

## ISTVÁN LAGZI

# THE NUMBER OF POLES HAVING ESCAPED TO THE TERRITORY OF HUNGARY DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR. FACTS AND DATA\*

In autumn, 1939 several ten thousand Polish citizens were seeking safety in flight from the invaders. People started to rush abroad in the first week of the war. Realizing this tendency András Hóry, minister of Hungary in Warsaw, asked Hungarian authorities to help the Polish in their escape to Hungary. Reacting to the request, the border between Hungary and Poland was opened after the proposal of Count Pál Teleki, Prime Minister at that time. The benevolence of the Hungarian authorities significantly aided Poland fighting for its life and attacked by Germany and later, after 17 September, by the Soviet Union. The number of Polish refugees, civil and political, was more than 60,000 according to written records.

Within some days the majority of the Poles having arrived at Hungary became members of the „permanent camp staff”. Financially the refugees were supported by the Polish—Hungarian Committee for Refugees and the 9th Department of the Ministry of the Home Office. Military persons were taken care of by the 21st Department of the Home Office.

The organ of federation of military persons was *Predstawicielstwo Polskich Żołnierzy Internowanych w Królestwie Węgier jako organ 21. oddział M. H.* (Federation of Polish Soldiers Interned to the Hungarian Kingdom as the organ of the 21st department of the Home Office). The brigade general Stefan Dembiński, first commander of the federation had the title of Representative of the Polish Army Interned to Hungary.

Civil refugees were obliged to personally appear at police organs of the first instance at certain times.

Military persons were more severely treated. Members of the armed forces in Hungary were interned.

With the support of Hungarian military authorities several legal committees, courses and workshops were organized.

For the medical treatment of the military refugees some institutes were set up: a Polish hospital in Győr, a sanatorium at Letkés and a T. B. hospital at Eger. Civil refugees were cured by local doctors and hospitals.

\* \* \*

---

\* Supported by OTKA.

Concerning the number of military and civil Polish persons escaped to Hungary we had different data contradicting even to each other and wrong information for a long period. The often quoted publication of 1946 „Polish Refugees in Hungary during the War” (its preface was written by Minister Dr. József Antall) — as is well-known — provided data and arguments for the conciliation committee. The publication includes important statements but does not rely on actual sources concerning numbers. (The compilation of articles by Iván Boldizsár with the main title „The Other Hungary” detailed some questions of Hungarian resistance and the aid given to refugees from Poland, France and other countries. It was written for the conciliation committee, too, and with the purpose of informing foreign countries.) The publication with the preface by József Antall contains the first printed total numbers of Polish refugees in Hungary: „...Almost 140.000 Poles moved across the territory of Hungary during the Second World War, from whom ...100—110.000 people in the first year and 15—25.000 people capable of military service during the following years went into France, Great Britain, and the Near East and there were about 15.000 people who took advantage of the right of asylum so willingly provided by the Hungarian government and society during the whole period of the war.”<sup>1</sup>

According to the editors of the publication „Polish Refugees in Hungary” „...the number of Polish soldiers and civil persons of military age who passed through the country and were boarded on their way or helped to proceed during the evacuation could have been 100—110.000. (...) Almost 110.000 people left Hungary during the mass-evacuation until June 1940. From the 30.000 persons who had remained here further 20.000 people left the country during the evacuation that continued in the following years but became slower, however, almost 5.000 new refugees arrived from Poland and Rumania; that is, *the number of those who remained in Hungary for the whole period of the war* (my italics, I.L.) could have been a round 15.000.”

The distribution of this number among military and civil refugees is:

military refugees: . . . . .	7.000
civil (refugees) living in housing estates: . . . . .	about 3.000
civils living in the capital and at other places as private persons (civil refugees): . . . . .	2.000
Jews placed at Jewish religious communities in Hungary: . . . . .	3.000
Altogether: . . . . .	15.000 <sup>2</sup>

Before the initiation of the archival examinations summarizing the whole of the topic and even for several years after the data mentioned above — far from reality and the possibilities of accomodation — were authoritative concerning the number of Polish refugees in Hungary.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Lengyel menekültek Magyarországon a háború alatt. (Polish Refugees in Hungary during the War)*. Budapest, 1946. (With the preface written by DR. JÓZSEF ANTALL, Minister of Reconstruction), pp. 5—6

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 26—27.

<sup>3</sup> Cp: LÁSZLÓ MAROS: *Hadifogolyszökés és a németek háta mögött (Aiding the Escape of Prisoners of War behind the Germans)*. Új Magyarország, 9 October 1945.; GÁBOR DÓRÓ: *Magyarok a lengyelekért (Hungarians for the Polish)*, Új Magyarország, 5 January 1946.; ZDZISLAW JAN ANTONIEWICZ *Najazd 120.000 Polaków. Dziennik Ludowy* 1968. 238., 236. sz.; „W tym stanie rzeczy nie znamy dokładnej liczby Polaków którzy

We got to know more and more data and facts during the archival examinations, and these data and facts contradicted in many respects to the data included in the publications of 1946. In the middle of the '70's it came to light that „few” Polish people had been boarded in the territory of the corps receiving Polish military refugees. Soldiers either „disappeared” or had not even arrived. At the end of September 1939, 10.365 persons were registered in the territory of corp II. in Székesfehérvár, while 6.927 military persons were taken into registration in the territory of corp VII. in Miskolc.<sup>4</sup>

The Ministry of Defense was prepared to receive hardly more than 25 thousand Polish military refugees in the second half of 1939, on the third day of the Polish Soviet war. (See: Table no. 1.) The first summarized statement derives from the VIIIth army corps headquarters: „... the number of Polish military persons escaped into the the country and interned here — according to the report made by the leading officer of Csap — already exceeded 40.000. Considering the constant movement and changes, it was necessary to involve an official expert (commissary; I. L.) proficient in registration and staff-management in the Department in order to provide the punctual recording of this number and the registration of the persons in question.”<sup>5</sup>

---

schronili się na gościnnej ziemi węgierskiej. Różne źródła podają liczby od 80 do 150 tysięcy. Według moich obliczeń było ich 10.000, z czego 60.000 dostało się na południe, do Francji, Jugosławii, państw bałkańskich i krajów Bliskiego Wschodu.” See: ANTONIEWICZ Z.: *Uchodźcza prasa na Węgrzech (1939—1944)*. Rocznik Historii Czasopismnictwa Polskiego XIV 2—3. 10.; GYÖRGY HAAS: *Harminc évvel ezelőti történet. A menekültek paradicsoma, Magyarország. (It Happened Thirty Years ago. The Refugees' Paradise, Hungary)*. Magyar Híradó (Wien), 1 September 1974. According to the article, the number of refugees was determined as 200.000, MADEJCIK LESZEK: *Miasto na szlaku Polsko—Węgierskiej przyjaźni*. Zeszyty Tarnowskie, Tarnów., 1972, p. 105., ROLAND JÓZSEF ANTONIEWICZ: *Élet és Tudomány*, 9 April 1976, p. 691. „From among the 140.000 refugees, 60.000 people remained in our country for a longer period.” STANISLAW PODLEWSKI: *Działalność duchowieństwa polskiego na Węgrzech*, WTK 14. II. 1971. r.

<sup>4</sup> Hadtörténelmi Levéltár (War History Archives; hereinafter: HL), Honvédelmi Minisztérium (Ministry of Defence; hereinafter: H.M.): 1939 21—21—2107—3107—59130. Telegraph report of the 7th army corps headquarters to the 3rd troop headquarters of H.M. 27 September 1939. *Ibid.*, Telegraph report of the 2nd army corps headquarters of Székesfehérvár to the 21st Department of H.M., 28 September 1939. On the territory of the 3rd army corps of Szombathely there were 10.000 Polish refugees (already later, in November). See: HL H.M. 1939—21—21—3107—57421. Report by the 3rd army corps headquarters of Szombathely to the 21st Department of H.M., 9 November 1939. According to the sources quoted in Witold Biegański's study 4.553 officers, 31.686 soldiers and 862 relatives (altogether 37.283 persons) resided in Hungary on 29 September 1939 and the number of Polish refugees increased to 40.382 till 11 October. Cp: BIEGAŃSKI W.: *Polska emigracja na Węgrzech w latach 1939—1940*. Rola emigracji wojennej, Najnowsze dzieje Polski, 1939—1945, T. XII. 1968. 60.

<sup>5</sup> HL H.M. 1939—21—21—3107—52.909. Department proposal, 9 October 1939. The document was presented and endorsed by the section head of HM. I. and at the reference of Department 10.

Table no. 1.

Internment camps planned for Polish military refugees  
(19 September 1939)

## I.

Gyöngyösapáti (rest-house) only for colonels and generals . . . . .	60 persons
Győr (new infantry barracks) . . . . .	500 persons
Eger (fortress barracks) . . . . .	500 persons

## II.

Internment camps of the rank and file

Komárom (fortresses) . . . . .	3.000 persons
Rimaszécs (legion camp) . . . . .	3.000 persons
Debrecen (agricultural machine factory) . . . . .	3.000 persons
Érsekújvár (supplementary deport of the Hungarian Army) . . . . .	2.100 persons
Sárvár (silk factory) . . . . .	2.400 persons
Tapolca (leased property, only for emergency) . . . . .	500 persons
Nagykanizsa (provision branch store) (hospital part) . . . . .	1.000 persons
Esztergom (camp) . . . . .	1.600 persons
Mosonmagyaróvár (Moirt plant) . . . . .	1.000 persons
Párkány (infantry barracks) . . . . .	700 persons
Felsőhangony (frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	300 persons
Vámosmikola (frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	300 persons
Tompa (barracks) . . . . .	250 persons
Püski (barracks) . . . . .	200 persons
Mohács (barracks) . . . . .	200 persons
Gara (barracks) . . . . .	200 persons
Salgótarján (former frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	200 persons
Bánréve (former frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	200 persons
Csaroda (place of the 14th cyclist battalion removed to Nagyszőlős) . . . . .	200 persons
Ricse (frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	200 persons
Tornanádaska (frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	200 persons
Hidasnémeti (customs officers' apartments) . . . . .	200 persons
Rajka (barracks) . . . . .	200 persons
Magyarcsanád (frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	150 persons
Drégelypalánk (former frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	150 persons
Mérk (former frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	150 persons
Krasznokvajda (frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	150 persons
Pácin (frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	150 persons
Letkés (frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	100 persons
Mándok (former frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	100 persons
Záhony (empty barracks) . . . . .	100 persons
Szeged-Alsóközpont (former frontier guard barracks) . . . . .	100 persons

Altogether: . . . . . 25.360 persons

We can find data on the number of Poles living in Hungary in several articles and studies. According to the special correspondent of the *Giornale d'Italia* until 21 September 1939 „...more than 70.000 Polish soldiers arrived in Hungarian territories. The number of the civil refugees is very low.”<sup>6</sup> The article of the International Red Cross stated about the distribution of Polish refugees by countries that 45.000 Polish citizens resided in Hungary, 24.000 in Rumania, 16.000 in Lithuania and 2.000 in Latvia at the beginning of October 1939.<sup>7</sup>

Of course, articles, reports and news published by the Hungarian press during the military expedition of September mentioned part figures only. We have not got any information on numbers valid to the whole country. The number known by László Matolcsy, Member of Parliament, is really remarkable. He determined the *approximate number* of Polish refugees in Hungary in his interpellation of 18 October 1939 as 50.000<sup>8</sup> instead of the 30.000 that was acknowledged by the government. According to the statement of 9 October 1945 made by Tamás Salamon Rácz 70.000 Polish persons crossed the border between Hungary and Poland.<sup>9</sup> The number of the refugees was stated (ignoring archival data and summarizing reports) as 140.000 in 1946.

The number „140 thousand” went into the public opinion during the years after the Second World War. Endre Richer, (independent) representative also mentioned at the Parliament that Hungary „... received 140 thousand Polish refugees, among whom it provided 100 thousand people with the possibility to [...] fight against the Germans once again.”<sup>10</sup>

Personally, I took *the written statements, the facts* concerning accommodation and provision (the alterations of the number by decades and months) as my starting point, instead of the principle and approach „How many people arrived?”; instead of legends and the statements and data of propaganda that are never free from exaggerations. As a matter of fact, it is obvious that —besides Poles having diplomatic passports, travelling in secret and performing conspirational tasks — refugees *had to be provided with food and accomodation*. Provision and accomodation had financial consequences: the written records

---

<sup>6</sup> Országos Levéltár (National Archives; hereinafter: OL), K. 428—820.MTI(Hungarian News Agency) Rome, 21 September 1939.

<sup>7</sup> OL. K. 428 820. MTI Litograph. Genf, 7 October 1939. According to the data detailed in the issue of 20 February 1940 of *Wiadomości Polskie* 15 thousand Polish soldiers and 5 thousand civil persons got asylum in Lithuania, 40 thousand soldiers and 5 thousand civils in Hungary, 22 thousand soldiers and 15 thousand civil persons in Rumania. See: ÁDÁMNÉ PORCSALMI ÉVA: *A II. világháború lengyel sajtója a magyarországi lengyel menekültekről. Adalékok. (The Polish Press of World War Two on Polish Refugees in Hungary. Additional material)*. In: *Tanulmányok a magyarországi lengyel emigráció történetéből 1939 1945. (Studies from the History of Polish exile in Hungary 1939 1945)*. Editor: ISTVÁN LAGZI. Budapest—Szeged, 1979. p. 64.

<sup>8</sup> *Országgyűlés Képviselőházának Naplója (The Journals of the House of Representatives)* Volume II, 18 October 1939, pp. 305—306.

<sup>9</sup> *Új Magyarország*; 9 October 1945.

<sup>10</sup> OL. B.M. Journals of the National Assembly, 1947. 134th session of the National Assembly, 25 April 1947. (slip 78)

made by the authorities and camp headquarters preserved the actual contemporary situation. That is, they are facts. They are ineludable sources for the scholar.

Colonel Zoltán Baló, leader of the 21st Department of the Ministry of Defence, — beside many other statements — had a detailed muster-roll broken down into headquarters and camps

made, which was revised by himself. He took it out from among the official documents and took it home in the middle of 1943 when he was dismissed. The valuable and undoubtedly authentic document got back to the War History Archives at the beginning of the '60's.

According to the documents found in Zoltán Baló's bequest the *recorded maximum numbers* of Polish military refugees in the autumn of 1939 were: 12 generals, 762 field-officers (majors, lieutenant colonels and colonels), 4.185 officers (and candidate officers), 3.620 warrant-officers, 35.735 soldiers and 911 relatives of military persons, that is, 45.225 persons altogether.<sup>11</sup>

The number of civil refugees — as we will see later — was about 14.000. The *recorded* maximum number of refugees in Hungary was 59.225, that is almost 60.000. There remained several statements concerning this number, contradicting even to each other. Because of the inaccuracies experienced so far and the chaos in connection with this number, it is worth thinking over the most important moments of this question.

According to the prospectus made on 11 January 1940 in the Ministry of Defence with the purpose of informing military attachés of the Hungarian chancelleries, the numbers of Polish military persons in Hungary were: 5.000 officers and 32.000 soldiers, that is, 37.000 people *altogether*; furthermore, 500 relatives of military persons and 400 military (civil) officers.<sup>12</sup> The number of civil refugees was determined, with reference to the Home Office (B.M.), as 14.000 with the specification that the number of civil refugees „...is increasing with 100—150 persons every day, even today.”<sup>13</sup> Another statement contradicts, to some extent, to the numbers mentioned above. According to a much earlier account made by the officer of the Home Office sent to North-East Hungary in order to receive military persons and organize their forwarding [...] 4.792 officers, 34.710 warrant-officers and people serving in the ranks, that is, „40.382 Polish citizens arrived altogether

---

<sup>11</sup> HL H.M. 1940—21—21—3205—504138. In this context see: ÁGNES GODÓ: *Magyar—lengyel kapcsolatok a második világháborúban. (Hungarian—Polish Relations during the Second World War)* Budapest, 1976. p. 208.

<sup>12</sup> HL H.M. 1940—21—21—3552—944. Information for the Hungarian Royal Military Attachés about Polish refugees interned in Hungary. 11 January 1940. „... together with military and civil refugees 50.000 persons had to be distributed in the whole of the territory of the country... and accommodation had to be found for exactly 5.000 officers and 32.000 persons serving in the ranks...”. In context of the number see also: HL H.M. 3553—957/79/pol.—1940./ Polish complaints in connection with Poles escaped into Hungary. The letter of Jenő Ghyczy, head of the Political Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the H.M. 5 January 1940. Strictly confidential.

<sup>13</sup> *Ib.*: Henry C. E. Baau, French diplomat, was informed about similar data. See: HL H.M. 1940—21—21—3553—957. The letter sent by lieutenant general Emil Barabás to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs. 20 February 1940. Cp.: HL H.M. 1940—21—21—3553—957/918/pol.—1940./ Hungarian Embassy in Paris.; 550/pol.—1940. Budapest, 13 February 1940. /Official communication by the Foreign Minister to the H.M./

between September — 11 October 1939.”<sup>14</sup> The authors of the publication „Encyclopedia of the Second World War” took the number mentioned above (40.382) as their starting point.<sup>15</sup> Ágnes Godó accepted and took this number (40.382) as real, too, although she referred to the statements of other authors and sources as well.<sup>16</sup> According to the manuscript memoirs of Colonel Jan Korkozowicz, 4.975 (mainly military) persons arrived in Hungary at the beginning of 1940 (between January and April).<sup>17</sup> This moment has been left out of the calculations so far. That is, we have to add, by all means, the number of those who arrived later but at least of those who can be pointed out officially, to the number 40.382 mentioned above several times: thus the number of people arriving in Hungary is completed to 45.375 *military persons*. The number of refugees changed significantly at the end of 1939 and at the beginning of 1940. In addition to the data by Zoltán Baló we can find written data broken down into army corps and camps only in the muster-roll of 6 December 1939. According to the summary made on the basis of the camp headquarters’ reports there resided 1.023 officers, 3.829 soldiers and 156 relatives in the territory of corp I, 1.160 officers, 8.835 soldiers and 95 relatives in the territory of corp II, 532 officers, 8.026 soldiers and 14 family members in the territory of corp III, 447 officers, 998 soldiers and 43 family members in the territory of corp IV, 17 officers, 1.888 soldiers and 1 family member on the territory of corp V, 1.413 officers, 4.210 soldiers and 146 family members in the territory of corp VII, 250 officers, 142 soldiers and warrant-officers on the territory of corp VIII. That is, the total number of Polish military persons *at the beginning of December 1939* included 4.842 officers (and candidate officers), 27.548 soldiers (and warrant-officers) and 455 relatives of military persons. *The total number of military persons was determined as 32.845*. According to the summarized muster-roll made on 1 January 1940 only (!) 4.096 officers, 23.353 soldiers and warrant-officers and 372 relatives were registered, that is, the total number was 27.821.<sup>18</sup> (See: Table no. 2.)

---

<sup>14</sup> HL H.M. 1939—21—21—3205—504138. Quoted by GODÓ, p. 88

<sup>15</sup> Cp.: *Encyklopedia II wojny światowej*. Warszawa 1975. Obozy internowania żołnierzy polskich. 381. 1. and Polscy uchodźcy wojenni. 451. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Cp.: GODÓ, p. 88. 1. See also: *Juchniewicz Mieczysław Polacy w europejskim ruchu oporu 1939—1945*. Warszawa, 1972. pp. 154—156. According to GODÓ (p. 157) the total number of Polish people in Hungary could be 45—50.000, 25—30.000 got to the West (France and Africa), a few thousand returned to Poland and about 10.000 people remained in Hungary.

<sup>17</sup> JAN KORKOZOWICZ: *Wojsko Polskie na Węgrzech 1939—1945*. (Manuscript) Warszawa, 1962. WIH, relacja sygn. V/21/33. 30. „Masowy ten ruch, dokonywany wśród warunków zimowych poprzez Karpaty trudny jest do uchwycenia w liczbach, jednak dane pochodzące ze źródeł najnowszych ustalają, że od stycznia do kwietnia 1940 r. przyszło na Węgry 4905 osób, z tego 412 oficerów, 497 podoficerów i podchorążych, 2305 szeregowych oraz 761 ochotników w wieku poborowym.”

<sup>18</sup> Cp.: GODÓ, p. 113. See: HL H.M. 1939—21—21—3205—504138.

Table no. 2.

Statement about interned Poles in the territory of the army corps  
1 Januar 1940

Army corps	guard		accomodation		existing number			
	officers	soldiers	officers	soldiers	officers	soldiers	woman	children
I.	40	998	—	—	1028	3252	97	78
II.	44	834	10445-	824	888	7454	63	116
III.	27	1003	24	8598	473	6646	12	5
IV.	16	337	368	1000	355	908	—	—
V.	5	95	40	640	14	145	1	—
VII.	30	973	1230	3977	1124	3705	—	—
VIII.	9	256	320	1760	214	1243	—	—
Altogether	171	4496	3526	16779	4096	23353	173	199

HL H.M. 1940—21—21—3207—516740.

Significant disagreements emerged in the estimation of the number of Polish soldiers and civil persons of military age as well. According to the report made by Tamás Salamon Rácz participating actively in aiding the escape, the number of the Poles evacuated from Hungary was 45.000.<sup>19</sup> According to the statement made by József Antall, who was one of the best-informed contemporaries „...we have helped...50.000 soldiers...from the 100.000 (!) Polish refugees staying in Hungary to cross the Yugoslavian border.”<sup>20</sup> However, the publication with the preface written by József Antall titled „Poles People in Hungary during the War” already stated the number of evacuated military persons as 100—110.000 or 130.000. László Dömötör declared in his article without referring to the source: „Almost 120.000 Poles of military age got across Yugoslavia to different territories of military importance of the Allied Forces with the help of the Hungarian people.”<sup>21</sup> Ferenc Szombath, at the same time, overbid even the number mentioned above: he estimated the number of Polish people evacuated from Hungary at 140.000<sup>22</sup>, similarly without naming his source. Jerzy Robert Nowak propagated the data published in 1946 in his articles and both of his books, too.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Új Magyarország, 9 October 1945.

<sup>20</sup> LÁSZLÓ MAROS: *Hungary aided the escape of 50.000 escaped Polish soldiers to the armies of the allied forces in Africa and Italy*. Statement by Dr. József Antall. Új Magyarország, 2 October 1945.

<sup>21</sup> LÁSZLÓ DÖMÖTÖR: *Lengyelek Magyarországon (Poles in Hungary)*. Magyarország, no. 30., 1968, p. 30.

<sup>22</sup> FERENC SZOMBATH: *Adatok a sárvári lengyel gyűjtőtábor történetéből (Data from the History of the Collection Camp of Sárvár)*. Vasi Szelele, no. 1. 1971, p. 31.

<sup>23</sup> JERZY ROBERT NOWAK: *Wegry 1939—1963*. Warszawa, 1971, item: the second edition of the book in 1975.



Witold Biegański pointed out the differences of attitude towards this number as well. In his opinion the numbers 40.382 (military refugees) and 14.000 /civil refugees/ reflected reality. He rightly counted with those persons who had returned to Poland during the war; he took into consideration even this „triviality” in his calculations.<sup>24</sup>

In the first phase of my research of the number of Polish refugees in Hungary I took the data from 1946 as my starting point, too.<sup>25</sup> Later, on the occasion of the archival researches, it was proved that the number of Polish military and civil refugees could not have been 140.000<sup>26</sup>; in Ágnes Godó's book we can find several statements that question — in possession of the sources — the authenticity of the numbers „140 and 110.000”.<sup>27</sup>

The impossibility of speaking about either 45.000 or 120.000 persons in connection with the *evacuation* follows unambiguously from the number of the arriving persons. Why? On the one hand, because the number of Polish units set up beside the Western Allied Forces included „only” 7.887 officers and 78.422 soldiers, that is, 86.309 persons altogether in June 1940 according to Wincenty Iwanowski.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, according to the statement made by *Kornaus*, lieutenant-colonel of general staff and head of the Office of Evacuation in Budapest, altogether 18.567 persons left Hungary until 11 May 1940. According to his report the number of people evacuated from Hungary was 8.670 between 20 September 1939 and March 1940, 3.967 in March 1940, 4.469 in April, 1.469 until 11 May; that is, 18.567 persons in all.<sup>29</sup>

Colonel *Jan Korkozowicz* published similar numbers, comparing obviously contemporary data and later publications. According to him 1.019 people left Hungary until 30 October 1939, 7.655 in the following four months, that is till February; 3.967 in March, 4.461 in April, altogether 17.402 persons until 1 May 1940. *Korkozowicz's* memoirs contain some data on the following period as well. 3.206 people were evacuated in May

---

<sup>24</sup> BIEGAŃSKI: pp. 60—61.

<sup>25</sup> ISTVÁN LAGZI: *Adatok az 1939 őszén Magyarországra menekült lengyel katonák evakuációjának történetéhez (Data on the History of the Evacuation of Polish soldiers escaped to Hungary in the autumn of 1939) /1939—1941/. Hadtörténelmi közlemények*, no. 3. 1973., pp. 692—693, 703, 719. I. I expressed the same opinion in my other studies as well. See: ISTVÁN LAGZI: *Lengyel menekültek Somogy megyében a második világháború idején. Tanulmányok Somogy megye múltjából (Polish Refugees in County Somogy during the Second World War. Studies from the Past of County Somogy*. Editor: JÓZSEF KANYAR). *Lévéltári Évkönyv (Archival Annual)*. ISTVÁN LAGZI: *Lengyel menekültek Sopron környékén a második világháború első éveiben (Polish Refugees in the Neighbourhood of Sopron during the First Years of the Second World War)*. *Soproni szemle* no. 3. 1973, p. 252.

<sup>26</sup> ISTVÁN LAGZI: *Lengyel menekültek Zala megyében a második világháború idején (Polish Refugees in County Zala during the Second World War)*. *Zalai Gyűjtemény*, volume 3. (Editor: ALAJOS DEGRÉ). Zalaegerszeg, 1975., p. 94.

<sup>27</sup> GODÓ: pp. 155—158.

<sup>28</sup> WINCENTY IWANOWSKI: *Z dziejów formacji polskich na zachodzie 1939—1945*. Warszawa, 1976., p. 56.

<sup>29</sup> HL H.M. 1940—21—21—3555—23695. Dr. Jan Kornaus's (lieutenant colonel of the general staff) report to the Minister of War and his deputy (Lieutenant colonel of the general staff) in Paris, 13 May 1940. Lieutenant colonel Dr. Jan Kornaus's report to the first deputy of the Minister of War in Paris. Hotel Regina. 28 May 1940. /Budapest/.

1940 and it can be demonstrated that 20.608 people left the country until June.<sup>30</sup> (We have to emphasize here and now that a part of the people involved in the evacuation — a few thousand people — did not get to the destination of their journey, that is, they were not registered.) But let us continue examining the numbers!

The following statement made on 8 June 1940 by general Henryk Werth, chief of general staff, deserves particular attention: „... there have been significant changes in the number of the Poles recently: their number was 16.561 on 1 May 1940 — 2.553 officers, 13.669 warrant-officers and soldiers, and 339 relatives of military persons — ; while their number was 12.994 on 21 May ...” We do not have the summarized data of 21 May but we do know the total number of Poles being in military provision in Hungary. Accordingly, the provision of 1.861 Polish officers, 9.601 warrant-officers and soldiers, and 254 Polish civilians being in military provision was guaranteed on 1 June 1940.<sup>31</sup>

According to *Biegański's* study, almost 21.000 people arrived in France from Hungary till the *middle of June* 1940.<sup>32</sup> 22.308 people were evacuated according to the data published (adopted) in *Korkozowicz's* memoirs.<sup>33</sup> Remaining at the question of the evacuation, we can undoubtedly prove the fact that relatively few people were evacuated in the summer of 1940, that is, it did not result in number-changes of several ten thousands of people.

Table no. 3.

Numerical statement about interned Poles  
in military provision from 1 October 1939 to 1 May 1943

Year month/day	officers	men of the rank and file/warrant- officers	civil persons			altogether
			men	women	children	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1939.						
X.1.	5330	28263	1717	[?]	[?]	35.310
XI.1.	4947	29270	1139	[?]	[?]	35.356
XII.1.	4653	25758	593	[?]	[?]	31.004

<sup>30</sup> KORKOZOWICZ: p. 30.

<sup>31</sup> HL. H.M. 1940—21—21—3556—23.707.

<sup>32</sup> BIEGAŃSKI: p. 58.

<sup>33</sup> KORKOZOWICZ: p. 36

Year month/day	officers	men of the rank and file/warrant- officers	civil persons			altogether
			men	women	children	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>1940.</b>						
I.1.	4485	23797	714	[?]	[?]	28.996
II.1.	4006	22772	254	516	39	27.587
III.1.	3677	20562	85	491	38	24.853
IV.1.	3225	18868	38	430	37	22.416
V.1.	2553	13669	43	256	40	16.561
VI.1.	1861	9601	33	206	48	11.749
VII.1.	1829	8217	54	324	27	10.451
VIII.1.	1686	6362	89	321	24	8.482
IX.1.	1617	4276	44	381	84	6.402
X.1.	1680	4100	36	394	7	6.217
XI.1.	1696	4093	2	403	6	6.200
XII.1.	1682	4351	2	409	6	6.450
<b>1941.</b>						
I.1	1688	4194	3	411	6	6.302
II.1.	1649	4109	18	411	5	6.192
III.1.	1639	4084	7	409	6	6.145
IV.1.	1588	3991	35	410	6	6.030
V.1.	1593	3901	33	406	6	5.939
VI.1.	1610	3869	26	325	97	5.927
VII.1.	1686	3853	7	388	134	5.902
VIII.1.	1681	4047	7	249	179	6.163
IX.1.	1675	4035	7	256	180	6.153
X.1.	1632	3859	6	250	135	5.882
XI.1.	1627	3859	7	254	134	5.881
XII.1.	1624	3843	30	259	128	5.884

Year month/day	officers	men of the rank and file/warrant- officers	civil persons			altogether
			men	women	children	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>1942.</b>						
I.1.	1631	3835	8	259	115	5.851
II.1	1627	3839	9	261	109	5.845
III.1.	1618	3886	6	259	109	5.878
IV.1	1612	3893	2	255	109	5.871
V.1.	1636	3852	6	248	108	5.850
VI.1.	1622	3861	12	260	164	5.919
VII.1.	1665	3855	3	259	175	5.957
VIII.1.	1634	3810	4	260	178	5.886
IX.1.	1632	3823	8	260	181	5.904
X.1.	1325	3820	7	261	140	5.853
XI.1.	1634	3829	14	252	143	5.872
XII.1.	1625	3789	16	250	143	5.823
<b>1943.</b>						
I.1.	1629	3781	3	252	149	5.814
II.1.	1621	3792	1	252	147	5.813
III.1.	1616	3787	1	253	148	5.805
IV.1	1622	3767	3	250	143	5.785
V.1.	1622	3756	8	247	142	5.775

HL. H.M. 1942—21—21—6116. Documents without number. Zoltán Baló's bequest. Accession register no.: 53/1963.

On the basis of details published in Korkozowicz's memoirs the number was 15.927 concerning military persons (2.229 officers, 13.700 soldiers and warrant-officers).<sup>34</sup> According to the muster-roll made by Department 21 of the Ministry of Defence in September 1940, the number of refugees in military provision in Hungary was: 2.100 officers, 12.500 soldiers and 450 relatives, which make 15.050 altogether.<sup>35</sup> According to other summarized data, 6 generals, 450 field-officers, 2.023 officers and

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> HL H.M. 1940—21—21—3558. Zoltán Baló's bequest, without number. Report on the Polish collection camps and their staff. September 1940. In connection with the previous number see: HL H.M. 1940—21—21—3556—23707 (no. 3938. eln. 1. vkf. — 1940). Henrik Werth's (chief of general staff) letter to Károly Bartha, Minister of Defense. 8 October 1940.

candidate officers, 1.220 warrant-officers, 11.060 soldiers and 385 relatives lived in Hungary from the autumn of 1940.

It follows from the data mentioned above that — if almost 30.000 people left Hungary until the middle or autumn of 1940 but the number of military persons was about 15.000 in September 1940 — the recorded maximum number of Polish military persons arrived in Hungary was *not* 40.382 or 37.000 but 45.225, in harmony with Zoltán Baló's data.

The number of Poles people changed significantly until the middle of 1941 because of the „Ewa—B”-action (the second wave of evacuation) partly defeated by the Germans and owing to the fact that many people returned to Poland (partly because of their escape to Hungary). 1.792 officers, 406 warrant-officers, 4.420 soldiers and 405 relatives, *altogether* 7.023 persons were registered in the middle of 1941.

The number went on decreasing till the middle of 1942. 1.777 officers and candidate-officers, 335 warrant-officers, 4.065 soldiers and 450 family members belonged to the category of military refugees at that time; the total number was 6.197. This number changed to a very slight extent during the following periods. Lieutenant Colonel Aleksander Król mentioned 1.500 officers, 3.900 soldiers (and warrant-officers) and 420 relatives of military persons, that is, *altogether* 5.820 people in the middle of July 1943. Engineering lieutenant colonel Król was more precise already when he claimed footwear: he requested help for 1.480 officers, 3.900 soldiers and 380 relatives of military persons.<sup>36</sup>

When Polish civil refugees were taken into military provision, 5.612 military persons were registered in 1944 in the proposal of the cabinet's session concerning refugees. The numbers of military refugees during the period in question were: 1.430 officers, 334 family members, 3.741 soldiers and warrant-officers, 94 relatives and 12 civil persons. The number of civil refugees was given as 2.835. That is, the summarized number of military and civil refugees was 8.447 in the middle of 1944 and as we can read in the proposal: „... Polish Jews of about the same number”<sup>37</sup>, that is, some more than 15.000 Polish citizens lived in Hungary. It is problematic to determine the number of Polish Jews in Hungary, too. (See: Table no. 4. ) Summarized statement was not probably made and cannot even be drawn up afterwards.

---

<sup>36</sup> HL H.M. 1943—21—21—6756—495363., HL H.M. 1944—21—21—6823—554495. See also: HL H.M. 1943—21—21—6116. Zoltán Baló's bequest, without number.

<sup>37</sup> OL B.M. 1944—IX—15—4026/no. 3780. eln. ÁVK.—1944/. Proposal to the Council of Ministers, 21 June 1944.

**Table no. 4.**  
 Number of people  
 declaring themselves Jews  
 in the Hungarian civil internment  
 camps in May 1944

Camp	Number
Szentendre	12
Karmacs	6
Várvölgy	5
Keszthely	19
Karád	9
Balatonkiliti	22
Ságvár	2
Bálványos	2
Balatonszárszó	7
Ádánd	3
Tab	27
Kadarkut	11
Balatonboglár	5
Homokmégy	15
Szakmár	8
Dusnok	21
Ebed	15
Nagyszakácsi	4
Marcali	2
Böhönye	2
Sükösd	1
Altogether:	198

The list of names was sent to the VIIth Department of B. M. (Home Office)

Source: OL B. M.—IX—10—4021—560818(9428—1944. VII. res.)

Summarizing the study of the numbers and data we can conclude that, according to summarized data of the Ministry of Defence, 45.225 military and almost 14.000 civil persons, that is, *altogether* some 60.000 persons were registered in Hungary during and following the military expedition of September. The number of Polish refugees in the territory of Hungary was approximately 15.000 at the end of the war, in June 1944.<sup>38</sup> These are the actual facts and numbers confirmed by archival data that accord to and coincide with other data on the number of Polish military forces.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Cp.: ISTVÁN LAGZI: *Magyarok és lengyelek „egymásnak vetett hátal”. A magyar—lengyel kapcsolatok, a barátkozás és a barátság ezer éve. (Polish and Hungarian People „Back to Back”. The Thousand Years of the Hungarian—Polish Relationship, Fraternization and Friendship)*. Tiszatáj, no. 6., 1980. pp. 81—82.

<sup>39</sup> Cp.: IWANOWSKI: p. 56; *Walki formacji polskich na Zachodzie 1939—1944*. (Editor: WITOLD BIEGAŃSKI: Warszawa, 1981. 40—41.; ISTVÁN LAGZI: *Uchodźcy polscy na Węgrzech w latach drugiej wojny światowej*. Warszawa, 1980.

*Lagzi István*

## A második világháború idején Magyarországra menekült lengyelek létszámáról. Tények és adatok.

A Magyarország területére menekült lengyelek tényleges létszámáról hosszú ideig különböző, egymásnak ellentmondó adatokkal találkozhattunk. 1946-ban került publikálásra a 140 ezer fős adat. A magyar területen keresztül a nyugati szövetségesekhez menekített katonák és önkéntesek számát 110 ezerben állapították meg. Volt olyan szerző is, aki a lengyelek számát mintegy 200 ezer főben vélte megállapítani. A levéltári kutatásokból azonban kiderült, hogy 1939 szeptemberében a magyar hatóságok alig több mint 25 ezer menekült fogadására készültek fel. A Baló Zoltán ezredes hagyatékából előkerült részletes kimutatás szerint 1939 őszén a lengyel katonai menekültek írásba foglalt legmagasabb létszáma 45 225 személy volt, a polgári menekülteké 14 ezer főt tett ki.