I. DESCRIPTION OF THE OBSERVATORY

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Nagycenk Geophysical Observatory was founded in 1956–1957 and it has been operated since then by the Geodetic and Geophysical Institute of the Earth Science Center, Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

The observatory is situated about 10 km to E of the city Sopron and 60 km SE of Vienna, on the southern shore of lake Fertő. The observatory lies on thick conductive sediment preserving the site from far industrial noise and it is surrounded by the Fertő-Hanság National Park which helps to shelter the long term measurements from any change caused by nearby manmade activity.

The co-ordinates of the observatory

3-character IAGA code: **NCK**

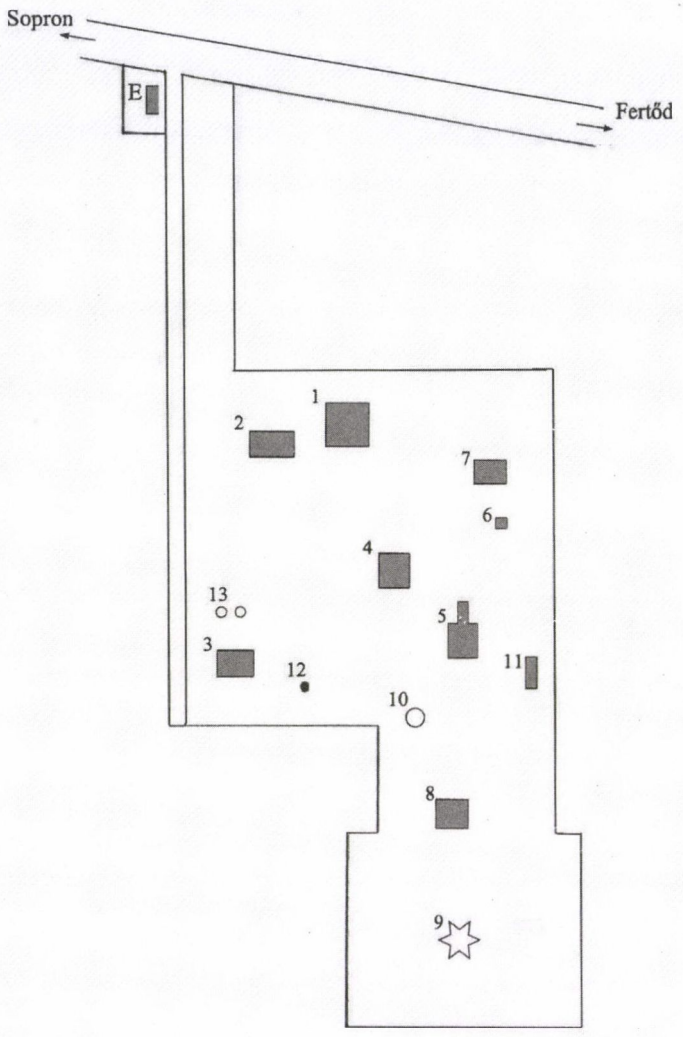
Geographic co-ordinates:

φ	=	47°38′ (N)
λ	=	16°43′ (E)
Altitude	=	153.70 m (magnetic house)
McIllwain L	=	1.9

Measurements and reports started in 1957 (International Geophysical Year) with earth current data. As it is customary the potential differences are measured in N-S and E-W directions with electrode spacings of 500 m. Low polarization lead plate electrodes are buried about 2 m below the surface. Potential differences are recorded with 1 sec and 10 sec sampling rate. Exceptionally long time series cover nearly four solar cycles.

Continuous observation of atmospheric electricity started in 1961. Slow variation (DC component of vertical atmospheric electric field) is measured between the ground and an electrode (at 1 m height) around which the potential is equalized by means of a radioactive collector. Potential gradient is recorded with 15 sec sampling rate. Point discharge is measured with stainless steel tip mounted on the roof of the atmospheric electricity building.

Table I. Observatory site diagram



E – Entrance, 1 – Main building with staff hostel and electronic laboratory, 2 – Telluric instruments and office, 3 – Atmospheric electricity centre (laboratory of Schumann resonance, potential gradient, point discharge and radiovawe absorption measurements), 4 – Magnetic absolute house with four pillars, 5 – Underground magnetic variometer chambers, 6 – Proton magnetometer (DI/DD) hut, 7 – Computer centre (data loggers, server of local network, satellite transmitter) 8 – Ionosonde station, electric and mechanical workshop, 9 – Ionosonde D-antenna, 10 – Meteorological station, 11 – ELF induction coil chamber, 12 Ball antenna (Schumann resonance antenna), 13 – Potential gradient sensors

Continuous observation of geomagnetic elements with control of the absolute observations began in 1961. The observatory has belonged to the INTERMAGNET co-operation since 1993. Data are transmitted via METEOSAT satellite to geomagnetic information nodes and made also available to the international research community on CD ROM.

Since 1967 ionospheric measurements have also been carried out. Lower ionosphere is studied using A3 (oblique incidence, LF radiowave absorption) method.

The early nineties are to be considered as a transition period in the observatory again. Schumann resonance measurements started in 1993, an ionosonde station type IPS 42 works since 1996 and a scientific meteorological station was installed in 1996. The meteorological station is based on a Campbell CR10X measurement and control modul, temperature, humidity, wind speed, wind direction, rainfall and radiation sensors.