

The goal of this thesis is to analyze the current situation of the Croat minority in Hungary.

As a consequence of the Ottoman expansion and unbearable living conditions the Croat population started to migrate to the North; these migrations took place from the 15th to the 17th century and the majority of the Croat refugees settled down in Hungary. The refugees created insular communities in the southern and western parts of the contemporary Hungarian territory, in Austrian Burgenland, Slovakia and Moravia. Hungarian Croats can be divided into seven groups, all of them speaking various types of all main Croatian dialects. A special part of the thesis is dedicated to the Bunjevci and Šokci, as in the last two hundred years there have been constant discussions as far as their origin and, therefore, their pertinence to the Croatian nation is concerned.

Under the Austro-Hungarian Empire the Croats represented only one of many nationalities in a multicultural state. However, during the process of the formation of the modern nations, Hungarian nationalism was strongly promoted and it in turn influenced minority politics until the Second World War. Following the post WWII transfers of inhabitants, Hungary has become even more ethnically homogenous than after the 1920 Trianon Treaty. During socialism the process of assimilation only accelerated and until the regime change in the 1990's the Hungarian Croatian minority did not have any favorable conditions to develop its minority identity. The situation changed with the approval of the so-called Minority Law in 1993, as a result of which the system of minority self-administration has started to function; in addition, the conditions for the development of minority education have improved as well.