

FN  
March 6  
IV-8011

HUNGARY

RE-EMIGRANTS (812.5)  
(812.51)

THE REPATRIATION OF HUNGARIAN REFUGEES FROM FRANCE  
SURVEY OF JANUARY 1959

SOURCE PARIS: RFE News Bureau.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: January 1959.

EVALUATION COMMENT: This is a sequel to similar earlier surveys. See e.g. PARIS Item No. 119/59. "Magyar Nemzet" of 18 February 1959 published a detailed report on the annual activities of the Hungarian Institute in PARIS of which Janos GERGELY is known to be the leader.

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General Movement

Since 8 November 1956, France has received 13,400 Hungarian refugees, out of which total almost 9,000 decided to remain in the country. Some 3,500 of them re-emigrated to Canada, the United States, New Zealand, Australia, etc. More than 1,200 have returned to Hungary, but almost the same number of Hungarians have come to France from other West European countries. There exist a certain number of refugees whose whereabouts are not traceable due to changed addresses, illegal crossing of frontiers, vagabondage and failure to keep contact with the French authorities or Hungarian circles.

It should be noted that there are Hungarians who try to return to Hungary illegally, without notifying the French authorities or the Hungarian legation in PARIS. It is a fact that most Hungarians who leave France illegally go to Germany, in most cases hoping for better labor conditions. Some of them have stated that they wanted to return to Austria "because it is closer to Hungary".

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Statistical Data About Hungarian Refugees in France

## 1. Age groupes:

|                                   |       |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Born before 1900 .....            | 100   |
| Born between 1900 and 1909 .....  | 400   |
| Born between 1910 and 1919 .....  | 600   |
| Born between 1920 and 1929 .....  | 2,000 |
| Born between 1930 and 1934 .....  | 1,600 |
| Born between 1935 and 1939 .....  | 2,800 |
| Born 1940 or later (minors) ..... | 1,500 |

## 2. Demographical distribution in France:

|                                      |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Living in PARIS .....                | 1,800 |
| Living in provincial cities .....    | 5,800 |
| Living in provincial towns .....     | 1,500 |
| Living in hamlets and villages ..... | 800   |

## 3. Distribution in France according to employment:

|                                   |       |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Mines .....                       | 200   |
| Heavy metallurgy .....            | 2,000 |
| Engineering .....                 | 1,500 |
| Light industry .....              | 2,500 |
| Agriculture .....                 | 250   |
| Offices .....                     | 300   |
| Commerce .....                    | 150   |
| Students .....                    | 600   |
| Other or without profession ..... | 1,500 |

## 4. Declared profession of refugees upon arrival in France:

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Unskilled workers .....   | 1,000 |
| Specialized workers ..... | 1,600 |
| Skilled workers .....     | 3,000 |
| Peasants .....            | 400   |
| Merchants .....           | 200   |
| Officials .....           | 500   |
| Students .....            | 1,000 |
| Free professions .....    | 1,000 |
| Without profession .....  | 300   |

## 5. Civil status of refugees:

Eighty per cent of the Hungarian refugees in France are male. Some 3,000 of them have families; about 6,000 are unmarried. 500 refugees have married in France, mostly fellow-countrymen. Mixed marriages are now increasing but they remain fairly uncommon (about 20 per cent).

## 6. Criminality:

Criminality among Hungarians in France is lower than that of other ethnic groups. However, relatively speaking, a lot

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of them are arrested for vagabondage or illegal border crossings. Attempts at suicide, not uncommon during the first few months of the emigration, have stopped altogether.

The Situation on February 1, 1959

During the month of February, many refugees left the country-side for the capital and for other large towns, where there are more possibilities for employment during the winter season.

Some 7,607 (84.52 per cent) out of the 9,000 refugees have regularized their situation by asking for the "Carte Blanche" from the French Office for Refugee Protection. Some 70 new cards were issued during January.

Repatriation Statistics for January 1959

Some 54 Hungarian refugees returned from France to Hungary in January. According to official French figures, the total of repatriates until 1 February 1959 amounts to 1,289 persons.

These 1,289 repatriates represent 9.62 per cent of the 13,400 refugees who came to France and 14.20 per cent of the 9,000 who settled in French territory.

The 54 January repatriates represent 0.40 per cent of the 13,400 refugees and 0.60 per cent of the 9,000 who settled. They finally represent 4.18 per cent of the 1,289 repatriates.

Some eleven out of the 54 January repatriates were born in or after 1940, being thus minors. Some 43 adults (against 38 in December) were repatriates in January.

Some 44 out of the January repatriates were men and 10 women. This corresponds to the proportion of men and women among the Hungarian refugees.

The January repatriates could be divided as to their age as follows:

|                                      |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Born before 1900 .....               | 1  |
| Born between 1900 and 1909 .....     | 5  |
| Born between 1910 and 1919 .....     | 5  |
| Born between 1920 and 1929 .....     | 9  |
| Born between 1930 and 1934 .....     | 9  |
| Born between 1935 and 1939 .....     | 14 |
| Born in or after 1940 (minors) ..... | 11 |

The average age of the January repatriates was 24 years while the average age of the Hungarian refugees in France is 26. Among the January repatriates were two families of two members and five with children.

The January repatriates could be divided as to their professions according to the followings:

|                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| Unqualified workers ..... | 10 |
| Specialized workers ..... | 16 |
| Qualified workers .....   | 4  |
| Peasants .....            | 2  |
| Artisans .....            | 5  |
| Office workers .....      | 2  |
| Intellectuals .....       | 2  |
| Without profession .....  | 13 |

Some 34 out of the 54 repatriates originated from the countryside, while 20 of them were from BUDAPEST.

The number of 54 repatriates for January shows a slight increase over the December figure of 46.

Reasons for Repatriation

The continued repatriation can be explained on the one hand by the various and incessant activities of the Hungarian authorities in France who organize social evenings, etc. and, on the other hand, by a psychosis of recession, provoked and kept alive by malicious elements. A true "Heimweh" can be added to these factors as well as certain individuals' incapability of adaption to foreign conditions.

Some 50 persons who have demanded to be repatriated after 1 September 1958 and who have been interrogated have given the following reasons for their decision to leave France:

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Family matters .....                       | 21 |
| "Heimweh" .....                            | 6  |
| Unemployment .....                         | 2  |
| Fear of unemployment .....                 | 7  |
| Lack of lodgings .....                     | 4  |
| General disappointment .....               | 2  |
| "Things already improved in Hungary" ..... | 1  |
| No answer .....                            | 7  |

The Activities of the Hungarian Authorities

The activities of the Hungarian authorities have considerably increased. The "Magyar Haz" in the rue de Vaugirard is organizing social evenings to which "all Hungarians are welcome". Many ill people also profit from the free-of-charge dispensary in the Hungarian house where they can be treated by Hungarian physicians. Finally, the weekly musical soirées, arranged by the Hungarian Institute and Janos GERGELY, enjoy a certain popularity among the refugees, although they were not conceived specially for them.

Communist propagandists put increasingly more emphasis on the frightening aspects of an imminent economic recession in

France and ensuing unemployment which, according to their reasoning, would victimize the Hungarian refugees in the first place.

Attacks of various kinds against the Hungarian Refugee Committee in PARIS are a novelty and run along two lines: official legation and consulate personnel try to impress the refugees with some veiled hints that the Committee is actually working for the Hungarian authorities; and secondly, before being repatriated, a number of refugees have visited the Committee to make scenes there. Apparently they hope that any openly aggressive action against the Committee might be considered in their favor in BUDAPEST. However, none of these rows have taken nasty turns, hitherto, mostly thanks to the tact and the firmness of the Committee employees.

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