AT THE EXTERNAL BORDER OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Abstract. The study introduces the main Hungarian borderline researches in the last 20 years. It is emphasizing the priorities of the research tasks, and focussing on especially two of them: delimiting and the wide variety of co-operations. At the end it summarizes the steps of Hungarian-Serbian borderline co-operations in the last 20 years.

Rezumat. La frontieră externă a Uniunii Europene. Studiul prezintă cele mai importante cercetări despre frontiere din ultimii 20 de ani. Saliniază prioritățile sarcinilor de cercetare și se concentrează cu precădere asupra a două dintre ele: delimitarea și larga varietate a cooperatorilor. La final, rezumă pașii făcuți în ultimii 20 de ani pentru cooperarea de la granița ungaro-serbă.

Key words: Schengen border, delimiting borderline co-operations, borderline co-operations

Cuvinte cheie: granița Schengen, delimitarea cooperării transfrontaliere, cooperare transfrontalieră

INTRODUCTION

Hungary joined the membership of Schengen on 11 December, 2007. This step resulted in forming 3 new border types at our 7 borders (fig. 1). Moreover the Hungarian border became the external border of the European Union in the south and in the north-east. It also means that our country takes serious tasks in the border-duties in the European Union. Therefore the Hungarian researchers have to pay more attention to the topic.

The borderline researches started 20 years ago, since that the variety and multi-dimensionality of researches, the expanded topics, the increasing number of the borderline researchers have been showing the importance of the border topic analysis not only in Hungary but also in the European Union. Since the last 20 years beside this multi-dimensionality, the border has become one of the main research topics of the social sciences such as Geography, Sociology, History, Economics just to mention some of them. It means disciplinary research with its colourfulness and expandability. The Geography researchers have bigger role in this topic as the base of this research is the space at the borderlines and as we know, Geo-Science is the science of the space.
The Treaty of Schengen was signed in 1985. Based on the treaty the control personal traffic was cancelled at the internal borders of the European Union, at the same time the control at the external borders of the European Union was reinforced.

The Hungarian-Austrian border section became the external border of the European Union in 1990. In 17 years this external border moves to the East, to the area of the Hungarian-Serbian and the Hungarian-Ukrainian borders. Such as in the future the border moves to the East again, to the eastern, southern and northern borders of Romania.

Nowadays the Schengen-zone has 20 members. By joining to Schengen we became the member of the SIS information system and the VIS visa-information system as well. Lately the differences appeared at the 7 Hungarian borders has been the key border research topic in Hungary.

There have been 3 different types of borders at the 7 borders of Hungary. The first is the internal border of the Schengen-zone such as the Hungarian-Austrian, the Hungarian-Slovenian and the Hungarian-Slovakian borders. The external borders of the Schengen-zone are the Hungarian-Croatian, the Hungarian-Serbian and the Hungarian-Ukrainian borders. However, the third type is the Hungarian-Romanian border which is unique as it is an external zone, but as having established one-stop border crossing system when Romania entered the European Union, the Romanian citizens can cross the border with the identity card. At the Hungarian-Serbian border, as meaning the external border, they have implemented stricter actions. On the other hand reinforcing the existing and new co-operations and involving them into the European Union processes has become the goal at the Hungarian-Serbian borders. The personal minor traffic passport issued to the ones living nearby the border is still valid. The European Union provides proper financial support for meeting these goals.

**1. THE NEW BORDERS OF SCHENGEN**
2. THE KEY BORDER RESEARCH AREAS

2.1 The delimiting of the borderline area

Defining the “borderline area” has always been a pivotal question of the borderline researches (…). Since stating how far the border expands and which places belong to this area is a challenging task because first the “borderline area” has to be defined clearly. There have been more tries of this with more or less success (…), but so far I have not seen the proper definition for delimiting which would meet all criteria. Although I made a suitable method of it, however, this method also includes a bit of subjectivity. To use the model in practice needs the process of a huge database therefore the application of the model has difficulties.

2.2 Co-operations

The analysis of the questions of sociology, economy, demography, ethnology, environment, culture, infrastructure, vocational education, life quality and history reflects to the key limits which supports the borderline co-operations. The borderline researches are to clearly uncover the multi-dimensional co-operations. Certainly the co-operations born at the 3 types of the borders are not the same. Therefore the subject of the analysis in this matter is to compare the 3 types of borders. Among the multi-dimensional co-operations the most researched areas are the employment, vocational education (educational tourism), infrastructure, environment-protection and the different branches of the tourism. Working out, realizing and controlling the legal background belong closely to the co-operations settled.

2.3 The hindering asymmetries of the co-operations

In many cases the existing asymmetries hinder the birth and expansion of different co-operations. These asymmetries between the two borders can be the differences in life-quality, economic development, public administration, the legal system of enterprises, the information flow, language boundaries, the Schengen-zone, language difficulties and application practice. Exploring in depth of these asymmetries can help on solving the problem and the fruitful expansion of co-operations.

3. THE HUNGARIAN-SERBIAN BORDER

Different types of economic cooperation could have been observed along the eastern, southern, western and northern sections of the Serbian-Hungarian borderline. The former and present economic and political relations established between the referred countries sharing a common border were the most influential in driving the directions of these co-operations. However, there is one common feature of the regions lying along the borderline. Namely, the areas across the border to a higher or lesser degree used to form a part of the Hungarian state. The size of the region formerly being a part of Hungary played a crucial role in shaping the near-border relations at the turn of the 20th-21st centuries.

3.1 The incentives of economic development: enterprising intensification – among the borderline

- Geographic location: border location, nearness, open border
- Transport
Social background: bank system, legal system, market conditions
Economical environment: developed industry, or developed agriculture, or delivery, or scientific life (researchers)
Human environment: employment, unoccupied labour force, high qualification, low wages, migration (immigrants)

The main minor border co-operations at the Hungarian-Serbian border are the economy co-operation, the education, tourism, institutional co-operation, brotherhood-locality relations, friendship-family relations and cultural relationships. Based on this it is clear that very colourful relations have been born since the last 20 years at the Hungarian-Serbian border. Among of them the most significant ones are the economy, educational, medical tourism, shopping tourism and the friendship-family relations in the area. The enrichment in investments is key sign for the economy co-operations in the last teens of years.

In the 90’s because of the Yugoslavian wars young immigrants arrived in two flows from the South in the Hungarian borderline region. 79% of border crossers was immigrants, 7% of them arrived to work and 8% of them intended to learn here. The immigrants set up small and medium size enterprises primarily in the borderline areas. By 1996 more than 1000 enterprises had been founded in Szeged. They had been spreading quickly in the area as there were Yugoslavian enterprises in all cities of the South-Hungarian Plain region within 5 years (Fig. 2). The centre of the enterprising was Szeged. Many small enterprises were set up not only in cities but also in the villages, we have to mention two key enterprising zones such as the borderline area and Szeged –agglomeration zone.

![Fig. 2 The annual changes (%) of the Yugoslavian enterprises in the border area of Csongrád and Bács-Kiskun counties](image)

Nowadays the number of Serbian enterprises is increasing in the centres and Szeged, although their numbers and importance have been decreased in the countryside villages.
To decrease the separating character of the border, to develop the cross-border infrastructure and to reinforce the community relations will gain priority in the future.

Moreover these priorities we can mention as key tasks to encourage the minor borderline co-operations at the Hungarian-Serbian border by keeping the strict control and to increase the role of the Duna-Körös-Maros-Tisza Euro-Region (fig. 3).

3.2 Interviews at the local governments of settlements

On the basis of the evaluation of interviews with mayors and experts of the local governments in the near-border region the following statements can be made in questions regarding Yugoslavian run enterprises and other business forms:

- All local authorities exercised a friendly attitude, with more or less success in real life towards investments and the start of new foreign businesses
- Yugoslavian enterprises were widespread in the vicinity of rural settlements and the homesteads likewise, although a large portion of these proved to be fictitious
- The majority of entrepreneurs were ethnic Hungarians of Vojvodina, with a few exceptions, where the Serbian owner spoke Hungarian as well. The majority of the businesses are family run and several of the former Yugoslavian citizens owning these businesses are now citizens of Hungary.
- The majority of the businesses is mixed (Yugoslavian and Hungarian) and was established on the grounds of former relations of friendship and kinship. The entrepreneurs were highly experienced finding the most profitable areas for themselves and the villages as well.
- The majority of businessmen came from settlements along the border (Fig. 4.).
- The newly arrived Yugoslavian entrepreneurs established a good relationship with both the local authorities and the local inhabitants very often supporting financially the civil organizations and charity programs of the villages as well (schools, kindergartens, churches, culture halls.). They all showed high willingness to
support culture. In a number of cases, the leaders of the local government seek initial advice of these businessmen regarding future development plans and strategies, and they all have good feasible ideas.

- All villages had a positive feedback on these enterprises.
- Almost all mayors expressed their intention to do their best to keep these investors in their villages.
- In case of a single settlement a brotherhood was established enhancing cultural and sport exchange between Dávod and Doroszló.

3.3 The results of interviews prepared with the Yugoslavian businessmen.

- The majority of the entrepreneurs are young (between 20–40 years of age), Hungarian and has a family. The majority of businesses are run by these families, who live in the villages as well. The number of employees is consequently low. The majority of business owners have a university or college degree, among the younger generations we have come across some with a high school degree only.
- Most of the businessmen have considerable practical experiences, as they were running businesses formerly in Vojvodina as an affiliate of a German firm as well before migrating over to Hungary.
- Everybody had some sort of a local knowledge and formerly established relations before they actually moved across the border.
- All of them admitted to have some sort of a religious affiliation. However, none of them actively practices their religion here as they did it in Vojvodina as well.
- 90% of them come from settlements just across the border and maintain a close relationship with those staying behind in the form frequent weekly or monthly visits paid to them.
- The major reason for immigration was uniformly an escape. Either from being drafted to the army or the uncertainty of the economy. The majority also brought their appliances and machines with themselves.
- The given villages were chosen as a site of settlement and starting new businesses, because they had an extensive network of past relations and a good local knowledge there, which encouraged investments.
- There was a uniform will for ultimate settlement in Hungary, and more precisely the villages where they started their businesses. Numerous of them actually received Hungarian citizenship. As an alternative, the reestablishment of a local enterprise on the other side of the border in Vojvodina was also among the future plans offering multiple income support, which would ultimately create real cross-border economic relations. Some of the businessmen were actually running businesses on both sides of the border, commuting on a daily basis to Vojvodina, where the Hungarian workers received their training. During the times of the embargo, exports were implemented from the Hungarian premises. This is a real cross-border cooperation.
• All business owners purchased a house of a plot in the village and established good relations with the locals and their neighbors, successfully settling in. They themselves were also satisfied with the quality of the neighborhood they live in.
• Their relationship with the local government is fruitful. They tend to support the village as much as they can and pay the local taxes in order. One of them in Röszke paid his taxes for 10 years in advance, which was a true benefit for local infrastructural developments on one side. On the other hand it also showed his willingness to stay in the village on the long run.
• Their relationship with the authorities is also good. However, they all noted slight problems with arranging their official deals.
• The majority of the enterprises were small, with some medium-sized businesses located along the border.
• The major business activities were as follows: mainly those related to services (wholesale and retailing, export-import, catering (from pubs to restaurants), bakery, pizzeria, pastry, grocery stores built on shopping tourism, perfumes and cosmetics trading). Only some of them were engaged in processing goods working with a maximum of 10 employees ranging from plastic products, through wood processing, machine assembly and green-grocery processing.
• As shown by the enterprise pyramids, these enterprises have small capital power. However, one must bear in mind that small and medium scale businesses can be outstanding regarding the future economic development of smaller rural areas.
• Development was among the future plans of all business owners. This involves investment into new machines, the expansion of activities as well as the employment of additional work force as well. The development strategies were all realistic and clearcut. As they all noted to have a decent knowledge of the odds and bits of the Hungarian market economy gained during the past 10 years, and the future in this light is highly promising.

REFERENCES

