*Information about interviewee:*

*Tibor Várady is the Professor Emeritus of the Department of Legal Studies at the Central European University. The Interview was conducted Budapest, Hungary.*

*R= Respondent – Tibor Várady*

*I=Interviewer – Sam Wrighton*

I: How would you describe the relationship between the Hungarian state and the Hungarians living abroad?

R: The question of why Hungary engages with their diaspora is not the most probing, they simply have no other option but to engage. This is a result of history. My personal experience reveals this complication: my father and I were born in two different countries, him in Hungary and myself in Serbia. You might not consider this to be strange, but when I tell you that we were born in the same house, you might begin to understand the difficulty in the relationship. The question is how and who they engage with and for what purpose. The situation in Serbia now is better than it has ever been. Hungary was a distinct enemy of Serbia in recent years and this is no longer the case. There is however a negative focus on the Hungarian minority in Slovakia. Commission joined with strong nationalism. Tito had to balance – with positive yields for minorities. Office holders had to belong to minorities. Minorities shielded as part implemented these shielding policies. Disappearance of Tito left a whole which has not been filled. Serbian obsession with Kosovo impacted Vojvodina. Prompted nationalism

I: Why has Hungary sought to strengthen relationship with Hungarians living abroad?

R: Competition for voters. Wanted more unity.

I: How is the situation in Serbia?

R: Intellectuals had role in Serbian policy and legislation in first 10 years after Milosevic yielded greater cultural autonomy. 2002 act of National Council elected by national minorities. There is financial support to VMSZ from the Hungarian government and helping this party mobilises votes for Fidesz. Cultural institutions. Entrepreneurs. The demographics in Vojvodina is a huge problem. There was an attempt to ethnically engineer the region – 200,000 Serbs came to Vojvodina. No positive inter-ethnic spirit. Decreasing relevance of Hungarians.

I: How did the 2011 dual-nationality law affect the region?

R: Biggest wave of Serbians leaving for Hungary. The people expected the Hungarian government to act given their Hungarian national identity. It was in line with nationalism. The mindset of the current Hungarian government is: If a change of borders is not possible, the next best alternative is to make them our citizens