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## **METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF POLITICAL- GEOGRAPHICAL STUDIES OF BORDERS USING THE EXAMPLE OF HUNGARY**

**Abstract:** This paper explores how political geography, through the application of various methodological approaches, studies borders. Political geography analyzes how political systems, decisions, and institutions influence the organization of space and territorial control. Borders, as qualitative lines that separate territories, can be linear or zonal and are classified by morphology, physiognomy, genesis, and functions. The example of Hungary reveals how historical changes in borders, such as natural, national, and treaty boundaries, impact the political and economic aspects of the state. Border management involves control of movement, security, and cross-border cooperation, which is critical for regional stability and development. Hungary has historically frequently changed its borders, necessitating active international cooperation and diplomacy to resolve issues and promote stability and economic growth.

**Key words:** political geography, state borders, Republic of Hungary, border management, cross-border cooperation

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## **Introduction**

Political geography is a branch of geography that deals with the study of spatial aspects of political systems, processes, organizations, and phenomena. It focuses on the examination of geographical phenomena, processes, and relationships of a political nature. In the broadest sense, it can be defined as the science of the system "geography – politics." This scientific discipline investigates how political decisions, political institutions, and political ideologies influence spatial organization, territorial control, and international relations. This paper will discuss political geography, its sub-disciplines, with a particular focus on political-geographical studies of borders using Hungary as a case study. Special attention will be given to border types, issues related to border functioning, and Hungary's cross-border cooperation with neighboring countries. Through a brief historical overview of the Hungarian state, we will examine the changes in its territoriality and cooperation with its surroundings. This paper will analyze this area and all political-geographical developments in Hungary using relevant examples and political maps (Grčić, 2000).

Political geography, like all other scientific disciplines, has undergone various stages of development throughout history. To effectively analyze political geography as a scientific discipline, it is essential to review and thoroughly examine its development, significance, and application. Accordingly, the primary goal of this research will be a detailed analysis of the objectives of political geography research. To achieve these research objectives, different aspects of political systems, processes, and phenomena will be analyzed in the context of space and territory, with a particular focus on borders, types of borders, issues related to border functioning, and Hungary's cross-border cooperation with neighboring countries.

## **Research Methodology**

The methodology of political geography research encompasses a broad range of quantitative and qualitative methods to understand the complex interactions between political processes and space. These methods enable researchers to collect data, analyze it, and draw conclusions about political systems, identities, and geopolitical relationships. The most significant research methods in political geography include literature analysis, fieldwork, geographic information systems, surveys and questionnaires, archival research, data analysis, comparative analysis, and qualitative research. Since this paper will discuss the methodological foundations of political-geographical studies of borders using Hungary as a case study, the methods used for analysis and understanding of this issue will include literature analysis, archival research, data analysis, and qualitative research. These methods are often combined in the research process to provide a comprehensive insight into political-geographical phenomena and processes (Grčić, 2000).

Borders represent qualitative transitions between different geographical phenomena and can be linear, zonal, or frontal. A state border is a social fact in the form of an imaginary line, zone, or front that separates a state's territory from all other territories or from the open sea. The study of geographical borders is covered by a specific discipline called limology. A border represents the limit of state power and an instrument for protecting sovereignty. "Borders are not just lines on a map; they are deeply intertwined with national identities, economic interests, and political control" (Alexander, Joshua, 2012). This means that borders have a multi-dimensional significance, affecting not only geographical divisions but also cultural, economic, and political aspects of society. Modern state borders are like imagined membranes. In the

past, borders were often wide zones or frontier areas with uncertain affiliations. These were typically deserts, forests, mountains, or swamps. Today's concept of a border is associated with the idea of marked and established boundary lines, which corresponds to the modern concept of the state. Modern borders are clearly defined and can be natural (mountains, rivers, seas, lakes, etc.) or artificial. Borders have always been, but especially in modern times, the most significant element of any state, as they are crucial for preserving sovereignty and territorial integrity (Grčić, 2000).

## **Concept of borders**

Determining borders is a highly complex process that depends on multiple factors and criteria. The most significant criteria for determining borders are: geographical factors, historical treaties and agreements, ethnographic and cultural factors, economic factors, political factors, administrative factors, demographic factors, and international law (Dennis, Julian, 1991). In political geography, five types of border concepts are distinguished: 1. Natural Borders, 2. National Borders, 3. Negotiated Borders, 4. Geometric Borders and 5. Political Power Borders.

Natural borders are boundaries formed based on natural geographical features, such as rivers, mountains, seas, deserts, or other natural terrain characteristics. These borders often arise as a result of natural processes over time and usually have a stable and permanent nature. Natural borders include: river borders, mountain borders, sea borders, desert borders, geological borders, and biomorphological borders. Natural borders often have advantages in terms of clarity, stability, and natural separation of territories but can pose challenges in management and supervision, especially in the case of river borders which may change over time (Saul, 2008).

The example of Hungary clearly illustrates the significance of natural boundaries. The Danube River has been one of the most important natural boundaries for Hungary throughout history. During the medieval period, the Danube frequently acted as a boundary between Hungary and Croatia to the south. The Tisza River partially separated Hungary from Romania and Serbia throughout history, playing a crucial role in defining Hungary's geopolitical position and was an important factor in military operations. The Carpathian mountain range in northeastern Hungary served as a natural border with neighboring countries such as Slovakia and Ukraine. The Mecsek Mountains in southern Hungary represented a natural barrier and acted as a border between Hungary and adjacent territories. Lake Balaton has historically partially served as a natural boundary and was an important geographical feature in defining territory (Próbáld et al., 2012).

National borders are boundaries that separate the territories of different states or national entities. These borders often represent political, legal, and territorial divisions between different nations or national groups. National borders can result from historical processes, geopolitical events, agreements, or conflicts, and may be defined in various ways, including political, economic, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural factors. Key characteristics of national borders include: political control, identity differences, legal status, security and control, and social and economic connections. National borders are often the subject of political and territorial disputes, especially in cases where there are disagreements over territorial claims or political assertions. Hungary has national borders with several neighboring countries, including Austria, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia. These borders are defined by

international treaties and agreements, as well as geographical features such as rivers, mountains, and other natural objects (Bora & Nemerkenyi, 2023).

Agreed borders are boundaries that have been formally negotiated and recognized through international treaties, agreements, or arbitration decisions between two or more countries. These agreements may result from diplomatic negotiations, peaceful negotiations, or arbitration processes. Key characteristics of agreed borders include: legal basis, diplomatic negotiations, border agreements, arbitration, and international recognition. In 1998, Hungary and Croatia signed a Border Agreement that officially defined the boundary line between the two countries. This agreement was important for the stability of relations and cooperation between Hungary and Croatia. In 2005, Hungary and Romania reached a border agreement that resolved some historical disputed issues and precisely defined the border between the two countries. This agreement is important for the stability and cooperation between Hungary and Romania. Agreed borders often represent a stable and accepted form of territorial boundaries between states but may be subject to changes or challenges if political, economic, or other circumstances change or if international agreements are violated.

Geometric borders are boundaries defined based on abstract geographical coordinates, lines, or geometric shapes, rather than natural features or political agreements. These borders are often the result of historical processes, colonial territorial divisions, or administrative decisions and may be a straight-line or rectangular in shape. Key characteristics of geometric borders include: a straight-line shape, geographical coordinates, administrative decisions, and potential conflicts. Geometric borders often pose challenges in managing and integrating territories, as they do not account for the complexity of geographical, political, and cultural factors that shape the identity and belonging of populations. In the case of Hungary, a notable example of a geometric border is the boundary between Hungary and Croatia in the Međimurje region, which has straight lines that are partially defined geometrically. These borders have mostly been established through agreements and partially follow straight lines drawn on maps during various historical periods (Malcolm, 1996).



*Fig. 1. Regions of Hungary (Provinces map of Hungary, 2024)*

Borders of political power refer to territorial boundaries within which political authority has jurisdiction and control. These borders denote areas where political institutions have the authority to enact laws, implement policies, administer governance, and enforce laws. Key characteristics of political power borders include: jurisdiction of authority, sovereignty, territorial integrity, security, and defense. Political power borders can be national borders between states or administrative borders within a state. They often represent the foundation for organizing political systems, managing territories, and exercising state sovereignty. However, these borders can also be a source of political disputes, conflicts, and problems, especially in the context of territorial claims and ethnic or national conflicts (Grčić, 2000). Hungary is divided into seven main regions: Northern Hungary, the Great Northern Plain, the Great Southern Plain, Central Hungary, Central Transdanubian Hungary, Southern Transdanubian Hungary, and Western Transdanubian Hungary. These regions typically have a degree of autonomy in managing their internal affairs (Szilárdiné, 2020).

### **Classification of borders**

Borders can be classified according to: morphology, physiognomy, genesis, conditions and causes of formation, and functions. Morphologically, borders may be: "geometric," "astronomical," meandering, straight, and transformed. In terms of physiognomy, borders can be orographic or hydrographic. According to genesis, borders can be categorized into natural (defined by natural features such as rivers, mountains, lakes, and forests. In Hungary, natural borders include: the Danube River, which separates Hungary from Slovakia; the Drava River, which forms a boundary between Hungary and Croatia; and the Carpathian mountain range, which covers the northeastern part of Hungary and partially serves as a natural border with Slovakia) and artificial (defined by human actions, often through agreements, negotiations, or international treaties, rather than natural features. For example, the border between Hungary and Serbia was established after World War I and the Treaty of Trianon. This border is not defined by natural features but is the result of political decisions and agreements). In a broader classification, borders can be antecedent, successive, superimposed, relict, and consequent. According to conditions and causes of formation, borders may be post-war, compensatory, inherited, colonial, and disputed. In terms of function, borders can be barrier, filtering, contact, and open (Alexander & Joshua, 2012).

Globally, contact or connecting borders dominate: integrative borders or connecting-type borders have formed only in North America (NAFTA) and Europe (EU) due to the "Schengen Agreement." Thus, when considering borders, three interconnected factors should be taken into account: connections, space, and time. Hungary has integrative borders with EU member states, namely Austria, Slovakia, Romania, Croatia, and Slovenia, while it has contact borders with non-EU countries, such as Serbia and Ukraine (Berend, 2021).

Borders are lines or zones that separate two or more territories. They can vary depending on the context and the nature of the territories they divide. The main types of borders are:

**Political Borders:** These separate the territories of different states or political entities. They are often the result of agreements, wars, or historical events. Hungary has undergone various phases of territorial changes throughout history. For example, following the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy after World War I, Hungary lost significant portions of its territory, including Transylvania, Slovakia, and Vojvodina. Conse-

quently, the border between Hungary and Romania became a national border after the Treaty of Trianon in 1920 (Unger & Sabolč, 2013). Political borders can be fixed, such as state borders, or temporary, such as administrative borders within a state.

**Geographical Borders:** "Geographical borders often follow natural features such as mountains, rivers, and seas, but their impact on political and social dynamics can be as significant as any artificial boundary" (Dennis, Julian, 1991). These borders typically align with natural geographic features like rivers, mountains, or lakes. They can be stable over time or subject to changes due to natural processes such as erosion or geological disturbances. Hungary has geographical, or natural, borders with most of its neighbors. Exceptions include Romania and Serbia, where Hungary has exclusively artificial borders.

**Cultural Borders:** These arise from differences in culture, language, religion, or customs between different groups of people. Borders between ethnic groups or linguistic communities are often defined as cultural borders. The border between Hungary and neighboring countries such as Slovakia, Romania, or Serbia may reflect cultural differences among ethnic groups living along the border.

**Economic Borders:** These reflect differences in economic systems, trade, or monetary policies between different regions or states. Hungary's economic borders are fluid and depend on various factors, including EU membership, bilateral agreements, free trade agreements, special economic zones, and regional economic cooperation. These examples demonstrate how economic borders can vary depending on specific economic activities and regulatory frameworks that define them (Pierre et al., 2008).

**Customs Borders:** These are used to control and collect customs duties on goods entering or leaving specific territories. These borders are important for regulating trade and protecting domestic industries. Hungary has customs borders only with Serbia and Ukraine, as they are not EU member states. Since Hungary's other neighbors are EU member states, it has integrative or connecting borders with them (Luc & José, 2005).

**Maritime Zones:** This refers to areas around the coast of a state within which that state has special rights and jurisdiction, including the right to exploit natural resources such as oil. Given that Hungary is a landlocked country and does not have a coastline, it does not have a maritime zone.

**Temporary Borders:** These are usually established in emergency situations, such as wars or humanitarian crises. They can be temporary or become permanent depending on political events and negotiations. For example, during World War I, Hungary was involved in battles on various fronts, leading to changes in borders with neighboring countries like Romania and Serbia. During the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy after World War I, Hungary went through a political crisis, resulting in temporary administrative borders with newly formed states: Czechoslovakia and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Barta et al., 2019). During crisis situations such as natural disasters, migration crises, or political unrest, temporary borders may be established to control the movement of people or goods. For instance, during the migrant crisis in 2015, Hungary temporarily closed its borders with Serbia and Croatia to prevent illegal crossings and manage migration flows.

**Contemporary Borders:** Today's borders of Hungary are precisely defined by international treaties and in accordance with European Union rules. These borders are open for

free movement within the Schengen Area (integrative borders), but stricter controls are implemented at external borders, particularly with Serbia and Ukraine (contact borders) (Amilhat & Frederic, 2015). Each of these border types has its own characteristics, functions, and implications in international relations, geopolitics, and the daily lives of people living in those territories (Walters, 2009).

Borders have important functions that affect political, economic, and social life. The main functions of borders are:

**Political Function:** Borders define the territorial extent of state authority and sovereignty. They separate one country from another and enable the management and control of specific territories.

**Administrative Function:** Borders demarcate administrative units within a country, such as provinces, regions, districts, or municipalities, and aid in the organization and efficient governance of the state. Hungary is divided into seven main regions. Each region is further subdivided into districts or counties, which are lower levels of administrative units. Counties typically have their own administrative centers and governing bodies. Hungary is administratively divided into 19 counties and the territory of the capital city, Budapest (<https://real.mtak.hu>).



*Fig. 2. Counties or districts of Hungary (Counties Of Hungary Baranya County Map, 2024)*

**Economic Function:** Borders regulate economic activities, including trade, customs, and taxation. They can serve as control points for the import and export of goods and for the enforcement of economic policies.

**Security Function:** Borders serve to protect against external threats and enable control over the entry and exit of people, goods, and vehicles. They help prevent illegal activities such as smuggling and unauthorized immigration.

**Cultural Function:** Borders can separate different cultural, ethnic, and linguistic groups, preserving and maintaining cultural identities and diversity.

**Symbolic Function:** Borders have symbolic value and can represent national identity, history, and sovereignty of a state or people.

**Legal Function:** Borders define the jurisdiction of laws and legal systems of a state, determining where specific laws and regulations apply.

**Social Function:** Borders can influence social relationships, migration, and demographic changes by regulating the movement of people and settlement within and beyond state territories (Colin & Peter, 1985).

The hierarchy of borders refers to the various levels and types of borders that exist within and between states. The basic levels in the hierarchy of borders are:

**International Borders:** These borders separate one country from another and define the territorial sovereignty of each state. Hungary shares its borders with Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Austria, with clearly defined and internationally recognized boundaries (Romsics, 2017).



Fig. 3. Hungary and its neighbors (Britannica, 2024)

**Subnational Borders:** These borders exist within states and divide the territory into administrative units such as regions, provinces, or districts. Hungary is divided into 19 counties and the city of Budapest, which has a special status. The counties of Hungary are: Baranya, Bács-Kiskun, Békés, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Csongrád-Csanád, Fejér, Győr-Moson-Sopron, Hajdú-Bihar, Heves, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok, Komárom-Esztergom, Nógrád, Pest, Somogy, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Tolna, Vas, Veszprém, and Zala. The city of Budapest has a special status and is not part of any county (Németh et al., 1975).

**Local Borders:** These borders exist within administrative units and divide them into smaller units such as municipalities and cities. Counties or districts are further divided into

municipalities, which are the lowest level of administrative units. Municipalities are responsible for local governance and providing essential services to citizens. Hungary has more than 3,000 municipalities, which vary in size and population, and can be classified as urban or rural depending on the type of settlement they cover (Próbáld et al., 2012).

Inclusion is the process of integrating various groups into the political, economic, and social system. It may involve opening borders to migrants, granting access to public services, or integrating minority groups. Hungary became part of the Schengen Area in 2007, which allowed for the free movement of people across borders with neighboring Schengen member countries without the need for passport controls. On the other hand, exclusion is the process of excluding certain groups from the political, economic, and social system. It may manifest through border closures, discrimination against minorities and migrants, or restricting access to resources and services. During the migrant crisis in 2015, Hungary faced a significant influx of migrants attempting to enter the country from Serbia, leading to border congestion, clashes between migrants and police, and serious challenges in managing the migrant flow. Consequently, Hungary constructed a fence along the border with Serbia to control the influx of migrants. This decision sparked controversy and criticism from the international community and non-governmental organizations, which argued that the fence violated the human rights of migrants. Border Identity Politics refers to the way borders influence the definition and maintenance of various identities—whether national, ethnic, cultural, political, or social (Dennis & Julian, 1991).



*Fig. 4. Fence at the Hungary – Serbia border (Source: Index, 2015)*

## **Border management, cross-border cooperation and border functioning issues**

Border management encompasses various strategies and measures that states implement to control and regulate their borders. This includes the control of the movement of people, goods, and information across borders, as well as the protection of territorial sovereignty. Key aspects of border management include: border control and security, migration policy, trade and customs control, health and sanitary measures, border infrastructure, regional and global security, identity politics, and international or cross-border cooperation (Nick, 2009).

Cross-border cooperation refers to collaboration that takes place across borders between different countries or administrative units. This concept involves the exchange of resources, knowledge, ideas, and information between various entities located on differ-

ent sides of borders. Cross-border cooperation can encompass various areas such as the economy, education, culture, science, security, infrastructure, and more. The goal of cross-border cooperation is often to strengthen international relations, enhance regional stability, promote economic development, exchange knowledge and experiences, and address common problems or challenges (Bacsi & Kovács, 2007).

In the 21st century, Hungary became a member of the European Union (in 2004), which has significantly impacted cross-border cooperation. Today, Hungary engages in cross-border cooperation in areas such as the economy, military, culture, education, and tourism with EU member states and neighboring countries, including Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania (where cooperation is less optimal), Serbia, Croatia, Austria, and Slovenia. Given that, apart from Romania, the largest Hungarian communities are in Slovakia (about 450,000) and Serbia (about 250,000), it is logical that Hungary has the most effective cross-border cooperation with these two countries (Romsics, 2017).

The construction of a bridge over the Danube River between the settlements of Komárom in Hungary and Komárno in Slovakia is a significant project aimed at increasing road traffic between the two countries and improving border infrastructure. Hungary and Slovakia have significant trade connections and support programs for the development of cross-border economic zones. Both countries possess a rich cultural heritage and natural beauty that attract tourists. Programs for developing tourism at the border, as well as joint marketing efforts, can contribute to attracting more visitors and enhancing tourism infrastructure. Student exchanges, cultural programs, and cooperation in the field of education can strengthen the ties between the two countries and enable students and professors to exchange experiences and knowledge (<https://www.emins.org>).

Hungarian companies' investments in Serbia across various sectors, including the automotive, IT, and pharmaceutical industries. For example, Audi has built a new factory in Serbia, contributing to the creation of new jobs and economic development. Participation in the development and modernization of railway infrastructure connecting Serbia and Hungary. An example is the project to construct a new railway corridor between Budapest and Belgrade, which will significantly improve the transportation of passengers and goods between the two countries. Joint projects for tourism development in areas bordering Hungary and Serbia, such as Lake Palić and villages in Vojvodina. Investments in hotels, restaurants, and other tourism-related facilities contribute to attracting more tourists and creating new business opportunities. Student and faculty exchange: Programs for student exchange and collaboration between universities in Hungary and Serbia. Examples include Erasmus+ programs and various scholarships for students and researchers who wish to study in the other country (<https://www.mei.gov.rs>).

Cross-border cooperation is one of the key forms of cooperation for any state and has the greatest impact on the development and stability of a country within the region. Throughout its history, Hungary has faced various challenges related to border functioning. These issues can be diverse and may include political, economic, social, and other factors. In the 10th century, conflicts with Eastern Germany, the Bavarians, and the Moravian tribes affected border stability. Additionally, conflicts with Bulgaria and Royal Russia resulted in changes to borders. The Middle Ages brought Mongol invasions and Ottoman threats, leading to territorial losses and alterations. The Treaty of Trianon in 1920 resulted in Hungary losing 60% of its territory. The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 worsened relations with neighboring countries. The dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s led to border

issues. The migrant crisis of 2015 caused tensions and the construction of a fence along the border with Serbia. Border functioning problems are among the most complex issues a country can face, as they directly affect territorial stability and the economy. Addressing these problems often requires international cooperation, diplomacy, economic development, strengthening institutions, and promoting human rights (Unger & Sabolč, 2013).

## **Discussion**

To conduct a quality discussion on this topic, it is necessary to have knowledge and a detailed investigation of several key subjects related to this area. These subjects include the history of Hungarian borders, changes in the territorial distribution of the state, ethnic communities inhabiting this region, diplomatic relations with neighboring countries, cross-border cooperation with neighbors, the region, and with European Union states, as well as the regional position of the state. Through the analysis of these subjects, a wide range of diverse analyses and discussions on fundamental issues that shape the geopolitical landscape of this region is opened up.

This topic can be analyzed and discussed using various methodological approaches: The historical approach, which can provide insight into territorial changes, conflicts, and diplomatic relations with countries in the region. The political approach, which focuses on the role of state institutions, political actors, and international agreements in shaping and maintaining borders. The geographical approach, which focuses on the analysis of the geographical characteristics of Hungary's borders, including natural barriers such as rivers or mountains, which can affect the shape and function of the borders. The sociological approach, which explores how borders affect the lives of Hungarian citizens and their relations with neighboring countries. And the comparative approach, which can provide contextualization and a better understanding of the specific characteristics and challenges related to Hungary's borders by comparing them with the borders of other states in the region or globally.

One of the most significant topics that has been extensively discussed is Hungary's cross-border cooperation with neighboring countries, the region, and the European Union states. "Cross-border cooperation is crucial for addressing common problems and promoting economic and social development in border regions" (Dennis & Julian, 1991). This means that cross-border cooperation is essential for solving shared issues and encouraging economic and social development in border areas. It highlights the importance of collaboration between different countries and regions to overcome challenges and improve living conditions for their inhabitants.

The most notable scholars who have researched the topic of Hungary's cross-border cooperation include: Johannes Wessels, an expert on cross-border cooperation and political relations in Central and Eastern Europe; Balázs Judák, who specializes in Hungarian history and politics, including aspects of cross-border cooperation; Eva Molnár, who studies the geopolitical dynamics in Central and Eastern Europe as well as relations with countries in the region; and Jelena Tošković, who focuses on geopolitical relations between Hungary and its neighbors. These scholars have made significant contributions to the understanding of the political-geographical aspects of Hungary and its role in cross-border cooperation in the region.

Through the analysis and development of this topic, it is concluded that every country, including Hungary, undergoes various phases throughout its history and development. These phases depend on current events in the region and require each country to adapt to the appropriate situation. Hungary has altered the appearance and size of its territory multiple times throughout its history, leading to the creation of new borders and new political, economic, and geopolitical situations that it has had to face (Dugin, 2004).

## **Conclusion**

Political geography is a branch of geography that deals with the study of spatial aspects of political systems, processes, organizations, and phenomena. It involves research into geographical phenomena, processes, and relations of a political nature. In the broadest sense, it can be defined as the science of the "geography-politics" system. This scientific discipline explores how political decisions, political institutions, and political ideologies impact the organization of space, territorial control, and international relations.

Borders represent a qualitative transition from one geographical phenomenon to another, and they can be linear, zonal, or frontal. A state border is a social fact in the form of an imaginary line, zone, or front that separates a state's territory from all other territories or from the open sea. The study of geographical borders is handled by a specific discipline called limnology. In political geography, five types of border concepts are distinguished: "natural" borders, "national" borders, "contractual" borders, "geometric" borders, and borders of "political power."

Borders can be classified by: morphology, physiognomy, genesis, conditions and causes of formation, and functions. By morphology, borders can be: "geometric," "astronomical," wavy, straight, and transformed. By physiognomy, borders can be orographic and hydrographic. By genesis, borders can be, according to a narrower classification, natural and artificial, and according to a broader classification, antecedent, successive, superimposed, relict, and consequent. By conditions and causes of formation, borders can be post-war, compensatory, inherited, colonial, and disputed. By functions, borders can be barrier, filtering, contact, and open. Borders are lines or zones that separate two or more territories. They can vary depending on the context and the nature of the territories they divide. The main types of borders are: political borders, geographical borders, cultural borders, economic borders, customs borders, maritime law zones, temporary borders, and contemporary borders. Borders have important functions that affect political, economic, and social life. The main functions of borders are: political function, administrative function, economic function, security function, cultural function, symbolic function, legal function, and social function. The hierarchy of borders refers to the different levels and types of borders that exist within and between states. The basic levels in the hierarchy of borders are: international borders, subnational borders, and local borders. Inclusion and exclusion, as well as border identity politics, are concepts that address how borders impact social, cultural, and political relations within and beyond specific territories.

Border management encompasses various strategies and measures that states use to control and regulate their borders. This includes managing the movement of people, goods, and information across borders, as well as protecting territorial sovereignty. Key aspects of border management are: border control and security, migration policy, trade and customs control, health and sanitary measures, border infrastructure, regional and global security, identity politics, and international or cross-border cooperation.

Cross-border cooperation refers to collaboration that takes place across borders between different countries or administrative units. This concept involves the exchange of resources, knowledge, ideas, and information between different entities located on either side of a border. Cross-border cooperation can encompass various areas such as economics, education, culture, science, security, infrastructure, and more. The aim of cross-border cooperation is often to strengthen international relations, enhance regional stability, promote economic development, exchange knowledge and experiences, and address common problems or challenges. Cross-border cooperation is one of the key forms of cooperation for any state and has a significant impact on the development and stability of a state within the region.

Throughout its history, Hungary has encountered various problems related to the functioning of its borders. These problems can be diverse and may include political, economic, social, and other factors. Border management issues represent some of the most complex challenges a state can face, as they directly affect territorial stability and the state's economy. Addressing these issues often requires international cooperation, diplomacy, economic development, strengthening institutions, and promoting human rights. Through the analysis and development of this topic, it is concluded that every state, including Hungary, goes through various phases throughout its history and development. These phases depend on current events in the region and require each state to adapt to the appropriate situation. Hungary has altered the appearance and size of its territory multiple times throughout its history, which has led to the creation of new borders and new political, economic, and geopolitical situations with which it has had to contend.

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