

National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary in the Period 2001–2011 – Ethno-Demographic Trends as Reflected in the Census Data

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The 2011 census data indicate that the number of people identifying ties with one or more of the thirteen minorities listed in the Minorities Act increased by one and a half times (146%) compared with 2001. Overall, the increase was greatest (177%) for the question concerning ethnicity and was a little less notable (138%) with regard to the language used in the family and among friends. There was even a slight growth in the number of native speakers of minority languages (109%).

In the study the authors examine the changes that have occurred in the basic demographics of Hungary's minorities over the past ten years.

KEYWORDS:

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A frequent criticism of censuses is that they fail to give a “real” picture of the ethnic composition of the population. To expect this from a census or from any other scientific method is unrealistic if by the real picture we mean some kind of primordial, objective and static concept. Identity – like its ethnic components – is a subjective and dynamic category, and so it is always necessary to look at the connections between identification (for example, where individuals self-identify as belonging to a given community), categorisation (where individuals are considered by the people around them to belong to a given community) and latency (where individuals are reluctant to self-identify as belonging to a given community even though this can be inferred from other factors). A census can only be real in the sense that the collection and processing of the data reflect, as faithfully as possible, respondents’ voluntary statements. In other words, census data amount to the momentary expression of value choices.

Evidently, censuses conducted at different times and using various methodologies produce data of limited comparability. Even at the time of comparing censuses carried out with the same methodology, when identifying trends, we must take into account possible changes in respondents’ understanding of certain terms in the questionnaires, as well as changes in the political attitudes of the state and in the social milieu. The trends thus identified may be useful for diagnosis, but they will not explain cause-and-effect relationships.

For this reason, it is important, in our view, to compare the responses to questions included in the 2001 and 2011 censuses.

Despite all these factors, we still regard the use of census data in social structure analysis as vital. First, the data tell us a lot about the dynamics of social trends, and so we can use them to check our forecasts based on other research methods. Second, in the case of ethnic minorities, a census constitutes the only occasion when data are collected, and responses concerning ethnic identity can be linked with other features – gender, age, education and activity. Census data constitute, therefore, important social statistics expressing the value choices of people. Today, at this time of the economic crisis that influences the social conditions, we see rather clearly the extent to which a stable identity, in conjunction with its ethnic components, is an important factor in the transformation of the social structure.

1. Census methodology

The methodology for the ethnic questions posed in the 2011 census (with the reference date: 1 October 2011) differed slightly from the methodology used in the 2001 census. The dissimilarity, however, was less significant than were the differences between previous censuses. Formerly, they had merely asked for a respondent's ethnic identity and native language; the 1970 census and those in the period before 1941 had asked for the native language alone.

The 2001 census questionnaire (with the reference date: 1 February 2001) included four questions pertaining to ethnic identity:

- Question 23.1 Which nationalities do you feel you belong to?
- Question 23.2 Which of these nationalities' cultural values and traditions do you feel affinity with?
- Question 23.3 What is your mother tongue?
- Question 23.4 In which languages do you speak with family members or friends?

The 2001 census questionnaire listed the various minorities mentioned in Act LXXVII of 1993 on the rights of the national and ethnic minorities (the Minorities Act), and there was a spare field for the indication of any other ethnic ties.¹ For each of the questions concerning ethnic identity, there were three possible responses, or a respondent could refuse to answer.

The 2011 census questionnaire contained the following questions pertaining to ethnic identity:

- Question 34. Which nationality do you feel you belong to?²
- Question 35. Do you think you belong to another nationality in addition to what you marked above?³

¹ Article 1(2) of the Minorities Act states that “for the purposes of the present Act a national or ethnic minority (hereinafter ‘minority’) is an ethnic group which has been living on the territory of the Republic of Hungary for at least one century, which represents a numerical minority among the citizens of the state, the members of which are Hungarian citizens, and are distinguished from the rest of the citizens by their own language, culture and traditions, and at the same time demonstrate a sense of belonging together, which is aimed at the preservation of all these, and at the expression and the protection of the interests of their historical communities.” Article 61(13) of the Act lists the minorities as the following: Bulgarian, Roma, Greek, Croatian, Polish, German, Armenian, Romanian, Rusyn, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian, and Ukrainian.

² According to the enumerators' guide, “The person should indicate – irrespective of his citizenship, his native language or his language knowledge – the national minority or ethnic group to which he feels himself to belong and with which he self-identifies. In response to this question, only one national minority or ethnic group can be indicated and recorded! If the person identifies with two national minorities, then the second one should be indicated and recorded under Question 35.”

³ The enumerators' guide noted that “If a person belongs to a single national minority or ethnic group, then the response indicated must be ‘does not belong to another national minority’. If the person belongs to more

- Question 36. What is your mother tongue?⁴ (At most two responses could be given.)
- Question 37. In which languages do you usually speak with family members or friends? (At most two responses could be given.)

As regards national and ethnic identity, it might be worth analysing the responses given to questions pertaining to language knowledge and citizenship, but we do not address this analytical aspect in our study.

Thus, as far as the questions relating to ethnic identity are concerned, the 2001 and 2011 census questionnaires differed only to the following extent: in 2001 each of the four questions had three possible answers; in 2011 the question relating to cultural affiliation was removed, and there were two possible answers to each of the other questions. Besides, the possible responses concerning ethnic identity could be given to two separate questions.

The 2011 census questionnaire – like the one in 2001 – specifically informed respondents that there was no obligation to respond to questions concerning ethnic identity, native language, religious affiliation and health status, as such issues are so-called special data under Act LXIII of 1992 on the protection of personal data and the publication of data of public interest.

In the enumerators' guide, the census enumerators were instructed to indicate “no response” where a respondent chose not to respond to such a question (Questions 34–42).

2. Major features of the ethnic communities

If the aim is to report briefly on the status of a minority and the conditions for its healthy reproduction, the following indicators are the most important: 1. nominal and 2. percentage figures; 3. age composition; 4. economic activity; 5. education.

2.1. Nominal figures

than one national minority or ethnic group, then one of them should be recorded under Question 34 and the other should be recorded under this question.”

⁴ As the native language, enumerators were to indicate the living language that the person learnt as a child (usually as the first language) and which he normally speaks with family members and identifies as his native language.

We consider individuals to have ties with (or belong to) a given minority if they indicated this in their responses to one of the census questions on ethnic identity. Since three different responses were possible for each question in 2001 and two different responses for each question in 2011, we find that the number of individuals belonging to the various minorities is greater than the total number of people with ethnic ties. The difference, however, is not statistically relevant, as Hungarian is one of the pair for a great majority of those expressing a dual identity. It means, for example, that in 2001 about 420 thousand persons gave 442 739 identity declarations since some individuals had ties with more than one minority.

Table 1

The number of people with ethnic ties, by the category of identity, 2001 and 2011⁵

National minority	Total			Ethnicity			Native language			Language in family		
	2001	2011	2001= =100%	2001	2011	2001= =100%	2001	2011	2001= =100%	2001	2011	2001= =100%
Bulgarian	2 316	6 272	270.81	1 358	3 556	261.86	1 299	2 899	223.17	1 118	2 756	246.51
Roma	205 720	315 583	153.40	189 984	308 957	162.62	48 438	54 339	112.18	53 075	61 143	115.20
Greek	6 619	4 642	70.13	2 509	3 916	156.08	1 921	1 872	97.45	1 974	2 346	118.84
Croatian	25 730	26 774	104.06	15 597	23 561	151.06	14 326	13 716	95.74	14 779	16 053	108.62
Polish	5 144	7 001	136.10	2 962	5 730	193.45	2 580	3 049	118.18	2,659	3 815	143.47
German	120 344	185 696	154.30	62 105	131 951	212.46	33 774	38 248	113.25	52 912	95 661	180.79
Armenian	1 165	3 571	306.52	620	3 293	531.13	294	444	151.02	300	496	165.33
Romanian	14 781	35 641	241.13	7 995	26 345	329.52	8 482	13 886	163.71	8 215	17 983	218.90
Rusyn	2 079	3 882	186.72	1 098	3 323	302.64	1 113	999	89.76	1 068	1 131	105.90
Serbian	7 350	10 038	136.57	3 816	7 210	188.94	3 388	3 708	109.45	4 186	5 713	136.48
Slovak	39 266	35 208	89.67	17 693	29 647	167.56	11 817	9 888	83.68	18 057	16 266	90.08
Slovene	4 832	2 820	58.36	3 025	2 385	78.84	3 180	1 723	54.18	3 108	1 745	56.15

⁵ As already noted, the 2001 census included a question concerning cultural ties. This means that individuals responding positively to this question were placed among those respondents with ties to a given minority. Based on the responses, we find that the percentage of individuals for a given minority who belong in this category varies widely (from 3% among Roma people to 55.6% among ethnic Greeks). Of course, we do not know whether, in the absence of the question on cultural ties, how many (what percentage) of these people would have responded positively to a question concerning other ties. This factor must be considered when examining the comparative table.

For more details on the declared identities of the various minorities in the 2001 census, see TÓTH, Á. – VÉKÁS, J. [2005]: *Lojalitás és szolidaritás. Államhatalmi homogenizálás vagy a keresztkötődések erősödése?* (Loyalty and Solidarity. Homogenisation Caused by State Power or a Strengthening of Cross-ties). In: *Kovács, N. – Ósvát, A. – Szarka, L. (eds.): Etnikai identitás, politikai lojalitás. Nemzeti és állampolgári kötődések* (Ethnic Identity and Political Loyalty. National and Civic Ties). Budapest. Balassi Kiadó. pp. 123–149.

Ukrainian	7 393	7 396	100.04	5 070	5 633	111.10	4 885	3 384	69.27	4 519	3 245	71.81
Total	442 739	644 524	145.58	313 832	555 507	177.01	135 497	148 155	109.34	165 970	228 353	137.59

The number of people identifying ties with one or more of the 13 indicated minorities increased by one and a half times in the period between the two censuses (from 443 thousand to 645 thousand, by 146%). The rate and direction of change, however, differed greatly among the various minorities. The largest growth was recorded among the Armenian and Bulgarian minorities. However, in view of their small numbers, these increases had little impact on the rise in the total number of people with ties to the ethnic minorities in Hungary. Of greater influence was the 2.5 times growth in the number of ethnic Romanians as well as increases in the country's two largest ethnic groups, the Roma (153%) and the Germans (154%). A decrease in the size of the minority was reported for three minorities (Slovak 90%, Greek 70%, Slovene 58%).

In terms of the various identity categories, the increase in the number of people expressing an *ethnic identity* was the greatest (177%). In 2011, the number of ethnic Armenians was more than five times higher than in 2001, while the number of Romanians and Rusyns had grown by more than three times and that of Bulgarians and Germans had more than doubled. As far as ethnic identity was concerned, the only downward change was recorded among the Slovenes (79% of the 2001 figure). They were the only ethnic community to see decreases in both the native language and ethnic identity figures compared with 2001, thus becoming the smallest ethnic minority in Hungary.

In terms of ethnic identity, the Roma community remains Hungary's largest ethnic minority; they are followed by the German and Slovak communities.

As far as the gender distribution is concerned, the increase in the number of males was greatest among the Rusyn, Polish and Serb minorities, while the number of females showed the highest rise in the Romanian and Armenian minorities.

In terms of *native language*, the number of people with a minority identity increased by only a small amount (to 109% of the figure in 2001), but this average figure conceals significant differences between the various groups. The number of people identifying one of the Roma community's languages as their native language grew by six thousand. Further, there was an increase of about five and a half thousand in the number of native Romanian speakers and of almost four and a half thousand in the number of German native speakers. The other (smaller) minority communities had no significant impact on the average, although decreases in the number of native speakers were recorded among the Croatian, Greek, Rusyn, Slovak, Slovene and Ukrainian minorities.

Based on the number of native speakers, the Roma and German communities remain the two largest minorities. The Romanian minority, however, has overtaken the Croatian and Slovak minorities. This change reflects a decrease in the number of native Croatian and Slovak speakers and a significant increase in the number of native Romanian speakers.

The extent to which males and females contributed to the changes of the number of native speakers in a given minority community, deserves special attention. Statistically, the greatest variance in this respect was recorded among the Rusyns, in 2011 the number of male native Rusyn speakers was 134.5% higher than in 2001. At the same time, the number of female native Rusyn speakers had fallen to 71.1% of the figure in 2001. It should be noted, however, that no more than 999 individuals identified Rusyn as their native language in 2011, and that even in 2001 the figure had been just 1,113.

It would be worth conducting statistical analysis on the contribution of males to the increase in native German speakers (16% higher than that of females) and in native Roma speakers (5.5% higher than that of females). Overall, between 2001 and 2011, the size of the non-Hungarian native-language speaking community grew by 12-13%.

However, a reduction was observed in the number of Slovene, Ukrainian, Slovak, Greek and Croatian native speakers. In all of these groups, the impact of women was to prevent an even greater decrease.

Regarding the *language spoken in the family and among friends*, the number of people with a minority identity increased by around a third, compared with 2001. The growth was greatest among the ethnic Bulgarians (247%) and the ethnic Romanians (219%). Meanwhile a decrease could be observed among the Slovaks, Ukrainians and Slovenes.

2.2. Ratios for the various identity categories

With respect to ethnicity, minorities differed greatly in terms of the extent to which they fell into the various identity categories. Based on ethnic groups, 97.9% of Roma people expressed ties with the community, while the ratio for the Armenians was 92.2%. At the same time, however, only 17.2% of Roma identified the Romani language as one of their languages, and in the case of Armenian it was only 12.4%. The percentages were similarly low in the case of the language spoken in the family (19.4% and 13.9%).

In contrast, only 56.7% of those with a Bulgarian ethnic identity self-identified as ethnic Bulgarians, and the percentages of those identifying Bulgarian as their native language or the language spoken in the family were not high either (46.2% and

43.9%). Thus, the compactness of identity is low, and the core of the community must be small.

Table 2

Various identity categories among those identifying ties with a given minority, 2001 and 2011

(percentage)

National minority	Ethnicity		Native language		Language in family	
	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011
Bulgarian	58.6	56.7	56.1	46.2	48.3	43.9
Roma	92.4	97.9	23.5	17.2	25.8	19.4
Greek	37.9	84.4	29.0	40.3	29.8	50.5
Croatian	60.6	88.0	55.7	51.2	57.4	60.0
Polish	57.6	81.8	50.2	43.6	51.7	54.5
German	51.6	71.1	28.1	20.6	44.0	51.5
Armenian	53.2	92.2	25.2	12.4	25.8	13.9
Romanian	54.1	73.9	57.4	39.0	55.6	50.5
Rusyn	52.8	85.6	53.5	25.7	51.4	29.1
Serbian	51.9	71.8	46.1	36.9	57.0	56.9
Slovak	45.1	84.2	30.1	28.1	46.0	46.2
Slovene	62.6	84.6	65.8	61.1	64.3	61.9
Ukrainian	68.6	76.2	66.1	45.8	61.1	43.9

Note. See footnote 5.

From Table 2 it can be concluded that a significant proportion of those Greeks who identified only a cultural affiliation in 2001, self-identified as ethnic Greeks in 2011. Even so, by 2011, the compactness of the Greek minority had also increased in terms of the linguistic identity categories. Among the other minorities, there were significant falls in the percentages of those identifying the language of the given minority as their native language. However, these were not nominal decreases, as the number of people identifying ties with one or more of the minorities grew at a far greater rate.

2.3. Age composition

In terms of age composition, notable differences between the 12 national minorities and the Roma ethnic minority could be observed in both 2001 and 2011. Al-

though the extent of the dissimilarities declined slightly between the two censuses, they were still significant in each of the four age groups (children aged 0–14, young economically active people aged 15–39, old economically active people aged 40–59, people aged over 60).

The percentage of children (aged 0–14) in the total population was 16.6% in 2001 and 14.6% in 2011. The population aged during the decade. For the minorities, it is unfortunate that none of them – with the exception of the Roma – reached even this percentage. The largest decline was recorded among the Slovenes (the proportion of children fell from 8.1% to 6.4%), and the Slovaks did little better (9.1%, 7.3%).

At the same time, however, the percentage of children among the Roma population was more than twice the national average, but even in this community a gradual decline could be observed (from 34.5% to 32.4%).

The proportion of the Roma of active working age grew slightly (from 60.8% to 63%), but the share of old economically active people remained very low. Meanwhile, the unmatched low percentage of people aged over 60 fell even further (from 4.7% to 4.6%).

Regarding the German ethnic group, the percentage of children increased from 8.5% to 10.1% and that of people aged over 60 decreased from 28.7% to 27.2%. The proportion of people of active working age has remained roughly the same, but there was a slight shift towards young economically active people (from 30% to 33.6%).

Among the Serbians, the proportion of young economically active people has continued to be stable, while that of old economically active people grew, and this was offset by a decrease in the percentage of people aged 60 and over.

Compared with the total population, there was a higher percentage of old economically active people among each of the minorities apart from the Roma. Between 2001 and 2011, the greatest decreases in the share of this age group were observed among the Bulgarians, Germans and the Poles, whereas it grew among the Romanians.

Between 2001 and 2011 the percentage of people aged over 60 increased in the total population by 3.1%, but the rise was even greater among the Slovene, Rusyn, Bulgarian, Armenian and Polish minorities. The proportions of the Slovaks and Slovenes minorities had been significantly higher and that of the Poles lower than the national average in 2001, whereas among the Rusyns it had been about the same as the national figure. Between 2001 and 2011, the percentage of people aged 60 and over fell somewhat among the Serbian and German communities.

Table 3

Age distribution of people identifying ties with ethnic groups, 2001 and 2011

National minority	Age group (years)											
	0-14			15-39			40-59			60-X		
	2001	2011	%	2001	2011	%	2001	2011	%	2001	2011	%
	number of persons	number of persons	%	number of persons	number of persons	%	number of persons	number of persons	%	number of persons	number of persons	%
Bulgarian	216	640	10.2	789	2 061	32.9	809	1 992	31.8	502	1 579	25.2
Roma	71 005	102 324	32.4	89 348	134 566	42.6	35 697	64 120	20.3	9 670	14 573	4.6
Greek	500	539	11.6	3 047	1 928	41.5	1 987	1 321	28.5	1 085	854	18.4
Croatian	2 358	2 198	8.2	7 508	7 334	27.4	8 567	8 809	32.9	7 297	8 433	31.5
Polish	488	618	8.8	1 688	2 500	35.7	2 235	2 375	33.9	733	1 508	21.5
German	10 275	18 807	10.1	36 048	62 438	33.6	39 533	53 895	29.0	34 488	50 556	27.2
Armenian	97	284	8.0	455	1 253	35.1	381	1 096	30.7	232	938	26.3
Romanian	1 187	2 682	7.5	6 436	14 677	41.2	4 117	12 033	33.8	3 041	6 249	17.5
Rusyn	173	299	7.7	784	1 231	31.7	716	1 286	33.1	406	1 066	27.5
Serbian	636	874	8.7	2 930	3 980	39.6	2 159	3 236	32.2	1 625	1 948	19.4
Slovak	3 584	2 570	7.3	9 615	8 678	24.6	12 440	10 813	30.7	13 627	13 147	37.3
Slovene	390	181	6.4	1 376	691	24.5	1 648	983	34.9	1 418	965	34.2
Ukrainian	749	613	8.3	3 164	3 286	44.4	2 270	2 294	31.0	1 210	1 203	16.3
Population	1 694 936	1 447 659	14.6	3 574 493	3 403 983	34.3	2 847 527	2 754 875	27.7	2 081 559	2 331 111	23.5

2.4. Economic activity

Between the two censuses, the proportion of economically active people in the total population raised from 40.3% to 45.4%. Meanwhile percentage increases were recorded for both employed people (from 36.2% to 39.7%) and unemployed people (from 4.1% to 5.7%) compared to total population. The economically inactive total population is almost equally divided between inactive earners (32.4% and 29.7%) and dependents (27.3% and 24.9%).

The same trends were also manifest among the minorities. The percentage of employed people increased the most among the Romanians: from 40.5% to 51.5%. In their case, the figure was already higher than the national average in 2001, and now the difference is even greater than before. Among those with a Romanian ethnic identity, the percentage of people born abroad was already 49% in 2001. Based on the geographical distribution, we may assume that the high immigration rate of people of active working age will get even higher.

Among the Serbians too, the (6.4 percentage point) growth in the proportion of employed people is higher than the national average.

As far as the Slovaks are concerned, the share of employed people was significantly lower than the national average in 2001 (34.2% compared with 36.2%). Between 2001 and 2011, the Slovak minority experienced a positive change in this regard. The increase (from 34.2% to 39.6%) meant that the Slovaks almost caught up with the national average (39.6% compared with 39.7%); the discrepancy is now just 0.1 percentage points.

Special attention should be given to changes observed among Roma people. In 2001, only 10.8% of people of Roma ethnicity were employed – a drastically lower figure than the national average of 36.2% (itself a low rate in international comparison). In 2011, 16.4% of people of Roma ethnicity said they were employed. This increase of 5.6 percentage points is significantly greater than the growth in the national figure (3.5 percentage points), but it is still worryingly small in terms of the successful integration of Roma people.

Only among the Greeks was there a fall in the proportion of employed people (4.4 percentage points from 47% to 42.6%). In their case, a 6.2 percentage point rise in the figure for dependents compensated for the difference.

The slight (1.6 percentage point) increase in the national unemployment rate (from 4.1% to 5.7%) is similar for all the minorities. The only community to diverge from the national average is the small Ukrainian minority; the 320 jobless ethnic Ukrainians in 2001 constituted 4.3% of the community, while the 606 unemployed

people in 2011 amounted to 8.2% of the community. In 2011, the unemployment rate was the highest – after the Roma community – among the Ukrainian minority.

The rise in the unemployment rate among Roma people was less than the national average (it increased from 11.8% to 13%, that is, by 1.2 percentage points compared with the 1.6 percentage point growth in the national figure).

Among the Germans, Hungary's second-largest minority, the unemployment rate in 2001 was already more favourable than the national average, and this was still the case in 2011. The employment rate grew by 4.1 percentage points (from 40.2% to 44.3%), compared with an increase in the national average of 3.5 percentage points. Meanwhile the rise in the unemployment rate was exactly the same as the national average (1.6 percentage points).

Table 4

The various minority populations by economic activity, 2001 and 2011

National minority	Employed						Unemployed						60-X										
	2001			2011			2001			2011			2001			2011							
	number of persons	%		number of persons	%		number of persons	%		number of persons	%		number of persons	%		number of persons	%						
Bulgarian	1 009	43.6		2 897	46.2		78	3.4		352	5.6		684	29.5		1 780	28.4		545	23.5		1 243	19.8
Roma	22 179	10.8		51 608	16.4		24 236	11.8		41 049	13.0		58 572	28.5		72 444	23.0		100 733	49.0		150 482	47.7
Greek	3 112	47.0		1 979	42.6		282	4.3		300	6.5		1 766	26.7		1 052	22.7		1 459	22.0		1 311	28.2
Croatian	9 872	38.4		11 144	41.6		779	3.0		1 208	4.5		10 355	40.2		9 860	36.8		4 724	18.4		4 562	17.0
Polish	2 478	48.2		3 489	49.8		189	3.7		407	5.8		1 200	23.3		1 652	23.6		1 277	24.8		1 453	20.8
German	48 337	40.2		82 232	44.3		3 107	2.6		7 779	4.2		45 940	38.2		57 350	30.9		22 960	19.1		38 335	20.6
Armenian	546	46.9		1 706	47.8		40	3.4		219	6.1		327	28.1		954	26.7		252	21.6		692	19.4
Romanian	5 982	40.5		18 365	51.5		697	4.7		2 675	7.5		4 976	33.7		8 577	24.1		3 126	21.1		6 024	16.9
Rusyn	903	43.4		1 739	44.8		102	4.9		225	5.8		628	30.2		1 233	31.8		446	21.5		685	17.6
Serbian	3 023	41.1		4 773	47.5		263	3.6		587	5.8		2 227	30.3		2 304	23.0		1 837	25.0		2 374	23.7
Slovak	13 423	34.2		13 930	39.6		1 089	2.8		1 425	4.0		18 245	46.5		14 831	42.1		6 509	16.6		5 022	14.3
Slovene	1 884	39.0		1 174	41.6		149	3.1		91	3.2		2 019	41.8		1 141	40.5		780	16.1		414	14.7
Ukrainian	3 226	43.6		3 319	44.9		320	4.3		606	8.2		2 053	27.8		1 694	22.9		1 794	24.3		1 777	24.0
Hungary	3 690 269	36.2		3 942 723	39.7		416 210	4.1		568 497	5.7		3 305 541	32.4		2 949 727	29.7		2 786 295	27.3		2 476 681	24.9

2.5. Education

Changes in the percentages for highest educational qualification among the various minorities cannot yet be analysed with reliability, because the 2011 census data that have been published to date contain distributions for all persons declaring an ethnic identity but not for appropriate age groups, and so the picture is distorted by the different percentages of children among the various groups. In other words, owing to this factor alone, the figure for the Roma minority is less favourable than the reality, while the data for the minorities with aged populations show relatively a more positive picture than that for the total population when a comparison is made.

Subject to this proviso, one can state that 52.16% of people with ethnic Roma ties had less than eight grades of education in 2001, whereas the corresponding percentage for the total population was 20%. At the time of the 2011 census, these rates had decreased to 47.5% among people with ethnic Roma ties and 18.3% among the population. This was due to the shrinking shares of people in the young age group and of those dropping out of school. The exact impact of the two factors will only be calculable when the age group percentages become known. Even so, we can already see that the percentage point decrease in the share of people with less than eight grades of education was greater among the Roma minority (the rate fell by 3 percentage points from 32.2% in 2001 to 29.2% in 2011) than among the total population.

In 2001, for 37.7% of Roma, the highest educational qualification was eight grades of education in primary school, while the corresponding figure among the total population was 26.3%. In 2011, the relevant rates were 39.4% and 23.3%.

Along with the low base figures and the minimal changes in the shares of Roma with completed primary education or incomplete secondary education (for example those who failed to obtain a secondary school-leaving exam) (both increased by just 5%), in the ten-year period the percentage of Roma people with a secondary school leaving exam (completed secondary education) increased by almost two and a half times (246%) and the number of those having higher educational qualifications more than doubled (from 1139 to 2607, that is, an increase of 229%). On the one hand, this implies a need to rethink education policy. On the other hand, our analysis shows that it is only worth examining this issue in conjunction with the other factors of integration, such as economic integration. At the level of social structural analysis, the powerful impact of economic integration can be shown. Indeed, economic integration is capable of compensating for the inadequacies of education, whereas the reverse is not true.

The other 12 minorities do not show the same critical symptoms. In 2001, the percentage of people completed less than eight grades in primary education was higher than the national average among the Slovaks and the Croatians – both with aged populations – but by 2011 the two groups had caught up. Among all 12 national

minorities, the proportion of people with higher educational qualifications is greater than the national average (14.5% in 2011). In 2011, the relevant figure of the Germans was 25% (compared with 18% in 2001), and among those minorities with a high proportion of immigrants, the rates were even higher (38% of Poles, 36% of Armenians, 31% of Ukrainians, and 30% of Rusyns). The Romanians represent an exception, as their percentage (14.85%) is only slightly higher than the national average in Hungary. The greatest increases were observed among the Croatians (150%) and the Slovenes (143%). This requires a separate investigation, because the number of Slovenes fell over the decade by a half (to 58.4% of the previous figure), while the Croatian minority stood still (104%).

3. Causes (sources) of the changes

A change in the population of a given territory has two causes (or sources): natural increase (the difference between the number of births and deaths) and migration (the difference between the number of immigrants and emigrants).

The reduction in Hungary's population by more than 260 thousand people between 2001 and 2011 was due primarily to a natural decrease of more than 387 thousand, which was mitigated somewhat by a positive migration balance of 126 thousand people.

How did the same factors impact on Hungary's minorities in such a manner as to result in an increase of more than 200 thousand in their number?

In terms of natural increase, the minorities did not differ substantially from the national average: live births among women with ethnic ties and aged 15 years and over exceeded two only in the case of the Roma. But in their case, one also has to consider a relatively low life expectancy.

We know that among people with a minority identity the number of people born outside Hungary rose from 35 thousand in 2001 to 70 thousand in 2011 (with ethnic Romanians accounting for more than half of it), but even this growth is only a fraction of the total change in the minority population.

It would seem, therefore, that in the case of a national or ethnic community we must also consider the presence of a third cause (source) of a population increase: the difference between assimilation and dissimilation. Identity – and its national and ethnic components – is a dynamic category. Alongside personal factors, many social circumstances also determine an individual's feelings in respect of his national and ethnic identity, and they also influence how an individual describes himself (his self-identification) in the census.

The question, therefore, is this: how can we delimit and define the group of individuals who, at some time between the two censuses, changed their self-identification, whereby, for instance, although in the 2001 census they stated that they were Hungarians in response to each of the questions on national and ethnic identity, in 2011 they declared themselves to be Germans in response to one or more of the census questions?

For the purposes of our analysis, we placed the members of a given national and ethnic community in three categories based on their migration features: those born outside Hungary, domestic migrants, and those who have lived in the same place since birth. When examining the individuals in the third category, we can exclude the effects of migration and then, by carrying out a ten-year shift in the cohort data of the two censuses, determine the minimum number of dissimilating individuals.

We present the methodology using the example of people with German ethnic ties.

The number of people with German ethnic ties grew between the two censuses from 120 344 to 185 696 (154.3%). As part of this, the number of individuals born outside Hungary increased from 9 756 to 17 500 (179.4%), and so the percentage of such people among the Germans in Hungary changed from 8.1% in 2001 to 9.4% in 2011. The extra number of those born outside Hungary, amounting to 7 744, thus contributed to the 11.8% increase in the ethnic Germans population.

At the same time, however, the number of people with ethnic German ties who, at the time of the census, had lived in the same place since birth, increased from 19 351 in 2001 to 33 108 in 2011 (171.2%). Accordingly, their proportion of the total number of people with German ethnic ties increased from 16.1% to 17.8%.

By dividing the people with ethnic German ties who have always resided in their birthplace into five-year age groups, we can examine how the number of people in an age group in 2001 relates to the number of people in an age group that is ten years older at the time of the 2011 census.

We need, therefore, to examine how, for instance, the number of persons aged 0–4 in the 2001 census relates to the number of persons aged 10–14 in the 2011 census, and so forth. By excluding persons that have migrated to the area, the size of the age groups in the 2011 census cannot be greater (ought not to be greater) than the size of the ten-year-younger age groups in the 2001 census. The data, however, indicated different results, as shown in the following table.

Table 5

The number of people with ethnic German ties who have resided in the same place since birth

Age group	2001	2011	2001=100%	Difference
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	censuses (number of persons)			
0–4		3 962		
5–9		3 756		
10–14	901	3 093	343.3	2 192
15–19	1 727	3 642	210.9	1 915
20–24	2 363	3 743	158.4	1 380
25–29	2 280	3 064	134.4	784
30–34	2 060	1 978	96.0	–82
35–39	1 445	1 606	111.1	161
40–44	839	1 189	141.7	350
45–49	687	1 010	147.0	323
50–54	777	1 103	142.0	326
55–59	940	1 168	124.3	228
60–64	855	922	107.8	67
65–69	688	718	104.4	30
70–74	774	693	89.5	–81
75–79	768	614	79.9	–154
80–84	857	514	60.0	–343
85 and over	1 390	333	24.0	–1 057
<i>Total</i>	<i>19 351</i>	<i>33 108</i>		<i>7 756</i>

Table 5 shows that at the time of the 2001 census there were 901 persons aged 0–4 years (who then fell into the 10–14 age group in 2011). However, in the 2011 census, 3 093 persons with ethnic German ties were recorded in this age group. This is a disparity of 2 192. We see that among the older age groups, the increase declines continuously, but it is only among the age groups aged over 70 that dissimilation is unable to compensate for the impact of outward migration and death.

Aggregating the positive values of the final column in Table 5, we may conclude that at least 7 756 persons with ethnic German ties and residing in the same place since birth have dissimilated, and that this group of people accounts for at least 56.4% of the nominal increase in the ethnic category between the two censuses.

Table 6

The minimum extent of dissimilation among people with ethnic German ties and residing in the same place since birth, 2001–2011

Persons self-identifying as ethnic Germans	Number
Total number of persons in 2001	19 351

Total number of persons in 2011	33 108
Difference	13 757
Minimum nominal difference stemming from dissimilation	7 756
Minimum percentage difference stemming from dissimilation	56.4

In reality the nominal and percentage figures can only be greater, because dissimilation is the only factor that can compensate for the ethnic Germans who have died, emigrated or been assimilated in the ten-year period.

There is another possibility for refining the methods; in particular, one could group the data according to year of birth rather than age-group. This would eliminate the distortion that arises from the notional date of the 2011 census. Even so, the available figures suffice to demonstrate the logic of the analysis.

The methodology is of limited applicability.

Where ethnic ties have declined among the (Greek, Slovak and Slovene) minorities, a decrease was also observed between the two censuses in the number of those who had always resided in the same place since birth. In the case of these minorities, our methods are clearly unable to determine the minimum amount of the increase stemming from dissimilation – because there was no demographic increase among those residing in the same place since birth.

Aforementioned also applies to the Croatian and Ukrainian minorities for which the number of people with ethnic ties has stagnated, but the number of those residing in the same place since birth has declined.

Turning now to the Roma minority, we see that the unusual age composition (low average age, high birth rate, early death) renders our methods inapplicable, even though the rate of increase for this minority cannot be explained by immigration (as the immigration rate was extremely low) or even by the relatively high fertility rate.

In consequence, for the purposes of our analysis, we are left with the following seven minorities and indicators.

Table 7

The minimum dissimilation-caused increase in the number of people with ethnic ties residing in the same place since birth, 2001–2011

National minority	Percentage of people with ethnic ties residing in the same place since birth (for 2011)	Minimum dissimilation-caused increase	
		(number of persons)	%
Bulgarian	14.5	414	59.6
Polish	11.8	124	34.4
German	17.8	7 756	56.4

Armenian	13.7	287	71.9
Romanian	5.8	45	6.9
Rusyn	15.1	336	72.9
Serbian	10.2	76	23.6

Although people residing in the same place since birth make up no more than 5.8%–17.8% of a given minority population, and their characteristic features evidently differ in many ways from those of immigrants or domestic migrants, it is noteworthy that the potential minimum for increases stemming from dissimilation is high.

4. Non-respondents

Finally, we should note that compared with the 2001 census, in the 2011 census there was a significantly higher number of people who chose not to respond the questions relating to national and ethnic identity.

As we have already mentioned, under the provisions of Act LXIII of 1992 on the protection of personal data and the publicity of data of public interest, data relating to ethnic background, native language, and the language used in the family are so-called special data, whereby people are not obligated to respond to questions concerning these categories. We may conclude that the number of people who made use of this possibility was higher in 2011 than in 2001 – despite the fact that even then it was quite high in an international comparison.

Table 8

The number of non-respondents by identity category, 2001 and 2011

Identity category	2001		2011	
	number of persons	%	number of persons	%
Ethnic identity	570 537	5.6	1 455 883	14.7
Native language	541 106	5.3	1 443 840	14.5
Language in family	558 246	5.5	1 486 218	15.0
Culture	628 328	6.2	–	–
Total population	10 198 315	100.0	9 937 628	100.0

While analysing the 2001 census data, we concluded that the high level of latency cannot be the primary reason for the high percentage of non-respondents among the minority populations. The true causes should be sought in the deeper social processes that are associated with understanding and interpreting the nature of national and ethnic identity.