

HUNGARY AT A GLANCE

Károly Kocsis

Location: Hungary is located in the Carpathian Basin, in the southeastern part of Central Europe between 16°05' and 22°58' of eastern longitude, and 45°48' and 48°35' of northern latitude, almost equidistant between the equator and the North Pole. Hungary is a landlocked country. From Budapest the nearest seaport is Rijeka on the Adriatic Sea (420 km by air). Due to its central location the country's territory is a genuine arena of oceanic, continental and Mediterranean air masses.

Territory: The Hungarian state territory (93,023 sq. km) spans 528 km from the west to the east, and 268 km from the north to the south. Geographical extremes are the village of Garbolc in the east, where the sun rises 27 minutes earlier than over Felsőszőlők in the west; the Nagy-Milic mountain peak in the north and parts of the village territory of Beremend in the south. As regards the territory of the country, Hungary with its 108th position ranks in the middle of the countries of the world, and its size is comparable to that of South Korea and Portugal.

Borders: The present borders of the Hungarian state arose in the aftermath of the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, when the dictated Peace of Trianon (Versailles, 4 June 1920) cut the territory of historical Hungary into pieces. The total length of the

Hungarian national borders amounts to 2,246 km, shared by the following countries: Slovakia – 679, Ukraine – 137, Romania – 453, Serbia – 164, Croatia – 355, Slovenia – 102 and Austria – 356.

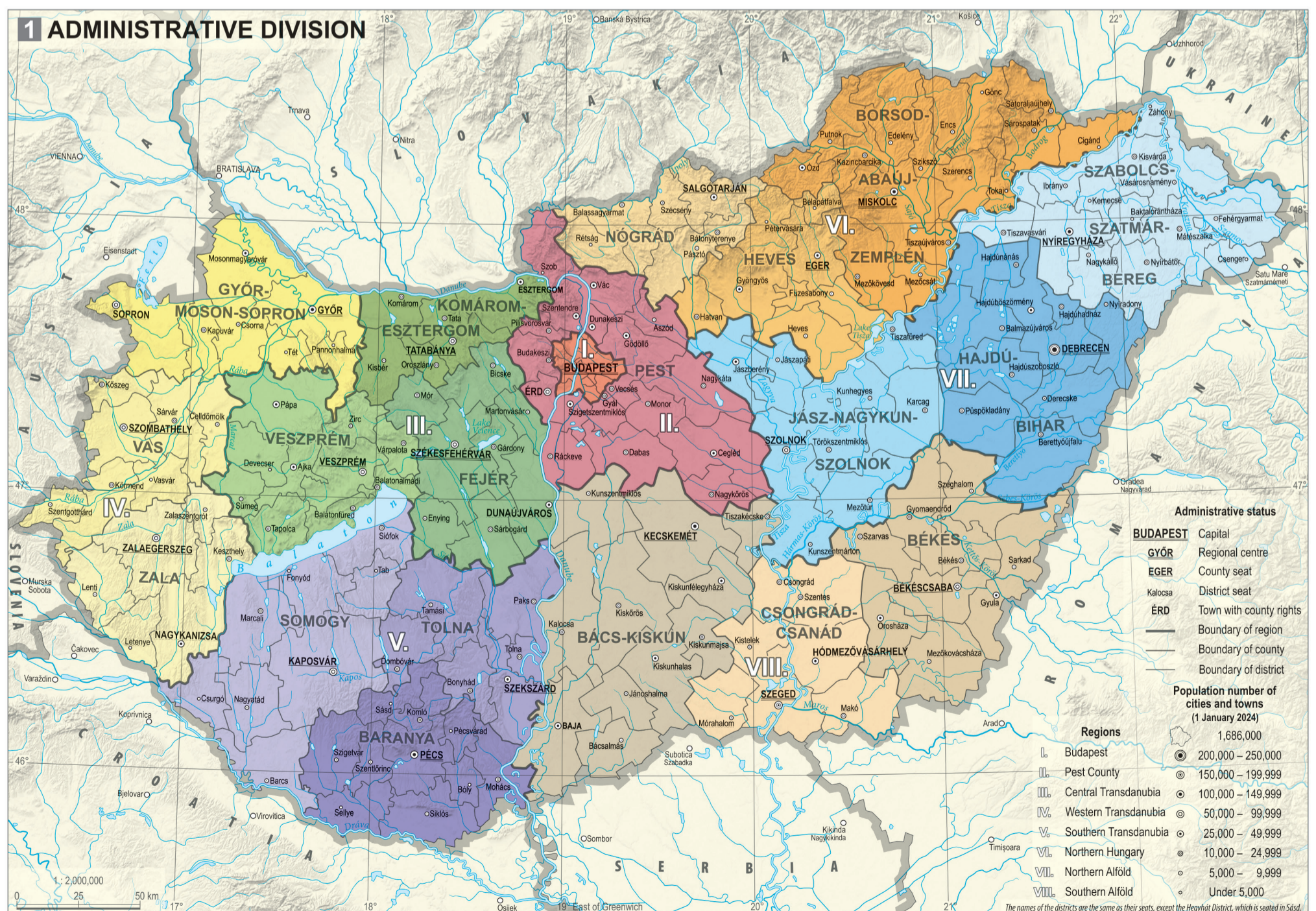
Administrative divisions: In 1950 Hungary's territory was subdivided into 19 counties ('vármegye' in Hungarian) and the capital (Budapest). Since 2018 these have been grouped together into 8 regions for statistical and development purposes **1**. The counties and the capital are subdivided into districts: 174 ('járás') in the counties and 23 ('kerület') in Budapest. Among the local municipalities (3,154) there are 347 urban settlements, out of which 25 are called 'towns with county rights' ('megyei jogú város'). The system of Hungarian counties, as substantial administrative units of the country, has a history going back nearly a thousand years. Following the partitioning of the country in 1920 the number of counties steadily decreased (1918: 71, 1930: 25, 1950: 19).

Population: The country had 9.58 million inhabitants on 1 January 2024, giving a population density of 103 people/sq. km. This number of inhabitants (which is comparable to that of Israel and Belarus) places Hungary as an average country (96th position in the international ranking of countries).

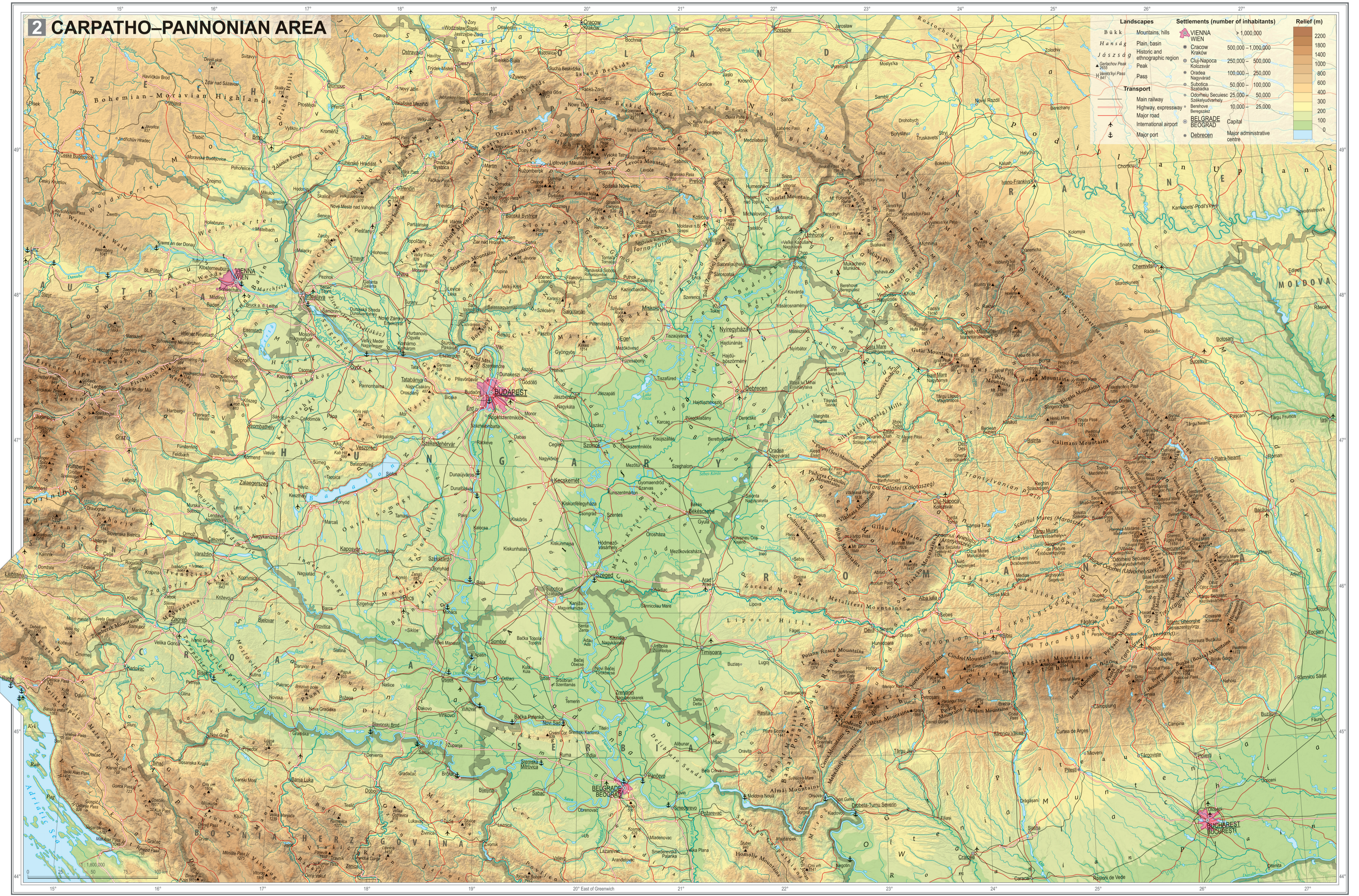
Settlements: The most populous city is Budapest (1.69 million inhabitants on 1 January 2024), followed by these towns (thousand people): Debrecen (202), Szeged (158), Miskolc (143), Pécs (140), Győr (130), Nyíregyháza (115) and Kecskemét (109). There are 36 medium-sized towns (25,000–100,000 inhab.) and 93 small towns (10,000–25,000 inhab.). The number of settlements with less than 1,000 people is 1,835.

Natural environment: Hungary today is predominantly a lowland country, since 82.4% of the territory lies at an elevation of less than 200 metres above the mean sea level, and only 0.6% of the territory rises over 500 metres **2**. The highest point of the country (Mt. Kékes) is 1,014 metres; the lowest point (near Szeged) is at 76 metres a.s.l. The country lies in the drainage area of the Danube. The longest river reaches in its territory are as follows: Tisza (597 km), Danube (417 km), Rába (188 km) and Zagyva (179 km). The largest lakes of Hungary (in km²) are Lake Balaton (596), Lake Fertő/Neusiedl (87, total area: 335) and Lake Velence (26).

Land use: 77.2% of the territory of Hungary is productive land (including arable 44.9%, forest 22.3%, grassland 8.5%). One-fifth of the territory is land taken out of cultivation (e.g. residential buildings, industrial areas, transport surfaces or barren lands).



2 CARPATHO-PANNONIAN AREA



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