

SCOPES, 2010-2012
Szeged, 3 December 2012



INTEGRATING (TRANS)NATIONAL MIGRANTS IN TRANSITION STATES (IMIG)

MAIN RESEARCH RESULTS IN SERBIA

DR. GÁBRITY MOLNÁR IRÉN

**Novi Sad team: Department of Geography,
Tourism & Hotel Management, University of
Novi Sad, Serbia**

***Subotica team: Scientific Association for
Hungarology Research
Subotica, Serbia***



Research objectives

1. Migration

- ◎ Migrants/refugees and their integration
- ◎ Interethnic relations between refugees/migrants and autochthon nations
- ◎ Language attitudes, identity, ideology

2. Transnational networks

- ◎ cross-border relationships



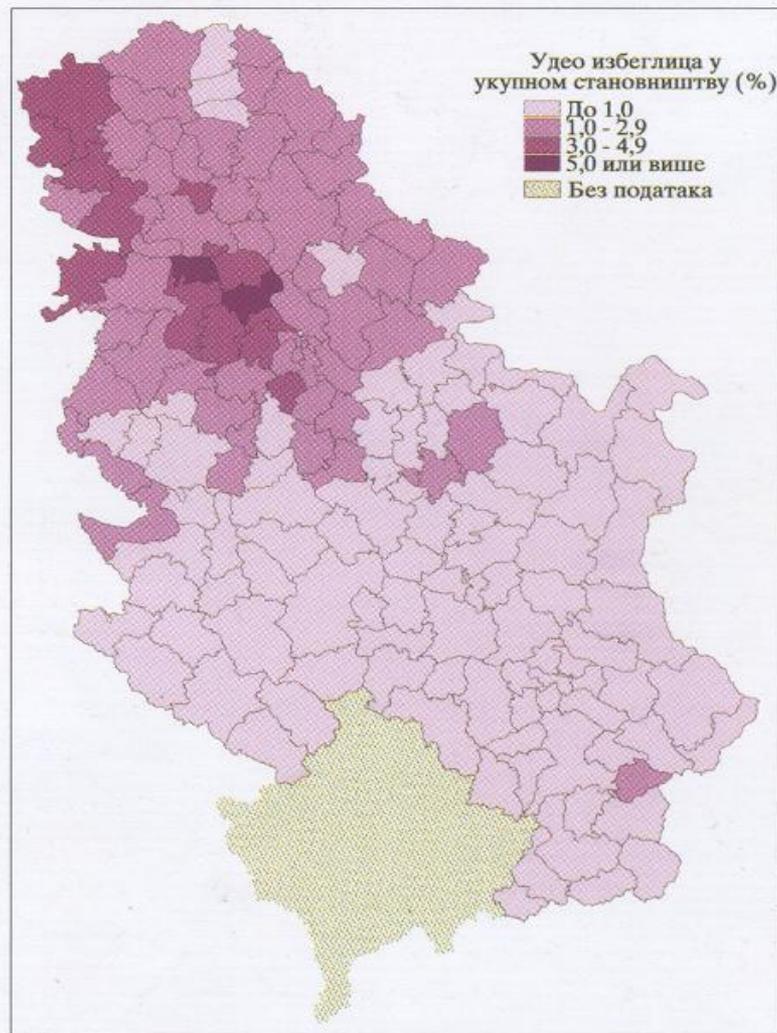
Novi Sad team is designed to look upon the factors having major influence in creating attitudes towards multiethnic co-existence or conflict, focusing on Temerin.

The relations between the Serbs and Hungarians in Temerin were changed by the migration flows during the 1990s. Several incidents occurred; many of them had clear ethnic background.

The task of the Novi Sad research team was to construct a picture focusing on the refugees' integration into the society, on one hand and the attitude of the local Hungarian population, depicting empirical feedback of coexistence with the new inhabitants, on the other hand.

Migrants arriving to Serbia

Карта 11. Избеглице, 2008.



Број избеглица – Србија: 97.108

Удео избеглица у укупном становништву (%)

Србија: 1,3; Централна Србија: 0,9; Војводина: 2,4

Прешево: 0,01; Сјеница: 0,03; Тутин: 0,03

Стара Пазова: 6,2; Ириг: 5,5; Сремски Карловци: 4,7

The Novi Sad team used the following sources:

- Statistical data of the Commissariat for Refugees (UNHCR) in Serbia;**
- Published data by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia;**
- In 2011 more than 40 interviews of local people in Temerin were conducted, both natives (Serbs and Hungarians) and refugees and new settlers as well as analysis and processing of data obtained from these interviews.**

Conclusions



The interviewee responses in this research reflect to the greatest extent the subjective dimension of identity construction.

Collective identity of a group (ethnic, i.e. national community) has advantage over personal identity so the focus of attention was put on that identity. Personal identity also refers to social recognition so in that sense it is sociogenic and culturally determined.

The analysis of interviewee responses indicates that war circumstances and exile have to a great extent affected the strengthening of ethnic identity which had not been too prominent in a previous period of life.

Ethnic identity represents a very important dimension of their cultural identity. War experience and exile have contributed to the development of national awareness and identity.

The relationships in the new social setting have been operationalized and represented through the interviewees' answers to the questions concerning the reasons for coming to Temerin and how the local population accepted them.

The answers indicate that these experiences are mainly positive. As refugees, their position was facilitated by the fact that many of them had relatives, friends or acquaintances here.

Subotica teem investigated the interethnic relationships in the region of North-Vojvodina as well as the ethnic conflicts that arise among autochthonous and refugee inhabitants. In Subotica and its surroundings, Hungarian-Serbian-Croatian co-existence has evolved.

This region, which is characterized by Hungarian dominance, is the scene of a more peaceful, but not tensionless neighbourhood.

The research task is the investigation of the Hungarian-Serbian border region with its migrant flows, strong business and family networks.

Information sources of the research

Total: 69 interviews

- 30 Interviews with migrants from Serbia (16 youth, 14 middle-aged)
- *19 Interviews with refugees in North-Vojvodina*
- *20 Interviews with institutions, organizations, companies*



The team focussed on three main issues:

- **Integration of migrants/refugees** (interethnic relations, attitudes between refugees and the majority society, conflicts and best practices of conflict mitigation);
- **Cross-border institutional connections** (The fluctuation of the inhabitants /enterprises, higher-educational students); the relationship network of „near-border” state institutions (educational and cultural cooperation);
- **Interethnic communications** - Language attitudes towards the border, as a consequence of migration (difference in the functions, statuses and values of languages in Vojvodina; the communicative situations in which minority languages can be used are restricted: private sphere; clear division of languages in various domains of language use).

Quotes from the interviews:

„In Subotica, I managed to make friends, they have accepted me, in comparison to Kraljevo and Niš, people are different there, but here, again, multinational environment and they accepted you differently. Nobody asks where you come from, what you are, all in all it's normal.“ *(Serbian refugee from Kosovo, 28-year-old male, sells on the market)*

„My opinion is that it is quite tolerant, quite... how shall I put it, that (Vojvodina) multinational environment functions quite well, that should be protected. Should anyone try to destroy it, we mustn't allow it. That is what I saw ... I thought since it belonged to the Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, it is on a bit higher level, culturally, ...higher level than in other parts since it is an Austrian-Hungarian town and they were not like Turks.“
(Milivoj, 55-year-old male, unemployed, works on the market, graduate economist, Serbian, lives in Subotica)

The willingness of the youth to migrate was influenced by:

- the South Slavic war
- the worsening economic conditions
- the low living standards

The motives of migration: finding a job, studying an occupation, gaining experience, studying languages.

Hungary is the first target country of migration as a result of linguistic and cultural motives.

Each of the subjects has relatives, friends and acquaintances in Hungary.

- the relational capital is very important
- provide them with reliable information concerning the living, work force, conditions and prospects in Hungary.

Why did they return?

- did not find appropriate job
- lack of work opportunities
- parents can help at home

Interviews with senior commuters and migrants from Serbia to Hungary

Since 1993 approximately 30,000 Serbian citizens have moved to Hungary. Non-officially there are more citizens who live or work in Hungary today.

Though the South Slavic wars ended the intention of migration has not declined.

The following motives/reasons can explain migration from Serbia to Hungary:

- differences in regional development
- finding a job
- double enterprise (business across the border)
- educational purpose
- capital investment
- transit migration towards West Europe

Quotes from the interviews:

„I experienced that the clerks were not too helpful, what's more I rather felt that they try to hamper our work. I very often felt like for example Josef K Kaffka in his novel, who is lost in the labyrinth of bureaucracy.” (*B. Endre, 26-year-old male, mathematician*)

„There was a person with whom I got into contact somewhat later, who directly told me he had the task to to write reports about us. So hm hm we were being watched in those times, that those people who come Hungary, what they want here, and why they want to and so on. So he needed to write reports...”

(*Róbert S., Szeged–Zenta, electric engineer- entrepreneur, 59-year-old male*)

The most recent types of migrants along the Serb–Hungarian border areas are as follows:

- 1. Settlers (with double citizenship)**
- 2. Circulars and seasonal migrants**
- 3. Pendulum migrants (from 3 months to 1 year)**
- 4. Students (secondary and third level)**
- 5. Refugees and asylum seekers**

▪ By the causes and purposes of migration

- 1. Economic migrants, migrant workers**
- 2. Creative class: entrepreneurs, businessmen, international traders (between the continuum of settlers and circulars)**
- 3. Investors and career builders (brain drain, brain gain, brain circulation);**
- 4. Family unification or reunification (marriage as family formation and for instance retirement movement as family reunification)**
- 5. Applicants for citizenship**
- 6. Recreational migrants-tourists**

- 
- **Transnational and peripatetic life styles have been emerging along the border zone with heavy travels, property purchases and changes of working places**
 - **The border regions provide large variety of communication channels and social networks**
 - **Cross-border activities ‘unifies’ the people, families and institutions both side of border**
 - **New transnational styles of life yield possibilities in order to solve the individual and ethnic level challenges first of all among the members of creative class**

Final conclusions



- 1. Migration and pendulum like movements of highly qualified youths (30-40 years) have increased from Vojvodina mainly for economic and professional career reasons.**
- 2. On the one side the regional identity is strong in Vojvodina fuelled by the Tito style multiculturalism but on the other side (mainly the Southern Great Plane, the xenophobe attitude of the locals did not disappear completely against the ethnic Hungarians).**
- 3. Most migrants from Vojvodina became back and forth movers because they did not sell their properties. Most pendulum migrants worked under the umbrella of legal contracts in Hungary.**
- 4. Personal migration networks are functioning with economic rationality: for example: „Production in Hungary but consumption in Serbia.”**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION!

