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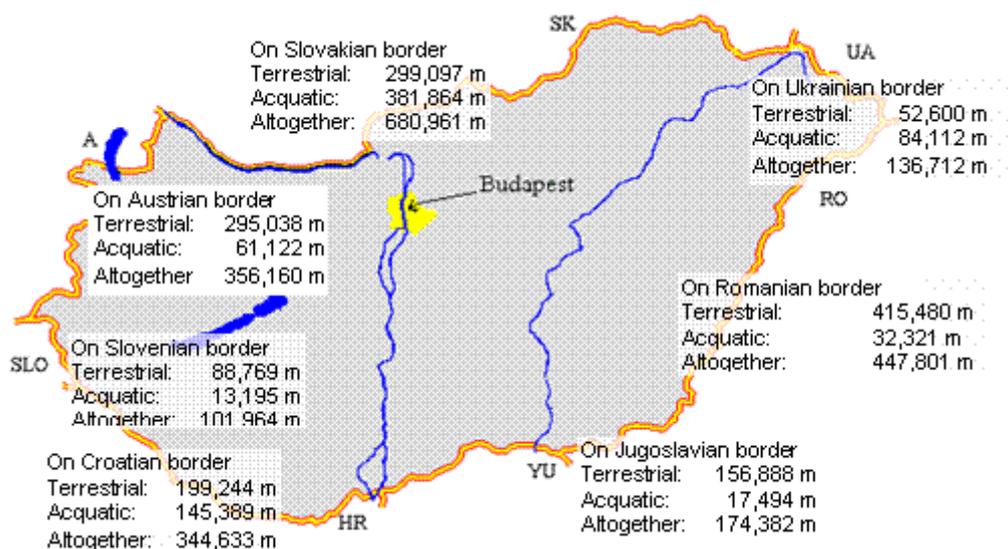
Bridges of Border Crossing Cultures and their Builders

The title prompts certain optimism and conceals dangers. A source of danger is that a specific cultural pattern (the cultural impression of society) appears to be torn into two or more parts and also, in eighty-two years there have been divergent elements integrating in the autonomous development of those parts. Do these parts want to reunite like this? What supports optimism is, however, that we talk about existing bridges and the continuous work of their builders. The question is: in what condition are the bridges? Are there enough builders, do they have enough technical knowledge, commitment, and are there resources available to build new bridges?

1. The condition of our regions and our region concepts

There have been bridge builders in the history of Europe. One thousand and thirty-one years ago Otto the Great received the forming Hungary and Poland into the system of European states and came to political and economic agreements with them.^[1] Also, exactly three hundred years ago Montesquieu's thoughts on "The Unity of Europe" outlined the possible European integration as interregional and international economic and cultural relations. "Europe is nothing less than a vast nation consisting of several smaller peoples." "civilised nations may be regarded as members of one large republic and the basis of their power is the economy."^[2] The bridge builders are progressing, while for those who are burning down the bridges only have minutes left.

There were also people burning bridges and building borders by putting there mines and barbed-wires in Europe and in the world, but their names are better to be forgotten.

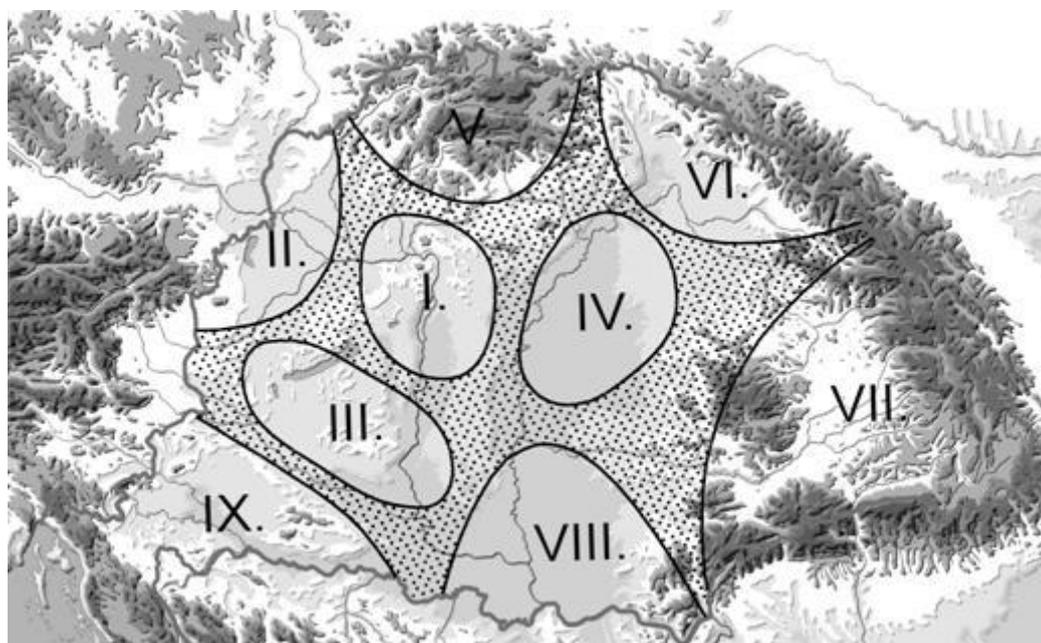


The European Union is the integration of states and regions at the same time. There are challenges in every era that can only be taken up by people of that given period, because if they fail to do so time will pass by and other solutions may arise. The European integration is a phenomenon, an achievement, and a process at the same time. On 1st May, 2004 the integration of the accessing countries appeared as an achievement, but with it whole and damaged configurations of regional spatial systems got into the European organisation.

The State Borders of the Republic of Hungary

On the Slovenian, Austrian and Slovakian sections of the borders of the Hungarian Republic, the regional territories have also become part of the European “state” on the length of 1139 kilometres and eighty-five metres. The Hungarian territories of the frontiers of Ukraine, Romania, Serbia-Montenegro and Croatia belong to the territory of the European integration, while the parts of the regions on the other side belong to the states waiting for accession, and are their integral part on the length of 1103.535 kilometres.

The borders of the Hungarian state cut through the historic regional system in the Carpathian basin and according to our illustration there is only one intact region in Hungary.^[3]



Historical Regions of Hungary

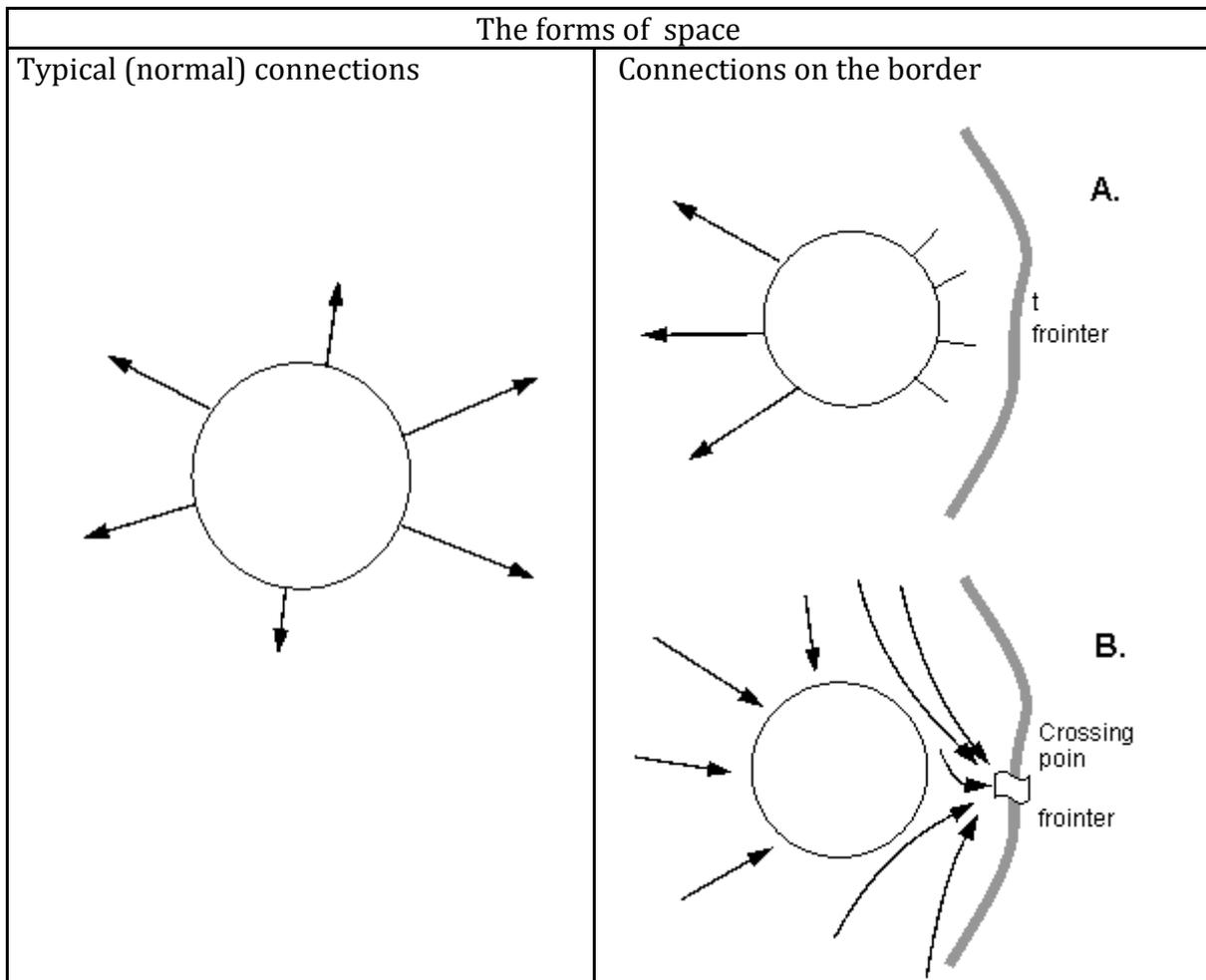
Bridge builders also have to be aware of the fact that regionalisation does not only have historical context but has economic, legal, administrative, political, cultural, structural elements and those concerning the conception of the future as well^[4]. Therefore historical regions are also characterised by “changing geometry.”



In this aspect we could talk about (interregional) bridges of co-operating, changing historical regions whose building is still in its early stage in our area, or we can observe the intraregional bridges attempting to create regional integrity in the torn apart frontier regions whose condition, content and “bonding material” has different quantitative and qualitative features. Our task here is the latter. In the observation we have to lay aside the point of view of the ideological, post-nationalistic virtual border-revision and instead we have to open grounds for the structural, functional approach which takes into consideration the asymmetric development of the two halves of the regions and the fact of “changing geometry” as well.

2. The Bridges of Culture

There were also municipal and institutional co-operations between states and frontier counties in the second (closing) period of the Kádár-ian socialism which, under the control of the authorities and the party, were meant to serve as evidence for the unbreakable friendship between socialist people and enhanced the spread of proletarian internationalism beside representing Hungarian culture in non-socialist countries. These bridges, however, are different from those of the present because the relations built in the seventies and eighties were political necessities and attachments of an ideology while the present ones belong to the basic functions of an operating complex social system.



Forms of Spatial Relations

Illustration from Dr. József Tóth's lecture held at "Mindentudás Egyeteme"
 (University of Omniscience – TV programme)

The spatial relations of frontier regions may be practically classified according to actors and financiers. The funds of the European Union and its funds, our international actors and the National Developmental Plan presume national financing and state actors. We cannot neglect the builders of bridges that ensure co-operation between statistical and planned regions, counties and small regions, towns and villages, and we cannot put aside the multitude of smaller footbridges connecting the narrower paths of institutions, organisations, blood relations and friendships either.



- The structural funds of the EU: The European Fund of Regional Development, The European Social Fund, The European Agricultural Fund; and the Cohesion Fund have offered numerous possibilities for regional development. From the AGENDA reform budgetary plan of the EU that extends until 2006, the annual fund for SAPARD is 520 million Euro, 1040 million for the cohesion tools (ISPA), 1560 million for the structural assets (PHARE)
From the middle of the eighties co-operation extending over borders is part of the EU's the regional development policy. The EU has devoted 135 million Euro from the pre-accession funds for the development of disadvantaged frontier regions between 1995 and 2003. The programmes of PHARE INTERREG I-II-III CBC (Cross-Border Cooperation) have been financing large projects (large investments up to 2 million Euro) and small projects (municipal governments, non-profit sector, small businesses. Up to 5-50 thousand Euro) The main interest of the Hungarian – Romanian, Hungarian – Slovenian, Hungarian – Austrian, Hungarian – Slovakian co-operations is not cultural co-operation in the narrower sense, but the basis of these co-operations are: hydrographical investments, economic development, ring roads, industrial parks, sewage works, refuse depots, informational centres, conference centres, border crossing points, bicycle routes. The INTERREG programmes can be three sided and can be applied for by the frontier regions of the already accessed states and those waiting for accession. Other programmes are the LEADER (innovation and support of the innovations of countryside regions and their civilian communities), EMPLOYMENT (NOW, HORIZON, YOUTH-STAR: sub-programmes improving the chances for women, people with changed working capabilities and young people in the labour market), with the EQUAL complex programme from the year 2000.
- The National Developmental Plan also mobilises amounts for the frontier areas as defined in the act on budgetary politics. For the realisation of the above, national, regional and county apparatuses were formed and have been working since 1996. In the NDP, in its operative programme and in the strategic and operative plans of the individual regions one can not only find the plans of cultural bridges but their budgetary funds as well. The councils of the different regional levels are making their plans in collaboration with state, non-profit and entrepreneurial sectors, on the level of NUTS III-V there are particular entrepreneurial, state and non-profit actors.
- The twin-city and twin-town relations are also suitable for the restoration of the traditions of frontier region-fragments and can help their new organisation. It is worth to divide these relations into two types: on the one hand we can talk about spatial organisation based on the complex co-operation of towns and cities of similar size and function according to the principle of spatial proximity (Osijek-Pécs; Záhony-Csop; Hajdúböszörmény-Szalonta). For most of the twin-city, twin-town relations there is no chance to co-operate in the same small region or region. The city of Pécs has many twin-cities all over the world with relations based on different interests. (The only common organising principle for Lyon, Fellbach, and Lahti is that they are twin-cities of Pécs.) Community cultural relations can be induced by accidental encounters, pres-



tige interests, or genealogy based on modern-age migration. These relations are useful and interesting but do not build bridges between frontier regions. (Pécsvárad-Steiermark: Hausmannstätten; Baden- Württemberg: Kühlshheim.

- The 1999 Bologna Meeting of the Ministers of Education brought a decisive change in reorganisation of the institutions of higher education. According to the Bologna Declaration and its continuation, the declarations of the conferences held in Prague in 2001 and in Berlin in 2003, two-phase education has been introduced in the countries of the European Union. The bachelor education is the first phase, which is nationally financed as “public welfare”. Built on this, there is a master (university) education which is carried out on a wider scale, in the so called European Higher Education Region. Some of the credits gained in non-accredited courses of higher education can be taken into consideration at “college level” admissions. There is a possibility for transfer from the first phase to the second or the students are able to enter the European labour market. The draft of the European Credit Transfer System which is planned to be introduced in 2005, the acceptance of the Magna Charta of European universities, in which the exchange of teachers and students between institutions is regarded as a European tradition, the Lisbon declaration of UNESCO and the Council of Europe on the equivalence of diplomas - presuming the that educational systems are comparable and can be harmonised – have started a really radical reform in higher education^[5].

The 2.2 student mobility campaign of the Socrates Erasmus programme has been a great success. Every year, maybe not crowds of students, but one or two of them travel between universities that applied for the Erasmus University Charter.

Universities have three types of inter-university relation systems. The first frame of these relations is Central Eastern Europe where there is a definitely recognisable network-like co-operation. The spatial accessibility, the common traditions, other cultural connections, such as twin-town relations, Hungarian minorities abroad, bilateral agreements make the harmonisation of learning, education and academic studies possible.

In this respect, the most important **strategic partners** of Pécs University are the Karl-Franzens Universität in Graz, the Slovenian Maribor University, the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University in Osijek, the Sapientia Transilvanian Hungarian University, the Serbian Újvidék University, the Romanian Babes-Bolyi University, the Slovakian Konstantin Philosopher University, the Jagiellonski University in Krakow and the Masaryk University in Brno. The Austrian, Slovenian, Croatian, Romanian and Serbian Universities do not belong to the region of the Visegrad Three, not even in the broad sense, therefore they cannot be classified into one spatial system with the others, unless we regard the **Carpathean basin** as the basis of the classification. It is remarkable that the above list does not contain Northern Italian universities that could be our partners in the Alpine-Adriatic region.

The **second circle of universities** contains further **Western European** prestigious institutions, the **third circle** comprises **overseas** institutions in North America, Asia and Australia.



- The **institutions of general education** behave differently in the cultural integration of spatial systems. The conferences, festivals and other events held at **bigger community centres** may extend over the borders, but in the co-operation spontaneity has a more significant role than deliberateness: bridge building is not among the duties of most of these institutions, they do not have the appropriate financial background. The small-regional, county and sometimes regional role of **folk high schools** sometimes includes frontier co-operation and they intend to build bridges in terms of mutual trainings (seminars, symposiums, exhibitions). Yet, the connection is rather odd, for example the co-operation of the Hungarian party in the Patrium and Romanian party means Hungarian-Hungarian and Romanian-Romanian co-thinking. **Cultural associations** rarely build relations over the borders, the local players of the non-profit sector are seldom able to emerge from their particular situation since their energy is devoted to self-supporting and carrying out their functions. Some of the nation-wide associations, however, are capable of multinational collaborations that go over borders, but the two parts of the same region on the two opposite sides of the border is much harder to reunite. We have a similar opinion of the **Regional Centres for Development and Training of Labour Power**. We do not blame them for this, but most of them are located close to the frontiers (Ózd, Miskolc, Debrecen, Szeged, Pécs, Győr, Szombathely) and they lose a potential market by neglecting the areas beyond the borders as their market segment, to say nothing of the fact that the European labour market in the area would give reasons for the expansion of their field of operation.
- The **churches** are institutions that create, preserve and spread culture and they have a significant culture sustaining in frontier areas. One can observe similar impressions of religious systems on both sides of the borders, the religious bridge that goes over the border makes the religious communities stronger. The socio-cultural functions of the churches can be enhanced if the states are able to think in terms of a regional system and if the churches are not left on their own when it comes to financing. (In the Patrium, for example, the Roman catholic, the Protestant, the Romanian orthodox and the Greek catholic churches are present on both sides of the borders. The regional organisation would make the revival of the dying parts possible. The dichotomy of the system of dioceses and the regional spatial structure will not be resolved for a long time. A similar conflict-point can be that the borders of the regions and those of the territorial systems of the Roman catholic, the Protestant, the Serbian orthodox churches are different on the Hungarian, Serbian and Croatian side of the Danube and the Drava).
- The regional media provide the citizens with information, they improve their activities in public life, form regional awareness, strengthen social cohesion, and improve regional culture. on the territory of the numerous members of the Assembly of the European Regions which gathers more than 300 regions all together. (e.g.: Kärnten,; Schleswig- Holstein; Bremen). In the practice of the Hungarian television the central national channels have regional programmes, and this attitude is miles away from the Basel declaration of the assembly of European Regions^[6], according to which “those



regions that have a common border have to promote the co-operation of the frontier areas in accordance with the relevant national laws and international regulations.”

There are occasional exchanges of experiences and consultative meetings on both sides in frontier regions between the experts of the press, radio and television, they send messages to each-others sides and they summarise them in short minority programmes, but these messages should be addressed to the majorities as well. A major change could be done in this area with the least investment by the introduction of regular regional programmes and the publishing of regional newspapers.

- The **bridges of bonds of blood** have weakened in Northern and Western Hungary, the first degree blood-relationships are either bond by second and third degree relations (second and side-cousins) or blood-relationships have been long forgotten. In these regions new international migratory processes cannot be detected in significant numbers. In the past 20 years a considerable number of Hungarian, Romanian and Ukrainian people came to Hungary from the territories of the Partium and Sub-Carpathia, but they did not stay in the Hungarian part of the region but moved further west and are living sporadically or scattered in the country. Their relations with their motherland are burdened with political and economic retaliations, experiences of poverty and fear. The Yugoslavian civil war, which resulted in the disruption of the country, made Hungarians and Croats emigrate in the Southern regions. Most of these refugees stayed in the region and are cultivating their relations over the border.
- The **economic relations** that extend over the borders are realised variedly. There has been an innovation zone established in the area connecting Western Hungary with Burgenland that extends over the Hungarian-Slovenian-Austrian frontier area (see: PHARE CBC I-II programmes). A report^[7] characterised those relations that extend over borders as “relations spanning state borders” and the integration of two sides of the border have started.

Tamás Hardi and István Mezei^[8] who were evaluating the economic phenomena concerning the region on the frontier reported that co-operation is sometimes hindered by the conflicts of prominent politicians on the two sides of the border, on other occasions their co-operation goes back to the local level. The European regional organisations have not improved the performance of the economic and entrepreneurial performances to the extent as it had been expected. Elsewhere “mirror organisations” guarantee the liveliness of the economy on the opposite sides of the borders, but the services are not connected on the full length of the border.

László Dancs^[9], when observing the relations in the Hungarian Sub-Carpathian region, stated that subsistence trading and the issue of refugees leave their mark on the area. Economy and the other side of the frontier region has different meaning for people living on the opposite sides of the borders. For Hungarians in Ukraine the Hungarian part means work and living. For those living on the Hungarian side of the region the part on the other side of the border has no advantages. This is clearly reflected by the multitude of relations in the survey: on the Hungarian side 22,8% of the population have relations over the border, while this figure is 72,1% on the Sub-Carpathian side.

Béla Baranyi’s research in the frontier area of **Hungary, Romania and Ukraine**^[10] drew attention to the characteristics to the regions that extend over the borders: there are few exam-



ples for economic co-operation in the areas which have historical, political, economic structural, demographic, geographical, infrastructural, settlement-geographical disadvantages. Instead, the dominating relations are in the fields of culture, sport, twin-towns, beside other relations.

In the frontier area of **Hungary and Croatia** there were several landing piers built on the Drava, there were civilian airports established in Öcsény, Pogány and Taszár, the border crossing points have been modernised, and the statistical planning region of South Transdanubia has been connected to the South Great Plain Region by a bridge over the Danube. The PHARE CBC small-project fund support was first announced for the region on the two sides of the Drava river in 2003 (Croatian Hungarian Experimental Small Project Fund) in the value of 533 375 Euros. It is worth comparing the applicable themes and the strategic objectives of the area.

Applicable themes

Strategic objectives of the South-Transdanubian planning region

Regional development and town-planning

Economic development and tourism

Development of human resources

Nature and environmental protection

Development of the infrastructure of transport

Tourist trade

Reinforcement of human resources in the region

Improvement of the competitiveness of businesses

The projects of the Small Project Fund are more or less expedient, they draw attention to the low degree of elaboration of frontier co-operation and the weak points of the infrastructure.

3. Bridge builders of culture

If we look at culture in the narrower sense and we only evaluate the initiatives of cultural institutions and the cultural organisations of the non-profit and for-profit sectors, we can place them at different positions on the line of spontaneity and resoluteness. Each one of the frontier developments between the two ends of this line is valuable, the conditions of living should be given to every version, but they should be harmonised, canalised, expediently operated, financed; the developers should be developed and we do not have the appropriate organisations to do so. The necessity of developing the co-operation in frontier areas was recognised by several organisations at a very early stage, they scientifically diagnosed the cultural state of these areas and they informed the participants of their programmes of the methods of development.

The builders of bridges can be the representatives of different professions, but in the management of bridge building there should be experts that are able to build connections in the great variety of cultures, on different levels between different contents, functions and systems of forms. (Development is not a task of financial management for technocrats which may be carried out by anyone. That is too, but besides it may also be a product of legal, sociological, educational-sociological, educational-political, cultural geographical, urban and economic-



geographical, cultural anthropological, organisational-sociological, management and organisational theoretical, andragogical, etc. interdisciplines and multidisciplinary knowledge and practice of sciences.

The **multiplicator training (Der Ort bestimmt die Themen)**^[11] was intended to give subtle theoretical and practical knowledge orientated on a particular problem. The training was organised by the Weddinger VHS in Berlin, the Albert Einstein VHS (Potsdam), the Tiroler VHS (Salzburg), the Hajdúság Folk High School, the Association of Austrian Folk High Schools, and the Institution of International Relations of the Association of German Folk High Schools between 1987 and 1997 with the following topics:

- 1987 Cultural politics
- 1988 National history and identity
- 1990 Intercultural Education at folk high schools
- 1991 Old and new minorities
- 1993 Social transformations and political changes
- 1994 Austria towards Europe and in Europe
- 1995 European institutions and Euro-regions. The Serbian frontier
- 1996 Europe, Hungarians in Central Europe - the Partium
- 1997 Ethnic groups in the Alps-Adriatic region.

Each seminar was somewhat different in terms of methodology due to the length of the training, but consisted of the following main points:

Schedule of the seminar

Methods

- | | |
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| 1. Getting to know each-other, harmonisation | Communicational exercises |
| 2. Definition of the subject of the seminar | Collective learning through games, mind mapping |
| 3. Specification of topics | Brain writing |
| 4. Processing of the topics | |
| • From a historical aspect | Getting to know the facts |
| • Confronting opposite views | Analysis of facts |
| • From the point of view of other sciences | Explanations |
| • What do politicians think? | Presentations |
| • From the point of view of churches | Debates |
| • Minorities about themselves | Video films |
| How does the subject exist in practice? | Study tours, visits, |
| Meeting successful municipal governments, experts, schools, museums, folk high schools, associations, etc. | interviews |
| 6. The subject in the eyes of foreign participants | Lectures, presentations |
| 7. Possible ways of development | Zukunftwerkstatt – future workshops |



8. Evaluation of the seminar, finding a new venue, a new topic: **Der Ort bestimmt die Themen**

About 70-80% of the participants of the seminars are permanent members, there were doctors, economists, army officers, university teachers, mayors, priests, leaders of folk high schools, leaders of cultural institutions, media managers, educational managers, administrative workers, etc. and with the knowledge of the practices of minority management and cultural development of the different locations they initiated developments on the frontiers of Hungary.

The Department of Adult Education of the Pedagogical Institute of the Karl-Franzens University in Graz (Elke Gruber), the Slovenian Maribor University (Jurij Jug) and the Verband Österreichischer Volkshochschule (Wilhelm Filla) aimed to examine the institutional system of adult education mainly in the Alps-Adriatic Euroregion from a historical synchronic point of view. The Symposium of Central European Adult Education was first organised in Brdo in 1995, and from 1997 this event has been held in different locations every year. Rogarska, Slatina, Debrecen, Pécsvárad-Pécs, Rogla, ... hof, Opolje gave the venues for the eight symposiums where the adult educational characteristics of Central European countries were evaluated and compared. The results of the research has been published in five volumes and served as a basis for the developmental plans of adult education in the euroregion.

The Central European region witnessed new initiatives around the turn of the millennium. The Robert Bosch Stiftung mainly supported the "stipendiums" of the students and teachers of higher educational institutions until 1996. On the initiative of the students and teachers participating in exchange programmes the "Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg", the "Verein für Sprach- und Kulturaustausch in Mittel-, Ost- und Südosteuropa" was established with the support of the foundation and has grown into a Central Eastern Europe-wide network. The organisation gathers twenty Central Eastern European countries, has more than one thousand members and besides granting "stipendiums" the network is establishing a new civilian network (Central and Eastern European Network of Young Adults), it announces cultural project in the field of film, theatre, literature, minority issues, the problem of piece, the responsibility for the future, etc. and organises festivals at changing locations for the youth of the twenty countries. (MitOst Festival). The one week long youth programme was organised in Pécs in 2003 with the support of PTE FEFPI and the city of Pécs with about 400 participants. In the main part of the event those who previously won scholarships were given a training on regional development and community leadership.

Every institution could enlist similar attempts. The basic problem, however, is still the question: how could we systemise these isolated attempts, finance them in the relevant states and regions, and who should train the builders of bridges who would be able to carry out their tasks competently and efficiently and could reunite the regions that had been torn apart.

^[1] Prof.Dr. h. c. János Gulya: Der Hoftag in Quedlinburg. Manuscript. Text of the VII. Congresso cultura Europea, on 23-26 of October, 2002, Pamplona Universidad de Navarra.2-5.p.

^[2] Montesquieu: The Unity of Europe, Publication of Phönix, Budapest, 1943. 35.; 37.; 38.;54.p.



- [3] Other region-typologies: historical regions, industrial regions, planned regions, regions originate on the basis of associating, city-regions, statistical-planning regions, euro-regions, makro regions
- [4] Tamás Kaiser: A regionalizáció „változó geometriája”. In.: Regionalitás-lokalitás a 21.században. (Editor: Béla Beszterci and Sándor Mikolasek), MTA Veszprémi Területi Bizottsága, Komárom, 2001. 107-115.p.
- [5] Ildikó Hrubos: Napjaink reformja: Az Európai Felsőoktatási Térség létrehozása. In.: Educatio, 12.volume, number 1., 2003- Spring 56-57.p.
- [6] Declaration about the regionalism. Assembly of European Regions, Basel, 4th of december, 1996. 11.paragraph 1.
- [7] Edina Volter: Államhatárt átfogó gazdasági kapcsolatok: Szentgotthárd- Heiligenkreutz. Falu-Város-Régió, 2004/ 3. 17-21.p.
- [8] Tamás Hardi- István Mezei: Királyhelmectől Somorjáig: Eurorégiók a szlovák-magyar határon. Falu-Város-Régió. 2003/ 8. 16-18.p.
- [9] László Dancs: A határon átnyúló kapcsolatok főbb jellemzői a magyar-kárpátaljai határtérségben a lakosság szemszögéből. In.: VI. Falukonferencia. A vidéki Magyarország az EU- csatlakozás előtt. (Editor: Teréz Kovács), MTA RKK, Pécs, 2003. 305-312.p.
- [10] Béla Baranyi: Schengen árnyékában: a határon átnyúló kapcsolatok szerepe a periférikus helyzetű rurális területek felzárkóztatásában Magyarország keleti államhatárai mentén. In.: VI. Falukonferencia. A vidéki Magyarország az EU- csatlakozás előtt. (Editor: Teréz Kovács) MTA RKK-MRTT, 2003. 421-428.p.
- [11] Dr. Mihály Sári: Grenzüberschreitende Multiplikatorenbildung im Rahmen der Globalisation. In.: Acta Andragogiae et Culturae 19. Felnőttoktatás-Ifjúság-Művelődés. (Editor: Dr. Kálmán Rubovszky), Debrecen, 2001. 145-152.p.
