

# POLICY FOR HUNGARIAN COMMUNITIES ABROAD

## STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR HUNGARIAN COMMUNITIES ABROAD



MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND JUSTICE  
STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN COMMUNITIES ABROAD



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# Table of contents

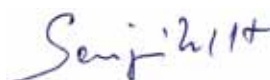
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR HUNGARIAN COMMUNITIES ABROAD</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1.1. The Nature of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1.1. The Special Characteristics of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad	4
1.1.2. The Organizational Role of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad	5
1.1.3. The Time Horizon for the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad	5
1.1.4. Institutions in Charge of Developing the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad	6
<b>1.2. Setting</b>	<b>6</b>
1.2.1. Actors of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad	6
1.2.2. Social and Political Processes	8
1.2.3. Results and Past Failures of the Policy for Hungarian Communities Abroad	9
1.2.4. International Examples	10
<b>2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR HUNGARIAN COMMUNITIES ABROAD</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2.1. Basic Assumptions of the Strategic Framework</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2.2. Overall Objective: Prospering Communities</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE NEIGHBOURING STATES AND HUNGARIANS LIVING IN THOSE STATES</b>	<b>16</b>

# Introduction

In November 2011, the Hungarian Standing Conference (MÁÉRT), which consists of the Hungarian political parties abroad, the Hungarian parliamentary parties and the Hungarian government jointly adopted the document entitled *Policy for Hungarian Communities Abroad – The Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad*. This is the first document to draw together the objectives of those active in policy for Hungarian communities abroad, and it serves as a comprehensive basis for guiding the future of those communities.

It is very important for us to introduce the document and present the basic principles of the policy for Hungarian communities abroad to a wider, international public. In recent years our policy for Hungarian communities abroad has witnessed numerous reforms and new achievements. By adopting the simplified naturalization procedure, since 1 January 2011 we have made it possible for Hungarians abroad to acquire Hungarian citizenship without needing to have residence status in Hungary. Furthermore, in November 2012 the Hungarian Parliament adopted an amendment to the Act on Electoral Procedure, which allows Hungarian citizens living abroad to participate in Hungarian parliamentary elections. The new Fundamental Law strengthens and expands the mutual responsibility of Hungarian communities within and outside the country's borders, as well as the inseparable unity of the Hungarian nation. The Strategy defines and sets the framework for our goals in order to achieve prosperity for the Hungarian nation.

It is our pleasure to inform our international readers first-hand of the objectives and achievements of the policy for Hungarian communities abroad.



Zsolt Semjén

Deputy Prime Minister for Hungarian Communities Abroad

Please note that the following English-language document only contains extracts from the Strategic Framework; the full text is available in Hungarian on the Hungarian Register website (<http://www.nemzetiregiszter.hu>).

# 1. The Conceptual Framework of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad

*Bearing in mind that there is a single Hungarian nation that belongs together, Hungary shall bear responsibility for the fate of Hungarians living beyond its borders.*

## 1.1. The Nature of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad

### 1.1.1. The Special Characteristics of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad

*The Policy for Hungarian Communities Abroad – The Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad* formulates objectives in order to achieve prosperity of Hungarian communities abroad, as we consider that through this we may influence the fate of the whole Hungarian nation. The strategy serves as a guideline for Hungary's relationships with Hungarians living beyond its borders and it defines the principles and the manner of support provided by the Hungarian state.

The Hungarian state is the bearer of the Hungarian nation. Hungarian state institutions have the abilities to implement policies which can improve the situation of the Hungarian communities abroad. This places a crucial responsibility on the Hungarian state. This responsibility is grounded in the Fundamental Law:

*Bearing in mind that there is a single Hungarian nation that belongs together, Hungary shall bear responsibility for the fate of Hungarians living beyond its borders, and shall facilitate the survival and development of their communities; it shall support their efforts to preserve their Hungarian identity, the assertion of their individual and collective rights, the establishment of their community self-governments, and their prosperity in their native lands, and shall promote their cooperation with each other and with Hungary.*

The survival of the nation, however, is not solely the responsibility of Hungary but also the joint responsibility of all Hungarians living all over the world.

This document systematizes and structures the Hungarian state's policy for Hungarian communities abroad. The Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad establishes objectives and tasks both for Hungary's policy and public administration in Hungary, and for Hungarian communities abroad. The Strategy summarises those principles and primary objectives that serve the prosperity of Hungarian communities abroad, based on consultations conducted with the legitimate representatives of Hungarian organisations abroad, the programmes and strategies defined by Hungarian political parties in the neighbouring states, as well as academic research. The Hungarian state assists in attaining these objectives with its own instruments.

A special feature of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad is that it contains measures affecting citizens of other states. In several areas, the implementation of the Strategy also depends on the legal system, economic situation and political will of other states. The Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad respects the legal system of the neighbouring countries and the fundamental principles of the European Union regarding minority protection. We welcome all measures targeting the extension of minority rights.

The State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad, together with the Hungarian communities abroad, shall bear responsibility for the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad, and for the operation of the kin-state policies. It shall be the duty of the State Secretariat, in continuous consultation with the legitimate representatives of Hungarians living abroad, to act in accordance with the principles of the Strategic Framework.

### **1.1.2. The Organizational Role of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad**

Hungary, as a kin state, has established the objectives of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of its policy for Hungarian communities abroad as part of the reorganisation process of the Hungarian state and public administration. The Strategic Framework affects Hungarian politics in all areas and must be taken into consideration by all decision-makers and executives.

*The Policy for Hungarian Communities Abroad – The Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad* has been shaped in a period of governance when key steps have been taken for the transformation of the aforementioned policy. The conceptual background of kin-state policies has been outlined in the new Fundamental Law. The Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad is established upon the following pillars: the Act on the Testimony for National Cohesion; the amendment of the Act on Hungarian Citizenship; re-convening the Hungarian Standing Conference (MÁÉRT) after six years; the establishment of the Hungarian Diaspora Council, as well as the continuous operation of these forums; the establishment of the Bethlen Gábor Fund and the Bethlen Gábor Fund Management Private Limited Non-Profit Company; and the guarantee of voting rights for Hungarian citizens living all over the world. Implementation includes government and public administration units with increased significance in the government structure which are dealing with kin-state policies, as well as a system operating support policy.

### **1.1.3. The Time Horizon for the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad**

The implementation of the Strategic Framework has already begun during the current government term, however, the document establishes long-term goals. The time horizon of the Strategic Framework is defined by macro-regional and strategic directions, as well as objectives of the European Union, in accordance with the guidelines and objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The elements of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad are also influenced by the ever-changing economic, social and political environment. The tasks and instruments may be further expanded and restructured in a flexible manner. During implementation the frameworks are intended to be continuously fine-tuned by regular monitoring and by interim and retrospective evaluations. The effects of social-political interventions may be experienced only in the long run; therefore, in addition to the interim review and fine-tuning, the *Policy for Hungarian Communities*

*Abroad – The Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad* requires a thorough further review in 2020. This shall be in line with the time horizon of the development of EU and other Hungarian strategies.

#### **1.1.4. Institutions in Charge of Developing the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad**

The development of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad is a joint task of the Hungarian state and Hungarians living abroad.

The preparatory work is performed at the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad of the Ministry of Public Administration and Justice, in the sub-committees of the Hungarian Standing Conference, in the Hungarian Diaspora Council, at inter-ministerial consultations, and in the Research Institute for Hungarian Communities Abroad. The document incorporates the strategic documents written by political organisations and professional workshops of Hungarians abroad, and those drafted within the Forum of Hungarian Parliamentary Representatives in the Carpathian Basin.

Strategic decisions are made jointly by the Hungarian state and the legitimate representatives of Hungarian parties abroad within the framework of the Hungarian Standing Conference.

Through establishment of the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad within the Ministry of Public Administration and Justice, the policy for Hungarian communities abroad receives due attention. The work performed by the Inter-ministerial Committee for the Policy for Hungarian Communities Abroad as well as the 38/2012 (III. 12.) Government Resolution on Strategic Governing (Kormányzati stratégiai irányításról szóló 38/2012 (III. 12.) Kormányrendelet) contributed to the strategies formulated in the ministries representing the interests of Hungarians abroad and the basic principles set out in the *Policy for Hungarian Communities Abroad – The Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad*.

The coherence of Hungary's kin-state policies are also supported by the targeted research conducted by the Research Institute for Hungarian Communities Abroad. The key objectives of the Research Institute are to harmonise and encourage research on minorities and Hungarian communities abroad, and to process the research findings for further policy implementation.

## **1.2. Setting**

### **1.2.1. Actors of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad**

#### **A. Hungary**

Hungary's kin-state policies reflect that Hungary provides political, moral and financial support for Hungarian institutions and organisations beyond its borders, and establishes direct and active relationships with Hungarians abroad. This support, however, cannot counteract the disadvantages resulting from the economic situation in the neighbouring states but significantly contributes to the improvement of educational opportunities for Hungarians living in those countries, the functioning of civic organisations, and the preservation of cultural traditions.



## **B. Hungarian Communities living in the Neighbouring Countries**

Similarly to the titular nations, national minorities strive to preserve their identities and ensure the prosperity of their communities. No national minority – including Hungarians – assimilates voluntarily.

Hungarians living in neighbouring countries experience various (explicit or implicit) disadvantages compared to majority communities. The state shall not differentiate between citizens based on their national belongings. Citizens' equal rights are not fully guaranteed if equality is not ensured at the level of minority nationalities.

After the breakdown of the communist system, Hungarian minorities established interest representation organisations and political parties, which formulated demands regarding minority rights, autonomy, and unhindered relations with Hungary. Progress has been achieved in comparison to the pre-1989 situation, but institutions essential for the growth and reproduction of Hungarian communities have not been established. The main political objectives of national communities are on the one hand territorial autonomy and the creation of smaller, self-governing units within the state, and on the other hand the foundation of independent institutions. In this area, progress has only been made in Vojvodina (Serbia), where in 2010 the Hungarian National Council – the political body of Hungarian cultural autonomy – was established through direct and democratic elections.

## **C. The Hungarian Diaspora**

Members of the Hungarian diaspora differ in terms of their location and the time of their emigration. Organisations actively focusing on the strengthening and preservation of Hungarian identity have been gradually established in the diaspora. However, due to the aforementioned reasons communities living in the diaspora are facing different problems, relating to their locations and differing levels of organisation. Unfortunately, many individuals in the diaspora are not members of these organisations. Recent emigrants from Hungary should also be included in the Hungarian diaspora. Not all members of the Hungarian diaspora speak the Hungarian language well, while second and later generations might not speak Hungarian at all.

## **D. Neighbouring Countries**

The majority of Hungarians abroad live in states neighbouring Hungary. In general one can say that the demands of the Hungarian communities have been partly satisfied by neighbouring countries – primarily in the course of the EU accession negotiations – but the political and institutional requirements necessary for the prosperity of Hungarian communities abroad have not been fulfilled.

In general terms, the relationship between the Hungarian state and its neighbours is satisfactory until the issue of Hungarians living abroad arises. Over the last years, the relationship between Hungary and its neighbours has been filled with tensions mostly due to minority issues. At the same time, however, it is a fact that in each neighbouring state members of the majority society usually adopt a more favourable attitude towards the minority than the political elite of that particular country does. One cannot deny that there have been positive changes regarding the situation of Hungarians in neighbouring states; nevertheless Hungarians – while loyal citizens to their states – still feel affected by prejudice, and thus consider further extension of their rights necessary.

## E. The European Union

The EU membership of Hungary and its neighbouring countries has brought about positive changes in many respects, but no comprehensive solution has been achieved for the problems of Hungarians living abroad. Despite the aspirations, there is no uniform, coherent minority protection at the EU level. Apart from the declaration of general principles, one cannot talk about definitive and uniform intentions for the protection of minority rights. The issue is further complicated by the problems that politicians and professionals had to face concerning minority protection after the democratic transitions. Besides some positive effects it must be noted that following the EU accession the situation of Hungarian communities has become worse in certain countries – a phenomenon which is completely contrary both to the values of the EU and to the accession criteria.

### 1.2.2. Social and Political Processes

In most neighbouring countries the situation of Hungarians has improved compared to their situation immediately after the breakdown of the communist systems. Self-organisation has become possible, and Hungary has been able to promote the interests of Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries. Following Hungary's EU accession, most Hungarians can maintain an undisturbed relationship with each other and with their kin-state. Even if one can observe some tension with certain neighbouring states, no violent conflicts have been emerged.

Despite these positive examples, the situation of Hungarians living abroad is still worrisome. The processes and phenomena giving cause for concern may be summarised as follows:

- The size of the Hungarian population is declining, in all neighbouring states as well as outside the Carpathian Basin (as a consequence of assimilation, declining birth rates, and emigration). Declining birth rates and a high tendency for emigration can also be observed in the majority nations. Therefore, special attention must be paid to the danger of assimilation and the directions of migration, as the extent and direction of the latter has shown significant change over the past few years.
- In certain countries the rate of mixed marriages is on the rise, particularly within the dispersed Hungarian communities. Most children born in mixed marriages identify themselves as members of the majority nation.
- A relatively high percentage of Hungarian children living in the neighbouring countries are enrolled in majority educational institutions, and the number of pupils required to launch Hungarian classes cannot be reached in all towns and villages.
- Although there are more opportunities to study in Hungarian language in higher education, the percentage of Hungarians studying in higher education is lower than that of the majority.
- In dispersed Hungarian communities, which may be called the “borders of the nation”, the process of assimilation is faster because they do not have access to the network of institutions reproducing Hungarian national identity.

- In cities and urban areas the cultural, educational and economic position of Hungarians living abroad is continuously declining.
- The number of votes for Hungarian parties is also decreasing, and consequently, Hungarian political parties abroad carry less and less weight in the political life of the particular country. (This trend can only be halted by cooperation among them.)
- New regional administrative units, in which Hungarians would be the majority, have not been established in any of the neighbouring countries. In this respect, territorial autonomy has not been established anywhere.
- International and European minority protection and the external norms of the accession process do not provide the conditions required for national/cultural survival.
- Generally, members of the Hungarian diaspora do not participate in Hungarian diaspora organisations, typically second and later generations do not speak Hungarian, and some members of the Hungarian diaspora have lost contact with Hungary. It is also difficult to find and address recent emigrants.

In order to stop these negative tendencies, a thorough evaluation of the situation is required and a strategic response needs to be developed. Previous measures and support policy for Hungarian communities abroad typically focused on a specific, significant and urgent problem. The situation of Hungarians abroad would be worse without these means of support; however, with this approach only partial success can be achieved.

Kin-state policies have to be characterised by a pro-active approach and perfectionism, targeting the prosperity of Hungarian communities abroad. The limits – they may be financial, social or political – are obvious.

### **1.2.3. Results and Past Failures of the Policy for Hungarian Communities Abroad**

Two decades after the breakdown of the communist system, one may state that Hungary has one of the broadest and most active kin-state policies: institutions supporting Hungarian communities abroad have been established; support for Hungarians living abroad is allocated in the central budget; the Hungarian state represents the interests of Hungarians living beyond the borders at international forums; the Hungarian society deems it natural that Hungary supports Hungarians living abroad; and the neighbouring countries accept that the Hungarian state supports Hungarians living in those countries, however one can experience tensions in this regard.

Like most European states, the Hungarian state supports its kin-minorities both in a declarative and active manner. On the one hand, the Hungarian state has played a proactive role in communicating the minority issue at international forums; it has established political and legal relationships with Hungarians living beyond its borders, and is continually developing the institutions in Hungary set up for the support of Hungarians abroad. On the other hand, Hungary is constantly forced to react to anti-minority policies of the neighbouring states.

Major results of Hungary's kin-state policies:

### Positioning the issue of Hungarian communities abroad within state administration.

- Establishment and operation of support schemes and institutions.
- **The Act LXII of 2001 on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries:** The issue concerning the relationship between kin-states and kin-minorities emerged at the European level in connection with the Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries in 2001, placing the issue in the spotlight of international political and academic interest. This means that a certain change of mindset has been reached at the international level. In accordance with this Act, Hungarians abroad had a chance to acquire a "Certificate of Hungarian Nationality" for the first time in many years; 948.340 persons have already taken the opportunity.
- **Foundation of Hungarian Universities** (In 1996 the Transcarpathian Hungarian Teacher Training College, in 1999 the Partium Christian University, in 2000 the Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania and in 2004, the Selye János University): the number of students studying in the Hungarian language has increased significantly, when higher education has become available in Hungarian in an increasing number of places.
- The establishment and operation of **institutionalised conciliation forums** (the Hungarian Standing Conference (MÁÉRT), the Hungarian Diaspora Council and the Forum of Hungarian Representatives in the Carpathian Basin).
- **Amendment of the Act on Hungarian Citizenship** (2010): increasing interest in the simplified naturalisation procedure supported by efficient administration. By autumn 2013, more than 525 thousand people have applied for Hungarian citizenship and 450 thousand people have already taken the citizenship oath.
- The new **Fundamental Law (2011)** emphasises the responsibility of the Hungarian state for Hungarians living beyond its borders.
- The **Act on the Testimony for National Cohesion** has been approved, declaring the unity of the nation.

During the formulation of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad, we have to learn from the mistakes of the past. The most important failures and the lessons to be learned in this area are the following:

- **There was no consensus** concerning kin-state policies. Hungarian parties did not succeed in separating kin-state policies from their domestic political debates.
- Kin-state policies were **not coherent**, either. No coherent, harmonised strategy with defined priorities has existed either in Hungary or formulated by the Hungarian organisations abroad.

- **Support** provided for kin-state policies **lacked accountability and** performance- and quality-based monitoring was also missing.
- Kin-state policies have not been effectively communicated to Hungarian citizens.

#### 1.2.4. International Examples

All European states support their communities living beyond their borders. Most constitutions declare the principle of supporting communities belonging to the same nation but living in another (neighbouring or non-neighbouring) state. The so-called “responsibility clause” is also included in the constitutions of most states in the region. These states have supported their kin-minorities living abroad in a declarative and/or political manner since the breakdown of the communist system. States have gradually founded institutions that operate support policy. There is no uniform model, however. States have developed their own solutions, defined different objectives, and established different institutions.

Most European states naturalise the members of their national communities living abroad in a simplified manner and generally guarantee their participation in elections. Almost all states support the members of their national communities living abroad by legislation similar to the Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries.

The Venice Commission, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe acknowledge the responsibility of kin-states for minorities and its consequences – partly as a result of Hungarian initiatives.

Different best practices are being implemented in the neighbouring countries and in those with extended diaspora communities. In countries with extended diasporas – such as Armenia and Israel – strategic steps taken in the interest of the diaspora play a crucial role, so does the role played by the diaspora of a specific state in the life of the national community (including financial support).

## 2. Objectives of the Strategic Framework for Hungarian Communities Abroad

*Fostering the prosperity of Hungary's national communities.*

### 2.1. Basic Assumptions of the Strategic Framework

Hungary can pursue a successful and efficient policy for Hungarian communities abroad provided that certain basic assumptions and conditions are satisfied, which facilitate the achievement of its main strategic objectives.

#### **A Successful Hungary**

The basic principle of the relationship between Hungary and Hungarian communities abroad, as well as the survival of Hungarian communities abroad, is that Hungary has to successfully increase its political, economic and cultural role in the region. Only under this condition can assimilation be hindered, and vigorous, developing communities be maintained, and supported. This is the fundamental prerequisite for the large-scale success of any programmes. If this condition is fulfilled, the proportion of Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries will increase and their national identity will strengthen. Only a strong Hungary can provide a solid basis for a successful policy for Hungarian communities abroad.

#### **Development and Tradition**

Hungary needs to become the regional hub of development and tradition. Hungary has every right to be proud of its traditions and its heritage of one-thousand years. Our national identity has to be established upon a profound and extensive knowledge of our history and awareness of our achievements. Hungary, however, has to become the most modern and creative country in the region, in order to make belonging to the Hungarian nation more attractive.

#### **Hungarian Communities Abroad are valuable for Hungary**

Members of the Hungarian communities abroad are valuable for Hungary, which is why the Hungarian state is devoting energy and financial resources to achieve the prosperity of these communities. It should be made clear that the Hungarian nation's cohesion represents value in itself. Based on our shared European values, Hungary believes that every nation has unique values, which also applies to the Hungarian nation. European values such as cultural and linguistic diversity, and the values of national communities, deserve recognition and protection. Recognising and protecting these communities and their linguistic and cultural diversity also has economic benefits. The contribution of Hungarians abroad to the universal Hungarian culture is invaluable, and likewise, it is also in Hungary's economic interest to see prosperity among Hungarian communities in the neighbouring countries. It is essential that these countries acknowledge that prospering Hungarian communities living within their borders offer benefits for them as well.

### **Clear Expectations and Mutuality**

If Hungary takes a clear, unified, and value-based position concerning the policy for Hungarian communities abroad, then it will also become clear what it expects from itself and the Hungarian communities abroad. Hungary has to convey clear messages to Hungarians living abroad since they are Hungary's partners. Consequently, the relationship between Hungarian communities abroad and the Hungarian state has to be based upon mutual responsibility and loyalty. During the past decades, these mutual expectations have often remained unsaid, or have only been fulfilled by one of the parties. One of the basic principles of the policy for Hungarian communities abroad is to restore this often disrupted balance.

### **Helping Hungarian Communities Abroad to Prosper in Their Homelands**

One of the basic assumptions of the policy for Hungarian communities abroad is that Hungarian communities living beyond the borders would like to preserve their Hungarian identity, while staying in the country they were born to. Hungary is committed to support them in preserving their national identity: the objectives defined in this document (and specified by policy sectors) all intend to contribute to these communities' survival, growth and prosperity. At the same time, however, Hungary cannot and does not intend to resist international trends of increasing mobility. Both Hungary and Hungarian communities abroad should encourage young, highly-qualified Hungarians, who speak foreign languages and have travelled the world, to return to their homelands and capitalize on the experience they have gained abroad. Furthermore, Hungary and the neighbouring countries have to strive to achieve positive economic developments in the region, which will motivate both younger and older generations to stay and work in their homelands.

### **The Carpathian Basin Region**

The Carpathian Basin is an organic, interdependent region. Due to its central position, Hungary can address the challenges of the Carpathian Basin in cooperation with the neighbouring states, while taking the region's yet underexploited potential into account. Partnership and cooperation with the neighbouring countries is essential, because neither the problems nor opportunities of the Carpathian Basin stop at the state borders. The sustainable development and competitiveness of the Carpathian Basin contribute to the prosperity of all communities living in the region, including Hungarian communities abroad. In order to achieve these positive developments, continuous networking is required between the subregions, while taking region-specific characteristics into consideration. When these conditions are met, all subregions of the Carpathian Basin can find their own paths towards sustainable development, and can cooperate and share their experiences with each other, while making use of their potential in the most efficient way. Cross-border cooperation is the key to linking the Carpathian Basin to the European area of development.

## **2.2. Overall Objective: Prospering Communities**

The overall objective of the Strategic Framework is to achieve prosperity for all Hungarian communities. The realization of these objectives can only be guaranteed if we clearly state and understand the factors influencing them and provide the conditions for their development.

## Prosperity and Growth

All nations and all national communities strive for prosperity and growth. All states and all national minorities strive to pass their language and culture on to future generations. European societies are founded on this idea. The history of the last century proves that no minority has voluntarily surrendered its identity and language. Hungarian communities abroad are also founded on this norm. Nevertheless, due to their situation they have limited possibilities to pass on their language and culture in its entirety. Therefore, Hungary's support is necessary in overcoming these limitations. The defined objectives aim to achieve the growth of the Hungarian communities in terms of their population, and their economic, intellectual, and legal opportunities.

- Population growth: Communities experiencing population growth are characterised by an increasing number of members, a decreasing tendency for assimilation, and higher quality of life.
- Intellectual growth: Communities experiencing intellectual growth have strong national identity; community members acknowledge community norms as their own, possess competitive knowledge, and preserve and develop the communities' culture.
- Economic growth: Communities experiencing economic growth are characterised by coordinated development, which includes efficient utilization of opportunities and cross-border cooperation, as well as coordination of clusters.
- Growth of rights: Communities experiencing legal growth achieve the enhancement of their rights, exercise them in a confident manner, and protect and extend them, if required.

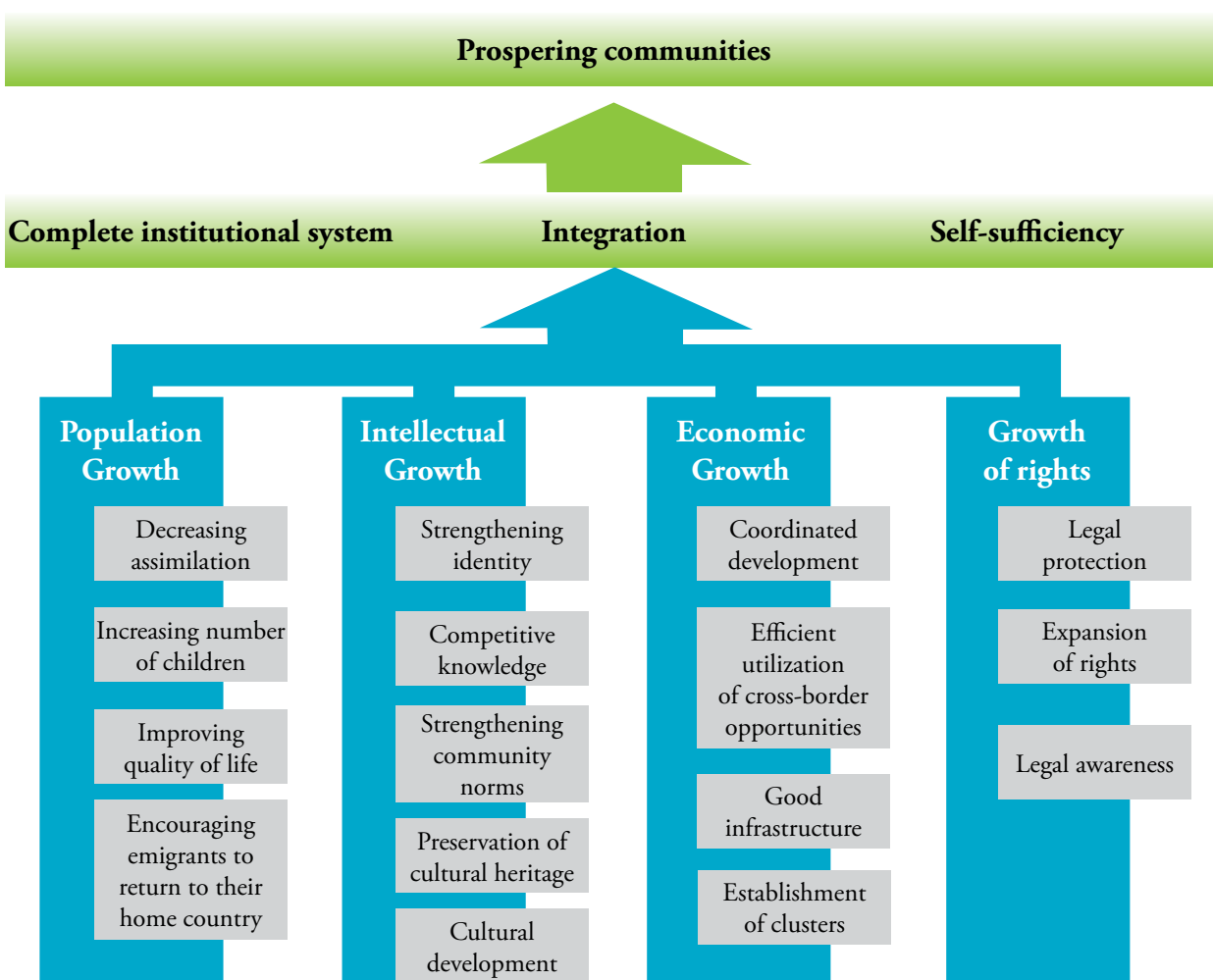
## The Community

Our aims are to establish a complete institutional system for Hungarian communities abroad, to achieve integration of all Hungarians through the integration of Hungarian individuals and communities living abroad, and to help Hungarian communities abroad become self-sufficient.

- Complete institutional system: The borders of the nation stretch as far as the influence of the national institutions, which help maintaining the national identity. This does not mean that someone is not Hungarian anymore if he or she is not connected to any Hungarian institutions, but that it is doubtful whether members of the next generation will remain "Hungarian" if they are not linked to any Hungarian institutions. It is desirable for all Hungarians to be linked to at least one – and if possible more – Hungarian institutions.
- Multi-level integration: At the level of the individual it is our goal to strengthen the relationship of Hungarians living abroad with the Hungarian state (via the Status Law, extension of citizenship, etc.) and with their own communities. At the community level our aim is to strengthen the attachment between Hungarian communities abroad to the Hungarian state and to their home states (through collective recognition and rights, consociational democracy, autonomy). In the latter case it has to be noted that integration as a community can only be successful if Hungarian individuals approach the state they live in through Hungarian parties, the Hungarian educational system, and a framework of community rights. The goal of the Hungarian nation is the integration of all Hungarians – both individually and collectively – in the European Union. This reflects Hungary's vision of a Europe of nations.



- **Self-sufficiency:** If a community does not have the capacity for self-sufficiency or it has lost this capacity, it means that community’s “engine” does not operate. Self-sufficiency is not equivalent to being abandoned. Hungarian communities abroad have to feel the support of the Hungarian state, but at the same time have to be able to organise themselves, define and represent their community objectives clearly, and gain supporters for their implementation. The Hungarian state is a partner of the Hungarian communities abroad, but it does not intend to take over their tasks. Self-sufficiency and self-determination are closely related notions: one cannot exist without the other. A community which has the right to make decisions regarding its own affairs must be able to maintain itself, and vice versa: a self-sufficient community also requires the freedom to make decisions concerning its own fate. Hungary is committed to the idea that all communities have the right to manage their own affairs in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity.



## 3. Relationship with the Neighbouring States and Hungarians living in those States

*We shall support the efforts of Hungarian communities abroad to preserve their Hungarian identity, assert their individual and collective rights, establish their community self-governments, support their prosperity in the country they were born to, and promote their cooperation with each other and with Hungary.*

Hungary is one of the few countries in the region, which had supported and supports its minorities inside and outside its borders, both before and after the democratic transitions. Based on the principles of minority protection and community self-governance, Hungary has the same approach regarding the minorities living in Hungary and Hungarian minority communities living beyond its borders.

The Hungarian state provides support for the aspirations and goals of Hungarian communities abroad. The claims, plans for community-building, and tasks regarding the Hungarian community may be defined in the following areas:

### 1. Legal Protection

Principally, legal protection for Hungarian communities abroad has to be provided by the neighbouring countries. As far as legal protection is concerned, the objective of Hungarian political parties abroad is to protect Hungarian individuals from ethnically-motivated offences. Members of the Hungarian community living in a given region also have to be encouraged to exercise their existing rights.

### 2. Expansion of Rights

The expansion of rights is the strategic direction which has been and will be the focal point of the policy for Hungarian communities abroad. The Hungarian state as well as the Hungarian parties and organisations abroad are convinced that where the right to cultural reproduction is acknowledged with regard to the titular nation, the same rights should apply regarding minority communities. Most European states regard it as natural (albeit implicitly) that the majority population has more rights than the minority. It is our shared goal to change this situation.

### 3. Official Regional Language

The maintenance and continuous development of the Hungarian mother tongue plays a crucial role in the preservation and development of Hungarian communities' national identity, along with the language rights and institutions assigned to the Hungarian language as mother tongue. Therefore, Hungarian communities in the neighbouring countries strive for achieving official regional language status for the Hungarian language.

#### 4. Institutions

Hungarian communities abroad intend to manage their own educational and cultural affairs. They require their own system of educational institutions. Regarding cultural affairs, they require sufficient financial support and unhindered institutional development.

#### 5. Objectives Regarding the Political System and Practice

**Autonomy:** Autonomy, which ensures the most wide-ranging scope of instruments for minority rights and equality, may offer the optimal framework for organizing the domestic political situation and kin-state ties of Hungarian national communities living in neighbouring countries.

Hungary supports territorial and personal autonomy claims of the Hungarian communities abroad. First of all, Hungarian parties and Hungarian societies abroad have to agree on their concept on autonomy and the necessary measures to achieve it. Hungary's duty is to support the communities concerned in the realization of these goals. However, it cannot act on their behalf.

**Regionalism:** Regionalism is an important element in the thinking of Hungarian communities abroad. Its implementation may be facilitated by the European Union's regional policy and the rising importance of European historical regions. Therefore, the Hungarian state intends to keep the issue of regionalisation on the agenda, which is also widely supported in the EU. Decision-making on regional boundaries is part of the sovereignty of each state. It is vital for Hungarian communities abroad to influence these decisions.

**Local governance:** As a consequence of the democratisation process and (partial) decentralisation, local governments play an increasingly important role in decision-making and the allocation of financial resources. Where Hungarians have gained the majority of the votes during national elections, state funds also serve the prosperity of local Hungarian communities in county and local governments. In countries where minority self-governments exist, national minorities mostly manage resources allocated by the given state. In other countries minority communities participate in local elections as political parties, and take part in the decision-making according to the proportion of the votes they receive.

#### 6. Consociational Democracy and Government Participation

In addition to – or even parallel with – autonomy and regionalism, the consociational model may be the most successful for national minorities. Even though the model cannot be implemented in its classical form, many examples of consociational agreements and bargains exist. By consociational agreements, we primarily mean the role minority parties play in government, but any minority-majority arrangements may be included. These arrangements may have their pros and cons, but Hungarian parties of the neighbouring states have achieved numerous partial solutions with this method. The consociational model requires continuous consultations, thus creating favourable frameworks for the negotiation of any issue, the result of which certainly depends on the political intentions of the participants.

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