

## Let Szeklerland be an independent administrative region!

The reorganization of Romanian public administration ever more sharply raises the question: What is to be the future of Szeklerland? Unfortunately, those influencing public opinion – among them the media and politicians – have no clear picture. The correct starting point is not what the government wants, or the *ad hoc* proposals of party politicians but the wish of the affected people. In the case of Szeklerland, the people living here must state, honestly, what they desire! There are, and will be, politicians who will try and convince us of so-called ‘reality.’ They would grasp the easier end of the matter, placing their own sense of comfort in the foreground, saying: “Ask for something that is easier to achieve.” They forget, and want us to forget, that Romania’s international covenants, national and community rights, as well as international laws, consider the affected communities’ will as pertinent in the re-drawing of administrative boundaries.

More to the point, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the European Council – of which Romania is a member country – forbids the altering of ethnic ratios: **“The Parties shall refrain from measures which alter the proportions of the population in areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities and are aimed at restricting the rights and freedoms flowing from the principles enshrined in the present framework Convention.”** [Article 16]

Similar regulations are contained in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

We must be clear that international law does not protect those who allow their rights to be introduced into bargaining. If we ourselves ask that, instead of [all of] Szeklerland, Maros [Mureş], Hargita [Harghita] and Kovászna [Covasna] Counties be a region (Appendix 2), if we ask that this be appended by Beszterce-Naszód County [Judeţul Bistriţa-Năsăud] (Appendix 3), too, then we will become victims of our own weakness and not the power of the majority.

For the Szekler National Council (SzNT), only one variant is acceptable, that which was the expressed public will of 210,000 Szeklerland citizens: the Szeklerland whose border was defined by the Szekler National Assembly in Gyergyóditró [Ditrău] and we can not deviate from that! (Appendix 1)

Let us express united, in Marosvásárhely [Tirgu Mureş] on March 10, the Day of Szekler Freedom, our faith in the only fair public administrative reorganization in accord with the interests and will of the Szeklers: **Let Szeklerland be an independent administrative region!**

Let us all proclaim that we want autonomy for Szeklerland!

Let us protest as one against the persecution of Szekler symbols!

We can only be successful if we are steadfast and united. If we understand the stumbling-blocks and traps of every version of regional redistribution, if we do not allow ourselves to be taken in and consistently hold to that which is in the interest of our community, and always demand that. We ask for what our conscience dictates. It is our right and, what’s more, our duty and the only road toward a more equitable and just future, toward autonomy.

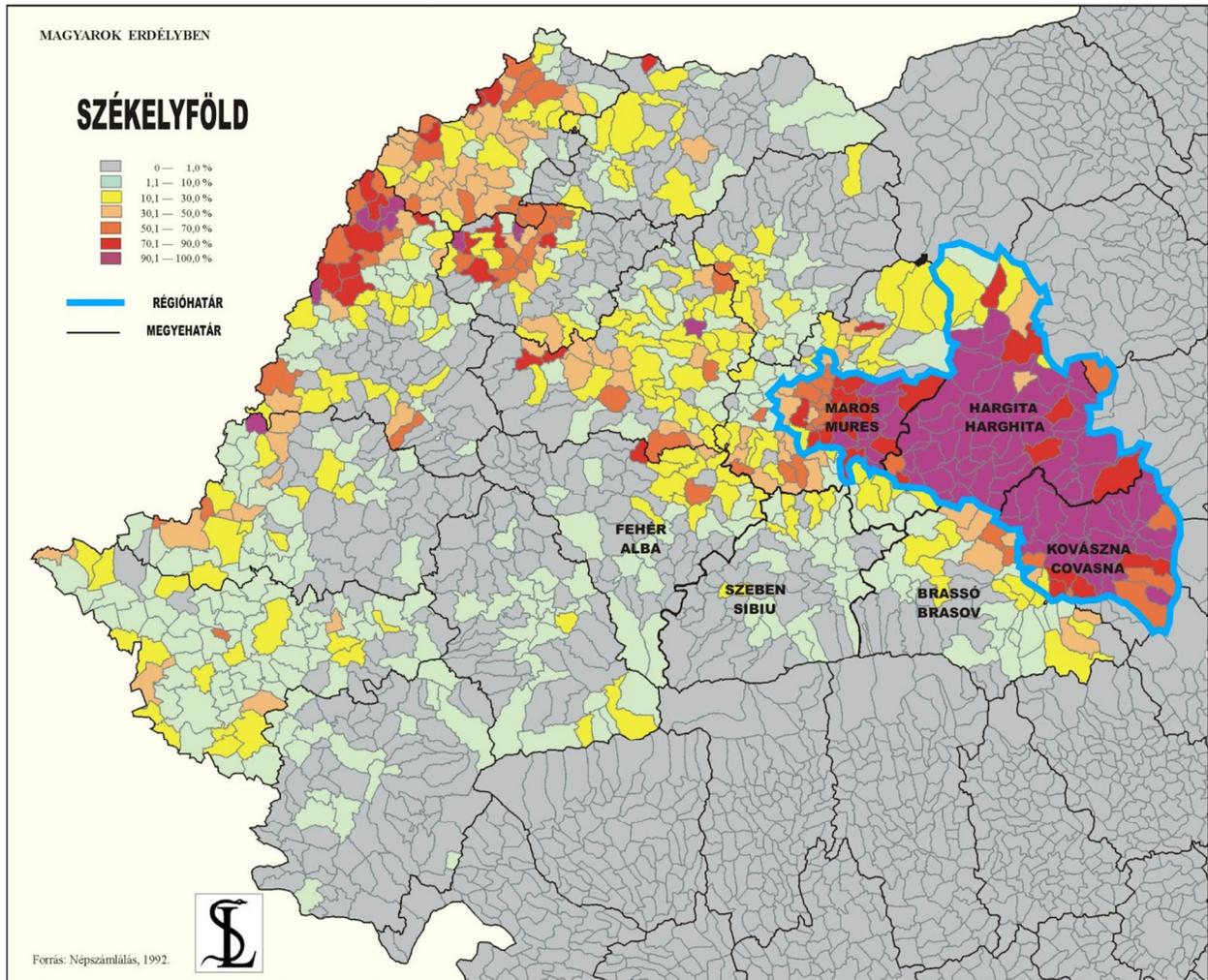
Balázs Izsák

President, Szekler National Council

Marosvásárhely (Tirgu Mureş) February 17, 2013

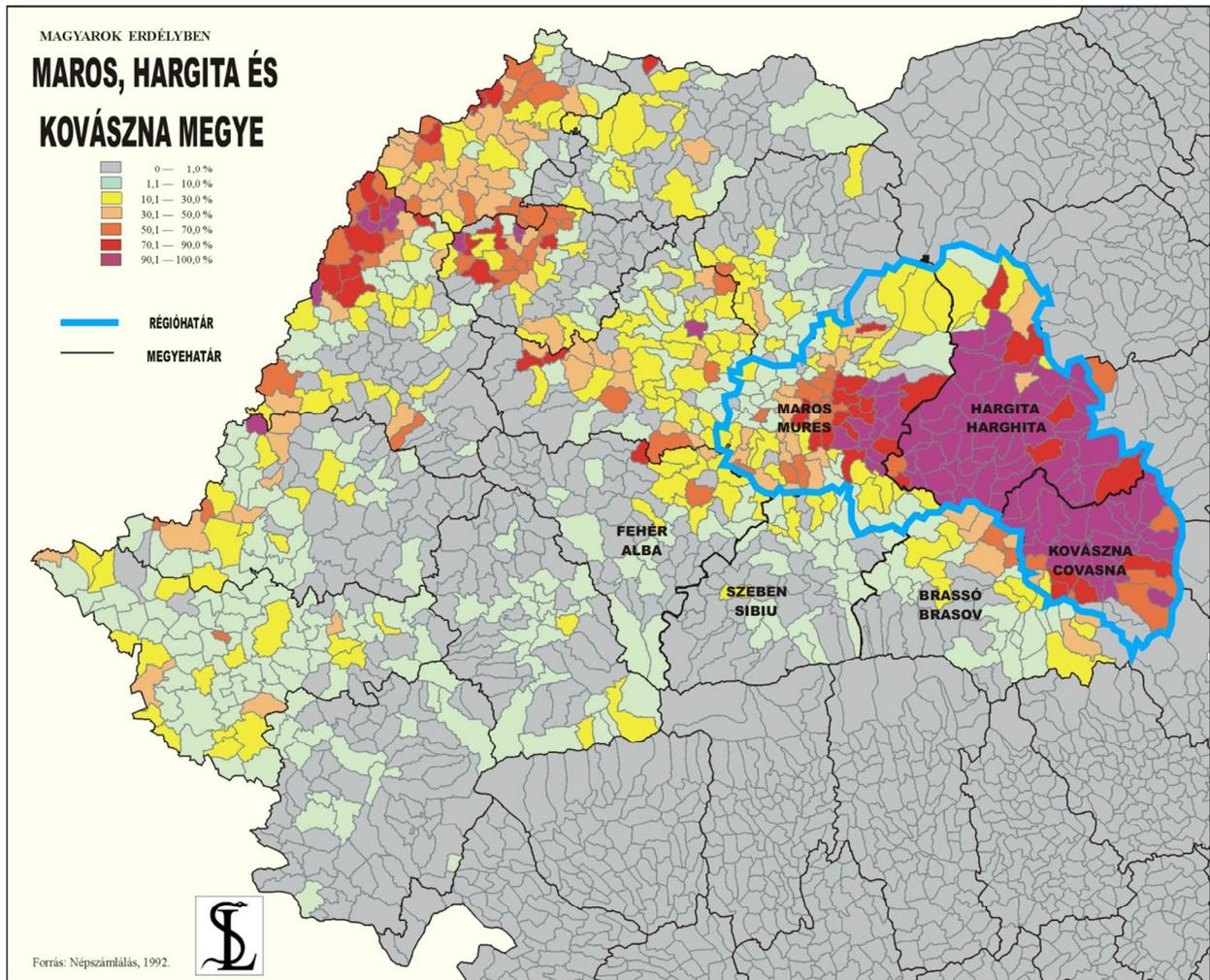
## Appendices: Szeklerland and the proposed regional redistribution plans.

1. **Szeklerland region**, based on the recommendation of the Szekler National Council. Its creation is a non-negotiable precondition for the creation of an autonomous Szeklerland. The proportion of Hungarians in the region: 73.5%.



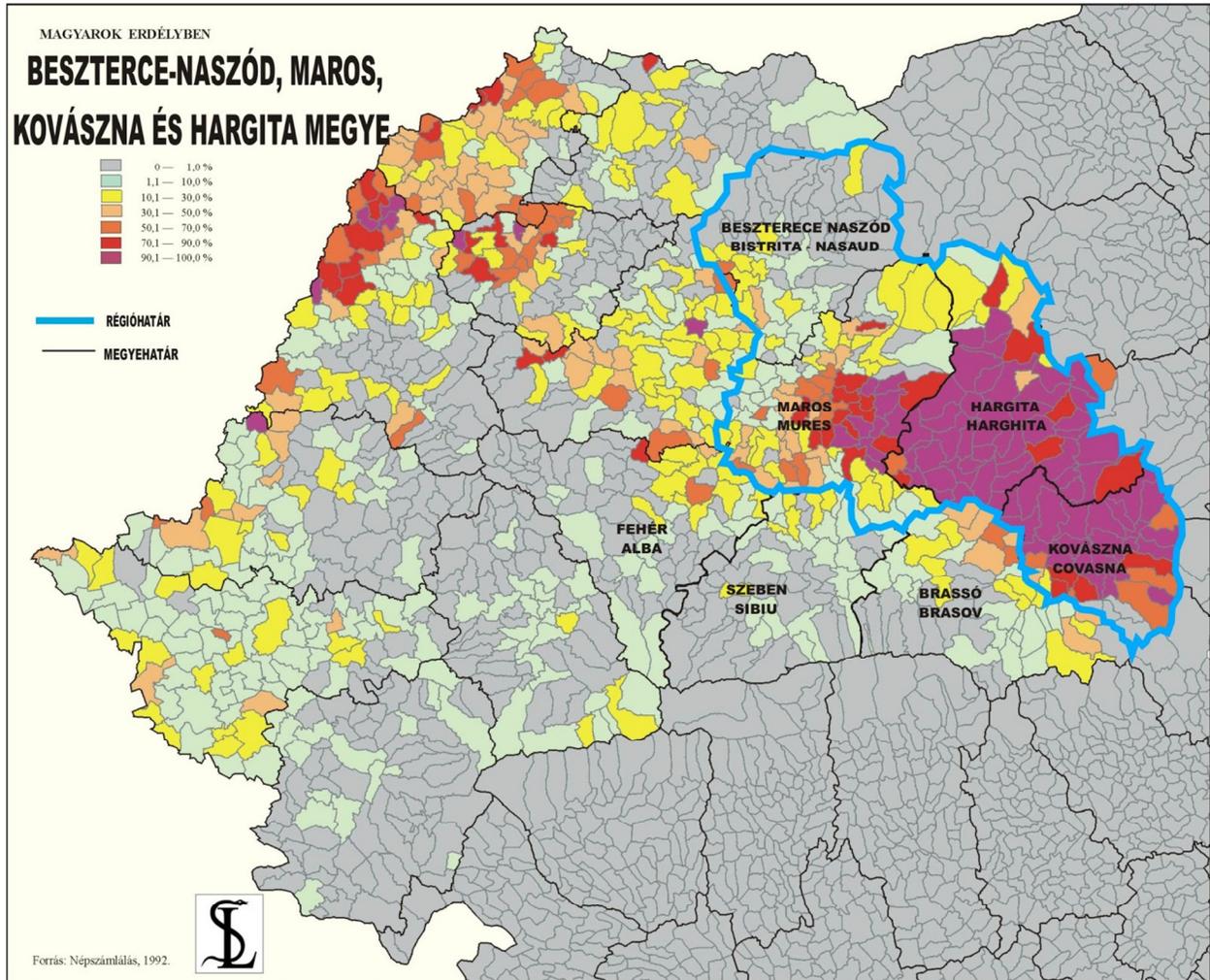
The ethnic constitution of Transylvanian Szeklerland.

2. Considering Szeklerland as **Maros [Mureș], Hargita [Harghita] and Kovászna [Covasna] Counties** is a tragic and dangerous misunderstanding. Its proponents speak of Szekler counties, whereas they were created by Nicolae Ceausescu for the express purpose of putting Szeklers into an inferior situation than the Hungarian Autonomous Province they lived in before. It is foolish and harmful to spread that the Ceausescu county boundaries are unchallengeable. The proportion of Hungarians in the region: 57%. Let us raise our objection against it on March 10.



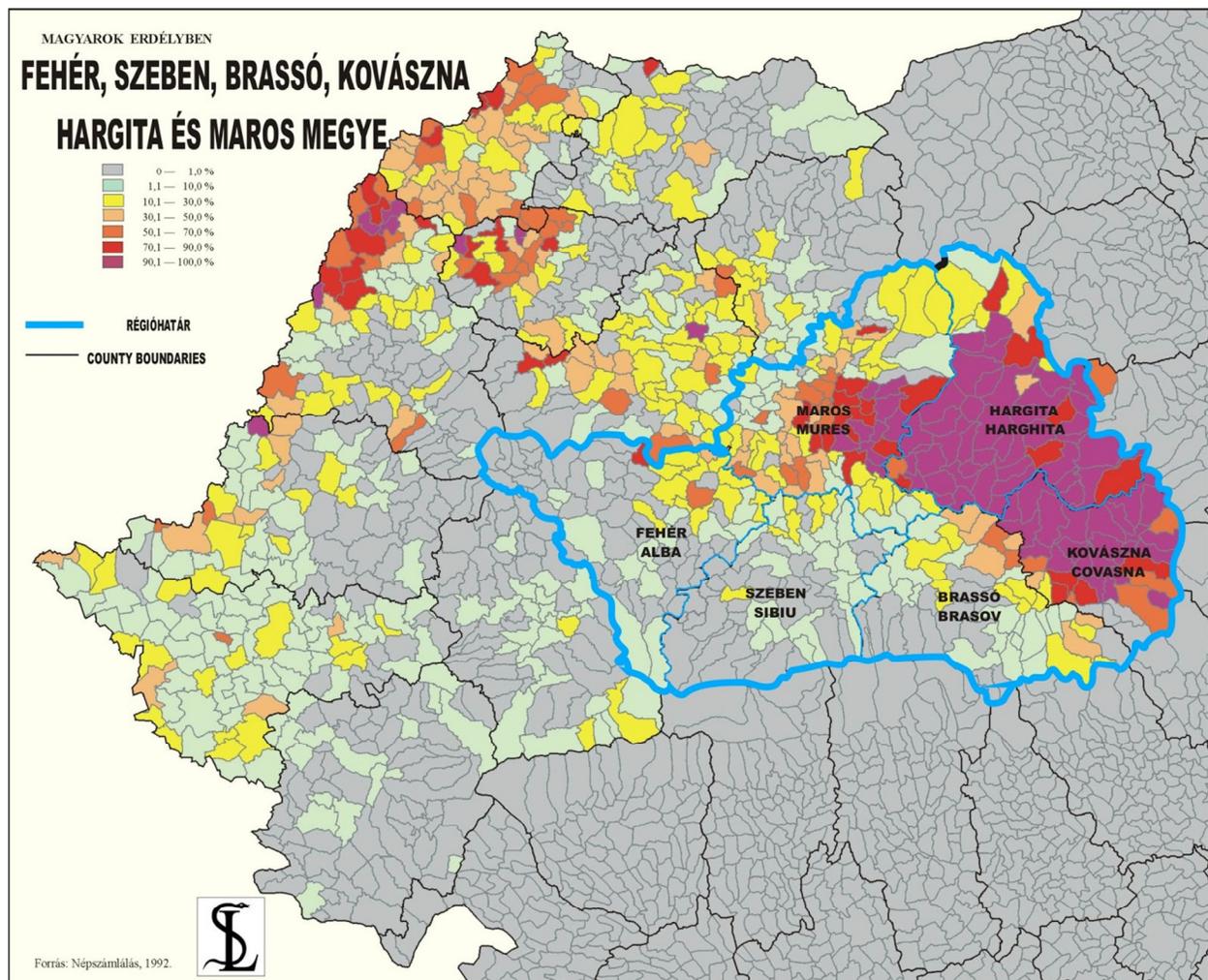
The ethnic constitution of Maros [Mureș], Hargita [Harghita] and Kovászna [Covasna] Counties

3. Maros [Mureş], Hargita [Harghita], Kovászna [Covasna] and Beszterce-Naszód [Judeţul Bistriţa-Năşăud] Counties. The latest compromise offer of the RMDSZ [Romanian Magyar Democratic Alliance] to Romania's political leaders. They think that, if the three-county solution is not palatable, then a version should be tried where the proportion of Hungarians is lower. What is more, here we would be a clear minority. The proportion of Hungarians in the region: 46%.



The ethnic constitution of Maros [Mureş], Hargita [Harghita] Kovászna [Covasna] and Beszterce-Naszód [Judeţul Bistriţa-Năşăud] Counties

4. **The government's proposal is** to make the current development regions as public the public administrative units. For the time being, the counties would remain but their jurisdictional responsibilities would be slowly migrated to the region. The Ponta plan is a text book model of stealthy stripping of rights. It would extend the breach of international commitments; it would erode them in an imperceptible way to make it barely noticeable to those being denied the decision making abilities in the affected counties. It is the typical method of Balkan dictatorships, putting the onus on the appearance while misleading the world. Romania would abolish the 85% Hungarian majority Harghita [Harghita] County, the 74% Hungarian majority Kovászna [Covasna] County, and even put Maros [Mureș] County, with its 39% Hungarian population, into a disadvantageous situation. The proportion of Hungarians in the region under this proposal: 29%.



The redistribution, which failed in the EU under the NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) initiative, would be raised by the Romanian government to a public administrative level. The sole reason for it in Romanian public opinion: our assimilation and the withering of Kovászna [Covasna] and Harghita [Harghita] Counties.

(Maps shown based on the map of László Sebők.)