

RÁCZ, ATTILA PH.D

*atiracz69@gmail.com*  
sociologist (Szeged)

# Demographic picture of Hungarians in Transylvania

## Review



Veres Valér (2015):

*Population structure and ethnicity/nationality. The demographic picture of Hungarians from Transylvania in the light of the 2002 and 2011 censuses*  
Cluj-Napoca. Cluj University Press



DOI 10.14232/belv.2018.4.16

<https://doi.org/10.14232/belv.2018.4.16>

Cikkre való hivatkozás / How to cite this article: Rácz, Attila (2018): Demographic picture of Hungarians in Transylvania. Review. *Belvedere Meridionale* vol. 30. no. 4. 222–224. pp.

ISSN 1419-0222 (print)

ISSN 2064-5929 (online, pdf)

(Creative Commons) Nevezd meg! – Így add tovább! 4.0 (CC BY-SA 4.0)

(Creative Commons) Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0)

[www.belvedere-meridionale.hu](http://www.belvedere-meridionale.hu)

Several analytical and overview volumes about the demographic results of the 2011 census from Romania concerning Hungarians have been published in Transylvania.

In our review we shall present Veres Valér's volume published by the Cluj University Press in 2015, which is a very comprehensive work that also presents the evolution of the demographic situation of Transylvanian Hungarians. Its biggest strength is that the author does not only present the situation of Hungarians from the point of view of trends in Transylvania, but also from those

specific to Romania as a whole and to Transylvania, therefore the focus of this volume is larger than the group of Hungarians from Transylvania. On the other hand, the text and the analyses contain several other statistical data – primarily migration and education-statistical data – besides census data, all in important places.

At the beginning of the book the author also reveals the special characteristics of the 2011 census. This was Romania's first census carried out according to EU requirements in which, based on Eurostat recommendations, persons residing abroad for more than a year were not counted into the country's permanent population.

In fact, this book may also be considered a monograph on social statistics which comprehensively presents the situation of Hungarians from Transylvania. The volume contains eight descriptive and a summary chapter. The first chapter is methodological in its nature, presenting the censuses analysed and – by means of content analysis – the discourses related to these censuses from the Hungarian public space from Transylvania. The following seven chapters cover the thematical analysis of the population number and its evolution, age structure, educational level, occupational stratification, natural movement of the population, marriages and divorces, as well as migration, all in a classical way. The internal structure of the chapters also follows a regular logic. First, the trends are presented at national level, then according to ethnic/national distribution and finally in relation to Hungarians, generally separately presenting the territorial differences within the Hungarian community. Of the scales used for the delineation of territorial analyses perhaps the use of development region is not the most felicitous methodological solution in the analysis of demographic processes, especially when approaching this problem from the point of view of a given ethnic/national group. Due to the ethnic-geographical specifics of Transylvania that have been formed over several centuries, the bigger regions (historical Transylvania, Partium, Banat) have different ethnic, economic and social characteristics. Development regions arbitrarily redraw the social, economic map of Transylvania, as well as territories outside of it, by setting aside historical regions. At the same time, considering that there are no data or there are only limited data which would allow historical regional analyses, it is understandable why the author has undertaken such a territorially delimited analysis.

There is an abundance of tables, maps and figures within the chapters and, moreover, tables are also annexed to each chapter. Yet, the author moves freely within the framework of this regular structure, from the point of view of the extent, the time span analysed and the data. Although in certain parts census data are pushed into the background compared to other data sources, this may rather be considered an advantage because it renders the volume more colourful and – by applying social historical and territorial analyses – more readable. The topic of the volume is otherwise larger than narrowly defined demography as it also contains detailed chapters on educational level and stratification, which are clearly as important to the author as “classical” demographic topics. As already mentioned before, in spite of the time delimitation signalled in the title, characteristically the analyses and data go back to 1992 and in several places even to the 1930-ies. It is obvious that the author is strongly interested in where the beginnings of the decrease of the Hungarian population can be dated back. Hungarian demographers from Transylvania are trying to clarify the demographic trends from the 1970-ies and 1980-ies and their causes by employing a serious

methodological apparatus. In order to shed light on this question, in his book Veres makes a complete, backwards construed cohort-component calculus based on 1992 census data. He also puts significant effort into refuting the standpoint according to which the “Romanisation” of Transylvania which took place during state socialism had been carried out by moving Romanians from the Romanian Old Kingdom (Vechiul Regat) to Transylvanian cities.

With his professionally construed data series and analytical description, in his book Veres Valér provides an exact diagnosis concerning the demographic situation of Hungarians from Transylvania based on official statistics. The understanding of tables and analyses is also aided by explanatory notes, therefore this book is not only useful to sociologists and readers with an affinity towards demographic trends, but also to those who start pursuing their studies in this field or to layman who manifest an interest in demographic processes.