

# Subotica and diversity

## Exploring the cultural and linguistic diversity of the city

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# Introduction

## Presentation of the project

### What kind of diversity?

Danilo Kiš, a famous writer born in Subotica, used the followings words to talk about the city: “*Subotica : Kosztolanyi, the Synagogue, the Baroque style Town Hall... multilingualism*”.

Indeed, there are three official languages in Subotica: Serbian, Hungarian and Croatian, whereas more than 20 national communities are represented : Hungarian, Croats, Bunjevacs, German, Roms ... among others (based on the last census of 2002)



### What are we talking about?

The concept of national community means here a group of people with common characteristics, either ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic. To get to understand the specific context of Subotica, we have to highlight the difference between nationality and citizenship. Nationality represents the fact of belonging to a national community, either majority or minority, that would be the one given for a census for example. On the other hand, citizenship refers to the fact of being affiliated to a State, in that case the Serbian State. Thus, the notion of nationality differs from the one used in countries like France where it is closely linked to citizenship. Yet, in Vojvodina everyone has his or her own nationality which can differ from his or her citizenship. In practical terms, a Hungarian living in Subotica has a Hungarian nationality and a Serbian citizenship - possibly a Hungarian one also. That is where it becomes interesting...

If you consider that a multicultural city brings together various cultures (ethnics, religious, linguistics...) then Subotica is definitely one. As for the intercultural aspect - understood as the existence of interactions between different communities -- it is also part of Subotica's identity. That is when we are wondering - how much intercultural is it in reality?

### Why this project?

Through this website, we would like to explore the multicultural context of Subotica to get to understand better the nature of interculturalism. The idea is to compare the official picture of Subotica being an intercultural city - for example, it is part of the network defined by the Council of Europe of 'Intercultural Cities' - to the reality lived on a daily basis by its inhabitants. Having said that, it seems important to specify that we are talking here from our own point of view - young French people coming from a country with a very distinct structure of national identity. The fact is, it will necessarily get an impact on our study. Still, we think that it contributes to make it quite unusual.

Our approach is determined and guided by several questions that are the following :

What are the factors allowing us to say that Subotica is an intercultural city? Is that a shared point of view? Finally, what makes the example of Subotica so specific compared to others in the region of Vojvodina, in Serbia and maybe in Europe?

### How are we working?

Our method does not pretend to be strictly scientific but based on the results of both our exploration and our personal experience as EVS volunteers for 10 months. We hope bringing a look as much external and

innovative as possible at the question of cultural diversity in Subotica.

1. The first step has been searching for already existing resources on the subject, such as books, online resources, articles.
2. Then we have organised a range of interviews to ask to some local people about languages, national community feelings, diversity and interactions. Without being representative given the limited sample population, we have decided to focus on quality interviews seeking to represent diversity of nationalities, ages, genders, occupations, etc.
3. Eventually, putting together the results on a new website aims both at promoting the specific context of Subotica to a broader audience as well as contributing to and encouraging dialog between the different persons being interviewed. We have also created a specific place in this website for ideas. The address of the website is: <http://suboticadiversity.weebly.com>

This booklet is also an outcome of our work. It is available in English, French and Serbian and contains all the content of the website.

## Presentation of the authors

We, Gregoire Vialleton and Agnes Rivet, are coming from different parts of France; Saint Etienne for Gregoire and Paris region for Agnes. Both 24, we graduated last year in 2010; Gregoire as an heating engineer in Nantes and Agnes in political studies in Toulouse.

We are both doing a European Voluntary Service (EVS) at Local Democracy Agency Subotica, for a 10 month period starting from October 2010 to July 2011.

As part of the EVS, we are to develop a personal project, creating and implementing our own ideas. We both share the same interest and wanted to develop our competences in complementary areas, this is why we decided to work jointly on this project.

Nevertheless, the personal project is just a part of the whole EVS picture - we are involved on a daily basis in other tasks for LDA's projects and youth work. For example, we are preparing the issues of e-newsletter for the project "Regional partnerships for intercultural exchange" in which the LDA Subotica is a partner. We also take part in organising events related to Europe, youth or volunteering. Moreover, we have created and implemented a programme of workshops in two high schools of Subotica, along with local volunteers.

Finally, we are included in the LDA team of volunteers, taking part in the project EU Info Point Subotica (more information at [infopointsubotica.eu](http://infopointsubotica.eu)) aiming at providing information for young people on Europe, volunteering and studying abroad.

# Historical and Geographical background

## Vojvodina

### Geography

Vojvodina is Serbia's northern province. It has on its west side, Croatia, on its north side Hungary and on its east side Rumania as neighbouring countries.

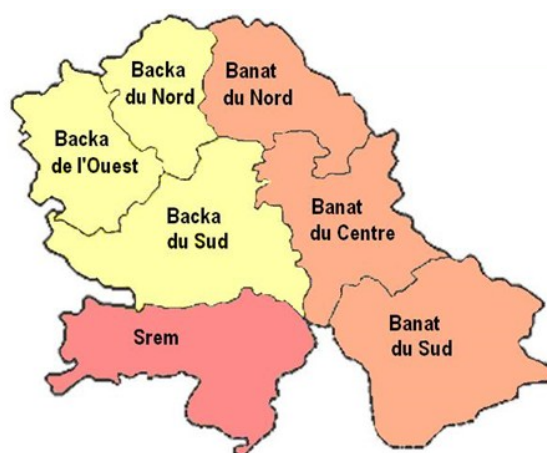
Vojvodina is part of the vast Pannonian plain which includes as well mainly Hungary and some parts of Rumania, Slovakia and Croatia. Vojvodina is then part of Central Europe, whereas the other parts of Serbia are located in the Balkan Peninsula.

Vojvodina is made up of three regions: Backa, Banat and Srem. Subotica is located in northern Backa.

Backa region is divided between Serbia and Hungary, but the bigger part remains in Serbia. Its biggest cities are Novi Sad in the south and Subotica in the north.

Banat region is divided between Serbia, Rumania and Hungary. Its main Serbian city is Zrenjanin and its main Rumanian city is Timisoara.

Finally, Srem region (in Serbian : Srem) is equally divided between Croatia and Serbia. It includes among others the cities of Vinkovci and Vukovar in Croatia and the cities of Zemun and Sremska Mitrovica in Serbia.



Source : LECLERC, Jacques. « Districts de la Voïvodine » in *L'aménagement linguistique dans le monde*, Québec, TLFQ, Université Laval, <http://www.tlq.ulaval.ca/axl/europe/>

### History

Vojvodina has a long and rich history. The following part does not aim to be exhaustive. It aims to give some clues about the main events that happened in the region, in order to better understand the present.

#### The arrival of Slavic people

Between the VIth and VIIIth centuries, some Slavic tribes started to settle in Vojvodina, among them were Serbs. The region was later attached to the Bulgarian empire at the IXth century.

#### Under the kingdom of Hungary

At the end of the IXth century, Hungarians moved to the Pannonian plain from Central Asia. Vojvodina was then progressively conquered by the kingdom of Hungary: Bačka (Xth century), Banat (XIth century) and Srem (XIIth century).

After their defeat at Kosovo-Polje (1389), a lot of Serbs took refuge in the north of the Danube, particularly in Vojvodina. According to Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary, from 1483, Serbs were majority in the province. They played a crucial part in the defense of Hungary against the Ottoman Empire.

### **Turkish occupation and Habsburg conquest**

After the battle of Mohacs (1526) and the conquest of Banat (1552), the Ottoman Empire took the control of the territory of present-day Vojvodina. Most of the Hungarians and Croatians of the region had to flee northern and were replaced mostly by Serbs and Muslims.

At the end of the XVIIth century, Habsburg Empire encouraged the settlement of Backa by Bunjevacs. 5000 of them arrived from Dalmatia in 1687. They received some lands on the strict condition that they had to make a pledge on fighting against the Ottoman Empire.

The peace of Karlowitz (1699), and then the peace of Szatmár (1711) ended decades of wars and sanctioned the Habsburg domination on Vojvodina. The province was devastated and depopulated.

### **Habsburg and then Austro-Hungarian Empire**

After the conquest of Vojvodina, the Habsburg Empire got in settlers coming from its empire in order to repopulate and exploit the region : Germans, Slavics, Roumanians, etc... The present ethnic mosaic of Vojvodina results from that period.



*Proclamation of Serbian Vojvodina in 1848 in Sremski Karlovci*

The 13th mai 1848, Vojvodina autonomy was proclaimed mostly by Serbs in Sremski Karlovci. An autonomous region was eventually created in 1849, yet it was entrusted to an Austrian governor seating in Temesvar (*Timisoara today*). 1867, Vojvodina was attached to Hungary, constituent part of the new born Austro-Hungarian Empire.

That incorporation was a prelude of an important process of magyarisation - an attempt to assimilate the minorities into the mainstream Hungarian culture - particularly in the field of education. This led to the 1913 law stipulating that children attending school should speak and write Hungarian properly after only four years of studies (at the age of 11 or 12).

### **The first Yugoslavia**

Along with Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire took the offensive of the First World War. As a consequence of their defeat, the Empire was broken up according to the Treaty of Trianon (1920) imposed by the victorious Allied. Hungary became independent, but lost almost 75% of its territory and a third of its population to the neighboring countries. Then, Vojvodina became a part of the new Yugoslavian state.

The 1921 census showed that 3 ethnic groups were forming an absolute majority: Serbs/Croats (503 000), Hungarians (380 000) and Germans (330 000). Some important minorities were also present: Rumanians (74 000), Slovaks (26 000) and Ruthens (11 000).

A process of serbisation of the education followed the process of magyarisation of the previous time. Thus, Serbo-Croatian became the official language of the education system. However, the cultural lives of the various nationalities were quite rich and lively, although under the control of the State.

### **The Second World War**

1941, Germany occupied Srem and Banat, whereas Backa was attached to Hungary, its ally. At the end of the war, the biggest part of the jewish community had been exterminated, or had fled.

Other consequence, during the post-war years, most of the Vojvodinian Germans were evicted or interned, almost leading to the extinction of this important component of the population.

### **Vojvodina under the Tito regime**

1946, Vojvodina was reincorporated to Yugoslavia, which became communist, federal and led by Marshal Tito. Yugoslavia was made up of 6 republics and two provinces included into the Republic of Serbia (Kosovo and Vojvodina).

1974, Vojvodina got a large autonomous status within Yugoslavia. Indeed, its prerogatives were nearly as important as the ones of the republics. Vojvodinian minorities' political and cultural rights were particularly respected back then: media, education, official languages, participation in the public institutions, services, etc.

### **Vojvodina under the Milosevic regime**

Slobodan Milosevic was elected President of Serbia in May 1989. In September of the following year, Vojvodina lost its autonomous status. One of the main consequences was the abolition of the numerous minority rights.

Even though important fightings happened at the edge of the province (like in Vukovar), Vojvodina was not directly affected by the wars of the 90's. However, it was confronted to a massive influx of Serbian refugees coming from war zones of Bosnia and Croatia. In the meantime, around 50 000 Hungarian and 30 000 Croatian have emigrated. A main consequence of the years of war was then a modification in the demographic balance of the province in favour of the Serbian majority.

### **Democratisation and partial comeback to autonomy**

In 2002, the « Law on the specific competences of the autonomous province» (Zakon o utvrđivanju određenih nadležnosti autonomne pokrajine) returned to Vojvodina few competences it had lost in 1990, especially in the field of education. In 2009, a new autonomous status was adopted by the Serbian parliament. It extends the province's prerogatives, for example by giving it its own government and allowing it to have regional cooperations inside Serbia's foreign policy.

# **Subotica**

## **Geography**

Subotica (*in Hungarian Szabadka*) is both a municipality and a city. As a municipality, it has 148,401 inhabitants and covers more than 1000 km<sup>2</sup>. The town itself has 99,981 inhabitants. The rest of the municipality is made up of 16 villages, including Palić's lake, its most famous tourist attraction.

The city Subotica is Serbia's fifth largest city and Vojvodina's second largest city after Novi Sad. It is the administrative centre of the North Bačka District in the autonomous province of Vojvodina.

The municipality of Subotica is located right in the middle of the road between Budapest and Belgrade, only 12km away from the Hungarian border. Its central location has made of Subotica an important industrial, commercial and multicultural centre in Vojvodina.

It lays in the Pannonian plain, thus it is absolutely flat. Moreover, no river is crossing the city.

– Due to either several conflicts leading to switching of the ruling power in this area or just changes of the



regime, Subotica has been part of eight different countries during the last century:

- Austro-Hungarian Empire until 1918
- Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes until 1929
- Kingdom of Yugoslavia until 1941
- Hungary until 1945
- Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia until 1992
- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia until 2003
- State Union of Serbia and Montenegro until 2006

Today, it is part of the Republic of Serbia.

## History

In this part, you will find a short chronology of Subotica, with some of its economic, urban and political developments.

**May 17, 1391:** First mention of the city under the name Zabatka

**1470:** The Transilvanian Duke János Pongrac of Dengeleg built a fortress on the site of the current city

**1526-1527:** Serbian Empire of Jovan Nenad, Subotica as a capital

**1542-1686:** Occupation by the Turks

**1726:** Building of the Serb Orthodox Church of Holy Assumption

**1743:** By a charter of the Empress Maria Theresa, Subotica became a free trade town within the Habsburg Empire

**1747:** Opening of the first Grammar School

**1779:** Maria Theresa proclaimed Subotica as a free crown town, bringing it a wider autonomy. The urban development of the city started from this time

**1798:** Building of the Cathedral St. Theresa of Avila

**1845:** Palić became a spa

**1848:** Publication of the first newspapers



*City Hall of Subotica*

**1853:** Building of the Theater

**1869:** Arrival of railways in the city

From the arrival of railways until the beginning the XXth century, the city lived a true golden era, an unprecedented economic and urban development.

**1897:** Arrival of the tramway

**1902:** Building of the Synagogue, first edifice built in the Hungarian secession style

**1910:** Building of the first cinema by Aleksandar Lifka



*Old National Theater of Subotica*

**1910:** Erection of the current Town Hall

**1918:** End of the 1st World War, Serbian and French troops marched in Subotica

**1920:** Treaty of Trianon, incorporation into the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes



**1941:** 2nd World War, Hungarian troops entered in Subotica. From the 6000 Jewish who were living in Subotica before the war, around 5000 were deported during the Holocaust.

**1944:** The Axis left the city and Subotica became part of the new socialist Yugoslavia

**1944-1945:** 8000 citizens have been killed by the Yugoslav partisans

In the 60s, started a new golden age for the city, jointly to Yugoslavia's one. In the new industrial zone of Aleksandrovo started to grow many industry related to steel (Sever) or agriculture (Fidelinka, 29. November, Suboticke Mlekara...). During this decade was also built the monumental Avenue of the Marshall Tito.

# Multi-culturalism today

In this part, we will start our exploration of the cultural diversity of Subotica, in term of nationalities, mother tongues, religion, citizenship, education and media. But before all, we will focus on the census.

## Census

A lot of data that we will use in the following articles are coming from the 2002 census in Serbia. Census in Serbia have a lot of similarities with census in the other Ex-Yugoslavian countries. Moreover, they are all organized the same year, the last one was in 2002 and the next one is in 2011, this year.

As common characteristics, they all include questions concerning: nationality, mother tongue and religion. The answers for these three questions are optional and up to each citizen. These questions turn each census into an important political event. Indeed, results allow evaluating the size of each community. Moreover, minority rights are based on them. The issue is of a great importance in the places where the differences between communities are weaker. Thus, during the last census in Montenegro, the Serbian and Montenegrin national parties led a massive political campaign on the question of nationality. In Vojvodina, the Croatian and Bunjevac community are also particularly impacted.



*'Dental office' in the three official languages of Subotica: Serbian (Cyrillic), Croatian (Latin) and Hungarian.*

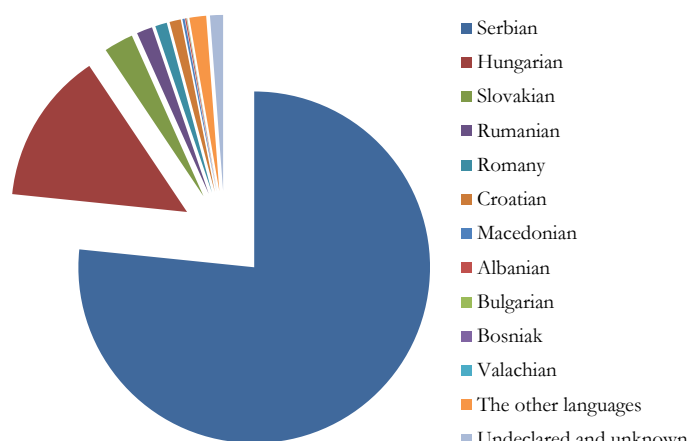
## Languages

Vojvodina is a multiethnic society with a lot of different nationalities speaking very different languages. Therefore, linguistic issues are crucial when talking about intercultural dialogue. In the following part you will get to know about the general situation in terms of mother tongues, official languages and finally you will get an overview about bilingualism in Subotica.

# Mother tongues

## In Vojvodina

<b>Total</b>	2031992
<b>Serbian</b>	1557020
<b>Hungarian</b>	284205
<b>Slovakian</b>	55065
<b>Rumanian</b>	29512
<b>Romany</b>	21939
<b>Croatian</b>	21053
<b>Macedonian</b>	4152
<b>Albanian</b>	2369
<b>Bulgarian</b>	920
<b>Bosniak</b>	186
<b>Valachian</b>	92
<b>The other languages</b>	31200
<b>Undeclared and unknown</b>	24279

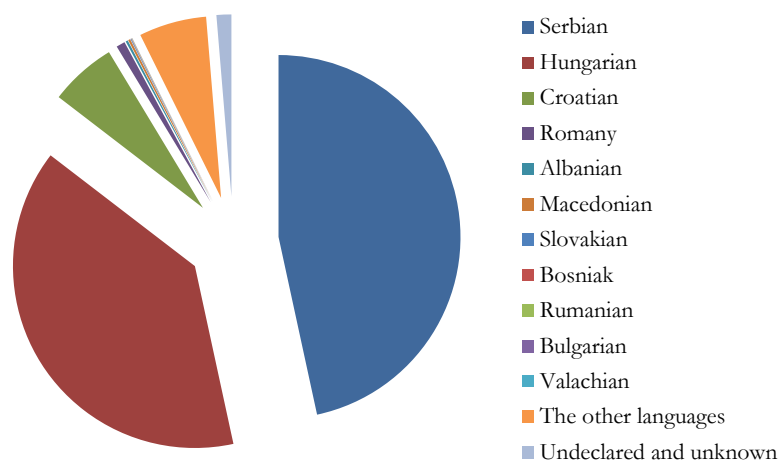


We notice a high level of linguistic diversity in Vojvodina with more than 10 mother languages listed plus the non-listed ones. However, minority languages are only spoken as mother tongue by 22.18% of the population, whereas Serbian is the language of 72.82% of the inhabitants.

Among the minority languages, Hungarian is the first one. It is spoken by 14% of the population.

## In Subotica

<b>Total</b>	148401
<b>Serbian</b>	69155
<b>Hungarian</b>	57608
<b>Croatian</b>	8806
<b>Romany</b>	1158
<b>Albanian</b>	292
<b>Macedonian</b>	287
<b>Slovakian</b>	111
<b>Bosniak</b>	44
<b>Rumanian</b>	43
<b>Bulgarian</b>	24
<b>Valachian</b>	3
<b>The other languages</b>	8914
<b>Undeclared and unknown</b>	1956



In Subotica the language distribution is quite different. Indeed, 52% of the population speak a minority language whereas Serbian is spoken only by 48% of the people as mother tongue. Among the minority languages, two of them are much more spoken : Hungarian (38.82%) and Croatian (5.93%).

These statistics are about mother languages, and therefore

give no clue about the level of multilingualism of the inhabitants. Moreover, these data have to be read with caution. Indeed, the census was made few months after the democratic transition. The memory of the persecution towards minorities in the 90s was then still alive. Therefore we may expect an underreporting of the minority languages. Moreover, some languages have not been taken into account during the census like the

Ruthenian language, a historical minority language in Vojvodina, and the Bunjevac language, claimed as different from Serbian and Croatian by the leaders of its community. The percentage of people who replied a non-proposed language is 15.54% in the province but goes up to 6% for Subotica which is not negligible.

## Official languages

At the national level, the unique official language is Serbian written in Cyrillic. Nevertheless, the 2006 Constitution of the Republic of Serbia protects the use of minority languages and prohibits linguistic discriminations. Moreover, Serbia ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, recognizing the following languages: Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Hungarian, Romany (or Romani) , Rumanian, Ruthenian, Slovak, and Ukrainian.

Vojvodina recognizes 6 official languages: Serbian, Hungarian, Slovakian, Rumanian, Ruthenian and since 2009 Croatian.

At the local level, each town recognizes a variable number of official languages according to the composition of its population. In that way, Subotica has 3 official languages: Serbian, Hungarian and Croatian. On the one hand, some local authorities recognize until 4 official languages such as Novi Sad, Zrenjanin or Kovačica. On the other hand, some authorities only recognize Serbian like Apatin or Sremski Karlovci, or even only Serbian written in cyrillic like Indija or in Ruma. Some languages are also recognized by few authorities without being recognized at the province level : Czech (Bela Crkva), Macedonian (Jabuka) or Montenegrin (Mali Idos). Roma language (or Romani) is specific because it is nowhere recognized as an official language, although in some places the number of Roma people would be enough for it.

In practice, this official multilingualism allows citizens to interact with an authority or to be judged in the official language they choose. At the provincial level, each citizen can also ask for official documents (like birth certificate) in one of the 6 official languages.

## Bilingualism in Subotica

Subotica's most spoken languages are Hungarian, Serbian and Croatian. On the one hand, Serbian and Croatian are very similar and almost totally mutually understandable. On the other hand, Hungarian's syntax, grammar and vocabulary are very different from Serbian and Croatian and needs a high level of motivation to be learned by non-native adults Hungarians.

It leads to the fact that speaking about the languages we can see two main groups: Serbian and Croatian speakers and Hungarian speakers.

There is no official statistic on the level of bilingualism in Subotica. But when we talk about interculturalism, this is a crucial issue. We can find some good practices in that field. Here are few good examples:

- The Hungarian theater Dezső Kosztolányi subtitles in Serbian all its plays
- The youth magazine 5+, whose target group is high school pupils, is mixing articles in Serbian and in Hungarian
- Shop assistants are very often able to speak both Serbian and Hungarian

In the same time, the school system has some difficulties to teach the other language. Hungarian pupils have two hours compulsory of Serbian language per week and Serbian pupils have also two hours but it's optional for them. Moreover the learning programs are very formal and not practical at all to speak in the everyday life.

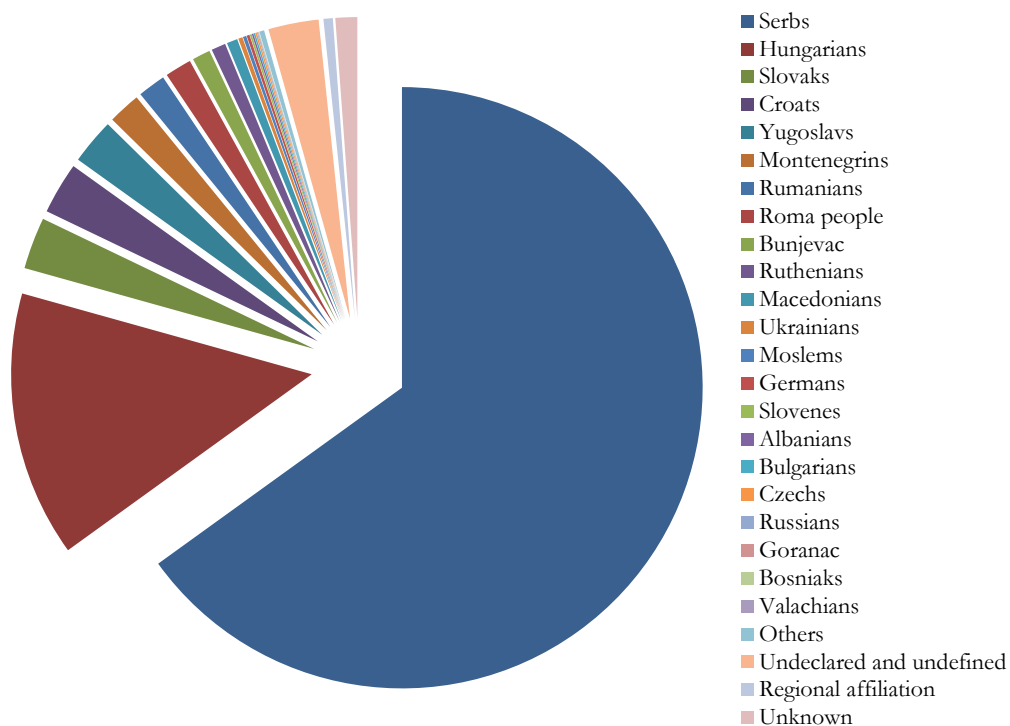
# Nationalities

## Distribution

### In Vojvodina

The last census (2002) listed 22 nationalities according to the following distribution:

<b>Total</b>	2031992
<b>Serbs</b>	1321807
<b>Hungarians</b>	290207
<b>Slovaks</b>	56637
<b>Croats</b>	56546
<b>Yugoslavs</b>	49881
<b>Montenegrins</b>	35513
<b>Rumanians</b>	30419
<b>Roma people</b>	29057
<b>Bunjevac</b>	19766
<b>Ruthenians</b>	15626
<b>Macedonians</b>	11785
<b>Ukrainians</b>	4635
<b>Moslems</b>	3634
<b>Germans</b>	3154
<b>Slovenes</b>	2005
<b>Albanians</b>	1695
<b>Bulgarians</b>	1658
<b>Czechs</b>	1648
<b>Russians</b>	940
<b>Goranac</b>	606
<b>Bosniaks</b>	417
<b>Valachians</b>	101
<b>Others</b>	5311
<b>Undeclared and undefined</b>	55016
<b>Regional affiliation</b>	10154
<b>Unknown</b>	23774
<b>Total</b>	2031992



Today Vojvodina is 65% Serbian. Despite this, its population remains as a mosaic of nationalities. Indeed, its first minority, Hungarian, represents 14% of its population and the total of the other minorities represent around 16% of the population. 8 minorities represent more than 1% each : Hungarians, Slovaks, Croats, Yugoslavs, Montenegrins, Rumanians, Roms and Bunjevacs.

## In the municipality of Subotica

In Subotica's municipality, 6 villages have a absolute Hungarian majority: Backi Vinogradi, Backo Dusanovo, Kelebija, Hajdukovo, Cantavir, Supljak.

6 villages have an absolute Bunjevac and Croatian majority: Bikovo, Gornji Tavankut, Djurdin, Ljutovo, Mala Bosna et Stari Zednik.

Only 1 village has an absolute majority of Serbs : Novi Zednik

4 villages do not have any community having an absolute majority. 2 are mixed Serbian and Hungarian : Visnjevak et Palic. 1 is mixed Serbian et Bunjevac/Croatian : Misicevo. And 1 is mixed Serbian, Hungarian and Bunjevac/Croatian: Bajmok.

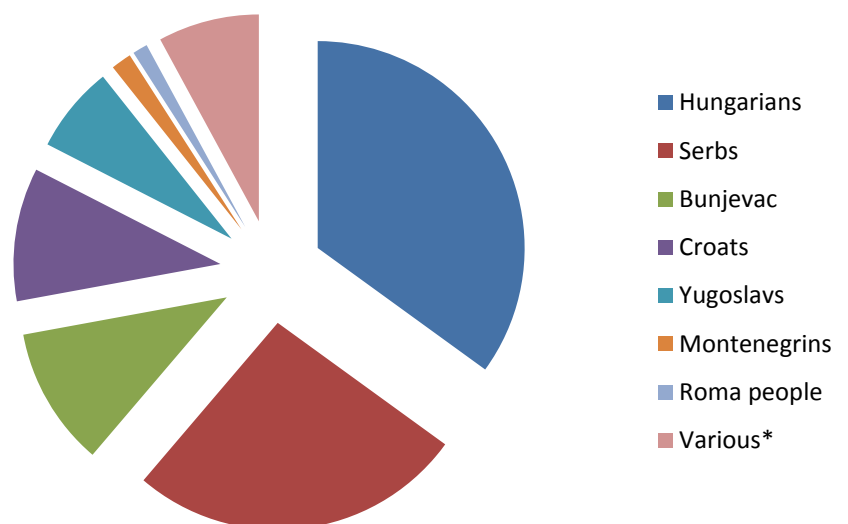
Although living in all the various villages of the municipality, 75% of the Serbs are living in the city of Subotica.

Roma people are significantly present in only two cities of the municipality, Subotica and Cantavir.

	Total	Serbs	Montenegrins	Yugoslavian	Bunjevacs	Hungarians	Roma People	Croats	Various*
Bajmok	8586	2900	102	454	1266	2450	13	700	701
Backi Vinogradi	2039	48	2	8	10	1927	0	14	30
Backo Dusanovo	741	239	3	12	1	463	0	2	21
Bikovo	1824	421	3	78	411	259	1	563	88
Visnjevac	639	302	23	21	41	224	8	7	13
Gornji Tavankut	1381	100	4	94	481	44	0	546	112
Donji Tavankut	2631	190	6	137	787	117	1	1234	159
Djurdin	1746	484	7	67	251	124	0	677	136
Kelebija	2168	367	14	102	133	1275	0	138	139
Ljutovo	1181	91	5	109	379	162	1	308	126
Mala Bosna	1245	69	1	69	283	92	1	621	109
Misicevo	446	208	1	15	150	18	0	35	19
Novi Zednik	2848	1805	35	44	398	240	8	206	112
Palic	7745	1930	39	351	335	4178	9	399	504
Stari Zednik	2230	248	8	139	327	567	0	727	214
Subotica	99981	26242	1596	6787	10870	34983	1171	10424	7908
Hajdukovo	2482	89	3	23	49	2191	8	40	79
Cantavir	7178	54	4	51	24	6632	233	22	158
Supljak	1310	39	4	1	58	1146	0	25	37
Total	148401	35826	1860	8562	16254	57092	1454	16688	10665
Pourcentage	100,00%	24,14%	1,25%	5,77%	10,95%	38,47%	0,98%	11,25%	7,19%

## In the city of Subotica

Hungarians	34983
Serbs	26242
Bunjevac	10870
Croats	10424
Yugoslavs	6787
Montenegrins	1596
Roma people	1171
Various*	7908
total	99981



\*Various : including Macedonians, Moslems, Albanians, Germans, Slovaks, Ruthenians, Slovenes, Bosniaks, Russians, Bulgarians, Goranac, Rumanians, Ukrainians, Czechs, Others, Undeclared and undefined, Regional affiliation, Unknown

In Subotica the distribution is different. Unlike the whole Vojvodina, no nationality is having an absolute majority. The biggest group is the Hungarian, gathering 35% of the city population. The four largest groups (Hungarians, Serbians, Croatians and Bunjevacs) are gathering 82% of the city population. Subotica also has one of the highest rates (7%) of people declaring themselves as Yugoslavs within the former Yugoslavia.

## The National councils

The national councils of the national minorities have been redefined and strengthened by the 08.31.2009 law (zakon o nacionalnim savetima nacionalnih manjina). This one governs their status, competences, financing, election modalities, and regional and international cooperations with other institutions.

The national councils have been established in order to preserve minority identities in Serbia. Their three main fields of competences are:

- Education
- Culture
- Information

There are 19 national councils, and 10 of them have their seat in Vojvodina: Slovak (Novi Sad), Ruthene (Ruski Krstur), Rumanian (Novi Sad), Hungarian (Subotica), Bunjevac (Subotica), Ukrainian (Novi Sad), Croatian (Subotica), Macedonian (Pancevo), German (Novi Sad), Czech (Bela Crkva).

They can include up to 35 elected members, function of the size of their community. The voting system is a Party-list proportional representation. All the adult members of the minority, registered on the electoral roll held by the ministry for human and minority rights can vote. During the last election, June 6th 2010, 436 334 voters were registered in Serbia. The participation rate totalled 54,47% countrywide.

## The Cultural Centers

The main nationalities present in Subotica have a cultural center. There are four :

Svetisava (Serbian), Bunjevačko Kolo (Croatian), Bunjevački Kulturni Centar (Bunjevac) et Népkör (Hungarian). Although these organizations have different history, they have a common mission: promoting and cherishing their national culture.

They all got fundings from the municipality, the province and the state, but also from the Hungarian government for Népkör. They are also supported by their national council, except the Serbian center.

They are not all active in the same way. Thus the activity of the Croatian cultural center is focusing on promoting traditional dances, whereas the Hungarian center has a much wider action (activities for children, music, theater, dances, etc...). As for the Serbian center, it's focusing its action on religious and national Serbian identity.

The cultural center are also involved in the organisation of some important events in the local life of Subotica :

- Dužijanca by Bunjevačko Kolo (harvest festival)
- Interetno festival by Népkör
- Pravoslavlja by Svetisava (two weeks dedicated to the Serbian Orthodox Church, during Christmas and Easter).



## Mixed marriages

According to Viktorija Simon Vuletic, who wrote a thesis on the topic, mixed marriages started in Subotica around one century ago. At first it was among the upper classes (gentry, bourgeoisie) and most of it among Bunjevci and Hungarians who shared the same catholic faith. Indeed, mixed religious marriages were at that time less accepted.

After the 2nd World War, under the socialist Yugoslavia, the influence of national and religious identities declined. "Brotherhood and Unity" was then the official slogan. There was a high pressure from the State to lower these affiliations. As a consequence, the number of ethnically mixed marriages strongly increased up to one third, which was one of the highest rate in Europe.

With the fall of Yugoslavia, ethnic barriers were restored and the number of mixed unions fell down.

## Citizenships

### Citizenship and Nationality

We will talk here about citizenship, in the meaning it's understood in Vojvodina. Therefore it is the affiliation to a state. It is different from the nationality which represents the belonging to an ethnical or linguistical community. The inhabitants of Vojvodina are having the Serbian citizenship. However, some of them, especially those belonging to the Croatian or Hungarian national community, decided to acquire a second citizenship. Indeed, Croatia and Hungary allows non-residents to acquire their citizenship, under conditions.

### Acquisition of the Croatian citizenship

To acquire the Croatian citizenship, one must prove its Croatian roots with official documents of parents or grandparents (school, workbook, or other). The procedure is quite long and can be done at the Croatian consulate of Subotica. At the end of it, the applicant receives an attestation of citizenship that allows him to ask for the Croatian passport. As well as its sentimental value, it used to offer some practical advantages. Indeed, it allowed to travel in the Schengen zone without visa, which is possible with the Serbian citizenship only since December 19. 2009.

2007, the consul of Croatia in Subotica estimated that around 90000 Croatian citizens lived in Serbia, including Croatians from Vojvodina, but as well Serbian from Croatia who had emigrated in Serbia.

### Acquisition of the Hungarian citizenship

Since January 1st 2011, Hungary offers the possibility for Hungarian living abroad to acquire the Hungarian citizenship. According to the Hungarian government, the measure's aim is to repair the injustice of 1919, when the treaty of Trianon shranked the country, letting many Hungarians outside their nation. The government plans to give it to 80 000 serbian citizens in 2011. However, april 30th 2011, the newspaper Magyar Szo reported the figure of 10 000 requests of double citizenship at the consulate of Subotica.

Among the main practical advantages, there is the acquisition of the European citizenship and thus the belonging to the Schengen Space.

The criteria to get this citizenship are double :

- Having a sufficient level of Hungarian language
- Having family members living or having lived in Hungary

Having ancestors who lived in the province during the Austro-Hungarian empire (before 1918), or during the 2nd world war when Vojvodina was gathered to Hungary is enough to fulfill the 2nd condition. However the required level in the language, both verbally and in writing, is quite high.

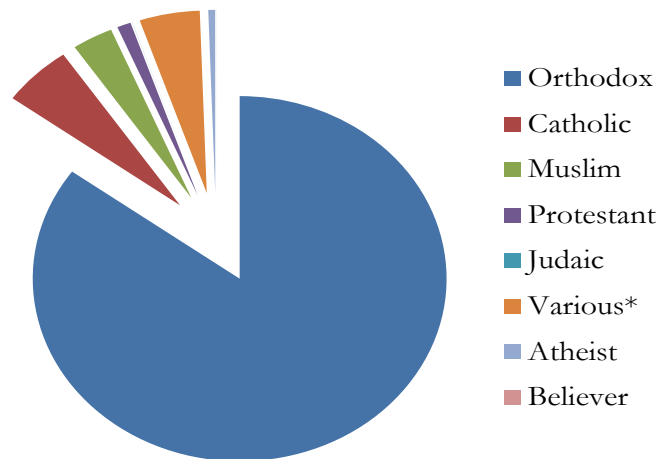
All the procedures can be done at the Hungarian consulate of Subotica. One must present its documentary evidence together with a personal CV handwritten in Hungarian. A short interview in Hungarian with the staff of the consulate is also needed in order mainly to check the level of Hungarian. Then, the applicant is informed 3 or 4 months later if he's going to get the citizenship, and if yes, a ceremony will be organized. The next step is then to ask for the Hungarian passport.

## Religions

Religion often remains an important part of the identity of the people and community. Thereby, in this part, we are going to have a look at this issue.

### Distribution in Serbia

<b>Total</b>	7.498.001	100,00%
<b>Orthodox</b>	6.371.584	84,98%
<b>Catholic</b>	410.976	5,48%
<b>Muslim</b>	239.658	3,20%
<b>Protestant</b>	80.837	1,08%
<b>Judaic</b>	785	0,01%
<b>Various*</b>	353.620	4,72%
<b>Atheist</b>	40.068	0,53%
<b>Believer</b>	473	0,01%

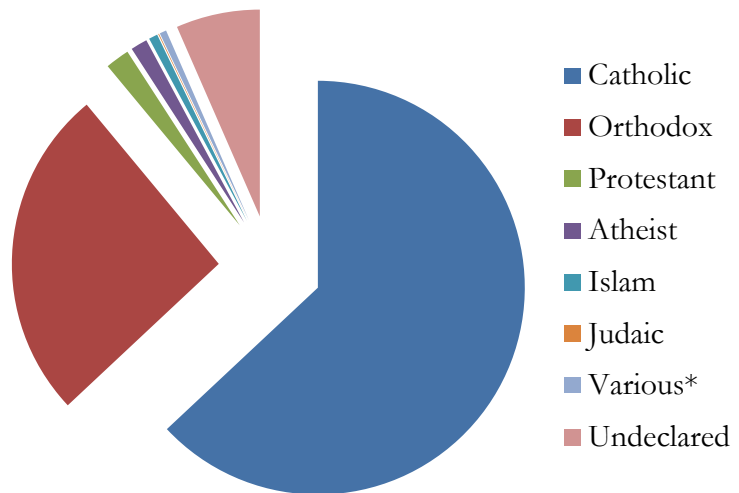


*\*Various: including: pro-oriental cults, other, undeclared, unknown*

The overwhelming majority (85%) of the population of Serbia is orthodox. Muslims are concentrated in the region of Sandzak and in the south of the country, whereas catholics and protestants are concentrated in Vojvodina.

## Distribution in Subotica

Total	148 401	100,0%
Catholic	93521	63,0%
Orthodox	38523	26,0%
Protestant	2794	1,9%
Atheist	1934	1,3%
Islam	1024	0,7%
Judaic	89	0,1%
Various*	784	0,5%
Undeclared	9732	6,6%



\*Various: including: pro-oriental cults, other, undeclared, unknown

The majority of Subotica's inhabitants is catholic. Subotica is then the capital of Catholicism in Serbia. It is the religion of Croats/Bunjevacs and of the majority of Hungarians.

## Link between religion and nationality

The link between religion and nationality in Subotica is complex. It is almost automatic, as far it concerns Serbs (orthodox) and Croatians/Bunjevacs (catholic). For these two communities, religion is the main identification factor. Indeed, although the Croatian language is official in Subotica, it is not spoken a lot and its setting-up is recent.

The Hungarian community is shared between the catholic faith (majority) and the protestant one. Around 8% of Hungarian are protestant. If protestants of Subotica are mostly Hungarians, the reverse is then not true. Moreover, most of the Protestants of Vojvodina are of Slovak nationality who are not very numerous in Subotica. Finally, if the Jewish community was historically Hungarian, today the reality is much more balanced, because of mixed marriages for example.

Members of the Roma community have three main religions, according to their origins. Roma people coming from Macedonia are orthodox in general, the ones coming from Kosovo are more muslim and the ones who have local origins are catholic.

## Places of worship in Subotica

The various places of worship in Subotica are deeply linked to its cultural diversity.

The city has one cathedral, St-Theresa of Avila, built between 1773 and 1798, and several catholic churches. There is also two orthodox churches : the church of the Ascension of the Christ, built between 1723 and 1726, and the church of Saint-Demetrius built in 1818. We can also mention the evangelical church, built in 1901, the Synagogue, built in 1902, and the Muhajir Mosque, built in 2008.

# Education

## Education in official languages

Education in the official languages of the Subotica's municipality (Serbian, Hungarian and Croatian) is done in separated classes but in the same buildings. In that way, unlike other Balkan countries (Croatia or Bosnia-Herzegovina for example), the buildings are not separated. The only exception is the High School Dezső Kosztolányi, reserved to the good pupils of the province wishing to study in Hungarian.

### **In Serbian**

As everywhere in Serbia, it is of course possible to study from primary school to faculty only in Serbian.

### **In Hungarian**

It is possible to study only in Hungarian in most of the elementary schools and in all of the secondary schools of the municipality of Subotica. Around 35% of the pupils from primary schools and 45% of the pupils from secondary schools in Subotica are studying in Hungarian.

The proportion is bigger in the secondary schools because a lot of pupils are coming from other municipalities of Vojvodina. It is also possible to study in Hungarian at the university: there is a faculty of pedagogy and a faculty of engineering (in which for each section, the lessons are to be chosen either in Serbian or in Hungarian).

### **In Croatian**

Since a decade, it is possible to study in Croatian in Subotica. 5 primary schools are offering classes in Croatian in Subotica and in some villages of the municipality (Đurđin, Tavankut). It is also possible at the Grammar School (Gymnasium «Svetozar Marković ») since 2007 and at the polytechnical high school since 2010. There is no faculty available in Croatian in Subotica.

In total, very few pupils are studying in Croatian in Subotica (around 2%). It's very little if we compare to the number of Croatian officially declared in the municipality of Subotica during the last census (2002: 11%). We can express some hypothesis on this situation. The main one would be because the Croatian language is not a very strong factor of identification in the Croatian community.

### **In Bunjevac language**

The Bunjevac language is not officially recognized, thus there is no classes with lessons in Bunjevac. However, it is possible in 7 primary schools between the 1st and the 4th year to take some optional lessons of Bunjevac language and culture.

## Learning of Serbian and Hungarian

### **Learning of Serbian in the Hungarian classes**

It is compulsory for the pupils to have some Serbian lessons (between 2 and 3h per week) during all the elementary school and all the High School.

### **Learning of Hungarian in Serbian classes and Croatian classes**

Learning Hungarian is optional in primary school. In Subotica, 10 teachers are giving these lessons, and they are paid by the municipality.

Here is the number of pupils who have chosen that option for the last three years:

School year	Pupils following the option	Total amount of pupils	Percentage
2008-2009	2242	11320	20%
2009-2010	1935	10984	17,5%
2010-2011	1835	10721	17%

There is no lesson of Hungarian in the Serbian or Croatian secondary school classes.

Until the beginning of the 90s, Hungarian lessons were compulsory in the north of Vojvodina (Subotica, Sombor, North-Banat...). The lessons were during the primary and secondary schools and called « Jezik Društvene Sredine » (language of the local community).

## Medias

Information in mother tongue is a fundamental minority right, recognized by the constitution of the Republic of Serbia and the status of the province of Vojvodina. This right is supported by the national councils of minorities (see 'Nationalities').

In this part we will present you the main medias in minority languages (Hungarian, Croatian and Bunjevac) reaching the inhabitants of Subotica, but also the main local medias in Serbian language. That way you will have an overview of the multiculturalism in the local media scene.

## Multilingual medias

Let's start with multilingual medias.



Радио-телевизија Војводине

Ближи Вама

**Radio Televizija Vojvodine** includes two TV channels and three radio stations.

The first TV channel broadcasts only in Serbian, and the second one broadcasts in the five other official languages of the province, as well as in Bunjevac, Romani, Ukrainian and Macedonian. In particular, a 15-min TV journal is broadcasted everyday between 5:45pm and 7:15pm, successively in Croatian, Slovakian, Ruthenian, Rumanian, Romani, and Hungarian.

The Vojvodinian public radio, Radio Novi Sad also broadcasts in several languages. The first station is dedicated to Serbian, the second to Hungarian, and the third one to the other minority languages, official or not.


**Radio Subotica** is a public radio belonging to the municipality of Subotica. It has two frequencies, one only in Hungarian and one mainly in Serbian. The frequencies in Serbian also broadcast in Croatian everyday between 6:00pm to 9:00pm and in Bunjevac every Sunday during 30 minutes.



**Pet Plus (5+)** is a monthly magazine intended to high school pupils in Subotica and partly made by high school pupils. It is mixing articles in Serbian and Hungarian and it has a circulation of around 1000.

## Medias in Hungarian

As the biggest community in Vojvodina, the Hungarian community has a lot of monolingual media.


 **Magyar Szó** is the newspaper of record for the Hungarian community of Vojvodina. It exists since 1944 and has a circulation of around thirteen thousand every day. It is also the only daily newspaper of the country not to be seated in Belgrad or in Novi Sad. Indeed its seats is in Subotica since 2006. Articles are available on its website in Hungarian, and some of them are translated in Serbian.

**Hét Nap** (7 days) is weekly magazine with a more traditional editorial line.

There are also few thematic weekly magazine like **Képes ifjúság** (for young people), **Jó Pajtás** (for elementary school pupils) and **Méreskalács** (for children).

There is also a private radio and television, only in Hungarian, **PannonRTV**.

## Medias in Croatian


 **Hrvatska Riječ** is a weekly magazine, supported by the province of Vojvodina and the Croatian National Council. It was created in 1945, but its circulation was interrupted in 1956 until 2003. It is intended to the Croatian community of Vojvodina.

## Medias in Bunjevac

**Bunjevačke Novine**, a monthly magazine, is supported by the province of Vojvodina and the Bunjevac National Council. Its first issue was in april 2008. It is intended to the Bunjevac community of Vojvodina, mainly located in Bačka

## Medias in Serbian

Serbian is the only official language of the Republic of Serbia, thus all the national media are in this language. Serbian is also majority in Vojvodina, thus, media based in Novi Sad are by a majority in Serbian. We will then focus on the main medias located in Subotica.

 **Subotičke Novine** is the weekly local newspaper in Serbian. It exists since 1893. After been called Hrvatske Novine, it became Subotičke Novine in 1956. It covers the municipality of Subotica.

**RTV Yu Eco** was at the beginning a radio, created in 1993, with Environment as a main topic. The Yu Eco Television started its broadcasts the 12.31.2001. It is broadcasting everyday « InfoBlok », its 20-minute TV Journal. Yu Eco TV covers North Bačka, part of Banat and of South Hungary, that is around 500.000 people.



**Red 9** is a television broadcasting only in Serbian in North Bačka. It was created the 1st March 2010. It is broadcasting every morning between 7:00am and 8:00am an informative program called « Dobro Jutro Subotico » and everyday 15 minutes of local information.

# Portraying

To get a concrete idea of how multi-culturalism is lived in Subotica, we interviewed several persons living there. We have tried to make the selection as diverse as possible, including people from different national communities, speaking various languages, of various age...

Keeping in mind the fact that it does not aim at being representative of Subotica's inhabitants' opinion - although it gives keys of comprehension and an opportunity to hear voices that are not usually in the spotlight.

We usually asked the following questions:

1. What is your current occupation?
2. Which language do you speak and/or understand? How do you use them? How did you learn them? Which one would you like to pass on your children?
3. What is your family background/what are the origins of your family?
4. Do you feel like belonging to a specific national community? Do you meet often people from other national communities in Subotica?
5. According to you, how did the past historical events influence relationships between national communities in Subotica?
6. Do you think there are a lot of interactions between national communities? Is it improving or getting worse? Do you have any idea on how to improve it?

All the interviews are available on streaming in our website. We will just write here the main outcomes.

## Cedomir Padjen

He is a physical education teacher with Croatian origins.

Extracts

"If people would have been asked, there would not be any war between Serbia and Croatia"

The diversity of languages in Subotica makes it quite special. It was not the case when he was living in Croatia.

"If you take out the part of the mask that you do not see, then everything looks okay here." Not everybody has been learning lessons from the war time.

A solution can be to gather young and older people around sport events to remove differences between national communities, for example with the "Tolerance Cup" happening in Vojvodina.

## Erdjan Bunjaku

He is a student and he is Roma.

Extracts:

Roma people have better opportunities than before in terms of education.

There are more and more interactions between people coming from different national communities in

Subotica. Still, difficulties remain for young people to get a job or to communicate with others.

## **Kertis Kajtes**

He is a mediator for the Education Centre of Roma and student. He's Roma with Macedonian origins.

Extracts:

To learn Serbian language was needed to work and communicate. To know Hungarian language is also very helpful in Subotica.

Roma young people were and are still discriminated in their daily life.

Interactions between national communities are getting better. Some initiatives are very relevant such as the magazine Mozaic, gathering several young people from many national communities around the same project, writing about subjects that interest all young people.

## **Ksenija Vojnic Tunic**

She is coordinator of Regional Youth Office in Subotica, for the Ministry of Youth and Sport of Serbia. She is Bunjevac with Croatian and Hungarian origins.

Extracts:

The national feeling increased since the war time in the 1990's. Knowing the nationality of someone matters but reminds a very small part of what she or he is as a human being. "I've never had negative experience connected to what I am".

Subotica's identity is composed of many parts and all of them compose people rooted in here, "not on paper but through cultural behaviors, horizons..."

An idea is to have more educational programmes bringing all the different national communities together with non formal methods. It is important to start from early childhood and reach people who are not already open or closed to other communities. "To learn each other language" is also fundamental.

## **Ljubica Aleksic Lendjel**

She is a tailor. She has Macedonian and Serbian origins.

Extracts:

"For me everyone is the same"

The main difficulty for citizens of Subotica is not about nationalities but rather on economic and work related issues. In the former Yugoslavia, questions like of "who is who" or "how much does one earn" were not even raised.

Still, traditional celebrations of different cultures are very wide respected here.

A meaningful political plan is needed to improve the situation that would not be resolved only with strikes.



## Mladen Lazic

He is Assistant in the Regional Youth Office. He's Serbian coming from Bosnia.

Extracts:

Hungarian, Croatian, Serbian and Roma people are very separated in Subotica. Some young people do not know the others' language and places to go out are divided. To see only people through national community is a way of dehumanizing.

In Subotica, there are many projects about 'multi-culturalism' or 'intercultural understanding'. Still, the gap between national communities is increasing, "Nobody go deep into what does it mean".

"Tension between people is quite obvious and easy to manipulate". Yet, the situation is better here than in other places in Serbia.

An idea is to implement a more creative way of teaching languages.

## Petar Mitric

He is programming the European Film Festival Palic, an international film festival in Macedonia and the cinema in Open University, Subotica. He has Montenegrin and Serbian origins.

Extracts:

"I'm just a homo sapiens", "I'm a mixture", "Nationalities are no longer so important especially among young people".

Young people have been raised separately from the Yugoslavian period. This leads to some situations where people from the same city have to communicate in English because they do not know Hungarian or Serbian.

An idea is to highlight the city culture of Subotica; "Cultural institutions are all separated by nationalities. And what about Subotica's culture?"

## Erika Roncsak Petrovic

She is a teacher in Dezso Kosztolanyi High school and Pedagog at Medical school in Subotica. She's Hungarian, with Slovak origins. She's originate from Bajsa.

Extracts:

People from different national communities often meet in Subotica, "It is natural for us".

"To work together is important" for example through the students parliament in high schools running common projects.

## Sofija Levay

She is a Folk artist, specialising in felting. She has Hungarian and Serbian origins

Extracts:

It is very important for children to master another language than their mother tongue during their childhood. Speaking two local languages Serbian and Hungarian, helps breaking down the barriers.

'I'm as proud to be Hungarian as I'm proud to be Serbian.'

The topic of the 90's is a hard one and not a lot of people like to mention it.

Traditions, directed towards an external audience, help to get to know each other's culture and prevent from having prejudices.

## **Kolja Nadj**

He is student. He has Rusynian and Serbian origins. Part of his family is coming from Ruski Krstur, a village in Vojvodina having a Rusyn ethnic majority.

Extracts:

Rusynian do not have a country, they are spread in different countries in Balkans. They came from Ukraine originally. Some came to Hungary and then saw their names or traditions influenced by Hungarian. There are some special places or events where they can gather in Subotica or in Ruski Krstur.

People from different national communities of Subotica are mixed and speak mainly the same language. The several national communities are interacting a lot in a peaceful way.

Many people in Serbia are gathering for Slava, a traditional orthodox celebration (every family has its own Patron Saint).

## **Abraham Gergo**

He finished a carrier as electro-mechanics. He has Bunjevac, Hungarian and Serbian origins.

Extracts:

Belonging to a specific national community was not important 15 or 20 years ago.

Political parties created to represent a specific nationality play a great role in dividing people today. "If you belong to a specific party here then you are considered as valuable" and it also helps when looking for a job.

The diversity of Subotica is a good example for Europe.

Newcomers in Subotica do not try to fit with the local culture but to force theirs. It impacts on the city which looks "less and less like Central Europe and more and more like Balkan". The job market is also more competitive as local people have more difficulties to find a job.

## **Saša Gruncic**

He is teacher at Musical school. He has Croatian, Rusynian and Serbian origins.

Extracts:

There is no feeling of belonging to neither a national minority nor majority, it is more about living here.

Subotica is not as concerned by the question of nationalities than other parts of Balkans because there was no war in this part. While the difficulties between them are not dramatic, there are still many stereotypes from one national community to the other.

"Subotica is very unique" because national communities are living together for centuries. Yet, people "must know each other", especially languages should be taught from early age.

## Special interview with Ms Erika Kudlik

She is city councillor for international and regional cooperation.

Extracts:

The city of Subotica has a budget for culture of 11%, much higher than other cities in Europe. It is part of the network of European Intercultural Cities for 2009 and has been selected for the next two years till 2012.

One of the difficulties faced by the city is that many projects of national communities are implemented in parallel without any joint working. Thus, she defines her mission as "to build the bridges between these projects".

When talking about the intercultural aspect of the city, two festivals are especially meaningful : Interetno and Duzijanica (harvest).

The war in the 90's changed the structure of national communities in Subotica. For the newcomers, there is both a need to teach them how to live in an intercultural city as well as to remember how it was before.

She is making a special effort on communicating with the minority still willing to develop separately from the rest of the community. 'Intercultural communication is very very important".

## Special interview with Ms Nela Tonkovic

She is curator of the Art Gallery Likovni Susret of Subotica. She has Serbian and Croatian origins.

Extracts:

"I made this conscious decision of not belonging to any nationality"

There are some places where only members of the same national community will gather, for example when a cultural center is organising an event. There should be a place where people from any origin can gather and feel welcome.

It is important to look at people as human beings and not through their nationality. There are interactions between national communities, yet the relationships must be much more based on similarities between people than on what divides them.

Instead of focusing only on what was good before, people should try to create something together today.

# Ideas' Square

## Ideas coming out of the interviews

When asking about ideas on how to improve interactions in Subotica during our interviews, people brought out key aspects where efforts should be focusing. We have tried to sort all these contributions into several topics that are the following:

### **Working together.**

Several people interviewed stressed the fact that common projects between different national communities are crucial. Youth work is often presented as fundamental to increase mutual understanding - for example through students' parliament in high school, workshops with non formal methods or other ways of gathering and fostering collective projects. Moreover, working from the early childhood is consequential to bring people together.

### **Improving teaching methods of languages.**

Some mentioned situations where inhabitants of Subotica could not understand each other because of languages issues and had to use English as a common language.

### **Providing young people with more opportunities to interact.**

When it comes to estimate whether interactions are increasing in Subotica or not, opinions were divided up among the participants. Nevertheless, a significant part agreed on the fact that young people have less places to interact now than in the past, before the 90's.

### **Supporting local initiatives bringing people together.**

For example, creating a place where everyone will feel welcome and can gather, without being related to his or her origins

### **Changing points of view**

Many people highlighted the importance of considering people firstly as a human being and not through the angle of the national community.

## Our Analysis

Subotica is a multicultural city made up of more than 20 national communities: Hungarian, Serbian, Croatian, Bunjevac and many others. It has three official languages: Hungarian, Serbian and Croatian. As far as languages are concerned, we notice that on the one hand, Serbian and Croatian are very similar and almost totally mutually understandable. On the other hand, Hungarian's syntax, grammar and vocabulary are very different from Serbian and Croatian. It leads to the fact that an efficient learning of languages is a condition for mutual comprehension.

These local communities have lived together for more than two centuries, when Vojvodina was colonized by settlers coming from the whole Habsburg Empire. Under Tito's regime, Vojvodina benefited from an extended autonomy and minority rights were very well respected. Even today, official languages, media and education in Vojvodina and especially in Subotica have proven to play a great role in terms of managing and sustaining the

local diversity.

The conflicts of the 90's brought changes to the demography of Subotica . Indeed, a lot of Serbian refugees from Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo arrived. These newcomers were not used to live in such a multicultural environment. Their adaptation is still considered as a challenge today.

It was quite often reported to us that the over-nationalistic environment of the 90's had brought a disaffection between the national communities. The current deep economic crisis could also lead to this kind of behavior. Along with good communication, a dynamic economy represents a great challenge for Subotica's inhabitants to live in harmony and for the city to improve its intercultural aspect.

## Our own ideas

### **Workshop on 'Share your language'**

*Two-day workshop at the Open University, 18-19 June, 10-17h.*

Within LDA Subotica's framework, we organised this workshop to strengthen the capacity of the participants to learn or improve themselves at local languages through sharing. Participants learnt about different methods and how to combine them: group-learning, tandem-learning, self-learning. All the fields of learning were tackled: written and oral understanding, written and oral expression. The working language was basic English, as a neutral language.

Participants had the opportunity to meet and work with other participants having a different mother language. In that way they were able to create pairs and groups to start their learning process. The workshop was open to anyone willing to learn another of the local languages (Hungarian, Serbian/Croatian etc...) no matter if he was a beginner or an advanced learner, and willing to share his own mother language.

### **Bilingualism in media**

Some newspapers are writing articles in both languages such as the one dedicated to young people of Subotica Novine 5+. There is also the daily Hungarian newspaper Magyar Szó which is providing in its supplement magazine Képes Ifjúság a page in Serbian every Wednesday along with a vocabulary.

These kind of initiatives are helping people in Subotica to become familiar with another local language. It fosters understanding and thus raises awareness on the variety of views that can exist on the same topic.

That is why the only weekly newspaper in Serbian about Subotica Suboticke Novine could also include a page in Hungarian with a help on vocabulary.

### **Community centre in Subotica**

Creating a place bringing together inhabitants from different backgrounds and providing various services to the whole community. These services can be in areas such as local economic development (linked with businesses), art and culture promotion, children, sport, library...

In the long term, several community centres could be set up in different areas of the municipality to be able to reach a wide range of people.

# Partners

It is important for us to make this project **collectively**. Thus, we are happy to have benefited from the help of many person along the way.

Especially, we would like to say thank you to the people working at Local Democracy Agency (LDA) Subotica who are providing us with material, network and experiences. Not less important is the team of LDA local volunteers which has been helping a lot for translation and good advice. Special thanks go to all the persons interviewed, as well as Svetislav Milanković for his help with researches, Lea Lendjel for her contacts, the team of Serbian and Hungarian translators and Dejana Bibić for her constant support.

Please, take few minutes to discover who the partners are and get to know the European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme - a great opportunity to achieve your projects in a multicultural environment!

- City of Subotica
- Local Democracy Agency Subotica
- LDA team of local volunteers
- European Voluntary Service (EVS) Programme

## Local Democracy Agency

The Local Democracy Agency (LDA) Subotica is a local non-governmental organisation working to foster Human Rights and local democracy at a regional level in the Autonomous Province of Voivodina in northern Serbia. It was founded in 1993, as a result of an agreement between the Council of Europe and the local authorities of Subotica. It is part of the Association of the Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) gathering 11 other LDAs from the Balkans and the Southern Caucasus. LDA Subotica is also involved in a long term partnership with Wolverhampton City Council, UK.

LDA Subotica is registered as local NGO and operates, since 1999 as a member of the international ALDA-Network. The profile of the LDA Subotica is determined by the aims of the ALDA-Network. The main goal of each LDA is to assist the region in a stable transition towards democracy and European integration, with an emphasis on promoting Human rights and tolerant and trust-based relationships within different local communities.

The organisation is mainly involved in the following areas: international cooperation, interculturalism, local development, Celebration of the Day of Europe, Youth. Two areas are particularly influencing our work:

- Dealing with intercultural issues, LDA Subotica is one of the promoters of the EU funded project Regional Partnerships for Intercultural Exchange. It was promoting the Local Partnerships for Tolerance and is taking part in the network of Intercultural Cities of the Council of Europe.
- The LDA Subotica is actively involved in youth work through hosting and sending European Voluntary Services (EVS) volunteers, animating a group of young local volunteers and organising events, training and exchanges related to youth funded by the Youth In Action programme of the European Commission.

# The city of Subotica

Subotica is a city and municipality in northern Serbia, in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. It is located about 10 km from the border with Hungary. Today it is Serbia's fifth largest city, with the municipality of Subotica having 148,401 inhabitants. It is known to be a "city of minorities" as it is a multi-confessional, multi-linguistic and multiethnic town populated by Serbs, Hungarians, Croats, Jews, Roma, Bunjevci, Slovaks and many other groups.

The City Council of Subotica is actively involved in promoting the diversity of the city, partnering with LDA Subotica in many projects such as the Regional Partnership for Intercultural Exchange. Indeed, the city is carrying out many regional and international cooperation projects.

We had the opportunity to interview Ms Erika Kudlik, the City Councilor for international/regional cooperation - have a look here

## Team of local volunteers

Many things would not be possible without the enthusiasm and activism of the group of local volunteers at LDA. They have been supporting our project by bringing their ideas, contacts and knowledge of local life, as well as helping us a lot with translating interviews.

We, as EVS volunteers, are joining them for a weekly meeting to develop projects related to youth issues, create material and promote the 5-month project called EU Info Point Subotica (more information at [infopointsubotica.eu](http://infopointsubotica.eu)), funded by the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, Secretariat of Youth and Sport, aiming at providing information for young people on the European Union and its youth programmes, especially the European Voluntary Service.

## European Voluntary Service Program

The European Voluntary Service (EVS) is managed by the European Commission and part of its Youth In Action programme. It allows young people from 18 to 30 to voluntary abroad (mainly in Europe) in a local organisation for a period of 3 to 12 months. It is a great opportunity to travel, learn about a new cultures and get a deep insight of the economic and social situation of the region of destination.

To apply for a EVS, there are usually several steps to follow:

- thinking about the motivations for doing an EVS; starting to develop ideas and priorities
- having a look at the information available in the European Commission website; description, conditions and database of organisations
- getting in touch with a sending organisation easily accessible; working together to define a projet of EVS
- searching for a hosting organisation; either by areas of work, geographic location or both
- getting in touch with the selected hosting organisations; writting application (CV + cover letter)

# Bibliography

## Languages

GLIŠIN Vladimir. Vojvodanski jezik

MIĆEVIĆ I. Vojvodina prva regija po broju jezika

RÁCZ Krisztina. Jezička prava nacionalnih manjina u Vojvodini

Pokrajinski sekretarijat za propise, upravu i nacionalne manjine, Novi Sad. Službena upotreba jezika i pisama nacionalnih manjina na teritoriji AP Vojvodine

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MIROLJUB Ante Evetovic, Petar PEKIC, Ante SOKCIC, "The Croatian Bunjevci", Croatian Almanac, 1986

## Nationalities

Balkans Human Rights. "Zakon o nacionalnim savetima nacionalnih manjina".

Smedia. "Izbori za savet nacionalnih manjina 6. Juna".

IONSVNM. « Adresar nacionalnih saveta nacionalnih manjina u Srbiji ».

RTS. « Nacionalne manjine sačuvale identitet ».

Blic. « Preliminarni rezultati izbora za Nacionalne savete manjina ».

## Citizenship

B92. "Pasoši za 80 000 Mađara iz Srbije"

B92. « Mađari ne žele da napuste Srbiju »

Blic. « Za mađarski pasoš dovoljno znanje jezika »

Magyar Szó. « Szabadkán átadták a 10 000. Igénylést »

## Education

Hrvatska Rijec. "Potpora obrazovanju na hrvatskom jeziku"

YuEco. "Školovanje na hrvatskom jeziku"

Blic. "Srbi i Mađari pričaju na engleskom jeziku"