half of the country was only slightly affected by the exodus [3]. About two-thirds of the emigrants were male, with the vast majority of them belonging to younger age groups (under 40).

Over time, Hungarian emigrants spread around the world; some countries accepted them in significant numbers. Although a small number of refugees subsequently returned to their home country, the loss of many young and skilled people left a noticeable mark on demographic trends.

The borders with Austria and Yugoslavia were closed again in the spring of 1957 and remained tightly shut for years. Although the possibilities of movement of Hungarian citizens improved over time, external migration was negligible between 1961 and 1989. During that period, just over 126 thousand people left Hungary and more than 86 thousand moved to the country. Thus the migration loss amounted to 40 thousand people, or 1,400 per year on average, a negligible figure compared to the total population of Hungary.

There were several aspects to both emigration and immigration [4]. Nearly 60 thousand of the emigrants left the country legally. A slightly higher number of people left illegally (i.e. without official permission). The latter, whom the communist regime called 'dissidents', numbered over 70 thousand. This figure, how-

ever, was only revealed after the collapse of communism, because during the communist period it was treated as a state secret.

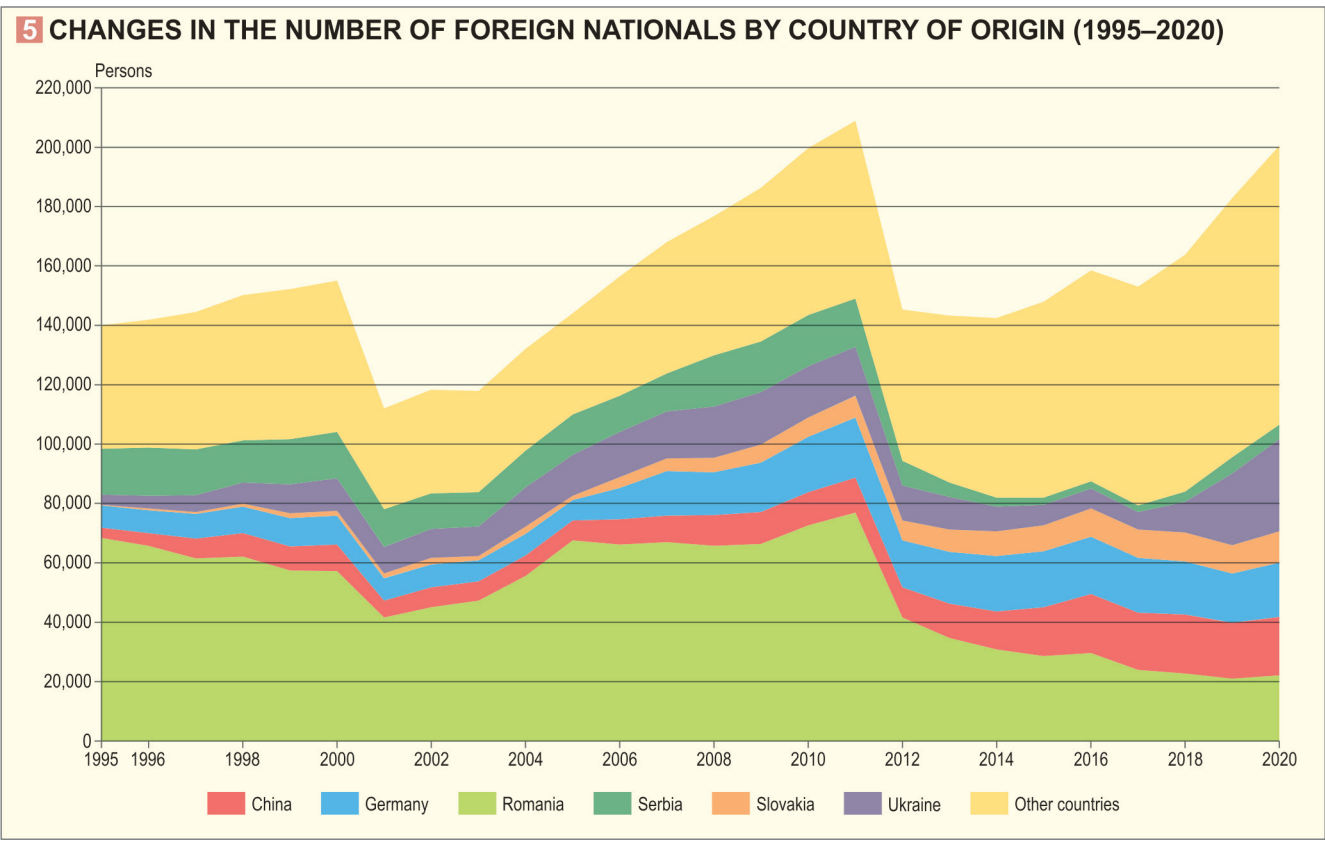
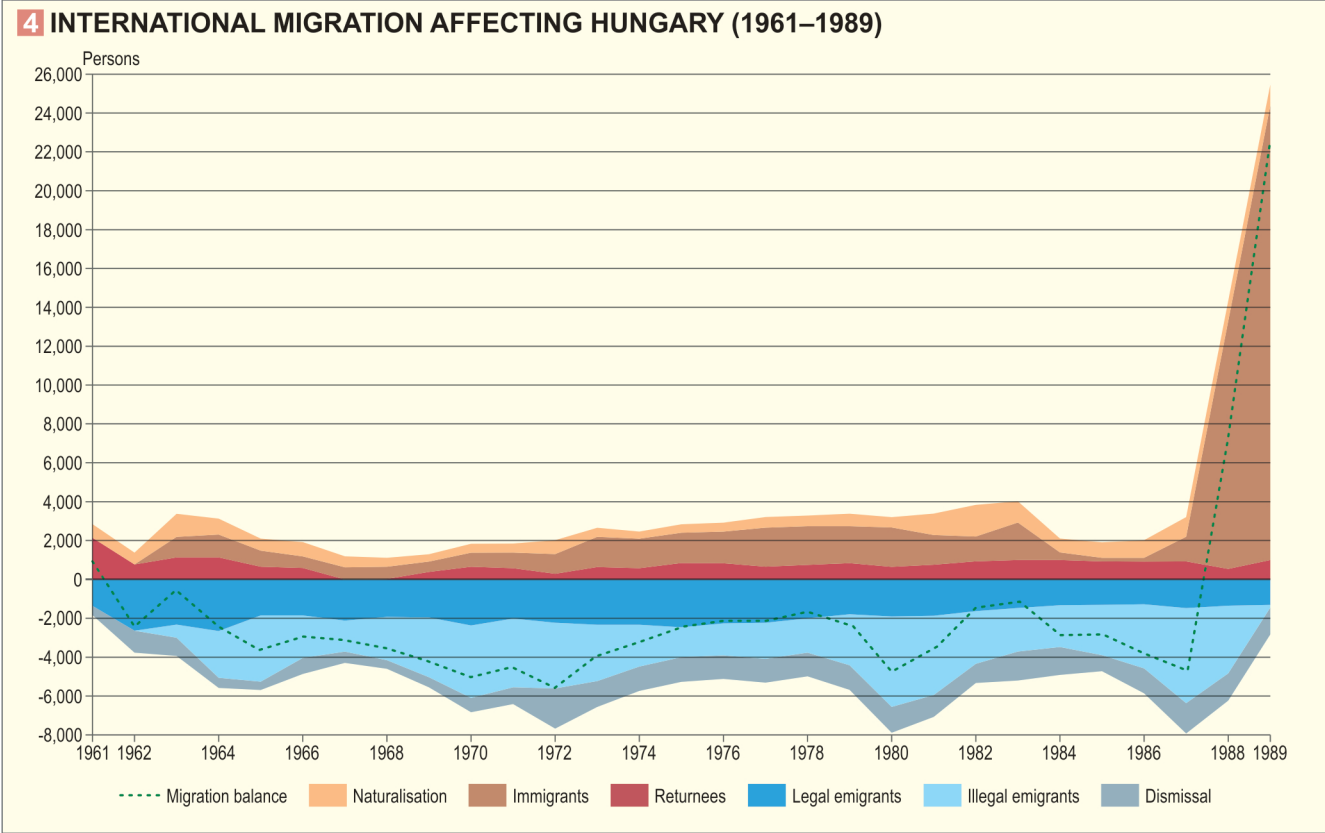
Communist Hungary drew little attention as a destination country for immigration. For this reason, it is particularly striking that more than 37 thousand immigrants arrived in the country in 1988–1989, a sharp turnaround from previous trends.

From a country of origin to a receiving country once more

At the end of the 1980s, the turbulent processes of international migration unfolded quickly and unexpectedly. Both voluntary and forced migration were significant in this period.

The extent of the change is demonstrated by the legal migration of some 390 thousand people to Hungary between 1985 and 2004, with nearly 310 thousand arriving in the country after 1989. Reliable data on the sudden increase in international migration are available from as early as 1993, by which time more than 123 thousand foreign citizens were living legally and permanently in Hungary. By comparison, it is worth mentioning that their number barely exceeded 12,000 in 1980, and even in 1987 the figure was less than 20 thousand.

More detailed statistics on international migration have been available since 1995. Detailed analysis is



made more complicated by the fact that this long series cannot be regarded as homogeneous, as the data set was cleaned up in 2001 and in early 2012 (i.e. the data no longer valid were deleted). However, this technical problem does not prevent the recognition of major trends and changes.

On 1 January 1995, 140 thousand foreign citizens were permanently residing in Hungary, and this figure had increased by about 15,000 by early 2000. During this period, most foreigners came from the neighbouring countries and were predominantly ethnic Hungarians [5].

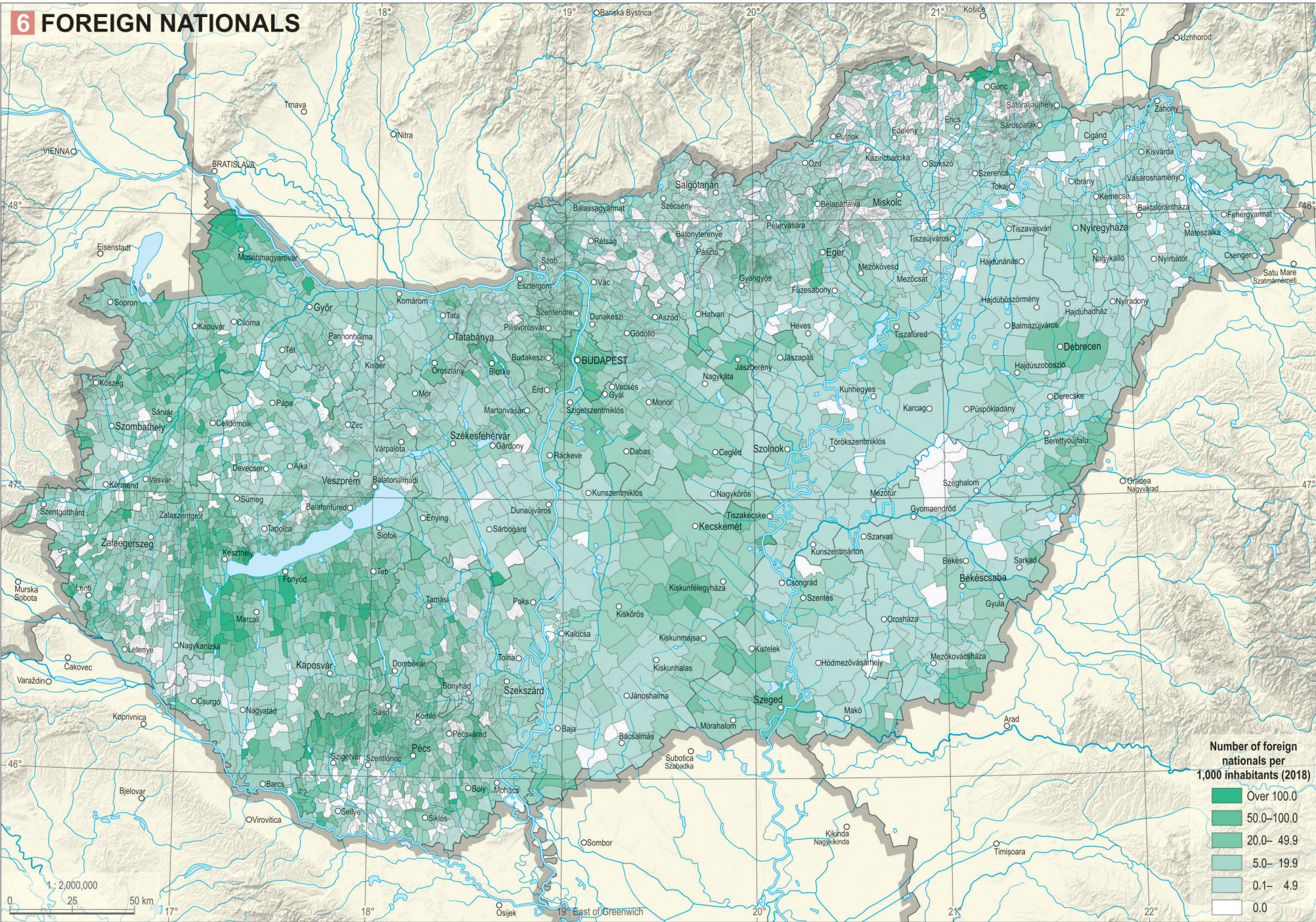
After the first revision of the data in 2001, 112 thou-

sand foreign citizens were registered as living in Hungary. In the subsequent ten years, their number rose rapidly to 208 thousand. This dynamic expansion reflects the continued presence of citizens of several neighbouring countries (primarily Romania, as well as Ukraine and Serbia) and the addition of people from other countries, notably Germany. In 2011, 20 thousand German citizens were permanently residing in Hungary. Thus, Germany was in second place behind Romania. Among the non-European countries, China was particularly notable: 12 thousand Chinese citizens were living in the country, constituting the third largest group of foreigners in Hungary [5].

The second database clean-up almost created a 'tabula rasa', as it reduced the number of foreign citizens residing in Hungary by more than 60 thousand from one year to the next, based on data from the 2011 census. The new phase also differed significantly from the previous one in that the dynamic influx of foreigners ceased, being replaced by a stagnation and a decline in the number of new arrivals. Between 2017 and 2020 the number of foreigners living in Hungary increased from 153 thousand to 200 thousand, mostly due to the dynamic influx of Ukrainian citizens. As has been shown above, there are two types of international migration affecting Hungary: global migration and migration from and to the surrounding countries. Foreign citizens currently living in Hungary have 175 different citizenships. This means there is almost no part of the world from which foreigners have not arrived. The vast majority of people from outside Europe are not native Hungarian speakers. The ratio of people coming from Europe is steadily declining: from 89% in 1995 to 66% in 2020.

At the same time, in view of the Hungarian aspect of international migration, even today most immigrants are ethnic Hungarians. If the current international migration figures were to be analysed in terms of the territory of pre-Trianon Hungary, we would classify about half of the movement as internal migration. In consequence of the peace treaties that concluded World War I and World War II, trans-border linguistic and cultural relations still influence migration patterns in the Carpathian Basin.

The foreign population is younger (average age is 38.8 years) than the Hungarian one (41.7 years), and it has a higher average level of education: almost half of Hungary's foreign permanent residents aged over



24 had higher education qualifications in 2019. The high employment rate of international migrants in Hungary since the collapse of communism can be explained by their level of education. In 2019 three-quarters of the Hungarian resident population and four-fifths of foreign citizens were employed.

In addition to the structural characteristics of the immigrant population, regional specifics are also important. As much as 17.4% of Hungary's population lives in *Budapest*, and nearly half of foreigners choose the Hungarian capital as their new residence. In 2018, Chinese citizens living in Budapest somewhat outnumbered Romanians, but in 2020 the number of the latter was again slightly higher. Budapest and Pest County, as an economic core area, attract people from a greater distance. Consequently, most non-European foreigners live there.

In Hungary, where most of the international migrants still come from neighbouring countries, the location of the target areas also plays a decisive role in the regional distribution of the foreign population. In addition to the economic core areas, *border areas* are also important in the choice of a new residence. Mostly people from the other side of the border settle in those areas.

The *Balaton* region is mainly chosen as a new place of residence by pensioners and older people from Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and Switzerland. They are attracted to the region by the higher purchasing power of their pensions, as well as recreational opportunities and closeness to nature. The rate of international migration of older people has increased significantly since the 2000s.

When examining the effects and extent of immigration, it is important to consider the *naturalised population* (i.e. Hungarian citizens who were born abroad but are now living in Hungary).

Their number is significantly higher than that of foreign citizens. On 1 January 2019, 565 thousand non-natives were living in Hungary, with 60% of them having been born in the EU28 countries. In other words, 5.8% of the resident population was born outside the present borders of Hungary.

Most of the naturalised people moved to Hungary from neighbouring countries. Today, the number of people born in Romania living in Hungary is greater than the total population of Debrecen (the second most populous city in the country).

In the course of internal migration, social groups with better labour market positions move to areas with more favourable economic indicators and opportunities. International migration, however, is only partially characterised by these findings. Budapest and the major cities are prominent destinations. One in 10 residents in Budapest was born abroad. The largest number of non-European international migrants live in the city, although the number of people born in Romania is the largest.

The role of border regions has changed in the era of globalism and substantial international economic integration and cooperation. Border areas are increasingly being transformed into active contact areas that are attractive to migrants. Beregsurány, Márókpapi, Kispalád and Ártánd are the settlements in Hungary where those born abroad are the majority. These settlements are located near the Ukrainian and Romanian borders. The number of people over the age of 65 from Ukraine exceeds 8,000, living in the immediate vicinity of the border separating the two countries.

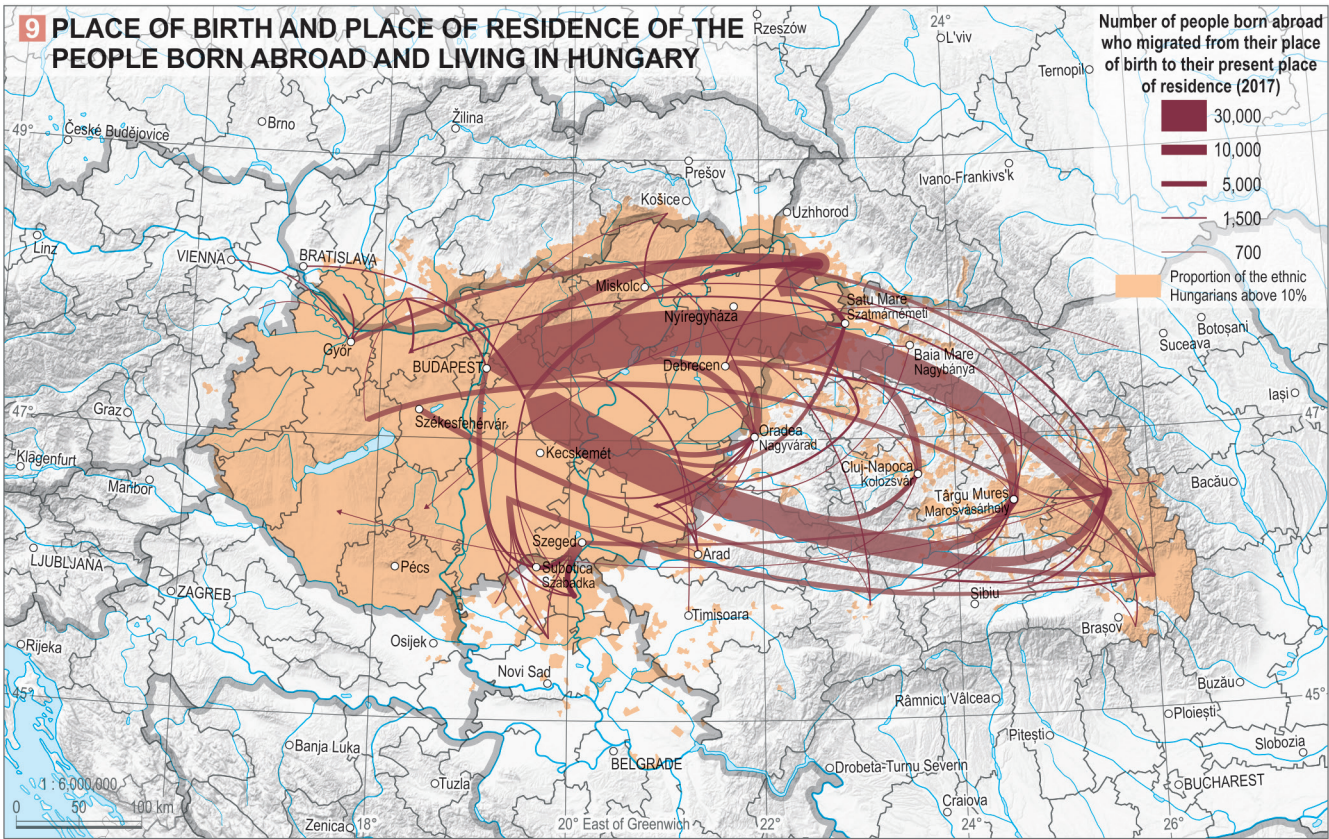
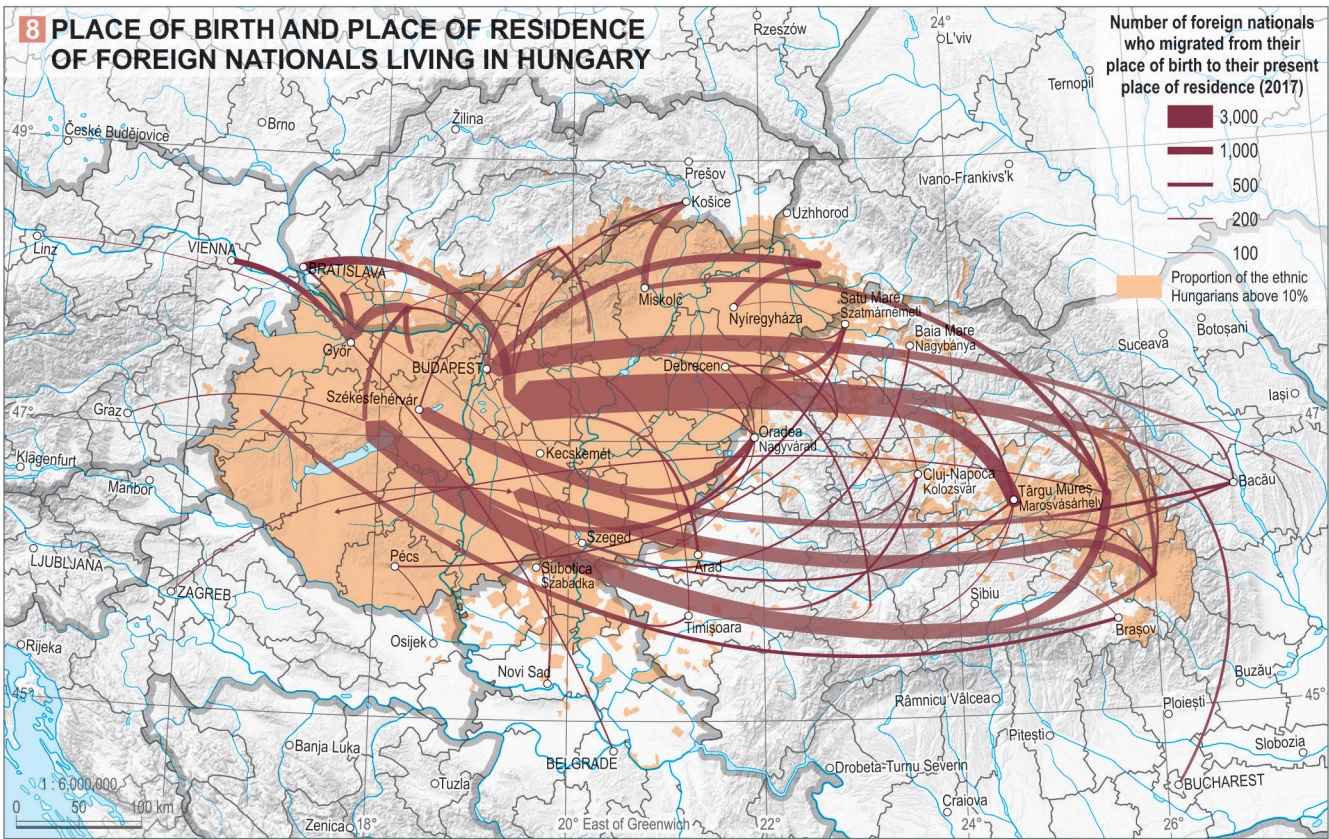
The key to analysing the regional network of migration is to connect areas of origin with the target areas. Maps 8 and 9 show, at county level, the relationship between the residence at birth and current residence of those foreign and foreign-born citizens who have arrived from the neighbouring countries. In 2017, 59% of the migration of foreign citizens was concentrated in 1.5% of all region pairs, while in the case of those born abroad, 46% of the migratory movement took place between 1.1% of region pairs.

According to the data for 2017, Central Hungary was most attractive to those born in Transylvanian counties. The most intense migrations took place between Székely Land and Central Hungary. Border areas were also of great importance, which can be explained partly by the phenomenon of circulation and partly by easier contact with family members left at home.

Among the migratory flows affecting the whole of Hungary, Serbian-linked migration is the only instance where more people have settled in the border areas than in Budapest.

Overall, the Budapest region became attractive to people not only in the major regions of origin but throughout the Carpathian Basin. This Hungarian region is now a popular destination even for those born abroad at great geographical distance. Border areas are more likely to be local targets. In the case of smaller geographical distances and cross-border movements, the proportion of people moving with their children and that of pensioners are much higher.

The numbers of ethnic Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries not only reflect natural demographic processes; migration also plays a significant role. When ethnic Hungarians move to Hungary,



10 SETTLEMENTS WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF FOREIGNERS AND PEOPLE BORN ABROAD (2020)

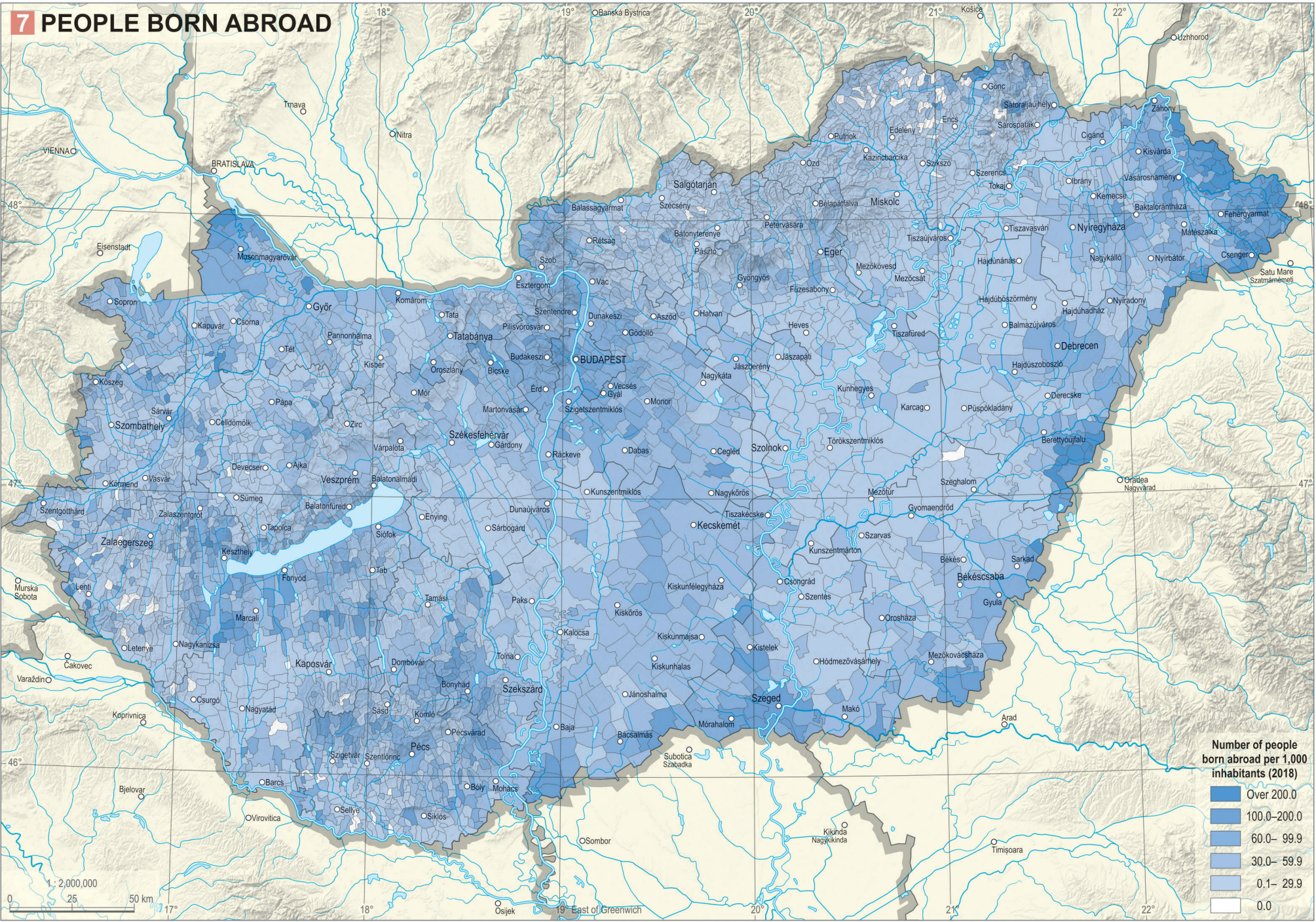
Settlements with the highest number of foreign citizens on 1st January 2020		
	Number of foreign citizens	Number of foreign citizens per 1,000 inhabitants
Budapest	91,540	52.3
Pécs	5,917	41.7
Debrecen	5,609	27.9
Szeged	4,615	28.8
Győr	3,960	29.6
Rajka	1,743	522.6
Székesfehérvár	1,541	16.0
Kecskemét	1,534	13.9
Mosonmagyaróvár	1,441	42.1
Miskolc	1,427	9.3
Settlements with the highest number of people born abroad on 1st January 2020		
	Number of people born abroad	Number of people born abroad per 1,000 inhabitants
Budapest	191,522	109.4
Szeged	17,990	112.3
Debrecen	15,568	77.4
Pécs	10,754	75.8
Győr	8,488	63.4
Nyíregyháza	6,768	57.9
Kecskemét	5,706	51.7
Érd	5,672	81.7
Miskolc	5,153	33.7
Székesfehérvár	4,624	47.9

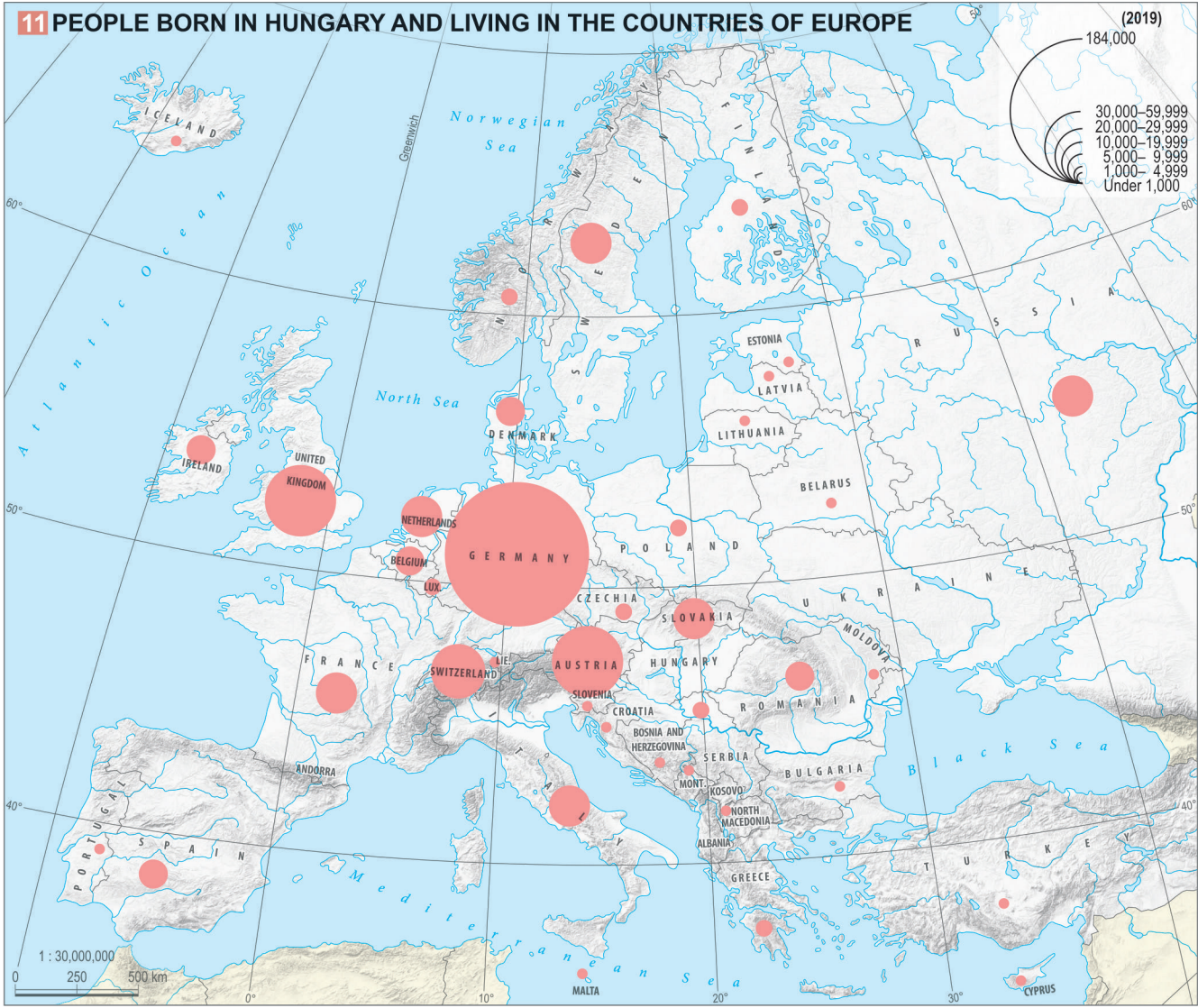
People from Hungary who have moved abroad

Unlike immigration, emigration did not increase immediately after the collapse of communism. It seems that the population had little inclination to take advantage of the new opportunities. Thus, the country's democratic transition did not mark the beginning of a new era in the history of Hungarian emigration. Indeed, as far as emigration was concerned, the 1990s passed uneventfully. Emigration increased only after Hungary joined the European Union (in 2004). However, after the economic crisis that began around 2007, a rapid increase was observed, with most emigrants going to one or other of the member states of the European Union. The rate of growth, however, slowed in 2013, came to a halt in 2014–2015, and started to decline from 2016.

How many people have left the country in recent decades? How many ethnic Hungarians or Hungarian citizens are now living abroad? The answers to these questions are rather uncertain. The uncertainty stems from statistical problems and difficulties in measuring emigration. The UN data are particularly useful, as its database covers all countries around the world.

According to this source, the number of people born in Hungary and living abroad exceeded 632 thousand, which is 6.6% of people born in Hungary. Hungarians lived in 65 countries of the world but in fewer than 30 countries did their number exceed 1000. The direction of the changes is clearly indicated by the fact that at the turn of the millennium 420 thousand people born in Hungary were living in different parts of the world. This number was 513 thousand in 2010. During this period, the direction of emigration also changed significantly: Europe gradually became the main destination. Thus, whereas only 53% of emigrants were living in the 'old continent' in 2000, in 2019 nearly three-quarters (73.4%) of them did so. Meanwhile, the North American share decreased significantly, from 34% to 19.6%.

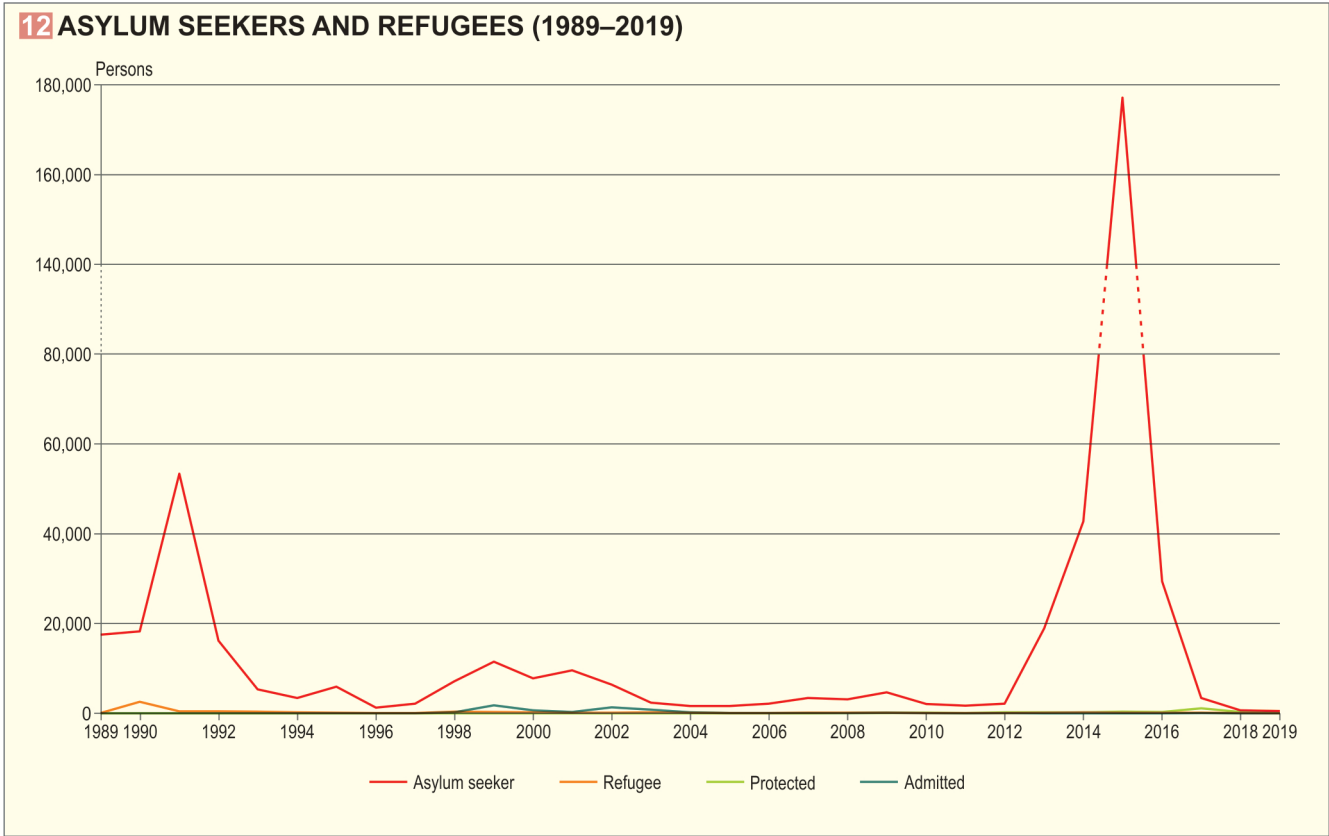




The strong regional concentration of Hungarian citizens living abroad is indicated by the fact that half of those who emigrated were admitted by the three largest receiving countries: Germany (29%), the United States (13%) and Austria (8%). More than ten thousand people from Hungary lived in several countries in Europe (United Kingdom, Sweden, Russia, Slovakia, Italy, France, the Netherlands and Switzerland) and elsewhere in Canada, Australia and Israel ¹¹. The situation in the United Kingdom is worth mentioning, where 84 thousand people who had been born in Hungary were recorded in 2017 but only 46 thousand in 2019, with the reduction being largely due to Brexit.

Asylum seekers, refugees, protected and admitted people

International migration affecting Hungary on a large scale began in the late 1980s with a wave of refugees from Romania. Tens of thousands of Romanian citizens – mostly ethnic Hungarians – sought protection in Hungary from the repressive Ceaușescu regime.



2 Migrants heading to Vienna from Budapest in 2015

migrant surge, in that year Hungary recorded the second-highest number of asylum applications in Europe after Germany. Based on the number of asylum applications per one million inhabitants, Hungary was the frontrunner, ahead of Sweden.

Between 2000 and 2018, 320 thousand asylum applications were submitted in Hungary, including many applications from Afghans (83 thousand), Syrians (79 thousand), Kosovars (56 thousand) and Pakistanis (24 thousand). However, the number of people subsequently receiving protection (as refugees or as protected or admitted persons) did not even amount to ten thousand (3%), which is a particularly low rate in Europe. The primary explanation for this is that Hungary has a strict migration policy, which rejects illegal immigration and does not support the resettlement policy of the European Union (i.e. the country does not want to be a destination for illegal immigration).

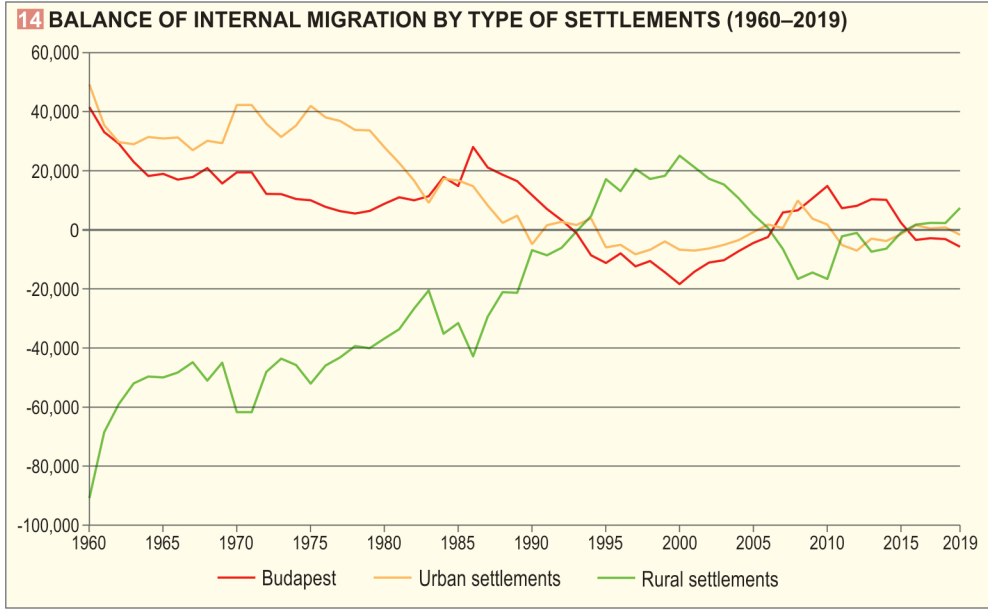
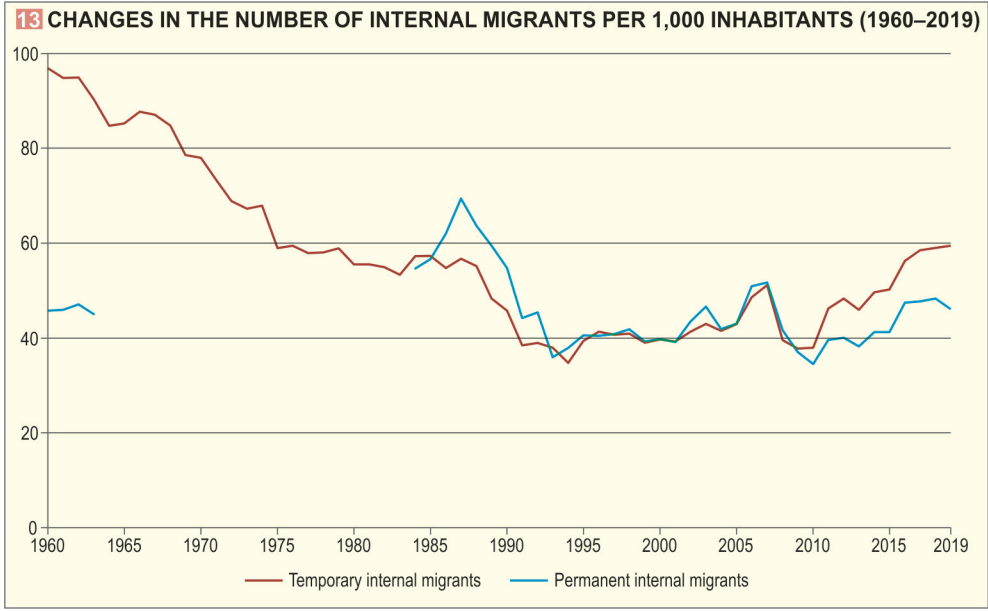
Internal migration

Internal migration, which increased in the early 1950s, peaked around 1960, and then – save for fluctuations – steadily decreased until the early 1990s, has entered a more dynamic phase in recent years. The number of temporary and permanent migrations developed differently: in 1960, the number of tempo-

Refugee: a person who has been granted refugee status because he or she has been able to demonstrate a well-founded fear of persecution. Refugee status is valid indefinitely. Protected: a person who is not personally threatened by persecution in his or her country of origin but is in danger of being seriously harmed there. The status of such individuals is reviewed at least every five years. Admitted: a person who is not entitled to refugee or protected status but who cannot be temporarily returned to his or her country of origin because he or she would be subject to serious retaliation there. The status of such individuals is reviewed annually.



3 'Technical border barrier' on the Hungarian–Serbian border blocking illegal migration



rary migrants was nearly double that of permanent ones. Around 1990, however, they were at roughly the same level ¹³. In addition to migrations crossing administrative borders, movement within municipalities should also be considered, as such movement can express a spatial movement of a scale similar to that of migration. In any discussion of the spatial aspects of migration, it should be made clear that internal migration plays a key role in the spatial distribution of the population. It also affects human resources, the composition and well-being of society, and the age structure and demographic behaviour of the communities concerned. In turn, these factors affect the future development of the population and the functioning of the economy and the housing market.

Factors that cause migration are diverse. Early theories explained the evolution of migration by pointing to the attractive conditions in the target areas and the unfavourable conditions in the areas of origin. Economic theories emphasise the role of income and labour market benefits. In addition to economic and labour market factors, other social, institutional and infrastructure factors also have an impact on the attractiveness of target areas.

From a macro point of view, migratory flows can be examined on the basis of the conditions of geographical units, with the emphasis being placed on the relationship between the economic and social characteristics of the areas of origin and those of the receiving areas. In the selection of the place of residence, the preferred target areas can also be clearly discerned in Hungary. Factors that trigger migration include opportunities for securing a higher income, the proximity of a more favourable labour market, and the convenience and environmental benefits of residence.

A significant number of settlements with migration gains are concentrated in the western part of Hungary. Municipalities in Vas and Győr-Moson-Sopron counties are attractive in view of the favourable labour market conditions and the proximity of Austria, which enables people to commute daily to places of employment in that country. The vast majority of migratory gains around the major cities are related to predominantly short-term migration patterns and suburbanisation. In Hungary, suburbanisation, which arose as a phenomenon in the late 1980s and the first half of the 1990s, continues to play a role in the spatial transformation of society, albeit much less so than before. A significant part of the migratory gains observed around Hungary's major cities are no longer derived from the departure of people from the core city. Instead, people arrive there from more remote settlements, having been attracted by the benefits of the major cities and the surrounding agglomeration.

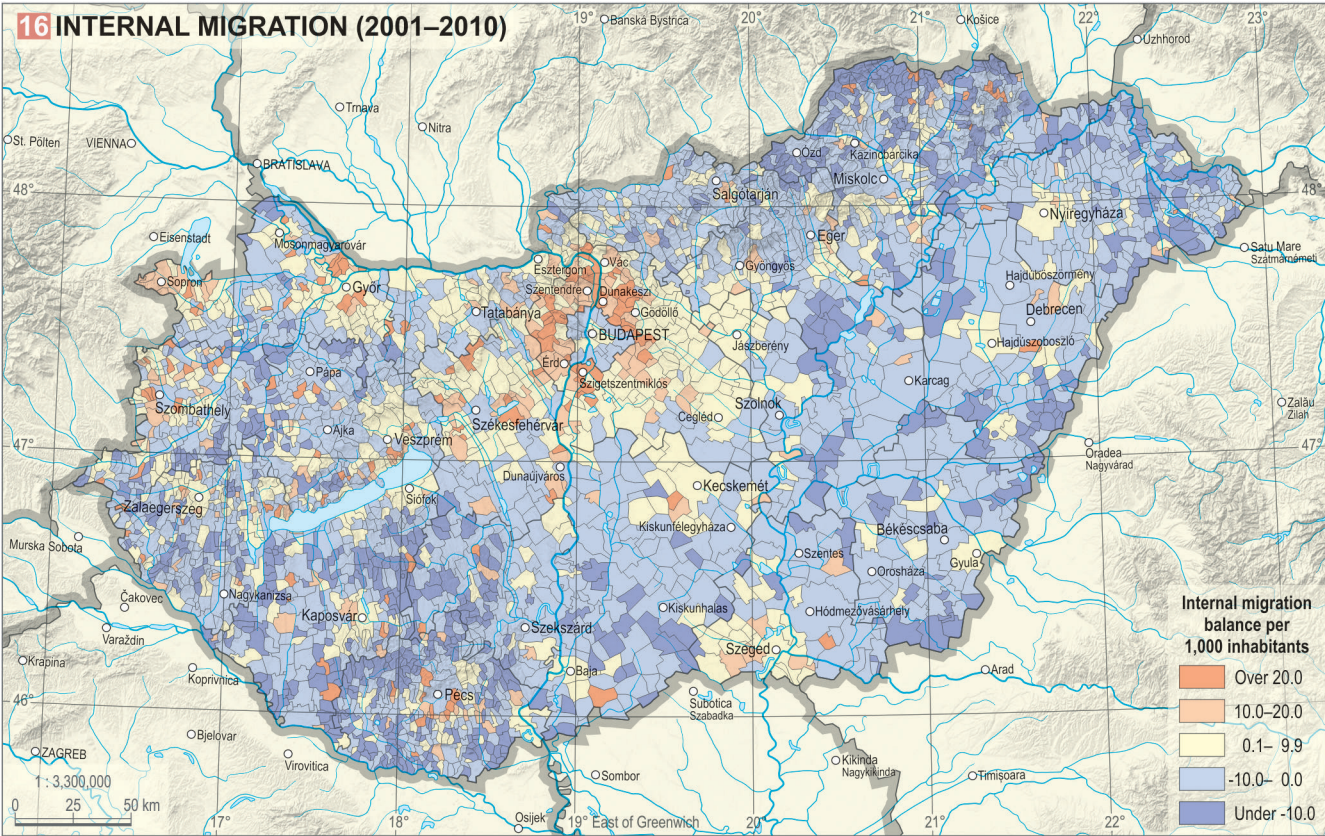
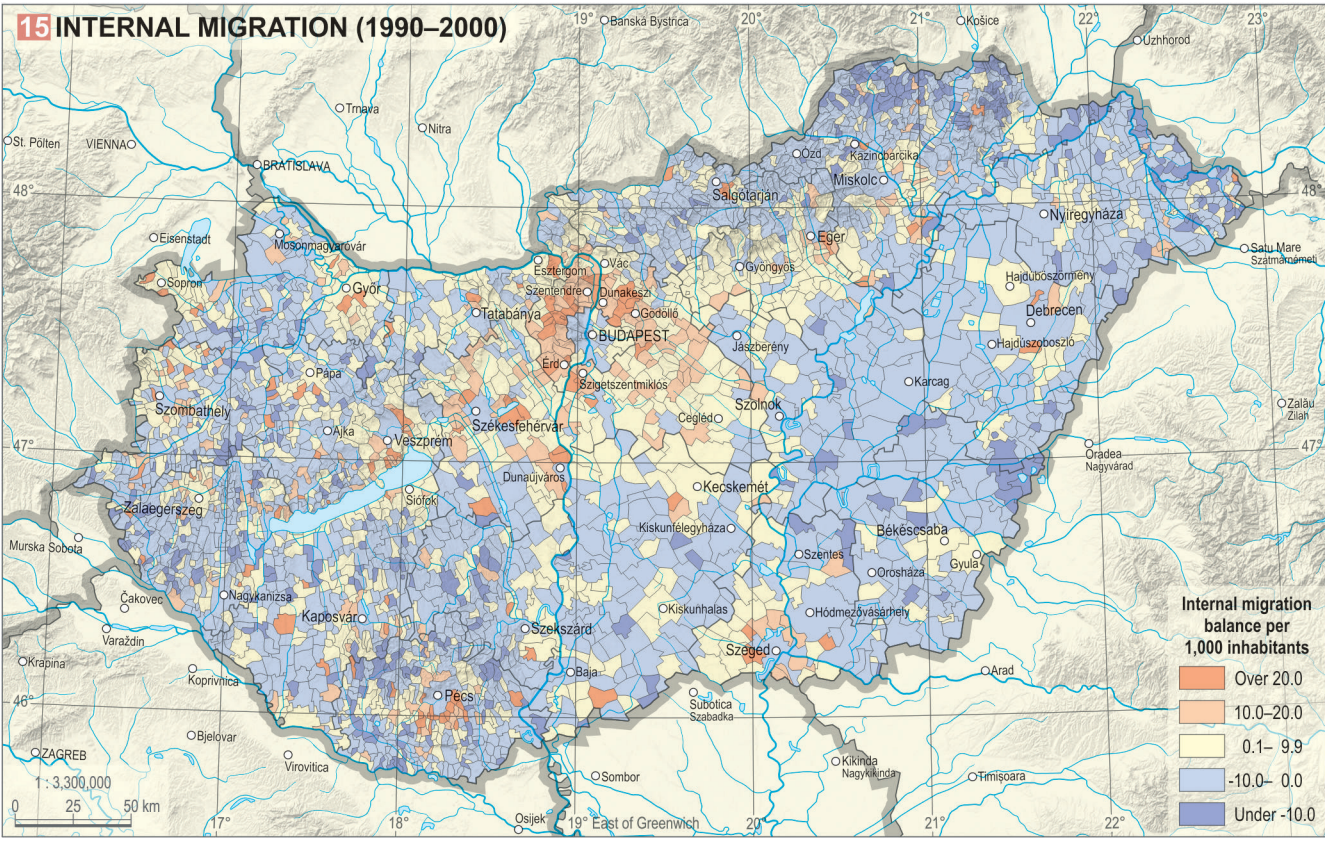
The settlements in the immediate vicinity of Lake

Balaton have a prominent role not only in the development of Hungarian tourism. The region is an increasingly attractive target area for those who want to spend more time near the lake or even move there permanently. The relative proximity of Budapest and Székesfehérvár and the expansion of local recreation and infrastructure services are further attractions. The recent dynamic increase in property prices at Lake Balaton reflects the increased attractiveness of the region.

So far, the discussion has been limited to the well-defined group of municipalities in Hungary with a pos-

itive migration balance. Areas suffering from migration losses are also clearly identifiable and constitute a larger portion of Hungary. Migration from east to west has been a traditional feature of Hungarian internal migration. This is illustrated by the migration losses of areas in the Alföld (Great Hungarian Plain) and in Northern Hungary. Similarly, the population retaining capacity of most settlements in Southern Transdanubia is low.

However, the trends of internal migration outlined above are not constant. New processes arise from time



to time, leading to a spatial realignment. Moreover, the drivers of migration may change. The nearly three decades since 1990 can be divided into three periods that differ from each other to a greater or lesser extent.

The most important feature of the last decade of the 20th century was the growing impact on internal migration of the outflow from cities to their surroundings. Indeed, the 1990s can be called the suburban phase. During this decade, Budapest and other cities suffered significant migratory losses, while the migration balance of villages was positive – an unprecedented development ¹⁴. This change can also be traced in the spatial imprint of migration: marked suburban zones were formed around major cities – especially Budapest – comprising settlements with significant migration gains. Moreover, the migration balance in rural areas has improved greatly overall: in many cases, villages have recorded a positive migration balance, whilst elsewhere the migration losses have decreased ¹⁵.

The first decade of the 21st century can be considered a transitional period, as fading suburbanisation was still a factor in the first half, but in its latter years the old pattern re-emerged. Overall, Budapest and rural towns experienced gains, while the villages lost on migration ¹⁴. An examination of the spatial characteristics of migration reveals that the greatest winners continued to be settlements near the major cities. Such settlements obtained new residents not only through suburbanisation, but also through in-migration. Processes in areas of out-migration became more definite in relation to those observed in the previous decade. Indeed, the number of municipalities experiencing migration losses increased ¹⁶.

The most recent period (2011–2019) is best described, in terms of migration patterns, as a post-sub-

urban phase, with population gains in the cities and losses in the villages, although the process may now be going into reverse ¹⁴. As the major population outflows from the cities ceased, the former marked suburban belt began to disintegrate. Areas close to the Austrian border have increasingly attracted population, while the traditional areas of out-migration have remained in a disadvantageous situation ¹⁷.

While the migration rate registers the balance of in-migration and out-migration, the locally born population (the mother's place of residence at the birth of the child) is mainly sensitive to the volume of in-migration. In districts with a higher ratio of locally born people, society tends to be closed to outsiders. Consequently, such areas are less attractive to in-migrants. When, however, the population is more heterogeneous in terms of origin, a major transformation of the society takes place. At the time of the census of 2011, around a half (50.3%) of the Hungarian population lived in the district in which they had been born, and 51.9% lived there in 2016. However, there are large differences between the various districts. Whereas 28.4% of the inhabitants of Budapest lived in their district of birth, this was true of four-fifths (80.8%) of those living in Hajdúböszörmény. At the top of this ranking, we typically find districts in the northern Alföld, including – in addition to the already mentioned Hajdúböszörmény – Balmazújváros (76.3%), Mezőtúr (79.1%), Püspökladány (75.0%) and Karcag (78.6%). In addition to the districts in the northern Alföld, the ratio of local born inhabitants is high in most of the districts of the southern Alföld and North Hungary. At the other end of the scale, settlements in the agglomeration around Budapest can be found (e.g. Budakeszi, Dunakeszi, Érd, Szigetszentmiklós and Szentendre dis-

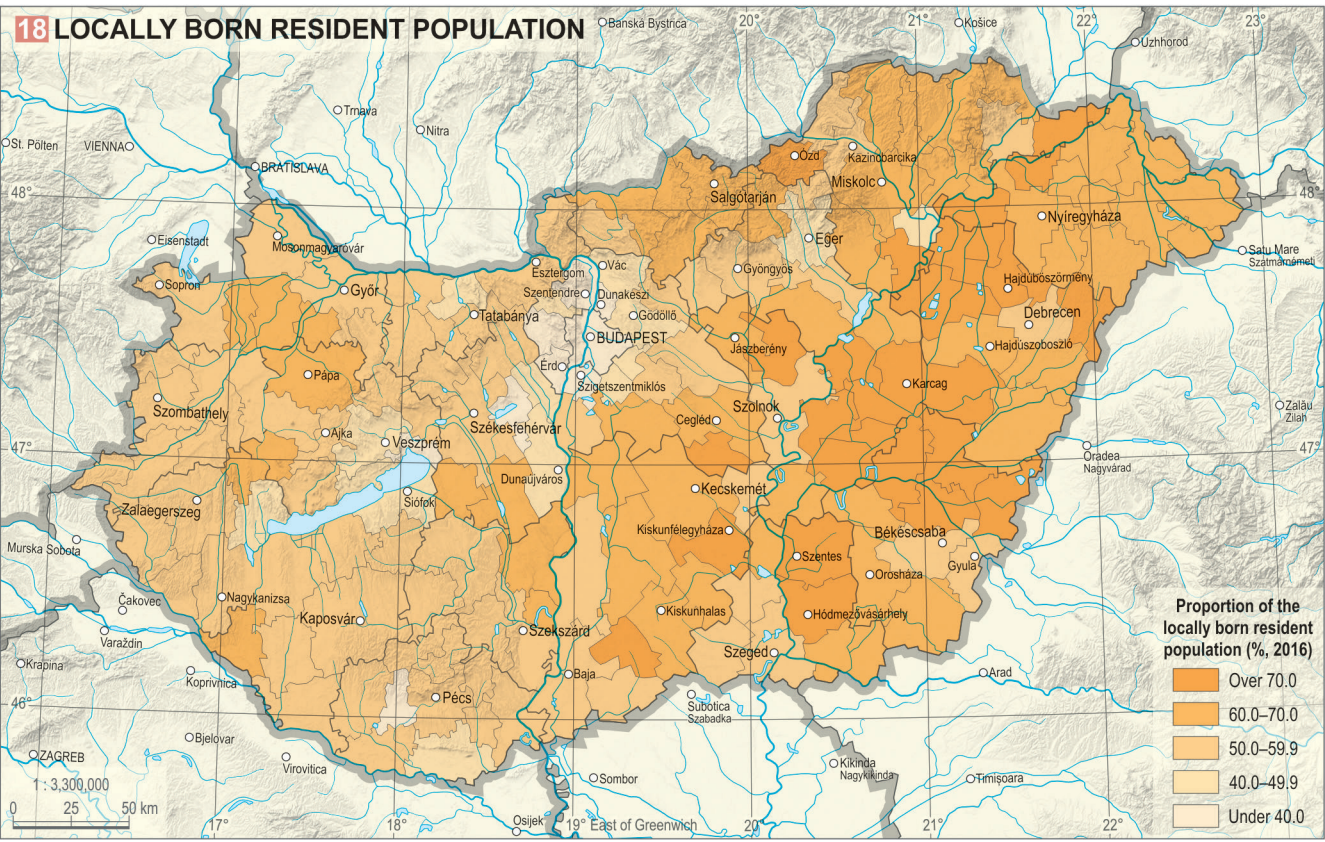
tricts). There is also a significant social transformation in some districts of Fejér County, in the Balaton region, as well as in some districts in Somogy and Bácskány counties ¹⁸.

Suburbanisation

Under the traditional pattern of internal migration by type of settlement, the winners of out-migration from rural areas are the capital city and other urban centres. This was the case in Hungary as well, throughout the communist period and even in earlier periods. However, the new conditions that arose after the collapse of communism fundamentally altered the situation. Indeed, the suburbanisation period that followed the urbanisation phase was characterised by migration gains for villages and migration losses for cities. This phase, which lasted from the early 1990s to about 2007, was followed by a few years in which – almost exclusively – Budapest benefited from migration. However, in recent years there has been a further change, with the return of parameters characteristic of the suburbanisation phase ¹⁴.

Suburbanisation has brought, among other things, a substantial realignment of previous migration directions. While migrants had previously flowed into cities, some of the population is now leaving the city and seeking new places of residence in settlements in the vicinity. This has created a new migration pattern, one of whose characteristics is the greater attraction of municipalities (especially villages) that are in proximity to the city.

The most important phase of suburbanisation in Hungary occurred between 1998 and 2002. It is worth presenting, therefore, its specifics and consequences. As the outflow mainly occurred from large and medi-



um-sized cities, the migration characteristics of the most affected urban areas are presented ¹⁹.

Suburbanisation took place most intensely between the capital and its surroundings. This is indicated by Budapest's migration loss of nearly 70 thousand people and the highly positive migration balance of agglomeration settlements per one thousand inhabitants. Among other cities, the migration losses of Miskolc were the largest in this regard (more than five thousand people). In five further major cities, the migration loss was 3–4 thousand people. It is interesting that Sopron and Kécskémét, despite suburbanisation, have a positive migration balance ¹⁹.

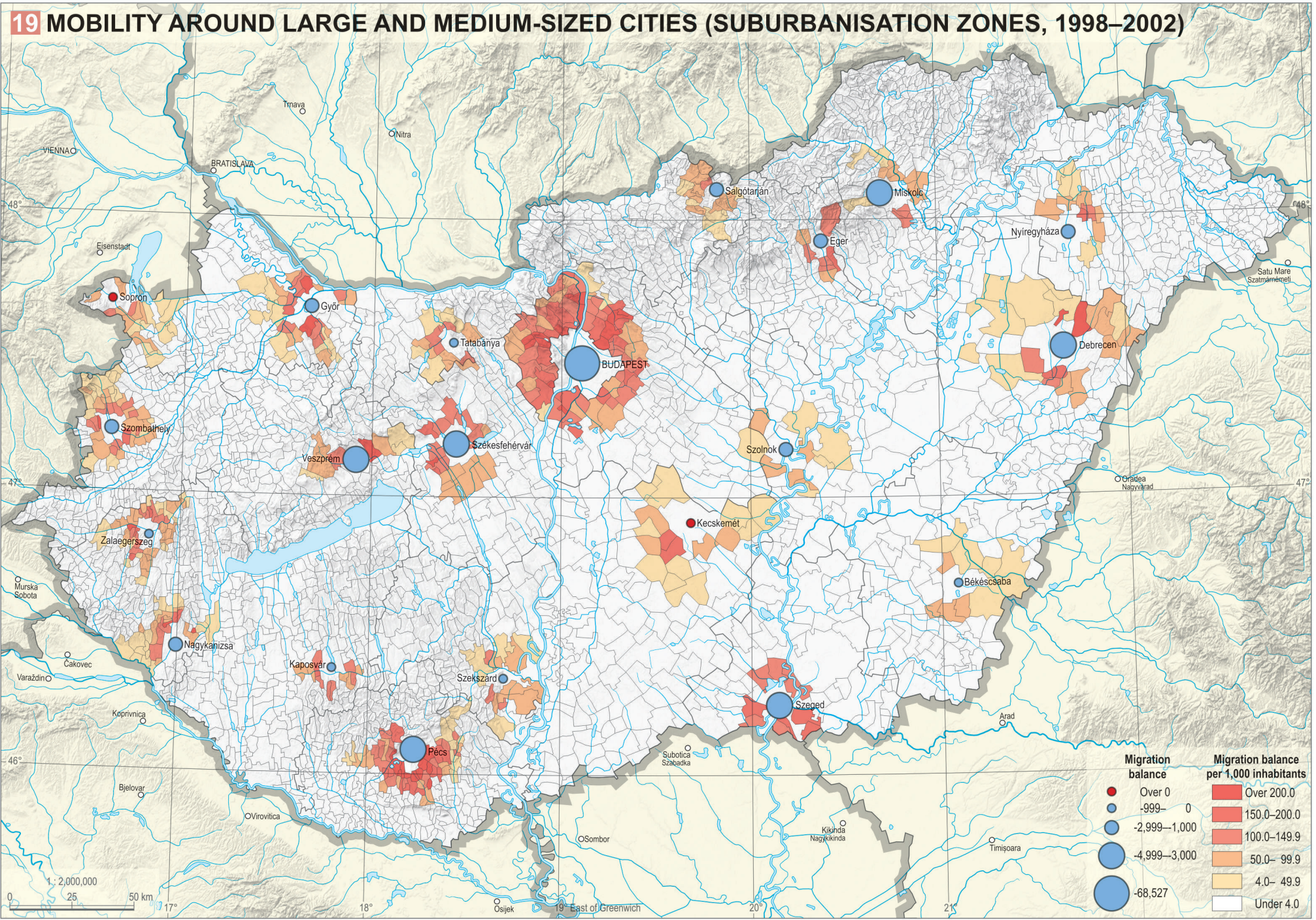
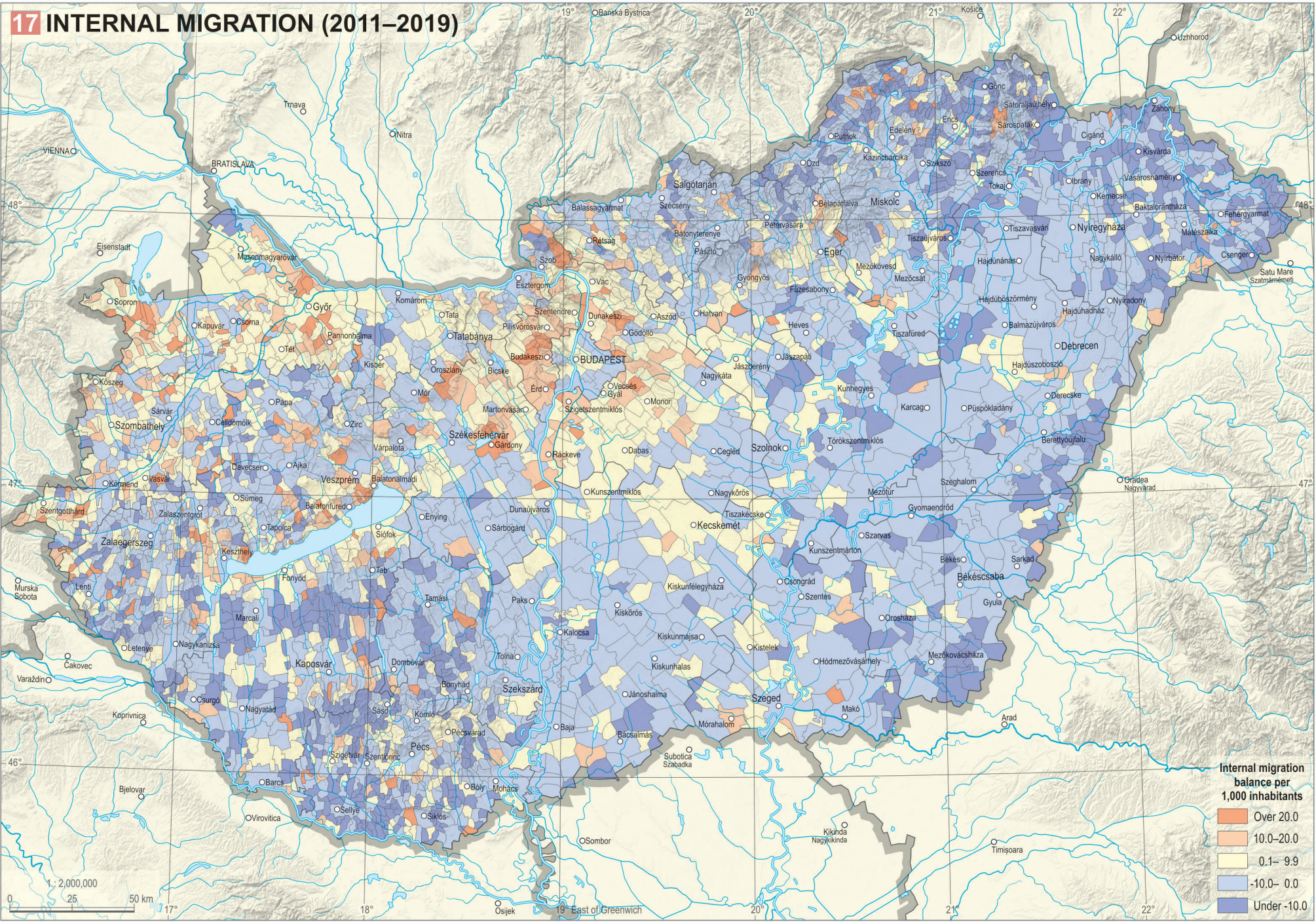
Commuting

Commuting is a specific form of migration where the worker regularly moves back and forth between two different municipalities because his or her workplace and place of residence are separated in space. This migration therefore does not involve a permanent change of residence. In the past, commuting has arisen for different reasons in each era. After the Industrial Revolution, the deepening of the division of labour and the uneven regional development of the economy resulted in commuting. During the 19th century, more and more jobs were created in cities.

While some former agricultural workers moved to these cities, some kept their rural residences. In the second half of the 20th century, as a new phenomenon, metropolitan residents moved out in increasing numbers to the suburbs (suburbanisation) and commuted to work in their metropolitan workplaces on a daily basis. In recent decades, the lower price of construction plots in the suburbs and more favourable tax conditions have resulted in new jobs (especially in offices and in services such as wholesale and retail). These processes have been seen in Hungary too, albeit after some delay compared to Western Europe. Indeed, in recent decades a complex commuting spatial structure has arisen.

Commuting should be given special attention because, although it has a beneficial effect on the flexibility of the labour market and the competitiveness of a country, as the worker 'goes after' his job, it also has a number of negative effects. The commuter worker does not spend his free time resting, cultivating family relationships, or studying, but travelling. This may later have a negative impact on the health and social relationships of the commuter. Large numbers of commuters cause severe congestion and traffic jams in metropolitan areas at certain times, hampering the movement of non-commuter residents and freight transport ⁴. The cost of fuel and energy used in commuting can also be considerable and the burning of fossil fuels used in commuting has adverse environmental effects.

In Hungary, at the time of the 2011 census, 34% of employees commuted, which continued to rise to 35.2% by the time of the micro-census in 2016. Although this is not outstandingly high in Europe, it evidently lags behind the values of countries that are





4 Congestion on the motorway near Budapest

economically more developed than Hungary (e.g. Germany: 60%; Austria: 54%; Netherlands: 50%) and is similar to the indicators for the neighbouring post-communist countries (e.g. Slovenia: 39%; Poland: 35%; Czechia: 30%). Even so, it is clearly higher than the percentage in less developed regions of the world. The relatively small size of Hungary, the rapidly evolving transport network, increasing motorisation and the increasing spatial mobility of the workforce play a role in this.

History of commuting

A spatial division between place of residence and the workplace emerged in the early 20th century, giving rise to commuting in its wake. It was only in the communist era, however, that commuting became a large-scale phenomenon. Opportunities for regular commuting arose in the region of Budapest with the development of a suburban transport system (tram and HÉV lines) and the rapid development of the manufacturing industry. The newly established industrial

plants not only attracted labour from the surrounding villages to the capital. Even before World War I, they were increasingly located in the suburban zone at the time (e.g. Kispest, Csepel and Újpest), triggering the commuting of workers. A noticeable increase in commuting occurred only in the environs of Budapest between the two world wars: in 1930, 33 thousand, in 1939 already 40 thousand people went to work in the capital from surrounding settlements which were incorporated into Budapest in 1950. The number of commuters in Hungary in the years before World War II was less than 100 to 150 thousand people. By 1960, however, when a discrepancy between place of residence and place of work was registered for the first time in the Hungarian census, 612 thousand people, or 12.5% of employees at the time, were not working in their place of residence, so they commuted ²⁰. Communist industrialisation and the restructuring of agriculture, the growth of large-scale farms and mechanisation have all contributed to this. From areas with a typically agricultural profile (Alföld, Southern Transdanubia), the workforce began to commute long

20 NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF COMMUTERS (1960–2016)

	Employees	Commuters	Commuters
	Number (thousand people)	Number (thousand people)	Proportion (%)
1960	4891	612	12.5
1970	4973	993	20.0
1980	5065	1217	24.0
1990	4525	1144	25.3
2001	3690	1102	29.9
2011	3943	1341	34.0
2016	4503	1585	35.2

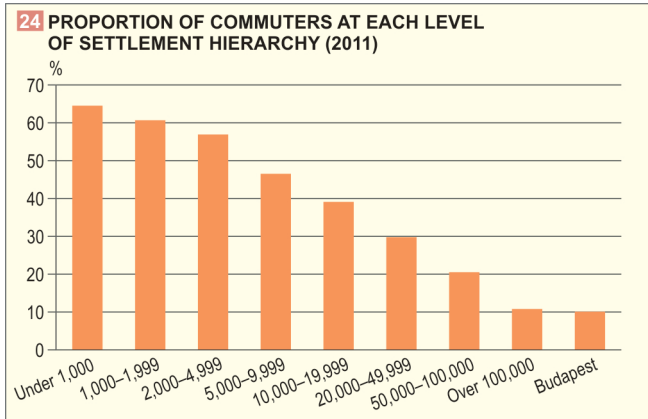
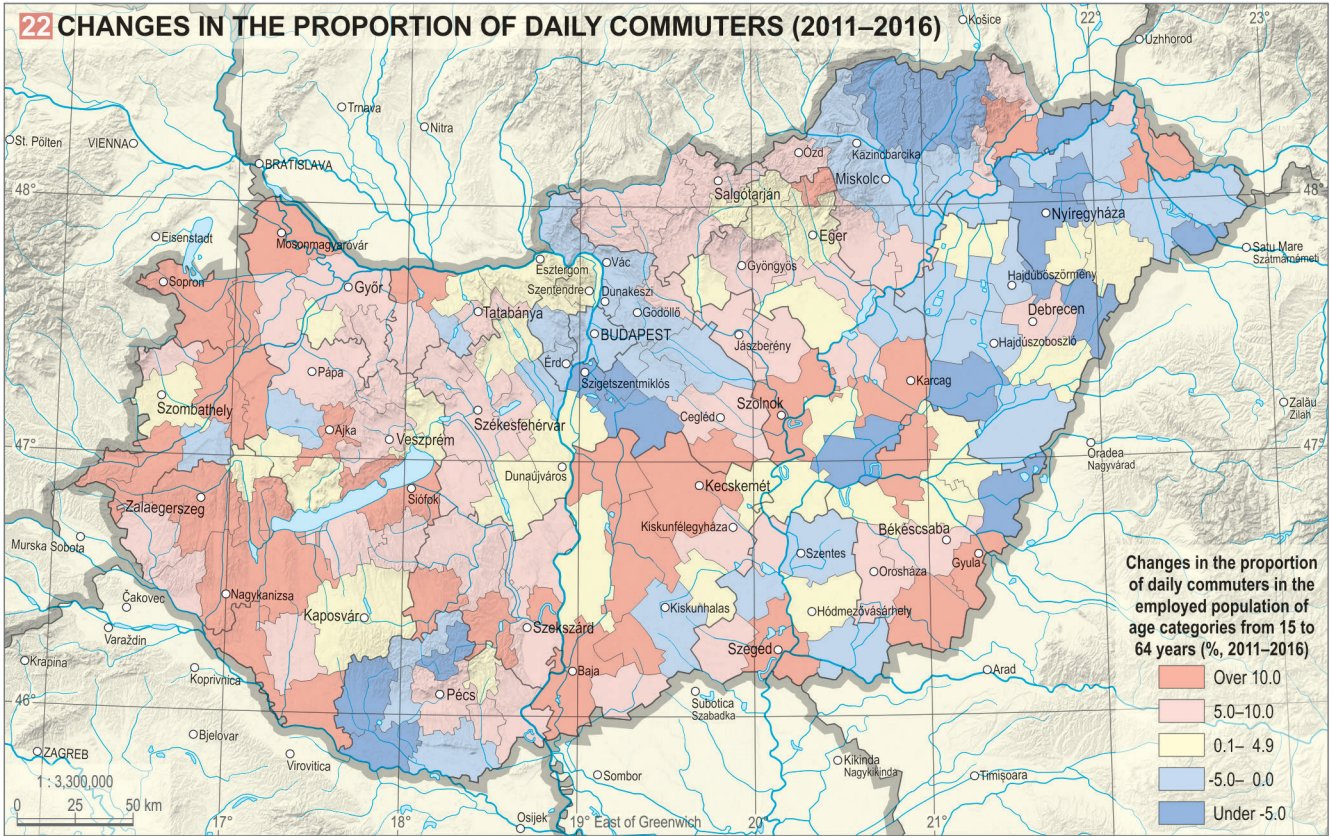


5 Railways were used for mass commuting into the capital in the 1960s

distances to jobs in the industrial axis (North Hungarian Range, northern Transdanubia) and Budapest regions.

Commuting changed the rhythm of life in rural areas and the lifestyle of families: male commuters travelled home only weekly, or every two weeks, while women worked in the local productive cooperative, or became so-called household workers and cultivated their family smallholdings ⁵. The number and ratio of commuters continued to increase until 1980, when more than 1.2 million people (i.e. nearly a quarter of all employees) commuted in Hungary. This was the peak of communist-style commuting, mainly from villages to the urban industrial plants.

After 1990, economic restructuring and the declining number and status of industrial jobs caused a fall in the number of commuters. After the turn of the millennium, however, the decline went into reverse. Long-distance commuting was gradually replaced by daily commuting over smaller distances. Despite the fluctuations

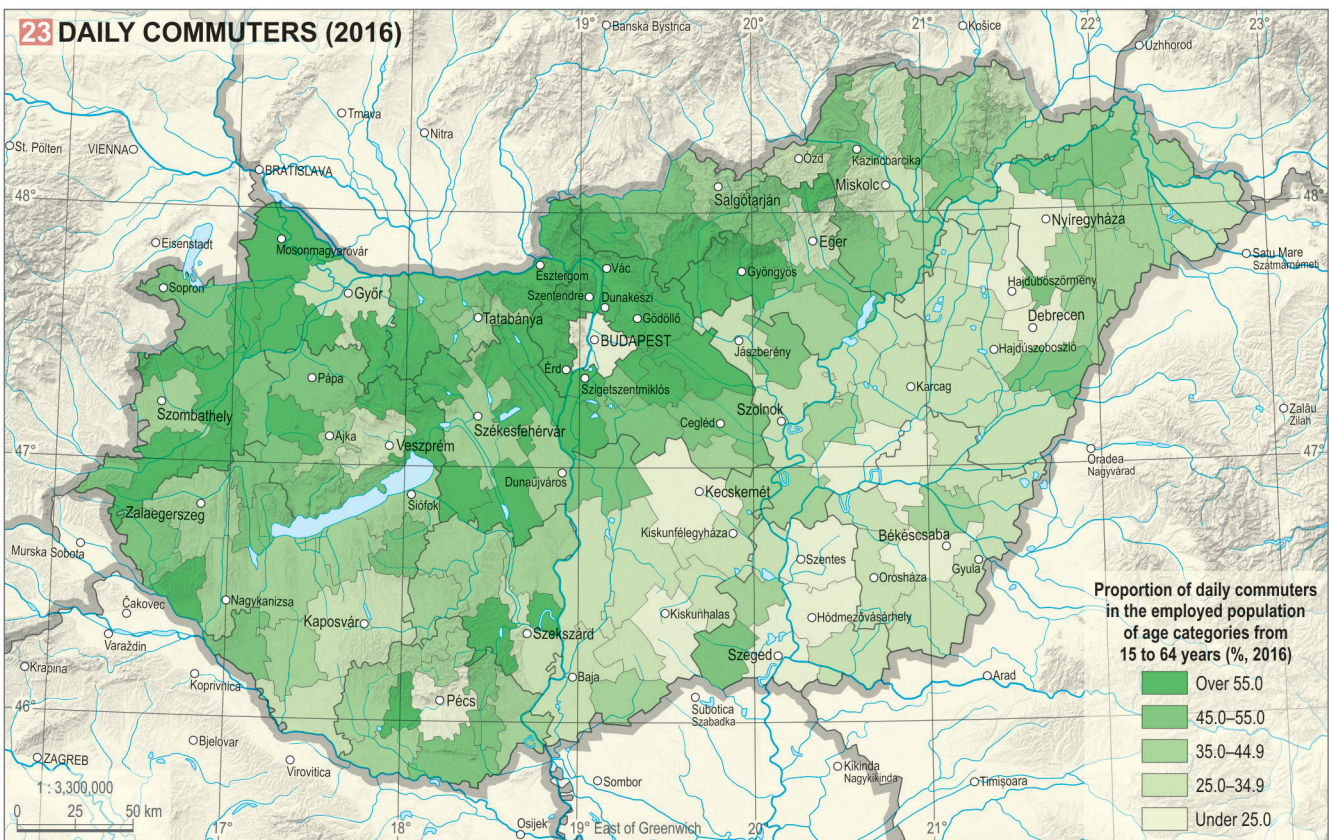
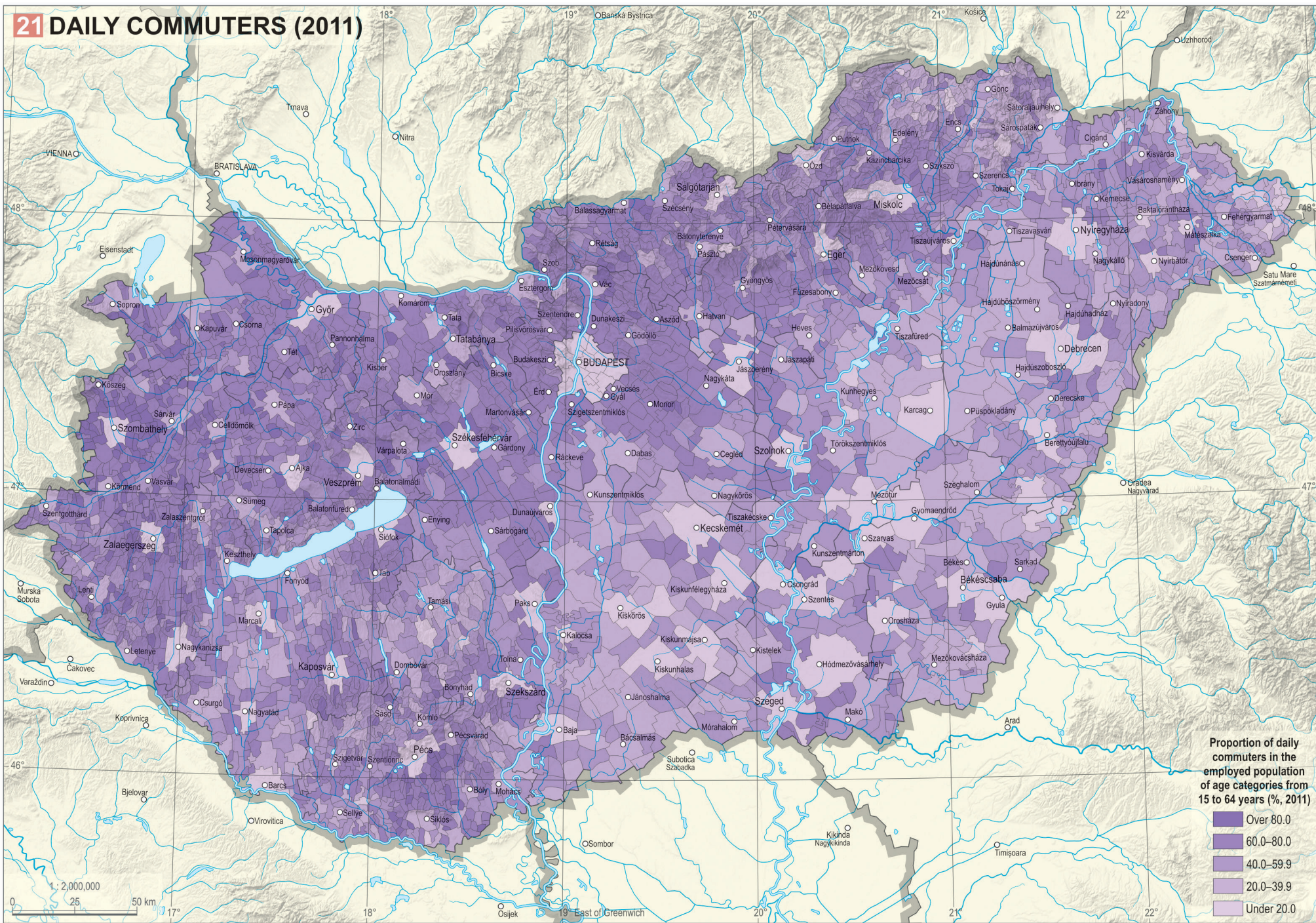


of Transdanubia and Northern Hungary are more reliant on commuting ²¹. On the other hand, economic success is also reflected on the map, as indicated by the far more intensive commuting in Budapest and the prospering region of northern Transdanubia, in contrast to Southern Transdanubia or Northern Hungary. However, regardless of the geographical situation, there is a commuter area of variable size around each of the major cities, which can be explained by suburbanisation after 1990. East-west differences deepened in the period after 2011 ²². By the time of the micro-census in 2016, the ratio of commuters had increased by more than 5% in most districts of Transdanubia, while in many districts east of the Danube stagnation and decrease were typical. The commuting map at the level of districts at the time of the micro-census indicates a further strengthening of the spatial structure described for 2011 ²³.

The distribution of commuting within the settlement network shows marked and regular differences. The smaller a settlement is, the bigger the role played by commuting will be in its life. This is natural, as the number of jobs in villages and small towns falls short of the labour supply, whereby most people of active age are forced to commute ²⁴. An analysis of the changes over time reveals that after 1990 the ratio of out-commuting people increased in all categories of municipalities, but the process was much faster in cities with a population of more than 50 thousand ²⁵. The increasing rate of commuting among the metropolitan labour force is a new phenomenon and can be associated with the increasing incidence of high-paying jobs in the suburbs.

Crisis areas with low rates of commuting and high rates of unemployment

After the collapse of communism, the number of jobs in Hungary fell sharply, but the changes were uneven in spatial terms. In some disadvantaged areas, commuting has declined due to job losses (the decline is thus associated with relatively high unemployment). In these areas, the working-age population has been unable to respond to the lack of jobs by undertaking spatial movement and commuting.



tions in the number of commuters, the overall ratio of commuters in Hungary has steadily increased in recent decades, and this trend is expected to continue in the future.

Spatial structure of commuting

Industrial plants with outdated technology and employing predominantly low-skilled manual workers were closed down after the collapse of communism. Many of the dismissed workers obtained jobs in the service sector in nearby major cities or in new manufacturing jobs created by foreign working capital in northern Transdanubia and Central Hungary. Automotive and electronics plants in northern Transdanubia mostly employed, instead of local labour, less skilled workers from nearby villages and small towns, who, for lack of a better job, began to commute. As a result, the proportion of commuter jobs increased to the largest extent in Fejér, Győr-Moson-Sopron and Vas counties, as well as in Budapest between 1990 and 2001. During this period, the rate of commuting, which had previously been very significant, decreased in traditional industrial areas (Baranya, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén and Nógrád counties) due to the loss of industrial jobs.

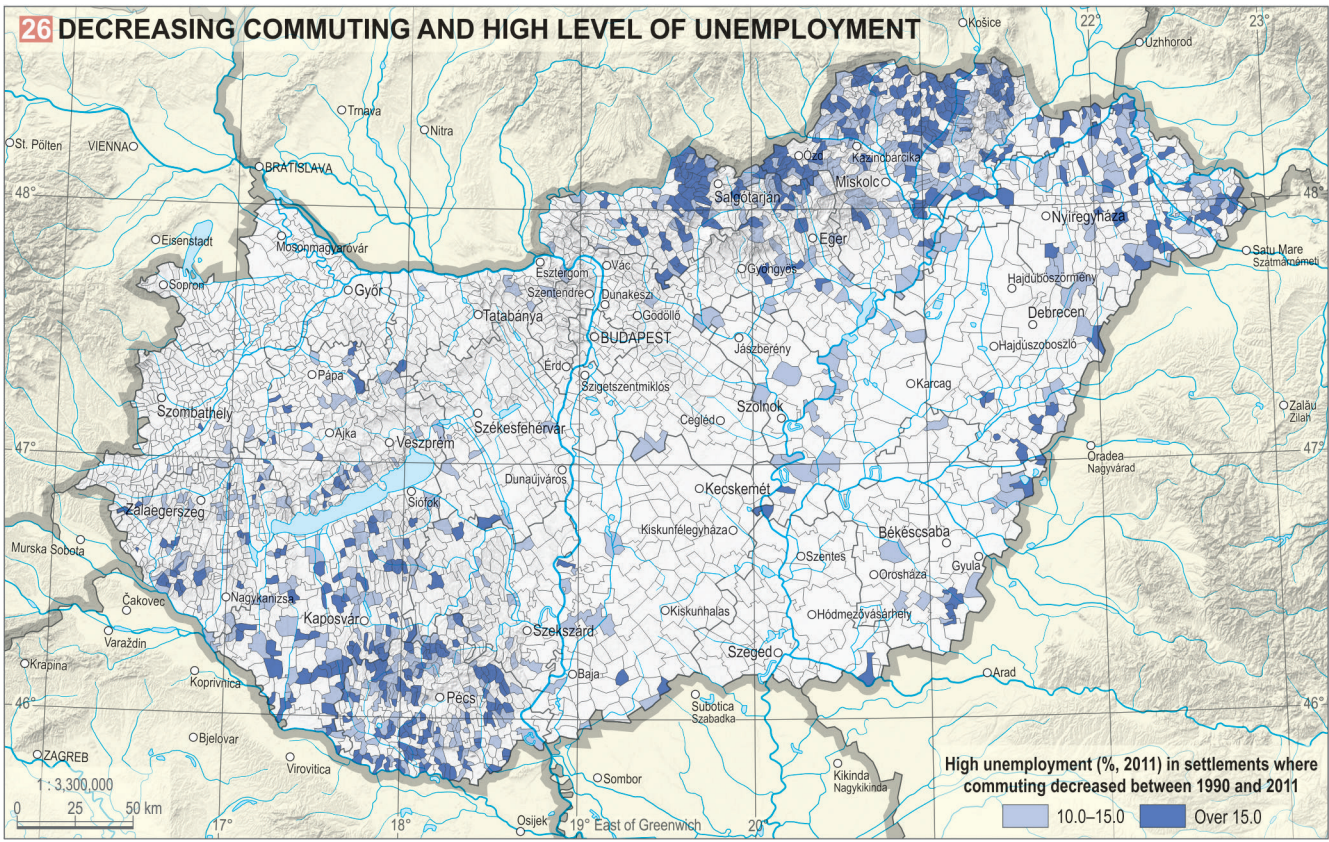
Significant changes occurred in the regional structure of employment and commuting between 2001 and 2011 compared to the previous decade. The number

of jobs increased by 196 thousand and the number of commuters increased by more than 260 thousand people. Due to suburbanisation in the meantime, commuting was increasingly concentrated in the major urban areas (Budapest, Debrecen, Szeged, Pécs and Győr). A new form of commuting also appeared, with workers going from large cities to jobs in the suburbs.

The spatial structure of commuting in 2011 shows, on the one hand, the differences in the structure of the settlement network: the giant villages and the market towns of the Alföld are much more 'self-employed', while people living in the more fragmented settlements

25 NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF OUT-COMMUTERS AT EACH LEVEL OF THE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY (1990–2011)

Settlement category (people)	Number of out-commuters			Proportion of out-commuters (%)		
	1990	2001	2011	1990	2001	2011
Under 1,000	217,330	147,132	168,454	67.7	65.2	64.5
1,000–1,999	221,775	173,932	199,185	56.6	59.3	60.7
2,000–4,999	297,883	260,760	297,092	48.6	53.3	56.9
5,000–9,999	142,786	133,012	165,009	37.7	42.7	46.5
10,000–19,999	137,347	130,842	175,710	28.3	32.5	39.1
20,000–49,999	83,554	106,023	148,705	16.0	23.9	29.8
50,000–100,000	23,477	51,733	56,839	6.5	16.0	20.5
Over 100,000	25,169	38,806	51,156	4.7	8.5	10.8
Budapest	31,714	66,673	78,681	3.5	8.9	10.1
In total	1,181,035	1,108,913	1,340,831	26.1	30.0	34.0



According to the census data, although the ratio of commuters increased significantly nationally between 1990 and 2011, in 1,432 municipalities it actually decreased. Nearly three-quarters of the latter are small and tiny villages with a population of less than 1000 people, mostly located in Southern Transdanubia and Northern Hungary. If, among the municipalities with declining commuting rates, those with high (between 10% and 15%) and extremely high unemployment (above 15%) rates are filtered out, the current crisis areas of Hungary are clearly obtained [26]. Municipalities suffering from the greatest problems are concentrated in the zone stretching from the northeast of Nógrád County through Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County to the Sztatmár Plain. There are also significant sporadic



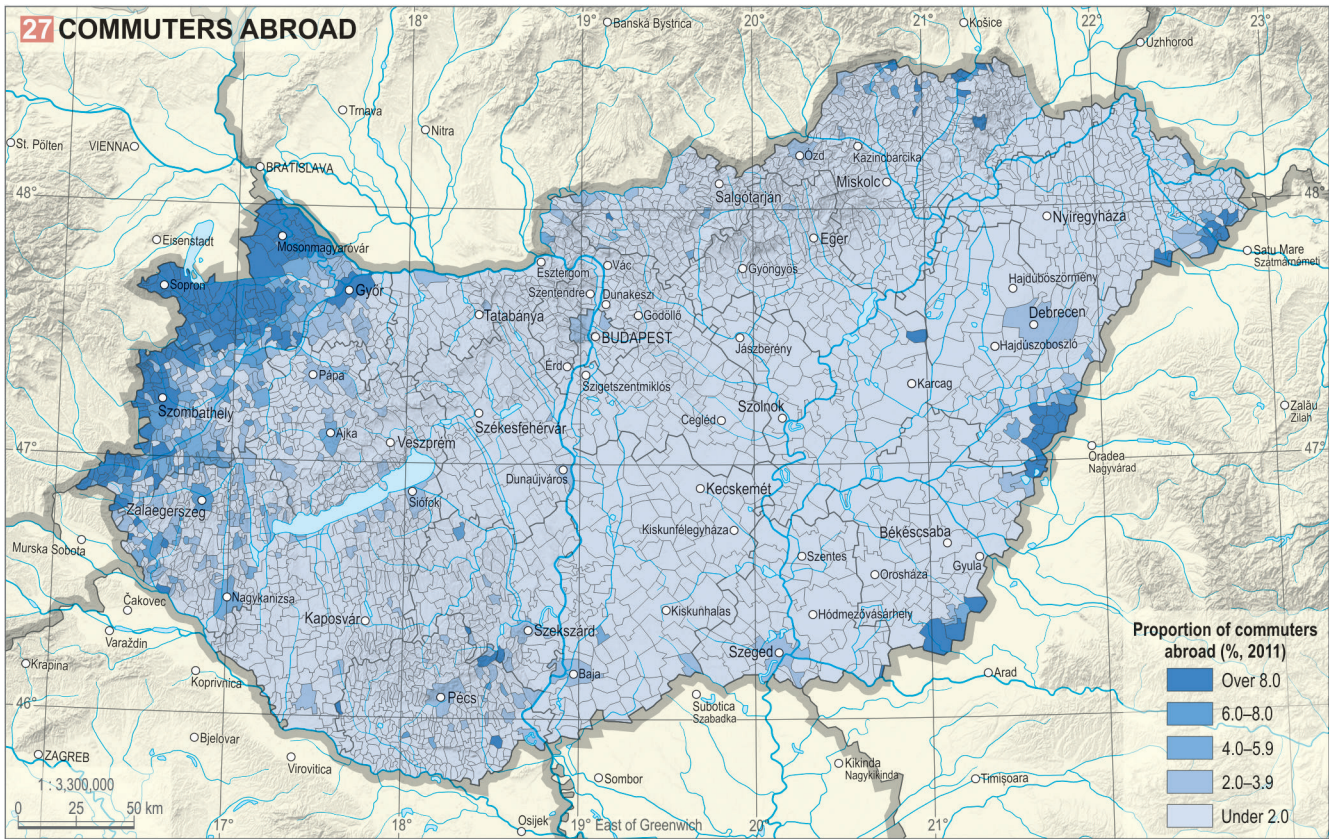
6 People living in little villages cannot afford long-distance commuting; many become unemployed

areas along the Romanian border. Another contiguous crisis area is located in the tiny villages of Baranya and Somogy counties.

As a result of economic restructuring and globalisation, smaller labour market centres (typically large villages of 2-3 thousand people) have been reduced, leaving a large number of workers in villages in the vicinity permanently unemployed. For them, the larger but more distant centres (e.g. Miskolc, Pécs and Kaposvár) were not an alternative either, as they could not cover the costs of travelling over long distances from their low incomes [6]. Only the public work programmes offered by the state in recent years have offered recourse to the people who live here.

Main directions of commuting abroad: West

After the turn of the millennium, commuting abroad also gained momentum as the number of commuters increased, to which Hungary joining the European Union and the expansion of the Schengen area contributed greatly. The number of commuters abroad increased more than five times between 2001 and 2011. According to the census in 2011, the number of people living permanently in Hungary but commuting abroad was 83,822. Some of them, 27,128 people, went to work in one of the neighbouring countries every day and 56,694 people were considered to be 'temporarily abroad'. By the time of the 2016 micro-census,



the number of people out-commuting abroad had increased to 72 thousand.

In 2011, 22 thousand people out of the 27 thousand who commuted abroad (83% of commuters) had jobs in Austria, having been attracted there by the significantly higher average wage level [27]. Most people commuted to work in Austria from Győr-Moson-Sopron County (13.5 thousand people), Vas County (nearly 5,000), and Budapest, Pest and Zala counties. The number of commuters to Slovakia and Romania is also significant. For both countries, closeness to the border and the lack of local jobs play a leading role in the phenomenon. In the case of Slovakia, the expansion of the Schengen area (the removal of border controls), the introduction of the euro and the rapid growth of the Slovak economy contributed to the increase in commuting, while in the case of Romania, the abundant supply of jobs in large border towns (Satu Mare/Szatmárnémeti, Oradea/Nagyvárad, Arad) was the main factor. In the case of both countries, proximity to the border and the suburbanisation of the major cities on the other side of the border (e.g. Bratislava, Košice, Satu Mare/Szatmárnémeti, Oradea/Nagyvárad and Arad) were the principal factors. Having moved to areas in Hungary with cheaper properties, the commuters (many of whom are of Slovak or Romanian ethnicity) continue to work in cities on the other side of the border and send their children to schools there. In other words, they are daily commuters.

In 2011, 126 municipalities in Hungary were classified as being affected by commuting abroad (i.e. at least five inhabitants commuted abroad to work, and those out-commuting to the area of the neighbouring state represented at least one tenth of the commuters). Most of these settlements are located not more than 20 km from the border. The settlements affected by commuting across the border are mainly located in Győr-Moson-Sopron, Vas, Békés, Hajdú-Bihar and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg counties. Cross-border commuting has increased the most in municipalities of 50-100 thousand people, including Sopron, Szombathely and Zalaegerszeg [7]. According to the data of the micro-census in 2016, 71% of workers who commuted abroad every day are men, almost two-thirds of whom are workers between the ages of 30 and 49. As many as 77% of these workers had participated in secondary education [28]. Based on the data, it can be concluded that women and those with higher qualifications are less likely to undertake this difficult and challenging version of commuting for the time being. Among those with secondary education, skilled workers were the majority. They were working mainly in industry, construction, transport-storage and agriculture. Those with a completed secondary school education mostly found work in catering and tourism, while those with higher education found work in health care. The absence of such workers from the workforce in Hungary causes difficulties in several sectors of the economy.

Cross-border commuting is a relatively new phenomenon in Hungary. In the densely populated border areas of the Western European countries (e.g. Belgium-Netherlands, Germany-Switzerland), however, significant numbers have been crossing the national borders every day since the end of World War II. It is also worth mentioning that the direction of commuting is not only from Hungary, for we know that a significant number of workers come to Hungary from neighbouring countries (e.g. Slovakia, Romania). At present, however, only a limited amount of information is available on their exact number and regional distribution.



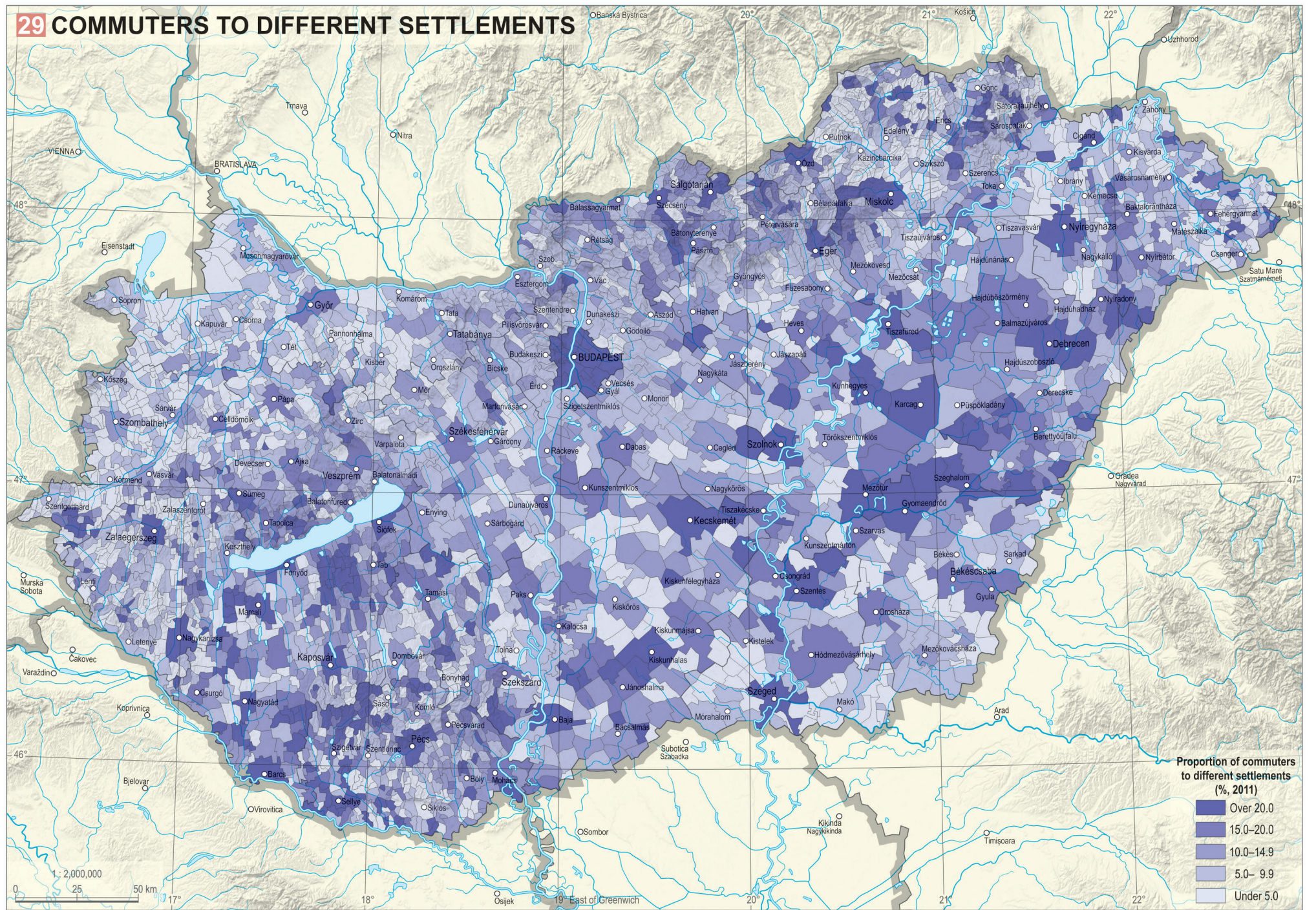
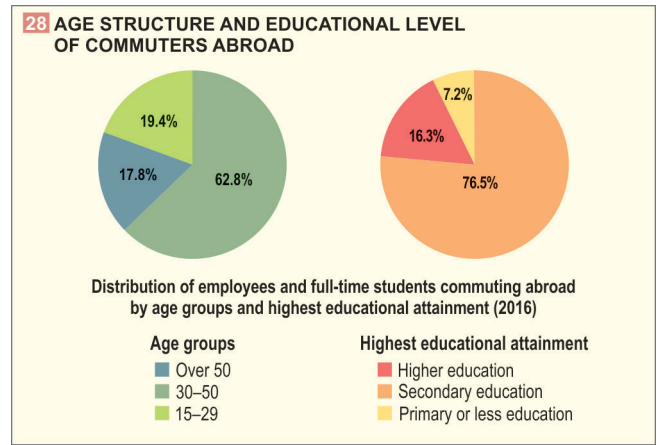
7 Commuters at the Austrian border near Sopron

Traditional and new forms of commuting

Since the turn of the millennium, the number and proportion of jobs filled by commuters has increased significantly, while the direction of commuting has changed substantially. In the previous traditional, industrial-shaped spatial process of commuting, the workforce usually went from smaller settlements with agricultural functions to cities offering industrial jobs. Although the number of commuters from village to city has decreased overall since 1990, such commuters continue to be the most populous group. At the same time, with the strengthening of the service sector and the relocation of various economic activities to suburban areas, the structure of commuting gradually changed, and more populous settlements became more and more labour-emitting. According to the data, even in Hungary, the primacy of 'traditional' industrial-based commuting seems to have ceased. New forms of commuting have appeared, such as cross-commuting between cities or commuting from cities to the capital and from major cities to suburbs. The

number of such commuters was well above the number of traditional village-to-city commuters in 2011. As an example, the combined share of commuting among cities and between cities and Budapest increased from 29% to 40% of total commuting between 1990 and 2011. It is also a telling figure that while 31 thousand people went out of the capital to work in 1990, their number increased to 49 thousand by 2011. Budaörs was the first settlement in Hungary to gain a positive commuting balance against the capital. In 2011, 7,847 people commuted daily from Budapest to jobs in Budaörs, while 5,392 people went to the capital [8].

A specific group of commuters are those who commute to different settlements. They carry out their activities regularly in various other settlements. Their number was 182,574 (16.5% of out-commuters) in 2001, which dropped slightly to 153,410 (11% of the out-commuters) by 2011. This form of commuting is more related to cities and more populous settlements, since as the size of the municipality increases, the share of services of the kind (e.g. freight transport, business, servicing) that require commuting to different settlements is increasing [29]. This is a specific



8 Many commuters to the capital use suburban transport (e.g. HÉV, railway)

group of workers: 92% are men, most of them work in the construction industry, transport and trade. The map also shows that this form of commuting is common especially among the more populous lowland settlements and market towns.

In conclusion, the proportion of commuting workers in Hungary is expected to increase further in the future. Due to increasing globalisation, the spread of new economic services and the development of the motorway network and motorisation, it is also likely that the share of commuters travelling abroad and to different settlements will also increase. In terms of commuting directions, the formerly prevailing village-city commuting will be replaced increasingly by new, more complex forms of commuting that combine the various elements of the settlement network (city-city, city-village, city-suburb). This will also mean that Hungary is increasingly adapting to the commuting patterns already observed in Western European countries (Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, etc.).

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TIBOR ELEKES
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JENŐ ZSOLT FARKAS
SÁNDOR FRISNYÁK
TAMÁS GÁL
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