

Oral History II

Objectives

In the framework of this project, the ICDT is conducting interviews with prominent figures of the Central and Eastern European transitions with the “Oral History” methodology. The findings are to be released in three publications.

Background

Hungary is celebrating the 20th anniversary of its political, economic and social transition in 2009. In the current political atmosphere, the public evaluates not only the change and the key personalities, but debates whether the transition process is already completed. In this unique political environment, the ICDT aims to analyze personal experiences and memories of contemporary witnesses.

Project Description

In the first phase of the project in 2008/09, the ICDT conducted 20 video interviews with Hungarian and foreign personalities of the transition. The interviewees were not only asked about the basic tendencies of the transition, but also about their personal memories so that the public would be able to acquire subjective and, up to now, unknown information about 1989. Based on the interviews, the Centre will publish three books addressing the 1989 events. One of them, entitled *Accelerated History*, was issued in February 2010 and is the second volume of the book entitled *Peaceful Transition*. It contains, like the first volume, edited versions of the Hungarian interviews. A detailed study in English will summarize the conclusions of the Oral History interviews and will draw lessons learned for countries which are in a similar transitional period now. Based on the interviews with non-Hungarian personalities, the third publication will be a survey on the international environment of the transition and Hungary's outstanding foreign policy between 1987 and 1992.