



**Border Regions in Transition (BRIT) XI**  
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**Topic:** **International institutional networks of higher education in border region of Serbia and Hungary**  
(Dissemination of research project IMIG-SCOPES 2009-2012)

The proposal summarizes the first year research results of applicant within the project: *The Integrating (trans)national migrants in transition states (IMIG)* – joint research project in the framework of the co-operation programme SCOPES (2009-2012), submitted to the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), coordinated by Prof. Dr. Doris Wastl-Walter (Department of Geography, University of Bern).

It is considered a border region of two European countries in transition, Hungary and Serbia as well. It should be emphasized that this border region is „divided” by two states, EU and not EU members, although there are natural, cultural (national – Hungarian minority) and economical contacts among the closed borders. The research problem would be defined: *How to activate the cross-boundary prospective? What are the capacities for cross-border cooperation and institutional networking?*

Empirical background: 25 interviews have been completed on topic of cross-border relationships of the institutions (leaders of institutions from North Vojvodina and South Hungary). Locations: Serbia and Hungary. *Objective:* Cross-border relationships of the institutions network - positive examples. *The cross-border relationship indicators: The level and development of cross-border relationships indicate the preparedness of the inhabitants and institutions for the EU membership, competitiveness (labor force, institutions of knowledge transfer, entrepreneurs) social, cultural and economical cohesion.* The role of local-regional elite was considered in processes of cooperation between Serbia and Hungary. The institutional cooperating capacities were analyzed according to the question of social and cultural cohesion of border region (emphasizing the permanent mobility and diversity of its inhabitants). The most important cooperation-channel is higher education and cultural institutions. The high motive and number of emigrating/commuting Hungarian students towards Hungary began in the year of 1990. In 2010, 1.385 Hungarian students (from Vojvodina) studied in HU, and 3.152 in SRB. *There is high concentrated student mobility between HU-SRB.* It causes a very low returning rate of high educated young elite (approximately 30%). The local-regional (academic and political) elite of minority, as the “changing agents” should initiate educational, cultural and economical cooperation in border region (for example, establishing a multiethnic university, organizing common (multilingual) educational programs). *The interview subjects were from state, institutional and university circles. The focus is on the intra- and interregional relationship network of „near-border” state institutions (educational and cultural co-operation, their embedment).*

Research methodology: There were used statistical data comparisons (H-SRB) of border region, interviews, and literature, published by domestic (Hungarian and Serbian) border researchers.