HISTORICAL ADMINISTRATIVE GEOGRAPHY OF HUNGARY

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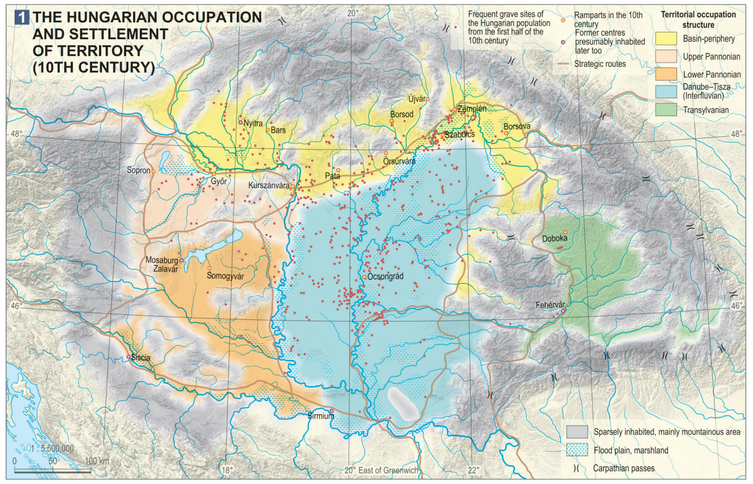
The medieval Hungarian state (895–1526)

The first state formation in the Carpathian Basin arose after the *Roman Empire* advanced into the region in the first and early second centuries CE. Two Roman provinces were formed: *Pannonia* west of the Danube and *Dacia* in Transylvania. In the 5th century, *Hunnic* and *Germanic* peoples occupied the basin. The 6th century saw the arrival of the *Avar*s, who established a Khaganate. Concurrently and especially from the 7th century onwards, *Slavic* peoples settled in the region. The Avars lived near the rivers and floodplains of the lowlands, whereas the Slavic peoples tended to inhabit the more remote marshlands and the wooded uplands. Meanwhile, the Germanic peoples settled along the major transport routes. The *Carolingian (Frankish) Empire* slowed the westward movement of the Slavs and halted the Avar advance. With the aim of weakening the Avars, the Carolingian Empire supported the formation of a Slavic dependent state *(Principality of Moravia)* to the north of the Danube. In the 9th century, Louis the Pious, a Carolingian ruler, established the Regio Pannonia as part of his empire, which was steadily expanding eastwards. It was here that the *Marquisate of Mosaburg* was formed in the latter half of the 9th century with a mixed population of Germanic peoples, Slavs and Avars. The periphery of the declining *Bulgarian Empire* covered an area from Syrmia to southern Transylvania. When the Hungarians arrived in the Carpathian Basin, they encountered power centres, fortifications and Christian institutions in these areas. By this time, the earlier Avar domination of the plains had ended; the area was now inhabited by a mixed population of Avars and Slavs.



The Hungarian occupation of territory in the 9th–10th centuries

The *Hungarian conquest* of the Carpathian Basin, which lasted from the late 9th century until the mid-10th century 1, was an occupation 1 based on two important principles: 1. the strategic occupation of territory by military means; 2. the occupation and settlement of the territory based on political power relations. The *strategic occupation of territory* entailed the establishment of major strategic strongholds along military roads and the securing of ferry crossings and fords. Concurrently but at a slower pace, a process of occupation and settlement took place. This entailed the destruction of the external power structures, the occupation of their bases, the control of military marching routes, and the construction of external (frontier) defence systems in the mountains encircling the basin. The next major step was the designation of military and tribal centres and settlement areas, coupled with the establishment of an internal defence system.

1 *Detail of Mihály Munkácsy's painting The Conquest*

Until the mid-10th century, the strategic occupation of territory was tied to external military campaigns aimed at the conquest of the Carpathian Basin. The cemeteries of the first half of the 10th century where the remains of the Hungarian conquerors have been found, were concentrated where the plains meet the surrounding hills. Such cemeteries are also found in other parts of the Carpathian Basin along military roads, at strategic junctions and in the former power centres. From the mid-10th century onwards and following the conclusion of the external campaigns, a more comprehensive and unifying process of territorial expansion began, resulting in the settlement of a significant Hungarian population in other parts of the basin. Accordingly, by the end of the 10th century, the following territorial occupation structure had emerged:

1. The *'basin-periphery' structure* emerged in the valleys of tributaries of the Danube and Tisza, in an area extending from the Vág to the Maros. In this region, an important aim was the integration of the Moravian territories lying between the Vág and Garam rivers. Traces of 10th-century and 11th-century settlements have been discovered near the rivers. Indeed, deposits of artefacts may be found from the lower to the upper reaches of each river in the region, together with onomastic finds. The most intense areas of settlement and the places where centres emerged lay at the valley entrances between the edges of the flood plain and the foothills. This region was the first to be administratively organized, becoming the location of the princely centres. The royal centre was also established here, in the northeastern corner of Transdanubia.

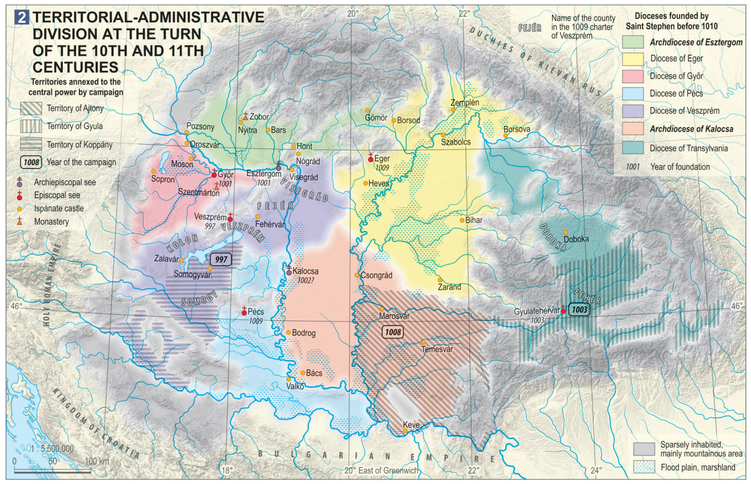
2. The *'Pannonian' structure* reflected the late Roman and Carolingian divisions in Transdanubia, with the area being divided by the old Roman roads into lower and upper parts of Pannonia. This division was later instrumental in the development of the early dioceses and counties. The administrative centres emerged primarily along the strategic routes. Recent archaeological research has shown a strong link between the territorial structure of royal power in Transdanubia in the 10th and 11th centuries and its Carolingian antecedents. Similarly, the east-west division of the Roman era was upheld in the area between the Drava, Danube and Sava, which constituted an evolving buffer zone against the Bulgarian and Byzantine Empires.

3. The *'Transylvanian' structure* constituted an outer area of settlement, where the strategic capture of the earlier centres was paramount in the 10th century. The final Hungarian settlement of territory began after the campaigns launched by Stephen I of Hungary in the early 11th century. The settlement of Székelys and Saxons in the area occurred in the 11th and 12th centuries. This was followed by the appearance of Vlach (Romanian) shepherds from the Balkans and Wallachia in the high mountain pastures of the Carpathians.

4. The *'Danube–Tisza (interfluvian)' structure* arose in the Alföld, which in earlier centuries had been predominantly inhabited by Avars. By the 10th century, however, few traces of the earlier Avar presence remained. Indeed, there were no major Avar centres and settlements between the Danube and Tisza. In this area, the incoming Hungarians tended to settle on ridges alongside rivers and at the edges of the floodplains. Less commonly, they also settled in the floodplain interior. The settlement of this area was still underway in the 13th century (Cumans).

The Hungarian state in the Arpadian Age

The occupation and settlement of territory was a lengthy process, with advances being made at different times in the various parts of the region. The *organization of the state* in the late 10th century resulted in profound changes in the territorial organization. A centralization of power under *Prince Géza* (972–997) was followed by the formation of a medieval state during the reign of *Stephen I* (997–1038) 2. They chose to establish power and territorial structures of the Carolingian-Bavarian type and rejected the Byzantine model. This also entailed the adoption of Roman Christianity and the associated feudal system of land tenure. Prince Géza and King Stephen I, the founder of the Christian Hungarian state and the first king of Hungary succeeded in constructing a new national order in alliance with the strongest and most menacing foreign power. Setting aside the previous structures, Géza and then Stephen I began to establish the *royal system* in Hungary. Hungarian power centres were established by Géza and Stephen I in the areas formerly controlled by the Moravian state, by Koppány in the old Frankish areas of Lower Pannonia, and by Gyula and Ajtony in the eastern and southern provinces. Supported by the papal and imperial courts, Stephen undertook the important task of centralizing royal power. The campaign of 997 was particularly important, for *Koppány*'s defeat facilitated the survival and consolidation of the new order under Stephen I. Two other campaigns soon followed – against *Gyula* in 1003 and against *Ajtony* in 1008 2. Victories in both campaigns enabled the extension of the institutional and territorial system of royal power to the entire country. Elements in this process were ecclesiastical organization, the founding of dioceses, and the establishment of royal ispánates (castle districts) manifesting the ruler's power. The *founding of dioceses* began with the bishopric of Veszprém (997) and continued with the archbishopric of Esztergom, the bishopric of Győr (1001), the archbishopric of Kalocsa (1002), and the bishopric of Transylvania (Gyulafehérvár, 1003). In terms of the number and size of the early dioceses, in addition to political interests, a key objective was to ensure the accessibility of the entire area from the diocesan centre (the episcopal see). For this reason, the establishment of roads adjacent to rivers was a priority. In 1009, two new dioceses (Eger and Pécs) were founded. At the time of Stephen I's death in the mid-11th century, ten dioceses were in existence. During the medieval period, the number and territorial boundaries of these dioceses changed little.



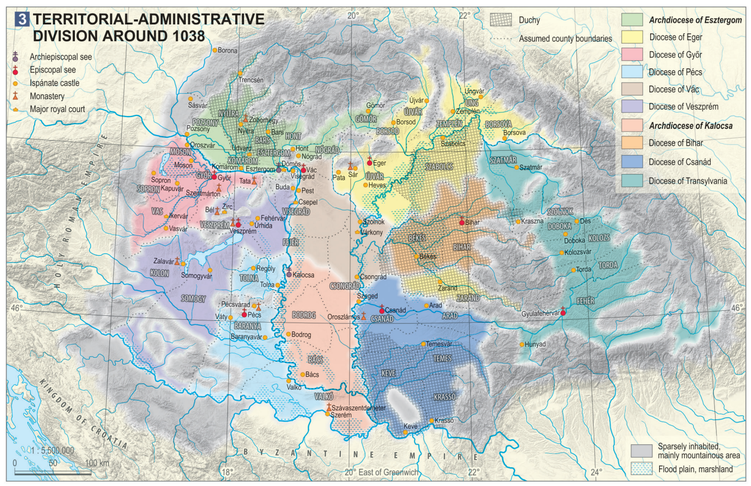
Another important administrative and territorial unit was the *royal county* (comitatus), which served the unity of the country and the enforcement of royal power 3. The *ispánates* (castle districts) and the *counties* were closely related to each other, but they were not identical. Each county formed a contiguous area, whereas an *ispánate* could be spread over a scattered area. Further, the territory of a county included all the royal, ecclesiastical and landlord estates of the county. The counties were headed by county *ispán*s, who were responsible for collecting taxes and for organizing and leading the local military force. Important county offices were the lieutenant (maior exercitus), the castellan (maior castri), and the castle magistrate (curialis comes). Each county military force was led by the ispán and the lieutenant and comprised the castle warriors (iobagiones castri).

2 *The equestrian statue of St Stephen in Buda Castle*

The territorial-administrative system established by Stephen I was determined in many respects by the features of earlier spatial structures, the evolving system of duchies, and tribal and clan divisions. The boundaries of the counties, which arose around the centres of the castle ispánates, reflected population density, the extent of usable and defensible land, and the location of routes linked with the network of waterways. Although routes traversing mountainous regions were important, most counties were nevertheless organized on the basis of the network of waterways. Based on the available sources, the number and geographical boundaries of the counties founded by Stephen I cannot be precisely determined. Historians now estimate that there were 48-50 such counties, many of which constituted border counties, with their external boundaries being the outer area of the frontier defence system in the wooded Carpathians. Uninhabited or sparsely inhabited, these areas were traversed by roads with defensive installations and lookout posts. On the country's western and southern peripheries there were better organized military frontiers and buffer zones.

The dynastic division of royal power resulted in the formation of duchies in the core areas of the country. The duchies of Nyitra, Bihar and Temes were created, each of which became a major political actor both in the power struggles of the Arpadian dynasty and in the preservation of national unity. In the late 11th century, *Ladislaus I* (1077–1095) captured a large part of the Kingdom of Croatia during a military campaign in 1091. In 1102, *Coloman* (1095–1116) was duly crowned king of Croatia. In this way, a personal union was formed, with the *Kingdom of Croatia* becoming subject to the Hungarian Holy Crown (it remained so until 1918).

The 12th century saw the completion of the organization of the state, despite external and domestic political struggles. The inhabited area in the counties grew, and the territory under their administration expanded. These developments reflected an increase in the donation of royal land. New counties were formed, with their total number reaching seventy. The areas of the former frontier defence system largely fell under the administration of the counties. After the promulgation of the Golden Bull in 1222, the royal counties were transformed into *noble counties* at the end of the 13th century. In such counties, the king appointed the ispán, but the local nobles elected the 'judge of servitors' (iudex nobilium). This period saw the abolition of the military frontier on Hungary's western periphery. The majority of the region's Székely inhabitants as border guards were resettled to Transylvania. Meanwhile, Saxons were settled in Upper Hungary and in Transylvania on estates donated by the king. In the



aftermath of the Mongol invasion of 1241, *Béla IV* (1235–1270) reorganized the country to reflect the altered circumstances. In the country's new defensive system, emphasis was placed on the construction of castles and fortresses from stone and on the resettlement of *Cumans* (Kun people) in the central parts of the Alföld (1243–1244). 4

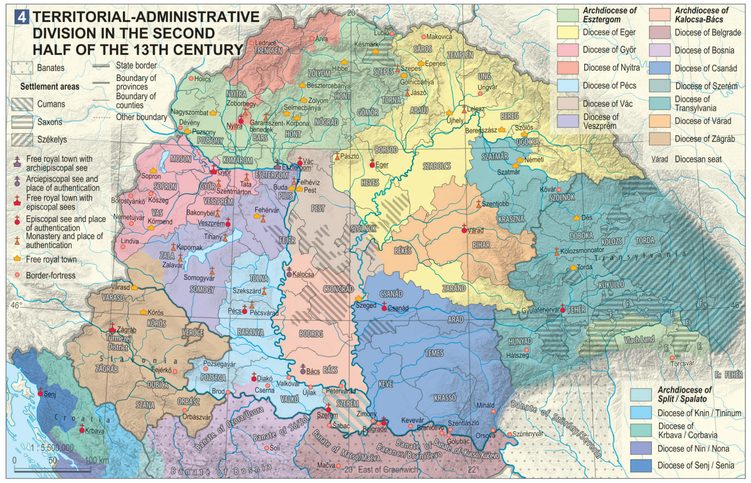
The *provinces* of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary had been established by the 13th century. Stephen I had already established counties in Transylvania, the number of which subsequently increased, but the share of royal lands and forests remained significant. With the settlement of the *Székelys* and *Saxons*, who later gained autonomy, Transylvania was characterized by a complex territorial system by the 13th century (with counties and areas inhabited by Saxons and Székelys). As a result of the great distance from the core area of the kingdom, the whole province came under the control of the *Transylvanian voivode*, a high-ranking official, who represented the Hungarian king. In the region southwest of the Drava, the Hungarian presence was consolidated through the establishment of counties in the 11th century. After the annexation of the Kingdom of Croatia, the area inhabited predominantly by Slavs became a province (Slavonia) headed by a *ban (viceroy)*. From the 12th century onwards, in the territories lying to the south of the Sava and Danube, so-called *banates* were established for defensive purposes. These political and administrative territorial entities, whose number and extent often changed, could be used to monitor developments in the Balkans.

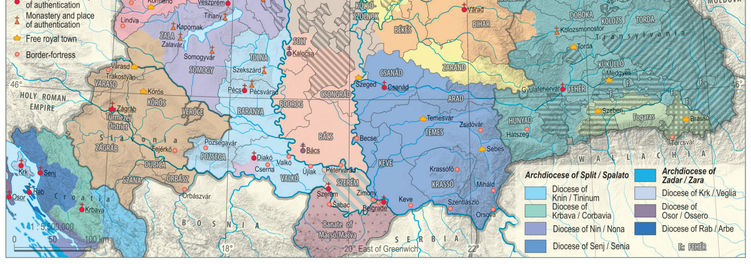
The age of kings from various dynasties (1301–1526)

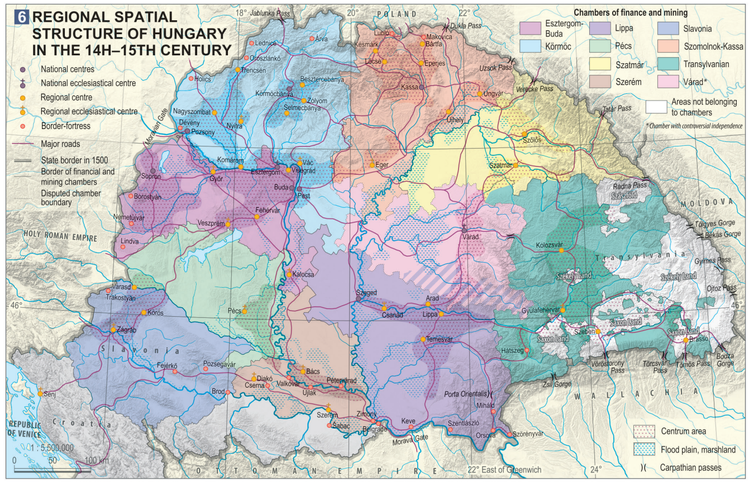
In the 14th and 15th centuries, the administrative role of some noble counties grew during the reign of *Charles I* (1308–1342), but no significant organizational changes occurred. A notable change was the division of Hont and Szolnok counties into parts, and the separation of Árva, Turóc and Liptó counties from Zólyom. With the legal guaranteeing of the Cuman (Kun) privileges and the establishment of the Székely and Saxon seats, the *various ethnically based privileged areas* became crucial elements in the territorial-administrative system 5.

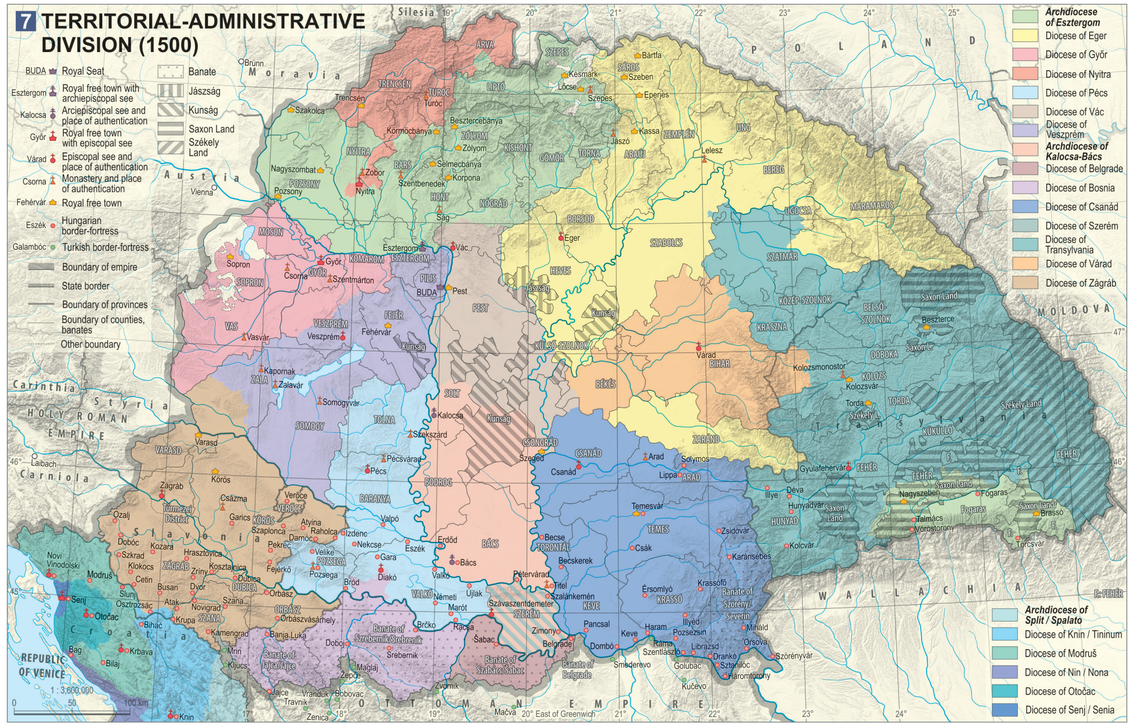
In the 14th century, during the reigns of the Angevin kings *Charles I* and *Louis I* (1342–1382), the transformation of the feudal economy accelerated. An increase in the money supply led to a significant expansion of trade, which spanned ever-greater distances. The number of cities also grew. The extent of these processes varied around the country, giving rise to greater regional disparities. By mid-century, economic and administrative relations covering the whole country had been established. Active central and passive peripheral areas arose, which reflected in turn the extent of spatial connections. The *central regions*, which consisted of the catchment areas of the *centres established on the inner edge of the basin*, were formed along the Sopron–Pozsony–Esztergom–Buda line, in Lower and Upper Hungary, in the Upper Tisza region, in Transylvania and in the southern areas 6. Regional spatial divisions were the basis for the nine financial and mining chambers established by the Arpadian kings and reorganized by Charles I.

By the 15th century, privileged towns and places of authentication had joined the lengthy list of Hungary's administrative (and legal) territorial divisions, which included the existing dioceses, counties, provinces, military banates, and the Cuman, Székely and Saxon seats 7. The granting of town privileges became an important part of royal policy as early as the 13th century. After the Mongol invasion, the country's major urban centres acquired a distinct legal status reflecting their economic and political stature. They became known as *royal free towns* in view of their royal privileges, which afforded them the highest degree of autonomy within the feudal system. The privileges were complex in nature, but the essential elements were personal liberty and freedom of association, the free election of prelates and magistrates, and the right to bear arms in defence of the city and the king. The construction of stone walls around the royal free towns was permitted. Further, various economic rights accompanied the status: common taxation for the king, the right to hold fairs, custom exemptions, and the right to stop goods in transit were the most important. The privileges could be obtained or then lost for longer periods. Major royal free towns in Hungary were, among others, Buda, Székesfehérvár, Sopron, Pozsony, Kassa, Bártfa and Szeged. Each of these towns had an impact on spatial development in the country. The major legal instruments of the medieval state were the charters that documented the founding of institutions and the donation of property and privileges. Such charters were authenticated by seals. Initially, the charters were written and sealed at the royal centres, but increasingly they were (also) issued at ecclesiastical centres (by the cathedral and collegiate chapters). From the late 12th century onwards, some of the Benedictine, Premonstratensian, Knights Hospitaller and Stephanite monasteries also became *places of authentication*. Their right to seal charters was usually valid in a specific area. Beginning in the late 15th century, the rate of development of this convoluted territorial administrative system slowed. The most significant administrative change in the final years of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary was the collapse of the southern border defence system. This precipitated the Ottoman (Turkish) conquest of the border castles, strongholds in the southern region, which had previously formed the centres of the military banates (Srebrenik 1512, Belgrade, Šabac 1521, Szörény/Severin 1524, Jajce 1527).









The Carpathian Basin. In the early 16th century, both empires were headed by rulers with grand political ambitions. In the *Habsburg Empire*, *Charles V*, Holy Roman Emperor, strove for hegemony in Europe. Meanwhile, in the *Ottoman Empire*, which spanned three continents, *Suleiman I* (1520–1566) likewise harboured such hegemonic ambitions. The conflict between the two empires defined the Ottoman period in Hungary's history. Both imperial entities encountered geographical limits to their expansion, reflecting the spatial limitations of government. For its part, the Ottoman Empire suffered logistical difficulties when fielding and manoeuvring mass armies, while the performance capacities of the Habsburg state administration similarly restricted its expansion. Despite all their efforts in the European arena, the Ottomans reached Vienna only twice (1529, 1683). Indeed, after the death of Suleiman, their empire entered a period of decline. In contrast, the state organization of the Habsburg Empire became increasingly efficient. Indeed, as time passed, a new Central European power emerged with its centre at Vienna. Whereas at the start of the Ottoman period, the anti-Turkish offensives of the Habsburg forces could proceed no further than the middle part of the Carpathian Basin, a century and a half later they were able to penetrate deep into the Balkan Peninsula.

In the 14th and 15th centuries, Hungary was a *major Central European power* with a socio-economic and cultural status approaching that of Western Europe. At the turn of the 16th century, there was a steady decline in its economic and defensive capabilities. Then, following the Ottoman occupation, the country found itself on the *periphery of Europe* in a buffer zone between two world empires.

From 1521, the Ottoman Empire occupied the southern border zone of the Kingdom of Hungary. After the defeat at Mohács (1526) and the capture of Buda (1541), the Ottoman forces proceeded to occupy the central parts of the country and then launched further offensives from their new fortresses. When the Treaty of Adrianople (1568) was signed, the Ottomans controlled more than a third of the historical territory of Hungary 8 3. The core area of the Hungarian state thus became part of the Ottoman Empire, while the western and northern areas of the Kingdom of Hungary were absorbed into the Habsburg Empire. In consequence, *the Carpathian Basin turned into a large buffer zone, a peripheral frontier between two foreign powers*. Shorter and longer periods of strife alternated with periods of relative peace.

After the death of Louis II without an heir (Battle of Mohács, 1526), Hungary was divided into two parts. Following the election of János Szapolyai as king, the troops of Ferdinand of Habsburg, who claimed the Hungarian throne himself, invaded the parts of the country along the Danube. After the Habsburg counter-king election, the northern and western areas became part of the Habsburg Empire. The eastern Hungarian Kingdom, initially ruled by the Szapolyai family, grew steadily more 'independent' under Ottoman vassalage. The third split was that the central and southern areas of the country became part of the Ottoman Empire through the Turkish conquest.

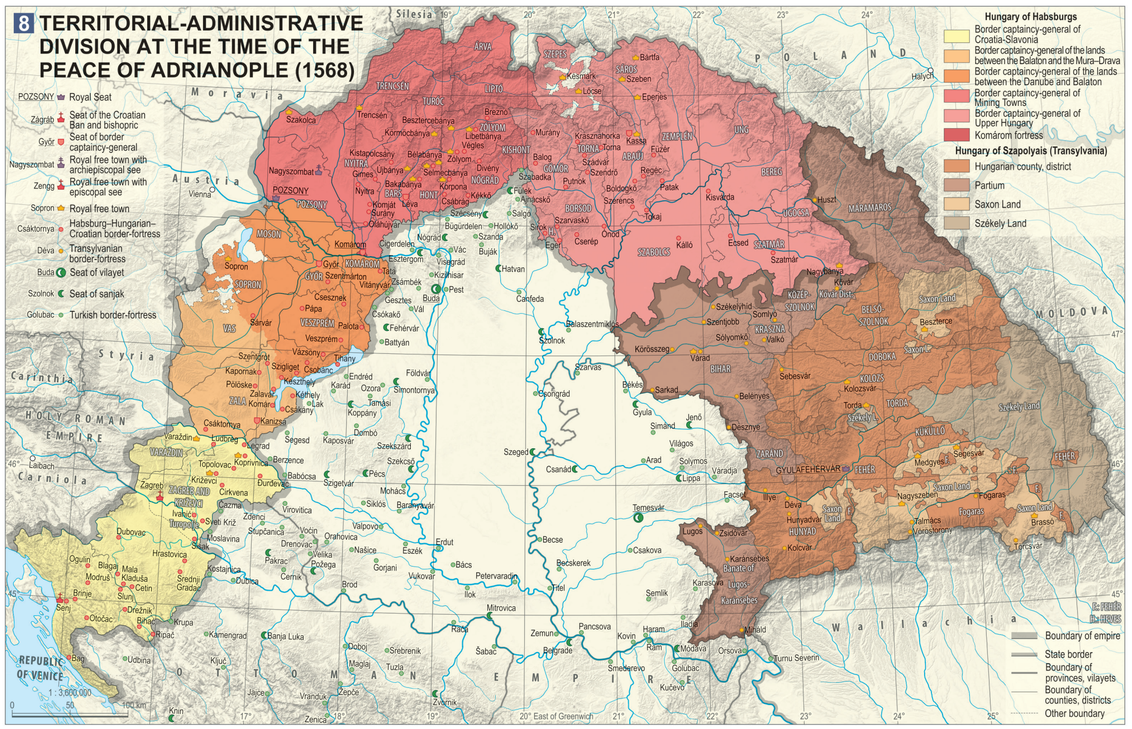
3 *View of Buda and Pest in 1617*

Tripartite Hungary (1526–1711)

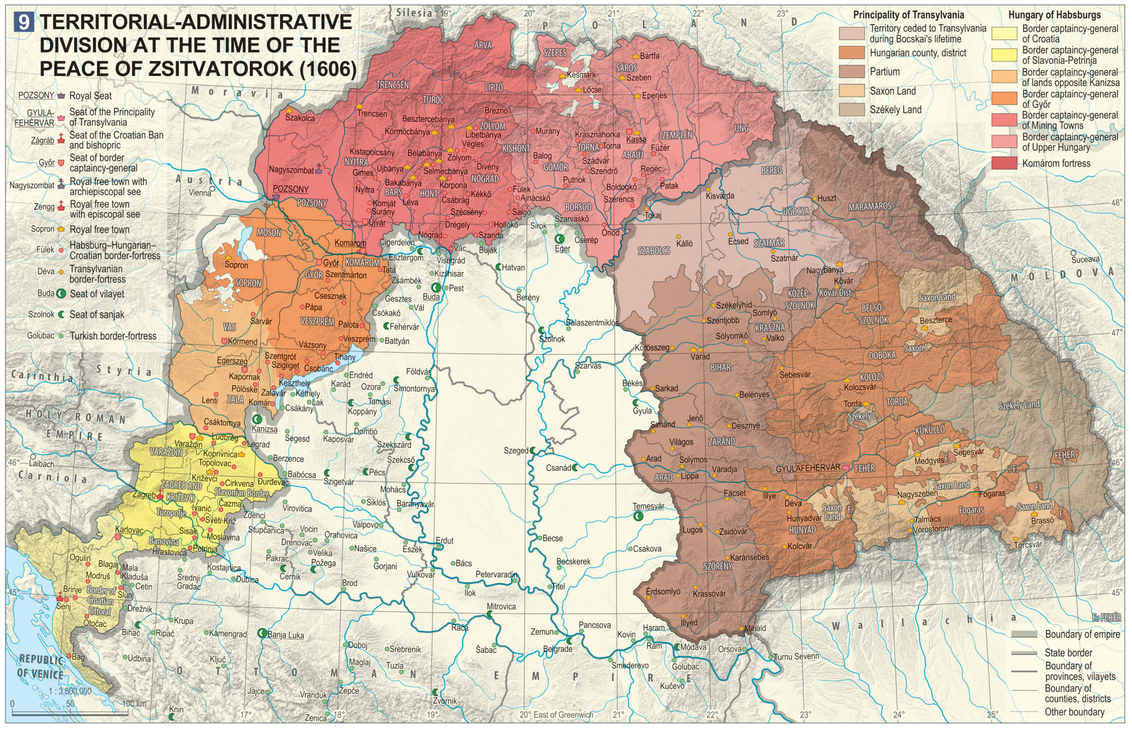
The Ottoman Period

A clash between the Ottoman and Habsburg empires determined the political geography of the period in

8 TERRITORIAL-ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION AT THE TIME OF THE PEACE OF ADRIANOPLE (1568)

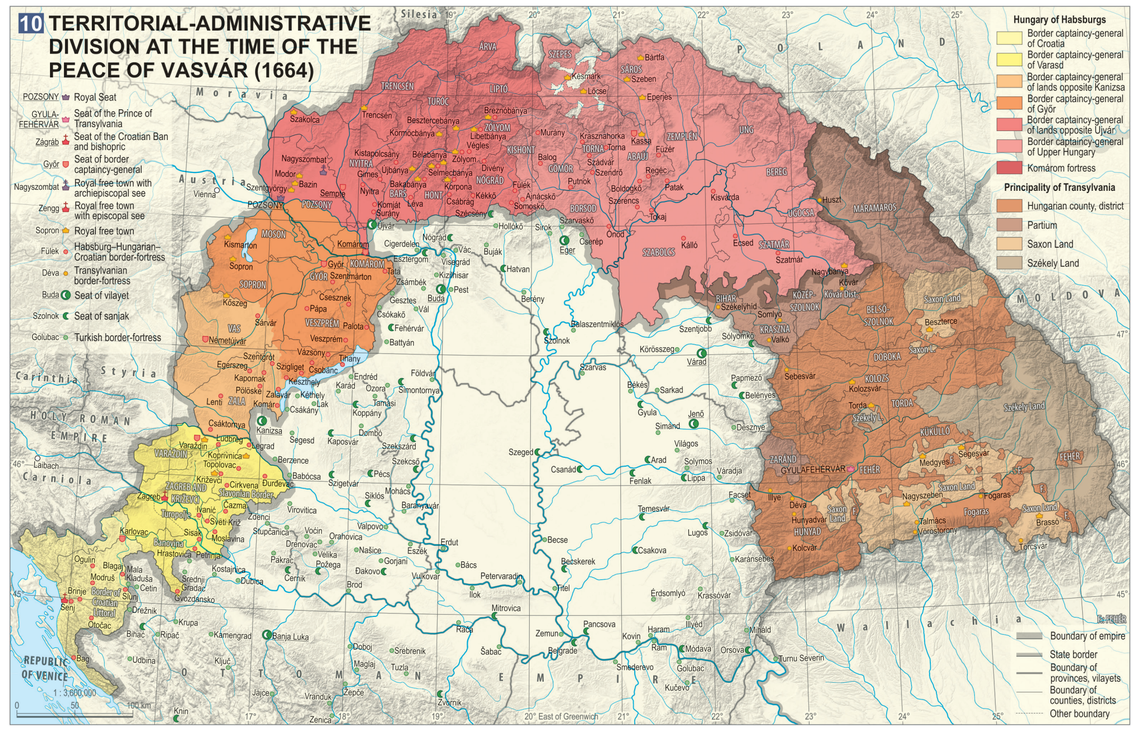


9 TERRITORIAL-ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION AT THE TIME OF THE PEACE OF ZSITVATOROK (1606)

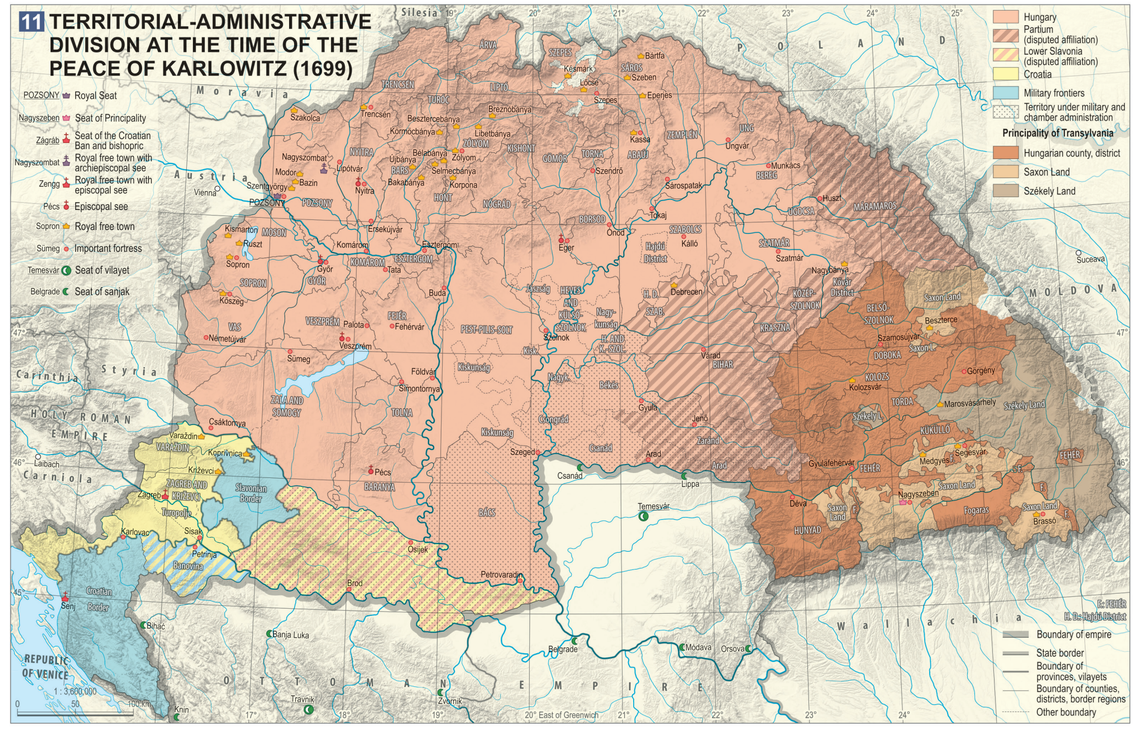


Adapting to the changed geopolitical situation, Habsburg Hungary focused *its military defensive efforts on the frontier zone bordering Ottoman territory*. In the late 16th century, the *border-fortress area*, which included nearly 120 castles and fortresses, stretched from the Upper Tisza region to the Adriatic Sea, often utilizing physical geographical obstacles (e.g. Lake Balaton and the mountain ranges). This conflict zone emerged in the northern and western parts of the Carpathian Basin, separating the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires. The boundary between the two empires was a temporary and fluid one, lined on both sides by border-fortresses. Between the two lines of fortresses, a depopulated no-man's land emerged, a consequence of the mutual attacks and raids perpetrated even in 'peacetime'.

10 TERRITORIAL-ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION AT THE TIME OF THE PEACE OF VASVÁR (1664)



11 TERRITORIAL-ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION AT THE TIME OF THE PEACE OF KARLOWITZ (1699)



During the quarter century after the Treaty of Adrianople (1568), there was a pause in the Ottoman offensives. Even so, skirmishes and looting continued along the border. The year 1593 marked the beginning of the so-called *Fifteen Years' War*, which was initially a defensive operation but turned into a general offensive – with international support – against the Ottomans. In the final phase of the war, the Transylvanian prince, *István Bocskai*, waged a *war of independence* (1604–1606) against the Habsburgs with Ottoman support. The Fifteen Years' War resulted in the return of the Nógrád area to Royal Hungary, but the important fortresses of Eger and Kanizsa remained in Ottoman hands 9.

In the 17th century, the alternation of peace and war concealed the gradual but relentless weakening of the

Ottoman Empire even from contemporaries. In the Habsburg–Ottoman War of 1663–1664, the Ottoman forces suffered a disastrous defeat at Szentgotthárd. In the Peace of Vasvár (1664), however, the Ottomans could retain their new conquests (e.g. the Érsekújvár fortress) 10. During the 17th century, Ottoman (and Crimean Tatar) forces repeatedly brought destruction to Transylvania, which was seeking greater independence from Istanbul. Military strife also occurred between the Principality of Transylvania and the Habsburg Empire, the scene of which was usually Upper Hungary.

In the part of the country controlled by the *Ottoman Empire*, the Turks abolished the Hungarian county system, introducing their own military and administrative divisions. The Ottoman administrative system comprised three levels: the *vilayets* (provinces) were divided into *sanjaks*, which formed the middle administrative level (similar to counties). The smallest administrative division was the *nahiye* (or district). Each vilayet was headed by a *vali* (often a pasha) or a *beylerbey*, while the sanjaks were administered by *sanjak-beys*. The first vilayets were those of Buda (est. 1541) and Temesvár (est. 1552). As the major centres of population were conquered, further vilayets were established (Eger in 1596, Kanizsa in 1600, Várad in 1660, and Újvár in 1663). Similarly, important former Hungarian fortresses and castles were designated as seats of the sanjaks.

The market towns with the highest incomes in the central part of the Alföld (e.g. Cegléd, Jászberény, Kecskemét, Makó, Nagykőrös) were directly owned by the sultan (as hass-ı hümayun, or imperial demesne). These so-called *hass* towns had extensive internal autonomy in matters of administration and justice. Their inhabitants, who lived primarily from cattle breeding and trading, collected their taxes themselves and submitted them to the Ottoman authorities.

Stretching from the Upper Tisza region to the Adriatic, *Royal (or Habsburg) Hungary* included Upper Hungary, the northwestern half of Transdanubia, and the Croatian and Slavonian parts that were subject to the Hungarian Holy Crown. Formally maintaining its independence, Royal Hungary preserved the country's old institutional system, including its state and administrative divisions, the counties, districts and the self-government system of the various forms of urban settlement. The country's system of public administration was based on the *counties*. The Habsburg imperial centralization was also based on the counties. The *Court Chamber* for the central administration of the provinces was established in Vienna. From 1531, the *Hungarian Chamber*, based in Pozsony (Pressburg), operated in subordination to it. Subsequently, the *Chamber of Szepes (Zips)* was separated from the Hungarian Chamber, becoming responsible for affairs in Upper Hungary. The county system was so effective that it was tolerated even in the Ottoman territories. In some places, double (Ottoman and Hungarian) taxation occurred. The administrative and judicial duties of the *royal free towns* and *mining towns* continued to be performed by the municipal councils. In the 17th century, several smaller towns near Sopron and Pozsony acquired the status of royal free towns.

Habsburg Hungary also adopted the organization of the imperial military government, including the dualistic structure of *captaincy-generals* which stood above the counties (with the regions of captain-generals of borders and districts existing in tandem). In each region, the supervision of border defence was entrusted to a *captain-general of border* (Grenzobrist), who was subordinated to the Aulic War Council (Hofkriegsrat) in Vienna. Meanwhile, the Hungarian estates supervised the less important *captain-generals of districts* (Kreisobriste). The number and names of these military administrative divisions changed several times in the 16th and 17th centuries. In the 1580s, various *captaincy-generals* of *borders* oversaw military activities and constructed and maintained the border fortresses. In the 1560s, the Tisza region was detached from the Upper Hungary captaincy-general, becoming the Tisza region captaincy-district. Komárom Fortress, which was paramount to the defence of Vienna, was independent of the captaincy-generals and directly subordinated to the Aulic War Council.

After 1526, the *administrative centre* of Habsburg Hungary was transferred from Buda to Pozsony, which became the seat of the estates' diet, the Hungarian Chancellery, the Hungarian Chamber, the Locotenential Council, and the associated institutions. Particularly in the Habsburg-controlled areas, the *Catholic ecclesiastical administration* survived the destruction of the Ottoman period and the Protestant Reformation. In the 16th and 17th centuries, uniquely among the medieval Catholic diocesan centres, Zagreb was spared disruption and disturbance. Győr, Veszprém and Vác changed hands several times and lacked resident bishops for some time. In 1532, the Archbishop of Esztergom fled from the Ottomans to Nagyszombat (Tyrnau), which functioned as the seat of the Hungarian Catholic Church from then onwards (until 1820). Owing to the fall of Eger to the Ottomans in 1596, the bishopric moved its seat to Kassa.

The Eastern Hungarian Kingdom, an internationally recognized entity that nevertheless paid a tribute to the Ottoman Empire from 1543 onwards, was renamed the *Principality of Transylvania* with the signing of the Treaty of Speyer with the Habsburgs (1570). The principality was considered an inalienable part of the Hungarian Holy Crown. The state administrative and defensive structures in historical Transylvania and the so-called Partium region were the medieval counties, the largely autonomous administrative seats and districts of the Székelys and Saxons, as well as several non-county administrative divisions with mostly Romanian populations (Fogaras, the Kővár region, and the Banate of Lugos-Karánsebes). Between 1570 and 1692, the seat of the Transylvanian state was Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia), which had been the centre of the medieval voivodeship and was the episcopal seat of Transylvania. The Székely seats formed a contiguous region in the Eastern Carpathians, while the small Aranyos Seat lay near Torda. The Saxon seats and districts lay in Southern Transylvania and in the Beszterce (Bistritz) region to the north.

In consequence of the Habsburg–Ottoman confrontation in the Carpathian Basin and its own geographical location, the Principality of Transylvania fell under Ottoman rule while retaining a degree of independence. *Emeric Thököly's Principality of Upper Hungary* (1682–1685) was founded as a similar state entity shortly before the wars of reconquest against the Ottomans. With the establishment of the Principality of Upper Hungary the country became divided into four parts.

The wars of liberation against the Ottomans in Hungary can be divided into two periods (1683–1699, 1716–1718). The opening salvo was the Turkish campaign against Vienna in 1683, which ended in an Ottoman rout at the Battle of Kahlenberg. The recapture of Buda (1686) marked the beginning of the restoration of the territorial integrity of the Hungarian state. Under the terms of the Peace of Karlowitz (1699), almost the entire territory of the country was liberated 11. The eastern part of Syrmia and the Banat, a region lying between the rivers Danube, Tisza and Maros, remained under Ottoman rule for a time. The complete liberation of the country from the Ottomans was achieved in 1718 with the signing of the Treaty of Passarowitz. During the wars of liberation against the Ottomans, swathes of territory fell to the Habsburgs in every year of the campaign. This marked the beginning of Hungary's integration into the Habsburg Empire.

Francis II Rákóczi's state

Rákóczi's War of Independence (1703–1711) occurred during the interval between the first and second periods of the liberation wars fought against the Turks (1683–1699, 1716–1718). Its outcome was dependent on several major armed conflicts that were reshaping the political geography of Europe at the time. These wars (Great Northern War, 1700–1721, War of the Spanish Succession, 1701–1714, and Ottoman–Russian War, 1686–1700, 1710–1711) created a favourable environment for the restoration of Hungarian sovereignty and statehood. Having been pushed out of the western half of the continent, Vienna focused on creating a unified imperial area out of what had been a loosely structured conglomerate of Habsburg domains. In the territories of the Hungarian Holy Crown that had been liberated from Ottoman rule, the centralizing ambitions of the Habsburgs and the excesses of the military (chamber) administration resulted in social unrest in many places. The nascent armed resistance movement was led by *Francis II Rákóczi* (1676–1735) 4, who was elected as prince of Transylvania in 1704 and then as ruling prince of the Confederated Hungarian Estates in 1705. A *civil war* broke out between the anti-Habsburg (kuruc) and pro-Habsburg (labanc) forces. The conflict involved broad sections of society and covered the entire country. At stake was whether the country should resign itself to being a part of the imperial space or should seek independent statehood outside of it.

4 *Francis II Rákóczi, the 'ruling prince', the leader of the war of independence named after him*

The prolonged struggle exhausted the social resources of the Carpathian Basin for good. The Habsburg imperial forces, which had fought with varying success on the European battlefields, gradually gained the upper hand against Rákóczi's state 12 13. A *demographic collapse* in Hungary explains in part the failure of the liberation struggle. At the beginning of Rákóczi's war of independence, the country (including Slavonia) had a population of at most 4.5 million people. In consequence of the various atrocities accompanying the war and an epidemic of bubonic plague that reached alarming proportions from 1708, the population subsequently fell to 3.9 million (despite ongoing immigration to the country).

The failure of the war of independence was in part an outcome of the inefficiency of the administration of Rákóczi's state, which was far less effective than that of the Habsburg Empire. The *core area* of this state lay in the northeastern part of the Carpathian Basin. Its public administration rested upon the structures of the noble counties. The armed forces, too, were organized on the basis of the counties. The territory of the country was divided into five captaincy-generals. In a given campaign year, entire parts of the country changed hands following battles between minor forces. In political geographical terms, the most important regions for the liberation struggle were Lower and Upper Hungary, where most of the country's social and economic potential was located. At the same time, the peripheral areas of the country (the western border region, Croatia-Slavonia, southern Transylvania) and several major cities and fortresses remained under Habsburg control throughout. State administration was increasingly affected by territorial fragmentation and the failure of central control. In some counties, the administrative apparatuses of the 'kuruc' and 'labanc' forces were present concurrently. Constant warfare hindered the efficient operation of the *Economic Council* (Consilium Oeconomicum), a body responsible for managing the economy. All these factors meant that the 'kuruc' state proved unable to assign social resources to the war effort. In the field of public administration, it was certainly less effective than the Habsburg Empire, which was constantly centralizing in response to the Ottoman threat.

Entirely in the Habsburg Empire (1711–1867)

The constitutional provisions of the Pragmatic Sanction and Joseph II's administrative reforms

Following the defeat of Rákóczi's War of Independence and in the aftermath of the Peace of Szatmár (1711), the diet of 1712–1715 addressed the major issues facing the country and proposals for its future. *Charles VI,* Holy Roman Emperor ruled the Austrian Habsburg monarchy from 1711 until 1740. It was he who, in April 1713, formulated the *Pragmatic Sanction* as the family rule of the House of Habsburg. His aim was to ensure that *the Habsburg hereditary possessions could be inherited by a daughter undivided*. He sought to obtain recognition of this principle from the great powers of the period as well as its acceptance among the domestic actors of the empire. The legislation of 1715 declared Hungary's independence in several respects, as well as a requirement to govern in accordance with its own laws. In March 1722, the Transylvanian diet adopted the act on the succession of daughters. It was clear to all political actors and factions that if the Hungarian diet rejected the new principle, then the right to freely elect a king would legally revert to the nation. The Hungarian Diet of 1722–1723 also adopted the law on the succession of daughters. Further, it settled the constitutional relationship between the Habsburg Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary. The Austrian Hereditary Provinces and the Countries of the Hungarian Holy Crown became 'indivisible and inseparable'. In this way, Hungary avoided becoming a hereditary province within the Habsburg Empire. Aside from the person of the ruler, the only common sphere of action was defence. Article XI of 1741 confirmed that the ruler could take action in Hungarian affairs only by way of Hungarians. Further, the ruler could act independently in Hungarian affairs only as king of Hungary.

Maria Theresa (ruled from 1740 until 1780) considered the modernization of social and economic structures (feudal fees, education) and the unification of public administration as her primary tasks. She elevated Transylvania to the rank of grand principality and determined various transfers of territory. In 1744, the ruler reorganized the counties of Pozsega, Verőce, and Szerém (but not Valkó) into a province named *'Lower Slavonia'*, whose affiliation led to a centuries-long (historical-ethnic) dispute between Hungarians and Croats. In 1778, she attached to Hungary the part of the Banat region that lay outside the military frontier. 14 In 1779, Fiume was likewise attached to Hungary.

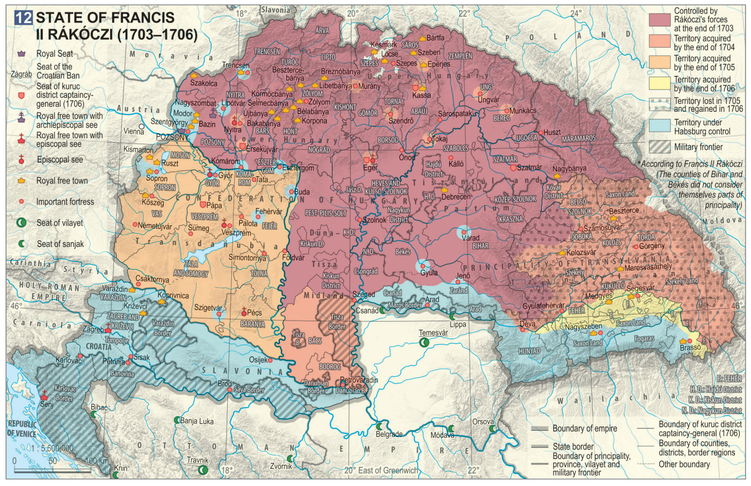
Joseph II (ruled from 1780 until 1790) established a powerful *centralized state administration* with the aim of creating a unified and functional empire. A natural consequence of all this was the abolition of any remaining feudal elements in territorial administration. A new type of state administration based on Bezirks (districts) was established, coupled with a stratum of state officials. Joseph II tended to regard the counties as opponents of his reforms. Preparations for the administrative reforms began in the winter of 1784. Following negotiations a consensus was reached on the division of the country into 10 Bezirks. The country's internal boundary of historical and contemporary constitutional importance was ignored. 15 The ruler appointed royal commissioners to head the ten Bezirks. On 18 March 1785, he replaced the main county heads and abolished the self-governance of the counties. The counties essentially became offices of the Bezirks. The new Bezirks were formally introduced in Hungary on 1 July 1785. In addition to overseeing public administration, the Bezirks commissioners also managed the chambers and they exercised supervisory authority over the administration of justice.

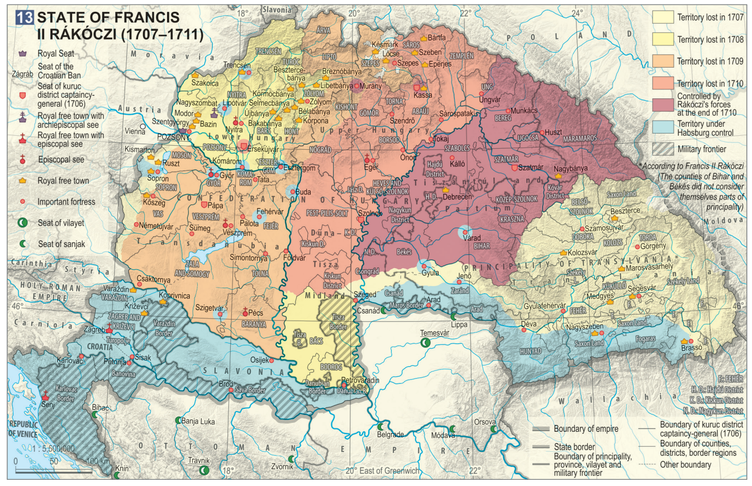
In his decree of 14 November 1786, the ruler merged some of the smaller counties deprived of their self-governance: e.g. Moson was merged with Győr, Komárom with Esztergom, Kis-Hont with Gömör, Ugocsa with Bereg, Csanád with Csongrád and Békés. In January 1786, three Bezirks (with seats in Fogaras, Kolozsvár and Szeben) were established in Transylvania. Joseph II abolished the Székely and Saxon seats and created counties in their place. The administrative reforms interfered with the holding of the census.

The new system of public administration proved to be short-lived. The new institutions and their operation were a source of controversy even among contemporaries. After the monarch's death, the original adminstrative divisions were restored.

The Age of Reform, debates on state administration, the administrative divisions of 1848

Joseph II's reforms subverted the historical state structure and its system of public administration. Leopold II (1790–1792), Joseph's successor, reigned for a noticeably brief time, but it was his task to set in motion a reorganization after the abrogation of Joseph II's provisions. The *Diet* of 1790/91 abolished the districts and rule by decree, thereby *restoring the country's constitutional order* (the independence of Hungary as a country that is not subject to any other and can only be governed by its own laws). The fierce debates of the Diet served to strengthen noble nationalism throughout the country. Self-governing counties constituted once again the foundation of the system of public administration.





Changes in the administrative division in the Banat region (1498–1921)

The Banat is a historical region with an area of 28,522 km² between the Danube, Tisza and Maros rivers. The lowlands in the region have been called the Temesköz since the 14th century. This southern area of the Carpathian Basin has seen the greatest changes in the administrative division during the past five centuries [14].

At the end of the Middle Ages, the counties here exhibited considerable stability. The lowland counties alongside the major rivers were formed in the 11th century, the Banate of Szörény had its roots in the 13th century and Torontál County in the 14th century. The only royal free town in the area was Temesvár, which served as the capital of Hungary between 1303 and 1323. The majority of the 52 market towns were located in the northeastern part of the Banat, being less exposed to Turkish raids. Meanwhile, the border-fortresses were mostly concentrated near the Danubian frontier.

In 1551–1552, the entire area of today's Banat region became part of the Ottoman Empire. In 1554, some of the eastern territories were liberated and incorporated into the Principality of Transylvania. The Ottoman section of the Banat was transferred to the vilayet of Temesvár, which was subsequently divided into the sanjaks of Temesvár, Csanád, Lippa and Módava, which (in 1579) were sub-divided into 25 nahiyes. The medieval Hungarian counties disappeared without trace, but the oldest county centres and the market towns were also included in the Ottoman administrative hierarchy.

Under the provisions of the Treaty of Passarowitz (1718), the area named Temesvár Banate came under Habsburg rule. The region was not returned immediately to the Kingdom of Hungary. Instead, it remained under military control until 1751 and then (excluding the southern parts) lay under civilian (treasury) administration until 1778. The main authority was exercised by the Imperial Court Chamber and the Aulic War Council, which created 11 districts and 35 sub-districts in the territory recaptured from the Turks. With the liberation of the Temesvár Banate (this came to be known as 'the Banat'), many of the Serbs of the Tisza–Maros military frontier (which had become militarily redundant) were disbanded in 1750. They were resettled in the privileged Serbian 'Kikinda District' created in 1774.

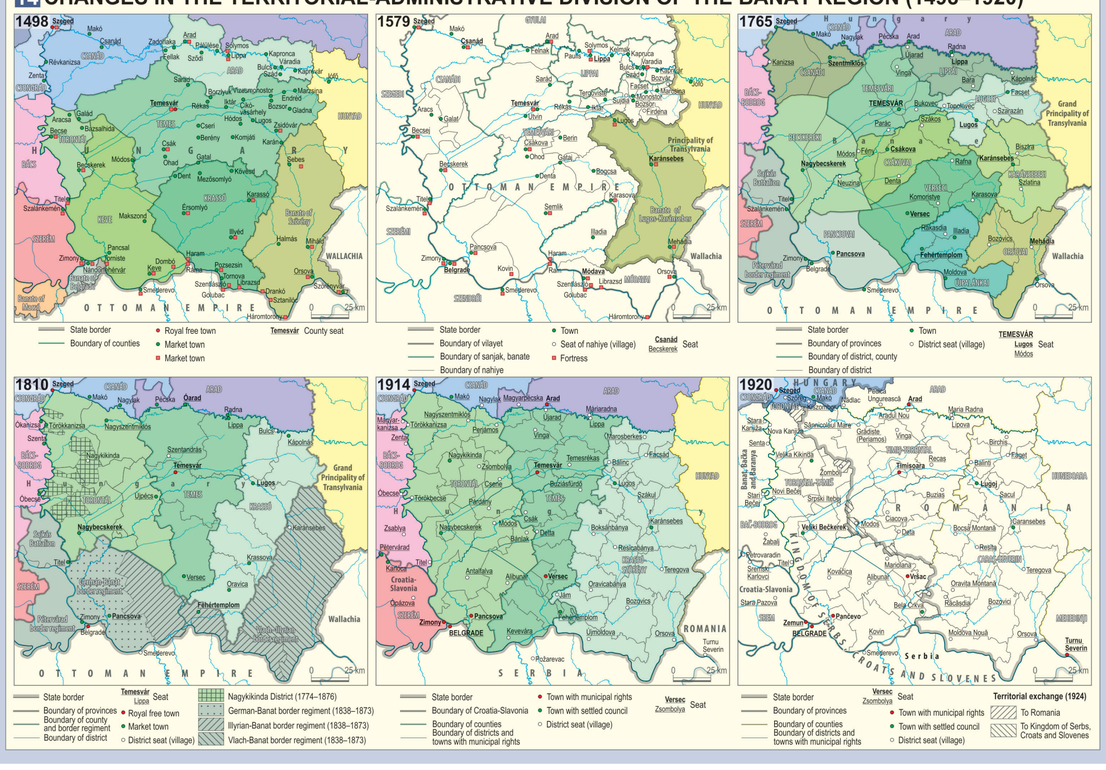
In 1778, Maria Theresa reannexed to Hungary most of the Banate districts that were under civilian control, re-establishing the counties of Torontál, Temes and Krassó within boundaries that differed from those of the medieval period. The Banat Military Frontier (1779–1873) was established in the Banat region near the Danube and adjacent to the Ottoman Empire. It continued to be ruled from Vienna and was independent of the public administration of the Kingdom of Hungary. This military frontier region initially comprised two border regiments (German and Vlach-Illyrian).

During the period of Habsburg absolutism, which lasted for a century and a half (1718–1867), there were two brief periods of reforms. In the period between 1785 and 1790, Joseph II placed Bács County and the counties of the Banat in the Temesvár Bezirk, which was named after its seat. Its territory was almost identical to that of the Serbian Voivodeship and Temesvár Banate, whose official language was German, and which was established in direct subordination to Vienna in 1849 after the failure of the 1848–49 Hungarian War of Independence. The difference lay in the fact that not only was Bács-Bodrog County added to the Banat counties, but also Szerém County. The counties of this province with 1.4 million inhabitants were dissolved in 1853 and five districts were created in their place. These existed until 1860, when the province was dissolved.

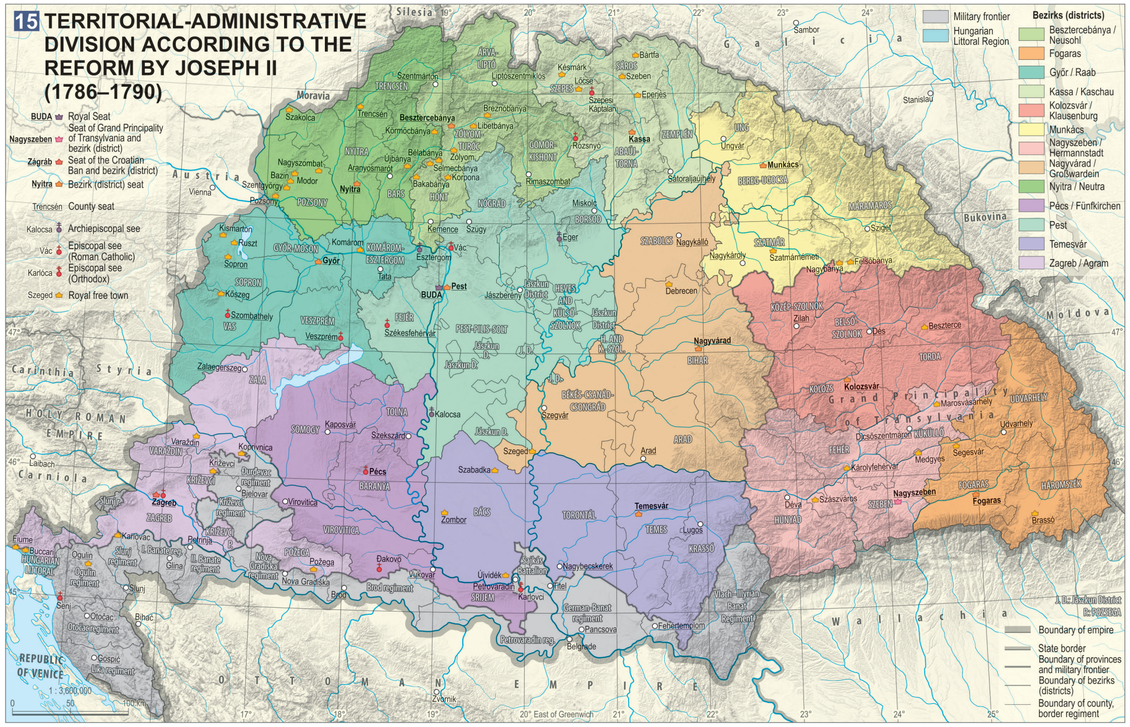
In the half-century following the Austro-Hungarian Compromise (1867), the abolition of the Military Frontier and its return to Hungary (1873) and the 'county adjustments' of 1876 were outstanding administrative changes. In 1876, the non-county administrative units were abolished. This explains the disappearance of Kikinda District of the Serbs, which had been wedged into Torontál County. In 1873, Szörény County was created, which was then merged with Krassó in 1880. Thereafter the three counties of the Banat region included 39 districts, three towns with municipal rights, six towns with settled councils, and 795 villages.

After World War I, between November 1918 and July 1919, the Banat was under Serbian, French and Romanian military occupation. Under the Treaty of Trianon of 4 June 1920, the Banat was divided into three parts: 66.5% of the region's territory was granted to Romania, 32.7% to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (SHS), and 0.8% to Hungary. The Treaty of Sèvres of 10 August 1920 then stipulated the border between Romania and the Kingdom of SHS. As neither side was satisfied with this border, on 24 November 1923 an agreement on border rectification and territorial exchange was signed in Belgrade. Ten settlements were exchanged (five being granted to Romania and five to the Kingdom of SHS). The creation of the new national boundaries necessitated the merger of the various truncated counties. Thus, the period saw the creation of Timiş-Torontal County in Romania (which existed until 1950), Torontal-Tamiš County in the Kingdom of SHS (which existed until 1922), and Csanád-Arad-Torontál County in Hungary (which existed between 1924 and 1949).

14 CHANGES IN THE TERRITORIAL-ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION OF THE BANAT REGION (1498–1920)



15 TERRITORIAL-ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION ACCORDING TO THE REFORM BY JOSEPH II (1786–1790)



The country could not evade the ideological and political impact of the French Revolution. In 1794, a secret and partially semi-public movement was organized under the leadership of Ignác Martinovics and with the idea of founding a republic. Supported by nobles and intellectuals, the movement failed to win mass support. Its leaders were executed in 1795, with much of the membership receiving lengthy prison sentences. The Hungarian estates refused to accept the independence offered by Napoleon; they were defeated by Napoleon at the Battle of Győr in 1809.

Economic, social and political issues were bubbling beneath the surface. In contrast to the situation under Maria Theresa and Joseph II, *demands for reform* now came *from below* rather than from above. A need for reforms was recognized by people familiar with the Western world and by the young lawyers and jurists from ordinary backgrounds who came together at the county assemblies.

The prerogatives of economic, social and political modernization evolved organically. The *Diet of 1825* (and Széchenyi's offer to establish the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) marked the beginning of the *Age of Reform* in Hungary. Multiple issues appeared on the agenda: the status of the Hungarian language, the liberation of the serfs, the establishment of civil land ownership, the 'equalization of rights', free enterprise, the sharing of public burdens, transport development, and various economic and social issues.

The works of *Elek Fényes* and others on the country's geography and society served to strengthen national awareness. From the perspective of the state and public administration, Fényes's description of the country (1847) played a significant role in outlining its constitutional and territorial structures and clarifying the relationship between the various categories.

In January 1848, Széchenyi's most comprehensive proposal for Hungary's economic, social and transport transformation was published. The Hungarian noble envisaged a country that would be centred on Budapest (in political, economic and transport terms) [16].

In 1848, the Kingdom of Hungary was still a highly fragmented country in terms of its public administration, which reflected the historical framework. Both in territory and population size, there were enormous differences between the counties. The need for a reform of the system of public administration was raised both at the conceptual-political level and in practical terms. The matter led to a debate between the 'centrists' (led by Baron József Eötvös) and the 'municipalists' (led by Lajos Kossuth). The *centrists* envisaged a form of centralism that was national in its nature and interests. For their part, the *municipalists* wished to prioritize the functions and autonomy of the counties in a process of modernization that was, in their view, inevitable and indeed necessary.

Questions were formulated in a novel manner at national, county and local level. In the debates surrounding the abolition of serfdom, it was evident that any reform in this field would result in fundamental changes in rural life. The debates of the two decades between 1825–1848 were characterized by a broad-minded and progressive approach. Participants in the debates were increasingly aware of the importance of infrastructure development, alongside the country's social, economic and political modernization. In addition to the debate between municipalism and centrism, there was a consensus that the country's transport system should be centred in Budapest.

[5] *The county division in Mihály Táncsics' draft*

Revolution, the war of independence, and the new absolutism (1848–1860)

In the spring of 1848, a wave of revolutions swept through Europe. Vienna's victorious revolution of 13 March was followed by a bloodless revolution in Pest-Buda on 15 March. The final Estates' Diet in Pozsony adopted legislation aimed at resolving the cumulative issues of the Age of Reform. The new laws were approved by the monarch on 11 April 1848. The constitutional operation of a *'responsible Hungarian ministry'* created new circumstances in the country. A 'Union' was created, which reunited Transylvania with Hungary.

The opening ceremony of the *new Parliament*, which was based on popular representation, took place *in Pest on 5 July 1848*. The bodies of public administration at the three levels (villages, towns, and counties) were granted self-governing status. A more explicit arrangement was made in the case of the royal free towns. Based on population size, the royal free towns were placed in three groups: those with fewer than 12,000 inhabitants, those with 12,000–30,000 inhabitants, and those with more than 30,000 inhabitants.

Mihály Táncsics, who was elected to the new Parliament, foresaw the need for a radical and democratic *territorial reform of the counties*. Such ideas were incorporated into his two draft constitutions. Although Táncsics was familiar with the geography of the country, 'the idea of democracy' was his point of departure when formulating territorial reform proposals. Indeed, his aim was to introduce to Hungary the practice of 'linear demarcation' of the United States [5].

6 *Lajos Batthyány, the first constitutional Hungarian Prime Minister*

7 *Hungarian Governor Lajos Kossuth, the spiritual leader of the War of Independence*

8 *Gyula Andrássy Hungarian Prime Minister, Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister*

9 *Ferenc Deák, 'the wise man, the lawyer of the nation', the main preparer of the Compromise*

Amid the dramatic events abroad and the intense constitutional and political debates at home, the Batthyány government 6 resigned on 11 September in the aftermath of an attack on the country by Josip Jelačić, ban of Croatia, and his army. *Ferdinand V* then 'stepped away' from the constitution, *dissolving the Hungarian Parliament on 3 October 1848*. On 8 October 1848, the Hungarian Parliament delegated the functions of government to the National Defence Commission, whose chairman was *Lajos Kossuth* 7.

In December, the Court in Vienna chose to launch an armed attack on the Hungarian government, which was seeking to adhere to a constitutional and legal path. *The revolution turned into a war of independence*. On 14 April 1849, the Parliament, which had sought refuge in Debrecen, deprived the House of Habsburg of its throne and adopted a Declaration of Independence. For a temporary period, Kossuth served as the country's regent and head of state.

The *Hungarian National Army laid down its arms at Világos on 13 August 1849* following the intervention of Russian troops. The regent (Kossuth) and a part of the government fled to Turkey. The defeat of the war of independence was followed by bloody reprisals, and the country was placed under military rule. The Court in Vienna oscillated between constitutionalism and overt dictatorship. *The period between the autumn of 1849 and the summer of 1860* can be divided into several characteristic stages (the '*Bach system*'), but in each stage, changes occurred in public administration.

The administrative decree approved by the emperor *Franz Joseph I* was published by the commander-in-chief Julius Haynau on *24 October 1849*. The country was divided into *five military Bezirks (districts)* with centres in Sopron, Pozsony, Kassa, Pest-Buda and Nagyvárad. The royal patent of 18 November 1849 created the crown province of the *Serbian Voivodeship and the Temesvár Banate* from the southern counties.

There were continuous changes in territorial administration. On 8 September 1850, military rule was abolished, and the country was divided into *five civilian administrative Bezirks (districts)*, whose territories did not fully coincide with the former military districts.

On 31 December 1851, the counties of Pest, Nyitra and Bihar were each divided into two parts. Torna County was integrated into Abaúj County, while Ugocsa County became a part of Bereg County. Árva County was merged with Turóc, and Csanád County with Békés. By this time, the country comprised 43 counties and 265 districts within those counties.

On 19 January 1853, Alexander Bach, the Austrian minister of the interior, restructured Hungarian public administration by issuing an organizational and operational decree. Between 1854 and 1860, the now 'permanent' administrative structure was stabilized 17.

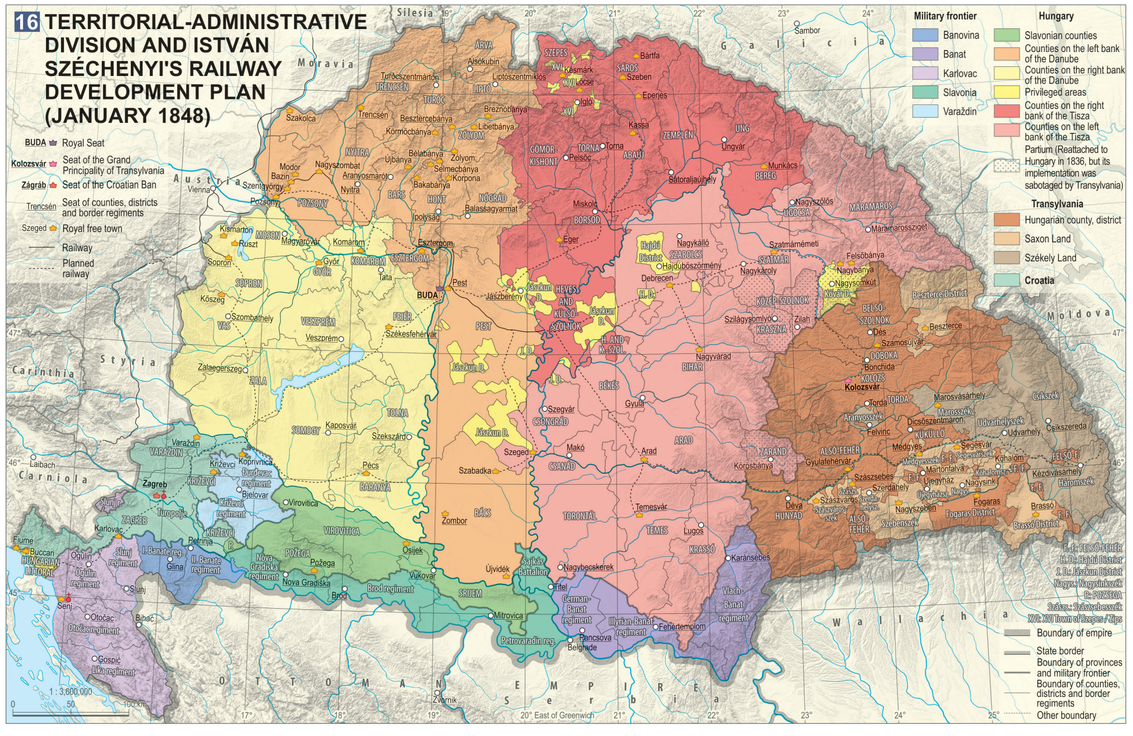
On 1 July 1860, the administrative Bezirks ceased to exist. By issuing the royal patent of 20 October 1860, the monarch moved towards ending the constitutional and political crisis.

The Dual Monarchy (1867–1918)

The geographical and political consequences of the Austro-Hungarian (1867) and Hungarian-Croatian Compromise (1868)

From the early 1860s, it became increasingly clear to both the House of Habsburg and the leading Hungarian politicians that a mutually beneficial compromise was needed. The settlement was essentially an agreement between the ruler and the Hungarian political leadership, which had been pursuing a policy of passive resistance.

On *20 February 1867*, the government of Count *Gyula Andrássy* 8 was established. It directed the reconciliation process in accordance with the preliminary political agreements, including the adoption of Act XII of 1867. The initial legal basis of the *Compromise law* was the legal construction of the Pragmatic Sanction, as interpreted by *Ferenc Deák* 9. Hungary was to be governed according to its own constitutional laws and was not to be subject to any other state. The country was linked with *Austria* in the person of the king *(personal union)* and by virtue of the common matters (military, foreign and the financial affairs). In practice, the ruler played a decisive role in the management of the common matters.



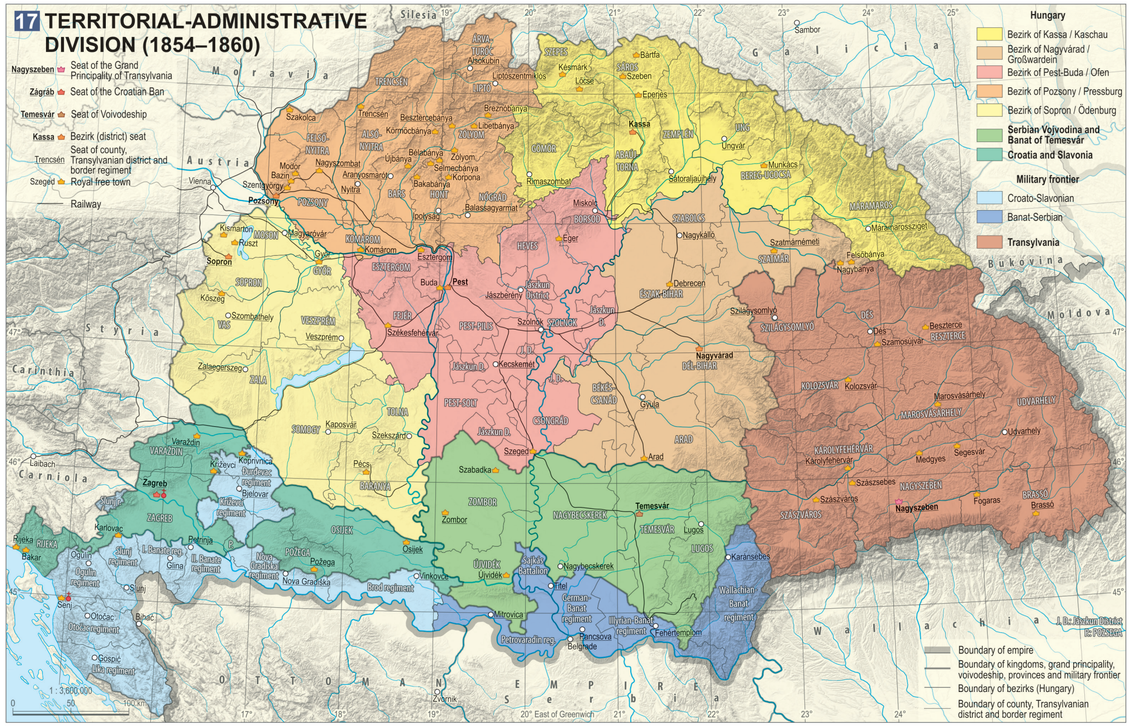
The leading Croatian politicians were reluctant to accept the compromise between the ruler and the Hungarians. Indeed, they protested the 1867 Compromise at several fora. In the end, the *Hungarian-Croatian public legal relationship* was regulated by a further law (*Act XXX of 1868*), which stipulated that the countries of the Hungarian Holy Crown were inseparable as a single state and that *Croatia* could send representatives to the Hungarian Parliament. Aside from the joint Hungarian-Croatian matters specified in the law, Croatia received nearly full *autonomy* in its domestic affairs. In the case of Fiume, no final agreement could be reached. A temporary agreement was adopted, which remained in force until 1918.

The outcome of the Austro-Hungarian and Hungarian-Croatian compromises was a complex state structure 18 that nevertheless satisfied the basic aspirations of all interested parties. Even so, the system constituted a fragile equilibrium that was beset by uncertainties and ongoing disputes. Throughout the period of the Dual Monarchy (until 1916), *Emperor Franz Joseph* ensured continuity and stability.

Organizational and spatial development of public administration in the Dual Monarchy (1867–1918)

On 20 February 1867, as part of the political process leading up to the Compromise law, a Hungarian government was established under the leadership of Count Gyula Andrássy. On 28 July 1867, the Parliament adopted the Compromise law (Act XII of 1867). With the constitutional framework in place, the social, economic and political restructuring of the Hungarian state could begin. There followed a period of consolidation.

The emergence of the new constitutional-political system was accompanied by territorial adjustments



(Transylvania was reunited with Hungary and civilian rule was introduced in the Military Frontier). The construction of a modern public administration began.

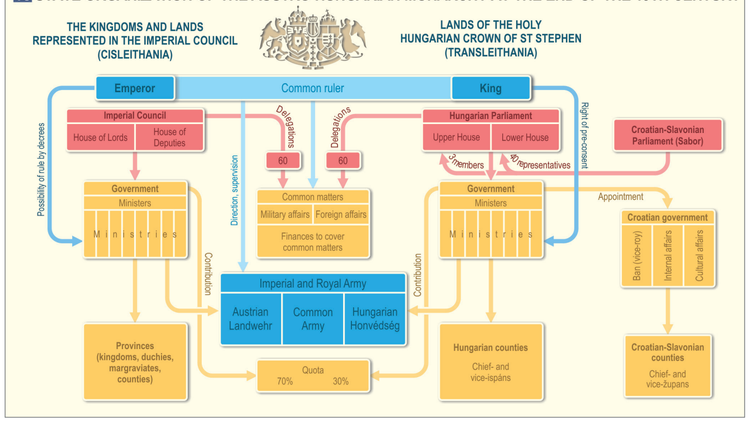
After the institutions of government had formed, a *law on public authorities* was adopted on 2 August 1870 (Act XLII of 1870). It regulated the institutions of public administration at the intermediate level. On 7 June 1871, a *law on municipalities* was adopted (Act XVIII of 1871). Except for the Austrian law on municipalities adopted during the period of absolutism, this was the first piece of legislation in Hungarian history to regulate comprehensively the administration of municipalities in the country. With the merger of Buda, Pest, Óbuda and Margaret Island (Act XXXVI of 1872), the *city of Budapest was created*. As the capital of Hungary, Budapest soon became a modern metropolis.

The 1870 census was a useful summary of conditions in the various historical administrative divisions. The following basic details of this structure should be highlighted: the Lands of the Crown of Saint Stephen consisted of four constitutional entities, namely the Kingdom of Hungary (which included Transylvania), the free port of Fiume, the Military Frontier, and the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia. There were 100 'county-level' units, 98 royal free and other privileged towns, 666 'district-level' units, 91 towns with organized councils, 769 market towns, 16,373 villages.

In 1873, Gyula Szapáry, the minister of the interior, developed radical and rational proposals for the reform of the counties and districts. Yet his ideas failed to consider the political realities of the period. For this reason, the major political forces withheld their support.

In 1876 and in 1877, a *restructuring of public administration at county level* occurred:

18 STATE ORGANIZATION OF THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN MONARCHY AT THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY



• The Hajdú, Jászkun, Saxon and Székely seats were incorporated into the new counties.

• Act XX of 1876 abolished the municipal rights of smaller towns.

• The abolition of the privileged territories of feudal origin (Act XXX of 1876) was followed by the establishment of a uniform system of counties (Act XXXII of 1876).

• On 13 March 1877, Act I of 1877 on the administrative divisions of the municipalities was adopted. The provisions ensured the stability of the administrative divisions (with a small number of revisions) until 1918.

The relationship between Austria and Hungary was impacted by the adoption of Act VI of 1880 (on the joint public administration of Bosnia-Herzegovina), which added further complexity to an already convoluted state structure [19]. During World War I, a degree of rivalry arose between Austria and Hungary over the acceptance of Islam as an established religion. In Hungary, Islam was granted official recognition as a religious denomination in 1916.

The established system of public administration initially proved functional, but revisions were deemed necessary a decade later. Act XXII of 1886, which amended the law on municipalities, pursued a policy of further modernization of public administration by way of centralization. Opportunities for state intervention in the affairs of the municipalities were expanded.

The outbreak of the 'Great War' on 28 July 1914 imposed unprecedented burdens on central, regional and local government. As elsewhere in Europe, the system of public administration in Hungary was militarized. At the time, Kingdom of Hungary comprised 63 counties, the city of Fiume, 27 towns with municipal rights, 112 towns with settled council, and 442 districts [20].

The Hungarian state between 1918 and 1944

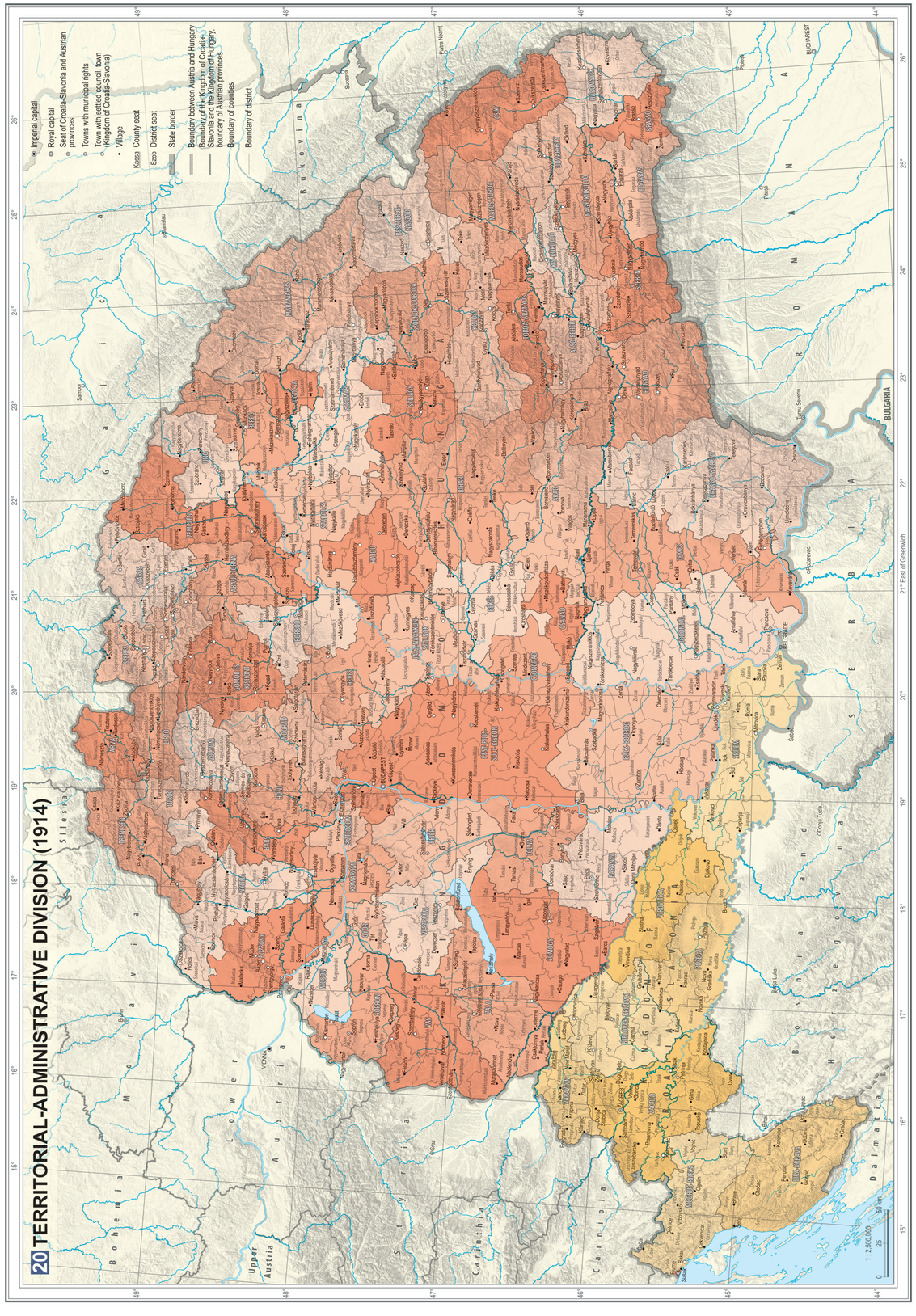
The post-WWI collapse (1918–1919)

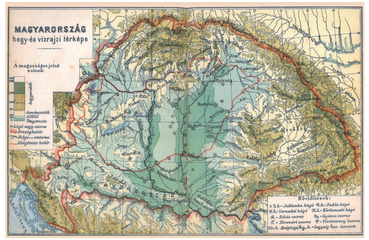
In October 1918, the constitutional and territorial framework of both Austria-Hungary and Hungary began to disintegrate. On 20 October, the Wekerle government adopted a proposal to transform the Dual Monarchy.

On 29 October, the Croatian Sabor (Parliament) abrogated the Hungarian-Croatian compromise and declared the creation of a new federal *state of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs*, which included parts of the former territory of both Austria and Hungary as well as Bosnia. On 30 October, the *Slovak National Council* decided to join the two days old Czechoslovakia. On 31 October, the 'Aster Revolution' was victorious in Budapest. On 3 November, a representative of the rapidly disintegrating Dual Monarchy signed the Armistice of Padua. On 13 November the representative of the Károlyi government signed the Armistice of Belgrade, which marked the demarcation line in the eastern and southern parts of the country.

On *16 November*, a *Hungarian People's Republic* was proclaimed. Its government, led by Mihály Károlyi, could not prevent Hungary's further political and territorial disintegration. On *25 November*, convening in *Újvidék* (Novi Sad), the *Great National Assembly of Serbs, Bunjevacs and other Slavs* from *Banat, Bácska (Bačka) and Baranya* declared the accession of those regions (where Serbs formed only 24% of the population) to Serbia. On *1 December*, at a meeting of the *Romanians in Gyulafehérvár* (Alba Iulia), the annexation of *Transylvania* (where Romanians comprised 55% of the population) to Romania was announced. In response, on 22 December, the predominantly Hungarian population of 28 eastern counties took a stand for the country's territorial integrity at the National Assembly in Kolozsvár (Cluj). With a similar aim, residents in several peripheral areas of historical Hungary announced the foundation of various short-lived 'states' (e.g. the Banate, Szepes German, Eastern Slovak, and Wendish republics) [21].

On *21 March 1919*, the *Hungarian Soviet Republic* was proclaimed, marking the beginning of a period of overt dictatorship in the country. To consolidate its rule, this entity adopted a written constitution that envisaged a restructuring of the country's public administration. At the same time, took up the fights against both the Romanian and the Czech conquerors. Following the recapture of the southeastern part of the former Upper Hungary, the *Slovak Soviet Republic* was established. Having suffered a series of military defeats,





10 *Relief and hydrographic map of Hungary and the new border*

the Hungarian Soviet Republic collapsed on 1 August. A large part of the country's remaining territory – including Budapest – came under Romanian occupation.

The peace conference concluding World War I opened in Paris on 18 January 1919. The Hungarians were neither invited nor given an opportunity to put forward their positions.

Trianon (1920)

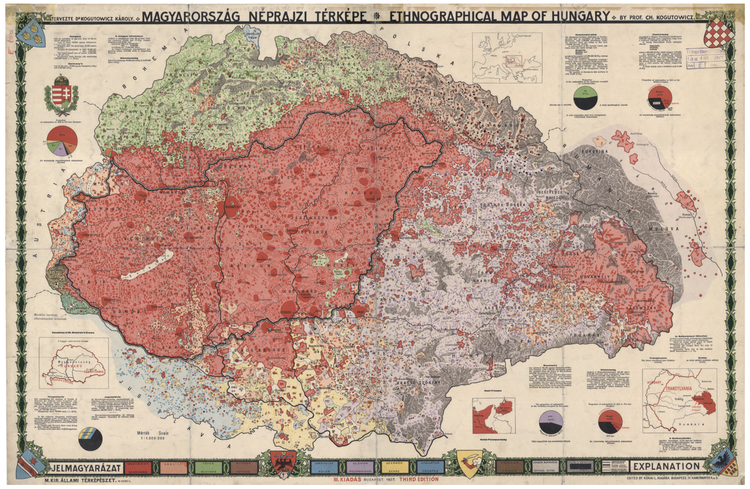
Hungary found itself in a particularly vulnerable position at the opening of the peace conference. The country was mostly occupied by foreign powers, whose forces had advanced as far as the demarcation lines. Indeed, a 'new state system' had come into being there.

The designation of Hungary's new borders was largely complete by March 1919. On 26 February, the Council of Ten decided to transform the areas between Szatmárnémeti, Arad, Szeged and Vásárosnamény (between the Romanian and Hungarian troops) into a neutral zone. Lieutenant-Colonel Vix, head of the Entente Military Mission in Budapest, submitted the documents containing these decisions to Mihály Károlyi. The 'Vix note' caused general consternation in Hungary. The government had no option but to resign, whereupon a major upheaval unfolded in domestic politics. The proclamation of the Hungarian Soviet Republic further complicated the country's foreign policy situation.

Under the *Treaty of Trianon (4 June 1920)* the country accepted the new post-war global and European order, with Part I of the treaty underlining the principles of the League of Nations. In the voluminous treaty, the victors regulated, under international law, the various consequences of the wartime defeat of the former Dual Monarchy, doing so in relation to Hungary, which was regarded as one of the Dual Monarchy's legal successors. The international legal provisions covered a broad range of topics, including political, economic and military issues, as well as minority rights, citizenship, war reparations, and transport.

Part II of the Treaty was concerned with the *new national borders*. The new borders, which nowhere coincided with the former borders of the Kingdom of Hungary, fundamentally altered the territory of the Hungarian state. An area of 92,607 sq km remained within the borders designated by the peace treaty. A few minor uncertainties were marked by the words: 'a line to be fixed on the ground.' This 'Trianon' area increased to 93,073 sq km after the Sopron plebiscite and several other border rectifications, which were undertaken between 1921 and 1924. The *negative consequences* of the *territorial changes* impacted on all areas of life. The following detrimental effects should be highlighted:

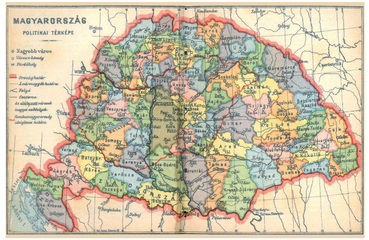
- The *Kingdom of Hungary*, which had previously filled the entire Central Danubian Basin, was transformed into a *basin-floor country* 10. The physical geography and resources of the old and new national territories differed fundamentally. This was an obvious consequence of the loss of *71.4% of the country's former territory*. The resource-rich mountain ranges surrounding the basin now lay, almost in their entirety, in the adjacent countries.
- The *population* of the pre-WWI Hungarian state – together with Croatia-Slavonia and Fiume (Rijeka) – had been 20.9 million (1910 census). After the Treaty of Trianon, the country's population fell to *7.6 million* within the new borders. The former multi-ethnic character of the country was replaced by a *homogeneous* one. Hungary – like Austria – became one of the most ethnically homogeneous countries in the region. At the same time, the new border (except for the Austrian and Croatian sections) cut through the Hungarian-inhabited areas, resulting in Hungarian minorities beyond the borders. Apart from Austria, all Hungary's neighbours became multi-ethnic countries 11.
- All levels of *public administration* (central, regional and local) underwent a restructuring. The spatial framework of the administrative divisions was fundamentally altered. Ten of the 71 former *counties* of the Kingdom of Hungary (63 Hungarian and 8 Croatian-Slavonian counties) remained intact. As many as 36 counties were transferred entirely to the successor states, while 25 further counties were partitioned to an extent by the new borders 12. Along the new border, there were varied consequences for the counties and their seats. The *'substitution'* of the annexed historical *county seats* could only be accomplished by elevating much less developed settlements to the rank of county seats. In 1919–1920, the refugee county assemblies, institutions and officials settled in the Hungarian small towns and villages of the remnant county territories: e.g. Baja became the county seat in Bács-Bodrog County; Szikszó in Abaúj-Torna County; Mátészalka in Szatmár County; Berettyóújfalu in Bihar County; Elek in Arad County. These new temporary county seats could not fulfil the role of the former county centres.
- The country's *districts* were similarly affected: the number of districts fell sharply from 513 in late 1918 (443 Hungarian and 70 Croatian-Slavonian districts) to 161 by the end of 1923. Serious operational problems arose, as new district seats had to be designated



11 *Ethnographical map of Hungary and the new border*

in several counties, and they were less developed than the ones annexed by the neighbouring countries.

- The administrative areas of the *settlements* were also ignored when drafting the new national borders. For this reason, the territories of many towns and villages (e.g. Komárom, Balassagyarmat, Szabadka) were partitioned, which had several consequences. When the 1920 census was undertaken, the Hungarian authorities still counted the population in the territories awarded to Austria but only transferred in 1923 (Burgenland). Meanwhile, in the southern territories under Serbian occupation, the census did not take place until after the liberation in August 1921.
- The border changes were accompanied by a fundamental shift in the settlement network and pattern. Including Fiume and the Croatian-Slavonian cities, the *number of towns with municipal rights* decreased from 30 to 12. The *number of towns with settled councils* fell from 125 to 41, and the number of *villages* decreased from 12,943 to 3,414.
- A consequence of the new borders and the creation of a new state territory was an important change in

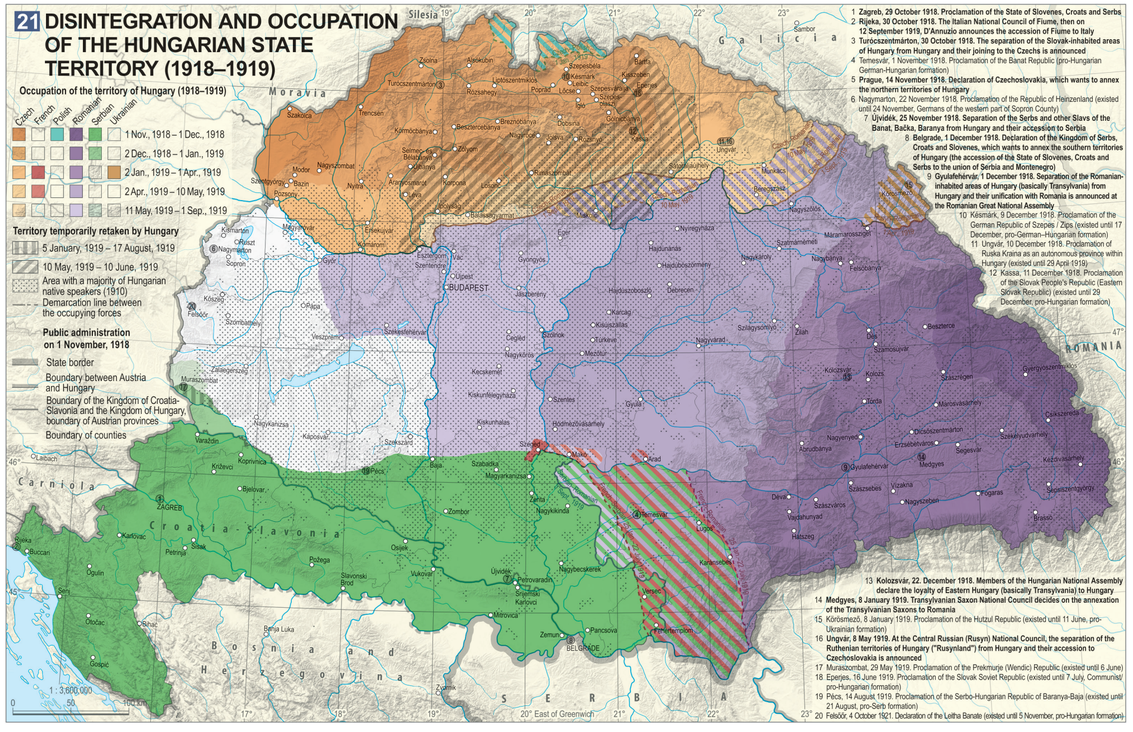


12 *Political map of Hungary and the new border*

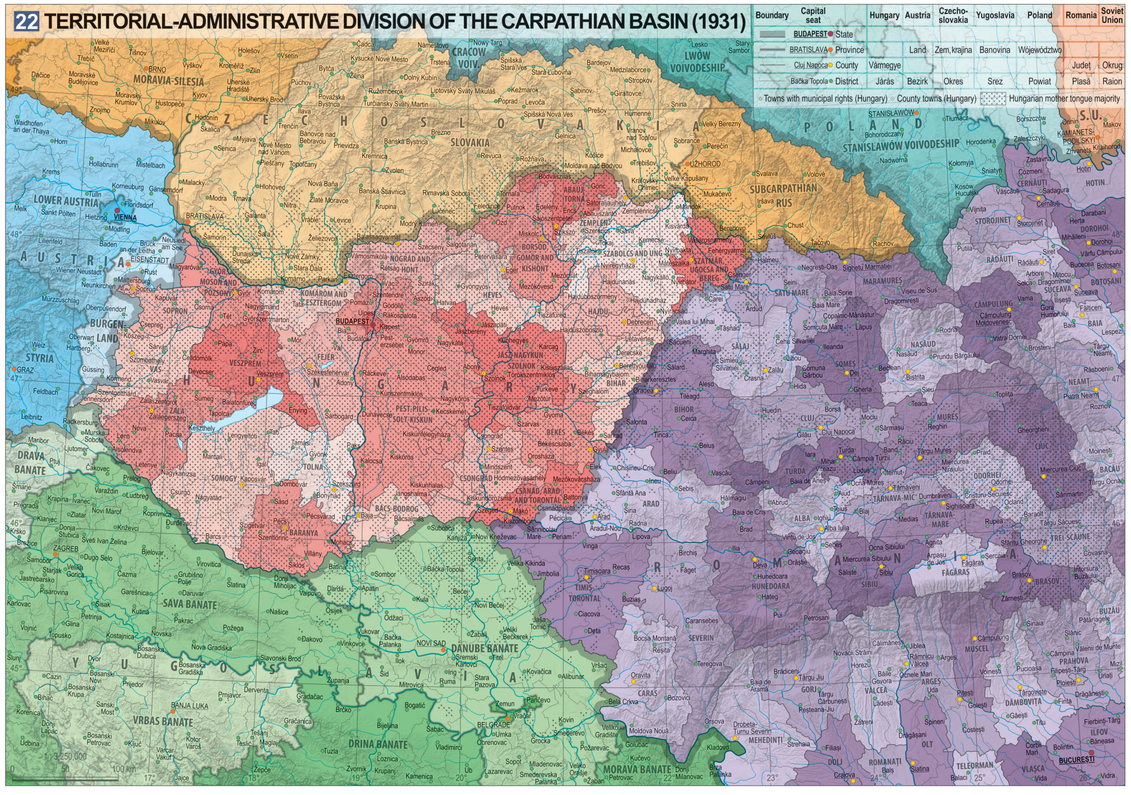
the settlement network. *Budapest's importance* within the new country increased greatly. Yet, similarly to Vienna, the city was *near the new national border*. As a result, it lost its attraction to the central areas of Upper Hungary (today Slovakia). Many of the historically established market towns and *regional centres now lay beyond the border* (e.g. Zagreb, Pozsony, Kassa, Kolozsvár, Temesvár). For this reason, the regional institutions of public administration soon underwent a restructuring. Even so, the functional deficit of the lost cities exerted a long-term impact.

- The sectoral and territorial *structure of the Hungarian economy was disrupted* by the new national border. At the time of the dismemberment of the Budapest-centred railway network, which had been established since the mid-19th century, a fundamental criterion was that the connecting railway lines should be transferred to the successor states. Many Hungarian cities sustained considerable losses, owing to the role played by railways in the demarcation of the new national boundaries (in particular the Czechoslovak–Hungarian and Romanian–Hungarian borders).

21 DISINTEGRATION AND OCCUPATION OF THE HUNGARIAN STATE TERRITORY (1918–1919)



22 TERRITORIAL-ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION OF THE CARPATHIAN BASIN (1931)



State and public administration in the interwar period

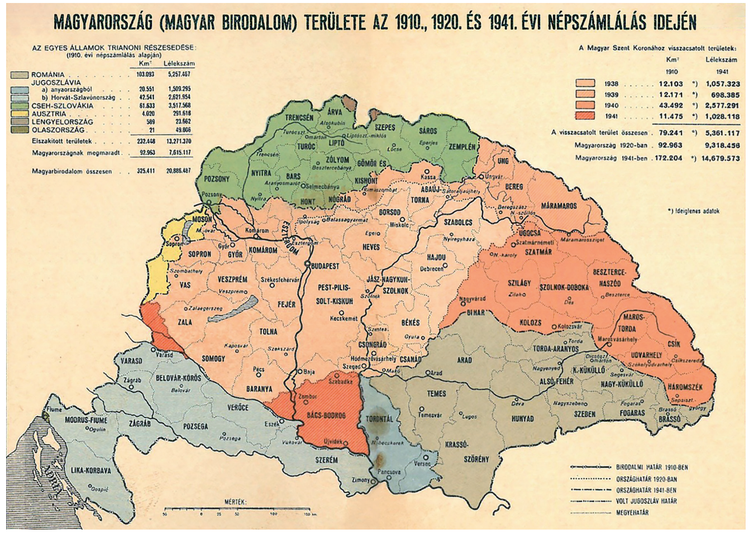
In the aftermath of World War I, Hungary struggled to recover from the post-war revolutions, the Romanian occupation, and the multiple ramifications of the Treaty of Trianon. The subsequent *consolidation* was a gradual process affecting all areas of national life. The starting point was the *restoration of the constitutionality and legal continuity* of the pre-October 1918 period (Act I of 1920), *the restoration of the kingdom*, a review of economic, social, governmental and administrative conditions, and an adjustment to the forcible changes. New circumstances were created by the election of *Miklós Horthy* as regent (1 March 1920), Charles IV's two attempts to return to the country, and the dethronement of the House of Habsburg.

In *1923* (Act XXXV), the *situation of the counties was 'temporarily resolved'* by merging the truncated counties with other small counties [22]. Despite such territorial changes the *counties continued to vary greatly in terms of size and population*. The reforms purposely avoided far-reaching territorial changes, because the re-annexation of territory from the successor states was expected after a border revision. In late 1923, in addition to the new counties, the country had the following administrative divisions: 12 towns with municipal rights, 41 towns with settled councils, 161 districts, 734 notary districts, 1,038 large villages, and 2,376 villages.

Act XXX of 1929 *(on the organization of public administration)* was the defining reform legislation of the era. It affected most aspects of the system of public administration. As the law stated, 'Self-government is the basic unit of Hungary's administration'. The law adapted both the state administration and the administration of local/regional government to the new circumstances in the country. It prescribed procedures for reorganizing and operating local government bodies. In effect, however, the law resulted in the further centralization of public administration. This was the assessment of contemporary legal opinion.

The *world economic crisis* (1929–1933) imposed new constraints on the state and public administration in Hungary. In response to the crisis, a government commissioner *(Zoltán Magyary)* was appointed (1931). His tasks were to elaborate a comprehensive reform of the system of public administration and to *rationalize public administration as a whole*. During the reforms, Hungarian public administration was analysed in unprecedented depth. The primary aspect was professionalism, with the political milieu of public administration being treated as a 'marginal issue'. The government wished to modernize the entire Hungarian state rather than merely the system of public administration. The territorial aspects of the system were then analysed (Gyula Hantos). A map series was completed showing the *jurisdictional and territorial confusion* that existed in *Hungarian public administration* (at both central and local levels of government).

The proposals were reasonable, but their efficacy and scope were limited by the fact that 'changes could not be made to the existing county borders'. (The country's administrative divisions comprised a system, and, in view of the extremely haphazard county divisions, it proved impossible to draft a new regional system of administrative divisions.) The results of the review showed that Hungarian public administration was neither rational nor efficient. Despite an awareness of the weaknesses of Hungarian public administration, the political elite at both national and county levels failed to draw far-reaching conclusions. An opportunity to rationalize, modernize, and restructure public administration in Hungary was missed.



13 *The territory of Hungary (Hungarian Empire) at the time of the 1910, 1920 and 1941 censuses*

The government of Gyula Gömbös (1932–1936) sought to restructure the entire Hungarian state under the auspices of a government program referred to as the National Work Plan. Gömbös envisioned the modernization of the system of public administration as part of this plan. His proposals included the creation of a regional level of government above the counties.

In terms of the number of public administrative reform proposals, the period between 1921 and 1938 was unprecedented in Hungarian history. Many territorial reform proposals were put forward. Some of the reform ideas stemmed from practising geographers (e.g. Pál Teleki and his team's plans for landscape administration; Gyula Prinz's ideas about transport accessibility and his principles concerning of central places). Ferenc Erdei's urban-centric approach to settlement policy elicited considerable debate. Despite the many territorial reform ideas, the territorial division of public administration changed little between 1923 and 1938.

In those areas of the Carpathian Basin that had been annexed from Hungary, the county-based Hungarian administrative divisions (with some revisions) remained in place for a fleeting period. In Czechoslovakia, two 'lands' – namely Slovakia and Subcarpathian Rus' – were then created in the annexed territories. *In Slovakia*, so-called *large counties* (veľžúp) were established between 1923 and 1928, which were then *abolished in 1928* with the formation of a *provincial system*. In this way, public administration became a system with *two levels (district and commune)* based on the Czech model. In *Subcarpathian Rus'*, public administration was consolidated into four counties between 1919 and 1921, three counties between 1921 and 1926, and a single county *(Mukačevo)* between 1926 and 1928. Here too, the counties were abolished in 1928, with the introduction of a uniform system of administrative divisions in Czechoslovakia. In Transylvania, a system of public administration based on *counties* (județ) and *districts* (plasă) remained unchanged until 1938. Major changes in the geographical areas of counties occurred rarely (principally in 1919 and 1925). In *1938*, the counties, deprived of their independent legal status, were consolidated into *provinces* (ținut) named after rivers. The result was a four-tiered system of public administration in Romania (province, county, district, village). This is how the provinces of Someș, Timiș, Mureș were created in Transylvania. In the areas annexed by the *Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes* (renamed the *Kingdom of Yugoslavia* in 1929), the county system was abolished in *1922*, being superseded by a system of *regions* (oblasts) that existed until 1928. In 1929, the regions were replaced by province-sized *banates* (banovina), the intention being to establish a Serbian ethnic majority in as many places as possible. The banates, which were also divided into districts (srez), were named after major rivers, with the 'Danube banate' covering much of today's Vojvodina, the 'Sava banate' comprising the Croatian-Slavonian areas, and the 'Drava banate' encompassing the Slovenian Mura region. In Austria, a province called *Burgenland* was created in the former Western Hungary, an area ceded to Austria in 1921. Burgenland, whose capital became Eisenstadt in 1925, was divided into districts (Bezirke).

Territorial revision (1938–1941) and its impact on public administration

In 1938, changes in the European balance of power created the external conditions for a revision of Hungary's national borders. A brief period between 1938 and 1941 saw rapid changes in this field. Border revision, which occurred on several occasions within a brief period, necessitated a reorganization of Hungary's system of public administration. The changes demonstrated more clearly than ever before that public administration is an inherent part of the political system and that the territorial division of public administration inevitably reflects international borders.

In the aftermath of the Munich Agreement (29 September 1938), Hungary – with the consent of the four great powers (France, Germany, Great Britain, and Italy) and following a German-Italian arbitration process that culminated in the First Vienna Award *(2 November 1938)* – got back 12,000 sq km of territory from Czechoslovakia, *an area predominantly inhabited by ethnic Hungarians* [13]. The first step towards establishing new national borders was the fixing of a military demarcation line on 5 November 1938. Under the new circumstances, the overriding principle was the restoration of the pre-1918 administrative divisions, albeit with minor territorial adjustments. Kassa (Košice) once again became the seat of Abaúj-Torna County.

On *15 March 1939*, following the dissolution of the Czechoslovak state and acting with Germany's consent, Hungary began the forcible re-annexation of the predominantly ethnic Rusyn part of *Subcarpathia*. This area had not been returned to Hungary under the First Vienna Award. The process of re-annexation, which lasted until 18 March, was complicated by the fact that in Chust (Huszt) on the same day (15 March 1939), the independent republic of *Carpatho-Ukraine* was proclaimed, a state that Germany refused to recognize. On 23 March 1939, Hungary – seeking to expand the Ung Valley defensive zone – attacked Slovakia and occupied the area around Sobrance and Stakčín in Eastern Slovakia. During the military operations of the spring of 1939, an area of more than 12,000 sq km and approx. 700,000 inhabitants, mainly Rusyns and Slovaks, was returned to Hungary. The incorporation of these ethnic minorities brought substantial constitutional and administrative changes; the *Subcarpathian Governorate* was established in the area. Pál Teleki argued vociferously that Hungary should support 'Rusyn autonomy' to set a good example. On 1 September 1939, World War II broke out when Germany and Slovakia attacked Poland. On 17 September 1939, the Soviet Union attacked Poland from the rear. Poland's territory was then basically divided between Germany and the Soviet Union. In the Carpathians, Hungary and the Soviet Union became immediate neighbours. On ideological grounds, Hungary found it difficult to deal with German-Soviet cooperation. The government and public of Hungary aided Polish refugees.

Hungarian-Romanian relations in the interwar period were characterized by considerable hostility, which intensified with the return of Subcarpathia to Hungary. On 16 August 1940, under German pressure, Hungarian-Romanian negotiations took place in Turnu Severin and aimed at resolving bilateral relations and territorial issues. These talks proved fruitless. On *30 August 1940* – essentially at Romania's request – a German-Italian arbitration process culminated in the Second Vienna Award. *Northern Transylvania*, with an area of 44,000 sq km, was returned to Hungary. As far as the county, district and commune administrative areas were concerned, an effort was made to restore the pre-1918 status quo, but several changes were required in view of the new national border.

On *3 April 1941*, Germany and its Italian and Bulgarian allies attacked *Yugoslavia*. Prime Minister Pál Teleki committed suicide in protest against the decision to permit German military forces to traverse Hungary. The *Independent State of Croatia* declared its independence on *10 April 1941*, which marked the formal end of the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The next day (11 April) Hungary began occupying its former southern territories. The Yugoslav Banat region was occupied by German forces. For Hungary, the point of departure was the restoration of legal continuity in the reannexed territories.

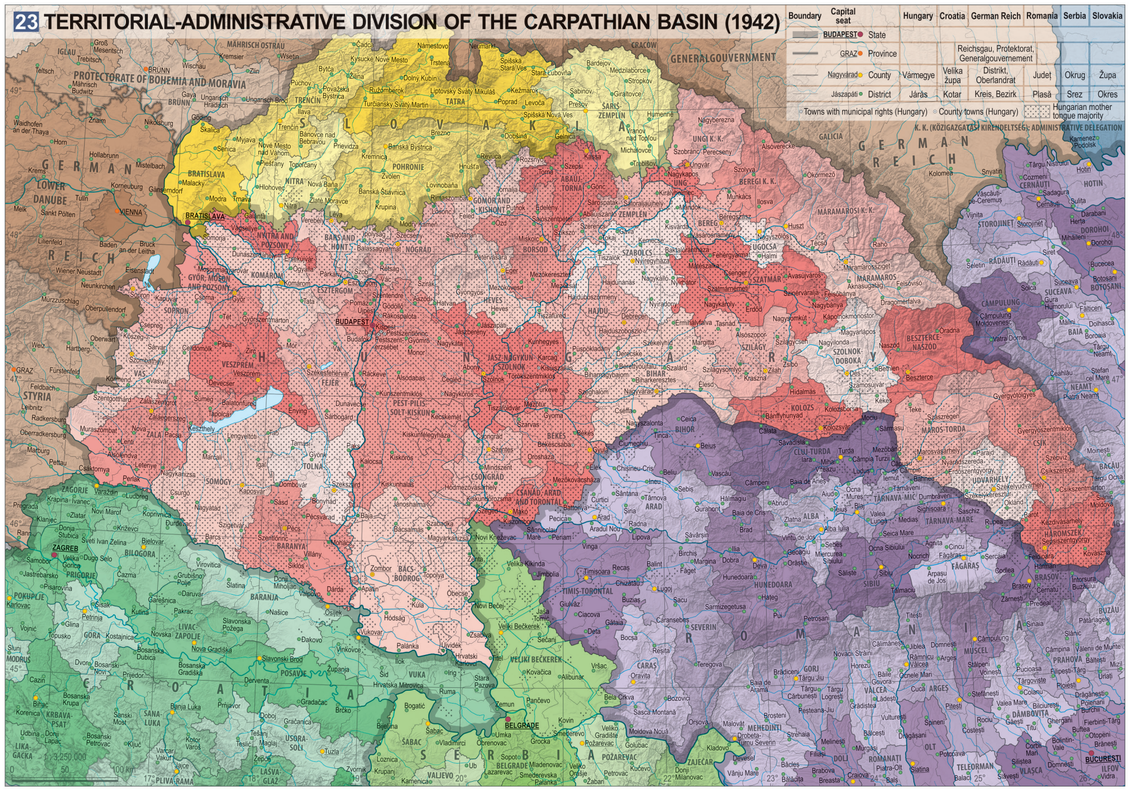
On 26 June, Hungary entered the Second World War on the side of Germany. The country's participation in the war put at risk not only its recent territorial gains but also its existence as an independent state. *On 19 March 1944, German forces occupied Hungary*. Subsequently, the resources of the occupied country served the German war machine. Beginning on 23 September 1944, the Soviet army advanced into the Trianon area of the country. An attempt by Hungary to exit the war failed when Ferenc Szálasi came to power on 16 October. The Arrow Cross party state was fully subservient to the Third Reich.

Between 1938 and 1944, new states and national borders were created in the part of the Carpathian Basin outside Hungary [23]. In line with Hitler's plans, the 'independent' *Slovak Republic* was created on 14 March 1939, which, in 1940, was divided once again into *large counties*. In Romania, which lost Northern Transylvania under the provisions of the Second Vienna Award (1940), the four-tiered administrative division established in 1938 remained, with changes being made to reflect the new Hungarian–Romanian national border. The seat of Bihor County in Romania was moved to Beiuș, while what remained of Cluj County was incorporated into Turda County. During the German invasion of Yugoslavia, the *Independent State of Croatia* was proclaimed *in Zagreb* on 10 April 1941. Its administrative structure was completely revamped. With a view to creating Croatian ethnic majorities, *large counties* were created. These counties were divided into *districts* and towns with district rights. The former *Yugoslav Banat* was placed under German military administration, theoretically as part of the Nazi puppet state of Serbia (known at the time as the Territory of the Military Commander in Serbia).

Hungary in the period 1945–1989

The impact of major constitutional and political changes on public administration (1944–1948)

On 23 September 1944, Soviet troops began to advance into the Trianon territory of Hungary. From December 1944 until April 1945, the country had two legislative bodies, two governments, two armies, and two 'legal and justice systems'. The area controlled by the Szálasi regime gradually declined as the Soviet occupation zone expanded. The *Provisional National As-*



sembly convened in Debrecen on *21 December*. This led to the formation of the *Provisional Government*. Thereafter, liberated Hungary began to increase in area.

With the Soviet advance, the old system of public administration collapsed. Many of its representatives fled. Temporary *national committees* were formed from representatives of the 'democratic parties'. On 4 January 1945, the Prime Minister's Decree no. 14/1945 was adopted on the reorganization of public administration. The decree also set the conditions for the establishment of so-called verification committees for public administration employees.

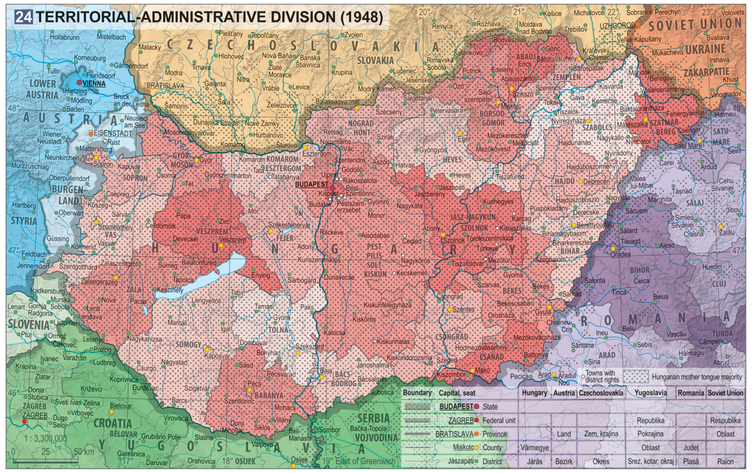
The Prime Minister's Decree no. 4330/1945 regulated the temporary arrangement of administrative divisions in Hungarian public administration. Under the provisions of the decree, various counties were merged once again. The decree also prescribed the transfer of territory between counties and adjustments to the territorial division of the districts. Among the parties, the National Peasant Party proposed the most comprehensive changes to public administration. Its ideas were based on Ferenc Erdei's vision of the interwar period. On 14 July 1946, the National Peasant Party published its proposals in the press, triggering a national political debate on public administrative reforms.

The new political system was shaped in the course of domestic disputes and foreign interventions. The national assembly elections of 4 November 1945 were won by the centre-right Independent Smallholders' Party. Although the party obtained an absolute majority, under Soviet pressure a coalition government was formed. Public administration soon fell under the control of the Hungarian Communist Party.

On 31 January 1946, the National Assembly adopted legislation on a *republican form of government* (Act I of 1946). On *10 February 1947*, Hungary signed the *Paris Peace Treaty*, which restored the former national borders, although an additional small territory was ceded to Slovakia near Bratislava. With the finalization of the borders in 1948, a reform of the old territorial divisions 24 was placed back on the agenda.

In Hungary's neighbourhood, the administrative changes were as follows. The statehood of *Austria* was restored in 1945, but the country remained under Allied control for the next ten years. The boundaries of *Burgenland* were the same as they are today. In 1945, the Czechoslovak administrative system of the period between 1928 and 1938 was restored in *Slovakia* and throughout the country. In Moscow on 29 June 1945, a treaty was signed between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, under whose terms *Subcarpathia* (today Zakarpattia) became a part of the Soviet Union. On 22 January 1946, this region was incorporated into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic with Uzhgorod (Ungvár) as its seat. At the time, the oblast comprised 13 raions (districts), two municipalities with territorial rights (Uzhgorod and Mukačevo), and three municipalities with district rights (Beregovo, Khust, Vinogradov).

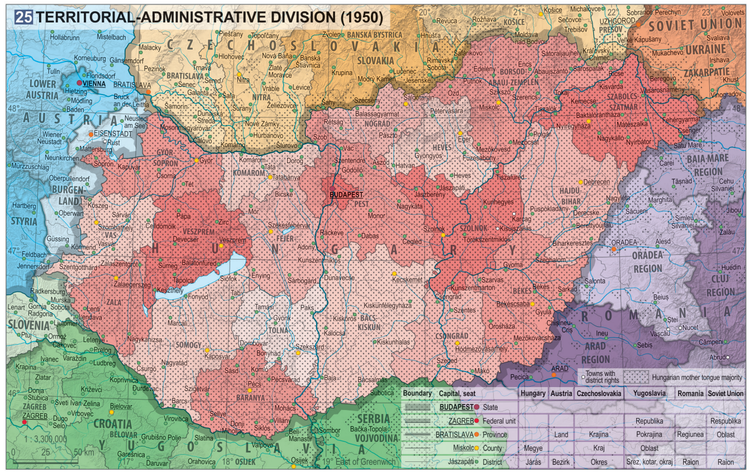
The pre-war administrative divisions were also restored in *Romania*, which, having regained Northern Transylvania, fell under communist rule in 1946. Led by Josip Broz Tito, *Yugoslavia* was reborn as a federative people's republic comprising six nations. The boundaries between the Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian constituent republics of Yugoslavia were fixed at this time; in 1992, they became the internationally recognized national borders. The Autonomous Province of *Vojvodina* was established in the northern part of *Serbia*. Three levels of public administration (region, district and commune) were introduced in *Slovenia*, and four levels (region, county, district, commune) in *Croatia*.



Public administration under the open dictatorship of the proletariat (1949–1956)

For the Hungarian Working People's Party, the ruling communist party after 1949, the construction of a Soviet-type 'party-state constitutional system' was a priority task. This entailed the development of a new functional and territorial system of public administration. The country's new *Constitution* was promulgated on 20 August 1949 (Act XX of 1949). It established a new form of government (the people's republic), which became the foundation of the party-state system and included the structural framework of a *system of councils*. In reality, decisions in all field and at all levels of government reflected communist party 'guidelines'.

The new constitutional and political framework contravened European constitutional norms. The separation of powers was no more than a formality. The main body of state power was ostensibly the *Parliament*, which in terms of its rights and duties reflected only in part previous Hungarian practice. The establishment of a *Presidential Council* with broad powers in effect created a potential rival to the Parliament, which was to meet 'at least twice' a year. The *Council of Ministers* became formally the supreme body of state administration. The government ministries were listed individually in the Constitution. Under the provisions of the Constitution, the judiciary was not a truly separate branch of government.



Chapter V of the Constitution determined the *territorial-administrative division* of the country. The administrative divisions of the *Hungarian People's Republic* were the *counties, districts, towns, and villages*. Cities could be subdivided into districts. Any territorial changes to the administrative bodies were to be determined by the Council of Ministers. The regional and local bodies of state power were the county, district, town, village, and city district councils.

A special 'constitutional element' of Hungary's overt dictatorship was the *telephone circular decree*, which was received on an administrative telephone line (the 'K-line') and whose implementation had likewise to be reported by telephone. The telephone circular decrees overrode all legislation.

Beginning on *1 February 1950*, the country's new territorial-administrative division entered into force in two steps. *Nineteen counties* were formed in place of the 25 old counties. The truncated counties of Trianon were merged into larger neighbouring counties (only some of their names were 'inherited' by these new administrative divisions). Medium-sized counties were the norm in Hungary after the reforms 25.

Prior to the establishment of the *districts*, the Institute for Regional Spatial Planning conducted several catchment area studies, the results of which were then considered. The number of districts was reduced from 150 to *140*. As the districts became area councils (to which smaller towns were subordinated), an opportunity arose for the coordinated provision of services in towns and villages.

A crucial decision in political and economic terms was the establishment of *Greater Budapest* through the incorporation of seven towns and 16 villages. This impacted on the settlement network and the organization of public administration.

The merger of villages was conducted on a large scale. The reforms led merely to a slight decrease in the number of villages from 3250 to *3169*. Villages were only merged or attached to municipalities where there was a continuous built-up area.

The detailed operational and substantial frameworks of the *council system* were elaborated in Act I of 1950 (the first Council law). After a transitional period, the first council elections were held on 22 October 1950, resulting in the formation of representative council bodies. The Constitution had created a clearly hierarchical relationship between the different council levels. The territorial aspect predominated, with most towns (29) 'being subordinated to district councils'. A smaller number of towns (24) were classified as towns/cities 'subordinated directly to the county councils'. Budapest was the only city to be 'subordinated directly to the Council of Ministers'.

The country's daily newspapers familiarized the Hungarian public with the new system and rules. In 1950, a textbook on 'Constitutional Studies' was published for pupils in their final year of school. The aim was to educate people to be conscious, law-abiding and disciplined 'socialist' citizens.

The new administrative framework failed to meet people's hopes in full. Accordingly, in 1953 preparations began for a comprehensive administrative and territorial overhaul. The ensuing economic and domestic political crisis pushed aside plans for radical reforms. Even so, the process did lead to the adoption of the so-called *second Council law* in 1954. The towns were removed from the administration of district councils and became towns with 'district rights'. Debrecen, Miskolc, Pécs, and Szeged were transformed into towns with county rights.

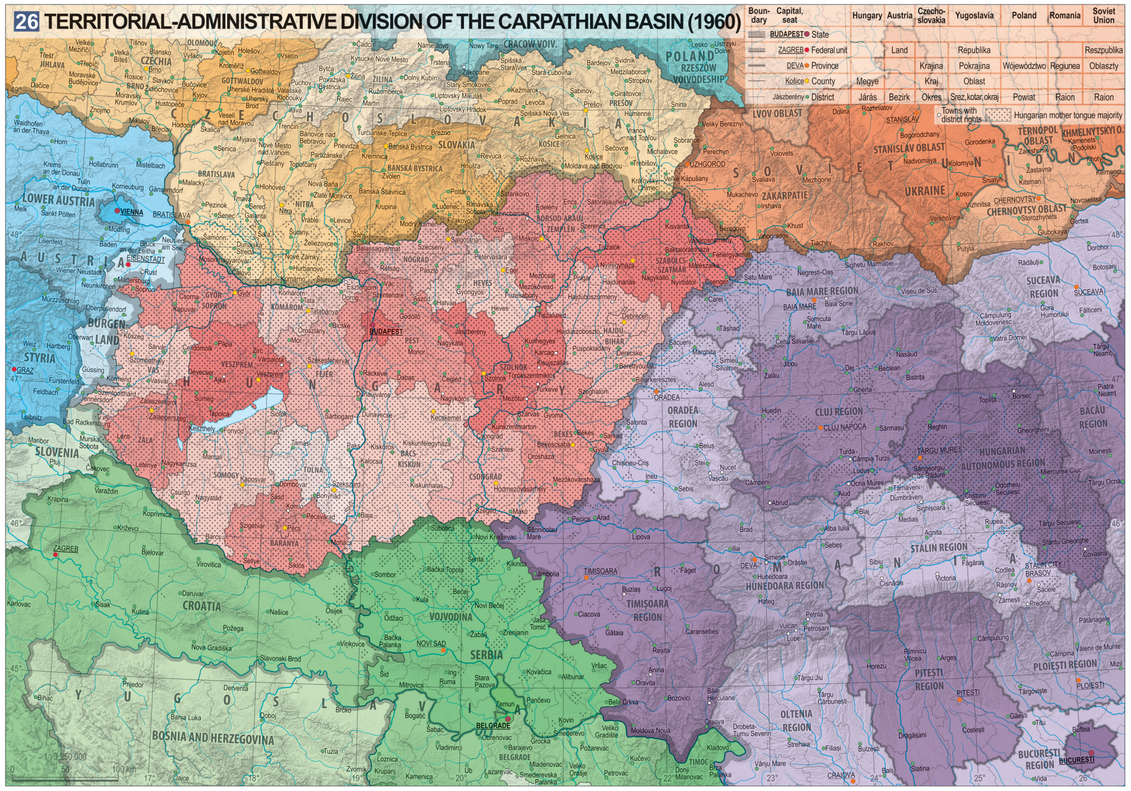
In 1956, the need for comprehensive public administration reform was placed back on the agenda. The goals were a radical reduction in the number of counties, the merger of districts, and a reconsideration of various issues of settlement administration. The reforms were prepared, and the preliminary decisions were made. Nevertheless, owing to the domestic political crisis, the proposals were never brought before parliament. In those counties whose abolition was foreseen, the administrative reorganization proposals led to an increase in political instability.

The period was marked by growing urbanization. In early 1949, there were 60 urban settlements in the country. Between 1949 and 1954 nine settlements then became towns, and 1950 saw the incorporation of seven urban settlements into Budapest.

In the communist countries of the Carpathian Basin, major administrative changes took place in 1949 and 1950, reflecting the Soviet pattern of administrative divisions (district-province/oblast and district/raion) 26. In *Slovakia*, in 1949, a *three-tiered administrative territorial division* was undertaken, based on *national committees* operating as the political subsidiaries of the centralized communist state. Six *major regions* were created, meanwhile, the number of districts was increased from 77 to 96 (including district seats with district rights). In *Romania*, the counties were abolished in 1950 and replaced by a system of regions and raions, which can be regarded as large districts. These constituted the main operational territorial entities of communist state power. In Transylvania, 11 provinces replaced the 23 counties, while 66 raions were created out of the 165 districts. The only province with an ethnic Hungarian majority, which included the southern half of Székely Land, had its seat at Brașov, which at the time became known as Stalin City. In 1952 and again in 1956, territorial centralization on the lines of the Soviet oblasts led to a reduction in the number of provinces. In Transylvania, the provinces of Severin and Rodna were abolished in 1952, while Arad was abolished in 1956. In *1952*, at Stalin's behest, Romania created the *Hungarian Autonomous Region*, which covered most of Székely Land and had its seat at Târgu Mureș/Marosvásárhely. (The region had an area of 13,550 sq km, 731,000 inhabitants in 1956, and a Hungarian ethnic share of 77.3%.) *In Yugoslavia*, in 1949, the number of *regions* was increased in both Croatia and Serbia (in the part of Serbia outside the autonomous provinces to five and in Croatia to six). In Croatia, these regions were abolished as early as 1951 with a view to strengthening self-governance (in the districts and municipalities). Then, in *1955*, a significant *administrative centralization* took place (reducing the number of districts from 96 to 27 and the number of municipalities from 737 to 299.

Novel solutions and models (1957–1970)

After the 1956 Hungarian revolution and under the new circumstances of the country's Soviet occupation, the old-new communist regime conducted a campaign of retribution against anyone who had participated in



the revolution. Concurrently, however, the authorities made considerable efforts to 'win over' sizeable portions of society. Living standards were raised and the despised secret police force was disbanded. An attempt was made to garner the support of (or at least neutralize) the peasant farmers by abolishing the compulsory delivery of produce.

In terms of their overall impact on society and the economy, the most significant developments were the oft-coercive reorganization of *agriculture* into *rural producer cooperatives*, *structural changes affecting urban industrialization*, and the advent of *mass housing construction* projects. *Rural-urban migration became a mass phenomenon*, and there were *profound changes in the occupational structure*. The *period of consolidation ended* in 1963, in the wake of a kind of compromise with the country's intellectuals.

Council administration remained an essential element of the political system (direction by the party became far more nuanced). State intervention continued to characterize the development of the network of settlements. When the municipalities were placed in various development categories (1963), long-term approaches relating to producer cooperatives and the issue of the coordination of public services emerged in tandem with the central and regional parts of the council system.

The period saw *corrective changes* in the council system as a whole. The failure of the county reforms of 1956 led to the removal of territorial reforms at county level from the political agenda. The process whereby settlements became towns accelerated in the latter half of the period. In village council administration, there was a noticeable increase in the number of joint village councils.

The relative status of the district-level councils rose at the beginning of the period, with the forcible collectivization of agriculture being largely conducted at the 'district level'. In addition, the districts played a role in the development of many public services. In the second half of the period, the status of the districts weakened.

The *economic reform package* of 1 January *1968* impacted on almost all areas of government policy, triggering dynamic economic and – in part unanticipated – social developments. A portion of society was ill-prepared for the competition that emerged in the economy. The resulting social disparities were also unexpected and proved difficult to address.

In March *1969*, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP) and the Council of Ministers passed a resolution on the development of government policy and socialist democracy. In accordance with the provisions of the resolution, preparations for a reform of the new Council law and for an amendment to the Constitution began.

Government Decree no. 1017/1969 introduced experimental measures. Villages could be removed from the control of a district and placed under the control of a town where a significant proportion of the village working population was working in the given town, where the village was participating in the various services provided by the town, where the village and the town had good transport connections, where the town's various services could also be provided to residents of the village, and where there was a tradition of ties between the village and the town.

In the environs of both Hatvan and Kapuvár, the urban-managed village scheme was introduced on an experimental basis. In the scheme, the town had actual powers over the village councils, and the town council could determine the revenue sources and mandatory expenditures of the village councils under its control. Having failed to meet expectations, the scheme was abolished by the Council law of 1971. This pointed towards a strengthening of village-county ties.

In connection with the economic reform package, new elements appeared both in the field of public administration and in policy proposals for the development of the network of settlements. The *National Settlement Network Development Framework Plan* (1969) defined the regional roles of settlements in a hierarchical pyramid: 1 national centre, 7 upper-level centres, 11 partial upper-level centres, 66 intermediate-level centres, 39 partial intermediate-level centres, 123 priority lower-level centres, 524 lower-level centres, 27 partial lower-level centres, and 2137 villages.

In connection with the economic reform package of 1968, there were lively debates about the planned amendments to the Council law and to the Constitution and about the settlement network development plan, which was made accessible to the public. Politically active groups in society became aware that the developments and events of the post-1956 period had given rise to opportunities for – or even the necessity of – changes in the model.

Beginning in 1968, *'reform'* became a particularly common notion in Hungarian social, economic, and political discourse. This reflected a realization that the established structures required reform and that the political will for such change was present. Territorial issues were also addressed in the debates.

In *Slovakia*, the *administrative reforms of 1960* gave rise to a system of administrative divisions (regions and districts) that remained in place until 1990. The system reflected the communist regime's policies of territorial centralization and ethnic homogenization. The regions and districts increased in area by a factor of two or three. The number of regions thus declined from 6 to 3, while the number of districts fell from 96 to 33. Consequently, the number of districts with an ethnic Hungarian majority decreased from 14 to 2. In *1968*, after the suppression of the 'Prague Spring' and reflecting a spirit of decentralization, the previously unified Czechoslovak state was divided into two formally sovereign constituent (Czech and Slovak) republics. Five new regions were created from those that had become excessively large. In this way, Košice became a city with district rights. In *1969*, Bratislava became *a city with regional rights* and was renamed *'Bratislava the Capital'*. During the 1966 reforms in *Zakarpattia* (Ukrainian SSR), the districts of Velykyi Bereznyi and Volovets became independent once again. In *1960*, the Hungarian Autonomous Region in Romania was reconstituted and renamed the *Mureș–Hungarian Autonomous Region*. On economic grounds, the southern ethnic Hungarian districts were annexed to the province of Brașov. Concurrently, ethnic Romanian-majority areas assigned to the autonomous region, which reduced the proportion of Hungarians in the region to 60%. As one of the stages in an increasingly overt process of Romanian nation-building and ethnic homogenization, the formalized autonomous province was abolished with the adoption, in 1968, of a *law restoring the county system*. The administrative reforms of the Ceaușescu regime in 1968 marked a final break with the Soviet model and were designed to promote what became known as 'national communism'. The Romanian party leadership viewed the counties as more suitable than the former regions for carrying out the policies of coercive industrialization, urbanization and Romanization. In Transylvania, out of the 23 *counties* abolished in 1950, only 16 were reconstituted. The boundaries of these counties remain unchanged to this day. The counties of Ciuc (Csík) and Odorheiu (Udvarhely) were merged to form Harghita County; Trei Scăune (Háromszék) became Covasna County, and the former territories of Someș, Turda, Târnava Mare and Mic, and Făgăraș counties were divided among their neighbours. The regions and raions were liquidated, and their role was taken over by the *municipalities* (21 towns with county rights), *towns* (112), and *communes* (990), which became greatly enlarged. In *Yugoslavia* during this period, in the spirit of centralization, the number of districts and villages steadily declined, resulting in their increased size. In the Pannonian areas of Croatia, the number of *districts* decreased from 19 to 6 between 1955 and 1962. In consequence, their size approached that of the regions abolished in 1951. In 1965 and *1966*, the districts were abolished throughout the country, being replaced by the administrative-territorial units of Yugoslav self-governance. These were the *municipalities*, some of which became as large as the former districts.

Modernization of the system of public administration (1971–1989)

From *1971*, major reforms were undertaken in three specialized areas (public administration, development of the settlement network, and regional development):

- The development of the system of *public administration* was formulated in 1971. Major changes included the strengthening the county councils, the abolition of the district councils, and the transformation of the districts into branch offices of the county councils.
- The adoption and publication of the National Concept for Settlement Network Development (Government Decree no. 1007/1971).
- The *regional spatial development guidelines* (Government Decree no. 1006/1971) aimed to establish a more balanced spatial structure.

Significant amendments were made to the Constitution on 12 April 1972. Several constitutional provisions were brought (formally) into line with European and historical Hungarian traditions.

In the aftermath of the adoption and entry into force of the third Council law (Act I of 1971), complex research on all areas of public administration was commenced under the auspices of a long-term national academic research plan (1971–1985). Participants in the research include the public administration departments of the university faculties of government and law, various research institutes of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and several think tanks.

Regarding the reforms undertaken in Hungarian local and regional public administration between 1971 and 1989, the following should be highlighted:

A major element of the new Council law was the reintegration of the *(limited) opportunities for self-governance* into the council system.

The *village* category was split into two parts, resulting in the reintroduction of *large villages*. Such villages usually had more inhabitants and better infrastructure. Further, they could potentially become towns. Under the new Council law, a review of administrative powers was conducted, accompanied by greater decentralization. When the law entered into force, local councils were given as many as 200 new powers.

In the allocation of resources at *county* level, consideration was given to the status of a council (large village councils, joint village councils) and to the settlement network development categories (partial lower-level, lower-level, and priority lower-level centres). This change partly explains the *increase in the number of joint (merged) village councils*.

In terms of *urban* administration, a momentous change was the abolition of the category of town with county rights. Debrecen, Győr, Miskolc, Pécs, and Szeged were then transformed into *county towns*. Thereafter, each county council was able to formulate plans for the entire county, including all its settlements.

During this period, the granting of town status was preceded by the *intentional urban development* of the settlement in question. In most cases, this process began with the 'inclusion' of smaller villages around the planned town, with a view to increasing the number of inhabitants to 10,000 or so. Meanwhile, functional improvements were made in most cases.

Under the new structure, the *district councils were abolished*. Even so, the districts continued to exist in administrative terms, functioning as the local branch offices of the county councils. As such, they played a significant role in maintaining relations between county and village councils.

A new institutional framework was elaborated for the *administration of urban districts*, which replaced the districts from *1984*. Under the new system, village councils were not 'subordinated' to town councils. Rather, for a brief period, towns/cities were given a role in shaping relations between the county and village councils.

The various changes led to preparations for a fourth Council law. Alongside public administration, precedence was given to regional spatial planning and the development of the settlement network. Based on 'theoretical' guidelines elaborated by the communist party, the government formulated its policy concept for regional spatial development and the development of the settlement network. A resolution of the Council of Ministers containing *guidelines for regional spatial development* (1971) formulated the medium- and long-term objectives and values of regional spatial development policy as well as the funding possibilities.

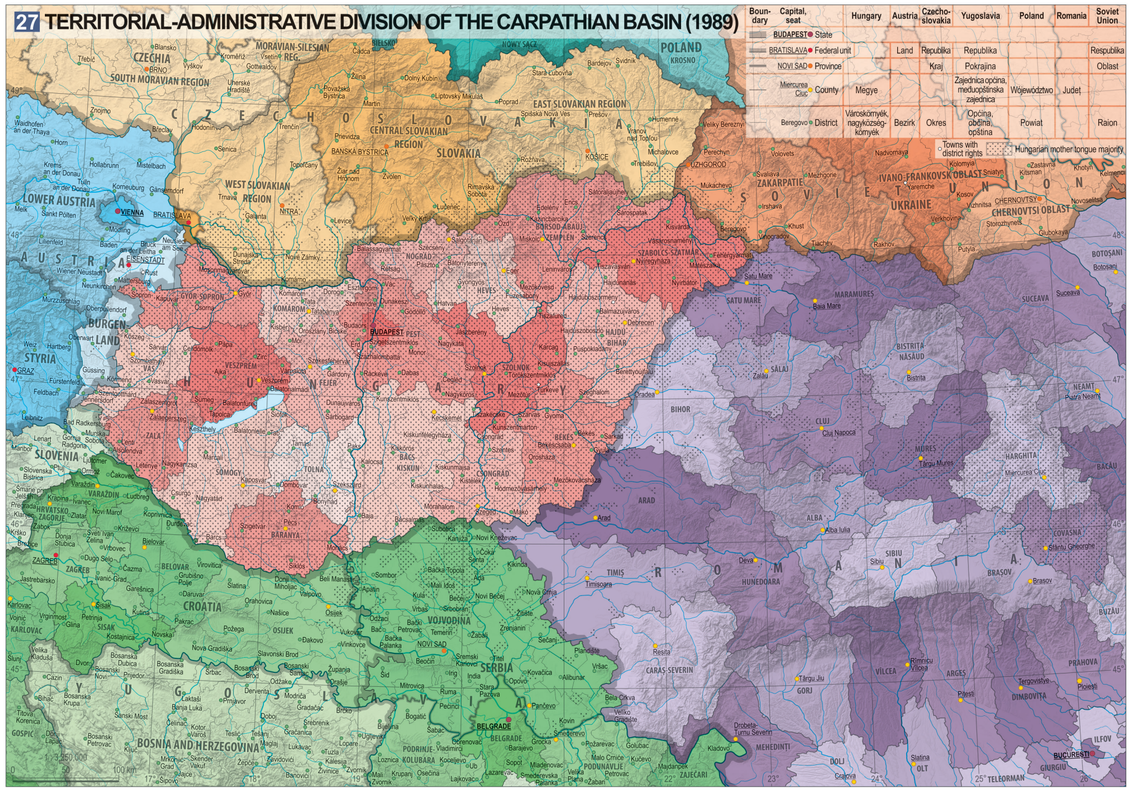
The *National Settlement Network Development Concept*, approved by the Council of Ministers in 1971, contained broad guidelines for the modernization of the settlement network (especially the urban network). The regional roles of settlements became more differentiated than they had been previously. The centres with key roles (1 national, 5 priority-upper, 7 upper, 11 partial-upper, 65 secondary, 41 partial-secondary centres) covered almost the entire range of functional and 'performing' urban settlements in the country.

The *Budapest agglomeration* (with 44 settlements) was demarcated, and this event was followed by a process of planning and development aimed at establishing the agglomeration's internal structure. The joint planning and management of Budapest and the agglomeration remained a cardinal issue for the duration of state socialism.

Defining the tasks and functions of the lower level (priority, lower, partial) of the settlement network was the most problematic part of the concept. Among Hungary's 3209 settlements, 2071 (64.54%) became 'other' settlements (without central functions). Many county councils took the view that no development resources needed to be allocated to these settlements.

On 1 January *1990*, the country was divided administratively into *19 counties* and the *capital city* (Budapest). These twenty administrative divisions constituted the basic administrative structure of the country in all respects. The country's urban settlements, as basic divisions of public administration, were placed in two categories (alongside *Budapest*, there were eight *county towns* and 157 *towns*). Similarly to the urban settlements, the villages also formed two groups (277 large villages and 2577 villages). The legal status and organization of the councils became extremely diverse. Some urban settlement councils also had co-municipalities (nationally, there were 50 co-municipalities with common urban councils). There were also the independent and joint councils of large villages, as well as the independent and joint councils of villages.

In *Slovakia* and Soviet *Zakarpattia*, there were no changes in the administrative divisions between 1970 and 1990, although some villages were granted town status. In *Transylvania*, the number, extent and names of the counties have remained unchanged since the reintroduction of counties in 1968 27. As part of Romania's coercive urbanization programme, in 1972, five towns that were the major destinations of internal migration were 'promoted' to the status of municipality (e.g. Miercurea Ciuc/Csíkszereda, Sf. Gheorghe/Sepsiszentgyörgy, Zalău/Zilah). A *settlement planning (systematization) plan* was adopted in 1972 and enshrined in law in 1974. Thereafter, a policy of coercive urban development and the *communist transformation of city centres* was accompanied by the neglect and, in many cases, liquidation of villages classified as 'unviable' ('village destruction'). In 1989, 16 counties, 26 municipalities, 93 other towns and 994 villages existed in Transylvania. In *Yugoslavia*, after the abolition of the districts in 1966, the country's basic administrative divisions were the *municipalities* until 1991. During this period, in *Croatia* so-called *municipality associations* arose, which resembled the former regions. Under the provisions of the 1974 *Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia*, the autonomous provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo were granted *substantial* rights of *self-determination* that corresponded, in many respects, to the self-determination of the constituent republics, including, in practice, a right of veto in the Serbian parliament.



27 TERRITORIAL-ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION OF THE CARPATHIAN BASIN (1989)

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