Péter Tálas

Demographic and Migration Trends in Hungary

1. Introduction

The present chapter reviews Hungary's demographic characteristics and problems, as well as the way the country's political leaders have reflected on these problems in the past. In the past 28 years since the 1990 regime change, Hungary's population has decreased by 604,000 to 9.77 million in January 2018. The decline of the country's population since 1980 has continued, and while the rate of the decline has decreased somewhat between 1980 and 1990, it has become a growing trend again (KSH 2018). Between 1980 and 1990 the population fell by 334,000, between 1990 and 2000 by 153,000, between 2001 and 2010 by 186,000 and between 2011 and 2018 by 215,000. Among the world's 206 countries, Hungary is the 98th by population size and in Europe it is the 15th of the 48 European countries. Besides the decline in numbers, the ageing of the population has also continued in the past 28 years: while in 1990 13% of the population fell in the over 65 age group, this proportion rose to 18.7% by 2017. Meanwhile, the proportion of children under 15 was the lowest ever at 14.5% since Hungary's first census in 1870 (E-Volution 2017; Obádovics 2018, 272).

2. General demographic trends after 1990: Reasons of population decline

2.1. Changes in fertility

The demographic trends of a country − the rise and fall − are determined primarily by the number and age indicators of women of childbearing age, and their willingness to have children. In Hungary, the decline in the number of women of childbearing age was more or less in line with the overall fall in the general population (their ratio was 24.4–25%); however, between 2001 and 2016 their number fell by almost 278,000 and their ratio dropped to 23.1% (KSH 2016, 2). After 2000, the age distribution among women of childbearing age has begun showing increasingly unfavourable trends. The number of women of childbearing age under 40 − who account for 97% of live births − showed a fluctuating rise in every age group, but their numbers fell since 2000–2001 in every age group and the younger the age group, the more severe the fall was (KSH 2016, 2–3). Very few children were born in 2017: only 91,577, which was 102,000 less than the last major peak in 1975. In terms of live births, the past 28 years can be divided into four distinct stages: between 1991 and 1999 the number

https://doi.org/10.36250/00770_04

of live births fell from 127,000 to 94,600; between 2000 and 2008 it practically stagnated at 97,000–100,000, falling to 88,000 by 2011 from which point onward it has stagnated at 88,500–93,000 (KSH 2018). In the first decade of the examined period (1991–1999), the Hungarian total fertility rate (TFR) dropped from 1.88 to 1.28 and then stagnated for the subsequent decade (2000–2010) and after the low point of 1.23 in 2011 it slowly began to recover to 1.5 by 2017 (KSH 2018). While in the previous decades the number of births and the total fertility rate essentially moved in tandem, since 2012 − when the fall in the number of women of childbearing age under 40 began to decrease further − the two indicators diverged. TFR was more favourable than the number of births, given that a decreasing number of potential mothers were willing to have equal number of or slightly more children than before. Due to the decreasing number of women of childbearing age, the total fertility rate may still continue to show a spectacular rise despite the fewer births in total (Kapitány–Spéder 2018, 49). The decline in the number of births between 1990 and 2010 was unequivocally the result of women postponing motherhood to a later age (the childbearing age has increased from 23 years in 1990 to 28.2 years in 2010). However, the postponement process ended in 2010 and from that point the age of having first-born children remained steady or even dropped a little in 2017 (to 28.6 years) (Kapitány–Spéder 2018, 48–49). With relation to postponement, we must draw the readers' attention to two facts. Firstly, the average age of motherhood varied significantly depending on educational levels: among women with eight completed elementary school grades, the age of motherhood barely changed, but it has risen by almost five years among women with secondary or higher education (Statisztikai Tükör 2014, 2). Secondly, the adjusted total fertility rate (TFRp) that filters out the tempo effect has dropped from 1.8 in 2005 to under 1.4 in 2010 and stagnated since then. This shows a decreased willingness to have children (Kapitány–Spéder 2018, 47). In this respect there was a change between 2015 and 2017 only among women with tertiary education whose fertility showed an increase (Farkas 2017a).

2.2. Changes in intimate relationships

An important factor in birth numbers is the ratio of children born in marriages or in unwed relationships. In Hungary the number of marriages continued to decline as part of a trend which began in 1975, falling from 66,400 in 1990 to 35,500 in 2010, followed by a moderate growth between 2010 and 2014 and a surge since 2016 to 51,800. Hungary registered 50,600 marriages in 2017. The number of divorces practically stagnated around 23,000–25,000 between 1990 and 2011 and has fallen since then. 2017 was the first in 50 years when it dropped below 19,000 (KSH 2018). In parallel with the declining popularity of marriages, there was an increase in the number of unwed couples in the 1990s and a rise in the number of singles after 2010 (from 20.3% in 1990 to 35.1% in 2018) (Statisztikai Tükör 2018, 8). This latter fact is of importance in the Hungarian society, which has traditional values because experts agree that the willingness to have children is mostly set back by the absence of a happy and steady relationship. Hungarian youth still have the desire to have children, but out of the planned 1.7 children only 1.4 are born (Fábos 2017). Showing a continuous growth between 1990 and 2000, the number of extra-marital birth rose from 13% to 29%. At the turn of the millennium, this trend stopped for a while but then resumed rapidly and by 2015 it

reached its peak of almost 48%. In 2016 and 2017 − due to the dynamic rise in the number of marriages − both the number and ratio of extra-marital children has fallen. In 2017, 55% of children were born in marriages and 45% out of wedlock (Statisztikai Tükör 2018, 4).

2.3. Changes in mortality rate

The examined period is contradictory with regard to mortality indicators. While life expectancy of the Hungarian population undoubtedly rose − from 65.2 years to 72.3 for men and from 73.9 to 79.2 for women –, Hungary still remains one of the European societies with the worst life expectancy rates. Although it is ahead of several regional countries (Romania, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Ukraine), in terms of life expectancy the gap has not been decreased neither to countries with low-mortality rate nor to the European Union average. We must also point out that the mortality rate crisis accompanying the regime change reached its bottom in 1993 (when men's life expectancy hit 64.5 years and only recovered to the 1990-level in 1995), meaning that life expectancy growth was more dynamic than the European average (Bálint–Kovács 2015, 75). Mortality rate by 100,000 citizens showed a staggering downward trend since 1994 but still remains one and a half times higher than in the developed EU countries. Since 2000 the annual number of deaths hovered around 130,000 (marginal years: 2003 − 135,823; 2014 − 126,308) while the annual natural population loss around 37,000 (marginal years: 2003 − 41,176; 2008 − 30,878) (KSH 2018). Besides the decline in mortality, the number of healthy years lost − an indicator of lower living standards − is also significantly worse in Hungary compared to other EU member states. Moreover, the country's handicap in the number of deaths due to certain circulatory diseases and cancer has even grown worse (Egészségjelentés 2016, 7–8).

2.4. Demographic ageing

Due to changes in fertility and mortality indicators − similarly to other European societies − the Hungarian society is also ageing. At the time of the regime change (1990) the average age was 36.1 years and it rose to 39.4 years by 2008 and 41.9 years by 2016 (Piac és Profit 2018). Between 1990 and 2017 the ratio of the over 65 age group rose from 13% to 18.7% and is forecasted to rise to 29% by 2070 (E-Volution 2017). One of the most severe problems of seniors in Hungary is the deterioration of their health, with those having only primary studies are the most affected. Within this demographic group only 11–12% rate their health as good, while this ratio among those with tertiary studies is 43% for men and 26% for women (Monostori 2015, 115–116).

2.5. Changes in the population's educational structure

Given that both life expectancy and health quality are related to educational levels, we must also examine this question. In the last 100 years the post-1990 period brought the biggest change in this field. While in 1990 those with primary studies accounted for 57.5% of

the population, this ratio dropped to 26.5% by 2016. Over the same period, the percentage of those with vocational training rose from 15% to 20.9%, those with secondary studies from 19.9% to 33.4% and those with higher education from 9.7% to 21.8% (Szémann 2017). In 2016, 1 million 750 thousand people had vocational qualification, 2 million 700 thousand had high-school graduation, and 1 million 716 thousand completed university education (Mikrocenzus 2016/4, 5–6). Women made the biggest strides in terms of education, as their number and percentage both among those with secondary studies and higher education is above than those for men. It is also true, however, that educational levels show significant regional disparities: while in the capital, Budapest, 76.4% have at least secondary studies and 40.7% have higher education, the same ratios are 61.4% and 27.2% in other cities and 37.8% and 11.8% in rural areas (Mikrocenzus 2016/2, 17–18).

2.6. The ethnic composition of the Hungarian population

Hungary has 13 nationality groups recognised by the law (the 1993 ethnic law recognised 12 nationalities and one ethnic minority, but since 2011 the law also defines Roma as a nationality), whose numbers are based on self-declarations. Between the 2001 and 2011 census their number officially rose from 205,720 to 315,583 while their ratio within the total population rose from 2.02% to 3.17%. (KSH 2014, 15). The real number and proportion of nationalities, however − primarily due to the Roma population − is significantly higher. A recent research pegs the number of Roma in Hungary at 886,000 and their ratio at 8,8% (Pénzes et al. 2018, 3). According to experts, these numbers also seem to be validated by the fact that during the 2011 census over 1.4 million people did not wish to declare their nationality (KSH 2014, 166). From a demographic perspective, only the Roma are standing out from the general population, as they tend to have decreasing, yet still high fertility rate and extended reproduction rates, higher mortality and lower life expectancy. Latter trends can be explained by the lower levels of education and employment, worse health and social conditions and the fact that they are often regionally segregated (Statisztikai Tükör 2015, 1–9).

2.7. Regional demographic specifics

If we consider the seven Hungarian regions, it can be stated that there is a continuous population decrease in the countryside of Hungary − with the exception of Western Transdanubia − and it is only the Central Region where the population is growing. In Hungary − as in other countries − there are significant differences in the development level of the regions: the most affluent region − which includes the capital − is only matched by Western and Central Transdanubia, while the other four regions have a significant economic handicap. This also determines the destinations of domestic migration: young and middle-aged adults seeking education or jobs typically migrate towards more developed regions with higher wages, more job opportunities and better infrastructure. But from a demographic perspective not only the more developed regions have an advantage, but the poorest ones (Northern Hungary) as well, where birth rates are relatively high. Negative demographic

trends have their biggest influence on regions where the number of seniors is relatively high, the number of children is low and the migration balance is also negative (Southern Transdanubia, Southern Great Plain) (Rigó 2017a). Since the direction of internal migration is largely determined by the level of economic development, the most affluent central region is the clear beneficiary of migration trends. Besides this, Western Transdanubia bordering Austria and Slovakia is the only other region where both domestic and international migration increase population numbers. The migration balance of Central Transdanubia is neutral but the other regions' populations are declining (Rigó 2017b). Domestic immigration does not only affect rural areas but most Hungarian cities as well. Between 2005 and 2016 Budapest and only the six largest county towns of the total of 24 (Győr, Sopron, Szeged, Hódmezővásárhely, Debrecen and Kecskemét) could increase their population.

3. Demographic perspectives, forecasts, reactions of decision-makers

The latest official population projection for Hungary was conducted in 2018. It had three scenarios (base, high and low) and all three forecasted a decreasing population until 2070. According to the base scenario operating with a 1.65 fertility rate concludes that at the end of the forecasted period, the population will be at 7.75 million; the low scenario, supposing a fertility rate of 1.45 forecasts a population of 6 million but even the high projection with a 1.75 fertility rate and significant immigration expects only 9.07 million (Obádovics 2018, 284). The United Nations' 2017 forecast until 2100 is somewhat more optimistic regarding the rate of the population decline with a prognosis of 9.23 million by 2030, 8.27 million by 2050 and 6.38 by 2100 (WPP 2017, 25). The single most important factor in the population decrease will be the decline in the number of women of childbearing age, but even they will be able to sustain around 90,000 births per year level − which will somewhat slow down the fall in population − only if they have more children. In terms of life expectancy at birth, all three variants expect an improvement by 2060 (the values for men are between 81.4 and 85.5 years, while it puts women between 85.5 and 90.3 years of expected lifespan). The projection also assumes a parallel drop in mortality to around 125,000–100,000 per year. The ratio of over-65s in the population will rise from 1.67 million (in 2011) to 2.27 million by 2070 (Obádovics 2018, 284–290). The surplus of women over the same horizon will drop from ca. 500,000 (in 2011) to around 100,000 (Obádovics 2018, 271).

Because the number of live births in Hungary began to drop significantly since 1974 and the same trend is valid regarding population numbers since 1981, the subsequent governments after the regime change have been well aware of the country's demographic challenges. The post-1990 measures intended to improve the demographic situation were primarily aimed at increasing birth rates, paying much less attention to the two other areas of demographic policy: increasing life expectancy (primarily through reducing mortality rates among the young and middle-aged) and migration policy (including emigration and return migration policies). This policy that spun across multiple governments was not only supported by the public opinion that values the structure of family, but also by the experts, in the hope that the relatively large generation that reached fertile age in the mid-1990s (the so-called Ratkó-grandchildren) combined with family support initiatives will be able to

stabilise the country's population in the short and medium terms (Kapitány–Spéder 2017, 184). Accordingly, in the period covered in this article, the generous (compared to other European systems) Hungarian family support system offered financial incentives to those with young children and those nurturing their children at home. The main elements of this system − based on the age of the children − are the following: the one-off maternity grant, the pregnancy and maternity benefit (TGYÁS) for children under the age of 3, the maternity benefit (CSED) that replaces the previous one, the childcare benefit (GYED), the childcare allowance (GYES) and the child rearing benefit (GYET), of which the latter three are provided to families with three or more children until the child reaches the age of eight. A 24-week maternity leave and a three-year childcare leave is also available after each child. The most important regular support for children until the age of 18 is the family allowance (with two components: the upbringing allowance and the schooling allowance) and the family tax rebate, which up until 2011 was only available to large families (i.e. with more than three children), but has since been extended to include all families with even one child. The family support system also gained new elements in the form of subsidised housing loan, the non-refundable housing support (the so-called "szocpol"), the regular child protection benefit and the regular child protection allowance for the socially disadvantaged and the one-off life start support. The fundamental structure of the support system established in 1990 has essentially remained unchanged; experts say that the different governments only changed the relative weight of each element. While leftist governments regarded these elements as parts of social policy, conservative governments primarily used them as tools of demographic policy thus prioritising them. Or, to put it more critically: experts criticised the former for neglecting demographic issues and the latter for ignoring issues such as child poverty (Ónody-Molnár 2017).

However, by the 2010s, it has become evident what the experts already foresaw after the turn of the millennium: the size of the population did not stabilise. Subsequently, when the "Ratkó-grandchildren" grew out of fertile age, the fertile group has been reduced to an extent that for the upcoming decades sectoral policies of encouraging childbearing would be insufficient to stabilise the population size of the country on their own (Kapitány–Spéder 2017, 184). The negative demographic turn was also reinforced by the 2008 global financial and economic crisis, which − after the 1989–1993 transformation crisis and the 1993–1994 Hungarian economic imbalance crisis − was the third one to hit the Hungarian society in a mere two decades. This coincided with Hungary's accession to the European Union, which triggered an emigration wave that resulted in an estimated 7–8% of the demographically fertile people leaving the country (Kapitány 2014, 2). Faced with all of the above, the conservative government that came to power in 2010 − after having also ruled between 1998–2002 − has included the improvement of the demographic situation among its political priorities and at the beginning of its third consecutive cycle in 2018 it announced a "governance with a demographic emphasis" with the goal of increasing the fertility to 2.1 by 2030. It is also important to mention that while this regime has implemented a series of positive family policy measures − extending the family tax rebate to families with just one child in 2011, extending GYED to higher education students, a continuous granting of GYES after children born within a short time span and allowing mothers to have jobs and still receive GYED and introducing the family housing discount (CSOK) in 2016 − it did all of the above while using the traditional family support toolset and primarily stimulated childbearing among the middle class with

a traditional family model. Experts warn that such measures could increase the fertility rate to 1.6 at best or in a more optimistic view to 1.7 and any further increase would require much more radical demographic policy intervention (Serdült 2018).

According to experts, there are several reasons why the measures intended to improve the Hungarian demographic situation have proven ineffective or of very little effect in the past decades. We have already mentioned one of the most important reasons: in the past decades, Hungarian governments started from the wrong premise that they will be able to put Hungary on a sustainable demographic path by using a single factor, a family policy that encourages childbearing (Kapitány–Spéder 2017, 184). It is important to mention that they did this with the support of the vast majority of domestic experts. We have also mentioned before that successive governments have approached demographic issues based on their political-ideological leanings. They either saw the solution in social policies, or they separated social policy from the decrease in population, or they restricted family policy support to certain social strata. This latter was particularly true for conservative governments, which primarily encouraged childbearing in the upper middle classes (Horváth 2017). Another frequent criticism is that the Hungarian family support system is insufficiently differentiated, too focused on financial support, bureaucratic, neglects measures intended to reconcile child rearing and work (such as nurseries, day care, part-time work, teleworking, etc.), and that in the past few decades no government could formulate a comprehensive demographic policy concept and strategy (Szilas 2015c). Even the Fidesz Government − the one with the best track record in this respect − failed to remedy these problems. While even critics of this government acknowledge their (partial) successes in a family policy that encourages childbearing, they are rightfully criticised for implementing very few effective measures in the two other important fields of demographic policy: the increase of life expectancy and migration policy.

4. Migration trends − political reactions

The stance and behaviour adopted by the current government since 2015 with regard to migration policy − primarily the strong refusal to solve demographic problems through migration from outside the Hungarian cultural sphere − seem to suggest that migration is not only a perception, but an actual problem for the country and its society. Despite the obvious difficulties and debates regarding the statistical approach to migration, data from the period under scrutiny only confirm the fears voiced by the government in the area of emigration. We must immediately put forward that with regard to migration, we will only focus on migrant groups which are relevant to the Hungarian society from a demographic perspective.

4.1. Immigration

Compared to the traditional host Western European countries, the number and proportion of immigrants in Hungary is modest − though data from some other Central and Eastern European countries are even lower (Gödri 2018, 237; Bleha–Sprocha 2018; Todor 2018). According to 2017 data from the KSH, 96% of the Hungarian population are Hungarian

citizens born in Hungary, thus immigration by citizenship or country of birth only affects a small fraction of the population. In 2017, the rate of foreign citizens in Hungary was 1.6% (151,000 people), and of people with foreign birthplace was 5.2% (508,000 people) in the society according to Eurostat data. The rate of foreigners from neighbouring countries among people with foreign birthplace was 72% and 28% among the people with foreign citizenship (Gödri 2018, 250). Hungary was affected by the largest wave of immigration around the years of the regime change (the peak was 1990, when over 37,000 people came to Hungary), and from then until 2003 immigration has stabilised at a rate of under 20,000 people per year (marginal values: 1994 − 12,758; 2001 − 20,308). In the years following the 2004 accession to the European Union, the number of immigrants began to rise again except for a 2008 peak of 35,547 people due to the introduction of the permanent residency card in 2007. Later it has stabilised around between 20 and 25 thousand and showed a modest growth since 2011. In 2017, there was another peak of 35,400 immigrants to Hungary. The rise was due to the massive growth in arrivals from the Ukraine, Asia and Serbia. In the examined period, the overwhelming majority of migrants came from Europe and within that, between 1990 and 2007 more than two thirds from four neighbouring countries with ethnic Hungarian minorities (Romania, Ukraine, Serbia and Slovakia), of which for a long time Romania was the largest source. After this, the proportion of immigrants from these countries fell to under 45% until 2011 and following the introduction of simplified naturalisation in 2011 it dropped to under 35% (Gödri 2015, 190; KSH 2018). Between 1990 and 2009, the ratio of those arriving from outside Europe was only 16%, rising thereafter from 19% to 32%, primarily on account of arrival from Asia. The number of the latter rose by 20,000 between 2000 and 2017. The ratio of African immigrants over the same period rose from 1% to 4%, but the actual numbers are very low: between 2000 and 2017, the number of African immigrants rose from 1,783 to 5,985 people (Vaskor 2018).

Although between 1990 and 2018 one million people received Hungarian citizenship, 797,000 of them are people living abroad naturalised under the simplified naturalisation scheme. This means that from a demographic perspective, the number of the population only increased by the 203,000 people naturalised in Hungary between 1993 and 2017 and by those 61,000 naturalised abroad with a residence in Hungary; while the rest might only influence future immigration trends (Gödri 2015, 187; Lengyel 2017; Farkas 2017b; Új Magyar Állampolgárok 2017, 5). In the examined period, immigrants were typically young (within the 20–39 age group), with senior people mostly immigrating from the European Union or as Hungarian citizens of neighbouring countries. 57% of the immigrants came to Budapest and its agglomeration, 10% to the Southern Great Plain and 9% to Western Transdanubia. Only 3% of them chose the disadvantaged region of Northern Hungary. Among those coming to Budapest, the majority were from Asia or Romania, while immigrants from the other neighbouring countries preferred the regions closest to them. This is even more so in case of those who became citizens under the simplified naturalisation scheme (Gödri 2015, 193).

4.2. Refugees

Between 1990 and 2017 Hungary registered 444,782 asylum-seekers (Halmos–Német 2014; KSH 2018). The actual number of refugees arriving to the country was certainly higher

than that, because for example only during the 2015 refugee/migrant crisis, the Hungarian police had to take action against almost 400,000 people at Hungary's Schengen borders (Christián 2017, 151). The annual number of asylum-seekers during this period was mostly below 4,300, except for the first years of the Balkan war (1990–1992), between 2000 and 2002 and the period of the 2015 migration crisis (2014–2016). During the first period 88,000 asylum-seekers came to Hungary, between 6,400 and 9,600 in the second period and 294,000 during the third one. 76% percent of all refugees registered in Hungary arrived during these nine years. Refugees only applied for asylum in Hungary for formal reasons, almost all of them went on to Western Europe later, mostly to Germany (Juhász et al. 2017, 8). Experts say the reason for this is partly that since 1995 Hungarian authorities only granted asylum, protected status or settlement rights to 10,784 people; i.e. an annual average of 469 people or 3% of all asylum-applications were accepted (Halmos–Német 2014; KSH 2018). In the 1990s, the overwhelming majority of asylum-seekers came from the former Yugoslav territory (between 1990 and 1992 Hungarians, Croatians, Bosnians, and since 1999 Romas and Albanians). In the 2000s − because Hungary also officially accepts asylum-seekers from outside of Europe since 1998 − the majority of the refugees arrived from Asia (Afghans, Iraqis, Bangladeshi and Syrians), although in 2008–2009 and since 2014 the Kosovars were temporarily the largest single group (Gödri 2015, 195). It is worth mentioning that the asylum-seekers' acceptance rate is worsened by those asylum-seekers between 2013 and 2017 whose vast majority had left Hungary before the decision was made in their cases.

4.3. Emigration

Emigration is where Hungarian experts have the biggest disagreement regarding the actual numbers. Firstly because the statistical definition of emigration is ambiguous to this day and secondly because many emigrants do not report their leave to the Hungarian authorities. For these reasons, the Hungarian expert literature has estimates regarding emigration on a fairly wide scale from 120,000 to 637,000. It is likely though that the actual number is much closer to the upper estimate (Mikrocenzus 2016/10, 10; Beke 2018). Emigration from Hungary began to grow significantly in the mid-2000s, after Germany and Austria opened their labour markets in 2011 to the workforce coming from the states that freshly joined the European Union (Gödri 2016, 7). Besides Great Britain, these are the two most popular destinations for Hungarian emigration (71% of Hungarians living abroad lives in Germany and Austria), the overwhelming majority of them (86%) lives in these countries due to employment reasons. Among the emigrants, the ratio of men (55%) is higher than their respective ratio among the total population, while the other over-represented groups are those of working age (90%), the younger generation (33–37%), skilled workmen (58%) or people with higher education (30%) (Blaskó–Gödri 2015, 61–62). In a regional breakdown, a higher percentage emigrated from Southern Transdanubia compared to the national average. The number of those with migration experience registered in 2016 shows that 41% of them returned to the country (Mikrocenzus 2016/10, 11). Although since 2015 the rate of emigration has dropped and the number of returning citizens has increased (Statisztikai Tükör 2018, 11), the majority of polls shows a high − 0.5–1.2 million people − willingness to emigrate (Beke 2018; Publicus Intézet 2018). It is important to notice that there is not always

a real intention behind the high willingness to emigrate. Only about half of the people who plan to emigrate can be considered as serious planners (Gödri 2016, 26).

Although in a short period after 1989 Hungary was the recipient of three larger immigration waves (Hungarians from Transylvania, East Germans, refugees from the Balkans) and in the second half of the 1990s a professional debate about migration has begun, these debates have not resulted in a deliberate and strategically supported migration policy on behalf of the various governments (Tóth 2005, 320). The liberal migration policy of 1990–1993 was changed to adherence to two views between 1993 and 2010 that will be discussed below. On the one hand, adhering in principle to the nascent migration and refugee policy of the European Union. On the other hand, there was the consensual practice to make it as difficult as possible for foreign nationals of other than Hungarian ethnicity to enter the country, receive a residence permit, buy real estate, settle in the country or be naturalised (Nyíri 2016). This is amply demonstrated by a migration strategy draft compiled for the Gyurcsány government in January 2007 − which did not pass in parliament due to the opposition's refusal. This strategy on the one hand regarded immigration as part of its demographic policy and foresaw that "the number of foreigners could rise tenfold and their ratio could rise above 10% in the first half of the century" (Előterjesztés 2007, 3). It is also important to note that the migration strategy adopted by the Orbán government in 2013 and which is formally still in effect, states that "for national economic and demographic reasons it is important to encourage a wider range and number of migrants' arrival to the country who wish to enter with economic reasons, seeking work or bringing knowledge, but it is imperative that security considerations receive a high priority" (Migrációs Stratégia 2013, 31). While the 2007 draft was cautiously supportive of inviting and naturalising ethnic Hungarians from the neighbouring countries, the 2013 strategy was much more committed in this respect. Orbán's migration strategy primarily counts on legal migrants from the EU and ethnic Hungarians from the neighbouring countries. With respect to those arriving from elsewhere, a certain "regulated openness" is mentioned: it deems the reception of third-country migrants desirable − similar to other countries − who can contribute to the economy as investors, highly qualified professionals and those who could relieve skill shortages (Migrációs Stratégia 2013, 31).

As in many other European countries, the 2015 migration and refugee crisis brought the most significant change in the Hungarian government's migration policy. On the one hand, since the inception of the migration wave, the government has put migration as one of its top political and communications issues, thereby removing it from the expert policy level. On the other hand, on verbal level it exhibits a rigid refusal of even harbouring those refugees who arrive from outside of the Hungarian, and broadly speaking European cultural sphere. At the same time, it is also true that the Fidesz government accepted almost exactly as many refugees between 2010 and 2017 as did the leftist governments between 2002 and 2009 (KSH 2018). On the other hand, it still makes immigration possible even for those coming from outside the European cultural sphere through special means (e.g. settlement bonds). According to experts, the biggest risk of this policy is that the strict anti-migration rhetoric of the government will turn the Hungarian society rigidly anti-immigrant for a long time. This is even more so given the fact that − as we have previously indicated − in previous years ethnic Hungarians from the neighbouring countries are much less disposed to settle in Hungary.

5. Conclusion

According to most experts, the unfavourable demographic trends of the past almost three decades (decreasing population, ageing, emigration) could have only been handled, or could only be mitigated in the future through devising and implementing a complex and flexible demographic policy that encourages childbirth through family policy, supports health preservation and regards immigration an essential component. The consecutive Hungarian governments since 1990 were unable to devise such strategy and their demographic policies were largely restricted to the financial tools of family policy. The political and social opinion regarding migration has changed significantly as a result of the 2015 migration crisis and is thus highly doubtful whether in the coming years, the government will be able to elaborate and implement a strategy in line with experts' recommendations. For the time being it seems that even the current government − one that is quite sensitive to demographic issues − is looking at increased birth rates as the only solution. But, in the words of demographer Balázs Kapitány: "The Hungarian society quite simply does not have the goal internalized that the government has set out for itself" (Serdült 2018).

References

Bálint Lajos − Kovács Katalin (2015): Halandóság. In Monostori Judit − Őri Péter − Spéder Zsolt eds.: *Demográfiai portré 2015.* Budapest, KSH Népességtudományi Kutatóintézet.

Beke Károly (2018): Ebbe belerokkanhat Magyarország − Több százezres kivándorlási hullám fenyeget. *Portfolio.hu,* 27.07.2018. Source: www.portfolio.hu/gazdasag/ebbe-belerokkanhat-magyarorszag-tobb-szazezres-kivandorlasi-hullam-fenyeget.293014.html (Accessed: 15.12.2018.)

Blaskó Zsuzsa − Gödri Irén (2015): A Magyarországról kivándorlók társadalmi és demográfiai összetétele. In Blaskó Zsuzsa ed.: *Közelkép. Nemzetközi vándorlás.* Source: http://econ.core.hu/file/download/mt_2015_hun/kozelkep.pdf (Accessed: 15.11.2018.)

Bleha, Branislav − Šprocha, Branislav (2020): Trends in Demography and Migration in Slovakia − From One of the Most Progressive to One of the Most Decreasing. In Tálas, Péter − Etl, Alex eds.: *Demography and Migration in Central and Eastern Europe*. Budapest, Dialóg Campus.

Christián László (2017): „Rendőri helyzetjelentés a frontvonalról". A 2015-ös migrációs helyzet rendőri kezelése. In Tálas Péter ed.: *Magyarország és a 2015-ös európai migrációs válság.* Budapest, Dialóg Campus. 149–158.

Egészségjelentés 2016 (2017). Budapest, Nemzeti Egészségfejlesztési Intézet.

Előterjesztés (2007): *Előterjesztés a Kormány részére a Magyar Köztársaság migrációs stratégiájáról.* Source: http://nepesedes.hu/drupal/files/migracio.doc (Accessed: 10.12.2018.)

E-Volution (2017): *Brutális infografikán a magyar népességfogyás.* Digital Hungary. Source: www.digitalhungary.hu/e-volution/Brutalis-infografikan-a-magyar-nepessegfogyas/5273 (Accessed: 15.12.2018.)

Fábos Erika (2017): Több gyerek születik, mint az elmúlt évtizedben. *Világgazdaság,* 28.05.2017. Source: www.vg.hu/kozelet/tobb-gyerek-szuletik-mint-az-elmult-evtizedben-barmikor-528223 (Accessed: 18.11.2018.)

Farkas Melinda (2017a): Minden harmadik baba anyja diplomás. *Magyar Nemzet,* 03.01.2017. Source: https://mno.hu/belfold/minden-harmadik-baba-anyja-diplomas-1379202 (Accessed: 15.10.2018.)

Farkas Melinda (2017b): Most már nem sláger a magyar állampolgárság. *Magyar Nemzet,* 23.08.2017. Source: https://mno.hu/belfold/most-mar-nem-slager-a-magyar-allampolgarsag-2413744 (Accessed: 15.10.2018.)

Földházi Erzsébet (2015): A népesség szerkezete és jövője. In Monostori Judit – Őri Péter – Spéder Zsolt eds.: *Demográfiai portré 2015.* Budapest, KSH Népességtudományi Kutatóintézet.

Gödri Irén (2015): Nemzetközi vándorlás. In Monostori Judit – Őri Péter – Spéder Zsolt eds.: *Demográfiai portré 2015.* Budapest, KSH Népességtudományi Kutatóintézet.

Gödri Irén (2016): *Elvándorlási szándékok – álmok és konkrét tervek között. A migrációs potenciál jellemzői és meghatározó tényezői a 18–40 évesek körében Magyarországon.* (Kutatási Jelentések 98.) Budapest, KSH Népességtudományi Kutatóintézet.

Gödri Irén (2018): Nemzetközi vándorlás. In Monostori Judit – Őri Péter – Spéder Zsolt eds.: *Demográfiai portré 2018.* Budapest, KSH Népességtudományi Kutatóintézet.

Halmos Máté – Német Tamás (2014): Az 1991-es rekordot ostromoljuk. Index.hu, 10.12.2014. Source: https://index.hu/belfold/2014/12/10/menedekkerok_menekultek (Accessed: 15.10.2018.)

Horváth Bence (2017): Kettészakadt a magyar családpolitika: a tehetősebbekre öntik a pénzt, a szegényebbeket egyre inkább magukra hagyják. *444.hu,* 04.12.2017. Source: https://tldr.444.hu/2017/12/04/ketteszakadt-a-magyar-csaladpolitika-a-tehetosebbekre-ontik-a-penzt-a-szegenyebbeket-egyre-inkabb-magukra-hagyjak (Accessed: 20.10.2018.)

Juhász Attila – Molnár Csaba – Zgut Edit (2017): *Menekültügy és migráció Magyarországon.* Prága–Budapest, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Political Capital. Source: www.politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/documents/HUNGARY_BOOK_HU_BOOK_ONLINE.pdf (Accessed: 20.10.2018.)

Kapitány Balázs (2014): *Kihívások és megoldások: A rugalmas népesedéspolitika lehetőségei Magyarországon.* Source: www.nepesedesikerekasztal.hu/files/2014nov/Kapitany%20Balazs.pdf (Accessed: 20.10.2018.)

Kapitány Balázs – Spéder Zsolt (2017): Hitek, tévhitek és tények a népességcsökkenés megállításáról. In Jakab András – Urbán László eds.: *Hegymenet. Társadalmi és politikai kihívások Magyarországon.* Budapest, Osiris.

Kapitány Balázs – Spéder Zsolt (2018): Gyermekvállalás. In Monostori Judit – Őri Péter – Spéder Zsolt eds.: *Demográfiai portré 2018.* Budapest, KSH Népességtudományi Kutatóintézet.

KSH (2014): *Népszámlálási adatok 2011. 9. Nemzetiségi adatok.* Budapest, Központi Statisztikai Hivatal. Source: www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/nepsz2011/nepsz_09_2011.pdf (Accessed: 20.09.2018.)

KSH (2016): *A termékenységi folyamatok hazai jellemzői, 1970–2015.* Budapest, Központi Statisztikai Hivatal. Source: www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/pdf/termekenyseg15.pdf (Accessed: 20.09.2018.)

KSH (2018): *Táblák (STADAT), Idősoros éves adatok – Népesség, népességmozgalom.* Budapest, Központi Statisztikai Hivatal. Source: www.ksh.hu/stadat_eves_1 (Accessed: 10.12.2018.)

Lengyel Tibor (2017): Közel a beteljesüléshez Semjén Zsolt nagy vágya. Zoom.hu, 27.10.2017. Source: https://zoom.hu/hir/2017/10/27/kozel-a-beteljesuleshez-semjen-zsolt-nagy-vagya (Accessed: 20.09.2018.)

Migrációs Stratégia (2013): *Az 1698/2013. (X. 4.) Korm. határozattal elfogadott Migrációs Stratégia és az azon alapuló, az Európai Unió által a 2014–2020. ciklusban létrehozásra kerülő Menekültügyi és Migrációs Alaphoz kapcsolódó hétéves stratégiai tervdokumentum.* Source: http://belugyialapok.hu/alapok/sites/default/files/MMIA_.pdf (Accessed: 20.09.2018.)

Mikrocenzus 2016/10 (2018): *10. Nemzetközi vándorlás.* Budapest, KSH. Source: www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/mikrocenzus2016/mikrocenzus_2016_10.pdf (Accessed: 20.09.2018.)

Mikrocenzus 2016/2 (2017): *2. A népesség és a lakások jellemzői.* Budapest, KSH. Source: www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/mikrocenzus2016/mikrocenzus_2016_2.pdf (Accessed: 11.09.2018.)

Mikrocenzus 2016/3 (2017): *3. Demográfiai adatok.* Budapest, KSH. Source: www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/mikrocenzus2016/mikrocenzus_2016_3.pdf (Accessed: 11.09.2018.)

Mikrocenzus 2016/4 (2017): *4. Iskolázottsági adatok.* Budapest, KSH. Source: www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/mikrocenzus2016/mikrocenzus_2016_4.pdf (Accessed: 11.09.2018.)

Monostori Judit (2015): Öregedés és nyugdíjba vonulás. In Monostori Judit – Őri Péter – Spéder Zsolt eds.: *Demográfiai portré 2015.* Budapest, KSH Népességtudományi Kutatóintézet.

Murinkó Lívia – Spéder Zsolt (2015): Párkapcsolatok. In Monostori Judit – Őri Péter – Spéder Zsolt eds.: *Demográfiai portré 2015.* Budapest, KSH Népességtudományi Kutatóintézet.

Népesség-Előreszámítás (2015). Source: www.demografia.hu/hu/tudastar/nepesseg-eloreszamitas (Accessed: 11.09.2018.)

Nyíri Pál (2016): Az Orbán-rendszer és a bevándorlók. *Népszabadság,* 16.08.2016. Source: http://nol.hu/velemeny/az-orban-rendszer-es-a-bevandorlok-1627911 (Accessed: 19.09.2018.)

Obádovics Csilla (2018): A népesség szerkezete és jövője. In Monostori Judit – Őri Péter – Spéder Zsolt eds.: *Demográfiai portré 2018.* Budapest, KSH Népességtudományi Kutatóintézet.

Ónody-Molnár Dóra (2017): „A Fidesz lemond ezekről a rétegekről" – Szikra Dorottya szerint enyhíteni kell a nőkre nehezedő nyomást. *168ora.hu,* 11.06.2017. Source: http://168ora.hu/itthon/a-fidesz-lemond-ezekrol-a-retegekrol-szikra-dorottya-szerint-enyhiteni-kella-nokre-nehezedo-nyomast-4588 (Accessed: 19.09.2018.)

Pénzes János – Tátrai Patrik – Pásztor István Zoltán (2018): A roma népesség területi megoszlásának változása Magyarországon az elmúlt évtizedekben. *Területi Statisztika,* Vol. 58, No. 1. 3–26. DOI: https://doi.org/10.15196/TS580101

Piac és Profit (2018): *Hat évet öregedett a magyar társadalom.* Source: https://piacesprofit.hu/tarsadalom/hat-evet-oregedett-a-magyar-tarsadalom (Accessed: 19.09.2018.)

Publicus Intézet (2018): *Kivándorlás: továbbra is több mint egymillió fő menne.* Source: https://publicus.hu/blog/kivandorlas-tovabbra-is-tobb-mint-egymillio-fo-menne (Accessed: 19.09.2018.)

Rigó Anita (2017a): Ez az igazi baj: lassan kiürül fél Magyarország. *Portfolio.hu,* 11.05.2017. Source: www.portfolio.hu/gazdasag/ez-az-igazi-baj-lassan-kiurul-fel-magyarorszag.249963.html (Accessed: 29.09.2018.)

Rigó Anita (2017b): Ez az igazi baj 2.0: Magyarország északi része kiürül, a déli pedig kihal. *Portfolio.hu,*24.05.2017. Source: www.portfolio.hu/gazdasag/munkaugy/ez-az-igazi-baj-20-magyarorszag-eszaki-resze-kiurul-a-deli-pedig-kihal.251357.html (Accessed: 29.09.2018.)

Rigó Anita (2017c): Nemcsak a falvak ürülnek ki, hanem a legtöbb vidéki nagyvárosunk is. *Portfolio.hu,* 10.06.2017. Source: www.portfolio.hu/gazdasag/nemcsak-a-falvak-urulnek-ki-hanem-a-legtobb-videki-nagyvarosunk-is.252957.html (Accessed: 29.09.2018.)

Serdült Viktória (2018): Orbán kedvet csinálna a szüléshez, csak már nincs mivel. *Zoom.hu,* 20.04.2018. Source: https://zoom.hu/hir/2018/04/20/orban-kedvet-csinalna-a-szuleshez-csak-mar-nincs-mivel (Accessed: 29.09.2018.)

Statisztikai Tükör (2014): *A népesedési folyamatok társadalmi különbségei.* 2014/126, KSH.

Statisztikai Tükör (2015): *A hazai nemzetiségek demográfiai jellemzői.* 2015/83, KSH.

Statisztikai Tükör (2018): *Népmozgalom.* 2017, KSH.

Szémann Tamás (2017): Így alakult az iskolázottságunk az elmúlt száz évben. Index.hu, 15.12.2017. Source: https://index.hu/chart/2017/12/15/iskolazottsag (Accessed: 29.09.2018.)

Szilas István (2015a): Sikeres-e a magyar családpolitika? (1) *Pénzügyi Szemle,* 05.05.2015. Source: www.penzugyiszemle.hu/vitaforum/sikeres-e-a-magyar-csaladpolitika-1 (Accessed: 29.09.2018.)

Szilas István (2015b): Sikeres-e a magyar családpolitika? (2) *Pénzügyi Szemle,* 12.05.2015. Source: www.penzugyiszemle.hu/vitaforum/sikeres-e-a-magyar-csaladpolitika-2 (Accessed: 26.09.2018.)

Szilas István (2015c): Sikeres-e a magyar családpolitika? (3) *Pénzügyi Szemle,* 19.05.2015. Source: www.penzugyiszemle.hu/vitaforum/sikeres-e-a-magyar-csaladpolitika-3 (Accessed: 26.09.2018.)

Todor, Cătălina (2020): The Demographic Country Profile of Romania after 1989 Challenges and Perspectives for Policy Makers. In Tálas, Péter − Etl, Alex eds.: *Demography and Migration in Central and Eastern Europe*. Budapest, Dialóg Campus.

Tóth Pál Péter (2005): Nemzetközi vándorlás és migrációpolitika. *Kisebbségkutatás,* Vol. 14, No. 3. 320–329. Source: http://epa.oszk.hu/00400/00462/00027/pdf/01tan01.pdf (Accessed: 26.09.2018.)

Új Magyar Állampolgárok (2017): *Változások az egyszerűsített honosítás eljárás bevezetése után.* Budapest, KSH. Source: www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/pdf/ujmagyarallampolgarok.pdf (Accessed: 26.09.2018.)

Vaskor Máté (2018): Megjelent húszezer ázsiai Magyarországon. *24.hu,* 16.01.2018. Source: https://24.hu/kozelet/2018/01/16/megjelent-huszezer-azsiai-magyarorszagon (Accessed: 26.09.2018.)

WPP (2017): *World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision, Key Findings and Advance Tables.* United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Population Division. Source: https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/publications/files/wpp2017_keyfindings.pdf (Accessed: 19.09.2018.)