

# Changes to the Centralized Regulation (Curricula Requirement, Textbooks) of History Teaching and Assessment of their Introduction in Hungary (2016-2023)

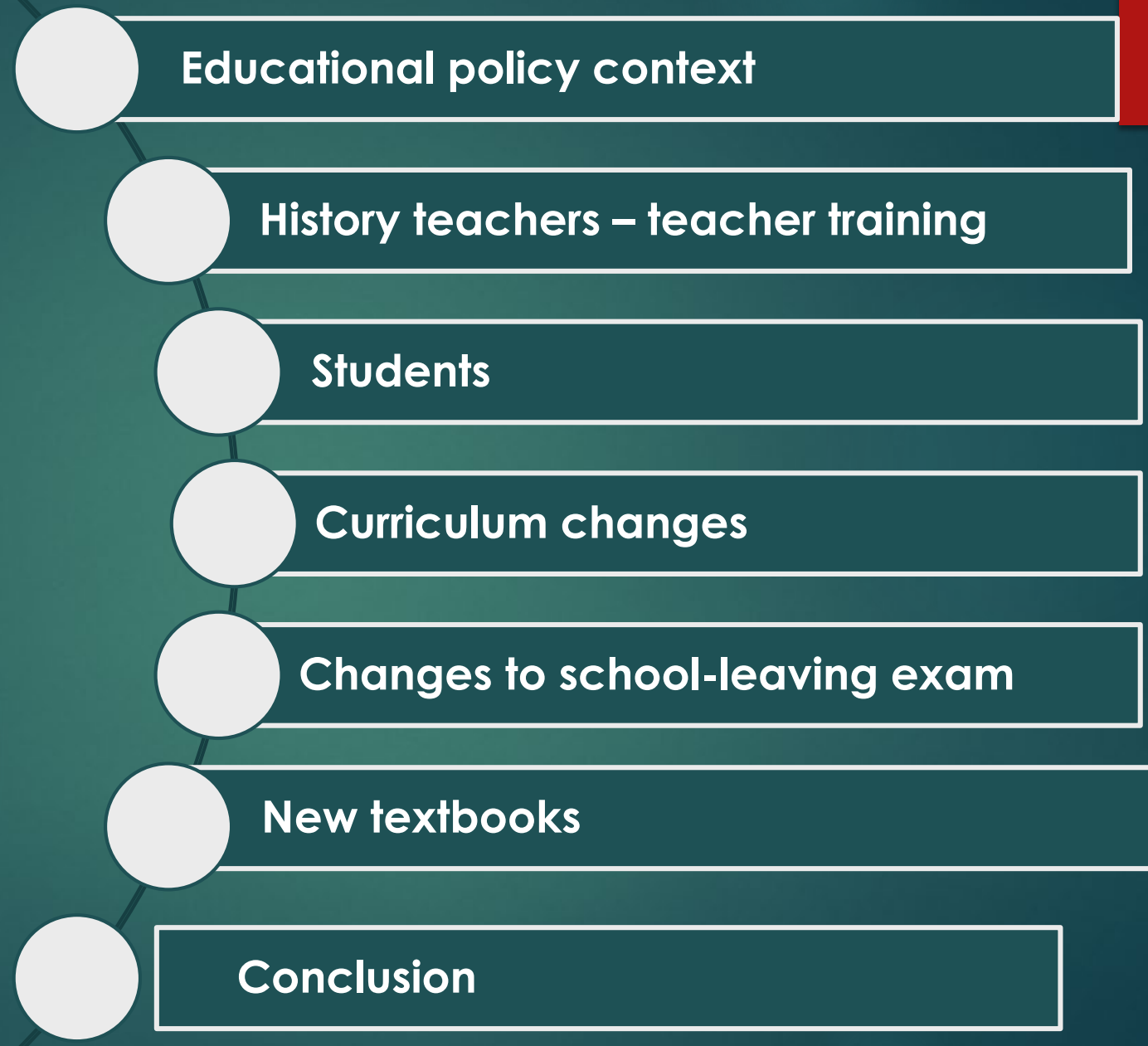


History and its Discontents:  
Theory and Practice, Stories  
from the Classroom Annual  
Conference International  
Society for History Didactics  
Rhode Island College  
Providence, Rhode Island

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# Tartalalom



# Educational policy context

- ▶ all educational legislation has been rewritten
- ▶ based not on policy, but on political/power and aspects
- ▶ the intention to monopolize intellectual life has strengthened
- ▶ the new cultural hegemony appeared (national radicalism + alt right)
- ▶ further training of history teachers based on the new hegemony (Institute No. 21) and even training (National University of Public Service)

## Background:

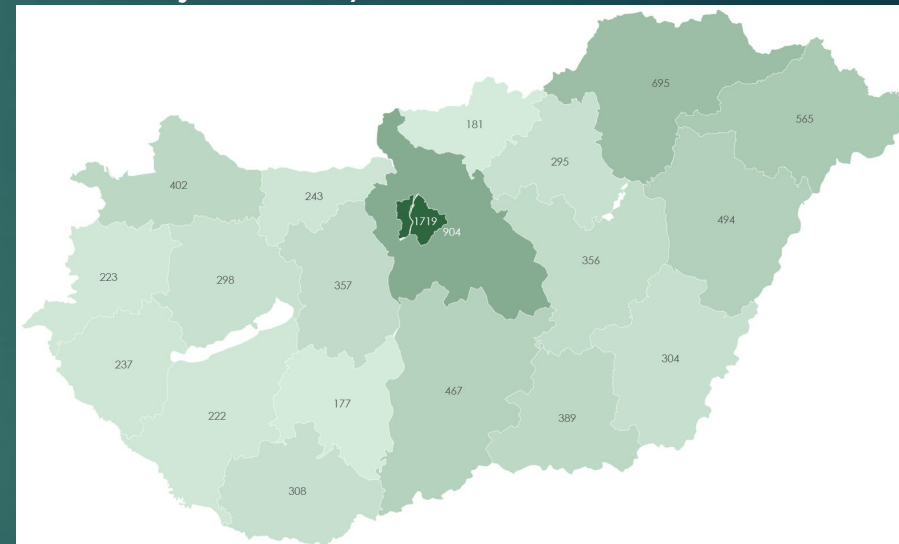
- ▶ The perception of democracy in public life has changed (from a procedural to a substantive approach)
- ▶ The status of schools and teachers has changed, their **decision-making power has been reduced.**

# Data on history teachers

## KIR database shows a total of 8,836 teachers

- ▶ Average age: 47; 64.8% women; 67.6 % have a university degree
- ▶ Geographical spread: Budapest 19.5%, Pest County 10.2%, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County 7.9 %, cities 84.6 %
- ▶ Operators: teaching district 58.6 %, church 17.2%
- ▶ Workplace: primary school 53.6 %, secondary school 24.9%, vocational school 16.5 %
- ▶ Advisors: 61 people; average age 56.5; primary school 47.5%, primary school + gymnasium 45.9 %, gymnasium 6.6 %
- ▶ Research teachers: 31 people, average age 51.1, gymnasium 90.3 %, vocational school 9.7%, Budapest 11 people

Földrajzi elhelyezkedésük



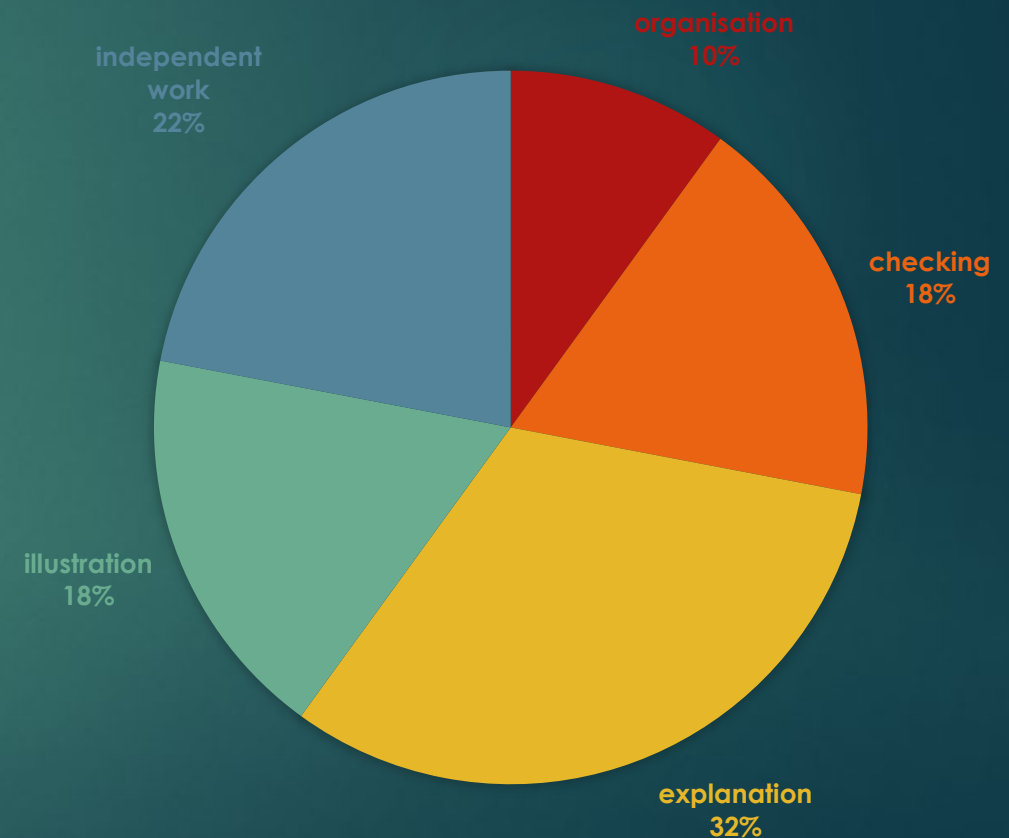
# The teaching practice of history teachers

An important element of classroom work is **teacher explanation and illustration** which takes about 50% of the hour. Independent learning work takes only about 20%.

- ▶ Maps, textbooks and digital devices are used most often during lessons. Workbooks and collections of tasks are used the least.
- ▶ Students' knowledge is tested most frequently with pop quizzes and oral assessments.
- ▶ Digital devices are most often used for illustration (PPT, Prezi, Youtube, Zanza Tv, NKP).
- ▶ Digital devices are least used for cooperative digital student projects and video interviews.

*Source: 2019 country-wide survey of 612 people*

LESSON ACTIVITIES AS A PERCENTAGE



# Teacher training in History

Qualification requirements changing several times 1997, 2006, 2013, 2021

- ▶ One vs. two majors
- ▶ B.A. ,M.A. vs. undivided training
- ▶ Discipline vs. pedagogy
- ▶ 10 places, around 560 students
- ▶ Admission cut-off scores: 305-350 points
- ▶ Theory vs. practice



# What we know little about...

## Students

- ▶ Decreasing number of age groups, but increasing number of exam takers, university students
- ▶ Little is known about their knowledge (school leaving exams, competitions)
- ▶ No diagnostic (longitudinal) evaluation of their knowledge
- ▶ Increasing content, overload vs. decreasing knowledge
- ▶ Problematic use of concepts, superficial historical thinking

## Results of the 2018 democracy survey...

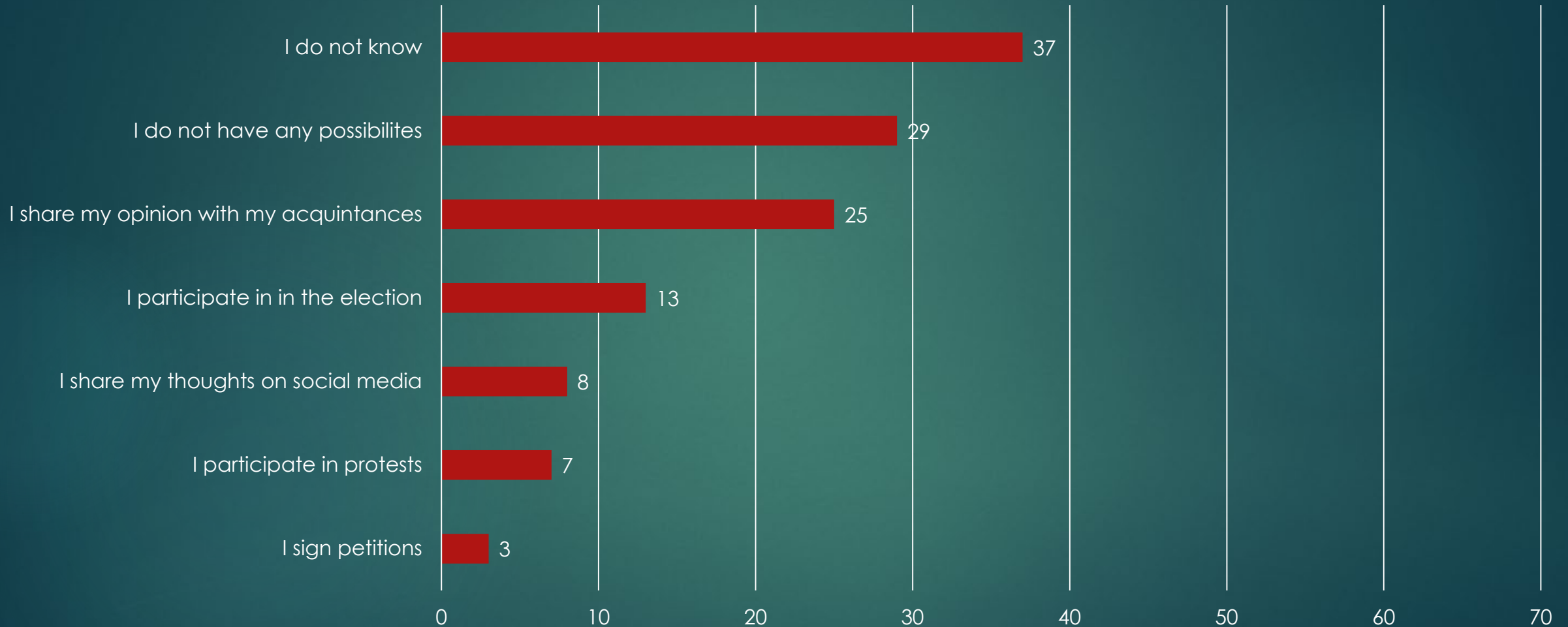


# Information on public affairs



*Where do you most often get information about public affairs? (N=889, %)*

# Chance for involvement in public affairs



*What kind of possibilities are available for you to be involved with public affairs?*

# What we know a lot about...

## Curricula in general

**National Core Curriculum** constant change

1995, 2003, 2007, 2012, 2020

### Returning issues

- ▶ Regulatory levels, centralized/local decisions
- ▶ Ratio of universal and Hungarian history
- ▶ Share of contemporary vs. historical past
- ▶ Knowledge-centered vs. Competence-based

**Framework curricula** also in constant change

2000, 2012, 2020

### Returning issues

- ▶ Regulatory function, e.g. one single or many framework curricula
- ▶ Room for local decisions
- ▶ Topic areas
- ▶ Period delineations
- ▶ Lexical data

# Curriculum changes 2020

## *Key competencies*

### ▶ **Social and civic competencies**

fundamental principles, goals left out

### ▶ **Critical thinking** replaced with **evaluative thinking**

## *Literacy/teaching area renamed*

- ▶ Man and society replaced with history, education for citizenship
- ▶ The structure of the independent area of civics
- ▶ Historical knowledge becomes priority
- ▶ No (thematic) repeating topics

## *Topic areas*

- ▶ Role, number of Hungarian historical topics growing
- ▶ Modification of the content "canon", emergence of new and changing approach
- ▶ War of Christian Kingdom of Hungary against spread of Islam gets greater attention
- ▶ Role of Western Europe as a paradigm in the Middle Ages and Modern Era is reduced
- ▶ Appearance of ideological, current political initiatives: e.g. rejection of left-wing, socialist theories, e.g. Kádár dictatorship, or eastern perspective, e.g. Huns
- ▶ New terminology

# Changes to School-leaving exam 2021

New, **broader topic areas** (7 instead of 12)

- ▶ 1. ANCIENT HISTORY
- ▶ 2. THE MIDDLE AGES
- ▶ 3. THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD
- ▶ 4. THE MODERN ERA
- ▶ 5. THE ERA OF THE WORLD WARS
- ▶ 6. THE COLD WAR ERA
- ▶ 7. THE PRESENT ERA

At advanced level **expanded lexical** requirements (+ 365 data)

About 1/3 of lexical data is permanent between 2003 and 2021

New competency requirements

- ▶ Historical thinking and historical knowledge

Modified oral topic areas

- ▶ Economy, economic policy, material culture;
- ▶ Population, community, lifestyle;
- ▶ Individual, community, society;
- ▶ Political apparatus in the modern era;
- ▶ Political institutions, ideas, ideologies;
- ▶ International conflicts and cooperation;
- ▶ Free topic areas.

# New history textbooks

New system for textbook publishing, textbook supply

- ▶ State textbook publishing, narrowed range of selection (2 parallel textbooks)
- ▶ Textbooks free of charge for all students
- ▶ Digitally available textbook workbooks, teaching aids
- ▶ So-called smart textbooks - digitally processed lessons with animations, task, in HTML format, responsive

History, civics textbooks

Foundations and characteristics of the two series

- ▶ Former NTK textbooks and so-called experimental textbooks
- ▶ Abundant content, much data, sources, maps, visual organisers, rich in images, "Historian's perspective" sections, many questions, and tasks
- ▶ Establishment of a new canon of politics of memory from current political perspectives (e.g. German occupation, 1956 Revolution, Kádár dictatorship) debatable statements about politicians (e.g. Tisza, Károlyi, Horthy) tabooization of words (e.g. white terror), conjectures (e.g. freemasons), opinions not scientifically certified, dishonesty in discussion

# Double standard – tuning intentio

## ▶ Horthy system

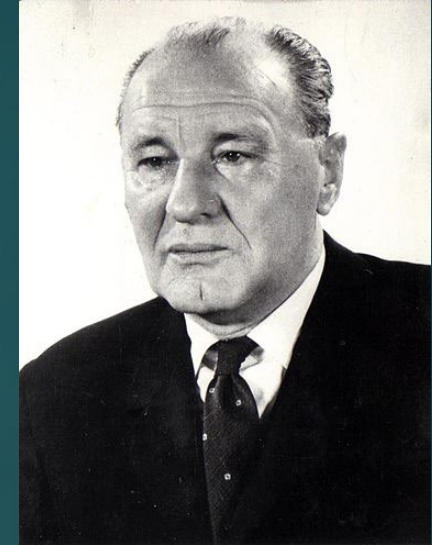


Negative elements are unweighted or not is played for example, in the 1930s "there are changes in political direction" not a right-wing advance or the Jewish laws are not under this heading, but the II. During the Civil War, although in 1938, 39

## ▶ Kádár dictatorship

Mostly negative signs and events of the system for example retaliation

False social peace  
Changing forms of oppression.



# New citizenship education textbook

Which is nothing or little

- for example
- civil organizations
- non-governmental organizations
- trade unions
- worker protection
- students voice



# „A picture is worth a thousand words” 23/17

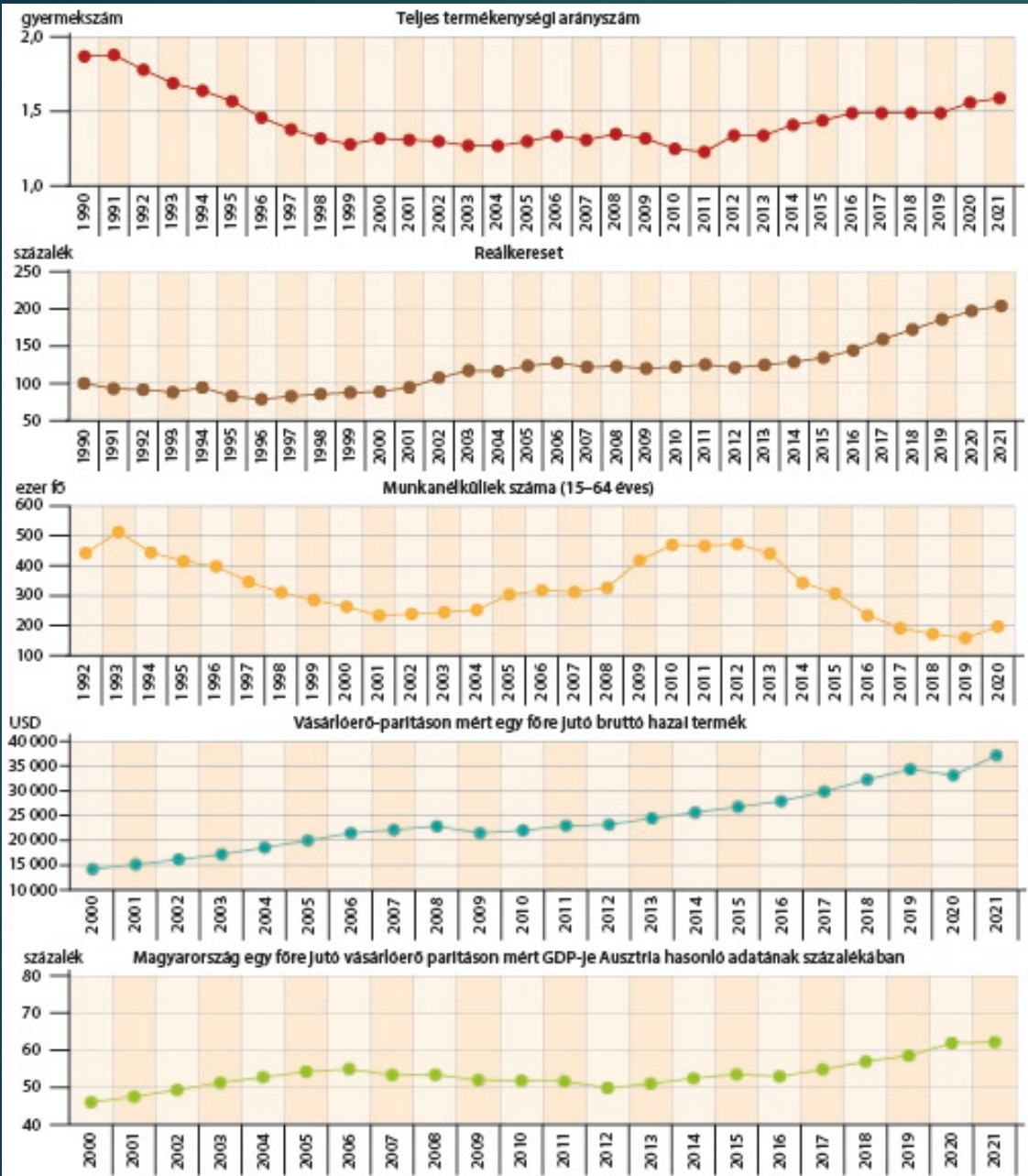


Of which there is a lot:

- war pictures
  - a textbook
- 23 of his pictures  
17 military



# Propaganda



The table of the one-party constitution in the Parliament

A is just a data series showing successes

# Conclusion - curricula, requirements

- ▶ the content regulators
- ▶ state centralization efforts have strengthened
- ▶ teacher autonomy has narrowed
- ▶ avoided professional publicity
- ▶ no implementation was associated with it
- ▶ are more declarative documents

# Conclusion - history education

- ▶ the history curriculum, textbooks
- ▶ the fight for the "past" expanded
- ▶ ministerial control was strengthened
- ▶ the European and democratic point of view has fallen into the background
- ▶ the monopolistic approach gained strength (feigned multi-perspective)
- ▶ the knowledge-centered approach has strengthened
- ▶ the daily political propaganda appeared

# Conclusion

These problems are complex and complicated. Much must be changed to improve the effectiveness of education for democracy, for example:

- ▶ supporting autonomy for teachers and school innovation
- ▶ developing a new evaluation for historical literacy.

This is no simple task and will take a long time.

# What to do?

## Recognise that ...

- ▶ the faster and greater the swing of the regulatory pendulum, the less effective it is
- ▶ the subordination of memory culture and the science of history to daily political agendas weakens the credibility of history teaching,
- ▶ scientific norms and substantive debates, the search for consensus cannot be ignored,
- ▶ a complex social science approach helps to educate for democracy

## Support should be given to the development of

- ▶ broad knowledge of international practices, regional cooperation,
- ▶ self-organising professional communities and networks.

**Thank you for  
your attention!**

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