*Information about interviewee:*

*The interviewee, who wished to remain anonymous, was a Hungarian-Serbian journalist. The interview was conducted in Subotica, Serbia.*

*R= Respondent – Anonymous journalist*

*I=Interviewer – Sam Wrighton*

I: How would you describe the Hungarian state’s influence on the VMS?

R: Absolute control. They unofficially finance the VMS. Even the MSP backed the VMS, but they did not want to get involved in politics in Serbia. VMS is the Serbian branch of Fidesz. The help with campaigning. Use the Prosperitati development fund for campaigning. Orbán sent his minister for foreign affairs (Peter Szijarto) – to SNS rally – “If I was a Serb, I would vote for SNS”. Hungarian state media helped 2012 VMS election. Control of Vojvodina media – and they know that the people in Vojvodina watch Hungarian news and tailor this to them

I: What financial help do the Hungarian state offer?

R: Grants for scholarships. Lots of small players have received small money. This, other than the commission deciding who gets this money, is quite transparent. Soon the big players will get big money. Not transparent. Football teams.

I: Why is Fidesz so interested in getting involved in politics in the neighbouring territories?

R: They have three options: One, they instil one part in each surrounding country that they can cooperate with. Two, if this is not possible, then they can unite two political parties. Three, pick one of the two. They do this to gain control of the political situation and to centralise the political power within Hungary, extend the reach of the Hungarian state across borders and to obviously gain votes for Fidesz to achieve a super majority. With this majority Fidesz can declare a state of emergency against its enemies and bypass the remaining democratic processes that the country has.

I: I have been told that Hungary sees the Hungarians living abroad as an ‘economic resource’. Do you believe this to be the case?

R: Yes. The demographic situation is bad, and they know it will get worse. People are replacing Hungarians in these regions. Migration has occurred, but not to Hungary, but to Austria, Germany, and the UK. The main reason is it is a source of corruption. They are able to money launder across territorial borders.

I: I understand Jobbik have opened offices in Senta and are facilitating in naturalisation requests. Why?

R: They are competing for votes with Fidesz. They have learnt from Fidesz that this works.

I: How does the Prosperitati Foundation distribute funding?

R: Fidesz decides who they want to receive funding. But this is officially decided by a commission (VMS and Fidesz) which is officially – not formed along party lines. Potential for serious corruption. Football camps.

I: How has Fidesz affected voting in Vojvodina?

R: Not yet succeeded in getting people to vote. They estimate only 30,000 votes came from Vojvodina in the referendum and 25,000 for the election. Viktor Orbán is inconsistent. He is a chameleon. He adjusts his policies to meet his needs. Fidesz originally liberal and against Russian involvement but this has changed dramatically. In the 1990s he walked out of forum discussing the negative impact of the Treaty of Trianon, and now he has a bumper sticker on his car displaying the area of Greater Hungary. No ideology – “authoritarianism is there ideology”. Fidesz had no manifesto when they came to power in 2010. Simply stated that the socialists were corrupted and were enemies of the state. They have control of media through Orbán’s network and used this for a propaganda campaign against the socialists.

I: Do you believe Fidesz have any territorial ambitions?

R: No. They are satisfied with influence. They want to balance the relationship between SNS and VMSZ. SNS have tactics that may be replicated by VMSZ Almost all city mayors in Vojvodina are SNS, except three which are VMSZ. SNS trying to influence/overtake their functions. Some local politicians turning to SNS. Maybe in Ukraine there is some buffer between Hungary and Russia is desirable. Definite desire for more cultural autonomy. Much of the engagement with the Hungarians abroad is purely down to corruption and to strengthen their position domestically in Hungary. They do not really care about the people.