

Chances and Challenges for the Danube Region

A 100 Years After the First World War

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Edited by: István Tarrósy and Susan Milford

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Preface

Any war is devastating...it does not only demolish in physical terms, but also – and this is the worse – kills the soul. Or at least plagues it with long-lasting effects, as it can haunt throughout many generations. It has consequences in a wider context, ranging from politics to the economy, culture to the society at large. In particular, when the war affects a large number of countries, peoples, regions – as it was the case with the first and second world wars, but also as the ‘Balkan wars’ of our immediate past showed. What happens after such turmoils to the communities, cultures of people involved, as well as all the sectors having been affected by the conflicts? How can we understand the events themselves (on their own and at the same time in their complexity) in a rather historic perspective – say, 100 years after the given war took place? What are the future prospects of a multicoloured and multiethnic region such as the Danube Region in light of a complex history over troubled waters?

The river connects us in this part of the continent (too). It is not only a marked sign of our geographic reality, but also a common cradle of our many cultures and societies, and an overarching, connecting thread of our countries and nations. It is always good to look at it as something that can offer many opportunities for cooperation. In our very case, a network of universities along its banks, and several topical issues to be discussed and debated upon, for instance, in the form of a sustainable series of events for young scientists – a particularly important target group of our common future.

In a historic 100 years’ time it is good to flash up some topics from our macro region with the intention to talk about our possible present and future scenarios. All the efforts that have been channelled into making our lives in the countries along the Danube and beyond better and more successful should be appreciated. With the series of the Danube Rectors’s Conference (DRC) Summer School, as well as the Pécs Debate Academy of the University of Pécs (PDA – formerly known as ICWiP), for more than a decade we have been taking determined steps towards the efficient networking of various institutions, associations and individuals, who want to contribute to the realization of these ‘possible scenarios’.

Our strategy covers structures, manifestations and methods of the exchange of views, ideas and hopes in the form of lively discussions in a non-formal, and certainly non-frontal teaching environment. Our series of the DRC Summer School has been made real in close cooperation with our long-lasting supporters, who have been with us for so many years. We clearly understand each other easily, which truly offers a firm and calm background for the organizational work. It is never enough to underscore that: our institutes and colleagues are grateful for all the positive attitudes, academic and financial contributions!

Renewal and the ability to renew are key to any successful project in the long run – while obviously, the need for adhering to traditions is ever so important. We think we have been making efforts to keep the traditions of our summer schools, while year-by-year always trying something new, something more, something different. This time we proudly present our renewed edited volume of a selection of interesting themes, fresh ideas and thought-provoking arguments.

For the continuous encouragement within our network to let scholars engage in academic discussions and presentations of research results, we consider our series of edited volumes an important tool. Beyond its primary mission to be a stable outlet for sound academic thoughts and products, our publication intends to serve the very heart of scientific work: the debate over policies, outputs, methodology, theories, data and social achievements in general, which can further how people across the Danube Region view their place and role in our global world.

The present book contains eight papers under the overarching motto of the summer school “Chances and Challenges for the Danube Region – A 100 Years After the First World War”. The papers do not deal with or analyze the war and its historic consequences directly; rather they expose certain topics from our region that all are, one way or another, manifestations of the historic developments of the last hundred years (and more) across the territories that are connected into ‘one’ by the river. *Darija Marković (1)* thinks that the Danube in our more recent history has had an important role in the process of EU integrations, especially in mutual cooperation and integration between countries along the Danube River Basin (DRB), as they share history and culture. She looks at why raising awareness of human rights and

the importance of their respect and protection can contribute to preserving international peace, a harmony among cultures, which is one of legacies of the World War I, i.e. the Versailles Peace Treaty. Her aim is to show the position of minorities in Serbia, with specific regard to the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, which is the area where a great number of national minorities have residence. The emphasis is on the legal aspects of minority rights, their harmonization with the EU integration process criteria, as well as problems that appear in practice. *Sebastian Schäffer (2)* deals with the democratic development of the Russian Federation in the context of Francis Fukuyama's hypothesis of the end of history. He argues that for the general population the changes after the fall of the Berlin Wall brought more freedom, but at the same time different restraints and more insecurity. Placing the 'simultaneity dilemma' – the problem of having to undergo two or even three transitions (political, economic and social) at the same time in the heart of the debate - Schäffer uses the results of previous discussions about this as a starting point for his argumentation over reality distortion in the discourse about Putin's Russia. *Alfred Kramer (3)* draws attention to a very recent crisis in a Danubian country: The Ukraine crisis, which has been one of the most discussed topics in the global media in the months preceding our publication. As he points out, it is still not presented as a direct conflict between Russia and Ukraine, mainly because of the mainstream discourse. The Ukrainian media use the term "antiterrorist operation" instead of "war" or "conflict." However, the crisis offers a significant opportunity for members of the Visegrad Four (V4) to strengthen cooperation among them, especially political and military cooperation. Kramer's paper analyzes the cooperation among V4 countries, together with their policies towards the Ukrainian crisis, Ukraine in general, and the Russian Federation. *István Tarrósy and Zoltán Vörös (4)* have been writing extensively about Chinese foreign policy and how Central European countries can tackle Chinese pragmatism for some time. In their present paper they draw attention to the fact that in the past few years relations between Europe and China has deepened, but it is not yet visible that much, whether the common stakes or the conflicting interests will dominate these relations. It is so because behind the numbers of the volume of trade, for example, and summits of heads of state and government there are still a lot of problems and worrying characteristics. The paper talks about whether

or not there is a tangible Chinese interest towards the Visegrad region, as a region, taking for granted in parallel that Beijing seeks bilateral connections with each country in the community – both the European Union, and the Visegrad Four. *Staffan Nilsson (5)*, former president of the European Economic and Social Committee – keynote speaker of the Pécs Debate Academy of 2014 – then turns towards a much-talked overarching topic of our everyday life: globalization. He, however, does this from a “glocal” perspective, addressing the place and role of villages in a growingly urban world. As a practicing farmer from Sweden, he offers his personal glimpses on how to promote public discussion on “glocality”, by emphasizing that to him, it means a good opportunity; perhaps also an absolute and necessary opportunity. *Svetlana Demianenko and Anna Vartanian (6)* take us to the Ukrainian Danube Delta discussing means of sustainable tourism development in rural areas, a truly important question for local, national and regional cooperative interests in the coming years (especially, that the EU has a Danube Strategy dedicated to some of the issues connected with this topic). The article assesses the economic, environmental and social factors in the development of sustainable forms of tourism. The authors propose the mechanism of sustainable tourism’s management formation as a guarantee of national strategies for the development of recreation and tourism activities in Ukraine. The chapter is illustrated by the magnificent photos of Research Associate Maxim Yakovlev. *Katarzyna Kajdanek (7)* offers another intriguing example of “glocality” in our region by neatly presenting suburban development of rural areas in Lower Silesia, Poland. The main purpose of her paper is to provide some insight into how the influx of newcomers affects the previously rural locus and into how newcomers go about their way of life in the suburban setting in selected areas in this part of the country. Finally, *Ilka Yonovska (8)* examines the multifunctionality of the forestry sector in Bulgaria. As we learn from her research, under the condition of transition to free market economy and especially after the accession of Bulgaria to the European Union the expectations related to the forestry sector have become markedly higher. New demands have been laid down for the management and utilization of the available forestry resources. The development of the sector is affected by many factors, the most important of which are forestry policy, changes in forestry legislation, the European Regulation on timber trade, for instance.

After a clear overview of challenges, Yonovska gives a few recommendations for the future.

Let us present the eleventh DRC Summer School edited volume and wish all our readers to join our debate and series of events in the forthcoming years.

Vienna–Pécs, 2014 November

Dr. István Tarrósy, Ph.D.
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Chapter 1

Title

**National Variety in Serbia
in the Process of EU Integrations**

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National Variety in Serbia in the Process of EU Integrations

Darija Marković

Introduction As many great rivers, the Danube River has also played a significant role in the history of people living on its riverbanks. In more recent history it has had an important role in the process of EU integrations, especially in mutual cooperation and integration between countries along the Danube River Basin (DRB), as they share history and culture. A lot of migrations have resulted in medley of various customs that can now be seen in practically all of the DRB countries. A long and broad history has left Serbia, as one of such countries, with an enormous cultural heritage that represents a mix of different nationalities. In such an environment it takes a lot of tolerance and respect for human rights for everyone to be able to live in peace together. Unfortunately, the story of human rights as science knows them today only began in the 18th century. Since it belongs to the sphere of social sciences, it took a lot of time, as it still does, to implement such rights into a social, economic and political system. In a certain manner, we can say that integration is a process of tolerance and respect for human rights, as one of the conditions for entering the European Union is precisely respecting human rights and minority rights, which are particularly important in the Danube Region because of its colorful cultural diversity. Raising awareness of human rights and importance of their respect and protection can contribute to preserving international peace, a harmony among cultures, which is one of legacies of the World War I, i.e. the Versailles Peace Treaty.

The aim of this paper is to show the position of minorities in Serbia, with specific regard to the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, which is the area where a great number of national minorities have residence. The emphasis is on the legal aspects of minority rights, their harmonization with the EU integration process criteria, as well as problems that appear in practice.

Once And Any armed conflict, especially an international one that
Future Aims includes the entire world, always has devastating consequences. When in such a state of anarchy and chaos, rare are
World those who have respect for human rights or even respect for
War I another human life. The year of 2014 is the year of remembrance that a hundred years have passed from the beginning
Legacy of the World War I. It was the first time in history of mankind that a war of such scales took place. The war lasted four years and in those four agonizing years the world saw a lot of destruction and suffering. It is one of the historic armed conflicts with the biggest number of fatalities, but what also ensued were changes in territories of certain countries and instability in some others due to political turmoil. According to the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) and figures they took from the Office fédéral de la Protection civile in Basel (Switzerland) the number of combatants killed in the First World War is 10 million, while 50,000 civilians were killed in the same war (Sassòli and Bouvier, 2006: 173). If one takes into consideration that according to the same source 24 million civilians were killed in the World War II, the 50,000 from the World War I seems small, but any number of killed and injured civilians in an armed conflict is terrible. Therefore, the winning parties decided to try and prevent such events from happening again and signed the Versailles Peace Treaty on June 28, 1919 after several months of negotiations. In the preamble of this Treaty (The Covenant of the League of Nations), it is stated that an international

cooperation is necessary in order for the international peace to be achieved. For that cause, the winning parties to the war founded the League of Nations, and one of its original members was the Serb-Croat-Slovene State whose successor is the Republic of Serbia.¹ It was the first universal organization for the protection of peace and security, which established a system of protection of minority rights, too.

The system of protecting minorities was established in documents containing obligations of countries regarding this subject. What is particularly of interest here is that in 1919 the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovene, among few other countries, signed a separate agreement that protected ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities. The aim of obligations stated in the mentioned documents was for minorities to be treated as equal and to be able to survive as groups – they had to have the highest, constitutional status in a country, which means those obligations could not have been changed by ordinary laws and without consent of the League of Nations (Dimitrijević et al., 2007: 292). Minorities even had the right to file petitions to the Council of the League of Nations.

However, after the League of Nations was dissolved in 1946, the United Nations decided not to continue with the policy of the League of Nations regarding minority rights. Reasons for such actions are mostly political and rooted in fear of history repeating itself because of what happened with German minorities after Hitler took control over Germany, therefore, ruling out group protection of minorities.

EU Even though parties to the Covenant of the League of Nations agreed on preserving international peace, individual
Integrations tendencies provoked dissatisfaction and a new global war,
and Regional during which the world saw more destruction than in the
Cooperation first one. As it was earlier mentioned, the League of Nations

¹ The Republic of Serbia is successor of the Serb-Croat-Slovene State even though the country itself changed its name in the past, as well as territory.

was dissolved at the end of the World War II (1946) and in a way we can look at the United Nations (UN) as successor to that organization since for the most part they share the same goals. As a universal international organization, the purposes of the UN, as stated in Article 1 paragraph 3, are to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging the respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.

With the foundation of the European Coal and Steel Community, the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community during the 1950's, the European countries came to an idea of regionalization in order to facilitate mutual cooperation and be able to help each other's economy. This idea evolved into the European Union (EU) as we know it today, although with not so many members at first. In the beginning, accession to the EU was easier, but in the past decades conditions required of a country to be able to become part of the EU have been defined very particular, which is not necessarily a bad thing if one bears in mind different levels of development of countries. Even besides that, cooperation exists between the EU and non-EU countries, especially when one country is in negotiations or has begun accession to the EU.

The EU integrations process has been subject to many political, sociological, legal and similar reviews in Serbia in the past decade. Considering that Serbia has formally started accession negotiations in January 2014, it means that to a certain level this country has fulfilled most of the conditions required of one country. One of the basic conditions for joining the EU is the respect for human rights and minority rights, as well as promoting regional cooperation and development of good relations with neighboring countries. Serbian EU integration on the inner plan has had a lot

challenges that it has had to cope with (Orlić, 2010:645). One of those challenges is harmonization of laws that protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, about which there will be more word in further text.

Another step on the way in the EU integrations is regional cooperation, as one of their basic elements. Regional cooperation is basic indicator whether one country is prepared to integrate into the EU and is part of specific political criteria – joining the EU goes in step with development of regional cooperation in the Western Balkans, following the model of integration and cooperation in the very EU (Đurić, 2012:307). It showed that connecting of countries on a regional level makes for best possibilities in achieving development goals, in individual countries and the entire region in general (Bulajić, 1994). Benefits of regional cooperation are that it is much easier to connect on a smaller territorial coverage, in most cases neighboring countries share similar interests, culture and tradition that can contribute to better international understanding and greater respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with European standards, the process of institutionalization is easier on smaller territories, etc.

One of the aspects of the EU integrations is that national and regional identities are becoming more and more expressed and manifested, while social groups direct their efforts toward European institutions (Radaković, 2010: 43). If one knows that national identities are deeply rooted into the basic structure and operations of the EU and looks at that from the aspect of human rights in connection with regional cooperation, then one can deduce that such process of integration and cooperation is a way of overcoming differences, which is in accordance with one of basic principles of human rights – the principle of equality.

Serbia has been active in the area of regional cooperation and has shown will to develop good-neighbor relations,

which is very important because of the history of the Western Balkans that is marked with armed conflicts and revolutions. What should be noted is that Serbia signed a number of agreements regarding regional cooperation in various spheres, and participated in the adoption of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, as well.

National Minorities in Serbia It is hard to define precisely what it means ‘minority’ and who belongs to such groups, so therefore, a universal definition of minorities does not exist. Many human rights experts tried to define minorities, ones giving too broad definitions while others making them too simple. Another reason that there is not a universal definition lies in the fact that not all cultures recognize all kinds of minorities (for example, Arabian countries believe that there is one Arabian nation, or that all Muslims are one people, which means they do not recognize ethnical criteria as much as religious ones). However, Norwegian expert Asbjørn Eide gave a completely simplified definition, reducing it to objective characteristics, and in this case this definition can be taken into consideration:

“... a minority is any group of persons resident within a sovereign State which constitutes less than half of the population of the national society and whose members share common characteristics of an ethnic, religious or linguistic nature that distinguish them from the rest of the population.” (doc. UN E/CN.4/Sub.2/1993/34)

Minority rights essentially refer to cultural rights of minority groups such as the right to education and to science and culture, but taking into consideration all types of minority groups, minority rights also encompass civil and political rights such as the freedom of religion and the

right to public participation. However, we must not forget that every member of minorities has all human rights and fundamental freedoms for the simple reason that he or she is a human being.

There are two aspects of minority rights: individual and collective. As already mentioned, in the eyes of the United Nations minority rights are not collective. However, according to Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) members of minorities should enjoy their rights in community with the other members of their group. From this we can see that there is not consistency and universality in the interpretation of minority rights. Nevertheless, each and every member of a minority group, be it ethnic, religious, linguistic or any other, can enjoy his or her rights and freedoms individually as well as in a group.

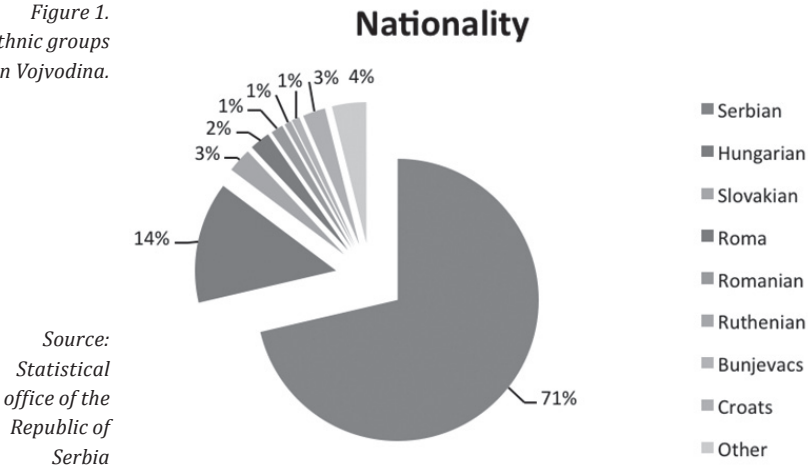
Who are minorities in Serbia? The history of Serbia is marked with many migrations across the present territory of this country that left traces of various cultures that still remain. World War I (1914–1918) and World War II (1939–1945) had effects on the increase of migrating people. The civil war in former Yugoslavia (1991–1995, although some sources state that the civil war ended in 1999) particularly caused enormous migrations, with a lot of refugees looking for a place where they could be safe from their country. As a result of these, say, more recent events, today we have a mesh of cultures in Serbia, for what the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (in further text, Vojvodina) is most notable. Such mesh incited the idea of multiculturalism, an idea or ideal of cohabitation of different ethnic and cultural groups within the same pluralistic society which implies their coexistence, mutual tolerance and equality (Raduški, 2009: 337).

Vojvodina was once part of the Austro-Hungarian empire, and before that many nations lived on its present territory – for relatively short while it was under the influence

of the Ottoman Empire, although not as much as the rest of Serbia. Migrations during the two world wars and civil war in former Yugoslavia triggered a lot of migrations, wherein many found new homes in this northern part of Serbia. Today Vojvodina is proud to be a colorful quilt of cultures and traditions that can be practically seen in every part of it. There is a number of bigger groups of national minorities living in Vojvodina: Hungarians, Slovaks, Roma people, Croats, Romanians, Ruthenians (Rusyns) and Bunjevacs, but there are also Montenegrins, Bosnians, Russians, Germans, Muslims (explained earlier in the paper why they are considered national minority) and many other (Figure 1). However, when the poll was done in 2011 the number of mother tongues used in Vojvodina gives a bit different picture (Figure 2).

Legal regulation When talking about legal regulation of protection of minority rights on a global level, we cannot find universal solutions. The United Nations do not protect minority rights as collective rights, but only as individual rights, while the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights sees minority rights as both individual and collective, and it seems

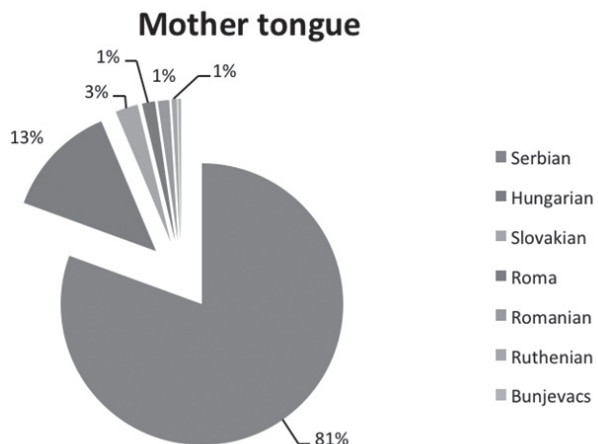
Figure 1.
Ethnic groups
in Vojvodina.



that the world has not come to a conclusion how to classify minority rights. However, more can be done on the regional level, which can be seen in the work of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe). One should not exclude bilateral and multilateral agreements between individual countries that play a big role in the protection of minority rights, as well.

Still, the biggest part in protecting minority rights can be done via national legislations. Each and every country is free to adopt laws protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms – as a matter of fact, they are encouraged to protect them this way. A state can use one of two approaches toward minorities: pro-assimilation or against assimilation. Simply put, pro-assimilation approach means that all minority members accept “becoming” majority members. A state can be against assimilation if it respects existence of other, minority nations living on its territory and having the same rights as those belonging to the majority. Nevertheless, it can never be this black and white, because the will of minority members plays a key role in this. One person can declare himself or herself as being of one or other nationality

*Figure 2.
Languages
in use in
Vojvodina.*



*Source:
Statistical
office of the
Republic of
Serbia*

depending on his or her free will. If one is forced to accept a certain nationality, then that would represent a violation of that person's fundamental freedoms.

The protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and especially minority rights is one of the prerequisites of the EU integration process. Serbia has done a great deal in this area, which can be seen from the number of laws protecting various aspects of minority rights, as well as the bilateral and multilateral agreements Serbia has signed. First of all, what is the most important for human rights is for them to be lifted to constitutional level, what Serbia has done – in the Articles 18-81 Constitution of Republic of Serbia (2006) regards the matter of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and their protection. The Constitution guarantees human rights cited in its text and prohibits any kind of discrimination (except for special measure the State can take in order to achieve equality of persons or groups of persons). It also prohibits forced assimilation of national minorities and guarantees their right to preserve their uniqueness.

At levels lower than constitutional, Serbia has adopted a number of laws. The first and foremost is the Law on the protection of rights and freedoms of national minorities (last changes in 2013), which is the basic law protecting minority rights. The importance of this Law is because, besides other principles, there is also the principle of cultural autonomy that protects collective rights of national minorities.

The next is the Law on the official use of oral and written language (last changes in 2010). This law is important as it prescribes that in units of local governments where 15 per cent of the population belong to a national minority, language of that minority is one of the official languages in that area or county, which means that minority language is used in court procedures, in communication with the authorities, in official records, on signs that show names of the unit of the local government, towns, cities, squares, streets, etc.

According to Article 9 of the Law on ID card (last changes in 2011) form of ID cards can be printed in the language of the given national minority in accordance with the law.

Aims of education and guidance system, as stated in the Law on the basics of educational and guidance system (last changes in 2013), are among others, nurturing the Serbian mother tongue and culture, as well as the language and culture of national minorities. Article 9 Paragraph 2 of this law states that members of national minorities can listen to classes in their mother tongue or, if they wish, they can attend bilingual classes, taught in Serbian and the language of the national minority in question.

As for the Law on local governments (last changes in 2014), it is provided that national minorities can establish educational institutions and arrange their work, but it also takes care of the protection of cultural heritage and monuments, public information in the language of national minorities, work of cultural institutions. In multiethnic communities, a council for international relations can be established as a means for those minorities to connect with people of the same nationalities.

Nonetheless, none of these laws would be good if they were not in harmony with international documents protecting and guaranteeing minority rights. In that sphere, Serbia has been active as well and is signatory to a number of bilateral agreements: Agreement between the Federal Government of FRY and the Government of Romania about cooperation in the domain of protection of national minorities (2004); Agreement between Serbia and Montenegro and the Republic of Croatia about the protection of the Serbian and Montenegrin minority in the Republic of Croatia and the Croatian minority in Serbia and Montenegro (2005); Agreement between Serbia and Montenegro and the Republic of Macedonia about the protection of Serbian and Montenegrin minority in the Republic of Macedonia and Macedonian

minority in Serbia and Montenegro (2005). Further, Serbia is party to numerous conventions and charters, such as the European Convention on Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995/1998), as well as the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992/2005).

Problems in Practice Formally, Serbia has done a lot to improve the respect for minority rights – with a network of laws it has managed to cover areas crucial to members of national minorities in preserving their uniqueness and distinctiveness. Not only that, Serbia is party to significant agreements, conventions, charters, etc. All of this show that a lot of efforts were put into providing for the protection of national minorities. However, law is a social science and any change in a social system is slow and takes a long time, especially when it comes to human rights – their implementation should be gradual for everyone to be able to adjust to new norms.

The situation has improved considerably in the past decade, and that can be seen in reports of organizations that follow improvements and warn about violations of human rights in different parts of the world. According to the 2012 report of the Human Rights Watch (HRW) the situation in Serbia is better but the work is not cut out for it. The issue of status and treatment of Roma people remains one of the big problems that Serbia is still facing. The annual report for 2013 of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia shows that legal regulation of minority rights is good, but that it is not applied equally in all parts of Serbia. They specially warn about inter-ethnic conflicts that happened between Serbian and Hungarian ethnic groups in Temerin and Bečej, two communities where these ethnic groups are present in

large percentage. Further problems touch upon the national councils of national minorities – bodies that represent the principle of cultural autonomy. Language obstacles appear in the area of education, where not all national minorities got the right to use their mother tongue in schools at the same time. In Vojvodina, there is a longer tradition of classes held in languages of national minorities, while in some parts of Serbia minority languages have been introduced in schools only in 2013. This is an alarming fact, and it means that not everyone can enjoy their rights equally and at the same time. There is also a shortage of textbooks written in the languages of national minorities.

This is only a portion of problems that members of national minorities face in practice. Many of them still face discrimination, which cannot be uprooted by laws. The problem with discrimination is that it is on an individual level, in the minds of individuals that cannot be “brainwashed” into the desired respect for others.

Conclusion Serbia is a country that has obviously taken care of providing means of the protection of minority rights from even before World War I, and especially after it. A poll done in 1995 where members of minorities were asked whether their rights were endangered they said their rights were not in the least endangered (Popović et al, 1995: 149). That being said, there are still those who believe their rights are jeopardized, and truly there is not an equality in enjoying minority rights. Even besides developed legal regulation, problems still appear in reality. Ways to overcome those problems are many, and there are many projects dedicated to the protection of minority rights.

Nevertheless, these problems should be faced head on, starting from the earliest of ages. The education of human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially of minority rights in an environment such as Serbia, can give a positive

feedback in the prevention of new conflicts between different ethnic groups, as well as develop a sense of tolerance and understanding for other cultures. Everyone loves travelling, seeing new places and getting to know different cultures, so why should learning and understanding different cultures within one's country be any different?

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Chapter 2

Title

**A Call for an End of the Reality Distortion
in the Discourse about Putin's Russia**

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A Call for an End of the Reality Distortion in the Discourse about Putin's Russia

Sebastian Schäffer

Introduction It is easy to criticize predictions made in the past about the future when this has become our present. We are all aware that the end of the Cold War did not lead to Francis Fukuyama's end of history, however, it seems that although within the expert community only the biggest optimists still hold on to Fukuyama's hypothesis, many of us – including myself – still hope that somehow it will become true. It becomes especially obvious when dealing with the democratic development of the Russian Federation. For the general population the changes after the fall of the Berlin Wall brought more freedom, but at the same time different restraints and more insecurity. Enough has been published about the simultaneity dilemma – the problem of having to undergo two or even three transitions (political, economic and social) at the same time – and therefore I will not further elaborate on this, however, will use the results from this as a starting point for my argumentation (Offe, 1991).

Memories and “Ostalgia” There are various reasons for people to be dissatisfied with the development after the Iron Curtain lifted. Participants of the peaceful revolution in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) that wanted to make socialism more democratic suddenly found themselves integrated – almost swallowed up – into the political system of the Federal Republic of Germany. Women and men working in their profession for decades

suddenly became unemployed. And people that have arranged themselves within the old system are told that their lives that they have been living are a historical dead end. As a result, we can observe a certain nostalgia for the past, in German there is even a special term coined by this called “Ostalgia”, which combines the words East and nostalgia, meaning that people from the GDR have a certain nostalgia for their lives back during socialist times.

The human mind is a fascinating thing, we tend to black out bad things from our memories and elevate the positive aspects of our past. This is certainly helpful to keep us sane and able to move on and move forward, however, it bears a certain danger to be exploited by demagogues. In fact, this is exactly what Vladimir Putin is doing when speaking about “Novorussia”. To his understanding, this new Russia will actually be what has been historically part of the Russian Empire and/or the USSR. Interestingly, he is able to combine the nostalgia for the Soviet times with the tsarist ambitions, something that would be mutually exclusive, if we look at the historical truth. But this is part of the exploitation, using historical analogies and putting them into a fitting context for one’s own benefit by playing with the above-described condition of the human mind. Putin is not the first and will certainly not be the last politician to play with this condition.

Distorted realities Keeping the memory alive can help us avoid repeating mistakes, but there is also a certain danger to clinging to the past, which can hamper progress and detain us from being able to evolve. The fear of the return of history gets us stuck in the present rather than shaping the future. Both patterns can be observed when analyzing EU–Russia relations today, however, there is also a third state of mind, which I call the ‘reality distortion’. When we look at the discourse about the development of the Russian Federation under Putin, one could get the impression that a non-minor part of the expert

community – again including myself – is or was hoping that if we write often enough that the Kremlin will change and believe strongly enough in those words, it will actually happen.

After Vladimir Putin became president of the Russian Federation for the first time in 2000, many (Western) politicians were happy about the strengthening weak state since they were more afraid of a violent break-up similar to Yugoslavia than a strong power vertical in Moscow. In 2004 then German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder called Putin a “flawless democrat”. To be precise, he was asked by a journalist if he believes that Putin is a flawless democrat and Schröder replied: “These are always such terms. I do believe him and I am convinced that he is one” (Schröder, 2014: 140; translation by the author). Schröder justifies his answer by saying that if he had answered with no, this would have had consequences for the foreign policy of Germany. This certainly has some truth to it, however, he is still convinced until today, that Putin’s aims are a functioning democracy and a stable political system (Schröder, 2014: 139). We can only speculate if the former Chancellor defends the Russian president out of his own interests – Schröder became shortly

Figure 1.
New Russia
on territory
of Ukraine
ca. 1897



after being voted out of office chairman of the supervisory board of the Nord Stream AG, the operating company of a pipeline connecting the Russian Federation with Germany, which had been initiated during his term. Whether he has personal reasons to believe that Putin is a flawless democrat or his reality is distorted might only know the former Chancellor himself. Nevertheless, this condition exists among the (German) expert community. When Dmitry Medvedev became president, the condition worsened and – including myself – claims were raised that if we just wait and see and believe it strong enough, the political system in the Kremlin would reform itself. Even when Putin was re-elected as president, the pattern continued. After the events in Crimea, we could see a change. The media is now portraying Putin as the evil man in Moscow, which is an equal reality distortion. Some experts claim that sanctions never change a system but rather strengthen the regime, which is true in a number of cases that can be observed throughout the recent history (Cuba, Iran, Belarus), however, again the perception is distorted. There have been cases where sanctions certainly contributed to a revolutionary situation, as for example, in

Figure 2.
New Russia



the toppling of the Milošević regime in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Revolutionary situations can occur when people are able to protest, in the sense that state repression is not forcing them to worry about basic needs like how to feed one's family. Having the feeling of loosing some of the gained freedoms within a repressive regime can contribute to a revolutionary situation and this is where sanctions can actually make a difference. However, there is no blue print for successful regime change and a change does not automatically lead to democratic development (Thompson, 2004). We can identify certain factors that can contribute to a successful democratic revolution as well as factors for unsuccessful attempts to make a regime more democratic can be identified. Nevertheless, there is never a single cause for either the victory or the defeat of the democratic forces, but rather a combination of implicates. If we analyze democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe, we can identify those implicates such as a strong united opposition, a developed civil society, support through external actors, triggering events like stolen elections and the state security forces are either siding with the protesters or remain neutral (Schäffer, 2008: 60). Therefore, theory can be exported and practically implemented, as it has been stated, amongst others, by Andrei Vladimirov in his Article "Revolution for Export" (Vladimirov, 2004). No matter how different the situation in, for instance, Serbia, Georgia or Ukraine was during the so-called colorful revolutions between 2000 and 2004, there is one thing they all have in common after the ousting of the ancien régime: the power vacuum has to be filled and once the common goal – change – is achieved, the rifts between the oppositional forces begin to surface which have been layered by the uniting fight against the former ruling elites. Democratic consolidation is a long and difficult process. The opposition has lost its smallest common denominator – altering the status quo – and is now in power. New challenges

emerge and different political – and for example in the case of Ukraine also personal – ideals and ways become apparent that have been not as visible as during the revolution. Furthermore, the support by the majority of the population is challenged by the simultaneity dilemma. The inevitable loss for parts of the people can then in turn create a new revolutionary situation. External actors such as the European Union can contribute to alleviate the situation, however, the opportunity for (antidemocratic) counter-revolution could be exploited. In the case of Russia the sanctions will not create a revolutionary situation and the European Union is not at all capable of dealing with such a hypothetical event, in fact, Brussels is already struggling to deal with the fall out in Ukraine, which had not been expected as is the other cases before or also in the Arab spring. But the sanctions are not aiming at creating a revolutionary situation, in fact, if Putin will be ousted, the probability to get even more hardliners to power in Moscow is much more likely than a democratic regime change and I do believe that the EU is aware of that. Nevertheless, the sanctions are a signal to the Kremlin, that there are consequences for the actions of the Russian administration. Therefore, a continuation of the negotiations should accompany the sanctions, not only but also because all other options are suboptimal. No reaction is equally dangerous as military actions. Historical analogies as for instance with the Hitler regime are not helpful especially when the West has also set historical precedencies as in the case of Kosovo. I am perfectly aware that this cannot be compared and I have no intention to do so, however, the West is not free from acting without double standards in international relations and the Russian propaganda is well aware of exploiting this. In fact, the PR-strategy of the Kremlin is flawless when it comes to the intended effects on the population in Russia and also in the disputed regions not only in Ukraine but also for instance in Transnistria.

The Eurasian Union and Putin's ambitions When Putin became president again in 2012, he made it very clear that his aim is to restore the Russian standing in the world. During his election campaign Putin already announced his plans for an Eurasian Union (EAU) and as first step Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan agreed on an economic union in November 2011. A treaty was signed in May 2014 and if all three parliaments ratify it (which is highly likely to happen given the influence all three presidents have in their political system), will go into effect on 1 January 2015. While the EU is struggling with fostering relations with its Eastern neighbors within the Eastern Partnership (EaP), the Kremlin is preparing a "hegemonic project to restore some parts of the former Soviet Union" (Schmieder 2011, translation by the author). Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have also shown interest in joining the EAU. However, the success of Putin's brainchild hinged on whether or not Ukraine would become a member, because this would mean victory over the attempts of the Brussels to bring Kiev closer to the EU. Former Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich always tried to balance interests between the EU and Russia. With the possible signing of the Association Agreement (AA) including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) at the EaP summit in Vilnius in November 2013, the most important foreign policy project of Putin was directly challenged and threatened to become a failure. While a DCFTA also could replace Russia as Ukraine's most important trade partner, a closer association with the EU would have made Ukraine becoming part of the Eurasian Union less likely. Yanukovich never ruled out Ukraine joining the EAU, but lately became less inclined to do so, since he began to realize that Ukraine would most likely only be a junior partner in such a Union with the Russian Federation being the dominant partner. A relationship with the EU in turn could be more on eye level. When Putin managed to exert the Kremlins leverage on Yanukovich through the energy

dependency of Kiev to prevent a signing of the AA, the events of the Euromaidan opened a new window of opportunity for Moscow. While the EU was taken by surprise, Putin seized the *occasione* in the best Machiavellian sense, which has also implications for Belarus and Kazakhstan. Both countries are partners of Moscow within the EAU. The sanctions against Russia and the economical implications will directly affect Minsk and Astana. The violation of the territorial integrity of Ukraine also might have further consequences. The Kremlin has shown before that they are willing to use force under false pretenses to protect ethnic Russians – for instance, in the case of Georgia 2008. While I do not want to debate the question of guilt here, it is evident that the reaction from Moscow was disproportionate. Both Belarus and Kazakhstan have a comparatively large ethnic Russian minority. Any development concerning the EAU that could endanger this important project of president Putin could potentially lead to a use of disproportionate reactions under those false pretenses. Crimea might be economically insignificant for Ukraine, however, for the current government it is certainly a heavy burden since it has not been able to do anything to prevent this breach of international law. This is problematic for their legitimacy that still needs to be democratically consolidated with the upcoming elections. Furthermore, consequences for Ukraine are potential other referenda in the Eastern regions that would continue to destabilize the country. There are additionally to that of course consequences for the Ukrainians and especially Tatars living in Crimea (new currency, passports, laws, regulations etc.), and there are also consequences for other countries with a large Russian minority. All in all the situation forced by the Kremlin is very dangerous and the next steps should be taken very cautiously by all parties involved. The role of the EU will be a crucial one, and Brussels has been acting very reasonable and with a more or less united foreign policy that

we have not experienced in the last couple of years. In our global interdependent economy sanctions can be harmful for both sides, nevertheless, Russia is highly dependent on its oil and gas exports to Western Europe in the same way Western Europe needs those imports. But I do think that Russia has a higher vulnerability since Western Europe will be able to adapt easier to a potential oil and gas import stop from Russia than the Kremlin will be able to find other recipients and this will eventually be more harmful for the Russian economy than for the Western European economies.

The danger of another great power war is connected to those economic interdependencies and should make it much more unlikely in theory. I do not believe that either Putin, or the Western leaders (including the USA) want a war. But we have learned from history that wars can be triggered from unlikely scenarios and Vladimir Putin is currently hazarding the consequences of such a situation, which I personally find very dangerous. Again the EU is playing a vital role here for instance at the meeting in Minsk. The important and positive thing about the meeting was that both the new Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko and Putin are speaking with each other. Nevertheless, the negotiations have not had an effect on the fighting on the ground, since the other conflicting party – the separatists – are not participating. Although it is apparent that Russian soldiers are involved in the conflict the Kremlin can only have a limited influence on the hostilities. Nevertheless, Moscow is also not contributing to find a solution and the constant violation of the border by Russian soldiers is certainly not helping to restore peace in Eastern Ukraine. A solution for the conflict does not seem likely in the foreseeable future. The parliamentary elections in Ukraine might help to alleviate the situation a bit, although a diplomatic solution to end the hostilities soon also seem unlikely. The big question here will be: How far is Putin willing to go? Russia will probably not invade Ukraine,

however, Putin is certainly willing to use his Machiavellian approach and seize an opportunity like a further escalation of the conflict to his benefit similarly as we could see it on Crimea. The sanctions from the West are affecting the Russian economy more that Putin is willing to admit and the conflict is a perfect opportunity to deflect from domestic problems. The sanctions will be harmful for both the European Union and the Russian Federation. Nevertheless Moscow has more to loose than the European countries. It would also be important for Brussels to find a more unified and thus quicker approach. Unfortunately it does not seem that this will be the case, also not with the new High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy under the new Juncker Commission. In any case the sanctions are the right approach, because they are the petty evil compared to any other option. The European countries should further engage in communicating with Putin and negotiate a solution acceptable for all parties (directly or indirectly) involved in the conflict.

End the reality distortion Now what does this all mean for the analysis and the future of EU-Russia relations? Neither the reality distortion nor a complete pessimistic approach will further the discussion. A sober approach that takes all actors into account would be the optimal solution and this has existed before and does exist (Meister, 2014; Rinke, 2014). The important point, however, is that no matter how hard we believe in a change from within the Kremlin, it is not going to become reality. An enforcement from outside is equally utopistic and to my understanding an even more dangerous option. We should be aware of the facts, learn from our history but continue to engage in dialogue. Make our intentions clear. Draw lines. Lines that should not be crossed. Accept different approaches. Embrace different realities – without one of them being distorted. It is enough that the Russian foreign

policy is based on illusions, we should not be delusional when analyzing it (Sukhov, 2014). And the reality is that we will not see a transformation of the Russian Federation any time soon, but the reality is also, that we are no longer living in a bipolar world and it is not going to return no matter how much the image of Putin in the Western media is portrayed as the antagonist. We should accept this reality – that we are living in a multipolar world, that realities have become complex. At least more complex than they have been before the end of the Cold War. Otherwise we might sleepwalk into another catastrophe. And then history might end. But not in the sense Fukuyama meant it.

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Chapter 3

Title

**The Visegrad Group's Position
Towards the Ukrainian Crisis**

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The Visegrad Group's Position Towards the Ukrainian Crisis

An Analysis

Alfred Kramer

Introduction: The Ukraine crisis – a media-coined term – has been one **A brief** of the most discussed topics in the global media in recent **history of** months. It is still not presented as a direct conflict between **recent** Russia and Ukraine, mainly because of the mainstream **events** discourse. The Ukrainian media use the term “antiterrorist operation” instead of “war” or “conflict.” Although there have been some accusations from the Ukrainian side that Russia is directly involved in the rebellions, until NATO made public its observations Kiev was afraid to publicly charge Moscow with sending its special forces to eastern Ukraine. The Ukrainian army was, until Petro Poroshenko's inauguration, almost helpless. Although now the situation has improved, the Ukrainian army – as well as other Ukrainian auxiliary forces most notably composed of volunteers – has to fight Russian professionals, although there is only presumptive evidence.

Recent evidence shows greater use of Russian military equipment – mainly heavy weapons such as T-72 battle tanks and missile systems – by the “rebels”. There remains the possibility that this equipment was taken from Ukrainian military depots, although NATO satellite images indicate that the tanks came from Russian territory – at least the battle tanks. At first, the Russian Federation did not publicly admit using military force on the Crimean peninsula but later – after annexation – Russian officials announced

and confirmed the use of Russian troops in this area. The main reason for the intervention was the concern about the security of the Russian-speaking population there. Many Russian-speaking people live in eastern Ukraine. Indeed, the 20th century was full of interventions aiming at protecting “weak” minorities living abroad. The most well-known example includes Nazi Germany’s intervention in the Sudetenland.

The situation in eastern Ukraine is very similar and it is just a question of time when Russian officials publicly confirm the use of military power – or at least the export of weapons. Russian tactics show a good example of those employed in modern warfare in the 21st century – the time frame and media discourse are very important elements. In this respect we can speak about a media war, because, naturally, Ukrainian media see the “problems” in eastern Ukraine differently to the way the Russian media do. The Internet also, (and predictably) serves as a propaganda tool.

The Ukrainian crisis offers a significant opportunity for members of the Visegrad Four (V4) to strengthen cooperation among them, especially political and military cooperation. Military exercises in Slovakia were planned for the autumn of 2014, the biggest since 1989. Ukraine is interested in fostering military cooperation with V4. All of the V4 members are also member states of NATO – Ukraine previously participated in NATO’s Partnership for Peace, so this step could be seen as the widening of cooperation with NATO as well as with EU member states. The main aim of this paper is to analyze the cooperation among V4 countries, together with their policies towards the Ukrainian crisis, Ukraine in general, and the Russian Federation.

V4: Strong national interests? The attitudes of the V4 countries towards Ukraine are fully dependent on their relations with Russia. Although V4 has a single official attitude towards the Ukrainian crisis, there

are many major differences in their individual foreign policies. Slovakia's Prime Minister and his political party have very close relations with Russia, and Slovakia generally is very dependent on Russian replacement parts for its army. The Slovak Army is under heavy criticism at the moment. The current president of the Czech Republic is known for his sympathies towards the Russian political elites, although the government cooperates with Poland – until the Prime Minister started to coordinate the steps of the Foreign Minister and the course was changed. Neither country – Slovakia nor the Czech Republic – agree with the presence of foreign troops on their territories. Hungary's Prime Minister has signed a contract with Russia about upgrading the country's sole nuclear power plant in the town of Paks, which also involves a Russian loan, in addition, he is very interested in the Hungarian minority living in eastern Ukraine – although he publicly supports the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Only Poland has taken a firm and unambiguous stand with respect to the Ukrainian crisis. The Polish government successfully reached agreement with NATO about the presence of US troops on its territory and it remains a strong critic of Russia.

*Picture 1.
Putin and
his friends.
A picture in
the Polish
Newsweek*



Hungary According to Prime Minister Viktor Orban, Hungary is not involved in the Ukrainian conflict. This is very similar to the prevailing attitude in France, which is going to sell several warships to Russia, a contract which the French President, François Hollande, will not cancel for fear of losing thousands of French jobs. Mr. Orban signed a contract with no public competition, and according to the opposition, too hastily – with Mr. Putin at the beginning of this year about upgrading a major nuclear plant, which would boost its energy production from 2,000 MW to 4,400 MW. Russia will also provide massive long-term credit – 10 billion euros –, which is around 80 per cent of the estimated cost. It should be mentioned here that it is still not clear in which currency the loan was agreed – there are doubts about why Russia would provide a loan in euros. The Hungarian parliament approved the deal, known as the “Paks deal” in June.

Russia has been Hungary’s main partner in solving its energy-sector problems. Mr. Orban presented co-operation with Russia as an opportunity for the Hungarian economy. Hungary is also against sanctions aimed at Russia largely because of its dependence on Russian natural gas. Hungary is more than 80 per cent dependent on gas from Russia and more than 75 per cent of Hungarian households use gas instead of other energy sources.

Russia is Hungary’s major trading partner outside the EU – but it is also very important for Poland – meat and apples export – and for the Czech Republic as well as Slovakia. The stock of the Hungarian Richter Gedeon pharmaceutical company is very low at the moment because of the Ukrainian crisis – Ukraine as well as Russia mean very important markets for this company.

The Russian annexation of the Crimean peninsula was – according to Russian officials – motivated by the desire to protect of the Russian-speaking people. Mr. Orban often speaks about restoring a greater Hungary, which would in-

clude Hungarian minorities living in neighboring countries – in Slovakia, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine. Both Mr. Orban and Mr. Putin share this expansionist nationalism. According to the former Hungarian Foreign Minister, Janos Martonyi, the nuclear plant upgrade deal was signed before the Ukrainian crisis had begun. Mr. Martonyi also argued that Hungary does not sell weapons to Russia – as France does. Generally, the rhetoric of Mr. Martonyi was not so strong. Mr. Martonyi claims to be concerned about the security of Hungarians – as well as other minorities – living in Ukraine. This is natural, as one of any state's most fundamental functions is to protect its citizens. The question should be rather: *How should it be done?* Mr. Orban's original statement included reference to a peaceful solution and attention to the rights and security of the Hungarian minority. This statement was released on March 4. Two days later, the Visegrad Group released a joint declaration, which accused Russia of conducting military operations in Crimea and of violation international law. The Russian intervention was compared to Soviet military interventions in the second half of the 20th century.

Most recently, Mr. Orban has renewed his call for the autonomy of Hungarian minorities in Ukraine. Such calls are not uncommon; however, Mr. Orban's came at an inopportune time, as it could seriously undermine the unity of the V4. There are almost 200,000 ethnic Hungarians living in the western parts of Ukraine – mainly in Zakarpattia Oblast. According to him, Ukraine cannot be stable without giving collective rights and autonomy to its minorities. This statement was heavily criticized by Poland within the V4; Donald Tusk, the Polish Premier, expressed his displeasure at the recent GLOBSEC Bratislava Global Security Forum. Later – again – Mr. Martonyi tried to calm down the diplomatic tensions. The Russian press gave a great deal of publicity to Mr. Orban's calls for autonomy because the Russian government accuses the Ukrainian government of discriminating

against national minorities. It seems likely that Hungary is to maintain its neutral position. It should also be mentioned here that its participation in NATO – as well as Slovakia’s – is very weak.

Slovakia Both Slovakia under Prime Minister Robert Fico, as well as his political party *SMER - socialna demokracia* maintain warm relations with Russia. Mr. Fico sees a solution to the Ukrainian crisis in diplomacy and politics – not in military action or economic sanctions. If sanctions against Russia continue, Slovakia’s economic growth in 2015 is likely to fall to only about 1 per cent of the GDP. In contrast, according to Frantisek Sebej, Head of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the Slovak Parliament, Slovakia’s attitude is very irresponsible. Slovakia should realize that it is threatened by Russia, too. The attitude that Slovakia should offer NATO use of its bases and other facilities is shared by many Slovakian politicians as well as security experts.

Mr. Fico also announced that he cannot imagine any foreign soldiers being based in Slovakia. He cited – as Martin Stropnický, the Czech Defence Minister, in the Czech Republic did – the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. In his opinion, the presence of the foreign troops is still a very sensitive issue in Slovakian society. The former Slovakian President, Mr. Gasparovic, also disagreed with the stationing of foreign troops in Slovakia. The question is why it is necessary to compare democratic countries to the former Soviet satellites and to the Soviet Union. His successor – Andrej Kiska – is expected to be more pro-western. According to his inaugural speech, Slovakia cannot expect to be protected by other NATO states. Mr. Kiska pointed to security matters as being very important; in particular, Slovakia’s membership of NATO and the EU as being pillars of the country’s security.

Mr. Fico refuses to comment on the current talks about gas prices between Russia and Ukraine. It seems, however, that the Prime Minister is not in favor of the new Ukrainian government, saying *"It's pathetic and comical to have the same Ukrainian Government minister who signed an unfavorable deal complain today and refuse to pay for what he signed a couple of years back. But that's their internal problem."* As in the case of Hungary, Slovakia received an 870 million euro loan from Russia. This loan was given by Sberbank, which is owned by the Russian state, to *Slovenske elektrarne* – a company 66 per cent owned by Italian Enel and the rest by the Slovakian state.

The main security problem for Slovakia arising from the Ukrainian crisis is human trafficking. The human traffickers are currently very well armed and determined. The Ukrainian government has little control over the situation and the smugglers have taken full advantage of this fact. Slovakia has moved more paramilitary police to the borders as well as increased military patrols. The Slovakian government has also obtained support from the EU. Slovakia is a transit country because it lies on the eastern fringes of the EU, where the Schengen area begins.

Slovakia does not intend to increase its military budget despite the Ukrainian crisis. Current defense spending is about 1 per cent of the GDP – which is more than 26 per cent decrease although Slovakia's GDP has grown by 10 per cent – and NATO's proposed target is at least 2 per cent of the GDP. According to Mr. Fico, Slovakia has very limited resources with respect to increasing its military spending; he said that an increase was possible, but only a minimal one. Slovakia allocated 745 million euros to the Defense Ministry in 2014 – this is exactly 0.9 per cent of its GDP.

In contrast, Mr. Fico's ally, Mr. Putin, has increased Russia's military spending. According to analysts, the Slovak army is near to collapse. According to Marian Majer and Jaro-

slav Nad of the Central European Policy Institute, the Slovak policy towards defense has a bad international reputation. Although Slovak troops earned a good name in NATO, the defense sector is under severe criticism. A lack of interest in defense issues could lead to a greater dependence on Russia. Of all the new NATO states, Slovakia is the most dependent on Russia because of its reliance on replacement parts for its aging Russian-made military equipment. The third round of sanctions against Russia includes the Russian export of Russian military items and, thus, the Slovak army could be without vital components for its armed forces. The Slovak Air Force still uses old MIG-29 jet fighters, which are dependent on Russian replacement parts. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Defence is attempting to resolve this issue by means of cooperation with the Czech Republic and Poland. The Czech Republic should protect Slovakian airspace after 2016, and Poland should eventually be able to service its aircrafts. This can be seen as a very positive step towards cooperation within V4 as well as within NATO. Slovakia is not as active in NATO as at least two of the other V4 member states, namely Poland and the Czech Republic.

Czech Republic The Czech position towards the Ukraine crisis remains unstable, unclear and complicated. Although there is strong support for Ukraine from the Czech government as a whole, the Czech President's stance towards Ukraine is highly controversial because of his close association with the Russian political elites. Milos Zeman believes that the Russian occupation of Crimea is legitimate because it never truly belonged to Ukraine. Bohuslav Sobotka, the Czech Prime minister, disagrees. In his opinion, it was a violation of international treaties. Mr. Zeman also says that referring to ethnic minorities in Ukraine as Russian or as Hungarian in the case of Mr. Orban, is quite inappropriate. On this basis, Russia would also demand the annexation of Karlovy Vary,

because many Russians live there. The Czech President strongly supports – as Russia does – Ukraine as a federation. Although Mr. Sobotka agrees with sanctions against Russia, the Czech Republic is, in his opinion, not directly threatened. He also noted that there is no evidence to show that Russia is preparing an attack on a NATO or EU member state. Strangely, however, Mr. Zeman agrees with boosting the US military presence in Europe, while Mr. Sobotka does not. Mr. Sobotka prefers a more intensive dialogue between the EU and Russia.

Regionalism or the process of decentralization, which can be seen in many European countries, most notably Italy or Spain, could be one of the solutions to the Ukraine crisis. It has helped to stabilize these counties, thus, there should be similar results with Ukraine. However, there are significant (and obvious) differences between “Russian federalization” and “western federalization.” Mr. Zeman speaks about the decentralization of Ukraine – the Ukrainian government should stop fighting against its own people. According to Mr. Zeman, there are no terrorists in eastern Ukraine but only disaffected citizens. If the Ukrainian government halted its military operation in eastern Ukraine, Russia would have no reason to invade the country. On the other hand, Mr. Zeman would support NATO intervention in Ukraine in the case of Russia launching military operations on Ukrainian soil.

Czech defense spending was under severe criticism recently. Mr. Rasmussen visited Prague on April 10 and stressed that NATO's proposed target is at least 2 per cent of the GDP, while current Czech spending is only about 1.08 per cent – one of the biggest defense's decrease among NATO members in recent years. From this point of view, the Ukrainian crisis can be seen as providing a potential boost to Czech military spending. Otherwise, Czech military units – most importantly its anti-chemical troops – are highly appreciated by NATO Headquarters and the Czech Republic sends its

newly-acquired JAS-39C Gripen aircraft to the Baltic States to guard their airspace. Both Mr. Zeman and Mr. Sobotka agree that it is necessary to increase the Czech defense budget as a response to regional security concerns – at least to 1.4 per cent of the GDP in the mid-term. According to Mr. Sobotka, the Czech Republic needs to fulfill its commitments within NATO and also in relation to the Ukrainian crisis.

In a speech following U.S. President Obama's announcement in Warsaw about increasing military support for eastern European member states of NATO, including the deployment of U.S. troops, Mr. Stropnický, almost caused a political storm by saying that the Czech Republic does not want foreign troops on its territory because of its history over the last 80 years. A few days later, the Czech Parliament approved a resolution stating that the Czech Republic was ready to fulfill its NATO commitments.

The positive effect of the Ukrainian crisis can be seen in the shared co-operation between the Czech and Slovak Republics. Both countries plan to pool defense resources – including radar installations and personal weapons.

Czech foreign policy under Lubomír Zaorálek, the Czech Foreign Minister, was very similar to Polish foreign policy under Mr. Sikorski. The change came after the intervention of Mr. Sobotka, who, like Mr. Hollande, does not want to lose jobs or Russian investments. As a consequence, and most importantly, the Czech Republic could lose Poland as an important ally.

Poland Poland is the only country inside the EU to share borders with both Russia – Kaliningrad – and Ukraine. Ukraine's new president Mr. Poroshenko's first foreign trip was to Poland. Poland was the only V4 member state to respond quickly. Poland agreed with the deployment of U.S. troops – like the Baltic States – and showed a clear security policy. The Ukrainian crisis was proof that the V4 is not prepared

for deeper dialogue among its members. It was Poland that originally asked for a larger U.S. military presence in Eastern Europe. The earlier request was for at least 10,000 U.S. troops, although, in the end, only a relatively small number of special troops were sent.

Only Polish diplomacy has been stable and strong: Poland supported the uprising in Kiev against the former president Viktor Yanukovich and remains in close contact with the current pro-western government. The most important role is played by Radek Sikorski, the Polish Foreign Minister, who is a long-term critic of Russia and its foreign policy. In his opinion, the V4 as well as the EU as a whole should take a more consistent approach towards Ukraine.

The United States has already sent F-16 fighters and some special forces to Poland, as well as F-15 fighters to the Baltic States. The Polish military is significantly larger than those of the other V4 states. Poland has its own reasons for keeping a strong army – mainly because of its history. Polish entry into NATO was the biggest reinforcement of NATO after the Cold War. On the other hand, Poland has almost 40 million people – more than the combined populations of the other V4 states. Poland continues to increase its defense spending – in contrast to the other V4 member states.

Poland's defense spending is around 2 per cent of its GDP. The current middle-left Czech government must solve this issue. According to the March 5 announcement by Mr. Tusk, Poland intends to modernize its military by 2022 under a 42.7 billion USD program. He later added that Poland plans to purchase hundreds of drones by 2016 under its own national drone program.

Conclusions Mr. Brzezinski, the celebrated American political scientist and geostrategist, sees countries like Ukraine as geopolitically endangered species. The solution to the Ukraine crisis must be Ukrainian; it cannot, as many experts note, come

from the EU or Russia. The current problems have their roots in history – it is not possible to find a simple solution by making a single swift decision.

The Ukrainian crisis can be seen as having both positive and negative effects on the Visegrad Group. Although the relevant Prime Ministers often stress cooperation among the V4, national interests take precedence. Hungary is unlikely to cancel its Paks deal with Russia, and so is Slovakia to cancel the Russian loan planned for its energy sector. The Czech Republic and Slovakia are still uncertain about approving the deployment of foreign troops on their territory – although, after much complicated debate, the original resolution, banning the deployment of foreign troops, was changed. The defense budgets of all Visegrad Group members – except for Poland – are gradually decreasing. The worst situation is in Slovakia, where the armed forces are near to collapse. Polish diplomacy was the most decisive; Poland responded quickly to the Ukrainian crisis, asking the United States to increase its military presence on Polish soil and in the Baltic countries.

The only positive outcome for the V4 states in general is that government ministers are now much more interested in matters of national security. Slovakia has increased border patrols and is expected to introduce a new security scheme in the upcoming months – although Prime Minister Fico has declared that it is not possible to increase the military budget. Slovakia, like Hungary, is also expected to increase its military co-operation within NATO. In the Czech Republic, there is currently a debate about improving the army's readiness.

It should be noted that the V4 Prime Ministers publicly declare co-operation although they, like many others, are aware of continuing disagreements among the V4 states. The Ukrainian crisis is the first significant test of the preparedness of its members to proceed together with one voice.

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Chapter 4

Title **Chinese Interest Towards the Visegrád Four?**

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Chinese Interest Towards the Visegrád Four?¹

István Tarrósy - Zoltán Vörös

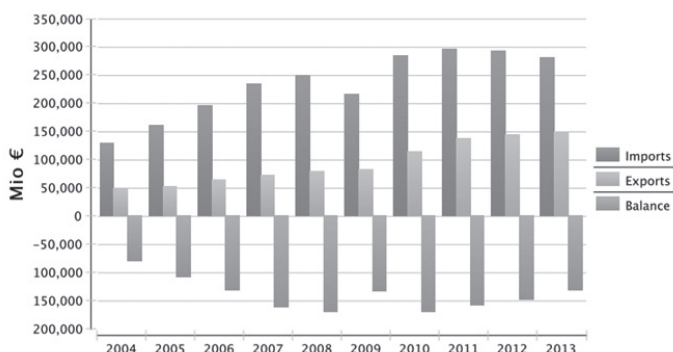
Introduction: It was in 1975 when the European Union (at that time the **EU-China** European Communities) and the People's Republic of China **relations** established diplomatic relations. Until today, despite their **through** differences, the Community and the Asian giant have deepened this relationship by a common aim of building up global **diplomatic** strategies. "Since 1998, an annual EU-China summit is held **lenses** between European heads of state/government and Chinese leaders to discuss bilateral, as well as global issues and since October 2003 the EU and China have acknowledged each other as 'strategic partners'." (Casarini, 2006: 7) The diplomatic connections look healthy and intensive between European countries and Beijing while the trade rates also indicate growingly strong ties: "Since 2004, China has become the EU's second biggest trading partner (after the U.S.) and, according to Chinese sources, the EU has become China's biggest trading partner – ahead of the U.S." (Ibid.)

It is clear, therefore, that in the past few years relations between Europe and China has deepened, but it is not yet visible that much, whether the common stakes or the conflicting interests will dominate these relations. It is so because behind these numbers and summits there are still a lot of problems and worrying characteristics.

¹ This paper was originally submitted to visegradplus.org upon the call for papers aiming at expanding and spreading the knowledge regarding the Visegrad+ countries. The present chapter is a modified version of the original paper.

Figure 1.
Total goods:
EU Trade flows
and balance,
annual data
2004-2013

Source:
Eurostat
Comext,
European
Commission



Among the problems we can name the increasingly negative views among the European public due to China's growing economic and military power: Europeans have become much more critical of China and the EU has serious concerns about the human rights situation in Beijing. The Asian giant "has now overtaken the United States as the greatest perceived threat to global stability in the eyes of Europeans, according to the opinion poll commissioned by the Financial Times. The poll, carried out by the Harris agency [in 2008] found that 35 per cent of respondents in the five largest EU states see China as a bigger threat to world stability than any other state."²

Beside close economic connections we have to notice another thing: it is a new trend that because of internal problems (and the lack of integrity) the EU is not an ultimate global partner for China. Beijing seeks bilateral connections with each country in the community. It is therefore true that import and export rates are growing and we count them together as EU imports and exports but the community cannot emerge and act as a global power, which can make decisions. (Inotai, 2010) In addition, the position of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy has not (yet) solved this problem either. So, as we can see

² Europeans View China as Biggest Threat to Global Security. Atlantic Review. <http://atlanticreview.org/archives/1058-Europeans-View-China-as-Biggest-Threat-to-Global-Security.html>

today, while China is a global player, the European Union is just a ‘bunch’ of countries in the international political arena and the countries seek connections on their own – naturally based upon their national interests – instead of forming a single EU strategy for international relations.

Go global From this perspective it is relevant to consider what Poland
Central (together with Italy, Spain and Sweden) proposed in the
Europe? so-called “European Global Strategy” (EGS).³ Recent devel-
Can the V4 opments in the affairs of the western Mediterranean region,
make moves for example, may also underline how timely the initiative is,
together? seeking to create a vision for the European Commission and
the European Parliament and for coordinating the foreign
policies of the EU member states (Parkes – Sobják, 2013).
The EGS can strengthen the outstanding role of the Visegrád
Four (V4) in bridging the widening gap between the Euro-
pean Union and its neighboring countries (Ibid).

The question how united the V4 can be in terms of acting on the global stage either with regard to the Eastern Partnership of the European Union or in fostering Chinese relations is worth being visited from several aspects. *First*, we may agree with Dariusz Kałan (2013) underlining that “even though the V4 as a whole has aspirations to create an active and compatible role in the East, each Visegrád country also pursues its own policy rooted in a historical and social background, particular economic and geopolitical interests as well as temporary political goals.” One good example of diverging interests was the inability to construct a joint (V4) standpoint on the Ukrainian crisis. *Second*, as for the Chinese connection, sharing Thomas Bondinguel’s argument (2008) about mutual or ‘reciprocal indifference’, “China simply was not a priority [for Visegrád] in political and foreign policy terms all the way into the 2000s.” Hungary’s case confirms this view as after the change of the political system towards

³ See: <http://www.euglobalstrategy.eu>

the end of the 1980s, it was obvious for the country (similarly to others of the former Soviet Bloc) that major (re)orientation in the foreign policy will be directed towards the European Union, with the aspiration to gain membership as soon as possible, demonstrating the firm move “back to Europe”. Three Hungarian foreign policy pillars covered European accession (as top number-one priority for the country), joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), therefore, strengthening the trans-Atlantic alliance,⁴ and neighborhood policy with a heavy focus on Hungarian communities across the Carpathian basin (and beyond). Developing relations with Moscow and the “East” was put aside at a fast pace, which may be explained as part of the strategy of keeping distance from “Soviet ties”, and demonstrating that the countries were ready to rejoin the European community. *Third*, on China’s side up until the turn of the century Central Europe was far from being a foreign policy priority, in particular with the unfolding events on Tiananmen Square in the summer of 1989 and the follow-up international isolation (though only for a couple of years) for the Asian giant. “At the turn of the century, however, things started to change and there were tell-tale signs that both China and Central Europe were maturing politically and started to find their place on the world stage” (Bondinguel, 2008: 4).

Is it possible, after all these, to foster natural alliances between the V4 and China, which pursues a very pragmatic and expansionist foreign policy all across the globe? First of all, can it be imagined that the V4 acts as an attractive regional group/community for China, or only bilateral linkages stay strategically interesting for Beijing?

The future of group dynamics certainly depends on the interest of the participating states, whether or not all of them

⁴ While the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary joined NATO in 1999, Slovakia got membership in 2004, when all four Visegrád countries joined the European Union.

want to establish closer cooperation as an intra-regional formation within the European Union. They have a natural overlap of their immediate foreign policy interest zones: the Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership states, and they are also vulnerable to internal divisions as a result of divergent positions towards the most significant players in the international arena, that is, the US, China, and [Russia] (Sobják, 2012: 124). Although there are unanimous success stories for the members, for instance, in the field of civil society, cultural and academic projects funded by the International Visegrád Fund (IVF), as Anita Sobják (2012) notes, divisions are deep as far as positions in shaping the future of the European Union are concerned, therefore, expectations from the Visegrád Group should not be too high, but rather remain within the horizons of what can be deemed realistic (Ibid: 138-139). The IVF has been a commitment, which is taken seriously by all the members of the group, and can provide a good ground for further “expansion of thought” to support regional cohesion. The numerous grass-roots initiatives can reach out to the public at large, as well as include key decision-makers, together with lobby groups, think tanks, academics who all can contribute to “more Visegrád” within the Community. This can then reflect former Hungarian Foreign Minister Martonyi’s thinking about the interest of Central Europe that the countries of the region do not compete with each other but that their interests are jointly represented towards the other regions.⁵ Despite the grandiose comments and official documents, however, the participants of the Visegrád Cooperation have let each other down, or had been played out against each other by Western states several times, not to mention the Agricultural Agreements of the EU accession negotiations or as it happened in the case of the Climate Quotas. For a healthy cooperation, each of the members needs to recognize the fundamental importance

⁵ Interview with János Martonyi, ‘Global Opening...’

of such a forum, especially in an ever-forming Community, where such a regional platform could be more successful in supporting of several common interests. In a “multi-speed” EU such cooperation can really find its momentum.

“Marching West” meets the “Eastern Turn”? How attractive is the V4 for China? Undoubtedly, “by entering the EU, the four Visegrád countries have been exposed to and included into the Brussels strategy towards China” (Bondinguel, 2008: 5). Due to their membership, therefore, all Visegrád countries have become “interesting” for China – as part of the EU markets. They can also be targets of China’s “peaceful rise” and the “charm offensive”, which uses soft elements in a smart strategy to convince anybody that no “China threat” exists any longer. Power for our discussion is used as Joseph S. Nye (2004, 2011) suggests, i.e. in a broader and more comprehensive way than any actor thought in the course of history when focussing only on either military might or increasing economic strength. The intention here is not to challenge either the realist or the liberal approaches to international relations, but to draw attention to the increasing need in global politics to include other, and explicitly ‘softer’ elements in the diplomatic game than simply coercion by military means. China’s Confucius Institutes and classrooms coupled with the increase in the number of scholarships offered by the Chinese state to foreign students, for example, has been successfully contributing to a more positive China image and collaborations. The first Confucius Institute in the Central European region was the Confucius Institute at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) Budapest, Hungary, which was opened on December 7, 2006. It is not surprising that there is an enthusiastic moment in building closer ties with China even if we look at the increasing number of students studying Mandarin, as a result of more than a dozen institutes or classrooms in the V4 countries since 2007.

Table 1.
Confucius
Institutes and
Classrooms
in the V4
countries

| | Confucius Institute | Confucius Classroom |
|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Czech Republic | 1 | 1 |
| Hungary | 2 | 3 |
| Poland | 4 | 1 |
| Slovakia | 1 | 0 |

Source:
Confucius
Institute Online.
Download at:
[http://www.](http://www.chinesecio.com/m/cio_wci)
[chinesecio.](http://www.chinesecio.com/m/cio_wci)
[com/m/cio_wci](http://www.chinesecio.com/m/cio_wci)

As Shannon Tiezzi (2013) commented, China's "march West" concept now possesses a new leg to the "New Silk Road" outreach across the European continent with the "1+16" framework, i.e. China plus the 16 Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs). Former Chinese Premier Li Keqiang "emphasized that China intends for its '1+16' engagement to 'supplement' the EU framework, not tear it down. Accordingly, both he and the European ministers were quick to note [at the November 2013 China-Central and Eastern Europe (CCEE) leader's meeting] that all economic deals will follow applicable EU regulations" (Ibid). However, there are some critical voices drawing our attention to what the non-EU member countries among the 16 CEECs may offer China; Turcsányi (2014) explicitly says that "China may just prefer to deal with [them] which are not subject to EU and OECD regulations that China finds unfavorable." In addition, continues Turcsányi, from a geo-economic perspective, "the countries in South-Eastern Europe may have useful position for China due to transport routes." In fact, at the same time, the Visegrád Four represents the most developed and economically attractive entities among the 16 CEECs. "They constitute roughly 4/5 of China-CEE16 trade and receive the bulk of Chinese investments in the region" (Ibid).

Figure 2.
China's FDI
in the EU-27
by country,
2000–2011
(USD million,
number of
deals)

| | Country | Investment Value (USD million) | Rank Compared to FDI from the Rest of the World* | Number of Greenfield Projects | Number of Acquisitions | Total Number of Deals |
|----|----------------|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | France | 5,722 | +2 | 46 | 24 | 70 |
| 2 | United Kingdom | 3,684 | -1 | 69 | 26 | 95 |
| 3 | Germany | 2,543 | -1 | 113 | 33 | 146 |
| 4 | Sweden | 2,251 | +4 | 14 | 6 | 20 |
| 5 | Hungary | 2,065 | +14 | 14 | 4 | 18 |
| 6 | Netherlands | 1,164 | 0 | 32 | 15 | 47 |
| 7 | Belgium | 847 | -3 | 12 | 3 | 15 |
| 8 | Greece | 714 | +14 | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| 9 | Italy | 554 | -2 | 31 | 16 | 47 |
| 10 | Austria | 391 | +1 | 6 | 5 | 11 |
| 11 | Romania | 299 | +4 | 13 | 1 | 14 |
| 12 | Poland | 190 | -3 | 15 | 1 | 16 |
| 13 | Spain | 187 | -8 | 22 | 1 | 23 |
| 14 | Czech Rep. | 76 | 0 | 10 | 1 | 11 |
| 15 | Finland | 48 | +1 | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| 16 | Portugal | 47 | +1 | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| 17 | Bulgaria | 47 | +1 | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| 18 | Luxembourg | 46 | -5 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 19 | Ireland | 44 | -9 | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| 20 | Denmark | 30 | -7 | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| 21 | Latvia | 3.8 | +5 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 22 | Cyprus | 3 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 23 | Estonia | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Lithuania | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Malta | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Slovakia | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Slovenia | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | 20,957 | | 428 | 145 | 573 |

Source:
Hanemann–
Rosen, 2012: 38

Chinese infrastructure projects in the region China is about to break into new markets, regarding infrastructure projects and planning to enter competitions in all regions of the world, a business where references are essential. The lack of Chinese infrastructure projects in the European Union is visible but should not be surprising: without successfully finished railway, motorway (etc.) projects outside of China, the reliability of their companies is questionable – especially after a failed project in Poland. Before analyzing the planned participation of Beijing in the V4 countries, where the Chinese presence might be the strongest in the Union regarding these projects, we have to underline: those reference investments are underway, from Central Asia to Central America, their companies are building motorways and railways to further boost their participa-

tion in this sector. Beside the well-known, raw material- and resource-motivated projects in Africa, the very first projects of China has just finished in the Middle East: a high-speed rail link between Istanbul and Ankara in Turkey⁶, cutting the 533-km journey between the two cities from a typical seven hours to three and a half and a metro-line infrastructure (in an international consortium) in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, becoming the highest capacity of any metro in the world. China won another high-speed rail project in November 2014 in Mexico, as they were the only bidders for the line connecting the capital of Mexico City with Queretaro, a manufacturing city 210 km to the north.⁷ According to the Turkish project, analyst Idris Gursoy noted, that the new railway line “paves the way for the Chinese companies to enter into other big infrastructure projects in Turkey”.⁸ But as a finished contract, it may pave to way to European projects as well.

The very first infrastructure project in Europe, which was about to help Covec Group (China Overseas Engineering Group, an enormous Chinese state conglomerate with an annual turnover of 25 billion dollars, and the world's third largest construction company⁹) in entering the European market, was a motorway project in Poland, the A2 motorway, connecting Warsaw with the German border. The Chinese

⁶ R. Sweet, ‘Turkey’s new high-speed rail: victory for Erdogan – and China’, *Global Construction Review*, 29 July 2014, at <<http://www.globalconreview.com/news/turkeys-new-high-speed-rail-victory-erdogan0938346/>>, 4 November 2014.

⁷ C. Richards, ‘Why China Won Mexico’s High-Speed Rail Project’, *The Diplomat*, 4 November 2014, at <<http://thediplomat.com/2014/11/why-china-won-mexicos-high-speed-rail-project/>>, 4 November 2014.

⁸ R. Sweet, ‘Turkey’s new high-speed rail: victory for Erdogan – and China’, *Global Construction Review*, 29 July 2014, at <<http://www.globalconreview.com/news/turkeys-new-high-speed-rail-victory-erdogan0938346/>>, 4 November 2014.

⁹ ‘The motorway that China couldn’t build’, *VOX Europ*, 16 June 2011, at <<http://www.voxeurop.eu/en/content/article/716731-motorway-china-couldnt-build>>, 4 November 2014.

company was criticized from the very first moment, since they had submitted a price that was less than half of the planned budget, making it impossible for local companies to compete with them. The outcome was disastrous: Covec abandoned the project a year later, leaving an unfinished project behind. Their entrance to the European market was a failure: they were unable to build the motorway for that fee, “the idea of importing construction equipment and building materials was a blunder: China is too far away, and the machines are not certified for use in the EU. The Chinese parent corporation did not supply funding as planned, and Covec was forced to wait for payment from the [Polish institutions] before it could move forward. Worse still, the Chinese had not factored in the impact of rising [...] prices”, making it obvious: the European market is different than the relations they got used to at home, or in China and Asia.

The failure shifted the planned infrastructural presence of China in Europe, but by now there are further projects, especially in Hungary. The first idea about Chinese participation covered the whole railway network, connecting Budapest with the Airport and the county capitals.¹⁰ Later on the Hungarian government wanted to build a bypass at Budapest for freight traffic, using Chinese credit and technology.¹¹ As the project is still under planning, at the end of 2013 another railway project emerged: the Budapest–Belgrade high-speed rail link, upgrading the existing infrastructure with the cooperation of the Chinese partner. The three sides have agreed on the project in Romania¹², the total value of the

¹⁰ ‘Hungary sets sights on China’s high-speed rail tech’, People’s Daily Online, 1 March 2014, at <<http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90883/7303756.html>>, 4 November 2014.

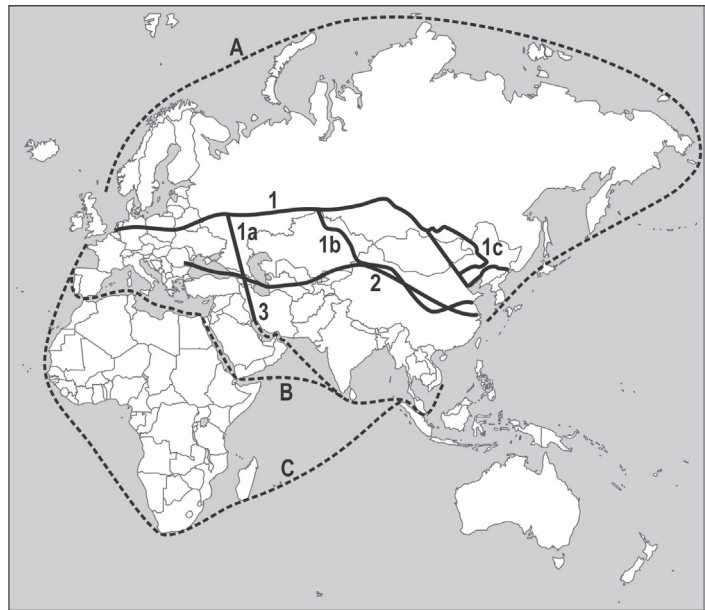
¹¹ ‘Hungary plans to build new railway using Chinese funds’, Reuters, 27 February 2013, at <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/27/hungary-railway-idUSL6N0BR6ZP20130227>>, 4 November 2014.

¹² D. Landry, ‘China in agreement to build Hungary/Serbia rail link’, Budapest Business Insider, 26 November 2013, at <<http://www.bbj>

project would amount to nearly \$3 billion. China is clearly pushing for their presence in Europe, as Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang noted, “most CEE countries see a need to upgrade and renovate their railway lines, roads, ports and other transportation facilities. China is making rapid progress in the manufacturing of transportation equipment, especially in the field of high-speed railway. We are fully capable of undertaking transportation infrastructure projects with high quality in CEE countries.”¹³

What gives further importance to this project is the planned “New Silk Road”, emerging in China and arriving in Europe to send goods in the shortest time in the safest way: as well as the mentioned Turkish project, the Budapest–Belgrade railroad line is also thought to be a part of it, giving importance to the affected countries.

Figure 3. Main maritime routes and planned railroads between China and Europe, the “New Silk Road”



Source:
Erdősi, 2013: 19

hu/politics/china-in-agreement-to-build-hungary-serbia-rail-link-72523, 4 November 2014.

¹³ Ibid.

As a summary, we have to express, that Chinese presence in the infrastructure sector in the region (and Europe) is still inconsiderable: though both sides (the CEE countries and Beijing) have expressed their desires for cooperation in several projects, the very first such Chinese involvement is still far away.

How high and realistic are CEE's hopes in the Chinese economy? Diplomatic and economic relations are evolving and becoming more intensive from year to year between European countries and Beijing, and the financial crisis of the Community just accelerated these events. All member states try to secure an outstanding place in the framework of cooperation with Beijing, so does Budapest and other CEE capitals, as well. And even if Europeans have become much more critical of China according to some surveys¹⁴ and the EU has serious concerns about the human rights situation in Beijing, the race for China and for Chinese investments has started.¹⁵ Beijing appears not only as an investor, but also as a lender and savior, an economic partner that could help find a way out of the crisis.

It is useless to compare, for instance, Budapest to the Western countries of the Community, but in its closer vicinity, Hungary is competitive. If we focus specifically on investments or trade relations, Hungary plays a prominent role in the region's relations with China. The country plays a particularly important role in China's foreign policy, as it is

¹⁴ See, for instance: <http://www.pewglobal.org/2007/06/27/chapter-3-views-of-china-and-its-increasing-influence/>.

¹⁵ The Asian giant has now overtaken the United States as the greatest perceived threat to global stability in the eyes of Europeans, according to the opinion poll commissioned by the Financial Times. The poll, carried out by the Harris agency [in 2008] found that 35 percent of respondents in the five largest EU states see China as a bigger threat to world stability than any other state. See in: J. Wolf, 'Europeans View China as Biggest Threat to Global Security', *Atlantic Review*, 16 April 2008, at <<http://atlanticreview.org/archives/1058-Europeans-View-China-as-Biggest-Threat-to-Global-Security.html>>, 4 August 2013.

not only the most popular regional destination for Chinese immigrants, but also Hungary is the only country that has a Bank of China branch in the region. What is more, there is a Hungarian-Chinese bilingual elementary school¹⁶ since the fall of 2004 – again a highly important soft “element” in successful outreach. Liu (2013) also confirms that: “Among the four Visegrád countries, Hungary has always led the China–CEE cooperation [and] is wishing to play the forerunner role and acts as the ‘bridgehead’ of [the] cooperation.”

The case of Hungary shows that the country has been establishing itself as a regional partner of China for years now and already the second Orbán government’s foreign policy openly declared its turn towards China – continuing and obviously extending bilateral relations previously enacted by the left-wing governments headed by Péter Medgyessy (2002-04), Ferenc Gyurcsány (2004-09), and Gordon Bajnai (2009-10).¹⁷ The visit of Wen Jiabao in the summer of 2011 seemed to mean an advantage for Hungary, compared to other countries in the region. The Chinese Prime Minister and Viktor Orbán signed twelve agreements, including a one-billion-euro extra credit or potential infrastructure investments. During this visit there was a shocking step of the Hungarian government against the protesters of Free Tibet movement: although Orbán stated that they did not lock up anybody, the demonstrations were banned and local Tibetans summoned to attend the government immigration offices on that day.¹⁸ As Orbán noted in another interview in *The Economist*, the government has the right to stop demonstrations that disrupt diplomatic relations. The Hungarian state has the right to pursue foreign policy in the national interest. Additionally, the reporter added: Perhaps, but other countries do allow protests within sight of visiting foreign

¹⁶ See: <http://magyar-kinai.hu>

¹⁷ D. Kałan, ‘Relationship of a Special Significance?...’, p. 61.

¹⁸ ‘Orbán and the Wind...’

delegations, including those such as the Chinese whose feelings are famously prone to injury. His didn't.¹⁹

But Hungary's so-called leadership in the region is very fragile, and many countries are willing to offer the Asian country immediate and full partnership; for example, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland or Romania – all of them are ready to act in this way. Clearly, China sees the Central European countries as a gateway to the European Union. [...] Hungary would [definitely] like to become a hub for the Chinese economic presence in the region.²⁰

Turcsányi (2014) rightly warns that high hopes about the “rapid increase of investments” need to be seen in a realistic way; expectations need to be realistic and the V4 countries should have to “plan their China-policies accordingly”.

Central European “Go global” and “Eastern Turn” policies in an age of inter-polar relations – Concluding remarks When a country like Hungary – a middle-sized European state –, or another such Central European country makes attempts to become more open to the global world, it recognizes that it is the only valid and plausible behavior in the long run, keeping in mind that it wants to keep fostering its national interests first and foremost. This attitude is easy to validate as inter-polarity expects that countries behave in such a way; in fact, the changing “post-American” international context, the fading away of the “unipolar moment” and the evolution of the multipolar set of relations have an impact on Europe and the foreign and neighborhood policy of these states.²¹ Although multipolarity and the debate whose interpretations have stirred in scholarly communities – also offering the ground for Grevi's theory – does not necessarily presuppose the existence of three or more states of basically equal power capabilities, according to Smith (2012). It does, however, suggest a widespread acceptance

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ T. Matura, ‘Sino-Hungarian Relations in 2010’, *HIIA Papers*, No. 8 (2011), p. 7.

²¹ See L. J. Kiss, ‘Magyarország...’, p. 18.

and inculcation of the belief that there is essential equivalence amongst several states.²² William Wohlforth (2007) warns us to remain cautious enough with today's multipolar mania²³, so that we can profoundly relate the position of the emerging actors to that of the US and foresee the potential redistribution of power in the international system in an increasingly multipolar environment. One of the most decisive arguments of Fareed Zakaria about a "post-American world" draws our attention to the "rise of the rest", meaning the growing influence of emerging powers coming from the Global South. We can agree with him that this rise is at heart an economic phenomenon, but it has consequences for nearly every other sphere of life. His "post-American world" is not an anti-American world, but one defined and directed from many places and by many people.²⁴ A world increasingly possessing more centers of gravity, one that is better referred to as "interpolar", as the context embraces the concept of a transnational setting with more "poles" or powers interwoven in deepening interdependence, in an interest-driven, problem-oriented and pragmatic way.²⁵

Although in recent years international media have been engaged with the "rise of the dragon" from the Far East, Zakaria is again right when he claims that it is not [only] China that is rising. Emerging powers on every continent have achieved political stability and economic growth and are becoming active on the global stage.²⁶ In our case, looking at the V4 countries and their redefined foreign policies about the global world, we can unanimously pose the questions:

²² M. A. Smith, *Power in the Changing Global Order. The US, Russia and China*, Cambridge 2012, p. 54.

²³ W. Wohlforth, 'Unipolar Stability. The Rules of Power Analysis', *Harvard International Review*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (2007), p. 46.

²⁴ F. Zakaria, *The Post-American World. Release 2.0*, New York 2012, p. 4.

²⁵ See: G. Grevi, 'The Interpolar World: A New Scenario', *ISS Occasional Papers*, No. 79 (2009), at <<http://www.iss.europa.eu>>, 18 March 2013.

²⁶ F. Zakaria, *The Post-American World...*, p. xii.

What are their relations with these entities? How can they get engaged with processes generated by these emerging forces? How can V4 countries envisage their place and role in an interpolar order?

There is no doubt that every country of the “Global North” – and as long as the V4 countries are member of the European Union they are considered to belong to the more developed part of the world – needs to have an idea how to position the emerging powers in their foreign policy priorities, or, to look at it from the opposite direction, how to position themselves with regard to the dynamics generated by these actors.

Pragmatic foreign policy is the key connecting thread in any potential Chinese expansionist idea also in Central Europe. Pragmatic cooperation, however, as Liu (2013) emphasizes, will involve further efforts, and “Chinese relevant executive institutions should make good preparations to cope with appeals from different countries properly”. For China, it will be vital to strengthen its image in CEECs so that it can represent a strategic alternative partnership for countries of the region. “Currently, China still needs soft power instruments to support its strategic layout. Therefore, it is urgent to construct and extend soft power.” (Ibid) This kind of pragmatism is also needed on the Central European side, coupled with the challenge of a new group dynamics within the V4, which may become a shared priority at a certain point in the coming decade.

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Chapter 5

Title

Villages in a Growingly Urban World
Personal Glimpses on How to Promote
Public Discussion on “Glocality”

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Villages in a Growingly Urban World

Personal Glimpses on How to Promote Public Discussion on “Glocality”

Staffan Nilsson

Introduction This subject is close to my heart. I live in a village consisting of about 30 houses, two farms and maybe around 15-20 people living year round. I have been involved in the Swedish peasant organizations also working on rural development, and I am a year chairman of the Swedish association “All Sweden Shall Live” with around 5,000 local village groups. But I have also had a European perspective and an international perspective as President of the EU Economic and Social Committee 2010-2013 where I as a rapporteur coordinated an opinion on “A better territorial balance”. I have also had Swedish international assignments. So, even if I am in everyday life comes from a tiny little village I have seen all these in a global perspective, through visits, among others in African countries, China, Central America, for instance, in Guatemala, Honduras, and in countries such as Chile, Brazil. For me “glocality” means a good opportunity; perhaps also an absolute and necessary opportunity. I would like to offer a few thoughts from a time perspective.

Globalization When we say the word, I am convinced, many people attach different values to the concept. Good or bad, ranging from threat to opportunity. To many, it leads to the realization that one can only perceive it as a movement that seeks a capitalist international development, that it is just an economic integration between national economies.

I would still put it in a broader perspective from the beginning, saying that it also involves a cultural and political process with the countries of the world acting more closely together. Maybe some see this as more of a threat, but I personally do not.

Part of globalization is that we move from one place to another, from one region to another, from one part of the world to another. But this is not something that just happened in the course of the last century. I come from a northern country, which is often associated with the Vikings. Over the ages, people had been moving across large areas. In the 700's, the Vikings came from the north to England and Ireland and the East equaled it far. Christopher Columbus started his first world voyage in August 1492 but it took him 8 months. In Europe many wars reached far away, with here and the whole entourage that was needed, but the movements took time; weeks or months. So, if we talk about globalization in the sense that we can move great distances, so it is not new at all. The big difference is time, the time it takes. Jules Verne wrote the book "Around the World in 80 Days" in 1873; today you can do this in a few days if you want. Columbus' trip we can do in 18 hours by plane.

In the digital world we are moving even faster. Nanoseconds quickly. We behave today as we always have, but the Internet is as a newborn baby: a creation from the late 1980's with its expansion in the 1990's. For any piece of news it took days, even further back weeks or months to reach its goal to go around the globe. Today, you on Facebook have friends all around the world and can be in contact with them instantly.

Another part of globalization, we can see is the basis and terms of trade in the world. 1956 was loaded the first container ship with 58 pieces on board. Today's largest container vessel is nearly 400 meters long and carries 16,020 containers that are 20 feet long.

All these examples show that it is technological development that allows all of these to happen, especially, the information to spread faster around the world. At the same time, we also need to make ourselves aware that our human communities rely heavily on fossil fuels, which also leads to large risky problems: climate change must be taken seriously.

Urbanization It involves a population movement from rural to urban areas; a process that is not new either. What is new is about it is how fast it happens. In Europe, for instance, most of the population up to the mid-1800's lived in the countryside. Since 2008, the majority of the world population lives in cities. It is estimated that in fifty years two thirds of the world's population will reside in urban environments. Growing cities are creating new opportunities for economic growth but it is also this realm where poverty increases the most. We can also realize that the most intense urbanization occurs in Africa and Asia.

Urbanization, in the minds of many, is associated with agricultural technological development, where fewer people can produce more. For some scholars and politicians urbanization can answer the challenges of energy and climate. For others, it is the problem itself; and we may ask: is there a limit to the big cities' livelihoods? One does not need to visit the largest megacities to see traffic misery with stagnant highways. For those of us engaged in rural development – not liquidation – the speed of urbanization is a major problem. In my own country, Sweden, you can see in the north part and the inlands, too, an overgrown landscape. Travel in Bulgaria, on the other hand, and you see devastated villages.

Glocality So, we arrive at a third term “glocality”, which is a mixture of global and local, and it is a relatively new expression to think about our world and our own personal place and role in it: “to think globally but act locally”.

This portmanteau of global and local is said to come from a Japanese word (*dochakuka*), which simply means global localization. Originally referring to a way of adapting farming techniques to local conditions, it evolved into a marketing strategy when Japanese businessmen adopted it in the 1980's.¹ If we search for the term “locality” online, we can find such a description immediately: “Locality is the leading nationwide network for community-led organizations. We believe that every community is a place of possibility.” (<http://locality.org.uk>)

I wish to quote what Wayne Visser wrote in a blog just about glocality: “When and by whom the phrase ‘think global, act local’ was first applied to environmental issues is a matter of some dispute. It may have been introduced by David Brower, founder of Friends of the Earth, in 1969, or by Rene Dubos as an advisor to the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment. Overpriced, in 1979, Canadian futurist Frank Feather chaired a conference called ‘Thinking Globally, Acting Locally’. Whatever its origins, the notion of glocality has entered into the popular consciousness.” (<http://www.waynevisser.com/blog/glocality>)

Figure 1.
Glocalization



¹ Visser, W. Thinking Global and Acting Local in CSR. Accessible at: <http://www.waynevisser.com/blog/glocality>

On the Internet we also find this description:

“According to the sociologist Roland Robertson, who is credited with popularizing the term, glocalization describes a new outcome of local conditions toward global pressures. At a 1997 conference on “Globalization and Indigenous Culture,” Robertson said that glocalization ‘means the simultaneity – the co-presence – of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies’.” (<http://www.jinn.co/glocalization/>)

Some people say that the increasing presence of McDonald’s restaurants worldwide is an account of globalization, and while the restaurant chain’s menu changes in an attempt to appeal to local palates we see glocalization taking shape. I do not know if I can directly associate glocality with just McDonalds, but it is certainly an interesting thought.

Villages in an urban world

I finally wish to turn to this topic from my own perspective, and also comment on my own values in terms of the ‘global’ and the ‘local’. I am not sure that I can only be optimistic in that it is possible to combine the global and the local. However, my intention is to maintain optimism, and to see it as a possibility.

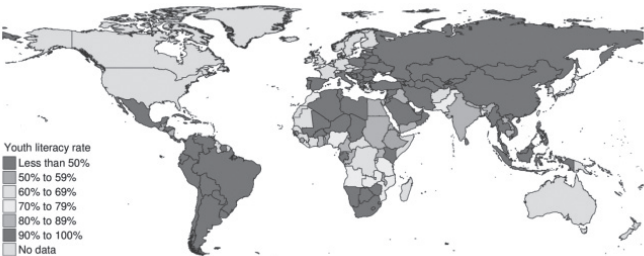
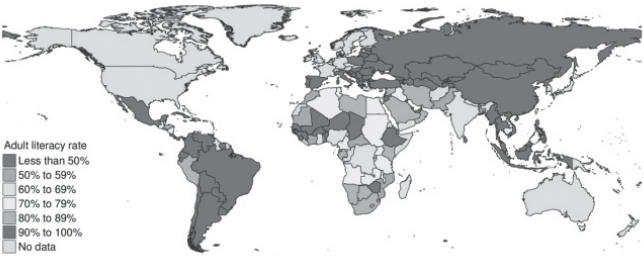
Even if we do not reach the 2015 Millennium Goals, there are positive trends connected with globalization. A clear example of a positive trend is that the number of people worldwide living in extreme poverty fell from 1.9 million in 1990 to 1.3 million in 2008. This has occurred despite the fact that the world population grew over the same period. In percentage terms, this means that extreme poverty in the world has declined by nearly 30 per cent in just less than 20 years.

It also offers trends that show that a large part of the development goes in the right direction. The number of people having access to clean water has increased with an incredible number of two billion since 1990 and now has a total of almost 9 out of 10 people on the planet with access to clean water. The rate of adult literacy has been also increasing. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2012):

“Adult literacy rates are estimated to continue to rise in the coming years but are expected to remain below the youth literacy rate in nearly all regions. The global adult literacy rate is estimated to reach 86% by 2015 and the youth literacy rate 92%.” (<http://www.uis.unesco.org>)

Figure 2.
Where are
Literacy Rates
Lowest and
Highest in the
World?

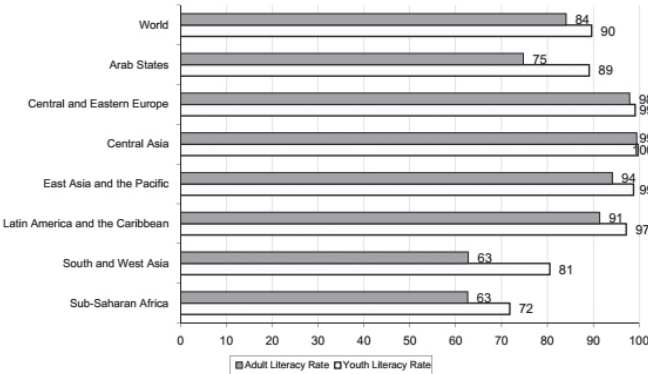
Global Maps of
Literacy Rates
for Adults and
Youth, 2010



Source:
UIS, 2012
September

Figure 3.
What is
the Global
Distribution
of Adult and
Youth Literacy?

Source:
UIS, 2012
September



We cannot and should not try to stop what is today global. However, we can aspire to achieve the ambitious climate targets, which go further than the EU Commission proposed in January 2014. Without sustainable development, we do not know how the world in all respects will be changing.

Globalization has also led to a more diverse society, partly by evil necessity and as a result of the world's violent conflicts and wars, partly because cultural exchange is a daily possibility. We travel and can therefore experience other people's cultural traditions.

In my role as chairperson of a rural organization in Sweden, I can see that we are witnessing a difficult change, so I am not just an optimist, but a realist, too. The city becomes the norm and the 'ruler' while the countryside becomes a 'servant'.

But as I said before: I want to stay an optimist, as if we ourselves do not believe it is possible to combine a global world with a local perspective in our closest vicinity, we will not succeed to unite them into glocality. We see the bar trends and developments: while we can enjoy a taste of other countries' cuisine, growing movements toward supporting local shopping, locally grown and locally produced products push society away from the multinational big food companies.

We should look at the European Union to understand cohesion. The reformed cohesion policy will totally make up 351.8 billion EUR available for investment in EU regions, cities, and the real economy. The European Regional Development Fund focuses on key priorities such as support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which are mostly located outside cities and towns, where the goal is to double the support scheme by 70-140 billion over the seven-year financial framework.

These areas constitute an important part of the EU's 'natural' identity. According to a standard definition in the

European Union, more than 91 per cent of the EU's territory is 'rural', and more than 56 per cent of the EU's total population lives in this area (Rural Development Policy 2007–2013). We receive virtually all products from the countryside, all the food, most of our energy, raw materials from mines, forest products and other things. However, usually their value is not transferred back to the countryside. In Sweden this is something we are pursuing right now: better and bigger reflux of rural values.

In sum, I believe in 'glocality' as a concept and an opportunity: it is possible to combine a global world and a local perspective. It certainly hangs on the right political decisions locally, regionally, nationally and at the EU/global level, but it depends even more on each and every individual.

Chapter 6

Title **Means of Sustainable Tourism Development
in Rural Areas of the Ukrainian Danube Delta**

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Means of Sustainable Tourism Development in Rural Areas of the Ukrainian Danube Delta

Svetlana Demianenko – Anna Vartanian

Introduction Today tourism is a widespread industry. The development of the tourism industry has worldwide impacts – social, economic, environmental – that can be positive or negative. The negative anthropogenic impact is the reason why tourism will never be completely sustainable, but some forms of it can be more sustainable. The question of how to achieve this remains a subject of discussion and debate.

In this article the development of sustainable tourism in the territory of Ukraine is described. The Nature Reserved Fund of the Ukrainian Danube Delta is the object of the tourist activities. The article assesses the economic, environmental and social factors in the development of sustainable forms of tourism. The authors propose the mechanism of sustainable tourism's management formation as a guarantee of national strategies for the development of recreation and tourism activities in Ukraine.

Sustainable development and tourism The Brundtland Report defines Sustainable Development as “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. It is now the leading concept of development of any industry.

There are three aspects of sustainable development which are widely recognized and emphasized (Making tourism more sustainable (<http://www.unep.fr/shared/publications/pdf/DTIx0592xPA-TourismPolicyEN.pdf>):

- Economic sustainability, which means providing socio-economic benefit and generating prosperity at different levels of society, must be maintained in the long run.
- Social sustainability, which means the protection and preservation of living cultural heritage and traditional values in host communities, respecting human rights and equal opportunities for all. It may revitalize the social structure and culture of local communities.
- Environmental sustainability, which means optimal use of environmental resources that represent a key element in tourism development, conserving and effectively managing natural resources and biodiversity. It requires actions to minimize pollution and any damage to the environment (flora, fauna, water, soils, etc.), together with preserving biological diversity and natural heritage.

*Picture 1.
The Lake's
Gull in the
Bush of White
Lilies (Danube
Biosphere
Reserve,
Ukraine), Photo
of Maxim Yako-
vlev, Research
Associate of
DBR*



Sustainable tourism has to minimize any harm and negative impact and to optimize potential economic benefits. The 12 aims of the approach of making tourism more sustainable include:

1. Economic viability: To ensure the competitiveness of tourism destinations and enterprises, so that they are able to understand the market and continue to prosper and deliver benefits, visitor satisfaction and business support in the long run.
2. Local prosperity: To maximize the contribution of tourism to the economic prosperity of the host community with diversity of products, extending the length of visitors' stay and increasing their spending.
3. Employment quality: To increase employment opportunities, number and quality of jobs created by sustainable tourism, to encourage enterprises to provide skills training programs, higher level of payment, better provision of services and, to be concerned about workers who lose their jobs.

*Picture 2.
Pink Pelican
as the Symbol
of the Danube
Delta (Danube
Biosphere
Reserve,
Ukraine), Photo
of Maxim Yako-
vlev, Research
Associate of
DBR*



4. Social equality: To use income from sustainable tourism to support social programs and develop opportunities for disadvantaged people.
5. Visitor fulfilment: To provide quality and safe services for visitors, satisfy and fulfill their expectations; improve access for everyone, monitor visitor satisfaction and the quality of experience and tourist services.
6. Local control: To ensure appropriate engagement and empowerment of local communities, improve conditions for effective local decision making about the future of tourism.
7. Community wellbeing: To maintain the quality of life in local communities, mutual use of services by tourists and residents, including social structure, infrastructure, access to resources, avoid congestion and social degradation.
8. Cultural richness: To preserve cultural, heritage and local traditions, by working with communities to enhance their distinctiveness.
9. Physical integrity: To minimize the physical impact and degradation of the construction and operation of tourism facilities, maintain and enhance the high quality of rural and urban landscapes as a tourism resource.
10. Biological diversity: To support National Parks and other protected areas, promote the development of ecotourism, implement the conservation of natural areas, habitats and wildlife and minimize damage to them.
11. Resource efficiency: To minimize consumption of non-renewable resources, ensure the efficient use of land and raw materials in tourism development and operation.
12. Environmental purity: To reduce the use of damaging substances, air, water and soil pollution, and the generation of waste by tourists and tourism enterprises.

Sustainable tourism is considered as a part of the sustainable development strategy and programs of many countries because it is a very attractive method of achieving economic growth, improving the national balance of payments, stimulating investments, diversifying the economy, improving the quality of life, and so on.

Forms of Sustainable Tourism Here are some essential forms of sustainable tourism:
1. *Responsible tourism* is tourism that (Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism, 2002)

- “minimizes negative economic, environmental and social impacts;
- generates greater economic benefits for local communities;
- improves working conditions and access to industry;
- involves local people in decision making;
- makes positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage;
- provides a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues for tourists;
- encourages respect between tourists and hosts, and builds local pride and confidence.”

2. *Agritourism, rural tourism, farm tourism* involves travelers visiting small communities and experiencing elements of traditional life in those communities. This experience encompasses a wide range of attractions and activities. Benefits of these forms of tourism are:

- job creation and retention;
- new business opportunities;
- opportunities for young people;
- service retention;
- community diversification;
- positive implications for community identity and pride;
- preservation of rural culture and heritage;

- landscape conservation;
- environmental improvements.

Farm tourism includes activities, which involve excursions, and provides tourists with farm animals (e.g., ostrich farms). This kind of tourism does not necessarily have to provide accommodation in the form of private housing.

3. *Ecotourism*, as the International Ecotourism Society defines it, is “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people”. All forms of tourism can be sustainable, but not all of them can be called ecotourism. Ecotourism involves visiting to relatively undisturbed natural areas in order to enjoy study and appreciate nature and promote conservation. It has low visitor impact and provides for the beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations” (*The official definition adopted by the IUCN in 1996*). The main aim of ecotourism is to form awareness of rational resource use and environment preservation.

4. *Green tourism* is the form of the outdoor recreation’s organization in clean areas with or without accommodation in private housing. Green tourism takes into account the needs of the environment, local residents, business and visitors.

5. *Geotourism* is defined by the National Geographic Traveller, as a concept focused on the ‘sense of place’ in an area rather than on industry’s efforts.

6. *Ethnographic tourism* is an activity that allows visitors to become familiar with the historical and cultural heritage, lifestyle, and rural crafts of the local place, as well as to attend traditional celebrations. It is dedicated to the revival and preservation of ethno-cultural heritage.

Sustainable Tourism Development in the Ukrainian Danube Delta The Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria are organized around four main themes: effective sustainability planning; maximizing social and economic benefits for the local community; enhancing cultural heritage; and reducing negative impacts to the environment. It is possible to develop all forms of sustainable tourism, and rural tourism in particular, in the Ukrainian countryside. The experience of one small town in Ukraine, in particular, deserves attention. This settlement is Vylkove, which is located in the Odessa region of the country.

*Picture 3.
The Yellow
Heron (Danube
Biosphere
Reserve,
Ukraine), Photo
of Maxim Yako-
vlev, Research
Associate of
DBR*



Vylkove town is the original capital of the Ukrainian part of the Danube Delta, and it has had a rich and distinctive culture for more than two and a half centuries. Local people have not only maintained the traditions, customs, distinctive dialect and religious beliefs of the area, but have also played an important role in caring for the environment.

Vylkove (8,800 inhabitants) is a town on the Danube Delta near the Ukrainian–Romanian border. The Delta, an elevated flood-plain surrounded by swampy terrain, used to be a historic refuge for fugitives. In 1746, the Lipovans, Russian dissenters, fled religious persecution and founded the village of Lypovanske here; it was mapped thirty years later. After Russia had destroyed the Zaporizhska Sich, a unit of Cossack settled here, and in 1805 Vylkove became a major Cossack settlement. In Vylkove the Church of the Nativity was built (1850), which is a good example of Orthodox architecture in the south-west of Odessa Oblast. Due to numerous drains and streams Vylkove is popularly called the Ukrainian Venice. In fact, there is nothing like Venetian gondolas, and canals are functional only during flooding. The local gondoliers use lifeboats to convey tourists and show them the “0 km” monument at the point of inflow of the Danube into the Black Sea. The main economic activities in Vylkove city are fishing, growing strawberries and tourism. There are two main local tour operators in Vylkove, focusing on the Danube Biosphere Reserve (DBR) is the main attraction for “sustainable tourism”. The DBR features a large number of rare plants and animals from the Red Book of Ukraine as well as from other international red lists in Europe.

The Danube Biosphere Reserve has now opened its doors to tourists. The DBR territory belongs to the primary and secondary geosystems of the Danube Delta, and is located in the north-eastern part of the Delta in the eastern part of the town of Kealia and south of Lake Sasik. In the east, the DBR borders the Black Sea, and the south the Ukrainian–Ro-

manian border. The town of Vylkove and other outlying villages are located on the perimeter of the reserve. The largest population centers in the area include the towns of Kealia, Tatarbunary and Vylkove.

- Involvement of NGOs and Local Communities in Recreational Activities in the Danube Biosphere Reserve**
- Development of outdoor activities has become more important in determining involvement by commercial organizations and the local community, especially local businesses. For this purpose it is still necessary to plan and implement some pilot activities even during the drafting of the territory of the biosphere reserve, namely:
- to conclude agreements on joint activities with travel agencies and other organizations engaged in the tourism business;
 - to develop and patent in the prescribed manner the reserve's logo;
 - to offer commercial use of the logo in sales of products and provision of services by local businesses and organizations;
 - to organize village meetings explaining the policy to attract local people to outdoor activities and increase the level of service;
 - to create a database of possible services for the local population, including living conditions in private buildings (apartments);

*Picture 4.
The Wild Boars
Family Fed
Water Chest-
nuts (Danube
Biosphere
Reserve,
Ukraine), Photo
of Maxim Yako-
vlev, Research
Associate of
DBR*



- to establish a coordinating body of recreational activities within the administration of the reserve, local authorities, businesses and other stakeholders;
- to obtain the support of local governments in the development of certain types of tourism business, which will increase employment of local people and increase their income;
- to create the Club of Biosphere Reserve's Friends;
- to conduct environmental and educational activities and organize seminars for skills acquisition in small business.

The community development of sustainable tourism can be successful if:

- local people are actively involved in it;
- there is development of appropriate means of informing, training and planning;
- community law on income distribution is actively enforced and not merely enacted;
- priority in the use of natural resources is granted to the local community.

Private travel firms have been productively and successfully engaged in sustainable tourism activities, gaining relevant experience, expanding and strengthening infrastructure and improving advertising in Vylkove.

The significant increase in the number of tourists over the last few years in Vylkove offers the people a new way to treat this problem. Local people are beginning to realize that they may derive some benefit from an increase in tourists. There are new services for tourists beginning to develop, such as the manufacture and sale of souvenirs from natural materials, transporting tourists on boats on the canals, opening private museums, cafes, hotels, etc.

Increasingly, the administration of the Danube Biosphere Reserve is directing individuals who are willing to organize

trips for environmental water routes through the territory of the DBR. The administration of the Danube Biosphere Reserve controls and carries out visits of the trails. Touristic organizations take responsibility for complying with the legislation during any of the tourist activities. The administration works out, together with tourist organizations, the agreements about the conditions of visiting the territory of the reserve. These agreements determine the quantity of tourist groups on an annual basis.

The implementation of sustainable tourism forms in the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve requires the assessment of environmental, social and economic conditions, as well as how to set the goals that can be achieved from tourism, and the need for appropriate training. It should be borne in mind that the development of the tourism and recreation industry has become one of the main directions of social and economic development in Vylkove.

*Picture 5.
The Mosaic Plot
of Stentsovsko-
Zhebriyansky
Marshes
(Danube
Biosphere
Reserve,
Ukraine), Photo
of Maxim Yako-
vlev, Research
Associate of
DBR*



The problem of sustainable forms of tourism development (such as ecological tourism, green tourism, rural tourism etc.) in Ukraine has gained particular importance in recent years. Tourism in the countryside has an extremely positive impact on the economy and ecology of the regions of Ukraine through the use of existing private housing, expansion of rural employment and the feasibility of on-site production of the subsidiary farm, providing travelers with environmentally friendly food and conservation due to lower anthropogenic pressure.

| | |
|--|--|
| Socio-economic conditions of rural tourism in the Danube region include | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing private housing; • The rural population, which is unemployed or partially employed in subsistence agriculture rural population; • The problem of marketing of agricultural products, two thirds of which are produced on subsistence farms and other farms. • The development of sustainable forms of tourism is now one of the means of increasing employment by creating new jobs. |
|--|--|

Environmental NGOs and environmentally oriented organizations may play an important role in developing sustainable tourism in the region. The administration of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve is working closely with some well-known entities, such as the Danube Tourist Information Center (Vylkove), Ecoclub “Danube” (Vylkove), Danube Youth Club (Vylkove), “MAMA-86” (Kyiv), WWF and others.

Staffing and Scientific We recommend that the improvement of staffing recreational activities should be provided with:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Support for | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • measures for training and staff development; |
| Recreational Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exercises, seminars for the Reserve and travel agencies, educators (teachers) schools, businesses, including those |

that provide accommodation and other tourism business sectors;

- a scientific software, which should be used to determine the maximum permissible loads on trails and paths of environmental objects and thus regulate tourism, sightseeing and eco-educational activities (group, time of visits, monitoring visit, etc.);
- the development of proposals to reduce recreational pressures on vulnerable areas of the reserve territory and even harmful to the prohibition of biological and landscape diversity or unpromising areas of recreational activities;
- a forecast of the tourism market;
- a monitor, which complies with environmental and other restrictions;
- the development of recommendations for improving recreational infrastructure and preventing degradation of BR values;
- the regulation of the flow of visitors within individual functional areas.

*Picture 6.
0 Km – The
Place Where
the Danube
River Falls
into the Black
Sea (Danube
Biosphere
Reserve,
Ukraine), Photo
of Maxim Yako-
vlev, Research
Associate of
DBR*



Basic documents on governmental regulation of tourist and recreational activities are the Law of Ukraine "On Tourism" (1995) and the Law to Adopt "on resorts" (2000), which have contributed to the adoption of an integrated approach to the problem of the overall efficiency of the tourism and recreation industry.

Conclusion The case of Vylkove can show that the development of sustainable forms of tourism such as ecological, rural and green tourism can not only attract potential tourists and provide economic benefits, but also minimize the burden on recreational resources and develop an ecologically oriented society. The development of eco-tourism in the Danube Biosphere Reserve region is certainly seen as a tool to enhance environmental education and awareness among the local population as a source of income to protect and preserve, as environmental sustainability of economic activity for locals is an opportunity to create new jobs.

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Chapter 7

Title

**Between City and Country
Suburban Development of Rural Areas
in Lower Silesia, Poland**

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Between City and Country

Suburban Development of Rural Areas in Lower Silesia, Poland

Katarzyna Kajdanek

Introduction Lower Silesia is a region in south-western Poland. At the end of 2013 it was inhabited by little over 2.9 million people (National Census Report, 2013). There are 91 cities in the region and Wrocław, Wałbrzych, Legnica and Jelenia Góra are the biggest among them with a total population of nearly 1 million people. It is one of the most urbanized regions in Poland with almost 70% of population living in cities whereas the average urbanization coefficient in Poland in 2011 was 61.8%.

In the time between two censuses – in 2002 and 2011 – the distribution of population between urban and rural areas in the region has changed significantly. During this period nearly 0.5 million people left cities and moved to rural areas. This trend is called suburbanization and can be described as a process in which urbanized areas gain population but the increase in number of dwellers is more significant on the urban fringes than in the central districts. Suburbanization is preceded by urbanization and followed by de-urbanisation (Klaasen and Paelinck, 1979: 1095-1104). Suburbanization can be also described as deconcentration of population within the metropolitan area and as such is one of the most important socio-spatial processes changing the physical landscape and social tissue of Polish society. Other processes are: population growth in metropolitan areas and depopulation of peripheral (mostly rural) areas in Eastern Poland (Węclawowicz et al., 2006).

The number of people who moved to rural areas in Lower Silesia region is estimated at the level of almost 50,000 people. It is a very rough estimation since only those who registered (the act of registration is not obligatory) in the new location have been taken into account. As various research show (Kajdanek, 2012 and Śleszyński, 2011) the actual number of newcomers may be twice or even three times higher than estimated by the National Statistical Office.

The main purpose of this paper is to provide some insight into how the influx of newcomers affects the previously rural *locus* and into how newcomers go about their way of life in the suburban setting in selected areas in Lower Silesia, Poland.

Suburbanization in Poland – example of post-socialist suburbanization There are some features of suburbanization in post-communist countries that aptly describe suburbanization in Poland, for example: relatively short history of the process and dynamics of the process since the mid-1990's, simultaneity of suburbanization of retail, offices and housing, lower decentralization rate due to low or even negative population growth, denser but at the same time more chaotic suburban development, social differentiation of inhabitants (Stanilov, 2007: 187-188). S. Hirt also emphasizes consequences of lack of suburban periphery of cities during socialism (Hirt, 2007: 755) for suburban development as well as poor quality of suburban infrastructure like roads and sewage that is also true for many of Polish suburbs.

Some authors suggest striking similarity of Polish suburbanization to the phenomenon that could have been observed in the USA about 50 years ago (Jałowiecki and Szczepański, 2006: 276). Others suggest that suburbanization in Poland has its specific background stemming from characteristics of spatial organization of rural areas and also cultural factors providing both reasons for individual mobility, social characteristics of those who moved as well as later models of

functional relations with the central districts (Marcinićzak, 2012: 301-302).

First of all, suburbanization gained momentum in late 1990's after the return of housing market and location rent when many Poles were finally able to fulfil their housing aspirations that were postponed for many years due to economic and political constraints. Hunger for housing inherited after socialism and galloping deterioration of housing in blocks of flats on the outskirts and inner city tenement houses caused that suburbanization in Poland comes mainly from rejection of poor quality housing in the city rather than from a rejection of urban life or preference for living "the rural way". The Polish ideal of suburban living is based on economic calculation of costs and benefits that prioritizes price per square metre and home ownership, which is different from the case of eastern Germany (Nuissl and Rink, 2005). Moreover, Polish suburbs are typically based on the comparatively stable core of old rural villages despite its multiple patterns described by Zebik (2011: 173-188) and it relies more on individuals since only a minority of suburban housing is carried out by developers. Although suburban development is too dense to be called urban sprawl, it needs to get emphasized that planning policy focused on short-term profit from selling plots resulted in far too much space allotted for single-family

Figure 1.
Karwiany



housing with very poor or literary no technical and social infrastructure provided by local authorities.

Between city and country. It is not possible to point out and assess the whole spectrum of consequences of suburbanization in Poland. One reason is the relatively short time scale especially since processes of urbanization are long-term and some effects of suburban development are only to be seen in the future. Another reason is related with the socio-spatial nature of the process. It means that it takes people who move (they are socially differentiated) and the place, which is chosen to become suburbanized. On an intersection of social and spatial characterises suburbia are created. They vary socially and spatially from one another and what is considered to be a serious social issue in one place may come unnoticed in another and so on.

Main consequences that are commented on in the following sections are:

- privatization of space,
- individualization of social life,
- imbalanced structure of commercial and social services,
- hidden potential of social capital in suburbia;

and it needs to be said that the aforementioned phenomena do not deplete the complex nature of suburbanization but draw attention to some of its aspects.

Figure 2.
Smolec



Privatization of space Emphasis on ownership, cultural preference for single-family housing as a “dreamed home” systematically reflected in all-Poland social surveys (CBOS 2006) and strong rejection of previously inhabited flats in high-rise blocks or neglected 19th-century tenement houses resulted in the emergence of a typical suburban habitat – single-family house built on a single plot. Interesting architectural design is expensive (and requires higher level of cultural capital) and therefore scarce – gabled houses, plastered in yellowish colours are most common. Houses are usually carefully fenced to mark physical and more importantly symbolic distance from others especially that “security” is not often referred to as the reason for leaving the city and choosing suburban settlements. Fences (natural shrubs, wooden fences, metal gates, etc.) guarantee living in the seclusion of one’s own home and not being disturbed by people living next door nor strangers.

Since the history of post-socialist suburbanization in Poland is relatively short those who moved from urban to urbanizing rural settlements have no experience of their own and also very little opportunity to draw on the experience of previous generations that had moved between the early 1950’s and the 1980’s but in the opposite direction. Therefore, they employ impromptu invented strategies of getting used to living in suburban houses. These strategies usually involve extended DIY (do-it-yourself) and finishing works, garden design and gardening. As a result – sheds, gardening tools and garden hoses are a common sign of adaptation to suburban living.

Privatization of space can be also observed in how newcomers perceive space surrounding their suburban home. Rarely do they discern what can be called public space – open and accessible to everyone. If they know and go to places located outside their plot, they rather call them their own “magical places” even though these places (local ponds, forest paths, small glades) may as well be frequented by other people.

Individual-ization of social life Every suburban house can be put on a continuum of “togetherness” with an extremely individualistic attitude towards one’s life on one end and deep conviction that it is vital to be a part of a carefully planned community on the other. According to results of research published in KajdaneK (2011), 2/3 of interviewed newcomers to suburbs suggested that people only focus on their private life and do not lead any forms of collective life. Common situations when some collective actions are undertaken are some infrastructural problems that need to be resolved or minor social misunderstandings that are usually cleared up.

Suburbia in Poland are rarely greenfield investments. However, newcomers and old-timers live in two separate social worlds. They are separated both physically (by fences and distance between new settlements and cores of old villages) and socially because newcomers are perceived to be much younger, more affluent, better educated than the old-timers. The knowledge about one another is often stereotyped but occasions to debunk myths are deficient since many of everyday activities that could bring people together

*Figure 3.
Private
playground
for kids*



(picking up children from school, chatting at the bus stop, doing shopping, going to the church, etc.) are usually performed elsewhere, i.e. in the central districts. Social contacts are limited to a few people who live close and they are often also newcomers.

The lack of neutral, public spaces impedes the process of people getting to know each other. Traditional public spaces in rural areas (such as church forecourts, local shops, youth clubs where also the farmer's wives' association would meet) are not perceived by newcomers as interesting and potentially "ours".

Imbalanced structure of commercial and social services As it was mentioned earlier, the decision-making process on where to live does not stem from strong cultural preference for life in bucolic rurality and thus from a rejection of the central city, services available there and additional urban experiences it offers. In fact, most newcomers locate majority of their everyday and festive activities in the central city. It is understandable for the activities which simply cannot be carried out in the suburban areas because they are non-existent: work located in the city, secondary and higher education, more complex infrastructure of personal,

*Figure 4.
Private
basketball
court*



social, cultural services, etc. However, an interesting pattern emerged from the data collected from the interviews with newcomers. They explained that they would travel to the city (to take children to a nursery or a primary school, to do shopping, to do jogging, to go to church) because, given the choice, they preferred the urban quality to suburban (rural) quality of (seemingly) the same services. Therefore, suburbs become mainly the place to sleep and to relax in the garden or the cosy interior of the house and not a fully developed habitat where most services can be fulfilled.

However, it is possible to discern some differences in strategies of organizing everyday life between newcomers to metropolitan suburbs (one example was the biggest city under study – Wrocław, the capital of the region) and to small town suburbs.

In the former, all social and commercial services are used in the urban core. There is a strong stigma of a much worse quality of services offered in the suburban areas as well as

Figure 5.
Gardening



less convenience (i.e. there are only some services and they are dispersed). Finally, an argument that newcomers give to explain why they choose urban over suburban services is grounded on the force of habit and reluctance to try and change it. In the latter, most social and commercial services are used in the urban core but not all. For example, some parents placed their trust in local primary schools and eventually took to them. Heavily subsidized by EU funds, well-equipped, small and pupil-friendly local primary schools have also very good results in exit exams. Still, they do not offer such a wide range of extracurricular activities to keep children busy until late afternoon, which is a serious obstacle for many parents. However, “poor quality” argument has apparently become irrelevant. Also shops selling local products are more appreciated, especially local bakeries that provide newcomers with fresh loaves of bread. Since mass production of low quality bread has driven many family-run bakeries out of business in cities, high-quality bread is what newcomers miss and crave for. There is also more frequent usage of personal services such as hairdresser, beautician, etc. One possible explanation to this might be that the perceived disparity between the level of service in the central small town and in the suburban location is much smaller (and price more competitive) and therefore easier to accept than in case of metropolitan services that are seen as unrivalled.

Suburban-central city connections are presented by newcomers as *constrained* and necessary but in fact social preference for urban services translates into strong *voluntary* connections with the central city. It results in the multiplication of the number of trips from the suburban home to the urban core. The means of transportation, which is habitually used to cover the distance, is a car since public transportation in suburban villages is neglected and heavily underfunded by local governments. There is also no obligation in local planning regulations to locate new housing developments

near railway lines or other nodes of efficient transport infrastructure. Public transportation is heavily underfunded by local authorities and does not seem like an interesting market niche for entrepreneurs, so routes and schedules of public buses are not fitted for newcomers' needs and railway stations are (if at all) too far to be used on an everyday basis. Cycling or pedestrian infrastructure is also incomplete and forces people into cars. There is a car in almost every suburban household under study (98%) and in almost 70% of households there are two or more cars (Kajdanek, 2012: 256). An accurate comment on the situation was made during an interview with one of the newcomers to Smolec – a suburban settlement near Wrocław. The interviewee said that when he moved in it seemed like living in a forested wilderness, but soon there were more and more cars, more and more traffic. And these days the place is noisy and polluted and he has to leave much earlier than he used to otherwise he will be stuck in the morning traffic jam (Kajdanek, 2011: 75).

It is also interesting that some services, which are normally located outside the household, are being embedded in

*Figure 6.
Sense of
belonging
through
intense
gardening*



the suburban house. For example, some houses have their own swimming pools, saunas and indoor gyms. Some living rooms are equipped with high-quality audio-video systems that serve the purpose of a home cinema. In gardens there are sandpits, inflatable palaces, swings and basketball courts so that inhabitants can limit the number of occasions to leave the suburban house.

Dormant social capital in suburbia Social resources in the suburban locations under study are rather limited. People (both newcomers and old-timers) possess very little knowledge about each other and since there is little willingness and too few occasions to get to know each other the knowledge is often based on stereotypes and results in a biased image each group has about the other.

When neighbours have a chance to get to know each other, give and take a helping hand in everyday situations they strictly follow the reciprocity principle. They return favours immediately and do not allow themselves to be indebted to neighbours in order not to have any sense of obligation towards them. It impedes accumulation of mutual trust, growth of a mesh of interdependence and pool of reliability. Sense of community is only “turned on” when it comes to solving technical, infrastructural problems and minor crises. When the problem is solved, the sense of community is “turned off” until next time. Selective belonging and limited place attachment of newcomers also hampers reinforcement of social capital in suburbia.

One group that is particularly affected by the aforementioned phenomena of privatization of space, individualization of social life, imbalanced structure of commercial and social services and weakness of social capital in suburbia is suburban youth and children. Lack of social infrastructure in suburban settlements makes them play in private playgrounds within the borders of the plot. Community centres offer very little to children and youth so there are no magnets attract-

ing them to leave the house and meet peers. Unfortunately, many existing sport facilities are gender-biased and tap into boys' not girls' expectations (numerous football pitches). Not only do girls have fewer opportunities to make friends but also, given parents reluctance to let children go out and play, they are condemned to loneliness or parents' mobility as a condition of using social structures in the city. What is more, local schools and parishes are mono-functional – in a school one can only learn and pray in a church whereas these places should serve the purpose of local activity centres and be vivid generators of multi-generational activism.

Isolation from past and present peer groups can be only overcome owing to parents' individual mobility and growing dependence on cars.

Summary The study I have conducted in the suburbs of the city of Wrocław and of small towns in Lower Silesia region is one of the very first attempts of careful sociological consideration given to suburbs in Poland. Therefore, the main focus was on the exploration of the topic rather than on providing definite answers.

As the number of people moving into suburbs is constantly increasing, new questions of future co-existence of old and new residents and of the ability of local authorities to support and enhance newly enlarged communities acquire importance (Kajdanek, 2014). There is also the question of how particular groups of suburbanites (e.g. women, teenagers, and elderly people) find themselves in this completely new reality and how they form their own specific strategies, alliances, and coalitions. All these questions, among many others, deserve thorough study.

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Chapter 8

Title **Multifunctionality of the Forestry Sector in Bulgaria**

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Multifunctionality of the Forestry Sector in Bulgaria

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Introduction Under the condition of transition to free market economy and especially after the accession of Bulgaria to the European Union the expectations related to the forestry sector have become markedly higher. New demands have been laid down for the management and utilization of the available forestry resources. The development of the forestry sector in Bulgaria is affected by many factors, the most important of which are forestry policy, changes in forestry legislation, the European Regulation on timber trade, to name a few.

The term “forest sector” gained popularity within the context of multifunctional management of forests and their role in climate change mitigation. The European Forest Sector Outlook Study (EFSOS II) defines the term “*forest sector*” as the forest resource (forestry), as well as the production, trade and consumption of forest products and services (forest industry). Forest products are the end products from processing wood (sawnwood, wood-based panels, paper and paperboard) as well as the by-products (wood raw material, pulp and sawdust). The term is quite complex and not clearly defined yet. This fact poses significant difficulties in analyzing the sector and the relationships among its components. The term does not cover secondary and added-value products such as doors and windows or furniture.

Forest The Bulgarian forests are part of Europe’s natural heritage.
recourses Bulgaria is among the European countries with greater

forests. The areas covered with forests amount to 4 089 762 ha, which is about 1/3 of the territory of the country. Most of these forests are natural. The forests preserve over 80 per cent of the protected flora species and over 60 per cent of endangered (with extinction) animals in the county; ensure 85 per cent of the fresh, drinkable water, as well the most significant non-timber forest resources – herbs, mushroom, forest fruits etc. They compose the main well-known area among European hunting activities in Bulgaria, and at the same time play a significant role in terms of soil erosion control, too. 10 per cent of the forests in Bulgaria are included in protected areas. Forestry in general has a positive effect on other sectors of the national economy.

Forest Functions (according to Bulgaria's Law on Forests) are economic, social and environmental. The main objective of forestry is to achieve a balance of the economic, social and environmental functions of the forests. In certain regions of the country some of these functions are considered more important than others. Bulgaria faces various problems related to the protection of its forests from diseases, parasites and fires, which are similar to the problems experienced in other European Union member states.

Although its contribution to the structure of industrial production is not significant, *forest industry* is a factor for the development of a balanced industrial production, especially in those regions of the country where wood cutting and wood processing are the main sources of income for the population.

Within the Industrial Policy of the European Union and its sustainable development strategy aimed at creating better conditions for the processing industry, forest industry is an example of a sector that is in line with the development of EU policies. At the same time “the sector faces a number of challenges, including access to raw materials, climate

change, innovation, trade and the provision of information on forest-based products.”¹

Systemic approach The key point to start the discussion of this study is to apply a systemic approach, i.e. to consider the two sectors of the forest sector as elements of a system. We chose this investigation because of the common opinion that it is “one of the tools for better insight into the essence of the economic phenomena, which reveals both their diversity and unity.” (Mircovich, 2006: 63-72) We believe that “the systemic approach examines the relationships and dependencies between processes and phenomena.” (Mircovich, 2008: 45) Donnelly et al. (1992: 12) define the systemic approach as “a unity of interrelated parts united by a common goal.”

In this contribution we shall consider forestry and wood-processing industry as elements of the system that includes the production and sales of forest products. The issue of sustainability is applicable to any of the components of forestry and the wood-processing industry as well as the relationships between them.

Forestry as a complex of activities related to planting, growing and the utilization of forests is a sector of the national economy with many functions economic, social, environmental, etc. Its main economic function is to generate income for forest owners. These incomes are generated mainly through the production and trade of its main product – wood. Being the main product of the forestry production process, wood can perform its main economic function (i.e. generate income) if it is sold on the free market, where, according to the provisions of the national and the international accounting standards, it should be traded at its fair price.

¹ See: Forest-based Industries at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/wood-paperprinting/index_en.htm

The wood-processing industry is part of the production sector of the national economy and, according to the Classification of Economic Activities 2008 (4), Section 16 talks about the “Production of wood and wood and cork products other than furniture”; Section 17 covers the “Production of paper, cardboard and paper and cardboard products” and Section 31 focuses on the “Production of furniture”. A distinctive feature of all these sections included in Sector C is that they refer to businesses engaged in chemical or mechanical processing of materials, substances or components into new products. One of the distinctive features of the wood-processing industry is the variety of wood-processing processes and technologies. Accordingly, the different processing companies have different requirements for the raw material they process both in terms of the volume of the raw material as well as its quality.

The issue of sustainability is related to the social relations in the spheres of production and distribution, i.e. the implementation of forest products. From an economic point of view, the question of sustainability of production is extremely important. Any violation in the processes of production and reproduction of each element of the analyzed system affects the others, and the relationship between them. The symbiosis between the two sectors (the sector that provides the raw material and the sector that processes it) is very important. Companies whose main activity is processing of wood use the raw material provided by the forestry sector and are thus important factors for the development of forestry activities. Conversely, forestry as a combination of two key activities – growing of forests and logging – is a key factor for ensuring the basic raw material for the wood-processing industry.

Sustainability of turnover In today’s dynamic environment the provision of raw materials plays a crucial role for the normal operation of the produc-

tion process of all businesses. It depends both on the ability of the enterprise that sells its products to generate revenue and the ability of the company that buys the raw materials to ensure the timely, reliable and rhythmical supply of the necessary raw materials both in terms of quantity and quality. These functions of the process of supplying raw materials ensure the continuity and efficiency of the operation of the businesses in both sectors. The supply of raw materials is an important process that has an immediate impact on the overall reproduction of the wood-processing enterprises. It affects their overall performance, the quality of their products, level of efficiency of the utilization of their current assets as well as their competitive advantages. The lack of raw materials with the required quality and the irregular supply thereof regardless of their quality deteriorates product quality and results in worse production efficiency.

The efficient organization of raw materials supply is a prerequisite for the efficient use of the operating assets and especially of current assets. By correctly estimating the required resources and reducing the unnecessary stock of materials companies can reduce the volume of their current assets engaged in the delivery of raw materials and thus speed up their turnover. The provision of quality raw materials will inevitably make the companies more competitive and will enable them to penetrate new markets or gain larger market shares.

One of the main characteristics of the analyzed system is that it relies on planning. Forestry planning in the Republic of Bulgaria has three levels to the regulation of the Forestry Act and consists of:

1. National strategy for development of the forestry sector and National plan for development of the forestry sector;
2. Regional plan for development of the forestry territories;
3. Forestry plans and programs.

The National strategy for development of the forestry sector covers a period of 10 years, while the strategic plan covers a period of 5 years. The forestry plans at level 3 are long-term as well – they cover a period of 10 years while the wood-processing companies can hardly make such long-term plans. The production of certain products is contracted according to the existing market conventions and at market prices but the proper execution of the existing contractual obligations does not guarantee future commitments.

The wood market is the element that links forestry with the wood-processing industry. The most important questions are: to what extent can forestry enterprises meet the demand of the wood-processing industry in terms of quantity and quality, price levels of the various wood products, regular and timely deliveries, etc.

In times of crises stagnation affects most of those market segments that are most susceptible to changes in market conditions. Of all the companies processing wood in Bulgaria the crisis affected mainly the export-oriented ones because their performance was simultaneously impaired by a decline in the prices of finished goods and the increase in prices of raw materials, energy, labor and other production costs.

The importance of the forest sector enterprises for the forest industry and the environment Forest industry uses large volumes of wood and the access to raw materials on competitive prices is a key factor for its normal operation and competitiveness. The regular provision of raw materials is extremely important for the companies operating in the forest industry because it affects the quality of their products, the efficient use of their current assets and their overall performance.

ment Apart from wood, the output of the forest sector provides non-wood products and environmental benefits as well, but we only look at the problems related to supply of raw materials to the wood-processing companies operating in the forest industry.

The supply of raw materials to these companies has two significant effects:

1. on the forestry output;
2. on the environment.

First, the wood-processing companies consume large volumes of wood and thus have a significant effect on the process of natural and cultivated reproduction of forests. By purchasing the wood, these industrial enterprises provide the forest owners with the financial resource they need for forestation, cultivation and protection of new forest stands. The larger the volume of wood is sold on the market, the better the opportunities for the forest owners are to reproduce their forests. Note that forestry enterprises operate in terms of 10-year forest plans and programs that provide the quotas for extraction of wood resources. These plans and programs are based on the principles of regularity and sustainability, i.e. the same volume of wood can be harvested each year during the 10-year period and there can be no drastic changes in the set volumes.

Forest industry enterprises have a twofold effect on the state of the environment. On the one hand, the excessive use of wood by the industrial enterprises may have an adverse effect on the forest ecosystems. On the other hand, businesses in the forestry industry are responsible for a significant portion of the emissions of industrial pollutants. Their production processes emit harmful emissions, the most harmful ones being emitted by processes involving chemical processing of wood. When machining a bigger problem is air pollution by particulate matter. The biggest problem related to processes for mechanical processing of wood is the emission of dust particles in the air. In this respect, the “development in the forest industry is thus of crucial importance for the future state of the environment.” (Seppala et al. 1998: 88)

Another aspect of ecological interactions between forestry and forest industry is the effect of forest policies

on climate change. A sustainable and efficient forest policy would contribute to the reduction of greenhouse emissions. What is more, paper and wood products provide an additional opportunity for storing the carbon removed from the forests, while an increase in the volumes of recycled paper and wood (instead of landfilling) increases the capacity to store carbon in harvested wood products.

Moreover, the EU climate change policies have a significant effect on the production of mechanical pulp, paper and wood-based panels because these processes are highly energy-consuming. Fuel and electricity are between 13 and 18 percent of the production costs for pulp and paper production in the EU. Paper mills are large consumers of energy, while the enterprises that produce chemical pulp are net producers of energy. They produce about one half of the energy they need from wood biomass. Sawmills and wood-based panel producers also produce the heating energy they need themselves, but the electricity they consume often comes from external suppliers. Conversely, mechanical pulp and paper production is largely dependent on outside suppliers of electricity and gas. The recent increases in their prices had a significant negative impact on these industries.

There are a range of causes for higher price levels including higher primary fuel costs, the ongoing need for investment and the extension of environmental obligations, as well as the development of renewable energy sources. High production costs pose a challenge for the industry's competitiveness and require further market liberalization and energy efficiency policies to make the European forestry sector more attractive for investments.

Presently, markets and administrative bodies impose additional requirements on the companies operating in the forest industry. Regulation (EU) No. 995/2010 (enforced on March 3, 2013) laid down three key obligations:

1. It prohibits the placing on the EU market for the first time of illegally harvested timber and products derived from such timber;
2. It requires EU traders who place timber products on the EU market for the first time to exercise “due diligence”;
3. Because once on the market, the timber and timber products may be sold on and/or transformed before they reach the final consumer and to facilitate the traceability of timber products economic operators in this part of the supply chain (referred to as traders in the regulation) have an obligation to keep records of their suppliers and customers.

These requirements confirm Seppala et al's (1998: 92) conclusions that “reducing emissions is not enough anymore; there are growing demands from markets to improve the ecological sustainability of forestry practices in particular.”

- Economic aspects of sustainable raw materials supply and concluding recommendations** To identify the problems related to the supply of raw materials we should first define the main characteristics of wood as a raw material. According to Petkov (2007) its main characteristics are:
1. Wood is an *organic raw material* produced in nature with or without the aid of man. For most forest species the reproduction process lasts between 80 and 120 years while this period for the fast-growing species is between 15 and 40 years.
 2. Wood has *universal consumer characteristics*. This is why it is used in many sectors of the national economy. Wood is a scarce raw material due to its common use and the long period of its reproduction. It is used in the mining and extraction industry as beams and struts, in the pulp industry, in agriculture, civil construction, production of musical instruments, etc.

3. There are *various grades* of wood in terms of tree species, sizes (length, diameter, volume), shape (curvature) and especially in terms of its physical and mechanical characteristics. These characteristics are the key factors for selecting the technology and the organization of its processing and storage, the operation mode of the wood-processing machines as well as the quantities and qualities of wood to be used.
4. In most enterprises operating in the forest sector wood is not used *completely*. This is due, on the one hand, to the fact that its quality varies and on the other – to the specific characteristics of the technology for its mechanical processing. The wood-processing waste is underused as well because it is not recycled and there are certain problems connected with its transportation. The amount of wood-processing waste is about 25 to 40 per cent of the raw material, in the sector of plywood production it is about 55-60 per cent of the raw material and in the sector of veneer production it is over 60 per cent.

All wood-processing companies process the raw material according to a particular technology. Production output depends on the correlation between the characteristics of the raw material and the technological requirements.

The supply of raw materials is a crucial factor for the performance of the companies operating in the forest industry. Ensuring proper material is crucial for the competitiveness of these enterprises because it affects the quality of their output, the efficient use of their current assets, their overall performance, etc.

The regular supply of the raw material to the production process is crucial for the continuous operation of the enterprise. This continuous operation is essential for the organization of production and the economic performance in certain sectors.

Most non-specialists assume that wood-processing plants can process any type of wood. This assumption is only true for some products with low added value or for some special cases that require high costs. In most cases, the use of unsuitable materials has a negative impact on production – most often it impairs the quality of the output or leads to process downtimes. This is why the quality of the raw material must be controlled as a cost optimization measure.

The use of inappropriate raw materials usually results in lower output rates and higher production costs. If the raw material in stock is inappropriate, the company must decide whether to reject it and seek alternative supplies of suitable material, which is sometimes associated with additional investments.

The irregular supplies of quality raw materials or the supplies of materials with poor quality that are either substandard or do not meet the requirements of the process result in the deterioration of output quality and lower production efficiency.

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Chapter 10

Programme – Organizers – Partners and Supporters – Content of Previous Volumes

Programme of the 11th DRC Summer School

Novi Sad, Serbia – 6-13 July, 2014

Cover



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www.drc-danube.org

Official website:
www.drcsummerschool.eu



www.idresearch.hu



www.idm.at

Special thanks to:



www.uns.ac.rs

The DRC Summer School project was initiated by the IDM (Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe/Institut für den Donaauraum und Mitteleuropa) and International House Pécs in 2003 to promote regional co-operation among young social scientists. Its general aim is the establishment of a network of young scientists who deal with the issue of regional co-operation as Central European perspective, and thus the institutionalisation of the Summer School for the future. The 11th Summer School is another step towards enhancing and deepening scientific co-operations in Central Europe, among the project partners, i.e. institutions from the V4 countries, the Ukraine, Austria and some Western Balkan countries. Since 2006 the IDM is represented in the project by Dr. Susan Milford, managing director, whereas IDRResearch Ltd. is represented by Dr. István Tarrósy, managing director, and former managing director of the Regional European Information and Education Centre PBC who has been implementing the project with the Austrian partners.

The 11th edition of the Summer School puts its focus on the Danube Region 100 years after the World War I. The Danube Rectors' Conference provides a platform for the collaboration of 67 institutions of higher education from 14 countries in the Danubian Region.

Main aims of the project:

- to enhance the awareness for the significance and possibilities of regional co-operation;
- to discuss and develop strategies for the improvement of co-operation in the region;
- to bring young scientists from the countries of the Danube Region and Central Europe together in order to establish a regional scientific network within the European Research Area;
- to foster relations between the partner universities of the Danube Rectors' Conference and between other regional actors, e.g. the V4 community;
- to promote the mobility of young scientists, especially in South East Europe;
- to prepare a sustainable series of events to be able to meet the tasks mentioned above.

As it was the case at the first ten Summer Schools, the results and best quality papers of the 11th Summer School will be published in a proceedings volume by the end of 2014.



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Dr. Susan Milford

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DRC
Danube Region Conference

Programme

6 July
Sunday

Arrival in Novi Sad

17.00-18.00 Registration, Introduction, First meeting
Accommodation of the participants (Bulevar Despota Stefana 5, Novi Sad)

19.00 Dinner
Plava Frajla (Sutjeska br. 2 21000 Novi Sad)

7 July
Monday

Visegrad Region Day

Registration
University of Novi Sad, New Rectorate Building

08.45-09.00 Welcome
Miroslav VESKOVIĆ
Rector of the University of Novi Sad
Pavle SEKERUŠ
Vice-Rector for International Relations, University of Novi Sad

09.00-09.15 Welcome address
Klaus FIESINGER
Hanns Seidl Stiftung, Munich
Jiří SÝKORA
Public Relations Coordinator, International Visegrad Fund, Bratislava

09.15-09.30 Opening
SUSAN MILFORD
Managing Director of the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe / Institut für den Donauraum und Mitteleuropa – IDM, Vienna
ISTVÁN TARRÓSY
Managing Director IDResearch Ltd. and Assistant professor, Department of Political Science and International Studies, University of Pécs



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Plenary lectures

University of Novi Sad, New Rectorate Building

09.30-10.15 **Disintegration and Integration in Europe**

VLADIMIR GLIGOROV

The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies, WIIW, Vienna

10.15-10.45 Break

10.45-11.30 **Preventing Genocide and Reconciliation Policy in the Region of Former Yugoslavia (The Role and Mission of Center for History, Democracy and Reconciliation)**

DARKO GAVRILOVIĆ

Center for History Novi Sad

11.30-12.15 **The Joint History Project - A New Historical Narrative?**

NENAD ŠEBEK

Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, CDRSEE, Thessaloniki

12.30-13.15 Lunch

Plava Frajla

13.30-14.15 **Peace by Europeanization: The EU Role in the Reconciliation between Serbs and Albanians**

JOVAN TEOKAREVIĆ

University of Belgrade

14.30-18.00 Workshop Sessions (I)

University of Novi Sad, New Rectorate Building

19.00

Dinner

Plava Frajla



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DRC
Danube Region Conference



8 July
Tuesday

Plenary lectures

University of Novi Sad, New Rectorate Building

09.15-10.00 **Crisis as a Chance for Federalism in Europe:**

Breaking the Joint-decision Trap

MARKO VUJAČIĆ

UEF Serbia, Belgrade

10.00-10.45 **Alternative approaches towards European Integration -
The Eastern Partnership**

SEBASTIAN SCHÄFFER

SSC Europe, Berlin

10.45-11.00 Break

11.00-11.45 **The Aftermath of Versailles: Geopolitical Competition in the
Danube Region from the Aspect of Aviation**

MÁTÉ DEÁK

University of Pécs

11.45-12.30 **1914-2014: 100 Years after the World War I**

FLORIAN TRAUNER

Institute for European Integration Research, University of Vienna

12.30-13.30 Lunch

Plava Frajla

13.30-17.30 Workshop Sessions (2)

University of Novi Sad, New Rectorate Building

19.00

Dinner

Plava Frajla



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9 July
Wednesday

10.00-12.30 Sightseeing: Novi Sad

13.00-14.30 Lunch
Plava Frajla

14.30-19.00 Free time in Novi Sad

19.00 Dinner
Plava Frajla

10 July
Thursday

Plenary lectures
University of Novi Sad, New Rectorate Building

09.15-10.00 **The Hungarian Political Elite and the Outbreak of World War I.
Political Interest and Cultural Background**

ANDRÁS GERŐ
Central European University, CEU, Budapest

10.00-10.45 **Difficulties in Hungary after the Economic Crisis**

VIKTOR GLIED
University of Pécs

10.45-11.00 Break



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DRC
Danube Region Conference



11.00-11.45 **Competing Histories. Austrian and Serbian Myths from 1903 to 2014**

SILVIA NADJIVAN

Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe IDM, Vienna

11.45-12.30 **Hungarian Turn Towards the “East”: The Global Opening Foreign Policy Doctrine in a Historic Perspective**

ISTVÁN TARRÓSY

IDResearch Ltd., University of Pécs

13.00 Lunch
Plava Frajla

14.30-18.00 Workshop Sessions (3)
University of Novi Sad, New Rectorate Building

19.00 Dinner
Plava Frajla

11 July
Friday

08.30-18.00 Field Trip
BELGRADE

19.00 Dinner
Plava Frajla



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12 July
Saturday

10.15-13.00 Workshop Sessions – Final Reports (4)
University of Novi Sad, New Rectorate Building

13.00-14.00 Lunch
Plava Frajla

15.00-16.30 Closing session: Presentations and discussion of the workshop results

Closing ceremony
University of Novi Sad, New Rectorate Building

19.00 Dinner
Plava Frajla

21.00 Farewell party
Plava Frajla

13 July
Sunday

Departure





DRC
Danube Region Conference

Workshops and informations

Combined workshops

Leader: Áron Bánáti, IDResearch Ltd.

1. Historical Dimensions of the “Great War” and its Geopolitical Consequences until the Present Day
4. 100 years after WWI – Pacifying Effects of the Current EU Integration Process and Development of Neighbourhood Relations

Leader: Sebastian Schäffer, SSC Europe

2. The Economics of WWI and its Socioeconomic Impact on the Danube Region Nowadays
3. Aspects of Remembrance Culture and Reconciliation in Science, Research and Education

Workshop sessions

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| 7 July, Monday | 14.30-18.00 – First meeting |
| 8 July, Tuesday | 13.30-17.30 |
| 10 July, Thursday | 14.30-18.00 |
| 12 July, Saturday | 10.15-13.00 – Final Reports |

Please note, that all of the participants will have to present their researches, papers on one of these occasions. The presence is obligatory. The WS-leaders are responsible for keeping the accurate time frames and for assigning the presentations.

Information for the students

Requirements for obtaining the certificate:

Participants who fulfil all the requirements mentioned below will receive a certificate at the end of the DRC Summer School with 10 ECTS points granted by the University of Pécs, Faculty of Humanities.

The following conditions must be met:

- 1) Presence at not less than 90 % of the lectures and excursions. The presence will be controlled by the organisers.
- 2) Presentation of a paper within the workshops and participation in the workshop activities.
- 3) Payment of the participation fee.

Proceedings volume:

The results of the DRC Summer School will be published in a proceedings volume that will be presented to the public at the DRC Summer School in 2015.



Organizers



Institut für den Donauraum und Mitteleuropa (IDM)

Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM)

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More than 60 Years of Research for the Danube Region The IDM was founded in 1953 as the “Research Institute for Issues of the Danube Region”. As an Austrian scientific institution, it was dedicated specifically to research on the Danube region.

Region In 1993 the Institute was renamed as the “Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe” (IDM).

Today the IDM is an extramural research institution based on an association – constituted by individual and corporate members – with its head office in Vienna.

As of April 1, 2011, IDM started a strategic cooperation with the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), Vienna.

The Institute is funded by the Austrian Federal Chancellery and the Federal Ministries of Science, Research and Economy, of Education and Women’s Affairs, of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs as well as by individual provinces, cities, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, the Austrian Central Bank and private sponsors.

Facilitator and clearinghouse As a gateway and a facilitator institution the IDM makes an important contribution to co-operation in the fields of research, culture, politics, economics and administration. At the same time the IDM sees itself as a clearinghouse for concerns of the Danube Region, Central and Southeast Europe, supporting the work of embassies, trade missions, cultural institutes and national tourist offices of the countries of the Danube Region, Central and Southeast Europe in Austria, as well as the work of Austrian missions to these countries.

Since 1995 the chairman of the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM) is the former Austrian vice-chancellor Dr. Erhard Busek.

Groundwork As a think tank the IDM performs basic groundwork for government agencies and institutions in the fields of politics, education, research, culture and business and supports efforts in the Danube Region, Central and Southeast Europe.

PR work The IDM performs PR work and serves as a lobbyist for the region.

Research The IDM carries out research projects dealing with current political, sociological, social, economic, cultural and ethnic issues of the countries of the Danube Region, Central and Southeast Europe. The results are publicised by means of events and publications.

Next generation support The IDM supports recent graduates and young professionals in research and practice.

Educational activities and events In seminars, symposiums, summer schools and the post-graduate course “Interdisciplinary Balkan Studies” in co-operation with the University of Vienna, all with international participation, the IDM also serves as an institute of learning

and training. In addition, the IDM organises expert meetings, conferences, workshops and lectures. In this context, cooperation with institutions that share the IDM's goals is of particular significance.

Corporate services On request the IDM will organise custom-tailored introductory and advanced seminars for companies (executive briefings).

- Publications**
- “Der Donauraum” (“The Danube Region”) – scientific journal of the Institute (quarterly/price per copy: € 9.60/subscription: € 34.50) – Böhlau publishing house, Sachsenplatz 4-6, A-1201 Vienna)
 - “Buchreihe des Instituts für den Donauraum und Mitteleuropa” (“Book Series of the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe”) – Böhlau publishing house
 - “Das Magazin für den Donauraum und Mitteleuropa” (“The Magazine for the Danube Region and Central Europe”) – issues on individual countries
 - “IDM-Studien” (“IDM Studies”) – on topical issues
 - “Info Europa” – journal on the enlarged EU (5 issues per year, subscription: € 40, reduced price € 15)
 - “IDM-Info” – newsletter of the Institute including the programme of events (5 issues per year/subscription: € 15/free of charge for members of the Institute)

Documentation The IDM maintains a documentation centre and a magazine reading room with specialised publications on current developments in the countries of the Danube Region, Central and Southeast Europe. Documentation is supplemented by regular reports provided by country correspondents working for the Institute on a voluntary basis.



IDResearch Ltd.



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ID in the name of our enterprise indicates first the significance of possible research and co-operation between different disciplines (InterDisciplinary) in today's globalising world; second, refers to the ability of developing creative ideas (Idea+Development) and third, covers Innovative power and Dedicated aspect of the enterprise.

Since 1997, a team of young researchers, students and Ph.D. aspirants from the University of Pécs have been organising various national and international symposia, conferences, seminars and summer schools about different aspects of social and political changes in Central and Eastern Europe (ranging from regional co-operation, the place and role of the V4 countries to security dilemmas of our global world). IDResearch is a young company based on the experiences and achievements of the past years, with a special intention of generating and shaping collaborations among young researchers in Central Europe. The aim of the company is to become a well-known generator of co-operations between national and international actors in the field of human sciences and research, project development and training. IDResearch Ltd. is interested in strengthening a new generation of social scientists who can search for and interpret affects of global processes appearing on the local level, and contribute to expressing social demand by estab-

lishing a new co-operation culture. For this aim the company plans to develop accredited trainings for young scientists to help them obtain complementary and pragmatic skills useful for their future work.

- Current projects include**
- the DRC (Danube Rectors' Conference) Summer School series on Regional Co-operation (www.d-r-c.org; www.drcsummerschool.eu);
 - the Publikon project (portal for social science research and publishing house (www.publikon.hu);
 - think tank and project leader on migration-related issues in the form of the European Integration Fund-supported scheme 'Black and white - Here we are!' and 'Immigropoly' (www.ittvagyunk.eu);
 - publisher of the Hungarian African Studies (Afrika Tanulmányok) periodical and initiator of several researches, conferences and workshops on African issues (www.afrikatanulmanyok.hu);
 - publisher of the journals of Modern Geográfia (Modern Geography; www.moderngeografia.eu) and the Central European African Studies Review (CEASR);
 - collaborator in the International Cultural Week in Pécs international studies summer school series (www.icwip.hu);

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DRC
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РОБОЧА СПІВПРУЖНІСТЬ
ПРИДУНАВСЬКИХ КРАЇН



International Visegrad Fund

The International Visegrad Fund was established in 2000 by the Czech Republic for the very reason to renew the historical connections and co-operation, also redevelop a closer connection between the Visegrad Group countries, also known as the Visegrad Four (V4). The region itself carries the opportunity for the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia to cooperate and connect issues related to this region and its citizens.

One of the Fund's main goal is to support common cultural, scientific, research and educational projects, youth exchanges, tourism and cross-border cooperation by the form of grants. It is worth to know that most of the grant applicants are non governmental organizations, universities and schools or other public institutions even individual persons. The Fund also awards scholarships and artist residencies to support talent and prominence.

In the last 14 years the Fund has announced and supported nearly 4000 grant projects and awarded over 1500 scholarships and artist residencies in total worth of nearly €55 million, which numbers can easily show how active the Fund is, and how many opportunities the Fund can provide for those projects which are deserves to be supported.

Grants are divided into three main categories entitled as small, standard and strategic. As a new feature, the Visegrad Strategic Conferences grant program was established in 2014 as a sub-program of the Strategic Grants to fund conference-type events of strategic regional relevance.



Pécs Debate Academy

If you feel inside the intention to express your thoughts about world and it's topical issues, take your first steps and arm yourself with the Pécs Debate Academy, a unique regional summer university initiative in Hungary, also known as one of those rare debate events, which offers 7 ECTS credits for those actively participating in it. Our main objective is to improve the critical thinking, argumentation and debating skills of the decision-makers of the future. Don't hesitate, come and join us in August, 2015 in the 3rd Pécs Debate Academy!



PDA 2015 offers students the opportunity to gain experience and learn how to argue along the techniques of the British Parliamentary Debate style. This is not just about debating, however; it is also about absorbing fresh knowledge which you might vindicate in your studies and work, even through self-realization and -assertion. Between August 13 and 23, 2015, in Pécs, Hungary you'll not only have the chance to participate in debate trainings and exchange your thoughts with various people from all over the world, but also to learn more about one of the most current and exciting topics entitled "The benefits and dangers of E-governance – On the edge of digital wars". The subject will be discussed from different angles with the help of acclaimed debate trainers and invited guest lecturers/experts. We are committed to emphasize non-frontal teaching: teambuilding activities and debate skills trainings, final debate tournament, on-topic and off-topic lectures, and also active off-programs in the form of concerts and interactive

events. We make sure that you get to know how cordial Hungarian hospitality is, we organize a visit to the beautiful city of Pécs and its surroundings; sport contests, the discovery of the best pubs in town and the best intercultural party imaginable, the Country Show. This year's debate academy is special since on August 20, Hungary celebrates the "Founding of the State", considered one of the most spectacular holidays in the year. Pécs and PDA 2015 is your place to be if you'd like to explore both sides of the shield, if you enjoy getting to know like-minded people or if you'd like to spend a little piece of your summer with something that is truly different.



Learn more @ debateacademy.eu or follow us on Facebook
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