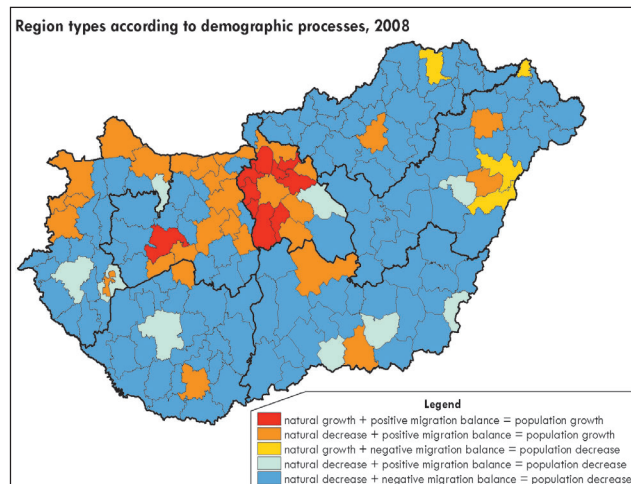


## REGIONAL CONVERGENCE

Spatial disparities in socio-economic development can manifest in the demographic situation and living conditions of the population, and in the provision of social services and public utility infrastructures.

### Demography

At the end of 2008, the **population** of Hungary was 10 million 31 thousand. This was by 14.5 thousand less than a year before. The decrease was the most significant in Northern Hungary where it was more than 1% within one year. Central Hungary and Western Transdanubia were regions where the population grew in 2008: in the first one by nearly 1%, in the other to a minimal extent (by 0.2 thousands). The population of Central Transdanubia slightly increased (by 0.15%) and of the rest decreased by 0.6 to 0.8% within one year.



As a result of the favourable change in the ratio of births and deaths compared to the previous years, in 2008, the rate of **natural decrease** slowed down to some extent (0.04‰), and was around 3.1‰ on the national level. The number of deaths was higher in every country than that of births. The most significant natural decrease occurred in Békés county (7.1 thousands), while in Pest county the rate of deaths was only by 0.2 thousands more than that of births. Like in the years before, the loss of 31 thousand people due to the negative balance of births and deaths could be partly compensated for by international migration, hence the actual population decrease was less than half of this figure.

The balance of **internal migration processes** is still the most favourable in Pest county, where it was +13.7‰ in 2008. Out-migration from the capital city had slowed down by 2007, and actually, a positive balance of migration occurred from 2008, which resulted in a plus of 3.9 thousands. The population pull of Budapest is still felt mostly in its adjacent areas (Pest county) and the north-eastern parts of the country (Borsod-Abaúj Zemplén and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg counties).

### Living conditions

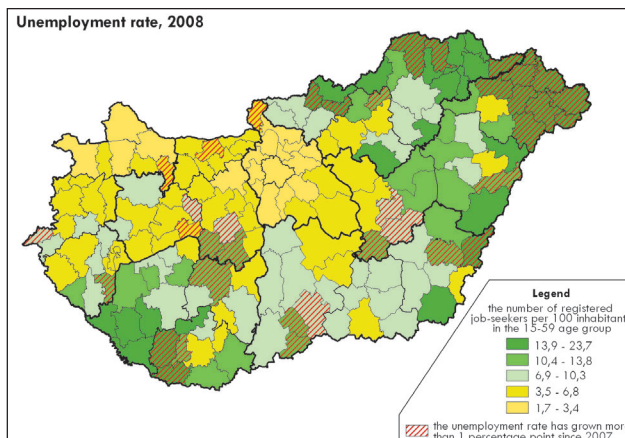
In parallel with the decreasing level of employment, the proportion of registered job-seekers increased in the whole country and by the end of 2008, in the 15–59 age group it reached 6.9%, which is by 0.4 percentage point more than it was one year before. In Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Somogy, Hajdú-Bihar and Nógrád counties the **rate of unemployment** reached or even passed 10%.

## REGIONAL CONVERGENCE

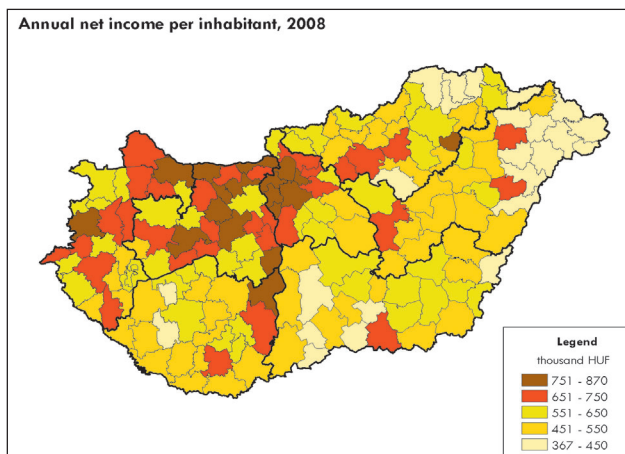
The microregions in the worst position were found almost exclusively along the Croatian and Ukrainian borders as well as along the eastern section of the Slovakian border and the ratio of the unemployed increased even compared to the previous years.

On the national scale, the nominal increase in the **net income per inhabitant** was 8.5%. In the less developed regions the growth of net income was slightly above the national average, it was in the range of 0.7 to 1.5 percentage point, while in the more developed regions by 0.8 to 1.2 percentage point below it. Despite of the downward nivellation between the regions territorial differences are still significant. In the capital city, and the Dunaújváros and Budaörs microregions the net income per inhabitant was in excess of HUF 800 thousand, in the microregions of Bodrogköz, Csenger, Baktalórántháza, it was below HUF 400 thousand.

The trends in the **housing stock** are closely related to the affluence of the population and the prosperity of the region. In 2008, 36.1 thousand new homes were built in the country, approximately the same as in the previous year (36.2 thousand); the total housing stock therefore slightly exceeded 4.3 million. The most of the new homes was built in Central Hungary (17.9 thousand) which account for 49.5% of all newly built homes. Notwithstanding, in the microregions in the Budapest agglomeration (Dunakeszi, Ráckeve) and in the microregions of bigger towns, such as Győr and Nyíregyháza the number of newly built homes exceeded 1000, while it was fewer than 10 in the microregions of Törökszentmiklós, Bácsalmás, Mezőcsát, Sellye and Mezőkovácsháza.

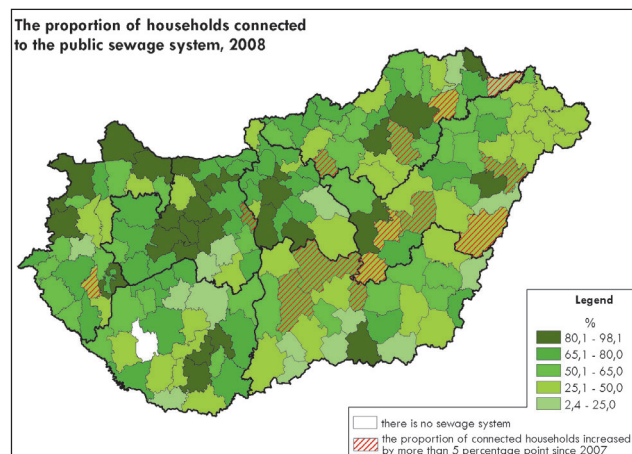


95% of the households were connected to the **drinking water pipe network** in 2008. In some of the most underdeveloped microregions, and in the microregions of Southern Great Plain which have a number of farmsteads, this proportion was lower than 80%, and in the microregion of Mórahalom, it was only 55.9%.



The **proportion of homes connected to the sewage system** was 71.3% in 2008 which is by 1.5 percentage point more than in the previous year. The development was the most intense in the South Great Plain region, where the ratio of dwellings connected to the sewage system grew by 2.5 percentage point. Besides the capital city, a few microregions in Transdanubia (Mosonmagyaróvár, Oroszlány, Kőszeg, Veszprém, Pécs, Győr, Várpalota, Sopron-Fertőd) had higher indicator than 90%, while in the Enying, Nagykáta, Kistelek, Jánoshalma and Bácsalmás microregions this ratio remained below 10%. The microregion of Kadarkút, as a microregion unique in Hungary, still had no sewage network in 2008.

In 2008 the housing stock that was connected to a **gas supply network** slightly increased: from the 76.3% in the previous year, it grew to 76.5%. The ratio of dwellings connected to the gas network was the highest in the Central Hungarian region: nearly 86.8%, and the lowest in the South Transdanubia (60.4%),



whereas in the microregions of Szigetvár and Sellye, this was below 20%.

## Social services

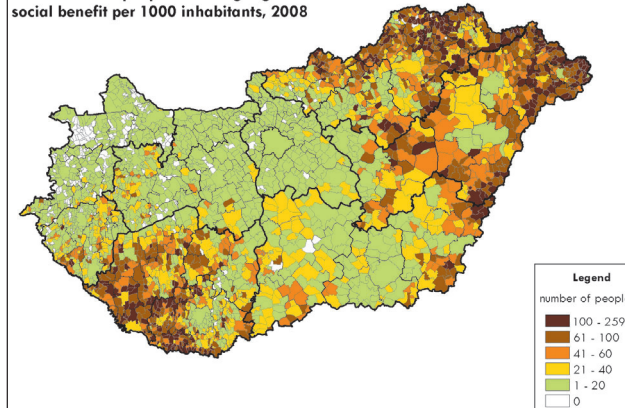
Regarding basic healthcare services, there were 37 more **general practitioners and family paediatricians** in Hungary than in the year before, which growth is insignificant considering the total number of practitioners (6560). The number of medical practices slightly decreased (by 7 in the Western and 3 in the Central Transdanubia), while increased by 6 to 11 on the other regions. In 2008, the number of inhabitants per a doctor was 1529 nationally, but it exceeded 2000 in the microregions of Baktalórántháza, and Hajdúhadháza in the Northern Great Hungarian Plain and certain microregions (Veresegyháza, Gödöllő and Monor) in Central Hungary. The reason for which is either untaken jobs (in the case of less developed microregions) or a sudden increase in the population (in the case of the microregions in the Budapest agglomeration) and the concentration of the specialized health care institution in the capital city and its neighbourhood.

In 2008 the decrease of the **number of hospital beds per 10 thousand inhabitants** that took place due to the restructuring of health care in 2007 did not continue. As a result of minor corrections, the number of hospital beds per 10 thousand inhabitations decreased by 0.5%, that is, to 70.8 nationally. This decrease was primarily attributable to the reduction of hospital beds in the capital city, where their number decreased from 113 to 107.5. Although thanks to its healthcare institutions playing national and regional roles the number of hospital beds it the greatest in

Budapest and the Central Transdanubian region (75.0) beds per 10 thousand inhabitants, while in the Southern Great Plain region 63.6 beds only for the same number of inhabitants.

The annual average of **those receiving regular social subsidy** from the local government was 194 thousand in 2007 which grew to 213 thousand by 2008, which means that 2.1% of the population got in 2008 some regular social subsidy. In 19 microregions, the number of those receiving regular subsidies per 1000 inhabitants was more than 70, and with the exception of the microregions of Sellye, Nagyatád, and Berettyóújfalu, these microregions were all in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén or Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg counties. In the Abaúj-Hegyköz, Bordroghöz and Encs microregion the number of supported people per 1000 inhabitants

The number of people receiving regular social benefit per 1000 inhabitants, 2008



exceeded 100. There were 30 municipalities in the country where more than 200 people per 1000 inhabitants were receiving regular social subsidies.

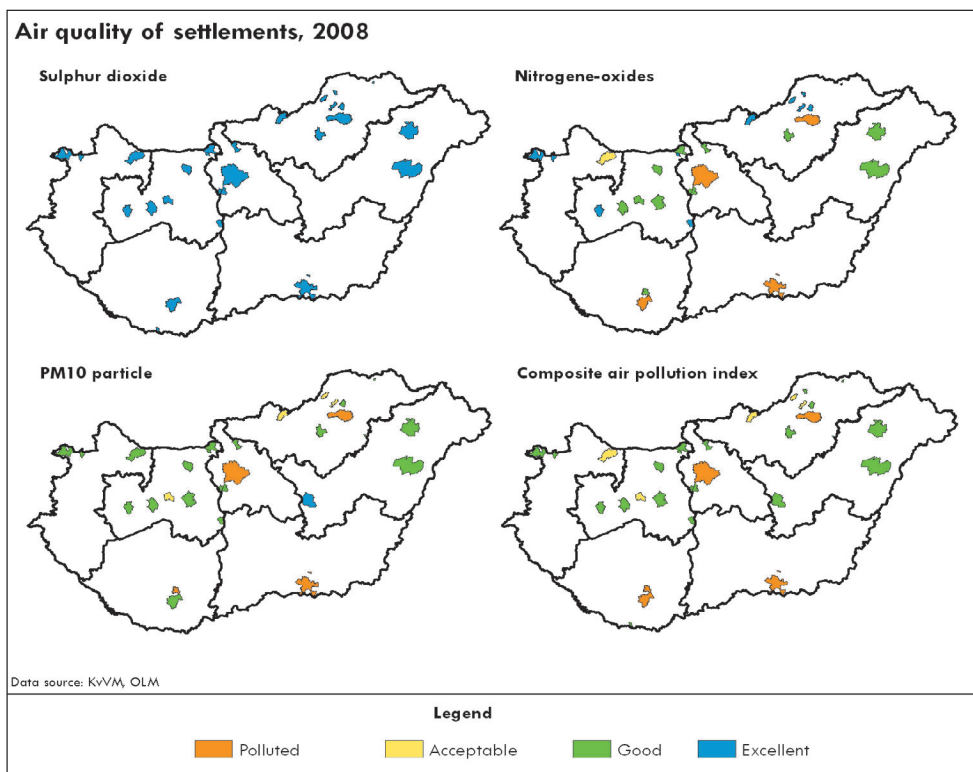
## SUSTAINABLE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Besides protecting the values of the natural and built environments, the purpose of sustainable regional development is to guarantee that development will improve the quality of life of the population while it will also ensure a careful use of the economic resources that form the basis of all. To assess the accomplishment of this complex set of targets, we need to have thorough knowledge of the condition of the environment, and the responses given to the environmental challenges.

### Air quality

**Point-source emission of air pollutants** was highest in 2008 too in major cities, in industrial areas and alongside the main transport corridors. The microregions of Kazincbarcika, Oroszlány, Ajka and Székesfehérvár were found especially polluted due to industrial activities and sectors with high emission rates and to coal-fired power stations. The rural microregions of peripheral locations, such as Abaúj-Hegyköz and Óriszentpéter having lower industrial production had small loads.

Based on the **complex index of air pollution**, in 2008 the air quality of 5 settlements classified as polluted: this was caused predominantly by settling dust and the high concentrations of nitrogen oxides, the major part of which was emitted by the various means of transport. In 2008, sulphured dioxide contamination was not yet causing serious problem: air quality, on a yearly average, was excellent at all monitoring points, a phenomenon mainly due to a radical decrease in sulphur dioxide emissions, the use of sulphur-free fuels as well as to the installation of smoke washers at the power stations.





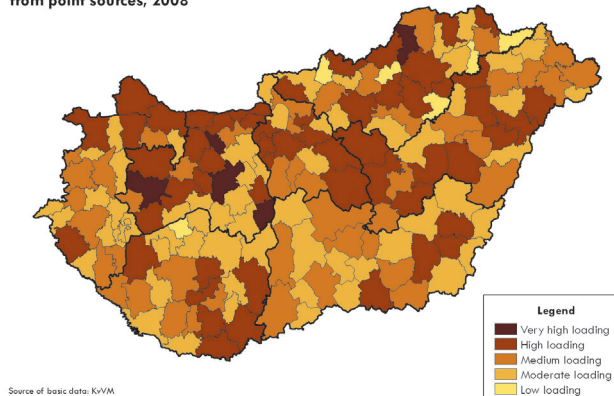
## Water quality

The **water quality of the Danube** was somewhat better at its exit point than at its entrance according to biochemical oxygen demand (BOD5). The total phosphorus and total nitrogen contents plus the Coliform count from communal wastewater load, on the other hand, increased towards the exit point, on the lower parts in 2008, and the river left the country with worse values than entered. Along **Tisza**, the value of biochemical oxygen demand (BOD5) decreased. In the meantime, the total phosphorus content and the total nitrogen contents were considerably higher when it reached the border with Serbia, than at its entrance point to Hungary. Thanks to the reconstruction of the Szeged water treatment plant in 2007, the Coliform count of the river at the exit point was only insignificantly higher than at the entrance point.

The **quality of drinking water**, in most of the country, is fulfilling the requirements. However, the drinking water supplied to about one quarter of the population contains boron, fluoride, nitrite, arsenic or ammonium in concentrations above the limit values. A further 7% of the population is supplied with drinking water with high concentrations of iron and/or manganese. Due to the National Program for Drinking Water Quality Improvement covering 873 settlements, projects affecting approximately 10% of the population have been completed as of yet.

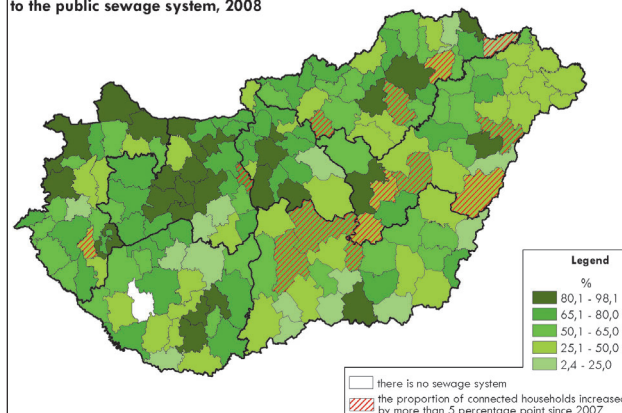
The quantity of **sewage** per capita collected by public sewage network was 54 m<sup>3</sup> nationally in 2008. Higher volumes were found in the most developed industrial and urban regions, i.e. the northern part of

Complex emission index of air pollutants from point sources, 2008



Transdanubia, Budapest and its agglomeration, as well as in the microregions containing the bigger cities. The disposal of waste water was more significant also in the case of municipalities where there are establishments using especially great quantities of water, like for instance, thermal baths, spas.

The proportion of households connected to the public sewage system, 2008



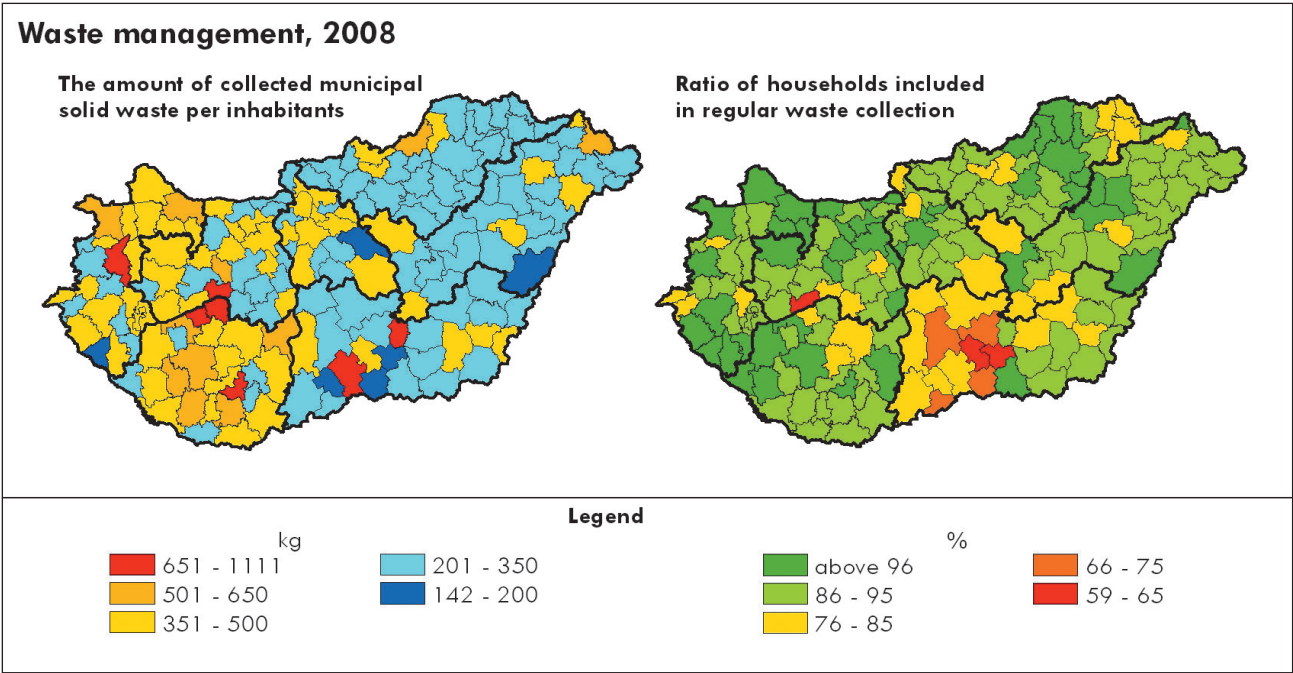
From all collected sewage in Hungary, the ratio of sewage receiving the **third level of treatment** was 36.7%, while 34.1% of the collected wastewater was released after **biological treatment**. In 2008, there were fewer, altogether 11 microregions where the collected sewage was disposed of **without any treatment**; the proportion of this compared to the total amount of collected sewage, was 4.7%.

Waste management

The proportion of households included in regular **waste collection** was more than 92.3% in 2008. The regular collection and disposal of solid communal waste was

solved almost everywhere in the country, although in areas such as, for example, in Kiskunság, due to their settlement structure with farmsteads, a considerably lower ratio of households was included. In the microregion of Tiszafüred, Füzesabony, Berettyóújfalu and Püspökladány the value have markedly improved by 2008 thanks to the setting up of local and regional waste management systems and networks.

The per capita volume of **municipal solid waste** was generally much higher in Transdanubia (387.3 kg/inh.), than the national average, while in the eastern part of Hungary, it was usually less. The waste generation of the microregions including the major cities and



their agglomerations, as well as of microregions with considerable tourism was particularly high.

### Environmental remediation

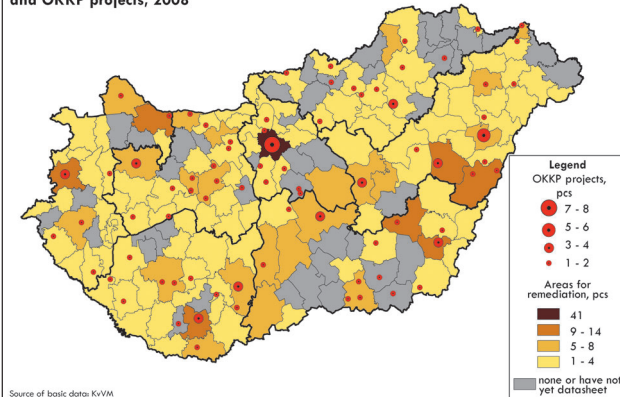
The mapping of sites requiring environmental remediation, the consolidation and revision of former data bases continued in 2008. According to the data for 2007, 459 sites were **registered as ones requiring environmental remediation**. The microregion of Budapest had the highest number, but the microregions of Győr, Szombathely, Pécs, Békéscsaba, Berettyóújfalú and Püspökladány had too such sites.

In the framework of the **National Environmental Remediation Programme** (Hungarian abbreviation: OKKP), 121 remediation programs were under way. Most of the interventions (51) were performed under the MÁV (Hungarian State Railways Co.) Sub-programme related to the modernisation of fuel supply systems. The Home Defence Sub-programme included 26 remedial measures, and the Water Management Sub-programme covered 22 projects.

### Nature conservation

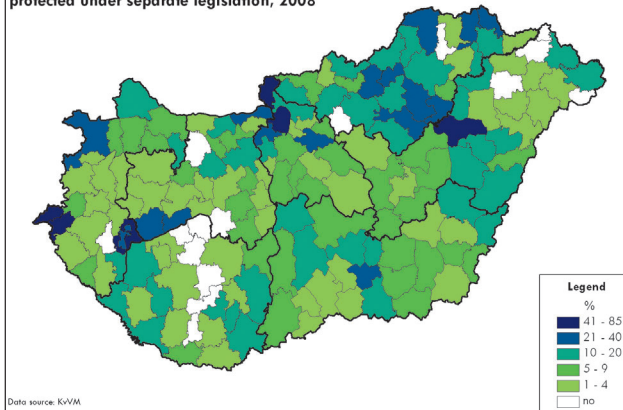
The number of **nature conservation areas of national significance protected under separate legislation** was 210 in 2008, and their combined area exceeded 847 thousand hectares, which is 9.1% of Hungary's territory. Another new nature conservation area was set up, the so-called Békő Nature Conservation Area with a footing area of 97 hectares and three areas of nature conservation have been enlarged by 2 729 hectares in aggregate.

Explored areas for remediation, 2007 and OKKP projects, 2008

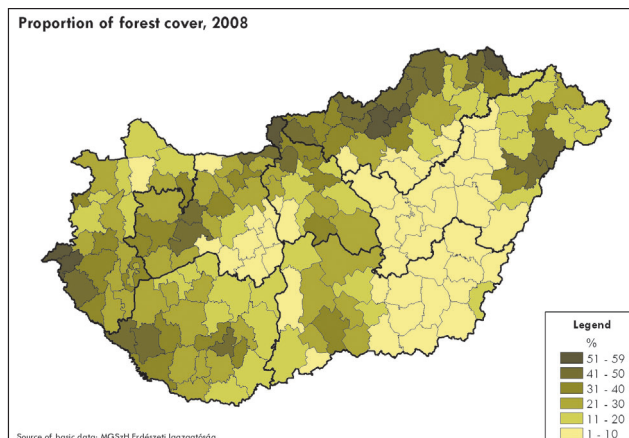


The territory of national parks exceeded 485 thousand hectares (5.2%) of the landscape protection areas 329 thousand (3.5%), the nature conservation areas 32 thousand (0.4%) In the Óriszentpéter, Szentgotthárd, Szentendre, Szob, Hévíz and Balmazújváros microregions the ratio of the protected

Nature conservation areas of national significance protected under separate legislation, 2008







areas was over 40%. The Nature 2000 areas covered 21.2% of Hungary's territory in 2008.

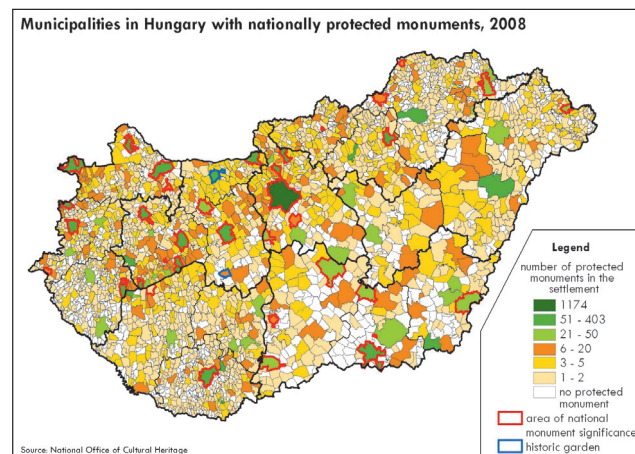
In the same year, two more areas were added to the list of Hungarian **areas falling under the effect of the Ramsari Treaty**. The Borsod-Mezőség Landscape Protection Area belonging to the Bükk National Park Management and having a footing area of 17 932 hectares and Montág-pusztá, a territory of 2 203 hectares between two settlements, Tótkomlós and Makó and belonging to the Körös-Maros National Park. In 2008, there were 3 officially designated **natural parks** in Hungary: the Vértes Natural Park (35 838 ha), the Irottkő Natural Park (20 119 ha) and the Sokoró-Pannontáj Natural Park (62 670 ha).

The **ratio of forests** continuously increases and thanks to this, in 2008 accounted for 20.5% of the entire territory of the country. The ratio of coverage is the highest in the mountain areas and in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county, in the Homokhátság and the Southern

Transdanubia. In the microregions of Pétervására and Szob the ratio of forests is thrice the national average, while that of the areas in the Trans-Tisza area and Mezőföld, which are territories much more favourable for cultivation as arable land, below 10%.

### Protection of cultural heritage

In 2008, two-thirds of all municipalities, that is, 2 149 settlements owned altogether 10 900 nationally protected **cultural monuments**, 39 historical territories under protection as monuments and 2 historical gardens. There are more settlements with no monuments in the areas of small settlements and farmhouses, as the number of buildings is lower there, and as protection involves serious financial burdens. On the other hand, the number of the protected monuments of arts in our historical towns, such as Sopron, Győr, Pécs, Kőszeg, Eger, Székesfehérvár, Esztergom, Veszprém and Szeged) are over 100 and in Budapest over 1 000.



Similarly to the stock of monuments, the number of World Cultural Heritage Sites in Hungary did not change in 2008: there were still 8 sites with this title, which involved 52 local governments and 4 national parks.

The number of visits to museums also shows a strong territorial concentration: 37.6% of all museum visits were made to museums of the capital city. From

the visitors of museums in Central Hungary, every sixth visitor went only to some exhibition in Pest county, predominantly Szentendre, Gödöllő or Visegrád. 1.3 million visitors visited the museums of Northern Hungary and the same number those of Central Transdanubia. In the Northern Great Plain which is less significant from the point of view of tourism only the exhibitions in the county seats had considerable number of visitors, that is, visitors in excess of 40 000.

