

# Identity Strategies of the UK-Based New Hungarian Diaspora: Three Patterns of Diasporization

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## Introduction

The UK has been one of the top three destination countries for the post-1990 emigration wave from Hungary. The exact number of Hungarian expats residing in the UK is hard to quantify due to the methodological variations of different statistical databases and due to the diffuse forms of contemporary migration. The UK authorities estimate the number of Hungarian citizens living in the country to be 108,000, and the number of Hungarians born in Hungary to be 96,000 (*Population of the UK by Country of Birth and Nationality: Individual Country Data, 2020*),<sup>1</sup> while Hungarian statistical estimates suggest a lower, and the UN's data suggest a higher sum of the UK-based Hungarians.

The emerging Hungarian expat community in the UK, regardless of its exact number, has become visible. In the past decade, the proliferation of Hungarian diaspora institutions (cultural associations, Hungarian schools, dance groups, sport associations, different networks, etc.) could be witnessed. Quantitative data also proves that there is a significant amount of Hungarian emigrants that show signs of diasporization in the UK.

During 2018 and 2019, a small research team realized several research trips<sup>2</sup> in the UK to investigate the early formations of the new Hungarian diaspora. The primary aim of the research project was to investigate the early formations of diaspora institutions – Sunday schools,

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<sup>1</sup> The difference in the two numbers reflects Hungarian children born in the UK who acquired Hungarian citizenship, and Hungarian citizens who moved to the UK from a country different from Hungary (typically Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, and Ukraine).

<sup>2</sup> The research project on the new Hungarian diaspora was supported by the Centre for Social Sciences' "Mobility Research Centre" research framework. Members of the research team are: Attila Papp Z., Eszter Kovács, András Kovács.

cultural associations, sport clubs, etc. – among Hungarians in the UK via qualitative research methods.<sup>3</sup> In addition to the original research goal, the gathered data also proved to be a rich material to investigate the stories of emigrants about how they turn to their fellow expatriates and embrace their national and cultural heritage in the host country. This paper is dedicated to the unfolding of the respondents' stories about the paths that lead to their involvement in the life of the local Hungarian community in the UK.

I analysed 19 interviews conducted with individuals who have been active in Hungarian diaspora institutions. Most respondents are involved in Hungarian weekend schools, while others are members of cultural or art organizations or managers of online platforms for local Hungarians.

My aim was to investigate, describe, and analyze the paths that led to the involvement of these emigrants to be part of the emerging diaspora community. The analysis pointed out three distinctive ways of diasporization patterns: forced diasporization, voluntary diasporization, and latecomer diasporization. The diasporization patterns were influenced to the most extent by the level of integration of the individual into the host society.

### **Theoretical considerations**

The term diaspora was first used exclusively to describe the exile of the Jewish people, but since the 1960s it has been widely applied to denote religious or national groups living outside their homeland (Faist, 2010). While the term has been used to various extraterritorial (migrant, religious, ethnic, etc.) groups, the notions associated with the Jewish archetype – exile, longing for the homeland, the idea to return to the homeland, maintaining culture and traditions – remained central in describing diaspora groups (Dufoix, 2011).

The proliferation of the use of diaspora resulted in the creation of numerous typologies. Some focus on the reason of migration (Cohen, 1997), while others focus on the diaspora's function in the host state (Esman, 2009). There are also categorizations that reflect on the main structuring element of the diaspora (Bruneau, 2010) or on the extension of time that the group has lived as a diaspora (Sheffer, 2013). While these typologies offer helpful analytical tools to

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<sup>3</sup> A paper was published about the results on the project in Hungarian. See: Papp Z. Attila, Kovács Eszter, Kovács András: Az új magyar diaszpóra intézményesülése – Hétvégi magyar iskolák az Egyesült Királyságban (Institutionalization of the new Hungarian diaspora: Supplementary Hungarian schools in the United Kingdom). *Regio*, 2019/3.

compare variations of diaspora groups, they are incapable to grasp diversity within a given diaspora group.

A contrasting typology in this respect is offered by Dahinden, who analyzed migrant belonging in the matrix of host country integration (locality) and linkages to the home state (mobility; Dahinden, 2010). The four ideal types that Dahinden defines differ as to whether they have strong or weak linkages in the host and the home countries, respectively. In other words, Dahinden's model can also be interpreted as a scale on the level of integration and the level of diasporization of the migrant individual. By offering a micro-level approach to diaspora identity, this model provides a very useful tool because it enables us to grasp heterogeneity within a given diaspora and helps us go beyond earlier static diaspora descriptions. Dahinden's categorization was highly inspirational in my research to allocate the interview respondents into different diasporization patterns. As my research focused on diasporization patterns, strong links with the home country (and with the local diaspora community) was a preexisting condition for my respondents, therefore I did not scrutinize these links. However, Dahinden's model helped me identify the respondents' strong and weak integration links to the host country, which proved to be crucial in defining the diasporization pattern of the respondents.

Academic and public interest in diasporas has been growing in the last three decades to the extent that, as Brubaker (2005) argues, it resulted in the confused use of the term "diaspora." As the multiple descriptions were adapted to the "various intellectual, cultural and political agendas," the term has not acquired a consensual definition in the scholarly literature. However, there are three core elements that are unalienable from the notion of diaspora: (1) dispersal, that is, physical distance from the homeland through forced or voluntary migration; (2) continuous ties to the homeland, which can be the idea of return migration or dense cross-border relations; and (3) maintaining boundaries vis-à-vis other groups, that is, the original identity is preserved to some extent (Brubaker, 2005; Faist, 2010).

With the advent of intensified international migration, researchers started to prefer the use of transnationalism and transnational formations to describe the consequences of international migration. While we can make strong claims about both terms, according to Faist (2010), the essential delineation of diaspora and transnational formation has not been realized. One important difference between the two terms is that diaspora has a connotation of boundedness, since its usage concerns mostly groups and communities, while transnationalism emphasizes the fluidity inherent to migration experiences, and its usage focuses on cross-border practices of migrants (Lacroix, 2007). Consequently, diaspora scholarship is primarily concerned with

groups retaining distinctiveness (in terms of nationality, culture, or religion), while transnationalism embraces all sorts of social formations, including networks of professionals or even social movements.

While acknowledging the legitimacy and necessity of the mainstream academic trend to approach contemporary international migration in the framework of transnationalism, the use (or reintroduction) of the term diaspora in relation to Hungarian migrants in the UK proves to be valid and grounded. My research focuses on how emigrant individuals living in the UK become invested or interested in taking an active part in the life of Hungarian organisations and initiatives. Consequently, groupism and community are essential concepts in my respondents' migration experiences. Furthermore, the three core concept of diasporas – dispersal, ties with the homeland, boundary maintenance – are all applicable to the interview respondents. For this reason, the diaspora approach better serves the purpose of my paper than transnationalism.

The preference for transnationalism instead of diaspora studies is especially true for research concerning intra-EU migration experiences. As Ryan (2018) points out, in European migration research, the majority of academic focus has been dedicated to the belonging, integration, and settlement issues of refugees, guest workers, and third-country nationals, while the transnational experiences of intra-EU migrants have been approached through terms such as “circularity, temporariness and liquid migration”. This trend, however, resulted in relatively little attention on how Central and Eastern European migrants negotiate belonging, attachment, and integration in Western European host countries. This paper aspires to contribute to fill this research gap in the context of the UK-based Hungarian migrants. The conclusions of my research point in the direction that intra-EU migration does not necessarily involve circularity and more liquid forms of movement; on the contrary, it often results in long-term stay and thus can also be interpreted in the “older” diaspora framework.

Despite the abundance of academic scholarship on diaspora, why and how migrants turn into diaspora is a lesser-discussed topic. Orozco (2007) approaches the issue from a macro perspective and argues that diasporas “do not emerge solely as a consequence of dispersion, common national ancestry, or simply any kind of connection. There is a process by which groups are motivated or influenced to become diasporas (Orozco, 2007:22). He defined four factors that influence migrant communities to become diaspora: (1) a community-level need or desire for ties with the homeland, (2) the homeland's perceptions of emigrants, (3) the outreach policies by the homeland government, and (4) the relationship between home and host countries.

My research found that these macro-level factors do not necessarily provide an answer as to why certain emigrants become invested in the diaspora community. In fact, my micro-level approach pointed out that failed or incomplete integration into the host society works as a definite push factor to diasporization. Furthermore, individual considerations, such as the will to transfer one's heritage to the next generation and a simple longing for comfort and nostalgia, are also important determinants of diasporization. In the latter matter, my research joins Butcher's argumentation about how seeking for familiarity, comfort, and "shared meanings" in migrants' social relationship work as a way of coping with difference experienced in the new cultural context (Butcher, 2009).

My paper attempts to contribute to the academic discussion on how and why emigrants follow a path to diasporization and offers a micro-level approach in the matter. In my research I investigate the conditions and circumstances that prove to be decisive in making an emigrant person turn to and embrace their national heritage through becoming actively involved in the life of diaspora institutions.

### **Emigration statistics and survey results**

Contemporary emigration from Hungary has become part of academic inquiry and the center of social and political debates only in the last decade. This is due to the fact that – compared to regional tendencies – outward migration was not been substantive until the end of the 2000s, (i.e., the post-communist migration tendencies have started with a significant delay). The situation abruptly changed at the beginning of the 2010s, and since then, ever-growing – yet still fragmented – data is available about Hungarian emigratory trends, including its volume, dynamics, and demographics.

Due to the differences in definitions and sources, the available data indicates significant variance. According to the 2016 Hungarian Microcensus, there have been 265,000 "people with Hungarian spouses or ex-spouses who reside temporarily or permanently abroad with past or current permanent residency in Hungary" (*Mikrocenzus 2016 - Nemzetközi Vándorlás*, 2018). Due to the technical specifics of the dataset (i.e., the respondents of the questionnaire were family/household members of the emigrants), the set excludes many who emigrated long ago and those who left with their whole family. Another source of statistics with the same technical limitations was the national census in 2011, which found 213,000 emigrants. The approximately 20% increase in the number of emigrants may be considered significant. The UN Population Division prepares annual estimates about emigrants based on the host countries' relevant

statistical data. According to these estimates, approximately 632,000 persons born in Hungary were living abroad in 2019. This number was 514,000 in 2010 and 555,000 in 2015, which also indicates growth, although to a limited extent compared to what the population census and Microcensus suggest.

There are multiple explanations for the increase in outward migration; the appeal of labor market opportunities following the EU accession, the temporarily disadvantageous labor market situation after the 2008 economic crisis, and the parallelly weakening social and welfare system in Hungary have all been significant factors. The wage gap between Western European and Hungarian labor markets, the growing opportunities for social mobility, and growing networkization have motivated more and more Hungarians to consider outward migration as an attractive – even if only temporary – alternative (Hárs, 2017).

Eurostat data from the beginning of the 2010s indicate a robust increase in the number of emigrants, peaking in 2015, followed by a slight drop. In parallel with these processes, return migration has gradually been increasing, but has still remained below the number of emigrants. Various databases confirm that most Hungarian expatriates reside in four countries: Germany, the United Kingdom, Austria, and the United States. In terms of the number of Hungarian emigrants, the relative ranking of these four countries has slightly changed throughout the last decades, though they still have a solid dominance. Based on recently compiled databases that have focused on the main features of emigrants (SEEMIG 2014, Micro census), the supremacy of Germany, the UK, and Austria as target countries has become quite clear. The main social and demographic features of Hungarians living abroad may be illustrated based on the 2016 Micro census data (as the most thorough, most recent available data). According to the datasets, the ratio of male, young, and highly qualified Hungarians among emigrants is higher than among those who stayed at home (*Mikrocensus 2016 - Nemzetközi Vándorlás*, 2018:12). Most Hungarian expatriates (86%) reside abroad for employment reasons in three main industries: commercial-services, industrial-construction, and low-qualified jobs. Most expatriates have prior work experience, though most frequently in other types of jobs than after their emigration.

In addition to national and international statistical data, our research team attempted to gather more quantitative data on Hungarians living abroad. An online survey was conducted in the summer of 2019 among Hungarian citizens living abroad concerning the maintenance of personal relations with home country residents and their participation at various Hungarian cultural-social events in the host country. The main questions of the research focused on the motivation and circumstances of their emigration, their changing labor market positions, their

relations with the home country, their personal relationships, cultural ties and on general socio-demographic indicators.

Due to the lack of sufficient and precise available data, online surveys are not representative of the whole observed population, which is especially important to note in terms of migration studies. Data derived from the survey indicates a larger ratio of women than the already-mentioned Microcensus data (49% compared to 45%), a higher average age, and higher ratio of highly qualified emigrants. Nonetheless, the main objective of the survey was the exploration and description of various patterns among statistically relevant groups.

Participation in diaspora activities was a crucial focus point of the survey: it included a multiple response questions about the visitation habit of expatriates of different diaspora events or institutions (11 items).

Diasporic integration and engagement may be analyzed in various ways based on the questions regarding the frequency of participation in diaspora events. Our research explored the nature and correlation patterns of the activities. By applying multivariate dimension reduction method on the 11 items, we could outline three main attitude groups: a general cultural attitude, an explicitly value-based institutionalized diasporic attitude, and a group of attitudes with more explicit political motivation.<sup>4</sup> These attitude groupings illustrate the potential motivational differences in the patterns of participation in diasporic events. However, the statistical relevance of the attitude results is ambiguous in terms of theoretical modeling. For this reason, three plausible groups were defined by cluster analysis.

Based on the frequency of participation at Hungarian events, emigrants may be categorized into three groups. Out of these three groups, the committed diaspora or groups currently undergoing diasporization processes are relevant for the topic of the paper. Members of the committed diaspora or diasporic group are interested in cultural events in addition to their visits to different forms of diasporic institutionalized activities, such as scouting, Hungarian supplementary schools, or folk dancing. Diasporic elements were identified concerning border maintenance as well: at an informal level, members of this group seek more connections with their fellow expatriates and would ask for help to a larger extent from Hungarian offices when in need than members of the other two identified groups.

Based on the results of this survey, it is clear that among the new emigrants, diasporization processes have started to some extent. Thus, it was worthwhile to complement the quantitative data on the Hungarian diaspora with qualitative data as well.

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<sup>4</sup> In statistical terms, principal component analysis.

## **Methods**

During 2018 and 2019, consecutive field works were carried out among the newly emerging Hungarian diaspora group in the UK. Two research trips were carried out in the greater London area, and one research trip was carried out to attend a weekend-long convention of UK-based Hungarian diaspora schools in Manchester. By participating in the convention, we could get in touch with major Hungarian initiatives functioning in the UK.

The primary aim of the consecutive research trips was to investigate the early formations of diaspora institutions – Sunday schools, cultural associations, sport clubs, etc. – among Hungarians in the UK. In addition to 25 interviews with individuals involved to a varying extent in diaspora organizations, we also conducted participant observation at diaspora events. Naturally, most of our respondents were actively involved in the local Hungarian community's life, but during our research trips we also encountered individuals who belong to the “unengageable” group, as defined by the survey data. In this paper, however, the focus of this analysis is on the diasporization patterns of those who are considered to be part of the diasporic Hungarian group in the UK. Therefore, I refrain from involving the data about individuals who are indifferent to diaspora organizations and events. For this reason, this paper is built on the analysis of 19 interviews that were relevant for the diasporization topic.

Concerning the research methodology, the first respondents were identified through diaspora organizations; founders, managers, and prominent leaders of different diaspora organizations were contacted. These first respondents then referred us to further possible respondents, and thus we were able to reach participants with the snowball method. Furthermore, at certain diaspora events, random contacting of respondents was also possible.

The semi-structured interviews focused on the respondents' emigration stories, their changing economic positions after the migration, their transnational practices, their levels of integration in the host country, their perceptions of the emerging Hungarian community in their localities, and their future plans (e.g., settling down in the UK or return migration).

As indicated earlier, the research project had the overarching goal to investigate the early formations of the emerging Hungarian diaspora in the UK. In this paper, however, my analysis is restricted to the theme of diasporization paths of diaspora members. The findings of the research are neither representative nor exhaustive for the Hungarian diaspora population in the UK, but show potential patterns of how individuals become involved in the diaspora life. The



names of the respondents and of the places in the interviews have been altered for the sake of anonymity.

## **Findings**

Based on the interviews carried out with individuals involved in the life of Hungarian diaspora organizations, I was able to identify three main groups concerning the circumstances and conditions of diasporization process. These circumstances concern mostly the integration pattern of the respondents into the host society. In relation to the level of integration, the level of education, the social situation, the level of English knowledge at the time of emigration, and the motivations of the emigration of the individuals proved to be important variables. I labelled the three identified groups as (1) forced diasporization, typical for respondents with failed integration; (2) voluntary diasporization, mostly typical for respondents with partial (or “halfway”) integration, and (3) latecomer diasporization, typical for individuals who successfully integrated into the host country, but for whom later on a new factor appeared in their lives that started to attract them to the diaspora community. Out of the nineteen respondents, five fit into the forced diasporization, seven fit into the voluntary diasporization, and seven fit into the latecomer diasporization pattern.

### ***Forced diasporization: Less of a choice, more of a necessity due to lack of integration***

Respondents whose diasporization can be described as forced typically work in low-skilled jobs. The stories behind their emigration reveal the classic pattern of economic migration and the typical post-emigration de-skilling (Nowicka, 2012) experiences. The examples introduced through the stories of these women present the forced diasporization of individuals who lack sufficient professional and language skills for successful host country integration: their vulnerable position in the new country immediately gravitates them towards the local Hungarian community. Thus, their involvement in diaspora organizations is less of a choice and more of a necessity: in their first years they heavily rely on the help of fellow Hungarians, while later on, even after their situation is more consolidated in the new country, they turn to the diaspora community for comfort, friendships, and mental well-being.

Sandra moved to England nine years ago. She has a Hungarian life partner whom she met in England at a Hungarian party a few years ago. They have an infant child. In the first years after her emigration, Sandra had cleaning jobs, but by now she has been able to rise to a decent job

step-by-step. She also completed some professional training. Based on these achievements, one would think that she completed a successful integration pattern. However, her own interpretation of her current situation is less favorable. She believes that her quality of life in Hungary would be incomparably better than it is in the UK, and it seems that her current job – although it is unquestionably better than her first jobs were in the UK – is still considered to have a lower status than her profession back in the homeland. She describes her daily encounters with the host society as unfriendly, sometimes even hostile. She extrapolates these encounters to the entire British society and therefore has a negative opinion of Britain.

Due to her lack of sufficient English language skills, she was very much dependent on the help of fellow Hungarian emigrants in the first years. When she first arrived to England, she moved in with a Hungarian acquaintance, and she regularly visited informal Hungarian gatherings. Momentarily, she is involved in the management of a social media group for Hungarians in her locality. The online community provides information for Hungarians and serves as an advertisement platform for services, housing, jobs, etc. In addition to her active involvement in the local Hungarian community's management, she claims that she and her partner have a lot of Hungarian friends whom they regularly see.

In the interview, Sandra kept describing her current place of living as something that is not terrible but certainly not comfortable. "It's not my favorite. It would be nicer to live in Hungary, but this is where fate brought me." Her plan is to return to Hungary by the time her child has to be enrolled in primary school. In this context, she emphasized in the interview that she believes that both the educational and the health care system function better in Hungary than in the UK. When asked about why she is still living in England despite her negative experiences, discomfort, and homesickness, she could not give a straightforward answer. Implicitly, however, it can be reconstructed from her story that her current job in the UK provides a better living for her family than what she could make in Hungary with her qualification.

Sandra's case illustrates an emigrant's story whose initial struggles in the host country immediately pushed her towards the local Hungarian community. With time, despite her relatively successful progress in her professional life, she still was experiencing discomfort, which she tries to overcome with intense relations with the local Hungarian community and her family and friends back in Hungary.

The interviews with Maria and Dora revealed many similarities with Sandra's narrative. Dora emigrated to the UK approximately 10 years ago because she was unable to provide for her family back in Hungary. Similarly, Maria left Hungary eight years ago because she was unable to pay her mortgage. They both started their UK-based life with jobs in the cleaning industry,

and while Maria was able to move up and by now manages her own cleaning company, Dora still works as a cleaning lady. One of them has a Hungarian partner whom she met at a Hungarian gathering, while the other woman is single. Both women are actively and passionately involved in Hungarian weekend schools. Maria used to work in child care back in Hungary, and she misses her profession on a daily basis. Since she joined the teachers of one of the Hungarian weekend schools, she feels like she has gotten back a part of her previous life. In addition to during her voluntary work in this Hungarian diaspora organizations, she is also surrounded by Hungarians in her everyday life.

*The house where we live, it's a big house, me and my partner could not afford renting it by ourselves. We rent it with another Hungarian couple. So... yes, naturally, we have Hungarian friends. We are closer to them than to foreigners. I have a Spanish friend too. English friends, no. I don't have English friends.*

Maria, similarly to Sandra, does not plan to stay in England in the long term. In the interview she said that she “does not hate England,” but it is just not a good fit for her. Instead of considering return migration to Hungary, however, Maria intends to move to a “more friendly” country. In her interpretation, a southern European country would better fit her expectations; thus she plans to move to Spain in a few years.

For Dora, being actively involved in a Hungarian weekend school, which is a diaspora institution, is what provides her mental balance and well-being against the hard physical work that she does on weekdays. Unlike in her full-time job, the work in the diaspora organization makes her feel successful. In the interview she talked in a passionate manner about her voluntary work in the Hungarian weekend school.

*I need this to exist, to be able to exist, to survive week by week. Because life here is not like how people at home (Hungary) imagine. We keep getting these comments from home that we have a fabulous life here. Well, that is not true... So, that's why I do this job.*

The examples of Sandra, Maria, and Dora illustrate the path of forced diasporization. These individuals typically lack sufficient professional and language skills for successful host country integration. Their vulnerable position in the new country makes them rely on the local Hungarian community immediately after their emigration. Thus, their involvement in diaspora organizations is less of a choice and more of a necessity. Even if with time they are able to secure a relatively better position in the host country, they keep themselves deeply embedded in the diaspora community for comfort, friendships, and mental well-being. However, people whose diasporization can be considered forced are the least likely to establish long-term

residency in the host country: some of them are planning return migration, and some of them want to move to a different country.

***Voluntary diasporization: Value choice of migrants with partial integration***

The second distinct group of diasporization includes emigration stories that I labelled as partial or incomplete. Respondents in this category are halfway in their integration process into the host society. For most of them, their initial years in England were difficult and they isolated from the host society. By now, they have established decent lives and advanced English language skills. Thus, theoretically they would have the possibility to open up more to the majority society. However, maintaining the diaspora boundaries is a choice for them. More specifically, in their interpretation this choice is constituted as a value choice: they have strong feelings about the Hungarian language and culture and feel morally obligated to make efforts to keep their heritage alive.

Marta followed her husband to England. As for many fellow emigrants, their plan was to stay for a short period of time (cf. Ryan, 2018). She did not speak English at the time of her arrival, but because she had an infant child at the time, she did not mind the language barrier at first. Later on she enrolled in an English language school, where she met with emigrants coming from different countries and successfully learned the language. As her original profession was teaching, she had no perspective to continue her career path in England. Her husband started to become more and more successful in his work, and they had two more children. They purchased a house and their children started school in London. Without noticing it, they became embedded in their UK-based life more and more deeply.

Marta has been a stay-at-home mother since their emigration, but she has been very actively reaching out to fellow Hungarian emigrants. At home they speak exclusively Hungarian, and it is very important to her that her children not only speak in Hungarian, but are able to read and write more complicated texts as well. The family takes regular visits to their homeland, because maintaining active ties with the extended family and friends is crucial to both Marta and her husband. During their visits, they even used to enroll their children in the local school for a week so that they could have a chance to experience education in Hungarian.

Marta reached out to the local Hungarian community immediately after she first arrived to England, mostly because she did not speak English, and partly because she felt insecure in the new environment and was longing for familiarity. She started to take her children to Hungarian

Sunday school, and a few years ago she became involved in the management of the school. They have immersed in the local Hungarian diaspora life so extensively that, as she put it in the interview, she thinks that they live in a “parallel society.”

*Now I can say that our friends are the fellow Hungarian parents from the Hungarian school. We meet up with them regularly, not just in the school. We have them over for birthday parties, they invite us back for a grill party, so it's like that. And our kids are the same age, so it is also important that they can hang out and have a good time with each other... So yes, I can say that they became our friends. And... there is this word, it's popular nowadays: parallel society. And frankly, we could not successfully assimilate, and we make up a sort of a parallel society. I mean, not like... I mean we obviously respect the culture and laws and everything of this country, and we're not like a visible parallel society, but... but that's the truth. We could not make English friends.... You have to have English friends to be able to say that you have assimilated, right? Well, I can't say that I have English friends. So that's why I say that this is a kind of parallel society actually.*

Despite their extensive ties with the local Hungarian community, Marta and her family are much better integrated into the host society than the respondents in the forced diasporization group: her husband has his own company and manages workers of all nationalities, they own a house in London, and their children are going to reputable English schools and are applying to prestigious colleges. They are not considering return migration. Rather, they want to keep putting effort into maintaining strong ties with their family and friends.

Marta is aware that living such an intensive diaspora life is not a sustainable model for her children. The children's primary socialization was provided by the English education system; their best friends are from their school environments and not from the Hungarian diaspora. Marta considers this a natural process of assimilation. She is happy that her children speak Hungarian fluently and have strong ties with their family members, but she supports and encourages them and is proud of them for their successes in their host environment.

Anna represents another example for the voluntary diasporization path. Anna arrived to England 10 years ago with her partner. She did not at all speak English at the time of her emigration. Back in Hungary, she worked as a teacher for almost 10 years, so it was clear that she would not be able to continue her career in the UK. Like many of her fellow emigrants, she started to work as a cleaning lady. Already at her first job she made Hungarian acquaintances and started to babysit for Hungarian families. The part-time job slowly evolved into a business, and now Anna manages her own private child care for Hungarian children, which provides for her family's living.

In the first years after their emigration, she was very unhappy with her new life. As she described, she felt like she failed in Hungary, even though she tried really hard to create a decent

life for herself and her baby. She was also frustrated because she had to do low-skilled jobs in the first years and was missing her profession. However, despite the hardships, England made her feel comfortable. This is an important factor: Anna, unlike respondents in the forced diasporization group, has felt that she can fit in. She has experienced inclusion and support from the host society.

*People here are accepting and tolerant. They don't care who you are, what you wear. It doesn't matter who your parents were or what your religion is. They are tolerant, they really don't care about these things. This is a likeable quality to me. So, I grew to like the English people.*

Anna is affectionate about Hungarian culture and traditions, and she claims that she loves visiting Hungary. It is important to her to pass on the language and culture to her children. However, she does not plan to move back to her homeland. She wants to provide better opportunities for her children than what they would have in Hungary, and she does not want to uproot them at this point in their lives.

Most respondents in the voluntary diasporization group started their diasporization in exactly the same way as respondents in the forced diasporization group. The crucial difference between the two groups is that by now, due to their partial integration into the host society, members of the voluntary diasporization group have had a chance to step out of the diaspora community and integrate more deeply into the host society. They have solid social and financial positions in England and are fluent in English. However, they prefer to stay close to the diaspora community. Thus, for them, staying in the diaspora community is a choice, more precisely a value choice: they cherish their ethnic ties and culture and wish to preserve their national identity, even though they do not plan to move back to the homeland and are proud of their and their families' achievements in the host country.

### ***Latecomer diasporization: Integrated transnationals embracing their heritage***

The latecomer diasporization group includes respondents whose involvement in the diaspora community did not happen immediately after their emigration. The diasporization stories of the individuals in this group are the most diverse amongst the three groups. The common theme is that the respondents whose diasporization happened at a later stage in their lives did not need the diaspora community, as their integration was already at an advanced level when they started to be interested in embracing their Hungarian heritage. I illustrate latecomer diasporization through Diana's and Anita's examples.

Diana arrived to England in 1996 after her college graduation for an au-pair job with a one-year contract. She completed a Bachelor's degree and her plan was to master the English language before looking for a job in Hungary. After a few months in England, however, she met her future English husband, and thus her stay in the UK turned into indefinite. As she described, and as we know from the statistics as well, at the time of her arrival there were not that many Hungarians in the UK, so she did not have contact with fellow Hungarian expats. As she said in the interview, she did not seek the company of Hungarians at all, because her aim was to practice English. Besides, she started to work for her husband's company, and her husband's friends and family became her primary social circle.

It was only later that she realized that on social media platforms, informal gatherings were organized for Hungarians in her locality. As she described, at first she was not sure if it would be a good idea to meet up with Hungarians, but then at the first such gathering, she realized that she appreciates being able to speak with people in her native language.

*No, I was not explicitly looking for the company of Hungarians. But then I came to realize that it is a good feeling to talk in your own language, even though I had no problem with communicating in English. There is something common between Hungarians... and the food. The food always connects people. So we would gather and cook something together, and then I thought to myself, this is not a bad idea, and then I started to regularly organize these Hungarian parties...*

She described these Hungarian parties as the place where she could loosen up more than with her English friends, and even her English husband grew to like and enjoy these Hungarian gatherings. She continued to be one of the major facilitators of these gatherings, and gradually a new circle of friends was formed. As these Hungarian people belonged to the same generation, by the 2010s, there seemed to be a demand for a place that would offer activities for their children as well. Diana thus became one of the founders of a Hungarian Sunday school in her town. She has been the manager and teacher of this school since its founding.

Diana and her husband have two children. Interestingly, she never pressured her children to participate in the Hungarian school. It seems that for Diana, her involvement in this diaspora organization is a hobby, and she has no expectation of it in relation to her private life (i.e., she does not take part in the school's life so that her children have a space where they could socialize with fellow Hungarian children). This is an unusual situation, since for most of our respondents who are actively involved in Hungarian schools or pre schools, an important motivation is to secure an ethnic socialization for their children. In the interview, when asked about why it is

important to her to dedicate so much effort to the Hungarian school, she could not give a straight answer.

*We (at the school) criticize those parents who don't bring their kids to the Hungarian school, but my children didn't really go at all... They speak Hungarian though. For me... I don't know. My children don't go. They are older now though. Yes, sometimes I do think about why I do this if my children don't go to the school...*

Anita represents a different example of latecomer diasporization. She arrived to London as a PhD student and has been offered various researcher jobs at prestigious universities ever since. She and her Hungarian husband started a family in the UK and now have three children. According to her recollection, in the first years of their stay, she was not at all interested in connecting with Hungarians in London. Rather, she was enjoying the diverse environment. However, the birth of her children and their interaction with their Hungarian grandparents made her start to think more “strategically” about their situation.

*When I first moved here, it was wonderful to see the diversity here, and I would not want to spend my weekends with Hungarians. I did not at all wish to compensate that I was living abroad. On the contrary, I was enjoying that everybody was from different places and that where you came from does not matter at all. (...) And now I see that the language is very important. My children, even though both of their parents are Hungarian, they have difficulty with the Hungarian language. (...) And of course there is pressure from the grandparents, because they are not able to communicate with their grandchildren.*

Anita joined a Hungarian Sunday school with her children, but soon she became involved with fellow mothers in the establishment of a new Hungarian supplementary school closer to their neighbourhood. For Anita, it is very important to create an environment for the children that is inclusive in many respect, because in her opinion, only a positive community experience will make the children want to embrace their Hungarian heritage. When she was asked about the mission of the Hungarian school, she said:

*We want the kids to experience their Hungarian ethnicity as a positive feature. We want them to feel that they belong to this community by birthright and they don't have to prove anything to belong here. So, we want this community to be inclusive and accepting.*

During the interview, Anita made several references to how she believes that the diasporization of her family does is not the same as strict boundary making against the majority society. On the contrary, she feels like she is both Hungarian and a Londoner, and the two do not exclude each other but are of equal weight and importance to her. The inclusiveness that she finds very important in her Hungarian school also reflects this notion. She wants the Hungarian school to



to be the community of all children, regardless of their Hungarian language skills and regardless of whether they come from a Hungarian or partly Hungarian family. In other words, the school should not exclude families who are exhibiting signs of assimilation, and should embrace everybody who wants to be part of the Hungarian community.

Anita and her husband have friends from the local Hungarian community but also from the majority society and from other emigrant groups as well. The diversity of her friendships also proves that her integration into the host society is advanced, but at the same time she has strong ties with local Hungarians as well. Thus, her diasporization coexists with her integration.

*When we take the kids to swim practice, and if we run into Hungarian parents, we will surely grab a cup of coffee after the practice with them. Just because we are Hungarians. And then later it turns out that being a Hungarian is not necessarily enough for a long-term friendship. In most cases it is enough to start a something, but then it can go either way.*

Latecomer diasporization is the typical diasporization path of highly educated intellectuals with advanced English skills who do not need to rely on fellow expatriates in their early years of emigrations. In my sample, respondents in this category did not even know about the existence of Hungarian organizations in their localities for years. The circumstances that make the individuals turn to the diaspora community vary. For Anita, it was the birth of her children and with that, the need to secure the children's positive attachment to their linguistic and cultural heritage, while for Diana and others in the sample, it was more of a random encountering with the local Hungarian community.

## **Discussion**

The paper presented three distinctive diasporization paths that could be identified in the sample of interviews conducted with individuals being actively involved in the organizations of the emerging Hungarian diaspora in the UK. The forced diasporization pattern appears to be less of a choice and more of a necessity for migrants who are lacking the necessary resources for a successful integration. These individuals need to heavily rely on their fellow emigrants in the host country immediately after their arrival and remain within the community's boundaries for the most part during their stay. Due to their unfavourable professional and social positions in the UK, they often experience frustration and unhappiness, which they try to overcome through the comfort of familiarity provided by the diaspora community.

The voluntary diasporization pattern could be interpreted as a possible continuation of an initially forced diasporization. Respondents in this group had similar first years of emigration as the individuals in the first group; however, for different reasons they were able to advance in their integration journey. They mastered the English language and secured a decent and solid existence in the UK. Due to their partial integration into the host society, members of the voluntary diasporization group could have a chance to step out of the diaspora community and integrate more deeply into the host society. However, they prefer to stay close to the diaspora community. Thus, for them, staying in the diaspora community is a choice, more precisely a value choice: they cherish their ethnic ties and culture and wish to preserve their national identity, even though they do not plan to move back to the homeland and are proud of their and their families' achievements in the host country.

The latecomer diasporization pattern showed the most variation regarding the circumstances that make the individuals turn to the diaspora community. Members of this group are highly educated intellectuals with advanced English skills who did not need to rely on fellow expatriates in their early years of emigrations. They discovered the local Hungarian community at a later stage in their lives; some of them accidentally, some of them due to the changing circumstances in their lives.

The examples of forced and latecomer diasporization point out that diasporization is highly dependent on the resources – and the lack of thereof – that are crucial for a successful integration into the host society. In this respect, it can be argued that becoming diaspora is a “luxury” for those who are empowered with the qualities that enable one to become a true transnational individual (i.e., with effective ties to both home and host country). On the contrary, diasporization is a “must” for those who lack the necessary skills to develop effective ties in the host country. Thus, forced diasporization is path dependent, while latecomer diasporization is a preference. Voluntary diasporization represents a hybrid path in this regard: it starts as forced diasporization but turns into chosen boundary maintenance.

To approach the three diasporization patterns from a different angle, we can deconstruct the meaning of diaspora boundaries in each case. For those whose diasporization was forced by the circumstances of their emigration, the boundaries of the diaspora community are real, but by no means are they intentional. These migrants are maintaining ethnic boundaries, but not because they decide to do so, but because they cannot effectively open up towards the host society.

For those whose diasporization is voluntary, boundary maintenance is effective and intentional. They could finish their integration process into the host society but prefer to stay within the

diaspora community for the most part. In this regard, the second group is to the closest of the ideals of the classic diaspora definition, since their diasporization is to a great extent motivated by the wish to preserve their language, culture and heritage.

Boundary maintenance in the latecomer diasporization pattern is intentional but rather symbolic. Emigrants with successful integration and effective ties with the host society join the diaspora community for varying reasons, but their participation in the diaspora’s life does not affect their host country connections.

	Boundary creation	Boundary qualities
Forced diasporization	unintentional	effective
Voluntary diasporization	intentional	effective
Latecomer diasporization	intentional	symbolic

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