European integration and ethnic minorities: a case study of Hungarians in Slovakia[1]

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European Integration and Ethnic Minorities: A Case Study on Hungarians in Slovakia. This paper examines the influence of European integration on the political and economical status of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia. Our study tests (and partially challenges) the dominant trend in the current scholarship in European and transition studies that claims the decisive influence of the European Union on minority policy and ethnic relations in Slovakia. These studies looked only at the national political elite level and usually neglected the local elite level. Moreover, they examined only "political conditionality" as the core strategy of the EU to promote "respect for and protection of minorities". Such an approach neglected a possible impact of the accession process on the economic status and the political mobilization of the ethnic minority in mixed regions that could be stimulated by access to the EU accession (structural) funds. Therefore, we interviewed 31 political and social actors, representing ethnic Hungarians and Slovaks at the national and regional/local level (Košice region), which had professional dealings with EU institutions, funds or representatives. The main aim of these in-depth, semi-structured interviews was to reveal their perceptions to get deeper understanding of possible changes induced by the EU accession process on majority-minority relations in Slovakia. The paper generalizes respondents' perception of "the EU impact" on: majority-minority relations, ethnic identity and socio-economic status. It argues that given the lack of an EU agenda and a special policy on minority protection beyond the vague Copenhagen criteria, effects of EU political conditionality in this field depends mostly on the organizational and political strength of respective minority, its articulation of demands, and on the coordinated action of other international organizations. In Slovakia it empowered the Hungarian political elite and promoted the power-sharing arrangement at the national level (1998-2006) that used to be the most conflicting arena. Paradoxically, access to EU funds has also promoted cross border cooperation among ethnic Hungarians in both Hungary and Slovakia, and did not (yet) affects the traditional patterns of cooperation and competition among ethnic Slovaks and Hungarians in Slovakia.
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1. Introduction

Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) has changed enormously since the fall of the communist regimes. Countries in CEE have undergone – often very painful – the triple transition of democratisation, marketisation and nation state-building (Offe, C., 1991). Moreover, eight of them joined the European Union on May 1, 2004. A number of recently published comprehensive studies of the EU's impact on CEE either portrays the Union as a key actor in process of complex political, economic, administrative and social changes (Jacoby, W., 2001 and 2004; Pridham, G., 2005, Malová, D. et al 2005, Grabbe, H., 2006), or looks also at the limits of the EU role on countries in the region (Hughes, J., et al. 2004; Vachudova, M., 2005; Schimmelfenning, F. – Sedelmeier, U., 2005; Haughton, T., 2007). In many studies the EU influence on political change in 1998 and ethnic relations in Slovakia is taken for granted and often referred as the manifestation of the EU's 'transformative power' (Grabbe, H., 2006) or its 'active leverage' (Vachudova, M., 2005), therefore we wanted to examine closer EU influence on minority policy.

The main research question of this study is to understand how the EU shaped, directed and maybe determined change in majority-minority relations in Slovakia. We thus seek to grasp, understand and assess the effects of European integration on this ethnic issue. We also address the question of whether and if so, then to what extent, EU funded projects resulted in changes in the regional economic situation in a given region inhabited by the minority and whether the patterns of relations between the majority and minority in a given region were thus influenced. This paper analyses empirical research carried out in the course of 2005-2006. The study is based on 31 in-depth interviews which were carried out with representatives from six different socio-professional categories: elected representatives at regional and local level; minority politicians at national level; representatives of the civil society like think tanks or media; development public officials; businesspeople or representatives of commerce chambers and main projects beneficiaries. The interviews were conducted mainly at the regional level (Košice region) but a few of them were made also with the key minority leaders at the national level. In addition to these interviews, we collected data also from official documents and academic studies. The main purpose of the fieldwork was to collect perceptions from a variety of different actors who are involved in the minority-majority affairs, on issues such as regional development, Europe, and their identity structure.

First of all we examine the development of the European Union's policy toward the accession countries in Central and Eastern Europe, known as EU conditionality, in the area of minority protection. In the second part of the study

we analyze perceptions of our respondents about the EU influence at national, regional and local level in Slovakia. Finally, we generalize our findings in respect of the positive effects of power sharing arrangements at the national level on the inter-ethnic relations at the local level in ethnically segmented society in Slovakia.

2. European Union conditionality and minority policy: an influence without policy instruments?

Conditionality is often defined as an international pressure that requires certain conditions, involving either the promise of material aid or political opportunities, and it usually includes political monitoring of domestic developments in the countries under discussion (Pridham, G., 1999, p. 1222). European Union conditionality has been strictly defined in terms of pre-conditions for accession (Schimmelfennig, F. – Sedelmeier, U., 2005; Grabbe, H., 2006). The EU's strategy during the so-called *Eastern enlargement* has focused on the transfer of international norms as a condition to get rewards (i.e. assistance, economic cooperation, association and membership). The reward was to be provided only if the candidate states complied with the required norms. The EU did not intervene directly to change applicant states' behaviour but through monitoring evaluated applicant states, and thus influenced domestic political and economic development. This policy fixed its influence of on a strictly defined reward, which meant membership in the 'club'.

EU primary law does not provide the Union with explicit norms and legislation to be implemented, as treatment of minorities has not been harmonized in the 'old' member states. Despite this lack of formal authority the EU unambiguously mentioned the question of minorities in the Declaration on Human Rights at European Council in Luxembourg (1991) including a paragraph that called for minority protection. The lack of common norms and values in minority protection in the EU formal documents was confirmed by the so-called Maastricht Treaty (Treaty on EU – TEU) signed in 1992, which on the one hand refers to the 'common values', such as "liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law (Article 6, *Treaty on European Union*), but on the other hand it expressly excluded 'respect for and protection of minorities', which was explicitly required at the Copenhagen European Council in June 1993 that set up conditions for accession. However, the Copenhagen Criteria for accession were just general political indications and had no legal implication; nonetheless, they constituted a normative pressure for domestic policy change and were part and parcel of the Stability Pact for Eastern Europe, in 1995, and of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe in 1999. During that time internally the EU was developing norms only concerned with anti-discrimination policies,

which might 'allow', but do not require, some forms of affirmative actions by states. When the Amsterdam Treaty of the Union, which was legally binding for the members, was signed in 1997, there was no separate mention of national minorities. There were provisions, like Article 13 on Race and Equality, which prohibit any form of discrimination, and there was also a Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom, which again mention the prohibition of discrimination on national grounds. But these were just provisions about individual and anti-discriminatory rights, which did not directly affected ethnic minorities.

The lack of an EU agenda in minority policy stems from the very nature of the European Union, which was founded primarily as a community for economic cooperation and member states traditionally enjoy sovereignty in other fields of domestic policy. The 'old' EU members were and still are deeply divided about their approach toward (ethnic) minorities. While some states, for example, Austria, Germany and Italy (that have an interest in defending the rights of their national minorities living in neighbouring countries) seem to be in favour of collective rights, other states such as France and Greece tend to oppose the very concept of the minority rights. Moreover, contrary to the EU 'conditional' approach to candidate countries in minority protection, there is no intervention into internal minorities' affairs of member states. Bruno De Witte (2002, p. 467) calls this double standard approach that EU concept of minority rights is an "export article and not one for domestic consumption."

Contrary to this slow and weak harmonization of anti-discrimination and minority policies inside the member states, the EU required minority rights to be implemented in the accession countries. The EU borrowed standards of minority rights from the Council of Europe and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, thus EU conditionality in minority protection resulted from cumulative effects of different interpretations of minority rights made by different institutions (Sassed, G., 2005). Given the lack of any EU minority policy or legally binding norms, the EU did not define common standards and benchmarks about domestic policies towards minorities but, rather, it intervened case by case. EU requests were followed by the Commission monitoring and regular reports on accession countries. The demands by the EU articulated towards governments in Central and Eastern Europe varied across applicant countries and across time, with different priorities. Therefore, a "hierarchy" of minority issues resulted from specific requirements of minorities living in a respective country. This led to an ambiguous shift made by the EU from individual to collective rights. In 1997, the Agenda 2000 and first Commission Opinions on applicant states, the EU mentioned the possibility to apply both the CE Recommendation 1201, which foresaw also collective rights for minorities, and by the same token the

Framework Convention on National Minorities (FCNM), which is firmly based on the concept of individual rights. Therefore such agenda encouraged different solutions. However, afterwards the EU referred only to the FCNM and dropped entirely the Recommendation 1201. Later, for migration and security reasons the EU policy toward CEE focused more on the issues of anti-discrimination in applicant countries, specifically regarding the Roma communities.

The EU has not and could not been the proponent of single specific policy towards minorities. EU law on national minorities, contrary to other aspects of the *acquis communautaire*, is virtually non-existent. The section on ethnic minorities in the regular reports on applicant countries issued by the European Commission have an incoherent and inconsistent approach, with frequent use of formal evaluations, ad hoc positions and rhetoric (Sassed, G., 2005). EU evaluations of progress in politics towards minorities in applicant countries in the end depended on the overall evaluation of the domestic context and on the EU political decision to acknowledge progress or not (Brusis, M., 2003). In the case of minority protection, because there is no EU minority rights regime, Europeanization in this area can be better understood as a diffusion of norms and practices anchored in CE and OSCE standards. Therefore EU conditionality in this area works only thanks to the "active leverage", i.e. the perspective to gain membership in this exclusive club. Such a situation provides just an opportunity for minority protection and actually increases possibility of local actors to shape EU agenda in their own countries during the accession process. The better organized ethnic minority and the better articulated demands, the better chances to promote own demands.

3. Individual perceptions of the EU impact

3.1. Majority-minority relations

The scholarship focusing on EU political conditionality in CEE often refers to Slovakia as the case where EU played important role also in promoting rights of ethnic (Hungarian) minority (Malová, D. – Rybář, M., 2003; Vachudova, M., 2005; Schimmelfenning, F. et al, 2005). Our respondents confirmed this impact at majority-minority relation at the national level in Slovakia. They perceived the European Union as a facilitator of the ethnic Hungarian – Slovak relationship at the national level. Using terms such as "political fight of parties", "national level" and "high politics" in reference to the Hungarian minority problems, interviewees suggest that things are different at local and regional level and conflicts are simply those of ordinary daily life. The relations among "people are normal, standard… and among politicians they are bad." "I cannot see any problems at the level of ordinary people. The [ethnic] card is played in politics." (R20) "The Eastern

Slovakia has been always more tolerant because most of all minorities live here." (R23)

Only a few respondents admit that there are any minority-majority problems at the local or regional level (R18, R28). Some of them admitted that even when it comes to use of the structural funds the level of interethnic cooperation is rather low and limited by ethnic identity. "I feel more competition than cooperation despite the fact that also our project is based on the cooperation between Roma, Slovaks and Hungarians. But there is no effort to cooperate – everybody is trying to apply with his own project." (R18)

Our respondents also supported our argument about the structural and organizational weakness of EU agenda and its selective approach in minority protection by pointing that there is more problematic ethnic issue in Slovakia that was not coherently tackled by the EU. All of them uniformly referred to more important majority-minority problems in the Košice region, namely they pointed out relations between Roma and non-Roma inhabitants. "I really think the Roma are a more urgent problem than Hungarians." (R24) "Until now we have spoken about Hungarians but there is the worst problem, we have also Gypsies here." (R21) Indeed, the European Union during the accession process did not pay attention to the Roma issue in candidate states. This findings support our argument that EU conditionality in minority protection depends largely on the organizational strength of the respective minority in candidate countries.

The perceptions of Slovak-Hungarian relations in Slovakia and Košice region presented rather a mixed picture, on the one hand there the most serious tensions at the national level have been improved partly due to EU conditionality, on the other hand although there are no serious conflicts articulated at the local and regional level, however, there is just a little cooperation between two ethnic groups. This situation can be better understood within the changing political context of the majority-minority relations.

The fall of the Communist regime in 1989 reawakened the idea of Slovakia's autonomy. Dissatisfied with the minority status in the federal government, many Slovaks called for a loose confederation of the Czech and Slovak Republics while others advocated complete independence. Political conflicts among elite resulted in the 'velvet divorce' on January 1, 1993. Overnight, the minority-majority proportion did change dramatically. While the Hungarian minority accounted for about 3% of population in the former Czechoslovakia, in the Slovak Republic they constituted 10% of the overall population. A new republic inherited a latent fear of demands for secession by the ethnic Hungarians, a fear which nationalistic politicians used to their advantage. Immediately, after the Slovakia's independence its relations with Hungary became more complicated and they substantially shaped the minority – majority relations in Slovakia.

On the Slovak side, the feeling that the southern border of the country was not secure and the secession claims might threaten territorial integrity arose. Shortly after the 1992 parliamentary elections, nationalistically-inclined governments got into power in both countries. The ethnic tensions in Slovakia substantially increased. For example, the Hungarian political parties in Slovakia during 1993 organized several rallies where they protested against delaying the most controversial issues: the spelling and use of names and surnames in the native language; the use of bilingual signs and references for the names of cities and villages; and the issue of alternative education. The Hungarian parties also sent protest letters to the Council of Europe concerning the delay in addressing these issues by the government led by Vladimír Mečiar. Majority-minority relations could improve only after a similar improvement of bilateral relations. The idea of signing the basic international agreement between the states gained momentum only in 1994 when Gyula Horn (Hungary) and Jozef Moravčík[4] (Slovakia) became prime ministers of their respective countries. Both were more moderate and pragmatic in their understanding of "national interests". Important roles in this process were also played by the discussions concerning the so-called Balladur plan and clear signals from the side of the EU that without a smoothing of mutual relations the inclusion of both states in the group of states eligible for further integration would be delayed (Sándor, E., 1997, p. 55). The first draft of the agreement (in 1994) immediately revealed extremely different perceptions, especially regarding the position of minorities on both sides. The creation of the new Mečiar-led government after the early elections of 1994 did not serve as an impetus for smoothing the Hungarian – Slovak or minority-majority relations.

Prime Minister Mečiar, in his inaugural speech in 1994, declared that neighbourly relations should be established based on respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, independent statehood and the rejection of political coercion. The approach was widely shared by both coalition political parties as well as with the opposition (with the exception of the Hungarian minority parties). Neither the Christian Democrats, nor the Democratic Union[5] was willing to go further, beyond the already existing legal framework, as regards ethnic Hungarian minority rights. Due to cross-party consensus on halting the deepening of the Hungarian minority rights, the important basic agreement was signed in 1995 but subsequently adopted laws diminished its minority protection usage. The Slovak National Party (SNS), a coalition partner of premier Mečiar, conditioned its support for the Treaty in the parliamentary ratification process by adopting the law on state language (prohibiting the usage of minority languages in the public offices and posing fines on those who use the Slovak language improperly in public communication), amending Criminal Code (in the area of commitment of crimes against Republic[6]) and by adopting the reform of public administration and the law on municipal elections. The reform on public administration adopted in 1996 was clearly unfavourable for the Hungarian minority. "Worsening of the Hungarian minority situation was caused by reducing the importance of the districts with significant proportion of Hungarians. That was achieved by the demarcation of the districts' borders and by setting disproportionately large districts in ethnically mixed Southern area" (Krivý, V., 1997, p. 103). The amendment to the law on municipal elections introducing the quotas for maximal representation of minority[7] within a given district was adopted two years later but it was related to the SNS [you haven't introduced SNS earlier in the article. I know it is for Sociológia, but you should still put it in full the first time you use abbreviation] "anti-Hungarian package". The discriminatory provisions were criticized by various European organizations and they were declared by the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic to be unconstitutional, however, the Mečiar-led government did not accept and implement Court's decisions.

The two governments led by prime minister Mečiar in Slovakia during 1992-1994 and 1994-1998 thus instituted a series of restrictive measures against the Hungarian minority, including refusal to adopt a law on minority languages, the abolition of bilingual school report cards, restriction on the use of minority languages in official contacts, introduction of fines for using Slovak improperly in public communication and misusing the funds designed for minority culture. The ruling coalition in Slovakia *a priori* rejected all demands for, and complaints regarding violation of, minority rights as 'anti-Slovak'. The process of seeking membership in the EU did bring attention to the rights of minorities that were explicitly stated in the Copenhagen political criterion of 1993. The EU, individual member states, the Council of Europe, neighbouring Hungary, the United States, and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities all repeatedly expressed concerns over the political and ethnic tensions in Slovakia. Despite the views expressed by the international community, the Slovak government (1994-1998) kept its unfair political approach towards (political and ethnic) minorities. Due to international criticism, the government had taken some positive actions in

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[4] The government of Jozef Moravčík was in office from 16 March until 13 December 1994.

[5] In the next election period (1998-2002) the Democratic Union, the Christian Democrats and three other political parties formed a new political party called the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK). The SDK approach towards minority policy was completely different – very accommodating.

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[6] Nationalistic politicians of SNS argued for the amendment of the Criminal Code primarily by the necessity to prevent some activities of the ethnic Hungarians. Thus they evoked feelings of being threatened by irredentist incentives of Hungarians living in Slovakia.

[7] Amended law limited minority representatives to be elected only in such number as is the proportion of a given minority in a given district. Such provision would disadvantage Hungarian minority parties with much disciplined electorate that sometimes due to passive approach of other nationalities within the region oversized the representation of ethnic Hungarians at the local level.

relation to the Hungarian minority (like the bilateral agreement with Hungary) however they were more "cosmetic" than of any substance. The approach of the then opposition Slovak political parties towards minority rights had started to change only under pressure from the side of the European Union and other European organizations such as the Council of Europe (CoE) or the Organization for the Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Opposition parties and civic society organizations and movements (supported by the international organizations) united as they feared the international isolation of Slovakia; these groups made an enormous effort to mobilize support for the political change.

Thus the most important turning point in the approach of the Slovak Republic towards its minorities was the parliamentary elections of 1998. A new ruling coalition included SDK (Slovak Democratic Coalition), SDĽ (Party of Democratic Left), SMK (Party of the Hungarian Coalition) and SOP (Party of Civic Understanding). The EU conditionality clearly influenced the inclusion of the Hungarian minority party in the government. (Malová, D. – Rybář, M., 2003) For the first time since Slovakia's independence a power-sharing arrangement among ethnic Slovaks and Hungarians has emerged at the national level. In its program manifesto, the new government articulated a more friendly and accommodating approach to minorities' demands. The government managed to widen the institutional framework for solving the problems of minorities and corrected a number of deficiencies in the state's minority policy. Changes included the reintroduction of bilingual school report cards and removal of the restrictions of the 1995 Law on the State Language regarding the use of minority languages in official contacts with state bodies.

During the 1998-2002 the Hungarian minority was represented by 15 members out of 150 in the national parliament and by 3 members in the government including the important position of Deputy Prime Minister for Human Rights, Minorities and Regional Development. The position of deputy prime minister for minorities is a legacy from the communist past. By the establishment of such a position the communist government and its descendants wanted to demonstrate good ethnic relations in the country. Under the Mečiar governments (1992-1998) this tradition was neglected. Only after 1998 was the position recreated, partly due to the SMK inclusion in the government. Despite, the improved minority-majority relations at the national level, some sensitive political demands of the SMK such as regional administrative reform and establishment of a Hungarian language university in Slovakia remained unfulfilled (see also Antušová, A. 2006).

The parliamentary elections of 2002 represented a further milestone in consolidation of the majority – minority relations in Slovakia. The SMK became the second largest party in a government coalition led by Mikuláš Dzurinda. The most urgent need – the call for establishing the Hungarian language university –

was answered by founding the University of János Selye in Komárno. During the second Dzurinda's government, the ethnic relations in Slovakia improved. Yet, the emergence of the anti-Hungarian coalition in regional elections in the Nitra region (December 2005) and the comeback of the Slovak nationalists into the government after 2006 elections demonstrated that the ethnic tensions have not disappeared from Slovak politics.

At the beginning of the democratic transition the Hungarian minority had formed several minority parties along the religious and ideological cleavages that allowed minority members to affiliate with parties not exclusive along ethnic lines. However, due to the change of the election law in 1998 that de-facto cancelled electoral coalitions the three major Hungarian parties (Hungarian Christian Democrats, Coexistence and Hungarian Civic Party) were forced to form a single Party of Hungarian Coalition to prevent possible electoral losses (On elections results of Hungarian minority parties see Table 1). Whilst this may have served the electoral purposes in 1998 the SMK is now often accused by liberal and/or left-wing ethnic Hungarians of short-sighted policies and the maintenance of ethnic tension rather than the resolution of economic problems. Our Hungarian respondents living in Eastern Slovakia also expressed their dissatisfaction with the SMK leadership who tends to support more the development of south-west region (*Žitný ostrov*) than the rest of regions inhabited by ethnic Hungarians. The party structure in Slovakia has shown the power of collective identities in the continuous division of post-communist society by shaping citizens' loyalties along ethnic lines.

Table 1: **The election results of the Hungarian minority political parties in national elections**

Political party /coalition	Elections' year	Placement from the top	Relative number of votes
Coexistence - MKDH	1990	5.	8,66%
MKDH - Coexistence	1992	5.	7,42%
The Hungarian Coalition	1994	3.	10,18%
Party of the Hungarian Coalition	1998	4.	9,12%
Party of the Hungarian Coalition	2002	4.	11,16%

Source: Statistical office of the Slovak Republic

However, the role of political leaders in shaping organizations, raising public issues and forcing new political solidarities around ethnic identities should not be underestimated. Exclusivist nationalist or ethnic parties limit a perspective for consolidation of party systems in ethnically divided society's and may restrain

effective coalition formation and cooperation. Our research suggests that while at the local level and regional level the consociational power-sharing arrangements among majority and minority political parties was and is quite frequent institutional pattern of cooperation among Hungarian and Slovak parties at the national it took several years to accept SMK as a coalition partner. Both sides needed more time to understand each other better and to settle their relations. On the one hand at the beginning of transition some representatives of the Hungarian parties asked for territorial (later cultural) autonomy, and on the other hand such demand was not likely to be accepted by the Slovak party leaders. In this respect the EU has been mostly influential by empowering the political representation of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia and also by promoting more cooperative strategies of Slovak political parties toward the ethnic Hungarian political representation. At the end this external pressure combined with the strong domestic support for the EU membership resulted in the change of Mečiar's government in 1998 and in the emergence of power-sharing regime at the national level that lasted till 2006 elections. The new Smer-led coalition government has excluded this arrangement that has immediately increased ethnic tensions at the national level.

3.2. Identity issue: dominance of ethnicity and loyalty to the state?

The findings from our fieldwork research have proved an assumption that the scholarship studying the Hungarian minority in Slovakia takes for granted, i.e. that this minority strongly identifies with its ethnic identity. To be Hungarian represents the most important identity for our respondents of Hungarian ethnicity. Most of the minority respondents refer to themselves as "Hungarian living in the Slovak Republic". From this perspective, ethnicity is powerful aspect of one's background. This view reflects the most important characteristic of the Hungarian minority i.e. as an indigenous group that was part of the same ethnic group which historically dominated the current territory. The ethnic identity still remains the important and significant aspect of the ethnic Hungarians self-identification in the Košice region.

For many, Hungarian language and culture are seen as the main attributes of their ethnicity. The use of the mother tongue is an essential precondition for the preservation of minority culture and traditions. As such, the language is the single most important indicator of the minority identity declared by the ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia. Within this context, education in the minority language plays an important role in creating the identity, preserving a group's history, literature and other important attributes (R18). If the minority schooling system does not exist or it is in unsuitable conditions, the risk of minority assimilation increases. The interviewees affirm the importance of a minority schooling system

by ranking teachers alongside the SMK local politicians as among the most important community leaders of the Hungarian minority. The most quoted cultural organization acting in the region by the interviewees was CSEMADOK, the only ethnic Hungarians' cultural organization with a countrywide performance that used to be the only ethnic Hungarian organization permitted and tolerated under the communist regime in former Czechoslovakia. Since the collapse of communism many similar local and regional associations, foundations and groups have spontaneously emerged and organize cultural life in ethnically mixed villages and towns. This cultural mobilization has reinforced the ethnic identity among Hungarians (R5). Some ethnic Hungarians admitted the dominance of the Hungarian language that is widely used in the proportionally composed communities (R3). According to them it indicates the formal assimilation of ethnic Hungarians and not the assimilation of ethnic Slovaks, who sometimes are in a minority where they live. Such an explanation was provided by Slovak ethnic respondents, who acknowledged the dominant status of Hungarian language and culture in mixed communities (R8). Some respondents emphasized the weakness of the Slovak (national) state vis-à-vis the European integration and expressed the fear of being melt in Europe (R8, R20).

According to the majority of our respondents EU accession has not influenced the strong ethnic identity among the ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia. Some respondents emphasized that the European Union does not support programs promoting minority culture therefore it is not possible to expect that EU can have any influence in reinforcing minority identity (R10). Moreover, respondents mostly referred to European identity as the weak or the least important among identities. The sense of being European is rather weak among ethnic Hungarians as well as Slovaks in the region. Despite the fact that most of the respondents, when asked directly, answered that they felt like Europeans, when asked to rank their identities, the European affiliation dropped down to one of the last. Interesting responses came from those who admitted that they had some problems with their affiliation to a European identity. "I will have to get familiar with this idea. People from the Czech lands, Hungary, Slovakia never stopped to feel European. It was them (Western Europeans) who sold us in Yalta. And now should we create the same nation with those who sold us?" (R16) Some responses indicated that people still did not feel direct benefits be "I would feel like European if they would take me as a [full-right] European." (R2) Responses of ethnic Hungarians suggest that there is a shared feeling of historical injury of Western Europe to Central and Eastern European states and the damage has even deepened by the contemporary preliminary periods in the functioning of the EU single market. It appears that respondents affiliate 'Europe' with four main

freedoms of which the freedom of movement is quoted most frequently. They value that "borders do not exist anymore and I can travel" (R26), the most.

However, some of our respondents suggested that the European Union's programs such PHARE, CBC and the INTERREG and the simultaneous accession of Slovakia and Hungary countries to the European Union directly contributed to the improvement of the minority situation at the regional level in Slovakia. When discussing the impacts of the pre-accession and structural funds on the Košice region, many respondents pointed to the cross-border cooperation programs as the ones from which they have profited most of all until now. "Cross-border cooperation program has to have a positive impact there but the financial sources [CBC sources] are very low" (R20). The European Union has contributed to the improvement of relations between the Hungarian minority and Slovaks "mainly through the cross-border cooperation" (R3, R20). These projects were also appreciated more by the interviewees because well prepared partners from Hungary made it much easier for them to follow complicated project management. However, cross-border projects do not significantly contribute to interethnic communication because they are mostly carried out by Hungarians on one side and the ethnic Hungarians on the other side, separately.

EU funds thus have had a paradoxical effect in the Košice region, as they enhanced cross border co-operation,, however only inside the same ethnic group. European integration has promoted the sense of ethnic identification in the case of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia as they see it as a new opportunity structure to improve the relations with their kin-state. The examination of our respondents' perceptions suggests that the accession process to the EU had produced only indirect and maybe an unintended impact on the ethnic identity and majority-minority relations. Instead of promoting cooperation among ethnic Slovaks and ethnic Hungarians within Slovakia in Košice region, the process of European integration reinforced communication and cohabitation between ethnic Hungarians in Hungary and Slovakia given the specific structural and cultural characteristics of this region.

The strength of ethnic identity widely shared by Hungarians can be better understood by examining the most salient moments of historical development of the Slovak-Hungarian relations and actual political and cultural context. First, Slovakia is a very new state, for over one thousand years it had been part of the Hungarian kingdom and used to be called *Felvidék* (Upper Country) and had undergone intensive *magyarization*[8]. This structural and historical context has shaped majority-minority relations of the new Slovak statehood. The area

inhabited by the Hungarian minority forms about a 50 km broad strip along the state border with Hungary. People living in this territory have been citizens of several different states (with different political regimes) without moving, namely, Austro-Hungarian monarchy, first Czechoslovak republic, Hungary or Slovak State (during the World War II), the post war Czechoslovakia and Slovak Republic. Different political leaders during 20th century used this troubled regional history to fuel nationalistic passions just to gain power. Slovakia was part of Czechoslovakia for most of 20th century, and only for a short period enjoyed the status of a federal unit. As such this territory has never been ethnically homogenous, and its borders were disputed by neighbouring countries.

The Hungarian minority perceived the formation of the Czechoslovakia in 1918 as an unjust decision imposed on them by foreign superpowers. The Košice region was seriously affected by this issue, as over a 20 year period, the area was twice occupied by the Hungarian army[9] and the border was shifted 4 times. The Treaty of Trianon contained a series of provisions to guarantee the rights of the minority populations in Hungary as well as in neighbouring countries. Inter-war Czechoslovakia respected the political and cultural rights of all ethnic minorities even if they did not have equal status with the state-building nationalities (Bibó, I., 1996). The Hungarian minority was represented by several political parties, and the Hungarian language was used as an official language in areas where the Hungarian minority constituted over 20 per cent of the inhabitants. At that time political leaders of ethnic Hungarians on both sides of the new border did not accept the Trianon Treaty.

The continuity and salience of the ethnic identity among Hungarians living in Slovakia can be also explained by patterns of cultural mobilization. Despite unfavourable conditions and constant attempts of the communist regime to assimilate ethnic minorities in former Czechoslovakia, the Communist Party program of "minority protection" provided at least some support for minorities to preserve and develop their culture and education in the minority language. (Marušiak, J., 2002) However, the incentives for this support were not part and parcel of an elaborated minority policy, but they resulted from external pressures of the Hungarian kin-state. The communist regime supported two Hungarian speaking theatres (*Thalia* in Košice and *Hungarian Country Theatre* in Komárno). As in case of any cultural institution during communist times the state, controlled the personnel policy and interfered in the program structure. During the communist period the only Hungarian-language daily newspaper was *Új Szó,* however it was widely read. Moreover, even during the communist regime the

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[8] The 'Magyarization' is a term for forced assimilation, the forced efforts to build a Hungarian nation out of the non-Hungarian inhabitants of the Hungarian Kingdom. It was connected with the denial of civil, political and cultural rights of the non-Hungarian residents (60-65% of the Hungarian Kingdom's population, for more details see Kováč, D., 1998).

[9] The Hungarian army occupied the southern area of the Košice region in 1919. On the eve of World War II (1939) the Hungarian army attacked the eastern part of Slovakia (including Košice region) and annexed 386 squared kilometres of Slovak territory.

broadcasting of Hungarian state TV and radio-broadcasting could be watched and listened to throughout almost all the territory inhabited by the ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia. Due to the natural preference for their mother tongue and also more 'liberal' spirit of the Hungarian regime, ethnic Hungarians in Czechoslovakia preferred Hungarian state media programs.

The collapse of the communist regime paved the way for rather extensive cultural mobilization. Since 1989, the opportunity structure for establishing a cultural organization has increased with the liberalization of political conditions. Many local and regional cultural groups, foundations and associations have emerged. The main constraint of developing cultural organizations and institutions in the whole Slovakia became economic conditions. The state in Slovakia provides financial support for the minority culture through grant schemes offered by the Ministry of Culture administered by the Department for ethnic minority culture. The annual amount devoted to minority culture support is about € 2,1 million[10]. In addition to this, the Hungarian Ministry of Culture grants other financial resources to support the Hungarian communities living in neighbouring countries. In 2005, the *Motherland Fund*[11] was established as a separate financial fund providing support for the development of entrepreneurship, as well as for regional and cross-border cooperation, and cultural and educational activities with an annual budget of € 4,5 million.

Minority education in Slovakia follows the general framework set up by the Slovak constitution and international documents, namely by *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* of the Council of Europe. The Convention grants the members of minorities (besides others) the right to use their mother tongue, its teaching, support of educational institutions and training of the teachers and the right to continue with education. The minority right of education in their mother tongue is also embodied in the Slovak Constitution (Chapter 2, Part 4, article 34). Also, public acceptance of the minority language is based legally on the 1999 *Law on Use of the Languages of Ethnic Minorities*. The act grants the right to use the minority language in public communications in the towns/villages where the proportion of minority inhabitants reaches a level of 20% of the local population. Minority education and minority culture supported by the state has a long tradition in Slovakia. At present, minority education in the Hungarian language includes a system of about 262 schools at the primary level, 34 schools at the secondary level and one university. (Statistical Yearbook…, 2005) Minority schools are integral parts of the school system in Slovakia and they follow the same curriculum and financial rules. However, in some schools

additional history and literature textbooks, printed and provided by civil society organization in Hungary are widely used.

As a relatively large, cohesive and politically engaged group, the Hungarian minority in Slovakia is a strong base for media, targeting their needs and interests. However broadcast media in the Hungarian language is quite limited; only programming from Slovak public television has any minority-language component (89 hours per year)[12], and this programming is required by law[13]. The only radio broadcast in Hungarian is *Radio Patria* (2982 hours per year)[14], a service of the Slovak public radio, which reaches the whole Hungarian-speaking population of Slovakia. Nevertheless, *Radio Patria* reaches about 25% of the ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia[15]. This is far too small an audience to generate any interest from commercial media in producing a Hungarian-language broadcast, and without state support this option would almost certainly cease to exist. The gap in audio-visual media is generally filled with broadcasts from Hungary, as most ethnic Hungarians living in southern Slovakia receive some of the Hungarian free-to-air television stations.

At present the Hungarian minority has most of its options in the print media. Since the fall of communism supply has substantially increased up to 31 newspaper titles and periodicals. The minority press as well as magazines for targeted groups such as kindergarten, first-grade students, and for teenagers receive support from governmental institutions (both Slovak and Hungarian) and private foundations.

Table 2: **Socio-economic index of the Košice region (2004)**

Indicator	Total number	Percentage
GNP	141,6 bil. SKK	12,9% (of total number in the Slovak Republic)
GNP per capita	184,3 bil. SKK	41,3% (of the EU-15 average)
Tax collection per year	14,7 bil. SKK	12,8% (of total number in the Slovak Republic)
Profit oriented companies	8 868	12% (of total number in the Slovak Republic)
Share of private entrepreneurs[16]	35 709	10,6% (of total number in the Slovak Republic)
Total foreign investments in region	32 097 mil. SKK	10,6% (of total number in the Slovak Republic)

Source: Ministry of Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic, conversion made by author.

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[10] Source: *Information on financing the minority cultures*…available at: http://www-8.mensiny.vlada.gov.sk/index.php?ID=469

[11] For more details see http://www.mfa.gov.hu/kum/en/bal/foreign_policy/nation_policy_affairs/

[12] Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Slovak Republic 2005.

[13] Law no. 254/1991 Coll. on Slovak television and law no. 255/1991 Coll. on Slovak radio.

[14] Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Slovak Republic 2005.

[15] http://www.ejc.nl/jr/emland/slovakia.html

[16] Košice region has the lowest share of private entrepreneurs per 1000 inhabitants from all 8 self-governing regions.

3.3. The impact of EU funds on the ethnic relations in the Košice region

One of the goals of our research project was to examine a possible impact of the EU on the socio-economic development in Košice region, as this region is one of the most backward in Slovakia (See Table 2). We assumed that in case of the visible improvement of socio-economic conditions two possible changes can be expected. First, it may increase the awareness of the EU as such and enhance the promotion of European identity. Second, it could induce more cooperation among minority and majority and thus improve also ethnic relations. However, these hypotheses were not verified.

Our interviews did not confirm that the EU pre-accession funds had contributed to the regional socio-economic growth in the studied region. In discussing the impact of these funds, many respondents were rather sceptical. According to their assessments, the pre-accession funds did not have any significant impact on the economic development region. In other words, the pre-accession funds only served as a 'demo' for state administration to prepare itself for structural funds. "We are speaking about pre-accession funds but here when you look around – square, streets, pieces of art – all of them were supported by the Hungarian [government] funds. There is a grant scheme of the Ministry of Culture [of the Hungarian Republic] and of the Office for Foreign Hungarians and also there is a cultural foundation and foundation Illys mainly devoted to infrastructure support." (R23) The sense of disillusion from the adaptation of the EU cohesion policy is present among the respondents not only because of the insufficient financial resources that it brought to the region, but also because of ascertained shortcomings of the 2004-2006 programming period, such as the bureaucratic regime, centralized allocation of money, delayed evaluation procedures and problems with co-financing. Development officials expressed that the possibility to decide on the EU money allocation at the regional level would better address the regional development necessities. "We are one hundred percent sure that if we [the self-government office] got the money, in cooperation with national level, we would be able to achieve the positive changes." (R19) However, most respondents' expectations of regional economic growth are connected with foreign investors, not with EU funds. "Everybody is expecting a foreign investor." (R26) While depicting the most urgent problems in regional socio-economic development, there is a tendency to explain the high rate of unemployment (See Table 3) by the lack of foreign investments in the region. The respondents explain the low investment attractiveness of the region by insufficient infrastructure. Many of them point out the fact that the location disadvantages of the Košice region in transport infrastructure policy. "Such [socio-economic] conditions of the border regions are the worst in every state." (R20) "The disadvantage is twofold –

we [the Košice region] are not only the border region of Slovakia but also of the European Union. We are absolute periphery." (R24)

Table 3: **Employees and registered unemployment rate as of 31st December 2004** (in persons)

Region, area, SR	Employees in total	Disposable job applicants	Registered unemployment rate
SR in total	**1 854 330**	**342 294**	**13,1 %**
Bratislava region	347 022	10 961	3,4 %
Trnava region	186 212	24 484	8,8 %
Trenčín region	213 998	24 197	8,1 %
Nitra region	215 312	49 679	14,8 %
Western Slovakia	**615 522**	**98 360**	**10,8 %**
Žilina region	231 372	35 918	11,1 %
Banská Bystrica region	206 628	62 698	19,5 %
Central Slovakia	**438 000**	**98 616**	**15,3 %**
Prešov region	218 624	65 061	17,5 %
Košice region	235 162	69 296	18,9 %
Eastern Slovakia	**453 786**	**134 357**	**18,2 %**

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Slovak Republic 2005

Comparing the socio-economic situation of the minority and the majority inhabiting the Košice region, no respondent referred to the Hungarian minority as worse off in the area. Interviewees see the conditions as similar – equally bad for both groups. The structural deficiencies such as a lack of job opportunities and the high rate of unemployment hit both communities in the same way. Some of the interviewees even assess the opportunities for ethnic Hungarians as better compared to Slovaks. "I would rather say that the Hungarian minority was more active in looking for a job and it was looking even behind the borders." (R26) "The new opportunities favour the Hungarian minority to gain the job in Hungary by facilitating a border regime." (R24)

The findings did not prove our assumption on an emerging redefinition of majority-minority interests around economic development goals. Surprisingly, there is increasing intra-community solidarity along centre-periphery lines. The EU fund allocations strengthen the sense of being unfairly treated by Bratislava (On regional disparities see table 4). "As there was Prague-centrism in the previous time, now there is Bratislava-centrism." (R26). In similar way our respondents have perceived SMK's politics and policies. Although, the interviewees expressed their satisfaction with the political representation of their interests at the national level, as the interview progressed, they acknowledged

some reservations. Despite the fact, that the ethnic Hungarians inhabit the southern regions of Slovakia with the socio-economic conditions that are reflected in the political agenda of the SMK, according to interviewees, the SMK politics has a more substantial impact on the western ethnic Hungarians' regions than on the eastern part of Slovakia. According to them, the reason is simple – all important political leaders in SMK are originally from the Bratislava, Nitra or Trnava regions that are situated in the western part of the country. "…after all, the Dunajská Streda district or the Komárno region (both have the biggest share of ethnic Hungarians and are situated in the western part of Slovakia) need several fold less support than our distant area. I stand for my opinion that within the SMK there are corruption groups that push their interests but their interest is surely not this territory [the Košice region]." (R21)

Table 4: **Gross domestic product in Mill. SKK, at current prices**

Region, area, SR	1998	2000	2001	2002	2003
SR in total	**781 437**	**934 079**	**1 009 839**	**1 098 658**	**1 202 687**
Bratislava region	195 467	234 663	255 942	285 829	307 390
Trnava region	83 831	101 164	103 744	110 882	128 065
Trenčín region	81 498	97 495	105 100	111 909	121 796
Nitra region	87 869	108 766	112 522	120 511	136 988
Western Slovakia	**253 198**	**307 425**	**321 366**	**343 302**	**386 849**
Žilina region	82 223	97 381	105 773	113 391	123 433
Banská Bystrica region	80 424	94 860	104 455	115 579	125 834
Central Slovakia	**162 467**	**192 241**	**210 228**	**228 970**	**249 267**
Prešov region	70 071	81 981	89 449	98 966	107 077
Košice region	100 054	117 769	132 854	141 591	152 104
Eastern Slovakia	170 125	199 750	222 303	240 557	259 181

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Slovak Republic 2005

Notice: Highlighted regions are regions inhabited also by the Hungarian minority (important notice: ethnic minority is at the same time regional minority. Towns/villages were ethnic Hungarians have majority belongs among the poorest one within the regions.)

At the same time, the interviewees point out that EU structural policy is not the answer to the perceived weakness of the Košice region. In their opinion, the regional disparities of the country should be answered by a national regional policy. Instead, the EU regional policy simply replaces the regional policy of the Slovak Republic. "State policy is not consistent in pursuing the [regional] equalization." (R23) "There is no [EU] program supporting border districts...

maybe there should exist some fund…[allocating resources from] Slovak budget because really that area is the worst, there should be some positive discrimination." (R20)

Regardless of nationality, the respondents did not perceive that some particular group would be given preferential treatment in EU resource allocation despite the fact that all key political posts in regional development were occupied by ethnic Hungarian politicians. During two Dzurinda's governments (1998-2006) some opposition leaders (from the Slovak National Party, HZDS and also from Smer) tried to fuel the debates on preferential treatment of southern (ethnically Hungarian) districts in regard to EU funds allocation, because all three ministers (of regional development, agriculture and environment) were nominees of the SMK. However, people from the southern region, from Košice, do not perceive their chances in gaining the EU projects better because of ethnicity or because of they inhabit ethnically mixed area. According to them, preferential treatment is based not on ethnicity but on proximity to the capital city. "It is painful when you figure out how many of these [EU] projects are implemented in what parts of Slovakia." (R23) "There is still a strong tendency to prefer Bratislava – not from the side of politicians but rather officials." (R19)

The overall optimistic expectations of the impact of European integration on ethnic relations are shared amongst ethnic Hungarians. "The more people will be forced to unite with people from foreign countries, the faster they come to understand each other and accept each other." (R23) "They will not differentiate anymore what nationality I am." (R26) Slovaks are more cautious towards the possible interfering circumstances when assessing the EU's influence on further development of minority-majority relations. They pointed out that the relationship between Slovaks and the Hungarian minority will depend not only on the internal factors but also on "the behaviour of Hungary. I can see it as trouble-free under the condition that Hungary will not interfere in some unpleasant way. In the case that its attitudes radicalised, it would bring tensions between the Hungarian minority and the majority nation, not only in Slovakia but also in neighbouring countries." (R25)

Regional disparities and weak regional development and lack of respective policies in Slovakia results from the inherited unbalanced industrial structure, the collapse of heavy industry at the beginning of 1990s and the ethnic issue politicised by the Slovak elite promoted fear of territorial integrity. Since Slovakia's independence these complicated conditions have halted, delayed and politicised the regional reform and decentralization. Such complex and intricate domestic situation cannot be easily 'remedied' by EU structural funds, even it they are sometimes perceived as a panacea to socio-economic and regional development. Our respondents were aware of these domestic constraints in the

Košice region and did not have high expectations from the EU. They perceived regional territorial reforms in Slovakia mainly as a result of a division of political actors over the creation of sub-national units along ethnic lines.

The demands of regional self-government have been more or less constantly present in Hungarian minority politics since 1990. Due to deep regional differences, different interests of historical regions, self-governing organizations and ethnic interests the debate over the public administration and territorial reforms became a part of political struggle its beginning. The consequence was a three-year delay in launching the administrative reform originally should be launched in 1993. (Buček, J., 2002, p. 146) While in the first phase of regionalisation, the Slovak Republic had chosen the way of decentralization (the local self-governments were created), during 1994-1998 the process was characterized by swelling centralization. The Mečiar government had been motivated primarily by political and power-seeking goals, and thus districts had been established most densely in regions where the HZDS enjoyed the biggest voter support (Krivý, V., 1996, p. 267). It clearly neglected demands of the Hungarian minority.

The regionalisation debate opened up again after 1998. Once again, the Hungarian minority was unsuccessful. To pre-empt the possibility of creating an ethnic Hungarian-governed area, the state administration reform (1996) but also a law on self-governing regions (2001) was designed with caution in regard to southern Slovakia. First Dzurinda's government (1998-2002) proposed the division of countries public administration reform into 12 self-governing regions and the abolition of the local-state administration. Two coalition parties – Party of Democratic Left (SDĽ) and Party of Civic Understanding (SOP) – took the opposition's side (HZDS, SNS) and criticized the proposed reform. They were in favour of a more centralized model of public administration. The reform was also impeded by the claim of another coalition partner – SMK. The SMK demanded the creation of a new region, the so-called *Komárno župa* in an area populated mostly by the Hungarian minority. The opponents of this request argued that ethnicity seemed to be the only criteria for the creation of such region, in contradiction with the other principles of the reform. In 2001, the Parliament approved a new public administration structure that was rather different from the government's proposal. It established eight self-governing regions and preserved the old system of state administration.

Districts as well as self-governing regions were drawn in a manner that incorporated the largely ethnic Hungarian areas to the Slovak-populated districts and regions and pre-empted the election of an ethnic Hungarian chairman of the self-governing region. Despite the failure of the SMK to introduce the *Komárno župa*, the adopted 2001 reform of territorial administration enhanced the minority opportunities for political participation as it created sub-national institutions with directly elected representatives. During the 1990s, a combination of domestic and European factors led to a wave of reforms which enhanced sub-national structures. The growing disparities did not prompt an acceleration of efficient regional policy formulation; rather, it was the effort to join the EU and gain access to EU pre-accession funds. (Buček, J., 2002) That is not to say that the EU would be the only driving force behind the reforms. The transformation process and the necessity to decrease public expenditures was the key driver of regionalisation in Slovakia, however European integration played an important accelerating role in the process.

On the national level, EU political conditionality (i.e. the preconditions for EU membership) worked together with the pressure of other international actors to help launch change in society perception of minority rights and political behaviour towards minority representatives. As a consequence, the incorporation of political representatives of the Hungarian minority into the government was realized and important changes in state minority policy were introduced.

The current regional and administrative arrangement represents the compromise between two ethnic political representations that is may not be the best solution, but it is the institutional framework under which the minority-majority relations can be improved if the politicians at the national level would accept the power sharing arrangement that we identified at the local and regional level and stop boosting nationalist emotions among population.

4. Conclusion

The EU definitely changed the opportunity structures for the Hungarian minority, as the perspective of EU membership has reversed reservations of the (part) Slovak political elite that previously hesitated to cooperate with the Hungarian minority parties/party. The exact relationship between domestic political incentives and the EU conditionality in the area of minority protection is difficult to specify due to the complexity of conditions and recommendations of institutions like the EU, the OSCE and the Council of Europe, making it difficult to measure their respective effects. Also, it is evident that domestic political will is required to generate sustainable policy outcomes inspired by external conditionality. (Sassed, G., 2005) Despite that, we regard the political commitment of both Dzurinda's governments towards European integration as a driving force behind the consolidation of ethnic relations in Slovakia, the development of a minority protection regime and the promotion of power sharing arrangement at the national level of politics. Our research has revealed that the power-sharing arrangement represents quite a strong tradition at the local and

regional level, where given immediate and everyday contacts the trust among politicians is apparently higher than among the national political elite. However, this arrangement had lasted only for eight years and disappeared after the accession to the EU. Union membership serves to stop the 'active leverage' that in the past motivated domestic actors to constrain their behaviour by norms imported from outside, and maybe therefore the new government 'resuscitated' conflict driven politics. The future of power-sharing arrangement at the national level in Slovakia now depends more on domestic factors than before. The ethnically segmented society, the frozen division of party system along ethnic lines, and revival of conflicts between Hungarian and Slovak governments are likely to function as constraints, whereas the EU structural funds could be used as institutional framework to further cooperation among ethnic groups at the regional and local level. However, the complex history of Slovak-Hungarian coexistence and also our interviews have re-confirmed that the likelihood of upgrading ethnic relations from down to up is rather weak. On the contrary, as we have noticed earlier the conflict driven national politics tend to constraint local actors and institutions.

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3. R3 interviewee, Hungarian nationality, male, Moldava nad Bodvou, 28.7.2005
4. R4 interviewee, Hungarian nationality, male, Veľké Kapušany, 28.7.2005
5. R5 interviewee, Hungarian nationality, male, Rožňava, 18.11.2005
6. R6 interviewee, Hungarian nationality, male, Turňa nad Bodvou, 26.7.2005
7. R7 interviewee, Hungarian nationality, male, Rožňava, 14.12.2005
8. R8 interviewee, Slovak nationality, male, Košice, 29.11.2005
9. R9 interviewee, Slovak nationality, male, Veľké Kapušany, 25.7.2005
10. R10 interviewee, Hungarian nationality, male, Bratislava, 6.7.2005
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17. R17 interviewee, Hungarian nationality, male, Kráľovský Chlmec, 19.4.2005
18. R18 interviewee, Hungarian nationality, female, Veľké Kapušany, 25.7.2005
19. R19 interviewee, Slovak nationality, male, 22.4.2005
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25. R25 interviewee, Slovak nationality, male, Bratislava, 11.1.2006
26. R26 interviewee, Hungarian nationality, male, Rožňava, 23.12.2005
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29. R29 interviewee, Hungarian nationality, male, Streda nad Bodrogom, 16.1.2006
30. R30 interviewee, Hungarian nationality, male, Veľké Trakany, 16.1.2006
31. R31 interviewee, Hungarian nationality, male, Bratislava, 14.3.2006