

II HUNGARIAN–ROMANIAN AND HUNGARIAN– UKRAINIAN CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION

1 National level

Cross-border relations in the region of our study can only be examined since the enactment of the Peace Treaty of Trianon, designating the borders of Hungary in 1920. The hostile relations that emerged after World War I between Hungary and the neighbouring successor states (Czechoslovakia and Romania) did not allow the deepening of the cross-border co-operations. Following World War II, this region became the interest zone of the Soviet Union, which resulted in an even closer isolation. This was especially true for Transcarpathia, a region annexed to the Soviet Union in 1944, but the situation was not much better in the Hungarian–Romanian relation, either. The expression “friendship and brotherhood”, declared in the socialist era, only existed at the level of slogans, in reality borders functioned as walls in that period, making it practically impossible to co-operate or even cross the borders. In this period, the relations were practically only formal even at national level; at local level, nothing could happen without consent “from above”.

The possibilities for the establishment of real cross-border co-operations in the region were created by the political easement and the systemic change at the end of the 1980s. Borders became more open, everybody was eligible for a passport, no visa was necessary, new border crossing stations were opened, and even bilateral cross-border traffic could start. At the late 20th century a great step forward was thus made in the field of cross-border relations both towards Romania and the Soviet Union. Following the disintegration of the latter, the Ukraine gaining its sovereignty in 1991 became Hungary’s new eastern neighbour.

The Hungarian–Romanian and the Hungarian–Ukrainian relations were regulated by a series of agreements at international level (for more details see the Background study). Of these, the so-called Treaties should be emphasised, which basically define the relationship between the Republic of Hungary to Romania and the Ukraine.

The inter-governmental special committees (e.g. Special Committee for Co-operation in Ethnic Minorities Issues; Special Committee for Co-operation in the Field of Economy, Trade and Tourism; Special Committee of Cross-border Issues and Inter-municipal Co-operation; Special Committee for the Co-operation in the Field of Infrastructure, Transport, Water Management and Environmental Protection etc.), set up in accordance with the Treaty between the Republic of Hungary

and Romania on Understanding, Cooperation and Good Neighbourhood (Act No. XLIV of 1997), are to work out and supervise the co-operations concerning the “common issues” of Hungary and Romania.

In the Hungarian–Ukrainian relation, the Treaty (whole name: “Treaty on the Bases of Good Neighbourhood and Co-operation between the Republic of Hungary and The Ukraine”) was signed in Kiev in 1991 (then it was ratified by the Ukrainian Parliament in 1992 and by the Hungarian Parliament in 1993). The Treaty declares, among other things, that the parties will promote the cross-border co-operations in all fields, they do their best to create the conditions for the approach of their peoples on the ground of good neighbourhood and friendship, they use all means to promote the expansion of the relationships among their citizens both at the level of the individuals and the level of the state, social and other organisations. Similar to the Treaty between the Republic of Hungary and Romania, a number of special committees have been set up by the agreement, some of which still operate today.

In addition to the Treaties, several other Hungarian–Ukrainian and Hungarian–Romanian agreements are in effect, such as the ones on water management and environmental protection. A closer co-operation at national level is evidently justified in these fields. The importance of this issue is indicated by the huge floods and the cyanide pollutions killing an enormous mass of fish in the Tisza River and the tributaries: all three countries are affected by these issues.

Although it is not a bilateral agreement, we have to mention the *Act No. LXII of 2001*, commonly known as the *Status Act*, on Hungarians living in neighbouring countries, which gives special (health care, travel, employment etc.) allowances to the Hungarians living outside Hungary. This Act is very important because the borders drawn in the peace treaty concluding World War (when Hungary shrank to approximately one-third of its previous size in 1920) did not consider ethnic relations (either), and so a significant number of Hungarian ethnic minority live on the other sides of the Hungarian borders (both in the Ukraine and Romania). It is not surprising that in the relations of Hungary to the neighbouring states, the co-operations between the Hungarians living in Hungary and those in the respective countries always played an important role. The Act had a favourable reception in the Ukraine, whereas it led to fierce debates in Romania, and there are still debated details after a lengthy reconciliation process.

The cross-border co-operations are considerably affected at national level too by the changes in the Euro-Atlantic integration processes, as the situation of the three countries basically differ from each other in this respect. Hungary is in the best position, as it became a full-right member of the European Union as of 1 May 2004. Romania, on the other hand, was left out of the first round of enlargement, and the associate membership status (that Romania gained back in 1993) will remain at least until 2007. Although significant achievements have been made in Romania

too in the field of legal harmonisation, the country reports still regularly point out to the fact that in several fields (e.g. the application of the principle of partnership, monitoring-and evaluation system, system of regional statistics etc.) not much progress has been made. The Ukraine is at the very beginning of the Euro-Atlantic integration process, we cannot talk about the acquisition of the *acquis communautaire* in reality. The objective of the Ukrainian government is to integrate the Ukraine to the European Union as soon as possible, but this process is still in its infancy.

Because the Hungarian–Romanian and the Hungarian–Ukrainian border sections are also EU external borders now, the conditions of the border crossings have become much more rigorous. As the Romanian citizens can travel without visa to the member states of the European Union since 2002, the main difficulty will be not the more strict legal regulations but the proof of the adequate financial means. The Republic of Hungary, in accordance with the expectations of the European Union, introduced a visa regime against the Ukraine on 1 November 2003, of which many had been afraid of in Transcarpathia. The fears did not come true, as the Ukrainian citizens intending to travel to Hungary are eligible for a visa free of charge, the long waiting time in the beginning (because of the large number of applications) is over, the main difficulty, as in the case of Romanian citizens, is the proof of the adequate financial means for the stay in Hungary. The control at the border crossing points, at the same time, have become much more strict, each vehicle heading for Hungary and each person are checked in details and thoroughly, the possibility of the smuggling of goods falling under the effect the Inland Revenue Act has become much weaker. Fuel tourism is still considerable, coming from the low fuel prices in the Ukraine, the difference being that formerly it was usually the Ukrainian citizens who “exported” petrol and diesel oil to Hungary, now, after the introduction of the visa regime it is the Hungarian citizens who visit the Ukraine in bigger number to fill up their cars (because they only need a valid passport and not any other document for a travel to the Ukraine).

Another problem is the elimination of the bilateral border crossing stations, used by the people of the two neighbouring countries, only, as they had to be closed after the introduction of the Schengen norms. An alleviation might be in the future that the European Parliament approved of a draft regulation in April 2004 that would make it easier for those living in the direct vicinity of the external border to cross. The point of the alleviation is the issue of special visas for those living in the 50-kilometre stripe along the border in both countries, a visa that allows several border crossings, is valid for at least one year and allows a stay up to 7–14 days each time. It would be free of charge or at least cheaper than the classic Schengen visa that costs 35 Euros. Those are eligible for this kind of visa who can prove that they have to cross the border regularly, because of family or business relations. In the given case it could even be used without a passport. The proposal

would also allow the opening of special bilateral border crossing stations by the neighbour states, only for those living in the border region. Such stations existed in the region before, but they should be eliminated after the accession in their old form. For the time being this is not more than a possibility, as the European Parliament only has a right of opinion in this issue.

2 Subnational level

2.1 Regions (NUTS 2)

In Hungary and Romania, the NUTS regions compatible with the practice of the European Union have been designated recently. This has not taken place in the Ukraine yet, which is not surprising, as the Ukraine does not even have an associate member status. Consequently, we can only talk about connections among *NUTS 2* level regions in the Hungarian–Romanian relation, although we have to remark that these regions have not been filled with a real administrative content yet. Because the regions are very young formations in both countries, also, they are not primarily political formations and do not have real administrative functions, self-governance content and character, they cannot appear as real factors of public power in national politics on either side or in the supra-national arena. Consequently, the cross-border relations at this level are still in their infancy, the co-operations are just being established and presently only the relations are taken up.

In the near future, in accordance with the reforms to be implemented in the European Union, NUTS 1 regions will be created in Hungary too. According to the preliminary concepts, three such regions will be in Hungary: West Hungary, Middle Hungary and East Hungary.

2.2 County level relations (NUTS 3)

The *counties (NUTS 3 level)* that constitute NUTS 2 level regions have a much more limited role and independence in Romania and the Ukraine than in Hungary, coming from the strong central will in the two countries. Still the cross-border co-operations at county level – as these administrative units have existed for a long time in all three countries – are much more versatile than the relations among the young NUTS 3 regions. In Hungary the first twin or partner county relations were created before the systemic change, while they were created somewhat later in Romania and the Ukraine, because of their isolation and the more centralised attitudes.

The present partner county relations cannot be identified with the former twin county relations in their names, as these new co-operations are not always reinforced with official co-operation agreements. At the establishment of the partner county co-operations the counties tried to establish a wide range of relations not only with their counterparts in the neighbouring countries but also with overseas countries. Among the 15 partner counties of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county e.g. we find, in addition to the direct neighbour regions in Romania and the Ukraine, areas from Denmark, Russia, the Netherlands, Germany and even the United States of America. We can say thus that in most cases it is not the neighbourhood relations that represent the majority, although there are counter-examples: three of the six existing partner counties of Békés can be found in Romania.

It is typical of the cross-border relations of the county self-governments that they are more and more trying to raise the interest in their respective county and region. Although co-operations of economic character and connections among entrepreneurs and businessmen have increased in the partner county relations, it is still the cultural, educational, training and youth co-operations that are successful. The further expansion of some partner county relations is blocked by the great physical distance and the deriving high costs of keeping in touch (Japan, USA and China). The most active and best functioning co-operations have usually been established among neighbouring counties or counties in the vicinity of each other.

In addition to the bilateral co-operations in the region, some counties are also related as members of the same *Euroregions*, because the majority of the Euroregions created along the East Hungarian borders consist of counties. In the Hungarian–Romanian border region, there are two large Euroregions with different history and operational conditions: the Carpathians Euroregion and the Danube–Körös–Maros–Tisza Euroregion (*Figure 2*). Of the two Euroregions, the Hungarian–Ukrainian border region is only part of the Carpathians Euroregion created in 1993 and now involving member regions from five countries (Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and the Ukraine). The establishment of this huge interregional organisation – as opposed to the Danube–Körös–Maros–Tisza Euroregion created in 1997 – was not an independent, bottom-up initiative; it started its operation within “top-down” defined frameworks, with higher political objectives. In addition, the Danube–Körös–Maros–Tisza Euroregion re-connected regions along the southeast borders of Hungary that used to be situated in the relatively more developed part of one single country, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and they have centuries of common historical past, while the Carpathians Euroregion is an absolutely “multi-national” formation.

Although both Euroregions have had and still have indisputable role in the recognition of the advantages of partnership based on mutual benefits, they still have not been able to fulfil their objectives, for different reasons. These vast Euroregions have not been able yet to demonstrate significant results in the region in our sur-

vey, they have not been able to penetrate down to the level of the individuals living in the border regions (for more details of this, see Chapter 4). The establishment of really intensive multilateral relations is blocked by the excessive size of the Euroregions in the first place, as the Danube–Körös–Maros–Tisza Euroregion covers a territory of 77,000 km², that of the Carpathians Euroregion equals to 161,000 km², and they are home to a population of 6 million and 16 million people, respectively. In addition to their too large territory, co-operation is blocked, especially in the Carpathians Euroregion, by historical–territorial–ethnic and other problems inherited from the past. Recognising this problem, the local stakeholders thought of establishing smaller and thus more effective euroregional organisations. The ideas were followed by action and now there are three interregional organisations of micro-regional character operating in the border region (Interregio, Hajdú-Bihar–Bihor Euroregion and the Bihar–Bihor euroregional Organisation).

One of the most important proofs of the development of the county level relations is the fact that cross-border planning documents going beyond protocol and cultural co-operations have been made over the recent years. We have to mention in this place the document finished in 2003, closing a work started in 2001, the *Common Development Concept of the Hungarian–Ukrainian Border Region*, which is not a county level document officially, but since the Hungarian–Ukrainian border section only involves Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county and Transcarpathia, it is actually a county level document in character, especially because the concept designates these two counties as the target area. The concept (that was made with the consideration of the planning and programming practice of the EU) is built on broad social reconciliations with the potential actors of the implementation of the programme (local governments, micro-regions, micro-regional managers, chambers, non-governmental organisations etc.) and is primarily meant to promote the socio-economic development and catching up of the border region, improve the living conditions of the population and exploit as much as possible the possibilities lying in cross-border co-operation. The concept categorises the implementation of the concrete goals and measures into five priorities: the development of economic co-operation; human resources development, cultural and innovation co-operation; transport and infrastructure development; environment and nature protection; and non-sector specific tasks.

For the Hungarian–Romanian border region, a development concept and programme was made back in September 2000, which was upgraded in 2003. The priorities of this document are similar to the ones in the document made for the Hungarian–Ukrainian border region. The document called *The Development Concept and Programme for the Hungarian–Romanian Border Region* concerns counties, like the previous document: Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Hajdú-Bihar, Békés and Csongrád counties from Hungary, Satu Mare, Bihor, Arad and Timis from Romania are target areas.

2.3 Micro-regional co-operations (NUTS 4)

The *system of the micro-regional relations* is rather complicated, because neither in Romania nor in the Ukraine can we find (unlike in Hungary) official self-organising *micro-regional associations* or *planning and statistical, micro-regional development* level. In the Ukraine there are active districts with specified administrative functions, while the institutional frameworks of the micro-regions and the micro-regional municipal associations are under construction both in Romania and the Ukraine. Given such circumstances, the Hungarian micro-regions with co-operation intentions (whether they self-organising or official CSO micro-regions) have to find partners at higher (county) or lower (municipal or local governmental) level in the neighbouring countries. In the majority of the cases it is thus difficult to decide whether the given relationship is of micro-regional, self-governmental or twin city character.

The Hungarian micro-regions were founded primarily for the representation of their interest in an organised form and for the co-ordination of regional and economic development programmes. These are the motivations of the establishment of the cross-border relations, too. Because of the above-mentioned reasons, from the Hungarian side only the micro-regional associations can build relationships and establish the frameworks of co-operation, in the lack of the “official” territorial level. The Hungarian micro-regional associations in the border region have versatile socio-economic, cultural, infrastructure development, environment and nature protection, twin city etc. partner relations in Romania (some two dozens of such relations exist), while the number of such co-operations is negligible along the Ukrainian border, even if we consider the different magnitudes of the two border sections. We have to remark, at the same time, that the Hungarian micro-regional system is in transition, too: according to the plans, the present 150 planning and statistical micro-regions will be replaced by such 168 such micro-regions, which would have administrative functions, too.

2.4 Cross-border co-operations at municipal level

Following the systemic change, more and more settlements in the counties along the East Hungarian borders realised the possibilities lying in the development of the “twin city”-like relationships and the development of the cross-border co-operations. Of course the county seats are the settlements that have the largest number and most versatile co-operations (e.g. Debrecen has fourteen, Nyíregyháza eleven twin or partner cities, from the neighbouring Nagyvárad and Ungvár to the Israeli Rishon Le-Zion), but several other municipal governments have twin relations, too.

The deepening of the municipal relations is not easy in this region, either, because while the municipal self-governments have broad autonomy in Hungary, their counterparts have strongly restricted independence in Romania and the Ukraine, because of the highly centralised administrative systems. In addition, the municipalities representing the lowest level of local administrative level in Romania often involve 5 to 10 settlements, and it is problematic to establish official relations with a municipality. A very important factor heavily blocking the deepening of the relations is the general poverty in the settlements in the border region, and the limited own resources restrict their possibilities for joint tenders, too.

The cross-border co-operations of the municipal governments are very much similar to the partner county co-operations, as it is cultural relations that prevail most of the time, too. This is supported by the data of a questionnaire survey done by the colleagues of the Debrecen Department of the CfRS of the HAS, interviewing the mayors of 119 settlements of the Northeast Great Plain (*Figure 14*). The questionnaire survey was conducted in 1999 and repeated in 2002. According to the findings, one-third of the villages and towns in the border region had partner settlements abroad, most of them with a – usually Hungary-inhabited – settlement in the neighbouring country, both in 1999 and 2002. No fundamental change occurred in the character of the relations, either, between the two surveys, although there was some positive change in the field of trade and economic relations and the different co-operations became more intensive: in the more recent survey, the number of reported co-operations increased, with the exception of the twin settlement co-operations (*Figure 15*).

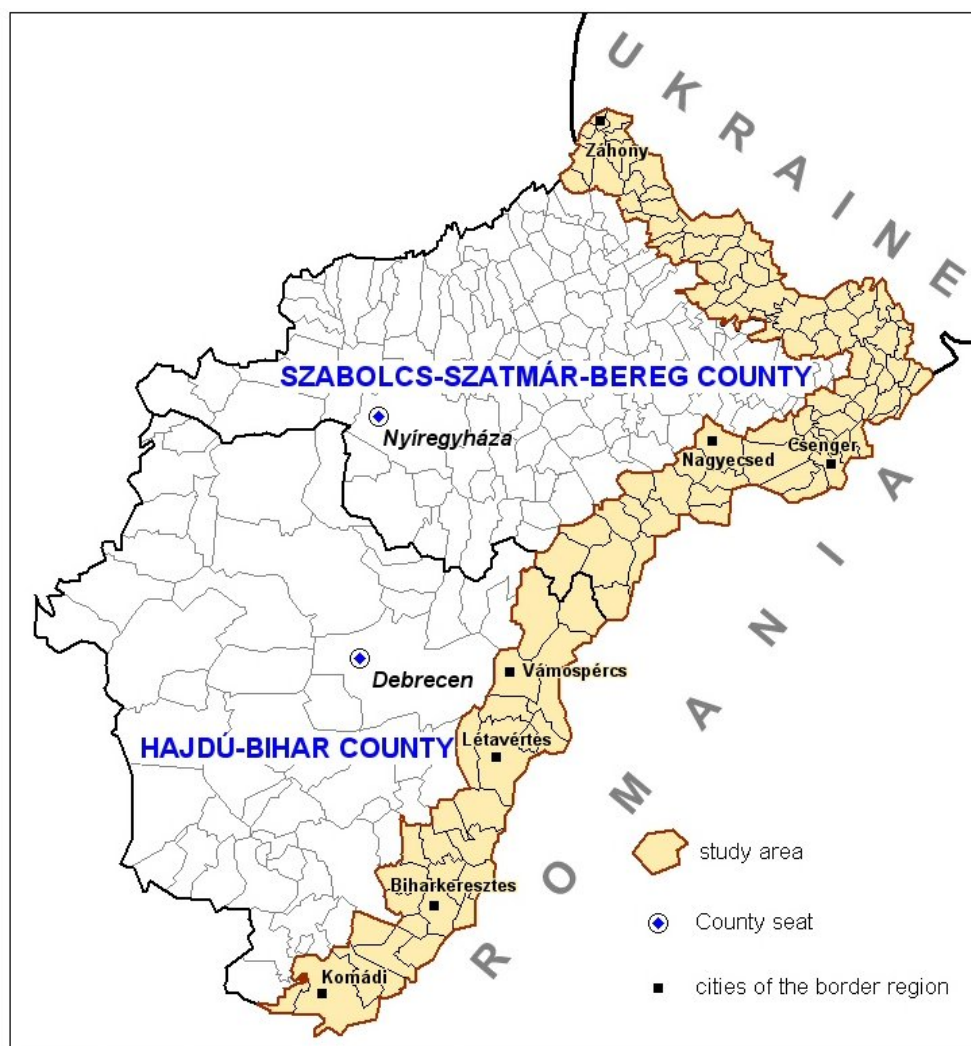
2.5 Other institutional relations

Irrespective of the territorial levels, there is a range of institutions and economic organisations that have cross-border relations, including the University of Debrecen and the closely related College of Nyíregyháza that have a wide range of relations in the Ukraine and Romania (*Figure 16*). The most typical form of the relations are educational co-operations, including lecturer-, researcher and student exchange programmes and joint applications, but e.g. the College of Nyíregyháza provided a substantial support (financial support, a commuting staff of lecturers etc.) to the start of certain majors at the Teacher Training College for the Hungarians in Transcarpathia.

Many of the actors of the economic life of the region have cross-border interests, especially the Hungarian investors have a stronger capital base, so it is not surprising that in both the Romanian counties in the border region and in Transcarpathia the Hungarian foreign direct investments are among the most significant ones. Important assistant organisations of the economic relations are the chambers

Figure 14

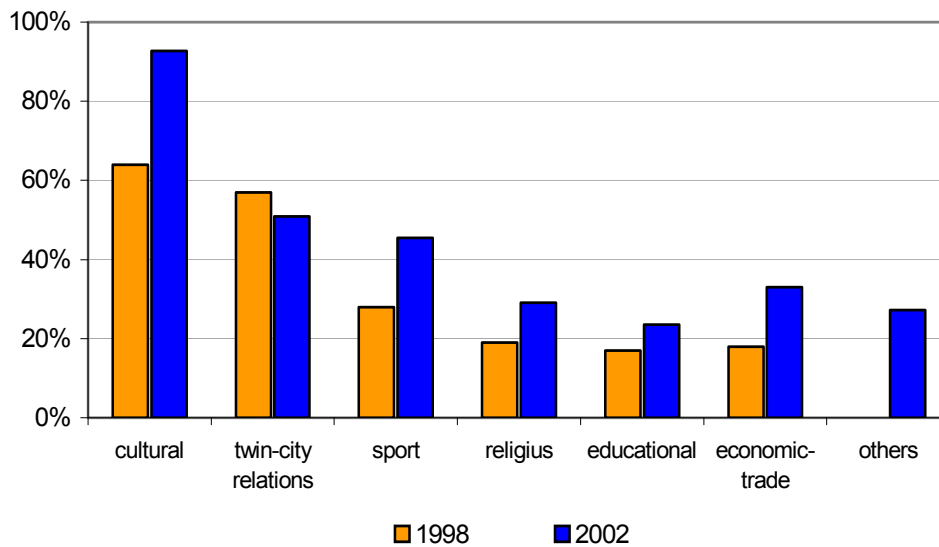
The position of borderland settlements in Hajdú-Bihar and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg counties



Source: Edited by the authors. CRS of HAS Debrecen Department.

Figure 15

The characteristics of cross-border relations in the settlements situated near the border in the North-Eastern part of the Great Hungarian Plain (based on frequency of mentioning), 1998; 2002, %



Source: Questionnaire survey 1999; 2002. Edited by the authors 2004.

that exploit every possibility to promote the cross-border economic relations. The important role of the Romanian and the Ukrainian economic co-operations in the region is indicated by the fact that the Ukraine Department of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry operates in Nyíregyháza, the Romanian division in Békéscsaba. In these places the Hungarian entrepreneurs can get detailed information on the investment opportunities in the neighbour countries, on the trade partners, taxation, registration of firms etc. Of course it is possible in the Ukraine and Romania too to get information on the possibilities in Hungary.

In addition to the above-mentioned examples, several other organisations (churches, charity and non-governmental organisations, cultural organisations and societies etc.) have cross-border relations in the region in our survey. The detailed analysis of these relations is not allowed by the limited scale of this study.

Figure 16

The official relations of the University of Debrecen in Ukraine and Romania



Source: University of Debrecen. Edited by the authors. CRS of HAS Debrecen Department.

3 Border region location and cross-border relation – as seen by the inhabitants

The Debrecen Department of the CfRS of the HAS conducted a questionnaire survey in 2001–2002, in which we asked the opinions of the population of 18 settlements (9 pairs of settlements) about border region location and the cross-border relations. The findings of the survey are comparable with the data of a survey conducted in the summer of 1998 along the Austrian–Hungarian border, allowing this way the comparison of the opinions of the citizens living in the western and the eastern border regions about borders, border region location and the cross-border relations.

When selecting the pairs of settlements, settlements of similar size, in the direct proximity of the borders and neighbour to each other were designated, in a balanced distribution along the border section. This is how the following pairs of settlements along the Hungarian–Romanian border, from north to south, were selected: Vállaj and Csanálos (Urziceni), where a bilateral railway border crossing and a temporary (seasonal) road border crossing operate; Létavértes and Székelyhíd (Săcueni), that are neighbour to each other but do not have a border crossing station at the moment. The next group of settlements was made of Biharkeresztes and Ártánd in Hungary and Bors on the Romanian side. The reason why two settlements were selected in this case on the Hungarian side is the division of the functions of the border crossing station of international importance, implementing rail and road personal and cargo traffic; also, the population of Ártánd directly neighbour to Bors is far below that of its Romanian counterpart. In the southern part of the border section, the settlement pairs are Elek and Otlaka (Grăniceri) with a temporary border crossing station, and Kiszombor and Nagycsanád (Cenad), recently qualified as international road border crossing station (*Figure 17*).

Along the Ukrainian border, Záhony and Csap (Csop) were in the sample, for a long time the only international rail and road border crossing implementing both personal and cargo traffic; Barabás and Mezőkaszony (Koszini) operating as a bilateral border crossing station; Tiszabecs and Tiszaújlak (Vilok), with an international border crossing station. The fourth pair of settlements is made by two peripheral, isolated villages, Kispalád and Nagypalád (Velika Palagy), where no border crossing station operates, but the two villages had close relationships before the designation of the border (*Figure 17*).

The questionnaire survey took place with the help of interviewers and a random sample selection in each case. There was no person younger than 18 of age among those filling out the questionnaires. In the Hungarian–Romanian border region, 600 questionnaires were filled out on each side of the border,⁴ while in the settlements along the Hungarian–Ukrainian border there were 509 questionnaires processed from Hungary and 566 from the Ukrainian side.⁵

⁴ On the Hungarian and the Romanian side of the Hungarian–Romanian border, a total of 1200 questionnaires were filled out (600 on both sides). In Hungary, the following settlements with the following numbers of questionnaires were part of the sample: Ártánd 50, Biharkeresztes, Elek, Kiszombor and Vállaj 100 each, Létavértes 150 samples. The respective figures on the Romanian side are as follows: Bors and Székelyhíd (Săcueni) 150 questionnaires each, Csanálos (Urziceni), Nagycsanád (Cenad) and Otlaka (Grăniceri) 100 questionnaires each.

⁵ On the Hungarian side of the Hungarian–Ukrainian border, 509 questionnaires were filled out (Barabás 109, Kispalád 100, Tiszabecs 100 and Záhony 200), and 566 questionnaires in the Ukrainian settlements (Csap 192, Mezőkaszony 104, Nagypalád 100 and Tiszaújlak 170).

Figure 17

The settlements involved in the survey in the Hungarian–Romanian and Hungarian–Ukrainian border region



Source: Edited by the authors. CRS of HAS Debrecen Department.

3.1 The impressions of the population of the border region about the border and the neighbour country

In order to get a more subtle picture, we examined the associations concerning the neighbour country with open questions, the respondents had to list three concepts that first came to their mind in connection with the neighbour country. At the subsequent definition of the categories we naturally strove for the comparability of the answers received, nevertheless we also found categories specific of the respective countries, only.

As regards the Romanian respondents along the Hungarian–Romanian border, most people associated Hungary with *sights of interest, landscape features and concrete places* (nice landscapes, concrete settlement names, Lake Balaton) and also with the notions of *richness and welfare*. More than 37% of the responses are in these two categories (*Table 16*).

Table 16
Associations of ideas in Romania related to Hungary, 2002

Categories	Cumulative rates (%)	Rates according to settlement (%)				
		Borş (Bors)	Urziceni (Csanáros)	Cenad (Nagycsanád)	Grăniceri (Otlaka)	Săcueni (Székelyhid)
Landscape, spectaculars, characteristics, concrete places	18.8	3.7	21.5	19.9	15.0	25.1
Well-doing, prosperity	18.7	18.0	9.7	22.0	32.4	16.0
Motherland, Hungarian identity, mother language	11.3	22.9	17.2	3.7	0.4	11.5
Personal connections	8.8	12.2	6.7	14.5	4.5	8.0
Positive mentality, culture	6.6	6.5	2.7	7.1	17.0	3.5
Concrete object, person	6.5	2.5	13.8	3.3	1.2	8.7
Border, border traffic	5.5	2.9	4.7	8.7	10.1	3.3
History	5.1	1.2	10.1	1.2	1.6	8.2
No association (!)	3.0	13.1	-	1.7	2.0	0.7
Purchasing, leisure time activities	2.8	2.4	2.7	2.1	1.6	4.2
Free jobs, employment	2.4	2.0	1.7	2.1	2.0	2.4
Negative mentality, culture	1.7	1.6	0.0	0.8	4.0	2.3
Subsistence	1.6	0.4	2.4	2.1	0.4	2.4
Europe, West	1.1	2.0	0.7	1.7	1.2	1.6
Other	6.1	8.6	6.1	9.1	6.6	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Questionnaire survey, 2002.

Among the associations relating to Romania, responses in the categories *landscape, countryside, sights of interest and concrete places* were most frequent, closely followed by the category of *poverty, derelict places and lagging behind*. The proportions of the responses in the first two groups are similar to that of the associations concerning Hungary: 36.3%. It is striking but not surprising that on the Romanian side people think of Hungary as a rich place, a welfare state, while just the opposite is typical in connection with the associations concerning Romania: poverty and lagging behind appear in the mind of the Hungarian respondents (*Table 17*).

Table 17

Associations of ideas in Hungary related to Romania, 2002

Categories	Cumulative rates (%)	Rates according to settlement (%)					
		Ártánd	Bihar-keresztes	Elek	Kis-zombor	Léta-vértes	Vállaj
Landscape, spectaculars, characteristics, concrete places	19.6	13.0	20.9	20.4	14.3	26.3	14.70
Poverty, desolateness, underdevelopment	16.7	9.1	13.0	22.0	17.9	16.3	17.5
Negative mentality, culture	9.7	10.4	10.2	9.1	13.3	8.7	7.3
Neighbours, neighbouring country	9.2	7.8	10.2	7.5	10.2	9.0	10.2
History	6.4	2.6	3.9	4.8	6.1	7.0	11.3
Personal connections	6.1	10.4	4.5	3.2	4.6	5.0	12.4
Subsistence (fuel)	5.5	6.5	8.5	8.6	7.6	2.7	1.1
Hungarian identity, Hungarians live there	4.8	6.5	3.9	3.8	6.1	4.0	6.2
Positive mentality, culture	4.4	5.2	2.8	1.6	5.1	5.0	6.8
Border, border traffic	3.9	10.4	2.8	3.8	1.5	4.0	4.5
No association (!)	3.5	7.8	2.8	3.8	3.6	3.3	2.3
Concrete object, person	3.0	0.0	4.5	3.2	4.1	3.3	1.1
Purchasing, leisure time activities	1.4	2.6	2.3	2.2	1.0	0.3	1.1
Emigration	1.3	2.6	1.1	0.5	1.5	2.0	0.0
Other	4.5	5.1	8.6	5.5	3.1	3.1	3.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Questionnaire survey, 2002.

Among the associations, the proportion of responses in the *mentality and culture* category has an important position. They were divided into two groups in the evaluation (positive and negative). On the basis of the associations, the attitudes towards Hungary and the people living there can be seen as positive: although their proportion is not very high (6.6%), still it is almost four times higher than the proportion of the negative responses. On the other hand, the associations concerning Romania are definitely negative, according to the responses: the category called negative mentality and culture has the third position with a 9.7% proportion in the order of the associations, surpassing the positive assessments more than twice.

On both sides, *personal relationships* are relatively important (friends, acquaintances, relatives), but the memories of the common *historical past* are also present in the mind of the people. The importance of the latter and the significant number of Hungarian ethnic group living in Romania are indicated by the fact that among the associations relating to Hungary, the category called *home, Hungarian nationality, mother tongue* had the third position. On the Hungarian side, the respondents did not completely forget about the Hungarians living in Romania, either, as 4.8% of the associations concerning the neighbour country are connected to them. Also, there were respondents, in largely the same proportion in both countries, who could not associate any notion to the neighbour country.

According to the findings of the survey conducted in the settlements in the *Hungarian–Ukrainian border region*, the associations of the population concerning the neighbour country are different than the experiences in the Hungarian–Romanian border region. The associations related to the Ukraine reflect the hard economic situation of the country and the general tendencies typical of the Hungarian–Ukrainian border region (subsistence trade, refugees), also the historical past. Most of the respondents ranked the characteristic landscape features (hills, Tisza River etc.) and concrete areas. Within this category, the names of the ex-Hungarian towns were mentioned in the first place (Ungvár, Munkács, Beregszász), but the association to the Ukraine also means Transcarpathia for 9.1% of the Hungarian respondents. Transcarpathia made a separate category in the survey (*Table 18*).

The second position is occupied by negative mentality and culture, generally associated to the Russians and the Ukrainians, to which the behaviour of the Ukrainian citizens at the border crossing stations definitely contribute (they do not stand in the queue, they are elbowing, they litter). In the recent years, the wave of refugees coming from the Ukraine has increased. The refugees, who arrive almost exclusively from Asia (e.g. Afghanistan and China) try to get to Hungary without official documents, with the help of smugglers. This process is experienced each day by the people living along the border, so it is not surprising that they associate the Ukraine to the refugees.

Table 18

Associations of ideas in Hungary related to Ukraine, 2002

Categories	Cumulative rates (%)	Rates according to settlement (%)			
		Barabás	Kispalád	Tiszabecs	Záhony
Landscape, spectaculars, characteristics, concrete places	16.9	15.3	20.1	22.0	13.7
Negative mentality, culture	16.1	15.0	16.7	9.0	20.0
Refugees	14.1	18.6	18.1	15.3	9.0
Poverty, desolateness, underdevelopment	12.8	17.4	10.7	10.0	12.7
Trans-Carpathia	9.1	10.1	9.0	7.7	9.2
Border, border traffic	7.9	8.3	10.4	15.7	2.8
Military power, army	7.7	0.3	2.0	4.7	16.0
Subsistence (fuel)	3.3	7.6	2.3	3.3	1.5
History (the Soviet Union)	1.4	3.1	0.7	2.0	0.5
Personal connections	1.0	0.9	0.3	1.7	1.0
Hungarian identity, Hungarians live there	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.7	1.5
Other	8.8	3.1	9.4	7.9	12.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Questionnaire survey, 2002.

As a consequence of the difficult economic situation, many think of the Ukraine as an impoverished, underdeveloped country. In addition, the decades of socialism are very much alive in the memory of the people, at least this is what the associations relating to military force (in some cases nuclear weapons) and the former Soviet Union indicate. It is surprising, on the other hand, how few people associated the Ukraine to the Hungarian ethnic group living there. This probably comes from the fact that Hungarian ethnic group living in the Ukraine is practically concentrated in Transcarpathia, and in Hungary they are usually referred to as the Transcarpathian Hungarians.

The *Ukrainian associations relating to Hungary* are different from those seen along the Romanian border, too. Because of the bad economic situation in the Ukraine (delayed wages, high unemployment rate), Hungary for most of the Transcarpathian respondents means (besides the features of the landscape) cross-border trade and the source of employment and living. Knowing this it is not surprising that Hungary is associated with richness and welfare. In the Transcarpathian settlements involved in the sample, the proportion of Hungarian ethnic population is quite high (Mezőkaszony and Nagypalád are practically totally Hungarian-inhabited villages), many see Hungary as their homeland and mother nation (*Table 19*).

As opposed to the Romanian settlements, the categories positive and negative mentality related to Hungary have almost the same weight, but the proportion of historical associations is much lower. The proportion of those thinking of Hungary as a destination of shopping or recreation is higher in the Transcarpathian settlements than on the Romanian side, but the proportion of those who cannot associate any notion to Hungary is not significant.

Table 19

Associations of ideas in Ukraine related to Hungary, 2002

Categories	Cumulative rates (%)	Rates according to settlement (%)			
		Chop (Csap)	Kosini (Mezőkaszony)	Velika Palad (Nagypalád)	Vilok (Tiszaujlak)
Landscape, spectaculars, characteristics, concrete places	15.3	23.6	12.0	10.7	5.8
Subsistence	12.1	10.7	11.5	7.6	17.3
Motherland, Hungarian identity, mother language	9.8	4.7	12.3	6.3	16.7
Well-doing, prosperity	8.8	7.6	11.2	16.6	4.1
Purchasing, leisure time activities	6.7	11.3	6.0	8.5	0.5
Personal connections	5.7	10.2	9.0	3.6	3.3
Negative mentality, culture	5.6	6.6	3.0	7.6	4.9
Concrete object, person	5.6	1.3	3.4	5.4	12.1
Free jobs, employment	5.2	3.0	7.8	9.9	4.9
Positive mentality, culture	4.7	2.4	7.8	5.4	4.9
Border, border traffic	4.2	4.5	3.4	-	6.3
History	3.0	1.7	1.1	0.5	6.6
No association (!)	2.5	3.6	0.4	1.8	3.3
Other	10.8	8.8	10.7	16.1	9.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Questionnaire survey, 2002.

3.2 Border region as the scene of everyday life

Naturally each border region has their advantages and disadvantages, which may be different for those living on one or the other side of the border and which may also change in time. For those living along the Hungarian–Ukrainian border e.g., living in the border region was a definite disadvantage for a long time, as this region was the westernmost fringe of the Soviet Union. There were times when those living here needed licences and documents even for leaving or approaching their

own settlements. After the opening up of the borders and the worsening of the conditions of living, the location in the vicinity of the border became an advantage, the proximity of Hungary is a source of living for the Ukrainian people struggling with subsistence problems. However, while this situation is presently advantageous on the Ukrainian side of the border, living in the border region is often seen as a disadvantage on the Hungarian side now, for several reasons (increased traffic, number of marketers, bad accessibility, lack of an adequate number of investors with a strong financial base etc.).

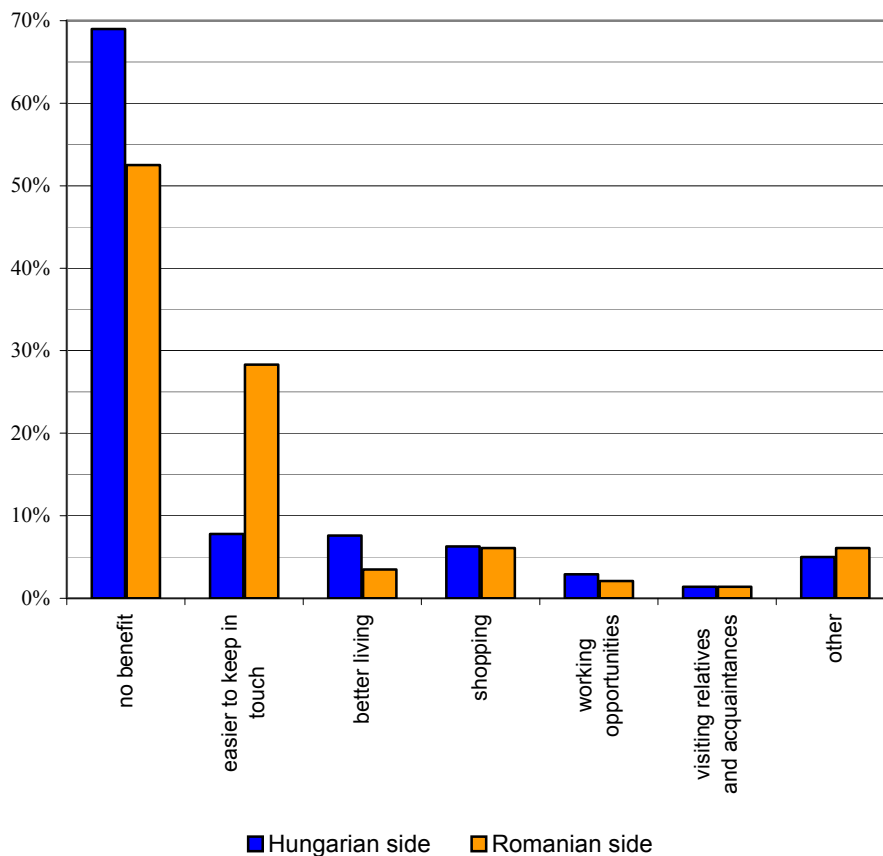
The *advantages of the border region location* are very similar on the two sides of the Hungarian–Romanian border. On both sides, those respondents had the highest the proportion who did not sense any advantage of this situation (this figure was 16.5% higher on the Hungarian side). As regards the assessment of the advantages, however, there are differences between those living on the two sides of the border. On the Hungarian side, the better living (primarily because of the lower fuel prices in Romania) is more frequently mentioned, while in Romania the respondents more often talked about the easier keeping in touch with the neighbour country (i.e. with the mother country in the case of Hungarian ethnic citizens). Also, the number of respondents mentioning shopping is significant in both countries. It is interesting that the possibility of cross-border employment was more often seen as an advantage on the Hungarian side (*Figure 18*).

On the Hungarian side of the Hungarian–Ukrainian border, the proportion of responses not identifying the border region location as a living space with any advantage was the highest (62%). The mentioning of the possibilities of visiting relatives and friends (12.5%) and of tourism (6.2%) was much less frequent, as were the mentions of the easy touch with the neighbour country (3.8%) and the better living (3.3%). In the Transcarpathian settlements, however, the most often indicated association was the easy keeping in touch with the neighbour country (the mother country in most of the cases), followed by those who did not associate any advantage to living in the border region. The third category on the Ukrainian side in the order of the mentions was better living, in a proportion much higher than in the case of the responses given in Hungary, in excess of 15% (*Figure 19*).

The opinions about the *disadvantages of the border region location* are divided in the Hungarian–Romanian border region. On the Hungarian side, almost two-thirds of the responses fall into the “no disadvantage” category, while this proportion reaches 73.5% in the Romanian settlements. In the Hungarian settlements the other most frequently given responses were backward position and underdevelopment and the rise of crime, while the Romanian respondents mentioned increased traffic, the existence of the borderline and the difficult border crossing (in the case of Székelyhíd, the lack of a border crossing station) most often (*Figure 20*).

Figure 18

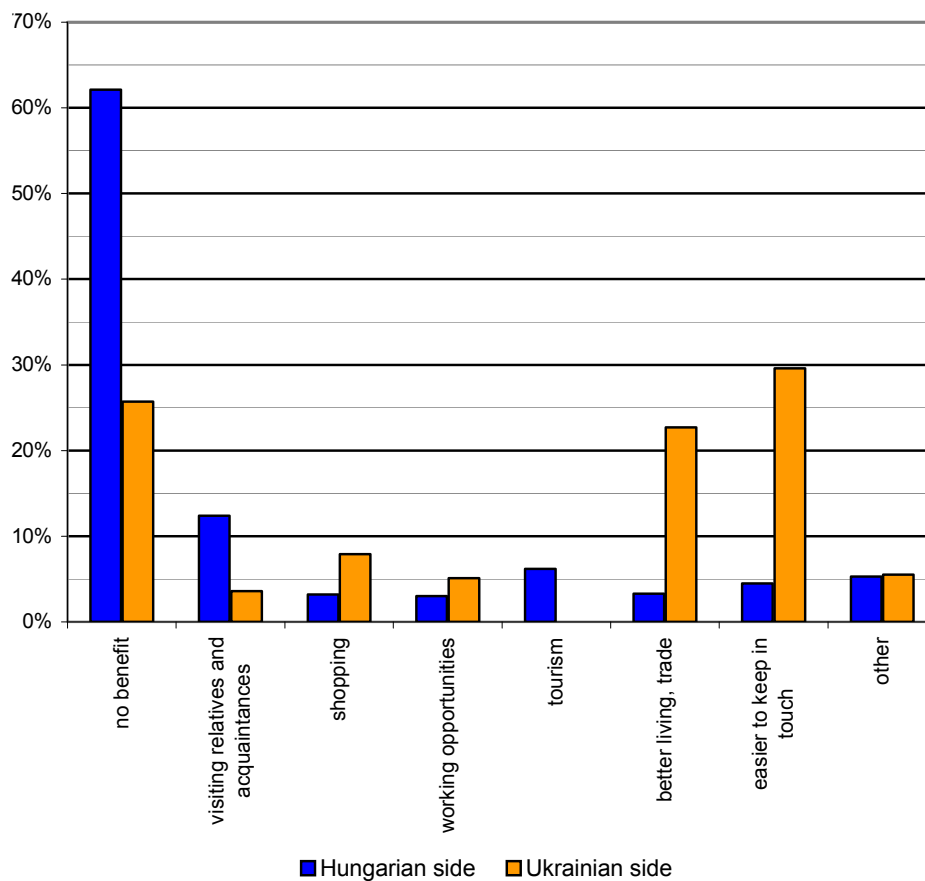
*The benefits of border situation in the settlements along
the Hungarian–Romanian border involved in the survey, 2002*



Source: Questionnaire survey 2002. Edited by the authors 2004.

Figure 19

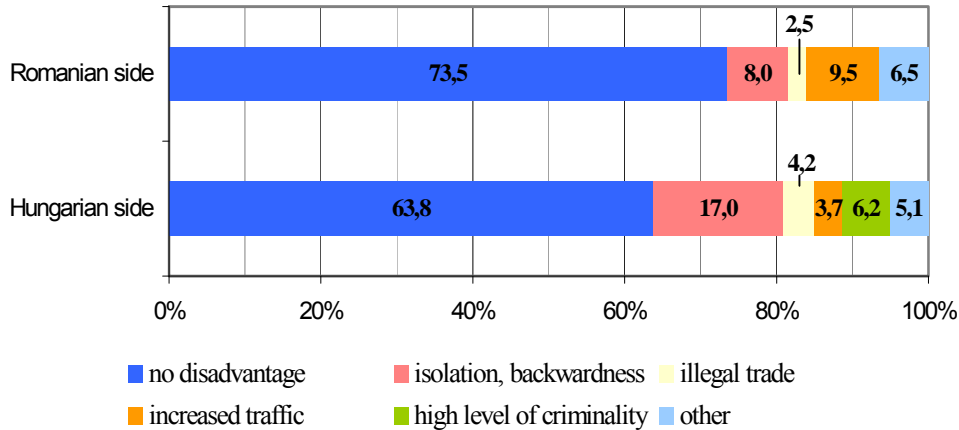
*The benefits of border situation in the settlements along
the Hungarian–Ukrainian border involved in the survey, 2001–2002*



Source: Questionnaire survey 2001–2002. Edited by the authors 2004.

Figure 20

The disadvantages of border situation in the surveyed settlements in the Hungarian–Romanian border region, 2002



Source: Questionnaire survey 2002. Edited by the authors 2004.

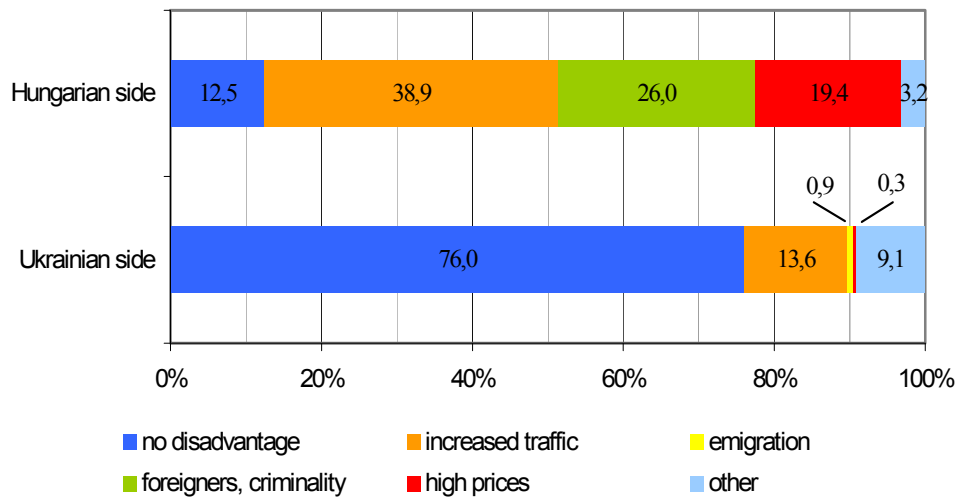
Along the Hungarian–Ukrainian border, very significant differences can be seen among the responses given on the two sides of the border. In Transcarpathia, where the people are forced by the bad economic situation to be engaged in subsistence trade in Hungary, more than three-quarters of the respondents said that the border region location was not any disadvantage, as opposed to the 12.5% proportion of the Hungarian responses in this category. As regards disadvantages, the highest number of mentions in Transcarpathia concerned increased traffic and the concomitant environmental stress (13.6% of all responses). In the Hungarian settlements, in addition to increased traffic (38.9% of all responses), the wave of refugees coming from the Ukraine (26.0%) and the high prices induced by the foreign shoppers (19.4%) were the categories most frequently mentioned (Figure 21).

Because of isolation, increasing crime rates, the high number of refugees, the scarce job opportunities and other problems one can ask with right *whether the citizens of the border region would like to move out from their present place of residence*. On the whole, the proportions of those who would move if they could are largely the same on the two sides of the Hungarian–Romanian border (32% each), but there are considerable differences among the individual settlements in this respect. While more than half of the citizens of Székelyhíd in Romania would happily move, this proportion is just over 13% in Bors. On the Hungarian side, the

people of Biharkeresztes are the most willing to move out (49%), while less than one-quarter of the respondents living in Kiszombor would choose a new place of residence.

Figure 21

The disadvantages of border situation in the surveyed settlements in the Hungarian–Ukrainian border region, 2001–2002



Source: Questionnaire survey 2001–2002. Edited by the authors, 2004

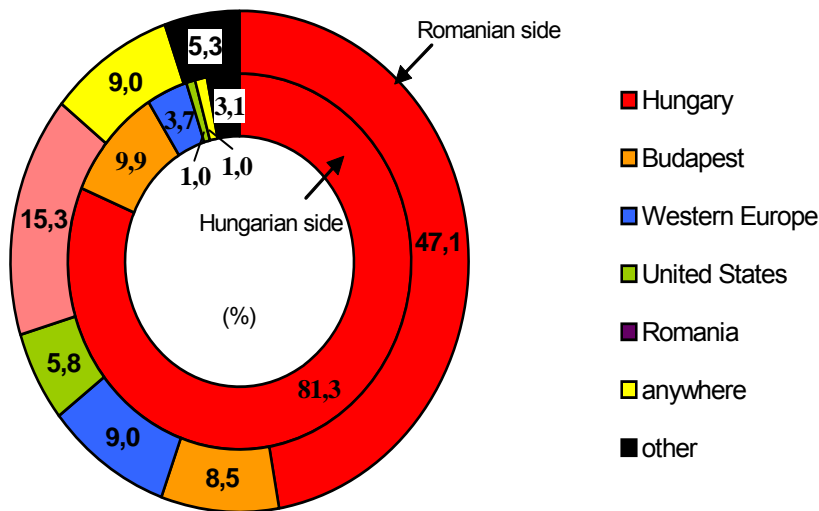
As regards the Hungarian–Ukrainian border, 41.9% of the respondents on the Hungarian side would choose a new place of residence, as opposed to the 35.7% proportion in the Ukrainian settlements. The higher proportion of the Hungarian side is not a surprise, as two-thirds of the respondents said they did not feel any advantage of living in the border region. There are differences among the settlements here too, the proportion of those wishing to move exceeds 50% in Záhony in Hungary and Mezőkaszony in Transcarpathia (67% and 51.9% of the respondents, respectively).

Both in the Romanian and the Ukrainian border region, Hungary is the most popular destination as a *potential new place of residence*. A Romanian destination was only indicated in Romania, and similarly, only Transcarpathian respondents mentioned a potential destination in the Ukraine. In each settlement, with the exception of Otlaka, Budapest was mentioned among the destinations as a city where those wishing to move out would happily go.

On the Romanian side of the Hungarian–Romanian border region, the proportion of Western European countries and the United States as potential new places of residence is higher, also, more people indicated here that they would happily move anywhere (Figure 22). Among the settlements in the sample it was only Biharkeresztes where these two destinations were not mentioned by the respondents. On the Romanian side, the proportion of the category called “other”, involving all other countries, is also higher (although the respondents in the sample only indicated some of the neighbour countries, and Canada in some cases).

Figure 22

The distribution of potential new habitations of local people along the Hungarian–Romanian border, 2002



Source: Questionnaire survey 2002. Edited by the authors 2004.

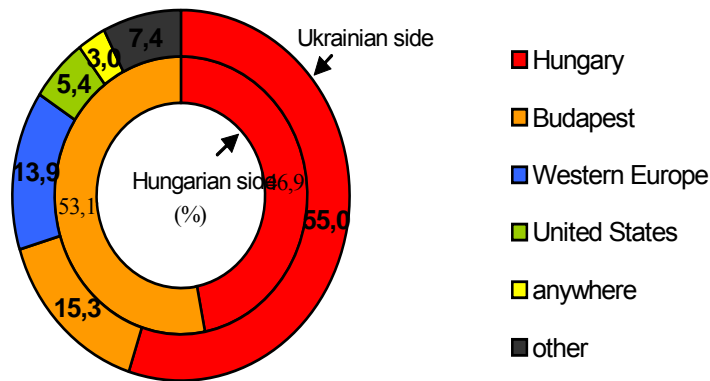
In the Ukrainian–Hungarian border region too Hungary and Budapest are the two most frequently mentioned potential places of residence, in fact, the Hungarian respondents did not indicate a single foreign country among the responses; the proportion of the Hungarian capital city (52.8%) exceeded the share of all other settlements and regions (Figure 23).

This situation will probable change after the EU accession of Hungary, as the possibility of freer migration will probably attract more people from this region to the other countries of the European Union. The survey of the migration tendencies

in the new member states of the EU and along the external borders of the Union may be a research topic of outstanding importance in the near future, either from security policy or criminal geographical aspect.

Figure 23

The distribution of potential new habitations of local people along the Hungarian–Ukrainian border, 2001–2002



Source: Questionnaire survey 2001–2002. Edited by the authors, 2004.

3.3 Relations of the citizens of the border region to the neighbour country

A considerable part of the population in the Hungarian–Romanian border region has relations to the neighbour country. While almost two-thirds (64%) of those living on the Romanian side have contacts in Hungary, this proportion is much lower in the settlements on the Hungarian side, where only 42.3% of the population have relations in Romania. Among the Hungarian settlements in the sample, Ártánd and Vállaj stand out, they are the only settlements on the Hungarian side where the proportion of those with relations in Romania exceeds 50%. The proportion of those with Romanian contacts is lower along the southern stripe of the border (33% in Elek, 38% in Kiszombor) and in Létavértes, lacking a border crossing station (36.7%). As regards the Romanian settlements, Székelyhíd and Csanáros have the highest proportion of those with contacts in Hungary (90% and 86%, re-

spectively). The findings reveal that in the Romanian settlements along the border, the proportion of those with contacts in Hungary is closely related to the ethnic composition of the settlements. Accordingly, both in Nagycsanád and Otlaka, where the proportion of the Hungarian ethnic population is the lowest, the respective figures of those with contacts in Hungary are 37%.

As regards the proportion of those with contacts in the neighbour country, there are significant differences between the two sides of the Ukrainian–Hungarian border region. While not more than 22.8% of the Hungarian respondents have any contact with the neighbour country, this proportion is 71.2% among the Ukrainian respondents. On the Hungarian side, the proportions of those with Ukrainian contacts in some settlements are as follows: 35% in Záhony, 19% in Tiszabecs, 17% in Kispalád and only 9.2% in Barabás. Among the Transcarpathian settlements, most people have Hungarian relations in Mezőkaszony and Nagypalád (97.1% and 90%, respectively), while this proportion is 70.8% in Csap and only 44.7% in Tiszaújlak. The case of Csap–Záhony and Tiszaújlak–Tiszabecs is interesting: of these settlement pairs, the Hungarian counterparts have the highest and the Transcarpathian ones the lowest proportion of contacts to the neighbour country.

3.3.1 The development of the relations in time

During the decades of socialism, the closed borders were a great obstacle blocking the crossing of the borders and the establishment and deepening of the cross-border relations. This statement was also true for the eastern border regions of Hungary, although the circumstances of border crossing were different in the Hungarian, Romanian and the Ukrainian (then Soviet) side of the border. On the whole, the Hungarian citizens could cross the border relatively more easily, unlike in the case of the Austrian–Hungarian border where it was the Austrian citizens who could travel more freely. Following the political transformation of Central Europe, the situation changed from 1989, the borders became more open, new border crossing stations were established, the visa regime ceased to exist, in fact, bilateral border crossing became possible. Within the new circumstances, Romanian and Ukrainian citizens could travel abroad easier, too.

On the Hungarian side of the Hungarian–Romanian border, almost two-thirds of the relations had been established before 1989, only Ártánd is an exception from this: the majority of its contacts to Romania have been established since 1989. On the Romanian side too, most of the relations of the inhabitants to Hungary had been born before 1989, and the proportions measured in the respective settlements are not very far from the average. The only exception is Nagycsanád (there had not been a border crossing station here, then the temporary border crossing station cre-

ated in the 1990s was reconstructed and opened for the international traffic in 2002) where more than two-thirds of the relations were established after 1989.

Unlike along the Hungarian–Romanian border, there are significant differences between the two sides of the Hungarian–Ukrainian border. On the Hungarian side, 67% of the relations go back to before 1989 (i.e. the Soviet era), while 62.8% of the Ukrainian relations have been established since 1989. There is one exception from this rule on both sides: in Barabás, 60% of the contacts have been established since 1989 (the year when the bilateral border crossing station was opened), while in the Transcarpathian Nagypalád, still lacking a border crossing station, 51.1% of the relations go back to the years before 1989.

3.3.2 Character of the cross-border citizen relations

As regards the character of the cross-border relations to the neighbour countries, relations of personal type (visits to relatives, friends and acquaintances) were most frequently mentioned among the respondents in all three countries, Hungary, Romania and the Ukraine. On all sides of the borders, the categories of recreation and holidaymaking and also of shopping appear quite frequently (*Figure 24*).

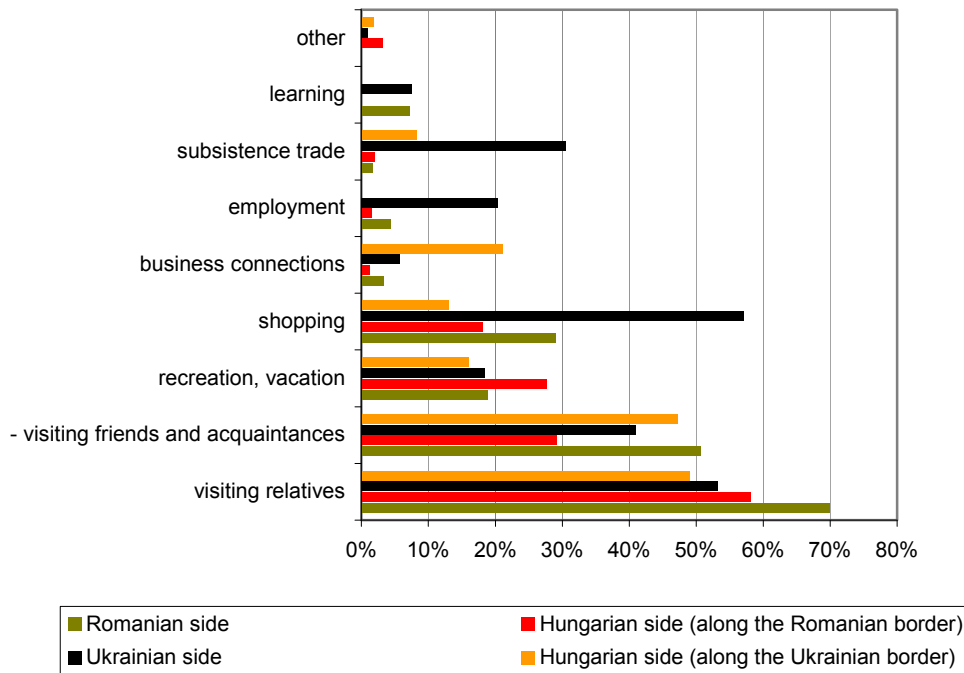
Since the opening up of the borders, the proportion of business relations has still not become significant, only the Hungarian respondents living in the vicinity of the Ukrainian border indicated this category in a higher proportion (but this only means 24 persons, due to the low number of Hungarian citizens with Ukrainian contacts). The economic hardships and the problems of subsistence typical in Transcarpathia are indicated by the fact that all three categories connected to subsistence (shopping, subsistence trade and employment) are dominated by the Ukrainian respondents.

3.4 The issues of the EU accession as seen by the population living in the border region

The cross-border relations and the everyday life of those living along the eastern borders of Hungary will certainly be influenced to a great extent by the EU accession of Hungary and the neighbouring countries. The level of the preparation for the EU accession is rather different in the two neighbouring eastern countries: Romania is already an associate member and has a chance to be involved in the next round of enlargement, while the Ukraine does not have a chance to become an EU member in the near future. Consequently, the Ukrainian–Hungarian border section will probably remain an external EU border guarded by the strict Schengen norms.

Figure 24

*Characteristics of connections between the neighbouring countries
 (based on frequency of mentioning), 2001–2002*



Source: Questionnaire survey 2001–2002. Edited by the authors, 2004.

It is worth looking at how the population in the Romanian and the Ukrainian border regions relate to this situation and *what they expect of the EU accession of Hungary*, becoming an EU-member in the first round of the enlargement. The Hungarian citizens along the Hungarian–Romanian border primarily expect better living standards, more jobs and higher salaries after the EU accession (46.4%). In addition, a significant proportion of them expect a general economic development and agricultural supports (9.5% each), there are less who do not expect anything (7.1%) or hope for an easier border crossing (6.7%) and the development of the economic relations (3.1%).

On the Romanian side, the highest proportion goes to those who do not expect anything of the Hungarian accession (36.7%), while the proportions of the two following categories, those expecting a more intensive assistance of the Hungarians living in Romania and the development of the economic relations are almost the

same (14.1% and 13.8%, respectively). One-fifth of the respondents expect better conditions of life and the expansion of job opportunities.

Both on the Hungarian and the Romanian side there are people who expect negative consequences after Hungary's accession to the European Union (4.5% and 6.8%, respectively). In Romania, the biggest concern is the introduction of the visa regime, in Hungary it is the "bankruptcy" of agriculture and the rising prices.

On the Hungarian side of the Ukrainian–Hungarian border, the proportion of responses expecting more jobs and better living conditions prevail (68.6%), many expect the conditions for a cleaner environment (9.2%), the decrease of the wave of refugees coming from the Ukraine (8.4%) and the development of the economy and the catching up of the region (5.1%) after the Hungarian EU accession. Those not indicating any expectation make only 4%, and even less expect easier border crossing and the intensifying of the economic and trade relations (3.8% and 0.9%, respectively).

On the Ukrainian side, like along the Romanian border, in most cases there are no specific expectations (44.8%), but the second most frequently mentioned category is the expectation that the visa regime will not be introduced despite the Schengen norms (28%). As the majority of the settlements in the Ukrainian sample are Hungarian-inhabited, it is not surprising that 13.5% of the respondents expect a more effective support of the Hungarians living in Transcarpathia (13.5%). The proportion of those indicating the expectation of the intensifying of the economic relations is low in this case, too (5.2%).

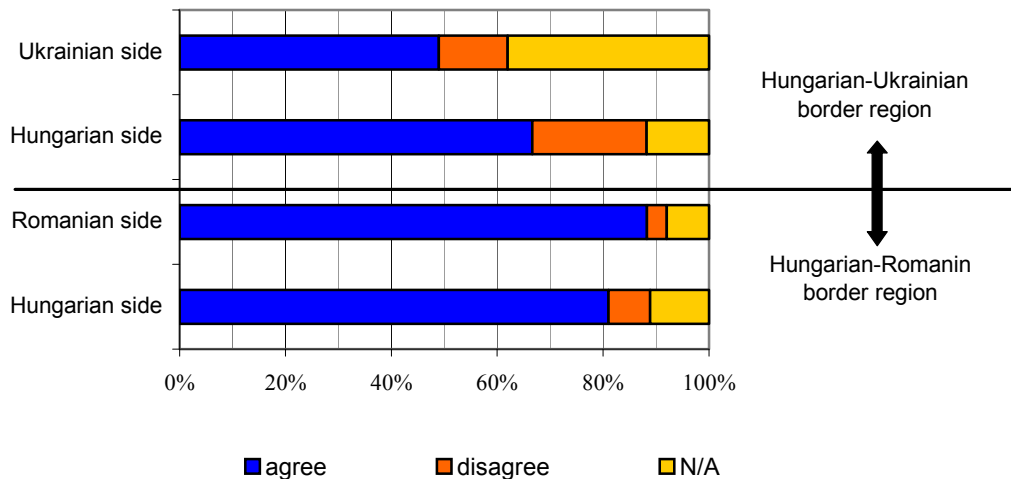
It is visible that the expectations of the EU accession are different along the respective sections of the border region in our survey. On the other hand, the *majority approved of Hungary's accession on all sides of the borders*. On both sides of the Hungarian–Romanian border, those in favour of the accession are in excess of 80%, without significant differences across the individual settlements. It is interesting, though, that the support of the accession is higher on the Romanian side than in the Hungarian settlements. On the Ukrainian side of the Ukrainian–Hungarian border, on the other hand, the number of those approving of the accession is much lower and that of those who are uncertain is higher, as less than half of the respondents said that they approved of Hungary's accession to the European Union (*Figure 25*). The Ukrainian border region is a source of living for many, so it is understandable that people are afraid of the introduction of the strict EU norms of border crossing (especially the visa regime).

We also asked the population on the Ukrainian and the Romanian side of the borders *whether their personal living conditions were influenced by Hungary's EU accession*. Among the Romanian respondents, 36.2% said yes, this figure was 28.4% among the Ukrainian respondents. Among the *favourable effects*, mostly better living conditions (27.4%), employment opportunities (12.8%) and some allowances connected to the Hungarians living in Romania (10.7%) were mentioned

on the Romanian side, but 33.8% of the respondents were unable to tell what positive effects the accession of the neighbouring country would have. On the Ukrainian side, three-quarters of the respondents could not indicate any positive effect, while 7.8% of them expect the more substantial support of the Hungarians living in Transcarpathia (e.g. free medical service) and 5.4% hope for better employment opportunities.

Figure 25

The opinions of local inhabitants about Hungary's accession to the European Union in the surveyed area, 2001–2002



Source: Questionnaire survey 2001–2002. Edited by the authors 2004.

In the case of *negative effects*, the situation is the opposite: while 69.3% of the respondents on the Romanian side were unable to indicate a concrete negative consequence, this was only 30.1% on the Ukrainian side. Both in the Ukraine and Romania, the biggest concern is the introduction of the visa regime and the more rigorous border crossing conditions (52.8% and 17.1%, respectively), while the worsening of the employment opportunities as an unfavourable factor was much less frequently mentioned (10.2% in Transcarpathia and 2.6% in the Romanian settlements).

We can conclude that the Hungarian EU accession is seen as a factor positively affecting the living conditions on the Romanian side, while the perception is the opposite in settlements of the border region of Transcarpathia.

The Hungarian respondents in the border region in our survey had to answer *whether their personal living conditions would be influenced by the potential European Union membership of the Eastern European countries*. It comes from the very much different preparation levels of Romania and the Ukraine and the great differences in the progress of the accession process that this answer was yes at 52.1% of the Hungarian respondents along the Romanian border and only 20.2% in the settlements neighbour to the Ukraine. Among the *positive factors*, the expansion of the job opportunities was most frequently mentioned in the territories neighbouring the Ukraine (46.6%), together with the better living and the higher wages (44.7%), but easier border crossing (3.4%) and the birth of the conditions of a cleaner environment (2.8%) are also worth mentioning. The population on the settlements neighbour to Romania considers the better income conditions and the rising living standards as the most useful consequence of Hungary's EU integration (56.3%), followed by the expanding job opportunities (19.9%), easier border crossing (6.7%) and the economic prosperity of the region (8.7%).

As regards the *expected negative effects*, those living in the vicinity of the Ukrainian border mostly mentioned the high number of guest workers and foreigners (31.7%), the rising consumer prices (40%) and the potential unfavourable economic and agricultural tendencies coming from the competition (24.4%). In the settlements neighbour to Romania, it is the worsening of the economic and agricultural tendencies again that prevails among the responses (30.5%), followed by the rising prices (20.0%) and the more rigorous border crossing (17.9%); also, 8.4% of the respondents believe that the Hungarian peripheries will receive less support after the accession.

3.5 The role of Euroregions along the East Hungarian borders

In the 1990s, the first euroregional organisations were founded along the eastern borders of Hungary, following Western European patterns. Their most important objective was the promotion of the cross-border relations and the catching up of the border regions. Of the Euroregions involving border regions from several countries, two can be found in the area in our survey: the Carpathians Euroregion created in 1993 and the Danube–Körös–Maros–Tisza Euroregion (DKMT) founded in 1997. During the questionnaire survey we tried to assess the level of the presence of these Euroregions in the everyday lives of the population in the border regions. In the Ukrainian–Hungarian border region and the northern part of the Hungarian–Romanian border, the counties are members in the Carpathians Euroregion, while Békés and Csongrád in Hungary, and also Arad and Temes counties in Romania are participants in the DKMT co-operation. Accordingly, in the case of the

Kiszombor–Nagycsanád and the Elek–Ottlaka settlement pairs we asked the citizens about how much they knew about the DKMT Euroregion, while we tried to map the level of information on the Carpathians Euroregion in the other settlements.

The findings revealed that in the examined settlements along the Hungarian–Romanian border, usually less than half of the respondents had heard about the Euroregion working in the area. On the Romanian side, more respondents had already heard of a euroregional organisation competent in their region, this proportion remained below 50% in Bors, only. On the other hand, the Euroregions are less known on the Hungarian side, the proportion of positive answers exceeded 60% in only one settlement, Biharkeresztes.

Among the Hungarian respondents in the Ukrainian–Hungarian border region, the proportion of positive answers was similar (45.8%), while only 28.4% of the Ukrainian respondents had heard of the Carpathians Euroregion before. At settlement level, the citizens of Csap knew in the highest proportion (two-thirds of them) of the Carpathians Euroregion, while this figure was the lowest in Nagypalád (20%).

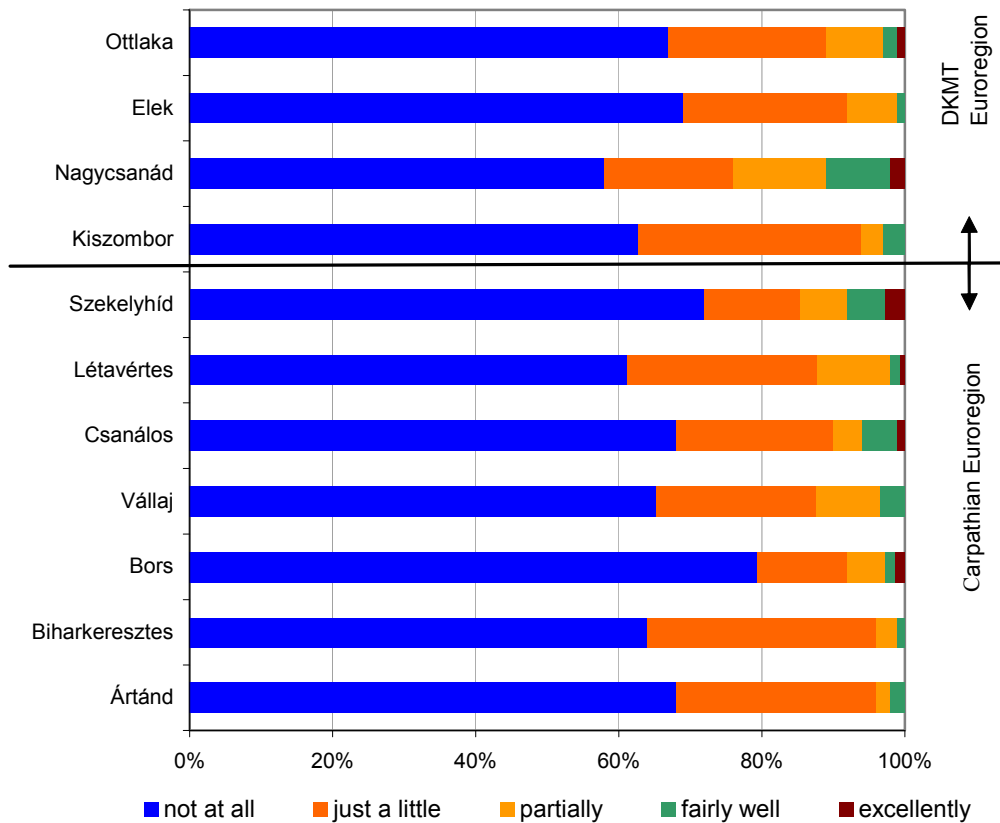
In the Romanian–Hungarian border region, the *population of only a few settlements thinks that their county is part of the respective interregional organisation*, the proportion of those who are uncertain is much higher. In this case too, the proportion of positive answers was higher in the Romanian settlements; in Ottlaka, Nagycsanád and Csanálos the “yes” answers exceeded half of all responses. On the Hungarian side of the Ukrainian–Hungarian border, 33.4% of the respondents think that their county participates in the work of Carpathians Euroregion; this figure is 27.3% in Transcarpathia. Most people are uncertain here too, i.e. they do not know whether or not their counties are members of the organisation. The proportion of “yes” answers is the lowest in Kispalád on the Hungarian side (20%) and the highest is in Záhony (46%). In the Ukrainian part, only the citizens of Tiszaújlak believe in a lower proportion (17.1%) that Transcarpathia is part of the Euroregion.

Knowing all this it is not surprising that the *proportion of those informed about the objectives and mission of the Euroregions is very low*, more than 60% of those living in the Hungarian–Romanian border region are not aware of them at all (only in Nagycsanád remained the proportion of those without any information on the objectives under 60%). With the exception of Létavértes, there was no Hungarian settlement in the sample where there was one respondent completely competent on the mission of the Euroregions (*Figure 26*).

In the Hungarian settlements along the Ukrainian–Hungarian border, the knowledge on the mission of the Carpathians Euroregion is similar to that along the Romanian border (*Figure 27*). Exactly two-thirds of the respondents did not know the objectives of the organisation at all, 15.3% had some information, 12.8% had more information and only 2.9% knew well and another 2.9% perfectly the goals of

Figure 26

Knowledge of the goals and functions of the Carpathian/DKMT Euroregion in the settlements near the Hungarian–Romanian border, 2002



Source: Questionnaire survey 2002. Edited by the authors 2004.

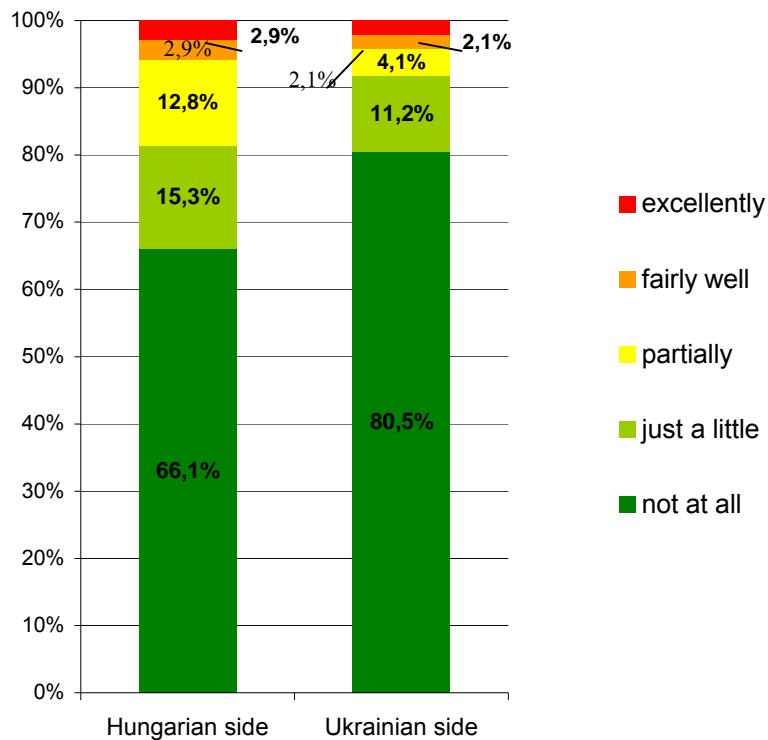
Carpathians Euroregion. The proportion of those without any information on the mission of the organisation is lower in the northern part of the border region (57.5% in Záhony and 59.6% in Barabás), and higher in the southern settlements (75% in Tiszabecs, 81% in Kispalád). On the Ukrainian side, even less people are aware of the mission of the Carpathians Euroregion: 80.5% of the responses fell into the “not at all” category, 11.2% of the respondents had little information, 4.1% of them some information and only 2.1% were well enough and another 2.1% completely informed. Among the settlements, the citizens of Tiszaújlak are least

informed (93.5% have no information at all), while the information level about this issue is the highest in Csap (of the 12 people in the Ukrainian area knowing perfectly the objectives of the Carpathians Euroregion, 11 are from Csap).

The responses of the citizens reveal that neither the Carpathians Euroregion nor the Danube–Körös–Maros–Tisza Euroregion has been able to become fully operational yet in the region. The majority of the people living in the border region do not know at all the reasons for the creation of these organisations, their mission and objectives. Really significant achievements cannot be made without an adequate level of awareness. In the future, the currently shaping two- and trilateral cross-border co-operations in the area (Interregio, Bihar–Bihor Euroregion etc.) may become more important than the large interregional organisations.

Figure 27

Knowledge of the goals and functions of the Carpathian Euroregion in the settlements near the Hungarian–Ukrainian border, 2001–2002



Source: Questionnaire survey 2001–2002. Edited by the authors, 2004.