

# 20 years of the Cold War History Research Center, Budapest Special Report: 1998 – 2018

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## About the Center

The Cold War History Research Center (CWHRC) was established by Founding Director Csaba Békés in December 1998, following a pioneering civic initiative, as the first scholarly institution founded as a non-profit organization in East Central Europe. The Center was founded with the aim of continuing within a new, independent institutional framework the international research that had been coordinated for several years by the international research division of the 1956 Institute in Budapest, also headed by Dr. Békés. Since January of 1999 the Center has been functioning as an independent legal entity as a private foundation. From the time of its establishment the Center has been contributing to the flourishing of "new Cold War history" aimed at transforming the previous one-sided approach based primarily on

Western sources, finally into a real international discipline through the systematic exploration of the once top secret documents found in the archives in the former Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc countries.

### **The English language content providing website: [www.coldwar.hu](http://www.coldwar.hu)**

Through the Center’s English language website, established in 2000, our mission has been to be the main provider of freely available English language online materials concerning research on contemporary history of the former Soviet Bloc countries in Europe. The website offers a great number of articles, documents, chronologies, bibliographies, databases and finding aids and it is the only such institution in the former Soviet Bloc. Now it is an indispensable resource for international scholars and students interested in the history of the Cold War, Communism, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Bloc. (In Google the Center appears on page 4 by searching for “Cold War history” from 500 million hits.)

### **Partnership, international cooperation**

While functioning as a foundation from the outset, since 2009 the Center has been affiliated with the Institute of International Studies at Corvinus University of Budapest, and beginning in 2017, also with the Centre for Social Sciences at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The Center continues the intensive cooperation that developed between the 1956 Institute and the network of international Cold War history research coordinated by the Woodrow Wilson Center’s Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) and the National Security Archive (NSA) in Washington D.C. since the early nineteen-nineties. The Center has also established close collaboration with other institutions such as the Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact (Washington–Zurich), the European Institute at Columbia University in New York and the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute in Graz. Director Csaba Békés has represented the Center as an invited speaker at 80 international conferences mostly in the USA and Western Europe since 1998.

In September, 2018 Professor Csaba Békés was awarded a “For the University Medal” by Corvinus University of Budapest for directing the Center’s internationally renowned work at the university for ten years. The award is given to those members of the university community who have played a prominent role in increasing and enhancing the prestige and reputation of the University at home and abroad.



*Csaba Békés receiving the “For the University Medal” in September, 2018 at Corvinus University of Budapest*

## Publications

In these twenty years of existence, the Center has produced 118 publications from articles to books, as well as extensive databases of the most important facts and sources of the Cold War. One of the Center's main projects has been the creation of an extensive English language online chronology on East-Central Europe: **The history of the Soviet Bloc, 1945–1991 (Parts 1–5)** which was completed in 2017 with the magnitude of 2 301 pages. In 2017, the Center also published a 575-page volume, the **Bibliography of New Cold War History**, collecting literature on the topic published after 1989 and an edited volume of 29 articles entitled **Students on the Cold War. New findings and interpretations.**

*Table 1. Total publications CWHRC 1998 – 2018*

Specialized chronologies	5
Bibliographies	7
E-dossiers of documents	2
Online publications (articles)	95
Online publications (books)	9
Overall	118

### Specialized chronologies

The Center has published five specialized chronologies and it is currently working on a volume about the revolts and riots against the Soviet regime during the Gorbachev period and on other publications over the role of the Soviet bloc in the Vietnam War. The collection **The history of the Soviet Bloc** has been permanently updated given that new documents and sources are continuously declassified. This special collection consists of five parts.

*Table 2. Chronologies by topic 1998–2018*

<b>Special collection: The history of the Soviet Bloc 1945 – 1991</b>	
History of the Soviet Bloc, part I 1945 – 1952	375 pgs.
History of the Soviet Bloc, part II 1953 – 1968	543 pgs.
History of the Soviet Bloc, part III 1969 –1980	417 pgs.
History of the Soviet Bloc, part IV 1981–1987	425 pgs.
History of the Soviet Bloc, part V 1988 – 1991	541 pgs.
<b>Other chronologies</b>	
Multilateral meetings of the Soviet Bloc 1947 – 1991	15 pgs.
The United States and East Central Europe 1945 – 1992	110 pgs.
Political transition in Hungary, 1987 – 1990	80 pgs.
Hungarian – Latin American Relations after the World War II	20 pgs.

## Bibliographies

Besides the History of the Soviet Bloc chronology, a highly important collection and an indispensable resource for Cold War research is the **Bibliography of New Cold War History**, which includes publications written by scholars from all over the world published after the “archival revolution” of 1989. This volume incorporates not only the predominant English language works, but also sources in languages such as Chinese, Georgian, Russian, Hungarian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Albanian, French, Italian, German, Spanish, among others, with added English translations of the titles. In 2018 a second enlarged edition will be published by adding the huge number of individual and institutional publications lists received from scholars from all over the World responding to our call for contributions.

*Table 3. Bibliographies by topic 1998–2018*

The Bibliography of New Cold War History	575 pgs.
The History of Bulgaria in the Cold War Era	31 pgs.
Hungarian Publications on the History of Latin-America in the Cold War Era	30 pgs.
Hungary’s International Relations in the Cold War Period (Books)	10 pgs.
Hungary’s International Relations in the Cold War Period (Articles, Essays, Source Publications)	30 pgs.
Romania's International Relations in the Cold War Period	5 pgs.
Austria and the Cold War: A Selected Bibliography	5 pgs.

## Other publications

In 2017, the Center published **Students on the Cold War: New Findings and Interpretations**, an edited volume of 29 articles, which represent the best scholarly papers from the students who participated at our annual conferences from 2010 to 2016. It has been a crucial contribution to establishing an international student scholarship on the Cold War. A considerable variety of topics is covered in this volume, from conceptual debates on the Cold War to nuclear, cultural and environmental issues.

The Center has also released the first two volumes of the **E-dossier series**, which intends to bring to public light some compilations of documents on specific topics. The Nr. 1 work was the first volume of the documentary evidence on the **Hungarian mediation efforts between the US and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (1965 – 1967)**. E-dossier Nr. 2 has been dedicated to the **French Diplomatic Documents on the 1956 Hungarian Revolution**, which makes new evidence available in English on the secret negotiations among the Western Great Powers and on France’s foreign policy priorities at the time when the Hungarian events intertwined with the Suez Crisis.

Finally, 95 online articles and 9 online books complete the extensive scholarly production carried out by our Center in the past 20 years.

**Table 4. Recent publications by topic**

Students on the Cold War: New findings and interpretations (2017)	575 pgs.
E-dossier series Nr. 1, Documentary evidence on Hungarian mediation efforts between US and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (1965 – 1967) (2017)	66 pgs.
E-dossier series Nr. 2, French diplomatic Documents on the 1956 Hungarian Revolution” (2017)	126 pgs.

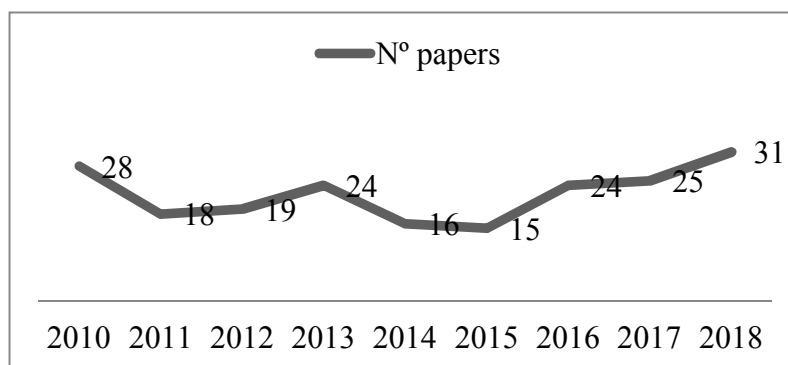
### International student conferences

Since 2010 the Center has also organized an annual two-day English language international student conference on the history of the Cold War, with the participation of BA, MA and PhD students from all over the world and from renowned universities such as Columbia, American University, US Military Academy at West Point, Indiana University, Hong Kong, Humboldt, University of Bologna, University of Florence, Central European University, University College London, St. Andrews University and the King’s College of London. **Since 2016 the conferences have been co-organized by the European Institute at Columbia University in New York.**

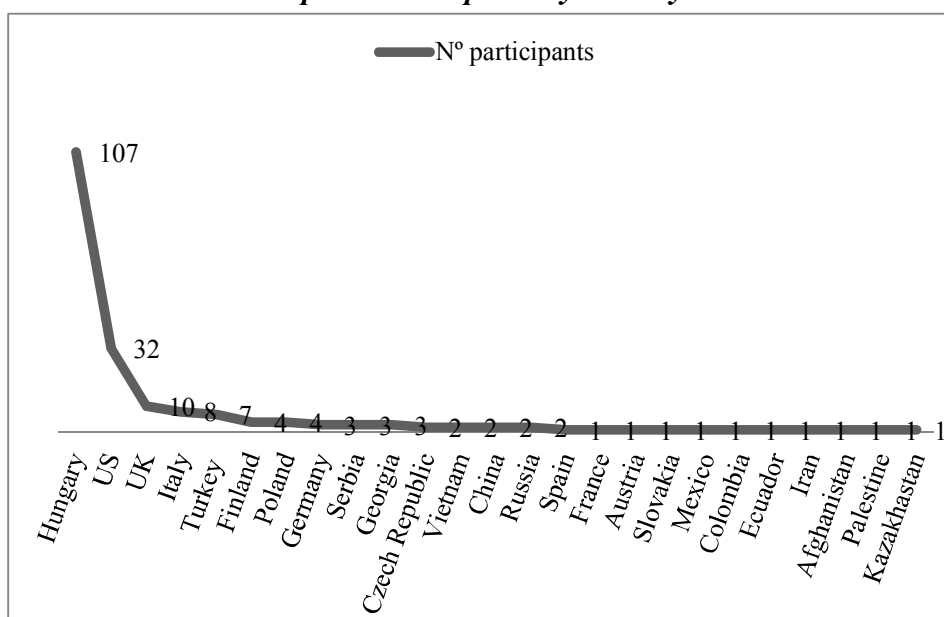
**Table 5. Summary of the international student conferences 2010–2018**

Number of presentations	200
Number of countries represented	25
Number of universities represented	48

**Graph 1. Number of presentations by year 2010–2018**



*Graph 2. Participants by country*



### International internship program

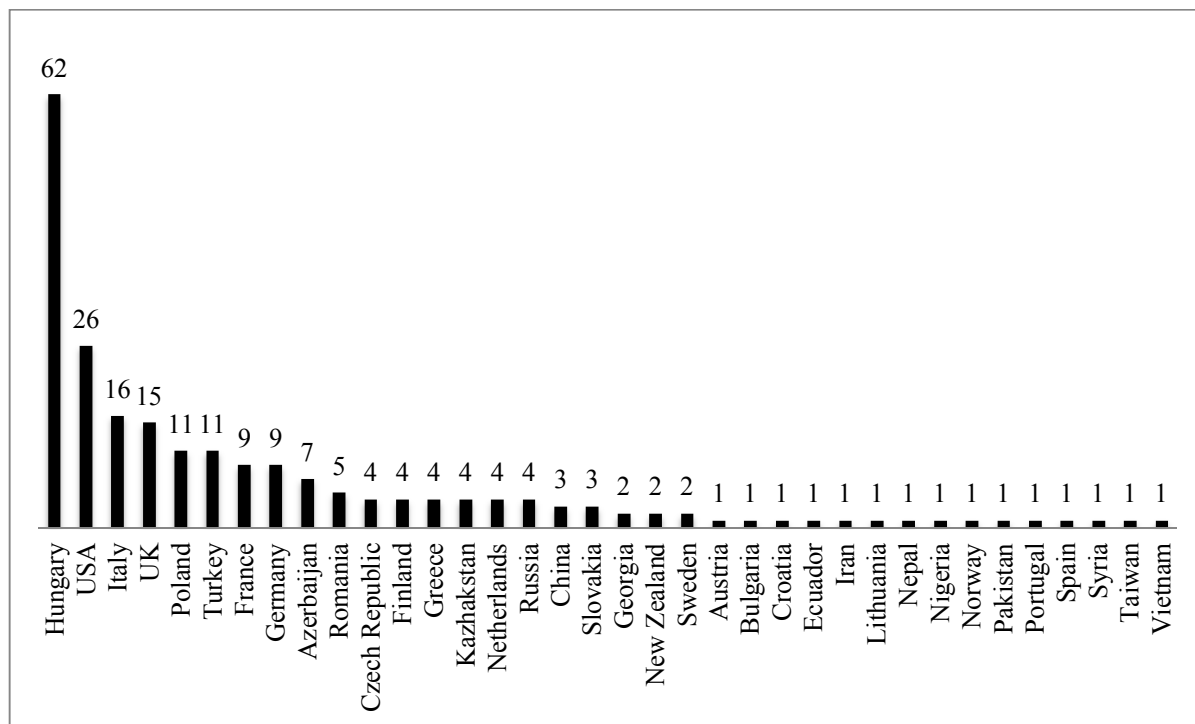
The internship program of the Center started in 2009. So far the internationally renowned research activity of the Center has attracted 222 interns from Western and Eastern Europe – mostly in the framework of the Erasmus program –, the United States (26), China, Ukraine, Turkey, Greece, etc.; altogether from 36 countries. **In 2017 the Center also became an official internship partner of Oxford University.**

*Table 6. Summary of the participation in the internship program 2009–2018*

Number of interns	222
Number of countries represented	36
Number of universities represented	92

The interns have the opportunity to learn about and contribute to the expanding English language bibliographies and chronologies on the new history of the Cold War. While the official language of the internship is English, the interns' knowledge of additional languages – especially those from Central and Eastern Europe – is an asset for the translation of numerous documents and texts. The Center welcomes interns especially in the final stages of their B.A., M.A. or PhD. studies.

*Graph 3. Interns by country 2009–2018*



### Facebook projects

The increasingly popular Facebook page of the Center, mostly operated by our interns, runs the "On this day during the Cold War" project drawing attention to important (but often forgotten) events and personalities of the Cold War era. It also has a special focus on women's history. The "Personal chronicles" project publishes short summaries of Oral History interviews conducted by our international interns with their family members on their personal memories of the Cold War era.

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## Staff

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