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Social Conflicts and Changing Territorial Consumption Patterns
Related to the Suburbanization Processes in Hungary

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the paper is to reveal the main social factors and conflicts which are related to the suburbanization processes. Indeed in the past decades the patterns of the settlement system were radically changed in all over the world, which were transferred mainly the new urbanization trends, especially the suburbanization processes. The spreading of the urban areas and agglomerations started a new stage of territorial consumption too, and formed also the relationships between the cities and their surrounding settlements, and their residents' as well. What kind of relations have changed?

Based on the international and Hungarian literature it is well known, that more and more people moved out from the cities to live outside, but their working places, schools, their everyday life, their consumption and social contacts are realised in the cities. They 'territorial consumption' is increasing in the outside, so the spreading of the suburban settlements is doubtless, but the inhabitants' everyday-life consumption take place in the cities, which usually caused sustainability problems and social, political and institutional conflicts as well, between the core cities and the surrounding settlements. The most visible problems of the phenomenon could be seen at the transport problems, at the service gaps and at the ecological problems. Social conflicts are also often realised, f. eg. conflicts between the commuters and local inhabitants, newly inmoving groups and locals, and due to the unequal allocation of resources there are often conflicts between the local governments.

In Hungary, after the Transition these problems were also appeared. One main reason of the development of the conflicts was the transformation of the municipal system (the self-reliance of the settlements, administrative fragmentation, and competition of them for the acquisition of the foreign investors). The other big source of the conflicts was the result of very rapid suburbanization processes, especially around the Hungarian big cities. This new living form transformed the original social structure of the outskirts villages in different way and developed several conflict situations. The author's hypothesis is, that the above mentioned examples of suburban conflict could be a barrier of the successful social-economical development of the urban regions.

This paper focuses on the Hungarian Capital, because the suburbanization processes here were the most visible phenomenon. It shows how the suburbanization transferred the relationship between Budapest and its suburban zone, what kind of conflicts were appeared here generated by the problems related to suburbanization, namely the transport problems and

commuting. The results are based on the analysis of two representative empirical surveys: the first was carried out in 2005 in 9 large Hungarian urban regions (included Budapest), where¹ 5248 people were questioned. The second survey was in 2010² in the Budapest region, where 1000 people were interviewed.

Keywords: suburbanization, commuting, social conflict, Budapest

INTRODUCTION

Processes such as globalisation, transition and new urbanization trends, like suburbanization reshaped the social and territorial structure of the metropolitan areas worldwide, which manifested in sustainability problems and sometimes social conflicts too.

Hungary faced with new urbanization processes in the last 20 years. Despite the delayed urbanization, the suburbanization cycle clearly defined and appeared after the political-economic and social Transition in 1990. The outcome of it could be seen by the increasing population and built-up area in the suburbs, ageing of core cities. Beside this, two other impacts have to be underlined: firstly, the social structure of the metropolitan regions have been changed – the outskirts settlements attracted the middle and high social strata groups from the metropolitan city, and due to their outmigration, the social structure was changed hierarchically in the different residential areas. Secondly, the globalized consumer models and places (eg. shopping malls, entertainment parks, private institutions, such as schools, health care services) became new factors of urban patterns too (Kovács-Váradi 2011).

These bunch of problems caused radical change in the inhabitants' territorial movements, and modified the historically developed consumer behaviour, which appeared in differences of the consumption models between the different social and territorial groups, and generated a lot of sustainability issues to be examined in the urban region.

³ The project titled 'Urban Areas, Socio-spatial Inequalities and Conflicts – The Socio-spatial Factors of European Competitiveness' was funded by the Hungarian National Research-Development Programmes in consortia cooperation, between 2004 and 2007, lead by Prof. Dr. Viktória Szirmai, developed by the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

² To show the territorial consumption of different everyday activities, such as commuting and working, realised by the population in the Budapest Metropolitan Region, based on the empirical results of the sub-research, called 'The social mechanisms and interests determining consumption models', developed by the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, lead by Prof. Dr. Viktória Szirmai. Its consortium project called 'Sustainable Consumption, Production and Communication', organised by the Corvinus University of Budapest in 2009-2011, and supported by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism (reference number: 0056/NA/2006-2/ÖP.) Datas are combined from different sources, on the one hand, official statistical data, and their analysis regarding the changing processes. On the other hand, the results of a quantitative survey: 1000 questionnaire of inhabitants in the Budapest Metropolitan Region (600 from Budapest and 400 from several underdeveloped and developed settlements in the agglomeration area).

In order to link these aspects, the paper focuses on the socially, economically and territorially defined consumption in the Budapest Metropolitan Region nowadays. It highlights the characteristic usage of urban space by several specified social groups, with the methods of empirical analysis.

Firstly it would like to underline the main features and models of everyday life activities by localizing their consumption scenes, such as places of work, and commuting. It would like to present the consequences of the new regional social structure and the reorganisation of the territorial consumption habits together, their dependence on each other, as well as the local or global consumption patterns of the different social groups. Secondly, it will be highlighted how these processes are related to suburban conflicts and social relations.

THE RELATION OF TERRITORIAL CONSUMPTION AND URBANIZATION TRENDS

The new developed effects of globalization, the transformation of the social and economical systems, the regional concentration and their impact on the institutionalized networks, plus the transformation in mess and social media modified the historically developed consumers' behaviour. While Hirsch (1976) pointed out to the positional role of products, Douglas and Isherwood (1978) wrote, the function of consumption is not the gratification of individual needs, but the ability to form feelings. Baudrillard (1970) highlighted the indicative use of property instead of their value. Due to Campbell (1995), consumption was already applied as an indicator of social origin and identity. Even, according to Utasi (2002), the temporary feeling of happiness - insured by the acquired assets - was replaced with newer and higher demand, where wastefulness became propriety, and propriety became necessary in consumer behavior (McKendrick et al, 1982). At this point, consumption issues reached the question of (un)sustainability (UN, 1987) (Váradi- Kovács 2011).

In the international literature the concept of the sustainable consumption has been discussed for a long time. But each definition requires to watch the world as a system - a system that connects space and time. Too often, sustainability is considered as a result, as a concrete situation in which our bounded goal is to define and achieve - rather than treating as a planned change or a managed learning process (Sriskandarajah et al, 1991). A process, that includes people, as well as spatial-social environment and the formation of sustainable relationship between them (Váradi-Kovács 2011)

In this framework either the normative or the realistic conception, but the empirical approach is more characteristic. It means firstly the real consuming processes should be described (Szirmai-Váradi, 2009).

The territorial consumption is generated by the social-structural position (qualification, occupation, financial situation, family background), and the consumer patterns of the habitats (which are generated by the global urban consumption requirements and opportunities) (Sassen, 1991). Besides the above-mentioned processes the urbanization, the regional and social inequalities, the historical background, the production and the distribution of the economic and commercial system, the influence of the market economy and the intervention of the state resulted in new type of territorial consumer models (Szirmai-Váradi, 2009).

THE SUBURBANIZATION PROCESSES IN HUNGARY

The Hungarian urban development processes could be described with similarities, within the post socialist countries, which means that the centralization, the redistribution of sources, the forced urbanization, the increasing inequalities of cities and villages were the most important aspects before the Transition (Kovács-Wiessner, 2004). After 1990 – as in lot of researches had been already introduced³ – the social, economic and planning processes have been radically changed which drew new regional patterns of the country. The former state dominated urban and regional development policy was replaced a democratic, local and market based policy, with the power of local governments, and beside this, the effects of globalization processes were prevailed as well. According of the above mentioned processed, the reactions and answers of the settlements were depending strongly on their local resources and innovation willingness, which caused differences in the urban network, and developed inequalities between the eastern and western part of the country, but decreased the urban-rural, especially the city-village gap. We can conclude that next to many other factors, the market, the globalization and the competition between the settlements became the most important driving forces of urbanization processes (see Table1).

Table1: Main features of urbanization in Hungary

| Before 1990 | After 1990 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ strong state intervention (top-down model) (Kovács, 2002) ▪ redistribution system | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ shift to market regulation (bottom-up model) (Kovács, 2002) ▪ born and depression of local |

³ Enyedi, Gy, 1998; Fassmann, 1997; Häussermann, 1997; Kovács, 2002, 2009.

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ range of urban population: in 1870 15%, in 1910 20%, in 1950 37%, in 1980 53% ▪ local councils functioning as the extended hands of political leadership ▪ forced urbanisation vs. settlements marked as non-functional and non-developed areas ▪ increasing social-economic differences between towns and villages ▪ strengthening of the upper part in urban hierarchy ▪ inner social-spatial inequalities ▪ special urban form: ‘socialist’ city ▪ ignored city centres | <p>governments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ forced town status declaration, „formal urbanization”: Capital, regional centres (5), county centres (14), middle-cities (25), small cities (80), quasi cities ▪ weakness of cooperation between the settlements ▪ settlements seek for independence: 3071 (number of Hungarian settlements) in 1990, 3152 in 2010 ▪ range of urban population in 2010: 68%, with formal urbanization (Kovács 2008) ▪ growing competition for (local, state, EU) resources ▪ ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ in the conversion of urban capital ▪ increasing differences within the regions ▪ strengthening of the lower part of urban hierarchy ▪ rapid suburbanization process via globalization and modernization ▪ territorial de/classification by foreign investors, industrial parks, property speculation ▪ separated urban development and planning ▪ continuously changing territorial administrative units ▪ tenders are not consistent with the needs ▪ privilege of city cores and agglomeration areas |
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Source: based on literature analysis edited by Kovács-Váradi 2011.

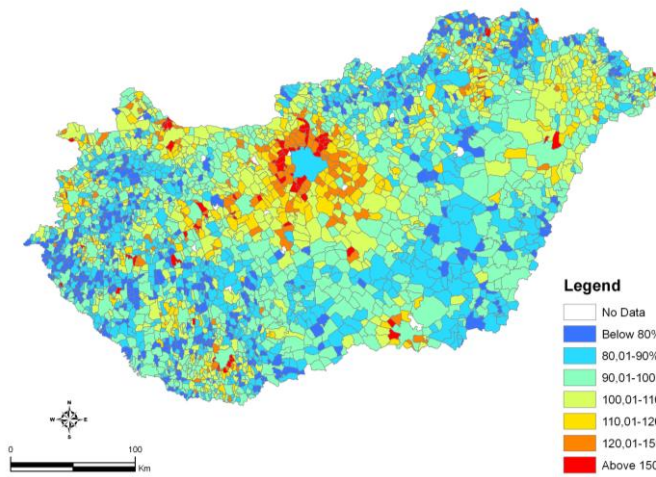
The above listed processes significantly transformed the social-regional structure of the cities, the relationship between the cities and their surrounding areas, which also contributed to the fact that, the post socialist countries have already adversed demographic structure from the 1980s, and characterized them as a natural weight loss (Hablicsek, 2009). Primarily the country's south-western and north-eastern regions (where the structure of the settlement network contained small villages in grater proportion), and urban areas were affected by ageing.

The other important process was the migration: the internal dynamics of movements and its direction was changed (Illés, 2009), which mainly affected the urban population structures,

because of the inhabitants of large cities started to move out, so the emergence of radical suburbanization processes took place from the middle 1990's (see Map 1-2.). One of the main result of these processes was the decreasing of metropolitan population, with more than ten percent on average, but significant increasing of suburban zone's population (see Table2). The biggest loss was realized by the case of Budapest: between 1990 and 2010 the number of population decreased with 300 thousand people (in 2010 1.7 million inhabitants), but its surrounding areas population increased with more than 20% (in 2010: 755 thousand inhabitants).

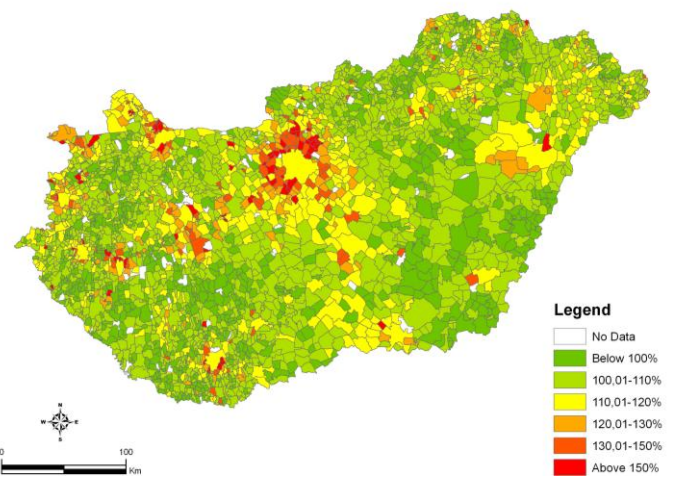
Map1

Change of population (%), 1990=100%



Map2

Change of housing (%), 1990=100%



Edited by Balázs Kohán

Table2: Main indexes and changes of urbanization processes in Hungary (1990-2008)

| | Change of population (%) | Change of housing (%) | Change of population density (%) | Change of elderly population (%) | Robin Hood index |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| metropolitan areas | -2,65 | +15,27 | +28,07 | +3,12 | 11,62 |
| core cities | -11,170 | +11,09 | -0,97 | +3,86 | 7,83 |
| suburban settlements | +32,460 | +34,00 | +16,80 | +1,84 | 3,79 |
| Hungarian average | -3,240 | +10,62 | -3,23 | +2,69 | 19,9 |

Based on data of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (1990-2008) edited by the Author

Two processes of suburbanization need to be mentioned. Firstly, the previous social structure was transformed, the social status were differentiated by medium-and high strata in the suburban area, thus creating a kind of hierarchical structure (Szirmai, 2009). Secondly, due to sprawl effects and transformation of the social-spatial structure, new territorial consumption patterns were emerged, which manifested in environmental and social conflicts and problems in and around the metropolitan region, and has fundamental impact on the development of sustainable urban development.

SOCIAL CONFLICTS IN THE BUDAPEST METROPOLITAN REGION

The suburbanisation, the urban sprawl, the territorial consumption around Budapest, the growing inequalities among the social groups appears in several form of conflicts. The formation of conflicts is linked to the phenomenon, that after the change of residence and the passage of time the benefits have reduced importance compared to what was expected before. The infrastructural deficiencies of the surrounding settlements, the discrepancy of the increased demands and opportunities (“foreign” taxpayers resort the services in Budapest (schools, health care system), the deployed commercial service network are not so that the usual in Budapest, which can pose a problem for the newcomers, moreover, it can create tensions in the relationship with the local population and the leaders as well. These elements are aggravated by the difficulties of commuting and the traffic problems. In addition, the influx of the moving out population can arouse the feeling that “the town comes after us”, and this can significantly impair the image of the new residence than thought before, and in many cases cause conflicts in the life of the local society. The suburbanization can affect

progressively disadvantages in the life of the “indigenous” population as well. For example the usually well-qualified “immigrants” have often problems with the integration to the mainly rural social relations and habits, which occur in the format of civil movements and social conflicts. The construction due to the migration can break the traditional image of the settlements, which effects loss for the “indigenous” population (Szirmai et al. 2011).

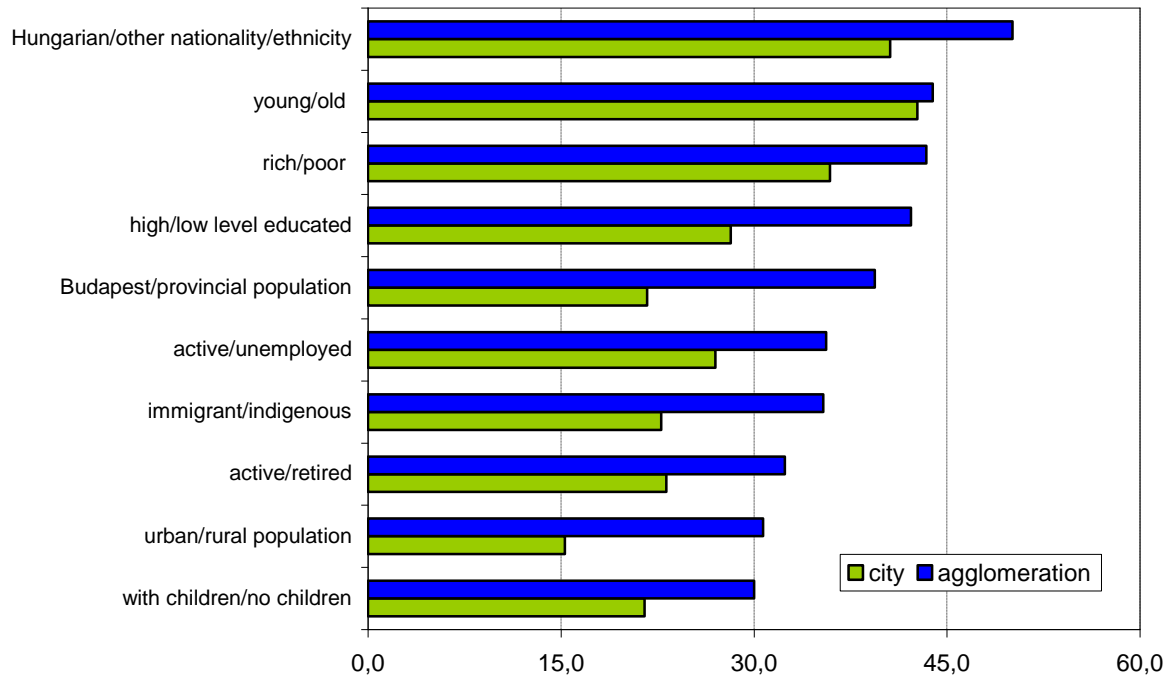
In the one hand it will be shown that inhabitants in the Budapest have been experienced certain conflicts, between different social groups. On the other hand it will be highlighted some recent conflict featured in the Budapest Area linked to the suburbanisation and urban sprawl..

Based on the empirical research results show that suburban social conflicts in the Budapest agglomeration appear more often than in the other urban areas in Hungary, namely the people living in the settlements in the urban periphery close to the capital typically experience more conflict than the other suburban region's population. Analyzing the two groups within the settlements in the urban periphery – developed and underdeveloped –, the perception of conflicts in the smaller underdeveloped settlements is especially pronounced (75-94 percent).

Within the local society of the settlements in the urban periphery are differences concerning the perception of conflicts, however not on the basis of demographic, but of the local – moved in characteristics.

In the developed settlements primarily the local population and those who moved in before 1990 experience the social conflicts, while in the underdeveloped settlements there is no difference in the perception of the "indigenous" and the “immigrants”.

Figure1: The differences in the perception of social conflicts in the Budapest agglomeration compared to the value of other urban areas (%)



Source: NRDP surveys, edited by N. Baranyai

The social conflicts in the place of residence perceived by the population in the Budapest urban area are less serious than in the other urban areas, however important differences can be discovered between the developed and underdeveloped municipalities of the Budapest agglomeration. The conflicts in the developed settlements are also considered milder both by the locals and the moves than the people living in underdeveloped communities, and in this latter type the population is more uniform in assessing the severity of the conflicts than population of the advanced settlements.

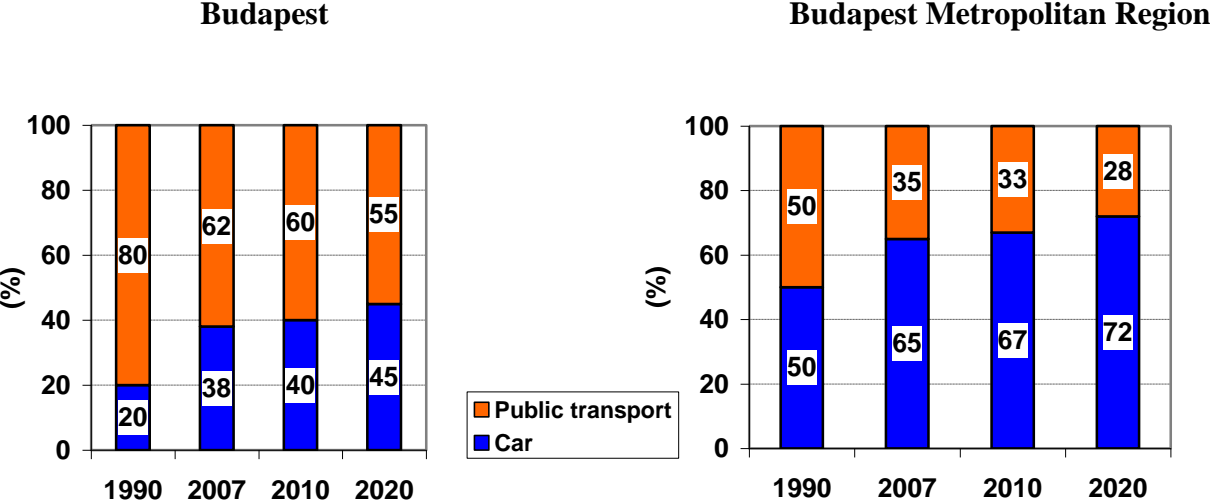
TRANSPORT AND COMMUTING PROBLEMS

“Over the past 10-20 years, the biggest lost market share of public transportation appeared by the relation of urban-suburban. However, the increasing car traffic is becoming an obstacle to the objective of a good accessibility. On the introductory routes of Budapest, the traffic congestions are nowadays permanent, the commuting time become longer, the accessibility of suburban areas is difficult and unpredictable, by road. The parking opportunity is inappropriate, the liveability of the city, and outdoor environmental quality is deteriorating due to the large individual transport methods. These problems have negative impacts on regional competitiveness.” (High-speed Railway Concept of Budapest Region)

The above mentioned quote summarized those factors, which are cornerstones of sustainability problems in the Budapest metropolitan region. Related to this, one question of the survey asked the locals about their transport methods, namely: *what vehicle do the different social and territorial groups use to go to work, and why? Are there remarkable differences between the groups?*

Earlier studies and surveys clearly show that in Budapest over the past decade drastically increased the proportion of car use and declining use of public transport customers. The latter rate is still high compared with other European cities, but if we consider that 80% of the value of the city started (Figure 2), and it decreased very high proportion, even the future of car use estimates also predict an increase, the region will face several environmental and sustainability problems.

Figure2: Modal split – past – present and future



Source: http://www.catch-mr.eu/public/DB_Data/files/Downloads/Documentation_-_Goeteborg_Workshop_-_Catch_MR.pdf.

To analyse this problem in detailed, it is clearly seen, that the public and the individual transport, car-using dominates in the Budapest region. The results also show that, the problem of sustainability was generated those groups living in the suburban zones, who choose individual, car transport. If we examine the question at social level, the survey reveals that, primarily social strata indicators explain the differences among the transport methods and vehicle using. The high social strata – compared to the average – uses their care in higher proportion, which is even more true in the developed urban peripheries (despite the fact that

public transport opportunities are favorable). The low social strata of both types of settlements are in the same low proportion in car use (see Table3).

Table3: Proportion according used vehicle by social strata and location

| location device | High social strata | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| | Budapest | Developed urban periphery | Underdeveloped urban periphery | mean |
| Motorbike | 0,68 | 0,00 | 3,70 | 0,91 |
| Other | 0,68 | 2,27 | 0,00 | 0,91 |
| Bicycle | 2,70 | 2,27 | 7,41 | 3,20 |
| By feet | 19,59 | 20,45 | 11,11 | 18,72 |
| Public transport | 43,92 | 4,55 | 18,52 | 32,88 |
| Car | 32,43 | 70,45 | 59,26 | 43,38 |
| Total | 100,00 | 100,00 | 100,00 | 100,00 |
| | Low social strata | | | |
| | Budapest | Developed urban periphery | Underdeveloped urban periphery | mean |
| Motorbike | 1,10 | 0,00 | 3,23 | 1,53 |
| Other | 2,20 | 2,33 | 3,23 | 2,55 |
| Bicycle | 2,20 | 2,33 | 6,45 | 3,57 |
| Car | 12,09 | 25,58 | 24,19 | 18,88 |
| By feet | 23,08 | 18,60 | 19,35 | 20,92 |
| Public transport | 59,34 | 51,16 | 43,55 | 52,55 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Based on questionnaire analysis edited by the Author.

The explanations of this phenomenon could be variable. After 1990, the consumption patterns have changed and opportunities for consumption widened, and car ownership became a prestige, and is a symbol for the different social groups. From the view of urbanization processes, the suburbanization resulted that the public transport infrastructure and its development has fallen behind in settlements the suburban areas (there is a gap between the demand and need). So in most cases, the inhabitants working in the capital, car use is indispensable, and sometimes compulsion for them. Thus we can say that the above mentioned factors are – namely the social strata indicators, consumer attitudes and infrastructural deficiencies together – form today the sustainability-related transport problems in the Budapest region. The results show that there should be change in attitude at the high status strata groups firstly, and have to find formulate proposals, because in their case trend of car use is much larger. To find solutions, the European best practices, the community development approach of regional development, the promotion of alternative modes of

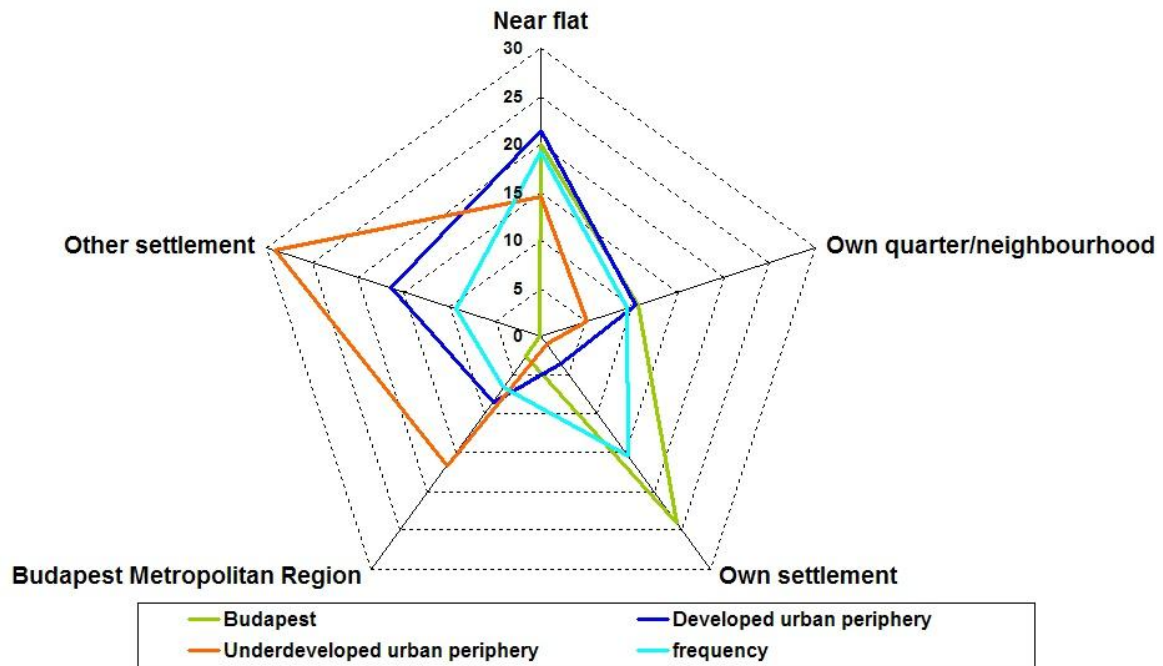
transport (and to encourage the development of systems) could help to facilitate the sustainable development of the metropolitan area.

Commuting in the Budapest Metropolitan Region - Where do the different social and territorial groups work? Why do they work in a different place?

The employment situation in Budapest metropolitan area, the region's economic and spatial structure significantly changed after the Transition, and adapted to the global processes, as well as the region's new role. The industrial production has ceased in the cities, or moved out to the edge of the urban zones. The tertiary sector became more and more dominant, its disperse location enabled the deconcentration of workplaces, and commercial, economic, institutional, sub-centers developed across the agglomeration. But as we see the national level, 28% of employees are working in Budapest recently, so it is still characterized by the concentration of jobs in the Capital.

The results showed that people living in Budapest – taking into account the better labour market opportunities – commute less and they are working mostly near or in their own quarter. The people living in developed urban peripheries have a much higher rate of commuting to another location to work, but here there are high proportion of local workers too. People living in undeveloped suburban settlements have to commute in highest percentage, which illustrates the “sleeping feature” of this kind of urban peripheries (Figure3).

Figure3: Where do the inhabitants work? (by place of residence, %)



Based on questionnaire analysis edited by the Author

If the different spatial and social groups are examined, there are significant differences between high and low strata: the proportion of those who working in other settlement is greater by employments with high social strata, which could be in relation with their qualification, their income and the nature of their work.

Regional differences are also appeared here: in Budapest the high social strata group is working locally rather than lower status groups, who commute to another location, (this category was chosen with 30% by the employees living in Budapest but working in other place). In developed urban peripheries with high social strata two trends are noticeable: they usually work nearby their residence or in other settlements. By the low social groups each category was balanced. The differences are also interesting in underdeveloped peripheries, where both groups are mobile, but a much higher proportion of high status go to another location to work (see Table4).

Table4: Place of work by social strata and by place of residence (%)

| workplace residence | High social strata | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | Near flat | Own quarter/ neighbourhood | Own settlement | Budapest Metropolita n Region | Other settlemen t |
| Budapest | 20,42 | 9,79 | 30,50 | 1,41 | 0,00 |
| Developed urban periphery | 30,56 | 8,11 | 0,00 | 8,33 | 21,62 |
| Underdeveloped urban periphery | 12,50 | 0,00 | 0,00 | 12,50 | 46,67 |
| Frequency of sample | 21,65 | 8,67 | 22,28 | 3,61 | 7,69 |
| | Low social strata | | | | |
| Budapest | 16,59 | 16,22 | 13,25 | 15,75 | 16,59 |
| Developed urban periphery | 5,88 | 8,11 | 2,41 | 5,54 | 5,88 |
| Underdeveloped urban periphery | 9,76 | 2,70 | 0,00 | 6,08 | 9,76 |
| Frequency of sample | 1,46 | 10,81 | 13,25 | 6,08 | 1,46 |

Based on questionnaire analysis edited by the Author.

In summary of work-related land use it is clearly outlined, that the territorial consumption is characterized by the local and microregional spatial use. If only we take consider into the inhabitants' residence, workers use less space in Budapest than people in the suburbs, which refers to the concentration of jobs in here. The two groups could be separated people living in the suburbs: those who works nearby their residence, and those who works in other municipalities. The case of the underdeveloped urban peripheries people have to but predominantly those living in other municipalities to see the work that the nature of the sleeping town.

CONCLUSION

Based on statistical and empirical research results two important questions were examined related to the social conflicts generated by different consumption patterns according to the inhabitants everyday life activities which mainly were caused the suburbanization and urban sprawl effects around the Hungarian capital. The two questions were the following: What kind of conflicts were revealed due to new urbanization processes and everyday life activities? Where are the everyday life activities, namely commuting and working of the different social residential groups localised?

From the results we can conclude that the social conflicts and suburbanization problems is generated by in one hand the social-structural position (qualification, occupation, financial situation, family background), and in the other hand the consumer patterns of the habitats (which are generated by the global urban consumption requirements and opportunities) (Sassen, 1991). Besides the above-mentioned processes, in the present Hungarian context the urbanization, the regional and social inequalities, the historical background, the production and the distribution of the economic and commercial system, the influence of the market economy and the intervention of the state resulted in new type of the inhabitants territorial consumer methods, everyday life activities too.

It should not be forgotten that, the studied area, namely the Budapest Metropolitan Region, is the country's most developed region. And the evaluation of its territorial consumption produced by the people who live here can not break away from its metropolitan and regional function. According to Enyedi (2009, 122), in the triple spatial system of Hungary, Budapest is the first level, as it is the most important national element in the global network, a gateway which is taking into the European and global impacts and transmitting them to other parts of the country.

As a results of suburbanization processes, people from the urban peripheries have to move in the cities for their basic needs, as working, but the growing perception of social conflicts, and sustainability problems could be a challenge to solve, with the development of competitive suburban centres with its high income and educated human and capital resources, if it can step over the conflicts and recognize the local opportunities and sources.

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