Acta Universitatis Sapientiae

European and Regional Studies

Volume 21, 2022

Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania
Scientia Publishing House

Contents

Acta Univ. Sapientiae, European and Regional Studies, **21** (2022) 1–24

DOI: 10.2478/auseur-2022-0001

Conceptualizing Citizenship. Eastern European Inputs to the Contemporary Debates. Insights from Hungary[1]

Alexandra HOLLE
PhD Candidate, Doctoral School of International Relations and Political Science
Corvinus University Budapest,
e-mail: hollealexandra@gmail.com

Éva VÁNYI
Head of Department, Associate Professor, Department of Political Sciences, Institute of International, Political and Regional Studies, Corvinus University Budapest
e-mail: eva.vanyi@uni-corvinus.hu

Abstract. Active citizenship, critical citizenship, digital citizenship, global citizenship: just a few from the concepts that have shaped the debate about citizenship in the past decades. While these concepts have dominated both the academic and the public discourse and had implications for citizenship education in mature democracies, they often seem to be far away from the lived realities of many Eastern European new democracies. In these countries, debates about citizenship have been burdened with the legacies of the non-democratic past, and even citizenship education has been marginalized for a long time. This paper introduces the Hungarian case and aims to contribute to the theoretical debates about the concept of the good citizen by reflecting on the peculiarities of a post-socialist new democracy.

Keywords: citizenship, democratization, education

1. Introduction

Since the 1990s, there has been a growing scientific interest in citizenship as several political changes have made it necessary to re-examine the concept. The birth of new states and the dissolution of old ones, globalization, the growing influence of international bodies, migration, the increasing internal diversity of liberal democracies, and the crisis of representation are just a few of the factors which have affected citizenship (Moro 2016, Leydet 2017). As a result,

1 Supported by the UNKP-21-3 New National Excellence Programme of the Ministry for Innovation and Technology from the Source of the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund.

discussions about citizenship have been intense, and the definitions have proliferated. There is a broad consensus that citizenship is way more than a legal status, it also extends to a set of values, norms, virtues, attitudes, and behaviours. It is a membership in a political community, characterized by rights and duties, manifesting in three dimensions: a legal, a political, and an identity dimension. But if we look at what these dimensions mean, what their relative importance is, and what normative standards they should meet, debates unfold (Leydet 2017) and a shared definition seems to be unachievable (Moro 2016).

While theoretical discussions on citizenship have flourished and resulted in several 'hyphenated citizenships' (Joppke 2008: 37 cited by Moro 2016), such as active, global, or digital citizenship, the empirical side of the issue has been less explored. As Lister (2008: 57 cited by Moro 2016: 22) put it, 'the theoretical debate risks being conducted in an empirical void'. We find this especially worrisome, as such 'hyphenated citizenships' have defined what good citizenship is and guided the academic and policy debates about school-based citizenship education in many democracies. Furthermore, as the systematic literature review of Villalobos–Morel–Treviño (2021) showed, contemporary conceptualizations of citizenship in English-language academic literature are disproportionately anchored in the Anglo-Saxon tradition. These conceptualizations reflect citizenship as valued in Western countries with comparatively higher income levels.

Similarly to citizenship studies, citizenship education research received a new impetus in the 1990s. On the one hand, declining levels of civic knowledge, interest, and engagement of the youth in Western mature democracies led many various actors to call for (better) citizenship education (Galston 2001, Torney-Purta 2002). On the other hand, the need for democratic consolidation and the democratic (re)socialization of citizens in the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe led to a growing attention to citizenship education also in this region (Torney-Purta 2002). Despite three decades of scholarly interest in the field, citizenship education does not have a comprehensive theory (Crittenden–Levine 2016). This might have three reasons. First, citizenship education is a subject of debate, as an 'essentially contested concept' (Gallie 1956), citizenship, lies at its heart. Secondly, it is also context-dependent, and its aims and means must be redefined from time to time (Kennedy 2019). Thirdly, it is an interdisciplinary research field although works that treat it as such are rather rare. As Keating argued, citizenship education is 'a complex phenomenon that can be hard to pin down – conceptually, analytically, and empirically' (Keating 2014: 14).

Nevertheless, there have been several valuable empirical studies on citizenship education. We believe that one of the most important results so far has been that school-based citizenship education can be an effective measure to develop the civic competences of the youth (Martens–Gainous 2013, Kawashima-Ginsberg–Levine 2014, Bruch–Soss 2018). Moreover, it matters the most for students who

come from disadvantaged backgrounds and have fewer resources at home, as it can compensate for missing parental political socialization (e.g. Langton–Jennings 1968, Metz–Youniss 2005, Gainous–Martens 2012, Neundorf–Niemi–Smets 2016). Among the various school practices, civic learning opportunities and open classroom discussion are effective ways to promote a comprehensive endorsement of citizenship norms (Treviño et al. 2021). Based on the empirical results, which mostly stem from mature Western democracies, citizenship education is a promising measure, advancing the democratic socialization of youngsters. But is it also the case in post-socialist countries?

Despite considerable interest in the 1990s and 2000s in the democratization of citizenship education in the post-socialist countries, little can be known of its success in the English-language scientific literature. According to Hippe (2008), this is so because the research focused on the institutional frame of citizenship education and not on its realization, on how the official goals and contents are constructed in textbooks and teaching practice. Besides, in post-socialist European Union countries, the Europeanization of citizenship education also led to a neglect of their peculiarities and the specific challenges and contradictions they face. European bodies, highly active in this field both as political actors and research commissioners, showed no interest in stressing the distinctive features of these countries (Hedtke–Zimenkova–Hippe 2007).

This study aims to help address this gap. We describe the Hungarian case and introduce the context in which citizenship education should work and emphasize the challenges it faces.[2] Based on these insights, we also propose a new citizenship concept. The paper proceeds as follows. The second section briefly introduces the Hungarian historical background in the 20th century. The third section describes the developments of the political system after the regime change, reflecting on the theoretical debates around the Orbán regime. The fourth section presents the peculiarities of political socialization originating in the historical context. The fifth section shows citizenship patterns, while the sixth section describes how school-based citizenship education has functioned since the regime change. In conclusion, we suggest a research agenda for those interested in the development of citizenship education in the post-Soviet satellite countries.

2. The Hungarian Historical Context

The history of Hungary in the short 20th century can be considered the history of regime changes. After World War I, there were nine historical turning points when the political regime changed, resulting in newer and newer resocializations

2 Other scholars who dedicated work to this area are Szabó–Dancs (2018) and Dancs–Fülöp (2020).

of the whole society. The basic rules of society changed, the past was re-evaluated, and the strongholds of individual life strategies became unpredictable (Szabó 2013). Even though there were brief democratic periods, the regimes were overwhelmingly authoritarian in nature until the end of the 1980s. Despite their ideological differences, they shared a common desire to develop a commitment to an idea or an ideology in citizens. The Horthy (1920–1945), the Rákosi (1949–1956), and the Kádár (1956–1989) regimes alike used the education system to transmit the ideas they wished to convey to young people (Dévényi 2013). In the following, we describe these regimes, which spanned longer periods, in more detail from the viewpoint of their educational aspirations.

After the end of the First World War, a new political system was established in Hungary led by the Regent of the Kingdom of Hungary, Miklós Horthy. The main features of the political system did not change in this period: the Parliament worked as a legislative body and governments served as an executive body. Miklós Horthy was elected as Regent only provisionally because of the debates within the political elite about the form of state. The Regent did not participate directly in the legislative and executive processes; however, Horthy exercised considerable political influence.

As part of the peace treaties around Paris that ended the First World War, the 1920 Treaty of Trianon largely reduced the territory of the defeated Hungary. The country lost 70 percent of its territory, and significant Hungarian-inhabited settlements were annexed to neighbouring countries, meaning both economic and cultural losses. This was considered unjust and a tragedy for the country and the nation. The trauma of Trianon was the defining historical event of the Horthy era and had an important social identity-forming function (Szabó 2009b). The national theme, organized around the politics of revisionism, played a decisive role in political socialization. The main political message was that the self-esteem of Hungarians – who had suffered a historical injustice – and their position in the Carpathian Basin must be strengthened. In the Horthy era, religion and education were closely intertwined, with education policy serving to strengthen the Christian national ideal. Politicians responsible for education considered this field as one of the most important tools for national renewal (Dévényi 2020). Both the formal and the hidden curriculum of schools served to educate moral Christians with national values. History, literature, and geography were the main subjects that conveyed these values. The curriculum served the politics of irredentism as early as the 1920s.

After 1949, the Marxist–Leninist ideology prevailed. In the Rákosi era, all aspects of life were affected by the transposition of Stalinist ideological considerations. The political system was under ideological pressure. The Communist Party and its leaders led the country, and other political alternatives could not appear in the political landscape. It was a dictatorship with a very strong leader, Mátyás Rákosi. The main intention of politics was to follow the Soviet one-party political system.

In the education system, the curricula were rewritten (Dévényi 2013), communist symbols were introduced in schools, and the key political messages were published in classrooms and textbooks. After the revolution of 1956, the Kádár era brought some moderations. Nevertheless, the role of the curriculum in transmitting ideology was maintained. The Education Law of 1961 declared that 'Schools should teach students according to socialist worldview and ethics to be true patriots, virtuous and law-abiding citizens, who truly love our country and people, who serve socialism, peace and who are devoted to the brotherhood of nations, who build and defend the state of people" (Education Law of 1961: 1 – transl. by Dancs–Fülöp 2020: 49). In 1965, a new subject called the foundations of our worldview was introduced with the goal to transmit the concept of the socialist citizen (Dancs–Fülöp 2020). Over time, the pedagogical and methodological directives of the party's management were relaxed, and by the 1970s and 1980s they had lost their importance (Szabó 2000).

In the socialist period, political socialization had a dual nature, the influences were inconsistent (Szabó–Falus 2000). The formal agents of socialization, including school, conveyed the expectations of the state, while in the arenas of non-formal socialization people were confronted with actual, divergent social practices. E.g. in the Rákosi era, many people could not identify with the communist values imposed on them but did not voice this publicly. They retained their previous values and lifestyle within the family, but this did not manifest itself outside (Szabó 2000). After the revolution in 1956, the new party leader, János Kádár, made an apolitical compromise with the Hungarian society. Basically, the Kadar regime was also a one-party-based dictatorship following the Soviet political system, but people gradually got more personal freedom (mainly in the economy and culture), and their standard of living rose, in return for their silence in public issues. An exception was, naturally, if they spoke in favour of the system. As a result of the dual political socialization and the apolitical compromise of the Kádár regime, a pattern of turning away from public life and politics became increasingly strong.

3. Developments after the Regime Change

After the collapse of the one-party political systems in Central Eastern Europe, democratic regimes were established in the region in the 1990s. It seemed – and perhaps it was expected by societies and scholars – that the democratization process will follow the Western European democratic patterns. New constitutions guaranteed human and political rights. The new political framework provided free elections, new democratic political institutions were established, and the separation of powers was one of the main principles of state building. In

Hungary, a chancellor democracy was introduced based on the German model with a powerful Prime Minister who can be resigned only by a constructive non-confidence vote and with a weak President with rather representative roles in the political system.

The reformulation of the political systems in Central Eastern European countries, including Hungary, was similar to that of the Southern European countries in the 1970s (Dawisha–Parrott 1997, Ágh 1998). However, the economic transformation of the region showed a different picture compared to Southern Europe. The differences in the transition to a market economy were caused by the changing geopolitical environment in Europe. The bipolar world order was no longer valid due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, so Western European countries had no primary geopolitical interest in the economic integration of the post-communist countries. Transition literature emphasized (Offe 1991) these circumstances already in the 1990s. It can be said that recent political changes in the post-communist countries of Central Eastern Europe are partly determined by these early problems of transition. In some societies, the difficulties of the market economy transition also created negative attitudes towards democratic transformation. This phenomenon was described in the literature in the early 1990s, and democratic consolidation studies underline that the democratic development process in Central Eastern European countries shows certain specificities compared to Western democracies: e.g. the lower level of commitment to democratic norms, the low trust in democratic institutions, and the weaknesses in civil society control.

However, the region's desire to join the European Union has strengthened its commitment to democratic standards and the political-institutional framework that guarantees them. The accession criteria adopted by the European Council in 1993 (the Copenhagen criteria) set out the minimum democratic conditions adopted by the European Union. Since the 1990s, the post-communist states of Central Eastern Europe have had a clear objective of joining the EU and, accordingly, of building their political institutions in accordance with the Copenhagen criteria (democratic political institutions, guarantees of human and political freedoms and minority rights, and stability of the rule of law). Hungary joined the European Union in 2004, guaranteeing the functioning of democratic institutions.

In the first decade after the regime change, the Hungarian political system was more of a consensual democracy based on Lijphart's model (Lijphart 1999), with a moderate multiparty system, political alternation possibility, and checks and balances built into the political system. The legislature typically functioned as a multiparty (4–6) parliament. Ruling parties typically served one term in office, and the selection of the highest public officials and the heads of the most important political institutions was the result of political compromise and consensus (Körösényi–Tóth–Török 2007). However, the single-chamber Parliament and

the disproportionality of the electoral system did not fit in with the theory of consensual democracy model.

In the early 2000s, a centralization process could be observed in the Hungarian political system: the blocking of the party system started (a quasi-two-party system of Fidesz and the Hungarian Socialist Party and their satellite parties), and for the first time the same coalition government was able to form a government twice in a row (in 2002 and 2006). Although these trends had not yet changed the nature of the Hungarian political system generally, there was a slight turn towards a centralized, majority system. The personalization of politics and the presidentialization tendencies (Körösényi 2001) also infiltrated Hungary in the 2000s. Consequently, the Prime Minister became even stronger within the government. At the beginning of his 2006 term in office, Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány proclaimed political governance, as a new style of governance, including the importance of political rationality. Achieving political goals and policy programmes even faster was the most important aim of the Prime Minister in this framework. The Prime Minister was the main actor of political decision-making in the government. A new law in 2006[3] declared that the Prime Minister determines the general policy of the government.

This trend continued after 2010 with the Orbán governments. The role of the Prime Minister in determining government policy was included in the constitution. In the post-2010 period, new changes were introduced in the political system based on the 2/3 majority of the ruling parties in the Parliament. However, the new Fundamental Law in 2011 did not declare any significant changes in terms of human and political rights and regarding the main political institutions. The more significant (and most criticized) changes affecting political control were the narrowing of the powers of the Constitutional Court and the extension of the scope of laws requiring qualified majority voting. Later, the consolidation of state-affiliated media products into one company and the partisan composition of the media authority controlling the media market became the subject of criticism. Furthermore, changes in the electoral system strengthened the majoritarian nature of the Hungarian political system after 2010. Based on the new electoral law, only a relative majority of votes is enough to win a seat in the Parliament in the single-member districts. Moreover, cancelling the territory list and using the national party lists as a compensation list not only for nominees who lose the single-member district but also for winners increased the disproportionality of the electoral system.

Debates on the classification of the Hungarian political system started after Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's speech in 2014, in which he described the country as an illiberal state, meaning that political leaders did not deny liberalism as a value but did not see it as the essential element of state organization either (Orbán 2014). Scholars

3 Act LVII of 2006 on Central State Administration Bodies and the Status of Members of the Government and State Secretaries.

interpreted this speech as a new conception of the state, referring to Zakaria's (1997) thesis on the illiberal state, according to which there are well-functioning states that do not follow the model of mainstream Western, liberal democracies in their political values and conception of democracy. According to Prime Minister Orbán's interpretation of the illiberal state, the state and politics cannot be run solely based on Western models. There is an ongoing academic debate about the classification of the current Hungarian political system. The classification of a hybrid regime has appeared in the literature (Bozóki–Hegedűs 2018). According to scholars, the Hungarian political system can no longer be classified as a (liberal) democracy but rather as a hybrid regime in which the democratic rules of the game are functioning (free elections and the guarantee of fundamental rights), but the dominant parties – with a 2/3 majority – can change the political frameworks and limit the opposition's control function (Gyulai–Stein-Zalai 2016).

A specific interpretative framework of Orbán's governance is the plebiscitary leader democracy (Körösényi–Illés–Gyulai 2020), which derives the characteristics of the Orbán regime from the idea of the Weberian charismatic leader. This approach does not claim that the current Hungarian political system is purely democratic, but it also rejects the concepts of the hybrid regime and illiberal democracy. According to this typology, the Orbán regime is a leader democracy, in which the leader can shape the system according to his own political vision and programme within a democratic framework. 'Plebiscitary' instruments (e.g. regular consultations with the people) are used, which also make decisions appear to be within the democratic framework (the will of the community is expressed in the consultation, and the government shapes its decisions on this basis).

4. The Peculiarities of Political Socialization

According to Szabó and Falus (2000), the historical turns and the multiple interruptions of the 20th century resulted in a revolutive development of the model of political socialization[4] in Hungary. The authors thought this to be characteristic of the entire Central Eastern European post-socialist region, even though there have been many differences between these countries. The defining features of this revolutive development are the following (Szabó–Falus 2000: 383–385):

– Recurring changes in the basic framework of political socialization.
– Double socialization.

4 The *model of political socialization* describes how political power handles social and political conflicts (Szabó 2013: 26). The model consists of formal (e.g. schools and churches) and informal factors (e.g. family, cultural patterns, own experiences). The different types of the model can be described through institutional autonomy, the identity strategies used, and the possibilities they ensure citizens to think about or act regarding social and political issues (Szabó 2013).

– Citizens were forced into a subservient behaviour; it became their experience that they serve politics and not vice versa.
– Frequent political reversals forced people to develop adaptive life strategies and individual co-existence techniques, a central element of which was the circumvention of the institutional political world.
– The development of a socialist type of citizen was a direct political aim.
– The possibilities for the expression of different minority group identities were very limited, which weakened these identities.

According to Szabó (2009a, 2013), these experiences contrast with what happened in Western countries, where political socialization followed an evolutive path of development. The evolutive model of political socialization is characterized by conflict resolution. The diversity of interests is recognized, and tensions are handled through compromises. This model has a consistent structure: formal and informal socialization factors are interdependent. Political actors do not question the importance of democratic citizenship education. It is a fundamental principle that civic knowledge and social values can be taught, and decision-making skills can be developed (Szabó 2009a). Citizenship education lays down the foundations, based on which individuals can develop their own political identity autonomously (Szabó 2013).

Focusing on Hungary, Szabó (2013) identified three models of political socialization from 1949 until the 2010s: the conflict-denying model of the Rákosi regime, the conflict-avoiding model of the Kádár era, and the fragmented model that emerged after the regime change of 1989, the ninth major historical turn of the 20th century. Even though the institutional and legal framework for democratic socialization was created with the regime change, the democratic model of political socialization has not been established. This phenomenon is described by Bognár and Szabó (2017) as a mixed model, as it contains different features of both the democratic and the non-democratic socialization model. In the fragmented model, the relationship between socialization factors is weak and contingent, and conflicts easily escalate. The idea of citizenship education is of minor importance, and there is no consensus among political actors on its implementation in schools (Szabó 2013).

5. Citizenship Patterns

Considering the specificities of political socialization, it is an interesting question how citizenship patterns have evolved after the regime change. In Hungary, the level of political interest is low, as is that of external and internal political efficacy (Szabó–Oross 2017). Moreover, based on the ESS (European Social Survey) data for the period of 2002–2015, political interest is on the decline. Those who have

neutral or positive associations with politics are more interested in it. Whether someone has positive associations is mostly determined by whether they identify themselves as right-wing (Szabó–Oross 2018). The level of political participation – especially that of non-conventional forms of participation – is low, even if compared with other post-socialist countries (Nový 2014). Although it is typical for Central Eastern Europe that the support for norms is less translated into action by citizens (Bolzendahl–Coffé 2013), in Hungary the support for duty-based citizenship is already more present at the level of norms than that for engaged citizenship (Coffé–van der Lippe 2010).

Susánszky et al. (2021) examined citizens' satisfaction with democracy in the context of the intense political debates around the Orbán regime. Using ESS data, the authors showed that Hungarians on average tend to be dissatisfied with the state of democracy, but their satisfaction has been increasing since 2010. At the same time, there is a strong polarization of satisfaction with democracy: government voters are satisfied, while opposition voters are dissatisfied. In this regard, Hungary is one of the most polarized countries in Europe, with the gap in perceptions between voters of different party preferences widening over time.

The picture of the various aspects of citizenship patterns among young Hungarians is more detailed. Three decades of research shows that young Hungarians are alienated, disillusioned, and suspicious towards politics (Szabó–Örkény 1998, Sik 2017, Csákó 2018, Kalocsai–Kaposi 2019). A significant proportion of them are not concerned with political or public affairs and feel that they have nothing to say regarding such issues (Kalocsai–Kaposi 2019). Even in comparison with other post-socialist states, the proportion of alienated young people is high (Szabó–Dancs 2018). There is also a significant group who share authoritarian, anti-democratic views (Csákó 2009a, Sik 2017, Csákó 2018). 57% of the youth support democracy, but nearly half of this group is not satisfied with its functioning (Domokos et al. 2021), meaning that scepticism towards democracy is still widespread (Szabó–Székely 2016).

The level of young people's political knowledge is low (Szabó–Örkény 1998; Csákó 2009a, 2018), but it is the highest within the authoritarian group (Csákó 2018). The level of citizenship engagement is also low, within which individualistic, self-interested forms of engagement dominate, while political and social activities are negligible (Szabó–Dancs 2018). The passivity of the Hungarian youth is striking even within the post-socialist country bloc (Kovacic–Dolenec 2018, Szabó–Dancs 2018). Moreover, those holding democratic attitudes are politically less engaged than those having authoritarian attitudes (Kovács–Oross–Szabó 2017). Also, political activism is associated with intolerance (Csákó 2009b). The low level of trust in public institutions is a further feature, which spans three decades (Torney-Purta 2002, Domokos et al. 2021).

The patterns of citizenship that can be seen in Hungary decades after the regime change are, according to many Hungarian social scientists (e.g. Sik 2017, Csákó 2018), the imprint of the fragmented political socialization. Based on these empirical studies, we assume that two patterns of citizenship may be present in Hungary, and probably also in other post-socialist countries. The first is the alienated citizen, whose fundamental attitude to public life is characterized by alienation. Alienated citizens think of themselves as citizens only at the level of their legal duties and do not believe that they themselves can shape the relationship between the state and the citizen in an active way. Their level of trust in institutions is low. Superficially, this description can be identified with the widely discussed image of the 'disengaged', 'disconnected', 'disillusioned', or 'passive' citizen, which is also found in mature democracies. However, the roots of the phenomenon are at most partially identical. We believe that the historical context cannot be ignored to understand the problem. In Hungary, the decades-old political culture of apoliticism is likely to play a role.

The other citizenship pattern that we believe should receive attention is that of fragmented citizenship, extending the adjective used by Ildikó Szabó to describe the specialties of political socialization. Inconsistent socialization influences have probably resulted in citizenship patterns that cannot be reduced to democratic or non-democratic categories but are a mixture of these. Unlike many 'hyphenated citizenships' (Joppke 2008: 37 cited by Moro 2016), neither alienated nor fragmented citizenship is an ideal to aspire to but empirical phenomena that citizenship education should address.

6. Citizenship Education in Hungary after the Regime Change

The legal framework for democratic citizenship education in schools was established shortly after the regime change. Even though the institutional frames have undergone several changes since then, one thing has been constant. The education system has failed to meet the official expectations (Murray 2017). Even though educational acts and subordinate legislation made it clear that schools have responsibilities in this area, schools have tried to avoid the tasks (Szabó–Falus 2000, Gáti 2010). What is more, the political socialization of teachers themselves has been deficient (Veszprémi 2017), which has also been reflected in the taboo culture around social and political issues in schools. Teachers have not realized that reticence and silence also have a socializing effect (Csákó 2009a). In the following, we describe particular areas of school-based citizenship education.

6.1 The Role of the National Core Curriculum

6.1.1 Background

The National Core Curriculum (NCC) is an important regulatory tool that defines the value preferences of the public education system (Kalocsai–Kaposi 2019). There have been five NCCs since the regime change (1995, 2003, 2007, 2012, and 2020),[5] which differ in their regulatory paradigm (autonomous or normative), the values they represent in the field of citizenship education, and how they organize the teaching of civics. A detailed discussion of these differences is beyond the scope of this paper and will be the subject of a separate one. However, in the next few paragraphs, we highlight some important differences.

6.1.2 Changes in the Regulatory Paradigm

The first NCC after the regime change, in 1995, was born in the spirit of decentralization. There were two levels of content regulation (NCC and local curriculum), which gave schools considerable freedom. However, only a limited number of institutions could take advantage of this, and for the majority the pressure to innovate was more of a burden than an opportunity. The 1999 amendment to Act LXXIX of 1993 on Public Education introduced the framework curricula as an intermediate level of regulation, which sought to overcome this problem and facilitate the implementation of NCC by schools. This can be interpreted as a kind of recentralization step, but freedom was not curtailed, the choice of framework curricula was only an option for schools. This changed with the introduction of Act CXC of 2011 on National Public Education when the framework curriculum became a compulsory element. At the same time, schools could not only choose from the ministry's framework curricula but also continued to have the possibility to choose alternative accredited framework curricula approved by the minister (Chrappán 2014, 2022).

The introduction of NCC 2012 was a further step in the centralizing turn of educational governance, as it shifted from an autonomous regulatory paradigm

5 NCC 1995, 2003, and 2007 were accepted by left-wing while NCC 2012 and 2020 by right-wing governments. Related legislation:
– Government Decree 130/1995 (X. 26) on the publication of the National Core Curriculum;
– Government Decree 243/2003 (XII. 17) on the publication, introduction, and application of the National Core Curriculum;
– Government Decree 202/2007 (VII. 31) on the amendment of Government Decree 243/2003 (XII. 17) on the publication, introduction, and application of the National Core Curriculum;
– Government Decree 110/2012 (VI. 4) on the publication, introduction, and application of the National Core Curriculum;
– Government Decree 5/2020 (I. 31) on the amendment of Government Decree 110/2012 (VI. 4) on the publication, introduction, and application of the National Core Curriculum.

towards a normative regulatory paradigm. The stated aim of this core curriculum was the creation of value-based school education accompanied by a more rigorous regulation of content and a redefinition of educational objectives. Since 2019, the choice of framework curricula has been further narrowed. Schools can only choose an alternative curriculum through an individual approval procedure, and the content of the alternative curriculum can deviate from the ministry's curriculum by up to 30 percent. This means that the latest NCC 2020 became a core element of a highly centralized curriculum regulation. In terms of content, it is a continuation of NCC 2012 but with a more modern and flexible approach to learning and teaching. However, these two opposing trends – strong centralization and flexible learning organization that considers individual needs – do not seem to be compatible (Chrappán 2022).

6.1.3 An Example of Changes in Value Preferences

A review of the national core curricula reveals several changes in values related to citizenship education. It is not possible to describe these in detail in this study, but to illustrate the changes, we analyse the shift in one motif, i.e. changes in the relationship with Europe. This is of particular importance as students are not only Hungarian but also EU citizens.

For this brief analysis, three of the five NCCs were analysed: the first (1995), the last (2000), and the third NCC, which was introduced in 2007, three years after Hungary had joined the European Union. The documents were not analysed in their entirety. After familiarization with the whole dataset, the sections that can be considered data-rich from the point of view of the research question were selected and involved in the analysis.

The idea of belonging to Europe is already present in NCC 1995: It encourages a positive attitude towards European values – understood as humanist values –, underpinning a sense of European identity. It bases the emotional relationship on the appreciation of the achievements of European history and underlines Hungary's contribution to them. The document highlights the importance of openness, understanding, and respect for the people of Europe. Students are expected to be aware and have a critical view of the strengthening of European unity, as the document highlights its contradictions as well as its importance.

Compared to NCC 1995, the civic horizon is broadening in NCC 2007. This document sets higher expectations for students, who are now citizens of 'a wider social, political, economic, and cultural community', the European Union. It makes explicit that citizenship education has a twofold purpose: It should serve to educate not only national but also EU citizens. Accordingly, it calls for increased knowledge of the European Union, participation in decision-making from the local to the European level, and critical attitudes to the decisions taken.

In addition to national identity, it is equally important to address the deepening of European identity. Accordingly, the document repeatedly refers to students as EU citizens, and it refers to Europe as the wider home of Hungarians.

The image of Europe in NCC 2020 is changing significantly. First, compared to the 2007 document, the topic is driven into the background. Secondly, the reference to EU citizenship disappears, and no related knowledge elements, attitudes, or means of action are mentioned. Thirdly, ideas about Europe appear mostly in terms of identity. The aim is to create a 'European civilization identity' in a narrower sense, "based on the fundamental values of antiquity, Jewish-Christian culture, and civil law'.

In sum, there was a clear vision shift in the policy rhetoric on citizenship regarding the European orientations during the past quarter century in Hungary. A sense of belonging to Europe is present in all three documents analysed. In NCC 1995, it is loosely defined and reflects openness towards humanist values and other European nations. In NCC 2007, a strong European identity is present, which is as important as the national identity. Students are European citizens who must be prepared to be able to live up to the increased possibilities in many facets of life, including the political realm. Diversity and multiculturalism are part of being European. In NCC 2020, a clear shift appears, the European identity is understood in a narrower, more prescriptive sense: it should be based on Jewish-Christian norms.

This brief analysis illustrates that major changes have taken place in the value preferences conveyed by NCCs. Such changing expectations have required a constant adaptation from teachers (Dancs–Fülöp 2020). This task has also been fraught with contradictions. While the symbolic parts (e.g. the preamble) of the various NCCs adopted by different educational governments have expressed sharply contrasting values and various pedagogical paradigms, other parts of the NCCs have shown a surprising continuity, often containing textual repetition. This has resulted in textually incoherent, cluttered, and increasingly unclear national core curricula (Jakab 2019). This might explain why everyday practice in schools has diverged from the expectations of NCCs (Jakab 2019, Kalocsai–Kaposi 2019).

6.1.4 Civics as Subject

Since the regime change in Hungary, civics has not found its place in school education, and a kind of competitive relationship has developed with traditional history teaching. This process is described in detail by Jakab (2018). In the following, we will highlight some important findings based on his work.

Since the regime change, history has played a prominent role in school education. Although the changes to this subject in the various national core curricula have been accompanied by heated debates, the basic structure,

objectives, and requirements of the subject have remained relatively stable. By contrast, the status of civics has been constantly changing. In NCC 1995, the educational objectives of civics were emphasized, but the way in which they were implemented was left to schools. Thus, only in a few innovative institutions was this area given real attention. In most schools, it was relegated to the domain of history. In the 2000 framework curricula, there was an attempt to give more emphasis to civics. It was possible to teach it as a separate module subject or to integrate it into history, but with more emphasis. However, NCC 2003 and NCC 2007 made no further effort to strengthen this objective, which again led to uncertainty about the status of civics. NCC 2012 abolished the possibility of teaching civics as a separate subject, and it was integrated into history for a small number of hours (Jakab 2018).

The teaching of civics was therefore constantly present at the level of educational regulations, but always in a changing form. This may be one reason why its status at the school level has not been consolidated. In practice, it has often disappeared, replaced entirely by the teaching of history. However, the linking of the two areas does not preclude the inclusion of civics in the school curriculum. Yet the pedagogical culture required to teach history and civics is very different, and history teachers have not been equipped to harmonize the two in recent decades (Jakab 2018).

Most recently, NCC 2020 reintroduced civics as a separate subject, taught in the 8th grade in primary school and in the 4th in general secondary school, for one teaching hour per week. The learning objectives of NCC 2020 cover the following themes:

1. The relationship between the individual and their various communities. The document raises the question of the individual's obligations to their smaller or larger communities (family, local community, nation) and of reconciling individual goals with community norms. There is a strong emphasis on different community identities, patriotism and defence being prominent themes.

2. Active social participation. The aim is to be familiar with fundamental human rights, the Fundamental Law of Hungary, state and local institutions and organizations. The importance of understanding the electoral system and the legislative process is also emphasized. The document also covers social responsibility, equal opportunities, and how to support those in need.

3. Everyday life. The aim is to equip students with the knowledge they need to organize their adult lives. They should be able to deal with formalities, employment and should have sufficient knowledge of the justice system and the care systems.

4. Economic, financial, and environmental sustainability. A number of objectives are set to promote economic empowerment and financial literacy such as increasing knowledge about credits, taxation, and starting a business.

Environmental sustainability is most pronounced through conscious consumer behaviour.

5. Cooperation, communication, and debating. The aim is to develop these skills, respect each other's values and opinions, develop a reflective and critical attitude, and consume media in an informed way.

Overall, making civics a separate subject is a step forward. The learning objectives of NCC 2020 also include elements that can help to overcome the patterns of alienated citizenship and fragmented citizenship. Mainly elements for active social participation and the development of debate culture can be considered as such, especially if they are not reduced to mere knowledge transfer. However, as we have seen, the development of citizenship knowledge and skills has been hampered in previous decades not by the objectives set at document level, but by their implementation at school level. It is questionable whether the teaching of the new subject is accompanied by the adequate preparation of teachers. Is there sufficient support for changes in pedagogical culture necessary for the teaching of civics? In its absence, this experiment will not yield results. In addition, given the small number of lessons in only two grades, it is worth examining to what extent other areas of school education are conducive to overcome the current dysfunctional citizenship patterns.

6.2 Further Areas of School-Based Citizenship Education

6.2.1 Pedagogical Objectives

The results of a recent survey (Kalocsai–Kaposi 2019) show that the pedagogical objectives of citizenship education are neglected by both headmasters and teachers. Goals like encouraging students to express their opinions or developing critical thinking skills are not sufficiently reflected in everyday practice. Frontal teaching methods continue to predominate, as the facilitator role of teachers is not yet widespread. The change in pedagogical culture long called for by experts has not taken place. This might be because the pedagogical skills required to develop an open classroom climate – which has the potential to be an effective form of citizenship education (Torney-Purta 2002, Campbell 2008, Gainous–Martens 2012, Martens–Gainous 2013) – do not come to the front in initial teacher education at all or they are presented – paradoxically – on the theoretical level (Gáti 2010). The results of Kalocsai and Kaposi also show that 40 percent of headmasters believe that students should not be given a greater say in school affairs. They are also reluctant to discuss institutional matters in meetings involving the whole school community.

6.2.2 Opportunities to Practise Democracy in School

Studies suggest that the different opportunities provided by the law to practise democracy in schools (the student government and community service) have been misused (Bodó 2016, Bodó et al. 2017, Veszprémi 2017). In the case of student governments, neither teachers nor students seem to comprehend the democratic function or the political socializing role of the student council. Only 43% of students think that the student council is an important institution, and 70% reject the possibility of getting involved (Veszprémi 2017).

Community service was introduced in 2012. It is compulsory as only those students can sit for the school-leaving exam who have completed 50 hours of community service prior to it. It typically takes place outside of the school and can be fulfilled, among others, at the local government, in public institutions, at non-governmental organizations or churches. However, schools are responsible for the administration, and they must organize a preparatory and a final session (Ministerial Decree 20/2012 (VIII. 31), paragraph 133(1–5)). These sessions are crucial to realizing the pedagogical aims of community service. They provide the possibility to clarify the learning objectives with students and increase their motivation to share and reflect on the experiences within the school community. Despite this, the vast majority of students reported that they did not have the opportunity to process their experiences in such professional circumstances (Bodó et al. 2017). The results of a survey conducted in 2015 show that teachers responsible for coordinating community service typically do not have the knowledge of students and host organizations to support a good match between the two sides. In addition, they barely consider their tasks related to community service as primarily pedagogical (Bodó 2016). After completing the service, only half of the students thought that it had been definitely a positive experience and even less, only 2 out of 10 students, believed that they would surely take part in any voluntary activity after the final exam (Bodó et al. 2017).

6.2.3 Historical Legacies

Finally, we would like to highlight two features relating to the historical context. During socialism, schools could not provide real-life opportunities for students to represent their interests and practise compromise seeking (Szabó 2000). As the above-mentioned examples show, such democratic socialization patterns could not develop even after the regime change. The Hungarian school system is still strongly hierarchically organized and mainly based on frontal teaching methods. This does not help children and young people to develop and practise their advocacy techniques in real power relations.

The development of democratic citizenship education in schools has also been hampered by a misinterpretation of a legal provision since the beginning of the 1990s, which aims to ban party politics from schools. Referring to this, however, all types of political and public activities have been banned from the institutions (Jakab 2019). Citizenship education is often identified by teachers and headmasters with the interpretation of party-political debates and relations, and they believe that this cannot be their task because of the above-mentioned regulation. In this sense, therefore, the Hungarian school system still carries the pre-transition pattern of thinking that citizenship education is a kind of reaction, an adaptation to the current political power. This narrow approach hinders the development of democratic civic competences.

7. Towards a Common Research Agenda

The aim of this paper was to draw attention to, and partly respond to, two gaps in the English-language literature on the debates on the concept of citizenship and on research on citizenship education.

Our first point was the relative paucity of empirical research in the citizenship debate (Moro 2016) and the Anglo-Saxon dominance in the conceptualization of citizenship (Villalobos–Morel–Treviño 2021). We believe that further empirical research is certainly needed to explore and deepen our understanding of citizenship patterns in post-socialist countries. We hypothesise that two citizenship patterns may be significant in the region, posing specific challenges for citizenship education. One of these is alienated citizenship, and the other is fragmented citizenship. However, both citizenship patterns are only hypotheses for the time being, and an empirical investigation into these categories is necessary. A first step is to understand better the meanings mass publics attach to citizenship, how they describe the 'good citizen'. As these personal conceptualizations might influence citizenship behaviour, it is also important to understand what kind of behaviours are connected to specific conceptualizations. How collective and individual socialization experiences and a particular context influence citizenship conceptualization is also of interest. As these questions focus on exploring individuals' understandings and experiences from their own perspectives, using qualitative methods would be an adequate approach. Surveys with structured question format used to assess people's ideas of what makes a good citizen bear the risk of failing to reflect the good citizen portfolio of the respondent (Jennings 2015). This might be particularly the case in the context of fragmented political socialization.

The other gap we wanted to address was the lack of English-language literature on how school-based citizenship education in post-socialist countries actually

works (Hippe 2008). In this paper, we have presented several specificities of the Hungarian case. Since the regime change, education policy has continuously addressed the issue of citizenship education in schools. However, the objectives set out in documents have not been translated into practice. Both the sharp changes in educational policy in this area and the historical legacies have led teachers to rather neglect these tasks. Thus, the current form of citizenship education can hardly contribute to overcoming either alienated or fragmented citizenship patterns. Furthermore, we believe that we have illustrated the claim of Hedtke et al. (2007: 8–9) that transition countries face specific challenges that make it impossible to simply implement the 'prefabricated institutional or conceptual elements of citizenship education'. This is confirmed by the results of Jakab (2019). According to him, some Hungarian reform attempts to implement modern citizenship education were top-down and aimed at spreading American and British pedagogical traditions that were contrary to the Hungarian ones. These attempts were resisted, and the Anglo-Saxon models failed to take root in the Hungarian education system.

We believe that case studies from other post-socialist countries could help us identify whether there are similar barriers in the field of citizenship education. This could trigger a common reflection on what the main challenges in the field are and how they could be addressed. Moreover, any good examples from the region would be more likely to provide inspiration than the Anglo-Saxon tradition that is currently often cited as an example.

In our view, a better understanding of the two areas outlined above would allow for the development of citizenship education programmes that reflect the specific challenges of countries with a short democratic history. And while we believe that similarities are likely to be identifiable among the post-socialist countries, we do not wish to suggest a simplistic view that the challenges in the region are the same. We believe that cultural, social, economic, and political differences are important contextual factors that should also be considered. Nevertheless, we think that the exchange of information and knowledge transfer between these countries could play an important role in the development of local school-based citizenship education.

References

ÁGH, Attila. 1998. *The Politics of Central Europe*. London: Thousand Oaks – California: Sage.

BODÓ, Márton. 2016. A pedagógusszerep és az Iskolai Közösségi Szolgálat. *KAPOCS* 15(2): 3–14.

BODÓ, Márton et al.. 2017. Az iskolai közösségi szolgálat a 9. és 12. évfolyamos diákok véleménye tükrében. *Új Pedagógiai Szemle* 2017/9–10: 41–71.

BOGNÁR, Adrienn–Szabó, Andrea. 2017. Politikai szocializációs modellek Magyarországon, 1990–2016. In: Szabó, Andrea–Oross, Dániel (eds), *Csendesek vagy lázadók? A hallgatók politikai orientációi Magyarországon (2011–2015)*. Szeged: Belvedere Meridionale. 16–36.

BOLZENDAHL, Catherine–COFFÉ, Hilde. 2013. Are 'Good' Citizens 'Good' Participants? Testing Citizenship Norms and Political Participation across 25 Nations. *Political Studies* 61(1_suppl): 45–65. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12010.

BOZÓKI, András–HEGEDŰS, Daniel. 2018. An Externally Constrained Hybrid Regime: Hungary in the European Union. *Democratization* 25(7): 1173–1189. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2018.1455664.

BRUCH, Sarah K.–SOSS, Joe. 2018. Schooling as a Formative Political Experience: Authority Relations and the Education of Citizens. *Perspectives on Politics* 16(1): 36–57. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1537592717002195.

CAMPBELL, David E. 2008. Voice in the Classroom: How an Open Classroom Climate Fosters Political Engagement Among Adolescents. *Political Behavior* 30: 437–454.

CHRAPPÁN, Magdolna. 2014. Tantervi szabályozás és intézményi implementáció. *Educatio* 23(1): 26–35.

2022. A NAT evolúciója 2010–2021 között. *Educatio* 31(1): 30–47. https://doi.org/10.1556/2063.31.2022.1.3.

COFFÉ, Hilde–van der LIPPE, Tanja. 2010. Citizenship Norms in Eastern Europe. *Social Indicators Research* 96 (3): 479–496. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11205-009-9488-8.

CRITTENDEN, Jack–LEVINE, Peter. 2016. Civic Education. In: Zalta, E. N. (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2018 Edition)*. Available at: https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/civic-education/.

CSÁKÓ, Mihály. 2009a. Demokráciára nevelés az iskolában. In: Somlai, Péter et al. (eds), *Látás-viszonyok – Tanulmányok Angelusz Róbert 70. születésnapjára*. Budapest: Pallas Kiadó. 155–188.

2009b. Szakmatanulás és demokrácia. Vázlat a szakmunkástanulók politikai szocilaizációjáról. *Új Pedagógiai Szemle* 10(3): 36–44.

2018. Politikai szocializáció serdülőkorban. *Metszetek* 7(3): 27–42. http://dx.doi.org/10.18392/metsz/2018/3/1.

DANCS, Katinka–FÜLÖP, Márta. 2020. Past and Present of Social Science Education in Hungary. *JSSE – Journal of Social Science Education* 19(1): 47–71. http://dx.doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4119/jsse-3273.

DAWISHA, Karen–PARROTT, Bruce (eds). 1997. *The Consolidation of Democracy in East-Central Europe*. Cambridge, U.K. – New York, USA: Cambridge University Press.

DÉVÉNYI, Anna. 2013. Bűnbakból vádló, vádlóból bűnbak. Ellenségképek a 20. századi magyar történelemtankönyvekben Mohács, Világos és Trianon példáján. In: Gyarmati, György (ed.), *Bűnbak minden időben: bűnbakok a magyar és az egyetemes történelemben*. Pécs: Kronosz Kiadó. 96–111.

2020. A középfokú oktatás társadalompolitikai vetületei a Horthy-korszakban. *SZÁZADOK* 154(1): 81–106.

DOMOKOS, Tamás et al.. 2021. *Magyar Fiatalok 2020. Kérdések és válaszok – fiatalokról fiataloktól*. Erzsébet Ifjúsági Alap. Available at: http://unp.hu/hir_docs/227_magyar_fiatalok_2020_web.pdf [last accessed on: 16.12.2021].

GAINOUS, Jason–MARTENS, Allison M. 2012. The Effectiveness of Civic Education: Are "Good" Teachers Actually Good for "All" Students? *American Politics Research* 40(2):232–266. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1532673X11419492.

GALLIE, Walter Bryce. (1956) Essentially Contested Concepts. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 56: 167–198.

GALSTON, William A. 2001. Political Knowledge, Political Engagement and Civic Education. *Annual Review of Political Science* 4: 217–234.

GÁTI, Annamária. 2010. *„Alattvalók vagy polgárok lesznek?" A fiatalok aktív állampolgársági készségei Magyarországon nemzetközi összehasonlításban*. T-TUDOK. Available at: http://www.t-tudok.hu/file/alattvalok_vagy_polgarok_lesznek_kutatasi_osszefoglalo_2010.pdf.

GYULAI, Attila–STEIN-ZALAI, Juliane. 2016. Hibrid rezsimek és a szürke zóna: új válaszok a politikai rezsimek rendszertanának örök kérdéseire. *Metszetek*. http://dx.doi.org/10.18392/metsz/2016/2/9.

HEDTKE, Reinhold–ZIMENKOVA, Tatjana–HIPPE, Thorsten. 2007. A Trinity of Transformation, Europeanisation, and Democratisation? Current Research on Citizenship Education in Europe. *JSSE – Journal of Social Science Education* 6(2): 5–20. http://dx.doi.org/10.4119/JSSE-381.

HIPPE, Thorsten. 2008. Does the Democratization of Polities Entail the Democratization of Citizenship Education? A Theoretical Framework for Researching the Democratic Quality of Citizenship Education in Transformation Countries and Elsewhere. *Journal of Social Science Education* 9(1): 36–57. http://dx.doi.org/10.2390/JSSE-V7-I1-1055.

JAKAB, György. 2018. A társadalomismeret tantárgy integrációs törekvései – A történelem és a társadalomismeret versengő együttműködése. *Új Pedagógiai Szemle* 68(9–10): 97–104.

2019. *Bevezetés az iskolai demokratikus állampolgári nevelés integrációs problémáinak diszkurzív vizsgálatába*. Doctaral dissertation, University of Pécs.

JENNINGS, M. Kent. 2015. The Dynamics of Good Citizenship Norms. In: Poguntke, Thomaset et al. (eds), *Citizenship and Democracy in an Era of Crisis*. London: Routledge. 93–111.

KALOCSAI, Janka–KAPOSI, József. 2019. Tanítjuk vagy tanuljuk a demokráciát? Egy felmérés és tanulságai. *Új Pedagógiai Szemle* 69(11–12): 17–32.

KAWASHIMA-GINSBERG, Kei–LEVINE, Peter. 2014. Diversity in Classrooms: The Relationship between Deliberative and Associative Opportunities in School and Later Electoral Engagement: Diversity and Electoral Engagement. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy* 14(1): 394–414. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/asap.12038.

KEATING, Avril. 2014. *Education for Citizenship in Europe*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK. http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/9781137019578.

KENNEDY, Kerry John. 2019. *Civic and Citizenship Education in Volatile Times. Preparing Students for Citizenship in the 21st Century*. Singapore: Springer.

KOVACIC, Marko–DOLENEC, Danijela. 2018. Youth Participation in Eastern Europe in the Age of Austerity. In: Pickard, S.–Bessant, J. (eds), *Young People Re-generating Politics in Times of Crises*. Palgrave Macmillan. 375–394.

KOVÁCS, Tamás–OROSS, Dániel–SZABÓ, Andrea. 2017. A magyar egyetemisták és főiskolások demokráciához fűződő viszonya. *Metszetek* 6(3): 47–69.

KÖRÖSÉNYI, András. 2001. Parlamentáris vagy „elnöki" kormányzás? Az Orbán-kormány összehasonlító perspektívából. *Századvég* 6(20): 3–38.

KÖRÖSÉNYI, András–ILLÉS, Gábor–GYULAI, Attila. 2020. *Az Orbán-rezsim: a plebiszciter vezérdemokrácia elmélete és gyakorlata*. Budapest: Osiris Kiadó: TK PTI.

KÖRÖSÉNYI, András–TÓTH, Csaba–TÖRÖK, Gábor. 2007. *A magyar politikai rendszer*. 3rd, rev. ed. Budapest: Osiris.

LANGTON, Kenneth P.–JENNINGS, M. Kent. 1968. Political Socialization and the High School Civics Curriculum in the United States. *American Political Science Review* 62: 852–867. http://dx.doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2307/1953435.

LEYDET, Dominique. 2017. Citizenship. In: Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2017 Edition)*. Available at: https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/citizenship/.

LIJPHART, Arend. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

MARTENS, Allison M.–GAINOUS, Jonas. 2013. Civic Education and Democratic Capacity: How Do Teachers Teach and What Works? *Faculty Scholarship*. 35.

METZ, Edward C.–YOUNIS, James. 2005. Longitudinal Gains in Civic Development through School-Based Required Service. *Political Psychology* 26(3): 413–437. http://dx.doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2005.00424.x.

MORO, Giovanni. 2016. Democratic Citizenship and Its Changes as Empirical Phenomenon. *SocietàMutamentoPolitica* 7: 21–40. http://dx.doi.org/10.13128/SMP-18274.

MURRAY, Rebecca. 2017. Civic Education as a Means of Democratization. In: Radu, Bogdan Mihai–Végh, Zsuzsanna (eds), *Frontiers of Democracy: Embedding Democratic Values in Central and Eastern Europe. Good Practices and Limits of Transferability*. Budapest: Centre for European Neighborhood Studies. 55–68.

NEUNDORF, Anja–NIEMI, Richard. G.–SMETS, Kaat. 2016. The Compensation Effect of Civic Education on Political Engagement: How Civics Classes Make Up for Missing Parental Socialization. *Political Behavior* 38(4): 921–949. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-016-9341-0.

NOVÝ, Michal. 2014. Electoral and Non-Electoral Participation in the Visegrád Countries: Complements or Substitutes? *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures* 28(4): 863–886.

OFFE, Claus. 1991. Capitalism by Democratic Design? Democratic Theory Facing the Triple Transition in East Central Europe. *Social Research: An International Quarterly* 58: 865–892.

ORBÁN, Viktor. 2014. *A munkaalapú állam korszaka következik*. Tusványos. Available at: https://mandiner.hu/cikk/20140728_orban_viktor_a_munkaalapu_allam_korszaka_kovetkezik_beszed_tusvanyos_2014.

SIK, Domonkos. 2017. A politikai kultúra mintázatai Európában. *Educatio* 26(1): 49–62. https://doi.org/10.1556/2063.26.2017.1.5.

SUSÁNSZKY, Pál–SZABÓ, Andrea–OROSS, Dániel. 2021. A demokráciával való elégedettség és a demokrácia értelmezése Magyarországon. *socio.hu* 11(2): 30–57. http://dx.doi.org/10.18030/socio.hu.2021.2.30.

SZABÓ, Andrea–OROSS, Dániel. 2017. Factors of Political Interest – The Internal and External Political Efficacy in Different Regions of Europe. *Človek a spoločnosť* 20(4): 12–26.

2018. A politikai érdeklődésre ható tényezők európai perspektívában – a magyar eset. *socio.hu* 2: 72–94. http://dx.doi.org/10.18030/socio.hu.2018.2.72.

SZABÓ, Andrea–SZÉKELY, Levente (eds). 2016. *Magyar Ifjúság Kutatás 2016*. Új Nemzedék Központ. Available at: http://www.ujnemzedek.hu/sites/default/files/atoms/files/magyar_ifjusag_2016_a4_web_0.pdf.

SZABÓ, Éva–DANCS, Katinka. 2018. Hungary: Participation Crisis, Disappointed

Youths. In: Krzywosz-Rynkiewicz, B.–Zalewska, A. M.–Kennedy, K. J. (eds), *Young People and Active Citizenship in Post-Soviet Times: A Challenge for Citizenship Education*. London–New York: Routledge–Taylor & Franics Group.

SZABÓ, Ildikó. 2000. *A pártállam gyermekei*. Budapest: Új Mandátum Kiadó.

2009a. A politikai szocializáció fragmentált modellje a rendszerváltás utáni Magyarországon. In: Pusztai, Gabriella–Rébay, Magdolna (eds), *Kié az oktatáskutatás? Tanulmányok Kozma Tamás 70. születésnapjára*. Debrecen: Csokonai. 166–177.

2009b. *Nemzet és szocializáció: a politika szerepe az identitások formálódásában Magyarországon, 1867–2006*. Budapest: L'Harmattan.

2013. Folyamatosságok a változásban: kontinuitások a rendszerváltás utáni politikai szocializáció mintáiban. *Metszetek* 2(2–3): 22–39.

SZABÓ, Ildikó–FALUS, Katalin. 2000. Politikai szocializáció közép-európai módra. A magyar sajátosságok. *Magyar Pedagógia* 100(4): 383–400.

SZABÓ, Ildikó–ÖRKÉNY, Antal. 1998. *Tizenévesek állampolgári kultúrája*. Budapest: Minoritás Alapítvány.

TORNEY-PURTA, Judith. 2002. Patterns in the Civic Knowledge, Engagement, and Attitudes of European Adolescents: The IEA Civic Education Study. *European Journal of Education* 37(2): 129–141. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-3435.00098.

TREVIÑO, Ernesto et al. (eds). 2021. *Good Citizenship for the Next Generation: A Global Perspective Using IEA ICCS 2016 Data*. Cham: Springer International Publishing. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-75746-5.

VESZPRÉMI, Attila. 2017. Középiskolás diákok politikai szocializációja – konferenciabeszámoló. *Új Pedagógiai Szemle* 9–10: 133–143.

VILLALOBOS, Cristobal–MOREL, Maria Jesus–TREVIÑO, Ernesto. 2021. A Comparative Approach to Notions of Good Citizenship. In: Treviño, Ernesto et al. (eds), *Good Citizenship for the Next Generation. IEAR, Volume 12*. Cham: Springer International Publishing. 51–66.

ZAKARIA, Fareed. 1997. The Rise of Illiberal Democracy. *Foreign Affairs* 76(6): 22. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/20048274.

Acta Univ. Sapientiae, European and Regional Studies, **21** (2022) 25–43

DOI: 10.2478/auseur-2022-0002

The Hungarian–Czechoslovak Relations from the Hungarian Perspective

János SÁRINGER
PhD, Head of Department, Associate Professor of Budapest Business School,
Head of the Central European Regional Research Group
e-mail: Saringer.Janos@uni-bge.hu

Abstract. As a result of the first free and democratic elections in Hungary, in May 1990, József Antall formed a government, whose foreign policy goal was the restoration of the sovereignty of Hungary and the support and representation of the Euro-Atlantic integration and of the Hungarians across the border. In the Hungarian–Czechoslovak bilateral relations, the new Hungarian government's aim was to expand the political relations in both federal and republican levels. It was Hungary's interest that serious legacies, such as the issue of the Bős–Nagymaros Dam system, should not hold back the general advance, wherefore a solution appropriate for both parties had to be found. Hungary considered Czechoslovakia as an outstanding economic partner. The Antall government took steps so that the fate and future of the Slovakian Hungarians would be ensured in accordance with the European development standards. One of the key issues in this was the consistent Czechoslovak condemnation of the principle of collective guilt, the Beneš decrees. During the dialogues, certain elements of the common historical past returned several times.

Keywords: Antall's foreign policy, diplomatic relations, Visegrád Three, Hungarian minority, Bős–Nagymaros Dam System

The Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF)[1] won the first free and democratic elections in Hungary. In May 1990, József Antall[2] formed a government, whose foreign policy goal was the restoration of the sovereignty of Hungary (withdrawal of Soviet troops, dissolution of the Warsaw Pact (WAPA), and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON)) and the support and representation of the Euro-Atlantic integration and of the Hungarians across the border.

1 The Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) was established on 27 September 1987 in Lakitelek. Its first president, József Antall, was elected on 21 October 1989. After winning the 1990 elections, MDF formed a government with the Independent Smallholders Party and KDNP. In the first half of the 1990s, several members were expelled from the party. Between 1999 and 2010, the party was chaired by Ibolya Dávid. After the 2010 election failure, the party disbanded on 8 April 2011.

2 József Antall (1932–1993): historian, Prime Minister of Hungary from 25 May 1990 until his death on 12 December 1993.

In the Hungarian–Czechoslovak bilateral relations, the new Hungarian government's aim was to expand the political relations on both federal and republican levels. The basis and mutually beneficial order of cooperation between the two countries might have been provided by the pan-European integration. It was Hungary's interest that serious legacies, such as the issue of the Bős–Nagymaros Dam system, should not hold back the general advance, wherefore a solution appropriate for both parties had to be found. Hungary considered Czechoslovakia as an outstanding economic partner, as it was in its interest to bridge the transition to the new settlement system after the collapse of the COMECON. In addition, the Hungarian presence in the federal state was significant as well. The basic shortcoming of the Hungarian–Czechoslovak economic cooperation was that modern forms of production cooperation and integration relations did not play a dominant role. The trade turnover characteristic of the structure of the COMECON became surplus in the spring of 1990 because the current ruble-based accounting system was not in line with economic changes. In addition, cross-border, regional, and sub-regional relations have become more valuable, some of which have already grown into multilateral relations.

When Mátyás Szűrös's[3] letter to Václav Havel[4] was published on 12 March 1990, the interim President of the Hungarian Republic, Árpád Göncz,[5] expressed his concern about the anti-Hungarian nationalist manifestations in Slovakia and called for the needs of the Hungarian minority to be taken into account in the development of the new Czechoslovak legal and institutional system. In a resolution published on 15 March 1990, the Slovak government described this letter as a step that had whipped up national passions. On the part of Czechoslovakia, preparations for the ceremony scheduled for 20 March 1990, on the occasion of laying the foundation stone for the future building of the Hungarian Cultural Centre in Bratislava, were halted.[6]

The Antall government took steps so that the fate and future of the Slovakian Hungarians would be ensured in accordance with the European development standards. One of the key issues in this regard was the consistent Czechoslovak condemnation of the principle of collective guilt about the Beneš decrees. From the Slovak side, accusations were often made that ethnic differences in southern Slovakia were exacerbated by statements made by some Hungarian politicians.

3 Mátyás Szűrös (1933–) was the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament between 1985 and 1989 and the chairman of the Parliament from 10 March 1989. He proclaimed the Republic of Hungary on 23 October 1989 and was President of the Republic until 2 May 1990.

4 Václav Havel (1936–2011) was a Czech writer and politician, who was President of Czechoslovakia (1989–1992) and of the Czech Republic (1993–2003).

5 Árpád Göncz (1922–2015) was the interim President of the Republic from 2 May 1990 to 3 August 1990 and then President until 3 August 2000.

6 For the above, see the Summary of Current Information on Hungarian–Czechoslovak Relations. ANAH XIX–J–1–j 1990 17. b. 9 May 1990.

During the dialogues, certain elements of the common historical past returned several times. In the case of the Hungarian–Czechoslovak Treaty, the Czechoslovak side did not accept the Hungarian proposal – not even in early 1992 – that said that the Contracting Parties would halt regular consultations on the situation of national minorities and would also establish an institutional framework for co-operation. Prague insisted that the 1938 Munich Convention be condemned when the treaty was signed, that they should make a declaration of invalidity or exchange a letter or notes to that effect. The Czechoslovak side could not accept the Hungarian suggestion that such a statement – a letter or a note – should also condemn the principle and application of collective guilt. The contract was not signed at that time. According to the position of the Slovak government adopted on 7 April 1992, the signing of the basic agreement on friendly co-operation and good neighbourly relations should have been postponed, depending on the steps taken by the Hungarian government in connection with the construction of the Bős–Nagymaros Dam system.[7] In addition, Hungarian–Czechoslovak relations were affected by the disintegration process of Czechoslovakia.

The Hungarian government led by Prime Minister József Antall had to settle the relations between Budapest and Prague and Budapest and Bratislava taking all this into account, especially because it was in the common interest to resolve the structural issue of the Warsaw Pact, strengthen security in the region east of the Elbe, and strengthen regional co-operation. In addition, the Antall government saw the conclusion of new types of bilateral treaties as the basis for its foreign policy, an important element of which were good neighbourly relations.

The Disintegration Process of Czechoslovakia

In Czechoslovakia, the engine of the 'velvet revolution' was the Civil Forum (OF) in the Czech Republic and the Public against Violence (VPN) in Slovakia. The two political movements – and then the party – with significant social support forced the leadership of the Czechoslovak Communist Party to take an important step in the democratic transformation of the June 1990 parliamentary elections. The Civil Forum and the Public against Violence won the elections, and their representatives got significant roles in the Czech, Slovak, and federal governments. After the elections in 1990, the development of the market economy in Slovakia had more serious social consequences than in the Czech Republic. The Slovak Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar[8] announced the slower pace of the market economy, which he linked to the representation of the Slovak interests

7 See Sáringer 2021, chapter: The Bős–Nagymaros Dam System. Cf. Jeszenszky 2016: 242–247.

8 Vladimír Mečiar (1942–) is a Slovak politician, who was Prime Minister of Slovakia from 27 June 1990 to 23 April 1991 and then from 24 June 1992 to 13 March 1994.

and to the need to create an independent Slovakia. He formed the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia, which was joined by the majority of the VPN.

In 1992, the disintegration process of Czechoslovakia and the parliamentary elections in June were primarily in the focus of the politics of Prague and Bratislava. The intellectual elite that, as a result of the elections held on 5–6 June, came to power in November 1989, was pushed to the margins of the political system. In contrast, Václav Klaus's[9] centre party adopting Czech national interests and left-wing parties from the Czech Republic had taken strong positions. In the whole of Czechoslovakia, the left wing obtained majority, while in the Czech Republic the right wing was in the majority. This might have encouraged the Czech winners to get rid of the left-winged Slovakia to save their economic reform and power. The Party of the Democratic Left of Slovakia[10] talked about common foreign policy as opposed to Vladimír Mečiar. In Bratislava, the federal reactions to the Hungarian steps taken in the case of the Bős–Nagymaros Dam system were considered belated.

After the parliamentary elections held in 1992, the differences between Václav Klaus and Vladimír Mečiar further increased the fragmentation of the political arena. The root cause of the opposition was the asymmetry between the two republics, which was also reflected in the two opposing concepts. At that time, Klaus still considered a unified state as acceptable and workable in some aspects. Mečiar's solution was to abolish the federal state. However, the Slovak leadership was increasingly aware of the economic and social problems arising from the immediate secession, for which – unlike the Czech Republic – it was unprepared. The danger of isolation due to the lack of an international background was also felt in Bratislava. Slovakia's problems were exacerbated by the tense and unstable domestic political situation in the region.

Czechoslovak (Federal) Foreign Policy

The Czechoslovak (federal) foreign policy continued to strengthen its relations with Western European cooperation structures. This has resulted in the ratification of the Free Trade Agreement signed with EFTA[11] and the accession to the Council

9 Václav Klaus (1941–) was the Czechoslovak Federal Minister of Finance from 10 December 1989 to 2 July 1992. In April 1991, he was one of the founders of the Liberal-Conservative Civic Democratic Party (ODS), which won the 1992 elections in the Czech Republic.

10 The Party of the Democratic Left (*Strana demokickej ľavice* – SD) is a Slovak social democratic political party founded in 1990 and united in 2005 with its official successor, the Smer.

11 The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) is an agreement signed in Stockholm on 4 January 1960 by the 'Seven' (Austria, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, Sweden). In contrast to the European Economic Community, the 'Six', EFTA is an integration organization that sought to achieve the free movement of industrial products. Iceland became a full member of EFTA in 1970, Finland in 1986, and Liechtenstein in 1991. In 1973, the EFTA

of Europe's Single Act on Human Rights and Freedoms. At a meeting of the CSCE Ministerial Council in Prague in late January 1992, Czechoslovakia took over the rotating presidency of the organization. With its military unit sent to the UN peacekeeping force in Uganda, Czechoslovakia declared its interest in ending the civil war and resolving the Yugoslav crisis. In accordance with the decisions of the European Communities, Czechoslovakia recognized Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina in consultation with the Visegrád Three. The country's new bilateral relations continued with the signing of the Czechoslovak–German Basic Agreement in Prague and the Czechoslovak–Russian Basic Agreement in Moscow, as well as an agreement on financial and property issues related to the Soviet troops' stay in Czechoslovakia. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia gradually recognized the new independent republics.

Foreign capital showed less interest in Czechoslovakia than expected. In addition to capital of German origin, French, Italian, and, to a lesser extent, US investments also appeared. The largest foreign investors in Slovakia were Austrians, accounting for almost 50% of the foreign capital invested in Slovakia. The reason for the modest inflow of foreign capital is the domestic political uncertainty in the country on the one hand and the economic and political dispute between the Czech Republic and Slovakia, which have had an alarming effect on investors, on the other.

In parallel with the process of the division of Czechoslovakia, the separation of the Czech and Slovak foreign services and the establishment of a network of independent foreign representations began. The aim of the Czech foreign policy was to establish the best possible relations with neighbouring states and with the powers that played a key role in international politics and the countries of the Central European region. The Visegrád Three was considered useful for the co-operation of the Central European countries, and their practical and non-institutional role was emphasized.

Slovakia took active foreign policy steps and showed several signs of working towards a Bratislava–Kiev–Bucharest axis.[12] In addition to the establishment of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Slovak Foreign Minister Milan Kňažko[13] met with his Hungarian, Austrian, Italian, and Romanian counterparts.

It was in Budapest's interest that its northern neighbour be a stable, democratic country, and it did not intend to isolate Bratislava because in that case there could be a danger that the Bratislava–Kiev–Bucharest axis had Belgrade included.

Member States concluded a free trade agreement with the European Community. On 13 June 1990, Hungary and the EFTA countries signed a declaration of cooperation in Gothenburg.

12 See Cryptographic Telegram from Warsaw. Activities of Romanian diplomacy in Poland. ANAH XIX–J–1–j 1992. 49. b. 11 August 1992.

13 Milan Kňažko (1945–) is a Slovak actor and politician. From 24 June 1992 to 19 March 1993, he was the first Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister of Slovakia.

On 1 January 1993, the split took place, with the creation of the Czech and Slovak Republics, which were automatically recognized by the embassies in Prague.[14]

Top-Level Visits to Hungary and Czechoslovakia

On the occasion of the invitation of Václav Havel, Árpád Göncz paid an official working visit to Czechoslovakia[15] on 12 July 1990, followed two days later by a one-day working visit to Bratislava by Tamás Katona,[16] Political Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The purpose of his visit, 'right after the meeting with the President of the Republic, was to assess the concrete possibilities and intentions of Slovakia, to get acquainted with future Slovak ideas on the structure of relations, and to exchange views on some practical issues of our co-operation'.[17] Tamás Katona also made concrete proposals to strengthen the relations between Budapest and Bratislava – thus, for the exchange of Hungarian and Slovak scholars, the establishment of a Slovak-language department at the University of Szeged, the establishment of a Slovak cultural centre in Békéscsaba, the cooperation of cities, counties, and other territorial units, and the establishment of relations between parliamentary committees. He suggested that Matica slovenská[18] send an unlimited number of books to Slovak nationals in Hungary and to the teachers there to improve the quality of education.

At the end of August 1990, Hungarian Foreign Minister Géza Jeszenszky[19] held a formal meeting in Prague with Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Jiří Dienstbier,[20] who made it clear that the federal government wanted to retain its own competence on a number of issues that the Slovak leadership wanted to bring to its exclusive competence: the issue of nationality in Slovakia or the Bős power plant. Jiří Dienstbier also made it clear that there were also competence issues between Bratislava and Prague in foreign affairs. The leaders of Hungarian diplomacy had

14 See Sáringer 2021. 196. Summary report of Ferenc Bősenbacher, member of the Diplomatic Information Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to Géza Jeszenszky. On 1 January 1993, the embassies in Prague automatically recognized the Czech Republic and Slovakia. 17 November 1992.

15 See Document No. 86 of Sáringer 2015. Report on the official visit of Árpád Göncz, President of the Republic of Hungary, to Czechoslovakia. Date: 17 July 1990.

16 At that time, Tamás Katona (1932–2013) was the Political State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (he held his position between 24 May 1990 and 20 June 1992).

17 See document No. 87 of Sáringer 2015 entitled Report of Tamás Katona, Political State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on his visit to Bratislava. Date: 30 July 1990.

18 Matica slovenská was founded in 1863 by leading Slovak politicians living in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, with the aim of bringing together Slovak cultural and scientific life.

19 Géza Jeszenszky (1941–) is a Hungarian historian and politician. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary from 25 May 1990 to 12 June 1994.

20 Jiří Dienstbier (1937–2011) was the Czechoslovak Federal Foreign Minister from December 1989 to June 1992.

to take all these into account to a large extent and strive to establish fair co-operation with Hungarian interests in mind. The issue of the Bős power plant was also discussed at the Foreign Minister's meeting. The Czechoslovak partner emphasized that they wanted to use this investment 'in some way'. Foreign Minister Géza Jeszenszky explained to his guests that the Hungarian government did not consider it expedient to continue the work on the Bős section of the power plant until sufficient expert opinions were available.[21]

In early February 1991, František Mikloško,[22] President of the Slovak National Council, and Vladimír Mečiar, President of the Slovak Republic, visited Hungary. The aim of the meeting was to develop Hungarian–Slovak relations and to clarify existing problems and confounding factors. 'On the Hungarian side, the negotiations emphasized that the efforts to develop Hungarian–Slovak relations are not directed against the Czechoslovak federal system but form part of the relations between the two countries as a whole and serve the Central European rapprochement and the construction of the Europe House.'[23] The Slovak leaders were received by Árpád Göncz, József Antall, and György Szabad. József Antall 'expressed his opinion that our intentions should be clearly stated, which is an important guarantee of understanding. There will obviously be debates in the future.' František Mikloško was the first to touch on the issue of the Bős–Nagymaros dam system and called it an 'inherited sin'. Nonetheless, the question of how to proceed had to be answered, and a compromise acceptable to both parties had to be found. Mečiar called the meeting a 'mission of good hope' and referred to the geographical significance of Slovakia as far as his country was supposed to be between Hungary and Poland. Prime Minister József Antall informed Vladimír Mečiar that the issue of the dam was a legacy that had to be dealt with, but it had to be taken into account that it was a serious political issue in Hungary. 'The opposition, which has been united in protests against the BNV, now forms a majority in the parliament. Resolving the issue is not a matter for government decision, as it requires a parliamentary resolution. It is up to further bilateral negotiations to determine whether the arguments are properly prepared professionally.' Prime Minister József Antall spoke about the planned Visegrád summit, where negotiations must be held in order for the trilateral co-operation to be effective.

21 See Sáringer 2015 No. 90 entitled Géza Jeszenszky's report to the government on his official visit to Prague. Date: 14 September 1990.

22 František Mikloško (1947–) was a Slovak politician and President of the Slovak National Council between 1990 and 1992.

23 Document No. 132 of Sáringer 2018. Summary of the visit of František Mikloško, President of the Slovak National Council and Slovak Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar, to the competent regional department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 22 February 1991.

Former Federal President Vaclav Havel told József Antall in Helsinki[24] that the disintegration of Czechoslovakia was unstoppable. For this reason, the Hungarian Prime Minister invited Václav Klaus Czech Prime Minister and Vladimír Mečiar Slovak Prime Minister to Hungary. After the Czechoslovak elections (June 1992), Václav Klaus's first foreign trip led to Hungary. During the working visit, he had a brief discussion with József Antall, during which he put economic cooperation first in the relationship between the two countries. He called it unfortunate, but not surprising, that trade turnover had fallen. He called this fact an intermediate state and suggested that the ministers meet in September to shorten the transition period.[25]

Vladimír Mečiar paid a working visit to Hungary in early September 1992, during which he made the following statements: 'It was a stabilizing element that the Hungarian card could not be played. [...] The "necessary rights" are guaranteed, the situation of the Hungarian minority is the best there, they do everything they can to "avoid ethnic conflict" [...] The minority issue is a "by-product", but public opinion must be taken into account. [...] In Slovakia, "we got rid of the nationalist movements".' In the light of the real situation, Mečiar's sentences testified to strong hypocrisy. Consul-General Jenő Boros in Bratislava reported on anti-Hungarian writings in the Slovak press. On the Slovak side, there was an awareness that Hungarian politics were seeking the later feedback of the southern territories, which were also featured in newspapers and commentaries close to the government.[26]

The Bős–Nagymaros Dam System

The construction of the Bős–Nagymaros Dam System, signed in 1977 by the leaders of two state-socialist countries, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, became the neuralgic point of Hungarian–Czechoslovak and Hungarian–Slovak relations. In Hungary, the Danube Circle, which was established in September 1984, played an important role in the process of regime change and structural change. The central theme of the movement was the protection of the environment and the Danube, and the Danube Circle won the alternative Nobel Prize in 1985. 'After that, the Danube movement became one of the "schools" of Hungarian democracy' (Bába 2015: 51). The protest against the construction of the Bős–Nagymaros Dam system played an important role in the change of regime in Hungary. There was

24 The follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, Helsinki, took place from 24 March to 10 June 1992.

25 See Sáringer 2021. 189. Report to the Government on the visit of the Czech Prime Minister Václav Klaus to Budapest. 17 August 1992.

26 Sáringer 2021. Document No. 171. Letter from the Chief Consul-General of Bratislava Jenő Boros on anti-Hungarian manifestations in the Slovak press. 14 April 1992.

a social consensus against the dam system, which became a political force by the end of the 1980s, and the case of Bős–Nagymaros became one of the identification factors in the change of regime in Hungary.

In May 1989, the government led by Miklós Németh halted construction at Nagymaros. At the end of August 1989, the Czechoslovak government stated in a letter that if the Hungarian side did not continue construction, the Czechoslovak side would unilaterally divert the Danube and put the power plant into operation. Prague withdrew from the case in May 1990 and left the dispute to the Slovak government. In the event of a complete halt in construction, Hungary was willing to pay compensation to the Austrian contractor, which affected Austria sensitively because they were one of the beneficiaries of the electricity generated by the dam system.[27]

On the Slovak side, Vladimír Mečiarek developed the issues related to the Bős–Nagymaros Dam system into a national affair, which strengthened anti-Hungarian sentiments, and at the same time treated several elements of Hungarian–Slovak relations as 'hostages'. The Slovak leadership used the construction of the dam to incite nationalism, this way creating a hostile image in the midst of Slovakia's independence. Mečiar and his people combined their search for identity against someone with their extreme nationalism, one of the characteristics of which was anti-Hungarianism.

In January 1991, the essence of the Hungarian concept was to terminate the 1977 interstate agreement by mutual agreement in the negotiations with the Czechoslovak side and to create a new one to settle it. Accordingly, the Hungarian position reflected the recognition of the primacy of ecological values. The Hungarian side did not accept the filling of the Dunakiliti reservoir, the diversion of the Danube, and the commissioning of the upstream canal.

In a letter dated 23 January 1992, the Czechoslovak Federal Prime Minister Marián Čalfa announced that on 12 December the Government of the CSSR had adopted a resolution authorizing the commissioning and completion of the Bős hydroelectric power plant on the territory of the CSSR. With this, the Prime Minister declared the unilateral diversion of the Danube and ran aground on bilateral intergovernmental talks on the hydropower issue.[28] On 5 August 1992, the Czechoslovak Government notified the Danube Commission[29] in writing

27 On what has been said, see Bába 2015: 50–57 and Jeszenszky 2016: 242–247.

28 Sáringer 2021. Document No. 206. The Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia, Marián Čalfa, wrote to the Hungarian Government, informing them of the unilateral diversion of the Danube. 12 February 1992.

29 The Danube Commission was established in 1948 after its predecessor organization established in 1856. Its aim is to promote cooperation on shipping on the Danube. In 1948, a convention signed by the coastal states declared the application of the principle of free navigation on the Danube. Cabotage traffic could be maintained by each country, and each country was obliged to maintain the waterways of the river section belonging to its territory and to carry out customs and health control and river policing tasks. The revision of the Convention began in 1993.

that the crossing of the Danube would be realized between 15 October and 30 November 1992. On April 4 1992, the Hungarian Parliament authorized the government to unilaterally terminate the 1977 interstate treaty, which took place on 19 May. In his submission to the government in early September 1992, Géza Jeszenszky proposed a response: Submitting a joint application and action with the Czechoslovak government to the International Court of Justice in The Hague.[30] It was in our fundamental interest that the procedure reached a stage as soon as possible in which we could ask the court to suspend the work on a temporary basis. The advantage of the procedure was that the court's decision was binding in the event of subjection. The downside, however, was that the Czechoslovak government might delay the process and complete the construction in Bős.[31]

On 25 September 1992, at the ceremonial handover of the Danube–Main–Rhine Canal in Nuremberg, József Antall spoke about the unilateral diversion of the Danube:

> It would not be fair for me to hide the fact that there is a serious tension between Hungary and Czechoslovakia and Slovakia, which is becoming sovereign, in the context of the common Danube section. Although we are clearly striving for good neighbourly relations, I still have to talk about the international legal, ecological, and shipping problems related to the construction of the Danube hydropower plant. We can only regret that the Federal Government of Czechoslovakia and the Slovak Government have not yet found a way to a common position.[32]

Three weeks later, on behalf of the Czechoslovak government, the Austrian construction company completed the work on the unilateral diversion of the Danube and ordered a three-day shipping lock. One day before the Hungarian national holiday, on 22 October 1992, officially the Czechoslovak government, but in fact the Slovak government, diverted the Danube from its natural channel. On 27 October 1992, with the involvement of the EC Commission, the two parties signed the London Agreement, which provided for the settlement of disputes between the countries before the International Court of Justice in The Hague. Temporary water sharing had been applied for the period until the court ruling.

Despite bilateral and multilateral consultations, the Slovak side did not honour its commitments, and the Danube was blocked and unilaterally diverted, disregarding the principle of good faith – the basic bona fide principle of

30 The International Court of Justice (Hague) is the primary judicial body of the United Nations.

31 Sáringer 2021. Document No. 210. Submission to the Government on the planned Hungarian response to the construction of the Bős–Nagymaros Dam system in Czechoslovakia. 1 September 1992.

32 Communicated by Marinovich 2018. 79–80.

international treaties; nor did they intend to change that, which might have been due to the fact that the construction company was based in Austria.

Hungarian National Policy

One of the factors determining the foreign policy of the Hungarian government led by József Antall was that Hungary, as a subject of international law, did not coincide with the Hungarian nation as a historical formation. An important element of the new Hungarian foreign policy strategy was the support of Hungarians living outside the borders. At the end of May, the Hungarian Parliament passed a resolution on Hungarian minorities living in the neighbouring countries, according to which:

> The responsibility and concern of the mother nation for the fate of their national minorities should be given a contractual international legal framework. The protection and development of the identity of national minorities, the legal guarantee of the individual and collective rights of national minorities living in the region, their participation in public life and the decision-making of their own affairs, the legal guarantee of their self-organization and self-government, and the use of nationality, education, cultural life, religion, and information.[33]

In bilateral agreements, the Hungarian government guaranteed unhindered contact between national minorities and provided assistance to Hungarian national minorities living in neighbouring countries.

The cornerstone of the nation's concept of the government led by József Antall was that all members of the Hungarian nation who professed to be Hungarian should be able to live anywhere in the world.[34] No one can be excluded from the nation on ideological, political, or religious grounds. Dealing with Hungarians living abroad, monitoring their destiny, and protecting and representing their interests in accordance with the norms of international law was one of the key elements of the new Hungarian foreign policy in bilateral interstate relations and international forums. This idea also permeated the foreign policy concept and diplomatic practice.

33 See Sáringer 2015 No. 114. Resolution of the Parliament of the Republic of Hungary on the situation of Hungarian national minorities living in neighbouring countries – 24 May 1990.

34 In the United States, on the occasion of the 1988 census, 727,000 people declared themselves Hungarian in both literal equality branches and 1,777,000 in one branch. There were 200–300 thousand Jews in Europe, 120,000 in Canada, 110,000 in Latin America, 70,000 in Australia, 20,000 in Africa, and 200,000 in Israel.

In the course of the historical transformation taking place in Eastern, Central, and South-Eastern Europe, the issue of nationals and nationality had resurfaced and often became the subject of serious conflicts. The Ural Mountains and the Oder–Leitha–Adriatic region as a whole affect several tens of millions of people. Western Europe was not free of national minority problems either. In shaping the international (and domestic) minority policy of the new Hungarian government, it was based on the general recognition that – in addition to its political, economic, ecological, and military components – the human and humanitarian factors are indispensable elements of international security. Unconditional respect for human rights is a universally accepted requirement in international relations and cannot be considered the exclusive internal affair of states. The full guarantee and continuous development of national and ethnic minority rights, which are an integral part of human rights, contribute decisively to the strengthening of international trust, the development of bilateral and regional relations, the deepening of the Helsinki process, and the consolidation of universal peace. Satisfactory treatment and reassuring the institutional settlement of the situation of national and ethnic minorities is a precondition and a measure of justice, democracy, and the rule of law. Nationalities that fully enforce their rights, freely preserve and develop their identity, language, and culture, and act autonomously in their own affairs are links between states and key factors in the internal strength and prosperity of their state. The rights of national minorities can only be fully exercised if persons belonging to these communities can exercise their individual minority rights in their natural communities, collectively. The real equality of rights of national minorities, the offsetting of the inherent disadvantages of being a minority requires that, in addition to the rights granted to the majority, they also enjoy the special rights deriving from their minority status; literal equality before the law means the legal disadvantage of the minority – e.g. in case of the language use of a majority minority.

The Hungarian government considered it particularly important that national and ethnic minorities truly live on an equal footing with the majority nation. In the spirit of these principles, the Hungarian government sought to enshrine and guarantee the rights of national minorities on four levels. The first level was the area of bilateral relations: Budapest proposed a joint declaration to all its neighbours except Austria. A draft bilateral declaration was drawn up with Ukraine and signed by Géza Jeszenszky in April 1991. Croatia and Slovenia reacted positively to the Hungarian initiative, and Belgrade did not oppose either. According to Prague and Bratislava, the issue should have been resolved at a European level, but they did not shy away from consultations. Romania considered the matter exclusively an internal matter. Romania reacted angrily and dismissively to the Hungarian initiatives, while gradually trying to restore the practice of Ceauşescu's

previous ethnic policy.[35] At the second regional level, the Hungarian government encouraged and participated in the elaboration of the Pentagon proposal, which was presented at the Copenhagen human rights conference and which formed one of the foundations of the Copenhagen document. At the third level, Hungarian diplomacy played an active role in the work of the Commission for Democracy through Law preparing the convention of the Council of Europe Convention. The draft also reflected the Hungarian intention. Budapest called for the development and adoption of a universal minority charter within the UN framework. To promote this, Géza Jeszenszky officially announced at the Geneva session of the Human Rights Committee in February 1991 (fourth level) the readiness of the Hungarian Government to host the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights.

It is necessary to mention the events of 16 September 1992 in connection with the qualifying football match between Slovan Bratislava and FTC Champions League (4–1). In the fifty-fifth minute, in the Hungarian sector and in the Sector C behind the gate, where a mix of Slovak and Hungarian fans were present, the Slovak police and commandos launched an attack and brutally beat the supporters. The Slovak government did not distance itself from the nature and methods of police action. In the media, the responsibility was shifted to the Hungarian sensitivity and to Hungary. The Slovak government complained that the Hungarian government had raised the matter to a diplomatic level. Slovakia saw this as fuelling anti-Slovak sentiments.[36] Today, the brutality of the police seems to have been a planned action, backed by intimidation, exaggeration, and preliminary force assessment, probing into: How does the majority of Slovaks react to such an event with international and ethnic dimensions? The Slovak government's policy miscalculated the gravity and danger of the events in the stadium in respect of the Hungarian–Slovak relations or Slovakia's international image.

New Forms of Cooperation in Central Europe and the Visegrád Cooperation

The Alps–Adriatic Cooperation was established in 1978 and was the basis for a community of countries along the Danube–Adriatic geographical line. At the initiative of Italy – Hungary, Austria, Yugoslavia, and Italy and their Foreign Ministers agreed in Budapest on 11 and 12 November 1989 to deepen good neighbourly relations and co-operation between the states (Quadragonale) along

35 Nicolae Ceauşescu (1918–1989) was the leader of the Romanian Communist Party and the dictator of Romania from 1965 to 1989.

36 Sáringer 2021. Document No. 194. Letter from the Chief Consul-General of Bratislava, Jenő Boros, on Slovak foreign affairs and current issues in Hungarian–Slovak relations. 21 September 1992.

cultural and historical traditions and based on the role of national minorities as bridges, an agreement joined by Czechoslovakia on 28 May 1990.

The first summit of the emerging organization was held in Venice from 31 July to 1 August 1990, during which the Italian name of Greek-Latin origin, the Pentagonale, became established. At that time, membership was conditional on the freely elected parliament in the candidate country exercising legislative power, guaranteeing human rights and recognizing the rights of national minorities. The agglomeration has proved to be geographically closed but also flexible enough to work with other countries.

At the second summit in Dubrovnik, on 26–27 July 1991, at the strong request of József Antall, Poland became the sixth member of the organization, creating the Hexagonale. This cooperation became the Central European Initiative in 1992,[37] when Yugoslavia's membership was suspended and Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the successor states to Yugoslavia, were accepted instead. In 1993, the organization expanded again due to the separation of the Czech Republic and Slovakia and the accession of Macedonia. The objectives of the CEEC included strengthening regional co-operation, promoting European integration, and supporting the EU accession process of non-EU Member States (See Bába–Gyurcsík–Kiss 2020).

An important element of the establishment and operation of the Visegrád Cooperation is the geographical-historical-cultural cohesion, in which the traditions of the common historical past and the idea of Central Europeanness – which also relies on the roots of the 19th century – played a significant role. It is also a significant cohesive force that all three countries had moderately developed economies but were relatively more developed within the COMECON. In parallel with the change of regime, they were at the forefront of building a market economy compared to the former state-socialist countries of Central Europe.

In terms of political cohesion, all three countries are characterized by a system of goals and means of negotiated regime change and democratic transition. The institutions of democracy and their mechanisms have essentially developed in the three countries. The dynamism that changed the previous system and the regional community of interests necessitated further and continuous co-operation between the three countries.

The security and foreign policy priorities of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland were the restoration of Euro-Atlantic integration and national sovereignty, primarily through the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops and the abolition of the Warsaw Pact and the COMECON. The Warsaw Pact and the CMO were disbanded during 1991, but the administrative, personal and inter-institutional relations acquired over several decades have survived. All this contributed to

37 Cf. Sáringer 2021 with document No. 282. Cryptography from Rome. The Italian government attaches importance to the Central European Initiative. 28 December 1992.

organizational and functional cohesion, which was further strengthened by their membership of international institutions in pan-European organizations such as the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), the Organization (OSCE), and the Council of Europe.

Among the external cohesion factors, the unstable domestic political situation in the Soviet Union was significant, especially those Soviet internal forces (conservatives) who wanted to keep their empire and reorganize their military and power. Another important factor is that a significant portion of U.S. decision makers treated the three countries together. In the meantime, Washington shared Central European security responsibilities with the united Germany, which also supported regional cooperation in the region.[38]

The antecedents of the Hungarian–Czechoslovak–Polish triad include the fact that in August 1990 Polish Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski[39] sent a letter to his Hungarian colleague, Géza Jeszenszky, proposing a conciliation forum for the Deputy Foreign Ministers of the three countries. In December 1990, a tripartite foreign consultation took place in Prague, where the parties agreed on the issue of the dismantling of the Warsaw Pact and the date of the Visegrád Summit. On 21 January 1991, the three foreign ministers met in Budapest and were greeted by József Antall, who told them: 'we consider important not only the tripartite co-operation and the development of a common position on all important issues today, including the future of the Warsaw Pact, but also the Lithuanian issue. We support coordinating our cooperation with Western European integrations.'[40]

The leaders of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, the Republic of Poland, and the Republic of Hungary signed a declaration in Visegrád on 15 February 1991, and with this act the co-operation of the Visegrád Three was established. At the meeting, József Antall said about the tripartite co-operation that 'we do not want to create an organization that would give the impression that a new international organization is being created, which could be an alternative to other European organizations. It is important that our negotiations with European organizations take place in parallel and independently. However, the three countries should coordinate on these issues. This also applies to military policy issues.'[41]

The last sentence of the Hungarian Prime Minister is related to the fact that the Union of European Centre-Right Parties held its meeting in Helsinki in September

38 Adding that in the transforming Central Europe, united Germany was interested in the system of small states (Mitteleuropa).

39 Krzysztof Jan Skubiszewski (1926–2010) was Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland from 12 September 1989 to 26 October 1993.

40 Sáringer 2018a. Document 184. Report of the competent regional department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Hungarian government on the Hungarian–Czechoslovak–Polish meeting at the level of foreign ministers in Budapest. 30 January 1991.

41 Sáringer 2018a. Document No. 188. Foreign Ministry Summary of the Visegrád Summit. 16 February 1991.

1990. At this meeting, József Antall outlined his plan for the Central and Eastern European Union, whose member states would be Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. They would secede from the Warsaw Pact and form an independent military alliance, and its structure would be similar to that of the Western European Union. An essential element of the concept was for the Union to negotiate as an equal partner with the Western European Union (WEU), the defence organization of Western European states, and thus serve as an intermediate institution until the three states join the NATO. In 1992, the Visegrád countries already designed a unified air defence system.[42]

In the first phase of the Visegrád Cooperation (1991–1993), cooperation between member states worked well. One of the foreign policy goals of the Visegrád Group of three member states was integration into the European Communities / the European Union. In the 1990s, support for the democratic states of the Central and Eastern European region became an important element of the Council of Europe's policy. Respect for human rights, the establishment of democratic institutions and a market economy were conditions for membership of the Council of Europe and a threshold for accession to the European Communities / the European Union.

In October 1991, the foreign leaders of the Visegrád Three decided in Kraków to establish the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA),[43] which aims to accelerate and deepen integration with Western European institutions, strengthening the democratic system and free market economy of their states. Three months later, there was another meeting in Warsaw, where they agreed on the need to strengthen the international importance of trilateral co-operation and the co-ordination element of their activities at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe. The members of the Triadic Group of Visegrád also sought to develop relations with the Western European Union, the European Communities, and the NATO.

Another summit of the Visegrád Three member states was held in Prague on 6 May 1992, where József Antall stated the following:

> The question always arises: what unites us? First, it connects us with memories of historical tradition, good and bad. Secondly, we are connected by a geographical link, which also provides an opportunity for economic co-operation. The third thing that unites us is the Euro-Atlantic security system, which we absolutely need. And, finally, the fourth is a practical question: we are sitting together in the 'dentist's waiting room' of the European Community. The Association Agreement, which we have agreed

42 Sáringer 2015. Document No. 132. György O'sváth's note on the reception of József Antall's plan for the Hungarian, Czechoslovak, and Polish unions in Brussels. 21 September, 1990.

43 Sáringer 2021. Document No. 276. Cryptographic telegram from Warsaw. Free Trade Agreement of the Visegrád Three. 17 September 1992.

> on together, forces us to work together in the common interest. […] We must continue to be aware, even after the Maastricht meeting, as we are all aware at this table that there is no complete consensus within the European Community on all aspects. Formally everyone agrees, but there are differences in emphasis (currency, certain economic issues, issues arising from the development of regions, the degree of sovereignty). So, we need to know that we will not be joining the European Communities in 1992 but presumably the European Communities at the end of the century.[44]

Following the Prague Summit, the Czechoslovak government's foreign policy activity in the run-up to the parliamentary elections became more subdued. Moreover, some specific steps were taken on the part of Czechoslovakia, which were described in the report of the Hungarian mission in Strasbourg. At the behest of Prague, the Czechoslovak side regularly and deliberately avoided negotiations. In Strasbourg, the Czechoslovak ambassador spoke at non-public events on behalf of the Three but represented only Czechoslovak interests. On several occasions, the Czechoslovak delegation voted differently despite explicit attempts at conciliation between Hungary and Poland.[45]

In August 1992, Václav Klaus from the Czech Republic and Vladimír Mečiár from the Slovak Republic agreed to become the two independent states of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, which took effect on 1 January 1993. From then on, the Visegrád co-operation transformed into the Visegrád Four (V4) (Bába–Gyurcsík–Kiss Gy. 2020, Sáringer 2018b).

Summary

The goal of the Hungarian government led by József Antall was the widening of political relations with Czechoslovakia at both the federal and republican levels. The basis of the cooperation of the two countries was the European integration. The purpose of the Visegrád Cooperation, established at the beginning of 1991, was to take joint and coordinated steps towards the Euro-Atlantic integration. In addition, both Budapest and Prague were interested in the strengthening of the economic cooperation, which was partly helped by the economic relations made during the operation of the KGST, and which was partly made difficult with the dissolution of the KGST by the transition from the rubel accounting system to the dollar accounting system. The political relations were characterized by regular bilateral, high-level visits and dialogues, which fundamentally

44 Hungarian Foreign Policy Yearbook 1992. 190–192.

45 The unsigned document of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Visegrád Three in the Council of Europe. ANAH XIX–A–150–j 91. b. 27 April 1992.

influenced positively the Hungarian–Czechoslovakian relations. But neuralgic points, such as the Bős–Nagymaros Water Barrage System and the Beneš decrees, made the cooperation difficult. During the examined period, both parties were open to resolve the problem of the Water Barrage System, trying to settle the controversial issues through negotiations. But the starting point of Budapest and Prague (later on Bratislava) were not the same. The process of disintegration of Czechoslovakia, which by 1992 had become evident, caused difficulties during the collaboration, and in addition Prague transferred the matter of the Water Barrage System to the jurisdiction of the newly formed Slovak government. The Vladimír Mečiar type of search for identity defined itself against the Czechs and primarily the Hungarians, which Mečiar connected – and developed into a Slovak national cause – with the construction of the Bős–Nagymaros Water Barrage System supported by the Austrian capital, a symbol of the creation of an independent Slovakia. The Czechoslovak federal government, and later the Czech government, distanced themselves from the repeal of the Beneš decrees – the principle of collective guilt. All of these have put a strain on bilateral and tripartite relations.

References

Archives of the National Archives of Hungary

ANAH XIX–J–1–j 1990. Box 17.
ANAH XIX–J–1–j 1992. Box 49.
ANAH XIX–A–150–j. Box 91.

BÁBA, Iván. 2015. Rendszerváltoztatás Magyarországon. Egy történelmi pillanat leírása. Budapest: VERITAS–Magyar Napló.

BÁBA, Iván–GYURCSÍK, Iván–KISS GY., Csaba. 2020. *Közép-Európa magyar szemmel*. Kőszeg: Felsőbbfokú Tanulmányok Intézete (iASK).

JESZENSZKY, Géza. 2016. *Kísérlet a trianoni trauma orvoslására. Magyarország szomszédsági politikája a rendszerváltozás éveiben*. Budapest: Osiris Kiadó.

MARINOVICH, Endre. 2018. *1315 nap. Antall József miniszterelnöksége*. Budapest: Magyar Napló–VERITAS.

SÁRINGER, János. 2015. *Iratok az Antall-kormány külpolitikájához és diplomáciájához 1990. május – 1990. december*. Budapest: VERITAS–Magyar Napló.

2018a. *Iratok az Antall-kormány külpolitikájához és diplomáciájához 1991. január – 1991. december*. Budapest: VERITAS–Magyar Napló.

2018b. Visegrád újjászületése az államszocializmus bukása után (1991–2004). In: Balaskó, Angéla (ed.), *A Visegrádi Négyek jelentősége, struktúrája és értékei*. Budapest: Külügyi és Külgazdasági Intézet.

2021. *Iratok az Antall-kormány külpolitikájához és diplomáciájához 1992. január – 1992. december*. Budapest: VERITAS–Magyar Napló.

TORDA Endréné (ed.). 1992. *Magyar Külpolitikai Évkönyv 1992*. Budapest: Külügyminisztérium.

Acta Univ. Sapientiae, European and Regional Studies, **21** (2022) 44–61

DOI: 10.2478/auseur-2022-0003

Changes of Urban Food Purchase Habits during the First Wave of COVID-19: Hungarians Living in Romania and Hungary Compared

Ottilia GYÖRGY
Assistant Professor, Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
e-mail: gyorgyottilia@uni.sapientia.ro

Endre ORBÁN
Assistant Professor, National University of Public Service, Hungary
e-mail: orban.endre@uni-nke.hu

Abstract. The outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic in 2020, the emerging economic uncertainty, a declining trust, digital solutions, and the home office have changed consumer behaviour, including food-buying habits. Given that the epidemic in Central and Eastern Europe has developed differently due to territorial differences, we have focused our study on the comparative analysis of two countries. The aim of our research was to examine the food purchase habits during the first wave of the pandemic together with consumer decisions and their motivations emerged due to the epidemic among the Hungarian urban population of two countries. In the present study, we conducted a survey among Hungarian urban consumers in Romania and among the urban population in Hungary at the beginning of the pandemic when lockdown was implemented. Over a two-month period, we collected more than 2,000 completed questionnaires.

Keywords: COVID-19 closure, food purchase of households, consumer behaviour of urban population

Introduction

In December 2019, a new viral pneumonia was reported from China, marking the start of a pandemic. The virus spread rapidly to the rest of the world, including Europe, where the number of people infected with COVID-19 increased, especially in northern Italy, in February. The first patient was identified in Romania on 26 February and in Hungary on 4 March.

As a result of the pandemic, measures were introduced worldwide, which severely restricted people's daily lives with a significant impact on the economy as a whole, on the labour market situation, and on people's social relations. The implemented measures aiming to reduce the spread of the virus were manifold. To reduce mobility, travel restrictions have been introduced and border controls have been reinstated between some countries. For health and safety reasons, state and municipal events were cancelled, distancing rules came into effect, cinemas and theatres were closed, food from restaurants was only available for takeaway, and sporting events, including the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympics, were postponed. In hospitals, beds were released as a precautionary measure and visiting people in hospitals was prohibited. Potentially infected but asymptomatic people were required to stay at home in a so-called home quarantine for two weeks. Universities switched to online teaching and the vast majority of jobs to home office.

As a consequence of the news quoting a warlike language (Szabó–Béni 2021), the phenomenon of panic shopping appeared, which led to a short supply of some products such as hand sanitizers, face masks, some non-perishable foods, yeast, or even toilet paper. As a result of the outbreak of the pandemic, the emerging economic uncertainty, digital solutions and home office, consumer behaviour, including food-shopping habits, have changed. The aim of our research was to examine the food purchase habits during the first wave of the pandemic together with consumer decisions and their motivations emerged due to the epidemic among the Hungarian urban population of two countries. In the present study, we conducted a survey among Hungarian urban consumers in Romania and among the urban population in Hungary at the beginning of the pandemic when lockdown was implemented. Over a two-month period, we collected more than 2,000 completed questionnaires.

Literature Review

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought drastic changes to people's daily routines in many countries, including their food-shopping habits. Numerous studies have been published over the past year that have examined changes in shopping habits in different parts of the world. A number of studies have been conducted to assess the purchasing decisions and reactions to the closures during the quarantine period, and their possible and expected consequences for food-buying habits. Thanks to COVID-19, people have reorganized the way they work and live, and essentially the entire economy has changed.

The pandemic has reached all countries in the world, but the affected areas reacted in different manners. For example, neither rural nor urban residents nor the countries responded similarly.

The epidemic and its economic afterlife is reflected differently in each country and in the evolution of inequalities (Uzzoli et al. 2021). In Central and Eastern Europe, the first wave was characterized by regional differences both at the country level and at smaller territorial levels (Kovalcsik et al. 2021).

The virus did not spare the Eastern and Central European region although some studies suggested that it appeared much later and in a less severe form in these countries (Szirmai 2021). There were differences between cities in the Eastern and Central European region, but strong similarities could also be observed (Csepeli et al. 2020). In the light of this, we considered worthwhile to examine the territorial aspects in connection with shopping habits.

In these countries, the common historical past, the similar model of urbanization, and the delayed urban development may lead to many similarities in terms of responses to the pandemic (Szirmai 2021).

People's food-purchasing decisions are usually determined by their established habits that are influenced by the environment. If there is a change in the environment, it will have an impact on their decisions. When people are forced to react to changes in their environment, their established habits are sensitive to these changes, and they initiate a new decision-making process (Verplanken–Wood 2006). In this regard, quarantine was also an unusual, limited period of time, which probably affected food-buying habits. One may say that consumer habits were distorted due to panic, which led to market disturbances. Panic buying and collecting (food) supplies is a complex and harmful form of consumer behaviour fuelled by multiple motivational and other psychological processes (Dholakia 2020).

According to previous surveys carried out in the pre-epidemic period, consumers began to spend more and more on food in supermarkets after the 2008 global economic crisis (Cha et al. 2015). In addition, some studies have also anticipated that consumers are expected to spend even more as the epidemic develops, i.e. to raise their spending average on food but reduce spending in other areas in parallel. Numerous studies also confirm that demand for food products is constantly on the rise as a result of global events similar to the pandemic (Aday 2020).

Behavioural changes also had an impact on food waste. It can be assessed as a positive result that the closures due to the pandemic have led to behavioural shifts in food waste, i.e. consumers became more conscious in this regard and sought to use, store, and consume leftover food (Jribi et al. 2020).

By mapping the analyses of shopping habits, a research conducted last year confirmed a change in the frequency of visits to grocery stores and the amount of money spent on food during a single purchase (Cranfield 2020). Consumers have turned their attention to durable products, started cooking at home, bought takeaway food more frequently, and often ordered food due to social distancing rules and restaurant closures (Bakalis et al. 2020). Furthermore, a study in the

United States found that 70% of the consumers consumed more food during their stay at home (Aday 2020).

Another study was conducted in France during the first period of restrictions (Marty et al. 2021), which showed that the quarantine period is indeed correlating with changes in food choice motivations. The research has shown that the importance of comfort and price sensitivity has declined, while the importance of health, natural ingredients, and ethical reasons has increased. All this suggests that awareness and sustainable food choices have come to the fore in France.

A study by Alina Butu et alia relies on the assumption that the state of emergency resulting from the total lockdown has led to significant changes in Romania, such as to a significant increase in demand for fresh produce (Butu et al. 2020). The impact of the pandemic has been analysed by several scholars in Hungary as well, which turned to be developing similarly to the situation in Romania in many respects. According to a research, the frequency of purchases has decreased due to the risks of the pandemic and the pattern of the weekly shopping dominates. Online food shopping has also come to the fore. Soós's paper also reveals that people started to cook more at home during this period (Soós 2020).

According to another study focusing on the United Kingdom (O'Connell et al. 2021), there was a large increase in demand for some durable product categories during the first wave of the pandemic. As per the explanation of the authors, this is mainly due to the fact that more consumers bought the very same products of these categories during the given period rather than due to the fact that the usual consumers started to purchase more products.

McKinsey & Company reported in a study (Arora et al. 2020) that motivation, mood, health, comfort, and natural ingredients had the greatest influencing power on shopping. These factors are common in the 45 countries examined in their survey. In addition, the study highlighted the growing popularity of e-commerce as a result of the epidemic.

However, a survey (Eger et al. 2021) also demonstrates that consumers focused on their most basic needs during the crisis, and an important message of this research is that any changes in shopping behaviour due to the COVID-19 pandemic is highly dependent on the level of fear. That is to say, the greater the fear, the greater the change in purchasing behaviour.

According to a survey on the impact of the pandemic in ten European countries (COVID-19 STUDY 2021), there are also general trends despite the differences between countries and age-groups. Results show that durable behavioural changes may be manifested by a different kind of shopping and by higher consumption than before the pandemic. In addition, the role of a more careful planning is growing, i.e. paying attention to what people buy. Furthermore, the study also highlights that there has been a significant increase in the number of major shopping trips in all the investigated countries after the outbreak of the pandemic.

As the epidemic in Central and Eastern Europe developed differently due to territorial differences, our study focused on the comparative analysis of two countries. We were curious about how purchasing decisions evolved in relation to the different city categories in the two examined countries.

The present study realizes a comparative research both geographically and temporally. On the one hand, the aim of our survey was to examine and compare the food-shopping habits of the Romanian and Hungarian urban populations during the first wave of COVID-19, when significant restrictions were implemented in both countries. In our study, we examine to what extent and how the motivation of the Hungarian urban population regarding food shopping has changed in the two countries during the first emergency period. On the other hand, for the sake of comparison, some questions in our questionnaire have also inquired about the pre-pandemic situation, which enabled us to compare those results with the answers reflecting the first wave of the pandemic.

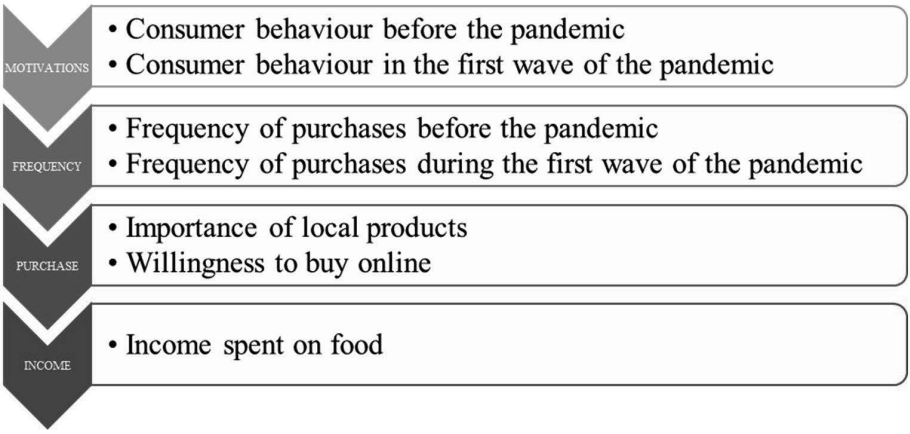
Methodology

The period for completing the questionnaire was April–May 2020, and it was completed integrally online because of the COVID-19 lockdown. In Romania, during the first wave, which began in March 2020, the lockdown meant that only those were allowed to leave their homes for whom this was indispensable for work, who had an urgent medical examination, had to obtain products needed for their subsistence or medical treatment, needed to pursue an agricultural activity, had to visit their close relatives in need of care, and who satisfied their own or their pets' need for movement in the immediate vicinity of their place of residence. In parallel, an emergency situation was introduced in Hungary on 11 March 2020, as part of which lockdown was implemented from 28 March to 11 April, which was then extended to an indefinite period. Similar to the situation in Romania, all this meant that leaving the place of residence could only take place on the basis of a 'good reason' specified in a government decree. In addition, only people over 65 could enter the shops between 9 AM and 12 noon. The lockdown was eased during May, at first in the countryside, when the terraces of restaurants and cafes could be opened and weddings and funerals were allowed to be held. The emergency state was finally abolished on 18 June, following which the government introduced the so-called 'epidemiological preparedness'.

In the course of the quantitative research, we adopted an online questionnaire that was used for interviews among the Hungarian urban population in Romania on the one hand and among the urban population in Hungary on the other. As the latter group is significantly larger than the latter group in Romania, the final number of items in the Hungarian sample was also higher (RO – 901, HU –

1,274). The online survey belongs to the so-called open research method, as the questionnaire was accessible in the form of a link placed on social media sites and community groups. The limitation of this analysis is that the sample was not representative for the urban population of the two countries, involving more women and individuals with higher education.

In the first half of the questionnaire, we asked about different aspects of food-buying behaviour, i.e. frequency, choice of location, factors determining shopping, and then we inquired about local product preferences, online shopping habits, and the amount of income spent on food (*Figure 1*).



Source: own editing

Figure 1. *Structure of the questionnaire*

According to our hypothesis, although the two countries show significant differences in social and economic terms, there may be less significant differences between the social responses given to the pandemic in terms of purchasing decisions, incentives, locations, and frequency during the first wave (H1).

Furthermore, we assumed that the importance of cooking at home increased in both countries during the first wave of the pandemic simply because people spent more time at home and had more time for food preparation (H2).

In addition, according to another hypothesis, the amount of the purchased food increased as people tended to stockpile more food due to general fear (H3).

Finally, following from the third hypothesis, we assumed that people spent a higher percentage of their income on food than before the pandemic (H4).

As for the respondents, more than 80 percent of them were women in both countries (RO – 81%, HU – 83%). In the distribution by age-groups, the highest proportion of the respondents belonged to the group between 25 and 45 years old (RO – 60.7%, HU – 52.5%). This is due to the fact that this age-group is the most

reachable online, but as an alternative explanation one may consider that the members of this age-group may spend the most time on the Internet.

It is interesting, however, that compared to similar online questionnaire surveys, the majority of participants in the present study have higher education, which is presumably explained by the increased leisure time of this social group during the lockdown. Among Hungarians living in Romania, 73.1% of respondents have a tertiary education (college, university, or doctoral degree) compared to the 55% of respondents from Hungary. In terms of their employment, more than 50 percent of the respondents have the status of employee in both countries (RO – 61.7%, HU – 55%) and 10 percent of them are entrepreneurs in both countries.

Based on their place of residence, 64% of respondents in both Romania and Hungary live in small and medium-sized towns. In comparison, the proportion of people living in the capital is relatively high in the case of Hungary, while in Romania those respondents are present to a greater extent who live in a metropolitan area smaller than the capital. This difference may be explained by the relatively lower number of Hungarians living in Bucharest, the capital of Romania (*Figure 2*).

Source: own editing

Figure 2. *Distribution by place of residence*

To map the financial situation of households, we used an objective variable whereby we inquired about the size of the monthly net income of the households using a number of intervals (*Table 1*). The highest proportion of respondents in Romania (33.7 percent) has a net income of RON 3,000–5,000 (EUR 600–1,000). More than 50% of the respondents in Romania had a net income of less than RON 5,000, which is close to the statistics of the respondents in Hungary, where 47.80% of the respondents had a net income of less than HUF 350,000 (EUR 990 – it roughly

corresponds to RON 5,000). For both countries, 5 percent of the respondents out of the total sample marked the 'I do not know' option for this question.

It is important to emphasize, however, that according to the table below, the sample available from the two countries is almost equally distributed in terms of the financial background of the respondents, which confirms the comparability of the responses from the two countries. Nevertheless, it is also worth pointing out that the number of the Hungarian respondents outweigh their Romanian counterparts in the top three financial categories of the table below, while the Romanian respondents dominate over those from Hungary in the lower three categories. This attribute can be explained by many factors: for example, by the over-representation of the respondents living in the capital city in the case of Hungary, where the wage level is *ab ovo* higher.

Table 1. *Distribution by the monthly net income of households*

HUNGARY (N = 1,122)	%	ROMANIA (N = 856)	%
Over HUF 750,000	10.50	Over RON 10,000	8.29
Between HUF 500,000 and 750,000	17.40	Between RON 7500 and 10,000	10.05
Between HUF 350,000 and 500,000	24.20	Between RON 5,000 and 7,500	22.43
Between HUF 200,000 and 350,000	26.40	Between RON 3,000 and 5,000	33.76
Between HUF 150,000 and 200,000	12.80	Between RON 2,000 and 3,000	16.00
Less than HUF 150,000	8.60	Less than RON 2,000	9.46

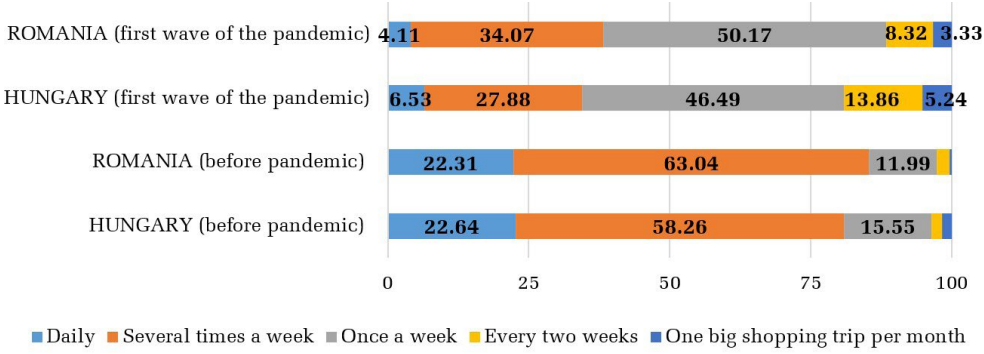
Source: own editing

Results

In the first half of our questionnaire, we asked about shopping habits, especially about the stores people chose, the factors influencing their choice, and about the frequency of shopping.

When asked how often consumers went shopping as a result of the epidemic (*Figure 3*), 50 percent of the respondents from Romania said it was once a week, which was in a huge contrast with the same question relating to the pre-pandemic period (12%). The situation is similar in the case of Hungary, as previously the majority of the respondents (58%) went shopping several times a week, while during the first wave the proportion of the once-a-week shoppers took the lead: their share increased from 15.55% to 46.5%. In fact, in both countries, the proportion of people who went shopping more than once per week was halved.

In addition, after the outbreak of the epidemic, the proportion of daily purchases fell from 22% to 4% in Romania and to 6.5% in Hungary.

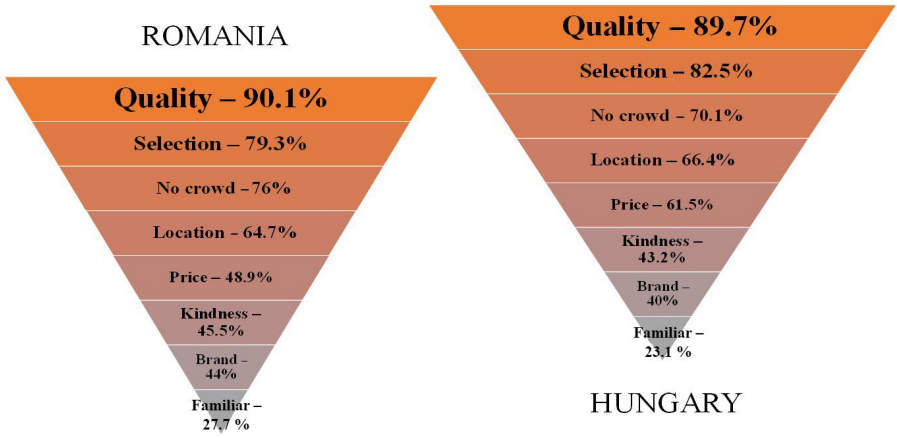


Source: own editing

Figure 3. *How often did people buy food before and during the first two months of the pandemic?*

As regards the factors that have been important in selecting a food retailer since the outbreak of the pandemic, we attempted to measure by indicating eight criteria (*Figure 4*). It turned out that the respondents thought very similarly in both countries, the most important aspect being 'quality', followed by 'selection', the quiet, non-crowded place of business ('no crowd'), and 'location' in the fourth place.

As shown in the figure, the overall ranking provided by the respondents is the same in both countries, and the preference for lack of crowd far outweighs price sensitivity ('price'), presumably due to the epidemic.

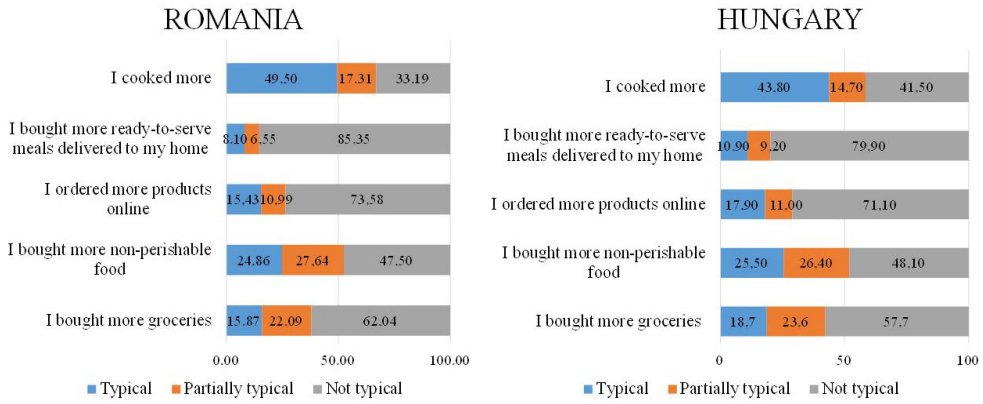


Source: own editing

Figure 4. *How important were the following criteria in your choice of grocery store in the first two months of the pandemic?*

Further objectives of the research were to assess whether the purchase of food increased due to the outbreak of the epidemic, with a special emphasis on the purchase of non-perishable foods, as well as the development of eating habits (home cooking) as a result of the home office. We were also interested in the fact if there was an increase in demand for ready-to-serve meals and in the tendencies concerning online shopping (*Figure 5*).

According to the data, it is clear that almost 50 percent of the respondents, both in Romania and in Hungary, were more likely to cook during this period. However, there was no increase in the amount of the food purchased in the case of more than half of the respondents. And, similarly, the majority of the respondents did not buy more non-perishable food, did not order more ready-to-serve meals, and did not buy online more often than before.



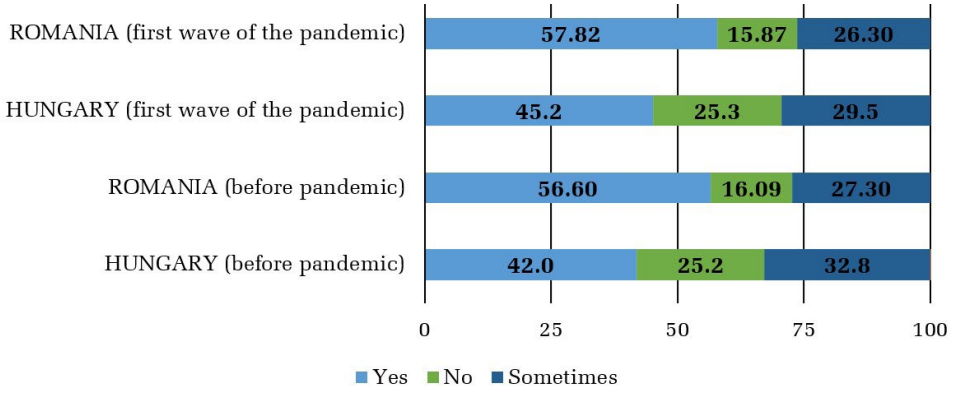
Source: own editing

Figure 5. *What characterized food purchase and cooking habits during the pandemic?*

We also inquired in the survey if consumers took into account where the product came from. In this regard, more than 50% of the respondents from Romania considered the place of origin of a product to be important, and this level was stable both before and after the epidemic (*Figure 6*). Nevertheless, this proportion was slightly lower among the respondents from Hungary.

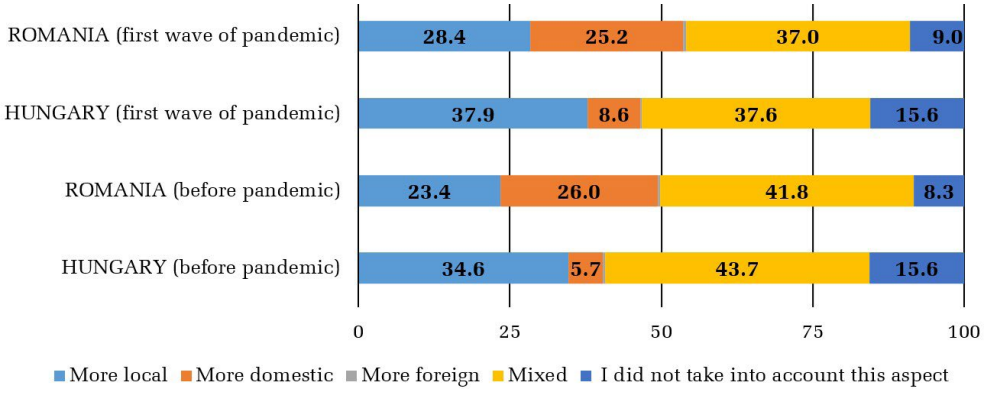
Our next question was about the demand for the domestic/local product. There was a significant difference between the respondents in the two countries in this respect (*Figure 7*). 53.6 percent of the Hungarian urban population in Romania preferred the domestic/local product to the foreign/mixed products; moreover, this proportion increased compared to the pre-pandemic period. In the case of the respondents from Hungary, the proportion of those who preferred a domestic/local product was lower (46.6 percent), which is presumably related to the higher

ratio of respondents living in the capital. The question also revealed that a large proportion of respondents buy a mix of domestic and foreign products, regardless of their place of origin (RO – 37%, HU – 37.6%).



Source: own editing

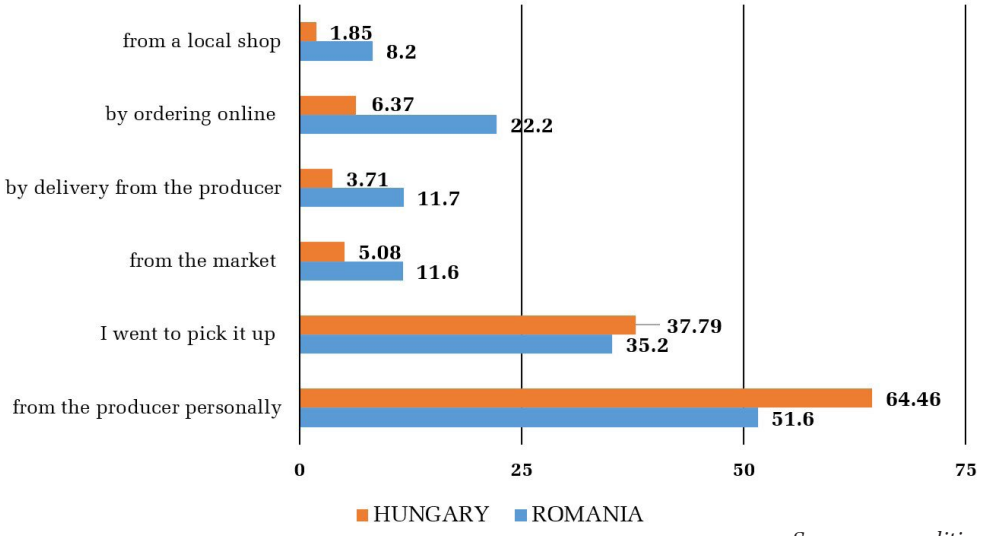
Figure 6. *Did respondents take into account where the product came from at the time of purchase?*



Source: own editing

Figure 7. *What food products did respondents buy based on their origin?*

Regarding the purchase of local products, we also asked about the place of purchase. More than 50 percent of the answers in both countries stated to have acquired the products in person from the producer (*Figure 8*). This was followed by the opportunity to buy the products directly at the house of the producer. Interestingly, the proportion of those who obtained local products via the Internet has become relatively high in Romania. This may be explained by the fact that there was a boom in the online selling opportunities during the first wave of the epidemic, as local producers viewed this option as the fastest sales channel.



Source: own editing

Figure 8. *Where do respondents acquire local/organic/smallholder products from?*

One of the objectives of the research was to map out the underlying reasons for buying a local product, so we inquired about the individual incentives lying behind the preferences towards domestic products. To the question of whether the respondent preferred domestic or local products during the epidemic, the two countries showed again similarities in terms of ranking. Among the urban population of Hungarian nationality in Romania, most of the answers indicated the freshness attribute (70%), so the majority of the respondents believed that freshness was the most important factor when buying a local product. This factor is in the first place in Hungary as well, but fewer answers marked this characteristic (53%). The following most frequent answer was the importance of supporting domestic economy, which reached almost 50% among the respondents from Hungary (HU – 49.6%), i.e. half of the respondents considered domestic economy to be very important (*Table 2*). This factor came out second in Romania, too (RO – 68%), proving that the survival and the functioning of the local economy during the pandemic was considered an essential aspect. These two factors were followed by the aspects of "tastier" and "I trust the producer". The least important factors were the use of chemicals in Hungary and environmental aspects in Romania. This actually proves that sustainability considerations took the last place as part of the purchasing motivations after the outbreak of the pandemic.

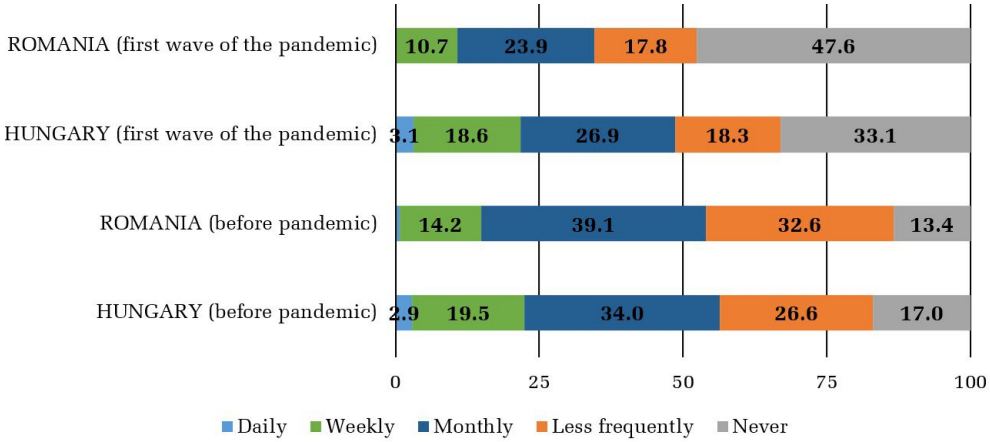
Table 2. *Why did respondents prefer domestic or local products in the first two months of the pandemic?*

Factors	HU	RO	Factors
More fresh	**52.9**	**70.2**	More fresh
Supporting the domestic economy is important to me	**49.6**	**68.0**	Supporting the domestic economy is important to me
Tastier	**38.4**	**54.1**	Tastier
I trust the producer	**37.1**	**47.7**	I trust the producer
Less polluting to the environment	**30.1**	**38.2**	May contain fewer chemical residues
Better quality than foreign products	**26.8**	**38.2**	Better quality than foreign products
May contain fewer chemical residues	**17.7**	**32.8**	Less polluting to the environment

Source: own editing

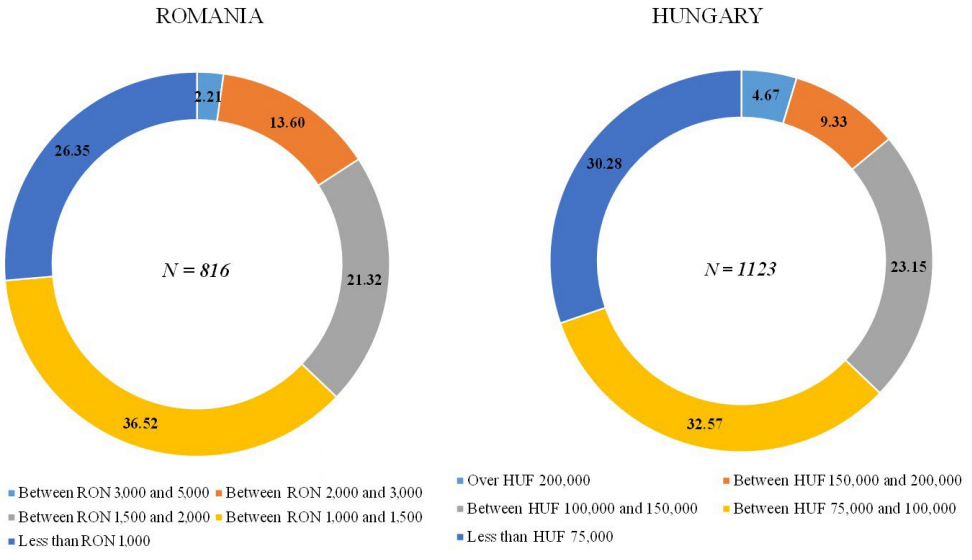
Other questions in the questionnaire referred to the willingness of online shopping with a particular focus on the demand for ready-to-serve meals (*Figure 9*). An analysis of the data revealed that, contrary to our preliminary expectations, the proportion of online purchases fell during the pandemic. This is presumably due to the fact that people spent more time at home, which probably led to more cooking and resulted in less online orders of ready-to-serve meals during this period. As a consequence, the proportion of those who had 'never' ordered online ready-to-serve meals increased in both countries (RO – 47.6%, HU – 33.1%) after the outbreak of the epidemic, while the 'daily' answer was marked only by respondents from Hungary. In fact, their number appears to be independent from the crisis, which can presumably be explained by the higher number of respondents living in the capital.

Next, we attempted to measure the amount of money that was spent by the respondents on food during the first months of the pandemic (*Figure 10*). The figure below shows how much money was spent on food per month. The highest proportion of respondents in Romania (36 percent) bought food in the amount of RON 1,000–1,500 per month (EUR 200–300), which is at the same level in Hungary, as the same amount is represented in the highest percentage there, too. This amount is followed by food purchases of less than RON 1,000 (EUR 200) per month in both countries. The data of the two countries were very close in this case as well.



Source: own editing

Figure 9. *How often did respondents order ready-to-serve meals during the first wave of the pandemic?*



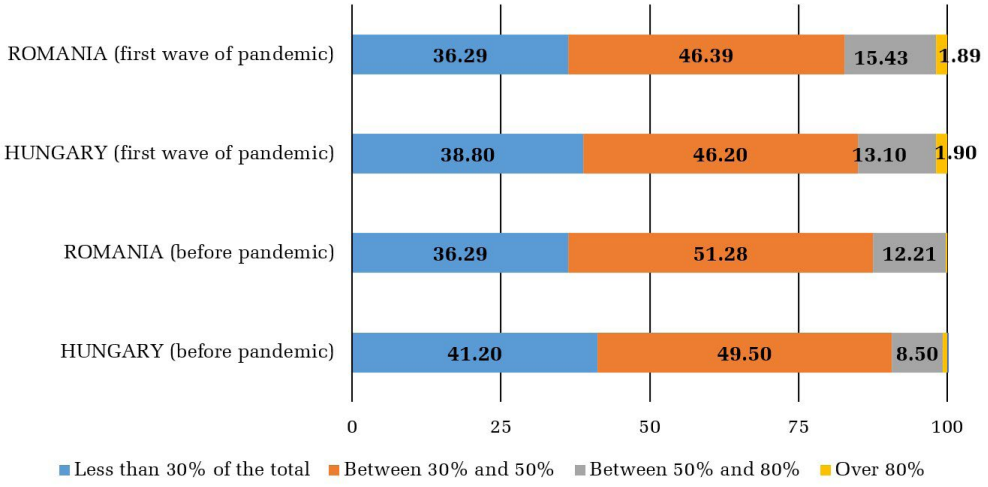
Source: own editing

Figure 10. *Approximately how much did respondents' households spend on food in the last month?*

Subsequently, we wondered what percentage of the total household income (*Figure 11*) was spent on food during these months. Again, the proportions are almost identical for the two countries, the rate of 30–50% being the highest in both countries (RO – 46.39%, HU – 46.20%). This is followed by less than 30

percent in both countries. Nevertheless, the value of 50–80% of the respondents from Romania is slightly higher, which suggests that – in line with *Table 1* – the number of those with lower income is higher among them.

At the same time, it is worth noting that there are only minor shifts in the proportions compared to the pre-pandemic period, i.e. households spent a similar share of their income on food during the first wave of closures. Nevertheless, the increase of the respondents choosing the '50%–80%' category in both countries and the emergence of the 'above 80%' category show that some households' incomes are likely to have fallen during the first wave of the pandemic. Such a result could be explained by the temporary loss of employment caused by the closures or the delayed social interventions of the governments.



Source: own editing

Figure 11. *Approximately what percentage of total household incomes was spent on food?*

Summary

The aim of this study was to examine and compare the food-shopping habits of the Romanian and Hungarian urban populations during the first wave of COVID-19, taking into account the pre-pandemic situation as well.

We can conclude that our first assumption was mostly confirmed for all of our questions, as the survey proved that, indeed, the purchasing behaviour of respondents in both countries has changed due to the pandemic situation, and, more importantly, the sample from the two countries showed that consumers reacted in almost the same manner. According to the findings, similar tendencies

emerged in both examined countries regarding the vast majority of the questions. That is to say, the appearance of the virus has changed consumer habits primarily in terms of the frequency of purchases, as the number of purchases per week decreased to one both in Hungary and Romania, which indicates the spread of a conscious, risk-averse consumer behaviour. Moreover, the consumers' order of preference has also changed in response to the pandemic; the factors that seem to influence shopping patterns are in line with the results of other research done in other parts of the world, as described in the literature review. For example, in terms of choosing a store, its location and the size of the crowd have become more decisive. Nevertheless, there was a slight difference between the respondents of the two countries regarding the question as to whether they preferred the domestic/local products or imported products, a higher percentage of the Hungarian urban population in Romania choosing domestic products compared to respondents from Hungary. Furthermore, online grocery shopping has increased among Romanian consumers more prominently.

Our second hypothesis was also confirmed both directly and indirectly, i.e. almost 50 percent of the respondents, both in Romania and Hungary, were more likely to cook during the examined period, and the analysis of the data showed that the proportion of online ready-meal orders decreased – the proportion of those who 'never' ordered online ready-to-serve meals increased in both countries –, which also suggested that people cooked more often.

In contrast, the third hypothesis was not fully confirmed, as the amount of food purchased did not increase: more than half of the respondents did not buy more durable food than before the pandemic. Accordingly, the same applies to the fourth hypothesis, as the vast majority of the respondents' households spent a similar share of their income on food during the first wave of closures compared to the pre-pandemic period. At the same time, the pandemic seems to have a more important impact in comparison with the pre-pandemic period: we found a slight increase in the number of respondents who chose the spending level of '50%–80%', and more people opted for the category of 'above 80%' in both countries, which indicated that some households' incomes were likely to have fallen during the first wave of the pandemic.

References

ADAY, Serpil–ADAY, Mehmet Seckin. 2020. *Impacts of COVID-19 on Food Supply Chain. Food Quality and Safety*. Published by Oxford University Press on behalf of Zhejiang University Press.

ARORA, Nidhi et al.. 2020. *A Global View of How Consumer Behavior Is Changing amid COVID-19*. Discussion document. Mckinsey & Company: covid-19-global-consumer-sentiment-20200707.pdf (mckinsey.com). Last accessed on: 22 March 2022.

BAKALIS, Serafim et al.. 2020. Perspectives from CO+RE: How COVID-19 Changed Our Food Systems and Food Security Paradigms. *Curr. Res. Food. Sci*. June 2–3: 166–172.

BUTU, Alina et al.. 2020. The Impact of COVID-19 Crisis upon the Consumer Buying Behavior of Fresh Vegetables Directly from Local Producers. Case Study: The Quarantined Area of Suceava County, Romania. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 17(15): 5485. DOI: 10.3390/ijerph17155485.

CHA, William Minseuk–PRADEEP, K. Chintagunta–SANJAY, K. Dhar. 2015. Food Purchases during the Great Recession. *Kilts Center for Marketing at Chicago Booth–Nielsen Dataset Paper Series*. Electronic Journal no. 1–008.

COVID-19 STUDY. *European Food Behaviours*. 2021 (https://www.eitfood.eu/media/news-pdf/COVID-19_Study_-_European_Food_Behaviours_-_Report.pdf).

CRANFIELD, John. A. L. 2020. Framing Consumer Food Demand Responses in a Viral Pandemic. *Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics/Revue Canadienne D'agroeconomie* 1–6.

CSEPELI, György–ÖRKÉNY, Antal–ZSIGÓ, T. Ferenc. 2020. Közép-európai fővárosok mentális térképei. Attitűdök, értékek, identitások [Mental Maps of Central European Capitals – Identities, Values, Identities]. In: A. Gergely, András et al. (eds), *Kultúra, közösség és társadalom.* Budapest: TK–Magyar Szociológiai Társaság. 56–74.

DHOLAKIA, Utpal. 2020. *Why Are We Panic Buying during the Coronavirus Pandemic?* https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-sciencebehindbehavior/202003/why-are-we-panic-buying-during-thecoronavirus-pandemic. Last accessed on: 22 March 2021.

EGER, Ludvík et al.. 2021. The Effect of COVID-19 on Consumer Shopping Behaviour: Generational Cohort Perspective. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 61: 102542.

JRIBI, Sarra et al.. 2020. COVID-19 Virus Outbreak Lockdown: What Impacts on Household Food Wastage? *Environment, Development and Sustainability* 22(5): 3939–3955.

KOVALCSIK, Tamás–BOROS, Lajos–PÁL, Viktor. 2021. A COVID-19-járvány első két hullámának területisége Közép-Európában [The Spatiality of the First Two Waves of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Central Europe]. *Területi Statisztika* 3: 263–290.

MARTY, Lucile et al.. 2021. Food Choice Motives and the Nutritional Quality of Diet during the COVID-19 Lockdown in France. *Appetite* 157: 105005.

O'CONNELL, Martin–ÁUREO, de Paula–SMITH, Kate. 2021. Preparing for a Pandemic: Spending Dynamics and Panic Buying during the COVID-19 First Wave. *Fiscal Studies*. 42(2): 249–264.

SOÓS, Gabriella. 2020. The Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic on the Consumer Behavior in the Initial Period. In: Ercsey Ida (ed.), *Marketing a digitalizáció korában*. Széchenyi István University. 283–294.

SZABÓ, Lilla Petronella–BÉNI, Alexandra. 2021. Vírusháború. A Covid-19 járvány metaforikus ábrázolása a magyar hírportálokon. *Médiakutató* 22(3–4): 59–68.

SZIRMAI, Viktória. 2021. Metropolises at the Time of the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Földrajzi Közlemények* 145(1): 1–16.

UZZOLI Annamária et al.. 2021. Regional Inequalities in the Waves of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Hungary. *Területi Statisztika* (3): 291–319.

VERPLANKEN, Bass–WOOD Wendy. 2006. Interventions to Break and Create Consumer Habits. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* 25(1): 90–103.

Acta Univ. Sapientiae, European and Regional Studies, **21** (2022) 62–76

DOI: 10.2478/auseur-2022-0004

The Central Location of the Hungarian Culture in the Syrmia Region: Maradék

Attila KASZNÁR
PhD, Associate Professor, Head of Department
John von Neumann University, Faculty of Economics and Business, Department of International Economics
e-mail: kasznar.attila@gtk.uni-neumann.hu

Ádám HÁGEN
Researcher
John von Neumann University, MNB Knowledge Centre, Centre for Economic, Geography, Urban Marketing and Geopolitics
e-mail: hagen.adam@uni-neumann.hu

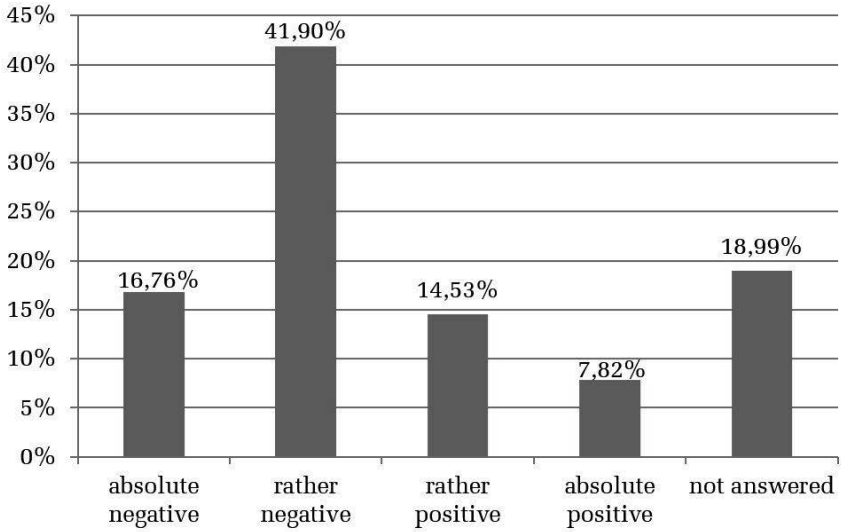
Abstract: The southernmost part of Vojvodina is the Syrmia region. The Hungarian presence here is only sporadic. The area is the most Serbian part of Vojvodina. The central settlement of the Hungarian diaspora in the region is Maradék. Maradék is the last stronghold of local Hungarian culture. The settlement is home to the Petőfi Sándor Cultural Association. The Association is the dominant community of the Hungarian culture in the Syrmia region. The local primary school has a Hungarian-language class, which is unique in the region. Maradék was also the economic centre of the region's Hungarian population. However, historical and economic changes have had a very negative impact on the settlement. Living in Maradék is difficult, and many people, especially Hungarians, are moving away.

Keywords: minority, diaspora, ethnic culture, emigration, religion

Introduction

The southernmost region of Vojvodina is Syrmia, named after the Roman name of the region, Syrmium. The area was part of the province of Pannonia in Roman times, and it is part of Vojvodina in the classical Hungarian regional division. Geographically, it is the southern part of Vojvodina, between the Danube and the Sava. 'The Szerémség was one of the most notorious areas on the border between Western and Eastern Christianity and on the line of contact between the Christian

and Ottoman worlds' (Sarány 2018: 83).[1] The Hungarian population, fleeing from the Turks, was replaced by a mixed population. After the expulsion of the Turks, the Hungarians also moved back to Szerémség, but their demographic situation changed fundamentally. By the 21st century, the proportion of the Hungarian minority population in the region had declined sharply. Compared to other Hungarian communities living beyond the border, the Hungarians living here are 'geographically more separated from the motherland and have found themselves in an environment where they are not only in a minority but also further apart' (Nagy–Hágen 2020: 201).[2] However, the assimilation of Hungarians has not yet taken place, even though the environment predisposes them to it (Bodó 2003: 48).[3] But the environment helps assimilation. The majority of Hungarians in Syrmia are not optimistic about a positive future.



Source: research on Szerémség Kollégium

Figure 1. *The future vision of the people in the region of Syrmia*

The Hungarians living here do not 'renounce their ethnocultural identity and their specific traditions' (Bodó 2014: 16).[4] It is the protection of ethnoculture that has shaped the people living here into a functioning ethnosporus. The Hungarian term *szorvány* accurately expresses this meaning – it is not the same as the term 'traditional minority', as it means a group of small minority communities of

1 Translated by the author.
2 Translated by the author.
3 Translated by the author.
4 Translated by the author.

people of the same culture, living far apart from each other, an ethnoculturally cohesive group, i.e. ethnospore, to use Barna Bodó's idea.

The Hungarian ethnospora in the Szerém region is a historically and economically distinct region of Vojvodina. The settlements of the region with a verifiably Hungarian population are: Árpatarló (Ruma), Beska (Beška), Dobradópuszta (Dobrodol), Fényberek (Platičevo), Herkóca (Hrtkovci), India (Inđija), Karlóca (Sremski Karlovci), Kisrádinca (Mali Radinci), Latyarak (Laćarak), Maradék (Maradik), Nyékinca (Nikinci), Pétervárad (Petrovadin), Satrinca (Šatrinci), Szávaszentdemeter (Sremska Mitrovica), and Ürög (Irig).

The region is mainly agricultural land, traditionally rich in handicrafts. Today, the major cities of the region (Novi Sad, Sremska Mitrovica, and Inđija) have established significant industrial plants. As a result, the craft industry has disappeared. Agriculture is facing major problems.

Maradék (Maradik) left as a model settlement in the Syrmia region, which serves as a case study for the local Hungarians, the region's economy and culture, and demographic trends. Maradék is a settlement of Syrmia with the most significant level of Hungarian culture. Village inhabitants' conscience of belonging to the Hungarian ethnicity is strong and is based upon rich and multifaceted traditions. This village with its long traditions may be called the centre of the Hungarian culture of Syrmia since all the inhabitants of the other villages where Hungarians still live are strongly linked to the ongoing processes in Maradék aimed to preserve the Hungarian traditions and culture, called Hungarianness. 'As long as language borders do not coincide with national borders, ethnic minorities will continue to exist' (Bodó 2003: 48).[5]

The study is based on the data from the research work of the Szerémség Kollégium of Lakitelek Népfőiskola [i.e. community college / Volkshochschule]. The authors were participants in the research. The ethno-regional presentation of Maradék can serve as a complex case study for the research on the economy, culture, and Hungarians in the region of Syrmia. In the research conducted by the Lakitelek Népfőiskola in Syrmia, more than one third of the respondents were residents of Maradék. The evaluation of the data thus justified the choice of Maradék as the case study settlement of the region.

General Features

Maradék (in English, the village's name means 'Remnant' or 'Leftover') is situated in the central area of Syrmia. Its history goes back to the 15th century. The area has excellent conditions for agriculture. Its name appears for the first time in a document dated 1498. However, archaeological research has

5 Translated by the author.

already proven that the location was already inhabited in the period of the Roman Empire.

There are three legends related to the origin of the village's name presented in the book 'Maradék maradéka' (The Rest of Maradék). According to the first legend, after a battle, there was only one house and its porch left, and the village was later built around this house. The second legend says that a landlord distributed his land among his sons, but there was one piece of land left. The third legend is of Serbian origin and says that the name of the village was composed from the names of a young couple in love, Mara and Diko (Bögözi 2018: 42).[6]

The Hungarians who lived in the village disappeared during the period of the Turkish domination, i.e. in the 16th-17th centuries. Their place was occupied by Serbians and Croatians. After squeezing out the Turks by the end of the 17th century, the Hungarians slowly returned. A new shock hit the Hungarians almost two hundred years later. 'At the Compromise of 1867 [between Austria and Hungary], the Hungarian State exchanged the whole area for the city of Fiume on the Adriatic See' (homepage of the Reformed Church of Maradék). That was the time when the Croatization of the mostly Roman Catholic Hungarians started. They lived in the Kingdom of Croatia, and the Croatization went on through their religion.

The Hungarian community passed from the tolerant and permissive atmosphere of nationalities into an ambience aimed at the assimilation and slow reduction of the Hungarian minority. Under these circumstances, the Hungarian community faced the horrors of the two world wars and of the period of Yugoslavia. In spite of having suffered a lot, this unbreakable community still represents a little fortress left from the Hungarians in Syrmia.

National Composition

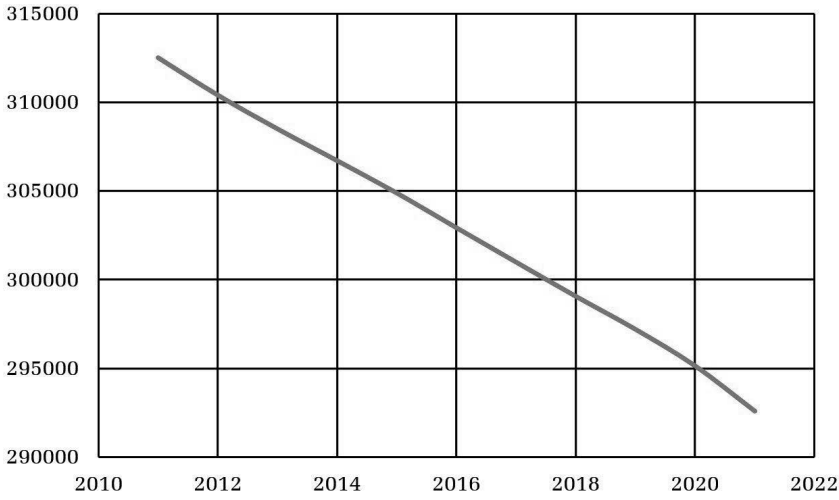
The number of inhabitants in Vojvodina has been on the decline over the last ten years. In the Vojvodina region, the population of the Syrmia region has also been steadily decreasing.

Maradék has a total of 2,100 inhabitants. It is a miracle that after so many devastations Hungarians still live in this village. More than 550 people consider themselves Hungarians, representing over 25% of the local population. It is an outstanding level among the Hungarian diaspora (Kasznár–Kőrösy–Ludvig–Poczkodi 2020: 118).[7]

More than 60% of the population in Maradék is of Serbian nationality. The process of the growth of the Serbian majority is permanent since new Serbian settlers arrive to the village quite often. The Balkan wars accelerated this process

6 Translated by the author.
7 Translated by the author.

when the majority of the Serbian nationals living in their nation-states split from Yugoslavia moved to the actual Serbia.



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia

Figure 2. *Estimated number of population in the Syrmia region, 2011–2021*

Due to the historical changes, a huge number of Croatian nationals used to live in the village. Actually, their population is much reduced now, amounting to around 100 persons. At the same time, the Croatians in the village had a very special status. During the Balkan wars, they did not suffer atrocities since they were considered part of the local Hungarians and were not treated as enemies.

Once a huge number of German nationals also lived on the territory of Syrmia, but due to the persecutions after WWII and the expatriation, their actual number has been considerably reduced, and they virtually disappeared from the area. Germans also lived in the old Maradék, but today there are no inhabitants of German nationality.

Religious Background

If we look at the village, we can see three churches. The majority of the population is Serbian, and they are Orthodox Christians. The Hungarians and the small number of other nationals are either Catholics or adhere to the Reformed Church.

The local Hungarians preserved their Catholic belief until the last decade of the 19th century, but the activities of the Croatian leadership of the time aimed at undermining religious identity created unbearable conditions. All the Catholics of Maradék were Hungarians, and their mother tongue was the Hungarian

language. They submitted a petition in 1897 to have a Hungarian priest, which was denied by the Croatian bishop. After that, the majority of the Hungarians joined the Reformed Church.

> After the conversion of the Hungarians to the Reformed faith, the Croatian Catholic Church sent three Jesuits to Maradék, who unsuccessfully tried to reconvert the believers in 1898. The Reformed Church started the education in Hungarian language of the children of Maradék, in the newly built community house. This church is still playing an important role in preserving the Hungarian culture and language. (Bögözi 2018: 43)[8]

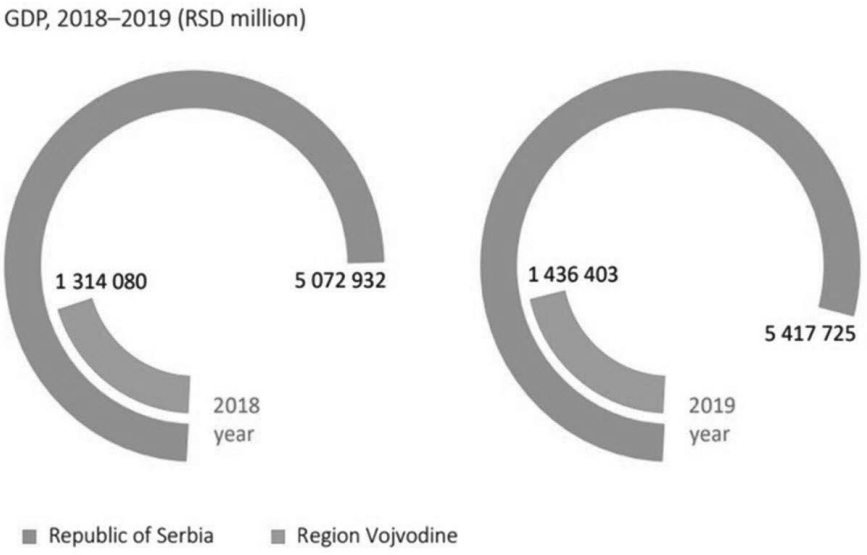
The new Catholic church of the village was opened in 2017. Unfortunately, the masses are still held in Croatian language, which does not help strengthening the links of the local Hungarians with the Roman Catholic Church. 'A little consolation for the Hungarian believers is that every second week the psalms are sung in Hungarian during the masses' (Bögözi 2018: 31).[9] This question, unresolved for more than a century, causes and can cause further problems in the future from the point of view of the Hungarians because 'the Catholic children attend the Hungarian language courses at the Community House of the Reformed Church. Although the Hungarians living in Maradék and its surroundings are Catholics, the preservation of the mother tongue and the Hungarian culture is mostly practised among the Calvinists' (Bögözi 2018: 31).[10]

The Economic Situation in Maradék

Vojvodina's economy is growing, and its role in Serbia's economy is significant. However, the situation for small and medium-sized companies is difficult. It is mainly the industrial centres that are growing. The craft industry is slowly disappearing.

There is no significant industrial activity in Maradék. In the past, the most important industrial object of the area had been the brick-producing workshop of Kálmán Birinyi. During Yugoslavian communism, the workshop was nationalized, and its deterioration started. Actually, it operates from spring to autumn. The workers are mostly from other regions of Serbia. There are a few locals working at the workshop. They do this job only seldom, or do not work there at all, wherefore none of the Hungarian-speaking inhabitants could give any information about the workshop.

8 Translated by the author.
9 Translated by the author.
10 Translated by the author.



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia

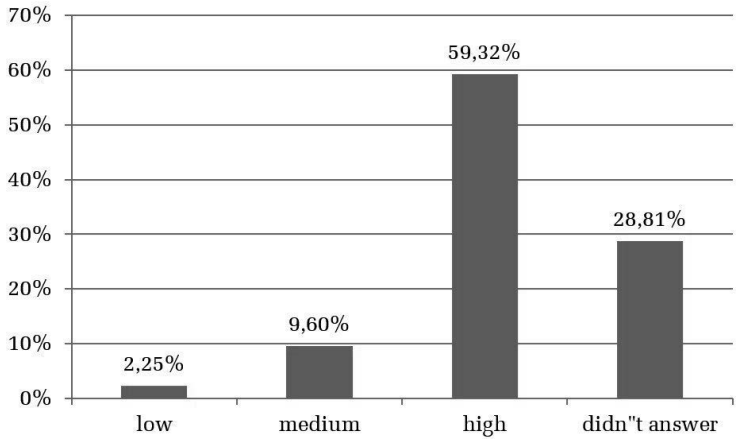
Figure 3. *GDP of Serbia and Vojvodina*

Artisanship has practically disappeared from Maradék. The flourishing period of the past enterprises came to an end as a consequence of large-scale industrial production. Basket weavers, broom knitters are not needed, the world has changed, and artisanship is not profitable any more. Today only hairdressing is a profitable business.

'The largest problem in Maradék is poverty, as there are not enough and appropriate jobs' (Virág 2017: 120).[11] Under these circumstances, it comes as no surprise that a significant part of the economically active population commutes to India, a town 10 kilometres from Maradék. This town has become one of the most prosperous industrial centres of Serbia during the last 10 years, and it can absorb all the labour force of the region.

'Those who have remained here live from agriculture' (Virág 2017: 120).[12] Most people in the municipality find work in agriculture. The most important produces are the traditional cereals, wheat and corn. As a result of the industrial and market changes during the past years, the importance of tobacco production is growing, which seems to be highly profitable in the region. In the production of fruits, apple still has the leading position, but apricot and plum are also popular produces.

11 Translated by the author.
12 Translated by the author.



Source: research on Szerémség Kollégium

Figure 4. *Workers not working in the municipality according to residents*

In Syrmia, cattle had the leading role in stock-raising, but it has been losing its importance. Actually, farming is the dominant activity, but it is far from industrial dimensions.

The Role of Language and Culture in the Life of the Hungarians in Maradék

Although there were opinions that the Hungarians in Maradék did not care about the preservation of their Hungarianness, 'during the last couple of years, fundamental changes have started, the first results of which are already visible' (Virág 2017: 117).[13]

It is a general problem in the diaspora that a significant part of those who consider themselves Hungarians do not speak the Hungarian language. This problem exists in many locations of Syrmia, among them in Maradék as well, and it is even bigger among the young generation who lives every day in a Serbianized environment and hardly speaks the Hungarian language even at home in the family. The nation lives in its language, and thus the transmission of the language is a key question in preserving Hungarianness.

The locals also consider that the role of the mother tongue is very important, since in families where the mother does not speak Hungarian the knowledge of the language disappears. Parallel to this, the links with the Hungarian culture become very weak, and this leads to the loss of Hungarian identity. Avoiding this

13 Translated by the author.

is a highly important national political goal since this is the way to guarantee the survival of the Hungarians in the area.

According to the locals of Maradék, the problem is very complicated. One of its root causes is that there are less and less places where they can use the Hungarian language. In public administration, they cannot use it at all, wherefore youngsters often reject to use the Hungarian language at home. Even if they understand Hungarian, they cannot answer or they do not want to. Mixed couples or mixed marriages also cause problems because most of the time the common language is obviously the Serbian and not the Hungarian. In the families where the communication is in any other language than Hungarian, there is a slight chance to preserve Hungarianness in the long term.

The policy towards the minorities of the Yugoslavian decades did not facilitate the preservation of Hungarianness either. After the tendencies of Croatization, Hungarians faced the growing threat of Serbianization, which became more explicit after the collapse of former Yugoslavia.[14] The most critical period of the survival of the Hungarians was the 70s of the 20th century. 'Even the director of the school tried to convince the parents that the children would have a better chance for a good career in life if they studied in Serbo-Croatian language, and it would be also easier for the teachers and the pupils if they did not have the burden of studying the [Hungarian] language in the superior classes' (Ambrus 2018: 17).[15]

These mistaken views led to the termination of Hungarian-language courses in the village in 1978, where an impressive Julianic School had existed earlier.[16] By now, only the ruins of this school are visible.[17]

It may be an important step forward that the locals of Maradék succeeded in teaching the inferior classes in Hungarian language in the Serbian school. It causes serious problems that Hungarian teachers change quite often. In the 2018/2019 academic year, two young Hungarian teachers undertook the responsibility of teaching the children. As they told us, it is difficult to convince the Hungarian children to speak this language. After a long and exhausting work with them, the children started to communicate with the teachers in Hungarian but still used the Serbian language to talk to each other. As Ms Lívia Bárdos and Ms Hargita Halász, the young teachers said, almost heroic efforts are needed to teach the children the Hungarian language, but the results can bring positive changes in the life of the local Hungarians. At the beginning of the 2019/2020 academic year, none of the teachers were in the village; however, there were chances that one of them would return.

14 In addition, huge groups of Hungarians left the land where they were born.

15 Translated by the author.

16 The Julianic Association was created in 1904 as a network for teaching Hungarian language for the Hungarian diaspora in the Southern Land (Hetzmann 2014).

17 It has for long been the wish of the local Hungarians to build the new Hungarian community house on the place of the former Julianic School.

Independently from these difficulties, teaching the Hungarian language in a Serbian school is successful: the teachers and the pupils receive all the support for their job that the Serbian education system can offer. The available means are sufficient to carry out the teaching of the Hungarian language under appropriate conditions.

The pupils can attend the superior classes in Újvidék, where they are transported in organized groups.

The main factor of coherence of the local Hungarians is the Sándor Petőfi Cultural Association in the courtyard of the priest of the Reformed Church, which is famous in Syrmia for its folklore chorus, tambourine orchestra, and dancers. Its main mission is to become the transmission centre of the Hungarian way of life in the diaspora. As the locals call it, 'The Petőfi' is known all around Syrmia, and it is recognized as an association aimed at preserving and strengthening identity, as the most important centre of Hungarian culture in the area. The Hungarian community concentrates around 'The Petőfi' serving as a key institution of preserving the Hungarian diaspora (Kasznár 2020).[18]

From the point of view of tourism, the County House in Maradék is a beloved place to visit, mentioned by the Serbians as "etno-kuca". The tools, artefacts collected and exhibited in this house demonstrate the peculiarities of the life of the Hungarians in Syrmia. Once this house was the scene of a movie filmed here on country life. Unfortunately, this house is not run and maintained by Hungarians. The person who operates the house does not even live in Maradék.

The Hungarians of Maradék

The Head of the Sándor Petőfi Cultural Association, an active promoter of the preservation of the local Hungarian community, Mr Géza Berta works day and night. Besides farming on his lands, he organizes and supports with his presence the activities of the Hungarian community aimed at preserving the cultural heritage. He is a guardian of many cultural values, a musician, a singer and played an outstanding role in the history of the bell of the local Reformed Church, closely linked to German culture and nationality. The bell was originally not made for the Maradék Reformed Church. Its place was in the bell tower of the church in Beska. The people of that village also suffered from WWII, and after the takeover by the Yugoslavian communists, German nationals were forced to move out, i.e. they were expatriated. As usual, the communists wanted to annihilate not only the enemy but also wanted to do away with all the monuments in order to prevent any remembrance. From this point of view, the bell of the church of the German community of Beska became the symbol of the hated hostile past to

18 Translated by the author.

be destroyed by melting. At this point, Géza Berta saved the bell. He recalled the story as follows. That time, the believers of the Reformed Church in Maradék did not have a church; they just had a house for praying. In the past, in Kalapérka, a small bell was tolled, signalling lunchtime for the people working in the fields. The community of the Reformed Church bought this bell first and built a small bell tower for it. The fundament of the church was laid before WWII. The local entrepreneurs provided the materials, the bricks, cement for the foundation. During the war, construction works stopped, and the materials disappeared. After the war, a nicer bell tower was built in Maradék. Once, when Mr Berta visited Beska with his father, they saw that the demolition of the Lutheran Church of the local German community had already been started. The two bells were already on the ground. Mr Berta thought these two bells originally brought from Germany had to be saved. They returned home and went back to Beska with chariots. Near the church being demolished, they took the wheels off to make it easier to roll the bells on the chariots. After that, they returned to Maradék, and the bells were transported there and placed first in the belfry and later in the church tower built in 1953. The Yugoslavian government was not opposed to Hungarians using the bells. After the change of the political system, the Hungarians visiting the land where they were born expressed their gratitude to the local Hungarian community for having saved the valuable monument of their ancestors.

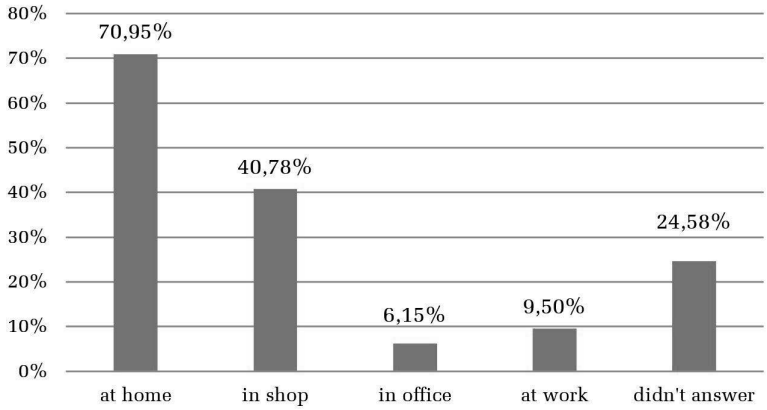
Uncle Géza renewed the activities of 'The Petőfi', and thus a new important opportunity for the survival of the local Hungarians appeared. The work he does in spite of his age serves as an eternal and historic example from the point of view of preserving Hungarianness.

His son, Mr Zoltán Berta, is the manager of Typography 'Forum' in Újvidék. He supports his father working on the preservation of the values and culture of Hungarians in Syrmia and also towards increasing the ability of Hungarian identity to form communities. He is convinced that the Serbian society makes possible to take further steps, thus step by step meeting the new, even the small results with happiness, making the majoritarian society accept the existence of the Hungarian community with its own independent identity. As an example, he mentioned that the first bilingual, Serbian–Hungarian place name sign of the location was erected in Maradék. Shortly after, the nameplate was taken off, but the Hungarians returned it to its place. Once again, the nameplate was taken off, but it was restored to the previous place. Next time it was only painted and scribbled. After a brief cleaning, it was restored again. Actually, everybody got used to the names of the locations being written in Hungarian as well.

The history of commemorating 15 March, the National Day of Hungary, also proves the success of the small steps. For the first time, the Hungarian community – only part of it – had an organized celebration on 15 March in 2009. The number of the participants that time was only 15. Ten years later, in 2019, a hundred

persons participated, and even the Serbians accepted the celebration with understanding and sympathy.

Mr Zoltán Berta considers the growth of activity among the Hungarians to be the result of 'The Petőfi', and there are some visible achievements in preserving the Hungarian identity. More and more people in their twenties who do not speak Hungarian sign up for language courses to study the language of their ancestors. The demand to approach the children to the Hungarian culture grows in the generations, and thus the "Tarcalka" children's folk dance group will be introduced soon.



Source: research on Szerémség Kollégium

Figure 5. *Language use*

According the Mr Zoltán Berta, the united Hungarian community, which has put aside the controversies, is able to act with a force never seen before to guarantee its survival in the diaspora.

Rev. Daniel Halász has been the Reformed priest of the village for seven years. He has made great efforts to forge Hungarians into a real community. He launched the initiative to open a private kindergarten, which took place in 2013. This kindergarten can provide the framework for teaching the children the Hungarian language and culture as early as possible. 'In September 2013, the General Convention (the representative body of the Reformed Churches of the Carpathian Basin) helped to launch a weekend kindergarten, and in 2014, with the help of the Hungarian State, the daily education started in the kindergarten set up in the Community Hall' (Farkas-Ráduly 2018: 66).[19] The kindergarten is the first place to form the identity in Maradék where the children can meet the linguistic and cultural traditions of their ancestors on a day-to-day basis. Many of them come from families where the Hungarian language is not used at all or only on rare occasions, wherefore it is important to teach them how to communicate

19 Translated by the author.

fluently in this language. As a result, they will be able to successfully attend the classes in Hungarian in the school. Due to the devoted work of Rev. Daniel Halász and his wife, the kindergarten has the necessary toys and tools for education, and thus it is a Hungarian heaven for the children.

After a complete renovation and refurbishment, some accommodation possibilities were formed in the attic of the priest's house, where the visitors of the village can spend the night. The activity of Rev. Dániel Halász has boosted the tourism of the region but has also involved the locals into the hospitality business. Among them, many have started the business of renting rooms for tourists. This development of the local tourism can also play an important role in preserving the local values. In the rooms in the attic of the priest's house, the Hungarian teachers and the scholarship holders of the Petőfi programme are accommodated. The latter group has the task of contributing to the local cultural life.

The day-care of the Hungarian class is also here besides the Hungarian pre-school course; the pupils can spend the afternoon with the teachers after the classes. The library with 3,000 books donated by the parsonage helps learning the Hungarian language.

We should not forget about Aunt Irénke, who takes care of the children's lunch every day. She also pays attention to offering the children – if possible – meals of Hungarian style that they can enjoy.

In the courtyard of the Reformed priest's house, the construction of the newest and the most modern kindergarten in Vojvodina started in 2019. The Hungarian Government also supported this project. The kindergarten has a hall for different events and offers accommodation for the visitors of the village. The event hall is in the basement of the three-storey building. The capacity of the hall is 150 persons, which can hopefully become the home for Hungarian cultural gatherings in Syrmia. On the ground floor, there will be a kindergarten for two groups and on the first floor rooms for the guests and visitors and an apartment for the teacher when she returns and for her husband, who will be the assistant pastor. This would be an important step forward in the village, as 'thirty years ago the young people went to the cities searching for a better life. Those who graduated ten years ago and have double citizenship went to the West. One of the biggest problems is that more than seventy graduated people left Maradék during the past couple of years, but these educated people could be very useful for the village' (Virág 2017: 120).[20] Although two people cannot replace seventy intellectuals, the fact that they are in Maradék is more than important, since no intellectual wanted to settle down here over the last decades. Further chances will open to preserve the Hungarian identity if the teacher of the local youngsters will be a local young lady who will help the local children to find their way. The young Rev. Dániel Halász is shaping the local Hungarian community with his plans and actions.

20 Translated by the author.

The recognized and highly respected expert of the values of the local Hungarians, Mr József Szabó, or Uncle Józsi, as everyone calls him, helped the researchers visit the village house by house to find and discover the traces of the local Hungarians. It is an interesting fact that Uncle Józsi, who plays a key role in the life of the local community, was not born here, in Maradék, but he is linked to the village through his wife. He could be an example for all the Hungarians living in diaspora. His energy, joyful attitude, and unbreakable commitment are the values local Hungarians can draw strength from for the further promotion of this heritage. Mr József Szabó is also known for his gastronomic knowledge and culinary art. People usually turn to him if they want to buy good-quality sausage, kulen, or smoked meat products. He adds carefully selected spices, so if anyone has tasted his products, they will never choose anything else. He is a frequent participant of the activities of the Petőfi Sándor Cultural Association, an active member of the chorus, a devoted guardian and teacher of the local culture. Uncle Józsi is an inexhaustible source of information about the local Hungarian life.

Maradék as the Guarantee of the Local Hungarians' Future

It is very hard to survive in the diaspora as part of the nation. The Hungarians of Maradék make increasing efforts to preserve the heritage of their ancestors, carefully protecting their Hungarianness. The building of the Hungarian identity has received new visible impulses after the lost decades. Concerning the people of Maradék as a Hungarian community at the heart of Syrmia, we share Zoltán Berta's thoughts: 'I cannot betray the past, otherwise I betray the future.' If the Hungarians in Maradék as a community can truly find the way to identify themselves with their past, they will find the way to survival in the future of the Hungarians in Syrmia.

References

AMBRUS, Attila. 2018. Maradék maradéka. In: Tóth Lívia (ed.), *Maradék maradéka*. Újvidék: Vajdasági Magyar Újságírók Egyesülete. 11–25.

BÖGÖZI, Attila 2018. Hajszálvékony semmiség, avagy cérnaszálból szőtt aranyfonál. In: Tóth, Lívia (ed.), *Maradék maradéka*. Újvidék: Vajdasági Magyar Újságírók Egyesülete. 26–48.

BODÓ, Barna. 2003. Szórványnarratívák. In: Ilyés, Zoltán–Papp, Richárd (eds), *Tanulmányok a szórványról*. Budapest: Gondolat–MTAKI. 43–51.

2014. Szórványról – Másként. *Korunk* 25(6): 6–23.

FARKAS-RÁDULY, Melina. 2018. Történelmet írtak Maradékon. In: Tóth, Lívia (ed.), *Maradék maradéka*. Újvidék: Vajdasági Magyar Újságírók Egyesülete. 65–69.

HETZMANN, Róbert. 2014. A Julián Egyesület időszerűsége. https://magyarpatriotak.hu/julian-egyesulet/. Last accessed on: 1 March 2022.

KASZNÁR, Attila. 2020. A Petőfi Sándor Művelődési Egyesület története, valamint szerepe a szórvány magyarság mindennapjaiban. In: Berta, Zoltán–Hágen, Ádám (eds), *Szerémség Kollégium*. Lakitelek: Antológia Kiadó. 259–264.

KASZNÁR, Attila–KŐRÖSY, Péter–LUDVIG, Gergő–POCZKODI, Petronella. 2020. Maradék – Maradik. In: Berta, Zoltán–Hágen, Ádám (eds), *Szerémség Kollégium*. Lakitelek: Antológia Kiadó. 117–138.

NAGY, Dóra–HÁGEN, Ádám. 2020. Magyar népesség, magyar identitás a Szerémségben. In: Berta, Zoltán–Hágen, Ádám (eds), *Szerémség Kollégium*. Lakitelek: Antológia Kiadó. 187–207.

SARÁNY, István. 2018. Berta Zoltán hűsége. In: Tóth Lívia (eds), *Maradék maradéka*. Újvidék: Vajdasági Magyar Újságírók Egyesülete. 82–92.

VIRÁG, Árpád. 2017. Az újraéledő falu. In: Fodor, István (ed.), *Szórványlétben II.* Újvidék: Magyar Szó. 117–122.

Other Sources

Homepage of the Reformed Church of Maradék: http://www.maradek.rs/tortenelem.html.

Interview with Lívia Bárdos – 2019.

Interview with Géza Berta – 2019.

Interview with Zoltán Berta – 2019.

Interview with Dániel Halász – 2019.

Interview with József Szabó – 2019.

Acta Univ. Sapientiae, European and Regional Studies, **21** (2022) 77–100

DOI: 10.2478/auseur-2022-0005

The Dilemmas of the Post-War Transition for the Transcarpathian Calvinists in the Soviet Empire (1944–1949)

Ibolya SZAMBOROVSZKY-NAGY
Director of 'Apáczai Csere János' Library
Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education (Berehove, Ukraine)
Associate Professor at the Department of History and Social Sciences
e-mail: sznibolya@kmf.uz.ua

Abstract. The present study examines the dilemma of the Calvinists living in Transcarpathia (which became part of the Soviet Union in 1946) that arose following its annexation to the Soviet Empire. The problem was caused by the fact that among the Protestant denominations in the Soviet Union in 1946-47, only Evangelical Christians-Baptists (ECB) had state registration, i.e. a legal operating licence. The study aims at revealing the dialectics of the dilemma arising among the Calvinists, according to which, in order to survive, they should either align with the ECB (i.e. imperial expectations) or, alternatively, even take the risk of termination and maintain their denominational separation. In addition, the research brings insights into how the choice of the Calvinists was influenced by the denominational autonomy and national traditions that had been enjoyed until then. The state authorities would have provided a chance for an easier and routine-like solution of the problem and classify the nearly 80,000 Reformed community members in Transcarpathia as ECB. However, the case generated an unexpected problem even in the Soviet bureaucratic system as the denominational affiliation was also linked to the issue of nationality. Therefore, at the state level, it was a problem of both a religious belief and national belonging. Likewise, the study highlights the extent to which the response of the religious minority in the present case was about religious affiliation and ethnicity. Finally, the present paper considers how the state's primary project had ultimately changed when exploring the dilemma and what conclusions and outcomes it entailed.

Keywords: church, Reformed Church, Calvinists, post-war transition, Soviet Union, Transcarpathia

„All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful."
(1 Corinthians 6:12)

Introduction

The present study tells the story of how members of the Transcarpathian Reformed Church tried to re-establish themselves in a post-war transition setting. According to the traditional approach (and at first reading), they can be identified with Rogers Brubaker's triple configuration model. In it, the Transcarpathian Calvinists, after being separated from their motherland (kin-state), repeatedly found themselves in a new state formation that was not a mono-national nationalizing state in its classical sense. Rather, it can be viewed in the system of minority relations both from a sectarian and ethnic perspective (Brubaker 2006). This story, though, cannot be reduced to the three-pole relationship only because the appearance of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists' (ECB) congregation loyal to the Soviet state cannot, after all, be fully identified with the structure of state power or bureaucracy. Similarly, a small faction, the Eastern Group of Friends, had split within the Reformed Church, due to which the three-pole relationship system, which at first glance was considered classic, became a relationship of at least five factions. Moreover, it was the latter that, by separating itself and revealing its intention to 'switch' to the opposing side, made the system of relations, which had been considered static, dynamic. In our study, we also examine the extent to which in these systems of relations the national indifference towards the dual identity and/or denominational identification of the Transcarpathian Calvinists may be revealed (Egry 2015: 473). However, the diversified relationships raise a number of issues, which were examined in a set of research questions as follows in order to prevent their untraceable proliferation.

In this set of research questions regarding the Transcarpathian Calvinists, the following problems arise: how they were related to and integrated into the state; why did homogeneous group identities break up and why did some of them want to join the ECB unconditionally; why at the same time did others so strongly oppose the possibility of joining them? In addition, has the question of nationality arisen in either side and, if so, how or in what construction? After all, the Transcarpathian Calvinists showed an undoubtedly strong ethno-cultural affinity to the Hungarian nation, that is, we are talking about people belonging to the Hungarian national minority and not people of ethnic Hungarian origin (Brubaker 2006: 12). It is also worth examining what the logic of the given situation dictated and what the response of the Calvinists was. In their reply, was the possibility of the perspectives for the empire's response to the community considered? And, finally, what was the outcome of the decision made?

Formulation of the set of research questions arising on the imperial side is as follows: How did the imperial state assert its authority over the Calvinists? Why, as a result of what influences, and how did the position of the bureaucracy change from the primary will to unify with the Calvinists to their recognition as an independent denomination. How did it happen, what events and reasons prompted the – otherwise rigid – Soviet bureaucratic system to change its perspective? At the same time, the undeniably and strongly asymmetric nature of the relationship between the Transcarpathian Calvinists and the Soviet state cannot be ignored. This, in turn, reinforces the importance of the question of how, in one of the harshest periods of the Soviet imperial era (1948), the state bureaucracy had come to the conclusion that it neither liquidated nor merged the Calvinists, but legitimized them as a separate church.

In addition to the above-mentioned set of research questions, it is also apparent that the concept of identity cannot be avoided when tackling these issues. However, there are scholars who consider it obsolete (Fox–Miller-Idriss 2008). Nevertheless, in this particular case, separation of the factions, (self-)determination of their position, i.e. their self-identity, becomes unavoidable. Meanwhile, the manifestation of plural identity indicating a state of dilemma (Protestants – Calvinists – Hungarian nationality – Soviet subordinate) in a situation born of necessity becomes visible. For the survival of the group, however, they were forced to coexist in a system of compromise relations. Asking the question whether there was a hierarchy between the elements of the above identity chain generates new issues – namely from whose point of view are we examining the hierarchy?

In view of the above, in my study I seek to obtain the best understanding possible of the once prevailing situation and bring the description of the process of bilateral or multilateral interactions to the rational state of a former historical picture. In this situation, the bottom-up approach provides the best opportunity for the study. For this reason, it is essential to narrate the story continuously and rely on contemporary sources. Hence, the study will only become traceable in the light of the events. The fact that the spatial and historical context is by no means negligible leaves its mark on the limitations of the narrative. This is reinforced by the predominantly institutional approach, whereby we can avoid a purely subjective point of view.

As a result of the latter, however, only the group identity emerges in most cases, and strong contours indicate the differences between ‘our group’ and ‘their group’ (Jenkins 2002). These group constructions did not (primarily) result from a change of political power. They presuppose a strong denominational identity of the Calvinists that had existed earlier and that was not hostile to the ECB, but it merely protected elements of its own self-determination.

As Gábor Egry emphasized, while strengthening their own group features, they also essentialize the differences (Egry 2012: 72) that separate them from others, and this process also ethnicizes them (Feischmidt 2010: 11–12).

The Location of the Story – The Area of Imperial Excessive Politicization

The story took place in a special location, a real fringe area, or, in Morgane Labbé's wording, a frontier area that had been a meeting place for religions and political systems in each of the state formations (Labbé 2019: 162) that held it in the 20th century. Frederick Jackson Turner defined this frontier as 'the outer edge of the wave', which had been an ignored historical research (Terner 2011: 13), or if it was still addressed, it was most often done using a one-sided approach.

Its population was ethnically, denominationally, and identically diverse. However, this diversity had nothing to do with the name of the region, as its name had been changing since 1919, depending on which empire it belonged to. The current English name of the region is TransCarpathia, but the names SubCarpathia and Sub-Carpathia are also being widely used. Until the end of the First World War, the region had belonged to the administrations of the Ung, Bereg, Ugocsa, and Maramures comitats of the Kingdom of Hungary, and it was not a separate region. In 1919, in the first Czechoslovak Republic, it was organized into a political-administrative region called Subcarpathian Rus (Podkarpatska Rus) (Szakál 2019: 171–179). This name was given from an imperial point of view; as the region did not have any specific geographical features, it was named by the Prague government solely on the basis of its spatial location: *at the foot of the Carpathian Mountains*. The local Ukrainian/Ruthenian and Hungarian population used their own version of the Czech name, Subcarpathian Rus, because it defined the exact place where they lived geographically. At the time of the 1944 change of power, only one of the prefixes for the name of the region changed following World War II and after the Soviet troops conquered the Carpathian Basin. The prefix 'Sub' was rewritten to 'Trans' when the political region was under the sovereignty of the Soviet empire, as the geographical point of reference had already changed. Seen from Moscow, this area had turned into *a region beyond the Carpathian Mountains* and became TransCarpathia. In the meantime, in the perception of the local communities, they continued to identify themselves as SubCarpathians, as they had remained in the same geographical space, at the bottom of the Carpathians. Even today, officially, the Soviet imperial name is being used to describe the area, as the capital of the state that includes the territory at present is still to the east from the Carpathians, as it used to be in the former empire.

The Consequences of the 1944 Changes in the Political Power for the Denomination

The scholarly field of Ukrainian historiography has not dealt much with the history of the churches that existed in the Soviet imperial period in its westernmost periphery, in Transcarpathia.[1] Most of the published works deal with the Greek Catholic denomination (Leshko–Shlikhta 2016), or even if they study the problem of the Transcarpathian Calvinists, they are more concerned with the issue at a general level (Liubashchenko 1995, Iarots'kii 2010, Leshko 2003). Only a few refreshing exceptions provide specifics about the rural Reformed community in the area (Salamaha 2001, Bondarchuk 2010, Sherstjuk 2012, Vojnalovych 2005).

By the end of October 1944, the Soviet troops had completed the occupation of the area (Fedinec 2011: 51–52). There was no civil resistance to the invading Soviet Army, yet in Transcarpathia – which became an ethnically and religiously mixed imperial frontier – mass deportations took place from the end of November. They were not of a transfer character as the German–Polish–Hungarian–Czechoslovak population exchanges and deportations were euphemistically called after 1945 (Brubaker et al. 2011: 51–52). In the present case, there were race-, ethnicity- (Hungarian and German), and gender-based (male population) deportations. Similarly to the Jewish deportations of Hitler's time, this was also aimed to achieve ethnic, racial (Slavic) homogeneity, as the fertile male population (aged 18–50) from the region had been deported with the help of the Soviet Army into various forced labour camps of the Soviet empire (Molnár D. 2014: 326–339). Thus, the national question had disappeared from the public eye because the remaining non-Slavic population was then classified as Hungarian-speaking Soviet citizens, a wording that was fully in line with the ideology of internationalism. From then on until 1991, there was no mention of the people of Hungarian nationality living in Transcarpathia, who were not only ethnically of Hungarian descent but remained (trapped) as a Hungarian national minority in the westernmost tip of the Soviet empire. Thereafter, the Cold War pushed any possible regional problems into the background. As a result, the so-called 'Soviet Hungarians' were in line with the multi-ethnic state ideology of the post-Stalin Soviet Union.

However, at the time of the deportations, the priests of the historic churches were not deported, but the number of Reformed believers had dropped significantly as the deportations affected more than 10,000 people (MRE ZSL 1947/1726: 3). According to the data, 'internment and forced labour took away 20–25% of the congregations on average'[2] (MRE ZSL 1947/1726: 1).

1 The 2020 publication collected articles in Ukrainian historiography from 1991 to 2018 addressing religious repression against the population of western Ukraine between 1939 and 1989. One of the 55 titles listed was on the topic of Reformation in the region. See: DOVBNIA 2020: 18–32.

2 Translated by the author.

Meanwhile, the region was not immediately annexed to the Soviet Union. In the period from 28 October 1944 to 22 January 1946, a transitional state formation, the Transcarpathian Ukraine, existed in the area. The new political power was atheistic (as was the Soviet Union), and almost immediately it began to repress the historic churches of the area. It had stages, including secularization of education followed by the expulsion of religious education from schools and later its total ban; in parallel, the declaration of parish property to public property and of churches to state property took place. On 22 January 1946, the Soviet Union officially annexed the former *Podkarpattya*, which later became *Zakarpattya*. On 25 January 1946, the Constitution and laws of the Soviet Union of 1936 and of the USSR of 1937 entered into force in the area (Danilets'–Mishchanin 2013: 91). As a result, the Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of 20 January 1918 on freedom of conscience, ecclesiastical and religious communities came into force. Therefore, the control of religious organizations in Transcarpathia was entrusted to two state bodies set up in 1943–44.[3]

Establishing Contacts between the Reformed Community and the State Bureaucracy

From January 1946 onwards, the imperial bureaucracy sought to gradually bring the Protestant Churches and organizations in Transcarpathia under state control.[4] To address this issue, the organization of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, legalized in 1944, was singled out because by this time it had already been cooperating closely with the state power everywhere, thus making it to some extent an instrument of imperial politics (Beliakova 2019: 427). At the end of January 1946, A. L. Andreyev,[5] who had to prepare the so-called accession of 'independent Christian' congregations to the All-Union *Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists* (AUCECB), arrived in Transcarpathia. On 22 February, negotiations between the AUCECB and the 'independent Christians' began in Mukachevo (in Hung. Munkács). However, in the end, the Soviet imperial bureaucracy did not achieve its goal since, though the small Protestant denominations had signed the accession treaty under duress, later – citing compelling circumstances – they withdrew from it (Leshko 2002: 105–114).

3 These were the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults.

4 Державний архів Закарпатської области (Derzhavnij arhiv Zakarpats'koï oblasti, DAZO) F. P-1490, Op. 1, Od. zb. 6. Ark. 8.

5 A. L. Andreyev (1882–1966) at that time was Vice-President of the AUCECB and Chief Presbyter of the USSR.

For this reason, in the spring of 1946, the head of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults in Kiev (Mitsel' 1998), Petro Vilyhovij,[6] visited Transcarpathia and was also in Mukachevo, where he held talks with the city's two pastors, József Kovács of the Reformed Church and Jenő Stumpf of the Baptist Church.[7] The official from Kiev was interested in:

> Whether the pastors of the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia considered the Soviet government or the Hungarian government to be legitimate for themselves. (…) Our answer was as follows: According to Scripture, all the faithful Reformed pastors are obliged to obey the higher powers whom God has ordained over them. Thus, seeing the changes and drawing consequences from them, the Hungarian Reformed pastors can do nothing but recognize the legitimacy of the Soviet government over themselves (MRE ZSL 1947/1726: 3).[8]

That is, the Reformed Church clearly recognized the legitimacy of the new power over itself.

Following this meeting, in the official letter No. XVI-268/1946 of June 1946, Serhij Lyamin-Agafonov[9] asked the leaders of the three Reformed dioceses to submit a list of pastors who had been working there. We know from these submitted documents that Sándor Lajos was the bishop in the Diocese of Ugocsa and 24 pastors remained there.[10] The Ung Diocese was led by Bishop Béla Gencsy, and it had 20 serving pastors.[11] The largest was the Diocese of Bereg, where 44 pastors served under the bishopric of Gyula Bary.[12] That is, based on the data, in the summer of 1946, 88 Reformed pastors served in Transcarpathia.[13] However, these sources did not indicate the number of congregations. Yet, the report on the year 1946 submitted by the Council of Religious Cults to the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union on 27 February 1947 to Molotov included 99 Reformed congregations.[14] In a report sent to Vilyhovij on 31 December 1946, Lyamin-Agafonov put the number

6 Between February 1945 and December 1959, Petr A. Vilyhovij was the Head of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults in Kiev, the USSR.

7 DAZO F. P-1490, Op. 1, Od. zb. 11, Ark. 4.

8 Translated by the author.

9 It was not until December 1946 that Serhij Lyamin-Agafonov was appointed to the post of Regional Commissioner for Religious Affairs in the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults.

10 DAZO F. P-1490, Op. 1, Od. zb. 19, Ark. 9–10.

11 Id. 11.

12 DAZO P-1490, Op. 1, Od. zb. 19, Ark. 5–6.

13 In the light of the fact that the last official figures recorded 113 pastors in 1941, of which 23-25 fled in the fall of 1944, the rest could have remained in place, so the number of 88 pastors was completely realistic.

14 Российский государственный архив социально-политической истории (Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sotsial'no-Politicheskoi Istorii, RGOSPI) F. 82, Op. 2, D .498 L. 105. Отчетный доклад Совета по делам религиозных культов при Совете Министров СССР по состоянию на 1 января 1947 г.

of Reformed believers in Transcarpathia at 40,000,[15] which was a significantly underestimated number, as according to official figures in 1941 the number of Reformed population was 92,949 (1941: 173–176, 191–197, 223–225). Moreover, we know from previous research that, unlike pastors, believers had not fled their homeland en masse in 1944 (Szamborovszkyné Nagy 2020: 35).

At the end of 1946, when Lyamin-Agafonov received his final appointment, he had already known whom he wanted to invite to the position of the territorial commissioner of the Calvinists in Transcarpathia. It was Gyula Bary, a pastor from the settlement of Velyki Berehy (in Hung. Nagybereg), the only bishop who had remained in his place even after the Soviet invasion. However, due to his illness, Gyula Bary could not comply with the December invitation of the Commissioner for Religious Affairs, but in consultation with István Györke, the Diocesan Archbishop of Bereg (Bary/1), he recommended the latter instead of himself and sent him to Uzhhorod (in Hung. Ungvár) (Bary/2).

The most important issue of the discussion in Uzhhorod was the election of the so-called 'commissioner,' of the Reformed Church who would have to represent his denomination before the state. A clergy meeting was held in Mukachevo on 20 January 1947 to clarify this issue, and two days later the bishops agreed to nominate István Györke for the position. Thus, elections were held in the congregations of all three dioceses, according to the results of which István Györke became the regional commissioner with 80 electoral votes, while József Pázsit was elected his secretary with 78 votes.[16]

On 22 February, Lyamin-Agafonov informed Vilyhovij about the developments.[17] Two weeks later, the latter wrote this comment on the margins of his report: 'To give instructions to comrade Sazanov: 1. To reject the election of István Györke as bishop. 2. To refrain from the election of another bishop until a special order is issued.'[18] A few days later, in a reprimanding letter, Vilyhovij instructed his Transcarpathian subordinate to follow the instructions he had received from the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults regarding the Calvinists. In it, Vilyhovij ordered neither to be forgiving nor 'to make friends' with the Calvinists but to start the register of the Reformed pastors as soon as possible.[19] Likewise, he initiated the control of the 'Oriental Friends Group' marked with the name of István Györke.[20] However, the Transcarpathian

15 Центральний державний архів вищих органів влади та управління України (Tsentral'nii derzhavnii arkhiv vishchikh organiv vladi ta upravlinnia Ukraïni, TsDAVOVU), F. 4648. Op. 4. Spr. 17. Ark. 5.

16 DAZO, P-1490, Op. 1, Od. zb. 18, Ark. 4.

17 Id. 3.

18 TsDAVOVU, F. 4648, Op. 4, Spr. 34, Ark. 130.

19 Государственный архив Российской Федерации (Gosudarstvennyy Arkhiv Rossiyskoy Federatsii, GARF), F. 6991, Op. 3, D. 1114. Ark. 91–92.

20 TSDAVOVU, F. 4648, Op. 4, Spr. 34, Ark. 134. zv.

Calvinists knew nothing about these events. Nor did they know about the fact that István Györke had resigned from his elected office on 15 March.[21] Likewise, they had no knowledge about the fact that István Györke had been watched by the State Security Department since the day after his election. It was then that three members of the Oriental Friends Group – Simon Zsigmond, József Zimányi, and Barna Horkay – went to the KGB district office in Berehove (in Hung. Beregszász) on 26 March 1947. Here, they recounted their creed, which they wanted to pass on to Stalin. However, the Head of the District State Security Department told the three pastors that their office did not deal with religious matters and sent them to Lyamin-Agafonov in Uzhhorod. The three pastors visited him on 29 March, where they wrote down their thoughts for Stalin. The Religious Commissioner passed this text to Kiev almost immediately.[22] Then, on 5 April, Lyamin-Agafonov sent a special notice to Gyula Bary in which he stated that Gyula Bary was still the senior of the Reformed Church[23] and ordered him to Uzhhorod. However, Bary (due to rail travel restrictions on 15 April in the settlement of Bátyu) was able to visit Lyamin-Agafonov only a month later. During the meeting, Lyamin-Agafonov wanted to persuade the pastor of Velyki Berehy to temporarily take on the responsibilities of the territorial commissioner as the Kiev leadership had annulled the results of the 12 February elections. He then also informed Bary of Györke's resignation. Thus, in the end, Bary took over the responsibility of the so-called *sztársij*, that is, of a senior territorial commissioner. Meanwhile, after a two-month investigation, in May 1947, the state security bodies found that 'the Group of Friends is an anti-Soviet organization that helps fascist Hungary turn Transcarpathian Ukraine into an estate of the Kingdom of St István'[24] and had to be urgently prohibited. Vilyhovij submitted this proposal to Moscow, where, on the instructions of the Council for Religious Affairs (CRA) attached to the USSR Council of Ministers of 20 May 1947, the Transcarpathian Territorial Commissioner dissolved the illegal organization of the 'Oriental Friends Group'.[25] Not only did the above events provoke dissatisfaction of the state bureaucracy, but following the events, a full screening of the Transcarpathian Reformed community was ordered:

> a) Examine and analyse the financial condition of each parish, the number and nationality of the faithful; b) examine and disclose the monthly remuneration of pastors (both monetary and natural); c) examine the

21 GARF, F. 6991, Op. 3, D. 1114. Ark. 88.

22 GARF, F. 6991, Op. 3, D. 1114. Ark. 82–85. This creed later became known as the 'Letter to Stalin'.

23 GARF, F. 6991, Op. 3, D. 1114. Ark. 88.

24 TSDAVOVU, F. 4648, Op. 4, Spr. 34, Ark. 134.

25 Архів Управління Служби Безпеки України в Закарпатській області (Arkhiv Upravlinnia Sluzhbi Bezpeki Ukraïni v Zakarpats'kii oblasti AUSBU ZO), F. 2258, Op. 1, Od. zb. 5983. D. C-2274. Ark. 5, 7.

political views of the influential church members; d) investigate the fact of existence or non-existence of youth, women's and children's associations or organizations in parishes; e) compile the biography (schooling, education, time and place of ordination) of each pastor, their activities, encounters with believers, preparatory work with young people for confirmation.[26]

The order also clarified that the question of the person of the church leader might be discussed only after a full examination of the above mentioned.

On the possible unification of the Calvinists and the Alliance of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists

In 1946, before negotiations on the Treaty concluding World War II with Hungary began, László Ravasz, Ministerial President of the Universal Convent of the Reformed Church of Hungary, wanted to ensure that the Hungarian-speaking Calvinists living in the divided Hungarian-inhabited areas of the Carpathian Basin could remain within a unified Reformed church organization. However, the proposal was not even discussed during the peace negotiations. It was then that Ravasz thought that the Presidency of the Convention should address a request to the Southern Baptist Convention in America since its President was visiting Moscow at that time, to at least help the Transcarpathian Calvinists (MREZSL 1947/5478: 2). 'The articles published in foreign church newspapers about this visit have reported that Baptists in Russia, who make up the majority and leadership of the Protestant alliance there, have good relations with both the Moscow state officials and the leaders of the foreign Protestant churches'[27] (MREZSL 1947/870). The Presidency first addressed the issue on 12 February 1947 and wanted to ask the Baptist Convention to 'take care of these congregations'. In particular, to ensure the continuity of preaching and administration of the sacraments' (Ibid). Finally, the letter was put on paper on 11 March and mailed to the President of the Baptist Convent, asking to *'integrate* the Hungarian Reformed congregations in Transcarpathia *into the Alliance* of Protestants in Russia.'[28] (MREZSL 1947/1485: 3). At the same time, in a letter to the Transcarpathians, he had already called on the congregations to '*seek contact* with the Protestants in Russia in order to build the kingdom of God together'[29] (MREZSL 1947/1485: 1). In other words, he asked the president of the Baptists to *integrate* the congregations, which could mean entry and accession, while the pastors of Transcarpathia were asked to only *seek contact.*

26 TsDAVOVU, F. 4648, Op. 4, Spr. 34, Ark. 146.
27 Translated by the author.
28 Translated by the author.
29 Translated by the author.

Finally, this ambiguous difference in wording had caused problems between the Transcarpathians and the Evangelical Christians-Baptists during the discussions.

Louie D. Newton's[30] reply letter to Budapest and to Jakob Zsidkov[31] in Moscow was dated the same day from Atlanta: 12 April 1947 (MREZSL 1947/5476: 1–2). The Russian translation of the letters was received by Lyamin-Agafonov from Kiev on 19 May, in which (according to the English version) these words were also translated into Russian as an application for *accession*.[32] This possible rapprochement between the Calvinists and the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (AUCECB) was then very useful for the Soviet imperial bureaucracy since they thought that the Calvinists would also be 'herded' into the AUCECB as it had been in the case with the 'independent churches'.

A source from a contemporary author reports that the Reformed pastors in Transcarpathia received two letters from the Universal Convention of the Hungarian Reformed Church.[33] On behalf of the AUCECB, Ivanov Ilia Grigoryevich[34] arrived in Uzhhorod on 2 June 1947 (Koroleva et al. 2013: 77). He came from Moscow with a merger proposal, according to which the Calvinists should have been fully subordinated to the Council. Negotiations with the Calvinists took place continuously from the first week of June until 17 July, both formally and informally. By the end of June, however, the negotiations came to a standstill, as, according to Vojnalovics, the pastors led by Simon Zsigmond were in favour of the unification and cooperation, while Gyula Bary and many others categorically opposed the idea of joining the Baptists (Vojnalovych 2005: 652). Indeed, Gyula Bary firmly opposed the unification, and, during the negotiations, he was only willing to accept the legal assistance of the AUCECB in the registration of the Reformed Church. He refused to expand on this, saying that László Ravasz's letter was no longer relevant in the current political situation and that with the unification the Calvinists would actually lose their own denominational identity.[35] In turn, Ivanov replied that the AUCECB could provide legal assistance only if the Calvinists accepted the full jurisdiction of the Moscow-based Council. After the negotiations came to a standstill, Béla Gencsy tried to continue the discussion, suggesting that the negotiations should continue even if they do not agree with the issue of full unification proposed by Ravasz. Finally, at a meeting in Berehove on 27 June, it was decided that:

30 Louie D. Newton (1892–1986) at that time (1947–1948) was the President of the Southern Baptist Convention in the United States.

31 Jakob Zsidkov (1885–1966) at that time was the President of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (AUCECB) in the Soviet Union.

32 DAZO. F. P-1490, Op. 1, Od. zb. 18. Ark. 11–13.

33 DAZO F. P-1490, Op. 1, Od. zb. 18. Ark. 20–21.

34 Ivanov Ilia Grigoryevich (1898–1985) at that time was the Chief Presbyter of the Moldovan USSR.

35 TsDAVOVU, F.4648, Op. 2, Spr. 34, Ark. 84.

– a written statement was sent to Lyamin-Agafonov in Uzhhorod saying that they were willing *to cooperate* with the Baptists;[36]

– a letter was handed over to a representative of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists stating that 'we are willing to begin the practical implementation of this cooperation';[37]

– they set the time and venue for the first formal hearing.[38]

Gyula Bary kept his opinion to himself and did not go to the meeting but transferred his voting rights to the other two bishops. The meeting took place on 8 July in the village of Bat'ovo (in Hung. Bátyú). It was attended by 58 pastors, who after the lengthy discussions adopted two resolutions:

> 1. We approve of the decision of the bishops of the Transcarpathian Reformed Church taken in Berehove on 27 June 1947 and consider it necessary to begin consultations with the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in Moscow. 2. A delegation consisting of the following persons should be sent to discuss and sign the agreement: 1. József Vass, 2. Bertalan Ruszka, 3. Béla Gencsy, 4. Dr Lajos Sárkány, 5. József Nagy, 6. István Illyés.[39]

The list of the delegation is interesting as nobody from the Group of Friends supporting the idea of unification had been included. The final protocol was eventually signed by 48 pastors.[40]

Pursuant to the decision taken in the village of Bat'ovo, the delegation of the Reformed Church sat down again on 11 July in Berehove to negotiate with Ivanov and his fellow Transcarpathian comrade, Kovács F. (who acted as interpreter). However, the results were quite 'poor', although they were summarized in four items: items 1 and 2 contained only formulas of politeness (they were glad that negotiations could have begun and that the two churches were close to each other); in item 3, they gave each other an opportunity to get to know each other's activities, and in item 4 Kovács from Transcarpathia was nominated as the contact person between the two churches in the future.[41] However, the issue of the organizational unification of the two denominations was not formulated here either, or, if it had been mentioned, it was not recorded in the minutes. Eventually, Béla Gencsy managed to reconcile the views of the parties when he suggested that they should accept the *cooperation* (not unification) with the Evangelical Christians-Baptists, but only under certain conditions. These conditions had already outlined a concrete action plan:

36 DAZO F. P-1490, Op. 1, Od. zb. 18. Ark. 18–19.
37 Id. 20–21.
38 Id. 17–18.
39 Id. 25.
40 DAZO F. P-1490, Op. 1, Od. zb. 18. Ark. 28.
41 Id. 29.

> 1/ The Calvinists will accept the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (AUCECB) as a spiritual centre if they may delegate their own representative to the Council; 2/ The Calvinists recognize the administrative power of the area's chief presbyter and give the AUCECB the opportunity to oversee their work and have a representative in every diocesan council; 3/ The Calvinists retain all the features of their rites of worship but give the representatives of the AUCECB an opportunity to deliver speeches in their parishes; thus, it gives the Calvinists the right for preaching in Baptist communities; 4/ The leadership of the parishes is carried out by the Calvinists; 5/ The Calvinists have their own deans, who in spiritual matters are subordinate to the AUCECB only and administratively to the archdeacon; 6/ The spiritual guidance of the churches in Transcarpathia, including the Reformed Church, is carried out by a member of the AUCECB; 7/ The Reformed Church voluntarily contributes to the expenditures of the AUCECB; 8/ The Reformed Church accepts the instructions of the AUCECB only, and the Reformed Church of the area does not consider itself a subordinate of the General Council of the Hungarian Reformed Church in Budapest; 9/ The AUCECB shall assume all legal and spiritual responsibilities, including the statutory registration of the Reformed Church.[42]

These conditions were handed over to Ivanov, as a result of which the points of the original draft unification had now been substantially amended. However, in his report submitted to the regional religious commissioner, Ivanov (before leaving Transcarpathia) described the discussions with the Calvinists as successful and expressed his hope that they would end in unification.[43] The text of the above conditions and Ivanov's report were both sent to Kiev.

Meanwhile, the membership of the Group of Friends continued its missionary activities in the form of conferences, prayers, and Bible circles. Vilyhovij may have felt that the events had slipped out of the hands of the Transcarpathian religious commissioner and called on him to act personally in order to end the activities of the Group of Friends. In September, Lyamin-Agafonov called in Simon Zsigmond (as the official leader of the Group) and told him that the Group of Friends had already been banned for more than three months, so if they continue their activities, it would then lead to retaliation. However, even after this call, evangelistic and missionary sessions continued. This made it clear for the leadership of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults that their representative in Uzhhorod had been helpless, so Ljamin-Agafonov was dismissed from his post at the end of September. The newly appointed commissioner, Dubrovsky, had not

42 TsDAVOVU, F. 4648, Op. 2, Spr. 34, Ark. 86–87.
43 DAZO, F. P-1490, Op. 1, Od. zb. 18. Ark. 31.

yet seen through the situation,[44] yet 'in early October, women began spreading rumours that the male members of the Bible Group were being called to the KGB and interrogated', recalled Barka Horkay (Horkay 1998: 152). Then, in October, two pastors, namely József Zimányi and a week later Barka Horkay were arrested.[45] The KGB considered them to be the most active members of the Group of Friends.

After six months of silence following the negotiations that ended in adopting a compromise document between the Calvinists and the Evangelical Christians-Baptists at the end of July, a U-turn was made in the directives of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults regarding the issue of rapprochement. The leaders of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults received the secret summary document of Vilyhovij, saying that the officials in Kiev had been disturbed because:

> …the negotiations with the Evangelical Christians-Baptists gave an impetus to the 'fanatical' part of the Calvinists, and as a result gatherings, discussions, and 'congresses' were thriving. This prepares the next defamation against the Soviet Union… Therefore, no 'rapprochement' between the Calvinists and the Evangelical Christians-Baptists may be allowed, and this 'friendship' must be ended as soon as possible, especially between members of the so-called 'revival' movement and the Evangelical Christians-Baptists.[46]

Vilyhovij, in his account of the last quarter of the year 1947, had already made a proposal to Moscow in accordance with which: 'It is not appropriate to unify the Reformed (Calvinist) Church with the Evangelical Christians-Baptists [...] The processes taking place in the Reformed Church show that this church should be kept under a so-called "glass dome" and not hidden behind the umbrella of the Evangelical Baptists.'[47] This opinion of the USSR's religious commissioner was also shared by his Moscow superior, Polyansky, who, in a resolution of 20 April 1948, refused to approve the unification of the Calvinists and the Evangelical Christians-Baptists. That is, the negotiations between the two denominations were interrupted by the state bodies. However, by the same decision, they instructed the appropriate bodies of the USSR to start the registration of the Reformed parishes.[48] Oddly enough, the Transcarpathian Calvinists thus avoided merging into the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists and remained as a separate denomination and church in the westernmost tip of the Soviet empire.

44 GARF, F. 6991, Op. 3, Д. 1112. Ark. 138.
45 AUSBU ZO, F. 2258, Op. 1, Od. zb. 5983. D. C-2274. 5, 7.
46 TsDAVOVU, F. 4648, Op. 2, Spr. 55, Ark. 11–14.
47 Центральний державний архів громадських об'єднань України (Tsentral'nii derzhavnii arkhiv gromads'kikh ob'єdnan' Ukraïni, TsDAGOU), F. 1, Op. 23, Spr. 5069, Ark. 34.
48 GARF, F. 6991, Op. 3, D. 1112. Ark. 177.

Summary

Examining the above events, we can agree with Gábor Egry's opinion. Accordingly, in these events, the relationship between the local community and the state appears at a given time and in a particular situation (Egry 2015: 437) (capturing of a new territory, emergence of a new denominational tendency in the empire) with regard to a particular event (negotiations of the Calvinists for the unification with the Evangelical Christians-Baptists). Entering a dialectical process, the local community and the imperial bureaucracy went from somewhere to somewhere else after assessing, exploring, and recognizing the situation.

Subsequently, when we turn to the problems raised in the first set of research questions, it becomes clear that we can see a discursive projection of group identity in the narrative (Egry 2015: 33). Therefore, we can, according to Brubaker's definition, clearly interpret the 'groupist' conception of ethnicity (Brubaker 2001) because the group does indeed appear here as a national minority (Brubaker 2006: 11), which has an undoubtedly identifiable homogeneous membership. Moreover, its interests were also well defined: to remain Calvinist and Hungarian. Nevertheless, when the imperial aspect emerged according to which it 'would have been good' for them to merge into the AUCECB, a break-up in the denominational dimension of group identity happened, as their views on unification had been divided. The membership of the Group of Friends focused on biblical teaching and considered progress in its own understanding more significant than the organizational autonomy of the denomination when it clearly took a stand in favour of unification with the Evangelical Christians-Baptists.

In other words, in the plural identity chain (Protestant – Calvinist – Hungarian nationality – Soviet subject) that resulted from being under pressure, the *Protestant* segment meant priority in the Group of Friends. However, nowhere in this resolution did the element of national indifference, such as fluctuations between different nationalities or the denial of nationality, appear although in 1944 they became part of the Soviet empire in its frontier area (Zahra 2017). What may be identified as indifference is the apparent indifference to tendencies within the Protestant denomination, according to which a group of Calvinists (members of the Oriental Friends Group) believed that according to their biblical interpretation of existence it was completely indifferent whether it took place within the church organization of the Calvinists or the Evangelical Christians-Baptists. Their concept of identity approved of the unification with a larger unit. The question of whether the full liturgical assimilation would also have been undertaken with the accession, however, remained open due to the cancellation of unification.

However, the other group of Calvinists (Gyula Bary and his fellow pastors) saw in the unification with the Evangelical Christians-Baptists not only the loss of the

traditional parish autonomy of the church organizations (dioceses and parishes) but also the loss of the identity of the Reformed faith itself. For them, it was unacceptable to expand the framework to such an extent that it would have meant abandoning the feature that determines their denominational identity, namely the synod-Presbyterian principle. Of the plural identity chain (Protestant – Calvinist – Hungarian nationality – Soviet subordinate), the traditional Reformed creed and adherence to the liturgy, that is, *Calvinism* remained the primary aim for them. Moreover, the ethnic aspect of the issue did not arise here either: they rejected the unification with the Evangelical Christians-Baptists not because they spoke a different language, as in 1946 there were ten Hungarian congregations of Baptists in Transcarpathia.[49]

If we look for the answer to what the logic of the given situation dictated, we find that in 1944 (after five years) the Calvinists found themselves again under the rule of a foreign state because of border changes. The community was unable to confront the new empire in terms of both size and strength. Therefore, the logic of the situation would have dictated that in order to survive, they had to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the imperial bureaucracy and unify with the Evangelical Christians-Baptists. However, this logic of the situation was contradicted by the structural self-organization of the denomination, namely the aforementioned synod-Presbyterian principle, which would eventually have been liquidated by merging with a different Protestant tendency. Therefore, while the primary driving force of the Group of Friends was the unconditional acceptance of the logic born out of the situation, the other group (Bary's) was stimulated by not giving up the room for manoeuvre and by their self-organizing structure. Thereby, they were faced with this logic (refusing the authority-supported possibility for unification). In this polarized stalemate – perhaps inevitably –, Béla Gencsy formulated a balance policy, which was in fact a 'swing policy' because the 'here and there' principle actually became a 'neither here nor there' principle.

Chronologically, the first issue in the set of the Soviet imperial research questions is the assertion of the authority of the empire. Of them, the first condition was imposed by the Soviet ecclesiastical policy extended to Transcarpathia at the end of February 1946. According to this, only communities and pastors recognized and registered by the state could have been engaged in religious activities. This is exactly what Vilyhovij inquired about in the spring of 1946, when he raised the question in Mukachevo as to which government the Transcarpathian Calvinist pastors considered legitimate: the Soviet or the Hungarian. In this, however, we can again clearly see the issue of the definition of identity, in which, from the point of view of the empire, 'Soviet subordination' came first, overriding everything else. Thus, the Calvinists could do nothing else but recognize the

49 DAZO, F. P-1490. Op. 1. Od. zb. 1. Ark. 6.

legitimacy of the Soviet government (MRE ZSL 1947/1726: 3). From then on, the relationship between the Transcarpathian Calvinists and the Soviet state became clearly and strongly asymmetric, with the empire dictating its own conditions, to which the Calvinists adapted (or not).

Thus, in the spring of 1948, the Calvinists received permission to legalize their active parishes. They became part of the Soviet empire while retaining the roots of their local self-organization (denominational liturgy, preservation of traditions, language of worship), even if they had to establish the Council of the Twenty.[50] For in these councils, almost without exception, all those were present who had earlier been presented in the parish leadership. And even if living their faith was pushed back into their family homes and the church (the house of God), it had not disappeared. Thus, the Calvinists, who adhered to their traditions, represented their local identity in isolation, on the periphery of the Soviet empire, as opposed to the Evangelical Christians-Baptists, whose presence extended to the whole empire. This form of survival can be described as an isolated or inclusive existence, but in retrospect, it seems to have preserved for the Hungarian community not only the complete original denominational direction but also the mother tongue. For the officials and party members of the bureaucracy, who considered themselves an imperial elite, this stubborn clinging to the own self-organization and traditions was incomprehensible, and therefore they treated it as a 'foreign body'. They kept a close eye on the activities and daily life of the Calvinists in Transcarpathia, prepared thousands of written statements, reports, denunciations, and statistical statements, and left them to posterity.

The research also raised an issue to which the study did not provide a clear answer. Such was the case, for example, of Gencsy's alternative action programme. We found only a single reference in the minutes of this programme about the necessity of considering how the empire might respond to the actions of the community; in addition, what perspective and future this can provide/mean for the Calvinists later. Moreover, such 'secular' considerations did not emerge anywhere on the part of the denomination. In view of the above, it is perhaps not so surprising that following the footsteps of Gyula Bary, Béla Gencsy became the head of the Transcarpathian Reformed Church in December 1949. However, that is a different story.

50 The Council of Twenty was an extension of the church organization system of the Orthodox Church adopted by the Soviet system for all other denominations, under which 20 locally elected church members represented the parish to the state. It consisted of a caretaker, clerk, cantor, bell ringer, treasurer, and presbyters.

References

Archive Sources

AUSBU ZO. Архів Управління Служби Безпеки України в Закарпатській області (Arkhiv Upravlinnia Sluzhbi Bezpeki Ukraïni v Zakarpats'kii oblasti), Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine in the Transcarpathian region – Uzhhorod, Ukraine, Fund 2258, Op. 1, Od. zb. 5983. D. C-2274. Upolnomotschennomu Coweta po delam religiosnych Kul'tow pri Cowete Minictrow CCCR po Sakarpatckoj oblacti. Cprawka №001, 13 janwarja 1948 g. pp. 5, 7.

DAZO. Державний архів Закарпатської області (Derzhavnij arhiv Zakarpats'koï oblasti), State Archive of the Transcarpathian Oblast – Uzhhorod, Ukraine / Fund R-1490 Upolnomochennyi soveta po delam religioznykh kul'tov:

Op. 1. Od. zb. 1. Ark. 6.

Op. 1. Od. zb. 6. Ark. 4.

Op. 1. Od. zb. 9. Арк. 5–6. Az Ugocsai Egyházmegye lelkipásztorainak névsora 1946 júniusában (List of pastors of the Diocese of Ugocsa in June 1946).

Op. 1. Od. zb. 9. Ark. 9–10. Kimutatás a Kárpátontúli Területen /Zakarpatska Oblaszt/ a *Beregi református Egyházmegye kötelékében működő lelkipásztorokról* (Statement of the pastors in the Transcarpathian Territory / Zakarpatska Oblast / in the Reformed Diocese of Bereg).

Op. 1. Od. zb. 18. Ark. 11–12. Письмо Луиса Д. Ньютон от 12 апреля 1947 г. доктору Ласлоо Равасу и доктору И. Э. Жидкову (Letter dated 12 April 1947, from Louise D. Newton to Dr Lazzo Ravasz and to Dr I. E. Zidkov).

Op. 1. Od. zb. 18. Ark. 17–18. *A Szovjetunió vallásügyi Minisztériumi Tanácsának meghatalmazottja, Ungvár* (Authorized by the Council of the Ministry of Religion of the USSR, Uzhhorod).

Op. 1. Od. zb. 18. Ark. 20–21. *A Szovjetunióbeli Evangéliumi Keresztény-Baptista Főtanácsának Moszkvába* (To the Moscow Council of the Evangelical Christian Baptist Council of the Soviet Union).

Op. 1. Od. zb. 18. Ark. 25. *Jegyzőkönyv, amely készült a Ref. Egyház Lelkipásztorai Értekezletének 1947. július hó 8-án Bátyú községben hozott határozatáról* (Protocol of the decision of the Pastoral Meeting of the Ref. Church on 8 July 1947 in the village of Bátyú).

Op. 1. Od. zb. 18. Ark. 28. *Список пасторов реф. Церкви участвовавших в совещании 8. июля 1947 г. в с. Батьево* (List of pastors of Ref. churches participating in the meeting on 8 July 1947 in the village of Batyevo).

Op. 1. Od. zb. 18. Ark. 29. Запись №1 совещания уполномоченных Закарпатской Венгерской Реформатской Церкви совместно с членом Президиума Всесоюзного Совета Эвангельских Христиан-Баптистов братом Ивановым И.Г. и при участии работника ВСЭХБ, брата Ковача Ф.И., состоявшегося 11 июля 1947 г. в Берегове

(Record No. 1 of the meeting of representatives of the Transcarpathian Hungarian Reformed Church together with a member of the Presidium of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, Brother Ivanov I. G., and with the participation of an employee of the All-Union Economic Union, brother of F. I. Kovach, held on 11 July 1947 in Beregovo).

Op. 1. Od. zb. 18. Ark. 31. Уполномоченному Совета по делам религиозных Культов при Совете Министров СССР по Закарпатской области (Commissioner of the Council for Religious Cults under the Council of Ministers of the USSR for the Transcarpathian region).

Op. 1. Od. zb. 18. Ark. 4. *Jegyzőkönyv a kárpáton túli terület református egyházközségeiből a területi megbízott és titkárja megválasztása céljából beterjesztett szavazatok felbontásáról és az eredmények megállapításáról. Kelt Nagyberegen 1947. évi február 12. napján* (Protocol on the dissolution of votes submitted by the Reformed parishes of the Transcarpathian region for the election of the territorial commissioner and its secretary and on the establishment of the results. Drawn up in Nagybereg on 12 February 1947).

GARF, Государственный архив Российской Федерации (Gosudarstvennyy Arkhiv Rossiyskoy Federatsii), State Archive of the Russian Federation – Moscow, Russia, Fund 6991. Sovet po delam religii pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR. Op. 3. Sovet po delam religioznykh kul'tov pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR. 1944–1960 gg.:

D. 1112. Materialy o rabote upolnomochennogo po Zakarpatskoj oblasti 1946–1948 gg. Ark. 138. Zamestiteliu predsedatelia Soveta po delam religioznykh kul'tov pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR tov. Sadovskomu Iu.V.

D. 1112. Materialy o rabote upolnomochennogo po Zakarpatskoj oblasti 1946–1948 gg. Ark. 177. Upolnomochennomu Soveta po delam religioznykh kul'tov pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR po Ukrainskoi SSR tov. Vilkhovomu.

D. 1114. Ark. 88. Otvet po Upolnomochennomu Soveta po delam religioznykh kul'tov pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR po Ukrainskoi SSR tov. Vilkhovomu na NO-48 s ot 22 marta 1947 goda.

D. 1114. Ark. 91–92.Otvet po Upolnomochennomu Soveta po delam religioznykh kul'tov pri SM SSSR po Zakrpatskoi oblasti na №099 ss ot 22 fevralia 1947 g.

D. 1114. Materialy o rabote upolnomochennogo po Zakarpatskoj oblasti 1946–1948 gg. Ark. 82–85. Otchet Upolnomochennogo Soveta po delam religioznykh kul'tov pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR po Zakrpatskoi oblasti ot 7-go aprelia 1947 g.

MRE ZSL. Magyarországi Református Egyház Zsinati Levéltára / Synod Archives of the Reformed Church in Hungary – Budapest, Hungary, 2. f. fond Egyetemes Konvent iratai, Konventi Külügyi bizottság iratai, 41. doboz: Külföldi reformátusok ügyei (2. f. Fund Universal Convention Documents, Convention Foreign Affairs Committee Papers, Box 41: Foreign Reformed Affairs).

1947/1726: 3. Jelentés az Zakarpacka Ukrajnai Magyar Református Egyház helyzetéről, 1946. október 1-i állapot szerint (Report on the situation of the Hungarian Reformed Church in Zakarpacka, Ukraine, as of 1 October 1946).
1947/1485: 3. *Az Amerikai Déli Baptista Unió Elnökének* (To the President of the American Southern Baptist Union).
1947/5476: 1–2. Letter dated 12 April 1947, from Louise D. Newton to Dr Lazzo Ravasz and to Dr I. E. Zidkov.
1947/5478. Louie D. Newton 1947. április 12-én kelt levele (Letter dated 12 April 1947, from Louie D. Newton).
1947/870. A Magyarországi Református Egyház Egyetemes Konventje Elnökségének 1947. február 12-én kelt levele Dr. Révész Imre püspöknek (Letter dated 12 February 1947, from the Presidency of the Universal Convention of the Hungarian Reformed Church to Bishop Dr Imre Révész).
1947/870. A Magyarországi Református Egyház Egyetemes Konventje Elnökségének 1947. február 12-én kelt levele az Amerikai Déli Baptista Unió Elnökének (Letter dated 12 February 1947 from the President of the Universal Convention of the Hungarian Reformed Church to the President of the American Southern Baptist Union).
1947/1485: 1. A kárpátaljai magyar református gyülekezetek pásztorainak (To the pastors of the Hungarian Reformed congregations in Transcarpathia).
RGASPI. Российский государственный архив социально-политической истории (Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sotsial'no-Politicheskoi Istorii), Russian State Archives of Socio-Political History – Moscow, Russia, Fund 82, Op. 2, D. 498 L. 105. Otchetnyi doklad Soveta po delam religioznykh kul'tov pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR po sostoianiiu na 1 ianvaria 1947 g. http://istmat.info/node/59127. Last accessed on: 5 March 2022.
TsDAGOU. Центральний державний архів ґромадських об'єднань України (Tsentral'nii derzhavnii arkhiv gromads'kikh ob'єdnan' Ukraïni). Central State Archives of Public Organizations of Ukraine – Kyi'v, Ukraine /, Fund 1, Op. 23, Spr.5069, Ark. 34.
TsDAVOVU. Центральний державний архів вищих органів влади та управління України (Tsentral'nii derzhavnii arkhiv vishchikh organiv vladi ta upravlinnia Ukraïni) Central State Archive of Supreme Authorities and Administration of Ukraine – Kyi'v, Ukraine, Fund 4648. Rada v spravakh religiï pri Ministerstvi u spravakh migratsiï i natsional'nostei Ukraïni ta ïï poperedniki: (ob'єdnanii fond).
Op. 2. Upolnomochennyi soveta po delam religioznykh kul'tov pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR po Ukrainskoi SSR, del za 1944–1965 rr.
Spr. 34. Ark. 84. 86–87.
Spr. 55. Ark. 11–14.

Op. 4. Upovnovazhenii Radi v spravakh religiinikh kul'tiv pri RNK RM SRSR po URSR del za 1944-1965 rr.
Spr. 17. Ark. 5.
Spr. 34, Ark. 134. and 134. zv. 146.
Spr. 34, Ark. 130. Dopovidna zapiska S. Liamina-Agafonova vid 15 bereznia 1947 r. 'Pro vibori starshogo reformats'koï tserkvi'.

Manuscripts

BARY/1 Bary Gyula beregi ref. esperes levele a Területi Vallásügyi Meghatalmazottnak Ungvárra. 1.K.i./1947. sz. alatt (Letter from Gyula Bary, Reformed Bishop of Bereg, to the Territorial Religious Commissioner in Uzhhorod. Number 1.K.i./1947). The letter is from the private collection of Szabolcs Györke, the son of István Györke. [The author wishes to thank Szabolcs Györke for granting access to the materials.].

BARY/2 Bary Gyula beregi ref. esperes levele Nagytiszteletű Györke István úrnak egyházmegyei főjegyző, tanácsbíró Beregújfalu. (Letter from Gyula Bary, Reformed Bishop of Bereg, to the esteemed Mr István Györke, Archbishop's Chief Notary, Councillor of Beregújfalu). The letter is from the private collection of Szabolcs Györke, the son of István Györke. [The author wishes to thank Szabolcs Györke for granting access to the materials.].

Bibliography

BELIAKOVA. 2019. Белякова, Надежда. Всесоюзный совет евангельских христиан-баптистов – продукт и заложник сталинской религиозной политики /Vsesoiuznyi sovet evangel'skikh khristian-baptistov – produkt i zalozhnik stalinskoi religioznoi politiki. In: *Konfessional'naia politika Sovetskogo gosudarstva v 1920–50-e gody: Materialy XI mezhdunarodnoi konferentsii.* Moscow. 418–429.

BONDARCHUK. 2010. Бондарчук, П. Особливості релігійної ситуації в Україні у середині 1940-х – на початку 1950-х рр /Osoblivosti religiinoï situatsiï v Ukraïni u seredini 1940-kh – na pochatku 1950-kh rr. *Ukraïns'kii istorichnii zhurnal* 2: 137–163.

BRUBAKER, Rogers. 2001. Csoportok nélküli etnicitás (Ethnicity without Groups). *Beszélő* 7–8: 60–66.

2006. Nemzeti kisebbségek, nemzetesítő államok és anyaországok az új Európában (National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External National Homelands in the New Europe). *Regio* 3: 3–29.

BRUBAKER, Rogers–FEISCHMIDT, Margit–FOX, Jon–GRANCEA, Lina. 2011. *Nacionalista politika és hétköznapi etnicitás egy erdélyi városban* (Nationalist

Politics and Ordinary Ethnicity in a Transylvanian City). Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó.

DANILETS', Mishchanin. 2013. Данилець Ю., Міщанин В. Православна церква на Закарпатті в умовах становлення радянської влади (1944–1950 pp.) /Pravoslavna tserkva na Zakarpatti v umovakh stanovlennia radians'koï vladi (1944–1950 rr.) *Rusin* 4(34): 88–112. DOI: 10.17223/18572685/34/8.

DOVBNIA. 2020. Довбня, О. Релігійний аспект політичних репресій проти населення Західної України (1939–1989) у сучасному вітчизняному історіографічному дискурсі /Religiinii aspekt politichnikh represii proti naselennia Zakhidnoï Ukraïni (1939–1989) u suchasnomu vitchiznianomu istoriografichnomu diskursi. *Naukovii shchorichnik 'Istoriia religii v Ukraïni'* 30. C. 18–32. DOI 10.33294/2523-4234-2020-30-1-18-32.

EGRY, Gábor. 2012. „Két pogány közt"? Régió, nemzet, őslakók és gyarmatosítók a két világháború közti Erdélyben ('Between Two Gentiles'? Region, Nation, Aborigines, and Colonizers in Transylvania between the Two World Wars). *Múltunk* 4: 66–88.

2015. *Etnicitás, identitás, politika. Magyar kisebbségek nacionalizmus és regionalizmus között Romániában és Csehszlovákiában 1918–1944* (Ethnicity, Identity, Politics. Hungarian Minorities between Nationalism and Regionalism in Romania and Czechoslovakia 1918–1944). Budapest: Napvilág Kiadó.

FEDINEC, Csilla. 2011. Case Studies (1944–1948). The Soviet Union. In: Bárdi, Nándor–Fedinec, Csilla–Szarka, László (eds), *Minority Hungarian Communities in the Twentieth Century. Social Science Monographs*. Boulder, Colorado – Atlantic Research and Publications, Inc., Highland Lakes, New Jersey. 304–306.

FEISCHMIDT, Margit. 2010. Megismerés és elismerés: elméletek, módszerek, politikák az etnicitáskutatásában (Cognition and Recognition: Theories, Methods, Policies in Ethnicity Research). In: Feischmidt, Margit (ed.), *Etnicitás. Különbségteremtő társadalom*. Budapest: Gondolat–MTA Kisebbségkutató Intézet. 7–29.

FOX, Jon E.–MILLER-IDRISS, Cynthia. 2008. Everyday Nationhood. Ethnicities. *SAGE Publications*. 8(4): 536–563. 10.1177/1468796808088925. hal-00571904.

HORKAY, Barna. 1998. *A Keleti Baráti Kör. Képek a kárpátaljai ébredésből* (The Eastern Circle of Friends. Pictures from the Transcarpathian Revival). Kom Over En Help Foundation.

IAROTS'KII. 2010. Яроцький, П. Релігійний релятивізм і міжконфесійна толерантність у контексті міжрелігійного і міжкультурного /Religiinii reliativizm i mizhkonfesiina tolerantnist' u konteksti mizhreligiinogo i mizhkul'turnogo dialogu. *Religiia ta sotsium* 2: 7–12.

JENKINS, Richard. 2002. Az etnicitás újragondolása: identitás, kategorizáció és hatalom (Rethinking Ethnicity: Identity, Categorization, and Power). *Magyar Kisebbség* 4(26): 243–268.

KISS, Gyula (ed.). 1941. A magyarországi református egyház egyetemes névtára 1941 (Universal register of the Hungarian Reformed Church for 1941). Budapest: Bethlen Gábor Irodalmi és Nyomdai Részvénytársaság.

KOROLEVA 2013. Королева, Л.–Королев, А.–Артемова, С. Власть и евангельские христиане-баптисты в России. 1945–2000 гг.: эволюция взаимоотношений. / *Vlast' i evangel'skie khristiane-baptisty v Rossii. 1945–2000 gg.: evoliutsiia vzaimootnoshenii*. Penza: PGUAS.

LABBÉ, Morgane. 2019. National Indifference, Statistics and the Constructivist Paradigm. The Case of the Tutejsi ('The People from Here') in Interwar Polish Censuses. In: Van Ginderachter, M.–Fox, J. (eds), *National Indifference and the History of Nationalism in Modern Europe* (1st ed.). Routledge. 161–179. DOI:10.4324/9781315145402-9.

LESHKO. 2002. Лешко, Оксана. Derzhavna politika i protestants'ki gromadi Zakarpattia v 1946–1949 rokakh. In: *Carpatika–Karpatika* 20: *Religiia i tserkva v kraïnakh Tsentral'noï ta Pivdenno-Skhidnoï Єvropi.* Uzhhorod: Vid-vo UzhNU. 105–114.

2003. Реформатське духовенство Закарпаття в другій половині 40-50-х роках / Reformats'ke dukhovenstvo Zakarpattia v drugii polovini 40–50-kh rokakh. *Naukovii visnik* Uzhhorod *skoho natsionalnoho universitetu. Seriia: Istoriia* 9: 74–82.

2016. Римо-Католицька Церква у владних планах «гармонійного співжиття» з греко-католиками і православними Закарпаття (1946–1956 pp.) /Rimo-Katolits'ka Tserkva u vladnikh planakh «garmoniinogo spivzhittia» z greko-katolikami i pravoslavnimi Zakarpattia (1946–1956 rr.). *Naukovii visnik* Uzhhorod. *nats. un-tu. Seriia: istorichno-religiini studiï* 5: 266–281.

LIUBASHCHENKO. 1995. Любащенко, Вікторія. *Історія протестантизму в Україні* / *Istoriia protestantizmu v Ukraïni*. L'viv: Prosvita.

MITSEL'. 1998. Мицель, Михаил. Общины иудейского вероисповедания в Украине / Obshchiny iudeiskogo veroispovedaniia v Ukraine. Kiïv. http://judaica.kiev.ua/old/eg9/mizel/miz3.htm. Last accessed on: 17 February 2022.

MOLNÁR D., Erzsébet. 2014. Transcarpathia and the Malenkiy Robot. *Acta Universitatis Debreceniensis, Series Historica* LXVI: 326–339.

SALAMAHA. 2001. Саламаха І. Реформатська церква Закарпаття в перші післявоєнні роки (1945–1948) /Reformats'ka cerkva Zakarpattja v pershi pisljavoєnni roki (1945–1948). In: *Istorija religij v Ukraïni. Praci XI Mizhnarodnoï naukovoï konferenciï.* Kn. 1. L'viv: Logos. 372–378.

SHERSTJUK. 2012. Шерстюк, В. Закарпатська реформатська церква у перші повоєнні роки. /Zakarpats'ka reformats'ka cerkva u pershi povoєnni roki. *Istorichna pam'jat'* 28: 85–92.

SHLIKHTA. 2016. Шліхта, Наталя. Мукачівсько-Ужгородська «возз'єднана» єпархія наприкінці 1940-х – у 1960-і рр.: унікальний випадок чи типовий приклад? / Mukachivs'ko-Uzhhorods'ka «vozz'єdnana» єparkhiia naprikintsi 1940-kh – u 1960-i rr.: unikal'nii vipadok chi tipovii priklad? In: *«Vitoki* Uzhhorod *s'koї uniї, kanonichne stanovlennia Mukachivs'koї єparkhiї ta istorichna dolia Greko-Katolits'kikh Tserkov* Uzhhorod *s'koї uniinoї traditsiї (do 370-ї richnitsi* Uzhhorod*s'koї tserkovnoї uniї)». Naukovi zapiski Uzhhorod s'kogo universitetu. Seriia: istorichno-religiini studiї* 5: 282–295.

SZAKÁL, Imre. 2019. The Year of Change. The Transcarpathian Hungarians in 1919. *Acta Ethnologica Danubiana* 21. *Az Etnológiai Központ Évkönyve – Ročenka Výskumného centra európskej etnológie – Jahrbuch des Forschungszentrums für Europäische Ethnologie*. Komárom–Somorja. 171–179.

SZAMBOROVSZKYNÉ NAGY, Ibolya. 2020. Magyar reformátusok a Szovjetunióban a hruscsovi egyházüldözés időszakában (Hungarians in the Reformed Church in the Soviet Union in the Period of the Persecution of Churches under Khrushchev). *Betekintő* 3: 27–54. DOI: 10.25834/BET.2020.3.2.

TERNER 2011. Тернер, Ф. Значення фронтиру для американської історії. /Znachennia frontiru dlia amerikans'koї istoriї. *Ukraïna Moderna. Pogranichchia. Okraïni. Periferiї* 18: 13.

VOJNALOVYCH. 2005. Войналович, Віктор. *Партійно-державна політика щодо релігії та релігійних інституцій в Україні 1940–1960-х років: політологічний / Partijno-derzhavna polityka shhodo religii' ta religijnyh instytucij v Ukrai'ni 1940–1960-h rokiv: politologichnyj dyskurs: (monografija)*. NAN Ukrai'ny, In-t polit. i etnonac. doslidzh. Kyi'v: Svitogljad.

ZAHRA, Tara. 2017. Képzelt nemközösségek: a nemzeti közömbösség mint elemzési kategória (Imagined Non-communities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis). *Regio* 2: 5–42.