

# *Passport and Visa Policy of the Kádár regime\**

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Like all communist states, post-war Hungary tried to hinder its citizens from crossing the border. In this matter, these states really made up a 'bloc'. In the early 1950s no difference was made even between travels to communist countries and Western ones. There were more types of travel documents, including Diplomatic Passport, Foreign Service Passport, Service Passport, Visitors' Passport, Collective Passport, Emigration Passport etc. The use of most types of these passports was limited; only Visitors' and/or Collective Passports were available for a normal citizen, at least theoretically. The number of passports issued was rather small. These circumstances started to change some months before the 1956 revolution. From that time, travel to the Eastern-Bloc countries was made much easier by the introduction of the so-called "Travel Permit" or "Inset" (passport sheet). The name indicates that it was used with another document, the identity card. Other new passports were the Danube Shipping Pass and the Seaman's Passport.<sup>1</sup> Visitors' Passport was gradually transformed into "private" Passport. This was an important change because it indicates that until mid-1956 passports could be obtained almost exclusively for familiar reasons, e.g. to visit relatives abroad. The applicants also had to produce an invitation letter. From then on, people were able to apply for a passport for other reasons like tourism or with no reason at all. But from as early as 1948 no public rules were published regarding passports and travelling and this situation remained unchanged until 1961.

## *Passport policy of the Kádár-regime*

After Soviet tanks suppressed the revolution, János Kádár (1912–1989) came to power in November 1956. The new regime had to face a very serious problem in

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<sup>1</sup> MOL XIX-B-10-1956-V-76.

the country's western and southern borders. Tens of thousands of people fled first to Austria and later to Yugoslavia. This was possible because of some pre-revolution events: the Iron Curtain was removed in 1955; much more passports were issued and passport-control became less strict in 1956. Moreover, the Border Guard became ineffective for some months due to the revolution. This is why Kádár's first initiatives about the passport- and border-question resulted in returning to the pre-1955 strictness. The Border Guard was quickly reorganized and its service was remilitarized. Trains were again stopped at the border and escorted by border-guardsman (equipped again with submachine guns). Passports were again taken away from passengers and examined in a separate room. Passport controls became very strict and lasted for a long time. However, in late 1956 and early 1957, with the disintegration of the ÁVH border guarding activities, and before Kádár reorganized the Border Guard, more than 200,000 Hungarians fled abroad (primarily to Austria) across the still unguarded borders. The Kádár regime interpreted it as illegal departure, but for political reasons promised impunity to those who left illegally before 31 January 1957 but announced their intention to return before 31 March.<sup>2</sup> This amnesty was related only to illegal border-crossing; another "crimes" committed by such returners were punished. This is why people coming home from Austria and Yugoslavia were settled first in a "filter-camp" in Győr and Szeged.<sup>3</sup> From December 1957 returners were put under tighter control at the border but the camps were abolished.<sup>4</sup>

The first years of the Kádár regime are characterised by reprisals (hard dictatorship). Passport regulations were not made public at all, while at the same time the border traffic significantly rose. What is more interesting, new measures had not been made and the older rules from the Rákosi-era remained in effect until 1961. A valid plea for a passport had to contain several certificate and papers. These included citizenship-, birth- and marriage certificates, photos countersigned by the police. But one also had to prove the need of his or her journey (invitation letter, medical certificate, death certificate of a relative who lived abroad etc.) These papers were not enough for a private journey – the approval of the employer had to be attached. Emigrants had to produce a tax-certificate, a so-called pre-visa from the country they wished to emigrate and they had to prove they did not leave behind any dependents.<sup>5</sup> The authorities checked the applicant's criminal record and asked the opinion of other departments. The decision was made by the Committee for Foreign Relations (Külföldi Kapcsolatok Bizottsága, KKB).

The validity of passports was limited not only in time but also territorially. In most cases it included one or two countries and the passport could not be validated for additional ones. The use of the travel documents was also restricted by

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<sup>2</sup> Edict No. 27. of 1956. TRHGY 1956, 66, and Edict No. 24. of 1957, TRHGY 1957, 170.

<sup>3</sup> 0579/szolg. – 1957 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1957-V-35.

<sup>4</sup> Order No. 58/1957 BM, MOL XIX-B-10-1957-45.

<sup>5</sup> 0759.597/1952 ÁVH HKB, MOL XIX-B-10-1952-V-21.

the so called "permit for going abroad" (actually an exit visa).<sup>6</sup> It was unnecessary for the first use of the Visitors' /Private Passport; any other journey was possible only with the permit.<sup>7</sup>

Pleas for passports had to be handed in the local police authorities, except in Budapest, where the Passport Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs arranged this task. The Passport Department was also the issuing authority of all passports, except Diplomatic and Foreign Service Passports (issued at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs) and also the "Insets" (issued at the county branches of the Home Affairs Ministry).

The first attempt to re-regulate the passport and visa policy of Hungary under Kádár was made in the session of the Politburo of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP) on 18 October 1960.<sup>8</sup> The Politburo agreed that new measures had to be worked out and published. Although the number of Hungarians travelling abroad was higher than in the neighbouring communist countries, the Politburo finally agreed that the issuance of passports and visas must increase. The first public measures on passports were issued on 31 March 1961.<sup>9</sup> They did not bring new rules only summarised those already in use. They are still of great importance; being the first public measures since 1948. Although this regulation was very short and did not clear many questions for the travellers-to-be, it was a move towards reform and liberalization. From that time on, brand new passport regulation were issued every 8 to 10 years. The next regulation in 1970 was not only a decree but also an edict,<sup>10</sup> but the first law on passports appeared only in 1989. From 1970, every new regulation was made at three levels (edict, decree of the Council of Ministers and decree of the Minister for Home Affairs).

The 1961 governmental measure annulled the old law on passports (Law No. VI. of 1903) which was in use only in theory that time. This decree ordered that passports could be issued by the Ministers for Home and Foreign Affairs. The decree 1/1961 of the Minister for Home Affairs contained the details. The issuance and renewal of passports was the task of the Passport Department, except for the "Insets" which could be issued at county police stations. Almost all requests had to be handed in the Passport Department, except for Visitors' or Private Passports

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<sup>6</sup> This kind of exit visas were not real visas, because visas were issued to foreign citizens. These permits were given to Hungarians. However, its role was the same as real exit visas and I am going to mention it as exit visa.

<sup>7</sup> 0759.597/1952 ÁVH HBK, MOL XIX-B-10-1952-V-21. Some types of passports were valid for one travel only, e.g. the Collective Passport, the Emigration Passport and the "Inset". These were withdrawn on crossing the border.

<sup>8</sup> MOL M KS 288. f. 5/205. őe.

<sup>9</sup> Decree No. 10/1961 Korm. TRHGy 1961, 206-207, and Decree No. 1/1961. BM, TRHGy 1961, 425-426.

<sup>10</sup> Edict: Hungarian "törvényerejű rendelet"; literally a "Decree with a force of a law" or simply a "Law decree". Edicts were issued by the Presidium of the People's Republic and substituted the laws which were very few due to the fact that the Parliament' activity was limited in communist Hungary.

and of course the Insets. Private Passports were valid for one single year but were renewable. Collective Passports and the Insets were valid for one journey. Emigration Passports were valid for 5 to 6 months but only with a special certificate called Border Transfer.<sup>11</sup> A new kind of passport, the Consular Passport was introduced in 1962.<sup>12</sup> In fact, it was the renaming of an old passport named "Passport for Hungarian Citizens Living Abroad".

The first public regulation for passports was not a complete one. The most important question remained unknown to the public. Namely who was entitled to obtain a passport and who was not. A secret resolution of the government was made in 1961, according to which, those who were previously or currently convicted, who were under criminal proceedings and even those whose journey "violated the interest of the country" were not entitled to obtain a passport. Another secret resolution in 1966 created new barriers: journeys to the West were possible every two years for visiting relatives and every three years for other reasons. For private journeys, the political and moral behaviour of the applicants had to be considered. Finally, those who had relatives who had left Hungary illegally were not entitled to get a passport. As these rules were not public, the resolutions of rejected passport-requests did not contain any explanation for the denial.<sup>13</sup>

Between 1961 and 1970, there were some slight modifications in the passport rules. The requests for passports were made easier in 1964. Insets and Private Passports for European communist countries could be applied at the local level, town and district police stations. The validity of passports was extended to two years, however they were still only for a single journey and a new exit visa was needed for further trips. Applications for Collective and Emigration Passports were made possible even at the county police stations and the deadline of judgement was considerably shortened to 30 days instead of 60 (in the event of emigration, 60 days instead of 90). However, those who lost their passports could only obtain a new one a year later with a very few exceptions.<sup>14</sup>

The use of Insets was made easier in the 1960s. Insets valid for Czechoslovakia and/or Poland were extended to one-year validity and more journeys from 1964. New journeys with this Inset were possible with a new exit visa<sup>15</sup>. This advantage was introduced also for Bulgaria in 1964 and for East Germany in 1965. The new

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Gy. Nagy, *Magyarország határforgalmat ellenőrző szervezetének, a szervezet feladatrendszerének, alkalmazott módszereinek változása 1945–1991 között*. [Changing of the tasks, methods and organization of Hungary's border traffic control] Ph.D. dissertation, ZMKA 1993, 1, 70, and 2, 30.

<sup>13</sup> Resolutions No. 3.082/1961 Korm. (MOL XIX-J-1-j-29/b-003528/1-1961 KüM.) and 3.215/1966 Korm. See K. Persa, *Igazgatásrendészeti Füzetek. Útlevelelrendészet*. [Administrative Papers. Passport Surveillance] Budapest 1991, 1, 13–14. A detailed case on denied passport application can be found in TH O-11027, in a file on the group called "Hírmondók" (News-tellers).

<sup>14</sup> Decree No. 6/1963. BM, TRHGy 1963, p. 206–207.

<sup>15</sup> 019/1964. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1964-V-3, and MOL XIX-B-10-1966-V-34.

Insets were available at most local police stations.<sup>16</sup> Travellers could use the Insets even at frontier stations open for close border traffic to Czechoslovakia.<sup>17</sup> What is more, these stations were made available to cross even with passports for the citizens of both countries from 1967.<sup>18</sup> Applications for the most frequently used types of travel documents – the Inset, the Private and the Collective Passport – were made possible even at Hungary's biggest travel company, IBUSZ.<sup>19</sup>

In 1964, the following travel documents were in use: Diplomatic, Foreign Service, Service, Private, Consular, Emigration and Collective Passports, the Inset (Travel Permit), Homecoming Certificate, Danube Shipping Passport and Identity and Travel Card (homeless passport).<sup>20</sup> The use of the above mentioned documents first appeared in a public measure in 1966, e.g. Shipping Passport and the Homecoming Certificate. The former was the official document of not only the shippers but also some waterworks-workers. This passport – unlike the others – was valid for five years, but its territorial validity was limited. Homecoming Certificate was issued abroad for Hungarian citizens, who did not have any valid (Consular or other) Passport and whose return to Hungary was allowed. Pleas for this certificate had to be handed in any Hungarian foreign representation, but the decision was made by the Passport Department. This document was valid only for returning to Hungary.<sup>21</sup>

An entirely new passport regulation was prepared in 1969–1970 after the Politburo discussed the subject in September 1969 and decided to issue new measures including an edict and two decrees.<sup>22</sup> It was the first time when an edict (Edict No. 4 of 1970) was made on passports and the second regulation on this subject in the Kádár-era. The importance of this edict is in its §3, which stipulates that every Hungarian citizen has the right to have a passport and travel abroad provided he or she satisfied the conditions determined by legal measures. Details, however, were regulated by decrees of the government and the Ministry for Home Affairs. The edict listed the types of travel documents, which were unchanged from 1962.<sup>23</sup>

The governmental measure (Decree No. 4/1970 Korm.) extended the validity of passports to five years, but exit visas were not repealed. The restriction that passport applications had to be judged by employers (by educational institutions in the case of students and by a representative organisation in the case of a self-employed person) was very important. The decree determined who were not en-

<sup>16</sup> Telegraphic directions Nr. 39/100, and Nr. 6, MOL XIX-B-10-1966-V-34.

<sup>17</sup> 0769/Hdm. – 1964. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1964-VI-5.

<sup>18</sup> 3041/1967. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1967-VI-17, also can be found in MOL XIX-B-10-1969-V-45.

<sup>19</sup> J. Czuczor, *Útleveél- és vízumismeretek*. [Passport and visa rules] Budapest 1968, 1–13; see also Klsz. 0990/1969 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1969-V-48.

<sup>20</sup> *Magyar útiokmányok érvényességére vonatkozó szabályok*. [Rules concerning the validity of Hungarian travel documents] Klsz. 0751/1964 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1964-V-31.

<sup>21</sup> Decree No. 6/1966 BM, TRHGY 1966, 264.

<sup>22</sup> MOL M KS 288. f. 5/499. őe.

<sup>23</sup> Edict No. 4 of 1970, TRHGY 1970, 53–55.

titled to get a passport, which was also of great importance. It was the first time that these conditions – which were extremely strict – had become public. Those who endangered the safety of the state, who travelled to countries considered enemies of socialism, who were under criminal proceedings, who were under police supervision, who travelled to visit persons who left Hungary illegally (and anyone who had such relative was suspected to travel for this reason), and who did not have the money for the travel could not have a passport. Other groups could be prohibited from travelling abroad for five years, including those who abused their passports, or only lost it, etc.<sup>24</sup> The passport issuing authorities had no right to consider the circumstances and those applicants who lied under the denying paragraphs did not get the passport. Still, it is important that the authorities had to justify the reasons of every denial.<sup>25</sup>

It was also a novelty that the private passports could be issued not only for (official) business trips and visiting but also for organised package tours, individual tourist trips (with the hard currency exchange permission of the currency authority) or for study trips, employment or medical treatment. These conditions were only applicable for western journeys, as trips to five socialist countries had been possible with the Inset several times a year. However, to other countries it was possible to travel bi-annually (provided the inviting person fulfilled the financial conditions) and with the purpose of tourism once every three years. Emigration or settling down abroad was even more difficult: only people aged 55 years or more and those who travelled due to family reunion were able to settle down legally (supposing they did not have public debt or any dependents staying in Hungary). Men of military age had to have a permit of the Ministry of Defense, too. Emigrants got Emigration Passport and so lost their Hungarian nationality; others obtained Consular Passport and kept their citizenship.<sup>26</sup>

The implementing decree No. 2/1970 BM regulated the application and issuing procedures, and also the contents of the passports. Area, town and district police stations were able to issue Insets and Collective Passports for five socialist countries (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Poland and Romania). The county police stations issued Insets for Yugoslavia and the USSR, Private and Collective Passports to all other countries; all other passports were the issued by the Passport Department.<sup>27</sup> Still, it was a measure of decentralization, as journeys to the West were judged at the county level. The applications for the passport had to be handed in personally (except at official trips) at the issuing authority. There were many annexes to be attached to the application form.<sup>28</sup> Passports could be

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<sup>24</sup> Decree No. 4/1970. Korm, TRHGY 1970, 184–186.

<sup>25</sup> Persa 1991, 1, 15.

<sup>26</sup> Decree No. 4/1970. Korm, TRHGY 1970, 184–186.

<sup>27</sup> Decree No. 2/1970. BM, TRHGY 1970, 315–318. Diplomatic and Foreign Service Passports were issued by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* To be attached: two photos, a biography, opinion (and not approval, as it had been) of the employer, permission of the military officials, max. 3 month old invitation

used for a single trip only, except those which had more than one exit visa. If they had not, a new permission (exit visa) was needed for the next journey. The application procedure for a new exit visa was almost the same as that for a new passport. Exit visa contained the reason and the duration of the journey. The deadline of issuance decreased again to 14 or 30 days, depending on the type of passport. All Insets were made valid for a year – they could be issued for one or more states. However, renewal was not possible.<sup>29</sup> The passport rules were summarised by the leader of the Passport Department also.<sup>30</sup>

The implementing decree had been modified several times. From 1972, Insets were withdrawn. Instead of them the “Red” or “Eastern” Passport (a private passport valid for five socialist countries, Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Poland and East Germany) was introduced. Older Private Passports had soon become the “Blue” or “Western” Passport. The Red Passport could be validated for all the five countries or only for one of them; it was shown by the exit visa stamped in the passport. However, its territorial validity could not be extended to any other country.<sup>31</sup> Originally, the Red Passport contained one exit visa but as soon as in January 1972 five exit visas were granted. At the same time, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia joined the five other socialist countries, but with only one exit visa at the same time.<sup>32</sup> Also from 1972, the Passport Department was relieved from the duty of dealing with applications for Collective and Blue Passports of the Budapest citizens. Instead, the Budapest Metropolitan Police was charged with this task.<sup>33</sup>

Although the Red Passport was valid for Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union even from 1972, the first public measure to mention it appeared only in 1976. Applications for this passport had to be arranged within 14 days.<sup>34</sup> In the meantime, Danube Shipping Passport was renamed Service Passport for Sailors.<sup>35</sup>

Passport-right was again re-regulated in November 1978 in an edict and two decrees. These new measures were again decided in the meeting of the Politburo in March 1978.<sup>36</sup> The Edict No. 20 of 1978 made no significant changes, with the only exception that it did not refer to the Consular and Emigration Passports which were withdrawn at this time.<sup>37</sup> The Decree No. 53/1978 of the Council of Ministers made more significant changes. From then on, no difference was made among the reasons of the journey at the private passports. However, Private

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letter for visiting trips, medical or school certificate in case of treatments or study trips, permission of the currency authority in case of individual tourist trip.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> 75–26–11/1970 BM. (Direction No. 01 of the leader of the Passport Department), TH 1.11.1. ÁBMHT, box 8.

<sup>31</sup> Decree No. 6/1971 BM, TRHGY 1971, 604.

<sup>32</sup> Circular No. 28–126/1972 BM, TH 1.11.1. ÁBMHT, box 8.

<sup>33</sup> Decree No. 6/1971 BM, TRHGY 1971, 604.

<sup>34</sup> Decree No. 7/1976 BM, TRHGY 1976, 405–406.

<sup>35</sup> 099/1975 HOP, MOL XIX–B–10–1975–V–3.

<sup>36</sup> MOL M KS 288. f. 5/741. őe.

<sup>37</sup> Edict No. 20 of 1978, TRHGY 1978, 327.

Passports could be issued for private and official trips and for settling down abroad. The reasons for denying the issuance of the passports had been refined. Some automatic denials had been changed to a possibility upon the consideration of the local issuing authority. These included the following: previously convicted persons, people under police supervision; anyone who wanted to travel to a person who left Hungary illegally not more than 5 years earlier or if he or she was liable for his or her relative's illegal departure; finally, whose defence could not be assured abroad. The range of those who were forbidden to travel abroad for five years did not change. However, losing a passport did not result in such prohibition.<sup>38</sup> These limitations together were so severe that they cast doubt on the right mentioned in the edict, that "every Hungarian citizen has the right to travel abroad". The passport-issuing authorities (i.e. local and county police stations) were granted discretionary power to deny the right to travel abroad. The limitation of the number of annual travel to the west – what remained unchanged – was again contrary to the right to travel and even to the Helsinki Declaration of 1975, which Hungary signed and ratified.<sup>39</sup>

The implementing decree of 6/1978 BM. listed four travel documents in addition to those defined in the edict. Some of these were used even earlier, like the Border Crossing Certificate (used by officials at border-meetings with the neighbouring countries), the Border Crossing Permit (used in the close border traffic) and the Homecoming Certificate. The only new travel document introduced here was the Emigration Permit, which was actually a signet stamped in a Private Passport and replaced the withdrawn Emigration and Consular Passports. Passport issuing authorities did not change (only foreign representations got broader rights). No change was made in the procedure of the application either, including the process of emigration. The validity of Private Passports remained five years; the territorial validity could be a state or a continent but never the whole world. Passports still contained the description of the holder. There was no change in the issuing deadlines and in the use of exit visas.<sup>40</sup>

Members of organised package tours to the Soviet Union were also equipped with the Red Passport instead of Collective Passport. From 1 May 1979, multiple exit visa was introduced for the five socialist countries instead of the five separate ones (excluding Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union). It also meant, that the number of travel to these countries became unlimited.<sup>41</sup>

The comparison of the 1970 and 1978 passport regulations yields interesting facts. The difference between them is negligible. It seems that, contrary to some noticeable liberalization, the 1978 measures meant to hide the single element that did change, but *negatively*. Namely the restriction of the right to settle down

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<sup>38</sup> Decree No. 53/1978 MT, TRHGY 1978, 476–477.

<sup>39</sup> W. Sólyom-Fekete, *Travel Abroad and Emigration under New Rules Adopted by the Government of Hungary*, Washington D.C 1979, 6–9.

<sup>40</sup> Decree No. 6/1978 BM, TRHGY 1978, 580–583.

<sup>41</sup> Direction No. 26/1978 BM and Measure No. 8/1978 ORFK, cited by 00144/1979 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1979-V-4.



abroad. Instead of emigration, much more emphasis is given on "settling down abroad". This slight change meant that it was not possible to lose Hungarian citizenship by going to live abroad, as the right of emigration was changed to the right of "settling down abroad". According to the Citizenship Law of that time, acquiring a new citizenship did not mean the loss of the Hungarian Citizenship. And if someone was officially a Hungarian citizen and his (or her) "activities abroad do not meet with the approval of the Hungarian Government, his passport may be revoked at any time. If he returns for a visit to Hungary, he may be detained there simply by denying to him the exit visa necessary to leave the country. (...) Thus a Hungarian emigrant must choose either to refrain from any activity the Government of Hungary may regard as impairing or jeopardizing the important interests of the present regime, or, failing this, must by all means refrain from visiting Hungary again."<sup>42</sup>

By 1979, although not mentioned in either measures of 1978, a new type of passport was introduced, called Passport for Hungarian Citizens Living Abroad. This was necessary because the Emigration and the Consular Passports were withdrawn.<sup>43</sup> It also supports the contention that restriction of legal emigration was one of the main aims of the 1978 regulation. The first public measure which mentioned this new type of passport was issued in 1982. In fact, a similar passport with the same name had been in use before 1962.

The possibility of an annual trip to the west from 1982 meant a considerable liberalisation. (Until then it was possible to travel every other year for the purpose of visiting and once every three years for the purpose of tourism. In the same year it was not possible to travel as tourist and later that year for visiting. Thus in a six-year period a maximum of five trips were allowed.) From 1982 we could travel every year and did not even need an invitation letter to prove the purpose of the visit.<sup>44</sup> Those who had hard currency accounts were entitled to travel to the west without having a separate hard currency allowance. Issuance of Service Passports (including Sailors') and Border Crossing Certificates became the duty of the Budapest Metropolitan Police instead of the Passport Department.<sup>45</sup>

Further modifications were issued in August 1982 but they came into force only on 1 January 1984. The Edict No. 19 of 1982 withdrew the Service Passport for Sailors, the Collective, the Red Private and the Foreign Service Passport. It was the first public measure which mentioned the Passport for Hungarian Citi-

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<sup>42</sup> Sólyom-Fekete 1979: 47–56. The citation is from page 51. Later on the author accuses the Hungarian government that the disguised prohibition of emigration is only because Hungary wants to get economic advantages from the USA. *Ibid.* 58–62.

<sup>43</sup> A magyar útiokmányok ellenőrzésének és kezelésének szabályai. (Rules of controlling of Hungarian travel documents) Klsz. 0546/1/1979 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1979-V-15.

<sup>44</sup> Decree No. 60/1981 MT, TRHGY 1981, 297.

<sup>45</sup> Decree No. 4/1981 BM, TRHGY 1981, 435–436. Issuing of Private Passport for settling down abroad, Passport of Hungarians living abroad, Homecoming Certificate and Emigration Permit remained the exclusive right of the Passport Department.

zens Living Abroad.<sup>46</sup> Instead of the Foreign Service Passport, the old Service Passport was utilized. Private Passport could be issued for service trips for those who were not entitled to have a Service Passport.<sup>47</sup> Another decree of the Minister for Home Affairs only summarised the changes made in the preceding four years.<sup>48</sup> With the new rules, an entirely new set of passports was issued after 1984. These travel documents differed only in their colours: Diplomatic Passports were brown, Service Passports were red and the Private Passports were blue. It also meant, that the two different types of Private Passports ceased to exist. However, Red Passports issued in 1983 still remained valid for five years. The new blue Private Passport had a permanent exit visa stamped in it, what was valid for the five (or the seven) European socialist countries for an unlimited number of travels. Some "wrongdoers" got this exit visa only for one occasion. For other countries, exit visas were given on a separate sheet of paper. For most cases, it was valid for one journey only.<sup>49</sup> Men of military age needed a permission from the Military Replacement Headquarters for journeys which exceeded 30 days.<sup>50</sup>

The last comprehensive regulation on passport-question in the Kádár-era was issued in 1987. By this time, border traffic had increased considerably as Hungary became more open to the west. More and more Hungarian travelled to Western Europe and it meant a lot of work for the passport-authorities. The economic crisis started around 1980. By this time, the standard of living decreased and this was a vital point after the 1956 revolution: the society accepted Kádár only because he promised well-being. Maybe this is why the regime decided to open western borders to travellers. This move was presumably only for improving the public feeling.

The Edict No. 25. of 1987 introduced the so-called World Passport. From 1988, (almost) every Hungarian citizen was entitled to obtain a passport valid for all countries of the world. The exit visas were abolished. This new Private Passport was also useable for business/service purposes. All other types of passports remained the same. Modified rules came to force in the question of settling down abroad. The age limit of 55 years was repealed, but the applicant had to certify he or she had the financial resources to resettle. According to the Edict, the right to travel abroad was fundamental and could only be limited exceptionally. The Edict lists what kind of persons are not entitled to have passport at all; in which cases the issuing authority must decide to issue a passport or not; who can get only a passport with limited validation; and finally, who can be excluded from travelling

<sup>46</sup> Edict No. 19. of 1982, TRHGY 1982, 219.

<sup>47</sup> Decree No. 38/1982. MT, TRHGY 1982, 353-354.

<sup>48</sup> Decree No. 8/1982. BM, TRHGY 1982, 625-627.

<sup>49</sup> *Az 1984. január 1-től kiadásra kerülő magyar útiokmányok ellenőrzésének és kezelésének szabályai* [Rules of controlling of Hungarian travel documents issued from 1 January 1984], 0269/14/1983. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1983-V-4, and *Dokumentáció az 1984. január 1-től érvényben levő új magyar útlevélekről* [Documentation on new Hungarian passports valid from 1 January 1984], D.ny.sz. 13-456/83, *ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Decree No. 8/1983. BM, TRHGY 1983, 371-372. See also the modified and updated 1978 measures in TRHGY 1984, 813-819.

abroad for a maximum five-year long period.<sup>51</sup> Critically, the limitations did not refer to financial clauses, because the right to have a passport and the right to travel abroad were separated from each other. The latter became to the competence of the Financial Ministry. Passport authorities did not have to examine the financial conditions of the journeys and issuing passports became easier and quicker.<sup>52</sup>

The Edict was accompanied by only an implementing decree of the Minister for Home Affairs. Exit visas did not disappear entirely, because the Passport for Hungarian Citizens Living Abroad and the Emigration Permit remained valid. Passport Department became an inspecting body and a forum for appeals; it was not entitled to issue passports. The county police stations and the Budapest Metropolitan Police had the duty to issue Homecoming Certificates and passports for settling down abroad. The universal Private Passport was issued by town and district police stations. Applicants had to fill in an application form and the only attachment needed was two photos.<sup>53</sup> Thanks to the new regulations, the number of passport applications and the border traffic to Austria increased at a large scale from 1988. Moreover, the proportion of denied applications fell considerably.<sup>54</sup> Most Hungarian citizen could travel to the west for the first time and "shopping tourism" began in Austria. It also meant that huge sums of hard currency left the country contributing to the economic crisis of the country.

### *The "close border traffic"*

Close border traffic is a special type of international wandering. It is a temporary one like tourism but originally it was similar to emigration in one vital point, that is, it was motivated by working abroad. This phenomenon could only occur close to the borders (hence the name, *close border traffic*): the 15–20 km wide frontier zones of neighbouring states took place in this exchange. In the beginning, close border traffic was related to the so-called dual landowners, i.e. those who had holdings at both sides of the border. The importance of the close border traffic increased after the Treaty of Trianon, when many estates were cut into two by the new borders. After 1945, close border traffic soon died and dual holdings were exchanged between the neighbouring states. The only exception was Czechoslovakia, with which an agreement was signed in 1952. Dual landownership ceased to exist even here, but for family reunions and official trips, temporary

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<sup>51</sup> Edict No. 25 of 1987, TRHGY 1987, 246–248.

<sup>52</sup> Decree No. 79/1987 MT. and 84/1987 PüM, TRHGY 1987, 432, and 1030–1033. See also Persa 1991, 1, 18.

<sup>53</sup> Decree No. 3/1987. BM, TRHGY 1987, 576–581. Other certificates were needed for the Service Passport, the Passport for Hungarian Citizens Living Abroad, the Emigration Permit and the exit permit for the latter two documents.

<sup>54</sup> In May 1988 the number of passport applications exceeded the whole 1987 year. The proportion of denied applications was 0,5% in the first half of 1987 and only 0,2% in the first half of 1988. Almost 50% of denials were connected with convicted persons. See TH 1.11.6. Papers of III/III Csoportfőnökség (Group directorate), box 11. (In 1969, denials reached 1,4%, see TH 1.11.10. AFTCS, box 170).

border crossing permits were easy to obtain. From 1955, negotiations started about the re-introduction of close border traffic with Romania<sup>55</sup> and Yugoslavia.<sup>56</sup> However, the old agreement with Czechoslovakia was also disputed as both sides wanted to extend the frontier zone and make crossings easier.<sup>57</sup> Still before the 1956 revolution, an agreement was reached with even the Soviet Union on close border traffic.<sup>58</sup>

These negotiations were stopped or had not yet begun when János Kádár seized power. The neighbouring countries were afraid that the revolution would spread to their territories and withdrew from the negotiations. There were some severe restrictions imposed in Hungarian-Czechoslovak border traffic; after the "normalization of the situation" Hungary criticized Czechoslovakia for still maintaining the restrictions in April 1957,<sup>59</sup> but these were finally lifted only in November 1958.<sup>60</sup>

Romania did not even negotiate about close border traffic. Hungary had the same attitude towards Austria. However, if Austria had insisted on the subject, Hungary would have agreed with strict conditions. Yugoslavia also showed intention to agree.<sup>61</sup> Real negotiations were carried out only with Czechoslovakia.<sup>62</sup> Although the delegations signed an agreement, it came into force only in 1961, just like the Hungarian-Soviet agreement.<sup>63</sup> In the latter case, a new agreement was reached on 17 March 1961 on the "simplified border crossing of the people living near the Soviet-Hungarian border". The traffic started on 10 July that year.<sup>64</sup> The agreement made it possible for inhabitants of 25 Hungarian and 31 Soviet villages to cross the border without passport. A maximum of 7 day stay was available on every occasion.<sup>65</sup> This form of crossing was called simplified border crossing in the whole Kádár-era but actually it was close border traffic. It was rather difficult to get a permission for "simplified" crossing: only birth, marriage, severe illness, death etc. of a close relative were reasons to apply for a permit. Naturally, an invitation letter or any other certificate to prove the reason of

<sup>55</sup> 0104/szolg. – 1955 BM HBK, MOL XIX-B-10-1955-V-93.

<sup>56</sup> 01801/ szolg. – 1955. BM HBK, MOL XIX-B-10-1955-V-58.

<sup>57</sup> 0614/szolg. – 1955 BM HBK, MOL XIX-B-10-1955-V-77. and 01730/Szolg. – 1955 BM HBK, MOL XIX-B-10-1955-VI-22. On the negotiations between the two countries, see 01551/Szolg. – 1956. BM HP, MOL XIX-B-10-1956-V-14, and 01503/Szolg. – 1956, MOL XIX-B-10-1956-VI-16.

<sup>58</sup> 01519/Pkh. – 1956 BM HP, MOL XIX-B-10-1956-VI-20 and 22.

<sup>59</sup> 0981/Jogi – 1957 MNK HP, MOL XIX-B-10-1957-V-8.

<sup>60</sup> 03740/Hdm. – 1958. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1958-VI-21.

<sup>61</sup> Romania: 0235/Pk. – 1958. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1958-VI-28; Austria: 01892/Hdm. – 1958, HOP, *ibid.* No. 100; Jugoszlávia: 0811/szolg. – 1958. HOP, *ibid.* No. 37.

<sup>62</sup> See the text of the draft in: 0508/Hdm. – 1959. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1959-VI-16, negotiations in Prague: 01479/Hdm. – 1959, *ibid.* No. 19, a newer draft: 02921/Hdm. – 1959. HOP, *ibid.* No. 59.

<sup>63</sup> 03339/Hdm. – 1960. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1960-VI-26.

<sup>64</sup> 02231/Hdm. – 1961. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1961-V-2.

<sup>65</sup> Report without registry number, MOL XIX-B-10-1961-VI-38.

journey was needed. Applications had to be handed in the local border guard unit, but the decision was made by both the Hungarian and the Soviet Border Representative. Border crossing was possible only by daylight, with ID and border crossing permit. Children under 16 could travel only with their parents.<sup>66</sup>

This agreement was supposed to be provisional, but later it was prolonged from year to year.<sup>67</sup> Only 2,000 people travelled to the neighbouring country during the first four years of the "simplified" border crossing. Later discussions on enlarging this traffic in 1965 and also in 1969 were fruitless.<sup>68</sup> Again and again, they rejected an enlargement of the frontier zone to 15 km.<sup>69</sup> Not surprisingly traffic decreased around 1970. Simplified crossing was agreed again in 1977<sup>70</sup> and even in 1985 in Moscow. According to the latter one, 62 settlements from each side were entitled to participate in it. It was also possible by then to travel for medical treatment or public festivals near the border. Regular permits were introduced named Border Crossing Permit. It was valid for 5 years, but only in theory: an exit visa was necessary for every new journey. Officially stamped invitation letters still remained in use.<sup>71</sup>

After long negotiations<sup>72</sup> an agreement was signed with Czechoslovakia in October 1962 in Prague. A frontier zone of 15 km (including towns and cities) was determined. People living on this territory could get Single and Permanent Border Crossing Permits. The single permit was valid for a five-day trip and was obtainable once a year for official or family businesses. Permanent permits were used by employees working in the neighbouring frontier zone. It was valid for 12 months, for unlimited number of crossings and a maximum of six-day stay abroad each time. This permit was achievable only by demand of the employer. It was valid only through one crossing point and in the listed settlements abroad. Leaving the frontier zone to the inner parts of the neighbouring country was forbidden.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>66</sup> 01462/Pk. – 1961. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1961-VI-24. Border crossing was soon limited, it was possible only on Mondays and Wednesdays between 10 and 12 a.m. See 03791/1961 HOP, *ibid.* No. 37.

<sup>67</sup> Agreement for 1962: see under 0559/1962 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1961-VI-20.

<sup>68</sup> 02909/1965 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1965-VI-12, MOL XIX-B-10-1966-VI-20. For 1969, see protocol of 2-6 September 1969 about the negotiations between the border guards of Hungary and the USSR. See in *A magyar-szovjet államhatárral kapcsolatos szerződések gyűjteménye* [Collection of contracts concerning the Hungarian-Soviet border], Klsz. 310/1980 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1980-VI-43.

<sup>69</sup> 0393/1971 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1969-VI-33.

<sup>70</sup> 0241/3/1977 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1977-VI-15.

<sup>71</sup> Decrees No. 20/1986 MT. and 4/1986 BM, TRHGY 1986, 258-261, and 386-387. See also in *Belügyi Közlöny* (Home Affairs Bulletin) volume XXVII, No. 11, 109-112, and 113-114 and under MOL XIX-B-10-1969-VI-40.

<sup>72</sup> Newer draft of the agreement: 01003/1961 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1961-V-10, and (later) 01794/1962 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1962-VI-4.

<sup>73</sup> Edict No. 15. of 1963, TRHGY 1963, 53-56, and Decree No. 2/1963 BM, *ibid.*, 203-205. Introducing of the new permits was in 1963, see 2241/1963. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1963-V-9.

Close border traffic was on probation between Yugoslavia and Hungary.<sup>74</sup> The traffic started first in 1963, between the Danube and the Dráva rivers and slightly later between Letenye and Murakeresztúr. A frontier zone of 10 km was chosen. However, only close relatives could travel to visit each other.<sup>75</sup> Negotiations were carried out only after this trial. The views of the sides differed a lot.<sup>76</sup> However, at the end of December 1965 close border traffic was re-established.<sup>77</sup> The inhabitants of the 15 km wide frontier zone were entitled to obtain Border Crossing Permit which was valid with the identity card. A five-day stay was allowed abroad twice a year. For further journeys, important family events and other justified cases were to be proved. Organized group trips were also available. The permit was valid for a year but was renewable for another one. Except for the first regular trip annually, a permission from the area or town police stations – the issuing authority of the permits – was needed for all journeys. Children under 16 were shown in their parents' permit.<sup>78</sup>

The Yugoslavs urged to increase the number of annual regular travels and also the number of border crossing points and to enlarge the 15 km zone.<sup>79</sup> Four regular journeys were made possible yearly at the end of 1968 instead of two.<sup>80</sup> Yugoslavia also suggested that Border Crossing Permits should contain a photo in order to be used without identity cards.<sup>81</sup> It was realized only when a new agreement was signed in 1976. According to the new contract, the frontier zone was widened to 20 km and the number of regular yearly trips became eight. New crossing points were opened only for the purposes of close border traffic. The duration of allowed stay abroad was also extended to 10 days.<sup>82</sup>

Finally Romania agreed with the re-introduction of close border traffic. Negotiations were started in 1967 but due to differences between the points of view an agreement was reached only in 1969. This time it was Hungary who wanted to

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<sup>74</sup> Decision of the Politburo of the MSZMP in 28 December 1962, cited in: 0393/Pk. – 1964. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1965-VI-28.

<sup>75</sup> 0329/Tfk. – 1963. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1965-VI-17, and 01121/1963 HOP, *ibid*, No. 19.

<sup>76</sup> History of the negotiations: 01967/1965 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-VI-24, and 0393/Pk. – 1964. HOP, *ibid*, No. 28.

<sup>77</sup> 01014/1966 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1966-VI-27.

<sup>78</sup> 4199/1965 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1965-VI-29, Edict No. 25. of 1965, TRHGY 1965, 136–143, and Decree No. 2/1965 BM, *ibid*, No. 223. The agreement was signed on 9 August 1965 in Budapest.

<sup>79</sup> 03615/1966 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1966-VI-34; 03466/1967. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1967-VI-48, 0180/1968. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1968-VI-79.

<sup>80</sup> 03718/1968. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1968-VI-55.

<sup>81</sup> 02250/1970 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1970-VI-58. Later negotiations: 0177/2/1972 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1972-VI-24. Rules valid in 1970, see 10-24/8/1970 BM, TH 1.11.1. ÁBMHT, box 8.

<sup>82</sup> Edict No. 19. of 1976, TRHGY 1976, 168–178. The agreement was signed on 5 November 1975 in Budapest. The implementing decree was Decree No. 3/1976 BM, *ibid*. 402–403.

grant more rights.<sup>83</sup> The agreement was a success for Hungary because the frontier zone became 15 km wide (instead of 10 or 12 as Romania suggested) and only bigger cities were excluded (instead of all towns). However, the number of journeys were limited to four occasions yearly and travellers had to use the same crossing point for returning. Three new crossing points were opened. Border Crossing Permits were introduced.<sup>84</sup> The traffic started in 1970,<sup>85</sup> but in 1977 the agreement was modified. The frontier zone was enlarged to 20 km but bigger cities remained excluded. The number of regular annual trips increased to 12. Border Crossing Permits were valid for a year but a permission from local police authorities was needed for every journey. However, permissions were obtainable for more trips.<sup>86</sup>

No agreement on close border traffic was signed with Austria under the Kádár regime,<sup>87</sup> although Yugoslavia and Austria maintained such traffic. What is more, even dual landownership remained intact between Austria and Yugoslavia.<sup>88</sup>

### *Hungary's visa policy under Kádár*

While passport policy allowed the regime to take control over journeys of Hungarian citizens, visa policy was used to exclude some undesirable foreigners. In the beginning of the Kádár-era, every foreigner – including citizens of communist states – had to apply for a visa in order to travel to Hungary. Compulsory visas were in use also for Hungarians going abroad. First bilateral visa agreements were signed in late 1950s with socialist countries only. However, these agreements were rather sophisticated and most of them were applicable for Diplomatic and Service Passports. Strangely, Soviet citizens had a visa-free travel possibility to Hungary but Hungarians needed a visa to the USSR.<sup>89</sup> Fully visa-

<sup>83</sup> 03036/1967 Fep, MOL XIX-B-10-1967-VI-32. Later discussions: 01071/1968. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1968-VI-42, 03584/Fep. – 1968. HOP, *ibid.* No. 49; in 1969: 01731/1969 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1969-VI-42.

<sup>84</sup> 03046/1969 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1969-V-1, see also MOL XIX-B-10-1969-V-46, and Edict No. 43. of 1969, TRHGY 1969, 219–225. and Decree No. 1/1970 BM, TRHGY 1970, 315. Extracts can be found also in 10-24/2/1970 BM, TH 1.11.1. ÁBMHT, box 8.

<sup>85</sup> 170/1/1970 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1970-V-18.

<sup>86</sup> Edict No. 31 of 1977, TRHGY 1977, 303–308, and Decree No. 8/1977 BM, *ibid.* 524. See also 0236/2/1977 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1977-VI-22; and 10-27/21/1977 BM, TH 1.11.1. ÁBMHT, box 8.

<sup>87</sup> Large scale visiting of Western-Hungarian territories by capitalist (Austrian) citizens was not welcome due to state security reasons. However, mass travel of Hungarians to Austria was also “problemous”. See 0920/1970 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-VI-1.

<sup>88</sup> 01273/1968. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1968-VI-71.

<sup>89</sup> Bulgaria: 03402/hdm. – 1958. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1958-VI-103; other communist countries: see *Fontosabb FEP rendeletek gyűjtője 1957. I. 1-től*. [Collection of important decrees on border crossing from 1 January 1957], Klsz. 0512/1959 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1959-V-11. Czechoslovakia: 02599/1960 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1960-VI-18. Romania: 00989/1960. FEP, MOL XIX-B-10-1960-V-15.

free travel started from 1960 to neighbouring Czechoslovakia.<sup>90</sup> Soon, most socialist countries signed similar agreements with Hungary (Soviet Union 1960 and 1969, Bulgaria and Poland 1964, Yugoslavia 1965, Romania 1967, East Germany 1963 and 1969.)<sup>91</sup>

Western states remained visa-needing territories until 1969 when Finland signed an agreement with Hungary.<sup>92</sup> It was of greater importance that visas were abolished between Hungary and Austria in 1978.<sup>93</sup> (Both agreements entered into force on New Year's Day in the following year). Other countries with which such agreement was reached included Mongolia, Cuba, Nicaragua, Malta, Sweden and China.<sup>94</sup> Other Asian socialist countries granted visa-free travel for diplomats and travellers with Service Passports.

The visa system of Hungary was unchanged until 1964 although the Politburo decided as early as in 1960 to loosen the system. At that time, official visitors and tourists coming in organized groups waited 2 to 6 days for a visa. Private travellers had to wait up to four weeks.<sup>95</sup> In the '50s visas prescribed even the entry point for foreigners. Expired transit visas were regarded void except for those of communist nationals.<sup>96</sup> Visas were issued solely by the Foreigners Inspecting Office of the Ministry for Home Affairs even in 1964 and visas were issued as slowly as in 1960.<sup>97</sup> The only exception was Budapest Airport where issuance of

<sup>90</sup> *FEP rendeletek gyűjtője*. [Collection of decrees on border crossing], Klsz. 00570/1960 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1960-V-49.

<sup>91</sup> Soviet Union: only with invitation letter and organized package tours. Klsz. 0990/1969 HOP. *Magyar útiokmányok ellenőrzésére és kezelésére vonatkozó utasítás* [Direction concerning controlling of Hungarian travel documents], MOL XIX-B-10-1969-V-48. Later: 01349/Fep. – 1969. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1969-VI-35 and 40; Bulgaria: Telegraphic direction No. 258, *FEP rendeletek és utasítások gyűjtője* [Collection of decrees and directions on border crossing], MOL XIX-B-10-1966-V-34; Poland: *Magyar útiokmányok érvényességére vonatkozó szabályok* [Rules concerning the validity of Hungarian travel documents], Klsz. 0751/1964 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1964-V-31; Yugoslavia: 01014/1966 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1966-VI-27. and Edict No. 4. of 1966, TRHGY 1966, 37–39; Romania: 03036/1967 Fep, MOL XIX-B-10-1967-VI-32. and Edict No. 7. of 1968, TRHGY 1968, 110–112. (A maximum of 100,000 private visitors were allowed annually until 1975); East Germany: 01930/1969 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1969-V-23. and Edict No. 31. of 1969, TRHGY 1969, 208–210.

<sup>92</sup> Edict No. 40. of 1969, TRHGY 1969, 215–216.

<sup>93</sup> Edict No. 30 of 1978, TRHGY 1978, 352–353. Diplomatic Passports were visa-free from 1965, Service Passports from 1969. See telegraphic direction No. 399, *FEP rendeletek és utasítások gyűjtője* [Collection of decrees and directions on border crossing], MOL XIX-B-10-1966-V-34. and Edict No. 17. of 1969, TRHGY 1969, 159.

<sup>94</sup> Mongolia: Edict No. 17 of 1968, TRHGY 1968, 132–133; Cuba: Decree No. 11/1979 MT, TRHGY 1979, 289–291; Nicaragua: Decree No. 6/1983 MT, TRHGY 1983, 213–214; Malta: Decree No. 51/1983 MT, *ibid.*, 295–296; Sweden: Decree No. 1/1986 MT, TRHGY 1986, 232–232; China: Edict No. 6 of 1989, TRHGY 1989, 389–390.

<sup>95</sup> MOL M KS 288. f. 5/205. őe.

<sup>96</sup> 03806/ FEP – 1959. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1959-V-38.

<sup>97</sup> MOL M KS 288. f. 5/339. őe.



visas was possible from 1962 in certain cases.<sup>98</sup> With the increasing traffic, the Politburo had realized that a change was necessary. It suggested that the most important Hungarian embassies could give visas to every foreigner, except those who were on the "black list" and were undesirable in Hungary. With this move, issuing time was reduced to 24–72 hours.<sup>99</sup> Later that year visas were issued even at the most important border crossing points (excluding railway entry points).<sup>100</sup>

The visa system was very complicated in late 1960s. First, there were at least five authorities which were entitled to issue visas; second, the number of visas was large, there were diplomatic, service, courtesy, tourist, week-end, transit, return, exit, subsequent, visitor and official visas! These could be distinguished only by the serial number, although they granted different rights to their holders. Visas of this time were signets stamped in the passport. It was filled by hand-writing and it contained information about the number of travels allowed; how many people could use it; expiry date and also info on the direction it was valid. Courtesy visas were issued to visitors of employers of foreign representations in Budapest and also persons who were invited by the party, the government etc. Week-end visa was valid for one or two days; at the western entry points only one-day week-end visas were issued with which travellers had to leave Hungary at the same place they entered by midnight. Return visa was given to foreign citizens permanently residing in Hungary. With this visa they were allowed to leave and come back to Hungary. Real exit visas (not those given in Hungarian passports which were indeed travel permits) were issued to various kinds of foreigners: those who spent more than six months in Hungary; who lost their passports and got new travel document here; who remained behind from a collective travel or just whose visa expired or was not valid for leaving Hungary. Those who travelled to Hungary without visa (but with permission to do so) had to apply for a visa subsequently.<sup>101</sup>

The visa was valid for a maximum of 30-day stay in Hungary (extendible to 3 months). Anyone who stayed more had to ask for a residence permit. It was valid for a year. However, there were also permanent residence permits. Residence permits were withdrawn when the foreigner left the country; for leaving so, an exit visa was required.<sup>102</sup> Visa-free travellers could stay for 30 days without residence registration. After 30 days, residence permits were necessary for them too. If such a traveller stayed for more then 6 months, an exit permit (not a visa) was

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<sup>98</sup> 01692/1962. HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1962-V-7.

<sup>99</sup> MOL M KS 288. f. 5/339. őe.

<sup>100</sup> Order No. 020/1964. HOP, *FEP rendeletek és utasítások gyűjtője* [Collection of decrees and directions on border crossing], MOL XIX-B-10-1966-V-34. Some of the border crossings opened later also issued visas, see 01418/1968 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1968-V-1, and 01659/1968 HOP, *ibid.* No. 2.

<sup>101</sup> Decree No. 24/1966 Korm, TRHGY 1966, 202–203; Decree No. 4/1966 BM, *ibid.* 262–264. and Direction No. 01/1967. BM. cited by Klsz. 0989/1969 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1969-V-6.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

required before leaving.<sup>103</sup> Every foreigner had to report any change in their residence address within 24 hours.<sup>104</sup> Visas were issued to Hungarian citizens also especially to those living abroad with Passport for Hungarian Citizens Living Abroad or Consular Passport. Hungarians with this travel document had to apply for a permit (visa) for travelling to Hungary. The permit was issued by foreign representations or border stations and was valid for 30 days. However, Hungarian address of residence had to be reported.<sup>105</sup> The visa policy which was formed in the 1960s remained almost unchanged in the following two decades of the Kádár-era.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ÁVH – State Security Authority (Államvédelmi Hatóság)  
 BM – Minister [or Ministry] for Home Affairs (belügyminiszter, Belügyminisztérium)  
 f. – fond (fond)  
 FEP – border crossing point, border-traffic controlling point (Forgalom-ellenőrző Pont)  
 HBK – Border Guard and Inner Armed Forces (Határőrség és Belső Karhatalom)  
 hdm. – operational department (hadműveleti osztály)  
 HOP – National Command(er) of Border Guard (Határőrség Országos Parancsnok[ság]a)  
 HP – Command of Border Guard (Határőrség Parancsnoksága)  
 jogi – legal department (jogi osztály)  
 klsz. – inventory number of books (könyvleltári szám)  
 korm. – government, governmental (kormány)  
 KüM – Minister [or Ministry] for Foreign Affairs (külügyminiszter, Külügyminisztérium)  
 MNK – Hungarian People's Republic (Magyar Népköztársaság)  
 MOL – Hungarian National Archives (Magyar Országos Levéltár)  
 MT – Council of Ministers (Minisztertanács)  
 ORFK – National Police Headquarters (Országos Rendőr-főkapitányság)  
 őe. – inventory unit (őrzési egység)  
 pk, pkh. – commander, deputy commander (parancsnok, parancsnok-helyettes)  
 PüM – Minister [or Ministry] of Finance (pénzügyminiszter, Pénzügyminisztérium)  
 szolg. – of service (szolgálati)  
 RTF – Police Academy (Rendőrtiszti Főiskola)  
 TH – Historical Office [from April 2003: Historical Archives of State Security Services] (Történeti Hivatal; 2003 áprilistól Állambiztonsági Szolgálatok Történeti Levéltára)  
 TRHGY – Official Collection of Laws and Decrees (Törvények és Rendeletek Hivatalos Gyűjteménye)  
 ZMKA – Miklós Zrínyi Military Academy (Zrínyi Miklós Katonai Akadémia)

<sup>103</sup> A vízummentes külföldi útiokmányok ellenőrzése és kezelése (Controlling of visa-free foreign travel documents) Klsz. 0991/1969 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1969-V-49.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, and Decree No. 4/1966 BM, TRHGY 1966, 262–264.

<sup>105</sup> 02144/1970 HOP, MOL XIX-B-10-1970-V-14.