

**Interplay of European, National and Regional Identities:
Nations between States along the New Eastern Borders of the European Union**

Series of project research reports

**Contextual and empirical reports
on ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe**

Belarus
Germany
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Research Report #13

**The Hungarian Minority
in Slovakia**

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Project host and coordinator



About the ENRI-East research project (www.enri-east.net)

The Interplay of European, National and Regional Identities: Nations between states along the new eastern borders of the European Union (ENRI-East)

ENRI-East is a research project implemented in 2008-2011 and primarily funded by the European Commission under the Seventh Framework Program. This international and inter-disciplinary study is aimed at a deeper understanding of the ways in which the modern European identities and regional cultures are formed and inter-communicated in the Eastern part of the European continent.

ENRI-East is a response to the shortcomings of previous research: it is the first large-scale comparative project which uses a sophisticated toolkit of various empirical methods and is based on a process-oriented theoretical approach which places empirical research into a broader historical framework.

The distinct ethno-national diversity in this region, along with the problems resulting from it was generated by dramatic shifts of borders, populations and political affiliation which have continued until today. The prevailing pattern of political geography of this part of Europe was the emergence and the dismemberment of empires, a process which created ethno-national enclaves within the boundaries of new nation states. These minorities were frequently drawn into inter-state conflicts and subjected to repression, ethnic cleansing and expulsion. The subjects of interests were ethnic minorities in the supra-region "Wider Eastern Europe", i.e. the region between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea, along the current geo-political "East-West" division line. Estimated 8 to 10 millions of people are affected by "ethnic splits" or minority groups, whose ethnic compatriots would constitute a titular majority in another country, some of them even on each side of this contemporary geopolitical east-west dividing border line.

The complex ENRI-East study was designed as a comprehensive set of theoretical, methodological, empirical and comparative work streams exploring the interplay of identities among the twelve ethnic minorities in the supra-region of Central and Eastern Europe. These ethnic groups are: Russians in Latvia and Lithuania, Belarusians and Ukrainians in Poland, Slovaks in Hungary, Hungarians in Slovakia and in Ukraine, Poles in Ukraine, in Belarus and in Lithuania, Belarusians in Lithuania as well as Lithuanians in Russia (Kaliningrad oblast). The project includes also a case study of Germany, where our target groups were the ethnic Germans returning to their historical homeland after the centuries of living in other European countries as well as Jewish immigrants (so called "quota refugees" who had moved to the country since 1989).

ENRI-East addresses four general research themes. The first one deals with the interplay of identities and cultures by comparing 'mother nations' and their 'residual groups abroad'. The second theme is a cross-cutting approach which addresses the nations and the states: more exactly, the attitudes and policies of 'mother nations' and 'host nations' toward the 'residual groups' and vice versa. The third research theme comprise the reality of self organization and representation of "residual groups abroad" (ethnic minorities) along the East European borderland. Finally, the last research theme of the project deals with path dependencies, historical memories, present status and expected dynamics of divided nations in Eastern Europe.

The empirical data base for ENRI-East was generated through 5 sub-studies implemented in all or several project countries:

- ENRI-VIS (Values and Identities Survey): face-to-face formalized interviews with members of 12 ethnic minority groups in eight countries, 6,800 respondents;
- ENRI-BIO: qualitative, biographical in-depth interviews with members of 12 ethnic minority groups in eight countries (144 interviews);
- ENRI-EXI: semi-structured expert interviews with governmental and non-governmental representatives of ethnic minority groups in eight countries (48 interviews);
- ENRI-BLOG: online content analysis of weblogs and Internet periodicals run or maintained by ethnic minority group members;
- ENRI-MUSIC: special study on cultural identities and music; an innovative, multi-disciplinary pilot effort in Hungary and Lithuania.

The series of ENRI-East research reports (www.enri-east.net/project-results)
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Main outcomes of the ENRI-East research program are summarized in the series of research papers and project reports as outlined below. The whole collection of papers will be publicly available on the project web-site by December 2011, while some papers can be accessed since September 2011.

Individual papers are written by ENRI-East experts from all project teams and the whole series is edited by the Coordinating Team at the CEASS-Center at the Institute for Advanced Studies under the guidance of the Principal Investigator Prof. Hans-Georg Heinrich and Project Coordinator Dr. Alexander Chvorostov.

Summarizing and generalizing reports

1. Theoretical and methodological backgrounds for the studies of European, national and regional identities of ethnic minorities in European borderlands (Edited by Prof. Claire Wallace and Dr. Natalia Patsiurko)
2. Interplay of European, National and Regional Identities among the ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe (main results of ENRI-East empirical program) (Edited by Prof. Hans-Georg Heinrich and Dr. Alexander Chvorostov)
3. ENRI-East Thematic Comparative papers and synopsis of authored articles of ENRI-East experts (9 tender papers and further bibliography of project-related publications)

Contextual and empirical reports on ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe:

(edited by respective team leaders)

4. The Polish Minority in Belarus
5. The Slovak Minority in Hungary
6. The Russian Minority in Latvia
7. The Belarusian Minority in Lithuania
8. The Polish Minority in Lithuania
9. The Russian Minority in Lithuania
10. The Belarusian Minority in Poland
11. The Ukrainian Minority in Poland
12. The Lithuanian Minority in Russia (Kaliningrad oblast)
13. The Hungarian Minority in Slovakia
14. The Hungarian Minority in Ukraine
15. The Polish Minority in Ukraine
16. Special Case Study Germany

Series of empirical survey reports:

17. ENRI-VIS: Values and Identities Survey
 - Methodology and implementation of ENRI-VIS (Technical report)
 - ENRI-VIS Reference book (major cross-tabulations and coding details)
18. Qualitative sub-studies of ENRI-East project (methodological and technical reports)
 - Methodological report on Biographical Interviews (ENRI-BIO)
 - Methodological report on Expert Interviews and data base description (ENRI-EXI)
 - Methodological report on the pilot study on Musical cultures and identities (ENRI-MUSIC)
 - Methodological report and main findings of the Pilot study of web-spaces (ENRI-BLOG)

Disclaimer:

The treatment of historical, statistical and sociological data and facts, their scientific accuracy and the interpretations as well as the writing style are the sole responsibility of the authors of individual contributions and chapters published in the ENRI Research Papers. The positions and opinions of the project coordinator and of the editors of ENRI-East series of research papers as well as of the ENRI-East consortium as a whole may not necessarily be the same. By no means may the contents of the research papers be considered as the position of the European Commission.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Abstract

Research of Slovak citizens with Hungarian nationality by ENRI-East project found that "nationality" is important (17 %), but by far not the only component of identity. In terms of structure citizens of Slovak republic with Hungarian nationality shall be reported to dominant identity "I am Hungarian living on Slovakia" (65 %). Quantitative distribution of this type in terms of age has a significant homogeneity which implies that in the future to be reckoned that dominant group of citizens of Slovak Hungarian national minority will be the one that accepts current national framework for their existence, their life satisfaction and cultural needs. Proficiency of Slovak language is not perceived as a first step towards assimilation, but as an effective tool of social life in the host country. Approximately 60 % of respondents in 2009 have managed to introduce "real Hungarian" without Hungarian citizenship. Important for them is "mother tongue" and "feeling to be" member of nation. The generous approach of Slovakia towards minorities is stemming from the basic principle that the Slovak society has always perceived minorities as a cultural enrichment of the whole Slovakia.

Summary of the Study

Towards the end of the last century the international community decided to enhance cooperation on the issue of the protection of national minorities. The reasons were obvious. This decision was taken against the background of the ethnic conflict in the Balkans and the situation in new democracies, on the territory of which different minorities had lived. The international community wanted to guarantee that the issue of minority should be an object of peaceful cooperation – and definitely not a reason for disputes or even conflicts.

A set of important international documents was adopted – the UN Declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, the Copenhagen OSCE document on Human Dimension, the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe on the protection of national minorities (FCNM) and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Charter). The one thing that these documents have in common is that states engaged in the cooperation on the protection of minorities fully respect the key principle that responsibility for the situation of the respective minority is upon the State where the minority lives. To be reminded; when preparing FCNM as the first legal pan-European standard ever, Europe still remembered the mid-war negative experience with the international system of the protection of minorities. The reason why the system failed - and thus contributed to the war – was the lack of balance between the commitments of respective States and an unfair way of monitoring of those commitments. As a consequence of the historic experience, the Council of Europe also refused to incorporate into the standard a concept of collective rights for national minorities. There were more legitimate reasons why Europe has given a clear preference to the individual rights of persons belonging to national minorities – stability on the continent, territorial integrity of the States concerned and approach to the protection of minorities as to a human rights concept. Last but not least, enforcement and monitoring of individual rights creates definitely less space for political conflict both within the State and on the inter-state level as well.

And, in our case study it is worthy to remind that Hungary's acceptance of collective rights for national minorities has not been very helpful in protecting and promoting the identity of minorities at all.

Generally speaking, we may say that there are three basic models of co-existence of the majority with a minority and of the policy of the majority towards minority and vice versa.

1) **process of assimilation** – is the case when the state concerned does not create appropriate conditions in order to protect a minority. International documents forbid the states to execute an active policy of assimilation. An example of the assimilation policy leading almost towards disappearance of national minorities is the real policy of Hungary, which is well documented in the reports of the relevant international institutions – see below.

2) On the opposite side of (to) the assimilation is a phenomena which we can label as **the ethnic separatism** – when the minority step by step, via creating its own structures in different fields like religion, social life, policy – gradually promotes an atmosphere of mistrust, which makes cooperation and later even peaceful co-existence in one state difficult. All this is happening very often with the support from the other side of the frontier. This process may lead to the exclusion of the minority and at the last stage the minority eventually separates itself from the state concerned. Some experts would point to Kosovo as the recent example of such a process.

3) **The integration of minority** – this model can be characterised as the optimal one. The key principle of the integration is dwelling in the duty of the state to create appropriate conditions for the protection of a minority and at the same time to the fullfledged inclusion of the minority into the society as such. It is also expected that also the members of the minority themselves contribute actively to the positive atmosphere in the interethnic co-existence, especially by their loyal behaviour towards the state on the territory of which and citizens of which they are. In no case we can reduce the loyalty just to the paying of taxes. Integration policy of state towards minorities is fully endorsed by the international documents (FCNM) and respective international institutions (HCNM OSCE). To be more specific - in the field of education, it is taken for granted that the minority is bilingual, i.e. their members not only speak their mother tongue but they are able to communicate in the official language as well. From this point of view, this is maybe the most efficient way when the person belonging to the minority becomes a fullfledged member of the society, because his/her command of both languages creates an opportunity for him/her to seek a job, to study, to live and generally speaking to socialize on the territory of the whole state.

It goes without saying that the integration policy in Slovakia has been and should remain the core of the minority policy in the state. In other words, it is of utmost importance to maintain the balance between the protection of minorities and the needs of the whole society.

In Slovakia, persons belonging to national minorities have their rights not only codified in the national legislation. And, at the same time there exist institutional guarantees in order to execute those rights. E.g. the right to get education in a minority language is guaranteed by the whole educational system (378 schools for pre-school education, 259 schools for primary education, 20 secondary schools and the recently established University in Komárno), the right to protect cultural identity is enabled by real cultural institutions (e.g. two theatres operating on the permanent basis, several museums, etc). When we talk about the right to disseminate information in a minority language there exist publishing houses, etc. A reminder – these institutions have existed in Slovakia for many decades even during the old regime before 1989. The right of persons belonging to national minorities to participate in public affairs is ensured by the Minority Council – an advisory body to the Government. This council, where all minorities are represented is consulted on every legislative initiative that might be minority-related.

Research of Slovak citizens with Hungarian nationality by ENRI-East project has brought more comprehensive description of indicators, which relate to "identity" of the Hungarian national group. We found that:

- "The Nationality" is important (17 %), but by far not the only component of identity.
- In terms of structure citizens of Slovak republic with Hungarian nationality shall be reported to dominant identity "I am Hungarian living on Slovakia" (65 %).
- Group is significantly less with identity "I am member of Hungarian nation" and identity group "I am citizen of Slovakia as the host country with different ethnic origin".

For each group is characterized difference in preferences adapt to life with the majority society. For all groups common fact is that respondents expect support for their cultural development by host country for the future.

In our research, we surveyed how much "correlate" orientations aiming to promote customs and traditions with alternatives of ethnic identity orientation Hungarian minority culture, but also with an attitude to its possible adaptation to the majority society:

- The choice of alternative "I am Hungarian", expresses the attitude of refusing to adapt and assimilate with the majority society (69.8 %, including 48.1 % with strongly oppose). Such a choice is associated with promoting the development of ethnic minority culture (90 %, included 57.4 % respondents with strong expression of this requirement).
- Choice of alternative "I am Hungarian living on Slovakia" is associated with rejection of adaptation and assimilation with the majority society (54.8 %, of which only 24.9 % strongly oppose), but not so rigorous. In the case of support of own minority culture similar level is achieved (88.6 %) as an alternative to "I am Hungarian" (90 %), but is characterized by a certain moderation of expressing this requirement.
- Choice of alternative "I am Slovak with Hungarian ancestors" refers bigger shift on range effort refusing to adapt to mainstream society. As a whole there is only 46.7 % (strongly oppose is only 16.2 %) of respondents. Orientation to promote cultural development of ethnic minorities is same (82.8 %), although shifted in position requiring like lighter.

Results of research using only two indicators, while allowing only hypothesizes that "adaptation" to coexistence with the major society does not entail automatically "cultural assimilation" or the loss of "ethnic identity".

Reflects only the willingness of Slovak citizens belonged to ethnic minority to show some "loyalty" to the state framework that should be compensated by adequate possibilities of cultural development.

Proficiency of Slovak language is not perceived as a first step towards assimilation, but as an effective tool of social life in the host country. Approximately 60 % of respondents in 2009 have managed to introduce "real Hungarian" without Hungarian citizenship. Important for them is "mother tongue" and "feeling to be" member of nation.

The generous approach of Slovakia towards minorities is stemming from the basic principle that the Slovak society has always perceived minorities as a cultural enrichment of the whole Slovakia.

Summary of Practical Implications

We can express hypothesis, that satisfaction of citizens with the quality of their lives (included democracy, rule of law, education opportunities, employment opportunities, security) in a specific country mostly creates a good basis for equality in the case of citizens with different ethnicity.

Addressing of situation of national minorities in Slovakia, as well as in every EU country, depends not only on bilateral relations ("mother" and "host" countries), but also from the supervision of European institutions.

Young generation of Hungarian nationality is more open to European integration processes, not associated with fears of losing national identity and sees them as beneficial for people living in Slovakia. Security and social threats perceive not so sensitive as older generation.

New political party representing Hungarian minority in Slovakia (MOST – HÍD) has become a part of the new governmental coalition - new political party defines itself as a party that will connect Slovaks and ethnic Hungarians and will eliminate worsening tendency of Slovak-Hungarian relations by SMK.

Local and regional sporting and recreational clubs and associations of citizens are ethnically more open and representing area where is a greater understanding of intercultural communication and cooperation of citizens of the majority and minority ethnic groups.

Research points to the possibility representing by different civil associations (eg. numismatics, philately, chess, singing and dance clubs, catering) as a platform for better understanding and eliminating prejudices and stereotypes among ethnic communities. It is up to governmental bodies and officials at local, regional, national and supra-national levels (EU) to direct the financial support to projects and programs of this type of associations.

This would be good supplement to so far unilaterally oriented financial support of cooperation of ethnically pure Hungarian organizations in various countries such as Slovakia, Romania, Ukraine, Serbia and Vojvodina. It is necessary to provide financial support to ethnically mixed cultural and sports organizations in the regions of each EU member country.

1 HUNGARIANS IN SLOVAKIA: A BACKGROUND OVERVIEW

Ladislav Macháček

1.1 Slovakian-majority and Hungarian-minority relations

1.1.1 Historical overview

The Hungarian minority is an autochthonous minority that has lived in the area of today's southern Slovakia since the days of the Kingdom of Hungary in the 10th century. In the 1848 revolution that abolished serfdom Slovaks and Hungarians were divided against each other and fought on opposite sides, with Slovaks supporting the Austrian side against the Hungarian revolutionary guard. Magyar rulers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire moved to strengthen assimilation into Hungarian national life among local Slavs. At the same time Slovakian national consciousness began to emerge, leading to a reaction against Magyarisation. Tensions between neighboring Slovaks and Hungarians in the area of modern Southern Slovakia continued to sharpen in the decades leading up to World War One. Historians have noted that the fact that Slovakian national identity was not expressed in terms of statehood for decades led to a sharpened emphasis on ethnic and cultural identity as opposed to identifying with the state as the state of all citizens, regardless of ethnic origin.

As a result of the treaty of Trianon in 1920 Slovaks went from being a minority within the old Austro-Hungarian Empire to being a majority, together with the Czechs as a result of the formation of the new state of Czechoslovakia. From being representatives of the titular nation, Hungarians became a minority overnight. Although Czechoslovakia managed to remain a parliamentary democracy in the inter-war period, the policy towards the new Hungarian minority was more repressive. The treatment of the Hungarian population following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire laid the foundations for deep-rooted national sensitivities. Within the Hungarian minority resentment against their new Czechoslovak rulers chimed with irredentist demands in Hungary. In the 1930s the Hungarian government joined sides with Germany. In 1938 Czechoslovakia was invaded by Nazi Germany and a separate Slovak state appeared on the map for the first time. Hungary invaded Southern Slovakia, including sub-Carpathian Ruthenia, which was annexed by the Soviet Union in 1944 when it became Zakarpats'ka province of the Ukrainian SSR.

After the war, anti-Hungarian feelings in the re-established Czechoslovakia ran high. The government at first aimed at eliminating national minorities through population exchange and assimilation. Here the fortunes of the Hungarian minority were affected by the treatment of the Sudeten Germans, who were resettled in Germany on the basis of a decision of the Potsdam conference. The Czechoslovak government lobbied for approaching the Hungarian minority in the same way but Western powers rejected this. While a partial population exchange took place between Hungary and Czechoslovakia, the Czechoslovak government deported more than 44,000 Hungarians from Slovakia to the Sudetenland between 1945 and 1947 to solve the labour shortage that resulted from the expulsion of the Sudetenland Germans. Ethnic Hungarians who weren't deported were subject to pressure to assimilate and renounce their Hungarian roots or risk losing their entitlements to pension, social and healthcare provision. As part of this campaign Hungarian children were enrolled in Slovak schools.

However, the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia received state citizenship and full civil rights by autumn 1948. In 1949 Hungarian-language schools reopened. By 1950 the status of Hungarians in Czechoslovakia was resolved. The government again gave citizenship to ethnic Hungarians. The majority of Slovak Hungarians returned to their original homes in Slovakia.

1.1.2 Political overview

Despite the turbulent time the current social and demographic data illustrate that the Hungarian minority in Slovakia is not only the most numerous, but also most developed civil and cultural minority. This is a result of state policy in relation to minorities in Slovakia, which does not emphasize the concept of cultural assimilation and allows highly developed action on the part of the Hungarian minority. The Hungarian minority is organised politically in the SMK-MKP, which was a member of the ruling coalition of the Slovak Republic (1998-2006). And consistently receives approximately 15% of parliamentary seats in the National Council of the Slovak Republic. The Hungarian minority also has a strong presence in regional governments. They hold crucial positions in local government in many towns and villages in southern Slovakia.

The financing of the culture of national groups is controlled by the Ministry of Culture through a dedicated grant programme for National Minority Culture. This focuses on the overall support and development of minority culture, the dissemination of current artistic works, support for cultural and social projects whose end result is the creation and preservation of permanent cultural heritage, and support for periodical and non-periodical publications.

Training and education of national minorities provided at pre-school facilities, elementary schools, secondary schools, special schools and school facilities with teaching in languages other than Slovak, including the languages of the Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian and German national minority: In addition, education is provided for members of the Roma community and children from socially disadvantaged environments at schools and school facilities.

The issue of administrating the balance between state (Slovak) and minority (Hungarian) language in public relations became the subject of fierce domestic political debate in 2009. This controversy has led to a deterioration in bilateral relations between Slovakia and Hungary. Extremist political forces in Hungary began to escalate disputes over national political issue in Slovakia, particularly in pre-election period (2009) to the European Parliament (Jobbik). The elimination of border controls has allowed demonstration marches of extremist groups (such as Hungarian Guard) to the Slovak Republic (eg Kráľovský Chlmec)¹. This concerns all citizens of Slovakia, including the Hungarian minority.

Today the common history of Slovaks and Hungarians is being discussed by historians (among them are D. Kováč, J. Liptak). There is a process of writing joint Hungarian-Slovak history book.²

¹ <http://www.cas.sk/clanok/94906/slovenska-policia-zatkla-madarov-v-uniformach-madarskej-gardy.html>

² Common Slovak-Hungarian history textbook is Project Forum Institute for Minority Research in Samorin http://www.foruminst.sk/index.php?p=&t=a&xp=&Data_Id=15&From=0&Col=1&Mid=&Lev=&Ind=52&P=index,en Both in Slovakia and Hungary, the currently used history textbooks present the common history of two nations solely from single viewpoints, giving very little information about the other nation. For this reason, a team of historians and teachers is trying to compile a history textbook that will contain multiple viewpoints and will lack wordings evoking negative emotions towards the other nation.

1.2 Demographic Overview

1.2.1 The 2001 census

Magyars are Slovakia's largest ethnic minority, numbering, according to the 2001 census, 520,628 people and accounting for 9.7% of the overall population.

1.2.2 Language Usage

Among the young generation at home, they speak less (72,4%) only in Hungarian as in the case of the older (82,1%). Bilingualism is promoted more at younger households- 22,4% in comparison with older generation 14,1% (Machacek 2010).

1.2.3 Age Structure

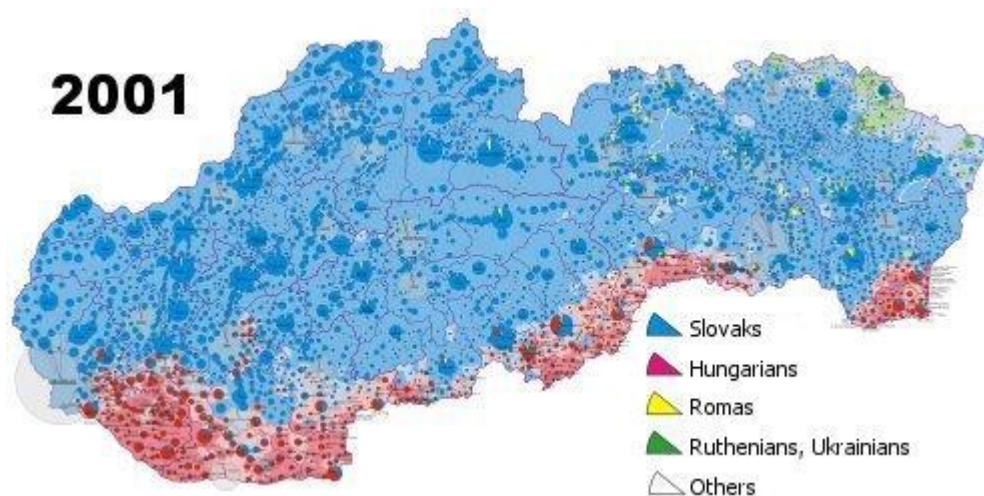
The Hungarian minority is older on average than the Slovak majority.

Tab Census 2001 Slovakia: age groups (5 years)

Age	Slovaks		Magyars	
	Spolu	Spolu (v %)	Spolu	Spolu (v %)
0 – 4	238 364	5,2	21 167	4,1
5 – 9	296 759	6,4	24 941	4,8
10 – 14	350 170	7,6	31 851	6,1
15 – 19	386 666	8,4	36 792	7,1
20 – 24	409 211	8,9	39 670	7,6
25 – 29	375 195	8,1	38 788	7,5
30 – 34	307 472	6,7	34 164	6,6
35 – 39	323 826	7,0	37 986	7,3
40 – 44	339 726	7,4	41 861	8,0
45 – 49	349 198	7,6	44 365	8,5
50 – 54	292 821	6,3	35 427	6,8
55 – 59	213 911	4,6	30 077	5,8
60 – 64	182 230	3,9	26 729	5,1
65 – 69	164 957	3,6	24 082	4,6
70 – 74	146 711	3,2	21 574	4,1
75 – 79	114 594	2,5	16 205	3,1
80+	85 172	1,8	12 888	2,5
No data	37 972	0,8	2 061	0,4
Spolu	4 614 954	100,0	520 628	100,0

1.2.4 Geographic Distribution

Most Hungarians live very close to the border to Hungary in Southern Slovakia and exceed 10% of the local population in five counties (kraj). They number 24% of the population in Trnavsky kraj, 27% in Nitriansky kraj, 12% in Banskobystricky kraj, 11% in Kosicky kraj and 4% in the capital Bratislava. Hungarians form the majority (80%) in two districts of Slovakia: Komárno (*Komáromi járás*) and Dunajská Streda (*Dunaszerdahelyi járás*). In these area Slovaks are in a minority.



1.2.5 Religion

In the last census of the population, houses and dwellings of May 2001, 84 per cent of the population declared membership of churches or religious societies registered in the Slovak Republic. Churches and religious societies have a stable and durable high level of confidence in surveys of confidence in institutions. Dr. J. Juran³ presentation „Religion“ brings this newest data about churches and religious societies in Slovakia:

As at 1 May 2008 there were 18 registered churches and religious societies operating in the Slovak Republic. And as at 1 July 2008, the following churches and religious societies operated in the territory of the Slovak Republic in accordance with Act no. 308/1991:

Name of church or religious society	Number of believers (based on population census 3.3.1991)	Number of believers (based on population census 3.3.2001)
Roman Catholic Church in the Slovak Republic	3,187,383	3,708,120
Evangelical (Lutheran) Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia	326,397	372,858
Greek Catholic Church in the Slovak Republic	178,733	219,831
Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia	82,545	109,735
Orthodox Church in Slovakia	34,376	50,363
Religious Society Jehovah's Witnesses in the Slovak Republic	10,501	20,63
Evangelical Methodist Church, Slovak Region	4,359	7,347
Church of the Seventh Day Adventists	1,721	3,428
Baptist Union in the Slovak Republic	2,465	3,562
Brethren Church in the Slovak Republic	1,861	3,217
Apostolic Church in Slovakia	1,116	3,905
Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities	912	2,31
Old Catholic Church in Slovakia	882	1,733
Christian Assemblies in Slovakia	700	6,519
Czechoslovak Hussite Church in Slovakia	625	1,696

³ <http://www.slovakia.culturalprofiles.net/?id=-7197>

Name of church or religious society	Number of believers (based on population census 3.3.1991)	Number of believers (based on population census 3.3.2001)
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Slovak Republic	*	*
Bahai Community in the Slovak Republic	*	*
Others	6,373	6,294
Total believers	3,840,949	4,521,549
Total non-denominational	515,551	697,308
Total indeterminate	917,835	160,598
Total population of the Slovak Republic	5,274,335	5,379,455

* not asked

A significant change in the perception of church-state relations was marked by the bilateral effort to establish relations and areas for co-operation on a contractual basis. Since the end of 2000, two significant changes have taken place in this area. These were the ratification of the Basic Treaty between the Slovak Republic and the Holy See signed at the Vatican on 24 November 2000, which applied to the Roman and Greek Catholic Churches, and the approval of the Agreement between the Slovak Republic and the registered churches and religious societies of 11 April 2002 on the status of 11 churches, including the Jewish religious community.

1.2.6 Education

The analysis of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak claimed⁴, that in the academic year of 2006/2007, Hungarian was taught in 278 kindergartens, 252 primary schools, 19 Gymnasias, 6 higher vocational schools, 8 lower vocational schools and 3 associated secondary schools. This network of the Hungarian schools is continuously developing in the meaning of quality and quantity, too. The curriculum for the first four years of elementary school with Hungarian language of instruction in the basic variant of the 2 years, 24 hours a week to 19 hours taught in Hungarian. The school is required to teach the state language as a separate subject called „Slovak language and literature“ 5 hours weekly. Only this subject is taught in Slovak. This training is done for the Hungarian minority in its own request.

Apart from the elementary schools, the high schools and colleges offer education in the native - Hungarian language, which is highly respected.

The citizens of Slovakia with Hungarian nationality have the choice to send their children to Slovak elementary and secondary schools and universities.

Research into the Slovak education system has been conducted with the aim of identifying areas that multicultural education should be focused on and the recommending practical steps regarding its implementation.⁵ According to several analyses conducted in Slovakia, the education system is still relatively ethnocentric. Multicultural education as a way of incorporating issues of cultural diversity into the educational system might be an effective tool for the integration of

⁴ <http://www.minedu.sk/index.php?lang=en&rootId=33>

⁵ The Centre for the Research of Ethnicity and Culture (CVEK) conducted a study on the subject of The Attitudes of primary schools pupils toward autochthonous and new minorities in Slovakia. Quantitative survey Period: January 2008 - April 2009. Publication with results of the research was presented in the OSF Gallery in Bratislava on April 21, 2009. see: www.cvek.sk

these minorities. The effective incorporation of multicultural education into the school system depends, however, on numerous factors that have to be met. One of the most important ones is a good knowledge on the part of young people of attitudes towards different ethnic and religious groups. The identification of prejudices and stereotypes can help to identify the proper form of multicultural education in order to implement it effectively.

In relation to higher education, the Janos Selye University in Komárno is the only Hungarian-language University in Slovakia. It was established in 2004 in Komárno and comprises three faculties, for Economics, Education and Reformation Theology⁶ Currently they count⁷ 2500 students – 1277 at Pedagogic Faculty, 1176 at Economic and 47 at the Faculty of Theology.

A number of Slovak universities offer Hungarian language degrees. The department of Hungarian Language and Literature at the Comenius University in Bratislava⁸ trains teachers and professionals for the needs of the Hungarian ethnic minority in Slovakia in the field of education, culture, literature and journalism. Since 1990 it has offered a course in Hungarian Studies in combination with Slovak Language and Literature to students who had not graduated from a Hungarian language secondary school. It also provides Masters and Doctorate degree study programmes, involving basic academic research opportunities in the field Hungarian Studies, Linguistics and Literature. The Department of Hungarian Studies at the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica⁹ prepares future translators, interpreters and scientific workers in the field of philology. The Faculty of Hungarian Language and Literature at Constantine, the Philosophy University in Nitra¹⁰, prepares future pre-school and elementary teachers of Hungarian language and literature, as well as translators and interpreters involved in Hungarian language and culture. In its professional research within linguistics, this institution explores modern Hungarian literature.

1.2.7 Employment

The areas of southern Slovakia are dominated by agriculture and processing industry for vegetables and fruit, as well as wine producing. Tourism and recreational services are also strong in these areas.

EU accession in 2004 allowed visa-free movement of people between Slovakia and Hungary for work and leisure activities under the Schengen agreement. As a new phenomenon appeared to be moving and housing in neighborhoods in Bratislava, Hungary (e.g. Rajka). It is generally accepted as a positive consequence of EU accession. European regional funds help to build infrastructure (especially bridges, road and rail links), which brought this possibility into reality. The classic example is the Maria Valeria bridge in Štúrovo, which was destroyed during the World War II and was restored only in 2001. Approximately three thousand citizens from the Slovak Republic (mainly ethnic Hungarians) commute across the bridge to work in Japanese companies Suzuki and Sanyo in Hungary.

⁶ <http://www.selyeuni.sk/>

⁷ <http://www.uips.sk/prehlady-skol/prehľad-vysokych-skol>

⁸ <http://www.fphil.uniba.sk/index.php?id=kmjl>

⁹ www.umb.sk

¹⁰ www.ukf.sk

1.3 Hungarian self-organisation in Slovakia¹¹

1.3.1 Political organisation

Most-Híd (Bridge) – new political party defines itself as a party that will connect Slovaks and ethnic Hungarians and will eliminate the tendency of worsening Slovak-Hungarian relations.¹²

The Hungarian minority has a strong presence in regional governments. They hold crucial position in the local government in many towns and villages in southern Slovakia. Elections of self-governing regions and of presidents of self-governing regions took place in November 2009. According to the results of the elections to the regional parliament in November 2009 received by political parties SMK and Most-Bridge represented mainly in the Trnava Region (12 members), Nitra region (13 members), Banská Bystrica-region (8 members) and Košice-region (4 members). In neither of these regions win the Hungarian political parties, candidate for President of the autonomous region.

Hungarian political parties in many towns and villages in southern Slovakia won mayoralships and many seats of municipal councils. For example the SMK-MKP candidate became mayor in Dunajská Streda and P. Pázmány from (Most-Híd) became mayor in Komárno T. Bastrnak¹³. The city municipality in Komárno with the majority of the members of the SMK-MKP and Most-Híd has not met a solution of the requirement made by Slovak Matica (Matica slovenská) about acceptance of placing statue of Cyril and Methodius in the city center. It became a subject of great unwillingness between the majority of the population and the argument of intolerant behavior by the Hungarian minority in Slovakia.

1.3.2 Civil society organisation

The Hungarian minority is one of the best organised in terms of culture.

The Hungarian Workers' Cultural Association of Slovakia (CSEMADOK) is a cultural and social umbrella organisation that has a structure of regional and local branches throughout Slovakia, in addition to a national council.¹⁴ The major focus of CSEMADOK is the development and presentation of Hungarian national culture in Slovakia. It currently administers 16 regional offices and one central office. The task of these offices is to co-ordinate the work of 396 basic organisations, which together consist of approximately 50,000 members. As a cultural and civic association CSEMADOK has become an important part of the social life of Hungarians living in Slovakia. It is able, if necessary, to mobilise a significant force in order to protect Hungarian rights, traditions and culture and to preserve the identity of the Hungarian minority living in Slovakia.

Professional associations

The Forum Minority Research Institute¹⁵, founded in 1996 by the Katedra Foundation and the Fórum Foundation in Dunajská Streda conduct complex studies on the situation and culture of the national minorities in Slovakia. The research centres document the Hungarians' written and

¹¹ Text in this part is taken from <http://www.slovakia.culturalprofiles.net/?id=-12655>

¹² <http://www.nrsr.sk/Default.aspx?sid=poslanci/kluby/nezavisli>

¹³ http://www.basti2006.sk/cirill-metod-ujra-tema_3465-n.html

¹⁴ <http://www.csemadok.sk/>

¹⁵ <http://www.foruminst.sk/index.php?P=index,en>,

social heritage. As a non-profit organization, the Institute operates as public and service institute. In 2002, the Forum Institute established its centre and seat in Šamorín. In 1999, two other partner institutes were founded. The Forum Information Centre provides civil training and civil service while the Forum Regional Development Centre is engaged with rural development and small area planning. Together with the Forum Minority Research Institute these three organizations form a consortium, the Forum Institute.

The department of Present Research and Hungarian Identity Research carries out research into the different areas of social policy of the Hungarian national minority community in Slovakia – including identity politics, economics, culture and the various social, institutional and other relations. Its strategic research plans are summarized in the outline titled “Hungarians of Slovakia 1990 – 2005”. The bibliographical processing of all literature relating to the Hungarians and other minorities of Slovakia makes up a significant part of the department’s tasks. It also involves publishing chronologies, lexicons, source-books, annuals and repertoriums of related journals.

The Round Table of Hungarians in Slovakia

is an open, independent, non-partisan, voluntary and informal institution, functioning as an umbrella platform for organizations and esteemed personalities of the Hungarian community in Slovakia. It was initiated by the South-Slovakian Civic Information Network at the Civic Forum Conference 2008 held in Šamorín. It holds meetings in the form of a professional conference at least once a year. The financial background is ensured by voluntary contributions of the member organizations. The number of the members of the Round Table is currently 51 NGOs and 13 private persons.

Events organized up today by the Round Table:

- The 1st National Meeting (29.01.2009., Šamorín-Čilistov)
- The situation of the Hungarian media in Slovakia – professional meeting (25.11.2009., Šamorín)
- The 2nd National Meeting (27.11.2009., Dunajská Streda)

The presentations of the 1st National Meeting was published in the book entitled *Hatékony érdekérvényesítést (Effective advocacy). Enforcement of language rights in Slovakia*

Youth organisation

The most important student organisations that support the dissemination of Hungarian culture are the Diákhálózat Student Network (Bratislava), the Hungarian Students’ Association JUGYIK (Nitra), and the Civic Association Young People for the Future (Nové Zámky) and VIA NOVA. Recent studies of political youth organizations in Slovakia showed that Via Nova is a viable organization in the environment of the Hungarian national minority. Its task is political education and youth cooperation with ethnic political party of the Hungarian minority such as SMK (FEM) to mobilize young voters.¹⁶

¹⁶ Pozri: http://www.vyskummladeze.sk/images/stories/iuventa/DAVM_029/ucm_prvovolici.pdf

1.3.3 Arts and culture

Literary activities are organised by the Society of Hungarian Writers in Slovakia.¹⁷ The Association of Hungarian Teachers in Slovakia has a long tradition of educational activity in schools and for the general public. The Hungarian national minority is also the best represented minority in terms of the number of cultural and artistic groups in Slovakia.

It is the only one to have a folklore and dance group - the Ifjú Szivek Hungarian Folk Ensemble. It is under the patronage of the state and therefore receives a regular annual contribution from the government. Another folk group is Szóttés Folkloric Ensemble, which enjoys nearly the same level of success, while Ilosvai Selymes Péter Folk Ensemble is the main children's folklore group. The Hungarian minority also tries to promote its important cultural and social personalities (groups) through documentary films (Imrich Nagy - BODVA STUDIO, REGFILM s r o).

Hungarian theatre is presented in two important theatres: Jókai Theatre, Komárno and Thália Theatre Košice. There are also a number of smaller amateur, volunteer theatre groups in Slovakia, eg Rock Theatre, Róckszínház, Polgári Társulás.

There is a specialised scientific research and documentation centre for Hungarian culture at the SNM - Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia, Bratislava in Bratislava. Specialised collections relating to the development of Hungarian culture may also be found in regional museums such as the Danube Museum in Komárno, the Gemer-Malohont Museum, Rimavská Sobota, the Novohrad Museum and Gallery in Lučenec and the Žitný Ostrov-Csallóköz Museum, Dunajská Streda.

1.3.4 Religious organization

Citizens SR of Hungarian nationality in our research (Machacek 2010) shall be reported to the Roman Catholic (60.5%), but also the Christian Reformed (12.2%) and the Evangelical Church (7.4%). A Relatively large Proportion (15%) are not reported to any church.

Participate in religious services once (13%) or several times a year (25.2%), but once a month (11.2%). However, there is a smaller group, participates in ceremonies more often - once (18.4%) or several times a week (7.4%), or even every day (1%). This is case, people older than 65 years. (Machacek 2010)

1.3.5 Publishing and the press

Publishing activities are well developed. The following publishers produce periodical and non-periodical publications (Petit Press Publishing Company, Kalligram Publishing Company, Liliium Aurum Publishing Company, MADÁCH-POSONIUM Publishing Company and etc) The most widely read periodicals are Új Szó, Új Nó, Szabad Újság, TÜCSÖK, Irodalmi Szemle, Jó Gazda, and etc.

Our survey accomplished in 2009 claimed the citizens of the Slovak Republic with Hungarian nationality (about 80-90% highly appreciate the possibilities to receive the information in Hungarian language in the mass media (TV, radio, press, books) printed in Slovakia.

¹⁷ Regularly updated information on Hungarian culture in Slovakia can be found on the Holnap website <http://www.holnap.sk>.

1.3.6 The media

The National Minority and Ethnic Broadcasting Department of Slovak Radio is based in Košice and currently produces broadcasts in Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Romani, Czech, Polish and German.) Slovak Television has provided regular broadcasting for national minorities since 2004, through the Hungarian news programme „Hírek”, the Hungarian programme „Magyar magazin” about everyday life theme and the Hungarian discussion programme „Terítéken” about education, culture, economy and regional politics.

The Hungarian minority in contrast to others ethnic minorities disposes with its own special radio station called PATRIA. The advisory board of the Hungarian transmission and broadcasting is an organic member of the Slovak Radio. According the law 619/2003 on Slovak Radio it focuses its transmission mostly on the Hungarian minority. The PATRIA radio does not have an exclusive audience within the Hungarian minority. Its broadcasting is dedicated to all social groups who understand the Hungarian language. The advisory board which consists of 24 members provides 8 hour broadcast from 12.00 to 20.00.

1.4 Overview of existing surveys

Research that has explored¹⁸ the historical memory of the Slovak majority and minority populations indicates that the citizens of Hungarian nationality are more likely to perceive their ethnicity and to play greater importance to historical events in terms of their cultural identity. D.Kusá demonstrates this in a study *Collective Memory in Conflict and Conciliation*, that the transmission of historical narratives through societal channels conveys strong emotions, which aid in ethnic mobilization of social groups. An illustrative survey also indicates that the local opinion leaders tend to give more importance to history than a random sample, and ethnic Hungarians tend towards stronger ethnic identification than Slovaks. (p.57)

¹⁸ EXPLORING THE NATION. Nine Studies on Ethnicity and Nationalism
Peter Drál and Andrej Findor (Editors),Tribun EU,Brno 2009. ISBN 978 80-7399-752-6.

2 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE ENRI-VIS SURVEY (ENRI-VIS)

Ladislav Macháček

2.1 Methodological aspects of ENRI-East¹⁹ research

In the case of ENRI-East project, comprehensive research strategy that uses the advantages of qualitative and quantitative sociological methods was developed. Quantitative method is represented by a sociological questionnaire, by which reputable agency FOCUS Slovakia collected research data in Bratislava (November and December 2009). By random selection 801 interviews with respondents was carried out, which represents representative research sample of the Hungarian national minority living in Slovakia, especially with regard to regional distribution (Table 1 Sample by regions, Table 2 Sample by counties – from Bratislava to Michalovce). This research has a representative sample in terms of regional distribution of Hungarian minority in Slovakia. It has exceptionally great importance in terms of comparisons with other researches, which have been implemented in recent years in Slovakia and their results become part of professional discourse. (Kusá, Z., Krivý, V., Mészárosová-Lamplová, Z., Homišinová, M.)

Methodological specificities of this study is a comparison of two generations, first one with experiences from period since 1945 to 1951 and the second one with its intensive perception of social changes and transformation after 1989.

In the research file, youngest generation is represented by the age group of 18-29 years old and the oldest generation by the age group over 60 years. Middle generation represents age group of 30-59 years old. Their representation is relatively reasonable, so we can make a comparative analysis. Young generation: age group 18-29 years has 116 respondents (14.5 %). Middle generation: the age group 30-59 years is 449 respondents (56.1 %). The older generation: the age group over 60 years reached 234 respondents (29.2 %).

According to the methodology developed by an international team ENRI-East we conducted in 2010 in-depth individual interviews with randomly selected respondents according to three age and gender categories. In this study, we use qualitative methods of sociological research not only because we have to "illustrate" the subject of the original statements made by respondents, but also thoroughly interpret some findings quantitative sociological research.

The advantage of the concept of ENRI-East international research lies in the possibility to compare situation of national minorities in several countries and to clarify effects of state policy on cultural development of ethnic minorities. In our analysis in some areas, we compare results of quantitative research of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia (800 respondents) files with the

¹⁹Project of the EC ENRI-East: "The Interplay between European, national and regional identities: Nations between states towards the new eastern borders of the European Union" (international study of social and ethnic groups living in border areas of Europe) has a special slogan, which is aptly describes: 'People in motion, boundaries in motion.' Enria-East is an international research project dedicated to the analysis of socio-ethnic identities in Eastern Europe, issues of individual or group self-identification and ethnicity. It is a pilot study. So far none similar studies, particularly with regard to geographic scope, thematic framework and a variety of research tools and methods have been made. This research study was carried out in Russia (Kaliningrad), Belarus, Ukraine (400 respondents of Hungarian minority), Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary (400 respondents of Slovak minority) and Slovakia (800 respondents of Hungarian minority).

Hungarian minority in Ukraine (400 respondents) and the Slovak minority in Hungary (400 respondents).

2.2 Hungarian minority in Slovakia: interdisciplinary approach

Traditional dominance of historical science in political and scientific discourse in the case of this subject gradually recedes into the background. This is linked to the fact that relatively distant historical events such as assimilation of Slovaks and other minorities in Hungary (1874 – 1879, Apponyi Acts 1907 – 1908, occupation of eastern Slovakia by the Hungarian Red Revolutionary Guard Corps (Kuhn, 1919), Paris Convention (Trianon, 1920), as well as subsequent occupation of part of Slovakia by armies of Admiral Horthy (Vienna Arbitrage 1938) – all this recedes into the background in the historical memory of today's young generation. "Trauma" build on the basis of these historical events are clearly different in both parts of population. (Krivý, 2006, s. 36).

Older generation is still able to update their memories on the arrival of Hungarian troops on southern Slovakia after the Vienna Arbitrage.²⁰ Older people through their own experiences in childhood reflect especially exchange and withdrawal of the ethnic Hungarians after 1945 to Hungary and Bohemia.²¹

But still should be mentioned, that political discourse is constantly updated oldest traumas from the era of common coexistence of the Slovaks and Hungarians. „When mentioning this we have forgotten one more important fact – the historical factor greatly influencing the mutual relations. Understanding the position of the Hungarian minority in the Slovak Republic, continuation of the so called ‘Trianon trauma’ but also the considerations about the ‘thousand year oppression of the

²⁰ HU(SK) O6 M L O :...I can tell you a particular case my father remembered that cannot be erased. Hungarians came here, my father told me, I was born only in 1949, so I cannot remember that. The army came on horses, and Czechoslovak army left – by cars, motorcycles...yes, they freed the space...the difference between those who came and those who left. My father remembered that in Blatné, Slovaks – Hungarians lived here , they were legionnaires as one says. From Orava (region in the north of Slovakia – translator's note) as well they were here in Senec. They lived here, they were Slovaks, during first republic - they came after 1921, they lived together, worked together, when they closed it here, they stayed here, but traded, they used to go to Blatné, it was Slovak...because here was nothing, flour, sugar. Everything was limited...there was nothing here, in the evening they gave bread soaked in rum to the pigs, they drank and went to sleep. Here across the woods, the vineyards they went to the forest, there was sugar, flour on the carriage, they brought it, divided, and they did not steal from each other. My father used to tell me one rhyme: „ back Prague, back Bratislava, Hungarians f... you“ And Hungarians themselves were talking like that, about 1938.....it was developed here, everything was here....if we take it, everybody dreams about Great Hungary, I do not know what for what, does anybody want to rule there, or some fee, if we tak economic side, Hungarian currency never jumped over Slovak, 70 pennies was the maximum what I remember, and now in fact 16-17 pennies of Slovak crown is 100 forints, it changes a little..euro for 260 forints, those few forints up and down.

²¹ HU(SK) 07 M L O:.. village Pitvaroš, Tothkomloš, almost near Romanian borders, close, some already from Romania, from that part they were moved here, they got big houses, big lands, after those big farmers, those were leaving were put in one wagon, some misunderstandings occurred, their relatives were not nice to those Pitvaroš people, they were not satisfied ... they did not know well, Hungarian they knew better than us Hungarians, ...yes, but they did not know Slovak, such expressions they had, we did not know, as they spoke it was funny to us ... from Senec they went to Šumava, there were no problems with them, but with those Pitvaroš were problems a bit, because relatives, that were displaced, they were doing bad things to them, because nobody likes, when you have to leave home, and somebody moves in there, so yes, they were coming back too then, they were bad, were setting fires and killing in Šumava ... no, nothing like it, no, from time to time somebody set a fire in the crops of the farmers that were displaced, so they set a fire there ...they were visiting here, after years they came, it was better for them here.

Slovak nation´ seem to be very negative determinants of the mutual bilateral Slovak-Hungarian relations” (Klus, 2010, p. 346).

After 1993, political science, as well as international relations strengthens its position in the case of research of ethnic minorities in Slovakia (Poláčková, 2010, Strauss, 2010, Weis, 2010). Their attention, in the context of reforming of the concept of multiculturalism in Europe, is focused on state-defined national interests and promotes national identity through the national foreign policy.

Today, knowledge of sociological and psychological sciences (Homišínová, 2008), which reflect everyday life of citizens in the transforming countries are much more important and interesting. Addressing of situation of national minorities in Slovakia, as well as in every EU country, depends not only on bilateral relations ("mother" and "host" countries), but also from the supervision of European institutions.

We can express hypothesis, that satisfaction of citizens with the quality of their lives (included democracy, rule of law, education opportunities, employment opportunities, security) in a specific country mostly creates a good basis for equality in the case of citizens with different ethnicity.

2.3 Role of ethnicity in collective (social)identity

Through the research of "identity" of young citizens from EU countries, idea that concept of identity belongs to type of concepts that should be strictly construed in the situational contexts, is developed (Yndignen, 2009). From everyday life we know that the answer to question of who we are or where we are, depends a lot on our personal expectations. For example, during the visiting of USA or China, our answer to question – “Where are you from?” - will be “I am from Europe”. When we are in Europe, we will answer that we are from Slovakia and when we are in Slovakia, answer will be that we are from Bratislava, Košice, Trnava, etc. But it should be mentioned, that this does not reflect the different identities, but only different expressions of the same contextual identity. This is useful if we interpret fact that the ordinary man sees its identity as a multi-layered, but internally similar entity (something like famous Russian toy "Matrioška").

This approach can be called like social-constructivist, because "... under smaller or bigger social pressure of communicated ideas and expectations, persons subsequently “define their situation” and select their loyalty, which they considered as most relevant”. (Krivý, 2006, s. 24)

Table 1: These factors are most important for my identity

For my identity is most important	Hungarians in Slovakia	Hungarians in Ukraine	Slovaks in Hungary
My job	13,4	24,6	4,4
Whether I'm man or women	22,5	27,5	9,6
Whether I'm younger or older	9,4	11,6	11,5
My religion (ev. atheist)	4,6	14,5	5,9
My ethnicity (Hungarian living on Slovakia)	21,7	14,5	19,2
My social category	2,4	1,4	2,5
Place of living	10,0	3,5	30,5
Political party, movement, that I support	0,5	0,0	0,2
That I am a European	3,2	1,2	0,7
That I am state citizen	6,1	1,2	15,5
I don't know	5,6	0,0	0,0
Don't want answer	0,6	0,0	0,0
Total	100	100	100

Basis of human identity is built on universal (biosocial determined and identifiable at first sight) characteristics such as gender, age and race. Several research analyses depict them as primordial characters (Kusá, 2008). Even in our research, we surveyed whether respondent is man or woman, age group (by year of birth), what is respondent's education or profession.

We pointed reference to national minority on the base of complex issues, so that we ask respondent on the level of local (municipality), regional (area) and state area in which is he/she living, how high is their confidence in state institutions, how they can see living perspective of their children in their own country and in Europe.

Citizen identity has several components and therefore nobody can compel respondent to an unequivocal decision. In our research, respondents used opportunity of three options. From 801 respondents in Slovakia, 174 respondents chose like "important thing" for the identity on first place category of "national identity". In second round of selection, 145 respondents chose this option and during the third round 107 respondents. When counting all the votes (like we present it in the Table 2 in the column "SR average") ethnic identity level reached 17.7 %. Together with other characteristics it creates balanced core of "identities", and these identities characterize citizens of Hungarian nationality in Slovakia – these categories are represented by gender (14.9 %), age (11.4 %), community (12.3 %), employment (9 %) Slovak citizenship (7 %), being European (4.7 %). In the first place (see Table 1) are these "elements" of identity at the choice of respondents in a different order: gender (22.5 %) and identity "of ethnic Hungarian living in Slovakia" (21.7 %). Followed by employment (13.4 %), belonging to the municipality (10 %) and age (9.4 %). Slovak citizenship (6.1 %), religion (4.6 %) and Europeanism (3.2 %) is placed at the end of the optional segments of Slovak Hungarians identity. Other components of the received file have marginal position.

For Slovak citizen with Hungarian nationality is balanced selection of different "identities" relatively typical. In both cases, either by placing on the first place or by the average of all three

possible options, ethnic identity placed although significant, but only complementary importance in the field other role-status identities.

2.3.1 Comparative analysis of minorities in three countries

For our analysis, clarifying importance of "ethnic identity" in this structure, we can proceed using the comparison with the other two countries where national minorities live: Slovaks in Hungary and Hungarians in Ukraine. Very important is mainly comparison of Hungarians on Slovakia and in Ukraine, that strikes primary goal of ENRI-East research - obtain information about the situation of ethnic minorities in EU member states and in countries on the eastern border of EU. As we know, Slovakia and Hungary are members of the EU since 2004. Comparing situation of Hungarian minority in Slovakia and Ukraine with situation of Slovaks in Hungary is very important. In Slovak political discourse is continuously present requirement of compliance with "reciprocity" in the creation of conditions (finance civic associations, schools, public media and special sessions, etc..) of cultural development of ethnic minorities (mainly by Slovak National Party – SNS). Comparison of three countries (Table 2) allows us to demonstrate that countries and their national minorities are really different in what segments of their own identity for themselves regarded as important. With only cursory look at the results allow us to conclude that there is a sort of "dominant" or "core" identity in the case of national minorities living in these three countries. In a way they reflect same specific cultural tradition and key issues of cultural minority policies of these countries as well:

1. In the case of Slovakia, Slovak nationality is according the respondents - Slovak citizens with Hungarian nationality – mainly important component of this complex.²² For comparison - in the first election 21.7 % of Hungarians in Slovakia highlighted this aspect of their identity, 19.2 % of Slovaks in Hungary and 14.5 % of Hungarians in Ukraine highlighted this aspect of their identity as. In the case of Ukraine, factor of nationality as important element of individual identity is placed only like a second 27.6 % (UA) and partly third option 19.5 % (UA).

Table 2: Which one from these factors is most important for you personally in general?

	HU I.	SK I.	UA I.	HU II.	SK II.	UA II	HU III	SK III	UA III.	Average SR v %
Job	4,4	13,4	24,6	2,7	7,4	10,0	3,7	6,4	6,5	9,0
Man/Woman	9,6	22,5	27,5	4,9	12,7	16,1	7,7	9,6	10,4	14,9
Age	11,5	9,4	11,6	9,1	15,0	10,6	14,5	10,0	9,2	11,4
Religion	5,9	4,6	14,5	6,9	4,1	20,8	6,7	2,5	9,8	3,7
Nationality (Note)	19,2	21,7	14,5	25,6	18,1	27,6	16,0	13,4	19,5	17,7
Village/City	30,5	10,0	3,5	29,5	13,1	5,6	23,4	13,7	25,1	12,3
I am European	0,7	3,2	1,2	1,5	5,1	2,3	5,7	5,6	4,1	4,7
I am citizen	15,5	6,1	1,2	14,5	6,2	1,5	17,2	9,0	3,8	7,1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100,0

ENRI-East, november – december 2009. Note: Fact, that person is Hungarian living on Ukraine (Slovakia), or Slovak living in Hungary

²²Although several studies of collective identities in Slovakia confirm this. Not only Hungarians in Slovakia, but also Slovaks emphasize mostly, that they belong to a particular nationality. (Krivý – Danglová, 2006).

2. In Hungary situation relates to "location". Slovak Hungarians much more than other minorities derive their identity from the place, town or city in which they live (30 % in the first place, 29.5 % for the second and 23.4 % for third place). It seems clear from the fact that their settlement in Hungary has character of relatively isolated communities and is not so geographically compact like in Slovakia²³. All three countries are different on the field of accentuation of collective identity in an important element - "I am a citizen of this republic", which presents civic loyalty of a minority to the state. Demonstration of belonging to the In the case of Slovak living in Hungary, demonstration of belonging to the Hungary on the basis of citizenship is evident (14-17 %), whether compared with the Hungarians in Slovakia (6-9 %), but particularly with Hungarians in Ukraine (1.2 to 3.8 %).

3. In Ukraine, ethnic Hungarians recall their employment, gender, ethnic identity, but mainly their confessional identity (14.5 % in the first place, 20.8 % in second place), which is different (Orthodox) from the majority population. In Slovakia and Hungary are Christian - Catholic and Protestant religious institutions are predominant. Slovakia is traditionally for Slovak Hungarian minority reformed (Calvin) church is traditionally dominant, which is symbolized by Theological Faculty at the University of Komarno.

2.3.2 Generational considerations

Generational aspect in the analysis of "ethnic identity" allows us to show that for older as well as for younger generation of Slovak citizens with Hungarian ethnicity is dominant identity "I am a Hungarian living on Slovakia".

Younger generation of Hungarian minority in Slovakia prefer as first choice of its identity quality as "gender", i.e. they are a boy or a girl (29.3 % of young and 18.4 % of older) and age, i.e. they are young or old (15.5 % of young and 10.7 % of older). For the first election younger generation prefer their nationality as strongly as the older generation (16.4 % of younger and 22.2 % of older). In the second line, we can see convergence of opinions between the generations in the case of ethnicity (18.1 % of younger and 18.4 % of older) and only in the third round, younger generation provides "nationality" more often than the older generation (17.2 % of young and 13.2 % of older).

Younger generation of Slovak Hungarian minority respondents derives their identity primarily from the "age" and "gender", not only because these respondents are "younger" and "gender" has important role, but also on the historical and social base.

During the period of modernization on Slovakia after 1989, "national" identity meets with the integration processes that changed citizens of national states to the citizens of the European Union. Current Slovak citizens has survived two decades in which process of dissolution of Czechoslovakia and establish of independent Slovak Republic (1993) was connected with the process of its integration into the European Union (2004) together with the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. Slovak citizens with Hungarian ethnicity always were and still are strong supporters of European integration processes, especially because these removing institutional barriers and restrictions on the field of free movement of persons.

²³ According to the results of long-term analysis of M. Homišinová not only population but also other factors operating at deepening of "hungarianism" of Slovak minority, for example. "Underdeveloped ethnic school system, adverse demographic variables..." (Homišinová, 2010, s. 462-463).

2.4 "Structure" of national identity and citizenship

Unlike other empirical studies (Kusá and Zeman, 2008, s. 232) ENRI-East research project tried to develop a specific typology ("construct") of respondents' national identity. Its foundation has become a combination of indicators such as "national identity" and the indicator of "citizenship".

We offered to respondents on Slovakia 4 options of self-categorization:

- a) I am a member of the Hungarian nation (Hungarian)
- b) I am ethnic Hungarian living in the host country (Slovakia)
- c) I am a citizen of Slovakia as the host country with different ethnic origin
- d) I am a citizen of Slovakia as the host country

As results of this research shown, sociological "construct" is suitable if we want differentially express identity of minority Hungarian citizens of Slovakia (Graph 1). There is confirmation that most members of this ethnic minority have been identified with the characteristic "I am a Hungarian living in Slovakia" (68 %). Two separate groups of relatively same size chose identity "I am a Hungarian" (16 %) or "I am Slovak with Hungarian origin" (13 %). Only a few individuals indicated that they are Slovaks (1 %). It is noteworthy that the representation of age groups in different types of ethnic identity is rarely balanced. It can be concluded that each type is essentially reproduced to the future according same key. For example type "Hungarians" are equally represented in all three generations - youngest (16.4 %), medium (14 %) and oldest (19.7 %) as well.

Graph 1: Could you please choose one option from this list that represents mostly your ethnical status?



It is necessary respect fact that respondent's choice of each alternative has its background and rationale. It is not accidental decision. We can certify this by fact that respondent's consequent opinions and attitudes related to these decisions.

In our research, we surveyed how much "correlate" orientations aiming to promote customs and traditions with alternatives of ethnic identity orientation Hungarian minority culture, but also with an attitude to its possible adaptation to the majority society (Table 3 and Table 4).

Table 3: Could you please tell me, how much do you agree with: It is better if Hungarians living in Slovakia preserve their own customs and traditions

		Strongly agree	Rather agree	Rather do not agree	Do not agree at all
I'm Hungarian	Count	74	42	5	2
	100 %	57.4 %	32.6 %	3.9 %	1.6 %
I'm Hungarian living in Slovakia	Count	233	247	22	5
	100 %	43.0 %	45.6 %	4.1 %	.9 %
I'm Slovak with Hungarian descent	Count	27	60	10	0
	100 %	25.7 %	57.1 %	9.5 %	.0 %

Table 4: Could you please tell me, how much do you agree with: It is better if Hungarians living in Slovakia adapt and blend into the larger society

		Strongly agree	Rather agree	Rather do not agree	Do not agree at all
I'm Hungarian	Count	10	21	28	62
	100 %	7.8 %	16.3 %	21.7 %	48.1 %
I'm Hungarian living in Slovakia	Count	57	140	162	135
	100 %	10.5 %	25.8 %	29.9 %	24.9 %
I'm Slovak with Hungarian descent	Count	17	30	32	17
	100 %	16.2 %	28.6 %	30.5 %	16.2 %

The choice of alternative "I am Hungarian", expresses the attitude of refusing to adapt and assimilate with the majority society (69.8 %, including 48.1 % with strongly oppose). Such a choice is associated with promoting the development of ethnic minority culture (90 %, included 57.4 % respondents with strong expression of this requirement).

Choice of alternative "I am Hungarian living on Slovakia" is associated with rejection of adaptation and assimilation with the majority society (54.8 %, of which only 24.9 % strongly oppose), but not so rigorous. In the case of support of own minority culture similar level is achieved (88.6 %) as an alternative to "I am Hungarian" (90 %), but is characterized by a certain moderation of expressing this requirement.

Choice of alternative "I am Slovak with Hungarian ancestors" refers bigger shift on range effort refusing to adapt to mainstream society. As a whole there is only 46.7 % (strongly oppose is only 16.2 %) of respondents. Orientation to promote cultural development of ethnic minorities is same (82.8 %), although shifted in position requiring like lighter.

Results of research using only two indicators, while allowing only hypothesizes that "adaptation"²⁴ to coexistence with the major society does not entail automatically "cultural assimilation" or the loss of "ethnic identity". Reflects only the willingness of Slovak citizens belonged to eth-

²⁴ In Europe, there is discussion about different options and terminology, such a adaptation, accommodation, assimilation, integration and so. As it formulates Z. Poláčková: "In the future it will be difficult, in a further deepening of integration processes in Europe, a joint project aimed at addressing minority cohabitation" (Poláčková, 2010, s. 218).

nic minority to show some "loyalty" to the state framework, that should be compensated by adequate possibilities of cultural development.

Belonging to Hungarian minority is articulated openly on Slovakia, without any barriers. In many cases we find testimonies of pride to their own nationality in the expressions of respondents.

In many cases there is demonstrated that "Hungarian nationality" is not identical with Hungary, but is rather bound to Slovakia as a country in which respondents were born and where their ancestors lived.

This huge presence of self-definition of national identity as "Hungarians living on Slovakia" is not result of comparison or "confrontation" of minor (Hungarians) and major (Slovaks) societies in their common country. Categories like WE and THEY are applied as a result of intensive regional contacts (family, recreation, shopping) of Hungarians living in Slovakia and Hungarians living in Hungary. It should be respected fact that when they visit Hungary, they are identified like "Hungarians from Slovakia", not like "Hungarians". It is not just a thing of state cars' signs, but mainly on the basis of their exceptional pronunciation (dialect) and specific vocabulary (some Slovak words). This is important factor or aspect of creating their specific dominant identity, with which we not count during ENRI-East project research.

This is demonstrated by some statements of our respondents during individual interviews:

HU(SK) 02 (W,36) „we are in a very bad situation, we are not real Hungarians, not real Slovaks...here they call us Hungarians, in Hungary Slovak, it is difficult, because they do not take us as real Hungarians...when we go to Hungarian schools, to have something... yes, they do a bit, because we speak Hungarian dialect...it is not that sparkish, or how would I put it, they use very proper language, therefore it is easy for them to see we are not from Hungary, they see it immediately...difficult“

HU(SK) 07(W,71) ... of course, when a Hungarian goes to the market and wants frankfurters, and he says „he wants „horčica“ (mustard), they do not know the word, in Hungarian it is muštard, in Hungarian he asks, and he says I would like „horčica“, here in Senec we can't speak the Hungarian they speak in Hungary, it is not the language as original in Hungary, I say I am a Hungarian, but in radio or television I listen and I do not know some words, what it is, and I am a Hungarian“.

For confirmation of this hypothesis we have results of sociological research as well, conducted by Forum Institute for Ethnic Minorities Research in Samorin in 2008 and which has also sample of 800 adult citizens of Hungarian nationality living in southern Slovakia. In this research²⁵, researchers asked for question "How do you think people in Hungary behave for Hungarians arriving from Slovakia?"

Replies showed that they are not only kind, trying to help (29.0 %), or are acting in good faith rather than malicious (43.0, %), but in some cases also they are more malicious than in good faith (14.0 %) and even malicious (4.0 %). Responses revealed that there are also cases "more malicious than in good faith" or even "malicious" behavior of Hungarians in Hungary to Slovak Hungarians. This has influence on strengthening specific identity of Slovak Hungarians certainly.

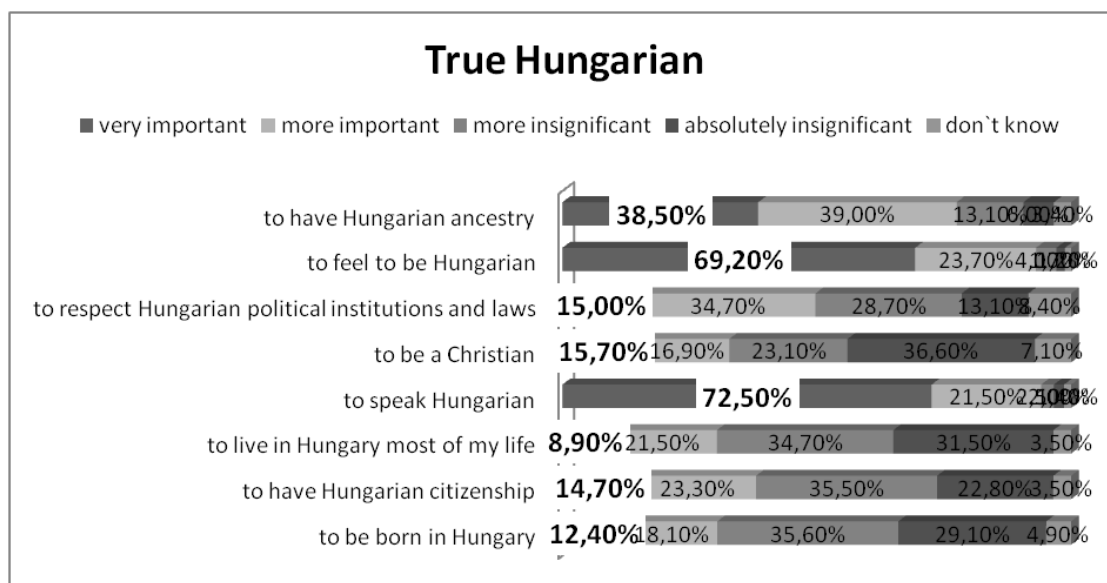
²⁵ Results of research of political identity of Hungarians in Slovakia. Forum Institute for Ethnic Minorities Research, Samorin. Research supervisor: Zuzana Mészárosová-Lamplová. Responsible person: Károly Tóth. October 2008.

2.5 „True Hungarian“ and Hungarian citizenship

Research allowed respondents to adopt its opinion on the issue, which actually considered facts are very important according them, if somebody wants to say about himself that he/she is "true Hungarian". Results are presented in a separate graph (Graph 2) shows that according respondents, person is "true Hungarian" if speaks Hungarian language fluently" (72 %) and if he/she "to feel like Hungarian" (69.2 %). To these important factors, we can include also category "to have Hungarian ancestors" (38.5 %). Other facts, such as religion, be born or live in Hungary, are not so important.

Generational differences are reflected remarkable in each group of characteristics. Older generation much more accentuated factor "Hungarian language" (77.4 % versus 69.8 %) and 'feel to be Hungarians (73.1 % vs. 69 %). "To have Hungarian citizenship" is the only characteristic of "true Hungarian", where generation gap is in different chaperone. For "real Hungarian" is "very important" to have "Hungarian citizenship" little more according younger generation (15.5 % of respondents) than by older respondents (10.3 %).

Graph 2: According to you, how much important are these factors, if person wants to be „true Hungarian“?



Data collection: FOCUS, November – December 2009

2.6 Slovak language and its proficiency

Question of application of state and minority languages in public relations or in everyday parlance is in the center of political discourse in Slovakia today. Research²⁶ has produced some information that indicates relative improvement in the use of Slovak language in communication and attitude towards its use. Research confirmed tendency of lesser closeness to minority isolation and greater openness to the majority society by proficiency of both languages. (Graph 3)

More detailed analysis of specific expression of same friendliness and demonstration of competence to use Slovak language in public communications, however, shows (Table 5) that this is in

²⁶ Surprisingly, there was founded that approximately 48.1 % of Hungarian respondents in this research chose Slovak version of sociological questionnaire.

direct relation to self-identification with the type of "national identity". But even people with a strong Hungarian identity (I am Hungarian) showed not only willingness to interviewer, but a decent knowledge of Slovak language (37.2 %). On the other side Slovaks of Hungarian ancestors (I am Slovak with Hungarian descent) preferred Hungarian language (23.8 %).

Graph 3: What language or languages do you speak at home most often?

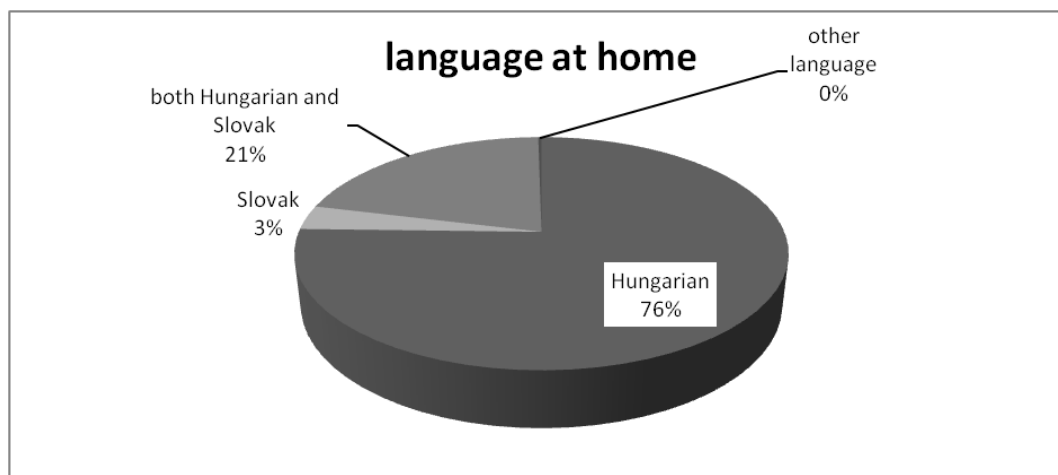


Table 5: Choice of Slovak or Hungarian version of sociological questionnaire (ENRI-East Research 2009)

	Count	HU	SK
I'm Hungarian	Count	81	48
	%	62.8 %	37.2 %
I'm Hungarian living in Slovakia	Count	304	238
	%	56.1 %	43.9 %
I'm Slovak with Hungarian descent	Count	25	80
	%	23.8 %	76.2 %

In principle, in families (at home) members speak Hungarian. In the case of young generation, was founded that at family members speaking little less (72.4 %) only in Hungarian as in the case of the older generation (82.1 %). Bilingualism is therefore advocated in younger households more (22.4 %), especially compared with older generation (14.1 %).

Proficiency of Slovak language has different levels and causes. It can be demonstrated by stories of some our respondents, in which parents based on their own life experiences, encourage their children to learn Slovak language. But young people themselves purposefully overcome many obstacles in learning state language, for improving career prospects throughout country.

Younger generation, understand many issues related to the Hungarian language differently than older generation. Generational differences are noticeable at level of 15-25 %. For older respondents is very important category "to speak Hungarian with my friends' (58.6 % of younger vs. 71.8 % of older), opinions' consensus can be seen in the case of indicator generations "to read newspapers in Hungarian language "(according to 58.6 % of younger and 60.3 % of older this is very important).

2.7 European integration

Young generation generally assesses EU as an institution much more positive than older generation (25.9 % vs. 8.1 %). Young generation is also more believes that Slovak's membership in EU membership has great benefits for country (30.2 % vs. 13.7 %).

When we want to compare situation and status of "Hungarian minority" before accession and after accession to EU indicates (Table 6), we found that dominant is indicator "everything is almost identical" (48.3 % of younger and 44 % of older).

Generational aspect allows to find better, how Slovak citizens with Hungarian nationality assess ongoing changes. In particular, it can be stated that younger generation has a greater sense of some changes either for better (22.4 %) or worse (18.1 %). Older generation does not feel these changes so intense, but relatively same size value that these changes were better (10.7 %) or worse (12.8 %). This situation can be shown in the case of recognition of culture of Hungarian national minority after Slovakia joined the EU.

Table 6: After Slovakia joined the EU (2004) can you say that national minority to which you belong to.... (In %)

	Much more better	Rather better	Almost same	Rather worse	Much more worse	Don't know	Don't answered
Has bigger influence in politics	2.9	15.9	45.6	17.6	5.5	11.5	1.1
Situation of minority culture is	1.6	14.4	52.6	14.5	2.1	13.4	1.5

Data collection: FOCUS, November – December 2009

Significant differences are also visible in the case of evaluating of future of Europe and European Union in terms of impact on some sensitive areas respondents live. As far as the "organized crime and drugs" (62.8 %) and "loss of social security" (55.1 %) fears are concentrated more explicitly with older generation. There is approximately 20 % of difference, because younger generation has less concern about the drug (44 %) and loss of social security (37 %).

Loss of Hungarian and Slovak culture identity in integrating Europe would not cause concerns in the case of young generation (72.4 % Slovak culture and 78.4 % Hungarian culture).

Older generation expresses approximately 20 % more concern in case of emergency of "Hungarian identity" (51.3 %).

Young generation does not have such a high concern over the difficulties which might arise on ethnic and national minorities. "I have a fear", answered 34.5 % of respondents in 30 years, but 43.6 % of respondents over 60 years.

Mobility and migration in the European space is really important and actual issue for younger generation. In our study expressed interest for moving to another country only very few members of older generation (certainly 2.6 %, maybe 3.8 %).

Young generation would "definitely" (18.1 %) and a „maybe“ (34.5 %) under very favorable condition wants to leave their country.

Target destinations in the case of Slovak citizens with Hungarian nationality represents not just Hungary (10.3 %), but also UK (8.6 %), Austria (3.4 %), Germany (2.6 %), Italy (2.6 %) and Czech Republic (1.7 %).

2.8 Conclusion

Research of Slovak citizens with Hungarian nationality by ENRI-East project has brought more comprehensive description of indicators, which relate to "identity" of the Hungarian national group. We found that "nationality" is important (17 %), but by far not the only component of identity. In terms of structure citizens of Slovak republic with Hungarian nationality shall be reported to dominant identity "I am Hungarian living on Slovakia" (65 %). Group is significantly less with identity "I am member of Hungarian nation" and identity group "I am citizen of Slovakia as the host country with different ethnic origin". For each group is characterized difference in preferences adapt to life with the majority society. For all groups common fact is that respondents expect support for their cultural development by host country for the future. Proficiency of Slovak language is not perceived as a first step towards assimilation, but as an effective tool of social life in the host country. Approximately 60 % of respondents in 2009 have managed to introduce "real Hungarian" without Hungarian citizenship. Important for them is "mother tongue" and "feeling to be" member of nation.

Generational aspect provides an opportunity to see phenomenon of "identity" of Hungarian national minority in the context of historical and cultural changes. Quantitative distribution of major types in terms of age has a significant homogeneity which implies that in the future to be reckoned that dominant group of citizens of Slovak Hungarian national minority will be the one that accepts current national framework for their existence, their life satisfaction and cultural needs.

As far as evaluation of the status of "Hungarian minority" after Slovakia's accession to the EU outweigh majority feeling that situation in terms of possible cultural development of minorities is "almost unchanged" and even improved. In the political field situation has changed, but in better either in worse way. Young generation of Hungarian nationality is more open to European integration processes, not associated with fears of losing national identity and sees them as beneficial for people living in Slovakia. Security and social threats perceive not so sensitive as older generation.

New "European identity" in Slovakia since 2004 has been reinforced, especially by accepting of "Euro" as new currency since 2009. This is a new 'feature' for Slovak Republic, which allows for Slovak citizens regardless of nationality presentation by specific way in Hungary. Stability of the Euro currency, functioning of plural democracy and political presentation of minority interests in the National Council of Slovak Republic through new political party MOST – HID have real impact on positive influence for integration opinions and on behavior of all generations of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia.

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2.10 Annex 1: Regional allocation of sample of respondents of Hungarian nationality in Slovakia

	Region					Total
	Bratislava	Trnava	Nitra	Banská Bystrica	Košice	
No. of respondents (abs)	20	212	303	130	136	801
Proportion of respondents (%)	2.5	26.5	37.8	16.2	17.0	100.0

2.11 Annex 2: Survey sample by counties

Respondenti	County														Total	
	Dunajská Streda	Galanta	Komárno	Košice-okolie	Levice	Lučenec	Michalovce	Nové Zámky	Revúca	Rimavská Sobotka	Rožňava	Senec	Šala	Trebišov		Veľký Krtíš
Number (abs)	154	58	119	30	60	36	20	89	20	54	40	20	35	46	20	801
Proportion (%)	19.2	7.2	14.9	3.7	7.5	4.5	2.5	11.1	2.5	6.7	5.0	2.5	4.4	5.7	2.5	100.0

3 MAIN FINDINGS OF BIOGRAPHICAL INTERVIEWS (ENRI-BIO)

Ladislav Macháček

3.1 Brief description of the people and their life stories interviewed and from which districts/settlements they came

The interviewees are from west (Senec, Velký Meder, D. Streda), middle (Levice, Želiezovce) and east Slovakia (Kapušany, Oborín). This is really very good results from regional point of view. Sample of 12 interviewees is composed from women (7) and man (5) and from older (5), middle age (3) and young (4) people. All young people are students from 19 to 22 years. Only two persons are people with basic education and workers (driver and electrician).

Research sample of respondents is not representative for social and educational structure of citizens Slovakia with Hungarian ethnicity.

Individual respondents and description of key social-demographic variables

Respondent	Place of Residence	Age	Sex	Education	Employment	Ethnic identity
01	Velký Meder	68	W	Uni	Teacher	Hu
06	Senec	61	M	Basic	Driver	Hu
08	Senec	52	M	Middle	Electrician	HU
09	Levice	22	M	UNI	Student	HU
11	Želiezovce	19	W	UNI	Student	HU
12	Levice	71	M	(PhD)	Researcher	HU
13	D. Streda	59	W	UNI	pharmacist	HU
14	D. Streda	22	W	UNI	Student	HU
15	Oborín	22	W	Uni	Student	HU
16	V. Raskovce	62	W	UNI	Teacher	HU
17	V. Kapušany	75	M	Middle	Teacher	HU
18	Oborín	47	W	UNI	business	HU

3.2 European identity

3.2.1 Old generation

01(68) .How do you understand being European? We live in Europe, and within Europe in one small state. It is a good feeling that we can say we live in the heart of Europe. We can pay by Euro. I do not feel any advantages in being European. I do not agree with everything. In comparison with other European states for example, where salaries are higher and rents as well. Even nurse has twice-bigger income than me when retired, although I was working for 45 years.

06(61):- thanks to my job I felt European even during totalitarian regime, during past era, I used to go across Europe, I was everywhere, it was not problem for me, this change, that I would suddenly feel that now I am an European, thank God I had the possibilities, I cannot say any wrongful word, but for those that did not have a chance to travel abroad, for them this uniting, I say it as it is...for such a person it is more exciting than for those that had a chance to travel and see what is there...I feel European, if we take that, it is in Europe, not in Asia or Africa....everybody feels that in some way, I cannot say that he is not European, that he rejects Europe well, I see it positively, because in fact I was travelling, I know what it is, how it goes, but when you take it, those politics here, they see democracy only for themselves, and the others are somewhere else,

it would not be possible in Sweden, or in Germany, because as soon as he does something, he has to leave in shame, it is positive, yes, of course, it is for people as well, we do not have to wait at the borders, nobody is bullying you for nothing, searching you as a thief, so I see it as a positive thing...but there are negatives as well, democracy and the EU, those are big things, in my opinion when euro came as well, it was I say 5 minutes to 12....some say, that if he still had crown, if it was, maybe we would pay 45 – 50 crowns for 1 euro, as our industry works -.we started at the rate 32 crowns, in that value we count, good for factories, for businessmen, he cannot say, you got 50 or 40 crowns, cheaper export, ok, now you export in Euros and be competitive, those are things we see, they see, but we cannot help ourselves, because they are up there

12 (71) R: I think it's good that it exists and it's a pity that it didn't exist before, but actually it existed because I consider the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy the same thing. The Hungarian Kingdom is a bit different, but I think the first EU was the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Even if you like it or not. Then of course it was destroyed which was also its own fault as others and it was created a different power which is almost the same. The problem was with the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy that there were many nationalities and there was a problem with the autonomy so it led to where it had to. The EU is better in this because it's declared that the f people are French, the English people are English, the Irish people are Irish and whoever is who and that's it. And it's accepted like this. In the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy wasn't exactly like this because if the Slovaks wanted very much to be on their own and they declare it although I doubt that they always wanted it they should have made it possible in some way but they didn't and it's the business of the ones who created it and they were punished for it because of the Czechs. I was always wondering how come that the Czech Republic which has a huge history was working only as an altar boy in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy because there were the Czech soldiers who were doing stupid things how Švejk wrote about it. It couldn't have been a good feeling for them. And I'm sure they didn't have their heart beating from the thought that they were part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy because they were kingdom from the beginning. Where did they disappear? I didn't deal with it a lot but I was always thinking how these things could happen? I think it's a normal thing. This is natural. It exists and it wants to work out then it wouldn't be smart if we want a homogenous Europe-homogenous like we respect everybody but we have common ideas then the logical is that we let everybody get in.

16(62) I don't even know what was better. It's definitely better than when we belonged to where? There two camps: the United Nations and the other camp. I don't even know the other. You can see that my memory failed me sometimes. On the other hand it is a better feeling to be in a union to belong to somewhere. That time when we belonged to the Soviet Union. We had to do what they wanted us to do and we didn't have any chance to go anywhere else. So now we have more freedom. It's better to live in freedom than to live under pressure in dictatorship. Because there was the Russian dictatorship and we had to do what they said. So, about this I could talk a lot. I think that is much better now, but there are things that could be changed. There are things that could be changed but it's still better to live in the Union. You don't need passport anywhere. It's a joy to travel not like before when they tried to terrify people because we couldn't take anything with us through the borders. We couldn't take this with us, we couldn't take that with us... And we were travelling with a fear that they will return us or whatever. Living in freedom is better than... You can't remember the former things, so I think this is much better. And what does being European mean to you? I don't know (laughing). When people can call themselves European. Well, you can call yourself only European because we live in Europe. It exactly means what I just told you. Europe is good. I am satisfied with it.

17 (75) From my point of view is good because it eased the conflicts between the smaller countries. Basically it brought the nationalities closer to each other. And for us it didn't really change anything because we don't travel a lot, but it gave the possibility of travelling freely (laughing) I haven't thought about it yet. It's good to be part of the European Union because you belong here and the EU can keep in touch better with other countries than without it. The small countries separately

are not as strong as the whole EU together. It's difficult to say it. I don't know whether they have the right or not, but I agree that Slovakia belongs there. And would you consider yourself rather Hungarian or European? Well rather Hungarian (laughing). It's obvious (laughing). I: And does the EU have a disadvantage? : It definitely has because the crimes increased and the criminals are travelling more freely and they bring the rubbish to Slovakia and to Hungary from abroad (laughing) and this is not good.

3.2.2 Young generation

09(22) Yes, of course. Few years ago, it did not mean much for me and my friends to be „European“. The feeling of „Europeanism“ was very distant and hard to imagine. Since we became a part of the EU it has gradually changed and thanks to a number of programs mainly for youth I as well got this feeling of „supranational“ identity.

11(19) I like to be European. For me to be American is not attractive. Many people think that it's cool to be American. For me if somebody is American then I think about a complacent person comes to my mind with McDonald's food in his hand. I think it's better to be a European. And I don't even mention the rest. Asia and Africa: no. It doesn't affect me much. In Slovakia we changed the currency, the poverty grew bigger but that's it. And the European Union competitions help us a lot. They help the schools, the villages but nothing else. So is it a positive or negative thing that Slovakia joined the EU? Positive because it helps in developing and to catch up with West. And what do you think about the EU enlargement? I think the Turks' question is an interesting question because the biggest part of the country is in Asia but smarter people than me are going to decide about it. And the rest who want to join and many people think that it's not a good idea maybe they thought the same way about Hungary and Slovakia and the richer countries are going to help us to catch up and the same way Serbia and the rest are going to catch up as well. And those who decide who can join the EU I think they will make a good decision and not anybody can join. Well, the EU has many nations so it will have even more. I don't know. I don't think it will make a big difference only the territory is going to be bigger and there are going to be more members

14 (19) Do you consider yourself a European citizen? I think the developed countries overtook so I feel less a European than a local citizen. So the development in these countries is so different. For example within the public health the hospital care and the salaries and everything else are so different so that's why I can't really sympathize with the idea of European being if we compare. I think the EU is useful because it helps the countries to develop with the supports and all the competitions. These are useful things. And without EU we wouldn't have made any headway. Is it an advantage or disadvantage that Slovakia is a member? It's an advantage. And why?: (laughing) Well, can I say a concrete example? For example I've been to a summer university which was organized for Hungarian students who live abroad²⁷ and this wouldn't have happened without EU supports because they wouldn't have had so much money to create it.

15(20) Well, there are also good things. There are some supports from European Union from what they can renovate buildings like the Museum of Rock which is dear to my heart and close to this a cinema with 3D near the Lidl at the University. (smiling) Really! And all other financial grants from the European Union are good, but not in every case they get to the good place for example near the border on the side of Felvidék the money got to the entrepreneurs pocket which is not really used for his business, but for all kind of money-laundering. Otherwise it would be a good possibility for all kind of renovations. And what does it mean to be a European? Is this negative or positive?: Well, positive, because the eastern culture is too abstract, the northern culture is too stupefying, the culture of the northern continent and the European culture is pretty colorful for everyone to

²⁷ Especially for those who live the neighbouring countries (Slovakia, Romania, Ukraine and Serbia.)

love it or to be proud of it, so it may be a good feeling to travel to Europe. Sure. I don't know (laughing).

3.3 National identity – relationship to country of residence (Slovakia)

3.3.1 Old generation

06(61) no, it was Hungarian, here as you go from Bratislava, there was a border, Velký Biel, Senec – it was Hungarian, and here a village Martin, Blatné – that was Slovak. Senec was Hungarian, that was a big jump, as in Poland when it changed, Czechs gave to Poles and from us took...I can tell you a particular case my father remembered that cannot be erased. Hungarians came here, my father told me, I was born only in 1949, so I cannot remember that. The army came on horses, and Czechoslovak army left – by cars, motorcycles...yes, they freed the space...the difference between those who came and those who left. My father remembered that in Blatné, Slovaks – Hungarians lived here, they were legionnaires as one says. From Orava (region in the north of Slovakia – translator's note) as well they were here in Senec. They lived here, they were Slovaks, during first republic - they came after 1921, they lived together, worked together, when they closed it here, they stayed here, but traded, they used to go to Blatné, it was Slovak...because here was nothing, flour, sugar. Everything was limited...there was nothing here, in the evening they gave bread soaked in rum to the pigs, they drank and went to sleep. Here across the woods, the vineyards they went to the forest, there was sugar, flour on the carriage, they brought it, divided, and they did not steal from each other. My father used to tell me one rhyme: „back Prague, back Bratislava, Hungarians f... you“ And Hungarians themselves were talking like that, about 1938.....it was developed here, everything was here....if we take it, everybody dreams about Great Hungary, I do not know what for what, does anybody want to rule there, or some fee, if we take economic side, Hungarian currency never jumped over Slovak, 70 pennies was the maximum what I remember, and now in fact 16-17 pennies of Slovak crown is 100 forints, it changes a little..euro for 260 forints, those few forints up and down... in 1947 they started to move people, then those schools, 3-4 years it was, because they started, what my father said, it was Beneš who started in 1947, in 1946 there was something, in February 1948 Gottwald came and everything was cancelled, it was all back... they lied to their peers, that here are immigrants...from Békecs Csaba, from Hungary, from Slovak villages.....Pitvaroš, Tóthkomloš..they promised they would be here, my neighbour here, he is replaced, his father was brought here in Senec and his father's brother he was in a second wagon, they took him to Czech land to Sudety, even though they promised they would be in Slovakia both, he could not help himself. Only one wrong wagon and one was here and the other one there in Šumava, only after the situation eased a bit in 1957-1958, he came back here to his brother to Senec. So I say, those grievances made by certain people, it was unjust, today it is unjust as well, but the nation is not the one to blame, only as it is said the one who signed it and made a line in the years since 1989 let's say? Well, what I remember as a kid, when we were little kids, we used to play on the street, here opposite was a free place, here we used to play in that triangle that is near me...there were no problems between us, of course, children's' fights, but we played together, Slovak kids learned to speak Hungarian, we spoke Slovak, and now in fact, in my opinion it started, I do not know, if it was somehow hidden during communism, but I do not think so, because I was adult in fact, I lived through that age, but such extremes, when it comes to nationality issues, such animosity did not exist then, as after 1989, in the so called democracy...well, in my opinion, both are now weakened, they are not in the parliament (note – in the 2010 parliament election one Slovak and one Hungarian party did not make it to the parliament).....there is a little pub here, there we go for beer sometimes, in the evening people from Stolen area come, that are working here, building, they came here and were waiting for a reaction, now when we come there, we talk like it have been years that we are together, he noticed that I go for beer as well as he goes, we talk and laugh, and he says that we are so surprised, that when we came home after three weeks, we said at home, that what it is, and I say, well, you have not seen Hungarians in Gillian, we live here with them together and we have

no problems with them, at least here in the area, not before, of course, there are some extremists, you can always find extreme ones, somebody wants to be seen, but mostly we have no problems, I do not see any...

12(71) It's an interesting question. I was born in 1939 and at that time it was part of Hungary and to be honest with you I'm very proud of it. And when they talk about the double citizenship I can say that it doesn't affect as much as they think because I have Hungarian citizenship by the law and for me it's natural. I have this citizenship and nobody took it from me. So basically I have been living in Slovakia after the second Slovakia was created and if I remember well it was created in 1993. So since then I have been living in Slovakia and before that I lived in Czechoslovakia and at the beginning it was Hungary. R: It depends on the point of view. I mentioned that I lived through the liberation. In Levice it happened on 20th of December in 1944 so I was about 5 years old. It was a very interesting event. On the 20th it was quite cold but it was snowing I remember that. And in the morning the members of the Hungarian and German armies were still there. We can say that a big convoy went out from Levice. They were lined up there with cannons and with vehicles with caterpillars the Germans... There were no tanks but many vans. Around 20 past 2 of our neighbor came. He is not alive anymore. He was very surprised and his lips were shaking. He said: "the Russians are already at the forest." It was true. After 10 or 15 minutes the sirens started and the soviet army and soldiers came in through our street. It was the second Ukrainian front that was led by Malinovszki marshal. He was the commander-in-chief. And I think this was the advance guard let's say the first wave and we can say that it was a very trashy company. We found out later that they used prisoners for this so called breakthrough. It means that they took lot of hours from the parents, they liked the children very much but after that on Christmas Eve the real army came in and very important units were accommodated at our place. So they were at our place and they liked children. It wasn't a pleasant but it's such a memory. And then there was a bombing against Levice which didn't come true that's why I didn't die. So it failed because the Russians were shooting so those who wanted to bomb they couldn't. Some people maybe 8 died but I didn't. It was a "beautiful memory". It wasn't easy. But these are memories. For children every memory is nice because they idealize it. That happened. This is one of my memories. After this I don't have such memories because the 40 years stupidity came I think. What kind of memory is that I wanted to be a scout but I couldn't because I couldn't. But everybody had to be a pioneer there was no selection. They put on us the scarf with the red triangle and unfortunately I could go only to the Slovak school because there was no Hungarian. Now we just celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Hungarian school then my parents didn't put me into the Hungarian because I already had a company. If they wanted to put me in 1950 into the Hungarian school... I was already going to school for 4 or 5 years. After such a long time the school changing couldn't happen. It wouldn't have worked because I was going to school with Hungarian children but I learnt Slovak. And there was a company it's very difficult to change. I never liked this kind of changes that you go chaotically everywhere. We held on. Unfortunately the Hungarian history and literature I didn't study. I studied it by myself. I still study it. When I make these programs I select them according to the important events like 1848 or anything else. So I select it myself and I hand it over to others. I study myself. R: Hungarian. Totally Hungarian but it shouldn't have happened how it happened. I'll explain why. This has two reasons. One is that my mother is true Hungarian but her father was German so if I was a little more careerist and my grandfather taught me German then I would have started to consider myself German and then we wouldn't be sitting here doing the interview because then it would have turned out totally differently. My grandfather was ethnic German he was originally from here. But he never pushed it. He spoke Hungarian with me. I got to know from him the first Hungarian tales and many other things and somewhere I took it for granted that my grandfather was a Hungarian though it's not true. He is German....From my father side I know for sure that my other grandmother so his mother is pure Slovak. She is from a strong Slovak atmosphere but when they lived here, in Levice they fit to the local things and she knew Hungarian very well. She never told me what to be, it wasn't even fashionable at that time. And my grandfather who was called Üveg like me I have no important information who was he. According to his name I consider him Hungarian but

this is not for sure. He could have been Slovak because there are many Üveg who are not Hungarian at all. Their Hungarian is Hungarian, but let's admit it that the name Üveg is not Hungarian either. It has two meanings. One is the cute ground squirrel, the animal. I suffered with it a lot because the Slovaks always found out what my name means in Slovak and then I got what I deserved. But the other thing is that it's originally Turkish. And its importance is that one of the Turkish sectors they put on the ground snares to catch the animals. And in Turkish this snare which was made from wire or rope or string they called it üveg. Maybe they called it üveg because this ground squirrel could move there as well and maybe they caught this the most. I don't know which one was named üveg first, but then they had the same name. So this is an ethnographical additional information to my name. The other reason that I turned into a Hungarian is that after 1945 in August after the liberation on a cold night... They took me into the castle in the morning and they wanted to deport me from the country. Slovak soldiers came with bayonet. All the groups had 3 or 4 soldiers and one secret. And they commanded my mom to collect all her belongings and we had to go to the castle fast and in the evening they put us in the cars and took us to the borders. But the Hungarians till it was the native country announced that this is not right because it wasn't by the law. So one week later we got back. That's all. And when I was sitting in that car that evening, that night which I still can see in front of my eyes I didn't say that I am Hungarian but I said... I will never forget it and till I live and if I have time for it I will tell everybody that it was very bad, and I didn't realize it I didn't have it in mind what the wild people did to the Jews which was even worse but this was as bad atrocity as that. We were the first ones to be deported. I found out that they deported us because we were Hungarians. First of all I applied for those who were in a bad situation anyway. Why do I betray them. I went to the other side. One of my grandmother was Slovak so why do I step there while they (the Slovaks) were doing something bad to me. And I said this is who I am. That's it. It's over. I mentioned that I went to Slovak schools I learnt by myself the Hungarian history etc. And by now I know Slovak quite good. I don't teach.

3.3.2 Young generation

09(22) : Yes, I do. I was born in Slovakia, my parents, grandparents and even great-grandparents have always lived on the Slovak land, and this relationship with my country of birth is very strong. I like Slovakia, even with its shortcomings that I sometimes strongly feel. I as well try to fight them many times. yes, after 1989, it started then, first it was difficult, during the era of Mečiar (former prime minister of Slovakia in 1990s – translator's note). What I remember from my own experience, in 1995 there was this incident when we did not get bilingual transcripts of records, only monolingual...I remember strikes then, we could not go to schools, we were happy, parents did not let us go to school. Then better times arrived, two governments headed by Dzurinda (former prime minister of Slovakia 1998 - 2006 - translator's note). It can be said that the situation was somehow more peaceful. When SMK (Party of Hungarian Coalition – translator's note) became a member of government, I think that it is true, it was more peaceful, from political point of view, we can dispute about that, maybe some things were achieved, maybe there were some compromises that were not necessary...we will see, I know..... well, I am quite skeptical about these issues, because European Union has more advisory character and it cannot influence those things as we know. Mostly it then looks like that, there were various things during past four years ...and thanks to SNS, HZDS and SMER (parties of former governing coalition in Slovakia 2006 – 2010 – translator's note) as well had a tendency to go a bit to the right side of the political spectrum, as it was said and various laws and so on it was not necessary... I try to be optimistic; I hope it will get better...

11(19) R: Connected to the nationality everybody is Hungarian from both sides including the ancestors. But I have some relatives of mine who are of my age and they are already Slovaks or they don't speak Hungarian so well. And not connected to the nationality we are an average rural family with simple qualifications and nothing special.... Yes. My second cousins are going to Slovak school and they still speak Hungarian but they have difficulties with it. And my further cousins are almost the same: either they don't speak Hungarian at all or they understand but don't speak or even if they speak they don't speak well. And there is another kind who speaks Hungarian but de-

ny it because his/her friends would expel him/her from the community and so on.... Because of the mixed marriages. In my family usually the mother is Hungarian and the father is Slovak. And it doesn't matter that they were speaking Hungarian with the grandparents because they went to Slovak school and I think they didn't tell their friends that they are from Hungarian family so they don't speak in Hungarian with anyone anymore. Only with the family at home...And what do you think about being a Hungarian in Slovakia? : I don't feel ashamed that I am Hungarian because I was always taught that I should always be who I was born to be. At the primary school my form teacher started every year with this: "As many languages you speak you are as many person." It remained in my mind and I think that it doesn't make sense to deny being a Hungarian it rather should make you feel proud if you speak many languages and you can communicate in many languages. I couldn't deny it because they raised me as a Hungarian. (laughing)

15(20) I have clearly Hungarian nationality, as in East-Slovakia, in our region everybody I mean those who are afraid to declare themselves as Slovaks. However, in my Hungarian student card is written that I have Slovak citizenship which is true, but if somebody from the mother country looks at this then he thinks that I'm Slovak. It is a misleading thing in my card..It absolutely disturbs me, because as I said when I was transferred to Sárosputak then I don't know... the raising of those people is a little bit strange I think, because there I am the Slovak and when I go home I am the Hungarian. And the fact that in my student card is written the Slovak citizenship leads to the same misunderstanding. I'm obviously Hungarian. I'm surely a Hungarian from Slovakia, because I'm angry with those people who live there and only the location of one river decided that they aren't from Felvidék, but they remained Hungarians from Hungary. And they don't consider this at all when they use these words like Slovak. Sometimes they say this to a person who doesn't deserve this or vice versa. So from this point of view it made my Felvidék feeling stronger. Well, that's all.

3.4 National identity – relationship to mother country(Hungary)

3.4.1 Old generation

06(61) Yes, of course. There are no problems, only if certain people make problems in themselves. There is no problem to speak Hungarian, Slovak here, in the shops. Lately some Germans came, I was listening, the shop assistant had no problem serving Germans, Hungarians, if she wants to sell and earn a living she needs to adapt to the existing conditions. I think that everybody should do like that. I am here, I live in this country, I do not want to move, and everybody modifies the conditions to be good for him. I feel being a citizen of Slovak republic of Hungarian nationality and I want to live here until I die, in many states borders were changing, nation or people have no guilt for that somebody drew a line across the village... I feel for Hungary, until there was a family from my mother's side, all the aunts I had there, I used to go there, because we would go to visit. Now they are gone, I have only been there twice I think since they died...because when you go to Hungary, no problem, I have Hungarian schools, when I want to, I can speak proper Hungarian, but here people that went to Slovak schools, they only speak this improper Hungarian, and when you come there, for them you are still: Felvidektóth...

12(71): I would say that everybody should understand. My life taught me that when they were building that Babel tower if it's true and God thought that he could disturb the humanity to drop new languages then we have to learn that each ethnic group is committed to its group. It also means that they are often blinded, selfish and stupid. I didn't want to be neither blinded nor selfish or stupid. That's why I ask everybody not to pounding our chests just because we are Hungarians. I ask the same from the Slovaks. It's very nice to belong to a nationality but let's think about how many nationalities there are. If I met an African tribe and I would make myself understood with them-. I know English very well by now because I also learnt it by myself and that's why I could read all this. Otherwise I couldn't. The truth is that I feel Hungarian if anybody sits here next to me- which could be more uncomfortable if it is a Roma or let's call them Gypsies but even though I would love to talk with them with pleasure if I understood their languages because they are very...

So this is how I feel my Hungarian being. I am proud of it or I am happy to be Hungarian but this is not a credit. This is given by God but this is my duty to respect the others. And that's why I can't understand when they talk nonsense connected to the Language Law. For me it's the same when the small children are doing something small bad things in the kindergarten. This is my Hungarian being. I can't say anything else about it....I think yes. I came to realize that in the USA, in Canada the Hungarians are so strong not even to mention Transylvania. To tell you the truth I would like the Hungarians from Hungary to know and to make themselves realize it- they do it but not good enough that the strongest Hungarians are in Transylvania now. It's unbelievable. It's beautiful and they have such a belief that they are Hungarians. And the poor csángó²⁸'s who are judged badly sometimes because they say that they turned into Romanians and they still feel that if they have their roots started there they want it they wish it. But it's a tragedy when somebody speaks only Romanian and only in the church but even there the Hungarian being is not like that. For us it's not so difficult because I learnt the Slovak by myself which I am very proud of and I remained Hungarian for me it's even an advantage because they can't sell me. I am richer that I know this language but as I said Hungarians are living in many places. The problem is that the youngsters got lazy or I don't know how to say it. Maybe it's the culture that it's not so important anymore. Or they feel that if I know things then I try to fit but they should like and respect at least as much their own language as the other s. They run after the English, the German and the French. The French is not going to come to my mind when I am a Hungarian. And they will always defend their French maybe they will be polite to talk to me in Hungarian but they rather want to stick with the French. But why can't I stick with the Hungarian being? He will be always French. This is natural. And all the communities should think like this and all the youngsters if they are normal. If not, then... If he is a cosmopolitan or I don't know what you have to be not to think like this. Let him be whatever he wants to be I can't change him but it should be like this. I can't deny my family where I was born. I can't deny my nationality if my mum was part of it. I can't say she was Japanese because everybody would laugh at me... Hungary and Slovakia? I feel very close to both. I live here so it's logical. I already told you how it belonged to Hungary which many people doubt it but I don't because it's natural. You can't doubt the history. So my native land is very close to me as we spoke about before. And Hungary is natural that is close because I feel that whatever existed before still exists today a bit differently. I don't have any reason to deny my so called mother because of the history. I think it would be stupid. Both are very close to me. Well, it's difficult to answer. I'm sure that where I was born is very close to me because it's like this with everybody. It's difficult to say because it happens when I sympathize with the Hungarians. Mostly I listen to the Hungarian Kossuth radio I don't really listen the Slovak one. I'm a bit angry with myself because of this. So I take many things from there the culture and everything so I can't answer which one is closer. My Hungarian being is very natural for me but apart from this I can communicate here as well every day. Sometimes it's important to listen to the news because here I pay the taxes and many things are happening here. So if I don't know something here then I know about Hungary in vain. So it's a difficult question. I respect both and I take care of both. They are not so different. Maybe it's not a well put question because. I think in Austria where there is Italian influence or in Italy where there is Austrian influence you have to respect both. You can't have... I could say that I like more Hungary but then I couldn't live here. I should go there then which I can't do. I was supposed to do it when I was young. Well, it's very difficult to answer....I think it's beautiful and because I like it very much I rather go to all places and look for the history and the nice regions. What makes me sad is that any group of the politicians who are rather regress it than develop it. It hurts me because it's stupidity. Now there was a big example. I was very angry but now I am satisfied but we will see what they will do.

²⁸ It's a Hungarian speaking ethnic minority living in Romania. They identify themselves according to their religion. The Hungarians consider them Hungarians.

3.4.2 Young generation

09(22): This question is difficult to answer in a few sentences. Anyhow, I am very proud of my ancestors, to our culture, to large number of traditions – folklore, to my mother tongue, that is very rich and unique. I appreciate great work, devotion, and belief of the Hungarian peoples, that in spite of all the constraints they still are – and not only within Central Europe, but all over the world somehow unique (in sport or science – thanks to 14 Hungarian Nobel prize winners etc). And as well those maybe „nameless heroes“ of everyday life, parents bringing up their children maybe with difficulties, but against all odds they stayed Hungarian and did not assimilate neither in Hungary nor anywhere in the world. That and even more is to be Hungarian, to be part of the 14 million family and specifically to be a Hungarian from Slovakia which bears some specifications that are shaping my life since birth.... Yes, I think I do. Little differences can be found for example in the fact that life is not „the same“ if you live e.g. in Dunajská Streda (there is more than 80% Hungarians) or in Levice, where I live, and where the portion of Hungarian inhabitants is only around 10%.... Hungary means a lot for me, since I am a Hungarian. Sometimes they call it „home country“, but this relationship is difficult to describe (and a lot of Slovaks hardly understand this, since they were born in Slovakia as Slovaks and their view is simplified – you were born in Slovakia, therefore you are Slovak.) Relationships towards Hungary is therefore typical for Hungarians living abroad, since my country of birth is Slovakia, but my home country is Hungary as well, even though I was not born there.

11(19) Well, they wouldn't (laughing). When I told them that I would like to continue my studies here then my godfather condemned it "why don't I want to study in Komárom where I could study in Hungarian" and "if you go abroad you won't come back". My godfather has quite a strong personality and he always tells me his opinion. For a long time I was the only child for him and he is my second father (laughing) so he didn't like it at all. My father didn't like it because he wanted me to continue his specialty and to be cadastre. He had the same problem that if I come here I won't go back but then it calmed him down that I am going to the Corvinus which is one of the strongest in the country so he is proud of me now and he calmed down. And when I was moving here he liked Budapest and the view and "wow, how famous the place where my daughter is going to" (laughing) so he calmed down. My mother was kind of happy but she is always standing by me. If I am happy then she is happy. And if it makes me happy to go to Corvinus then let it be. She waits for me as well and she wants me to be home but I think she supports me in everything.... Well, Hungary. I would place our house and my family here and it would be perfect then.

15(20): So here in our region people don't even think about their Hungarian beings. Everyone speaks in Hungarian and they don't really care about their national identity. And certainly the young people don't even really speak Slovak they just try to fit somehow. To be a Hungarian it means to me that when I come home I'm the "Hungarian boy", and when I go away than I'm the Slovak. This is what I just mentioned before. I don't know... for example the cultural events don't promote that the people should consider themselves Hungarian. Only the TV is where they can be informed about something. ...Those should change who can do something about it. I don't know, not necessarily but maybe those should help, who have money as we already experienced this in history. Or those should help who don't have money, but they have to have such powerful position that they can do something about it. I used to defend people of this place when they accused them that they are not well informed, because somehow not their own family, but the surroundings don't allow them to think that some things could be in another way, so the problem is that there is no one to initiate.

3.5 Civic participation

3.5.1 Old generation

08 (52) that is a difficult question here...there is an association here, where people are associated that can speak Hungarian, Csemadok, of course, when there is some performance, or some cul-

tural event here in Senec, it does not matter whether in Hungarian or Slovak, when I suppose it is gonna be good, I am going, if not, then I am not going...

18 (47) I go to fitness. Generally I go there twice a week. I drive 5-6000 kilometers a month because of the clients and in my age I like to come home early which means around 4 or 5 o'clock so before I have English lesson I go to fitness and after I come home I have to prepare for my work for the next day. I have my schedule beforehand so I know which client I am going to and I know approximately what I have to offer to him and I have to think how to sell it for him. The other thing is that when I come home I try to write down with whom and what I was talking about because the target is 15 people a week and after a month I won't remember at the end of the month what I was talking about with the clients in the beginning of the month. Of course it comes with paperwork because nowadays taking the car and talking with a client is not enough for selling. I have to write reports. I am going to write a report to my boss about this whole week.

17(71): I am part of the cultural life through the CSEMADOK we organize cultural events every year. As I mentioned the Association of the Apáti Miklós deals with the discovery and promotion of the historical traditions so we would like to place a memorial place into the Calvinist Community Centre. This is a matter of money. If there was money... Now we got some money so we will place it there. Every year we hold celebrations for Erdélyi János. Now we have cultural days of Erdélyi János which would be from four or five events. We go to the concerts and to the theatre. There are two theatre companies and they have four or five plays a year. And many people are coming from other cities as well to see it. Usually the room is full. In the Hungarian Community Centre we organize conversations and there are events as well. Sometimes people come from Hungary to present movies. Last time a Hungarian opera singer was here. And in the Cultural House some there were some famous people as well. I hope you will be able to figure out something from what I said.

3.5.2 Young generation

09 (22) yes, it is, we can say, it is more of a hobby for me, I have been in scouting for almost 13 years already, therefore it is my life, every week, now we are preparing for such competition, we are outside with young people... counsellor, there is a qualification in the camps, when we become leaders and so...I had a group, now I am a leader of Rovers group, they are older...and as well I am in the management, we are trying to coordinate, in Levice, and as well within district when we try...lately we organized action within whole Slovakia, this is more than a hobby for me...

11(19) R: I am a member of the CSEMADOK²⁹ at home. But the youngsters don't play such a big role. We are just members for the adults to see that there is supply. The middle age people are active and doing something. At the last membership admission the leadership... My godfather is the president of CSEMADOK and from the leadership another two members whose children are of my age and we were classmates at the primary school so the CSEMADOK got bigger with three members. All the Hungarian families' children are considered members and that's it. There are not too many young people and we don't play a big role. Sometimes we put the flowers but we are not very important... but I usually participate on the ICS events. But in Tekovské Lužany there is no ICS: Via Nova Group of Youngsters/Youth Group. And I usually go and see the different events, parties, football and things like this. Well, I think that the CSEMADOK is the most active organization and they are doing most of the programs, they hold together the Hungarians but they are not "big Hungarians" who hate Slovaks. They have really good connection with the Slovaks. Everybody knows where he belongs to but they still get friends with each other. I really like that it works like this in my village because there are cities or villages where they are at enmity with each other and at us it's not like this. They even support the foundation based schools. The CSEMADOK is one of the biggest supporters. There are the youngsters who are going to be the members who are

²⁹ CSEMADOK, also written Csemadok, is a cultural society of ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia.

very important for them and the ICS is a very positive thing for me. I met this thing in Levice and I feel home there. This is where my ex schoolmates, class mates and for me it's very familiar. And if I go to a disco where there are Slovaks and Hungarians I didn't feel as good as at a Hungarian party that was organized by the ICS.

15(20) And are you a member of any civil organization?: No. Not of any cultural, political organization? No, I'm concerned with my free time, I'm not interested in these things. I should, but I don't. What kind of organization do you prefer? Political? Political not. I don't like the orange and red. Neither in Slovakia? Here I understand less from the politics. Rather some cultural... Where I may help others or where we may create performances in any kind of categories: music or art. And you said that you don't like politics. What about voting? Yes indeed, I always vote.

3.6 Discrimination experiences

3.6.1 Old generation

08(52): it depends what you understand by discrimination...what that is? Somebody does not like that I speak Slovak. It happened to me once, I was travelling by bus, of course my daughters, we were mixing the languages, they said something in Hungarian and one lady in the bus said that we should not be speaking like that there...it is 20 years old story....you should speak Slovak in Slovakia she said....I said that children can speak Slovak, that is not the problem, but it is none of your business, we can speak Italian or Gypsy language, it does not matter, it is our business how we speak, and I found out she was a teacher...I was curious, because I got angry than, she was very aggressive...I say: If I spoke English with my daughter, you would poke into my ass...

18(47) There was a story. The director didn't like it... He employed two people at the age of 20. I am 46 years old. That time I was 45 years old. One of them was from Detva and the other one was from next to Serina and we went... They got drunk and we were in Germany at the expo and we were travelling and I had a Hungarian colleague and we spoke in Hungarian about personal staff which is not proper, but it wasn't very long. And I was sitting next to a Czech that I was speaking in English with. The boy started to complain "how can you speak in Hungarian and the Hungarians are like this and like that". "I am speaking in English." What I told this boy then... The company got drunk and they started to pick a fight even more. I told them what I had to. What you just have to tell them is that "you can only speak in Slovak because we let you speak in Slovak for 1000 years" (laughing). But there are not too many of this kind. This is the stupid kind. I sell the machines among Slovak people I go to different regions and I have no problem with them at all. I can vindicate myself easier among Slovaks and ruszins³⁰ than here in Kráľovský Chlmec where there are Hungarians who know me and are envying me. And what about the whole Slovakia? I have no problems with the Slovaks. If I don't try to pick a fight with them then they don't do it either. This is all about attitude. And whoever is stupid I don't talk to. And what do you think about it in general? Do the Slovaks discriminate Hungarians or not? What do you think about the tension? How bad is it? I haven't met this before. Maybe it exists, but I never saw it.

17 (71) About the relation between Hungarians and Slovaks is different in every city and region. The population understands each other and there is no problem till the Hungarians don't demand their rights. If they do it's a problem then every Slovak is Slovak. In this city there are no such problems, but sometimes things happen. For example about the naming of the streets and squares. Once I had a proposal for naming three squares and they would be named after three famous people of Kapušany, but there is the statue of Štúr³¹ and the Slovaks wanted to name it af-

³⁰ It's a minority in the Carpathian Basin they don't have a mother country. (I didn't find their name in English.)

³¹ Ľudovít Štúr known in his era as Ludevít Velislav Štúr, was the leader of the Slovak national revival in the 19th century, the author of the Slovak language standard eventually leading to the contemporary Slovak literary language.

ter him. I told them that there is a Stúr street and there is a statue of him so let it be a Somló Sándor³² square. They didn't accept my idea they named it Galgóczi Tibor square, but there is no storage there. The new street was named bulrush (in Slovak) street which was our idea (the wife corrected) because there were many of these plants here and we found a folkloric expression at Erdélyi János³³ for this plant so we had this idea to name this new street after this. In this city there were no problems because of the nationality. I never heard of it...No, the population is not threatened in Slovakia they just try to threaten them. They try to make us feel it in the elite the issue of Malina Hedvig is a good example for this, but basically we don't have to be afraid. One of the reasons of the assimilation is the indifference of one part of the Hungarian population from here.

3.6.2 Young generation

11(19): I think there is a difference. Of course there is. Now that I got here I see from many aspects how the Hungarians are looking at Hungarians from Transylvania or from Slovakia and I think that they have delusions about some things. To be a Hungarian in Hungary is easier than to remain Hungarian in Slovakia. I think this is a big difference and they don't get it that for us it would be easier to be a Slovak at home because of some things and "ok, you are Hungarian". And I had disadvantage from being a Hungarian from Slovakia and not from here. It disturbed me. They shouldn't be rude with me because I think I am Hungarian the same way. What happened? I wanted to register in the library and I said that I am going to Corvinus and I am a foreigner. "For a foreigner is not possible to register." "What do you mean is not possible? I am going to the university here and I am not with Erasmus for a half a year. I will be here for three or five years." "Well, I have to ask about it." And the girl called somebody and finally they let me register but I would have been very angry if I couldn't register because I'm not a Hungarian from Hungary but from Slovakia. They shouldn't treat me as French people who study here for half a year. Because she really has nothing to do with being a Hungarian.

15(20) What do you think, are there any conflicts between the Slovaks and the Hungarians? In this region I don't really see these kinds of things, although I don't use the public transports where these conflicts may happen. Well as I said, here in East-Slovakia this thing can't really happen only in Middle-Slovakia and where the TV pushes the hatred, that's why the beating of the Hungarians happened mostly in these areas. Around this area it's not an existing phenomenon and maybe it wouldn't exist at all if it wasn't said to hate people instead of listening to the politics. And you were intimidated or discriminated? No, not really. Maximum the bus driver didn't like when I bought the ticket in Hungarian, but I still I bought the ticket in Hungarian. Not really. And did you hear about anybody who experienced it? Yes, my cousin, not, my god-brother is punished with words all the time at work although he speaks with them in Slovak, but he is always hurt because of his Hungarians. And he always mentions that in the toilet there are some graffiti against the Hungarians. But physical harms don't happen around here. Generally, what's the situation of the Hungarians in Slovakia? Are they intimidated or not? Well, I have this feeling that they aren't. The adults can speak Slovak on a level that the Slovaks can't say anything to them, that's why it's not a reason to distinguish Hungarians from others or how to say. And why does the discrimination exist when it does? It can be lead to that the Slovaks are worried about their homes, because in the history they didn't really learn how their own country developed, but they are so stupefied with rumors, and they give credit to this. And these rumors say that they must hate the Hungarians, because the Slovak unity can be strong only this way which doesn't really exist, because within the country there are different groups that derive from the Poles, from the Czechs and although they consider themselves Slovaks.

³² He was a Hungarian actor. He was born in Kapušany.

³³ He was a Slovak poet also from Kapušany.

3.7 Summary

According to the methodology developed by an international team ENRI-East we conducted in 2010 in-depth individual interviews with randomly selected respondents according to three age and gender categories. In this study, we use qualitative methods of sociological research not only because we have to "illustrate" the subject of the original statements made by respondents, but also thoroughly interpret some findings quantitative sociological research.

3.7.1 European Identity

As far as evaluation of the status of "Hungarian minority" after Slovakia's accession to the EU outweigh majority feeling that situation in terms of possible cultural development of minorities is "almost unchanged" and even improved. In the political field situation has changed, but in better either in worse way. Young generation of Hungarian nationality is more open to European integration processes, not associated with fears of losing national identity and sees them as beneficial for people living in Slovakia. Security and social threats perceive not so sensitive as older generation.

3.7.2 National Identity - Slovakia

Belonging to Hungarian minority is articulated openly on Slovakia, without any barriers. In many cases we find testimonies of pride to their own nationality in the expressions of respondents. In many cases there is demonstrated that "Hungarian nationality" is not identical with Hungary, but is rather bound to Slovakia as a country in which respondents were born and where their ancestors lived. Reflects only the willingness of Slovak citizens belonged to ethnic minority to show some "loyalty" to the state framework, that should be compensated by adequate possibilities of cultural development.

3.7.3 National Identity –Hungary

Categories like WE and THEY are applied as a result of intensive regional contacts (family, recreation, shopping) of Hungarians living in Slovakia and Hungarians living in Hungary. It should be respected fact that when they visit Hungary, they are identified like "Hungarians from Slovakia", not like "Hungarians". This is important factor or aspect of creating their specific dominant identity. This is demonstrated by some statements of our respondents during individual interviews. For example:

12(71)So this is how I feel my Hungarian being. I am proud of it or I am happy to be Hungarian but this is not a credit. This is given by God but this is my duty to respect the others. And that's why I can't understand when they talk nonsense connected to the Language Law. For me it's the same when the small children are doing something small bad things in the kindergarten. This is my Hungarian being. I can't say anything else about it....I think yes. I came to realize that in the USA, in Canada the Hungarians are so strong not even to mention Transylvania. To tell you the truth I would like the Hungarians from Hungary to know and to make themselves realize it- they do it but not good enough that the strongest Hungarians are in Transylvania now. It's unbelievable.

3.7.4 Civic participation

Many of the old and young respondents are participating or member of political, civic or cultural organizations. For example:

09 (22) yes, it is, we can say, it is more of a hobby for me, I have been in scouting for almost 13 years already , therefore it is my life.

But this is not typical for everybody. Also not for our young respondents - all students in university. For example:

15(20) And are you a member of any civil organization?: No. Not of any cultural, political organization? No, I'm concerned with my free time, I'm not interested in these things. I should, but I don't.

3.7.5 Discrimination

They are really no trouble being a young and middle age generation minority in contemporary Slovakia.

HU(SK) 15 (20) And you were intimidated or discriminated? No, not really. Maximum the bus driver didn't like when I bought the ticket in Hungarian, but I still I bought the ticket in Hungarian. Not really. And did you hear about anybody who experienced it? Yes, my cousin, not, my god-brother is punished with words all the time at work although he speaks with them in Slovak, but he is always hurt because of his Hungarians. And he always mentions that in the toilet there are some graffiti against the Hungarians. But physical harms don't happen around here.

HU(SK)18(47) :And what about the whole Slovakia? I have no problems with the Slovaks. If I don't try to pick a fight with them then they don't do it either. This is all about attitude. And whoever is stupid I don't talk to. And what do you think about it in general? Do the Slovaks discriminate Hungarians or not? What do you think about the tension? How bad is it? I haven't met this before. Maybe it exists, but I never saw it.

Older generation of interviewees experienced bad stories.

For example:

08(52): it depends what you understand by discrimination...what that is? Somebody does not like that I speak Slovak. It happened to me once, I was travelling by bus, of course my daughters, we were mixing the languages, they said something in Hungarian and one lady in the bus said that we should not be speaking like that there...it is 20 years old story...

The other version is that whenever some conflicts happen in Slovakia, it is closely connected to the ones in Hungary, so it's a kind of reaction to it.

In one interview with the Slovak living in Hungary, we found mention of this case and interpretation of events by researcher, who did interview with respondent SK (HU) 12 M H M:

Of course. I hear about these things. Not very often, but the graffiti's, the scribbling on the nameplates of the villages, these things occur when there is a conflict between the two countries. So when we read in the media that they said this... and in the Hungarian media the interpretation is usually about Slovaks hurt Hungarians in Slovakia or their rights there and it's true many times. Or when they beat Hungarians. It's usually not happening in Slovakia, but the Hedviga Malinova problem... So at these occasions there are people in Hungary who think that they should revenge on us. And this is when they are doing graffiti's on our nameplates, and things like this. For example in Békéscsaba they scribbled on the House of Culture. This time people reported it. So these things can happen, of course.

Researcher, that did interview explains this case: Hedviga Malinova (English: Hedwig Raspberry) is an ethnic Hungarian student from Myto, Slovakia, who was allegedly physically assaulted in a hate crime incident. Her case represents a highly controversial and debated issue of Hungarian-Slovak relations.

H. Malinova case resonated well in interview with Slovak citizen with Hungarian ethnicity
HU(SK) 17 M M 0:

„No, the population is not threatened in Slovakia they just try to threaten them. They try to make us feel it in the elite the issue of Hedviga Malinova is a good example for this, but basically we don't have to be afraid. One of the reasons of the assimilation is the indifference of one part of the Hungarian population from here.“

3.7.6 Data about new discrimination

Qualitative research-deep interviews was very successful not only with that it brings knowledge about historical-generational character of discrimination of ethnic minority (Hungarians) in the surrounding of majority. Middle and younger generation ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia doesn't feel discrimination as it show older generation.

We have found out some informations also about new phenomenon of “discrimination” of ethnic minority in Slovakia (Hungarians) in the surroundings of majority (Hungary). It is brought on with open borders and wide possibilities in Hungary not only shopping and do recreation, but also study and work. Very interesting are stories from new “dimensions of the discrimination” Slovak Hungarian in Hungary. For example In one case it is connected also with non-finished administrative regulations:

HU(SK) 11: I think there is a difference. Of course there is. Now that I got here I see from many aspects how the Hungarians are looking at Hungarians from Transylvania or from Slovakia and I think that they have delusions about some things. To be a Hungarian in Hungary is easier than to remain Hungarian in Slovakia... I think there is a difference. Of course there is. Now that I got here I see from many aspects how the Hungarians are looking at Hungarians from Transylvania or from Slovakia and I think that they have delusions about some things. To be a Hungarian in Hungary is easier than to remain Hungarian in Slovakia. I think this is a big difference and they don't get it that for us it would be easier to be a Slovak at home because of some things and “ok, you are Hungarian”. And I had disadvantage from being a Hungarian from Slovakia and not from here. It disturbed me. They shouldn't be rude with me because I think I am Hungarian the same way. I: Can you tell me an example for this? What happened?... I wanted to register in the library and I said that I am going to Corvinus and I am a foreigner. “For a foreigner is not possible to register.” “What do you mean is not possible? I am going to the university here and I am not with Erasmus for a half a year. I will be here for three or five years.” “Well, I have to ask about it.” And the girl called somebody and finally they let me register but I would have been very angry if I couldn't register because I'm not a Hungarian from Hungary but from Slovakia. They shouldn't treat me as French people who study here for half a year. Because she really has nothing to do with being a Hungarian.

Mostly it is “new discrimination” connected with “intonation” and “accent/pronunciation” , which is different in some regions, but there are some cases of apprehension from competition at labour market.

It is mentioned also by this respondent:

HU(SK) 09 :...foreign Hungarians are proud of the fact, that even though they do not live in Hungary, they stayed Hungarian, and as well, I would say, to be a Hungarian abroad is more difficult and different from being a Hungarian in Hungary....that is only one note....they feel it, however it depends on that people...most of the Hungarians they do not have problem with that...they say we are like foreign, from Slovakia, that I want to hear, and as well if they are foreign Hungarians, from Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine, maybe even further...it can be said that as well from Slovenia, and Austria as well....there are few Hungarians...the accent is always typical for..... yes, yes...it is typical accent, we can say, ours as well, but people do not have problems with that, maybe even they do, maybe some people see it like that, that politics, some are afraid they will lose their jobs or so...

Regional aspects of Hungarian national identity is often a topic of a discussion and evaluation also by members of Hungarian minority in Slovakia. For example...

HU(SK) 12....I came to realize that in the USA, in Canada the Hungarians are so strong not even to mention Transylvania. To tell you the truth I would like the Hungarians from Hungary to know and to make themselves realize it- they do it but not good enough that the strongest Hungarians are in Transylvania now. It's unbelievable. It's beautiful and they have such a belief that they are Hungarians. And the poor csángó's (It's a Hungarian speaking ethnic minority living in Romania. They identify themselves according to their religion. The Hungarians consider them Hungarians) who are judged badly sometimes because they say that they turned into Romanians and they still feel that if they have their roots started there they want it they wish it. But it's a tragedy when somebody speaks only Romanian and only in the church but even there the Hungarian being is not like that.

3.8 Conclusion

No doubt that language is one of or maybe the most important aspect of the identity of any person. The policy in Slovakia regarding protection of minority languages has developed as follows. After independent Slovakia joined the Council of Europe in 1993 two important pieces of legislation were adopted. The first one made it possible for persons belonging to minorities to use their names and surnames in the minority language and the second one introduced bilingual signposts of the names of villages and cities on the ethnically mixed territory.

Later in 1995 Slovakia ratified FCNM and concluded the bilateral treaty with Hungary. All this domestic legislation and international documents enhanced the protection of minority languages. As a consequence, on the ethnically mixed territory there were situations that the use of minority languages was detrimental to the use of the Slovak language, i.e. the language of majority, which may locally represent a minority. Therefore, it seemed to be demanding to codify the use of the official language mainly for the official communication between the State authorities and people. The Act on the State Language was adopted in the Slovak Parliament in November 1995, despite a huge international campaign launched by Budapest. The target of this campaign was to accuse Slovakia of causing damage to minority languages. Not surprisingly the Council of Europe when monitoring Slovakia repeatedly (2001 and 2005) stated that the implementation of the Act on the State Language of 1995 had no negative impact on the use of minority languages. Consequently, in 1999 Slovakia adopted a law on the use of minority languages in the communication with authorities and in 2001 Slovakia acceded to the Charter.

The Charter is from the legal point of view a *sui generis* document because it is up to the ratifying State to choose a combination of commitments and via this to set the level of protection of minority languages. The fact that Slovakia accepted the highest possible level of the commitments (regarding the Magyar language) and Hungary the lowest possible level of the commitments (regarding the Slovak language) should be no surprise - see ratification documents of both states upon their accession to the Charter, namely Art. 8 Education. While the Council of Europe recognizes that Slovakia on one hand has adopted very ambitious engagements, on the other hand Hungary has been criticized for very poor implementation of the minimum of undertakings.

In the course of the last decade, the situation in southern Slovakia - where more languages are used - has again developed in such a way that there was a real threat that the use of a minority language in the official communication would be detrimental to the use of the official language. Persons not speaking the minority language in their dealing with the authorities did not always receive necessary information available in the official/state language. Therefore, an Amendment

to the Act on State Language (Amendment) was adopted in July 2009 aiming at ensuring that the official language would not be excluded from the official communication according to the amendment. In other words, the aim of the Amendment was to guarantee that in the official communication (in the situations envisaged by the law) the state language has to be used alongside (not instead of) the minority language. Despite the fact that the new piece of legislation was not focusing on the use of minority languages, before adopted, the Amendment was consulted also with the Minority Council of the Government of Slovakia. All but one minority (from 12) have supported the law considering that the state language is an important tool for communication. Slovakia approached the office of HCNM of OSCE in The Hague in order to consult the Amendment. HCNM stated that the Amendment pursued a legitimate aim and was in line with international standards (see conclusions in opinion of HCNM of 22 July 2009). Hungary has not accepted this opinion and still argues that the Amendment is violating international law.

4 MAIN FINDINGS OF EXPERT INTERVIEWS (ENRI-EXI)

Ladislav Macháček

4.1 Brief description of people interviewed and which districts/settlements they came from

Mr.T is the director of the Forum Minority Research Institute in Samorin/Somorja, Slovakia. He earned a degree in Hungarian language, literature and history at the Comenius University in Bratislava. Later he worked three years long as manual worker because of his oppositionary political position. He participated in more oppositionary network during the eighties mainly composed by *littérateurs* and with these connection he succeeded to change to the editorial board of Madách Publishing House in Bratislava/Pozsony. In 1989 having strong contacts both with all the Hungarian democratic and “people-national” movements and even with the Czech and Slovakian opposition forces he started his political career and participated in the foundation of the political party *Független Magyar Kezdeményezés* (Independent Hungarian Initiative). FMK/IHI was the first democratic political party in Slovakia and the second one in Czechoslovakia. He was member and representative of the party till 1998, when the three Hungarian parties unified and he left the political stage and publicity. Meanwhile he participated during the nineties in the establishment of many civil organisations (Márai Foundation, Forum Foundation, e.g.) and since its founding in 1996 he is the director of the Forum Institute.

Mr.N. is one of the founders of the political party *Híd-Most* and member of the party's board. Earlier as MP of the Hungarian Coalition Party through three legislative cycle (1999-2006) he was president of the Slovakian National Council's human rights committee. Currently he is member of the parliamentary committee for media and culture. He earned a degree in psychology and philosophy at the Comenius University in Bratislava. Until 1989 he has worked mainly as sociologist in different social research institutes. His student activity in 1968 led to sanctions against him at the university and during his early working career he became that way early a member of the underground opposition movement and founder of the Hungarian Legal Aid Committee in Czechoslovakia. He participated in the “velvet revolution” and he has been being since the January of 1990 continuously member of parliament. Between 1990 and 1992 he was Vice-President of the Slovak Parliament. He participated in the establishment of the Independent Hungarian Initiative, the first democratic party in Slovakia in 1989. In 1992 the Independent Hungarian Initiative was transformed into the Hungarian Civic Party and A. became its president until 1998. After the union of the three Hungarian parties in 1998 he became vice-president of the Hungarian Coalition Party (HCP).

4.2 Organization they represent and how it is organized

Forum Institute between 1996 and 1999 it played a very important civil oppositionary role during the Meciar Era and covered nearly the whole territory of Southern-Slovakia. Later contributed a lot to the development of the civil sector in this region and after 2004, after the EU accession of the country has been facilitating and disseminating the application writing skills, has been fostering regional and cross-border cooperation and parallel with that has been trying to analyse the effects of all these social and political transformation processes in the life of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia. Forum has been playing since its founding a pioneering and leading role in the organization, capacity building and development of the Hungarian civil sphere in Slovakia. It

organises and often leads the Hungarian Roundtable in Slovakia. On the other hand Forum is the one single, independent, financially not by the state supported minority research organization and think tank, which maintains important databases. Through this double, civil and scientific role the professional influence of Forum Institute in the Hungarian public life in Slovakia is very high. Forum Institute often represent as a professional, but not political institution the Hungarian minority in Slovakia in the front of different international organizations, like the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities or the different monitoring organs of the Council of Europe Framework Convention or Language Charter. Beside the professional character, that Forum Institute disposes on the required know-how to aggregate the community's interest to the international organizations, this role also roots in the fact, that Forum is an important core and mostly the organizer of the Hungarian Roundtable in Slovakia, and trough that it has also got a representative character. But that is definitively not a political representation. After 1998 Forum withdraw very consciously from politics, all the more, because Forum was often mentioned and treated like a party in born. A serious role was introduced in the institute that employees of Forum can participate in politics only in limited way and on local level to make the scientific and civil character of Forum genuine. The institute was withdrawn from the political public life, but of course often published important sources and products with political effects, because Hungarian politics and party politics in Slovakia is an important research field of the institute.

The party Híd-Most would have been never established, if there would not have happened a paradigmatic change after the parliamentary elections of 2006 in the Hungarian Coalition Party. The earlier paradigm of HCP was after its founding with the union of the earlier three Hungarian parties that a successful interest representation of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia is imaginable just through active political participation on cooperative way with democratic forces in all public arenas, but mainly – if it is possible – in the government. It was also a great change in 1998, because especially the party Coexistence shared the attitude, that a minority party can represent the interests of the community clearly and honestly only in opposition. But in 2006, when the Hungarian Coalition Party lost its governmental position and went into opposition, and on the other hand also fundamental changes happened in the board and leading of the party, the new leadership changed political strategy and has left this earlier paradigm. This step had two important consequences. At one hand the support of voters decreased from around 10-11% to 5-6%. On the other hand in 2007-2008 the former coalition partner Slovak democratic parties turned away from HCP and cancelled the permanent political negotiations with the argument that HCP is on the way on a continuous national radicalisation. This isolation of HCP was very dangerous from the point of view of the Hungarian community's interest representation. It existed consequent criticism within the party against the politics of the board influenced by Pál Csáky, president and Miklós Duray, strategic vice-president of HCP, but the answer was the suppressing of criticism and the suspension and exclusion of some critical party-members, like Zsolt Simon, earlier minister for agriculture, for example. Motivated by the responsibility for the future representation of the Hungarian community's interest founder of Híd-Most left the Hungarian Coalition Party and decided to establish a new political party in June 2009. It became a Slovakia-wide political organisation, now among the 82 districts (okres) in Slovakia Híd-Most has party structures and cells in 72. It was a surprise that in 2010 democratic forces could beat the Smer-SNS-HZDS coalition and could establish a government, but because of the small majority of the democratic coalition (only 4 MPs) the ideological differences was placed again in the background. It should be concentrated on practical policy issues and challenges.

4.3 Main issues associated with Hungarians in Slovakia

According to Mr.T.

Slovakia is without any doubts, similarly to the other East-Central-European countries which became members of the European Union a state with rule of law. Which means, that the fundamental human rights and basic minority rights are laid down in the constitution and in the relevant legal acts. From a very formal point of view this laws fulfill the international requirements vis-a-vis minority protection in the region. But it is important to be mentioned, that in connection with many minority rights the constitution contains phrases, that the real content and regulation of the right will be expanded in acts and laws. But many of these laws were never adopted and that narrows a lot how minority right can be implemented or used by the minority communities. For example Slovakia has no comprehensive minority act, which would contain all the minority rights with which the persons belonging to minorities could live. Related to the civil sphere and the cultural institutional system the legal environment is very liberal, clear, transparent and very friendly, but concerning the collective or community rights of the minorities there do not exist neither any legal anchors, nor a functioning institutional system. In this field nearly nothing could be reached during the last decades. The Hungarian Roundtable in Slovakia thematized this question harshly during the last two years, especially in connection with the language use. In Slovakia there exist a general rejection against any form of autonomy. Independently from the main political discourse, the main question is, why the principles of self-government, widely used and recognized in many social spheres from the municipalities till to the worker unions, can not be recognized and used in connection with minorities. And unfortunately the existence of this fact is independent from the composition of the governing coalitions in Slovakia. Generally it is a fact, that Slovakia adopted nearly all international instruments in the field of minority protection, perhaps just in connection with the Language Charter could we mention, that Slovakia recognizes only individual language use and not regional language regimes. Individual language use in the public sphere is only rightful in municipalities, where the proportion of the minority reaches the 20% threshold. It is a question, whether this lacking legal and institutional system could be established in the future, perhaps in the form of a minority self-government system, similar to that which are functioning in Hungary and Serbia. But this would be highly needed, because there are a lots of minority issues, which can not be solved by the state itself. Such a self-government system would overtake a lot of burden from the state, because would fulfill tasks which are currently bothering the state administration. And on the other hand of course would give the satisfactory feeling for the minorities, that the community is deciding in its own issues. Now the amendment of the act on the use of minority languages is currently on the political agenda, initiated by the party Hid-Most. But at one hand, considering the power relations within the governing coalition, it is not impossible, that the main elements of this amendment (for example the lowering of the 20% language use threshold to 10%) will not be accepted neither by the the other coalition parties, or finally by the parliament, and on the other hand also that possibility can not be excluded, that a nationalistic ad-hoc coalition will be established, and finally the amendment will narrow the language rights of minorities. It was very dangerous to put this question on the parliamentary agenda without a preliminary political consent. The situation in connection with the State Language Law is a bit different. The amendment proposed by the new government changed only some marginal points, the philosophy and the main character of the act remained the same. That can be described on the following way, that the use of the state language is compulsory and general, but beside that in some specific cases the use of other languages, for example the speakers' mother tongue can be allowed. That is absolutely the opposite of the liberal approach that everybody should use generally its mother tongue, and the law should regulate that concrete cases, in which the use of the state language is unavoidable.

According Mr.N.:

From a legal point of view the main problem is that since the establishment of Slovakia the Constitution affords only a soft legal framework for minority rights and has not been treating members of

minorities equally with other citizens of the state. This characteristic of the Slovak constitution has been being very determining in the last two decades. Albeit the Constitution empowers and charges the legislation to adopt further laws to regulate and implement minority rights laid down in the constitution, generally it did not happen still today. During the Meciar-regime not just the enjoyment of minority rights was very narrowed, but also the functioning of the state strode away from the “rule of law” principle. In this period some restrictive laws were adopted which are still in force and discouraging the enjoyment of minority rights even on the level of everyday life. The law Nr. 270/1995 on the state language or law Nr. 221/1996 on the administrative division of the country can be mentioned in this context. This second one was guided by the principle that minorities should not be able to constitute majority in any middle-level administrative and self-governing organ of the Slovak state. It is till today very determining from the point of view of regional elections, self-governance and representation of minorities on regional level. Between 1999 and 2006 during the two Dzurinda-governments it was just possible to partially revise the most narrowing elements of this legal framework, but the cornerstones remained the same. In this time Slovakia also ratified the most important international legal instruments of the Council of Europe in the field of minority protection, which obtained great importance beside the constitutional regulation as main legal sources of minority rights. But, as consequence of the lack of implementation rules, they could have played again just a framing role. In many points the Slovakian regulation is not in conformity with the guidelines of these international standards, as it could be seen in connection with the debate about the state language law, but the modification of these cornerstones even in the forthcoming years is hopeless. But hopefully this governmental period till to 2014 will create the possibility to adopt a partially new legal framework for minority rights which can be the most liberal among all since the Second World War. But unfortunately no hope can be seen for the institutionalisation of the minority self-governance, autonomy or ethnic self-representation principles. Of course, many elements of the political environment draw off the project of minority rights' liberalisation, but the Hungarian dual citizenship legislation should be necessarily mentioned. It activated those Slovakian nationalist powers, which can make the advance in all fields – improving minority rights and protection Slovakia's citizens from loosing nationality – very difficult. As a first step Hid-Most will try to improve the possibilities on the field of minority languages' public use through the amendment of law Nr. 184/1999 on the use of minority languages. What could be reached until now in the new legislative period was at one hand the liberalisation of the state language law and the reduction of fees in the cases of its violation. On the other hand in the newly amended law of administrative competencies instead of the Ministry of Culture the Deputy Prime Minister responsible for minority issues will be authorised for decisions affecting the financing and regulation of minority cultures by the state, which can be interpreted as a first step in the direction of the cultural self-governance of the minorities. An other important improvement since 1998 is the realisation of a broader concept of minority politics, which emphasise beside the minority education and culture, language use, etc. also the regional dimension of minorities' existence and try to abolish the earlier existed discrimination concerning the distribution of regional development resources between mainly by Slovaks or mainly by minorities inhabited regions and try to institutionalise equal treatment in this field. It was mainly possible, because the Hungarian political powers in Slovakia tried to get and influence those governmental portfolios – for example agriculture, environment protection and regional issues – during their current and previous governmental participation, which are the most directly related with the issue of regional development.

It could be a general experience in Slovakia that a bad legal framework, either concerning minority rights or in connection with the general legal system or with the principle of “rule of law”, contributes to the minorities' identity preservation, because through its suppressive character constrains them in a collective defensive position. It encourages segregating tendencies which has a positive effect in short term on the collective self-identification of the minority communities. But if it exists parallel with economic and social modernisation processes in which members of minorities could not participate, it can also enhance assimilation. The urbanisation and industrialisation in South-Slovakia after the Second World War is a good example for that.

4.4 Relationship to mother country

Mr.T. explain relations with the Hungarian State:

“Because the professional connections of Forum are related mostly to other professional and scientific institutions and is not participating in the system of Hungarian political dialogue, it is hardly to adjudge its importance and effect on the Hungarian community in Slovakia.” Fortunately politics also never influenced the existence of the independent civil, professional and scientific networks. Concerning the Hungarian Standing Conference and other similar cooperation platforms the Hungarian Coalition Party was in an exclusive and monopol situation even in the smallest issues which have had a lots of deficits. It would have been better, if beside the political cooperation platforms also another organs would have been existed, for example for civil dialogue and cooperation. It was the same situation in the financial redistribution and support system too, which afforded a lot of political and financial support just for the Hungarian Coalition Party, which could have allocated about this sums. This overlapping of the political and civil/cultural/professional dimensions in the support system is the reason, why political clientalism is so vivid in the Hungarian communities abroad.

The financial contribution from Hungary is not because of its volume important for the Hungarian community in Slovakia. It is important because supports such kind of issues, for which no other resources are available. From the perspective of the Forum Institute, the contribution of the kin-state was financially not very remarkable, albeit Forum got the award of “Institution with National Importance” in 2005. But the establishment of the Hungarian Library in Samorin/Somorja under the aegis of the institution would have been unimaginable, because for such an aim – buying and cataloging of books – other EU or Slovakian financial measures were not available. The other importance is, that on local level, in the small cultural organisations, which have no need for a huge financial contribution, the idea of an EU application arises of course very rarely. They would not like to apply, they would like just to work. And to that are the resources from Hungary satisfactory. Of course, the redistribution of the Hungarian resources is deeply depending from the existing political client-system.

Mr.N:

The Relations of the party Híd-Most with the Hungarian State are very controverse. The current Hungarian government does not recognise Híd-Most as a legitimate representative of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia and does not invite it to the different forums of Hungarian-Hungarian dialogue, like the Hungarian Standing Conference or the Forum of Hungarian Representatives in the Carpathian Basin. It is a short-sighted politics from the side of the Fidesz-government and it intervenes in the internal affairs of the Hungarian community in Slovakia. It constitutes advantages for one, and disadvantaged situation for other political parties. Whether this behaviour is in conformity with the political preferences of the Hungarian community, is an other question. The results of the last parliamentary elections in Slovakia shows us, that despite the full support of Budapest the Hungarian Coalition Party failed out from the Parliament, because the voters have not shared this concept of politics. A responsible politics for the Hungarian community in Slovakia can be made just in Bratislava, and not from Budapest. But nevertheless this relationship between Hungary, as kin-state and the Hungarian minority in Slovakia is essential for both parties. No Hungarian minorities abroad are enough great to be self-sufficient in cultural, linguistic and other fields, to create an own nation and live without the kin-state and the Hungarian society. On the other hand the Hungarian society spiritually needs it, that it should be able to maintain contacts with the rest one-third of the nation living outside of Hungary. Therefore the cross-border cooperations should cover all social spheres, because through that could be this very special relationship realised. The constitutional protection of the Hungarian communities abroad from the side of Hungary is also important, but the exaggerating of this national issue, which is often done by some Hungarian political parties, is detrimental for the Hungarian communities, for the Hungarian nation as whole and also for bilateral neighbourhood relations of Hungary, which could be experienced during the last months be-

tween Slovakia and Hungary. The Hungarian support for the minority culture and education in Slovakia can also not be treated as satisfactory. About the sum it would be impolite to express opinion, because this money belongs to the Hungarian taxpayers and they give it out of the country. But the distribution of the resources happens through networks of political clientele and patronage and has been never so subjective as it is today under the current Hungarian government.

4.5 Relationship to European events and organizations

Mr.T.

One of the most crucial point is, that education and culture are national competencies even within the European Union. There exist Slovak and Hungarian education and cultural policies and that constitutes a very important regulatory border for Hungarians in Slovakia. This regulatory effect of the borders can be seen also in very European fields, like the mutual recognition of certificates, the free movement of persons and employment for example. It is a fact, that thousands of Slovakian citizens work in Győr, Komárom, Esztergom, but they were never employed, worked just in the frame of temporary agency work. This way could be that administrative burden avoided which pounds employment in Hungary. Again an example on borders regulatory effects. The level of the transit infrastructure, the small number of bridges on the Danube and on the Ipeľ/Ipoly has also an important negative effects on cross-border issues. The existence or lack of bridges is very determining, just on the Danube are more than three under planing, but the realisation is a different question. In the Eastern and Middle-regions, by the river Ipoly beside the bridges there is a general lack in transit infrastructure, in public roads, etc., which makes the cross-border connections and traffic very difficult. In the Eastern border section, around Sátoraljaújhely, where the geographical conditions are the most favourable for the connection keeping, the cultural and economical cooperation is very intensive again. The problem there is, that the regions on both sides of the border are very underdeveloped and unpreferred by investors or in the field of regional development. On the other hand Eastward from Trebisov/Töketerebes the connections to the Ukraine became more and more intensive and that is also true concerning the cultural and scientific cooperation with Hungarian institutions in the Ukraine.

Mr.N.

The effect of the enlargement of the EU on situation of the minority: The idea of the European Integration was supported by 95% of the Hungarian population in Slovakia. The Hungarian Coalition Party has played a hardly underestimable role between 1998 and 2004 in the European accession of Slovakia with the non-hidden motivation that the European integration will enhance the Hungarian minority's level of protection. The fundament was that during the Meciar-Era the Council of Europe and the European Union criticized harshly the ethnically suppressive character of the regime. Today the redistribution of EU's financial contributions in the field of cohesion policy is ethnically also more just and lesser discriminating, than the redistribution of the national resources, which affords important development tools for the minorities. The European integration has contributed also a lot to the improving of Slovakian-Hungarian bilateral relations, which has had positive effects concerning the life circumstances of Hungarians in Slovakia too. On the other hand it leads to a partial disappointment that a strong and comprehensive minority protection policy of the European Union was not born until today during the integration process. But to summarize it, the Hungarian minority in Slovakia was clearly beneficiary of the European integration of the country and has been profiting a lot from that. The Hungarians in Slovakia have also till today, positive, pro-European attitudes.

5 MAIN FINDINGS OF WEB-ANALYSIS (ENRI-BLOG)

Hans-Georg Heinrich / Olga Alekseeva

5.1 Methodology

ENRI-East is an interdisciplinary project which employs different methodological approaches. In the framework of the project, Content Analysis of Internet Resources uses internet websites attributable to ethnic minorities in order to analyse the identity-related cultural, social and political activity of minorities. The study analyses the situation of twelve minorities: Russians in Latvia and Lithuania, Ukrainians in Poland and Hungary, Belarusians in Poland and Lithuania, Poles in Belarus, Ukraine and Lithuania, Hungarians in Ukraine, Hungarians in Slovakia, and Slovaks in Hungary. Lithuanians in Russia, who were polled in the ENRI survey, were excluded due to linguistic problems. Instead, Ukrainians in Hungary were included.

Internet can be assumed to provide valid sources of information, because it is a modern and flexible means of communication. Analyzing the presence of minorities in the internet, the study can be expected to yield insights into actual concepts of identity. The internet research helps to understand not only special opinions and media activities of minorities, but also how the concept of ethnic identity evolves within new media like internet. Internet provides a forum for the democratic exchange of information, a free and unrestricted domain to escape the limits of political participation in real politics. The World Wide Web can be the communication medium of groups which are politically underrepresented. Among flows of information in the internet, such new patterns of social communication are observable as forums, live journals, or blogs that have an authentic nature and help to restore the public discourse in the most objective way.

The data base of the content analysis consists of online resources attributable to ethnic minorities, such as periodicals, organisations, blogs, forums, personal websites, and commentaries to articles. Collection of empirical resources from the internet has been carried out in two steps: selection of online resources and selection of text fragments within the online resources. Internet resources were identified by employing search engines like www.google.com for different languages and countries using key-words combinations, or checking websites which contain catalogues of resources like <http://kamunikat.org/>. Individual text fragments within a resource were selected for processing according to the criterion of theoretical relevance.

The research discovered a large number of different resources of ethnic minorities. In the study, 154 online resources were randomly identified, from which 350 text fragments³⁴ were collected and analyzed. Qualitative and quantitative content analysis of the text fragments was conducted using *simstat/wordstat6.2.1*. The data analysis consisted of the description of a resource or a text fragment according to formal criteria like “title”, “author”, or “intention”, as well as according to the content of text fragments. The former data were ordered and coded in a *simstat* data base. The data of the qualitative content analysis were generated by assigning single cases (usually combination of words or parts of sentences) to categories (keywords) which constituted the *wordstat*

³⁴ The notion “text fragment” in this study indicates a unit of analysis in the *simstat/wordstat* program. These can be single texts like articles from websites of periodicals, blogs or organisations without postings of readers or with readers’ postings. Apart from that, a “text fragment” can be called a number of single short texts under particular title as represented by dialogues on internet forums.

dictionary. On the basis of simstat/wordstat data, research results were generated in form of figures which in turn have been qualitatively interpreted.

During the analysis, 69 categories could be created. 8 categories among them belong to the main categories: “cultural heritage”, “images of Europe”, “history”, “cultural encounter”, “minority rights”, “style”, “politics”, and “socio-economic situation”. These main categories include further categories (sub-categories). The following data presentation describes however only those categories, which represent the majority of coded cases within text fragments, measured in %. All other categories, which cover less than 5% of cases were left out in the presented study.

5.2 Description of internet resources

The web analysis concerning *Hungarian minorities in Slovakia* used 17 resources, which indicates a high degree of web activity by members of this minority (third place among all ethnic minorities under study). The resources of Hungarians in Slovakia include 3 periodicals, 1 news portal, 7 resources with blogs, 1 forum, and 5 resources containing articles/blogs with postings. The internet presence of Magyars in Slovakia is quite pronounced. A multitude of news portals, e-periodicals, blogs and other publications tries to organize, to inform, and to raise the awareness of the community.

The periodical *Csallóköz* (<http://issuu.com/csallokoz/docs>) is the regional Hungarian internet publication in Slovakia. It is published in the Hungarian and Slovak languages by an ethnically mixed team of publishers. The periodical has a moderate political stance which strives at promoting the rights of Slovak citizens of Hungarian descent. According to its self-description, the periodical *Paráméter* (www.parameter.sk) is the most popular media for Slovak Hungarians. Around 70% of its readership is concentrated in the Zytva Ostrov, one of Slovakia’s key economic regions. Around 12, 000 visits per day of the online periodical website are registered. Three fourths of the visitors are Slovak citizens, the remaining part are mostly Hungarians. As other similar publications, it sports an advertisement section, a video and imagery rubric, but also a forum with a broad audience. “Paráméter” is supported by the Cultural Ministry of the Slovak Republic. Despite of the “official” funding, critical opinions can be freely vented.

Magyar.sk (<http://www.magyar.sk/szwmw.asp>) is the largest internet portal. It was established in 2005 under the auspices of the Hungarian Ministry for Information and Communication and the Puskás Tivadar Public Foundation, a public body that promotes technology transfer as well as the internet presence of Magyars outside Hungary. “Magyar.sk” is operated by Hungarian organizations in Slovakia and has the stated objective to inform about their activities, about Hungarian schools in Slovakia, to report about community life and various events. The news portal *Felvidék Ma* (<http://www.felvidek.ma>) has an estimated number of page views of 767 000 per year and is the largest Hungarian news site in Slovakia. Established in 2005, it gained popularity among the Magyars during the political conflicts which harnessed ethnic identity as a vehicle when it took a distinct nationalist position, especially during 2009 when clashes between Hungarian and Slovak soccer fans occurred.

“Felvidék Ma” competes with other commercial news portals such as “Bumm.sk” (<http://bumm.sk>). A different position is taken by the forum “Körkép.sk” (<http://korkep.sk/>), which caters to liberal and intellectuals. Among the blog sites which in most cases are linked to news portals “Bumm.sk” or “Körkép.sk” are “Komáromi blog”, news portal “Presztige”, periodicals “Szlovenszko”, and “Paráméter”. The majority of websites are of a non-political nature providing information for everyday life. Overall, the contributions are moderate and pragmatic. This

landscape is a far cry from Hungary-based sites which contain a hard core of such right extremist and anti-Semitic sources as www.kurucz.hu. To that extent, they reflect the present party system and the voting preferences. Incidentally, the June 2010 elections in Slovakia have punished the radicals on both sides of the ethnic fence.

5.3 Results of content analysis of internet resources

5.3.1 Dictionary

The highest frequency in the text fragments attributable to the Hungarians in Slovakia have the following categories (keywords), here in the alphabetic order:

Assimilation

The category “assimilation” means enforced or natural adaptation of the ethnic minority to the culture, language and life style of the host nation. It captures a spectrum of problems which raise considerable concern under the representatives of ethnic minorities. Assimilation is associated with the loss of culture and destruction of the national identity. While the host countries try to implement the politics of integration of ethnic communities, the minorities try to resist the progress of assimilation.

Criticism Representatives

The category “criticism representatives” stands in context of the term “communication” which denotes the relationship between the members of the same ethnic minority. It can be a relation of partnership as well as a relation of conflict and criticism, especially based on different political interests.

Democratization

The category “democratization” refers to the status of development of social and political rights and freedoms in the host country of the minority, the democratic transformation of the society of the host country as a whole. Democratization means the improvement of the situation of the ethnic minorities and a higher responsiveness to the minorities’ rights.

Eastern and Central Europe

The category “Eastern and Central Europe” reflects the amount of references towards the Eastern and Central European countries among the ethnic minorities.

EU Positive

The category “EU positive” reflects positive attitudes of the ethnic minorities in Eastern European countries towards the idea and politics of the European Union. The skepticism towards the policy of the European integration goes hand in hand with the stressing of advantages after the joining of the European Union.

Host Country Critical

The category “host country critical” represents the views of an ethnic minority on the socio-political situation in the host country. Especially critical views shall be considered, how the members of an ethnic community position themselves towards official politics. According to such perception modes, the image and political views of an ethnic minority can be identified and

the self-awareness as social group closely observed. The majority of ethnic groups share position of criticism towards the host country concerning the discrimination of their rights. However the politics of dialogue are typical especially when the host country supports the cultural programs of the minority.

Multiculturalism

The category “multiculturalism” means respect of ethnic rights, implementation of ethnic rights at the state level, and the representation of the ethnic minorities in the legislative body. Multiculturalism indicates the coexistence of different ethnic and national groups in one society which can be historically shaped or influenced by the politics in the host country. The attitude of the ethnic minorities to the multiculturalism can be different, from the negative to positive one. One of the forms of multiculturalism on the level of the individual behavior is tolerance.

Native Country Critical

The relation to the mother country can have different aspects. On the one hand, the minority can be closely connected to the mother country and receive a positive support from it. On the other hand, this relation can be an alienated one when the minority criticizes the native country for its politics. The representatives of minorities, who understand themselves as part of the national opposition in their mother country like the Belarusians in Poland, demonstrate critical attitudes if human rights in the mother country are violated.

National Consciousness Pos

“National consciousness positive” means the ability of individuals to share feelings of belonging to a particular cultural tradition, historical and cultural heritage, to a group for which particular value system is typical. A political debate goes on between those who apparently share the values of belonging to a collective body and those whose collective identity is not sufficiently developed.

Natural identity

The category “natural identity” can be understood as unquestioned “everyday” identity, often juxtaposed to spoof identities created by politicians. Political concepts and ideologies apply towards an individual particular behaviour or perception mode. Natural identity is on the contrary generated by individuals in their life experiences to position themselves independently towards the official politics, cultural norms and traditions.

Representation Neg

The term “representation” shows how well ethnic minorities are represented at the local and federal level of government of the host country and if the ethnic politicians adhere to their duties to represent the interests of their electorate effectively. The resources of ethnic minorities contain however much criticism towards ethnic representatives in parliament as well as towards the lacking political representation of ethnic minorities in the governmental structures, and discrimination of political rights of the ethnic minority as a result of such situation. Insufficient political representation is explained by the weak integration and organization of the ethnic communities in the framework of the civil society, and the inability to create strong organizations and civil society.

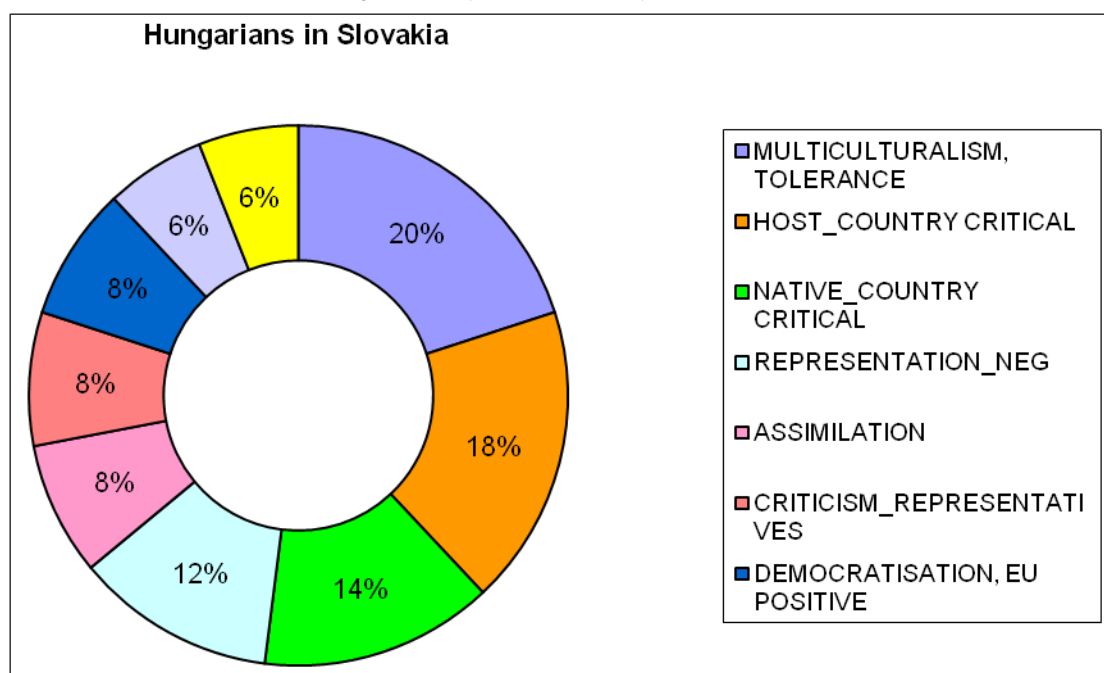
Tolerance

The category “tolerance” indicates the feeling of respect towards ethnic/national differences, the readiness to respect ethnic rights of other groups and to coexist with them in the frame of one community. Tolerance can be shown by the host country towards the ethnic groups and by the ethnic groups towards the host country and other nations. Tolerance can also mean forgiveness and reconciliation between nations.

5.3.2 Practical Realization

Figure 1 demonstrates keywords/categories distribution according to the % of coded cases for the Hungarian minority in Slovakia.

Figure 1: Keyword Frequency, % of Cases



In contrast to widely held stereotypes and commentaries in the media, Hungarians in Slovakia are bent on living together and co-operating with their Slovak compatriots. The categories MULTICULTURALISM/TOLERANCE cover in the analysis 20% of cases.

Hungarians in Slovakia are critical toward their host country Slovakia (HOST COUNTRY CRITICAL, 18%), but also toward their own political representatives (CRITICISM REPRESENTATIVES, 8%). Hungarian minorities are conscious of their cultural legacy, their historical and political role in Central Europe and consider education in their mother tongue as the main tool to prevent ASSIMILATION (8% of cases). As follows from the online resources of the Hungarians in Slovakia, Hungarians direct their criticism to the Hungarian parents and to politics in the mother country rather than to Slovak government authorities.

Processes of assimilation and the reduction of the factor like national identity among Hungarians in Slovakia is emphasized on the blog-site “Paráméter”:

- The Hungarian name is the most visible sign of belonging to the nation or of Magyar identity. In the present situation, when, as a result of the extreme vulnerability of this identity, the number of Magyars is rapidly decreasing, the doors of Magyar elementary schools are closing, the official regis-

tration of the Magyar name, the open avowal would in any case be an identity-strengthening factor which would stop the assimilation process.

Translation from Hungarian: A magyar név a nemzethez való tartozás vagyis a magyar identitás legláthatóbb jele. A jelen helyzetben, mikor a harmatgyenge identitás következményeként rohamosan fogy a magyarok száma, folyamatosan zárulnak be a magyar alapiskolák kapui, a magyar név hivatalosítása vagyis vállalása mindenképp identitáserősítő tényező lenne, amivel megfékezhetnénk a beolvadási folyamatot.³⁵

Numerous contributions come out against what is perceived as an unwise claim of the present government to represent all Magyars and to disregard the national sovereignty of neighboring states (NATIVE COUNTRY CRITICAL, 14%). Quite naturally, this is seen as a move that may spell trouble for the situation of the minority. Hungarians in Slovakia subscribe to democratic values and frequently come out against Hungarian jingoism. There are some distinct differences in the post-2008 ranking of keywords: While criticism of the host country is still on a high level, the necessity of a “European” value, namely tolerance, comes to the foreground. The negative consequences of an excessive national consciousness are more clearly realized (DEMOCRATISATION/EU POSITIVE, 8%).

A great deal of attention is given to the – obviously unsatisfactory – structure of interest representation (REPRESENTATION NEG, 12%), where the allegedly excessive diversity of Hungarian parties together with their ideological orientation is criticized (CRITICISM REPRESENTATIVES, 8%). This is illustrated by the rejection of the ideological component of ethnicity and the relatively strong support for citizenship and democratization. The geographical focus of the Hungarian identity in Slovakia is Central Europe (EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE, 6%), a fact that does not exclude the claim to live on one’s own territory. The latter is never treated as controversial, but as something natural which does not need further discussion.

While reminiscence of a negatively perceived Communist past prevails in the period before 2008, the issue of assimilation gains prominence after 2008 to the detriment of multiculturalism. Overall, one may state that the identity of Hungarians in Slovakia is firmly rooted in the Central European topography. It has not been affected by nationalist currents in the mother country. It is an identity of ethnic belonging which accepts mother tongue and space as undisputed natural ingredients (NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS POS/NATURAL IDENTITY, 6%). This goes with an attitude of active citizenship, which is often critical of Slovak policies and authorities but does not challenge Slovak statehood. Hungarians in Slovakia insist that Slovakia is their historical territory, but their identity centers around the notion of Central Europe.

The meaning of the natural identity can be illustrated by the following quotation:

- It is not important for others, who I am, but for me. The answer has to be asked from the inside, not from the outside.

Translation from Hungarian: Nem másnak fontos tudni: ki vagyok én, hanem nekem. Nem felülről, belülről kell kérni és hallani a választ.³⁶

³⁵ Gábor, B. (2008) “Promóció-névhasználat” (Promotion and name use), Paráméter (blog), 18 July, internet WWW-Site: <http://www.parameter.sk/blog/balko-gabor/2008/07/18/promocio-%E2%80%93-nevhasznalat>.

³⁶ Gyurkovits Róza, N. (2010) “Nem felülről, belülről – avagy: Ki a magyar?” (Not from outside, from inside, or: Who is Magyar?), Felvidék Ma (blog), 08 November, internet WWW-Site: http://www.felvidek.ma/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=25243&catid=64&Itemid=131

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Research conclusions

The communist rulers in Central Europe in their effort to maintain „homogenous“ society did not want some sensitive historic pages to be explored. Let us focus on the implications that the „taboo“ communist period had regarding the perception of history on both banks of the river Danube during last two decades; or, what kind of “luggage” the countries brought into the European Union.

In Slovakia – during these decades political elites have been too busy dealing with the complicated processes that have been concentrated within very short time.

Ad 1) building up new statehood comprising all relevant institutions,

ad 2) political, social and economic transformation of the society reshaping thus its value system and

ad 3) integration of Slovakia into the most important international structures: UN, OSCE, CoE, OECD, NATO, EU including Schengen and Euro zone – this altogether has consumed too many capacities of elites and the population as well.

Logically, very little energy has been left for the exploration of own history of Slovaks, whose ancestors had lived in this part of the old continent since the 6th century. The specific aspect of this exploration reflects the fact that the Slovak nation throughout many centuries has been under the rule of other nations – which „in return“ taught Slovaks their perception of history. Thanks to the far-reaching process of changes in Central Europe since 1989 the Slovak nation got its independent state in 1993 as one of the results of the democratisation process in the region. Gradually, Slovak elites had to learn how to run the whole country.

Influenced by today’s optic, the Slovak society still has a problem to distinguish between the political regime of those days, which was an ally of Hitler – just like other European nations at that time - and the State entity that in limited space allowed some kind of promotion of the Slovak awareness. It is very often forgotten that the motivation of Slovak elites for „cooperation“ with Germany was to defend the integrity of Slovakia vis-à-vis the revisionist aggressive policy of profascist Hungary that openly declared territorial demands towards then democratic Czechoslovakia. Interestingly enough, different aspect of the coexistence of Slovaks with the Czech nation (during Czechoslovakia) and with the Magyar nation (when together in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, please distinguish between Magyar – ethnic and Hungary – state entity) is not a major problem of today’s Slovakia. For better or worse, especially the latter things seem to be a very remote past for the present generation of Slovaks. And they are rather surprised, to be stressed unwillingly, when somebody raises the issue of Trianon or post-war legislation of President Beneš. Slovak elites and society as well consider cases like these to be closed and there is a consensual opinion in Slovakia that historians should deal with those cases rather than politicians.

Many nations lived in peace on the territory of Austro-Hungary. This changed dramatically after the deal between Vienna and Budapest in 1867. Political elites of the Magyar nation in Hungary wanted to convert multiethnic Hungary (where ethnic Magyars represented roughly 40 percent) into a pure national Magyar state. The consequences of the severe nationalist policy towards non-Magyar nations were devastating for the latter. There was a real threat that some vulnerable ethnic groups - if this policy of Budapest continued - would cease to exist.

It needs to be stressed that the policy of Budapest during the period of monarchy had two opposite faces – abroad, Hungarian propaganda via presenting liberal domestic legislation was quite successful in getting credit in Western Europe. The Act on minorities in Hungary No. XLIV of 1868 was officially aiming at the promotion of ethnic minorities, but the implementation of the very Act went to the opposite direction. It took some time and an inside view for foreign actors to realize that the internal policy of Budapest regarding the non-Magyar nations was totally contradictory. Brutal magyarization of the whole population in the part of the Empire that was ruled by Magyar elites led to the decision of the nations living there to leave (abandon) the monarchy.

Neighbouring nations to Hungary of today – those who had lived together with the Magyars in the monarchy – have had since then three major discrepancies with Budapest when history is discussed.

Ad 1) Hungary of today has been trying to „privatize“ the common history of the then multiethnic empire that had been home to several peoples and logically history was then produced also by other nations.

Ad 2) political elites of the „modern“ Republic of Hungary have identified themselves historically mainly with the last half century of the Monarchy. What for the Magyars might have meant „golden age“, for non-Magyars was and still is a nightmare. The label „Prison of the nations“ given to the monarchy at that time was not an accident at all.

Ad 3) political elites of „modern“ Hungary, have not yet come to terms with the fact that Trianon was a consequence of the policy of their ancestors, who did not want to find a peaceful modus vivendi with non-Magyar nations, rather than „dictate“ of the powers. It goes without saying that in those days Magyar rulers had established good contacts with the capitals in Europe. This was definitely not the case of the intellectual elites of the „ruled nations“ who were brutally persecuted by Magyars. Budapest also underestimated the process of increasing the level of self-awareness of the oppressed nations during the WWI that led those nations to the conviction that future coexistence with the Magyars under „one roof“ was not an option any more.

The most dramatic consequence of the false interpretation of history by Budapest for our region is that almost one century later, Magyar elites not only still think in the virtual category of the monarchy; there is a clear pattern of historic revisionism present in Hungary's policy. Budapest has done everything possible to convince the international community about her loss of territory and population. Given the fact that the Austro-Hungarian Empire ceased to exist by the end of the WWI and the new Republic of Hungary emerged alongside other new state entities founded upon the ruins of the empire – Budapest therefore could not and did not lose anything. Ethnically mixed territory of ex-monarchy made it impossible to create „nation clear“ countries. As a consequence cca 650 thousand ethnic Magyars remained in Czecho-Slovakia (including 150 thousand on the territory of today's Subcarpathian Ukraine) and more than 400 thousand Slovaks in post-Trianon Hungary.

Absolute lack of historic reflection in Budapest and a revisionist drive in the policy of the mid-war Hungary contributed a lot to the beginning of the WWII. The issue of „badly treated“ Magyar minority in Czecho-Slovakia – the same minority which had its own and complete educational system, publishing houses, political party etc. - was abused as a pretext to unleash a Slovak-Hungarian conflict. Unlike Slovak elites, the motivation of Hungary's cooperation with the Nazi Germany was to saturate territorial claims of Budapest towards the neighbours, including Slovakia. No surprise then that the Czecho-Slovak delegation at the Paris Peace conference insisted on the ban of revisionism in Hungary (see Art. 4 of Paris Peace Treaty from 1947).

Towards the end of the last century the international community decided to enhance cooperation on the issue of the protection of national minorities. The reasons were obvious. This decision was taken against the background of the ethnic conflict in the Balkans and the situation in new democracies, on the territory of which different minorities had lived. The international community wanted to guarantee that the issue of minority should be an object of peaceful cooperation – and definitely not a reason for disputes or even conflicts. A set of important international documents was adopted – the UN Declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, the Copenhagen OSCE document on Human Dimension, the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe on the protection of national minorities (FCNM) and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Charter). The one thing that these documents have in common is that states engaged in the cooperation on the protection of minorities fully respect the key principle that responsibility for the situation of the respective minority is upon the State where the minority lives. To be reminded; when preparing FCNM as the first legal pan-European standard ever, Europe still remembered the mid-war negative experience with the international system of the protection of minorities. The reason why the system failed - and thus contributed to the war – was the lack of balance between the commitments of respective States and an unfair way of monitoring of those commitments. As a consequence of the historic experience, the Council of Europe also refused to incorporate into the standard a concept of collective rights for national minorities. There were more legitimate reasons why Europe has given a clear preference to the individual rights of persons belonging to national minorities – stability on the continent, territorial integrity of the States concerned and approach to the protection of minorities as to a human rights concept. Last but not least, enforcement and monitoring of individual rights creates definitely less space for political conflict both within the State and on the inter-state level as well. And, in our case study it is worthy to remind that Hungary's acceptance of collective rights for national minorities has not been very helpful in protecting and promoting the identity of minorities at all.

Generally speaking, we may say that there are three basic models of co-existence of the majority with a minority and of the policy of the majority towards minority and vice versa.

Ad 1) process of assimilation – is the case when the state concerned does not create appropriate conditions in order to protect a minority. International documents forbid the states to execute an active policy of assimilation. An example of the assimilation policy leading almost towards disappearance of national minorities is the real policy of Hungary, which is well documented in the reports of the relevant international institutions – see below. On the opposite side of (to) the assimilation is a phenomena which we can label as

ad 2) the ethnic separatism – when the minority step by step, via creating its own structures in different fields like religion, social life, policy – gradually promotes an atmosphere of mistrust, which makes cooperation and later even peaceful co-existence in one state difficult. All this is happening very often with the support from the other side of the frontier. This process may lead to the exclusion of the minority and at the last stage the minority eventually separates itself from the state concerned. Some experts would point to Kosovo as the recent example of such a process. In this context, it is very important to bear in mind that the mentioned case of Kosovo is in the Magyar political circles perceived as one of the possible solutions of the minority issue in Central Europe.

Ad 3) the integration of minority – this model can be characterised as the optimal one. The key principle of the integration is dwelling in the duty of the state to create appropriate conditions for the protection of a minority and at the same time to the fullfledged inclusion of the minority into

the society as such. It is also expected that also the members of the minority themselves contribute actively to the positive atmosphere in the interethnic co-existence, especially by their loyal behaviour towards the state on the territory of which and citizens of which they are. In no case we can reduce the loyalty just to the paying of taxes. Integration policy of state towards minorities is fully endorsed by the international documents (FCNM) and respective international institutions (HCNM OSCE). To be more specific - in the field of education, it is taken for granted that the minority is bilingual, i.e. their members not only speak their mother tongue but they are able to communicate in the official language as well. From this point of view, this is maybe the most efficient way when the person belonging to the minority becomes a fullfledged member of the society, because his/her command of both languages creates an opportunity for him/her to seek a job, to study, to live and generally speaking to socialize on the territory of the whole state. It goes without saying that the integration policy in Slovakia has been and should remain the core of the minority policy in the state. In other words, it is of utmost importance to maintain the balance between the protection of minorities and the needs of the whole society.

Both Slovakia and Hungary are legally bound not only by the bilateral treaty but also by multilateral documents concerning the minority issue – FCNM and Charter. When we compare the implementation of these documents and the actual and legal situation of the minorities in these two countries, we will come to the following observation: in Slovakia, persons belonging to national minorities have their rights not only codified in the national legislation. And, at the same time there exist institutional guarantees in order to execute those rights. E.g. the right to get education in a minority language is guaranteed by the whole educational system (378 schools for pre-school education, 259 schools for primary education, 20 secondary schools and the recently established University in Komárno), the right to protect cultural identity is enabled by real cultural institutions (e.g. two theatres operating on the permanent basis, several museums, etc). When we talk about the right to disseminate information in a minority language there exist publishing houses, etc. A reminder – these institutions have existed in Slovakia for many decades even during the old regime before 1989. The right of persons belonging to national minorities to participate in public affairs is ensured by the Minority Council – an advisory body to the Government. This council, where all minorities are represented is consulted on every legislative initiative that might be minority-related. The generous approach of Slovakia towards minorities is stemming from the basic principle that the Slovak society has always perceived minorities as a cultural enrichment of the whole Slovakia.

Economically the country is doing quite well. Slovakia has been the first postcommunist state to become a netto contributor to the IMF. The Slovak society – after some domestic political turbulences in the nineties of the last century – has also passed an important test of democracy, when rejecting extreme forms of nationalism, despite a lot of provocations coming from Budapest. The new government in Bratislava is formed by the coalition of four political parties with its own positives and negatives. An advantage would be that the broad coalition may represent a wide spectrum of the opinions across the society.

Research of Slovak citizens with Hungarian nationality by ENRI-East project has brought more comprehensive description of indicators, which relate to "identity" of the Hungarian national group. We found that "nationality" is important (17 %), but by far not the only component of identity. In terms of structure citizens of Slovak republic with Hungarian nationality shall be reported to dominant identity "I am Hungarian living on Slovakia" (65 %). Group is significantly less with identity "I am member of Hungarian nation" and identity group "I am citizen of Slovakia as the host country with different ethnic origin". For each group is characterized difference in

preferences adapt to life with the majority society. For all groups common fact is that respondents expect support for their cultural development by host country for the future. Proficiency of Slovak language is not perceived as a first step towards assimilation, but as an effective tool of social life in the host country. Approximately 60 % of respondents in 2009 have managed to introduce "real Hungarian" without Hungarian citizenship. Important for them is "mother tongue" and "feeling to be" member of nation.

Generational aspect provides an opportunity to see phenomenon of "identity" of Hungarian national minority in the context of historical and cultural changes. Quantitative distribution of major types in terms of age has a significant homogeneity which implies that in the future to be reckoned that dominant group of citizens of Slovak Hungarian national minority will be the one that accepts current national framework for their existence, their life satisfaction and cultural needs.

Extremist political forces in Hungary began to escalate disputes over national political issue in Slovakia, particularly in pre-election period (2009) to the European Parliament (Jobbik). Elimination of border controls has allowed demonstration marches of extremist groups (such as Hungarian Guard) to the Slovak Republic (e.g. Kráľovský Chlmec). This concerns all citizens of Slovakia, including Hungarian minority.

6.2 Practical implications

6.2.1 Implications for civil society organizations

One of the remarkable findings of ENRI-East research is that political organizations and religious communities of ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia are showing as ethnically homogenous and closed for Slovak citizens of another ethnicity.

The new political party MOST-HÍD represents the exception, not only in Slovakia, which unlike the ethnic political parties of Slovak citizens with Hungarian nationality associated in coalition SMK-MKP, merging the citizens of both nationalities. Its mission is to find solutions, that would improve coexistence of citizens, especially in areas with mixed population structure. Sessions of highest political authorities of this party are in Slovak language, but in the case of large assemblies of political party the discussion is in Hungarian language and the interpretation into Slovak language is provided.

The party Híd-Most would have been never established, if there would not have happened a paradigmatic change after the parliamentary elections of 2006 in the Hungarian Coalition Party. The earlier paradigm of HCP was after its founding with the union of the earlier three Hungarian parties that a successful interest representation of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia is imaginable just through active political participation on cooperative way with democratic forces in all public arenas, but mainly – if it is possible – in the government. It was also a great change in 1998, because especially the party Coexistence shared the attitude, that a minority party can represent the interests of the community clearly and honestly only in opposition. But in 2006, when the Hungarian Coalition Party lost its governmental position and went into opposition, and on the other hand also fundamental changes happened in the board and leading of the party, the new leadership changed political strategy and has left this earlier paradigm. This step had two important consequences. At one hand the support of voters decreased from around 10-11% to 5-6%. On the other hand in 2007-2008 the former coalition partner Slovak democratic parties turned away from HCP and cancelled the permanent political negotiations with the argument that HCP

is on the way on a continuous national radicalisation. This isolation of HCP was very dangerous from the point of view of the Hungarian community's interest representation. It existed consequent criticism within the party against the politics of the board influenced by Pál Csáky, president and Miklós Duray, strategic vice-president of HCP, but the answer was the suppressing of criticism and the suspension and exclusion of some critical party-members. Motivated by the responsibility for the future representation of the Hungarian community's interest founder of Híd-Most left the Hungarian Coalition Party and decided to establish a new political party in June 2009.

6.2.2 Implications for governmental bodies and officials

Local and regional sporting and recreational clubs and associations of citizens are ethnically more open and representing area where is a greater understanding of intercultural communication and cooperation of citizens of the majority and minority ethnic groups.

Research points to the possibility representing by different civil associations (eg. numismatics, philately, chess, singing and dance clubs, catering) as a platform for better understanding and eliminating prejudices and stereotypes among ethnic communities. It is up to governmental bodies and officials at local, regional, national and supra-national levels (EU) to direct the financial support to projects and programs of this type of associations.

This would be good supplement to so far unilaterally oriented financial support of cooperation of ethnically pure Hungarian organizations in various countries such as Slovakia, Romania, Ukraine, Serbia and Vojvodina. It is necessary to provide financial support to ethnically mixed cultural and sports organizations in the regions of each EU member country.

6.2.3 Suggestions for future research and follow-up studies

ENRI-East research omitted important ethnic group living in Slovakia (Rusyns and Ukrainians) and in Ukraine (Slovaks and Rusyns). Although these groups are not very numerous, but they are significant in terms of relations of two countries at the EU borders. In relation to the original objectives of the project we consider this as a fault. We recommend to support research project focused primarily on ethnic group of Rusyns in Ukraine, Poland and Slovakia in the future. The process of forming and self-determination of this ethnic group in Slovakia is going well.

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