



‘External ethnic citizenship’ constellations in Hungary and Romania: identity, rights and mobilities

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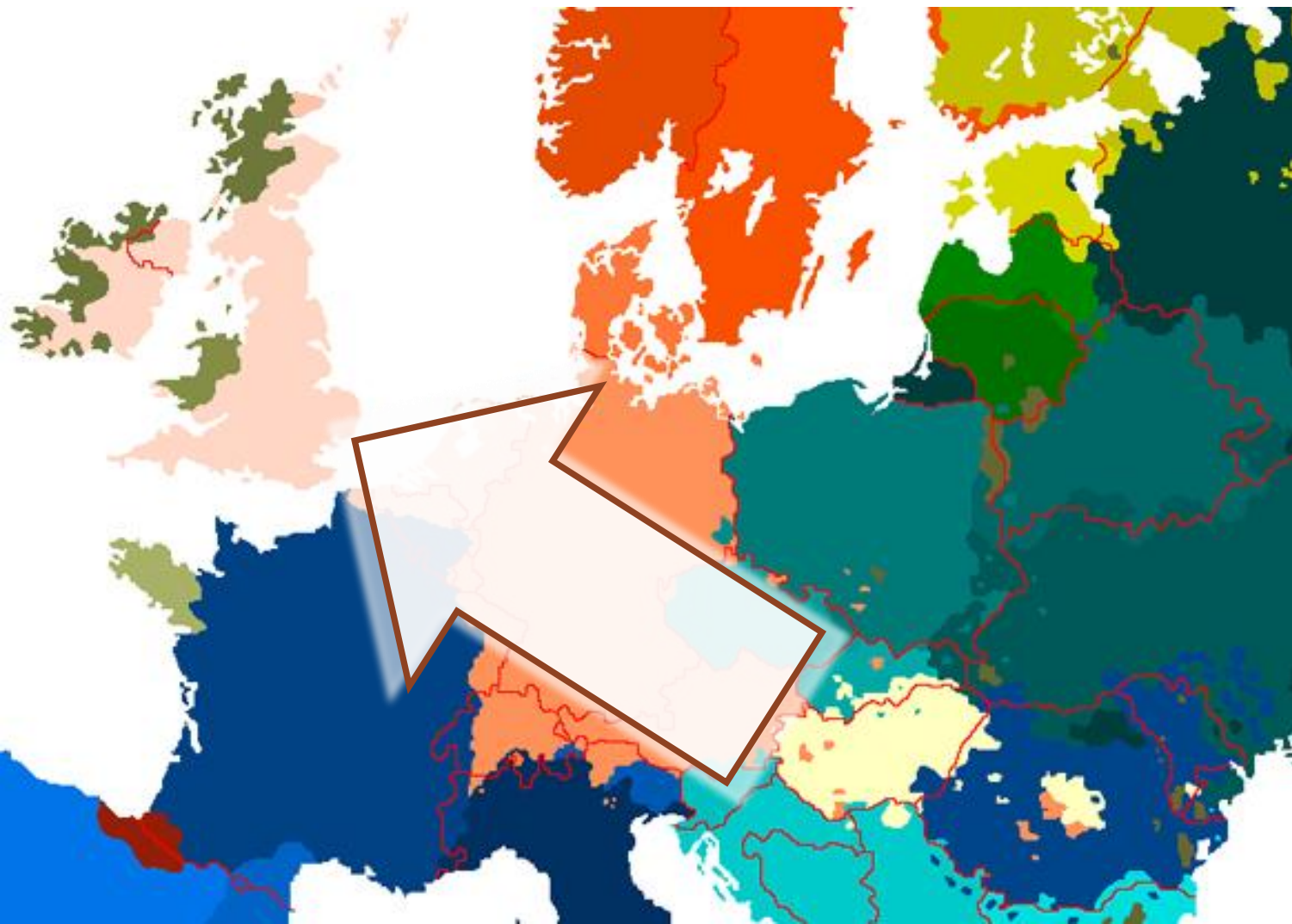
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Moreh (forthcoming) *Mobility citizenship: migration, identity, and nationality in a restructuring Europe*. Palgrave Macmillan

- Ch. 2.3 & 5.3

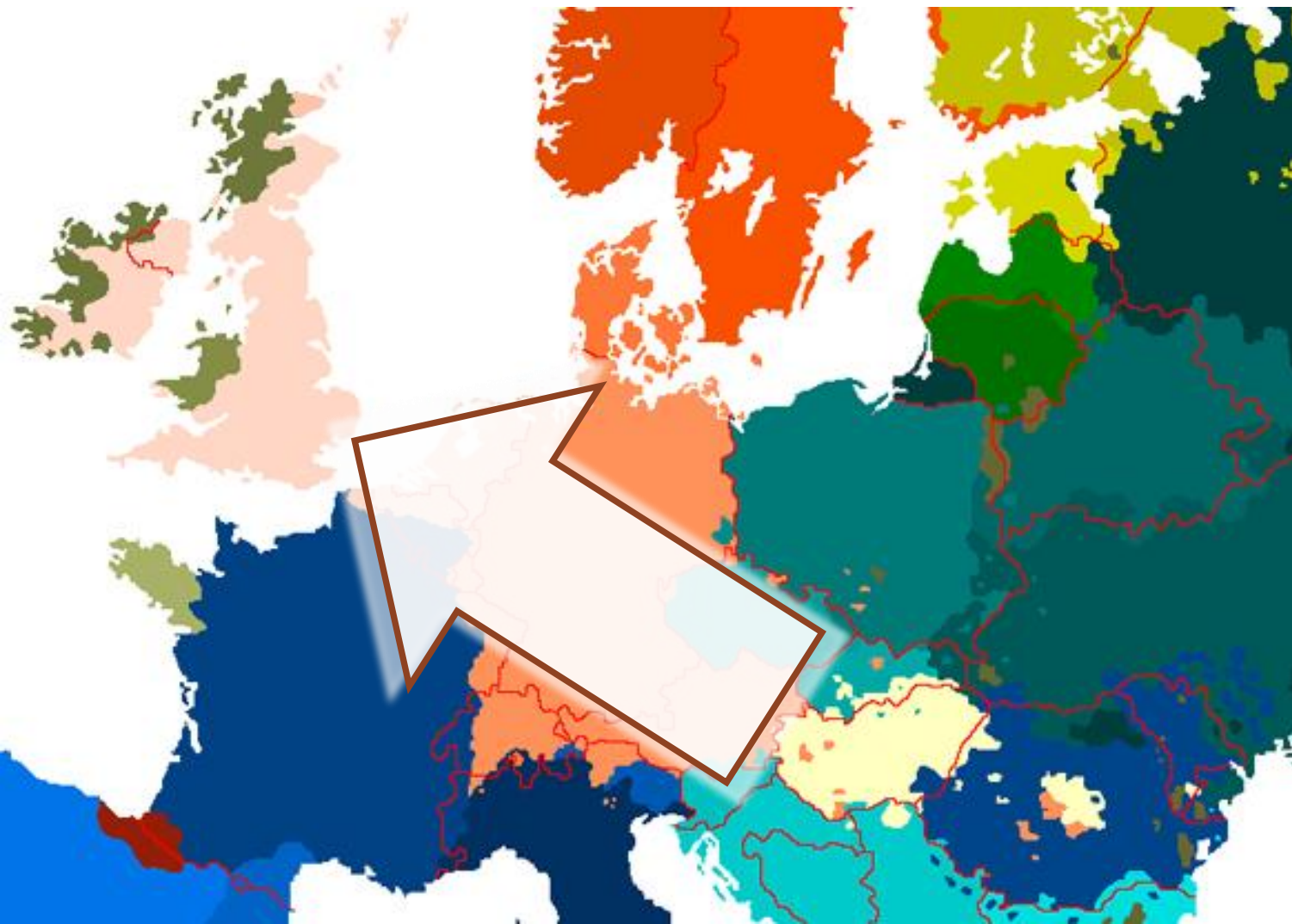
- o 'mobility' as integral to 'citizenship', complementing and linking together a 'lighter' version of the civic, political, and social rights that make up the classical tripartite notion of citizenship described by T. H. Marshall (1950).



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- **Mobility constellations** (Cresswell): 'historically and geographically specific formations of movements, narratives about mobility and mobile practices'
- **Citizenship constellations** (Baubock): 'a structure in which individuals are simultaneously linked to several [territorial political entities, among which states are the most important ones], so that their legal rights and duties are determined not only by one political authority, but by several '



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- **‘National minorities’ / ‘Trans-border nationals’**: ethnic groups living on the territory of one state (‘host-state’), while at the same time being ethnic kins of the majority nation of another, often neighbouring, state (‘kin-state’). In terms of national identification, they often find themselves in a position of ‘mismatch’, ‘attached by formal citizenship to one state (...) yet by ethnonational affinity to another’ (Brubaker, 1996: 7).

External ethnic citizenship laws

- **Romania:**

- Decree-law no. 7 of 31 December 1989
- Decree-law no. 137 of 11 May 1990
- **Romanian Citizenship Act No. 21 of 1991 (articles 8, 11 and 37); amended more than twenty times and republished twice, in 2000 and August 2010**
 - June 2010, creation of the Romanian National Citizenship Authority to process the 'frozen' and new applications

- **Hungary:**

- **Act LXII of 2001 on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries**
 - a 'benefit law' (Ieda, 2004)
- **Law no. XLIV of 2010, on the modification of law no. LV of 1993 regarding Hungarian citizenship.**
 - Effective from January 2011; applications could be submitted from August 2010

External ethnic citizenship ‘threats’

MailOnline

Passport giveaway opens UK back door: 2m more Hungarians will have right to work here

By DAILY MAIL REPORTER
UPDATED: 07:49, 6 August 2010

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Hungary is set to hand passports to millions of people living outside the EU – raising the prospect of a new wave of immigration into Britain.

From next year, Hungary's leaders will begin a huge passport giveaway to minority groups who have historic or ethnic ties to the East European country but live elsewhere.

Most of the beneficiaries live in impoverished countries on the fringes of Europe. Once they are given a passport, they will be entitled to full access to the rest of the EU – including Britain.



Passport giveaway: Around 4.7 million people from countries like Moldova, Macedonia, Serbia, Ukraine and Turkey will be eligible for Hungarian passports

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Romanian Passports For Moldovans: Entering the EU Through the Back Door

By Benjamin Bidder in Chisinau, Moldova

Romania's president wants to increase his country's population and is using an odd means to do so. The country is generously bestowing hundreds of thousands of Romanian passports on impoverished Moldovans. They are gratefully accepting the offer from the EU member state and are streaming into Western Europe to work as cheap laborers.



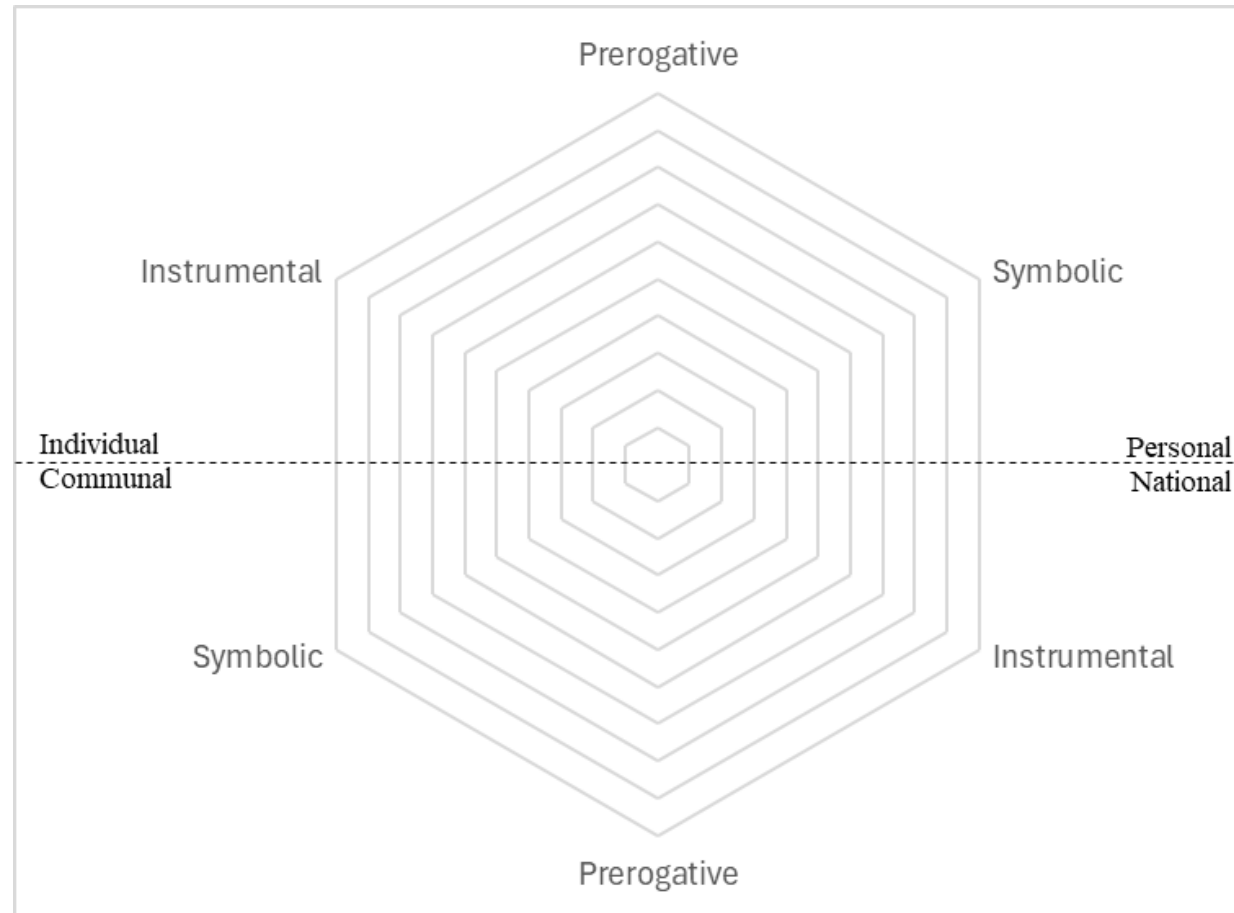
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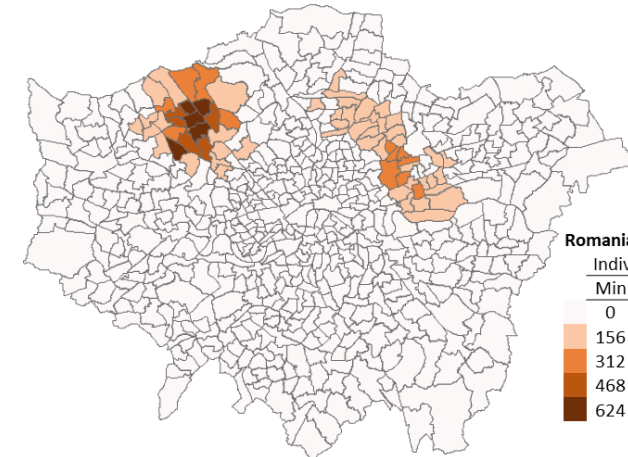
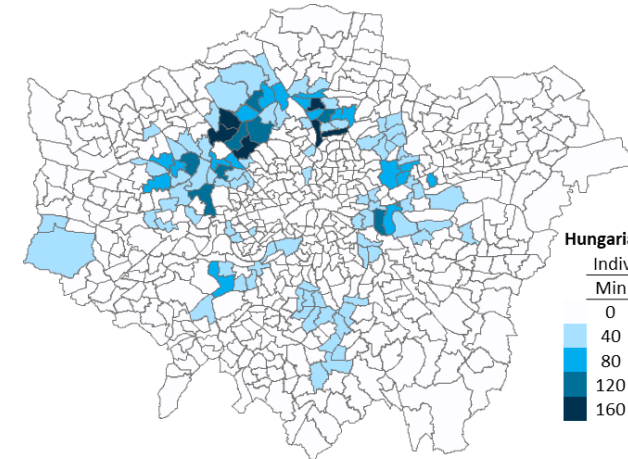
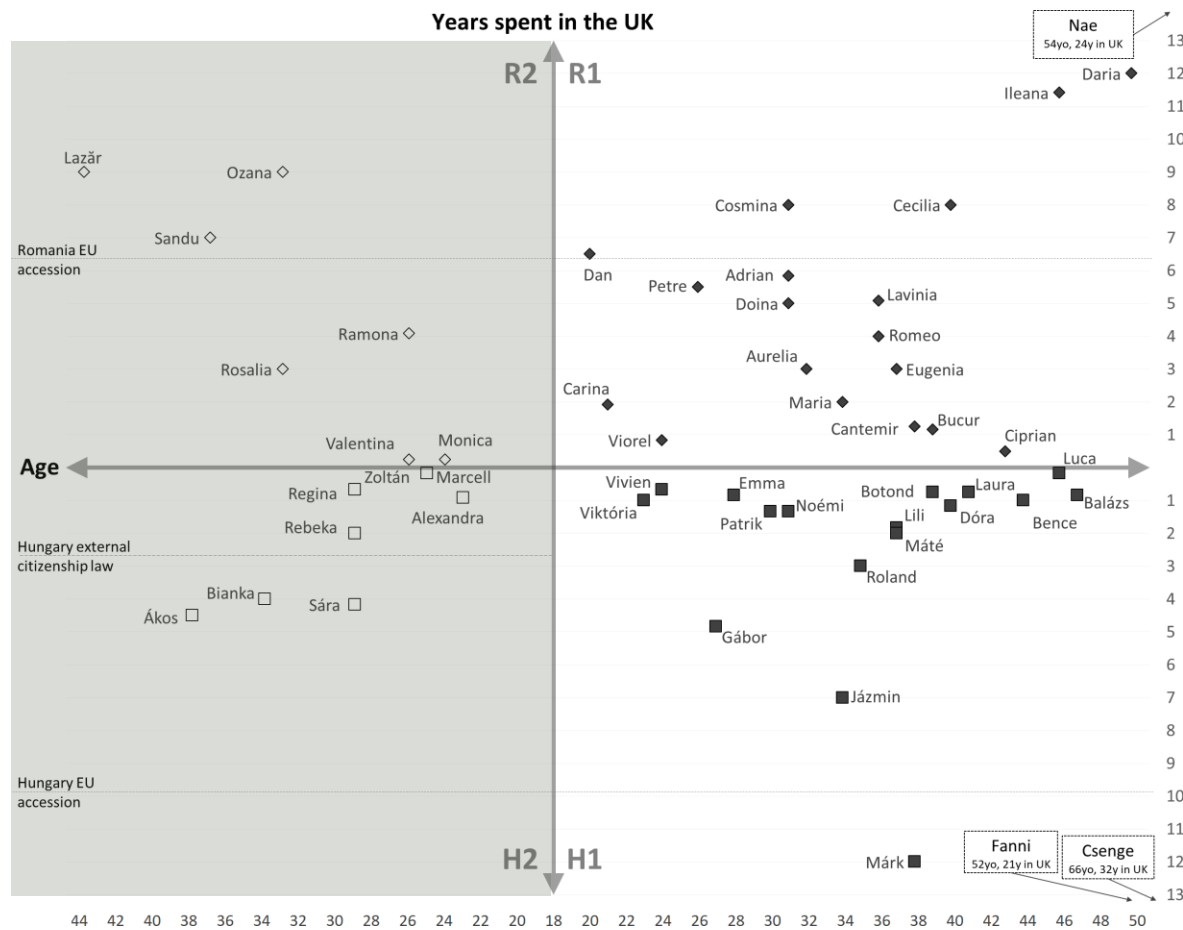
External ethnic citizenship ‘acts’

- Acquiring external citizenship can be read as a primordial ‘act’ of citizenship (Isin and Nielsen, 2008; Isin and Saward, 2013) – including the *lack of action* in this direction –, which has both individual and communal elements and rationalisations, and an array of usages, interpretations and a/effects
- Kiss and Barna (2013): ‘symbolic’ vs. ‘pragmatic’
- Papp (2014): ‘sentimental-familial traditions’, ‘ethical’, ‘national’ motivations, often complemented by ‘references to the role and responsibility held by the mother country’
- Toderiță, Silaghi and Ghinea (2012): migration to kin-state; migration to EU; ‘cultural identity’, ‘family traditions’; scepticism about Moldova’s EU prospects; ‘anti-Russian feelings’
- Knott (2019): ‘strategic’, ‘symbolic’ and ‘legitimate’

Motivational fields



Data and methods



Naturalisation, migration and status change

“It opened all doors for us and I felt very happy that such a law was adopted. For **me personally, it fulfilled me.** And I felt more... free ... I got it on the 27th of March this year, and on the 31st I came here ... I got my passport in three days, and three days later the ticket was purchased” (Monica, R2, 24 F)

“In the beginning, since I didn’t have Hungarian citizenship, I knew that the only option I have is to become either a cleaner or an au-pair. The initial plan was that I would work as a nanny until I get my passport, and as soon as it arrives, I say kiss-kiss, bye-bye. (...) [in Britain] They don’t like Romanians. A Romanian friend of mine advised me not to say that I was Romanian, even he had pretended to be Hungarian”
(Alexandra, H2, 23 F)



MOTIVATIONS

Instrumental motivations: 'insurance policy'

“The reason? Well, employment here in England. ... If I had stayed, well, I would have applied, but then not for employment. Then just for the sake of having it. I may find work in Hungary, **you never know, we live close to the border**” (Ákos, H2, 38 M)

“The main reason was that I thought it would make my residence abroad easier in every sense, so in any country ... I would have solicited it anyway, but staying at home and not wanting to travel anywhere was not an option for me, because **something could intervene at any time, even if I'm planning to stay at home, you never know**” (Regina, H2, 29 F)

Symbolic motivations: personal

*It has always been an issue [in Moldova] whether one is Russian or Romanian, or where I am from, what language I speak, that I don't want to speak Russian but Romanian, there has always been this nationality question. And since around 1998-2000, people started demanding that they be spoken to in Romanian in the shops; people were saying "you should be speaking to me in Romanian, not I to you in Russian", and this sort of things. ... And people then began making Romanian passports and Romanian citizenships. ... And my parents thought, well, **initially they thought that we may go to live in Romania one day ... The situation in Moldova has never been very stable, and if you are Romanian, I don't know, my parents thought "why not affirm our being Romanian?"** (Ramona, R2, 26 F)*

Prerogative: national

“I would have taken up [Hungarian citizenship] even on sentimental grounds, so... on a level **I feel that this is due to us... because of our past, our history...** that our great grandparents were still Hungarian, but it has been taken away from us” (Marcell, H2, 25 M)

Prerogative: personal

“I’ll tell you honestly, I did not need it so that I could come easily abroad, because I decided after it anyway. It was purely because **I have always felt that the whole family is Hungarian, my great-grandmother, my grandparents... even my great-great grandmother was a Hungarian citizen, and my great-great grandfather used to work at the railways at the time ... And when the borders were redrawn, then the [national railway company] offered to take him and his family to Hungary on a carriage. But he could not leave his home behind, so he was stuck there.. ... So, it has been more of a sentimental thing. Well, for me it does help now, it gives me the advantage of not to have to do this Romanian charade anymore”** (Sára, H2, 29 F)



IDENTITY NEGOTIATIONS

National self-presentation and negotiating ethnicity (1)

It does make a difference if I have a Hungarian citizenship, because **now I can say that I am just as Hungarian as the other Hungarians. Before, I couldn't, because he had a certificate of it while I didn't.** Even if I speak Hungarian and I can recite I don't know which poem that even he doesn't know, and still... (Patrik, H1+, 30 M)

It was terrible in the beginning. People are always glowering at you, and that was when I first arrived; now it is much worse! ... **I kept trying to explain in vain that you know, historically... They just said: "madam, what is in your passport?"** [In English] **And if the passport says Romanian, there is no point in explaining any further.** ... I prefer to call myself Hungarian now. If you say you are from Transylvania, they may not understand what that means. **It's easier to say Hungarian, it also comes easier to me, and why carry this Romanian stigma, when you are not even Romanian?** (Sára, H2, 29 F)

*It's hard to explain. In Hungary, when you fill in an official form, you have the distinction between citizenship and nationality. **Here you don't have that option; it is automatically assumed that citizenship equals nationality'*** (Marcell, H2, 25 M).

National self-presentation and negotiating ethnicity (2)

When they hired me I told them I was Romanian, because I didn't have Hungarian citizenship. **Now recently, when we were talking I told them I was Hungarian and they looked perplexed**; then why did I say before that I was from Romania? So then I have to explain that yes, I live in Romania, I grew up there, but regardless of that I am Hungarian, and at the same time Romanian, because I have two citizenships; but **they find it hard to understand, the English, they are not very good at history.**' (Bianka, H2, 34 F)

I say I am Transylvanian. **I know that many people do not understand what that means, but they should look it up then.** For example, I had an episode with the previous child [as a nanny]: he asked me once if I was speaking Romanian [on the phone], and I told him that no, it's Hungarian. How come I am from Romania then? And then I explain the history... to an eight-year-old. **Two weeks later he says to me – well, by then our relationship had turned bad – and he says: why did you lie to me? Because mummy said that it wasn't true. I told him he should learn history.** (Rebeka, H2, 29 F)



TRANSBORDERING
NATIONHOOD

Transbordering nationhood (1)

“I had the **‘Hungarian certificate’** and I tried with that, but it didn’t work... If you go to Scotland to one of the islands to work in a hotel, they would hire you, because they have no idea what that is, and they don’t really care; and to be honest, **no one goes to check anyway** ... I have heard from people who work there, **and I know some who were employed with a Hungarian certificate without any problem**” (Sára, H2, 29 F)

Transbordering nationhood (2)

“I always try to explain to people that there is no such thing as a Moldovan language, that it is the same as Romanian and that Moldova has been historically part of Romania. And interesting things happen; for example, I used to have **a Greek colleague** at the company where I worked, and we used to talk a lot about history, he was telling me about Greece, and I was telling him about Moldova. After I left the company he got promoted, and at one point he was **interviewing for a position in his department**. And a Moldovan girl came along, who had **written on her CV that she speaks Romanian, Moldovan...** And the first question [my friend] asked her was to **describe the differences between Romanian and Moldovan** – he already knew of course, **I had told him that there was none**. And the poor girl, she just froze, her face changed through all the colours of the rainbow” (Sandu, R2, 37 M)



CONCLUSIONS?