QUO VADIS EUROPE?

International Conference of the Budapest Forum
Székesfehérvár, 12-13 September 2003
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Right from its establishment Kodolányi János University College has been engaged in the organisation of international conferences. We believe that the lecturers representing higher education institutions and participating in conferences can make use of the knowledge and relations accumulated in the field of education, training and research.

The closing act of the 2003 summer university was the conference entitled ‘Quo Vadis Europe?’ At this conference, organised just before Hungary’s accession to the European Union, reputable researchers coming from foreign institutions expressed their opinion about the role of Europe in 2010 as well as the ethnic and security policy of the enlarging Europe.

The international conference ‘Europe of Regions: Networks and Cross-Border Co-operations’ dealt with the peculiarities of this region. The participants examined the opportunities for cooperation within the education systems in the light of the Bologna Process and the forms of development of small regions. The section sessions dealt with questions concerning security policy and European co-operation.

It is very important for Kodolányi János University College to attract a large number of students to the conferences organised at our college, this way enriching their knowledge and raising their interest in scientific activity. We hope that this conference volume will allow these thoughts to be more accessible and deepens the reader’s knowledge of international relations.

Gyöngyvér Szabó Hervai
I. PLACE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE WORLD
Introduction of Fejér County

Regarding its potentiality, in the rank of the counties of Hungary, Fejér County can be considered an average one. It is one of the nineteen counties. It has a territory of 4,300 square kilometres and approximately 430,000 people live in this community. It also involves a settlement structure and economy. Examining its potentiality, we could say that the results we could achieve among the counties, within the country, depend on us. Unfortunately, our economic figures depict a versatile picture. On the one hand I have to use such an attribute because considering the average potentiality, I am thinking of our potentiality related to nature—this could either mean agriculture, or the preservation of the natural endowment—we cannot achieve a higher performance than that of the Hungarian performance. I have the same opinion about the political achievements of the county, which comprise our enforcement of interests at community, county and parliamentary level. I am not able to mention outstanding results in this field either. In reality, the position of our county depends on the economic activities, which are reflected in the economic figures, and, first of all, they are related to its towns.

Another prevailing idea is that in Hungary the tasks and situations of the self-governments were recorded in the self-governmental law in the autumn of 1990. The constitution provides only the frames for this. During the period of the changing of the regime, when this law was passed, there was such a political situation that the county level was granted a lesser range of tasks. At present, this means that the Hungarian counties do not possess authority and a position of power. The consequence of this situation is that it requires a great effort for any county to build an extensive network or carry out activities that can be recognised at an international level as well. The self-governmental law provides an opportunity for the counties; however, it does not support them with adequate means.

About the freedom of the self-governmental law:

With reference to networking and foreign relations, it must be stated that the law is permissive to the extent that at present it depends on the settlement itself how much energy, money and effort it is willing to spend to be a member of a network or alliance. It also depends on the settlement whether it benefits from the possibility of international relations or whether it seeks such relations. At present, the same freedom characterises the Hungarian counties as well. That is why the question of how the Hungarian counties deal with this can be compared. However, the existence of these interests varies from county to county. There is a common tendency: the questions related to regional conceptions are at a developmental stage at the moment.
Examining it whether from the point of view of the government or of the counties, meeting the requirements and following the guidelines of the European Union is dominant regarding the above-mentioned conceptions. Talking about our own interest, the pressure to benefit from the aid programmes of the Union also appears.

I have also depicted the two questions related to the settlement and counties as this freedom provides such opportunities that have not been explored: opportunities that regional co-operations have already proved in the European Union. The idea is that not everything should be related to the national state, or to national interests. It provides a greater scope for action and a more extensive network for the self-governments if the laws do not place an obstacle in their way. On the basis of the above-mentioned ideas it can be stated about the self-government of Fejér County that, on the one hand, over a span of several terms, it is continuously trying to extend its own international relations to different parts of the world. On the other hand, it tries to find such alliances, where it can explore new opportunities. Furthermore, it tries to provide a mediation role for the economy and settlements of the county.

If I put these in order, I could start with the kind of relations we have undertaken with other foreign counties or county-level public administration authorities. Its direction varied according to the different terms and political circumstances but now it can be stated that our relations focus mainly on Europe. There was a period—about eight or nine years ago—when the greatest emphasis in the international relations of the self-government was to try to approach Western Europe. From this period we still have two existing relations: a German relation with Göttingen district and a Dutch relation with Eastern Groningen. The aim of these relationships has been to explore the county’s own situation and follow the new guidelines while preparing for the accession. About four or five years ago, we similarly tried to open in the direction of Asia as a response to their initiations. Out of these I would highlight the existing relations: the relation with the Chinese Chilin County and another one with Kio-Kin-San-Lan-Do province in South Korea. Naturally, these two relations reflect a different aspect to the Western European ones. However, both relations can be called regular. We provide a relationship for them towards Europe. This is an opportunity for them to get closer to us and we try to participate as a host partner in these relations. During the previous self-governmental term there was an attempt to establish relations with our neighbour countries so that the county would also have foreign relations with territories where Hungarian people live. During the past two or three years, one of them has become a regular relation and that is the co-operation with Kolozs County in Romania. Taking a look at these relations, the present self-government, which was elected a year ago, has to choose the direction to be followed.

As the chairman of the County Assembly, I intend to continue these tendencies and widen the existing network. It does not mean overseas, American or other great openings; I rather find it important to think about the sphere of the enlarged Europe. We have an existing relation with Opole County in Poland and I would really welcome the possibility of finding new relations among the acceding Middle-European
countries (it could either be Slovakia, Slovenia, or the Czech Republic). With the help of these co-operations, targeting the preparation for the accession, we would be able to create better circumstances for the integration.

These tendencies approximately characterise our individual initiations at county level, and the kind of role we give to the self-government. In every international relation I represent the idea that the county self-government attempts to build cultural and social relations. Consequently, we try to form co-operations between the settlements and the partner settlements at county level. In this way they have the opportunity to meet each other and create sister-town relations. In the field of the economy we try to solve these questions by means of business offers. We would not like to stimulate our activities just for their own sake or for EU harmonisation but for this mediation role. We are also members of two organisations. One of them is the Assembly of European Regions. Every Hungarian County is a member of this assembly. It has approximately 250 organised members. The organisation has four specialised committees. As our county has also delegated a representative to all four committees, we are also regular participants in the workshops as well. Once a year there is a board meeting, usually it takes place at the end of December and our county is represented at board level at these meetings. The secretary-in-chief is Mr. Klaus Klip, who was my guest here in Fejér County about ten years ago. He promised a partnership in order to give a more active role in this co-operation system than that of the average member. The Assembly of European Regions deals with a wide scope of political, social, and economic analysis. Moreover, in the charter of the regions, it tries to fulfil a role that is preparatory for the EU. The other alliance that we are a member of is the Community of Provinces on the Danube. The alliance brings together all the counties on the Danube from the Black Forest to the Black Sea. The major task of this alliance is mainly linked to culture, the protection of the environment, sports and tourism, as determined by its closeness to the Danube. We took part in issuing maps, cultural brochures, and organising programmes. I would like to strengthen this co-operation by developing the protection of the environment and of the Danube and the bicycle-path system. Our main slogan will be a more powerful and united county that will be competitive at the regional, national level and in the EU as well. This trend has been emphasised in the work of the succeeding self-governments, but we have not been able to reach the desired level. So we have set the task to attain a stronger collaboration in the political, economic and social field.

This appears in our material as a concrete determined aim and a detailed task. We also name those partners whom we would like to co-operate with. The programme of this term sums up the task of our self-government and shows the direction of our public service tasks arising from our legal engagements.

The questions of partnerships and international relations are separately dealt with. I am convinced that the programme of the term is addressed to the population of the county to join us and contribute to the creation of a stronger and more effective county on the eve of the EU accession.
As soon as the question of the eastern enlargement comes to the forefront, Russia becomes a real headache for the architects of the European Union. The main question is: what are the limits of such an expansion? Or in other words: how far eastward can and should the European Union extend? The continuation of the eastern enlargement inevitably intrudes either directly into Russian territory, or into the historic sphere of its geopolitical interests. And then the question acquires another content: whether the EU should continue its eastward expansion without taking into account Russia’s geopolitical interests (and thus, sooner or later, enter a path of conflict), or try to seek some compromise solution satisfying both sides. These solutions may range from developing new forms of relations between the EU and Russia (or even the EU and the CIS, or any other successor integration structure in post-USSR space), to variants of Russia’s possible joining the trans-European integration. Thus, the problem in fact is much more complicated that just the answer “yes” or “no” to the question whether Russia could become a member of the European Union.

What makes the EU politicians doubt, is, first of all, the parameters of our country. Even within her borders, significantly cut after 1991, Russian territory presents something far beyond the imagination of the European commissars: Russia is simply six times bigger than the current European Union and will more than four times exceed the eastward-enlarged European Union after May, 2004. The population figures are not only impressive, but also make Europeans worry about the possible problem of Russian “representation” in European governing and decision-making structures.

The geopolitical nature of our country provokes similar uncertainties. Russia’s disposition in two continents at once raises among western Europeans quite a logical question about its belonging to Europe. But whatever conceptions of the origin of the Russian nation we refer to, all of them, with fewer or more geographical errors, point to the European continent. Thus, Russians are Europeans by their origins. They have unbreakable cultural-historic ties with their direct western neighbours, undoubtedly considered as Europeans (Slavic people, Hungarians and Finns). Geographically we occupy the eastern part of Europe. Our extension towards Asia historically and
economically is not as decisive as our European development. Of course all these arguments (our two-continental expansion, as well as the remarkable mixture of more than one hundred nationalities that have made Russians to a certain extent different from the whole of Europe culturally, traditionally and even mentally) should be taken into account, but they should not be overestimated.

Still, to my mind, the most categorical proponents of the negative approach are more frightened by the political and economic situation in Russia than by any of the factors presented above. And in this connection an answer to the following question might be decisive: what prevails in such an approach—a centuries-long fear and rejection of Russia, or worries about the scale and character of the “capitalization process” in our country?

It seems that the “second reason” is rather the modernized sequence of the “first”. Our classics persistently pointed to this inalienable trait of the western perception of Russia. At the end of the 19th century the most famous of Russian writers and thinkers, Fyodor Dostoievsky, wrote in one of his diaries: “Two hundred years since Europe had been living with Russia after it had forcefully rushed into the European peoples union, into civilization: but Europe had always looked askance at her, as if feeling wickedness, some fatal mystery of God-knows-what origins, but which has to be resolved at all costs.”

Times have changed, of course, but the problem of the continuing misinterpretation of Russia remains. One of our contemporary political scientists has put the problem as follows: “Thank Heaven, Russia might not any more strive to conquer the World. But the lack of this possibility puts in front of us another, no less complicated, though realizable task—to persuade the World.”

In full agreement with the latter statement, still, I would add: to persuade the world that Russia can and should develop in accordance with its unique inner conditions, and that such a development will be of no danger to Europe but will be, on the contrary, to its and our mutual benefit. Thus, the main problem of our relations arises, as I see it, more from old prejudices and a lack of will to understand each other (on both sides) than from the real causes.

Europeans seemingly have forgotten that it was our country that at the start of the 90s of the 20th century had given a start to democratic changes throughout the world. Those changes had really taken the world—as well as both parts of Europe—unawares. And this circumstance of unexpectedness made the western Europeans use this window of opportunity rather for rushing forward in realization of the old models, acquired at the time of the Cold War, rather than to revise radically the new geopolitical situation in the world and on the continent, and try to find new solutions corresponding to these realities. This is one of the main reasons hampering the process of trans-European integration and even its stagnation recently: the world is radically different, the challenges and threats are other, but vectors acquired at times of the Cold War remain unchanged.

At the same time, it is clear that all extra-brave declarations, like the recent Berlusconi invitation to the EU made during Putin’s 2003 visit to Italy, should be
received very cautiously and with a strong degree of critical approach. However, this critical approach should not push into the background the evident fact that relations between Russia and the European Union (in the case of whatever scenario) should be somehow organized and acquire a stable basis.

As well as in Europe, in Russia there are different opinions about the possibility of Russia’s membership in the European Union, and about the prospects of relations between Russia and the enlarging EU. Some are inclined to view the EU-Russian relations through the prism of relations with America. The former Russian Prime Minister Eugenij Primakov, for instance (as well as representatives of the liberal wing in Russian politics), is of the opinion that the European trend in Russia’s foreign policy will not, and should not, substitute the American relation. At the same time, Russian conservatives and nationalists view Europe as “a friend in misfortune” suffering from the global ambitions of America. They think that the unprecedented situation, when Europe towards the end of the 20th century had in fact turned into a transatlantic colony of the USA, has logically turned Europeans into long-term partners of Russians in anti-globalisation resistance.

But back from conceits to real facts, i.e. geographical and geopolitical factors, which present a cause for real scepticism on both sides.

Geopolitically Russia, though no longer being one of the cornerstones of world politics, still feels itself responsible for world stability. It continues to bear the status of a country “that counts” in world affairs. Besides, security is necessary for her to achieve a certain inner economic and political stability. But the situation, currently occurring on the borders of Russia, demonstratively surrounding her with USA and NATO military bases under the slogans of “anti-terrorist campaign”, makes her doubt ever more strongly the mechanisms that drive the mono-polar world, i.e., in such an order when decisions of who is threatening the world, and what is to be done, are taken by one country, one person. Especially, when as the result of such power actions, the situation on Russian borders, especially her southern ones, grows much more unstable than before those military intrusions. The same geopolitical problems, I suppose, face unifying Europe. Hardly anyone would insist that the situation in Europe has become much more stable after the military intervention in the Balkans. More doubtful still are the causes that made Europe support military actions in Afghanistan and in Iraq. All these cases are to my mind direct manifestations of the growing incompatibility between the security interests of NATO and Russia, and NATO and the EU.

Being to a certain extent, like the post-USSR area, also “a space under transition,” Europe currently needs stability in order to bring certainty and some finality to its home under construction, to its surroundings. From this point of view, from the point of view of our striving to create a “peaceful” environment around us, we are geopolitical partners with Europe. In this context a trilateral union of France, Germany and Russia that had crystallised this spring in an impulse to prevent the Iraqi war, acquires traits of a geopolitically balanced response to universal European (as well as every constituent’s national) interests. Of a special importance is the fact
that this triangle is not something newly born or absolutely irrational. Three capitals, historically, i.e. during the entire 20th century, had been at the centre of European events, positive, or negative. The very fact that those historically concurring centres had joined their efforts in order to draw away the continent from involvement in the next world military crises should not be underestimated.

Nor should be underestimated the fact that this is for the first time in history a political step, undertaken on the basis of mutual respect and having behind it no aspiration to gain extra-profit at the cost of any of the participating sides. If such a union could have been shaped much earlier, when the first preconditions for it occurred, that is, at the end of the 1980s to the beginning of the 90s, the world picture today might be entirely different. But at that time, Russia was plunged into its inner economic and political chaos. Germany was concentrating on the solution to its own “German issue”. The French president was restricted in his actions by the USA-oriented socialist coalition. In some of my earlier articles, I tried to analyse the reasons that drive countries to form unions and alliances. Among the factors I accentuated the existence of a common threat. Maybe this time, when France, Germany and Russia have departed from the unfriendly stereotypes of the Cold War, together they will manage to define what the real threats to continental stability are and where they originate from. Three presidents had enough wit not to turn their common action into an anti-American campaign, though this might have received a greater appreciation among some sections of the world community. They proclaimed their main aim to be the establishing of a multi-polar world. Such a world structure would, first of all, save the USA from becoming a victim of its own monstrous ambitions. Already the first action of the triple alliance of France, Germany and Russia has seriously improved the international image of both European and Eurasian centres of world politics. It is hard to imagine what might have happened if, in the case of the Iraqi crises, Russia had not joined the French-German alliance, but the side of the USA and Britain. The world would have been plunged into a bacchanalia of power. The UN would have been finally forced to the backyard of world politics as a completely useless organisation. The EU and the USA would have entered a stage of “cold war” as the best scenario. World tension would have reached its upper limit. Russia in this situation acted not only in accordance with the canons of the geopolitical balance of power (when in order to keep stability it is recommendable to join the weaker), i.e. as a “country that counts”, but also as a patriot of Europe.

We all see that after the Balkan war it is very difficult to return the world powers to the legislative field, to restore the reign of law in international relations. The weighted, reasonable position of Russia, however pathetic it may have sounded, did help the world to keep the last chance for world nations to live in accordance with their perceptions of self-respect and mutual trust. As in the days of the Balkan war, though being unable to prevent it, Russia played a decisive intermediary role in separating the conflicting sides and thus stopping the stupidity of limitlessly bombing a part of the European continent.
Having all this in mind, the birth of a triple European alliance is a geopolitical event with the prospects of becoming one of the mightiest pillars of the world. The nucleus of such an alliance on the European side might be based on a partnership of France, Germany, Belgium, and Luxembourg who criticized the USA-led Iraqi campaign in April 2003. But the then proclaimed decision to start a new stage in the development of a European security and defence system, as well as the working out of a new security and defence concept, unfortunately did not find support from the rest of the EU member states during the debates on the European Constitution that followed. The situation reminds one of the long, on-going discussions between Russia, Ukraine and Belarus on the post-USSR area. The advantages of such a security, economic and humanitarian alliance seems evident, but integration does not move forward.

Thus, the security issues remaining unresovled in both parts of Europe do not help the progress of trans-European security integration in general. More than that, neither Europeans, nor Russians have taken the final decision as to how far they might go within such an alliance.

The Europeans are restricted in this respect by the absence of their own security system outside of NATO being controlled by a transatlantic power, and also by certain economic rules of the game. Meanwhile, it becomes more and more evident that NATO security schemes are erroneous and unproductive. They bring Europe to new confrontation lines and do not answer new challenges and dangers.

Russia also has some misperceptions as to how far it might go in forming a trans-European alliance so as not to damage relations with her other geographical neighbours. The geographical, geopolitical disposition of Russia is such that it is neighbouring—that is, having common borders with—all three rapidly developing centres of the world economy and power: the USA, China and the EU. All of them are interested in relations with Russia. (Though in some spheres, such as energy supplies, even much more than Russia itself.) Thus Russia has to be very cautious so as not to damage seriously the relations with its other two neighbours at the cost of the third.

A serious question, however, remains as to how to proceed further so that the fruitfully begun cooperation of the EU and Russia should not be limited only to common political declarations and anti-war actions. What is to be done in order that the alliance might also acquire other pillars for stability? Should we wait for some stabilisation of integration processes in both parts of Europe, i.e. within the EU and within the post-USSR area, or should we move towards establishing some already accessible forms of cooperation which would allow us to model our future transcontinental cooperation according to the new geopolitical challenges?

There was a saying in the USSR in Nikita Khrushchev’s and Leonid Brezhnev’s times, characterizing the state of the roads in the country: “There are no roads in the USSR, there are only directions”. One may note that this saying might also characterize the state of the integration process in both parts of our continent: yet
there is no clear-cut understanding where and how to proceed, whether we refer to debates on the European Constitution, or to the attempts to establish a Euro-Asiatic Economic Community.

It is incorrect to state that Russia is not very friendly towards the European integration process, or even opposes it. On the contrary, only the completely blind cannot see that Russia’s policy has been growing more and more pro-European lately, and that it is interested in developing relations with Europe at all events. It would be more correct to say that Russia, as a nucleus of a country that had recently experienced the disintegration process, has some justifiable pessimism when such unprecedented-in-scale integration is concerned. Besides, some Russian analysts see that many of the decisive structural drawbacks of the former USSR are being laid as the basis of the new European architecture.

Many of Russia’s cautions about the perspectives of the European Union are shared by many Europeans themselves, though only a few of them are ready to articulate them. Europe had several times postponed the moment of absorbing the new members. So this time the question sounds rather tragically: either now, or never... And this decision leaves no space for doubts and corrections any more, even though the international situation has seriously changed since the time when the first proposals for the East Europeans had been made by the leaders of the Western Powers.

Russian thinkers already in the 19th century had noticed the European passion for “tribal idea...”7 “All are driving towards some average European type of society and the reign of some average man... they will move along this path until all will merge into one, all-European, republican federation.”8 But the majority of them did not believe in its success. Nicolay Berdjaev, at the beginning of the 20th century, pointed to the reasons for the instability of such a structure: “Europe hides within itself the most contradictory and antagonist elements, self-excluding spiritual types.”9

In contemporary Russian philosophy, there are both followers of the Euro-Asian trend who at the beginning of the 20th century foretold the progress of western European integration towards a customs union headed by Germany,10 and opponents, like former dissident Alexander Zinovjev, who are of the opinion that the main stimulus for West-centred European integration had been buried together with the disappearance of the main threat that brought these countries together—that is the Soviet Union, the Cold War. He states that hardly might the feeling of European belongingness be stronger than the feeling of belongingness to a particular nation and sooner or later immense inequality among its members will bring the EU towards “disintegration of the worst type, like the one that had taken place in the USSR.”11

One might share or not the above beliefs. However, the facts are:

- That modern Europe even now remains too different. What is there in common between Portugal and Finland, Iceland and Greece or Turkey, queuing for EU membership that could bind them so tightly together? Even now a majority of members are trying to question the privileges of France and Germany, who
are definitely at the head of west European Integration. Not to mention the antagonistic position of Great Britain in respect of the entire European Union and its nucleus in particular. Contradictions between the newcomers and the old members, such as the disagreement in the position on the Iraqi military action, or like the one recently inspired by Poland over representation, quotas, etc., are only the beginning. In a Europe of different possibilities, of different privileges and different classes contradictions will inevitably grow.

— That modern Europe is still too dependent and too vulnerable. Europe is too weak in its military aspect. The “third pillar” necessary for the stability of the EU is as lacking as ever. It won’t be able to resist any of the current world dangers alone and will inevitably look for partners. It is true: there is no confrontation among states in Europe today, but there is also no distinct vision of a future European security model. Currently, the EU tries to delegate the problems of its security to the USA, who, in its turn, is using Europe in military actions which not only do not correspond with American security interests, but also put at stake the stability of the entire European continent. (The already mentioned Balkan, Afghanistan and Iraqi crises). It is clear that a NATO-centric security scheme cannot guarantee Europeans two basic principles: the indivisibility of security and equal security for all. More than that, American strategy will continue the further absorption of Europe in the Balkan and Iraqi crises, and Russia in the Chechen war. That will clear for America the road to world dominance, when its only opponent will remain China. Besides, Europe is too dependent financially on the USA, and—in raw materials and fuel resources—on Russia and the Middle East.

— Europe has no strategy of its own for enlargement. Until now the directions of the EU enlargement are a weak copy of NATO’s enlargement. Sometimes EU and NATO processes are perceived as supplementing each other. Such “mutual substitution” already brings Europeans to serious conflicts within the EU, like tensions over the Iraqi campaign defined by the American defence minister as contradictions between “New” and “Old” Europe. The aims, the tasks and the methods of EU deepening and enlargement are not pronounced distinctly. However, the contradictions between the two integration structures grow and this is not for the benefit of either the trans-European structure, or for the separate nation states trying to solve them separately.

While the question of Eastern enlargement becomes more and more urgent for Europe, it seems more and more evident that nobody responsible can answer whether they have to move towards an alliance between Russia and the EU, or some form of partnership of the European Union with the USSR-successor integration structure whatever shape it might acquire. Moreover, nobody knows whether the “Europe of the Future” should be Europe from the Atlantic to Vilnius (as it currently is), from the Atlantic to the Urals (according to French conceptions), or from Reykjavik to Vladivostok (taking into account Russia’s disposition).
After 1st May 2004, the EU will have a common border with Russia and, thus, will inherit the problems Russia has been having with its former constituent parts, i.e. the former USSR republics (among them, territorial and national minorities problems). Talks on Russian transit towards Kaliningrad have already proved that these problems might seriously damage our political relationships.

These are only some of the EU problems as seen from Russia. There are certainly many more arising from the world’s geopolitical and economic situation. Besides, considering transition processes, there will be many more in common both for the EU and Russia.

Both the EU and Russia (or the whole post-USSR area) currently present unstable federative structures, but rather “territorial processes”. While one structure is in the process of expansion, another is decreasing. Both have currently reached crucial limits to optimising their space and spheres of influence. Proceeding from the fact that challenges of both structures territorially coincide, we may state that these decisions should not be postponed. The working-out of optimal models for settling their relations is the main task for Russia and the European Union for the time limit remaining before 2010.

What might be the variants? In fact, there exist three of them, but the current geopolitical situation leaves space for the realization of only two, leaving the most optimal, third variant out: what are they?

The worst possible scenario is when “the sides”, i.e. the European Union and Russia pursue their aims of seizing as much territory for geopolitical influence as they can without taking into account the arguments of the opposite side. That is, if they act according to the worst scenarios from the time of the Cold War. What is meant here? As an example, there might be taken the case of Russian transit to its Baltic exclave, i.e. the Kaliningrad region. The conflict will grow if the EU, in exchange for Russia’s agreement for Lithuania’s peaceful separation from the USSR and later changing to the western integration, will not insist that its new member recognise the right of Russians of transit towards its Baltic coast. Thus, this might be an example how the spread of the rules (in this case, the visa regime) over the new territories, provokes serious conflict between Russia and Lithuania. It is evident that the nominal conflicting sides will be the EU and Russia, but real “virtual battlefields” will be transferred to the periphery of the EU—i.e. to the former Republics and allies of the USSR.

Another possible sphere of tension might be ignoring the interests of Russia’s trade with its traditional partners, i.e. the former COMECON countries. The losers in this case will be on both sides, maybe the eastern Europeans even more significantly than the Russians. And if the newcomers to the Union will lose profit, that will inevitably echo on the general economic climate within the EU, not only on the development of Russian–EU relations.

These are only two of the potential obstacles that can return the EU–Russian relations to the worst confrontational scenarios from the times of the Cold War.
The second scenario, that might be called “neutral”, or “postponed”, lies in the ability of the EU and Russia to reach a compromise over the territories and issues under discussion. Compromise means that both the EU and Russia provide conditions favourable for making East-Central Europe (i.e. all those European countries under transition, including the former Baltic Republics) neutral and self-sufficient as a partner in the trans-European dialogue. There is, however, besides the political will on both sides, one no less, or even more decisive, precondition—that is the will, or the desire of the Eastern Europeans themselves for such a status. And currently it seems that such a will is absent. The reasons for it might be a subject for another article.12

Besides, currently neither Russia, nor the EU (not even in joint efforts) can give those countries the necessary guarantees for their neutrality and stable development. Such a decision needs time, time necessary both for Russia and the EU to reach their own internal stability.

The third scenario, the most favourable one, is transferring the dialogue between Russia and the European Union onto a more stable basis, built on principles of real partnership, mutual trust and respect.

Having forecast the development of the European alliance, Russian thinkers already in the first half of the 20th century tried to forecast the possible relation between the alliance headed by Germany and the Russian-centric alliance. Thus, Pjotr Saviczky, one of the founders of the Eurasian school, was convinced of the possibility of a very close alliance between the two integration structures of the future. A contemporary representative of this school, A. Dugin, goes further and forecasts the merging together of the two alliances (another question is the circumstances of such a merging together).13 He calls Russia to support the establishing of a united and friendly Europe.14

These are conceptions. But if we turn towards the facts, then it will become evident that the Soviet Union has been extremely interested in the experience of the western integration and the possibility of closer contacts and cooperation, already since the second half of the 50s.15 In 1972, at a Trade Unions conference, L. Bresnev for the first time articulated the necessity to develop relations with the European Economic Community. Thus, as we see, the problem is not as new as many may think. Another thing is that its realization constantly had to pave its way through the barriers of the Cold War, and now, through the ambitions of the western Europeans demonstrating the tone of supremacy towards Russia and Eastern Europeans, as well as through the continuing worries of the Eastern Europeans themselves about their eastern neighbour. The Berlin Wall, or others may say—the Iron Curtain—in reality did not fall away: it had moved eastwards and become more inaccessible. The visa regime introduced between Russia and its former Baltic republics, not to mention the visa and trade restrictions that had arisen between Russia and its former East-European partners are the most vivid example. But there are many more in political and economic spheres. Until now, the eastern enlargement has brought only problems for Russia.
Many new mechanisms aimed at promoting Russian–EU relations have been introduced lately. Just to name them, we can mention the establishment of the standing highest level Council Russia–EU, the signing of numerous protocols on strengthening European stability, the widening of trade-economic cooperation, the establishing of joint research groups in the field of science and technology. Plus, from time to time, declarations of the European leaders (like the already-mentioned promise of Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi) or the highest EU officials on the readiness to move further in relations with Russia.

Results are much poorer. In the sphere of politics we can mention as to its significance only the joint action of the leaders of Russia, France and Germany. In the sphere of science and technology, the joint space project Glonass-Galileo. Impressive are the figures of the EU share in Russian trade output—more than 40%. About 50% of foreign investments into our country’s economy also originate from the countries of the European Union. But the detailed decoding of this figure brings less optimism. The lion’s share of Russia’s export originates from selling its natural resources. A great part of European investments into the Russian economy comes to Russia via American companies.

Since 2000 Brussels calls Russia its “strategic partner”. It becomes evident that the main spheres for such cooperation will be two projects. The first is the so-called Energy dialogue, a plan signed two years before and which has to be transformed into something grandiose, counts on a many years’ program of energy cooperation. The second is the conception of “Four Common Spaces”, proposed at the St. Petersburg summit between Russia and the European Union on May 31, 2003. According to it, the aim of Russia and the European Union is the establishment in the long term of:

- a common European economic space;
- a space of freedom, security and justice;
- an outer security space;
- a space of scientific research and education, including cultural aspects.

Later on it was proclaimed that the establishment of these Four Spaces might be considered as the realization of the European integration. The picture is merely idyllic, but what are the chances for its realization? The practice shows that we already have good skills in working out long-term projects. But realization, as a rule, lags far behind.

Thus, the main task for the time remaining until 2010, both for Russia and for the European Union, is to move all the already-formulated positive processes further, to make them work and to fill them with new and concrete contents, responding to the current political, economic and geopolitical situation. For example, let us start with a real removal of the Iron Curtain and cancel visa regimes between the EU and Russia, or at least, let us start the stage-by-stage repeal of it. Or, in another urgent sphere: removing the obstacles that EU membership currently brings for traditional trade cooperation between East-Central Europe and Russia.
There is too little time till 2010 for establishing any other, closer form of cooperation between the two parts of the continent, but enough time to thoroughly work out such a model for the other 10 years that will follow. There are also good prospects for establishing new regional cooperation structures uniting frontier eastern regions of the EU and western territories of Russia. What are the desires of Russia? That the relations between Russia and the EU should be based on the same principles as are the relations among the member-states of the western union themselves. That the modes and tones of approach towards Russia should change. That Europe will notice that Russia might not only be the fuel appendage for its economy, but its equal partner in the spheres of defence and security, of science-technical progress, education and of many others, without their postponement to some more or less visible future.

**Notes**

1. Russia’s population is only 2,5 times smaller than the population of the current EU and 3 times of the enlarged one.
2. The first raids of Russians under the lead of Jermak are dating back to 80s of the 16th century.
3. Ф.М. Достоевский. Полное собрание сочинений. Т.23, стр. 110.
8. К. Леонтьев, стр. 520.
12. Among them, continuing disbelief in Russia in their own powers, continuing fright between themselves, i.e. that some country or a group of countries will neglect regional solidarity for the sake of rivalry by joining the camp of the most powerful states and so on…
15. Academician O. Bogomolov maintains that even since 1956. In the 1960s there had been working a group of experts in the Russian Academy of Sciences, lead by prof. M. Maximova studying the process. Its first analysis had been published in 1971.
We are used to describing the countries of the world in terms of “First World” (North America, Western Europe, Australasia, Japan), “Second World” (Eastern Europe, Russia), and “Third World” (the rest: Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean). But since the collapse of Communism the prospects are that by 2050 the so-called “Second World” will have been subsumed by the First World. And even the phrase “Third World” is a misnomer. The Third World should really be divided into two, if not three. Many “Third World” countries are actually on a par with current “Second World” ones—Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Turkey. These would have a per capita income of at least $3,030 per annum. Then there is the real “Third World” of some 45 countries with a per capita income of $760—3,030, among them Egypt, Iran, Morocco, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tunisia. But after that comes the “Fourth World” of no less than 73 countries earning less than $760 per capita income, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, and Central Asia, but also including the world’s three most populous countries, namely, China, India and Indonesia.

In this essay I want to examine six problems which are blighting the economic and social prospects of a number of countries of the Second World and most of those in the Third and Fourth Worlds so that we can estimate what the European Union and the Member States of Europe in general should be doing—or have done—by 2010 in order to have stopped by 2050 the catastrophe of the growing disparity in living standards between the First and Second Worlds on the one hand, and the Third and Fourth Worlds on the other.

The first and starkest problem is that of the population explosion. The shocking fact is that since the 1951 Treaty of Paris establishing the European Coal and Steel Community, the population of the world has more than doubled—from 2.4 billion to 6.5 billion. At that rate of growth it would be reaching 10 billion by 2050.

But whereas today’s Europe, including Russia, increased its population in that period by some 20 per cent—from 600 million to 730 million, and is actually scheduled to fall by 2050 to nearly 678 million—the populations of Africa, Asia and Latin America have tripled at least, if not more.
In Africa the country with the greatest increase is Nigeria, 25 million in 1951, but some 120 million today, very nearly a five-fold increase.

In Latin America Mexico is the fastest growing country, whose population has increased from 25 million in 1951 to 96.4 million in 2000. Mexico City is the largest city in the world with a population of 15 million, a six-fold increase since 1951. The population of Brazil has increased over three times, from 48 million to 160 million, while that of Argentina has more than doubled, from 16 million to 35.6 million. But Argentina’s capital, Buenos Aires is the third largest city in the world with 11.3 million, nearly four times what it was in 1951.

In Asia the population of China rose from 467 million to 1.25 billion; that of India from 320 million to 970.9 million; that of Indonesia from 75 million to 200 million, making it the fourth most populous country in the world after China, India and the United States. Japan’s increase in population, like all “First World” countries has been relatively moderate, from 84 million to 125 million, but Tokyo, the capital, with 11.7 million, is the second largest city in the world.

And another country to watch, because of its wish to enter the European Union, is Turkey. From 1951 to 2000 its population increased three-fold, from 20.9 million to 62.6 million. If admitted to the European Union, it would be the second largest member state after Germany.

In general, the population of the world has been increasing by some 80 million per annum, and so far China, with its policy of only one child per family, is the only country trying to do something about it. At the moment one person in five is Chinese; by 2050 another one person in five could be a sub-Saharan African.

A population summit of more than 100 biologists, economists and mathematicians meeting in New Delhi in 1993 warned the world’s governments of the dangers of failing to act.

"With each year’s delay, the problems become more acute," said a fifteen-page statement. It warned of increasing deforestation, loss of species of wild life, pollution, loss of topsoil and shortages of food and water in many parts of the world. Professor Roger Short of Monash University, Australia, provided some statistics about one day in the life of the world. Some 100 million acts of sexual intercourse would take places; some 910,000 conceptions would occur; 150,000 abortions would be performed, killing some 500 mothers as a result; some 384,000 babies would be born; some 1,370 mothers would die of pregnancy-related causes; some 25,000 infants in the first year of
life would die; some 14,000 children aged 1–4 would die; some 356,000 adults would become infected with a sexually transmitted disease. Overall, the population of the world would increase by some 250,000.\footnote{3}

In real terms this population explosion means ever more mouths to feed, ever more housing\footnote{4} and jobs to be found, ever more consumption of natural resources. The wisdom is that in order to absorb a one per cent increase in population the economy of the country concerned has to expand by one per cent. This has simply not been happening in the countries of the “Fourth World” and not in most of the “Third World” either.

If we examine why the economies of particularly “Fourth World” countries do so badly, a second problem is the absence of important raw materials—gold, diamonds, oil, gas, tin, copper, bauxite, aluminium. Unfortunately, very few “Fourth World” countries have any of them. Their economy is mostly based on agricultural products, and they try to get extra revenue by such means as tourism. Unfortunately, as we shall see, it has often been difficult to export agricultural products to the “First World”, and revenue from tourism could be adversely affected by political instability. But in any case what has been happening over the last fifty years has been—for the developing world—a continual deterioration in the so-called “Terms of Trade”, i.e. that the developing country is being obliged to pay ever more in terms of its exports in order to pay for its imports, usually from an advanced industrial country of the “First” or “Second World”.

Under these circumstances, how does a country survive? The inevitable answer is by borrowing, usually from the former colonial power, whether government or private banks, but also international organisations such as the United Nations or the World Bank. And this brings us to the third critical factor, namely that of debt. The problem with borrowing is that the capital sum has—eventually—to be repaid, and one also has to pay interest annually. By the 1990s the world’s poorest countries were so much in debt that servicing the debt was amounting to more than they received in aid, and twice as much as what was being spent on health and education. In 1996 the World Bank reported that 41 countries, 33 of which were to be found in Africa, were declared to have “unsustainable” levels of external debt.\footnote{5} In 1999 36 states in the HIPC (Highly Indebted Poor Countries) group of countries were reported to have a combined debt of $220 billion.\footnote{6} But it is not only “Fourth World” countries that are in debt; richer countries have even more debt. Brazil had debts in 1999 of over $270 billion;\footnote{7} in 2001 Argentina defaulted on its debt of $132 billion, the largest default in history.\footnote{8}

A fourth problem is the overwhelmingly powerful position of the Advanced Industrialised Countries, especially those in the “First World.” They are the ones which call the world’s economic shots. They control the markets, like the EU and NAFTA; they own most of the means of transportation; they control almost all the world’s insurance; they create the synthetic materials which have often replaced natural products (such as hides and skins) used for export by “Fourth World” countries; and they also dominate research. Amazingly, some 99 per cent of world
research is undertaken in the laboratories and universities of the Advanced Industrialised countries. If they are short of trained, skilled personnel like nurses, they do not hesitate to suck them out of the countries that need them most, the “Third World” and “Fourth World” countries, by offers of higher wages, better facilities, better opportunities. This adds to the problem of the so-called “brain drain” when so many of the “Third” and “Fourth” Worlds educated, trained or skilled elite, appalled at the economic, social and political backwardness of their countries, and despairing of any progress, desperately seek employment in the “First World.”

Fifth, if the advanced countries dominate the developing ones, in far too many cases they themselves contribute to their inability to break out of their situation. In Africa, for example, society is tribal, which usually means that one tribe is on top. Inter-tribal hostility is a permanent cause of instability, for example, in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Burundi, Nigeria, Uganda, and Kenya. There are also countries such as Nigeria and the Sudan, where the mix of Arab/Islamic populations with Black/Christian ones has made religion a destabilising factor. For sub-Saharan African heads of state the temptation is to look after their own—promote their tribal interests, see their friends and relatives get the lucrative posts and contracts, usually those in or with the “First World.” This merely arouses resentment with the rest. But there are other things as well. It was in the 1960s that most African countries obtained independence. The temptation to behave like an independent Western nation was difficult to resist. Resources went into the establishment of national airlines, modern airports, and modern hotels—the so-called “cathedrals in the desert”. It was not long before heads of state arranged for palaces (often more than one), yachts, private aeroplanes, to be provided for them, and then began systematically looting their countries, transferring the proceeds to western banks, and buying western real estate. The opportunities for corruption were endless, and rarely resisted, especially if for world political reasons like the Cold War or English–French rivalry dating back to the 1898 Fashoda incident, the head of State was supported militarily and/or financially by one or more “Western” powers.

The sixth problem concerns health, and in particular the disastrous phenomenon of AIDS. This disease has dealt a heavy blow to the economy and development of sub-Saharan Africa, and is transforming the structure of families and parenthood. At the beginning of the millennium, of the 33 million persons affected by AIDS in the world 60 per cent lived in sub-Saharan Africa. The worst place was Zimbabwe, with 25 per cent of the population HIV positive, and 1,000 persons dying of AIDS every week. One general result is a high percentage of orphans. The percentage of under-15-year-olds orphaned by AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa has been put at 20-30 per cent. It is not rare to see today African families composed of grandparents and grandchildren, households run by adolescents, and dying parents nursed by their children. A further consequence is that without adults to protect them girls are sexually abused and boys used as cheap labour. Children are thus paying a heavy price. Circumstances force them into reversed roles of caring for sick parents while they themselves need care.
Often the only family providers, they miss out on school for long periods and then have difficulty catching up, and even when they are in school they may be emotionally unfit to learn. But AIDS is also having a disastrous effect on sub-Saharan education. With so many struck down, there is a shortage or absence of teachers, and often trained teachers have had to be replaced by ones less qualified.

We therefore have a picture of Africa as a disastrous continent—it is slipping out of world trade; it has a horrific population explosion; it has a phenomenal rural exodus with people moving into artificial, unhealthy shanty towns which produce nothing yet swallow up money; the continent has reverted to the nineteenth century in terms of health—apart from AIDS, previously eradicated diseases have returned. In many countries the illiteracy rate is 75%; there is famine, civil war, international war, high levels of crime and corruption, to say nothing of environmental disasters. All this provides the incentive for emigration; the skilled and educated leave for the West, while the unskilled try to enter (mainly) the EU clandestinely, with people walking from West Africa to Morocco in order to try and cross the Straits of Gibraltar.

Table 2. Mainland Africa since 1990

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<tr>
<th>Civil/Tribal Religious Conflicts/Coups</th>
<th>International War</th>
<th>Environmental Disasters</th>
<th>AIDS</th>
<th>Famine</th>
<th>Civil Crime</th>
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<td>Mozambique</td>
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In the Middle East the situation has hardly been better. International war has either occurred (Iraq versus Iran) or is continually threatened (India versus Pakistan over Kashmir); civil conflict is endemic in Afghanistan, Israel/Palestine, Nepal and Sri Lanka); the level of religious fanaticism is unmatched anywhere else in the world (Sunni versus Shia and both against Christians, Jews, Kurds and Hindus); the economic gap between the ruling few and the ever-increasing masses continues to widen. Africa may have AIDS—in the Middle East the scourge is terrorism. As in Africa, many seek to avoid war, persecution and unemployment by trying to migrate to the West. As in Africa, for most of the population there is a growing hopelessness, breeding resentment and contempt for their governments and, paradoxically, a hatred of Western governments.
It has been estimated that by the year 2000 half the population was not part of the world economy, and more than one billion people were surviving on less than one euro per day.⁹

Although this situation has been gradually building up over the last forty years the EU as an institution and including its member states, has done very little about it until very recently, and even its most recent efforts raise as many questions as they attempt to answer.

On paper this verdict may appear unjust. The EU imports about 75 per cent of its raw material needs, whether energy, minerals, food, timber, hides and skins. Much, of course, is obtained from other advanced countries but the EU still imports half of its energy needs, including nine-tenths of its oil requirements and 65 per cent of its uranium from the developing world. From Africa it also gets copper, coffee, cocoa, tropical fruits and palm oil; from Asia tropical fruit, rubber and rice. EU development assistance policy is conducted through a number of different channels: there is the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), the Global Mediterranean Policy (GMP), agreements with fourteen Latin American and twelve Asian countries, food aid to starving areas of the world and emergency aid to areas hit by natural disasters, and financial aid to the programmes of UN agencies. However, the main source of aid is the European Development Fund, which has operated through seven Conventions since 1963 and has been applying to an ever-increasing number of countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. These were the two Yaoundé Conventions (1963-1969), applying to 18 former French and Belgian African colonies, four Lomé Conventions (1975, 1980, 1985, 1990) in which the original 18 Associated States were joined by an additional 51 states, mostly from the British Commonwealth, and lastly the 20-year Cotonou Convention of 2000 with a total of 77 Associated States (AS).

These Conventions provided financial and other forms of assistance for economic and social projects rising from $780 million under Yaoundé I. to €15.2 billion for the first five years of Cotonou. Included in this overall assistance was STABEX, a fund for stabilising prices for the exports of those associated states with only one or two major crops which, if destroyed by drought, flood or disease or a collapse in prices, would adversely affect income and thus undermine national development programmes, and applying to over 50 commodities.¹⁰ SYSMIN was a similar scheme for mineral exports and applying to 10 commodities; non-discrimination between EU member states in regard to tenders, right to supply services and right of establishment by firms in the Associated States; and a number of institutions to oversee the operation of the Conventions such as a Council of Ministers, Parliamentary Conference, and Committee of Ambassadors (to provide the day-to-day running) with parity of membership between the EU and the Associated States. Under Yaoundé there was also a Court of Arbitration, but it never met as it was felt that since disputes were likely to be political they would best be settled by the Council.¹¹

But it was as long ago as 1962, during the negotiations on the first Yaoundé Agreement that the Africans complained bitterly that the Europeans never
compromised their own interests for the sake of African economic development. What the developing countries wanted, and indeed what the International Commission under the chairmanship of the former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt would call for in its 1980 Report on North–South relations, was a New Economic Order to deal with their immediate problems—population explosion, mass hunger, poverty and unemployment—before matters got out of hand and the world descended into chaos. But this never happened.

In 1981 Carol Cosgrove-Twitchett made it clear that the EU never had a clear perception of its relations with the developing world, let alone a strategy. The whole development assistance issue grew out of the need to accommodate, first, France over its African colonies at the time of the 1957 Treaty of Rome negotiations, and then following this precedent to accommodate Britain when it joined the Union in 1973. The Conventions were the responses to the legacy of colonialism, not to face up to a new world order.

What the “Third” and “Fourth” Worlds wanted were real partnership (i.e. co-decision making on projects and co-management of funds); price indexation and stabilisation of export earnings for all products; development and diversification of agricultural production to meet local needs; encouragement of private enterprise, technology transfer, and opening of the advanced countries’ markets to their manufactured goods; financial assistance to be based on the UN’s original benchmark of one per cent of the advanced countries’ GNP; reduction of debt and protection against inflation.

Insofar as the EU response to these requests, at least as far as the ACP countries were concerned, the issue of partnership was complicated by the fact that EU development aid is financed in two ways. Non-EDF aid is funded by the EU budget but this applies to non-ACP countries and food aid purposes. EDF aid is funded by contributions from the member States in addition to any bilateral agreements or funding they might have with individual ACP states. In fact the EU’s own aid amounts to about 15 per cent of the combined efforts of the Member States. And because money from the EDF comes directly from the Member States the Associated States never got co-management of the Fund. Attempts to have the Fund put into the budget got nowhere. This highlighted another feature of EU/ACP relations. Whereas the EU was a close knit group with an array of institutions for decision-making and co-operation, the ACP countries were divided between ex-French and ex-British African colonies, while Caribbean countries and Pacific ones feared too-predominant African interests and were suspicious of any measures which could compromise their links with North America in the first case and Australasia in the second. The EU member states alone, however, decided matters of EDF technical and financial co-operation on the basis of Commission proposals, and agreed that if there was a dispute between an EU Member State and the Commission the matter would be decided in the European Court in Luxembourg and not the Association Court.
It is unsurprising, therefore, that in general the EU response to the requirements of the Associated States, when examined closely, appears meagre.

STABEX and SYSMIN were never applied to all the ACP products. With regard to agriculture, only with Lomé III. was there a switch from a policy of producing cash crops for export (to gain foreign currency and pay off debt) to one of producing food for local needs. Strict rules of origin and quality standards backing up the ferocious protectionism of the Common Agricultural Policy against goods produced by EU farmers have made it very difficult to penetrate the EU market. Furthermore, the CAP has been damaging the interests of many developing countries by “cutting world market prices for key products as a result of the dumping that occurs under the aegis of export restitution.”

As for industrial goods, if under the GSP nearly all the ACP countries’ products can enter the EU free of tariffs and quotas these do exist on so-called “sensitive” products such as textiles. But in any case few ACP countries produce industrial goods capable of competing with EU goods. Furthermore, EU member states have refused to insure private investment against non-commercial risks and this has hampered not only such investment but also joint ventures. Finally, with regard to finance there has been no automatic protection against inflation. In the year 2000 EU member states were providing on average about 0.33 per cent of their GNP in development assistance (the United States 0.1 per cent) a far cry from the 1.0 per cent originally called for by the UN but long since scaled down to 0.7 per cent.

In order to contribute to their development the EU needs to import much more than it exports to the ACP states. Yet figures show that between 1988 and the end of the millennium the EU recorded only a slight deficit vis-à-vis the ACP countries (and in two years, 1993 and 1998 was actually in surplus), and there was little fluctuation and hardly any growth in total values traded between the two sets of countries. Indeed, the ACP countries’ share of the EU market declined from around 7 per cent in 1976 to 4 per cent in 2000. Things appeared to change when South Africa joined Lomé IV. in 1998—the EU trade deficit became more marked in 1999 and 2000. But the figures are misleading. By 2000 South Africa was accounting for around a third of EU-ACP total trade (the next country was Nigeria with less than half that amount), and there were steep rises in oil prices. Furthermore, three-quarters of ACP import into the EU originated from only 10 countries, while roughly half of all EU imports in value terms from ACP countries were in just 4 products, namely mineral fuels (oil) 24 per cent, precious stones and metals (diamonds and gold) 21 per cent, followed by wood and ore.

On the positive side, the EU and all its individual Member States have been participating in the 1996 HIPC Initiative launched by G7 in 1996 as part of a debt relief package, and revised and re-launched in 1999. Totalling $100 billion, it covered debt relief and debt cancellation. To qualify for debt relief countries have to develop and implement a nationally-owned and led poverty reduction strategy agreed with the IMF, setting out how they would tackle poverty and specifying how debt relief would be used. 26 ACP countries in the HIPC group have so qualified, and under the
terms of the Initiative are no longer required to service their debt and cease to make payments. Relief amounting to some $62 billion is being provided to these countries, reducing their debts by about two-thirds. Since about half of debt relief needs to be provided by Multilateral Development Banks (such as the African Development Bank), not all of which are able to cover the costs of providing their share of debt relief from their own resources, they require additional funds. Accordingly an HIPC Trust Fund was established to receive and manage contributions from governments. All the EU Member States have pledged, with the Commission agreeing in 1999 to provide one billion euro. Some EU Member States, including Britain, have gone further, writing off 100 per cent of all bilateral debts for HIPC countries when they qualify. Britain has also cancelled the aid debts of all the poorest countries, not just HIPC countries.  

Nevertheless, as Clare Short, the British former Secretary of State for International Development bitterly put it, each cow in the EU receives a subsidy of 2.4 euro under the CAP; each person in the developing world receives less than 2 euro.

A rather different, more positive and certainly more ambitious approach could, however, be seen in the seventh agreement, the Cotonou Agreement of July 2000 signed between the EU and 77 ACP states, which came into effect on 1 April 2003.

The aims of Cotonou were three: to eradicate poverty, bring about sustainable development and gradually integrate the ACP countries into the world economy. Unlike Lomé IV, this was a 20-year programme and it accepted that long-term development could only succeed if there was a stable political environment that guaranteed peace, security, respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law.

The aims of the economic development programmes were to reduce debt, rectify balance of payment problems, counter instability in earnings, and promote structural reform. This time ACP countries would be responsible for choosing objectives, programmes and projects, and negotiating contracts. However, it would still be the EU that would be taking the financial decisions relating to these. Monitoring equality on conditions for tendering and evaluation of results would be a joint enterprise by the EU and the ACP state concerned.

In terms of financial assistance the 20 year programme would be divided into four 5-year periods, and in the first of these 15.2 billion euro would be made available, a 40 per cent increase on the first part of Lomé IV.

However, the STABEX and SYSMIN facilities were ended, on the grounds that they had been poorly poverty-focussed, were slow to disburse and failed to meet their objectives. Instead, in order to mitigate the adverse effect on national development of instability in export earnings, countries could be eligible for extra financial support (limited to four successive years), taking into account the impact on the national budget rather than receipts from individual commodities.

With regard to economic development, the ACP countries were urged to make more use of the private sector, including privatisation of firms and non-state actors
such as trade unions and social groups, to concentrate on developing entrepreneurial skills, and to build an environmental dimension into programmes and projects, as in the EU. The ACP countries would get special and differential treatment in regard to the supply of tourism, communication and financial services. With regard to social development, they were urged to improve education and health (including the fight against AIDS), improve the quality of water, concentrate on family planning and promote the equal participation of women in public life.

With regard to democracy, human rights and the rule of law, the Parties “reaffirmed their commitment” to ILO Conventions on Trade and Labour standards—freedom of association, collective bargaining, no forced labour, abolition of the worst forms of child labour and non-discrimination in employment. However, if a state failed to respect human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, and if there were serious cases of corruption, then consultations to reach a solution should take place, and if these were not successful “appropriate measures may be taken.” Unfortunately these were not defined, and suspension of the state concerned from the benefits of the Agreement would only be taken as a last resort.  

And the “Brain Drain” was seen as a problem to be tackled. The EU would “assist ACP countries which so request” to facilitate the return of qualified ACP nationals resident in developed countries through appropriate re-installation incentives.

If the Cotonou Agreement is a step in the right direction, is it enough, in view of the threat to world stability of the problems facing the “Third” and “Fourth Worlds”? For one thing, at time of writing, the Convention has not yet been ratified by a majority of EU states. But, in any case, lots of questions remain to be answered. Does the European Union have the courage and will to reform the Common Agriculture Policy so as to diminish sharply export subsidies? How many EU Member States will follow Britain’s example and write off the debts of individual ACP countries? Will EU member states stop poaching skilled workers, especially from the Associated States? What if “qualified ACP nationals” do not wish to return to their home countries? If the first tranche of Cotonou’s financial assistance provides the ACP population of some 500 million with about 6.0 euro per head per annum, even if it were doubled to 12 euro—if EU member states went for the UN’s 0.7 per cent GNP option—or 18 euro—if they went for the 1.0 per cent GNP option, would these sums be remotely adequate? Will Cotonou enable the individual ACP states’ growth rate to surpass their rate of population growth and thus give “lift off” a chance? Is it enough to suspend criminal and corrupt regimes from the benefits of the Agreement or should one go further and seek actively to overthrow them, especially when the consequences of their actions have an international or cross-border impact?

If development assistance efforts as a whole are perceived as having no success in reversing the worsening problems of the developing world, then the pressure may grow in the Advanced countries—North America, Europe, the advanced Pacific countries, Australasia and Russia (which has 20 per cent of the world’s most valuable
natural resources in terms of food, gold, oil, natural gas and uranium), to pull up the drawbridge and withdraw into a kind of Northern World Fortress.

The Brandt Commission’s fears would then become reality.

Notes

1 China 1,279 million, India 1,038 million in 2002. Eurostat, Yearbook 2003, Luxembourg, Publications office, p. 79.


4 924 million people live in urban slums around the world and the number is due to rise to 2 billion by 2030. UN Human Settlements programme, quoted in Time (UK Ed.) 13 October 2003.


6 Keesing, op. cit.; 1999, p. 43040.

7 ibid., p. 42724.


10 35 ACP countries are heavily dependent on only one crop.


13 Cosgrove-Twitchett, ibid., p.133.


15 Cosgrove-Twitchett., op.cit., pp. 10,35.

16 Ibid., pp. 76, 90.


18 Cosgrove-Twitchett, op .cit., p. 123.


20 Allen T., EU Trade with ACP Countries, in EUROSTAT, Statistics in Focus, External Trade, Theme 6, 3/2002, Luxembourg.

21 DFID (Department for International Development), Debt Relief for Poverty Reduction, Background Briefing, November 2002.

22 Speaking on the BBC’s Today programme, 10 September 2003.

23 Text of the Convention at URL: www.delsur.cec.eu.int/en/en_and_acpcountries/cotonou/the_cotonou_agreement_2.htm

24 Information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the European Commission.

25 Under Lomé IV, a number of states had aid suspended for a variety of reasons. See European Commission, EU-ACP Co-operation in 1998, Brussels, DG8, 1999. Under Cotonou Haiti, Liberia, Togo and Zimbabwe have had aid suspended for, amongst other things, violations of human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, while consultations are taking place for the same reasons with regard to the Central African Republic. Somalia has not yet signed the Agreement. (Information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the European Commission.)

* For simplification the term “European Union” appears throughout the text even though the Union as such did not come into being until the Maastricht Treaty of 1992.
Autonomy Problems: the Council of Europe and the European Union

For a number of Central European countries the greatest challenges of the new century are connected with their membership of the European Union.

1. The first challenge is their fulfilment of the very strict requirements, set up as preconditions, for membership of the organisation.
2. The second challenge for those states will be to live up to their obligations.
3. The third challenge is to make effective use of the numerous economic, social, and political opportunities provided by membership.

When the European Union was founded in 1952, as the Steel and Coal Pact, following a number of enlargements, the main integration aims of the organisation were those of a common economy, a common monetary system (€), customs union, and market policy. Last but not least, it wished to instigate, step by step, a common legislation, and to establish a common foreign policy.

For Hungary and for the Hungarians, as well as for others living in the Carpathian Basin, one of the crucial questions is: what legal rights and conditions will be exploited by the Hungarian Republic, as an EU Member State, to secure the future of the Hungarian communities living in the neighbouring countries as national minorities?

In this respect, I refer to a proposal tabled by the Hungarian delegation, during the debate of the European Convention, and I would like to bring your attention to the so-called Ebner Resolution, which was passed with 89.9% of the votes at the Plenary Session of the European Parliament on 7th September, in Strasbourg this year. Thanks to his politically tactful approach, Mr. Ebner managed to find an agreement with practically all of the parliamentary groupings and convinced them to support his initiatives.

In his presentation, Mr. Ebner referred to his own experience in his native Autonomous Region of Südtirol/Alto Adige (Italy), where three languages, namely German, Italian, and Ladin are spoken, a true European microcosm. Mr. Ebner declared: ‘I believe that Regional and Minority Languages should not constitute a problem. On the contrary, they are to be seen as assets, as an added value to Europe and its rich linguistic diversity. They are very often bridges between different cultures and they are therefore helpful for European integration.’

The Vice-President of the Intergroup for Regional and Minority Languages...
declared: ‘I welcome the initiative, which, by the way, is also supported by the inclusion of the mention on linguistic diversity recently endorsed by article 3 of the European Convention. Of course, all of this should be carried out in the spirit of European cooperation.’

Because of a lack of time, I am quoting only one of the supporters of Dr. Ebner. The Catalan MEP, Joan Vallvé, spoke for the European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party (Spain), fully supporting the Ebner Resolution. He highlighted the subordinate position of the Catalan language in the EU, a ‘minority’ language spoken by over seven million people.

The positive results will exert a certain pressure on the European Commission, but the outcome is still doubtful, given the reluctance of this institution. However, the report is part of a larger strategy, including the afore-mentioned European Convention and the Action Plan on Linguistic Diversity recently launched by the European Commission. The European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages in Brussels, EBLUL, Secretary-General Markus Warasin stated: “Thanks to the recent events, EBLUL now expects the EU and its programmes to support regional and minority languages more vigorously in its recent mainstreaming policy. We hope that, in the future, projects coming from language minority areas will not only be more heartily considered, but also favoured.” (EL)

By carefully reading the Ebner Resolution, a great achievement at the European Union level, it should be clear to all that the Resolution concerns only the language use in the member countries.

This proves and illustrates well the very important, but often disregarded, fact that other international organisations, like the Council of Europe, have gone much farther in the elaboration of instruments for active minority protection than the European Union.

For this obvious reason the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has elaborated a number of important resolutions during the drafting of the European Convention. Here I refer only to two of them. Namely Resolution No.1314 Contribution of the Council of Europe to the Constitution-making Process of the European Union, and No.1339/2003: The Council of Europe and the Convention on the Future of Europe. Their aim is to strengthen the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), as a legally binding mechanism for the protection of human rights along with minority rights in Europe.

At the same time—03 June 2003—Hungarian observers proposed a joint amendment with the following explanation: this proposal adds the missing elements of the Copenhagen criteria, constituting an important part of their amendment proposal to the European Convention. Additionally, each Hungarian parliamentary group presented its own proposal. All of them had one common aim: not to set back the standards of the European Convention, concerning human and minority rights, by comparing the standards already achieved by other international organisations.

The elaboration by the international organisations of all of those Conventions, Charters, and Covenants was a move in the right direction. However, there is always
a long and difficult path to follow before the relevant states are ready to sign and to ratify such internationally binding documents—not to mention the implementation of such agreements or the monitoring process required to measure how far a country is honouring its obligations.

There is a number of ways to protect ethnic and national minorities. The standards and the means of protection can differ very much from country to country, even in the EU member-states. If we take as examples the Scandinavian countries, Spain, Italy, or a number of others and compare them with the daily practice in countries like Greece or France, the difference becomes evident.

- There are countries in Europe where non-discrimination alone is judged as a satisfactory standard.
- In others, the equal rights of ethnic national and religious minorities are considered to be the European standard.
- The third possibility is to derive minority protection from the principle of positive discrimination.

In fact, only the third approach provides active minority protection.

All three options are practised in Europe, and within the European Union. This is a very important point and it is simply nonsense to speak about a European Standard in the field of minority protection: there is no such a general standard or norm.

This would appear to raise three questions:
1. What is the best method of successful minority protection?
2. How can a framework be created to secure stability, and with it prosperity, in regions where numerous ethnic or national minorities are living?
3. How can one of Europe’s greatest treasures, its ethnic cultural and linguistic diversity, be secured?

The highly respected international jurist and minority expert, the late Dr. Felix Ermacora, has stated during a conference at Dobogókő in 1998: “It has never happened that a State has given rights to its ethnic or national minorities from their own free will.” (Except for St. Stephen’s and King Andrew II’s Hungary.)

International organisations like the UN, the Council of Europe and others have elaborated a number of legal instruments for the protection of Human and Minority Rights. The Council of Europe’s European Charter of Local Self-Government provides a very important legal framework for Self-Governments to establish, or to take in their hands, all those institutions which concern their own affairs.

Accordingly, a region is able to establish or control various institutions in fields such as
- local legislation,
- education, and
- management of local, natural resources and finances.
In the process of integrating a number of East and Central-European countries into the European Union, the acceptance of the principle of subsidiarity is very important. This strengthens the tendency to establish regional self-administration, and is important in securing the enlargement and competence of local and regional authorities.

In this respect today, a number of basic political and economic approaches are already changing Eastern and Central-Europe. These approaches affect those governments and politicians whose countries are EU member candidates especially. At the same time it must be acknowledged that the basic principle of reducing the competence of central government and the delegation of powers, in the future,  
- to a higher level in Brussels on the one hand, and  
- to a lower level, the local authorities, on the other, in a number of cases is not readily accepted by politicians in power in the future EU member states.

In this respect let me refer to the statement of the highly respected Slovak political scientist, Professor Miroslav Kusy of Comenius University in Bratislava in connection with the demand of the Hungarian community for an autonomous region. He said:

*Territorial autonomy does not have the secession as its final aim… In its essence autonomy means self-administration. This is equivalent to the decentralisation of power, i.e., to the delegation of powers to the lower of more local levels. This is exactly what Democracy is founded upon. Therefore territorial autonomy is something both the Slovak and the Hungarian regions are equally entitled to, because democracy is indivisible.*

Further on in this context it is worthwhile to note that ethnic groups today are exposed to assimilation forces from two sides.  
- on the one hand there are the policies of government linked to the concept of the “nation-state”, and  
- on the other hand, there are the effects of globalisation.

However, there is a *third factor* which must be taken into account. It is the impact of the growing sense or consciousness of European identity which is gaining strength with the enlargement of the European Union.

Furthermore, thanks to the principle of subsidiarity, and the ever growing tendency towards *regionalisation* under the well-known slogan “Unity in Diversity,” the importance of local identity and local patriotism (in the positive sense of the term), are becoming increasingly visible in Europe.

Almost ten years ago, during the parallel conference of OSCE in Budapest, Mr. Csaba Tabajdi, the Secretary of State in Hungary at that time, declared: “A Ghost is *moving around* in Europe, the Ghost of Autonomy.”

The main topic of the Annual Session of the UN Working Group on Minorities, on
May 2001 in Geneva, was a presentation of the different forms of autonomy structures in Europe. This must be considered as the first breakthrough in the context of the international organisation in so far as autonomy is concerned. A year later (20-21 March 2002), at the 58th Plenary Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, in the context of The Right of People to Self-determination, I had the opportunity to make observations under the title: Self-determination in Relation to the Principle: National Integrity of a State.

It should be borne in mind that all forms of autonomy, regardless whether it is territorial, cultural or local, should have the greatest capacity to provide the most favourable circumstances for an ethnic group, or a national minority, to safeguard its identity in the long term. Moreover, since it has significant economic and security implications, autonomy can be considered as an instrument for conflict prevention as well.

In this respect the second and most important political achievement was the excellent Report of the Political Affairs Committee for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, elaborated by the Swiss parliamentarian, Mr. Andreas Gross. His paper must be considered to be a milestone in the history of the creation of instruments for minority protection.

The title is: “Positive experiences of autonomous regions as a source of inspiration for conflict resolution in Europe.” (This document dates from 3 June 2003 and has the reference number: Doc. 9824.)

Because of its crucial importance, let me quote a Summary of his report:

Most present-day conflicts no longer occur between states but within states and are rooted in tensions between states and minority groups which demand the right to preserve their identities. These tensions are partly due to the territorial changes and the emergence of new states, which followed the two world wars and the collapse of the old communist system, and also reflect the inevitable development of the concept of the national-state, which, hitherto, viewed national sovereignty and cultural homogeneity as essential.

Autonomy as applied in states governed by the rule of law can be a source of inspiration in seeking ways to resolve internal political conflicts. Autonomy allows a group of which is a minority within a state to exercise its rights, while providing certain guarantees of the state’s unity sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Autonomous status may be applied to various systems of political organisation and means that autonomous entities are given specific powers, either developed or shared with the central government, while remaining under the latter’s authority.

In order to provide the right conditions for the permanence of autonomy, the report recommends compliance with a number of basic principles, including the creation of legal and executive bodies in autonomous regions, a framework for autonomous status, a clear division of powers and the establishment of democratically elected legislative.”
If we are looking at autonomies, we must bear in mind that all forms of autonomy have legal, human, security, economic and cultural aspects.

When concerning ourselves with the legal aspects of autonomy, we first ought to tackle the internationally valid basis for the self-determination of people. Whenever we are dealing with the question of self-determination, we ought to differentiate between internal self-determination, and external self-determination. Let me emphasise the point that internal self-determination, which does not alter the internationally recognised border of a state, does not affect the national integrity of that state.

The right of self-determination, which has emerged after World War II, through the United Nations, is guaranteed in Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Furthermore, the General Comment No. 12, Article 1 of the UN Human Rights Committee sets out the nature of these rights. I consider also Paragraph VIII of the Helsinki Final Act to be an internationally binding document, where the right for self-determination is clearly formulated.

There are also other factors which have a bearing on internal self-determination or territorial autonomy for minorities.

For example, Council of Europe Recommendation 1201/1993 which includes an Additional Protocol on the Rights of National Minorities to the European Convention on Human Rights contains the following controversial Article 11:

In the regions where they are in majority the persons belonging to a national minority shall have the right to have at their disposal appropriate local or autonomous authorities or to have a special status, matching the historical and territorial situation and in accordance with the domestic legislation of the state.

The Recommendation’s content has often been referred to by the Parliamentary Assembly when considering a state’s application for membership. Consequently, in a number of cases Recommendation 1201/1993 has become an integral part of the list of Opinions set up for candidates by the admission process for the membership of the Council of Europe.

The accomplishment of internal self-determination means that a sufficiently numerous ethnic group or national minority, in order to safeguard its ethnic or national identity and to preserve its own national resources within the clearly defined border of its settlement, or settlements, can make the decision to take its own affairs into its own hands. Accordingly, it establishes its own bodies and institutions in all fields including local legislation, education and the management of its local finances. It should be emphasised that this should occur within the legal framework mentioned before, and that the process should be in full conformity with the principle of subsidiarity.
The different forms of autonomy

One of the basic structures for managing the different forms of autonomy is the Convention on the Protection of Ethnic Groups in Europe, prepared by experts for a non-governmental organisation. These experts included the highly respected Dr. Felix Ermacora and the former President of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN), Prof. Dr. Christoph Pan. The Convention is based primarily on the practical experience of ethnic groups in Europe, and it was unanimously adopted by the representatives of over thirty ethnic groups from all over Europe at the annual congress of the FUEN held in Cottbus in 1993.

The specific circumstances of a particular group determine which form of autonomy would be suitable. In general, a group and its members shall have the right to autonomous legislative and executive powers to conduct their own affairs, wherever possible, in one of the following forms:
- territorial autonomy,
- cultural autonomy,
- local autonomy or self-administration.

Self-determination, self-government, autonomy. There may be disagreement as to the exact meaning and content of these concepts. However, what is really important is the basic concept designed both to ensure stability and to reconcile people with each other in a democratic, tolerant manner, whilst the unimpeded preservation and development of the different cultures is secured. In this way, the diversity of Europe is maintained.

I am convinced that a future Great Europe, a Europe of security and prosperity, can only be a Europe without dividing lines, as far as the practical implementation of the rule of law is concerned.

A Europe of security and prosperity must be necessarily a Europe of diversity. Diversity of cultures, diversity of languages, diversity of religions, but by no means diversity of rights: no first and second-class nations.

A prosperous Europe must secure and preserve its multiple diversity to ensure its stable and long-term unity.

Appendix

Proposal for an MP of the Council of Europe to elaborate a MOTION:

European Charter of Autonomies

One way of proceeding would be to set up an internationally binding framework to help define autonomy and how its security, cultural, economic, and human
aspects should be applied. This framework would seek to guide how, in specific cases, territorial, cultural and local autonomy can be tailored and applied.

These are the main reasons why there is a need to elaborate a flexible, yet clear, instrument such as a *European Charter of Autonomies*. It could be applied in the same way as the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. It would contain some fundamental provisions and a number of paragraphs and subparagraphs to accommodate local circumstances.

The Council of Europe should take the lead in setting out such an instrument. Experts from other international organisations, government bodies, independent experts, and legal representatives of ethnic and national minorities should also be involved in the process.

I am convinced that the proper application of a *European Charter of Autonomies* would provide a major tool for the just and lasting prevention of ethnic, national and religious minority tensions both in Europe and in other parts of the world as well. It could provide us with a key to an appropriate and viable long-term solution. I strongly believe that to struggle for such a correct, peaceful solution is a common task for us all.
Melita Richter

Identity and Exclusion in an Expanded EU

This contribution to the theme on “identity and exclusion in an expanded EU” is given in the form of a hypothesis for the discussion rather than in the form of closed, finished paper. We have chosen this form for the reason that in South-Eastern European countries and Central European post-communist countries the discussion on the integration process and generally on a European identity, is almost absent. When it is present, it is led exclusively between political leaders. We feel the necessity to promote a larger debate on Europe, on what it means for the citizens, on what the genuine feelings of European supranational identity are, on European identity as multiple identity, on the values it is founded on, on multiculturalism. To start the debate we will concentrate our attention on some essential topics, integral to our reflection on the process of European re-unification—the term we prefer to the one of the enlargement.

There are at least four concepts we would like to start with:

• the old/new borders;
• the differences;
• the fears;
• the difficulties.

1. New borders between the two Europes are shaping the soil of the continent. A new process of inclusion/exclusion dominates the European political scene. Those promoted as future members of EU are exclaiming “Back to Europe!”, others feel humiliated, punished, excluded. New separations are appearing (the example of the Istrian border—never before divided into two socio-political entities).

Will the establishment of new political borders produce new barriers (ideological, cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious) on the soil of Europe?

2. Besides the economic and financial aspects and the degree of democracy achieved, one of the most important differences between the EU partners, south European and central European post-communist countries concerns the identity issue. While the aim of the EU is to build a supranational European identity based on a plural feeling of belonging and multiculturalism, most of the candidate countries—once a part of the Soviet block and countries born from the dissolution of Yugoslavia—are searching for their identity deeply rooted in the national past, in the affirmation of an “ethnically pure” homogenized society. The example of Yugoslavia shows how the new territorial separation and
separation of identities can be tragic and lead to open conflict and war in the very heart of Europe. The multiple belonging, the overlapping cultures, indispensable elements of being European, are still strongly doubted, not only where a part of our identity is being destroyed with weapons (as the case of Yugoslavia demonstrates) but also in any place where a double personality decides to become one, indivisible, absolute, when it decides to expel the other part of itself and to jump to one side only, alone. This is not possible without violence on itself.

3. Despite the fact that all Balkan countries are geographically part of Europe and officially qualify to apply for EU membership under the condition originally stipulated by the Treaty of Rome (Its article 237 said, “any European state may apply to become a member of the Community”), the EU external border in South-Eastern Europe was among the first to get fixed in the post-communist period and remains one of the most difficult to cross.

4. The European enlargement process is accompanied by diffuse fears on both sides—the side of the EU members and the side of the newcomers. Let us reveal some.

**The fear of Union partners**

- that the newcomers—most with a communist past and some of them with a strong nationalist present—will bring elements of their political culture, their behaviour and conflictuality into the Union;
- that the newcomers—mostly situated on a new eastern and south-eastern border of the Union—will not be capable, new guarantors of European impenetrability and wardens of the fortress;
- the fear of being invaded from the East is very strong in some EU countries;
- the fear that the entrance of the “new poor” will take away the opportunity for important communitarian financial support to less developed areas assigned to some regions of the EU;
- the fear of a new kind of internal mass migration and the pressure of new migration on the borders of the Union.

**The fear of candidate countries**

- the fear of becoming subject to a new hegemonic policy;
- the fear of a non-parity role of cultural identity actors and the diffidence with which the “small” (states, nations, minorities, weaker regions) regard the possible new cultural domination of the transnational centre of power;
- the fear that cultural information and communication could become “one-way oriented;”
- the sense of “dis-equality” and marginalisation. Most of the candidate members
are small, not too rich and stable countries. This fact is introducing a significant change in the balance between four strong partners of the Union and a new relationship between being in the centre or on the outskirts of Europe.

- the fear of “paying too much” for the entrance (unemployment, unequal starting conditions for competitiveness, obligatory participation in the financial structure of transnational military formations).

**About the difficulties**

a) If we are conscious about the fact that every local development depends and will depend increasingly on the global context—we have to see what the global context means for the EU and, more widely, for Europe itself.

- The war in former Yugoslavia showed that Europe was not able to solve the crisis, neither was she able to develop her own common foreign policy. Particularity of aims and interests are still dominating the European political scene.

- The war in Iraq confirmed the above and showed that the differentiation of political interpretation of the crisis in the core of the EU (France, Germany, Belgium) and wider Europe (Russia) brought about the separation of political praxis and values between the biggest European partners—Great Britain and Italy on the one side, Germany and France with Russia on the other.

- It is evident that while we are searching for a common European interest and European identity and for its cultural roots to share with the newcomers, there is still not visible a kind of unity of interests, ethical aims and values, a shared “European position” in the institutional core of the Union (example: this fact is evident in the work in progress on the European Constitution).

- The pressure of the big ally—the USA—on European international policy—which means on European autonomy and its identity—is stronger than ever. How much will it determine the European identity? How much can the judgment of the American President *(the winner)* about who are “bad Europeans” and who are “good ones” and who are the “Old Europe”, who the “New one”, contribute to the authentic and autonomous thinking on its essence?

b) We consider mistaken the policy of European integration which sees in becoming a member of NATO a first step or even a preliminary condition to the extension of the EU. For some people in the region this condition (not explicitly expressed, but pressed upon *de facto*) is humiliating, for others it is unacceptable.

Europe, intended both as the Union or as some other formation founded on multiple identities and specific traditions, on cultural and spiritual values, apart from the common market and economic parameters, cannot identify in a military formation a basic factor for its unification.

c) The future will show how the Europe of 25 will function, but there remains a justified fear that the great disparity between the richer and more powerful states
in the Union and the states which will become its members could establish a new relationship between being in the centre or on the outskirts of Europe.

d) The vanishing of political borders and openness are not enough for cancelling old borders and barriers (psychological, cultural, linguistic, ideological, ethnic and religious). The past and recent history of Europe shows that the vanishing or obliteration of political borders does not automatically mean the vanishing of barriers created through previous periods. The socio-cultural differences, resulting from previous separation and a different historical heritage, may last for a long time.

e) The appearing of new political borders and barriers in the European body will bring a psychological burden on the excluded who will react in both directions—the rush of the political structure of the excluded countries to join as soon as possible the “club of the privileged” and the spreading of anti-European feeling among the citizens as the answer to being left outside the door of the fortress.

Regarding the concept of Fortress Europe—a question of common European citizenship arises. It is one of the most important aims of a wide debate that has accompanied the path of the European Convention. The aim is: to overcome a state model which bases its idea of citizenship on a national principle, that is on the identification of state, nation and territory.

A real common European citizenship can only exist within a Europe with permeable borders composed of heterogeneous nationalities and cultures which find their cohesion when adhering to certain fundamental and constitutionally ratified principles and rights.

But what really happens is the fact that integration proceeds at different speeds has remarkable implications with regard to migratory phenomena: on the one hand it determines different schedules and different needs, to give time to single countries to adapt each legislation concerning free circulation, justice and internal affairs; on the other hand, the unequal expansion of the Schengen area traces new borders across Europe which have many consequences, both for the countries included—they will have to carry the weight of the external borders of the EU—and those excluded—its citizens will go through remarkable difficulties when trying to enter territories which were earlier freely accessible. This is why we consider that while opening up, the EU creates new exclusions (the case of citizens of Serbia and Montenegro who will soon need a visa in order to enter Hungary, or the introduction of a visa regime between Poland and Ukraine).

The introduction of a visa regime between bordering countries which have close historical ties as well as common economic interests necessarily creates new divisions, engenders contrast and creates obstacles to economic growth in the whole of ‘so-called’ Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, isolating those very countries that are currently most fragile in their democratic institutions.
QUO VADIS EUROPE?
II.
THE EUROPE OF REGIONS-NETWORKS
Gyöngyvér Szabó Hervai

Prospects for City-Regions in Europe

The nineties were an influential decade for local governments. 400,000 new local governments emerged in different regions of the world and hundreds of regions and states were developed during the processes of political localisation and decentralisation. From the last decade of the 20th century a great variety of transnational city networks were able to grow behind the wall of subsidiarity. From the early nineties the local governments were able to gain some independence from central political power, and get autonomy in financial, programming and decision-making, as well as being able to develop their own international partnership system by participating in different networks.

New trends in internationalisation of local economies, more influential participation in decision-making of the private sector, Europeanisation of the public policy, new challenges as migration, ageing, environmental risks, new trends in political participation mean a shift to the post-bureaucratic state, and have changed the whole context of locality: a shift from local government to the new systems of local governance. Among the new processes we have to outline the following:
- in the region of the Global Triad the number and variety of the administration levels (multilevel governance systems have emerged) have grown;
- the new public management ideologies and practices have led to new systems of agencies with confused financial systems, transforming the old financing practices;
- the public administration capacity was enforced with new horizontal links, and trans-local links;
- behind the myths of regionalism emerged a sharp competition among the cities and resulted in a variety of innovation practices in regional and local planning systems;
- the multi-level community governance systems formed new bureaucratic strata—leaders of networks—rewriting the local power balance.

The new Millennium’s narrative is about the city-regions, which are decisive actors for local regimes. The local regime is a definition used in political terminology, the city-region is a term of geography.

The city-region theory was used first for analysing the political and economical structure of global cities, but the recent studies treat the city-region as a micro-region, which is not common with earlier administrative districts, and French-type pays. City-regions are now seen by many commentators as the motors of globalised economy.
(Hall 1998, Scott 1998), and it is agreed that the governance of cities, regions and states is changing and the global competitiveness of cities and regions is a concern to governments at city, regional, national and supranational levels. We need to go beyond the global and national contexts to examine the conditions of city-regions as developmental models.

As we approach the twenty-first century, a worldwide mosaic of large and small city-regions seems to be overriding an earlier core–periphery system of spatial organisation. The economic dynamics of these city-regions raise many issues about the local economic development policy in an era of a knowledge economy. (Bagnasco et al. 2000) The city-region as a new governance model can be characterised as a post-Fordist political structure. The city-regions as models are very important elements in a new world system, based on a multi-level hierarchy of economic and political institutions ranging from global to local.

In the era of a knowledge economy the traditional bases of industrial economy are disappearing, and the process is accompanied by new trends:

− small, closed communities are disappearing;
− new demographic trends (ageing communities in developed states, immigration, new vibrant communities in cities) are emerging;
− new balance between genders;
− new family structures with extended families and growing numbers of singles;
− diverse employment and salary structures;
− new household management strategies;
− new cultural trends;
− individuals under pressure of new biochemical and psychological trends;
− new types of settlements;
− new psychological trends (growing needs for identity and community);
− growing polarisation and segmentation of communities, new networks without norms;
− new digital forms of decision-making, new risks, new electronic administrative services and globally connected local programmes;
− integrated business, educational, health spaces with elite life-style communities.

Why is the city-region the new unit for governance? I think it is a so-called post-Fordist political structure, which was developed as an answer for a post-Fordist economic organisational model. The Fordist political structures are disappearing, while a new media class and knowledge service sector is emerging. The new age structure, the new age structure of the workforce, the changed balance of genders, the new family structure, the new employment and reward patterns, the new household patterns have caused new psychological trends.

Governance models of city-regions are based on a new balance of power, new network-based interest groups, information-based digital decision systems, risks, information society programmes. The sustainable knowledge-based city-region
is transnational space, based on new public management, rooted in sustainable institutions, centred around a new type of planning and development offices, interconnected into different networks of cities.

We have to state that an attractive region is built on the network of different city-regions, which are complex webs of different life-style communities.

In this context, the new urban regeneration programmes must be connected with the reconstruction of suburban places, the integration of edge cities, stable traffic infrastructure, the development of suburban communities and with new employment programmes. The city-region as a system of different communities built around concentric circles, where political communities, commuting, bioregion, planning region, and cultural empowerment are connected with the development of different life-style communities. (Donald 2001) The 21st century is the century of micro-regions, where technical resources and experts, decision-making, financial resources, civilian networks, spatial programmes of different scale, communication resources are connected. (Collits 1999)

The first chapter of the paper is about the dynamics of city-regions and their competitiveness. It also depicts the city-regions in different knowledge networks as well as the quality of life in city-regions. The next chapter is about the regional competencies of city-regions, and the branding of city-regions. The last chapter analyses the different types of city-regions, the models of capacity buildings and experiences in different parts of the world.

1. The city-region as a distinct model of spatial organization

Since the end of the 1970s, a number of key concepts about the large city-regions have been introduced as the basic geographic pillar of the global economy. The global city-regions were first identified as ‘world cities’ by Hall (1966) Friedman and Wolf (1982) and Sassen-Koob (1982). In parallel with the development of special metropolitan areas, the embryonic consolidation of global city-regions is also occurring, as continuous local political units club together into spatially polarized coalitions to deal with both the threats and opportunities of globalisation. (Le Galés 2002)

Today, in an era of economic restructuring and technological change, significant restructuring has occurred virtually across the world as well as in the political institution system. The new global order based on globalisation and new regionalism has distinctive features:

− Huge amount of economic activity now occurs in and through the spaces that lie between sovereign states (export-processing zones, special borderline territories).
− New economic integrations (EU, NAFTA, APEC, CARICOM etc.) can be seen as institutional efforts to control the negative externalities created by the spilling over of national capitalisms beyond their national political boundaries.
− Sovereign states and national economies remain dominant elements of the global landscape, but no longer enjoy the former degree of sovereign political autonomy and have been subject to massive re-bordering, giving some regulatory functions to the supranational level and other functions downward, to the middle level.
− The recent dynamic of the restructuring of political space was accompanied by a resurgence of region-based forms of economic and political organizations, city-regions below states, formalised territorially administered regions, and the formation of the large, global city-regions. This new type of special forms faced many new tasks of political co-ordination and representation. (Prescott 2004)
− These places, especially large city-regions, attract more and more low-wage migrants from all over the world or from the neighbouring countries, so that their population becomes more and more polyglot and disinherit social groups are confronted with pressing issues related to political participation and reconstruction of the local political identity and citizenship. (John 2001)

There are now some 300 city-regions scattered across the world with their population exceeding one million and more than 20 the population of which is more than ten million and expected to double by the year 2025. We can state that the city-region regime is an exceptional and not an ordinary model, which has been serving to get transnational or international financial resources. The sub-urbanisation processes were connected with the emptying of the towns; the political and business elite have moved to the suburbs and agglomeration, and so the employees of the urban state sector have got the role in local governments. New shifts in the economy, the new ideologies in location criteria developed a new interest in urban development, the development in urban institution systems. Denationalisation processes were connected with renewing the role of the towns in economic and political life. The best-known city-regions, such as Leeds, Manchester, Lille, Rennes, Hamburg, Bilbao, Venice, Bologna, are good examples for drawing the new line between entrepreneurial and traditional cities. We have to point out that the North–South divide is disappearing in the case of city-governance models. In this model the city has a twofold governance structure: the first is the level of local government and organisation, with local actors, identity and milieu; the second is the supranational, or global level with flows, networks, and standardised services. While the European narrative is centred around the regions, as a good entity for development, the European and American towns are strong collective actors in the global competitive arena.

The city-regions can be understood in terms of network structures that constitute the basic framework of organized economic and social life: they are represented by activities like the high-technology industry, the sector of cultural products, the media, the business and financial services, activities that assumed a markedly socialized character, networks or complexes of specialized, but complementary producers with strong inter-producer synergies:
− high levels of firm specialization and complementarity;
- mutual insurance against critical supply failure;
- new information and practical know-how networks;
- network-specific skills and forms of workers in the local area of city-regions;
- common pool of human resources;
- special social systems of common functional capacities;
- access to rich physical infrastructures typically supplied by public funds as the cities grow;
- special flows of local labour market;
- special mixture of conventions and culture: places of learning, creativity and innovation.

The city-regions are to be defined as territorial-cum-territorial units with specialized and co-ordinated actions. They are built around a leading city in a large, dense, polarized agglomeration, or formed by active formation of territorial coalitions in which different types of political units come together. (Chesire et al. 2000)

The second type of city-region was also formed in a fiercer global rivalry. Although the regional approach is greatly stressed nowadays, there is no generally accepted definition of ‘region’ and ‘city-region.’ Cook defines regions in terms of four criteria: a region must not have a determinate role, it is homogeneous in terms of specific criteria, it can be distinguished from bordering areas by a particular kind of association of related features, and it possesses some kind of internal cohesion. In the case of city-regions, the city-region is relegated to the background, the focus being on networks and development processes. (Cook et al. 1998)

The city-region is not based on a border-oriented and administrative view, but on the networks and processes that flow through in the city-regions, and it is conditioned by the concept of the ‘network society’.

M. Castells describes this view as a space of flows, such as flows of capital, flows of information, flows of technology, flows of images, sounds, and symbols, and flows that express organisational interaction.

The dynamic of the flows forces city-regions to develop their competitiveness continuously, and requires them to specialise. City-regions need to choose which flows they want to attract and what type of development strategies they need to implement. As the global economy is driven by and dependent on flows of information, achieving regional innovation—focused competitive advantage—is based on the ability to access and generate knowledge, access to knowledge networks. The cities that are successful in the knowledge-based flows are able to adapt, learn and innovate. (Hamilton Report 2002) Cities are the places where knowledge as a strategic resource is created and achieved. City-regions are special social-political units, where knowledge-based activity is formed around universities, research centres, entrepreneurial networks of small firms and knowledge centres of multinational firms. (ODMP New Horizons Programme. Final Report. July 2003)

The literature on urban studies and geography has demonstrated growing interest
in the relationship between economic competitiveness and the quality of life in city-regions. Recent researches on local authorities in the UK and Canada have found out that in many cases economic competitiveness was promoted at the expense of quality of life factors. Rogerson, R. examined the link between the quality of life and city competitiveness, and focused on the question of the physical environment, climate, pollution, crime, education and health. (Rogerson 1999) In their contexts the quality of life indicators have become a tool of place marketing for the city-region in search of economic competitiveness. These indicators are called positive ones. Cities may use negative indicators to attract other forms of capital investment for state or national government expenditure. A number of scholars have pointed out that the rise of knowledge economy radically alters the way cities and regions establish and maintain their competitive advantage. (Porter 2002) In this context the city-regions themselves are competitive with a critical mass of economic actors, a wide range of specialized suppliers, service providers, associated institutions and innovation networks. (Sellers 2002)

Social capital is another term used to emphasize the essential role that civic and social institutions play in generating innovation through socially organized processes. According to Gerther the social capital is regionally specific and enables and facilitates the establishment of collaborative social learning relationships. (Heidenreich 2001) The recent literature focuses on the cultural economy of the cities and puts the accent on the urban-based character of the transformative processes of the new economy. Creativity and innovation require a degree of chaos, culture products of a city such as fashion, film, multimedia, music, furniture design, food and beverages, the so-called ‘cultural capital.’

In this context the city-region is a special geographic-political unit of the world-system, determined by special knowledge and information flows, developed social-capital patterns and special culture images. Markinson and Florida placed the accent on talent as the critical factor of production in the new economy. (Gertler et al. 2002)

According to Florida and Gates the social character of the city-region has a great influence over its economic success and competitiveness. They use four key variables to compare the place of American and Canadian city-regions: the Talent index of the population’s proportion over 18 years of age with bachelor’s degree or higher, the Bohemian index (employment rate in creative and artistic occupations), Mosaic index (the so-called melting pot index, the proportion of the total population that is foreign born), the Tech-Pole index (a city-region’s high-technology industrial output). These dimensions are very important because they reflect openness for newcomers, tolerance (the city’s ‘Gay index’), and the proportion of people who used to be marginalized. The feminist geography for women’s place in society: can the place offer women working outside their homes flexitime, child-care options, and domestic services. The knowledge economy focuses on women because they are more highly skilled, more mobile and that is crucial for the quality of life environment. There is great debate over the kind of talent that is important for city-regions. The first is that regions would
be better served by concentrating on family-oriented professionals in their 30s and 40s. According to Florida, talent attraction is more important than talent retention and post-college age workers are the ‘workhorses’ of a city-region.

2. Regional competencies and branding of city-regions

City-regions are special types of political institutions, based on governance models. Governance is a flexible pattern of decision-making based on loose networks of individuals. Governance does not just seek to describe a more networked form of politics; it also refers to the capacity of governing systems to co-ordinate policy and to solve public problems in a more complex context. They can be characterized by self-organized, inter-organizational networks with significant autonomy from the state. The city-region as a governance regime is connected with institutional reforms: a new level of sub-national governance and institutional restructuring (privatisation, contracting out, the creation of agencies and new budgeting system). Their competencies are connected with new networks, with greater presence of the private sector, and cross-national links. The governance system of the city-regions is based on local innovation and capacity building policy, on the search for new mechanisms of control and accountability, and ruled by the more prominent form of executive leadership.

We can state that the local governance regime is the location where a physical place and organizational capacity can give competencies to strategic actions and development.

Development trends in post-industrial city-regions are based on economic, environmental and social sustainability, the information society and the knowledge economy. (Simmie 2001)

The city-region is a complex web of urban centralized structures and local co-operative networks. They focus on long-term environmental management, co-ordinated public services and strategies, long-term investment strategies, cultural diversity, and a diverse non-profit economy. The city-region model is a holistic development strategy; it is connected with urban centre regeneration, with development of different types of urban roles (special traffic systems, special industrial districts, green growth poles, innovative quarters for living and working, business service districts, leisure and cultural centres). The most successful one tries to connect the living and working places, social economy, and services. They place emphasis on suburban territories (new services, new parks and business places) landscape rehabilitation, and build the environment. The ideal type of city-region is a complex web of urban and suburban settlements, the region of the so-called life-style communities. The new type of intelligent places, service clusters, the successful heritage management are important for the stabilization of suburban and urban places and for a critical cultural capital capacity. (SURF 2002/b)

In Europe a new model of regional planning has emerged: the polycentric urban region project. (Meijers et al. 2003) The traditional functional hierarchy and duality
between city centres and the multitude of suburban places are eroding in many city-regions. The polycentric urban region concept is used to describe network cities and city-networks. It promotes the advantages of stronger interaction between neighbouring cities to develop specialized complementary assets to avoid destructive, territorial competition. (Sotarauta et al. 2002)

In the UK, the SURf (Centre for Sustainable Urban and Regional Futures) has studied the effectiveness of long-term and strategic thinking about the future development of city-regions in England. (SURf 2002) The report focused on the following themes: city-regions require the capacity to develop a widely shared, well-researched and strategic understanding of their collective future. The existing capabilities are weak because:
− data sources that can inform city-regional forecasts are fragmented and dispersed;
− urban future programmes and initiatives usually focus on individual parts of cities or units of local governments rather than cities at regional levels;
− urban research tends to be retrospective and only informally supports prospective thinking at city-regional level.

English city-regional development is structured around six types of city-regions (metropolitan model, city-enlargement model, subregionalization-devolution from regions, city-region government, polycentric alliances, core cities, and capital-city collaboration). The most innovative approaches were developed for greater Nottingham and greater Cambridge partnerships.

In France, the most successful city visioning is the Lyon experience. City visioning was a mobilization factor in the case of Italian city visions: Rome, Venice, Naples, Milan and Turin. While on an earlier stage regional planning was based on managerialism (swot analysis, programming, project management techniques), recent trends are concentrated around five methods of future thinking. Future techniques, methods, and processes aim at overcoming traditional barriers to long-term planning and strategic thinking. Speed, risk, and the logic of just-in-time dominate economic, social, political and technological intersections and systems. (Gilbert 1998) The pace of change is unprecedented and systems, organisations such as city-regions are subject to pressures that require flexibility, adaptability, and resilience. (Hauswirth et al. 2003)

Future studies offer new methodologies for meeting the challenges of the multiple, pluralistic, reflexive, critical and responsible approaches. The methods are both qualitative and quantitative: they use numerical data analysis; emphasize factors such as intuition, invention, hypothesis, and judgement. They are explorative and normative: they look at the future from the perspective that starts in the present and develops pathways and trends in the future. They develop visions or scenarios of a desirable future and studies ways to reach them. Forecasting methods use stimulation, modelling and visioning.

Summing up the methods of enhancing quality and improving effectiveness, we
can state city-regions are not only places where the knowledge economy can root, not only places for life-style communities and life-quality but places where the future is communicated, planned and agreed with a new set of governance policies.

3. Summary

The global and decentralised world economy is no longer a competitive battlefield for nations, but cities and regions. Cities and regions form a unique mix of dynamic and growth, modernism and innovation, infrastructure and technology, attractiveness and quality. City-regions are the engines of the economic and cultural development—powerful clusters of valuable resources as well as melting pots of innovation. To achieve competitive advantage, they must be able to attract and retain the best companies, organisations, professionals and investors quickly and in a sustainable way.

Therefore, brand-building and management gain much more relevance. It is the brand that signals the quality of the place. A strong brand can create a regional personality built on soft facts: mentality and tolerance, arts and culture, nature and healthcare. A strong regional brand proves not only the quality of resources like ground, workforce, and capital, but also soft facts like the quality of life. (CHINABRAND Consulting Limited 2004)

In order to be successful in a highly competitive environment, city-regions have to develop and maintain a strong location brand. (Hervai 2003) That means building a local or regional brand identity as well as the permanent and consistent representation of their identity through integrated brand communications that include and network all relevant organizations, companies, and individuals. The brand management depends on the type and life cycle of the region. All city-regions have to develop an adequate brand strategy and management. Branding for city-regions is vital for gaining attractiveness in the knowledge economy.

The 21st century city-region is an organic functional unit based on environmental quality, integrated life-style communities, integrated governance of cities, small villages and regions, locally based, locally managed sustainable economy, and the party-led policy replaced by a new functionally managed and partnership based one, decision-making and communication is communication-technology based, local society, public services, social economy is organised around life-style communities, and culture is developed connecting global popular and diverse local community arts and networks by media and creative industries. We can state that the city-region is a new visionary model, a new social and environmental development management policy, greening and more ethical investment, economical development process, where market, strategic planning, partnership building are agreed, and long-term oriented.
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The Central-Transdanubian Region

The Central-Transdanubian Region is in the heart of Europe, in the middle of Hungary. The Region is situated, as defined by the name, in the central part of Transdanubia. The northern border is the Danube and Slovakia, in the east Pest County and the capital (Central Region) and again the Danube. In the south it is the Southern Transdanubian Region and in the west the Western-Transdanubian Region. Our region was formed by the co-operation of the counties Fejér, Komárom-Esztergom and Veszprém in September, 1997. Geographically, the area is immensely diverse. The Bakony, Vértes and Gerecse mountains are home to tourism and forestry. Mezőség and the eastern part of the Small Plains are the “breadbasket” of the country. Almost the entire length of the northern shore of Lake Balaton is part of the region. Velence Lake, situated 40 kms from Budapest is an increasingly important tourist attraction. The Danube running 130 kms along the region’s border is also a particularly significant area. As one of the Helsinki Corridors it is an important shipping route. Its bank is not yet fully utilised for tourism or sports.

The region is in the middle or, rather, a cross section of the European development zone. Its position is thus emblematic. The economic development effects of Europe have a direct impact on the region and its long-term development assuring its enduring and continuous renewal.

Based on its size, this is the second smallest region of Hungary (right after the Central Region); by population it is the third. In the life of the country the weight of the region is a lot more sizeable. This is one of the most significant and internationally recognised areas of Hungary.

The region is the second, when considering the GDP per inhabitant. The Central-Transdanubian Region is one of the most industrialised regions of the country. It produced one fourth of the industrial production in 2001. According to this measure, the region is the first in Hungary. The GDP per capita is better than the national average. But in the field of regional balance, we can say that two thirds of the industrial production of Central Transdanubia is concentrated in Fejér County. Most of the products of the multinationals of Fejér and Komárom-Esztergom Counties are exported. The production/export ratio gives the region an eminent position: 28% of the total exports of Hungary stem from here.

What can we say about the crisis in the economy after the regime change at the end of the 80s?

− Loss of eastern markets
After the transition most of the regional companies of metal processing and machinery have gone through a crisis due to the loss of the eastern markets. As a consequence:

- Industrial crisis areas developed

And this led to:

- A rapidly increasing unemployment rate.

The result of all these: the possibility of a declining economical-social situation appeared.

What were the possibilities at this time?

- successful reorganisation of state-owned companies;
- privatisation, brownfield investments;
- greenfield investments by transnational companies;
- increasing number of newly founded companies, based on
  - favourable geographical location;
  - highly skilled and relatively cheap labour force.

How could the region cope with the severe structural problems?

- The first factor was the successful reorganisation of state-owned companies (privatisation, brownfield investments).
- Secondly, a great number of multinational companies have settled in the region. The factors producing the development are the exceptionally good infrastructure, the geographical position, the highly skilled but relatively cheap labour force and the high level of adaptability of the inhabitants.
- And thirdly, the number of newly founded enterprises has been increasing significantly in the 1990s.

The engines of the industrial development are the machinery, especially computer parts, electronic/IT parts and vehicle producing companies. More than 60% of the industrial production of the region is exported by 15% more than the national average. The computer products, vehicles, parts of vehicles are 80-90% exported mostly to the countries of the EU.

Based on these, the following characteristics can be emphasized as results of the extensive economic development of the '90s:

- regional economy fully integrated into the global market;
- export-oriented industrial production dominated by the transnational companies;
- world-class production culture;
- low unemployment rate;
- labour costs—as a competitive advantage—are decreasing;
- low wage-based production—some companies have begun to move eastwards.
There are dangerous, more and more intensifying phenomena:
− few links between big companies and SMEs;
− increasing unemployment rate.

The main question is the strategic opportunities of the future—how to raise regional competitiveness?

The solutions can be:
− innovation-oriented, knowledge-based economic development,
− clusterisation and networking.

Clusterisation is accelerating in the fields of electronics/IT, automotive industry, wood and furniture and food processing, especially in the centres Veszprém-Székesfehérvár-Mór-Tatabánya, where a great number of SMEs have highly developed technology and produce high quality.
− Improvement in accessibility.

Improvement in accessibility means that we should form the proper communication channels.

The key factors can be the intelligent use of two factors: the knowledge and the environment and the third one, information transfer.

The results are: making opportunities and competitiveness.

Background conditions are the next:
At first: MENTALITY. This means that the members of the competitive society can be efficient partners in the fields of making, using and capitalizing new knowledge and abilities.
At second: SOLUTIONS. This expression is focused on the establishment of up-to-date organizations, “products” and processes, so that their acceptance and everyday use will be natural.
At third: SUPPORT. This means that the central will, the commitment of the organization making decisions, will be ensured by creating processes, products and services, sustainable support and defence.

The strategic aims are to build
− innovative, competitive social and economic structures to form;
− balanced and attractive territory in the region and to develop;
− an EU-conforming regional and local institution system and strong regional identity.

In Hungary, the decision-making body of the regions is the regional development council, which consists of regional actors and ministerial delegates. The problem is that the council has no revenue of its own and is not an elected body. However, the imminent changing of the regional development and administrative law will help. The operational body of the council is the regional development agency. In the case of Central Transdanubia, the agency was founded on 10th December 1997 as a non-
profit organisation. The agency runs the administrative issues of the council. This is also the strategic planning organisation of the region and its task is the preparation of tender conditions, too. In the case of Central-Transdanubia, 3 committees and working groups assist the work of the council and the agency. The main members of our Regional Development Council come from ministries, microregions, counties and towns with county rank.

Our agency consists of 3 divisions. The secretariat runs the administrative issues of the council. The main task of the implementation division is the execution of the regional programs: launching regional calls for proposals, evaluation project proposals and controlling-evaluating-monitoring the systems. The planning division—which I head—is the responsible section for regional planning, programming, project pipeline systems and project-based cooperation. The Agency established a well-functioning network of regional actors and is participating in several transnational projects.

As a result of the economic and social changes of the last decades, innovation has become one of the most important production factors in our industrialized region. As a consequence of the accelerated technological development, only continuous research-development and innovation activities appearing and materializing in the form of concrete new market products, services, production processes, and the introduction of organizational systems, market conduct forms and marketing channels can ensure a durably sustainable competitiveness for the companies.

Based on our situation the future vision for the Central-Transdanubia is that this region can become the region of innovation, performing a determinant role in the national modernization as a core-area. The mission of our region is the overall extension of innovation, continuous improvement of the living conditions of the inhabitants living in the region. To achieve this goal, we are elaborating our regional innovation strategy as the leading partner in a consortium within the frame of the 5th European Framework Programme.

The future prospects of the region are based on three aims. These strategic aims of the program are:

− innovative, competitive social and economic structures;
− balanced and attractive living space in the region;
− EU-conforming regional and local institution system with strong regional identity.

These aims lead to four priorities to achieve these aims. These are the following:

1st priority: innovation-orientated development of the economy;
2nd priority: human resources development;
3rd priority: creating the conditions for quality life;
4th priority: EU-accession—improving the local institutions to meet the expectations.

Of course, the regional plans in themselves are suitable for determining only the development directions. Plans have to be based on taking surveys on the demands,
and we have to explore further project proposals, matching with the plans. It is our task to find such things that can increase the characteristics of output-result and effect indicators, leading to the regional objectives. The development conceptions—first conceived as an idea—have to be developed, we have to form real project proposals. In the end we have to realize them. On the one hand it is possible to do that with the supporting systems—EU and national sources—and on the other hand we have to undertake to search for direct investment possibilities. Its mark is that profitable connection, which has been built by the Region and our main partners for ages, and which can be described by creating such successful presentations as this one, and other meetings and publications. As a result of the connections there are nearly 500 project proposals in the possession of the region waiting for investment.

We in the regional development are hoping that our projects will come to fruition, and we can rely on our experiences of the past; we have to work hard every day in the present, and we have to believe that our dreams will come true in the future.
On the eve of the EU enlargement, the consent of the European Parliament will determine the new rules of co-habitation. Since both Italy and Hungary will be regions of the new Europe, it is useful to know more about our economic and social history. In my lecture I will present the development and fast evolution in San Salvo, as well as the transition of an area of poverty and underdevelopment to a prosperous and flourishing one.

One of the most competitive systems of local production in Chieti County and Abruzzo Region is San Salvo. The economic development of this region started in 1964 with the settlement of the Italian glass factory that produced windowpanes and car windows. The British firm Pilkington now owns the factory. The establishment of this factory was the answer of the Italian government to the request of the inhabitants of San Salvo and Qupello. The request was not to send the natural gas from Montafano Qute to Rome, (Montafano is situated between San Salvo and Qupello) but to make use of it in the regional development of an economically poor area suffering from the emigration of its youth. (As we know many people from southern Italy migrated to northern Europe in search of work.)

In the seventies, after the great struggles of the northern metal industry, trade unions began to develop southern Italy, significant companies appeared in the region. Among them was Fiat that, due to the decentralisation of production, was in a phase of great national and international expansion. The now Japanese-owned Magnetti Marelli also came to San Salvo and produced electrical parts such as generators and self-starters for vehicles. This model of foreign industrialisation, this decentralisation that came from the North towards the South was well managed by the political and administrative department of San Salvo. These departments paid attention to the requirements of development that could improve the area. They created the infrastructure that was necessary for the competitiveness of investments: roads, technological networks and the training and supply of workforce.

The infrastructure and the social sphere free of crime facilitated the new progress, the appearance of small and medium-size enterprises that provided different services for the first generation large ventures present in the area.

Thus started the development that has continued to the present day. The home industry production process was set up to harmonise the various investments. The competitiveness can be expressed by the sum of the competitiveness of given firms
and the public institutions of the local government. All the local governments of the region, where all the actors of the society are democratically represented, have played an important part in the development of the production system in San Salvo.

The planned formation of the developmental model was, right from its initiation, a cultural process with the participation of the actors of the social and economic development. These actors were the investors, the firms providing services, the bodies of the local and national governments, the enterprises and schools, firms of social and cultural services and the self-employed. These heterogeneous actors were united in achieving sustainable and multisectoral competitiveness as well as a better standard of living. Thus, the Treaty of Trignosignello Area was signed, the aim of which was to guarantee the development of the region. The treaty unites a region governed by 52 local governments that are situated in the catchment area of the Rivers Trigno and Signello, although in the three different counties of Chieti, Campobasso, and Insernia. The settlements of the region belong to the bordering provinces of Abruzzo and Molise divided or, rather, united by the River Trigno.

The regional treaty strengthened a new cultural development based on a programme preceded by democratic negotiations at local level. It was not thus a centralised, concrete programme conceived at national or regional level that tolerated actors in the region, but a democratic programme with the region as the main character. That was only possible because the local institutions and new investors activated and experimented with the governance method in the competitive way of local systems in the globalised world.

As a first step, the local actors of the programme have to be freed from the illusion that someone else will solve their problems. They have to be aware that they are the protagonists of a local development based on dialogue. The second step is connected to the productivity and competitiveness of an undertaking that depends on the network developed in a certain environment. The advantage of an industrial zone is that a network of services and relations can be developed in such a region where everyone is represented and is a major player in a dynamically growing economy. To achieve all these, one has to take a deep insight into the given area in order to perceive its virtues and drawbacks, to interpret, to flourish and to continuously integrate the actors and the interests of development. In order to strengthen the competitiveness of a local system one has to appreciate the existing technical knowledge and opportunities, to preserve and foster our natural and cultural heritage and create an environment that favours production and development.

The cultural and natural environment of a region is the factor of development that facilitates the economic growth and productivity, in a word, the competitiveness of the local system. In order to preserve the advantages of the environment and the culture of a region, the most specialised and competitive staff has to be employed. We have been working on regional marketing and sustainable and complemented development in San Salvo for about ten years. We take into account that every region has its own characteristic defined by its surroundings, history, culture and regional economy, and
has the power to value, respect and enhance these differences so that they serve better
the society and the economy.

In order to strengthen a local system one has to be aware that the region is the
place where small and medium-sized enterprises grow and develop, new investments
are created owing to the advanced technology, research is carried out and technical
innovations are implemented. The relationship between investors, the young labour
force, and technical knowledge is a prosperous one. Nature is protected and respected,
social services are effective and accessible.

The capital of a region is the sum of the financial, infrastructural, cultural
knowledge and social capita of the region. The engines and pilots of local development
are the governing institutions, especially the local governments. Their main role is
to initiate social dialogues, democratic programmes and environmental management
through the governance model in industry policy and system development policy as
well.

San Salvo has used these methods through a dialogue with the local government
that takes into account all the aspects and sensitivities of the region present on the
market with a local production system where a regional plurality and an effective
sustainability co-exist. The industrial zone is internationalised; the agricultural area
focuses on qualitative vegetable and fruit growing, olive and grape cultivation that
are present on European markets. The tourist area is in the phase of development
paying attention to the other sectors that preserved the natural environment. These
achievements are just a starting point for further modernisation and continuous
performance of a local dynamic and competitive economic system.
István Schrick

Settlement Partnership between Rácalmás and Dansfeld

I would like to show how a small settlement could develop a county and international-level relationship. Rácalmás and Dansfeld (a settlement in Germany) started a relationship in 1991.

The creation of this partnership was by chance on the one hand and deliberate on the other, for in 1990 the settlement was led by a young mayor and notary who were obviously seeking a western partner in the first years of the changing of the regime. Our aim was to get a practical insight into the so-called social market economy, for the Hungarian self-government law was largely based on German and, slightly, French experience. On the other hand the teaching of English and German languages took over that of the compulsory Russian so it was our obligation to give our children an opportunity to practise these languages in the framework of a summer camp. It was a perfectly timed move because the German partners were thankful to the Hungarians for their role in pulling down the iron curtain and were looking for Hungarian partnerships. The Hungarian German newspaper ‘The Night Zeitung’ was of great help to us for they had already assessed a demand for settlement partnership. We were thus lucky to take up a blossoming relationship with a settlement in the Göttingen district in the north of Germany.

In this period we set up an exchange programme for our children in the framework of which we send 35 to 45 youngsters to German families where they can improve their German and take part in different programmes. I think these 9 to 10-day-long visits presented a golden opportunity for these village children to get an insight into another lifestyle and culture, to make friends and to practise their German. The first exchange students have since grown up, for the then ten to eleven-year-old children are in their early twenties now. It is worth mentioning that the student exchange programme was in full swing even in the time of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and before the Second World War but after that it was broken for some 40 to 50 years.

The exchange of delegations has also been a great opportunity for our body of deputies. The annual exchange of professionals and local leaders is a chance to get a professional insight into one another’s practices and experience.

Our organisations, clubs and circles of friends have also benefited from the German experience, for the Hungarian cultural associations are just in a learning phase.

The other excellent example is the exchange of our folk dance groups. We have an old tradition of organising a folk dance camp in such settlements on the Danube
as Adony, Rácalmás, and Harta to which we invite the folk dance group of our partner settlement Dansfeld. The folk dance group from Sweden that has passed on its Swedish and other folk dance connections, has an annual presence at the camp. Thus, the international links of the folk dancers are self-supporting and need no local government subsidy.

The humanitarian aid of our partner is an extremely noble action, a good example of which is the county education home and orphanage that belongs to Székesfehérvár but has a subsidiary in our settlement as well. These institutions have a permanent and close co-operation with our German partners and get serious support from them. Another good example is the aid given by the town of Göttingen where a Hungarian boy underwent a liver transplant in Hamburg.

The Bükkenschlage Institute, a foundation from Duddenstadt that supports various projects from federal resources, has played a significant role in our life. I have to state that Hungary was in the mainstream of the aid but lately the support has gone mainly to Poland. As we benefited from this aid in the past years we fully understand the German inclination towards Poland.

35-40 mayors from the county took part twice in a seminar the aim of which was to present the system and experience of the hosts. I believe that this co-operation was a very successful one.

Another opportunity for our young professionals was the participation at a number of summer seminars organised in different fields in Duddenstadt.

The relations initiated by Rácalmás are now taken up enthusiastically by Úrhida, Aba, Pusztaszabolcs, Adony and possibly Gárdony. This shows the success of the relations as well as the need to extend them. We can be proud that a small settlement like Rácalmás helped Fejér County create an official relationship with Göttingen district. We should not forget that it was thanks to the former mayor of Dansfeld who became president of the district council and was elected to the Landrat. His attraction to and interest in Hungary led to our co-operation. Since the district is situated in the north of Germany, their attention is more oriented towards Poland. These relations continue at county level as well, in the field of science and in the exchange of professionals. Our vocational students can go for a two-week practice session in Göttingen. Co-operation in the field of economy has not been as satisfactory as in the cultural one. There is a definite demand for co-operation in this field, yet I think that this has to be first undertaken by the chambers. A new initiation arose at our last meeting in August, namely, to organise an annual summer camp with 20-30 children participating from Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Germany. The Lieder programme is a regional development programme initiated at our EU accession. It would be useful for our mayors and professionals to have a close look at such successful projects. There will be two commissions set up next year to deal with this question. We are organising the trip of 40-50 mayors and professionals working in public administration who are welcomed by our partners from Göttingen.

I think that this small settlement on the Danube was motivated enough to create
a relationship that was the initiator of a whole network. The CDU, SPD and Green representatives of the Göttingen county council were present in Rácalmás taking part in countless official and informal meetings. It is now extremely difficult to meet Göttingen officials who do not know where Rácalmás and Fejér County are.
Cross Border Academic Relations

In my presentation I would like to tell you about the relations of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which have undergone a significant development during the past six years. I think it is also worth mentioning the Hungarian universities and colleges that have established faculties over the border for the Hungarian-speaking students living there. These institutions have been more successful in establishing relations in countries where they found a friendly economic and political climate. If we take a look at the countries along the border it seems only natural that the civil war in the former Yugoslavia made it almost impossible to develop relations in Serbia-Montenegro, Croatia or Slovenia. Figures show that the situation is a bit better in Sub-Carpathia and far the best in Romania or Slovakia. It is also true that relations in these countries were initiated by Hungarian institutions but usually hindered and rejected by the host countries. A significant change in their attitude followed the appearance of democratic governments in Romania and in Slovakia in 1998.

The first Hungarian university to appear in Slovakia after the change of regime was the Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration, which established an external faculty in Királyhelmc in 1993. At first, it was called the Municipal University and was managed/maintained by the local government of Királyhelmc. The institute came under severe attack after Meciar came to power in 1994, there were even talks about intervention in the internal affairs of Slovakia. The public prosecutor launched an investigation, which resulted in stating that the establishment of the university, which then was already called the Academy of Királyhelmc, had not been anti-constitutional. Due to administrative reasons (and the attacks) the Academy was transformed into a public limited company and in 2001 it was reorganized as the Lórántffy Zsuzsanna Civil Association, which still maintains the university.

Establishing the faculty in Királyhelmc, the founders were trying to act on the principle of regionalism. Although the first semester started with only 25 Hungarian students from Slovakia, the following years saw a growing number of students from Sub-Carpathia, Transylvania and the north of Hungary. The minimum and maximum number of first-year students was 21 and 38, respectively. The academic year 2002/2003 started with 22 students out of 40 to 45 applicants. So far the total number of graduate students has been the following: 12 from Sub-Carpathia, 5 from Transylvania, 15 from North-Hungary and 109 from Slovakia (courtesy of István Gilányi, former headmaster).

There are regular degree programs in economics, marketing and finance. Each
program is divided into eight terms, with the first term as preparatory owing to the
differences in mathematics teaching in different countries. Degree requirements
include an intermediate language exam for specific purposes.

The teachers are mainly from Budapest except for language and computer sciences
teachers, who come from Slovakia. The language is Hungarian with the exception
of the subjects of economic law and accounting, which are taught in Slovakian. The
Pozsony University of Economics and the Budapest University of Economic Sciences
and Public Administration mutually accept each other’s degrees therefore equivalency
of degrees does not fall in the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education.

Beside the Faculty of Királyhelme the Budapest University of Economic Sciences
and Public Administration launched a regular degree program of economics at the
Selye János University Centre—run by the Selye János University Foundation—
in Komárom in 2001. I quote the objectives of the degree program launched by the
Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration in Komárom:
“...program is to train qualified economists who are able to
control, manage and run companies and businesses, who have full command of
Hungarian, Slovakian, English and other foreign languages, who know the laws
and regulations as well as the unexploited economic possibilities of both countries
and promote the co-operation between Slovakia and Hungary. Our graduates shall
be able to make and implement decisions at international standard in all branches
of business.” In 2001-2003 550 students were accepted. The university level degree
program is for 10 terms.

A year later, in 2002 The Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information
Technology of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics launched
a regular degree program of technological informatics at the Selye János University
Centre. The language of tuition is 80 per cent Hungarian, 20 per cent Slovakian. In
2002/2003 85 students were accepted. The university level degree program is for 10
terms.

The Selye University Centre has a total of 633 regular students, 5 professors, 12
associate professors and 42 assistant professors and assistant lecturers.

Declaration of Mission of the Selye János University Foundation:

“The Selye János University Foundation was officially registered in April 2000. Its
primary task is to establish and support Selye János University, which is intended to
teach the Hungarian intellectuals and become the intellectual centre of the former Upper
Hungary.”

Further aims of the Foundation—under its statutes—are to support education, to
promote local and international scientific co-operation and to promote and sponsor
scientific conferences and seminars.

The aims of this declaration will only be accomplished if the act to establish the
Hungarian University in Slovakia (based in Komárom as Selye János University)
is passed in the Slovakian Parliament (the first reading of the bill was passed in September). We hope the following readings will also be successful.

The first state-funded college to venture over the border was Gábor Dénes College of Information Technology, which had its 10th anniversary last year. The college established study centres in Romania in 1994, in Slovakia and Serbia in 1998. Study centres were set up in Székelyudvarhely, Sepsiszentgyörgy, Nagyvárad and Kolozsvár in 1994, in Marosvásárhely in 1995, in Satmárnémeti in 1996, in Csíkszereda in 1999, all in Romania, in Kassa in 1998, in Diószeg in 2000, both in Slovakia and in Szabadka, Serbia in 1998. (See Table 1.)

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<td>125</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>75</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>0</td>
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</table>

*The tables have been reconstructed and translated based on the material provided by the author. (The editors.)*

Here are some ideas from the Declaration of Mission:

“The college aims and intends to pursue high quality education which meets both the demands of our time and the labour market and the challenges of the Hungarian nation and Europe.”

“Everybody shall be provided free access to knowledge and skill in information technology irrespective of age, place or conditions of admission. The illiteracy of the 21st century is the lack of ability to acquire and process information.”

“Gábor Dénes College intends to become a centre for mass education of information technology both in Hungary and the neighbouring countries with Hungarian population.”

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The above statements are beyond dispute especially in the light of recently published statistics, which show that there are three times as many higher education degrees in the active Slovakian population than in the Hungarian one.

Ferenc Glatz, then President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, appreciated the college’s cross-border efforts and said in his speech at the opening ceremony of the academic year 1999/2000, “The fact that Gábor Dénes College has always undertaken the mission to spread its sphere of activities over the Hungarian ethnic minorities in the neighbouring countries indicates the recognition of the demands of the 21st century.”

The college offers seven-degree programs in three consecutive levels. They have a full-time further education speciality course, two full-time and one distance learning first-degree courses and four correspondence post-graduate speciality courses. Full-time and correspondence courses are offered in Budapest only, whereas distance learning courses are offered in Budapest and at the consultation centres.

All the courses are in the credit system. Students set up their individual curriculum selecting from obligatory, optional–obligatory and optional subject groups.

The college gives degrees in engineering and economic sciences.

The college offers the following degree programs:

- Engineering and Information Technology (180 credits), degree qualification: engineer–information specialist. Length of studies: 6 semesters in full-time education, 8 semesters in distance learning.
- Economics and Information Technology (180 credits), degree qualification: economist. Length of studies: 7 semesters in full-time education, 8 semesters in distance learning.
- Information Technology Statistics and Economic Planning (120 credits) degree qualification: information statistician and economic planner. Length of studies: 4 semesters.
- Speciality courses in engineering (60 credits) degree qualification: depends on first degree. Length of studies: 4 semesters.

The program is in module system. The lectures and consultation/tutorial sessions follow each other in a linear order. There is no set examination period. The students are free to choose the time of an exam. Each module is followed by the examination period of the given subjects. In order to get a better mark students are allowed to take an exam several times.

Schedules of classes and exams follow the same pattern in Budapest and in the consultation/tutorial centres.

Each subject is sponsored by a leading professor. In order to maintain high quality teaching there is excessive in-service teacher training. New teachers are employed after assessment in profession and methodology. All the teachers take part in subject specific conferences and seminars.

Tutors—in Budapest and the tutorial centres—are given the educational packages
necessary to meet the unified requirements in print or electronic form: instructions, detailed syllabus, teaching material, problems book, presentation material, video films, home assignments and written exam tests with keys and sample tests.

The majority of students are in distance learning, which puts great emphasis on learning at home. The following table shows the number of students in full-time education and distance learning. (Table 2.)

Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Distance Learning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992/1993</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>500</td>
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<td>1993/1994</td>
<td>1200</td>
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<td>1995/1996</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1999/2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000/2001</td>
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<td>2200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001/2002</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>2400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On registering for each semester students in the first-degree program are provided with their learning kit, which includes all the teaching material (textbooks, instructions, problems books, CDs, floppies), the schedules for classes and tutorials and other supplementary material. Students in state financed programs get the package free of charge.
Finally, a table of full-time employees, teachers and lecturers in the past ten years. (Table 3)

Table 3.

The number of full-time workers and teachers 1992-2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All employees</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Lecturers (PhD)</th>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>510</td>
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<td>1992</td>
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</table>

I have put a great emphasis on introducing Gábor Dénes College as it was the first to open towards ethnic Hungarians over the border and I personally foresee a bright future for distance learning.

It was the University of Komárom that had to fight the fiercest struggle for survival during the anti-democratic Meciar era in 1992. This university comprised three Hungarian colleges that started work in 1992. They were the following: Apáczai Csere János Teacher-Training College from Győr, Benedek Elek Pedagogical College from Sopron and the College Faculty of Horticulture from Kecskemét. Since 1992 there has been correspondence education only. Coordinating with the Hungarian authorities, the Presidents of the colleges amended the curriculum of the tutorial centres so that they meet the Slovakian requirements and specifications. That meant adopting subjects like Slovakian language, literature, subject-specific pedagogy and kindergarten in infant into teacher and kindergarten teacher training. The geography of Slovakia was added to environment and nature studies and Slovakian norms and standards were supplemented to the subjects of accounting, financing, business administration, industrial safety and economics in horticulture studies.

The tuition centres are fully integrated into the Hungarian colleges: the students have the same rights and responsibilities as the Hungarian correspondence students. The registrar’s offices at the colleges and the university provide services regarding administration, education, placements and group travel. In order to obtain the
undergraduate status applicants have to pass an aptitude test and an entrance examination.

115 ethnic Hungarian undergraduates living in Slovakia started their studies in four colleges in the academic year 1992/1993. In the academic year 1995/1996, when the colleges had filled up all the grades the number of students was 335 and reached 398 by the academic year 2001/2002.

During the past ten years there has been a constant interest in teacher training (min. 138 max. 185) whereas interest in horticulture has been erratic (90 vs. 171). Most of the dropouts are from the first grade. Again, horticulture produced the most startling statistics in the academic year 1995/1996, when only 44.6 per cent of the first grade students completed their studies successfully.

The Modern Business Studies from Tatabánya launched a full-time degree program of commerce and trading with 77 undergraduates in Székelyudvarhely, Romania in 1998. 131 students registered and 31 graduated in 2002. Degree program in Dunaszerdahely was launched with 52 undergraduates in 1999. By 2002 the number of students reached 115 and 25 students graduated in 2003. Both in Romania and Slovakia the college insisted that, besides English, students take their exams in the official language of the host nation. Local teachers, businessmen, distinguished experts were recruited to lecture at the colleges in both countries. Before each semester the lecturers took part in subject specific training in Tatabánya. Exams were conducted under the supervision of the subject managers from Tatabánya. A characteristic feature of the program is that the syllabus of some subjects such as law, accounting, economic geography and current economic policy is adapted to the local (Romanian, Slovakian) conditions. The following table shows the changes in the number of students both in Hungary and the neighbouring countries. (Table 4.)
Research centres of other universities (e.g. ELTE SOTE) and colleges have successful and efficient co-operation in several fields with colleagues in the neighbouring countries but this is through personal contacts lacking formal or official relations of the institutions.

Before 2000 it was difficult to have Hungarian diplomas accepted in Slovakia. The process was regulated by old Acts of Law of Czechoslovakia and the Hungarian People’s Republic. The two Ministers of Education signed the Act of Equivalency, which applies to universities and academic degrees. The two countries mutually accept degrees and academic degrees acquired at the other country’s universities. However, there is no agreement applying to colleges. After the change of regime all colleges were upgraded to university level, so there are almost no colleges. This is a problem in teacher and kindergarten teacher training. Primary school teachers are trained at universities and graduates get a Master degree. A student graduating from the University of Komárom, the extension faculty of the Apáczai Csere János Teacher Training College has to do four semesters at a Slovakian University of Pedagogy as his college degree is accepted as a Bachelor degree only, which may entitle him/her to teach but for a much lower salary. The situation is reversed with kindergarten teacher training. In Slovakia kindergarten teachers are trained in secondary schools and they get a school-leaving exam whereas in Hungary they get a college degree. Therefore,
kindergarten teachers graduating from Hungarian colleges have to settle for a lower salary category.

As has been mentioned there are universities in both countries that mutually accept each other’s diplomas without agreements between the ministries of education.

It is beyond the scope of this lecture to discuss equivalency agreements between Hungary and other countries, but this may be worth discussing in the future.

To sum up, after the change of regime five colleges and two higher education institutions launched college level and university level degree programs, respectively, in five towns (Komárom, Királyhelme, Kassa, Diószeg, Dunaszerdahely) in Slovakia.

1990 marked the turning point in the cross border relations of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (henceforward: HAS). The general assembly of HAS in February established the institute of associate membership for scientists and scholars who have foreign or dual citizenship and regard themselves as Hungarians.

In 1991 The Sub-Committee to Coordinate the Hungarian World of Science under the Committee of International Relations was established under the leadership of Gyula Juhász and later academician Ferenc Glatz.

In 1993 the conference “Hungarian World of Science in the Neighbouring Countries” was held in the European Institute in Budapest. The next conference was held in Debrecen in 1995. By then the profile of the conference had taken shape: it was a forum of scientific research centres from seven countries attended by leading personalities of the scientific life and institutions.

1996 saw the real turning point in the Academy’s cross border relations when President Ferenc Glatz established the presidential committee of HAS’s “Hungarian World of Science Abroad.” Later the Scientific Secretariat of Ethnic Hungarians Abroad was established under the leadership of Mariann Tarnoczy.

“The Academy was spurred by the concept of a cross-border nation of one culture,” writes Academician Dénes Berényi in “Hungarian World of Science Abroad.”

The first sentence of the statutes of the committee sums up the tasks and objectives. “The Presidential Committee of HAS’s «Hungarian World of Science Abroad» has been established to promote the co-operation between the national and foreign actors of the Hungarian world of science as well as to integrate researchers with foreign or dual citizenship but regarding themselves as Hungarians and Hungarian research centres abroad into the Hungarian scientific life.” and later, “Those non-Hungarian researchers who do research into Hungarian-related topics of Hungarian history and language are also regarded as belonging to the Hungarian world of science.”

Extremists might think it might look like a nationalistic Hungarian–Hungarian hug. But I think as Hungary is the only country in the region that is bordered with its own nation (not my invention) it is only natural for academic institutes to aim at establishing and strengthening Hungarian–Hungarian relations. “We would like to emphasise that promoting these relations has nothing to do with nationalism as science is universal and promoting relations within the Hungarian world of science is not against the universal world of science. Quite on the contrary, it serves as a catalyst.
in the relations within the universal world of science,” writes the above-mentioned publication.

Two major programs were launched within the scope of the committee: Relations and Domus.

The main objective of the program Relations is to liaise with the approx. 160 external members of the Academy. The program is independently funded and entitles external members to spend two weeks in Hungary every two years at the cost of the Academy, to attend the General Assembly of the Academy or any other academic or non-academic scientific conference or program.

It is also the aim of this program to promote relations between non-member Hungarian researchers throughout the world.

Since the first meeting in Budapest in 1993 the meeting of Hungarian scientific workshops has been held every other year in Debrecen. The number of the workshops has increased from around 10 to 80 since the start of the program.

The Domus program was launched by HAS and run by HAS and the Ministry of Education. Hungarian researchers can send in their applications to do research at universities, research institutes and archives as well as to attend conferences in Hungary.

The program has been running for six years since spring 1997. Approximately one thousand applications have been passed by the board of trustees for the past five years. 90 per cent of the applications came from the neighbouring countries. The majority of the rest of the applicants are from the U.S.A. (Table 5)

| Table 5. |
| Attachment of HAS Public Body members (from neighbouring countries) to the regional centres of HAS |
| Number of members |
|-------------------|--------|
| Debrecen Academic Centre | 241 |
| Miskolc Academic Centre | 16 |
| Pécs Academic Centre | 30 |
| Szeged Academic Centre | 161 |
| Veszprém Academic Centre | 48 |
| TOTAL: | 496 |

There are Domus afternoon sessions organized at the Domus headquarters (10 Abonyi Street, Budapest) for scholars. At the sessions external lecturers or scholars give presentations followed by informal discussions.

15 per cent of the scholars work at provincial universities and research institutes mainly in Szeged and Debrecen. They are accommodated at guest rooms at universities, research institutes or at the headquarters of the regional centres of HAS.
Two new programs were launched in December 1999. One was the Motherland program, the other the move to extend the jurisdiction of the public body over Hungarians living abroad. It has to be noted that anybody holding an academic degree may apply for membership at the public bodies of HAS. In 2000 the General Assembly opened public body membership to Hungarian researchers living abroad. The Presidential Committee of Hungarian World of Science Abroad and the regional committees of HAS keep a record of the members and provides assistance for them. Application forms were sent to Hungarian colleagues with an academic degree in the neighbouring countries. 500 applications were sent until 2000. (Table 6.)

**Table 6.**

*Distribution of HAS Public Body members by countries and Scientific Sections (external and Hungarian honorary members included)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>I.</th>
<th>II.</th>
<th>III.</th>
<th>IV.</th>
<th>V.</th>
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The jurisdiction of this program was extended over other European countries and countries overseas as well. The latest figures (2003) are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7.**
_Distribution of HAS Public Body members in neighbouring countries and according to fields of research_

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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- I. Department of Language and Literature
- II. Department of Philosophy and History
- III. Department of Mathematics
- IV. Department of Agriculture
- V. Department of Medical Sciences
- VI. Department of Technical Sciences
- VII. Department of Chemical Sciences
- VIII. Department of Biology
- IX. Department of Economics and Law
- X. Department of Geology
- XI. Department of Physics

Liaison with public body members is maintained by the regional centres of HAS. See Tables 8-II.

**Table 8.**
_Distribution of successful Domus applications in junior and senior categories (1997-2002)_

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<th>Junior</th>
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<td>Successful applications</td>
<td>261 (28,5%)</td>
<td>654 (71,5%)</td>
<td>915</td>
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</table>
Table 9.
Distribution of successful applications in different countries (regions) (1997-2002)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country/Region</th>
<th>Successful Applications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romania (Transylvania)</td>
<td>597 (65%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia (Uplands)</td>
<td>108 (12%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yugoslavia (Voivodina)</td>
<td>77 (8%)</td>
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<td>Ukraine (Transcarpathia)</td>
<td>62 (7%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>North-America</td>
<td>29 (3%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>47 (5%)</td>
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</table>

Table 10.
Distribution of successful applications according to basic fields (1997-2002)

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<th>Field</th>
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<td>Social sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural sciences</td>
<td>437</td>
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Table 11.
Distribution of successful applications according to research centres (1997-2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>Successful Applications</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Budapest</td>
<td>778 (85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debrecen</td>
<td>51 (5,5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Szeged</td>
<td>38 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>48 (5,5%)</td>
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</table>

The other program is called *Motherland*. The Presidential Committee of Hungarian World of Science Abroad has always been authorized to promote Hungarian world of science in the Motherland. “The reason we support the researchers is not their nationalities but that they help Hungarian world of science survive abroad,” emphasized the Academician Dénes Berényi, President of the Presidential Committee of Hungarian World of Science Abroad. Since the programs of Hungarian world of science started at HAS, the Academy has been asked several times to support research activities carried out in the Hungarian researcher’s Motherland. (This applies to Hungarian researchers and research centres from the neighbouring countries.) In 2001 the Academy launched the Arany János Public Fund in order to meet this claim. 120 out of 146 applications have been passed and sponsored. Research centres to do research in the Hungarian language and provide counselling were established in Beregszász, Dunaszerdahely, Kolozsvár and Szabadka at a cost of 44 million HUF.

In 1998 the Academic Workshop for Ethnic Minorities was set up within the scope of the academic program of development and strategy. During its two-year operation until 31 December 2000, its scientific results, research organization activities, publications and programs proved the importance and *raison d’être* of institutional research into minorities. The researchers and institutes of the ethnic minorities in question have taken part in the work of the Workshop since the beginnings.

In 2001 the Workshop was re-established as an independent academic research centre called the Ethnic-National Minority Research Institute.

The Workshop and the Institute focused its research activities on the dynamic
changes in the majority minority relations, social position and self-organization of the three minority target groups—Hungarian ethnic minorities living in the neighbouring countries, non-Hungarian ethnic minorities living in Hungary and the Eastern-Central European Gypsy/Romany communities. It also carries out research into changes in the ethnic space and identity structure, potential and real ethnic conflicts, various theoretical and practical alternatives, changes in connection with bilingualism, language and identity shift, minority mode of existence and ethno-social and cultural phenomena in relation to ethnicity and denominations in the target groups.

In September 2001 the Migration Research Centre was set up, which researches on migration in Eastern-Central Europe. In 2002 the program council was established to co-ordinate ethnic minority research in Hungary.

There are contractual joint research activities carried out at research institutes in Hungary, Slovakia, Serbia and Romania.

The office representing the Slovakian Academy of Sciences is also located in the Institute. The two Academies have set up several co-operation offices to promote and develop joint research activities. The contract was signed by Stefan Luby, the President of the SAS and Ferenc Glatz, the President of HAS on June 2001.

The two academies published a collection of essays and studies titled “Science on the Banks of the Danube,” which comprised the lectures given at the conference “Joint academic research.” It was published in Hungarian and Slovakian by the Kalligram Publishing Office in Pozsony and the Cultural Institute of the Hungarian Republic.

In 2003 the Economic Judicial and Social Sciences Committee of the Veszprém Regional Committee of HAS and the Forum Minority Research Institute from Somorja joined in organizing the conference “Cultural Effects of the EU Accession.” It is followed by co-operation with the above-mentioned Institute and Selye János University.

Other co-operation activities of HAS in the neighbouring countries:
- 12 projects with the Croatian Academy of Art and Sciences between 2001 and 2003;
- 2 projects by the Institute of Nuclear Research, HAS;
- 3 projects by the CRC Institute of Isotope and Surface;
- 3 projects by the Chemical Research Institute;
- 1 project by the Geophysical Institute;
- 1 project by the Geographical Sciences Institute;
- 2 projects by the Department of Inorganic and Analytical Chemistry.

In Croatia:
- 8 projects with the Ruder Boskovič Institut (Radiation Chemistry and Dosimetry Laboratory);
- 4 projects with the University of Zagreb;
- 23 joint projects have been submitted with the Romanian Academy of Sciences;
• 9 Joint projects with the Serbian Academy of Art and Sciences between 2001-2003;
• 4 joint projects with the Slovenian Academy of Art and Sciences between 2001-2003;
• 20 projects with the Ukrainian Academy of Art and Sciences and 2 projects with the Ukrainian Academy of Agriculture between 2001-2003.

To sum up, we can state that it was the Hungarian institutions that initiated and organized academic relations with the neighbouring countries. The academic institutions in these latter countries seem not to have heeded the changes in the times.

Bibliography

5. What has the HAS done for the Hungarian world of science in the past six years? 1996-2002 HAS.
The Relationship of Hungary and the Higher Education with Regard to the Neighbouring Countries

One of the main goals of the EU is the establishment of a unitary European Higher Education Area, which would turn higher education into the main engine of further economic development in Europe. The process of achieving it is known as the Bologna process and besides the member countries, others including Hungary, Slovakia and Romania take part in it. Serbia and Montenegro have also expressed a willingness to join. The process enables Hungary and the neighbouring countries to harmonise their reforms in higher education, which will result in higher education systems with identical structures.

This provides solutions for a series of problems which marked the relationship of Hungary and the Hungarian higher education with regard to the neighbouring countries.

**Examples**

**Recognition of diplomas.** Even today it is difficult to have the diplomas accepted in the neighbouring countries, so Hungarian minority graduates who study in Hungary face difficulties upon their return. (This might be one of the reasons for the low—20%—return rate.) Introduction of the two-level education and the standards of quality assurance for the participants of the Bologna process will result in the equivalence of diplomas, thus simplifying the current complicated process of authorisation of university degrees to a mere formality.

**Student mobility.** According to the recent situation none of the higher education institutions in the neighbouring countries accept the part-time studies of their students in Hungary. The Bologna process might be a solution for that problem as well by prompting part-time studies based on inter-institutional agreements and by providing a standard means for the participating countries.

In the face of EU accession, Hungary needs to reconsider its policy regarding the development of minority higher education abroad by elaborating different models for the countries joining and for those who will remain outside the EU.
- EU countries must harmonise their support policies with the EU norms while taking into account the possible negative consequences. When drafting support and development policies EU trends must be considered.
- In the case of outside countries (Vajdaság/Voivodina in Serbia and Montenegro, Kárpátalja/Transcarpathia in Ukraine and Erdély/Transylvania in Romania) support policy must put a special emphasis on reducing and balancing lag and its negative consequences (such as migration) and assist the Hungarian higher education institutions in their pursuit of European standards.

The accession of Hungary to the EU has a positive effect on the development of Hungarian higher education abroad by opening new perspectives. As a consequence, in 5-10 years Hungarian higher education abroad will be replaced by an EU-compatible, cross-border higher education.

**Hungary and the development of Hungarian higher education in different regions abroad**

As a result of spontaneous mechanisms many young people from neighbouring countries entered Hungarian universities at the beginning of the 1990s. No precise data are available, but, still, a pattern trend can be traced: the majority of students (if we exclude Budapest) have chosen universities and institutes which are close to the border. For example, students from Partium (Romania) have preferred Miskolc, Szeged and Debrecen; students from Kárpátalja (Ukraine) Nyíregyháza, etc.

This has remained a prevalent trend and the 2001-2002 academic year indicates similar preferences. Obviously, certain higher educational small regions have been forming, whose spheres of operation cross the borders.

An example can be Kárpátalja (Ukraine); besides the dominant Budapest (49.1%), Nyíregyháza (16%) and Debrecen (13%) play important roles.

Another example is the students from Serbia and Montenegro; their top preference is also Budapest (58.63%), but the two near-border towns, Szeged (27.22%) and Pécs (5.11%) are also popular choices.

Since the beginning of the 90s an institutional framework has also been elaborated in order to deal with the Hungarian education abroad. The most important among them is the Ministry of Education, the main drafter of the Hungarian educational policy (including higher education) in the neighbouring countries. This policy focuses on the supply of intelligentsia in the Hungarian communities abroad.

**Recent situation — problems and achievements**

Also since the 90s, a transformation in the structure of higher education can be observed in each of the neighbouring countries (only since the end of the decade in Yugoslavia): the number of students has increased, private institutions have appeared,
Subsidised and paying arrangements have formed, the range of education on offer has widened, and education has started to adjust itself more flexibly to the labour market. These processes have been very influential in the participation of Hungarian young people in higher education as well. Despite the considerable growth in their numbers, however, two closely interrelated negative phenomena can be observed:

- In each of the neighbouring countries, the participation of Hungarians in higher education is far below the figures for the European Union or Hungary, and even less than the relatively low figures for the given country.
- In each of the neighbouring countries, the share of Hungarian students in higher education is significantly lower than the proportion of Hungarians in the country, and the proportion of students studying in Hungarian—essential for preserving cultural and language identity—is even lower.

In some professions, this disproportionate representation has nearly reached the stage when no sufficient Hungarian workforce with appropriate qualifications is available.

This constitutes a serious drawback especially in some sectors of strategic importance of the economies undergoing transformation (law, economy, communications, education). The problem is also palpable through the various programmes intended to improve higher education, where establishing the necessary level of local Hungarian teaching staff poses serious problems.

**Strategies and tools of educational policy**

*Scholarships.* one of the most important tools in the hand of Hungary’s educational policy for Hungarian minorities is the provision of scholarships.

- Contrary to previous practices, preference is now given to partial education instead of full education in Hungary,
- Instead of providing scholarships in Hungary, a system of providing scholarships for studying in one’s home country has to be established and widened because of the previously mentioned 20% return rate of Hungarian minority students studying in Hungary.

**Establishing educational centres (consultation centres)**

Since the 90s, educational centres in the neighbouring countries have been set up by Hungarian universities. These have relatively small staffs and student numbers, education is usually provided in the form of distance education, concentrating on skills of special importance for the region (primary school teacher, horticulturist), and employed local teaching staff. Often, such educational centres have not been set up according to a clearly established strategy but rather as a result of active local initiatives or cooperation with an institute of higher education in Hungary. In addition to the problem of their funding in Hungary, their operation has been hindered by their
unclear legal status as well. Thus, while a large number of such centres have proved successful, some became unable to operate and were discontinued.

**Two positive examples**

The Partium Christian University and the Hungarian Teacher Training College of Kárpátalja in Beregszász (Kárpátaljai Magyar Tanárképző Főiskola), originally established as educational centres, have achieved accreditation and have become independent institutions and integral parts of the local higher education systems.

- They have been financed by the Hungarian government.
- They are regional institutions, serving the purposes of the given small region.
- They have strong cross-border ties determined by their past since the Teacher Training College in Beregszász started as a local centre for Nyíregyháza University and the Partium Christian University as an educational centre for the University of Debrecen. Their activities include lecturer and student exchanges, common professional activities and research.

**Demand for separate state universities**

Nearly each of the political organisations for Hungarian minorities—which were often part of the government of the given state—set the objective of establishing an independent Hungarian university maintained by the state. (Bolyai University, Petőfi-Schiller University in Kolozsvár, Jókai University in Pozsony.) Despite their activity as part of the government, no breakthroughs were achieved in this regard in any of the countries and each had to make do with the widening of state-funded Hungarian-language educational possibilities within the existing infrastructural framework.

Thus, at the end of the 90s the Hungarian government initiated the establishment of separate private universities in the neighbouring countries with the necessary financial means provided by Hungary.

These efforts led to the establishment of the Sapientia—Hungarian University of Transylvania (Erdélyi Magyar Tudományegyetem [EMTE]) which has integrated Partium Christian University. The institution has become part of the Hungarian higher education network and benefits from guest lecturer programs, student exchanges, and common professional forums. At the same time its rector is a member of the Hungarian Rectors’ Conference and 20 PhD scholarships are awarded to EMTE annually.

In Slovakia, an educational centre has been set up within the framework of the Foundation for the Selye János University; it serves as a base for the state-run Selye János University, which is expected to start in 2004.
The Board for the Development of Higher Education of Hungarian Minorities: harmonisation of development strategies

Pursuant to the act on support for Hungarian Minorities (and the amendment thereof), currently the Ministry of Education has financial and professional competence to supervise education provided in educational centres, while autonomous institutions such as EMTE are supervised by the Office for Hungarian Minorities within the Office of the Prime Minister. (We are of the opinion, however, that from a professional perspective, the latter should also fall primarily under the competence of the Minister of Education.)

Decree 47/2001 OM of the Minister of Education sets down an unambiguous framework for supporting Hungarian higher education institutions operating in the neighbouring countries. In the future, we intend to create a system of educational centres along the lines specified in the development strategy prepared by the Board for the Development of Higher Education of Hungarian Minorities, to be established pursuant to Decree 47/2001 OM of the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the relevant Hungarian professional associations in the neighbouring countries. Unfortunately, the envisaged system of support, which is based on trilateral agreements to better address specific local conditions, and which would have made the funding of educational centres independent from the funding system of higher education in Hungary, could not yet be implemented (or only partially, as in the case of the Foundation for the Selye János University in Révkomárom, Slovakia).

Summary

The process of the formation of a complex Hungarian cross-border higher education network can be witnessed, and includes such elements as:
- cross-border higher education small regions;
- a growing number of minority Hungarian students which benefit from part-time studies in Hungary;
- intensive cooperation between institutions and professional forums within and beyond the border; i.e. EMTE’s rector is a member of the Hungarian Rectors’ Conference;
- lecturer and student exchanges, common professional activities and research based on inter-institutional agreements, with special attention to the flagship Babes-Bolyai University;
- the Bologna Process will contribute to a great extent to the development of these initiatives.
The Role of Networking in the Creation of the European Higher Education Area

I will speak about the role of networking in the creation of the European Higher Education Area. Before I start my presentation, I would just like to say that perhaps you have seen in this piece of paper that the theme of today’s conferences is ‘Relaxed and Turbulent Challenges, or Security.’ I would like to say that we have already had two presenters today, who have talked about higher education: Ildikó Szatmári from the Ministry of Education and Péter Szabó from Kodolányi János University College. I’m sure that you have already got the impression from the previous two presentations that, unfortunately, at present and in the near future there will be no such thing in European higher education as stability and security. So I would say that probably these are challenges we have to face, as we have been facing in the recent past. And we are going to have to face them in the future as well.

The first part of the theme is relaxed and turbulent. Well, I would say that as things are at present, and Péter talked about it a lot, challenges are rather turbulent, I’m afraid. But networking can give a kind of an answer and can help us face these challenges. And this is what I would like to show you in my presentation. So first of all, I am sure you all are very much aware of the importance of globalisation and networking in European education and that this has been a major and specific trend of the last decade. And I would like to add that is not only about the last decade. It will remain a very major trend in the first decade of the 21st century.

Let me give you a brief introduction to the history of networking within Europe. And we can divide this very brief history into two sections. The first section lasted from 1985 to 1993. What were the characteristic features of this period from the point of view of networking in higher education? In the handbook published this year by the Academic Corporation Association it says that one third of the 37 consortia listed in the handbook were actually created in this period. From our point of view it is important because at that time Hungary and the neighbouring countries could not participate really actively in this networking process. That was also the time when the European Union decided that education was very important for the Union. This is when they launched the Comet project. The Erasmus and Socrates projects started at that time, as well. There was an innovative aspect in this period. It meant that the European Union through project funding insisted that not only bi-lateral agreements should be formed, but also multi-laterality was also very important. So we can already see the emphasis on networking. Instead of just two institutions cooperating, a whole
network of institutions could work together. And then, in the 1990s, the integration of institutions from Central and Eastern Europe into these projects imposed the new characteristic feature of networking in this period.

The second period of networking started in 1993 and, in fact, is just over now. It ended by the signing of the Bologna declaration. What were the characteristic features of this second period? During this time fewer networks were created, as the institutions that wanted to find partners had already found their partners. Kodolányi experienced this well, because when we wanted to get into the networks, we found that many universities already had their networks working very well, and they did not really want new members into these networks. So, we find it very difficult to find partners from the United Kingdom. The opposite case is Finland, which has always been very keen to find new partners. Therefore, four of our partners are from Finland. Also during this period we could see there was competition for funding between networks, especially funding for European project money. There is another characteristic feature, and this is that globalisation appeared, and the increasing competition between educational providers. And here we are not talking only about the European Union, but we are talking about North America, and we are talking about Japan, and Australia, as well. There is another characteristic feature of this period. This is the time when higher education started its internationalisation, and Europeanisation. If we think of the subjects, for example, we offer at Kodolányi now, we can say that every single student at Kodolányi can learn about the European Union. This is also the time when information technology and other new technologies helping e-learning, distance learning, open learning started to be developed. This is the time when universities, for example, the Open University in the United Kingdom started to educate a large number of learners, but not only in the UK. Again this is a trend globally. I have just mentioned that probably now we are at the start of a new phase. What I have here is actually a quote from the Lisbon European Council Declaration, and it says that the strategic goal of the European Union is to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of a sustainable economy that grows with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. Péter Szabó this morning talked a little bit about the debatable content of the expression “the knowledge-based economy.” Still, I would say that from this quote it is obvious that education and, within education, higher education must have a major role in fulfilling this goal—if it really can be fulfilled. In order for the European higher education to join in and help the Union fulfil this goal, the following is needed. First of all, it is essential to build a European higher education. This is what I refer to in my title as the European Higher Education Area, and this is what all the Bologna Process is about. And this is why I’m so grateful that I’m the third presenter in this topic. Because now you already have a good background knowledge about the Bologna Process itself. So the first requirement for this European Higher Education Area is for it to be established, and the second requirement is to make the European Higher Education Area a world reference. This is an answer to globalisation. As I have already mentioned, an
important contribution in achieving this strategic goal is the Bologna Process itself. The Process started in 1998 at the Sorbonne. Then the declaration itself was signed in 1999. The Prague Communication revised it, and gave a better shape to it in 2001, and in fact just one week ago, exactly one week ago, ministers of education from all around Europe signed the Berlin Declaration. And one important message of that declaration is that originally the idea was to create this European Higher Education Area by 2010. Last week ministers of education agreed that this is too far ahead in time and should happen earlier. They decided that they would like to start it in 2005. Of course, it brings us a lot of new challenges, and it is debatable and questionable how successful the whole process will be, but it is beyond the scope of my presentation now to go into details about it.

What does this all mean? It means that higher education institutions, their students and their networks are called on and asked to be involved in shaping this to be a compatible and efficient, but, at the same time, diversified and adaptable European Higher Education Area. Please note the adjectives: compatible and efficient, but at the same time diversified and adaptable. So it means that we cannot just create a uniform higher education within Europe. Because, as some of the speakers before me have already mentioned, we have traditions in Europe, which are different yet which have their advantages, and probably it wouldn’t be the best idea to choose just one or the other and forget about the rest. Again this is obvious. In order to do so, European universities with the help of the member states need to adopt profound changes. This is why I said at the beginning of my presentation that there is no such thing as stability and security in higher education at present. And there will be no such thing in the future either, I’m afraid.

Let us consider the challenges European Higher Education faces at present. Firstly, there is a demand for higher education as better-paid jobs can be found by people, by graduates, who actually have a degree or have several degrees. Also there is a kind of an internationalisation of education and research, which is a characteristic feature of the present-day higher education. There is internationalisation and cooperation not only between higher education institutions, but between universities and industry as well. And here this is a challenge, because universities in the United States are much better at doing this than we are. So Europe has to be careful to be able to follow what is already done in the United States. A bit later I will talk about the question why. Also it is a must, a necessity to multiply the places where knowledge is produced. As always happens, and it happens in our times very intensively, the emergence of new expectations is here: expectations of the labour market towards higher education; expectations of the students towards the labour market and expectations of the parents towards higher education. These are all influences.

What are the answers we are going to give to these challenges? How can we make European higher education a world reference? In order to do so, three objectives need to be pursued. One: ensuring that European universities have sufficient and sustainable resources and that they use them effectively. Again this is a topic we
have heard about earlier today. The second objective is the consolidation of the excellence in research and teaching particularly through networking. And the third one is opening up universities to a greater extent to the outside (meaning outside the European Union) and increasing their international attractiveness.

Now, I’m going to talk about these three objectives in a bit more detailed way. In order to ensure sufficient and sustainable resources it is really important to increase and diversify the income of universities. How this can be done? Probably by making a better use of the potential of alumni networks. In fact, this is something Kodolányi has just started to do. In this way, we can actually increase our funds, and create very good contacts with the business world and within industry with the help of our former students. Another way is advocating in favour of legal changes, so that the income of universities can increase. By changes I mean changes in the tax legalization and changes in the status of universities, where necessary. Another possibility is to sell services particularly to the business sector. And by services we basically mean research services, and we also mean flexible education programmes: life-long learning possibilities, which can be contact training, but it can be via e-learning, via open learning as well. What else could be done? Apart from increasing income using the available financial resources more effectively, networking is also a very good possibility, which should be sought ever more carefully. So, for example, it would be possible with the help of networking to mutualise certain available financial resources within consortia. For example, if there is a consortium of academic libraries then they can share resources, and they can share expenses through the use of technology and the development of a virtual library. Again, as a good example, I can say that Kodolányi has already started negotiations with partner universities in Poland and in Romania and in the Ukraine to do this, to create a kind of a virtual library, which can be used by all our students within the network and by all our researchers and lecturers. Yet another possibility to ensure efficient and enduring resources is to apply scientific research results more effectively. Institutional networks can jointly work towards convergence of legislation, related to university research and intellectual property all over Europe. And in countries where the legal framework allows, strategic alliances between higher education institutions and private companies can exploit the results of research much better than at present.

If you remember, I had three objectives. The second objective is consolidating the excellence of European universities in research and teaching. Now how could this be achieved? On the one hand, there is a combination of the absolute need for excellence, and there is a pressure of competition, and also there are the effects of insufficient resources among Hungarian universities—a problem I’m sure other universities within Europe have as well. And all this obliges governments to make choices and select potential centres of excellence. So by various rumours we have heard that probably in Hungary the Technical University will be chosen as a potential centre of excellence. This means that a lot of government money will feed into the University supporting research. But, again with the help of networks, a networking of centres of excellence
creating a kind of a virtual centre of excellence could help other excellence centres to remain and to work actively. There is another possibility to enhance quality to ensure quality through networking. And I’m sure many of you know that quality insurance is a major aspect of the Bologna Process, and a European network for quality insurance in higher education has already disseminated information, experiences, good practices and new developments in the field of quality assessment. At present, Hungary has its own accreditation board, which is responsible for quality insurance within the country. Other countries have the same. Now, according to the European Commission, the European quality insurance body is probably very likely not a conceivable and relevant solution. Therefore, networking remains an essential tool to improve quality insurance instead of having one large European quality insurance body. It is very likely that such a networking will happen here as well. Excellence of European universities in teaching can happen with the help of joint curriculum development and with the help of joint degrees. Already throughout Europe many thematic inter-university networks contribute to strengthening the cooperation at a European level. Individual institutions should cooperate and create consortia in order to develop and deliver joint degree programs. This is what Kodolányi has just started to do, in fact, with a partner institution in Dijon, for example, to develop a joint degree program. There are challenges here of course. Questions we need to be able to ask and answer. One: what is the working language of such a program? What is the working language of a joint degree program? In our case, is it French and Hungarian, is it only French, is it only Hungarian depending on the participants? It is English, because if you really want to open it up to students from other countries as well, basically the logical answer is English, which then just provokes further questions about the use of languages. Two: the application of new technologies. It would be very logical to suggest using e-learning for example within the framework of a joint degree program. But in many cases, and in the case of Kodolányi as well, we have just started to develop our own technology for it. So we need some more time. Or the question is: who is going to issue the degree? How should this be done? So again, there is the question of legislation as well. This is the third objective: to increase the international attractiveness of the European higher education area. Networks can help here a lot, because they spread information on EU and non-EU mobility programs as well. Also networks contribute to the implementation of mobility with the help of joint degrees. Specific mobility programs, for example, the Erasmus program or the Siphus program we already have. The organisation of conferences and seminars and the improvement of student living conditions are also very important.

Let me draw my conclusions. First of all, there are already hundreds of networks, which exist among actors in the higher education sector throughout Europe. This has created a climate of trust to take a bold commitment at a European level towards creating a higher education area by 2010. Current networking includes information exchange, curriculum development, sharing of expertise and pooling of resources. It is for sure that in the future networks will need to enhance their current role. They
need to act as think tanks. By think tanks we mean a group of people networks, which come together to collect ideas, brainstorm ideas and forward these ideas. We also need to participate more in European Union calls for performance and tenders, and they will need to anticipate the innovation and respond to its challenges. In order to increase the attractiveness of networks, academic institutions should do more about them. They should do more networking. As I have mentioned before, this is not easy. Extensive networks are based on cooperation, and this could transform brain drain into brain exchange and brain circulation. Finally, networking contributes to the quality of institutions and the visibility of their research output.
Science is a highly specialized exploring activity, conducted by scholars and aimed at objectively exploring and understanding the environmental and social reality and at creating premises for using the acquired knowledge in order to transform the reality in accordance with human needs.\(^1\)

Security, understood as a state of lack of risk, is a subject of interest of many areas of science such as natural, technological, medical, agricultural and social and also of particular science disciplines dealing with ancestry going back to the beginnings of the scientific recognition of reality.

Security is an idea used very frequently and it seems that with the lapse of time even more frequently, embracing global, regional and local security to traffic, work, intimate life and other forms of coexistence security.\(^2\) The lack of security or the process of a declining level of security is treated as a threat, a phenomenon and a process dangerous for the existence of life and its perspectives.

Security means an objective state relying on the lack of threat, felt subjectively by individuals and groups.\(^3\) By security is meant also “the state of calmness and certainty”\(^4\) or “the psychical or the legal state in which an individual has the sense of certainty, support in other person or in the skilfully functioning legal system; reverse to threat.”\(^5\)

When analysing the idea of security one can distinguish:
- objective state of security (the existence or lack of threats) in a general, local or individual dimension;
- the sense of security (the awareness of existence, lack or possibility of counteraction, of danger) in a general, local or individual dimension.

Analysing the problem of security and its political and social understanding, we emphasize the correspondence and confirmation of acceptance by the official governments of Central and East Europe.\(^6\)

Nowadays terrorism has become one of the most important challenges that we have to face. The World Trade Centre tragedy has changed the way we perceive the world, and it continues to alter our approach towards security. We profess the principle that the distance from the source of threat is no guarantee of security. Such phenomena as organized crime, drug and arms trafficking, financial crime, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, illicit migration and crimes committed with the use of the internet are all connected with terrorism, the major threat to security.

The unconditioned reflex in the almost instinctive response of the international community was the unanimous condemnation of the September 11\(^{th}\) attacks and the
initiation of wide-ranging activities aimed at preventing new threats. The terrorists failed to attain their goal. They wanted to provoke fear and despair that would destabilize our lives. They achieved the opposite effect to the one intended: the majority of the members of the international community formed a coalition to fight against terrorism. We made concerted efforts to find the best possible solutions that would allow us to counteract terrorism and the related phenomena. The capacity to live up to the challenges of terrorism has become an important criterion in assessing international institutions.

However, the question of how this international solidarity can be sustained in the long term is of great importance for the future of regional and global security. Combating terrorism and building regional stability require a commitment to “economic security” which covers security in the energy sector, economic development and financial security. Ecological security becomes ever more significant for the quality of our lives.

Before our very eyes the once rigid borders between internal and external security, between economic and political cooperation disappear. More and more often not only states and the policies they pursue, but also the non-state agents on the international arena jeopardize security.

We have reached the point when we have to face multifarious challenges and threats to the security and stability of our region. It is worth mentioning here the “ethnicisation” of politics which over the last decade took a heavy toll in the Balkans, caused the increase of threats on the part of organized criminal groups and problems accompanying system transformation which bring with themselves the potential exacerbation of intrastate conflicts resulting from differences in access to economic development. The above-mentioned issues should be raised at an international debate, because the way in which we decide to tackle them will have an impact on our future and the future of our children.

We embark on the debate aware of the fact that security in Eastern and Central Europe is a constituent part of the security and stability of our continent and of the whole world. There are a number of international institutions and organizations active in this region which pursue a broad scope of activities, as well as several sub-regional organisations. They create a dense network of links that can and should supplement each other. Will their potential complementarity determine the collective sense of security? Will their diversity bear fruits of broader possibilities to take action? We have to seek answers to such questions.

The Organization of Cooperation and Security in Europe exerts a substantial influence on shaping security in the region. Not only the human dimension of its activities deserves to be emphasized here, but also its instruments of preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention, building new democratic structures and—finally—its economic dimension. We are conscious of the challenges ahead of us. We also have at our disposal the instruments of international cooperation that can be harnessed in order to strengthen regional and sub-regional security. When the need arises we must
modify and supplement these instruments. However, first and foremost, we must use them harmoniously, in the way best tailored to our common strategy.

It seems that in a constant discussion about the future of Europe the prime topic is the security strengthened by the cooperation of regions and solving the ecological and social problems. From 2004 regions will be able to use a variety of assistance programs worth 10.5 billion euro:

- "Interreg" is an initiative helping to remove the differences in development in certain areas;
- "Equal" is concerned with the fight with inequality and discrimination on the labour market;
- "Leader" supports the development of rural areas;
- "Urban" assists the development of cities and outskirts affected by crisis.

It is known that the European Union’s financial funds within the program “Interreg” will be designed for seven border projects which are the subject of interest of Poles, Germans, Slovaks, Czechs, Byelorussians, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, and also Russians from the Kaliningrad area. There are programs that will be accomplished and which are the subject of interest for the coastal “Baltic” regions and also the program of international cooperation CAD-SES.

Attention should be paid to an engagement of organizations that are outside the government which may be linked to the European Union’s support through the project “Equal.” One such organization, which is involved in the problems of education of security in all its dimensions, is Association EAS.

The EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION for SECURITY was created at the Krakow conference on May 12th 2000 and has the status of legal person.

The main aim of the Association is the education for security of people and companies in a united Europe. The Association achieves its aims through educational activities, consulting, popularising activities, publishing, as well as the organising of scientific conferences, meetings and discussions; courses, the exchange of information, the financing of scientific and educational scholarships, the assessment of activities for protection from dangers, the assessment of the safety of installations, recommending organisations and companies working for safety, representing the interests and protecting the rights of its members before state and local government authorities and other parties, shaping social and organisational conditions in order to improve safety, creating the organisational and economic conditions in order to increase the quality of educational services, expressing opinion in matters related to the statutory aim of Association.

The Association organises personalities as well as local and national organisations engaged in different aspects of protection from dangers. Among the members of the Association are such institutions as: Academy of Physical Education, Katowice, Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Cracovian College in Krakow, College of Management, Słupsk, Westpomeranian Business School, Kołobrzeg (Poland), Higher School of
Transport Todor Kableshkov, Sofia (Bulgaria), the Institute of Crisis Management of the Economic College in Prague (Czech Republic) Kodolányi János University College, Székesfehérvár (Hungary), the Faculty of Special Engineering of the University of Žilina, the Department of Security Management in Košice (Slovakia), the International University RIEH, named after Academician Stepan Demianchuk, Rivne (Ukraine) and others, as well as renowned personalities of the scientific world and managers from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, England, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine who are engaged in issues of education and safety.

Previous activities include international conferences and scientific seminars organized or co-organized by the Association:
1) 11-12.05.2000. Krakow (Poland);
2) 10-12.06.2001. Zakopane (Poland);
3) 4-5.10.2001. Košice (Slovakia);
4) 6-7.03.2002. Tatranská Štrba (Slovakia);
5) 16-18.05.2002. Rivne (Ukraine);
6) 2-4.06.2002. Zakopane (Poland);
7) 9-10.10.2002. Košice (Slovakia);
8) 27-29.04.2003. Katowice (Poland);

Upon a program-base elaborated by the Association exist higher education studies in specialisation “security management” (in Poland and Slovakia, and in Ukraine it is being adapted); postgraduate studies “security management” and “education for safety”; post-high school courses for educating security workers (with rights of public school). Its own publishing house publishes Scientific Letters and other publications regarding education for security.

Undoubtedly, Europe has all the possibilities to eradicate ethnic conflicts, extreme divisions between poverty and wealth, to increase the chances of survival in catastrophic situations, to decrease threats and create circumstances for each citizen to enjoy a better quality of security. So as not to smother these chances by the Union’s bureaucrats, it must be supported by such organizations as EAS.

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