

Ukrainian citizens in Hungary: national cohesion and economic constraint

Introduction

In 2003, Hungary, as part of the accession process to the European Union (EU), imposed a visa regime on the citizens of Ukraine and since our accession to the Schengen area (2008) our country has been subject to the EU visa and immigration policy. All this, in principle, is to protect the Hungarian citizens – who at the same time are EU citizens. It is important to ask whether, in a domestic context, we could actually speak about “An impending migration wave from the east”. On the other hand, it should be considered how far the EU-CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) border behaves as a barrier (NEMES-NAGY 1998, 2009), i.e. how far it is an obstacle to the migration relations between the two areas. The third important issue is how the migration between the two countries relates to the changes in Transcarpathia’s demographic-ethnic situation, however, this is partly beyond the scope of this study.

A number of Hungarian language publications (MOLNÁR 2005, MOLNÁR-MOLNÁR 2004 és 2005, FODOR 2003, 2004, 2005, KOCSIS et al. 2006, KÉSZ 2008) were produced on Transcarpathia’s migration-demographic processes, but only a few publications (MOLNÁR-MOLNÁR 2003) had a Ukraine-wide focus highlighting complex relationships. While MOLNÁR’S, FODOR’S and KOCSIS’S works were descriptive statistical in nature and highlighting the processes behind the data, KÉSZ used a questionnaire survey to highlight the underlying reasons behind the migration processes. Of these studies MOLNÁR-MOLNÁR’S (2005) study is the longest and the most detailed, this highlights Transcarpathia’s demographic situation based on the data of the census of 2001 as well as this is the first that provides settlement level data on the region (MOLNÁR-MOLNÁR 2003). In the international literature there are a number of descriptive, quantitative (KHOMRA 1989, SHAMSHUR 1998, ROWLAND 2000, ROWLAND 2004) and qualitative (POPSON-RUBLE 2000, HORMEL-SOUTHWORTH 2006) studies on the migration processes of Ukraine. In general, inward international migration was studied by a number of people (to mention a few: HABLICSEK 2004, HALMI ET AL. 2006, RÉDEI-KINCSES 2008, ILLÉS 2009). Our quantitative study is mainly to focus on the migration from the Ukraine to Hungary, because the eastward migration is of little significance in Hungary. Based on these data we try to identify the latest tendencies of these migration processes in the second part of the first decade of the XXI century.

In our country – after the Romanians – the Ukrainians are the second most important foreign citizen group (HALMI ET AL. 2006). In this study foreign citizens are those Hungary based people who have a residence, an immigration or a settlement permit as of 1 January of the reference year. This study is based on Hungarian (HCSO) and Ukrainian (*Derzskomsztat*) statistics sources. HCSO statistics are based on the database of the Office of Immigration and Nationality.

¹ Geographer PhD, young researcher, Geographical Research Institute Hungarian Academy of Sciences
karacsonyidavid@gmail.com

² Hungarian Central Statistical Office, public officer, e-mail: aron.kincses@ksh.hu

Connection between international migration and border regions

International migration is an extended absence from the country of the original place of residence to reside in another country with the purpose of studying, (RÉDEI 2007), settling down, doing an income generating activity (ILLÉS 2008), better exploiting the purchasing power of pensions as well as looking for a more favourable climate (ILLÉS 2008). International migrants, based on the relevant exogenous and endogenous as well as push and pull factors, choose where to live (RÉDEI 2005). Migrants play an active role in the rapid transformation of the global demographic and economic structures so international migration flows show several global economic poles and demographic spaces (MASSEY 2004). Metropolitan core areas, which show cultural-ethnic diversity and have a large range of employment opportunities, are primary target areas for migration. The location of the target area, in addition to regional income disparities (HATTON–WILLIAMSON 2005) plays a determining role in the spatial distribution of the migrants. Neighbouring – in this case peripheral – areas, in addition to economic core areas, play an important role in choosing a new place to live that is the propensity to migrate is linearly related to the economic disparities and inversely related to the distance, be it topographic or cultural distance (KOVÁCS 2002).

Traditionally, border regions, as a result of customs borders and the potential military threat, were regarded as disadvantaged ones by the location theory (ANDERSON, O'DOWD 1999). As a result of increasing transaction costs national borders exerted a negative influence on the economy of these regions, not to mention that the given national market had a lower potential purchasing parity in the outlying areas. The arising taxes and customs duties, the different languages and cultures hampered the cross-border trade reducing the demand to locate domestic or foreign producers in these regions (HANSEN 1977). This unfavourable picture changed in the age of globalizing (trans-national) market processes and large international economic integrations, agreements (e.g. WTO). Border regions increasingly become active contact areas (NIJKAMP 1998; VAN GEENHUIZEN, RATTI 2001). These active contact areas near to the border – following Budapest and Pest County – are significant source and destination areas for the international migration from the Ukraine to Hungary.

Migration processes in Hungary and in Central Europe

All Central European countries, due to the regime changes and the rapprochement to the west (EU), became host countries by the second part of the 1990s. The new EU member states of Central Europe (Visegrad countries), as a result of their geopolitical situation, play only a marginal, intermediary, role in the intercontinental migration, most of the migrants are from neighbouring countries and regions. Most of those from the European CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States – Ukraine, Belarus, Russia) arrive in Poland, but the Czech Republic also accounts for a large number of Ukrainian citizens (MOLNÁR 2005) In Hungary, the sending countries of Romania, Ukraine and Serbia account for the largest proportion of foreign employees, but around 10% of these – mainly Germans and Austrians – are migrants from the old EU member states. In Hungary, migrants from the countries of the Carpathian Basin, who surpass migrants from outside the Carpathian Basin in how their number increases, account for a dominant proportion. This is in connection with cross-border

ethnic, linguistic and cultural connections. Of migrants from a more distant sending country, the Vietnamese had a larger number in the Czech Republic and Poland, while Hungary had the largest Chinese Diaspora in the region (OECD 2009). The decline in the level of school attainment of migrants is not typical of the Visegrad Countries so international migration may generate more advantages here than in the large host countries.

Since the 1990s Hungary has had a positive balance of international migration along with an ongoing decrease in the number of the resident population since the 1970s. An estimated natural decrease of 30-40 thousand people is offset by a positive balance of migration of 10-20 thousand people so in the foreseeable future only the options of international migration may mitigate the decrease in population (HABLICSEK 2004). In the seven years from the turn of the millennium foreigners showed a 61% increase in number in Hungary (HCSO 2007). International migration positively influences the change in population, the economic activity, the age structure and the proportion of taxpayers.

Active age people account for a much higher proportion of the Hungary based foreigners and more specifically Ukrainian citizens than in case of the Hungarian population. In case of the Ukrainian citizens especially those aged 20-29 years account for a high proportion, which results from the fact that many of them came to Hungary to study. As a result of the high proportion of working age people the proportion of tax payers is higher as well.

As of 1 January 2007 there were 174 697 foreign citizens in Hungary (1.74% of the population), one-tenth of them were Ukrainian citizens. On 1 January 2008 there were 17289 Ukrainian citizens in Hungary, furthermore since 1993 10 299 people were granted Hungarian citizenship (overwhelming part of them were ethnic Hungarians). As a whole, over 15 years nearly 30 thousand Ukrainian citizens moved to Hungary according to the official statistics, which exerted a positive influence on the demography of our country and a highly detrimental one on that of the Transcarpathian ethnic Hungarians. This 30 thousand people correspond to around one year of natural decrease in population in Hungary.

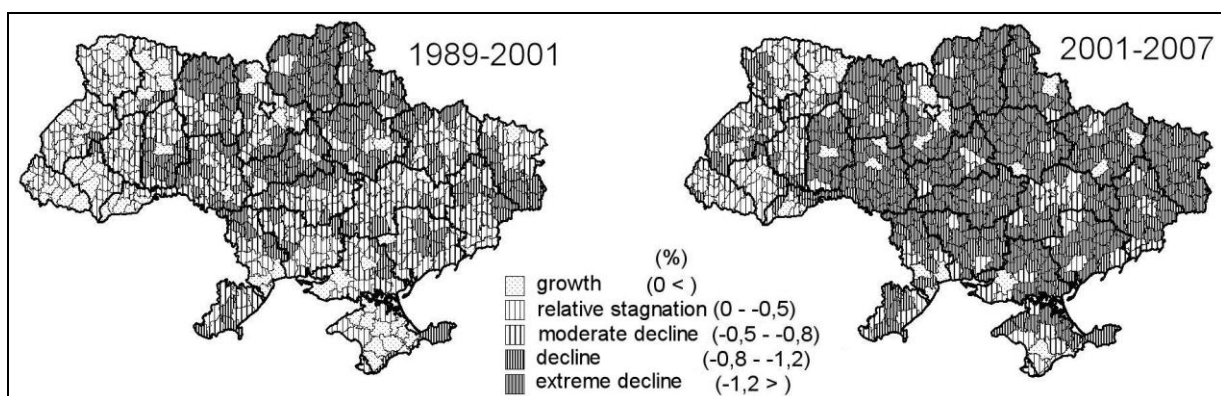
Migration conditions in Ukraine and Transcarpathia

To completely understand the migration processes between the two countries Ukraine's migration-demographic conditions should be known. Nearly the total area of Ukraine loses population, because the country has been in a deep demographic crisis since it became independent. The population showed a decrease of around 7.5%, i.e. 3.8 million people between the latest two censuses (1989-2001). A total of 1 million people – mainly returning Russians and residents of other former member republics, Jewish and Polish people (MOLNÁR 2005; MOLNÁR-MOLNÁR 2003) – left the country, while the population loss accounted for the remaining 3 million people, i.e. emigration accounts for only one-fourth of the decrease in the number of population. Since 1991 the increased mortality has continued to outnumber the number of births (MOLNÁR-MOLNÁR 2003). Since 2001, as a result of an economic boom after the turn of the millennium and the child allowances, the number of births has showed again an increase and even the migration balance has become positive

in the last years, in spite of this, due to the high mortality rate, the population number of the country continued to decrease.

The individual regions lost population at different rates and showed marked differences in case of urban and rural areas. The north eastern areas of Ukraine showed the most drastic decrease in population between 1989 and 2001 (Figure 1). In the west where the larger towns (Ternopil, Khmelnytskyi, Rivne, Lutsk, Uzhhorod) increased in population, the rural areas showed a more moderate decrease in population while the rural areas in the area of the Carpathian Mountains (Transcarpathia, Bukovina, Hutsul Country) and Northern Volhynia showed even a natural increase in population. From this point of view Ukraine's western regions are unique inside the country because of their positive or relatively positive demographic factors. If we take into account the age structure of the population, the dependency ratio (the elderly and the young / working age people) or the aging index (the elderly / the young) Transcarpathia has the most favourable conditions in terms of demographics. Kész – without a Ukraine wide regional comparison – underlines the aging of Transcarpathia's population. Based on the data of the 2001 census Transcarpathia even shows a relatively young population profile inside Ukraine.

Figure 1 Annual change in the number of population in the rajons of Ukraine, based on Derzskomsztat data, edited by Dávid Karácsonyi.



In the period since the latest census (2001) there has been an even sharper decrease in population. A significant population loss in the area of Poleszje spread to the significant part of the country and even the slight and sporadic increase in population in the western area of the country that was seen in the 1990s phased into a moderate decrease in population. In 2004 only Eastern Transcarpathia, some rajons in Bukovina and Northern Volhynia showed a natural increase in population. In Transcarpathia, east to the Vynohradiv-Mizhhirya line in the so called Hutsul Country as well as in the Maramarosh Basin the major part of the settlements, where there was an ongoing natural increase in population, showed an increase in population between 1989 and 2001 (MOLNÁR-MOLNÁR 2003; KOCSIS et al. 2006). In the Hungarian majority border district of Berehovo the major part of the settlements decreased in population (MOLNÁR-MOLNÁR 2003; KOCSIS et al. 2006). However, the most significant population loss was seen in the northern, mountainous areas of Transcarpathia (Boiky and Lemky Countries), where certain settlements decreased by 10 per cent in population between the last two censuses (MOLNÁR-MOLNÁR 2003; KOCSIS et al. 2006).

Migration plays a significant – although nationally ever decreasing – role in how the number of population changes. The metropolitan agglomerations (Uzhhorod, Lviv) and this way the population growth of the most dynamically increasing Kiev Agglomeration is derived from internal migration alone (WORLD BANK 2005), because these areas lose population. Based on what proportion of the change in total population derives from internal and international migration as well as from the absolute values of the natural increase in population Transcarpathia was the most affected county by migration between 2003 and 2005. In Transcarpathia international migration plays an especially important role in how the number of population changes, it is only partly resulting from the higher migration rate of the Hungarian population and mainly from the traditional Ruthenian majority sending areas of Eastern Transcarpathia.

In the western part of Transcarpathia Uzhhorod and Mukachevo showed the most intensive migration between 2003 and 2005, where the intra-Transcarpathia – inter-rajon – migration was of the highest significance. Only these two districts showed a positive migration balance, where the significant net out-migration to other regions as well as to other countries was offset by immigration from Transcarpathia's other districts. In the Uzhhorod district natural decrease in population was also offset by large scale immigration, a total of over 3 thousand immigrants arrived in the villages surrounding the town between 1989 and 2001 (MOLNÁR-MOLNÁR 2003). In the Great Plain based Hungarian majority border areas, the international migration (to Hungary) and the intra-Transcarpathian migration played a major role. In spite of this intra-regional migration was the least significant as well as international migration mainly to Germany, the USA and the Czech Republic was the most significant in the eastern areas of Transcarpathia in the districts of Tiachiv, Khust, Rakhiv and Mizhhyra (MOLNÁR 2005). This area showed the most negative balance of migration i.e. the overwhelming majority of the out-migrating population settled down in one of the other regions of the country or abroad. The northern districts of Vel. Berezhny, Volovets and Perechyn showed the least significant migration processes.

The spatial characteristics of the migration from the Ukraine to Hungary

Ukrainian citizens living in Hungary may be classified to three groups according to their original (Ukraine based) place of residence.

The first group is from the border area districts of Berehovo, Mukachevo, Vynohradiv and Uzhhorod. This area is the Transcarpathian Plain, the continuation of the Great Hungarian Plain, which is the major sending area for the migration to Hungary. Ethnic Hungarians show the highest number and proportion here in Ukraine, (MOLNÁR-MOLNÁR 2005, FODOR 2005, KOCSIS et al. 2006) as well as the major part of the Ukrainian Hungarians live in this area. These four districts account for around 74%, while Transcarpathia for around 90% of the migrants coming to Hungary. According to Kész (2008) this value is only 55%, but he used the “persons settled down in Hungary” term. In spite of the fact that the number of Ukrainian citizens living in Hungary showed a double increase between 2001 and 2008, no change was seen in these proportions, only a slight concentration was recorded on behalf of Transcarpathia. Between 2001 and 2008 the proportion of the major traditional sending settlements, i.e. the towns (FODOR 2005) – Berehovo, Uzhhorod, Mukachevo – decreased as a result of the fact that a number of villages – Vel. Dobron, Koson,

Dercen, Vari – became a significant sending settlement (Figure 2). Mainly Vynohradiv and some settlements of the Vynohradiv district – Vilok, Salank, in the small area between the River Tisza and the Romanian border: Tsepe, Tserna – showed a sharp increase in the number of those migrating to Hungary. These settlements played a major role in the double increase in the number of those residing in Hungary between 2001 and 2008. We are of the opinion that KÉSZ's finding, according to which the migration from the Ukraine to Hungary has showed a decrease or a fall in volume since 2000, needs further investigation. However, it is true that a lower rate of annualized increase was seen in the number of Ukrainian citizens living in Hungary in the 2000s as a result of the fact that the comparison was based on an originally higher basis.

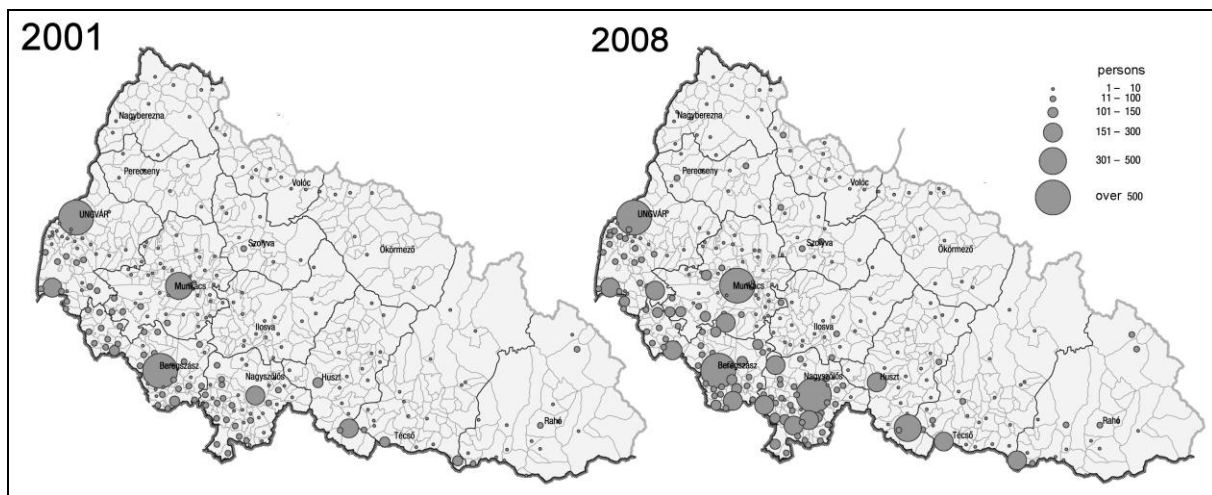


Figure 2: Transcarpathian Ukrainian citizens living in Hungary by sending settlements

Edited by Dávid Karácsonyi and Áron Kincses based on OIN data Cartography: Zsolt Bottlik, HAS GRI

The members of the second group are from Transcarpathia's mountainous areas, the Ruthenian majority Lemky – Vel. Berezhny and Perechyn districts – and Boyky – Svaliava, Volovets, Ilosva and Mizhhyra districts – countries, furthermore from the Hutsul Country which shows a high population increase – Rakhiv district – and from the Maramarosh Basin – from the Khust and Tiachiv districts. Mainly those towns at the Upper Tisa River which have a large Hungarian minority and are in Máramaros – Khust, Vishkovo, Tiachiv, Solotvino – showed an increase in migration to Hungary but more and more migrants from small Ruthenian majority villages in the mountains arrive in Hungary as well. However, their number is not significant, and the rate of increase in their number between 2001 and 2008 was below average. Only the major settlements of Svaliava, Rakhiv as well as Chorna Tisa accounted for more than ten people.

The third group is from the inner areas of Ukraine, lying beyond the Carpathian Mountains, mainly from the metropolitan areas of Kyiv, Donetsk and Lviv. The number of migrants coming from this area was over one hundred per town in 2008. In addition to this the major county seats – Cherkasy, Kharkiv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Odesa – and major manufacturing towns – Alchevsk, Mariupol – play a major role. The small

significance of these migrants is shown by the fact that none of the inner settlements or million cities of Ukraine sent as many as people as Uzhhorod or e.g. Chop.

Budapest, Nyíregyháza, Debrecen, Kisvárd and Miskolc are the major destinations among the settlements of Hungary; of the counties Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Pest and Hajdú-Bihar, where more than 77% of these migrants live. Those coming from Ukraine mainly prefer the agglomeration of the capital and the areas along the Ukrainian border. Ukrainian citizens also show a high concentration by place of abode. As for their regional distribution, by 2008, they were present in all settlements along the Ukrainian border and in the most settlements of the agglomeration of the capital. However they mainly increased in number in the larger host settlements. That is why the Ukrainian citizens, in spite of an increasing regional spread, showed an increase in concentration in Hungary between 2001 and 2008, as a result of an increase in the number of those migrants living in major towns and a proportional decrease in that of those living in villages – mainly in areas along the Ukrainian border. The weight point of the Ukrainian citizens living in our country showed a significant westward shift, which shows an ongoing up valuation in the capital city region as well as a decrease in significance in the areas along the border (RÉDEI-KINCSES 2008).

Regarding the areas of settlement, three distinct groups can be identified in Hungary too: the counties near to the Ukrainian border (Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Hajdú-Bihar, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg), the core area of migration (Budapest and Pest County), and the other counties (Figure 3). Between the two countries, in 2008, migration from the Hungarian majority Transcarpathian Plain to Central Hungary played a major role with a flow of 6 172 people accounting for 39% of all migrants, i.e. the migration showed a strong regional concentration. The Ukrainian citizens, irrespective of their original place of residence, mainly prefer Central Hungary, it is underlined by the fact that Central Hungary accounts for around the half of those coming from the different areas of Ukraine. In those Hungarian counties that are near to the border those coming from the other side of the border from the Transcarpathian Plain account for the largest proportion. However, these areas near to the border are less attractive for those coming from the mountainous areas of Transcarpathia. Those coming from other areas of Ukraine, as they are mainly from great cities, do not prefer the border areas and more than one third of them may not be connected to neither the regions near to the border nor to the central region that is why they show the most scattered – most random – spatial distribution out of these three groups. As a whole, the most intensive movement is generated by those coming from the Transcarpathian Plain outnumbering those from the mountainous areas of Transcarpathia and from the inner areas of Ukraine.

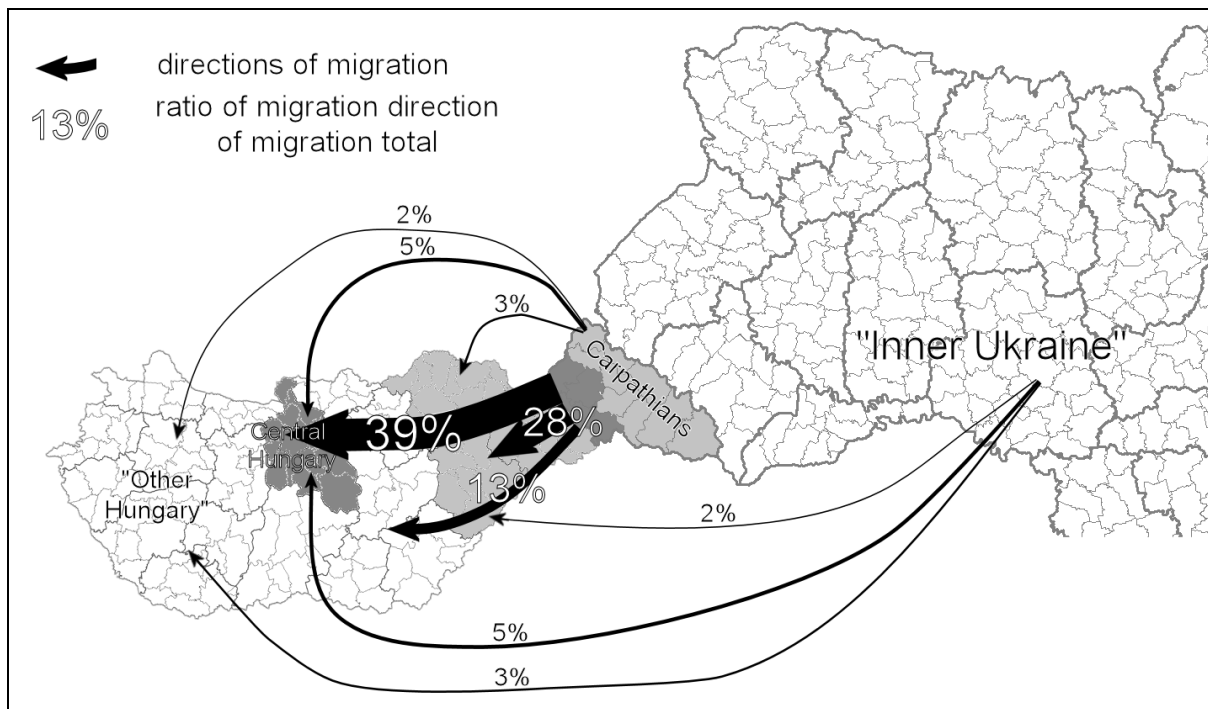


Figure 3 Main directions of the migration from the Ukraine to Hungary, 2008
 Edited by: Dávid Karácsonyi based on OIN data

Social characteristics of migrants from Ukraine

Ukrainian citizens living in Hungary, in terms of their distribution by age group, show a significantly different regional picture for both the sending and the host side. Working age people account for the highest proportion of Ukrainian citizens living in Central Hungary and for the lowest proportion of those living in border areas, because the lack of job opportunities makes the border region less attractive for this age group.

Those aged 19-24 years old and came mainly from Transcarpathia's lowland areas account for a higher proportion in areas near to the border and in Central Hungary. This group mainly pursues higher studies in Hungary. Students, by their places of residence, account for the highest proportion in the counties near to the border and in Central Hungary as well as nearly one fifth of those from the Transcarpathian plain and aged over 18 are students. Nearly one fifth of Ukrainian citizens living in Hungary arrived to study. According to KÉSZ's estimate (2008) nearly three quarters of those Ukrainian citizens who settled down in the North Hungary region are higher education graduates or undergraduates. However, this share seems to be irrational if we take into account both the age distribution of those residents who came from Ukraine (10% of those aged 19-24 years) and the proportion of higher education graduates (20-25%).

School attainment shows a stronger correlation with the original place of residence in Ukraine than with the present one. Among those from the inner areas of Ukraine – who mainly live in Budapest – university and college graduates account for the highest proportion, which results from the higher rate of urbanization of these groups.

However, FODOR (2004) emphasizes the fact that in Transcarpathia the Hungarians account for a lower proportion of university and college graduates compared with the Ukrainians. Together with this, in case of migrants from Ukraine secondary school and higher education graduates account for a higher proportion than in case of the Hungarian resident population aged over 18 years. According to FODOR (2005) out of Transcarpathian Hungarians mainly higher education graduates, i.e. higher status individuals (engineers, physicians, lawyers) moving to the mother country. However, those with primary education accounted for more than one-fifth of those migrants who arrived in Central Hungary from Transcarpathia's lowland areas. Taking into account the distribution of those came from Ukraine their number is at least as high as that of migrants with higher education. In Central Hungary slightly more than one-third of the Ukrainian citizens work in unskilled (manual) jobs as well as in the manufacturing and construction sections.

Concerning occupations, in the Ukrainian group as a whole, manual – manufacturing, construction workers, unskilled workers, machine operators, vehicle drivers – jobs account for the highest proportion. This category accounts for one-fourth of residents with Ukrainian citizenship. Intellectuals – in jobs that need higher education, office workers, lawyers, other service activities – have the second highest proportion (23%). However, in border areas, intellectuals account for the highest proportion of Ukrainian citizens in employment. Other service activities as well as agricultural and forestry jobs have the lowest proportion.

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