

CROSS-BORDER SUBURBANISATION AROUND BRATISLAVA: CHANGING SOCIAL, ETHNIC AND ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER OF THE “HUNGARIAN SUBURB” OF THE SLOVAK CAPITAL

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Cross-border suburbanisation around Bratislava: changing social, ethnic and architectural character of the “Hungarian suburb” of the Slovak capital

Rajka is a village in Northwest Hungary with a special geographical location, only fifteen kilometres from Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia. This settlement is an excellent example of the phenomenon of cross-border suburbanisation which means the migration of the urban population from the city to the not too distant rural area even if it is in another country. This process is transforming the original character of Rajka. There are huge differences between the lifestyles of the indigenous and the immigrant community. The autochthonous inhabitants are worried about Rajka's fast alteration, there are considerable problems in between Hungarians and Slovaks due to language differences and a lot of tensions because of the village's changing atmosphere, congested local traffic and the new challenges in Rajka's educational institution. Besides the presentation of social changes, this paper focuses on the ethnic and residential ancestry of the immigrants to show new linguistic and social patterns in Rajka. On the other hand, examining the specifics of the dramatic transformation of the architectural character of this settlement is also an important element of the study.

Key words: migration, suburbanisation, ethnicity, built environment, Rajka, hinterland of Bratislava, Hungary, Slovakia

INTRODUCTION

Rajka, located in the north westerly periphery of both Hungary and the county of Győr-Moson-Sopron, has until recently functioned as a border crossing to Slovakia, from the Paris Peace Treaty (1947) that had ended World War II, and the community remained part of Hungary against the will of the Czechoslovakia. The mass deportation of the German-speaking residents and their replacement with mostly ethnic Hungarians from Czechoslovakia caused big trauma in the history of the village, which was originally mainly inhabited by Germans. The village was regarded as peripheral in terms of its spatial-connections, and due to its position was hardly developed during the socialist era. For this reason, its typical demographic process was migration, mainly towards Mosonmagyaróvár and Győr.

A new situation occurred when Hungary and Slovakia joined the European Union (2004), then border checks were ceased (2007). Rajka lies only 15 kilometres away from the Slovak capital of Bratislava, therefore with the abolishment of the border alterations from the early 20th century, regional relations were revitalised – just like in the case of several other border towns (e.g. Oradea, Arad and Szombat-

hely) – bringing with them the possibility of reorganization within the urban agglomeration. Rajka was “promoted” as Bratislava’s potential suburb and gained instant advantage over the already saturated suburban villages. Property prices were much lower than those of its Slovak “fellows”, and it was also much less saturated.



Fig. 1. Rajka, with the new quarters (grey with white contour), housing estates (with stripes) and new housing estates (black)

Source: own edition, OpenStreetMap

The influx of immigrants from Bratislava to Rajka received strong publicity in the Hungarian national press, too. The changes in the community, social transformation, coexistence within the community together with the possible consequences all appear as relevant questions, which can also become relevant in other Hungarian villages (mainly in the Romanian border regions mentioned earlier) in the near future. The articles published in this field can only be interpreted as snapshots, providing information about the current situation, based mainly on locals’ reports, and require new field trips due to the fast-changing nature of social statuses. Only a few words have been said so far about the process regarding spatial formation, furthermore the changing language and social relationships presented street by street or perhaps by households have been completely left out, or changes have been put into the context of time and space. Based on what has been said so far, the aim of this study is follows:

– Our first goal was to define the processing of domestic and foreign (Slovak) reports from the written media, the changes in the situation in Rajka, completed with information from the few scientific publications existing and our own information sources.

– Regarding Rajka’s ethno-linguistic pattern our preconception was that the changes in ethnic characteristics – although they do not create any conflicts in everyday life – have a perceptible effect, not only on the local community, but on Rajka’s visually measurable parts (e.g. public places). Our second goal was therefore

to survey the local ethnic language circumstances, to characterize the current situation, and to analyse the temporal changes of the relative proportion of indigenous and immigrant populations.

– We also aimed to present the physical impact of the suburbanisation process on the appearance of the village, and to compare the current and previous state of the settlement. We assume that the transformation of the built environment on this local scale is very significant and reveals a lot about the direction and speed of this process.

Rajka, in its own complex case offers a rather diverse academic subject, in fact there are hardly any past or present social changes in the village which would not offer significant professional results when assessed. Furthermore – like it often happens on a local scale – information arising while carrying out research or extra information experienced during field trips can lead to several further questions (i.e. migration within Rajka or the concentration of the built-in areas in the settlement) (Fig. 1). These questions – since they are in line with our two main objectives – were also included within the topics we decided to analyse.

METHODS

In order to present the current situation of Rajka, reports from previous publications provided a sufficient background; we regard these articles and field trips as academic literature, which complement the actual information provided to us by local sources. Thanks to their local knowledge, we could not only discover parts of the village that is relevant to our topic, but from their opinions and personal anecdotes (the state of the local property market, the characteristics of the migration or local conflicts) we could discover their point of view regarding the landslide-like changes that happened over the past decade. It was important, that both the native and the immigrant side was represented, so we worked with two respondents. The reasons for the social changes in the settlement are presented by looking at material already published together with the opinion of the locals. We also show the factors that still have an effect, and what new effects have lined up with them since. By shedding some light on to the questions not yet examined we establish the foundation to our research.

The previous researches – despite being well-founded – need updating due to the dynamic changes that have occurred in the area. The academic literature relevant to our subject requires further expansion, which is the aim of this article, together with assessment of the changing pattern of the inner language-origin and the changing appearance of the settlement. Despite the fact that the number of professional publications is small low, the Hungarian and Slovak media have quickly snapped up the subject. Besides the regional publication called Little Hungarian Plain (Kisalföld), journalists from other countrywide press releases Hungarian Nation (Magyar Nemzet), Weekly World Economy (Heti Világgazdaság) and from Slovak newspapers and periodicals have become “regulars” in Rajka, presenting from time-to-time the unique development in the community and other actual changes. Apart from the academic publications, we analysed 20 articles out of the ones that were published in these journals, both in the printed and online versions.

When examining the appearance of the settlement we concentrated on the changes, which in the case of Rajka can be well detected even within a few years. Two hundred and fifty photographs were taken during the field trip (April 2017).

Due to the lack of previous field-research we compared the photos taken by us to those from the database of Google Street View from December 2011, identifying the locations on the pictures and then comparing the two stages. Besides the fact that we are talking about a mere six-year period, we are convinced that the substantial transformation proves the relevance of our investigation.

The method used to analyse the linguistic and ethnic patterns is also based on field research, using several well-established methods, parts of which plays a fairly important role in this research. Just think of the involvement of people with an extensive knowledge of the local circumstances, and the method used to survey individual households when researching the inner structures of the settlements (further reading: Keményfi 2002, Tátrai 2006 and Balizs 2014). On the other hand, think of the written and other materials and symbols that appear in public places, full of linguistic-ethnic content, and the outstanding role of photographic evidence, which is stressed during researching the linguistic landscape (Landry and Bourhis 1997, Backhaus 2007, Laihonen 2012, Híres-László 2015 and Szoták 2016). Regarding the research method, the aim is to collect as much local information as possible. Besides taking notes and photos, the views and aspects of those who know the village well play an important part, too; in regard to the ethnicity – mother tongue relations, the ethnic history of Rajka, for example the situation of the locally-born German-speaking community.

In Rajka's case we have to be careful when using the terms native and indigenous, since a large percentage of Hungarian nationals living in Rajka today can only trace back their family members coming from Rajka to the end of World War II. The village was mainly inhabited by Germans residing in Hungary, who were only replaced with Hungarians following their deportation in 1945. Regardless, we can call the Hungarians and the few Germans who stayed behind natives, in order to clearly distinguish them from those who moved here from Bratislava after the year 2000.

Besides the facts above, any kind of visual information can play a part, which in any way contributes to understanding the general linguistic aspect, or to establish the original background of the population. This is how registration numbers of vehicles on and off the road or the occurrence of cars with different number plates (Hungarian or Slovak) could qualify as usable data. The monitoring of the cars' number plates as a research tool mainly appears when detecting the cars or when conducting criminal investigations. Many case studies draw attention to the wealth of information when it comes to number plates (Du et al. 2012 and Prates et al. 2014), which aims to partially identify the owner. It is also mentioned by László et al. (2011) in a similar context, but with a different topic. He focuses on identifying the origin country of visitors in tourism related research. Both approaches can be useful to us. However, it is important to stress that since the method is based on simple observations, it can only be used with necessary caution or together with other methods.

Based on previous information it became clear that during the investigation we could not ignore Rajka's unique inner structure, which is built in fragments. Consequently, we differentiated between the "old" part of the village that can be traced back many centuries, but in terms of its buildings was predominantly established between 1960 and 1980, and the "new" part which was built after 2007 and almost entirely inhabited by people originating from Bratislava. The two parts show significant differences, comparing them further enriches our research.

As we mentioned in the introduction, previous publications dealing with Rajka were missing the presentation of these changes in the spatial structure, therefore visualisation with the help of a map became an important method, giving an insight into the social-immigrational process and the current linguistic structure. All in all, the method implemented in the research was constructed based on the following logical structure:

Analyzing academic literature → Interviewing respondents → Field trip → Taking photos → Visualization

SUBURBANISATION IN CROSS-BORDER ZONES

The enlivening of the cross-border migration with aims to settle down in Western-Europe can be linked to the past few decades' integration process, but at the same time the development of the transportation infrastructure has played an important role, too. The increase of cross-border residential mobility is in coherence with some level of decrease of the state's power, and with EU guidelines urging free movement and ensuring the right to stay (Jagodič 2010). Citizens of the European Union enjoy more flexibility when crossing borders. To the west from us, this could be felt straight after signing the Schengen Treaty in 1985, especially in the German-Dutch (Strüver 2005), Belgian-Dutch (Van Houtum and Gielis 2006), and the French-German (Terlouw 2008) border zones, but it appeared relatively quickly in the Central European countries that joined after the turn of the millennium, first of all at the Slovenian-Italian border (Jagodič 2011).

Interest in the other side of the border can usually be detected first by the increase in mobility for work (commuting), then due to the price differences in the property market, the residential mobility increases too, in the form of permanent or wished to be permanent re-location. The theoretical background of the process is presented in great detail by the authors listed, so we will not go into it in this study. The influencing effect of the ethnical/origin/linguistic factors – which we put more emphasis on compared to other similar studies – can clearly be detected because of the Slovenian speaking population living near the Slovenian-Italian border in the Trieste area (Jagodič 2011). It also plays a role at the German-French border, but not at all in a form expected from a “Central-European point of view”: French families arriving in the German side don't in fact arrive into a community that speaks their language, since the vast majority of Alsations of a German origin speak French. The presence of the linguistic factor is much more matter-of-fact: according to Terlouw (2008), the lack of mutual understanding was more likely to lead to many Germans returning home. Communication problems will also emerge in Rajka's case, but as we will see, the linguistic component is a lot less significant here.

In many cases, if the border zone has an asymmetric nature due to urbanisation and/or its economic potential, the mobilization mentioned above will be present in the form of cross-border suburbanisation¹. To make it simpler, a certain percentage of people moving out of a large town near the border will target a settlement in the neighbouring country, due to reasons such as the property market, accessibility, appearance etc. On the one hand they do this for the main reasons that trigger suburbanisation (the attraction of a country-life or a larger property), on the other

¹ For understanding the theoretical background of suburbanisation (see van den Berg et al. 1982, Fishman 1987, Enyedi 1988, Dövényi and Kovács 1999, Timár 1999 and Bajmócy 2007).

hand, because the other side of the border is also part of the agglomeration of the centre town (the town where they used to live) and the town's transformational effects (including transport and accessibility) stretch across to the neighbouring country. The border however, due to its rigidity, creates a strong barrier in the process; but when crossing is permitted, the so far suppressed demand immediately appears, inducing visible changes in the target settlements of those moving away. (Hardi 2010 and Jagodič 2010).

After the process had become widespread in Western Europe, it could also be experienced in Central Europe in an increasing number. The increasing level of mobility mentioned earlier falls into this category, at part of the Italian-Slovenian border, but we can detect several similar cases in the Pannonian Basin, too. The abolition of passport checks in 2007 (within the Schengen region for Austria, Slovenia and Slovakia) and checks being simplified (for Romania and Croatia) in many cases leads to the unionisation of the agglomerations of towns shared between Hungary and its neighbouring countries, both from an economic and a social point of view. We are talking here mainly about towns that ended up outside the Hungarian borders at the beginning of the 20th century, then, having recovered from the shock caused by the political changes of 1989, started a dynamic development process and their natural agglomeration, settlements and some parts of their population that used to belong to the town's catchment area stayed in Hungary. These areas ended up in a peripheral situation, losing their centre could only be partly substituted by other towns. Oradea (Lovas Kiss 2011) and Košice² are prime examples, but Bratislava also belongs to these cities, with the difference that most of its agglomerations can be found at the other side of the border, only a few settlements (including Rajka) stayed part of Hungary. Bratislava is also unique, because it is a capital city, and this fact drives forward suburbanisation both in terms of population (population that is potentially involved in suburban processes) and in other social characteristics of the population (level of income, qualification, mobility etc.).

In Slovakia a suburban process can be detected near several urban centres, out of which two are very significant on a national level (Bratislava and Košice). Apart from these, movement to suburban areas can be noticed in Banská Bystrica, Prešov, Trnava, Nitra, Poprad, Prievidza, Trenčín, Martin and Žilina (Šveda 2014). Authors who are engaged in this subject stress that the process is very significant on a Slovak scale, however rather low-key when compared to Western Europe (Šveda and Križan 2011). The only exception is Bratislava, where the level of the population affected by suburbanisation and the speed of the process proves to be especially remarkable. The core of the city of Bratislava had significantly started to lose its population in the mid-1990s, the surrounding settlements could register a considerable level of immigration from around the turn of the millennium (Slavík et al. 2011). Although the most intensive period of immigration falls between 2003 and 2008 (Šveda 2011 and Šveda and Šuška 2014), its intensity is still notable today; the constantly appearing new property development plans and investments show that demand for newly built property in the Bratislava area will remain significant in the next decade (Šveda and Šuška 2014). The reason behind the population "fleeing" the overpopulated urban areas is a change in their residential prefer-

² <http://24.hu/belfold/2013/03/13/kassaiak-menekulnek-magyarorszagra/>
http://figyelo.hu/cikk_print.php?cid=szlovak-ingatlanvasarlas-roham-a-hatarszelen

ences, just like in other large European cities (Šveda 2014), but the receiving settlements must pay attention to similar risks: the spread of the urban lifestyle and the local decision-making process that eliminates the locals create revulsion amongst them. The outskirts of the city is constantly changing both in terms of land usage and function, this transition can be followed up well by looking at built-in areas and land use (Baus et. al 2014) and on top of that by recognizing that the suburbanisation process now spreads to businesses as well, primarily as an economic reflection on social mobility (Šveda and Križan 2011). Those who leave Bratislava usually do not go any further than 40 kilometres from the capital, most new properties are built in a 15-25 kilometres radius (Šveda 2011 and 2014). By taking a glance at the map, we can easily notice that a large part of this zone does not belong to Slovakia, but to Austria (west) and Hungary (south). It is unique on an Eastern-Central-European scale, that the suburban zone of a capital city spreads out to other countries as well, due to the proximity of the borders, many people leaving Bratislava will look for a new home outside of Slovakia, obviously this process could only start after joining the European Union and the borders became symbolic (2007). Joining new areas to the suburbanisation of Bratislava was not only justified by utilizing new opportunities, but by the significant transformations of Slovak settlements. Besides the undoubtedly positive effects (dynamic changes in local communities in terms of demographic, economic and infrastructural development etc.) the suburban settlements had to face several negative effects of the process (environmental and traffic problems, contrasts between the old and new residents, profiteering from the property market etc. (Podolák 2007, Ira et al. 2011 and Šveda and Šuška 2014). The saturation deriving from the rise in built-up areas, and the increase in social differences turned the attention of people wishing to move out of Bratislava and the estate agencies towards the neighbouring (and yet “untouched”) settlements of Austria and Hungary.

The Austrian and Hungarian side settlements that are located the nearest to Bratislava and can easily be reached on the motorway (Berg, Hainburg, Kittsee, Marchegg, Pama, Wolfstahl, Bezenye, Dunakiliti, Feketeerdő, Mosonmagyaróvár and Rajka) became the targets of the newcomers (Ira et al. 2011). Interest in Austria increased after 2004, in Hungary only after 2007 (Dillinger 2004, Slavík and Kurta 2007), in the case of the latter, Rajka, which lies only 15 kilometres from the Slovak capital is undoubtedly in the lead. In the first few years Rajka was mainly chosen by high earners who were highly qualified and at the beginning bought already existing properties, which they then renovated. Even then a still existing practice was detectable (this worries many of the local residents), which involves the local residents of Rajka selling their houses or flats to buyers from Bratislava at a price that is much higher than their realistic value, then leaving the village. This resulted in a population decrease in Rajka before 2009, however this was also the result of the fact that a large proportion of the newcomers did not formally register in the village (Slavík et al. 2011). This, as the number of the non-registered residents keeps increasing, is proving to be a growing problem for the local authorities, while it is taking its toll on services and the infrastructure of the village, since they were designed for a settlement with a much smaller population. Ira et al. (2011) write about the problems of Rajka in detail, which in fact appeared when the first wave of newcomers had arrived. Our study can be interpreted as an answer to the topics and questions raised by them (the unique nature of suburbanisation in Rajka, language barriers, the social status of those moving out, the position of the community etc.) for further analysis.

The development of a suburban zone in the Bratislava area and its spreading across the Slovak-Hungarian border is a well-known process for social scientists thanks to the works of Hardi and Lampl in particular. The negative effects of the political transformation were reasonably small on the Slovak capital; Slovakia's independence gave the country an even stronger growth economically and in its regional organisational powers after 1993. Its population grew fast in the second half of the 20th century: from 193 thousand to 442 thousand within four decades. A large percentage of the growth was made up of the influx of workforce ensuring the operation of new industrial sites. The immigrational background – with a generational time lag – is shown in the flexible approach toward moving on, and in Bratislava's case this forms an important base for the suburban process (Lampl 2010)³. The agglomeration of the city started to spread decades ago, first along the main traffic routes (towards Brno and Trnava), then in the direction of Csallóköz (Žitný ostrov) and at the other side of the border. The intense and mutual relationship of the western part of the Slovak-Hungarian border was already developed during the socialist era, mainly in the form of work exchange (Hardi 2011); according to research carried out round the millennium, Slovaks visited Hungary in a larger proportion (94% of interviewed persons) than Hungarians visiting Slovakia (80% of people asked), supposedly language issues were behind this (Hardi 2008). Also, telling data, that 50% of Slovaks living in the Slovak-Hungarian border region of the Bratislava area regarded being near the neighbouring country as an advantage, while out of those living on the Hungarian side only one tenth said the same (Hardi and Lampl 2008). Hardi payed special attention to linguistic attitudes during his 2009 research, and he established that 80% of the immigrants had Slovak nationality, but every other person spoke or understood Hungarian to some level. According to the author's new research only 29% of those living on the Slovak side of the Bratislava agglomeration said that they could manage without speaking Slovak, while on the Hungarian side 76% of the immigrants said that they could get by without speaking Hungarian. This is of course strongly related to the fact that part of those who move to Hungary have no intention of adjusting to their new environment, they have no need to do so; the fact that they feel at home in Rajka does not mean a change in identity (Hardi 2011). Four fifths of them agreed that they had a helpful and friendly welcome by the locals, regardless whether they had Slovak or Hungarian nationality⁴. Their positive experience however has little impact on their mobility for work, 82% of them worked in Bratislava, and only one tenth in their current place of residence (Lampl 2010).

If we do not just focus on the relationship between Bratislava and Rajka, but we examine one of its main unique features, the language issue on a European scale, we can find many examples where migration from central towns to suburban zones had a significant effect on the linguistic-ethnic pattern of these zones. Crossing the border is not the only way for this process to happen, like in the Italian, German and Dutch examples we mentioned earlier. It can also originate from the central town being more ethnically diverse than its surroundings, and because of this the linguistically and ethnically heterogenic migrating population will turn the popula-

³ At least 30% of the people who moved to Rajka from Bratislava before 2010 born somewhere else, not in the Slovakian capital (Lampl 2010).

⁴ The immigrants are treated as foreigners by the autochthons regardless of their nationality (Hardi and Lampl 2008).

tion of the neighbouring settlement heterogenic, too. The case of Lugano in Switzerland is an excellent European example for this process, where 40% of the city's population is not of Swiss origin, but immigrants who had arrived from nearly a hundred different countries. Diversity in residential preferences can be shown in how certain ethnic groups place themselves within a city, for example the level of segregation, and it also shows great diversity when it comes to moving into suburban areas. Some communities participate in this process a lot less, while other (already heavily segregated) groups aim to arrive in a linguistically homogeneous group (their own language) after leaving, but there are nationalities which, in this case follow the pattern shown by the majority (Ibraimović and Masiero 2014). One thing is sure, that due to this process the neighbouring rural settlements become linguistically much more mixed. Similar process happens in big cities and their surroundings in North-America. The examples show (Alba et al. 1999, Fong and Shibuya 2000 and Massey and Tannen 2017) that the population of a big city is much more complex linguistically than its surroundings, and that certain racial groups (from black, Hispanic or Asian origin) are very different when it comes to suburbanisation activities and residential preferences; Afro-Americans for example move out of the city in a significantly smaller ratio.

The diverse city – homogenic countryside dichotomy is not only a unique feature of the suburbanisation to the west of us, we can also experience this in Eastern-Central Europe. The clearest examples can be discovered at the Baltic region, where in the Soviet era, industrialization was in connection with the influx of Slavic (mainly Russian) speaking nations, altering the nationality ratios of scarcely populated areas. More than a third of the population of Tallinn and Riga is still Russian, but the Slavic population also makes up a significant proportion in other cities (amongst others in Tartu in Estonia). Since the latter had arrived within organised frames, all in all they were met by ready housing estates (providing relatively modern living facilities), while the Estonian and Latvian population lived in the more scarcely populated outskirts of towns in detached houses. Segregation deriving from this and segmentation experienced in the standard of living had fallen since 1991, however it is still an important characteristic of cities in the Baltic region, and it has a differentiating effect on suburbanisation, both in relation to the majority and minority. Despite a decrease in differences, the ethnic segregation between the Estonians and Latvians and other nations in the minority, segregation has even increased in the last few years; this shows that the social and economic differences between each group can be traced back to their ethnic background. The latter is worth the attention, even if the importance of the ethnic factor has decreased since the regime change (Kontuly and Tammaru 2006, Kulu and Billari 2006, Hess et al. 2012, Krisjane and Bezins 2012 and Leetmaa et al. 2015).

The effect of suburbanisation on the language pattern can therefore materialize if the process crosses a country border or if the town is more heterogeneous than its surroundings from an ethnic-origin point of view. However, a third scenario also exists when the city centre is located in an area where the minority of the given country forms a local majority. Vilnius in Lithuania is an example of this, where the capital has a Lithuanian majority but it is surrounded by Polish villages. And to some extent Bratislava can also be listed here, where several Hungarian villages can be found in its Slovak suburban zone, since the city still lies near the Hungarian-Slovak language border. In the case of Vilnius, the influx of Lithuanians into the neighbouring Polish-style settlements resulted in strengthening of the Polish

identity (Ubareviciene et al. 2015). Examining this proves to be interesting research material also in the case of Bratislava (this study does not elaborate on this).

“HERE BRATISLAVA DICTATES”⁵

This process began straight after the 2004 accession (Hardi 2010 and Lampl 2010), after the first few people to try there was – on a local scale – an influx of those who were interested. As opposed to the earlier mentioned German-French example, commuting for work did not happen in Rajka’s case, people from Bratislava only changed their place of residence, their workplace stayed in the city. The reasons for the fast acceleration of this process fit the international pattern:

- large city located near the border, rural area on the other side of the border,
- opening the borders, taking away physical obstacles that would stop the move,
- desire for country life and for living in a quiet residential area near nature,
- excellent transport links between the city and the suburban zone,
- similar cultural and social medium on both sides of the border,
- the almost same price levels of everyday household items,
- a significant difference in property prices due to urban life versus rural life, which urges urban residents to sell their flats/houses and buy new property (in Rajka) instead.

Up to 2008, 130 –140 properties came under Slovak (Bratislava) ownership, the number of those who moved reached 400. After the first impressions it became obvious that:

- the new arrivals have a much higher income than the residents of Rajka, which soon led to a rise in otherwise attractively low property prices on this side of the border;
- the rise in property and land prices led to the departure of the residents of Rajka, because those who are about to start a family are unable to pay such high prices, and property owners are better off selling and moving away;
- the new arrivals’ social (community life, education, health and social services, local interaction, self-organisations) and economic (using local shops and services, adding to the income of the settlement) integration into the local community is minimal, although there has been a slight improvement in the past few years;
- the influx of people from Bratislava was not restricted to Rajka, it was almost immediately detected in other settlement in the area (Bezenye, Dunakiliti, Feketeerdő, Mosonmagyaróvár etc.) and also on the Austrian side (Deutsch Jahndorf, Kittsee and several other settlements).

The phenomenon of rising property prices has been a common scheme in both the closer and wider areas outside Bratislava; but in Rajka’s case – due to the previously relatively low prices and the fast-accelerating demand – this rise is a lot more dynamic than that experienced on the Slovak side. Based on data collected from Hungarian property sites and on Slovak statistics, in 2008 house-, flat- and land prices in Bratislava were three to five times higher than those in Rajka. Only

⁵ Quotation of participant from Rajka

http://www.kisalfold.hu/mosonmagyarovari_hirek/a_szlovakok_inkabb_maradnanak_rajkan/2077771/

nine years later the difference is only one and a half to twice. In the meantime, property prices in Rajka are getting closer to those in villages in the Bratislava area, which are much more affected by suburbanisation, whereas the difference there, too used to be significant (Tab. 1). Meanwhile the price of a house or a flat in Rajka is twice as much as it was in 2008; in terms of land prices the rise was somewhat slower.

Tab. 1. Property prices in Bratislava, Bratislava region and Rajka between 2008 and 2017

	2008			2017		
	house	flat	building plot	house	flat	building plot
Bratislava	320	470	450	147	222	228
Bratislava region	220	220	375	123	156	158
Rajka	100	100	100	100	100	100

Rajka = 100; source: see footnotes ⁶

The never-before experienced, dynamic transformation in the local area means new challenges to the community, both native and immigrant. Even though natives from Rajka – unlike residents of Deutsch Jahrndorf in Austria – did not put up a stop sign on the (dirt)track leading to the village, they regard the new situation odd:

- the number, income, qualification etc. of those moving in is attractive, which according to the native residents contributes to – through the rise of the population and proportion of young people, and also through changes in the physical surroundings – the invigoration of community life;

- both the leaders and the residents of the community resent the fact that even though the immigrants are using the infrastructure of the settlement the majority of them still work and pays taxes in Bratislava, or many of them live in Rajka without being registered there, which leads to a controversial position in the normative and task-based Hungarian social support system⁷;

- the native residents of Rajka are not in favour of the fast-changing appearance of the village, the spreading of the urban lifestyle, the increasing traffic, nor the poor knowledge of the Hungarian language within the Slovak residents;

- there are frequent complaints that the fast-rising property prices put great pressure on the native families, who in many cases bought their houses with a mortgage. In this way the immigrants, by offering more than the market price, effectively force the locals to sell up and leave the village.

Ten percent of Rajka's population was changed until 2008, one fifth of the population was "Slovak" in 2009. Until then 13 children were taken out of the kinder-

⁶ http://mno.hu/migr_1834/feszultseg_a_vegeken-364085

<http://www.demokrata.hu/cikk/rajka-lassan-szlovak-lesz>

http://index.hu/belfold/2009/10/08/jol_jar_akinek_van_mit_eladni/

⁷ <http://www.demokrata.hu/cikk/rajka-lassan-szlovak-lesz>

garten, because of moving⁸, however after 2009 the institution became more and more popular amongst the immigrants, which made it necessary to employ a Slovak nursery teacher⁹. In 2015 one third of the 69 children enrolled came from Bratislava¹⁰, in 2017 this proportion rose to 35-40%. Uniquely, the local school does not follow the same trend, almost everyone chose schools in Bratislava: in 2015 out of 149 pupils only one had Slovak nationality¹¹. The effect of moving away can also be felt here, the number of pupils decreased by 13% between 2006 and 2009. German ethnic heritage can be detected at primary school, at the institute that teaches the ethnic language, German is taught in a high number of lessons since year one, the Local Government of German Ethnicity contributes to the running of the school. The bilingual German minority with dual identity is active in maintaining traditions, and according to the respondents, has adopted well to the new situation (other minority groups also turned up in the village). The immigrants however cannot form a Slovak Local Government until they take up Hungarian nationality. This however cannot be expected due to the Slovak law that makes having dual nationality impossible.

As Lampl (2010) summed it up, the residents of Rajka who originally came from Bratislava have had a high level of satisfaction rate right from the start¹². Those who moved out from the capital gave the Hungarian settlements as their new place of residence a more positive rating than the Slovak settlements in the Bratislava area (Felső-Csallóköz in Lampl's research). The difference was most significant when looking at accessibility by car: Bratislava can be reached quicker, only in 15 minutes from Rajka and the surrounding villages (on the M15 motorway) than from villages of the suburbanisation on the other side of the border. The other factor in which Rajka proved to be better is the integration in the local community and the linguistic aspect. This requires some explanation, since leaving Bratislava either in the direction of Rye Island (Csallóköz / Zitny ostrov) or Hungary we reach Hungarian-speaking communities. The reasons behind the different judgement lies in different expectations: the mainly Slovak speaking families moving into "Hungarian" villages of Csallóköz on the Slovak side expected to be understood speaking their mother tongue in their new place of residency, while in Rajka or its surroundings being able to speak Slovak to a few people was regarded as a nice gesture (Lampl 2010). Besides there are some complaints amongst them, too, which can also be tracked back to differences in living standards (hostile local community, defective local infrastructure etc.).

*"This is my home, but I am also a guest here. We have to bear this in mind and behave accordingly. We are European citizens with common interests. It is important to avoid negative stereotyping, and not to consider only our own interests"*¹³.

⁸ http://www.bumm.sk/archivum/2008/04/11/17919_szlovakok-leszunk-teljesen-magyar-szagon-terjeszkedik-pozsony

⁹ http://index.hu/belfold/2009/10/08/jol_jar_akinek_van_mit_eladni/

¹⁰ <http://uj szo.com/online/regio/2015/12/01/rajka-osszetartobb-a-szlovak-negyed>

¹¹ <http://www.teraz.sk/slovensko/madarsko-prihranicna-obec-rajka/165246-clanok.html>

¹² After the real estate offices the Slovakian political parties also reacted to the new situation. One of the parties (Obyčajní ľudia a nezávislé osobnosti /Simple People and Independent Persons – OĽaNO) has campaigned in Rajka (<http://www.oslovma.hu/index.php/sk/archiv/185-archiv-nazory/690-dom-za-cenu-bytu-polovica-rajky-je-u-slovenska>; http://gyorplusz.hu/cikk/az_egyik_szlovak_part_kepviselojeloltjei_rajkan_is_kampanyolnak.html).

¹³ <https://spectator.sme.sk/c/20048672/rajka-a-model-for-peaceful-coexistence.html>

The quotation above is from a man who moved from Bratislava, his wife is an ethnic Hungarian from Slovakia, his children are bilingual. They arrived in Rajka at the start of the “moving out fever”, their jobs and other connections ties them mainly to Bratislava, but at the same time they have a good relationship with the locals, and unlike other immigrants they enrolled their children at the school in Rajka. The few sentences above describe the new residents’ cautious attitude well, they show the willingness to integrate, but also that the right approach from the natives is necessary in order to achieve this. However, not everyone wishes for integration in the community: it can happen, that the new residents are happy, because “there is a close Slovak community”¹⁴ in the new residential area in the outskirts of Rajka. This view can suggest a different meaning when phrased differently:

*“For us it is good that they are coming here, because the village is developing nicely. Sometimes people are cursing each other, but this happens in other villages, too. In the so-called Slovak quarter people are closer than the natives of Rajka.”*¹⁵

Conflicts and more significant protests only happened in the first few years, in the case of signs in public places, graffiti (“Slovaks, Hungarian land is not for sale!”)¹⁶, vandalization of vehicles with a Slovak number plate, protests organized on the border (in which, according to the locals no one from Rajka participated). Provocation also happened on the Slovak side, coming from an estate agent who painted a depressing picture of the immigrants’ situation, he stated that “70% of the Slovaks wants to pack up because of the incidents, the rest is contemplating whether to stay or not.” This statement was received with uproar from the Slovaks in Rajka, stressing their peaceful coexistence with the locals¹⁷. According to similar experiences of the respondents and local reports the difference between the new and the old residents lost its ethnic dimension at an early stage, today it is fed – with a low intensity – by differences in points of view and lifestyle (city vs country life, locals vs immigrants)¹⁸. One of our respondents who is a native Hungarian but lives in a mixed marriage mentioned the following statement that refers to those who come from a different environment (other settlement, other country): “It happened that my children were mocked as Slovaks at school”. Nowadays there are only very few frictions, there is an opportunity for the two communities to get closer to one another through programmes that are open to everyone, clubs, special occasions (mother and baby club, sport club etc.). According to our respondent, unfortunately the new residents very rarely visit local community events in Rajka, which shows that their local identity is still in an immature state. Restaurants and pubs are proving to be more suitable to spend time together, one in particular, a “Slovak Pub” which opened a few years ago in the south part of the village and is run by a native Hungarian businessman who moved here from Slovakia. This pub is visited by both Hungarians and Slovaks¹⁹.

¹⁴ <https://www.cas.sk/clanok/335893/prihranicnu-obec-rajka-obsadili-slovaci-ako-ich-tam-prijali-madarski-obyvatelia/>

¹⁵ <http://uj szo.com/online/regio/2015/12/01/rajka-osszetartobb-a-szlovak-nyegyed>

¹⁶ http://mno.hu/migr_1834/feszultseg_a_vegeken-364085

¹⁷ http://www.kisalfold.hu/mosonmagyarovari_hirek/a_szlovakok_inkabb_maradnanak_rajkan/2077771/

¹⁸ http://www.kisalfold.hu/mosonmagyarovari_hirek/a_pozsonyiak_kikoltozese_tovabb_folytatodik/2142618/

¹⁹ <https://spectator.sme.sk/c/20048672/rajka-a-model-for-peaceful-coexistence.html>

As we mentioned earlier, Rajka is not the only target destination of immigration. In the county of Győr-Moson-Sopron the number of persons who regard themselves as Slovak was nine times as much in 2011 than in 2001 (from 195 to 1802 persons). At the millennium in the wider Rajka area only Mosonmagyaróvár had more than ten residents (16) who regarded themselves as Slovak. In Rajka itself there were only six of these persons. Ten years later Rajka had the highest number (535 persons, 19% of residents²⁰), at the same time a significant Slovak community can be found in the earlier mentioned Mosonmagyaróvár (284 persons, 0.9%), Bezenye (131 persons, 9%) and Dunakiliti (126 persons, 6%). In the Mosonmagyaróvár district the number of Slovak residents is between 10 and 100 in the settlements of Dunasziget, Feketeerdő, Hegyeshalom, Levél, Máriakálnok, Mosonszolnok and Újrónafő, which means that in 2011 only 40% of Slovaks of this area lived in Rajka²¹. According to our respondent, in 2017 the proportion of immigrants reached 20% in Feketeerdő, and 10% in Bezenye and Dunakiliti. The second largest Slovak community after Rajka could be found in Mosonmagyaróvár (500-600 persons)²².

Bezenye, which can be found a few kilometres south of Rajka is a unique example. The relatively closed community with a Croatian identity that respects its traditions received the immigrants with hostility from the beginning, even though their number was smaller than in Rajka. Bezenye joined together against the immigrants who “did not follow the traditions of the village”, and “were willing to go against every written and unwritten rule”. They did this through a number of attacks on the immigrants’ properties and vehicles, despite the fact that these attacks happened in a so far law-abiding village. On top of this the native villagers not only separated themselves from people from Bratislava, but also from those who wished to sell their property, whom they accused of treason. Thus, people from Bezenye and also from Rajka expect the newcomers to adopt to local circumstances, or be willing to adopt, and the lack of this – whether it is real or perceived – generates conflicts²³. Despite all this, the old and new community live together in peace most of the time and there has been a definite improvement since the shock of the first few years. Even with the early conflicts – none of which ended up with personal injuries – people blamed politics, therefore some coherency can be drawn up between smoothing out local disputes and the fact that in the past few years the relationship between the states of Hungary and Slovakia has improved.

²⁰ Besides that, a German community is also living in Rajka (284 persons).

²¹ <http://www.ksh.hu/nepszamlalas/>

²² In the 2011 census, the data regarding ethnicity was published “based on at least one of the answers on ethnicity, mother tongue, and the language used in the family and with friends”. We can assume that the vast majority of the Hungarian newcomers from Slovakia was registered as Slovak, since their everyday routine requires the use of Slovak. In consequence, there is no methodological difference between the census data results and the locals’ estimation (which refer to both Slovaks and Hungarians), and thus the official results from 2011 and the estimated results for 2017 are comparable.

http://index.hu/belfold/2012/04/13/atvasaroljak_magukat_a_szlovakok_a_hataron/

²³ http://mno.hu/migr_1834/feszultseg_a_vegeken-364085

http://www.kisalfold.hu/mosonmagyarovari_hirek/ingatlanvita_inzultus_a_bezenyei_hivatalban/2175657/

Tab. 2. Examination of the number of properties and inhabitants by timeline in Rajka

Year	Number of properties	Population			%		Proportion of registered newcomers (%)
		Census	Estimation	Indigenous	Newcomers		
					Slovak	Hungarian	
2007	930	2,504	2,500	100	0	100	
2009	949	2,385	2,800	80	16	4	85
2012	1,161	2,561	3,600	61	29	10	71
2015	1,339	2,607	4,500	49	36	15	58
2017	1,556	2,843	5,300	43	38	19	54

Source: see footnotes ²⁴.

In 2009 the number of immigrants was 500, in 2010 it was 900, and in 2012 it was up to 1,400, which shows that the recession during this period did not affect the growing number of immigrants from Bratislava. Thanks to the continuous demand – unlike in other parts of the country – property prices did not drop here, on the contrary, they continued to rise. Due to increasing demand not only detached houses were built or purchased, in 2012 four blocks of flats with 29 flats in each were under construction, which in the meantime all have been completed²⁵. In 2013 the Local Government allocated 131 new building plots²⁶. We only have indirect information about the origin of the immigrants, at the beginning they probably arrived from the nearest part of Bratislava, called Petržalka (more than 100,000 inhabitants) and consists almost entirely of high-rise blocks of flats. Later the combination based on people's origin became more diverse, when interviewed during our field trip our respondents reported more “mixed” circumstances, based on both geographical background (estates of high-rise blocks of flats in central and outer Bratislava) and on immigration (natives from Bratislava and those who moved there only a few years ago)²⁷.

In 2015 the population of Rajka exceeded 4,500, fifty % of which are originally from Bratislava²⁸. In the freshly allocated new living quarters, which were saturated within a couple of years practically everyone is from Bratislava, but their number has rapidly increased in the old, central part of the village, too. According to one respondent they were also in majority here by the year 2017.

²⁴ http://mno.hu/migr_1834/feszultseg_a_vegeken-364085
http://index.hu/belfold/2009/10/08/jol_jar_akinek_van_mit_eladni/
http://hvg.hu/itthon/20120225_Rajka_bekoltozo_szlovakok
<http://uj szo.com/online/regio/2015/12/01/rajka-osszetartobb-a-szlovak-negyed>
http://hvg.hu/gazdasag/20170320_Ilyen_a_bekes_magyarszlovak_egyutteses_van_is_meg_nincs_is
http://hvg.hu/gazdasag/20170727_Igy_lett_Rajka_szinte_mar_Pozsony_elovarosa
http://www.ksh.hu/apps/hntr.telepules?p_lang=HU&p_id=26587

²⁵ http://hvg.hu/itthon/20120225_Rajka_bekoltozo_szlovakok

²⁶ http://figyelo.hu/cikk_print.php?cid=szlovak-ingatlanvasarlas-roham-a-hatarszelen

²⁷ http://figyelo.hu/cikk_print.php?cid=szlovak-ingatlanvasarlas-roham-a-hatarszelen

²⁸ <http://uj szo.com/online/regio/2015/12/01/rajka-osszetartobb-a-szlovak-negyed>

“On first sight visitors would think that they are in the settlement of Csallóköz (Žitný ostrov) as there is perfect reception from the Slovak mobile network provider. In some shop windows Slovak, as well as Hungarian signs can be read. The street signs are in Hungarian, there are Hungarian and German signs on the walls of official buildings. The ratio of Hungarian and Slovak cars is about fifty-fifty.”²⁹

In 2017 the number of residents reached 5,300, out of which 3,300 had a registered address (Tab. 2). The remaining 2,000 residents are without exception of Slovak origin, but out of those who have registered still at least a 1,000 belong to this group. Their number all together adds up to almost 60% of the residents of the village. Out of them at least 1,000 people have Hungarian as their mother tongue, which means that so far, the Hungarians are still the majority in Rajka. Over the past few years the number of ethnic Hungarians from Slovakia has risen continuously, while 10 years ago, out of those originally from Bratislava, 18% regarded themselves as Hungarian. This share today is 33% (Lampl 2010). The emigration of Rajka’s native residents is continuous but has somewhat decreased since 2012 as today purchasing property that became vacant (its owner diseased) from the inheritor is more significant. Besides building new properties, buying new flats or refurbishing old properties are all part of the process: so far approximately 500 properties have been bought by Slovaks³⁰. According to current planning the population of the village can rise up to about 7,000, any higher number will require the assignment of new areas that can be built on. The population of Rajka is expected to reach the above number within five to six years³¹.

Analysing the relationship between the two communities instead of peaceful coexistence – despite the many examples of mutual contacts and a relatively conflict-free environment – we are more likely to talk about living next to one another. It is an unnerving thought that the spatial (separate living quarters where still more than half of the immigrants live) and mental seclusion and the low level of interest in each other forms a gap between the new and the native residents, while the immigration continuous with the lack of conscious integration and willingness to fit in which will stay the same or will keep re-occurring. As Lampl, Z. said, spatial proximity has an effect on building a community (...), but whether they live segregated or together (...) they have different values, lifestyles, habits, and most probably financial situations (...). Perhaps that is why they do not want or cannot participate in community life (Lampl 2010, pp. 102-103). Rajka’s residents who came from Bratislava have so far kept a distance from important matters regarding the village and from the local elections, however in a few years’ times they might want to express their will in a much more determined manner³². It matters whether there will be two separate groups in Rajka, who hardly acknowledge one another or a much more united community.

²⁹ <http://uj szo.com/online/regio/2015/12/01/rajka-osszetartobb-a-szlovak-negyed>

³⁰ http://www.kisalfold.hu/mosonmagyarovari_hirek/

³¹ http://www.kisalfold.hu/mosonmagyarovari_hirek/

³² http://hvg.hu/gazdasag/20170320_Ilyen_a_bekes_magyarszlovak_egyuttes_van_is_meg_nincs_is

HETEROGENIC VILLAGE CENTRE, HOMOGENIC NEW AREAS

“There is an interesting situation in Béke Street. Béke Street was built in the 1950s by the then young people. These people are now dying out and as they die their houses are bought by Slovaks. And there is this thing, when – let’s say – five houses in a row are Slovak owned.”

(Respondent from Rajka)

The monitoring of the ethnic spatial-pattern is the categorisation of public places with unique local relations, based on the linguistic-origin, illustrated in individual households. It was also monitored by surveying the registration numbers of local vehicles (as a unique add-on to the linguistic landscape). Based on the facts above we only examined one street (in the end not Béke, but Móricz Zsigmond Street³³), for the following two reasons: our respondent could provide detailed information about this public space, plus conducting a similar survey in the “Slovak quarter” was regarded unnecessary, due to their origin being identical. In the case of the registration numbers – since here the objects examined represent a much more dynamic category – we examined three different parts of the village.

Before presenting the results, it is important to stress that the area-pattern is first determined by the origin based on a person’s (former) address, this is followed by differentiation based on linguistic origin. On the one hand this came about when the respondent clarified the situation, saying that the differences between Rajka’s social sections can be traced back to their lifestyle, and the main cornerstone of that is the place of origin. On the other hand, the respondents could in every case determine the immigrant’s background or the lack of it (are there immigrants living there or not) of a community within households, or in public places, but determining their mother tongue proved a lot more difficult. Therefore, the aim was not to draw up Rajka’s ethnic map, but to present the diversity of a typical part of the village, based on origin.

Out of the 51 households identified, 30 (59%) have a background in Bratislava. Our respondent indicated that only in two of those households did the residents speak Hungarian. This low figure can be explained by the fact that the respondent could not identify the linguistic relationships within the households; at the same time, he stressed that the number of Hungarian speakers must be much higher than what he identified. The other 21 properties are inhabited by native Rajka residents; it should be noted here, that amongst them there are people who fled to Hungary, and from there to the nearest village, Rajka, from the “Bratislava bridge-head” area, which was given to Czechoslovakia after World War II.

“An old man standing in front of me in the queue talked with rage about the number of Slovaks coming to Rajka. It did not even occur to him that after the war he arrived from Čunovo, and the two things are not really that different.” (Respondent from Rajka)

The overall view of Móricz Zsigmond Street is remarkable in the sense that despite the fact that it can be found in the central (old) part of Rajka, the majority of the households have a background from Bratislava (Fig. 2). Based on the above, a

³³ For our respondents this street was more familiar.

so far hardly documented transition can be detected, which shows the influx of the new residents to the older parts of Rajka too.

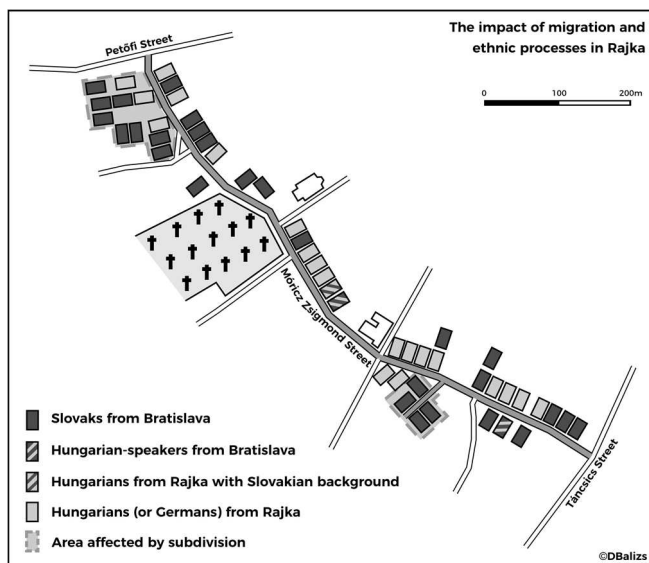


Fig. 2. The impact of migration and ethnic processes in Rajka (Móríc Zsigmond Street)

Source: own illustration.

Surveying the number plates confirms the continuous influx of people from Bratislava into the old part of Rajka. In order to present the real-life situation, we conducted a survey in three different areas:

- in the new, eastern part of the village,
- in the centre of the village,
- in the west, which is a mixed zone regarding the age and characteristics of the buildings (older and new detached houses, old blocks of flats next to new housing estates).

At the beginning of the survey we expected cars with Slovak number plates to have a clear majority in the new parts, while in the centre and other older parts of Rajka, besides a significant number of cars with Slovak number plates, we expected Hungarian ones to be dominant. During our field trip we tried to only get each vehicle just once into survey.

- In the newly-built area 95% of the vehicles out of the 196 we surveyed had Slovak number plate, which was in line with our expectations. The few vehicles parked here that had Hungarian number plates belonged to Hungarians working on a building site, not as residents.

- In the village centre we noted the SK mark on 51% out of the 147 vehicles surveyed. The primary school located here has hardly any Slovak pupils, so all the cars parked outside had a Hungarian number plate.

– On the route leading to the west part of Rajka we counted 124 vehicles, out of which almost half (48%) had been registered in Slovakia. In this case the occurrence of Hungarian and Slovak number plates followed a random pattern. We examined two housing estates in Rajka, in the almost completely enclosed parking area of the new estate we counted only Slovak cars (45), whereas in the old one we found mainly Hungarian cars (11). So on the second and third route the latter had a much higher proportion than expected (Fig. 3).

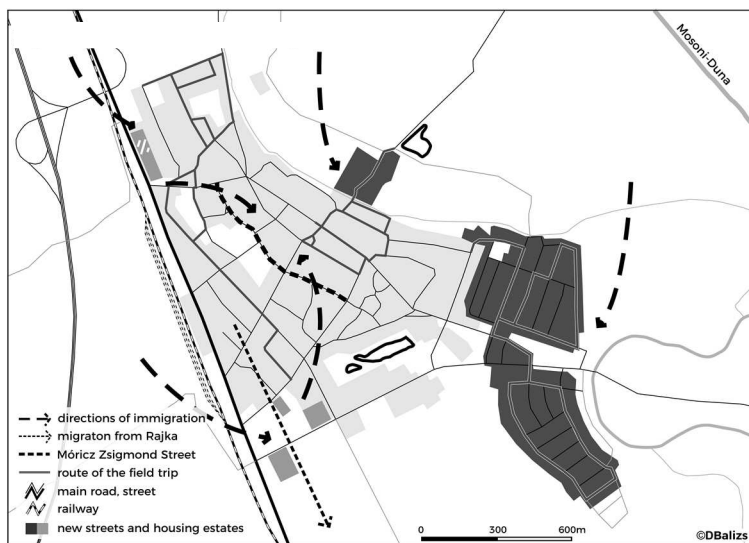


Fig. 3. Migration and ethnic processes in Rajka

Source: own illustration.

CHANGING APPEARANCE

The changes in Rajka's settlement structure and buildings are happening in various ways, but the intensity and simultaneity of the changes are undoubtable. The number of flats (1,430 in 2006) grew by 70% between 1990 and 2016, almost nine tenths of which happened after 2007. The growth speed in the past three years – despite the fact that the areas that currently have a building permit are becoming saturated, or perhaps for this very reason – has accelerated further (80-90 new flats per year).

The five and a half years that passed between downloading the pictures from Google Street View and our field trip proved sufficient to notice significant changes in some parts of Rajka. In many cases the volume of these changes made it difficult to identify certain locations. Out of the newly built areas, north of the road leading to Dunakiliti, the building of the infrastructure had only just finished (or was still in progress). At the end of 2011, the freshly allocated pieces of land were either empty, or had half-built buildings on them. This area is now completely built-up or shows further saturation (by dividing lands). South of the Rajka-Dunakiliti road we could find land untouched by developers (fields) even a few years ago. By now this is also a fully developed area, and a living space per person – thanks to the building of rows of houses – and is smaller than areas north of the main road (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Fakopáncs Street and Pisztráng Street in December 2011(left) and April 2017 (right)

Source: own photos.

Still we cannot talk about a complete change in appearance as the new arrivals are also obliged to keep to building regulations (which for example does not allow the building of flat roofs). The area fitted with public utilities was only included in the village a few years ago and is now almost 100% saturated with only two or three streets that can still be built on. Further land suitable for building can be found north of the village, however allocating it is hindered by two factors:

- providing public utilities and building an access road would mean a one and a half to two billion Forint (4.8 – 6.4 millions €) investment;
- both the leaders and the residents of the village disagree with further developments being carried out in Rajka, which in the long run, according to some people would lead to losing the feel of the countryside and the deterioration of the living standard in the village; by which it would lose the attraction that defines its development at the moment.

The lack of space does not mean a decline in demand; this is why the local government is again forced to allocate new building sites, like in the 2007 period, despite “protests” against further developments. Even though property prices are stagnating at the moment, after a continuous rise in the previous years, a rise can be expected again when the available lands are all sold out. This does not slow down immigration but continues to force native residents to sell their property, and then

move away. In addition, in 2008 the local government developed 50 building plots, especially for families in Rajka, and offered them significantly under the market price (3,000 – 4,000 HUF per square metre), which attracted only 4 Hungarian, but 304 Slovak bids³⁴.

People from Bratislava can find different solutions for the already existing problem of the shortage of land that can be built on or for restricting immigration, since so far there is no sign of a decreasing demand for local property. One of the possible solutions is choosing another settlement; of course – as we have mentioned before – for many Rajka is not the number one target destination. The other solution is moving into the old part of the village by buying and renovating existing properties. This was already noted during field research – both by a survey carried out in Móricz Zsigmond Street and by looking at the number plates of cars here. Photographic evidence taken here only confirms this statement. At the same time, local handling of the lack of space in the new streets does not only make the old part of the village more popular but leads to sub-dividing plots of communal land.

“The process in which all the existing plots are being built on has really accelerated in the past few years. And the plots are fast running out. Because lots of the people, especially Hungarians arriving from Slovakia say, that they want to buy land in the old Rajka, not in the outskirts because this has more atmosphere.” (Respondent from Rajka)

Dividing the building plots is becoming more and more common in Rajka, because there is plenty of room for one more building (detached house) at the back of the fairly big plots. To some extent this can be traced back through generations: it was a tradition in Rajka, that there was more than one house on each plot, a separate one for the old and for the young.

The diverse nature of immigration is shown by the fact that the immigrants simultaneously move into the old and the new parts of the settlement, but the move can also happen at different stages (Fig. 5). This means that the new resident first moves into one of the new housing estates (or old blocks of flats), then after a short while moves on to the old, usually central part of the village (Fig. 6). Those who move into the newly-built streets almost without exception move there straight away, without any stops in between, straight into a newly-built property.

“It is fascinating and typical, that those who moved into housing estates three or four years ago, even the Slovaks, are aiming to buy land in the old Rajka, or buy an old property there.” (Respondent from Rajka).

The above observation is supported by the example of a young immigrant family, who after four-five years in a housing estate built a new property on Fő utca (High Street), while selling the old flat to probably another immigrant. Financially this probably was not a good move, but these cases show that those with similar ways of thinking are willing to pay a much higher price for a property in “old Rajka” than what they could afford in the new parts of the village.

³⁴ http://www.bumm.sk/archivum/2008/04/11/17919_szlovakok-leszunk-teljesen-magyar szagon-terjeszkedik-pozsony



Fig. 5. Types of street views in Rajka: old building in bad condition (left above); partly renewed buildings (right above), partly renewed and totally renewed building with newcomers (left below), renewed buildings with newcomers (right below)

Source: Google Street View³⁵ and own photos.



Fig. 6. Old and new housing estates

Source: own photos.

CONCLUSION

The process happening in Rajka is in many ways similar to others experienced in Hungarian or other European settlements (Strüver 2005, Van Houtum and Gielis 2006, Terlouw 2008, Jagodič 2010 and 2011 and Lovas Kiss 2011). Amongst these can be mentioned the cross-border aspect of suburbanisation (as the foundation of changes), the conflicts of interest between the immigrants and local residents, the changes of appearance, and the somewhat contradicting transformation of the lan-

³⁵ <https://www.google.hu/maps/>

guage. By this we mean the appearance of many Slovak-speaking residents, who only change certain elements of the language pattern, since taking part in the community's life, and the usage of local institutions and services has (so far) only partially happened (Hardi and Lampl 2008, Lampl 2008 and Hardi 2010 and 2011). For example, in Rajka's case the local kindergartens have a large number of immigrants while their number is insignificant in local primary schools. Clearly this issue is not only very important in terms of ethnic pattern, but also in relation to local economic and social interactions, and the everyday operations of the village. A certain percentage of the newcomers are native Hungarians, which can be traced back to the regional positioning of Hungarian people within the Pannonian Basin. The unique nature of Rajka comes from the outstandingly high intensity of this process, which without a doubt can be traced back to the demographic and economic "strength" of Bratislava as a capital city. The fact that Rajka's language pattern is going through significant changes for the second time within a barely seventy year period can also be regarded as unique. Furthermore, the rate in which the originally local residents leave the village is particularly high, which is probably in connection with the facts stated in the previous sentence and can lead to further acceleration of the process happening in the community. Because of these Rajka can fit in well with those European and Central Eastern European suburban settlements, where because of the ethnic difference between the central city (e.g. Bratislava, Tallinn, Trieste, Vilnius etc.) providing the population and the suburban zone, the social changes also bring changes in the language pattern. At the same time, we can look at Rajka as a kind of example of a type of settlement which on a Hungarian scale "leads the way" when it comes to the impact of cross-border suburbanisation. Studying the processes that are happening here can also be beneficial to other settlements but naturally their unique nature must also be taken into account.

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Dániel Balizs, Péter Bajmócy

CEZHRANIČNÁ SUBURBANIZÁCIA BRATISLAVY – MENIACI SA SOCIÁLNY, ETNICKÝ A ARCHITEKTONICKÝ CHARAKTER „MAĎARSKÉHO ZÁZEMIA“ HLAVNÉHO MESTA SR

V ostatnom desaťročí sa obci Rajka výrazne zmenil vzhľad, počet a štruktúra jej obyvateľov. Obec je veľmi atraktívna vďaka svojej geografickej polohe v blízkosti štátnej hranice a hlavného mesta Slovenska. Leží vo vzdialenosti 180 kilometrov od Budapešti a iba 60 kilometrov od krajského mesta Győr. Napriek tomu sa však zmenila na prímestskú obec v zázemí Bratislavy. Počet obyvateľov obce sa za obdobie rokov 2007 – 2017 viac než zdvojnásobil, pričom občania SR tvoria tri pätiny. Pretože časť obyvateľov prisťahovaných zo Slovenska je maďarskej národnosti, maďarcina zostáva najpoužívanejším jazykom v obci. Noví obyvatelia obývajú spolu okolo 500 nehnuteľností, dve tretiny z nich bývajú v novovybudovanej východnej časti obce. Mnohí sa však presťahovali do domov v staršej zástavbe a vytvorila sa tak mozaiková forma spoluzitia pôvodných a prisťahovaných obyvateľov. Pre nedostatok nových stavebných pozemkov sa záujem nových obyvateľov stále viac zameriava na staršiu časť obce, z ktorej sa naopak pôvodní obyvatelia majú tendenciu odsťahovať. Jedným z dôvodov odchodu pôvodných obyvateľov je miznúce vidiecke prostredie v Rajke. Dôležitú úlohu zohráva tiež lepšie finančné zázemie nových obyvateľov. V niektorých prípadoch imigranti vykupujú nehnuteľnosti pôvodných obyvateľov aj za oveľa väčšiu sumu ako je ich trhová cena. Vďaka tomu ceny nehnuteľností v Rajke začali rýchlo stúpať a v priebehu niekoľkých rokov sa v skutočnosti zdvojnásobili.

Počet obyvateľov obce stále rastie a mení sa tiež štruktúra obyvateľstva. Napriek tomu, že vzťahy medzi týmito dvomi skupinami obyvateľov (pôvodní obyvatelia a prisťahovalci) nie sú ovplyvnené etnicko-lingvistickými konfliktmi, existujú ťažkosti v integrácii. Takmer úplný nedostatok cieľenej integrácie spôsobuje to, že interakcia medzi starými a novými obyvateľmi je minimálna. Obyvatelia prisťahovaní zo Slovenska majú vytvorené silné prepojenie s Bratislavou prostredníctvom ich práce, spoločenského života a vzdelávania. Preto iba ojedinele využívajú služby v Rajke a časť z nich tu žije bez oficiálnej registrácie. Znamená to, že počet obyvateľov využívajúcich infraštruktúru obce je oveľa vyšší ako počet ľudí, ktorí prispievajú k jej udržiavaniu. Rastúca populácia, intenzívnejšia doprava, ako aj rozdiel medzi mestským a vidieckym životom vedú k napätiu medzi pôvodnými obyvateľmi a prisťahovalcami. Neexistujú však žiadne konflikty v každodennej komunikácii. Snahou obce je dosiahnuť zblíženie obidvoch komunit a ich vzájomné porozumenie.

Rajka zmenila svoj vzhľad a tiež sa veľmi zvýšila jazyková rozmanitosť jej obyvateľstva. Noví obyvatelia, novopostavené alebo zrekonštruované domy výrazne vplývajú aj na staršie časti obce. Stará časť sa tiež stala atraktívnejšou pre imigrantov, na rozdiel od nových obytných štvrtí alebo bytov v novopostavených bytových domoch. Stav budov často na prvý pohľad poukazuje na pôvod súčasného majiteľa. Dopyt po nehnuteľnostiach zostáva vysoký, čo má za následok nielen zmeny v zložení obyvateľstva, ale aj hustejšiu zástavbu obce (rozdelenie pozemkov). Obyvatelia (pôvodní alebo noví), ktorí si chcú v Rajke zachovať pocit vidieckeho prostredia, čelia náročným rozhodnutiam. V prípade, ak sa nebudú rozširovať plochy na výstavbu, miestni obyvatelia sa odsťahujú a nahradia ich prisťahovalci z Bratislavy, resp. Slovenska. Na druhej strane vytvorenie nových stavebných pozemkov povedie k výraznému rastu počtu obyvateľov. V obidvoch prípadoch však bude transformácia obce Rajka pokračovať.