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METHODS AND RESULTS OF TWO BORDER RESEARCHES ON THE HUNGARIAN-UKRAINIAN- SLOVAKIAN TRI-BORDER AREA

Based on the consequences of two researches carried out on the Hungarian-Ukrainian-Slovakian tri-border area we tried to reveal the region's social processes especially the effect of the border on the inhabitants. It was also the goal to explore cross border networks, and differences between the Hungarian-Slovakian and the Hungarian-Ukrainian border.

The aim of this paper is twofold. First to present some migration and network-related results of a former border project (Border as a complex system¹) while the second part is addressed to the methods being used and developed in our present research, (EUBORDERREGIONS²).

Keywords Hungarian-Ukrainian tri-border area, methodology, network, migration, youth, income generation

Some results of the “Border as complex system” project

In summer 2011 Eötvös Loránd University (Budapest) has conducted a research at the Ukrainian-Slovakian-Hungarian tri-border territory using both quantitative and qualitative methods. In our presentation we summarized the outcomes of three subtopics: border's

¹ The fieldwork and the research “*Border as a complex system*” was part of the program „*For Knowledge on a European Scale, ELTE*”, supported by the European Union and co-financed by the European Social Fund (grant agreement no. TAMOP 4.2.1/B-09/1/KMR-2010-0003)
<http://kp.elte.hu/nagy-rendszerek/kutatocsoportok/a-hatar-mint-komplex-rendszer-1>

² <http://euborderregions.eu/en>

effects on organizational networks, features of income generation abroad and students' perception of the border.

Bridges and barriers – borders' effects on organizational networks

The data were collected through personnel and phone interviews using snowball sample. The whole dataset contains 208 actors nominated by 60 organizations.

In the overall data most of the organizations are state owned (56%) and have Hungarian seats (51%). As the first table shows below, the distribution of organizations by sector is similar in the three countries. The actors – around 55 percent - are mostly state-owned organizations, while there is only 16-17 percent who work in the business sector. We experienced a small difference in the proportion of the civil organizations and the church: Ukraine has the more religious actors, but the fewer NGO-s in the network.

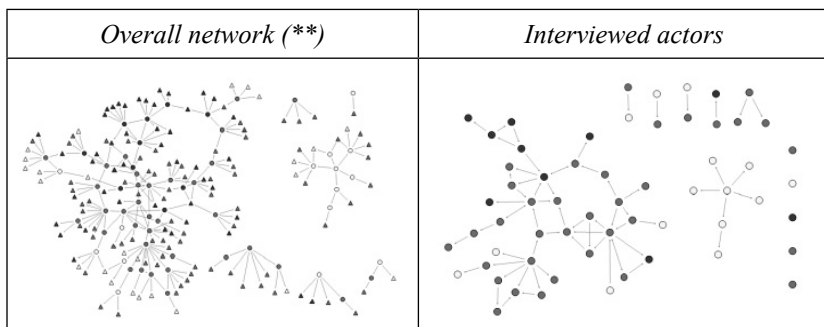
1. Table

Organizations by sector and country in % (N)

	Governmental	Business	NGO	Religious	SUM
Hungary	(60) 56	(18) 17	(25) 24	(4) 4	(107) 100
Slovakia	(21) 53	(6) 15	(9) 23	(4) 10	(40) 100
Ukraine	(33) 59	(9) 16	(7) 13	(7) 13	(56) 100
SUM	(114) 56	(33) 16	(41) 20	(15) 7	(203) 100

The network is organized into one large (162 actors, 78%) and six smaller components. There is only one single-national component. In this network, relations are centred at the interviewed organizations and form star shape. There is only a few closed shapes (e.g. triplets and clicks) formed.

Figure: The overall network and the network of the interviewed actors ()*



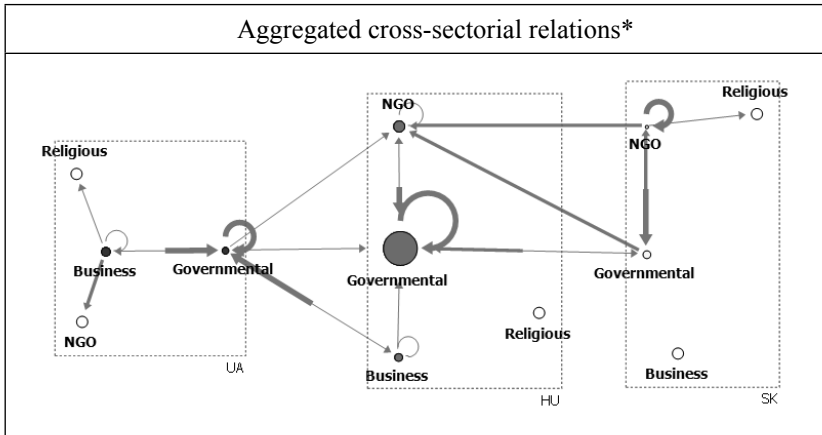
() Red refers to Hungary, yellow Slovakia, blue Ukraine.*

*(**) Circle shaped nodes were interviewed.*

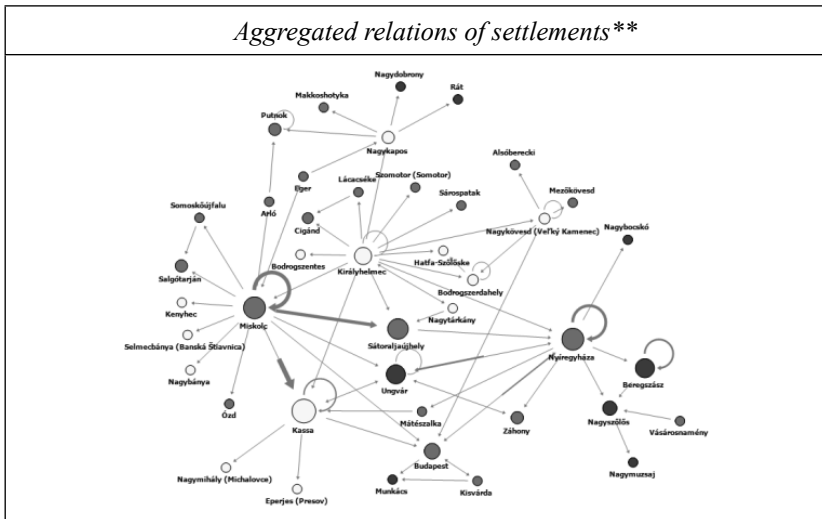
The network of the interviewed actors shows different results: this network has only sixty actors and it is much more connected. Although there are similarities – there is also one large component consists of the sixty-two percent of organizations – there are many differences compared to the overall network: Here we are able to identify the central actors, closed shapes, triplets and so on.

Sectorial relations are highly influenced by the borders. Mostly the sectors are connected to each other inside the countries. As we see on Figure 2. although in Hungary the church, in Slovakia the business sector remains separated, but the other sectors are connected to at least one other sector's organizations. Cross-border picture here is different: the main broker of relations is the state. Hungarian state-owned actors have relations to both Ukrainian and Slovakian actors, as we see mostly to state-owned organizations. Church remains closed inside the countries in all cases, while civic actors work differently in Ukraine (they have just in-country relations), and in the other two cases: there is a relatively strong and vital connection among the civic sectors of Slovakia and Hungary.

2. Figure: Sectoral and settlement network



(*) The letters sign the countries (HU=Hungary, UA=Ukraine, SK=Slovakia). The size of the nodes refers to the number of outgoing relations a node has. Empty nodes have less than 10 outgoing relations. The line thickness is proportionate with the strength of ties.



(**) The line-thickness refers to the strength (number) of ties. The node size refers to the number of out-going ties.

The connection among countries is embedded in cultural similarity: as the right picture of Figure 2 shows the connected settlements have Hungarian majority or a great Hungarian minority in Slovakia and Ukraine as well. Relations among Hungary and the other two countries show a different structure. Larger Hungarian cities, like Miskolc have vital relations to smaller villages and towns in Slovakia. Besides that, smaller settlements on the different sides of the border have relations with each other. The Ukrainian-Hungarian networks are smaller and mainly formed among larger cities. Uzhhorod and Berehove collects the relations on the Ukrainian side, while Nyíregyháza in Hungary.

Brokerage

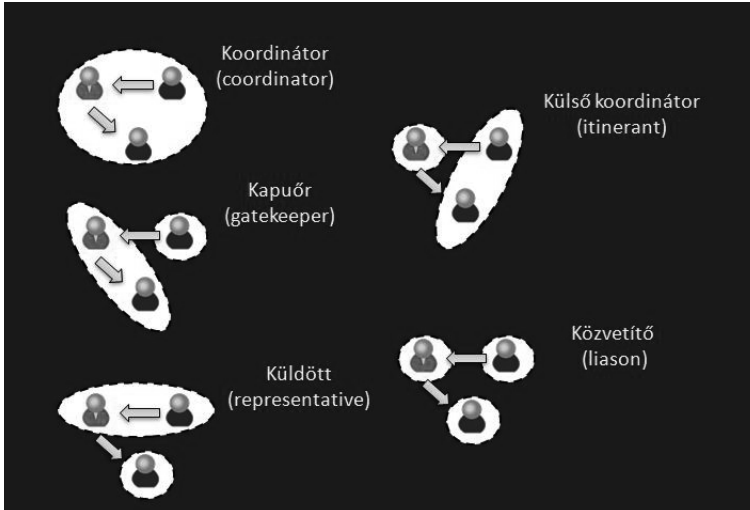
According to Granovetter (1973) brokers are the connection between different groups even they have only one connection with each of them. The concept of broker was developed more precisely by Gould and Fernandez (1989) as they determined five types of it.

The coordinator's role is important within a group. It is an actor which has in and out coming connections as well, so it is able to mediate among other actors or to provide the flow of information.

With consideration of two groups' relation, Gould and Fernandez identify three types. The gatekeeper only receives the incoming ties without trying to connect to others. The representative represents the groups (for example a country abroad), while the itinerant is the member of one group, but also establishes connections to members of an outside group. For example if the relation between a mother and her child is problematic, a psychologist can help them to solve their problem.

And finally liason can be identified in case of at least three different groups. This role coordinates between two other groups. Using the previous family example if a couple divorced and they do not want to communicate with each other a jurist can mediate between them.

3. Figure: Five types of brokerage



In our analysis we show the actors brokerage roles regarding to the three countries (see Table 2). In Hungary and Ukraine we can identify coordinators but this role is almost missing in Slovakia. In Hungary the governmental organizations are the basic coordinators, but the business actors have an important role in Ukraine, as well.

The missing liason shows that there is a structural hole among the three countries because there is no organization which could coordinate the cooperation between them.

The results of the brokerage show us that there are organizations and actors which are inherently mediators, for example chambers and consuls. The Hungarian consul in Uzhhorod has an important role but we cannot see a similar actor on the other side of the border. The Hungarian consul in Kosice is also almost invisible and since the Slovakian consul's seat is outside the region (in South-East-Hungary) we are not able to compare their roles. Slovakia has a consul in Uzhhorod, while Ukraine has one in Presov but none of the actors mentioned them. To summarize, the efficiency of governmental brokers are low, but actors from other sectors are not able to fulfil these roles.

2. Table

Brokerage results

Name	Country	Coordinator	Gatekeeper	Representative	Itinerant	Liason	SUM
Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Government	HU	14	0	9	0	0	23
VÁTI Hungarian Non-profit Limited Liability Company for Regional Development and Town Planning	HU	11	4	2	0	1	18
Kiút Regional Development Association (Záhony)	HU	6	3	1	1	0	11
Hungarian-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry	HU	0	0	6	5	0	11
Bodrog Tour, Tourist-Information Centre	SK	3	0	2	0	0	5
Nagykövesd Local Government	SK	1	0	4	0	0	5
HUSKROA	SK	0	2	0	1	1	4
University Safarik Kosice	SK	0	3	0	0	0	3
Hungarian Consul in Uzshorod	UA	0	0	5	8	0	13
ADVANCE Transcarpathian Advocacy and Development Centre	UA	6	0	2	0	0	8
Lear	UA	7	0	0	0	0	7
BeregKábel GMBH	UA	5	0	0	0	0	5

Income generation and labour market

The survey based research was led by Endre Sik and Júlia Koltai³. The observed territory was the region which is approximately 50-50 km from the border lines, where 55 settlements were selected randomly. With the help of stratified sampling method 1202 respondents were selected from the 18-65 age group using special quotas in the case of ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia and Ukraine⁴.

There were two main questions:

- How extensive is income generation abroad (as employee or as entrepreneur) in the tri-border region?
- Which factors influence the chance of foreign income generation in this region?

1. table

Income generation abroad - employment and entrepreneurship by border region, country and ethnicity (%)

	Hungarian-Slovakian border region			Hungarian-Ukrainian border region			Total
	Hungarians living in Hungary	Ethnic Hungarians living in Slovakia	Slovakians	Hungarians living in Hungary	Ethnic Hungarians living in Ukraine	Ukrainians	
N	300	200	100	302	200	100	1202
Income generation abroad	6	18	19	5	17	14	11
Employment (part of income generation)	4	12	10	1	11	8	6
Entrepreneurship	3	8	10	4	9	7	6

The results of the multivariate analysis suggest that those groups that have a good labour market position (ie. younger, male, qualified) are the ones who mainly move in connection with income generation. These practices are generally embedded in other foreign activities of the individual or the household: those who have adequate human resources (ie. language knowledge) and social capital (ie. connections) are the most likely to move.

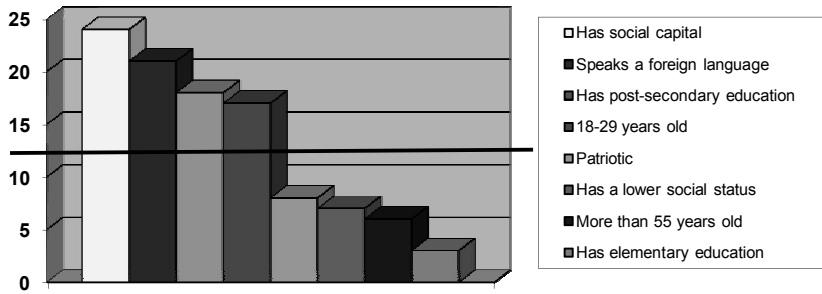
³ EndreSik – senior researcher at TÁRKI Research Institute, professor at Eötvös-Loránd University

JúliaKoltai – assistant professor at EötvösLoránd University

⁴ mother tongue was the selection criteria in case of these groups

1. chart

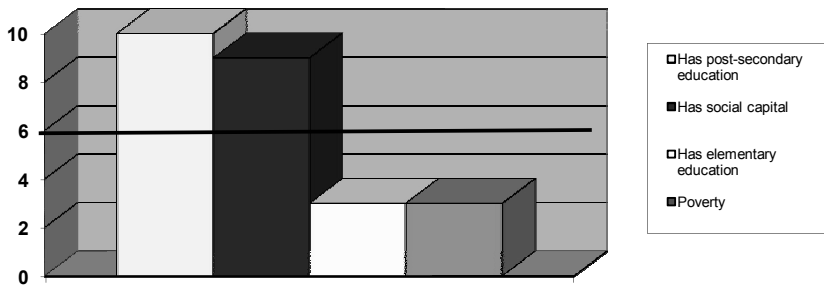
Income generation abroad – values that derive significantly from the mean (13%) by social groups (%)



Working abroad is most likely among those who are dissatisfied and have the appropriate human capital and demographic profile, while the chance to run a business is higher among “smugglers” who have an enterprise within the family and who are likely to be moody due to the problems of frequent border crossing.

2. chart

Enterprise abroad – values that derive significantly from the mean (6%) by social groups (%)



School in the border region

Another part of the research focused on high school students and its aim was to explore the Hungarian and ethnic Hungarian students’ opinion on the possibilities and barriers caused by the tri-border. The researchers – Dorka Sik and Judit Szécsi - chose four

secondary schools which have Hungarian students in the tri-border area. In these institutions 9 focus groups were organized with the students, and semi-structured interviews were taken with the head of the schools.

The selected institutions: Gymnázium Kráľovský Chlmec (Slovakia), Bethlen Gábor High School, Berehove (Ukraine), Kossuth Lajos (No. 4.) Secondary School (Berehove, Ukraine), Kossuth Lajos High School, Vocational School and Dormitory (Sátoraljaújhely, Hungary)

The discussed topics can be arranged along 4 dimensions: language, identity, welfare and closed vs. opened borders. Based on these, three types of students can be formed:

- (1) “Leavers”: those who would like to spend some time (shorter or longer period) in Hungary (in the case of ethnic Hungarians) or in Western Europe in order to work or study there
- (2) “Integrated”: they stay in their country of origin, they learn the language of the state and focus on how to make their living there
- (3) “Stayers”: they won’t leave their country of origin either, but there are two sub-groups based on whether (a) they make compromises (ie. learning the language), approaching the neighboring nations with an open attitude or (b) they form a close up, considering their presence in the country as a mission.

In the case of the Slovakian-Hungarian border it seems that the plans including mobility and further education are more of an economic issue. “Getting by” is the key expression and the most important factor of motivation, based on which the youngsters make their decision. But in Berehove due to the strong presence of the border the motifs of national identity and the Hungarian patriotic elements are more tangible and distinct when it comes to future plans. While students in Kráľovský Chlmec “*go over to Hungary*”, the students from Berehove “*go out to Hungary*.”⁵

⁵ „*kimennek Magyarba*” - „*átmennek Magyarba*”

About the methods being used in EUBORDERREGIONS project

EUROBORDERREGION is a 4 year-long FP7 project launched in 2011 involving 14 partners with the main objective to compare the different types of economic, social and territorial cohesion as well as regional development potentials observed on the outer borders of the EU.

The mixed methodology (combining qualitative and quantitative methods) being used within the framework of the project enables us to carry out a deep analysis combining the benefits of the two kinds of researches. Since the project is partially based on the findings and methods of the former project “*Border as a complex system*”, we had the possibility to develop the methods and learn from past experiences.

We decided to use a mixed methodology engaging qualitative and quantitative methods including (1) expert interviews and mapping of homepages, (2) structured observations, (3) media analysis, (4) stakeholders’ forum and (5) analysis of statistical data⁶ in order to carry out a comprehensive report not leaving out geographical, statistical, economic, historical and geopolitical aspects.

In accordance with the goals of the project the aim of expert interviews (1) is to gain information about the opinion of stakeholders about

- CBC participation,
- the effects of CBC projects on the area and the organization,
- and the effect of the proximity of the border on the region on the life of certain actors (local governments, inhabitants, NGO-s).

Altogether 50 expert interviews will be conducted (25 from each side of the border⁶) with the representatives of the most important organizations including governmental and non-governmental organizations, entrepreneurs, schools and churches. Before starting the interviews the key information about the organization will be put together into a data base with a strong focus on the cross-border relations appearing on home pages serving as an important basis of

⁶ In the present paper the qualitative methods will be introduced.

the network-analysis. To be able to conduct the network analysis properly we decided to use the snowball sampling method to gain new participants to the interviews.

The structured observation (2) is a rather soft/anthropological tool and is arranged around four main activities. The first one is the border-traffic observation which is carried out four times in the observation year (one week in each of the four seasons). The almost random allocation of observation units allows us to make conclusions about the nature and extent of the traffic. The second one aims to compare exchange rates of the national currencies (on both side of the border) with the rate appearing on the homepage of the national bank. The third tool aims to explore the price differences among the most popular goods (including gas) being sold on both side of the border. We compare the price of gas as well as certain products' prices. The goods selected are commonly known as "home", "neighbour" and "multinational" products in the shops and open markets of Ukraine and Hungary.

Media representation of the neighbouring country is also to be observed. We analyse the content of online and offline media (3) examining the homepages of settlements in the border area, while also analysing the products of the popular printed media available on each side of the border.

Based on our experience of a former expert workshop and using the results of the current research we will set up two stakeholders' forum (4) on both side of the border inviting the most important actors. The analysis of the forums will be incorporated into the final study.

List of sources

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