DISCUSSION PAPER

(Dxx)

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FOUR EUROPEAN BORDERLANDS FOCUSING ON POPULATION CHANGES AND CROSS BORDER CONNECTIONS

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I INTRODUCTION

Researchers deal with borderlands from different aspects, such as political (e.g. O’DOWD, L. 1994; ANDERSON, J. O’DOWD, L. 1999; DIEZ, T, STETTER, S, ALBERT, M. 2004), the point of security (e.g. SALLAI, J. 2002; KOBOLKA, I. 2000), sociological (e.g. DONNAN, H, McFARLANE, G. 1987; COOK, S, POOLE, M. A, PRINGLE, D, G, MOORE, A. J. 2000) anthropological (e.g. DONNAN, H, WILSON, T. M. 1999), historical (e.g. ZEIDLER, M. 2001), economical (e.g. FITZGERALD, J.D, QUINN, T, P, WHELA, B, J, WILLIAMS, J. A. 1988, KOKAI, S. 1995), demographical (e.g. HOÓZ, I. 1992) etc. This is a very important issue for all social sciences, because borderlands can be contact or dividing lines, conflict zones or market places, intercultural or multicultural territories, homogeneous or heterogeneous spaces, developed and impoverished areas, etc, with important social, territorial and political roles. When we would like to exam these areas we need to start our research with population, the people who live there and who are the main actors in the area.

Europe has more problems after enlargement, at least in the short-term. Apparently it is advantageous for the new European Union as a whole, but we have to be wary of giving conclusions now and we have to think about the future watchfully if we would like to predict it. In the European Union, in spite of globalization, the Single European Market (SEM) and a proliferation of transnational bodies, there are still national, economic and other conflicts here. Liam O’Dowd, concluded that “As the meaning of national borders changes, existing borders are challenged, old borders re-emerge and new ones are established often in the midst of bloody conflict. The whole process reminds us that we should never see boundaries as natural, fixed or immutable, rather they should be understood as ‘temporary’ constructions dependent on the balance of forces at specific times in history.” (O’DOWD, L. 1994).

It is very important that borders are “dependent on the balance of forces at specific times in history”, because we could be misled into analysing situations without enough of a grasp of their history. We can approach conflicts from the point of view of “subject positions” (DIEZ, T, STETTER, S, ALBERT, M. 2004). Certainly it will help us to understand the actual situation because finally the result will depend always on the actors in the conflicts’ positions, and who has more power, resources and a bigger hinterland. The example of the former Yugoslavia also shows us that conflicts were latent during the Communist era, but afterwards turned into a manifest ones (DIEZ, T, STETTER, S, ALBERT, M. 2004).

In such processes, old borders disappear and new ones are born. This can change peoples’ lives dramatically on the borderlands.

In this paper we have compared the different border areas, and how the population has changed under different circumstances using examples from the Hungarian-Austrian, Hungarian-Slovakian, Hungarian-Ukrainian borderlands and the Northern Ireland-Republic of Ireland border region. This paper also tries to show contacts through and across the borders and some of the impact of those drawn borders on peoples’ lives.

Method
The study is based on statistical data analysis and survey by questionnaire. An empirical study was made, at the household level, of the:

- existence of relatives beyond the border
- level of relations maintained with the relatives from the other side
- frequency of border crossings
- purpose of the border crossings
- municipal attraction centres in these areas - places visited for the use of retail and services.
We used a non-probability sample in the villages and a probability sample in case of Sopron town and Irish borderland.

**Research areas**

The study is based on four border regions:

- 98 settlements running of the full length of the Hungarian-Ukrainian border, called the “Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderland” (Figure 1)
- 105 settlements along the border section between the Sajó and Hernád rivers of the Hungarian-Slovakian border, called the “Sajó-Hernád borderland” (Figure 2)
- the Sopron region of the Austrian-Hungarian border with 35 settlements including the city of Sopron and the Fertő-lake region, called the “Kékfrankos borderland” (Figure 3)
- Northern Irish and Irish borderland from Monaghan, Cavan an Fermanagh County with 42 districts or electoral divisions, called “Upper-Erne” borderland (Figure 4)
Figure 2  The Sajó-Hernád borderland research area

Figure 3  The Kékfrankos borderland research area
**Historical background**

After the two world wars, the new borders of Hungary were not created to take notice of the ethnic compositions of the areas they bisected. As a result of these treaties, many Hungarian people found themselves left out of their original home country. After the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary lost 67% of its territory; its population decreased dramatically from 18,264,533 to 7,990,202; and its territory decreased even more dramatically from 282,870 km$^2$ to 93,073 km$^2$. 1.7 million Hungarian people were left in Romania, 0.5 million Hungarian people in the Serb-Croatian-Slovenian Kingdom, 1.1 million Hungarian people in Czechoslovakia, and 26,000 Hungarian people in Austria (ZEIDLER, M. 2001).

Partition of Ireland worked out on the similar way: “The meandering 280-mile boundary confirmed in 1925 cross-cut 1400 agricultural holdings, approximately 180 roads and 20 railway lines. It bisected villages and, in some cases, private houses” (O’DOWD, L. 1994. p.20).

Two of our research areas contain ethnic Hungarian majorities on the non-Hungarian side of the border: the Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderland and the Sajó-Hernád borderland. Within these areas there are settlements with Hungarian minorities and settlements with Hungarian majorities.

**II Population change and structure**

**Population change**

In all these areas the creation of borders has divided formerly cohesive communities and territories. In three of these borderlands (only Kékfrankos borderland is exception) mostly people with same languages and nationalities live both sides of the borders.
The population change in Hungarian borderlands research areas can be described here from 1880 until 2001. The population of the Hungarian side of the Sajó-Hernád and Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderlands had been increasing until the 1970s, except during the two world wars. Between 1970 and 1990, ten years before the start of the overall population decrease in Hungary, the population of these areas started to decline, especially in Sajó-Hernád borderland, where the population size has decreased to under its 1880 level. At the same time, the population size was increasing on the other side of the border in these research areas.

The population of Kékfrankos borderland has increased on both sides of the border, but it was in drastic decline on Hungarian side after World War II. Probably the war casualties played an important role in this. Also, a lot of German speakers lived here previously, who were forced to leave this area after the war. After this time the number of the people started to quickly increase. On the Austrian side the population increase was continuous, but very slow (Figure 5).

Population changing in Irish borderland research area: In the case of Northern Ireland, people moved to neighbouring towns during the conflict from 1971 (Figure 6). In the Southern border area after 1971 a relatively high percentage of inhabitants left, some could go to more peaceful and safer parts of the Republic of Ireland or to other parts of the world. When the situation became more peaceful from the mid-1990s the overall population change was positive (though not necessarily large), though Southern border towns continued to experience population decline.
(Figure 7). (Unfortunately it was not possible to get comparable data from this research area before 1971.)

6. Figure  Population changing in Upper-Erne borderland research area between 1971-2001
Population dynamics

If we study the different factors involved in population dynamics over the last 10-20 years in the Kékfrankos borderland, we can see the increase was caused by immigration and not by natural change (Figure 8-9). This area is one of the gates to West-Europe with Sopron at its centre. This town is important for tourism, education, and trade, and it has a significant role as an attraction in the whole surrounding area and across the border as well. There are good connections between the two countries, so we find close economic relationships both legal and illegal. The cheap but skilled labour force goes to Austria from Hungary, and people from Austria go to Hungary for many services. In spite of the iron curtain the borders are more open than in the other research areas. Visitors are warmly made welcome on both sides of the Kékfrankos borderland, there is also good cooperation in education, with teachers working in Austria and in Hungary from both sides of the border.
Figure 8  Factors in population dynamics on the Hungarian side of the Kékfrankos borderland research area

Figure 9  Factors in population dynamics on the Austrian side of the Kékfrankos borderland research area
In the two other research areas, there are mostly Hungarian populations on both sides of the border. There were bad political conditions in these borderlands. The borders were difficult to cross. Visitors from Hungary were up against a hostile welcome on the other side of the border among Slovaks; and the Hungarian nationalities not were well tolerated in those countries (in Slovakia and Ukraine). The governments in power made a strong effort to decrease the proportion of Hungarians in these areas and did it with political and administrative tools. They supported ‘foreign’ nationalities (Slovakians, Czechs, or Ukrainians, Russians) moving to these areas, decreased the number of Hungarian schools and put up obstacles to using Hungarian as a formal language. Looking at the processes of population change, we can find differences between Hungarian and other nationalities. The population of Hungarians has been decreasing or slowly increasing opposite the Slovakian or Ukrainian population, which we can see has increased extremely (Figure 10-11). Native language and nationality was asked in 2001 in the Slovakian official census. (Formerly only nationality was asked.) We can see the different on Figure 10. More people declared Hungarian as a native language, than Hungarian nationality. This difference was caused by fear of the Slovakian government rather than by assimilation. On the Sajó-Hernád borderland the official census was organised by government of Czechoslovakia between two world wars, when it was trying to change the ethnic composition, if it needed to, with intimidation. Unfortunately in Ukraine these data were estimated after 1941, The population decrease in 1949 represented those men who were deported by the Soviet government in 1944. In the meantime when Soviet Union annexed Kárpátalja (Subcarpathia), the power feared the failure of an overall referendum, so it enacted compulsory work for three days for every Hungarian and German man between 18 and 50. After they were collected in Szolyva, many of them were killed there or later in the lagers. About 30 000 Hungarian men were deported and 16 000 were killed (KOVÁCS S. 1999).

![Population of the Sajó-Hernád borderlands](image-url)

**Figure 10** Population of the Sajó-Hernád borderlands
The new borders created made living even worse for the population. The region remained in Hungary, but the traditional central places, towns (Rimaszombat, Rozsnyó, Kassa or Munkács, Ungvár, Nagyszőlős) of the regions, were given to the newly formed countries. The new relations with the new central cities (Miskolc, Ózd, Kazincbarcika or Nyíregyháza, Mátészalka, Vásárosnamény) don’t always work very well and cannot replace the traditional links. On the Hungarian side of the Sajó-Hernád borderland the settlements with a good condition of transport show an increasing population, but villages with a bad transport situation decreased (Figure 12). Also, on other aspect, population change is shown in settlements with high proportion of Gypsy people in 2001. The population of these villages has been increasing from 1990, because after this time there started a change of population from Hungarian to Gypsy. Among the Gypsy population we find a high birth rate, so these populations are always increasing. In spite of a good transport situation, the population of the Hungarian side of Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderland has been decreasing, but not as radically as in dead-end-road villages (Figure 13). Having less services did not affect population change so much.
Three main factors can be identified behind the population decline in these areas: the low birth rate, the high death rate and the higher number of emigrants than of the immigrants. The most significant of these three was the high emigration rate. The majority of the emigrants were from
the younger, more educated part of the society. This selective migration caused an extremely low fertility rate (Figure 14-15).

Figure 14  Factors of population dynamics of the Sajó-Hernád borderland
The population dynamics of Gypsy ethnics are characterized by a high level of births per head, and while the original population are moving out from these villages, the Gypsy population are moving into these settlements (Figure 16-17).
Figure 16  Factors in population dynamics of Tomanádaska, where the proportion of Gypsy people is more than 60%

Figure 17  Factors in population dynamics with more than 20% gipsy population in Hungarian side of the Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderland
We have no data about the birth, death and migration rate either from rest of these borderlands, neither from Irish border areas.

**Aging**

If we exam the age factor of the population comparing with the past situation, we can see that it has changed all research area and became less advantageous (Figure 18-24). The situation is the worst in Slovakian-Hungarian border research area, where in Hungarian side we can find villages without people who are younger than 14 years old (Figure 21). In case of Irish border research area the aging of the population is still advantageous, but in some output areas lost their young inhabitants (Figure 24).

![Figure 18](image.jpg)

*Figure 18* Index of population age structure in Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderland, 1941
Figure 19  Index of population age structure in Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderland, 2001

Figure 20  Index of population age structure in Sajó-Hernád borderland, 1941
Figure 21  Index of population age structure in Sajó-Hernád borderland, 2001

Figure 22  Index of population age structure in Kékfrankos borderland, 2001
Figure 23  Index of population age structure in Upper-Erne borderland, 1971

Figure 24  Index of population age structure in Upper-Erne borderland area, 2001
III COMPARATIVE STUDY OF INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES OF THE BORDERS

The existence of relatives across the border

In all of three Hungarian and neighbouring countries’ research borderlands connections were found with relatives from the other side of the border (Figure 25) and social interweaving across borders is often strongly felt. Hungarian people living in the Ukrainian and Slovakian research areas, have the most relatives across the border in Hungary. More than 70% of the people asked in each of these areas have relatives. It is interesting that those living in the same borderlands on the other side apparently have many fewer relatives on the other side of the border (20% in Hungarian side of the Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderland and around 40% in Hungarian side of the Sajó-Hernád borderland).

In these areas lives the Hungarian diaspora, people living abroad (from Hungary’s point of view), and these people would like to keep contact strongly with their native country so they keep tally on more distant cousins than people who live in Hungary do. In the Austrian-Hungarian research area, there are very few Hungarians on the Austrian side and also just a few Austrians on the Hungarian side, so they have not many relatives across the border. But the Hungarians on the Hungarian side would like to keep the contact with their families who live west, so they also keep count of distant cousins on the Austrian side.
The level of relations maintained with relatives across the border

We can see that, in these research areas, most people meet their relatives rarely - more rarely than monthly, or only for an important family occasion (Figures 26-28).
Figures 26-27 The intensity of visits to relatives in the Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja and Sajó-Hernád borderlands

Figure 28 The intensity of visits to relatives in the Kékfrankos borderland
The frequency of border crossings

Despite the “Schengen border” the frequency of travelling across the border is highest in the Kékfrankos borderland. In all three Hungarian and neighbouring countries’ border research areas most people never or very rarely go cross the border (Figures 29-31). Really very few people go to Ukraine from Hungary (20%) and Hungarian people who live in the Sajó-Hernád borderland on the Slovakian side travel most often to Hungary. In two of the three research areas, we find “tourists”, who go to the neighbouring country for business or to work as cheap labour. These border crossings are illegal, so these people do not always want to tell us the truth about them.

Figures 29-30  The intensity of journeys across the border in the Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja and Sajó-Hernád borderlands
Figure 31  The intensity of journeys across the border in the Kékfrankos borderland
In Ukrainian-Hungarian borderland is an illegal petrol trade and lot of Hungarian people from Ukrainian side have no alternative to this for earning money. In the Austrian-Hungarian borderland Hungarians go to Austria to work as a cheap labourers. In both cases they these things secret and only when we talked informally would they tell us their true situations.

The purpose of the border crossings
There is a large difference between the research borderlands, and between the difference sides of the borders, in the purposes people have for crossing the border (Figures 32-34).

Mostly, people travel to Hungary from the Ukrainian side of Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpatalja borderland to visit their relatives, and for foodstuffs, clothes and manufactured goods. Hungarians travel to the Ukrainian side also to visit their relatives and to buy petrol and as tourists (Figure 32).

People living on the Slovakian side of the Sajó-Hernád borderland go to Hungary to shop for clothes, foodstuffs and manufactured goods and to visit their relatives and for a holiday. Hungarian families go to Slovakia to visit their relatives, as tourists and for shopping something (Figure 33).

In Hungarian-Austrian research area we can find intense contacts between people living two sides of the border. Austrians travel to Hungary for holiday, for services and shopping. Hungarians go to Austria to buy foodstuffs, clothes and manufactured goods and to visit their relatives (Figure 34).

Figures 32-33  The purpose of travelling across the border in the Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpatalja and Sajó-Hernád borderlands
Figure 34  The purpose of travelling across the border in the Kékfrankos borderland

Municipal attraction centers based on the use of retail and services

When a political frontier does not run on a natural border, it can divide areas that rely on same resources of nature, humans, and economy etc. This happens easily when a new border is born after the settling of an area and it happened in the last century after each of the two world wars and their peace treaties. All of the new Hungarian borders “forgot” to consider the original connections and structures and made difficulties for the border people and indeed for the whole country. From this point of view the situation was same in Hungary as it was in Ireland. The settlements of these bisected areas had to rebuild their relationships, the border people had to make new centres and form new catchment’s areas, but sometimes these cannot work successfully. Is it possible to reform the original texture when the border becomes opened and permeable again? Is it necessary or not? Is there any claim to be made for it or not? And what is the situation in those areas where the border obstructs movement across it?

Method

The method is based on a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire posed a series of questions about where respondents engaged in consumer activities (for example buying foodstuffs or visiting the cinema). Respondents were able to name a maximum of two places used for each activity. A town or village got 1 point each time it was mentioned for any activity (i.e. if one person named the same town for every activity it would the maximum number of points available). The number of mentions received by each (possible) centre of attraction was summed. If the respondent named their home settlement it was not counted: only places travelled to were counted. Each centre’s score was divided by the maximum possible score and multiplied by 1000 to give a ‘per-thousand score’. This was termed the ‘attraction index’.

We also gave a score to each area from which people were attracted to centres based on how attracted people from these settlements were to particular centres. The number of mentions that one particular centre received from each settlement was divided by the maximum possible score and multiplied by 100 to give a per cent score. This was termed the ‘attracted’ (or ‘attracted-ness’) index.
**Results**

The attraction index shows us which settlements work as ‘centres’ in the research area. All the examined areas have substantial cross-border contact. Borderland inhabitants can readily cross the border, but there are no significant central places to attract people from across these borders for economic reasons, except in the Irish border area. Despite the different currency and the unfavorable political situation (which is less of a disadvantage now), there are some towns in the South (Clones, Monaghan) which are very popular with border people from the North as well (Figure 35). Enniskillen has got highest score as a local centre, and this town has the strongest attraction role from South. Clones plays the main role as a trade centre from point of the whole research area. De-militarisation of the border means that without any checkpoints cross-border movement is now much easier.

![Figure 35 Centres and their scores on the attraction index in the Irish border research area](image)

In the Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderland (Figure 36), there are two main centres: Beregszász from Ukrainian side and Vásárosnamény from Hungary (Figures 37-38). If our research based on the local reference area, which means that we observe whether is there any attraction centre on the other side of the border. We can see no single place on the Ukrainian side that works as a centre for Hungary, despite the traditions of the past, when Beregszász, Ungvár, Munkács, Nagyszőlős had a complementary region in this area (when the whole region still belonged to Hungary). From the Ukrainian side people go to Nyíregyháza (Figure 39), Vásárosnamény and Fehérgyarmat on the Hungarian side, but not so many people and not so often (Figure 36). In this research area on the Hungarian side we can find good structures of settlements, there are some well-working centres with their catchment areas close to them (Figure 40). But on the Ukrainian side there is only one big centre from this research area with a high score on the
attraction index and in some cases the villages forming its complementary region are very far from it (Figure 37).

Figure 36  Centres and their scores on the attraction index in the Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderland
Figure 37  Beregszász and its catchment area in the Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderland

Figure 38  Vásárosnamény and its catchment area in the Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderland
Figure 39 Nyíregyháza, capital of local county, and its catchment area in Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderland.

Figure 40 The main centres and their scores on the attraction index in the Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja borderland.
In the Sajó-Hernád research area, the situation is opposite to the previous area’s (Figure 41). Here the Slovakian side has the more favourable structure of centres and catchment areas and on the Hungarian side we can find really a very bad situation. The main centre of this side is Miskolc (Figures 41, 42), which is as far as 50-70 kilometres from the villages forming its complementary area in several cases, and the road network is also very bad. On the Slovakian side the main centres are Kassa (Kosice) (Figure 43), Rozsnó (Roznava), Tornaalja (Tornal’a) and Szepsi (Moldava Nad Bodvou), and every town is very close to the villages attracted towards it. On the Hungarian side the main centres are Miskolc (Figure 44), Encs, Kazincbarcika, Putnok, Ózd, and in several cases to go to these centres is very difficult from the little villages. The traditional centres were Rozsnó, Rimaszombat (Rimaska Sobota), Kassa, but these towns were dislocated from their catchment areas after the two world wars. On the Hungarian side the new little centres do not work well, so the people from this area have to go a greater distance, to the capital of the county, Miskolc. But Miskolc is very far from these villages. The structure of settlements is the worst from the three Hungarian border research areas here.

Figure 41  Centres and their attraction indexes in Sajó-Hernád borderland
Figure 42  Miskolc, capital of local county and its catchment area in Sajó-Hernád borderland

Figure 43  Kassa and its catchment area in Sajó-Hernád borderland
In the Kékfrankos research area Sopron is the main centre with its complementary region, as we can see in Figure 46. Sopron has the highest level of attraction (or it is the most attractive), in particular if our assessment is based on only the Hungarian reference area (Figure 45). On the Hungarian side there is no other important centre in this research territory. On the Austrian side there are two main centres, Eisenstadt (Kismarton) (Figure 47) and the capital, Wien (or ‘Vienna’) (Figure 48). We can find an important role from a very local point of view, if we observe the magnitude of Mattersburg, as a local centre. The people asked from Hungary, they did not mark any centre on the Austrian side, but marked Austria in general. But we can see that Sopron, as a centre, is working a little from Austrian side (Figure 45). There is good structure of settlements in this borderland, with favourable central places hierarchies (Figure 49).
Figure 45 Centres and their attraction index scores in the Kékfrankos borderland

Figure 46 Sopron and its catchment area in the Kékfrankos borderland
Figure 47  Eisenstadt and its catchment area in the Kékfrankos borderland

Figure 48  Wien and its catchment area in the Kékfrankos borderland
Figure 49  The main centres and their attraction index scores in the Kékfrankos borderland

All three Hungarian and neighbouring countries’ border research areas can be defined as the main central places and their primary attracted settlements. We can find concentrated but heterogeneous complementary regions on the Hungarian side of Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja and the Slovakian side of the Sajó-Hernád borderlands. There are concentrated and homogeneous attracted areas on the Ukrainian side of Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja and the Hungarian side of the Kékfrankos borderlands.

On the Hungarian side of the Sajó-Hernád borderland there are also concentrated and scattered heterogeneous complementary regions. Finally, on the Austrian side of the Kékfrankos borderland there are very scattered areas attracted to the centres, some villages are a long distance from their central places.

It is important not to forget that this research on the Hungarian border research areas (in terms of data gathering) finished before the 1st of May in 2004, that is, before Slovakia, Hungary became EU members. These relations may now change, especially if these countries are to have the same currency in future. Maybe the old connections can be rebuilt and help the lives of people living on the border.

IV SUMMARY

If we focus on population change in borderlands, we often find that if the border acts as a barrier and border-crossing is difficult or impossible, the population starts to decrease on both sides of the border. The main outcome is high levels of migration on both sides of the border. When physical obstacles are removed from the borderlands, and the economic and political situation improves, we can see that life is not significantly changed in those areas. Only in the Hungarian-Austrian borderland research area are the processes changed much, both in terms of society and in the economy as well, especially on the Hungarian side of this borderland. Recently the population is increasing in this area because of high levels of selective migration within Hungary. The young and qualified people move in. In the Northern Ireland-Republic of Ireland borderland
research area, after 10 years of paramilitary cease-fires the people feel more peaceful, but the proportion of qualified people is less than the norm for Northern Ireland. The apprehension of paramilitary activity has an effect on people’s mobility. In all these areas the natural population increase rates are declining. However, the main factor in population change is migration - if life conditions are advantageous people will move into this area, if not the population will decrease. In case of some Hungarian borderlands (Szatmár-Bereg-Kárpátalja and Sajó-Hernád borderlands) in villages where the gypsy inhabitant rate is high, the population is increasing, because of high level of birth rate.

The main factors affecting the border area: Permeability of the frontier depends on the political situation, presence of checkpoints on the border (difficulty or perceived difficulty in crossing, militarization, etc.). Legal border crossing was more frequent when there were close familial relationships between people living on two sides of the border. The intensity of illegal border crossing depended on the economic and political situation. Where there is a big difference in the price of certain goods between the two countries some inhabitants try to exploit this. The findings suggest another main factor of border life and contact is whether the area is rural or urban. It appeared to be easier to build cross border relationships in urban areas.

The four borderlands present a range of different problems, of variable seriousness:
1. political problems, including conflict between governments, ethno-national groups and political parties. (especially in Northern Ireland-Republic of Ireland; Hungarian-Slovakian – in the past; and the Hungarian-Ukrainian borderlands)
2. economic problems, like rural area depression, deindustrialization, geographical isolation, etc. (Hungarian-Slovakian, Hungarian-Ukrainian borderlands)
3. demographic problems, mainly of population decline (all the border areas, but the problems are less in the Austrian-Hungarian borderland)
4. social and ethical problems, like deprivation, racial prejudice, etc (Northern Ireland-Republic of Ireland; Hungarian-Slovakian, Hungarian-Ukrainian borderlands).

To handle these problems we need to analyse the particular situation and conditions in each area. Local political leaders can play a major role in improving the situation by meeting with each other and with the local stakeholders, to make compromises, agreements, suitable laws, etc. To support the economy in these areas and encourage small enterprises, cooperation between the two sides of a border, in order to help both the economic and demographic situation, is very important. The hardest question concerns social and ethical problems. This problem is very complicated and depends on the local situation and history. To examine this problem fully requires further and deeper research. It would seem that where the biggest effect can be made is with the young generation. Volunteers and good teachers, who have a calling for this work, are needed. Cooperation and socialisation between the different groups will continue to be very important.

BIBLIOGRAPHY