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**WINNER PLACES IN A LOSER COUNTY**

**GROWING SETTLEMENTS IN SOMOGY,**  
**WHERE THE POPULATION DECREASE HAS BEEN MASSIVE**  
**FOR HALF A CENTURY**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Somogy is the fourth largest but the most sparsely populated county of Hungary, where the density of population is still half of the national average. The western third of the South-Transdanubian region between Lake Balaton and the River Drava has always been an underdeveloped part of Hungary with a sparse spatial structure. Capitalist modernisation and socialist development were not able to make significant changes. After the change of regime, Somogy is the only loser area in Transdanubien by FARAGÓ I. (1999).

Its demography has been characterised by natural decrease and a mostly negative migration balance for a long time. As a result of this, population decline is about 5.5‰, which is almost 40% worse than the national value. This makes Somogy a county where population decreases at the 6<sup>th</sup> fastest rate in Hungary. The reason for the population decrease may be the low level of socio-economic development. It coincides with the results of Human Development Index (HDI) calculations, which rank Somogy as the third or fourth weakest county. (CSITE A. – NÉMETH N. 2007)

When investigating on settlement-level similar features can be observed, negative indicators characterize the majority of the county's settlements. According to the survey conducted in the period of the Hungarian demographic turning point – apart from the settlements with special, touristic functions around Lake Balaton – the county's villages belong to the group of "small- and tiny villages with a rapidly diminishing population, lacking basic facilities and providing low standards of living" or the group of "medium-sized villages having traditional village functions, with agricultural employment structure". (BELUSZKY P. - SIKOS T. T. 1982) According to the survey determining the distribution of regional development subsidies 2/3 of the 244 settlements have received accentuated subsidies for being underprivileged since the turn of the millennium. (FALUVÉGI A. 2003) This makes the county the fourth, regarding the number, ratio and the population of under-

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privileged settlements. The factor-analysis based on 27 variables, repeated by BELUSZKY P. – SIKOS T. T. (2007) after the year 2000 brought subtler results, but half of the villages in Somogy still belonged to the weakest category.

Values of population dynamics, partly decreased by factor-analysis, can of course show great differences in the actual picture of the population. The latter in turn can cause a change in the population-rank of settlements. Losers decreasing faster than the average can fall back, while the better, especially the winners with an increasing population can leap forward in their rank. The background of differing population dynamics can be the different socio-economic processes. All in all, the population of „good places” is generally increasing by immigrants attracted from „bad places”, who are moving towards settlements offering better life conditions. The degree of natural increase depends on the age-structure of the settlement as well as the willingness to have children among the population of child-bearing age. These, due to the varied population structure of the migrants and the residents, may produce different cases. Our research aims to examine the prominent demographic characteristics of growing settlements, as well as the causes, the social and economic factors.

## 2. METHODS

In our research we relied on the statistical databases of the KSH (Central Statistical Office). Primarily T-STAR demographic data (in the period between 2000 and 2007) were used in the study. Changes in the population of settlements were ranked, and those with an increase were collected. The annual mean value of the increase was also calculated to make it comparable to the rate of population change in the previous two decades. Data of the latter were taken from the census database. The territorial distribution of increasing settlements was represented on a cartogram. With the analysis of some typical demographic and economic data, the possible causes of the increase were pointed out, and the settlements were categorized on this basis.

## 3. RESULTS

It was found about the population change of the 244 settlements in Somogy County between 2000 and 2007 that only about a third of them shows better demographic values than the county average. The middle third has loss rates higher than the county average: between 4-10%. The last

third, however, has a very high decrease, which is over 10%. The record breakers had a loss of about 30% during the decade since the turn of the millennium. About 1/6 of the settlements represent the opposite, their population increased even in absolute terms. The subject of the research, the 43 increasing settlements of Somogy, can be seen in Table 1. There are only 2 towns among them (capital letters). Among the 15 towns of the county Siófok is the second most populous town and with its growth just above 3% comes 22<sup>nd</sup>, while the neighbouring Zamárdi – which became a town in 2008 – was the 14<sup>th</sup> fastest growing settlement with an increase of almost 6% in the period examined.

Among growing settlements the leaders are mostly tiny and small villages – according to the standardisation made by TÓTH J. (2002). This is partly understandable, as given the small population some new-born babies or immigrants can cause a significant change, however, it partly contradicts the image of social geography about the viability of tiny villages. Apart from the two towns only 12 increasing settlements have a population over 1000, but the best-ranked of them, Juta has only the 10<sup>th</sup> largest increase.

Population growth shows large differences, which is between 1 to 713 people. Of course, the rate projected on the population or the annual rate tells us more, as they show the velocity of growth. Nemeskisfalud has an outstanding rate of 80‰, which means that the population might double during the decade. This phenomenon would count high even in Africa. Eight settlements follow this record with a growth rate between 14 and 21‰, which is significantly above the world average. The following 3 settlements have a rate around the world average with growth between 10 and 13‰, and 13 settlements, including the two towns, follow them with growth rates of 3 to 9‰. Out of the remaining 18 settlements, five have only a nominal increase, less than 1‰, however, it is completely consistent with the stagnation in Europe. Of course, compared to the 5.5‰ loss of the county it still counts as a good indicator.

**Table 1. Settlements of Somogy County with growing population**

Settlement	Population		Growth	Growth %	Av. rate ‰	Change %	Average rate ‰
	2000	2007					
Nemeskisfalud	58	100	42	72.41	80.93	-57.97	-40.44
Balatonmáriafürdő	566	655	89	15.72	21.08	-23.25	-12.52
Kőkút	562	647	85	15.12	20.32	-7.72	-3.82
Pálmajor	338	389	51	15.09	20.28	-14.89	-7.65
Kaposhomok	432	496	64	14.81	19.93	9.50	4.33
Orci	522	593	71	13.60	18.39	7.04	3.24
Kaposújlak	661	744	83	12.56	17.04	-5.57	-2.73
Siójut	538	594	56	10.41	14.25	26.29	11.18
Kisasszond	166	183	17	10.24	14.03	-26.79	-14.74
Juta	1 152	1 257	105	9.11	12.54	51.64	20.02
Ságvár	1 762	1 910	148	8.40	11.59	8.89	4.07
Gige	353	379	26	7.37	10.20	-12.53	-6.36
Gálosfa	297	315	18	6.06	8.44	-37.27	-21.96
ZAMÁRDI	2 250	2 382	132	5.87	8.18	-9.91	-4.96
Kelevíz	343	360	17	4.96	6.93	9.43	-4.71
Porrog	246	258	12	4.88	6.83	-36.22	-21.19
Kaposszerdahely	958	1 003	45	4.70	6.58	32.97	13.66
Balatonszabadi	2 871	3 001	130	4.53	6.35	14.88	6.63
Magyaregres	610	634	24	3.93	5.53	4.01	1.87
Mezőcsokonya	1 239	1 284	45	3.63	5.11	-1.23	-0.59
Gadány	365	377	12	3.29	4.63	-22.08	-11.81
SIÓFOK	23 318	24 031	713	3.06	4.31	12.72	5.72
Teleki	219	225	6	2.74	3.87	-44.69	-27.80
Kereki	557	572	15	2.69	3.80	-5.87	-2.88
Csököly	1 145	1 171	26	2.27	3.21	-13.94	-7.12
Szabás	639	652	13	2.03	2.88	-5.20	-2.54
Szena	747	762	15	2.01	2.84	1.56	0.74
Törökkoppány	486	494	8	1.65	2.34	-27.26	-15.04
Pogányszentpéter	510	518	8	1.57	2.23	-8.88	-4.42
Somogyfajs	529	537	8	1.51	2.15	-11.83	-5.98
Baté	844	855	11	1.30	1.85	2.60	1.22
Somogytúr	426	431	5	1.17	1.67	-28.30	-15.72
Hetes	1 155	1 168	13	1.13	1.60	12.96	5.82
Somogysimonyi	90	91	1	1.11	1.58	-48.77	-31.34
Szőlősgyőrök	1 219	1 231	12	0.98	1.40	-19.26	-10.14
Görgeteg	1 191	1 202	11	0.92	1.31	-13.25	-6.75
Lulla	253	255	2	0.79	1.13	-19.93	-10.53
Szentborbás	134	135	1	0.75	1.06	-29.32	-16.39
Bárdudvarnok	1 199	1 207	8	0.67	0.95	-17.28	-9.00
Ádánd	2 336	2 346	10	0.43	0.61	3.34	1.57
Zselicszentpál	397	398	1	0.25	0.36	8.06	3.70
Látrány	1 363	1 366	3	0.22	0.31	-0.71	-0.34
Som	684	685	1	0.15	0.21	-7.55	-3.73

Source: based on the data of KSH

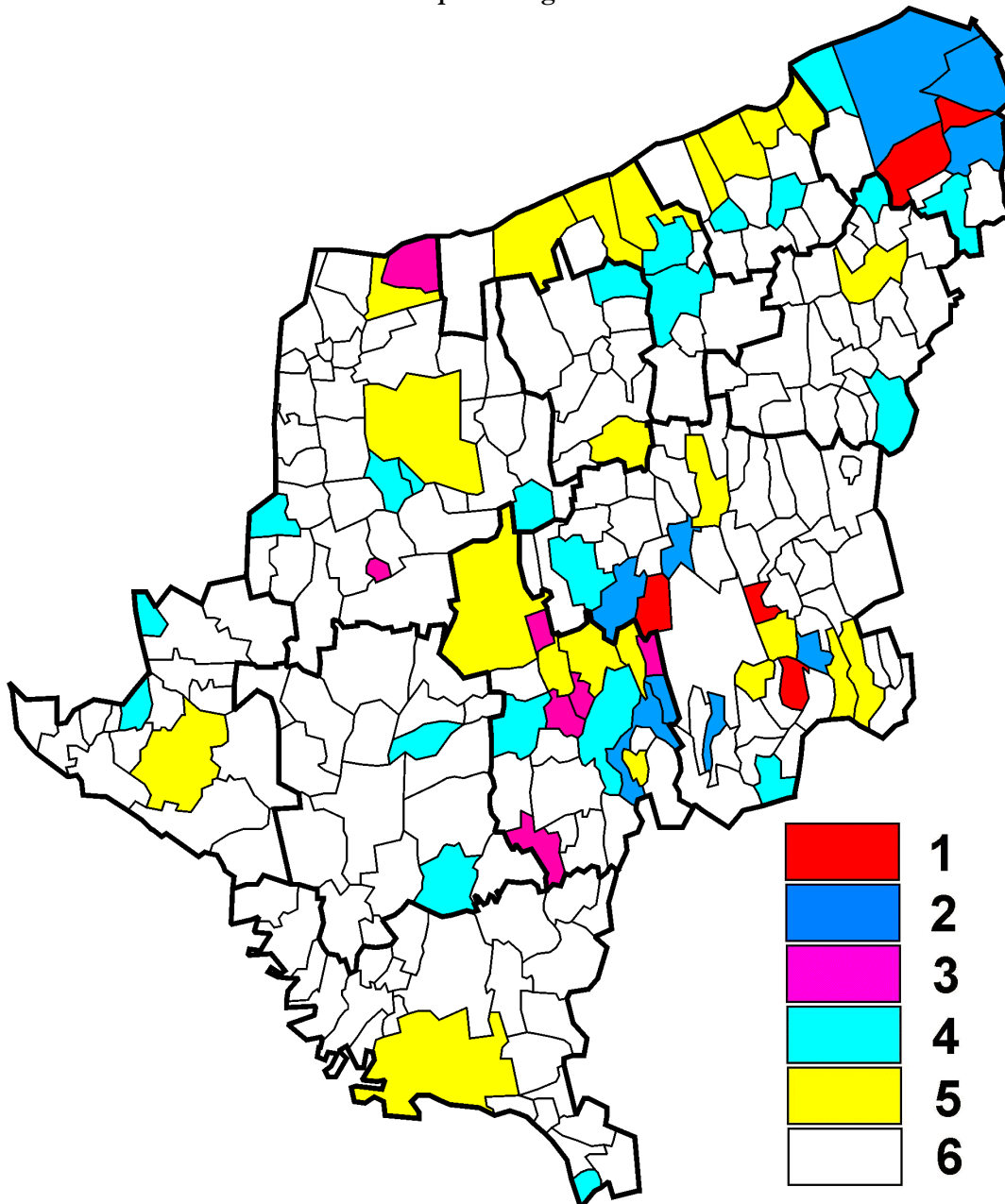
Interestingly enough, 29 out of the 43 growing settlements had an increasing population only during the period examined, which means that a previously downward trend turned positive in their case. Some settlements with an extreme decrease have turned into a growth. Nineteen of these settlements had a loss greater than 10%, while five of them lost more than 1/3 of their population during the two decades before 2000. Only 14 of them showed growth in the previous period as well, nevertheless the number of increasing settlements was also around 40 then.

The spatial distribution of the settlements with growing population during the two periods is illustrated in Figure 1. The 14 settlements being able to grow in both periods can be found in the north-eastern part of the county and around Kaposvár. In case of five the growth rate exceeds 10‰ (cat. 1), while the remaining nine of them are below that (cat. 2). In the course of their development the attractive effects of the county's largest and most dynamic centres and agglomeration processes act together. Siófok, the most dynamic centre of Somogy, is the only town that belongs to settlements with a constant growth.

The earlier loss of seven settlements turned into a growth higher than 10‰ (cat. 3). One of them can be found by Lake Balaton, the others in the area to the west of Kaposvár, but only Kaposújlak belongs to the inner ring of the agglomeration. Moderately growing settlements not showing increase earlier are spread in the middle of the county, in the outer ring of the agglomeration and in the north near Lake Balaton, furthermore there are one or two on the western, eastern and southern part of the county (cat. 4). Their moderate growth can also be partly affected by the nearby centre, or the dynamic power of Lake Balaton, however in the case of some remote settlements other causes should be sought.

It is notable that towns, the majority of the settlements by Lake Balaton and several places belonging to the Kaposvár agglomeration, situated by major roads, have fallen out of the category of growing settlements and show decrease at present (cat. 5). The shift of growth from settlements near centres and major roads to the villages of the second ring can be an indicator of counter-urbanisation, but it can also show the generally weak dynamics of development in the county.

Figure 1. Population change of settlements in Somogy County between 2001 and 2007, and in the preceding two decades.



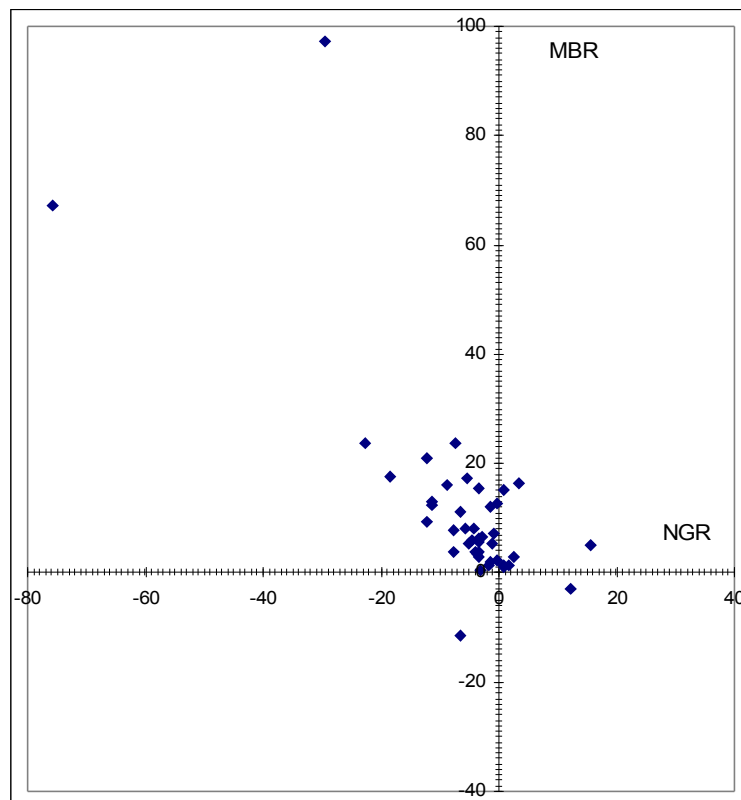
**Key:** 1. long-term growth, fast growth; 2. long-term growth; 3. fast growth, earlier loss; 4. growth, earlier loss; 5. earlier growth, present loss; 6. long-term loss

Source: edited by the author, based on KSH data

Kaposvár, the county seat, and the earlier third most populated Nagyatád together with two micro towns, Lengyeltóti and Kadarkút, have had a decreasing population since the 1980s. More than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of villages have had decreasing population in both periods (cat. 6). These villages can be found around the growing settlements of the Kaposvár agglomeration. Apart from 2 or 3 exceptions the Tab, Lengyeltóti, Nagyatád, Csurgó and Barcs subregions also have settlements decreasing in the long run. These are the economically most backward subregions of the county with significant outmigration.

Two factors can influence the population of settlements: natural growth and migration. In the growth of the 43 settlements migration plays the main role (Figure 2). Only two of them have a negative migration balance. However, only few of them can be found on the positive side of natural growth. Two of them can be seen in the top left quarter of the diagram separated from the others with their extreme values.

**Figure 2. Natural growth and migration balance rate of the 43 settlements between 2000 and 2007**



Source: based on the data of KSH

Migration indicators are given numerically in Table 2 for a more accurate analysis and for making it easier to identify settlements. According to this the annual rate of migration balance is over 10‰ in 15 villages and in Zamárdi, while Nemeskisfalud and Kőkút have extremely high values. Negative migration rates can only be found in Gige and Somogysimonyi.

Natural growth is positive in only 8 settlements, from which the very high indicator of Pálma-  
jor and Gige far outweigh the value of migration balance, so increase is clearly caused by the high birth rate. Despite the positive birth rate immigration exceeds it in Kaposhomok and Orci. Apart from the moderate birth rate slight migration also increases the population in the remaining four settlements.

Interestingly enough, in case of many settlements the rate of the national migration balance is lower than the natural decrease, or the value of growth is higher than expected. Moreover, in Somogysimonyi both data show a significant decrease, still the population has increased. In such cases – apart from statistical error - the increase in the population can be explained by international migration, which is not yet published by KSH for each settlement. (HABLICSEK L. 2004) This assumption is also supported by the fact that after Budapest, the most properties were purchased by foreigners in Somogy (KOVÁCS E. – CSITE A. – OLÁH M. – BOKOR I. 2004). Apart from the settlements by Lake Balaton some small villages in Somogy County have also become the target of foreigners seeking a rural way of life. For example almost half of the properties are owned by foreigners in Somogysimonyi.

In a region with generally declining population the growth of a settlement can induce significant changes in the position of population-rank (Table 2). Of course, this depends on the size and population dynamics of neighbouring settlements on the list. Five of the leaders stepped 20 or more positions forward in the population-rank, while 13 more had an improvement between 10 and 20 positions. More populous settlements could improve less positions on the list than the smaller ones. The position of Siófok and Balatonszabadi did not change, however Ádánd, despite its growth, has stepped backwards on the list, as it has been overtaken by the faster growing Zamárdi, while was not able to overtake any settlements itself.



**Table 2. Natural growth and migration balance rates of growing settlements in Somogy and their position in population-rank.**

Settlement	Natural growth	Migration balance	Rank		
	%	rate %	2000	2007	Change
	2001-2007				
Nemeskisfalud	-29.60	97.16	243	234	9
Balatonmáriafürdő	-12.31	21.08	121	99	22
Kőkút	-75.66	67.19	122	102	20
Pálmajor	15.72	5.00	178	154	24
Kaposhomok	3.27	16.37	155	132	23
Orci	0.82	15.17	134	114	20
Kaposújlak	-7.52	23.74	104	88	16
Siójut	-0.27	12.78	130	113	17
Kisasszond	-3.48	15.60	228	218	10
Juta	-5.29	17.19	64	53	11
Ságvár	-1.38	12.19	36	27	9
Gige	12.10	-2.86	171	160	11
Gálosfa	-8.89	16.04	193	176	17
ZAMÁRDI	-6.41	11.17	22	19	3
Kelevíz	-3.37	5.73	176	166	10
Porrog	-11.42	12.85	208	193	15
Kaposszerdahely	-0.90	7.15	70	68	2
Balatonszabadi	-1.10	5.48	13	13	0
Magyaregres	2.56	3.02	113	106	7
Mezőcsokonya	-4.32	8.10	55	52	3
Gadány	-22.61	23.69	169	162	7
SIÓFOK	-2.84	6.53	2	2	0
Teleki	-1.31	1.95	218	202	16
Kereki	-3.37	6.29	124	116	8
Csököly	1.61	1.37	65	61	4
Szabás	-0.22	2.22	108	101	7
Szena	-4.46	6.01	92	86	6
Törökkoppány	-18.32	17.57	144	133	11
Pogányszentpéter	0.84	1.12	137	128	9
Somogyfajsz	-7.74	7.91	133	122	11
Baté	-5.68	8.09	82	75	7
Somogytúr	-3.73	3.65	156	146	10
Hetes	-11.39	12.39	63	62	1
Somogysimonyi	-6.47	-11.50	238	238	0
Szőlősgyőrök	-7.80	3.94	56	55	1
Görgeteg	-1.69	1.31	60	58	2
Lulla	-4.00	3.91	206	194	12
Szentborbás	-12.16	9.33	232	229	3
Bárdudvarnok	-3.49	3.77	59	57	2
Ádánd	-3.40	2.85	20	21	-1
Zselicszentpál	-5.12	5.31	162	153	9
Látrány	-3.17	0.31	51	47	4
Som	0.83	1.25	102	94	8

Source: based on the data of KSH

There can be different socio-economic reasons why the population change of a settlement is significantly different from the trend. These reasons can be revealed by the analysis of data, as they leave a trace in local social and economic indicators. Table 3 illustrates the income situation of settlements examined and some data associated with social and economic development. To illustrate the general standards of living the “standard of living” factor (-2.44 to 2.12) of the author’s earlier settlement-development analysis created by 26 indicators is also presented together with the factor values of the settlement. (KERESE T. 2001) Data were compared to the county and to the average of the villages in Somogy as well. Negative difference from the latter is highlighted in red.

Thus, three groups became clearly outlined among settlements with growing population. In the first one, settlements with mainly positive indicators can be found. They are the urbanised villages around the county seat, or the settlements by Lake Balaton, especially in the vicinity of Siófok. This includes Zamárdi and Siófok itself, the two towns with growing population, which - together with Juta and Hetes - have only positive indicators. Real socio-economic development lies behind the population growth of these villages and the two towns. Siófok and the surrounding area, taking advantage of the touristic season at Lake Balaton, and also because of its proximity to the country's economic centre, has been the most dynamic subregion of Somogy for decades. The strengthening effect of the Budapest-Zagreb-Padania axis in the northern part of Somogy also contributes to the positional advantage. This axis is the southwestern part of the St Andrew’s cross protruding from the power centre of our capital, having determined the geopolitical and economic situation in the Carpathian Basin for a millennium (GÓTH J. – WILHELM Z. – PIRISI G.– KISS K. 2005). Kaposvár, however, shows the signs of economic stagnation mainly because Hungarian highway-development projects disregard it and it is left out of modern transportation for a long time. Nevertheless, the signs of agglomeration can be seen around the town where suburbanisation has already started as the main tendency today is that the population has been flowing towards the surrounding ring of settlements for three decades.

**Table 3. Some indicators of growing settlements and the average in Somogy County**

Name of settlement	Inc. th.Ft/head/month	Worker in services %	Unemployed %	Inactive %	Depend. /100p	Roma inhab. %	Flat without conv. %	Quality	Stand. of living factor
Nemeskisfalud	13.3	42.9	13.8	55.2	157	13.8	61.2	-	-1.07
Balatonmárfiafürdő	47.1	74.8	2.4	46.1	72	0.0	1.8	+	1.09
Kőkút	9.8	48.9	5.2	58.9	349	3.7	69.9	-	-1.66
Pálmajor	6.2	26.5	7.5	31.6	474	6.3	54.8	-	-
Kaposhomok	23.4	48.1	7.2	36.9	115	2.2	26.9	-	-0.16
Orci	51.1	53.4	2.9	32.5	64	0.0	7.2	+	1.61
Kaposújlak	51.0	60.4	5.9	35.6	61	0.0	6.4	+	1.04
Siójut	41.8	62.6	10.0	31.8	75	0.0	13.8	+	0.97
Kisasszond	31.0	47.8	2.4	42.1	98	0.0	48.6	-	-1.39
Juta	52.1	73.8	2.6	27.6	58	1.1	7.4	+	2.28
Ságvár	39.7	66.3	5.1	33.1	74	0.5	13.3	+	0.84
Gige	21.1	41.5	7.0	37.9	202	17.7	37.9	-	-1.28
Gálosfa	28.3	51.7	15.5	33.7	73	0.3	27.4	/	-1.16
ZAMÁRDI	51.8	73.1	4.1	37.1	63	0.0	1.8	+	1.06
Kelevíz	27.9	42.0	6.3	43.5	92	9.5	31.3	-	0.36
Porrog	27.2	44.3	4.9	45.7	97	2.5	43.3	-	-0.62
Kaposszerdahely	47.9	54.2	3.1	28.8	74	4.1	16.7	+	1.72
Balatonszabadi	47.0	68.2	4.7	33.6	74	0.3	8.3	+	1.57
Magyaregres	38.0	47.1	4.7	29.6	77	3.0	16.1	+	0.90
Mezőcsokonya	34.1	55.9	5.4	37.0	85	2.0	16.2	/	0.93
Gadány	22.7	40.6	9.4	43.9	143	11.7	51.2	-	-1.06
SIÓFOK	57.5	72.3	3.7	32.4	69	2.0	2.4	+	1.84
Teleki	28.8	64.5	11.8	38.4	226	3.0	26.5	/	0.02
Kereki	40.3	52.4	2.3	40.8	72	1.1	12.3	/	1.11
Csőköly	22.2	50.4	5.5	38.9	149	10.1	33.6	-	-0.38
Szabás	26.2	46.7	7.2	40.2	152	9.5	25.5	-	-0.21
Szena	51.5	61.0	3.3	32.9	100	8.9	18.8	+	0.34
Törökkoppány	38.6	46.1	5.6	41.3	63	0.4	21.8	/	-0.01
Pogányszentpéter	35.4	43.4	3.7	32.6	106	7.2	25.3	/	-0.31
Somogyfajs	22.6	47.1	7.7	35.9	140	3.7	40.3	-	-1.53
Baté	43.5	58.3	6.3	33.7	69	2.2	9.9	+	1.36
Somogytúr	33.1	53.4	8.1	40.7	84	0.7	22.9	-	0.32
Hetes	41.4	66.9	4.5	33.7	90	0.5	7.7	+	1.29
Somogysimonyi	32.8	57.1	0.0	45.8	61	0.0	38.9	/	-0.52
Szőlősgyőrök	39.1	56.3	8.7	34.8	80	0.7	7.7	+	1.11
Görgeteg	24.4	46.2	7.7	38.4	135	8.7	17.3	-	-0.06
Lulla	32.6	30.3	7.5	39.0	70	0.8	14.9	/	-0.26
Szentborbás	29.4	31.8	11.1	51.1	132	18.5	56.3	-	-2.21
Bárdudvarnok	36.5	55.5	5.1	36.7	87	2.1	35.2	/	-0.09
Ádánd	39.0	62.3	4.0	32.5	92	0.9	9.3	+	1.50
Zselicszentpál	44.0	61.3	5.5	30.1	73	0.0	8.4	+	1.76
Látrány	36.0	55.3	4.7	35.6	79	5.0	8.0	/	0.93
Som	36.6	61.7	4.5	32.0	82	0.8	27.4	+	0.33
Average of county	35.4	62.1	4.7	34.6	81	3.1	13.2	-	-
Average of villages	44.2	54.6	5.4	37.7	95	4.4	22.1	-	-

**Key of quality column:** ‘+’ – Mostly better; ‘-’ – Mostly weaker, ‘/’ – Ambivalent indicators

Source: edited on the basis of KSH data

The other extreme comprises settlements with mainly or completely negative indicators. Seven of them only have data below the average, another seven have only one or two positive indicators. In spite of this, migration balance is positive here, and in some cases the natural growth rate is positive too. A common feature of these settlements is that the ratio of Roma population is above the average, and most of them can be found in the area between Marcali and Szigetvár. It should be noted that the self-based ethnic affiliation data of the 2001-census significantly understated the proportion of the Roma. The 2003 MTA (Hungarian Academy of Sciences) research, for example, found nearly 30 thousand Romany people in Somogy County, in contrast with the less than 10 thousand given by the KSH. (KEMÉNY I – JANKY B – LENGYEL G. 2004) According to the Gipsy Association in Somogy County however, their number is even higher, around 35 thousand. This means a 10.5% ratio in the county instead of the 4.4%. The difference can be even higher on the level of settlements. In Pálmajor, for example, despite the 6.3% KSH data the minority self-government claims that the population of the village is almost entirely Roma. This is supported by the fact that in the National Atlas of Hungary (1989) - based on the MTA assessment of the eighties – in most villages of the Szigetvár-Marcali lane their ratio is above 10% and in a few of them even exceeds 20% and most probably their number has not decreased since then. However, in the lack of any other database about settlements we had to make do with KSH data. Irrespectively of its practicability we can surely claim that the growth of settlements in the second group was caused by the high growth rate of the Roma ethnic group, their willingness to have a high number of children resulting from economic concerns associated with subsistence and the migration towards ageing villages.

The third group consists of transitional settlements where the previous two factors act together or act moderately thus they have no clear impact on local characteristics. In addition, it is possible that other conditions induce the immigration to these settlements. This may be the migration towards the old people's home in the case of Nemeskisfalud or Kőkút causing extreme values in migration indicators, or the district school in Törökkoppány which attracts the population of dependent villages in the area partly by improving the income indicators with the outstanding standard of teachers' salaries. The proximity of Nagykanizsa helps the slight dynamics of Pogányszentpéter. Finally, this group includes Somogysimonyi, the silent village near the M7, where the beautiful tranquil environment has attracted a number of foreigners to buy properties or to settle down.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

In the study the growing settlements of the highly shrinking Somogy County were examined. In the period between 2000 and 2007 about one sixth of the settlements in the county, ie. 41 villages and two towns showed population growth. The bulk of growth concentrated in the north-western part of the county and around the county seat, but there are a few scattered ones in the south-western area too. The primary reason for the increasing population is migration, but natural growth is also positive in some villages. The following groups could be created with the analysis of some socio-economic indicators of the settlements.

- Real winners: as a result of their development they exert migrational attraction. Here the growing population is the result of the positive migration balance induced by the demand of nearby labour market centres. They are mostly developed and urbanised settlements with data better than the county average. Partly they form a continuous block in the Siófok subregion acting as the hot spots of the Somogy economy and partly they indicate the process of suburbanisation in the ring around the stagnating county seat.
- Pseudo winners: earlier ageing villages which have long become the targets of Roma immigration. The high proportion of the Roma, through a greater willingness of bearing children created a youthful demographic structure. Natural growth plays an important role in the increase of the population, but further migration also results in the growth of this ethnic group. Settlements with high Roma ratio, showing below-average socio-economic characteristics and a declining picture, can be found mainly in the Marcali-Kadarkút lane.
- Lucky winners: none of the effects are very strong or another special factor induces settlement growth. These settlements with miscellaneous indicators are scattered in the territory of the county. Their growth might be by chance and is not a long-term trend.

The settlements examined significantly leap forward in the population rank of the county, their situation however, might not always be enviable. The first two groups will probably increase in the long run, but their socio-economic development might take different directions. “Real winners” might get into the flow of European development and can become the pulling force of the area with their increasing standards of living. The “pseudo winners” can become the scene of Roma segregation which can push them to the periphery of society. The future prevention of this may be an important indicator of the success of our settlement development system and the Roma policy.

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