

The aim of the project is to identify and study the state boundaries in their cultural, social, political and pragmatic dimensions at the time of increased security measurements and ongoing economic recession. Changes observed in the Ukrainian Western region of Transcarpathia (Zakarpatska Oblast) in the face of the recent political and military developments in the Country's Eastern region of Donbass serve a case study for that matter. Transcarpathians have long developed various strategies of dealing with the border policies and visa regulations and found their ways of omitting the political and bureaucratic obstacles to cross the borders and to familiarize them in one way or another. Thus, the hypotheses and research questions are centered around the way, Ukrainian crisis changed the cross-border dynamics and migration activities in Western Ukraine. Evidence gathered so far indicates that the inhabitants of the region face increased pressure for migration and maintaining and utilizing cross-border links with Romania, Slovakia and Hungary. What is more, and no less relevant, due to the tensed relations Ukraine has with its Eastern neighbour, Russia has lost its popularity among people migrating from the region.

The project objectives will be fulfilled in the course of the ethnographic fieldwork in the Transcarpathian towns of Beregszasz (30 000 inhabitants), Uzhgorod (120 000 inhabitants) and Solotvyno (10 000 inhabitants), where I conducted my research in 2005/2006 and 2009-2011. The research and analytical framework is inscribed in the extended case method developed by American sociologist, Michael Burawoy. The plan is to reach (with the structured and semi-structured interviews, participant and non-participant observation) three groups of people: a) persons with migration, cross-border circulation and other forms of cross-border dwelling experiences; b) former and current industrial workers from the heavy industry, mining, food processing and electronic industries; c) local and regional experts, such as: NGOs, academics, authorities, journalists and other opinion-leaders.

The project covers the issues of local cross-border links and labour migration in their wider political and historical contexts. Even though the study is set in particular geographical locations under particular political conditions, its results will contribute to the general studies on borderlands as well migration and mobility in sociology and social/cultural anthropology.