The spatial effect of economic recession after the political transition in Hungary –

the case study of the Northern Great Plain Region

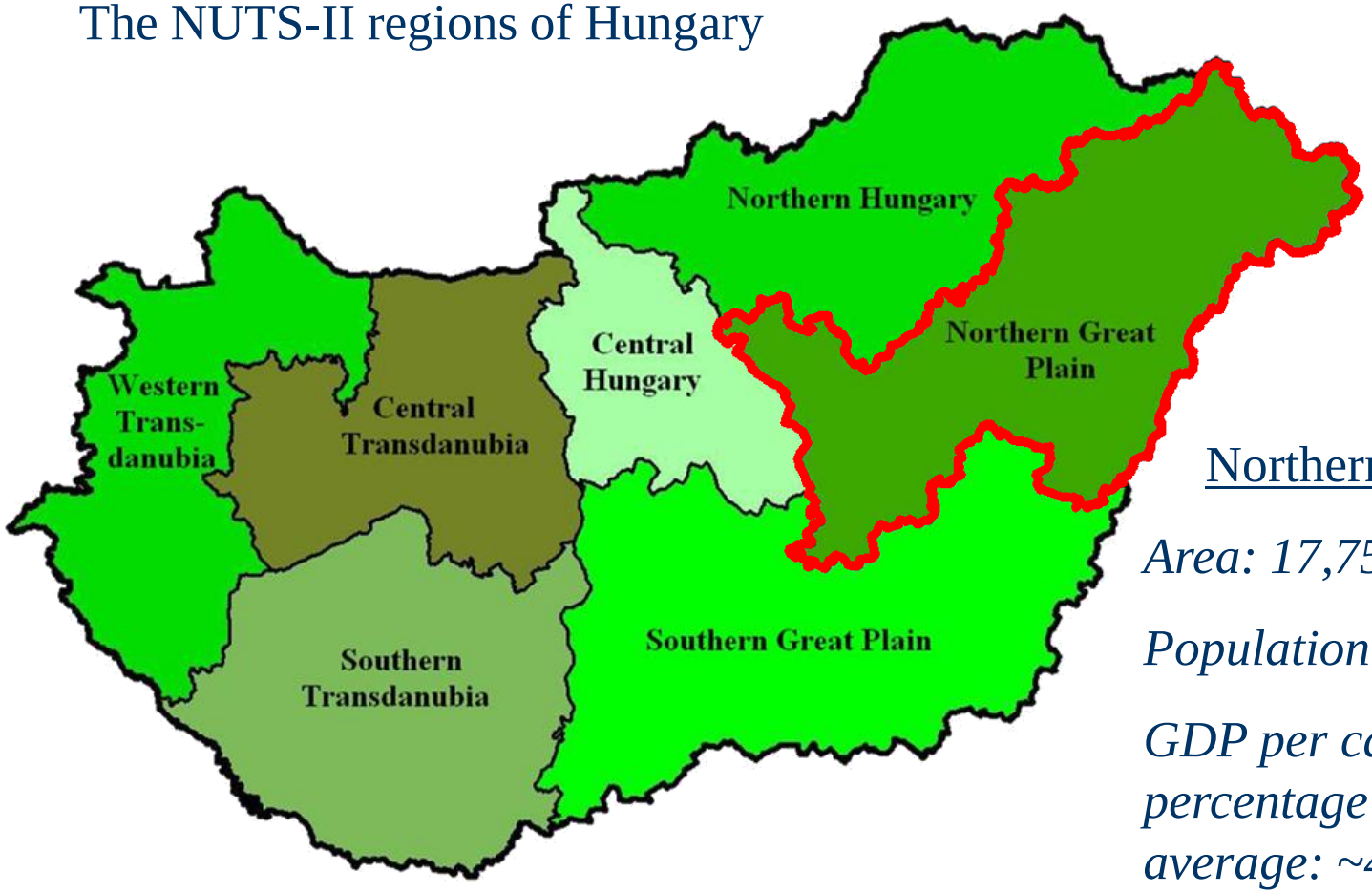
János Pénzes
assistant lecturer

University of Debrecen
Department of Social Geography and Regional Development Planning

GLOBALISATION, EUROPEAN INTEGRATION and ECONOMIC CRISIS
International Conference
22-23 April 2010
Wrocław, Poland

The spatial effect of the political transition

The NUTS-II regions of Hungary



Northern Great Plain Region

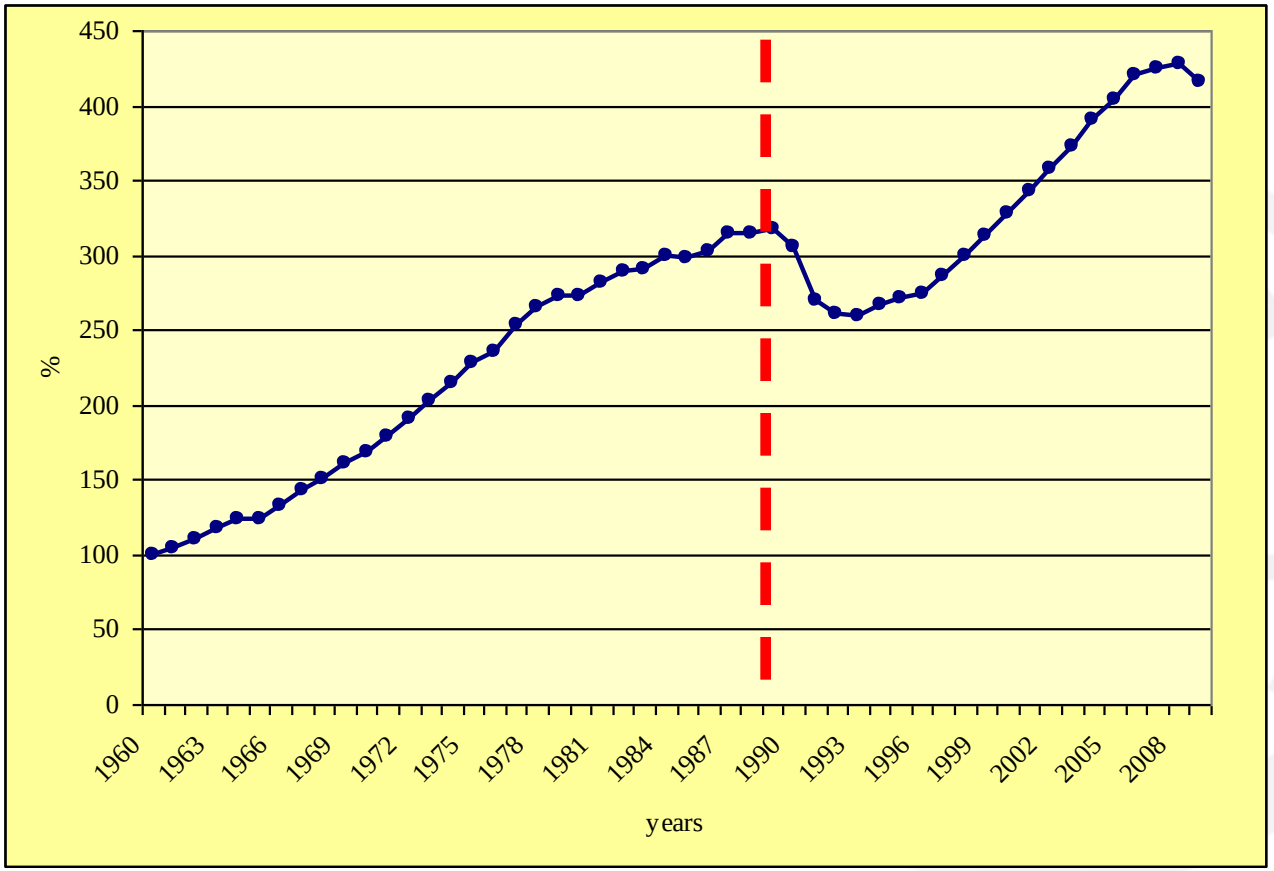
Area: 17,750 km²

Population.: ~1.5 million

GDP per capita (PPS) in the percentage of the European average: ~42%

National trends and characteristics

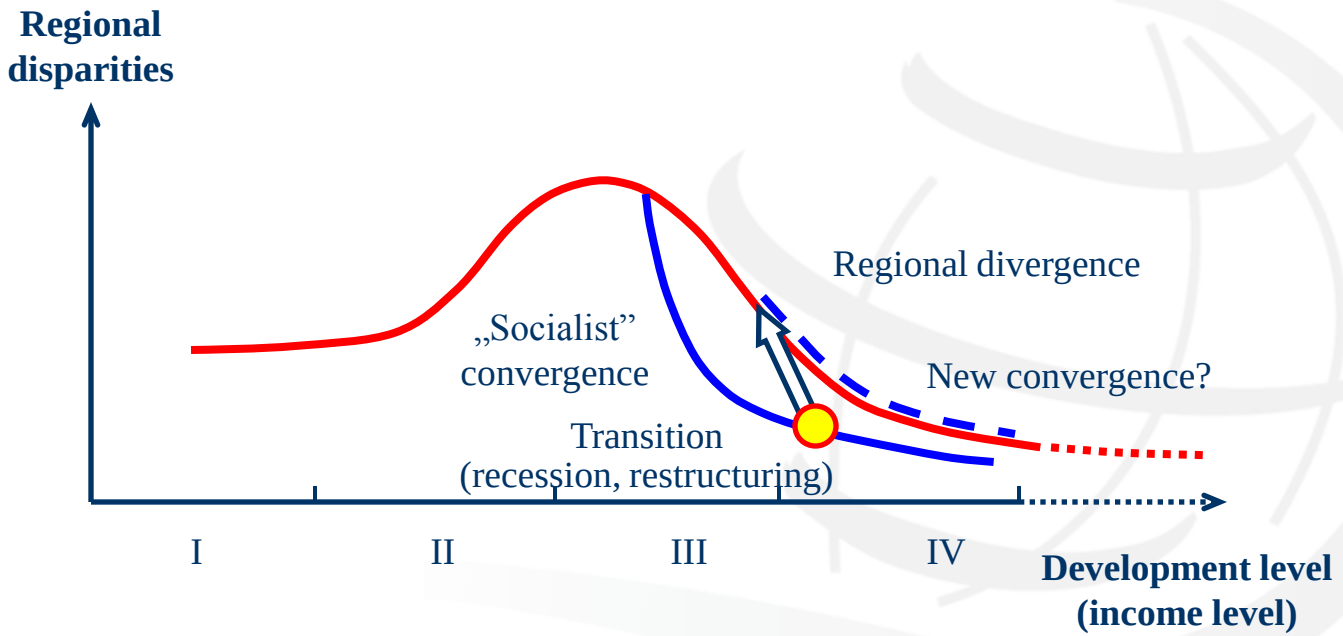
The development of GDP per capita compared to 1960, %



Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office

National trends and characteristics

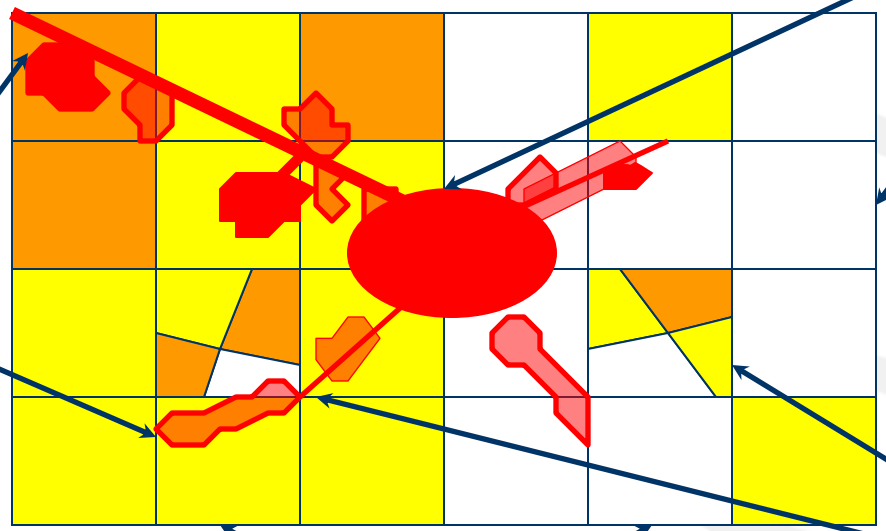
The modified Kuznets-Williamson inverted U hypothesis adapted for transitional countries



Source: Nemes Nagy, J. 2005

National trends and characteristics

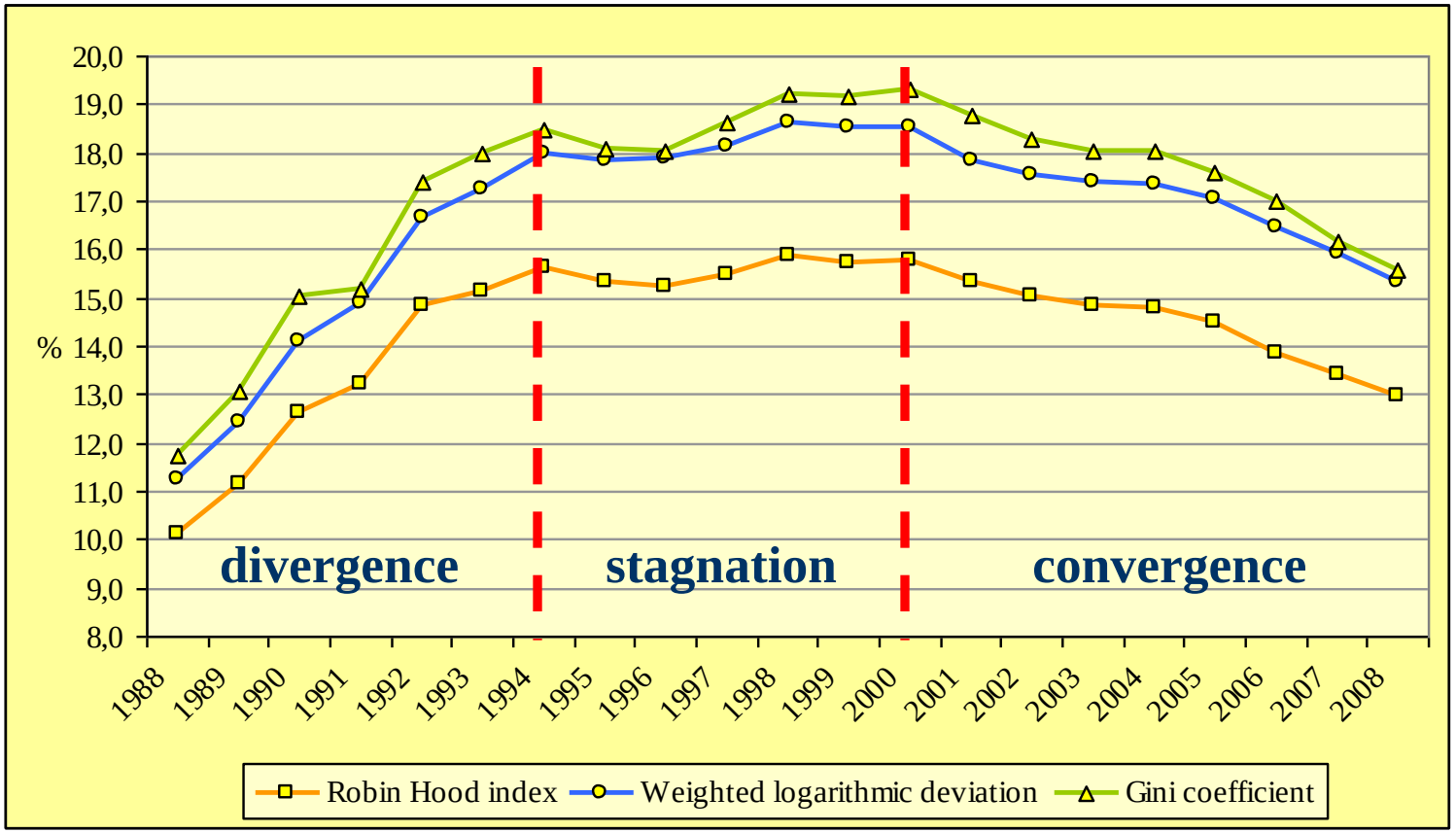
Dimensions of spatial disparities



Source: by Nemes Nagy, J., 1998

National trends and characteristics

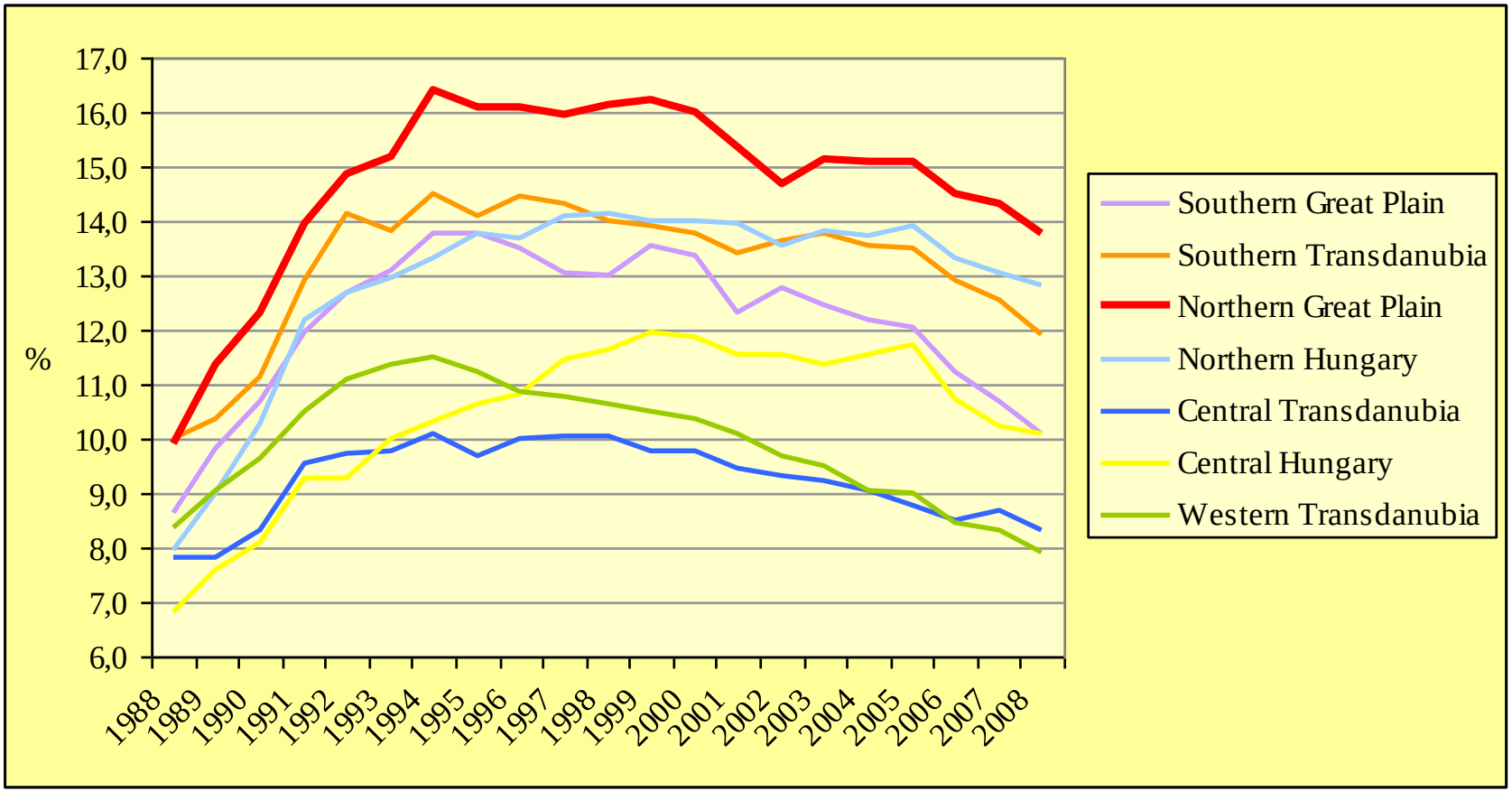
Spatial income inequalities on the level of settlements by inequality indices



Source: calculated from the database of the Hungarian Tax and Financial Control Administration (APEH)

National trends and characteristics

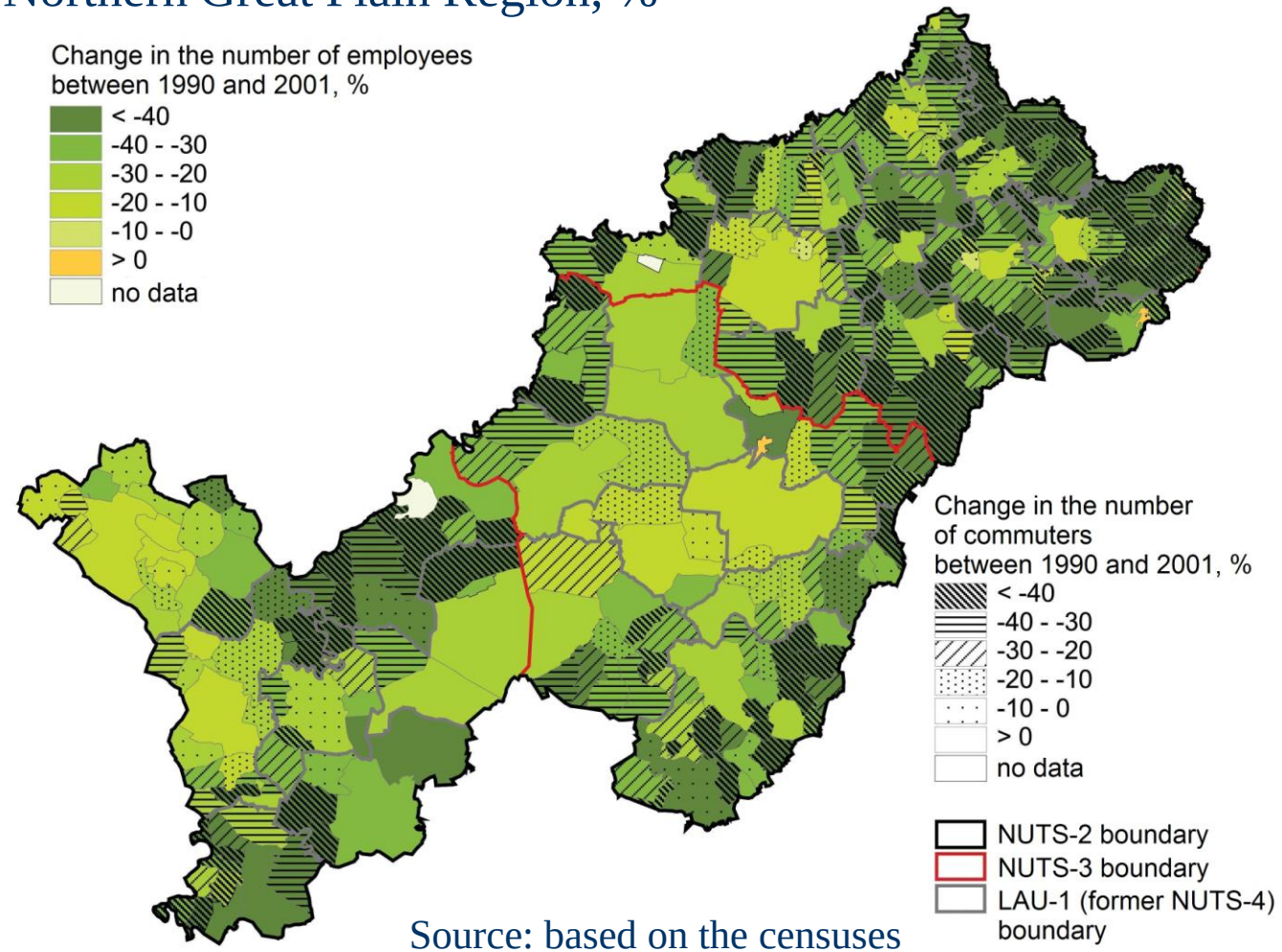
The development of Hoover index between 1988 and 2008 in the Hungarian regions



Source: calculated from the database of the Hungarian Tax and Financial Control Administration (APEH)

The intra-regional spatial income pattern

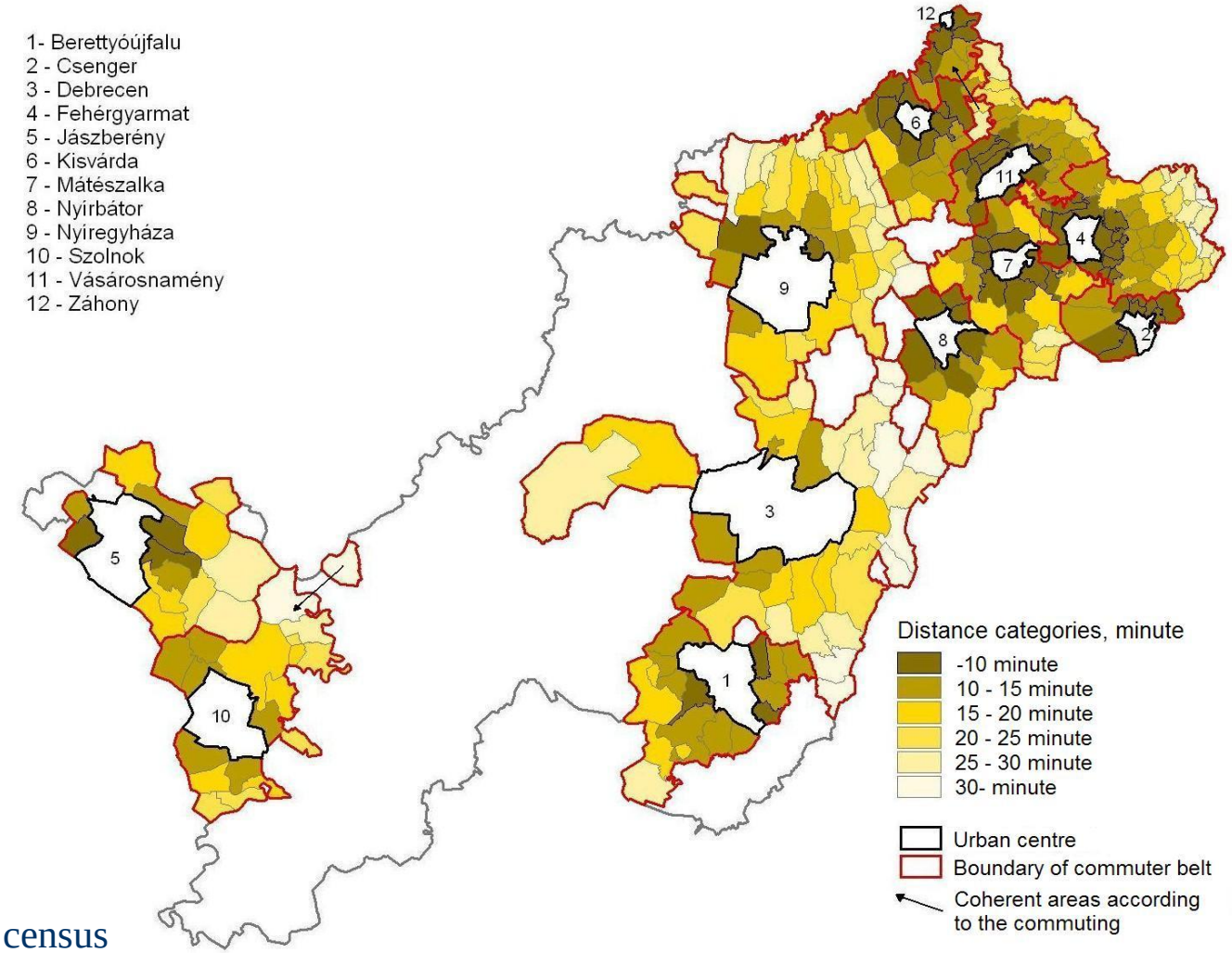
Change in the number of employees and commuters between 1990 and 2001 in the Northern Great Plain Region, %



Source: based on the censuses

The intra-regional spatial income pattern

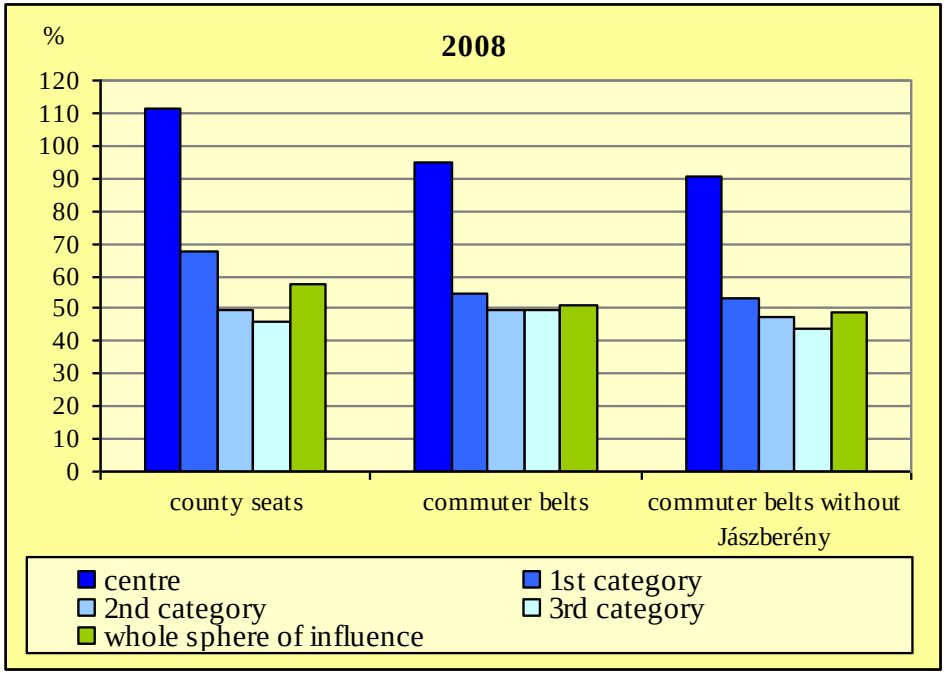
Categories of settlements by the distance from the urban centres in the selected commuter belts

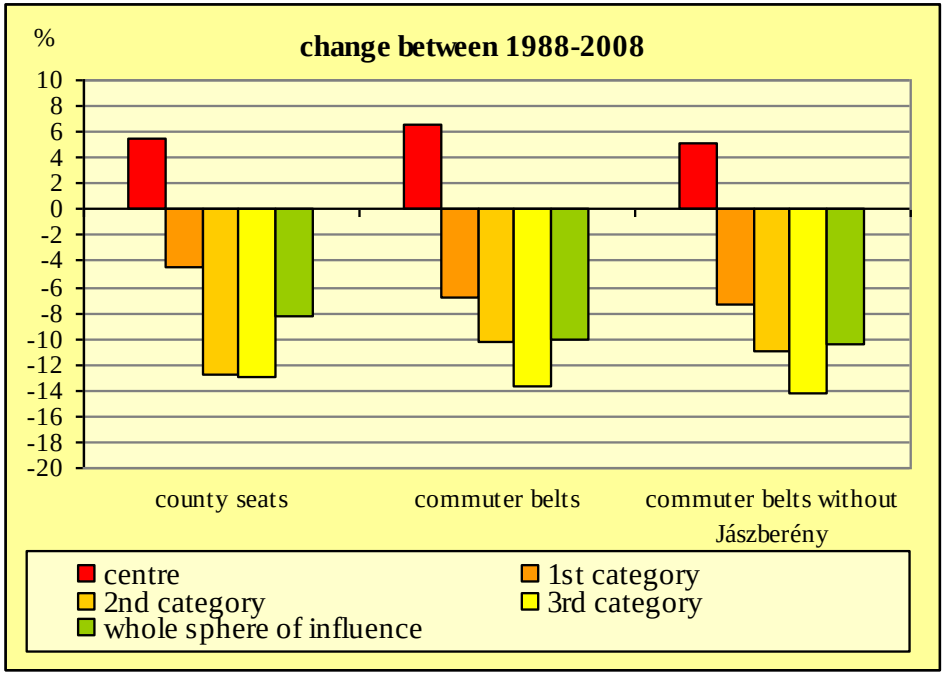


Source: based on the census

The intra-regional spatial income pattern

The relative income per capita level and its change on the level of settlement categories (set up by the distance from their centres) in the commuter belts of the Northern Great Plain Region, %





Source: calculated from the database of the Hungarian Tax and Financial Control Administration (APEH)

Concluding remarks

- Spatial income inequalities spectacularly grew after the political transition,
- Three stages can be detected by the national inequality trends:
  - stage of rapid growth until the mid 1990's;
  - stage of high level stagnation until the millennium;
  - stage of moderate convergence.
- However, there are considerable differences regarding the regional trends;
- The pattern of economic recession after the political transition reflects income polarization according to the local core-periphery relations;
- This pattern tends to stagnate or become even more polarized in the case of backward areas with economy unable to recover.