

PREFACE

The reader is holding the English version of the Society volume of the *National Atlas of Hungary (MNA)*. A national atlas is the given country's 'identity card,' one of its most significant national symbols in addition to its flag, coat of arms and national anthem. Similarly to the previous undertaking, the present volume is the outcome of wide-ranging professional collaboration: 16 editors, 42 authors, 87 map authors, and several dozen cartographers, professional and language proofreaders, translators have made their valuable contributions to it. Reflecting the special significance of the Atlas, the staff of the publishing institution, who carry out their work as a public task, have made selfless efforts in recent years. While the flagship strategic partner, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, has provided the vast majority of the national and international databases, important contributions have also been made by the staff of universities (e.g. University of Szeged, Babeş Bolyai University, University of Debrecen, University of Pécs, Eötvös Loránd University, University of Miskolc) and other supporting bodies and institutions.

Prior to a more detailed introduction to the second volume of the symbol of the Hungarian state and nation as embodied in maps, it is my great pleasure to guide the esteemed reader along the virtual international and local path that has led to this publication and its digital version.

A national atlas is usually a series of maps complemented with textual explanations and various illustrations, which show the given state's natural, economic and social features through logically and proportionally constructed maps using a well-defined scale and fairly uniform cartographic iconography. It is intended for the country's inhabitants as well as for interested foreigners. The national atlases issued so far all share the principal feature that they refer to the given state's territory. They introduce a country's natural, social and economic structure and its spatio-temporal data with an almost encyclopaedic scope, in a complex and structured form, applying a logical sequence of maps. The main expectations concerning national atlases are that they should serve the representation of the state and the nation, public policy planning and decision-making, scientific research, as well as public and higher education, and that, due to their user-friendliness, they should also meet the requirements of the wider educated public.

In our days, most countries in the world have national atlases as far-reaching national symbols. Such atlases first appeared during struggles for national independence or in their aftermath, and they are usually updated every two or three decades. The first national atlas was published in 1899 by Finland, a country that was seeking to escape Russian control. Up to the mid-20th century, most atlases were issued in a single volume; although their size varied considerably, their methodology was mostly unsystematic, and in content they tended to concentrate on geography. After WWII, several developed countries launched their first (or revised) national atlas project, which already aimed at regional development and planning.

The 1980s saw the beginning of a new era in the history of national atlases, which is primarily due to reasons of marketing. The increasingly sophisticated national atlases were now intended for the educated public and actors of public and higher education. As a

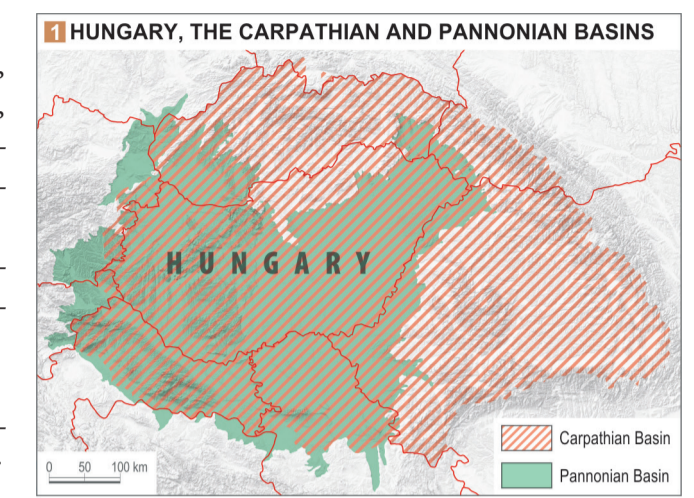
sign of targeting wider audiences, in order to be more comprehensible, more popular and more marketable, atlases started to include more explanatory texts, photographs, and various visual elements at the expense of maps. At the same time, maps were simplified, and themes shifted towards areas more relevant for society and users in general. Still based on scientific research, since the late 1980s the more market-oriented, more mass-consumable atlases have been issued electronically as well as in hard copy. The birth and rapid spread of personal computers revolutionised cartography, including atlas cartography, all over the world. Thanks to the changes in production and information technologies, modern atlases issued since the 1990s have been able to meet all the various functions emphasised during the past century in atlas making. The first electronic development was the appearance of CD-ROM versions accompanying conventional print atlases. Subsequently, the first internet and web-based national atlas was marketed in Canada.

In the case of national atlases published over the past two decades, traditional print atlases have lost ground to their electronic versions, which contain an almost unlimited number of multimedia elements (e.g. photos, videos, animation, and World Wide Web hyperlinks). However, paper-based atlases that we can still use at times of blackouts, a copy of which is in the hands of the reader, have not disappeared as outstanding period documents of the given state's geographic environment. Instead, they have been completely revived, becoming more interesting and more fascinating in consequence of their competition with electronic mass communication. Meanwhile, electronic atlases have become primary sources and tools of obtaining and analysing regional information. The easy access to and up-to-the minute nature of web-based atlases on the internet make them attractive because of their practically unlimited capacity to store data and maps.

Hungarian geography and cartography have always played a decisive role in developing our knowledge of the nation and the homeland, in building the image of Hungarians and their country. Following World War I, geographic and cartographic pieces were produced mainly in French, English and German, with maps and atlases among them, reflecting the impact of the Trianon Dictate and justifying the demand for a full or partial restoration of the country's former territorial unity.

In 1945, the *Atlas of Central Europe* was compiled by the Institute of Political Sciences, the organisational predecessor to today's Geographical Institute, Research Centre for Astronomy and Earth Sciences. Issued in both Hungarian and English, it already met all the requirements for national atlases. However, rather than focusing on the territory of one state (Hungary), it covered the Carpathian Basin and the broader region (12 countries).

Following the fundamental political, social and economic changes of 1948, the year 1967 saw the first edition of the *National Atlas of Hungary*, which was to propagate the new socialist Hungary. Based on the recommendations of the International Geographical Union's (IGU) Commission on National Atlases, work on the map collection was launched in 1959. The atlas, whose birth was assisted by the scientific contributions of MTA (especially its Geographical Committee) and the cartographic projects of the Cartographia Ltd.



Company, intended to facilitate 'economic management and planning' as well as to offer general information about the country. Again funded by the Government, in 1983 MTA in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food decided on a revised edition of the National Atlas. Coordinated by the Geographical Research Institute of MTA and with the contribution of 87 (mainly) state-run institutions and organisations, as well as 183 authors, the second edition of the National Atlas was issued in 1989, shortly before the democratic regime change. In order to be more open to the outside world, the atlas, which was still published as one volume but had grown four-fold in size compared to its earlier version, was now bilingual (English and Hungarian).

The country's fundamental post-1989 social and economic transformation compelled the Geographical Research Institute to continue, in 1994–1995, the publication of the National Atlas in the form of a supplementary map lift-out series, thereby providing the public with accurate and updated information. The National Atlas managed to catch up with international trends. Thus, it broke with the tradition of producing one huge uniform volume; it changed its orientation by turning to the general educated public and opening its vista to education; it selected problem-centred issues of interest to a wide range of the population; and for working with maps and geographic information, it switched to digital technology (ArcGIS).

In preparation for a further edition of the National Atlas, in 2009 our legal predecessor, the MTA Geographical Research Institute issued its relatively small-sized information atlas called *Hungary in Maps* in English, and subsequently in 2011 in Hungarian (*Magyarország térképekben*). With the help of numerous maps, this publication intended to give a quick overview of the Hungary of the 2000s and of the Carpathian Basin.

Nearly a quarter of a century following its second edition, in 2013 preparations for the new (conventional) edition of the *Atlas of Hungary* were started – again under the coordination of the Geographical Institute of the MTA Research Centre for Astronomy and Earth Sciences (CSFK).

It is a unique novelty of our aims that the new edition of the National Atlas of Hungary wishes to present the dynamic spatial structure of nature, society and the economy not merely for Hungary, but wherever the required data are available, for the entire Carpathian Basin and its neighbourhood (the Carpatho-Pannonian Area), thus covering a territory of some half a million sq. km and 34 thousand settlements in twelve countries. It is to be noted that in the National Atlas, we strictly distinguish the terms 'Pannonian Basin' and

VIII. SETTLEMENT SYSTEM 108 (eds. PÁL BELUSZKY, ZOLTÁN KOVÁCS)

Changes in the settlement system in the Carpathian Basin after World War I
Settlement system of the Carpathian Basin by population size
Settlement system of Hungary
Settlements and public administration

IX. URBAN SETTLEMENTS 116 (eds. ZOLTÁN KOVÁCS, PÁL BELUSZKY)

Changes of the urban system in the Carpathian Basin
Population dynamics of cities
Urban hierarchy
Types of cities after World War II
Types of cities today
Development dynamics of cities
Morphological characteristics of cities
Distribution of some high-rank institutions in the urban system
Agglomerations
Creative cities

X. BUDAPEST AND ITS REGION 128 (eds. ZOLTÁN KOVÁCS, ZOLTÁN DÖVÉNYI)

Urban structure
Population
Population size and density
Age structure, household composition
Ethnicity, religion
Level of education, employment
Social characteristics
Housing market
Age structure of the housing stock
Housing tenure, number of rooms
Housing conditions, residential mobility, urban renewal
Budapest agglomeration
Historical development and spatial structure of the agglomeration
Society in the agglomeration
Housing market of the agglomeration

XI. RURAL AREAS 140 (eds. PÉTER BAJMÓCY, PÁL BELUSZKY, † BÁLINT CSATÁRI)

Rural settlements and agriculture
Types of villages
Service provision in villages
Dynamics of villages
Functions of villages
Service provision in areas with tiny villages – in the districts of Lenti and Letenye

Outskirts, scattered settlements
Complex types of villages, rural landscapes
Complex types of villages
Rural landscapes
Villages in focus

XII. LIVING CONDITIONS, QUALITY OF LIFE 150

XII. 1. HUMAN SIDE OF LIVING CONDITIONS AND QUALITY OF LIFE 150 (ed. VIKTOR PÁL)

Health and quality of life
Health conditions of the population
Health risks – lifestyle, health behaviour
Health culture – subjective well-being and use of the healthcare system
Covid-19 pandemic
Income, consumption and quality of life
Sources of spending – income, state benefits
Household expenditure and consumption
Literacy, consumption of culture
Our digital world – access, use and well-being

XII. 2. SETTLEMENT SIDE OF LIVING CONDITIONS AND QUALITY OF LIFE 160

XII. 2. 1. HOUSING CONDITIONS (eds. ZOLTÁN KOVÁCS, JUDIT SZÉKELY)

Housing conditions in the Carpathian Basin
Housing stock of Hungary in space and time
Dwelling size, residential density, dwelling quality
Processes in the housing market

XII. 2. 2. MUNICIPAL ENVIRONMENT (ed. VIKTOR PÁL)

Natural elements of a municipal environment
Municipal infrastructure and quality of life
Supply and accessibility to services
Security

AUTHORS, BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES 176

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES 187

LIST OF PICTURES 190

LIST OF ENGLISH AND FOREIGN PLACE NAMES 191

‘Carpathian Basin’ which are frequently believed to be synonymous. Whereas the *Pannonian Basin* is a geographical and natural phenomenon, meaning the actual basin between the Alps, the Carpathians and the Dinarides, the *Carpathian Basin* (without irredentistic connotations), a term frequently used in colloquial Hungarian, covers the historical-cultural homeland, or autochthonous settlement area, of Hungarians, in fact, the historical territory of the State **1**.

An additional important objective was to compile and publish high-quality geo-informational background material for *governmental use and for public and higher education*. In other words, we intend to make available to large sections of the population *scientifically well-established and reader-friendly* material about Hungary and the Carpathian Basin.

In addition to the conventional (print) version, for the *internet-based Atlas*, interactive analysis and searchability will be enabled; in line with contemporary technical expectations, we wish to *build an interactive digital national geo-information system* and upload the National Atlas content on it. In order to provide foreign readers with authentic information of international standards, in addition to the Hungarian version, it is essential to *publish an English translation*, as well as the Hungarian original, of the four upcoming volumes of the Atlas being produced from 2018 and to *make them available online*.

The *traditional paper-based edition* will cover the most important topics *in four volumes* (The Hungarian State and its Place in the World; Natural Environment; Society; Economy) and *in representative quality*. It will serve mainly awareness-raising and information provision rather than academic research. Evidently, paper-based volumes, whose production takes a long time, may contain less up-to-date information at the time of their issue. For this reason, some current readers may find them less attractive. Nevertheless, future generations will see them as *significant records of the period*. In contrast, practically up-to-the-minute information and contact with the wider public will be ensured by the *digital version (e-MNA)* available at www.nationalatlas.hu.

For the sake of user-friendliness, *each chapter of a volume has its own colour*, which appears on the margins of pages, in subtitles, as well as in references to non-verbal information. Unlike in strictly academic publications, however, in the same way as in other national atlases, the chapters only provide the authors’

names. Their particulars (scholarly rank, position, primary employer’s name and town) are then given at the end of each volume (*Authors, Bibliography and Sources*). Due to the nature of the genre, we do not include any footnotes or references to any literature. Therefore, all the sources for the texts and for compiling figures, the list of further readings, and the names of photographers are to be found in the aforementioned chapters. Due to these reasons (and occasionally space limitations), figures (i.e. maps, tables, graphs, diagrams) and photos that enrich the topics do not feature the names of their authors or their origins. Such important constituents of the Atlas can be found again in the chapter *Authors, Bibliography and Sources*. Titles and occurrences of the figures and photos are included in the lists of figures, tables and pictures, facilitating focused searches. In addition to these illustrations, highlighted in the relevant chapter’s colour, *text boxes* explaining interesting professional terms, ideas or phenomena (often containing their own graphs and other visuals) add content and help the reader to use the Atlas.

Each of the subsequent volumes will start with a *brief overview chapter bearing the same title (Hungary at a glance)* and presenting the most important data for Hungary on three pages. The maps included introduce the administrative division of Hungary in the given year, as well as the general geographical features, including the topography, hydrography, and the settlement and transport network of the Carpatho–Pannonian Area.

In the English versions, geographical names (e.g. topographic, hydrographic and settlement names) are given *in English* in the first place, or when that does not exist, *in the given country’s official language*. In regions where the proportion of national-ethnic minorities is over 10%, geographical names are given also in the minority language, using ethnonyms both in the maps and the texts. The equivalents of the English geographical names as used in the country concerned are to be found in the *List of English and Foreign Place Names* at the end of each volume.

The *Society* volume of the new version of MNA presents changes in the *numbers of the population, its spatial distribution, vital statistics, migration and composition* according to various aspects (e.g. sex, age, marital status, ethnicity, religion, education, employment, social stratification), the state and changes of the settlement system in relation to the area of Hungary (and to that of the Carpathian Basin). The synthesizing chapter

on *living conditions and quality of life* is new compared to national and international antecedents. Compared to the chapters discussing Hungarian society in the 1989 version of MNA, in this atlas the volume of the material and the number of maps have increased four times and the ratio of explanatory text, figures, tables and pictures has increased from 25% to 50%, whereby the inclusion of photos is a new feature in the Atlas. As a result of the new concept and available data, the number of maps showing the Carpathian Basin increased to 92, and their ratio regarding all maps increased to 30%. Thematically, whereas demography and settlements dominated in the 1980s, the current atlas is far more balanced. New or more detailed elements include the presentation of the past of population and settlements as well as spatial analyses of marital status, religion, social divisions, living conditions and the quality of life.

In addition to the professional knowledge, enthusiasm, and data of the special strategic partner, the Hungarian Statistical Office, and the valuable contributions of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Eötvös Loránd Research Network, the publication of the present volume of the new version of the National Atlas was made possible – in accordance with international practice – by support from the Government.

As a final word, I should like to thank all contributing institutions and persons for their selfless dedication to the project and express our gratitude for the generous support of the Government and the Central Statistical Office, without which the publication of the Society volume of the new National Atlas of Hungary would not have been possible. On behalf of the several hundred contributors, let me express our hope that our esteemed readers both at home and abroad will enjoy the pleasures and benefits of browsing the printed atlas (despite its large size) or reading its digital version on the Atlas webpage. We trust that it will assist an understanding of population, settlement and the general social environment in Hungary and the Carpathian Basin, while also revealing the underlying processes.

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