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CONNECTION BETWEEN TOURISM AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON THE HUNGARIAN-CROATIAN BORDER

Zoltán BUJDOSÓ

College professor, Department of Tourism and Regional Development, Károly Róbert College, Gyöngyös,
Hungary, E-mail: zbujdoso@karolyrobert.hu

Lóránt DÁVID

College professor, Department of Tourism and Regional Development, Károly Róbert College, Gyöngyös,
Hungary, E-mail: davidlo@karolyrobert.hu

Bulcsú REMENYIK

Associate professor, Department of Tourism and Regional Development, Károly Róbert College,
Gyöngyös, Hungary, E-mail: bremenyik@karolyrobert.hu

Géza TÓTH

Associate professor, Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Budapest, Hungary, E-mail:
Geza.Toth@office.ksh.hu

Abstract: Following the changes of regimes in Central Europe, research into border regions has been increasingly adverted. On the estimation and development of borders and border regions were impacted to the highest degree. In our research, we intended to explore, by applying statistical indicators, to what extent the situation of border micro-regions is different from that of other micro-regions and the national average. As a next objective, our research focused on how, from the point of view of tourism, the micro-regions studied can be distinguished beyond the significant spatial differences represented above as well as on how to define the most relevant groups and the differences among them. In this paper, on the one hand, by applying the approach by this latter author and, on the other hand, similarly by applying the method of disaggregation, the authors intended to study tourism competitiveness and its components in the tourism regions of Hungary. According to the results of our surveys, countries willing to gain access were not blocked from each other by Schengen borders as they received facilitations in cross-border tourism. In the field of cross-border cooperation, within the tourism industry, a west-to-east and north-to-south gradient can be detected that, by the present logic, can be explained by the changes of economic circumstances and the succession of European Union accession.

Keywords: cross-borderness, Hungarian-Croatian border, role of tourism, regional development, cluster-analysis

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BORDERS AND CROSS-BORDERNESS IN THE INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE

Following the changes of regimes in Central Europe, research into border regions has been increasingly adverted. However, various suggestions of researchers came into light on the definition and role of borders. Below, an overview of the most relevant theories and functions

of borders as well as of border studies will be given.

According to the theory by Haggett (1979), the features of border regions are connected to the development of borders. According to the author, three types of borders are distinguished namely subsequent boundaries, antecedent boundaries and superimposed boundaries. In case the border is demarcated after a given ethnic group is settled down and these coincide, subsequent boundaries are mentioned. When the border was established after the settlement and the ethnic group are adjusted to this line, the border is an antecedent boundary. When the border line does not fit into the ethnic group's line of settlement, such are superimposed boundaries.

Ratti's theory is based on the functions and the impact of borders (Ratti, 1993). According to the author, closed, filtering and open borders are distinguished. A closed border will fundamentally determine the given area's regional characteristics as a border with rather limiting features will intensify peripheral processes (Houtum Van, 2000). As a consequence of long-term closedness, cross-border regions become, from the aspects of both geography and socio-economics, peripheral areas (Ratti, 1993). Such regions have basic features as transmigration, ageing and lower living conditions. Filtering borders have a role of filtering disadvantageous elements and by this protecting the region's own, internal economy and living standards (Hardi and Rechnitzer, 2003). Those residing along such borders are attracted by certain particulars of the neighbouring country (lower prices, higher living standards etc.), thus illegal trade, smuggling and also shopping tourism can be frequent along the border (Michalkó, 2004; Süli-Zakar et al., 1999). An unlimited flow of population, labour force, capital and services, the fall down of administrative limitations are achieved at open borders, thus cross-border regions at both sides will satisfactorily develop making up an integrated economic area.

According to Nemes Nagy (1998), the meaning of borders in everyday life is related to a content of dividing line, end or the rim of something and by this includes peripheral features. Thus basically 4 important functions of borders are emphasized: division, connection, conflict and filtering that can be present in a concentrated, sporadic, linear and zonal form.

The model by Martinez is based on the interrelationships developed between the two sides; his studies were primarily carried out at the U.S.-Mexican border (Martinez, 1994). According to this theory, alienated, co-existent, independent and integrated border regions exist. Their socio-economic features vary according to the intensity of such relations.

Frontier and boundary are distinguished by Mező. Frontier is an imaginary border zone where a given civilisation meets the area not yet influenced whereas a boundary (political border) will also include the area demarcated (Mező, 2000).

By Hansen and Ratti (1993), border regions are assessed as areas for which socio-economic life is significantly influenced by being situated in the proximity of an international border. Based on this, border regions found along a national border and in a peripheral situation characterized by centripetal forces towards the inner regions of the country as well as cross-border regions where the peripheral situation becomes central and connective and can be described by centrifugal forces are distinguished.

Border regions and cross-border cooperations in Europe are classified into three types (Czimre, 2003; Sersli and Kizsel, 2000). The first type has been developed in a Western European environment and is exclusively a feature of this region with several common features as a relative backwardness (underdevelopment) to its environment, high unemployment within the country as well as underdeveloped infrastructure. Such are the French-Italian or the Spanish-Portugal borders. The second type is a somewhat modified version of the above with the difference being that problems originate, in general, in the cross-border planning (environmental, infrastructural or border stations) deficiencies of the neighbouring regions (Gibb and Michalek, 1993). The third type includes countries either not

only bordering EU countries or even themselves are not as such. This type can be further divided into three subtypes. The first includes the border regions of nations classified as among the developed regions of the continent as e.g. Austria, Switzerland, Norway or Finland. The second subgroup, the so-called Central European type includes the border regions of the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary, whereas the third one is the so-called Eastern European type with the Baltic States, the European member states of the former Soviet Union and the countries of the Balkan Peninsula). These areas can be described by peripheral features, they are basically the peripheries of the periphery (migration, ageing, high unemployment) (Bujdosó, 2009).

A model of cross-border relations and border regions of the East Central European post-socialist countries was created by Tóth (1996). By his model, a perfectly closed and controlled border line is assumed that was dependent on the rather centralised power and decisions of the countries involved (Kovács, 1990).

THE HUNGARIAN-CROATIAN BORDER REGION

The Hungarian-Croatian border region, during the period between the Treaty of Trianon and the late 1980s, was almost absolutely confined. Former freight and passenger transport typical at the River Dráva' section under Barcs has decayed. Due to the strict border control, it was basically only anglers and some fanatics reaching the river with having permission to approach the border with also observing seasonal, diurnal and spatial restrictions; tourists were literally unknown in this region. The former Yugoslavia, due to its western-oriented policy, became unrepresentable in the 'Communist Block' despite which several attempts were made for economic cooperation; among them, the joint Barcs-Djurdjevac hydro-power plant investment and the cooperation between the State Farm of Bóly and the Sugarworks of Beli Manastir (Pélmonostor) are usually mentioned (Bognar, 2008).

The era following the changes of regime saw the outbreak of the Balkan War transforming the border regions into war zones (a barrage still not eliminated today was built by the Serbs along the border), economic cooperations stood off as well as the area was far avoided by tourists. In 1994, Croatia signed a Water Management Agreement with Hungary further insisting on its proposals to build a hydro-power plant. As a reaction, the Danube-Dráva National Park was established by the Hungarian side in 1996, thus areas along the River Dráva became protected nature zones. In the late 1990s, the Croatians announced to launch a hydro power plant construction along the (Croatian section of the) border river, at Novo-Virje.

Construction works (mainly due to financial reasons) stopped in 2002 and were postponed as a consequence of Croatia's and Hungary's coming European Union accession. Nevertheless, the forecasted access of Croatia was withdrawn (due to failing to meet the EU requirements) whereas a proposal to establish a joint 'Green Corridor' came to the fore (Mikuska, 1999; Srsan, 2000).

Along the lower section of the River Dráva, the Danube-Dráva Eco-Landscape was established as a result of a joint Croatian-Hungarian-Serbian initiative in 2007. Ecotourism developments on the Hungarian side decisively financed by the European Union and supported by the counties of South Transdanubia and the Danube-Dráva National Park were completed in 2008 (Iványi and Lehmann, 2002). The possibility to acquire European Union financing became available for Croatia in 2009. Thus, in 2010 a joint application was submitted with Hungary in order to establish the Mura-Dráva Trans-Boundary Biosphere Reserve.

From the 2000s, the establishment of Croatian-Hungarian cooperations was greatly advanced by the origination of close friendships between the Hungarian counties and

Croatian counties (Županije) that had actually existed since the times of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Several town twinnings between the towns of the counties in the South Transdanubia Region and Croatian towns on the other side of the border were realised (between Pécs and Osijek, Barcs and Virovitica etc.) that jointly became members of various regional organisations (Alps-Adriatic Working Community, Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregion etc.). Croatia is expected to become a member of the European Union next year to be followed by the fall of borders between the two countries leaving the River Dráva actually connecting not dividing them.

THE ROLE OF TOURISM IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF BORDER REGIONS

General socio-economic features of border micro-regions

The classification according to which 174 micro-regions are found in Hungary has been in force since September 2008. Of these 174 micro-regions, 49 are located along the state border (Figure 1).



Figure 1 The system of micro-regions in Hungary

Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office,

In the first part of our research, we intended to explore, by applying statistical indicators, to what extent the situation of border micro-regions is different from other micro-regions and the national average.

Border micro-regions cover 29% of Hungary's area while 21.9% of its population as of 1 January 2009. Based on the most important statistical indicators, they unequivocally can be classified as backward micro-regions since low population density, significant transmigration, high unemployment rate, low disposition to entrepreneurship, high inhabitant density and unfavourable income status are among their features (Table 1). The micro-regions along the Hungarian-Croatian border are in an even more disadvantaged

situation. The extent to which this group of micro-regions can be considered as uniform and the regional differences that can be observed are worth elaborating.

Table 1 Main statistical indices

Index	Border micro-regions	Other micro-regions	Hungary
Population, 2008 (2000=100)	96.8	98.8	98.3
Population density	81.4	118.6	107.8
Migration balance per thousand inhabitants, 2000-2008	-1.5	0.4	0.0
Unemployment rate, 2008	9.9	6.3	7.1
Number of operating enterprises per thousand inhabitants, 2007	55.7	72.0	68.4
Number of inhabitants per hundred flats, 2008	241.5	231.1	233.3
Per capita income in the percentage of the national average, 2008	85.6	104.1	100.0

Data source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office,

Spatial differences within the study periods

The question has arisen whether these micro-regions should be studied jointly or a classification in accordance with the national borders is entirely contingent but differences among border micro-regions are so significant that such classification has no *raison d'être*. Consequently, as a next step, we focused on the rate of spatial differences between border micro-regions and the other micro-regions by using data for the period between 2001 and 2008.

In this present research, the Hoover index which is frequently applied in Hungarian studies was used. It, on a scale from 0 to 100%, indicates the percentage of a given parameter (in this case, the income making the basis for personal income tax) that should be redeployed among the given micro-regions to have its distribution exactly in accordance to the distribution of the other parameter examined (i.e. population) among the micro-regions. Its formula is:

$$h = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n |x_i - f_i|}{2}$$

where x_i and f_i are partition ratios (in this case the share of the population and incomes of micro-region 'i' from the total population and total incomes of the given section), to which the following two equations can be applied: $\sum x_i = 100\%$ and $\sum f_i = 100\%$.

As seen above, 49 of the country's micro-regions are classified as border micro-regions. In order to obtain comparability for differences between them and the remaining micro-regions, the calculated Hoover indices were divided by the number of micro-regions for each group and multiplied by one hundred. Therefore, in our study, average spatial differences per micro-region were introduced.

As indicated by the data in Table 2, spatial differences are significantly higher among border micro-regions compared to other micro-regions or to the national average. Although border micro-regions, similar to the national tendency, witnessed a considerable decrease of

spatial differences between 2001 and 2008, they have remained to be rather outstanding. Unfortunately, spatial differences among the micro-regions along the border of Croatia are fairly significant with also rather fluctuating in the study period, thus making the decreasing tendency not yet definite.

Table 2 Average Hoover indices for the differences in the level of development

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Border micro-regions	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25
Other micro-regions	0.11	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.09	0.09
National average	0.08	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07

Data source: own calculation based on Hungarian Central Statistical Office

In the second approach, instead of incomes, guest nights of public accommodations were applied. In this respect, it can be concluded that spatial differences in tourism on the micro-regional level, on the national average, are significantly higher compared to the level of development (Table 3). Moreover, an especially high concentration can be observed among border micro-regions, consequently such micro-regions should be classified based on certain aspects in order to have differences within each group better indicated.

From the point of view of tourism, differences along the Croatian border are significantly greater compared to those in the level of development and, furthermore, the increase in this respect is even more intensive.

Table 3 Average Hoover indices for the differences in tourism

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Border micro-regions	0.80	0.79	0.79	0.82	0.82	0.83	0.85	0.85
Other micro-regions	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.38	0.39	0.38	0.38	0.38
National average	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.28

Data source: own calculation based on Hungarian Central Statistical Office

Cluster analysis to classify micro-regions from the aspect of tourism

As a next objective, our research focused on how, from the point of view of tourism, the micro-regions studied can be distinguished beyond the significant spatial differences represented above as well as on to define the most relevant groups and the differences among them (Baros and Dávid, 2007). To explore this, data sets for the period between 1990 and 2008 were compiled and 5 indicators, namely capacities of public accommodation facilities, domestic and international guests and guest nights of public accommodation facilities were applied. For the data compiled, a mean value was determined for the entire period followed by a standardisation prior to beginning the research.

Then, cluster analysis was carried out for the above 5 indicators. By applying cluster analysis, our results and the statistical study of the division of objects comprising the heterogeneous population into homogenous groups can be demonstrated simultaneously. Such groups are called clusters. The objective of cluster analysis is to classify objects into homogenous groups disjunctive for each pair and covering the entire carrier. In our study, among the non-hierarchical methods of cluster analysis, K-means algorithm was applied. K-means algorithm classifies each element to the cluster that has a mid-point closest to the given element.

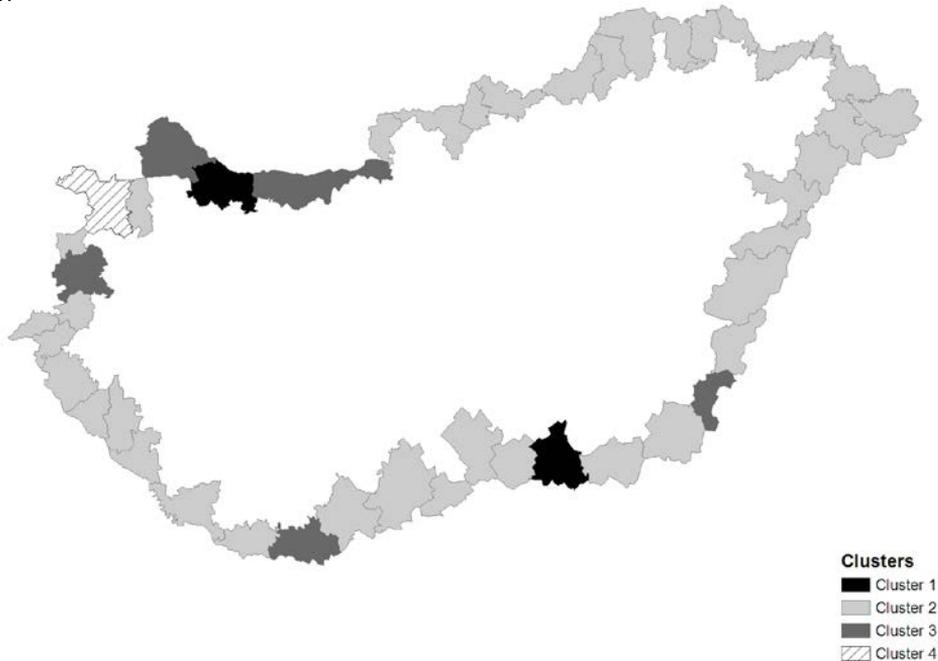


Figure 2 Final results of the cluster analysis

Source: own calculation based on Hungarian Central Statistical Office,

Two micro-regions are classified into Cluster 1, i.e. the micro-regions of Szeged and Győr (Fig 2). The centres of both micro-regions are also regional centres in Hungary. Due to the economic, political and administrative role of the two large towns, these two micro-regions are somewhat distinguished from other border micro-regions. From the point of view of tourism, it can be claimed for both micro-regions that they are, for all 5 indicators taken into account, well ahead to border micro-regions.

Cluster 2 includes a significantly higher number of micro-regions with the vast majority of border micro-regions, i.e. approximately 39 micro-regions. As their general feature, a low value for all 5 tourism indicators is observed.

7 micro-regions are classified into Cluster 3 all of them, with only one exception, located in the western part of the country. Capacity and international guest nights exceed the average.

Finally, Cluster 4 contains only one micro-region, i.e. that of Sopron-Fertőd. Here, for all indicators, extremely high values even exceeding those of micro-regions classified into Cluster 1 can be seen.

Of the 8 micro-regions along the Hungarian-Croatian border, 7 falls into Cluster 2 while 1, namely the Micro-region of Siklós, is classified into Cluster 3.

Table 4 Main indicators for tourism, 2008 (2000=100)

Area	Capacities	Domestic	International	Domestic	International
		guests		guest nights	
Cluster No. 1	181.1	145.8	60.4	191.5	75.1
Cluster No. 2	217.7	122.7	37.8	159.1	54.5
Cluster No. 3	177.6	158.7	63.2	216.5	76.0
Cluster No. 4	191.9	190.5	82.5	254.1	164.4
Border micro-regions	192.7	148.4	58.6	197.9	78.6
National average	162.0	257.4	103.6	292.8	92.9

Data source: own calculation based on Hungarian Central Statistical Office,

Based on the clusters obtained, a more detailed study on the most relevant processes related to border micro-regions can be carried out. As indicated in Table 4, the increase of capacities in the border micro-regions significantly exceeded the national average in the period between the changes of regime and today. Unfortunately, the situation is considerably more unfavourable regarding turnovers as the number of domestic guests increased to a lower extent coupled by a more intensive drop in the number of international tourists for the study period compared to the national average.

After having Figures 3, 4 and 5 studied, it can be concluded that since 1990, for the number of domestic guests, a continuous and intensive increase is indicated while for the number of international guests, along with significant fluctuations, a fallback can be observed in Hungary.

For border micro-regions, the growth of dynamics of domestic guest nights is lower compared to the national average that could be approached only by the Micro-region of Sopron-Fertőd included in Cluster 4 with the most advanced situation. Regarding the number of international guest nights, for border micro-regions, the fallback was even more significant compared to the national average with the only exception being the micro-region classified into Cluster 4.

The share of international guest nights in the border micro-regions is significantly behind, by more than 20 percentage points the national average. Unfortunately, for all 4 clusters, a negative tendency can be observed with no difference seen in this respect between border micro-regions and the national average.

The number of domestic guest nights in the micro-regions along the Croatian border, in the period between 1990 and 2008, increased by approximately 108% whereas the number of international guest nights dropped by nearly 30%. While in 1990, the share of international guest nights was almost 66%, this figure in 2008 remained under 40%.

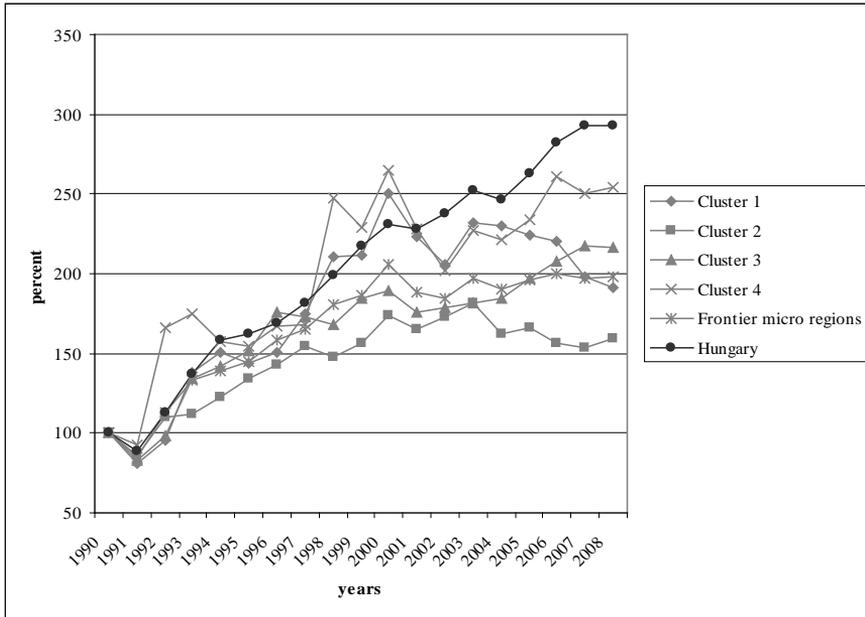


Figure 3 Number of domestic guest nights, 2000=100
 Source: own calculation based on Hungarian Central Statistical Office

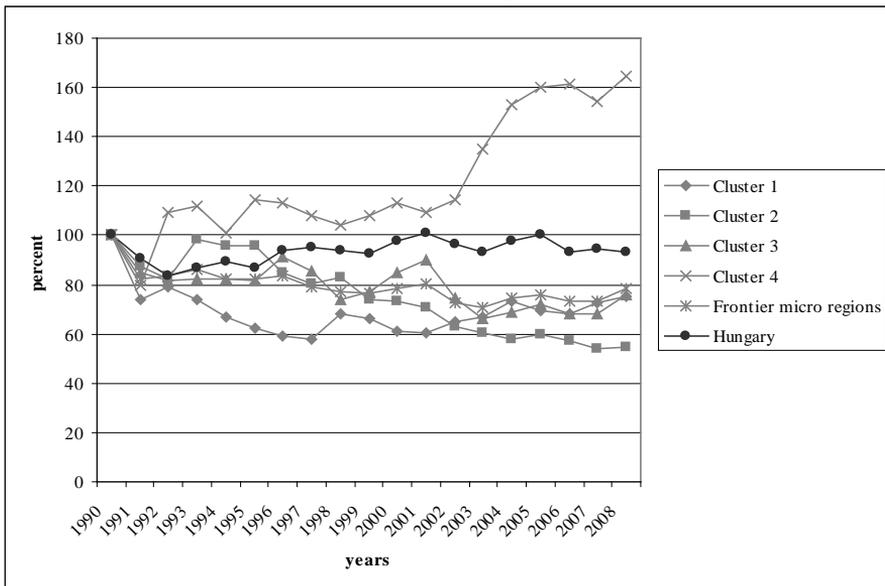


Figure 4 Number of international guest nights, 2000=100
 Source: own calculation based on Hungarian Central Statistical Office

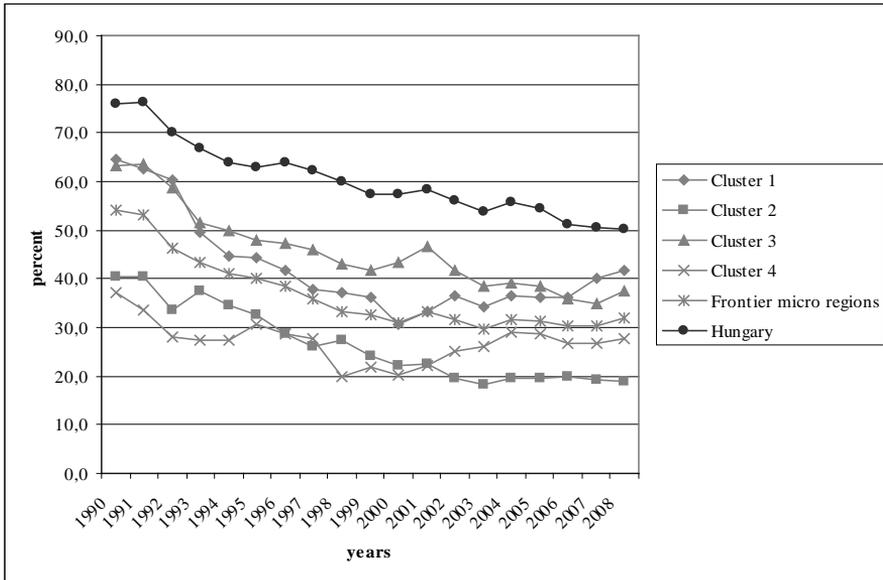


Figure 5 The share of international guest nights, 1990-2008, %
Source: own calculation based on Hungarian Central Statistical Office

Competitiveness in the border micro-regions

Based on the basic data of capacity and overturns, primarily negative tendencies can be mentioned for the border micro-regions examined (Tóth and Dávid, 2010). However, it was suggested that closer correlations should be also studied in more detail, thus tourism competitiveness of micro-regions was also focused on.

A wide range of international literature on regional competitiveness is available, mainly due to the works of Michael Porter (see, among others Porter, 1996; 1998, 1999). Tourism competitiveness related publications have also been released in recent years (Enright and Newton, 2004; Schroeder, 1996), however in this present paper the focus was, somewhat differently, on potential measurement methods.

On the potential methods for the measurement of regional competitiveness, a number of remarkable studies have been carried out in recent years of which results are applied in this present paper. These works give a review on how relative residential incomes can be disaggregated into the product of quantifiable social-economic factors with distinct content. (Lengyel, 2000; Nemes-Nagy, 2004). In this paper, on the one hand, by applying the approach by this latter author and, on the other, similarly by applying the method of disaggregation, the authors intended to study tourism competitiveness and its components in the tourism regions of Hungary.

After some mathematical modifications conducted (logarithms of values will have to be applied), the product is transformed into a more easily manageable sum as according to the formula below:

$$\log\left(\frac{GDP}{\text{Number of population}}\right) = \log\left(\frac{GDP}{\text{Number of employed}}\right) + \log\left(\frac{\text{Number of employed}}{\text{Number of active aged}}\right) + \log\left(\frac{\text{Number of active aged}}{\text{Number of population}}\right)$$

In our study, the micro-regions' total incomes from public accommodation fees, the number of guest nights and capacities and the number of inhabitants were used. An adequate estimation can be obtained for the level of development of the given micro-regions' tourism by the income from accommodation fees per capita, for efficiency by the income from accommodation fees per guest night, for the capacity per capita by the number of guest nights per bed and for the encasement of the micro-region's tourism by the number of beds per capita.

The basis of our classification was the relation of the values of certain micro-regions to the national average for specific incomes from accommodation fees as well as the three resolving factors. Returning to the definition of competitiveness, regions with residential incomes above the average are regarded as with competitive advantage while those below the average are with competitive disadvantage. Within this, complex competitive advantage is also assessed where the given region indicates values for all three components of residential incomes exceeding the average whereas competitive advantage is of multi- or one-factorial when this presupposition is fulfilled for two or one factor. The features of competitive disadvantage are interpreted analogically.

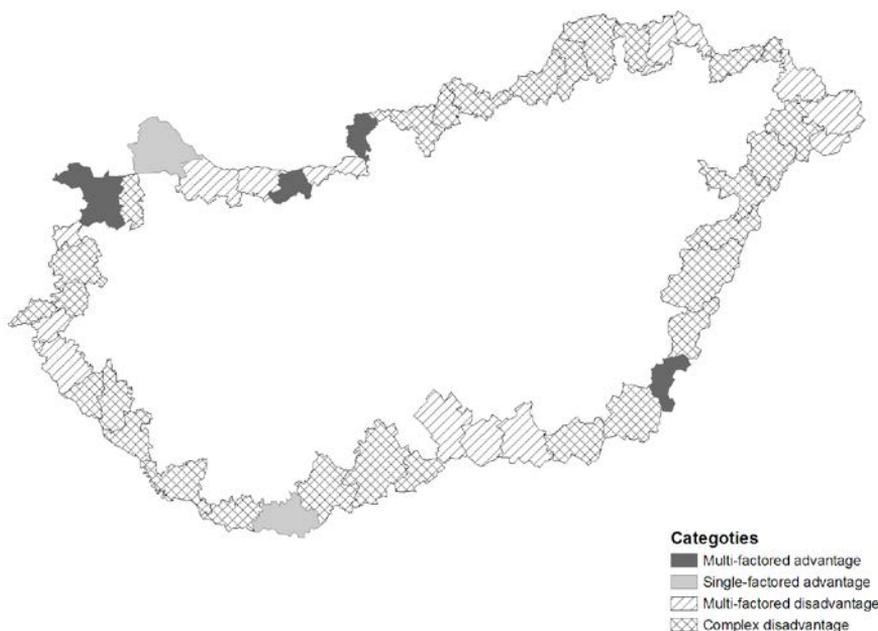


Figure 6 Tourism competitiveness types in the border micro-regions of Hungary, 2008
Source: own calculation based on Hungarian Central Statistical Office

Based on the results of the static competitiveness study carried out in 2008, the overall picture drawn from the cluster analysis can be slightly modified (Figure 6 and 7). From the point of view of tourism, 6 micro-regions of Hungary can be considered as competitive. Of these 6 micro-regions, 5 are located in the western part of the country and only one, i.e. the Micro-region of Gyula is situated east of the River Danube. No complex advantage is observed for any of the border micro-regions while for four of them a multi-factored and for two, single-factored advantage was detected. The vast majority of micro-

regions (43) were found with disadvantage also in this research. Among them, in 29 micro-regions a complex while in 14 multi-factored disadvantage was observed.

Among the micro-regions along the Hungarian-Croatian border, only that of Siklós can be classified as competitive, with a single-factored advantage in 2008. Among the other micro-regions, for that of Lenti, a multi-factored while for the remaining ones, a complex disadvantage can be observed.

In order to study the changes taking place between 2000 and 2008, dynamic research was carried out. (The term 'dynamic research' was used by József Nemes Nagy. It should be noted however that such calculations should not be considered as really dynamic as by applying them, not the entire period is analysed but its first and final years are compared.)

In this context, it is unequivocally seen that the picture indicated by border micro-regions is not as disadvantageous as represented above. In more than half of the border micro-regions (27) dynamics considered to be more advantageous compared to what observed for the national average is seen thus they can be regarded as competitive. Among the micro-regions indicated, there are 5 micro-regions with complex advantage with only one of them located in the western part of the country. In addition to this, multi-factored advantage was observed for 21 micro-regions and single-factored for 1 micro-region. Among the 22 micro-regions with disadvantage, 5 can be described as with single-factored, 12 with multi-factored and 5 with complex disadvantage.

In a dynamic comparison, a complex advantage is determined for the Micro-region of Csurgó, whereas for those of Siklós and Lenti, a multi-factored advantage can be observed. Disadvantage in the case of the micro-regions of Barcs, Letenye and Sellye is multi-factored while for the remaining ones, it is unfortunately complex.

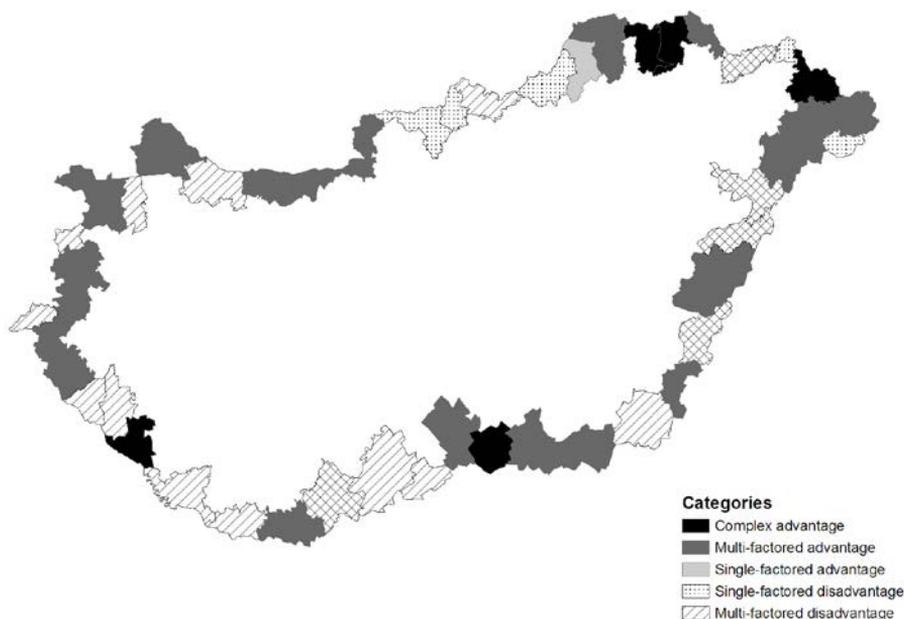


Figure 7 Tourism competitiveness types in the border micro-regions of Hungary, 2000-2008

Source: own calculation based on Hungarian Central Statistical Office

CONCLUSIONS

After having our results summarized, it can be claimed that while studying cross-border tourism, conclusions typical not only for Hungary but also for countries of East Central Europe were reached.

The European Union accession of the region's countries had a positive impact on the development of cross-border tourism.

Prior to the changes of regimes, the development of cross-border tourism was counterworked by administrative tools resulting in settlements in border regions becoming peripheral. During the 1990s, attempts were made at all these locations in order to change this peripheral situation as well as to establish good relations with countries previously accessing the European Union. Thus, as concluded the best co-operations in cross-border tourism developed between countries already being EU members (e.g. between Austria and Hungary).

The European Union's financial resources also played an important role in the emergence of co-operations (pre-accession funds then the joint PHARE CBC, Interreg and Territorial Cooperation programs).

Joint approaches were further facilitated by cooperation formed already during the 1990s (euroregions, associations) whose establishment was also supported by the European Union.

According to the results of our surveys, countries willing to gain access were not blocked from each other by Schengen borders as they received facilitations in cross-border tourism. The eastward drifting of the Schengen borders and the cease of former state borders further advanced the development of joint tourism partnerships.

Negative effects emerged mostly at border sections demarcated between countries either not able to join (for some reason) or not willing to gain access to the European Union and certain member states (occurring at the Ukrainian, Serbian, Belarusian and, in some cases, the Croatian border).

In the field of cross-border cooperation, within the tourism industry, a west-to-east and north-to-south gradient can be detected that, by the present logic, can be explained by the changes of economic circumstances and the succession of European Union accession.

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