

## CHRONICLE

*Hungarian Geographical Bulletin 62 (1) (2013) pp. 68–73.*

### Report on TRANSMIG final conference

*3–4 December 2012, Szeged–Subotica*

TRANSMIG (*Integrating transnational migrants in transition states*) is a research project supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) SCOPES Programme which is especially dedicated to the research cooperation between Switzerland and Eastern European countries. It is coordinated by the University of Bern (Switzerland) in collaboration with the Geographical Institute, Research Centre for Astronomy and Earth Sciences (GI RCAES HAS, Budapest, Hungary) and the Institute for Regional Studies, Research Centre for Economic and Regional Studies (IRS RCERS HAS, Pécs, Hungary) of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, University of Novi Sad (Serbia) and the Scientific Association of Hungarology Research (SAHR) (Subotica, Serbia).

The research itself was designed to provide a detailed analysis of the effects of migration generated by Yugoslavian wars in selected settlements of Vojvodina (part of Serbia) and in Hungary. It had three main research objectives. The first was the investigation of the so-called integration of migrants and refugees (e.g. relationship between different groups and the disposition to conflict in an ethnically mixed environment in Vojvodina).



Irén GÁBRITY MOLNÁR (standing) and Doris WASTL-WALTER open the conference in Subotica



The audience pay attention to Imre Nagy's presentation



The international team of the TRANSMIG after the successful conference

The second objective was the presentation of the transnational migrant networks: the focus was on the various ways they are constructed and function, their key actors and their social and demographic characteristics. The third objective was the research of migrant policies including governmental discourses and policy in relation with immigration and national policies in both countries. The TRANSMIG final conference held on 3 December in Szeged (Hungary) and on 4<sup>th</sup> December in Subotica (Serbia) presented the results of the research started in 2010. The language of the conference was Hungarian on the first day, Serbian, Hungarian and English on the second day.

The conference was opened by the coordinator of the project, Doris WASTL-WALTER (Department of Geography, University of Bern) who greeted the audience and summarized the importance of the research. The program continued with the scientific presentations which consisted of two parts: first, Monika VÁRADI (IRS RCERS HAS) and Irén GÁBRITY MOLNÁR (SAHR), the leaders of the Hungarian and the Serbian research groups outlined the framework of the project and the main research results in Hungary and in Serbia. In the second part, the highlighted topics were focused on the issues which primarily concern Hungary. That part started with Patrik TÁTRAÍ's (GI RCAES HAS) presentation about the educational migration from Vojvodina to Hungary. Kata RÁCZ (IRS RCERS HAS) delineated migrants' stories of welfare and the economic aspects of migration based on semi-structured interviews. Eszter GÁBRITY (SAHR) summarized her findings about language use experiences among migrants, primarily among commuters, who regularly cross the Hungarian–Serbian state border. Ágnes ERŐSS (GI RCAES HAS) has a presentation about the memory of place and space in migrant interviews.

During the evening, the program was continued with a literary event which was held primarily for migrants from Serbia who (re)settled in Szeged. The event was organized in cooperation with the Vojvodina Hungarian migrant association (VMDK-Szeged). The program started with a short overview of the research activities and results by the Hungarian teams, and followed by a discussion. The literary event was held by Beáta VERBÁSZI (an artist from Vojvodina living in Hungary, Radnóti Award holder) who presented novels, essays of Vojvodina Hungarian authors regarding experience, explanation and stories of migration.

Next day the conference continued in Subotica with presentations focused on issues concerning Vojvodina and the different cross-border activities in the Hungarian–Serbian border zone. The program was opened by Doris WASTL-WALTER again. After that Tamás KORHECZ, the president of the Hungarian National Council of Serbia, outlined the effects and the legal circumstances of the dual citizenship in Serbia (focusing on the case of Hungarians living in Serbia). The history of migration and its impacts on the ethnic demographic changes were presented by Károly KOCSIS (GI RCAES HAS). Béla FILEP (Department of Geography, University of Bern) who had a presentation with the title of 'The Politics of Good Neighbourhood: State, Civil Society and the Enhancement of Cultural Capital in the Serbian–Hungarian Border Region'.

Irén GÁBRITY MOLNÁR outlined the relationship between the cross-border connections and the new regional consciousness of the Vojvodina Hungarians. Imre NAGY (University of Novi Sad) also focused on the border zone; he examined cross-border cooperation networks in EU projects. Saša KICOŠEV and Dušan RISTIĆ (University of Novi Sad) researched the cultural identification and the social integration of refugees settled in Temerin. The last presenter of the conference was Zoltán TAKÁCS who studied the cross-border institutional networks with a special attention to the higher education.

All in all, it was a real cross-border conference as the research itself. The presenters managed to cover most of the important types and fields of migration system concerning Vojvodina and Hungary. The final conference does not mean the end of the research; the results will be published during this year.

ÁGNES ERŐSS and PATRIK TÁTRAÍ