

# SEMIGRA

## Case Study Report North-Hungary

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# 1. Regional Statistical Analysis

## 1.1 Case study region with regard to the European context

Észak-Magyarország (North Hungary) is the fourth largest region with one of the highest population density in the country. Out of 605 settlements 39 are towns comprising approximately half of the regional residents. The population potential of the region is satisfied, but the economic potential has proved to be inadequate. Among the Hungarian regions the most disadvantaged region is North Hungary with 15% unemployment rate. Compared to EU data the unemployment rate is higher; among the 15-64 year old population the average rate is more than 10 percent.

With regard to differing ESPON typologies it has already be mentioned that the North Hungarian region is placed in type 4 – population decrease in combination with negative natural population change and also negative net migration in the ESPON 1.1.4 Demographic Typology regarding regional sustainable population development. These tendencies – especially of young people's out migration results in an eroding reproduction potential that indicates low population sustainability in short but especially long term.

With regard to the EDORA Structural Typology the North Hungarian region is localized in the category "Consumption Countryside", which means the region has a small agrarian sector and large public service sector.

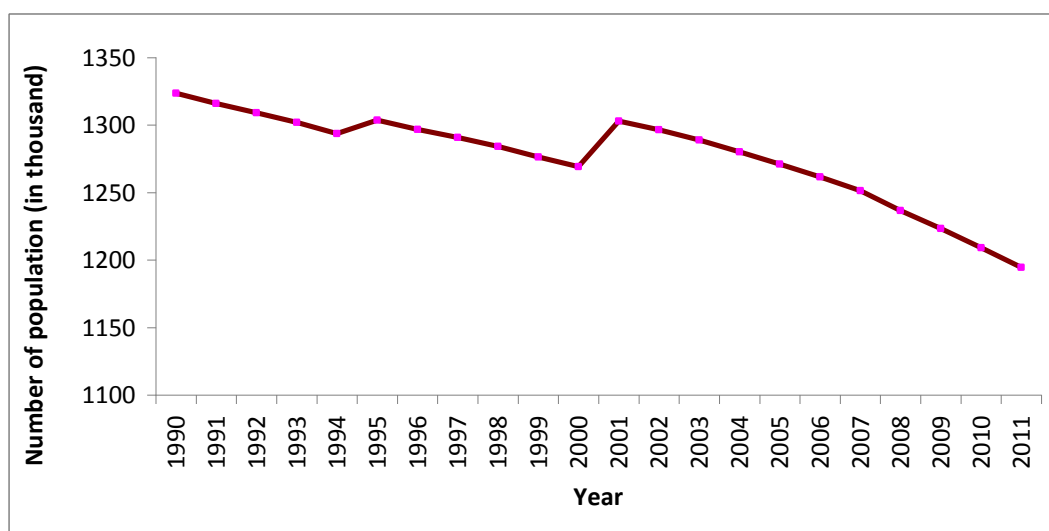
In the DEMIFER Typology our region is placed in type "Challenge of Decline". From a demographic point of view this type is affected by a population decrease as a consequence of both out-migration and natural population decrease that also has resulted in important and accentuated population ageing.

## 1.2 National Context and inner regional differences

**Demographic development:** The region has faced severe economic and social challenges since the transition to market economy. In spite of its natural and environmental potentials, the performance of the region is very poor both in terms of economic and social progresses. Currently real struggle has been fought for economic competitiveness and for a better quality of life.

Demographic development can be characterised by the number of population. The decline in the number of population was only interrupted twice in the past twenty years. Firstly it happened in 1995, when the number of population slightly increased by 0.8 percent. The second

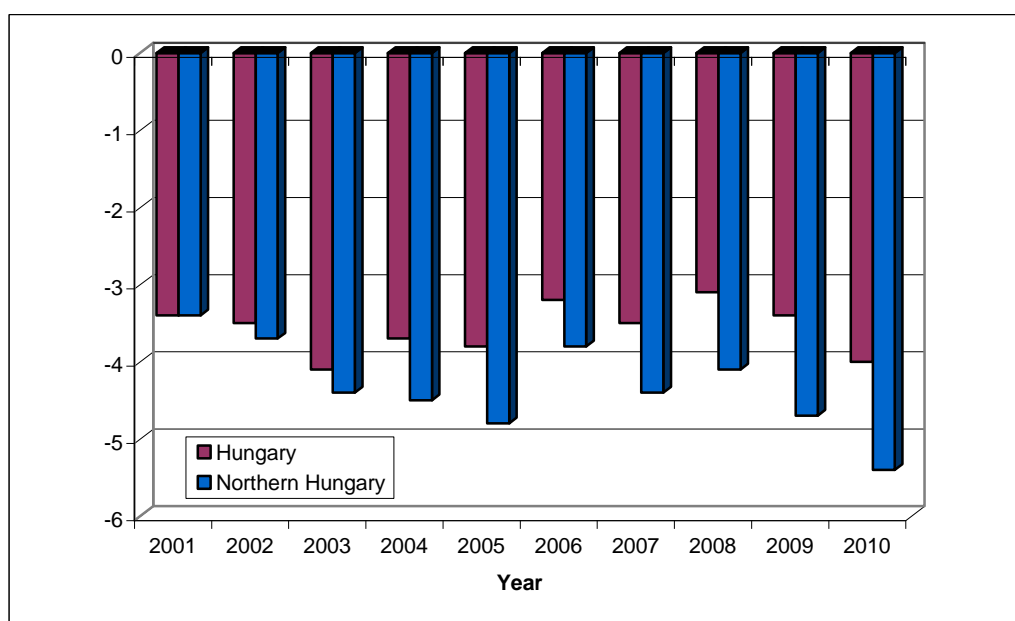
increase was in 2001, when the Hungarian Statistical Office corrected the applied methodology of estimations after the 2001 census.



**Figure 1: Population of Northern Hungary (1990 – 2011)**

Source: own compilation based on data from [www.ksh.hu](http://www.ksh.hu) and [www.registar.hu](http://www.registar.hu)

Besides looking at the total number and the changes of the population, its composition is also worth examining. Population changes can have two sources: vital events and migration. Vital events include birth and death and natural increase or decrease expresses the sum of these two factors. The next figure shows the natural increase and decrease per thousand inhabitants for Hungary and Northern Hungary.



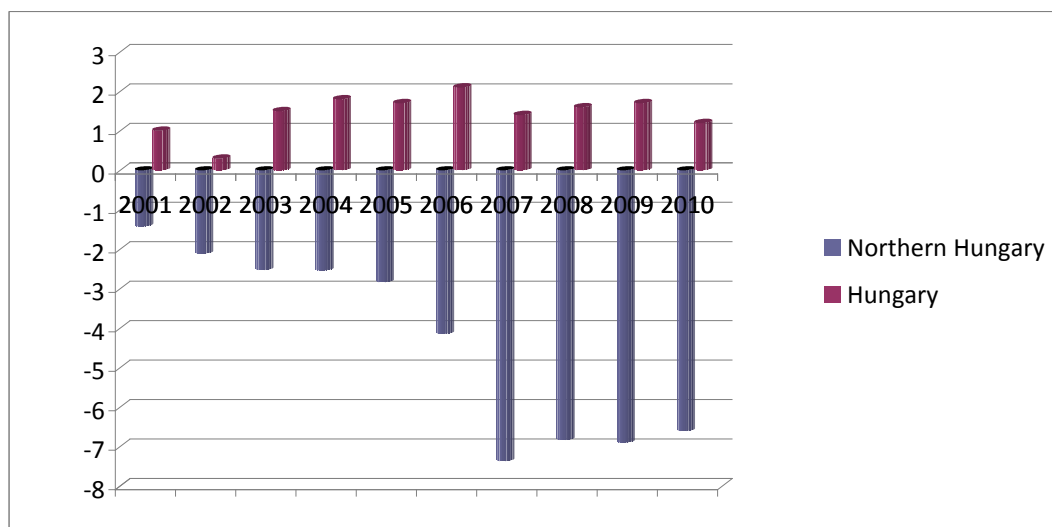
**Figure 2: Natural increase (+) and decrease (-) per thousand inhabitants (2001-2008)**

Source: own compilation based on data from [www.ksh.hu](http://www.ksh.hu)

In the examined period the balance was always negative regarding the analyzed territories, but in Northern Hungary, the natural decrease was always higher. Even if the live birth for thousand inhabitants is higher in the region than the national average, deaths per thousand inhabitants is also higher.

It is notable that one of the highest fertility rate indicators can be found in Northern Hungary. This is due to the fact that fertility rate is extremely high among women younger than 14 (which is three times higher than the national average) and women between 15 and 19 years (twice as high as the national average) (Darók 2006), while the fertility rate of those above 25 is lower than in Hungary (Tóth Szita – Buday-Malik 2006). This leads to the unfavourable fact that young mother get out of the education system, do not get any qualification and thus cannot reach the living standard necessary to satisfy the minimum needs. Early founding of family can be a reason for poverty and deprivation.

Changes in the number of the population can be caused also by migration. The next figure shows the net migration per thousand inhabitants. In the case of Northern Hungary, this measure is the sum of internal and international net migration, while in national level this is equal to the international net migration. While net migration in Hungary has been positive, in the case of Northern Hungary it has always been negative. A considerable increase in net migration can be seen for the examined period. Even if the international net migration has been positive in the region between 2001 and 2010, it has been counterbalanced by the negative national net migration.

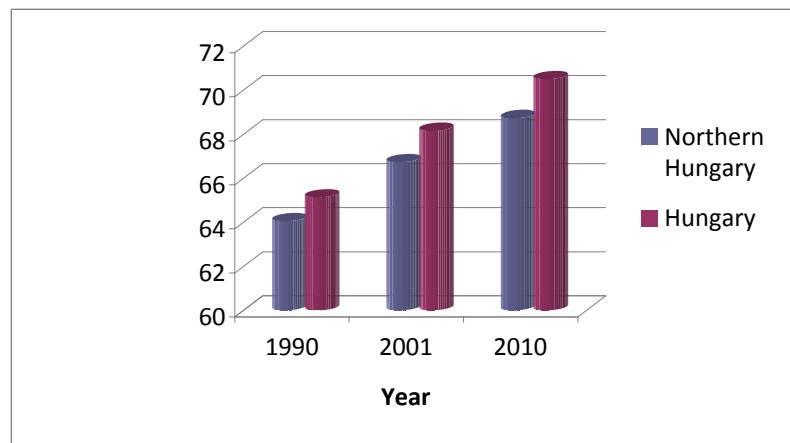


**Figure 3: Net migration per thousand inhabitants (2001-2010)**

*Source: own compilation based on data from [www.ksh.hu](http://www.ksh.hu)*



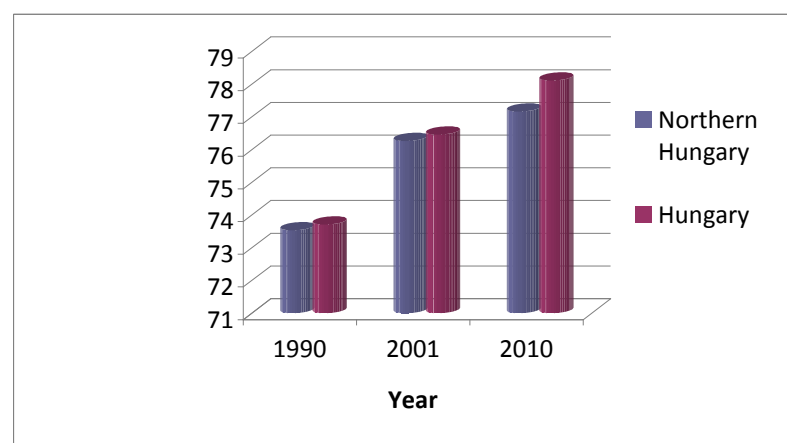
Not only population data, but also average life expectancy is an important social indicator of regional performance.



**Figure 4: Average life expectancy for men (1990, 2001, 2010)**

Source: own compilation based on data from [www.ksh.hu](http://www.ksh.hu)

The average life expectancy is shown for men and women in the two figures. This value is much lower for men than for women, which is a problem throughout the country. In case of Northern Hungary, however, all values are lower than the national average. The difference between regional and national data is more significant in the case of men.

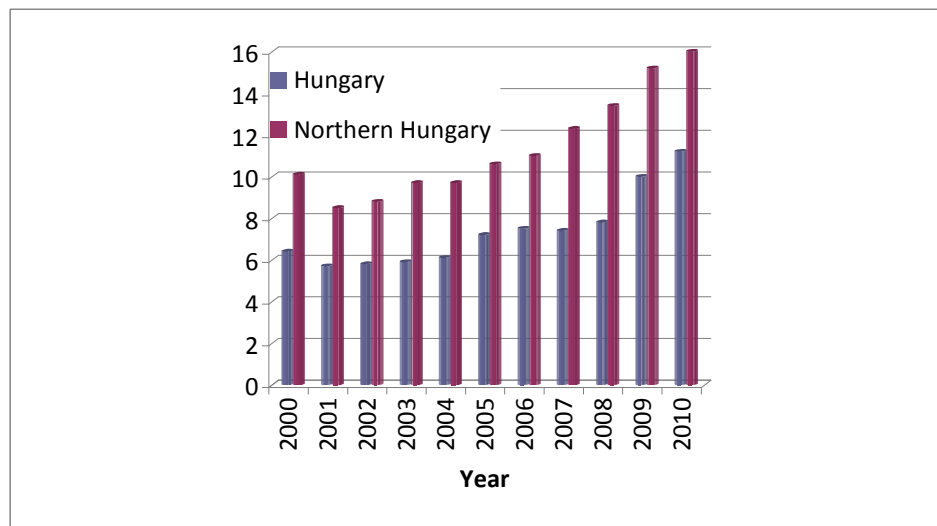


**Figure 5: Average life expectancy for women (1990, 2001, 2010)**

Source: own compilation based on data from [www.ksh.hu](http://www.ksh.hu)

Besides demographic data, labour market position of the region, its option for future development paths is also an interesting question. The unemployment rate can be a measure of regional performance (see next

figure). The trend of the rate is the same in the region as at national level, but it is always higher than the national average for Northern Hungary. It has been increasing since 2001 and for four years it has been over 10 percent, while the national average has been below 8 percent.

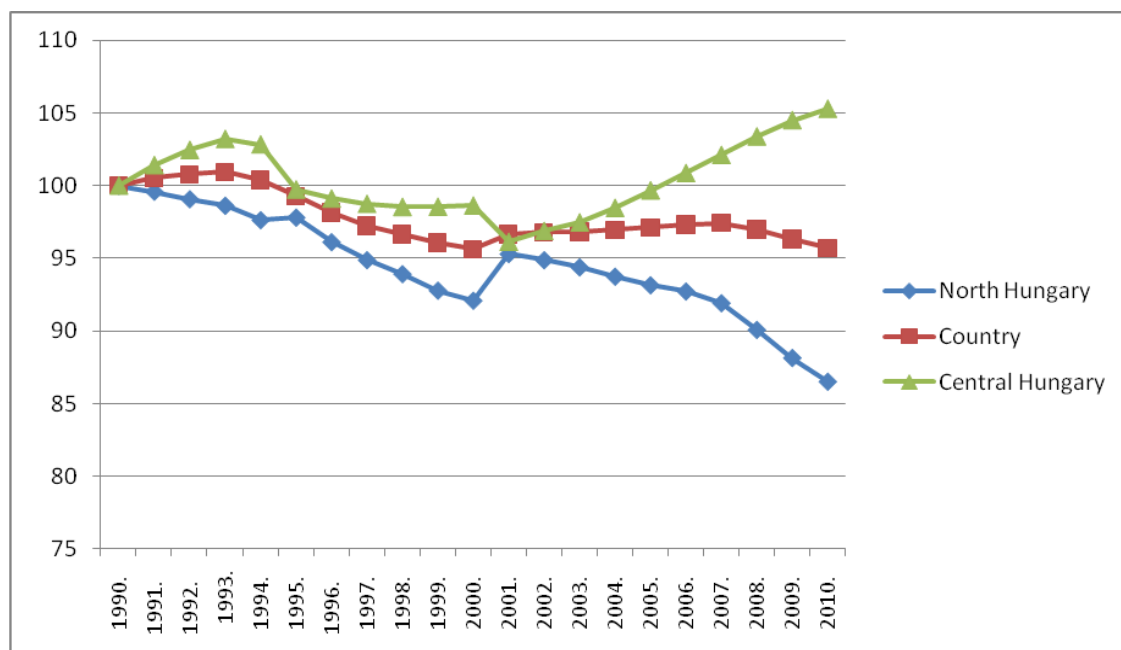


**Figure 6: Unemployment rate (2000-2010)**

*Source: own compilation based on data from [www.ksh.hu](http://www.ksh.hu)*

**Women in the Northern Hungarian region:** In 2001 during the national census there were 1 302 835 people living in the North Hungarian region, of which 682 936 women and 619 899 men. According to the Hungarian statistical office by 2010 the region's population decreased by 100 thousand people to 1 109 142, the gender ratio did not change significantly. Compared to the 1990 base year the region's population was decreased to 91% which is the largest population decline in the country.

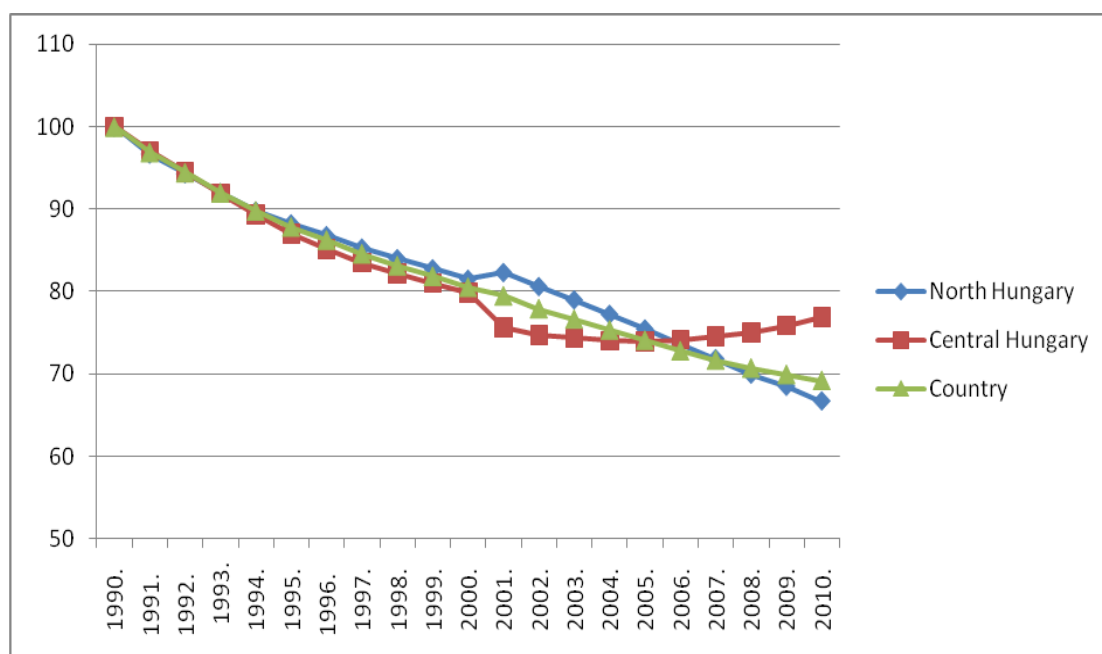
Compared to the 1990 base year the Northern Hungarian region had the largest population decrease to 86,5% among 15-39 year old female participants, compared to the other parts of the country. Despite the nationwide decrease in the demographic index, Central Hungary shows a 5% increase in the number of women of childbearing age, which is likely due to the internal migration trends; the central region has a more attractive economy and labour market ability.



**Figure 7: Change of the women 15-39 years of age based on 1990**

Source: own compilation based on data from [www.ksh.hu](http://www.ksh.hu)

The number of females under the age of 15 decreased drastically in the region and in almost all other parts of the country except in Central Hungary. Here since 2003 the number of underage girls shows an increase.



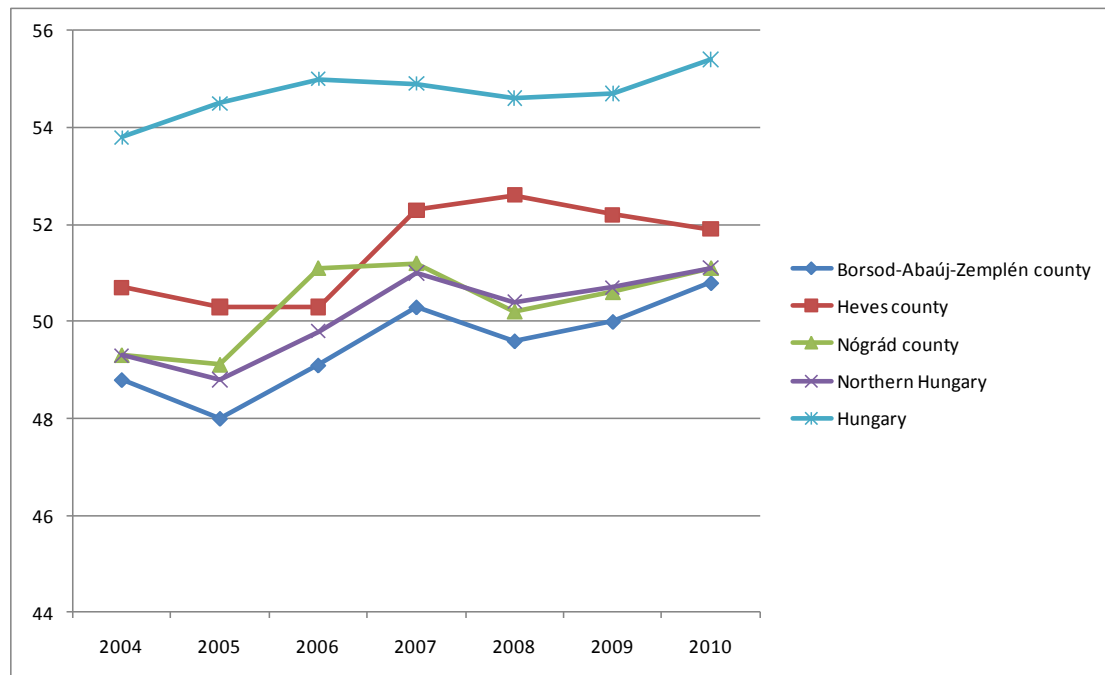
**Figure 8: Change of the women 0-14 years of age based on 1990**

Source: own compilation based on data from [www.ksh.hu](http://www.ksh.hu)

### Activity rate and unemployment in the North Hungarian region:

Regarding the labour market presence, many changes occurred compared to the past years.

Northern Hungary is below with 3 percentage point the country's average. The activity rate of the Northern Region improved with 4 percent, which is caused mainly by Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county's development.



**Figure 9: The activity rate in Northern Hungary (2000-2009, %)**

Source: own compilation based on data from [www.ksh.hu](http://www.ksh.hu)

After the recession the activity rate stagnates or slightly decreases everywhere. The activity rate of Northern Hungary region is 3 percentage points below the country's average. Due to the active population shrinking, there is an increasingly growing share of the elderly population that further contributes to huge problems (one of them is the descending level of safety) into the area.

**Table 1 Number of population per gender and changes in the rate of the elderly**

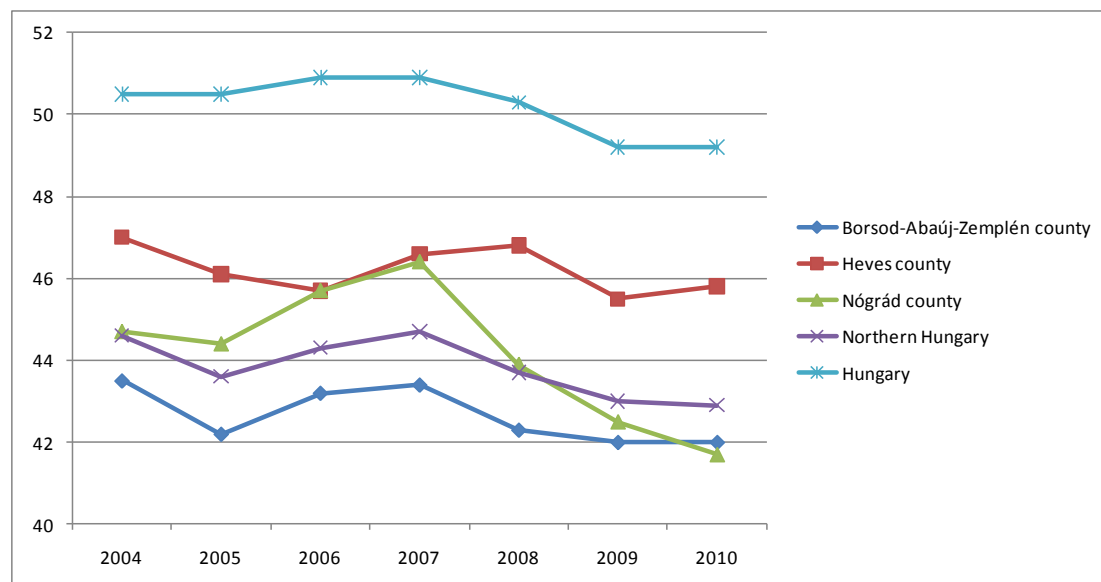
County, region	Rate of people aged 60 and over of the permanent population, 31 Dec., %	
	2000	2009
Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén	19.1	19.9
Heves	21.6	22.4
Nógrád	21.0	21.9
<b>North Hungary</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>20.9</b>

Source: own compilation based on data from [www.ksh.hu](http://www.ksh.hu)

Because of this fact, the social directions of the country and the region have to be also restructured. At present, there is lack of possibilities for the elderly that would improve their quality of life and make their home area more attractive.

The average activity rate increased just 2 percent in the examined period. The activity rate was almost the lowest in Northern Hungary (the average rate was only 50 percent). The trend of this indicator was decreasing in the most developed regions, otherwise was increasing. After the recession the activity rate stagnates or slightly decreases everywhere.

Among the active (mainly due to the financial crisis) the share of the employment is also extremely low and deeply under the average.



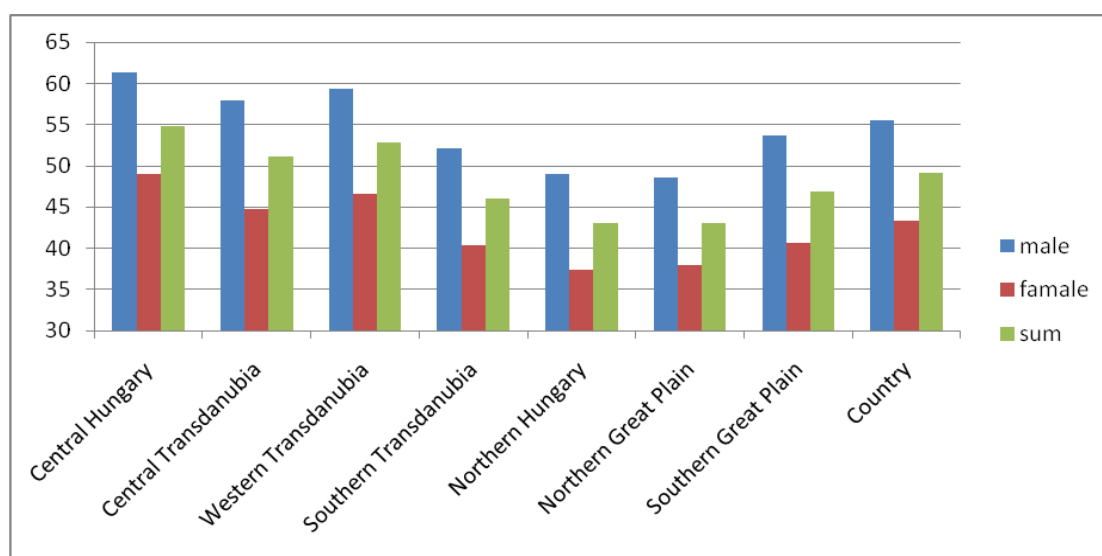
**Figure 10: Changing of employment rate in Northern Hungary (2004-2010, %)**

Source: own construction

With regard the employment the Northern Hungary region is far from the country's average. The employment rate, after a short rising, has started to decrease from 2007. The main reason was the recession. The crisis influenced mostly Nógrád county, where the employment rate was under 42 percent in 2010.

In 2009 as an annual average 54,1% of the 15–74 year old population was employed. The actual number was 3 million and 782 thousand, of which 2 million 45 thousand men and 1 million 737 thousand women.

In 2009 the ratio value of the employed population in the age group 15–74 was the highest in Central Hungary with 55 percent, and the lowest in North Hungary where only 43 percent of the population had a job. The employment rate for women was extremely low in the North Hungarian region: 37 percent which is far below the EU targets, that is mostly because of the hard re-integration after maternity leave. According to the 2010 plan, the women's participation in the labour market should have been increased to 60 percent. In the educational structure there is no significant difference/change. Women's employment rate with higher educational qualification of high-school, college, or with a university degree is higher, quite similar to the national rates.



**Figure 11: Employment rates, 2009**

Source: own compilation based on data from [www.ksh.hu](http://www.ksh.hu)

The employment rate for women was extremely low in the North Hungarian region 37,4 % which is far below the EU targets, according to the 2010 plan, the women's participation in the labour market.

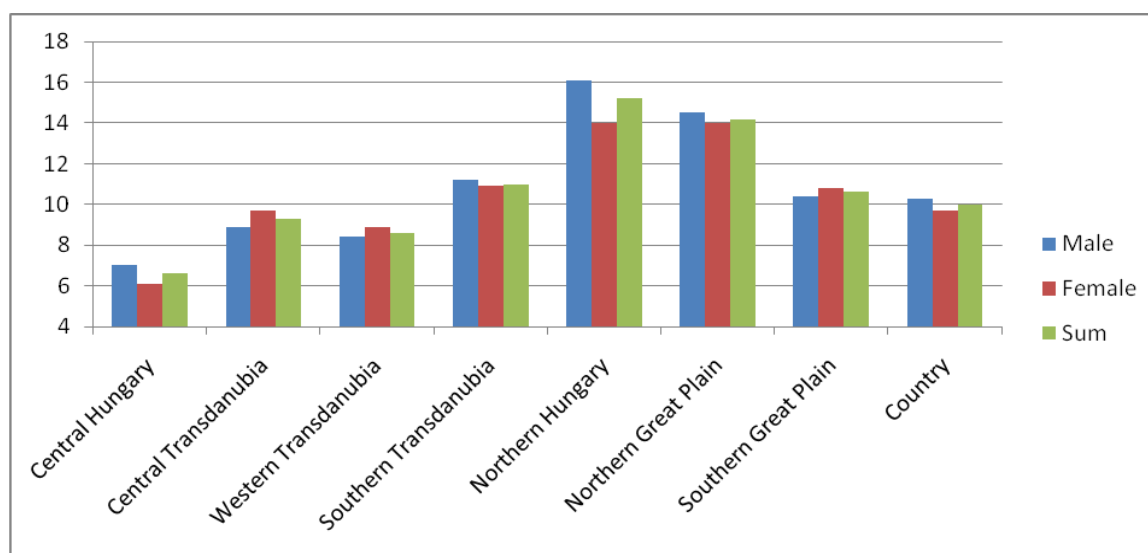
**Table 2 Employment rate according to the qualification structure, 2009**

	Primary school completed and not completed	Vocational school	High-school graduation	College or university	Sum
Northern Hungary	53,47%	28,82%	51,60%	56,20%	45,12%
Country	49,37%	30,39%	52,48%	54,32%	45,93%

*Source: own compilation based on data from [www.ksh.hu](http://www.ksh.hu)*

Full-time employees' monthly gross earnings in 2009 was 199,8 thousand HUF, 0.5% more than last year. In the region the average gross earning was 164 155 HUF, which was 82% of the national average. At the same time in two other regions employees earned an even lower salary.

According to EU recommendations we need to measure the gap between the wages of men and women- what percent is this gap of men's average earnings. In the Northern Hungarian region there was a 12% gap in gross income, and this meant a 16% gap in net income. According to a study from 2009 the difference between the wages of men and women shows the greatest difference in the North Hungarian region (Borbély, 2010)!

**Figure 12: Unemployment rates, 2009**

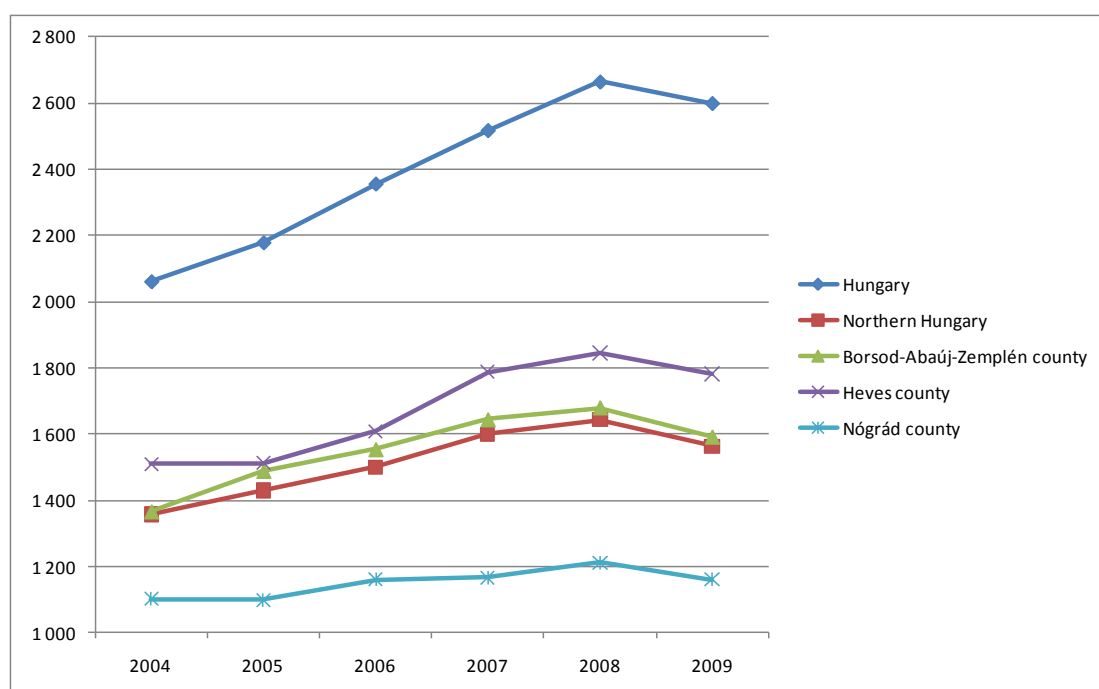
*Source: own compilation based on data from [www.ksh.hu](http://www.ksh.hu)*

Among the regions, the most disadvantaged region is Northern Hungary with a 15.2% unemployment rate, 16% men and 14% women. Compared

to EU data the unemployment rate in the EU-27 among the 15-64 year old population the average rate is 9,0%.

**Economic situation:** According to the Hungarian Central Statistical Office database the GDP per capita was 2600 thousand HUF in Hungary in 2009. In Hungary the difference between the most and least developed region is 2,4-fold. Only the income level in the region of the capital city exceeds the European Union's average (25600 euro in 2007), it increased 6 percent between 2004 and 2007.

Based on Hungarian Central Statistical Office data, North-Hungary's GDP accounted for 7,3% of the national GDP in 2009, whereas the population of the region represents 11,96% of the Hungarian population. GDP per capita was HUF 1.568 thousand, which is 60,3% of national average and 40% of EU27 average measured at purchasing power parities (PPP). In line with the national tendency, the service sector accounts for more than half of the regional GDP.



**Figure 13: GDP per capita in Northern Hungary (thousand Ft)**

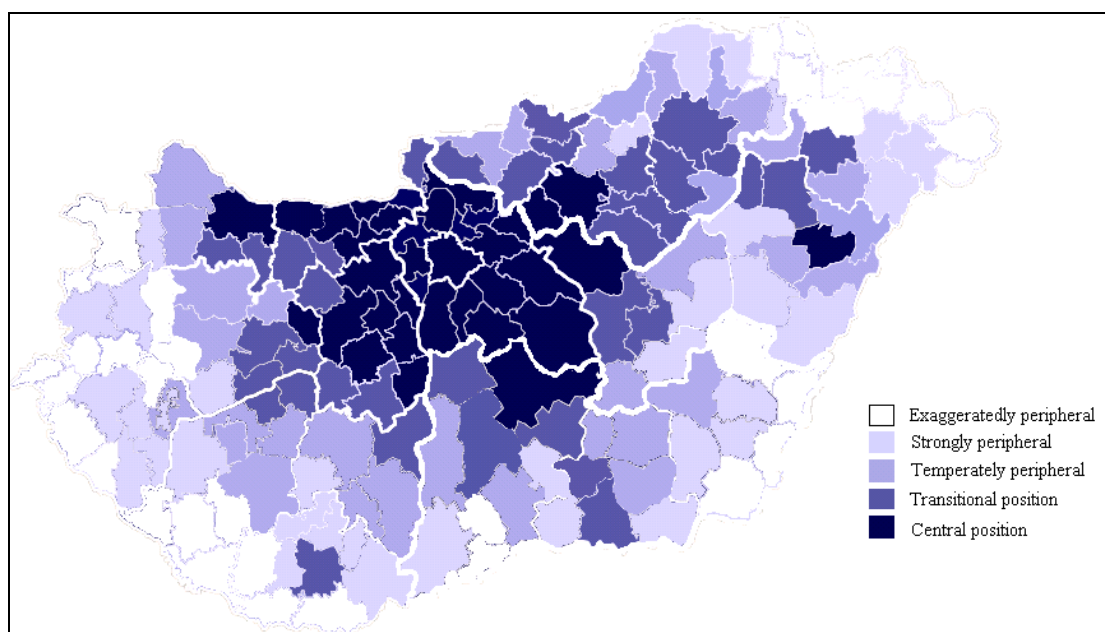
*Source: own compilation*

In the other six regions a slow growth of GDP can be recognized. The income gap increased in the examined period between Central Hungary and the other regions, the standard deviation increased from 34 percent to 38 percent. In Northern Hungary the growth rate is very low, so the region's position has changed neither in the European Union nor in the local hierarchy in the examined period. In the counties of Northern Hungary the growth of GDP per capita is more than 4 percent. The best



performance belongs to Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county, the indicator's value exceed the other two counties with 3 percent. In contrast Nógrád county is far from the average performance, the growth rate is half of the others. Each of three counties could reach a significant growth just in 2005-2006, but after the crisis they have slowed down.

**Accessibility:** The other important viewpoint is the accessibility, as well-developed transport infrastructure is able to support the development processes.



**Figure 14: Centre and peripheries by road infrastructure (2009)**

*Source: own calculation*

The main problems of the North-Hungarian region arise from the inadequate road and rail networks that are able to delay the economical and social development to a great extent mostly in those settlements that are in the periphery of the region, in a relative confinement. Mostly the inadequate density of the minor-, access- and connecting roads cause disadvantages, and the low-quality transport services in the rural areas.

The development of these factors, to streamline and enlarge the regional road infrastructure would be necessary and have to be in a dominant position in the future to make the quality of life better, to ensure the connections into the global economic to assist, increase the economic development processes and to improve our competitive potentials.

Regarding ICT accessibility, mobile phone and internet coverage is poor in underdeveloped micro-regions. PC and Internet use among the general public is much lower than the extent observed in business organisations.

Obviously, because of the small settlement structure in those territories where the share of young people is very low, these data are deeply under the average – among elderly, the usage of computer and internet is just around 10 percent.

## **2. Interviews with pupils**

In the region 514 secondary school students (17-19 year old) was surveyed. From them, 328 are girls and only a little more than a half, 184 were boys (2 pupils did not answered this question). The surplus of the girls in secondary schools (with no specification) is typical, but decreases from year to year.

During the selection we tried to find a wide scope of trainings and locations. As we thought in the framework of the capital city-rural region opposites, we have chosen three county capitals (as peripheries in geographical and also in economical aspect) and a village next to one of the county capital to see, how great effect can be observed near a rural centre.

The four towns where we selected the five schools are as follows: Miskolc, Eger, Salgótarján, Mezőkövesd. On the whole, there was a positive attitude from the students' side regarding the answers.

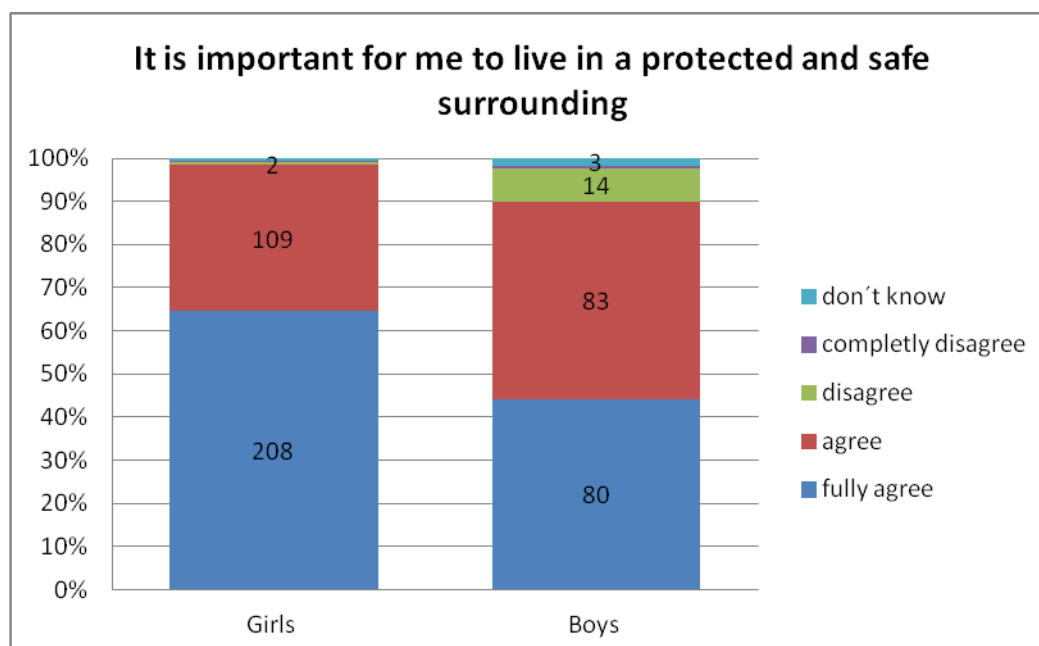
### **Way of life**

Analysing the way of life in the region, it was hopeful to see that one of the best average got the answer about family and the friends are more important for the students the than the career and the money – 169 fully agreed from which 59 were boys. Pupils don not think that it would be very difficult to find a place of living elsewhere based on more than 65% of answers. The ration of the boys was lower, only 30% disagreed or fully disagreed, so it seems the home town stands closer for them. 480 pupils fully agreed (almost 95%) that the protection and safe surrounding has very high importance.

It shows inadequate situation that high ratio of the students commute between the place of living and the schools. The schools attract significant amount of population from the nearing villages. In some cases, the distance was more than 60 km between the two destinations.

Regarding the social relations, in rural areas the pupils feel that they have enough time after school that can be also a negative sign: there are just a few possibilities for pursuing sports or leisuring, having free time with friends in local places (cinema, theatre, club, sport centre, etc.). That is why most of the students prefer online meetings with friends that mean a „daily routine” in case of more than half of the answers.

**Figure 15 Statement surrounding**



*Source: own compilation*

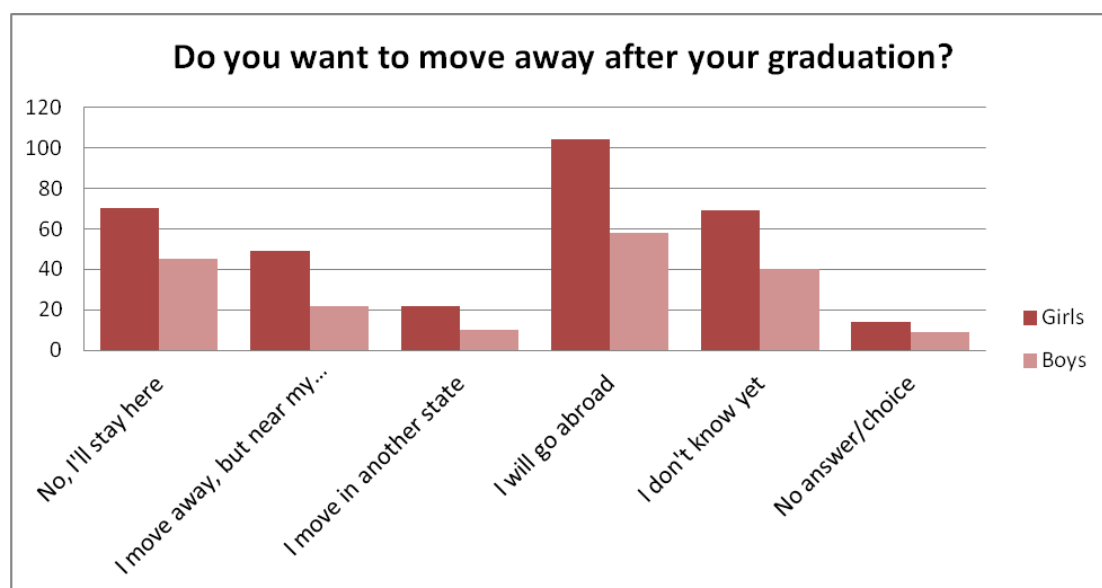
Security gets high importance, especially in case of the girls. Because of the problem as the security level is a sensitive question in these territories, this means a strong push factor among the young women.

### **Intentions to migrate**

The results of the questionnaire study clearly show that that the biggest problem that are important causes of the further moving potential is the high unemployment rate that goes with poverty, the high ratio of roma minority, pollution and security of the places. 35 percent of the students also mentioned the inadequate mass transportation (that set back option for commuting) as push factor. Because of the adverse availability of the analysed areas (the county capitals are far from the centre of the country, so in geographical aspect – based on available population potential –) these are strongly peripheral or transitional areas that is less attractive because of the high availability times.

Student think that there will be less and possibilities for them to find a workplace, and because of the chaotic situation in Hungary they can hardly trust also in the country. The following chart highlights also this situation: many students are planning to leave the region latest after graduation.

**Figure 16: Plans after graduation**



*Source: own compilation*

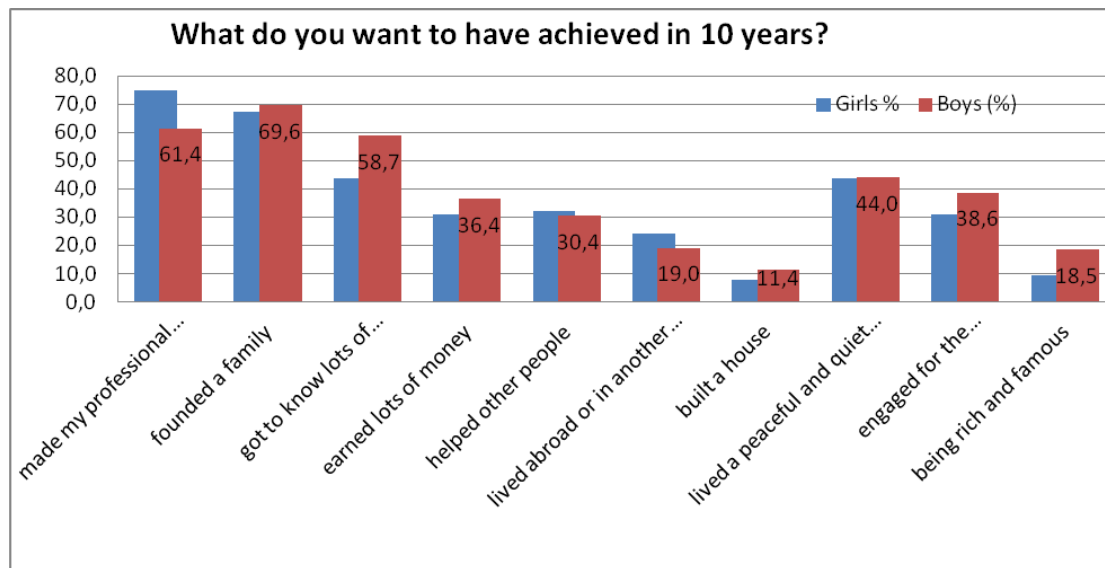
The family of the students also offers to leave the region, so the future plan of these rural territories – out-migration, shrinking population, and growing share of elderly, low level safety – is distressing.

#### Future plans/Expectations

Unfortunately most of the students are planning to leave the region before or latest after the higher education. Almost 80% of the students think that because of lack of jobs in the region, the liveable place in Hungary is proved to be only the capital city and its agglomeration.

In 10 years time concerning the aims, the answers were unambiguous: in total, most of the students (246 girls and 113 boys) want to have a family firstly, than professional career (221 girls and 128 boys) – here the ranking was opposite in the case of boys. On the third place peaceful life comes, with 143 yes from the girls and 81 from the boys. Networking with interesting people and ensuring peaceful and quiet life, securing the environment are also among the most important goals of the pupils.

**Figure 17: Future plans**

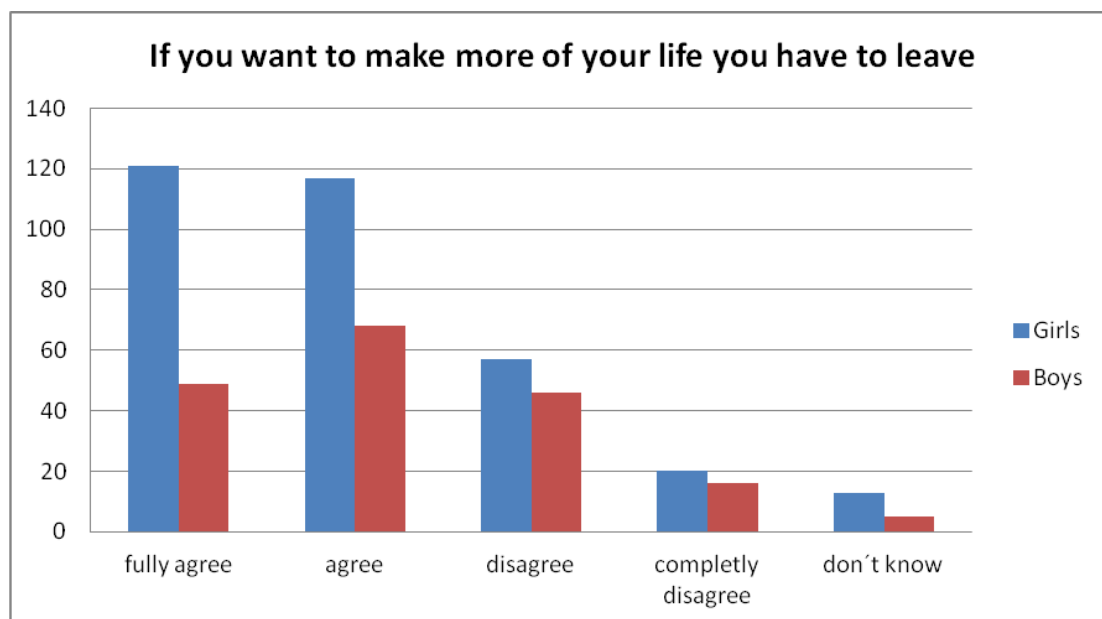


*Source: own compilation*

30% of the boys and 32% of the girls plans that they will work in abroad 10 years later. Unfortunately, only 24% of the boys and 21% of the girls plan to stay at their present location – mostly because of the family. 112 pupils (38 boys 73 girls) go abroad, while 109 students still do not know, if they want to move or not. For many students are sure that they will come back (54 girls, 53 boys), 198 answered with „maybe” (138 of them were girls).

### **Evaluation of the local living situation**

Regarding the evaluation of the region, only 60% of the pupils agrees, that it is very nice to live in their present place. It was interesting, that 70% of the boys agree, opposite to the girls' opinion (53%). It is also a negative aspect that only 51% of the pupils disagrees with the statement that there is no future of their hometown (there was no significant difference between the boys and girls at this question). Moreover, most of the girls and boys agree that their quality of life will improve with moving away. As the results indicate, the general problem is the low level of standard of living, so the strategy should focus on to change the mentioned weaknesses. It was also a relevant problem that more than half of the pupils (269) hear from the family that it is better to leave the region (or the country) in order to find better terms of life. Friends suggest staying on the average. Surprisingly more than half of the students do not talk about this question with the teachers at school (274 answers), who would normally have a relevant effect on them.



**Figure 18: Statement**

*Source: own compilation*

## Conclusions for policy recommendations

From the questionnaire it can be assumed that there were not so many sex specific differences between the groups. Both boys and girls have to face with serious problems, push factors that inspire them to migrate. Bigger share of the girls see poor future possibilities for their family if they stay, so the main factor is the financial situation: they remain poor in their hometown and chances to move are disappearing with the ages.

The universities in the region can keep them here for some years, so latest during this "transitional period" is very important to find factors and highlight advantages of the region in order to assure them to stay. During this activity, teachers have also relevant role.

It was also an interesting point to emphasize, that the students think, they are not appear as an important target audience for the politicians – it means, there is not so many points in the regional strategies that would affect their state of living in the future, as they see. That is why this communication channel has to be also strengthened in order to give some hope at least for the youngsters.

### 3. Expert interviews

During the research we have made interviews also experts who are affected by the problem of women outmigration and able to give some advices to the regional policies.

**Table 3 List of experts**

Expert	Name	Organisation
1	Kristóf Plébán	Municipality of Miskolc
2	Nándor Széni	North Hungarian Regional Development Agency
3	Mihályné Bacskai	Employment Center of North-Hungary
4	Jánosné Juhász	Mezőkövesd, Szent László Gimnázium és Szakközépiskola
5	Hornyákné Csörgő Ágnes	Eger, Dobó István Gimnázium
6	Holczinger Ferenc	Miskolc, Fényi Gyula Jezsuita Gimnázium
7	Pálfalvai Zoltán	Salgótarján, Bolyai János Gimnázium és Szakközépiskola
8	Matiscsákné Lizák Mariann	MINŐIES foundation

*Source: own compilation*

All of the experts agreed that it is a relevant problem that the number of children is decreasing in the region. Great number of the unemployed live in the territory, that fact strengthens out-migration processes and decreases towards the population. Unemployed and employees with lower income represent poor consumption demand that has a negative effect on the economy.

Experts from the education sector mentioned as further problems that the supply and demand at the labour market does not meet. The labour force does not have proper qualification; therefore, their chances on the labour market continuously worsen. It also affects the tendency that the qualified work force and young people with higher education degrees migrate.

This is a vicious circle: the unfavourable tendencies mentioned above discourage investors and prevent new businesses from moving to the region, so there is no chance to create workplaces that affects further the out-migration.

For example, secondary school education is mostly concentrated to large cities, as we also saw this trend during the questionnaire. Secondary, with key roles played in this respect by county centres, which offer a wide range of schools that take more than half of secondary school pupils, while there are some micro regions that does not have secondary school –

these are early forces for children to leave their hometown at the very beginning.

In the national and regional documents there is not so many concrete referring to the situation of the women, because this problem affects the whole young population.

As the Municipality of Miskolc and NORDA states, regional cohesion is urged in order to advance the improvement of the quality of life of people living in urban and provincial areas by settlement development. This would mean the bases for making the region to be attractive, make business and investor environments adequate and to ensure reasonable and sustainable use of local resources. It is primarily the improvement of the competitiveness of SME's that is expected to bring about direct job creation.

Ensuring the development of the networking of towns and strengthen a regional axis would be also important and probably lead to new businesses moving to the region, creating new jobs. Otherwise the out migration will be a continuous process, even though there are more and more incentives that help e.g. the women's employment, like MINŐIES foundation. For women the most important term is the security, ensuring good future possibilities for the children. If it is not secured by the state, if the region attractiveness is getting worse, it will be very hard to act in order to keep young women here and attract from other regions. Unfortunately experts think, if a women stay, it is more likely because of her less chances (financial situation, afraid against the new) for moving away.



## 4. In-depth interviews with young women

During the research we have interviewed 17 women. All of the respondents have university degree and they are mostly 25-30 years old, three of them are more than 30 years old. The distribution of the group is the following:

5 stayers

1 re-migrant

4 immigrants

6 out-migrants (from the region, one from the country)

1 pending (seasonally, abroad)

**Table 4 In-depth interview with young women**

	Age	Profession	Family situation	Why stayed?	Why move?	Why return / immigrate?
1	25	PhD student	married	workplace, husband	-	-
4	25	PhD student	single	studies	-	-
2	26	controller / PhD student	single	studies, workplace	-	-
12	26	PhD student	single	studies	-	-
14	26	physics	single	-	studies	-
15	26i	layer	single	-	-	workplace
11	27	lecturer	in a relationship	-	-	studies, workplace
5	29	lecturer	married	-	-	workplace, husband
8	29	chemist	in a relationship	-	workplace	-
9	29	bookkeeper	married	-	relationship	-
3	30	lecturer	in a relationship	workplace	-	-
6	30	economist	married	-	workplace	-
13	30	chemist	in a relationship	workplace	-	-
16	30	priest	single	-	-	workplace
7	32	actor	in a relationship	-	workplace	-
17	35	biologist	in a relationship	-	studies	-
10	49	entrepreneur	divorced	-	-	parents

*Source: own compilation*

1. Stayers: Three respondents are PhD students (two of them are economists, the other one is lawyer) and they work and live in their hometown, in Miskolc. The fourth women finished the university seven years ago and since she has been working here. Because of some latter mentioned reasons she is planning to leave the region. The fifth

respondent also lives and works in Miskolc, she is economist and works as controller.

2. Re-migrant: The 29-year-old woman was born in the region and studied here from the beginning until the university degree. She found a husband here and started to work in Miskolc immediately. Two years later they moved abroad, but after the scholarship they came back to continue their life in their hometown.

3. Immigrants: The first woman is lawyer, who was born in Debrecen, she graduated last year. She wanted to stay in Miskolc that is why she decided to look for a job in our city. The second respondent was born in the region, but in another county capital. Because of the university she moved to Miskolc than she got a scholarship here and later also a job. Now she is not satisfied with her salary in this part of the country that is why she would like to move to Budapest. The third woman was born in a neighbouring region, but found both a job and got a PhD scholarship at the same time in Miskolc. She has chosen the scholarship and bought a small flat in Miskolc, too. The fourth respondent is a Calvinistic priest. She has studied in the United States and in Budapest too. She got a job in Miskolc that was the only reason that she moved here. She does not plan to stay here, but this job is big challenge for her, and she sees good promotion facilities from that. She is still studying in Budapest as part time student.

4. Out-migrants: One of them is lawyer, she graduated in 2009 and lives in Budapest for 2 years. The second respondent is biologist, she has PhD degree and left the region after the secondary school (firstly because of her studies, later she got a job also in Budapest). The third woman is a 30-year-old economist, who lived near Miskolc in a rural area, and tried to find a job for many months without success, than she forced to move to the capital city. Since she found a partner there she is not planning to move back any more. The fourth interviewed woman did not planned to move away – from a rural area of the county she started the university in Miskolc, but after two years she was forced to go to the USA, because her partner got a job. The respondent planned every year to come back – it was 9 years ago. Now she knows that in this region she would never reach this state of living than in the United States, so last year she asked for a citizenship there. The fifth respondent, who was born in Miskolc, is an economist and a physicist. After she got her economist degree, she wanted to study physics, which is possible (in Hungary) only in Budapest. During her second term university during summers she worked abroad to earn as much as money to pay her tuition fee. The sixth woman was born in a very small town in the region. After secondary school she decided to become an actress and started university in the country capital. She loves

the rural areas, but because of her profession, there is impossible to find a job elsewhere.

5. Pending: The woman was born in Miskolc and for 10 years she works abroad more than half a year. For the second half she always moves back and spends her 5 months holiday here, mostly because of her parents.

“We don’t have a chance to find a well-paid, even a low-paid job here”

Almost all of them know girls who left the region and went to the capital city. According to them the main reason was that in Budapest there are many kinds of facilities by working place, the salaries are also higher and the chance is better to building a carrier. In the capital city the professional experience is most significant and the personal connections are not so important.

The asked women think that other (push) reasons of the migration are the hopeless situation of the whole territory: high share of the gypsy population and the high unemployment rate. It results that the young women can find job very hardly. The huge (and important) companies, such as BOSCH, TVK (auto parts and machine tool production, petrochemical industry) employ mostly people with technical qualification, but this profile characterizes mostly the man.

The immigrants do not plan to come back, but they frequently come home to visit (usually monthly). They did not regret their decision, they like living in Budapest (or in other region). They have new friends and partner there. Usually they advise everybody to move away. According to the respondents it is very typical that most of the ex-classmates and old friends now are living in Budapest (or in abroad).

All of the respondents know somebody who came back to the hometown. The main cause was that they could – after long searching – find job or they would have liked a baby near the grandparents. They need the help of grandparents by bringing up a child, because the grandparents can take care of the children if they are ill and the parents cannot get holiday.

According to the immigrants it is also feasible to establish family far away from the grandparents.

The other mentioned advantages of the city for the returners are because they could build a nice house from the money they earned (in abroad). Otherwise only maybe a very good job opportunity, which is very rarely, can make someone to stay here.

### **Migration: Decision-making and residential “biography”**

All of the respondents had a point in their life when they seriously considered the migration (mostly when they finished their higher

education training). Almost many of them thought about working abroad. Three of them starkly wanted to emigrate and searched for possibilities, the others had not got exactly plan, they were just adrift, what is quite a typical mentality among the Hungarian youngsters. Average opinion that until the man is young is able to work abroad, but later, with family it is almost impossible. The main reason was the money. Everybody stated that after some years that young people spend abroad and earn more money helps as a base really much to "start a life" at home.

*"As a remigrant I feel, the reintegration was the most hard because of the lower living standards here. Reintegration into the society did not mean a problem."*

Regarding the question, if the residents of the region were welcoming vis-a-vis new inhabitants, they think that the residents usually do not really care about the new inhabitants. Especially in this region (mainly in the small towns and villages) the older generation is not really open and take new inhabitants as "carpet-bagger". But they also added that the migration is more typical than the immigration. The women who remigrant did not regret her decision; with her husband they felt themselves alone in the USA. They did not really have problems with coming back, but it was not easy to come back and left a much better living-standard, good cultural life, public transport and shops.

### **Professional life and voluntary work**

13 respondents are employees; four persons are PhD-students. One of the respondents, who lives in Budapest lives really far from her working place, it takes at least 1 hour every morning. The working place is accessible, but the distance is very large and there is frequently traffic jam. Other respondents who also live in Budapest or abroad live nearby to their working places. Those respondents who stayed in their hometown live also near to their workplace and they have got own car, so the travel takes just a couple of minutes. Almost all of the respondents who stayed in North Hungary are satisfied with their working position – the problems arise from the infrastructural terms of the cities, the growing unemployment rate and the safety that is getting worse like the following statement exemplifies: *"I like working here. I fell sorry that I will have to change this workplace later as other terms for living family life are not satisfying."*

Those women who left their region they were looking for work quite long, but that was because of the economical situation of the country – from the past years it was very hard to find a good job with normal salary in a short time period. Two women tried to find a workplace in her hometown for many months, after they realized that they have no chance there.

Regarding the immigrants, one of the respondents is full-time PhD-student in law and after the PhD-degree they would like to work as a lawyer or to stay in the university, as teacher. The second respondent would never get a job by personal connections as a physicist or an economist. The third respondent, who serves as a priest get her job also by an internal tendering, so in this way there is no direct chosen.

### **Family life and attitudes on living in a rural municipality**

Three respondents are single, independent young woman, with very good living conditions. They do not have long and serious partner relation. Only one of them thinks that Miskolc is a good place for children. The others are on the opinion that usually rural communities are good places in childhood, but not necessarily for them and not necessarily Miskolc. All of the stayers were worried about the gipsy-problem. The advantages of the city according to them related with children are the good education system and secondary schools, and the beautiful surrounding such as Lillafüred. Despite, all of the respondents would suggest their children to move away in the next 20 years! They think it is much better to live in a western European country if you have chance: better universities, more culture, nicer places, they could learn foreign languages, etc. They would suggest England, Belgium, France or Sweden like the following quotation from an interview with a young women illustrates: *"If I have a chance, I would bring my children up in Western Europe to give them better chances for life."*

Except one, all of the out-migrants have partner and live together with him. They would like at least two children averagely, and according to them it is not a problem that the grandparents are far away from them. It is sure they would support their children to learn or work in abroad.

All of the women are above 25 and five of them are 30 or more, but only one of them has a child! The reason for this is the career-building and the hard financial situation – firstly everybody would like to ensure the stabile base that takes many years.

Most of the respondents who live in Miskolc like it and if they have chance they would do everything in the same way again – however, they do not plan to stay here with a child in the long-term. Based upon their opinion for everybody is hard to look for job, it does not depend on the gender.

## **Conclusions for policy recommendations**

In very small municipalities the conditions for the work and living circumstances, promotion facilities are heavily differs from conditions in the capital or western Hungary. All of the women we asked had to leave their hometown because of the job possibilities – some of them have special profession with that is almost impossible to find any workplace, others left the territory because of the poor salaries.

The smaller the population of a village or a small city has, the narrower the job opportunities locally available. The critical employment conditions and the lack of jobs in the economically disadvantaged Northern Hungarian areas are serious push factors, as the problem of the gipsy-minority and the lower level security in many settlements. The region of North Hungary has the highest number of Roma population in the country; the proportion is the highest in rural areas, internal peripheries.

The growth of the number of the Roma has accelerated due to the continuous fall of the non-Roma population at settlements because of natural reduction and migration as was discussed before. The chance for life of the population where the ratio of Roma population is higher it is worsening and these settlements become depopulated, so that is a vicious circle.

Although all the respondents who stayed like to live in Miskolc (they found good job possibilities), they are missing other terms for leasuring, learning, etc. – that was also mentioned in case of the students. Because of the gipsy-problem discussed above they do not feel themselves safe, that is the reason why they do not want to have family here, even they stayed because they found a job here that they like. The integration is an actual question in Hungary for many years, there is no best practice for improving the present situation.

As the surveys pointed out, in our case we have to talk about "outmigration culture" – this trend is perceived as a general precondition to make more of life and is conveyed already in the childhood. This mentality will not change unless the terms of living will not improve significantly.

## 5. Result of the SWOT

With the SWOT analyses we tried to summarize the main problems and possibilities of the region, based on the statements of regional analyses and the primary research.

### **Strengths and opportunities:**

There are many terms in the region – location, good population potential – that could be an attractive factor for residents. The purpose of improving the settlement environment is to create favourable conditions for residential, commercial and economic functions. The improvement of the settlement environment is especially justified in settlement centres accommodating daily services and commercial activities. Besides, areas having considerable economic potential, the renewal of central settlements of socially-economically underdeveloped areas must be urged to ensure job creation and to increase the capacity to retain the population.

To ensure the development of the region, it is of paramount importance to extend employment and to renew the region's human resources, more specifically child care that supports young mothers and health conditions. For this reason it is a must to improve the quality and harmonised operation of local health, social, elementary, and secondary educational/training public services through micro-regional cooperation.

To make the population more eligible for employment, in addition to improving the quality of public services and ensuring equality of chances in access, support must be given to training programs necessary for more efficient operation of institutions.

Quite often this entails the improvement of the quality of services of towns located in the centre of each area; at the same time, special attention must be paid to areas with small villages when working out access to services, which requires the harmonisation of services and transport management.

Social cohesion, eligibility for employment and the mobility of the workforce are greatly advanced by ensuring better access to territorial and service centres within the region – to attain this goal it is necessary

**Weaknesses and threads:** High unemployment rates and low employment levels with lack of future possibilities – these are the main problems of the region – that quite often go together with permanent segregation of certain areas or districts of settlements.

The external appearance and look of the majority of settlements is improper; town and settlement centres are not properly taken care of current requirements of quality of life. In recent years EU support programs and private investments mainly aimed at developing commercial functions have produced good results in improving the settlement environment but the accumulated lack of investments and renovation in the past decades and the low level of funds allocated to local governments in view of their duties make it necessary to give further support for renewing settlement environment.

There is a shortage of labour force with the education and professional knowledge required by the prospering branches of the economy in the rural areas mostly due to migration from the areas. Job creation and the integration of new enterprises that would give rise to it can be promoted by the establishment of the attractive residential environment and business infrastructure of an area. In the entire region, there is a strong need to develop settlement environment that attracts businesses and commercial outlets, and to improve access to them at central settlements. It is notable that the development of the infrastructure should be able to retain the population and improve access to public services also.

Currently, public transport systems are unable to compete with individual transport because they cannot beat the advantage of individual transport in travelling times through raising standards of services. Therefore, it is necessary to harmonise various forms of transport, to raise the quality of the infrastructure of public transport between towns and the roads of regional importance. If these factors improve, young family would be able to stay at their hometown, choose better living surroundings, and undertake some pending time contrary to move directly where the workplace is (because accessibility is insufficient).

The renewal of the other infrastructural terms in cities and the reinforcement of their cultural and free time programme offer might be important to retain and attract highly qualified young people and researchers and consequently strengthen the innovative role of cities.



**Table 5 SWOT Analysis with focus on young women**

<i>Indicators with impact on migration, facts</i>	<i>Strengths, internal factor, what makes women stay in the regions</i>	<i>Weaknesses, internal factors, what is driving young women to move away from the region?</i>	<i>Opportunities, influenced by external impacts (economy, policy)</i>	<i>Threats, influenced by external impacts (economy, policy)</i>
Economic structure	Prosperous geographical location.  Clustering activities in certain branches.	No tradition of female-friendly working terms.  Safety is getting worse.  Weak GDP potential in the territory, rising regional disparities.  High unemployment rate and relatively low level of active population.  Unsatisfied level of wages, lower productivity rate.	Labour market opens more up for women.  Improve the attractiveness of the city in order to observe the population.  Creating attractive economic environment for the entrepreneur.  Ensuring the framework for supporting small and middle size enterprises.  Highlighting the networking potentials in many sectors, establishing competitive clusters.	Few possibilities, lack of funds for creating more attractive environmental terms.  Dispersion of regional public funds.  The effect of the crisis is still remaining high.  There is no change in the governmental mentality and everything became more bureaucratic.
Social and educational structures	High density of population, strong population potential in the region.  University of Miskolc as knowledge center.	Decreasing number of inhabitants, adverse migration potential.  Few possibilities for women with children to have part-time jobs.  There is not enough capacity in Miskolc for the talented students.	Increasing growth of academic research-industry collaborations.	Brain drain; because of the less RnD activity the migration of talents from Miskolc and from the region is even higher.
Gender-specific sharing of roles		Traditional gender roles, until 2-3 years mothers stay at home.	Improving terms for supporting young mothers.	Reactionary trends.
Quality of environment	Wonderful natural environment.	After the decline of heavy industry, under-utilized, polluted industrial sites have been left behind.	Improving with adapting new technologies.	Getting worse in territories where the ratio of out-migrants is high.
Image, has to be considered with regard to different target groups (age, gender)	Beautiful surrounding.	Negative, "no future", "overaged". "nothing to do".	Rising, women see the nice surrounding as high living value.	Worsening.
Settlement patterns, housing situation	Cheap housing prices, low cost of living.  Quality of transport is good.	High density of small settlements with inadequate infrastructural terms for youngsters.	Making the accessibility more adequate.  New infrastructure of geoenergy, which generate less living costs.	Getting worse in territories where the ratio of out-migrants is high.
Cultural and social activities	Active international relationship of the region.	Few places for leisure, "nothing to do" feeling, especially for young women.	Rising cultural and social activities for young women.	Still not more cultural activities, programs for women.
Social/educational infrastructure for women (young families)	High quality schooling system.	Traditionally insufficient child care system before the age of 3.	Improving quality, new, flexible and adjusted solutions in case of child care system for young mothers.	Cutting down of infrastructure because of continuously decreasing number of inhabitants.

*Source: own compilation*

## **6 Scenarios: possible futures for the region**

A geographical inequality is characteristic of the labour market in Hungary: the level of employment, the rate of unemployment and the inactivity rate differ by regions. Its reason has been different in the various decades after 1989 (change of regime) (Tóthné Sikora 2007).

Taking the following scheme, we have discussed the future directions in three scenarios. The status quo scenario in which the present tendencies will continue without policy intervention, a smart growth scenario when the policy aims help to start implementation of better terms of life for the young generation and an inclusive growth scenario in which a modernisation of labour markets result very attractive terms for entrepreneurs who bring into the region new skills and jobs, forcing the young generation staying here.

Status quo scenario: Stochastic relationships between net migration rate and macro-economic indicators can be proven, that is why it is very important to analyse this question in the future also in political aspect. According to our primary surveys, there is a considerable internal and international migration in Hungary, with special regard to the economically backward counties. The growth of the population has slowed down in these regions, with the exception of some special subregions, the decrease of the population can be observed. It comes, apart from the low number of birth, from the negative balance of migration. The decrease of the population worsens a given region's productive capacity and competitiveness, and without political intervention this tendency could be easily even worse. The emigration of the population causes a vicious circle because it brings about labour shortage which, aggravated by the bad economic situation, exerts a push effect to the mobile part of the population. The poor infrastructure (services, availability, etc.) is also not able to improve the attractiveness of these locations that will also result continuously growing emigration. This kind of push effect was presented through the students' questionnaire and also the deep interviews.

Smart growth scenario: Regarding the results so far, the chances of our analysed territories are not adequate, that is why direct political decisions are needed. Most of the pupils are staying in their hometown because there is lack of possibilities to move (hard financial situation that was described in the last parts of the questionnaires). Generally, students think that later, because of the high unemployment rate (that is expected to grow in the next years) they will be forced to find a new place to live, maybe in abroad. Additional problem to his case, that pupils feel that they are not an important target group when the regional documents have been created. With some basic incentive, like improving the urban and

rural environment, making the transportation system more effective (in order to make possible the pending terms between the home town and school or workplace). With supporting cultural life, collaboration between the public and private spheres is considered more and more valuable. Significant local resources are mobilised, which improves quality of life.

Incentive growth: In case of the best scenario, the main aim of the region would intensively increase the employment rate (especially among young women), make the quality of the labour force better and the region much more attractive for the enterprises.

Due to the high unemployment rate in the region, primarily among untrained people with low levels of education and the Roma population<sup>1</sup>, and because of the poor capacity of peripheral areas with small villages to draw capital, preference should be given to development projects that can reduce permanent social tensions arising from unemployment, gives special preference to job creation especially in underdeveloped areas.

More efforts should be made to prefer the technological modernisation of SME's, to improve the capacity utilisation of industrial parks, potentially by attracting innovative businesses. Incentives must be created for the modernisation of existing brownfield industrial sites or their re-use for commercial purposes.

In the regional strategies of the region, the latter mentioned terms of living are highlighted as long-term goals of the territory; however, we are lack of funds to ensure them. The most important factors would be the high level security, good environment, more jobs with higher value added. To increase the activity rate of the region (as well as of the whole country) is insistent, while it is strongly under the European average. According to the data of the Central Statistical Office the participation rate in North Hungary is 49.3% within the proportion of the economically active age group between the 15-74 year olds. The low activity is related to the economic and industrial decline of the region as it was discussed above. The termination of jobs resulted in unemployment, which was followed by the deactivation of economically active people and their withdrawal from the world of labour.

With the opportunities that were listed in the SWOT table the region especially for young persons and in particular young women could be much more attractive as well as for the enterprises with job vacancies.

As in the previous chapters was assumed, part-time jobs could help young women to re-integrate into the labour market. Many asked women plan to

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<sup>1</sup> Only in the long run does it seem possible to change the unfavourable labour market position of the Roma minority; the labour market offers no wage earning employment to this social layer.

have child later, after securing herself at her workplace and sometimes this comes too late. That is why the number of children is decreasing that has many negative spillovers. In the recent years the utilisation of nursery schools and elementary schools has deteriorated because of the fall in the number children and ageing in some areas with small villages, therefore, their economic maintenance has been endangered.

As social disadvantages evolve in early childhood, therefore, in the region great emphasis should be placed on the early education of children, especially in problematic areas and areas inhabited by Roma majority. Better education calls for the improvement of the quality of nursery school environment, buildings, and tools. Nursery school services will also offer jobs especially to mothers.

## **7. Conclusions and policy recommendations**

The motivation and willingness are different in the case of the various social strategies. Some large nations have prepared to the treatment of the growing migration in their migration policies, in which coordination and precise data collection get an outstanding role. The techniques of managing migration do not exist in Hungary. A well segmented migration policy is very important for the future.

Regional (economic) policy is more and more important in the 21st century. Strategies relating to migration are essential part of economic policy. Migration is primarily a question of national security and secondarily it is an economic issue. That is, its labour market aspect tends to be neglected, which is a wrong approach. Although we are aware that the international agreements determine the political, legal and economic life, we suggest that the national employment policy should place more emphasis on managing migration in order to decrease the negative effects of the emigration processes and make use of the positive effects.

Hungary is a sender, a transit and a host country at the same time. That is why we should draw conclusions from other countries' practices. It is important to notice that migration influences growth, redistribution and the sustainability of the pension system. This process needs to be managed. Immigration, especially in the case of qualified workforce, may strengthen the domestic economic growth. Apart from the potential benefits of immigration, the country has to prepare for the emigration of its labour force. Since qualified workforce is a key factor of competitiveness, one objective of a nation's economic policy is to utilize the knowledge of its citizens, so make sure if they move abroad temporarily, then having returned, they can make use of their experiences at home.

Recommended tools for developing a migration policy for the region on national level:

"Mainstreaming": that is migration becomes a mainstream element of every special policy area.

Peer review: we have to find good practises from international strategies.

Administration and institutions of migration policy; and the co-existence of the actors of migration with local community. Local governments' responsibility relating to migration should be enforced much more radically than it is today.

Creating an innovative milieu, one of the main tasks of which is retaining workforce. These environments have to include research bases and the belonging satellite offices.

The objective of promoting people's staying in home-land, by way of supporting them, tends to be obsolete after the EU accessions. The main question is that the doctrine of "staying in home-land" is still valid or not. Since the EU itself is not going into this direction, it is becoming an anachronism. Characteristically, many people has been leaving for abroad for study and work and this trend is expected to get stronger in the future. The circular migration should be exploited through scholarship programs and through resettlement supported by the county chambers.

Governments' and local governments' support is essential for the increase of the weight of the civil society so that social institutions can cooperate with ethnic institutions in order to mitigate tensions.

Improving the mental environment: the migration strategy has to focus on treating the society's depression as well.

Scholarships granted by the government and the local governments to promote returning home or staying at home. Scholarships should support the scientific career of those young researchers and teachers who intend to do their scientific job at a regional (or county) company or institution. Academic positions and PhD scholarships financed at county-level should be introduced.

The competitiveness of our region and the international migration affecting the territory are closely linked, the international migration can be influenced and it is important that the region's economic policy pays more attention to the labour migration processes.

Whereas the economic and sociological theories deal with the impacts of migration on the host countries, the negative impacts occurring in the sender countries will be important in the 21st century. The competitiveness of a region is determined by the composition of the labour force both in terms of quality and quantity and also its ability to retain its population.

The task of a region's economic policy is to attract, retain, motivate and to efficiently manage its population which includes that migration strategy is part of its employment policy. Tools that would be able to treat the rapidly growing lack of balance are missing in the labour market. The competitiveness is held by the lack of coordinated migration strategy that would protect the labour market. It is a great loss for the whole country if its investment into the human capital is harvested by other countries. Retaining workforce should get a greater role in the employment strategy.

Recommendations concerning the regional migration strategy we have formulated different scenarios using the GEO4 report as a basis:

Market solution: The achievement of human prosperity is facilitated through the support of the private sector. That is, the government strives to create favourable domestic conditions for the workforce; and to adopt market-compatible solutions to mitigate the adverse effects of migration.

Political solution: The government is able to stop emigration using political tools. It also attracts knowledge in order to help backward regions. It runs state-owned research institutes and supports educational institutions in the country; it concentrates the state investments in the lagging regions.

Safety: Here the government and the private sector compete for the control. It is important from the point of view of migration because in this case there are scenarios in which self-regulation and re-burdening have role.

Sustainability: It entails the cooperation of the private sector, the society and the government in order to ensure human welfare. (Labour) migration develops in a way that the labour markets of the less developed countries of Europe are able to reproduce themselves: in this way the systems of the welfare-state based on redistribution will not collapse; the classical social insurance system is able to work.

Strategies are based on interests: it is the interests that answer the question why a strategy is necessary and the environment determines where the strategy should be implemented. The strategy itself refers to what and how should be done (Korompai 1995).

In order to lay the groundwork for migration strategy, we designed the following (Protection-Attraction-Defence) model:

Protection: means to curb the immigration hazarding the region, the objective of which is to maintain the fragile peace of the society. Although the emphasis of the research was to call attention to the losses caused by emigration, one has to pay attention to immigration as well. On the one hand, a strong and selective procedure of getting residence and work permit is necessary. However, EU citizens' migration should not be administratively hindered. One way of protection is strengthening the national self-awareness, interpreted in its correct meaning. This means, that Hungarian employees or employees should enjoy preference. On the other hand, the society and the people employed in infrastructure facilities should be prepared for the rippling world-tendency that more and more foreigners will settle down.

Attraction: because of the loss of population (natural loss and emigration), the demographical self-reliance of the region has become less and less. The labour market trends clearly necessitate supplementing the loss of the population from external sources. The demand is twofold: highly qualified

workforce with innovative marketable knowledge and highly skilled workers are needed. The migration strategy has to support immigration of artists, doctors and people coming from afar because their presence may revitalize competition.

Defence: refers to retain the population born in the region to decrease the willingness to emigrate. It is essential that policy makers concentrate on people with outstandingly good skills (innate and gained competences). Two solutions are recommended at this point: on the one hand establishing local educational and research bases, financing and supporting public education. Knowledge centres are becoming today's economic and political centres. Those colleges and student workshops are important in which students become aware of their talents. However, as Professor Polonyi warns, we should not become a knowledge-factory. On the other hand, paving the way for the circular migration is also the task of the strategy. It means creating opportunities that motivates people working or studying abroad to return home. Areas of the region in bad social conditions also need special attention for economic reasons.

In the event that the above mentioned terms are secured, the region will have a chance to considerably reduce territorial differences within the region and raise the level of employment even in underdeveloped areas with reducing out-migration processes.



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