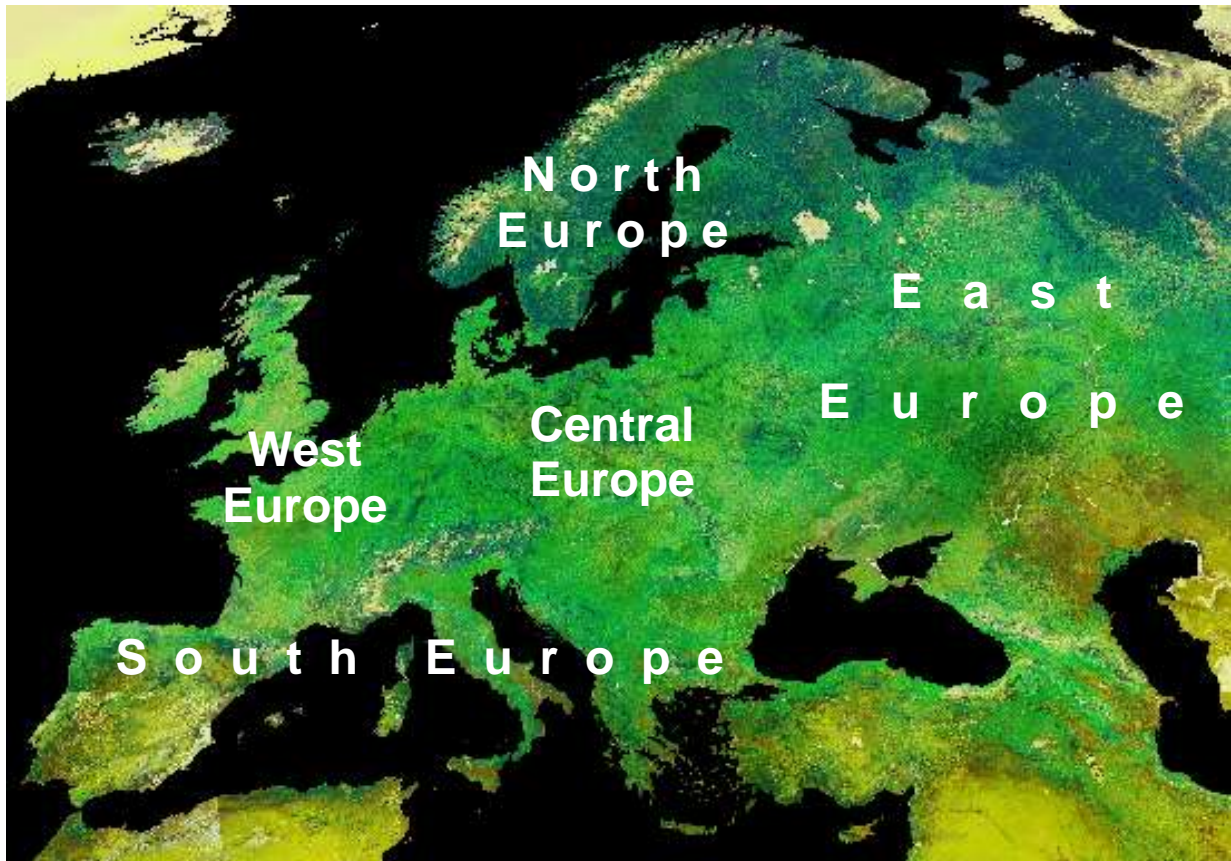


The New Eurasian Gateway

Geography of Central Europe

University textbook



<http://dgl.salemstate.edu/geography/profs/young/Imaging%20Earth/Biosphere%20Web/europe.gif>

Edited by

István Tózsá

Economic Geography and Urban Marketing Center

John von Neumann University

Kecskemét - Budapest

2024

The New Eurasian Gateway
Geography of Central Europe

University textbook

Editor: István Tózsza

Authors:

István Tózsza¹
Norbert Csizmadia²

Csaba Lovász
Zoltán Dorogi
Szilvia Graczka
Eszter Kovács
Szabolcs Nagy
László Percze
Bálint Tóth³

Read by

László Jeney⁴
Ágnes Bernek⁵

Antal Ferenc Kovács⁶

ISBN 978-615-6435-77-4

Published by
Economic Geography and Urban Marketing Center
John von Neumann University
Responsible publisher Tamás Fülöp rector
Kecskemét – Budapest, Hungary 2024

¹ Geographer, professor, John von Neumann University

² Geographer, head of the Foundation for the John von Neumann University

³ PhD students, Corvinus University of Budapest (2019)

⁴ Geographer, associate professor, Corvinus University of Budapest

⁵ Political geographer, associate professor, John von Neumann University

⁶ Economist, assistant professor, John von Neumann University

The New Eurasian Gateway

Geography of Central Europe

Summary

The textbook contains four chapters. The first two are introducing the geopolitical and economic environment of Central Europe.

Chapter 1 ‘The Global Heartland’ deals with the central part of Eurasia, as the key and geostrategic bridge between Europe and Asia. It is the mainland of the world and the American, Russian and Chinese geostrategic interests are competing for it.

Chapter 2 ‘Geostrategic Impact on Central Europe’ describes the American economic campaign against Germany, the economic driving force of the European Union occupying the west part of Central Europe actually. The main part is

Chapter 3, the core of the textbook, describing in detail the economic geography of all the countries and regions that belong to Central Europe. It deals briefly with ‘Central Europe’ itself as a whole and the countries forming it with the description of their geographic environment, economic output, administration, society, landmarks, tourism, transportation, culture and development.

Chapter 4 is about the geostrategic approach to Central Europe, ‘The European Heartland’ as a geographic bridge between the European Union and Eastern Europe which latter is the gateway of the global Eurasian Heartland. This ‘bridge’, however, is having been destroyed by the geo-economical interest of the USA since 2022 February, though undermining it goes back to 2014.

The geographical knowledge of the Central European region and its geostrategic environment and potential may help diplomats, investors and other economic actors to find their way in this part of the world that is of unquestionable importance from the viewpoint of the future of global economics. In the new world of connections, after the open Russian-Ukrainian hostility and war, this region hopefully will serve as the ‘bridge of the bridge’ between Western Europe and Eastern Europe, the latter being the bridge between Europe and Asia.

István Tózsza, editor

Contents

Chapter 1

The Global Heartland - the Gateway between Europe and Asia (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	5
---	---

Chapter 2

Historic and Cultural Geo Impacts on Central Europe (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	11
--	----

Chapter 3

3.1. Central Europe (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	18
--	----

3.2. Physical Geography of Central Europe (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	22
--	----

3.3. Economic and Social Geography of Central Europe (<i>Cs. Lovász</i>)	24
--	----

3.4. Geoconnectivity and Central Europe (<i>N. Csizmadia</i>)	33
---	----

3.4.1. Connectivity in the age of fusion and networks (<i>N. Csizmadia</i>)	33
---	----

3.4.2. Geofusion (<i>N. Csizmadia</i>)	36
--	----

3.4.3. Geopolitical structures and theories (<i>N. Csizmadia</i>)	38
---	----

3.4.4. The new Eurasia (<i>N. Csizmadia</i>)	56
--	----

3.4.5. The Belt and Road (<i>N. Csizmadia</i>)	60
--	----

3.4.6. The rise of Eastern Central Europe and Hungary (<i>N. Csizmadia</i>)	64
---	----

3.5. The Central European Countries and regions

3.5.1. The Visegrád 4 Countries (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	70
--	----

3.5.1.1. Poland – Polska (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	71
---	----

3.5.1.2. Czechia – Česko (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	75
---	----

3.5.1.3. Slovakia – Slovensko (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	79
--	----

3.5.1.4. Hungary – Magyarország (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	83
--	----

The Small Ones and the Big Ones (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	87
--	----

3.5.2. Austria (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	88
-------------------------------------	----

3.5.3. Latvia (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	91
------------------------------------	----

3.5.4. Lithuania (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	93
---------------------------------------	----

3.5.5. Germany – East of the Rhine (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	95
---	----

3.5.6. Switzerland – East of the Rhine (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	102
---	-----

3.5.7. Liechtenstein (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	105
---	-----

3.5.8. The Alpine North-East Regions of Italy (<i>B. L. Tóth</i>)	106
---	-----

3.5.9. Galicia in Ukraine (<i>Z. Dorogi</i>)	110
--	-----

3.5.10. Transcarpathia in Ukraine (<i>Z. Dorogi</i>)	114
--	-----

3.5.11. Vojvodina in Serbia (<i>Sz. Gaczka</i>)	118
---	-----

3.5.12. Slavonia in Croatia (<i>E. Kovács</i>)	121
--	-----

3.5.13. Slavonia in Slovenia (<i>L. Percze</i>)	124
---	-----

3.5.14. Transylvania in Romania (<i>Sz. Nagy</i>)	127
---	-----

3.5.15. Kaliningrad of Russia (<i>Z. Dorogi</i>)	131
--	-----

Chapter 4

The European Heartland – the Gateway between the European Union and Eastern Europe (<i>I. Tózsza</i>)	134
---	-----

Sources	150
---------	-----

Chapter 1

THE GLOBAL HEARTLAND – THE GATEWAY BETWEEN EUROPE AND ASIA

(István Tózsza)

*Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland;
Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island;
Who rules the World Island commands the World.⁷*

Russia is the world's richest country in natural resources, raw materials, mineral deposits, fuels, which are significant inputs for economy. Russia alone accounts for around 17 % natural gas and 11 % oil of the world's production.

Eurasia, engulfing the Heartland, has the world's most potential for economy and energy. For understanding the current situation of Central Europe and the Third World War⁸ that has been already launched, it is essential first to survey the geopolitics situation of the Heartland. Russia happens to be situated right around the world's most potential region named Heartland.

Eurasian Economic Union⁹

The Eurasian Union, initiated by the Kazakh president Nazarbayev and supported by the Russian president Putin, is to be grown into a powerful, supra-national union of sovereign states, uniting economies, legal systems, customs services, and military capabilities to form a bridge between Europe and Asia and be the main competitor of the EU, USA, China, and India by 2025.

⁷ Halford John Mackinder: *Democratic Ideals and Reality: A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction* (1909) [Mackinder](#) was a strategist who influenced later strategists like [Nicholas J. Spykman](#) and [Zbigniew Brzezinski](#) who was an influential foreign policy advisor to the [Anglo-American](#) elite. Mackinder introduced [The Geographical Pivot of History](#) in which he outlined the importance of the regions of the world.

⁸ The term *Third World War – The Untold Story* was introduced by Sir John Hackett's novel published in 1982. Since then the Cold War period (1950-2000); the War on Terror (2001-2014); and the War on Islamic State (from 2015) together could be referred to as the Third World War. As Pope Francis has said: *'the world is at war, because it has lost peace.'*

⁹ The EAU members: Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan; potential candidates: Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, Syria. In political context the membership of Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Ukraine could also be considered.



The Heartland is situated between Asia and Europe: in the middle of the Eurasian mega-continent. It is controlled mainly by Russia and by the former Soviet Central Asian republics: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan; and partly by Belarus, Azerbaijan, Iran, Afghanistan, China and Mongolia

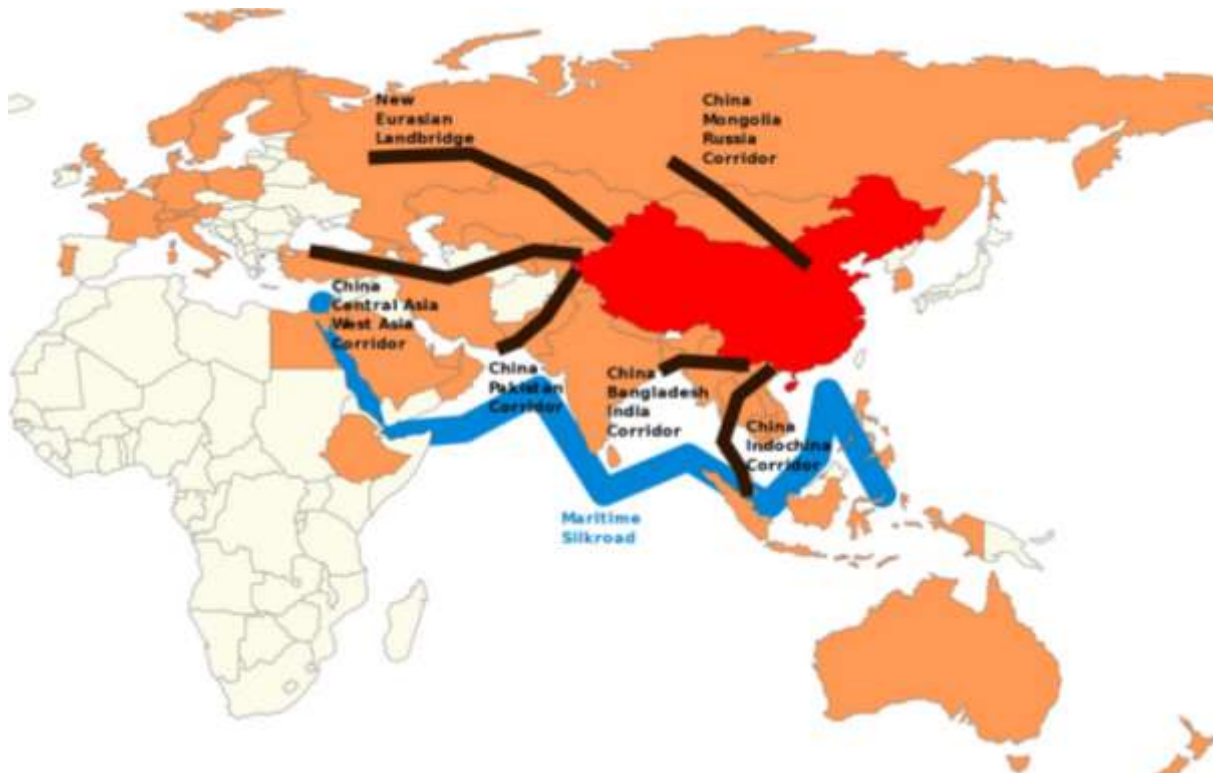
Naturally, the western power elite, led by the summation of their economic interests mainly based in the USA,¹⁰ wants to prevent Russia from becoming more powerful. Therefore, they try to undermine Russia's economic interests in international context. Anglo-American economic hegemony has been challenged by the BRICS, which was created in 2009 by Brazil, Russia, India and China. South Africa joined the cooperation afterwards. The Anglo-American power elite seemingly regard free trade as their own sole right while obstructing others from that right. The most important stakeholder in the Eurasian region is China.

One Belt One Road (OBOR)

The New Silk Road strategy serves China's intention to take a significant role in global economy, and the demand to coordinate its manufacturing capacity with other countries.

One of China's key objectives for supply security in recent years has been to develop closer ties with Russia and Central Asian fuel and other resources producing countries, such as Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Chinese companies have invested heavily in Central Asian energy producing states, and built multiple oil and gas pipelines to the western part of China.

¹⁰ Of course, it is not manifested and stated openly in the official policies of governments like that of the USA, the UK, France, or any other western countries. It is the embodiment of the summation of economic interests of transnational companies – represented in this textbook as 'the Anglo-American' or 'western' power elite.



Routes of the New Silk Road Program initiated by China to link Asia and Europe again. The continental lines show land bridges of train and highway investment regions, while the Maritime Silk Road line indicates the world's busiest freight traffic

The western power elite wants to prevent China, too, from becoming more powerful. The Anglo-American economic power elite does not support projects like the OBOR Initiative and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

The New Great Game

Getting control of the Heartland has been the central issue of global politics for centuries. This question may seem pointless, since the Russian economic power has been ruling most of the area from the Volga to Eastern Siberia for centuries. However, throughout the 19th and 20th centuries the West European powers (Britain and France) had tried, usually successfully, to shape European and global policy in order to prevent Russian economic expansion out of the Heartland, and German expansion into it.

Recently, China, Russia, and the United States have started to compete for influence in Central Asia representing the south part of the Heartland.

Central Asia has emerged as a battlefield for big economic powers engaged in an old geopolitical game. Western powers think that the largely untapped oil and natural gas reserves of the Caspian Sea countries could make that region the new Persian Gulf of the following century. The object of their policy is to befriend the leaders of the Central Asian former Soviet republics controlling the oil, while neutralizing Russian suspicions and devising secure alternative pipeline routes to world markets.

Since the 19th century, the western power elite have been forming alliances in opposition to Russia. The British Empire fought against Russia in the so-called Great Game. They still do so today. The Anglo-American Empire is of course known for many aggressive wars related to geopolitics. Most countries they invaded were no match for the dominant military power of the United States and their allies. Russia and China are of course not easy to be overpowered. Hence, the so-called New Great Game, which is regarded as a new Cold War, or the Third World War being fought with economic tools.

The Grand Chessboard

As the landmass of Eurasia has been regarded the centre of global power, Zbigniew Brzezinski formulated a Eurasian geostrategy for the United States. In particular, he wrote, it was imperative that no Eurasian challenger would ever emerge capable of dominating Eurasia and thus challenging America's global dominance.

How America manages Eurasia, is critical. A power that dominates Eurasia would control two of the world's three most advanced and economically productive regions: the EU and China. A single glance at the world map also suggests that control over Eurasia would almost automatically entail Africa's subordination to Eurasia, rendering the Western Hemisphere and Oceania geopolitically peripheral to the world's central continent. About 75 per cent of the world's people live in Eurasia, and most of the world's physical wealth is there as well, both in its enterprises and underneath its ground. Eurasia accounts for about three-fourths of the world's known energy resources.

After the Cold War, Brzezinski opened his Grand Chessboard in 1997, with the attribution to Eurasia of crucial geostrategic significance. The formulation of a comprehensive and integrated Eurasian geostrategy is the purpose of the geostrategy of the USA. The geostrategic *Chessboard Doctrine* of Eurasia aims to prevent the unification of the mega-continent. According to this doctrine, Europe (with the EU and Russia) and Asia (with China, Japan, India and Russia) are politically and economically powerful. American foreign policy must employ its influence in Eurasia in a manner that creates a stable continental equilibrium, with the United States as the political arbiter. Eurasia is thus the chessboard on which the struggle for global primacy continues to be played, and that struggle involves geostrategy i.e. the strategic management of geopolitical interests. In the meantime it is imperative that no Eurasian challenger emerges, capable of dominating Eurasia and thus of challenging the USA. For the USA, the chief geopolitical prize is Eurasia and America's global primacy is directly dependent on how long and how effectively its preponderance on the Eurasian continent can be sustained.

The Anglo-American power elite will do anything in their power to prevent Russia, or China, from making any kind of alliance while they themselves have of course set up all kinds of alliances against Russia and China. They have an economic and financial alliance in the form of a global banking cartel and a military alliance in the form of NATO by which they control much of the world. On top of that, the United States has been installing military bases all over the globe particularly around Russia and China.

The EU – Russian Relation

In the beginning of the last decade (2012), the EU accounted for 52% of Russia's exports, 68% of which consisted of fuel and energy. Until the Russian – Ukrainian energy crisis in 2006, stable interdependence could ease political tensions. Russia is the largest exporter of natural gas to Europe. A disruption of gas supply from Russia can cause huge damage to the European economy. The Russian gas industry also depends on the European gas market, because it is the main source of cash for investments in Russia.

Energy security has become a vital part of state strategies, both in consuming and producing countries. Based on the trade relations between consuming and producing actors, one of the dominant ideologies in the political sciences (neoliberal interdependence theory) argues that economic interdependence between actors leads to co-operation on the bases of mutual benefits, which decreases the emergence of conflicts. This American thesis argues that the securitization of EU energy (gas) policy is experiencing serious challenges due to (increasing) European dependence on Russian gas resources, which have not resulted in further co-operation, but rising tensions.

In general, it is a good practice to work towards a decent relationship with one's neighbours as the EU and Russia had been doing up to 2010. A good relationship was certainly desired and due to their interdependence. This was not good news for the Anglo-American power elite on the other side of the Atlantic who are known for their many interferences in other parts of the world. Since the early 2010s, things started changing between the EU and Russia.

Anglo-American intervention

The transition of Afghanistan from a *barrier* separating rival powers to a *bridgehead* from which to further advance economic liberalization is a key to maintaining US power and influence. As Brzezinski said: 'the distribution of power on the Eurasian landmass will be of decisive importance to America's global primacy.' This 'distribution of power' favours those who dominate trade on the Eurasian supercontinent. It is Afghanistan where both Cold War and the new cold war created military conflicts to achieve Soviet-Russian then US dominance. In reality, it is the manifestation of the quest for power. The reality is that the shortest routes between China and Europe, as well as between India and Russia, are via Afghanistan. As in previous imperial ages, the empire that achieves primacy is the one that establishes itself as arbiter, builder, and protector of trade routes.

The US criticizes Russia, saying it is trying to re-Sovietize Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Crimean Peninsula, Transdnistria, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia). The US also criticizes Russian efforts to create the Eurasian Union, saying it is really an effort to re-assert Soviet-era controls on the region and it is necessary to slow down or prevent it.

It is about power. Of course, Afghanistan is one of the many countries invaded by the Anglo-American power elite under the umbrella of the so-called war on terror. Facts are that the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 while the Anglo-American Empire has expanded since that time. The interest of the economic power of the United States is the main driver behind illegal NATO

military expansion towards the Russian border. Now Russia is trying to negotiate a Eurasian Union with its neighbours, in the likeness of the European Union, which is openly done. However, this is not to the liking of the Anglo-American power elite.

When trying to seek for answers in global geostrategic processes, there is the reason hidden in the US managing the Heartland in three main instructions expressed with the words: block, keep, balance.

1. **Block** the Heartland's access to the oceans (Japan, Iran, and Turkey).
2. **Keep** the Heartland divided and small (Ukraine, Caucasus region).
3. **Balance** out the Heartland (India, China, Indonesia, Saud Arabia)

The consequences of these three actions are represented in the history and the geopolitical events including civil wars of the regions surrounding the so-called Heartland. However, the purpose of this textbook is not an introduction to the global Heartland, but to the regional geography and economy of Central Europe. This introduction is going to verify the vision of Central Europe as a kind of new, a European Heartland that is why a brief introduction to the global Heartland seemed to be unavoidable in the above chapter.

Chapter 2

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL GEO IMPACTS ON CENTRAL EUROPE

(István Tózsza)

„Wind Rips Through Her Rich Hair¹¹”

Since 2015, the European Union has been hit by a large number of migrants from Asian and African countries to use the welfare and social system of the EU countries. This chapter tries to shed light upon the causes of this migration, other than global warming, because the German economy's weakening would cause a serious decline in both the EU's and the Central European economies.

Europe.¹² The meaning of this name in old Greek language is *eur ópé* ('wide face,' referring to the full moon, the symbol of maternal society); or *eu rópé* ('good for the willow'), referring to the European continent abundant in water – what is good for the willow tree – dissected with landlocked seas, bays, peninsulas, islands, lakes, rivers and high mountains. This geographic fragmentation, which was not characteristic of the first, huge, geographically homogeneous territories of human civilization,¹³ where god kings centralized the economy, made it possible to market the extra products not collected by any central empires, and thus it gave free way to the early development of bourgeois civil societies and the formation of market economy. The first in the world.



*Paul Manship: Flight of Europe
from Phoenicia to Crete.*

¹¹ The first line from Mihály Varga: Old Europe (it is a Hungarian top hit from 1994, sung by Miklós Varga). It is worth listening to with English subtitles, see below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkKuYLNZ4xQ>

¹² Europe was a Phoenician princess, whom Zeus (the king of the gods in Greek mythology) in the form of a white bull, took to Crete, to the cradle of European civilization, where they founded the Minoan civilization and empire, the historic and mythical home of the first high-level European culture.

¹³ Egypt, Mesopotamia, China, India.

Europe is the smallest, most diverse and geographically the most dissected continent, which due to its inhomogeneity, has colonized the world with its firstly developed market economy. The Spaniards, the Dutch, the Portuguese, the French and the English have for centuries, if not simply robbed, but used the resources of other continents in their capital accumulation. They gave in exchange European culture, Christianity, Spanish, French and English languages, and above all, a basic infrastructure that did not provide prosperity in the colonies, but at least halted the enormous infant mortality and extended life expectancy at birth. That is why, and because of the big family traditions, Asia, Africa and South America became overpopulated. When after World War II, the weakened colonizing European powers withdrew from South Asia and Africa they tried to maintain their economic influence in the former colonies with continued ethnic tensions in order to prevail the demand for their own economic products and, above all, the demand for their weapons. This requires drawing straight political boundaries and careful consideration of these boundaries to keep populations of different ethnicities sufficient to maintain conflict situations on both sides of the new political borders.

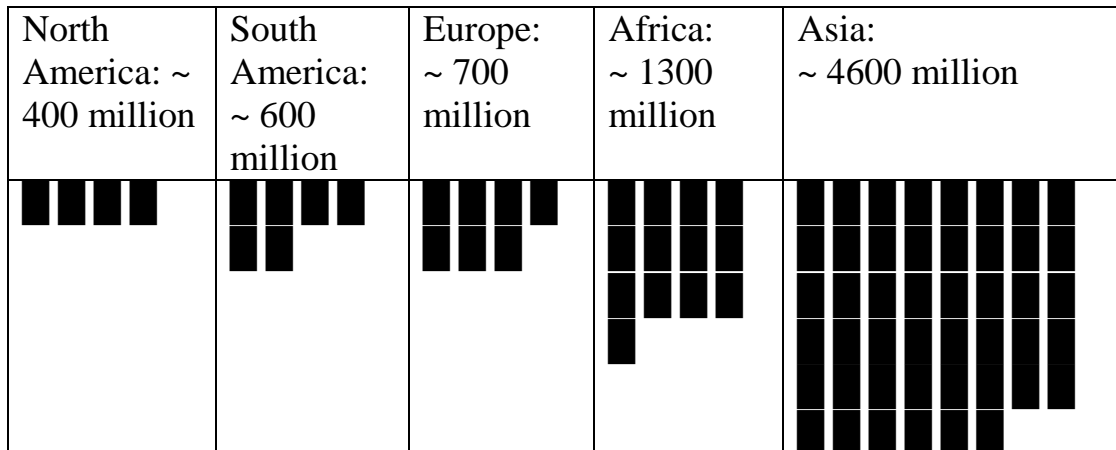
The world's largest geostrategic forecasting institute, the US STATFORT, with its noble simplicity, characterizes Africa only – referring to the expected, nationalist civil wars in forming countries – in the coming period as ‘a place to be avoided.’¹⁴ The Polish, the Hungarians, the Czech people or the Germans know exactly what the neglect of ethnicities means in the definition of political boundaries: 100 years after the Versailles Treaty concluding World War I. the national minorities still cannot maintain good neighbour relations with the majority societies in Romania, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, and Ukraine.¹⁵

Growth in population is now the limit of the Earth's bearing capability; these global problems are known. Population domination of Asia is also well known.

The population of the African and Asian regions affected by food and water shortages, epidemics and civil wars has nothing to lose beyond their mere lives. It is clear that there are 650 million people (390 million in Africa and 260 million in Asia), who are ready to leave their native land any time – because they have nothing to lose in their natural habitats. They are those whose daily earnings do not reach 2 (two) dollars, if the dollar is calculated in purchasing power parity, in ‘international’ dollars, which eliminates the differences in food prices in different countries. If we consider the amount of the European Union migrant aid in Germany, which is € 1,000 per month, then migrants can expect a 20-fold purchasing power parity increase in income if they get asylum in an EU country. This is the same as when a Hungarian employee earning HUF 300,000 is offered a salary of HUF 6 million a month – without work, in the form of support – in a remote country. It is natural, then, that as soon as this 650 million people becomes aware of such a possibility, eventually they will set off on a journey towards the European Union. This mass of people is not a ‘few million’ at all, but more than the total population of the EU.

¹⁴ George Friedman: The Next Decade 2012 (issued in Hungarian by the PAGEO Foundation, Budapest in 2015)

¹⁵ French and English geopolitics dictating the Trianon Treaty in Paris kept the isolation of Germans in mind; so that once again a new Austro-Hungarian Monarchy would not be established as a German ‘bridge’ towards the Balkans and Eastern Europe, and the Heartland. The Kingdom of Hungary, as the strongest link in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, was geographically simply at the bad place at the wrong time, so it was cut off, with care being taken to neglect the exact ethnic boundaries of the Hungarian nationality.



*Distribution of global population
in 100 millions in continental dimensions in 2018.
With Australia and Oceania included in South America.*

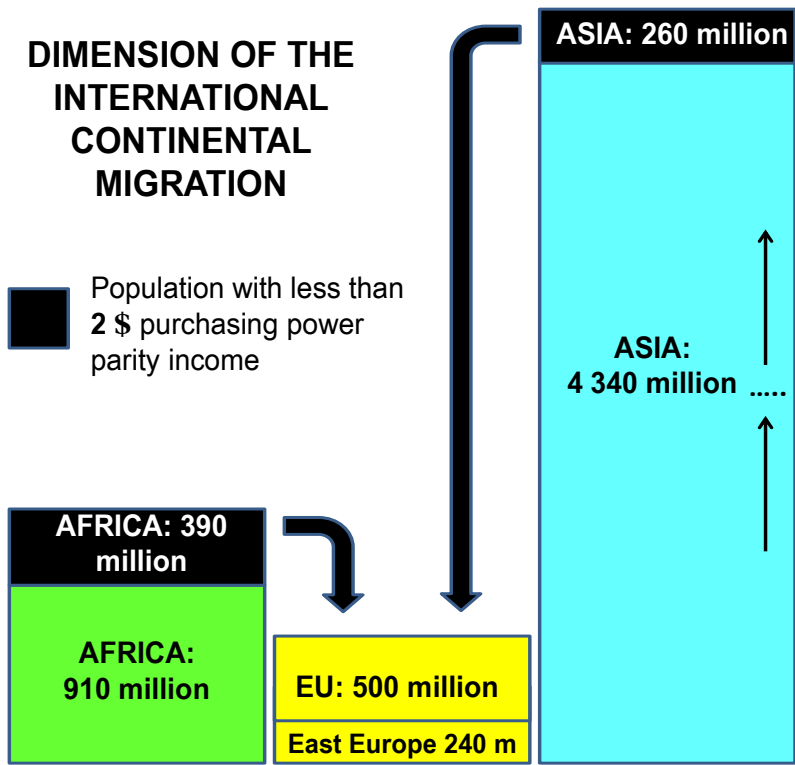
(Source: Our World in Data 2018 Oxford University)

The population of the whole European Union is around 500 million. It is less than the mass of the above-mentioned 650 million people, potentially arriving in Europe.¹⁶ It would initiate an economic apocalypse that would turn into European civil wars, which would, in the next half a century, ensure the US as a global superpower, being still secure in a geographical distance and continuing to grow rich on weapon and security system dispersion to Europe among others. To this end, 2014 was the first year in which the total EU GDP of the 28 EU Member States (~ 18 trillion USD) exceeded that of the US (which was ‘only’ ~ 17 trillion USD).¹⁷ Something had to happen, and what coincidence, the illegal migration of refugee seekers began in 2015, via the freeway Asian and African corridors having been opened by the US ‘democracy export’ under the name of ‘Arab Spring’ that destroyed not only the dictatorships, but the state administrations in Syria and Libya running into civil wars on end. The most frequented destination of migration is the economic motor of the EU: Germany. Again, like before World War I. In addition, some political interpretations consider the British leave of the EU as if like they want to miss out on the expected economic crisis of the EU. The British are given the opportunity to renew their economy with American and Commonwealth resources as a consequence of the Brexit.

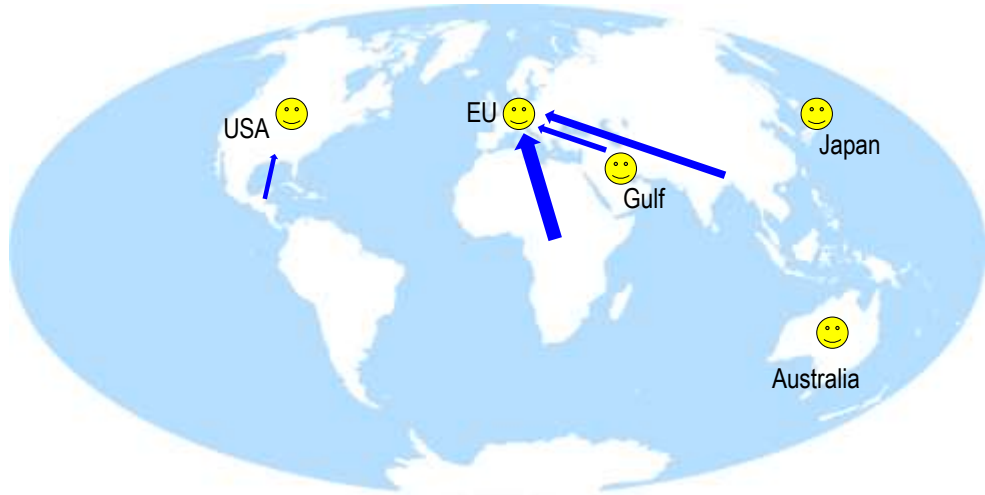
The present (2020) Government of Hungary can understand the social, geopolitical danger of the migration trends. As a consequence of personal private ambitions, the Hungarian nation, the geopolitical and economic situation of the Hungarian state had been ruined for several centuries, leading directly to the catastrophe of the Trianon Treaty in 1920, when the once powerful European Hungary became a tiny state both in territory and population. The individual, spreading-apart interests of the Germans were manifested in the same way in their history, too: German unity could occur only in the 20th century when it was too late for them from the point of view of the colonialization of the remote continents. It led to the two world wars – to their loss and to Europe’s destruction and suffering, as well.

¹⁶ In this study, ‘migrant’ is understood, as someone who conceals his or her personal data or attempts to tamper with the ‘green border’ or through the sea to the European Union without documents. See the term in more detail: <https://www.iom.int/who-is-a-migrant>

¹⁷ Source: www.knomea.com (IMF, WB, CIA), 2014



The number of economic refugees potentially headed towards Europe, including the European Union with a population of ~ 500 million people. The number of the African and Asian population with no (less than D 2) income a day, with nothing to lose, but their lives, is ~ 650 million! That is 150 million more than the total population of the European Union (Source: own editing).



Smileys stand for the welfare regions of the world, the possible destinations of global migration, to which only the welfare states of the European Union prove to be open and unprotected (with the sole exception of Hungary and Poland in the V4 Member States). The governments of the USA¹⁸, Japan, Australia and the Gulf States try to prevent and keep away migration (Source: own editing)

¹⁸ At least up to 2021, when the democrats take over power.

The question arises why the hundreds of millions of African and Asian refugees fleeing from poverty, drought, hunger, epidemics and civil wars endanger only the European Union? Why do they not try to get into other regions of the world and countries where wealthy societies have strong social networks? The target of the Asians could be three regions. One is Japan, which practically does not accept immigrants. The other is Australia, which protects the continent's coastline from the immigrants with the navy. The third prosperous destination is the region of the rich oil producers in the Persian Gulf. They do accept guest workers and pay them very well, provided these workers have the expertise and are able to work 12 hours a day – otherwise they will be immediately subjects to expulsion, or not accepted. Obviously, these countries cannot be the destination of illegal migrant masses, as long as there is a region where they can get their current income level, without work, twenty-two times. Hundreds of millions of people in Africa are about to head towards the geographically close European Union. The US-Canada region, not mentioning the army, is geographically protected by two huge oceans, and migrants from Latin America through the narrow Central American corridor via Mexico or mainly from Mexico can easily be stopped, if political leadership wants – as President Trump and his ‘Fence.’ The consequences of the new president’s different approach to migration will be seen in 2021. In a geostrategic sense, therefore, for the migrants seeking the hope of a better life there is only one single welfare destination left: Europe, and, since Eastern Europe is neither inclusive or rich, it is in particular the European Union, which apart from one or two member states, does not seem to intend to prevent immigration.

Europe, with its rugged coastline, especially in Greece and Croatia with their archipelago, is virtually indefensible from a limiting point of view. Greece's Schengen membership is therefore geostrategically unintelligible: anyone entering here – in principle – has a free path anywhere within the Union. Greece was like an island as a Union member with no member neighbours, until Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU, too. The insecurity of Greece is also hampered by the Turkish mainland neighbourhood, which can link the migrants' access and transit to Turkish political affiliation and ambitions. Turkey can do this all the more, because it is a columnist member of the NATO. This is in the interests of the US, so it is necessary to control the transit of the post-Soviet-Russian warships at the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. In terms of migration, however, Turkish NATO membership is a risk factor for – for the European Union. The Greek-Bulgarian, Greek-Macedonian border is a mountainous area, which is difficult to control from a border guard perspective. Greece unfortunately does not consider herself to be in a position to comply with its obligations under the Dublin Convention¹⁹ on the registration and transfer, readmission and deportation of migrants. As Romania and Bulgaria are not Schengen members, it is the duty of the Schengen member Hungary to stop and register migrants arriving without documents or passport, thus irregularly passing the borders of not only the Schengen member Greece, but the non-Schengen member Macedonia and Serbia, too. Under such conditions the Frontex²⁰ is unfortunately not at the height of the situation. Spain and Italy can be reached on short sea trips, even on rescue rafts from Africa. The dictatorial powers with close guard-of-custody characteristic of presidents Moammer Gaddafi and Bassar El-Assad in Libya and in Syria respectively, were put to an end by the ‘well-meaning’ US democracy export, having

¹⁹ Dublin Decree: Council Regulation (EC) No 343/2003 containing the responsibility of the Member States for examining the asylum seekers’ applications lodged in any of the Member States in accordance with the relevant procedural rules.

²⁰ Frontex: the short name of the European Border Protection Agency for the French *Frontières extérieures* (external borders), headquartered in Warsaw. It is responsible for border control in the European Schengen area, working together with the border and coastal guards of the Schengen area countries. It was established in 2004.




caused civil war confusion in these regions. Thus Libyan and Syrian ‘gateway houses’ were set up for the sub-Saharan and Central African refugees, as well as for migrants from the Afghan, Pakistani, and Bangladesh regions.

According to the official German migration-based view, the holding of the German economic machinery in motion requires an estimated 200,000 entry-workers per year due to the retirements and the aging of the German society. Unfortunately, however, as it is, the Germans seem to be forced to rely on the work force of the Central and Eastern European region. Migrants happen to come from Asia and Africa in particular from the Muslim world. Different cultural habits everywhere, where the number of immigrants reaches a certain level, create parallel societies with quasi-own ‘public administration’ and judicial practice and no-go zones. Obviously, this is inadmissible in a modern society – whether open or multicultural – as it is threatening citizens' security. Apart from the cultural value system controversy that treats females as valuable household belongings, there is another problem, the lack of the diploma, expertise and German language skills of the ‘labour force.’ Does German political leadership think that if they receive 2 million migrants a year, they can sort the demanded 200.000 of the out and distribute the rest in a proportionate public distribution quota-like system among other EU countries? The weaker EU member states thus will need to borrow more and more loans to meet the needs of migrants who enter their countries and who are legitimate in demanding and requiring the EU social benefit levelling the one introduced in Germany. This benefit, especially in the Central European countries, exceeds the average level of the minimum income and pensions, too! Apart from creditors (international financial institutions) and large economic competitors (like the USA or China), in whose benefit is it?

Permitting, but not fully sustaining the socio-economic benefits of multiculturalism, it ought to be also clarified what the foundations of European culture mean. According to the editors of this textbook, there are three basic pillars of European culture: (1) the ancient Greek-Roman mythology, which was kept alive by the medieval Christian monasteries and schools up to the 20th century. (2) The Celtic-Germanic traditions affecting the European way of life and customs even today. (3) The Christian religion and morality rooted in the Jewish culture.

One of the most important common denominators of the three pillars is a momentum that is lacking in Islamic culture and civilization: gender equality. Think of the most important, most powerful goddesses in Mediterranean Greek mythology (*Pallas Athena* or *Minerva* goddess of wisdom, *Hera* or *Juno*: goddess of family, *Aphrodite*, or *Venus*: goddess of beauty, etc.). The same can be observed in northern Celtic and German mythology; in fact, even among the unrestrained warrior Vikings, the leader of the first American colonies was *Freydis Ericsdottir* – a female leader. In Christianity, in addition, there is the full equality of women, for example, the Hungarian King St. Stephen did not recommend Hungary to Jesus Christ, but to *Virgin Mary* when introducing Christianity. 2015 was the first year in which, due to the goodwill of a prince, some of the women in the emblematic country of the Islamic world, Saudi Arabia, could participate in the elections, but – the news agencies noted – driver licenses were still unavailable for females. While European civilization going back to Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Persian and ancient Greek, Roman, Jewish, Christian roots, is 2-5 thousand years old; Islamic religion, tied to the life of its founder (Prophet Mohammed 570-632 A.D.) is a relatively young religion; and it is just 6 centuries younger than Christianity. Consider the state of the now 2000-year-old

Christianity 600 years ago. It was the age of crusaders occupying the Holy Land. Islam is just 1400 years old.²¹

Ancient Greek-Roman mythology	Early Medieval Age Celtic-Germanic traditions	Christian-Jewish religion and morality
which left the trace of the Roman Empire, later mediated by the Latin language and is present in the art and performing arts of all European peoples, in the form of so-called 'classical literacy' and European culture.	which in the majority, but mainly in the Western and Northern European regions, overlapped folk tales and tales, set the European value systems.	which blended with Jewish traditions, transformed them into a cult of Jesus, having defined the morality, values, economy, and social consciousness of societies in almost all European countries. ²²
		

The three pillars of European culture, of which unfortunately younger European generations are not aware of.
 Note the presence of females in cultural landmarks that is characteristic of European national cultures (Source: own editing)

European Christianity seems to be undermined in prosperity, and the 6 centuries younger Islam seems to be strengthened in poverty. How was Christianity some 600 years ago? It still wrangled into Crusaders' wars to spread faith forcefully in the Holy Land. The English king, Richard the Lion Hearted, whose words are still present in the official coat of arms of England and the UK,²³ did not earn his heroic adjective during perilous fights, but because he was capable of giving orders to slaughter 200 hostages: women and children – just like a terrorist today. But there are good examples from the warrior era of Christianity, too: in 1456 Giovanni Capistrano, the old, fanatic, Italian inquisitor, spoke in the Hungarian capital, in Buda, such a way that ten thousand Hungarian populist 'crusaders' demanded martyrdom, they wanted to die for their faith. Moreover, a couple of weeks later, at today's Beograd (capital of Serbia), this unarmed mass of fanatic people initiated the Hungarian attack that the greatest Hungarian warlord, Hunyadi whom the Turkish themselves called 'the lightning of the war and the fear of the earth,' turned into a world-wide victory over the Ottoman Turkish army that was about to invade Europe. We can hear the message of this victory throughout Europe even today: the noon bell rings of the churches.

²¹ Islam should not be misunderstood. The Prophet Mohammed's faith as written in the Koran, originally proclaimed a religion of peaceful co-existence as originally Christianity did, too. Modern 'Jihad' is a kind of reincarnation of the Christian Crusades, alien to the basic philosophy of both the Islam and Christianity.

²² Exceptions may be made to Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina or Albania, where the proportion of Muslims is high.

²³ *Dieu et mon droit!* = by God's and my right! The motto of the UK said by Richard the Lion Hearted in the Holy Land when the European crusader kings and dukes could not agree on who would be their leader, and Richard, being physically the strongest of them all, forcefully seized the emblem, thus declaring himself the leader of the crusader army.

Chapter 3

3.1. CENTRAL EUROPE

(István Tózsza)

*Tell me where Central Europe is,
and I can tell you who you are.*²⁴

Central Europe is rather difficult to define as an exact geographical unit. Throughout history, it has continuously been the battleground of the great powers like the early medieval Romans, Huns, Bulgarians, Byzantines, Czechs, Hungarians, then the Ottoman Turkish, the Polish and Lithuanians, the Germans, the Austrians and finally the Russians. The Central European region cannot be fitted on the map to answer political borders of certain countries in most cases.



The Central European region is uncertain to define

The quotation below show the mixed identity of a classical Central European citizen: ‘If you ask me what my native country is, I answer: I was born in Fiume /Rijeka/, grew up in Belgrade, Budapest, Pressburg /Bratislava/, Bécs /Vienna/ and Munich, and I have a Hungarian passport; but I have no fatherland. I am a very typical mix of old Austria-Hungary: at once Magyar /Hungarian/, Croatian, German and Czech; my country is Hungary, my mother tongue is German.’²⁵

First, let us try to outline the geographical borders of the region. From East to west on the north, it is bordered by the Baltic Sea, the Canal of Kiel and the North Sea. Then the border of Central Europe turns south by the River Ems between the German and the Dutch regions. In the Ruhr Land the River Rhine forms the border between Western and Central Europe, and from the Saarland it runs between France and Germany. So the Ruhr Land region, the Eifel Mountains the Mosel region and Saarland belongs to Western Europe within Germany. In Switzerland the Central European boundary is defined by the social geographical distribution of the French, Italian and German speaking cantons, the latter ones belonging to Central Europe.

²⁴ Quotation from Jacques Rupnik in: Lonnie Johnson: Central Europe: Enemies, Neighbours, Friends – Oxford University Press, 1996.

²⁵ Quoted from Ödön von Horváth in Michael Kort: The Handbook of the New Eastern Europe – Twenty-First Century Books, 2001.



An approach showing the physical geographical boundaries of Central Europe (Source: own editing)

At around the spring of the River Rhine, from the Simplon Pass southwards the border follows the foothill regions of the Alps that used to be under Austrian political and cultural influence. Such cities as Locarno, Como, Bergamo, Brescia, Verona and the Vicenza – Udine – Trieste line represent the border between Southern and Central Europe. Much of Slovenia also belongs to Central Europe, and the border is marked by the River Sava via Slovenia and Croatia. The northern part of Croatia is the Central European Slavonia. Then the border between Central and Southern Europe is marked by the River Sava between Croatia and Bosnia – Herzegovina. The northern part of Serbia is the Vojvodina province, north of the River Sava. From Belgrade, the Serbian capital city where the Sava enters the River Danube, the River Danube is representing the geographical division line between Southern and Central Europe, up to the Iron Gate, where the Danube forces its way through the Carpathian Mountains. From there in Romania, in a huge semi-circle (the historical region of Transylvania), it is the water divide line of the Carpathian Mountains that forms the border between Central and Eastern Europe. Going northward, it is the region of the historic Galicia (once belonging to Poland, Lithuania and to the Austrian Hungarian Monarchy) in today's western Ukraine that can be taken as Central European land. The division line is represented by a religious border between the Catholic (Central European) and the Orthodox Christian (Eastern European) population in western Ukraine. Then, there is a sharp social geographic border all the way northward between the Catholic and Orthodox Christian population between Poland and Ukraine, Poland and Belarus, between Lithuania and Belarus, Latvia and Belarus respectively. The political borders answer the religious borders everywhere: Poland being completely Central European, while Belarus being an Eastern European country. Estonians consider themselves as being affiliated to Northern Europe rather

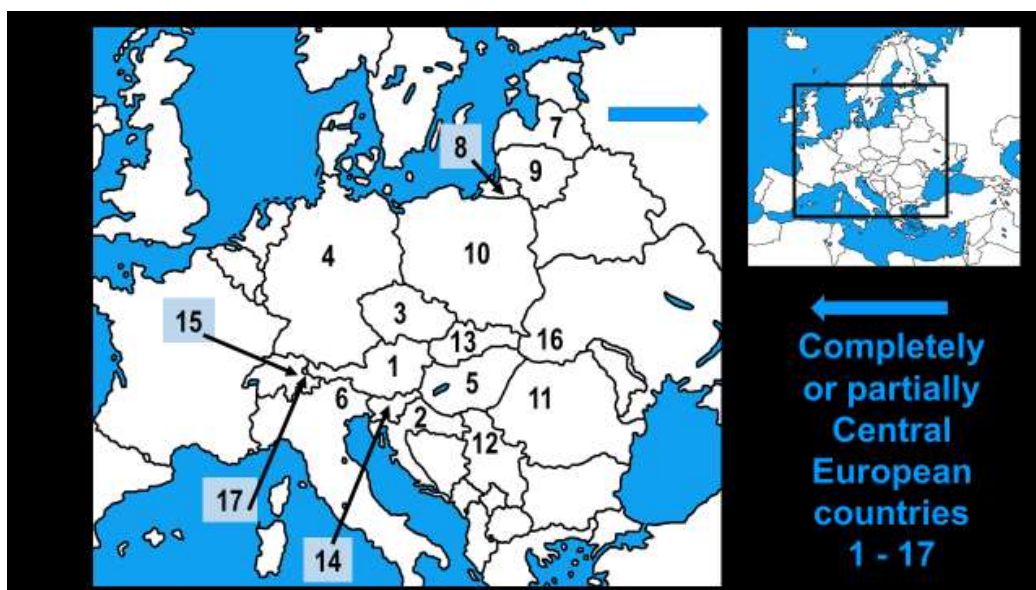
than Central Europe. The status of the Russian federal subject, the Kaliningrad enclave, between Poland and Lithuania is Central European, since it bears the architectural and cultural traces of the German Knight Order (the Königsberg region).

Countries which, or some of the territories of which lie in Central Europe in physical geographical aspect

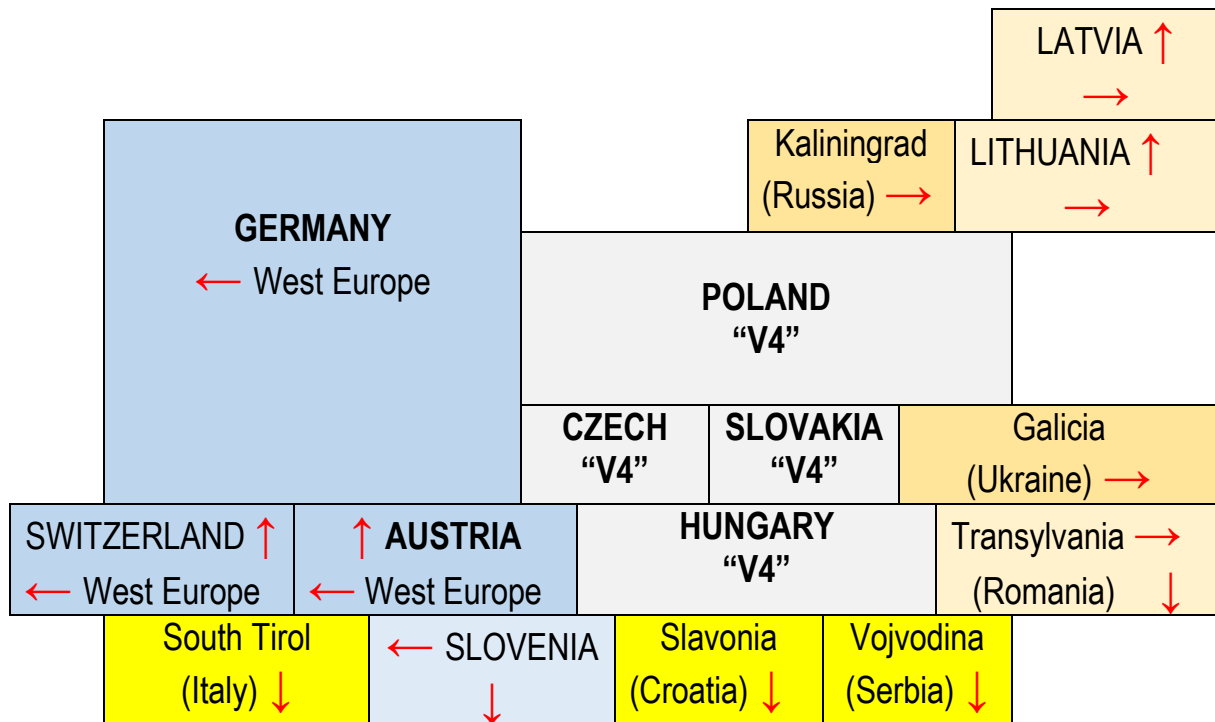
Partly Central European 17 countries and/or regions	Fully Central European (9)	Visegrad Four (V4) countries
1. Austria		
2. Croatia (only Slavonia)		
3. Czech Republic		
4. Germany (except: Alsace)		
5. Hungary		
6. Italy (only South Tirol)		
7. Latvia		
8. Lichtenstein		
9. Lithuania		
10. Poland		
11. Romania (only Transylvania)		
12. Serbia (only Vojvodina)		
13. Slovakia		
14. Slovenia (except: the Karst)		
15. Switzerland (only East of Rhine)		
16. Ukraine (only Galicia)		
17. Kaliningrad Territory (of Russia)		

Note: the Kaliningrad Territory is a Russian federal oblast belonging to the Russian Federation, though the district lies entirely in Central Europe – as an enclave. (Source: own editing)

Therefore, in political geographical context 17 independent states share the territory of Central Europe. Eight of them are totally located in the Central European region, while 8 of them are only partially situated in Central Europe.



The 17 territories (states or parts of states) which presently comprise Central Europe in political-geographical aspect (Source: own editing)



The political geographical basic structure of Central Europe; with the core countries (the V4) that are not affiliated elsewhere. Arrows show the cultural affiliation of other fully, or partly Central European countries to other (← = western, ↑ = northern, → = eastern, ↓ = southern) regions of Europe (Source: own editing)

The partially Central European provinces include certain parts of the following 8 countries. Central European history, traditions and culture affected:

1. the German speaking northern and eastern parts of Switzerland, mainly east of the River Rhine
2. the northern, Alpine parts of Italy i.e. South Tirol
3. the northern and western parts of Slovenia, north of the Sava river that used to be under Austrian influence and rule
4. the northern half of Croatia, north of the River Sava, i.e. Slavonia that used to be a Hungarian province
5. the northern part of Serbia, north of the rivers Sava and Danube, i.e. Vojvodina that used to be part of the Hungarian Kingdom
6. the western part of Romania i.e. Transylvania that used to be part of Hungary for more than one thousand years
7. and the westernmost parts of Ukraine, i.e. Transcarpathia and Galicia that used to be under Polish-Lithuanian and Austrian-Hungarian influence and rule.

Although the majority of Germany belongs to Central European culture, Germany ought to be considered a rather Western European country because it does not quite share the common historical fate of Central Europe, especially the western part of it after the 2nd World War. Germany was and is even today the great power trying to dominate Central Europe either in economic, or in the past, in military sense. Austria lies in Central Europe totally, and its historical and economic role and impact exercised on Central Europe is very similar to that of Germany. Its living standard and economic status together with Germany and Switzerland tends to be Western European rather, despite the cultural roots. Lichtenstein is a mini state between Switzerland and Austria. Lithuania, Latvia, and the Kaliningrad Russian federal territory are

located in Central Europe's northern, peripheral region, with a prevailing Russian cultural, political and economic effect. Consequently the 4 'true' Central European, core countries can be: Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. They are the so-called V4 (Visegrad 4) countries.

3.2. PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF CENTRAL EUROPE

(István Tózsza)



Physical geographic map of Europe

(Source of the basic map is <http://sgaularjramos.blogspot.com/2013/03/europe-physical-features.html>)

Central Europe is a true transitory zone between the western and the eastern parts of Europe, without sharp boundaries, thus the geographic definition is rather ambiguous. In this approach, the northern boundary of the region is quite clear: the shores of the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. Since the Estonians consider themselves Northern Europeans, the boundary of Central Europe is the political border between Estonia and Latvia. On the east, the boundary of Central Europe follows a cultural division line between the Catholic and Orthodox Christian religion that coincides with the political border between Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Russia, Belarus. It is the River Bug and the River Dniester that divides the Polish and the vast Eastern European Plains. In Ukrainian territory, the historical Central European region, Galicia, is a low hilly area. The Central European boundary then follows the foothills of the high mountains of the Carpathians, the Dinaric and the Alps in the east and the south. The River Rhine marks the western border of Central Europe.

Topography. The southern part of Central Europe is rich in high mountains, like two thirds of the mighty Alps, the large semi-circle of the Carpathians around the Hungarian Plain, and the

Sudeten Mountains and the Czech Forest encircling the Czech Basin. Low hilly regions border the high mountains. The northern half of Central Europe is a large plain land represented by the Germanic and the Polish Plains. The low hilly areas, in Germany, in the Czech Basin, and in Silesia, Poland are usually rich in minerals and ores that are responsible for the early formation of heavy industry in these regions.

Climate. The dominating climate of Central Europe is continental, with cool winters and hot summers. Apart from the high mountain regions of the Alps and Carpathians, where there is a vertical distribution of temperatures, the mean temperature in January is between 0 and minus 10 degrees centigrade in the majority of the Central European lands. The mean temperature in July is between 15 and 20 degrees centigrade. Besides the ruling continental climate, there is another climatic effect on the Central European region, prevailing mainly in the northern plains. This is the Atlantic effect with westward winds, bringing most of the precipitation, which is between 500 and 1000 mm-s a year.

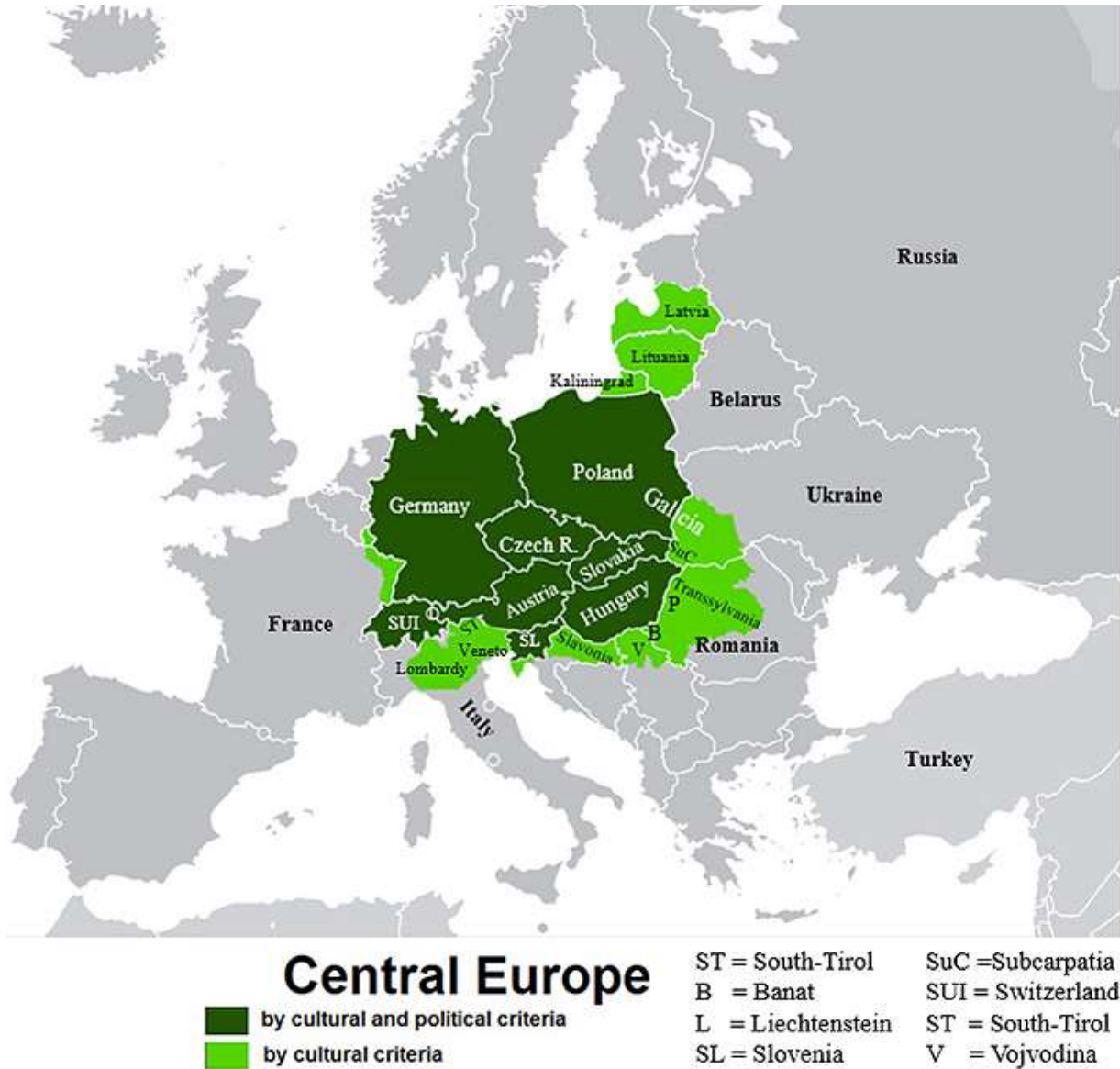
Hydrology. The rivers in the northern part of Central Europe run to the North and Baltic Sea. They are from west to east: the Rhine, the third largest river of Europe, the Weser, the Elba, the Odera, the Vistula and the Daugava. In the southern part of Central Europe, the dominating river is the Danube, the second largest river of Europe, flowing into the Black Sea. Its main tributaries are the Tisza, the Drava and the Sava, this latter forming the southern border of Central Europe. In the east, the Dniester, bordering Galicia, runs towards the Black Sea as well. In the Southern Alps, the relatively short rivers run down towards the Adriatic Sea. The largest lake is the Balaton in the middle of the Carpathian Basin. In northern Germany and in northern Poland there are two large lake districts, the Mecklenburg and the Masurian ones respectively. They are the remnants of the last Ice Age. In the Baltic regions, in Lithuania and Latvia, there are extending marshlands because of the cool and wet continental climate prevailing there.

Vegetation. The majority of Central Europe is covered with mixed (deciduous and coniferous) forests. In the high mountain areas, however, there is a vertical distribution of vegetation (oak, beech, pine, dwarf pine, mountain pasture). The only wooded steppe vegetation is characteristic only in the Carpathian Basin. The **fauna** is rich in continental species, birds of prey, and deer, with protected animals like brown bear, lynx and wolf in the Carpathians. The most valuable and highly protected species on the edge of extension include the last specimens of the European buffalo in Galicia, Poland.

The **soils** of Central Europe in the northern plain lands and in the mountainous regions are of poor quality with the exception of the inner plains of the Carpathians. In addition, the Carpathian Basin is the richest region in the world as far as hot **mineral water** resources are concerned, because the Earth's crust is the thinnest in this area, causing a very high **geothermic gradient**. However, the whole territory of Central Europe is safe from the point of view **seismic activity**, there is no active volcanism and earthquakes are very rare. The long distance from the Atlantic Ocean and the mountain ranges of the Alps and the Carpathians protect most of the central and eastern parts of Central Europe from weather extremities. However, the impact of the global warming can be felt in Central Europe as well, in an ever-increasing aridity mainly on the plains and a shrinking amount of snow cover in the hilly and mountainous regions.

3.3. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY OF CENTRAL EUROPE

(Csaba Lovász)



The Cultural and Political borders of Central Europe

(Source: Edited by the Author)

What is Central Europe? There is no exact and short answer to this complicated question without the risk of missing important details. Physical geography constitutes three rivers' catchment areas the Elbe, Danube, and Vistula. Central Europe or 'Mitteleurope' **constellates small, middle-sized states** situated continuously between great empires and superpowers in socio-economic aspects. They reached their independence after the fall of great empires in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Each of these states has unique socio-economic characteristics. This part of Europe is a transition zone between Western and Eastern Europe. Nowadays, more than **150 million people** live in the territory of nineteen countries.

On the one hand, Central Europe's area lies over more than **1.25 million km²** from the Rhine to the Carpathian Mountains and surrounded by the North Sea and Baltic Sea on the north and the Adriatic Sea on the south. On the other hand, the internal and external borders of Central Europe were never static. They were always in shifts during the centuries. Furthermore, the East European Plain opens the way for invaders from the east. As a result, both internal and external borders are still blurred, and their depiction is challenging and problematic.

Central Europe is a real melting pot of different people. This diverse region is the part of the world where the western Roman Catholic and eastern orthodox catholic divide from each other, which separation started in the 11th century. At the same time Central Europe also the place which is situated on the meeting point of the northern protestant areas and the southern roman catholic regions from the 16th century. Reflecting on these exceptional geographic locations, Samuel P. Huntington's world-famous book uses a more political approach on that issue. With Huntington words: Central Europe includes "those lands which once formed part of Western Christendom; the old grounds of the Habsburg Empire, Austria, Hungary and Czechia (Czech Republic), Slovakia, together with Poland and the eastern marches of Germany (Samuel P. Huntington 1994 [2004] p. 168.). A part of Northern Italy and the Baltic states are also part of Central Europe in this classification.

At the same time, Robert D. Kaplan noticed Central Europe at least until the presence of coffee houses. That culturally means the German, especially the Habsburg influence, is relevant in this corner of the world. These German standards still have a massive impact on governance, the legal system, and education.

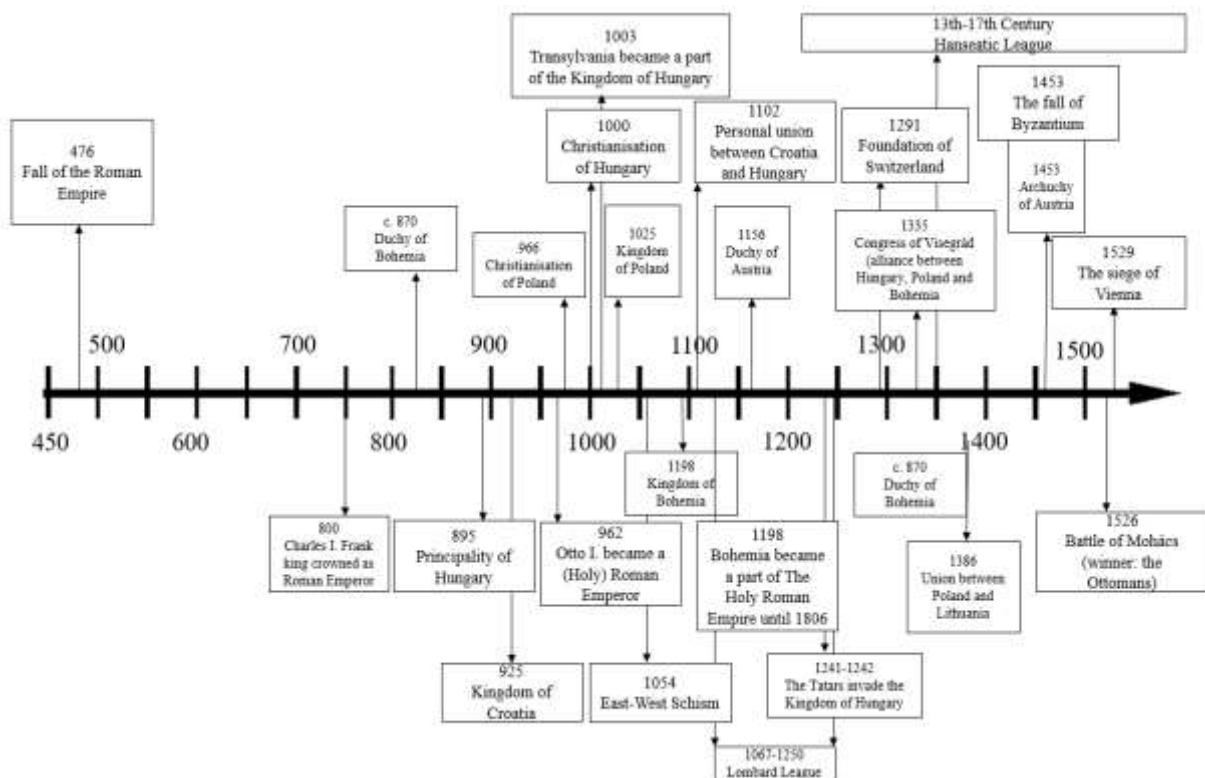
Most of the region's people belong to the Indo-European language family except the Estonians and Hungarians, who belong to the Uralic language family. The western part of Central Europe is mostly influenced by different Germanic languages (Germany, East Switzerland, small principality: Liechtenstein and Germany and Austria). The Eastern side of Central Europe is dominated mainly by mainly Slavic-speaking countries, including Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, or the Ruthens²⁶. The group of Baltic languages heavenly concentrate on Latvia and Lithuania Separated them from their Russian neighbours. Although due to the politically driven migration from the Soviet Union, these countries also gained large Russian-speaking minorities during the twentieth century.

Meanwhile, the 'island' of Hungarian speakers stretches over the current borders of Hungary. They can find every neighbouring country due to the treaty of Trianon after the Great War. They belong to the Uralic Languages family with their far Estonian relatives. Economically Central Europe differs from Western and Eastern Europe, but it has got similarities with both. Western Central Europe is situated in the economic centrum of Europe. Due to its historical heritage, Eastern Central Europe was a periphery or semi-periphery economic area of the European Continent. The four decades rule of communism also created remarkable economic differences with other parts of the continent. For example, between Eastern and Western Germany, bias economic division is still a substantial regional development issue. Despite the vast amount of financial subsidies provided by the federal government to develop the former regions of the German Democratic Republic.

²⁶ A minority who live remotely and modestly among the east Carpathian Mountains in Modern Ukraine

Brief History of Central Europe

To better understand the enormous ethnic and cultural, economic characteristics of Central Europe, we should dig deeper into the region's history. Archaeological evidence shows that people from ancient times inhabited central Europe. In the 1st century, the Roman Empire conquered southern Central Europe and expanded its borders until the Danube. Where a fortification line, 'the limes,' was established. The Danube became the natural eastern frontier of Pannonia's province (A.D. 14-395) and the Empire²⁷. Belonging to a great empire was beneficial for the locals who became 'civilized' due to Romanization and enjoyed the vast network of well-paved roads and the sufficient water supply by aqueducts. The trade was flourishing due to the excellent infrastructure and the common Latin language. The most well-known trading route was Amber road²⁸. The Romans founded many of the modern Central European cities²⁹. On the western edge of the Empire, the Rhine was also a frontier between the Romanised Galls (in the territory France) and the ever-problematic German tribes (Germany). This cultural break is also a great example of how physical geography affects human history. The decline of the Roman Empire started with the arrival of German tribes and ended in a fall in 476 A.D.



The Time Table of Central European History from 476 A.D. to 1526 A.D

(Source: Edited by the Author)

²⁷ Only one province, Dacia (A.D. 106-271/275), was founded over limes' watchtowers and fortresses because the soil was rich in precious minerals, gold, and silver.

²⁸ The Amber Road created a connection between the Baltic sea and Rome (A.D. 1-4 century) and encouraged the foundation of new cities

²⁹ Vienna (Vindobona), Salzburg (Iuvavum), Cologne (Colonia Agrippina), Aquincum (a part of Budapest), or Bratislava (Gerulata).

In the following centuries, many cities were destroyed; people were killed or escaped because of instability and ongoing warfare. Only a few places were able to develop, such as clerical centres and important trading towns. During the early medieval ages, the Slavic tribes, later the Magyars (Hungarians), arrived in Central Europe. Subsequently, they formed their first states. In 962, Otto I. was crowned as a Roman Emperor named the ‘founding father’ of The Holy Roman Empire (962-1806).

Around the millennium, the duties converted to Christian kingdoms. In the 11th century, according to the **Great Schism**, the Roman Catholic Church and orthodox Christian church divided from each other. The Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire were the organizing force in Central Europe.

Meanwhile, in the 11th century, in a humble fortress in Arau Canton, a great dynasty started to increase its power due to smart dynastic marriages, the Habsburgs. To the 13th century, the dynasty gave several Holy Roman Empires. Later, the Duchy of Austria became the core of their power until 1918. In the 13th century, Swiss cantons united and rose against the Holy Roman Empire and gained their independence in 1291.

German settlers migrated from the overpopulated western parts **to the eastern, sparsely populated areas of Central Europe to cultivate lands**³⁰. They established **gold and silver mines and new mining cities** in Bohemia, Upper Hungary, and Transylvania (e.g., Saxon cities). The trade of **salt** also was a lucrative business in medieval Central Europe for merchants, nobles, and the state treasury (e.g., Austria, Bohemia, and Transylvania).

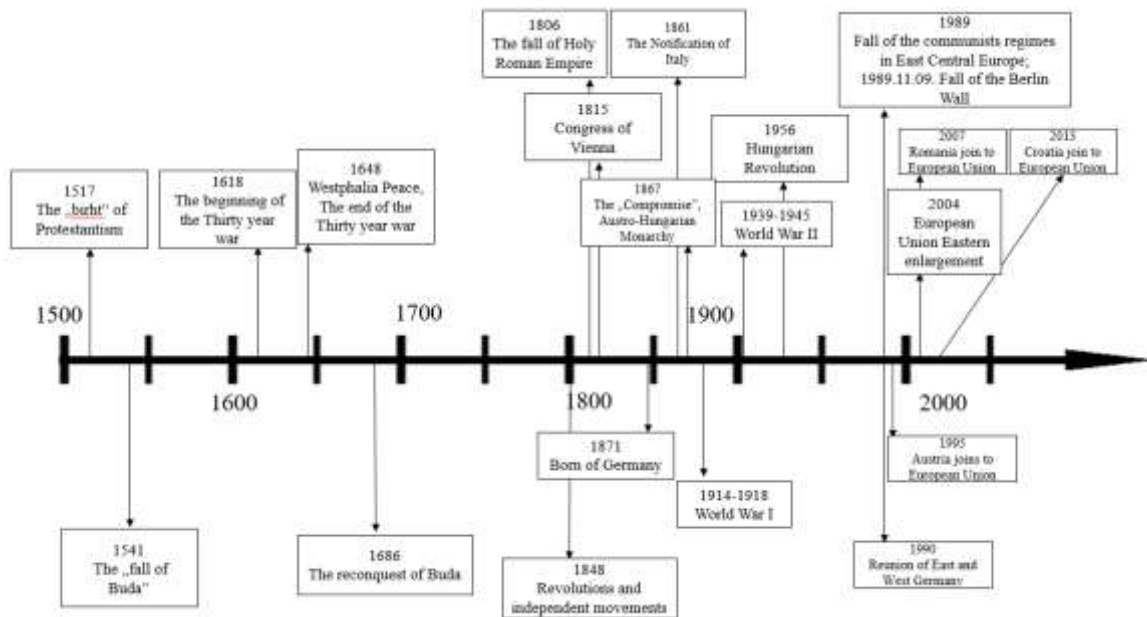
The commerce also encouraged a Northern alliance between **Hansen cities**, which became a success story between the 12th and 17th centuries. The alliance helped boost economic development and the rise of Riga and Königsberg (Kaliningrad), Rostock, and other cities on the Baltic Sea and beyond.

At the same time, a ‘rival’ lucrative trade route of Levant was under the control of Lombardian city-states and Venice. As a result, with the help of the East’s trade of luxury goods, these city-states became the core economic engine of Medieval Europe. Meanwhile, according to the inland trade, 1335 was a remarkable year.

The Congress of Visegrád³¹ brought together three Central European kingdoms, Bohemia, Hungary, and Poland, to improve competitiveness against the Holy Roman Empire (mostly Vienna). In 1386, the personal union between Lithuania and Poland was also a crucial moment for Central Europe.

³⁰ The kings warmly welcomed them because they were skilled merchants, artisans. They also established towns. As a result, they have a considerable influence on the improvement of agriculture and mining and the city network.

³¹ This alliance was unique in its age, which inspired the later Visegrad Group or V4 cooperation at the end of the twentieth century.



The Time Table of Central European History from 1526 to 2020
(Source: Edited by the Author)

Although continental and maritime trade developed the second half of medieval Central Europe, wars and diseases also shape its history. In the middle of the 13th century, the Mongol horde invaded Central Europe and caused enormous destruction in Polish and Hungarian kingdoms' territory. In the following century, the "black death" or plague killed millions of people, mostly in the western part of Central Europe. During this century, a new threat came from the southeast, the Ottomans. The fall of Byzantium was an ominous sign of the inevitable end. **A few decades later, in 1526, the Kingdom of Hungary's army defeated the Ottomans in a bloody battle at Mohács.**

In the 16th century, it was weakened and torn into three parts. Upper Hungary was ruled by the Habsburgs, while the southern part became an Ottoman vilayet. Despite the decline, the 16-17th century was Transylvania's golden age in cultural and economic aspects. The religious movement of Protestantism shocked the hegemony of the Roman Catholic Church. **The continent is divided into the protestant north and Roman Catholic south.** In Western-Central Europe, Switzerland and Northern Germany became protestant after peasant uprisings and civil wars. Transylvania also converted from catholic to protestant except the Szeklers. Hostility between churches and religious groups has led to armed conflicts worldwide (e.g., the German parts of the Habsburg Empire, Transylvania). The thirty-year war started in Czechia, and 1648 ended with Westphalian peace. **The Westphalian system became the coexistence principle and equal rights of European states** after a bitter and bloody conflict. The war mostly affected German territories and Central Europe.

In the 17th century, the retreat of the Ottoman Empire finished. Many cities and areas were depopulated. As a result, new settlers arrived from German areas to Eastern Central Europe. The 18th century brought enlightenment for Central Europe. At this time, the absolute monarch of the Habsburg Empire and Prussia flourished. Vienna became a glittering capital of the Habsburg Empire with its marvellous palaces, fancy coffee houses, and unique architecture. While in the new state of Prussia, Berlin replaced the former capital, Königsberg (Kaliningrad), and developed into a modern metropolis during the following centuries.

The 19th century was the time of the outset of nationalism and the awakening of nations. Because of 1815, the Congress of Vienna, the absolutist monarch of Europe, created an alliance to protect their empires' unity against riots and revolutions. However, in 1848-49 revolutions broke out all over Europe. For example, in Prague, Vienna, and Pest, people have risen against their absolutist's rulers. The alliance of great empires successfully suppressed even the revolutions, but it only delayed the empires' inevitable collision. Another most peaceful but radical revolution has an extraordinary impact on the economy and society in Central Europe, the industrial revolution. The industrial revolution started in continental Europe in German land in the 1830s.

Later, the Habsburg Empire and Eastern Central Europe also industrialized by the western capital investments and the accumulated wealth of nobility from agriculture. The railways transformed the economy, warfare, and transportation in Central Europe. The railroads have competitive advantages compared with inland waterways and muddy roads. In 1867, the Habsburg Empire converted a dualist monarchy due to a political compromise between Hungary and the emperor. Before World War I. Budapest became a prominent capital city, and Vienna was due to the monocentric railway network, which provided raw materials for the mills' factories and grain. The two capital cities are longingly compete with each other in economic and cultural ways.

On the one hand, Germany and Austro-Hungary left the colonial race behind France and Great Britain. Meanwhile, Germany became a leading economic force due to the second industrial revolution, especially in the chemical industry. The Empire desperately wanted natural resources to boost economic development. At the same time, Austro-Hungary expanded toward the Balkans and annexed Bosnia in 1908. These events led to World War I, where Central powers fought against allied forces. The devastating war ended a loss of Central powers, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Germany found themselves on the losing side and disintegrated. On the ruins of old empires, new small and middle-sized states gain their independence.³² Meanwhile, the second Polish state³³ was born.

While Hungary suffered the greatest territorial and economic losses³⁴ in Central Europe, neighbouring countries gained large areas. Millions of ethnic Hungarians found themselves in foreign countries one day to the next. The situation was the same with Germany. The organically developed network of cities torn apart because of new borders. Budapest became oversized compared with the new size of the country. The trading system, which developed organically during the centuries, also collapsed. The new states a most of their traditional markets, the central powers were humiliated and economically crushed by winners³⁵. When the economic consolidation started, the great economic crisis hit the economies of the countries. The economic problems led to a political crisis. Subsequently, fascism and Nazi ideology had risen and resulted in a more bloody and deadlier World War II, which had begun in Central Europe when Germany attacked Poland in 1939 and ended with the devastation of

³² Czechoslovakia, Poland, Austria, Hungary, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and the Baltic states.

³³ After 123 years of the tripartition of Poland in 1795, the second Polish was born and exist until the invasion of Poland in World War II.

³⁴ Hungary's territory (without Croatia) was 282 870 km² and lost 1890918 km², which was the $\frac{2}{3}$ of its area and became a middle-sized state with 92 952 km². Later, 355 km² more land also returned due to few referendums.

³⁵ French military commander bitterly noticed, "This is not peace. It is an armistice for twenty years." (Ferdinand Foch). His prediction became real, and World War II broke out because of the deadly combination of unsolved issues of minorities - mainly Germans - and enormous amounts of required compensations by the winners.

the national wealth³⁶ and millions of lives due to the fights of the Eastern front, air bombing, and the Holocaust.

After WWII, the borders were nearly restored with few exceptions³⁷. Simultaneously, the minorities were not protected by the Paris treaty, which led to ethnic cleansing³⁸ among ethnic Germans and Hungarians.

As Churchill said in 1946 May, ‘From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent’. (Churchill, Missouri, 1946). According to historians, this speech openly designated the Cold War beginning, which radically transformed the region’s socio-economy. The effects of this period still are determinative and have long-term effects. Most Central European states fell under communist rule and became the satellite states of the Soviet Union. In the next four decades, the diplomatic relationship between the Warsaw pact and NATO members was tense and hostile. While Liechtenstein, the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy, remained democratic. Austria and Switzerland became neutral; the rest of the region’s countries fell under the rule of communism. **The main political and economic characteristics of the socialist economic system** were fundamentally different from the democratic, free-market economy.

Characteristics of the Socialist Economy

Characteristics of the socialist economy	
the private property was eliminated	The central political elite forced nationalizations of companies, financial institutes, and lands. The process was rapid and cruel. The violation of human rights was regular—the state propaganda called enemies the peasants and intellectuals, and entrepreneurs. In the 1970-the 1980s, the economic policies became less oppressive.
Total economic control of the communist state.	The planned economy developed by the USSR and became standard in socialist countries for decades. The central government set up strict economic plans with target numbers. In most cases, the quantity was matters, not quality. Later, economic stakeholders gain more independence, but the system remains robust and rigid. Because the governments determined production and prices, these measures eliminated the basic market mechanisms.
Intensive growth policy	Mostly with inefficient and wasteful ways because of obsolete technologies. The main tools were large infrastructure investments (e.g., hydropower plants, factories, canals).
Redistribution of national income	The artificial transition of economic structure because of the communist governments’ industrial policies led to a dead-end, and entire sectors collapsed because they were unsustainable. The planners ignored natural endowments. The planners ignored Unsustainable and the natural endowments.
Socialist Cities	The extensive industries were rapid up urbanization—the type of socialist cities characterized by extended neighbourhoods. Factories made the blocks of the building with standardized manufacturing processes.
Underdeveloped service and finance sector	Due to the forced industrialization, the services played a limited minimal role in the economy than Western European capitalist countries.

Source: Edited according to Probáld F. 2014

Meanwhile, the social benefits were generous (free health care, free education, childcare allowance). At the same time, some massive social issues were also created by communism.

³⁶ Poland, Hungary, and Yugoslavia suffered the most incredible destruction during World War II.

³⁷ Germany lost Königsberg (Kaliningrad), which became a part of the Soviet Union.

³⁸ Around 20 million people were forced to leave their homeland. For example, Germans who used to live in Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia and Hungarians lived in Slovakia.

The people exploited themselves for better living standards. Alcoholism and health problems (e.g., cardiovascular diseases) became regular, especially among the working-class members. The expected life expectancy is still lower than in Western-Central Europe. In 1989, the Soviet Union lost the Cold War, the socialist regimes collapsed, and the economic and political transition was started. The former socialist states became democratic and embraced the market economy and capitalism. After the states' oppression, the churches also became essential elements of the post-socialist countries' societies. Poland is still one of Europe's most religious countries³⁹, while other Central European areas remain more religious than the Northern and Western states.

The process of privatization began. Regularly state-owned competitive companies and properties acquired by financially strong transnational companies or went to stock exchanges. Others were closed because they were inefficient and could not stand the competition with western companies. The unemployment rate was increasing during the 1990s. At the same time, the living standards plummeted due to the harmful effects of the economic transition. Many of the socialist cities, which were in an advantageous situation in the previous decades, get into depression because they were too dependent on an industry or a company (e.g., Silesia, Northern Hungary, and former DGR). Later the economies of East-Central European countries were consolidated due to the more intensive FDI from western enterprises (e.g., German automotive companies' investment into V4 countries), successful SMEs, and 'national champions' (e.g., MOL, PKN Orlen) According to eastern enlargement, most of the Eastern Central European states joined to European Union. Due to the EU funds regional development, the differences were increased among the regions.

In general, western gateway cities and capital cities became real economic hubs all over central Europe. Another trend that borders 'disappeared' within the European Union and historically motivated economic cooperation started to recover between border cities and regions (e.g., Vienna, Győr, and Bratislava). In the last three decades, the services and financial sector dominated the economies of Central European countries. Furthermore, the creative industries and IT sector have increasing relevance, especially in large, vibrant cities such as Milan, Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, Bratislava, and Warsaw.

Nowadays, Berlin and Vienna are situated among Europe's most innovative cities, while Prague, Budapest, and Warsaw went through rapid development. Tourism also went through an extraordinary development in the previous years. Due to the infrastructural development, international cultural, sports events, and low-cost flights, Central Europe's reputation dramatically grew worldwide among the tourists (Prague, Vienna, and Budapest) among the traditionally popular revenues Bavaria and the Austrian Alps or Venice. Furthermore, the breathtakingly beautiful natural wonders and romantic smaller cities also boosting domestic tourism all over Central Europe.

The outstanding economic performance of these cities with their population resulted in **monocentric city networks** in the Czech Republic (Prague), Hungary (Budapest), and Slovakia (Bratislava) along with the Baltic States. These city-regions are situated among the EU's most developed regions regarding capita per GDP. While Northern Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and Poland have more **polycentric city networks** due to the historically strong regionalism and

³⁹ Poland's religiosity has essential historical and political consequences for Central Europe at the end of the 20th century. Pope John Paul II, as an influential religious and political leader, played a vital role in the collapse of the communist regimes in Central Europe.

organic urban development. During the socialist era in Eastern Central Europe, the rural areas' population declined due to the rapid urbanization processes and conscious neglect of the rural population's demands. After the economic transition, the differences decreased due to technical development (e.g., broadband internet services). The EU funds also allow rural regions for development. However, the aging rural population is a significant problem. Due to the eastern enlargement, foreign farmers also migrate to rural areas. Mostly from the Netherlands and Germany.

Central Europe is situated in the Berlin-Istanbul-Moscow access. According to Central Europe's geopolitics, most of the states joined the Western military alliance system. The most crucial military cooperation is NATO, led by the United States. The presence of their troops is crucial for the maintenance of cooperation and peace in Europe. For the U.S. strategically, Romania and Poland are the most important allies in the region regarding their size and geographical positions.

Meanwhile, Austria and Switzerland preserved their neutrality. Germany's reunification meant that unquestionably Germany became the economic and political leading power of Central Europe and the European Union. At the same time, due to Brexit, the region would become more important from a European perspective. Although the Soviet Union collapsed, Russia was an ongoing military threat for the region's states. Especially for the Baltic States, Poland, Romania, and Ukraine feel threatened by future Russian aggression. China is also getting more active in the region, thanks to the One Belt Initiative.

Among the Central European states, **the Visegrad Group** has an increasing economic and political role in the region. The heads of the states and ministries meet regularly to establish common positions on different questions. This political alliance tries to present the four members' common interests Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia on EU level in political disputes (e.g., EU funds, agricultural). Furthermore, they have increasingly deeper cooperation in culture, education, science, and change of information. In the future, they plan joint infrastructure projects in the field of energy supply and transportation within the frame of the EU (e.g., regional high-speed railways, gas pipelines).

As a short conclusion, this brief introduction reveals that Central Europe transformed rapidly during the last decades; meanwhile, the region preserved its unique and diverse socio-economic characteristics, which originated in Central Europe's socio-economic and political development.

3.4. GEOCONNECTIVITY AND CENTRAL EUROPE

(Norbert Csizmadia)

3.4.1. Connectivity in the age of fusion and networks

Connectography (a term ‘merging’ connectivity and geography) was coined and popularized by Parag Khanna in 2016, in his book *Connectography: Mapping the Future of Global Civilization*. According to Khanna, geo-economic systems have been organized into new, geographical networks, which operate based on new methodological principles. Khanna argues that in this new setup, the new geopolitical paradigm is based on the direct and indirect links between the various infrastructures, even distant ones, as well as the leadership and control over the supply chains arising from these. Connectivity has thus become a world paradigm, and the maps that have only shown traditional political borders can now be complemented with power lines, highways, railway networks, internet cables, air routes, in other words the symbols of the global network society. Geopolitical competition is supplemented and transformed in the fight for connecting supply systems.

Competitive connectivity is the most important geopolitical factor of the 21st century. Nowadays infrastructure lines (and thus also connectivity) are the most crucial lines on our maps, as they offer the best chance for understanding the 21st century world order. If we only look at infrastructure, we can see what we have built, but not what the impact is on the rest of the world. Therefore, in the 21st century, we need to learn three kinds of geography – physical geography, political geography, and functional geography – if we really want to understand what is happening around us. Each region counts, as regions are part of the network. The world is becoming increasingly complex, and we must be aware of the value of connectivity, regionalism, and other forces that shape the world much more than our traditional geopolitical theories, which are only based on area, size, and military force.

Maps are increasingly important in our daily lives, and when they are drawn now, they will have new content. We need new maps with new morphological symbols and a new approach to cartography. Smart cities and network cities are endowed with new meaning, as they are connected by digital virtuality, just like new connectivity mechanisms emerge in regional national communities. New connectivity mechanisms are developed between the US, China, and Russia as well.

New world orders are emerging, and the maps that were created in the wake of the Age of Discovery, are used in the 21st century for digital navigation, thereby establishing digital and virtual geopolitics. The traditional concept of space changed in the second half of the 20th century. Some kind of a ‘deterritorialization’ ensued. Our world is shrinking into a global village, but it is also expanding at the same time. The 21st century saw the significance of geopolitics with an approach focusing on geographical space return to its rightful place, and geographical components play a crucial role in certain decisions. The new world order is global and also based on networks and information, just as new maps are simultaneously global, while being about networks and information. Nowadays, anyone can participate in creating maps with the help of *Google Maps* and other tools, on an unprecedented scale. Community projects such as *OpenStreetMap* prepare maps covering the whole globe, created by users in a cooperation that was not available before the advent of digital technologies. The power of mapping has always lain in the capacity to create, organize, and disseminate knowledge.

Modern life is impossible without networks. They are increasingly significant today, as more and more advanced networks emerge and spread. This is because while the networks in nature developed organically, and they operate almost imperceptibly, on their own, man-made

networks need to be planned and made operational by us. The better we understand networks, the better we can make efficient structures facilitating the achievement of our goals. Networks multiply our strength and opportunities.

What makes a network? How do we recognize it? Networks are determined by their unique structure, which is fairly simple at a basic level. A network is a collection of nodes that are linked to each other in some way. The nodes and the links between them may vary widely, and so do networks. The economy may also be construed as a network, with the nodes represented by the individual players who may be connected to each other through various links. The systems that function as networks and can be described as such have features that are inherently related to networks and are thus characteristic of all types of networks.

Through networks, one can understand the self-organization processes that are responsible for several aspects of the world around us. This points out the significance of the nodes and connections in a network as well as the connections that organize networks into bigger networks. One of the most interesting and important features of networks is that there are special nodes in every network that have many links, while a large portion of nodes are only linked to a few others. This crucial characteristic is the basis for several other features of networks and their operation, ranging from their general robustness to their regenerative capacity and their exceptional vulnerability observed sometimes nonetheless. Besides presenting the basic types of networks, such as random and scale-free networks, centralized, decentralized, and distributed networks, Albert-László Barabási shows the reasons behind the emergence of the different types of networks and the features arising from the various structural types. These features ultimately explain why a given network structure is the most favorable and viable under specific circumstances, which helps in understanding the operation of systems and the background of sometimes surprising events and phenomena.



Network of scientific cooperation in 2005–2009 and 2010–2016

Source: Science-Metrix, Scimago Lab, Inc, Oliver H. Beauchesne – Data: Scopus – Elsevier

Along with geographical places, spatial flows are increasingly important. Instead of the historically developed geographical approach, actual developments call for a space of flows approach. Nevertheless, the global change in the international economy is uneven, so geographical differentiation is much greater than ever. A complex spatial structure is on the rise, i.e. a mosaic of unevenness in a continuous state of flux. Therefore, the global economy is much more of a multipolar system. With the rediscovery of space, international integrations and subnational, regional levels (regional and local economy) are increasingly important besides the level of nations.

International relations should also be examined through the lens of network science. Network science is the science of interactions, also appearing in the examination of international relations. In international studies (e.g. social sciences and geography), the network science approach is based on the assumption that international relations are shaped by networks in a close relationship with each other and the interactions within them.

Spatial studies related to network science focus on how and why the networks in the international (global) space arise. How are they being transformed in the course of history and the characteristics of networks and the interactions among them as well as the micro and macro factors ensuring the stability of the international space and their spatial and temporal chains.

Network science related to international space garnered more attention than before primarily in the first decades of the 21st century. This is because analyses, forecasts and new theories became increasingly important in the 2000s. Research also focused on the way, how the positive correlations resulting in international coordination and cooperation arise. The essence of the preferential attachment theory developed by him is that the growth of trade and alliance networks that are prone to being scale-free reflects the development model by Barabási. In other words nations prefer the centers with the most links when establishing new relations.

It has to be noted that networks can be divided into subgroups. In such a case, graph-partitioning rules are defined by the topic, as nodes are grouped according to geographical, political, economic, trade or cultural similarities or differences. In other cases, the composition of node cohesion is determined by the connection structure in question. The significance of the nodes follows from the density (cohesive communities or cohesive geographical nodes). The most important type of cohesive community is the clique, which is a subset of a network where nodes have high cohesion.

Closeness centrality, or in other words the centrality of the elements of a network, is also based on the central role of nodes, and in such a scenario, the network centrality of a given geographical space is determined based on roads and distances. However, centrality emphasizes the increased role of connecting bridges, so the more nodes are connected to the network through a given node; the more important it is in the network. The most important interconnectivity theory is Maoz's Networked International Politics (NIP) theory, in which Maoz concluded in connection with macro-networks, that international relations can be defined as a system of interactions. The shared feature of these networks is that they are invariably organized along some value or interest, and depending on their complexity and scope, they may even become dominant factors in international politics. In trade networks, small trade centers are constantly relocated over the course of history. Most researchers mainly concentrate on four countries (United States, Germany, Japan, China), which are the biggest players in world trade nowadays. There are models of the world trade dividing the globe into three main communities.

The first region comprises North and South America, Nigeria, Congo, Israel, and Afghanistan. The second group includes the European countries, western and northern African states, while the third is made up of Asian, East African, and Pacific countries. In this approach, the trade centers are the United States, China, and Germany. In contrast to the above, other models analyze trade only as regards oil transportation. They also divide the world into three blocks and conclude that while trade is balanced in the group comprising South America, North America and West Africa, the major oil producers dominate in the Russia–Europe–North Africa group. The situation is similar in the Asian – Pacific – Middle East block.

In terms of the morphology of space, connectivity may become a world paradigm, and the maps that have only shown traditional political borders can now be complemented with power lines, highways, railway networks, internet cables, air routes, in other words the symbols of the global network society. Khanna believes that geopolitical competition is supplemented and its nature is transformed in the fight for connecting supply systems. One only needs to think of the global urban hubs or the newly established special economic zones where global centers reach each other to form an even more massive center. Based on the new organizations in connectography, the world economy is transformed, and nation states will be replaced by global urban clusters organized through networks of supply chains.

The IMF's trade database shows whether China or the United States is the more important trading partner for the countries in the years between 1980–2018. The data reflect the extent of trade integration between the two economies. In 2001, when China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO), more than 80% of the countries for which data are available engaged in more active trade with the US than with China. By 2018, this figure had diminished to 30%, with two-thirds of the countries (128 out of the 190) trading more with China than the US. It is equally important that 90 countries traded more than twice as much with China than with the United States. The turning point was the global financial crisis of 2008, when China surpassed the United States as the larger trading partner of more than half of all countries. Global trade has been considerably reshaped.

3.4.2. Geofusion (Norbert Csizmadia)

In 2013, the geo-matrix creating software of *3D Map Technology* launched a real-time satellite imaging program titled Geofusion and this software is used on over 422 flights operated by British Airways and 12 other airlines. This is a special 'fusion' map that shows exactly where our aircraft is at any given moment, and this launched a revolution in real-time cartography. In his book *Connectography*, Parag Khanna wrote about the Geofusion software that it is integrating virtual reality and 3D visualization techniques into its *GeoMatrix* and *GeoPlayer* engines to produce near real-time visualizations used in industries such as aviation, defense, space exploration, education, and entertainment. The term fusion was first used in music. In musical fusion (especially in jazz or world music), a new genre was born out of combining and merging different styles of music to produce something new.

Culinary fusion is defined as eastern flavors meeting western flavors. The first culinary fusion was performed in 1899, in the Raffles Hotel, the most famous hotel in Singapore, by an Armenian family. Fusion refers to the connection and merger between different groups. The other expression related to fusion is synthesis, which is a chemical reaction where two or more substances turn into one. Diffusion is used in physics and chemistry, and it refers to the flow of material particles caused by the changing concentration depending on particles' location.



The geofusion map of the 21st century
Source: Norbert Csizmadia, 2018, author's work

The fusion of places or geofusion is a geographical synthesis producing new results in geography with the simultaneous application of economic policy, technology, design, and visualization. Geofusion maps offer new perspectives on a wide range of areas, explaining geopolitical and geo-economic correlations. Geofusion mapping methods employ connectivity factors, infrastructural and knowledge networks, determining global hubs and a new way of interpretation based on the geopolitical structure in geographical hubs.

The rapid development of information technology changes human, social, geographical, economic, political, and cultural relationships considerably, as it makes it substantially easier to access knowledge, use data, and compare, regroup, and increase knowledge. Information technology can bridge continents, regions, cities, and communities across long distances, providing immediate presence and opportunity for action for all players. This highlights the fact that the emergence of geofusions and clusters that appear along scientific and geopolitical force lines is heavily influenced by the features of geographical places. The recent interdisciplinary nature of sciences and the emergence of new disciplines is attributable to both fusions and complex networks of relationships. Therefore network science, a recent phenomenon, also becomes more important, since it outlines the centers, relationships, and access points that general findings lead to specific realizations and solutions.

Fusions and networks are maintained by a complex system of relationships, based on which a complexity index can be calculated regarding the economic development of the different areas. All in all, economic development based on knowledge and technological innovation focuses on areas and hubs (global cities, megaregions, geographical regions) that have high-quality higher education and knowledge transfer institutions and favorable climatic conditions.

The book titled *Geofusion – Mapping of the 21st Century* sheds light on today's societies living in a special geo-moment where knowledge, innovation, creativity and skilled labor are the most important values in space and time. Geography helps to identify and adapt changes. The drivers

of economic growth, in particular talent, innovation, and creativity, are distributed unevenly around the world, clustering in space. Geography speaks in the language of maps: this new world and world order needs to be explored by maps, because they not only help in orientation but may also assist in the deeper understanding of, the adaptation to, and the shaping of, reality with their new ways of representation. Our static maps need to be redrawn, because the shifting human values and technological innovations require dynamic maps. The IT explosion and globalization trends fundamentally transform the functioning of economies all over the world. This is the special geo-moment when a knowledge-based competition develops among areas, resulting in completely new economic rankings. Choosing and implementing the right and fast way in this competition can be facilitated by the new economic geography with a geopolitical approach and dynamic computerized maps presenting new phenomena in several versions.

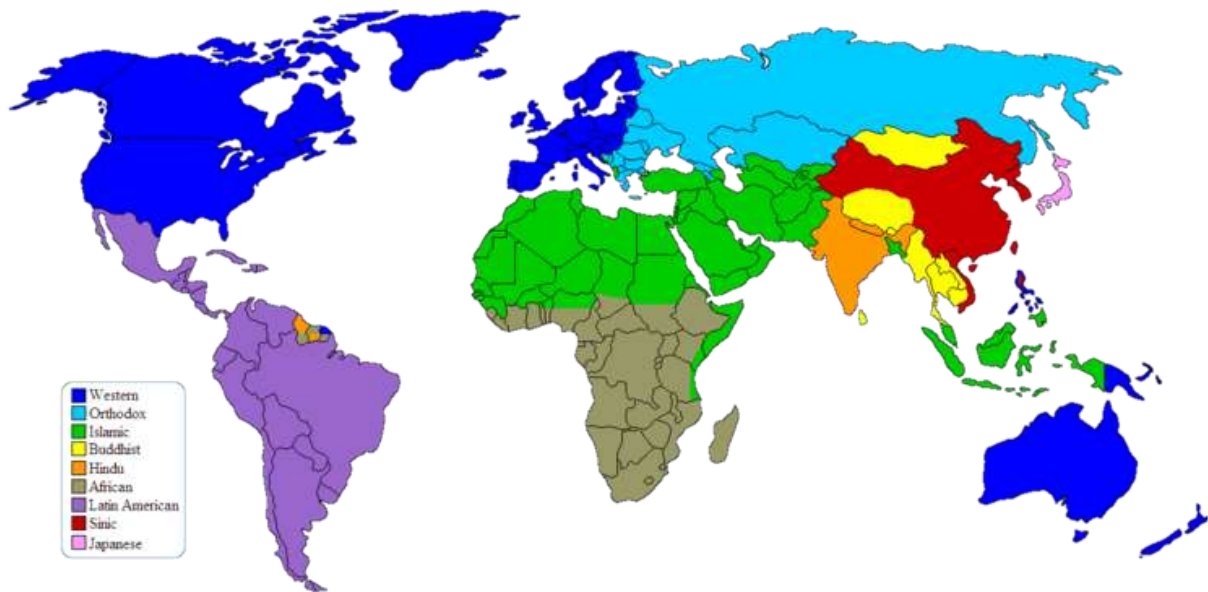
One of the hypotheses of this chapter is that the rise of geography and new geofusion maps can be used to determine geopolitical structures and designate the main power centers of the multipolar world economy based on geographical factors that will inevitably influence the geopolitical status of Central Europe, too. Geopolitical and civilization theories, connectography and geofusion maps help to outline the most important power centers, areas, and connections in the multipolar world order of the 21st century.

3.4.3. Geopolitical structures and theories

(Norbert Csizmadia)

Space, place, location, and geographical features are important in all geopolitical analyses. Nevertheless, players, borders, identities, thinking, language, the past, and roots are also significant. Just like social and economic geography, history, culture, the emergence of civilizations and thus geopolitical patterns, codes, models, and globalization, or technological trends, and the changing interpretation of the scales of geopolitical patterns. Symbols, ideas, ideologies, and political culture and communication are also major constituents of geopolitics.

In his epical *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Samuel P. Huntington describes the emergence of the new world order, ten years ahead of the changes in 2008. In his work from 1998, i.e. before the recession in Asia and ten years prior to the financial and economic crisis in the US and Western Europe, he argues that a new era is starting in world politics. For the first time in history, global politics becomes multipolar, and the world economy is influenced by more than just a few civilizations. The balance of power between civilizations changes, the West declines and Asian civilizations start a dramatic rise in terms of demography, the economy, and the military as well. The main source of conflict among civilizations will be cultural identity. In this diverse and multipolar world order, the countries that are culturally related will cooperate with each other, and the main players of world politics will continue to be nation states. Huntington views civilization as the highest rank of cultural clustering, the broadest sense of cultural identity, differentiating between nine civilizations: Sinic, Buddhist, Japanese, Hindu, Islamic, Orthodox Christian, Western Christian, Latin American, and African, and their boundaries do not always follow country borders. Out of today's and past civilizations, seven have disappeared (Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Cretan, Classical, Byzantine, Middle American, and Andean), which are complemented with five existing ones (Sinic, Japanese, Indian, Islamic, and Western), and the Orthodox, the Latin American and perhaps the African. Several states fluctuate between two civilizations or are currently changing civilizations, and they are classified by Huntington into a separate category of lone states. These include Turkey, Haiti, former British colonies in the Caribbean, and Ethiopia. Israel also stands apart, close to the Western civilization.



Huntington's civilizations

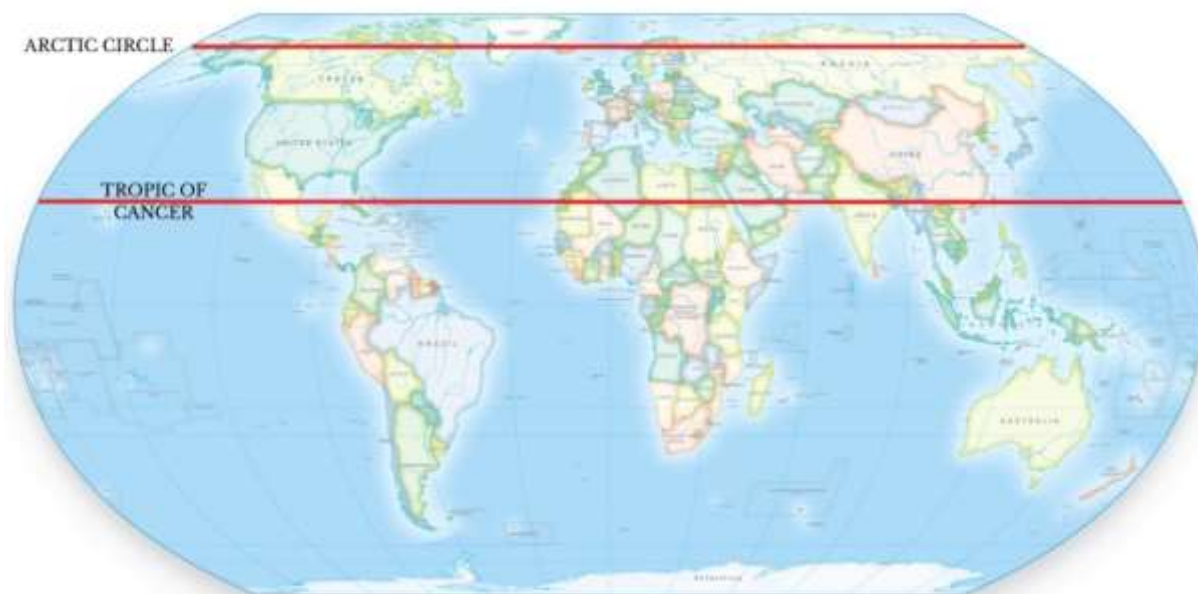
Source: Zack Cooper: The Clash of Asian Civilizations? <https://www.cato-unbound.org/2017/02/16/zack-cooper/clash-asian-civilizations>, January 6, 2019

When determining the key imperial indicators, Huntington claims that the power centers or major countries of the world economy own and operate the international banking system, control all hard currencies. They are the world's principal customers, provide the majority of the world's goods, and dominate international capital markets. They exert considerable moral leadership within many societies, are capable of massive military intervention, control the sea lanes, conduct most advanced technical research and development, control leading-edge technical education, dominate access to space, dominate the aerospace industry, dominate international communications, dominate the high-tech weapons industry. The list shows China has taken the lead in several indicators in the past decade, and it is a serious contender of the US in financial innovation, production and consumption, technological innovation, and artificial intelligence. According to Huntington's findings on civilization, the West is in decline, its share of world political, economic, and military power going down relative to that of other civilizations. Economic power is rapidly shifting to East Asia, similar to technological development. Huntington argues that the decline of the West is the result of a slow process (taking roughly 400 years), and this decline does not follow a straight line. The three reasons behind it are the shrinking territory, population numbers, and economic performance as well as military potential.

The large power status of Europe is ending. The West will control 24% of the world (down from 49% in the past century). It will have 10% of the global population (down from 48%), will have a share of 30% in total global economic output (down from the peak of 70%) and 25% of industrial production, and less than 10% of military personnel in the world will serve in Western armies.

By contrast, Chinese researcher Ruan Wei (2012) has the hypothesis that the group of countries that may belong to different civilizations but nonetheless inhabit the same geographical space constitute a natural geo-unit, or a super geo-community or geo-civilization. Spatial proximity is much more important than hitherto assumed, since it makes the alliance of the different societies more cost-effective and efficient, by considerably accelerating exchanges of personnel, information, technology, capital, and services, unlike in the case of distant regions

The Hungarian-born and most important American geopolitical thinker and founder of the Geopolitical Futures, George Friedman argues that the most important great powers and geopolitical force fields of the new economic and geopolitical world order can be found between 23 and 66.5 degrees north latitude, in other words between the Tropic of Cancer and the Arctic Circle.

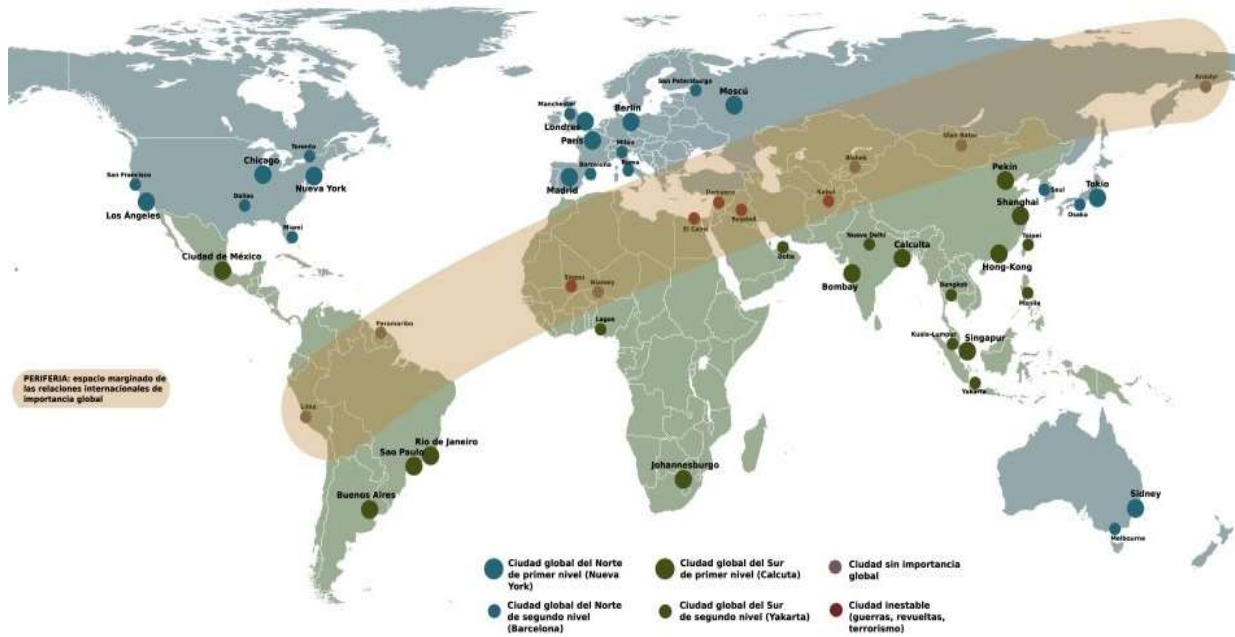


George Friedman's New Geopolitical Model

Source: Friedman, 2019.

Global cities play a crucial role in center and periphery locations. In today's world, globalization is actually not a global process. The world is becoming polarized, and this polarization, which has traditionally been referred to as the dynamics between the north and the south (with the north being the center as opposed to the underdeveloped countries in the southern periphery), has changed considerably over time. The countries of the former periphery have experienced a very rapid transformation since the 1990s, and these emerging economies cannot be considered peripheral anymore." Building on Mackinder's "empty zone," he maps economic power centers of the northern, primarily Atlantic period, as well as the rapidly emerging economies and global centers of the new world order that can be found south of that band.

In his book *Geopolitics: The Geography of International Relations* published in 2009 and revised in 2015, Saul Bernard Cohen outlined the spatial organization of geopolitical structures in a hierarchy of three spatial levels: he determined macro-level geostrategic realms, mezo-level geopolitical regions and micro-level nation states and subnational unit areas. As territorial units, the macro-level geostrategic realms have features and functions that exert a global influence on world events. Their framework is determined by circulation patterns that link people, goods, and ideas together, and they can efficiently control strategically important land and sea passageways. Cohen defines four macro-regional geopolitical force fields or realms in the early 21st century.



The Center–Periphery Model

Source: Juan Pérez Ventura <https://vaventura.com/divulgacion/geografia/centro-periferia-centralidad/>

These are as follows:

1. Maritime force field, which includes the American continent, EU Member States (Western and Central Europe), Japan, and the force field comprising Australia and New Zealand;
 2. Eurasian continental force field dominated by Russia;
 3. East Asian force field dominated China;
 4. Indian Ocean force field led by India.
- Within geostrategic realms, there are geopolitical regions. These regions at the mezzo-level are part of the geostrategic territorial unit (or geostrategic realm).
 - The regions are tied together by geographical links as well as political, cultural, and military relations, and history.
 - Regions of the maritime geostrategic force field: In geographical terms, their boundaries are outlined by two large oceans of the world, the Atlantic and the Pacific. Within this area, the following four geopolitical regions can be found: Northern and Central America, South America, Western Europe, and the Maghreb as well as the Asia–Pacific Rim.
 - The Eurasian continental force field has three regions: Russia (the Russian Heartland), complemented with Belarus and Eastern Ukraine, Middle Asia and the Southern Caucasus region.
 - Within the geopolitical force field of the East Asian realm, there are two regions, namely continental China and Indochina.
 - Within the Indian Ocean force field, South Asia as a geopolitical region differs from the three geostrategic territorial units. The regions associated with this force field include

India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and western Myanmar. In the long run, the aim is to establish an alliance under the leadership of India that includes the African and Southeast Asian coastlands of the India Ocean's basin.

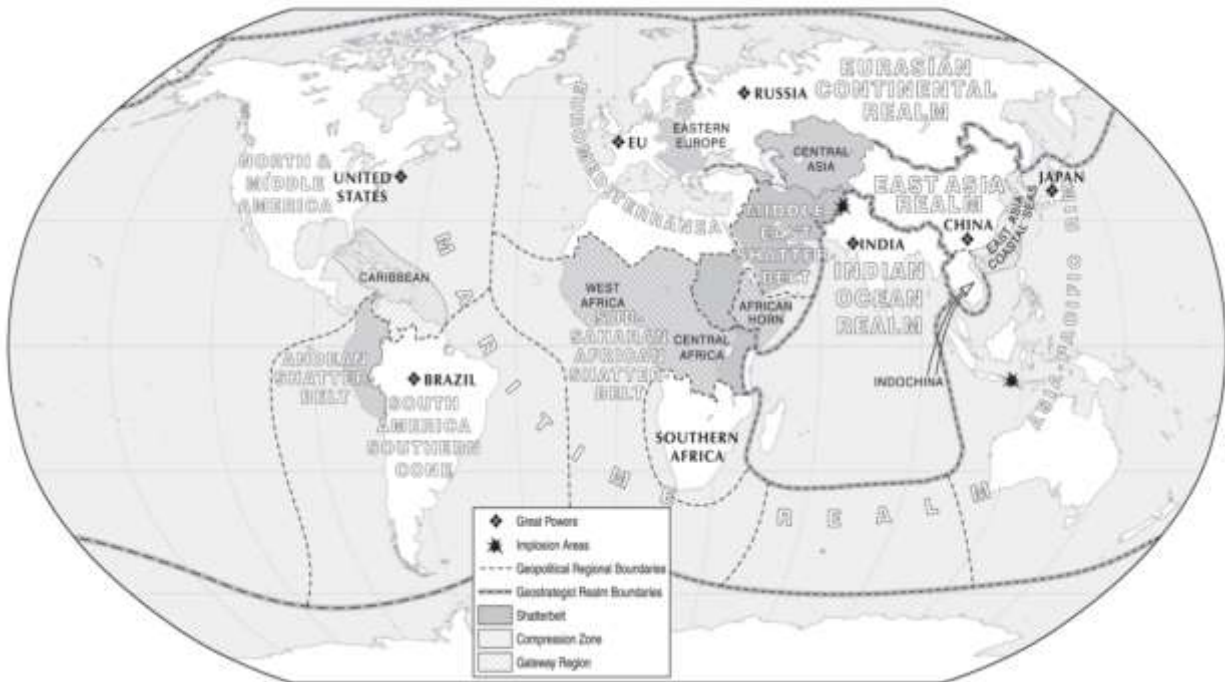
In Cohen's interpretation, the territories considered special geopolitical regions can be found between or overlapping the geopolitical force fields. These are shatter belts, compression zones, and convergence zones without an undefined status and situated between realms, and gateways that bridge geopolitical force fields. According to Bernard Cohen's definition, shatter belt areas are strategically oriented regions that are both deeply divided internally and caught up in the competition between great powers of the geostrategic realms. They are typically internally fragmented and often experience the competition between great powers. They include North Africa, the Andes (Inca America), the Caucasus, and Eastern Europe. Compression zones are torn apart even more by internal fragmentation and the intervention of neighboring countries in the region. Examples include West Africa, Central Africa, East Africa and the shatter belt of the Middle East.

Convergence zones are regions between the realms. Cohen argues that they include Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Mongolia. Cohen does not provide a clear-cut definition for gateway states and regions, but lists some examples for the former (Singapore, Hong Kong, Bahrain, Dubai). Nonetheless, he regards the Central and Eastern European region as a potential gateway that could link the maritime force field and the Eurasian continental force field in the future. Important features of gateway states include the following: strategic economic position, the high degree of the population's economic affinity, highly skilled population, great openness toward the world economy, high-quality services, and especially the strategic geographical location near the world's major transportation routes. In Cohen's interpretation, the level of national states comprises five orders. In this classification, the leading powers of the world dominate the life geostrategic territorial unit. Cohen outlined the geopolitical force field around seven great powers: US, EU, Japan, China, Russia, which may be joined by India, since it is the core of an independent geopolitical region, and also Brazil, as the center of a South American unit.

The second order of national states includes regional powers whose influence covers most of their own geopolitical region, and in a specialized way, other parts of the world as well. The regional powers according to Cohen (classified into high, medium, and low categories) are as follows. High regional powers: Canada, Turkey, Australia, Iran, South Africa, Nigeria. Medium regional powers: Indonesia, South Korea, Vietnam, Mexico, Pakistan, Egypt, Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, Israel. Low regional powers: Algeria, Thailand, Argentina, and Taiwan.

The third, fourth and fifth orders include the states whose reach usually extends to only a part of the regions.

The level of nation states appears at other authors too, in similar or different structures. Brzezinski introduced five geostrategic players (Germany, France, Russia, India, and China) and five geopolitical pivots, which are important due to their strategic location: Ukraine, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Iran, South Korea. He also developed the category of the seven potential geopolitical players (UK, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Thailand, Taiwan, Japan, Indonesia). According to Paul Kennedy, the nine pivotal states are: Mexico, Brazil, Algeria, Egypt, Republic of South Africa, Turkey, India, Pakistan, and Indonesia. Huntington defines six great powers, namely: United States, China, Europe, Japan, Russia, and India.

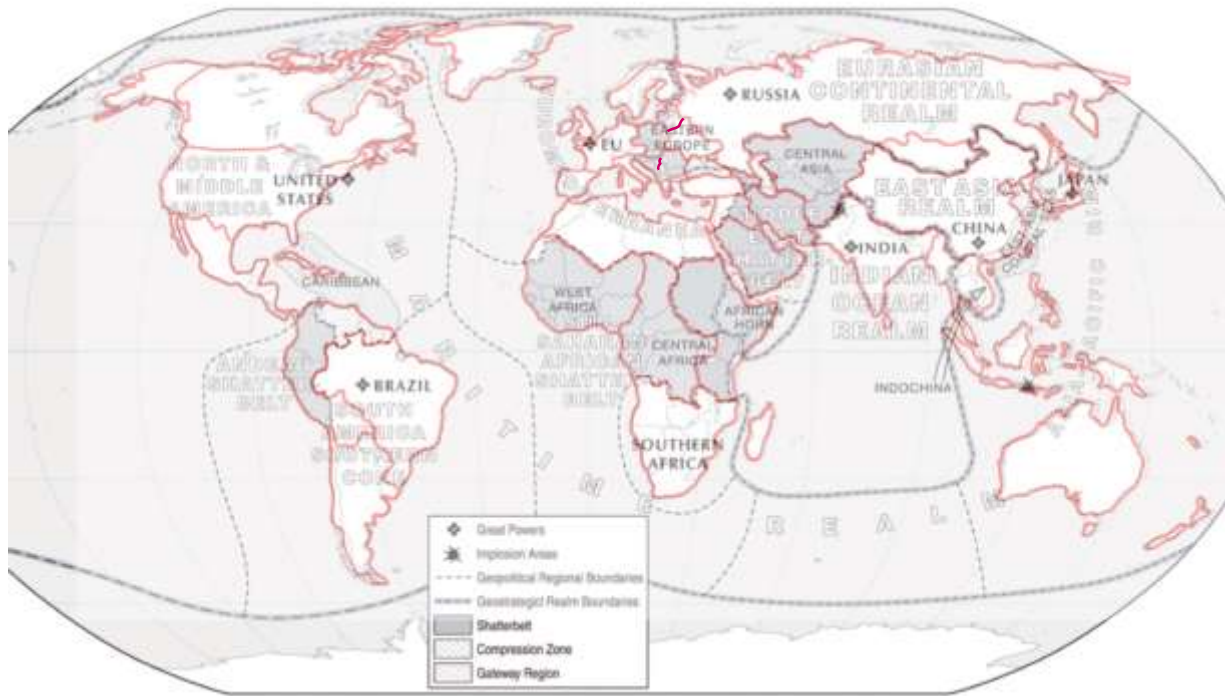


Saul Bernard Cohen's division of geopolitical space in the early 21st century based on region types and the classification of national states. The map above shows Cohen's four geostrategic realms and the geopolitical regions within them (gateway regions, shatter belts and compression zones), with seven great powers identified.

Source: Cohen, 2009

According to the Santos Theory (2006), the two 'islands' of global power are the United States and China. Quasi-global powers are Russia, India, and Brazil. Half-global power islands: European Union, the southern part of Eurasia (the area between the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea, and the Red Sea), the Arabian Peninsula, Iran, Turkey. Small islands of global power: Canada, UK, France, Germany, Japan. Quasi-small islands of global power, to whom Santos refers to as "states with great potential": Venezuela, Australia, Republic of South Africa, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia. In my opinion, the spatial system offered by Santos is inconsistent, and although Russia, India, and Brazil are regarded as quasi-global powers, Japan along with Germany and France are classified as small islands of global power.

It can be seen that in the early 21st century, several factors, players, and international actors shape the conditions of the establishment of the multipolar international order. The role, relative importance, and influence of Europe (and the European Union) in the world declines. On the other hand, the significance of China, Russia, and the Eurasian region increases. In connection with the emergence and shaping of the new world order, there is a crucial role and dawn of Eurasia. In the new phase of globalization, the territorial basis of power is replaced with the system of networks, trends, and flows. At the same time, the politics of the global world maintains the space of flows, just like the space of places related to the relations of modernity.



Breakdown of geopolitical regions

by Saul Bernard Cohen and Norbert Csizmadia

Source: Author's work based on the map in Saul Bernard Cohen's *Geopolitics: The Geography of International Relations* (2009)

Cohen's geopolitical division of space does not always take into account country borders; however, if the results are to be used in practice, such a division needs to be compatible with borders. Also, Cohen prepared his forecast for the first quarter of the 21st century (2000–2025) and did not take into consideration the new situation that emerged in the wake of the 2008 economic and financial crisis, or that the Belt and Road Initiative launched by China could (and does) redraw the geopolitical map of the world. Cohen's geopolitical division reflects the Atlantic geopolitical approach, based on the opposition between Russia and the Atlantic force field. This disregards the possibility of the emergence of a new Eurasian continent built around the cooperation between Europe and Asia, covering not only Russia but also the East Asian region as well as Europe. Cohen also distinguishes between high, medium, and low regional powers while determining the regional power centers. For example, he defines Nigeria as a high regional power, while South Korea, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela are classified as medium powers. We can see that some regional power centers may rise over time (Scandinavian countries), while others (Venezuela, Nigeria) could lose their regional influence. I also disagree with Cohen's division of 12 geopolitical regions. The geopolitical regions defined by me are more detailed. Cohen identifies 12 large regions, however, several areas, such as North and Central America or the African continent, are merged, and the same goes for the European continent. Cohen names two regions: Atlantic Europe and the Mediterranean, which also includes the Maghreb countries. I, on the other hand, examine the British Isles, Western Europe, Scandinavia, Southern Europe, and Central and Eastern Europe separately. The same is true about the regional division of Southeast Asia. In my individual research, the regions (36 in all) are analyzed in more detail, coinciding with country borders. My analysis used Cohen's geopolitical types (force field or central space, convergence zone, compression zone, gateway region), however, these were recreated in the light of the geopolitical situation that changed in recent years. The various types were determined for 36 regions, which were redefined using a special, Central and Eastern European viewpoint.

The geopolitical regions used by me are central force fields or centers. Convergence zones were included as separate units of spatial structure that are linked to the neighboring central force fields, and the majority of these are also regional powers. The role and significance of gateway regions has to be underlined. Cohen did not clearly define the importance of gateway regions, but I believe that they will gain even greater importance in the period ahead. Gateway regions, connected to central force fields, may play an especially important role in the future due to their strategic geographical location. Similar to Cohen's wording, shatter belt areas are strategically oriented regions between geopolitical force fields that are deeply divided internally. They are typically internally fragmented and often experience the competition between great powers. Compression zones are torn apart even more by internal fragmentation and the intervention of neighboring countries in the region.

GEOFUSION INPUT FACTORS
for the geopolitical regions in the 21st century
(developed by S.B. Cohen and Norbert Csizmadia)

REGIONS (SBC; NCS)		Classification by CSIZMADIA: geopolitical regions (1–36)	TYPE OF GEOPOLITICAL REGION	COUNTRIES
“Realms ” COHEN	Major global realms according to COHEN			
M A R I T I M E	NORTH AND MIDDLE AMERICA	1. US super bloc	CENTRAL FORCE FIELD	United States
		2. Caribbean	CONVERGENCE ZONE	Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Cuba, Suriname, Trinidad
		3. Canada	CONVERGENCE ZONE	Canada
		4. Mexico	CONVERGENCE ZONE	Mexico
		5. Central American land bridge	GATEWAY REGION	Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Salvador
	ANDEAN SHATTERB ELT	6. Inca America	SHATTERBELT	Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela
	SOUTH AMERICA	7. Brazil	CONVERGENCE ZONE	Brazil
		8. Latin America	CONVERGENCE ZONE	Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay
	AFRICAN SHATTERB ELT CONTINENT	9. East Africa	COMPRESSION ZONE	Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, Madagascar, Mauritius, Comoros, Seychelles
		10. West Africa	COMPRESSION ZONE	Benin, Guinea-Bissau, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Gambia, The, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Togo

		11. Central Africa	COMPRESSION ZONE	Burundi, Chad, Gabon, Cameroon, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, Rwanda, Uganda
		12. South Africa	CONVERGENCE ZONE	Angola, Botswana, Republic of South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe
		13. North Africa	SHATTERBELT	Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia
	ATLANTIC EUROPE	14. British Isles	CONVERGENCE ZONE	United Kingdom, Ireland
		15. Atlantic Europe + Austria, Switzerland	CENTRAL FORCE FIELD	Austria, Belgium, France, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland
		16. Scandinavia	CONVERGENCE ZONE	Denmark + Greenland, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden
	MEDITERRANEAN	17. Southern Europe	GATEWAY REGION	Cyprus, Greece, Malta, Italy, Portugal, Spain
		18. Asia Minor	CONVERGENCE ZONE	Turkey
		19. Persian Heartland	CONVERGENCE ZONE	Iran
		20. Middle East shatter belt	COMPRESSION ZONE	Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel (x), Jordan, Lebanon, Syria
		21. Arabian Peninsula and Gulf countries	GATEWAY REGION	Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia
	ASIA-PACIFIC RIM	22. Japan and South Korea	CENTRAL FORCE FIELD	Japan and South Korea
		23. Indonesia	GATEWAY REGION	Indonesia
		24. Australia and New Zealand	CONVERGENCE ZONE	Australia and New Zealand
	EURASIAN	RUSSIA	25. North Asia (Siberia)	CONVERGENCE ZONE
26. European Russia			CENTRAL FORCE FIELD	Russia west from the Urals and the Volga Delta
CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE		27. Caucasus region	SHATTERBELT	Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia
		28. Eastern Europe	SHATTERBELT	Belarus, Ukraine, Moldavia
		29. Balkans	GATEWAY REGION	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia
		30. Central and Eastern Europe	GATEWAY REGION	Czech Republic, Croatia, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania

	CENTRAL ASIA	31. Central Asia and Mongolia	GATEWAY REGION	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
EAST ASIAN	CHINA AND INDOCHINA	32. Chinese super bloc	CENTRAL FORCE FIELD	China
		33. Malaysia and Singapore	GATEWAY REGION	Malaysia and Singapore
		34. Pacific Islands	GATEWAY REGION	Philippines, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu
		35. Indochina	GATEWAY REGION	Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam
INDIAN OCEAN	INDIAN SUBCONTINENT	36. Indian subcontinent + Indian Ocean islands	CENTRAL FORCE FIELD	Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

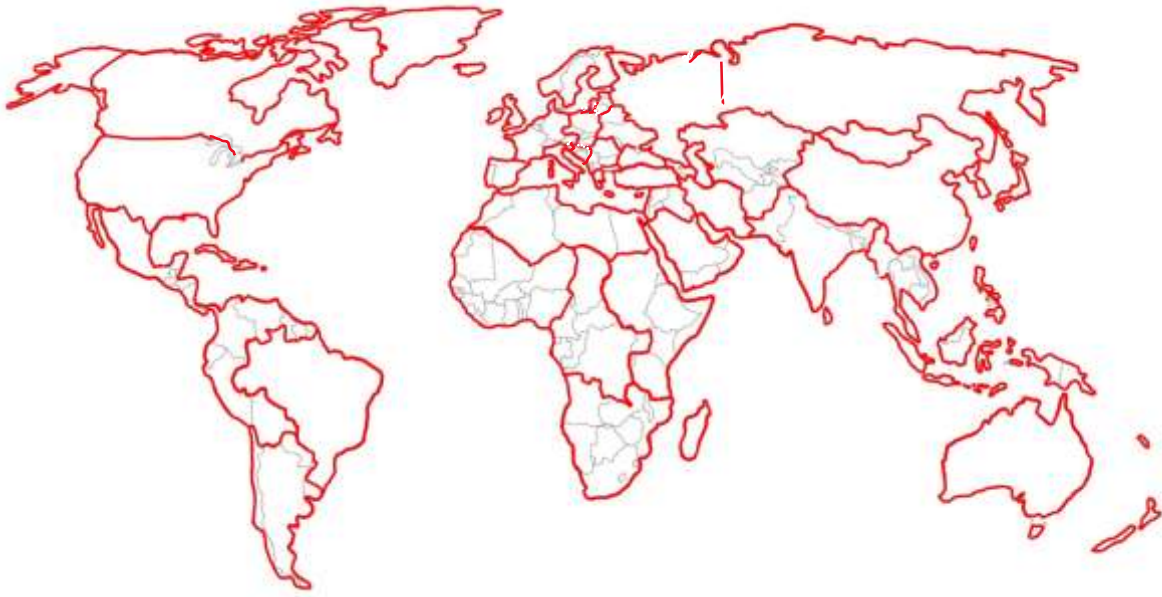
Source: Author's work, 2019

Notes:

1. Israel was included in the so-called Middle East shatter belt as a geographical unit, however, it should be regarded as a regional center and power compared the other countries in the region.
2. The financial offshore centers of the Caribbean (e.g. Bahamas) and the islands in the East Africa–Indian Ocean area (e.g. Seychelles) are important and stand out in the region, however, these were not marked on the map.
3. The Pacific Islands were referred to as a gateway region, but here the Philippines plays a major role.
4. Russia was divided into two regions (European Russia and North Asia – Siberia) and examined separately due to connectivity, and it was analyzed as a key regional great power.

A major geopolitical challenge of the 21st century is connectivity, which makes it necessary to ascertain the new world order outlined by the centers of the world economy. A baseline map comprising the above outlined 36 regions was prepared based on the structure and division of Cohen's geopolitical map for the 21st century.

The baseline map is a political world map. The region boundaries were drawn along the borders or the countries comprising the region before digitalization. A detailed grid was used to determine the density of the factors in the individual regions. Seven thematic map overlays were digitized over the baseline map, taking into account the connectivity factors (1) density of railway network, (2) density of highways, (3) air traffic, (4) population density, (5) population of global cities, (6) location and density of submarine internet cables, and (7) maritime transport routes with the location of the major ports.



Distribution of the 36 regions based on Norbert Csizmadia's analysis

Source: Author's work



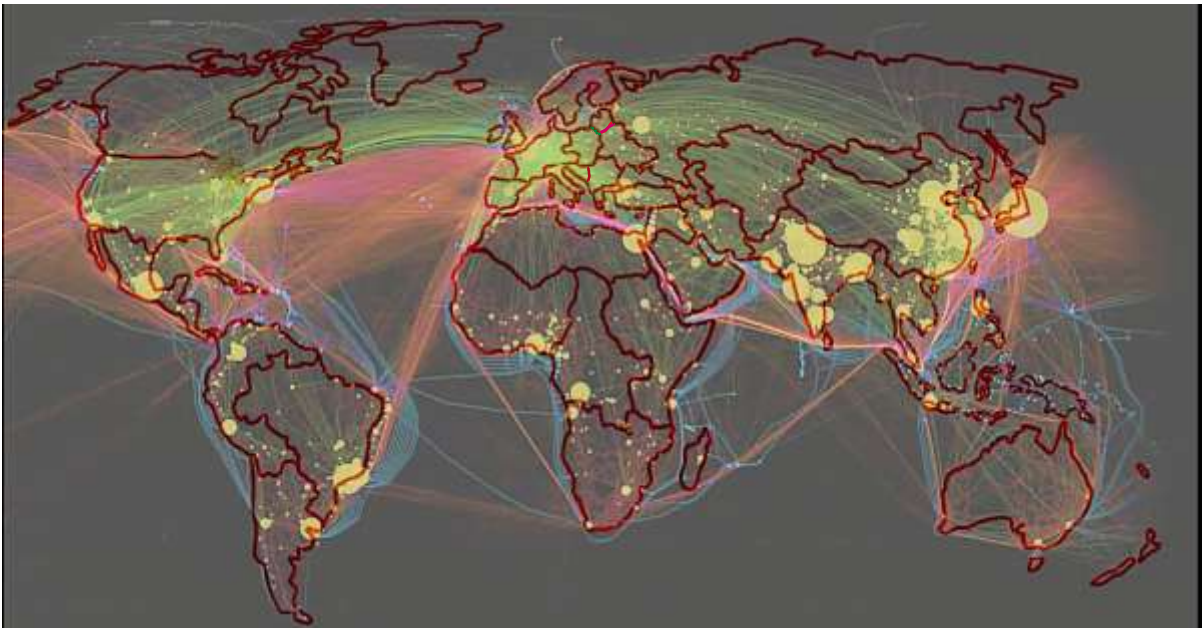
Geofusion map based on the connectivity air traffic, maritime routes, submarine internet cables

Source: Author's work based on the baseline map by ESRI – Cooper Thomas



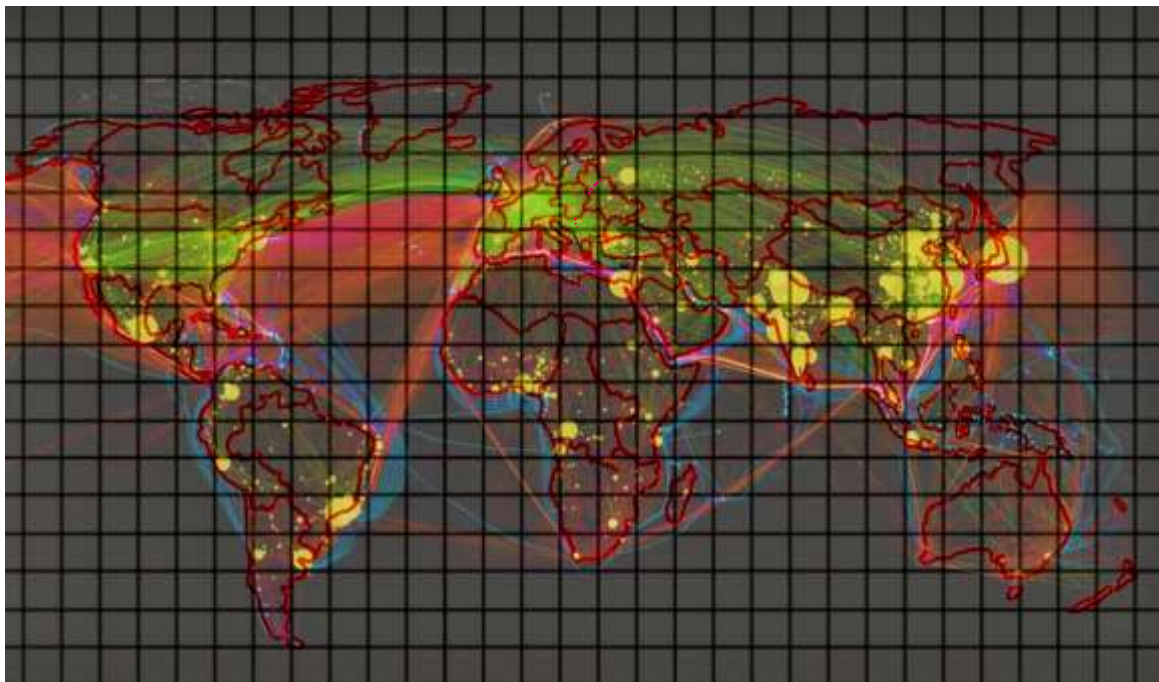
*Geofusion map based on the connectivity air traffic
with the division of the 36 geopolitical regions*

Source: Author's work based on the baseline map by ESRI – Cooper Thomas



*Geofusion map based on the connectivity air traffic, road network, maritime transport,
submarine internet cables, and population growth in metropolises,
with the division of the 36 regions*

Source: Author's work based on the baseline map by ESRI – Cooper Thomas



Geofusion map based on the connectivity air traffic, road network, maritime transport, submarine internet cables, and population growth in metropolises, with the division of the 36 regions, using a grid

Source: Author's work based on the baseline map by ESRI – Cooper Thomas

The Geofusion world maps were used to create a network of 36 regions. Then, the maps of the individual connectivity factors, employed as input rating factors, were examined. Based on this, the quantiles were used to determine the regional scores of the input rating maps from 1 to 5 in accordance with the density of their networks, by using a 15 degree grid comprising 288 cells in harmony with the latitudes and longitudes. Employing quantiles in this case is also important because if trends are sought to be determined, this method helps in identifying the reach of the power of the incomparable factors that comprise connectivity, and in ascertaining orientations. As regards the weighting of the maps, the most important point is the role of cities (5), followed by the density of flights (4), railway density (3), maritime cargo traffic (2), population density (1), and internet network (1), with a quintile-based rating. Therefore, the analysis focuses on the rating values of seven factors for the regions, with round scores of 1 to 5 (quintiles).

GEOFUSION input factors

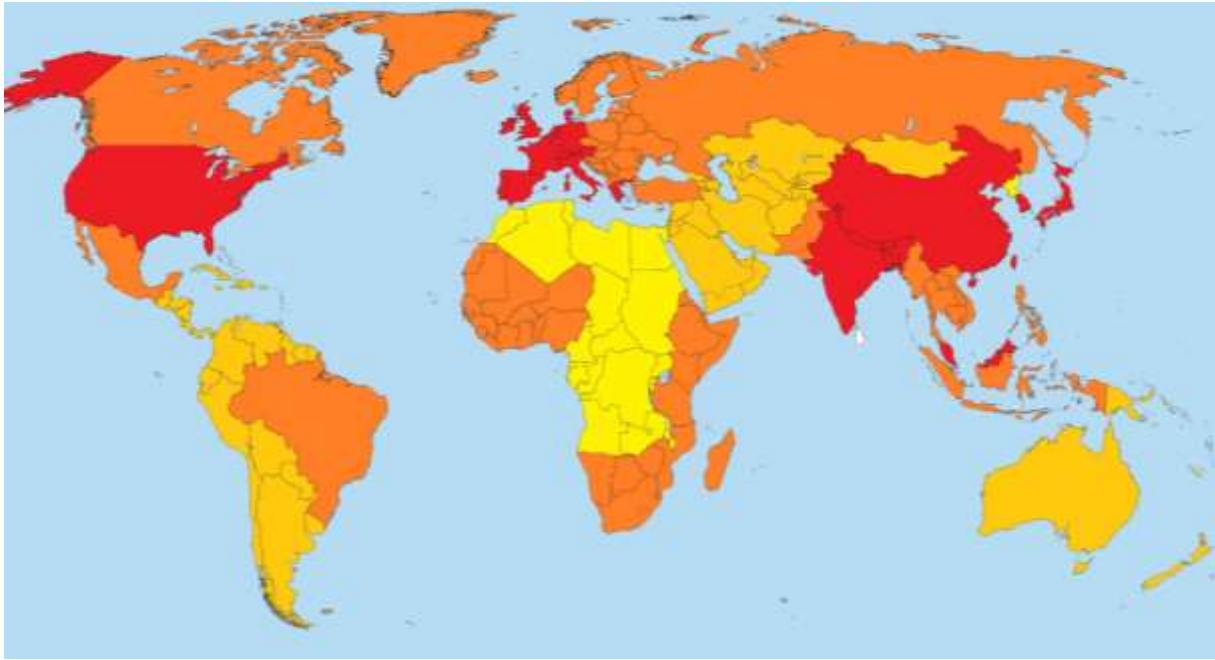
for the global regions in the 21st century
(developed by S.B. Cohen and Norbert Csizmadia)

ASSOCIATIVE RATING BY REGIONS: **5** (VERY MUCH/HIGH) **4** (MUCH/HIGH) **3** (MEDIUM) **2** (LITTLE/LOW) **1** (VERY LITTLE/LOW)

REGIONS (SBC; NCS)	Maritime cargo traffic	Flight density	Population density	Road density	Internet traffic	Metro polis	Rail density	TO- TAL	Average
US super bloc	5	5	2	5	5	4	4	30	4.28
Caribbean	4	3	3	5	5	2	2	24	3.43

Canada	2	3	1	2	3	1	3	15	2.14
Mexico	1	2	3	3	1	4	2	16	2.28
Central American land bridge	4	2	2	4	4	3	3	22	3.14
Inca America	1	2	2	2	2	3	1	13	1.86
Brazil	2	3	1	2	2	3	4	17	2.42
Latin America	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	13	1.86
East Africa	1	2	4	2	2	2	1	14	2.00
West Africa	1	1	4	3	2	3	1	15	2.14
Central Africa	1	2	3	2	1	2	1	12	1.71
South Africa	2	3	3	4	1	2	2	17	2.42
North Africa	2	2	2	2	3	1	1	13	1.86
British Isles	4	5	3	5	5	4	5	31	4.43
Atlantic Europe + Austria, Switzerland	3	5	4	5	5	5	5	32	4.57
Scandinavia	4	4	2	5	4	1	3	23	3.28
Southern Europe	4	5	3	5	4	3	4	28	4.00
Asia Minor	1	4	3	4	2	4	3	21	3.00
Persian Heartland	1	3	3	2	3	2	2	16	2.28
Middle East shatter belt	1	4	4	2	2	3	2	18	2.57
Arabian Peninsula and Gulf countries	3	3	2	2	3	2	1	16	2.28
Japan and South Korea	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	31	4.43
Indonesia	3	3	4	4	5	2	2	23	3.28
Australia and New Zealand	2	3	1	3	4	1	3	17	2.42
North Asia (Siberia)	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	10	1.43
European Russia	1	3	2	4	1	3	4	18	2.57
Caucasus region	1	3	2	5	1	3	2	17	2.42
Eastern Europe	1	3	2	5	2	3	4	20	2.86
Balkans	1	4	2	5	1	3	4	20	2.86
Central and Eastern Europe	1	4	2	5	1	3	5	21	3.00
Central Asia and Mongolia	1	2	2	4	1	1	2	13	1.86
Chinese super bloc	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	30	4.29
Malaysia and Singapore	5	5	3	4	5	5	4	31	4.43
Pacific Islands	2	2	4	4	4	1	1	18	2.57
Indochina	2	3	3	5	2	4	2	22	3.14
Indian subcontinent + Indian Ocean islands	3	3	5	5	3	5	4	28	4.00

Source: Author's work, 2019



Connectivity factors and Geofusion results classified by the average of the factors (very dense, high, medium, low, and low density categories)

Legend: red means very high density, orange means high, light orange means medium and low density, yellow means very low density

Source: Author's work, 2019

Four regions stand out in terms of connectivity: North America, Europe (Western Europe), China, and Southeast Asia as well as the Indian subcontinent. The analysis has proven the significance of the global urban hubs within regions and countries. Cooperation links and connections between regions are especially important, and this is the most obvious in the case of air traffic links, but it can also be seen in overland traffic (highways and railway networks). While ties are stronger on the Eurasian continent and North America, power centers are dispersed wide apart in Latin America, Africa, and Australia (Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Sydney). Geographical fragmentation is also crucial. While there are vast expanses of land north of the Eurasian mountains, the southern areas are divided by peninsulas and islands (Arabian Peninsula, Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia), which are mainly connected by sea and air links.

The Geofusion method based on connectivity factors (i.e. the global urban hubs and the significance of nation states as well as the economic force fields that emerged based on connectivity factors) can be used to determine the geopolitical and geo-economic force fields. This is a brand new research method under the name of Geofusion. It has to be noted that in today's world, hierarchical spatial systems (global cities, nation states, geopolitical regions) need to be examined together to determine the force fields, and the Geofusion approach (i.e. the simultaneous analysis of connectivity factors, the nation state level, and hubs) helps precisely in this.

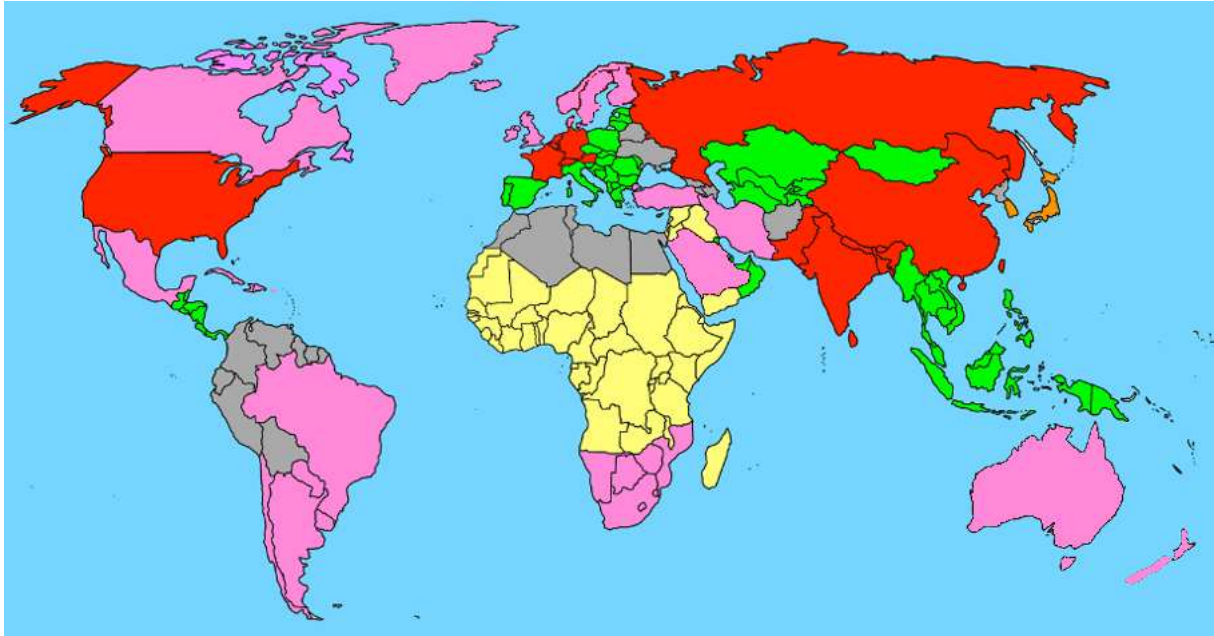
As regards the classification based on nation states or countries, Max Weber defines power as the capacity to force someone else to do something that the person would otherwise fail to do of their own accord. Power is any chance within a social relation to impose one's will also

against the resistance of others, independently of what gives rise to this chance. Pursuant to this, power in international relations and geopolitics means the capacity of a state to change the behavior of another state. Superpowers are states that can promote their interests all over the world through their economic, military, and soft power, thereby exerting considerable influence over global events. Regional powers are the states that can promote their interests in their geographical region through their economic, military, and soft (cultural) power, thereby exerting considerable influence over the life of the region. In the multipolar international order, several states have a major role.

By taking into account the great powers and regional powers presented before at the geopolitical thinkers (Cohen, Brzezinski, Kissinger, Kennedy, Huntington, Santos), and the country rankings based on my own research integrated into indicators built on geographical factors, as well as the densities derived from the connectivity factors, the following results were obtained. According to the maps prepared on the basis of the analysis and the earlier geopolitical structure within the 36 regional territorial units:

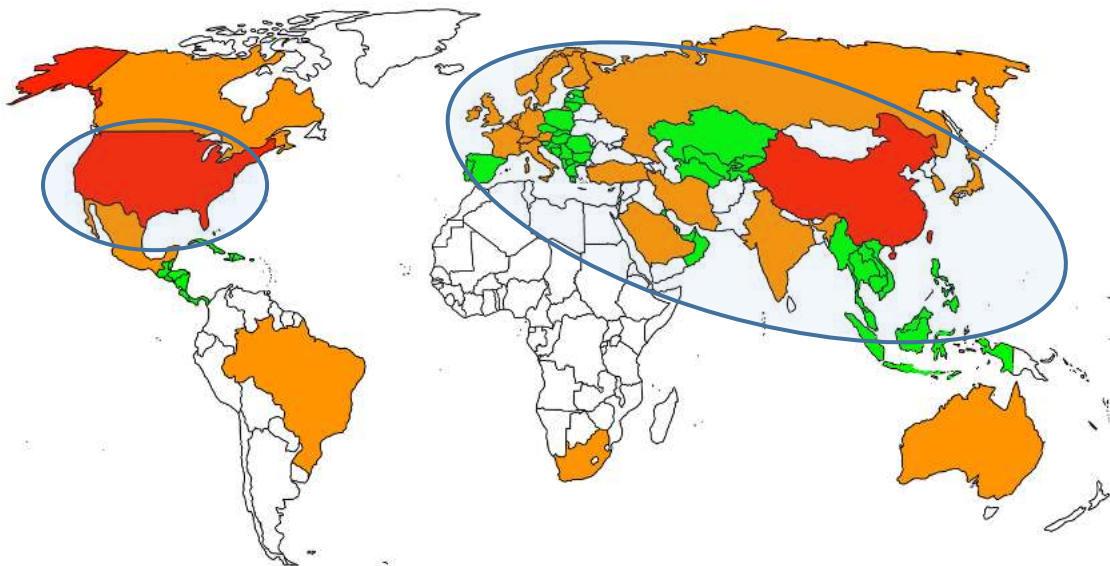
- There are two (large) global geopolitical force fields, namely America and Eurasia, with two main great powers acting as geopolitical leaders; these are China and the United States (which are also referred to as the G2 countries).
- The analysis identified 16 regional powers: Russia, India, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Israel, Germany, France, UK, Italy, Scandinavia, Brazil, and Republic of South Africa.
- Among geopolitical regions (as regional force fields), gateway regions will be especially key in the future, largely owing to transportation and trade. Six major gateway regions were identified by the analysis: Southeast Asia's ASEAN countries, Central Asia's countries, Persian Gulf countries, Southern Europe, Central and Eastern Europe (the countries that joined the 17+1 Initiative) and Central America.
- 64 global urban power centers were determined, which are located in nation states and are important parts and hubs of the geopolitical force fields. Out of the 64 global urban hubs, 5 are in Latin America, 3 are in Africa, 3 are in Australia, 12 are in North America, and 41 are on the Eurasian continent (with 20 in Asia and 21 in Europe).

The results obtained with the Geofusion method show that in the multipolar world order, not only countries have geopolitical and geo-economic significance (although they play a central role), but so do the territories arising from regional cooperation, economic and geostrategic power centers as well as global hubs and cities, which take on new importance owing to connectivity. The types of geopolitical regions are broken down into central force fields, gateway regions, convergence zones, shatter belts and compression zones.



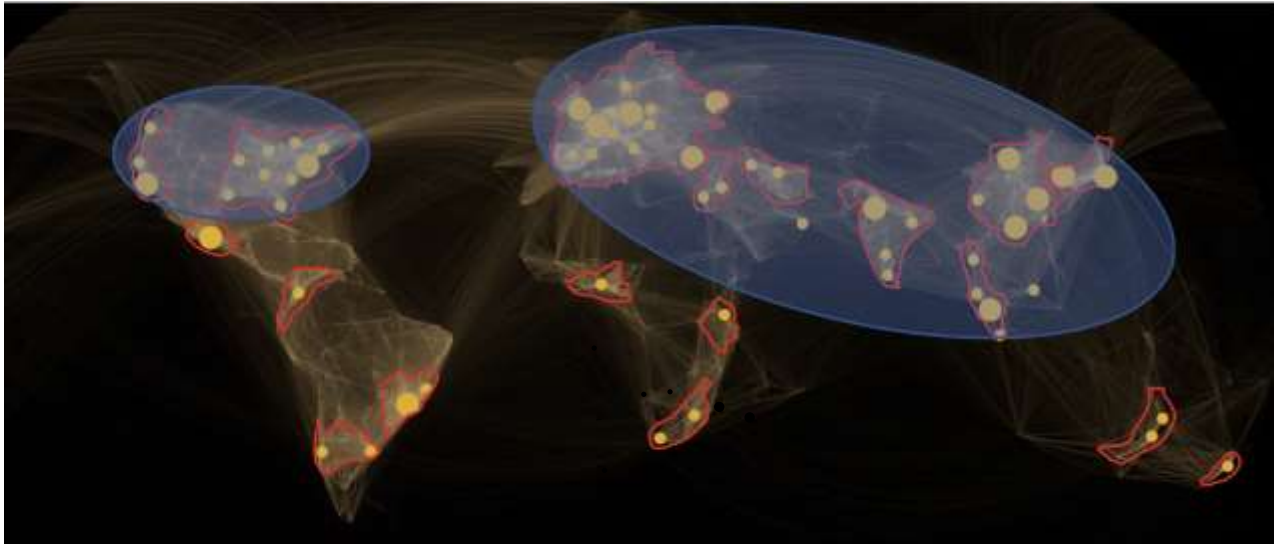
Types of geopolitical regions according to Norbert Csizmadia
 Legend: red – central force field, pink – convergence zone, green – gateway region, yellow – compression zone, gray – shatter belt

Source: Author's work, 2019



Geopolitical players and actors classified by global regions and geopolitical force fields according to Norbert Csizmadia
 Legend: Red – global geopolitical power, orange – regional power, red – gateway region, as well as the American and Eurasian geopolitical force field

Source: Author's work, 2019



Geo-economic force fields by regions

Legend: blue – global geopolitical force field: American force field, Eurasian force field, red – major geopolitical regions and centers based on connectivity, yellow – hubs in the network, global cities

Source: Author's work

3.4.4. The new Eurasia

(Norbert Csizmadia)

In the new, 21st century world order, a cohesive Eurasia will be of key importance. In an institutional approach, or from a sort of political geographic perspective, the various global institutions and international organizations refer to different groups of countries when talking about Eurasia. The World Bank considers Eurasia to comprise the 12 former members of the Soviet Union, namely: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Armenia, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. However, in its operating activities, it essentially uses a Europe-and-Near-Asia demarcation. In the OECD's division, Eurasia consists of 13 countries: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Armenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. This is a much narrower geographical framework than the geological or physical geography approach would suggest. Although the UN also uses the term Eurasia, the organization's territorial division related to its operation uses Europe and Central Asia, with 18 countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, Macedonia, Turkey. The IMF does not use the term Eurasia in the territorial division related to its activities. For the IMF, Europe is a separate region, Asia is in the same territorial unit as the Pacific, while Central Asia and the Middle East are also treated as a single units.

Among the geopolitical and geostrategic concepts related to Eurasia, Halford Mackinder's ideas about this territory are worth mentioning. He devised several theories in his works, explaining the impact of geography on world politics and world events. The most important ones are the Pivot, the Heartland, and the Lena-land theories. These successive theories were revised in the light of current events in world politics focused on Eurasia, which he refers to using various names (Pivot Area, Heartland) in his different works. According to Mackinder's theories, the power wielded over Eurasia is the key to securing a world power position. In other words, who

rules East-Europe commands the Heartland; who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island; who rules the World-Island commands the World. In his book, *The Grand Chessboard*, the Polish-born American geostrategist, Zbigniew Brzezinski argued that Eurasia is the globe's largest continent and is geopolitically axial. A power that dominates Eurasia would control two of the world's three most advanced and economically productive regions. A mere glance at the map also suggests that control over Eurasia would almost automatically entail Africa's subordination. About 75 percent of the world's population live in Eurasia, and most of the world's physical wealth is there as well, both in its enterprises and underneath its soil. After the United States, the next six largest economies and the next six biggest spenders on military weaponry are located in Eurasia. All but one of the world's overt nuclear powers and all but one of the covert ones are located in Eurasia. The world's two most populous aspirants to regional hegemony and global influence are Eurasian. In his *Strategic Vision*, Brzezinski maintains these claims, and underlines that the US needs to develop a geostrategy *vis-à-vis* the politically newly active Eurasia, since this is the region posing the most direct political threat to America's global position, and to the global geopolitical stability, too.

Geostrategy should treat Eurasia as a single entity. Eurasia is a term originally used in physical geography and geology, referring to the continent comprising Europe and Asia. Regarding its geological history, it has to be noted that Eurasia became a separate continent about 400 million years ago. It covers approximately 55 million square kilometers, or around 36.2% of Earth's surface. About two-thirds of the world's population, over 5 billion people, live there. In plate tectonic terms, Eurasia does not only mean the land areas of Europe and Asia, but also the Eurasian Plate, which is one of the seven major plates comprising the lithosphere, and it extends to the eastern part of the northern Atlantic Ocean, the Arctic Ocean, and the Sea of Japan. The Eurasian plate is the largest contiguous landmass on Earth. In the Cenozoic Era, when smaller plates from the south (the Arabian and Indian Plates) joined Eurasia, the longest East–West mountain system was created, stretching from the Pyrenees to the Himalayas, which is sometimes called the Eurasian Mountain System.

Eurasia is a 9000 km long contiguous unit of physical geography. On the current geographical map that evolved after the last ice age, if we take a look at the band that stretches from the Carpathian Basin between the 40 and 50 degrees north latitudes to the Pacific Ocean, we can see that a so-called steppe belt extends for over 9000 kilometers. From a geological and physical geography perspective, there is a homogenous area here spread out over 20–24 million square kilometers. This could be traversed, and it became the most important transport route, the so-called Steppe Route, which is a vast expanse with fertile soil and inter-fluvial areas, lying in the temperate and subtropical climates. For thousands of years, this represented a link to the steady stream of East–West traffic on the ancient Silk Road. The ancient Silk Road's main route ran through the steppe between China and the Carpathian Basin. The main thoroughfare of the ancient Silk Road stretched between the Carpathian Basin and China. This ancient Silk Road was the place where the most important innovations and technologies of the age, advanced agriculture, irrigated cultivation, metalwork, and pottery developed. It was also the main road for contemporary philosophy. An ancient, naturalistic worldview prevailed from the Carpathian Basin to China. There were four major periods in the history of the Silk Road: a Paleolithic Silk Road 40 000 years ago, a Prehistoric Silk Road 7000 years ago, an Ancient and Middle Age Silk Road that existed between the 2nd century BC and the 17th century, and the New Silk Road in the 21st century.

China has been building an 'ecological' civilization since 2007, and this organic thinking is the continuation of ancient Chinese philosophy and ancient Eurasian knowledge in the 21st century.

The construction of the New Silk Road would provide even greater benefits to the peoples that live around it. This could lead to the rise of Eurasia. The ecological civilization could become more efficient than modern civilization if it establishes its scientific foundations, built on local features and creating a unique culture. Just as during the Renaissance Europe's primacy in the world was enabled by the revival of the ancient Greek knowledge, for Eurasia the key could be to return to an even higher-quality body of knowledge and morals, which could be a new geocivilization. The ancient worldview, knowledge, philosophical system, religion, folk music, folk tales, and common traditions of the Silk Road's peoples reflects an ecological value system, and a deeper understanding of the ancient high culture may facilitate the cultural and social progress of the peoples in the area and the advent of a New Renaissance.

History has cycles, whether we talk about the 60 year Kondratiev waves, 100 year cycles or 250 or 500 year large cycles (solar cycles), or even longer ones lasting 2200 years. If we examine how the civilizational ages changed during the course of history, we see a shift from the East to the West. First the river valley civilizations rose: the Chinese between the Yellow and the Blue River, the Indus Valley Civilization, the Mesopotamian civilization near the Tigris – Euphrates river system, and the Egyptian civilization along the Nile. It was followed by the rise of the peoples in the European Mediterranean in ancient Greece and the Roman Empire. In the mid-5th century BC, economic development moved from the seas to land, heralding the rise of Europe, Asia, and the city-states. The Silk Road as a trade route flourished in the 11–15th centuries. In the Late Renaissance, the role of sailing increased, just like the discovery of new territories and the search for raw materials (especially gold), and this ushered in the Age of Geographic Discovery. Starting from 1492 and the great geographical discoveries, and especially after Vasco da Gama's journey, the Atlantic period began that lasted for another 500 years. The countries near the ocean rose, while landlocked mainland territories were increasingly overshadowed. The various trading companies, including Portuguese and Spanish companies first, which were later followed by their Dutch, French, and British counterparts, colonized more and more territories in East Asia, where China and Asia's economy started their centuries-long decline as opium spread and was traded widely. The 19th century was clearly the age of the British Empire, and the 20th century was that of the US. Besides the Atlantic age, a Pacific era was also starting to gain traction. This lasted until the 2000s, when the eastern part of Asia embarked on a rapid rise, and 2013 marked the beginning of another mainland age, the age of Eurasia. In this new world order, mainland gateways are important again, and the middle is rising again.

A shift to the East ensued in the changing center of gravity of the global economy. In his article *The Global Economy's Shifting Centre of Gravity* published in 2011, Danny Quah, professor at the London School of Economics and at the National University of Singapore, models the change in the world economy's center of gravity on Earth's surface, based on average economic activity. For his calculations, he identified and used the total GDP produced on Earth, the world's agglomerations of over 1 million people, and rural centers. According to these calculations, the world economy's center of gravity was in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean in 1980, on the same longitude as Izmir and Minsk. The change clearly reflects the economic growth of East Asia and China, the main reason behind the shift. Having estimated the economic output of the almost 700 locations under review, the author concluded that the center of gravity would be in China by 2020. Observed from Earth's surface, this would represent a shift of 9300 kilometers relative to 1980. Therefore, the countries that were considered developed and wealthy in the past century have to open up to the East on the issues related to the world economy and global governance. Moreover, many existing global issues will probably remain dominant in the 21st century. Examples include ensuring the continued growth

of the global economy; however, on other issues change is expected, whether regarding political influence or military intervention.

The world became European in the 19th century, it was Americanized in the 20th, and now, in the 21st, it will become irreversibly Asian. This is actually a multi-civilizational order that connects five billion people through trade, finance, and infrastructure networks, amounting to 40% of global GDP. China will not be the sole leader in this system, because Asia will return to the stable multipolar order that existed well before the European colonialization and American dominance, therefore India and Southeast Asia will become major economic and strategic centers. Asia's growing muscle will reshape business and cultural life in North America, Europe, South America, and Africa. Nevertheless, add to this that the two most important words in this new, multipolar world order will be connectivity and complexity, and the two strongest global trade areas will be Europe and Asia, and we can say that in terms of connectivity, it is no longer just Asia's century, it is Eurasia's.

In *The Dawn of Eurasia* Bruno Maçães also argues that this age will not be Asia's or Europe's, it will clearly be Eurasia's. Maçães believes that the dissolution of the bipolar world order not only entailed the reunification of a previously divided Europe, it also brought the old continent closer to Asia, in which China played a crucial role. Nowadays, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) creates a new geographical entity, Eurasia, stretching from Lisbon to Shanghai and Jakarta, through infrastructure investments and closer economic cooperation. The most original observation in connection with Eurasia's new role came from Robert D. Kaplan in his *Return of Marco Polo's*. He claims that Eurasia's new connections in the form of roads, railways, pipelines, and fiber-optic cables mean that the old territorial categories, such Central, East or South Asia are less and less meaningful as geopolitical concepts.

Thanks to the influence of globalization, technological progress, and geography, Eurasia will become a changing, malleable but still distinct unit. Eurasia will take on a meaning it has never had before. Kaplan argues that the more Europe is weakened, the stronger Eurasia gets. Eurasia is connected by infrastructure and in trade and finance. This world is familiar to Marco Polo, the 13th century traveler, just as suggested by the book's title. China's grand strategy is the realization that trade is a better weapon than a sword, in the vein of *Pax Mongolica*, which was able to rule the entire multicultural Eurasia. Sovereignities will multiply, and there will be flourishing city-states, such as Singapore and Dubai, or Bukhara and Samarkand in Marco Polo's time. And what worked once, can be repeated again.

A new Eurasia has emerged like a New Renaissance, a new Chinese Renaissance that starts with the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative. According to the Center for Technology Innovation and Strategy Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the so-called hard and soft technologies complement each other, just as yin and yang do in Chinese philosophy and thinking. The most important objective of global civilization is the shift to sustainable development and growth by using green technologies, artificial intelligence, and production technologies. This can engender the Great Civilization, based on the Chinese ideas about ecological civilization.

3.4.5. The Belt and Road

(Norbert Csizmadia)

From an economic, geostrategic, and geopolitical perspective, the most important factor in creating the 21st century Eurasia is China's long-term development plan, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) or the New Silk Road Program. It was announced by China and Kazakhstan in 2013. The most important objective of the Belt and Road Initiative is to move the world economy's axis back from the oceans to land, and restore and reinforce Eurasia's old economic, political, and cultural role. In the end, the program is actually a complex network that can be expanded flexibly in both time and space. It is an alliance of state-owned and economic institutions and cities, a peaceful rise based on cooperation and a network of win-win relationships. The New Silk road connects the players who constitute the new phase of globalization and represent 40% of global GDP and 70% of the Earth's population. The One Belt, One Road Initiative (BRI) heralds infrastructural connection, political coordination, the removal of trade barriers, financial integration, and human development. Upon its announcement, the Belt and Road Initiative was joined by 64 countries, and until the spring of 2019, 125 countries and 29 international organizations of the world had signed and started implementing 170 agreements, with a total amount of USD 1000 billion.

The Belt and Road Initiative can be summarized in six points. (1) Concept and initiative. (2) Wings: the land and the sea route, namely the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. (3) The principles built in the interest of everyone, by everyone, for everyone. (4) Keywords: at the macro level: connectivity, strategic synergy, capacity building; at the level of cooperation common development of the markets; at the operational level business governance, market operations, government services, international standards. (5) Directions that are also the five main goals of connectivity: connecting politics, infrastructure, trade, finance, and interpersonal relationships; and this is realized through (6) i.e. economic corridors.

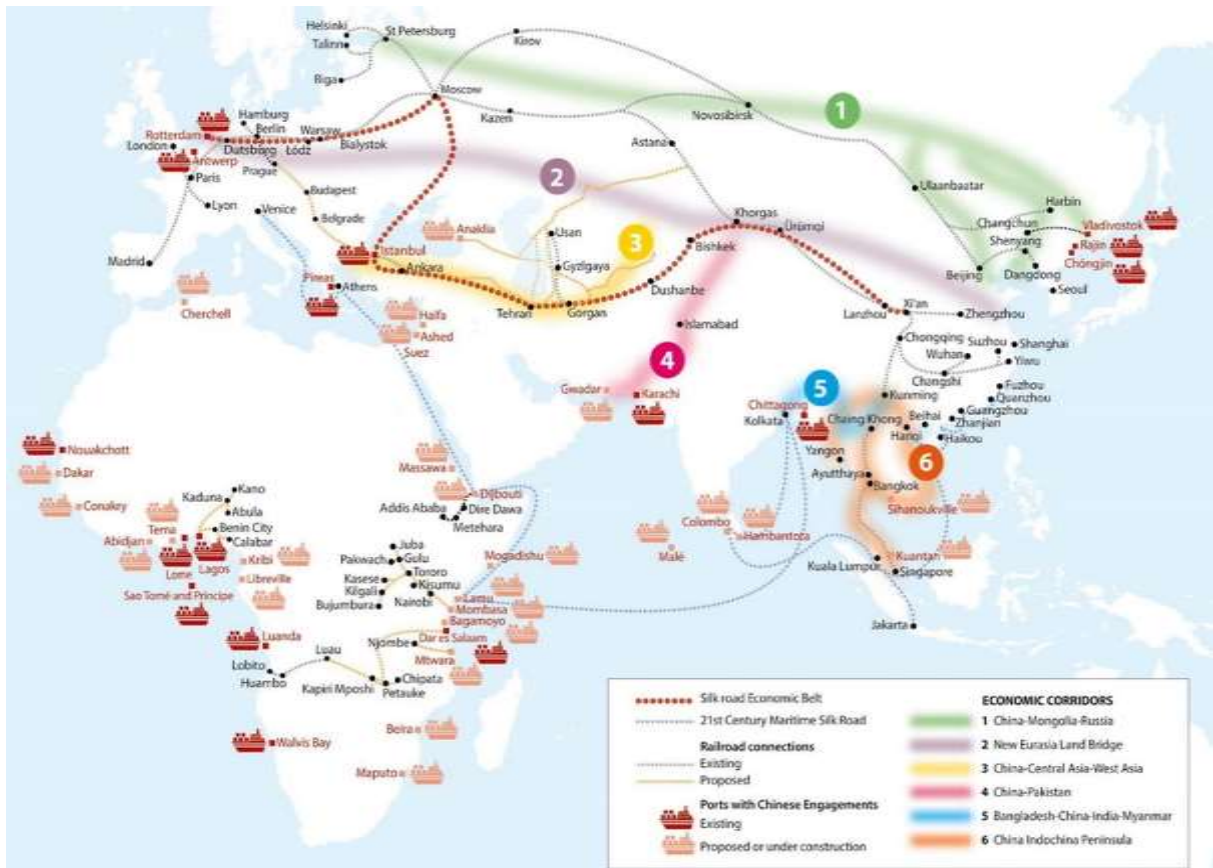
The Belt and Road Initiative is the most important geostrategic program of the 21st century, and also the largest investment in history. It is a coherent network of maritime routes and land-based economic corridors. Among the latter, the most important one is the New Eurasia Land Bridge Economic Corridor, connecting 108 cities. 14 000 trains run between the main cities of China and Europe each year, transporting over 1.1 million tons of goods in containers. More than 600 projects have been realized since the announcement of the plan, including 41 pipelines, 203 bridge and highway developments, and 199 power plants; new railway lines are being constructed, and in early 2019, 12 new port developments began in Europe. The Belt and Road Initiative includes three main overland routes and three main maritime roads as well as six major development zones.

The overland component of the Belt and Road Initiative has three main routes:

1. the route connecting China to Europe through Central Asia and Russia;
2. the route connecting China to the Middle East through Central Asia;
3. the route connecting China to South and Southeast Asia (the countries near the Indian Ocean).

The maritime component of the Belt and Road Initiative has three main roads:

1. the maritime road connecting China to Europe through the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean;
2. the maritime road connecting China to the Pacific region through the South China Sea;
3. the maritime road connecting China to Europe through the Polar Ocean.



The economic routes and development zones of the Belt and Road Initiative

Source: Merics, 2017

The six main routes are complemented by six major economic corridors:

1. The three countries participating in the China–Mongolia–Russia economic corridor signed an agreement at a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization held in Dushanbe, on strengthening the tripartite cooperation in the future. They plan to renovate the Russia railway lines in the region and establish the so-called New Mongolian Steppe Route under this agreement.
2. The New Eurasia Land Bridge economic corridor is centered around a railway line running from Lianyungang in the Jiangsu province along the Yellow Sea to Alashankou in Xinjiang province in Inner China. This city lies near the Dzungarian Gate, the most important border crossing between Kazakhstan and China, which was one of the main mountain passes used by nomadic tribes during the Migration Period. The Western endpoint of the development zone is the port of Rotterdam in the Netherlands, and China will build direct railway transport routes in this belt between Chongqing and Duisburg, Wuhan and Mělník and Pardubice in the Czech Republic, Chengdu and Łódź, Poland, and Zhengzhou and Hamburg.
3. The China–Central Asia–West Asia economic corridor connects China with Turkey through five countries in Central Asia as well as Iran. Within the framework of this cooperation, China signed a partnership agreement with five countries in Central Asia that will harmonize their national development strategies with the objectives of the New Silk Road Economic Program.
4. The main aim of the China–Pakistan economic corridor is to connect Xinjiang province in Inner China to the port of Gwadar, Pakistan through railways lines and roads.

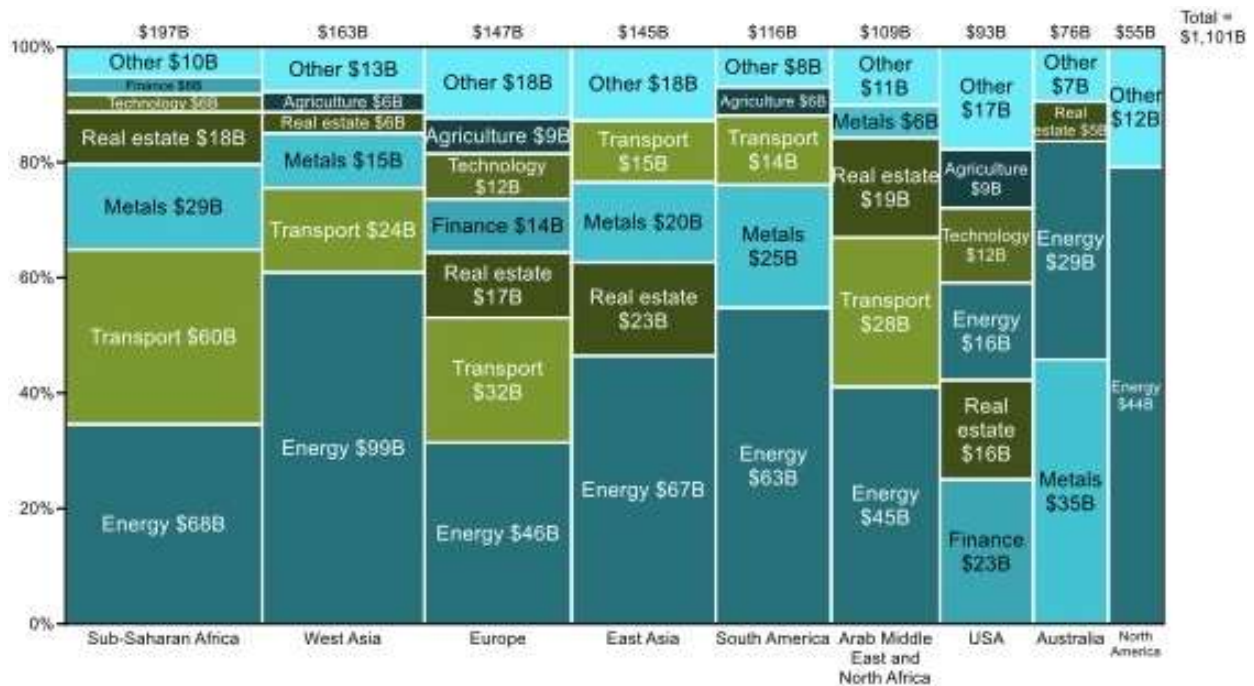
5. Regarding the Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar economic corridor, China signed a common development agreement with India in 2013, which was extended to Bangladesh and Myanmar.

6. In the China–Indochina economic corridor, China signed a new partnership agreement with five countries on the Indochinese Peninsula. This is also coordinated with the so-called Greater Mekong Sub-region Economic Cooperation Program. Under these programs, several railway lines and roads are planned to be constructed.

A geopolitical examination of the routes shows that they hold the potential of establishing a new Eurasian force field in the 21st century. In fact, this presents a unique, unprecedented chance to the countries along the route at developing their infrastructure. The funds for this enormous infrastructure development are provided by Asia mainly through the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which was established at China's initiative and started operating in 2016. It currently has 77 members, and Hungary joined in 2017. In connection with the Belt and Road Initiative, the various available data are inconsistent on the number of investment projects and their value as well. At any rate, the BRI is characterized by investments amounting to over USD1000 billion, more than 250 000 new jobs, almost 600 infrastructure investment projects, and a multitude of energy centers, power plants, railway lines, roads, and pipelines. The past decade also saw major investments. China's deliberate planning and thinking has produced a 21st-century global Silk Road that surpasses even the original one, and it has enlaced the whole planet since the early 2000s.

China makes huge investments all over the world, in almost all economic segments, including agriculture, finance, energy, transportation, metal ore production and processing, and real estate brokerage. Africa has benefitted the most from this, and the majority of the Chinese investments, typically amounting to billions of dollars, were related to the energy sector (Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Uganda). Investments in the transportation sector are also substantial (Algeria, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Libya). Metal ore production is also a major activity on the continent (Guinea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sierra Leone). In Asia, at China's neighbors, the number of investments in the energy sector stands out (Afghanistan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Laos, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Singapore, Turkmenistan, and Vietnam). In addition, metal ore production is significant as well (Afghanistan, Indonesia). In North and South America, the energy sector dominates, too (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Ecuador, and the United States). The largest Chinese investment was made in Canada. The Chinese CNOOC company acquired the Canadian Nexen oil and gas production firm for over USD 15 billion. Metal ore is also produced in huge volumes on that continent (Brazil, Chile, and Peru). Venezuela has received a massive amount for its transportation sector, and so did the United States for its financial sector, and the agricultural sector has also attracted billions of dollars in Chinese investment. Since 2012, Chinese investments have accounted for 50% of all foreign investment. In 2014 alone, China invested more than USD 14 billion in the United States.

The energy sector also dominates in Europe (Italy, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Switzerland). On the other hand, investments in the transportation sector (Greece, Hungary, Sweden); finance (Belgium, Germany); agriculture (Netherlands, Russia); and the real estate sector (Hungary, Ukraine) are increasingly important. On the continent of Australia and Oceania, metal ore production towers above everything else. The Chinese Chinalco company invested USD 12.8 billion in the Australian Rio Tinto company, engaged in bauxite mining and aluminum smelting. Australia has also received large investments from China in its energy sector.



Chinese investments in regional distribution and sectoral breakdown

Source: American Enterprise Institute, Graphic design: MekkoGraphics

As the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) developed, China's global project has expanded even further. The Digital, Green, Golden, and Arctic Silk Road now form an integral part of the BRI. Due to its extension to Latin American and African countries, the initiative is increasingly a driver behind megaregional integrations. The international community frequently voices concerns regarding the Belt and Road Initiative's sustainability, environmental awareness, transparency, and openness. Therefore, at the 2019 Belt and Road Forum in Beijing, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced the establishment of a BRI that endeavors to be of high quality, open, green, clean, transparent, and inclusive. China assigns great importance to developments in innovation, artificial intelligence (AI), and science and technology (R&D), as well the optimization and modernization of industry and the improvement of productivity. Also, the financial sector needs to be developed to high standards, with a special focus on enhancing financial services and preventing financial risks.

In 2017, China motioned at the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation that an international coalition be established that seeks to develop the BRI in a green manner (Green Silk Road). The green development needs to take into account cyclical and sustainable development and low carbon dioxide emissions. President Xi also proposed to launch a reporting platform concentrating on ecology and environmental protection. The infrastructural and transportation cooperation facilitates the uptick in trade among BRI countries, which is a boon to economic relations as well consumers. Thanks to the new or renovated trade routes, consumers have access to a wider range of products and services as well as an increasing number of jobs on account of the improving connectivity. The latter has a positive effect not only on infrastructure development but also on tourism, which also helps in understanding other people's culture and improving people-to-people (p2p) connections.

Tourism might be further boosted by establishing new, direct flights and the expansion of visa agreements. China has entered into a reciprocal visa-free travel regime with 57 countries, and simplified visa procedures for another 15 countries. In 2018, the number of outbound Chinese tourists was 150 million, while 30.54 million people arrived in the country from all over the world. Further bolstering tourism not only improve cultural ties but also provides economic

benefits for the BRI countries. The Belt and Road Initiative places great emphasis on improving cultural and people-to-people relations. Cultural cooperation is realized in increasingly diverse ways: art, music and film festivals, exhibitions, book fairs, and media content created in international cooperation help people familiarize themselves with other cultures. Cooperation also provides several benefits in medicine for the population of BRI countries. China has signed healthcare partnership agreements with 56 BRI countries. Education is also an important segment of BRI cooperation: due to the scholarships established by China, young generations have more and more opportunities to gain first-hand experience about the country, and Chinese students have an increasingly active presence abroad, including Hungary. China has signed agreements with 24 countries on the mutual recognition of higher education diplomas. An important example for the strengthening cultural ties is the growing number of Confucius Institutes around the globe. Thanks to scientific and technological cooperation, BRI countries can benefit from the advantages offered by innovative solutions, in which the FinTech sector dominates.

3.4.6. The rise of Eastern Central Europe and Hungary (Norbert Csizmadia)

In the Eurasian age, owing to the increasing importance of transcontinental cooperation, Hungary and the Central and Eastern European region have become key in 21st century geopolitics, providing a link between Europe and Asia. An excellent platform for the cooperation mechanism between the Central and Eastern European region and China is the V4 alliance, and the 16+1 (or, more precisely, 17+1 after Greece joined) group serves the same purpose by promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

In 2017, Budapest hosted the 16+1 summit, and in 2018, the city hosted the 16+1 central bank governors' meeting. In 2018, a joint MBA program was launched in a cooperation between the Fudan University, Shanghai, the central bank of Hungary and the Corvinus University of Budapest. Hungary's opening up to the East is closely aligned with the Belt and Road Initiative.

In the near future, the completion of the currently constructed Budapest–Belgrade railway line could further boost trade between Hungary and China, and Hungary may become a logistics hub for the transport of goods from China to Western Europe. Also, a sector of the Trieste port rented by Hungary also expedites the flow of goods with the Trieste–Ljubljana–Budapest route, partly replacing the Greek Piraeus until the Budapest–Belgrade railway line is completed.

The deepening financial cooperation between the two countries has created favorable conditions for the Chinese firms wishing to be established in Hungary. For example Huawei opened its regional logistics center in Hungary in 2013, and BYD (China's leading electric vehicle manufacturer) unveiled its first European electric bus factory in 2017. China is a leader in digital technologies, and in developing and testing intelligent transport systems, e-cars, smart cities, and 5G technology. Hungary wishes to become the regional center for digital technology. One element of this endeavor is the vehicle industry test track under construction in Hungary, which will be unparalleled in Europe by offering the opportunity to test and examine self-driving vehicles.

Seventy years ago, Hungary was among the first to establish diplomatic relations with China. According to an analysis published by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, Hungary is one of the main trailblazers in the New Silk Road cooperation. Hungary is considered a 'champion' of Chinese investments in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), a long-standing major partner in the strategy of opening up toward other countries.

Hungary is one of China's key trading partners. In 2016, the country received the largest share of Chinese imports in the CEE region (USD 3.5 billion or 23 percent of total Chinese imports in the region). In terms of the exports to China, only Poland and the Czech Republic fared better with USD 5.4 billion, amounting to 12.3 percent of the region's total.

In 2013, Hungary was the first country in the CEE region to sign a currency swap agreement with the People's Bank of China, and in 2015, the Hungarian National Bank announced the Budapest Renminbi Initiative under the Renminbi Program, which supports Sino-Hungarian economic cooperation aligned with the RMB-HUF market. Hungary became the regional center for the Bank of China (BOC), and in 2015 it was chosen by the BOC from among the CEE countries to establish its first RMB clearing center in the region. The first RMB-HUF debit card in Europe was launched in 2017. In 2016, Hungary was the first country in the Central and Eastern European region to issue sovereign bonds denominated in RMB.

In Europe, Hungary was the first country to sign an agreement under the Belt and Road Initiative in 2015. That agreement is about the construction of a 350-kilometer high-speed railway line between Budapest and Belgrade, which would reduce travel time from the current eight hours to three, thereby considerably modernizing the infrastructure links.

Furthermore, Hungary actively supports intercultural relations and exchange programs with China, for example in tourism and art. As regards tourism, the China-Central and Eastern European Countries Tourism Coordination Center should be mentioned, which opened its first CEE office in 2014, and the China National Tourism Administration did so in 2016. Both are good examples for the Sino-Hungarian cooperation in tourism. From the First Chinese Film Festival held in 1953 to the screening of Kung Fu Yoga in the Urania National Film Theater in 2017 (with the participation of Hong Kong movie star Jackie Chan), films and art also show that China establishes good relations with the Hungarian people.

The first co-produced film of the two countries was 'China, Hungary, and the Soccer,' which premiered to great acclaim in 2013 at the opening of the Beijing Hungarian Cultural Institute in Budapest. Thanks to trade relations, the volume of trade has amounted to USD 4.5 billion, and in 2018, 235,000 Chinese tourists visited Hungary, which was coupled with a 32-percent growth at the beginning of 2019. In 2019, a direct air link was established between Budapest and Chinese cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, Chongqing, and Xi'an.

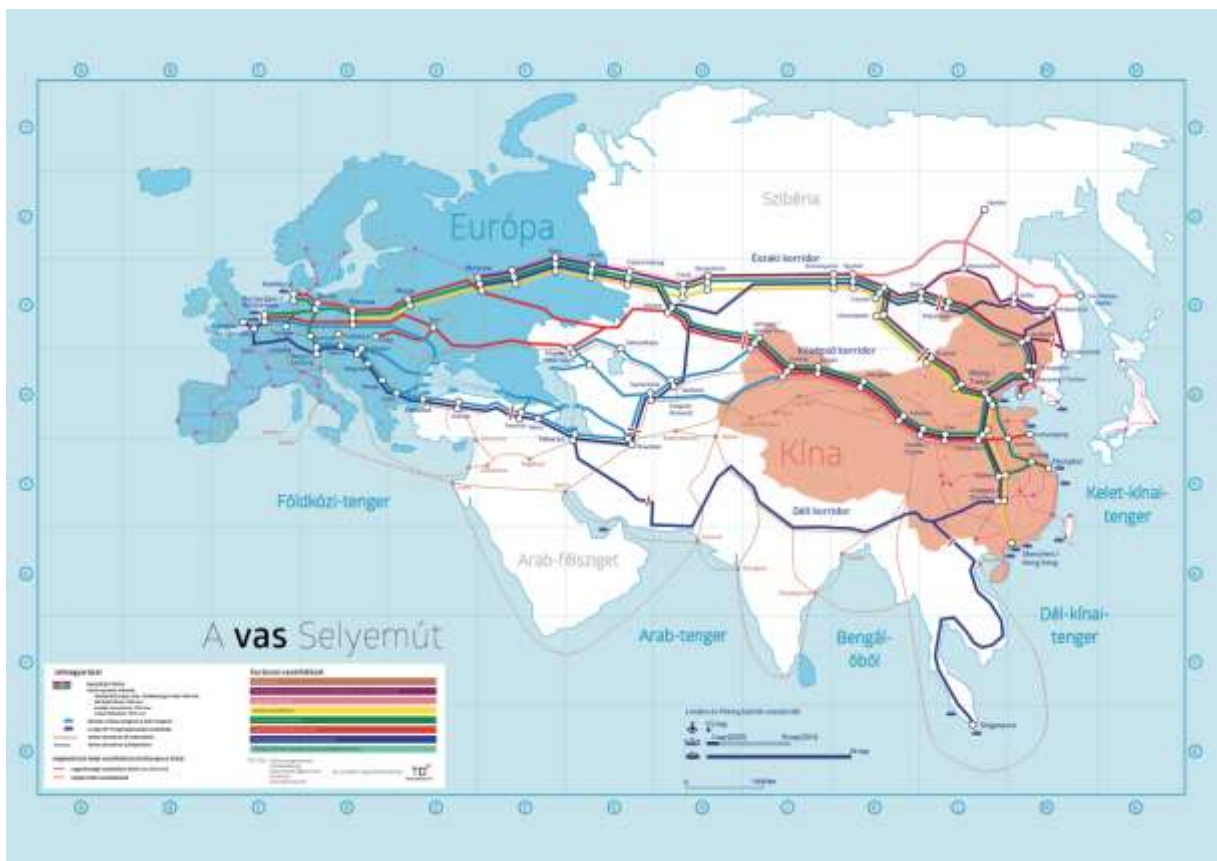
The Central European economic force field is rising. The 21st century will see a shift in geopolitical powers. Central Europe has an increasing role and significance on the geopolitical world map of the 21st century. Previously viewed as a shatter belt, this region is now a new gateway for the new Eurasia, providing a meeting point between the East and the West. In his lecture held in Budapest, David A. Jones, a professor at the American Studies Center of the University of Warsaw, proposed that Europe should be shifted to the East, since that region offers more opportunities. Central Europe is no longer, what it used to be: this region has posted the largest economic growth on the continent, coupled with strict financial stability. Government debt is the lowest here, and unemployment steadily decreases, while competitiveness continuously strengthens.

The main hubs of the infrastructure networks built within the framework of the New Silk Road will reorganize the regions in terms of their significance, with new centers cropping up. The dry port of Khorgas, Kazakhstan, is the largest dry port in the world, and it is one of the most important Eurasian gateways on China's overland route. It is a major logistics center, and it also impacts the development of Central and Eastern Europe. The same holds true for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which connects China to the Arabian Sea at the port of

Gwadar through the Karakoram Highway, the highest international paved road in the world. Gwadar's significance lies in the fact, among other things, that it allows Chinese goods to reach the European continent faster than over the traditional transport route crossing the Strait of Malacca.

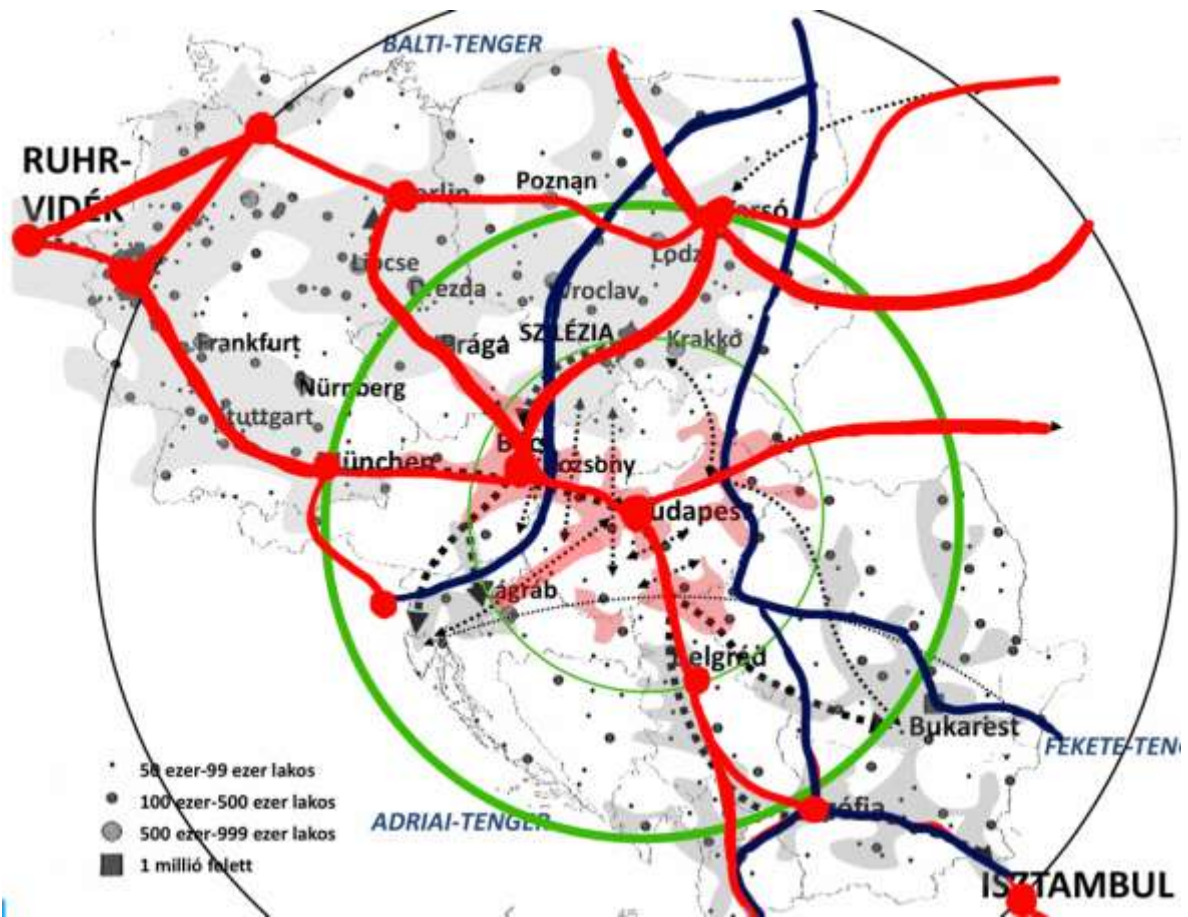
One of the main goods distribution centers is the Port of Piraeus in Greece, from which goods are expected to reach Hungary over the Belgrade–Budapest railway line, before moving on to the ports of Rotterdam and Hamburg. The Port of Piraeus can shorten maritime transportation by 20 days and the Xian–Duisburg railway reaches its destination in 24 days instead of the earlier 42. The Western European hubs of railway transport could be Duisburg, Germany; Brest at the Belarusian–Polish border; Łódź, Poland; the Greek Port of Piraeus; and Budapest.

Accordingly, a new development axis is emerging, in East–West direction in the north, and NW–SE in the south, linking Piraeus to Rotterdam and the port of Hamburg. This creates a north–south region stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Adriatic and the Black Sea. The 16+1 (17+1 since 2019) member states and the initiative represent the most important European connection to China. According to Chinese plans, two hubs are expected to emerge in the region, one in the north, with Warsaw as its center, for transportation, logistics, and energy investments, and the other in the south, with Budapest at its heart, for financial services and cultural and intellectual cooperation.



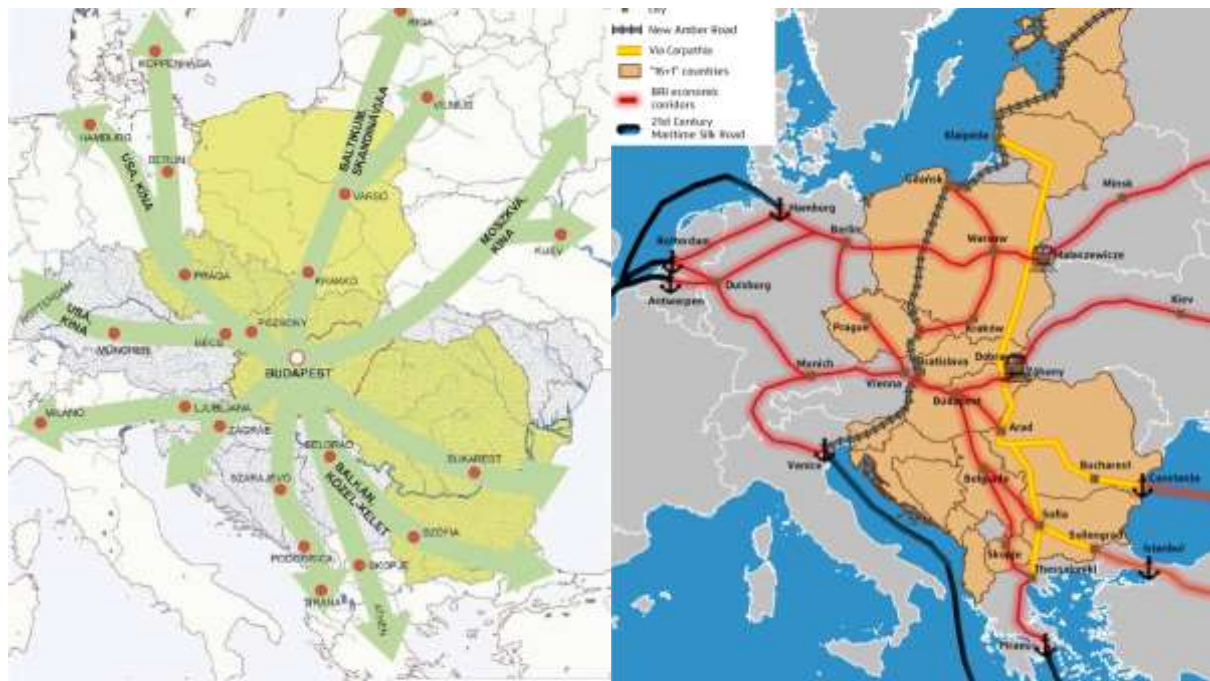
The Iron Silk Road – Eurasian railway connections of the Belt and Road Initiative

Source: Norbert Csizmadia, Geofusion (2016)



The Central and Eastern European economic area

Source: Author's own editing



The Central and Eastern European economic area

Source: National Settlement Network Development Concept and author's edition

The new world order will redraw our maps. Previously peripheral territories will move to the center. The 21st century brought about the emergence of the multipolar world order, and the economic center of gravity has clearly and substantially shifted to the east. Central Europe offers many opportunities, and the region is no longer what it was a decade ago. It has been, and always will be, an important part of Europe, and the Visegrád Group has vested interest in a strong Europe. The main hubs of the evolving networks will reorganize the regions in terms of their significance. The New Silk Road reaches Europe through Central and Eastern European countries, therefore the region will become even more important in the future.

While Europe still thinks in terms of an East–West division, Europe’s central part has turned into a North–South region. Central Europe, the meeting point of the East and the West, could become a getaway and economic and geopolitical force field of a new Eurasia. Central Europe is not only a historical and geographical entity, but also an economic, intellectual, and cultural one. The Central European identity could rise from its ‘dormant’ state, and the countries of this area could identify with the region.

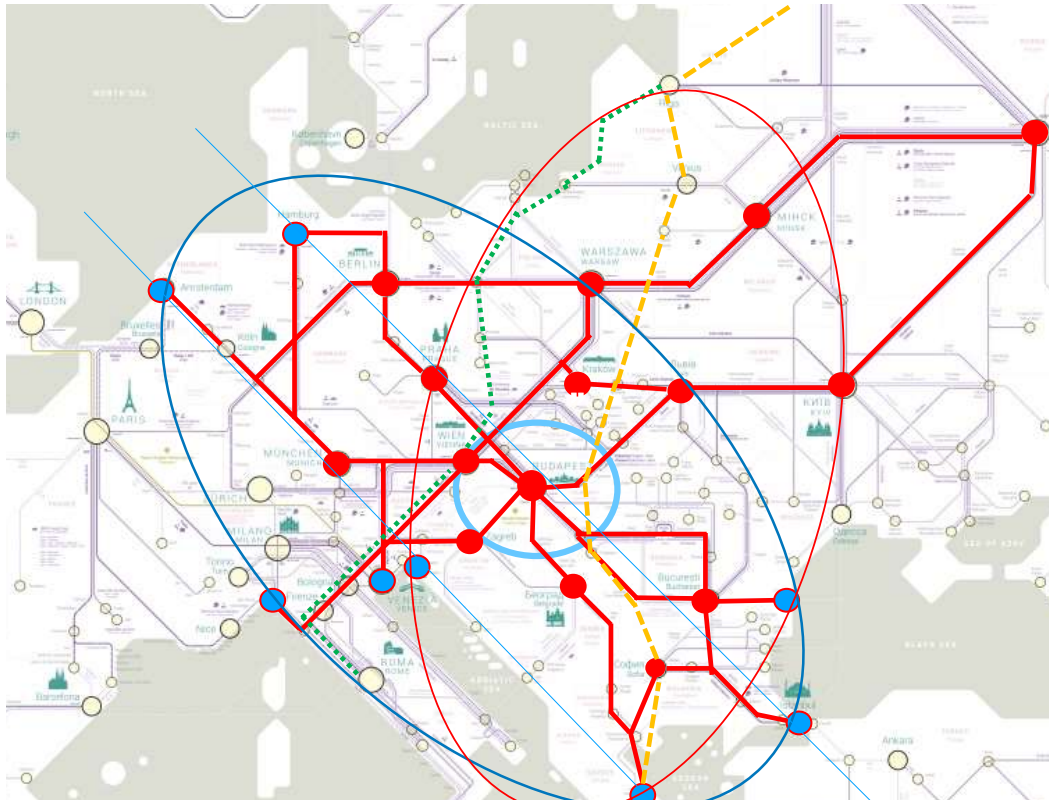
To enable Central and especially Eastern Central European countries to become a gateway for the currently evolving Eurasian continent, they must turn into an independent economic force field. The region’s response is to establish, besides the East–West division, a new Central and Eastern Central European geo-economic force field based on North–South infrastructure corridors.

This could be a key region for the new Eurasia. In the EU, the four major elements of the Central European economic and geopolitical force field are

- the Visegrád Group (Poland, Czech R., Slovakia and Hungary),
- the Three Seas Initiative (connecting the Baltic Sea, the Adriatic Sea, and the Black Sea),
- the Via Carpathia Highway (connecting Greece to Lithuania via Hungary),
- the New Amber Road Railway Corridor running along the western boundary of the region from the port of Koper, Slovenia to the Baltic Sea.

Related to this is Trieste, where Hungary rents a port. These routes run alongside Hungary’s western border. The 16+1 initiative between China and the Central and Eastern European countries organizes a coherent territorial unit between Piraeus and Rotterdam/Hamburg, flanked by the Via Carpathia Highway on the east, the New Amber Road on the west, and the New Silk Road on the east and southeast.

The region exploits its geographical location to rise in a geopolitical sense, and it will continue to play an increasingly important role in the period ahead.



Hungary's role and significance in the new Central and Eastern European economic force field (at the junction of the New Silk Road, the New Amber Road, and the Via Carpathia Highway)

Source: Author's work, 2019

Legend:

yellow: Via Carpathia Highway

green: New Amber Road

red: New Silk Road

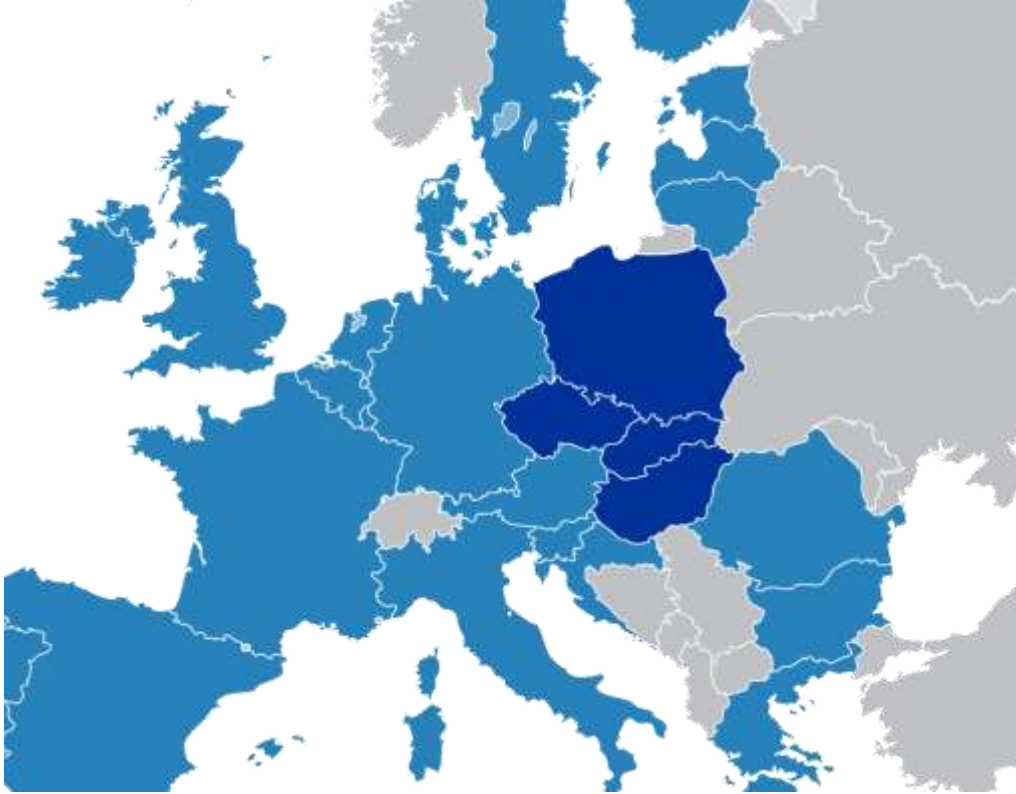
blue cities: ports

red cities: major hubs

3.5. THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

(István Tózsza)

3.7.1. The Visegrád 4 Countries





The V4 Countries (in dark) within the European Union countries – representing the political core of Central Europe, or the European ‘Heartland’ between the West and the East halves of Europe

The **Visegrad Group (V4)** is a political cooperation of the four core Central European states (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia), all of them being members of the European Union and the NATO. The purposes of the alliance is military, economic, cultural and energy management cooperation which was initiated at the summit of the leaders of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland, in the Hungarian town, Visegrad, on 15th February in 1991. Visegrad was chosen in memory of the medieval Congress of Visegrad in 1335 between John I of Czechia, Charles I of Hungary and Casimir III of Poland. After the separation of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, there were 4 members of the Visegrad Group that is referred to as V4.

The **Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary** comprise the core area of Central Europe. Therefore, their geographical and economic introduction are emphasized in this textbook.

3.5.1.1. Poland (Polska)

(István Tózsza)

National Flag		Official name		Coat of arms	
		Republic of Poland Native name: Rzeczpospolita Polska			
Capital city and population (million): Warsaw 1,6				Language: Polish	
Country's population (million): 38		Currency: Złoty		Territory (sq kms): 312 683	
Administrative division					
Region: provinces / województwa:		Seat		Region: provinces / województwa:	
Dolnośląskie (Lower Silesia)		Wrocław		Podkarpackie (Subcarpathian)	
Kujawsko-Pomorskie		Bydgoszcz		Podlaskie	
Lubelskie		Lublin		Pomorskie (Sea coastland)	
Lubuskie		Gorzów		Śląskie (Silesia)	
Łódzkie		Łódź		Świętokrzyskie	
Małopolskie (Little Poland)		Kraków (Cracow)		Wielkopolskie	
Mazowieckie		Warszawa (Warsaw)		Warmińsko-Mazurskie (Mazur)	
Opolskie		Opole		Zachodniopomorskie	
				Szczecin	

Geography

Most of Poland lies on the Polish Plain. The central part of the country is covered by low hills, and on the south it is bordered by the ranges of the Carpathian Mts.

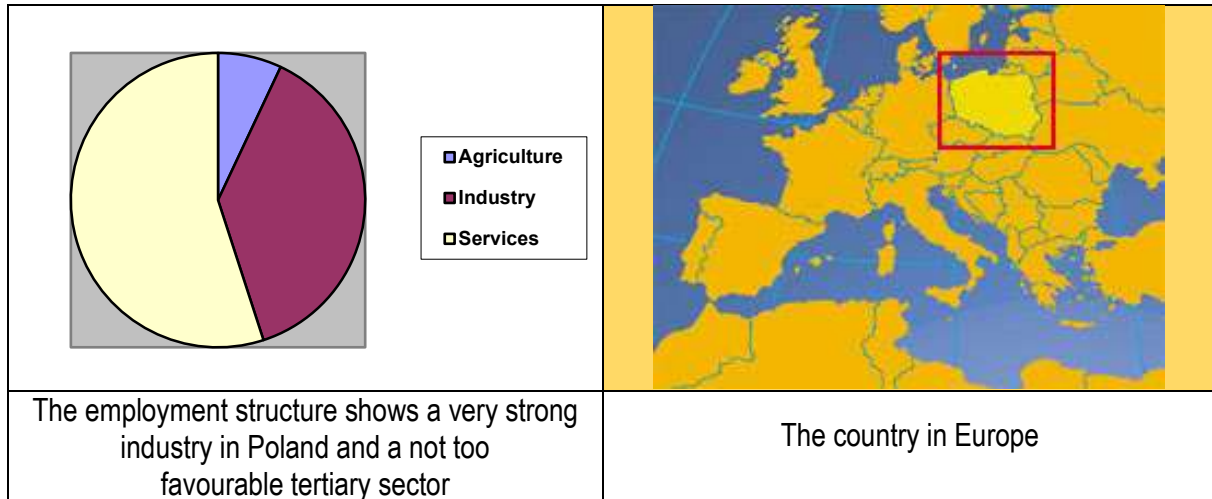
They are the Beskids and the Sudety mountains. The climate is continental with cold winters and cool summers. The soils are poor not providing good conditions for agriculture. However, the Sudety Mts are very rich in black coal and copper ore, which was favourable for industrial development. The largest Polish river is the Vistula, crossing the capital city. Poland has a long history of constant wars between two world powers: Germany and Russia. After World War II it became a socialist country. In the 1980s, there was a strong political movement of the Solidarity Trade Union to undermine the Soviet rule. Finally, Poland could join the EU in 2004.

Economy

Heavy industry with **metallurgy** was based on abundant deposits of local **black coal** mainly situated in Upper **Silesia** (at the foothills of the Beskids Mts) and Upper Silesia (at the foothills of the Sudety Mts). Silesia, the workshop of Central-Europe always used to be a '*casus belli*' in the eyes of German, Austrian, Czech and Russian political powers. The Silesian **steel industry** is concentrated in and around **Katowice, Wrocław** and **Nova Huta** (at Cracow) in the south of Poland. Energy production relies on coal-heated **power plants**, too, and it induces **air pollution** damaging the forests and public health. **Engineering** is also well developed. **Textile** industry is a traditional branch of economy. The towns on the Baltic Sea in the north specialize in **shipbuilding**, with **Gdansk**, being the largest.

Agriculture grows **potato**, wheat, sugar beet, malting barley and hops (for beer brewery) and **rye** as a cereal. Food production is insufficient, Poland has to **import food**. **Salt** used to be an

important mineral, too, though today salt mines are closed down due to the cheap marine salt produced everywhere by the seas. The largest salt mine is a touristic attraction in South Poland today. **Tourism** is important in the **Polish Tatry** in the north part of the Carpathians (in the vicinity of Cracow). A domestic touristic destination is the **Mazur Lakeland** in the north east of the country.



Administration

The 16 Polish NUTS-2 regions correspond to the boundaries of the historical voivodeships, the voivodes being the governors of these regions. The historic capital of the country used to be Cracow, the most beautiful Polish town in the Sub-Carpathian land. Warsaw was unfortunately destroyed completely during World War II by the German troops. Because the historic and traditional roots, the voivodeships have more administrative functions than regions do in a unitary type of state. Poland can therefore be considered as a decentralized state tending to change into a regionalized one, unlike most former socialist countries that are unitary and changing towards a decentralized type of state.

Society

National minorities are rather insignificant in Poland (German, Ukrainian, Belarussian make up 2 % together). This is due to the post-war forceful migrations of both German and 'Russian' ethnic groups. Poland suffered most during World War II. The 98 % Polish population are in a social union as far as religion is concerned: 94 % are Roman Catholic believers. Poland is the East European stronghold of Catholicism. Polish people are fond of travelling and migrating abroad. There are many guest employees in West European countries and the USA. There is also a strong international fellow feeling towards Hungarians, for historical reasons.

Landmarks

- *Masurian Lakeland* is north east part of Poland with nature conservation parks, lots of lakes, marshland and woods.
- *Makowiec, bigos, barszcz* are national traditional meals: crescent filled with poppy seed; stew with cabbage; red beet soup.
- *Wawel* is the former royal castle in Cracow.



Masurian Lakeland



Bigos, barszcz: meals



Wawel (Cracow)

Polish landmarks

UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Poland:

- *Kraków Old Town* is the most prominent example of an old town in Poland, because for many centuries, Kraków (Cracow) used to be the royal capital of Poland.
- *The Wieliczka Salt Mine* is located in the town of Wieliczka within the Kraków metropolitan area. The mine continuously produced table salt from the 13th century until 2007 as one of the world's oldest operating salt mines (the oldest is Bochnia Salt Mine in Poland, closed down after World War I and turned into a museum in 1981). Wieliczka is also a gigantic museum now.
- *Auschwitz - Birkenau Camp* (at Oświęcim and Brzezinka) = is shocking museum in memory of the former German (Nazi) concentration camp during World War II. The camp of Auschwitz was restored and turned into a museum honouring the victims of Nazism.
- *Białowieża Forest* (Belavezhskaya Pushcha National Park in Belarus) = is one of the last and largest remaining parts of the immense primeval forest which once spread across the Eastern European Plain. This transboundary property shared with Belarus is a wildlife reservation area, for the last specimens of the European buffalo, as well.
- *Warsaw's Old Town* (Stare Miasto, or: Starówka) is the oldest historic district of the Polish capital city. It is bounded by Wybrzeże Gdańskie, along the bank of the Vistula River, and by Grodzka, Mostowa and Podwale Streets. It is one of Warsaw's most prominent tourist attractions. The heart of the area is the Old Town Market Place, with its restaurants, cafés and shops. Surrounding streets feature medieval architecture such as the city walls, the Barbican and St. John's Cathedral.
- *Old City of Zamość* is a perfect example of a Renaissance town of the late 16th century, which retains its original layout and fortifications, and a large number of buildings blending Italian and central European architectural traditions.
- *Malbork Castle of the Teutonic Order* was founded in the 13th century by the Teutonic Knights and is noted for its Gothic Marienburg Castle, one of the most striking one in Europe.
- *Medieval Town of Toruń* is on the Vistula River is one of the oldest and most beautiful cities in Poland. The medieval old town of Toruń is the birthplace of Nicolaus Copernicus. The old town market and the gothic town hall are said to be one of the 30 most beautiful places in the world.

- *Kalwaria Zebrzydowska* is an Architectural and Park Landscape Complex and Pilgrimage Park.
- *The Churches of Peace* (Kościóły Pokoju) is in Jawor (Jauer) and Świdnica (Schweidnitz) in Silesia. They were erected after the Peace of Westphalia of 1648 which permitted the Lutherans in the Roman Catholic parts of Silesia to build 3 Evangelical churches from wood, loam and straw outside the city walls, without steeples and church bells.
- *Wooden Churches of Southern Lesser Poland (Małopolskie) and Sub-Carpathia* is the wooden churches of southern Lesser Poland and Sub-Carpathia represent outstanding examples of the different aspects of medieval church-building traditions in Roman Catholic culture. Built using the horizontal log technique, common in eastern and northern Europe since the Middle Ages.
- *The Muskau Park* (*Muskauer Park*, or *Park Mużakowski*) is the largest and one of the most famous English Gardens of Germany and Poland, covering 3.5 km² of land in Poland and 2.1 km² in Germany. The park extends on both sides of the Neisse River, which constitutes the border between the countries. *Muskau Castle* is situated west of the river, the heart of the park are the partially wooded raised areas on the east bank called The Park on Terraces. In 2003 a pedestrian bridge spanning the Neisse was rebuilt to connect both parts.
- *The Centennial Hall in Wrocław* (*Jahrhunderthalle*, or *Hala Stulecia*) is an early landmark of reinforced concrete architecture, constructed in 1911-1913, when the city was part of the German Empire.



Kraków Old Town



Wieliczka Salt Mine



Auschwitz - Birkenau Camp



Warsaw's Starówka



City of Zamość



Teutonic Castle (Malbork)



Town of Toruń



Kalwaria Zebrzydowska



Churches of Peace



Wooden Churches (Małopolskie)



Muskau Park





Centennial Hall (Wrocław)



Białowieża Forest

Polish World Heritage Sites

3.5.1.2. Czechia (Česko) (István Tózsza)

National Flag		Official name	Coat of arms
		Czech Republic Native name: Česká republika	
Capital city and population (million): Prague 1.2			Language: Czech
Country's population (million) 10.1		Currency: Koruna	Territory (sq kms): 78 864
Administrative division			
Region: kraj	Seat	Region: kraj	Seat
Jihočeský kraj	České Budějovice	Plzeňský kraj	Plzeň
Jihomoravský kraj	Brno	Hlavní město Praha	Praha (Prague)
Karlovarský kraj	Karlovy Vary	Středočeský kraj	Praha (Prague)
Královéhradecký kraj	Hradec Králové	Ústecký kraj	Ústí nad Labem
Liberecký kraj	Liberec	Kraj Vysočina	Jihlava
Moravskoslezský kraj	Ostrava	Zlínský kraj	Zlín
Olomoucký kraj	Olomouc	Pardubický kraj	Pardubice

Geography

The country is situated in the geographical centre of Europe. Mountains and hills in every direction surround it. The territory is occupied by two large basins: the Czech (west) and the Moravian (east). There are two main rivers crossing the country: the Vltava and the Morava. The mountains are rich in minerals. This is the reason why industry started to develop in Czechia in the early middle ages. The territory used to be independent kingdoms of the Moravians in the early Middle Ages, then of the Czech, and then it became part of the Austrian Habsburg Empire up to the end of World War I when it became an independent country again, together with Slovakia (the Hungarian Uplands) under the name of Czechoslovakia. However, Czechia (or Bohemia) used to be the industrial workshop of the Habsburg Empire; it was the province with the strongest economy. In 1993, Slovakia seceded and Czechoslovakia was split into two: the Czech Republic and Slovakia. In 2004, both of them joined the EU.

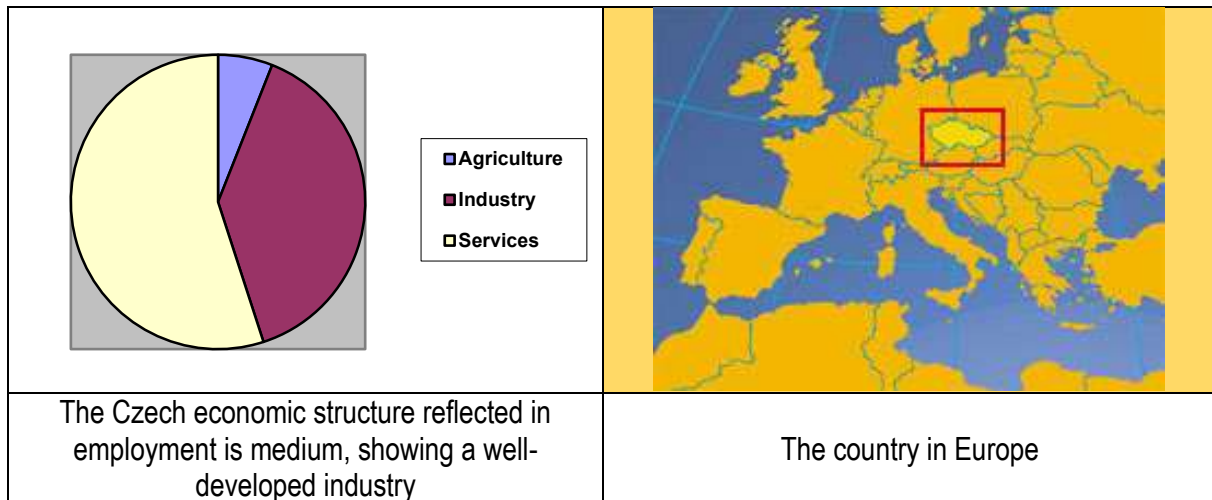
Economy

The most important branch of the Czech economy is engineering, producing vehicles (like **Skoda** automobiles and railway engines) and weapons, **military equipment**. The most significant centres are **Prague** (the capital), **Brno** (seat of the Moravian region), **Plzen** (best known for its beer) and **Ostrava** (the centre of the Silesian industrial region). **Black coal** is mined in Silesia (in the northeast), in Moravia, and in the Sudety Mts (in the north), and in the Czech Forest (in the south). Heavy industry was based on this resource.

In light industry **glass** and **furniture** production, the **textile** industry and **footwear leather** are notable. Based on very fine clay mineral, (**kaolin**) mined in the hills, the Czech **chinaware** (porcelain) is very famous. In the food industry, the most well-known product is beer (Plsener).

The main plants grown include **potato**, malting **barley** and **hop** (for brewing beer), **rye** and **sugar beet**. However, food has to be imported; the domestic cereals cannot meet the demand.

Tourists are best attracted to **Prague** because of its many mediaeval monuments and urban quarters. **Karlovy Vary** is a famous resort place with hot medicinal waters. The Czech Basin is rich in **mineral water** springs as well.



Administration

There are 14 regions (krajs) in the country, however, the country being a unitary type of state, the regions do not have elected members and legislative functions, they have but a statistical role.

Society

The largest national minority is represented by the Moravians (13 %). There are some Gypsies (2 %). As for religion, the Roman Catholic Church has some 40 %, while another 40 % of the population are atheists. This is due to the long decades of the communist rule.

Landmarks

- *Karluv Most (Charles Bridge) in Prague* is a famous, and richly ornamented bridge in the city of Prague, part of the cultural world heritage.
- *Knedlo – zelo – vepro* is a typical Czech national meal (potato pastry with cabbage and pork).
- *Pilsen beer* is the best-known Czech beer.
- *Toy Museum of Prague* is the second largest toy collection in the world, located in the Castle.
- *Vaclav Square, Hradzin Castle* is the central square and the royal castle in the City of Prague.



Czechian landmarks

UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Czechia:

- *Český Krumlov* the historic centre of this Bohemian small city is the best known for the fine architecture and art of the historic old town and castle. World Heritage Site.
- *The Historic Centre of Prague* has been the political, cultural and economic centre of the Czech state for more than 1,100 years. Since 1992, the extensive historic centre of Prague has been included in the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites, making the city one of the most popular touristic destinations in Europe, receiving more than 4.1 million international visitors annually.
- *The Historic Centre of Telč* with a monumental 17th century Renaissance chateau and an English-style park is an original Gothic castle; the most significant sight is the town square, a unique complex of long urban plaza with well-conserved Renaissance and Baroque houses with high gables and arcades.
- *Historical Town Centre of Kutná Hora* with the Cathedral of Our Lady, St. Barbara Church, Sedlec Ossuary, Church of St. James, Church of St. John Nepomuk, Church of Ursuline Convent, Jesuit College, Italian Court, Marian column. World Heritage Site.
- *The Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape* with ponds, castles, chateaus, galleries, lodges, chapels. World Heritage Site.
- *Gardens and Castle at Kroměříž* comprise a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- *Villa Tugendhat* = is considered an icon of modern architectural masterpiece in Brno, and a paradigmatic example of functionalism. World Heritage Site.
- *St. Procopius' Basilica and Jewish Quarter* World Heritage Site in Třebíč.
- *Pilgrimage Church of St John of Nepomuk at Zelená Hora (Gruneberg)* is the final masterpiece of Bohemian architecture combining Baroque with Gothic elements in both construction and decoration.
- *Holašovice Historical Village Reservation (Holaschowitz)* is a small historic village near the protected landscape area of *Blansky* Forest. The village was deserted after the Second World War, allowing its medieval plan and vernacular buildings in the South Bohemian Folk or Rural Baroque style to remain intact. It was restored and repopulated from 1990.
- *Litomyšl Castle* = a chateau complex with a monumental Renaissance castle. World Heritage Site.

- *The Holy Trinity Column in Olomouc* is the biggest Baroque sculptural group in Czechia. World Heritage Site.



Český Krumlov



Centre of Prague



Centre of Kutná Hora



Lednice: Europe's Garden



Castle
at Kroměříž



Villa Tugendhat
(Brno, 1930)



Jewish Quarter
(Třebíč)



Zelená
Hora



Holašovice
Village Reservation



Litomyšl Castle



Centre of Telč





Holy Trinity (Olomouc)

Czechian World Heritage Sites

3.5.1.3. Slovakia (Slovensko)

(István Tózsza)

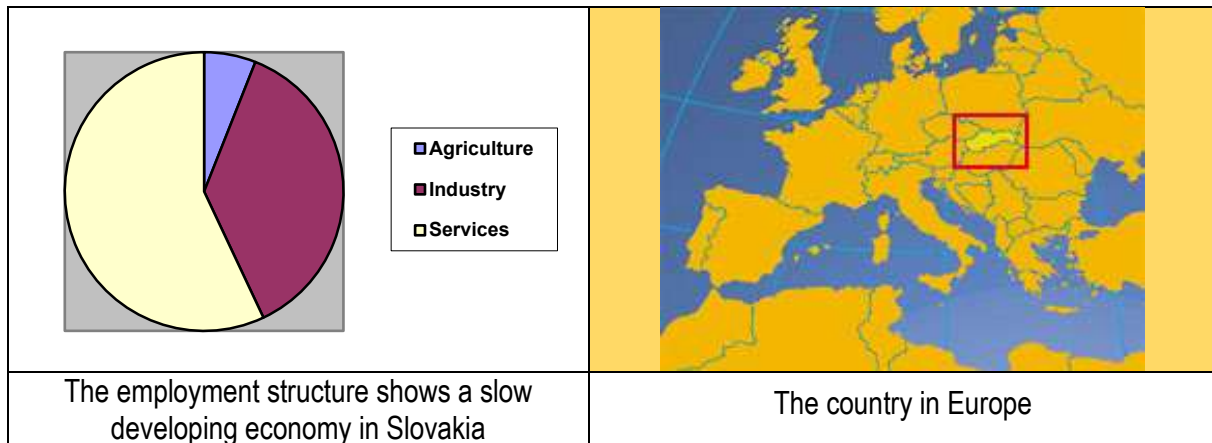
National Flag		Official name	Coat of arms
		Slovak Republic Native name: Slovenská republika	
Capital city and population (million): Bratislava 0.4		Language: Slovak	
Country's population (million): 5.4		Currency: Euro	Territory (sq kms): 49 036
Administrative division			
Region: kraj:	Seat	Region: kraj:	Seat
Banskobystrický	Banská Bystrica (Besztercebánya)	Prešovský	Prešov (Eperjes)
Bratislavský	Bratislava (Pozsony)	Trenčiansky	Trenčín (Trencsény)
Košický	Košice (Kassa)	Trnavský	Trnava (Nagyszombat)
Nitriansky	Nitra (Nyitra)	Žilinský	Žilina (Zsolna)

Geography

Slovakia is situated in Central Europe, in the region of the Carpathian Mountain range, and on the highland of the Carpathian Basin. The highest part of the Carpathians (Tatras) is situated mainly in Slovakia, partly in Poland. The hilly country has but a little plain land on the southwest by the River Danube, and in the easternmost part, in the lower catchment area of the River Bodrog. The climate is continental. In history, the land of Slovakia used to belong to the Hungarian Kingdom up to the end of World War I (1920), then it was a union with the Czech (Czechoslovakia) up to 1993, when it became an independent country.

Economy

In recent history, in the Czechoslovakian times, it was the Czech part of the country that could develop economy. **Heavy industry** was developed only in the east (**Košice**) based on some local iron ore (previously on Russian import). The country is poor in natural reserves, especially energy, and food has to be imported. There is some traditional **textile** and **engineering** industry in the west part of the country (**Žilina, Bratislava**). The building of large-scale hydropower plant on the Danube in the 1980s and 1990s resulted in political tension with Hungary because of the diversion of the waters of the Danube. There is some **precious metal ore** deposits that have been mined since the Middle Ages on. Because of the abundance of forests, **wood processing** and the **paper** industry has long traditions. Both summer and winter **tourism** is an important branch of economy, relying on the beautiful landscapes of the High and Low Tatras and the other mountain ranges.



Administration

The country is divided into 8 districts (**krajs**) named after their main cities. They are further divided into 79 boroughs (**okres**) standing for the economic gravity zones of minor towns. Slovakia joined the EU in 2004.

Society

Some 78 % of the population are Slovakian. The largest national minority is represented by Hungarians (11 %), then Gypsies (9 %) and some 1 % Czech and 1 % Ukrainian respectively. Because of debates rooted in history (the integrity of the Hungarian Kingdom, the Hungarian invasion during World War II and in 1968 together with the Russians), the Slovakian Government and the Hungarian one cannot agree on the issues of national minority policy in Slovakia, like using mother tongues, and national symbols in offices and schools.

60 % of the country's population are Roman Catholic, the rest, some 10 % is Protestant and the rest is atheist, due to the long decade reign of socialism. The long centuries when Slovaks were being subordinated in the political and economic senses to either Hungary then to the Czech state, resulted in a lack of regional identity. It is now being built causing **political tension between with Hungary and Slovakia**, despite the common EU and V4 memberships. In addition, the rising number of the **Gypsy population** being unable to integrate in both economic and social aspects is an unsolved social problem.

Landmarks

- *High Tatras* = the highest range of the Carpathians, with peaks well over 2000 metres.
- *Banská Bystrica* (Besztercebánya) is an old (originally Hungarian) historical town with gold and silver mines.
- *Bojnice Ghost Festival* is organized in the first week of May, in a mediaeval castle.
- *Bryndzové halusy* is a traditional meal: potato pastry with ewe's cheese and bacon.
- *Dobsina Ice Cave* is a unique cave of ice formations.

- *Lomnic Peak* is the second highest peak of the High Tatras that can be visited by cable cabin.
- *Strebske Pleso* is a tourist centre around a lake (pleso) at the foothill of the High Tatry.
- *Kosice* (Kassa) the only large (originally Hungarian) city in Eastern Slovakia, with the St. Elizabeth cathedral and the Opera House.



High Tatras



Lomnic Peak



Strebske Pleso (Lake)



Dobsina Ice Cave



Banská Bystrica



Bryndzové halusy



Bojnice Ghost Festival



Košice

Slovakian landmarks

UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Slovakia:

- *Banská Štiavnica* (Selmecebánya) is a completely preserved (originally Hungarian) medieval town with historical value.
- *Levoča* (Hungarian: Lőcse), *Spišský Hrad* (Hungarian: Szepesvár) and the *Associated Cultural Monuments* = the ruins of Spišský Castle is one of the largest castle sites in Central Europe. The castle is situated above the town of Spišské and the village of Žehra (Zsigra) that with adjacent ecclesiastical town Spišská Kapitula, (Szepesi Káptalan) (both meaning the Spiš Chapterhouse) is an exceptionally well-preserved ecclesiastical town. The historic centre of Levoča has many well-preserved Renaissance buildings.
- *Vlkolínec* is a picturesque village of rural architecture under the administration of the town of Ružomberok (Rózsahegy). Vlkolínec is one of ten Slovak settlements that have been given the status of a folk architecture reservation in the region of the Northern Carpathians.
- *Caves of Aggtelek and the Slovak Karst* is a transboundary property with Hungary including 7 components: the Aggtelek Karst, the Szendrő-Rudabánya Hill, the Esztramos Hill in Hungary, and the Dobšinská (Dobsina) Ice Cave, the Koniar plateau, the Plešivec (Pelsőc) plateau, and the Silica (Szilice) and Jasov plateau in Slovakia with many dripstone caves.
- *Bardejov* (Bártfa) is an old town (originally Hungarian) exhibiting numerous cultural monuments in its completely intact medieval town centre.

- *The Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathian* is an outstanding example of undisturbed, complex temperate forests. They constitute a transnational serial property of ten separate components (6 in Ukraine and 4 in Slovakia) along a 185 km axis from the Rakhiv Mountains and the Chornohirskiy Range in Ukraine, west along the Polonynian Ridge, to the Bukovské vrchy and Vihorlat Mts in Slovakia. They contain an invaluable genetic reservoir of beech and many species associated with it.
- *Carpathian Wooden Churches* = consists of 9 wooden religious buildings constructed between the 16th and 18th centuries in eight different locations. They include two Roman Catholic (Hervartov, Tvrdošín), three Protestant (Hronsek - Garamszeg, Leštiny, Kežmarok - Késmárk) and three Greek Catholic churches (Bodružal, Ruská Bystrá, Ladomirová - Ladomérvágása) plus one belfry in Hronsek. In addition to these churches, there are about 50 more wooden churches in the territory of present-day Slovakia, mainly in the northern and eastern part of the Prešov (Eperjes) region.



Banská Štiavnica old town



The Primeval Beech Forests



Vlkolinec, rural architecture



Bardejov old town



Caves of the Slovak Karst



Carpathian Wooden Churches





Old town of Levoča and Spišský Hrad (castle ruin)



Slovakian World Heritage Sites

3.5.1.4. Hungary (Magyarország)

(István Tózsza)

National flag		Official name	Coat of arms
		Republic of Hungary Native name: Magyar Köztársaság	
Capital city and population (million): Budapest 1,7			Language: Hungarian
Country's population (million): 9.9		Currency: Forint	Territory (sq kms): 93 000
Administrative division			
Region: megye	Seat	Region: megye	Seat
Bács-Kiskun	Kecskemét	Komárom-Esztergom	Tatabánya
Baranya	Pécs	Nógrád	Salgótarján
Békés	Békéscsaba	Pest	Budapest
Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén	Miskolc	Somogy	Kaposvár
Csongrád	Szeged	Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	Nyíregyháza
Fejér	Székesfehérvár	Tolna	Szekszárd
Győr-Moson-Sopron	Győr	Vas	Szombathely
Hajdú-Bihar	Debrecen	Veszprém	Veszprém
Heves	Eger	Zala	Zalaegerszeg
Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok	Szolnok	--	--

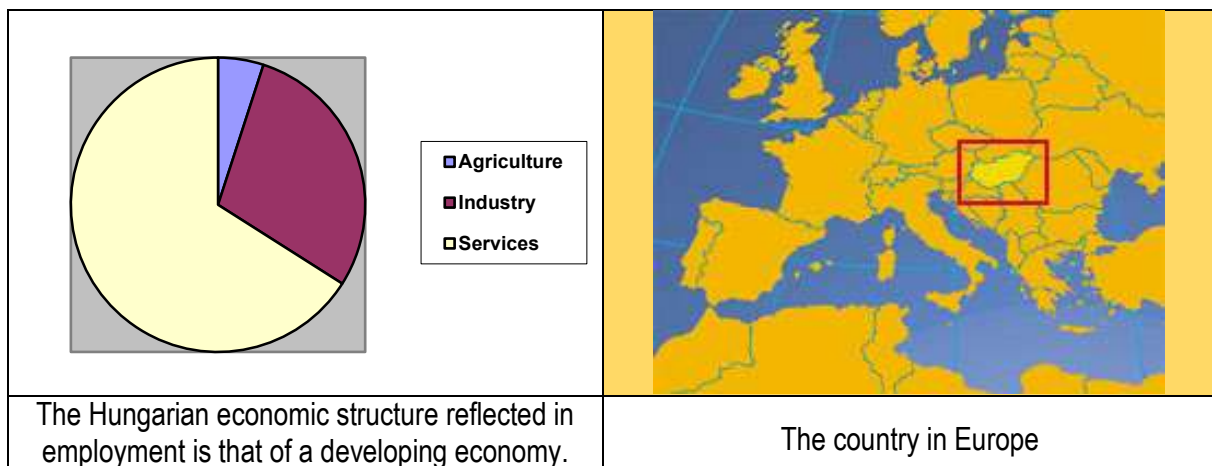
Geography

Hungary is situated in the middle of the Carpathian Basin. This is a place protected from climatic extremities, because it is surrounded by high mountains on every side: the Carpathians (N, E), the Alps (W) and the Dinarides (S). There are two big rivers crossing the central plain: the Danube and the Tisza. The soils are fertile, favourable for crop cultivation. The western and the northern parts of Hungary are hilly, while the central and eastern parts are completely flat. The earth's crust is rather thin below the Carpathian Basin and the geothermal gradient is high, therefore the area is extremely rich in geothermal waters. Indeed, they represent the main natural resource of Hungary.

Economy

The country is very poor in minerals and raw materials, therefore heavy industry that was developed during the Soviet period collapsed, causing unemployment when the market economy was introduced after 1990. Engineering of multinational companies is present (e.g. **car manufacturing**). Though agriculture has the most favourable natural conditions in Hungary, the large-scale cooperatives were privatized and sold, so food industry and much of the previously well-developed agricultural production was put to an end, too. Western companies purchased all units of economy, and then closed them down, as they only wanted to buy market and cheap labour power.

Agriculture grows **wheat, maize, sunflower**, but the most outstanding product is **wine** of very fine qualities. **Hot mineral medicinal waters** are present everywhere and they make the country a health and wellness world power. There are lots of hotels and medicinal baths.



Administration

The country as a former communist country is still a unitary type of state, starting to change into a decentralized type. There are 8 NUTS-2 regions, but the regional councils do not have any legislative power, nor are they elected. The only administrative function they have is to redistribute development funds given by the EU. There are 19 counties as well, with little administrative functions. The local governments' responsibility is regional and local development, administration is centralized. Hungary joined the EU in 2004.

Society

90 % of the population is Hungarian, and the largest ethnic minority is Gypsy/Roma (10 %). The rest is mainly composed of Germans and Slovaks. The greatest social problem and tension is caused by the inability of the Roma population to integrate. While during the communist regime this social problem was resolved by oppression, in the democratic country the governments cannot handle it. Most of the uneducated and unemployed come from the rising number of Gypsy minority. Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania are facing the same problem among the new EU members. As for religion, 64 % are Roman Catholic and 21 % of the population are Protestant Christians.

After World War I most of the territory of the Hungarian Kingdom⁴⁰ was given to the Czechoslovakian, Romanian and Yugoslavian states, leaving a huge number of Hungarians as national minorities in these countries. They have become the subjects of forceful assimilation. This political act, carried out by the French and the English was meant to prevent the

⁴⁰ Hungary has a handicap in its name associated with the Huns. Hungarians are relatives of the Turkish, Finnish and Estonian in Europe belonging to the Ural-Altai language family, not to the long before extinct Huns. The relationship with the Huns, stressed in the manuscripts of the chronicle writers, used to be encouraged by Hungarian kings in the Middle Ages. They wished to legitimize the Hungarian conquest, i.e. they as the legal descendants, came for the heritage of the Huns who once (600 years before the Hungarians came) dwelled in the Carpathian Basin for a while. By the way, Hungarians never call themselves Huns, but Magyars.

reintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the Carpathian Basin, lest the Germans could use it once again as a 'spring board' towards Eastern Europe and then to the Heartland.

Landmarks

- *House of Parliament; Chain Bridge; Gellért Hill; Royal Castle; Margaret Island; Heroes' Square* = places of interest in Budapest. The house of the parliament is considered the most beautiful building in Europe. The Chain Bridge was the first over the Danube in the Carpathian Basin. Gellért Hill in the middle of the city offers a nice view from its top. The Royal Castle is a district and palace on the hilly Buda side of the Danube. Margaret Island is also situated in the heart of Budapest; the Heroes' Square is a central one with monuments and the first subway train of continental Europe, still operating.
- *Hévíz* = the most famous hot mineral medicinal water spa, being the world's largest hot water spring at the same time.
- *Balaton* = the largest lake in Central Europe, ideal for summer holidaying because of its shallow waters.
- *Danube Bend* = a nice landscape where the River Danube breaks its way through the hills.
- *Cave Bath of Miskolc* = the world's unique natural cave with geothermal water spring in it at Miskolc.
- *Tshikosh* = traditional Hungarian horse-herder or cowboy: 'csikós.'
- *Goulash* = traditional Hungarian stew soup with red pepper: 'gulyás.'



The House of Parliament



Heroes' Square



Balaton – largest lake in Central Europe



Gellért Hill



Margaret Island



Hévíz Lake



Tokaji wine



Gulyás soup



Csikós (horse-herders)



Danube bend



Cave Bath

Hungarian landmarks

UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Hungary:

- *Budapest* = the palaces on the Pest bank of the Danube and the Buda Castle medieval district. The *Andrássy Avenue* lined with spectacular Neo-renaissance mansions; and the *Millennium Underground* (the 2nd oldest underground railway in the world and the 1st one in the continental Europe).
- *Hollókő* = an ethnographic village museum.
- *Caves of Aggtelek Karst* = a transboundary property with Slovakia with 712 caves, the most famous of which the Baradla (Hungarian) and Domica (Slovakia) dripstone cave complex is the largest. The Slovakian caves include Gombasek, Silica, Dobšiná, Ochtina and Jasov.
- *Pannonhalma* = it is the Millenary Benedictine Monastery with its natural environments. This is the second largest territorial abbey in the world, after the one in Monte Casino.
- *Hortobágy* = national park, a large alkali grassland named 'pusta' with traditional breed of sheep and grey cattle, and horses. It is the largest natural grassland in Europe.
- *Necropolis of Pécs (Sopianae)* = early Christian tombs.
- *Fertő (Lake Neusiedl)* = cultural landscape around a large alkali grassland lake shared between Austria and Hungary. It also enjoy protection through the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.
- *Tokaj – Hegyalja* = cultural landscape, the growing area of the world's best quality sweet white wine, named in Latin: '*Vinum Regum, Rex Vinorum*' (wine of the kings and king of the wines).



Chain Bridge and Royal Castle



Hollókő village



Aggtelek Karst cave



Pannonhalma Abbey



Hortobágy pusta



Pécs ancient Christian tombs



Fertő Lake



Tokaj Landscape

Hungarian World Heritage Sites

The Small Ones and the Big Ones

Austria, Latvia, Lithuania, Kaliningrad, Liechtenstein are countries that lie entirely in Central Europe in physical geographical context, but they are affiliated to other major regions (either the German, the Russian, or the Baltic ones) from cultural and mainly from economic points of view.

Germany, Switzerland, Slovenia, Croatia, Italy, Serbia, Romania, Ukraine are countries, some regions of which can be considered as Central European, but their chief economic and partially cultural profiles connect them to either Western Southern, or Eastern Europe. In Germany some regions west of River Rhine are definitely West Europeans, and in Switzerland the French cantons in the Alps and in Italy the northernmost provinces belong to the West, to France and to Central Europe, to Austria respectively. In case of Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia their northern regions have some Central European cultural roots in history, however, today it is reflected only in some old monuments dating back to the time of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy before World War I.

The Yugoslavian period's forceful national assimilation, though it failed and ended up in a civil war between the Croats and Serbians, was successful to redefine these countries as belonging either to the West (Slovenia) or to the South (Croatia and Serbia) of Europe. In Romania, Transylvania used to belong to the Hungarian Kingdom for one thousand years, therefore it could rightly be considered as a true Central European region. However, the forceful national assimilation policy of the Romanian governments in the past one hundred years led to the sorrowful consequence of the German minority's complete disappearance and the Hungarian minority's shrinking to a great degree and being 'homeless in their homeland.'



The responsible organizations of the European Union that are very sensitive towards the rights of all minorities with the exception of the national minorities. That is why the oppressed human, cultural rights of the Hungarian national minorities in Romania, Ukraine, and Serbia are not even considered in the different forums of the European Union, in spite of the efforts of the Hungarian Government since 2010. Compared to the Roman majority in Transylvania the fate of the Hungarian minority seems to be doomed in spite of the European Union's sonorous, but insufficient national minority policy. Their hopes to stay and get along in their native land could be supported with cultural autonomy.

Owing to their relatively little number and representation in Transylvania, the remaining Hungarian national minority's economic and political force is not enough to consider Transylvania as a special Euro region among the V4 core countries of Eastern Central Europe.

Finally, the part of Ukraine that could be considered as Central European had undergone such violent and horrible holocaust before and during World War II that it lost its Central European profile completely. Only some of the old buildings and monuments are representing the historical Central European status and some of the Hungarian and Polish national majorities having survived the 20th century in Galicia, the westernmost part of Ukraine.

3.5.2. Austria (Österreich)

(István Tózsza)

National flag	Official name	Coat of arms	
	Republic of Austria Native name(s): Republik Österreich		
Capital city and population (million): Vienna 1.6	Language(s): German + Hungarian and Croatian (in Burgenland), Slovenian (in Carinthia and Styria)		
Country's population (million): 8.2	Currency: 1 Euro = 100 cents	Territory (sq kms): 87 871	
Administrative division			
Region: Bundesland	Seat	Region: Bundesland	Seat
Burgenland	Eisenstadt	Steiermark (Styria)	Graz
Kärnten (Carinthia)	Klagenfurt	Tirol	Innsbruck
Niederösterreich (Lower Austria)	Sankt Pölten	Vorarlberg	Bregenz
Oberösterreich (Upper Austria)	Linz	Wien (Capital City Region)	Wien (Vienna)
Salzburg	Salzburg	--	--

Geography

Half of the country's territory is occupied by the high mountain ranges of **the Alps**, and one third is covered with hills. The rest is plains, along the north-east border (Burgenland) and along the river Danube's valley in the north (Lower Austria). The main river is the **Danube**.

Economy

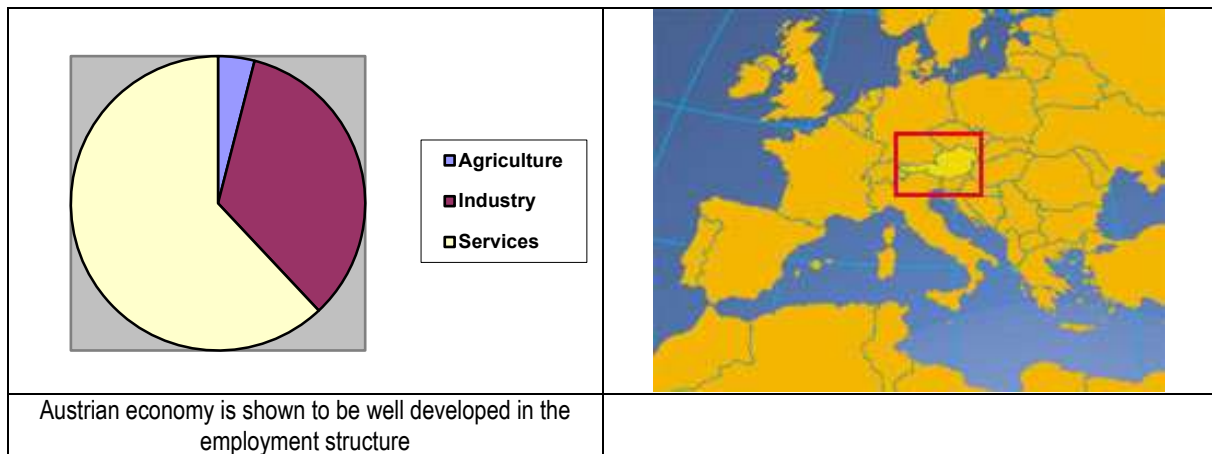
The traditional branch of the Austrian economy is mining **salt** (the name of the famous historical, touristic and musicians' town of Salzburg also refers to it). Another resource for mining is **magnesite** needed for fireproof tiles and bricks. The magnesite deposits of Austria are significant in a global sense as well. The main source of energy production is **hydro energy**, since 70 % of the country's energy demand is covered by this pure, non polluting source of energy. The geographic environment of Austria (high mountains with rapid and abundant rivers) is very favourable for water-based energy production. However, Austria has to import crude oil and natural gas for energy supply.

Because of the mountainous regions **wood and paper industry** is traditionally well developed. Metallurgy (**steel and aluminium** production) is based on imported iron and bauxite ore. **Engineering** produces cars and electronic equipment.

Agriculture is not too important as far as cropland cultivation is concerned: it is limited to the small area of plains. Animal husbandry, **cattle breeding and dairy industry** have long traditions on the slopes of the hills and mountains.

The most important branch of economy is, however, **tourism** both in summer and winter. The many landscape beauties and **winter sport** facilities make Austria one of the most frequent

touristic destinations in Europe. The capital city (**Vienna**) is the most important regional centre of Central Europe. It had been the seat of the large European empire of the Habsburg Dynasty for centuries, and today it is very rich in historical landmarks, famous buildings, monuments and cultural attractions.



Administration

Austria is a **federal republic**, with 9 regions (bundesland) fairly independent from the central government in local legislation and finances.

Society

The majority (85 %) of the Austrians are Roman Catholics. There are very few national minorities (Italians, Slovenians and Hungarians) living in Austria. The larger half of the population dwell in urban areas. The local Austrian population, with the exception of Vienna which is an international and open city, is very closed, foreigners are not welcome to integrate easily. Yet, there is a large number of foreign employees coming mainly from the Balkan countries, South Europe (Serbia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Albania and Turkey).

Landmarks

- *Saint Stephen's Cathedral*, the *Opera House* and the *Burg* (Royal Castle) = Famous and frequented historic imperial monuments in the heart of Vienna.
- *Prater* = The Town Park and amusement park of Vienna.
- *Ice wine* = Made from a type of white grapes picked after the first frosts, and grown in Burgenland in the north-east part of the country on the hills by Lake Neusiedlersee.
- *Wiener schnitzel* = Pork chop fried in breadcrumbs, the most typical Austrian food.
- *Croissant* = A kind of biscuit in the shape of a half Moon, in memory of the Battle of Vienna against the Turkish troops in the Middle Ages. (Half Moon is the national symbol of the Turks.) Also, coffee (brought to Europe by the Turks) spread from Vienna all over Europe, for the first cafés were opened here.



- *Dachstein* = A high range of the Alps, the central peak of which is visited by tourists, travelling up by cable car. There is the 'Skywalk' a frequented view-point, and several glaciers for skiers in summer, too.
- *New Year's Concert* = The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra traditionally gives a concert on New Year's Day that is broadcast all over the world. Austria is the land of classical music, with composers like the Strauss brothers, Mozart and Schubert.
- *Gross Glöckner* = the highest (3797 m) peak in the Austrian Alps and a large glacier.
- *Hohe Tauern* = High ~, the highest range of the Alps east of the Brenner Pass, includes the highest mountains in Austria.
- *Yodel* = Traditional Alpine song of very rapid and high voices.
- *Edelweiss* = Small white flower symbolizing the wildlife of the Alp Mountains.

UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Austria:

- The *Historic Centre of Salzburg* owes much of its Baroque appearance to Italian architects. It is a place of arts, especially music, as it used to be the residence of Mozart, the great Austrian composer of music.
- The *Historic Centre of Vienna* is rich in architectural ensembles, including Baroque castles and gardens, the late-19th-century Ringstrasse lined with grand buildings, monuments and parks.
- The *Schönbrunn Palace* was the residence of the Habsburg emperors and is full of outstanding examples of Baroque decorative art with its gardens and the site of the world's first zoo from 1752.
- The *Historic Centre of Graz and Schloss Eggenberg* is an exemplary model of the living heritage of a Central European urban complex.
- The *Wachau Cultural Landscape* is a stretch of the Danube Valley between Melk and Krems, a landscape of high visual quality.
- The *Hallstatt – Dachstein Salzkammergut Cultural Landscape* as an Alpine region is an outstanding example of a natural landscape of great beauty which contains evidence of a fundamental human economic activity.
- The *Semmering Railway* is a 41 km long mountain rail built between 1848 and 1854, with high standard of tunnels, viaducts and other works has ensured the continuous use of the line up to the present day.
- The *Lake Neusiedl* is the westernmost large alkali lake in Europe and has been the meeting place of different cultures in its varied landscape, which is the result of an evolutionary and symbiotic process of human interaction with the physical environment.

3.5.3. Latvia (Latvija)

(István Tózsza)

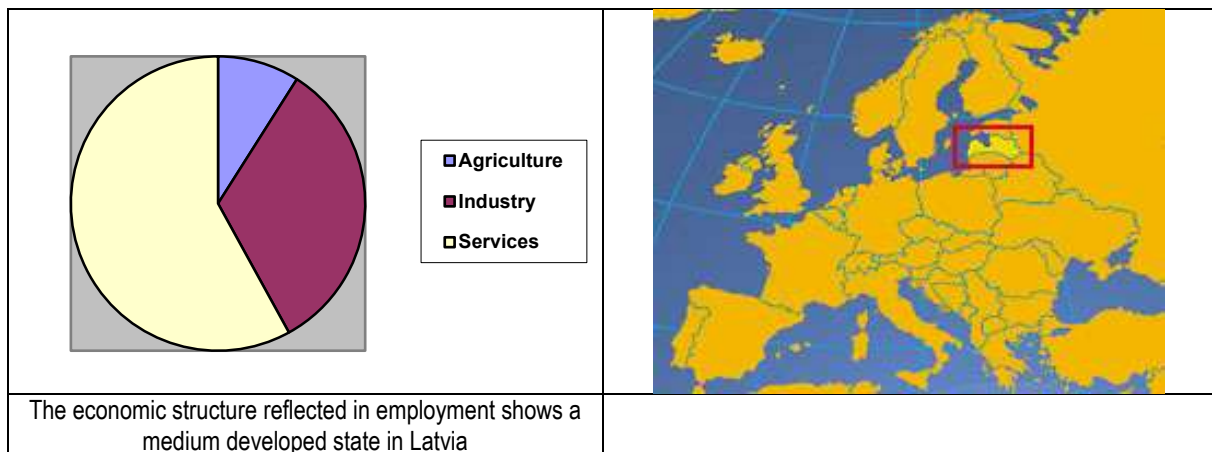
National Flag	Official name	Coat of arms
	<p>Republic of Latvia Native name(s): Latvijas Republika</p>	
<p>Capital city and population (million): Riga 0.9</p>	<p>Language(s): Latvian</p>	
<p>Country's population (million): 2.1</p>	<p>Currency: 1 Lat = 100 santime</p>	<p>Territory (sq kms): 64 500</p>
<p>Administrative division</p>		
<p>Regions: 109 districts / novadi</p>		

Geography

Latvia is situated by the Baltic Sea, on the Riga Bay. It is completely plains, part of the vast Eastern-European Plain. Its main river is the Dvina flowing to the Baltic Sea. The capital city, Riga was built at its mouth. The east and west part of the country is marshland. The climate is continental with cold winters and cool summers. In history, Latvia used to be under Lithuanian, Polish and mainly Russian occupation. It gained independence from Russia only in 1918. This lasted only 22 years, when it was again occupied by the Soviet Union. Latvia remained a Soviet republic until 1991 when, with the collapse of the socialist system it again could be an independent country. It joined the EU in 2004.

Economy

The country lacks all kinds of mineral resources; traditionally only the **textile industry** could develop, based on **flax**. Agriculture grows **rye** and **sugar beet** as well. During the Soviet period, however, some engineering was developed in Latvia, especially **ship building**. The Latvian economy has to **import** raw materials and minerals. Because of the Dvina river's reservoirs, **hydroelectric power** plants supply some 70 % of the Latvian energy demand. The rest is imported from Russia. Since much of the country's territory is covered by woods, the **paper industry** is also well developed. Latvian sea **fishing** is also important. In animal husbandry, they breed **cattle** and **pigs**.



Society

Only 52 % of the country's population is Latvian. The largest national minority is Belorussian with 34 %. The rest is composed of some Ukrainian and Polish minorities. As first religion, the majority of the Latvian are evangelist (44 %), 33 % of them is orthodox Christian, and 20 % Roman Catholic.

Landmarks



- *Wittenstein Castle* = in Riga with palaces and houses from the mediaeval times.
- *Amber jewellery* = amber is the fossilized pine resin of ancient trees and it has always been a valuable material for making jewellery.
- *Riga Balsam* = a thick, black national drink with high (45 %) alcohol content, brewed from 1775.
- *Kuldīga (Goldingen)* = the buildings of the historic centre is well preserved and dates to from the late 16th to the 18th centuries, when it used to be a trade junction and member of the Hanseatic League.

UNESCO World Heritage Site in Latvia:

- *Vecrīga (Old Riga)* = the historical centre of Riga, located on the east side of Daugava River. Vecrīga is famous for its old churches and cathedrals, such as Riga Cathedral and St. Peter's church.

3.5.4. Lithuania (Lietuva)

(István Tózsza)

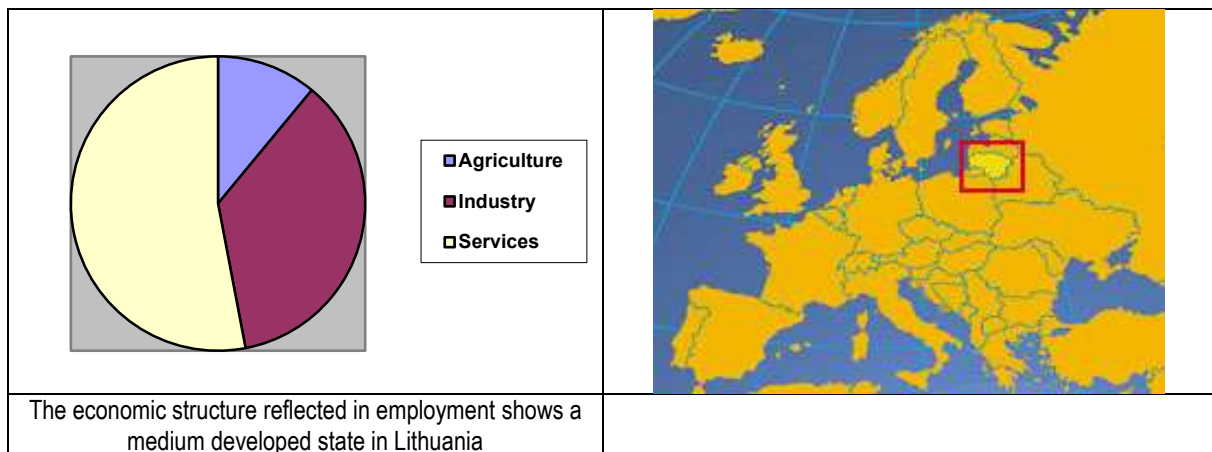
National Flag		Official name		Coat of arms	
		Republic of Lithuania Native name(s): Lietuvos Respublika			
Capital city and population (million): Vilnius 0.6		Language(s): Lithuanian + Russian			
Country's population (million): 3.5		Currency: 1 Litas = 100 centu		Territory (sq kms): 65 200	
Administrative division					
Region: counties / apskritys	Seat	apskritys	Seat	apskritys	Seat
Alytaus	Alytus	Panevėžio	Panevėžys	Telšių	Telšiai
Kauno	Kaunas	Šiaulių	Šiauliai	Utenos	Utena
Klaipėdos	Klaipėda	Tauragės	Tauragė	Vilniaus	Vilnius
Marijampolės	Marijampolė	--	--	--	--

Geography

Lithuania is situated by the Baltic Sea. It is completely plain land, part of the vast Eastern-European Plain. Its main river is the Nemunas flowing to the Baltic Sea. The middle part of the country is marshland. The climate is continental with cold winters and cool summers. In history, Lithuania used to be a powerful nation and together with Poland, they dominated the territory of Ukraine, down to the Black Sea. Later it was occupied by Russia. It gained independence from Russia only in 1918. This lasted only 22 years, when it was again occupied by the Soviet Union. Lithuania remained a Soviet republic until 1991 when, with the collapse of the socialist system it again could be an independent country. It joined the EU in 2004.

Economy

Since the country is poor in minerals and raw materials, much of these have to be imported from Russia. Recently, however **oils reserves** were discovered at sea **off the coast** of Lithuania at sea. A **chemical industry** was developed based on imported Russian oil. In the Soviet times, an **engineering** industry and **shipbuilding** were created. Its traditional industrial branches are in connection with agriculture and forestry: **paper** industry, **textile** industry (flax) and food (**dairy**) industry. They grow **flax, sugar beet**, tobacco; they breed cattle and pigs.



Society


81 % of the population is Lithuanian. The national minorities are Russian (8%), Polish (7 %) and Belarussian (2 %). The majority of the population are Roman Catholic like in Poland (90 %) and 8 % of the population are Orthodox Christians.

Landmarks

- *Amber Museum* = in the town of Palanga there is the most valuable collection of different amber 'stones'. Amber is referred to as the gold of the Baltic Sea. It is mineralized pine resin having been formed some 60 million years ago.
- *Drum Museum* = the world's largest collection of drums in Vilnius.
- *Cepelinai* = national meal; a potato pastry filled with mushrooms and minced meat served with sour cream and fat sauce.
- *Vytautas Castle* = located on an island in a lake west of Vilnius.
- *Curonian Spit* = a 98 km long, thin, curved sand dune separating the Curonian Lagoon from the Baltic Sea. It is a moving, drifting formation, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Transboundary property with the Russian Federation.
- *Vilnius Old Town* = the largest surviving medieval district in Europe. World Heritage Site.
- *Cultural Reserve of Kernavé* = an archaeological site and tourist attraction, the former capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. A World Heritage Site.

3.5.5. Germany – East of the Rhine

(István Tózsza)

National flag		Official name		Coat of arms			
		Federal Republic of Germany Native name(s): Bundesrepublik Deutschland					
Capital city and population (million): Berlin 3.5		Language(s): German + Danish, Frisian, Low German					
Country's population (million): 80		Currency: 1 Euro = 100 cents		Territory (sq kms): 356 975			
Administrative division							
Region: Länder		Seat		Region: Länder		Seat	
Baden-Württemberg		Stuttgart		Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony)		Hannover	
Freistaat Bayern (Bavaria)		München (Munich)		Nordrhein-Westfalen (North Rhine - Westphalia)		Düsseldorf	
Land Berlin		Berlin		Rheinland-Pfalz		Mainz	
Brandenburg		Potsdam		Saarland		Saarbrücken	
Freie Hansestadt Bremen		Bremen		Freistaat Sachsen (Saxony)		Dresden	
Freie Hansestadt Hamburg		Hamburg		Sachsen-Anhalt		Magdeburg	
Hessen		Wiesbaden		Schleswig-Holstein		Kiel	
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern		Schwerin		Freistaat Thüringen (Thuringia)		Erfurt	

Geography

Germany is situated in Central Europe, though the regions west of the River Rhine belongs to Western Europe, including Saarland (the Saarbrücken Region) and Westphalia (the Düsseldorf region), the Eifel Mountains and the Mosel River Valley. The climate of Germany is a mixture of oceanic with westerly winds bringing humid air from the Atlantic, and continental with hot summers and cold winters. The north of the country is plain with weak, not too fertile soils (Germanic Plain). There are hilly regions in the middle (Eifel Mountains, Black Forest, Thuringian Wood) while in the south there are the high mountain ranges of the Alps. The two big rivers of the country (the Rhine in the west and the Danube in the south) have fertile valleys (River Rhine Valley and Swabian–Bavarian Basin). The Rhine region is especially good for growing wine.

In history, the eastern part of Germany was occupied by the Soviet troops at the end of World War II. While the west and south parts of the country underwent a rapid economic renewal and development supported by the USA, the eastern part remained a socialist republic (named German Democratic Republic (GDR) with a relatively weak economy. In spite of the fast industrial investments specialized on local resources like brown coal, this part of Germany had remained underdeveloped compared to the west part. Even the capital city (Berlin) was divided into West and East Berlin, separated from each other by the ill-famed Berlin Wall, representing and symbolizing the 'iron curtain' and the 'cold war' between the Soviet (socialist) and the capitalist parts of Europe.

The political separation of the Germans lasted from 1945 to 1990, when with the assistance of the Hungarian government of the time; a huge number of East German tourists were let cross the Austrian border from Hungary without valid passports⁴¹. This political and social event initiated the collapse of the East German Communist Party and the political system, giving way to the reunion of Germany after 45 years of political separation.

Economy

Germany is an industrial world power. Its industrial production alone contributes almost 30 % to that of the EU. As for international commerce, only the USA precedes Germany. Its hilly regions have been rich in coal and salt. Heavy industry and especially metallurgy was based on the black coal and imported iron ore. Engineering has long traditions with manufacturing motor cars and precious instruments. The chemical industry is also well developed, especially in the eastern part based on brown coal.

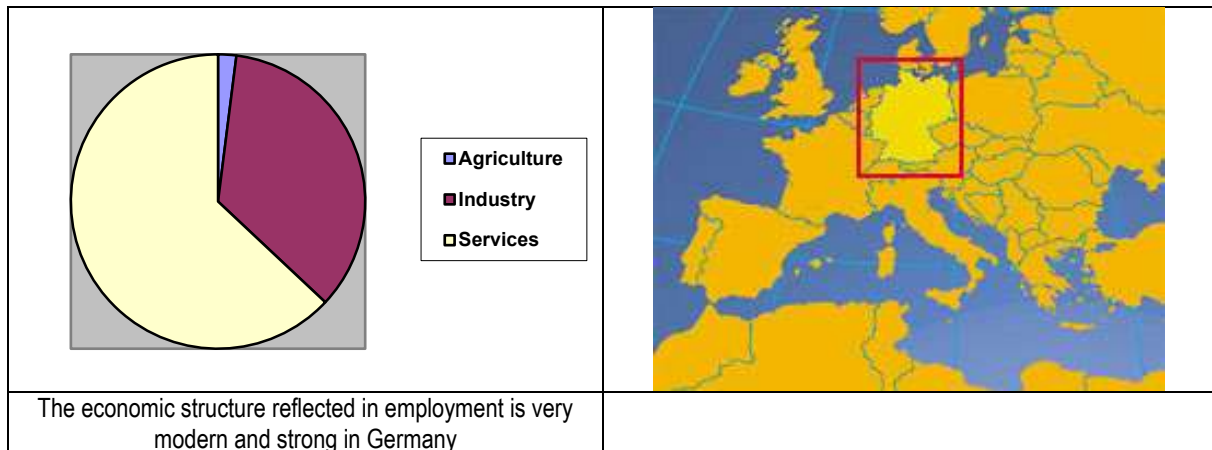
The homeland of the industrial revolution in the continental Europe is the **Ruhr Land** in North Rhine – Westphalia Region – though these regions are affiliated to West Europe. Almost half of Germany's metallurgy is concentrated there. The Ruhr cities include **Düsseldorf** (the regional capital) **Dortmund, Essen, and Cologne**. The steel produced in **Solingen** is said to be the *non-plus ultra* in steel quality. Another German basis of heavy industry is the **Saarland** Region in the west, though it is again a Western European region.

The centres of engineering can be found in **Stuttgart** (Baden Württemberg Region) with the **Porsche** and the **Daimler-Chrysler** Co. manufacturing Mercedes Benz. The **Bosch** electro technical Co. is also situated here. **Frankfurt** (Rhineland and Pfalz Region) is the centre of German **banking** services and European **finance**, with the busiest **airport** of the continental Europe and with the **Opel** Co. A huge chemical plant (BASF Co.) is situated in Ludwigshafen.

The centre of Bavaria (the largest German region) is **Munich** with such well-known companies like the **BMW, Siemens** and **Messerschmitt**. Munich is also the **beer** capital of Germany with the famous Beer festival. Besides **malting barley** and **hop** needed for beer brewery, they grow sugar beet and wheat in Bavaria.

The German agriculture is characterized by rowing wine along the River Rhine and especially in the Mosel River Valley (**Burgundy** red wine) – though, in Western Europe. Animal breeding is best known by cattle and dairy industries and farming. In general, the north and eastern part of Germany is less developed than the rest. There are, however large centres of production and services in the north, like **Hamburg** (a port) and **Bremen** making up independent regions with their gravity zones and high number of inhabitants.

⁴¹ In the autumn of 1989 there was a Pan-European bicycle picnic organized by Hungarians in Burgenland, Austria, when everybody was let through the 'iron curtain' if riding a bicycle, without a passport to symbolize the friendship of the peoples of Europe. Borrowing from Shakespeare's tragedy entitled King Richard III, when the main character says the well-known line: 'A horse, a horse! My kingdom for a horse!' there was a new saying created for the East Germans happening to stay in Hungary at that time: 'A bicycle, a bicycle! My Trabant for a bicycle!' :-)



Hannover in Lower Saxony is another automobile manufacturing centre with the neighbouring Wolfsburg (**Volkswagen** Co.). In Eastern Germany, car manufacturing that used to produce the very popular, cheap Wartburg and Trabant cars for all socialist countries was closed down in Thuringia. **Jena** is famous for its quality glass production (**Zeiss** Co.). In Saxony, **Dresden** and **Leipzig** are the economic centres; the latter is the home to the largest international fair. **Chemnitz** and **Halle** are chemical centres based on local brown coal. **Berlin** is the largest metropolis in Central Europe.

Germany is the third largest manufacturer of automobiles (following the USA and Japan). Its chemical industry is also among the first ones in global sense, and as for its **chemical exports**, it is the first, including the export of **pharmaceuticals** (**Bayer** Co. in Cologne). As for **automobile export**, it is preceded only by Japan.

The structure of German economy is changing from heavy industry to information communication and precision engineering requiring fewer raw materials and more knowledge than previously.

Administration

Germany is a federal republic. It is divided into 15 regions + Berlin, with their own local parliamentary systems looking back on long history. The regions have a relatively great legislative and financial independence from the central (federal) government seated in Berlin.

The German one is a typical federal system with two legislative levels: one on the regional (provincial) level, the other on the federal one. Both parliaments are elected directly. The chancellor heads the government formed by the winning party in the federal assembly. The provincial (regional) assemblies delegate appointed members to the federal council who, together with the federal assembly elect the president.

Society

Germany in history used to be the stronghold of **Protestantism** as opposed to Roman Catholicism. This resulted in long lasting religious wars, the cause of which was the economic interest of the German 'regions' and states to avoid the formation of a strong (Catholic) central power in the hands of the German–Roman emperors. Today some 40 % of the population are Protestants.

Aging is a social problem in Germany. According to estimations, the old age population (above 60 years) is going to be 40 % of the total population. The replacement fertility rate⁴² is 208 children from 100 women of maternity age. This value is around 140 in Germany, which results in a decreasing population. Even today, the German economy relies on a large number of **guest employees** coming from the south east of Europe (Turkey, Serbia, Albania, Macedonia, Bosnia, and Romania in the first place). Their ever-increasing number and the housing places, the different cultures and traditions of the immigrants are causing social tensions in German residential areas. There is a domestic migration from the former East Germany to the western regions in search of jobs and a higher living standard. Some 3 million people have moved westward since the German reunion.

Landmarks

- *Donau Quelle* = the spring of the second largest European River, the Danube is situated in the Black Forest.
- *Berlin, Golden Bear Festival* = a movie film festival.
- *Münchener Bier Fest* = the beer festival in Munich.
- *Berlin, Potsdamer Platz; Reichstag; Tiergarten* = the centre of Berlin; the House of the Parliament, symbol of the city; the Berlin Zoo.
- *Würstchen mit Kartoffeln* = sausage with potato, a typical German meal.
- *River Rhine* = the third largest European river on the west part of the country.
- *Saxonian Switzerland* = the hilly region around Dresden with interesting rock formations.
- *Frankfurt Airport* = the 'revolving air disc' of Europe.
- *UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Germany:*
- *Aachen Cathedral* = frequently referred to as the 'Imperial Cathedral' (*Kaiserdom*), is a Roman Catholic Church in Aachen. The church is the oldest cathedral in northern Europe and was known as the 'Royal Church of St. Mary at Aachen'. For 600 years, from 936 to 1531, it was the church of coronation for 30 German kings and 12 queens.

⁴² The limit of the reproduction value in demography is 208 children per 100 women to preserve and maintain the population number in a country or a region.

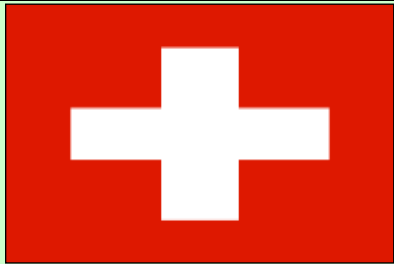

- *Speyer Cathedral* = is a major monument of Romanesque art of the German Empire.
- *The Würzburg Residence* = a palace with the Court Gardens and Residence Square.
- *The Pilgrimage Church of Wies* (Wieskirche) = is an oval Rococo church, located in the foothills of the Alps in Steingaden, Bavaria.
- *The Augustusburg and Falkenlust palaces* = connected by the spacious gardens and trees of the Schlosspark in Brühl, Rhine-Westphalia.
- *St. Mary's Cathedral* (Dom St. Maria) and *The Church of St. Michael* (Michaeliskirche) = an important medieval Catholic cathedral and an early Romanesque church in Hildesheim.
- *Trier* = monuments include the Cathedral of Saint Peter (Trierer Dom) one of the most important early Gothic cathedrals, the Liebfrauenkirche (Church of Our Lady) the oldest cathedral in the country and some Roman monuments.
- *The Hanseatic City of Lübeck* = the Hansa was an economic alliance of trading cities and their guilds that established and maintained a trade monopoly along the coast of Northern Europe. Lübeck was for several centuries the capital of the Hanseatic League ('Queen of the Hansa') with a rich Brick Gothic architectural heritage.
- *Palaces and Parks of Potsdam and Berlin* = refers to a group of palace complexes and landscaped gardens in Potsdam (e.g. Sanssouci Palace, Neuer Garten, Marble Palace, Cjateau of Cecilienhof, Babelsberg Palace and Park, Heilandskirche, Sacrow Palace and Park) and Berlin (e.g. Glienicke Palace and Park, Volkspark, Nikolskoe log house, Pfaueninsel, Böttcherberg, Jagdschloss Glienicke).
- *The Abbey of Lorsch* (Reichsabtei Lorsch) = is a former Imperial Abbey near Worms, one of the most renowned monasteries of the Carolingian Empire.
- *The Mines of Rammelsberg* are the site of continuous mineral extraction. Near the *Old Town of Goslar*, together with the *Upper Harz Water Regale* (Oberharzer Wasserregal) which is a system of dams, reservoirs, ditches and other structures, much of which was built from the 16th to 19th centuries to divert and store the water that drove the water wheels of the mines.
- *The Old Town of Bamberg* = with its authentic medieval appearance.
- *Maulbronn Abbey* (Kloster Maulbronn) = is the best preserved medieval Cistercian monastery complex in Europe.
- *Quedlinburg* = a medieval old town, castle and collegiate church in the Harz Mts in Saxony-Anhalt.
- *The Völklingen Ironworks* (Völklinger Hütte) = part of the European Route of Industrial Heritage.

- *The Messel Pit* (Grube Messel) = is a disused quarry near Messel, Hesse. Bituminous shale was mined there. Because of its plethora of fossils, it has significant geological and scientific importance.
- *Bauhaus* = the buildings of the famous German house building school that combined crafts and the fine arts. It operated from 1919 to 1933. The most famous buildings are in *Weimar* and *Dessau*.
- *Cologne Cathedral* (Kölner Dom) = one of the best-known architectural monuments in Germany, and Cologne's most famous landmark, an exceptional work of human creative genius. It is visited by 30 thousand people every day.
- *Luther Memorials in Wittenberg and Eisleben* = the importance of Wittenberg historically was partly due to its close connection with Martin Luther and the dawn of the Protestant Reformation; several of its buildings are associated with the events of this time. E.g., the Augustinian monastery in which Luther dwelt in Wittenberg and his birthplace in Eisleben.
- *Classical Weimar* = a city, famous for its cultural heritage in Thuringia.
- *Museum Island* (Museumsinsel) = an island in the Spree River in the centre of Berlin. It received its name for a complex of five internationally renowned museums (Altes, Neues - Egyptian, Alte Nationalgalerie, Bode, Pergamon).
- *Wartburg Castle* = is situated at Eisenach, Thuringia and is an outstanding monument of the Feudal Period in Central Europe.
- *The Garden Kingdom of Dessau-Wörlitz* = is one of the first and largest English parks in Germany and continental Europe.
- *Reichenau Monastic Island* = the monastery is the Benedictine Abbey of Reichenau.
- *The Zollverein Coal Mine Industrial Complex* (Zeche Zollverein) = is a large former industrial site in the city of Essen, North Rhine-Westphalia.
- *Historic Centres of Stralsund and Wismar* = with Brick Gothic buildings and brick churches.
- *The Rhine Gorge* = the Upper Middle Rhine Valley, a 65 km section of the River. It has a unique combination of geological, historical, cultural and old industrial values.
- *Bremen* = the Bremen Roland is a statue of the city's protector, erected in 1404; the market place and the Town Hall.
- *The Muskau Park* (Muskauer Park) = is the largest and one of the most famous English gardens of Germany and Poland on both sides of the River Neisse. Transboundary property with Poland.

- *Rhaetian Limes* = part of the Limes Germanicus, the frontier (limes) fortifications that bounded the ancient Roman provinces of Germania Inferior, Superior and Raetia.
- *Old Town of Regensburg* = the medieval centre of the city.
- *Berlin Modernism Housing Estates* = consists of 6 subsidized housing estates (Siedlungen) that testify to innovative housing policies from 1910 to 1933, during the Weimar Republic, when the city of Berlin was particularly progressive socially, politically and culturally.
- *The Wadden Sea* (Wattensee) = is an intertidal zone in the SE part of the North Sea, lying between the coast of NW continental Europe and the Frisian Islands, forming a shallow body of water with tidal flats and wetlands. It is rich in biological diversity. Transboundary property.

3.5.6. Switzerland – East of the Rhine

(István Tózsza)

National Flag	Official name	Coat of arms
	Swiss Confederation Native name(s): Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft Confédération Suisse Confederazione Svizzera Confederaziun Svizra	
Capital city and population (million): Bern 0.1	Language(s): German, French, Italian, Romansh	
Country's population (million): 7.6	Currency: 1 Franc = 100 centimes	Territory (sq kms): 41 285
Administrative division: 26 cantons (Kantone / cantons / cantoni / chantuns)		

Geography

The country lies exclusively in the territory of the high mountains of the **Alps** and the **Jura** Mountains in the north. The third largest river of Europe (the **Rhine**) originates in Switzerland. In addition, the River Rhône flows from Switzerland towards France. The terrain of the country is Europe's highest lying land, with an average elevation of 1300 metres above sea level. The central and eastern parts of Switzerland with the German speaking cantons belong to **Central Europe**, while the Western, French speaking cantons can be considered as **Western European** ones rather. Nevertheless, there is a full geographic description of Switzerland here with the above remark regarding the country's transition between the east (larger part) and the west (smaller part).

Economy

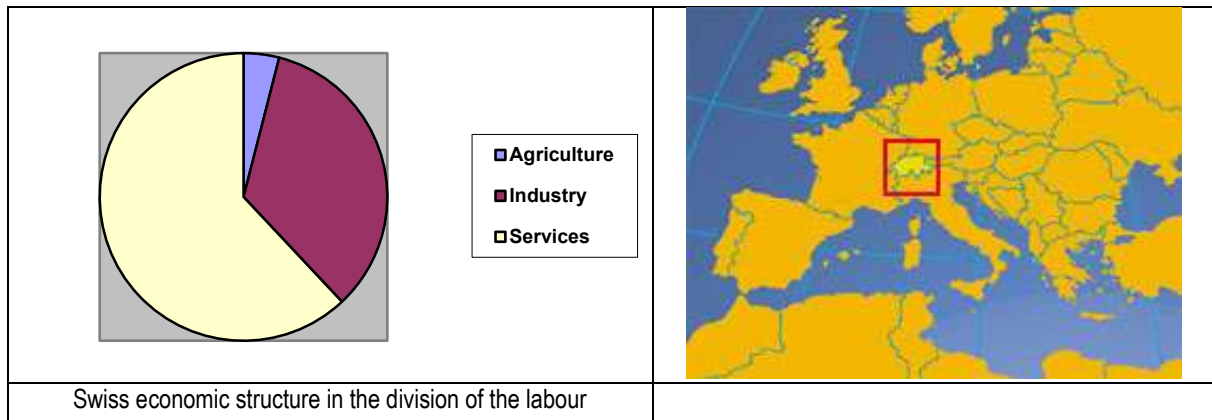
The cantons of Switzerland reached political **independence** both from the German and French empires at a very early stage of history, in the Middle Ages. This independence was reinforced in 1815 when the country was guaranteed a politically **neutral non-aligned status** by all the countries of the world. This position led to the development of the banking industry and Switzerland became the world's safest international **financial centre**.

Traditional branches of industry include the manufacture of **watches** and clocks and **pharmaceuticals**. The centre of the watch industry is **Geneva** (0.1 M), and that of the pharmaceutical industry is **Basel** (0.2 M).

Agriculture traditionally is confined to **cattle breeding** and consequently **dairy industry** is very important – it produces high quality of different **cheeses** and **chocolates**. Swiss chocolate like a Swiss watch is a trademark in itself.

Energy production is based on water: **hydro energy** stands for 60 % of energy production and the rest is produced by **nuclear power** plants. Thus, Switzerland is free of environmental pollution. **Tourism** is another important branch of economy in summer and especially in winter in the mountains.

Infrastructure (transportation, communication) is very well developed and **living standard** is very **high**. The busiest and relatively largest city is **Zurich** (0.3 M), the financial centre.



Society

Swiss society is by far the closest one in Europe. Foreigners are not at all welcome to immigrate in the local communities. Though there are numerous foreign workers from southeast Europe (Turkey and the Balkan countries), they will never be accepted as Swiss members of the community. Application for Swiss citizenship is a very long lasting and bureaucratic process.

In the western third of the country – belonging to Western Europe – the Swiss native population speaks French (21 %); in the central part: German (72 %), in the south eastern part: Italian (6 %), and in the easternmost part: the so called Retoromansh (1 %). However, English is spoken and understood all over the country.

Some 60 % of Swiss population lives in urban area (towns). The proportion of the followers of the Roman Catholic Church is 46 % and the Protestants number 40 % of the citizens.

Administration

The country is a federal republic with strong micro regions of historic origin. The names of the small regions are cantons. Cantons have an elaborated structure of legislation and financial independence. There are 20 cantons and 6 semi cantons.

Landmarks

- *Swiss watch* and *Swiss chocolate* = the name of the nation in itself can stand for a quality trademark of these products.
- *The Alps* = High mountainous region, especially favourable for winter sports.
- *Rhine waterfall* = Famous touristic destination.
- *Matterhorn* = Famous, steep, horn shaped peak of the Alps.



- *Alphorn* = Traditional, very long horn of low voice used by the shepherds of the Alps.
- *Milka* = the best-known Swiss chocolate trademark in Europe, first produced by Suchard in 1825. A purple cow symbolises it.
- *William Tell* = A legendary national hero of the Swiss, who according to the tale, was forced to shoot off an apple off the head of his own son with his crossbow.
- *Tre Castelli* = the 3 castles of Bellinzona are a group of fortification located around the town of Bellinzona in Canton Ticino.

UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Switzerland:

- *Benedictine convent of Saint John (Clastra Son Jon)* = is an ancient monastery in Müstair village, and, because of its exceptionally well-preserved monument of Carolingian art, has been a World Heritage Site.
- *Abbey of St. Gall (Fürstabtei Sankt Gallen)* = is a religious complex in the city of St. Gallen. World Heritage Site.
- *Old City of Bern* = the medieval city centre, a World Heritage site.
- *Jungfrau – Aletsch Pprotected Area* = Swiss Alps Jungfrau-Aletsch is located between the cantons of Berne and Valais. It is a mountainous region, containing the northern wall of Jungfrau and Eiger peaks, and the largest glaciated area in Western Europe, comprising the Aletsch Glacier. This protected area was the first World Natural Heritage site in the Alps, when was inscribed in 2001.¹
- *Monte San Giorgio* = is a wooded mountain in Canton Ticino. It is a World Heritage site of geological importance, because it is the best-known record of marine life in the Triassic period. The Italian side of the mountain was added to the World Heritage Site in 2010.
- *Wine-growing area of Lavaux* = it consist of 830 hectares of terraced wine yards that stretch for about 30 km along the south-facing northern shores of Lake Geneva. It is a cultural landscape World Heritage site.
- *Sardona Tectonic Area (Glarner Überschiebung)* = The Glarus thrust is a major thrust fault in the Alps of Eastern Switzerland. The area is of geologic importance showing the traces of high mountain evolution. UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- *Rhaetian Railway* = a famous mountain railway network and service. In 2008 the network of the Albula/Bernina Landscapes (the part from Thusis to Tirano in Italy, including St. Moritz) was added to the list of World Heritage.
- *La Chaux-de-Fonds and Le Locle* = architectural heritage of a watchmaking area, part of the Word Cultural Landscape Heritage.

3.5.7. Liechtenstein

(István Tózsza)

National Flag	Official name	Coat of arms
	Principality of Liechtenstein Native name(s): Fürstentum Liechtenstein	
Capital city and population (thousand): Vaduz 100	Language(s): German	
Country's population (thousand): 30	Currency: 1 Swiss Franc = 100 centimes	Territory (sq kms): 160
Administrative division: 11 communes (Gemeinden)		

Geography

It is a mini state in between Austria and Switzerland, in the mountains of the Alps. There are 10 settlements forming the country, which is a constitutional monarchy (duchy). It is in customs union with Switzerland.

Economy

The income of this mini state comes from 3 sources: application of very low **tax** rates ('tax Paradise'); issuing valuable **stamps**; **tourism**. The living standard is the highest here in European context. Liechtenstein is the world's largest exporter of false teeth (dentures). In addition, it is an international financial centre. Agriculture produces cheese.

Society

The population of the mini state is composed of Swiss, Austrians, Germans and Italians.

Landmarks

- *Museums* include National Arts, Ski, Postage, and Walser. There are two *castles* to visit the Liechtenstein Castle in Vaduz and the Gutenberg Castle.
- *Hilly landscapes* in the Swiss Alps.



3.5.8. The Alpine North-East Regions of Italy (Bálint L. Tóth)



Map of the Alpine North-East Italy

			
			
Lombardy (the north part)	Veneto (region of Venice)	Friuli - Venezia Giulia	Trentino - Alto Adige Südtirol (South Tirol)
Flags and coats of arms of the Alpine regions of North-East Italy			

Based on historical, cultural, economic, geographic and political features of the Italian regions, Trentino – Alto Adige (Südtirol – South Tirol) and the northern, Alpine parts of Lombardy, Veneto, and Friuli – Venetia Giulia can be considered as Central European. All of these regions contain territories that used to belong to Austria – Hungary, the major Central European power in 19th century. The one fully and three partially Central European administrative units, however, are far from being analogous as far as the composition of their population, economic strengths, political traditions and cultural – linguistic characteristics are considered.

In Italy, regions are autonomous entities with powers defined in the 1948 Constitution. Unified as late as in 1871, Italy itself is a very heterogeneous country whose unification process was totally completed only by November 1918 with the annexation of the so-called unredeemed Italian territories (*terre irredente*) once belonging to Austria–Hungary. Following the above-noted logic, North-East Italy (i.e. South Tirol, Veneto and Venetia Giulia) plus the northernmost part of Lombardy belongs to the political–cultural–economic concept, named Central Europe.

Lombardy

Lombardy produces around 20 % of the national added value in Italy, which ranks the region the first in the country and the fourth in Europe in this sense. Lombardy is also the first Italian region both for its volume and value of commercial exchange with foreign markets. It also hosts many of the country's major industrial, commercial and financial activities, and its per capita income exceeds the European average level by 35%. Lombardy is the seat of the Italian Stock Exchange, one of the most important European financial centres.

The privileged geographic position (the Milan – Turin – Genoa industrial triangle) has allowed Lombardy to operate at an international scene as a dynamic economic actor, and to become one of the most industrialized areas in Europe. Its economic system mainly focuses on small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Lombardy is one of the four motors of modernization for Europe alongside with Baden-Württemberg (Germany), Rhône-Alpes (France) and Catalonia (Spain). After the significant drops caused by the 2008–2009 financial and the 2020-2021 epidemic crisis, the productivity level of manufacturing companies doing business in Lombardy has considerably increased, especially in the clothing, transportations and food industries.

In 2016, agriculture, forestry and fishing together give the 1% of Lombardy's GDP, while the industry and services sectors are responsible for 27% and 71,5% of the region's GDP, respectively.

There are approx. 800,000 enterprises based in Lombardy, distributed over 16 industrial districts specialized in all the traditional Made in Italy domains such as fashion and furniture-decoration, but also in all the technology-dominated ones, such as electronics, industrial automation and robotics. In a highly dynamic industrial context, craftwork enterprises still represent one third of the production sector, employing 17% of the Lombard labour force. Tourism is again an important source of income for the Lombard economy. The region is rich in artistic monuments of high cultural–historical relevance, beautiful natural landscapes (e.g. the Italian Lakeland in the Southern Alps), while Lombardy is also a common destination for business travellers.

Trentino – Alto Adige (Südtirol - South Tirol)

Trentino - Alto Adige has a population of approximately 1.1 million inhabitants living in 13 605 km². People living in Trentino are almost completely Italian-speaking (speaking Trentino dialects), however, the region has historical German-speaking communities too: Alto Adige is, on the other hand, mostly German-speaking (speaking the South Tirolean dialect) with an Italian-speaking minority that stands at about 26%. The Ladin people constitute an ethnic group and a historic minority in the Italian Dolomites. They speak a Romance language that is close to the Swiss Rhaeto-Romance. The region's administrative capital is Trento with 118 thousand inhabitants in 2019.

South Tirol remained Austrian almost continuously until the end of the 1st World War. In 1919, it was assigned to Italy together with Trentino. Fascism began a process of forced Italianization with the prohibition of the use of the German language and the encouragement of immigration of Italians from other regions. All the region's attempts to return to the Austrian (or German-speaking) homeland have proved to be unsuccessful. Since then the German-speaking Tirolean people received linguistic and cultural protection, implemented in international treaties and through the forms of autonomy granted by the Italian state.

In 2016 Trentino - Alto Adige was the third Italian region for GDP per capita, preceded by Valle d'Aosta and Lombardy regions. The region's unemployment rate is the lowest in Italy. Despite the predominantly mountainous, Alpine territory, the agricultural sector is quite significant in the area. Trentino – Alto Adige holds the national production record for apples. Cattle breeding is also historically significant in the region, as being the most important means of livelihood in the Italian Alpine valleys. In 2016, agriculture, forestry and fishing together give the 3,6% of Trentino - Alto Adige's GDP, while the industry and services sectors are responsible for around 18% and 71% of the region's GDP, respectively. A great importance is given to tourism too, in particular in the winter season: the ski resorts of Trentino – Alto Adige are quite popular destinations. The education and research sector is also well-developed in Trentino – Alto Adige, with the presence of the University of Trento and the Free University of Bolzano. A primary role in the regional economy is played by the public sector, given the wide administrative competences of the autonomous provinces.

Veneto

With its 4.9 million inhabitants, Veneto ranks fifth among the Italian regions as for population. Those nearly 5 million people living in an area of 18,407 km² give a population density figure of 266.6 inhabitants per km². As of 2017, one out of five new-born children is a foreign citizen in Veneto, while those who were born to at least one foreign (non-Italian) parent give the 29.4% of the region's total population. The region's administrative capital is Venice with more than 261 thousand inhabitants.

According to tradition, it was Saint Mark the Evangelist who found the church of Aquileia located in the center of the region. The first infiltrations of Germanic tribes in the territory took place in 168-169 AD. Starting from 1000 AD, there has been an economic take-off throughout the region and a revival of social life in the main cities, which began to exercise hegemonic control over their countryside. Although the centres of Venice's economic interests were in the overseas Mediterranean territories, the state always kept alive its ties with its hinterland. The Kingdom of Lombardy – Venetia was created as part of the Austrian empire in 1815. After the sixty years of Austrian domination, the annexation of Veneto to the Kingdom of Italy took place in 1866. Together with Trentino – Alto Adige and Friuli – Venezia Giulia, Veneto is part of a broader Italian macro-region called the Three Venices, in Italian: *Triveneto* or *Tre Venezie*.

In agriculture, cereal production (corn and soybeans) and viticulture prevail in Veneto. The region is the first national producer of wine grapes. The breeding of cattle and swine is also important. Agriculture, forestry and fishing together give the 2.1% of Veneto's GDP. The industry of Veneto is characterized by the presence of large metallurgical and chemical plants in Marghera and Mestre, while in the provinces of Vicenza and Treviso SMEs prevail. The industry sector (together with constructions) is responsible for the 30.7% of the region's GDP. The transport sector's production, on the other hand, slowed down. The level of activity in the construction sector recorded a slight increase, however, without rising significantly above the low figures of the 2009 crisis period. Services give the major part (67.3%) of Veneto's GDP.

In 2017, regional exports of goods increased by 5.1%. The growth in tourist flows has strengthened in 2017: the number of guests in the region's accommodation facilities grew by 5.8 percent, thanks to visitors, especially from Germany, and, to a lesser extent, from Italy. With 19.5 million arrivals and 69.9 million visitors in 2017, Veneto is the 6th most visited region in Europe and the first in Italy.

Friuli – Venezia Giulia







In 2018, Friuli – Venezia Giulia (also referred to as FVG) counts more than 1.2 million inhabitants that is the 2% of the total Italian population, with a density level of 154.6 inhabitants per km². One third of the inhabitants is concentrated in the urban areas of Udine and Trieste. The region's administrative capital is Trieste with some 205 thousand inhabitants. It is a region with a special statute as the entity is characterized by multiple cultural, historical and economic traditions. Due to the particular historical events and the fact of being inhabited by different linguistic and historical minorities (Friulians, Germans, Slovenes), in 1964 Friuli – Venezia Giulia obtained an autonomous status within the country. However, Italian remained the official language.

The city of Gorizia is a quite clear illustration of the Central European nature of the region: at the end of the Second World War, the new border cut the city of Gorizia in two: its western part remained Italian, while the eastern side became a Yugoslavian city by the name of Nova Gorica.

The provinces of Udine, Pordenone and Gorizia were once seen as underdeveloped agricultural areas, however, they have faced a great industrial take-off over the years and the population has now a high standard of living. The city of Trieste and its surroundings are now mainly characterized by the presence of the tertiary sector and enjoy one of the highest per capita income rates in Italy. The regional agricultural production is concentrated on cereals, sugar beet and grapes, from which high quality wines are manufactured. The breeding of cattle, swine and silkworms is also significant in Friuli – Venezia Giulia. In 2017, agriculture, forestry and fishing together give the 1.8% of Friuli – Venezia Giulia's GDP, while the industry and the services sectors give the 26.9% and 71.3% of such index, respectively.

The main industrial sectors are: metallurgy, mechanics, and chemistry, shipbuilding, food, textile and paper industries. The activity of Trieste's port is dynamically growing. The so-called Science and Technology Park hosts numerous high-tech scientific institutions, including *Elettra* laboratory, one of the main scientific research centres in Europe.

3.5.9. Galicia in Ukraine (Zoltán Dorogi)

		
		
Lviv Oblast	Ternopil Oblast	Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast
Flags and coats of arms of the three regions (oblasts) in the Ukrainian Galicia		

Galicia is a historical region in Central Europe currently sharing between Poland and Ukraine. It is known as the Kingdom of Galicia, Volhynia and Lodomeria. Its traditional capital is Lemberg (Lvov, L'viv). In the medieval and modern ages, the history of Galicia was varied. The origin of the name Galicia (called Halych, Halics in the medieval ages) come from Slavic word of jackdaw, which is very common there and can be seen in the coat of arms.

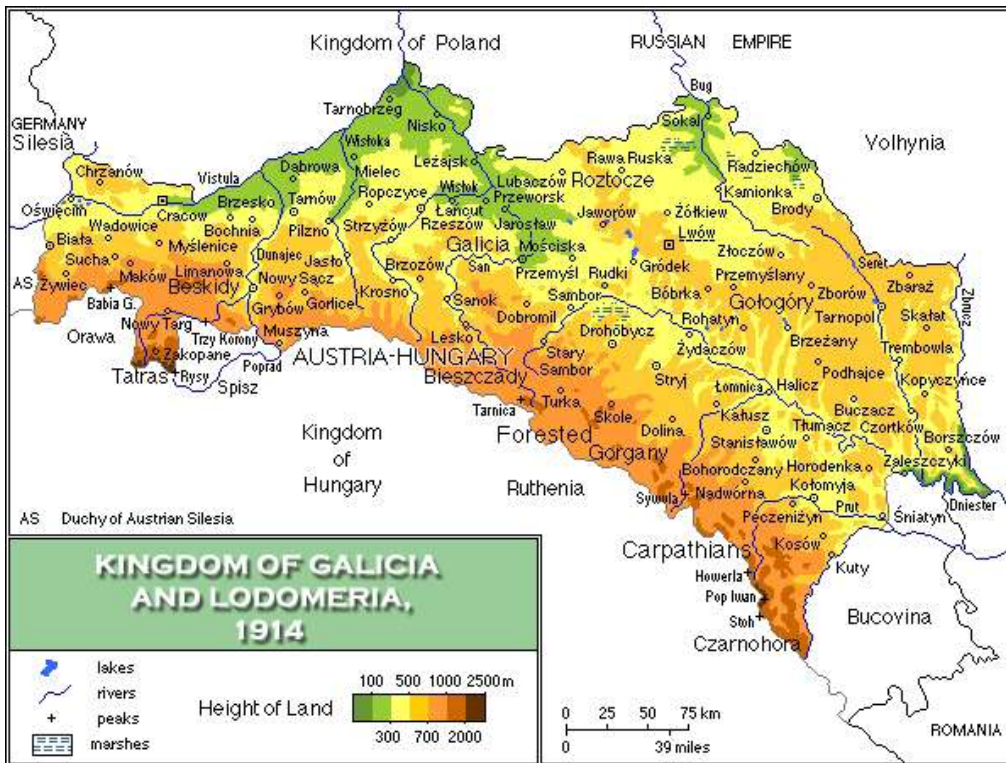
The population was colourful: Polish, Ukrainian ethnic groups (Ruthens), Jews, Russians settled down in the region with mixed religion situation. In the historical wars the region was repeatedly shared and annexed by various empires (Poland, Lithuania, Russia and the Habsburg Empire). The region lies in the border of Catholic and Orthodox churches. From 1873, Galicia, as part of the Habsburg Empire, became independent, with their own parliament (Sejm) responsible for education, culture and local issues. During World War I. heavy battles took place in the region between the Central Powers (Habsburg Empire and Germany) and the Russian Empire with serious damages and death tolls in the population. The main conflict origins between the Polish and Ukrainians for the leader role.

This division was also evident in the usage of mother tongues, barely 40% of inhabitants mentioned Ukrainian as their mother language. The number of Polish-speakers may have been inflated because Jews were not given the option of listing Yiddish as their language. Jew and German groups immigrated from the medieval in more waves. In the multi-linguistic culture Yiddish became very common, thanks to trade and industry, which is a German-based language mixed by Hebrew, Romance and Slavic elements, mostly from Polish.

By the turn of the Millennium, the community had become more homogeneous (dominant by Ukrainians and Russians). The architecture, heritages, monuments of Polish, Austro-Hungarian and Russian-Ukrainian effects flood the mood of typical Central European background.

Ethnic diversity of Eastern Galicia at the turn of the twentieth century and in 2001

Ethnicity	Various groups of Ukrainians (Ruthens, Rhumens, Rhusins, Huchuls)	Poles	Jews	Germans	others (Armenians, Belarus, Hungarians)	Russians
Ratios in 1914	64.5%	21%	13.7%	0.3%	0.5%	-
Ratio in 2001	98,84%	0,16%	0,04%	-	0,07%	0,87%



Map of Galicia from 1914



Map of the separated Galicia

In World War II, the situation got even worse, the population suffered from the battles and armies. The Paris Peace Treaty shared the territory between Poland and Ukraine (formerly the Soviet Union). A large part of Galicia belongs to Ukraine, and a smaller one became part of Poland. The border mostly followed the ethnic border. In the Lvov oblast, the ratio of Russians in the total population was approximately between 3-5%, in the Ivano – Frankivsk oblast it was between 1-3%, so the ratio of Russians very low in Galicia. The southwest part of Galicia is Trans-Carpathia, a mountainous region that used to belong to the Hungarian Kingdom for more than one thousand year, before the end of World War I. The original population was Hungarian and the Ukrainian Ruthens. Today there is an approximately 150 thousand Hungarian minority living in the western edge of Galicia, in the Carpathians (in the Trans-Carpathia Region). Their cultural, educational, language using autonomy is hardly observed by the Ukrainian Government and Parliament, which is making the Ukrainian EU accession rather difficult.

The political borders cut the traditional trade routes and connections, broke up markets and formed centres. Traditional commercial and industrial cities like Lvov (Lemberg) lost their role. Nowadays, two earlier formed oblasts sign the region: Lvov, Ivano-Frankivsk (Prykarpattia) and some settlements are in Ternopol oblast. Galicia is not to be confused with Bukovina that belongs to Eastern Europe. In agriculture, small farms became more common, which not large enough to produce values for the families.

After the independence, deindustrialisation and privatization characterized the country, which means that many inhabitants moved from the cities and industrial centres to rural areas due to the daily living standards. In Galicia, employment proportion in the agriculture is high, compared to foreign values. Industrial activity mostly stopped or decreased in Galicia because of their less competitiveness in the global market. Thanks to the neighbouring Polish areas, the gas and oil pipelines, the electricity lines, the manufacturing activity was continued in the centres. All the important transport ways, like railways, roads, pass the region, that is why the region has good connections with the western world. Near Lvov, at the Polish border, railway infrastructure is operating to help the change between European (normal) and Russian (wide) gauges.

L’viv/Lvov/Lemberg. With approximately 730 thousand inhabitants, it is the capital of Lvov oblast, which is the cultural, educational and industrial, commercial centre of Southwest Ukraine. The old town lies in a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The city was established near the Poltava River, under the Castle Hill. In the Soviet period, the city was developed into an industrial centre, with newly established factories and heavy industrial activities. The number of inhabitants dynamically increased after the war and many Ukrainians moved to the city to work in the factories. The Jewish and the German ethnic groups suffered severe losses of lives during and after World War II, respectively. Polish groups were deported to Poland. Car industry developed in the Soviet period, which is still important and represents high added value in economic activity in Galicia. The wood, paper and furniture, textile industry is operating in L’viv.

Ternopil / Tarnopol (population: 223 thousand), capital of Ternopil oblast, is located along the River Seret. Administrative, education and industrial centre of Western Ukraine. Economy based on agriculture, food and textile industry, manufacturing, producing mostly to domestic market. The city is rich in historical and religious heritages, cultural institutions and universities. It is recommended to visit: The Church of the Nativity, Dominican Monastery, Church of the Exaltation of the Cross and the Ternopil Castle established in the 16th century.

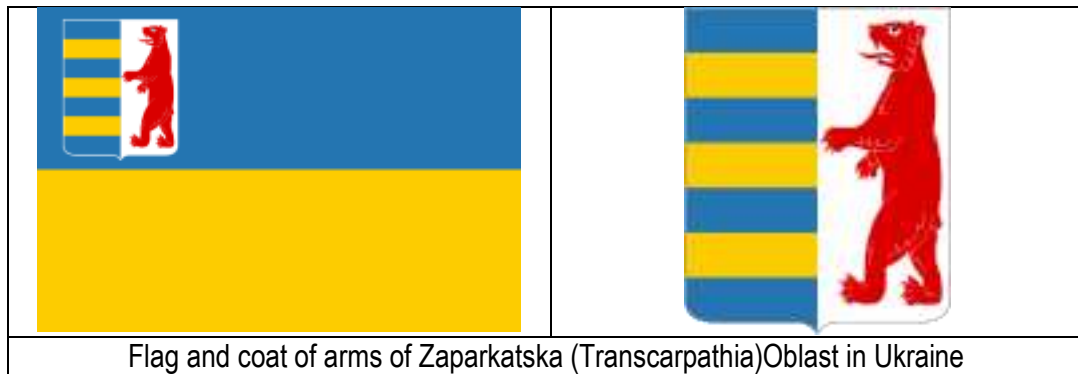
Thanks to centuries old cultural connection with Western Europe, plenty of cultural heritages, colourful buildings, churches have been visited near the natural unique, which attracts many tourists to the region.

- **Halych:** Halychyna tombs, Church of Dormition, Remains of Cathedral of the Dormition and St. Basil chapel, Reconstruction of wooden church from the 16th century, Prince's well, Residence of Mitropolit, Castle of 13-17 centuries, Church of The Nativity from the 14. Century.
- **L'viv/Lvov:** Cathedral of Armenians, Orthodox, Roman Catholics, the Dominicans, the city hall (Rathaus), the old market place called Rinok.

The Russian war on Ukraine ensuing in 2022, however, changed both the economic and demographic situation of Galicia, too. The final results of the crisis cannot be seen presently (in May 2024).

3.5.10. Transcarpathia in Ukraine

(Zoltán Dorogi)



Transcarpathia (in Hungarian Kárpátalja, in Ukrainian: Zakarpats'ka oblast) was the part of the Kingdom of Hungary over thousand years till 1920. Based on historical legend, Hungarian tribes occupied the Carpathian Basin after crossed the mountains at the Verecke pass, which is in the Transcarpathia region. As a result of treaties, which closed the World War I., many counties (Bereg,Ung, Ugocsa, Maramaros) attached to Czechoslovakia, and then to the Soviet Union after the World War II. The previous Hungarian counties were integrated in one administrative unit, called Zakarpats'ka oblast. From 1991, Transcarpathia became part of Ukraine; with Galicia belong to Central Europe, while Ukraine lies mostly in Eastern Europe. Transcarpathia is the only region of Ukraine which lies inside the Carpathian Basin.

The area of Transcarpathia is 12,800 km², located in the North-eastern region of the Carpathian Basin. Carpathians make up 80% of its territory, the rest parts covered by lowland and the Hungarian Plain. The region is subdivided to 13 districts and 5 cities. The population density is not so high (98 capita/km²), which causes the double-faced characteristic in where urban-rural dichotomy is obvious. The administrative centres are the five cities: Beregovo, Chop, Khust, Munkachevo, while the administrative centre is Uzhhorod.

Transcarpathia became very important for Ukrainian policy to strengthen connections with Central and Western European countries and the European Union where to more than 2 million Ukrainian moved to work and live, mostly to Poland and Germany, and on the other hand to keep more distance from Russia. From geopolitical viewpoints, strategic location, high number of Hungarian minorities living in the region with their self-organization made Transcarpathia the part of Hungarian national policy while support education, health and social care organizations of the minority.

Transcarpathia was populated by Hungarians from the X. century, Slavic-origin Rusyn, Ruthen groups were located from other side of the Carpathians. During the XIV-XV. Centuries Saxon, Swabian and other settlers from the German Empire established new villages and smaller towns after deforestation in the lower highlands. The long XVII. Century was abounded in wars, causing massive destruction and depopulation of the region, building fortresses and castles to keep under control the trade routes. The period after the wars till World War I can be characterized by relatively peace and prosperity. Settlers came from the neighbours and from the German Empire as well, so Transcarpathia became a multicultural, multilingual region. Hungarians lived mostly in the Plain and the cities, German groups in the cities, both of them working mostly in the agriculture and trade, later industrial activities connected mostly to them. Rusyns, Ruthens and Romanians were populated in the lower and higher highlands.



Map of Transcarpathia

The cities received traders and artisans; Polish, Armenian, Jewish, Greek, Slovak and Muslim groups were formed, creating a typical Central European colourful characteristic with various languages, religions and traditions. Hungarian and Polish population were mostly Latin rite Catholics, Rusyns and Ruthens Greek rite or Orthodox Catholics, appearance of Muslims and Jews, Lutherans and Calvinists were also significant. Despite prosperity, the region was large population emitting area, more and more inhabitants migrated to Western Europe and the USA, that is why locals have extensive connections.

Both of the World Wars Transcarpathia suffered huge losses, lost high ration of population, economic, commercial and trade systems were damaged. Between 1920-1938, Transcarpathia was part of Czechoslovakia, till 1944 of Hungary, in 1946 was attached to the Soviet Union, after its disintegration the region belongs to Ukraine. Rusyns and Ruthens have not been recognized as independent ethnicities by Ukrainian governments, just as dialects, they were classifies among Ukrainians during the census.

Economy is determined by geographical signs and location, the region has been lying far away from capital cities and large industrial regions, that is why developing the region's economy has not been taken priority. The Carpathian Mountains provides opportunity of forestry, woodworking and mining. Agriculture is the most significant sector of the economy, wide range of traditions links to food production, including growing cereals, livestock's, mainly sheep's, milk and meat production. Growing fruits and grapes, vineries also famous.

Nationalities in Transcarpathia by census in 1910 and 2001.

Nationality	Number in 1910	Ratio in 1910 (%)	Number in 2001	Ratio in 2001 (%)
Hungarians	184.789	30,7%	151.533	12,1%
Rusyns (1910) Ukrainians (2001)	334.755	55,5%	1.010.100	79,9%
Germans	63.561	10,5%	3.500	0,3%
Romanians	11.423	1,9%	31.183	2,5%
Slovaks	6.333	1,1%	5.645	0,45%
Jews	-	1,4%	2.419	0,19%
Roma	-	-	14.631	1,17%
Russians	-	-	31.183	2,49%
Belarus	-	-	2.821	0,23
Others	1.913	1,4%	8.883	0,71%
Total	602.774		1.254.614	

Industry is characterized by mostly light activities and metal engineering, although heavy industrial sites were not settled during the soviet period. The light industry is built up traditional activities, like furniture, textile, shoes industries, creating building materials and concrete from local raw materials. Some factories produce chemicals, plastics, medicines. Mechanical engineering dominates the economy, producing various elements of electric motors, machine tools to electro mechanic systems and car assembly plants.

Transport is also an important sector, which based on the fact that at the Ukrainian-Hungarian and Ukrainian-Slovakian border meet the European standard of railway line with the Russian standard. Csap (Ukraine) – Zahony (Hungary) region is an international railway hub, in where trains and wheels of railway equipment are replaced between European gauge (1435 mm) and the so called wider, Russian size (1520 mm). This procedure can be just in three sites in Europe, other hubs settled in Polish-Belarus and Finnish-Russian border.

Tourism has become more and more important; number of visitors has been increasing. The destination has numerous sights. Natural values in the Carpathian Mountains, like peaks, lakes, biosphere reserves and national parks invite visitors. Winter sports, as skiing, have good opportunities in the mountains. Main attractions are castles, fortresses and their ruins, various churches from the medieval period filled with paintings, frescos and furnishing in roman, gothic and baroque style. Rusyn wood churches are also cultural values, two of them are under the protection of UNESCO World Heritages. Small historical quarters in towns, preserved from war destruction and modernization, promote unique cultural and architectural heritages present turn-of-the-century milieu.

Despite diversified economy, it can be characterized as inefficient, low technical level and organization, backwardness. Corporations suffer from lack of materials, energy, capital and connections to markets, which mean that stakeholders are not so competitive. Industry concentrates in towns, population has a low standard of living with low salaries and pensions.

Ungvar (in Hungarian, Uzhhorod in Ukrainian) is the administrative centre and largest town in Transcarpathia with approximately 115.000 inhabitants lying at the Ukrainian-Slovakian border. The town is one of the ancient settlements of the Hungarian Kingdom. Until the World War I. it was the cultural, administrative, commercial, education and religious centre of the Eastern border site. The downtown is still preserved the character of the Austro-Hungarian

Monarchy, the castle with citadel was built from the XIII. Century. The fortress with religious buildings in the old town is offered to visit, the open-air folk museum and other museums collected traditions, architectural features from all over the region.

Munkacs (in Hungarian, Munkacsevo in Ukrainian) has about 90.000 inhabitants. Like Ungvar, Munkacs was also cultural, administrative, commercial, education and religious centre. In the soviet area heavy industrial and metal engineering factories were established, mostly declined except electro mechanism, light industries. The town has a strategic location which is strengthen its geopolitical importance. The 5th Pan-European corridor (Venice-Trieste-Ljubljana-Budapest-Lvov-Kiev-Moscow) leads through Munkacs, transport sector is significant. Heritages, especially the castle that is one of the most famous building complex, churches, and the town hall are renovated from the Millennium.

Beregszasz (in Hungarian, Berehove or Beregovoin Ukrainian) is the cultural centre of Hungarian minority in Transcarpathia. Economy of the town degraded after 1991, in the past decade it has been strengthening slowly, mostly light industrial and agricultural, food producing sites are working. The II. Rákóczi Ferenc College, the first Hungarian-language college in Ukraine is in Beregszász, in addition to this, more second school is operating in the town. Cultural life was represented in museums, theatres and many social organizations. Main attractions are churches, castles, and buildings of the administration, museums and exhibition.

The Russian war on Ukraine ensuing in 2022, however, changed both the economic and demographic situation of the western edge of Ukraine, too. The final results of the crisis cannot be seen presently (in May 2024).

3.5.11. Vojvodina in Serbia

(Szilvia Graczka)



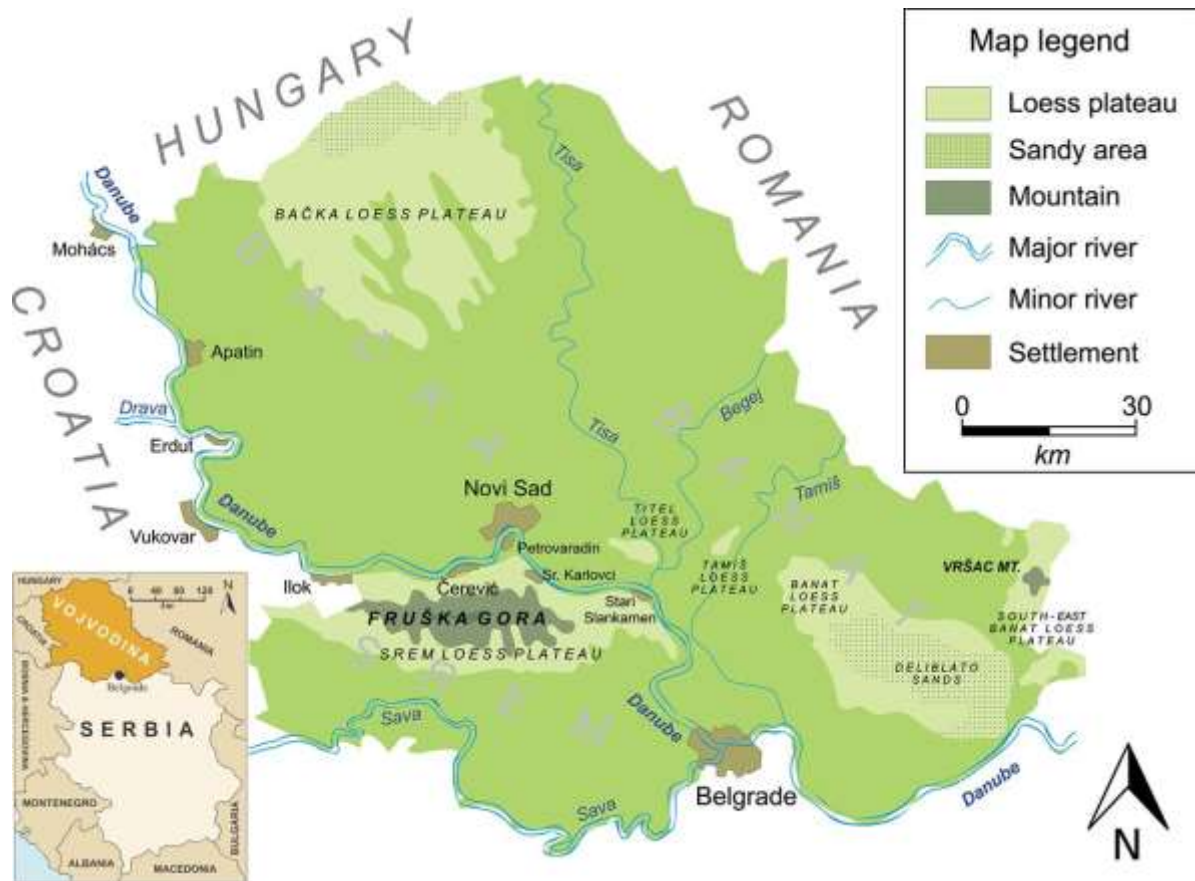
Serbia forms part of Southern Europe, however, its northern region, the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina is part of Central Europe. First, because it physically lies on the Central European Pannonian Plain. The large proportion of Hungarian minority also blurs the Hungarian-Serbian border in terms of cultural and linguistic characteristics. From a historical perspective, Vojvodina formed part of the Hungarian Kingdom for one thousand years. Hungarians then Austrians, then Hungarians again were ruling the region until 1920, when it became part of the former Yugoslavia. As a multicultural region its official languages are Serbian, Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian, Croatian and Rusin.

The region's population in 2017 was around 1.9 million. The Yugoslavian Civil War between 1991 and 2001 caused a flood of refugees (e.g. Croats) immigrating to Vojvodina, and about 60 thousand Hungarians and 40 thousand Croats have been forced to leave the province as part of an ethnic cleansing. The emigration in the past decade is due to economic reasons the so-called brain drain is in effect, as highly qualified citizens are also leaving the region. Germany, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland, the US and Italy are the most attractive destination countries for emigrants from Vojvodina. The immigration level is highest in Vojvodina (892.000 in 2017) as compared to other Serbian regions. According to birth and death rates, there is continuous natural decrease in the population ranging from -4.9 to -5.5 peaking in 2011 and 2015. The society in Vojvodina is ageing. Vojvodina used to be a heterogeneous region for centuries. Three dominant ethnic groups are Serbian, Hungarian and German. In the past decades, ethnic homogenisation is continuous due to the Yugoslav war and economic considerations.

The area of Vojvodina is 21,506 km², which is 28% of Serbia's area. Most of Vojvodina is plain, fertile and arable land, part of the Pannonian Plain. Fruska Gora is the only hilly region south of Novi Sad and Vrsacki Breg Hill is in the south-east of Banat.

As a EU candidate country, Serbia is aligning its statistical regions with the NUTS. Accordingly, Vojvodina is a NUTS-2 level region, but this is under discussion. Vojvodina is part of Sever together with Beogradski region. Its sub-regions are Backa (Bácska) in the north-west part of which is in Hungary, Banat (Bánát) in the east partly in Romania, Hungary and Central Serbia, and Serem in the south-west partially in Croatia and Central Serbia. This structure demonstrates the close bond of Vojvodina to its neighbours. The three main sub-regions are divided by the large rivers Danube, Tisza and Sava.

The population density and the level of urbanisation is also high: 60% of the population lives in urban settlements. Vojvodina gives home to 45 municipalities and cities, and the administrative centres are Subotica, Zrenjanin, Kikinda, Pančevo, Sombor, Sremska Mitrovica and the capital city, Novi Sad. The city agglomeration between Novi Sad and Belgrade is the centre of industrial activity.



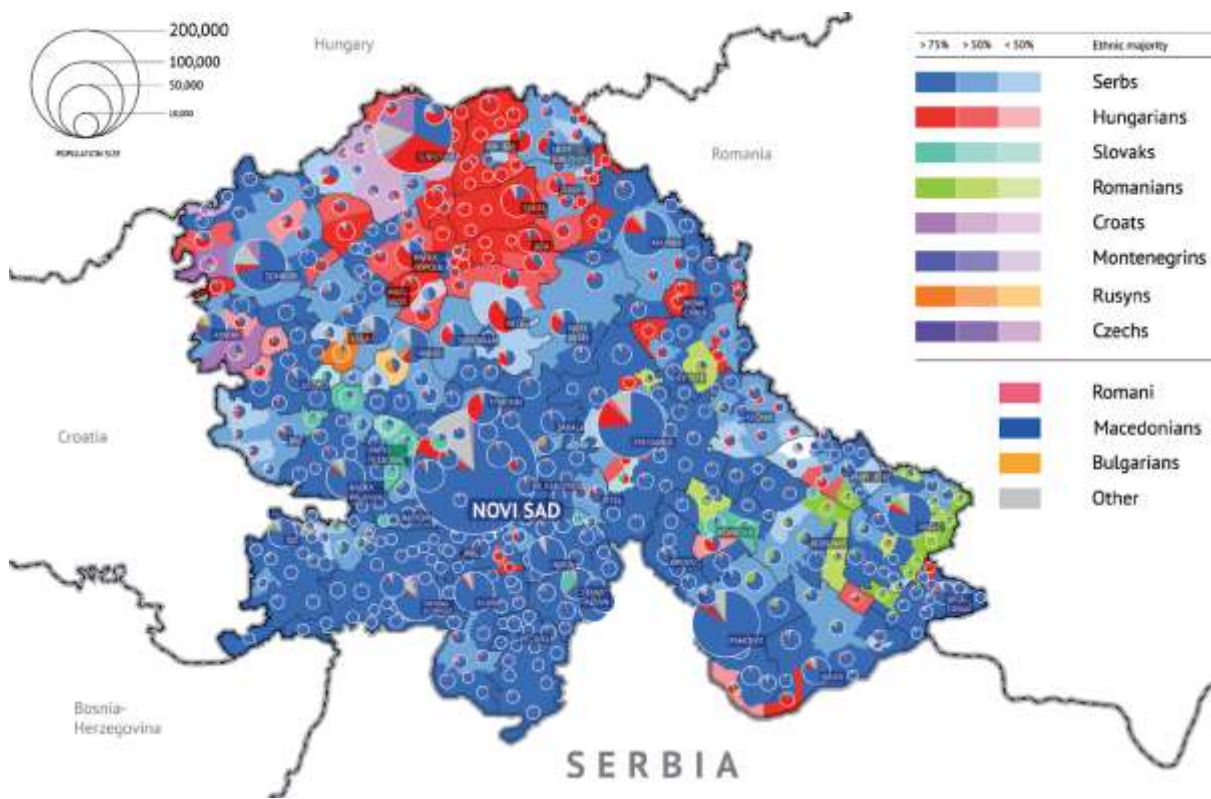
The geography of Vojvodina, Serbia

As part of Yugoslavia, Vojvodina was an agricultural centre, but also heavy industry was developed. Following the damages of the Yugoslavian War, Vojvodina is once again a prospering region of Serbia. The GDP per capita is the second highest after the Serbian capital's, and it grew by almost 4.9% from 2016 to 2017. The rich soil of the plains in Vojvodina gave grounds to a successful agriculture.

The main agriproducts are grain and corn (in terms of production output, corn is the number one product), but sugar beet and sunflower are also grown, as well as vegetable and forage plants. Orchards and vineyards are also found in the region. The land is primarily used for cultivation of cereals and industrial crops. The share of population working in agriculture is 11% of the total. The average farm size is close to 4 ha, which is small since collectivisation did not occur during the Communist era. Animal husbandry is not significant. Pig and cattle are the most dominant in the livestock. Large proportion of agriproducts are exported without processing, resulting in a loss of value added. Vojvodina has very low rate in forested lands (only cc. 7%).

The industry of Vojvodina has a well-developed transportation infrastructure like roads and railways and an extensive network of canals and navigable waterways. Irrigation network is underdeveloped in proportion to the agricultural land. Vojvodina industry is strongly connected to agriculture: food industry is significant. The agribusiness gives 40% of the total industrial output and 30% of total exports. Geographically the industry is centred on the petroleum and natural gas extractions in Vršac and Kikinda, and the Pančevo heavy industrial complex. Metal processing is traditional in the region, chemical, electrical and construction industries are also important. The fast-growing ICT sector is deemed to be the field of innovation in the future: today software development is the main source of income. Regarding Vojvodina energy sector

large oil and gas deposits should be mentioned in the Pannonian basin. 222 hydrocarbon deposits are identified mainly in Backa and Banat. There is also a potential in hydroelectric energy production.



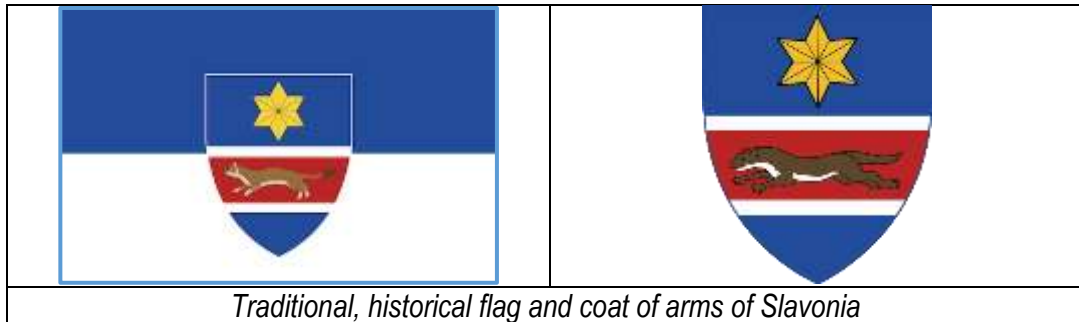
The nationalities of Vojvodina, Serbia

The interregional and cross-border economic co-operation is also a priority for Vojvodina. Among the top external trade partners of Serbia are traditional and/or regional partners and neighbours. The rank in 2017 is the following: Germany, Italy, Russian Federation, Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Hungary, Romania, Poland, Republic of Slovenia, and Republic of Croatia. In 2017, Vojvodina represented 26% of the total Serbian exports and 28% of the imports in value. In the first half of 2018, Vojvodina had 54.8 share in Serbia's total exports and 56.3% share in the total imports of the country making the region a relevant player in external trade. The balance, however, is negative, as imports increased at a faster pace than exports. Imports are focused on raw materials for the industry and energy products. Main export products are raw materials and agricultural products.

The relatively well-performing economy is also proven by the rate of unemployment: 10.7% in 2018 among the working age group (15-64), which is the lowest among all Serbian regions. The majority of employees work in the industrial sector. The industrial structure of Vojvodina shows that the dominant branch is manufacturing accounting for almost half (48.5%) of the total value added, being first in turnover and the number of employees in 2016. The relatively low number of enterprises in manufacturing indicates high concentration, i.e. the presence of large sized companies. The second most important branch is trade with significant turnover (35.3%), but performing only 17.6% of the value added items.

3.5.12. Slavonia in Croatia

(Eszter Kovács)



According to the EU Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS), between 2007 and 2012 Croatia was divided in several tiers. NUTS 1 level referred to the entire country as a single unit, while there were three NUTS 2 regions: Central and Eastern (Pannonian) Croatia, Northwest Croatia and Adriatic Croatia. From 2013, however, there are two NUTS 2 regions in Croatia: Continental Croatia and Adriatic Croatia. The main city, Zagreb is the centre of economy, transport, and culture, which concentrate 18% of the total population, 19% of employed, 25% of the industrial production, 67% of investors and 33% of the GDP. In this survey the continental or Pannonian Croatia is concerned with the data regarding the former Central, Eastern and Northwest Croatia. This northern half of the country can be considered as traditionally Central European under the historic name of Slavonia.



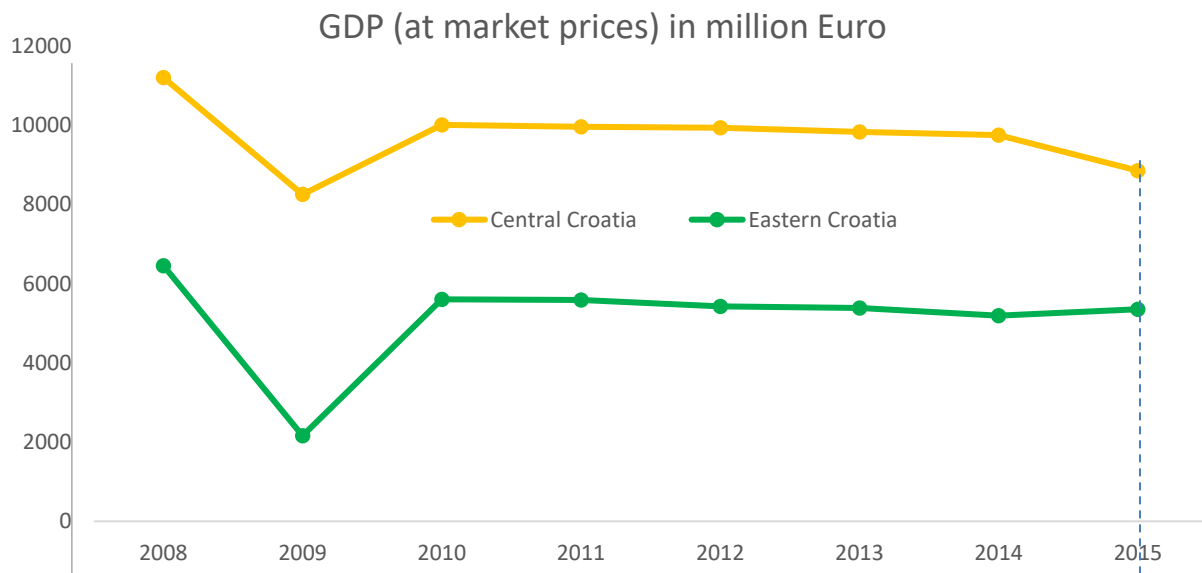
On the left: the basic regions of Croatia. The Northwest (with Zagreb), Eastern (Slavonia) and north of the central parts belong to Central Europe in physical geographical sense. The latest NUTS-2 statistical regions reflect this conception: the northern region, the Continental Croatia represents the historical Slavonia, while the southern region (including Dalmatia) is the Adriatic Croatia.

The features of **demography** are analysed mainly by the Croatian Bureau of Statistics. The latest census in Croatia was performed in 2011. The population density is shared in NUTS 2 regions, the most popular city is Zagreb (1200<), while the less popular regions are Karlovac,

Sisak-Moslavina, Požega-Slavonia, Bjelovar-Bilogora, and Virovitica-Podravina with a 30-49 persons per km².

Croatia's death rate has continuously exceeded its birth rate; therefore natural growth rate of the population is currently negative since 1991. The median age of the population is 41.4, and the gender ratio of the total Croatian population is 0.93 males per 1 female. 90.4% of the population is Croats. This makes Croatia the most ethnically homogeneous country of the former Yugoslavia. More than 86% of the population is Roman Catholic. The second-most common religion is Eastern Orthodoxy at 4%. 78% of Croatians speak at least one foreign language, the English as a second language, while 34% speak German and 14% speak Italian.

The Croatian **economy** is significantly centralized; its GDP is generated mainly within the capital, Zagreb. Croatian exports shows a smaller proportion of GDP, compared to any other big economies of the European Union.



There is a difference between Central and Eastern, and Northwest Croatia relating GDP. It means that the territory of the historical Slavonia is not homogeneous, but there is a westward territorial tendency to perceive in economic development. After Global Financial Crisis (GFC), its drop in GDP regenerated, which has continually performed since then. Although the Croatian economy is starting to recover, the problem is that during the crisis the public debt has increased significantly, so the current growth rates are not enough to pay interest on debt. According to the Croatian National Bank, in August 2015 the general government debt amounted to 86.5 % of the estimated GDP in 2015. Compared to August 2014, the public debt had increased by as much as 16.3 billion kuna, which represents a growth of 6 % per year. Interest rates payments amount to about one billion kuna per month.

According to forecasts, broadly stable and solid growth is expected in the following years, driven chiefly by firm domestic demand. An improving labour market, and healthy wage growth, further subdued inflation should buoy private consumption, while fixed investment should benefit from higher disbursement of EU funds and still-low borrowing costs. A slowdown in major trading partners in the EU poses a key downside risk to the outlook. Analysts expect growth of 2.7% in 2019, and 2.5% in 2020.

Industry concentrates at the large ports (oil refinery, chemistry, ship building) as Rijeka, and major towns (engineering, textile industry, electronics) as Zagreb. The copper mining is also relevant based on local resources. There is a considerable aluminium metallurgy based on imported raw materials. Croatian agriculture grows fruit, grapes and olives in Dalmatia, along the Adriatic shore, and wheat, maize and sugar beet in Slavonia on the fertile arable lands between the rivers Drava and Sava. Perhaps the most important branch of economy is tourism on the rocky coastland of the Adriatic Sea with lots small peninsulas and islands. Both Central and Western European tourists frequent Dalmatia in the summer. The centre of tourism is Dubrovnik, the 'Pearl of the Adriatic Sea'

The **cultures** that influenced Croatian folk culture through the centuries are Hungarian, Austrian, Venetian, Balkan, ancient Croatian, ancient Mediterranean, and Turkish. Traditional Croatian folk culture is manifested in dances, songs, holiday traditions, folktales, and other forms. Slavonia belongs to Central and Eastern Croatia, its cultural heritage represents social influences from its history, its heritage including manor houses, and folklore. Slavonia contributed to the Croatian culture, both through artists and through arts. Slavonia is a distinct region in traditional music; its culture is preserved through folklore festivals. The most significant musical instrument is tambura that is associated with the country's culture.

3.5.13. Slavonia in Slovenia

(László Percze)



Slovenia is divided into 12 statistical regions. They are based on the socio-geographic regionalization of the country (functional medium-size regions). Statistical regions coincide with the so-called Slovenian planning regions determined for the purposes of spatial planning. They have no political or administrative function and, apart from several minor exceptions, follow the boundaries of the existing municipalities. North of the Sava river, a territory which once was part of the so-called historical Slavonia, there are six statistical regions.

Savinja (Largest city: Celje; Population: 261,851; Area: 2,384 km²). This region is very diverse in terms of natural geography; it comprises mainly the wooded alpine world attractive for tourists (the Upper Savinja valley and a part of the Kamnik-Savinja Alps), the fertile Lower Savinja valley with good conditions for growing hops, the Kozjansko hills and the Velenje basin with lignite deposits for the production of electricity. In the Savinjska statistical region almost 3% of regional gross domestic product is annually invested in environmental protection. In 2011, 25.9% of total gross fixed capital formation was intended for environmental protection. In the same year, 11% of enterprise births and 7% of enterprise deaths were recorded. Compared with other regions, members of general libraries here borrow most library materials. In 2012 a member of a general library in the Savinjska region on average borrowed 62 units of library material. Savinjska has good natural conditions for agriculture. In 2010 this region had more than 11,400 agricultural households, which is 15% of all agricultural holdings in Slovenia and ranks the Savinjska region right behind the Podravska region. As regards utilised agricultural area as well as livestock units, Savinjska also took second place. This region is also a well-known and popular tourist destination. In 2012 tourist arrivals and overnight stays in this region represented 11.1% of all tourist arrivals in Slovenia and 15.0% of all overnight stays. On average tourists spent here four nights.

Carinthia (Largest city: Slovenj Gradec; population: 70,588; Area 1,041 km²). This statistical region of wooded hills and three river valleys lies in the northern part of the country along the

border with Austria. As far as traffic is concerned, it is difficult to access and is badly connected with the central part of Slovenia. The environment has been strongly affected by the heavy industry in the valleys. The importance of agriculture in the region is shown by the fact that agricultural holdings in Koroška are among the largest in the country both in terms of their average size of utilised agricultural area and in terms of the number of livestock units per agricultural holding. More than 90% of agricultural holdings in Koroška are breeding livestock. Regarding the average age, managers of agricultural holdings in Koroška are the youngest (53 years); in 2012, the registered unemployment rate was about the same as the national average. The difference between the registered unemployment rate for men and women was the highest, namely for women it was 6 percentage points higher than for men. In 2012, most of the insolvency proceedings were commenced in Koroška, i.e. 18 compulsory compositions, bankruptcies and liquidations per 1,000 companies and cooperatives in the region. The share of five years survivals among new enterprises was here the highest (61% of all new enterprises in 2011). This region also had the highest share of innovation active enterprises (62% of all enterprises).

Central Sava Region (Largest city: Trbovlje; Population: 41,657; Area 264 km²). This statistical region of the Posavje hills is the smallest region in the country by both area and population. In mid-2012, almost 43,800 people lived on 264 km², so it is the most densely populated region in the country. The natural and geographic features of this region create conditions for industrial activities and more than a third of gross value added is still generated by manufacturing, mining and other industry. In 2012, Zasavska once again recorded the highest negative annual population growth rate (−9.7‰), which was mainly a result of migration to other statistical regions. Among all regions in 2012, Zasavska had the highest negative net migration between regions, namely −8.1. This region also stands out by age of mother at childbirth. In 2012, first-time mothers in Zasavska were on average 27.7 years old, while first-time mothers in Osrednjeslovenska were on average 2 years older. In the same year, the number of unemployed persons increased further. The registered unemployment rate was here among the highest in the country (14.7%). In comparison with other regions, this is 6 percentage points more than in the region with the lowest registered unemployment rate, Gorenjska, and almost 3 percentage less than in the region with the highest unemployment rate, Pomurska. According to labour migration index among Slovene regions, Zasavska is the most residential region. In 2012, 60% of people in Zasavska had workplace in the region of their residence and 40% had workplace in another region.

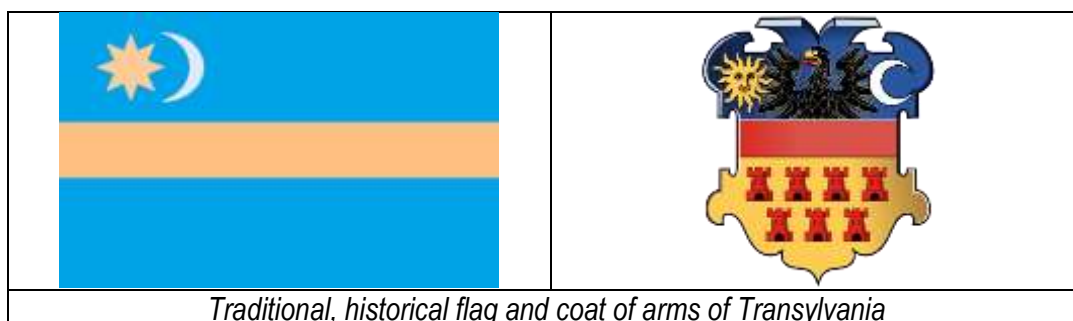
Lower Sava Region (Largest city: Krško; Population: 70,067; Area: 885 km²). This statistical region has very good traffic accessibility, it contains the fertile river valleys of Sava and Krka, the hilly areas of vineyards and the abundance of water are the characteristics of the second smallest statistical region in Slovenia. The only nuclear power plant in the country and the thermal riviera at the Čatež health resort are its main features. For environmental protection, the Spodnjeposavska region annually allocated only around 0.1% of its gross domestic product. For the same purpose, this region in 2011 allocated only 0.3% of total gross fixed capital formation, which is the least among all regions. In 2012, the employment population ratio in the region was around the national average. It was characterized by the largest difference between the employment rate for men and for women (for men it was 13 percentage points higher than for women). In the same year, the highest number of sick leave cases was registered in Spodnjeposavska (122 per 100 persons in employment); they lasted on average almost 20 days. In 2012, the fewest insolvency proceedings were commenced in Spodnjeposavska, only 5 compulsory compositions, bankruptcies and liquidations per 1,000 companies and cooperatives in the region.

Drava statistical region (Largest city: Maribor; population: 324,104; Area: 2,170 km²). In terms of geography, the Podravska statistical region is marked by hills in the northeast, subalpine wooded mountains (Pohorje and Kozjak) to the west and Dravsko-Ptujsko polje along the Drava River. The water wealth of this region is used for electricity production (the chain of hydroelectric power plants on the Drava River), while the fertile soil is used for agricultural production. This region has the largest agricultural area in Slovenia (80,500 hectares) and is the leading region in terms of the number of agricultural holdings (more than 12,300). In this region, the share of female holders of family farms was the highest, namely more than a third of all holders of family farms. In 2011, the region ranked second behind Osrednjeslovenska as regards the contribution to the national GDP. However, the disposable income per capita was one of the lowest in the country (EUR 9,800). In the same year, the highest share of gross value added was generated by services. The employment population ratio (53.7%) was in 2012 among the lowest in Slovenia, while the employment ratio of older persons (aged 55–64) was above the national average. In 2012, the registered unemployment rate was slightly lower (by 0.4 of a percentage point) but it was still above the national average. According to the labour migration index, the number of persons in employment working in the region does not lag far behind the number of persons in employment living in it (96 in 2012).

Mura (largest city: Murska Sobota; Population 114,287; Area: 1,337 km²). This is the most northeastern and flat statistical region. Fertile soil, the continental climate and flat land provide good conditions for agriculture, which generated nearly 8% of gross value added in 2011. The region had the greatest area of cereals per resident. In 2010, the area of cereals per resident was three times greater than in Spodnje Posavska, which follows Pomurska. On the other hand, its geographical position deteriorates the economic position of this region and people's living conditions, which reflects in its low GDP per capita (EUR 11,950 in 2011) and the lowest disposable income per capita (EUR 9,000 in 2011). The registered unemployment rate in 2012 was slightly lower, but still the highest in the country (8.4 percentage points higher than in the region with the lowest unemployment rate). In 2012, most of the insolvency proceedings among sole proprietors were commenced in Pomurska, i.e. 3 compulsory compositions, bankruptcies and liquidations per 1,000 sole proprietors. Relatively few accidents at work happened in this region in 2012, namely 16 per 1,000 employees, and none of them was fatal. Pomurska is one of the most tourist attractive Slovenian regions, since this region annually generates a tenth of total overnight stays in Slovenia. Health tourism, hunting and rural tourism, the wine trails near the Mura River all contribute to the touristic significance of the region.

3.5.14. Transylvania in Romania

(Szabolcs Nagy)



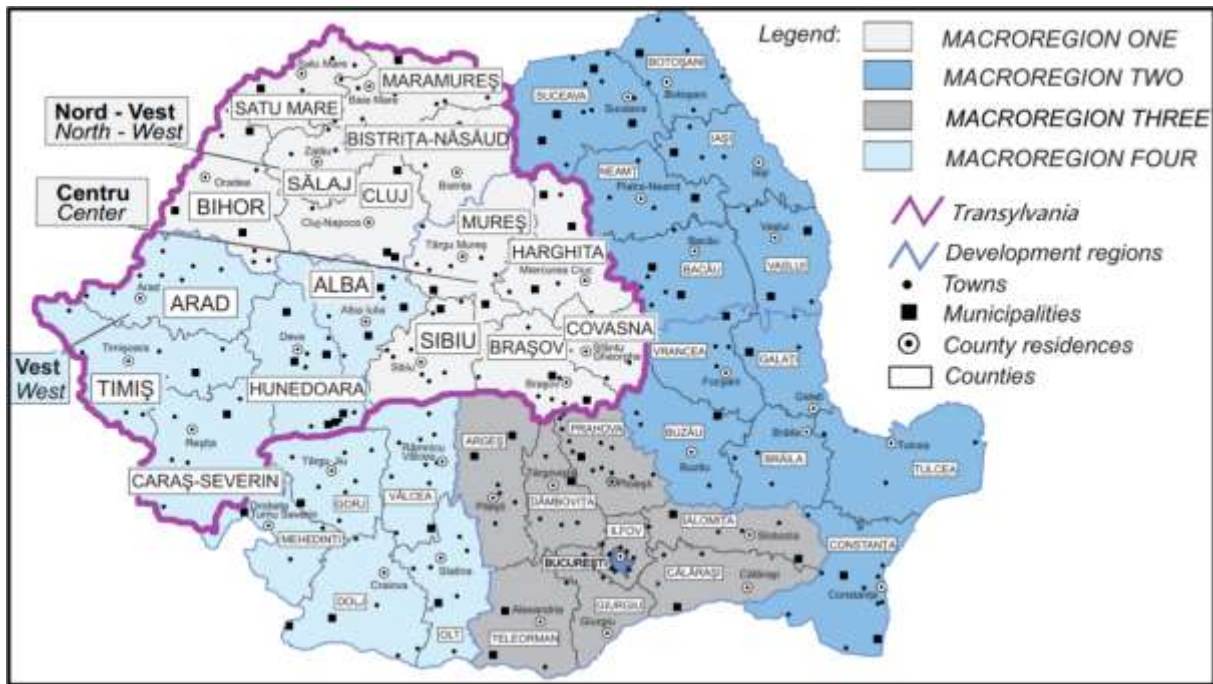
Population (person, 2019)	6 647 858
Population ratio (100=population of Romania)	34,2%
Total area (km ²)	100 294
Area ratio (100=area of Romania)	42,1%
GDP/capita (euro, 2017)	9240
GDP ratio (100= GDP of Romania)	32,9%

Statistical key figures of Transylvanian counties according to EUROSTAT

Transylvania is located in the territory of Romania from the eastern edge of the Great Hungarian (Pannonian) Plain to the north-eastern, eastern and southern lines of the Carpathians and to the Banat Mountain. The eastern and southern ranges of the Carpathians surround the Transylvanian Plateau. The south-western border of Transylvania is the plain from the South Carpathians to the Tisza River, the B ans ag flatland and the Banat Mountains. From hydrological aspect Transylvania belongs to the catchment area of the Danube.

The different interpretations of the geographical boundaries of the Central European region also define the situation of Transylvania in different ways. Before the First World War in significantly politicized German interpretations, different explanations can be seen. In some of the definitions of „Mitteleuropa” Transylvania was not a part of Central Europe. Other approaches regarded not only Transylvania, but also Romania and the northern part of the Balkans as Central Europeans. Further regional delimitation meant a more extensive area to Central Europe so Transylvania's position in it became clear. After World War I most geographers interpreted Transylvania as part of Central Europe owing to its cultural and economic heritage.

After the Second World War, the East-West divide became primary, thus, the questions of boundary interpretation between the countries and regions of the eastern bloc did not arise in the context of Central Europe. This region functioned as a transitional zone, its clear boundaries reflected political relations. At that time, Transylvania was part of the Eastern bloc as part of Romania. During the change of regime in the region, Central-European identity was once again at the forefront and there has been a growing intention to build a close co-operation in Central Eastern Europe, although the conflicts of the nineties and then the accession to the EU made it difficult to translate the political will for cooperation into practice.



Counties of Romania and Transylvania region

It is an interesting question to examine Transylvania as a part of Central Europe, as most of the delimitation lists are based on political country borders. In many cases, Transylvania is excluded from the region simply because it belongs to the territory of Romania. Although that is a fact that Romania is strongly linked to the region, it is too different from the countries of the region to be classified as Central Europe without questions. However, it is mentioned in numerous studies and delimitation that the dividing line is not bounded by the boundary of the country, but by the range of the Carpathians.

After 1541, Transylvania, formerly part of the Hungarian Kingdom, became a half-independent principality with the Partium territories, although previously this area also formed separated bishopric and voivodeships. In time of the dualism, the most developing areas were the southern territories inhabited by Romanians and Germans. The regions inhabited by the Hungarians were more backward agricultural areas in that time. After World War I, Romania annexed Transylvania, which became the country's most developed area. While the northern half of it was re-occupied by Hungary just before and during World War II, after the war, the borders of Trianon were restored again (in 1947), thus, Transylvania remained the territory of Romania without autonomous status.

Based on the current Romanian administrative division, 3 development regions (NUTS2: Nord-Vest, Vest and Centru), including 16 counties belong to the historical Transylvania area. According to the internal division of Transylvania, the counties of Bihor and Satu Mare are completely, and the counties of Salaj, Arad and Maramureş are mainly part of the Partium, while Harghita and Covasna counties are classified as Szeklerland. The other counties (excluding Timis) are forming the Central Transylvanian region. Timis County is located in the Romanian area of Banat. (The names of the Romanian development regions do not refer to the historical division of Transylvania.)

County	Area (km2)*	Population * (capita; 2019)	GDP/capita * (M. euro; 2017)	Proportion of Hungarians**
Alba	6 241,6	325 426	9597	4,3%
Arad	7 754,1	417 422	9778	8,5%
Bihor	7 544,3	561 404	7706	24,0%
Bistrita-Nasaud	5 355,2	278 851	6956	5,0%
Brasov	5 363,1	552 193	11501	7,2%
Caras-Severin	8 519,8	271 292	7472	1,0%
Cluj	6 674,4	706 905	13405	15,0%
Covasna	3 709,8	202 146	6836	71,6%
Harghita	6 638,9	302 308	6842	82,9%
Hunedoara	7 062,7	383 647	7544	3,8%
Maramures	6 304,4	460 689	6816	6,8%
Mures	6 713,9	535 193	7274	36,5%
Salaj	3 864,4	211 691	7682	22,4%
Satu Mare	4 417,9	332 572	7043	32,7%
Sibiu	5 432,5	401 006	10648	2,7%
Timis	8 696,7	705 113	12224	5,2%

*Statistical key figures of Transylvanian counties according to EUROSTAT
and the last census 2011*

Similarly to the national trends in Romania (and wider East-Central European regional trends), in case of Transylvania, population decline is dominant. In this, both the decrease in fertility rate and the growing emigration have a significant impact. However, population decline has different characteristics for different nationalities. In case of the Romanian population, there is greater emigration, than in case of the local Hungarians. Although the number of Hungarians moving to the mother country and Western Europe is significant, the rate remains below the national average. It is also important to note that in case of Transylvanian Hungarians, the loss of population resulting from assimilation is lagging behind population loss due to emigration. The great presence of the Hungarians plays a major role in this, as well as being able to form a majority in Szeklerland, and in some of the towns of the Partium.

In Transylvania, in most significant proportion, Hungarians are represented as a minority (forming blocks as a majority in some regions). The Hungarian population in Romania is around 6% in national level, while in case of only Transylvania their proportion is reaching 18%. Beside the Hungarians, there are Roma (4%) and a much smaller number of Ukrainian, German, Serb and Slovak ethnic minorities in Transylvania. Nearly 94 per cent of Transylvania's population admitted themselves as religious in the 2011 census. According to religious affiliation, due to the large proportion of the Romanian population, orthodox people give the vast majority (below 65%). Beside them Calvinist and Roman Catholics live in Transylvania with a ratio of 9-9 percent, and a smaller number of Greek Catholics and Unitarians. Most Roman Catholics belong to Hungarians as Csangos, Swabians, while the Calvinist and Unitarian communities are typically Hungarian.

Europe's major development axes do not reach Transylvania. In the structure of the Transylvanian economy, both agriculture and industry play a significant role. There is significant agricultural production in the area. In the western part of the plain area, as well as in the Transylvanian Basin, cereals are grown, while in the plain periphery region hemp and

flax (in the Székely Basin) are the most important. Adapted to environmental conditions, vegetable growing is typical in whole Transylvania, potato growing is concentrated in basins of higher areas. Livestock production has fallen significantly compared to previous periods however, in the area, beside the traditional horse, cattle and sheep breeding, buffalo or in Banat area silk caterpillar breeding are also typical.

The industrial structure was significantly transformed by socialist industrialization in Romania. Strong industrialization has created industrial centres in several counties, however, the traditional industrial centres remained stronger, while the centres of forced industrial development, like many former East-Central European industrial centres, have fallen into crisis after the regime change. The two strongest centres in Transylvania remained Brasov and Timisoara, preserving their national importance, but Cluj-Napoca is also an important centre from a historical, cultural and educational point of view. Traditionally, heavy industry and machine industry have great importance in Brasov, while in Sibiu, Timisoara and Arad, beside the machine industry light industry has more significance. The role of Timisoara in addition to its industry is reflected in its transport junction position.

In the economy of the region, although it has lost much of its importance, mining is still important. The natural gas accumulated in the Transylvanian basin is a valuable raw material for the area, and the mining of the region's rock-salt is also traditional. Nowadays, more salt mines are used for tourism purposes (e.g. Praid or Torda) for higher profit. The reach sites of non-ferrous metals and precious metals of Metalliferous Mountains, has been mined since the ancient times. Iron ore and polymetallic ores are found in the Banat and the Ore Mountains, while in the Carpathians copper ore, bauxite and building materials mining in Bihor Mountain have also significance, however, the metallurgies of the Hunedoara-Banat district and the chemical industries of the Transylvanian Plateau are in crisis.

In terms of GDP, Transylvania accounts for one third of Romania's GDP. Bucharest, with Ilfov County, also accounts for nearly one third of the value, leaving the remaining one third from the other counties of Romanian. The economic performance of Transylvania's GDP per capita is somewhat lower than the value of the national average, but if we the value of Bucharest is not considered, the economic performance of the Romanian counties does not reach Transylvania's average value. It can be clearly seen that counties of the Transylvanian economic centres (Timisoara, Brasov, Cluj) are well above the value of the other counties.

From a geopolitical aspect, Transylvania is in an interesting position. Its stormy past, the significant number of Hungarian minorities living in the region, and the strategic importance of the Carpathians are decisive factors as well. Transylvania plays role not only in Romania's strategic planning, but also in the Hungarian national strategy. In the background of this, there is not only national consciousness or sympathy to the Hungarians in Transylvania. It can also have serious economic significance, because local Hungarians could be the engine of cross-border economic relations. From this point of view, Szeklerland has a prominent role and has great importance through its large Hungarian population because it is a cross-border base point for Hungary.

Transylvania is an important factor in the Romanian national strategy as well, due to its large number of Hungarian minority, and because of the special attention of Hungary for the area. It is not in Romania's interest to support strong cross-border Hungarian-Hungarian relations, however, this could serve as catalyst in mutually beneficial economic cooperation between the two countries. In spite of this, in the political sphere, the Romanian government often sees the local Hungarians as problem, which is mainly driven by the suppression of the autonomy intention of Szeklerland.

3.5.15. Kaliningrad of Russia

(Zoltán Dorogi)

Its official name is Kaliningrad Oblast (in Russian: Калининградская область). The area is 15 100 km² and it has a population of just under a million. It is located between Lithuania and Poland on the shores of the Baltic Sea. After the break-up of the Soviet Union (1991) and the re-independence of Lithuania, the Kaliningrad-based oblast was the only Russian territory that, as a political exclave, did not border directly with other Russian administrative units. Kaliningrad's old name is Königsberg, which used to be one of the centres of the Baltic state of the German Knights. Later it belonged to Prussia, and in 1945, it was annexed to the Soviet Union. Its economy can be characterized by mechanical engineering, food industry and rye production.



The Catholic Teutonic (German) knights established Kaliningrad in 1255 when they conquered Old Prussia near the Pregel/Pregolya River. The knights had to build a new fortress to keep under control the coastal parts of the territory. It was Königsberg (meaning Hill of the King). During the medieval ages, the fortress and the settlement became the centre of power, industry and commerce, the German Catholic Church. Later it became the capital of Eastern-Prussia. Frederick III, elector of Brandenburg and Duke of Prussia created a personal union between Prussia and Berlin in 1701. The Kingdom of Prussia was the base of building the German Empire. Königsberg was one of the fatherlands of the modern Germany. It was an educational, cultural centre of the Empire, capital of the eastern parts.



Map of Kaliningrad Oblast among its neighbouring countries

At the end of World War II., the city was damaged by British saturation (carpet) bombing, and lost a large part of its population. The Soviet Red Army occupied the region, and as a result of

the Paris Peace Treaties in 1947, Königsberg and its region was annexed to the Soviet Union and renamed Kaliningrad in 1946. (Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin was a Bolshevik revolutionary and soviet politician, the chair of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.) The city was rebuilt during the soviet period. During the Cold War, the strategic importance of its port and industry dynamically increased. In modern times the city became a cultural base, plenty of famous scientists, artists, and philosophers lived there or learned, taught in the universities of the city, like Immanuel Kant, Leonhard Euler (mathematician), E. T. A. Hoffmann.

Kaliningrad lies at the mouth of Pregel/Pregolya River, which connects the Baltic Sea to the Vistula Lagoon. The harbour does not freeze (it is ice-free) in winters, that is why it became an important commercial centre in the medieval ages. Thanks to a channel built in the early 1900's, larger sea vessels can reach the city. The land lies app. 1-2 m above sea level, but several regions are under the sea level. The land is rich in rivers and marshes, not so advantageous for agriculture. Ratio of food import is quiet high, goods come from Poland and Lithuania, Germany. The land is poor in mineral resources, raw materials. The most significant resource is the amber, which has been collected from ancient ages to create jewelleryes. Amber is widely spread in Kaliningrad oblast, amber mines are working in the Jantarny territory. In the coastal region, oil, gas, phosphor and various types of salt are mined.

After the Paris Peace Treaties, German population was deported and repopulated by Russians. After the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991, Kaliningrad remained under the authority of the Russian Federation. Its legal status currently is an exclave (a portion of a state or territory geographically separated from the main part of the country and is surrounded by foreign territories). The population has been growing since the breakup of the Soviet Union. Inhabitants of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) can move to the oblast to get a job without any limitation, so foreign enterprises have to co-operate with them, while inhabitants who do not get jobs usually move to the western countries, which generated a labour market migration.

Ethnicity	Number of total population	% of the population
Russian	351,186	87.4 %
Ukrainian	16,053	4.0 %
Belarus	15,077	3.7 %
Armenian	3,062	0.8 %
Tatar	2,075	0.5 %
Lithuanian	1,789	0.4 %
German	1,676	0.4 %
Polish	1,114	0.3 %
Other ethnicities	10,041	2.5 %
All	401,649	100.0 %

Ethnic diversity of Kaliningrad in 2010, by Russian Statistical Office

In 1996, the whole oblast became a special economic zone, called Yantar (meaning amber in Russian) Free Economic Zone. It is a connecting clip between Russia and the Baltic States, Poland and the western world, generating international investments in the region. Manufacturing is a prosperous sector because of tax-free or tax-reduced proceedings, duty free activities, therefore it is referred to as the Russian Hong-Kong. Especially corporate profit tax and corporate property tax are low, compared to foreign standards. Furniture, electronics, car, train and ship industries, fish processing are quite developed in the free trade zone. The largest car factories have plants there like GM, BMW, KIA, but modern info-communication

technologies are developed as well, like satellite systems and connected services, facilities. 2 nuclear power plants are operating there producing energy mainly to export. Kaliningrad had diverse relationship with the EU member states, but the international embargo against Russia breaks these interactions and increasing of common business opportunities. The region's main trading partner is Germany; investments mostly come from Germany by German enterprises.

International airport and railway station ensure connections to several international destinations. Next to them, a naval air base is working there. Kaliningrad Oblast used to be the most heavily militarized area of Russian Federation. Thanks to the rich amber stocks, Kaliningrad is one of the leader amber exporters in the world. Tourism has been developing, more and more tourists visited there while the region opens its border. The port became the headquarter of the Soviet Baltic Fleet, and it is so nowadays. In the Soviet period, the city was a so-called closed-city, closed from foreign and Soviet visitors as well. The territory valorised more and more while Poland and Lithuania joined to the EU and the NATO in the 2000's. In 2009, 2% of its total population worked for the army. Near the Headquarter of the fleet, 2 air bases and a special naval air base were built in the oblast. In many times it was announced by the media that missiles, missile defence systems and high range radars were deployed against the NATO activity in Poland neighbouring regions.

Sights to see include:

- cathedrals;
- museums: Immanuel Kant Museum, Amber Museum, submarine and ship museum;
- architectural sights: Brandenburg gate, Sackheim gate, King's gate, House of Soviets,
- spas in the coastal region.

Chapter 4

THE EUROPEAN HEARTLAND – THE GATEWAY BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE

(István Tózsza)

- *The Russians went out.*
- *And who came in?*
- *No one.*
- *I don't believe.*⁴³

The Central European Mentality and Existence

The Central European feeling can be the best characterized with the thoughts of a semi Hungarian, semi German, man of letters, living in Slovakia. Lajos Grendel describes the Central European existence as below:

My Slovakian classmate happened to tell me once he would jump out of the window in despair, if he had been born Hungarian. When I asked him why, he told me it had to be a horrible feeling to be Hungarian. After I calmed down and began to consider what he had told me, I had to admit he was right. It is really a horrible feeling to be Hungarian. It is at least as desperate feeling as being Czech, Slovak, Romanian, German, Jewish, Russian, or Gypsy, not to mention the Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians or the Chechens, Azerbaijanis and Armenians.

I amused myself with the thought for a while, what if I were a Slovak? If I were a Slovakian, I could never forgive the Hungarians, nor the Czech that the Slovaks could only found a state of their own for the first time in history in 1993, hence, it was not a favour given by a European great power. If I were a Czech, I would stand in fear of the revenge of the three million Germans or their descendants whom our fathers and grandfathers chased away from their homeland with disgusting atrocities. If I were Polish, I could not forget the two mighty neighbours, the Germans and the Russians having divided and occupied my country several times. If I were Jewish, I could never forgive the German contribution in having taken the majority of my ascending relatives and friends into the gas chambers. If I were Romani, the colour of my skin would betray me even if I denied my nationality every day. And I could go on with similar examples.

The native Central European citizens keep on wondering how the Western European type of citizens, the WEIRD⁴⁴ cannot understand them. When they are lamenting about historical injustice or their cruel fate, the WEIRDS regard them as quarrelling and fighting against one another like infantile, uneducated children. The Central European citizens cannot understand the WEIRDS either, having been unable to travel there freely, and having had their most intimate feelings nationalized in communism. They all consider their lands as the middle of the world, which is really; where they live, that is the middle of the world for them. Though they would

⁴³ Quotation from Lajos Grendel: *Közép-Európa kísértetei /Ghosts of Central Europe/* = Historical Magazine 2019.02. pp 52-56) describing the Central European mentality. An old German – Hungarian nationality couple's dialogue in Kassa /Košice/ in Slovakia in 1993.

⁴⁴ Yuval Noah Harari describes the Western Europeans and the USA citizens this way: Western, Educated, Industrialized, and Rich, Democratic (WEIRD) individuals – in his book, titled *Homo Deus* 2015.

like to be elsewhere, too, to have a wider horizon. There are things to be seen only from Central Europe, however. These are the real definitions of Central European existence:

1. Central Europe is the land and region of all the continents, which is the easiest to conquer from any directions.
2. Though Central Europeans inhabit Central Europe, it has been too many times, if not all the time in history the garrison of foreign troops.
3. Central Europeans are extremely sensitive of their origin and nationality.
4. According to a strange historical algorithm, Central Europeans have always been regularly conquered or in other words raped.
5. Central Europeans are more likely to be filled with anguish, distress and to suffer from paranoia more than others are in Western, Northern, Eastern or Southern Europe.
6. Central Europe has recently been composed of small states, and there is a political claustrophobia to be experienced there.
7. These small countries are relatively poor.
8. The identity feeling of the Central European natives has been hurt all the time in the past 70-80 years.
9. Central Europeans, like all the people, would also like to be successful, rich, happy and appreciated, but their chances to realize it are the slightest in Central Europe.

As a demonstrative example, let us examine the story of the Schmidt family, one of the many Schmidt families living in the Eastern Slovakian major town, Košice. When in 1991 the last Soviet soldier had left the territory of the then Czechoslovakia, the very old Mr. Schmidt told the old Mrs. Schmidt: 'the Russians went out.' 'And who came in?' asked old Mrs. Schmidt who had almost never read the newspaper or watched the news on TV. 'Nobody came in' said old Mr. Schmidt. 'It's not possible, I don't believe it' said Mrs. Schmidt categorically. When they were newlywed, and they were proud of the town Košice, because it was one of the most beautiful town of the old Hungary under the name of Kassa; one day the young Mrs. Schmidt told her husband in alarm: 'Imagine, the Czech came in!' Mr. Schmidt was young then and was not afraid of anything, especially of the Czech. 'Well, if they came in, they will leave' he said and history verified his words. 'The Hungarians came in, our people' he said twenty years later. Then World War the II broke out and as the frontline it was approaching the Carpathian Mountains, one day the Germans came in. The German occupation made the Schmidt indignant, because the then Hungary was in alliance with Germany and to occupy the territory of an ally was dishonourable they thought. But the Germans had left the town quickly westward, from where they came. So the Germans went out and the Russians came in. Then the Russians went out, but only the soldiers and the Czech came back. After 23 years, in 1968 the Russian soldiers came back and stayed for another 23 years.

The Schmidts are trueborn Central European people. During their long life, they were twice Hungarian, twice Czechoslovakian citizens for shorter longer periods and they died as Slovakian citizens. They had a taste of democracy, fascism and communism. Their ancestors were Germans who were invited to settle down by one of the Hungarian kings in the Middle Ages. They considered themselves Hungarians; however, they were proud of their German origin. During the communism, they had to forget and conceal both of their identities. In the communist Czechoslovakia, it was the possible worst reputation to be a German origin Hungarian bourgeois. Every tenth year census-taking officials asked them about their nationality. 'Decide at last, whether you are Hungarian or Slovakian' urged one of them. Mr. Schmidt was fed up with it: 'none of them' he said 'I'm a Kassa-dweller.' He soon lost his job and was almost imprisoned, consequently.

Central Europeans could be ‘raped’ in the 20th century almost for anything; for being rich, or poor, for being Hungarian, Slovak, Polish, Czech, or Jew, or Christian. Whom for what reason; it changed in every decade or so. There is no Central European citizen who has not been ‘raped’ at least once in a lifetime. When after World War I the Czechoslovakian republic had been established, there was a land distribution in the southern regions of the Uplands inhabited with Hungarians. However, land was not given to the local, poverty-stricken and landless Hungarians, but to the Slovaks coming from the northern parts of the Uplands in order to settle down there and reduce the Hungarian demographic dominance. Native Hungarians called the Slovakian newcomers colonists therefore, and when the Hungarian state reoccupied the southern parts of the Uplands in 1938, the Slovak newcomers were driven away. Then in 1945 the colonist newcomers came back again and chased away the Hungarians from their native lands. The Schmidt family foresaw the consequences of the change of the regimes and tried to compensate them. Mr. Schmidt declared himself Slovakian in the office where he worked. After the working hours, he stayed at home as a Hungarian. To be prepared for all possible emergencies, he had his elder son educated as a Slovak in school, and his younger son as a Hungarian.

The boy having attended the Slovakian school married a Slovak girl; the other boy with Hungarian schooling married a Hungarian girl. In a short time, the two sons of Mr. Schmidt hated each other. The elder boy escaped over the new border to Slovakia, changed his name from Schmidt to the Slovakian sounding Kovalsky, and became a guerrilla fighter, because he thought if he had to choose between fascism and communism, the latter was the lesser evil. The younger boy stayed at Kassa and changed his name from Schmidt to the Hungarian sounding Kovács and became the member of a Hungarian fascist party because he thought fascism was the lesser evil compared to communism. The older boy thought that even so the Russians are communists, they have share common Slavic hearts with the Slovaks. The younger boy considered the Russians not only evil communists, but pan-Slavic imperialists, too. The two brothers agreed only upon one thing: democracies were weak, corrupt, and immoral.

When Kassa in 1945 was annexed to Czechoslovakia again under the name Košice, the younger boy escaped to Hungary with his family. There he had to choose between either to be accounted for his fascist past, or to collaborate with the communist secret agency. He chose the latter. After the Hungarian revolution against communism was defeated in 1956, he joined the communist party and by the mid-1970s, he became a reform-economist of great reputation. The communist party forgave his past, but when the 1968 reforms were neglected, he was neglected, too. He came into conflict with himself and died of a heart attack at a relatively young age.

The career of the older boy, who stayed in Czechoslovakia, was rising until the early 1950s when he was excluded from the communist party under false pretences, and imprisoned. Ten years later, he was readmitted into the communist party, but in 1968, he protested against the new Russian military presence, so he was again expelled from the party, lost his job, and his children were not admitted to the university. He was disillusioned from both communism and nationalism. He spoke Slovakian with his wife, children, and Hungarian with his old parents, the Schmidt’s. He did not live to see the change of the regime in 1989 either. He also died early like his younger brother.

The children of the two brothers met for the first time at the funeral of old Mr. Schmidt at Košice. They agreed that their parents had weak characters and were immoral, miserable and wretched figures. They agreed they would have done everything in a different way. This

conservation went on with the help of interpretation, because neither of them spoke the native language of the other. They were not good at speaking English fluently enough to have a common language to talk either. They were not proud of their being Central European; What is more, they were ashamed to live in such countries where after the many occupations and reoccupations there were no money or career possibilities left.

Earlier, the son of the younger Schmidt boy who lived in Hungary, in Budapest, married a Jewish girl. When old Mrs. Schmidt, the grandmother in Košice learned this, she got upset, because in her family everybody has always been Lutheran, back to the 16th century. ‘Don’t worry’ old Mr Schmidt comforted her ‘perhaps this Jewish relation will be useful for them some time. Instead of lamenting, be happy that we are free at last.’ Old Mrs. Schmidt replied: ‘what can we gain with this freedom, when we are going to die soon.’

When one of their grandchildren flew over the Atlantic Ocean to America he was shocked to realize the Central Europe is one of the most insignificant peripheries of the Earth, with several small countries that are unviable on their own. Their natural resources are too few, most of them do not have seacoast, or if yes, they are unfavourable for navigation. Their unfavourable geographical situation, far from the Atlantic gateways has deprived them of the opportunity to rob the natural resources of faraway continents. They could not have the opportunity to colonize faraway lands, to exterminate the Native Americans, and drive the rest into reservations. They could not have the opportunity to carry off black men into slavery and to delight in their abolition. They could be strong and big some of the times, but only at the expenses of one another. The grandson of old Mr. Schmidt harboured suspicions that the reason why the neighbouring nations hate his nation is not that his nation once oppressed them, but because the oppressive role was not gained by their nations, the neighbours. It occurred to him that maybe Central Europeans would have to forget their languages and use English instead. It is a global language after all, and it is neither Russian, nor German. Or is it worth speaking at all in this region? No one can be expected to understand the others.

Of course, in Central Europe we can meet not only the Schmidt family type. There are many Hungarian origin Hungarians, Slovakian origin Slovaks, Czech origin Czech people and Polish Origin Poles as well. Their fate was not easier a bit, either. ‘I would also jump out of the window, if I were Slovakian’ I told my classmate a long ago. ‘Then let’s jump together’ he said ‘but not from the tenth level, but from the ground floor, from where it is not worth doing.’ So now, 25 years later when all our occupiers got bored with us, we cannot find our places nor inside the building, nor outside of the window. By now we have completely lost our identity or we have several identities what is not normal? Robert Musil, Franz Kafka, Witold Gombrowitz, Danilo Kiš, Endre Ady and other writers knew this weird Central European feeling well.

*We are always late for everything
From faraway we must be coming
(Ady)*

Lord, who made the lion and the lamb, you decreed I should be what I am⁴⁵

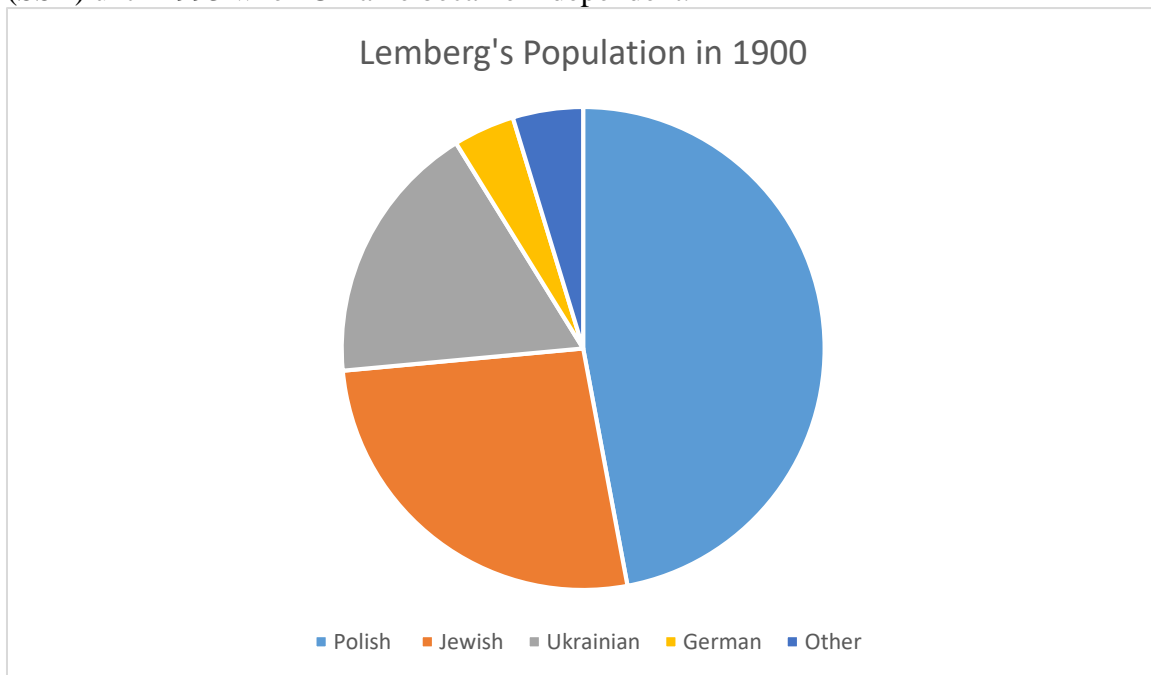
The homeless at home

⁴⁵ From the musical Fiddler on the Roof: If I were a Rich Man

The real suffering having formed the Central European generations' feeling lost and blue could be experienced on the eastern borders of Central Europe, however. Let us examine Lemberg,⁴⁶ the capital of Galicia in today's Ukraine.

Lemberg is the city of 'vanished borders'⁴⁷ lying in between the Byzantine Constantinople, the German Nurnberg, the Italian Bologna and the Lithuanian Vilnius, bearing the cultural effects of the Central European land in between. Its intercultural character reflected the best of art, handicraft, science, architecture of the mixed Central European impacts. Through its stormy history, Polish and Hungarian kings, Austrian emperors, Ukrainian hetmans, and Moldavian voivodes had ruled this beautiful and rich European city

The flourishing multiculturalism, however, came to a shameful end with the dawn of the 20th century. From 2014 to 2045 all Galicia including Lemberg, was turned into a battlefield of destruction, the 'Thirty Year Long War' of Central Europe. After the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in 1918, it came under the rule of a so-called Western Ukrainian People's Republic, and then from 1919 to 1939 it was under Polish rule. Following the German – Soviet Treaty before World War II in 1939 Soviet troops occupied it in accordance with the German conquest of Poland. Again, in 1941 the Germans took Lemberg when they attacked the Soviet Union. In 1944, the Soviet Red Army reoccupied it. Lemberg was renamed as Lvov⁴⁸ and the rest of Galicia remained under Soviet control as part of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) until 1993 when Ukraine became independent.



⁴⁶ This city had six names throughout the 20th century: Lemberg, Lamburg, Leopoldis, Lvov, Lwów, and finally L'viv – today in Ukrainian

⁴⁷ Karl Schlögel: Europe Archipelago

⁴⁸ In 1977 the Author of this chapter, as a university student, had to spend a month in the Ukrainian SSR at the University of Odessa, the twin city of the Hungarian Szeged. On their way home, the students had to spend half a day in L'viv (Lemberg) waiting to change trains. Some Gypsy children came up to them begging for alms, cigarette or some change as usual at that time. Of course, they did not know the students were Hungarians. As the Gypsy children were leaving empty handed, the students heard something what made them give all their money left to the little beggars. One of the little children said half loud to himself 'Éhes vagyok' (I'm hungry) – in Hungarian at a site where Hungarian was officially spoken the last time six decades earlier, so it must have been one of the last traces of multiculturalism.

The population of Galicia's capital at the beginning of the 20th century. Besides the 80 000 Poles, there were 45 000 Jews, 30 000 Ukrainians, 7000 Germans and the 8000 others included: Armenians, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Italians, Moldavians and Romanians.

Until 1918, all the peoples coming to Lemberg added to its cultural richness. But during the 20th century, all the peoples (and armies) coming to Lemberg took something away. They took away human lives, fates and identities. Both the Germans and the Russians exterminated all the Jewish population. The Poles and the Germans were also either killed or deported, like the other nationalities. In the Soviet times, Lemberg was turned into a regular Soviet metropolis with one, Soviet culture, and the shadows of the past. Owing to the genocides having taken place in this once beautiful city the Ukrainian Russian Soviet citizens of Lvov have always felt the ghosts of the bloody history of the 20th century over Lemberg. This city unified at the highest level what it meant to be a Central European native who is homeless at home.

The anticipation of the bloody fate of Eastern Central Europe in the 20th century is best depicted by a piece of art, a world famous musical and a film titled 'Fiddler on the Roof.' The story takes place in 1905 at the dawn of the 20th century and characterizes the peoples living at that time on the eastern border of Central Europe. They are the real Central Europeans: Jews, Poles, Ukrainians, Germans, Russians, Armenians, Italians, Gypsies, Austrians, Hungarians, Lithuanians, Romanians, Moldavians, Belarusians, and Bulgarians – once living together in one city.



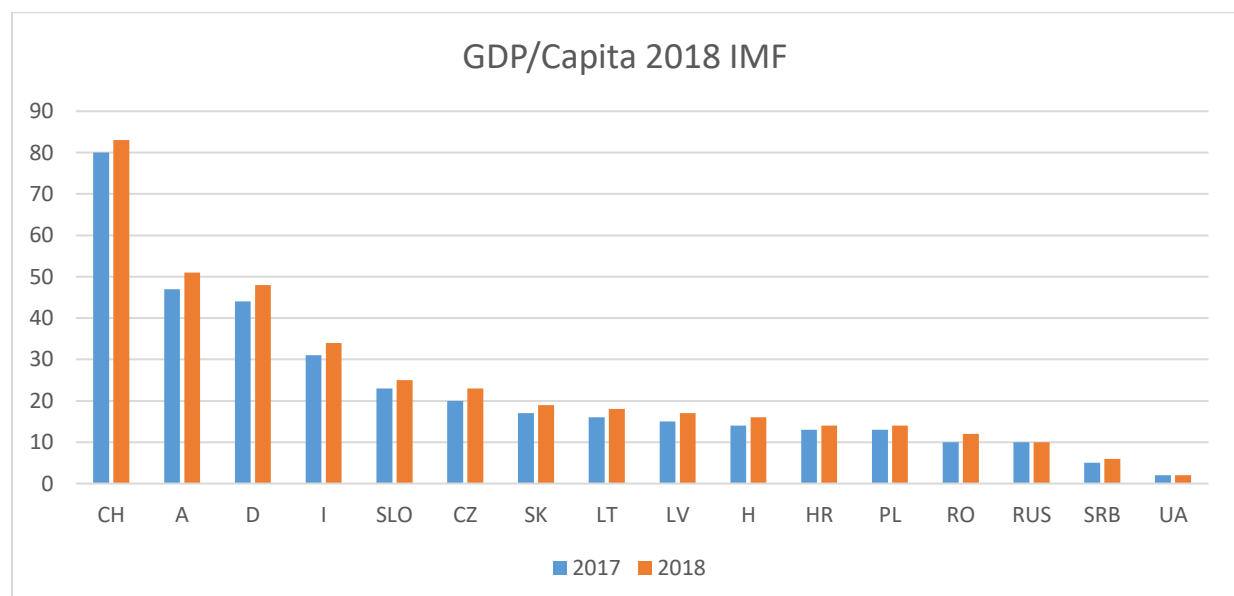
Norma Crane and Topol in the film Fiddler on the Roof by Metro Goldwyn Meyer (1971). The film and the musical show how the Galician Jewish in the imperial Russia in 1905, tried to stay on the surface – in the close neighbourhood of Central Europe.

The events in *The Fiddler on the Roof* take place in Anatevka, a fictional town in the Pale,⁴⁹ during the year 1905. From the 1880s to the 1920s, when there was a permanent political and social crisis in Russia, the government would incite the Russian nationality population against the Jews, trying to divert their attention from the problems. These anti-Jewish movements were the pogroms (attacks, accompanied by destruction, looting of property, murder, and rape, committed by one section of population against another, first of all against the Jewish, then sometimes against the Hungarian, German, Polish, Moldavian, Romanian, Belarussian, Lithuanian, or Russian nationalities) in the Eastern Central European region.

However, Ukraine's independence in 1993 had not brought back the memories of multiculturalism. Ukrainian nationalist efforts try to integrate the whole country into one true, united Ukrainian state with a national identity strong enough to withstand the Russian influence from the East. It includes the discouragement of any multicultural movements, events and traditions not only in Lemberg, but also in the whole of Galicia. Thus Galicia, the last frontier of Central Europe in the East has been lost forever. Today's population have already been educated as Ukrainians solemnly. When in the modern Lemberg there are events, cultural programs trying to remember or renew Jewish or Polish traditions, these are not initiated by the late descendants and successors of the once Lemberg citizens who come to visit the cemeteries. The liberal minded, intellectuals of the young Ukrainian generation do this, who wish to express their commitment to join Western Europe via the European Union instead of the Eurasian Union.

The Economic Bridge (V4) between Western and Eastern Europe

If we consider the European countries the territories of which lie fully or partially in Central Europe from physical geographical aspect, there are 18 such countries. Taking the IMF data (2017-2018) in thousand USD, the average GDP/capita is 31 in these countries (leaving out Liechtenstein).



*The GDP per person in thousand USD
in the Central European countries (Source IMF)*

⁴⁹ The Pale = the territory annexed to Russia from Poland where the Polish Jews were permitted to settle down, or remain in between 1835 – 1917. Its administrative area was situated in the gravity zones of Minsk (today's Belarussian capital) and Kiev (today's Ukrainian capital).

We can see a tremendous (24 times) difference between Switzerland and Ukraine for example, but Germany, Austria and even Italy ought not to be considered to be in the same region with Serbia and Ukraine, or even with most of the countries from Slovenia to Romania or the Russian Kaliningrad district. Therefore when we mention Central Europe it had to be divided into two halves both in economic and in cultural aspects. The western part of Central Europe has to be related to Western Europe. The average GDP/Capita (2018) for the total physical geographical land of Central Europe is **31** thousand USD.

If we take the average GDP/Capita (2018) of Slovenia, Italy, Germany, Austria and Switzerland it is **48** thousand USD. But if we leave out Slovenia and Italy – being partially rather Southern European states – this value is **60** thousand USD. It cannot even be compared to that of the rest of the Central European countries. If we add this to the data of Western Europe, the average is **55** thousand USD.

The GDP/Capita (2018) of the Western European countries (Luxembourg /113/, Ireland /75/, the Netherlands /52/, Belgium /46/, the United Kingdom /42/ and France /42/) is **62** thousand USD. Therefore, the western half of Central Europe with either 48 or 60 thousand USD can be verified as belonging to Western Europe rather than Central Europe.

The GDP/Capita of the remaining fully or partially Central European countries (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Croatia, Poland, Romania, Russian Kaliningrad, Serbia and Ukraine), it is **14** thousand USD.

Finally, if we consider the living standard expressed in GDP/Capita of Eastern Europe, the average of the countries (Russia /10/, Romania /12/, Belarus /6/, Azerbaijan /4/, Georgia /4/, Armenia /4/, Moldova /3/ and Ukraine /2/) is **6** thousand USD. See the table below.

The regional averages of GDP/Capita expressed in USD in 2018 (IMF) shows that the real transmission zone, or 'bridge' between Western and Eastern Europe is Eastern Central Europe, while the western half of Central Europe has to be considered as part of Western Europe from economic geographical aspect.

Western Europe	Central Europe		Eastern Europe
	Western Central Europe	Eastern Central Europe	
Luxembourg, Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium, the United Kingdom, France	German Switzerland, Germany, Austria, North-Eastern Alpine Italy, Slovenian Slavonia	Czech Republic, Slovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Croatia Slavonia, Poland, Romanian Transylvania, Russian Kaliningrad, Serbian Vojvodina, Ukrainian Galicia and Transcarpathia.	Russia, Belarus, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia
62 000	48 000		
55 000 USD		14 000	6000

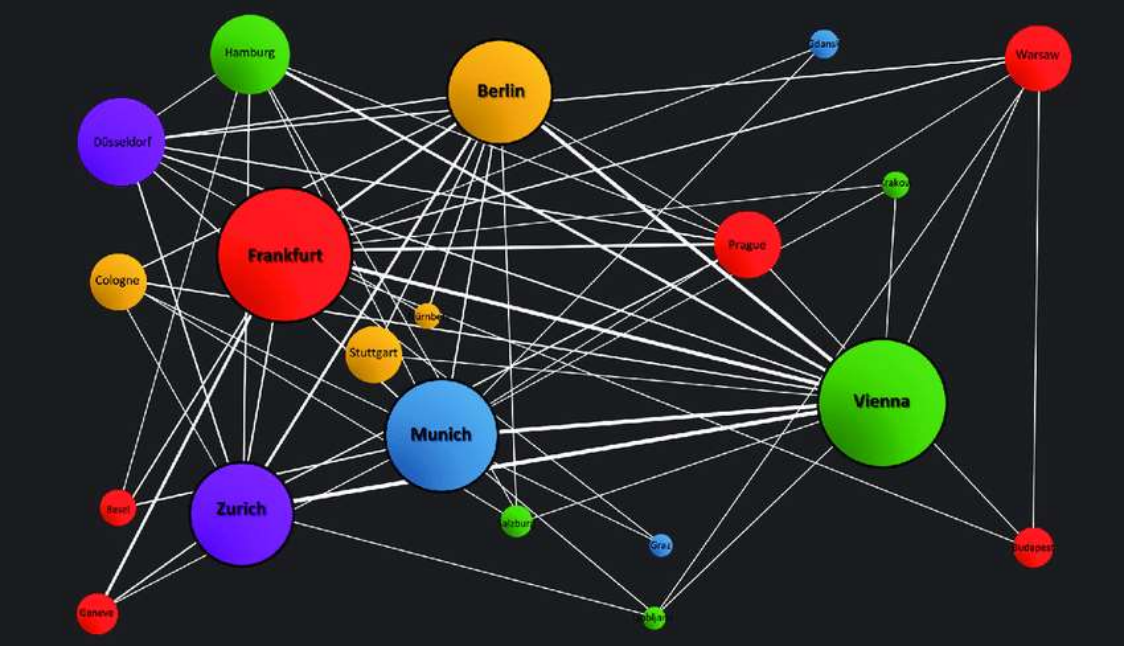
When it comes to comparison of data on national level, the fully Central European countries have to be mentioned in the first place among the Eastern Central European ones and those

without cultural affiliation to either northern, eastern or southern European regions, i.e. the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland, that is the V4 countries.

When considering Central Europe, in spite of the common historical and cultural links the economic network of the western half of Central Europe proves to be in an overwhelming advantage compared to the eastern half. The largest hubs of the total economic connections, showing the spatial structure of Central European economy are the following:

- | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Frankfurt (D) | 6. Düsseldorf (D) | 11. Cologne (D) | 16. Gdansk (PL) |
| 2. Vienna (A) | 7. Hamburg (D) | 12. Genève (CH) | 17. Nurnberg (D) |
| 3. Munich (D) | 8. Warsaw (PL) | 13. Budapest (H) | 18. Cracow (PL) |
| 4. Berlin (D) | 9. Prague (CZ) | 14. Basel (CH) | 19. Graz (A) |
| 5. Zurich (CH) | 10. Stuttgart (D) | 15. Salzburg (A) | 20. Ljubljana (SLO) |

Was it not for Vienna, intruding deep into the Eastern Central European structure, the Warsaw – Prague – Budapest triangle, with the addition of Bratislava (which is presently in the economic shade of Vienna) could make up a perfect medium size transit-zone structure between the very strong Western Central European region and Eastern Europe. This way the Eastern Central European region defined by Warsaw, Prague, Budapest and Bratislava could really be regarded as the Heartland of Europe.



The major spatial economic network reflected in air traffic of Central Europe showing the absolute dominance of Germany, Switzerland and Austria. (Source: Kraft 2018)

Investment Capacities and Competiveness of the V4

In the global geostrategic chessboard game China, being the chief competitor of the USA tries to engulf the Heartland either with or without Russia via the One Belt One Road (OBOR) Initiative. It includes the economic conquest of Eurasia by connecting China to the Western European ports Rotterdam, Antwerp and Hamburg. However, the OBOR has two main routes: the continental and the maritime. In both cases, the Central European ‘Heartland’ plays an important role from Chinese Outbound Direct Investment strategy. Chinese economic strategy considers 16 countries as Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries as being of strategic importance and key partners to the establishment of the European sections of the continental and maritime OBORs.

In 2011, China started its co-operation with the 16 CEE countries, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia (EU), the Czech Republic (EU), Estonia (EU), Hungary (EU), Latvia (EU), Lithuania (EU), Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland (EU), Romania (EU), Serbia, Slovakia (EU) and Slovenia (EU). In 2012, the first government level meeting was held in Warsaw, marking the official launch of the program in which China provides preferential financing to support government to government (G2G) infrastructural investment projects using Chinese inputs and capital investment in start-ups to initiate valuable impetus to rejuvenate the CEE economy and restore its industrial and commercial potential.

(2015)	Market Size (population, mn)	Purchasing Power (Per-capita GDP, US\$)
Hungary	9.9	12,240
Poland	38.0	12,495
Czech Republic	10.5	17,257
Romania	19.9	8,906
Slovakia	5.4	15,992
Serbia	7.1	5,120
Estonia	1.3	17,288
Slovenia	2.1	20,732
Bulgaria	7.2	6,832
Lithuania	2.9	14,210
Latvia	2.0	13,619
Croatia	4.2	11,573
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3.9	4,088
Macedonia	2.1	4,787
Albania	2.9	3,995
Montenegro	0.6	6,489



Ranking the economic market sizes of the CEE countries from Chinese aspect with considering the population and the purchasing power per capita in each one (Source: IMF 2015)

Between 2011-2014 China's OFDI grew almost 100% to CEE countries from USD 853 million to USD 1.7 billion. Among the 16 CEECs, 3 countries, namely Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, accounted for more than two-thirds of the total, followed by Romania, Bulgaria and Slovakia, which together accounted for another 30%.

China's OFDI (Outward Foreign Direct Investment) stock in the 16 CEECs

(US\$ Million)	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Hungary	465.70	475.35	507.41	532.35	556.35
Poland	140.31	201.26	208.11	257.04	329.35
Czech Republic	52.33	66.83	202.45	204.68	242.69
Romania	124.95	125.83	161.09	145.13	191.37
Bulgaria	18.60	72.56	126.74	149.85	170.27
Slovakia	9.82	25.78	86.01	82.77	127.79
Serbia	4.84	5.05	6.47	18.54	29.71
Lithuania	3.93	3.93	6.97	12.48	12.48
Croatia	8.13	8.18	8.63	8.31	11.87
Albania	4.43	4.43	4.43	7.03	7.03
Bosnia and Herzegovina	5.98	6.01	6.07	6.13	6.13
Slovenia	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Estonia	7.50	7.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
Macedonia	0.20	0.20	0.26	2.09	2.11
Latvia	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54
Montenegro	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32

Source: 2014 Statistical Bulletin of China's Outward Foreign Direct Investment

Foreign trade between China and the CEECs has become unbalanced, because in 2015, China's exports were nearly twice the size of its imports from the 16 CEECs. This trade imbalance has brought about a new development model featuring geographic connectivity with large-scale investment in infrastructure such as railroads, highways, tunnels, bridges, power plants, industrial and logistic parks, seaports and airports.

Between 2011 and 2015, China's trade with the 16 CEECs grew 6.4% from USD 52.9 billion to USD 56.3 billion. See Table 4. Similar to the pattern seen in China's ODI to CEECs, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary were China's top three trading partners among the 16 CEECs, accounting for more than 64% of all trade in 2015.

The data in the above tables prove that the countries having been considered as the Central European 'Heartland' (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia) are chosen the main trading partners by the global OBOR chess player China, too, from among the 16 so called CEECs.

China's foreign trade with the 16 CEECs in 2015.

Country	Total Exports		Total Imports		Total Trade	
	US\$ Mn	% Share	US\$ Mn	% Share	US\$ Mn	% Share
Total	42,191	100.0	14,096	100.0	56,290	100.0
Poland	14,346	34.0	2,748	19.5	17,094	30.4
Czech Republic	8,227	19.5	2,784	19.8	11,011	19.6
Hungary	5,198	12.3	2,873	20.4	8,071	14.3
Slovakia	2,794	6.6	2,237	15.9	5,032	8.9
Romania	3,186	7.6	1,299	9.2	4,486	8.0
Slovenia	2,094	5.0	290	2.1	2,383	4.2
Bulgaria	1,044	2.5	756	5.4	1,800	3.2
Lithuania	1,211	2.9	140	1.0	1,351	2.4
Estonia	954	2.3	235	1.7	1,190	2.1
Latvia	1,023	2.4	144	1.0	1,168	2.1
Croatia	986	2.3	112	0.8	1,098	2.0
Albania	430	1.0	129	0.9	559	1.0
Serbia	416	1.0	134	1.0	550	1.0
Macedonia	86	0.2	137	1.0	223	0.4
Montenegro	134	0.3	24	0.2	159	0.3
Bosnia & Herzegovina	62	0.1	54	0.4	115	0.2

Source: China Customs

The OBOR program is expected to provide new opportunities to widen and deepen trade and investment co-operation between China and the CEECs, moving from being export destinations to becoming investment partners in production, technology, and finance and infrastructure development.

The consequences of figures showing the highest OBOR related investments and initiatives very the fact that it is the V4 group that stands for Eastern Central Europe among the so called Central Eastern European Countries⁵⁰ chosen by the Chinese economic expansion.

⁵⁰ The phrase Central Eastern European countries is not correct, however, because in grammatical and geographical sense Central Eastern Europe means the central part of Eastern Europe somewhere between Moscow and Novgorod in the heart of the vast Eastern European Plain. The correct phrase is Eastern Central Europe if the eastern part of Central Europe is meant or mentioned.



China's continental and maritime OBORs.

(Source: www.scmp.com/business/global-economy)

Note: However, the Russian – Ukrainian war (in 2022) serving the pure economic interest of the USA seems to have destroyed the geopolitical of the OBOR as far as the EU countries are concerned in Central Europe. This gigantic global network (in 2024) seems to serve the integration of China – Central Asia – Russia in the continental context, and the integration of China with Indonesia, Indo-China, India, the Arabian region and North-Eastern and Eastern Africa in the maritime context. The status of the remaining Central European regions in Ukraine and Serbia might be sharing the geo-economic situation with the EU countries in the future.

The main directions of the OBOR include the one crossing Asia via Central Asia and Russia goes to Brest (Poland) when reaching Central Europe. The maritime one has its traditional way round Europe, but there is the so called 'Sea-Land Express' route from the South European port, Piraeus to Skopje (North Macedonia), Beograd (Serbia) and arriving to Central Europe in Budapest (Hungary) and going on towards Prague to reach Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium in Western Europe. The nature of the Chinese OBOR investments and trade in Eastern Central Europe offers a good possibility to characterize Central European economy, too.

The most promising investments rely on electronics in which manufacturing outsourcing clusters are becoming increasingly prominent in the face of rising production costs in other farther away-located production bases and in the light of a greater need for proximity to key markets and better inventory management.

To meet this demand, Hungary has been specialising in the production of transport vehicles since Soviet times, and boasts a long history of motor vehicle parts and electronics manufacturing. Hungary is the largest electronics producer among the CEECs, representing some 30% of the region's total electronics output. Meanwhile, the Czech Republic is often regarded as the most successful CEE country in terms of attracting foreign direct investment, thanks to its strong automotive cluster. Slovakia has also invested in motor manufacturing, while Poland has the largest domestic market and ranks high in terms of manufacturing and automation.

While most, if not all, of the CEECs are supporters of the OBOR, some have shown greater participation than others. Poland, with its well-developed industrial market and logistical importance (an estimated 25% of all road transport in Europe is operated by Polish companies) has not only established a strategic partnership with China, but is also a founding member of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the only CEEC having joined the Bank so far.

As an important route linking Asia and Western Europe in the OBOR, in 2013 a high-speed railway started operating from Chengdu, in Southwest China, to Łódź, in Poland. The freight train takes only 10-12 days to ship products from China to Poland, twice as fast as sea transport. Goods arriving in Łódź can then be transported to warehouses or customers via Europe's rail and road networks. Railway lines for container trains have also opened up in 16 Chinese mainland cities, heading to 12 European CEE cities including Łódź in Poland, Pardubice in the Czech Republic and Košice in Slovakia.

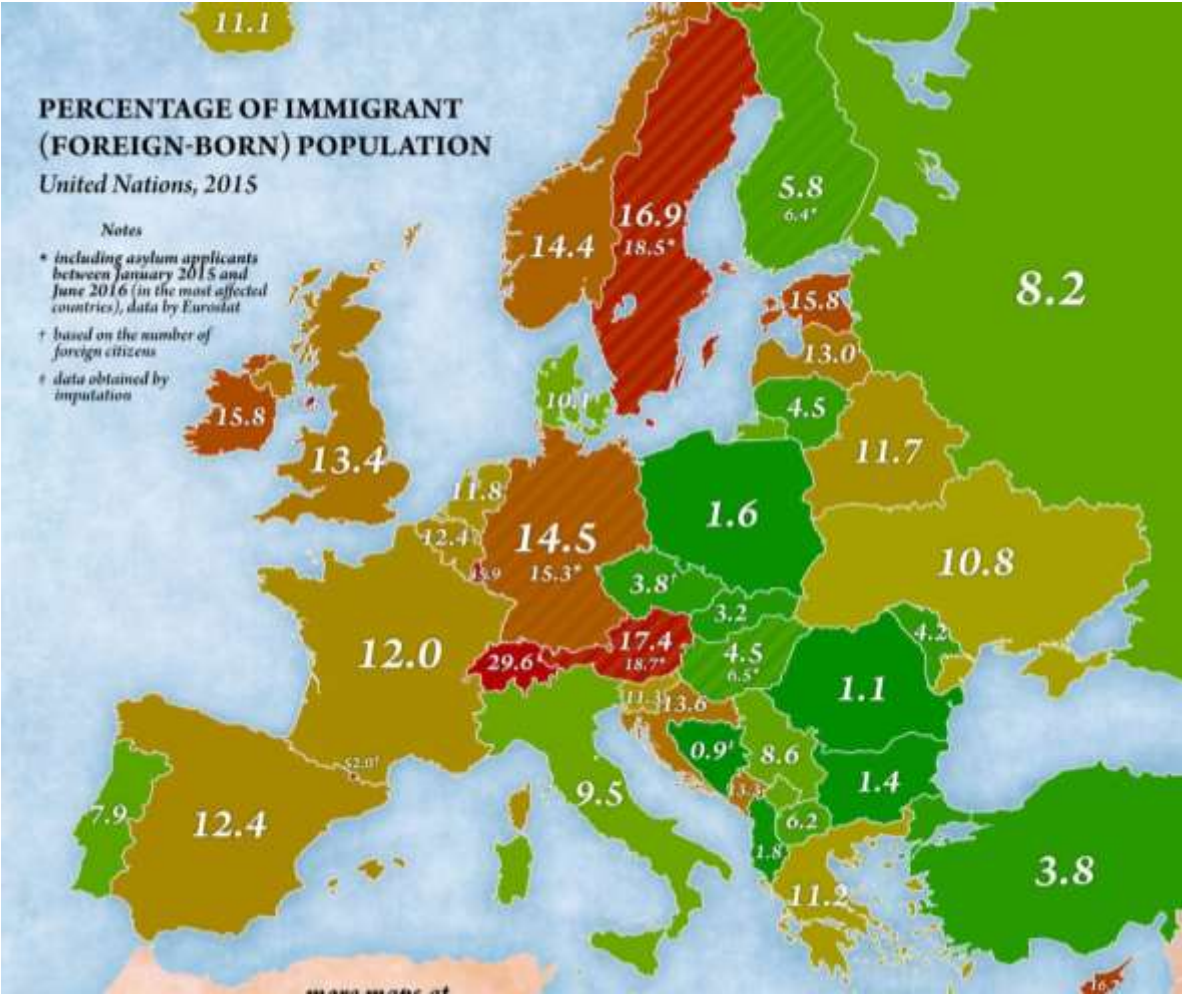
Hungary was the first European country to sign a memorandum of understanding on OBOR co-operation with the Chinese mainland. It has also signed deals to build a major rail line between Budapest, its capital, and Belgrade, the capital of Serbia. With the line expected to be completed in 2021, the 85% Chinese-financed project will shorten the travel time between the two capitals from 8 hours to three. In addition, its starting point will be in Piraeus, the Greek terminal port of the maritime New Silk Road.

In the Balkan Peninsula, Serbia became China's first strategic partner among the CEECs, in 2009. This relationship is also focused on economic co-operation under the OBOR. As it has been mentioned previously, the further extension of the Budapest-Belgrade high-speed rail line to Skopje, the capital of Macedonia, and to Athens, the capital of Greece, will give China-bound freight trains another alternative to gain access to the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas. To achieve better synergy, China's state-owned shipping giant COSCO has recently acquired a majority stake in the Piraeus Port Authority, which complements the 35-year concession to operate piers at Piraeus port. As the closest port in the Northern Mediterranean to the Suez Canal, Piraeus is not only one of the largest ports in the Mediterranean, but a strategic trans-shipment hub for Asian exports to Europe. China's exports could reach Germany, for example, seven to 11 days earlier thanks to the above mentioned new rail connection.

As it can be concluded from the above, the final integration of Eastern Central Europe to the highly developed western Central Europe and West Europe needed an impact produced by a global competitor of the European Union i.e. China. 15 years since the 10 mainly Central European countries joined the EU have not been enough to achieve a catching up. German, French, English economic interests resulted in purchasing markets and cheap labour in Eastern Central Europe and the investments were lagging behind. Now, the geographic gateway potential of the Eastern Central European region is going to be evaluated by the Chinese economic expansion. The Chinese plan to invest on the construction and upgrading of port facilities in the Baltic, Adriatic, and Black Seas, with a focus on production capacity cooperation among ports and industrial and logistic parks along the coastal areas heading into the EU. Thus, the core region of Central Europe is going to enjoy the benefits of the economic gateway position at last: Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic as first stage logistic distribution site.

Besides the economic geographical reasons given above, social geographical facts can also strengthen the V4 countries position as the 'Heartland' of Central Europe. The population

coherence of these nation states holds them together in refusing the migration policy of the EU and the United Nations alike.



The percentage of the immigrant (foreign-born) population shows a strong coherence in Eastern Central European countries. 1.6 % in Poland, 3.2 % in Slovakia, 3.8 % in the Czech Republic and 4.5 % in Hungary, though this latter comes from Hungarian nationality immigrants from Romania, Serbia and Ukraine, so it does not affect national homogeneity in Hungary, like it does in Austria and Germany.

(Source: World Economic Forum 2016)

The political geographical and cultural geographical status of the countries situated in the Central European physical geographical region also show the V4 countries as the original ‘trustees’ of Central Europe with their total territory.⁵¹

⁵¹ Austria and Switzerland, though they can also be regarded as being situated in Western Central Europe, have to be ranked along with Germany as belonging rather to West Europe in economic geographic aspect, while Slovenia’ southern region belongs to the South rather.



The cultural and political definition of Central Europe

(Source: Reddit 2018)

When we consider the Eastern half of Central Europe as the ‘European Heartland’ i.e. the economic clash region, or Eastern Union Frontier between the EU and the Chinese-Russian economic interest sphere, we have to see two facts.

1. The purpose and the economic strategy of the OBOR.
2. The cultural cohesion force acting in between Poland and Hungary on the one hand, accompanied and often backed by the other two V4 countries (Slovakia and the Czech Republic) on the other. This Central European cohesion force can also be perceived in the former eastern territories of the late Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (Vojvodina, Galicia, Transcarpathia, Transylvania and Slavonia); and in other Central European territories that used to be under German influence: the Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia with the exception of Estonia) and the Kaliningrad territory.

The content of the OBOR is clear, while the above mentioned cohesion force can best be characterized by the policy manifested against the migration in the EU Parliament and the preference towards keeping up their own cultural heritage not only within the European Union, but in their individual state administration forms that is known as nation states.

SOURCES

- Barabási Albert László 2016: A hálózatok tudománya – Budapest, Libri Könyvkiadó
- Bernek, Á. 2018: Közép- és Kelet-Európa a 21. század geopolitikai/geoökonómiai stratégiáiban – Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó
- Brzezinski, Zbigniew 1998: The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy And Its Geostrategic Imperatives – Perseus Books, paperback
- Brzezinski, Zbigniew 2012: Strategic Vision – America and the Crisis of Global Power. Highbridge Audio
- Csizmadia Norbert 2016: Geofusion. L'Harmattan France
- China Go Abroad: <http://www.chinagoabroad.com/en/article/21526>
- Cohen, S. B. 2015: Geopolitics – The Geography of International Relations. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers
- Friedman, G. 2019: Geopolitics and Technology 2019 WORLD.MINDS Annual Symposium. <https://geopoliticalfutures.com/world-minds-george-friedman-on-geopolitics-and-technology-2019-world-minds-annual-symposium/>
- Grendel Lajos 1998: Hazám, Abszurdisztán /My Country, Absurdistan/. Pozsony, Kalligram Könyv
- Huntington, S. P. 1994: The Clash of the Civilisations and the Remaking of the World Order, Simon & Schuster New York.
- Kacziba P. 2018: A nemzetközi kapcsolatok hálózattudományi megközelítései. PTE. Politikatudományi Szemle 27/4. pp 133-156
https://epa.oszk.hu/02500/02565/00096/pdf/EPA02565_poltud_szemle_2018-04_133-156.pdf
- Khanna, Parrag. 2016: Connectography: Mapping the Future of Global Civilization. New York, Random House
- Kaplan, R. D. 2016: In Europe's Shadow: Two Cold Wars and a Thirty-Year Journey Through Romania and Beyond, Random House, New York
- Kaplan, R. 2018: The Return of Marco Polo's World. Random House, New York
- Kraft, S. 2018: Hierarchical organization of air transport in Central Europe. In: Distance, integrity, hierarchy – The issue of regionalization of Central Europe based on air transport flow. Acta Universitatis Carolinae. 53.1. Geographica Univerzita Karlova, Prague
- Maçães, B. 2019: The Dawn of Eurasia – On the Trail of the New World Order – Allen Lane Penguin Books
- Mackinder, Halford John 1919: Democratic Ideals and Reality. Washington D.C. National Defense University Press
- Maoz, Z.: 2010. Networks of Nations. Cambridge University Press
- New Cold War: <http://www.basfeijen.nl/newcoldwar/eurasia.htm>
- Probáld F. (szerk.) 2014: Európa Regionális földrajza II., Társadalomföldrajz, Eötvös Kiadó, Budapest
- Quah, Danny 2011: *The Global Economy's Shifting Centre of Gravity*
- Ruan, W. 2012: Two Concepts of 'Civilization'. Comparative Civilizations Review V. 67. No. pp 16-26 .
<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1870&context=ccr>
- Santos, B. D. S. 2006: The rise of the global left. The world social forum and beyond. Zed Books, New York-London.
- Schlögel, Karl 2007: Archipelago Europe = Osteuropa 2007. October Issue

- Szilágyi I. 2018: A geopolitika elmélete – Budapest, Pallas Athéné Könyvkiadó
- Reddit 2018: Europe’s Jewish Population Then and Now. https://www.reddit.com/r/europe/comments/7qkifl/europes_jewish_city_populations_then_and_now/
- SCMP Business Global Economy 2022: <https://www.scmp.com/business/global-economy/article/2022090/one-belt-one-roadbut-how-choose-best-route>
- Tózsza István 2018: Dús hajába tép a szél /Wind Rips through Her Rich Hair/ - in Hungarian: Liber amicorum in Honorem Georgii Kiss aetatis suae LXV. 2018. Dialog Campus Kiadó, Budapest pp 901-910.
- Tózsza István 2015: Regional Geography and Economy of the European Countries – university textbook, BCE, Budapest. http://unipub.lib.uni-corvinus.hu/1672/1/ISP_Textbook_Tozsa.pdf
- Weber, M. 1987: A megértő szociológia alapvonalai. Gazdaság és társadalom. 1. Budapest, Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó
- World Economic Forum 2016: Four maps that will change how you see migration in Europe. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/08/these-4-maps-might-change-how-you-think-about-migration-in-europe/>
- Zhouying, Jin 2018: *The Future of Humanity* – Center for Technology Innovation and Strategy Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

“American hegemony rests not on the dominance of weapons, but on the cult of technology, not on economic power, but on the global use of the English language, not on international political influence, but on the distinctively American cult of freedom and resistance, of prudence and daring. The American way of living is still attractive today, whether or not the world's gendarme successfully concludes its military campaigns.”

George Friedman