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## **Social, economic and population processes in Transylvania in the hundred years after Trianon**

### **Introduction**

According to the Treaty of Trianon signed on 4 VI 1920, of the 325 411 km<sup>2</sup> total territory of the Hungarian Kingdom 103 093 km<sup>2</sup> was transferred to Romania, 61 633 km<sup>2</sup> to Czechoslovakia, 63 092 km<sup>2</sup> to the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and 4020 km<sup>2</sup> to Austria, with also Poland and a then independent Fiume receiving pieces of Hungary. The territory of Hungary has been reduced to 92 963 km<sup>2</sup>. According to the census recorded in 1910 of the 20 886 487 total citizens 5 257 467 became citizens of Romania, 3 517 568 of Czechoslovakia, 4 131 249 of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and 291 617 of Austria. The population of Hungary decreased to 7 615 117. Among the losers of the first World War Hungary was penalized the most. The country lost over two third of its territory and almost as much of its population. When drawing the new boundaries, in addition to ignoring, by disregarding ethnic borders, the principle of the much-voiced right to self-determination, also historical traditions, economic relations that had worked for centuries have not been taken in account. One-third of Hungarians – about 3 330 000 – were delegated into the successor states; most in contiguous blocks on the other side of the new border<sup>1</sup>.

Discounting autonomous Croatia-Slavonia, 10,7 million of Hungary's population had been transferred into the successor states. Of those at most 5,2 millions may be considered (given ambiguities in the case of Czechoslovakia and partly Yugoslavia) turning thereby from a minority into a state forming position. Simultaneously the number of those to whom the Trianon Treaty had been detrimental was 5,5 million. This included those turned to be minorities (the Hungarians), and those that although used to be and remained in a minority position had to

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<sup>1</sup> *Erdély rövid története*, ed. B. Köpeczi, Budapest 1993, p. 684; 1910.évi népszámlálás 1. Magyarország, Budapest. 1910. Hungarian census data [https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/NEDA\\_1910\\_01/?pg=0&layout=s](https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/NEDA_1910_01/?pg=0&layout=s) (19 VII 2020).

face an unwelcome turbulent adjustment to wholly new circumstances. At that time 53,8% of the population transferred to Romania was Romanian, 31,6% Hungarian, 10,7% German and 3,9% of other nationalities (Figure 1)<sup>2</sup>.

### Socio-economic processes from 1920 to the present day

After the takeover Romanian became the official language of the administration, education and every day life. It was possible to get a job only in the possession of a Romanian language exam and language skills. The army, the police, education, the culture worked with people of the new power, often from the old Romanian territories. The land reform in Transylvania took place primarily at the expense of Hungarian and German landowners. In the period between the two world wars, despite Transylvania having been more developed than the national average, the state of its economy is best described, or mostly so, as that of stagnation.

During the second World War Germany and Italy divided Transylvania between their disputing allies: Romania and Hungary. Northern Transylvania with Székelyland, with a territory of 43 104 km<sup>2</sup> was reannexed to Hungary, Southern Transylvania, with a territory of 59 989 km<sup>2</sup> remained in Romania. Division between 1940–1944 was followed by the return of Northern Transylvania with Székelyland to Romania after the war<sup>3</sup>.

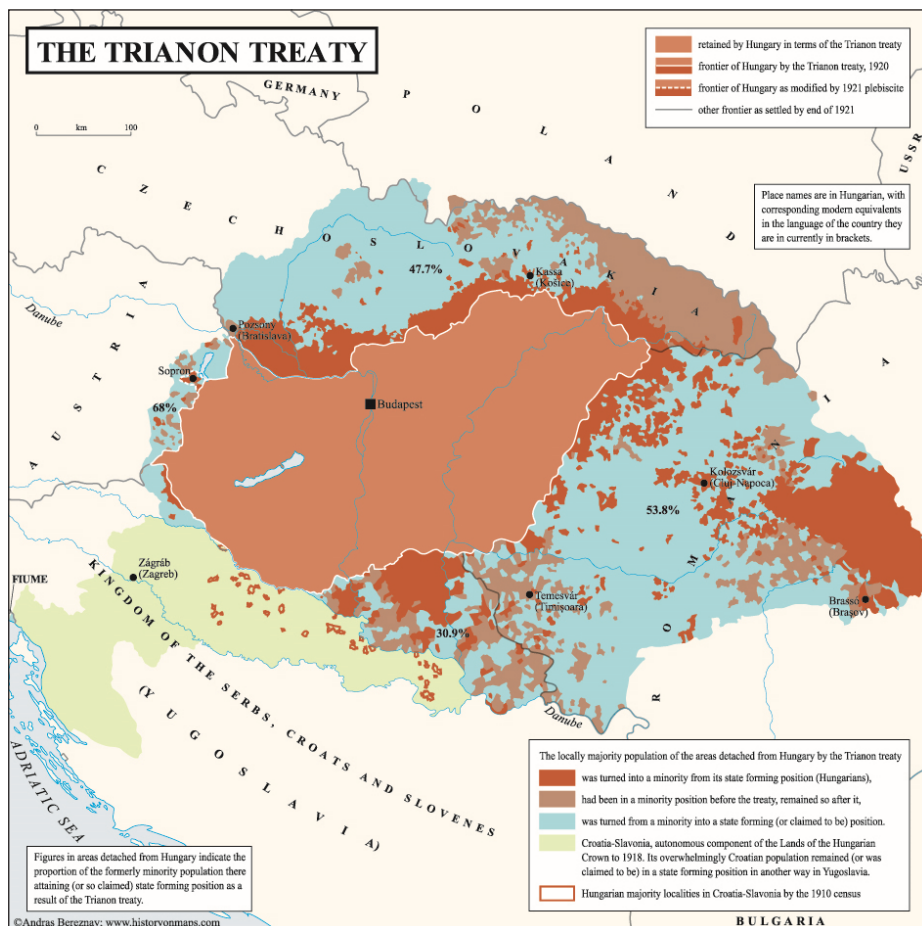
Romania became part of the Communist block after the second World War. There had been historic changes. The political power was seized by the Communist party. Production units, economic facilities and the vast majority of private goods have been nationalised.

Planned management led from the centre by the new political elite had been introduced. The new society was built in theory on an „alliance” of the working class, the peasantry and the intellectual class. The economic transformations and the strong development of industry helped the rapid strengthening and growth of the working class, regarded as the leading social class. Agricultural cooperatives and state owned farms were formed from formerly privately owned agricultural lands and assets. The main task of the new intellectuals, adapted to the new ideology of power, was to spread Communist ideas, to explain and glorify socio-economic implementations. The „exploitative layer” of former bankers, factory owners and landowners were liquidated by the nationalisation of private property. The Church has come under strong state influence. The state’s treatment of the various denominations was different. The Romanian Orthodox Church operated

<sup>2</sup> A. Bereznay, *Trianon: self-defeating self-determination*, „Regional Statistics” 2020, vol. 10, no. 1, p. 151-156.

<sup>3</sup> K. Kocsis, E. Kocsis-Hodosi, *Ethnic geography of the Hungarian minorities in the Carpathian Basin*, Budapest 1998, p. 241.

Figure 1. The Trianon Treaty



Source: A. Berezney, *Trianon: self-defeating self-determination*, „Regional Statistics” 2020, vol. 10, no. 1, p. 151-156.

as a state religion overseen by the authorities. At the same time, the Greek-Catholic denomination made up of mostly Romanian believers, with 1,4 million people in 1930, was liquidated by the state in 1947–1948. Their believers, their churches, their possessions went to the Orthodox Church until 1990. The Roman-Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, Unitarian Churches, with their centuries-old history in Transylvania were allowed functioning as state-controlled, tolerated denominations<sup>4</sup>.

All elements of culture, education, social life have adapted to the new ideology. Those who did not accept socio-economic transformations and those who opposed were excluded, exiled or retaliated against.

The main goal was rapid and general development, reducing regional disparities. Industrialisation, in particular mining, metallurgical, energy and mechanical engineering, played a primary role<sup>5</sup>. The developments that caused a strong economic, social, spatial and environmental transformation were connected to the cities and the new industrial zones. The state has provided significant source of money and development opportunities for large industrial centres, large cities (e.g. Brassó/Braşov, Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca, Temesvár/Timişoara, Nagyvárad/Oradea, Arad/Arad, Nagyszeben/Sibiu, Marosvásárhely/Târgu-Mureş, Nagybánya/Baia Mare, Resicabánya/Reşiţa, Petrosény/ Petroşani etc.). Secure jobs, housing estates, living wages, and a „relative prosperity” compared to village life in the cooperatives strengthened the new working class, resulting in rapid growth of the urban population. The alignment with the victorious power of the second World War in the region, the Soviet Union, was achieved at all levels of ideology, political, economic, social life, public administration. The „nationality issue” has been shed new light. A native language education system has been established for non-Romanian native speakers.

In Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca, a Hungarian-language state university, founded in 1872, which was made to operate from 1919 in Romanian, then between 1940–1944 under Hungarian control in Hungarian again was allowed when returned to Romania to operate in Hungarian (Bolyai János University). In addition, however, in 1945 also a Romanian-language university (Victor Babeş University) was established.

In Transylvania, there was a network of primary and secondary schools for Hungarians, Germans and other nationalities. At the same time, the centuries-old church education network was abolished/nationalized.

In 1959, the Romanian and Hungarian universities of Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca (Babeş-Bolyai University) were forcibly merged, and in the following steps were

<sup>4</sup> Erdély rövid..., p. 684; A. Bereznavy, *Erdély történetének atlasza*, Somorja 2011, p. 223; T. Lönhárt, *Geopolitikai helyzet és történelmi fejlődési pálya*, [in:] *Erdély. Tér, gazdaság és társadalom*, ed. J. Benedek, Kolozsvár 2020, p. 15-172.

<sup>5</sup> J. Benedek, I. Kurkó, *Evoluția și caracteristicile disparităților teritoriale din România*, [in:] *Politicele regionale în România*, eds. M. Bakk, J. Benedek, Iași 2010, p. 77-120.

made towards the gradual elimination of the nationalities' education system and cultural networks.

The administration of Romania was organized on the Soviet model between 1950 and 1968. The province-rajon system has been reorganized three more times over the nearly two-decade period, including the establishment in 1952 of a „Hungarian Autonomous Province” in the historic Székelyland with nominal autonomy. The Székely-Hungarians, settling in southeastern Transylvania by the 13th century at the time of Transylvania was part of the Hungarian Kingdom. They enjoyed tax exemptions in view of their military service and, like the Saxons of southern Transylvania, territorial autonomy for centuries. Of the 13 500 km<sup>2</sup> large „Hungarian Autonomous Province”, 565 000 of its 731 000 inhabitants (77%) were of Hungarian nationality<sup>6</sup>.

Between 1960–1968, the extent of the autonomous area was transformed so as to include less Hungarians and more Romanians and renamed to „Maros/Mureş-Hungarian Autonomous Province”. Even this diluted nominal autonomy of the Hungarians was abolished in 1968 when a county organization was put in place to replace the hitherto Soviet model of administration, remaining in force to date. Like other Communist countries of the period Romania had a city named after Stalin: Brassó/Braşov, a former city of Transylvanian Saxons. It became the second industrial centre of the country from 1950 to 1960<sup>7</sup>.

Since the late 1970s and early 1980s, centralisation has intensified and the national character of the Communist dictatorship has intensified. Control over the population has increased. The power machine constantly observed „the enemy elements”, using all means to protect and serve the beneficiaries of the dictatorship.

Those who rejected the official ideology, the norms of behavior expected by the authorities, had been intimidated, isolated, expelled, or „neutralized”.

At the same time, talented individuals were tried to serve the interests of the power by providing advantages and extortion. Thus the contribution of tens of thousands of „innovative” people had been lost to the country. At the cost of much deprivation by the population the country repaid the debt it accumulated in the past. Striving for autarky has increased the country's isolation. Foreign travel was restricted; it was possible to visit only Communist countries in exceptional cases and with special permission, the media, the acquisition of information were under full state control. The population was not cognisant with the functioning of Western type societies, neither the market economy<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> S. Bottoni, *Sztálin a székelyeknél. A Magyar Autonóm Tartomány története (1952–1960)*, Csík-szereda 2018, p. 445.

<sup>7</sup> T. Elekes, *Székelyföld földrajza és közigazgatása*, [in:] *Székelyföld története I*, ed. Á. Egyed, Székelyudvarhely 2016, p. 55-71.

<sup>8</sup> T. Elekes, F. Szilágyi, *Administrative, spatial and demographic changes in Székelyland since the Treaty of Trianon to the present day*, „Regional Statistics” 2020, vol. 10, no. 1, p. 120-132.

After the fall of the dictatorship in 1989, it took almost a decade to catch up with building a market economy, due not least to information poverty, lack of specialists, know how, and instruments. Some of those who served the dictatorship were integrated into the new power structure after the dictatorship. The role of the former power elite has not been clarified, with more than a thousand victims of the events taking place in Romania in December 1989, the events in Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş in March 1990, and the „mineriads” in Bucharest in June 1990. All this has hampered the socio-economic development that began in the 1990's. The deteriorating economic situation, the delayed privatization, the rapidly rising unemployment, high inflation, political instability have brought impoverishment, hopelessness and disillusionment for millions of people.

The largest emigration in the country's history has begun. By the beginning of the 2000s, the economic situation had stabilized, and Romania had become a member of NATO as from 1 V 2004 and of the European Union as from 1 I 2007.

With the exception of the crisis of 2008–2009, economic growth was the norm, and the process of catching up with the EU average began.

After 1990, the structure of society changed completely. The number of people employed in industry and mining rapidly decreased, the number of people working in agriculture gradually declined, and the importance of the service sector increased. An economic elite governing daily life has been established, and the role of the Church in society has been respected.

The appearance of the COVID-19 pandemic in Romania in March 2020, like in other countries of the world, brought a significant decline and a transformation of socio-economic processes. The management of the epidemic will be of paramount importance, and the period of restart will be crucial for the economy and society in need of transformation. It may be necessary to eliminate previous errors and re-evaluate processes.

## **Demographic Processes from 1920 to the Present Day**

Between 1912 and 1990 the population of Romania increased by more than 10 million (Table 1). The growth of the first half of the 20th century was broken by the two world wars. The decline in the post-World War II birth rate was prompted by state legal intervention from 1966. Population growth lasted until 1990, after which population loss was typical.

In the three decades after 1990, official statistics show that the country's population has declined by nearly 4 million. Between 1990 and 2002, 84% of the 1,6 million population loss and 79% of the 1,3 million population loss in 2003–

2009 were caused by migratory loss. Nearly two-thirds of the population loss of more than 1 million after 2010 was due to the declining birth rate<sup>9</sup>.

The active population was decreasing and the proportion of elderly dependents in the aging population was increasing. The main reason for mass emigration is the economy. Care for the future of children, political and institutional instability, legal uncertainty, deficiencies in the functioning of central and local administration, and personal security are all factors that increasingly encourage emigration. The emigration of millions of young active people is also confirmed by statistics from host countries<sup>10</sup>. In 2019, out of a population of 19,4 million, 5,1 million were employed within the country, and a significant part of the active population took up permanent or temporary work abroad. Five million Romanian citizens live abroad<sup>11</sup>.

**Table 1.** Changes in the total, urban and rural population of Romania between 1912 and 2019

Year	Total population of Romania	Urban population		Rural population	
			%		%
1912	12 768 399	2 079 860	16,3	10 688 539	83,7
1930	14 280 729	3 051 253	21,4	11 229 476	68,6
1948	15 872 624	3 713 139	23,4	12 159 485	76,6
1956	17 489 540	5 474 264	31,3	12 015 186	68,7
1966	19 103 163	7 305 714	38,2	11 797 449	61,8
1977	21 559 910	9 395 729	43,6	12 164 181	56,4
1983	22 553 074	11 054 179	49,0	11 498 895	51,0
1990	23 206 720	12 608 844	54,3	10 597 876	45,7
1992	22 810 035	12 391 819	54,3	10 418 216	45,7
2002	21 698 181	11 436 736	52,7	10 261 445	47,3
2011	20 121 641 *19 042 936	10 054 000	52,8	8 989 000	47,2
2019	19 405 000				

\*Preliminary data of the 2011 Census.

Source: 1930, 1941, 1956, 1966, 1977, 1992, 2002, 2011. Institutul Național de Statistică, București. Romanian census data, <https://insse.ro/cms/ro/content/recens%C4%83minte> (19 VII 2020).

<sup>9</sup> V. Ghețau, *Anul 2020: O populație rezidentă cu 4 milioane de locuitori mai mică* [7 I 2020], <https://www.piatafinanciara.ro/anul-2020-o-populatie-rezidenta-cu-4-milioane-de-locuitori-mai-mica/> (3 VII 2020).

<sup>10</sup> *Boldogulni itthon vagy külföldön?: legújabb trendek a magyarországi kivándorlásban*, eds. B. Siskáné, Szilasi, L. Halász, Miskolc 2018, p. 222.

<sup>11</sup> V. Ghețau, *op.cit.*

Population changes were especially intense during the last one hundred years in Transylvania. In the years after 1920, settlers from other parts of Romania (400 thousand people) came to the big cities of Transylvania and to settler villages established in the western part of the country, close to the Hungarian-Romanian border. In the years after the war, 200 000 Hungarians left Transylvania<sup>12</sup>.

During the second World War in the divided Transylvania 220 thousand Romanians from Northern Transylvania settled to the southern areas, while 190 thousand Hungarians from Southern Transylvania arrived to Northern Transylvania. As a result of the atrocities during the war and the deportation from Northern Transylvania, the number of Jews in Transylvania fell to one sixth of the pre-war number. After the war 70 000 Germans were deported to the Soviet Union to do forced labour. By then, thousands of them were already compelled to leave for Germany from the Beszterce/Bistrița area by the Nazis in 1944<sup>13</sup>.

The industrialization of the decades after the second World War triggered strong intra- and interregional migration. Between 1948 and 1990, the urban population increased from 3,7 million to 12,6 million, while the proportion of the rural population within the total population decreased by 30%. Over four decades more than 1 million people arrived to Transylvania from other regions of Romania, mostly from Moldavia, which has a higher birth rate. In the 1970s, the organized emigration of the Germans from Transylvania to the Federal Republic of Germany began<sup>14</sup>.

„Social homogenization” intensified in the 1980s, aimed at a unified social system of workers-peasants-intellectuals, the creation of a unitary nation-state, the disappearance of „redundant” small villages and the resettlement of their population in larger centers<sup>15</sup>.

Between 1990 and 1992, 84 000 Germans left Romania. Also a stronger exodus of Romanians and Hungarians has begun<sup>16</sup>.

Population changes were most strong in cities. In the largest Transylvanian cities, the growth between 1910 and 1941 was far outpaced by the population growth caused by mass resettlement in the four decades after World War II (Figure 2, 3).

<sup>12</sup> K. Kocsis, E. Kocsis-Hodosi, *op.cit.*, p. 241.

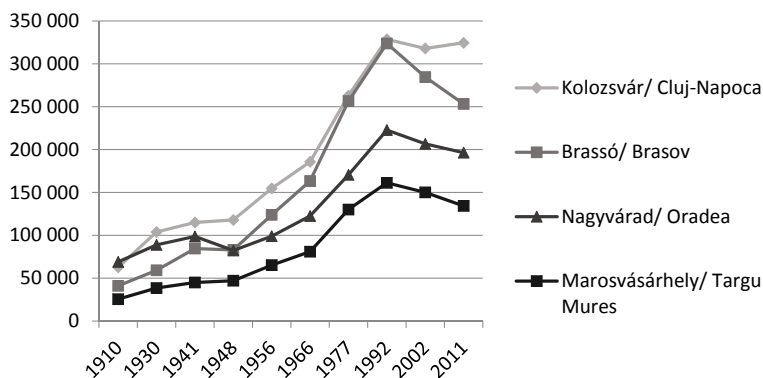
<sup>13</sup> A. Bereznay, *op.cit.*, p. 223.

<sup>14</sup> K. Kocsis, E. Kocsis-Hodosi, *op.cit.*, p. 241.

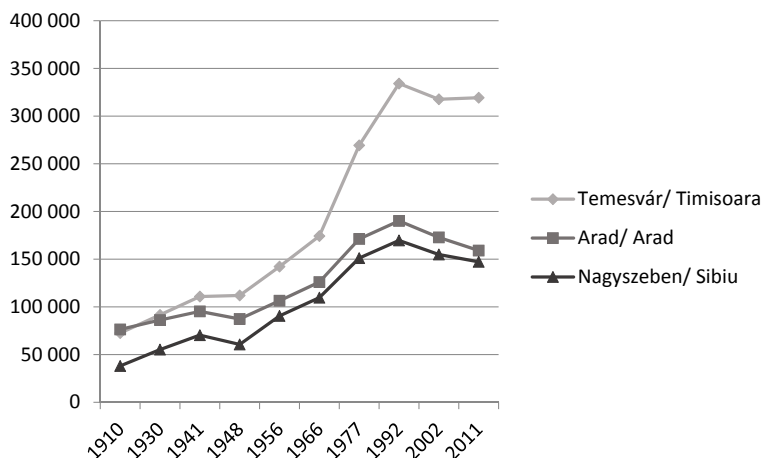
<sup>15</sup> T. Elekes, A. Trócsányi, J. Tóth, *Erdély változó térszerkezete a XX. században*, [in:] *Erdély természeti és történelmi földrajza*, ed. L. Boros, Nyíregyháza 2000, p. 150-157; T. Elekes, P. Gyenizse, *A földrajzi tényezők és a közigazgatás kapcsolatrendszere Erdélyben*, „Észak-Magyarországi Stratégiai Füzetek” 2014, vol. 2, no. 2, p. 118-126.

<sup>16</sup> Gr. P. Pop, *Evoluția populației României în a doua jumătate a secolului al XX-lea*, „Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai” 2001, Geographia, XLVI, no. 1, p. 81-94.



**Figure 2.** Population change in 4 important cities of Transylvania between 1910–2011

Sources: 1910.évi népszámlálás 1. Magyarország, Budapest. 1910. Hungarian census data [https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/NEDA\\_1910\\_01/?pg=0&layout=s](https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/NEDA_1910_01/?pg=0&layout=s) (19 VII 2020); 1941.évi népszámlálás. Magyarország, Budapest. 1941 Hungarian census data [https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/NEDA\\_1941\\_demogr\\_adatok\\_kozsegek/?pg=0&layout=s](https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/NEDA_1941_demogr_adatok_kozsegek/?pg=0&layout=s) (19 VII 2020); 1930, 1941, 1956, 1966, 1977, 1992, 2002, 2011. Institutul Național de Statistică, București. Romanian census data <https://insse.ro/cms/ro/content/recens%C4%83minte> (19 VII 2020).

**Figure 3.** Population change in 3 important cities of Transylvania between 1910–2011

Sources: 1910.évi népszámlálás 1. Magyarország, Budapest. 1910. Hungarian census data [https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/NEDA\\_1910\\_01/?pg=0&layout=s](https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/NEDA_1910_01/?pg=0&layout=s) (19 VII 2020); 1930, 1941, 1956, 1966, 1977, 1992, 2002, 2011. Institutul Național de Statistică, București. Romanian census data <https://insse.ro/cms/ro/content/recens%C4%83minte> (19 VII 2020).

After 1990, everywhere, the decline was typical, at the national level, the proportion of the urban population in the total population decreased slightly.

Since the early 2000s, the population has stabilised and started to increase slightly in two regional centres: Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca and Temesvár/Timişoara. In other major cities of Transylvania (Brassó/Braşov, Nagyvárad/Oradea, Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş, Arad/Arad, Nagyszeben/Sibiu) and even in medium and small towns population loss is typical to the present day.

The ethnic structure of the vast majority of cities has completely changed in the last hundred years. This change was the most spectacular from the 1950s to 1990s as a result of the state-led processes. I illustrate the process with changes in the ethnic structure of the 7 largest cities in Transylvania (Table 2, Fig. 4, 5, 6). In 1910 there was an absolute Hungarian majority in Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca, Nagyvárad/Oradea, Arad/Arad, Marosvásárhely/ Târgu Mureş, Brassó/Braşov with a relative Hungarian majority, Nagyszeben/ Sibiu with an absolute German majority and Temesvár/Timişoara with a relative German majority. In the period between the two world wars, the number and proportion of Romanians in Transylvanian cities that joined Romania increased everywhere. During the second World War, the number and proportion of Hungarians increased in the areas returned to Hungary (Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca, Nagyvárad/Oradea and Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş) and the number and proportion of Romanians increased in the areas left in Romania (Temesvár/Timişoara, Arad/Arad, Nagyszeben/Sibiu). From the Second World War to date the proportion of Romanians in Transylvanian cities has been increasing, forming an absolute majority in all major cities. In 2011, 45,2% of the population was registered as Hungarian in Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş. The Hungarian majority of Székelyland's small and medium-sized towns had been retained, and so it was in those of the area close to the Romanian-Hungarian border.

According to preliminary data from the 2011 census, the population registered in Romania is 19 million. The final population figure is 20,1 million, of which the nationality of 1,2 million (6,1%) people is unknown. The proportion of people with data gaps is generally above the national average in large cities.

**Table 2.** Change in the ethnic structure of 7 important cities of Transylvania (1910–2011)

## Kolozsvár / Cluj Napoca

	Total population		Romanians		Hungarians		Germans		Others		No data	
	number		number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
1910	62 733		8 886	14,2	51 192	81,6	1 678	2,7	977	1,5		
1930	103 840		36 981	35,6	55 351	53,3	2 728	2,6	8 780	8,5		
1941	114 984		11 524	10,0	100 172	87,1	1 841	1,6	1 447	1,3		
1948	117 915		47 321	40,1	67 997	57,6	360	0,3	2 257	2,0		
1956	154 723		74 623	48,2	77 839	50,3	1 115	0,7	1 146	0,8		
1966	185 663		105 185	56,7	78 520	42,3	1 337	0,7	621	0,3		
1977	262 858		173 003	65,8	86 215	32,8	1 480	0,6	2 160	0,8		
1992	328 602		248 572	75,6	74 892	22,8	1 149	0,3	3 989	1,2		
2002	317 953		252 433	79,5	60 287	18,9	734	0,2	4 499	1,4	55	
2011	324 576		245 737	75,7	53 374	16,4	544	0,2	1 756	0,5	23 165	7,2

## Temesvár / Timișoara

	Total population		Romanians		Hungarians		Germans		Others		No data	
	number		number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
1910	72 555		7 566	10,4	28 552	39,3	31 644	43,6	4 793	6,7		
1930	91 580		24 088	26,3	32 513	35,5	30 670	33,5	4 309	4,7		
1941	110 840		44 349	40,0	20 090	18,1	30 940	27,9	15 461	14,0		
1948	111 987		58 456	52,2	30 630	27,3	16 139	14,4	6 762	6,1		
1956	142 257		76 173	53,5	36 459	25,6	25 494	17,9	4 131	3,0		
1966	174 243		109 806	63,0	33 502	19,2	25 564	14,7	5 371	3,1		
1977	269 353		191 742	71,2	36 724	13,6	28 429	10,6	12 458	4,6		
1992	334 115		274 511	82,2	31 798	9,5	13 206	4,0	14 600	4,4		
2002	317 660		271 677	85,5	24 287	7,6	7 157	2,3	14 411	4,6	128	
2011	319 279		259 754	81,3	15 564	5,4	4 193	1,3	9 554	3,0	28 679	9,0

## Brassó / Brașov

	Total population		Romanians		Hungarians		Germans		Others		No data	
	number		number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
1910	41 056		11 786	28,7	17 831	43,4	10 841	26,4	598	1,5		
1930	59 232		19 378	32,7	24 977	42,2	13 276	22,4	1 601	2,7		
1941	84 557		49 463	58,5	15 114	17,9	16 210	19,2	3 770	4,4		
1948	82 984		55 152	66,5	17 697	21,3	8 480	10,2	1 655	2,0		
1956	123 834		88 651	71,6	24 186	19,5	10 349	8,3	648	0,6		
1966	163 345		123 711	75,7	28 638	17,5	10 280	6,3	716	0,5		
1977	256 475		210 019	81,9	34 879	13,6	9 718	3,8	1 859	0,7		
1992	323 736		287 535	88,8	31 574	9,7	3 418	1,1	1 209	0,4		
2002	284 596		258 042	90,7	23 176	8,1	1 717	0,6	1 619	0,6	42	
2011	253 200		219 019	86,5	16 551	6,9	1 188	0,4	1 601	0,4	14 841	5,8

## Nagyvárad / Oradea

	Total population		Romanians		Hungarians		Germans		Others		No data	
	number		number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	numbe	%
1910	68 960		3 779	5,5	62 985	91,3	1 450	2,1	746	1,1		
1930	88 830		21 790	24,5	60 202	67,8	1 165	1,3	5 673	6,4		
1941	98 622		5 135	5,2	90 828	92,1	886	0,9	1 773	1,8		
1948	82 282		26 998	32,8	52 541	63,8	165	0,2	2 578	3,2		
1956	98 950		34 501	34,9	62 804	63,5	373	0,4	1 272	1,2		
1966	122 534		55 785	45,5	65 141	53,2	499	0,4	1 109	0,9		
1977	170 531		91 925	53,9	75 125	44,0	618	0,4	2 863	1,7		
1992	222 741		144 244	64,8	74 228	33,3	959	0,4	3 310	1,5		
2002	206 614		145 284	70,3	56 985	27,6	563	0,2	4 000	1,9	51	
2011	196 367		132 718	67,5	45 305	23,1	336	0,2	3 303	1,7	14 705	7,5

## Arad / Arad

	Total population		Romanians		Hungarians		Germans		Others		No data	
	number		number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	numbe	%
1910	76 356		14 600	19,1	48 409	63,4	10 841	14,2	2 506	3,3		
1930	86 181		30 381	36,2	41 854	48,6	11 059	12,8	2 887	2,4		
1941	95 287		42 862	44,7	27 344	28,5	14 146	14,8	10 935	12,0		
1948	87 291		45 819	52,5	35 326	40,5	2 234	2,5	3 912	4,5		
1956	106 460		59 050	55,5	37 633	35,3	8 089	7,6	1 688	1,6		
1966	126 000		81 005	64,3	33 800	26,8	9 456	7,5	1 739	1,4		
1977	171 193		121 815	71,2	34 728	20,3	10 217	6,0	4 433	2,5		
1992	190 114		151 438	79,7	29 832	15,7	4 142	2,2	4 702	2,5		
2002	172 827		142 968	82,7	22 492	13,0	2 247	1,3	5 114	3,0	6	
2011	159 074		125 310	78,9	16 761	10,5	1 259	0,7	2 789	1,8	12 955	8,1

## Nagyszében / Sibiu

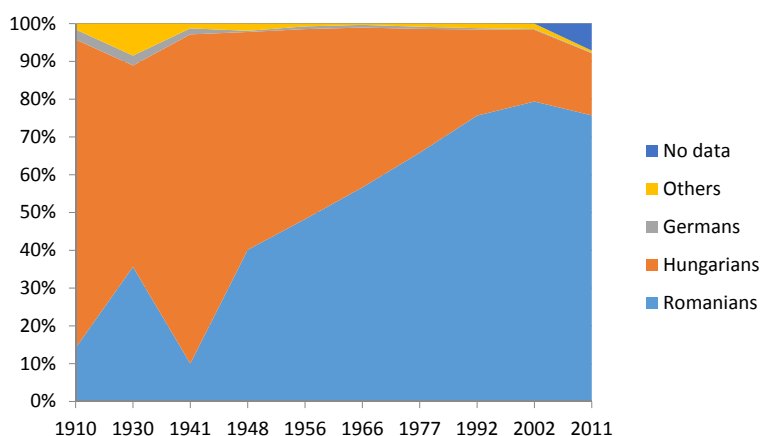
	Total population		Romanians		Hungarians		Germans		Others		No data	
	number		number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
1910	38 061		10 125	26,6	7 297	19,2	20 015	52,6	624	1,6		
1930	55 224		20 676	37,4	6 884	12,5	26 136	47,3	1 528	2,8		
1941	70 352		35 753	50,8	4 313	6,1	28 172	40,1	2 114	3,0		
1956	90 534		59 902	66,2	4 884	5,4	24 263	26,8	1 485	1,6		
1966	109 658		78 646	71,7	5 206	4,7	25 047	22,9	759	0,7		
1977	151 137		119 625	79,2	5 114	3,4	25 414	16,8	984	0,6		
1992	169 656		158 908	93,7	4 164	2,5	5 605	3,3	979	0,5		
2002	154 892		148 269	95,8	3 135	2,0	2 508	1,6	970	0,6	10	
2011	147 245		130 998	89,0	2 352	1,6	1 561	1,1	821	0,5	11 513	7,8

## Marosvásárhely / Târgu-Mureş

	Total population		Romanians		Hungarians		Germans		Others		No data	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
1910	25 517		1 717	6,7	22 790	89,3	606	2,4	404	1,6		
1930	38 517		9 493	24,6	25 359	65,8	735	1,9	2 930	7,7		
1941	44 946		1 725	3,8	42 449	94,4	436	1,0	336	0,8		
1948	47 043		11 007	23,4	34 943	74,3	72	0,1	1 021	2,2		
1956	65 194		14 315	21,9	50 174	77,0	45	0,1	660	1,0		
1966	80 912		22 072	27,3	58 208	71,9	441	0,5	191	0,3		
1977	130 076		45 639	35,1	82 200	63,2	773	0,6	1 464	1,1		
1992	161 216		74 549	46,2	83 249	51,6	554	0,3	2 864	1,8		
2002	150 041		75 533	50,3	70 108	46,8	303	0,2	4 041	2,7	56	
2011	134 290		66 033	49,3	60 747	45,2	202	0,1	198	0,1	7 110	5,3

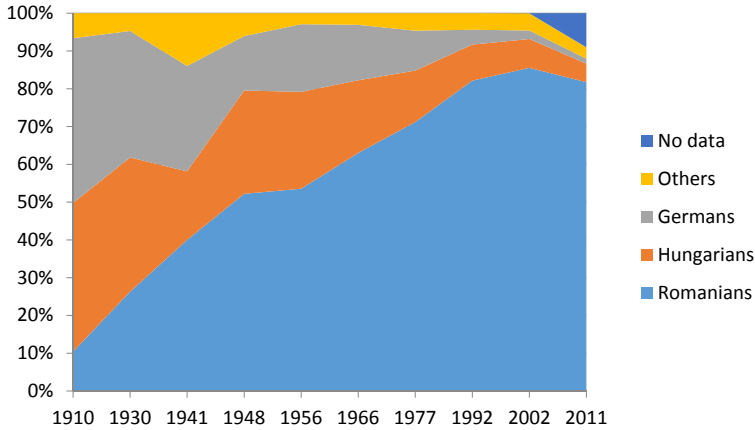
Sources: K. Kocsis, E. Kocsis-Hodosi, *Ethnic geography of the Hungarian minorities in the Carpathian Basin*, Budapest 1998, p. 241; K. Kocsis, Zs. Bottlik, P. Tátrai, *Etnikai térfolyamatok a Kárpát-medence határon túli régiókban (1989–2002)*, Budapest 2006, p. 197; T. Elekes, *A településhálózat és a közigazgatás változásainak néhány jellemzője Hargita megye délnyugati részében 1333-tól napjainkig*, [in:] *Székelőföld 2000: A kulturális térségek szerepe a regionális fejlesztésben*, eds. E. Papp-Kincses, J. Kassay, J. Kánya, Csíkszereda 2001, p. 103-109; T. Elekes, *Demográfiai, gazdasági-társadalmi folyamatok Románia városaiban 1948-tól napjainkig*, „Tér és Társadalom” 2008, no. 2, p. 185-201; K. Kocsis, P. Tátrai, *Changing ethnic patterns of the Carpatho-Pannonian area*, Budapest 2015, p. 11; <http://statisztikak.erdelystat.ro/adatlapok/erdely/3280> (17 VII 2020).

**Figure 4.** Change in the ethnic structure of population of Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca (1910–2011)



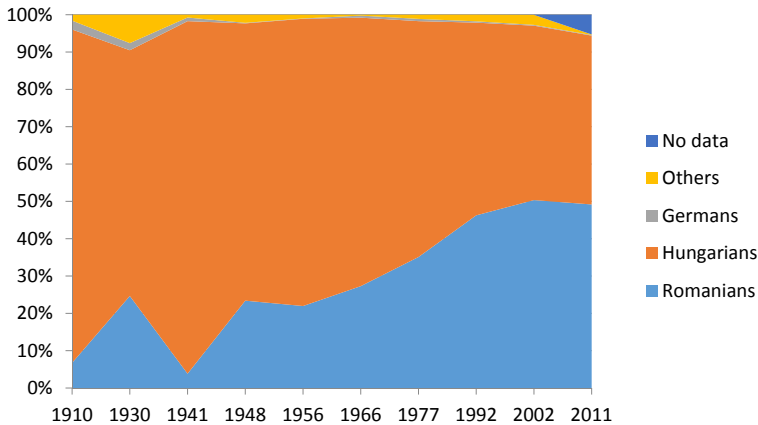
Sources: K. Kocsis, Zs. Bottlik, P. Tátrai, *Etnikai térfolyamatok a Kárpát-medence határon túli régiókban (1989–2002)*, Budapest 2006, p. 197; <http://statisztikak.erdelystat.ro/adatlapok/erdely/3280> (17 VII 2020).

**Figure 5.** Change in the ethnic structure of population of Temesvár/Timișoara (1910–2011)



Sources: K. Kocsis, Zs. Bottlik, P. Tátrai, *Etnikai térfoiyamatok a Kárpát-medence határon túli régióiban (1989–2002)*, Budapest 2006, p. 197; <http://statisztikak.erdelystat.ro/adatlapok/erdely/3280> (17 VII 2020).

**Figure 6.** Change in the ethnic structure of population of Marosvásárhely/Târgu-Mureș (1910–2011)



Sources: K. Kocsis, Zs. Bottlik, P. Tátrai, *Etnikai térfoiyamatok a Kárpát-medence határon túli régióiban (1989–2002)*, Budapest 2006, p. 197; <http://statisztikak.erdelystat.ro/adatlapok/erdely/3280> (17 VII 2020).

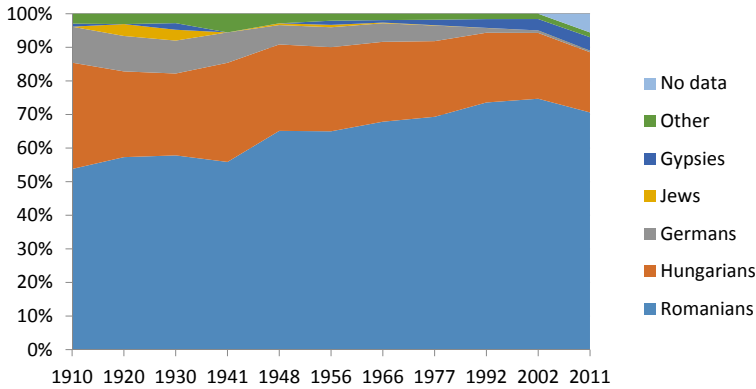
Structural changes similar to those of large cities characterise the total population of Transylvania. With the exception of the 1941 census, the official statistics indicate a steady increase in the proportion of Romanians from 1920 to the present day. At the same time, the proportion of Hungarians, from the 1980s onwards, is characterised by decrease. In 100 years, the Jewish community has been almost completely eradicated, the number of German nationality decreased to a fraction of its former strength. At the same time, statistics recorded a nearly sixfold increase in Romani people (Gypsies). The results of the last two censuses indicate a smaller change in rates than before (Table 3, Figure 7, 8).

**Table 3.** Change in the ethnic structure of Transylvania (1910–2011)

	Total population	Romanians		Hungarians		Germans	
	number	number	%	number	%	number	%
1910	5 260 181	2 829 351	53,8	1 663 774	31,6	563 416	10,7
1920	5 114 124	2 930 120	57,3	1 305 753	25,5	539 427	10,5
1930	5 549 806	3 208 767	57,8	1 353 288	24,4	544 278	9,1
1941	5 912 413	3 304 063	55,9	1 744 179	29,5	535 359	9,0
1948	5 761 127	3 752 269	65,1	1 481 903	25,7	332 066	5,8
1956	6 218 427	4 041 156	65,0	1 558 254	25,1	367 857	5,9
1966	6 719 555	4 559 432	67,9	1 597 438	23,8	371 881	5,5
1977	7 500 229	5 203 846	69,4	1 691 065	22,5	347 896	4,6
1992	7 723 313	5 684 142	73,6	1 603 923	20,8	109 014	1,4
2002	7 221 733	5 393 552	74,7	1 415 718	19,6	53 077	0,7
2011	6 789 250	4 794 577	74,8	1 216 666	19,0	32 805	0,5

	Ethnic Jews		Romani people (Gypsies)		Others		No data	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
1910	....	....	47 876	0,9	155 764	3,0		
1920	181 340	3,5	....	....	157 484	3,2		
1930	178 810	3,2	109 156	2,0	155 507	2,8		
1941	....	....	....	....	328 812	5,6		
1948	30 039	0,5	....	....	164 850	2,9		
1956	43 749	0,7	78 278	1,3	129 133	2,0		
1966	13 530	0,2	49 105	0,7	128 169	1,9		
1977	7 830	0,1	123 028	1,6	134 293	1,8	118	0
1992	2 687	0,0	202 665	2,6	123 411	1,6	158	0
2002			244 475	3,4	113 978	1,6	933	0
2011			270 755	4,2	96 149	1,5	378 298	

Sources: K. Kocsis, E. Kocsis-Hodosi, *Ethnic geography of the Hungarian minorities in the Carpathian Basin*, Budapest 1998, p. 241; <http://statisztikak.erdelystat.ro/adatlapok/erdely/3280> (17 VII 2020).

**Figure 7.** Change in the ethnic structure of population of Transylvania (1910–2011)

Sources: K. Kocsis, Zs. Bottlik, P. Tátrai, *Etnikai térfoiyamatok a Kárpát-medence határon túli régióiban (1989–2002)*, Budapest 2006, p. 197; <http://statisztikak.erdelystat.ro/adatlapok/erdely/3280> (17 VII 2020).

The process of structural change of the population described above is also reflected in the national data. Between 1977 and 1992, the proportion of Romanians in Romania increased by 7,4% to reach as to numbers 20,4 million, and the proportion of Romani increased by 76,3% reaching 401 000 in actual numbers.

At the same time, the proportion of Germans decreased by 66,7% and that of Hungarians by 5,2%. Between 1992 and 2002, the German, Hungarian and Romanian communities were characterized by a decline in numbers, while the number and proportion of Romani people increased. The previous processes continued between 2002 and 2011, but then the proportional decline of Romanians was almost the same as that of Hungarians.

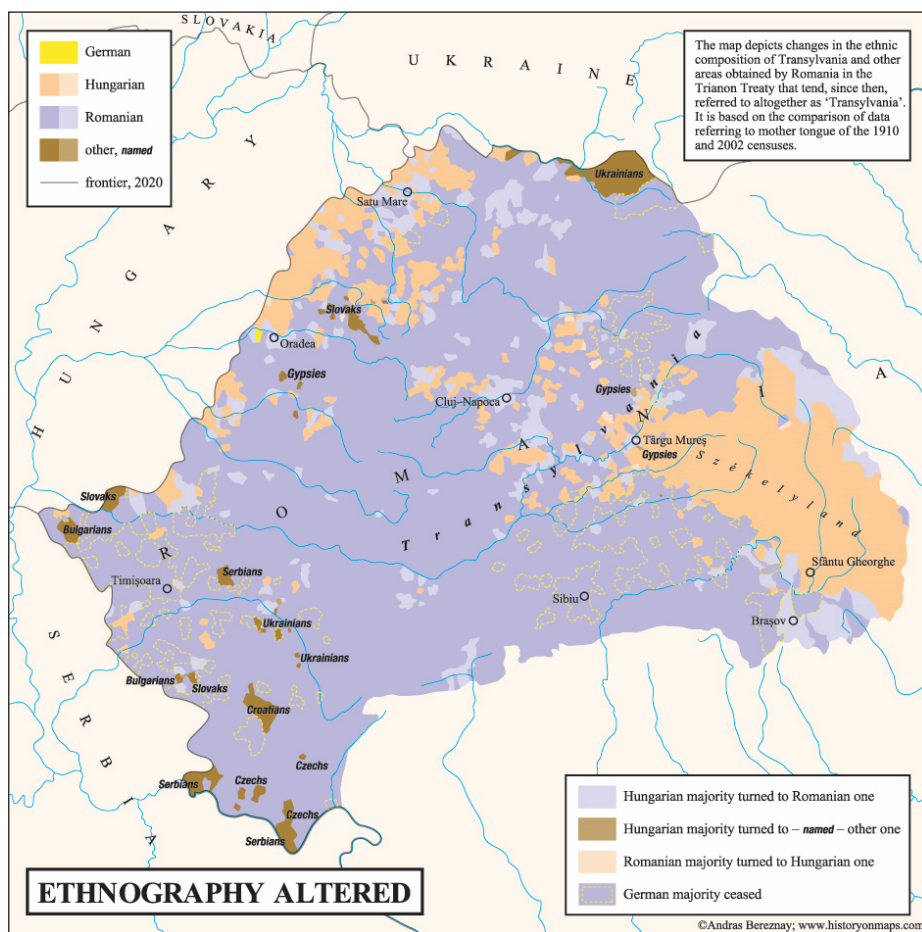
The proportion of the two ethnic groups within the population points in the direction of stabilization. Between 1992 and 2011, the number of Romanians decreased by 3,6 million and decreased to 16,8 million. The number of Hungarians diminished from 1,7 to 1,2 million between 1977 and 2011 (Table 4).

The number of Germans, 600 000 between the two world wars, dropped to 36 000 by 2011, and the half-million strong Jewish community in Romania, counted in 1930, was all but eliminated. At the same time, the number of the Romani increased to 621 000<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> <http://statisztikak.erdelystat.ro/adatlapok/erdely/3280> (17 VII 2020).



**Figure 8. Ethnography altered. Change in the ethnic structure of population of Transylvania (1910–2002)**



Source: A. Bereznavy, *Erdély történetének atlasza*, Somorja 2011, p. 223.

**Table 4.** Change in the ethnic structure of Romania (1977–2011)

	Total population	Romanians		Hungarians		Germans	
	number	number	%	number	%	number	%
1977	21 559 910	18 999 565	88,1	1 713 928	7,9	359 109	1,7
1992	22 810 035	20 408 542	89,5	1 624 959	7,1	119 462	0,5
2002	21 680 974	19 399 597	89,5	1 431 807	6,6	59 764	0,3
2011	20 121 641	16 792 868	88,9	1 227 623	6,5	36 042	0,2

	Romani people (Gypsies)		Others		No data	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
1977	227 398	1,1	259 458	1,2	452	
1992	401 087	1,8	255 219	1,1	766	
2002	535 140	2,5	252 725	1,2	1 941	
2011	621 573	3,3	206 725	1,1	1 236 810	

Sources: K. Kocsis, E. Kocsis-Hodosi, *Ethnic geography of the Hungarian minorities in the Carpathian Basin*, Budapest 1998, p. 241; K. Kocsis, Zs. Bottlik, P. Tátrai, *Etnikai térfolyamatok a Kárpát-medence határon túli régióiban (1989–2002)*, Budapest 2006, p. 197; <http://statisztikak.erdelystat.ro/adatlapok/erdely/3280> (17 VII 2020).

The most important change in the denominational structure of the population over the last hundred years was the ban on the Greek Catholic denomination in Romania in 1947–1948. In 1930, there were 1,4 million believers of the Greek Catholic denomination. After 1990, it can officially operate again, in 2011 the number of its believers was 150 593 (0,8% of the total population). Neo-Protestant denominations and sects emerged as new elements in the centuries-old denominational structure, and after 1990 they intensified.

The Romanian Orthodox denomination was the most prominent in 2011 (16 307 004 people, 86,5% of the total population). Some of the Hungarians in Transylvania and the Csango-Hungarians in Moldavia are Roman Catholics. (870 774 people, 4,6%). Both the Calvinist (600 932, 3,2%) and the Unitarian denominations (57 686, 0,3%) belong to the Hungarians of Transylvania. With the emigration of the Saxon community, the number of devotees of the Lutheran Church in Transylvania decreased to 20 168 (0,1%). In 2011, 362 314 Pentecostals (1,9%), 112 850 Baptists (0,6%), 80 944 Adventists (0,4%), 49 820 Jehovah's witness (0,3%) and 209 157 (1,1%) of other denominations lived in Romania. 0,2% of the total population is undenominational (39 660 people), suggesting strong religiosity. However, there are no data on the denominational distribution of 1 259 739 people<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*.

## Conclusions

Of all losers of the first World War Hungary had been the most penalized. That included the losing of over two third of its territory and nearly as much of its population. Albeit paying lip service to the right of self-determination, the victors delegated 5,5 million people into a minority position (whilst for some this meant no change, yet brought difficulties). It was only 5,2 million about whom it could be claimed on ethnic grounds – in part with reservations – that their fate as that of a community improved.

In the areas annexed by Romania, the socio-economic processes of the wider region prevailed in the studied period. The greatest change took place during Communism's four decades after the second World War. The main objective of the centrally managed economy was industrialization, and soon the national-communist leadership aimed at creating a „homogenized society”<sup>19</sup>.

Population growth of four decades after the second World War came to a halt due to mass emigration and decline in birth rate in the early 1990s; the number of population falling by nearly 4 million to date. In proportional terms the loss of the 16,8 million strong Romanians (2011) and the 1,2 million strong Hungarians was near identical during the 2002–2011 period. By 2011, the number of Transylvanian Germans counting 600 000 prior to the second World War had been reduced to 36 000. The number of the half a million strong in 1930 Jews had fallen to a few hundred. At the same time, the number of Romani increased to 621 000<sup>20</sup>.

The Hungarian indigenous minority in Transylvania see the survival of their community in the realization of autonomy in Székelyland, and in Northwestern Transylvania<sup>21</sup>. A significant part of today's Romanian politics and society opposes the realization of any kind of autonomy in Romania.

Due to population, economic and social processes, as well as the current epidemic the significance of specialists and communities integrated into the society and conducting economic activities is expected to be appreciated more<sup>22</sup>.

Adjusting to the demands of the social, ethnic, denominational and regional communities and promoting their continuance and development, spatial, economic and social organisation<sup>23</sup> strongly integrates the citizens by „making them

<sup>19</sup> F. Szilágyi, T. Elekes, *Changes in administration, spatial structure, and demography in the Partium region since the Treaty of Trianon*, „Regional Statistics” 2010, vol. 10, no. 1, p. 101-119.

<sup>20</sup> <http://statisztikak.erdelystat.ro/adatlapok/erdely/3280> (17 VII 2020).

<sup>21</sup> K. Kocsis, *Historical predecessors and current geographical possibilities of ethnic based territorial autonomies in the Carpathian Basin*, „Hungarian Geographical Bulletin” 2013, vol. 62, no. 1, p. 3-46.

<sup>22</sup> T. Elekes, F. Szilágyi, *op.cit.*, p. 120-132.

<sup>23</sup> K. Kocsis, *op.cit.*, p. 3-46.

motivated” in the economic and social processes, facilitates staying at home and reduces the intra- and inter-regional divergences<sup>24</sup>.

## Abstract

Tibor Elekes

### **Social, economic and population processes in Transylvania in the hundred years after Trianon**

Of all losers of the first World War Hungary had been the most penalized. That included the losing of over two third of its territory and nearly as much of its population. Albeit paying lip service to the right of self-determination, the victors delegated 5,5 million people into a minority position (whilst for some this meant no change, yet brought difficulties). It was only 5,2 million about whom it could be claimed on ethnic grounds – in part with reservations – that their fate as that of a community improved.

In the areas annexed by Romania, the socio-economic processes of the wider region prevailed in the studied period. The greatest change took place during Communism’s four decades. The main objective of the centrally managed economy was industrialization, and soon the national-communist leadership aimed at creating a „homogenized society”.

Population growth of four decades after the second World War came to a halt due to mass emigration and decline in birth rate in the early 1990s; the number of population falling by nearly 4 million to date. In proportional terms the loss of the 16,8 million strong Romanians (2011) and the 1,2 million strong Hungarians was near identical during the 2002–2011 period. By 2011, the number of Transylvanian Germans counting 600 000 prior to the second World War had been reduced to 36 000. The number of the half a million strong in 1930 Jews had fallen to a few hundred. At the same time, the number of Romani increased to 621 000. The Hungarian indigenous minority in Transylvania see the survival of their community in the realization of autonomy in Székelyland, and in North-western Transylvania.

**Keywords:** Trianon, Transylvania, social, economic and population processes

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<sup>24</sup> T. Elekes, F. Szilágyi, *op.cit.*, p. 120-132.

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