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OF THE
HUNGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES**

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ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC REPORT

2009

I. Main tasks of Centre for Regional Studies (CRS) in 2009

As previously, the institute considered its public tasks, i.e. basic research as its main priority in 2009. To showcase its results, it planned the publication of 5 monographs, 5 other volumes, some 350 research papers, its Discussion Papers series (10 issues) and the continuous publication of its journal, *Tér és Társadalom*.

As the basic institute of regional studies in Hungary, the Centre contributed to the survey of spatial principles and the domestic and international dissemination of research results; its research laying the groundwork for the territorial policies and development strategies of the European Union and Hungary. Its applied research has directly contributed to the establishment and management of balanced and sustainable spatial structures.

The eight decentralised research units of CRS have considered the analysis of specific territorial features a major task beyond their own research profile.

As a result of multiple decades of work, the Centre planned the publication of three volumes in its monograph series titled “Regions in the Carpathian Basin” (Transcarpathia, Southern Transylvania and Banate, Southern Great Plain), and undertook preparations for the upcoming, final volumes (Slavonia–Predmurje Region, Burgenland, Central Transdanubia, Northern Hungary).

The Centre planned to establish lasting cooperation with government institutions responsible for development policy, mainly the Ministry for National Development and Economy, whose tasks include a responsibility for territorial development.

In 2009, an emphasis was placed on research contributing to the better understanding of urban networks (National Settlement Network Development Concept, integrated city development strategies) and knowledge-based territorial development (the spatial differences of innovation, R&D and knowledge-intensive services); preparation for the tasks of the 2011 Hungarian EU presidency (territorial cohesion, Danube strategy), the further development of institutions and instruments for territorial (regional, agrarian and rural development) policies; sustainable development (Danube–Tisza canal) as well as the regional analysis of Balkans countries.

With respect to scientific qualification, researchers employed by the Centre planned to acquire 1 Doctor of Sciences degree, 4 PhDs, multiple PhD working discussion materials and 4 habilitations. In 2009, these plans were surpassed by defending two additional PhD degrees.

Centre for Regional Studies intended to take advantage of its international research connections in both basic and applied research. The majority of its funding had already come from international grants, but due to the difficulties posed by pre-financing and commonly occurring late payment, could only rely on them to a certain degree and the careful evaluation of financing schemes. However, the importance of international projects transcends simple funding opportunities in allowing researchers employed by CRS to come into contact with the leading actors of the international scientific community as well as furthering the international prestige of the Centre.

Similar to previous years, several project proposals were planned to be submitted – with a special emphasis on OFA (National Employment Fund), OTKA (National Scientific Research Fund), NKTH (National Office for Research and Technology), ÁROP (State Reform Operational Programme) and INTERREG programmes – in spite of the growing need for administrative capacities in the preparation of the proposals and the management of consortia. This activity has become an indispensable, if not always entirely fruitful element of the Centre's operative work, as well as a virtual obligation for research staff. However, the effects of these obligations have not manifested in the quantitative or qualitative decline of publication activity, but rather the growing unfeasibility of long-term study tours and increases in the time required to obtain scientific degrees.

In the reporting year, CRS celebrated the 25th anniversary of its establishment with a two-day event. On the date of the jubilee, in cooperation with domestic and international partners, the Centre set out, outlining the research results and practical effects of the last two decades, to debate and accept the strategy of CRS to the year 2015, with special attention to the reform of Hungarian territorial and development policy (aspects of Hungary's modernisation and regional transformation), as well as the interests of Hungarians living beyond the borders.

In 2009, the Centre planned to organise ten international and 30 domestic scientific events, among them the conference of the International Geographic Union and multiple workshops on cross-border cooperation.

Taking into account the more active marketing strategy of the Centre, it intended to place a greater emphasis on professional and scientific awards, collecting 11 in the reporting year.

The activity of Centre for Regional Studies in higher education – the accreditation of doctoral schools, doctoral programmes and Master degree courses under the direction or with the thematic guidance of research staff – posed a serious challenge in the year 2009.

II. Major research results and other accomplishments of CRS, their socio-economic benefits

1. Laying the groundwork for government decision-making

The research results of the Centre contribute to the potential of central governance to enhance its efficiency, lay the groundwork for central regulations and supervision, and better utilise national and European Union funds.

Centre for Regional Studies prepared *the concept for the comprehensive reform of the law on regional development*. The Centre stood firmly by the stronger regional decentralisation of development policy, stressing that the separation of European and national development policy and the marginalisation of the regional institutional network is unwarranted and deleterious. It declared that efficient governance coordination demands a different form of government oversight, the more integrated institutional arrangement of government sectors, and regulated planning practice. The current fragmented and essentially instrument-less institutional structure of domestic development policy can only undergo revitalisation if it can once more exercise its prerogatives to dispose over European funds, and these competencies are re-constituted within its framework and under its direction. Fundamental changes must also be undertaken in the dimension of partnership, as the model governed by current regulations has not been able to fulfil the hopes it had been invested with.

Within the scope of *preparations for the 2011 Hungarian EU presidency*, CRS sought to give support to the national contribution to the emerging European concept on territorial cohesion. This activity, mainly based on expert studies, intended to develop suggestions taking into account the interests of Central and Eastern European cohesion countries.

Centre for Regional Studies took part as an expert in *laying the groundwork for the National Settlement Network Development Concept*. The Centre took the lion's share in striving to get across the need for a development policy turn on the basis of urban centres to the actors of territorial policy, classifying Hungarian urban areas into four categories based on their central role. The functional urban areas created through this method may not only play an essential role in development policy, but also in shaping public services, transport functions and linear infrastructure, provided the government accepts the concept and draws conclusions regarding the instruments of execution as well.

The Centre developed proposals for *the monitoring procedures of integrated city development strategies (IVS)*. Research concentrated on three information sources: the analysis of experiences from previous strategic, project-based, programme and IVS monitoring; professional consultations and conciliation (National Development Agency, VÁTI Public Non-profit LLC); as well as interviews undertaken by the researchers in 27 cities distributed among the 7 regions. The aim of the research was to develop distinct scenarios as alternatives to facilitate IVS monitoring, taking into account the potential tasks, competences and – consequently – legal system establishing the framework of monitoring on specific territorial scales (urban, regional and national levels). CRS proposed the development of a multi-level monitoring system that counts on the active participation of the local level, builds on existing practice but also synthesises them to facilitate participation and communication.

Commissioned by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, CRS experts developed studies to address *questions of resource distribution and regulation for the LEADER Programme of the New Hungarian Rural Development Programme*.

In *delineating a new – complex – micro-regional typology of rural spaces*, research staff undertook the complex development level analysis of Hungary's 174 micro-regions and calculated their HDI (Human Development Index) ratings. They ascertained that rural areas in more developed regions are in a relatively more advantageous situation, and development poles and large cities exercise a great deal of influence over the rural areas of their immediate catchment area. Peripheral, disadvantaged micro-regions are all rural in their character, with a clear dominance of agriculture in the economy. The results have made it clear that it is possible to identify complex agrarian space types which can serve as a basis for a future, renewed Hungarian agrarian and rural development policy, regional and rural planning.

In *the analysis of urban spaces*, results encompass the review of the changes that have taken place within the definitions of urban policy; the summary of the paradigms and shifts shaping European urban spaces as well as the underlying macro-social conditions; the overview of processes forming the European urban network and the recent spatial structures that have emerged in consequence. Research undertook a critical evaluation of neo-liberal urban policies, analysing the directions of urban policy discourse that influences the EU's policies in this sphere as well as the policies themselves. Historical legacies were analysed in light of their potential in urban development for South-Eastern European small and medium-sized towns, encouraging polycentric territorial development and new, more balanced urban–rural relationships. Within the scope of the VITO project, CRS took stock of European urban and regional policy as a framework for planned revitalisation projects. All of these results have direct applicability for the renewed National Regional Development Concept, Hungarian urban development and the better utilisation of European Union funding.

Research in the Centre surveyed *the role of services in spatial processes of differentiation and integration*. The interpretation of tertiarisation as a spatial process and the survey of the sector in uneven spatial development through re-formulating company linkages is a new approach that has produced new results. It has been proven that the process of the recreation of spatial inequalities can only be fully unearthed if, breaking with the dominant domestic approach of focusing on (material) production, we consider consumption as a stage of the value creation process. Unlike the countries of the European core area, capital in commerce has reshaped the spatial division of labour in our region drastically and with the utmost speed. CRS surveys have contributed to understanding the operational logic of commerce capital, which produces distinctive conflicts and resolutions within the conditions of the Hungarian market, constantly forming and reshaping seller–supplier relationships. This dynamic can hardly be understood without taking into account the cultural embeddedness of corporate relationships.

During *the exploration of cross-border cooperation*, research staff sought answers on how market transition (restructuring within the national economy and the establishment of market institutions) has reshaped crossborder economic relationships, their extent and content. They intended to capture the content of border constructs on the basis of specific knowledge, experiences and spatial linkages. New results have been reached in the mapping of cultural and trade relationships along the Hungarian–Romanian border. Contacts are still mainly based on cultivating familial ties and (shopping) tourism; settlements in Partium (Romania) are sought from the other side for the purposes of work to only a negligible extent. The most common

form of work is legal labour in the employment of a Hungarian company. In the scope of an international research project, *the role of crossborder cooperation in regional development* was researched.

The Centre examined *the special characteristics of employment among Ukrainian citizens* in the border areas of North-Eastern Hungary. The motivations, opportunities and experiences of seeking employment in Hungary were surveyed along with future plans among prospective employees and their intent and form of participation on the Hungarian labour market.

For several years, Centre for Regional Studies has assisted the work of the government on laying the groundwork for the *development of the Danube region*. In 2009, research staff analysed national development plans concerning the river from countries situated along the Danube, prepared the English-language edition of the almanac titled “The Danube in Hungarian regional development”, and, developing three alternate scenarios, examined the possibility of the construction of the Danube–Tisza canal.

Research on *the institutional system of vocational training and funding strategies of schools involved in mid-tier vocational training* showed that the system of territorial integrated vocational training centres is unlikely to solve the acute problems of vocational training in the long term, as these go back to deeper structural causes. Development coordination among territorial integrated vocational training centres is hindered by the lack and uncertainty of adequate funds, as well as strong conflicts of interest obstructing the efficient redistribution of vocational training contributions. The flow of contributions through training centres reproduces inequalities among the institutions of the territorial integrated vocational training centre. The research calls attention to the phenomenon that selection has strengthened among schools, generated in part by maintainers who can successfully lobby for development, and in part by the different aspirations of trade schools concentrating disadvantaged students. The research has emphasised that there is a broad gap between the principle of life-long learning and practice. Adult education has become strongly marketised, producing a structure which is not only detrimental for vocational schools, but also inordinately expensive. In market competition, trade schools again and again ended up as losers, and vocational schools are not much more successful when they have to compete with top-tier training. The strong suction effect of universities and colleges depleted the number of participants in vocational training, and with it the normative-based income of institutions. Meanwhile, vocational schools have been more successful at joining the adult education market via the further training of middle-sized enterprises. In summary, the research has unveiled uncertainty, alternative-seeking and the dearth of development and operational funding in both branches of mid-tier vocational training, shedding light on the substantial inequalities of development opportunities.

2. Regional inequalities in the Eastern and Central European research area

Analysing the spatial distribution of research and development serving as a dynamising factor of European territorial development, it has been found that systematic change had preserved the previous regional structure of R&D in Central and Eastern European EU member states. Outstanding spatial inequalities can be observed within the regional institutional structure of innovation. Central areas, national capitals preserve their privileged positions while the institutional system of regions is lopsided, characterised by the dominance of universities. National regional and structural policy in new member states, although based on union standards, does not incentivise the development of R&D on the regional level, as evident from the

study of 2007–2013 operational programmes. We have found no country in Central and Eastern Europe whose regional or competitiveness-oriented operational programme has set the goal of the comprehensive restructuring in the development of human resources within research.

Changes in the factors influencing spatial development necessitate the transformation of the goals, instruments and institutional system of regional policy across Europe. The long trends of European spatial development require variable, institutionalised forms of decentralisation within countries of the continent that constitute different administrative traditions. Only decentralised institutions are able to fulfil the requirements of EU cohesion in Central and Eastern European member states. This is not only a question of administration, but also a precondition of efficient R&D activity to achieve enhanced competitiveness. The spread of regionalism may result in the modernisation of spatial structures. In countries with a decentralised structure, the spread of the knowledge-intensive economy surpasses the same in centralised unitary states.

The example of multiple European states demonstrates that the decentralisation of research and development has a positive effect on the development of regions. The location of research-intensive branches increases the number of working places with high qualification requirements. In the background of R&D institutions, there is a demonstrable and obvious enterprise development and production enhancement effect on the basis of spin-off companies. Innovative enterprises improve regional export capabilities, encouraging their integration into European and international research space. Research-intensive enterprises encourage regional reindustrialisation and the spread of advanced business services. This further improves regional income generation potential, with a significant contribution to territorial cohesion. Without decentralised state reform, Lisbon criteria are impossible to be met in Europe's unitary states, including Hungary.

3. Territorial cohesion in the Carpathian Basin

In the development of natural regions, economic spaces and administrative units making up the Carpathian Basin, the political changes and economic restructuring of the 1990s had initiated contradictory processes. Economic transformation has had unfavourable consequences for most Hungarian communities. Settlements that have been able to exploit the advantages of the market economy relatively early are mostly large cities and settlements with a favourable geopolitical position. The latter group includes several successful settlements in border areas, first taking advantage of informal, then cooperation-based economy and demand on the labour market. The majority of ethnic Hungarians living across the borders live in rural environments, while the most profitable jobs in tertiary branches, financial services and export-oriented companies were created in cities. The less educated population of the villages who had previously commuted to cities have remained without a certain income after the collapse of large-scale industry.

In the spatial spread of development, ethnic factors play a limited role. Naturally, national support policy can have an effect on the development of specific territories. It must be highlighted that modern regional development policy – including the European Union's structural and cohesion policy – places emphasis on the spatially continuous dissemination of economic advantages. This means that the favourable effects of economic growth must be enjoyed by all ethnicities living in the area to an equal extent.

In preparing for the European Union programming period to begin from 2014, Hungarian development policy must lay down much more distinctive priorities for the range and content of actions to strengthen the cohesion of the economic space of the Carpathian Basin, and this must also manifest in the various forms of Hungarian support policy.

The capital expansion of the Hungarian economy must increase, and areas populated by ethnic Hungarians may come into question as potential target areas of capital export. However, economic rationality dictates that these areas must also be prepared to receive Hungarian capital, while Hungarian economic policy must take into account that within the support policy of capital export, investments into areas populated by Hungarians living beyond the borders need separate regulations.

In the future, especially in light of the lessons learned from the causes that have initiated the economic crisis, the pace of development in the real economy, the quality and income creation potential of economic structures will be more and more strongly influenced by the spatial cooperation and quality of partnership among state, local governments and business actors. The institutionalisation of formal regionalisation within the Carpathian Basin may lead to the macroregion's economic upswing, indirectly also contributing to the development of territorial autonomies. This is only one reason why Hungary should be setting examples in the empowerment of regions.

4. Programmes towards Roma policy

Research on *segregation and integration processes among Roma*, as well as the survey of the real estate market in Hajdúböszörmény (a small town in Eastern Hungary) has confirmed that *in the movements of Gypsy population*, the existing gravitational effect, obtaining housing, the receptive and defensive attitude of local society, working forms of co-existence, relationships between the two ethnicities and the internal differentiation of the Gypsy population plays a defining role. Opportunities for integrating into the economic division of labour have narrowed to such an extent that in most cases, it is not possible to speak of their attraction towards Roma. With the cessation of preferential allowances for buying housing, peremptory real estate occupation has risen in prominence among the means of obtaining housing. The defensive attitudes of local society have strengthened in opposition of the immigration of Gypsy residents. As opportunities for work have narrowed and social aid has become a universally perceptible and visible phenomenon for locals due to rapid pauperisation among the non-Gypsy population, the framework of co-existence has altered, tolerance has decreased and opposition between the two ethnicities has been on the rise. The aforementioned general processes have however manifested differently on a settlement by settlement basis, preserving spatial variety.

In recent years, the *directions of migration* have altered in comparison with the previous migration routes of the Gypsies and the movements of the non-Gypsy population. It has been apparent that Roma gravitate more and more towards rural settlements. Changes in the opportunities for finding housing have precipitated a shift towards smaller settlements or settlement parts which have smaller empty houses but lack the ability to defend themselves. Certain areas have experienced a growth in Gypsy population, while in other settlements, their share is on the decline. *Providing opportunities for work* are one of the most important preconditions for solving the problems, but it is by itself insufficient. Considering potential future scenarios, five possible consequences can be outlined on the basis of steps that can be taken by local

societies, for of which may result in severe negative consequences for the social structure of settlements or settlement parts. One of these is complete isolation, the avoidance of conflicts through “keeping distance”, eventually leading to the “secession” of the settlement part. The second may result in even more serious problems through the forceful prevention of Gypsy immigration and the driving out of those who are already present, triggering a wave of violence with unpredictable consequences. The third scenario assumes resignation and the passive acceptance of the events; in the long term, it leads to the complete loss of value for the settlement part and its environment, and the escalation of conflicts. The fourth variant encompasses the growing emigration of non-Gypsy residents and the assimilation of the remaining into the now majority Gypsy population. The fifth, most favourable possibility open before the inhabitants of the area is to find and accept new methods of co-existence and acceptable roles – naturally for those who are willing and able. It is more and more pressing to develop instruments pointing towards this last, long-term solution. There is no generalised recipe, and every settlement or microregion must find its own way towards an appropriate resolution.

Centre for Regional Studies has *examined the employment and training of Roma unemployed in public education institutions*. The model of embedding the training of Roma coordinators into employment, which supplies projects participants with a high school certificate and a National Training Index (OKJ)-certified vocation, and also employs them for three to six years as a public servant, has been shown to have been profitable in not just a social but also a financial sense. As a result of the programme, there has been an improvement in the labour market opportunities and personal development of the participants, while the elementary schools employing them have also benefited – Roma pupils have improved their grades while the rate of absences, skipping years and moving to homeschooling has dropped. The analysis of effects has proven on the whole that the model of embedding training into employment can be successfully and efficiently employed to encourage the educational and social mobility and integration of Roma (and non-Roma) who had been squeezed out of the labour market. It is reasonable to give the model further support and extend it to a broader range of public services.

5. Applied research projects to assist the work of local and economic decision makers

On the basis of its traditional, long-term (framework contract) association with *Paks Nuclear Power Plant Ltd.*, Centre for Regional Studies has studied the role of nuclear industry in industrial competitiveness and social communication. The presentation of international good practice, such as the social embedding of the Finnish nuclear industry, has allowed to draw several lessons that are applicable to the Hungarian case. Future investments in Paks appreciate the role of social communication not only for the power plant in question but also the government, local government and civilian spheres. Within the scope of a separate assignment, a survey of cooperation possibilities between the Kalocsa micro-region and the power plant has been undertaken, with special emphasis on the yet to be realised development projects.

The Centre has prepared *city development concepts* for two towns (Paks and Zalakaros), representing a renewal from the methodological perspective due to the now legally stipulated integrative approach. In the future, difficulties can be prognosed after the *en masse* preparation of integrated city development strategies due to the disjointed system of resource distribution, operation, maintenance and development instruments. The depreciation of the role of planning can hardly be solved through the prescription of new-style plans; more attention

should be paid to the elaboration of appropriate instruments and mechanisms for execution and coordination.

The research task titled “*Exposing strategic elements in sustainable urban development on the case of Székesfehérvár*” aimed to research the problems of urban development in Székesfehérvár, encompassing laying the scientific groundwork for building an economically, socially and ecologically sustainable modern city offering a fitting habitat for its citizens.

Commissioned by the National Association of County General Assemblies, Centre for Regional Studies undertook a survey of the current situation of counties, and made suggestions for future development. Analysis, which involved all counties in Hungary, has shown that the meticulous squeezing out of county general assemblies from development policy in recent years has been accompanied by severe budgetary restrictions. Counties have become incapable of fulfilling even their mandatory tasks; this process has drawn attention to the fact that two decades of policy based on postponement with respect to mid-tier governance has resulted in complete centralisation as well as the growing unfeasibility of operating the mid-tier under present circumstances. Reforms can hardly be put off any longer.

6. Impact analyses

Involvement in the evaluation of various European Union and national project systems (as a member of the OFA and Existimo consortia within the scope of the New Hungary Development Plan) has become a new research task for Centre for Regional Studies. Research staff has shown that domestic evaluation activity is rather formal and mechanical; authorities and agencies involved in resource management are not interested in learning and addressing the genuine anomalies of resource distribution. Evaluation is a comparatively recent area in Hungarian public policy, which also means more attention would be due. In contrast, the selection of evaluating organisations and establishing the requirements they have to conform to, as well as the low share of funds delegated to this task both show that government has not yet realised the importance of evaluation in improving its own operational efficiency.

The impact analysis of the Cserehát Programme has produced practical results in development approaches and practices for the hardest task – development opportunities for the most disadvantaged settlements and micro-regions. The project has confirmed that only an approach embedded into the development process, able to cooperate with locals, and assuming at least 4 or 5 animator tasks (individual and community development), may prove fruitful.

The impact analysis of Roadway to Work has corroborated that the system, designed to facilitate the labour market reintegration of the long-term jobless through an emphasis on active instruments, has only produced results to a limited degree. Surveyed settlement chiefs have mainly greeted the new system of serving the active-aged for its disciplinary, “work-encouraging” aspect, but from a financial perspective, they consider public employment uneconomical due in part to its higher cost requirements, and in part to the limited availability of tasks and low value of completed work. It is a favourable development that close to ten percent of persons released from the programme has found employment on the primary labour market, but this has been achieved through whitening previous illicit work: not even the new system of public employment can raise hopes for a significant reduction of the grey economy. The impact analysis has affirmed that the programme is incapable of reducing settlement and spatial inequalities, and presents excessive burden precisely for local governments where

problems in need of treatment are found in high concentration. The efficiency of public employment, interpreted as an obligatory task for local governments, may be questioned from several aspects, and although it offers temporary opportunities to gain work and income for deprived groups, it closes the door before labour market reintegration.

III. Presentation of domestic and international relations

The domestic and international relations of Centre for Regional Studies are organised around two of its core activities, research programmes and commissions as well as higher education. The Centre has broadened its circle of partnership in the reporting year, and mostly continued its previously established relations.

Cooperation with academic research units has received a moderate emphasis; with institutes of a similar profile (Geographical Research Institute, Institute for World Economics, Institute of Economics, Institute for Political Science, Institute of Sociology), its form is mainly in joint publication, more rarely project preparation.

Centre for Regional Studies has considered one of its central objectives the economic and social utility of its research, placing special emphasis on support for government decision making. Accordingly, it has developed close relations with government organisations in charge of spatial and development policy (Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour). Among government organisations, the primary partner of the Centre is the Ministry for National Development and Economy, which has commissioned Centre for Regional Studies in eight assignments.

All researchers of the Centre participate in the activities of scientific professional bodies and societies; leading researches also fill more important functions. Among scientific societies, the most significant are the Hungarian Economic Society, the Hungarian Society for Political Sciences, the Hungarian Sociological Association, the Hungarian Geographic Society, and, created by the initiative and on the foundations of the Centre, the Hungarian Regional Science Association.

Research staff of the Centre is furthermore represented in several national and territorial public policy advisory and trustee boards (e.g. operational programme monitoring committees).

On the basis of expert and research commissions (analyses and strategies), cooperation with local governments in large cities has been further strengthened in 2009, including settlements beyond the borders. Connections with the majority of regional development councils and agencies have stabilised, resulting in cooperation centred on council work and research assignments. In microregional cooperation, qualitative improvement (in the case of rural and least developed areas) has been accompanied by qualitative reduction.

40 researchers from Centre for Regional Studies have actively participated in domestic higher education, 25 in doctoral schools, among them 8 as university professors. Research staff exercises controlling functions in regional science-related doctoral schools (Győr, Pécs, Debrecen) as well as regional and environmental management Master courses. Higher education connections and the high quality of cooperation are guaranteed by joint departments (Debrecen, Győr, Kaposvár, Kecskemét, Székesfehérvár). Research and consortial cooperation has become established. The Centre takes part in training professionals beyond the borders; lasting education cooperation has emerged with Babeş-Bolyai University, Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, University of Oradea, University of Novi Sad and Hungarian College of Berehove (in Ukraine).

In addition to traditional forms of cooperation (joint research projects, exchange programmes), the lasting and multilateral broadening of relations with the scientific and professional organisations of surrounding countries has characterised the reporting year; this has been an especially outstanding development in crossborder research programmes and education relationships.

Paks Nuclear Power Plant Ltd. is a stable partner of the Centre. Cooperation mainly involves professional advice and analysis in the fields of territorial development and social dialogue. The consortial partners of Centre for Regional Studies include a wide-ranging set of companies from environmental management organisations to leading consulting agencies.

According to its plans, the Centre organised ten international scientific events in 2009. Outstanding interest followed the gender conference of the International Geographic Union and the Slovakian–Hungarian border cooperation workshop. From the 26 Hungarian language events, the conference titled “Subsidiarity and regionality in church and public organisation” has been the subject of extraordinary interest.

Centre for Regional Studies considers it the most important accomplishment of its international cooperation activity that, according to the decision of the Regional Studies Association presidium, the Centre has the opportunity to organise and host the World Conference of the Regional Studies Association in Pécs, in the programme of the Pécs European Capital of Culture in 2010 project.

IV. Brief evaluation of more significant domestic and international research projects awarded in the reporting year

As in previous years, Centre for Regional Studies has undertaken an active tender application activity. In the reporting year, all of its research units have prepared numerous applications. Among *domestic research grants*, the Innotárs project of the National Office for Research and Technology, as well as the grants of OTKA and the State Reform Operational Programme can be considered significant from a financial perspective. In 2009, the staff of the Centre has collectively or individually applied for 18 grants to obtain domestic funding. In 2009, ten grants received a favourable evaluation, encompassing 180 Million HUF of funds over various time spans (1-3 years). In case of five tenders, results have not yet been announced (three of them appear to have a high chance of winning) while three applications met no success. The percentile rate of successful tender applications is 72%. The domestic grant system is highly differentiated, characterised by significant internal variance.

Multiple tendering organisations operate in an overly bureaucratic manner; this circle includes the National Employment Foundation, which finances important research assignments and has a strong economic significance with respect to results as well. The financial accounting required to be attached to research reports within this programme is inordinately labour-intensive, accounting procedures highly ambiguous and the system of auditing not transparent enough: in denying payouts, subjective factors appear to play a role. The quantity of administration required for submitting tenders has not changed. We have raised criticism in several instances over the requirement to submit notary-certified articles of incorporation and similar documents even in the case of academic institutions. The procedures have in fact not been simplified, but often made even more complicated; in some events, even the signing of tender contracts had to be undertaken with a notary in attendance. We must remark with regrets that the Centre is required to expend considerably more effort on administering grants than disseminating the actual research results.

The majority of active *international research grants* have been wrapped up in 2009. Within various framework programmes of the European Commission, three research projects were successfully concluded. In the reporting year, from 9 tender applications submitted to the European Commission's Interreg, Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA, in support of Croatian accession) and European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion (ESPON), 7 have been successful, for a tendering success rate of 78%. Altogether, these grants represent 120 Million HUF worth of funding for the years 2010–2011. The Centre has also won a smaller-scale (4 Million HUF) grant within the SCOPES project of the Swiss National Science Foundation.

Due to the *post-financing* requirements of international grants, Centre for Regional Studies has experienced incessant liquidity problems over 2009. The late payments of the EU, amounting to 60–70 Million HUF, have had a destabilising effect on the Centre's finances.

Although it cannot be considered a form of tendering, it must be mentioned here that the Centre has continued its fruitful cooperation with the *Ministry for National Development and Economy*, which has provided the Centre with 42 Million HUF worth of research funding.

V. Major publications and other outstanding results in 2009

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