

Camping trips for children of families affected by the 2010 flood

The floods caused by heavy rains in May and June 2010 severely affected Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county. The rivers flooded the county due to the rainfall many times the annual average. A flood warning was issued on 17 May 2010 for the whole administrative area of the county, which was not cancelled until mid-June. Flood control measures were taken on a nearly 400 km long section with some days over 8,000 people working on the dams. The damage assessment found that 183,200 hectares of land was covered with inland water, 31,500 hectares was flooded and 104,300 hectares of fallow was soaked and impossible to cultivate. The flood caused the death of flora on 89,000 hectares.



In May and June 2010, the safety of 100,000 people was at risk in the county, and 4,643 of them had to be evacuated. Many houses were also severely damaged. Over 5,000 damaged properties were reported, and a total of 235 homes in 31 villages were found to have collapsed or been damaged beyond repair by the flood.¹

¹ Data source. Flood in 2010 in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county. KSH. 2011. <http://mek.oszk.hu/11100/11170/11170.pdf> Date visited: 28.12.2020



Donations and charity offers were sent from all over the country during the time of the disaster. The Board of Trustees of the Barankovics István Foundation decided to support the most vulnerable and adversely impacted children, and in a joint effort with the Ministry of Human Capacities, organised the travel and the week-long camping holiday for the children in the flood-stricken villages. During the summer 629 school-children and their accompanying travellers were transported in special buses taking ten round-trips to Lake Balaton from Sajólád, Felsőzsolca, Ónod, Sajószentpéter, Alsózsolca, Aszaló, Boldva, Szendrőd and Szendrőlád. ²

² Archives of the Barankovics István Foundation. Our own and joint projects. 2010.



Edelény was one of the villages hit hardest by the disaster in spring 2010. The water level of the river in the small town of 10,000 rose by 70 cm on 16 May breaking through the dams and flooding the main street. The two parts of the town were only accessible by trucks and power vehicles. Twenty-four houses collapsed and many became uninhabitable; water and electricity supply was irregular and the school year had to be closed early.

During the recovery efforts, between 20 and 30 June, the Barankovics István Foundation organised a trip to Budapest for the affected children in Edelény in order to help them overcome the trauma and for their parents to facilitate the recovery process.³ This project included the trip for 28 children and 3 accompanying teachers, who were staying at the Csillebérc Youth and Leisure Centre. Many had never been to Budapest, so the plan included visits to famous sights, such as the Parliament Building, Heroes' Square, the City Park, the Basilica, the Margaret Island, and the Museums of Sciences and Transportation. Other special trips included the forest train, the Visegrád Toboggan Park, swimming pools, the Tropicarium, the Capital Circus of Budapest, and the zoo. The

³ Archives of the Barankovics István Foundation. Our own and joint projects. 2010.

group was transported in a high-comfort bus on these trips, to the accommodation afterwards and finally back home.

Both projects were implemented in order to allow these children's parents to rebuild their houses and provide a safe and healthy home for their families. The rescue efforts included the reparation of the damaged sewage network, disinfecting all the drinking water supply systems as well as affected buildings.

At the same time, the feedback we received also shows that these children were given a real opportunity to forget about the disaster.



Source of the flood photos: László J. Kremmer: Flood in Borsod! June 2010
<https://www.slideshare.net/kremmer/rvz-2010-4478025>